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## Visualizing the Child:

## Japanese Children's Literature in the Age of Woodblock Print, 1678-1888

Children's literature flourished in Edo-period Japan, as this dissertation shows through a survey of eighteenth-century woodblock-printed picturebooks for children that feature children in prominent roles. Addressing a persisting neglect of non-Western texts in the study of children's literature and childhood per se, the dissertation challenges prevailing historical understandings of the origins of children's literature and conceptions of childhood as a distinct phase of life. The explosive growth of print culture in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Japan not only raised expectations for adult literacy but also encouraged the spread of basic education for children and the publication of books for the young. The limited prior scholarship on Edo-period Japanese children's books tends to dismiss them as a few isolated exceptions or as limited to moralistic primers and records of oral tradition. This dissertation reveals a long-lasting, influential, and varied body of children's literature that combines didactic value with entertainment. Eighteenth-century picturebooks drew on literary and religious traditions as well as popular culture, while tailoring their messages to the interests and limitations of child readers.

Organized in two parts, the dissertation includes two analytical chapters followed by five annotated translations of picturebooks (*kōzeibyōshi* and early *kusazōshi*). Among the illustrators that can be identified are ukiyoe artists like Torii Kiyomitsu (1735-1785). The first chapter analyzes the picturebook as a form of children's literature that can be considered in terms analogous to those used of children's literature in the West, and it provides evidence that these

picturebooks were recognized by Japanese of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as uniquely suited to child readers. The second chapter addresses the ways in which woodblock-printed children's literature was commercialized and canonized from the mid-eighteenth century through the latter years of the Edo period, and it shows that picturebooks became source material for new forms of children's culture during that time. The translated picturebooks, from both the city of Edo and the Kamigata region, include a sample of eighteenth-century views of the child: developing fetus, energetic grandchild, talented student, unruly schoolboy, obedient helper at home, young bride-to-be, and deceased child under the care of the Bodhisattva Jizō.

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## Introduction: A Children's Literature of the Edo Period (1603-1867)

Over a century before children's literature—according to most scholars—began in Japan, there was already a large corpus of picturebooks, heavily illustrated woodblock-printed booklets for young people. Some of these works depicted the child reader in visible terms, as in the scene below from *Osana asobi* おさな遊び (*Youthful Play*), where a reading boy is depicted as the envy of his friends. In the first double-page scene in this mid- to late- eighteenth-century picturebook, six boys pause as if in a dramatic tableau, and each speaks a line of dialogue.<sup>1</sup> Across the two pages runs a poem about flying a kite, one of the two activities depicted; reading a book is the other. Both are commercially produced amusements, part of an urban consumer culture for children.

The content of the young boy's book is hidden from the reader or viewer of *Osana asobi*, but the other boys' reactions suggest that it is more likely to be a picturebook like *Osana asobi* itself than a dry textbook or primer. The older boys peer over the reader's shoulder to see the book. One asks if the book is interesting; he wants to borrow it. The other says that he is going to practice calligraphy, but his attention is on the book rather than on his own paper and inkstone. The reader responds, but over time, wear on the only extant copy of the real book has rendered his answer illegible. What remains clear is that the depicted book is an amusement to be desired, something more fun than practicing writing.

*Osana asobi* is typical of eighteenth-century picturebooks in that its small ten-page format has a high ratio of illustration to verbal text and a simplified script. Most words are

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<sup>1</sup> *Osana asobi*, in *Kinsei kodomo no ehon shū* (henceforth *KKES*), *Kamigata hen*, ed. Nakano Mitsutoshi and Hida Kōzō (Iwanami shoten, 1985), 376.

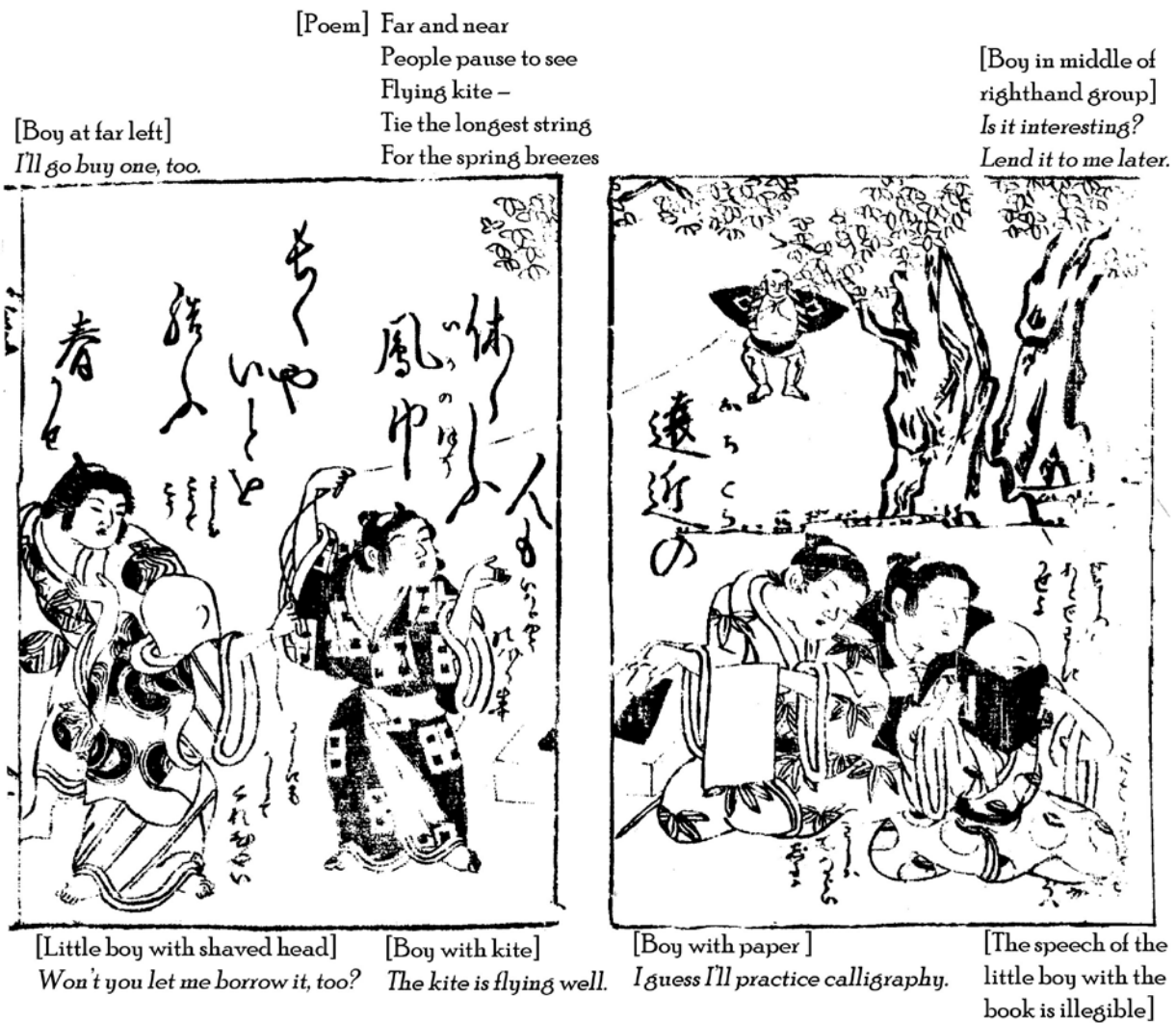


Figure 1: Reading a book (right) and flying a kite, in *Osana Asobi*

written phonetically in the syllabary (*kana*) such books sometimes taught. Chinese characters rarely appear, and when they do, are almost always accompanied by phonetic glosses. This weaving together of illustration with a simplified verbal text was a distinguishing characteristic of eighteenth-century children's literature. In order to read the verbal text, one must read it with reference to the visual text, by which the speakers and situation are identified. Likewise, larger script sets the poem apart from the dialogue. In this example from *Osana asobi*, explanatory notes identify the speakers and situation, but the full translations in this dissertation place the

English verbal text within the illustration in order to allow a reading experience analogous to that of eighteenth-century readers, who relied on visual cues to understand the verbal and vice versa.

*Osana asobi*'s pairing of a book with a kite is not coincidental. Rather, it is indicative of the fact that both were associated with early spring. For much of the eighteenth century, picturebooks were published and sold especially around the New Year's holidays, and auspicious motifs related to early spring are particularly common in these books. Thus, picturebooks were designed both to accommodate emergent readers and to suit a season of celebration. At the same time, *Osana asobi*'s depiction of the book and the kite as enviable amusements suggests to the reader that picturebooks, like *Osana asobi* itself, are just as much fun as kites. The boy at left who leaves to buy his own kite suggests a course of action: children without their own picturebooks can go to buy them.

*Osana asobi*'s overt reference to an implied child reader is unusual, but it demonstrates a commercial sensitivity to child readers as a category. One might call individual texts, such as *Osana asobi*, "children's books" based on the self-reflexive depiction of a child reader with a book, the simplified script, or the depiction of children's activities. However, the question of whether there was a distinct group of texts one could call "children's literature" in Edo-period Japan—the subject of this dissertation—is more complicated and more contested. To speak of children's literature is to imply a society that made conscious distinctions between adults and children in terms of their needs and interests; it is also probably to suggest the existence of a consumer culture oriented toward fulfilling the needs and desires of specific, age-based markets. In other words, children's literature is to be seen as one part of a larger children's culture—what

Henry Jenkins has defined as “popular culture produced for, by and/or about children,” though the focus here is primarily on the “for” and “about” rather than the “by.”<sup>2</sup>

Through a survey of eighteenth-century picturebooks for children that feature children in prominent roles, this dissertation introduces the child reader of the Edo period within the context of the children’s culture of the time, and it redresses a persisting neglect of non-Western books and related media in the study of children’s literature before the modern era. Rather than looking at the relationship between Edo-period children’s literature and modern children’s literature, this dissertation instead focuses on key texts from the Edo period, presents evidence that Edo-period Japanese publishers marketed picturebooks to children, and considers late-Edo-period reception of eighteenth-century picturebooks. By locating eighteenth-century picturebooks in relation to their publishers and their implied readership, the dissertation aims to break down the generalizations about Edo-period children’s literature, or the lack of such literature, which are dominant in English-language scholarship, and to introduce a more nuanced view of Edo-period childhood that is sensitive to historical changes.

Edo-period woodblock-printed picturebooks may not have been the first literature to be enjoyed by Japanese children, but these books reached a broader range of children than had the illustrated scrolls or manuscripts of earlier generations.<sup>3</sup> Eighteenth-century publishers marked and marketed their books as items for children, selling them in numbers and at prices that allowed children’s literature to circulate widely within the urban merchant class. This was children’s literature made possible by the same woodblock-print technology that had transformed

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<sup>2</sup> Henry Jenkins, “Children’s Culture,” <http://web.mit.edu/cms/People/henry3/children.htm> (accessed September 30, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> Melissa McCormick, *Tosa Mitsunobu and the Small Scroll in Medieval Japan* (University of Washington Press, 2009), 72-78.

popular literature for adults.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, just as woodblock-printed ukiyo-e flourished from the late seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, so too did woodblock-printed children's literature.

### **Edo-period children's literature in the existing scholarly literature**

According to most scholarship, Japanese children's literature is supposed to have begun in the Meiji period (1868-1912). Scholars variously date its emergence to children's magazines of the 1880s, late nineteenth-century translations, the publication of *Koganemaru* こがね丸 (1891), or the publication of *Akai fune* 赤い船 (1910).<sup>5</sup> Those points were indeed critical junctures for the emergence of modern children's literature and new understandings of the child, yet a new appreciation of the woodblock-printed children's literature of the Edo period is needed. As I will argue, this children's literature emerged as early as the late 1670s, some two centuries earlier than most scholars would look for children's literature in Japan. Though it faded in the late nineteenth century, displaced by modern children's literature in movable type, Edo-period children's literature lasted for over two hundred years, borrowed from and transformed literary and theatrical sources, influenced the visual imagination of adult popular literature, and helped to shape both Edo-period concepts of the child and Edo-period children themselves.

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<sup>4</sup> Studies relevant to woodblock printing and the growth of the reading public include Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Japan in Print: Information and Nation in the Early Modern Period* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006); Laura Moretti, "Kanazōshi Revisited: The Beginnings of Japanese Popular Literature in Print," *Monumenta Nipponica* 65.2 (2010): 297-356; Richard Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Nona L. Carter, "A Study of Japanese Children's Magazines 1888-1949" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2009); Karatani Kōjin, "The Discovery of the Child," trans. Ayako Kano and Eiko Elliot, in *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, trans. ed. Brett de Bary (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 114; Ogawa Mimei, *Akai fune: Otogi-banashi shū*, ill. Watanabe Yohei, Meicho fukkoku, Nihon Jidō Bungakkan 5 (1910; reprint, Horupu shuppan, 1971); L. Halliday Piel, "Loyal Dogs and Meiji Boys: The Controversy Over Japan's First Children's Story, *Koganemaru* (1891)," in *Children's Literature* 38 (2010): 207-222; Judy Wakabayashi, "Foreign Bones, Japanese Flesh: Translations and the Emergence of Modern Children's Literature in Japan," *Japanese Language and Literature* 42 (2008): 227-255.

Despite the profound and lasting influence of Edo-period children's literature, Japanese scholars have been reluctant to use the term "children's literature" (*jidō bungaku*) in reference to anything from the Edo period, even when they acknowledge early-modern books for children. Instead, the Japanese scholar Kami Shōichirō, one of the scholars most active in bringing these works into conversation with modern and contemporary children's literature, speaks of "Edo-period children's picturebooks" (*Edo-ki kodomo ehon*), "books for children" (*kodomo no tame no shomotsu*), or a "prehistory of children's literature" (*jidō bungaku zenshi*).<sup>6</sup> Likewise, Kawato Michiaki uses the term "children's books" (*jidō sho*) for Edo-period works and "children's literature" (*jidō bungaku*) for works published since the Meiji period.<sup>7</sup> One reason for the distinction in terms is simply practical: by now the use of "children's literature" to refer only to that Japanese children's literature that developed in the Meiji period in response to European and American influences is well-established. Using a less precise word allows scholars to discuss a wider range of materials. However, the difference in terms, based as it is on differences in format, influences, and time period, does not imply that earlier texts are less engaging or less relevant to children's lives. Amid the explosive growth of print culture in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Japan, rising expectations for adult literacy encouraged the spread of basic education for children and the publication of books designed to attract young people. However, Edo-period children's books, when not overlooked entirely, have tended to be dismissed as moralistic primers or as records of oral tradition set down without attention to the particular interests or

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<sup>6</sup> Kami Shōichirō, *Kindai izen no jidō shuppan bijutsu*, Nihon jidō bunka shi sōsho 6 (Kyūzansha, 1995), 60; Kami Shōichirō, "Jidō bungaku zenshi e no izanai," in *Kindai izen no jidō bungaku*, ed. Nihon jidō bungaku gakkai, vol. 1 of *Kenkyū Nihon no jidō bungaku* (Tōkyō shoseki, 2003), 7-30.

<sup>7</sup> Kawato Michiaki, ed., *(Zusetsu) Nihon no jidō sho 400 nen*, vol. 1 of *(Zusetsu) Ehon, oshie daijiten* (Ōzorasha, Nada shuppan sentaa, 2008), 1-2.



needs of child readers.<sup>8</sup> Such views misrepresent what was in fact a long-lasting and varied body of children's literature that combines didactic value with entertainment. Simply put, the tendency among Japanese scholars to speak of “children’s literature” during the Meiji period but not during the Edo period is highly problematic not only for a consideration of the history of children’s literature in Japan, but also for a consideration of the history of childhood itself.

Since the 1960s, scholars in the West have examined the concept of childhood and how ideas related to children have changed over time and across cultural and national boundaries. In this they have generally followed or contested research by Philippe Ariès, who wrote of changes in the structure of the family and in the treatment of children in France in the centuries prior to the French revolution.<sup>9</sup> Our understanding of childhood today is not the same as the understanding of childhood in sixteenth-century France, nor is it the same as the understanding of childhood in France ca. 1960.<sup>10</sup> Few would object to the idea that the treatment of young people has changed over time as society’s beliefs about the needs and rights of the young have shifted, and Ariès’s foregrounding of childhood as an idea that changes has spurred fruitful inquiry into the history of children from Europe to Latin America and East Asia.<sup>11</sup> However,

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<sup>8</sup> Jürgen Barthelmes, “Die Bürgerliche Kinder- und Jugendliteratur im Japan des 19. Jahrhunderts” (PhD diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität zu München, 1977), 58, note 1 p. 198; Joan E. Ericson, introduction to *A Rainbow in the Desert: An Anthology of Early Twentieth-century Japanese Children's Literature*, trans. Yukie Ohta (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2001), viii; Wakabayashi, “Foreign Bones, Japanese Flesh,” 228.

<sup>9</sup> Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, trans. Robert Baldick (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962).

<sup>10</sup> Patrick H. Hutton, *Philippe Ariès and the Politics of French Cultural History* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 110; cf. Neil Postman, *The Disappearance of Childhood* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1982).

<sup>11</sup> Albrecht Classen, ed., *Childhood in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: The Results of a Paradigm Shift in the History of Mentality* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005); Ping-chen Hsiung, *A Tender Voyage: Children and Childhood in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005); Lizbeth Halliday Piel, “The Ideology of the Child in Japan, 1600--1945” (PhD diss., University of Hawai'i at Manoa, 2007); Linda A. Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Bianca Premo, “How Latin America’s History of Childhood Came of Age,” *The Journal of the History of Childhood*

Ariès went so far as to observe that there was probably “no place for childhood in the medieval world” and that medieval society lacked “an awareness of the particular nature of childhood.”<sup>12</sup> Such claims about the absence of a concept of the child in earlier times elicited the strongest reactions to Ariès’s study, such as Linda Pollock’s research into parents’ expressions of affection and concern for their children.<sup>13</sup> Developments in research on the history of childhood have been treated at length elsewhere and will not be rehearsed here.<sup>14</sup>

No doubt the most influential essay in informing English-language scholarship on the history of Japanese childhood is that of Karatani Kōjin, titled “The Discovery of the Child.” Karatani claims that Western influences in the Meiji period caused Japanese to adopt Western ideas about the child but that the apparent objective reality of children blinded them to the fact that the concept of the child was new and foreign. Meiji-period Japanese “discovered” in their own culture and history an awareness of children who seemed to have always been there but who were actually newly constructed.<sup>15</sup> Karatani sees this concept of the child as shaped and disseminated by the modern nation-state and the school system it instituted.<sup>16</sup>

There is truth in Karatani’s account of the Meiji-period child, but he goes too far in his generalizations about Edo-period children. As evidence of the discontinuity between the old and new understandings of children, Karatani compares the large numbers of items produced for

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*and Youth* 1.1 (2008) 63-76; James A. Schultz, *The Knowledge of Childhood in the German Middle Ages, 1100-1350* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995).

<sup>12</sup> Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, 33, 128.

<sup>13</sup> Pollock, *Forgotten Children*.

<sup>14</sup> William A. Corsaro, *The Sociology of Childhood*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., *Sociology for a New Century* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2005), 61-81; Hutton, 92-112; Andrea Immel and Michael Whitmore, “Introduction: Little Differences: Children, Their Books, and Culture in the Study of Early Modern Europe,” in Immel and Whitmore, ed., *Childhood and Children’s Books in Early Modern Europe, 1550-1800* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 1-18.

<sup>15</sup> Karatani, “The Discovery of the Child,” 115-116.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 132-133.

children during the Meiji period with what he claims to be a lack of commercial products marketed for children before the latter half of the nineteenth century. Karatani writes, “It was not until ‘the child’ came to exist that literature and amusements ‘for children’ appeared.”<sup>17</sup> In fact, books for children appeared nearly two hundred years before the Meiji period began, and children’s literature was well-established in both the Kamigata region and the city of Edo by 1744—when, in England, John Newbery published his influential first contribution to English children’s literature, *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book*.<sup>18</sup> The oldest extant Japanese picturebooks for children date to the 1660s and 1670s—seven or eight decades before Newbery’s children’s books and nearly two centuries before the heavily illustrated storybooks of such artists as Walter Crane, Kate Greenaway, and Randolph Caldecott popularized picturebooks in the West.<sup>19</sup> Since 1980, when Karatani wrote, Japanese scholars have published studies on and collections of books and board games for children in early-modern Japan, but such studies and anthologies are neither available in English nor reflected in much of the recent Anglophone scholarship.<sup>20</sup> While

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>18</sup> F. J. Harvey Darton, *Children’s Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., revised by Brian Alderson (London, UK: The British Library and Oak Knoll Press, 1999), 1; *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book, intended for the instruction and amusement of little Master Tommy, and pretty Miss Polly: with two letters from Jack the Giant-Killer; as also a ball and pincushion; The Use of which will infallibly make Tommy a good Boy, and Polly a good Girl. The tenth edition. To which is added, a little song-book, being a New Attempt to teach Children the Use of the English Alphabet, by way of Diversion* (London: printed for J. Newbery, in St. Paul’s Church-Yard, [1760]), in Eighteenth Century Collections Online, Gale (accessed November 1, 2011).

<sup>19</sup> Nakano Mitsutoshi and Hida Kōzō, eds., *KKES, Kamigata hen* (Iwanami shoten, 1985), 484; Okamoto Masaru, ed., *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*, Kichō kotenseki sōkan 13 (Kadokawa shoten, 1982, 1995); Perry Nodelman, *Words About Pictures: The Narrative Art of Children’s Picture Books* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1988), 2.

<sup>20</sup> For an overview of such books and board games in English, see Ann Herring, “The Hidden Heritage: books, prints, printed toys and other publications for young people in Tokugawa Japan,” in *Written Texts--Visual Texts: Woodblock-Printed Media in Early Modern Japan*, ed. Susanne Formanek and Sepp Linhart, vol. 3 of Hotei Academic European Studies on Japan (Amsterdam: Hotei, 2005), 159-197. In Japanese, see Seta Teiji, *Ochibo hiroi: Nihon no kodomo no bunka o meguru hito bito* (Fukuinkan shoten, 1982).

the changes of the Meiji period were immense and affected many aspects of Japanese culture, Japanese children's culture before the Meiji period was hardly a blank slate.<sup>21</sup>

Karatani emphasizes the modern nation-state and the school system as prerequisites for the “discovery of the child,” but evidence of children's culture in the eighteenth century points to a need to look elsewhere for the sources of Edo-period conceptions of the child.<sup>22</sup> Edo-period Japan did not have a compulsory school system, but it did not lack shared cultural ideas and experiences. Mary Elizabeth Berry argues for the existence of an “early modern nation” in Edo-period Japan, one with a sense of community formed through the circulation of books and maps among a reading public.<sup>23</sup> Commercial texts made up a “library of public information” that promised access to cultural literacy and, through it, membership in the early-modern nation.<sup>24</sup> As the translations in this dissertation show, picturebooks provided a first point of entry into this library and a means for pre-literate children to begin to acquire both cultural and textual literacy. Moreover, adult ideas about who children were and what they needed were shared through print: fiction, nonfiction, and visual media.

English-language scholarship concerning the child in Edo-period Japan began in earnest with R. P. Dore's *Education in Tokugawa Japan*.<sup>25</sup> Since then it has continued to be largely the achievement of historians who have addressed questions related to schooling and educational

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<sup>21</sup> Karatani, “The Discovery of the Child,” 119-120; cf. Yanagita Kunio, *Kodomo fūdōki*, in vol. 12 of *Yanagita Kunio zenshū* (Chikuma shobō, 1998), 383-384.

<sup>22</sup> Karatani, “The Discovery of the Child,” 131-133.

<sup>23</sup> Berry, *Japan in Print*, 32-33, 211-212.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 210-211. Also relevant is Eiko Ikegami's discussion of commercial publishing and “proto-modernity” in Edo-period Japan. Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility: Aesthetic Networks and the Political Origins of Japanese Culture* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 286-323.

<sup>25</sup> R. P. Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965).

texts.<sup>26</sup> Questions of children's literacy and reading practices during the Edo period have been considered within studies of literacy and reading practices by Richard Rubinger and by Peter Kornicki.<sup>27</sup> Recent work by Fabian Drixler and Lizbeth Halliday Piel has moved beyond the question of education to shed light on the lives and deaths of infants and children as well as on relevant ideological debates.<sup>28</sup> In particular, Piel has analyzed the arguments of both Ariès and Karatani as they relate to children in Japan from the early-modern period through 1945.<sup>29</sup> Piel's study of the "ideology of the child" as constructed in Japan from the early-modern period through the experience of World War II does much to fill in the gap in English-language scholarship on Japanese childhood. Though Piel does not dwell on children's books prior to the Meiji period, she provides a valuable discussion of ideas, social conditions, and challenges that affected children during the early-modern period.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Relevant studies in this vein include W. J. Boot, "Education, Schooling, and Religion in Early Modern Japan," in *Two Faces of the Early Modern World: The Netherlands and Japan in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, ed. Yōzaburō Shirahata and W. J. Boot, Proceedings of International Symposium in Europe, October 27-29, 1999, Netherlands (Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2001), 15-34; Marleen Kassel, *Tokugawa Confucian Education: the Kangien Academy of Hirose Tansō (1782-1856)* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996); Brian Platt, *Burning and Building: Schooling and State Formation in Japan, 1750-1890*, Vol. 237 of Harvard East Asian Monographs (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center; distributed by Harvard University Press, 2004); Richard Rubinger, *Private Academies of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), Martha C. Tocco, "Norms and Texts for Women's Education in Tokugawa Japan," in *Women and Confucian Cultures in Premodern China, Korea, and Japan*, ed. Dorothy Ko, JaHyun Kim Haboush, and Joan R. Piggott, 193-218 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003).

<sup>27</sup> P. F. Kornicki, "Literacy Revisited: Some Reflections on Richard Rubinger's Findings," *Monumenta Nipponica* 56.3 (2001): 381-395; P. F. Kornicki, "Unsuitable Books for Women? 'Genji Monogatari' and 'Ise Monogatari' in Late Seventeenth-century Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 60.2 (2005): 147-193; Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*.

<sup>28</sup> Fabian F. Drixler, "Infanticide and Fertility in Eastern Japan: Discourse and Demography, 1660-1880" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2008); Piel, "The Ideology of the Child in Japan, 1600-1945." Also relevant to the lives of children in the Edo period is the work of Hideo Kojima: Kojima, "Childrearing Concepts as a Belief-Value System of the Society and the Individual," in Harold Stevenson, Hiroshi Azuma and Kenji Hakuta, eds., *Child Development and Education in Japan*, A Series of Books in Psychology, ed. Richard C. Atkinson, Gardner Lindzey and Richard F. Thompson (New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1986), 39-54; Kojima, "Japanese Childrearing Advice in its Cultural, Social, and Economic Contexts," *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 19:2 (1996): 373-391.

<sup>29</sup> Piel, "The Ideology of the Child in Japan, 1600-1945," 1-21.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 69-89.

In addition to these historical studies, references to real or imagined children may be found here and there among translations of Edo-period poetry and prose: Bashō's reaction to an abandoned child, Ryōkan's games with neighborhood children, and narrations of grief by bereaved fathers.<sup>31</sup> Most relevant to the present study is a translation of the play *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* 菅原伝授手習鑑 (*Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, 1746), still popular in the puppet and kabuki theaters, which includes a scene set at a writing school (*terakoya*) that influenced Edo-period depictions of schoolboys and other children, including those in picturebooks.<sup>32</sup>

Studies of children's culture in Japan during the Edo-period are still lacking. In fact, the absence of translations of Edo-period Japanese children's literature and the lack of studies of children's culture has led scholars working in Western languages to assume falsely that children's culture did not exist in the Edo period. The conventional wisdom on children's culture in Edo-period Japan is expressed well in this statement by Brian Platt, "Despite the growth of a creative and prolific commercial print industry . . . children received surprisingly little attention from the popular culture of the day."<sup>33</sup> The only widely available English-language introduction to Edo-period children's culture is a chapter by Ann Herring, which was not published until 2005

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<sup>31</sup> Matsuo Bashō, *Bashō's Journey: the Literary Prose of Matsuo Bashō*, trans. David Landis Barnhill (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005), 14; Ryūichi Abé and Peter Haskel, trans., *Great Fool: Zen Master Ryōkan: Poems, Letters, and Other Writings* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 132-135, 198, 203; Harold Bolitho, *Bereavement and Consolation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 31-59; Kobayashi Issa, *Spring of My Life and Selected Haiku*, trans. Sam Hammill (Boston: Shambhala, distributed in the U.S. by Random House, 1997). See also the discussion of children in early-modern Japanese literature in Jeremy Lane Giddings, "Innocence and Instinct: The Figure of the Child in Modern Japanese Literature" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1988), 59-70.

<sup>32</sup> Stanleigh H. Jones, Jr., trans. and ed., *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, Translations from the Oriental Classics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

<sup>33</sup> Brian Platt, "Japanese Childhood, Modern Childhood: The Nation-state, the School, and 19<sup>th</sup>-century Globalization," *Journal of Social History* 38.4 (2005): 968.

(the same year as Platt's article).<sup>34</sup> Art catalogues provide rare glimpses of woodblock-print media for or about children, and Herring's 2000 catalogue, *Dawn of Wisdom*, includes a brief history of Japanese children's books.<sup>35</sup> Introductory essays about picturebooks from the city of Edo are translated in the back of *Kusazōshi jiten* 草双紙事典 (*Encyclopedia of Edo Comicbooks*).<sup>36</sup> Janine Sawada introduced late eighteenth-century moral texts for children, including illustrated songs, from the Shingaku religious movement in her chapter, "Shingaku for Children."<sup>37</sup> Other than those in this dissertation, scholarly translations of Edo-period picturebooks for children would seem to be limited to two by R. Keller Kimbrough.<sup>38</sup> In addition to these print sources, the International Library of Children's Literature maintains an online exhibit of ten digitized Edo-period picturebooks that attempts to bring these books within reach of contemporary children with spoken explanations in Japanese and English.<sup>39</sup> While picturebooks for children have been little-studied, scholars have worked on closely related

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<sup>34</sup> Herring, "The Hidden Heritage."

<sup>35</sup> Ann Herring, *The Dawn of Wisdom: Selections from the Japanese Collection of the Cotsen Children's Library*, ed. Don J. Cohn (Los Angeles: Cotsen Occasional Press, 2000); Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien, *Papierspiel und Bilderbogen: Aus Tokio Und Wien 1780-1880*, vol. 233 of Sonderausstellung, Historisches Museum Der Stadt Wien (Wien, Austria: Eigenverlag der Museen der Stadt Wien, 1997); Brigitte Koyama-Richard, *Kodomo-e: L'estampe japonaise et l'univers des enfants* (Paris, France: Hermann, 2004).

<sup>36</sup> Katō Yasuko, "Akahon: An Introduction," trans. Jonathan Mills, in *Kusazōshi jiten*, ed. Sō no Kai (Tōkyō dō shuppan, 2006), 355-361; Kuroishi Yōko, "A General View of Kurohon and Aohon," trans. Jonathan Mills, in *Kusazōshi jiten*, 349-354.

<sup>37</sup> Janine Sawada, *Confucian Values and Popular Zen: Sekimon Shingaku in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 110-140.

<sup>38</sup> R. Keller Kimbrough, "Murasaki Shikibu for Children: The Illustrated Shinpan Murasaki Shikibu of ca. 1747," in *Japanese Language and Literature*, vol. 40 (2006), 1-36; R. Keller Kimbrough, "Illustrating the Classics: The Otogizōshi Lazy Tarō in Edo Pictorial Fiction," *Japanese Language and Literature* 42 (2008): 257-304.

<sup>39</sup> International Library of Children's Literature, National Diet Library, "Edo Picture Books and Japonisme / Edo ehon to Japonizumu" (2006), [http://www.kodomo.go.jp/gallery/edoehon/index\\_e.html](http://www.kodomo.go.jp/gallery/edoehon/index_e.html) [English] and <http://www.kodomo.go.jp/gallery/edoehon/> [Japanese] (accessed February 4, 2012). No transcription; includes spoken explanations.

heavily illustrated fiction for adults, especially the comicbooks known as “yellow books” (*kibyōshi*).<sup>40</sup>

Attempts to compare modern childhood with early-modern childhood have been affected by this relative lack of research into early-modern Japanese children’s culture, including children’s literature. In addition, there has been insufficient dissemination of the scholarship that has been done in Japanese in the three decades since Karatani originally published his essay about the child. The 1982 publication of Seta Teiji’s groundbreaking study of Edo-period children’s culture, *Ochibo hiroi* 落穂ひろい (*Gleanings*), was followed by increased interest in and research on Edo-period children’s culture. More research on Edo-period children’s picturebooks has appeared in Japanese than one might imagine based on a look at the scholarship in English; the bulk of this work consists of annotated transcriptions rather than considerations of the child audience.<sup>41</sup> The translations in this dissertation build on existing Japanese work

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<sup>40</sup> Iwasaki Haruko, "The World of Gesaku: Playful Writers of Late Eighteenth Century Japan" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1984); Sumie Amikura Jones, "Comic Fiction in Japan during the Later Edo Period" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1979); Adam Kern, ed., "Kibyōshi: The World’s First Comicbook?" special issue, *International Journal of Comic Art* 9.1 (2007): 3-197; Adam L. Kern, *Manga from the Floating World: Comicbook Culture and the Kibyōshi of Edo Japan*, vol. 279 of Harvard East Asian Monographs (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center; distributed by Harvard University Press, 2006); Fumiko T. Togasaki, "Santo Kyoden's 'Kibyōshi': Visual-Verbal and Contemporary-Classic Intercommunications" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1995).

<sup>41</sup> Ann Herring, *Edo jidō tosho e no izanai* (Kumon shuppan, 1988); Kami, *Kindai izen no jidō shuppan bijutsu*; Katō Yasuko, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei* (Kokusho kankōkai, 2004); Kawato, ed., (*Zusetsu*) *Nihon no jidō sho 400 nen*; Kimura Yaeko, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi: akahon izen no bu*, *Nihon shoshi gaku taikai* 95-1 (Tachikawa-shi: Seishōdō shoten, 2009); Kimura Yaeko, *Kusazōshi no sekai: Edo no shuppan bunka* (Perikansha, 2009); Kimura Yaeko, Uda Toshihiko, and Koike Masatane, eds., *Kusazōshi shū*, vol. 83 of *Shin Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei* (henceforth *SNKBT*) (Iwanami shoten, 1997); Koike Masatane, *Edo no ehon: shoki kusazōshi shūsei* (henceforth *EEH*), ed. Sō no Kai and Koike Masatane, 4 vols. (Kokusho Kankōkai, 1987-1989); Nakamura Yukihiro, "Edo jidai Kamigata ni okeru dōwa bon," in vol. 10 of *Nakamura Yukihiro chōjutsu shū* (Chūō kōronsha, 1983), 397-437; Nakano Mitsutoshi, Hida Kōzō, Suzuki Jūzō, and Kimura Yaeko, *KKEs*, 2 vols. (Iwanami shoten, 1985); *Nihon jidō bungaku gakkai*, ed., *Kindai izen no jidō bungaku*, vol. 1 of *Kenkyū Nihon no jidō bungaku* (Tōkyō shoseki, 2003); Okamoto Masaru, *Kodomo ehon no tanjō* (Kōbundō, 1988); Okamoto, ed., *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*; Seta, *Ochibo hiroi*; Sō no Kai, *Edo no kodomo no hon: akahon to terakoya no sekai* (Kasama shoin, 2006); Sō no Kai, ed., *Kusazōshi jiten*; Sō no Kai, *Shoki kusazōshi no honkoku, naiyō bunseki ni yoru kinsei ki no kodomo no bunka no kenkyū*, Heisei 10-nendo - Heisei 13-nendo kagaku kenkyūhi hojokin "kiban kenkyū C1" kenkyū seika hōkokusho (Tōkyō gakugei daigaku, 2002); Uchigasaki Yuriko, *Edo-ki mukashi-banashi ehon no kenkyū to shiryō* (Miyai shoten, 1999). In addition to these works, relevant articles, chapters and books published between 1926 and 2005 are given in the following indices: "Sankō bunken mokuroku," in *Kusazōshi jiten*, 319-338; "Sō: kusazōshi no honkoku to kenkyū sō mokuroku," in *Kusazōshi jiten*, 339-348.



transcribing and annotating picturebooks in a two-volume anthology, *Kinsei kodomo no ehon-shū* 近世子どもの絵本集 (*Collection of Early Modern Children's Picturebooks*).<sup>42</sup> Other than the Kamigata volume of that anthology, scholarship on picturebooks from the Kamigata region has been limited.<sup>43</sup> There are more anthologies and reference works for picturebooks from the city of Edo, including significant contributions from the Sō no Kai research group.<sup>44</sup> Takahashi Noriko's study of the relationship between such picturebooks and the popular stage suggests a model of reading theatrical allusions in picturebooks, though these playful references cannot always be taken at face value.<sup>45</sup> Recent works by such scholars as Katō Yasuko, Kimura Yaeko, and Uchigasaki Yuriko have dramatically increased the secondary literature on and available reproductions of late Edo-period publications for children.<sup>46</sup> Studies and anthologies of primers (*ōraimono*) provide examples of children's reading materials other than picturebooks.<sup>47</sup> Also helpful in that regard are portions of a hundred-volume anthology of didactic works for women

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<sup>42</sup> Nakano et al., *KKES*.

<sup>43</sup> The main sources are still Nakamura, "Edo jidai Kamigata ni okeru dōwa bon;" Okamoto, ed., *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*.

<sup>44</sup> Kimura Yaeko, *Akahan kurohon aohon shoshi*; Kimura, Uda, and Koike, eds. *Kusazōshi shū*; Koike, *EEH*; Sō no Kai, *Edo no kodomo no hon: akahan to terakoya no sekai*; Sō no Kai, ed., *Kusazōshi jiten*; Sō no Kai, *Sō: kusazōshi no honkoku to kenkyū* [journal]. Note that Kimura includes some discussion of Kamigata works in *Akahan kurohon aohon shoshi*.

<sup>45</sup> Adam L. Kern, "Kabuki Plays on Page—and Comicbook Pictures on Stage—in Edo-period Japan," in Keller Kimbrough and Satoko Shimazaki, eds., *Publishing the Stage: Print and Performance in Early Modern Japan*, Boulder Books on Asian Studies I (Boulder, CO: Center for Asian Studies, University of Colorado Boulder, 2011), 163-189; Takahashi Noriko, *Kusazōshi to engeki: yakusha nigaoe sōshiki o chūshin ni* (Kyūko shoin, 2004).

<sup>46</sup> Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*; Katō and Matsumura, eds., *Bakumatsu, Meiji no esugoroku* (Kokusho kankōkai, 2002); Kimura Yaeko, *Akahan kurohon aohon shoshi: akahan izen no bu*; Kimura Yaeko, *Kusazōshi no sekai*, Uchigasaki Yuriko, "Akahan no dentō o hikitsugu ehon," in Torigoe Shin, (*Hajimete manabu*) *Nihon no ehon shi I: eiri hon kara gajō, ebanashi made*, *Nihon bungaku shi* 2 (Kyoto: Minerva shobō, 2001), 17-33; Uchigasaki, *Edo-ki mukashi-banashi ehon no kenkyū to shiryō*.

<sup>47</sup> *Ezu shūsei kinsei kodomo no sekai*, 10 vols. (Ōzorasha, 1994-1995); Ishikawa Matsutarō, *Ōraimono taikai*, 100 vols. (Ōzorasha, 1992-1994); Ishikawa Matsutarō and Yoshinaga Oizumi, *Kikō ōraimono shūsei*, 32 vols. (Ōzorasha, 1996); Tan Kazuhiro, *Kinsei shomin kyōiku to shuppan bunka: Ōraimono seisaku no haikai*, *Kinseishi kenkyū sōsho* 13 (Iwata shoin, 2005). No transcription for *Ōraimono taikai* or *Kikō ōraimono shūsei*.

and girls, *Edo jidai josei bunko* 江戸時代女性文庫 (*Edo Period Women's Library*).<sup>48</sup> Finally, depictions of children in ukiyoe and related woodblock-print media are collected in art catalogues.<sup>49</sup>

## Overview of the dissertation

This dissertation examines the role of the child both as a subject and a consumer of literature in Edo-period picturebooks. To allow such an examination, the dissertation provides five translations of eighteenth-century picturebooks, carefully chosen for their historical significance and their relevance to the concept of the child. Based on these picturebooks and related woodblock-printed media, strong evidence is presented that reading picturebooks was a common leisure pastime for Japanese children in the Edo period, and publishers explicitly marketed picturebooks to children.

In this study, close-up considerations of the verbal and visual texts of eighteenth-century picturebooks and related media feature prominently, as in some studies by Japanese scholars. However, setting this study apart is a concern for the figure of the child as both a reader and a viewer, while at the same time the subject of reading and viewing—as we have already seen in the example from *Osana asobi*. This concern has implications for the integration of Edo-period picturebooks into the larger discourse on children's literature and commercial children's culture.

The title, “Visualizing the Child,” alludes to a major argument of the dissertation, that illustration was central to the Edo-period understanding of children's literature, especially for the

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<sup>48</sup> *Edo jidai josei bunko*, 100 vols. (Ōzorasha, 1994-8). No transcription.

<sup>49</sup> Kobayashi Tadashi, comp., and ed. Nakajō Masataka, *Edo kodomo hyakkei*, Kumon ukiyoe korekushon (Kawade shobō shinsha, 2008); Kumon Kodomo Kenkyūjo and NHK Puromōshon, ed., Kuroda Hideo, Inagaki Shin'ichi, and Nakajō Masataka, comp., *Asobe ya asobe! kodomo ukiyoe ten: Utamaro ya Hiroshige mo egaita Edo no kodakara* (NHK Puromōshon, 2003); Tōbu Bijutsukan et al., ed., *Ukiyoe no kodomotachi* (Tōbu bijutsukan, 1994).

decades of the eighteenth century prior to the development of comicbooks for adults. Visual comprehension was thought to come naturally to children, and recognition of sounds—expressed as a phonetic vernacular in writing—to follow close behind. Yet children’s literature did not merely reflect Edo-period ideas about children. Visual forms of mass-produced media, especially picturebooks and other works related to the popular theater, helped to shape and disseminate conceptions of the child in the eighteenth century. Picturebooks reinterpreted materials borrowed from the stage and other pop-cultural sources for their representations of children. In fact picturebooks were often produced by the same artists and publishers who made prints and advertisements for the kabuki theater.

In addressing visual and verbal representation of children and for children, the dissertation touches on broader questions regarding the place of children’s literature in Edo-period popular culture and, indeed, the existence of Japanese children’s literature in the age of woodblock print. In referencing the “age of woodblock print” rather than the “Edo period,” the second part of the title acknowledges that children’s literature may well have existed in some form prior to the Edo period and that woodblock-printed children’s literature faded some twenty years into the Meiji period rather than disappearing abruptly with the Meiji Restoration.

The dissertation helps to diversify the textual bases for children’s literary studies and the history of childhood by contributing translations and highlighting other key texts from the already flourishing trade in children’s recreational picturebooks in mid-eighteenth-century Japan. Eighteenth-century picturebooks are a fitting subject for such a study because they survive in significant numbers and were recognized by Japanese of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as uniquely suited to child readers. Nineteenth-century authors and artists would depend on these books as source material for new forms of children’s culture. This dissertation

brings eighteenth-century Japanese picturebooks into conversation with related theatrical, historical, and religious texts from the period, both visual and verbal. To that end, the project references additional primary source material from picture board games as well as Edo-period essays and treatises on childhood reading and education.

Chapter One, “The Picturebook as Children’s Literature,” examines evidence of childhood reading and attitudes toward children’s literature in the Edo period. Particular attention is given to the place of eighteenth-century picturebooks in the range of woodblock-printed children’s literature from the 1660s or 1670s to the 1880s. I consider evidence for treating woodblock-printed picturebooks as children’s literature. In particular, comments on child-rearing, early education, and picturebooks by Edo-period Japanese scholars and writers show that a concern for age-appropriate reading materials dates back to the eighteenth century, if not earlier.

Chapter Two, “Visualizing the Child Reader,” looks at eighteenth-century definitions of the child and examines how picturebooks fit into eighteenth- and nineteenth-century commercial children’s culture. Publishers advertised directly to children through games and through picturebooks themselves, with advertisements and depictions of the child audience. Woodblock-printed picturebooks flourished through the end of the Edo period, lasting into the first two decades of the Meiji period. The canon of children’s stories that emerged in this commercialized children’s literature by the early nineteenth century carried over into modern and contemporary Japanese children’s literature, though not without considerable changes.

The second part of the dissertation begins with a discussion of the issues involved in translating picturebooks. Chapters three through seven consist of translations with introductions and extensive annotations. The translations are ordered in as close to chronological order as

could be achieved without knowing the precise dates of publication; only one of the five translated picturebooks stipulates a publication date. The five translated picturebooks are considered together with related works from Japanese anthologies as well as with woodblock-printed picturebooks found in the National Institute of Japanese Literature and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Chapter Three, “The Value of Children in an Early Red Book,” presents *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, a translation of *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu* たたとる山のほととぎす (author and illustrator unknown, ca. late 1690s or early 1700s). This picturebook, in the “red book” (*akahon*) genre from the city of Edo, demonstrates the existence of children’s literature in Japan nearly two hundred years before the start of “modern” Japanese children’s literature in movable type. It has been much remarked upon in Japanese scholarship on Edo-period picturebooks for its early depiction of children at play and its series of improbable events, which some have compared to *The Adventures of Baron Münchhausen*. In *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, playful grandchildren are one form of the patriarch’s wealth; providing for their wellbeing and delight motivates the grandfather’s strange actions, which appear morally problematic to the Gods of Fortune within the story.

Chapter Four, “Seeing the Future: From Maiden to Mother,” focuses on one of the most enduring stories in this corpus of children’s literature, *Nezumi no yomeiri* 鼠のよめいり (ill. Nishimura Shigenobu, ca. 1737-1747), translated as *The Rat Wedding*. The young bride is the most prominent image of girls in picturebooks and is often, as in this red book, visualized as an anthropomorphized rat or other non-human character. This is a simple story of a girl’s coming of age, from the arranged meeting with her future husband to her firstborn son’s ceremonial first visit to a shrine. Although it is a picturebook in terms of its place among eighteenth-century

genres, *The Rat Wedding* is like some comicbooks in its use of dialogue without narration. The absence of narration allows the story to include brief but intimate cameo appearances for a variety of otherwise peripheral characters, particularly servants, and to present the wedding from multiple juvenile and adult perspectives.

Chapter Five, “Seasonal Changes and the Stuff of Picturebooks,” demonstrates how a picturebook could explain meteorological phenomena and agricultural rhythms of labor to children. *Kaminari no shiki banashi* 雷の四季咄 (author and illustrator unknown, ca. mid- to late- 18th c.), translated as *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons*, is a “patterned book” (*kōzeibyōshi*) from the Kamigata region. It presents a loosely related sequence of scenes from the daily lives of thunder demons over the course of a year. Here and in similar picturebooks from Edo, thunder demons live in a land above the clouds and control the weather. Child and youth demons appear in multiple scenes, but their participation in adult work is noticeably limited.

Chapter Six, “Mischievous and Marketing,” focuses on a picturebook about the daily lives of contemporary children from both merchant and samurai households. (*Iroha characters*) *Verses for Schoolchildren* is a translation of (*Iroha moji*) *Terako tanka* いろは文字：寺子短歌 (ill. Torii Kiyomasu II and Torii Kiyomitsu, published in 1762 by Urokogataya Magobei). “ABC” poems for each character of the phonetic syllabary (*kana*) make up a kind of narration that presents the viewpoint of a responsible adult. The verses contrast with the book’s illustrations and dialogue, which present something closer to the perspective of children with mixed responses to the civilizing project of their elders.

Chapter Seven, “Envisioning the Invisible Ideal,” presents a picturebook that explains fetal development through a dream of the womb as a Buddhist paradise. *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* is a translation of *Kaitai tanjō raku* 懐胎誕生楽 (author and illustrator

unknown, ca. mid- to late- 18<sup>th</sup> c.), another patterned book from the Kamigata region, this one targeted at a female audience. Here the child is literally constructed—from wood—with an ax, a plane, and other tools. The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, themselves animated statues, each add some feature or positive attribute to the developing fetus. In addition to this unusual representation of the fetus, the picturebook features an illustration of surprisingly lively deceased boys under the care of the Bodhisattva Jizō, considered the patron of children in the afterlife.

The source materials considered in this dissertation pose unique challenges for research. First, woodblock print was used to reproduce calligraphy, so the handwriting varies from book to book. Later printings of woodblock-printed books are especially difficult to read since the wooden blocks wore down with repeated use. Japanese scholars have worked to transcribe many picturebooks into typescript, including the picturebooks translated here. However, other picturebooks and related materials referenced in this dissertation have not been transcribed, and reading them requires specialized training in Edo-period cursive Japanese (*kuzushiji*). When no published transcription is available for a given source, I have noted this fact in the footnote and bibliography. Second, woodblock-printed picturebooks tend to be dominated by dialogue, including dialect and references to passing trends. The picturebooks' very brevity can impede understanding because there is limited verbal context to explain terms. The visual context can be helpful but can also be obscure in places.

Certain common themes about children emerge from these materials, although it would be too simplistic to offer a unitary vision of Edo-period childhood, given the variations over time and distance and the gaps in the available evidence. First, the child, particularly when depicted as energetic and playful, is usually gendered male. Second, children are distinct from adults, not only in their smaller size but also in their lower level of experience and responsibility. The

child's place in a consumer culture is never far from these picturebooks, even when the settings themselves are above or beyond human experience.

Visuality is key to understanding eighteenth-century children's culture, including the heavily illustrated children's literature at its center. As products of commercial publishing illustrated by the same artists that illustrated kabuki, eighteenth-century picturebooks are impossible to neatly separate from the early modern stage and related woodblock-print media. The distribution of these early-modern images of children depended on traveling salesmen, gift-giving, souvenirs, and the extensive borrowing and adaptation that were part of the publishing culture of the time. With consideration of the consumer—of what would sell—a chief concern, publishers and artists designed picturebooks not necessarily or only to educate children but rather to appeal to children and their parents as consumers.

The consideration of Edo-period children's literature suggests a shift from thinking of Japanese children's literature to thinking of Japanese children's *literatures*, recognizing that the concept of the child "discovered" in the modern period overlapped with and displaced earlier concepts of the child, which were visualized in picturebooks.<sup>50</sup> The introduction of previously untranslated picturebooks provides an opportunity to consider the role of woodblock-print media in constructing and disseminating Edo-period concepts of the child.

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<sup>50</sup> Karatani, "The Discovery of the Child," 115-116, 131-133.



**Part I: Japanese Children's Literature in Woodblock Print, 1678-1888**

## Chapter 1: The Picturebook as Children's Literature

The woodblock-printed picturebook occupies a central place within the extensive corpus of Japanese children's literature that survives from the Edo period. In addition to discussing the study of children's books themselves, this chapter includes accounts of giving children picturebooks or illustrated storybooks as souvenirs or gifts for special occasions. Eighteenth-century references to children's books in government documents related to censorship are considered here as well.

Since there is substantial evidence of children's literature in Japan that predates any possible influence from modern Western children's literature, why is this literature virtually unknown in English-language scholarship? One reason is that English-language accounts of children's literature tend to be accounts of children's literature in English. Sometimes this fact is acknowledged in the title or in an introduction.<sup>51</sup> In other cases, the emphasis on English-speaking countries is implicit in the narrative and in the choice of source material; rarely does the discussion touch on other European countries and cultures influenced by them.<sup>52</sup> Texts for children before early-modern or modern European influence barely enter English-language scholarship on children's literature.<sup>53</sup> In a preface to the second edition of the *International*

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<sup>51</sup> M. O. Grenby and Andrea Immel, preface to *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Literature*, ed. Grenby and Immel (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), xiv; Janet Maybin and Nicola J. Watson, introduction to *Children's Literature: Approaches and Territories*, ed. Maybin and Watson (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, The Open University, 2009), 5; John Rowe Townsend, *Written for Children: An Outline of English-Language Children's Literature*, 6<sup>th</sup> American ed. (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 1996),

<sup>52</sup> Clare Bradford, "Race, Ethnicity and Colonialism," in *The Routledge Companion to Children's Literature*, ed. David Rudd (London, UK: Routledge, 2010), 39-50.

<sup>53</sup> Exceptions other than those given in the introduction include Gillian Adams, "Medieval Children's Literature: Its Possibility and Actuality," *Children's Literature* 26 (1998): 1-24; Limin Bai, *Shaping the Ideal Child: Children and their Primers in Late Imperial China* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2005).

*Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, Peter Hunt responds to criticisms made of the Anglocentric nature of this ostensibly international work:

It has been remarked that the sections on Theory and Critical Approaches, Forms and Genres, Contexts, and Applications are all English-language based: that is, the historical developments described and the examples given are overwhelmingly of English first-language-speaking countries and their empires; the theorising is largely based on Western – and specifically English-language – schools of thought. Equally, the gathering of articles on separate countries and areas of the world in a separate section (National and International) suggests that the “rest” of the world is “other” – that colonialism is not dead.

The answer to these quite reasonable criticisms is *not* that English-language children's books have one of the longest histories, have been most internationally influential, and currently dominate the world market. Nor is the answer that English-language theory and criticism are better than or more influential or more extensive than their equivalents in other languages, even given the status of English as a world language. [. . .]

The answer to the charge of Anglocentrism, then, is far more pragmatic than any of these. This is an English-language work, primarily written by scholars working in English, for a predominantly English-speaking audience. [. . .] As yet, I do not think that a scholar does, or perhaps could, exist, who could speak at first hand of the intricacies of, for example, reader-response criticism as developed in the indigenous languages of China, Germany, Norway . . . and everywhere else. Books in those languages remain mutually inaccessible except to a very few.<sup>54</sup> [Emphasis in original.]

The problem is a practical one: English-speaking scholars tend to focus on primary and secondary sources written in or available in English. A scholar may be fluent in multiple languages but not in all languages. The problem is exacerbated in the case of Japanese because Edo-period scripts are not immediately readable by speakers of modern Japanese; the grammar, vocabulary, and allusions—both visual and verbal—present additional barriers. Picturebooks that would have entertained emergent readers in Edo ca. 1750 need transcription and considerable annotation to be understood by contemporary educated adults who are native-speakers of Japanese. Scholars of Japanese literature who are not specialists in the Edo period may have only

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<sup>54</sup> Peter Hunt, ed., *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London, UK: Routledge, 2004), vol. 1, xix.

a passing familiarity with Edo-period children's books; and if they are not native speakers of Japanese or especially interested in the history of children, they may be unaware even of the existence of these books. The implication of Hunt's ruminations for Edo-period Japanese children's books is that if they are to enter an international discourse on children's literature, they need to be translated into English and introduced in English—one reason for this dissertation. As it is, the *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* spends more time on Edo-period children's literature than do most other sources in English, though its brief account is still inadequate as a basis of understanding. The section on Japan mentions a subset of the picturebooks that are the focus of this dissertation in the following sentence, "Story books especially for children came into being as early as the 1670s; they were called *Akahon* (Red Books), as they were books of myth, legend, folk or fairy tales in red bindings."<sup>55</sup>

This chapter argues for an understanding of Edo-period Japanese children's books, particularly picturebooks, as a children's literature. It considers evidence that Japanese publishers and book artists addressed children in their own way long before increased Western influences of the late nineteenth century brought European and American children's literature to Japan.<sup>56</sup> It addresses ways that adults used illustrated books and, in particular, picturebooks, to amuse and teach late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century children and thus shows an awareness of the particular needs and interests of child readers. This chapter will distinguish picturebook genres from didactic genres, such as primers, and will demonstrate an awareness in eighteenth-century Japan that children could and should enjoy picturebooks and other illustrated books.

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<sup>55</sup> Teruo Jinguh, "Japan," in *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, vol. 2, 1108.

<sup>56</sup> On the influence of translations on late nineteenth-century Japanese children's literature, see Wakabayashi, "Foreign Bones, Japanese Flesh," 227-255.

## The Discovery of a Child and His Books

A young man called Obiya Chōkurō 帯や長九郎 died in 1678, sometime between the New Year and the ninth month. He was probably about fifteen or sixteen years old, just at the age when a boy became a man in Edo-period Japan. His parents had some of his belongings placed inside a statue of the Bodhisattva Jizō (Sanskrit: Kṣitigarbha), patron of children in the afterlife. Chōkurō's belongings were wrapped in two packages marked with his posthumous name, Eigaku Hisamoto Shinji 永岳久甫信士, and the phrase, “Hail to the Great Bodhisattva Jizō” (*Namu Jizō Daibosatsu*).<sup>57</sup>

What could be so precious or personal as to be placed with Jizō in Chōkurō's memory? When the packages were finally removed and inspected three centuries later, in 1980, one package revealed woodblock-printed publications: ten picturebooks and illustrated storybooks, two small handbooks, and an illustrated broadsheet. The other package contained scrap papers that had been used for calligraphy practice and a sketchbook with hand-drawn pictures of warriors. Coloring and marginalia in the picturebooks and illustrated storybooks suggest that these were things that Chōkurō enjoyed as a boy, years before his death. The verbal text may have helped Chōkurō learn to read and write, but a sketch of a man in one of the books suggests that Chōkurō may have learned to draw from the books as well (Figure 2). These books and papers were personal items, some from early childhood and some from as recent as the New Year prior to the young man's death.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Okamoto, ed., *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*, 337-340.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 337-340.



**Figure 2: “Obiya Chōkurō” and sketch, inside the front cover of an illustrated storybook<sup>59</sup>**

The statue was in the town of Izawa, Matsusaka City, Mie Prefecture—some 72 miles from Kyoto, where at least some of the books were published. Based on the evidence of these “time capsules,” the scholar Okamoto Masaru surmised that Chōkurō’s father, Obiya Jirōkichi, was a successful merchant who traveled to Kyoto and that the illustrated books were likely souvenir gifts brought to Chōkurō occasionally over a period of several years. A few of the books are dated—the earliest date is in an illustrated storybook from 1667—but most likely all of them were published during or shortly before Chōkurō’s lifetime, that is between the early 1660s and 1678.<sup>60</sup>

The discovery of Chōkurō’s picturebooks altered scholars’ understanding of the history of Edo-period picturebooks. Until 1980, the oldest known Japanese picturebook for children was

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<sup>59</sup> *Imo jōruri, Bijin tataki* (originally published by Tsuruya Gohei), in Okamoto, *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*, 106, transcription 326.

<sup>60</sup> Okamoto, *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*, 337, 340.

from Edo: *Hatsu-haru no iwai: shūgi-zoroe* <sup>はつはる</sup>初春のいわひ: しうぎぞろえ (*New Year's Celebration: A Collection of Festivities*, 1678).<sup>61</sup> Picturebooks for children were assumed to have originated in the city of Edo and spread from there to other parts of Japan, but the appearance of Kyoto picturebooks about a decade older necessitated a shift to thinking of children's picturebooks as coming to Edo from Kyoto.<sup>62</sup> This problem suggests a larger issue for the history of children's literature, both in Japan and elsewhere, which is that one cannot assume that the historical record is complete or that the "first" example of a child's book can ever be determined with certainty.<sup>63</sup> Chōkurō may have been the only boy of his time to have left a book collection intact, preserved for over three hundred years from fire, bookworms, and the hands of other readers. But he could hardly have been the first or the only one to look at picturebooks—after all, these were not manuscripts for the elite but booklets published in large numbers by woodblock print.<sup>64</sup>

### **Picturebooks as Popular Literature: Formats and Prices**

As the story of Chōkurō demonstrates, woodblock-printed children's books emerged in Japan sometime in or before the mid-seventeenth century. But Edo-period Japan witnessed a

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<sup>61</sup> *Hatsu-haru no iwai* includes a date on the last printed page. The book itself is lost, but images of each page and of the covers survive from reproductions made in 1924. *Hatsu-haru no iwai* in *KKES, Edo hen*, ed. Suzuki Jūzō, and Kimura Yaeko (Iwanami shoten, 1985), 3-8, summary 490.

<sup>62</sup> Nakano Mitsutoshi, "Kamigata kodomo ehon no gaikan," in *KKES, Kamigata hen*, 494-495.

<sup>63</sup> Katō Yasuko raises a similar issue in Katō, "Bakumatsu, Meiji no mamehon," in Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, 374.

<sup>64</sup> On woodblock printing in the Edo period, see Berry, *Japan in Print*, 30-31; Peter Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1998), 136-138; Henry D. Smith II, "The History of the Book in Edo and Paris," in James L. McClain, John M. Merriman, and Ugawa Kaoru, eds., *Edo and Paris: Urban Life and the State in the Early Modern Era* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 332-352.

particular high point for children’s literature in the mid- to late eighteenth-century. In *Hōryaku genrai shū* 宝曆現来集 (*Collection from the Hōreki Era [1751-1764] to the Present*, 1831), Yamada Keiō 山田桂翁, known only for this book of miscellaneous essays (*zuihitsu*) about how the world had changed since his youth, identifies specific qualities that distinguish children’s literature from literature for adults. Picturebooks for children were small and cheap. They had a cultural function as New Year’s gifts. They could be used as playbooks for children’s chanting. Picturebooks for adults were dense, with extended verbal text and plots too complicated for children to enjoy. Moreover, picturebooks for adults were too expensive for children to use.<sup>65</sup> Thus, for Yamada, key factors distinguishing children’s literature were affordability and also accessibility in both language and content. Yamada mentions the use of picturebooks as texts for chanting, which may imply an educational function, but he first mentions the books’ connections to New Year’s festivities. Picturebooks are to be enjoyed.

Yamada made these distinctions between literature for children and for adults within the context of comparing picturebooks published through the middle of the Tenmei era (1781-1789) with picturebooks published in a similar format in his own time. See the table below (Figure 3) for an overview of woodblock-printed picturebook genres, and see Figure 4 for the books’ approximate sizes and relative dimensions.

Yamada uses the word *kusazōshi*, a term that is inclusive of several heavily illustrated genres from the city of Edo. As indicated in the table, *kusazōshi* were made in the “medium book” (*chūbon*) size, and the term is sometimes rendered as “comicbook” in English.

Specifically Yamada seems to be contrasting what scholars would today call “blue books”

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<sup>65</sup> Koide Masahiro, “Kaidai,” in *Hōryaku genrai shū I*, vol. 6 of *Kinsei fūzoku kenbun shū*, ed. Mori Senzō and Kitagawa Hirokuni, *Zoku Nihon zuihitsu taisei*, Bekkan (Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1982), 3-4; Yamada Keiō, *Hōryaku genrai shū I*, 61-62.



Region	Format	Approx. dates	Approx. Size
Kamigata (Osaka and Kyoto)	Early Kamigata picturebooks, similar to small red books in Edo	mid to late 17 <sup>th</sup> c.	Varied. About half the size of <i>chūbon</i> or <i>hanshibon</i> . <sup>66</sup>
	Patterned covers ( <i>kōzeibyōshi</i> ) <sup>67</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup> c.	<i>hanshibon</i>
	Other Kamigata picturebooks	18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	<i>hanshibon</i>
Edo: comicbooks ( <i>kusazōshi</i> , lit. “grass booklets”)	Red books ( <i>akahon</i> )	late 17 <sup>th</sup> to mid-18 <sup>th</sup> c.	<i>chūbon</i>
	Black books ( <i>kurohon</i> )	mid to late 18 <sup>th</sup> c.	
	Blue books ( <i>aohon</i> ) <sup>68</sup>	mid to late 18 <sup>th</sup> c.	
	Yellow books ( <i>kibyōshi</i> )	1775 to early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	
	Graphic novels ( <i>gōkan</i> , lit. “combined volumes”) <sup>69</sup>	mid 19 <sup>th</sup> c. to 1880s	
Edo: other	Small red books ( <i>akakohon</i> ), similar to early Kamigata picturebooks	mid to late 17 <sup>th</sup> c.	Varied. About half the size of <i>chūbon</i> or <i>hanshibon</i> .
	Doll books ( <i>hiinabon</i> )	Kyōhō era (1716- 1736)	Varied. A few centimeters wide.
	Bean books ( <i>mamehon</i> )	19 <sup>th</sup> c. through 1880s	Varied. Slightly smaller than small red books.

**Figure 3: Picturebook formats**

<sup>66</sup> The two sizes were based on divisions of two different standard paper sizes. A “medium-size book” (*chūbon*) was approximately 19 cm long by 13 cm wide. A “half-sheet-size book” (*hanshibon*) was approximately 24 cm long by 13 cm wide. Kazuko Hioki, “Japanese Printed Books of the Edo Period (1603-1867): History and Characteristics of Block-printed Books,” *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* 32.1 (2009): 85-86. In practice, many picturebooks were slightly smaller than these standard dimensions.

<sup>67</sup> The *kōzei* 行成 in the term *kōzeibyōshi* 行成表紙 is an alternate pronunciation for Yukinari. The genre is named for a style of paper that imitated the papers used by Fujiwara no Yukinari 藤原行成 (972-1078) for his poems. The thin paper was dyed and decorated with both a pattern and flakes of mica. Cf. Hioki, “Japanese Printed Books of the Edo Period,” 3.

<sup>68</sup> The “blue” of blue books was actually a yellowish green known as “leek-colored” (*moegi* 萌葱). Because the dye that was used quickly faded to yellow, distinctions between blue books and yellow books are not always clear. Hioki, “Japanese Printed Books of the Edo Period,” 91; Adam Kern, “*Kibyōshi* in the Harvard-Yenching Library: A Guided Tour,” *Early Modern Japan* 15 (2007): 3.

<sup>69</sup> Most graphic novels (*gōkan*) would not be considered children’s literature, but there were some relatively short graphic novels for children. Graphic novels are included here for reference because they emerged from the *kusazōshi* tradition, borrowed themes and characters from children’s literature, and shared authors and illustrators with bean books. See Uchigasaki, “*Akahon no dentō o hikitsugu ehon*,” 19-20.

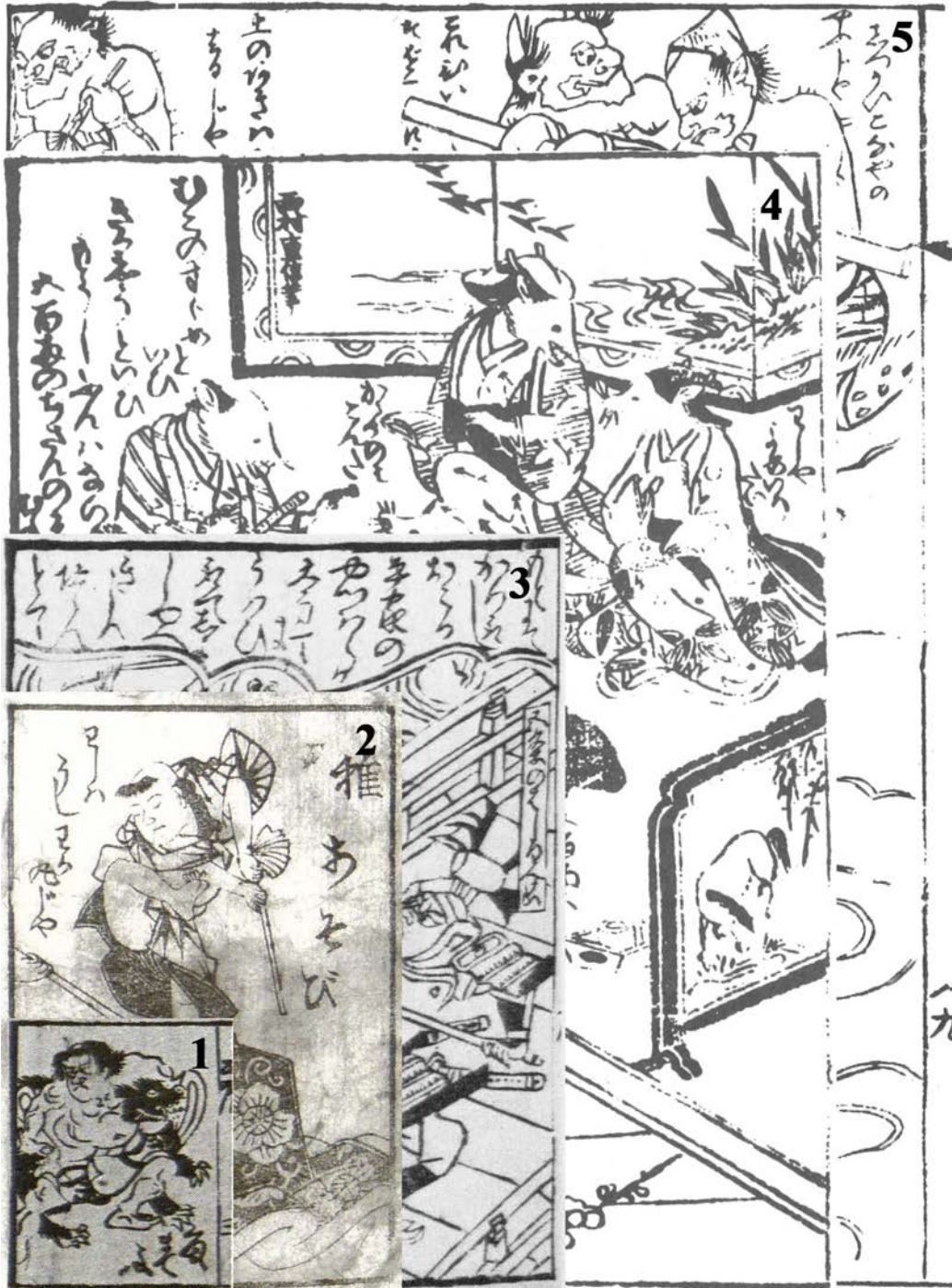


Figure 4: Full-size images of pages from picturebooks: (1) doll book: 4.0 cm x 2.8 cm, (2) bean book: 8.6 cm x 5.8 cm, (3) early Kamigata picturebook: 11.1 cm x 8.1 cm, (4) red book (*chūbon* size): 16.5 cm x 11.2 cm, and (5) patterned book (*hanshibon* size): 18.6 cm x 13.2 cm<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> (1) *Kinpira tachi* (Edo: Yamamoto Kyūzaemon, 1723), in Kimura Yaeko, “Tenri toshokan no akakohon, hiinabon,” *Biburia: Tenri toshokan hō* 105 (1996): 70; (2) *Kodomo buyū* (Edo: Ishikawa Wasuke, ca. 1850s-1860s), in Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, 79; (3) *Benkei tanjō ki* (Kamigata region: [Yamamoto Kyūbei?], ca. 1660s-1678), in *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*, 169; (4) Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., *Nezumi no yomeiri* (Edo:

(*aohon*), “black books” (*kurohon*), and “yellow books” (*kibyōshi*)—all relatively short—with “graphic novels” (*gōkan*), in which multiple fascicles were combined into a bound volume.<sup>71</sup> By the time Yamada was writing, children’s literature was appearing more often in miniature picturebooks known as “bean books” (*mamehon*) and specialty forms such as “picture board games” (*esugoroku*) than in the formats that were prevalent in eighteenth-century picturebook publishing in the city of Edo and the Kamigata region respectively.<sup>72</sup>

*Kusazōshi* have been considered comicbooks on the basis of their content, audience, and visual-verbal format.<sup>73</sup> Many “patterned books” (*kōzeibyōshi*) and “bean books” (*mamehon*), similar in content to *kusazōshi*, can be considered comicbooks as well. This dissertation uses “picturebook” as a broader category because the early Kamigata picturebooks and “small red books” (*akakohon*) from which the later genres developed tend to exhibit less integration of visual and verbal elements than one might expect to see in comics and because some picturebooks within both Edo and Kamigata genres lack a narrative and instead consist of a series of loosely related items, like animals or birds.

As these various names for picturebooks and comicbooks suggest, Japanese scholars have developed an intricate classification scheme for Edo-period picturebooks. The classification scheme has its value in bibliographical study, but it risks impeding literary analysis by artificially isolating closely related forms of picturebooks and comicbooks. As a result, scholars writing in

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ca. 1737-1747), in *KKES, Edo hen*, 189, [translated in Chapter Four]; (5) *Kaminari no shiki banashi* (Kamigata region: ca. mid- to late 18<sup>th</sup> c.), in *KKES, Kamigata hen*, 168, [translated in Chapter Five].

<sup>71</sup> For an overview of picturebook formats in Edo, see Kazuko, “Japanese Printed Books of the Edo Period,” 97-100.

<sup>72</sup> Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, 8.

<sup>73</sup> In a discussion of the “yellow book” (*kibyōshi*) as comicbook, Adam Kern defines “comicbook” as “a medium of entertaining, sustained visual-verbal narrative, often with an emphasis on topical humor and social issues, mass-produced and sold on the cheap to a broad segment of the general population and not just a narrow privileged elite.” Adam L. Kern, “The Kibyōshi: Japan’s Eighteenth-Century Comicbook for Adults,” *International Journal of Comic Art* 9.1 (2007): 10.

Western languages have tended to assume that the “red book,” in the strict sense of red-covered picturebooks from the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-centuries, was an isolated phenomenon, a lone genre for children that simply died out rather than a part of a more enduring “children’s literature.”<sup>74</sup> However, looking at early red books in isolation is misleading because they derived from and evolved into other types of picturebooks that shared the target audience of children. Even the yellow book, known for its appeal to adults, included some texts targeted toward children with titles that included the word “lesson” (*kyōkun*) or “red book” (*akahon*). In fact, when, around 1834, the popular author Takizawa Bakin 滝沢馬琴 (1767-1848) described the red book (*akahon*) as a famous product of Edo (*Edo no meibutsu*), the context makes it clear that he was speaking broadly of picturebooks from the city of Edo and including the yellow book, which he mentions by name.<sup>75</sup>

This variety of genre names has had the effect of obscuring the continuity of children’s picturebooks—one reason that this literature has been overlooked. Picturebooks crossed such generic boundaries as they shifted over time and as ideas and books traveled between the Kamigata region and the city of Edo. Of the titles translated here, *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* and *The Rat Wedding* are both red books, but they differ as much from each other as they do from other genres in their content, layout, and illustrations. Such genre names as “red book” and “patterned book” can be convenient insofar as they suggest a certain size, provenance, time period, and style of cover. However, the genre names alone speak little of the content. In fact, many eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Japanese, like Yamada, in the passage discussed above, probably

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<sup>74</sup> Barthelmes, “Die Bürgerliche Kinder- und Jugendliteratur im Japan des 19. Jahrhunderts,” 58, note 1 p. 198; Wakabayashi, “Foreign Bones, Japanese Flesh,” 228.

<sup>75</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Kinsei mono no hon: Edo sakusha burui*, in *Kahei hiroku; Sangen kō; Kinsei mono no hon Edo sakusha burui; Narubeshi no ben; Hōei no rakugaki; Yūjo kō; Hokuri jūnitoki*, ed. Naitō Chisō, Komiyama Yasusuke (Hakubunkan, 1891), part 2, 11-12.

used broader terms like "comicbooks" (*kusazōshi*) to describe a variety of heavily illustrated books and booklets.

Given the multiple and overlapping terms used for illustrated books in the Edo period, my use of the term "woodblock picturebook" to encompass heavily illustrated, woodblock-printed books and booklets in vernacular Japanese, regardless of their city of origin, cannot map neatly onto a word in eighteenth-century usage. My use of "picturebook" is perhaps closest to what might be translated as "picture chapbook" (*ezōshi*). These books tended to be produced by publishers specializing in ukiyoe prints and theatrical genres, such as illustrated scripts for puppet plays, as opposed to publishers specializing in more serious books. In Edo, the publishers of lighter works were referred to as "chapbook shops" (*sōshi-ya*) or "ballad-book shops" (*jōruri hon-ya*) and later as "local-book shops" (*jihon-ya*); whereas the publishers of more substantial works were called "bookstores" (*mononohon-ya*) and, later, "dealers in reading material" (*shomotsu toi-ya*).<sup>76</sup> Thus, picturebooks were associated with such texts as illustrated puppet plays from the point of their production and sale. Names for picturebooks in the eighteenth century included *kusazōshi* and *ezōshi* as well as a more limited usage of the subgenre names listed above. *Ehon* or *e-iri* were used to describe a wider range of illustrated books, which could include picturebooks but often described more substantial or verbally dense books, such as illustrated primers or illustrated war tales.

Although its dimensions shifted, the picturebook endured for over two hundred years. The wooden blocks could be stored and reused, so new editions of old picturebooks might be printed decades after the blocks were carved. Takizawa Bakin lists several picturebooks

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<sup>76</sup> Hashiguchi Kōnosuke, *Wahon nyūmon: sennen ikiru shomotsu no sekai* (Heibonsha, 2005), 63-64. See also Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, 175, 202, 219.

reprinted in the early nineteenth century from mid-eighteenth century originals.<sup>77</sup> With the nineteenth-century rise of the graphic novel, the smaller bean book became the dominant format for children's literature. The bean book continued through at least 1888, possibly even as late as 1898.<sup>78</sup>

The list of subgenres included under my larger heading of “woodblock picturebook” is long, and the content and style of presentation is varied, even within particular subgenres. However, thematic and other continuities exist among these various formats. Familiar storybook characters, such as animal brides, the legendary heroes Momotarō (Peach Boy) and Kintarō (or Kinpira), and the Seven Gods of Good Fortune, appeared in large and small picturebooks throughout the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries as well as in a few graphic novels and picture board games. Some works can be definitively assigned to particular subgenres, but others are categorized differently by different scholars. With classification based on the type of cover (red book, blue book, etc.), texts with missing covers are particularly problematic. Because the wooden blocks could last through thousands of printings, publishers sometimes put a new cover on a work printed from old woodblocks. Thus, a red book could appear later as a black book. A blue book could appear as either a black book or a yellow book, as was the case with *Verses for Schoolchildren*, which has been variously classified as a blue book, black book, and yellow

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<sup>77</sup> The passage is discussed further in the second chapter. Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, in vol. 19 of *Nihon zuihitsu taisei, dai 2-ki*, ed. Nihon zuihitsu taisei henshūbu (Nihon zuihitsu taisei kankōkai, 1975), 439; quoted in Kimura Yaeko, “Akahon no sekai,” *KKES, Edo hen*, 518.

<sup>78</sup> See Kamada Ariake, *Asahina shima meguri* (originally published by Kamada Ariake in 1888), in Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, 282-85. *Asahina shima meguri* is the newest *mamehon* in the collection. However, Katō appends a list of known extant *mamehon*, which includes the following: *Minamoto no Yoshitsune kunkōki* (pub. Tsunashima Kamekichi, 1898), in an unspecified private collection; Katō, 393. Only a few titles in the list date to after 1888. Uchigasaki gives the last years of the woodblock picturebook as the first half of the Meiji 20s, that is between about 1887 and 1892. Uchigasaki, “Akahon no dentō o hikitsugu ehon,” 23.

book.<sup>79</sup> To complicate matters further, enterprising publishers or illustrators could condense the illustrations and verbal text of a *chūbon*-sized picturebook to make a bean book, as was the case with a bean book closely based on the version of *The Rat Wedding* translated in the fourth chapter.<sup>80</sup>

Sales figures are not available for early picturebooks, but estimates are available for some of the more popular yellow books that emerged around 1775 as a more sophisticated variety of Edo picturebook. Popular yellow books could sell up to 5,000 or more volumes, and bestselling books sometimes went into multiple print runs.<sup>81</sup> Earlier picturebooks must have been selling well on a regular basis—otherwise, “serious” authors and illustrators would not have been tempted to adapt the form into comicbooks for adults that could deal with such topics as a fashionable life in the pleasure quarters. To some extent the market had to already be there in order to attract a wide audience. As one scholar notes, with the inexpensive picturebooks of Edo (*kusazōshi*), “the publishers’ major clients shifted from dozens or hundreds of lending libraries to thousands of individual customers. The publishers’ marketing strategy in *kusazōshi* was for low price and high volume.”<sup>82</sup> In other words, the woodblock-printed picturebook was among the first popular genres for a mass market in Japan.

