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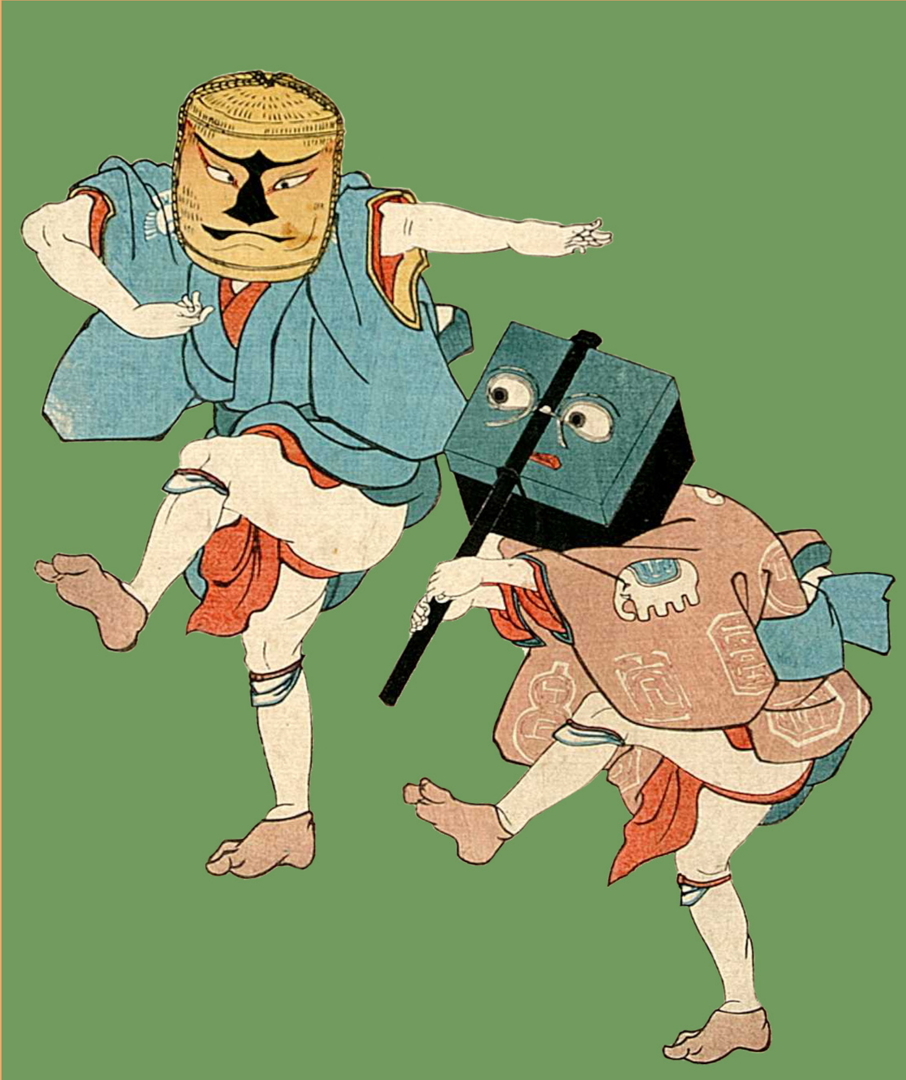

UKIYO-E CARICATURES

Edited by

NORIKO BRANDL and SEPP LINHART

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UKIYO-E CARICATURES

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Introduction: The Study of 19th Century Caricatures on *Ukiyo-e*

Noriko BRANDL and Sepp LINHART

Caricatures have a long history in Japan. The most well-known work in Japanese history is the picture scroll *Chōjū giga* made by the monk Toba Sōjō and others in the Heian period, a work which has not yet been sufficiently interpreted. Yet the animals - frogs, rabbits, and monkeys -, which behave like human beings, are depicted in such a funny way, that Toba-pictures (*toba-e*) have become an important part of Japan's cultural history. In fact, Toba created a certain tradition by drawing human beings disguised in the form of animals. This method was also used frequently in the 19th century, which is the main focus of this collection of essays.

In the 18th century, artists from Osaka started to publish several books depicting grotesque figures with overlong and extremely thin arms and feet, and these pictures were also called *toba-e*. After the Meiji Restoration, the drawing of caricatures became rather popular due to sudden social and cultural changes that were thus 'digested'. One of the several magazines which published caricatures at that time even bore the title *Toba-e*.

Ukiyo-e, the pictures of the floating world, were part of the city dwellers' culture, first in Kyoto and Osaka, and later, following the shift of the cultural centre, also in Edo. These urban merchants and artisans could not afford the artistic pictures of the Kanō school of painting or others and instead created their own visual culture. These pictures were cheap and reproducible, not unique works of arts, but rather images of the life they knew: of the *kabuki* actors, of beautiful women from the licensed quarters, pornographic pictures, and finally pictures of various famous places in Japan, after travelling had become popular around the end of the 18th century. These four genres comprised the main categories of pictures, but there were also others: religious pictures, educational pictures, pictures for children, and funny pictures. The last category of funny pictures can again be divided into pictures with the aim to make people laugh and pictures which ridiculed certain social and political circumstances of Edo and later also Meiji society.

One of the techniques used in such pictures was *mitate*, often translated as travesty. To give a few examples: A certain famous historical or mythical person is drawn as a courtesan from the brothel district, and with the help of certain hints given by the artist the viewer recognizes that the elegant and

beautiful woman represents both a Yoshiwara courtesan and a sage from the past. If a cat is drawn, one can suspect that a tiger is implied, try to remember the many tiger stories an educated citizen of Edo would have been familiar with at the time and thus decide whom the cat in the print is supposed to represent. This elegant technique of *mitate* had been used since the first *ukiyo-e* were printed in the 17th century, but in the 19th century it no longer sufficed to express all the issues *ukiyo-e* designers wanted to show.

The one person who made use of many new modes of expressing various issues in a funny way, thus influencing not only his contemporaries but generations of print designers, caricaturists and even more recent *manga* artists, was Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi (1798-1861). Since he can also be said to have 'invented' political caricature in Japan as a reaction to the Tenpō Reforms of the 1840s, Kuniyoshi constitutes the natural center of the present volume, which to our knowledge is the first collection of essays not only in English but also in Japanese that devotes itself solely to *ukiyo-e* caricatures. It is based on papers presented at the symposium "Comic Pictures and Caricatures in the Late Edo and Meiji Periods", held in Vienna, Austria, from May 26 to 28 in 2006. After the symposium the presenters were asked to rewrite and submit their papers for publication.

This collection of essays is divided into three parts. It opens with a discussion of various genres of *ukiyo-e* caricatures. Takahashi Noriko looks at caricature in so-called yellow bound books, *kibyōshi*, which depicted caricatures earlier than independently issued prints. *Kibyōshi*, most of which were published between 1775 and 1806 with a peak in the years before the Kansei Reforms (1787-1793), consisted of text and pictures, and offered room for both satire and caricature. Thus, *ukiyo-e* designers could make use of some of the techniques of *kibyōshi* caricatures when in the 1840s, fifty years later, *ukiyo-e* caricatures were sought after by the consumers. Citing several concrete examples, Takahashi demonstrates the tricks used by the illustrators of these small books in order to evade censorship.

The typical culture of play dominating Edo society made everything a possible object of humor, even the most unbelievable things. For anyone familiar with this aspect of Edo society it is not surprising that even the genre of memorial pictures of dead actors, so-called *shini-e*, became a playing field for humor and caricature, so that many *shini-e* can be included into the genre of comic pictures (*giga*). Although they are usually not signed, we can assume that the afore mentioned Kuniyoshi drew quite a lot of them. In his contribution, Hara Michio gives an overview of some very typical examples, especially of pictures published after the surprising death of the very popular actor Danjūrō VIII. Most of these caricatures are of a very good-natured humor and

make use of the characteristics of a certain actor's life on the stage.

Akama Ryō concerns himself with caricatures of the most popular *kabuki* drama, *Chūshingura, The Storehouse of Loyal Retainers*, the famous story of 47 samurai who took revenge for their lord's forced death, after which they committed suicide. As in the case of death memorial pictures of actors, a Western onlooker would probably not associate this drama with wit and humor, but Akama shows that for Edo artists, and of course Kuniyoshi, this drama was well suited for ridicule. Needless to say, the rather secularized Edo society seems to have lacked the concept of blasphemy.

Inagaki Shin'ichi, one of the Japanese pioneers of research on *ukiyo-e* caricatures, attributes the genre of funny battle prints to the fondness the Japanese people had for competition. But one could also speculate that the commoners in their visual culture not only expressed their admiration of samurai culture, as can be found on numerous battle prints which depicted famous battles from Japan's history, but also ridiculed the same tradition from which they themselves had been excluded. Ink battles, fart battles, battles of frogs, and battles between foreign and Japanese objects make this genre one of the funniest and, at the same time, one of the easiest to understand among *ukiyo-e* caricatures.

The first part of this collection of essays concludes with an exciting chapter by Marianne Simon-Oikawa about graffiti during the Edo period, which seem to have been equally provocative as they are today. As we can learn from her essay on pictorial graffiti consisting of Japanese and Chinese characters, so-called *moji-e*, there seems to have been a great deal of standardization. Many *ukiyo-e* artists found them so interesting that they copied them in prints or in book illustrations, which is most likely why we know about their existence today.

The second and third part of this collection are devoted to various aspects of *ukiyo-e* caricatures approximately twenty-five years before and after the Meiji Restoration, spanning a period of roughly fifty years from 1842 to 1891. First, Yuasa Yoshiko discusses different perceptions of caricatures of the Tenpō Reforms and draws our attention to the fact that people tended to 'over-interpret' prints. As a consequence, the print publishers seem to have made use of this tendency by publishing pictures that were difficult to interpret.

Iwakiri Yuriko focuses mainly on Kuniyoshi prints which show cats with actors' faces. She points out that this predilection in Kuniyoshi's work was not a new development after the Tenpō Reforms brought about by increasingly severe censorship. As she convincingly demonstrates, the same method had been used by Kuniyoshi already earlier, and thus could be easily revived by him as a means to evade censorship when it became necessary.

Several of Kuniyoshi's caricatures appeared as fan prints, i.e. prints which

were pasted on fans and were in general use during the hot season. Sepp Linhart speculates that this might have been a means for the publishers to secure Kuniyoshi's caricature prints the utmost attention. Compared to prints which were usually 'consumed' at home alone or with friends and family members, such caricatures on fans, which were visible for everybody, transcended the private realm and became public, and in the case of anti-political establishment prints even served as public agitation against the ruling class.

Kuniyoshi suffered a stroke in 1855, after which he was no longer able to draw in the same powerful way as before. As a result, his works from the period after he fell ill up until his death have been almost completely neglected by Kuniyoshi researchers. In her contribution, Noriko Brandl shows that in this period Kuniyoshi concentrated on caricatures and left much meaningful work in this genre. His later work also gives proof of his continued interest in social and political matters.

Shimizu Isao can be said to be the academic who did the most to promote research on caricatures in Japan. His essay in this book focuses on one particular caricature, *The Great Battle Between the Vegetable and the Fish Armies* by Hirokage. He tries to assemble all the stylistic particulars which can be found in this triptych and points out earlier parallels, thus proposing a new method for the study of *ukiyo-e* caricatures.

The second part of this collection concludes with an essay by Tomizawa Tatsuzō who is interested in the news character of many *ukiyo-e* at the final stage of the Edo period. News in *ukiyo-e* was often drawn in a funny way, perhaps to guarantee the consumers some fun even after the curiosity concerning a certain event had been already satisfied. Since such prints were issued by well-known print publishers, they differ from cheap *kawaraban* news prints, the publishers of which are usually unknown. Tomizawa calls this still hardly researched genre of prints 'topic prints' or *jiji-e*.

Part three focuses on caricatures during the Meiji Period and begins with an essay on topic prints that deal with the conflict and civil war between the shogunate and the anti-Tokugawa forces of Satsuma, Chōshū and others. Out of more than a hundred prints of this kind, Nagura Tetsuzō analyses only two prints meticulously, and compares this genre to European caricatures from 19th century England and France. Although he finds many differences, for him the role of the Japanese prints is important in the process of nation formation hat began in the years of the waning power of the shogunal government.

The next two chapters are devoted to two outstanding caricaturists of the Meiji Period, Kawanabe Kyōsai and Kobayashi Kiyochika. Both were renowned woodblock print artists, but they also drew many illustrations for journals and books. Oikawa Shigeru, who can be considered the foremost Kyōsai

expert in Japan, deals with Kyōsai's many book illustrations, concentrating on the books written by Mantei Ōga. Both Ōga and Kyōsai were anti-modernists and on this ideological basis their friendship lasted their whole life.

While Kyōsai wanted to prolongate the Edo period, Kiyochika had a different approach in so far as he was a political activist of the Movement for Freedom and People's Rights. Reinhard Zöllner draws our attention to the fact that the drawing technique used by Kiyochika corresponds to the contents of his drawings. He also explains a number of caricatures by Kiyochika both from modern magazines as well as single sheet woodblock prints.

The volume concludes with an essay by Hartmut Rotermund on caricatures of *naichi zakkyo*, After the abolition of the unequal treaties toward the end of the 19th century, this regulation stated that foreigners were no longer forced to live in special conclaves but could settle everywhere in Japan. Japanese artists and foreign artists living in Japan like the Frenchman Georges Bigot seem to have had a lot of fun drawing the consequences of this change in policy.

Although the papers in this collection offer a considerable range of themes and artists, they cannot represent the full spectrum of caricatures on woodblock prints in the late 19th century starting with the Tenpō Reforms in 1842. An idea of the boom of satiric woodblock prints in the last six decades of the 19th century can be gained by consulting the Vienna University Database of Caricatures (VUD). This database, which was launched in 2006, can be accessed online at http://www.univie.ac.at/karikaturen. Containing roughly 1500 caricature prints in 2011, it is still far from complete.

There is hope that the existence of this database will lead to more detailed research in *ukiyo-e* caricatures in the future. Although every print in the database has been essentially analyzed, a detailed analysis of a caricature can only be done through deeper and more time-consuming research going beyond the possibilities of a database.

Unfortunately, not all papers which were presented at the conference in 2006 could be included in this collection, as some papers never arrived at the hands of the editors. For the sake of completeness they are listed here:

Susanne Formanek (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna): *Shini'e* as News Media in Caricatural Form.

Hatakeyama Yutaka (Machida City Museum, Tokyo): The Gods and Their Caricatures in Catfish and Measles Pictures.

Ann Herring (Hōsei University, Tokyo): Cheerful Revenge: Kobayashi Kiyochika's Pictorial Narratives as Satire.

Katō Mitsuo (Saitama Museum of Literature, Saitama): Caricatures of the Post-Earthquake Society as Seen in *namazu-e*.

Finally, the editors have the great pleasure to thank a number of people who collaborated in this project. These include the participants at the mentioned conference and the authors of the essays assembled in this volume, to whom we deeply apologize for the overly long production period. Our deep thanks go to The Japan Foundation, Tokyo, which financed the conference, and to the Cultural-Philological Faculty of the University of Vienna, which provided funding for the publication of this book. Furthermore, we thank all the print owners for letting us make use of their prints as illustrations in this book.

Katharine Apostle took on the troublesome task of rewriting the English of the authors, none of whom is a native speaker of English, and Florian Purkarthofer was responsible for the layout and the final form of the book. Without their enormous help this book could never have been published.

Vienna, April 2011

Noriko Brandl and Sepp Linhart

Part One:

GENRES OF UKIYO-E CARICATURES

The Meaning of Caricature in Yellow-Bound Books

TAKAHASHI Noriko

In this study, I will discuss expressions of satire in yellow bound books or *kibyōshi*, a type of *kusazōshi kana* booklet, as a specific technique deployed by *gesaku* writers in caricatures of the Bakumatsu Period. In addition, I will discuss one part of the development of caricature. Generally speaking, *kusazōshi* can be thought of as a predecessor of manga.

1. Defining *Kana* Booklets (*Kusazōshi*)

Kusazōshi developed in the 18th century as printed booklets with text and illustrations on the same page. Originating in Kyoto, they were eventually produced also in Edo, and by the mid-18th century, Edo became the center of *kusazōshi* publication. Basically written in Japanese syllables (*kana*) and avoiding Chinese characters, their content was initially simple, but texts with an adult readership in mind gradually surfaced more often. *Kusazōshi* were read predominantly by commoners in the Edo Period and came to be published in great numbers. In addition, *kusazōshi* existed not only in the urban centers; people visiting Edo from other regions would bring *kusazōshi* back as souvenir gifts from Edo, and many people in the provinces read them, too. The kinds of *kusazōshi* categorized according to the time period are red-bound booklets (*akahon*), black-bound booklets (*kurohon*), blue-bound booklets (*ao-hon*), yellow-bound books (*kibyōshi*), and multi-volume books (*gōkan*). The red- through yellow-bound books are named after the color of their covers. Kibyōshi were published from 1775 onwards, written for an adult audience, and they contain the most sophisticated content of all *kana* booklets.

2. Penalization of *Kibyōshi* under the Kansei Reforms

The sixth year after the emergence of *kibyōshi* marked the beginning of the Tenmei Era. Due to devastations caused by crop failures, the Tenmei Era (1781-89) was a continually dark period. Since 1782, terrible misfortune brought on unseasonable weather, which led to crop failure. This failure and

the resultant famine were large-scale and continued throughout the country for several years. The situation was especially dire in the Tōhoku region, where several hundred thousand people starved to death. In 1784, an incident occurred in the political arena, in which Tanuma Okitomo, son of Elder Statesman Tanuma Okitsugu, was stabbed to death by Sano Zenzaemon Masakoto in Edo Castle; consequently, Tanuma Okitsugu was forced to resign as Elder Statesman in 1786. Due to the fact that members of the Tanuma faction remained in office, he still privately held power. In 1787, the price of rice soared due to great floods, but rice merchants hoarded rice in storehouses, and as a result rioting and destruction occurred in various provinces. 29-year-old Matsudaira Sadanobu, who was newly appointed as Elder Statesman to the Shogunal Council of Elders, assigned responsibility for the riots by dismissing retainers of the Tanuma faction one after the other. Sadanobu's extremely strict reforms were welcomed in the countryside, but they were not fully approved of in Edo. In 1789, the first year of the Kansei Era, Sadanobu's government, purged of members of the Tanuma faction, reorganized and used publication regulations to penalize numerous *kibyōshi*.

Koikawa Harumachi was a samurai from the Suruga Ojima Domain, serving in Edo as a *rusuiyaku* officer. Such an officer lived in the domain's quarters in Edo and gathered intelligence while coordinating contact with the Bakufu Government and other *daimyō* houses. Koikawa Harumachi wrote *Ōmugaeshi bunbu no futamichi* in response to Hōseidō Kisanji's text *Bunbu nidō mangoku tōshi* of 1788. Kisanji was also a samurai and *rusuiyaku* officer in Edo in the Akita Domain. Since the text responded to Kisanji's *Bunbu nidō mangoku tōshi*, Harumachi's title *Ōmugaeshi bunbu no futamichi* was created to repeat it: the phrase 'two ways, martial and civil' (*bunbu nidō*) of the first work's title are repeated in Harumachi's title with the phrase 'two paths, martial and civil' (*bunbu no futamichi*). At the same time, Harumachi's title *Ōmugaeshi bunbu no futamichi* hints at a work written by Elder Statesman Matsudaira Sadanobu titled *Ōmu no kotoba*: the Elder Statesman's title word '*ōmu*' (parrot) is duplicated in Harumachi's title phrase '*ōmugaeshi*' (parrot responding). Harumachi's text can be summarized as follows: In the age of Emperor Daigo, Sugawara Michizane's son Kanshūsai became an assistant officer in the government, and in order to promote martial competence, he put the samurai through training drills; however, due to mistakes, disruptions and violence occurred frequently. As a result, Ōe Masafusa was summoned and all were sent off to study at Yushima Seidō Confucian Academy. On this occasion, Kanshūsai's treatise *Kyūkanchō no kotoba* was selected as study material. However, due to the fact that the kite in the treatise was not read as a metaphor, everyone took up kite flying with a passion. As a result, the phoenix

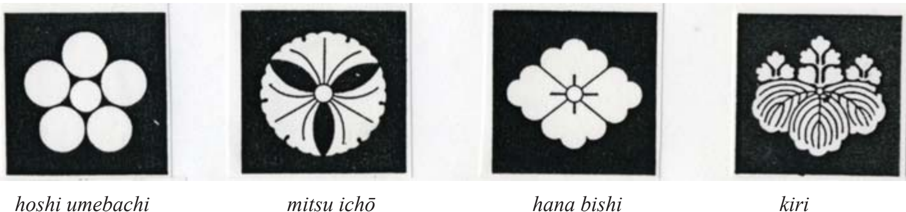
mistook a kite for a friend, and both fell from the sky.