The typical red book of ten pages (in five folded sheets) was inexpensive and priced in copper or iron *mon*, the least valuable coins of the day. In the Hōreki era (1751-1764), a red book or black book could be had for about five *mon* and a blue book for about six *mon*. With inflation,

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<sup>79</sup> Kimura, *Kusazōshi no sekai*, 90, 91; Tanahashi Masahiro, *Kibyōshi sōran*, vol. 2, *Nihon shoshigaku taikai* 48 (Musashimurayama-shi: Seishōdō shoten, 1989), 445-6.

<sup>80</sup> *Yomeiri*, in Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, ed. Katō Yasuko, 190-195.

<sup>81</sup> Kern, *Manga from Floating World*, 53-54.

<sup>82</sup> Hioki, “Japanese Printed Books of the Edo Period,” 98.

the price of a blue book went up to 12 *mon* by the Bunka era (1804-1818); presumably prices for other picturebooks increased over time as well.<sup>83</sup> The price difference between the blue book and black book probably relates to the fact that publishers could use a new set of woodblocks to publish a blue book and reuse the blocks later with a different cover to publish a black book.<sup>84</sup>

Compare the six *mon* for a blue book to some other prices during the Kan'en (1748-1751) and Hōreki eras: 1 *mon* for an earpick, 6 *mon* for a one-sheet souvenir print (*banzuke* 番付) from the year's first play, 6 *mon* for 10 rice crackers (*senbei* 煎餅), 8 *mon* for 10 *monme* (1 *monme* was about 3.75 grams) of cut tobacco, 19 *mon* for a toy, and 32 *mon* for one admission to a sideshow (*misemono* 見世物).<sup>85</sup> These prices suggest that a picturebook would have been as accessible to urban commoners as a snack or a smoke. These monochrome picturebooks were inexpensive compared to decorative prints as well. A full-color picture print of a beautiful woman could cost 32 *mon*, more than five times the cost of a blue book.<sup>86</sup> The low price of picturebooks would have allowed them to reach children in almost any urban family and to travel beyond the city as convenient souvenirs.

## Defining Children's Literature, Distinguishing Picturebooks

The affordability of picturebooks for Edo-period children is one reason to study these books—they were widely available to ordinary children. But in focusing on picturebooks, I am

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<sup>83</sup> Ōta Nanpo 太田南畝, *Kanasogi* 金曾木, cited in Ono Takeo, *Edo bukka jiten*, vol. 6 of *Edo fūzoku zushi*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Tembōsha, 1980), 402.

<sup>84</sup> Kuroishi, "A General View of Kurohon and Aohon," 352-353.

<sup>85</sup> *Zoku Asukagawa* 続飛鳥川, cited in Ono, *Edo bukka jiten*, 169-170.

<sup>86</sup> *Miyagawa no ya manpitsu* 宮川舎漫筆, cited in Ono, *Edo bukka jiten*, 400.



excluding a larger array of reading materials designed for Edo-period children, including educational compendia, religious texts, primers, and guides to writing Chinese characters. Educational texts for children in Edo-period Japan and the same centuries in China have been discussed elsewhere.<sup>87</sup> My interest in this section is rather to show how the Japanese woodblock picturebook, as reading material primarily for the enjoyment of children, compares to influential definitions of children's literature used in the history of children's books in the West and further to distinguish the picturebook from other Edo-period publications for children with which it is sometimes confused in Western-language scholarship.

In *Children's Books in England* (1932), a work that helped to establish the study of children's literature, Harvey Darton defined the term "children's books" as follows:

By 'children's books' I mean printed works produced ostensibly to give children spontaneous pleasure, and not primarily to teach them, nor solely to make them good, nor to keep them *profitably* quiet. I shall therefore exclude from this history, as a general rule, all schoolbooks, all purely moral or didactic treatises, all reflective or adult-minded descriptions of child-life, and almost all alphabets, primers, and spelling-books; though some works in each category will be mentioned because they purposely gave much latitude to amusement, or because they contained elements which have passed into a less austere legacy.<sup>88</sup> [emphasis in original]

So the kind of books that belong to children's literature are meant to amuse children, not only to educate them or to inculcate moral values. If applied to the Edo period, this definition would include such picturebooks as are translated in this dissertation as well as the illustrated storybooks among the books belonging to the young reader Obiya Chōkurō, discussed earlier.<sup>89</sup> On the other hand, it would generally exclude primers (*ōraimono*) and educational compendia

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<sup>87</sup> Bai, *Shaping the Ideal Child*; Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 275-290; Sawada, *Confucian Values and Popular Zen*, 110-140.

<sup>88</sup> Darton, *Children's Books in England*, 1.

<sup>89</sup> All of the illustrated books are reproduced in Okamoto, ed., *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*.

like *Onna chōhōki* 女重宝記 (*The Woman's Record of Treasures*, 1692), though the occasional exception might be made for unusually entertaining ones.<sup>90</sup> Alternatively, one could take a more inclusive understanding of children's books and children's literature based on reader reception theory, as does Seth Lerer.<sup>91</sup> However, I follow Darton's lead by focusing on picturebooks as examples of Edo-period children's literature in the narrower sense—a body of works designed primarily to entertain children—because it is precisely the existence of this type of children's literature that has been overlooked or disputed in most existing English-language scholarship on Edo-period Japan.<sup>92</sup>

Darton's explanation below of how and why he chose John Newbery's 1744 *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* as a starting point for "children's literature" suggests by analogy how one might identify the start of woodblock-printed children's literature in Japan:<sup>93</sup>

Children's books did not stand out by themselves as a clear but subordinate branch of English literature until the middle of the eighteenth century. . . . To put it commercially, it is less than two centuries since they became a definite object of the activities of the book-trade; that is to say, since authors first wrote them, and merchants first produced them, *habitually*, in quantities and with a frequency which implied that they were meant for a known, considerable, permanent class of readers ready to receive them. Because an arbitrary date is a convenience, and for no other reason, I will say that commencement took place in 1744, when John

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<sup>90</sup> Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 275-290; Namura Jōhaku, *Onna chōhōki. Kenai chōhōki*, ed. Kinsei Bungaku Shoshi Kenkyūkai, annotated by Ogawa Takehiko, Kinsei bungaku shiryō ruijū, Sankō bunken hen 18 (Benseisha, 1981), 1-220.

<sup>91</sup> Seth Lerer, *Children's Literature: A Reader's History, From Aesop to Harry Potter* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 2.

<sup>92</sup> See the introduction. In summary, Ericson, Karatani, and Wakabayashi argue against the existence of children's literature in Edo-period Japan. Herring and Kimbrough introduce Edo-period children's books but reserve judgment on the question of whether these were part of a children's literature. Ericson, introduction to *A Rainbow in the Desert*, viii-ix; Herring, "The Hidden Heritage," 159-197; Karatani, "The Discovery of the Child," 119-121; Kimbrough, "Murasaki Shikibu for Children," 1-36; Kimbrough, "Illustrating the Classics," 257-304; Wakabayashi, "Foreign Bones, Japanese Flesh," 228.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book*, in Eighteenth Century Collections Online.

Newbery, the most authentic founder of this traffic in minor literature, published his first children's books.<sup>94</sup> [Emphasis in original.]

Darton describes children's literature as beginning with developments in the commercial book trade. High literary value is less critical to this definition than the identification of child readers as a group, so the appearance of a few books specially crafted for a small group of elite children would not qualify as the beginning of children's literature.

To apply Darton's conception of children's literature to the Japanese case, one could look at developments in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Japan because of the growth and increasing sophistication of the publishing trade in woodblock-printed books at that time. A similarly arbitrary but convenient date for the commencement of woodblock-printed children's literature in Japan would be 1678. That was the year that Obiya Chōkurō's collection of illustrated books was enshrined in the statue of the Bodhisattva Jizō—evidence of both a child's reading and an adult's recognition that the child's books mattered.<sup>95</sup> Also, 1678 was the year of publication for the oldest picturebook from the city of Edo for which a date is known.<sup>96</sup> The fact that the publication of children's books had spread to Edo by this time shows that new publishers were ready to take a risk on these books.

Darton's focus on English-language children's literature has proved to be an enduring precedent, but recent scholarship by Emer O'Sullivan and Hans Heino-Ewers has attempted to open the field of children's literature to more effective comparative study.<sup>97</sup> O'Sullivan argues

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<sup>94</sup> Darton, *Children's Books in England*, 1.

<sup>95</sup> Okamoto, ed., *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*, 337-338.

<sup>96</sup> Suzuki and Kimura, ed., *KKES, Edo hen*, 490.

<sup>97</sup> Hans-Heino Ewers, *Fundamental Concepts of Children's Literature Research: Literary and Sociological Approaches*, translated from German by William J. McCann (New York: Routledge, 2009); Emer O'Sullivan, *Comparative Children's Literature*, translated from German by Anthea Bell (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).

for three “universal” features of children’s literature: “its definition as texts assigned by adults to the group of readers comprising children and young people, the asymmetry of communication in children’s literature, and its belonging to both the literary and educational realms.”<sup>98</sup> The first two characteristics have to do with the fact that it is largely adults who decide what is suitable for children, and adults who write, illustrate, publish, and market children’s literature. Often, adults are the ones who purchase children’s literature as well as the ones who provide it to children. In creating children’s literature, adults adjust the way that they relay information to their understanding of a child reader’s knowledge, capabilities, and interests.<sup>99</sup> In the case of woodblock-printed picturebooks of the Edo period, the authors, illustrators, and publishers were adults with, presumably, a higher level of literacy than that needed to enjoy picturebooks, but they used illustrations and phonetic script to make the text engaging and accessible for young readers.

The final feature O’Sullivan ascribes to children’s literature describes its double status, the fact that it has both cultural value and an educational function.<sup>100</sup> The cultural value in woodblock picturebooks included their potential for amusement, their connections to earlier literature and poetry, and their function as New Year’s gifts or souvenirs. The educational function is particularly evident in *Verses for Schoolchildren*, which features poems for the syllabary characters (*kana*) that incorporate instructions related to such ethical values as kindness, hard work, or respect for elders, especially parents and grandparents (filial piety). Other picturebooks promoted values related to warrior traditions, such as righteous vengeance and courage in battle, or conveyed cultural or factual information, such as the names and

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<sup>98</sup> O’Sullivan, *Comparative Children’s Literature*, 21.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-20.

distinctive iconography of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas (as in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*), the seasons and types of weather (as in *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons*), and the steps in betrothal and marriage (as in *The Rat Wedding*).

The full range of children's literary communication in the Edo period included written materials or performances meant for an audience of both adults and children, materials meant originally for adults but reworked for or recommended to children, and materials meant primarily for children.<sup>101</sup> Many types of illustrated popular fiction throughout the Edo period appealed to audiences of both adults and children. Seventeenth-century illustrated storybooks based on puppet plays, particularly those about the hero Kinpira and other warriors, had a significant influence on the less verbal picturebooks.<sup>102</sup> Among Chōkurō's ten illustrated storybooks and picturebooks, three retell legends of the warriors Minamoto no Yoshitsune 源義経 (1159-1189) and Benkei 弁慶 (d. 1189).<sup>103</sup> Adaptations of adult literature were sometimes versions close to the original but with the addition of phonetic glosses and illustrations; others, such as *Young Genji* (*Osana Genji* おさな源氏, 1661), were not only illustrated but also abridged or simplified.<sup>104</sup> Primers and some reference works were made primarily for children, as were picturebooks and nineteenth-century picture board games.

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<sup>101</sup> In my discussion of types of children's literary communication, I am drawing on Ewers, *Fundamental Concepts of Children's Literature Research*, 9-15.

<sup>102</sup> Kawato, ed., (*Zusetsu*) *Nihon no jidō sho 400 nen*, 26; Seta, *Ochibo hiroi*, vol. 1, 65-66.

<sup>103</sup> *Ushiwaka sen-nin kiri, Hashi Benkei*, originally published by Yamamoto Kyūhei in 1667, in *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*, 124-141; *Minamoto no Yoshitsune kōmyō soroe*, originally published by Hachimonjiya Hachizaemon, in *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*, 142-158; *Benkei tanjō ki* in *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*, 159-176.

<sup>104</sup> Seta, *Ochibo hiroi*, vol. 1, 61; Nonoguchi Ryūho, *Osana Genji*, 5 vols. (1661 edition held by Waseda University Library, Bunko 30 a a0214), in "Kotenseki Sogo Database: Japanese and Chinese Classics," [http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/bunko30/bunko30\\_a0214/index.html](http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/bunko30/bunko30_a0214/index.html) (accessed October 18, 2011). No transcription.

The language in texts intended for children could be Chinese, Sino-Japanese, classical Japanese, or a local vernacular. But in recreational children's literature, as opposed to didactic primers, the vernacular was dominant, presumably because it was easier—and thus more enjoyable—for children. *Verses for Schoolchildren*, for example, uses all of these linguistic styles in some form, and yet relies mainly on vernacular Japanese, particularly in the dialogue.

*Verses for Schoolchildren* represents a children's canon in miniature as it references Confucian classics, a guide to writing Chinese characters, a popular story from the kabuki theater, a collection of ancient Chinese poetry, the story of Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真 (845-903), two primers and four *nō* plays, before ending with an advertisement for fifteen picturebooks, including itself. The context suggests that all of these would be acceptable for children in some circumstance, whether reading *The Mencius* under the guidance of a teacher or seeing kabuki outside of school hours. Texts acceptable for children thus appeared in a wide range of genres and styles—to call all of them “children's literature” would empty that term of its usefulness for discussion and comparison.

Within the wide range of literary communication intended for or received by Edo-period children, I have chosen to focus on picturebooks as children's literature in the relatively narrow sense adopted by Darton and O'Sullivan. In Ewers's words, these books are “intended children's reading”—texts meant for children and young people to read voluntarily and not as part of their instruction.<sup>105</sup> Of the texts and stories referenced in *Verses for Schoolchildren*, only the picturebooks were both meant for enjoyment and designed specifically for children, albeit with older source material, such as the puppet play *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*

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<sup>105</sup> Ewers, *Fundamental Concepts of Children's Literature Research*, 18.

(*Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* 菅原伝授手習鑑, 1746) that informs *Verses for Schoolchildren* itself.<sup>106</sup>

Primers for children are well-documented in English-language scholarship, but the amusing and intensely visual children's literature found in picturebooks is less known.<sup>107</sup> In part, this neglect of Edo-period picturebooks by scholars may be due to an assumption that their content is already familiar. Since the late nineteenth-century, some stories that once appeared in the form of red books, such as "Momotarō," have been adapted into modern Japanese children's literature and rewritten at various points to suit new purposes.<sup>108</sup> Stories retold for English-speaking children may be particularly far from eighteenth-century versions for the children of Edo or Kyoto. In her preface to *The Japanese Fairy Book*, for example, Yei Theodora Ozaki explains that the stories were not literally translated but rather told "with the view to interest young readers of the West."<sup>109</sup> Ozaki "followed [her] fancy in adding such touches of local colour or description as they seemed to need or as pleased [her]."<sup>110</sup> Actual translations of eighteenth-century red books into English (as opposed to retellings or translations of later

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<sup>106</sup> *Verses for Schoolchildren* is translated in Chapter Six; cf. Takeda Izumo, et al., *Kōchū Sugawara denju tenarai kagami*, ed. Kageyama Masataka (Kasama shoin, 1977), 118-137; Jones, trans. and ed., *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, 221-254.

<sup>107</sup> Relevant sources on primers include Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 275-290; Carl Steenstrup, "The Imagawa Letter: A Muromachi Warrior's Code of Conduct Which Became a Tokugawa Schoolbook," *Monumenta Nipponica* 28.3 (1973): 295-316.

<sup>108</sup> Modern variations on the story of Momotarō have attracted particular scholarly attention in English. See, for example, Klaus Antoni, "Momotarō (The Peach Boy) and the Spirit of Japan: Concerning the Function of a Fairy Tale in Japanese Nationalism of the Early Shōwa Age," *Asian Folklore Studies* 50.1 (1991): 155-188; Carter, "A Study of Japanese Children's Magazines 1888-1949," Appendix B.

<sup>109</sup> Yei Theodora Ozaki, comp., *The Japanese Fairy Book* (Westminster, UK: Archibald Constable, 1903), v; in "Google Books," <http://books.google.com> (accessed November 22, 2011).

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, v-vi. Notable among early adaptations of Japanese stories for English-speaking children were the "crepe-paper books" (*chirimenbon*) in the "Japanese Fairy Tale Series." Twenty-one volumes are reprinted in Miyao Yoshio, ed., *Taiyaku Nihon mukashi-banashi shū: Meiji-ki no saishiki chirimen ehon = Japanese Fairy Tale Series*, 3 vols. (Sairyūsha, 2009).

versions) would seem to be limited to the two that appear in the second part of this dissertation: *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* and *The Rat Wedding*.

In the absence of translations of Edo-period picturebooks until this point, English-speaking scholars have understandably conflated picturebooks and primers. In her introduction to an anthology of modern Japanese children's literature, Joan Ericson dismisses the idea of a children's literature prior to the modern era:

Didactic texts of the Tokugawa era *akahon* (red books), used as primers, clearly targeted young readers, but even in these works the emphasis was on the acquisition of literacy and the propagation of state-sanctioned neo-Confucian morality, not in cultivating themes specific to children.<sup>111</sup>

In other words, for Ericson the putative didacticism of red books precludes their identification as children's literature, regardless of the extent or nature of that didacticism or of the fact that they were created for children. This characterization of red books is misleading. First, with Confucian ideas so widespread in the Edo period, it is hard to see how their presence is relevant to the question of whether red books and other Edo-period picturebooks were children's literature. One can find Confucian influences in red books and other eighteenth-century texts of a variety of genres for both adult and juvenile audiences. The Kansei Prohibition of Heterodoxy (*Kansei igaku no kin* 寛政異学禁) that officially privileged neo-Confucianism came in 1790, several decades after the early red books had been displaced by later genres of picturebooks, especially the black book, blue book, and yellow book.<sup>112</sup> Second, as the translations in the second half of this dissertation demonstrate, there were figures of children and themes related to childhood to be found among red books and related picturebooks for children. Ericson does not attempt a full

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<sup>111</sup> Ericson, introduction to *A Rainbow in the Desert*, viii.

<sup>112</sup> The text of the prohibition is translated in Robert L. Backus, "The Kansei Prohibition of Heterodoxy and Its Effects on Education," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 39.1 (1979): 57.



or authoritative account of Edo-period books for children, which are mentioned primarily as a context for her discussion of modern children's literature. However, her account of Edo-period picturebooks has been influential, perhaps because few others have addressed the topic in English.

Scholars working in English have underestimated both the size of the market for children's books in Edo-period Japan and the degree to which educational and recreational children's books were differentiated by Edo-period publishers. One scholar writes, "The use of *akahon* as primers meant that they were on the whole limited to the relatively small number of children attending school."<sup>113</sup> However, there is evidence that children too young to attend school enjoyed illustrated books at home.<sup>114</sup> In addition, primers designed for educational use tended to be distinct from red books in their longer and more verbose formats, language (Sino-Japanese rather than Japanese vernacular), higher prices, and explicitly educational titles. Publishers' catalogues from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries list a variety of these primers, which are identified by the inclusion of *ōrai* in the titles or section headings.<sup>115</sup> Other words used in the titles of educational works included "compendium" (*chōhōki*) and "teachings" (*kyō*). Even such educational works were not limited to use at school. One influential Confucian

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<sup>113</sup> Wakabayashi, "Foreign Bones, Japanese Flesh," 228.

<sup>114</sup> Arai Hakuseki, *Oritaku shiba no ki*, in Yamaga Sokō, *Arai Hakuseki, Matsudaira Sadanobu, Katsu Kokichi, Shosei Nakamura Nakazō*, by Yamaga Sokō et al, vol. 1 of *Nihonjin no jiden*, Bekkan (Heibonsha, 1982), 49; Arai Hakuseki, *Told Round a Brushwood Fire: the Autobiography of Arai Hakuseki*, trans. Joyce Ackroyd, UNESCO Collection of Representative Works, Japanese Series (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1979), 59; Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 51-52; Emura Hokkai, *Jugyō hen*, in vol. 2 of *Kosodate no sho*, ed. Yamazumi Masami and Nakae Kazue, vol. 293 of *Tōyō Bunko* (Heibonsha, 1976), 147-8; Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, 424-425; Yamada, *Hōryaku genrai shū I*, 61; Yuasa Jōzan, *Bunkai zakki*, in vol. 2 of Yamazumi Masami and Nakae Kazue, eds., *Kosodate no sho*, *Tōyō Bunko* 293 (Heibonsha, 1976), 136.

<sup>115</sup> Such catalogues are collected in Keiō Gijyū Daigaku Fuzoku Kenkyūjo Shidō Bunko, ed., *Edo jidai shorin shuppan shoseki mokuroku shūsei*, 4 vols. (Inoue shobō, 1962-1964).

scholar, Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 (1657-1725), for example, wrote of studying at home from primers as a child because he did not have access to a teacher.<sup>116</sup>

The following sample pages, one from an illustrated version of a well-known primer and another from a picturebook, demonstrate the key differences between these genres.<sup>117</sup> *The Illustrated Household Precepts Primer* (*Teikin ōrai zusan* 庭訓往来図讃, 1688, Figure 5) includes illustrations of musical instruments to clarify words in the verbal text. The main text is in Chinese characters, but there is a phonetic gloss in a smaller script to make it more accessible.<sup>118</sup> *Amusements of the Gods of Fortune* (*Fukujin Asobi* 福神あそび, illustrated by Nishimura Shigenobu, ca. 1730s or 1740s, Figure 6), a red book, presents musical instruments as things that the Gods of Fortune enjoy. The latter illustrated scene includes supplemental verbal text to identify the gods, record their dialogue, and report their actions. This picturebook has only a few Chinese characters—most of the verbal text is phonetic.<sup>119</sup> Both texts illustrate a zither (left center in Figure 6 and right in Figure 5), but the picturebook uses a general Japanese term for a stringed instrument (*koto* こと) while the primer uses a more specific Sino-Japanese term for a Japanese zither (*wagon* 和琴). As in these examples, the most obvious difference between red books and primers is that red books were picturebooks while most primers had few if any illustrations, usually in frontispieces or on the tops of pages. Red books like *Amusements of the Gods of Fortune* usually told a story or presented a loose grouping of scenes related to some

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<sup>116</sup> Arai Hakuseki, *Oritaku shiba no ki*, 49, 51; Arai Hakuseki, *Told Round a Brushwood Fire*, 59, 60-61.

<sup>117</sup> The distance between educational texts and children's literature began to narrow in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, but authors and publishers still produced distinct categories of children's books. Nineteenth-century primers, including examples by Jippensha Ikku and Takizawa Bakin are discussed at length in Tan, *Kinsei shomin kyōiku to shuppan bunka: Ōraimono seisaku no haikai*.

<sup>118</sup> *Teikin ōrai zusan* (Edo: Toshikuraya Kihei, 1688), in vol. 1 of *Kikō ōraimono shūsei*, compiled by Ishikawa, ed. Koizumi, 387. No transcription.

<sup>119</sup> Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., *Fukujin asobi*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 166.



Figure 5: Musical instruments in a primer<sup>120</sup>

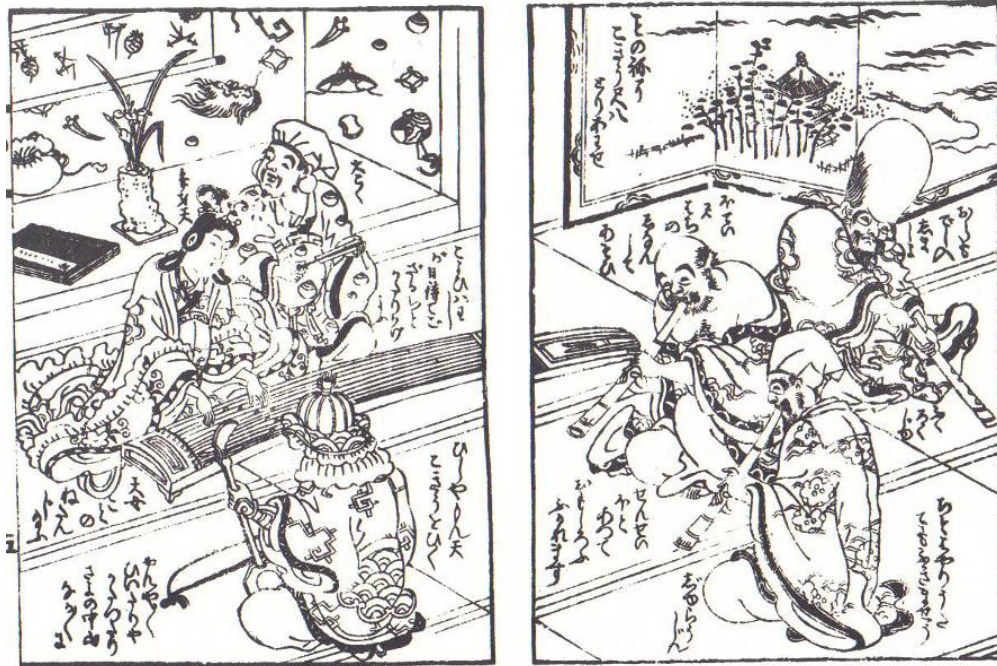


Figure 6: Gods of Fortune playing musical instruments in a picturebook<sup>121</sup>

<sup>120</sup> *Teikin ōrai zusan*, 387.

<sup>121</sup> Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., *Fukujin asobi*, 166.

theme of interest such as games or monsters, whereas primers like *The Illustrated Household Precepts Primer* might include models for calligraphy in formal prose, lists of vocabulary, or useful information on various topics. Picturebooks could have educational applications, and *Verses for Schoolchildren* is one that would lend itself to that purpose. However, primers were more commonly used as specifically educational texts, particularly at higher levels of literacy.<sup>122</sup> In the case of Arai Hakuseki, his first experience with a written text involved not a studying a primer but gazing at an illustrated storybook with pictures of people viewing flowers at a temple.<sup>123</sup>

To speak of Edo-period “children’s literature” in the narrower sense in which Darton and many subsequent scholars have used the term is to speak, not of primers, but primarily of picturebooks and perhaps of illustrated adaptations of puppet plays or of illustrated digest versions of adult literature. Primers and other educational works designed for children are valuable records of what adults thought children should learn; they inform this dissertation to the extent to which they shed light on the sources and cultural context of picturebooks. While a more inclusive view of children’s literature might more fully account for the variety of texts children read, limiting the scope of the current project permits a focus on that aspect of children’s literature that has been underappreciated in the case of Edo-period Japan.

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<sup>122</sup> The dominance of *kanji* text in these books may be seen in the hundreds of *ōraimono* reproduced in the following hundred-volume anthology: Ishikawa, *Ōraimono taikai*. Further discussion of *ōraimono* and other didactic texts, as well as some translated excerpts, may be found in Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 275-290.

<sup>123</sup> Arai Hakuseki, *Oritaku shiba no ki*, 49; Arai Hakuseki, *Told Round a Brushwood Fire*, 59.

## “Tell me about the pictures”

What value, if any, might an educated adult of eighteenth-century Japan have seen in illustrated children’s literature, and in picturebooks, in particular? One answer—that pictures allow children to enjoy learning to read—was suggested by Emura Hokkai 江村北海 (1713-1788), who described childhood reading in a 1783 treatise on education, *Jugyō hen* 授業編.<sup>124</sup> Hokkai offered what he saw as an alternative vision for early education, which should center on illustrated books, rather than forced rote learning. Hokkai himself was a specialist in Chinese studies and Chinese poetry (*kanshi*) who lived in Kyoto and served the Miyazu domain.<sup>125</sup> As a professional scholar, Hokkai did not minimize the need for education but suggested illustrations as a path to reading. Illustrations arouse an interest and curiosity about the text, and they create opportunities for storytelling.

Hokkai suggested giving books to children as young as age two, though at that age the books were to be treated like other toys. In his advice on building a child’s collection of books, Hokkai depended on a strong culture of gift giving to supplement the family’s own resources:

From the time small children are two or three years old, they always call for “presents, presents” whenever father and mother go out and return home. So, everyone in the world is the same in that they give “dolls” and various toys on each such occasion. I bring back “picturebooks” [*ezōshi*], whatever they may be, as gifts once every two or three times I give such presents. Of course, being small children, they will dirty and rip the books. Without being concerned about that, I just leave them with the child in the same way as other toys.

However, since there is reason to take care at the beginning of anything, I first give an illustrated copy of *The Twenty-four Filial Exemplars*.<sup>126</sup> After that,

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<sup>124</sup> Emura Hokkai, *Jugyō hen*, 144-157.

<sup>125</sup> Anna Beerens, *Friends, Acquaintances, Pupils, and Patrons: Japanese Intellectual Life in the Late Eighteenth-Century: A Prosopographical Approach* ([Leiden, The Netherlands]: Leiden University Press, 2006), 57-58.

<sup>126</sup> *The Twenty-four Filial Exemplars* (*Ni-jū-shi kō* 二十四孝, C: *Ershisi xiao*) was a collection of twenty-four accounts of people who carried devotion and respect for their parents to unusual lengths. The grouping of stories dates to the tenth century or earlier, and it circulated widely throughout China, Japan, and Korea in a variety of forms. Keith Nathaniel Knapp, *Selfless Offspring: Filial Children and Social Order in Medieval China* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005), 1-5; For a translation of one Chinese version, see: Guo Jiu-jing (Yuan

without saying anything, I give books that have pictures [*ga no aru hon*]. Gradually, the books accumulate. Seeing them strewn about to the left and right, even someone coming in from outside would say, “This child must like books,” and generally send illustrated books [*gahon*] as souvenirs or even as New Year’s presents [*toshidama*]. Thus, the books become even more numerous.<sup>127</sup>

Thus, Hokkai advocated a very early introduction to books; he referred to children in their second or third year of life, rather than those who had been through two or three full years. The child’s book collection was to begin with souvenirs from parents and grow with gifts from friends of the family, including New Year’s gifts. The connection between picturebooks and the New Year came up repeatedly in Edo-period works as well as in picturebooks themselves. Gifts worked particularly well with Hokkai’s plan because Hokkai stressed quantity of books over quality or content. Once the child had *The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars*, parents or friends could add any illustrated book that might interest the child.

The gift of an illustrated book, according to Hokkai’s logic, initiated a natural progression from attraction to playful interaction to intellectual engagement. “If you have given a child books that have pictures, he will always beg, ‘tell me about the pictures,’ because that is the habit of children,” as Hokkai wrote.<sup>128</sup> He gave an example from among the twenty-four stories of filial children to show how he used such requests to educate the child, “This is a holy person called Shun, and this is an animal called an elephant. Because Shun was filial to his parents, when he farmed, the elephant came and plowed the field, and birds used their beaks to pull weeds from the field.”<sup>129</sup> The child’s natural attraction to pictures led to curiosity about the story

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Dynasty), *The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars*, trans. David K. Jordan, in *The Psycho-Cultural Dynamics of the Confucian Family: Past and Present = Yogyokwŏn kajok ūi munhwa sinnijŏk kujŏ: kwagŏ wa hyŏnjae*, ed. Walter H. Slote, ICSK Forum Series No. 8 (Seoul, Korea: International Cultural Society of Korea, 1986), 82-94.

<sup>127</sup> Emura Hokkai, *Jugyō hen*, 147-8.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

and, eventually, to an interest in the text itself. To Hokkai, “what is most important is to acquire familiarity with books while a small child, without avoidance or dislike for written things. The main idea is to foster a heart inclined toward books.”<sup>130</sup>

Although Hokkai prioritized the child’s attitude toward literacy, he also suggested that children would benefit from casual exposure to illustrated books by gaining a general familiarity with names, terms, concepts, and texts that would appear in later, more formal study. Aside from the moral examples of the children in *The Twenty-four Filial Exemplars*, other illustrated texts that met Hokkai’s approval included:

*Illustrated book: Talks About Ancient Matters* [*Ehon Kojidan* 絵本古事談], *Picture Dictionary* [*Kinmōzui* 訓蒙図彙], *Illustrated Chronicle of Years* [*Eiri Nendaiki* 絵入年代記], *Illustrated Household Precepts* [*Eiri Teikin* 絵入庭訓], *Illustrated Dictionary* [*Eiri Setsuyōshū* 絵入節用集], *Around the Capital* [*Kyō meguri* 京めぐり], *Chronicle of the Seasons in Japan* [*Nihon saijiki* 日本歳時記], *The Tale of the Soga* [*Soga monogatari* 曾我物語], and *The Tale of the Heike* [*Heike monogatari* 平家物語].<sup>131</sup>

As the titles suggest, the list includes several specifically educational texts, such as *Illustrated Household Precepts* (Figure 5 above). *Illustrated book: Talks about Ancient Matters* is an illustrated storybook based on a collection of stories compiled in about 1212-1215.<sup>132</sup> *The Tale of the Soga* and *The Tale of the Heike*, though not overtly didactic works, featured characters and events with which educated adults would be familiar as well as themes of filial piety and courage. Episodes from these tales showed up frequently in picturebooks. *Chronicle of the Seasons in Japan* is a lightly illustrated book, rather than a picturebook, but its theme of seasonal

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>132</sup> Earl Roy Miner, Hiroko Odagiri, and Robert E. Morrell, *The Princeton Companion to Classical Japanese Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 185; Yamamoto Joshu and Tachibana Morikuni, *Ehon Kojidan*, 8 vols. (Osaka: Hōbundō, 1714), held by Waseda University Library, Bunko 06 00025, in “Kotenseki Sogo Database: Japanese and Chinese Classics,” [http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/bunko06/bunko06\\_00025/index.html](http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/bunko06/bunko06_00025/index.html) (accessed October 21, 2011). No transcription of *Ehon Kojidan*.

activities was common in picturebooks as well.<sup>133</sup> One example of a picturebook on this theme, *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons*, is translated in Chapter Five. The above list of books is a glimpse into what might have been considered canonical literature for children, and there are areas of overlap with children's literature in picturebook form.

Hokkai argued for the effectiveness of teaching children by explaining illustrations. In the following passage, Hokkai related what one child in his household learned from illustrated books prior to the age of six:

I have not yet taught him a single thing. However, as explained previously, having been raised among books with pictures, he has learned both the names of the twenty-four filial children and the outlines of their stories without realizing it. He has also learned the birds and beasts in the *Picture Dictionary* and so forth. When I point to people and ask him, he answers giving the name of each. In addition, particularly with pictures of warriors and the like, he remembers the people's names very well. That's not all. He has learned most of the *Classic of Filial Piety* [*Kōkyō* 孝經] and more than half of *The Greater Learning* [*Daigaku* 大学]. This fellow, though he has not yet been properly taught to read characters aloud, says, "I'll read, too," when he sees other people reading. Since I have taught him a little at a time on such occasions, the results are as described . . .<sup>134</sup>

Hokkai claimed not to have taught the child a single thing but immediately proceeded to contradict the assertion, thereby emphasizing the contrast between the strict and forced teaching that Hokkai saw as traditional and his own more subtle guidance. This teaching without teaching had the five-year-old recounting famous stories, reciting portions of classics, and identifying pictures of animals, birds, and warriors. A similar use could be imagined for a picturebook like *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, translated in the seventh chapter, in which major Buddhas and Bodhisattvas appear with labels and iconographic details in the context of a story. Hokkai

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<sup>133</sup> Kaibara Ekiken and Kaibara Chiken, *Nihon saijiki*, 7 parts in 4 vols. (Kyoto: Nisshindō, 1688), held by Waseda University Library, Wo 06 00199, in "Kotenseki Sogo Database: Japanese and Chinese Classics," [http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/wo06/wo06\\_00199/index.html](http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/wo06/wo06_00199/index.html) (accessed October 21, 2011).

<sup>134</sup> Emura Hokkai, *Jugyō hen*, 148.



acknowledged that his method was “not the proper way to teach . . . as prescribed by the sages,”<sup>135</sup> but he claimed that his experience had shown it to be effective.

The concept of the child as a playful and visual learner and the opposition of this concept to a strict and traditional method of education that emerged in Hokkai’s writing resonates with the advice of John Locke (1632-1704), the English philosopher who influenced thought on education in Europe and the Americas with his *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693). Both Locke and Hokkai independently suggested the possibility of play as a means to literacy. With the use of educational games and toys such as alphabet dice, Locke said, “Children may be cozen’d into a Knowledge of the Letters; be taught to read, without perceiving it to be any thing but a Sport, and play themselves into that which others are whipp’d for.”<sup>136</sup> Hokkai similarly recommended making illustrated books themselves into playthings and explaining the pictures to the child long before the child could read alone. Like Hokkai, Locke suggested using pictures to entertain children and encourage them to read:

If his *Æsop has Pictures* in it, it will entertain him much the better, and encourage him to read, when it carries the increase of Knowledge with it. For such visible Objects Children hear talked of in vain, and without any satisfaction, whilst they have no Idea’s of them; those Idea’s being not to be had from the Sounds; but from the Things themselves, or their Pictures. And therefore I think, as soon as he begins to spell, as many Pictures of Animals should be got him, as can be found, with the printed names to them, which at the same time will invite him to read, and afford him Matter of Enquiry and knowledge. *Reynard the Fox*, is another book, I think, may be made use of to the same purpose. And if those about him will talk to him often about the Stories he has read, and hear him tell them, it will, besides other Advantages, add Incouragement, and delight to his Reading, when he finds there is some use and pleasure in it.<sup>137</sup> [Emphasis in original.]

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 148-149.

<sup>136</sup> John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, edited with introduction, notes, and critical apparatus by John W. Yolton and Jean S. Yolton, *The Clarendon edition of the works of John Locke* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1989), 209.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 212.

In other words, children understand what they see before they understand what they hear, so the best path to reading words is through seeing pictures, especially those that can provide both entertainment and knowledge. Like Hokkai, Locke mentioned the positive influence of talking about the stories with the child. Locke did not give a long list of illustrated books such as the one Hokkai provided; instead he voiced a concern about the lack of books in English “fit to engage the liking of Children, and tempt them to read” [emphasis in original].<sup>138</sup> Locke was limited by the publications available to him, but his pragmatic approach was similar to Hokkai’s. Locke wanted the child to have a collection of pictures of animals; Hokkai’s child learned the animals from the *Picture Dictionary*.

Information about the reading habits of Edo-period children is rare, but Yuasa Jōzan 湯浅常山 (1708-1781) provides a clue. Jōzan was a student of the Confucian scholar and poet Hattori Nankaku 服部南郭 (1683-1759), who had studied with the prominent Confucian scholar Ogyū Sōrai 荻生徂徠 (1666-1728). Jōzan, like Hokkai, advocated using illustrated books in early education and suggested familiarizing children with books before teaching them to read individual characters. In *Bunkai zakki* 文会雑記 (*Literary Group Miscellany*, 1782), he wrote:

To teach a child, just give him the *Picture Dictionary* or the like, with pictures on one side, and let him become used to seeing characters here and there. The most important thing is to make it interesting and not boring. Once the child is eight or nine, make him learn one or two [Chinese] characters at a time, including the left radicals and right sides. Approach it this way, rarely making him read, but just showing him illustrated publications [*e aru shomotsu* 絵ある書物] or books of war tales. It is very important to get him to like books on his own.<sup>139</sup>

Like Hokkai, Jōzan wanted the child to develop an interest in books that would sustain him through later years of study. Jōzan envisions the child progressing from a book with pictures and

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Yuasa Jōzan, *Bunkai zakki*, 136.

few characters to books with both illustrations and stories. As R. P. Dore points out, “the abundance of illustrated books for children suggests that [Jōzan’s] was, indeed, a widespread view.”<sup>140</sup> The recognition of an intrinsic value to reading for young children made space for children’s literature meant for enjoyment, not just moral enlightenment. War tales were among the many types of picturebooks available to interest children.

Both Hokkai and Jōzan mentioned the *Picture Dictionary* (*Kinmōzui* 訓蒙図彙), a reference work with a title that might be more literally translated as “Didactic Picture Collection.” Kaibara Ekiken (貝原益軒, 1630-1714), a scholar with training in both Confucianism and medicine, approved of the book’s verbal content. Ekiken recommended the *Picture Dictionary* as one of a few recent and accurate books for learning how to write characters.<sup>141</sup> In the original *Picture Dictionary*, a twenty-volume work published in 1666 by Nakamura Tekisai (中村惕斎, 1629-1702), an illustration and a single large Chinese character dominate each brief entry (Figure 7). The 1789 version of the book more closely resembles a picturebook than it does the original dictionary, though many of the same words are illustrated (Figure 8). Both editions illustrate the elephant Hokkai mentioned; other entries include plants, birds, tools, and body parts. *The Picture Dictionary* inspired a number of similar books on various themes, including a book about occupations, *Picture Dictionary of People* (*Jinrin kinmōzui* 人倫訓蒙図彙, 1690).<sup>142</sup>

The differences between the original 1666 and the 1789 editions of the *Picture Dictionary*, both in illustration and in the shift from terse Sino-Japanese to longer explanations in

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<sup>140</sup> Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 51-52.

<sup>141</sup> Kaibara Ekiken, *Wazoku dōjūkun*, in *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjūkun*, ed. Ishikawa Ken, Iwanami bunko, 6364-6366 (Iwanami shoten, 1961), 262.

<sup>142</sup> *Jinrin kinmōzui*, ed. Asakura Haruhiko, Tōyō bunko 519 (Heibonsha, 1990).

vernacular Japanese, may reflect an increased awareness of the needs and interests of the child readership to whom scholars like Hokkai, Ekiken, and Jōzan recommended the book. For example, the 1666 entry for elephant (Figure 7, lower right) simply gives three terms for elephant: *zō*, *shō*, and *kisa*. The 1789 entry (Figure 8, left) is comparatively verbose, beginning, “The elephant is a large beast from a foreign country. Its nose and tusks are long. It is said to eat food with its mouth and drink water with its nose.” The entry concludes with a note about ivory and its many uses. The longer 1789 entry thus performs the function of telling about the pictures that Hokkai claims that children desire.

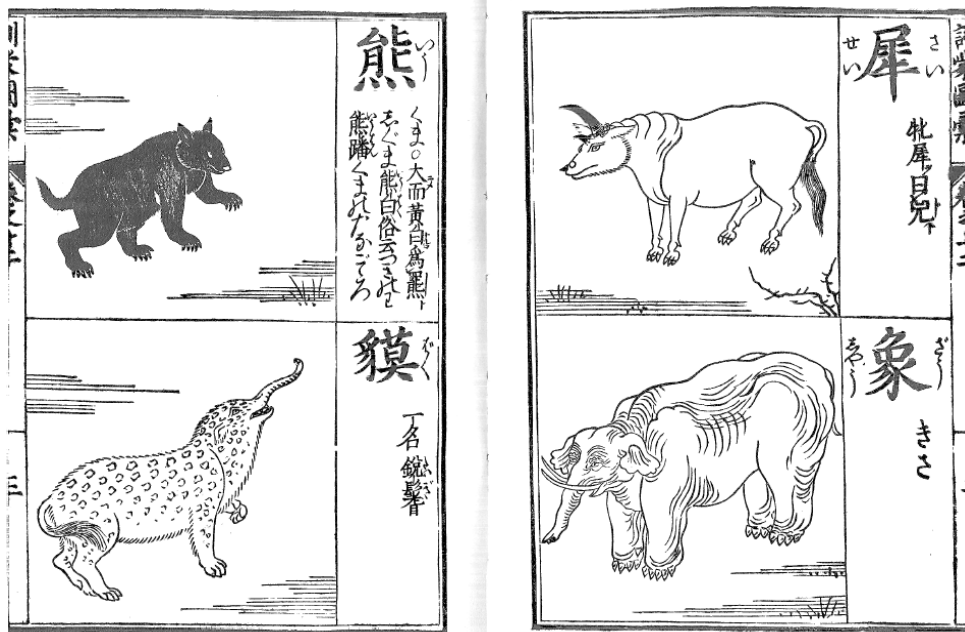


Figure 7: (right) Rhinoceros and elephant, (left) Bear and *baku* in the 1666 Picture Dictionary<sup>143</sup>

The shift from Sino-Japanese to a vernacular written in a phonetic syllabary would have made the 1789 edition more accessible to beginning readers than the 1666 edition, although the larger Chinese characters of the earlier edition would have been more convenient models for handwriting practice. The larger pictures and more detailed setting of the later edition give a

<sup>143</sup> Nakamura Tekisai, *Kinmōzui* (originally published 1666), analysis by Kobayashi Shōjirō, ed. Kinsei Bungaku Shoshi Kenkyūkai (Benseisha, 1976), 614-615. No transcription.

visual effect more similar to a picturebook than to early reference works and primers. At this point in the late eighteenth century, the overlap between the didactic and the entertaining had increased. Like Hokkai and Jōzan, the publishers of the *Picture Dictionary* seem to have realized the appeal of a visual-verbal format for child readers.



Figure 8: (right) *Baku*, (left) elephant in the 1789 *Picture Dictionary*<sup>144</sup>

### Adults and the Freedom of Children's Literature

The height of popularity and creativity for the early red books coincided with the Kyōhō Reforms (1716-1745), which began in the Kyōhō era (1716-1736). The rising fortunes of picturebooks seem to have been due in part to their exemption from censorship applied to other

<sup>144</sup> Nakamura Tekisai and ill. Shimokobe Shūsui, *Kinmōzui* (published 1789), held by Waseda University Library, Bunko 06 00027, [http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/bunko06/bunko06\\_00027/index.html](http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/bunko06/bunko06_00027/index.html) (accessed July 2, 2012). No transcription.

popular genres.<sup>145</sup> One early reference to the picturebooks of Edo appears in a 1721 memorandum related to the regulation of books during the Kyōhō Reforms wherein we learn that publishers are not to be prosecuted for “children’s toy comicbooks” (*kodomo moteasobi kusazōshi*).<sup>146</sup> This inclusion of children’s books in an official document is striking because it demonstrates a recognition of a type of picturebook as being designed specifically for children—and for their amusement, rather than only for their education. Moreover, the association with children’s play exempts the books from the censorship applied to popular literature for adults.

The artistic development of picturebooks was furthered by their harmlessness as toys for children in the eyes of censors. Groups of artists who were primarily known for decorative prints of actors and beauties as well as advertisements for the theater began working in the picturebook medium.<sup>147</sup> Examples include Nishimura Shigenobu, who illustrated *The Rat Wedding*, and the Torii artists responsible for *Verses for Schoolchildren*. This trend of ukiyoe artists doubling as picturebook illustrators continued well into the nineteenth century and brought theatrical influences to picturebooks. Many picturebooks from Edo, in particular, would contain references to and even some recognizable depictions of famous actors.<sup>148</sup> By working in a medium associated with children, artists and their publishers were able to circumvent some of the rules

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<sup>145</sup> Seta, *Ochibo hiroi*, vol. 1, 91-92; Kimura Yaeko, “Akakohon kara aohon made: shuppan butsu no sokumen,” in *Kusazōshi shū*, 607-610.

<sup>146</sup> Minami Kazuo, ed., *Kyōho sen’yō ruishū*, Kyū bakufu hikitsugisho eiin sōkan (Nogami shuppan, 1985), vol. 4, 155; transcribed in Kimura, “Akakohon kara aohon made,” 608. The phrase “children’s toy” (*kodomo moteasobi*) is not common in these documents, but it does appear at least twice in reference to dolls or puppets (*ningyō*): Minami, ed., *Kyōhō sen’yō ruishū*, vol. 4, 145 (line 169), 154. No transcription.

<sup>147</sup> Kimura, “Akakohon kara aohon made,” 609-610; Seta, *Ochibo hiroi*, vol. 1, 92.

<sup>148</sup> Takahashi, *Kusazōshi to engeki: yakusha nigaoe sōshiki o chūshin ni*, 6-7.

applied to popular literature for adults, such as a restriction on fiction involving actors or plays (as opposed to books or prints depicting actual productions).<sup>149</sup>

*The Rat Wedding* (*Nezumi no yomeiri* 鼠のよめ入り, ca. 1737-1747), translated here, is one example of a red book published during or immediately after the Kyōhō Reforms.<sup>150</sup>

Although *The Rat Wedding* is a children's picturebook, it includes mature content, such as sexual innuendo related to the wedding night and ironic commentary on the duplicity of all parties involved in a marriage—from the bride hiding her bad teeth to the groom substituting cheap alcohol for the fine sake appropriate for the occasion. The presence of adult messages in some, though not all, children's picturebooks has given Japanese scholars pause. Koike Masatane acknowledges that there were “countless” publications primarily aimed at children, but he sees *The Rat Wedding* and similar works as texts that were clearly read by both adults and children. For him, oblique references to prostitutes and to the wedding night are evidence that Japanese of the time did not think of children and children's literature as completely distinct from adults and adult literature.<sup>151</sup> However, *The Rat Wedding* excludes such content from its visual text and its storyline: the wedding story jumps directly from a formal banquet celebrating the marriage to the first bath of a newborn son. Some of the adult content of the verbal text is hidden in puns or phrased so subtly that a child reader might not understand.

Given the ambivalence of picturebooks like *The Rat Wedding*, how are they to be understood? In countries with more recent experiences of oppressive censorship, children's literature has served as an area of relative freedom of expression. O'Sullivan gives the examples of the German Democratic Republic and of Brazil under the military rule that began in 1964 and

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<sup>149</sup> Kimura, “Akakohon kara aohon made,” 608-609; Takahashi, *Kusazōshi to engeki*, 6-7.

<sup>150</sup> Katō Yasuko, “*Nezumi no yomeiri*,” in *Kusazōshi jiten*, ed. Sō no Kai, 230.

<sup>151</sup> Koike Masatane, “Edo ki kodomo hon,” in *Kindai izen no jidō bungaku*, 164.

ended in 1985.<sup>152</sup> Ewers likewise notes that some children's books carry double meanings but are addressed only to children, whether as a literary "game" or as a tactic for dealing with censorship. He classifies such books as "bisemic children's literature."<sup>153</sup> Similarly, in the context of eighteenth-century censorship in Japan, the moments of irony and subtle sexual innuendo in *The Rat Wedding* can be seen, not as evidence of a lack of children's literature, but rather as signs of the relative freedom authors and readers found in children's literature as a medium presumed to be marginal, even innocent, with regard to socially or politically sensitive issues.

In the late eighteenth century, this potential for double meanings was exploited more fully in yellow books, which often maintained only slight nods to child readers while treating topics of interest to educated adult readers.<sup>154</sup> In fact the difference between the blue book (*aohon*) and the yellow book (*kibyōshi*) is as much a difference of publication date and target audience as of the colors of the covers, many of which have become indistinguishable with time.<sup>155</sup> *Mr. Glitter 'N' Gold's Dream of Splendor* (*Kinkin sensei eiga no yume* 金々先生栄花の夢, 1775) by Koikawa Harumachi 恋川春町 (1744-1789) is known as the first yellow book because it appealed to adult audiences with its protagonist's dream of a fashionable life in the pleasure quarters.<sup>156</sup> Late Edo-period writers noted this turn from a child audience to an audience

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<sup>152</sup> O'Sullivan, *Comparative Children's Literature*, 63-64.

<sup>153</sup> Ewers, *Fundamental Concepts of Children's Literature Research*, 48.

<sup>154</sup> Kern, *Manga from the Floating World*, 49-52.

<sup>155</sup> Hioki, "Japanese Printed Books of the Edo Period," 91; Kern, "Kibyōshi in the Harvard-Yenching Library," 3.

<sup>156</sup> Koikawa Harumachi and ill. Torii Kiyomitsu and Torii Kiyomasu, *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume* (Edo: Urokogataya, 1775) in Koike Masatane, et al., eds., *Shoki kibyōshi shū*, vol. 1 of *Edo no gesaku [parodī] ehon*, vol. 1037 of *Gendai kyōyō bunko* (Shakai shisōsha, 1980), 9-34; Koikawa Harumachi and trans. James Araki, *Mr. Glitter 'N' Gold's Dream of Splendor*, in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 673-687.



of both children and adults. An 1846 graphic novel by Shikitei Kosanba 式亭小三馬 (1812-1853) explains that adults became interested in comicbooks (*kusazōshi*) around the time Harumachi wrote *Mr. Glitter 'N' Gold's Dream of Splendor*.<sup>157</sup> Similarly, Takizawa Bakin recalled that the audience for *kusazōshi* widened to include adults around the end of the Meiwa era (1764-1772) and that humor made the difference.<sup>158</sup>

One yellow book directs its humor at the differences between picturebooks from Kamigata and Edo and at the rise and fall in popularity of various genres. In *Those Familiar Bestsellers* (*Gozonji no shōbaimono* 御存商売物, 1782), Santō Kyōden 山東京伝 (1761-1816) presents familiar varieties of books and prints as people whose personal characteristics suggest something of the genres after which they are named. The red book and black book are anthropomorphized as gullible men who are out-of-date and concerned about the fact that the yellow book has eclipsed them in popularity. Books from the Kamigata region, including the patterned book (*kōzeibyōshi*), orchestrate a plot against the yellow book and convince the red book and black book to take part. In the end, the red book and black book are punished in ways that suggest the ends of the physical books themselves:

Redbook [*akahon*] and Blackbook [*kurohon*] [. . .] on account of the shoddy construction of their twisted plots and warped characters are forcibly straightened out with a ruler, run through with a thousand-sheet-piercing awl, and totally recycled with all the haste of those at year's end trying to balance their books.

[. . .]

Once their sentences are served and their recycling completed, Blackbook and Redbook will flourish as before.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Shikitei Kosanba, and ill. Utagawa Kunisada, *Akahon sekai* (Edo: Tsutaya Kichizō, 1846), held by Waseda University Library, He 13 02378 0148, [http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/he13/he13\\_02378\\_0148/index.html](http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/he13/he13_02378_0148/index.html) (accessed October 22, 2011), back of sheet five.

<sup>158</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Kinsei mono no hon: Edo sakusha burui*, 12.

<sup>159</sup> Kitao Masanobu, ill., (*Shinpan temae katte*) *Gozonji no shōbaimono* (Edo: Tsuru-ya, 1782), in *Shoki kusazōshi shū*, vol. 1 of *Edo no gesaku (parodii) ehon*, ed. Koike Masatane, et al, Gendai kyōyō bunko 1037 (Shakai shisōsha, 1980), 244-245; Adam Kern, trans., *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, in *Manga From the Floating World*, 310-311.

The old picturebooks of Edo, the red book and black book, need simply to be refashioned and updated to survive among the newer genres. Meanwhile, Kyōden presents the Kamigata books as irredeemable, reduced to scrap paper for stuffing holes.<sup>160</sup>

As the above passage suggests, some staples of the early picturebooks were reworked into yellow books and later genres—yellow-book versions of *The Rat Wedding* include examples by Jippensha Ikku 十返舎一九 (1765-1831), Nai Shinkō 内新好 (fl. 1788-1805), and Torii Kiyonaga 鳥居清長 (1752-1815).<sup>161</sup> Even when writing new stories, not all authors followed the latest trends. At the same time as Santō Kyōden 山東京伝 (1761-1816) was writing political satire in comicbook form, Ichiba Tsūshō 市場通笑 (1739?-1812) was writing comicbooks with didactic messages for children often enough to earn the nickname “Moral-lesson Tsūshō” (*Kyōkun no Tsūshō*).<sup>162</sup> Bakin complained of Tsūshō that he had no talent for humor.<sup>163</sup>

The 1770s thus brought not an end to children’s literature but a blurring of the lines between children’s literature and popular literature for adults. Children’s literature was still marked by a use of the vernacular together with extensive illustration, but so was late-Edo popular literature for adults. After all, these adults had grown up with picturebooks, some by the same artists who would go on to design comicbooks for adults. The first yellow book, *Mr. Glitter*

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<sup>160</sup> Kitao, (*Shinpan temae katte*) *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, 245; Kern, trans., *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, 311.

<sup>161</sup> Jippensha Ikku, *On-atsurae-muki Nezumi no yomeiri* (Edo: 1796), original held by Kaga Bunko; Nai Shinkō, *Nezumi no yomeiri*, ill. Juge Sekijō (Edo: 1803); Torii Kiyonaga, ill., *Senshūroku Nezumi no yomeiri*, originally published 1780, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 389-399. No transcription for *On-atsurae-muki Nezumi no yomeiri* or for Nai Shinkō’s version of *Nezumi no yomeiri*.

<sup>162</sup> “Ichiba Tsūshō,” in *Nihon daihyakka zensho (Nipponika)* (Shogakukan, 2011), in *JapanKnowledge*, <http://www.jkn21.com> (accessed November 11, 2011).

<sup>163</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Kinsei mono no hon: Edo sakusha burui*, 17.

'*N' Gold's Dream of Splendor*, was illustrated by the same artists and produced by the same publisher who had made *Verses for Schoolchildren* thirteen years earlier.<sup>164</sup>

Although picturebooks avoided censorship during the Kyōhō Reforms because of their connection to a child audience, the later Kansei Reforms (1787-1793) identified children's literature as both frivolous and potentially subversive. The first censorship edict of the reforms, issued in the fifth month of 1790, specifically mentioned children's books, "Year after year, people have applied themselves to useless tasks, including even picture books for children, and have obtained large fees for their product." Rules were to be enforced because this was "thoroughly wasteful."<sup>165</sup> The content of children's books was problematic as well, "Recently some wicked children's books have appeared which are ostensibly set in ancient times; henceforward these are to be regarded as undesirable . . ."<sup>166</sup> The increased scrutiny of the Kansei Reforms brought an end to some of the satirical or otherwise sensitive content in picturebook or comicbook form.<sup>167</sup>

Thus, both major eighteenth-century periods of censorship affected children's literature. The earlier Kyōhō reforms, from 1716 to 1745, brought new energy into the picturebook as a genre for play, outside of adult rules. With that freedom and energy, authors and artists developed the form into a comicbook with appeal for adults. The Kansei Reforms, recognizing the prominence and potential of picturebooks for children (at least ostensibly), restricted their range of content, but did not succeed in ending their production. Despite the official

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<sup>164</sup> Koikawa Harumachi and ill. Torii Kiyomitsu and Torii Kiyomasu, *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume*, 30.

<sup>165</sup> Ishii Ryōsuke and Takayanagi Shinzo, ed., *Ofuregaki Tempō Shūsei* (Iwanami shoten, 2nd ed., 1958), ii, p. 810, #6417; translated in Peter F. Kornicki, "Nishiki no Ura: An Instance of Censorship and the Structure of a Sharebon," *Monumenta Nipponica* 32.2 (1977): 156.

<sup>166</sup> Ishii and Takayanagi, ed., *Ofuregaki Tempō Shūsei*, ii, p. 810, #6417; Kornicki, "Nishiki no Ura," 156.

<sup>167</sup> A more complete account of the effect of the Kansei reforms on comicbooks may be found in Kern, *Manga from the Floating World*, 224-236.

discouragement of children's books during the later period of reform, woodblock-printed children's literature was to continue through the late nineteenth century.

## Conclusion

I have reexamined definitions of "children's literature" in order to reevaluate the history of Japanese woodblock-printed children's books, and, in particular, Edo-period picturebooks. Going beyond the search for the origins of children's literature and letting go of the need to trace European antecedents allow us to focus on the wealth of children's literature in Japan during the Edo period, a time when "true" children's literature has been presumed not to exist at all in Japan or indeed anywhere outside Europe and those regions it influenced through colonization.

The immensity of the changes in Japanese print culture since the late Edo period has sometimes obscured the diversity that already existed in woodblock print and that impressed earlier foreign observers. In 1859, a journal edited by Charles Dickens claimed, "[The Japanese] have a cheap literature, and children's books, works on art and history, poetry and the drama, together with encyclopedias in true encyclopedia style."<sup>168</sup> Likewise, *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* made the following observations of Japanese publishing in 1864:

. . . the number of booksellers' shops, and the character of the works for sale, show that education must be widely diffused among the people. Illustrated toy-books for children are a great feature. . . . If one will look at the children's toy-books on the counters of a Broadway bookseller, he will find more worse specimens than better ones than these.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> "The Eastern Kingdom," in Charles Dickens, ed., *Household Words: A Weekly Journal*, 19.462 (January 29, 1859): 216; in "Google Books" (accessed July 18, 2012).

<sup>169</sup> "Pictures of the Japanese. III. Institutions and Policy," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 28.164 (January 1864): 173; in "Google Books" (accessed July 24, 2012).

Not only was Japan's flourishing trade in "children's toy-books" noticed in the West in the late Edo-period, but Japanese children's books compared favorably to the illustrated children's books available in New York City in 1864. Only in 1865 did Walter Crane's (1845-1915) famous picturebooks begin to appear in London, printed by Edmund Evans (1826-1905). Those by Randolph Caldecott (1846-1886) and Kate Greenaway (1846-1901) were to follow in the 1870s.<sup>170</sup> Thus, the inexpensive but heavily illustrated children's picturebooks of Edo-period Japan, designed by professional artists, actually preceded similar developments in English-speaking countries. Indeed Japanese prints influenced late nineteenth-century trends in children's book illustration in the West.<sup>171</sup>

Picturebooks were a central part of eighteenth-century Japanese children's literature because they were attractive and affordable. Picturebooks met a need for simple, visually appealing works for emergent readers, especially among urban children. These heavily illustrated monochrome pamphlets were entertaining as well as didactic, and they were produced in large numbers at prices that assured circulation beyond the elite. As we have seen in the writings of Hokkai and Jōzan, adults in Edo-period Japan found illustrated books an enjoyable way to introduce children to books and cultural knowledge before asking them to learn Chinese characters.

Illustrated books would have been most accessible to children in the three major cities where publishers were located—Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo—but in receiving picturebooks as occasional souvenirs, the young reader Chōkurō was probably more typical than exceptional for a merchant-class boy within a week's journey of those cities. During the Edo period,

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<sup>170</sup> Townsend, *Written for Children*, 109-110.

<sup>171</sup> Walter Crane, *An Artist's Reminiscences* (London: Methuen, 1907), 107; in "Google Books" (accessed July 16, 2012).

picturebooks were sold at bookstores, shops specializing in picturebooks and woodblock prints (*ezōshiya*), toy stores as well as perhaps at stores selling sweets (*dagashiya*). In the city of Edo, such stores would come to be concentrated near Shibaguchi and Asakusa Temple, areas travelers would pass on their way to the Tōkaidō—the main route to Kyoto—or to the road to the North.<sup>172</sup> An 1811 guide to gift-giving etiquette published in Osaka recommended “comicbooks” (*kusazōshi*), among other items, as souvenirs from the city of Edo.<sup>173</sup>

Eighteenth-century Japanese adults valued picturebooks and other illustrated books for children as a path to a lasting appreciation of books and of scholarship. Authors and illustrators also found in children’s literature—and in the pretense of writing for children—a relative freedom from censorship, where satire could coexist with stories for children. Neither the emergence of picturebooks that appealed to adults while maintaining the form of children’s literature nor an infusion of adult humor in the 1770s brought an end to children’s literature aimed at children alone. Nineteenth-century picturebooks and the legacy of eighteenth-century children’s literature are considered further in the following chapter, which looks at the place of picturebooks and childhood reading within Edo-period children’s culture.

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<sup>172</sup> Kami, *Kindai izen no jidō shuppan bijutsu*, 69-70.

<sup>173</sup> *Shinmotsu benran* (Osaka: Nunoya Chūsaburō, 1811), in Sumida Maritime Materials Collection, Kobe University Library, <http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/directory/sumita/00020377/> (accessed March 30, 2012), front of 76, [P0077.jpg]. No transcription for this portion.

## Chapter 2: Visualizing the Child Reader

Throughout eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Japan, woodblock-printed picturebooks and picture games helped to form expectations of children as players, learners, storytellers, and consumers. Some scholars have surmised that the concept of childhood in Japan in the Edo period was weak or missing altogether because they assume that there were few commercially produced amusements for children.<sup>174</sup> But as this chapter will show, there is ample evidence of a market for children's goods in Edo-period Japan. This evidence includes picturebooks and games for children as well as accounts or depictions of toys and other amusements for children. Japanese woodblock-printed children's literature was integrated into a commercial children's culture that both defined and targeted children. This chapter draws on children's media that feature two tropes from mid- to late Edo-period children's culture—reluctant students and children enjoying stories—to demonstrate an awareness of the particular interests of child readers and viewers as opposed to a generalized concern for less literate readers including both children and adults. In particular, the image of children enjoying old stories, which appears repeatedly within picturebooks and other woodblock-printed media, bridges the apparent gap between the idea of “fairy tales” and the concept of “children's literature.”

The market for woodblock-printed children's literature and other forms of children's culture continued through the end of the Edo period. During that time, children's culture was subject to historical shifts, including the late-Edo emergence of something like a canon of children's stories centered on what would later be considered fairy tales. The Meiji-period recasting of Edo-period picturebooks as folk stories and fairy tales, with an emphasis on verbal

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<sup>174</sup> Karatani, “The Discovery of the Child,” 115-116; Platt, “Japanese Childhood, Modern Childhood,” 968; Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, 12-13. A notable exception is to be found in Herring, “The Hidden Heritage,” 159-197.

rather than visual elements, has complicated the historiography of Edo-period children's literature by obscuring its printed form.<sup>175</sup>

A pictorial board game (*esugoroku*) from 1860 illustrates the intersection of children's literature, popular culture, and advertising in the last years of the Edo period. The game is titled *Red Books of Old Stories: the Record of Auspicious Tales Board Game* (*Mukashi-banashi akahon sugoroku* 昔咄赤本寿語禄, Figure 9), in which “board game” is written phonetically with the characters for “record of auspicious tales.”<sup>176</sup> The players start with a storyteller and his audience—clearly depicted as children—in the center square of the bottom row. Each roll of the die takes a player to an event from any one of eight stories from picturebooks. The object of the game is to be the first player to rise up through the stories and reach the happy ending at the center of the top row. To play the game is to enter into children's stories as listener, reader, and protagonist.

The game requires basic literacy. Although players need not be familiar with the stories, they must be able to read—or be accompanied by a reader—in order to play. A relatively low level of reading would suffice since the old stories promised in the title are largely communicated through pictures. The game's title and most of the words in the game itself are written or glossed in phonetic syllabary, an accommodation that makes the words easy to understand. The exceptions include the numbers one through six and the words in the starting square (lower center), which are glossed elsewhere on the page. Only the signatures of the artist and publisher, in the lower right and left margins respectively, are written in small Chinese

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<sup>175</sup> Cf. Herring, *The Dawn of Wisdom*, 11.

<sup>176</sup> Ikkeisai Yoshiiku, ill., *Mukashi-banashi akahon sugoroku* (originally published by Izumiya Ichibei, 1860), in Katō and Matsumura, eds., *Bakumatsu, Meij no esugoroku*, 82-83, and discussion, 304-307. Another copy of the same game is reproduced in Herring, *The Dawn of Wisdom*, 24.



characters and are not glossed anywhere in the game. The omission of syllabary for this paratextual information suggests that the publisher may have imagined an adult or older child looking for the names and perhaps facilitating future purchases of related items. In other words, the game accommodated emergent readers, but the game's target consumers included adults buying toys and books for young children.

The inclusion of the publisher's name and address reflects the fact that *Red Books of Old Stories* is a product of popular culture, an item made for sale by a commercial publisher and a professional artist. The publisher, Izumiya Ichibei, stayed in business over several generations, from 1686 to 1886. Izumiya was known for both illustrated books and decorative prints, a convergence seen in this game in particular.<sup>177</sup> The illustrator, Ikkeisai Yoshiiku (a.k.a. Ochiai Yoshiiku or Utagawa Yoshiiku, 1833-1904), had a career spanning much of the latter half of the nineteenth century. In the last decades of the Edo period, Ikkeisai trained with Utagawa Kuniyoshi and produced woodblock prints of actors and courtesans as well as illustrated books. Among Ikkeisai's contributions to children's literature are illustrations for the final volumes of a juvenile adaptation of Bakin's *The Eight Dog Chronicles* (*Hakkenden* 八犬伝).<sup>178</sup> In the Meiji period, Ikkeisai contributed to early illustrated newspapers.<sup>179</sup> The careers of both publisher and

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<sup>177</sup> Andreas Marks, *Japanese Woodblock Prints: Artists, Publishers and Masterworks: 1680-1900* (Tokyo: Tuttle, 2010), 208.

<sup>178</sup> Kanagaki Robun and ill. Ikkeisai Yoshiiku, *Kanayomi Hakkenden* [Syllabary-reader (i.e., "Easy-reader") *Hakkenden*], vols. 28-31 (Osaka: Kikujudō, ca. 1859 -1868), held by Waseda University Library, He 13 04271, [http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/he13/he13\\_04271/index.html](http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/he13/he13_04271/index.html) (accessed October 22, 2011). No transcription. The preface to volume 28 mentions the children (*okosama*) at whose request this easy-to-read version was written. Earlier volumes were produced by a different publisher and with a different author and illustrator.

<sup>179</sup> He worked for the *Tokyo Daily Newspaper* (*Tōkyō Nichi-nichi shinbun* 東京日日新聞) starting in 1872, and in 1875, he helped found the *Tokyo Illustrated Newspaper* (*Tōkyō e'iri shinbun* 東京絵入新聞). Sekine Shisei, *Ukiyoe hyakkaden* (Rikugōkan, 1925), in Kindai Digital Library, <http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/BIBibDetail.php> (accessed October 22, 2011), 122.



Figure 9: Red Books of Old Stories: the Record of Auspicious Tales Board Game

artist thus demonstrate the continuity and changes in woodblock print media during the transitions of the late nineteenth century.

The *akahon* in the title of the board game probably refers not to the red books of the early eighteenth century but to the smaller picturebooks of the nineteenth century, bean books, which usually had illustrated, multicolor covers.<sup>180</sup> In fact, Izumiya published bean books, including at least two of the stories pictured in the game: *The Fox Wedding* and *The Accomplished and Lucky Teakettle*.<sup>181</sup> No doubt there were more that are no longer extant. The illustrations in the game show a reliance on bean books of the day in that, with the exception of “Kinpira,” the game presents the stories in ways similar to those used in late-Edo bean books.<sup>182</sup>

By the time the game was published, the term *akahon* had been used in at least three related senses: 1) to refer metonymically to picturebooks of Edo that derived from the earlier red books, such as blue books, black books, and even yellow books;<sup>183</sup> 2) to refer to old stories considered representative of classic red books and appropriate for children, such as those depicted in the game, and 3) to refer to children’s picturebooks that claimed the tradition of the old red books, including bean books. In this last sense, the word *akahon* appears in some titles of works in the yellow-book and graphic-novel formats that are aimed at a younger audience. In the title of this game, the term *akahon* is used together with *mukashi-banashi* (“old stories”) to describe the type of stories depicted. The board game advertises stories, including some by the

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<sup>180</sup> Katō and Matsumura, eds., *Bakumatsu, Meiji no esugoroku*, 82.

<sup>181</sup> *Chiyo mosu: Kitsune no yomeiri* and *Bunbuku chagama hanashi* are cited in Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, 390, 392.

<sup>182</sup> Katō Yasuko, “Bakumatsu, Meiji no esugoroku,” in Katō and Matsumura, eds., *Bakumatsu, Meiji no e sugoroku*, 306, 307. According to Katō, bean books based on a given story tend to show continuity, but the depiction of specific scenes within a story shifted over time due to influences from theatrical representations and works in other forms, such as the graphic novel. *Ibid.*, 304-306.

<sup>183</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Kinsei mono no hon: Edo sakusha burui*, 11. See Chapter One, Figure 3 and Figure 4, for the distinguishing characteristics of these picturebook formats.

same publisher, by presenting them as auspicious tales for a child audience. If playing the game excited a child's interest in a particular story, he or she could buy the book.

The game includes the following eight stories: *Peach Boy* [*Momotarō*], *The Old Man Who Made Flowers Bloom* [*Hana saki jijii*], *The Fox Wedding* [*Kitsune no yomeiri*], *The Accomplished and Lucky Teakettle* [*Bunbuku chagama*], *Tongue-cut Sparrow* [*Shita kiri suzume*], *Crackling Mountain* [*Kachi kachi yama*], *Kinpira* [*Kinpira*], and *Battle of the Monkey and the Crab* [*Saru kani gassen*]. Though hardly hinting at the diversity of eighteenth-century woodblock picturebooks, these stories are repeated often enough in late Edo-period accounts of children's stories or of red books to suggest that a canon of children's stories was developing. Existing scholarship has overemphasized these few stories and neglected their ties to the commercial children's culture of the Edo period. As a result, scholars have read those stories as part of an oral or folk tradition not particularly associated with children rather than reading them within the picturebooks that were published for and marketed to children in the Edo period—part of a children's literature.<sup>184</sup> The reputation of woodblock-printed picturebooks for children as limited to folk stories and lacking relevance to children's lives comes in part from this simplification and in part from the fact that translators who brought the stories into English in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century called them “fairy tales.” The significance of the eight stories in the game to the current project lies not in their origins but in their function as a bridge between the children's literature of the Edo period and that of the Meiji period.

In the game, the winning square unites the various stories literally as well as figuratively; the square is labeled with the auspicious phrases, “*ichi ga sakaeta*” and “*medetashi medetashi*”

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<sup>184</sup> Ericson, introduction to *A Rainbow in the Desert*, viii; Yoshiko Takita, “Wakamatsu Shizuko and ‘Little Lord Fauntleroy,’” *Comparative Literature Studies* 22.1 (1985): 4; Wakabayashi, “Foreign Bones, Japanese Flesh,” 228, 237.

(both similar to “happily ever after”). Pictured is a boat filled with representatives from the stories, designated by their titles. One main character from each of seven stories appears in the place of each of the Seven Gods of Fortune, and the eighth story is represented by a crab riding the waves outside the boat. Picture prints of boats in this style filled with the Seven Gods of Fortune were sold at the New Year, and people would leave an illustrated print of these gods and their treasure boat (*takarabune*) under their pillows on the second night of the first month in the hope of auspicious dreams to start the year.<sup>185</sup> The scene thus suggests that the game was also an appropriate gift for the New Year. The Seven Gods of Fortune appeared regularly in picturebooks throughout the eighteenth century, and they are depicted as fun-loving, generous, and particularly interested in the welfare of children.<sup>186</sup> The conflation of the Gods of Fortune with the storybook characters helps to advertise the stories by likening the outcomes of the auspicious tales to the blessings of Gods of Fortune.

The other two squares at the top of the game board depict the fox couple enjoying “children and grandchildren for long ages to come” (*shison chū kyū*) on the right and the hero Peach Boy or Momotarō “entering the island of treasures” (*takara no shima iri*) on the left. Thus, prosperity, longevity, and progeny are the most auspicious aspects of these tales. Indeed, such themes are common to many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century picturebooks.

This seemingly simple game suggests a challenge to existing scholarship on the history of the child because the rise of commercially produced amusements, books, and clothing specifically for children has been taken as a distinctive feature of Western modernity—

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<sup>185</sup> Miyata Noboru, *Edo no hayari-gami*, Chikuma gakugei bunko (Chikuma shobō, 1993), 110; Kitagawa Morisada, vol. 23 of *Ruijū kinsei fūzoku shi*, ed. Muromatsu Iwao, Furuuchi Michiyo, and Hoji Shōji (Bunchōsha shoin, 1928), 236.

<sup>186</sup> Of them, the god Daikoku and his messengers, white rats, were most common. *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, translated later in this dissertation, contains an example of an early eighteenth-century picturebook appearance of the Gods of Fortune.

something that one should not expect to see in Japan until the Meiji period (1868-1912).<sup>187</sup> Yet here we have a game that depicts its child audience (lower center), provides the name of the illustrator (lower right margin), provides the name and location of the publisher (lower left margin), and advertises a set of children's picturebooks, at least some of which were available from the same publisher.

As the game demonstrates, the publishers, authors, and illustrators of Japanese children's literature in the mid- to late Edo period recognized children as a market for picturebooks and related media, such as picture board games. With the development and use of visual and verbal tropes related to childhood literacy and, later, of a canon of stories for children, those engaged in the creation of children's literature and popular literature for adults shaped expectations for child readers, as opposed to adult readers.

### **What is a child? What *was* a child?**

As shown by Ariès and the controversy his work initiated, we cannot assume that what we mean by "child" is the same as what was meant two or three hundred years ago.<sup>188</sup> Terms for children have shifted along with concepts of the child, in Japan as elsewhere. In modern Japanese, "child" is *kodomo* 子供, and "adult" is *otona* 大人. These terms can be found in some

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<sup>187</sup> Daniel Thomas Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood: The Children's Clothing Industry and the Rise of the Child Consumer* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 6-7; Dan Fleming, "Managing Monsters: Videogames and the 'Mediatization' of the Toy," in Kirsten Drotner and Sonia Livingstone, eds., *The International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture* (Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2008), 56-57; Eric Hopkins, *Childhood Transformed: Working-class Children in Nineteenth-century England* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1994), 230; Peter N. Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 98-99, 127-128.

<sup>188</sup> Scholarship on the changing meaning of childhood through history is discussed further in the introduction, but see for example: Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*; Corsaro, *The Sociology of Childhood*, 61-81; Hutton, *Philippe Ariès and the Politics of French Cultural History*, 92-112; Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900*; Schultz, *The Knowledge of Childhood in the German Middle Ages, 1100-1350*.

Edo-period sources, such as Yamada Keiō’s 1831 discussion of picturebooks for children (*kodomo*) and adults (*otona*), mentioned in the first chapter.<sup>189</sup> Other modern words for children include “boy” (*shōnen* 少年, lit. few years) and “girl” (*shōjo* 少女, lit. small female).

The widely influential *Picture Dictionary* (*Kinmōzui*) does not include any of those terms. Instead it describes young people in three entries that can be glossed as follows: “maiden” or “daughter” 女 (*onna* or *musume*), “baby” 嬰 (*ei*), and “boy” 童 (*dō*).<sup>190</sup> These terms appear to have been stable for much of the eighteenth century since the *Picture Dictionary with Expanded Headnotes* (*Tōsho zōho Kinmōzui* 頭書增補訓蒙図彙, 1695) and the 1789 *Picture Dictionary* used almost identical wording, although with different illustrations.<sup>191</sup> The 1789 version (Figure 10) thus provides a glimpse of how Edo-period Japanese regarded these categories.<sup>192</sup> The young people are illustrated between an old woman (far right) and an old man (far left). In subsequent pages, other adults are illustrated as examples of various occupations—only the youngest and oldest people are identified primarily by their age rather than by what they do.<sup>193</sup>

The “maiden” (*onna* 女) is not yet married and is female, as is clear by the picture and implicit in the Chinese character used to write the word. After marriage, she becomes a “wife” (*fu* 婦), though even then she remains a “daughter” (*musume* 女) with regard to her parents. So girls and women are differentiated in part by their relationships with men. The illustration

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<sup>189</sup> Yamada, *Hōryaku genrai shū* I, 61-62.

<sup>190</sup> Nakamura Tekisai, *Kinmōzui* (1666), 265-266; Nakamura Tekisai, ed., *Tōsho zōho Kinmōzui*, 129-130; Nakamura Tekisai, *Kinmōzui* (1789), vol. 3, image 4.

<sup>191</sup> Nakamura Tekisai, ed., *Tōsho zōho Kinmōzui*, 129-130; Nakamura Tekisai, *Kinmōzui* (1789), vol. 3, image 4.

<sup>192</sup> Nakamura Tekisai, *Kinmōzui* (1789), vol. 3, image 4.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, images 4-25.

depicts the *onna / musume* as a noble young lady of an earlier time, perhaps a tenth- or eleventh-century figure like poet and author Murasaki Shikibu.<sup>194</sup>



Figure 10: (right to left) Old woman, maiden, baby, boy, and old man in the 1789 *Picture Dictionary*

*The Picture Dictionary* defines babies and boys by both age and gender. The text explains that people are called “babies” (*eiji* 嬰兒) in the period after they are first born, and that, though the original sense of *ei* 嬰 is “nursling,” it is also possible to differentiate between “baby girl” (*ei* 嬰) and “baby boy” (*ji* 兒).<sup>195</sup> “Boy” (*dō / warawabe* 童 or *dōji* 童子) refers specifically to a male of fifteen years of age or younger, and the term derives from the fact that a boy is

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., vol. 3, image 4.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.



single and does not yet have a household (or a wife).<sup>196</sup> This specificity—*dōji* as boy and not girl—is worth noting because, in modern Japanese, *dōji* can refer to children of either gender.

What these terms tell us is that the “default” child of the eighteenth century was considered to be a male no more than fifteen years old. Also, marriage, not age alone, marked the boundary between girlhood and womanhood. These gendered definitions of children have echoes throughout eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century children’s literature. Whereas boys appear in a variety of playful and active roles, the smaller number of stories about girls usually involve preparations for marriage and motherhood.

**“When it comes to playthings for boys, this place has everything.”<sup>197</sup>**

Distinctions between girls and boys extended to the toys and games of children’s culture, as can be seen in an early eighteenth-century text by the scholar Kaibara Ekiken. Though Ekiken often seems determined to make children’s lives as disciplined and unpleasant as possible for their own good, he exhibits a surprisingly lenient attitude toward play and playthings in the following passage from *Japanese Custom and the Instruction of Boys* (*Wazokudōjīkun* 和俗童子訓, 1710):

Small boys [*shōni* 小兒] fly kites, shoot with toy bows and arrows, spin tops, whack balls with long mallets [*gichō no tama* 毬打の玉],<sup>198</sup> bounce handballs [*temari* てまり],<sup>199</sup> and put up flag shapes on Boy’s Day. Young girls [*joji* 女兒] hit shuttlecocks [*hago* 羽子], hug protective dolls, and play with paper display

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> *Jinrin kinmōzui*, 141.

<sup>198</sup> *Gichō* or *gitchō* was a Japanese game similar to field hockey, which was played with wooden balls and mallets or curved sticks.

<sup>199</sup> *Temari* are now considered traditional toys for girls. The balls often bear a design made by wrapping them with brightly colored string.

dolls. Empty amusements like these do no harm to the workings of the heart since they are only appealing to the young and are always set aside when people grow older.<sup>200</sup>

Ekiken asserts that children will naturally grow out of the “empty amusements” of childhood. He assumes that these toys and games were familiar to his reader, and no doubt they would have been. For instance, we see some of the same things portrayed in the *Picture Dictionary* and other works based on it.<sup>201</sup> Later in the eighteenth century, these toys and games were included in ukiyoe prints of holiday amusements for children.<sup>202</sup> Most of these games and toys are still remembered as traditional amusements today.

For Ekiken, these childhood indulgences are safe because they are qualitatively different from those of adulthood. Ekiken offers gambling (*bakuchi*) as an example of play that is not appropriate for children.<sup>203</sup> Unlike gambling, which could become a bad habit for life, play that stays in childhood does “no harm.” This affirmation of fun is striking because Ekiken elsewhere cautions against showing children too much affection, lest they grow up undisciplined and without a proper fear of their parents.<sup>204</sup> Ekiken recommends that children have clothing and food that is poorer than their households can afford since a person who has grown accustomed to hardship in childhood will be able to endure more as an adult.<sup>205</sup> In this, Ekiken’s opinion is similar to that of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), influential in the history of childhood in

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<sup>200</sup> Kaibara Ekiken, *Wazoku dōjūkun*, 216.

<sup>201</sup> Nakamura Tekisai, *Kinmōzui* (1666), 426, 429, 431; Nakamura Tekisai, ed., *Tōsho zōho Kinmōzui*, 198-199; Nakamura Tekisai, *Kinmōzui* (1789), vol. 4, image 25; Okuda Shōhakuken and ill. Yoshida Hanbei, *Jo yō Kinmōzui* (Edo: Man’ya Kiyobei, 1688), in vol. 10 of *Kinmōzui shūsei*, 24, 55, 56. No transcription.

<sup>202</sup> Torii Kiyonaga, “Precious Children’s Games of the Five Festivals (Kodakara gosetsu asobi),” ca. 1794-1795, in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (henceforth MFA), <http://www.mfa.org> (accessed November 7, 2011): “The Boys’ Festival” (11.13934), “The Doll Festival” (11.13938), “The New Year Festival” (11.13936).

<sup>203</sup> Kaibara Ekiken, *Wazoku dōjūkun*, 216.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 211.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 212.

the West, who rejected the idea of providing a child with teething rings of silver or gold because of the danger of "accustoming him to luxury from birth."<sup>206</sup> Ekiken intends for children to be prepared for and not hindered from successfully transitioning to adult roles and responsibilities.

Despite Ekiken's concern for frugality, his list implies the existence of a consumer culture for children because each activity requires toys or equipment. We know that such things as kites, tops, dolls, balls, sticks, bows, arrows, and flags had been available for purchase at least two decades before Ekiken's book was published because they are mentioned or illustrated in *Picture Dictionary of People* (*Jinrin kinmōzui* 人倫訓蒙図彙, 1690). Among the descriptions of craftsmen and merchants with various specialties is an illustrated entry for a "Seller of Toys and Trinkets" (*mochi-asobi koma mono ya* 持遊細物や, Figure 11). The association of toys with children is clear from both the words and the picture:

When it comes to playthings for boys [*dōji no moteasobi mono*], this place has everything. Craftsmen from all over make their own original handicrafts and bring them to this house. The various items are made of paper and thin board. The shop is west of the Fifth Avenue Bridge.<sup>207</sup>

The brief description of the shop suggests an advertisement rather than a generic definition such as might be found in the original *Picture Dictionary* and amplified or re-illustrated versions of the standard text. This particular toy shop, west of the Fifth Avenue Bridge in Kyoto, was the place to go for playthings, and the accompanying picture illustrates the shop's wide selection with boxes and shelves of dolls, miniatures, drums, and tops. The customers are two children who hold dolls or hand puppets—the one standing is a boy and seated beside him may be a girl. The boy points out an item on the shelf, and the shopkeeper points as if to confirm his choice.

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<sup>206</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, Harper Collins, 1979), 70.

<sup>207</sup> *Jinrin kinmōzui*, 141.

Other entries in *Picture Dictionary of People* include a maker of brass toys and a maker of battledores for badminton and sticks for ball games.<sup>208</sup> So well before the time Ekiken was writing, there were already artisans and merchants specializing in the production and sale of toys and other products for children's play.



Figure 11: “Seller of toys and trinkets (*Mochi-asobi koma mono ya*)” in *Picture Dictionary of People*. The shopkeeper (right) addresses two children, a boy (standing) and a girl (sitting). All three are holding dolls or puppets, and the boy and shopkeeper both point to the figurines on the top shelf, apparently discussing a purchase. On the shelves (from top to bottom) are dolls and figurines, drums and tops, small figurines, and models of two lucky things: peaches and a bream. The boxes on the floor hold small tops.<sup>209</sup>

In addition to shops with fixed locations, the traveling salesman was a familiar sight in the Edo period and on the Edo-period stage. In the puppet play *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy* (*Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* 菅原伝授手習鑑, 1746), one salesman calls out specifically to children as he sells candy, “Here here, come children, / Come and buy, come and

<sup>208</sup> “*Chūdeishi*” in *Jinrin kinmōzui*, 211; “*Hagoita-ya*,” in *Jinrin kinmōzui*, 243-244.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

buy” (*kodomo shū kōtari kōtari*).<sup>210</sup> The role of salesman allows the character to travel incognito and transport two fugitives, while listening for news. The text of the puppet play makes explicit the direct appeal to children and the consequent purchases by their parents, “So goes the hawking to draw the children, / And mothers come to purchase little gifts.” (. . . *to urigoe no. kodomo atsume ni ko no oya ga. sode no miyage ni kai ni kite*).<sup>211</sup> In a kabuki play, a salesman advertises red books (*akahon*) among other auspicious goods for the New Year, “. . . crane’s feather tobacco, half-cut paper [for letters], brush for the first writing [of the New Year], ink for the first inking, red books for the first reading . . .” (. . . *tsuru no hane tabako, hankiri-gami, kaki-zome hitsu ni suri-zome sumi, yomi-zome akahon . . .*).<sup>212</sup> In this case, the red books are listed among various items for the adults who would have purchased them in this gift-giving season. This seasonal context for the sale of picturebooks is similar to that described by Yamada Keiō, who spoke of traveling salesmen selling picturebooks for children at the New Year.<sup>213</sup>

Eighteenth-century depictions of children and references to children’s culture are not without gender distinctions. *The Picture Dictionary for Maidens* (*Jo yō Kinmōzui* 女用訓蒙図彙, 1688), for example, includes doll furnishings and several types of dolls.<sup>214</sup> These items do not appear with the toys illustrated in the original *Picture Dictionary*, which instead features a hobbyhorse, pinwheel, top, kite, and wooden samurai figure.<sup>215</sup> Likewise, Ekiken’s separation of

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<sup>210</sup> Takeda Izumo, *Kōchū Sugawara denju tenarai kagami*, 38; Jones, trans. and ed., *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, Act II, scene 1, p. 87.

<sup>211</sup> Takeda Izumo, *Kōchū Sugawara denju tenarai kagami*, 41; Jones, trans. and ed., *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, Act III, scene 1, p. 92.

<sup>212</sup> Kimura, *Kusazōshi no sekai*, 50.

<sup>213</sup> Yamada, *Hōryaku genrai shū I*, 61.

<sup>214</sup> Okuda, *Jo yō Kinmōzui*, 24, 55, 56.

<sup>215</sup> Nakamura Tekisai, *Kinmōzui* (1666), 429-431.

activities appropriate for boys versus those appropriate for girls makes several gender-based assumptions. Most of the amusements for boys are outdoor activities that require considerable movement. For girls, there are only dolls and the game of badminton that is usually played at the New Year.<sup>216</sup> Moreover, Ekiken recommends that girls remain indoors from the age of ten and, from that point on, focus on learning such skills as spinning thread, sewing, and weaving.<sup>217</sup>

Ekiken's division between active boys and domestic girls is consistent with the depiction of children in picturebooks, including those translated here. As in *The Rat Wedding* and *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, female characters in children's picturebooks tend to be either brides or mothers, or else would-be brides and mothers. Boys are more common in picturebooks than are girls, and even in wedding stories where female characters are central, it is the birth of a son that brings the story to an auspicious conclusion. Boys appear in a wider variety of roles than do girls; boys are the warrior heroes, the troublemakers, the students, and most of the consumers.

The greater numbers of boys in picturebooks may reflect, in addition to an expectation that boys might have more pocket money than girls, a sense that a wider range of reading materials were appropriate for boys than for girls. For example, Ekiken does not mention storybooks based on puppet plays (*jōruri-bon*) when discussing boys, but he cautions against allowing girls to read such books. According to Ekiken, girls must be taught to write and to do arithmetic for the good of their households, but they must be protected from lewdness and vulgarity, especially when youth makes them especially impressionable. The classic *Tales of Ise*

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<sup>216</sup> Kaibara Ekiken, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, 216.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., 268; cf. Hsiung, *A Tender Voyage*, 210. Ekiken's ideals for child-rearing and instruction, based in Confucian learning, often resonate with Hsiung's discussion of late-imperial Chinese ideals for childhood, although the historical reality for children undoubtedly departed from such ideals in both China and Japan.

and *The Tale of Genji*, though elegant in language, should not be introduced too soon because of the licentious nature of the content.<sup>218</sup>

What the above tells us is that, by the early eighteenth century, a commercial children's culture had developed that included a variety of products for children: toys, games, and books. This children's culture was differentiated by gender, with the roles expected for boys tending to be more active than those expected for girls. The same division may be seen in the picturebooks translated here, in which most girls and young women either become or desire to become brides and mothers, while boys take more lively and engaging roles. Boys appear as celebrated firstborn babies, playful grandchildren, disobedient sons, diligent pupils, rowdy schoolboys, and aspiring actors or artists. These picturebooks not only reflected this children's culture, as it was conceptualized for and of children (though not *by* them), but by virtue of the popularity of picturebooks and their mass printing, also helped to construct and maintain that conception of children's culture.

### **Schoolboys: Acting “normal”**

One role in which boys (and to a lesser extent girls) were depicted in mid- to late-Edo-period children's culture was that of the schoolboy or calligraphy student. The depiction of schoolboys and other students is informative because these children are differentiated from adults, and not only by their age. Schoolboys are characterized by their social role as students, their limited knowledge and experience relative to adults, their tendency to misbehave, and their interests (toys, snacks, and pictures rather than calligraphy). This section examines a play, two

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid., 268-269; cf. Kornicki, “Unsuitable books for women? *Genji Monogatari* and *Ise Monogatari* in Late Seventeenth-Century Japan,” 158.

books, and a board game to illustrate the notion of an ordinary or normal boy, as opposed to an ideal child or a juvenile hero, and to provide further evidence of the range of commercial children's culture available at this time.

Schoolboys feature prominently in both the picturebook *Verses for Schoolchildren* (translated in Chapter Six) and the play *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy* (*Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* 菅原伝授手習鑑, 1746), on which *Verses for Schoolchildren* undoubtedly drew heavily.<sup>219</sup> Schoolboys seem to have begun appearing in picturebooks after their appearance in the writing school (*terakoya*) scene of *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, a puppet play about the legendary poet and calligrapher Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真 (845-903), which was quickly adapted for the kabuki theater. It is considered one of the “three great works” of puppet theater and is still performed today.<sup>220</sup> Sugawara no Michizane had a special relevance to schoolchildren because he was venerated as the patron god of calligraphers and students, Tenjin.

*Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy* is the main theatrical precedent for *Verses for Schoolchildren*, a precedent that may have influenced not only that particular picturebook but also overall trends in representations of children.<sup>221</sup> Although Michizane lived several centuries prior to *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, the most famous scene in the play is set in a writing school of a kind characteristic of the eighteenth century. The scene includes many of the elements that would also be found in *Verses for Schoolchildren*: unruly schoolboys, a few good

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<sup>219</sup> Takeda Izumo, *Kōchū Sugawara denju tenarai kagami*; Jones, trans. and ed., *Sugawara and the secrets of calligraphy*.

<sup>220</sup> Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900*, 392.

<sup>221</sup> This is not to say that *Verses for Schoolchildren* is a record of a performance of *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy* or that it retells the plot of the play. Rather, *Verses for Schoolchildren* adapts the play's characterization of the relationship between students and their teacher in the writing school. Cf. Adam L. Kern, “Kabuki Plays on Page—and Comicbook Pictures on Stage—in Edo-period Japan,” 170-172.



students, boys sneaking sweets, writing practice, and an honorable but sometimes frustrated teacher. *Verses for Schoolchildren* is a performance of childhood—not only does it construct childhood as a commercial target but it draws on theatrical conventions and characters to do so.

Both *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy* and *Verses for Schoolchildren* draw a contrast between the ideal of obedient and hard-working students and the reality of disobedient and lazy ones. In *Verses for Schoolchildren*, this contrast is expressed by juxtaposing verses from the teacher's viewpoint—including classical references, sage advice, and complaints about the students' behavior—with illustrations of students enjoying their misbehavior. Its most memorable characters are schoolboys who are far from being model students.

Both picturebook and play include a samurai teacher supervising a group of unruly schoolboys. In *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, this teacher is Takebe Genzō, a former disciple of Sugawara. Genzō takes on the role of schoolmaster in a remote mountain village in order to hide the son of Sugawara and protect him from his enemies. From the beginning, the teacher's talent and high social status are incompatible with the humble village setting. Genzō's relationship with his peasant pupils is introduced in verse:

. . . he gathers about him  
The local children  
And teaches reading, writing  
To apt and awkward alike,  
To urchins who smear their faces with ink,  
Scribble on their hands,  
Draw pictures of their teacher,  
And sheepishly scratch their heads  
When caught at their roguery.  
The teacher, it seems,  
Knows all the mischief-makers<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Takeda Izumo, *Kōchū Sugawara denju tenarai kagami*, 119; Jones, trans. and ed., *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, 222.

The teacher's great calligraphic skill goes unappreciated by his students. The children's mischievous antics, though amusing in themselves, serve to highlight the schoolmaster's patience and benevolence. Moreover, here and throughout the writing school scene, the exaggerated misbehavior of the unruly village children shows by contrast the noble character of Kan Shūsai, the young son of Sugawara.

The contrast between the young noble and the peasant boys sets up the tragic climax of the play. In a plot twist (common in the kabuki and puppet theaters), the schoolmaster Genzō must deliver the head of Kan Shūsai or a believable substitute to his enemies. Sugawara's son is no ordinary boy and therein lies Genzō's dilemma: no village boy could pass as a substitute. The narrator describes a boy called Chōmatsu, for example, "His mischievous face / Besmeared with writing ink— / No more like Kan Shūsai / Than charcoal is to snow."<sup>223</sup> Only the willing sacrifice of another noble's son can resolve the situation.

However contrived or macabre the problem of finding a substitute head may seem, it matters to the depiction of children in Edo literature because it creates a need for "ordinary" boys to make the noble boy seem extraordinary. The ordinary boys are messy, playful, irreverent, and capable but lazy. Good-natured rascals, they provide comic relief at a tense point in the play. No wonder that, in *Verses for Schoolchildren*, the Torii artists recast these village schoolboys as typical urban schoolboys of the merchant class, creating new stock characters for later representations of schoolchildren in print media.<sup>224</sup>

One picturebook that borrows from *Verses for Schoolchildren* to create a typical schoolboy is *First Steps on the Mountain: Calligraphy Copybook* (*Shotōzan tenarai jō* 初登山手

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<sup>223</sup> Takeda Izumo, *Kōchū Sugawara denju tenarai kagami*, 126-127; Jones, trans. and ed., *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, 235.

<sup>224</sup> *Verses for Schoolchildren* is discussed at greater length in the introduction to the translation in Chapter Six.

習方帖, Jippensha Ikku, 1796). Although it is in the same yellow book (*kibyōshi*) format as comicbooks for adults, *First Steps on the Mountain*'s themes of learning and play suggest a young target audience. All three works—*Verses for Schoolchildren*, *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, and *First Steps on the Mountain*—feature a boy named Chōmatsu. *First Steps on the Mountain* begins with a reference to the play: “In *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, it is said that Takebe Genzō had a disciple named Chōmatsu, a fifteen-year-old ‘drooler’ (*yodarekuri*). Here is a drooler to equal that Chōmatsu.”<sup>225</sup> That statement betrays an influence from both the play and *Verses for Schoolchildren*. The play identifies the fifteen-year-old schoolboy only by the belittling nickname *yodarekuri*, which literally refers to someone who drools; Chōmatsu is a different boy, the one in the passage quoted earlier about the boy with the ink-smearred face. In *Verses for Schoolchildren*, Chōmatsu is identified as the student who is publicly punished for his bad behavior. Thus, *First Steps on the Mountain*'s Chōmatsu, as a character from the theater by way of an earlier picturebook, demonstrates the interconnected nature of eighteenth-century popular culture and its depictions of children.

In *First Steps on the Mountain*, Chōmatsu begins as a delinquent problem child and matures into a diligent student through the intervention of Sugawara no Michizane. In the beginning, Chōmatsu is rude to his parents and so disruptive that he has been kicked out of writing school after writing school. Because of the faith of the boy's parents, Sugawara no Michizane intervenes by appearing to the boy in a dream and by giving him everything he wants: endless snacks and sweets, an opportunity to draw on walls and play with dogs indoors, and trips to see the sights of Edo, including fantastic shows with large, moving dolls. What finally attracts

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<sup>225</sup> Jippensha Ikku, *Shotōzan tenarai jō*, in *Makki kibyōshi shū*, vol. 4 of *Edo no gesaku [parodī] ehon*, ed. Koike Masatane, et al., *Gendai kyōyō bunko*1040 (Shakai shisōsha, 1983), 123; Koike Masatane also notes the similarities in the three works. Koike Masatane, ed., *Shotōzan tenarai jō*, 122.

Chōmatsu to study is not the fun Sugawara provides but the vision of other children happily pursuing knowledge.<sup>226</sup> Chōmatsu experiences an attraction to a greater good rather than a loss of the dream's fantastic benefits. In the end, this illiterate problem child becomes a willing student of calligraphy with the help of Sugawara.

In Chōmatsu's dream, the dolls and mechanical toys are as large as people, but otherwise, they are based on real merchandise and entertainments that were available for children.

Describing an excursion into the city (Figure 12), the narrator points out that the attractions are ones that children (*kodomo*) typically enjoy:

First they went to the entertainment district. Chōmatsu said, 'I wanna see that, too! I wanna see this, too!' [Sugawara no Michizane] gave in to Chōmatsu's wishes and showed him everything because it was all the stuff that makes children happy [*mina kodomo no yorokobu mono ni te*]: the puppet theater [*ayatsuri shibai*], sideshows [*odedekoden*], the straw-weaver's show [*mugi-wara saiku no misemono*], bobble head tigers [*harinuki no tora*], the acrobatics of Yojirobei dolls [*Yojirobei ga karuwaza*], and acrobats on stilts [*take-uma no kyoku nori*].<sup>227</sup>

Thus, toys, dolls, puppets and shows are all things that appeal specifically to children. Chōmatsu wants to see all the sights and shows, and Sugawara allows Chōmatsu to experience these entertainments because they are supposed to be fun for children. The two go on to see a kabuki performance and a sumo match, both enacted by children's toys.<sup>228</sup>

At fifteen, Chōmatsu has reached the end of boyhood, as defined by the *Picture Dictionary* and reaffirmed in *First Steps on the Mountain*. The picturebook narrator uses cultural references to articulate a sense of adolescence as well as childhood. Tiring of sumo and the theater, Chōmatsu next asks to see the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters. The narrator explains the

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<sup>226</sup> Jippensha Ikku, *Shotōzan tenarai jō*, 121-156

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, 136-139.

request by saying that, though technically still a child, Chōmatsu was at the age when his voice was changing (*Chōmatsu mo kodomo to wa ii nagara, ottsuke koe-gawari no suru jibun nite*).<sup>229</sup>

A trip to see the Yoshiwara, itself literally populated by dolls, completes Chōmatsu's tour of Edo's delights. Thus, Chōmatsu's interest in toys and puppet performances indicate that he is a child while his curiosity about the pleasure quarters shows that he is on the verge of growing up.



Figure 12: From *First Steps on the Mountain*. Sugawara no Michizane (far left) shows Chōmatsu (second from left) the sights. They have already passed a clockwork mochi maker (far right) and a clockwork monkey (second from right), and they are headed toward signs for a straw weaver and bobbie head tigers.

As central as toys and willful, self-centered behavior are to its characterization of the problem child, *First Steps on the Mountain* does not demonize commercial children's culture, whether toys or performances. In the end, Chōmatsu willingly gives up what Ekiken called the "empty amusements" of childhood for the greater satisfaction of learning calligraphy. The

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 140.

transformation takes place when Chōmatsu sees schoolboys happily playing together and realizes that he cannot join them unless he learns to write.<sup>230</sup> The punishments and scolding the boy received from his teachers and parents were not as effective as Michizane's method of revealing the joy of learning after allowing Chōmatsu to see that the various amusements he had desired were ultimately unsatisfying. This formulation of the moral reconciles the book's mixed messages—celebrating commercial children's culture on the one hand and praising a single-minded devotion to learning on the other.

References to children's toys appear in books for adults as well as in picturebooks and picture dictionaries for children. In addition to Ekiken's discussion of children's activities, there are recommendations for gifts to children for various occasions in *Convenient Guide to Gift-giving* (*Shinmotsu benran* 進物便覧, 1811). Some of these gifts include toys featured in the dream world of *First Steps on the Mountain*. For example, appropriate gifts to cheer smallpox patients—typically children—included puppets (*tsukai ningyō*), jumping dolls (*tobi ningyō*), and water-powered mechanical dolls (*mizu karakuri*) as well as picturebooks (*ehon rui*).<sup>231</sup>

An 1847 board game demonstrates Sugawara no Michizane's place in children's culture: *Springtime Fun: Diligence in Learning Calligraphy Game* (*Shunkyō: Tenarai shussei sugoroku* 春興手習出精双六, illustrated by Utagawa Hiroshige). The game, pictured below, begins with boys entering the writing school in the center square at the bottom. The winning spot, top center, depicts a shrine devoted to Sugawara no Michizane.<sup>232</sup> The game thus echoes the plot of the

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid., 146-147.

<sup>231</sup> *Shinmotsu benran*, images 64 and 65 [P0061.jpg and P0062.jpg]; transcribed in vol. 7 of *Kōza Nihon fūzoku shi* (Yūsankaku, 1958), 332-333.

<sup>232</sup> *Shunkyō: Tenarai shussei sugoroku*, held by Tōkyō Gakugei Daigaku, <https://library.u-gakugei.ac.jp/etopia/sugoroku.html> (accessed February 27, 2011). See also reproduction and partial transcription in Katō and Matsumura, eds., *Bakumatsu, Meiji no esugoroku*, 208-209.



Figure 13: Springtime Fun: Diligence in Learning Calligraphy Game

picturebook *Verses for Schoolchildren*, which starts with a boy entering the writing school and ends with students making a pilgrimage to a shrine of Michizane.

The worst possible outcomes in the *Diligence in Learning Calligraphy Game* are shown in the right and left corners of the bottom row: “expulsion” (*hamon*) and “time out” (*tomerare*). The latter punishment also appears in *Verses for Schoolchildren*. In the game board’s top corners are two types of honors for students, honors to be reached by progressing through the various handwriting manuals and other educational texts depicted in the middle squares.<sup>233</sup>

Many of the books referenced in the game had been published decades prior to the publication of the game, if not earlier.<sup>234</sup> The game demonstrates the rewards of purchasing and studying educational books, and it shows continuity with the writing school scenes depicted in *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, *Verses for Schoolchildren*, and *First Steps on the Mountain*. Further, the game demonstrates the endurance of both the image of Michizane as a patron of education and the image of the hopeless schoolboy. Here, the unnamed problem student never makes it above the bottom row of the game despite—or perhaps because of—being twice the size of his young classmates.

These visual and dramatic texts related to Sugawara no Michizane reveal the emergence in Edo-period art and literature of the writing school as a typical childhood setting and the student as a typical child. The inclusion of older but unlearned boys in each of these pieces—

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<sup>233</sup> *Household Precepts Primer (Teikin ōrai)*, *Epistolary Primer (Shōsoku ōrai)*, *Sumida River Primer (Sumidagawa ōrai)*, *Commerce Primer (Shōbai ōrai)*, *Wind and Moon Primer (Fūgetsu ōrai)*, *Standing-style Text (Tatebumi)*, *The Tale of Genji (Genji)*, *The Imagawa for Maidens (Onna Imagawa)*, *Scattered-style Text (Chirashi bumi)*, *All the Lands for Maidens (Onna kuni-zukushi)*, *Treasured Children (Dōbō kodakara)*, *Path to the Capital (Miyako ji)*, *Toward Edo (Edo hōgaku)*, *All the Lands (Kuni-zukushi)*, and *Name Headings (Nagashira)*. Katō and Matsumura, eds., *Bakumatsu, Meij no esugoroku*, 208.

<sup>234</sup> By 1813, at least eleven of these titles had appeared in publishers’ catalogues. Asakura Haruhiko and Ōwa Hiroyuki, eds., *Kyōho igo Edo shuppan shomoku*, shinteiban (Kyoto: Rinsen shoten, 1993), 16, 62, 91, 119, 138, 233, 318, 341, 396, 429, 443 [not an exhaustive list of pages]. This reference only covers the years through 1818, but the board game likely advertised more recent publications as well.



picturebook, comicbook, puppet play and board game—adds humor and teaches by negative example. While the few female students are cast in positive roles, boys are portrayed in both positive and negative situations. Boys have energy and potential but need discipline and the inspiration of Sugawara no Michizane to develop into responsible, capable adults. The negativity does not extend to a rejection of consumer culture for children—after all the works themselves are part of that culture. Commercial products for the enjoyment of children, like the books and game themselves, are part of childhood, but they portray children who progress through amusements toward literacy and the responsibilities of adulthood.

### **Gathering by the Fire for Stories**

With picturebooks for young children, the journey toward literacy could begin informally at home, as well as in the school settings discussed above.<sup>235</sup> Picturebooks themselves encouraged informal use at home by representing their child audience engaged in literary leisure activities—storytelling, listening to stories, looking at books, or practicing writing—in relaxed domestic settings. One example is in *Old Tale of Momotarō, Republished (Saihan Momotarō mukashi gatari 再版桃太郎昔語*, ill. Nishimura Shigenobu, ca. 1750s to 1770s), a picturebook version of the story of Momotarō (The Peach Boy). The book begins with a scene of boys seated around a ceramic brazier (*hibachi*, Figure 14).<sup>236</sup> The image is one of a winter or early-spring gathering in a prosperous household, as suggested by the decorated screens and the use of the

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<sup>235</sup> See discussion of Emura Hokkai, Yuasa Jōzan, and Arai Hakuseki in the first chapter for additional evidence and examples of how illustrated books were used with and by young children at home in the eighteenth-century.

<sup>236</sup> Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., (*Saihan*) *Momotarō mukashi gatari*, vol. 1, originally published by Urokogataya, ca. 1750s to 1770s, in Suzuki and Kimura, eds., *KKES, Edo hen*, 57. My translation appears here in place of the original Japanese script.

hibachi for heat. A boy starts to tell the story of Momotarō but is interrupted by the others, one of whom suggests that the next story be *The Rabbit's Triumph* (*Usagi no tegara*, better known as *The Crackling Mountain*). Both the story that follows and *Rabbit's Triumph* are thus to be understood as ones that should be familiar to children and of interest to them. It should come as no surprise that *Rabbit's Triumph* was available from the same publisher, the Urokogataya.<sup>237</sup> Both stories were republished repeatedly into the nineteenth century; their success may even have been due to such advertising.

A hierarchy is visible among the boys in the illustration. Hairstyles and clothing show their age, gender, and status. The storyteller (top right) is the one holding the fire prongs. He appears to be the oldest boy since he is the only one to wear a sword. Another of the older boys (upper left) tells the others, "Shut up and listen!" (*damatte kike*). Four of the five boys have the crowns of their heads shaved but have left the hair at their foreheads intact, a hairstyle that shows that they are boys well out of their toddler years but under the age of sixteen. At about sixteen, they would shave their hair in front, as part of their transition to adulthood. The two boys seated in the foreground, including one with a shaved head, seem to be young. They are less formally dressed, without jackets or trousers (*hakama*), and they are seated furthest from the warmth of the hibachi. These young boys are the ones who interrupt the story with "Momotarō's fun!" and "I wanna hear 'Rabbit's Triumph.'" The youngest boys are learning to sit quietly and listen, while the older boys are ready to lead the storytelling session.

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<sup>237</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, 439.



Shut up and  
listen!

Illustrations:  
Nishimura  
Shigenobu

Long, long ago,  
an old man went  
to the mountain  
to cut grass  
...

Momotarō's  
fun!

I wanna hear  
"Rabbit's Triumph."

Figure 14: First scene of *Old Tale of Momotarō*, *Republished*

As a framing device, this image of boys telling stories around the fire self-consciously positions existing stories in relation to the target audience of the picturebook. As the title, *Old Tale of Momotarō, Republished*, suggests, there is an earlier but closely related version of the book: *Momotarō of Long, Long Ago* (*Mukashi mukashi no Momotarō* むかしむかしの桃太郎, by Fujita Hidemoto, ca. Kyōhō era (1716-1736)).<sup>238</sup> The earlier book begins with the old man and old woman who become Momotarō’s parents—there is no frame story. A deliberate decision had to have been made in the second book—whether by the artist or by the publisher Urokogataya—to present a boy storyteller and a boy audience.

A similar framing device appears in an 1856 picturebook in the “graphic novel” (*gōkan*) format, which retells the feud between the monkey and the crab. Although this form of picturebook is generally identified with an adult audience, here the illustrator and author take pains to imply a child readership. This is a straightforward presentation of the old tale, rather than a parody, as is sometimes found in graphic novels. The depiction of a child audience emphasizes the story’s association with children and suggests other stories that children may enjoy. The penultimate scene shows boys and girls seated around a hibachi, talking about which story they want to hear next (Figure 15).<sup>239</sup> They mention “Tongue-cut Sparrow,” “Momotarō,” “Kinpira,” and “Kichi-chan ton ton.” The first three stories were among the red-book tales considered traditional by late Edo-period Japanese. “Kichi-chan ton ton” was an “old tale”

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<sup>238</sup> Fujita Hidemoto, ill., [*Mukashi mukashi no Momotarō*, originally published ca. Kyōhō era (1716-1736), Kisho fukuseikai sōsho, series 1, no. 21 (Yoneyamadō, 1918). No transcription. The cover is marked as if it were illustrated by Okumura [Masanobu] (1686-1764), but there is an interior signature by Fujita Hidemoto; cf. Yamada Seisaku, ed., *Kisho kaisetsu*, Kisho fukuseikai sōsho series 1, no. 41 (Yoneyamadō, 1920), 37-38.

<sup>239</sup> Zentei [Kanagaki] Robun and ill. Ikkōsai [Utagawa] Yoshimori, *Mukashi banashi saru kani gassen*, originally published 1856 by Ozaki Kyūya, in Uchigasaki Yuriko, “Gōkan Mukashi-banashi Saru kani gassen ni tsuite,” in *Sō: kusazōshi no honkoku to kenkyū* 30:262.

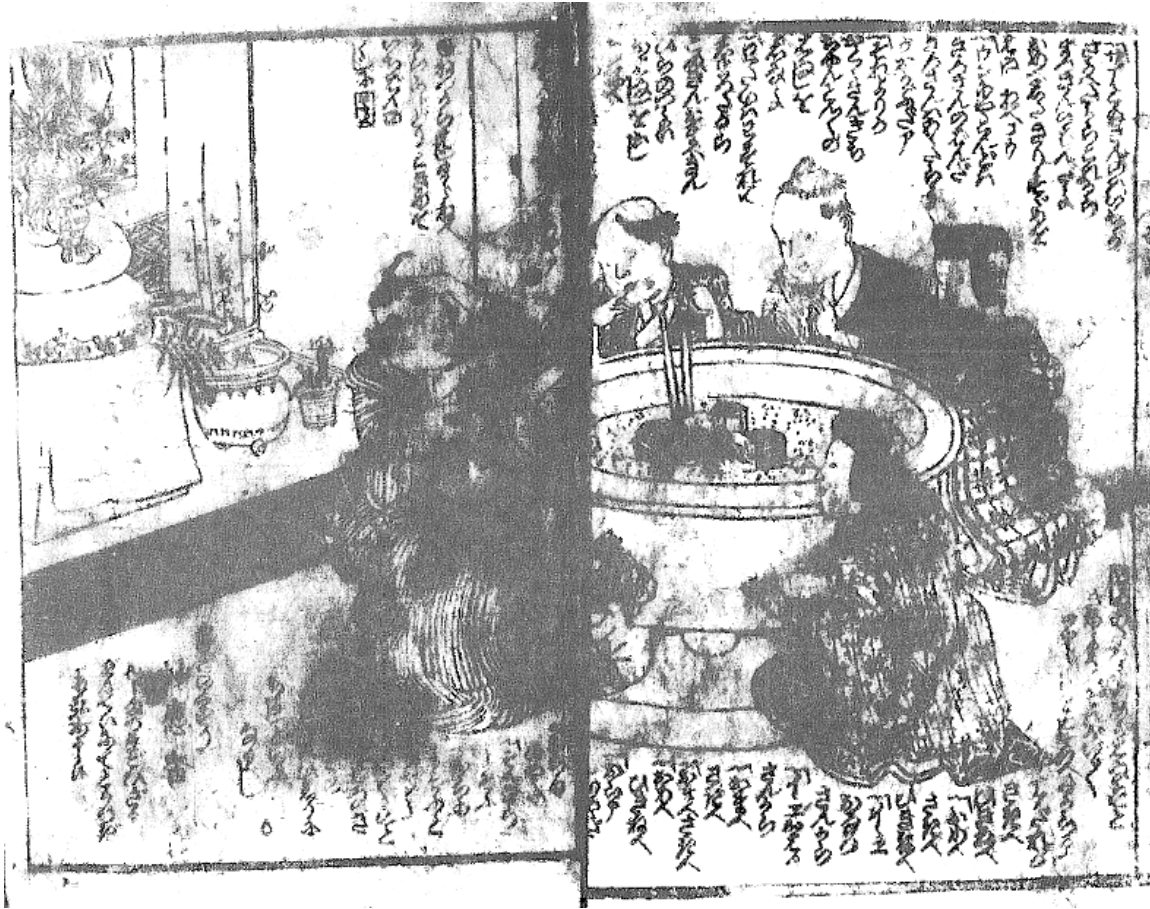


Figure 15: In *Old Tale of the Battle Between the Monkey and the Crab*, children tell stories around a hibachi.

written more recently by Ryūtei Tanehiko and published as a bean book in 1830.<sup>240</sup> Its appearance here with older and more familiar children's stories serves to make it seem traditional by association. The appeal to tradition is echoed in a line near the end, "The end of a red book and the beginning of spring are, both now and in olden times, 'Auspicious! Auspicious!'" (*akahon no owari to haru no hajimari wa ima mo mukashi mo medetashi medetashi*).<sup>241</sup> The graphic novel asserts itself first as an appealing medium for children's stories and then as a true heir of the red book's traditional association with New Year's celebrations. Similarly, a blue-

<sup>240</sup> Ryūtei Tanehiko and ill. Utagawa Sadahide, *Mukashi banashi kichi chan ton ton*, originally published ca. 1830 by Senkakudō, in Hayashi Yoshikazu, "Mukashi banashi Kichi chan ton ton no hakken to shōkai," *Edo bungaku shin shi* 1 (1959): 38-55. The title includes onomatopoeia for the sound of weaving on a loom.

<sup>241</sup> Zentei [Kanagaki] and ill. Ikkōsai [Utagawa], *Mukashi banashi saru kani gassen*, 263.

book version of *The Tongue-cut Sparrow* illustrated by Torii Kiyomitsu ends with an image of a girl and four boys gathered around a hibachi in contemporary (i.e., eighteenth-century) dress that contrasts with the preceding story of “long long ago.”<sup>242</sup> In each of these picturebooks, images of children telling stories identify both the audience (children) and the season (winter or the New Year), while suggesting the relevance of these old tales to the contemporary lives of their audience.

The enjoyment of picturebooks in a domestic setting is contrasted with reluctant participation in a writing school in a 1782 yellow book, *Moral Lesson: Spell Against Mosquitoes* (*Kyōkun ka no majinai* 教訓蚊之呪). The story of a gambler is offered as an explicit guide to the reader, who will learn more effectively from an example in a picturebook than from a teacher’s warning. The first scene introduces the protagonist as someone who began gambling as a child. In the second scene (Figure 16), school-aged boys practice calligraphy under the guidance of a samurai instructor in conspicuous wooden eyewear.<sup>243</sup> The teacher warns the two boys kneeling in front of him, “People who gamble later become thieves!” (*bakuchi o suru mono wa nochi ni dorobō ni naru zo ya*). The rest of the story tells of the fall and reformation of the boy on the right, who learns his lesson through the troubles in his life, rather than by heeding his teacher’s warning.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Torii Kiyomitsu, ill., *Shita-kiri suzume*, ca. 1850s to 1870s, held by Kaga bunko, microfilm at National Institute of Japanese Literature (henceforth NIJL, document ID #217856). No transcription.

<sup>243</sup> The design of the eyewear seems to be original to Japan. A similar device, with a wooden frame, rock crystal lenses, and ear loops, is in the private collection of Dr. David Fleishman of Sharon, Massachusetts. Neil Handley <neil.handley@college-optometrists.org>, “1782 eyewear in Japanese book,” Private e-mail message to Kristin Williams, December 5, 2011.

<sup>244</sup> Ichiba Tsūshō, *Kyōkun ka no majinai*, illustrated by Kitao Masanobu (a.k.a. Santō Kyōden) (1782), held by Kaga bunko, microfilm at NIJL (document ID # 100053610). No transcription.



Figure 16: Image of a writing school from *Moral Lesson: A Spell Against Mosquitoes*

In the final scene (Figure 17), the erstwhile gambler, now an adult, shares picturebooks with his wife and young son. The narrator explains that the man's life has become an example to others through the present book. The boy sits in his mother's lap, holding a picturebook and asking, "Where's Momotarō?" By the boy's feet are a *daruma* doll, a top, and two picturebooks. His father sits nearby with yet another picturebook. A caption on the right proclaims, "Picturebooks that are serious aren't fun" (*kusazōshi wa katai koto wa omoshirokunai*).<sup>245</sup> Here, it is the attractive nature of the book that allows it to serve as an effective deterrent.

The final illustration serves a promotional purpose, with its image of a young boy enjoying a picturebook with his parents. Although the teacher's warning was ineffective, the didactic picturebook has at least captured the child's interest. Picturebooks are an amusement

<sup>245</sup> Ibid. *Kusazōshi* could be translated as "comicbooks" or as "picturebooks" in this case. See the discussion of formats in Chapter One.

with redemptive potential, unlike gambling. Moreover, the final image of a family looking at picturebooks appears directly opposite advertisements for other books, including some by the same author.<sup>246</sup> What better advertisement for such books than this idyllic scene of a family drawn together by picturebooks?



Figure 17: Final pages of *Moral Lesson: A Spell Against Mosquitoes*. (right) “Comicbooks that are serious aren’t fun!” (left) advertisement for books published by Matsumura, including several authored by Tsūshō.

Thus, the depiction of children reading or telling stories in domestic settings brings old stories or stories seemingly unconnected to children’s experiences into a relationship with the child audience. Such scenes are evidence of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century publishers’ awareness of children as consumers of picturebooks and related media. Moreover, picturebooks that represent children enjoying stories or learning to read and write in winter or early spring tie children’s literature to the celebration of the New Year, when picturebooks were usually

<sup>246</sup> See the translation of *Verses for Schoolchildren* for a similar advertisement.



published during the eighteenth century.<sup>247</sup> For artists and publishers, these images were a way to reinforce readers' desires to give or enjoy picturebooks during that festive season.

### Children's Culture in the Early Nineteenth Century

Such late eighteenth-century picturebooks as *Verses for Schoolchildren*, *First Steps on the Mountain*, and *Moral Lesson: Spell Against Mosquitoes* encouraged the consumption of picturebooks as well as toys and educational texts, but by the early nineteenth century, there are also more ambivalent accounts of children's culture. In *Swallowstone Miscellany* (*Enseki zasshi* 燕石雑誌, 1811), Takizawa Bakin (1767-1848) discussed the story of the warrior Kinpira and observed, "If you showed today's boys [*ima no dōjira* 今の童子等] a picturebook [*ehon* 絵本] such as *Rousing Cherry Blossoms* (*Kioi sakura*) illustrated by Okumura Genpachi Masanobu [1686-1764], they wouldn't like it."<sup>248</sup> Bakin illustrated the graphic violence and the rough appearance of warriors in older picturebooks with pictures of Kinpira, one of which includes a pile of severed heads.<sup>249</sup> Bakin was not the only one to see warrior stories as appropriate for children. *The Convenient Guide to Gift-giving*, published in the same year, recommended "warrior picturebooks" (*musha ehon* 武者絵本) as a gift for a boy when he wore trousers for the first time (*hakama gi* 袴着) in the eleventh month of his fifth year.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> See *Stories of Thunder Demons in Four Seasons*, translated in the fifth chapter, for another example of the association of winter with literary activities. A scene of a family gathering in winter includes a man reading and a boy practicing writing in the ashes of a hibachi.

<sup>248</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, 424.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, 426-429.

<sup>250</sup> *Shinmotsu benran*, image 32 [P0029.jpg].

Bakin claimed that people at the time of his writing were more critical of picturebooks than in the old days and that the content of what parents taught children had changed as well. In former days, boys (*shōnen*) were kept honest, even simple-minded, until ages 15 or 16. Parents once taught children (*ko*) about courage because it was related to duty, whereas today, parents teach children to think of profit. Perhaps the 1762 *Verses for Schoolchildren*, which mentions various things children could or should buy and ends with an advertisement, is the type of picturebook that would have bothered Bakin. Certainly its contemporary theme is not one that Bakin included in his discussion of children's stories. Bakin assumes that picturebooks reveal the values that parents wish for their children, and he shows concern for how he sees these values shifting.<sup>251</sup>

Bakin's concerns about a recent focus on profit notwithstanding, prosperity was an old and perennial theme in picturebooks. Wealth appeared in the form of a money tree in the late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, and a few decades later, *The Rat Wedding* featured coins, gifts, new clothes, rich foods, and discussion of the size of the dowry. The promise of prosperity is often part of the auspicious ending that concludes most picturebooks for children.

Another early nineteenth-century observation of how children's culture had developed over time appears in *Bath of the Floating World* (*Ukiyoburo* 浮世風呂, 1809-1813), by Shikitei Sanba (1776-1822). *Bath of the Floating World* is a "funny book" (*kokkeibon*) full of humorous everyday interactions set in a public bath. The following vignette demonstrates an enduring association between illustrated books and child readers. A mother tells of the wide variety of paper amusements—including picturebooks—her children consume:

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<sup>251</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, 424-425.

"[Children] ask you for gilt paper, or that lovely colored paper with the designs done on it in mica powder, and then they just waste it. They cut it all up and throw it away. And then there are those things they call 'switch pictures' or whatever they are, the ones you fold one way or the other to change the pictures, you know, to make an actor do quick costume changes for instance. Anyway, my children buy them one after another, and then put them in a box. You wouldn't believe how packed that box is! And then my third one, the oldest boy, buys those—what are they? *gōkan*—those little illustrated novels, anyway, and *they* pile up in a *basket*. 'Toyokuni's the best!' 'Kunisada's the best!'—they even learn the names of all the illustrators! Children these days are up on simply everything!"<sup>252</sup>

The speaker wonders at the great number of papers, picture prints, and illustrated books her children accumulate and set aside. Her concern about the waste seems to stem not from serious financial problems but from a general sense that times have changed and consumer culture has increased. Nineteenth-century publishers' items for children included not only picturebooks but also board games, amusing single-page prints, and pictures that could be cut to construct three-dimensional buildings or other scenes.<sup>253</sup>

The second mother responds to this description of children's purchases by recalling the children's literature of an earlier day: "When we were young, there was nothing better than *The Rat Wedding* and red books of old stories" (*Watashi-domo no yōshō na jibun wa, nezumi no yomeiri ya, mukashi-banashi no akabon ga kono ue nashi de gozaimashita* 私どもが幼少な時分は、鼠の嫁入や、むかし咄の赤本が此上なしでございました).<sup>254</sup> Her characterization of earlier picturebooks for children—that they consisted of animal wedding stories and old tales—hints at an emerging sense of a canon of children's literature. Certain stories come up

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<sup>252</sup> Shikitei Sanba, *Ukiyoburo*, trans. Robert W. Leutner, in *Shikitei Sanba and the Comic Tradition in Edo Fiction*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 25 (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University; Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1985), 174-5; Shikitei Sanba, *Ukiyoburo*, in *Ukiyoburo; Kejō suigen maku no soto; Daisen sekai gakuyasagashi*, ed. Jinbō Kazuya, vol. 86 of *SNKBT*, part 2, *maki* 1, 88-89.

<sup>253</sup> For examples of such paper toys, see *Papierspiel und Bilderbogen: aus Tokio und Wien 1780-1880*, 79-119.

<sup>254</sup> Shikitei Sanba, *Ukiyoburo*, in *Ukiyoburo; Kejō suigen maku no soto; Daisen sekai gakuyasagashi*, part 2, *maki* 1, 89.

repeatedly in references to children and children's literature in the late Edo period, though they do not account for the full range of eighteenth-century children's literature.

### **Bakin's "Boy's Tales" and the Late-Edo Canon of Children's Literature**

In *Swallowstone Miscellany*, Bakin sets out to elucidate the origins of several traditional boy's tales (*mukashi yori warawabe no sunaru monogatari* 昔より童蒙のすなる物語).<sup>255</sup> At this early point in the nineteenth century, Bakin demonstrated an awareness of a body of children's literature, both written and oral. Bakin is today best known for his popular fiction, but in his own day he was also known to have been active in calligraphy and well-connected in the scholarly and artistic worlds of the early nineteenth-century.<sup>256</sup> Bakin analyzes the plots and sources of the following stories: "Peach Boy" (*Momotarō*), "The Old Man Who Made Trees Bloom" (*Hana saki no okina*), "The Rabbit's Triumph" (*Usagi no otegara*, a.k.a. *Kachi kachi yama* or "Crackling Mountain"), "Fresh Monkey Liver" (*Saru no nama kimo*), "The Battle Between the Monkey and the Crab" (*Saru kani gassen*), "Tongue-cut Sparrow" (*Shitakiri suzume*), and "Son of Urashima" (*Urashima ga ko*). Bakin uses the phrase "boy's tale" (*warabe no monogatari*) in regard to four different stories, and he uses similar phrases in reference to other stories.<sup>257</sup> Bakin describes most of these as fictional (*tsukuri monogatari*) but with old sources.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, 434ff. The translation of the title is borrowed from Antoni, "Momotarō (The Peach Boy) and the Spirit of Japan," 167.

<sup>256</sup> Anna Beerens, *Friends, Acquaintances, Pupils, and Patrons*, 151.

<sup>257</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, 446, 459, 463, 467. Similar phrases on pp. 434, 452, 468.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, 475.

Bakin's discussion of boy's stories may have been "the earliest folktale collection of Japan," but Bakin was writing of children's literature, not stories limited to oral traditions.<sup>259</sup> Bakin mentioned specific literary sources and printed versions of the stories. He wrote that some Urokogataya picturebooks (*ezōshi*) from the Hōreki and Meiwa eras (1751-1772) had been collected by Nishimura Eijudō and were still being issued year after year. *Verses for Schoolchildren* is one picturebook published by Urokogataya during those years. As examples of Urokogataya picturebooks, Bakin listed "Peach Boy," "Tongue-cut Sparrow," "The Old Man Who Made Trees Bloom," and "Urashima Boy" [*Urashima Tarō*]. Thus, Bakin's sample of picturebooks for children produced by this one publisher, the Urokogataya, represents over half of the titles he discusses. Bakin's reference to the publisher shows that his interests related to children's stories extended beyond oral traditions to encompass picturebooks, their sources, and their publication history.<sup>260</sup>

The stories Bakin identified as "boy's tales" and as already traditional in the early nineteenth century took on new forms in the mid- to late nineteenth century, inspiring not only games and bean books for children but also graphic novels for adults. Bakin applied his interest in children's literature to a graphic novel with elements borrowed—and liberally reinterpreted—from earlier picturebooks: *The Origins of Red Book Stories for Boys* (*Warabe hanashi akahon jishi* 童話赤本事始, 1824). Bakin also discussed the origins and prominent authors of picturebooks from the city of Edo in *Modern Fiction: A Classification of Edo Authors* (*Kinsei mono no hon Edo sakusha burui* 近世物之本江戸作者部類, 1834).<sup>261</sup> Shikitei Kosanba

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<sup>259</sup> Antoni, "Momotarō (The Peach Boy) and the Spirit of Japan," 167.

<sup>260</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, 439; quoted in Kimura Yaeko, "Akahon no sekai," *KKES, Edo hen*, 518.

<sup>261</sup> Kyokutei Bakin (a.k.a. Takizawa Bakin), *Warabe hanashi akahon jishi* (Edo: Moriya Jihei, 1824), in *Kusazōshi shū*, 429-523; Takizawa Bakin, *Kinsei mono no hon: Edo sakusha burui*, part 2, 11-98. The translation of the title of

similarly redeployed elements of eighteenth-century picturebooks in his graphic novel, *World of the Red Book* (*Akahon sekai* 赤本世界, 1846).<sup>262</sup>

### From Picturebooks to Fairy Tales

One of the earliest English-language collections of Japanese “fairy tales” is found in *Tales of Old Japan* (1871) by A. B. Mitford (1837-1916). Mitford was a British diplomat who lived in Japan from 1866 to 1870, during the transition from the Edo period to the Meiji period. Mitford describes woodblock-printed picturebooks, which, given the late date, are likely to have been bean books or aging reprints of older picturebooks. He sees the tales as remnants of an earlier time:

I think that their quaintness is a sufficient apology for the following little children's stories. With the exception of that of the "Elves and the Envious Neighbour," which comes out of a curious book on etymology and proverbial lore, called the *Kotowazagusa*, these stories are found printed in little separate pamphlets, with illustrations, the stereotype blocks of which have become so worn that the print is hardly legible. These are the first tales which are put into a Japanese child's hands; and it is with these, and such as these, that the Japanese mother hushes her little ones to sleep.<sup>263</sup>

Mitford describes the “little separate pamphlets, with illustrations,” as books for children, to be enjoyed by children themselves or read to them by their mothers. This connection with children is sometimes assumed to have been a mistake or misrepresentation, such tales having been rewritten as literature for children only after Japan had been exposed to the “global cultural

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*Edo sakusha burui* is borrowed from Michael Emmerich, “The Splendor of Hybridity: Image and Text in Ryūtei Tanehiko’s *Inaka Genji*,” in *Envisioning the Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production*, ed. Haruo Shirane (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 226.

<sup>262</sup> Shikitei Kosanba, and ill. Utagawa Kunisada, *Akahon sekai*. No transcription.

<sup>263</sup> A. B. Mitford, vol. 1 of *Tales of Old Japan* (London: Macmillan, 1871), 248; in “Google Books,” (accessed December 16, 2010).

discourse on childhood.”<sup>264</sup> In fact, the eight stories that Mitford found in picturebooks are the very same eight stories that appear in the 1860 game board described at the beginning of this chapter. The eight stories are all extant in the form of eighteenth-century picturebooks, seven in red books and the eighth, “The Foxes’ Wedding,” in a black book.<sup>265</sup> Mitford’s selection of stories overlaps substantially with Bakin’s 1811 account of “boy’s tales” as well as with the stories referenced in both *The Origins of Red Book Stories for Boys* and *World of the Red Book*. Meiji-period bean-book versions of all eight stories exist as well.<sup>266</sup>

The ninth story, which Mitford attributes to the *Kotowazagusa*, does not appear in the game board or among those woodblock picturebooks that have been anthologized, though Bakin mentions it in passing.<sup>267</sup> This story, now a familiar staple of Japanese children’s literature, tells of a man who was relieved of a facial cyst (a “wen”) and of his neighbor who received it instead.<sup>268</sup>

Mitford’s account of the “stereotype blocks . . . so worn that the print is hardly legible” suggests one reason the stories were recut in new formats, in addition to the existence of a market for attractive new illustrations and updated versions of stories. Mitford expresses some frustration with the limited selection of stories he found, perhaps an indication of a narrowed sense of the canon of classic children’s literature on the part of his Japanese informants:

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<sup>264</sup> Ericson, introduction to *A Rainbow in the Desert*, ix.

<sup>265</sup> The red books are in *KKES, Edo hen: Shitakiri suzume*, 24-29; *Kareki ni hana sakase jiji*, 18-23; *Bunbuku chagama*, 36-41; *Saru kani gassen*, 30-35; (*Saihan*) *Momotarō mukashi gatari*, 57-67; *Usagi ōtegara*, 68-73; and *Kintoki osana dachi*, 74-84. The black book is Katō Yasuko, ed., *Kitsune no yomeiri*, in vol. 3 of *EEH*, 9-23.

<sup>266</sup> Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, 6-7.

<sup>267</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, 475. The story is not in *KKES, Edo hen*; *KKES, Kamigata hen*; *Bakumatsu, Meiji mamehon shūsei*; or *EEH*.

<sup>268</sup> “The Elves and the Envious Neighbour,” in Mitford, vol. 1 of *Tales of Old Japan*, 276-277.

Knowing the interest which many children of a larger growth take in such Baby Stories, I was anxious to have collected more of them. I was disappointed, however, for those which I give here are the only ones which I could find in print; and if I asked the Japanese to tell me others, they only thought I was laughing at them, and changed the subject. The stories of the Tongue-cut Sparrow, and the Old Couple and their Dog, have been paraphrased in other works upon Japan; but I am not aware of their having been literally translated before.<sup>269</sup>

Mitford's claim that the stories are "literally translated" must be taken with a grain of salt, for the stories are, at best, adaptations. The differences begin with the format; Mitford recasts the picturebooks as short stories in prose with little dialogue and few illustrations. Mitford's "Story of Sakata Kintoki" differs significantly from the Kinpira story in the game, but as Katō has noted, the game's version of Kinpira is its one departure from picturebook models.<sup>270</sup> Mitford's version of the story of Sakata Kintoki focuses on the man's lineage, rather than on the exploits depicted in the game, which focuses on the hero's adult life.<sup>271</sup> In that respect, Mitford's version is similar to an eighteenth-century picturebook about the hero's childhood, which was published by the Urokogataya.<sup>272</sup> So the stories Mitford chose to present as "Baby Stories" were in fact staples of Edo-period children's literature, albeit in an altered form.

Mitford was not the only one to recognize an appeal for foreign audiences in the familiar stories of woodblock-print picturebooks. Many of the stories and characters that appear in the sources above—board game, Bakin's descriptions of boy's tales, and Mitford's account of "Baby Stories"—found a place in modern Japanese children's literature and in a series of foreign-language books published for export by Hasegawa Takejirō (1853-1938) as a "Fairy Tale

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<sup>269</sup> Mitford, vol. 1 of *Tales of Old Japan*, 248. The earlier paraphrases are to be found in Rutherford Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon: A Narrative of a Three Years Residence in Japan: With Maps and Numerous Illustrations in Chromolithography and on Wood* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Robers, and Green, 1863), vol. 2, 287-289; in "Google Books" (accessed July 6, 2012).

<sup>270</sup> Katō, "Bakumatsu, Meiji no esugoroku," 306.

<sup>271</sup> "The History of Sakata Kintoki," in Mitford, vol. 1 of *Tales of Old Japan*, 273-275.

<sup>272</sup> *Kintoki osana-dachi*, 2 vols. (Edo: Urokogataya), in *KKES, Edo hen*, 74-84.



Series.” Christine Guth argues that, by marketing old Japanese stories as children’s literature, Hasegawa contributed to the infantilization of Japan in the minds of Europeans and Americans. “Hasegawa was surely aware that classifying his publications as ‘fairy tales’ marked them as originally having been written by people Euro-Americans understood to be childish or childlike, and that in so doing he was helping to authorize a vision of Japan that played into Western stereotypes.”<sup>273</sup>

Guth provides an insightful analysis of the reception of Hasegawa’s books and of European and American views of Japan during the Meiji period as exotic and “childlike” in the sense of being “inferior, dependent, and vulnerable.”<sup>274</sup> However, in distancing herself from these views, Guth misses the stories’ real association with children, which predates Hasegawa and such late nineteenth-century visitors to Japan as Mitford. In many cases, the assignment of the old stories that Hasegawa calls “fairy tales” to a child readership had already happened over a hundred years prior to the 1885 start of Hasegawa’s first series.<sup>275</sup> Bakin had described some of these stories with terms like “boy’s tale” (*warabe no monogatari*) in 1811 and specifically mentioned versions published by the Urokogataya in the eighteenth century.<sup>276</sup> The problem lay not in the idea that stories such as “Tongue-cut Sparrow” were read by Japanese children but in the idea that children’s literature and toys could be made to stand metonymically for the entirety of Japanese literature and culture. The rich diversity of Edo-period Japanese publications for children and adults defies distillation into some essential character.

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<sup>273</sup> Christine Guth, “Hasegawa’s Fairy Tales: Toying With Japan,” in *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 53/54 (2008):280.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>275</sup> Cf. Herring, *Dawn of Wisdom*, 11.

<sup>276</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, 446, 439.

Hasegawa's series of "fairy tales" were borrowed from Edo-period children's literature. In fact, all but one of the six stories Hasegawa published in the first year of the fairy tale series, 1885, had appeared in the 1860 board game discussed above. The sixth story, *The Mouse's Wedding* (*Nezumi no yomeiri*), is closely related to the "Fox Wedding" that appears in the game as well as to the version of *The Rat Wedding* translated in this dissertation, albeit with *nezumi* translated as the smaller and perhaps more appealing "mouse."<sup>277</sup> Despite the substantial overlap in titles, neither Hasegawa nor his contemporaries producing stories for Japanese children in movable type replicated earlier children's literature. The differences in content between the Edo- and Meiji-period versions of these stories and the specific stories included and excluded were considerable. A full explication of the similarities and differences between stories in eighteenth- and late-nineteenth-century forms is beyond the scope of this dissertation, though the translations and readings of eighteenth-century children's literature here may facilitate a future project of that nature. For the present, it must suffice to note that the balance of visual and verbal elements shifted toward the verbal with the introduction of children's literature in movable type.

## Conclusion

Edo-period publishers, toymakers, and performers catered to children—both boys and girls—with picturebooks, dolls, tops, games, and puppet shows, among other amusements. This children's culture was both commercial and strongly associated with a season of gift-giving. While both boys and girls might enjoy picturebooks, the target audience for picturebooks was often male, and different types of toys were produced for boys and girls. Children's literature

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<sup>277</sup> Ishizawa Saeko, *Chirimenbon no subete: Meiji no Ōbun sashiebon* (Miyai shoten, 2004), i-ii.

drew on other forms of children's culture for its representation of children's activities, and it also became an inspiration for items like the picture board games discussed in this chapter.

The two picturebook tropes of children examined in this chapter show a clear sense of the child as distinct from adults. The young student is subject to the authority of parents and teachers, but he or she is more inclined to play than to study. The image of children engaged in telling or listening to old stories by the fire asserts the importance of stories and, by extension, picturebooks for celebrating the New Year and whiling away cold or rainy days spent indoors. The prominent inclusion of contemporary children, especially in stories otherwise unrelated to them, suggests an intent on the part of publishers and illustrators to attract these young readers or adults who bought books for them.

The use of picturebooks as gifts for the New Year and other special occasions, souvenirs, and presents to children suffering from smallpox helps to explain their role as distinct from textbooks or other educational reading matter. Substantial overlap exists between stories that late Edo-period Japanese associated with children and stories that Meiji-period and later observers considered to be folk tales or fairy tales. However, in terms of presentation, early picturebooks had more in common with comicbooks than with the illustrated tales in movable type that became common in the mid- to late Meiji period.

Edo-period children's literature introduced children to cultural literacy and guided them in moral and practical concerns, but it also taught children about consumer behavior. In addition to educating and amusing children on quiet winter days, picturebooks and other illustrated woodblock-printed books formed child consumers through overt advertising to children and their parents, conversation about buying things, and references to specific consumer goods, including the entertainment industry. There were also books with mixed messages: celebrating wealth on

the one hand while extolling frugality on the other or encouraging consumption of toys and puppet shows while praising students who focused on calligraphy instead.

Further discussion of child roles in picturebooks appears in the second half of this dissertation in conjunction with the translations of five picturebooks. The translated picturebooks model the dramatic fictions of the child—baby, schoolboy, bride-to-be, grandchild, and brat—that emerged in eighteenth-century children’s literature. Taken as a whole, these and related sources reveal that there was a significant body of children’s literature in Edo-period Japan. The lack of scholarly discourse about this children’s literature is due to the way that ideas of the child and of children’s literature shifted amid the Meiji period project of modernizing and Westernizing, not to any dearth of children’s literature or children’s culture in the Edo period. The canon that emerged in this commercialized woodblock-printed children’s literature has retained a place within Japanese children’s literature to the present day.

## Part II: Translations: Children Visualized in Five Eighteenth-Century Picturebooks

Thus far, I have argued that Japanese woodblock-printed picturebooks of the late seventeenth century through the late nineteenth century were a form of children's literature and that this children's literature was an integral part of a commercial children's culture in early modern Japan. Some key purposes of this children's literature—to amuse and instruct children while encouraging them and their parents to desire more products from the same publishers—were common to eighteenth-century children's literature in England as well.<sup>278</sup> However, the content and form of eighteenth-century children's literature in Japan, with its emphasis on monochrome pictures and dialogue, were radically different from that of English children's literature of the same period, in which lightly illustrated verses and moral tales predominated.<sup>279</sup>

In order to introduce Japanese eighteenth-century picturebooks to an English-speaking audience, I have chosen five works for translation here. These few could hardly be representative of the wide range of stories and topics treated in picturebooks, but these particular picturebooks are relevant to the current project because of the way they visualize children and represent childhood to an implied child readership. Children's activities—play, education, and work—are depicted, as are the children's pasts—fetal development and birth. The picturebooks also depict family life, including some scenes of boys' respectful or defiant relations with their elders and other scenes related to a girl's passage into the adult roles of wife and mother. Together they make up a child's eye view of eighteenth-century childhood, albeit one mediated by adult artists.

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<sup>278</sup> Darton, *Children's Books in England*, 1; Townsend, *Written for Children*, 14-19.

<sup>279</sup> Darton, *Children's Books in England*, 120-198; Townsend, *Written for Children*, 12-29.

These picturebooks represent a selection of views of childhood from the educational but entertaining children's literature of their day, but they do not limit themselves to showing real children. Far from it. Instead, most of these picturebooks depict characters never seen in everyday life: the Seven Gods of Fortune, Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, talking rats, thunder demons, and a legendary billionaire of long ago. The translations presented here include examples of three genres of eighteenth-century picturebooks. There are two "red books" (*akahon*), *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* and *The Rat Wedding*; two "patterned books" (*kōzeibyōshi*), *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* and *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*; and a "blue book" (*aohon*) that was subsequently published as a "yellow book" (*kibyōshi*), *Verses for Schoolchildren*.<sup>280</sup> Only *Verses for Schoolchildren* presents human children in a contemporaneous setting. The other picturebooks weave juvenile characters into extraordinary settings rooted in religion, folklore, and the popular stage.

### **The Form of the Translations**

The works translated here are not simply storybooks accompanied by illustrations but rather picturebooks in which word and image work together. The reader must view both to understand the whole and to recognize which character is speaking each line of the dialogue. Picturebooks of this kind are a relatively recent development in contemporary Western children's literature, and such elements as image and text that interact and share the same physical space

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<sup>280</sup> See Chapter One for a discussion of the types of picturebooks in the Edo period. "Black books" (*kurohon*) and yellow books were omitted here because examples are already available in English translation; cf. Kern, ed., "*Kibyōshi*: The World's First Comicbook?," 3-197; Kern, *Manga from the Floating World*; Kimbrough, "Illustrating the Classics," 257-304; Kimbrough, "Murasaki Shikibu for Children," 1-36.

are associated with the influence of comics and of postmodern aesthetics.<sup>281</sup> However, picturebooks that combine words and pictures have a longer lineage in Japan. Among the sources for these picturebooks for children were illustrated scrolls of the preceding centuries.<sup>282</sup> It will be seen that some conventions associated with comicbooks, such as the inclusion of dialogue within illustrations, are already present in the earliest picturebook translated here, *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, which dates to the last decade of the seventeenth century or the first decade of the eighteenth century.

Translating picturebooks necessitated a consideration of the close relationship between word and image. In these translations, I used Photoshop to substitute English text for the Japanese text. Because the original Japanese generally reads from right to left and from top to bottom, the substitution entailed “translating” the spatial layout of the page. Whenever possible, the English text was placed in approximately the same location on the page as the corresponding Japanese text. Distinctions between narration, signage, and direct speech are clear from the context in Japanese, but in the translation these distinctions have been indicated through the use of italics for direct speech and non-italicized text for narration and signage. Quotation marks have been used only for speech that quotes another source or for direct speech that appears within narration. In *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, a triangular mark appears at the beginning of each section of the narration in the original; these marks have been shifted to head the corresponding English sections.

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<sup>281</sup> Barbara Kiefer, “What is a Picturebook, Anyway? The Evolution of Form and Substance through the Postmodern Era and Beyond,” in *Postmodern Picturebooks: Play, Parody, and Self-Referentiality*, ed. Lawrence R. Sipe and Sylvia Pantaleo (New York: Routledge, 2008), 20; Maria Nikolajeva, “Play and Playfulness in Postmodern Picturebooks,” in *Postmodern Picturebooks*, 55-64; Amy E. Spaulding, *The Page as a Stage Set: Storyboard Picture Books* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995), 9-11.

<sup>282</sup> One example that served as a source for both *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* and *The Rat Wedding* is discussed in the third and fourth chapters. See also Kimbrough, “Illustrating the Classics,” 257-262.

For four of the translations, the pages were reproduced from a two-volume anthology, *Kinsei kodomo no ehon-shū* (Anthology of Early Modern Children's Picturebooks). In that collection, the pages are reproduced in black and white with most blemishes and wormholes erased. The images of *Verses for Schoolchildren* are from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which has an earlier edition with crisper printing than the one reproduced in the anthology. For the sake of legibility, the translated pages are slightly larger than the originals.<sup>283</sup>

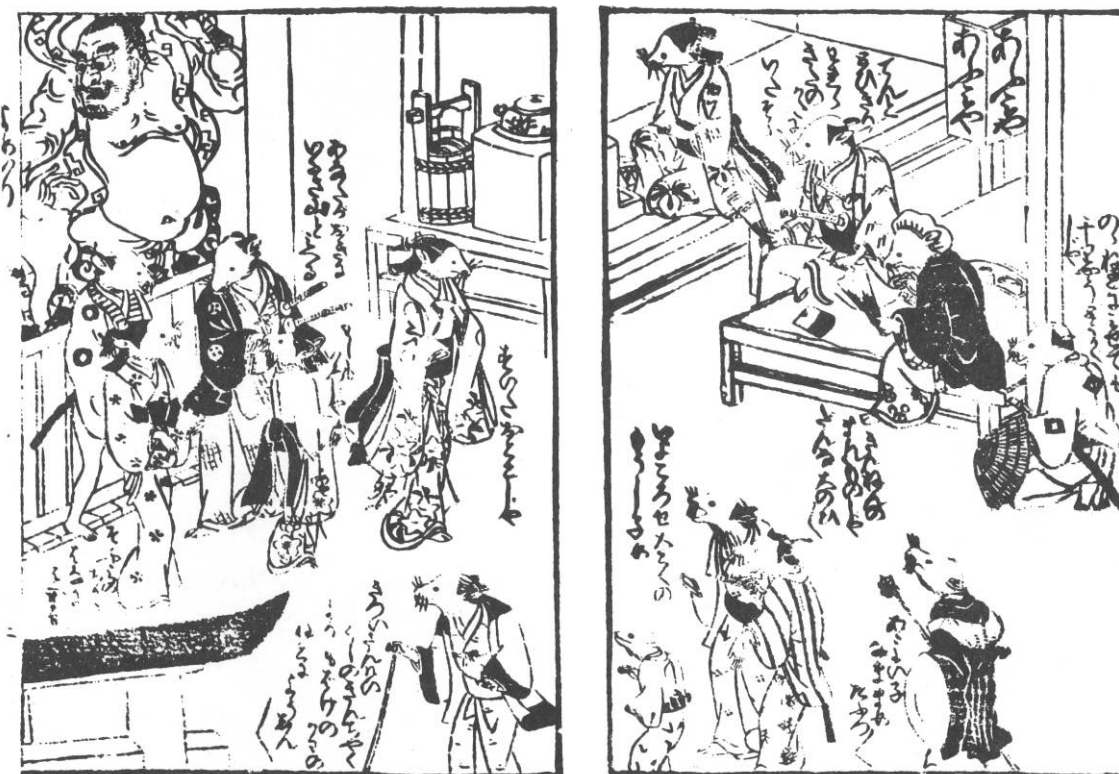
With the exception of *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, the translated picturebooks include little verbal narration. Instead of a linear narrative related in words, each story consists of a series of visual tableaux punctuated by speech or thoughts, which are written close to the speaking or thinking characters, as in comics. Such limited narration as accompanies these illustrations tends to appear at the top and to read from right to left. However, the speech given within the tableaux does not progress neatly from right to left or from top to bottom. The illustrated scenes may be seen first as a whole and then as an intricate web of roughly simultaneous visual and verbal content.

Many of the illustrations appeared in double-page spreads in the original picturebooks, where they were to be viewed across the center page breaks (Figure 18). However, the constraints of the dissertation form have necessitated placing what were double-page spreads on successive pages rather than facing pages. I have added captions that note the relative positions of the original pages. The translations proceed from right to left, beginning with the pages indicated at the end of each introduction. Readers of the electronic version of the dissertation may wish to print the translations to view the scenes in something like their original form.

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<sup>283</sup> See the chart in Chapter One for a sense of the original sizes in relation to other genres of picturebooks.





**Figure 18: From *The Rat Wedding* (*Nezumi no yomeiri*), translated in Chapter Four. In this double-page spread, all of the words represent speech or thought, except for the words on the sign in the upper right-hand corner. The scene may be viewed from right to left across the page divide in the center. But since everything is taking place at approximately the same time, the viewer is free to focus on any character or detail.**

Replacing the Japanese verbal text with English words involves a certain violence to the integrity of the original picturebooks. However, the nonlinear nature of the verbal text resists interpretation outside of the visual context. Translating the words as they appear within the illustrated scenes allows an approximation of the original reading experience that would not be possible if arrows were added to explain the pictures or if the dramatis personae were named in order to create a playscript.

### Chapter 3: The Value of Children in an Early Red Book

One of the earliest Japanese picturebooks to represent children at play is *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* (*Tadatoru yama no hototogisu* ただとる山のほととぎす, author and illustrator unknown, 1690s or early 1700s).<sup>284</sup> In this early “red book” (*akahon*) from the city of Edo, the protagonist is not a child but a wealthy patriarch, one old enough to have great-great-grandchildren but still healthy enough to climb trees. A reciprocal relationship of care for the children’s happiness on the part of the grandfather and exuberant appreciation and concern for the grandfather on the part of the children serves to inculcate in the reader a sense of filial piety and respect for elders even as the humor of the grandfather’s outlandish exploits is amusing and entertaining. Children’s play is one auspicious motif among others that help to communicate festive themes appropriate to the celebration of the New Year: prosperity, longevity, fecundity, and good fortune. However, children take on a value in this picturebook that is beyond that of the material blessings depicted. The prominence of children in both the narrative and the illustrations is unusual for a picturebook this early, and it is one reason that *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* has attracted the attention of Japanese scholars.<sup>285</sup> This chapter will compare *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* with related stories in other genres, revealing that the central focus on children in this picturebook is not essential to the events depicted but is rather an adaptation to the form of the red book and the interests of child readers.

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<sup>284</sup> For reproductions with annotated transcriptions, see *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, in Suzuki and Kimura, eds., *KKES, Edo hen*, 138-143; Kimura Yaeko, ed., *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, in *Kusazōshi-shū*, vol. 83 of *SNKBT* (Iwanami shoten, 1997), 9-16; Nihon koten bungakkai, ed. *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, vol. 2 of *Fukkoku koten Nihon bungakkan*, series 1 (Nihon koten bungaku kankōkai, Tosho geppan, Horupu shuppan, 1972).

<sup>285</sup> Kawato, ed., (*Zusetsu*) *Nihon no jidōsho yonhyakunen*, 43; Koike Fujigorō, “Shōnen bungaku no genryū to shite no kōzeibyōshi-bon, akahon, kurohon, aohon” (1953), in *Zasshi ronbun shū*, vol. 5 of Nakamura Masaaki, ed., *Kusazōshi kenkyū shiryō sōsho* (Kuresu shuppan, 2006), 468.

*Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* is episodic in nature, consisting of a series of tall tales about an archetypal wealthy old man. The events in the story took place long ago, as we are told both explicitly and by the use of the past-tense auxiliary verb *keri* at the end of each section of the story. A rich old man, his sons, daughters-in-law, and descendants all lived near the Hidden Village, the legendary home of the Seven Gods of Fortune. Even the man's name, Mantoku Chōja, suggests a prototypical wealthy patriarch. I have simplified the name by rendering it as "Max Profit Billionaire," though it is closer to "Billionaire Exceeding-in-Virtue/Profit." The old man delights his descendants: first by tossing them gold and silver from his personal money tree, then by catching live birds by the dozen for their amusement. The billionaire's last attempt to capture birds backfires when the birds, which he had fastened to his waistband, take flight and carry him out of sight. The birds drop the man in the middle of a party held by the Seven Gods of Fortune. The gods confront the man about his abuse of animals, but they forgive him because of his care for his grandchildren. At that point, the book abruptly ends.

### **An Early Red Book**

*Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* is not only the oldest of the picturebooks translated in this dissertation but also one of the oldest extant red books. As such, it has attracted more attention from Japanese scholars than have most Edo-period picturebooks for children.<sup>286</sup> This early work suggests the style of the picturebooks of the city of Edo prior to the influx of artistic talent that

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<sup>286</sup> In addition to the edited reproductions of the text listed above, the following works contain discussions of *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*: Katō Yasuko, "Tadatoru yama no hototogisu," in Sō no Kai, ed., *Kusazōshi jiten*, 188-189; Kawato, ed., (*Zusetsu*) *Nihon no jidōsho yonhyakunen*, 42-43; Kimura Yaeko, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi: akahon izen no bu*, 201-205; Kimura, *Kusazōshi no sekai*, 52-54; Mizutani Yumihiko (a.k.a. Mizutani Futō), *Kusazōshi to yomihon no kenkyū* (1934), in vol. 2 of *Kusazōshi kenkyū*, vol. 2 of Nakamura, ed., *Kusazōshi kenkyū shiryō sōsho*, 23-25; Seta, *Ochibo hiroi*, vol. 1, 85-86; Suzuki Jūzō (*Tōyō bunko zō*) *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu: kaidai*, supplement to *Nihon koten bungakkai*, ed. *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*.

occurred around the time of the Kyōhō Reforms (1716-1745), as discussed in Chapter One. The mingling of visual and verbal elements that characterizes later picturebooks is less evident here. Instead, the narrative and illustrations are clearly divided by a horizontal line, with the narrative above and the illustrations below. A black triangle marks the beginning of each section of the narrative, dividing the episodes. This device is unusual in picturebooks and, like the horizontal line dividing the page, is characteristic of early red books.<sup>287</sup> Only a few lines of speech within the illustrations bring the words and pictures together, such as when a child playing with birds on a string says, “It’s like a kite.”

The two extant copies of *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* seem to be incomplete. Each consists of one fascicle with ten illustrated pages, and each appears to be missing at least one page, since the last page includes one full illustration and the edge of another illustration. Scholars surmise that the missing page or pages depicted the gods sending the billionaire home with great treasure.<sup>288</sup> This reading fits the last remaining illustration, which shows the man bowing to the gods with a box of large coins and a large rice bale in front of him. The sliver of illustration in the upper left-hand corner that would have continued on the next page seems to show the man heading away with the bale on his back. The fact that both copies have the same pages suggests that they may be from a second or subsequent printing that omitted the final sheet of paper to cut costs or to exclude details about the original publisher.

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<sup>287</sup> (*Hi no shita kaisan*) *Meijin-zoroe: Hōka no nemoto* (日下開山) 名人ぞろえ：ほうかの根元 [(*Best Under the Sun*) *Line-up of Famous People: Origin of Performers*] (originally published by Fujita, late 17<sup>th</sup> c.), ed. Kimura Yaeko, in *Kusazōshi-shū*, 1-8; Mizutani, *Kusazōshi to yomihon no kenkyū*, 22, 23. Such divisions appear occasionally in later books; the 1762 *Verses for Schoolchildren* translated in Chapter Six is one example.

<sup>288</sup> Katō, “*Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*,” 188-189; Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 202; Kimura, ed., *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, 10, 16; Suzuki, (*Tōyō bunko zō*) *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu kaidai*, 4, 7-8. Mizutani suggests that there were probably two fascicles (most extant red books having ten pages per fascicle, as does *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* in its current form), but the more recent scholarship above allows or favors the possibility that there was only one volume. Mizutani, *Kusazōshi to yomihon no kenkyū*, 23.