As Kanshūsai can be said to represent Sadanobu, the work is critical of samurai under the sway of the Kansei Reforms. In addition, through the metaphor of the kite, the work is a parody of Sadanobu's *Ōmu no kotoba* and the rise of his current government. Upon hearing about this book, the author Harumachi was summoned to appear before Elder Statesman Sadanobu, but, due to an illness, Harumachi didn't comply with the summons and eventually died. Some explanations state that it was suicide. The work *Tenka ichimen kagami no umebachi* written by Tōrai Sanna, who had samurai origins, was a huge best-seller; book-binding production could barely keep up with demand from the start of the New Year through the third month in 1789. Drawing on the situation of the eruption of Mt. Asama and the riots, the work depicted commoners overcoming their hardships. Though there are other *kibyōshi* that also use this technique, Tōrai Sanna's reputation for relatively direct representation in his work caused it to be forced out of print by government censors. As seen in Fig. 1, in a seemingly peaceful world, the narration describes that it is unnecessary to lock one's doors. Yet, the illustration, contradicting the textual narration, shows doors being smashed and destroyed. Without explicitly referring to them, this illustration depicts the riots.

Fig. 1: Tōrai Sanna (text), Eishōsai Chōki (illustration):
Tenka ichimen kagami no umebachi, 1789, National Diet Library.

3. Conclusions Drawn from the Timetable of Revisions of *Bunbu Nidō Mangoku Tōshi*

There are various reasons for the circumstance that these works got into trouble in 1789, such as the situation at that time within the Bakufu Government, and the fact that the authors were samurai. However, I'd like to take note of the fact that the expressions of satire were quite direct in these works. The work *Bunbu nidō mangoku tōshi*, the earliest *kibyōshi* to use the Kansei Reforms as its subject, was not forced out of print by government censors. Seeing as it was revised many times, it is possible to understand which parts the publisher felt must be handled with caution. It is thought that there is great significance in the revisions made in the subsequent reprints of the first version printed in mid-1788. In the first printed edition, a samurai of the Kamakura Period named Hatakeyama Shigetada is dressed in a kimono with the *hoshi umebachi* plum pattern (see Fig. 2); the *hoshi umebachi* plum crest is the family crest of Elder Statesman Matsudaira Sadanobu. On the left, the samurai wearing formal attire with the '*hon*' mark in its pattern alludes to the actual contemporary Junior Officer (*wakadoshiyori*) Honda Tadakazu, and on the right, the samurai with the 'ishi' mark alludes to Town Elder (*machibugyō*) Ishikawa Masafusa. In the revised edition, Shigetada's clothing has been changed and now shows the *kiri* paulownia pattern (see Fig. 2), the family crest of Shigetada, while the shoulder and sleeve still bear the mark of Matsudaira Sadanobu's *hoshi umebachi*. Also, there is an addition of one figure with '*naka*' written on him; this is a character named Nakazawa Rokurō from the *Soga Monogatari*, and thus, the other figure with the '*hon*' mark now seems to refer to the *Soga Monogatari* character Honda Jirō; in this way, the emphasis has been shifted to stress the world of *kabuki*. In the second revised edition, the *hoshi umebachi* plum crest has been erased entirely from Shigetada's haori coat. In sum, the publisher judged that the *hoshi umebachi* plum crest of Matsudaira Sadanobu and allusions to the names of contemporary figures were problematic.



hoshi umebachi *mitsu ichō* *hana bishi* *kiri*

Fig. 2: Four family coats of arms. Reproduced from Niwa Motoji and Higuchi Kiyoyuki: *Kamon daizukan (Great Illustrated Dictionary of Family Coats).* Akita shoten 1971.

Fig. 3: Unknown artist (text), Ran Tokusai (illustration):
Atarishiku tatsuya kamegura, 1789, National Diet Library.

4. Regarding *Kamenoko ga Deta yo*

The *kibyōshi* titled *Kamenoko ga deta yo*, published in 1788 by the Uroko-gataya Publishing House and illustrated by Ran Tokusai, capitalized on currently fashionable poetry. In 1789, this *kibyōshi* was published under the new title *Atarashiku tatsu ya kamegura*, which can be summarized as follows:

Kamakura's Mannen'ya Kakuyuemon (hereafter Mankaku), inspired by tortoise cuisine, hatches a plan to make a profit with turtle cuisine. Mankaku's turtle cuisine gains a reputation and the shop prospers. He buys up all the stock of turtles in the Dragon's Palace, with the intention of creating a turtle monopoly. The purchased turtles are kept in the storehouses owned by the Dragon's Palace (Fig. 3). The tortoises, angry that the turtles have taken what was their work until now, have a meeting about planning to destroy Mankaku's shop, which eventually they do (Fig.4). When the Kamakura regent Hatakeyama Shigetada hears of the violence, the tortoises are arrested. Asked by Shigetada about their reasons, the tortoises reply that Mankaku has monopolized turtles, hindering them from making a living. Shigetada says to Mankaku: "Since turtles are different from rice, this is not a crime, but your storehouses will be sealed off and your stock of turtles will be confiscated in full." (Fig. 5) Shigetada's officers seal the storehouses and confiscate the stock of turtles.

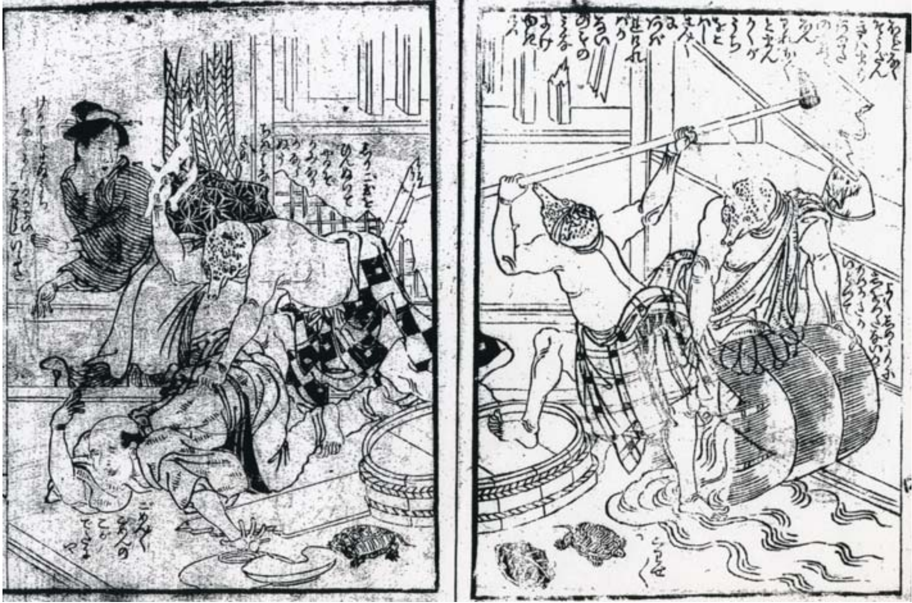


Fig. 4: Unknown artist (text), Ran Tokusai (illustration):
Atarishiku tatsuya kamegura, 1789, National Diet Library.

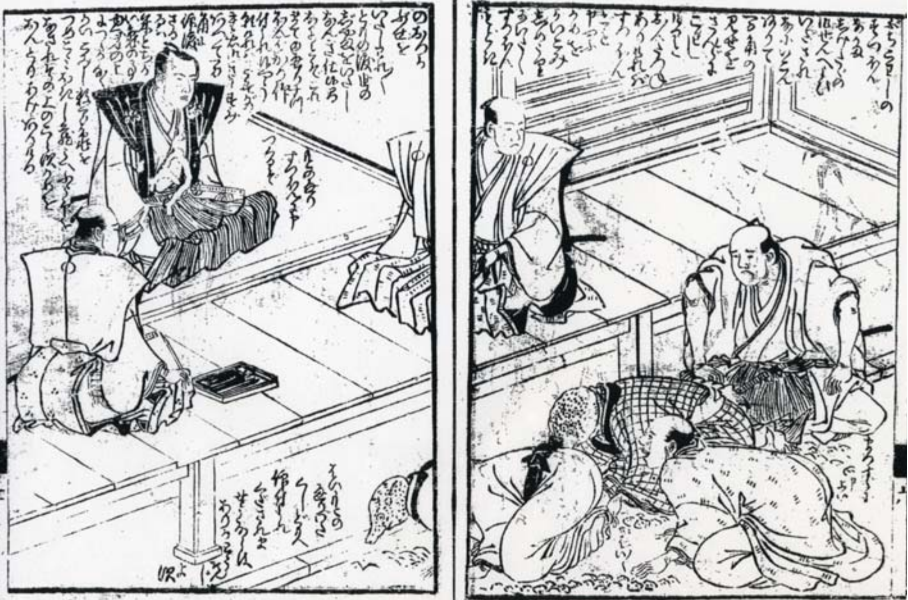


Fig. 5: Unknown artist (text), Ran Tokusai (illustration):
Atarishiku tatsuya kamegura, 1789, National Diet Library.

Fig. 6: Unknown artist (text), Ran Tokusai (illustration):
Atarishiku tatsuya kamegura, 1789, National Diet Library.

The confiscated turtle containers are transported to Shigetada's mansion, and Shigetada performs the Buddhist ritual of compassion towards sentient beings by setting the turtles free in the rivers. At the same time, rice is distributed to the commoners as charitable relief aid. The uproar is settled, and due to Minamoto Yoritomo's beneficence, Shigetada's stipend is increased as a reward for his actions.

But what is the hidden meaning of *Kamenoko ga deta yo*? Fig. 4 shows a picture of destruction. The violence is directed towards villain merchants who hoarded rice during crop failures and floods, while the price of rice rose and many people starved to death. Mankaku (Mannen'ya Kakuyuemon) corresponds to the historical person Mansaku (Yorozuya Sakubē of Kyōbashi Minami Denma-chō), a famous rice wholesale merchant who actually suffered violence. According to records, Mansaku took care of 10,000 bags of rice owned by Tanuma Okitsugu, and he was a merchant who colluded with Tanuma. Therefore, the turtles represent rice that could be bought directly in large amounts. The hoarded stock in the storehouse of the Dragon's Palace calls attention to the high price of rice and to the rice wholesale merchants who, beyond the reach of petty authorities, stored rice in samurai mansions and elsewhere.

In *Moriyama Takamori nikki*, a diary of a shogunal officer of the period, it

Fig. 7: Santō Kyōden (text), Kitagawa Yukimaro (illustration):
Jidai sewa nichō tsuzumi, 1788, Tokyo Metropolitan Library.

Fig. 8: Santō Kyōden (text), Kitagawa Yukimaro (illustration):
Jidai sewa nichō tsuzumi, 1788, Tokyo Metropolitan Library.

is written that many samurai mansions and wealthy townsmen were scandalously exposed for looking after entrusted rice. According to the fictional story, Hatakeyama Shigetada learns of Mankaku's evil deeds through the tortoises, releases the stored turtles, and distributes rice as relief aid; because of this, he is rewarded by Yoritomo. In actuality, the one to inspect the evil merchants' storehouses and confiscate the rice was Sadanobu's deputy Inahan Zaemon, but in the story, it is Sadanobu himself who is alluded to. When considering the question of how the fictional character Shigetada alludes to Sadanobu, notice that in Fig.6 the figure of Shigetada with the *kiri* paulownia crest, bowing to Yoritomo, also bears the pattern of the ginkgo leaf on part of his formal clothing, although Shigetada's family crest is the paulownia (*kiri*) (see Fig. 2). The ginkgo leaf is a crest of *kabuki* actor Matsumoto Kōshirō IV. Because Matsumoto Kōshirō IV often played the role of Hatakeyama Shigetada, there are many *kibyōshi* which transpose the face of Kōshirō onto pictures of Hatakeyama Shigetada. Two such examples are Fig. 7 and 8 from the work *Jidai sewa nichiyō tsuzumi* of 1788. This work is a genre piece of the Edo Period about the story of Fujiwara Hidesato, otherwise known as Tawara Tōta, defeating Taira no Masakado; however, it also implies the defeat of Tanuma by Sano Zenzaemon. In Fig. 7, Hidesato's clothing has a pattern resembling the *yotsu hana bishi* crest (Fig. 2), and in Fig. 8, his formal clothing - the fine pattern resembling the *umebachi* plum pattern - also bears a crest mark similar to the *yotsu hana bishi* crest on the sleeve. Furthermore, in Fig. 7 and 8, the face of Matsumoto Kōshirō IV has been transposed onto the figure. Considering these details, one can conclude that Hidesato represented as Matsumoto Kōshirō IV implies to be Matsudaira Sadanobu. In fact, at the time that Kōshirō performed the *kabuki* role of Shigetada, there are records indicating that Sadanobu's name was shouted out during performance via such phrases as '*nishi shita*' - because Matsudaira Sadanobu's residence was on the lower side of Edo Castle's Nishi no Maru Palace, the phrase '*nishi no shita*' implies Sadanobu - and 'Master Etchū', referring to Matsudaira Sadanobu because he was also the Lord of Etchū Domain. Therefore, Hatakeyama Shigetada, Matsumoto Kōshirō IV, and Matsudaira Sadanobu were associated with each other at this time. In *Kamenoko ga deta yo*, Shigetada has the face of Matsumoto Kōshirō IV (see Fig. 5), and the double wrinkle drawn at the jaw line can also be found in *Jidai sewa nichō tsuzumi* (see Fig.7).

In this way, *Kamenoko ga deta yo* is a *kibyōshi* which by means of depicting hoarded rice and the riots alludes to Matsudaira Sadanobu and adheres to current events. However, this work was not forced out of print by government censors. One reason for this is that its main characters are turtles and tortoises, and the picture of rioting tortoises is a caricature that is primarily

amusing. In addition, this work directly criticizes neither samurai nor Matsudaira Sadanobu. Of course, the example of the Dragon's Palace's stored bags of turtles contains criticism directed towards bad merchants and the samurai who joined them, but this criticism is not obvious. The allusion to Matsudaira Sadanobu is indirectly expressed through the mediation of *kabuki* actor Matsumoto Kōshirō IV. In sum, because of the efforts of the *gesaku* producers to bring out and emphasize the amusing aspects of the story, *Kamenoko ga deta yo* was not forced out of print by government censors. Therefore, without this kind of *gesaku* style, works would not receive publication permission at that time. From our modern perspective, the critical content of this amusing mode of expression is so indirect as to be almost indiscernible, but underneath this façade, it must be acknowledged that the spirit of critical parody exists.

In short, there are cases of *gesaku*-style modes of expression that contain a critical spirit hidden behind the humor. However, a command of knowledge about a work's publication time period and its social context is necessary to detect and understand this. While entailing a great deal of work, it is certain that historical research is also of grave importance.

Humor in the *Kabuki* Death Portrait

HARA Michio

1. Introduction

Among the *ukiyo-e* pictures portraying male subjects, the portraits of popular *kabuki* actors, generally called *yakusha-e* (actor pictures), are predominant. Situations depicted in these portraits vary widely, from being on stage to scenes of daily life. Yet, there is a notable subgenre of *yakusha-e* also known as '*shini-e*' or death portraits. These were numerously published and sold in commemoration of the recent death of especially famous *kabuki* actors, and in some cases of noteworthy theatre people and *ukiyo-e* printers as well. Usually, relevant information is written on these colorful memorial portraits concerning their looks, dates of death, posthumous Buddhist names, family temples, swan songs (poems written on their deathbeds), memorial songs, etc. Apparently, this commercial commemoration was widely practiced from the late 18th to the early 20th century.

In spite of the morbidity of the occasion and the name of these portraits — '*shini-e*' literally meaning 'death pictures' —, many of them are quite humorous, sometimes to such a degree that in some eyes they may seem rather irreverent. One good example was released following the death of Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII (Bunsei 6 - Ansei 1.8, 1823-1854), who at the age of 32 — the peak of his popularity — mysteriously committed suicide (Fig. 1). The picture portrays a throng of women of various classes and professions, including a harlot, a married woman, a girl of townsfolk, and a maid, all trying to prevent a red demon from dragging their star actor to hell. Along with these women, a spaniel, a cat, even dead women and the mythical coat-snatcher from the netherworld — an old woman who is supposed to help send the dead to the other side of the Styx (Sanzu no kawa in Japanese) — are clinging on to the demon. The entire portrayal serves to emphasize, by way of comic exaggeration, how popular the actor was in his lifetime among his female supporters, both human and non-human. The intensity of their postures and facial expressions is enough to provoke laughter.

It should be noted, however, that the humor was not meant to convey any sense of disrespect for the dead. Rather, it was thought to be the most appropriate way to cherish the memory of the now deceased actor with full tender-

ness and intimacy. My paper will illustrate this point by means of examining some death portraits.

Fig. 1: Anonymous: *Shini-e* of Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII. *Ōban*-size diptych, ca. 1854. Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Print no. 114-0063, 0064.

2. Making Use of Surrounding Characters

Portraitists often created the sense of genial humor in commemorating the deceased actor by integrating surrounding stage characters so as to transpose a well-known theatrical scene into a parodic setting. Many *shini-e* portray the actor being commemorated in the roles in which he was most acclaimed in his lifetime, in which he had performed just before his death, or which he would have performed in the next program had he not died prematurely. The humor often derives from the poses and facial expressions of the minor surrounding characters — in this case demons in hell, quite appropriate for the picture which imagines the dead actor playing, even in his afterlife, his most successful character known for bravery. A good example can be seen in Fig. 2, in which Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII plays the character of Jiraiya, a great magician and thief, hitting two demons by the Styx.

Danjūrō's premiere performance of Jiraiya won great popularity, but due to his death two years later, his long-awaited revival did not materialize. The audience particularly missed his exhilarating stage combat in the role, and this

Fig. 2: Anonymous: *Shini-e* of Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII. *Ōban*-size single sheet print, ca. 1854. Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Print no. 014-0233.

picture was designed to appeal to this sense of loss by means of resetting the scene by the Styx on the way to the netherworld. The two demons fighting with him are dressed in the costume of *kabuki* arresters. One's neck is being pressed down while the other somersaults in the established *kabuki* style called '*tonbo* (*o kiru*)', a type of handspring or forward flip starting from an upright position, in which one lands first on the hands and then on the feet. This is an action often used in combat scenes in which one combatant is flung away or cut by a sword. It is a great reconstruction of the famous scene, and the pathetic facial expression on one of the demons' faces serves to enhance the sense of genial humor. In the background, naked children are piling stones to pray for their ancestors and are throwing them across the river at the demons. The innocence of their noble support for Danjūrō's Jiraiya clearly adds to the pathos of the picture, especially since the demons were believed to obstruct the children's service to their ancestors by destroying their stone piles just before their completion (Jizō Bosatsu, or Ksitigarbha, eventually saves them as the guardian deity of children).

A more elaborate example of layering cultural allusions can be found in Fig. 3, a death portrait of Nakamura Utaemon IV (Kansei 10 - Kaei 5.2, 1798-1852), who died suddenly at 55 in the midst of the New Year program in 1852. In this portrait, Utaemon is in the role of Henjō (816-890), who was a high-

ranking Buddhist priest and a famous poet in the Heian Period. The two palanquin bearers on the cloud have come to carry him away to the otherworld, while a man clinging on to him and a sobbing woman with an infant bemoan his death.

The character of Henjō was quite timely as the subject of this death portrait, not only because it was one of Utaemon's celebrated roles, but also because it was the role he played for the 1852 program, the last in his career. The wit of the portrait is caused, in part, by the accompanying parodic text which includes a comic poem in the margins. This caters to the more literally-minded by tapping into their classical knowledge of Henjō as a famous poet. The entire composition of the picture ingeniously alludes to one of Henjō's poems contained in the *Kokin wakashū* as well as in the *Hyakunin isshu*, with which people in the Edo Period must have been well acquainted. The poet wishes to prevent angelic court maidens from dancing away beyond the clouds:

Amatsukaze
kumo no kayoiji
fuki toji yo
otome no sugata
shibashi todomemu

Fig. 3: Anonymous: *Shini-e* of Nakamura Utaemon IV. *Ōban*-size single sheet print, ca. 1852. Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Print no. 114-0232.

O heavenly breeze,
blow so as to block
their path back through the clouds!
For I would, if but for a moment,
detain these maidens' forms. (Mostow 1996: 178)

Notably, the picture specifies the allegorical meaning of the five surrounding characters by showing their names on their otherwise blank faces. The palanquin bearers are Mutability (*mujō*) and Wind (*kaze*) respectively. The one clinging onto the poet represents the Souls of Utaemon's Supporters (*hiikirenjū no tama*). The sorrowful woman and the child in the foreground are the Teardrops (*namida no tama*). Combined, they seem to make the following statement: 'Invited by the wind of mutability, Utaemon has made Henjō his last role and had to depart for Heaven, leaving all his lamenting supporters in tears' — a message which clearly parodies the aforementioned poem by Henjō. It may be useful to point out that this type of ideographic allegory had been established in the genre of humorous illustrated novels called *kibyōshi*[1] *and was later adopted into kabuki* dance. This allegorical personification was incorporated into Utaemon's dance piece entitled *Yayoi no hana Asakusa matsuri*, *Spring Flower Festival of Asakusa* (usually called *Sanja matsuri, Festival of the Three Shrines*), first performed in 1832 in front of an enthusiastic audience, dance being Utaemon's specialty. Overall, the refined parody contributes to effectively conveying the sense of loss and commemoration for Utaemon through the gentle humor it embraces.