Given the texts as they exist now, there is only sparse evidence to tie *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* to a particular illustrator and year of publication.<sup>289</sup> Previous owners of the copy held by the Tōyō Bunko wrote inside and outside the covers, both front and back. The most relevant information in these handwritten notes is that the book was first published for the New Year in the seventh year of Genroku (1694) and that this was over 120 years prior to the eleventh year of Bunka (1812), presumably the year that that particular note was made. One of the book's owners, by the name of Kayano, also asked that the book be returned quickly; it may have been rented to others.<sup>290</sup> Based on the auspicious content and the page layout, it is likely that the book was published for the New Year in or before the early eighteenth century, but the date and the attribution to an illustrator are inconclusive.<sup>291</sup>

### **An Auspicious Picturebook for the New Year**

Giving picturebooks to children for the New Year had gained the status of tradition by the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>292</sup> Publishers and illustrators helped to promote their picturebooks by including content appropriate for the festive season, such as felicitous imagery and happy endings. In addition, the red color of the covers that lend “red books” their name was thought to possess protective qualities. For that reason, pictures and picturebooks designed for

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<sup>289</sup> Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 201. According to Kimura, the records of the Iwasaki Bunko attribute the illustrations to the ukiyoe artist Hishikawa Moronobu 菱川師宣 (d. 1694), although neither of the extant books contains this information.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>291</sup> Katō, “*Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*,” 188-189; Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 201, 202.

<sup>292</sup> The practice is discussed further in the first two chapters as well as in the following: Katō Yasuko, “Akahon: an Introduction,” 359; Kimbrough, “Murasaki Shikibu for Children,” 2; Yamada, *Hōryaku genrai shū I*, 61.

giving to children with smallpox were still printed in red ink long after the early red books were displaced by black books and blue books.<sup>293</sup>

As a festive work for the New Year, the picturebook includes a combination of seasonal and auspicious elements that would have been familiar to many readers and would have served to introduce such elements to the youngest viewers. Woodblock-printed New Year's picturebooks were similar in that respect to Christmas songs today that tend to include seasonal markers such as bells, snow, toys, or reindeer, even if they do not identify the holiday by name. Seasonal or festive markers in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* include prosperity, longevity, the Seven Gods of Fortune, pine trees, snow, a rich man, children, the chasing of birds, a money tree, a form of the word *medetai* (auspicious or happy), and a *tai* (bream), a fish with a name that recalls *medetai*. Additional festive or auspicious signs in other picturebooks included white rats, flowering plum trees, cranes, and peaches. The abundance of symbols of good fortune in picturebooks such as *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* reflects the hope that the events of the whole year might echo the manner in which the beginning of the year was spent. Thus, in addition to the historical context, there is internal evidence to suggest that *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* would have had a place in New Year's celebrations as a gift for children or an appropriate reading to start the year auspiciously.

The festive spirit of *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* begins with an illustrated frontispiece that foreshadows the appearance of the Seven Gods of Fortune. The surviving illustration is unfortunately effaced in places, but it features Daikoku—one of the Gods of Fortune—watching

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<sup>293</sup> Hanasaki Kazuo, *Hōsō ehon shū*, Taihei bunko 3 (Taihei shooku, 1981); Kern, *Manga from the Floating World*, 333-334; Rebecca Salter, *Japanese Popular Prints: from Votive Slips to Playing Cards*, A Latitude 20 Book (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 120-122; Seta, *Ochibo hiroi*, vol. 2, p. 32.

a dance performed by what appears to be an anthropomorphized animal, probably a rat.<sup>294</sup>

Daikoku appears again with the rest of the Seven Gods of Fortune in the final two scenes. If the frontispiece and the first illustration—featuring a money tree—were not promising enough, the appearance of the Seven Gods of Fortune near the end of the picturebook is a clear sign that there will be a happy ending.

The Seven Gods of Fortune are associated with children and youthful play in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, as in other eighteenth century picturebooks. These gods are more interested in games and feasting than in education, moral or otherwise. Generous rather than demanding, they bring such blessings as effortless prosperity, long life, and healthy, happy male children.<sup>295</sup> An example of their generosity to a billionaire like the one in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* is found in the final scene of *Amusements of the Gods of Fortune* (*Fukujin asobi* 福神あそび, ill. Nishimura Shigenobu, eighteenth century). There a billionaire and his wife face their children and servants, and they “rejoice to receive treasures from the Gods of Fortune” (Figure 19). New Year’s decorations in the foreground and a design of pine branches—symbolizing longevity—on the screen in the background complete the scene of celebration and abundance.<sup>296</sup> This image of a billionaire family blessed by the Gods of Fortune could almost be a missing scene from *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*. Like *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, *Amusements of the Gods of Fortune* distinguishes between children and adults by indicating ages and roles within the family as well as by depicting children as visually distinct from adults in size, clothing and hairstyle. Both

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<sup>294</sup> Kimura Yaeko, *Akahan kurohon aohon shoshi*, 201-202. The frontispiece survives only on the copy in the Tōyō Bunko, reproduced in the translation below.

<sup>295</sup> Other picturebook appearances of the Seven Gods of Fortune include: *Ehon Fukujin kodomo asobi*, in *KKES, Kamigata hen*, 200-208; Nishimura Shigenobu, ill. *Fukujin asobi*, 162-172. Shigenobu also illustrated *The Rat Wedding*, which is translated in Chapter Four.

<sup>296</sup> Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., *Fukujin asobi*, 172.



Figure 19: "Mr. & Mrs. Max Fortune Billionaire" (*Man fuku chōja fūfu*) in *Amusements of the Gods of Fortune*



picturebooks demonstrate a clear concept of children as distinct from adults. The presence of the Gods of Fortune at the end of *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* makes the picturebook highly appropriate for the New Year while at the same time affirming the images of playful children earlier in the book.

**“To cheer your grandchildren” (*mago-domo o nagusamen tame*)<sup>297</sup>**

In their interactions with Max Profit Billionaire, the Seven Gods of Fortune highlight the value of children, implicit in earlier scenes, by weighing the virtue of caring for children against the crime of killing animals. The Gods of Fortune initially react negatively to the billionaire, a fact that is surprising given the typically cheerful dispositions of the Gods of Fortune and their consistently felicitous associations in picturebooks. They are upset to have their party interrupted. Moreover, they accuse the billionaire of a major offense against Buddhist doctrine: he "is fond of taking lives needlessly." Indeed, Max Profit Billionaire would be responsible for many deaths if the fish and all of the 120 to 150 birds mentioned in the story died—the narrative does not dwell on their fate.

The accusation that the Gods of Fortune make against the billionaire protagonist relates to the injunctions against harm to living creatures that were in effect during or immediately before the time the picturebook was published. *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* might be dated as early as 1694 or as late as the first decade of the eighteenth century.<sup>298</sup> In either case, the book was probably published during the Shōgun Tokugawa Tsunayoshi's strict prohibition of harm to animals. Tsunayoshi issued the first of his "orders of mercy toward living things" (*shōru*

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<sup>297</sup> Kimura, ed., *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, 16.

<sup>298</sup> Kimura, ed., *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, 10; Suzuki, (*Tōyō bunko zō*) *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu: kaidai*, 7.

*awaremi no rei* 生類憐みの令) in 1685. This and subsequent related rules remained in effect through Tsunayoshi's death in 1709.<sup>299</sup> The timing raises the possibility that the book may suggest either a popular reaction to that prohibition or an attempt to rehabilitate an earlier story by appending a contemporary moral: the billionaire promises never to kill again.

True to their tolerant natures, the Gods of Fortune pardon the rich man. The stated logic behind the gods' forgiveness is curious but also revealing of their priorities. The gods explain that the man's faults are mitigated by the fact that he killed in order to "cheer" or "comfort" his grandchildren (*mago-domo o nagusamen tame*). Here, the family ties so critical in Confucianism trump the Buddhist aversion to the taking of life. One might expect lenience for feeding the children or protecting them, but here it is amusing children that is raised to a moral virtue.

The happiness of children affirmed as a key value in this picturebook suits the red book's role as children's literature, but it does not necessarily reflect a widespread tolerance or indulgence in society as a whole. The mercy the Gods of Fortune show the billionaire in consideration of his affection for his children does not seem to have been typical of this time when a person who accidentally killed a dog or cat might meet with capital punishment.<sup>300</sup> Thus, a key aspect of the picturebook's felicitous fantasy is the benevolence it attributes to authority, from the words "Happy is your reign!" on the cover to the generosity of the patriarch and the mercy of the gods.

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<sup>299</sup> Donald H. Shively, "Chikamatsu's Satire on the Dog Shogun," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 18.1/2 (1955): 161-162; Tsukamoto Manabu, "Shōrui awaremi no rei," *Heibonsha's World Encyclopedia* (rev. ed. 2007), 579-580.

<sup>300</sup> Shively, "Chikamatsu's Satire on the Dog Shogun," 162.

## The Billionaire as Patriarch

In *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, the great value of children does not apply equally to boys and girls. Among the first signs of the old man's good fortune in the verbal text are his five sons. However, the billionaire's treasures do not include daughters. Similarly, the image of the billionaire's family in *Amusements of the Gods of Fortune* identifies only one of the four children as a daughter (Figure 19). Both sons and daughters could be counted among the blessings of a rich man for the gaiety of their play and for their appreciation of the man's wit and material bounty. But it is the sons' ability to continue the household that ensures a form of immortality to the patriarch without which "the seven jewels and ten thousand treasures" the man possessed would be forgotten. Outside of the world of the picturebook, a preference for boys is also apparent in evidence of sex-selective infanticide practiced during this time period in eastern Japan.<sup>301</sup> Daughters were more often victims of infanticide than were sons.<sup>302</sup> *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* is a product of its time in the respect that, though positive in its depiction of children, it is not neutral with regard to their gender.

The sons and grandchildren who are symbols of good fortune in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* remain subordinate characters to the rich old man. Each of the first four scenes depicts the old man's actions on behalf of his appreciative children and grandchildren. Child protagonists may be found in other picturebooks of the eighteenth century, but these children tend to act in the absence of a strong patriarchal figure. This is the case for the young Lady Bowl-on-head (*Hachikazuki hime*) who leaves home only after her stepmother turns her father against her. Likewise, the boy hero Kintarō acts in the absence of a father or other male head of household,

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<sup>301</sup> Drixler, "Infanticide and Fertility in Eastern Japan: Discourse and Demography, 1660-1880," 416-426.

<sup>302</sup> Drixler estimates that at least 9.9% of girls were killed and that the rate of infanticide may well have reached 2.8% of boys and 12.6% of girls. *Ibid.*, 418.

and Momotarō brings his parents out of poverty by his adventures.<sup>303</sup> Such children emerge as actors at around the same time as their departure from home, signaling the beginning of their transition to an adult role and, eventually, to a stronger position within the family. The relative passivity of the children in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* reflects the strength, longevity, and prosperity of the rich old man; there is no need for another strong figure to emerge from among his descendants.

In *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, the depiction of sons as objects of affection rather than subjects in their own right keeps the focus on the patriarch. The sons and grandchildren act merely as happy recipients of their grandfather's generosity. The children's lack of agency is particularly evident when the grandfather is taken up into the sky; the children can only look up in dismay and exclaim, "Where are they taking Grandfather?" This helplessness is a function not only of their age but also of their position within the family. Adult children and young boys and girls are similarly positioned in the illustrations, and all rely on the patriarch to act on their behalf. A slightly later picturebook, *Five Hundred Eighty-seven Twists* (*Gohyaku hachijū nana magari* 五百八十七曲) foregrounds this conflation of childhood with a weak position within the family by depicting a father and sons who are all hundreds of years old. The father's prerogatives as head of household do not disappear when his sons reach adulthood.<sup>304</sup>

*Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* encourages children's play even as it communicates a patriarchal worldview. Although children do not effect change or take major action in the picturebook, the artist does not show them as silent or still. Visual suggestions of energetic arguments over the children's living playthings give a sense of vitality, health, and excitement. Moreover, insofar as

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<sup>303</sup> *Kintoki osana dachi*, 74-84; Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., (*Saihan*) *Momotarō mukashi gatari*, vol. 1, 57-67.

<sup>304</sup> *Gohyaku hachijū nana magari* (author unknown, eighteenth century), in *KKES, Edo hen*, 144-155.

the children's play gives their grandfather joy, it is not incompatible with Confucian examples of filial piety.<sup>305</sup>

### Tall Tales or Child-centered Picturebook?

As central as children are to *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, most of the events that take place in the story could be retold without them, as can be seen in comparison with related stories that do not include children. Prior scholarship on *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* has noted the billionaire's accidental flight with ducks and its similarity to adventures attributed to Baron Münchhausen (1720-1797) and to Japanese folk tales like "Gombei the Duck Hunter" (*Kamo-tori Gombei*).<sup>306</sup> In addition, two "yellow books" (*kibyōshi*) for adults include episodes similar to those in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis: A Record of Manpachi's Many Lies* (*Uso happyaku manpachi den* 嘘八百万八伝, 1780) and *A Book of Lots of Lies About a Goose Hunter* (*Uso shikkari gan tori chō* 嘘多雁取帳, 1783).<sup>307</sup> The reference to lies in the yellow-book titles emphasize the "tall tale" aspect of their

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<sup>305</sup> The value placed on bringing joy to elderly parents by playing like a child can be seen in the story of Lao Laizi, one of the twenty-four filial children whose stories were a mainstay of early education in this period. Guo Jiu-jing, *The Twenty-four Filial Exemplars*, 90-91; Knapp, *Selfless Offspring*, 149-151; cf. Emura Hokkai, *Jugyō hen*, in vol. 2 of *Kosodate no sho*, 148.

<sup>306</sup> Katō, "Tadatoru yama no hototogisu," 189; Kawato, ed., (*Zusetsu*) *Nihon no jidōsho yonhyakunen*, 42-43; Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 202; Suzuki, (*Tōyō bunko zō*) *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu kaidai*, 5-7; cf. [R. E. Raspe], *The Travels and Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, ill. Alfred Crowquill, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Trübner and Company, 1859), in "Google Books" (accessed February 7, 2012).

<sup>307</sup> Suzuki, (*Tōyō bunko zō*) *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu kaidai*, 8-9; cf. Yomoya Hontarō, *Uso happyaku Manpachi den*, 3 vols. (Edo: Tsutaya, 1780), in Hamada Giichirō, ed., "Kibyōshi," in *Kibyōshi senryū kyōka*, vol. 46 of *Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* (Shogakkan, 1971), 87-103; Namakeno Bakahito (a.k.a. Shimizu Enjū) and ill. Kitagawa Utamaro, (*Migi no tōri tashika ni*) *Uso shikkari gan tori chō* (Edo: Tsutaya, 1783), in Sasakawa Rinpū, ed., *Sharebon kusazōshi shū*, vol. 8 of *Hyōshaku Edo bungaku sōsho* (Dai Nihon yūbenkai kōdansha, 1936), 81-98.

stories, something they share with the 1785 tale of Baron Münchhausen and its later accretions.<sup>308</sup> None of these stories includes children in a significant way.

Some early scholarship on *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* emphasized its similarity to the Baron Münchhausen stories. But there is still little proof of a common origin for the two stories or of influence from Japan on tales about Baron Münchhausen.<sup>309</sup> In the part of Baron Münchhausen's adventures that seems most similar to *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, the Baron climbs a high tower and throws a rock down, accidentally disturbing a giant eagle that soars up and carries the Baron away on a trip around the world.<sup>310</sup> The occasion for the flight is different—the Baron makes no attempt to catch the eagle—though the effect of taking the man to unseen places is similar. In an earlier episode, the Baron kills over a hundred ducks with one shot.<sup>311</sup> These kinds of outlandish adventures involving birds bear some similarities to events in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, but the overall import of the two tales is different. While Max Profit Billionaire of *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* is at every point motivated by concern for his children and grandchildren, Baron Münchhausen is a proud and solitary wanderer.

Yellow books for adults with episodes adapted from *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* or similar sources include fantastic methods for catching birds but leave out children. For example, *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* and *A Record of Manpachi's Many Lies* both depict a method of catching little birds by painting one's hand black and holding out rice as bait. In the former case, the billionaire's actions are related in the third person as a story of how the man caught birds for his

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<sup>308</sup> Raspe, *The Travels and Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen*; Suzuki, (*Tōyō bunko zō*) *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu kaidai*, 5-6.

<sup>309</sup> Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 202-203; Suzuki, (*Tōyō bunko zō*) *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu kaidai*, 6-7; cf. Fujii Otoo, *Edo bungaku kenkyū* (Kyoto: Naigai shuppan, 1921, 1930), 451-460.

<sup>310</sup> Raspe, *The Travels and Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, 91-101. The episode is marked "Supplement;" it does not appear in the earliest editions of the tales.

<sup>311</sup> Raspe, *The Travels and Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, 12.

grandchildren by painting his hand black and holding out rice. The children are more prominent than the billionaire in the illustration (Figure 20). The latter yellow book presents Manpachi—whose name means “liar”—explaining his own method of catching birds, “Manpachi says, ‘To catch little birds. . . .’<sup>312</sup> It involves hiding in a hollow bale of hay, painting his hand with ink, and putting out his hand with rice (see the hands protruding from the bale on the right in Figure 21). He grabs the birds when they come to eat and pulls them into the bale. Additional examples of events that appear in both *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* and a later yellow book are discussed in the annotations following the translation. This shift in emphasis from the children as motivation for the protagonist’s adventures to the unbelievable events themselves highlights the difference in expected audience between *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* as children’s literature and *A Record of Manpachi’s Many Lies* as a comicbook for adults.

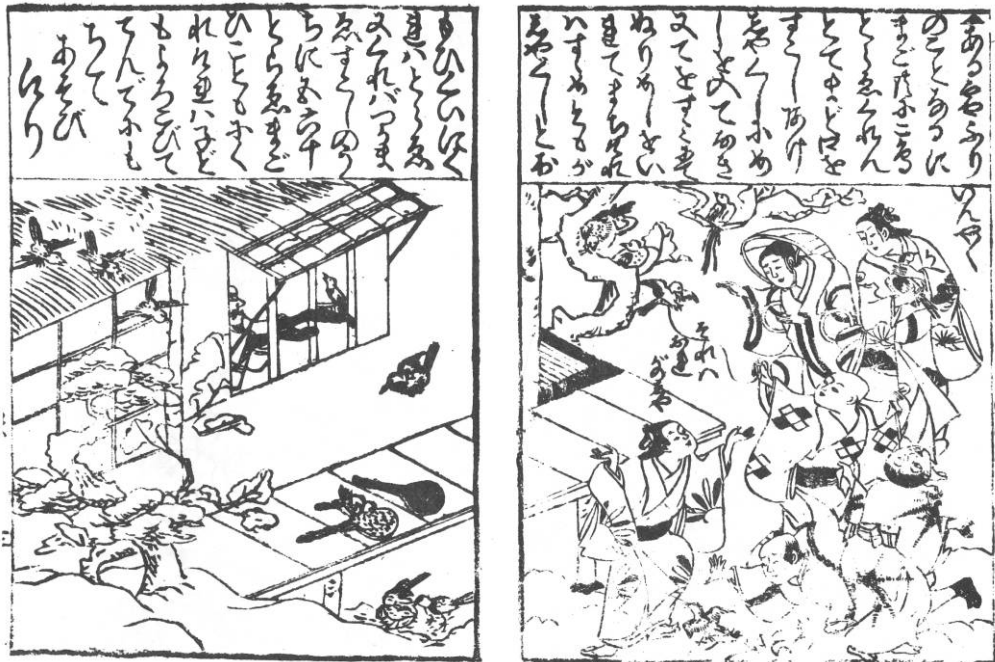


Figure 20: “Once, during a snowfall, Billionaire told his grandchildren that he’d catch little birds for them. . . .” (*Aru yuki furi no koto naru ni, mago-domo ni kotori torae kuren to te . . .*)<sup>313</sup>

<sup>312</sup> Yomoya, *Uso happyaku Manpachi den*, 92.

<sup>313</sup> *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 140.



Figure 21: “Manpachi says, ‘To catch little birds . . .’” (*Manpachi ga iwaku kotori o toru nite*)<sup>314</sup>

### Yahyōe the Rat as a Possible Source for *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*

Whereas the aforementioned yellow books of tall tales do not share the auspicious motifs and concern for children found in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, such elements are essential to a closely related story that has been overlooked in prior scholarship on picturebooks: *Yahyōe the Rat* (*Yahyōe nezumi emaki* 弥兵衛鼠絵巻, seventeenth century or earlier). This illustrated scroll relates a tale of a rat spirited away by a goose but saved with the help of Daikoku, one of the Seven Gods of Fortune.<sup>315</sup> Like Rapunzel’s father, Yahyōe runs into trouble when he attempts to satisfy his pregnant wife’s desperate craving for a specific food, in this case, meat from the right wing of a goose. Yahyōe accidentally flies away with a goose as it migrates to the North (Figure

<sup>314</sup> Yomoya, *Usō happyaku Manpachi den*, 92.

<sup>315</sup> *Yahyōe nezumi emaki*, in Matsumoto Ryūshin, ed., *Otogizōshi shū*, vol. 34 of *Shinchō Nihon koten bungaku shūsei* (Shinchōsha, 1980), 329-366.



22). As Yahyōe flies off, he calls out to Daikoku in his distress. Yahyōe eventually finds himself thrust into a drinking party of humans who see the white rat as a bearer of good fortune and a sign from the god Daikoku. The similar accidental flight, the importance of one of the Gods of Fortune, and the emphasis on good fortune and large numbers of descendants all suggest *Yahyōe the Rat* as a possible source for or influence on *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*.



Figure 22: Yahyōe accidentally flies off with a goose in *Yahyōe the Rat*<sup>316</sup>

The pursuit of birds and the accidental flights are tied to the patriarchs' descendants in both stories. In *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, the billionaire successfully catches birds for his grandchildren twice before ducks carry him away on his third attempt, and the gods pardon him because he acted on behalf of the children. In *Yahyōe the Rat*, the connection between the rat's adventures and his child is more tenuous but nonetheless explicitly stated. Yahyōe blames his flight and exile on his youngest son, with whom his wife was pregnant when she began craving goose meat.<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> *Yahyoe the Mouse*, in "Naraehon Digital Database" (Keio University Humi Project, 2003), <http://dbs.humi.keio.ac.jp/naraehon/ehon/index2-e.asp?ID=KL033&FRAME=False> (accessed December 20, 2010). *Nezumi* may refer to either a rat or, as it is translated in the "Naraehon Digital Database," a mouse. However, I believe that the animals' size and their association with Daikoku make "rat" a better translation in this case.

<sup>317</sup> *Yahyōe nezumi emaki*, 360.

In *Yahyōe the Rat*, as in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, children embody the protagonist's good fortune and prosperity. Both Yahyōe and his human counterpart are wealthy from the outset and become many times wealthier under Daikoku's patronage. The final description of Yahyōe's situation emphasizes his many descendants:

Well, Lord Yahyōe eventually had many children, and they took bridegrooms and brides. They built warehouses upon warehouses in all directions. They added ridgepoles and lined up gates. They prospered and flourished. Grandchildren and great-grandchildren and great-great-great-great-great-great-grandchildren and their descendants were born and spread such that there was no one in any province who would not choose a tie with Lord Yahyōe. The branches sprouted tips, so the members of the clan became difficult to count. Therefore, it is said that the phrase, "An only child holds sway in the land," began at this time because Lord Yahyōe's wife was the only child of Lord Shōgen.<sup>318</sup>

Yahyōe's wealth and power show in the way his family spreads through all the provinces. This spread of influence honors not only Yahyōe and his wife but also Yahyōe's father-in-law, who lacks a son. The ability of Yahyōe's descendants to make alliances through marriage further shows the strength of the family. In the brief space of *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, the strength and number of the rich man's descendants are described more simply but to similar effect. Max Profit Billionaire "had five sons, and he took a wife for each. Grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren, all in good health, prospered gloriously." Thus, the stories are alike in their concern for grandchildren and in their auspicious resolutions as well as in the inclusion of a fateful flight.

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<sup>318</sup> *Yahyōe nezumi emaki*, 364-365. The editor notes that the story about the wife is a false etymology for a phrase that usually refers to the selfish nature of an only child, note 10 on p. 365.

### **Translation of *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* (*Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*)**

In short, *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* can be read as an auspicious tale for the New Year that highlights the value of children while focusing on the actions of an old man. The emphasis on children in this early red book is missing in later yellow books that include similar events but present them for a more sophisticated adult audience. The picturebook includes source material from an earlier illustrated scroll, *Yahyōe the Rat*, as well as from other sources, some of which are identified in the annotations that follow. This material was adapted for a child audience by distilling the story into a short but heavily illustrated form, placing children prominently on each page, and giving the Seven Gods of Fortune a central role in the resolution of the story. This resolution, which gives concern for children a higher priority than the protection of animals required by Buddhist law and government decree, suggests that the historical and political realities of the time entered even into children's literature.

The translation of *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* follows this introduction, beginning at page 149. It proceeds from right to left, ending at page 139. Annotations follow the translation, beginning on page 150. The present translation and annotations rely heavily on three editions annotated by Japanese scholars.<sup>319</sup> I benefited from additional commentary in Japanese in *Kusazōshi jiten* (Encyclopedia of Edo Comicbooks) and *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi* (Bibliography of Red Books, Black Books, and Blue Books).<sup>320</sup>

The illustrations that follow are taken from the reproductions in *Kinsei kodomo no ehon-shū, Edo hen* (Anthology of Early Modern Children's Picturebooks, Edo Volume), and the

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<sup>319</sup> *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 138-143, summary p. 492; Kimura, ed., *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, in *Kusazōshi-shū*, 9-16; Nihon koten bungakkai, ed. *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*.

<sup>320</sup> Katō, "Tadatoru yama no hototogisu," 188-189; Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 61, 201-205.

frontispiece is from a reproduction edited by Nihon Koten Bungakkai (Society for Japanese Classical Literature).<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 138-143; Nihon Koten Bungakkai, ed. *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*. In addition to the copy in the Tōyō bunko, which is reproduced here, one other copy exists in the Daitōkyū kinen bunko. Suzuki, (*Tōyō bunko zō*) *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu kaidai*, 10.

▲ By and by, the Gods of Fortune summoned Billionaire.  
"Although one could say that you are fond of taking lives needlessly, this was not exactly 'the destruction of life.' Since you killed in order to cheer your grandchildren, we pardon the offense ..."



*I shall  
never kill  
again.*

Figure 23: *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* §6

Without panicking at all, he took Billionaire's hand and asked, "You! What sort of person are you to interrupt the enjoyment of the drinking place of these worthies? Explain yourself, stranger!" So Billionaire told him what had happened.



Figure 23 (continued): *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* §5 left

▲ Here, the Seven Gods of Fortune are gathered in the Hidden Village. When Billionaire fell right in the middle of the drinking party, the Gods of Fortune were surprised and raised a ruckus. Among them, Bishamonten was the strongest.



Figure 23 (continued): *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* §5 right

his waistband. More ducks came and got caught. After taking twenty or thirty, Billionaire climbed up a hill. The ducks all flapped their wings at once and rose up, causing Billionaire to be taken up into the sky. He went up toward the void.



*What's this?!*

*Oh, no! Where are they taking Grandfather?*

Figure 23 (continued): *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* §4 left



▲ Another time, Billionaire went to a stream where there were many ducks. First he sent gourds down the stream, so the ducks drew near. Afterward he went and put a gourd over his head, making the ducks think that he was a gourd. The ducks took one spot after another, and Billionaire caught them in



Figure 23 (continued): *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* §4 right

sparrow came to eat, and he caught it. When another came to eat, he caught it, too. In a little while, Billionaire had caught fifty or sixty birds. When Billionaire gave the birds to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, the children were very happy. Everyone held the birds and played with them.



Figure 23 (continued): *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* §3 left

▲ Once, during a snowfall, Billionaire told his grandchildren that he'd catch little birds for them. He opened the window a little bit and put rice out in a scoop. Then, he painted his hand with black ink. When he put rice in his hand and waited, the sparrows thought it was a scoop. A



Figure 23 (continued): *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* §3 right

marsh, where there were many herons. Billionaire attached loach to long strings and threw them in, so the herons ate the loach and pooped them out. Then, those same fish were eaten again by other herons, who excreted them again. Billionaire caught fifty or sixty herons at once and had his grandchildren take them.



Figure 23 (continued): *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* §2 left

prospered gloriously. Furthermore, Mr. Billionaire's greatest treasure was a tree that grew gold and silver. Billionaire always gathered his grandchildren and climbed up to the top of the tree. He plucked gold and silver and amused his grandchildren by having them pick up the money.

▲ One time, Billionaire took his grandchildren to a



Figure 23 (continued): *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* §2 right

▲ Long, long ago, in the vicinity of the Hidden Village, there was a man called Max Profit Billionaire. He lacked none of the seven jewels and ten thousand treasures. Mr. Billionaire had five sons, and he took a wife for each. Grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren, all in good health,



Figure 23 (continued): *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* §1

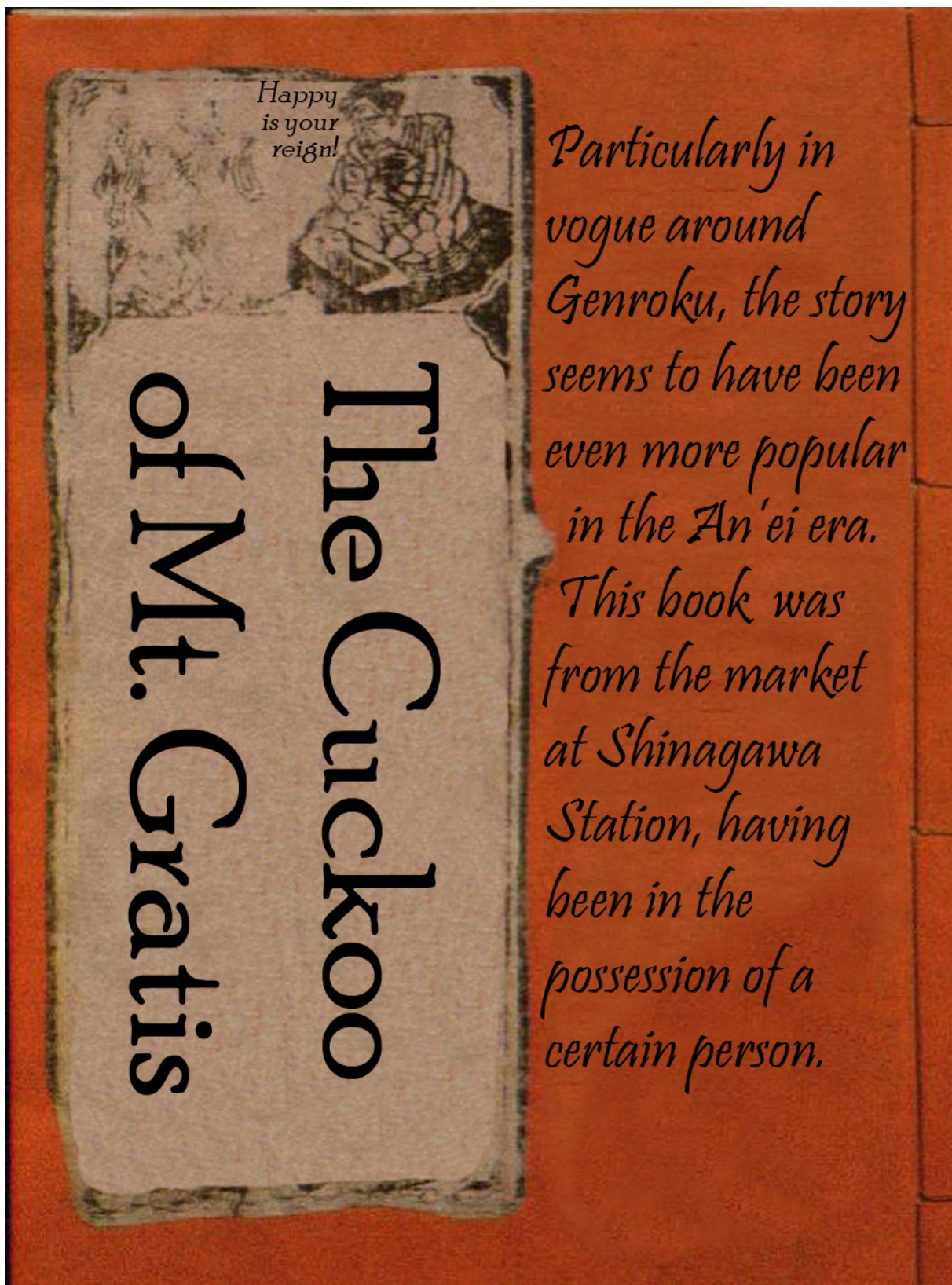


Figure 23 (continued): *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, cover

## Annotations to *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*

### Cover

The partially effaced image at the top of the frontispiece shows Daikoku, one of the Seven Gods of Fortune, along with what appear to be anthropomorphized animals. One animal pulls the low cart on which Daikoku is seated, while the other one performs. Given the felicitous context, the figures are mostly likely rats—messengers of Daikoku and auspicious symbols in their own right.<sup>322</sup>

The handwritten note on the cover mentions that the story was popular in the Genroku era (1688-1704) as well as in the An'ei era (1772-1781). Specifically the mention of the An'ei era may be a reference to two yellow books, one published in An'ei and another published shortly thereafter, both of which include events similar to those in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis: A Record of Manpachi's Many Lies* (1780) and *A Book of Lots of Lies About a Goose Hunter* (1783).<sup>323</sup>

### § 1

[Picture] Perched in a tree on which gold nuggets and silver or gold coins are growing, Mr. Billionaire throws money to his delighted children and grandchildren. One of the billionaire's sons is pictured together with his wife at lower right while four grandchildren busy themselves with coins on the left. One child rakes up coins, while others gather armfuls of coins. The old man has a beard and a soft hat, both of which suggest wealth and good fortune by recalling the appearance of Daikoku.

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<sup>322</sup> Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 201-202.

<sup>323</sup> Mizutani, *Kusazōshi to yomihon no kenkyū*, 24-25; Namakeno, *Usō shikkari gan tori chō*; Seta, *Ochibo hiroi*, vol. 1, 85-86; Yomoya, *Usō happyaku Manpachi den*.



The adult woman, far right, has her hair tied up, and she wears a short-sleeved kimono. The man in the lower right corner has his forehead and crown shaved, but the hair on the sides of his head is intact, as was typical of an adult male at this time. Small size and distinctive hairstyles distinguish the four children on the left from the adults. One child has a shaved head, two children have short hair that has not been shaved or tied up, and the fourth child has a pigtail in the middle of an otherwise shaved head.

The money tree was a motif characteristic of Chinese woodblock prints produced at the New Year during this period (Figure 24 and Figure 25). Its presence in Japanese woodblock-printed picturebooks published at the New Year raises questions of influence that could prove fertile ground for future research that might suggest a Chinese origin for the pictures in this and other red books or, more broadly, for the practice of giving woodblock-printed media on auspicious themes to children as part of New Year's celebrations.

**Hidden Village** (*kakure-zato* 隠れ里). The legendary home of the Seven Gods of Fortune.<sup>324</sup>

**Max Profit Billionaire** (*Mantoku Chōja* 万とく長者). *Man* is literally "ten thousand," and *toku* could be "virtue," "gain," or "profit." *Chōja* is a term used to describe a very wealthy man, one with unimaginable resources. *Chōja* has been translated as "millionaire" since at least the early twentieth century, but inflation warrants a shift to "billionaire."

**seven jewels and ten thousand treasures** (*shicchin manpō* 七珍万宝). In the Buddhist tradition, the seven jewels were gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, a particular kind of clamshell, coral, and agate. Ten thousand suggests something that is countless or limitless.<sup>325</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> For other picturebook depictions, see *Kakure sato fukujin no yomeiri*, ed. Katō Yasuko, in vol. 3 of *EEH*, 25-43; Torii Kiyonaga, ill., *Senshūroku nezumi no yomeiri*, 389.

<sup>325</sup> Later in the eighteenth century, the phrase was adopted as an artistic name by a yellow-book author also known as Shinra Manzō II (森羅万象, 1762-1831), a disciple of Morishima Chūryō 森島中良 (also known as Shinra



Figure 24 (left): Qing Dynasty (1644-1912) Chinese print of money tree with children<sup>326</sup>  
 Figure 25 (right): Qing Dynasty Chinese print of money tree with Taoist immortals<sup>327</sup>

## § 2

[Picture] Mr. Billionaire catches herons with **loach** (*sagi*), a freshwater fish native to Japan, as bait. The fish are not pictured. On these pages, the narration does not correspond with the picture until the triangle marks a new section of the story. In the illustration, size, costume, and hairstyle again distinguish the generations. The beard and hat mark the grandfather's age and prosperity, but otherwise the old man appears to be young and vigorous as he pulls herons from the river on strings. On the left, children admire herons, and a young woman with her hair up bears a baby with shaved head and tiny features on her back.

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Manzō I). William David Fleming, "Morishima Chūryō (1756-1810) and the Development of Late Edo Fiction" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2011), 180.

<sup>326</sup> Wang Shucun, *Zhongguo nian hua shi* (Beijing: Beijing gong yi mei shu chu ban she, 2002), 137.

<sup>327</sup> Bo Songnian, *Zhongguo nian hua yi shu shi* (Changsha: Hunan mei shu chu ban she, 2008), 62.

A variation on the grandfather's strange method of catching birds is included in *A Record of Manpachi's Many Lies*. Manpachi's method of catching pigeons involves tying a soybean to a string and painting the bean with a laxative medicine. One after another the pigeons eat the bean until they resemble a string of prayer beads (*juzu*).<sup>328</sup>

### § 3

**[Picture]** A group of children and young adults (right) play with sparrows caught by the grandfather, who is looking out from the window (left).

A scoop full of seed and one empty scoop lie on the veranda below the window where the grandfather is catching a bird. Birds are scattered throughout the illustration: descending from the upper left, gathered around the scoops and fallen seed, on the ground near the children, and perched in a tree to the right of the house. Though the children argue over the birds, there are more than enough birds for all. These playthings are natural in origin and, appropriately enough given the title, “free for the taking.”

One of the figures in the upper right-hand corner wears a hat that appears to be woven. Such hats were typical for New Year's performers of *torioi*—a ritual chasing away of birds.<sup>329</sup> Whereas the series of episodes of catching birds might appear to be unrelated to the auspicious seasonal themes and motifs of the rest of the book, an Edo-period Japanese reader would have associated chasing away birds (*torioi* 鳥追) with agricultural success and with the New Year festivities. The purpose was to ensure a good harvest for the year by keeping birds away from seeds and crops. The word *torioi*, which suggests driving birds away rather than catching them,

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<sup>328</sup> Yomoya, *Uso happyaku Manpachi den*, 94.

<sup>329</sup> Ikeda Sumiko, “Torioi,” in Shin'nen vol. of *Kadokawa haiku dai-saijiki* (Kadokawa gakugei shuppan, 2006), 261; Kitagawa, vol. 23 of *Ruijū kinsei fūzoku shi*, 235.

does not appear in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*. However, the concept of claiming the bounty of nature by controlling birds is implicit in *torioi* as it is in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, and a billionaire (*chōja*) is central to stories of the origin of *torioi*. *Torioi* ritualized into song and dance were performed by children or by female performers during the New Year season when children's picturebooks were sold.<sup>330</sup>

The performance of *torioi* at New Year's appears in another early picturebook, appropriately titled *Bird Chasers (Torioi とりをひ, 1723)*. In this "doll book" (*hiinabon*), *torioi* performers in large straw hats visit the home of a billionaire, where they sing to the accompaniment of a samisen and beat the time with folded fans. As the performers sing, "With prosperity and fortune" (*fuku to toku to*), a member of the household offers them a tray of refreshments (Figure 26). The rest of the miniature picturebook consists of other auspicious scenes related to the New Year, including girls and boys at play.<sup>331</sup>



Figure 26: "With prosperity and fortune" (*fuku to toku to*), from *Bird Chasers (Torioi)*, to scale (1.6 in high)<sup>332</sup>

<sup>330</sup> Watanabe Seiichirō, "Torioi asobi," in Shin'nen vol. of *Kadokawa haiku dai-saijiki*, 230-231; Ikeda, "Torioi," 261-263; Kitagawa, vol. 23 of *Ruijū kinsei fūzoku shi*, 234-5. The practice lasted into the twentieth century in some regions of Japan. Tokutoro Sakurai, *Japanese Festivals: Annual Rites and Observances* (International Society for Educational Information Press, 1970), 23-24; Ikeda, "Torioi," 261.

<sup>331</sup> *Torioi* (originally published by Maruya Kyūzaemon, 1723), in Kimura, "Tenri toshokan no akakohon, hiinabon," 60-65.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*, 61, figure 4.

#### § 4

[Picture] The narrative above the picture continues over the two pages without a break, but the picture shows different scenes on the right and left. On the right, the rich old man hides under a gourd in the stream and reaches out to take a duck by the neck.

The left-hand illustration depicts a later event. Billionaire has tucked the ducks' necks between his body and his waistband, but the ducks have overpowered him. Billionaire looks down as he rises above the clouds with his arms and legs pointing in different directions. The children and grandchildren look up to the patriarch in excited confusion, which recalls their depiction with the money tree. In the first scene, the grandfather threw down good things to the waiting children, who filled their arms with treasure, but here the intended gifts have borne him away from the children, who are left empty-handed.

This episode has been compared to scenes in *A Book of Lots of Lies About a Goose Hunter*. In that work, Kinjūrō, a young man who has fallen on hard times, travels to “goose country” (*gan koku*) in the North, having heard a rumor that the geese are easy to catch when frozen stiff. The geese are frozen when he arrives (Figure 27), but they revive and take flight in the warmth of the sunrise (Figure 28).<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> Namakeno, *Usō shikkari gan tori chō*, 90-91. Suzuki Jūzō cautions against taking *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* as the main source for such later scenes, noting that tall tales about a goose hunter precede *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*. Suzuki, (*Tōyō bunko zō*) *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu kaidai*, 8-9.



Figure 27: “What’s this?! These geese are positively chilling!” (*Kore wa kore wa susamajii gan da*)<sup>334</sup>

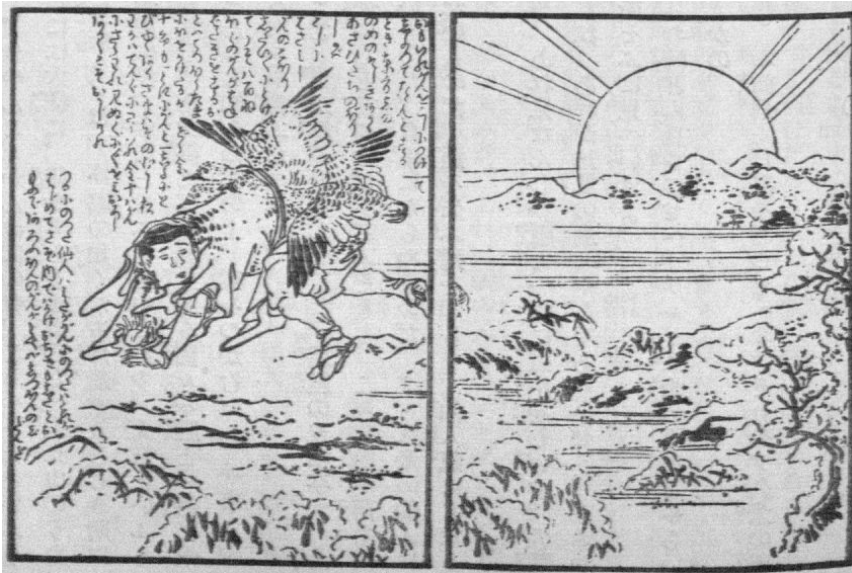


Figure 28: “He was enthusiastically tucking geese in at his waist, and . . .” (*Omoi ire gan o koshi ni tsukete*)<sup>335</sup>

<sup>334</sup> Namakeno, *Uso shikkari gan tori chō*, 90.

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

## § 5

[Picture] The billionaire meets the Seven Gods of Fortune in the Hidden Village. In the drinking party in the Hidden Village are the following characters (clockwise from upper right): Ebisu, Daikoku, Max Profit Billionaire, Bishamonten (with spear), Fukurokuju (on ground, with elongated head), a goddess who may be Kichijōten, two children in Chinese dress, Benzaiten, Hotei, and Jurōjin.<sup>336</sup> In addition to the gods themselves, the symbols of good fortune in the illustration include a *tai* (bream), a fish that was considered lucky because its name appeared in *medetai* (“happy” or “auspicious”).

Though they are lined up in the next illustration, here the gods seem as energetic and disorderly as the man's own children. The gods are upset to be interrupted while drinking; their business is play. A similar depiction of the Gods of Fortune as occupied with leisure pursuits—albeit the more orderly board games *gō* and *shōgi*—may be found in *Amusements of the Gods of Fortune* (Figure 29).<sup>337</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> Suzuki and Kimura identify Benzaiten and suggest that the second woman is probably Kichijōten; Suzuki and Kimura, ed., *Tadatoru yama no hototogisu*, note on p. 142. For descriptions of the gods in English, see “Shichifukujin,” in JAANUS, <http://www.aisf.or.jp/~jaanus/> (accessed December 14, 2010); and “Kichijouten,” in JAANUS.

<sup>337</sup> Nishimura, ill. *Fukujin asobi*, 167.

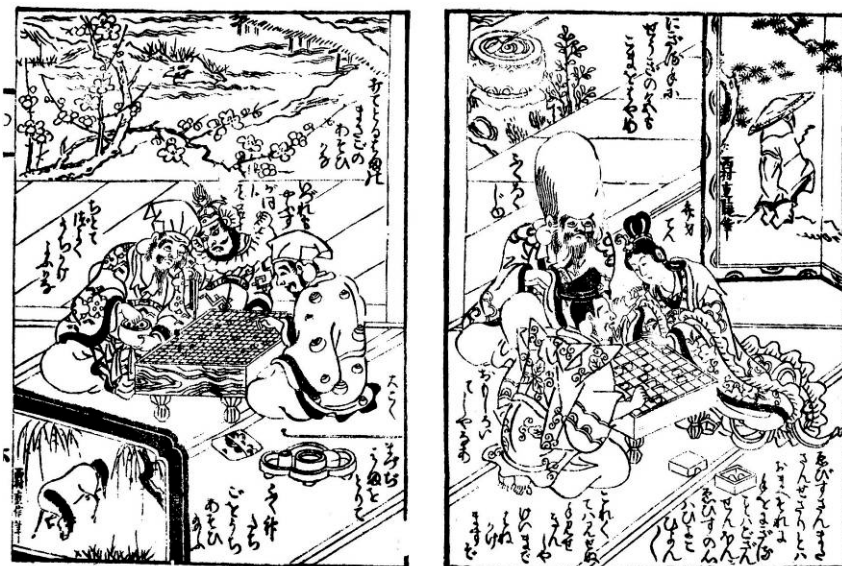


Figure 29: “Sorry to make you wait, Mr. Ebisu. . .” (*Ebisu san matasanse*)<sup>338</sup>

§ 6

[Picture] The old man bows before the merciful Seven Gods of Fortune, who appear without the additional figures that accompanied them in the previous illustration. Between the gods and the man are arrayed a variety of goods, including a tray of large coins.

This page provides the main evidence for what may have happened in the missing page or pages because the edge of a second illustration is visible in the upper left-hand corner. Beyond the scalloped edge of the main illustration is the old man's back, burdened with the rice bale that lies in front of him in the scene to the right. The gods seem to be sending the man home with riches to add to what he already possessed.

**Although one could say that you are fond of taking lives needlessly, this was not exactly “the destruction of life”** (*nanji muyaku no sesshō o konomu to iedomo, makoto no sesshō ni*

<sup>338</sup> Ibid.



*arazu*). The Gods of Fortune recognize that the old man has violated the Buddhist prohibition of taking life, but they take pains to find a reason to excuse him.

**Since you killed in order to cheer your grandchildren, we pardon the offense . . .**

(*magodomo o nagusamen tame no sesshō nareba toga o yurushi . . .*). *Nagusamu* has a range of meanings from “divert” or “cheer” to “comfort” or “console.” A form of the same word is used in an advertisement for *Verses for Schoolchildren* to describe the entertainment value of picturebooks. The fact that this sentence is incomplete supports the idea that a page is missing.

## Chapter 4: Seeing the Future: From Maiden to Mother

*The Rat Wedding* (*Nezumi no yomeiri* 鼠のよめ入り, ill. Nishimura Shigenobu, ca. 1737-1747) is a polyvocal and episodic picturebook loosely structured by the sequence of events in a wedding and the theme of a girl's passage to adulthood.<sup>339</sup> Shigenobu's *Rat Wedding* is an early example of a story that became part of the canon of Edo-period children's literature (as discussed in Chapter Two). Within that canon, animal wedding stories had the strongest connection to female readers.<sup>340</sup> *The Rat Wedding* represented an optimistic vision of the future for eighteenth-century girls—a future in which marriage to a handsome and prosperous man led to a safe childbirth and a smooth transition from maiden to mother. This story thus presents an opportunity to consider the girl as a subject of picturebooks and the girl as reader in the Edo period.

In contrast to *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, in which a narrative tells the story and identifies the protagonist, Shigenobu's version of *The Rat Wedding* lacks both narrative and protagonist. Instead, each unnamed character speaks for himself or herself with a perspective on the wedding that differs based on his or her role: bride, groom, father, mother, matchmaker, or servant.<sup>341</sup>

Many of these characters speak only one or two lines. Insofar as any one character could be the

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<sup>339</sup> Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., *Nezumi no yomeiri*, in Suzuki and Kimura, eds. *KKES, Edo hen*, 187-197. My translation is based on the transcription found in this anthology. Some Japanese scholarship mentions another printing of the picturebook illustrated by Shigenobu titled *Nezumi no engumi* 鼠のゑんぐみ [The Rat Nuptials], but it seems that this may be a confusion of the titles, rather than a difference in the books themselves. Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 122, 123.

<sup>340</sup> For example the winning square of the board game “Red book of Old Stories: a Record of Auspicious Tales,” which casts one character from each story as one of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune. The fox bride takes the role of Benzaiten, the only female among the Gods of Fortune. See Chapter Two and Ikkeisai Yoshiiku, ill., *Mukashi-banashi akahon sugoroku*, 82.

<sup>341</sup> Morishita Misako similarly observes the absence of a third-person narrator. Morishita, “*Nezumi no yomeiri: waizatsu sei no shikake*,” *Bungaku* 57.7 (1989): 30.

focus in a story told from multiple first-person viewpoints, the focus is on the bride—both her reactions to the events and other characters’ reactions to her. This emphasis begins with the title, *Nezumi no yomeiri*, which might be more literally translated as "The Rat’s Bridal Entry" since *yomeiri* refers specifically to the entry of the bride into the groom's household.

There is a depth to the characters in *The Rat Wedding* that does not appear in the other works translated here, in part because the events of the wedding are common. The boys of *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* are happy in the present moment, but the rat daughter anticipates her future wedding, expresses awareness of how others perceive her, and joins others in praying for future protection. The context of the illustrations and the familiar events of the wedding story allow a few words to suggest a longer dialogue, even in the absence of narration.

The illustrations for this “red book” (*akahon*) and its reprints—with the exception of a related “bean book” (*mamehon*)—include two signatures: Nishimura Shigenobu 西村重信 and Nishimura Magosaburō 西村孫三良. Both names seem to belong to the same artist, most often known as Shigenobu and active from approximately 1731 to 1747. He was a student of Nishimura Shigenaga 重長.<sup>342</sup> Shigenobu is well-known as an ukiyoe artist, although more for his depictions of actors and beauties than for his picturebooks.<sup>343</sup> Of the two other picturebooks signed by Shigenobu, *Old Tale of Momotarō, Republished ((Saihan) Momotarō mukashi gatari*

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<sup>342</sup> In the past, Shigenobu was sometimes identified with Ishikawa Toyonobu, active later in the eighteenth century, but not enough evidence exists to confirm or definitively deny that theory. Mutō Junko, "Nishimura Shigenobu," *Ukiyoe daijiten* (Kokusai ukiyo-e gakkai, 2008), 374.

<sup>343</sup> For example, the MFA catalogue lists twenty-nine prints by Shigenobu as well as four signed Magosaburō. Of those, all but seven are images of either actors or beauties. MFA, [searches on keywords: "Nishimura Shigenobu" and "Nishimura Magosaburo"], <http://www.mfa.org/collections/> (accessed September 15, 2009).

再板桃太郎昔語, mid- to late eighteenth century) includes a scene of childbirth similar to that in *The Rat Wedding*.<sup>344</sup>

Nishimura Shigenobu's illustrations of the rat wedding were particularly influential in shaping the story for readers in Edo. The scenes in the version of *The Rat Wedding* translated here, a red book, were reprinted at least twice, including once with the cover of a "blue book" (*aohon*) sometime after 1777.<sup>345</sup> They were adapted for publication as a bean book as well.<sup>346</sup> There is also a closely related picturebook signed by Nishimura Shigenaga, *The Crane Wedding* (*Tsuru no yomeiri*, ca. 1740s). Although it is unclear whether *The Rat Wedding* or *The Crane Wedding* came first, one appears to have been a strong influence on the other.<sup>347</sup>

### ***The Rat Wedding* as an Introduction to Marriage and Motherhood**

The cultural role of *The Rat Wedding* as a text of initiation into the mysteries of marriage and motherhood is demonstrated in a scene from a vastly popular "graphic novel" (*gōkan*)—an extended picturebook format chiefly for adults—by Ryūtei Tanehiko: *An Imitation Murasaki and a Country Genji* (*Nise Murasaki inaka Genji* 倭紫田舎源氏, 1829-1842).<sup>348</sup> In this passage, a

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<sup>344</sup> The only extant picturebooks signed by Shigenobu other than editions of *The Rat Wedding* are *Old Tale of Momotarō, Republished* and *Amusements of the Gods of Fortune* (*Fukujin asobi* 福神あそび). Kimura, *Akahan kurohon aohon shoshi*, 130, 238-239. Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., (*Saihan*) *Momotarō mukashi gatari*, vol. 1, in *KKES, Edo hen*, ed. Suzuki and Kimura, 57-67. On issues related to the dating of *Old Tale of Momotarō, Republished*, see Kimura, *Akahan kurohon aohon shoshi*, 130-131.

<sup>345</sup> Kimura, *Akahan kurohon aohon shoshi*, 123-124, 128-129;

<sup>346</sup> *Yomeiri*, in Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, 190-195.

<sup>347</sup> Katō, "Nezumi no yomeiri," 231. Kimura, *Akahan kurohon aohon shoshi*, 254.

<sup>348</sup> Ryūtei Tanehiko and ill. Utagawa Kunisada, *Nise Murasaki inaka Genji*, ed. Suzuki Jūzō, 2 vols., in vols. 88 and 89 of *SNKBT* (Iwanami shoten, 1995). The only full English translation of the work is marred by inaccuracies but useful as a quick overview: Ryūtei Tanehiko, *The Rustic Genji* (*Inaka Genji*), trans. Donald M. Richardson and Teruo Tanaka, 2 vols. (n.p., 1985).

female servant, Kotonoha, addresses young Murasaki, the eponymous heroine of this story inspired by the *Tale of Genji*.<sup>349</sup>

Kotonoha took a picturebook [*e-zōshi*] of the rat wedding and brought it before Murasaki. "That is the ceremony of three, three and nine, and soon there's the maternity sash. The birth is easy, too. They're blessed with a young master, and they visit the shrine at the end. May you, too, soon reach your happy ending," she encouraged her.<sup>350</sup>

Kotonoha (far right in Figure 30) introduces *The Rat Wedding* by explaining the pictures rather than by reading every word. Kotonoha's description includes several events that may await the girl: a ceremony consisting of multiple toasts, pregnancy (marked by tying a sash just under the woman's bosom as in Figure 31), childbirth, and a joyful visit to the shrine with the firstborn son. The example of the rat bride has the potential to prepare Murasaki for the changes ahead.

In this case, however, the picturebook fails to communicate with its audience. The passage continues, "But Murasaki showed no sign of seeing or understanding anything about marriage. Instead, she just drew near in familiarity to Mitsu'uji, as if he were her father or elder brother."<sup>351</sup> The illustration in which this passage appears shows Murasaki standing between Kotonoha and her future husband, Mitsu'uji—the "Country Genji" of the title (Figure 30). Murasaki's stance suggests the ambiguity of her position between girlhood and womanhood. Kotonoha beckons Murasaki to consider the picturebook, which is open to an illustration of the new mother resting while other women wash the newborn rat baby (see detail, Figure 32). Murasaki gazes at the book, but her body is turned toward Mitsu'uji and the game board for *go* at

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<sup>349</sup> Ryūtei Tanehiko, *Nise Murasaki inaka Genji*, vol. 1, 468-9. Murasaki was such a central character in the original *Tale of Genji* that the author is remembered by the nickname Murasaki Shikibu.

<sup>350</sup> Ryūtei Tanehiko, *Nise Murasaki inaka Genji*, vol. 1, 468-9. Pregnancy, as represented by the maternity sash, is not included in Nishimura's version of *The Rat Wedding*, but see Figure 31 for an eighteenth-century representation of the practice.

<sup>351</sup> Ryūtei Tanehiko, *Nise Murasaki inaka Genji*, vol. 1, 468-9.

which he sits. Murasaki goes toward her future spouse, but since she does not take in the message of the book, she goes with the intentions of a child. The open but unappreciated book represents the innocent ignorance that Tanehiko's young Murasaki shares with the Heian original. Murasaki's childlike attachment to Mitsu'uji as a father or brother defies attempts to introduce her to romance. However, this failure highlights the purpose of the wedding story in this context: to awaken desire.



Figure 30: Kotonoha draws Murasaki's attention to *The Rat Wedding*. (Right to left) Kotonoha, Murasaki, Mitsu'uji, and Inukichi.<sup>352</sup>

<sup>352</sup> Ryūtei Tanehiko and ill. Utagawa Kunisada. *Nise Murasaki inaka Genji*, held by Waseda University Library, He 13 04274, vol. 14, [http://archive.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kosho/he13/he13\\_04274/he13\\_04274\\_0014/he13\\_04274\\_0014\\_p0005.jpg](http://archive.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kosho/he13/he13_04274/he13_04274_0014/he13_04274_0014_p0005.jpg) (accessed February 8, 2012).



Figure 31: Woman with maternity sash. “When the belly’s big, the birth’s near” (*hara takōshite umi chikashi*)<sup>353</sup>



Figure 32: *The Rat Wedding* as shown in *Nise Murasaki inaka Genji* (rotated detail)

Thus, Tanehiko presents *The Rat Wedding* as a picturebook intended to inspire a girl to desire marriage and form some idea of conjugal relations. Such a purpose helps to explain the presence of sexual innuendo within Nishimura Shigenobu’s *The Rat Wedding*, which Koike Masatane brings up as indicative of a clear difference between Edo-period Japanese views of children and modern views of children.<sup>354</sup> For example, during the preparations for the wedding

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<sup>353</sup> *Tonsaku shin jiguchi*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 343.

<sup>354</sup> Koike, “Edo ki kodomo hon,” 164.

feast, a male servant looks at an octopus clinging to a bucket with its suction cups and imagines that the bride will be like the octopus with the groom.<sup>355</sup> Later, the bridegroom compares the wedding banquet to the first meeting of a courtesan and a client in the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters.<sup>356</sup>

The picturebook's references to sexual relationships remain primarily in the words rather than in the illustrations and depend on the reader's prior knowledge. For example, when a servant exclaims that if he had money he would go to the persimmon shop curtains (*kaki noren*, rendered here as "red curtain district"), the informed reader would realize these curtains identified brothels. A young reader with less experience might assume that the servant wanted to go shopping. On the visual level, *The Rat Wedding* skips directly from the wedding banquet to the baby's first bath, omitting both sexual relations and pregnancy. The unflattering depiction of a woman with prominent nostrils wearing a maternity sash (Figure 31) is not from a wedding story but from an eighteenth-century picturebook of jokes, a fact that suggests images of pregnant women or women with bare breasts were not considered taboo for children's books but rather indelicate and unattractive.<sup>357</sup> Even in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, most of which is taken up with pregnancy, the mother is not shown until after the safe delivery of her child.<sup>358</sup> An adult mediator introducing a girl to *The Rat Wedding*, as in the passage above with Kotonoha and Murasaki, would have had considerable leeway to determine how much of the subtext was appropriate for the girl reader.

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<sup>355</sup> Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., *Nezumi no yomeiri*, 193.

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.*, 195.

<sup>357</sup> *Tonsaku shin jiguchi*, 343.

<sup>358</sup> See translation, Chapter Seven.



## ***Yomeiri*: wedding stories**

The story of the rat wedding was a perennial subject for picturebooks, as the appearance of *The Rat Wedding* in Tanehiko's graphic novel attests.<sup>359</sup> In addition to rat marriage stories, there are wedding stories featuring cats, sparrows, gods, monsters, and foxes. The basic outlines of the stories are similar, regardless of the type of creatures that appear in them, but the stories range from straightforward accounts to parodies for adults, like *The Monster Wedding*.<sup>360</sup> The titles of such wedding stories generally specify the wedding theme with the inclusion of the words *yomeiri* or *engumi*.<sup>361</sup> The repetition of this theme in picturebooks suggests a continuing demand for these stories of young girls transitioning into marriage and motherhood. A number of such picturebooks, from both Edo and the Kamigata region, have been annotated by Japanese scholars.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> The Union Catalogue of Early Japanese Books includes eleven titles that begin with "Nezumi no yomeiri" and several more that preface that phrase with some felicitous word. The books are listed as examples of several genres of Edo picturebooks: "red book" (*akahon*), "black book" (*kurohon*), "yellow book" (*kibyōshi*), and "graphic novel" (*gōkan*). Union Catalogue of Early Japanese Books (Nihon koten seki sōgō mokuroku), [search for title phrase "ねずみのよめいり" (*nezumi no yomeiri*)], <http://base1.nijl.ac.jp/~tkoten/about.html> (accessed July 17, 2010). See details of extant rat-wedding red books in Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 122-130.

<sup>360</sup> Jippensha Ikku, *Bakemono no yomeiri* (1804), in Adamu Kabatto [Adam Kabat], ed., *Edo bakemono sōshi* (Shōgakkan, 1999) 85-116.

<sup>361</sup> A search of the database of early Japanese Books returned 130 records containing the word. Many were play scripts or books of etiquette. Still, forty-eight of the entries, including duplicates, consisted of some variety of picturebook. I found an additional eight records for picturebooks including *engumi*. The database does not include most books in private collections, so there may be more picturebooks on this topic that are not listed. Union Catalogue of Early Japanese Books, [search for keywords "よめいり" or "嫁入" (*yomeiri*) and for keyword "えんぐみ" (*engumi*)], (accessed September 16, 2009).

<sup>362</sup> From Edo, there are *Nezumi no yomeiri* (*The Rat Wedding*), *Bakemono yomeiri* 化物よめ入り (*The Monster Wedding*), *Senshūroku nezumi no yomeiri* 千秋楽鼠のよめいり (*Joy for a Thousand Autumns: The Rat Wedding*, 1780), and *Ōshima dai neko no yomeiri* 大島台猫の嫁入 (*Cat Wedding on an Ōshima Stage*). *Nezumi no yomeiri*, 187-197; *Bakemono yomeiri*, 198-209; Torii Kiyonaga, ill., *Senshūroku nezumi no yomeiri*, 389-399; *Ōshima dai neko no yomeiri*, 476-487; all in *KKES, Edo hen*. The marriage stories in the Kamigata volume of the same anthology are similar in plot and imagery, but the titles follow a different pattern: *Shūgen fukki nezumi* 祝言富貴鼠 (*Felicitations: Rich Rat*) and *Shūgen kitsune no mukoiri* 祝言狐のむこ入 (*Felicitations: Wedding of the Fox Groom*). *Shūgen fukki nezumi*, 209-215; *Shūgen kitsune no mukoiri*, 216-222; both in *KKES, Kamigata hen*. The "mukoiri" in *Shūgen kitsune no mukoiri* is "the entry of the groom;" the title thus reverses the positions of the bride

Despite the extensive work in Japanese, *The Rat Wedding* has received only superficial treatment in English-language scholarship. Examples of stories of animal brides have entered English in paraphrased versions, but the translation in this dissertation is the first to be based on an Edo-period text. English-language paraphrases include "The Foxes' Wedding" in Mitford's *Tales of Old Japan*, *The Mouse's Wedding* in the late nineteenth-century Japanese Fairy Tale Series mentioned in Chapter Two, and *Red Book: The Mouse's Wedding* (*Akahon nezumi no yomeiri* 赤本 鼠の嫁入り, ca. 1735-45) in the "Edo Picture Books and Japonisme / Edo ehon to Japonizumu 江戸絵本とジャポニズム" website by the International Library of Children's Literature.<sup>363</sup> Paraphrases like these can be valuable introductions to the stories and, in the case of the website, to the Edo-period illustrations. However, paraphrasing tends to emphasize the verbal plot and elide the characteristics that distinguish eighteenth-century picturebooks from late nineteenth-century retellings of the wedding story: puns, double entendres, situational humor, and references to popular culture. Moreover, the polyvocal texture of the red-book originals is lost with the existing English versions, all of which rely on narration to the exclusion or near-exclusion of speech by the characters.

One reason to translate Shigenobu's picturebook rather than one of the extant variations on the wedding story is that it is both early, and, as one scholar points out, an example of the "most standard rat wedding" (*mottomo hyōjunteki na nezumi no yomeiri*).<sup>364</sup> This story is

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and groom. See also *Tsuru no yomeiri*, ed. Katō Yasuko, in vol. 2 of *EEH*, 9-23; *Kakure sato fukujin no yomeiri*, ed. Katō Yasuko, in vol. 3 of *EEH*, 25-43.

<sup>363</sup> International Library of Children's Literature, National Diet Library, "Edo Picture Books and Japonisme;" Mitford, vol. 1 of *Tales of Old Japan*, 270-272; *The Mouse's Wedding*, trans. David Thompson, Japanese Fairy Tale Series 6, in vol. 1 of Miyao, ed., *Taiyaku Nihon mukashi-banashi shū: Meiji-ki no saishiki chirimen ehon*, 117-137. The *Akahon nezumi no yomeiri* in the International Library of Children's Literature exhibit, which was originally published by Tsuru-ya, is not the same as the text translated here.

<sup>364</sup> Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 123.

different from the mouse wedding involving various potential grooms that became familiar in the modern period with its inclusion in Iwaya Sazanami's "old tales" (*mukashi banashi*).<sup>365</sup>

In Shigenobu's *Rat Wedding*, twenty illustrated pages, which make up eleven scenes, relay a simple wedding story. The future bride and groom first see each other in an arranged meeting. Then, a matchmaker representing the groom negotiates marriage terms with the bride's father. The households make preparations for the wedding and exchange gifts. The bride and her household travel to the bridegroom's home. The bride and groom, along with their parents, enjoy a wedding feast. The bride gives birth to a baby boy. Finally, the mother or a wet nurse takes the baby to a shrine to pray for his health and safety. These scenes complemented didactic books for girls and women, which could include information about marriage and childbirth, as in the *Record of Treasures for Maidens Compendium* (*Onna chōhōki taisei* 女重宝記大成, 1692), or pictures of wedding articles and clothing, as in the *Picture Dictionary for Maidens* (*Jo yō Kinmōzui* 女用訓蒙図彙, 1688).<sup>366</sup>

## Why rats?

This discussion of the rat wedding picturebook has thus far assumed the basic humanity of the characters, despite their animal appearance. In twenty-first century America, after decades of Muppets and theme parks full of singing mice, the idea of a talking rat in a kimono may not be

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<sup>365</sup> *Nezumi* can be rat or mouse, but the illustrations for Iwaya Sazanami's version of the story depict mice. Sazanami's story is that of a mouse couple who sought a groom for their daughter and inquired of the moon, the cloud god, the wind god, and the wall before finally settling on another mouse. Iwaya Sazanami, *Nezumi no yomeiri*, *Nihon mukashi banashi* 24 (Hakubunkan, 1896); Katō Yasuko, "Edo ki kodomo ehon no miryoku (shōzen): akahon *Oni no shiki asobi*, *Bakemono yomeiri ni tsuite*," *Baika joshi daigaku bunka hyōgen gakubu kiyō* 2 (December 2005): 85.

<sup>366</sup> Morishita Misako, "Akahon *Nezumi no yomeiri* ni miru kyōiku teki ichi to tayōsei," *Yōji no kyōiku* 83.1 (1984): 45-48, in TeaPot: Ochanomizu University Web Library: Institutional Repository, <http://hdl.handle.net/10083/43607> (accessed January 31, 2012); Okuda, *Jo yō Kinmōzui*.

anything extraordinary. But why would the most typical versions of the wedding story, nearly 300 years ago, feature rats in human roles?

The white rat was commonly associated with Daikoku, one of the Seven Gods of Fortune. Rats were said to sense impending danger, whether of fire or earthquake, so they could be thought of as protectors of a house. Rats are also naturally fertile. Perhaps most importantly, the zodiac sign for rat 子 (*ne*) is the same Chinese character used in Japanese for child 子 (*ko*).<sup>367</sup> Thus, rats were an auspicious choice for stories related to marriage and child-bearing.

Examples of illustrated rat wedding stories are not limited to Japan but are also found in China, where single-page picture prints depicting rat wedding processions survive from the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Some Chinese prints show the bride and groom as rats, and some show one as a human and the other as a rat. Unlike Edo picturebooks, the Chinese prints tend to show a cat watching the procession (Figure 33). There was a tradition that rats—or mice, depending on the translation—held their weddings in the first month of the year, and the illustrations may have been intended to encourage the rodents' departure.<sup>368</sup>

A concern for the auspicious and a connection between the human girl reader and the rat girl subject may explain why the cats so prominent in Chinese prints are missing in the Japanese rat wedding picturebooks. As one rat warns in Shigenobu's *The Rat Wedding*, "The word 'cat' is taboo at weddings."

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<sup>367</sup> Miyata, *Edo no hayari-gami*, 116-7.

<sup>368</sup> Po Sung-Nien and David Johnson, *Domesticated Deities and Auspicious Emblems: The Iconography of Everyday Life in Village China*, vol. 2 of Publications of the Chinese Popular Culture Project (Berkeley, CA: Chinese Popular Culture Project, distributed by IEAS Publications, University of California, 1992), 181.



**Figure 33: In an early or mid-Qing Dynasty print, a cat watches the procession of a rat bride and her entourage.<sup>369</sup>**

Before there were red books and other picturebooks of *The Rat Wedding*, there were illustrated scrolls depicting weddings with rats. Prior scholarship on *The Rat Wedding* has noted the presence of a wedding between a human and a rat in illustrated scrolls of *The Story of the Rat* (*Nezumi no sōshi* 鼠の草子).<sup>370</sup> But *Yahyōe the Rat* (*Yahyōe nezumi* 弥兵衛鼠), the same illustrated scroll discussed in the preceding chapter in relation to *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, also includes a rat wedding, this one between two rats.<sup>371</sup> The interspecies marriage in *The Story of the Rat* is not meant to be—the bride leaves her groom behind when she realizes he is a rat, and

<sup>369</sup> Wang Zhaowen and Deng Fuxing, eds., *Zhongguo min jian mei shu quan ji* (Jinan: Shandong jiao yu chu ban she; Shandong you yi chu ban she, 1993), 165, plate no. 166.

<sup>370</sup> *Nezumi no sōshi*, 35-68; *Nezumi no sōshi* (beppon), 69-93; both in *Ko Nara ehon-shū*, vol. 8 of Tenri Toshokan zenpon sōsho, Washo no bu (Tenri: Tenri daigaku shuppan-bu; Yagi shoten, 1972); cf. Katō Yasuko, “Edo ki kodomo ehon no miryoku (shōzen),” 85. Note that the *Nezumi no sōshi* in D. E. Mills, “The Tale of the Mouse. *Nezumi no sōshi*,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 34.2 (Summer 1979), 155-168, refers to an unrelated text.

<sup>371</sup> *Yahyōe nezumi emaki*, 329-366.

the disappointed groom takes Buddhist vows.<sup>372</sup> In contrast to that melancholy outcome, *Yahyōe the Rat* is a comic tale with a felicitous ending suitable for a red book: generations of prosperity for the major characters.

Shigenobu's depiction of rats with a mixture of human and animal qualities has a precedent in *Yahyōe the Rat*. In the scroll's first illustration of the ladies-in-waiting and other members of the household, the rats are seated in formal dress (Figure 34). However, the rats lose their inhibitions in the face of food. The next scene shows them raiding the food prepared for the wedding banquet (Figure 35): "Though they layered on garments of all colors, they had not lost the hearts of rats, so how could they hold back for even a single night? The ladies stripped off their clothes and each stole a bit for herself."<sup>373</sup> Similarly, Yahyōe's wife flings off her clothing and wig before running (Figure 36). After the rats discard their clothing, the illustrations show them to be pure animal, with no lingering human characteristics. The contrast humorously suggests the artificiality of human society and its rules of etiquette.

Likewise, in *The Rat Wedding*, Shigenobu uses the characteristics of rats humorously throughout the book to suggest a conflict between appearance and intention. The human qualities of the anthropomorphized rats are more consistent in Shigenobu's *The Rat Wedding* than they are in *Yahyōe the Rat*. With the sole exception of the newborn rat baby, Shigenobu's rats always appear in human dress. But the rats still have some of the attitudes and attributes of rodents. They speak of stealing food, licking up cooking oil, and fearing cats, for example. The fact that the characters are rats does not preclude interiority—the rats express human desires, frustrations, and anxieties. In fact, the rats express themselves more readily for what they lack in human

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<sup>372</sup> Nakajima Shōji, "Nezumi no sōshi," in *Chūsei ōchō monogatari, otogi-zōshi jiten*, ed. Kanda Tatsumi and Nishizawa Masashi (Bensei shuppan, 2002), 862.

<sup>373</sup> *Yahyōe nezumi emaki*, 332-3.

manners. A boy serving tea to the visiting matchmaker complains, perhaps under his breath, “That bucktooth sure gulps down the tea,” and predicts that the guest will wet himself. For a child reader, the transparency of these characters may have been not only humorous but also instructive in that it provides insight into the concerns of all parties involved in a major event.



Figure 34: Rats in formal attire, from *Yahyōe the Rat*<sup>374</sup>



Figure 35: Rats raiding the kitchen, from *Yahyōe the Rat*

<sup>374</sup> Images from *Yahyoe the Mouse*, in “Naraehon Digital Database.”



Figure 36: Yahyōe's wife, from *Yahyōe the Rat*

### Translation of *The Rat Wedding* (*Nezumi no yomeiri*)

Shigenobu's telling of the wedding story depicts multiple layers of truth and deception within the various preparations and transactions involved in staging an elaborate wedding. Before the wedding, the family and staff of the two households are suspicious of each other and anxious to protect their own interests. Repeated references to prostitution emphasize the financial aspect of the marriage and hint at conjugal relations, which are not depicted. However, references to the theater and the pleasure quarters also link the wedding with the glamour of a world beyond the everyday.

The translation of *The Rat Wedding* follows this introduction, beginning at page 195. It proceeds from right to left, ending at page 176. Annotations follow the translation, beginning on page 196. I have chosen to render rats' names into English where the meaning is humorous or otherwise meaningful in Japanese. Male given names ending in *emon* or *suke* have been translated with the endings "man" or "guy."



Both translation and annotations rely on an annotated edition in *Kinsei kodomo no ehon-shū, Edo hen*, from which the illustrations of this picturebook are taken.<sup>375</sup> I benefited from additional commentary in Japanese in *Kusazōshi jiten* and *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*.<sup>376</sup> In addition, I was informed by several annotated editions of other wedding-related picturebooks from the city of Edo.<sup>377</sup>

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<sup>375</sup> Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., *Nezumi no yomeiri*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 187-197.

<sup>376</sup> Katō, “*Nezumi no yomeiri*,” in *Kusazōshi jiten*, 230-232; Kimura Yaeko, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi: Akahon izen no bu*, 123-126.

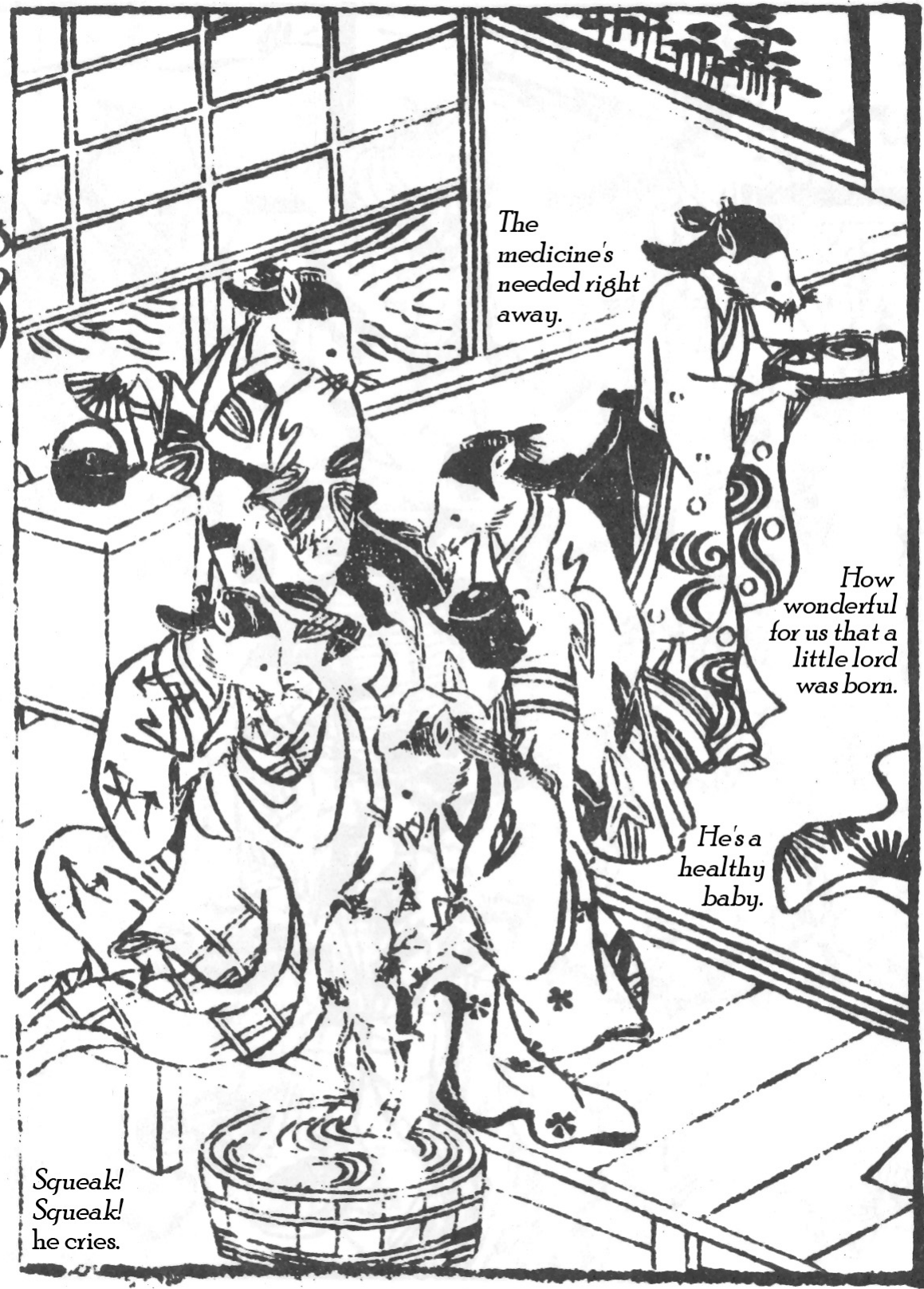
<sup>377</sup> *Bakemono yomeiri*, originally published in Edo by Urokogataya, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 197-209; *Bakemono yomeiri*, originally published in Edo by Urokogataya, ed. Katō Yasuko, in vol. 2 of *EEH*, 25-39; *Kakure sato fukujin no yomeiri*, ed. Katō Yasuko, in vol. 3 of *EEH*, 9-23; *Kitsune no yomeiri*, ed. Katō, 9-23; *Tsuru no yomeiri*, ed. Katō Yasuko, in vol. 2 of *EEH*, 25-43; *Yomeiri*, in Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, 190-195.



*Please protect  
us that we may  
escape the  
scourge of cats.*

*The shrine  
maidens  
always look  
beautiful.*

Figure 37: *The Rat Wedding* §11



The  
medicine's  
needed right  
away.

How  
wonderful  
for us that a  
little lord  
was born.

He's a  
healthy  
baby.

Squeak!  
Squeak!  
he cries.

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §10 left



Nishimura  
Magosaburo

*It was  
much easier than  
I expected; I'm  
so happy.*

*A cup to drink will  
calm the blood flow.*

*Dr. Lucky  
Hermitage,  
how is her  
pulse?*

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §10 right



*I'm embarrassed.*

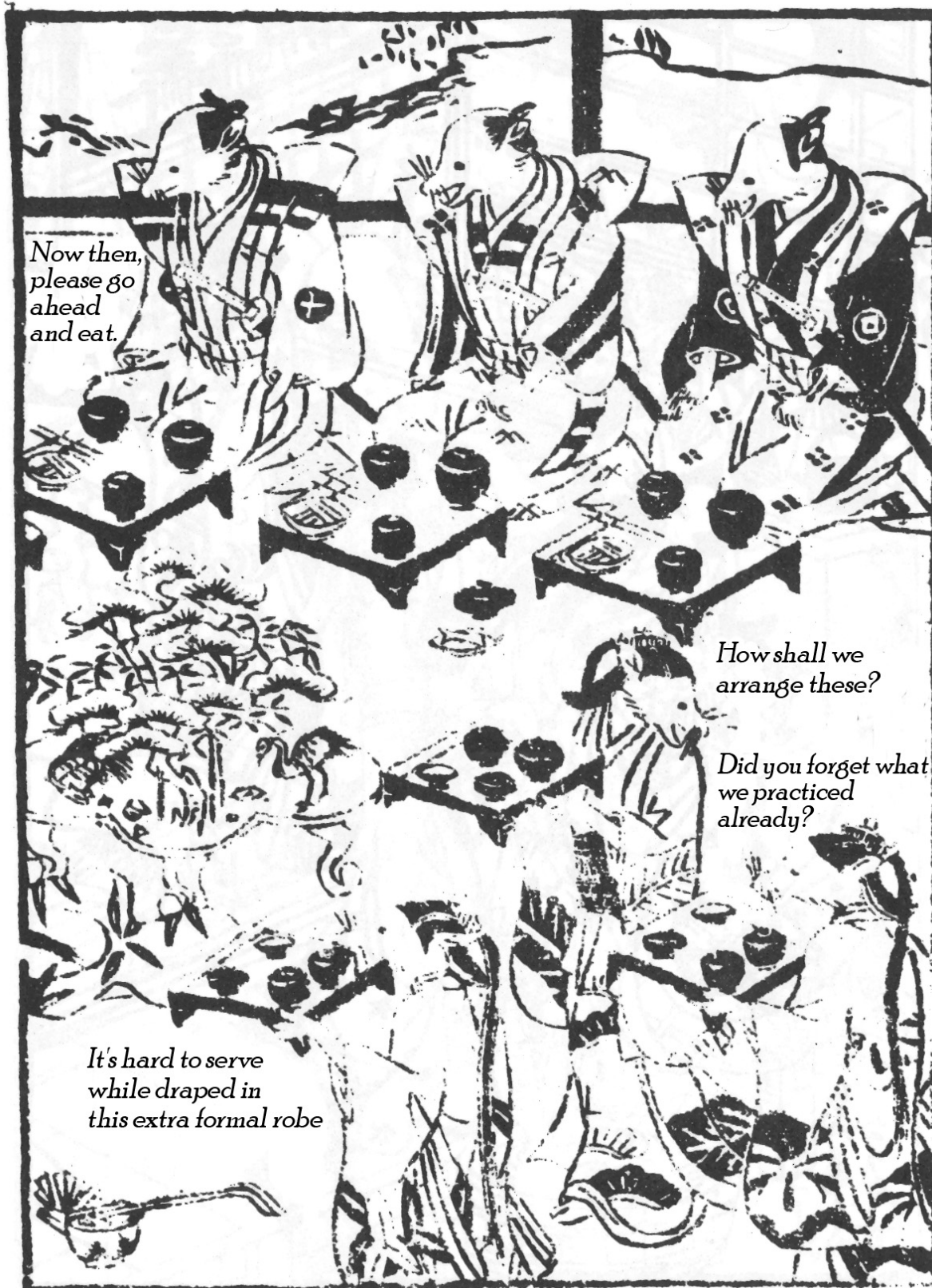
*I'm so happy!*

*It's just like a first meeting at the Yoshiwara!*

*The high-piled rice looks like the castle of a grand feudal lord.*

*They're fine girls.*

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §9 left



*Now then,  
please go  
ahead  
and eat.*

*How shall we  
arrange these?*

*Did you forget what  
we practiced  
already?*

*It's hard to serve  
while draped in  
this extra formal robe*

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §9 right

Take a big bowl  
when you  
drink,  
Totesuke.

With a gentleman at night... ah, afterward...  
knock on wood, knock on wood!

I'm so embarrassed  
that I'm flushed.

Make her tie the  
knot, the knotted  
pattern. A pile for  
the dyer's daughter;  
oh yes, one pile.

Acting up  
already,  
Eight-guy?

Yes, yes.

Foreward,  
quietly.

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §8 left



Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §8 right



Lucky-man, try eating some dessert, won't you please?

I'm slicing fish for vinegared salad—the master will have quite a “dish” of his own.

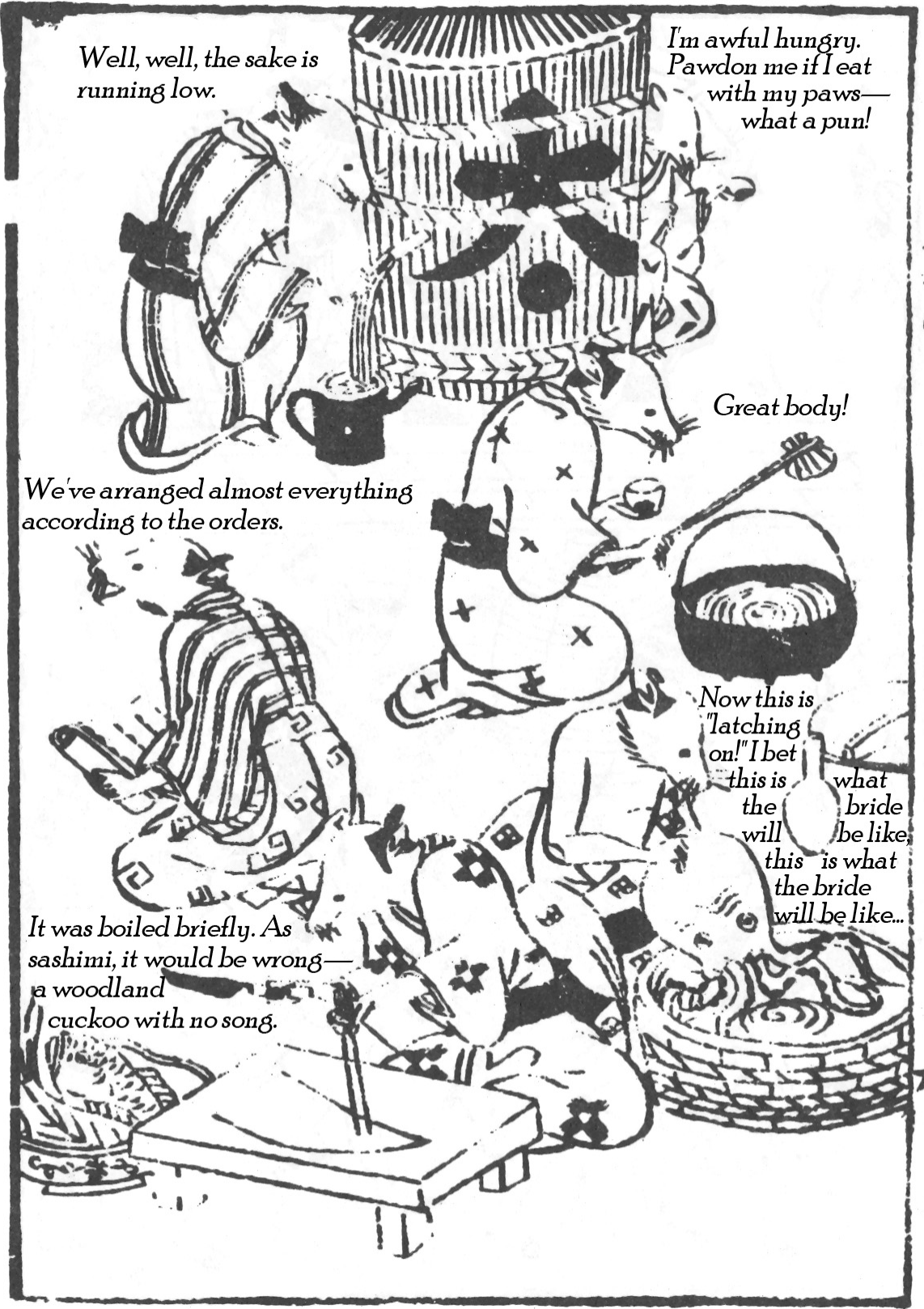
I'd rather bite into some toasted rice crackers than this grilled fish.

Drunken ramblings start with a single drink.

When I become the brother-in-law, they'll give me some sweets they've set aside. How about that? How about that?

Virtue-guy, won't you drink some leftover sake?

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §7 left



Well, well, the sake is running low.

I'm awful hungry. Pawdon me if I eat with my paws— what a pun!

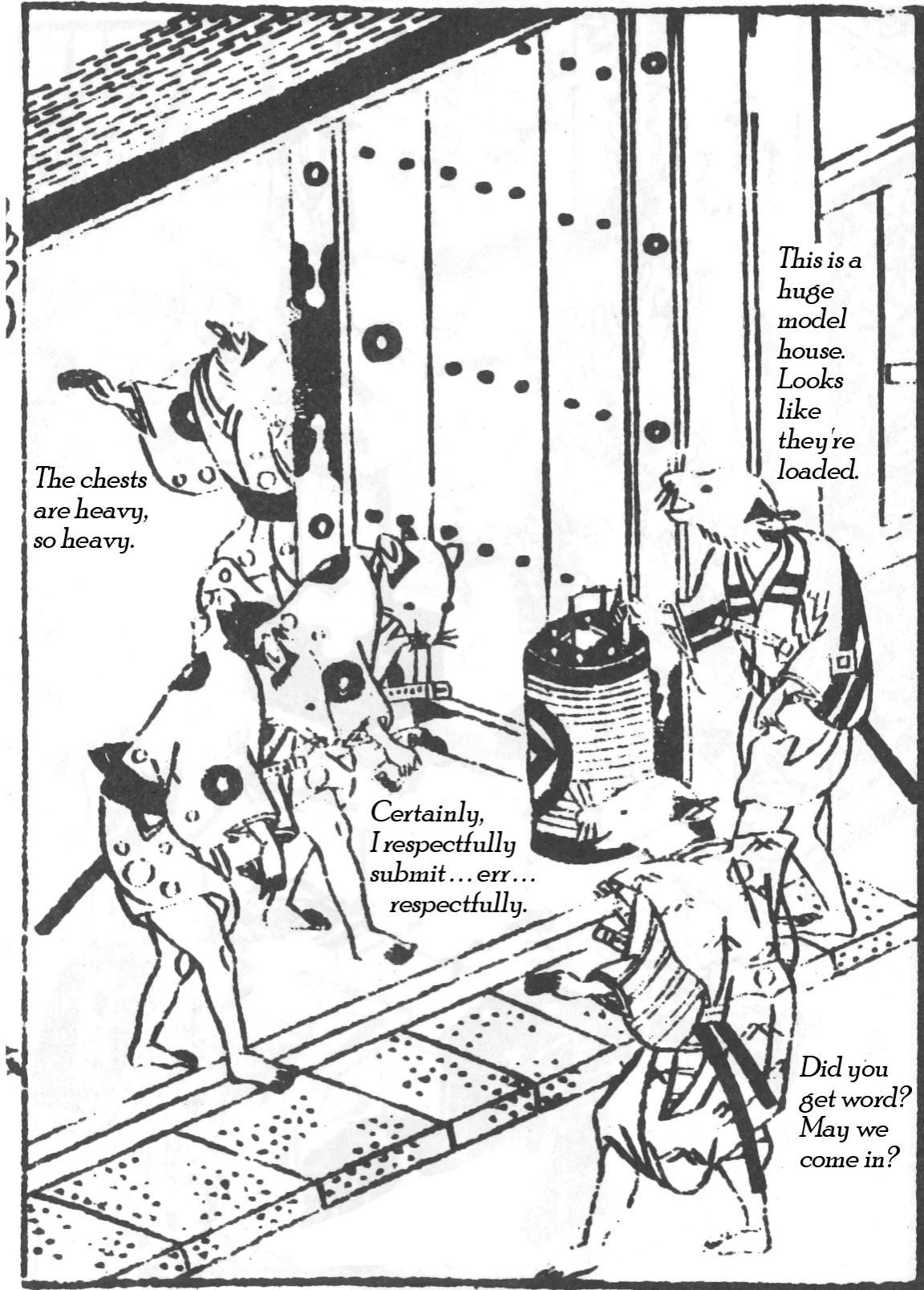
We've arranged almost everything according to the orders.

Great body!

Now this is "latching on!" I bet this is what the bride will be like... this is what the bride will be like...

It was boiled briefly. As sashimi, it would be wrong—a woodland cuckoo with no song.

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §7 right



*The chests  
are heavy,  
so heavy.*

*This is a  
huge  
model  
house.  
Looks  
like  
they're  
loaded.*

*Certainly,  
I respectfully  
submit... err...  
respectfully.*

*Did you  
get word?  
May we  
come in?*

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §6 left

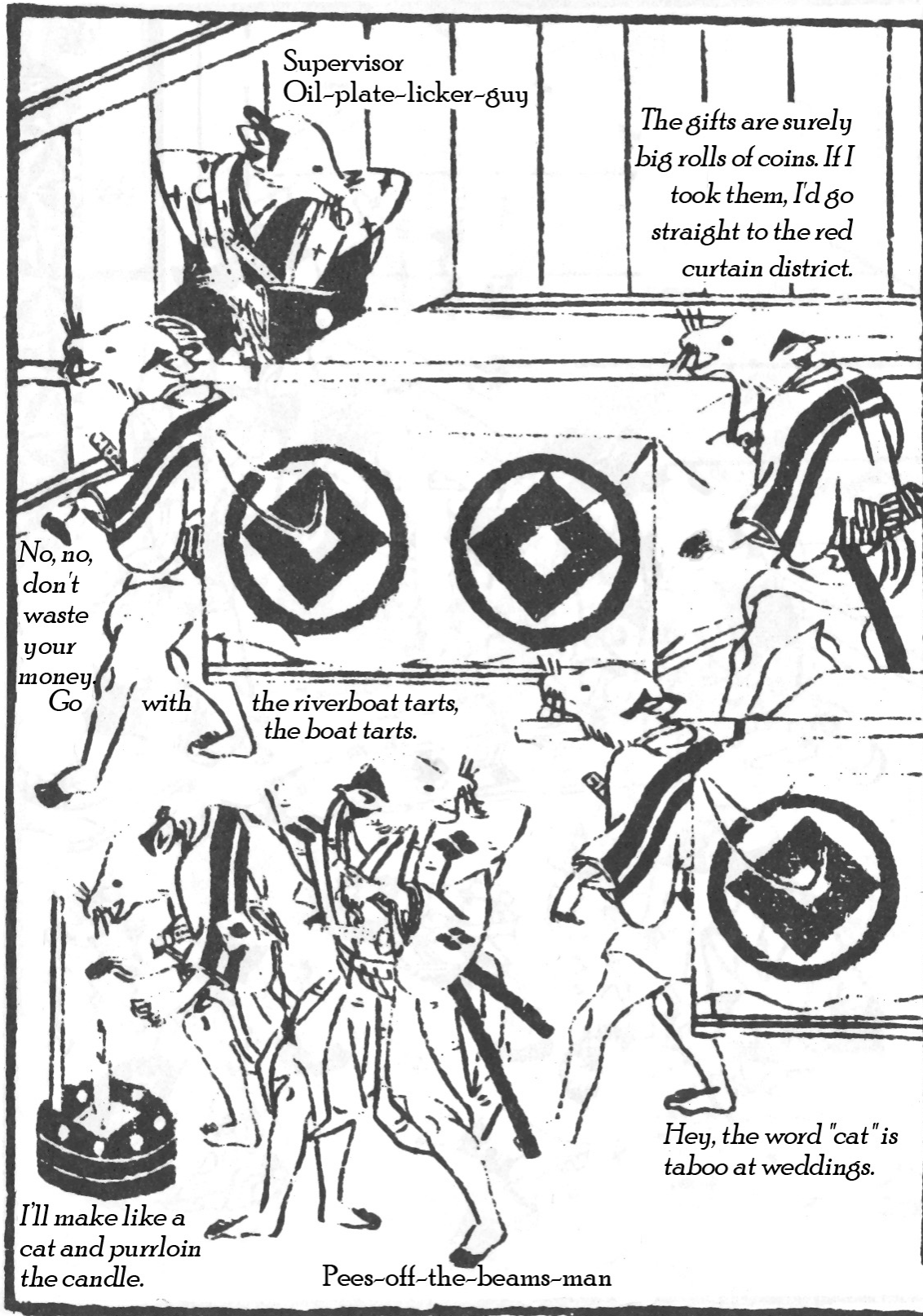


Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §6 right



Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §5 left

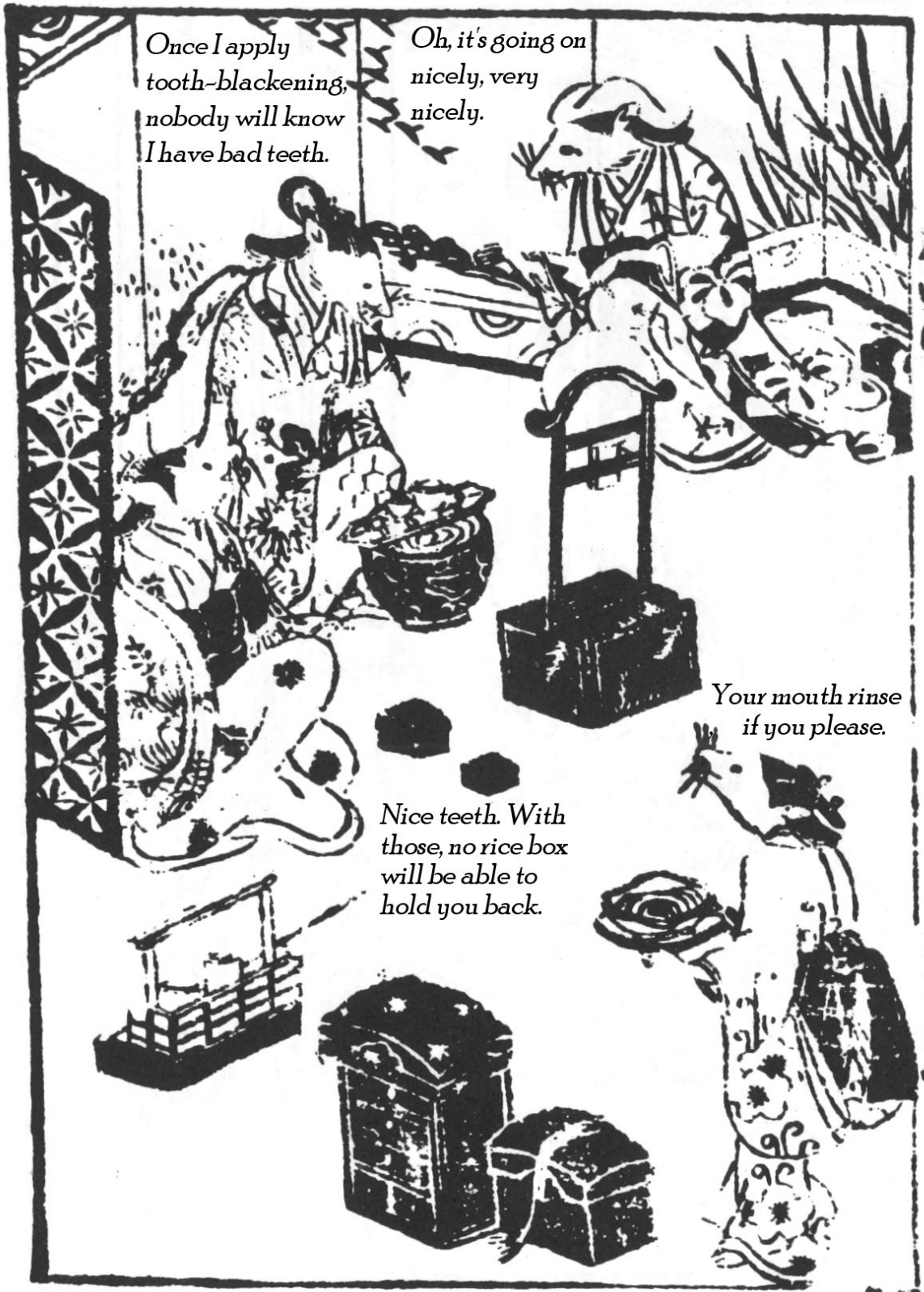
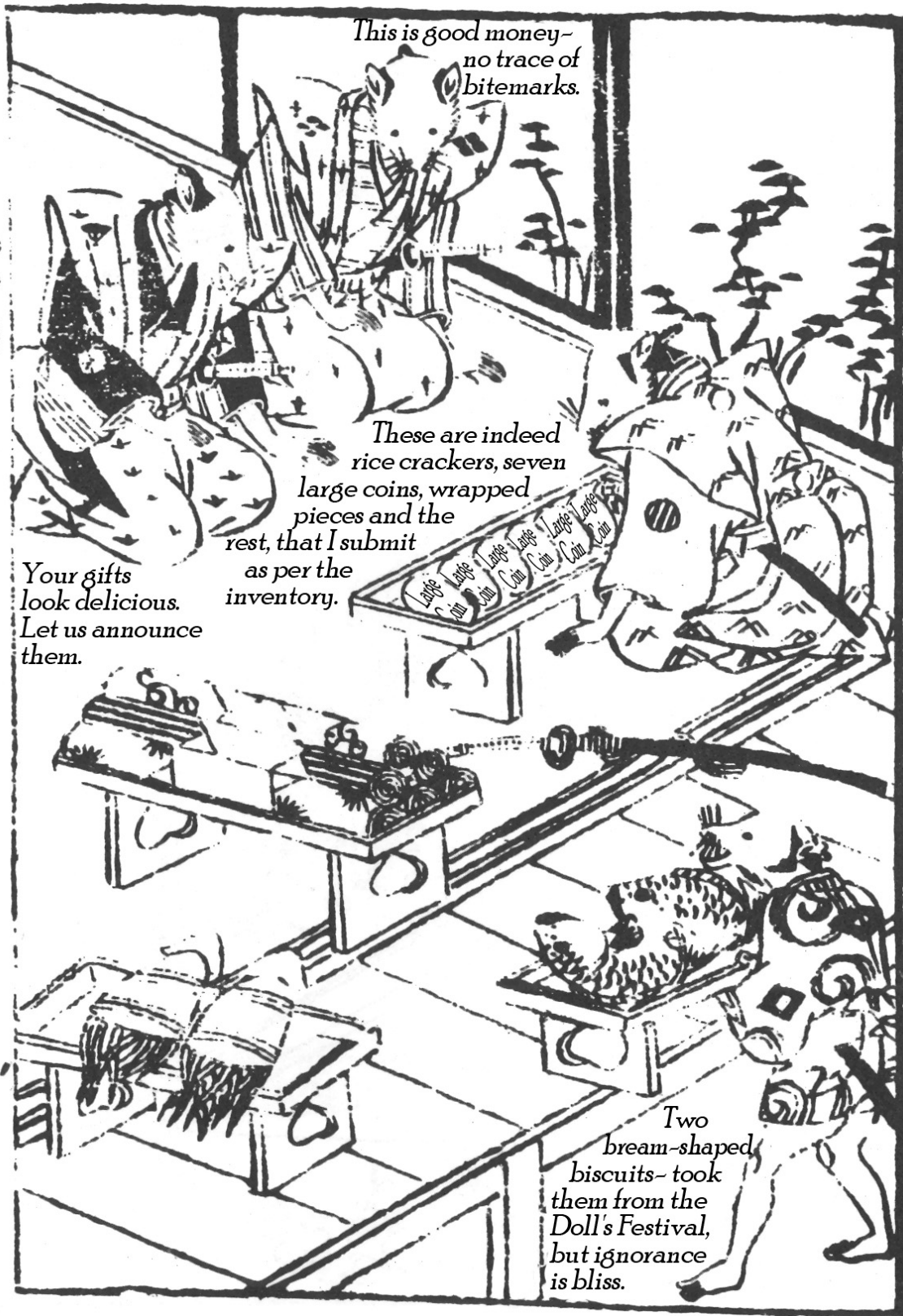


Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §5 right



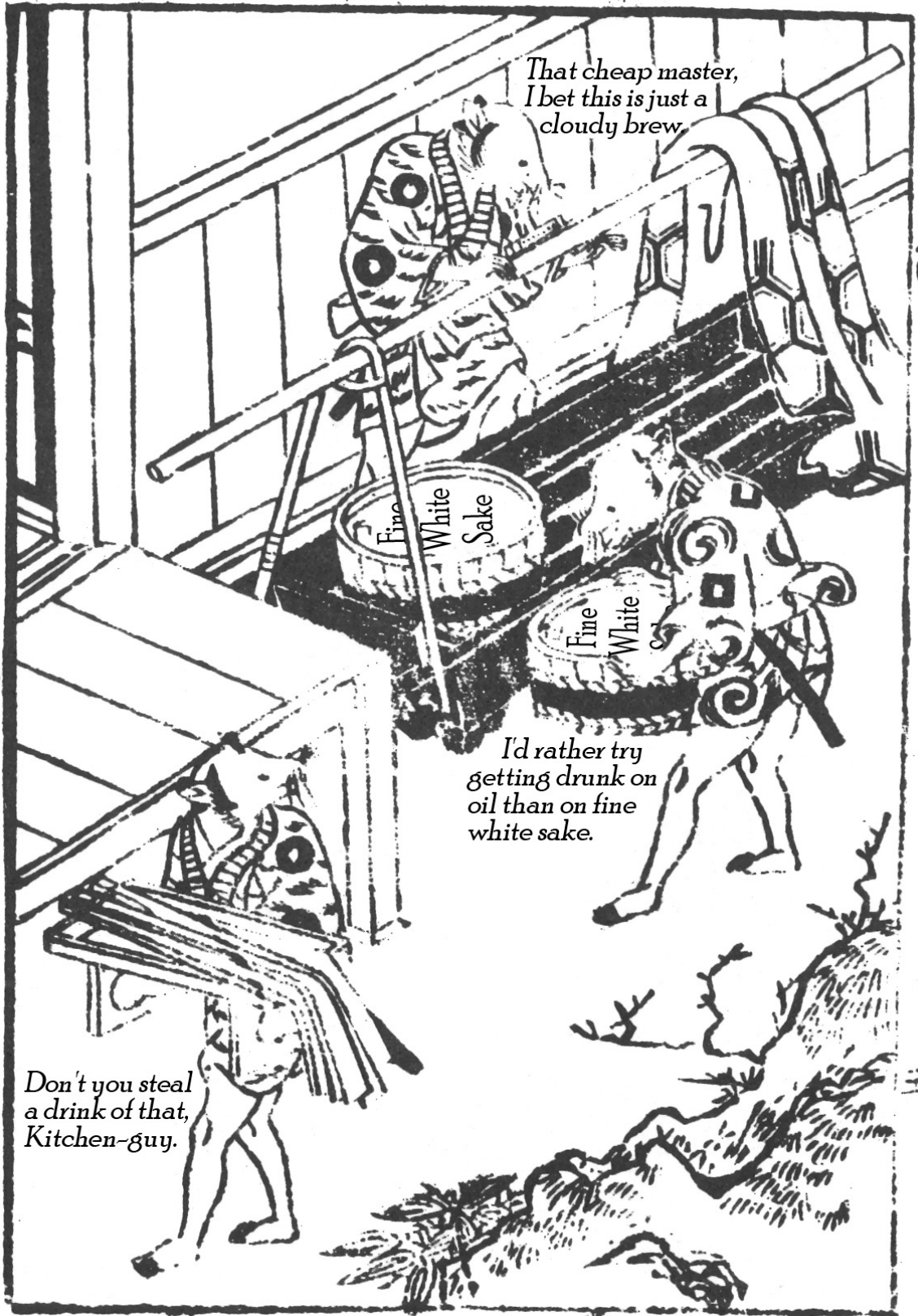
This is good money—  
no trace of  
bitemarks.

These are indeed  
rice crackers, seven  
large coins, wrapped  
pieces and the  
rest, that I submit  
as per the  
inventory.

Your gifts  
look delicious.  
Let us announce  
them.

Two  
bream-shaped  
biscuits— took  
them from the  
Doll's Festival,  
but ignorance  
is bliss.

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §4 left



*That cheap master,  
I bet this is just a  
cloudy brew.*

*I'd rather try  
getting drunk on  
oil than on fine  
white sake.*

*Don't you steal  
a drink of that,  
Kitchen-guy.*

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §4 right



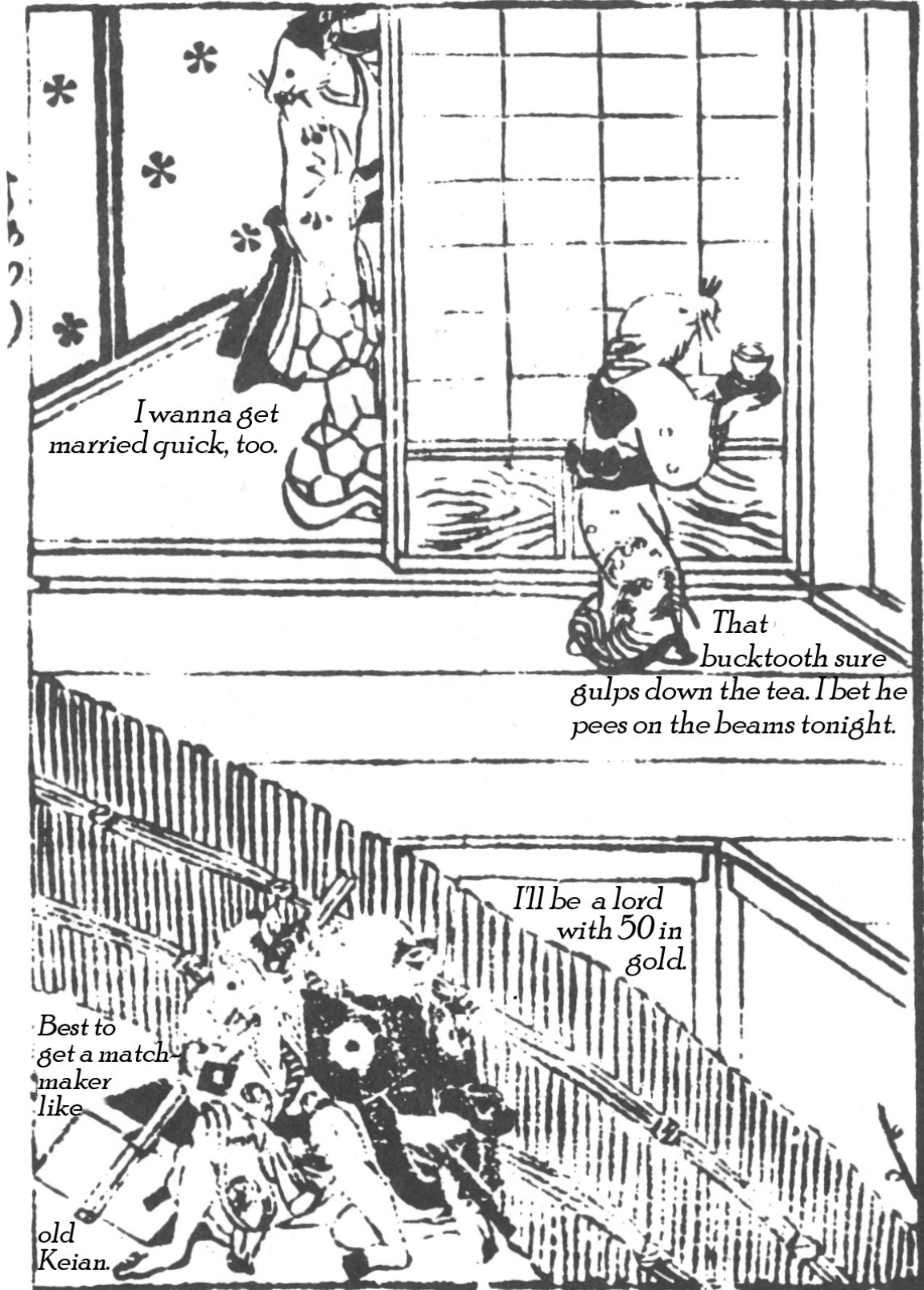


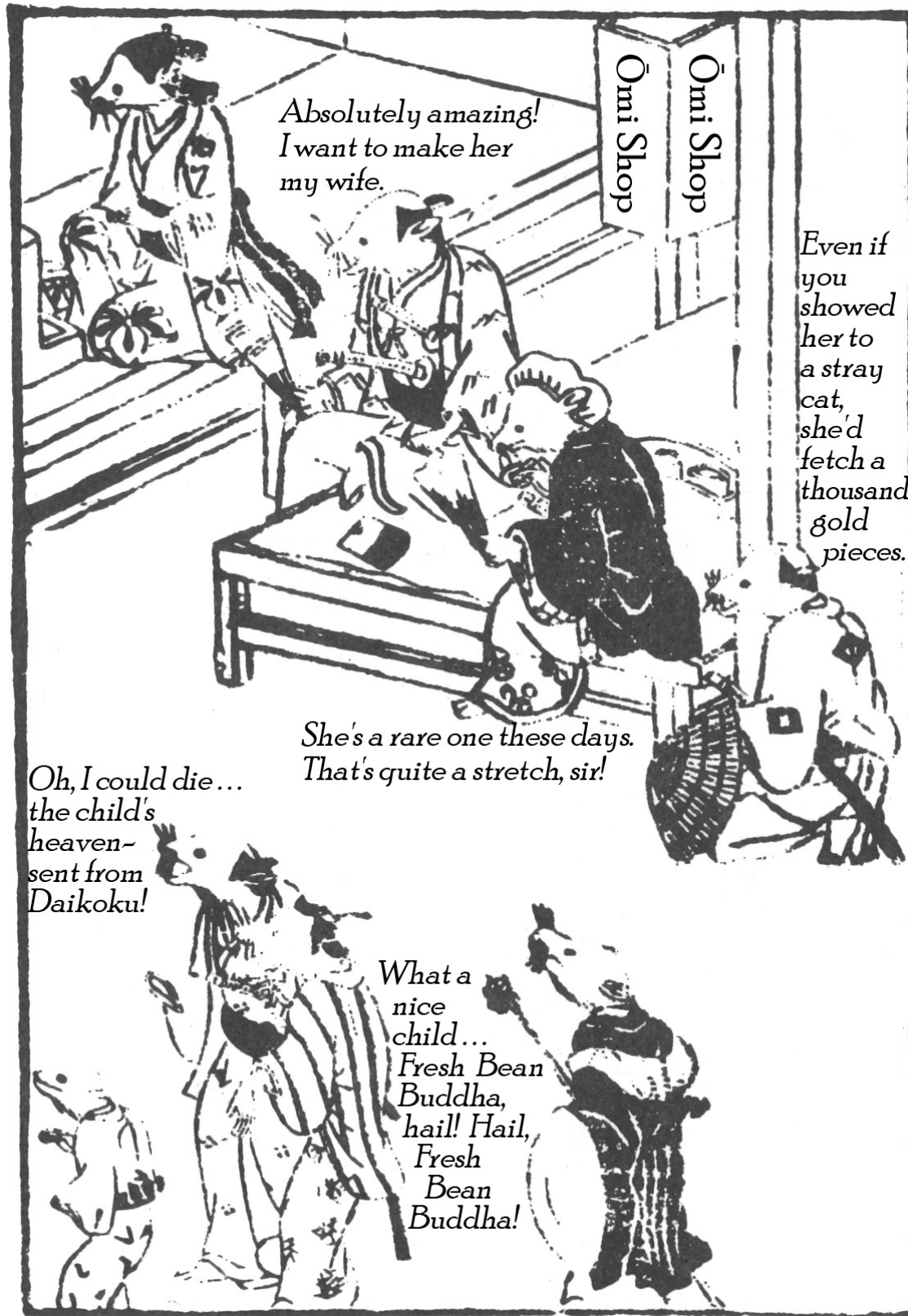
Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §3 left



Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §3 right



Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §2 left



*Absolutely amazing!  
I want to make her  
my wife.*

*Even if  
you  
showed  
her to  
a stray  
cat,  
she'd  
fetch a  
thousand  
gold  
pieces.*

*She's a rare one these days.  
That's quite a stretch, sir!*

*Oh, I could die...  
the child's  
heaven-  
sent from  
Daikoku!*

*What a  
nice  
child...  
Fresh Bean  
Buddha,  
hail! Hail,  
Fresh  
Bean  
Buddha!*

Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §2 right



Figure 37 (continued): *The Rat Wedding* §1

## Annotations to *The Rat Wedding*

### § 1

[Picture] Since its original cover has been lost, *The Rat Wedding* begins with a close-up image of a *shimadai*, a centerpiece for wedding banquets, which is arranged on its own table. A simpler *shimadai* image appears later in the picturebook as well. This traditional decoration is a standard visual trope in wedding stories.<sup>378</sup> Here the display includes two rats in the guise of the married gods central to the *nō* play *Takasago* (高砂) as well as images of a tortoise, a crane, bamboo, and a pine tree.<sup>379</sup> These auspicious symbols of longevity and marital happiness, appropriate to the start of a wedding story, are echoed in the poem. The only major intrusion by the narrator in this picturebook, this poem is a *tanka* 短歌, a poem in five phrases of five, seven, five, seven, and seven syllables, respectively.<sup>380</sup>

### § 2

[Picture] At right, a servant (seated far right, with a square crest on his sleeve) and the matchmaker (seated, in a black coat) have accompanied the future bridegroom (upper center) to an arranged meeting at the Ōmi Shop. This fictional shop—possibly named after the picturebook’s publisher—offers hot tea to visitors outside the Gate of the Two Deva Kings (*ni-ō mon* 仁王門) at the Asakusa Temple, identifiable both by the large statue of one of the two kings

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<sup>378</sup> See for example, *Yomeiri*, in Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, 191.

<sup>379</sup> For an English translation, see *Takasago*, in *Japanese Nō Dramas*, trans. by Royall Tyler (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 277-292. This play is also referenced in *Verses for Schoolchildren*.

<sup>380</sup> The *tanka* in the title of *Verses for Schoolchildren* is interpreted more freely in that picturebook as “short” (*tan* 短) “verses” (*ka* 歌). The poems in that picturebook feature alternating lines of seven and five syllables.

(far left, top) and the partially visible torii gate (far left, bottom). At the shop, a female shopkeeper (right panel, upper left) sits with a stove and a bucket of drinking water (left panel, upper right).

The future bride (left panel, center right) arrives with four others (from right to left): a young girl, a samurai (with two swords), an adult woman, and a male servant (one sword, with circular crests on his sleeve and his shoulder). The matron's kimono is simpler than the girls' kimonos; the short sleeves and the small bow in the front show that she is an adult.<sup>381</sup>

Along the lower part of the scene are male passersby: a monk, two merchants, a boy, and a pilgrim with a cane. Except for the cautious old pilgrim, all of the passersby have their eyes on the bride.

**Looks like your interest is mounting Mt. Irusa** (*o-ki ni iru sa yama* お気に入るさ山). The phrase *o-ki ni iru* ("you are interested in") pivots into *irusa yama* (Irusa Mountain), a set phrase (pillow word) from classical poetry used of Mt. Konosumi (in what is now Hyōgo Prefecture).

**Daikoku.** One of the Seven Gods of Fortune, Daikoku often appears in picturebooks together with white rats or mice, which were thought to serve as his messengers.

**Fresh Bean Buddha, hail! Hail Fresh Bean Buddha!** (*Nama mame da butsu nama mame da butsu*). This is a play on the usual prayer, "Hail to Amitābha Buddha" (*Namu Amida butsu*).

Beans suggest a small size, as in "bean book" (*mamehon*), and they might also be eaten by rats.

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<sup>381</sup> Scholars writing about Edo-period prints or paintings sometimes note that a sash tied in the front shows that a woman is a courtesan or prostitute. However, within eighteenth-century children's picturebooks, the position of the knot in the obi more typically differentiates girls from adult women. Married women are shown with their sashes tied in front—but in small bows rather than the ostentatious cascades of fabric sometimes seen in prints of courtesans. This is evident throughout the picturebooks translated here. Mary Pluckhahn Masilamani, "Clothing in Edo Japan," in vol. 2 of *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Clothing Through World History* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008), 201-202; cf. Donald Jenkins, "Paintings of the Floating World," *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 75.7 (1988): 247; Amy Boyce Osaki, "Instructional Resources: The Floating World Revisited: 18th Century Japanese Art," *Art Education* 49.3 (1996): 27, 35.

Amitābha is associated with the Pure Land sects of Buddhism, whose followers believe that Amitābha has promised an afterlife in a paradise to the West to those who trust in him.

### § 3

**[Picture]** Now that the couple has seen and approved of each other, the details of the marriage must be arranged. At right, the bride (top right) talks to her mother (wearing a white headcovering). The folding screen behind them boasts the artist's signature—both for the screen painting and the picturebook itself. Meanwhile the matchmaker negotiates with the father of the bride (upper left). Both men hold closed fans as they speak. The trays and cup nearby suggest that refreshments have been served. There is a tobacco tray and a pipe by the small screen to the right as well. In the foreground is a blossoming plum tree, which indicates that the season is early spring.

At left, a young boy crosses the veranda to bring tea, and an older girl looks out from an interior room (top). Outside the fence to the left are two male servants. Beside them is a box mounted on a wooden pole, which suggests that at least one of the men was acting as a porter for the guest. The servant with a circular crest on his black coat uses tweezers to pluck a hair for the other man, who has a square crest on his sleeve. These are the same crests that appeared on servants' clothing in the previous scene. They appear to identify the bride's household (circular crest) and the groom's household (square crest).

We may infer from the context that some comments are spoken aloud while others are left unspoken. The boy serving tea probably only mutters his remark under his breath. Otherwise, we might see a reaction to his comment that the thirsty matchmaker is likely to wet the bed—rats



slept among the beams.<sup>382</sup> Likewise, the young woman behind the door and the men behind the fence seem to be listening to the discussion in the parlor while avoiding being overheard themselves.

**Keian** 慶庵. A doctor (fl. ca. 1652-55) whose name became synonymous with matchmaking.

**I'll be a lord with 50 in gold** (*go jū ryō no nushi ni naru ja*). The servant anticipates receiving a ten percent cut of the dowry as a gift from the go-between.

#### § 4

**[Picture]** The groom's servants present gifts to the bride's household. On the right, two servants unload barrels of sake from a large tray suspended from a carrying pole. The sake tray appears to have been covered by the cloth during transit. One of the servants, whose clothes are marked with the circular crest that designated the bride's household in earlier scenes, suspects the groom of substituting cheap, unstrained **cloudy brew** (*hakushu* 白酒), usually served at the Doll's Festival, for the more appropriate **fine white sake** (*morohaku* 諸白), high-quality sake brewed from both rice and other grains. But as a second servant suggests, rats would prefer the taste of cooking oil to that of alcoholic beverages. Meanwhile, a servant carrying biscuits shaped like auspicious bream (*tai*) and wearing the square crest of the groom's household (left panel, lower right) admits that he stole his gift from the doll's display. Mentions of the Doll's Festival and its decorations relate the story to girls' lives and act as a humorous reminder of just how small these characters are.

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<sup>382</sup> Kimura and Suzuki, eds., *Nezumi no yomeiri*, 189, note 4.

At left, the highest ranking visitor presents a tray of large silver coins (*ōban*). He is formally dressed and has a second sword beside him, indicating his samurai status. Other gifts include squid (lower left) and bolts of cloth. The gifts are received by two men in formal wear, representatives of the bride's household, who kneel respectfully.

## § 5

**[Picture]** The bride (right panel, upper left) blackens her teeth with a brush in preparation for the wedding. She faces a round mirror on a stand, a prop that also appears in pictures of kabuki actors preparing to go on stage. To the right is her mother, wearing the same veil as in the second scene, and at left is another matron of the household. These three wear decorated jackets over their kimonos; the other women in the scene are dressed more simply. The standing girl (lower right) brings a rinse for the bride to use. In the right panel are a tobacco tray, a painted screen, and two lightly decorated chests. These contrast with the simpler decor of the left panel, where four women are preparing new garments for the bride. One woman prepares to cut some fabric as another holds the fabric still. Around these female servants are fabric and implements related to sewing. A young girl kneels as she serves a cup of tea.

From the mirror to the new costumes, there is an element of performance to the presentation of the bride in the new household. In case the reader overlooks that similarity, the conversation of the women reminds us of the **collar-cutting ceremony** (*eri tachi iwai* 衿裁ち祝い) in the kabuki theater, a time for purifying and dedicating the fabric to be used in a new kimono. The Nishimura line of artists produced illustrations of and for the kabuki theater, in addition to their book illustrations.

**Kanza[burō].** Nakamura Kanzaburō 中村勘三郎VI (1688-1758), a kabuki actor from the city of Edo. He used the name Kanzaburō from 1701 to 1750, though he temporarily changed his family name from Nakamura to Saruwaka in 1728. After 1728, Kanzaburō’s stage appearances were limited because he was working as the head of the Nakamura theater.<sup>383</sup>

**Uzaemon.** Ichimura Uzaemon 市村宇左衛門 VIII (1698-1762). The manner in which “Uzaemon” is written in this scene has been critical to the dating of the picturebook, for he performed under the name of Ichimura Takenojō IV (竹之丞) between 1703 and 1737, used the name Uzaemon with the above characters from 1737 to 1747, and changed the character for “U” to 羽 in 1748.<sup>384</sup>

The variations in two additional extant copies with the Shigenobu illustrations suggest that the picturebook had a long afterlife. One edition that was printed with re-carved woodblocks is in the collection of the National Diet Library. That edition has Takenojō in place of Uzaemon. Kimura dates the alternate edition to the twelfth month of 1748 or later, that is, after Uzaemon changed the way that he wrote his name, arguing that “Takenojō” may refer to the Ichimura actors as a group.<sup>385</sup> The third extant copy of the picturebook includes “Uzaemon” rather than “Takenojō” but apparently dates to sometime after 1777, based on the frontispiece that was used for the reprinting.<sup>386</sup>

**Kōrin** 光琳. The richly decorated manner of the artist Ogata Kōrin (1658-1716).

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<sup>383</sup> “Nakamura Kanzaburō (6 dai me),” in *Kabuki jinmei jiten* [Biographical Dictionary of Kabuki], ed. Nojima Jūsaburō, revised ed. (Nichigai Asoshietsu [Nichigai Associates], 2002), 421.

<sup>384</sup> “Ichimura Uzaemon (8 dai me),” in *Kabuki jinmei jiten*, 123.

<sup>385</sup> Kimura, *Akahon kurohon aohon shoshi*, 124.

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*, 128-129.

## § 6

**[Picture]** Messengers from the bride's household deliver long chests (*nagamochi* 長持) of gifts to servants waiting at the groom's household. The chests to the right are marked with a household crest of a square inside a circle, perhaps a combination of the bride's and groom's family crests. The porters joke about buying prostitutes if only they had access to the money in the chests. The servants opening the doors, whose clothes are marked with the circular crests that identified the bride's household in earlier scenes, are nervously polite. One (far left, second from top) stumbles over his words as he speaks to a samurai (lower right, left panel), who wears two swords and a formal top, though his trousers are tucked up for travel.

**big rolls** (*korori* ころり): palanquin bearer slang for 100 mon of copper or steel coins (*zeni*).

**red curtain [district]** (*kaki noren* 柿暖簾). Persimmon-colored (deep orange or red) shop curtains marked shops with a low class of prostitutes, who apparently still cost more than

**riverboat tarts** (*funa man* 船饅), unlicensed prostitutes that worked from boats on the Sumida River, ostensibly selling buns filled with bean jam (*manjū*).<sup>387</sup>

**Certainly, I respectfully submit . . . err . . . respectfully** (*Kashikomari mōsuru de gowari mōsuru*). The rat's needless repetition of polite words shows his nervousness on the big occasion.

## § 7

**[Picture]** In the kitchen, male rats make preparations for a feast to include sake (keg in upper right), octopus (lower right), and grilled fish (far left). Two of the rats sit at low tables, using them as cutting boards for fish or squid. Four of the rats are holding cups, and with so many of the rats drinking as they work, the sake for the wedding is running low. The busy scene suggests

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<sup>387</sup> Morishita, "Nezumi no yomeiri: waizatsu sei no shikake," 27.

the festivity and bounty of the feast to come, and the verbal text hints at the wedding night. The rats mention the wine's "great body" (*anbai*) and imagine the bride latching on to her husband like an octopus.

There are three children in the scene. A boy peeks from behind the keg of sake with a cup in his hand (right panel, upper right). An older boy stands and offers a cup of sake to the man using the mortar and pestle or to the young boy who expresses his hope for good things to eat at the wedding. The sexual imagery of the mortar and pestle suggests the wedding night—or the designs of the man on the boy beside him. The older boy's pose is also suggestive.

**Dessert** (*osae* おさえ). The meaning of *osae* is unclear but may refer to an after-dinner accompaniment to sake, which would have been brought out on a decorative display.

**I'm awful hungry. Pawdon me if I eat with my paws—what a pun!** (*kitsū hidarui. te no kohoto de kakeru, nan to share ka.*). This is a pun on a contemporary proverb along the lines of, "When you're hungry, put your hands to work."

**As sashimi, it would be wrong—a woodland cuckoo with no song** (*Sashimi ni wa narazu no mori no hototogisu*). *Narazu no mori* plays on the phrase *Tadasu no mori*, which was a name for a Kyoto-area forest known for its cuckoos. The word *narazu* means "does not become" and "does not sing," so the two halves of the sentence could mean "It can't be sashimi" and "cuckoo of the woods of no singing."

## § 8

**[Picture]** The bride (presumably in the palanquin partially visible at the lower right) and a large entourage wind around the wall in the center of the page as they process to the groom's house. Behind the wall and bringing up the rear of the procession, from right to left, are samurai in

formal wear, two servants with the square crests of the groom's household, a woman with her head covered, three girls, and four male servants, including two porters. In front of the wall and at the head of the procession, from right to left, are two men holding the front of the bride's palanquin in the background and two girls in the foreground, a servant of the bride's household with a lantern in the background, and three samurai with two swords each. In the left panel, there is a man holding a covered spear with a curved blade (*naginata*) that was considered a woman's weapon by this period but could also be displayed as a decoration. Beside him is a servant holding another lantern—the scene may take place at night. Ahead of them are a samurai in a formal top, two porters carrying decorated boxes, and at the front of the procession, two servants with lanterns.

**Make her tie the knot, the knotted pattern** (*kata tsuke kata tsuke*). *Kata tsuke* can be to set a pattern when dying (fabric, etc.) or to send a bride to marry, so this is a pun, perhaps from a song that is now lost.

## § 9

**[Picture]** The bride, groom, parents, and guests enjoy a wedding feast. At right, three men sit with trays of food; the one on the left appears to be the host. Three girls stand and serve food. One girl mentions having trouble with the unfamiliar **extra formal robe** (*kaidori* 掻取) she is wearing for the special occasion. The *kaidori* had trailing sleeves, and it was worn open over a belted under-kimono.

The decorative table (*shimadai*) in the center of the right panel, like the one in the first scene, features the auspicious symbols of a tortoise, a crane, pine, and bamboo, but it does not include the rat couple, who are instead present elsewhere in this double-page spread. At left, the

bride's mother has veiled her hair as in earlier scenes, but now the bride's hair is covered as well. In the center, a girl presents a bowl of **high-piled rice** (*otakamori*) that the bride and groom will share in commemoration of their wedding day. Three female guests sit with trays of food.

**First meeting at the Yoshiwara** (*Yoshiwara no shokai*). The groom compares the wedding to a first meeting with a courtesan in the pleasure quarter. The remark is both an expression of appreciation for the occasion and the bride and an acknowledgment that the banquet marks the beginning of a sexual relationship.

## § 10

**[Picture]** The rat bride has just given birth to her first child, a son. At right, the new mother rests, covered in a thick kimono, attended by several women, and relieved to have had an easy childbirth. Despite the sexual innuendo in the preceding pages, the picturebook has omitted everything between the wedding banquet and the birth of the first child. The new father (lower right) consults the doctor, who holds a spoon to prepare medicine.

At left, one girl carries tea, and another fans a stove, heating water. The midwife holds the naked infant over a tub, giving him the customary first bath. Nearby, a girl holds a kettle of water and a woman holds a kimono, ready to receive the baby. The scene is a happy one, but expressions of relief and concern suggest the possibility that some births prove more difficult.

The folding screen includes the signature "Nishimura Magosaburō 西村孫三良," another artistic name used by Shigenobu. He also used both names in *Old Tale of Momotarō*, *Republished*.<sup>388</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., (*Saihan*) *Momotarō mukashi gatari*, vol. 1, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 57 and 67.

## § 11

**[Picture]** A pilgrimage to a shrine with the bride's firstborn son, who is just visible in the arms of the veiled woman below the railing. Among the pilgrims is a young girl (second from lower right). Musicians and a shrine maiden perform.

Even if the mother is not present—since the woman holding the baby may be a nurse—this pilgrimage completes the bride's passage from girlhood to motherhood as well as the literal journey she began by traveling to her husband's home. Mother and child both survived what must have been a critical first month, for a male baby was taken to the shrine of the local god thirty-one or thirty-two days after birth. This is another cause for celebration, and it shows that the marriage is a success in one of its goals.



## Chapter 5: Seasonal Changes and the Stuff of Picturebooks

Demons in the sky who make the weather are the central actors in *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* (*Kaminari no shiki banashi* 雷の四季咄, author and illustrator unknown, ca. 1743-1750s).<sup>389</sup> Whereas *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* and *The Rat Wedding* drew on stories from earlier illustrated scrolls and other sources, *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* lacks a “story” as such, despite its title. Instead of a coherent plot, loosely connected humorous scenes communicate aspects of cultural literacy to a child audience. In a time when the idea of a powerful and threatening thunder god was current on the popular stage, this “patterned book” (*kōzeibyōshi*) of the Kamigata region and a related red book of Edo offer comfortingly familiar visions of the heavens and non-threatening explanations of the source of thunder and other meteorological phenomena. The centrality of a theme—in this case, thunder in four seasons—rather than a story is characteristic of much eighteenth-century Japanese children’s literature and differentiates this picturebook from its sources in legend, myth, and drama.<sup>390</sup> This picturebook demonstrates how consideration of a child readership could color the treatment of topics and characters from older sources.

As a picturebook for children, *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* not only borrows ideas and images across media and genres but also transforms this material in the process of organizing it by season. This transformation is remarkable because much of the prior scholarship on Edo-period books for children (at least that published in Western languages) has tended to

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<sup>389</sup> *Kaminari no shiki banashi*, 168-174, summary 487.

<sup>390</sup> Another example of a picturebook with a central theme rather than a story is *Verses for Schoolchildren*, translated in Chapter Six.

assume that early picturebooks contained traditional stories, that they, in other words, passively transmitted culture generated in other genres—oral literature, classical or medieval tales, and theater—without a particular concern for the child reader.<sup>391</sup> For example, Yoshiko Takita writes:

In Japan there had been a rich stock of stories and novels for women and children, *Otogi-Zōshi* which originated in *Muromachi* Period [1392-1573]. They were folk tales, legends, fairy tales, and religious and moral stories, but they were not written for or told directly to children. It is true that people read these stories in *Aka-Hon* (Red Book) in the Edo period, for there were no alternatives.<sup>392</sup>

The Muromachi-period works Takita references would include *Yahyōe the Rat* and *The Story of the Rat*, mentioned earlier in relation to *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* and *Rat Wedding*. The illustrated tales of the Muromachi Period were not generally targeted specifically at children, even when they appeared in small scrolls.<sup>393</sup> But Takita's dismissal of red books as storybooks of last resort does not do justice to the rich visual-verbal texture of red books and other eighteenth-century picturebooks. Nor does it recognize the inclusion of children and child-centered themes in many of these picturebooks, including *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons*.

Teruo Jinguh's more recent, though equally brief, description of red books in the *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* acknowledges that they were meant for children: "Story books especially for children . . . were called *Akahon* (Red Books). . . ." However, Jinguh overlooks both the centrality of illustration in red books and the degree to which they privileged scene over story when he characterizes them as "books of myth,

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<sup>391</sup> Exceptions to this general rule include Herring, *The Dawn of Wisdom*, 7, 11-12; Kimbrough, "Illustrating the Classics: The *Otogizōshi Lazy Tarō* in Edo Pictorial Fiction," 260-262.

<sup>392</sup> Takita, "Wakamatsu Shizuko and 'Little Lord Fauntleroy,'" 4.

<sup>393</sup> McCormick, *Tosa Mitsunobu and the Small Scroll in Medieval Japan*, 72-78.

legend, folk or fairy tales in red bindings.”<sup>394</sup> L. Halliday Piel notes that the works are illustrated but still emphasizes the red books’ dependency on folk tales:

Picture books may have bridged the gulf between oral stories and classical texts, at least in families that could afford them. There were illustrated collections of medieval folk tales (*setsuwa* or *otogi-zōshi*), known as ‘red books’ (*akahon*), and picture books (*kusazōshi*) based on medieval epics, Heian romances, ghost stories and plots of kabuki plays.<sup>395</sup>

Although there are elements from earlier source materials in red books and patterned books, the relationship between the sources and the picturebooks was more complex than it may seem from such descriptions.<sup>396</sup> With a picturebook like *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons*, the relationship to “myth, legend, folk or fairy tales” is tangential as the pictures and dialogue incorporate elements from various stories.

As has already been seen in *Rat Wedding* and *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, picturebooks did not pass on old stories without some degree of variation and adaptation to the particular characteristics and goals of children’s literature. In the case of *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons*, the picturebook humanizes thunder demons in two ways. First, it attributes to the demons a family life that includes children. An appeal to a child audience is visible from the first scene of the picturebook, where a young boy demon holds a kite and says, “Daddy, a kite broke off and came from below. I picked it up” (*Totosama, shita kara ika ga kirete kita. Ore ga hirōta*). A human child’s lost kite thus connects earth with the parallel realm of the demons above the clouds. In depicting thunder demons within the context of a family, the picturebook suggests a universality of the relationship between parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren.

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<sup>394</sup> Jinguh, “Japan,” 1108.

<sup>395</sup> Piel, “The Ideology of the Child in Japan, 1600-1945,” 82.

<sup>396</sup> See for example, Kimbrough, “Illustrating the Classics,” 260-261.

Second, the picturebook represents the creation of weather as the demons' duty, a labor the demons perform on behalf of humans. One demon blows toward earth and boasts that people “absolutely love this breeze down there in summer” (*shita de, natsu, kono kaze o, ikkō hoshigaru*). Other demons mention that they are looking forward to taking breaks to smoke or eat lunch. Similarly, the cold weather of winter is presented as a rare opportunity to spend leisure time with other members of the household. The demons show what it means to work hard and to value times of rest. At the same time, this depiction of thunder demons as similar to people in their responsibilities and their feelings about work both renders the demons less fearsome and neutralizes potentially frightening phenomena such as thunder, lightning, and hail.<sup>397</sup>

### **Theme, Not Plot**

*Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* consists of a sequence of seven scenes loosely organized by season. Episodic structures of this kind were common among early woodblock-printed picturebooks for children.<sup>398</sup> The picturebook has fourteen illustrated pages, but its original covers are missing. As a result, the original full title is unknown; the short title printed on the edges of the pages (*hashiradai*) is “Thunder” (*kaminari* 雷).<sup>399</sup> The scenes within the book are not causally linked nor even related by the reappearance of specific characters. Instead, the scenes are related by their shared setting—up in the clouds above earth—and by their focus on the weather-related activities of thunder demons during the seasons of a year.

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<sup>397</sup> For a study of how the image of thunder demons changed in China—centuries prior to this time but with possible implications for the Japanese understanding of thunder—see Mark R. E. Meulenbeld, “Civilized Demons: Ming Thunder Gods from Ritual to Literature” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2007).

<sup>398</sup> See for example: In *KKES, Edo hen: Fukujin asobi*, 162-172; *Oni no shiki asobi*, 238-248; *Musha zukushi*, 363-374. In *KKES, Kamigata hen: Ehon Fukujin kodomo asobi*, 200-208; *Musha ehon*, 338-347; *Maru zukushi*, 406-417.

<sup>399</sup> *Kaminari no shiki banashi*, 487.

As Barbara Kiefer has noted of twentieth-century and later picturebooks, not all picturebooks are picture storybooks. There are “alphabet and counting books, ‘toy’ books, concept books, information books, and, of course, wordless books.”<sup>400</sup> Similarly, late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Japanese picturebooks did not always tell a story. Picturebooks that presented a series of thematically related illustrations, as opposed to a story, were typical of early woodblock-printed children’s literature through the mid-eighteenth-century; often their titles include words like “line-up” (*soroe*) or “exhaustive listing” (*tsukushi*). For example, among the ten picturebooks of the 1660s and 1670s that were left as a memorial to a deceased boy (as discussed in Chapter One), there were four of this kind: *Goblin Line-up* (*Tengu soroe*), *Lots of Pictures of Buffoons* (*Dōke e-tsukushi*), *Lots of Rogue Priests* (*Akusō-zukushi*), and *Tall Tales* (*Senmitsu hanashi*). *Goblin Line-up* consists of thirty illustrations of long-nosed goblins together with descriptive captions, and *Tall Tales* presents fifteen vignettes of encounters with the supernatural. The remaining two picturebooks are similarly loosely organized by theme.<sup>401</sup> These picturebooks and others like them present pictures and sparse verbal text on the themes indicated by their titles.

*Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* exhibits one such theme—that of seasonal activities or festivities. The picturebook is organized chronologically, beginning in early spring and ending in winter on an auspicious note suitable to the New Year’s season (considered early spring) when picturebooks were typically published. *Amusements of the Young* (*Osana asobi*), discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, similarly begins with springtime amusements like kite-flying

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<sup>400</sup> Barbara Kiefer, “What is a Picturebook, Anyway? The Evolution of Form and Substance Through the Postmodern Era and Beyond,” 10.

<sup>401</sup> The four are reproduced and transcribed in Okamoto, ed., *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū: Tengu soroe*, 10-27, 251-252; *Dōke e-tsukushi*, 28-45, 252-253; *Akusō-zukushi*, 46-61, 253-258; *Senmitsu hanashi*, 62-79, 258-261.

and looking at picturebooks, and it ends with children building a snowman in the winter.<sup>402</sup> Seasonal activities are a recurring motif in *Verses for Schoolchildren* as well.<sup>403</sup> The thunder demons introduce an added complication; where they live—above the clouds—the seasons are the opposite of those on earth. The thunder demons repeatedly remark on both the characteristics of the current season and those of the season that is its opposite, the cold of winter and the heat of summer, for example.

As an organizing theme, the seasons are found in multiple genres, not only woodblock-printed picturebooks but also illustrated scrolls like *Activities Throughout the Year* (*Nenjū gyōji emaki* 年中行事絵巻) and lightly illustrated reference works, such as *Chronicle of the Seasons in Japan* (*Nihon saijiki* 日本歳時記), which Emura Hokkai recommended for children.<sup>404</sup>

Seasonality was critically important to Japanese art, poetry, and drama at this time, not to mention such activities as flower arranging and the celebration of holidays.<sup>405</sup> So it is no wonder that children's literature would introduce weather and seasonally appropriate activities both visually and verbally as key elements of cultural literacy.

### **Stories of Thunder in Multiple Media and Several Genres**

Similarities between *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* and other picturebooks about the seasonal activities of thunder demons demonstrate the interconnected nature of picturebook genres from Kamigata and Edo. *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* has received little scholarly

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<sup>402</sup> *Osana asobi*, 375-380.

<sup>403</sup> See translation in Chapter Six.

<sup>404</sup> Emura Hokkai, *Jugyō hen*, 148; Penelope Mason, *A History of Japanese Art* (New York: Abrams, 1993), 143.

<sup>405</sup> Cf. Haruo Shirane, *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons: Nature, Literature, and the Arts* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2012).

attention since the 1985 publication of an annotated transcription except in relation to two other picturebooks about thunder demons, both titled *Amusements of the Demons in Four Seasons* (*Oni no shiki asobi*: おにの四季あそび (published by Urokogataya, ca. 1740s) and 鬼乃四季遊 (ca. 1820s)).<sup>406</sup> The 1740s *Amusements of the Demons in Four Seasons*, a “red book” (*akahon*) from the city of Edo, seems to be roughly contemporaneous with *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* since the two picturebooks are similar in structure, theme, and the visual depiction of thunder demons.<sup>407</sup> The red book refers to the actor Kikunojō I (d. 1749) in the play *A Maiden Narukami* [i.e., “thunder”] (*Onna Narukami*, 1743), so it can be dated to 1744 or shortly thereafter.<sup>408</sup> This Edo production was inspired by an earlier play in Osaka (the Kamigata region): *Saint Narukami and the God Fudō: Cherry Blossoms on the Northern Mountains* (*Narukami Fudō kitayama zakura*, 1742).<sup>409</sup> If *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* accompanied or followed this thematically related play, it may have preceded or even inspired its Edo cousin.

The 1820s version of *Amusements of the Demons in Four Seasons* is a “bean book” (*mamehon*), which appears to be closely adapted from the earlier picturebook of the same name.<sup>410</sup> In the intervening years, the Urokogataya red book *Amusements of the Demons in Four Seasons* had been reprinted sometime after 1798 by the Nishimuraya with a cover and frontispiece in the style of a yellow book.<sup>411</sup> Thus, the single picturebook translated here, *Stories*

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<sup>406</sup> *Kaminari no shiki banashi*, 168-174; *Oni no shiki asobi* (ca. 1740s), in *KKES, Edo hen*, 238-248; *Oni no shiki asobi* (ca. 1740s), ed. Katō Yasuko, in vol. 1 of *EEH*, 19-33; Ichienai (a.k.a. Utagawa) Kunimaru, ill., *Oni no shiki asobi*, ca. Bunsei era (1818-1830), in Katō, ed., (*Bakumatsu, Meiji*) *Mamehon shūsei*, 132-139.

<sup>407</sup> Katō, “Edo ki kodomo ehon no miryoku (shōzen),” 80, 83.

<sup>408</sup> Katō, “Edo ki kodomo ehon no miryoku (shōzen),” 79; Suzuki and Kimura, eds., *KKES, Edo hen*, 495.

<sup>409</sup> Tsuuchi Hanjurō, Yasuda Abun, and Nakada Mansuke, *Saint Narukami and the God Fudō*, in James R. Brandon, trans., *Kabuki: Five Classic Plays* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 93-164.

<sup>410</sup> Katō, “Edo ki kodomo ehon no miryoku (shōzen),” 80.

<sup>411</sup> Katō, “*Oni no shiki asobi*,” in *Kusazōshi jiten*, 74-75; Tanahashi, *Kibyōshi sōran* vol. 2, 665.

of *Thunder in Four Seasons*, was one of the earliest entries in a line of thunder-demon picturebooks that brought the topic of thunder from the stage into children's literature and forward through a new century.

The taming of thunder in *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* stands in marked contrast to the play *Saint Narukami and the God Fudō*, which depicts a vengeful thunder god. Whereas the play tells of people troubled by drought, the picturebook depicts good-natured demons considering how best to serve people and help crops. *Saint Narukami and the God Fudo* was based on Indian legend, classical Japanese tale collections, *nō* theater, puppet theater, and multiple kabuki plays, which were combined into one full-day play.<sup>412</sup> So if the 1742 production inspired the picturebook, it was itself inspired by other dramatic and literary sources. *Saint Narukami and the God Fudō* introduces the legend on which the play is based in a monologue by Narukami, whose name means “thunder:”

In ancient times there was a priest in India from Benaras called the Holy One-Horned Wizard. Such was his wizardry he rode the clouds, he walked on water, until the day the Dragon Gods of Rain deluged the ground with endless downpour, when unthinkingly the Holy Hermit slipped and fell into a valley far below. Enraged, he cursed all the Dragon Gods living between the heavens and the seas . . . With angry eyes the size of wagon wheels the Holy Wizard imprisoned all offending Gods of Rain. . . . Drought seized the world, fields whirled with dust, everywhere the people suffered.<sup>413</sup>

Like the “Holy One-Horned Wizard” (*Ikkaku sennin*), Narukami has imprisoned the dragon gods behind a sacred rope out of anger, albeit anger directed at the emperor rather than toward the dragon gods themselves. Both the Holy One-Horned Wizard and Narukami find their spells broken by beautiful women who seduce the men so as to disrupt their ascetic practices and bring back the rain. Furious at the woman who caused his downfall, Narukami threatens to pursue her

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<sup>412</sup> Tsuuchi, Yasuda, and Nakada, *Saint Narukami and the God Fudō*, 95.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.



as “roaring thunder” (*naru ikazuchi*) for the rest of his life.<sup>414</sup> *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* shares several elements with this legend: its explanation of the weather as caused by beings above the clouds, the depiction of some of these beings as creatures with single horns, and its concern for the effects of the weather on agriculture and other aspects of human life. But *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* is not a condensed version of the play—it omits the plot and thereby eliminates the rage, suffering, and seduction in the drama.

Beyond picturebooks explicitly focused on the seasonal activities of thunder demons, the demons made cameo appearances in other eighteenth-century picturebooks. Thunder demons of the kind in *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* appear in multiple picturebook versions of the story of the boy hero Kintarō (a.k.a. Kaidōmaru).<sup>415</sup> In that way, the story of the thunder demons’ activities intersects with one of the canonical tales that emerged in the late Edo period as representative works of children’s literature (as discussed in the second chapter).

Just as *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* humanized the thunder demons, later appearances of the thunder demons in other works made them subject to the power of a child, albeit one with extraordinary strength. In a red book published by Urokogataya, for example, Kaidōmaru torments a thunder demon by tying him up and smashing the drums that make the sound of thunder (Figure 38). The demon begs the boy to return the drums since they are needed in the rainy season, but the boy complains, “The ‘rumble rumble’ is too noisy when I’m playing.”<sup>416</sup> A closely related patterned book (Figure 39) combines this scene with a sumo match that appears earlier in the red book—or inspires both scenes, depending on which picturebook

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<sup>414</sup> *Narukami*, in Hattori Yukio, ed., *Kanjinchō, Kenuki, Shibaraku, Narukami, Yanone*, vol. 10 of *Kabuki on Stage* (Hakushuisha, 1985), 141.

<sup>415</sup> *Kintoki osana-dachi*, 81

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

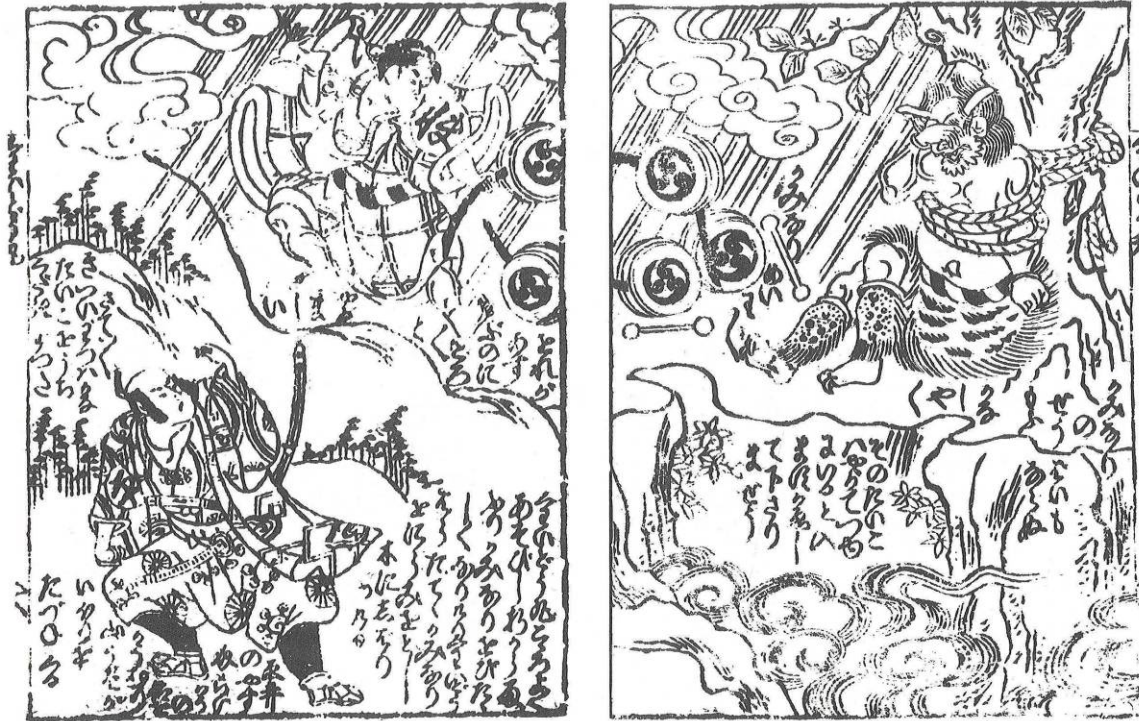


Figure 38: In a red book, a bound thunder demon (right) cries helplessly as the child hero Kaidōmaru (a.k.a. Kintoki or Kintarō, upper left) smashes the drums he uses to make thunder. A samurai observes.

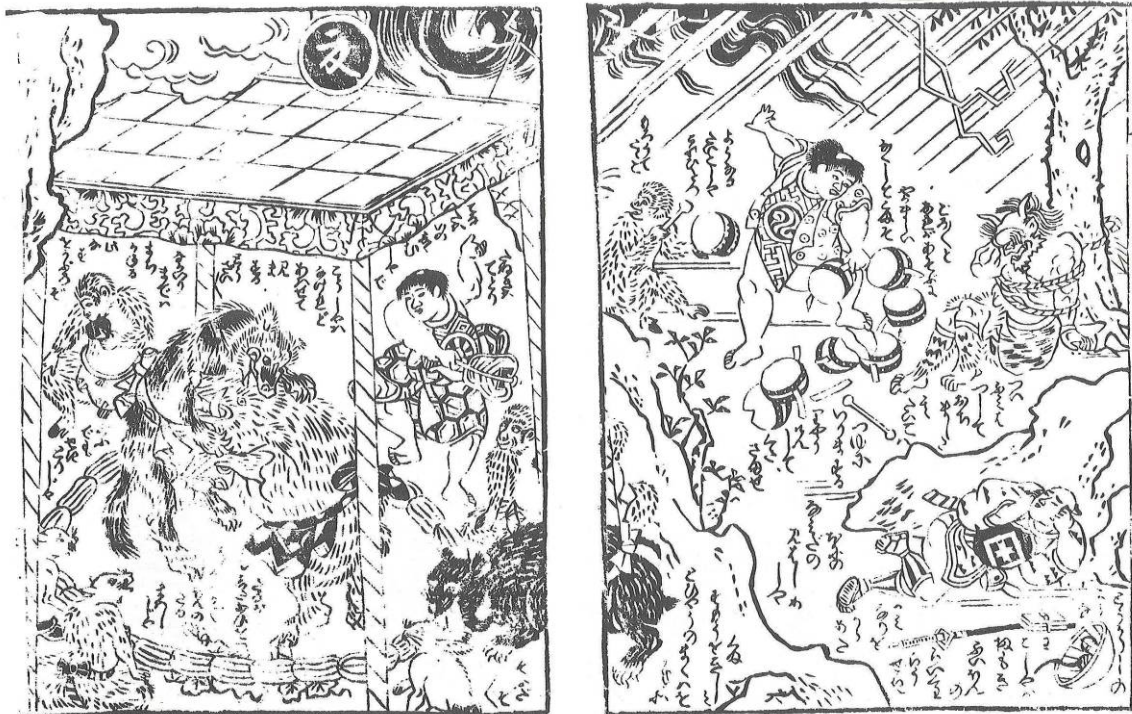


Figure 39: “Summer” (*natsu*). In a patterned book, a bound thunder demon (upper right) cries as Kaidōmaru smashes his drums. A monkey and a samurai observe. On the left, Kaidōmaru referees a sumo match between two wild boars.

came first.<sup>417</sup> Again, the thunder demon begs to no avail, “I just missed my step and fell. I’ll need those drums in the rainy season. Please understand.”<sup>418</sup> The threat of thunder is reduced to a disruption of play, and in controlling the thunder demon, the boy controls the weather.

*Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* and other picturebooks about thunder are far from printed versions of the plays *Saint Narukami and the God Fudō* (Osaka, 1742) and *A Maiden Narukami* (Edo, 1743). Only personified thunder and the idea of weather-making remain for the child reader. However, the differences shed light on the objectives of picturebooks as children’s literature as opposed to adaptations of plays or records of folklore. The picturebooks take what is great and terrible in the plays—thunder gods—and reduce them to demons with work and domestic lives similar to those of human farmers. In each of their picturebook appearances, the thunder demons retain their mythical associations with the weather and the realm of the sky, but they lack the power and ferocity that thunder holds in the theater and in earlier myth.

### **Lessons of the Seasons**

*Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* not only neutralizes the threat of thunder but also demonstrates how to approach work and play. The seasonal theme allows the picturebook to treat activities throughout the year since the busy thunder demons work hard throughout the spring, summer, and fall. Even the cold of winter has value because it provides respite from work and the opportunity to enjoy reading.

The picturebook’s dialogue and events convey a commonsense wisdom about work. The thunder demons tell each other to pay attention, work hard, remember what they have learned,

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<sup>417</sup> *Kaidōmaru*, in *KKES, Kamigata hen*, 126; cf. *Kintoki osana-dachi*, 78, 81.

<sup>418</sup> *Kaidōmaru*, 126.

and avoid boasting. In the second scene, a demon who forgets which season it is on earth provides an occasion for the explanation of the seasons. Another demon's boast, "Nobody's as good as I am at scattering hail evenly," elicits this reprimand, "Stop talking and put in some effort."<sup>419</sup> The messages about the importance of careful attention and hard work in *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* are not intrinsic to the topic of thunder demons in the seasons, as is evident by the fact that the related red book, *Amusements of the Demons in Four Seasons*, puts greater emphasis on puns and references to popular culture than on the demons' attitudes toward work.<sup>420</sup>

A scene from a festival for Tenjin—patron deity for students and calligraphers but also long associated with thunder—provides an opportunity for references to thunder lore, including the idea that thunder demons are wont to steal human belly buttons.<sup>421</sup> The veneration of Tenjin in children's writing schools (*terakoya*) is one way that this otherworldly setting intersects with the everyday world of its audience—thunder demons and young students are alike in their devotion to Tenjin.<sup>422</sup>

Winter is a time for quiet, indoor activities, such as reading and writing. *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* depicts a family gathering in cold weather (Figure 40). The scene is one of relaxation that contrasts with the busy activity of the other scenes, a fact that one of the male demons (far left) notes, "There's free time in winter, but there won't be time to spend like this going forward." In the foreground is an oversized hibachi, around which gather various

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<sup>419</sup> *Kaminari no shiki banashi*, 169.

<sup>420</sup> *Oni no shiki asobi*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 238-248.

<sup>421</sup> *Kaminari no shiki banashi*, 172.