3. Friendship in the Otherworld

Many death portraits combine several actors who died successively in one frame. Among those, the pictures depicting the dead actors playing games in the otherworld are especially amusing. The games which are most notably used for this type of *shini-e* are *ken*, a type of rock-scissors-paper, and *kubihiki*, a tug-of-war game played with a rope around the players' necks. Here again, infectious laughter is aroused not by satire, but by the peaceful representation of the actors genuinely having fun among friends.

As Sepp Linhart's study (Linhart 1998) shows, *ken* was a game quite popular throughout the Edo Period. It was introduced into many *kabuki* performances, and numerous colorful woodprints, including death portraits, de-

1 A typical example *kibyōshi* is Santō Kyōden's *Shingaku Hayasomegusa* (1790).

Fig. 4: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: *Sanbutsu-ken*, *Three Buddhas Playing Ken*, *Ōban*-size single sheet print, ca. 1851. Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Print no. 014-0109.

Fig. 5: Anonymous: *Shini-e* of Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII and Bandō Shūka I. *Ōban*-size single sheet print, ca. 1855. Edo-Tokyo Museum. Print no. 91220073.

pict actors playing the game. Fig. 4 shows three famous actors enjoying *ken*: Ichimura Takenojō V (Bunka 9 - Kaei 4.8, 1812-1851), who died at the age of 40; Onoe Matsusuke III (Bunka 2 – Kaei 4.7, 1805-1851); and Matsumoto Kinshō I, former Matsumoto Kōshirō VI (Bunka 8 – Kaei 2.11, 1811 -1849). The combination of these three actors may well have been largely fortuitous apart from the contiguity of their deaths, as we neither have records of their performances together winning great reputation, nor of their closeness in private life. Nevertheless, in the print they are immersed in the game so cheerfully that it evokes humor. The particular *ken* in this picture was called '*sangoku-ken'*, or 'three-nation-*ken*': Kinshō (right) plays China beating India, Matsusuke (upper left) India beating Japan, and Takenojō (front) Japan beating China.

The printing block for this picture originally depicted Takenojō and two different actors playing the game. Two years later, the block was recycled for this portrait, with Kinshō and Matsusuke taking the place of the two actors. To add to the complication, which I will not dwell on here, the picture would undergo a further process of recycling, in which the two actors accompanying Takenojō were replaced by other actors, who died later.[2]

Kubihiki, a children's game, was played by two people playing tug-of-war with a rope around their necks. Fig. 5 shows Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII and Bandō Shūka I (Bunka 10 – Ansei 2.3, 1813-1855) happily playing the game in the otherworld. Shūka specialized in female roles, and the decadence of his character interpretation, very much characteristic of the closing days of the Tokugawa regime, made a highly acclaimed match with Danjūrō, with whom he performed frequently. The unexpected death of Shūka due to a malignant tumor on the 6th of the 3rd month, Ansei 2/1855, seven months after Danjūrō's suicide on the 6th of the 8th month, Ansei 1/1854, was very much in the manner of legendary feudal widows, who followed their husbands to Hades. The sensation of their successive deaths produced numerous death portraits of the two, including several portraying them at the game of *kubihiki*. The coincidence that they both died on the same day (though in different months) added to the newsworthiness, making many people suspect that their affinity was heaven sent. The portrait shows the two in a touching scene, where, after seven months of separation, they enjoy playing the game with childlike innocence in the otherworld, surrounded by their fervent fans.

2 For the complicated process of recycling, see Tabako to shio no hakubutsukan 1999: 77-78.

4. Female Supporters in Sorrow

Obviously, the central figures in the *kabuki* death portraits are the famous deceased actors, but in many prints portraitists put more effort into the representation of lamenting supporters, especially women. This is most evident in the case of Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII, whose sudden suicide came as a tragic blow to his countless female followers. Their sorrow, their heartfelt lament out of sheer enthusiasm for the actor, is depicted to the fullest in these death portraits, enabling their viewers to share their grief. Simultaneously, the seriousness of the followers in the picture also offers a humorous impression to the viewer, regardless of deep sorrow. In some cases, the humor originates in the pictorial composition, while in other cases it derives from that which the lamenting followers say, illustrated in the form of inscriptions in the margins of the picture.

4.1. Humorous Composition

One prominent *shini-e* composition is that of *nehan-zu*, or Nirvana Picture, depicting a reclining Buddha in the centre as he enters into Nirvana, surrounded by Bodhisattvas, his holy disciples, laymen, and even animals,

Fig. 6: Anonymous: *Shini-e* of Danjūrō VIII. *Ōban*-size single sheet print, ca. 1854. Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Print no. 114-0062.

all bearing sorrowful faces. When this composition is applied to the death portrait, the deceased *kabuki* actor takes the place of Buddha, surrounded by the affiliated theatre people and his fervent followers. The scene of the actor Buddha entering into the state of Nirvana was a perfect subject for religious parody, and consequently, many portraitists used this pictorial composition, which enabled them to elaborate on the humorous depiction of the entourage. The Nirvana-type death portraits of Danjūrō VIII stand out for their sheer predominance of female followers among those who surround him, making a magnificent picture not lacking in humor.

Fig. 6 is a very well-known example of this Nirvana type with twenty-two women grieving over Danjūrō's body in the centre. Their diverse clothes, hair styles, and poses are illustrated in detail, enabling the viewers to enjoy the fully articulated variety of his female followers. In terms of class, they are harlots, married women, ladies-in-waiting, girls of townsfolk, and maids. Age varies from the old, the middle-aged, the young, to girls. The ways in which they express their sorrow are also diverse: there is a woman who bursts into tears beside Danjūrō's pillow, another woman is groping his crotch, and still others are clinging to his toe. Even a white cat in the foreground - undoubtedly female - is sobbing like a woman.

One composition which can be found even more frequently than this Nir-

Fig. 7: Anonymous: *Shini-e* of Danjūrō VIII. *Ōban*-size single sheet print, ca. 1854. Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Print no. 114-0134.

vana type depicts people lamenting in front of a hanging portrait of the deceased actor, enabling, just as in the Nirvana type, the representation of followers in their full variety. A good example of this can be seen in Fig. 7, in which the exclusively female followers are grieving in front of the portrait of Danjūrō VIII. The print includes 33 women and vividly caricatures their poses and looks. Again, we have a white cat in the picture, and a comic poem in the margins specifies its sex:

Meneko made
sode ni namida o
fuku botan
naku ya hisago no
tsuru no hayashi ni

Even a female cat
Wiping tears with her sleeve
For the actor (peony)
Who is no more
Only a gourd in the cranes' grove[3]

4.2. Textual Humor

As in other kinds of *ukiyo-e*, it was a customary practice to print in the margins a verse or a piece of prose as a legend for the picture, as well as the utterances and thoughts of the surrounding people, all these inscriptions often creating humor. In these cases it becomes necessary to go beyond the purely iconographic field of study into the textual. There are good examples of this among Danjūrō VIII's death portraits.

Fig. 8 is almost identical to Fig. 7 in terms of pictorial composition, having women followers, nine in all, weeping over Danjūrō's sudden death in front of his portrait. However, it differs from the previous picture by depicting the followers' speeches in balloons. The girl in the centre, most likely of a rich merchant family, is holding a death portrait of the actor - a common design in *kabuki* death portraits -, calling out amid tears: 'I cannot eat anything because of your death. How painful it must have been for you to die like that.'

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3 *Tsuru no hayashi or kakurin* is an expression for the death of Shakyamuni, because the trees around his death place looked like the plumage of cranes. The poem is full of word plays: *botan*, peony, and *hisago*, gourd, are plants symbolizing the actor Danjūrō, *fuku botan* is a fictitious species of peony, *fuku* meaning 'good fortune' and 'to wipe away (tears)'. *Naku* means 'to weep' and 'not exist', and *tsuru* can be connected with the gourd, meaning vine, or with *hayashi*, meaning 'crane'.

Her mother, facing the girl, as much disheartened as her daughter, says, ‘How could you have died, Danjūrō, leaving me no excuse for my visits to the theatre as my daughter’s chaperone.’ Her little daughter sitting next to her utters a rather precocious line, adding to the picture’s genial humor: ‘Because of your death, I will never go to the theatre anymore, even when I’ve grown up.’ Their maid behind the elder daughter says, ‘I knew you were always eyeing me and not my young lady whenever we went to the theatre. Why did you have to die?’ — a ludicrously conceited line considering her low social status. We also see a harlot, not related to the family, grieving over her vanished dream: ‘O, your cruel death! I have endured all the hardships solely for the expectation of marrying you when my term of service is over.’ Not only the variety of the followers in the caricature, also these sincere but humorous utterances faithfully reflecting the colloquial quality of everyday speech offer us a look into the sheer enthusiasm for the actor.

Fig. 9 shows Danjūrō holding a rosary and posing like a statue of Buddha — the cushions he sits on represent the lotus plinth in the Land of Perfect Bliss — with seven women in front of him, each of them giving a speech. The composition itself shows that the picture is a parody of *Renge Ōjō*, or the peaceful ascent into heaven on the lotus seat. Allow me to lay aside the exact nature of this religious ritual here and concentrate on what the women are saying.

Fig. 8: Anonymous: *Shini-e* of Danjūrō VIII. *Ōban*-size single sheet print, ca. 1854. Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Print no. 014-0220.

As has been noted before, Danjūrō VIII was tremendously popular among women of all social statuses, including high-ranking women serving the Shogun or prestigious samurai. One young woman, probably of this class, is saying, ‘I was so shocked at your sudden death that, on hearing of the news, I have taken leave from my duty and done nothing but cry for these past three days. My colleagues Kōbai and Chiura have eaten nothing for about ten days. How deep is our sorrow!’ It is easy to imagine from this how shocking the actor’s unexpected death was to her and her colleagues in court. Other women, whose age range is unidentifiable, say, ‘I will cut off my finger and bury it in your tomb. I will never marry.’, and ‘I will donate all my money for your funeral so that your soul can go to heaven.’ That they are happy to give everything for the soul of the actor testifies, albeit in an exaggerated manner, the intensity of their dedication to the late object of idolatry. Another woman blames Danjūrō VIII for committing suicide and goes so far as to say, ‘Why did you have to be so hasty as to do such a thing without letting me know beforehand? I would have accompanied you with all my heart’ — a self-satisfied and comical mentality. Unfortunately, the picture has no speech balloons, making it difficult to see where the utterances come from in some cases as clearly as in Fig. 8.

Fig. 9: Anonymous: *Shini-e* of Danjūrō VIII. *Ōban*-size single sheet print, ca. 1854. Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Print no. 014-0225.

5. A Parody of *Raigō-zu*

Raigō-zu is a type of traditional Buddhist painting from ancient times portraying Buddhist deities coming down on the clouds in order to receive the dead's soul for the Land of Perfect Bliss. Quite a few *kabuki* death portraits were produced as parodies of this type of painting, the commonest form depicting the welcoming deities as famous actors who had died before the main subject of the portrait. Generally speaking, the *raig*ō-*zu* type has two branches: the first depicting the actors already in heaven as deities, and the second portraying them in non-saintly clothes. The latter further branches off into pictures showing the actors as fictional stage characters and those depicting them in their private clothes. The death portraits of this kind are evidently more optimistic and hopeful in nature, because the *raig*ō-*zu* composition which the parody is based on promises the salvation of the dead in the next world.

One example which has taken the parody to the extreme can be seen in Fig. 10, though it is a little unconventional for a *raig*ō-*zu*, as Danjūrō VIII, the main subject of the portrait, has already been received in heaven. The *shini-e* portrays Buddhist deities who have escorted Danjūrō, urging him to take a seat on the lotus plinth, the act which marks the final stage of admission of the actor's soul into Paradise. The benevolent deities' eagerness and Danjūrō's posture of hesitation out of a sense of humility and unworthiness in accepting the exhortation add an air of genial humor and intimacy to the commemoration of the superstar.

Fig. 10: Anonymous: *Shini-e* of Danjūrō VIII. *Ōban*-size single sheet print, ca. 1854. Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Print no. 114-0100.

6. Conclusion

Having seen some examples of *shini-e*, it cannot be overemphasized that the humor was by no means the unwitting result of the portraitists' efforts to arouse a sense of sorrow in the viewers of memorial portraits. On the contrary, the humor was intended. The *ukiyo-e* artists thought that, rather than soberness in the depiction of sorrow, laughter should accompany the representation of the mourners for the dead actors. The comic touch — *okashimi* in Japanese — works quite effectively in the examples we have examined in this paper. The humor of most *shini-e*, therefore, does not derive from sardonic satire; it rather aims at evoking the sense of intimacy and closeness felt for the deceased star actor by caricaturing everyday life and the comic nature that comes with it.[4] Lastly, let me briefly point out that in the Edo Period culture the treatment of laughter is essential for almost all art forms. It is in this unique cultural context that humorous death portraits flourished.

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4 It goes without saying that satire was also an important part of *shini-e*. I chose not to discuss this aspect of death portraits fully in my paper, but Susanne Formanek's *Shini-e* as News Media in Caricatural Form, a paper read at the symposium together with mine, examined this point.

Satirical and Humorous Pictures of *Chūshingura*

AKAMA Ryō

1. Introduction

Chūshingura refers to more than just another revenge incident. The very fact that the original event inspired a drama of lasting fame suggests that it is both unsettling and endlessly fascinating. During the Edo Period, beginning with the play *Kanadehon Chūshingura* (*A Treasury of Loyal Retainers*, 1748), the story had a great influence and generated what might be called an entire 'Chūshingura culture'. Due to the high frequency of Chūshingura-related theatrical productions, the world of *ukiyo-e* naturally offers many actor prints issued in connection with specific performances. Yet, artists also designed a striking range of Chūshingura pictures unrelated to any performance. In a previous publication, I suggested that Chūshingura pictures could be organized in the following eight categories:

1. Actor prints issued at the time of a performance
2. Actor prints not related to an actual performance (actor *mitate-e*)
3. Print series depicting the different acts of Chūshingura
4. Narrative prints depicting all acts of the play
5. Warrior prints and depictions of the Night Raid
6. *Yatsushi-e, e-kyōdai, mitate*-Chūshingura, *giga*
7. Games
8. Print series that include individual characters or scenes from Chūshingura (Akama 2004: 135)

Categories 1 and 2 comprise actor prints. Categories 3 and 4 comprise narrative prints. Category 5 corresponds to warrior prints, including depictions of the Night Raid and related scenes, which suddenly increased in importance following the Tenpō Reforms (1841-3). Due to their occasionally satirical content, these pictures bear on the subject of this volume. The pictures in category 6 comprise *mitate-e*, in the broad sense of the term, and have a strong element of humor. Satirical Chūshingura pictures were able to use the technique of *mitate* because the story ranked among the most powerful narrative frameworks (*sekai*) of the Edo Period. Categories 7 and 8 contain a wide

variety of pictures for the same reason.

According to Minami Kazuo, the satirical pictures produced during the final years of the Edo Period (Bakumatsu, 1853-67) and around the time of the Meiji Restoration (Meiji ishin, 1868) can be divided into six categories:

1. Pictures based on *kabuki* plays or literary works
2. Pictures based on famous paintings of the past
3. Pictures related to animals and food
4. Pictures related to famous regional specialties
5. Pictures based on historical events or battles
6. Pictures of conditions in the city of Edo (Minami 1998: 302-304)

These categories require some refining for the purposes of *ukiyo-e* studies, but they are readily understood. In connection with category 1, Minami describes *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, *Tenjin-ki* (*The Annals of Tenjin*), and *Soga monogatari* (*Tale of the Soga Brothers*) as literary works, though all three formed part of the standard *kabuki* repertory. Satirical pictures were able to employ these narratives precisely because they were established components of Edo culture or the cultural environment shared by the people of Edo. Many pictures in category 3 are likewise related to the Chūshingura story. I would now like to discuss pictures from these two categories.

2. 'Excerpted Phrases' *(Nuki-monku)* and Satirical Chūshingura Prints

Minami has introduced three satirical pictures that are based on the subject of Chūshingura:

Dōke chaban chūshingura yodanme
(*Comical Amateur Chūshingura, Act IV*) (Fig.1)
Kodomo shibai chūshingura yodanme
(*Children's Theatrical Chūshingura, Act IV*)
Chūshingura kudanme kakeai serifu
(*Lines of Dialogue from Chūshingura, Act IX*) (Fig.2)

The first two are relatively well known, since Minami has discussed them on several occasions and they have also appeared in other publications. They liken the surrender of Edo Castle in 1868 to the surrender of the castle in Act IV of the play. The two situations are identical, so the pictures can be described as *mitate-e*. Interested readers can consult Minami's explanations

Fig. 1: Anonymous: *Dōke chaban Chūshingura yodanme*, *Comical Amateur Chūshingura*, *Act IV*, *Ōban*-size single sheet color woodblock print, 1868 (?) Ritsumeikan University ARC.

Fig. 2: Anonymous: *Chūshingura kudanme kakeai serifu, Lines of Dialogue from Chūshingura*, *Act IX*, *Ōban*-size single sheet color woodblock print, 1868 (?), Ritsumeikan University ARC.

(Minami 1998: 294-296), so I will refrain from giving further details in order to concentrate instead on the third example, which has not been previously discussed.

The inscriptions in Figure 2 are quotations from Act IX of the *jōruri* drama *Kanadehon chūshingura*. The patterns and writing on the clothing of the figures unmistakably point to leading *daimyō* and figures in the Edo Government during the Bakumatsu Period. A similarly designed print is inscribed with a quotation from the *jōruri* drama S*ekitori senryō nobori* (*The Sumo Champion's Thousand-Gold-Piece Banner*), and it depicts a *jōruri* practice session with the participants divided into two groups. The designs on the clothing show, once again, that the scene satirizes the alliances among the various *daimyō* during the Bakumatsu Period. But why use the device of a *jōruri* practice session to depict the figures? Why not represent the scene using children or anthropomorphic animals, as appear in other satirical prints of the time?

Twelve quotations from *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, Act IX, have been inscribed on the print in Figure 2.

Sa zo nikukatta de gozanshō
Hetsurai bushi to wa tare ga koto Yōsu ni yotte wa
Sā Iya ka ou ka no hentō o to surudoki kotoba no rikutsu-zume
Go-keiryaku no nengan todoki
Totō no ninzū wa soroitsuran
Kara to Nihon ni tatta futari
Hahaoya wa musume no kao o tsukuzuku to uchinagame
Gozaisho mo sadaka narazu utsurikawaru wa yo no narai
Koko o shikitte kō semete
Atchi kara ayamatte deta yue ni kiru ni kirarenu hyōshi nuke
Teijo ryōfu ni mamiezu Tatoe otto ni wakarete mo
Tekichi no annai shittaru ue wa

The practice of selecting quotations from *jōruri* dramas in order to express some other idea is called 'excerpted phrases' (*nuki-monku*). *Nuki-monku* prints were usually printed without illustrations, like the so-called 'tile prints' (*kawaraban*). Although this volume was designed to focus on illustrated material, I decided to spend a few moments discussing *nuki-monku* prints, since they were relatively popular around the time that satirical pictures were being produced. Research in this area is still quite limited. Konda Yōzō defines *nuki-monku* as the process of associating actual customs and conditions or political events and social incidents with phrases excerpted from popular *jōruri* dramas. Popular dramas used for this purpose include *Kanadehon Chūshingura, Ehon*

taikōki, Sugawara denju tenarai kagami, Imoseyama onna teikin, Goban taiheiki shiraishi-banashi, and *Dannoura kabuto gunki*, but it was most common to associate social conditions and incidents with phrases excerpted from Act IX of *Kanadehon Chūshingura*. *Nuki-monku* prints began to appear in great numbers from the Kyōwa Era (1801-4) onward. Amateur *jōruri* became extremely popular in this time and everyone was humming phrases from *jōruri* (Konda 1997). Konda also points out that the practice originated in Osaka with the sale of single-sheet prints and later spread to Edo.