<sup>422</sup> See further discussion of Tenjin in Chapter Two and in connection with *Verses for Schoolchildren* in Chapter Six.

members of the household, including a young boy (upper right) and his older brother (next to him, writing with stick).



**Figure 40:** In *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons*, the thunder demon family gathers around an oversized hibachi, passing the slow winter days with writing, reading, and smoking.

In the picturebook, literacy is presented as a diversion for a slow winter day. The older boy is practicing writing in the ashes, while his brother watches, and a young woman (far right), possibly an older sister, reminds him of the next character to write.<sup>423</sup> The younger brother tells his grandfather (standing), “Grampa, big brother is writing the syllabary!” (*Jisan ani ga iroha o kaku wai na*). The grandfather’s response is not to tell the children to work hard on writing but to

<sup>423</sup> Verses by Kobayashi Issa (1763-1827) evoke a lonelier scene of writing in ashes:

In winter hibernation  
I look forward to  
My ABCs

Ashes on an old tray  
Writing practice  
In the cold

Translated in Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, 157.

tell them to play nicely together (*Magodomo nakayō shite asobe*). At the upper left is a male demon, possibly the boys' father, who lies with a book in the comfort of a quilt and a heated table (*kotatsu*). Although he is not reading a picturebook, he models reading as a leisure activity. He invites his father to the warmth of the table, an act that shows both his respect for the older man and the desirability of his position with the book and blanket.

The association of literacy with leisure has as much commercial value as educational value in the picturebook's real-world context. Parents might appreciate child readers and viewers of *Stories of Thunder in the Four Seasons* learning to work hard, venerate Tenjin, or spend quiet days reading and writing. But the publisher would benefit as well if the child audience learned to appreciate reading enough to want to buy more books.

### **Translation of *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* (*Kaminari no shiki banashi*)**

In *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons*, elements of popular culture, literature, and myth combine in a playful way that relates to children's lives, communicates some basic moral lessons, and follows the basic structure of the seasons. *Saint Narukami and the God Fudō* and related tale literature have what the picturebooks lack: plot and named characters. This lack is suggestive of the purpose of children's literature. Long, complicated stories do not belong in picturebooks for children because children do not enjoy them, as Yamada Keiō, an early nineteenth-century Japanese writer, explained, nostalgic for the simpler picturebooks of his youth.<sup>424</sup> Moreover, the auspicious nature of the red book tends, though not without exceptions, to diminish conflict, without which plot, at least in the Aristotelian sense, is necessarily attenuated. Rather than a

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<sup>424</sup> Yamada, *Hōryaku genrai shū I*, 61-62. See further discussion of this passage in the first chapter.

shortcoming, this is a choice to tailor the material to the particular interests and needs of children and the demands of a felicitous genre.

The topic of thunder serves to capture the interest of consumers in a picturebook designed for gift-giving at such times as the auspicious New Year season. What remains of the picturebook's sources in myth and theater is enough to inform the reader about the seasons and to communicate a safe and benevolent view of the natural and supernatural world. Publishers must surely have experienced success with readers using this formula since related themes and illustrations appear in the three versions of *Amusements of the Thunder Demons in Four Seasons* as well as, to a certain extent, in other picturebooks where thunder demons or seasonal activities appear.

The translation and annotations that follow rely heavily on an edition annotated by Japanese scholars.<sup>425</sup> The translation benefited from comparison with the black book and bean book versions of *Amusements of the Demons in Four Seasons*.<sup>426</sup> Additional commentary on the eighteenth-century *Amusements of the Demons in Four Seasons* is found in *Kusazōshi jiten* (Encyclopedia of Edo Comicbooks).<sup>427</sup> In the translation that follows, the illustrations are from the text in *Kinsei kodomo no ehon shū, Kamigata hen* (Anthology of Early Modern Children's Picturebooks, Kamigata Volume).<sup>428</sup> The original cover is not extant.

As with the other translations in this dissertation, *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* is to be read from right to left. The translation begins at page 235 and ends at 222. The annotations begin on page 236.

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<sup>425</sup> *Kaminari no shiki banashi*, 168-174, summary 487.

<sup>426</sup> *Oni no shiki asobi*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 238-248; Ichien-sai Kunimaru, ill., *Oni no shiki asobi*, 132-139.

<sup>427</sup> Katō Yasuko, "Oni no shiki asobi," in *Kusazōshi jiten*, 74-76.

<sup>428</sup> *Kaminari no shiki banashi*, 168-174.

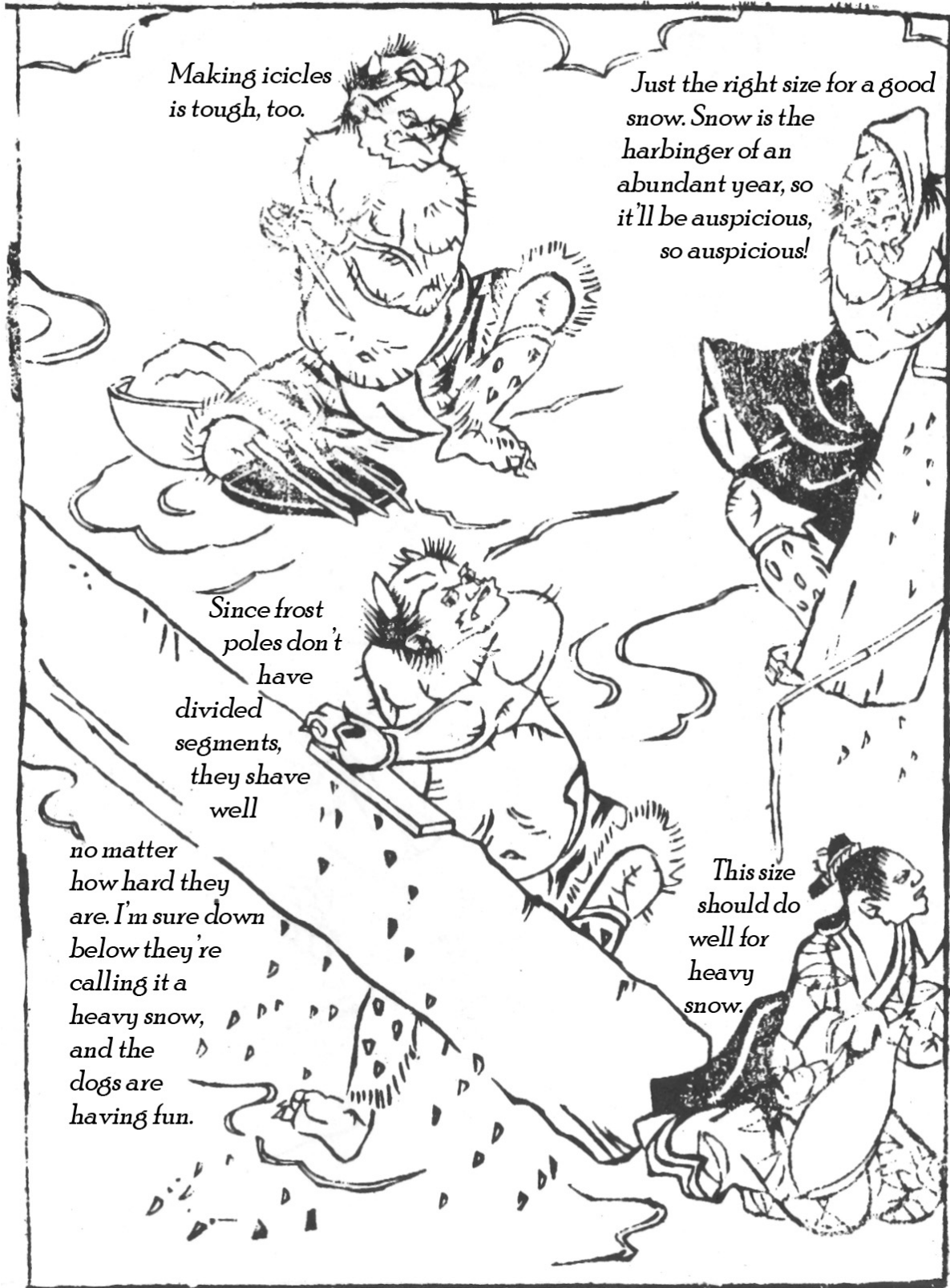


Figure 41: *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §7 left





Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §7 right



HEAVENS

The south wind  
has to be warm.

...  
mirror polisher,  
mirror polisher.

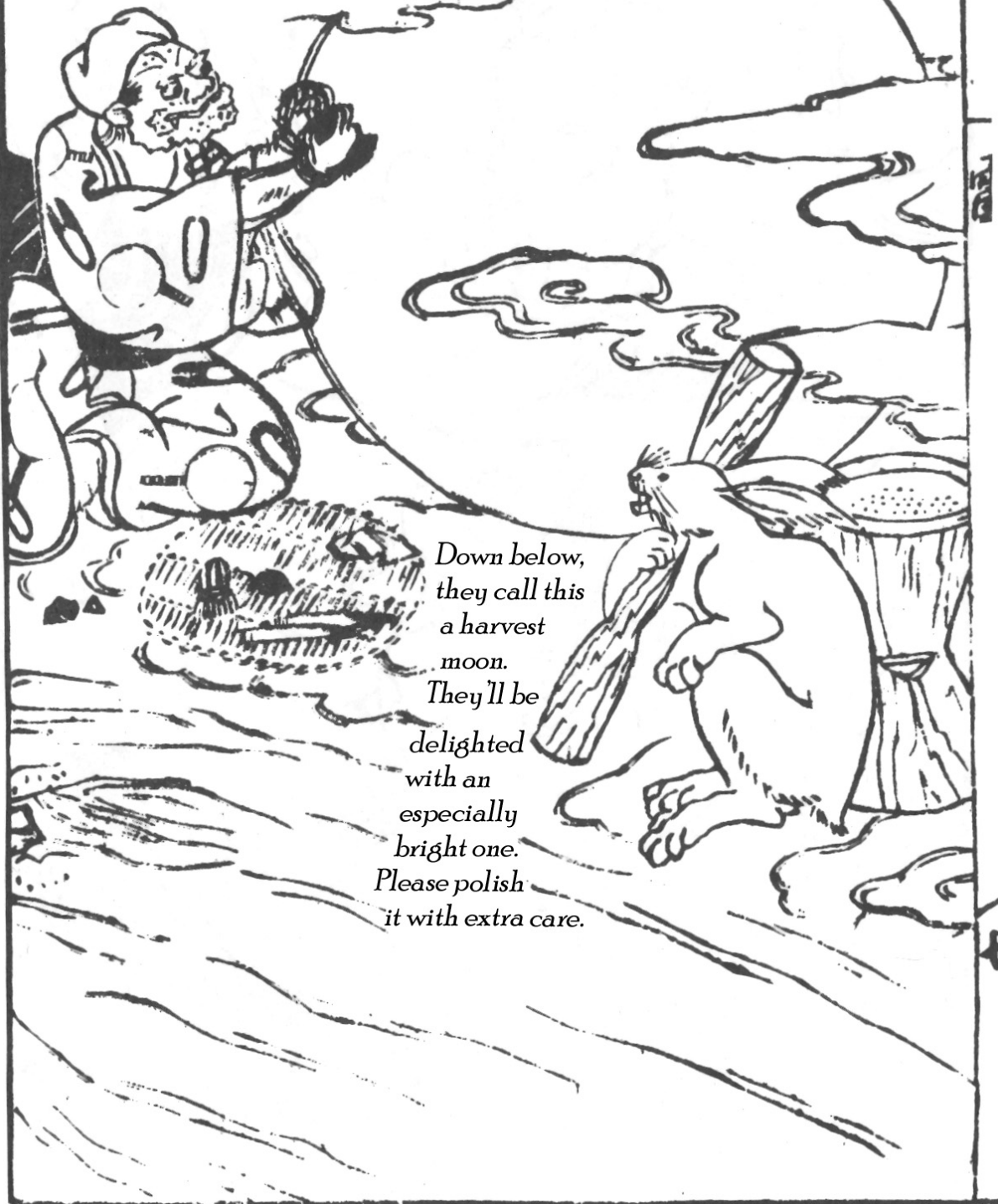
It's almost like  
the fiery chariot.

Mirror Polisher  
Mirror

Once we're  
done with  
this, why  
don't we stop  
for lunch?

Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §6 left

*Of course, I'll polish it well for you.  
Mirror polisher, mirror polisher  
who can't polish without drinking...*



*Down below,  
they call this  
a harvest  
moon.  
They'll be  
delighted  
with an  
especially  
bright one.  
Please polish  
it with extra care.*

Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §6 right



Hey, look out! What a clumsy  
guy! Couldn't you see the gap  
in the clouds?

When you go  
down, a belly  
button would  
make a nice  
souvenir!

Hail the Three!  
I missed my step.

Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §5 left



Heave ho,  
heave ho.

Ugh, it's  
heavy,  
so heavy.

If I tell, people  
would  
flock to me.  
They'd say  
the wind god  
had come  
and they'd  
send me off  
with respect.  
Unlike you guys.

Kitano  
Thunder  
Shrine

I came close to  
falling, too.

Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §5 right

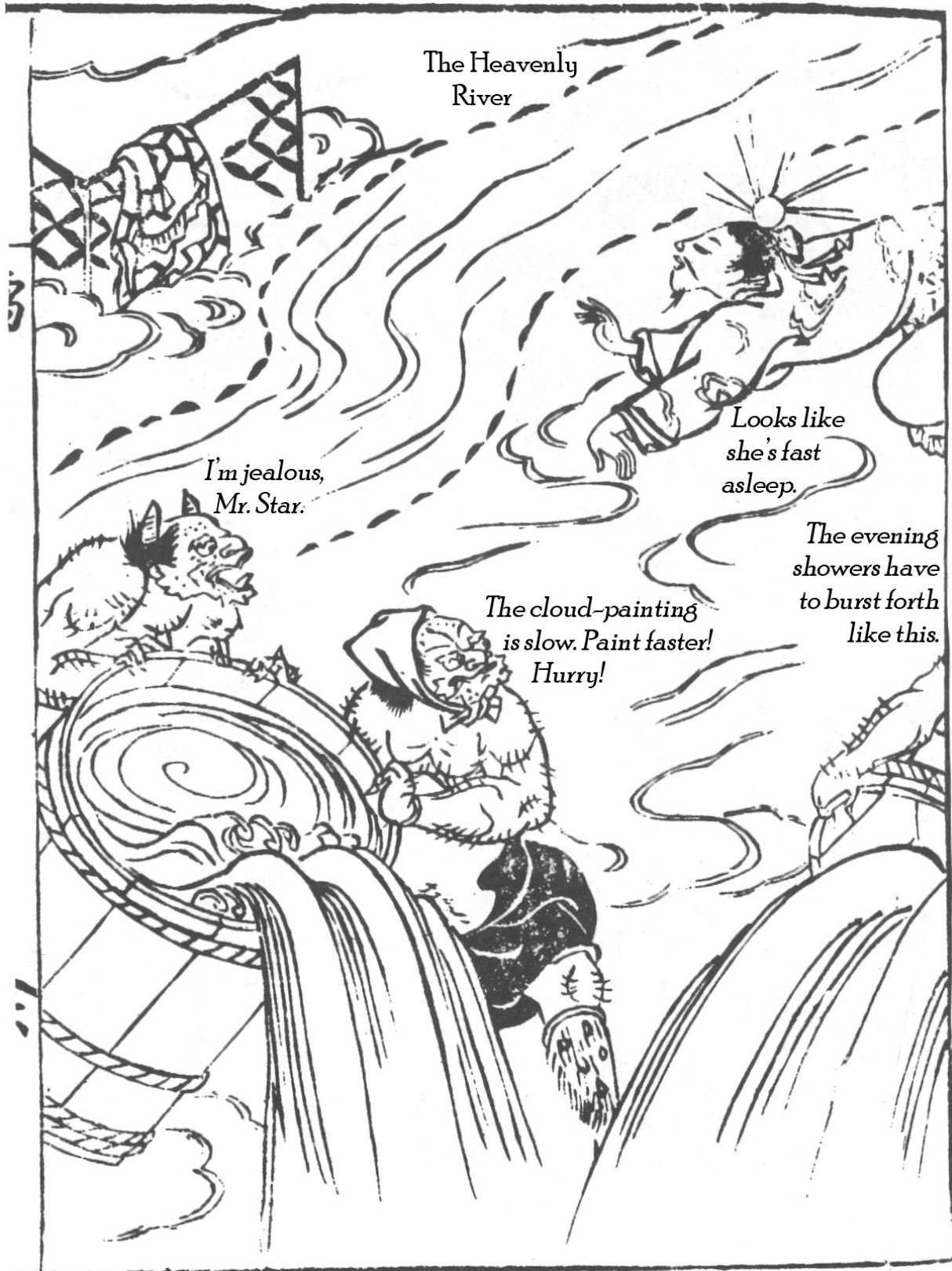


Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §4 left

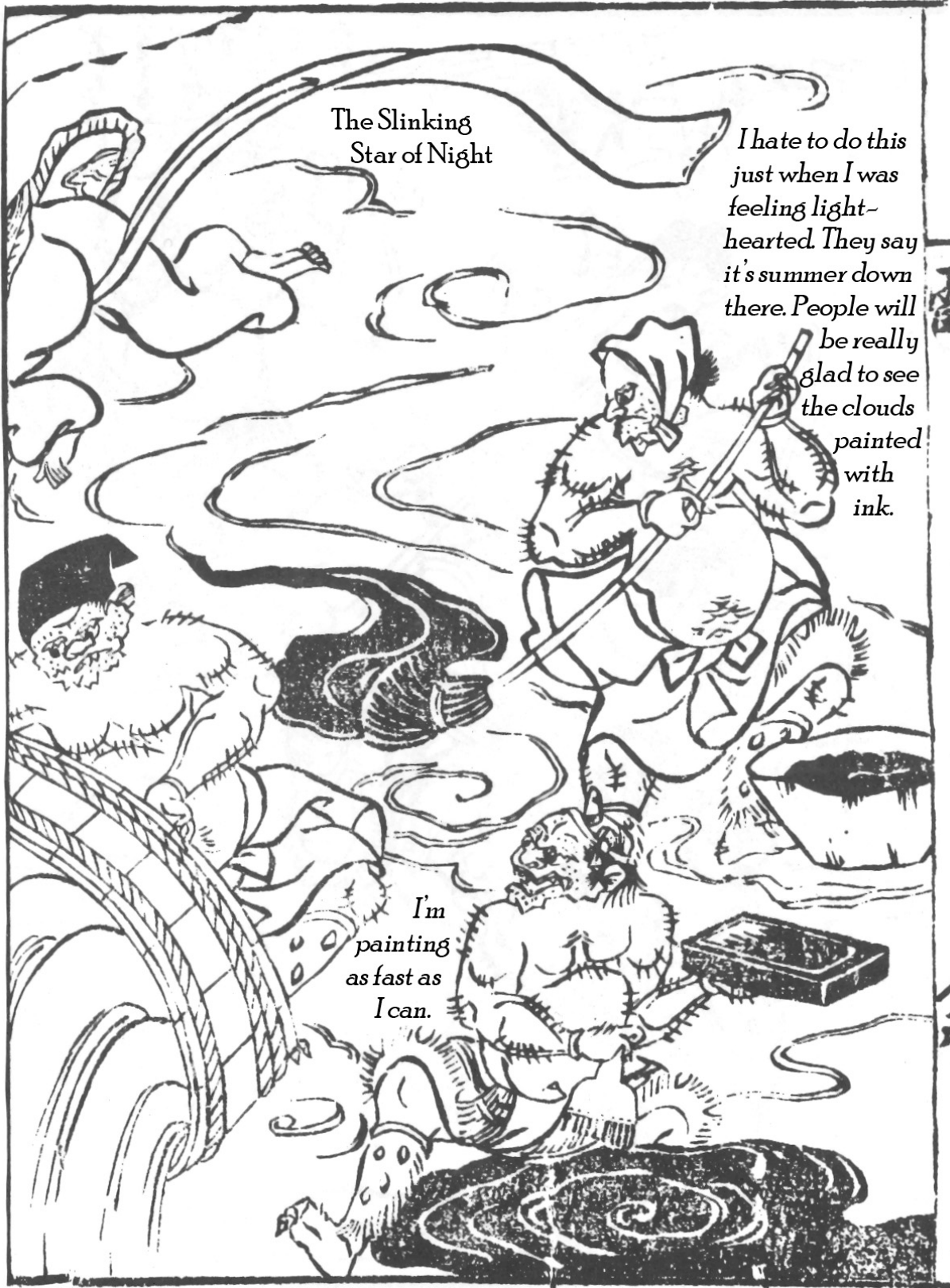


Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §4 right



Father, come use  
the heated table.

I'm really  
feeling the  
winter  
chill.

We have  
free time in  
winter, but  
there won't  
be time to  
spend  
like this  
going forward.

Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §3 left



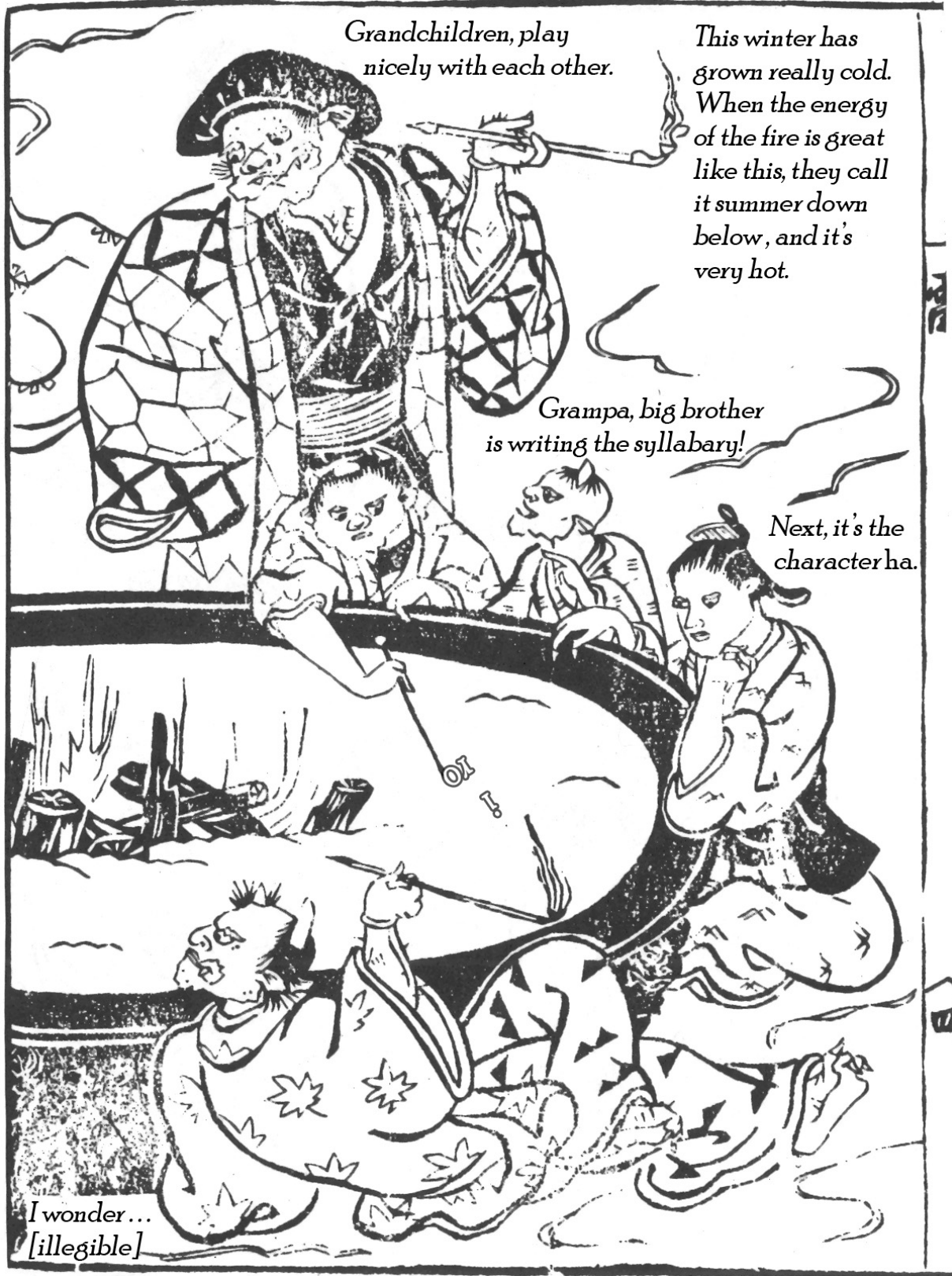


Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §3 right

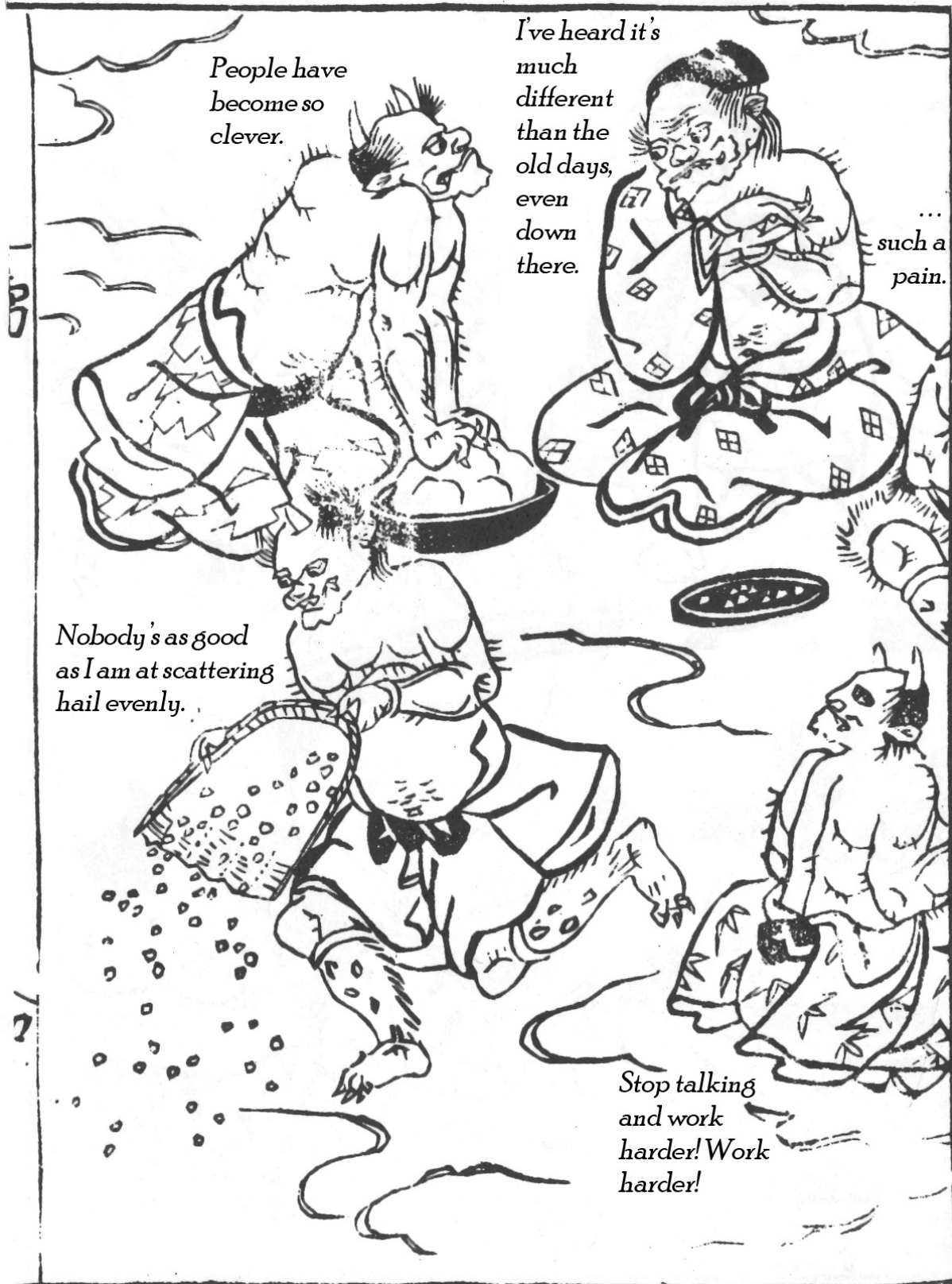


Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §2 left

What is  
it in the land  
below?  
Rolling  
hail is...

You should remember the  
fall up here is always spring  
down there. Every single  
year. What a bad memory...



Not to boast,  
but I'm  
famous  
for  
being  
long-  
winded.  
They absolutely  
love this breeze  
down there  
in summer.

Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §2 right

Father, we should rejoice since they say it is spring in the land below. Let's do our best and send down slushy snow.

They say this wind is called a goblin wind or a whirlwind down there. Fan hard, keep fanning.

You'll be sharp when you grow up.

You picked up a good thing, didn't you, boy?

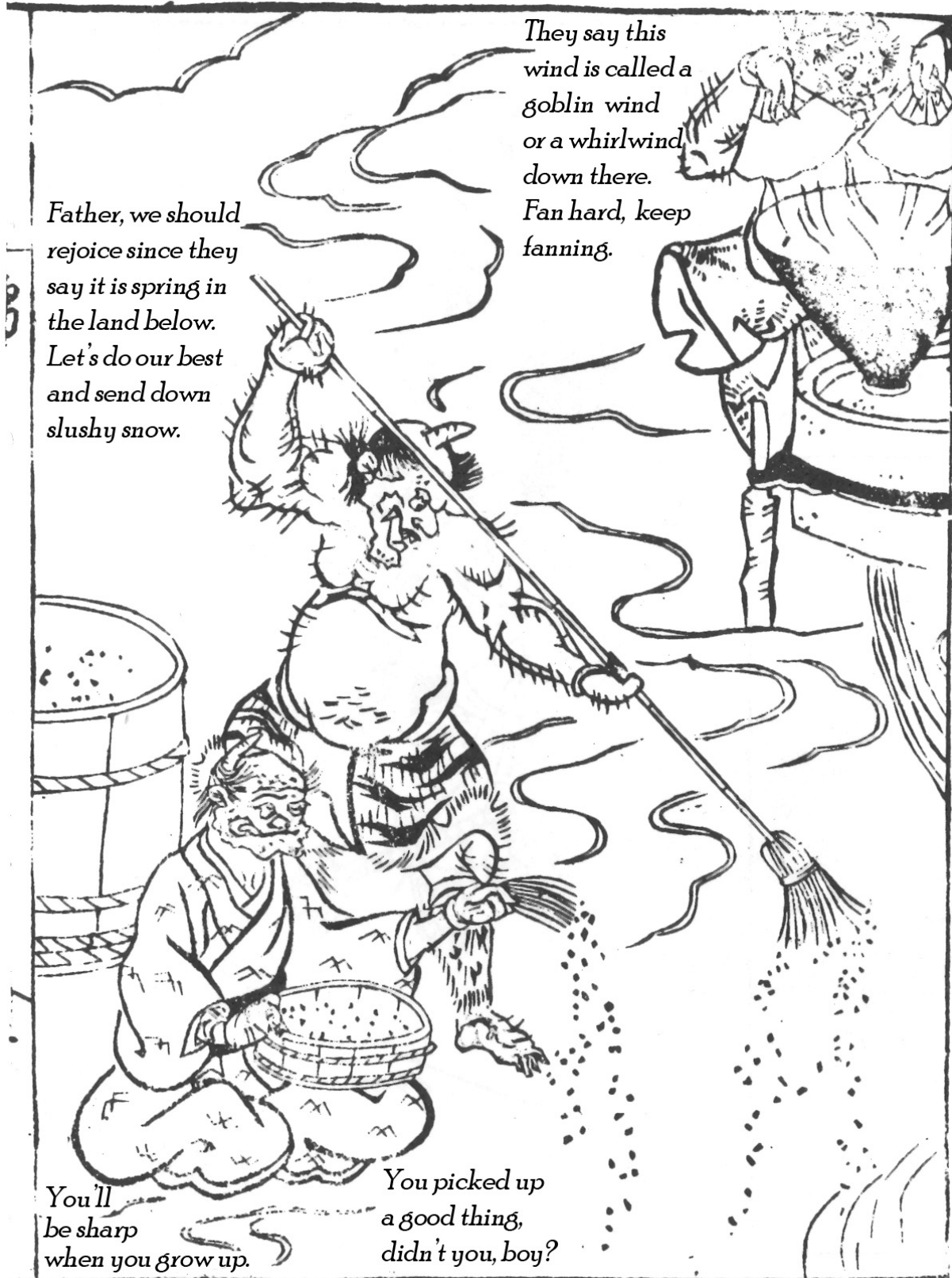
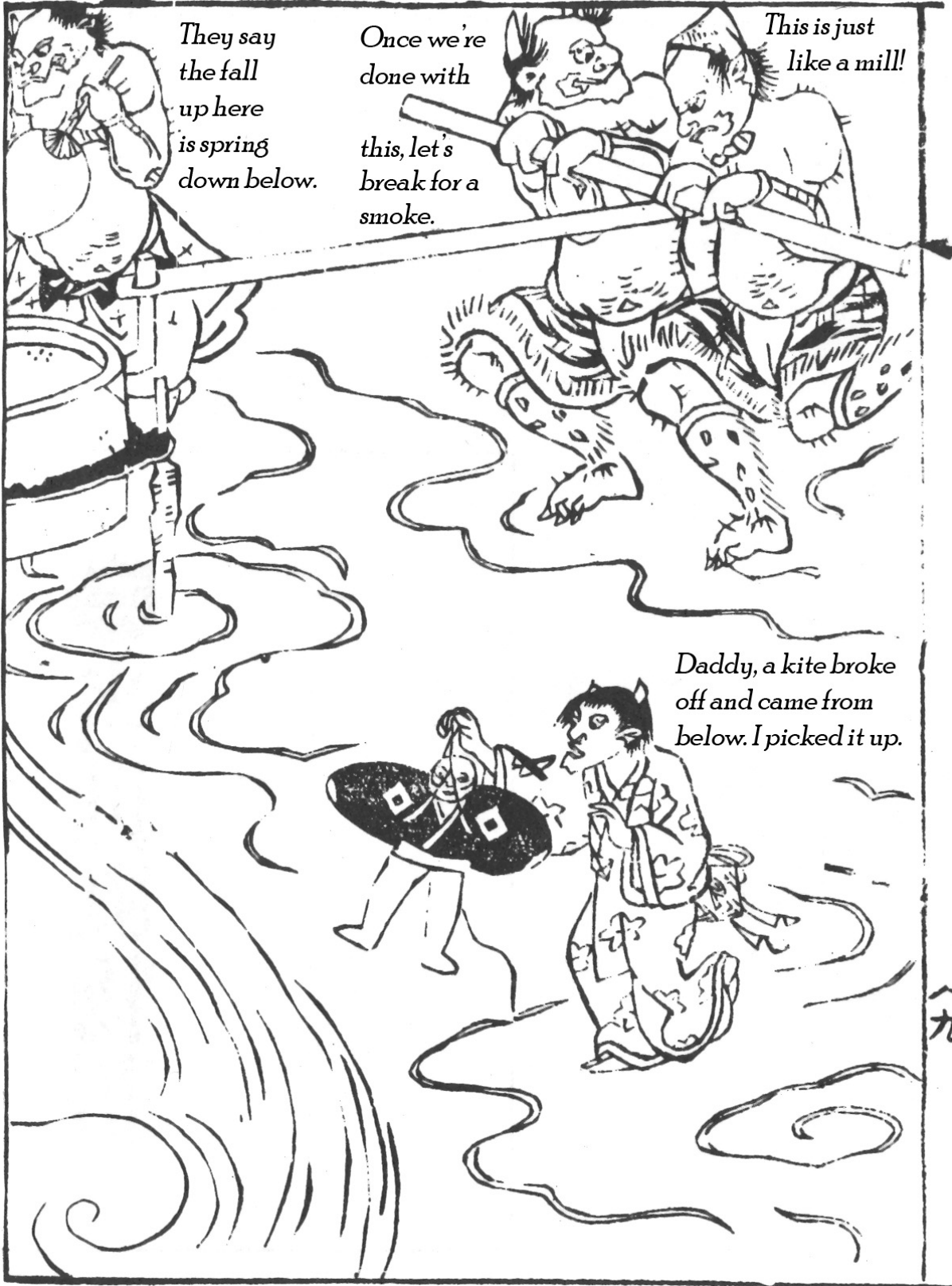


Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §1 left



They say  
the fall  
up here  
is spring  
down below.

Once we're  
done with  
this, let's  
break for a  
smoke.

This is just  
like a mill!

Daddy, a kite broke  
off and came from  
below. I picked it up.

Figure 41 (continued): *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons* §1 right

## Annotations to *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons*

### § 1

**[Picture]** In a realm above the clouds where the seasons are the opposite of those on earth, three generations of male thunder demons work to send snow and a whirlwind (generated with a mill) to earth. The young or middle-aged adults do strenuous manual labor wearing loincloths or kimonos stripped to the waist. An older man (lower left) sprinkles snow from a seated position, wearing two layers of kimono. A young boy catches a wayward **kite** (*ika*), a common toy for boys at the New Year. Specifically, this is a manservant-shaped kite (*yakko-dako* 奴舩).<sup>429</sup> Curved lines represent clouds.

**Daddy** (*totosama*). A term used by children.

**Father** (*oyaji-dono*). A respectful term used by an adult.

**boy** (*bonchi*). A term used to address a young boy and related to such words as *bōchan* or *bonchan*. Also part of a regional dialect that helps to identify this picturebook as having originated in the Kamigata region.<sup>430</sup>

### § 2

**[Picture]** It is autumn in the heavens, an active, busy time. Adult male thunder demons form balls of hail and sprinkle the hail from wide baskets. One demon blows through a bamboo pipe to make a breeze. Here the hail is rolled from a dough-like substance whereas, in the roughly

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<sup>429</sup> Suzuki Tōzō, ed., *Ehon Edo fūzoku ōrai*, vol. 50 of Tōyō bunko (Heibonsha, 1965), 20-21.

<sup>430</sup> Katō Yasuko, ed., *Oni no shiki asobi*, in vol. 1 of *EEH*, 33.

contemporaneous red book *Amusements of the Thunder Demons in Four Seasons*, hail is chopped from icicles and fried (Figure 42).

In the present scene from *Stories of Thunder in Four Seasons*, two demons scold their peers for shortcomings. Similarities in these demons' actions and in their dress suggest that it is not the demons' positions in a hierarchy or their class that gives one authority over another. Rather, attitude, memory, and attention to assigned tasks distinguish the demon workers.



Figure 42: A scene of making hail from the Urokogataya red book *Amusements of the Thunder Demons in Four Seasons*. Above, two adult male demons; below, right to left, two boy demons, mother demon, girl demon. *Arare* could refer to hail or to seasoned, fried rice cakes, so here the clumps of hail are literally rice cakes. The boy in the lower right-hand corner says, “Mommy [*kakasama*], can’t I please have a little bit?” The mother retorts with a pun, “How the hail do you think I could just give it to you? Don’t pelt me with such nonsense!” The girl, eating hail behind her mother’s back, says, “It’s really, really yummy.”<sup>431</sup>

<sup>431</sup> *Oni no shiki asobi*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 243.

### § 3

**[Picture]** In winter, multiple generations of demons gather around an over-sized brazier (*hibachi*) with a fire that causes summer heat on earth. Among the thunder demons, whose labor in this picturebook mirrors agricultural work, winter provides the opportunity for resting, reading, writing, and smoking. Three of the men in the scene are smoking pipes.

At right, the grandfather (standing) wears a Daikoku-style cap also associated with billionaires (like the one in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*), which helps to identify him as a wealthy patriarch, the respected head of the thunder demon household. Two boys sit by the fire, the older one tracing letters in the ashes and the younger one observing. The young woman, half-hidden by the brazier, appears to be a mother or older sister. At left, a demon with a head covering, perhaps a grandmother, sits behind the brazier. One man relaxes with a book under the **heated table** (*kotatsu*).

**Grampa, big brother is writing the syllabary!** (*Jisan, ani ga iroha o kaku wai na*). The youngest boy addresses the grandfather more casually than does the adult demon lying above left, who again calls him “**Father**” (*oyaji-dono*).

**Grandchildren, play nicely with each other.** (*Mago-domo nakayō shite asube*). The grandfather addresses his grandchildren directly, perhaps in response to the younger boy’s outburst. Rather than telling them to work hard, he pays attention to the way that they play.

### § 4

**[Picture]** In summer, thunder demons paint the clouds with ink and pour water from buckets to make evening showers. Behind them is the personification of a shooting star, identified visually with a headdress like a shining star and verbally by an alternate term for a meteor or shooting



star: **slinking star of night** (*yobai boshi*, lit. night-creeping star). The term *yobai* also referred to a lover visiting his beloved by night, a pun enacted in this scene. As in the legend of Tanabata, the star travels across the **Heavenly River** (*ama no gawa*, the Milky Way) to visit his lover, who must be lying down behind the screen at left. The image of the star resembles an illustration of a heavenly being (*tennin*) in the Edo-period encyclopedia *Wakan san sai zue* (Figure 43).<sup>432</sup>



**Figure 43: Heavenly being (*tennin*)**

This scene takes place in summer. The Tanabata Festival itself is celebrated on the seventh day of the seventh month, which was technically in autumn by the calendar in use in the Edo period. In contrast, the red book *Amusements of the Demons in Four Seasons* includes an explicit and literal reference to Tanabata (Figure 44). There the legendary herdsman crosses a bridge to reach the weaving maid.

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<sup>432</sup> Terajima Ryōan, vol. 2 of *Wa-Kan sansai zue*, ed. Shimada Isao, Takejima Atsuo, and Higuchi Motomi, eds., Tōyō bunko 451(Heibonsha, 1985), in JapanKnowledge <http://www.jkn21.com> (accessed February 9, 2012), 71.



Figure 44: “Scene on the night of the seventh day of the seventh month: the Herdsman (Altair, right) doth visit Lady Tanabata (Vega, left)” (*shichi gatsu nanoka no yoru no tei: kengyū me tanabata no kata e kayoi tamau*)<sup>433</sup>

§ 5

[Picture] A group of young men participate in festivities for a Tenjin Shrine festival, which is celebrated on the twenty-fourth day of the seventh month. One demon holds a bag that releases wind, another beats a drum, presumably heard as thunder on earth, and a third holds a mirror that casts down beams of lightning. At left, a careless demon falls through the clouds toward earth holding a ring of small drums. The *Wakan san sai zue* mentions that thunder sometimes falls to

<sup>433</sup> *Oni no shiki asobi*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 241.

earth and that the creature then scrambles up a tree or pole and rides back to the heavens on dark clouds.<sup>434</sup>

... **a belly button would make a nice souvenir!** (*dosan ni wa heso ga yoi zo*). Thunder demons had a reputation for attacking people to steal and eat their navels. This may have been an incentive to lie face down during thunderstorms for safety.<sup>435</sup>

**Hail the Three!** (*Namu san*). This exclamation of surprise and distress is short for “Hail the Three Treasures!” (*Namu sanpō* 南無三宝), which refers to the three treasures of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dharma (law), and the Saṃgha (the community of Buddhist practitioners, or the priesthood).

## § 6

**[Picture]** Here the full moon is a mirror. In Japanese tradition, the “man in the moon” is seen as a rabbit pounding rice with a mortar and pestle (Figure 45). Accordingly, this scene includes a rabbit in front of the mirror, ready to make rice cakes (*mochi*) with a large wooden pestle and a wooden mortar full of rice.<sup>436</sup> A demon, wearing a cap and a kimono patterned with mirrors and scissors, polishes the moon. His tools sit in a woven tray in front of him and in a box behind him.<sup>437</sup> At left, two additional demons create a warm wind by fanning a fire.

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<sup>434</sup> Terajima Ryōan, vol. 1 of *Wakan sansai zue*, Tōyō bunko 447, 179-180. The *Wakan san sai zue* does not visualize thunder demons as they are presented in this picturebook. According to this encyclopedia, thunder is a mysterious creature, the true form of which is yet unknown.

<sup>435</sup> Fujisawa Morihiko, *Nihon densetsu kenkyū*, vol. 4 (Mikasa Shōbō, 1935), 145-150.

<sup>436</sup> *The Picture Dictionary (Kinnōzui)* similarly depicts the moon with a rabbit inside and explains that the moon reflects the light of the sun. Nakamura Tekisai, *Kinnōzui* (1666), 180; Nakamura Tekisai and ill. Shimokobe Shūsui, *Kinnōzui* (1789), vol. 2, image 5.

<sup>437</sup> The mirror could be a symbol of enlightenment, particularly here where it is conflated with the full moon. Fabio Rambelli writes, “Mirror polishers envisioned a well-polished mirror as a representation of both Buddha’s enlightenment and the Japanese kami. Looking into such a mirror would result in liberation from the suffering of



Figure 45: The moon, from the *Picture Dictionary* (*Kinmōzui*, 1789)<sup>438</sup>

**harvest moon** (*meigetsu*). The full moon closest to the autumnal equinox, on the fifteenth day of the eighth month according to the lunar calendar.

... **mirror polisher who can't polish without drinking** ... (*nomaneba toganu kagami togi*).

This obscure reference appears to be part of a song. Mirror polishers used alcohol to buff mirrors.

**fiery chariot** (*kasha*). In Buddhist tradition, this carried people to hell, so it contrasts with the bright mirror, a symbol of enlightenment.

## § 7

[Picture] The demons make winter weather. Two adult women (lower right) instruct two girls (bottom center) as they tear off pieces of **cotton bridal bonnets** (*ōwata bōshi*) to make a thick covering of snow. *Watabōshi*, here preceded by “large” (*ō*), is a term used both for traditional bridal bonnets and for a thick layer of snow that resembles them. *Wata* could refer to silk floss or to cotton. One of the women rests her bonnet on what appears to be a bell. The ready pun linking snow with bridal bonnets helps to explain why this is the only image of labor by women or girls in the picturebook. Above and at left, male thunder demons hang icicles, shave poles of ice to make frost, and form icicles.

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saṃsāra; in contrast a dirty mirror represents a world without buddhas and kami.” Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality: A Cultural History of Objects in Japanese Buddhism* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 189.

<sup>438</sup> *Kinmōzui* (1789), vol. 2.

**divided segments** (*fushi*). Bamboo has ridges on the outside because it is naturally divided into segments (*fushi*), but the poles of frost are smooth.

**Scarlet, dear** (*aka ane*). Literally “red elder sister,” this expression is a pun on “red demon” (*aka oni*). I have substituted “dear” for “sister” since the mother, rather than the younger sister, is speaking the line.

## Chapter 6: Mischief and Marketing

A mix of morality and mischief enlivens (*Iroha characters*) *Verses for Schoolchildren* ((*Iroha moji*) *Terako tanka* いろは文字: 寺子短歌). This “blue book” (*aohon*) was illustrated by Torii Kiyomasu II (鳥居清倍 1706-1763) and Torii Kiyomitsu (鳥居清満 1735-1785).<sup>439</sup> Much like an ABC book, *Verses for Schoolchildren* contains short verses for each character of the *hiragana* syllabary, the phonetic system used to write picturebooks and other light genres as well as to gloss Chinese characters in more serious texts. The *tanka* of the title are literally “short verses” with alternating long and short phrases, rather than *tanka* in the strict form of five phrases, each with a set number of syllables (5 / 7 / 5 / 7 / 7). Below these verses are scenes from the lives of children who attend a writing school (*terakoya*). Throughout the book are reminders of the commercial nature of the picturebook as product, culminating in an advertising colophon touting recent and forthcoming works by the same artists and publisher. A playful tension between adult and child viewpoints—represented as verbal and visual respectively—allows *Verses for Schoolchildren* to present an overview of the knowledge and skills with which children should become familiar and simultaneously to appeal to the reader’s desire for fun and freedom.

Thanks to an advertising colophon, the basic publishing information for *Verses for Schoolchildren* can be established relatively well. It was first published in 1762 by Urokogataya Magobei. Some extant volumes date from a later edition with the same interior woodblocks and

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<sup>439</sup> Except when otherwise indicated in notes, the images of *Terako tanka* show the 1762 original held by the MFA.

different frontispieces, which was published around 1794 by Nishimuraya Yohachi.<sup>440</sup> In the intervening years, the second son of Urokogataya Magobei had married the daughter of Nishimuraya Yohachi and joined the household as Nishimuraya Yohachi II. Presumably, the young man brought some of the Urokogataya woodblocks with him—*Verses for Schoolchildren* is one of several picturebooks originally published by Urokogataya and reprinted by Nishimuraya.<sup>441</sup>

Like the Urokogataya and Nishimuraya publishers, the Torii artists were part of a family business—Torii Kiyomitsu is thought to have been the second son of Torii Kiyomasu II. The names Kiyomitsu and Kiyomasu also appear together on other picturebooks, including *The Cat-child's Kitten* (*Neko no ko no koneko* 子子子子子子, 1758), which features a calligraphy classroom similar to that in *Verses for Schoolchildren*.<sup>442</sup> The most famous picturebook that bears their names is *Mr. Glitter 'n Gold's Dream of Splendor* (*Kinkin sensei eiga no yume* 金々先生栄花夢, Koikawa Harumachi, 1775), which is considered the first “yellow book” (*kibyōshi*).<sup>443</sup>

The setting of *Verses for Schoolchildren* is educational, as are the “alphabet” verses. Prior scholarship has pointed out the value of this picturebook as a realistic representation of a writing

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<sup>440</sup> Kimura, *Kusazōshi no sekai*, 92.

<sup>441</sup> Takizawa Bakin, *Kinsei mono no hon: Edo sakusha burui*, part 2, 11-12. Some Urokogataya picturebooks were still being published by Nishimuraya as late as 1811, including titles like *Momotarō* and *The Tongue-cut Sparrow*. Takizawa Bakin, *Enseki zasshi*, 439; quoted in Kimura Yaeko, “Akahon no sekai,” *KKES, Edo hen*, 518.

<sup>442</sup> Torii Kiyomasu and Torii Kiyomitsu, ill., (*Jodoku*) *Neko no ko no koneko* (Urokogataya, 1758), ed. Kimura Yaeko, in *Kusazōshi shū*, 89-104.

<sup>443</sup> Koikawa Harumachi and ill. Torii Kiyomitsu and Torii Kiyomasu, *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume*, 9-34; Koikawa Harumachi and trans. Araki, *Mr. Glitter 'N' Gold's Dream of Splendor*, 673-687.

school of its time.<sup>444</sup> This picturebook is one of the earliest and most thorough visual depictions of an Edo-period writing school, and this fact alone would be sufficient reason to examine this work when considering how children were visualized in eighteenth-century Japanese children's literature. *Verses for Schoolchildren* helped to develop the ordinary schoolboy as a stock character for illustrated print media: popular literature, games, and decorative prints. Some scenes in this picturebook depict students working hard to learn to read, write, do arithmetic, and perform selections from the *nō* theater. But not all of the student behavior is normative. Some of the schoolboys are energetic rascals, their mischievous tendencies held in check only so long as their teacher or their father is watching. A humorous tension arises between the alphabet verses—with exhortations to virtue and discipline—and the scenes depicted below these verses—with defiant or devious students who are far more interested in food, toys, plays, and pictures than in hard work.

### ***Iroha* picturebooks**

*Verses for Schoolchildren* is a child-centered variation on an earlier eighteenth-century picturebook with alphabet poems on the top of each page: *Iroha Verses (Iroha tanka)*.<sup>445</sup> There are at least two versions of a black book by this title with the same words and slightly different illustrations.<sup>446</sup> There is also at least one yellow book that is substantially similar both visually

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<sup>444</sup> Tan Kazuhiro, “*Terako tanka*,” in *Kusazōshi jiten*, 206-207; Sō no Kai, ed., *Edo no kodomo no hon: akahon to terakoya no sekai*, 4; Suzuki Jūzō and Kimura Yaeko, ed., *KKES, Edo hen*, 498. Another valuable early example, excerpted here in the annotations to *Verses for Schoolchildren*, is found in several scenes of the following: Tada Nanrei, ed., and ill. Nishikawa Sekinobu, (*Ehon*) *Azuma warabe*, Meiwa 4 [1767], in vol. 1 of *Sōsho Nihon no jidō yūgi*, ed. Kami Shōichirō (Kuresu shuppan, 2004), 1-84. No transcription.

<sup>445</sup> Kimura, *Kusazōshi no sekai*, 90, 92; Tan, “*Terako tanka*,” 207.

<sup>446</sup> *Iroha tanka*, two different originals held by the Kaga Bunko, microfilms at NIJL (document ID #100053109 and #100053230). See also *Iroha tanka* (Edo: Urokogataya), in *KKES, Edo hen*, 346-351.



and verbally.<sup>447</sup> *Iroha Verses* was such a well known title that Santō Kyōden included it in his yellow book about books: *Those Familiar Bestsellers* (*Gozonji no shōbaimono* 存知商売物, 1782).<sup>448</sup>

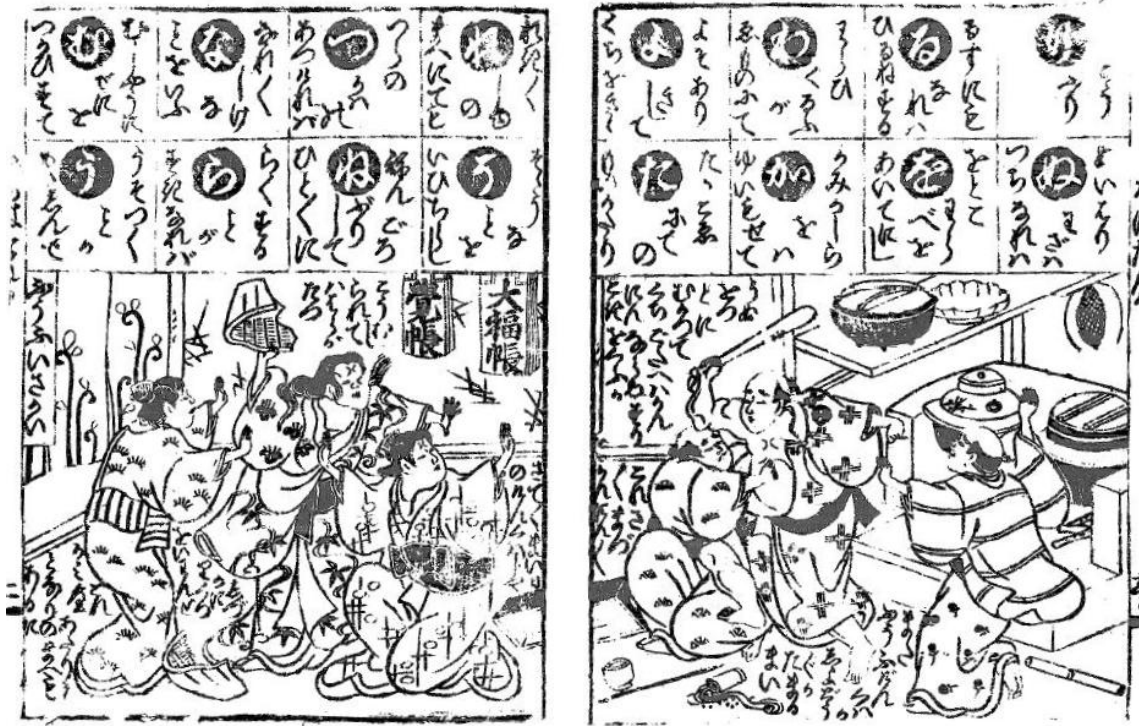


Figure 46: *Iroha Verses*. Above, verses for the *hiragana ri* through *u*. Below, male neighbors restrain the husband on the right, and female neighbors restrain the wife on the left. A sexual aspect to the confrontation is suggested by the fact that the husband holds a pestle and the wife a mortar.<sup>449</sup>

*Iroha Verses* is itself a variation on wedding stories such as *The Rat Wedding* in that it begins with a wedding and ends with the birth of a son. Between these happy scenes however, the husband sends the wife back to her parents' house after complaining in verse about her bad habits, including talkativeness, laziness, over-sleeping, and over-eating. The wife's mother

<sup>447</sup> Katsukawa Shunsen, *Iroha uta* (1780), original held by the Kaga Bunko, microfilm at NIJL. No transcription.

<sup>448</sup> Kitao Masanobu, ill. (*Temae katte*) *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, 236; Kern, trans., *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, 298.

<sup>449</sup> *Iroha tanka*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 347.

responds in verse about the husband's shortcomings, including lying and failing to appreciate her daughter. In the end, the husband and wife reunite, and the wife bears a healthy child.<sup>450</sup>

*Verses for Schoolchildren* transforms *Iroha Verses* by replacing the relationship of husband and wife with two relationships: that of a teacher and his students and that of a father and his son. The wife's alleged bad habits easily translate into the bad habits of the schoolboy: laziness, chatter, tardiness (due to over-sleeping), and a tendency to prefer snacking to studying. The angry and unreasonable husband is replaced by a strict but benevolent teacher and a father whose anger is held in check by the gentle persuasion of his wife and daughter. Likewise, the two conflicting perspectives on the wife's behavior carry over into the picturebook of school life. The teacher's perspective is voiced in verses like "Behave yourself, be mature" (*otonashi yaka ni otonabite*), but this appears over a scene of boys enacting a kabuki fight scene with classroom materials for props.

*Verses for Schoolchildren* would be less useful than *Iroha Verses* for instruction in reading because it includes only the *hiragana* syllabary and the character for "capital city" (*kyō* 京). *Iroha Verses* includes the *katakana* syllabary and the numbers one through ten, in addition to all of the graphs in *Verses for Schoolchildren*. However, *Verses for Schoolchildren* goes farther than the earlier picturebook toward promoting cultural literacy. Whereas *Iroha Verses* is a relatively straightforward story of fighting and reconciliation in marriage, *Verses for Schoolchildren* is a crazy quilt of high and low cultural references: kabuki actors, *nō* plays, festivals, seasonal activities, Chinese classics, and historical figures.

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<sup>450</sup> Ibid., 346-351; Tan Kazuhiro, "Iroha tanka," in *Kusazōshi jiten*, 35-36.

## Tension Between Word and Image in *Verses for Schoolchildren*

In representing an opposition between words and images, *Verses for Schoolchildren* may seem to favor words and the related art of calligraphy. But this tension works to justify a need for illustrated children's literature, such as *Verses for Schoolchildren* itself. Pictures are the “spoonful of sugar” that makes the medicine of calligraphy go down.

*Verses for Schoolchildren* begins with a fleeting image of an ideal classroom. The first page features well-behaved students and verses that encourage calligraphy practice and attitudes modeled on Confucius and Mencius. The first poem is self-reflexive, directing the reader's attention to the utility of the “alphabet” verses that give this picturebook its name:

<i>i ro ha kara</i>	Start with <i>i – ro – ha</i>
<i>manabi oboyuru</i>	To learn and remember these
<i>tehon kasu</i>	Handwriting models

In the scene below this verse, a father brings his son to the school for the first time. The teacher cautions the new boy to behave and focus on calligraphy. A second student sits politely in the corner, having apparently served tea to the guests.

In the second scene, the teacher is alone with his charges, and the perfect discipline of the previous scene is broken. On the right a boy called Chōmatsu serves out a punishment by sitting on a stationery chest in the Edo-period version of a dunce cap. His amused classmates comment on the sight. On the left, a young graffiti artist decorates a warehouse wall with images of a demon and a phallus, remarking, “I’ll draw like [Torii] Kiyonobu. Just hope the teacher doesn’t come by.” Even as the teacher disciplines one student, another one defies him.

This memorable scene of misbehavior—shocking enough to be bowdlerized when the picturebook was reproduced in twentieth-century anthologies—casts the delinquent as an

artist.<sup>451</sup> Fumiko Togasaki sees this depiction of punishment and graffiti as an example of the "anti-visual bias of the Confucian educational system."<sup>452</sup> However, the artists who illustrated the book were more closely connected to the kabuki theater than to Confucian scholars and bureaucrats. The students' behavior in this scene—both drawing graffiti and snickering—is consistent with the mischievous spirit of the students in several of the subsequent scenes. Moreover, the ukiyoe artist that the boy wants to emulate is Torii Kiyonobu, the founder of the line of illustrators to which Torii Kiyomasu and Torii Kiyomitsu belonged. Kiyonobu is thought to have been Kiyomasu's father-in-law as well. This is a tribute, one both playful and humble, to the illustrators' own teacher, not a hypocritical attack on drawing by professional artists.

In *The Cat-child's Kitten*, Kiyomitsu and Kiyomasu include a related scene of graffiti and punishment in a calligraphy classroom. They represent the legendary artist Sesshū as a young troublemaker, running from his teacher after painting a warrior and a shaggy-haired demon on the doors of his classroom (Figure 47).<sup>453</sup> The teacher's early scolding and discipline give way to acceptance and encouragement when the teacher realizes the extent of the boy's artistic talent.<sup>454</sup> Thus, the boy's misdeeds are the first sign of his future potential.

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<sup>451</sup> Members of the Sō no Kai kindly alerted me to the omission. Unaltered images of the page may be found in Kimura, *Kusazōshi no sekai*, 25; Tabako to shio no hakubutsukan, ed., *Hanpon* (Tabako Sangyō Kōsaikai, 1990), 89. The altered image appears in Sō no Kai, ed., *Terako tanka*, in *Edo no kodomo no hon: Akahon to terakoya no sekai*, 65; Suzuki Jūzō and Kimura Yaeko, ed., *Terako tanka*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 353. As noted earlier, the version reproduced here is in the MFA.

<sup>452</sup> Togasaki, "Santō Kyōden's Kibyōshi," 26.

<sup>453</sup> Torii Kiyomasu and Torii Kiyomitsu, ill., (*Jodoku*) *Neko no ko no koneko*, 92.

<sup>454</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.



Figure 47: The child Sesshū, brush in hand, runs from a priest angry about classroom graffiti.

Togasaki reads both *Verses for Schoolchildren* and *The Cat-child's Kitten* with the idea of an opposition between the verbal and visual aspects of the picturebooks. She writes:

Some Black-Books openly preached letter-superiority as an orthodox dictum that all beginning students should understand and accept. The imperative that letters be superior to pictures is especially apparent in the frequent presentation of poor classroom performance in calligraphy as a violation of sacred rules of school and society, disobedient to teachers and parents who firmly believed in the virtues of writing, and in its superiority to drawing. With this lesson to teach, Black-Books tended to portray drawing as a positive evil, a vicious and improper mockery of writing.<sup>455</sup>

Togasaki sees a demonization of drawing in *Verses for Schoolchildren* and similar picturebooks.<sup>456</sup> But even if *Verses for Schoolchildren* makes a distinction between writing and drawing, its encouragement of calligraphy does not necessarily imply that drawing is evil. The subject of graffiti appears twice in *Verses for Schoolchildren*, once in the visual text and once in

<sup>455</sup> Togasaki, "Santō Kyōden's Kibyōshi," 19.

<sup>456</sup> Togasaki refers to this blue book as a black book because it had been classified as such prior to the recent discovery of a copy with its original covers intact. That the various forms of picturebooks were similar enough to allow such confusion is one reason this dissertation has adopted "picturebook" as an inclusive term.

the verbal text for a later scene. In addition to the image of a boy drawing on a warehouse wall, there is this verse:

<i>rakugaki suru ga</i>	Your graffiti may be great
<i>emono to te</i>	But we see too much
<i>dozō no kabe ni</i>	On the walls of warehouses
<i>amata miyu</i>	

Graffiti is wrong not because it is visual but because it is inappropriate for the place. This could be read as encouraging a respect for private property as easily as it could be interpreted as a condemnation of pictures. And the humor of the scenes of bad behavior—the lazy schoolboys outsmarting their strict schoolmaster—should not be discounted.

Although Togasaki's conclusion that drawing is portrayed as “evil” is questionable, the lack of emphasis on drawing pictures may indeed reflect a view that children's time in the classroom is best spent on calligraphy practice. The verse for the syllabary character *re* 礼 claims precedence for writing among the six arts of the Confucian gentleman:

<i>rei gaku sha gyo no</i>	Ritual, music
<i>dai ichi wa</i>	Archery and horsemanship—
<i>mono kaku koto ga</i>	Writing comes first
<i>omo zo kashi</i>	And is the most important

The statement seems bolder when one considers that ritual, rather than calligraphy, comes first in the usual order of the six arts. Ritual 礼, music 楽, archery 射 and horsemanship 御 are the first four of the six arts of the gentleman in Confucian tradition, and they are the only ones listed in the verse. The remaining two are writing 書 and mathematics 数. An illustration of children practicing the six arts appears at the beginning of *Easy Guide to All the Characters for Boys* (*Dōji ji-zukushi anken* 童子字尽安見, 1716, see Figure 48).<sup>457</sup> The group of six arts is a vestige of an earlier time, as the presentation of “horsemanship” (upper left) makes clear. Two boys,

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<sup>457</sup> *Dōji jizukushi anken*, in vol. 25 of *Setsuyō shū taikēi*, part 2 (Ōzorasha, Furiooru, 1995), 6-7. No transcription.

their hairstyles marking them as younger than the other boys on the page, represent “horsemanship” by playing with hobbyhorses.

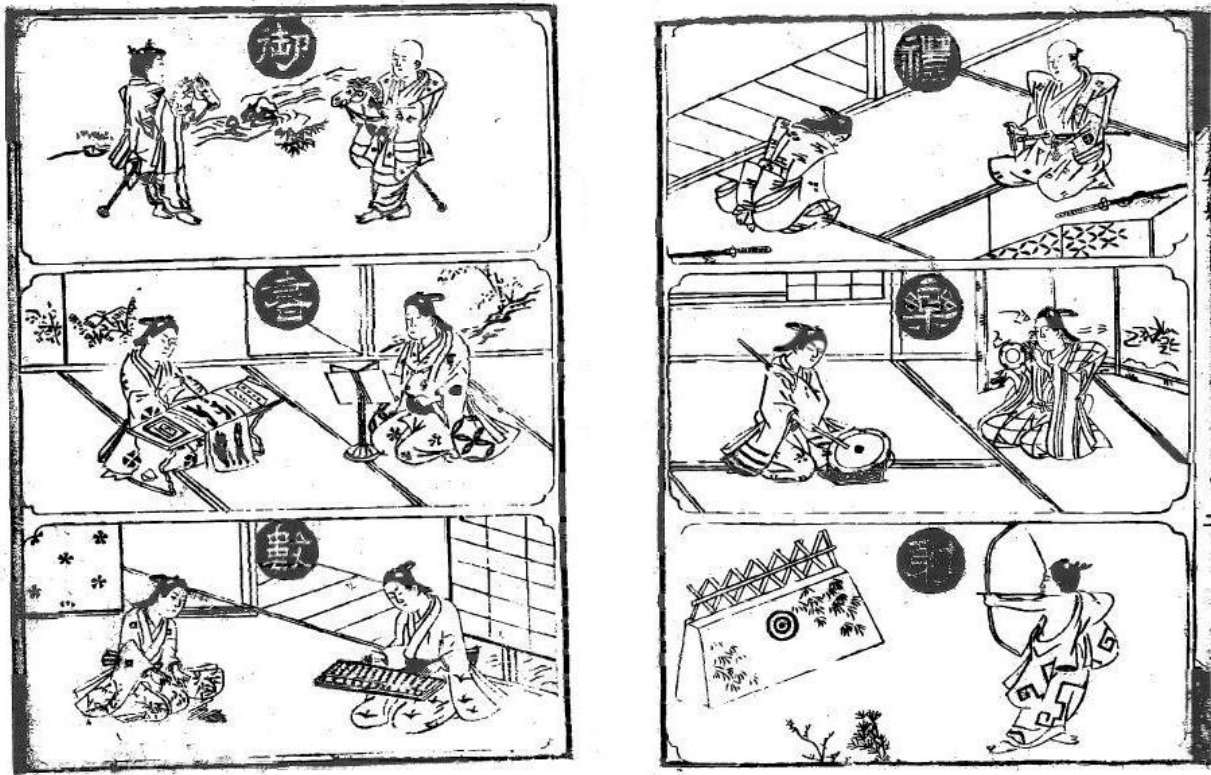


Figure 48: Boys practicing the Six Arts: (right) Ritual, Music, Archery; (left) Horsemanship, Writing, Mathematics

In *Verses for Schoolchildren*, ritual subsumes writing, which allows writing to take first place among the arts. Conflating writing and ritual may blur the line between writing and drawing, the two arts of the brush. In the context of the verse, the four arts are shorthand for essential education. Writing schools of the kind shown in the picturebook did not teach archery or horsemanship, and neither art is shown in the book, even as play. The other arts appear as reading and writing, manners, music, and mathematics.

The distinction between calligraphy and drawing made in *Verses for Schoolchildren* is not one of good and evil. Rather, drawing and enjoying pictures is childish but fun; reading and

writing calligraphy are mature and harder to appreciate. The illustrators betray sympathy for the delinquent schoolboys by casting one of them as a would-be Torii school artist. Likewise, the verses make it clear that the children enjoy pictures, “Drawing people—that’s all / They want to do” (*ningyō bakari / kakitagari*). But writing is less appealing: “Tedious calligraphy / Practice slow and dull” (*noronoro suru wa / tenarai ga*). A solution might be found in a picturebook that combines illustrations that children like with the knowledge of writing that children need but detest—that is, a picturebook like *Verses for Schoolchildren*. Thus, *Verses for Schoolchildren* promotes itself and other picturebooks by highlighting the contrast between children’s attitudes toward calligraphy practice and drawing pictures.

## Marketing

Just as in *Verses for Schoolchildren* the goals of the teacher do not always align with those of his lazy students, so child readers and parents may hold different ideals for children’s reading material. Fun and moral or intellectual formation can be at odds. The tensions between word and image, discipline and mischief, suggest an attempt to market to both child readers and adults who chose picturebooks for children. As Ewers writes of more recent children’s literature:

The necessity of being the servant of two masters occasionally demands bizarre contortions on the part of children’s literature. In periods where the expectations of the mediators deviate sharply from those of the primary addressees it is by no means simple for children’s literature to provide the signals necessary to attract both sides; the price paid for this can often be seen in gaps in the logic of the plot, the description of the characters or the assessment of behavior. Thus many young people’s novels produce completely unmotivated U-turns . . . simply because now at the latest adult mediators must be given a signal that prevents them from declaring outright war on the book.<sup>458</sup>

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<sup>458</sup> Ewers, *Fundamental Concepts of Children’s Literature*, 38.



In *Verses for Schoolchildren*, the tension between the dual purposes of entertaining children and providing moral and informational messages acceptable to adult mediators is expressed in a disconnect between verses in praise of virtues like frugality, hard work, and filial piety and lively scenes illustrating the activities of boys and girls with more energy than discipline. The final scene of the picturebook affirms the mediators' purposes: the children make a pilgrimage to the shrine of Tenjin, patron of students and calligraphers, where they express admiration of a girl whose calligraphy is on display.

Pleasing both child readers and adult mediators would mean selling more books. This commercial aspect of eighteenth-century children's literature is particularly clear in *Verses for Schoolchildren*. Embedded in the authoritative voice of the alphabet verses is an encouragement of consumption. The verse for the syllabary character *he* へ describes the parts of Chinese characters and proclaims, "You should buy *Takamura* / And learn them all" (*Takamura kōte / oboyuru beshi*). This is a reference to *Ono Takamura's Poems for All the Characters* (*Ono Takamura uta ji zukushi* 小野篁哥字盡), a dictionary that used mnemonic verses to help readers remember how to write Chinese characters. This Edo-period work was falsely attributed to a famous poet and scholar who lived hundreds of years earlier, Ono no Takamura (802-852).<sup>459</sup> Naturally, this guide was available from Urokogataya Magobei, the same publisher that produced

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<sup>459</sup> Suzuki and Kimura, ed., *Terako tanka*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 362, n. 4. Ono no Takamura's reputation as a poet and scholar would be familiar to Edo-period readers, including children, from the oft-reprinted *The Ogura Collection of One Hundred Poems, One Poem Each* (*Ogura hyakunin isshu* 小倉百人一首, ca. 1237), even more than from the major anthologies *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing* (*Wakan rōei shū* 和漢朗詠集, ca. 1013) and *Collection of Early and Modern Japanese Poetry* (*Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集, ca. 905), which also include examples of his poetry. Cf. Helen Craig McCullough, trans. and annotated by, *Kokin Wakashū: The First Imperial Anthology of Japanese Poetry: With Tosa Nikki and Shinsen Waka* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985), 369; Peter McMillan, *One Hundred Poets, One Poem Each: A Translation of the Ogura Hyakunin Isshu*, Translations from the Asian Classics (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2008), 13, 133-134; J. Thomas Rimer and Jonathan Chaves, *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing: The Wakan Rōei Shū*, with contributions by Jin'ichi Konishi, Stephen Addiss, and Ann Yonemura, Translations from the Asian Classics (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1997), 317.

*Verses for Schoolchildren*.<sup>460</sup> And the mention in *Verses for Schoolchildren* may have increased demand for the title. A later edition, possibly a picturebook version, was advertised in a colophon to another Urokogataya picturebook: *The Beginning of Japanese Merchants (Nippon akindo no hajimari 日本商人の始, 1769)*.<sup>461</sup>

Marketing enters into *Verses for Schoolchildren* in a few visual and verbal references throughout the two fascicles but especially on the last page. The final page encourages the reader to move beyond this picturebook in three ways. First, the verse for *su* す challenges the reader to aspire to the goal of excellence in calligraphy. Second, the final verse, for *kyō* 京, reinforces the illustration of a pilgrimage on the preceding page by directing the reader to visit the shrine at Kitano, the principal shrine dedicated to Sugawara no Michizane as Tenjin. Both verses encourage action of moral and practical value for their time. However, the third way that the page exhorts the reader to act is through an advertisement that appeals to the desire for entertainment. It recommends *Verses for Schoolchildren* and fourteen other titles by the same illustrators and publisher. The advertising colophon describes these works as "remarkable entertainment" (*mezurashiki onagusame 珍しきお慰*).<sup>462</sup>

Based on observations of five of the six extant titles, the advertisement appears to be limited to picturebooks.<sup>463</sup> *Kani no Saizō: Hometown Where Flowers Fall (Kani no Saizō hana*

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<sup>460</sup> Ono Takamura *uta ji zukushi* (Edo: Urokogataya, 1692), in vol. 9 of *Itaiji kenkyū shiryō shūsei*, ed. Sugimoto Tsutomu (Yūzankaku shuppan, 1975), 324. No transcription.

<sup>461</sup> Tan Kazuhiro, ed., "Kōkoku ichiran," in *Kusazōshi jiten*, ed. Sō no Kai, 316. *Nippon* may carry the additional meaning of "best in Japan," depending on the full context of the story.

<sup>462</sup> Tan, ed., "Kōkoku ichiran," 313-318.

<sup>463</sup> I viewed four of these in microfilm or digital versions: (*Flute-following Deer, White-handed Monkey*) *Songs of the Moon Over Monkey Marsh, Chronicle of the Stepdaughter's Return, Origin of Mototsu*, and *The Story of the Career of Genkurō the Fox*. I also examined *Kani no Saizō: Hometown Where Flowers Fall* at the MFA. *Origin of the Azuma Avatar* appears to be extant, but I have not had the opportunity to see it.

*furu sato* 可兒才蔵花降里), for example, is a black book in three fascicles telling the story of a historical warrior and featuring samurai warfare (Figure 49).<sup>464</sup> An additional book, *Shuten the Kid: Miniatures of the Pleasure Quarters* (*Shuten dōji kuruwa hinagata* 酒呑童子廓雛形), has a title identical to a book in the advertisement (*Dōji kuruwa hinagata*) except for the first word. The “Union Catalogue of Japanese Books” lists the two separately, but only one is extant. The extant book, *Shuten the Kid*, was produced by the Urokogataya, the same publisher as *Verses for Schoolchildren* and the other books. Like the others, it is either an *aohon* or a *kurohon*. However,



Figure 49: “Sasa no Saizō . . .” (mounted warrior on right) in *Kani Saizō: Hometown Where Flowers Fall*. Photograph © MFA.

<sup>464</sup> Torii Kiyomitsu I, *Kani no Saizō hana furusato*, 3 vols. (Edo: Urokogataya, 1762), in MFA, no. 1997.924.1-3.

*Shuten the Kid* came out in 1765—three years later than *Verses for Schoolchildren*—bearing the words "newly published" (*shinpan* 新版) on its cover.

The late publication of *Shuten the Kid* raises the possibility that the advertisement in *Verses for Schoolchildren* was based on tentative plans for publication or even padded to fill out the page, with some of the books not being produced on schedule, if at all. Supporting this conjecture is the fact that six of the first eight books on the list are extant while, of the last seven books, only the 1765 *Shuten the Kid* and *Verses for Schoolchildren* itself survive.<sup>465</sup>

Picturebooks like these were not advertised in the same sources as more expensive books. None of the titles in this advertisement found their way into the recent compilation *Kyōhō igo hanmoto betsu shoseki mokuroku* (Catalogue of Books Arranged by Publisher, Kyōhō Era or Later), for example, though some primers (*ōraimono*) by the same publisher did.<sup>466</sup>

Of the other picturebooks listed in the advertisement and viewed for this study, including *Shuten the Kid*, none end with an advertisement like the one here. In addition, *Verses for Schoolchildren* is the only one to feature pages divided vertically. The other picturebooks have words (both dialogue and narration) dispersed around the illustrations, as in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*. Poems, if present, are not major features of the verbal text. The stories are presented as old tales, complete with samurai violence, and the illustrations are not as distinctive as the ones in *Verses for Schoolchildren*. If those are typical of the Urokogataya's picturebooks

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<sup>465</sup> All of the titles that are not extant, including the 1762 *Dōji kuruwa hinagata*, have entries in the Union Catalogue of Early Japanese Books that give the 1762 publication year and mention that the information was found in *Nihon shosetsu nenpyō*, a chronology of vernacular fiction originally published in 1906 by Asakura Kamezō (1877-1927). The presence of these entries could be explained if Asakura depended on the advertisement in *Verses for Schoolchildren* rather than on copies of the books themselves.

<sup>466</sup> Sakamoto Muneko, *Kyōhō igo hanmoto betsu shoseki mokuroku* (Osaka: Seibundō shuppan, 1982), 44-46.

from 1762, *Verses for Schoolchildren* is an exception in style and content as well as in the prominence of the artists' names. It was likely something of a showpiece for the two illustrators.

One of the advertised picturebooks, *Songs of the Moon Over Monkey Marsh* (*Ongyoku saru sawa no tsuki*), concludes with the thought that the old story will be "entertainment for children during the spring rains" (*kodomo tachi no harusame no nagusami*).<sup>467</sup> In this it is similar to the ending of *Verses for Schoolchildren*; both reference their spring publication and both aim at entertainment or comfort (*nagusami*). Likewise, comforting children was the same goal for which the old man was pardoned in *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*, published some seventy or eighty years earlier. With *Verses for Schoolchildren*, entertainment is an explicitly stated goal of a picturebook featuring the daily lives of contemporary children. Like the other picturebooks translated here, *Verses for Schoolchildren* features a mixture of didacticism, entertainment, and a child-centered theme in an inexpensive book produced in numbers. But with its advertising colophon and advertising woven through the book, *Verses for Schoolchildren* demonstrates a conscious choice on the part of the artists and publisher to market children's literature and other consumer goods directly to children themselves.

### **Translation of *Iroha* characters: *Verses for Schoolchildren* (*Iroha moji: Terako tanka*)**

The translation of *Verses for Schoolchildren* follows this introduction, beginning at page 282. It proceeds from right to left, ending at page 261. Annotations follow the translation, beginning on page 283. In translating the verses, I have alternated short and long lines. However, in order to prioritize the meaning of the words, I chose not to be strict in following the original

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<sup>467</sup> Jōa and ill. Torii Kiyomitsu, (*Fue ni yoru shika, te shiro no saru*) *Ongyoku saru sawa no tsuki*, 2 vols. (1762), original held by Tōyō Iwasaki Bunko. No transcription.

meter with its lines of seven and five syllables. In some cases, I also rendered four-line verses into three-line verses.

The present translation and annotations rely heavily on three editions annotated by Japanese scholars.<sup>468</sup> The translation deviates from those editions in a few places where I relied on an edition held by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which is an earlier and more legible text than those reproduced in Japanese anthologies. I benefited from additional commentary in Japanese in *Kusazōshi jiten* and *Kusazōshi no sekai*.<sup>469</sup>

In the translation, the illustrations are from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA).<sup>470</sup> The frontispieces are from a 1762 edition reproduced in *Kusazōshi no sekai*.<sup>471</sup>

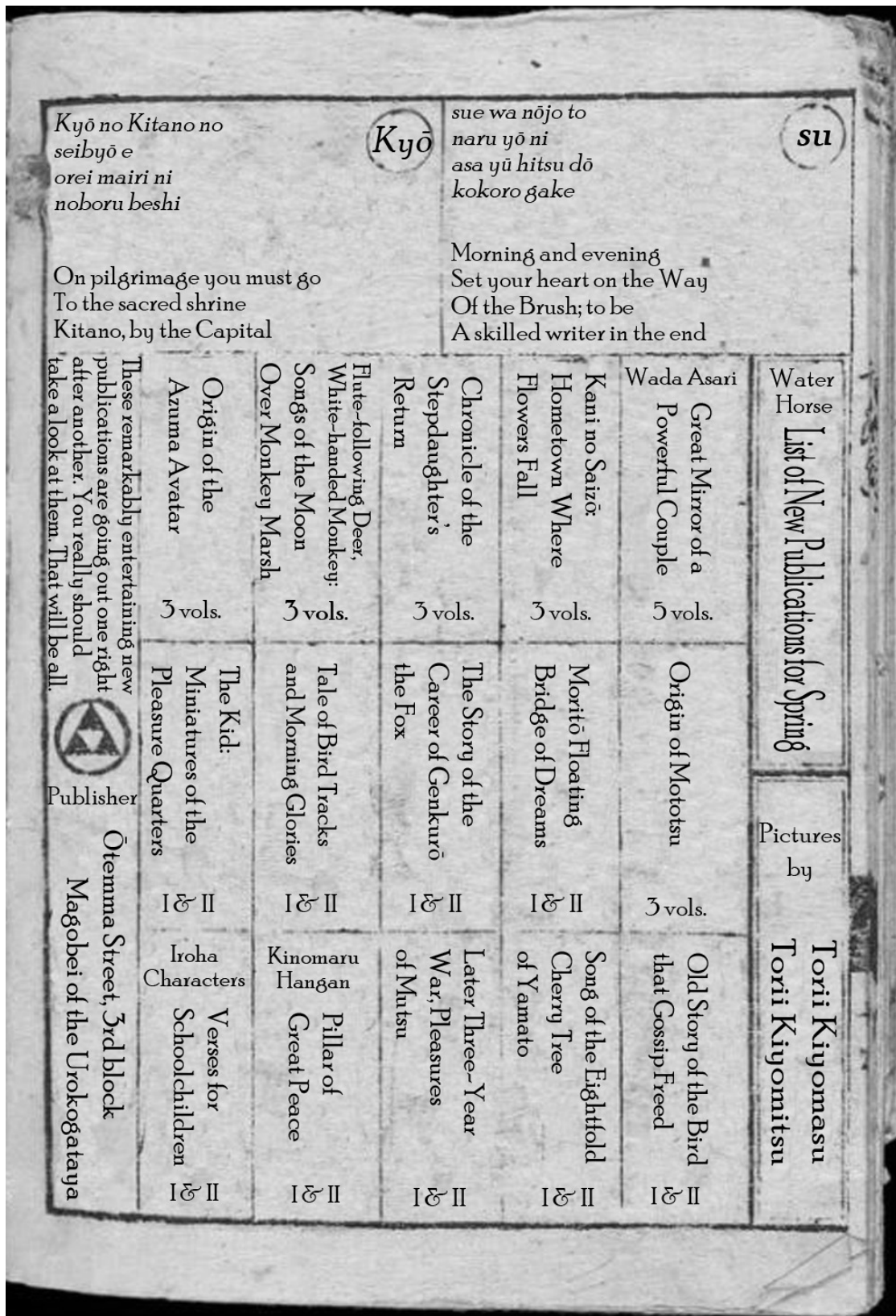
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<sup>468</sup> Miyoshi Shūichirō, “Kusazōshi ni egakareta terakoya kyōiku: Kurohon *Terako tanka* o chūshin ni shite,” *Kokugo ka kyōiku* 32 (1985): 114-122; Sō no Kai, ed., *Terako tanka*, in *Edo no kodomo no hon: Akahon to terakoya no sekai*, 62-82; Suzuki and Kimura, ed., *Terako tanka*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 352-362.

<sup>469</sup> Tan, “*Terako tanka*,” 206-207.

<sup>470</sup> Torii Kiyomitsu I [and Torii Kiyomasu II], attr., (*Iroha moji*) *Terako tanka (A School Verse)* (Edo: Urokogataya, 1762), MFA, no. 1997.932.1-2, <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/-iroha-moji-terako-tanka-a-school-verse-404795> (accessed July 18, 2012). For transcription, see *KKES, Edo hen*, 352-362. The covers are missing from the MFA books, but otherwise the books are in relatively good condition.

<sup>471</sup> Kimura Yaeko, *Kusazōshi no sekai*, 91 and color plate 3.



*Kyō no Kitano no  
seibyō e  
orei mairi ni  
noboru beshi*

**Kyō**

*sue wa nōjo to  
naru yō ni  
asa yū hitsu dō  
kokoro gake*

**su**

On pilgrimage you must go  
To the sacred shrine  
Kitano, by the Capital

Morning and evening  
Set your heart on the Way  
Of the Brush; to be  
A skilled writer in the end

Water Horse		List of New Publications for Spring		Pictures by		Torii Kiyomasu Torii Kiyomitsu	
Wada Asari	Great Mirror of a Powerful Couple	Origin of Mototsu	3 vols.	Old Story of the Bird that Gossip Freed	II	1	1
Kani no Saizō: Hometown Where Flowers Fall	3 vols.	Moritō Floating Bridge of Dreams	I & II	Song of the Eightfold Cherry Tree of Yamato	II	1	1
Chronicle of the Stepdaughter's Return	3 vols.	The Story of the Career of Genkurō the Fox	I & II	Later Three-Year War, Pleasures of Mutsu	II	1	1
Flute-following Deer, White-handed Monkey; Songs of the Moon Over Monkey Marsh	3 vols.	Tale of Bird Tracks and Morning Glories	I & II	Kinomaru Hangan Pillar of Great Peace	II	1	1
Origin of the Azuma Avatar	3 vols.	The Kid: Miniatures of the Pleasure Quarters	I & II	Iroha Characters Verses for Schoolchildren	II	1	1
These remarkably entertaining new publications are going out one right after another. You really should take a look at them. That will be all.							
Publisher		Otemma Street, 3rd block Magobei of the Urokogataya					

Figure 50: Verses for Schoolchildren II §6

(Photograph © MFA)

shōshisenban  
tonikaku ni  
hito no hagemu o  
mi naraite

se

mohaya deshi ni wa  
nari katashi  
sōsō gesan  
sasuru koto

mo

...  
mai nichi  
shippe  
o itadaite

A laughing matter?  
Regardless, you should watch and  
Learn from those who strive

Already it seems  
Too difficult to become  
A disciple—  
So quickly down the mountain

...  
Every single  
day

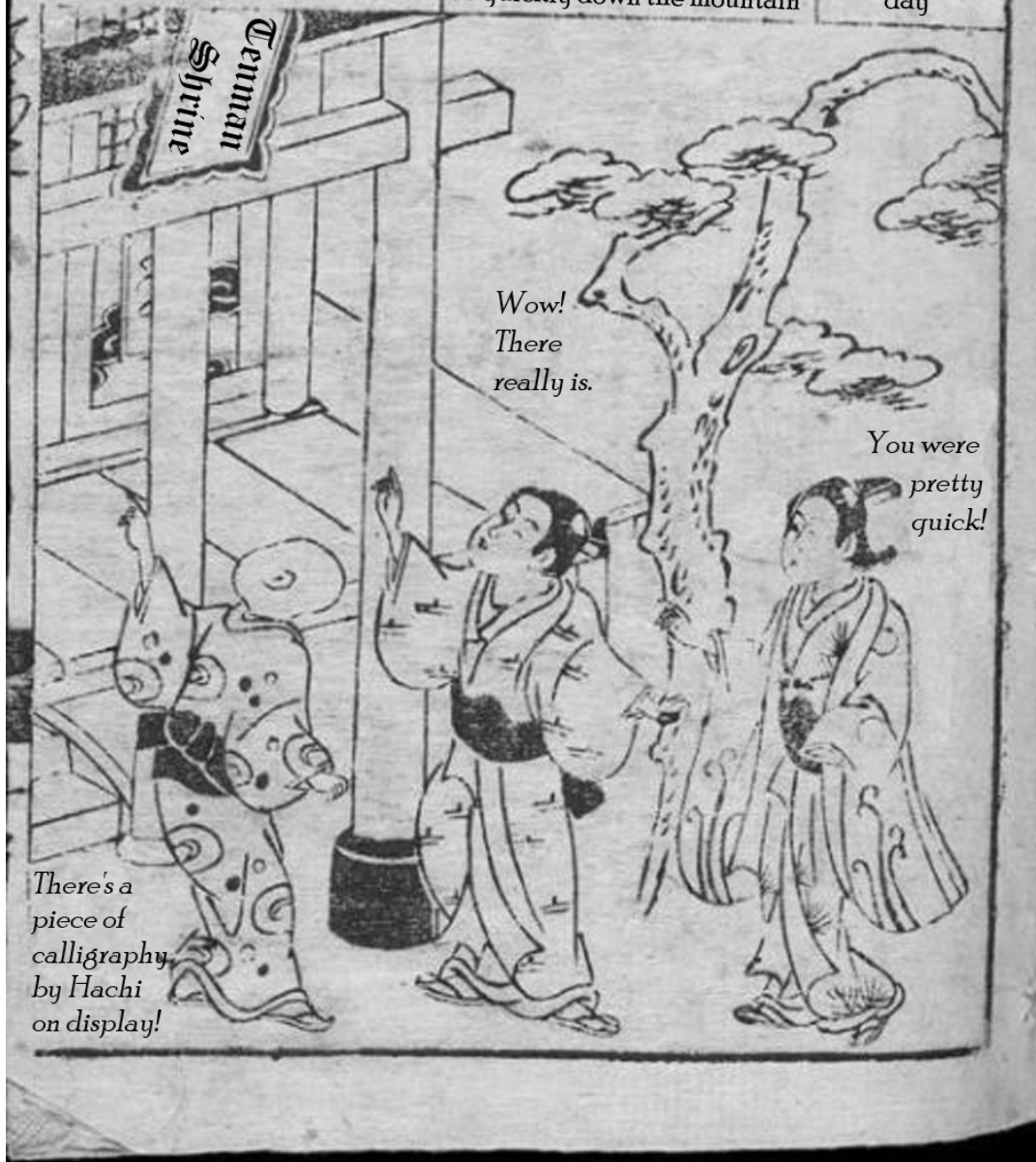


Figure 50 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren II §5 left

(Photograph © MFA)





Figure 50 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren II §5 right

(Photograph © MFA)

myōga ni kanai  
tama no koshi  
oheya sama ni mo  
naru mono zo

mi

medetaku kashiku  
mōse to no  
onkoto made no  
goyū hitsu

me

...  
kibishii chichi  
ga  
kusuri zo ya

Perhaps by divine favor  
You might even be  
Lady of jeweled palanquins  
Or private chambers

"I offer my best wishes...  
Felicitations..."  
The scribe until the big day

...  
The best  
medicine!

# Pine Bamboo Plum

Written by Kiyo,  
age nine

Seal script  
is hard  
to write.

Oh! You  
did very  
well.

"There have  
been  
occasional  
setbacks..."  
and then something or another.

Figure 50 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren II §4 left

(Photograph © MFA)



Figure 50 (continued): *Verses for Schoolchildren II* §4 right

(Photograph © MFA)

asa narai ni wa  
ichiban no  
za ni tsuku yō ni  
oki tamae

For lessons in the morning  
Wake up in time to  
Sit at the head of the class

a

Tenjin kō ya  
tatami sen  
hito yori saki ni  
itatsu beshi

Tenjin Festival dues or  
Mat-replacement fees—  
Be the first to pay your share

te

...  
tsuzumi taiko  
no  
jōzu ari

...  
Because even  
instruction's  
Unrestricted  
here

Program

Takasago

Tamura

Oimatsu

The End

Encore



Well done,  
everyone.



"In the woods  
of Gion and  
Shimogawara..."



Figure 50 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren II §3 left

(Photograph © MFA)

e  
Edo wa  
shinan mo  
jiyū ni te ...

koutai shite waki  
kashikomari  
koe taka daka to  
utau beshi

ko

buseina kuse ni  
satsuma imo  
dora yaki nado wa  
kitsui suki

fu

Edo has skilled  
players of  
The small and  
large drums

Protagonist, companion—  
In a nō chant, both  
Should sing respectfully  
In high voices

As lazy as they are, yet  
Terribly fond of  
Sweet potatoes, bean jam cakes



Ba-boom,  
boom, boom.

Hey!  
Boom, boom.

That boy's really  
talented. He could  
be like  
Hiko-  
saburō  
when he  
grows up.

"Rising from  
the peak are  
clouds - or  
are they  
blossoms?"

Wakatarō is  
handsome  
as the youth,  
isn't he?

Spring's first  
cherry blossoms..."

Figure 50 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren II §3 right

(Photograph © MFA)

keiko wa sama-zama  
machi no ko wa  
hachi san kuku o  
chito narae

Children from various towns  
For their training learn  
Just a bit of division,  
Multiplication

ke

masaka no ori no  
jigi sahō  
hitotsu mo rachi wa  
akanu mono

Unbelievable that the  
Opportunity  
Be abused in such a way—  
He'll come to no good

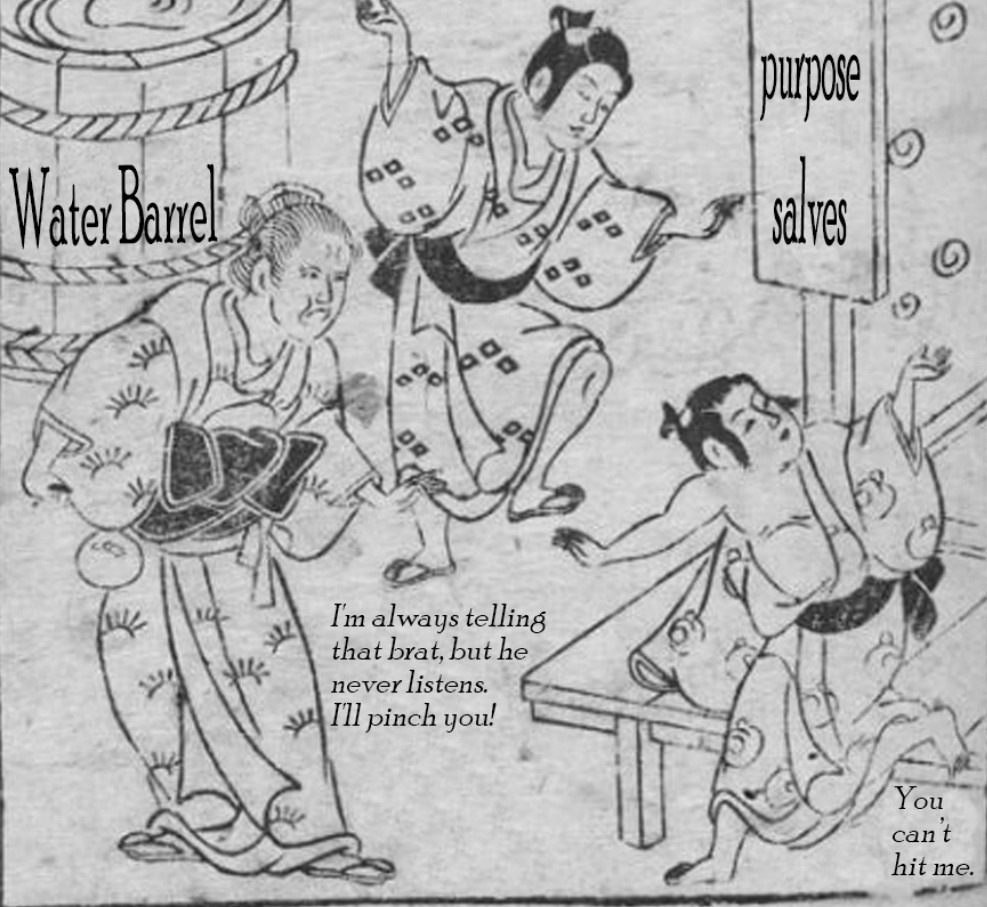
ma

kazoe tate  
hōzue ineburi  
waki mishite

...Nodding off  
with chin  
in hand



Matsujirō, come  
and run away to  
my house.



I'm always telling  
that brat, but he  
never listens.  
I'll pinch you!

You  
can't  
hit me.

Figure 50 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren II §2 left

(Photograph © MFA)



Figure 50 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren II §2 right

(Photograph © MFA)

noro-noro suru wa  
tenarai ga  
iyasa no mama no  
temochi ka ya

Tedious calligraphy  
Practice slow and dull  
And just then—hand puppets!

no

witari tattari  
suzuri mizu  
aru ga ue ni mo  
kumi tagari

Sitting down and standing up  
Even when they have  
Water for their inkstones  
They want to get more

wi



My Dad  
bought  
this one  
for me.

Calligraphy  
practice pad

Big brother,  
gimme one, too!

Give it  
here!

That  
one's  
mine,  
too!

Figure 50 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren II §1

(Photograph © MFA)



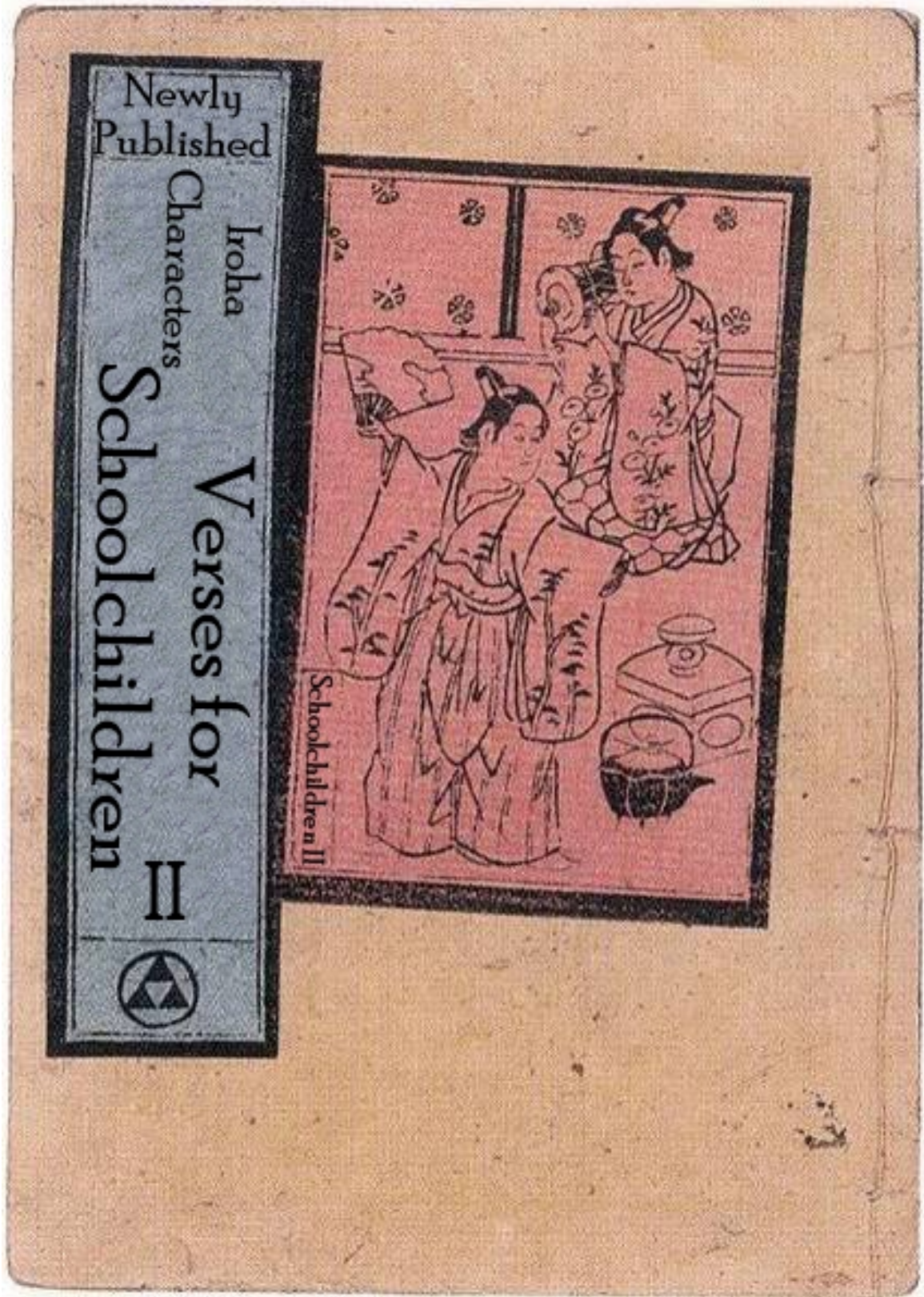


Figure 50 (continued): *Versetes for Schoolchildren II*, cover

urusashi to iu  
moji wa mata  
Kanjin Shihei no  
koji nareya

u

The word "troublesome"  
Fits the case of Lord Suga  
And Tokihira

mume wa shoboku no  
ani nareba  
Michisane oshimase  
tamau nari

mu

Plum is the elder brother  
Among the trees  
And that's why Michizane  
Loved it so



Let's  
buy  
them  
again  
to-  
morrow.

Plume grass  
and the moon.

This is the  
third one I've eaten.

You've  
learned it well,  
haven't you?

Ten divided by three  
is three with a  
remainder of  
one. Thirty  
divided  
by  
three  
is ten.

I think these jam  
pancakes taste  
much better than  
the jam rolls.

Figure 51: Verses for Schoolchildren I §6

(Photograph © MFA)

rakugaki suru ga  
emono to te  
dozō no kabe ni  
amata miyu

Your graffiti may be great  
But we see too much  
On the walls of warehouses

ra

narai mo sezu ni  
kiyogaki o  
iku tabi kaite mo  
onaji koto

When you write clean copies  
Over and over  
Without practicing first  
That's just the same.

na

tsuie na zeni o  
tsukawasu na

For money  
and then  
Use it all up  
wastefully



Figure 51 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren I §5 left

(Photograph © MFA)



Figure 51 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren I §5 right

(Photograph © MFA)

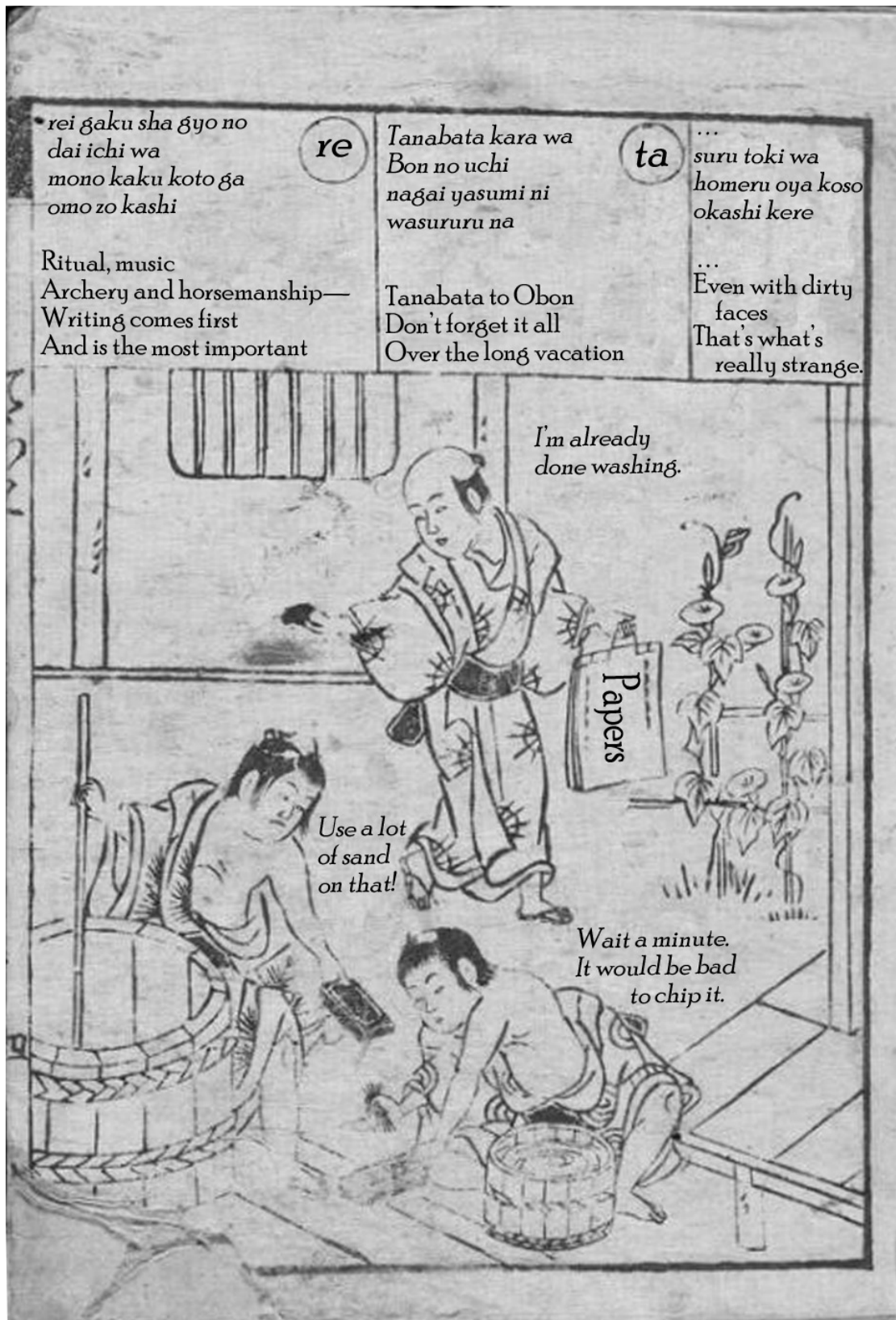


Figure 51 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren I §4 left

(Photograph © MFA)

**yo**  
yogoreta  
kao sae...

Parents  
praising  
[children]...

karuwaza no mane  
kazuke goto  
tera hōbai ni  
utomare na

Excuses for playing at  
Acrobatics—  
Don't make your classmates  
hate you.

**ka**

waru agaki shite  
shibai no mane  
tsukue suzuri o  
sokonō na

Don't break the desks and  
inkstones  
Working mischief and  
Pretending to be onstage

**wa**



Bring  
that  
red  
one  
over  
to me.

They've  
already  
put it out  
next door,  
so let's hurry.

Hold on, we've  
still got all  
this  
left.

Figure 51 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren I §4 right

(Photograph © MFA)



Figure 51 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren I §3 left

(Photograph © MFA)

nukatte  
hito **nu**  
ni  
oi nukare...

When you  
cheat  
When someone  
copies from  
you...

rihatsu de ōmoji  
aji o yaru  
kake tatematsuru  
gohōzen

Wise words, skillfully brushed  
In large characters  
Hanging as an offering  
Before the gods

**ri**

chie wa sono mi no  
mumare tsuki  
san nen naraeba  
agaru mono

Wisdom –  
Each is born with some  
But with three years' learning  
Wisdom will increase

**chi**

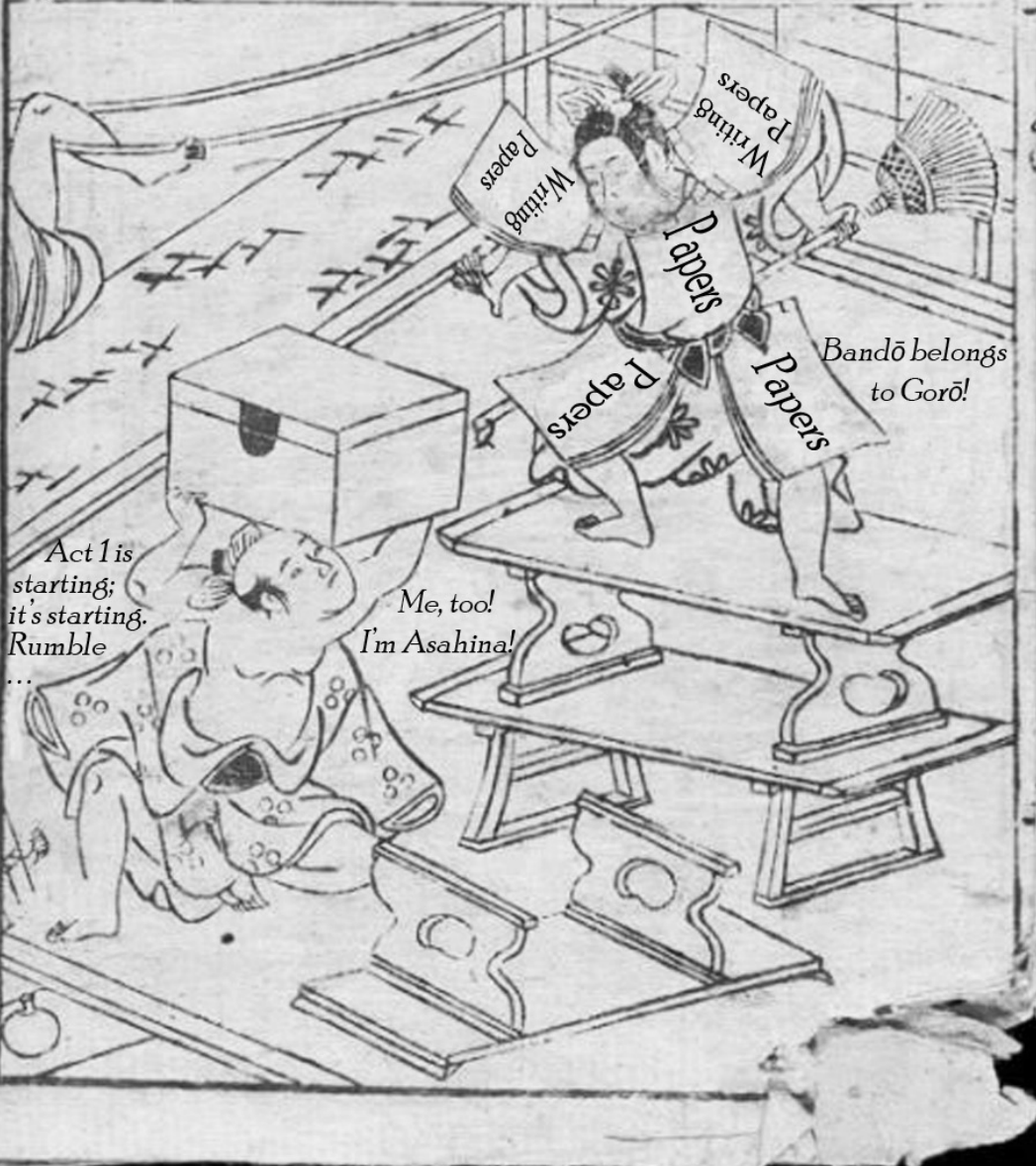


Figure 51 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren I §3 right

(Photograph © MFA)





Figure 51 (continued): *Verses for Schoolchildren I §2 left*

(Photograph © MFA)



ho

ningyō bakari  
kakitagari  
sōshi ni sotto  
mizu o kake

Drawing people – that's all  
They want to do  
Furtively putting water  
To writing papers

ni

Hatsumuma goto no  
tera nobori  
mai toshi fueru  
kodomo tachi

Hatsumuma Day again  
Up to the temple  
Go every year more and more  
Children

ha

I understand, Sir. I was wrong.  
From now on,  
I'll behave.

He looks  
like he  
should  
be at

the head  
of Lord Gozu's  
parade.

Look at  
Chōmatsu's  
face!

Why  
do  
you  
keep  
doing one bad  
thing after  
another?

Figure 51 (continued): Verses for Schoolchildren I §2 right

(Photograph © MFA)



• *Rongo Mōji ni  
aru gotoku  
shishō no go'on  
oya no on*

**RO**

Obligations  
To parents and to teachers  
Just as seen in  
*The Analects and Mencius*

*i ro ha kara  
manabi oboyuru  
tehon kazu*

**i**

Start with *i-ro-ha*  
To learn and remember these  
Handwriting models



Yes, sir.

Behave  
yourself,  
and put  
your

I will entrust  
him to you,  
now.

energy  
into  
writing  
practice.

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Figure 51 (continued): *Verses for Schoolchildren I §1*

(Photograph © MFA)



Figure 51 (continued): *Versedes for Schoolchildren I*, cover

## **Annotations to *Verses for Schoolchildren***

### **Fascicle 1: Cover**

The yellow paper of the cover is brightened by a title slip printed on blue paper and cover art printed on red paper (see the cover of the second fascicle for a color image). The title slip bears the full title, the identifying mark of the Urokogataya publishing house (a circle enclosing three triangles), and the claim that this is the first fascicle of a newly published piece.

The pasted-on cover art includes a short title, perhaps added for convenience in assembling the book, and a simplified version of the third scene, which shows students reenacting a kabuki play based on the *Tale of the Soga Brothers* (*Soga monogatari* 曾我物語, 14<sup>th</sup> c. with earlier oral versions).<sup>472</sup> The brothers, Soga Jūrō Sukenari (1172-1193) and Soga Gorō Tokimune (1174-1193), and their quest to avenge the death of their father frequently appeared in the kabuki theater and other popular media during the Edo period. Plays about the Soga brothers were typically performed at the New Year when *Verses for Schoolchildren* and other picturebooks were published. Here a boy in the role of Soga Gorō, wearing armor devised of calligraphy papers and wielding a broom as his only weapon, stands on a desk to oppose a man in the role of Asahina, who raises a stationery chest to show his strength. Torii Kiyomasu II, one of the two illustrators of *Verses for Schoolchildren*, also depicted this pose with professional actors (Figure 52).<sup>473</sup>

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<sup>472</sup> Lawrence Kominz, *Avatars of Vengeance: Japanese Drama and the Soga Literary Tradition* (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1995), 38-40.

<sup>473</sup> Torii Kiyomasu II, *Actors Ichikawa Danjūrō III as Soga Gorō and Ōtani Hiroji III as Asahina Saburō* (Edo: Iwai-ya, 1723), William Sturgis Bigelow Collection 11.13293, MFA, <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/actors-ichikawa-danj-r-iii-as-soga-gor-and-tani-hiroji-iii-as-asahina-sabur-205940> (accessed July 18, 2012).

*i-ro-ha*. *I*, *ro*, and *ha* are the first three characters of the Japanese syllabary (*kana*), and just as “ABC” can stand for the entire alphabet, *iroha* here suggests the whole syllabary.



Figure 52: Soga Gorō (right) and Asahina (left) pose in a theatrical print by Torii Kiyomasu II. Photograph © MFA.

### Fascicle 1: §1

[Picture] In a classroom, a father (bottom left) entrusts his son (center) to the care of a teacher (top right), who tells the new student to behave in school. The new student inclines his head respectfully and holds up a dish. Another boy holds a kettle and sits up on his feet, perhaps preparing to stand and offer tea. In addition to classroom furniture (two desks stacked on the right and another on the left with a stationery chest), there are a small stand with a serving dish

of food and another one with a teacup for the special occasion. The Urokogataya publisher's seal at the top of the page does not appear in the later reprint published by Nishimuraya.<sup>474</sup>

***The Analects and [The] Mencius (Rongo Mōji)***. Both *The Analects* of Confucius (551-479 BCE) and the writings of Mencius (372-289 BCE) were used in writing schools (*terakoya*). Here these texts encourage filial piety and respect for authority.

### **Fascicle 1: §2**

**[Picture]** The teacher punishes one student while another paints graffiti. At right, the teacher looks on, holding a rod, while Chōmatsu endures a typical classroom punishment mentioned in the verse for *to* と (above left), included in the kabuki version of *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy (Sugawara denju tenarai kagami)*, and pictured in an 1847 “picture board game” (*esugoroku*) about a writing school (Figure 53).<sup>475</sup> Chōmatsu wears a cap and holds a wand as he sits on the stationery chest on the desk in front of the classroom. Incense burns to keep track of the time.<sup>476</sup> Other students, engaged in calligraphy practice, comment on Chōmatsu's appearance.

The left panel shows a view of the scene outside the schoolroom. Beside the veranda is a wash basin with a dipper. Out of his teacher's sight, the new boy from the previous scene stands on an overturned water barrel to draw graffiti on the side of a warehouse: the head of a demon on the right and a stylized phallic image on the left.<sup>477</sup> The image at left was called Mt. Noshikoshi

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<sup>474</sup> Suzuki and Kimura, ed., *Terako tanka*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 352.

<sup>475</sup> Jones, trans. and ed., *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, 20. An image of the full game appears in the second chapter. “Heisei 15 nen-do shozō shiryō-ten Tenjikai shiryō ichi ran 'Sugoroku'.” See also Katō and Matsumura, eds., *Bakumatsu, Meij no esugoroku*, 208-209.

<sup>476</sup> Cf. Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 273.

<sup>477</sup> The original text in the MFA, clearly shows the left side of the boy's graffiti, whereas reproductions of this image from *Kinsei kodomo no ehon shū*, *Edo hen* and *Edo no kodomo no hon: akahon to terakoya no sekai* have been altered. Sō no Kai, ed., *Terako tanka*, 65; Suzuki and Kimura, ed., *Terako tanka*, 353.

(*noshikoshi yama*) because it was formed from writing the syllabary characters *no* の, *shi* し, *ko* こ and another *shi* し above the character for mountain (*yama* 山). In a sense, the boy is making good on his earlier promise that he would put his energy into calligraphy practice.



Figure 53: “Time out” (*tomerare*), detail from *Springtime Fun: Diligence in Learning Calligraphy Game*

The idea of starting school, which is presented visually on the first page, comes up in a poem about **Hatsumuma** (初午) day, when children in Edo often entered the *terakoya*. The first day of the horse (*uma* 午) in the second month was a festival day at Inari shrines. Other verses encourage learning calligraphy and complain that children prefer pictures.

**Head of Lord Gozu’s parade** (*Tennō sama no saki birai* 天王様の先払い). *Tennō*-sama was another name for *Gozu* 牛頭 (*Gośīrṣa*), a bull-headed deity or demon of a particular hell. This line probably refers to someone at the front of a festival procession. One famous *Tennō* Festival took place in the sixth month in *Ōtemma-chō*, where the publisher of this book was located.



**Takamura** (Takamura 篁). *Ono Takamura's Poems for All the Characters* (*Ono Takamura uta ji zukushi*) broke down Chinese characters into their constituent parts and arranged them into patterns for easier memorization. It was available, though not exclusively, from Urokogataya, which published *Verses for Schoolchildren*.<sup>478</sup> Despite the title, this Edo-period text could not have been the work of the poet and scholar Ono no Takamura (802-852).

**Kiyonobu.** Torii Kiyonobu (鳥居清信 1664-1729), forerunner of the second and third generation Torii artists who illustrated, and perhaps wrote, this book.

### Fascicle 1: §3

[Picture] The classroom has become a stage set for an unauthorized student performance of a kabuki play based on the story of the Soga brothers. A boy in a costume made of stationery pads poses as Soga Gorō, with broom and hand outstretched. Below him, an older student poses as Gorō's strong opponent **Asahina** (あさひな or 朝比奈, d. 1213), demonstrating his strength by holding the stationery chest over his head.<sup>479</sup> The three desks and the stationery chest that were previously neatly stacked and then carefully used in the preceding two scenes are now in disarray. The ropes meant for drying calligraphy papers instead support an aspiring acrobat, whose striped kimono doubles as the striped curtain of the stage. The bucket that served as a stool for the graffiti artist now functions as a drum. At left, the teacher discovers what the students have been doing in his absence and is unamused.

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<sup>478</sup> For a reproduction of an Urokogataya original, see *Ono Takamura uta ji zukushi*, 291-328.

<sup>479</sup> Asahina is a minor character in the story of the Soga brothers, but in kabuki plays about the Soga brothers, Asahina often has the memorable role of comic strongman to oppose the heroic Gorō. Kominz, *Avatars of Vengeance*, 42 and 175.

This scene appears to be one of the earliest illustrations of schoolboys performing and using everyday objects as props, but it was not to be the last. One similar image is in (*Ehon*) *Azuma warabe* 絵本 東わらべ [(Picturebook) Children of the East], a 1767 Kamigata picturebook.<sup>480</sup> Labeled “Imitating the stage” (*shibai no mane*), the illustration lacks both the crisis of the teacher’s return and the specificity of the reference to particular characters or performers, but it features many of the same props: a broom, calligraphy papers as armor, desks, and a stationery chest.



Figure 54: "Imitating the stage" from (*Ehon*) *Azuma warabe*

**Bandō belongs to Gorō!** (*Bantō ga Gorō no tokoro da wai*). Bandō 坂東 refers to the Eastern region where the Soga brothers killed their foe, Kudō Suketsune.<sup>481</sup> In addition to this literal reference, “Bandō ga Gorō” could be read as “Gorō of the Bandō” in reference to Bandō Iwagorō (1732-1795). Bandō Iwagorō and his brother Bandō Kunigorō (fl. 1743-1761 or later)

<sup>480</sup> Tada, ed., (*Ehon*) *Azuma warabe*, 60-61. See also *Kodomo buyū*, 78-83.

<sup>481</sup> For an English-language discussion of the tale and its variants, see Kominz, *Avatars of Vengeance*.

were kabuki actors who were active in Osaka around this time. In the illustration to *Verses for Schoolchildren*, the line is spoken by a boy wearing costume armor made of calligraphy papers.

The papers suggest a visual pun for Iwagorō, who used the word “paper” (*kami*) in his stage nickname (*yagō*): Kamiya.<sup>482</sup> Iwagorō was one of the more famous Osaka actors at this time.<sup>483</sup>

**Son'en Calligraphy** (*Son'en* 尊円). Style of Japanese calligraphy named for Prince Son'en Shinnō (1298-1356), the son of Emperor Fushimi (r. 1287-1317). The style was popularized during the Edo period.

### **Fascicle 1: §4**

**[Picture]** Children prepare to celebrate Tanabata, which occurs on the seventh day of the seventh month. Tanabata relates to the annual meeting of male and female deities who are separated for most of the year, and appropriately enough, this is the first appearance of girls in this piece.

On the right, boys and girls decorate a branch of bamboo for Tanabata with their calligraphy on papers cut into strips, squares, and decorative shapes (blossom, gourd, and fan). Similar illustrations elsewhere hint at what the children may have written on the papers here. In particular, a decorative print by Torii Kiyonaga 鳥居清長 (1752-1815), who studied with Torii Kiyomitsu, reveals the literary aspects of Tanabata (Figure 55).<sup>484</sup> A young girl looks through a

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<sup>482</sup> “Bandō Iwagorō,” in *Kabuki jinmei jiten*, 537-8; “Bandō Kunigorō (Shodai),” in *Kabuki jinmei jiten*, 541.

<sup>483</sup> In a ranking of actors published in the first month of 1762, Iwagorō is ranked superior-superior-excellent (white) (*jō-jō-(shiro)-kichi* 上々白吉) for the role of a villain (*teki-yaku* 敵役). Ihara Toshirō, *Kabuki nenpyō*, ed. Kawatake Shigetoshi and Yoshida Eiji (Iwanami shoten, 1956-63), vol. 3, 479.

<sup>484</sup> Tada, ed., (*Ehon*) *Azuma warabe*, 46; Torii Kiyonaga, “The Tanabata Festival, from the series Precious Children’s Games of the Five Festivals (Kodakara gosetsu asobi)” (Edo: Tsutaya Jūzaburō (Kōshodō), ca. 1794-1795), in William Sturgis Bigelow Collection 11.13935, MFA, <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/the-tanabata-festival-from-the-series-precious-children-s-games-of-the-five-festivals-kodakara-gosetsu-asobi-206259> (accessed March 3, 2012).

collection of poems by famous poets of the past, and an older girl keeps a book of poetry open on the desk as she prepares to write on one of the papers.



**Figure 55: Three girls (standing at right, writing, and reading) and two boys (standing at left and holding branch) prepare decorations for Tanabata. The open book at the bottom appears to be an illustrated edition of *A Hundred Poems by a Hundred Poets* (*Hyakunin isshu* 百人一首). Photograph © MFA.**

On the left page are morning glories (*asagao*), which are seasonally appropriate because there was a famous *asagao* market in Edo held from the sixth to the eighth of the seventh month

at the temple of Kishimojin. Boys (bottom left) are washing inkstones, another activity associated with Tanabata that was performed in the hope of future success in calligraphy.<sup>485</sup>

**Tanabata to Obon** (*Tanabata kara wa Bon no uchi*). Obon, a time of remembrance for the dead, falls about a month after Tanabata, depending on the region.

**Ritual and music / Archery and horsemanship** (*rei gaku sha gyo* 礼楽射御). These are the first four of the six arts of the gentleman in the Confucian tradition. The remaining two are writing (*sho* 書) and mathematics (*sū* 数). Here writing is combined with ritual, which allows it to come first.

### **Fascicle 1: §5**

**[Picture]** Students practice writing and reading. On the right, the teacher guides the hand of a young boy (note the shaved head) writing his first characters. A pad of paper provides models for handwriting, and a calligraphy practice pad lies folded on the floor to the right. Behind the teacher is an alcove with a hanging scroll, the image of which is not visible. Other contemporary depictions of *terakoya* often have hanging scrolls depicting Sugawara no Michizane. The student looking up from writing practice sports an adult hairstyle, suggesting that he is at least fifteen or sixteen years old and probably not the best student. The small object on the floor to the right of his desk may be a crumpled wad of paper, but it is unclear.

On the left, two students, using pointers to keep their place in their books, read aloud under the watchful eyes of a teacher. The teachers on the left and right are so similar in appearance that they may represent the same person at different times. The students reading do not use desks, but like the writers, they sit formally, with their feet tucked under and behind them

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<sup>485</sup> Nishimura Kazuko, "Suzuri arai," in *Aki* vol. of *Kadokawa haiku dai saijiki*, 171.

(*seiza*). Rows of unconnected dots on the books suggest the formal style of Chinese characters, rather than the connected, wavy lines that suggest Japanese text (such as in the Tanabata cards in the previous scene).

The book case in the back holds *Wen xuan* (*Monzen* 文選), a classical Chinese anthology of prose and poetry compiled by Xiao Tong (501-531) from earlier sources. *Wen xuan* was widely studied in both China and Japan until modern times. The six commentators mentioned on the label of the book box here would be Li Shan 李善 (d. 689) and five scholars whose commentary was collected in 718 by Lu Yanzuo 呂延祚: Lü Xiang 呂向, Lü Yanji 呂延濟, Liu Liang 劉良, Zhang Xian 張銑, and Li Zhouhan 季周翰.<sup>486</sup>

**let's stop for lunch now** (*mō hiru sagari ni itashimashō*). The lunch break, or noon recess, was taken in the early afternoon, about 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

*Imagawa, Household Precepts / The Greater Learning* (*Imagawa Teikin Daigaku* 今川 庭訓 大學). Three books written in literary Chinese often used in *terakoya* for practice in reading aloud (*sodoku*).

### Fascicle 1: §6

**[Picture]** One boy practices division on an abacus under the teacher's supervision while others eat snacks furtively behind a screen.<sup>487</sup> The screen is decorated with a full moon and wild autumnal grasses, visually echoing the contrast between the diligent and delinquent students.

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<sup>486</sup> Kojima Noriyuki, "Monzen," in vol. 6 of *Nihon koten bungaku daijiten* (Iwanami shoten, 1985), 38-40; Xiao Tong, *Wen xuan: Or Selections of Refined Literature*, trans. David R. Knechtges (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 1 and 52-55.

<sup>487</sup> The interpretation of the arithmetic is based on Nishida Tomomi, *Kodomo tachi wa zō o dō hakatta no ka? – terakoya no tanoshii benkyō hō* (Haku shobō, 2008), 91. For related examples in an Edo-period mathematics text,

The delinquents are seated and dressed casually, unlike the more formally garbed diligent student. This difference suggests a correlation between social class and behavior, similar to that seen in the writing school scene of *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy* where the sons of samurai households are model students while the farmers' sons are more interested in playing than learning. Here the boys behind the screen, who are using their arithmetic skills only to count snacks, are probably from merchant families.

**Jam pancakes** (*dora yaki* どら焼き). A filling of sweet bean paste sandwiched between two small pancakes.

**Jam rolls** (*ankoro* あんころ). Pounded rice cakes (*mochi*) covered in sweet bean paste. *Kanoko mochi*, a treat similar to *ankoro mochi* but with whole beans on the outside instead of only crushed beans, was so popular around this time that it made its way into the kabuki theater.<sup>488</sup>

**Plum is the elder brother / among the trees . . .** (*Mume wa shoboku no ani nareba . . .* むめは諸木の兄なれば). Legend has it that Sugawara no Michizane recited poems to his plum tree and to his cherry tree before going into exile in Kyūshū in 901. The plum tree flew there to meet him, and the cherry tree withered away.<sup>489</sup>

**Lord Suga / And Tokihira** (Kanjin Jihei 菅神時平). Sugawara no Michizane and Fujiwara no Tokihira 藤原時平 (871-909). Michizane rose to a highly influential position under Emperor

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see Katsumi Eiichirō, ed. *Jinkōki: Kan'ei jū-ichi nen kogata yon kan bon*, vol. 1, part 3 of *Edo shoki Wazan sensho* (Kenseisha, 1990), 11, 13.

<sup>488</sup> In the second month of 1762, a sign for *kanoko mochi* appeared in a Soga production at the Nakamura Theater. Ihara, *Kabuki nenpyō*, vol. 3, 481-2.

<sup>489</sup> For a discussion of the history of the association of Michizane with the plum and cherry trees, as well as an old pine tree, see Robert Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court*, Harvard East Asian Monographs 120 (Cambridge MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University; distributed by Harvard University Press, 1986), 290-295.

Uda 宇多 (r. 887-897) but was brought down by rivals after Uda left the throne. Later accounts depict Tokihira, Michizane's greatest political rival, as a great villain.<sup>490</sup>

**Plume grass and the moon** (*susuki ni tsuki nari* 薄に月也). Both plume grass (*miscanthus sinensis*, J: *susuki*) and the full moon are recurring autumnal images in *waka* poetry. The pairing of the two may have been familiar to contemporary readers from the flower card game (*hana fuda*), in which “plume grass and the moon” (*susuki ni tsuki*) is one of five particularly valuable cards and is associated with the eighth month.<sup>491</sup>

## Fascicle 2: Cover

The picture is a simplified version of a scene to come, in which one student holds a fan to perform a dance from a *nō* play while another student provides accompaniment on a small drum (*kotsutsumi*).

## Fascicle 2: §1

[Picture] Four boys vie for three Kinpira dolls just outside the writing school. The second poem expresses the boys' excitement at playing with puppets after school, and the dialogue within the scene makes it clear that the toys were purchased, not made at home. The Urokogataya publisher's mark above the illustration does not appear in the later Nishimuraya reprint.

**My Dad bought this one for me** (*kore wa ore ga tossan ni katte moratta no ja* これはおれがとっさんにかつてもらったのじゃ). The boy is indirectly a consumer, having influenced his father's spending habits.

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<sup>490</sup> Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court*, 255-6.

<sup>491</sup> Ishikawa Gashō, *Hyakunin issu to hanafuda* (Ōizumi shoten, 1958), 133, 163-4.



## Fascicle 2: §2

[Picture] A merchant father chases his delinquent son with a broom. The mother and sister act as mediators, but a grandmother or elderly neighbor (far left) threatens to pinch the boy. (The verse for *yu* 兪, a few pages later, mentions the "indulgent mother" compensating for the "strict father."). The son's frantic state is suggested visually by the fact that he is leaping off the veranda, half-dressed, with bare feet. At left, a boy from another family offers the delinquent a refuge. Above this illustration, four of the five verses relate to lazy students who waste the opportunity to learn.

## Fascicle 2: §3

[Picture] A teacher supervises a student recital of *nō* dance, chant, and drumming. One verse continues the idea of lazy students from the previous page, two verses comment on *nō*, and the two final verses urge prompt, responsible behavior. The verse for *te* て, with its reference to two kinds of fees paid at writing schools, reminds us that this is a private, for-profit school.

By the formal clothing here and the board with titles of plays, we can see that this is a recital, rather than an ordinary day of class. The three titles listed on the program are all auspicious plays by Zeami 世阿弥 (ca. 1363-1443), known as the greatest playwright of the *nō* theater. The girls seem to be in attendance as observers, not as students.

The idea of *nō* as a childhood activity circulated with this picturebook, inspiring an illustration in the 1767 (*Ehon*) *Azuma warabe*, where it is labeled “*Nō* music and dance” (*hayashi komai*, Figure 56).<sup>492</sup> The *Azuma warabe* version includes more children and presents

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<sup>492</sup> Tada, ed., (*Ehon*) *Azuma warabe*, 62-63.

them in a more formal and controlled setting than does *Verses for Schoolchildren*. There are no girls in the *Azuma warabe* scene, and there is no whispering about the dancer's looks. Specific references to plays and to a performer are absent. Rather than an integrated whole of visual and verbal elements, *Azuma warabe* offers a line of poetry accompanied by an illustration.

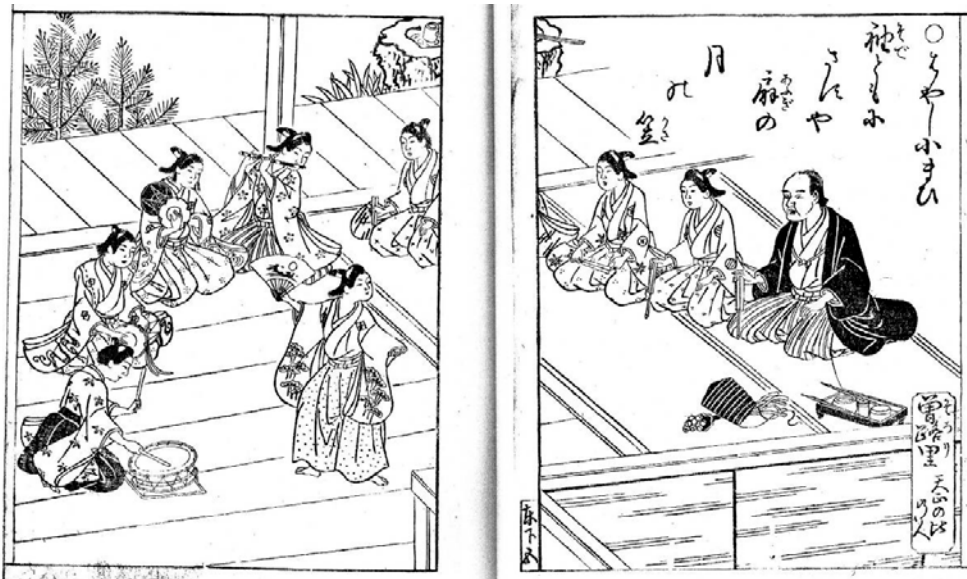


Figure 56: "Hayashi komai" from (*Ehon*) *Azuma warabe*

“Rising from the peak are clouds . . .” (*tachi idete mine no kumo . . . 立いでてみねのくも*).

This line and “In the woods of Gion and Shimogawara . . .” are direct quotations from the *nō* play *Yuya* 熊野, which has filial piety as a major theme.<sup>493</sup> *Yuya* is not listed on the program but may be the encore piece. It is a third-category play (*kazura mono*), and the authorship is uncertain.

**Protagonist, companion** (*shite waki* シテワキ). The two main characters in a *nō* play. Children are traditionally encouraged to chant in loud, high voices at the beginning of their *nō* training.

<sup>493</sup> These translations are my own, but see the following for an English translation of the full play: Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, trans., *Yuya*, in vol. 2 of *Japanese Noh Drama: Ten Plays Selected and Translated from the Japanese* (Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, 1959), 33-51.

**The small and large drums** (*tsuzumi taiko* つづみたいこ). These drums are used in the *nō* theater. The small drum appears in the center, rear of the illustration; it rests on the drummer's shoulder. A larger drum, now known as the *ō-tsutsumi* 大鼓, is played by the drummer on the right.

**Tenjin Festival dues** (*Tenjin kō* てんじん講). The Tenjin Festival was held to honor Sugawara no Michizane on the twenty-fifth day of the second month or on the twenty-fifth day of each month. *Tenjin kō* could refer to either the festival itself or to money collected on the twenty-fifth of every month for a mutual financing association.

**Mat-replacement fees** (*tatami sen* 畳銭). These fees were paid to the teacher toward the periodic replacement of woven-straw mats (*tatami*) on the floor of the *terakoya*.<sup>494</sup>

**Takasago** (高砂). A famous god play (*waki-nō*) by Zeami. The first half of the play features two ancient pine trees from the shrines at Sumiyoshi and Takasago. The pines are personified as an old man and old woman with a long and happy marriage.<sup>495</sup>

**Tamura** (田村). A famous warrior play (*shura mono*) by Zeami. The ghost of the warrior Tamura-maru appears beneath the cherry blossoms of Kiyomizu-dera Temple and relates the story of his successful battle to a traveler and his companion.<sup>496</sup>

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<sup>494</sup> For an English-language discussion of fees and gifts involved in *terakoya*, see Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 260-264.

<sup>495</sup> For an English translation, see *Takasago*, 277-292. Note that a rat version of the happy couple appears on a decorated table (*shimadai*) at the beginning of *The Rat Wedding*.

<sup>496</sup> For an English translation, see *Tamura*, in vol. 1 of Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, *Japanese Noh Drama: Ten Plays Selected and Translated from the Japanese* (Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, 1955), 19-36.

**Oimatsu** (老松). *Oimatsu*, which has been translated as “The Ancient Pine,” is another god play by Zeami. The spirits of the pine tree and the plum tree that belonged to Sugawara no Michizane appear to a traveler at Anraku Temple.<sup>497</sup>

**Wakatarō** (若太郎). A male given name that means “young boy.” In this case, it appears to be a generic name rather than one that suggests a specific actor or historical figure.

**Hikosa[burō]** (彦三[郎]). Bandō Hikosaburō II (1741-1768) was an Edo kabuki actor popular with female fans and known for roles as a youth or young woman.<sup>498</sup> The mention of Hikosaburō here is embedded advertising—Hikosaburō played Soga Gorō in the Ichimura-za New Year’s production on the twenty-fifth day of the first month of 1762. Kiyomitsu included Hikosaburō’s image in the Ichimura-za program for the opening production (*kaomise*) of the new season that began in the eleventh month of 1761.<sup>499</sup> The schoolboy Wakatarō resembles Hikosaburō in a 1759 print by Torii Kiyomitsu (Figure 57).<sup>500</sup>

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<sup>497</sup> For an English translation, see *Oimatsu (The Ancient Pine)* in “God Noh,” vol. 1 of Chifumi Shimazaki, *The Noh* (Hinoki shoten, 1972), 141-167.

<sup>498</sup> “Bandō Hikosaburō II,” in *Kabuki jinmei jiten*, 553-554.

<sup>499</sup> Ihara, *Kabuki nenpyō*, vol. 3, 478; Torii Kiyomitsu, ill., “Ichimura-za kaomise” (Edo: 1761), in “Shibai banzuke dejitaru gazō dētabēsu,” TJJ22.6-04-015, [http://library.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/lib/sibai\\_index.html](http://library.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/lib/sibai_index.html) (accessed November 4, 2011).

<sup>500</sup> Torii Kiyomitsu, “Actor Bando Hikosaburo” (Edo: Maruya Jinpachi (Marujin, Enjudō), 1759), William Sturgis Bigelow Collection 11.19008, MFA, <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/actor-bando-hikosaburo-211689> (accessed July 18, 2012).



Figure 57: Actor Bando Hikosaburō in a theatrical print by Torii Kiyomitsu. Photograph © MFA.

## Fascicle 2: §4

[Picture] Girls practice calligraphy and reading in a private home. The girls' parents (upper right and far right) sit in on the lesson with the teacher (far left). The scene includes a visual-verbal pun: the girl holding up the brush for writing (*kaki* 書き) wears a kimono decorated with persimmons (*kaki* 柿). The girl at left uses a slender stick to follow the line of characters as she reads aloud from a letter or similar text—the wavy lines suggest cursive Japanese.

**Pine / Bamboo / Plum** (*matsu take ume* 松竹梅). The calligraphy piece displayed on the wall shows the characters for pine, bamboo, and plum in old forms—the **seal script** (*tenji* 篆字) mentioned in the dialogue. These plants have auspicious connotations, and they are recurring motifs in both picturebooks and the *nō* plays mentioned in the previous section.

**Written by Kiyo, age 9** (*Kiyo kyū sai shoshi* きよ九才書之). While the “Kiyo” mentioned in the picture may refer to the girl holding the brush, it is also the “Kiyo” of the two illustrators, Kiyomasu and Kiyomitsu.<sup>501</sup> Here, as in the graffiti scene, the illustrators include a playful, self-reflexive element in their depiction of a budding talent for brushwork.

## **Fascicle 2: §5**

**[Picture]** Four male students and three men visit a shrine dedicated to Tenman Tenjin 天満天神, another term for Sugawara no Michizane. Were the sign on the temple fully visible, it would read *tenmangū* 天満宮 preceded by a name indicating the shrine's location. A poem on the last page recommends a pilgrimage to Kitano 北野 Tenmangū, the main Kyoto area Tenjin shrine, but the shrine depicted here appears to be a smaller, local one.

The felicitous words from the calligraphy piece on the previous page are repeated here as images. A pine tree stands before the shrine, and two men use a bamboo pole to carry a large sign with the design of a plum blossom. These men illustrate the contrast between the lazy and "those who strive" mentioned in the verse for *se* 世. One man, carrying most of the weight, expresses exhaustion after the long walk, while the other suggests that the trip was short and easy. Likewise, the boys at left, who in earlier scenes had been mischievous or rambunctious, here express admiration of a girl (Hachi) whose calligraphy is displayed at the shrine. The girl thus becomes a model for boys.

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<sup>501</sup> The transcription on page 360 of *KKES, Edo hen* gives the name as Sayo. Here the *sa* さ was changed to *ki* き based on the more legible edition in the MFA.

The father figure and two of the students keep their left hands slightly inside their sleeves, a manner of walking that was more polite or dignified than exposing both hands. Some figures in the procession in *The Rat Wedding* walk with one or both hands hidden as well.

**Fascicle 2: § 6: “List of New Publications for Spring” (*Haru shinpan butsu mokuroku*)**

Poems for the last syllabary character and for the Chinese character for capital city, *kyō* 京, appear at the top of the final page. However, instead of a picture there is an advertisement for new books from the publisher Urokogotaya for spring 1762 (identified as the “Water Horse” year in the sexagenary cycle of years). Advertisements like this one are relatively unusual in early picturebooks but more common in yellow books, and there are other examples of advertisements by the same publisher. Most end with some variation of the line urging the reader to look at the “remarkably entertaining new publications.”<sup>502</sup>

The publisher’s mark, name and address at lower left do not appear in the Nishimuraya reprint from around 1794 (Figure 58).<sup>503</sup> The Nishimuraya would have scraped off the original publisher's information before printing with the old woodblocks. As Kimura Yaeko observes, the fact that the book was republished after more than thirty years suggests that it sold well.<sup>504</sup>

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<sup>502</sup> Tan Kazuhiro, ed., “Kōkoku ichiran,” 313-318.

<sup>503</sup> *Terako tanka*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 362.

<sup>504</sup> Kimura, *Kusazōshi no sekai*, 92.



Figure 58: “List of New Publications for Spring” in Nishimuraya reprint of *Verses for Schoolchildren*

[Book titles]<sup>505</sup>

(*Wada Asari*) *Great Mirror of a Powerful Couple* ((*Wada Asari*) *Chikara kobu imose no masu kagami* 和田阿佐利努陰陽尺鏡). Not extant. The title seems to refer to “Battle at Wada: Female Dancing Crane” (“*Wada kassen onna mai-zuru*” 和田合戦女舞鶴), a play by Namiki Sōsuke first performed in the puppet theater in 1736 and later adapted for kabuki. *Hangaku*, a female warrior and here the wife of Asari Yoichi, stars as an extraordinarily strong woman.<sup>506</sup>

<sup>505</sup> The original text includes phonetic glosses for each title in the list. Where the meaning of the characters conflicted with the meaning of the gloss, I chose to follow the phonetic gloss. Some copies of these books might remain unpublished in private collections, but the information that follows is based primarily on the Union Catalogue of Early Japanese Books produced by NIJL, <http://base1.nijl.ac.jp/~tkoten/about-en.html> (accessed November 4, 2011).

<sup>506</sup> “The Herculean Woman / *Wada kassen onna maizuru*” in “The Barbara Curtis Adachi Bunraku Collection at C. V. Starr East Asian Library,” <http://bunraku.cul.columbia.edu/plays/view/164> (accessed July 12, 2012); “*Wada kassen onna mai zuru* (*Hangaku*),” in Toita Yasuji et al., eds., *Maruhon jidaimono shū* 2, vol. 3 of *Meisaku kabuki zenshū* (Tōkyō sōgen shinsha, 1968).



***Kani no Saizō: Hometown Where Flowers Fall*** (*Kani no Saizō hana furu sato* 可兒才藏花降里).<sup>507</sup> Kani Saizō (1554-1613), also known as Kani Yoshinaga or Sasa no Saizō, was a warrior famous at the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600 (Figure 49). He was given the nickname “Bamboo grass Saizō” (Sasa no Saizō) because he used bamboo leaves to mark the trophies he took at the Battle of Sekigahara.<sup>508</sup>

***Chronicle of the Stepdaughter’s Return*** (*Gijo sairai ki* 義女再来記). This is a fantastic tale of Minamoto no Yoshimasa’s stepdaughter, who commits suicide so that her spirit can follow her stepbrother into battle and ensure victory.<sup>509</sup>

***(Flute-following Deer, White-handed Monkey) Songs of the Moon Over Monkey Marsh*** (*Fue ni yoru shika, te shiro no saru*) *ongyoku Sarusawa no tsuki* (笛寄鹿・手白猿) 音曲猿沢月).<sup>510</sup>

Monkey Marsh, or Sarusawa, is the name of a pond in Nara that is the site of various legends.

***Origin of the Azuma Avatar*** (*Azuma gongen no yurai* 吾妻権現由来).<sup>511</sup> The Shrine of the Azuma Avatar was a famous spot near Edo; it is now in the city of Yokohama.<sup>512</sup> The shrine’s principal deities are Yamato Takeru and his wife Ototachibanahime.

***Origin of Mototsu*** (*Mototsu ma no yurai* 本津間由来). The title puns on Mototsu 本津, a family

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<sup>507</sup> Torii Kiyomitsu I, *Kani no Saizō hana furusato*.

<sup>508</sup> “Kani Saizō,” in *Nihon jinmei daijiten* (Kodansha, 2012), in JapanKnowledge, <http://www.jkn21.com> (accessed February 9, 2012).

<sup>509</sup> *Gijo sairai ki*, 3 vols. (1762); in Tōkyō Daigaku Katei Bunko, <http://kateibunko.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/katei/cgi-bin/srch.cgi?no=&title=&yomi=&cls=080200> (accessed June 18, 2012). No transcription. The name “Yoshimasa” belonged to more than one historical figure. However, this particular Minamoto warrior appears to be fictional.

<sup>510</sup> Jōa and ill. Torii Kiyomitsu, (*Fue ni yoru shika, te shiro no saru*) *Ongyoku saru sawa no tsuki*.

<sup>511</sup> Jōa, *Azuma gongen no yurai*, 3 vols. (1762); in the collection of Yamazaki Fumoto, according to the Union Catalogue of Early Japanese Books.

<sup>512</sup> “Honmoku Azuma gongen gū,” in *Edo meisho zue*, vol. 2, fascicle 6, 132 chō (Chikuma shobo), in JapanKnowledge, <http://www.jkn21.com> (accessed March 2, 2012).

name, and “former wife” (*moto tsuma* 元妻). With a different pronunciation for the characters, Honzu 本津 is also a family name, place name, and the name of more than one river.<sup>513</sup>

***Moritō Floating Bridge of Dreams*** (*Moritō yume no ukihashi* 盛遠夢浮橋). Not extant. Endō Moritō (1139-1203), better known as Mongaku, was a Shingon sect monk. He appears in the *Tale of Heike*.<sup>514</sup>

***The Story of the Career of Genkurō the Fox*** (*Genkurō kitsune shusse banashi* 源九郎狐出世噺).<sup>515</sup> Genkurō the Fox was a legendary trickster who also appeared in the puppet play

*Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees* (*Yoshitsune senbon zakura* 義経千本桜, 1747).

***Tale of Bird Tracks and Morning Glories*** (*Tori no ato asagao monogatari* 鳥跡槿物語). Not extant.

***The Kid: Miniatures of the Pleasure Quarters*** (*Dōji kuruwa hinagata* 童子廓雛形). No book with this exact title exists, but a picturebook with a similar title (*Shuten dōji kuruwa hinagata* 酒呑童子廓雛形) was issued by the same publisher in 1765.<sup>516</sup> If this book was published three years after it was advertised, it is possible that some of the advertised books that are not extant now were never published at all. The “Drunken Kid” (*Shuten Dōji*) was a legendary bandit. Various stories of how he became a demon and of how he was eventually defeated at Ōeyama appeared in illustrated scrolls, picturebooks, puppet plays, and other genres.

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<sup>513</sup> Kansuidō (Jōa), *Mototsu ma no yurai*, 3 vols. (1762); in Tōyō Iwasaki Bunko, microfilm at NIJL. No transcription. I did not have the opportunity to read the original closely; the way this title would play out within the plot is obscure, perhaps intentionally so.

<sup>514</sup> Yamada Shōzen, “Mongaku,” in *Kokushi daijiten*, in JapanKnowledge, <http://www.jkn21.com> (accessed February 15, 2012).

<sup>515</sup> *Genkurō kitsune shusse banashi* (1762); held by Tōyō Iwasaki Bunko, Hibiya Kaga Bunko and Dai Tōkyū Kinen Bunko, microfilm at NIJL. No transcription.

<sup>516</sup> *Shuten dōji kuruwa hinagata* (Edo: Urokogataya, 1765); in Tōyō Iwasaki Bunko, microfilm at NIJL. No transcription.

*Old Story of the Bird that Gossip Freed* (*Mukashi uwasa hanashi tori* 往古噂放鳥). Not extant.

*Song of the Eightfold Cherry Tree of Yamato* (*Yaezakura yamato uta* 八重桜倭歌). Not extant.

*Later Three-Year War, Pleasures of Mutsu* (*Gosannen Mutsu tanoshimi* 後三稔奥羽鐮). Not extant. The title refers to a war in Mutsu in 1083-1087.

*(Kinomaru Hangan) Pillar of Great Peace* (*(Kinomaru Hangan) Taihei hashira* (木丸判官) 太平榎). Not extant.

*(Iroha Characters) Verses for Schoolchildren* (*(Iroha moji) Terako tanka* (いろは文字) 寺子短歌). The current picturebook.

## Chapter 7: Envisioning the Invisible Ideal

*The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* (*Kaitai tanjō raku* 懷胎誕生楽, author and illustrator unknown, mid- to late 18<sup>th</sup> c.) translates religious and medical knowledge about fetal development into the visual idiom of a picturebook for children.<sup>517</sup> At the same time, it informs its audience of the attributes of an ideal child. This “patterned book” (*kōzeibyōshi*) from the Kamigata region is one of several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts that identify specific Buddhas and Bodhisattvas responsible for a fetus in each month of pregnancy.<sup>518</sup> Among these Buddhist explications of pregnancy, *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* goes the furthest toward weaving the “facts” of fetal development into an engaging but informative visual-verbal narrative—one that includes iconographic detail but animates the Buddhist objects of devotion in a gently humorous way. The picturebook’s focus on explaining the unseen mysteries of pregnancy—a topic also covered in a standard didactic work for girls from this period—suggests a female audience while its emphasis on the desirability of a male baby reinforces the gender expectations of the day.<sup>519</sup> As this brief description suggests, *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* provides religious instruction with little that resembles an overt moral lesson.

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<sup>517</sup> *Kaitai tanjō raku*, in Nakano and Hida, eds., *KKES, Kamigata hen*, 468-474, and summary p. 491.

<sup>518</sup> Chikamatsu Monzaemon, attr., *Kinoene matsuri*, in vol. 2 of Fujii Otoo, ed., *Chikamatsu zenshū* (Osaka: Asahi shinbunsha, 1925), 105-108; Chikamatsu Monzaemon, *Semimaru*, in vol. 2 of Chikamatsu Zenshū Kankōkai, ed., *Chikamatsu zenshū* (Iwanami shoten, 1985), 384-387; [Namura Jōhaku], *Onna chōhōki*, ed. Arima Sumiko, Wakasugi Tetsuo, and Nishigaku Yoshiko, Tōyoko Gakuen Joshi Tanki Daigaku Josei Bunka Kenkyūjo sōsho: dai 3-shū (Tōyoko Gakuen Joshi Tanki Daigaku Josei Bunka Kenkyūjo, 1989), vol. 1, 58-59, 65; James H. Sanford, “Wind, Waters, Stupas, Mandalas: Fetal Buddhahood in Shingon,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 24.1/2 (1997): 25ff.; Hōseidō Kisanji, and ill. Torii Kiyotsune, (*Fujin hitsudoku kaidatsu yōshin*) *Kotobuki haru bukuro* (Edo: Urokogataya, 1777), in MFA, no. 2012.450, vol. 3. No transcription.

<sup>519</sup> [Namura Jōhaku], *Onna chōhōki*, ed. Arima et al., vol. 1, 58-59, 65.

The simple but strange plot of *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* unfolds in twelve illustrated pages. An expectant father falls asleep while his wife is in labor, and in this sleep comes a dream of “the ten months in the womb.” With one page for each month, the dream makes up the majority of the picturebook. In the dream, ten different Buddhas and Bodhisattvas—animated statues—each work on the fetus for a month, constructing the fetus from wood as if it too were a Buddhist devotional object. The last page of the picturebook reveals the new mother resting after giving birth. These events are presented through a combination of narration, speech, labels, and pictures that incorporate Buddhist symbols and iconography. Neither the words nor the images could stand alone.

### **Edo-period Literary Representations of Fetal Development**

The visual representation of Buddhas as artisans engaged in the construction of a fetus may be original to *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, but the picturebook’s basic understanding of fetal development is not. *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* shares its interest in pregnancy and fetal development with at least two plays and two picturebooks from the late seventeenth through the early nineteenth centuries. Of these, the earliest is *Kinoene Festival* (*Kinoene matsuri* 甲子祭り, 1684), a puppet play attributed to Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門 (1653-1724).<sup>520</sup> The relevant passage—a recitation of the stages of fetal development and the names of the responsible Buddhas and Bodhisattvas—is repeated almost verbatim in

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<sup>520</sup> Chikamatsu, attr., *Kinoene matsuri*, 59-110. The Kinoene Festival (*Kōshimachi* 甲子待 or *Kinoene matsuri* 甲子祭) is dedicated to Daikoku, one of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune. *Kinoe* 甲 (also pronounced *kō*) is the first of the ten calendar signs, and *ne* 子 (also pronounced *shi*) is the first of the twelve signs of the Chinese zodiac. There are six or seven Kinoene days in a year, but the festival was generally observed with a vigil preceding the Kinoene day in the eleventh month of the lunar calendar. Hirayama Tomojirō, “Kōshimachi,” in *Kokushi daijiten*.

Chikamatsu's *Semimaru* せみ丸, a puppet play composed around 1688.<sup>521</sup> In the latter play, the passage appears in the final scene, “The Origin of the Ten Months in the Womb” (*Kaitai totsuki no yurai* 懐胎十月由来), in which a Buddhist priest recites the mysteries of the womb in order to enlighten a vengeful female ghost.<sup>522</sup> The details about these ten months in the womb differ from those presented in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, but the basic understanding of fetal development as the work of the Buddhas is the same.

Similarities among illustrations of the fetus in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* and two other picturebooks suggest that they all derive from the *Record of Treasures for Maidens* (*Onna chōhōki*, 1692), whether directly or indirectly. This late seventeenth-century educational compendium was reissued multiple times through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>523</sup> Its depiction of pregnancy condenses ten months into a two-page illustration (Figure 59).<sup>524</sup> Nearly identical images of the fetus can be found in the last pages of *Felicitations: A Springtime Pouch* (*Kotobuki haru bukuro* 寿春袋), a 1777 yellow book written by Hōseidō Kisanji (1735-1813) and illustrated by Torii Kiyotsune (fl. ca. 1751-1781).<sup>525</sup> This yellow book names the same Buddhist figures but omits their images. Illustrations in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* also suggest an influence from the *Record of Treasures for Maidens*, albeit one interpreted freely and supplemented with other sources.

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<sup>521</sup> Chikamatsu, attr., *Kinoene matsuri*, 105-108; Chikamatsu, *Semimaru*, 384-387; cf. Susan Matisoff, *The Legend of Semimaru: Blind Musician of Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 130-131, 146.

<sup>522</sup> Chikamatsu, *Semimaru*, 382-388; Susan Matisoff, trans., *Semimaru*, in *The Legend of Semimaru*, 266-272.

<sup>523</sup> Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 288-290.

<sup>524</sup> Namura Jōhaku, *Onna chōhōki*, in *Onna chōhōki. Kenai chōhōki*, 94-95. Transcription of the words in this illustration is not included in *Eiri Onna chōhōki honbun hen*, vol. 1 of [Namura Jōhaku], *Onna chōhōki*.

<sup>525</sup> Hōseidō Kisanji, and ill. Torii Kiyotsune, *Kotobuki haru bukuro*.