The definition suggests that Konda has not studied *surimono*, but the *surimono* database of the Historiographical Institute at the University of Tokyo contains seventeen *surimono* examples of *nuki-monku* (HIUTDB). Also, I have come across another fifty *surimono* examples in various collections (see Chart 1). Doubtless, there are still many other *nuki-monku* prints in existence. The chart shows that the play *Meiboku sendai hagi* should be added to Konda's list, and also that *Kanadehon chūshingura*, Act IX, and *Ehon taikōki*, Act X, were frequently used sources of quotations. The oldest Chūshingura *nuki-monku* print is titled *Tayū shamisen ōshibai yakusha chūshingura kudanme nuki-monku mitate (Jōruri Musicians, Major Actors, and Phrases Excerpted from Chūshingura, Act IX*). The upper part of the print presents a list of *jōruri* chanters (*tayū*) and shamisen players, and the lower part presents a list of *kabuki* actors. Quotations from Act IX of Chūshingura appear across the middle, resulting in a *mitate* critique of performers. The names of the musicians and actors suggest that the print was issued around 1800. Among the phrases from the play, two also appear in *Chūshingura kudanme kakeai serifu*.

Kara to Nihon ni tatta futari
Go-keiryaku no nengan todoki

Fig. 3, titled *Konogoro machi-machi uwasa o chotto chūku no nuki-monku* (*Recent Rumors around Town and Phrases Excerpted from Chūshingura, Act IX*), was published in 1854. It combines trends related to the arrival of the Black Ships at Edo Bay and with the relocation of actors from Kamigata. As one part of the inscription states: "Nothing innovative, just a familiar old-style Act IX *mitate*." Using phrases from Act IX of Chūshingura was evidently an established practice. Fig. 4, T*akeda Shibai sōdō fūsetsu chūshingura nanatsume nuki-monku* (*Rumors Surrounding the Takeda Theater Disturbance and Phrases Excerpted from Chūshingura, Act VII*), is a *nuki-monku* print issued during the early Meiji Period. In 1876, the Takeda Theater in Osaka burned down and at least fifty people are known to have died. Fires struck Osaka's theater district at least twice more during the same year, prompting arguments

Chart 1: A List of Chūshingura Prints

Nr	Original text	Jap. Year	Year	Mon.	Title	Possessor	Source title
1	Chūshingura 9 danme	Kansei12	1800		*Chūshingura 9 danme nukemonku mitate*	KDT	Kyota Kakushoku-chō
2	Chūshingura	Kyōwa3	1803		*Hashika,odoke/Chūshingura mitate zukushi*		Setsuyōkikan
3	Chūshingura 9 danme	Kyōwa3	1803		*Chūshingura 9 danme monku*		Rakushu ruijū
4	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunka1	1804		*Shitennōji saiken Chūshingura 9 danme mitate*		Setsuyōkikan
5	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunka2	1805		*Konogoro meika no hihan ni hi Chūshingura 9 danme no kotoba*		Wagakoromo
6	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunka3	1806		*Chūshingura 9 danme*		Rakushu ruijū
7	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunka3	1806		*Chūshingura 9 danme*		Rakushu ruijū
8	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunka3	1806		*Chūshingura 9 danme*		Rakushu ruijū
9	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunka4	1807		*Kanatehon Chūshingura 9 danme*		Fujiokayanikki
10	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunsei6	1823		*Chūshingura 9 danme*		Ukiyo no arisama
11	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunsei8	1825	6	*Bunsei 8 nen tori 6 gatsu daishinpan tōji ryūkō Chūshingura 9 danme*	OFSS	Hokochō
12	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunsei12	1829		*Chūshingura 9 danme no serifu*		Haru no momiji
13	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunsei13	1830		*Shokoku okagemairi Chūshingura 9 danme nukemonku*	OFSS	Hokochō
14	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunsei13	1830		*Okagemairi Chūshingura 9 danme nukemonku*	OFSS	Hokochō
15	Akoya ko-tozeme	Tenpō1	1830		*Shokoku okagemairi Akoya kotozeme danmuke monku*	TDSJK	
16	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunsei13	1830	7	*Daijishin Chūshingura 9 danme nukemonku*	OFSS	Hokochō
17	Chūshingura 9 danme	Tenpō2	1831	7	*Ōsaka chōnai Kawaguchi Sunamochi Furukeredo Chū9 no nukemonku*		Ukiyo no arisama
18	Chūshingura 9 danme	Tenpō4	1833		*Komedaka Mi no fuyu Chūshingura 9 danme nukemonku*	OFSS	Hokochō
19	Chūshingura 9 danme	Tenpō4	1833	1	*Tenpōzan no funaasobi mairi Shohō kaichō arukimairimōde Sai Chū9 no mitate*	OFSS	Hokochō
20	Chūshingura 9 danme	Tenpō7	1836		*Sumiyoshi Shōsengū Chūshingura 9 danme nukemonku*	OFSS	Hokochō
21	Chūshingura 9 danme	Tenpō8	1837		*Chūshingura 9 danme nukemonku*		Rakushu ruijū
22	Chūshingura 7 danme	Tenpō9	1838	1	*Inu no 3gatsu Geishū Miyajima ni oite daishibai Gyakushinren no Fu Chūshingura 7 danme mitate Kanatehon Chūshingura massei to nari*		Rakushu ruijū
23	Chūshingura 9 danme	Tenpō9	1838	4	*Tenpō 9 inu no 4 gatsu Dairyūkō Tenmangū Sunamochi Chū9 nukemonku mitate*		Ukiyo no arisama
24	Chūshingura 9 danme	Tenpō10	1839		*Tenpō 9 nen inu no toshi uchi mezurashiki koto o oboe yoi yahari 9 danme mitate*		Ukiyo no arisama
25	Chūshingura 9 danme	Tenpō10	1839	6	*Tenpō 10 I no toshi 6 gatsu Naniwakyū ni shōsengū Chūshingura 9 danme nukemonku mitate*	OFSS	Hokochō
26	Chūshingura 8 danme	Tenpō11	1840	5	*Tenpō 11 ne 5 gatsu shinpan Kitashinmei Suna-mochi*	OFSS	Hokochō
27	Chūshingura	Tenpō12	1841		*Chūshingura*		Rakushu ruijū
28	Chūshingura 9 danme	Ansei 1	1854		*Konogoro machimachi uwasa o Chotto Chū9 no nukemonku*	OFSS	Hokochō
29	Chūshingura 9 danme	Ansei 1	1854		*Konogoro machimachi uwasa o Chotto Chū9 no nukemonku*	KSS	Chinjishū

Nr	Original text	Jap. Year	Year	Mon.	Title	Pos-sessor	Source title
30	Chūshingura 4 danme	Ansei 1	1854	8	*Kaei 7 nen tora 8 gatsu 6 ka asa ōjō Edo nobori 8 daime Danjūrō koto Ichikawa Hakuen gyōnen 33 sai Saigo monogatari Chūshingura 4 danme nukemonku*	OFSS	Hokochō
31	Numazu	Ansei 1	1854	11	*Daijishin tsunami Numazu no dan nukemonku*	TDSH	
32		Ansei 1	1854	11	*Tōkaidōsuji shokoku no uwasa daijishin hanashi Umiyama*	MB	
33	Taikōki 10 danme	Ansei 1	1854	11	*Daijishin ō-tsunami Taikōki 10 danme nukemonku*	MB	
34	Chūshingura 9 danme	Ansei 1	1854	11	*Daijishin ō-tsunami Chūshingura 9 danme nukemonku*	MB	
35	Chūshingura 9 danme	Ansei 2	1855		*Mitate Chūshingura*	ARH	
36	Chūshingura 9 danme	Ansei 4	1857	1	*Ansei 4 hinoto mi no toshi shōgatsu chūjun yori kaze ryūkō Kaze no kami-okuri Chū9 nukemonku*	KKT	
37	Chūshingura 7 danme	Ansei 5	1858		*Ansei 5 tsuchinoe uma no toshi Chūshingura 7 danme mitate*		Rakushu ruijū
38		Ansei 5	1858	8	*Ansei 5 nen uma 8 gatsu jōjun yori ō-hayari(mon) ku mitate seken ryūkō 3ji korori matsudai hanashi no tane*	OFSS	Hokochō
39	Chūshingura 9 danme	Ansei 5	1858	8	*Seken ryūkō 3 ji korori matsudai hanashi no tane Chū9 nukemonku mitate-e awase*	TDSH	
40	Akegarasu	Ansei 5	1858	8	*Ichinichi korori Akegarasu Yume no awayuki nukemonku ge*	TDSH	
41	Taikōki 10 danme	Ansei 5	1858	8	*Taikōki 10 danme nukemonku mitate*	TDSH	
42	Chūshingura 9 danme	Ansei 6	1859	6	*Hitsuji 6 gatsu hajimari 8 gatsu saichū hannichi tonbyō Chūshingura 9 danme nukemonku*	OFSS	Hokochō
43	Chūshingura	Bunkyū1	1861		*Bunkyū gan kanoto tori no toshi Kanatehon Chūshingura jōruri monku hyōban-ki*		Rakushu ruijū
44	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunkyū2	1862	6	*Matsudai hanashi kokoroe-gusa Ryūkō hashika Chū9 nukemonku*		Fujiokayanikki
45	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunkyū2	1862	6	*Bunkyū 2 inu toshi 6 gatsu Furumekashi nagara Chū9 nukemonku*		Fujiokayanikki
46	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunkyū2	1862	6	*Dai hashika ryūkō Furumekashi nagara Chū9 nukemonku*	TDSH	
47	Chūshingura 9 danme	Bunkyū2	1862	6	*Matsudai hanashi kokoroe-gusa Ryūkō hashika Chū9 nukemonku*	TDSH	
48	Taikōki 10 danme	Ganji 1	1864	7	*Kyoto taika Taikōki 10 danme nukemonku*	TDSJK	
49	Chūshingura 3 danme	Keiō 2	1866		*Chūshingura 3 danme nukemonku*		Rakushu ruijū
50	Chūshingura 9 danme	Keiō 2	1866	8	*Tōsei mitate Taikōki 10 danme nukemonku*	TDSH	
51	Chūshingura 9 danme	Meiji 1	1868	1	*Ōsaka shichū no hitogokoro Chū9 nukemonku eawase*	TDSH	
52	Chūshingura 6 danme	Meiji 1	1868	1	*Mitate Igagoshi 6 danme nukemonku*	KTSC	
53	Chūshingura 7 danme	Meiji 9	1876	4	*Takeda-shibai sōdō fūsetsu Chūshingura 7 tsume nukemonku*	KKT	
54	Chūshingura 7 danme	Meiji 9	1876	4	*Takeda-shibai sōdō fūsetsu Chūshingura 7 tsume nukemonku*	KSS	Chinjishū
55	Taikōki 10 danme	Meiji 10	1877	11	*Konogoro chotto Taikōki 10 danme nukemonku*	KKT	

ARHT Akōshi Rekishi-Hakubutsukan
KDT Kansai-daigaku Toshokan
KKT Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan
KSS Kyoto-fu Sōgō-shiryōkan
KTSC Kariya-shiritsu Toshokan Satō-collection
MB Mitsui-bunko
OFSS Ōsaka-Furitsu Sōgō-shiryōkan
TDSH Tōkyō-daigaku Shiryō-hensanjo
TDSJK Tōkyō-daigaku Shakai-jōhō-kenkyūjo

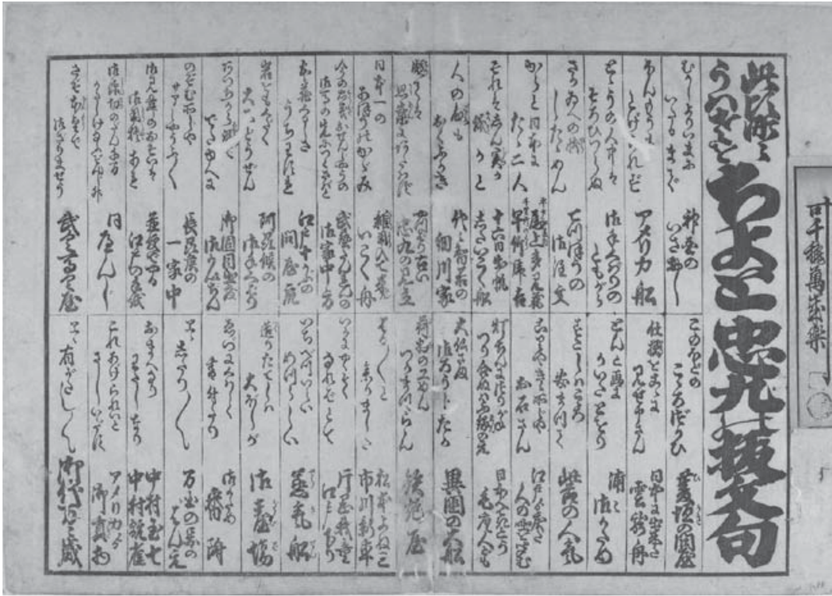

Fig. 3: Anonymous: *Konogoro machi-machi uwasa o chotto chūku no nuki-monku*, *Recent Rumors around Town and Phrases Excerpted from Chūshingura*, *Act IX*,
Single sheet black and white woodblock print, 1854, Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives.

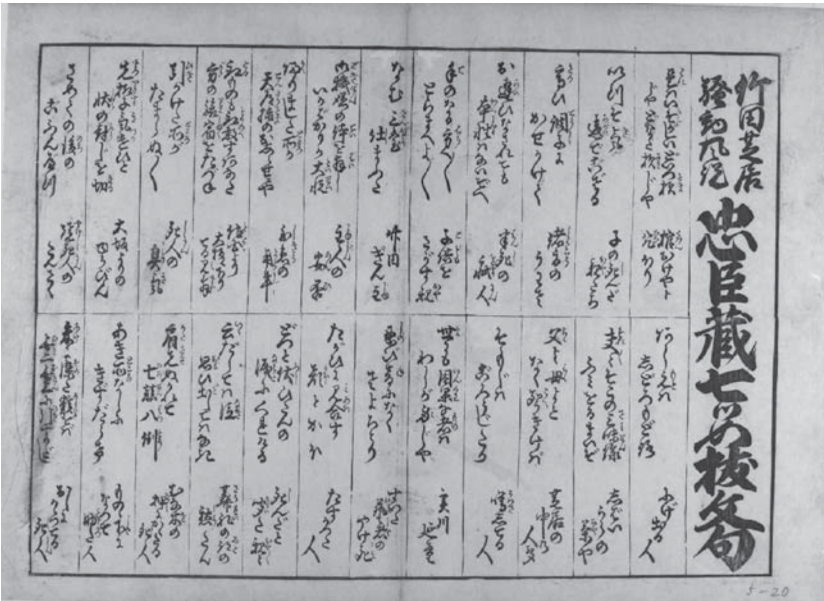

Fig. 4: Anonymous: *Takeda Shibai sōdō fūsetsu Chūshingura nanatsume nuki-monku*, *Rumors Surrounding the Takeda Theater Disturbance and Phrases Excerpted from Chūshingura*, *Act VII*,
Single sheet black and white woodblock print, 1876, Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives.

for and against rebuilding the theaters. The print was published under these circumstances.

Given this background, we can see that Figure 2 is a satirical picture designed in accordance with the popularity of 'excerpted phrases' during the late Edo Period, turning a single-sheet print into a satirical picture. Having recognized this much, we can also see that Figure 5, *Mitate chūshingura* (1855), is a *nuki-monku* print satirizing the Ansei earthquake.

Matsu no kataeda zuba to kiri ○ *hito o tasukeru* (From Act II)

Gozō tsukande naritomo otomo ga shitō gozarimasu ○ *daiku-san no* (From Act VII)

In this case, however, the quotations are taken from several different acts of the play. The preceding discussion shows how the Kamigata tradition of *nuki-monku* stands behind satirical pictures based on *jōruri* dramas, especially satirical pictures and *kawaraban* based on Chūshingura.

Fig. 5: Anonymous: *Mitate Chūshingura*, A *Chūshingura Travesty,*
Ōban-size single sheet color woodblock print, 1855, Ako City Museum of History.

3. Satirical Prints Depicting Animals and Food

One of the more famous print series in this category is *Usagi mitate chūshingura* (*Rabbit and Chūshingura Mitate*), which takes Chūshingura as its subject and also builds on the popularity of rabbits during the early Meiji Period. Rabbit breeding was the fashion in Japan during the years 1872-3. Fig. 6 depicts a 'stage performance' together with the 'musicians', a type of *degatari-zu* but also a playful variation on the travel scene (Act III, *Ochiudo*) as chanted in Kiyomoto style, with phrases from the original drama inscribed in the background. The quoted passages give a sense of the atmosphere of the time, which became overheated and ended in a ban. Volume 6 of *Nishiki-e Bakumatsu Meiji no rekishi* (*Late Edo and Meiji History through Prints*) by Konishi Shirō introduces a print titled *Ōtsu-e bushi* (*Ōtsu-e Style Jōruri Chant*), which associates rabbits with Chūshingura, Act V (Konishi 1977: 107). Figure 7 clearly relates to Act VII of the play. These prints convey exactly the same sense of excitement and agitation exhibited by breeders in the current craze for pets in Japan.

The anthropomorphic technique used in these humorous pictures had appeared long before in illustrated books (*kusazōshi*), but it greatly increased in popularity through the activities of Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1798-1761) during the 1830s-40s, especially through his pictures of cats1. For example, Kuniyoshi designed *Ryūkō neko no kyōgen zukushi* (*Assorted Fashionable Kabuki Dramas Played by Cats*), which includes a version of Chūshingura, Act V, along with a scene from *Natsu matsuri Naniwa kagami* and scenes related to the famous *kabuki* couples Oshun and Denbei, and Koina and Hanbei. His series *Neko no hyakumensō* (*One Hundred Cat Faces*) includes a version of Chūshingura, Act VII, and he designed *Gamadehon hyōkingura* (*A Treasury of Humor as Demonstrated by Toads*), which features toads through a loose pun in Japanese: '*kanadehon*' ('beginner's text') and '*gamadehon*' (an invented word literally meaning 'frog handbook'). He also designed a related series titled *Chōchingura*, in which lanterns bear the faces of toads. This title derives from another pun: '*chūshin*' ('loyal retainer') and '*chōchin*' ('lantern'). In Figure 8, we see Kuniyoshi's version of the 'Great Prologue' to *Chūshingura* from his series *Jūnidan tsuzuki kanadehon chōchingura* (*A Treasury of Loyal Lanterns in Twelve Acts*, 1852). The prints depict famous actors with lanterns as faces. Here in the foreground, Ichikawa Ebizō is depicted normally in the role of Moronao, while the background shows lantern-faced versions of Onoe Baikō and Ichikawa Danjūrō. The toad-lantern *Chōchingura* series followed

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1 Compare the contribution by Iwakiri in this volume.

Fig. 6: Yoshifuji: *Kiyomoto Ochiudo Okaru Kanpei, The Ballad of the Fugitives Okaru and Kanpei, Ōban*-size single sheet color woodblock print, 1873, Ako City Museum of History.

Fig. 7: Toyokuni IV: *Ōtsuki Usanosuke, Keisei Unoko, Ono Kurodayu,*
Ōban-size diptych color woodblock print, 1873, Ritsumeikan University ARC.

Fig. 8: Kuniyoshi: *Jūnidan tuzuki Kanadehon Chōchingura daijō*,
A Treasury of Loyal Lanterns in Twelve Acts: Grand Opening,
Ōban-size single sheet color woodblock print, 1852, Waseda University Theatre Museum.

from a long *Mitate chōchingura* series, which, in turn, built on the tradition of *yatsushi* and *mitate* beauty prints taking Chūshingura as their subject. The toad-lantern series led to the actor-lantern series.

Finally, during the early Meiji Period, Utagawa Yoshifuji (1828-1887) designed *Shinpan neko to nezumi no katakidōshi* (*Cats and Mice are Mutual Enemies – A New Publication*). Clearly, humorous anthropomorphic versions of Chūshingura featuring animals and objects continued to be produced in the Meiji Period, extending to the time when rabbits were the fashion.

4. The Night Raid Scene from Chūshingura as Depicted in *Ukiyo-e*

The oldest dated picture of the Akō Incident of 1703, the event which formed the basis of Chūshingura, is a votive plaque submitted to Chion Temple, Miyazu, in 1715. It depicts the night raid of the loyal samurai. The same subject appears in a *tan-e* print designed by an artist of the Torii School at around 1711, which makes it the oldest Chūshingura print found thus far (Fig.9). Both works were produced during a time before popular lore had raised Ōishi Kuranosuke, the leader of the loyal samurai, to the status of a hero, and before the stories of the individual samurai had begun to multiply

Fig. 9: Unknown artist of the Torii School: *Shida kaikei youchi.*
Tan-e single sheet print, ca. 1711, Ritsumeikan ARC.

and turn their subjects into models of human behavior.

The history of the incident reached a turning point with the staging of *Kanadehon Chūshingura* in 1748. The previous years are best considered a period of fermentation leading to this drama. In the following year, the three main theaters in Edo all staged productions of the play, at a stroke setting in motion a Chūshingura boom. Researchers have discovered a number of actor prints that correspond to the performances of the time. Following these rival productions, the play became the biggest money-earner in *kabuki*. Accordingly, vast numbers of actor prints corresponding to performances of the play were produced throughout the Edo Period. At the same time, print artists such as Okumura Masanobu (1686-1764) took advantage of the play's popularity by designing and selling not actor prints but depictions of The Night Raid of the Loyal Samurai, for example Masanobu's *Kanadehon Chūshingura Ryōshibai Kyogen-Uki-e* (*Perspective Picture of Chūshingura Performances at the Two Theaters*) (Fig.10).

The concluding act of the play, Act XI, consists of three main scenes (The Night-Raid, The Attack, and The Offering of Incense), but these do not work well as stage drama. During the Edo Period, the Night Raid scene was hardly ever staged, the reason being less to keep a dwindling audience in place toward the end of a long performance than to bring the entire performance

Fig. 10: Okumura Masanobu: *Kanadehon Chūshingura ryōshibai kyogen uki-e, Perspective Picture of Chūshingura Performances at the Two Theaters*, Colored single sheet woodblock print, ca. 1750, Waseda University Theatre Museum.

more swiftly to a close. As far as *kabuki* performances were concerned, the Night Raid counted for little more than a postscript. But in this connection, *ukiyo-e* prints of the subject exhibit two curious phenomena. First, the majority of Chūshingura series consist of twelve prints, each depicting a different act. It is not enough to explain this simply by saying that the play was performed more frequently than others and hence deserved lengthy illustration. From the mid-1760s to around the early 1790s, no format was established for Chūshingura print series, but gradually, the horizontal perspective picture became a standard. For example, *Shinpan Chūshingura jūichidan tsuzuki* (*The Eleven Acts of Chūshingura, A Newly Published Set*) by Utagawa Toyokuni I (1769-1825) consists of four narrow format (*hosoban*) prints, each with three scenes, which makes a total of twelve perspective-picture-style images. The play itself, however, consists of only eleven acts, meaning that an extra scene had to be selected to make up the additional panel. In this case, the Withdrawal to Ryōgoku Bridge was added to the Night Raid.

Up until the early 1790s, the majority of Chūshingura series consisted of eleven prints, each depicting a different act. Yet, over time, the Withdrawal scene or the Offering of Incense scene came to be added, bringing the total to twelve. It would also have been acceptable to present Act IV or VII or IX in two parts, but this never happened. Hiroshige's Chūshingura series of the late 1830s consists of sixteen prints, but even here the first ten prints depict just one act each, while the last six prints all relate to the Night Raid and its aftermath: Approach at Night, Night Attack, Ambition Satisfied, Retreat, With-

drawal to Ryōgoku, and Offering of Incense. As this extreme example shows, the potential for expansion came not from the staged acts, but from the Night Raid episode. The Night Raid scene in Chūshingura enjoyed a long and vigorous life, being represented in the form of horizontal landscape perspective pictures. Emphasis was placed not on Kira Mansion as a famous place (*meisho*), but on the episode of the attack as a famous regional product (*meibutsu*).

These two phenomena - designing the prints in sets of twelve and depicting different aspects of the Night Raid scene - increased from the 1830s onward, when combined with the development of narrative pictures depicting the *tōshi kyōgen* of temporary theaters. This is how Chūshingura was depicted in *ukiyo-e* during the Edo Period.

5. Loyalty and Satire

The subjects and genres of *ukiyo-e* greatly expanded on account of the Tenpō Reforms. For example, the warrior prints devised by Kuniyoshi developed into satirical pictures. And as already discussed in connection with Chūshingura, influence steadily passed from prints connected with stage performances of the drama to those focusing on the Night Raid. In fact, the Night Raid became an independent subject for warrior prints, while series depicting the loyal samurai under their real names had a high success rate. It was an age of transition from the fiction culture generated by the flowering of Edo, to looking squarely at the hard reality. In the *Fujiokaya nikki* (*Fujiokaya Diary*), an entry from the ninth month of 1848 reads as follows:

> 'In association with a special exhibit held this spring at Sengaku-ji [the mortuary temple of the loyal samurai], many prints were published depicting the loyal samurai. None of them had any success, except for a fifty-one-print series titled, *Seichū gishi den* (The lives of the loyal and true samurai) designed by Kuniyoshi, with inscriptions by Ippitsuan Eisen, published by Ebiya Rinnosuke, and sold at the shop of the fan vendor Sabei, located at Horie-chō Nichōme. In addition to the forty-seven loyal retainers, the series included Hangan, Moronao, the spirit of Kanpei and even the scene where Chikamatsu Kanroku sends Shimobe no Hirosaburō a gift of oranges. The series went on sale last year, on the fourteenth day of the seventh month, and continued to be published until the third month of this year. The pictures were highly acclaimed, and around 8,000 copies of each were printed. Since the series included fifty-one pictures, they would have sold 408,000 sheets. This is the most highly acclaimed and the biggest hit of recent years.'

This passage has been previously cited by Ōkubo Jun'ichi (2006: 54-55), who introduced several other *ukiyo-e* prints issued in conjunction with the same exhibit at Sengaku-ji. For some time after the exhibit, prints illustrating the lives of the individual loyal samurai continued to be issued, but instead of using the word Chūshingura, the titles refer to 'loyal samurai' (*gishi*). This development has nothing to do with the exhibit, but instead represents a response to contemporary trends emphasizing 'devotion and loyalty' (*chūgi*) under the continuing influence of the Tenpō Reforms.

Kuniyoshi was always in touch with his times, and he reflected these developments in prints such as the one shown in Figure 11. Suzuki Jūzō has previously commented on this print as follows:

> 'Incorporating a Chinese character as a rebus into a design was a device used by Santō Kyōden (1761-1816) in his *kibyōshi On-atsuraezome chōju komon* (1802). The technique was revived in the light fiction of the late 1840s, but for didactic effect. Kuniyoshi's humorous picture was produced under these circumstances. The warrior supporting the heavy character "*chū*" (devotion) wears robes with a zigzag pattern and he has a strong bearing, which together suggest that he is Ōboshi Yuranosuke, the leader of the loyal retainers [in the stage drama]. Two of his subordinates are putting

Fig. 11: Kuniyoshi: *Chūgi ga omoshi, mei wa karushi, Devotion to Our Lord Weighs Heavy, Our Life Weighs Nothing*, *Ōban*-size single sheet color woodblock print, Kōka Era (Suzuki 1992: Pl. 433).

all their strength into lifting the character "*gi*" (loyalty), while another warrior lightly carries the Chinese character "*mei*" (life). One could interpret the picture as saying that the Akō rōnin considered devotion to weigh more in importance than life itself, but this would be an overly easy interpretation. A deeper meaning emerges when one recalls that [the historical leader of the loyal retainers] Ōishi Kuranosuke kept an inscription nearby: "My lord's life weighs more than ten thousand hills. My life weighs nothing beside just one of his hairs." The meaning of this severe inscription also runs through Kuniyoshi's portrait of Ōboshi Yuranosuke in the series *Seichū gishi den*.' (Suzuki 1992: 238).

Kuniyoshi never tired of depicting the Night Raid. In this way, he expressed the atmosphere of the Tenpō Reforms, which pressed for educational value. But having said as much, one cannot help sensing a Kuniyoshi-style irony because the artist also produced pictures such as Figure 12, *Gishi no seichū yoshi ga tawamure* (Kuniyoshi Having Fun with the Devotion of the Loyal Samurai). This picture treats the Night Raid in a comical manner by depicting one warrior frightening another with a scarecrow placed on a barrel of charcoal, and another blowing a police whistle in front of a snow sculpture of Moronao's head. The concept partly derives from Hiroshige's *Kokkei*

Fig. 12: Kuniyoshi: *Gishi no seichū yoshi ga tawamure, Kuniyoshi Having Fun with the Devotion of the Loyal Samurai*, *Ōban*-size single sheet color woodblock print, 1847-48, Ako City Museum of History.

chūshingura (*Humorous Chūshingura*), in which a demon emerges from a charcoal storehouse and frightens a warrior. However, the deliberate emphasizing of the Night Raid scene is particular to the period following the Tenpō Reforms, while the absence of 'devotion and loyalty' is a particular feature of Kuniyoshi's work.

The world of *kabuki* never ceased to rely on Chūshingura, as observed in the repeated staging of the drama over many decades, while the lives of the individual samurai became popular through the ongoing influence of histories and public lectures. The popularity of Night Raid pictures, however, must reflect the historical circumstances of the late Edo Period. Consider again Minami's final two categories: pictures based on historical events or battles and pictures of conditions in the city of Edo. The drama Chūshingura became a well-established historical framework (*sekai*). The fact that the play could serve as the foundation for serious works certainly reflects the repeated efforts of a government to establish the creed of 'devotion and loyalty'. However, the subject also could be treated in a comical manner. The presence of these two trends, developing in parallel, precisely illustrates the broader social conditions. Not only Kuniyoshi's humorous prints, but the entire movement to publish Chūshingura *ukiyo-e* pictures after the Tenpō Reforms can be seen as a sign of the times.

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On the Parody of Battle Prints

INAGAKI Shin'ichi

1. Introduction

At the end of the 19th century, French Japonists like the Goncourts or S. Bing discovered *ukiyo-e*. Whereas in Japan, *ukiyo-e* prints depicting popular courtesans or *kabuki* actors were nothing but expendables, in Europe they were regarded as artistic works, and this viewpoint was later re-imported into Japan. During the Meiji Period, cheap prints became highly artistic material, and beautiful women prints by Harunobu, Kiyonaga or Utamaro as well as limpid landscapes by Hokusai and Hiroshige were suddenly considered great art.

Besides these famous prints, large numbers of works depicting the lives of ordinary people were created at the same time. They showed vivid characters and incidents of the time, such as minor itinerant actors, story tellers, strange events or fires. Comic prints were often published in order to criticize the government's scandals in roundabout ways. Although later they became difficult to understand without a good knowledge of their historical context, they can still be seen as precious documents of the life of common people. It was not until after the end of World War II, however, that the popular classes received the attention of many historians. Hence, those prints were neglected and fell into oblivion.

In the Meiji Period, the comic prints of Edo were influenced by the English magazine *Punch*. In allusion to this, they first were called *ponchi-e,* Punch pictures, and later, they would become known as *manga*. Not only their name, but also their concept changed. As rapid modernization was promoted in order to overtake the European countries, the Edo culture was rejected by the Meiji Government. But after being defeated in World War II, Japan looked back to its traditional culture and began to study popular forms of expression such as *ukiyo-e* and *gesaku* novels of the Edo Period. Yet, comic prints had no status, and even today not many people know about their existence.

I happen to know that original *ukiyo-e* prints were still for sale on the market in the 1970s. Comic prints of the end of the Tokugawa Period and the beginning of the Meiji Period were extremely cheap and were sold not in antiquities shops but in second-hand bookshops, where they were kept together with old papers, posters, and other printed matters. The first time I saw them,

I found that they were extremely fresh and interesting. I began my collection and discovered an unknown world. Because they were not regarded as artistic prints, never shown in exhibitions and never reproduced in *ukiyo-e* books, I could only rely on my curiosity.

In 1988, I published *Edo no asobi-e* (*Comic Pictures of Edo*), in which I presented comic prints, toy prints, and *asobi-e*. '*Asobi-e'* means 'playful picture', full of humor and wit. Various aspects of playfulness are represented in these pictures, such as in Hokusai's *Rokkasen* (*The* S*ix Great Poets Made of Written Characters)* or in Kuniyoshi's *Mikake wa kowai ga tonda ii hito da* (*He is a Good Man though his Appearance is Frightening*), in which a human face is made up entirely of naked men.,

In this book, I showed one triptych by Hiroshige entitled *Taiheiki mochi sake tatakai* (*Taiheiki of Sweets and Liquor in Contest*), which is a caricature composed of *mochi* (sweet cakes) and *sake* (a Japanese alcoholic beverage) representing soldiers (Pl. 6). This is a parody of the traditional representation of battles in scrolls and screens. In some cases, the soldiers are personified objects and in others human beings. Many parodies of battle scenes are known today, and I would like to discuss their meaning in the following chapters.

2. On the Genre of Battle Paintings (*Musha gassen-e*)

The origin of these parodies can be found in traditional scrolls or screens called 'battle paintings'. Japanese history is full of battles such as the battle between the Soga and the Mononobe family, which took place in A.D. 587, the battle of Jin-shin of 672, and many other battles fought during the Kamakura, Nanboku-chō, Muromachi, and Azuchi Periods. In *Nihon gassen sōran* (*The General History of Japanese Battles*), the author mentions up to 135 battles which were fought from the beginning of the Nara Period up until the beginning of the Meiji Period (NGS 1988). Battle paintings can be divided into two categories: battle scenes adapted from war chronicles or literature, such as *Heiji monogatari emaki* (*The Scroll of the Heiji Story*), and scenes of real wars such as *Mōko shūrai emaki* (*The Battle against the Mongolian Invasion*). These paintings appeared around the end of the Heian Period with the development of battle literature. During the Kamakura Period, many scrolls were produced, and the Edo Period saw the production of huge screens representing the most important war scenes (NBK 1997).

It is said that battle scene scrolls were made by Kyoto painters and appreciated by higher class samurai of the Kamakura Government. The oldest battle painting known today is the *Zenkunen gassen emaki* (*The Scroll of the First Nine Years War*), painted in the 13th century. This war took place in 1051

in the Tōhoku area between Minamoto Noriyoshi and his son Yoshiie against Abe Yoritoki and his sons Sadatō and Munetō. This battle marked the turning point of the war and allowed the Minamoto family to establish a strong base in Eastern Japan.

The first war chronicles were *Shōmonki* (*The Chronicle of Masakado*), written in 940, and *Mutsu Waki* (*The Chronicle of Mutsu*) of about 1062. Many chronicles followed, such as *Hogen monogatari* (*The History of Hogen*), *Heiji monogatari* (*The History of Heiji*), *Heike monogatari* (*The History of the Heike Family*), *Shōkyūki* (*The Chronicle of Shōkyū*), *Taiheiki* (*The Chronicle of Taihei*), etc. Since the end of the Heian Period (1192), the samurai class dominated the country, and they appreciated battle paintings based on those chronicles. Battle scenes were first represented in small scrolls but gradually developed into large folding screens meant to decorate the houses of samurai. Famous battle scenes such as the Battle of Nagashino fought by Oda Nobunaga, the Battle of Komaki-Nagakute (Toyotomi Hideyoshi), and the Battle of Sekigahara (Tokugawa Ieyasu), were depicted in many screen paintings.

In ca. 1670, when the genre of *ukiyo-e* appeared, long after Ieyasu founded the Tokugawa Government, warriors and battles also occurred. In the 19th century, battle pictures were depicted in triptychs. Utagawa Kuniyoshi designed famous warrior prints, and his students Yoshitsuya, Yoshikazu, Yoshitoshi, and Sadahide produced many battle prints as well. Battles between two groups of opponents offered great entertainment for ordinary people, and this genre became a bestseller for publishers.

The Tokugawa Government prohibited the depiction of samurai after Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, fearing that common people would say that the Tokugawa had usurped power from these two generals. As a result, only battle scenes of the Middle Ages were represented. The most popular scenes were the battle of the Genji and the Heike families in the 12th century, and the Battle of Kawanakajima between Takeda Shingen and Uesugi Kenshin in the 16th century.

Hishikawa Moronobu made series of prints such as *Shuten Dōji* (ca. 1689) and the *Soga monogatari* (*Story of the Soga Brothers*,1681-84), illustrated books such as *Musha-e zukushi* (*A Collection of Images of Samurai*, 1680) and *Kokin bushidō e-zukushi* (*A Collection of Images of Samurai*, *Past and Present*, 1686), which shows that *musha-e* were already popular. With the birth of polychrome prints and the rise of the popular classes, the publication of *ukiyo-e* prints developed, and battle triptychs were produced in great quantities. The triptych format made it possible to depict huge battle scenes in a dynamic fashion, and the more violent those battle scenes were illustrated, the more popular the *ukiyo-e* prints were.

3. On the Parody of Battle Paintings

It is not yet clear when the first battle painting parody appeared. The origin of parody paintings can be traced back to *otogizōshi* (fairy tales) of the Muromachi Period, such as *Gyorui aomono kassenjō* (*The Battle between Fish and Vegetable*), *Keiso Monogatari* (*The Story of Rats and Cats*), *Kedamono Taiheiki* (*The Taiheiki of Animals*), *Shubeiron* (*The Story of Wine and Sweets*), and others referred to as '*irui gassen mono*' ('battles between opponents of different species'). In those stories, each opponent fights with its own weapon, according to its own nature. The scenes are full of humor and wit, and gave birth to our parodies of battle pictures.

At the end of the Edo Period, the economy was exhausted, foreign ships arrived at the shores of Japan, and the country found itself in a critical situation. In 1841, the Tenpō Reforms were introduced in order to prohibit the luxurious lifestyle of ordinary people, and the economic situation of the populace was severely threatened. Additionally, a great earthquake occurred and cholera and measles epidemics broke out. Commodore Perry arrived at Edo bay and demanded the opening of the country. The port of Yokohama was opened, and unequal treaties were concluded. The 14th shogun Iemochi went to Kyoto to meet the emperor. The civil war which followed led to the victory of the emperor, and the new Meiji Period. In short, times were changing violently.

Ordinary people were looking for humor because they were dissatisfied with the political situation, but the feudal system left no room for free expression. Kuniyoshi's warrior prints were, it seems, published in an attempt to satisfy the people. His most popular work is *Minamoto Raikō-kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu* (*Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon*, Pl. 4). In front of the ill Minamoto Yorimitsu, four guards are depicted playing *go*. Behind Yorimitsu, a giant spider spreads its huge web, and two groups of strange ghosts are fighting each other. People of the time said that these ghosts represented the hostility of the people suffering from the Tenpō Reforms, and each ghost represented the prohibition of a popular job. For example, Daruma meant the prohibition of blind men's money lending, the big lantern that of lottery, Okame that of local geisha, and the small birds that of selling small birds. Raikō (Yorimitsu) was supposed to represent the shogun Tokugawa Ieyoshi, and one of the guards, Urabe Takesue, the leader of the reforms, Mizuno Tadakuni. This triptych was soon prohibited.

Domestic troubles like the failure of the Tenpō Reforms, and external threats such as the frequent arrival of foreign ships may have helped the publication of many parodies of battle prints. After the publication of this triptych,

every Kuniyoshi print was expected to be a caricature of the Tokugawa Government, and *Koma kurabe banjō Taiheiki* (*The Taiheiki on the Game Board, Comparing the Chess Pieces*, Pl. 2) or *Bokusen no zu* (*The Battle of Black Ink*, Pl. 3) were believed to contain political criticism. However, the police took no notice of them.

In 1859, a cholera epidemic occurred, and in the following year, Hirokage published *Aomono sakana gunzei ōkassen no zu* (*Picture of the Great Battle between the Vegetable and Fish Armies*, Pl. 9). Fish were believed to transmit cholera, and vegetables were seen as protection against this disease. The orange in the picture was said to represent the fourteenth shogun Iemochi and the killer whale the fifteenth shogun Keiki. The whole scene was interpreted as an image of their struggle for power. As a result, Hirokage was threatened by Tokugawa's retainers. In 1864, Kyōsai published a triptych entitled *Fūryū kawazu daigassen no zu* (*An Elegant Picture of a Great Battle between Frogs*) in which one can see the shogun's crest on the wheel of the cannon (Fig. 1). The print was prohibited, and Kyōsai had to suppress the crest in order to obtain permission to sell it.

In 1868, during the war between the shogun and the emperor which took place from Toba and Fushimi near Kyoto to the Tōhoku area, the Satsuma and Chōshū forces fought for the emperor against the shogun's army. After they were defeated, the Tokugawa gave up power to the emperor. This war was depicted in many satirical diptychs. As the publication of news was prohibited, these prints were issued without the publishers' or artists' names. The war was represented in the form of boys battle play with popguns, mud battles,

Fig. 1: Kyōsai: *Fūryū kawazu daigassen no zu* (*An Elegant Picture of a Great Battle between Frogs*), *Ōban*-size triptych, 1864. Publisher: Suhai.

water battles, snowball battles, battles between potatoes and octopi, insect battles, etc. The two parties are represented by the designs on their kimono: the splashed pattern refers to Satsuma, the sweet clover and the butterfly to Chōshū, the clam to Kuwana, and the candle to Aizu.[1]

So far, the prints I have presented here have political messages. However, others seem only to convey humor by means of personification.