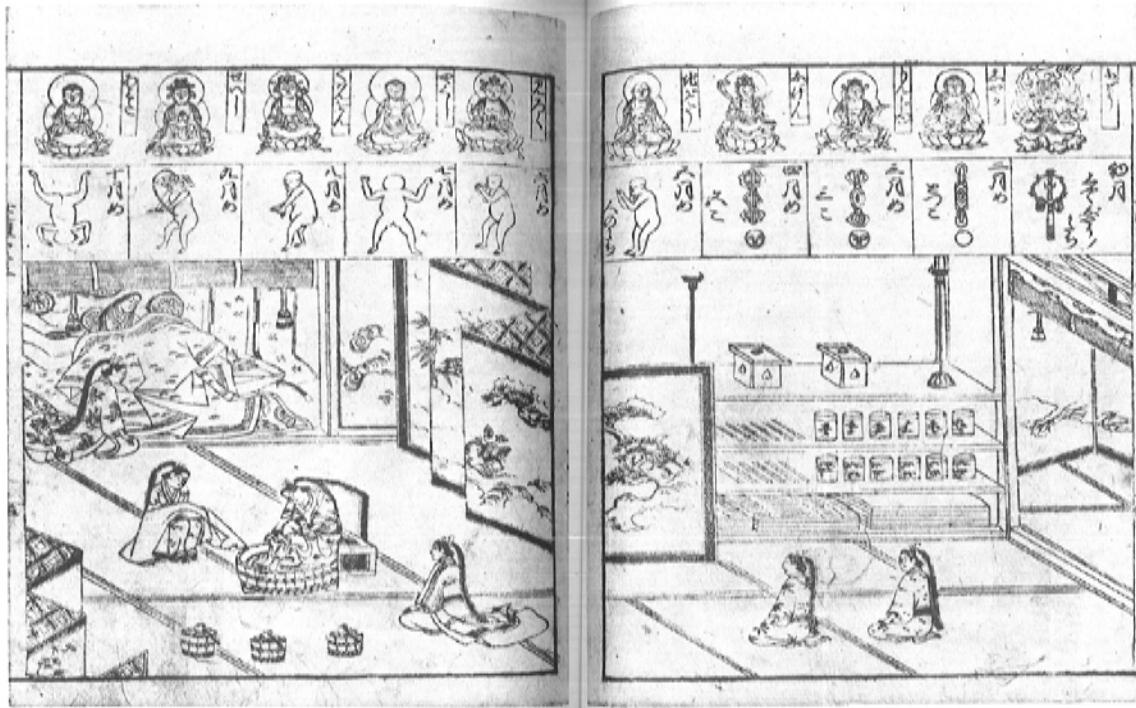


Figure 59: Buddhas (top row) and fetal development (second row) in *Onna chōhōki*, 1692

The idea that specific Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are responsible for the fetus in each stage of pregnancy is central to *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, and a sense of “fetal Buddhahood” is implicit in its visual text.<sup>526</sup> For example, in the ninth month of pregnancy, the Bodhisattva Seishi holds a miniature lotus seat for the fetus as he dangles the fetus in the other hand to demonstrate that the babies are born upside-down (Figure 60).<sup>527</sup> Other indications of the perfection of this particular fetus are woven throughout the ten months. Fudō remarks that he is working hard on this fetus because of the parents’ faith, and the Bodhisattva Monju comments that he is giving the fetus especially large ears—a typical feature on Buddhist images, including the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and arhats in this piece.<sup>528</sup>

<sup>526</sup> Cf. Sanford, “Fetal Buddhahood in Shingon,” 6ff.

<sup>527</sup> *Kaitai tanjō raku*, 473.

<sup>528</sup> *Kaitai tanjō raku*, 470. This is one place where the illustration differs slightly from the verbal text. The fetus is shown with ears of normal proportions, rather than elongated ears like those of the Buddhas.



**Figure 60: The ninth month in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* (detail)**

The Buddhist figures' active and visible engagement in the process of constructing the fetus is consistent throughout *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*. This is the point that most clearly distinguishes this picturebook from the illustrations and recitations of fetal development in the plays, the religious works, *Record of Treasures for Maidens*, and *Felicitations: A Springtime Pouch*. Whereas *Record of Treasures for Maidens* shows the Buddha Yakushi posed on a lotus seat, *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* shows him sitting on the floor and peering through spectacles to measure the fetus with a ruler (Figure 61).

The humorous aspect of depicting Buddhist devotional objects hard at work does not interfere with a sensitivity to iconography. As different as the picturebook image of Yakushi is, it maintains the simple appearance that distinguishes this Buddha from the ornately decorated Bodhisattvas in both *The Record of Treasures for Maidens* and *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*. Likewise, the Bodhisattva Fugen appears together with a white elephant, as is characteristic of images of this bodhisattva. In the picturebook, however, the elephant is not a silent prop—it makes a joke about the similarity of the name of Monju Bodhisattva to *manjū*, a



bean-filled bun.<sup>529</sup> The didactic value of the picturebook lies not only in the explanation of pregnancy but also in labeled images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas made the more memorable for their humor.



**Figure 61: Month 7, Yakushi in *Record of Treasures for Maidens* (left) and *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* (right)**

In animating and personalizing the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* suggests a precedent for a parody of the standard explanation of pregnancy in a “yellow book” (*kibyōshi*) by Santō Kyōden 山東京伝 (1761-1816). In *Ten Months in the Author’s Womb, Illustrated* (*Sakusha tainai totsuki zu* 作者胎内十月図, 1804), Kyōden casts himself as an author who gives birth to triplets—a picturebook in three fascicles—with the help of punny versions of the Buddhas.<sup>530</sup> The humor of *Ten Months in the Author’s Womb, Illustrated* depends on a mature reader’s prior familiarity with the facts of pregnancy whereas the more straightforward accounts in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* and *Felicitations: A Springtime Pouch* assume a less informed reader.

<sup>529</sup> *Kaitai tanjō raku*, 470.

<sup>530</sup> Santō Kyōden, *Sakusha tainai totsuki no zu*, 3 vols. (Edo: Tsuruya, 1804), in “Writings and Life of Novelists 2,” in “Rare Books of the National Diet Library: 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary,” [http://www.ndl.go.jp/exhibit60/e/copy2/3gesakusha\\_2.html#no51](http://www.ndl.go.jp/exhibit60/e/copy2/3gesakusha_2.html#no51) (accessed January 2, 2012).

## Fetal Development and Edo-period Buddhism

An investigation of the ultimate origins of eighteenth-century ideas about pregnancy and fetal development is beyond the scope of this inquiry into children's literature, but the similarities between *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* and Buddhist texts suggest the picturebook could be used for home religious education as well as for an introduction to pregnancy itself. The depiction of fetal development in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* and related works relies on Edo-period ideas of pregnancy and fetal development as set out in non-fictional works of the seventeenth century and earlier. One such work is the aforementioned *Record of Treasures for Maidens*.<sup>531</sup> In addition, texts in the Shingon Buddhist tradition include related explanations of the stages of fetal development and of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas responsible for them. Of these, the explanation in the early Edo-period text *Record of the Three Worlds in a Single Heart* (*Sangai isshinki* 三界一心記, attr. Dairyū, ca. 17<sup>th</sup> c.) is most similar to those in the picturebooks considered here.<sup>532</sup> The assignment of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for the ten months in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* and *A Springtime Pouch of Longevity* is the same as that in the *Record of Treasures for Maidens*: 1) Fudō, 2) Shakyamuni, 3) Monju, 4) Fugen, 5) Jizō, 6) Miroku, 7) Yakushi, 8) Kan'on (or Kanzeon), 9) Seishi, and 10) Amida.<sup>533</sup>

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<sup>531</sup> [Namura Jōhaku], *Onna chōhōki*, ed. Arima et al., vol. 1, 58-59, 65.

<sup>532</sup> Sanford, "Fetal Buddhahood in Shingon," 25-31.

<sup>533</sup> Hōseidō, *Kotobuki haru bukuro*, vol. 3; *Kaitai tanjō raku*, 469-473; [Namura Jōhaku], *Onna chōhōki*, ed. Arima et al., vol. 1, 58-59, 65. Chikamatsu's *Semimaru* differs slightly, leaving out Shakyamuni and Amida but including Ashuku and Aizen. The order of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas is also different: The list in *Semimaru* and *Kinoene matsuri* is as follows: 1) Fudō, 2) Yakushi, 3) Monju, 4) Fugen, 5) Jizō, 6) Kan'on, 7) Miroku, 8) Ashuku, 9) Seishi, 10) Aizen. Chikamatsu, attr., *Kinoene matsuri*, 105-109; Chikamatsu, *Semimaru*, 384-387; Matisoff, trans., *Semimaru*, 268-272. *Kinoene Festival*, from which *Semimaru* takes its description of fetal development, dates to 1684, before the *Record of Treasures for Maidens* was published. Chikamatsu, attr., *Kinoene matsuri*, 60, 109; Matisoff, *The Legend of Semimaru*, 146. The plays may represent an earlier phase in the evolution of Edo-period ideas about fetal development, one displaced—at least in popular culture—by the account in *Record of Treasures for Maidens*. Although *Ten Months in the Author's Womb* is closer to the two earlier picturebooks than it is to Chikamatsu, Kyōden does not pretend to represent the facts of pregnancy. He substitutes puns for most of the Buddhist names, and he switches the order of Jizō and Monju. Santō Kyōden, *Sakusha tainai totsuki no zu*, 3 vols.

This is also the order of appearance of the Buddhas in the *Sutra of Jizō and the Ten Kings* (*Jizō jūō kyō* 地藏十王經), a sutra that reveals the progress of the dead through the afterlife.<sup>534</sup>

The Buddhist knowledge a reader gained through a picturebook like *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* would have relevance beyond the immediate topic of pregnancy. For example, Sanford's investigation of Shingon Buddhist texts suggests the intriguing possibility that if the afterlife overlaps with the period before (re)birth, these stages that the dead experience are directly relevant to fetal development. The *Record of the Three Worlds in a Single Heart* explains pregnancy in periods of seven days that correspond to the seven-day periods following death in terms of order, length, and responsible Buddha.<sup>535</sup> In addition to the correspondence between the Buddhas in the picturebooks and those in the *Sutra of Jizō and the Ten Kings*, the Buddhas mentioned as responsible for the fetus in the first seven stages of pregnancy in *Record of the Three Worlds in a Single Heart* are the same as the first seven in the picturebooks.

The identities of the Buddhist figures (their names and iconography) and the order in which they appear are both relevant to religious education with a practical application—that of knowing to whom to look for help in each month of pregnancy. As Fudō explains in the first month, it is the parents' faith that has inspired his best work in the construction of the fetus. The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas repeatedly remark that this fetus is exceptionally well-made. The lesson that Buddhist devotion can result in a better baby is both inspirational and cautionary for the reader.

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(Edo: Tsuruya, 1804), in vol. 5 of Santō Kyōden Zenshū Henshū Iinkai and Mizuno Minoru, eds., *Santō Kyōden zenshū* (Perikansha, 1992), 163-186.

<sup>534</sup> Quitman E. Phillips, "Narrating the Salvation of the Elite: the Jōfukuji Paintings of the Ten Kings," *Ars Orientalis* 33 (2003): 123-124.

<sup>535</sup> Sanford, "Fetal Buddhahood in Shingon," 25-26.

## A Female Audience for Narratives of Pregnancy and Childbirth

This focus on the Buddhist implications of pregnancy suggests that *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* was written for a female audience, as does the picturebook's resonance with other works explicitly aimed at young female readers. Both *Record of Treasures for Maidens* and *Felicitations: A Springtime Pouch* visualize the unseen world of the womb for a female readership. In the former case, the audience is implied in the title. The latter picturebook was advertised as “preparation for pregnancy” (*kaitai yōjin* 懐胎用心).<sup>536</sup> The frontispiece to its second volume includes the phrase “Required Reading for Wives” (*Fujin hitsu doku* 婦人必読).<sup>537</sup> Likewise, it is in picturebooks about brides that depictions of mothers and their newborn babies are most common, and allusions to such picturebooks by the nineteenth-century writers Shikitei Samba and Takizawa Bakin place them in the context of young female readers.<sup>538</sup>

One exception to the female-oriented treatment of the topic of pregnancy and childbirth is Kyōden's *Ten Months in the Womb of an Author, Illustrated*. In depicting a visibly pregnant man—complete with an “x-ray” image of the fetus—Kyōden subverts the gender expectations of motherhood for the sake of humor (Figure 62). This yellow book for adults is structured on an extended analogy between giving birth and delivering a manuscript to a publisher. Puns related to authorship and pregnancy abound.<sup>539</sup>

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<sup>536</sup> Tanahashi, *Kibyōshi sōran*, vol. 1, 76.

<sup>537</sup> Hōseidō, *Kotobuki haru bukuro*, vol. 2. Unfortunately, the cover of the third volume is missing.

<sup>538</sup> Such wedding stories are discussed in more detail in the fourth chapter, which includes a translation of one example: *The Rat Wedding* (*Nezumi no yomeiri*, Nishimura Shigenobu, ca. 1737-1747). *Nezumi no yomeiri*, in Suzuki and Kimura, eds. *KKES, Edo hen*, 187-197; Ryūtei Tanehiko, *Nise Murasaki inaka Genji*, vol. 1, 468-469; Shikitei Sanba, *Ukiyoburo*, trans. Leutner, 175; Shikitei Sanba, *Ukiyoburo*, part 2, maki 1, p. 89.

<sup>539</sup> Santō Kyōden, *Sakusha tainai totsuki no zu*, in *Santō Kyōden zenshū*, 163-186.



Figure 62: “The Tenth Month” (*totsuki me*) in *Ten Months in the Womb of an Author, Illustrated*. “Yamida Buddha,” the Buddha of Darkness (far right), and the expectant author (right center) gaze at an assembly of veteran red-book characters (left panel, clockwise from upper right): Momotarō, Lady Lightsnow (*Usuyuki hime*), Monk Lookahead (*Mikoshi nyūdō*), Lady Bowl-on-head (*Hachikazuki hime*), and Kinpira. The author is desperately seeking ideas so as to deliver his picturebooks on time.<sup>540</sup>

Despite the expectation of a female audience for picturebooks about weddings and childbirth, the babies born in these stories are almost always male. This is true of *The Rat Wedding* and similar stories of animal weddings—the fact that the baby is a boy is cause for celebration.<sup>541</sup> Even the babies born in the parodic *Ten Months in the Womb of an Author, Illustrated* are male.<sup>542</sup> *The Record of Treasures for Maidens* avoids obvious indications of gender in its illustrations of the fetus, but *Felicitations: A Springtime Pouch* adapts these images

<sup>540</sup> Santō Kyōden, *Sakusha tainai totsuki no zu*, in “Rare Books of the National Diet Library: 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary;” cf. Santō Kyōden, *Sakusha tainai totsuki no zu*, in *Santō Kyōden zenshū*, 180-181.

<sup>541</sup> See for example the translation of *The Rat Wedding* (*Nezumi no yomeiri*) in chapter 4.

<sup>542</sup> Santō Kyōden, *Sakusha tainai totsuki no zu*, in *Santō Kyōden zenshū*, 185-186.

to present a fetus that is clearly male (Figure 63, middle).<sup>543</sup> In the first scene of *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, a servant prays that the baby born will be a “young master” (*waka danna*)—a boy.<sup>544</sup> Illustrations of the fetus, particularly in the fifth and sixth months when the body is being formed, show that the servant’s prayers are being answered (Figure 63, right).<sup>545</sup> These picturebooks involving pregnancy or childbirth thus present the female reader or viewer with a message about the greater desirability of a boy baby—a “young master” who can both continue the household and secure the mother’s place in it.<sup>546</sup>



**Figure 63: Month 6 detail in *Record of Treasures for Maidens* (left), *Felicitations: A Springtime Pouch* (center), and *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* (right)**

*The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* balances the higher value placed on boys with a suggestion that the new mother has been enlightened by the experience of pregnancy and childbirth. The final scene shows the mother resting as servants give the baby his first bath (Figure 64). This is a typical scene in picturebooks about weddings such as *The Rat Wedding*

<sup>543</sup> Namura, *Onna chōhōki*, in *Onna chōhōki. Kenai chōhōki*, 94-95; Hōseidō, *Kotobuki haru bukuro*, vol. 3. Photograph from *Kotobuki haru bukuro* © MFA.

<sup>544</sup> *Kaitai tanjō raku*, 468.

<sup>545</sup> *Ibid.*, 471.

<sup>546</sup> See chapters two and four for further discussion of eighteenth-century expectations for girls.

(Figure 65), and it is part of the representation of childbirth in *The Record of Treasures for Maidens* as well (Figure 59). However, the mother in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* does not lean against a pile of folded futon as do the mothers in the other two illustrations and in similar scenes in other wedding stories.<sup>547</sup> Instead, she rests in what appears to be a chair draped with a cloth and resting on a platform—a setting that evokes the style of portraits of enlightened monks and famous priests. *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images (Zōho Butsuzōzui* 増補仏像図彙, 1796), for example, depicts famous historical figures in Buddhism in that manner, including the Ritsu Sect priests in Figure 66: “Indian High Priest Dharmagupta,” “Chinese bonze Ganjin of Anchūji temple,” “Bonze of Sennyūji temple,” and “Priest Eizon of Saidaiji Temple” (clockwise from upper right).<sup>548</sup> In most cases the priest sits either in a high-backed chair draped with a cloth or on a low platform. Given that this scene appears after ten pages of Buddhist symbols and statues, the similarity between the mother’s pose and the poses in portraits of monks is not likely to be coincidental.

The idea of a woman reaching enlightenment through a knowledge of pregnancy has a precedent in the section of Chikamatsu’s *Semimaru* discussed above. Chikamatsu follows the recitation of the ten months in the womb with an explicit statement regarding female enlightenment. The spirit of Semimaru’s first wife, who died while jealous of Semimaru’s lover Naohime, had posed a threat to this lover’s pregnancy until a priest conducted a forty-nine day ritual directed at the wife’s spirit. The Buddhist explication of pregnancy appears at the end of this ritual, and it proves efficacious in placating the spirit of Semimaru’s wife. The once-jealous

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<sup>547</sup> *Bakemono yomeiri*, in *KKES, Edo hen*; Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., (*Saihan*) *Momotarō mukashi gatari*, vol. 1, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 59; Nishimura Shigenobu, ill., *Nezumi no yomeiri*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 196. A more ambiguous illustration appears in *Shūgen fukki nezumi*, in *KKES, Kamigata hen*, 215.

<sup>548</sup> Tosa Hidenobu, ill., *Zōho Butsuzōzui*, 5 vols. (Kyoto: Ōmojiya, 1796), in vol. 14 of Asakura Haruhiko, ed., *Kinmōzui shūsei* (Ōzorasha, 1998), 340. Titles are translated in Anita Khanna, trans., *Buddhist Iconography in the Butsuzōzui of Hidenobu* (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 2010), 181.

wife announces, “Drawn by the power of this sutra I attain Buddhahood just like Devadatta who committed the five sins and like the eight-year-old dragon maiden. My resentment has been dispelled, and now I shall become a Buddha of the five wisdoms” (*Kono onkyō ni hikarete go gyaku no datta hassai no ryū nyo. Tomo ni Butsu ka o ukeshi zo ya urami o harete ima yori wa. Goji no hotoke to naru beshi . . .*).<sup>549</sup> The references to Devadatta and the dragon maiden recall two surprising examples of salvation or enlightenment in the Lotus Sutra: that of Devadatta who was a great sinner and that of the dragon maiden who was young and female.<sup>550</sup> After invoking these precedents, Chikamatsu goes on to describe the transformation of the first wife’s spirit into a shining form of the Bodhisattva Kannon. With the conversion of the vengeful spirit into a protective one, the play ends on a joyous note: the descendents of Semimaru and his second wife enjoy generations of prosperity.<sup>551</sup>

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<sup>549</sup> Chikamatsu, *Semimaru*, 388; Matisoff, trans., *Semimaru*, 271-272.

<sup>550</sup> Matisoff, trans., *Semimaru*, 261, 271.

<sup>551</sup> Chikamatsu, *Semimaru*, 388; Matisoff, trans., *Semimaru*, 272.





Figure 64: “Is the baby healthy?” Final scene of *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*



Figure 65: “It was much easier than I expected . . .” Penultimate scene of *The Rat Wedding*

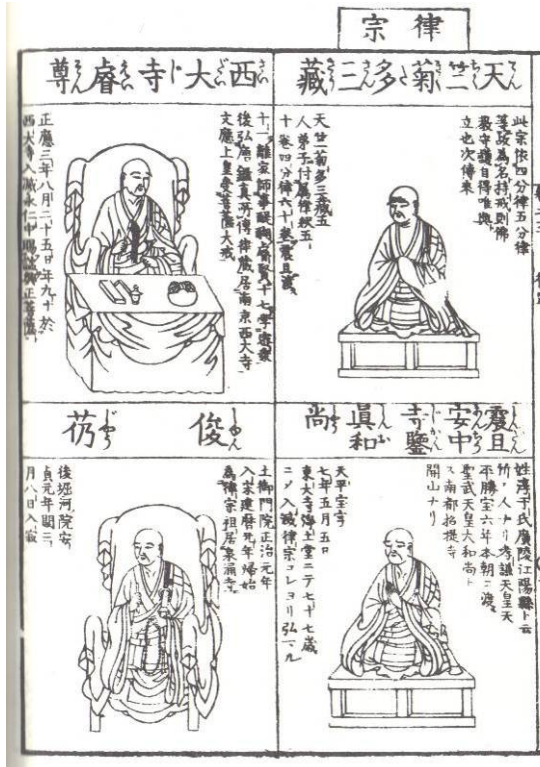


Figure 66: Ritsu Sect priests in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

### Translation of *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* (*Kaitai tanjō raku*)

Edo-period religious ideas and medical knowledge as well as literary and visual precedents inform the vision of fetal development in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*. The dream of the womb as Buddhist paradise unites the visible aspects of pregnancy and childbirth with their invisible implications in the spiritual realm. In an economy of faith, the parents' devotion buys the Buddhas' earnest efforts to construct a fetus destined to be the ideal child.

The following translation thus demonstrates one eighteenth-century understanding of both fetal development and the qualities of an ideal child. This child is to be not only strong, wise, eloquent, well-formed, and healthy but also male. This gender preference was in part a

reflection of the practical considerations involved in raising a girl only to send her out to marry.<sup>552</sup>

However, as a picturebook for a female reader, *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* ends with a scene that emphasizes the mother; it leaves the newborn boy out of the picture, literally, and evokes the setting of portraits of enlightened Buddhist monks and priests. The birth of a baby boy is already felicitous, and the subtle suggestion of the mother's potential enlightenment, as is made more explicit in Chikamatsu's *Semimaru*, makes the happy ending complete.

The translation of *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* follows this introduction, beginning at page 334. It proceeds from right to left, ending at page 322. Annotations follow the translation, beginning on page 335. The translation and annotations rely on an edition annotated by Japanese scholars. The illustrations are reproduced from that text.<sup>553</sup> Details of illustrations of the Buddhas for each month from *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images* and of the Buddhas and stages of fetal development from the *Record of Treasures for Maidens* are reproduced with the annotations for the sake of comparison.<sup>554</sup>

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<sup>552</sup> See Chapter Four regarding wedding stories. A more thorough exploration of the Edo-period issues related to marriage and childbirth may be found in Drixler, "Infanticide and Fertility in Eastern Japan: Discourse and Demography, 1660-1880." In particular, see evidence of female infanticide pp. 204-207.

<sup>553</sup> *Kaitai tanjō raku*, 468-474, summary p. 491.


<sup>554</sup> Tosa, ill., *Zōhō Butsuzōzui*, 308-309; Namura Jōhaku, *Onna chōhōki*, in *Onna chōhōki. Kenai chōhōki*, 94-95.



Figure 67: *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* §7

All of the  
craftmanship is  
well done. For the  
finish, I'll polish it  
with scouring rushes.

Buddha  
Amida

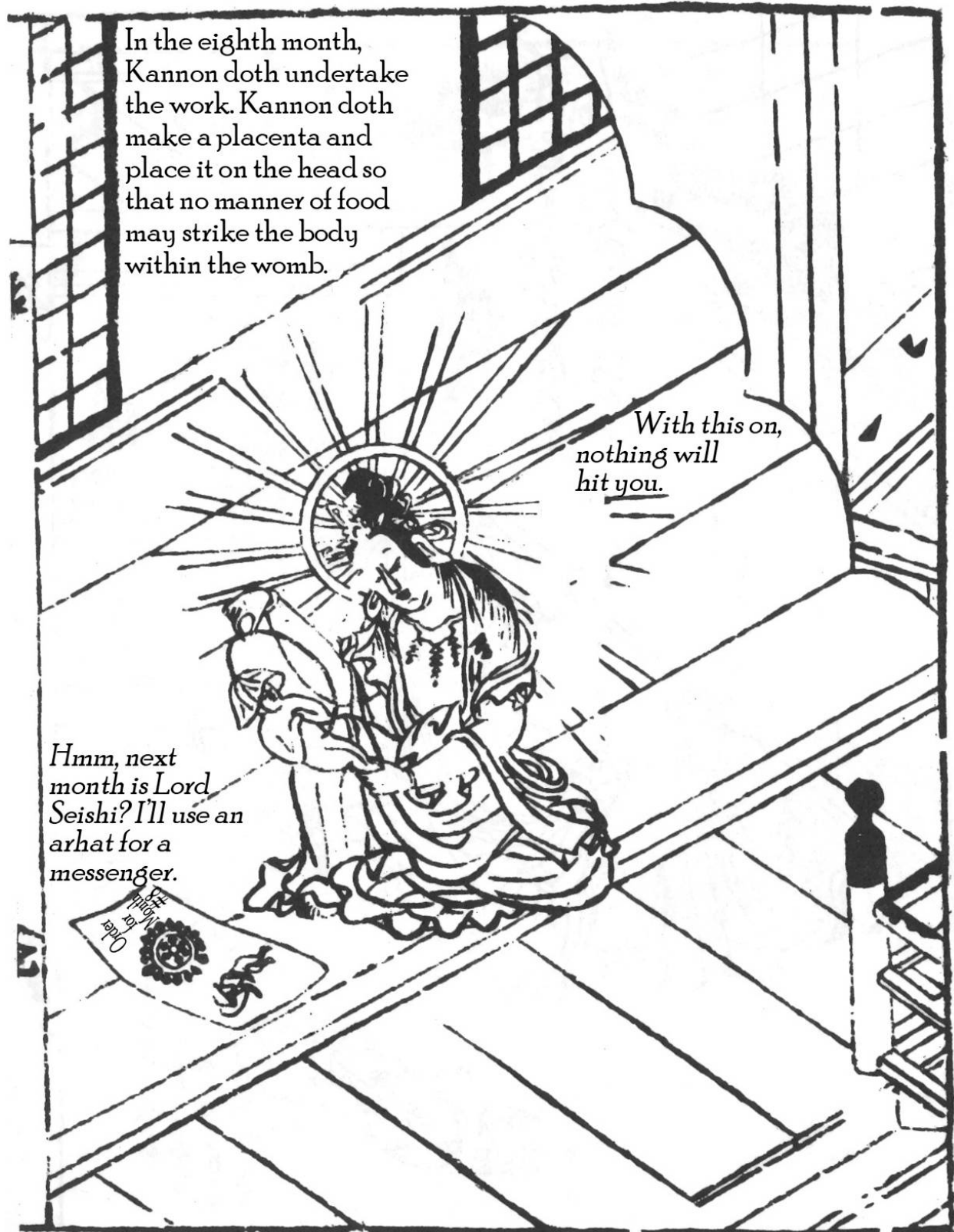


In the tenth month,  
Buddha Amida  
doth  
undertake  
the work.  
He removeth  
the placenta,  
completeth the  
human shape, and  
causeth an easy birth.

Figure 67 (continued): *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* §6 left



Figure 67 (continued): *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* §6 right



In the eighth month,  
Kannon doth undertake  
the work. Kannon doth  
make a placenta and  
place it on the head so  
that no manner of food  
may strike the body  
within the womb.

*With this on,  
nothing will  
hit you.*

*Hmm, next  
month is Lord  
Seishi? I'll use an  
arhat for a  
messenger.*

Figure 67 (continued): *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* §5 left

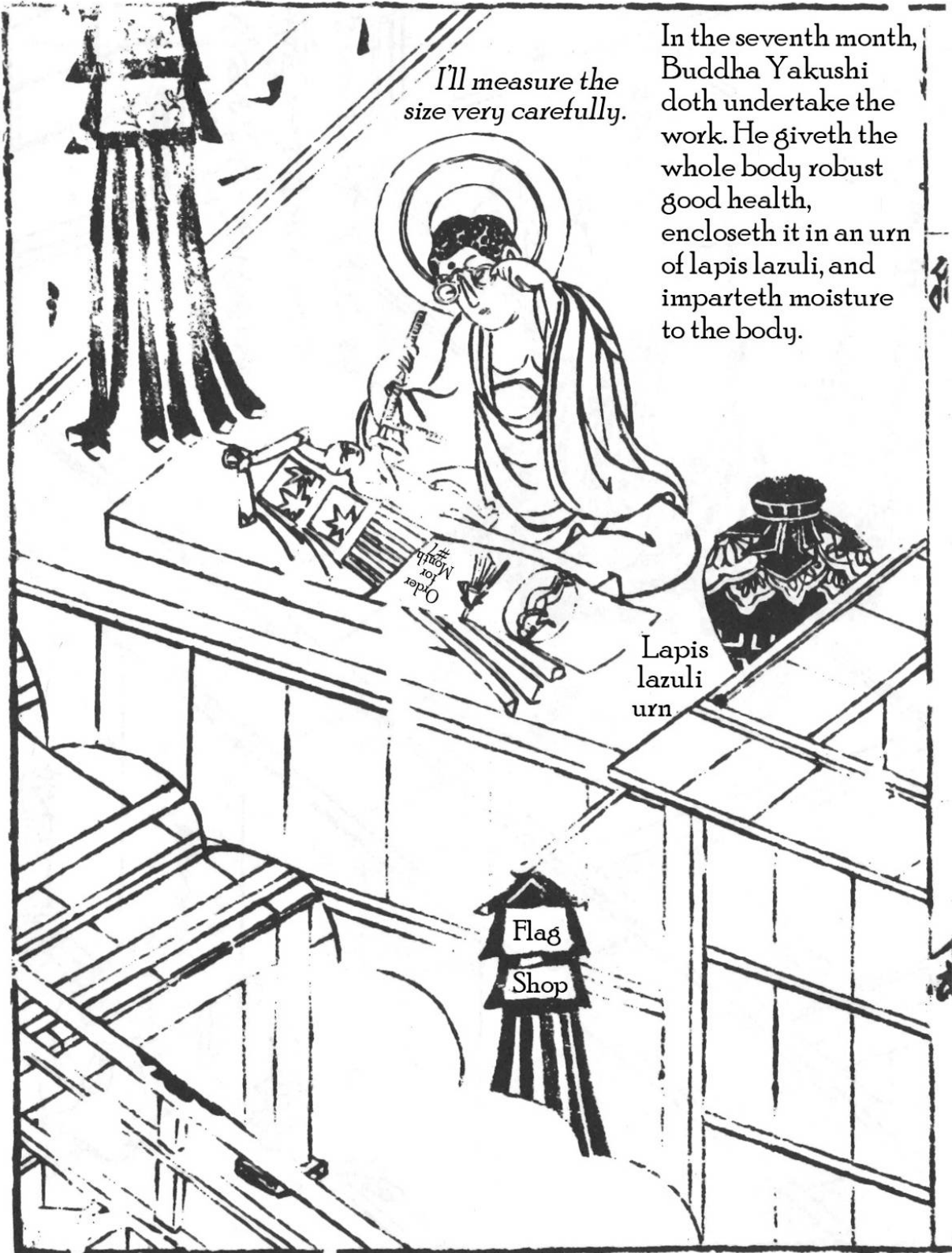
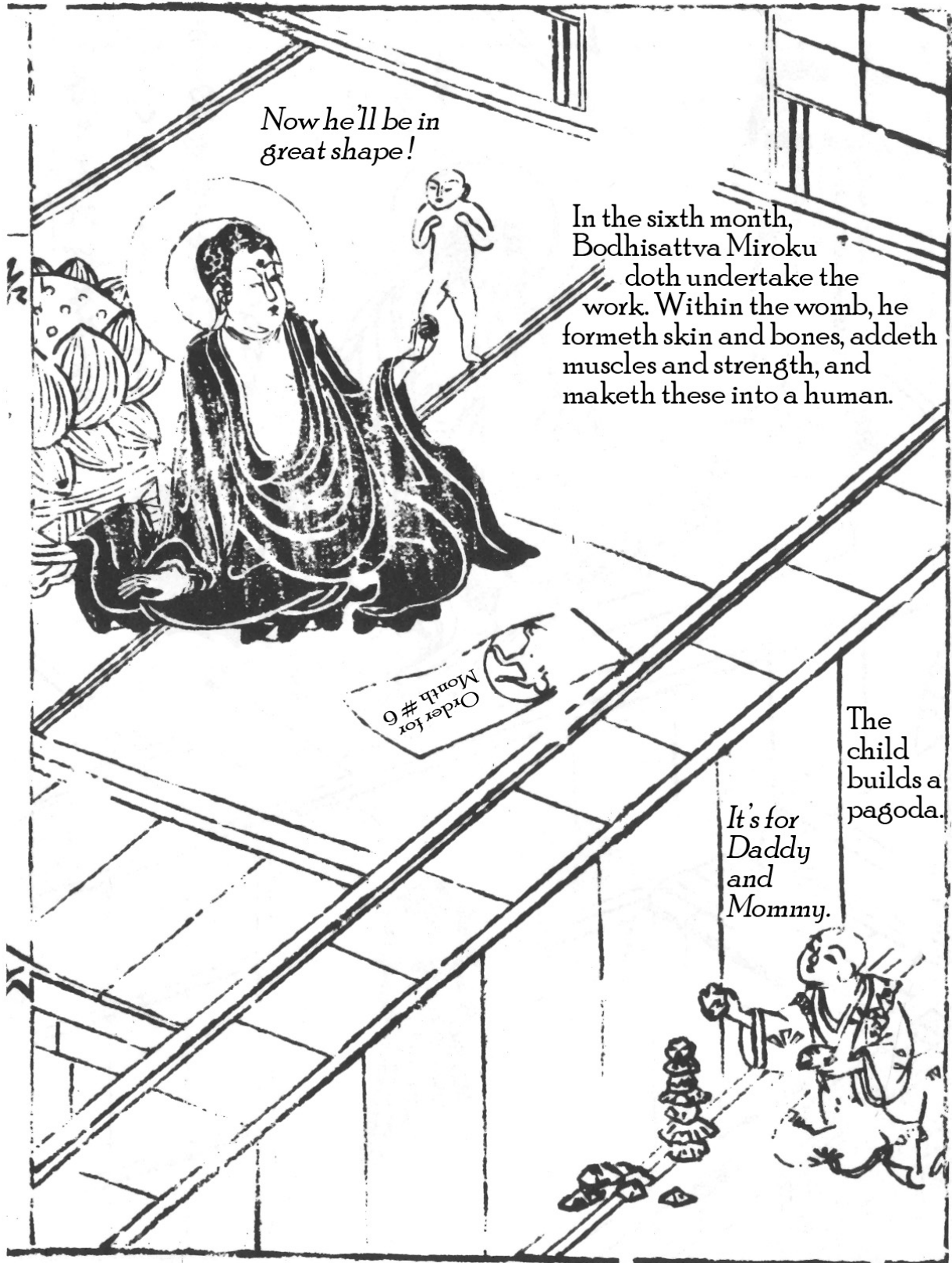


Figure 67 (continued): *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* §5 right





Now he'll be in  
great shape!

In the sixth month,  
Bodhisattva Miroku  
doth undertake the  
work. Within the womb, he  
formeth skin and bones, addeth  
muscles and strength, and  
maketh these into a human.

The  
child  
builds a  
pagoda.

It's for  
Daddy  
and  
Mommy.

Figure 67 (continued): *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* §4 left



Figure 67 (continued): *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* §4 right



*Give him my  
best wishes  
and make  
sure to tell  
him I've  
undertaken  
it.*

*In the fourth  
month,  
Bodhisattva  
Fugen doth  
undertake  
the work. He  
maketh the  
mouth and tongue,  
bringeth forth the  
voice, and causeth  
eloquent speech.*

*This month it  
hath become  
your turn.*

*An arhat  
comes as a  
messenger  
from  
Monju.*

*Bodhisattva  
Fugen*

*If only it were manjū  
buns, I'd wanna  
gobble 'em up.*

Figure 67 (continued): Paradise of Gestation and Birth §3 left

Well, I shall add ears  
for hearing good  
things, and I shall  
make them very  
large so that the  
child may have  
good fortune.

Lord Shaka's  
craftsmanship  
hath grown  
yet more  
skillful.

In the third month,  
Bodhisattva  
Monju doth  
undertake  
the work. He  
maketh both  
ears, and  
he imparteth  
wisdom.

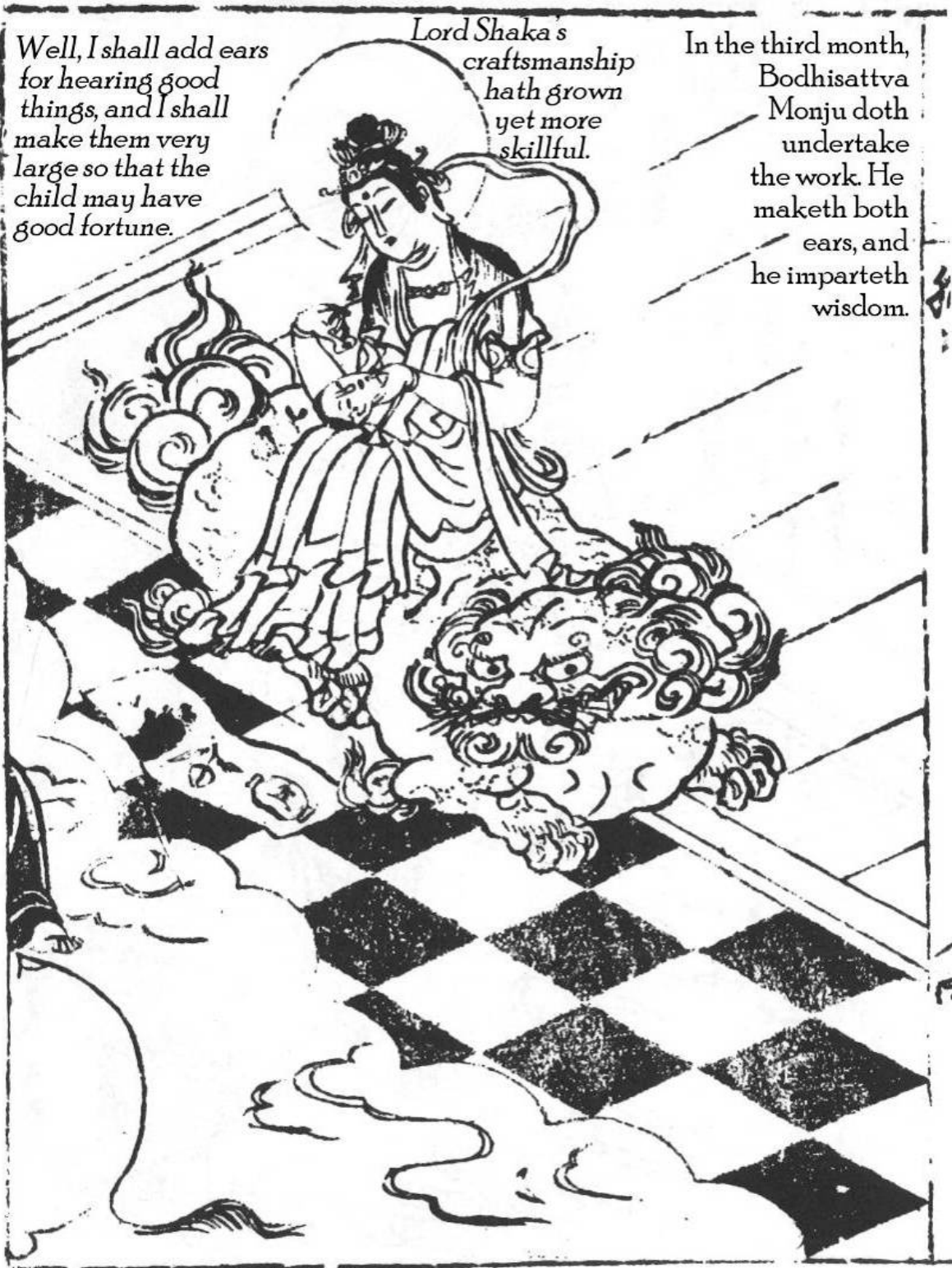


Figure 67 (continued): *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* §3 right



Figure 67 (continued): *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* §2 left



*Master, you must be exhausted from your work. I shall heat sake for you.*

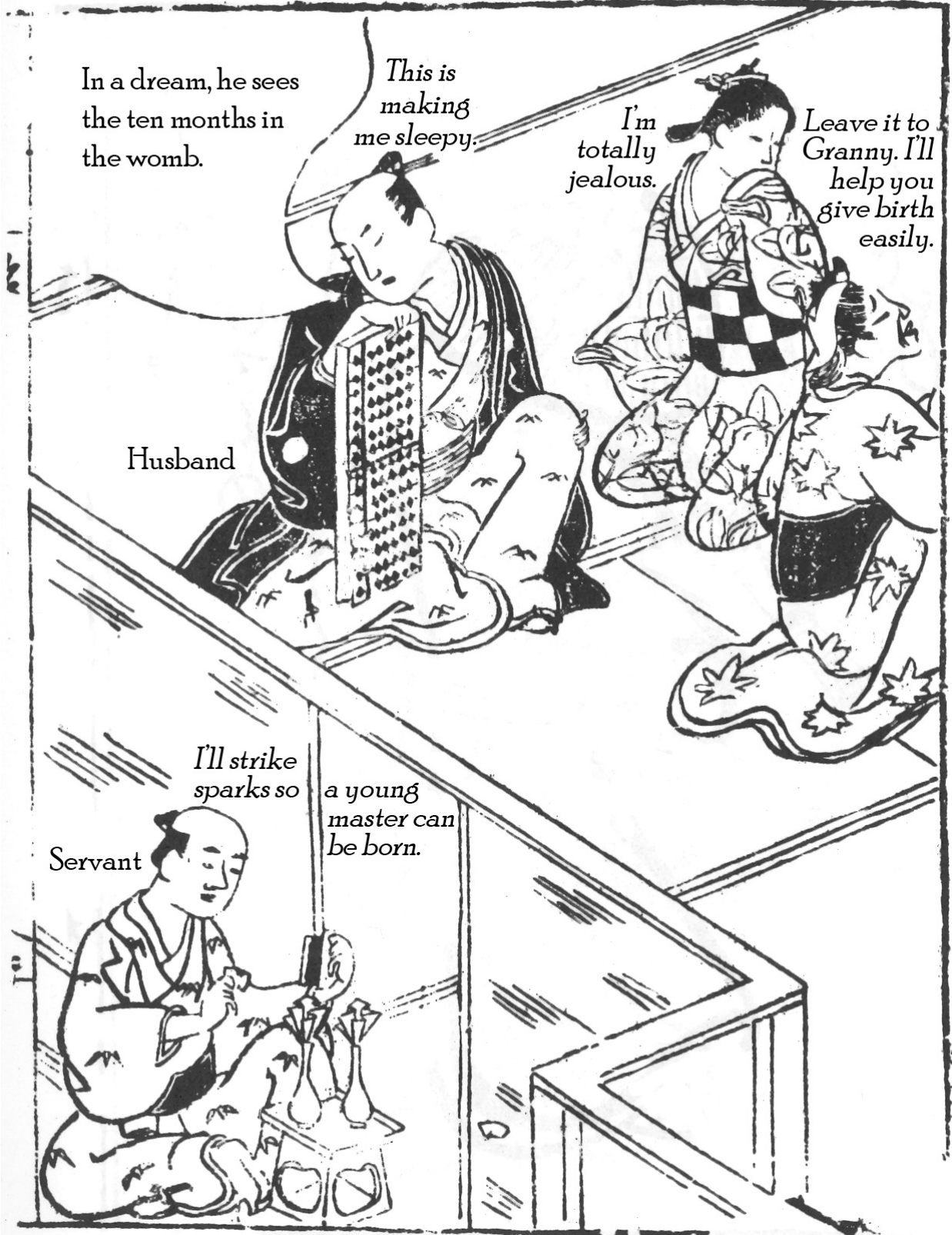
Bright King Fudō

*I'll put effort into the workmanship because the parents have always been reverent.*

In the first month, Bright King Fudō doth undertake the construction. So it is with all born in human form.

Order for the First Month

Figure 67 (continued): Paradise of Gestation and Birth §2 right



In a dream, he sees the ten months in the womb.

*This is making me sleepy.*

*I'm totally jealous.*

*Leave it to Granny. I'll help you give birth easily.*

Husband

*I'll strike sparks so a young master can be born.*

Servant

Figure 67 (continued): *Paradise of Gestation and Birth* §1



Figure 67 (continued): *Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, cover



## Annotations to *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*

### Cover

As is typical for the “patterned book” (*kōzeibyōshi*) genre, *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth* features a cover made of decorative paper that features a title slip but not an illustrated frontispiece. The title is in Chinese characters without a phonetic gloss. The handwritten text at the bottom reads, “This book has one fascicle” (*kono hon wa issatsu*).

### § 1

**[Picture]** An old woman (far right) acts as a midwife to an expectant mother (unseen). A young woman (right) looks on, but the expectant father (upper left), apparently more interested in trade than in the process of childbirth, falls asleep with his chin resting on an abacus. The “dream” balloon that comes from the husband initiates a dream that will encompass most of the remaining illustrations. In the next room, a servant (lower left) sits before an altar holding a firestone (not necessarily flint) in one hand and a piece of iron or steel in the other to make sparks.

**I’m totally jealous** (*kenarui koto de gozansu*). The *de gozansu* ending, short for *de gozarimasu* and translated here as a form of the verb “to be,” is thought to have spread from its use by women of the pleasure quarters in the Kamigata region. Here it characterizes the servant girl as young and familiar with popular culture.

**I’ll strike sparks so a young master can be born** (*waka danna ga dekiru yō ni kirihi o kakeyō*). Spark-striking (*kirihi*) was a ritual for purification and good luck. Although common during the Edo period, its roots went back to more elaborate practices at major shrines, where sparks were

made with two pieces of wood rather than with metal and stone.<sup>555</sup> Here, the ritual is performed for the delivery of a male child as well as a safe childbirth.

## § 2, right of the diagonal

[Picture] In the first month of pregnancy, the Bright King Fudō sits outside by a waterfall, using an ax to make the basic shape of the fetus's head. On the order sheet are an outline of the face similar to the sculpted form, a stupa, and a vajra shaped like the one in the first-month image for *The Record of Treasures for Maidens* (Figure 68). A dish for sake rests on a stand by Fudō's side, its shape recalling the stupa shown in the instructions as if ready to be completed by the addition of the head. A plane and a small saw lie near Fudō.

The iconography is more traditional than the pose. Fudō's customary sword and rope rest beside him. Fudō's attendants watch over the flames that usually appear behind Fudō, and these flames serve to heat sake.



Figure 68 (left): Fudō, first month, in *The Record of Treasures for Maidens*  
Figure 69 (right): Fudō in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

<sup>555</sup> Sano Kazumi, "Kiribi," in *Nihon daihyakka zensho*.

**Bright King Fudō** (*Fudō myōō*, Skt: Acalanātha Vidyaārāja). Fudō is known as the mouthpiece of the Buddhas and the chief of the five bright or luminous kings. He appears fierce to awe evil spirits. He is associated with the realm of fire, wisdom, and the salvation of those in distress.<sup>556</sup>

... **doth** ... ( ... *tamō*). One characteristic of this piece is that multiple distinct speech registers are present. The narrator uses polite speech and honorifics to describe the actions of the Buddhist figures, and the arhats likewise show deference to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The ten main Buddhist figures use casual, unadorned speech when thinking aloud, and they speak with varying degrees of politeness when speaking to or about other Buddhist figures.

**Kiṃkara kumāra** (*Kongara dōji*), **Ceṭaka kumāra** (*Seitaka dōji*). The two are messengers of Fudō.

## § 2, left of the diagonal

[Picture] In the second month, the Buddha Shaka sits on the veranda of a temple and carves details on the fetus's face. Like Fudō, Shaka works from an order sheet, this one with a more detailed face, a vajra, and an oblong shape that may be a tablet. Shaka has a mandorla attached to his back, showing that he is a living statue.

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<sup>556</sup> A. Charles Muller, ed., "Digital Dictionary of Buddhism," <http://www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb/> (accessed February 9, 2012).



Figure 70 (left): Shaka, second month, in *Record of Treasures for Maidens*  
 Figure 71 (right): Shaka in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

**Buddha Shaka** (*Shaka nyorai*, Skt: Śākyamuni Tathagata). The historical Buddha, founder of Buddhism. Tathāgata, meaning “thus come,” is one of ten epithets of the Buddha.<sup>557</sup>

**earthly realm** (*shaba*, Sanskrit: *sahā*). The secular or corrupt world. In this context, the ordinary world inhabited by humans.<sup>558</sup>

**image-unveiling exhibit** (*kaichō*). An event in which a Buddhist image that is not usually visible is displayed, whether at its home temple or in another location. The editors point out that the famous image of Shaka Nyorai from the Saga Shaka-dō of Seiryōji Temple in Kyoto was exhibited in Osaka in 1709, 1759, 1781, and 1795. If this is a reference to a specific upcoming or recent event, then the picturebook might have been published around the years of 1759 or 1781.

### § 3, right of the diagonal

[Picture] In the third month, the Bodhisattva Monju sits on a lion at the division between two rooms, one with floorboards and the other with tiles in a checkerboard pattern. The bodhisattva

<sup>557</sup> Ibid.

<sup>558</sup> Ibid.

holds an ear, which he is about to attach to the baby's head. As in the previous illustrations, the instructions for the month's work—a head with ears and what appears to be a flower—rest in front of the bodhisattva.



Figure 72 (left): Monju, month 3, in *Record of Treasures for Maidens*

Figure 73 (right): Monju in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

**Bodhisattva Monju** (*Monju bosatsu*, Skt: Mañjuśrī). Monju, the chief bodhisattva, is associated with wisdom and enlightenment. He is usually shown riding a lion to the left of the Buddha Shaka.<sup>559</sup>

### § 3, left of the diagonal

[Picture] In the fourth month, the Bodhisattva Fugen sits on a cloud, studying the order sheet while the fetus's head rests in front of him. This month's order sheet has a bell and what appears to be a long radish (*daikon*) in addition to the head. Fugen and Monju are almost mirror images from the waist up; both have halos, flowing scarves, delicate features and similar hair. An arhat, pictured as an old man with elongated eyebrows and ears, perches on a cloud above Fugen's elephant to address the bodhisattva.

<sup>559</sup> *A Dictionary of Buddhist Terms and Concepts* (Tokyo: Nichiren Shoshu International Center, 1983), 267.



Figure 74 (left): Fugen, fourth month, in *Record of Treasures for Maidens*  
 Figure 75 (right): Fugen in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

**Bodhisattva Fugen** (*Fugen bosatsu*, Skt: Samantabhadra Bodhisattva). Fugen is usually shown to the right of Shaka, with Monju on Shaka’s left. He is often shown riding a white elephant, which may have six tusks. Fugen is associated with “the virtues of truth and practice.”<sup>560</sup>

**arhat** (*rakan*, Sanskrit: *luohan*). The arhat is one who has reached the highest level of enlightenment in Hinayana Buddhism, a saint.<sup>561</sup>

**manjū buns** (*manjū*). Steamed buns with a filling, supposed to be a favorite treat of the elephant who accompanies Fugen. The elephant thinks of *manjū* because they sound like Monju, the bodhisattva for the previous month.

#### § 4, right of the diagonal

[Picture] In the fifth month, the Bodhisattva Jizō reclines in front of his outdoor shrine as he chisels out a body for the baby. Though the bodhisattva has left the shrine, his staff and jewel rest on its steps. A nimbus surrounds the bodhisattva’s head. The monthly order includes what

<sup>560</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>561</sup> Ibid., 15.

appears to be a rope and a human shape with legs and arms. Jizō is known in Japan as a protector in the afterlife for children and infants as well as miscarried or aborted fetuses. He appears here accompanied by three young boys, who must be deceased, given the context. One boy pesters the bodhisattva and leans over him to see the baby. Another lies to the right, watching. The third piles small rocks to make a pagoda for his parents' spiritual benefit.



Figure 76: Jizō, fifth month, in *Record of Treasures for Maidens*  
 Figure 77: Jizō in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

**Bodhisattva Jizō** (*Jizō bosatsu*, Skt: Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva). In addition to his role as protector of deceased children, the Bodhisattva Jizō is known for easing childbirth. As in Figure 76 and Figure 77, he often appears as a monk with a staff and a jewel.<sup>562</sup>

**That's a bespoke piece** (*are wa atsurae ja*). As the boy notes, the doll-like fetus is being made for specific "customers," the couple awaiting the baby's birth.

**The child builds a pagoda** (*kodomo tō o tsumu*). Deceased children were said to make pagodas of small stones in their place of suffering, as memorials for their parents. Jizō would manifest himself when evil demons destroyed these pagodas.

<sup>562</sup> Ibid., 192.

#### § 4, left of the diagonal

[Picture] In the sixth month, the Bodhisattva Miroku holds up the fetus, now nearly complete in form. Miroku's empty lotus pedestal sits behind the bodhisattva. The order sheet shows the human form surrounded by a circle or aureole.



Figure 78: Miroku, sixth month, in *Record of Treasures for Maidens*

Figure 79: Miroku in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

**Bodhisattva Miroku** (*Miroku bosatsu*, Skt: Maitreya Bodhisattva). Miroku is a Bodhisattva who is expected to become a Buddha in the future to follow Shakyamuni.<sup>563</sup>

#### § 5, right of the diagonal

[Picture] In the seventh month, the Buddha Yakushi wears spectacles and holds a ruler to measure the fetus, which is to be placed in a lapis lazuli urn, such as the one on the right. A jar or urn of that kind could be used to hold medicine, and indeed Yakushi is associated with medicine and healing. This month's order sheet shows a flag and an image of the fetus enclosed in a circle.

<sup>563</sup> Ibid., 266-267



Yakushi is shown operating a flag shop as a comic reference to the practice of dedicating a five-colored flag to the Buddha Yakushi in the hope of a long and happy life. Yakushi's spectacles also humorously suggest popular ideas about this Buddha since one famous Yakushi temple is also humorously suggest popular ideas about this Buddha since one famous Yakushi temple is associated with the healing of eyes and visual impairment: Ichibata Yakushi in what is now Shimane Prefecture. The temple had groups of devotees throughout Japan.<sup>564</sup>



Figure 80: Yakushi, seventh month, in *Record of Treasures for Maidens*  
 Figure 81: Yakushi in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

**Buddha Yakushi** (*Yakushi nyorai*, Skt: Bhaiṣajyaguru Tathagata). “The Buddha of Medicine” or “the Buddha of Healing,” Yakushi is said to have vowed “to cure all illnesses and lead all people to enlightenment.”<sup>565</sup>

**imparteth moisture to the body** (*mi no uruoi o sazuke tamau*). The fetus had lacked the moisture of a living body because it was constructed of wood.

<sup>564</sup> Itsuki Hiroyuki, *San'in san'yō*, vol. 8 of *Hyaku ji junrei* (Kōdansha, 2005), 92-93.

<sup>565</sup> *A Dictionary of Buddhist Terms and Concepts*, 510.

## § 5, left of the diagonal

[Picture] In the eighth month, Kannon holds the fetus, which now wears a floppy hat, identified in the text as the placenta. Similar images of the placenta as a hat appear in illustrations for Ihara Saikaku's *Life of an Amorous Woman (Kōshoku ichidai onna)* and Santō Kyōden's *Ten Months in the Womb of an Author, Illustrated*.<sup>566</sup> The umbilical cord resembles a halo here. This month the order sheet shows a wheel, in addition to a human form with (placental) hat and (umbilical) halo. This image of the fetus comes a month later in the *Record of Treasures for Maidens* (Figure 84).



Figure 82: Kannon, eighth month, in *Record of Treasures for Maidens*

Figure 83: Kannon in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

**Kannon** (*Kannon*, a.k.a. *Kanzeon*, Skt: Avalokitēśvara). The Bodhisattva Kannon, sometimes shown as female, is associated with compassion. Kannon was said to protect women during childbirth. Based on references in the Kammuryōji and Muryōji sutras, Kannon is often shown

<sup>566</sup> Ihara Saikaku, *Life of a Sensuous Woman (Kōshoku ichidai onna, 1686)*, trans. Chris Drake, in Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology 1600-1900*, 116; Santō Kyōden, *Sakusha tainai totsuki no zu*, in *Santō Kyōden zenshū*, 178.

together with the Bodhisattva Seishi and Amida Buddha, the figures in the two scenes that follow this one.<sup>567</sup>

### § 6, right of the diagonal

[Picture] In the ninth month, the Bodhisattva Seishi holds the fetus upside down, demonstrating to an arhat how the baby will be born in the following month. The bodhisattva holds a baby-sized lotus seat. The order sheet shows an indistinct design of swirling lines and an image of an upside down human form. Again, the setting could be the interior and veranda of a temple. The corner of what appears to be a mandala is visible behind the bodhisattva. The arhat holds a pipe and sits near a tray with other items related to smoking.



Figure 84: Seishi, ninth month, in *Record of Treasures for Maidens*

Figure 85: Seishi in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

**Bodhisattva Seishi** (*Seishi bosatsu*, Skt: Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva). Seishi is known for the strength of his wisdom and compassion. He and the Bodhisattva Kannon attend Amida Buddha, according to the Kammuryōji and Muryōji sutras.<sup>568</sup>

<sup>567</sup> *A Dictionary of Buddhist Terms and Concepts*, 218.

<sup>568</sup> *Ibid.*, 372.

**six sense organs** (*rokkon*): eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind.<sup>569</sup>

### § 6, left of the diagonal

**[Picture]** In the tenth month, the Buddha Amida holds the completed baby on a rough stand.

Short pieces of reed, scouring rushes, rest on the stand and on the floor in front of Amida. There is a metal lantern hanging from the ceiling, and part of the floor is covered with tiles in a checkerboard pattern. Amida is the only one of the Buddhist figures to not have a page of instructions. Together with the fact that Amida compliments the others on a job well done, this shows Amida's place at the top of this Buddhist hierarchy; he is providing direction rather than following it.



Figure 86: Amida, tenth month, in *Record of Treasures for Maidens*

Figure 87: Amida in *The Enlarged Picture Dictionary of Buddhist Images*

**Buddha Amida** (*Amida nyorai*, Skt: Amitâbha Tathagata). Amida is of central importance in Pure Land Buddhist sects. He is said to enable a rebirth in his paradise, “the Pure Land of Perfect Bliss in the western region of the universe.”<sup>570</sup>

<sup>569</sup> Ibid., 405.

<sup>570</sup> Ibid., 10.

## § 7

[Picture] The new mother asks after the health of her baby (unseen). The story has returned to the human realm, though whether inside or outside the dream is left unstated. The mother rests, covered with a thick kimono emblazoned with a paulownia pattern. In front of her are two female attendants. On the right, the young woman who appeared in the first illustration reappears holding a light kimono with which to receive the baby after its bath. On the left, another young woman holds a kettle over a wooden tub of water.

Although the baby is not shown, this is a scene of the baby's first bath not unlike the corresponding illustration in *The Rat Wedding*. One difference is the manner in which the mother is resting. Instead of leaning against a pile of folded futon, she sits in what appears to be a chair draped with a cloth and sitting on a platform. The pose recalls the conventions of portraits of famous monks and may suggest that the mother's participation in the work of the Buddhas has led to a type of enlightenment. A moment of realization or enlightenment appears in other picturebooks with dream narratives, such as *Mr. Glitter 'n' Gold's Dream of Glory* (*Kinkin sensei eiga no yume*), but this instance is unusual because the original dreamer (the father) does not reappear.<sup>571</sup>

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<sup>571</sup> Koikawa Harumachi and trans. Araki, *Mr. Glitter 'N' Gold's Dream of Splendor*, 673-687.

## Conclusion: Japanese Children's Literature in the Age of Woodblock Print

To return to Karatani's assertions, raised in the introduction, were "the child" and "children's literature" discovered in the Meiji period? Only insofar as older concepts of the child and of children's literature were forgotten, displaced by new concepts. Children's literature not only existed in Edo-period Japan, it flourished. As we have seen, woodblock-printed picturebooks communicated ideas about the child and images of children, including children engaged in literary activities, throughout the eighteenth century and through much of the nineteenth century. Japanese woodblock-printed children's literature was not high literature approved by a literary establishment but a popular literature for children, a niche market in an urban consumer culture.<sup>572</sup> Even so, the authors and illustrators that worked on woodblock-printed picturebooks for children from the 1750s to 1840s included some of the most famous contributors to popular literature and ukiyoe for adults.<sup>573</sup>

Karatani turns to Yanagita Kunio to describe the children of earlier times imitating adult activities and creating games of their own rather than playing with toys made by adults.<sup>574</sup> This vision of children's lives is not unlike that depicted in *Stories of Thunder in the Four Seasons*, where girls work alongside their mother and grandmother; *The Rat Wedding*, where a young boy brings tea to a visitor; and *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, where a boy leans over the shoulder of Jizō-as-carpenter to watch his work. But these scenes of children's lives appear inside mass-produced picturebooks made by adults and designed to be sold as playthings for

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<sup>572</sup> On the question of how to define popular literature in the Edo Period, see Moretti, "Kanazōshi Revisited," 300, 344.

<sup>573</sup> Uchigasaki, "Akahon no dentō o hikitsugu ehon," 18-20.

<sup>574</sup> Karatani, "The Discovery of the Child," 119-120; cf. Yanagita, *Kodomo fūdōki*, 383-384.

children, likely in areas that more closely resembled the urban setting of *Verses for Schoolchildren* than the rural paradise of *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*.

Woodblock-printed children's literature was one part of a larger print culture that, as prior scholarship has shown, was widespread and diverse.<sup>575</sup> In the eighteenth century, the age of woodblock print reached beyond the cities of Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo to the trade routes and the rural periphery.<sup>576</sup> Indeed, the example of Obiya Chōkurō's collection of picturebooks, found in a statue in a temple over seventy miles from the books' place of publication in Kyoto, demonstrates that children's books were already traveling in the late seventeenth century.<sup>577</sup>

In a society where literacy had become important and booksellers and book lenders were common, it is hardly surprising that books adapted for the youngest readers—and viewers—would emerge. At the same time, picturebooks for children spread particular ideas about children—both the images of children in them and the idea of childhood as a time when children enjoy picturebooks and other commercial goods, such as toys and games. Picturebooks were a means to familiarize children with print culture while teaching them basic literacy: verbal, visual, and cultural. Picturebooks and other illustrated books could lay the foundation for a lifetime of learning by introducing historical and religious figures, animals, plants, and with them, the seasonal associations critical to cultural literacy at this time.<sup>578</sup> From this beginning, young people might go on to formal study in a school or with a private tutor. The numbers of writing schools and other educational institutions seem to have increased over the course of the

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<sup>575</sup> Berry, *Japan in Print*, 18, 30-33; Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, 286-323; Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, 140-141; Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, 81-85; Smith, "The History of the Book in Edo and Paris," 334; cf. "The Eastern Kingdom," 216.

<sup>576</sup> Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, 173, 205-207; Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, 80-81, 95-100.

<sup>577</sup> Okamoto, ed., *Shoki Kamigata kodomo ehon shū*, 337, 340.

<sup>578</sup> Emura Hokkai, *Jugyō hen*, in vol. 2 of *Kosodate no sho*, 148; cf. Shirane, *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons*.

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, although we may never have precise knowledge of school attendance during the Edo period.<sup>579</sup>

As we have seen in advertisements and in depictions of the child audience within picturebooks, publishers and book artists targeted children as an important market. For publishers this made economic sense. Parents were potential consumers, wanting children to become fully literate. Not only that, but adults could buy illustrated books for children as souvenirs and as gifts for occasions as varied as celebrating the New Year, starting school, or suffering from smallpox.<sup>580</sup> Advertisements, such as those in *Verses for Schoolchildren* and implicit in *Red Books of Old Stories: the Record of Auspicious Tales Board Game*, make it clear that children themselves were potential consumers of picturebooks, whether as fun and attractive amusements or as aids for gaining calligraphy skills.<sup>581</sup> As children grew, they could enjoy a wider range of books, and they could also buy more picturebooks. The child readers of the 1762 *Verses for Schoolchildren* might have enjoyed yellow books by the same illustrators, like the 1775 *Mr. Glitter 'n' Gold's Dream of Glory*, as young adults.<sup>582</sup> Whether publishers wrote about the ways they addressed children, aside from advertisements and prefaces in picturebooks themselves, is a question that remains for future research based on other sources. So, too, do the questions of how many picturebooks were published for children and what percentage of the book trade consisted of children's literature.

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<sup>579</sup> Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, 125-136.

<sup>580</sup> Emura Hokkai, *Jugyō hen*, 147-8; Yamada, *Hōryaku genrai shū I*, 61-62; *Shinmotsu benran*, images 11 [P0008.jpg], 35 [P0032.jpg], 64 [P0061.jpg], 80 [P0077.jpg].

<sup>581</sup> Ikkeisai Yoshiiku, ill., *Mukashi-banashi akahon sugoroku*, 82-83; Suzuki and Kimura, eds., *Terako tanka*, in *KKES, Edo hen*, 353, 362; cf. Kimbrough, "Murasaki Shikibu for Children," 2.

<sup>582</sup> Koikawa Harumachi and ill. Torii Kiyomitsu and Torii Kiyomasu, *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume*, 9-34; Koikawa Harumachi and trans. Araki, *Mr. Glitter 'N' Gold's Dream of Splendor*, 673-687.



A recent survey of the global history of childhood claims that, before the late nineteenth century, “The Japanese publishing industry (which in Europe by the late eighteenth century was beginning to crank out some books specifically directed to children) paid essentially no attention to a child market.”<sup>583</sup> The present dissertation challenges that view with evidence of Japanese children’s literature decades older than the oft-cited early examples of children’s literature by English publishers like John Newbery—evidence that Japan has one of the world’s oldest traditions of children’s literature for a mass audience. Commercially produced picturebooks meant to amuse and secondarily to edify children were central to this early Japanese children’s literature. Japanese publishers also catered to children with primers and simplified reference works, as has been discussed in prior English-language scholarship, and these works must have been a significant source of sales for both publishers and authors.<sup>584</sup> Jippensha Ikku, better known for his popular fiction, churned out over thirty primers between 1822 and 1825.<sup>585</sup> But because educational texts fall outside many definitions of children’s literature, the dearth of scholarship on Edo-period children’s picturebooks has contributed to a misconception that there was no true children’s literature in Japan prior to the increased Western influence in the late nineteenth century.<sup>586</sup> The exclusion of woodblock-printed children’s literature from prior scholarship has been fueled by several tendencies, including a longstanding emphasis on

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<sup>583</sup> Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, 13; cf. Platt, “Japanese Childhood, Modern Childhood,” 968.

<sup>584</sup> Berry, *Japan in Print*, 3-4, 14-15, 21; Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 275-290; Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, 139-140; Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, 96.

<sup>585</sup> Tan, *Kinsei shomin kyōiku to shuppan bunka: Ōraimono seisaku no haikai*, 73.

<sup>586</sup> Ericson, introduction to *A Rainbow in the Desert*, viii-ix; Wakabayashi, “Foreign Bones, Japanese Flesh,” 228.

Anglophone traditions within the study of children's literature and a tendency to underestimate the impact of commercial woodblock-printing in the development of mass print culture.<sup>587</sup>

The picturebooks translated here, and others like them, fall within many definitions of children's literature, although they have only recently been included in Japanese-language histories of children's literature, and then with qualifications.<sup>588</sup> These picturebooks were mass-produced by woodblock print by the hundreds or thousands and cheap enough to reach ordinary children, who might buy new books but might also buy them secondhand, rent them, or receive them as gifts. Picturebooks were adapted to low reading levels by being written in syllabary characters and heavily illustrated.

In their content, these picturebooks suggest views of children in their day. Happy endings and auspicious themes or motifs are common, especially in those stories that were emerging as canonical children's literature by the early nineteenth century. A significant minority of picturebooks features child characters, and other picturebooks include simplified versions of well-known stories from history, theater, or legend. Some, like *Verses for Schoolchildren*, take up educational themes or content. But the "adult" content in such works as *The Rat Wedding* raises questions about what content adults found suitable or unsuitable for children. For older children such content may have introduced potentially delicate topics with humor. Meanwhile, adults reading picturebooks to young children may have appreciated double entendres or sexual

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<sup>587</sup> Kai-Wing Chow, "Reinventing Gutenberg: Woodblock and Movable-type Printing in Europe and China," in Sabrina Alcorn Baron, Eric N. Lindquist, and Eleanor F. Shevlin, eds., *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press; The Center for the Book, Library of Congress, 2007), 170, 186-187; Hunt, ed., *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, vol. 1, xix.

<sup>588</sup> Kami, *Kindai izen no jidō shuppan bijutsu*; Nihon jidō bungaku gakkai, ed., *Kindai izen no jidō bungaku*; Kawato, ed., (*Zusetsu*) *Nihon no jidō sho 400 nen*.

innuendo without children taking notice. Likewise, illustrators and authors who wished to avoid censorship sometimes found picturebooks a congenial format.<sup>589</sup>

In many cases, Western scholars have overlooked or underappreciated Edo-period picturebooks for children because of an assumption that the early red books of the city of Edo, which died out, were the only picturebooks for children. But as we have seen, the full range of picturebooks was far broader both chronologically, from the late seventeenth century through the late nineteenth century, and geographically, encompassing picturebooks from the Kamigata region as well. Moreover, earlier scholarship has identified red books with folk tales, oral literature, and older materials without recognizing the diversity of the genre, the ways that older material could be adapted for a child audience, or the demand during the Edo-period for new and different picturebooks. Some have assumed that red books did not have child-related themes or characters, a misconception that any of the picturebooks translated here could dispel.

The evidence of the Edo-period child examined here contradicts an assumption often made in scholarship on the history of childhood: that the child as we know it—in a society with commercial children’s culture, children’s literature, and differing expectations for the young—developed (only) in the early modern and modern West.<sup>590</sup> As demonstrated by the humor and the commercial considerations in the children’s picturebooks translated here, not everything that can be considered “modern” is from the West.<sup>591</sup>

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<sup>589</sup> See discussion in Chapter One; cf. Seta, *Ochibo hiroi*, vol. 1, 91-92; Kimura, “Akakohon kara aohon made: shuppan butsu no sokumen,” 607-610.

<sup>590</sup> Cf. Karatani, “The Discovery of the Child,” 116, 118-121; Gary Cross, “Toys and the Shaping of Children’s Culture in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century,” in Mouritsen and Qvortrup, eds., *Childhood and Children’s Culture*, 125-126; Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, 12-15.

<sup>591</sup> Cf. Charles Shirō Inouye, “Pictocentrism—China as a Source of Japanese Modernity,” in Sumie Jones, ed., *Imaging/Reading Eros* (Bloomington, IN: East Asian Studies Center, Indiana University, 1996), 148-152. [The original uses the spelling “Inoue.”]

Woodblock-printed children's literature developed in Japan at a time of limited cultural intercourse with Europe; Japan's concepts of the child and of children's literature developed independently of Western influence. This concept of the child was defined explicitly in the *Picture Dictionary* and *First Steps on the Mountain* as a male fifteen years of age or younger. In the *Picture Dictionary*, girls were also distinguished from adult women by their youth and especially by their unmarried state. Reality was more complicated, of course, but these definitions are valuable because they were distributed in large numbers by woodblock print—and, in the case of the *Picture Dictionary*, remained in print for more than a century.

The idea of a child was expressed visually in all picturebooks translated here. In picturebooks, children can be identified by their small size relative to adults and, in the case of boys and very young girls, by their distinctive hairstyles: tufts of hair on shaved heads of the youngest boys and girls, fully shaved heads or unshaven forelocks on boys. While a girl would wear a long-sleeved kimono and tie her sash in the back, adult women would tie their sashes in small bows in the front. In *Amusements of the Gods of Fortune*, children are pictured and labeled with their ages, from three to fifteen.<sup>592</sup> Toys are another visual attribute of children in picturebooks: kites, puppets, and carts.

Children are also distinguished by their verbal expressions. Children use casual speech when adults would use honorifics, as with the boy beside Jizō in *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, or more polite speech, as in *The Rat Wedding*, *Stories of the Thunder Demons in Four Seasons*, and *Verses for Schoolchildren*. Some specific words, “Daddy” (*totosama*) and “Mommy” (*kakasama*) mark children, as does the squeaking cry of the baby rat.

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<sup>592</sup> See Chapter Three, Figure 19.

The depiction of children in picturebooks is gendered. There is a wide range of depictions of boys: heroes like Kintarō, the delinquents and diligent students of *Verses for Schoolchildren*, and the playful children of *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis*. On the other hand, girls are more often domestic or oriented toward a future as a wife and mother, not only in marriage-related picturebooks like *The Rat Wedding* and *The Paradise of Gestation and Birth*, but also in picturebooks like *Verses for Schoolchildren* and *Stories of the Thunder Demons in Four Seasons*, where girls help their mother and grandmother make snow from “wedding bonnets.”

Such picturebook depictions of and references to children contrast with Karatani’s assertion that the concept of the child and the concept of children’s literature came from the West and developed out of Christian ways of thinking, as do the terms for child defined in works like the *Picture Dictionary*. But what Karatani discusses is primarily Literature for children, not popular literature marketed for children. Scholars of children’s literature do not usually limit the subject in that way, particularly when speaking of the early history of children’s literature. The children’s literature discussed here was a popular literature for the young, a commercial children’s literature comparable in function and, to a certain degree, in intent to that which was developing in the West in the eighteenth century, however distinct it was in form.

China’s role as a source of cultural inspiration for views of childhood and for children’s literature should be considered in future research. Existing scholarship already shows that Chinese texts were used in the education of children in Japan.<sup>593</sup> Commonalities between images in such eighteenth-century Japanese picturebooks as *The Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* and *The Rat Wedding* and earlier or roughly contemporaneous Chinese woodblock prints for the New Year

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<sup>593</sup> Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, 127, 131, 136.

and suggest that some images were also adapted from Chinese sources for use in Japanese picturebooks.

While I have argued that the Edo-period concept of the child developed without Western or Christian influence, it is possible that future research could reveal an influence on the Edo-period concept of the child from sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Jesuit missions in Japan. Such missions might even have affected the development of children's literature since they included schools and a printing press. *Aesop's Fables*, for example, was published as an illustrated storybook in Japan during the seventeenth century: *The Tales of Isoho (Isoho monogatari)*.<sup>594</sup> However, histories of children's literature generally trace its appearance to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England, which had little contact with Japan. Japanese children's literature developed without influence from Locke, Newbery, and their contemporaries. Should one wish to search for foreign inspiration for woodblock-printed children's literature in Japan, one would surely look to China and Korea, rather than to the West.

The visuality of woodblock-printed picturebooks for children was no incidental detail. Hokkai and Jōzan, among others, identify illustrated books as appealing to children and thus useful for introducing literacy. Popular culture portrays children as liking pictures better than calligraphy or reading. We saw this in *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, *Verses for Schoolchildren*, and *First Steps on the Mountain*. With limited narration in many picturebooks, the story cannot be understood apart from the pictures, and in fact in some cases the picturebooks consist of a series of related scenes rather than a story per se. Puns, allusions, and playfulness appear in both visual and verbal texts as well as in the way words and pictures work together.

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<sup>594</sup> Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology*, 11.

These characteristics carry over into the adult picturebooks that evolved from children's picturebooks in the eighteenth century.

The emphasis on the visual and the integration of visual and verbal elements in early picturebooks for children contributed to forming the visual-verbal imaginations of generations. Picturebooks for children gave rise to picturebooks for adults: “yellow books” (*kibyōshi*) and the longer “graphic novels” (*gōkan*). These included some parodies and some attempts to avoid censorship by adopting the pose of writing for children. Picturebooks for children also continued in or contributed to new formats, including picture board games and picture prints, through the early Meiji period.

Charles Shirō Inouye finds a “modern consciousness” in Edo-period Japan that derived from Chinese inspirations. Inoue bases his reading of the development of this modern consciousness in part on the linear evolution of illustrated books from picturebooks such as those translated here to long, “emplotted” novels with stable narrators, illustrations subordinate to the verbal text, and rounded characters—characteristics of late-Edo illustrated popular fiction, including graphic novels.<sup>595</sup> However, as we have seen, picturebooks for children did not disappear with the rise of longer fiction with more prominent narrators. “Bean books” (*mamehon*) were published through the first decades of the Meiji period, disappearing only with the demise of woodblock printing itself. Children's picturebooks often lacked narrators, plot, and rounded characters, and they included words and pictures that worked together to make scenes. Japanese print culture was not, therefore, lacking or backward; it was diverse. Publishers and authors realized that not all readers were the same—no one form of fiction would suit all audiences or age groups.

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<sup>595</sup> Inouye, “Pictocentrism,” 148-152.

Technology and ideas were entering Japan from China and, in a more limited fashion, from the West during the Edo period. Ideas, literature, and visual media were circulating throughout Japan in ways and at speeds that they could not have traveled prior to the Tokugawa peace and the rise of woodblock-print culture. As Inouye has argued and as we have seen here, some characteristics of Edo-period Japanese literature had sources in China, as did woodblock-print culture itself. But his search for the rise of a logocentric “modern consciousness” inspired by China is problematic to the extent that it implies that visual culture and mixed visual-verbal forms of literature are somehow incompatible with progress or a relic of the past to overcome for the sake of the novel.

Contrasting an East Asian pictocentrism with a Western logocentrism may imply too stark a dichotomy. Images retained a place in European printing throughout its history, and even during the Reformation, Protestant publishers in Europe created illustrated children’s Bibles and illustrated religious pamphlets.<sup>596</sup> Woodcuts illustrated and decorated European scientific works as well as works of literature, although most words were printed with movable type. However, as Kai-Wing Chow has argued, the historiography of printing in the West has focused on movable type to the exclusion of woodcuts, creating an overly strong impression of logocentrism.<sup>597</sup> The pressure of the printing press—necessary because of the relatively rough paper in use in Europe—caused woodblocks to wear out quickly and to break where carved too finely. Thus, woodblock print, which in China and Japan could include intricate detail, gained a reputation as a crude means of illustration. Because of the technological differences, words and pictures were

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<sup>596</sup> Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-modern Europe*, vols. 1 and 2, combined paperback edition (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 66-70; cf. R. W. Scribner, *For the Sake of the Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

<sup>597</sup> Chow, “Reinventing Gutenberg,” 175-176, 180-182.



usually separated from each other in European books.<sup>598</sup> In contrast, woodblock print provided the freedom to integrate words and pictures anywhere within the space of a page, a freedom similarly achieved with developments like lithography and computerized printing.<sup>599</sup>

I hope that, by highlighting the figure of the child in Edo-period Japanese popular culture for children, this study will encourage the comparative work that clearly remains for the future—both between Edo-period Japanese and early European children’s literatures and between woodblock-printed and Meiji-period Japanese children’s literatures. Hsiung Ping-chen identifies late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century collections of short stories for young children as the “earliest belletristic literature for children” in China.<sup>600</sup> The timing of that start to Chinese children’s literature, less than a hundred years before the earliest identifiable children’s literature in Japan, and similarities of motifs in *The Rat Wedding* and *Cuckoo of Mt. Gratis* to woodblock prints from China suggest a host of issues related to influence that call for further investigation.

The few texts translated in full or as excerpts here could hardly be representative of the wide range of picturebooks that are extant from the eighteenth century, let alone the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Future research more closely focused on the “golden age” of publications for children by Urokogataya Magobei may shed light on the formation of the canon of stories for children. Likewise, questions related to networks among authors and illustrators remain to be answered in the course of a targeted inquiry. Issues related to reader reception—who was reading and under what circumstances—could benefit from attention to marginalia on

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<sup>598</sup> Ibid., 177, 181-182.

<sup>599</sup> Ibid., 191-192.

<sup>600</sup> Ping-chen Hsiung, “Erh-t’ung wen-hsüeh (children’s literature),” in vol. 2 of *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), 34.

extant copies of picturebooks or primers as well as from research into diaries or collections of essays (*zuihitsu*).

Picturebooks introduced children to reading and to both popular and high culture. This highly visual form of children's literature was but the beginning of what the Edo-period child might read, view, or enjoy. A full account of Edo-period reading matter for children would look beyond the deliberately focused view of children's literature adopted here and consider textbooks, primers, digests of adult fiction or history, collections of poetry or *nō* plays, and such Confucian classics as were assigned to older children. And so this project, in the end, only begins to approach Edo-period children's culture.

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The place of publication for Japanese books is Tokyo unless otherwise noted. Original woodblock-printed media and reproductions without transcription into movable type (*honkoku* 翻刻) are indicated as such or cross-referenced to published transcriptions.

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<i>EEH</i>	<i>Edo no Ehon</i>
<i>KKES</i>	<i>Kinsei kodomo no ehon shū</i>
MFA	Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
NIJL	National Institute of Japanese Literature
<i>SNKBT</i>	<i>Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai</i>

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