Taiheiki mochi sake tatakai (*Taiheiki of Sweets and Liquor in Contest*), published between 1844-47, shows the battle between *sake* and *mochi* (Pl. 6). This print, in which Hiroshige depicted human bodies by combining several utensils and tableware, is not a political caricature. Instead, it is a kind of print aimed at showing the artist's skill. Many parodies of battle prints were published to show the artists' genius. Every artist tried to depict imaginatively personified characters and make them fight in original ways. After the success of *Taiheiki,* Hiroshige published *Mochi sake ni-hen kasei no tatakai* (*The Second Version of Mochi and Sake, Battle of Domestic Ingredients*) in 1844-47, and Yoshiiku imitated him with *Mochi sake daigassen no zu* (*The Great Battle of Sweets and Liquor*) in 1859.

The contrast of characters is also a popular subject. Yoshitsuya published *Neko nezumi dōke gassen* (*The Comic Battle of Cats and Rats*) in 1844-47, in which rats fight against their natural enemies, and Yoshitora depicted *Kusuri to yamai daigassen no zu* (*The Great Battle of Medicine and Illness*), in which he shows how medicine wins against illness (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: Yoshitora: *Kusuri to yamai daigassen no zu (Great Battle Between Medicine and Illness), Ōban*-size triptych, 1847-1852.

1 These objects correspond to a special product of each fief or a pun of the fief's name. Kimono with splashed patterns were produced in Satsuma, the sweet clover *hagi* stands for the Hagi fief, the butterfly (*chō*) for Chōshū, clams are a specialty of Kuwana and candles a product of Aizu.

Other prints simply describe the state of society. Yoshimori’s *Hashika no doku kassenzu* (*The Battle of Measles and Poison*), published in 1859, depicts the prevalence of epidemics. His *Makero makenu baibai daigassen* (*The Great Battle of Buying and Selling*) of 1861 shows the people suffering from the rise in prices.

Kuniyoshi’s *Bokusen no zu* (*The* Battle of Black Ink) and *Tosa emakimono no utsushi (Copy of a Tosa-Scroll*) are new interpretations of traditional subjects. Hiroshige’s *Ōko uwanariuchi no zu* (*The Harassment of the Bride by the Former Wife, Past and Present*) of 1852 is also a new representation of an old custom (Fig. 3).

Among these battle prints, some subjects are not suitable for serious battles. Kuniyoshi depicted the seven gods of happiness and children fighting merrily in *Shichi fukujin kodakara asobi* (*The Play of the Seven Gods of Happiness and Children*) in 1838-43. Yoshitoyo’s *Dōke teasobi kassen* (*The Battle of Comic Toys*) of 1862 shows a battle of dolls and toys for the girl’s festival fighting in pairs. It is unusual that these objects are connected with battles.

Fig. 3: Hiroshige: *Ōko uwanariuchi no zu (The Harassment of the Bride by the Former Wife, Past and Present)*, *Ōban*-size triptych, 1852.

4. On Fart Battle Scrolls (*hōhi gassen*)

The origin of the battle picture parodies can be found in the *Hōhi gassen emaki* (*Scroll of Fart Battle*) depicted by Toba Sōjō in the 12th century, which is now said to be lost. Old copies of the scroll show two groups of naked noblemen eating sweet potatoes and battling each other with farts. The force of farting is such that some men are blown away, others cover their noses because of the smell, and everybody is laughing. This is a true nonsense scroll. *Chōjū giga emaki* (*The Scroll of Frolicking Animals and Figures*, 12th century) is a national treasure and said to have been drawn by Toba Sōjō. Later, comic drawings were generally referred to as *'toba-e'*. Today, however, Toba's comic drawings are lost, and only the name '*toba-e'* remains. I have seen a scroll depicting a fart battle housed at Enman-in Monzeki, near the famous Miidera Temple at Ōtsu, Shiga, which is said to be an original drawing by Toba Sōjō. It bears the following inscription: "Copied on the 4th, 5th, and 6th of May, 1743, by a descendant of Toba Sōjo, Gon-no-sōjō Banshō." This shows that the drawings had been copied by the best pupils of Toba Sōjō. The style is very similar to that of *Chōjū giga emaki*, and this fart battle scroll might also have been made by Toba Sōjō.

In an album by Hishikawa Moronobu, *Ningen burei kō* (*The Study on the Impoliteness of Human Beings*, 1680), fart battle scenes are presented as a classical subject.[2] Moronobu may have seen the original by Toba Sōjō or a version similar to it. The composition is drawn with very dynamic lines.

Another version of a fart battle scroll entitled *Zare-e* (*Joke pictures*), which belongs to the Suntory Museum, has an inscription saying that it is a copy of an album by Jōchi. The brush strokes are very different from the *Chōjū giga emaki*, so this work might come from another lineage.

As for more recent works, the Kawanabe Kyōsai Museum owns two fart battle scrolls; one was painted in 1867 and the other in 1876. Both show naked noblemen immersed in a fart battle. This kind of eccentric depiction is very familiar to Kyōsai, another eccentric painter of the Meiji Period. Depicted at the end of the scrolls, policemen dressed in Western clothes arrive to restore order.

The representation of laughing loudly or of fart battles ought to be studied more thoroughly in order to understand their history. Unfortunately, this kind of 'dirty' painting is not appreciated in Japan today, and many pictures still remain unknown.

2 Six images from 24 are reproduced in Uchida 2003.

5. Parodies of Battle Paintings Today

A battle is a fight between two groups of opponents. Today, many competitions take place in Japan. In every primary school, boys and girls compete in athletic contests. They are divided into two groups, red and white, and practice various kinds of sports. Not only in athletics but also in song, on New Year's Eve, the Japanese national TV station NHK organizes a popular show in which male and female singers are divided into a red and a white group. In the Heian Period, the Minamoto and the Taira family were recognizable by their red and white flags. Recently, I watched a haiku competition, in which five high school boys and girls had to compose a haiku on a subject given by the jury. The judge immediately decided on the winner and on the loser. The existence of many battle paintings and parodies of battle pictures might be a proof of the Japanese's fondness for competition.

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All pictures are privately owned.

Appendix: A List of Parodies of Battles in *Ukiyo-e* Prints

Kuniyoshi: *Shichi fukujin kodakara asobi* (*The Play of the Seven Gods of Happiness and Children*). *Ōban*-size triptych, latter half of Tenpō Period (1838-43). Publisher: Izumiya Ichibei.

Kuniyoshi: *Shitone gassen no zu* (*Battle of Cushions*). *Ōōban*-size, latter half of Tenpō Period (1838-43). Publisher unknown.

Kuniyoshi: *Minamoto Raikō-kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu*, *Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon Ōban*-size triptych, 1843. Publisher: Ibaya Senzaburō.

Kuniyoshi: *Koma kurabe banjō Taiheiki* (*The Taiheiki on the Game Board, Comparing the Chess Pieces*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1843. Publisher: Gusokuya Kahei.

Kuniyoshi: *Bokusen no zu* (The Battle of Black Ink). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1843. Publisher unknown.

Hiroshige: *Taiheiki mochi sake tatakai* (*Taiheiki of Sweets and Liquor in Contest*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1844-47. Publisher: Maruya Seijirō.

Hiroshige: *Mochi sake ni-hen kasei no tatakai* (*The Second Version of Mochi and Sake, Battle of Domestic Ingredients*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1844-47. Publisher: Maruya Seijirō.

Yoshitsuya: *Neko nezumi dōke gassen* (*The Comic Battle of Cats and Rats*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1844-47. Publisher unknown.

Sadamasu: *Dōke teasobi gassen* (*Comic Battle of Playthings*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1844-47. Publisher unknown.

Yoshitsuya: *Shōki mitate Ujigawa kassen no zu* (*The Ujigawa Battle as a Travesty of Shōki*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1848-52. Publisher: Kagiya Hanjirō.

Yoshitora: *Kusuri to yamai daigassen no zu* (*The Great Battle of Medicine and Illness*). *Ōban*-size triptych, date? Publisher: Ebisuya Shōshichi.

Yoshifuji: *Kanzen chōaku Shingaku banashi. Iriyō na mono iranu mono no arasoi no zu* (*Moralizing Tales from the Shingaku. A Picture of the Battle Between Useful and Useless Things*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1848-52. Publisher unknown.

Hiroshige: *Ōko uwanariuchi no zu* (*The Harassment of the Bride by the Former Wife, Past and Present*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1852. Publisher: Maruya Seijirō.

Yoshiiku: *Mochi sake daigassen no zu* (*The Great Battle of Sweets and Liquor). Ōban*-size triptych, 1852. Publisher: Maruya Seijirō.

Hirokage: *Aomono sakana gunzei ōkassen no zu* (*Picture of the Great Battle between the Vegetable and Fish Armies*). *Ōban*-size tryptych, 1859. Publisher: Tsujiokaya Bunsuke.

Yoshimori: *Yama hata dōke kassen zu* (*Picture of Battle Between Buffoons of Mountain Fields*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1859. Publisher: Sanoya Tomigorō.

Yoshimori: *Hashika no doku kassen zu* (*The Battle of Measles and Poison*). *Ōban*-size

triptych, 1859. Publisher: Sanoya Tomigorō.

Yoshitoshi: *Daidokoro daigassen* (*Great Battle in the Kitchen*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1859. Publisher: Enshūya Hikobei.

Kuniyoshi: *Tosa emakimono no utsushi* (*Copy of a Tosa-Scroll*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1860. Publisher: Echizen'ya Kajū.

Yoshitoshi: *Wakan kemono daigassen no zu* (Great Battle between Japanese and Chinese Animals). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1860. Publisher: Kameya Iwakichi.

Yoshimori: *Makero makenu baibai daigassen* (*The Great Battle of Buying and Selling*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1861. Publisher: Maruya Tokuzō.

Yoshitoyo: *Dōke teasobi kassen* (*The Battle of Comic Toys*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1862. Publisher: Tsujiokaya Bunsuke.

Kyōsai: *Fūryū kawazu daigassen no zu* (*An Elegant Picture of a Great Battle between Frogs*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1864. Publisher: Suhai.

Anonymous: *Natsu no yo, mushi gassen* (*Battle of Insects on a Summer Evening*). *Ōban*-size diptych, 1868. Publisher unknown.

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Anonymous: *Ryūgū uo gassen* (*A Fish Battle in the Dragon's Palace*). *Ōban*-size diptych, 1868. Publisher unknown.

Anonymous: *Toba emakimono no uchi he gassen* (*From the Toba Picture Scrolls: A Battle of Farts*). *Ōban*-size diptych, 1868. Publisher unknown.

Kyōsai: *Kawazu daigassen no zu* (*A Great Battle Between Frogs*). *Ōban*-size triptych, 1877. Publisher: Satō Isetatsu.

Notorious *Moji-e*: Japanese Graffiti in the Edo-Period

Marianne SIMON-OIKAWA

1. Introduction

Nobody would encourage their children to use the walls of the neighbor's house as a scrapbook. Yet, graffiti are more than a form of antisocial behavior. Rather, they are a form of popular culture and of expressive art, and are therefore of equal concern to sociology, anthropology, history, and art history. Graffiti are not an invention of modern Western subculture. Many have been found in ancient civilizations, and those discovered in Pompeii, for example, are well-known today. However, not all graffiti were fortunate enough to be preserved by the magma of volcanic eruption. As they were often drawn on surfaces not primarily intended to be used for such means, or even on places where private inscription was forbidden, they gradually disappeared, leaving only few traces: scraps were thrown away, reused, or burnt; walls were repainted or they collapsed in fires and earthquakes. However, textual and visual documents such as book illustrations or *ukiyo-e* prints show that graffiti existed also in pre-modern Japan. Some are essentially verbal (a word written on a wall), others purely pictorial (a human face drawn in the margin of a textbook), and yet others combine both text and image. In the famous series by Kuniyoshi entitled *Nitakaragurakabe no mudagaki* (*Scribblings on a Storehouse Wall*, circa 1848), we can find examples of each of these three categories: faces of actors, words and expressions celebrating the success of a play, an umbrella bearing the names of two lovers supposed to take shelter under it, and so on. Faces of actors and umbrellas of love are two basics of Japanese graffiti and would deserve a thorough study for themselves.

This paper will focus on a different group of graffiti in which the relation between text and image is particularly intricate. These graffiti are called *moji-e*. The word *moji-e*, which was already in use during the Edo Period (1603-1868), literally means 'image (*e*) made from written characters (*moji*)' (Chu 2004, Inagaki 2006, Simon-Oikawa 1999, 2000, 2001, 2006, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, HHB 1989, SSB 1996). It is a technique that amounts to creating the shape of a person (most frequently), a small animal, or an object by means of rapidly combining a few *kanji* or *kana*. *Moji-e* may be found in many kinds of images belonging to different genres, which makes them an extremely ver-

satile object of study.

Not all graffiti are *moji-e*. Purely textual or pictorial ones obviously do not belong to this category. Reversely, not all *moji-e* are graffiti: some *moji-e* assume a religious, moral, or even esthetical dimension which graffiti do not have. Still, a number of *moji-e* have been mentioned in Japanese sources as *mudagaki*, *itazuragaki*, or *rakugaki*, which are words that we usually translate as 'graffiti', and which share common characteristics with caricature. In this paper, I will concentrate on three *moji-e*: *noshikoshi-yama*, *yamamizu tengu*, and *hemamusho nyūdō*.

2. *Noshikoshi-yama*

Noshikoshi-yama (*Mount Noshikoshi*) is certainly the most notorious of all *moji-e* and of Japanese graffiti in general. It represents a vigorous phallus drawn with the *hiragana* '*no-shi-ko-shi-yama*'. Sex, pornography, and scatology are common themes in graffiti, and it is no surprise to find them in Japan as well. What is more specific here is, of course, that the male organ is both drawn and written. The word '*noshikoshi-yama*' itself is a pun referring to other phallic symbols: Mount Noshikoshi is the dwelling of the *tengu*, which are imaginary creatures famous for their ability to fly as well as for their long nose. Cheap and dirty as it is, *noshikoshi-yama* is not a work of art and never pretended to be such. Nevertheless, it appears in pictures made by famous artists like Hokusai, who drew a beautiful version of it in an illustration for a *kibyōshi* entitled *Kyōkun zō nagamochi* (*The Long Lasting Lesson*, text by Itō Nanboku, 1784). Let us take a look at the wall behind the group of characters walking on the street (Fig. 1). It is covered in graffiti. One can see the profile

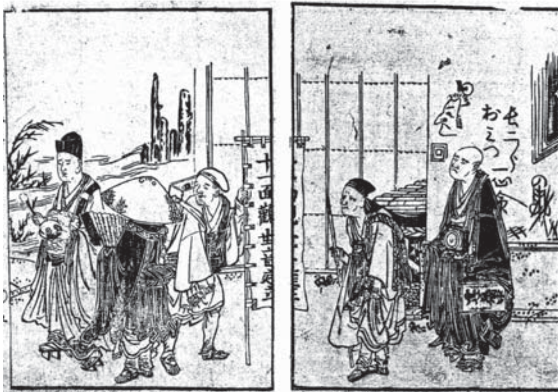

Fig. 1: Itō Nanboku (text), Katsushika Hokusai (illustrations): *Kyōkun zō nagamochi, The long lasting lesson,* 1784. In Goncourt 1988: 27.

of the actor Ichikawa Danjurō, the names of two lovers ("Chōjirō Oetsu isshin inochi", "Chōjirō and Oetsu forever"), and a small *noshikoshi-yama* drawn on the lower part of the wall. The character used for *chō* in the name Chōjirō is a *moji-e*: the shape of the *kanji chō*, which means 'longevity', has been simplified so as to suggest the image of a crane, which itself is a symbol of longevity, since cranes are said to live a thousand years. This *moji-e* is called '*chōnotsuru*' or '*chōtsuru*' ('the crane *chō*') and is also mentioned, for example, by Santō Kyōden in the introductory section ('*Kohō*', 'Old Method') of his *Kimyō zui* (*Collection of Enigmatic Images*), published in 1803. We can assume that Hokusai neither intended to offer a general view of current graffiti, nor a theory of the written sign. By means of selecting common motifs that anyone could see in the streets, he must have simply wanted to convey to the reader the impression of a real wall in a real town. However, they give us precious information about the visual subculture of the time. It is interesting, too, that the artist, who was to play an important role in the history of *moji-e* (his series of six poets drawn in the 1810s is among the most beautiful *moji-e* ever), drew *moji-e* graffiti from the very beginning of his career. This illustration of 1784 must be seen if not as the starting point, at least as early proof of a long lasting interest.

The popularity of *noshikoshi-yama* is confirmed in Santō Kyōden's *Shinzō zui* (*New Collection of Images*) published five years later in 1789 (Fig. 2).

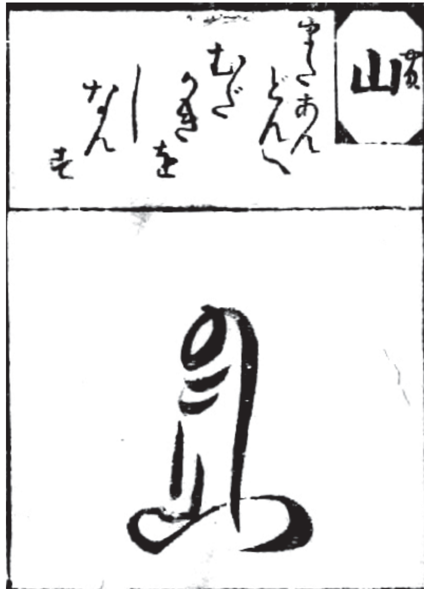

Fig. 2: Santō Kyōden (text and illustrations): *Shinzō zui*, *New collection of images*, 1789. Tokyo Metropolitan Library.

Among other small vignettes, Kyōden drew a *noshikoshi-yama* with the following text: “Here‘s another one who drew a graffito on the lantern” (“*mudagaki o shinansu*”). This remark must have made sense to the reader at the time: clients of the Yoshiwara, who had not been accepted by the prostitute they had asked for, would take revenge by drawing this little motif on the paper lanterns of the building in which she worked. Nevertheless, *noshikoshi-yama* was not a graffito limited to adults. The one made by Hokusai could have been drawn by a very young boy, and other textual documents suggest that it was well-known among young people. For example, in his novel *Ukiyodoko* (*The Hairdresser of the Floating World*, 1813-1814), Shikitei Sanba connects it with a boy of twelve or thirteen years of age. The scene is rather ordinary: a few clients are chatting together while waiting for the hairdresser to tend to them, when a young clerk enters the shop. Noticing how impatient he is, the hairdresser tells him in jest that there are between 150 and 160 clients waiting. The clerk is surprised and asks the hairdresser a second time about the number of clients. The text specifies: “moistening his finger with saliva, he writes *noshikoshi-yama* (*noshikoshi-yama o kaite iru*) on a mouse-grey hairdressing box.” The hairdresser gets angry, and says: “Won’t you stop? That clerk has nothing in mind but doing mischief! (*itazura*)” The clerk answers: “Don’t scold me if they are good, but only if they are bad.” (Shikitei 1974: 111) The

Fig. 3: Jippensha Ikku (text and illustrations): *Shotōzan tenarai jō*, *A beginner’s notebook to the study of writing,* 1796. In: Koike and others 1983: 128-129.

hairdresser does not respond, which suggests that he appreciates the joke.

The little graffiti artist who appears in Jippensha Ikku's *Shotōzan tenarai jō* (*A Beginner's Notebook for the Study of Writing*, 1796) seems even younger. The main protagonist of the novel dislikes school (Jippensha 1983). His parents send him to a temple school (*terakoya*), but he spends his time playing, until he dreams of Tenjin and sees the progress of his classmates who patiently climb the Mountain of Study. He then decides to study seriously. One of the first illustrations of the text shows him just after his dream (Fig. 3). He is represented with his new teacher Nagamatsu, who is, in fact, Tenjin himself. He has not changed his attitude yet and is playing with a dog. The graffiti on the wall behind him symbolize his bad behavior at the beginning of the story. The text says: "The newly repainted white wall is full with graffiti of all kinds" ("*Kabe wa nokorazu nuritate no shirakabe ni iroiro no rakugaki ari*"). On the wall, we can see, along with a human face, the first strokes of a *noshikoshi-yama*. The reason why the boy gave up before the end is uncertain: did he simply lack the time? Did he think that the first strokes were unbalanced from the very beginning and could not be corrected? It is interesting to compare this illustration with another one at the end of the novel. The boy is now writing carefully on a large sheet of paper before him: "To learn one character everyday amounts to three hundred and sixty a year." The sliding doors behind him are decorated with paintings. The bad boy has become a good pupil, and the graffiti subculture has disappeared, being replaced by pictures of the literati taste.

3. *Yamamizu tengu*

Noshikoshi-yama, though a popular graffito, is a minor motif in the corpus of *moji-e*. As we have already mentioned, *moji-e* mainly depict human figures, and in that sense *yamamizu tengu* must be considered as much more representative than *noshikoshi-yama*, though its relations with the latter are clear. The *moji-e* called *yamamizu tengu* features the head of a tengu in profile made with the significantly altered characters '*yama*' (mountain) and '*mizu*' (water). It is usually reversible: even upside down, it still shows the profile of a *tengu*. The relationship between this drawing and caricature is obvious: the face of the tengu is simplified considerably, and the portrait is reduced to its most basic components (eye, nose, mouth).

Santō Kyōden seems to have had a long and special fondness for this character. He mentions it in *Tanagui awase* (*Collection of Hand Towels*) as early as 1781 (Fig. 4). Hand towels were a fashionable artifact at the time, and Kyōden would not let such a trend spread without contributing to it. Among his origi-

nal suggestions, we can see a towel decorated with graffiti that are supposed to be drawn on the wall of a house or a warehouse (we can see the hooks used to maintain the ladder enabling the workers to climb on the roof, carry heavy loads, or undertake maintenance work). We can read names like Oshun (a woman‘s name), Denbei (a man‘s name), and Tanikaze (the name of a famous sumo wrestler), the word *iro* (is in love with), and a *yamamizu tengu*. The link between *yamamizu tengu* and wall graffiti is clearly emphasized, although the medium on which this scene is reproduced here is a hand towel. Kyōden uses it again in his *Kaidan momonjii* (*Encyclopedia of Ghosts of all Kinds*, 1803), a book in which the illustrations of Kyōden‘s master Kitao Shigemasa are based on various fixed expressions, such as ‘The walls have ears’ (*kabe ni mimi ari*) transformed into images of ghosts. *Yamamizu tengu* is one of them, and Kitao Shigemasa gives it the shape of a graffito rapidly drawn on a wall. According

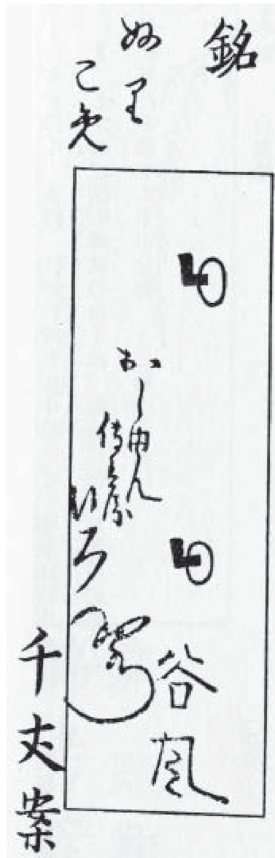

Fig. 4: Santō Kyōden (text and illustrations): *Tanagui awase*, *Collection of hand-towels*, 1781. In: Tani and Hanasaki (eds.) 1986: 118.

to Kyōden, similar to the crane in the form of *chō* (*chōtsuru*), which is often found on white walls, this tengu has appeared on the wall of a warehouse.

Hokusai was attracted to this character and drew it in his *Ono ga bakamura muda ji e zukushi* (1810-1812), as did Hiroshige in the beginning of *Kyōji zukue* (*Haiku to be Read and Seen in Mad Characters*, 1854-1857), a collection of haiku by Mantei Oga. More interesting for us are lesser-known examples, because they suggest how frequent *yamamizu tengu* was in the culture of the time. This *moji-e* is one of the favorite stories concerned with *tengu*. In *Yamamizu tengu toki ni ōyama* (1813), a novel written by Shinrotei and illustrated by Utagawa Kunimaru, we read the story of a young boy, Chikaranosuke, who is particularly strong and defeats all those who compete with him. His extraordinary strength derives from a *tengu* who took him away from his family when he was a child and nurtured him in the Mountain of Ōyama. Chikaranosuke has now grown up and decides to revenge himself. With the help of Kannon and others, the *tengu* is defeated and drowns in the river. In most illustrations, the *tengu* is represented in a traditional manner. Yet, in the beginning of the book, Kunimaru depicts the tengu in a frame which corresponds to the form of a *yamamizu tengu*. In the final scene, the fight of Chikaranosuke and the *tengu*, the latter is represented by a mask in *moji-e*, floating on the river (Fig. 5).

Evidence of the popularity of *yamamizu tengu* can be seen in its presence within unexpected contexts that are not directly related to *tengu* or ghosts. For example, many artists used it simply to produce the same 'effect of reality' that I have already mentioned concerning Hokusai's illustration. This is the case in a print by Shunkōsai Hokuei, an artist from Osaka. He made the print

Fig. 5: Shinrotei (text), Utagawa Kunimaru (illustrations): *Yamamizu tengu toki ni ōyama*, 1813. National Diet Library.

in 1833 after a representation of the play *Osome Hisamatsu ukina no yomiuri* commonly called *Osome no nanayaku* (*The Seven Roles of Osome*), which was performed at the Minami Theater in Kyoto during the eleventh month of 1833 (Fig. 6). The theme is Osome and Hisamatsu, two lovers about to commit suicide. Here, Osome is carrying a lantern; she fears she might have been followed and walks near the granary where Hisamatsu is hiding. Several graffiti have been drawn on the granary: an umbrella under which the two lovers' names have been written, an inscription celebrating the play's success (*ōatari*), another inscription mentioning the name of the actor, Iwai Shijaku I, and a *yamamizu tengu*. This last drawing, the only one without any relation either to the scene or to the main actor, seems to convey an impression of realism by suggesting the wall is a real wall and not just another theatrical setting. Yet, the presence of *yamamizu tengu* here is not justified by the narrative, and other artists who used graffiti in the same scene did not necessarily choose this particular one.

Stories of decay are a good place to look for both graffiti and *moji-e*, as we can see in an illustration by Utagawa Toyohiro taken from a novel by Kyokutei Bakin, *Shunden jitsujitsuki* (*The Most Veritable Story of Oshun and her Fiance Denbei*, 1808). The plot is full of twists and tells us about the ordeals of Oshun, a young and virtuous girl. Rejected by the man she loves and raped

Fig. 6: Shunkōsai Hokuei: part of a triptych, 1833.
The Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University.

by a treacherous friend, she finds comfort in Sanae, a brave samurai who protects her. In chapter four, Oshun returns to the place where she had spent her childhood, only to find the ruins of the house she had lived in (Fig. 7). This is a scene of pathos, and the young girl starts to cry. Toyohiro has multiplied the signs of the house‘s decay on its walls. There are huge gaps between the planks, a spider web hangs from the ceiling, a votive paper set against evil spirits is half torn, and the walls are covered with several graffiti whose shape and location on the wall suggest that they have been drawn by children. These graffiti consist of two hands, a human face, and a *yamamizu tengu*. The little drawing on the left is not a *moji-e*, but it is very close to a well known *moji-e* that reads *henohenomoheji*. The exact origin of this *moji-e* is not clear, though Hiroshige, for instance, drew one in *Kyoji zukue* (1854-57), which shows that it was already well-known during the Edo Period.

Yamamizu tengu was not only seen on the walls of houses. It was also encountered (and can still be seen today) in less obvious locations such as the pillars or ceilings of temples (Hayashi 1993: 648-650). Here, the history of *moji-e* meets that of the *senjafuda*, paper votive bands which were glued on the shrines by pilgrims so as to perpetuate the memory of their visits. One need not be surprised by this relation between votive scriptures and graffiti: they are both connected to popular culture and belong to graphic forms destined to in-

Fig. 7: Shikitei Sanba (text), Utagawa Toyohiro (illustrations): *Shunden jitsujitsuki, The most veritable story of Oshun and her fiancé Denbei*, 1808. In: Suzuki and Tokuda (eds.) 1997: 211.

vade public places. During the Edo Period, it was common practice to leave a sheet of paper mentioning one‘s name in temples. The most organized among the pilgrims even printed the paper bands entirely. In 1756, a man named Hagino Nobutoshi, whose little brother suffered from chicken pox, visited several temples to help with his recovery. Because he was getting tired of drawing his name with a brush, he printed a great number of *senjafuda* and pasted them in all the temples he visited, for the sake of self-promotion. On some of these *senjafuda*, not only his name but also his face is drawn in *moji-e* (Fig. 8). It seems to have been strongly inspired by the *tengu* motif, whose name he had adopted, Kyūkoku Tengu Kōhei. To this day, some *senjafuda* bear the *moji-e* he elaborated, beside a pilgrim‘s name. Some *senjafuda* duplicate the *moji-e* without altering it, others change the characters composing the face.

Fig. 8: Hayashi 1993: 649.

4. *Hemamusho nyūdō*

Yamamizu tengu and *henohenomoheji* are only facial *moji-e*, but most *moji-e* depict the full human figure, as is the case with *hemamusho nyūdō*. This *moji-e* represents a little monk turned to the left made entirely of the characters *he, ma, mu, shi, yo, nyū*, and *do*. Interpreting this name is not easy and people seem to have been confused even in the Edo Period. *Hema* could be an old form of the word meaning ‘snake’, *hebi*. *Mushi* means ‘insect’, *yo* means ‘evening’, and *nyūdō* means ‘monk’ or ‘ghost with a monk‘s head’. In the last case, the drawing would represent a strange creature.

This *moji-e* is often classified as a graffito. The oldest piece of evidence

we have of it comes from Kurokawa Michisuke, a doctor and connoisseur. In the end of his *Enpekiken-ki* (*Notes from Enpekiken*, 1675 for the preface, 1756 for the revised edition), he writes: "In the temple of Shōren'in, there is a *hemamusho nyūdō* which is more than four hundred years old. Unfortunately, its author is unknown." (Kurokawa 1977: 176) The *Kiyū shōran* (*A Panorama of Entertaining Things*, 1830) devotes the longest note to this *moji-e* and also characterizes *hemamushi* as scribbling (*itazura*): "About the graffito *hemamushi nyūdō*, the *Notes from Enpekiken* mention that in the Shōren'in there is one such graffito which is more than four hundred years old, and that unfortunately its author is unknown" (Kitamura 1979: 31). Several visual sources, once again borrowed from the works of Santō Kyōden, confirm the links between *hemamusho nyūdō* and graffiti. Santō Kyōden refers to it in his *Kaidan momonjii*, which we have already mentioned. *Hemamushi nyūdō* is featured in the setting of a school in a temple (Fig. 9). Santō Kyōden explains that *hemamushi nyūdō* disrupts the children's work by appearing in the classrooms. Indeed, the children scribble its portrait as graffiti in their textbooks, utterly bored and yawning while the professor is teaching a lesson ("*tenarai zōshi no uchi ni sugata o arawashi, tenarai no jama o shite* […], *mudagaki sasete*..."). According to Kyōden, *hemamusho nyūdō* is responsible for illiteracy, which makes it an *osoroshiki bakemono* (terrifying ghost).

Fig. 9: Santō Kyōden (text), Kitao Shigemasa (illustrations): *Kaidan momonjii, A lexicon of ghosts of all kinds*, 1803. National Diet Library.

However, *hemamusho nyūdō* has a much more complex status than *noshikoshi-yama* or *yamamizu tengu*. Its history is linked to that of calligraphy, which explains that it sometimes appears in more refined contexts than the other two. Let us return to Kurokawa Michisuke and the *Kiyū shōran*. The name of the temple mentioned must be stressed, as the Shōren'in is well-known in the history of calligraphy for having fostered famous calligraphers like Konoe Nobutada or Shōkadō Shōjō. It even gave its name to a particular style called Shōren-ryū. Taking this into consideration, there is something striking in the fact that this *moji-e* would be located in such an intellectual place. *Hemamusho nyūdō* never forgot its high origins. In fact, one of the most ancient visual examples of *hemamusho nyūdō*, the sheet of an album by Nishikawa Sukenobu entitled *Fude no yama* (*The Mountain of the Brush*), links it to a drawing of rare elegance (Fig. 10). It shows a man sitting with two courtesans. He is tracing small silhouettes on a piece of paper that one of the courtesans is holding for him. He has already drawn a *hemamusho nyūdō* and is about to finish drawing a courtesan in *moji-e*, whose clothing is entirely made of polite expressions used in the epistolary style. In their letters, women used abbreviated forms for common expressions like *medetaku* (happily), *kaesu gaesu* (constantly), *zonji mairase sōrō* (I know) or *kashiku* (concluding phrase), and *moji-e* depicting courtesans drawn with these phrases clearly

Fig. 10: Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Fude no yama*, author's collection.

derive from the art of calligraphy. In this case, the two *moji-e* may seem very different from one another: one is made of compact, angular *katakana*, while the other is drawn with many flowing characters. Yet, their presence side by side on the same sheet of paper suggests that these two motifs were not felt as contradictory by the artist and his public.

An illustration made by Utagawa Kuninao for a book by Kyōden, *Hemamushi nyūdō mukashi banashi* (*The Legend of Hemamushi Nyūdō*, 1813), shows that *hemamusho nyūdō* may not be the enemy of study after all. In the last image of the book, a mother is holding a piece of paper vertically on which a little child has just drawn the face of *hemamusho*. The mother would certainly not have appreciated to see her son write *noshikoshi-yama* or *yamamizu tengu* on the wall of a warehouse, but she seems rather pleased that he should write '*hemamusho nyūdō*' on a sheet of paper as an exercise in calligraphy. The fact that *hemamusho nyūdō* might have been a pleasant way of learning how to write is also suggested in a little book of the Meiji era entitled *Kyōiku moji-e*. *Shōnen e-sagashi* (*Educative Moji-e, Images to Decipher for Young People*, 1893) by Utagawa Kunitoshi. The purpose of this small book is to teach children writing and vocabulary at home. In the upper part of each page, we find *kana* which are used to trace the outline of small human figures or animals (*moji-e*) in the *iroha* order. In the lower part, one can find vignettes containing hidden images which the children must try to identify (*e-sagashi*). The aim of the publication is clear: to teach as well as entertain, or rather to teach through entertainment. The first page of this book appears as both an introduction and an abbreviated history of the *moji-e henohenomoheji*, *hemamusho nyūdō*, and the crane. Hence, even Kyōden, who claims that *hemamusho nyūdō* disrupts the children's work, might, in fact, be enticing them to study.

5. Conclusion

Moji-e graffiti do not amount to a large number of motifs when compared with the corpus of *moji-e* or with that of graffiti as a whole. They are limited to a few prominent figures, *noshikoshi-yama*, *yamamizu tengu*, *hemamusho nyūdō*, *henohenomoheji*, and *chōnotsuru*, which appear repeatedly on walls or scraps. They lack the sophistication of more beautiful *moji-e* or graffiti which were elaborated with greater esthetical sense. Yet, their simplicity was what saved them from complete oblivion. Because anybody from children to adults were able to draw them in a few seconds, on any surface and with any tool, they continued to be drawn by generations of bad boys until the Meiji Era, and some still appear in children books today.

Nobody noticed them at the time. After all, who pays attention to scribblings on a wall? For a patient eye, these neglected products of popular culture are, on the contrary, fascinating objects of study. They tell us a lot about both visual subculture and the relationship between text and image in pre-modern Japan. From a semiotic point of view, their association of writing and drawing is unparalleled. It relates to the Japanese system of writing itself, in which the visual elements are essential. When writing words to make pictures, maybe the Japanese graffiti artists of the Edo Period were simply returning to the visual origin of writing.

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Part Two:

CARICATURES AT THE END OF THE EDO-PERIOD

How Were the Riddle-Like Caricatures Perceived after the Tenpō Reforms? A Look at Some Examples of Interpretation

YUASA Yoshiko

1. Introduction

In the last years of the Tenpō Era, Kuniyoshi's famous print, *Minamoto Raikō-kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu* (*Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon,* Pl. 4) was published. This print caused a great sensation among common people, who thought it was a caricature of the Tenpō Reforms, in which the demons represented the people who were heavily suppressed by the Reforms. The people's demand of the print was strong as they tried to read the riddles, and some of their answers to those riddles can be found in essays and diaries.

In those days, due to the Reforms, the publication of prints depicting beautiful courtesans and *kabuki* actors was prohibited. Hence, the publishers and artists were forced to produce new types of prints, one of them being the riddle-like caricature. Naturally, the people loved this type of print and enjoyed deciphering the riddles. After the publication of Kuniyoshi's *Earth Spider* print, many riddle-like caricatures were published. For some of them there are records of the people's interpretations, as is the case with Kuniyoshi's *Earth Spider*.

When considering these interpretations, in some cases it is apparent that different readings existed of the same print. For example, there are riddle-like prints which people thought implicated the newest political issues, even though the prints were published before said political issues had occurred. These interpretations appear to be fickle, in some cases even wrong, which suggests that the people merely read what they wanted to read. However, one must admit that it is very difficult to find the artists' real intentions by analyzing riddle-like caricatures. By means of illustrating certain wrong interpretations, I would like to discuss what we are able to understand about riddle-like caricatures.

As mentioned before Kuniyoshi's *Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon* caused a great sensation. There are papers written by Minami Kazuo (1998: 41-60) about this print

published early in Tenpō 14 (1843), claiming that it was perceived as a riddle-like caricature, and that common people tried to read the riddles. According to Minami, Iseki Takako wrote in her *Diary of Iseki Takako* that even Kuniyoshi himself said they were riddles and explained who is who. Hence, following Kuniyoshi's explanation, people began to buy this print and read the riddles by themselves.

Comparing the interpretations of the print found in many essays and diaries, it was generally assumed that Minamoto Raikō was the twelfth Shogun Tokugawa Ieyoshi. In the roles of Raikō's four vassals, it was further assumed that Urabe Suetake was Mizuno Tadakuni, the key promoter of the Tenpō Reforms, Watanabe no Tsuna was Sanada Shinano no Kami, Sakata Kintoki was Hotta Sagami no Kami, and that Usui Sadamitsu was Doi Ōi no Kami or Sakakibara Kazue no Kami. Each demon was thought to represent a job which was heavily suppressed by the Tenpō Reforms. However, even the people in those days were not able to understand the riddle-like caricatures completely. Also, it was impossible for them to get absolute answers, for which there are two reasons. One reason points to Kuniyoshi's use of ambivalence as a caricaturist to escape penalty, the other reason being that people thought too much of the rumor that the print was supposed to be a riddle-like caricature of the Tenpō Reforms. It was known even in those days, that some intellectuals thought common people read more into it than was Kuniyoshi's intention.

Minamoto Raikō and his vassals were a common theme of woodblock prints, which is why there are many prints depicting them with demons. Yet, it was only Kuniyoshi's *Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon* that was perceived as a riddle-like caricature. The time of publication, which was just after the suppression under the Reforms, the rumor of Kuniyoshi himself explaining that the print was a caricature as well as the expectation caused by Kuniyoshi's explanation enforced common people to read too much into the matter. It is, of course, possible that Kuniyoshi really wanted each demon to represent a heavily suppressed job. At this time, however, we must conclude that his real intention cannot be discovered.

Though it is impossible to understand Kuniyoshi's real intention and to find absolute answers, it is certain that *Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon* caused a great sensation. After the publication of this print, riddle-like caricatures were published one after the other. Additionally, this print was heard of even in the Kyoto-Osaka area and Kuniyoshi became known throughout Japan as an artist who made riddle-like caricatures.

2. Cases of Misinterpretation

2.1. A Misinterpretation in an Essay Written by a Doctor of the Kyoto-Osaka Area

Utagawa Kuniyoshi made two prints of toys to be pasted on a casual fan. One of them is a bamboo toy, on which a figure in the kabuki role of Sukeroku is seated and his umbrella jumping at the bamboo's bend (Pl. 5a). The other one is a toy print illustrating two dolls carrying a basket palanquin (Pl. 5b). Both of these prints which are illustrated in the essay *Ukiyo no Arisama* (N. N. 1970) are marked with censorship stamps. According to Iwakiri Yuriko's paper, a censorship stamp indicates that the artist finished the design before the fifth month of Tenpō 15 (1844).

In the essay *Ukiyo no Arisama* written by a doctor of the Kyoto-Osaka area, these prints were thought to be riddle-like caricatures aimed against the reinstatement of Mizuno Tadakuni as promoter of the Reforms in the sixth month of Tenpō 15. These prints bear censorship stamps of the fifth month of the year Tenpō 15, yet Mizuno's reinstatement was not until the following month. Therefore, it is impossible that Kuniyoshi depicted these toys as caricatures.

Nevertheless, the writer of this essay thought these prints were riddle-like caricatures. Concerning the bamboo toy, for instance, he writes the following about the missing umbrella handle: Functionally, the umbrella handle pulls all parts of the umbrella together. As it is a very important part, the umbrella handle represents a Tokugawa Shogun. An umbrella without a handle indicates that the shogun can easily be ignored.

Looking at the toy depicting the basket palanquin, we can see a Japanese lantern with the logotype of a shop's name. However, the essayist thought this logotype, consisting of the Japanese words *uma* (horse) and *iwa* (rock), was a kind of pun. The Japanese words *umaiwa* mean 'Lucky!' in English. Hence, he drew various conclusions: that Mizuno considered himself lucky because of his reinstatement, or that the common people were lucky because Mizuno, the most hated person, was tied by the rope, and so on.

Of course, there are no relations between these prints and the reinstatement of Mizuno Tadakuni, as it was impossible for Kuniyoshi to depict this political event one month before it actually took place. The essayist's reading must be seen as a misinterpretation. Bamboo toys and basket palanquin toys were common in the Edo area. One explanation for the essayist's misinterpretation could be the fact that he lived in the Kyoto-Osaka area and did not know these toys in the Edo area. Another explanation could be that the artist

of these prints was Kuniyoshi, who had made *Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon* in the previous year. The essayist even mentioned that the artist of these prints was Kuniyoshi and that they might contain some riddles. Perhaps this explains how he was led to make the above mentioned misinterpretations.

Utagawa Yoshitora's print titled *Women Divers Meet Heike Clan under the Western Sea*, (Fig. 1), bears the same censorship stamp as the toy prints. Hence, the design of this print was also finished before the fifth month of Tenpō 15. Although the print appears to merely depict old samurai, the essayist thought it also hinted at Mizuno's reinstatement.

Both toy prints and the samurai print bear the same censorship stamps of the fifth month of Tenpō 15, meaning that these prints could have been on the market as soon as in the sixth month, and that the essayist might have purchased them in the sixth or seventh month. For him, the news of Mizuno's reinstatement and the purchase of these prints may have occurred at almost the same time. This shows that due to the artists' names, the lack of knowledge of the themes and the time of purchasing and contemplating the prints, it was possible to misinterpret the prints, even for people in those days.

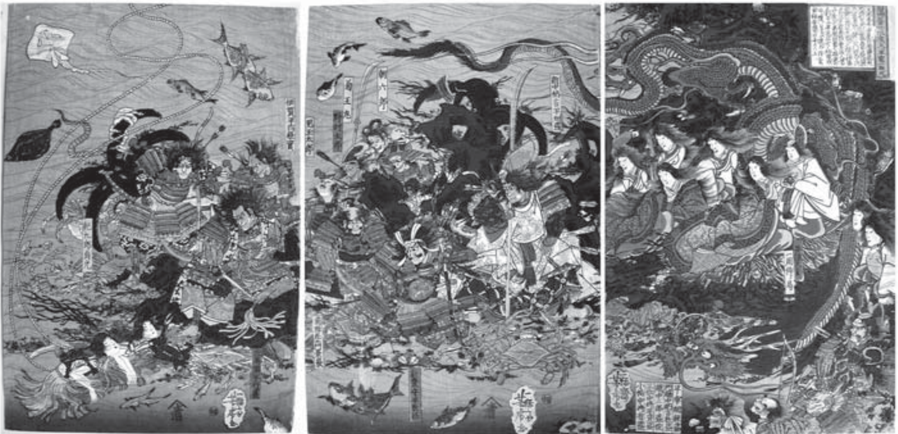

Fig. 1: Utagawa Yoshitora: *Saikai no ama mizuzoko ni irite Heike no ichizoku ni mimau*, *Women Divers Meet Heike Clan under the Western Sea*, *Ōban*-triptych print, Yuasa Yoshiko Collection.

2.2. Overinterpretations of Kuniyoshi's *Ukiyo Matabei Meiga no Kitoku (Strange Interpretations of Ukiyo Matabei's Masterpieces of Ōtsu-e)*

The print *Ukiyo Matabei Meiga no Kitoku* (*Strange Interpretations of Ukiyo Matabei's Masterpieces of Ōtsu-e*) (Pl. 7) is a depiction of the local folk paintings called *Ōtsu-e*, which were sold in the Ōtsu district near Kyoto. Typical subjects of *Ōtsu-e* are a demon praying to Buddha, a girl decorated with wisteria, and a young hawk trainer, among other things. Here, various *Ōtsu-e* subjects are depicted through kabuki actors' faces, even Matabei, the first creator of *ukiyo-e*. Essays and diaries of the time mention that there were rumors about this print being in fact, a riddle-like caricature.

According to official documents of the Tokugawa Shogunate, the design of this print was censored on the sixth day of the sixth month, Kaei 6 (1853), and it was on the market by the middle of the sixth month. Just before common people were able to purchase this print, an important incident occurred. On the third day of the sixth month, Kaei 6, the ships of the American ambassadors appeared in the port of Uraga. In the Edo Era, Japan was in national isolation, and the negotiation with foreign countries seemed unimaginable to Japanese people.

Consequently, some people have linked Kuniyoshi's *Ōtsu-e* print to this incident. For example, a monkey suppressing a catfish with a gourd - a theme in Zen Buddhism - could be seen to represent America itself, whereas the god of thunder trying to catch his lost drum represents cannon training against America. Since the appearance of the American ambassadors occurred on the third day of the sixth monht, and the censorship record of Kuniyoshi's presentation was dated sixth day of the sixth month, it could have been possible for Kuniyoshi to compare *Ōtsu-e* themes with this incident. However, the comparison with cannon training against America, in other words the arms build-up as the weapon, is clearly a misinterpretation. In this case, the print was on the market in the middle of the sixth month, which was just the time of official alerting. Therefore, people were able to interpret the print as a riddle of the American ambassadors' appearance and political drift.

There is yet another explanation for the emergence of misinterpretations concerning this print. In it, the Japanese *kana* syllables *ka* and *n* can be seen on the sleeves of a kimono worn by a young hawk trainer. In those days, *Ōtsu-e* and *Ōtsu-e* songs were very popular with the people in the Edo area, and there were many other woodblock prints depicting *Ōtsu-e*. Compared to other *Ōtsu-e*, however, the syllables *ka* and *n* present a very peculiar aspect of Kuniyoshi's print. They even induced the thought that the young hawk

trainer represented the thirteenth Tokugawa Shogun who suffered from epilepsy (*kanshō*). Furthermore, the check pattern on the other sleeve of the hawk trainer's kimono led people to believe he was Hitotsubashi Shichirōmaro, who was to become the last Tokugawa Shogun, because the upper check is formed from seven lines, symbolizing 'seven', Shichirōmaro's *shichi* in Japanese. People thought one specific subject, a young hawk trainer, represented the thirteenth Tokugawa Shogun or Hitotsubashi Shichirōmaro. In short, the people believed what they wanted to believe. It seems as if either Kuniyoshi or the publishers deliberately added the Japanese letters and check pattern to the kimono, not for the purpose of ensuring correct readings, but for the purpose of provoking misinterpretations.

Considering this case as well as the one demonstrated in *Ukiyo no arisama*, it seems as if common people thought Kuniyoshi to be the artist who made riddle-like caricatures such as *Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon*. As a result, people began to read and interpret any peculiar aspect in his prints.

2.3. Utagawa Yoshikazu's *Comical Crazy Picture*

The print *Dōke kyōga* (*Comical Crazy Picture*, Pl. 8) shows the following seven grotesque stories drawn by Utagawa Yoshikazu: an octopus jumping out of a pan, a drinking party consisting of two turtles and Urashima Tarō, the hero of a traditional Japanese story, two tourists possibly named Yajirobē and Kitahachi, surprised by a scarecrow, a bathing woman obstructed by the god of thunder, a big mouse and two naked men, an ownerless samurai and a surprised mailman, the image of a palaquin in which a passenger and a palanquin bearer have changed their positions. The date of the censorship stamp is the fourth month of Ansei 5 (1858), so apparently the design of this print was finished before the fourth month. Minami Kazuo mentions in his book *Bakumatsu Edo no bunka*, that there is a record of the reading of this print in an essay written by a samurai who possibly lived in the residence of the Matsushiro-han in Edo. Another reading of Yoshikazu's print can be found in the archives of the aristocratic Sanjō Family in Kyoto. In both records, it is thought that this print hinted at the poisoning of the thirteenth Tokugawa Shogun.(Minami 1998: 249-257) Since the first days of the seventh month, the health of the Shogun had suddenly declined, which was known at the time, and he died on the sixth day of the seventh month. However, Yoshikazu finished his design before the fourth month. This shows that it was impossible for the artist to link the print's content to the cause of the shogun's death, which is yet another proof of the fact that people in those days read too much into

the matter.

The fact that this print was still on the market in the seventh month, that there was a great political change, and that the print itself was strange enough to appear to hint at something might explain the people's misinterpretation. It seems that the artist or the publisher of this print aimed to make people read too much into it. In fact, not only common people, but even the aforementioned samurai and the nobleman of the Sanjō Family misinterpreted the print. Though its message is not clear, it is a fact that in those days, people of every class enjoyed reading riddle-like caricatures.

Various editions exist of this print, which can be seen as a result of printing procedures. As soon as the first woodblocks were damaged by repeated printing, the publisher made second woodblocks in the same design. Though it is still unknown how many editions existed, it appears that this print was quite acceptable to the authorities. Kunyoshi's *Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon* and *Strange Interpretations of Ukiyo Matabei's Masterpieces of Ōtsu-e* also have many editions. The records showing the thoughts of the people as well as the existence of various editions illustrate that people greatly enjoyed reading the riddle-like caricatures at the time.

2.4. Concerning Utagawa Kuniyoshi's *Dōke musha zukushi* (*A Mixture of Funny Heroes)*

When looking at Utagawa Kuniyoshi's *Dōke musha zukushi* (*A Mixture of Funny Heroes*) (Fig. 2), Iwakiri Yuriko suggests that the same print series appears in *A Mixture of Funny Kyogen Plays*. Kuniyoshi's touch and signature indicate that this series was printed in the last years of Tenpō, around 1840. Although the shape of the censorship stamp on *A Mixture of Funny Heroes* is a little strange due to an engraving error, one can decipher the Japanese letters *kiwameru*, which also shows that the series was printed before the Tenpō Reforms. Furthermore, it is known that Jōshūya Kinzō, the publisher of this series, moved from Ikenohata to Motokuromon-chō before 1853. The stamps in the series mention Ikenohata as the seat of Jōshūya Kinzō, which again proves that it was printed before 1853. One of the prints of *A Mixture of Funny Heroes* belongs to the Historiographical Institute of the University of Tokyo. This print is divided into six parts, including attachments on each part.

Each attachment offers comments made by people who had read these pieces as riddle-like caricatures. According to Miyaji Masato, following the words of *tairō*, Mito, and Hitotsubashi, these comments hint at the problems of inheritance of the next Tokugawa Shogunate, which started on the 25th of

the sixth month of Ansei 5 (1858). Most likely, *A Mixture of Funny Heroes* was published in the last years of Tenpō, whereas Tenpō itself means the years 1830-1844. In this case, it is obvious that whoever considered the print to be a riddle-like caricature was unaware of the fact that it was published about twenty years earlier. Not only does this put a strain on the meaning of the print, but the fact that it is of the *A Mixture of Funny Heroes* type further suggests that it can be seen as a timeless riddle-like caricature.

Apart from this print, there is a newer edition in the *Shimizu Isao Collection* which mentions the following six themes: Kusunoki Masatsura, Susanō no Mikoto, Raikō, Raikō and his four vassals, Hankai, Yoritomo and Kajiwara, and hide and seek in a cave (Fig. 3). All these samurai were very famous and their stories were well-known in those days. The artists depicted humorous stories, because the people appreciated the contrast these made to true stories.

Fig. 2: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: *Dōke musha zukushi, A Mixture of Funny Heroes*, *Ōban* print, Suzuki Jūzō Collection.

When comparing the editions those bearing the six theme names to those that do not mention them, they seem to differ in respect to the color woodblocks. But a closer look shows that many differences can be found even in the main woodblock. This means that the two editions were made by using rather different woodblocks and that there are questions concerning both editions.

In the edition with the theme names, Kusunoki Masatsura represents Kusunoki Masashige, though the family crest is depicted incorrectly. Concerning the theme of Raikō and his four vassals, Raikō is usually depicted sitting on the red carpet. Yet, in this edition Raikō sits on a carpet of different shades of red. When looking at the edition without the theme names, it seems that the color woodblocks do not match the main woodblock. Also, there are unnatural blanks in each theme, especially in Susanoo no Mikoto. Iwakiri Yuriko mentions that in *A Mixture of Funny Kyogen Plays*, the theme names are included

Fig. 3: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: *Dōke musha zukushi*, *A Mixture of Funny Heroes*, *Ōban* print, Shimizu Isao Collection.

in the print. Hence, one may conclude that, initially, the names of the themes had been included.

One can assume that in the last years of Tenpō, the first editions of *A Mixture of Funny Heroes* and *A Mixture of Funny Kyogen Plays* were published including the theme names. Afterwards, the names were deleted from the main woodblock of *A Mixture of Funny Heroes* before they were published again. Later, a new edition of *A Mixture of Funny Heroes* was published in the old style, including the theme names.

It is not clear why there are three styles, though a possible reason for the deletion of the theme names lies in the relation to Kuniyoshi's *Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon*. Since Kuniyoshi was the artist of both of these prints, and *A Mixture of Funny Heroes* had a funny and humorous pattern, the publisher may have thought that if the theme names were deleted, people would think that this print was also a riddle-like caricature. This would further suggest that funny and humorous patterns were very popular and that they tempted the reader to contemplate the riddle, regardless of the artist's intention. The version of *A Mixture of Funny Heroes* belonging to the Historiographical Institute of the University of Tokyo must be considered as an example of later years.

There still remain some unsolved issues and questions concerning *A Mixture of Funny Heroes*. Yet, in the end one can say that in those days, even in the case of simple funny and humorous patterns, sometimes the woodblocks were adapted so that the final print was perceived to be a riddle-like caricature.

3. Postscript

As I have shown in this study, in the days after the Tenpō Reforms, people thought that some of the riddle-like prints hinted at the newest political issues, even though the prints were published prior to the occurrence of said issues. This indicates that people in those days were disposed to misinterpret prints, going beyond the artists' intentions. Some explanations for this trend of misinterpretation can be found when considering the time of sale, the name of the artists, certain strange aspects in the print, the theme of the print, or the grotesque stories, to name a few.

Many records of people reading the riddle-like caricatures can be found in diaries and essays, perhaps including misinterpretations. However, it is necessary to point out that there are rare cases of readings which are real misinterpretations, as was demonstrated by the examples presented in this study. Taking these misinterpretations into account, it becomes clear that it is very difficult to know the artists' real intentions. Although it is a very significant

study to try and understand the artists' intentions, it is very difficult to find absolute answers. In the end, no one knows the artists' real intentions, unless they recorded them.

What remains to be considered when dealing with riddle-like caricatures and the records that people read in those days? To find more records of their readings of riddle-like caricatures, to discover what led people to think the way they did, and to compare their thoughts seem to be aspects which offer many possibilities for future studies.

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Censorship and *Nishiki-e* Print Publication in the Tenpō Reform Era - Instances from the Works of Utagawa Kuniyoshi

IWAKIRI Yuriko

1. Censorship Seals of 1842

In Edo, Japan, capital of the shogunal government, the sixth month of the year Tenpō 13 by Japanese reckoning (1842) witnessed the enactment of new and severe censorship regulations established by the Tokugawa Administration. Among other strictures, these draconian governmental rules were aimed at prohibiting publishers from issuing prints that depicted actors, courtesans, and geisha. The promulgation of the new laws also radically altered the methods and the concrete system for controlling the publication of *nishiki-e*, multicolor woodblock prints. The publishers' guild was abolished, and subsequent censorship inspection was to be conducted by minor shogunate officials (known as *kakari-nanushi*), who examined print designs and affixed seals with their names to approved designs. Thus, the seal of one or the other of these inspectors appears on the prints published from Tenpō 14 (1843) to Kōka 3 (1846). Prior to that time, however, there were certain significant exceptions. For example, from the fourth to the twelfth month of Tenpō 13 (1842), censorship seals do not appear on any prints.

In this brief study, I would like to discuss some instances of prints by Utagawa Kuniyoshi which concretely demonstrate the actual conditions of *nishiki-e* publication during this period.

My first example appears in Pl. 1: Kuniyoshi's *Hida no takumi*[1] *hashira-date no zu* (*View of the Erecting of Pillars by the Craftsmen of Hida*). In fact, this *ōban* triptych published by Igaya Kan'emon is an actor print, disguised behind a title and a deliberately vague description that camouflage its real import. In the somewhat later genre of caricature prints, often termed *fūshi-ga* in Japanese, this technique of covert concealment became increasingly common.

Interestingly enough, a report on this very triptych can be found in the famous compendium known today as the *Fujiokaya Diary* (*Fujiokaya nikki*). In the section devoted to the fifth month of 1842, the author states that the pub-

1 The mountainous district of Hida in central Honshū was historically famous for its capable woodworkers, carpenters, and builders. Thus, by late Tokugawa times, the terms 'Hida craftsman', 'architect from Hida', and the like had long since become general similes for 'master builder', even if the craftsmen themselves had never set foot in Hida.

Fig. 1: Utagawa Kuniyoshi: Designs for the print set *Osana-asobi setsukagetsu*, *Child's Play: Snow, Flowers and Moon,* (Lempertz 2000: Cat. no. 154).

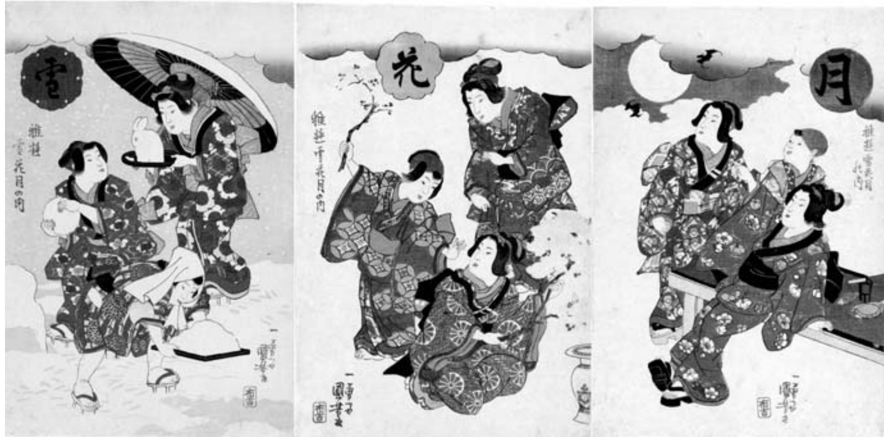

Fig. 2: Utagawa Kuniyoshi: *Osana-asobi setsukagetsu*, (1842) *Ōban* print set, publisher Nunokichi. (Private collection, Tokyo).

lishers of Kuniyoshi's *View of the Erecting of Pillars by the Craftsmen of Hida* and *Sugawara tenjin-ki ayatsuri ningyō no zu*, (*Puppet Play Concerning the Life of Sugawara Tenjin*) by Toyokuni III were punished because of the actor portraits in the prints. This, however, leaves us with a discrepancy in the time frame; the new censorship restrictions were (as mentioned above) not issued until the sixth month - well after the date of the *Fujiokaya Diary* entry. By way of trying to find a solution to this dilemma, I have previously suggested that Fujiokaya, when editing his diary, might possibly have mistaken the month of publication. (Iwakiri 2002: 6-7)

Subsequently, I had the good fortune to come across another contemporary report of the same incident. This occurs in a letter dated the 23rd day of the ninth month, Tenpō 13 (1842), written by the novelist Takizawa Bakin (1767-

1848) to his friend Tonomura Jōsai, a wealthy merchant of Matsusaka in Ise (Shibata and Kanda 2003: 50). In his letter, Bakin states that the publisher, Igaya Kan'emon, issued Kuniyoshi's triptych *View of the Erecting of Pillars by the Craftsmen of Hida* that summer with intent to publicize the festive foundation of the two theatres in Saruwaka-*chō* in Edo.

In Fujiokaya's account, he refers to the artist of the other *nishiki-e* print in question, *Puppet Play Concerning the Life of Sugawara Tenjin,* as Toyokuni. This would seem to indicate a date after Tenpō 15 (1844), the year when Kunisada succeeded to his master's name of Toyokuni. Therefore, in this instance, Bakin's letter is probably more precise than the *Fujiokaya Diary* entry and can be taken as reasonable proof that the incident, which occurred after the new regulation, was enacted in the sixth month of Tenpō 13 (1842).

Next, I would like to discuss a further example of a print from 1842 that lacks a censorship seal. After the prohibition of actor and courtesan prints went into effect, many prints depicting children (*kodomo-e*) were published. In most, if not in all of the *kodomo-e* prints from this period, the censorship seals are conspicuous by their absence. As no potentially dangerous problems with such subjects were anticipated, it seems likely they were not regarded as objects for compulsary submission to the censors. A surviving set of Kuniyoshi's preparatory sketches for one such *kodomo-e* set may yield some helpful clues in regard to this problem. The sketches are shown in Fig. 1, while three prints from the work as published appear in Fig. 2.

Examining the preliminary designs, we find one and the same semicircle seal on each of the three sheets. This is the lower half of the Chinese character (*kanji)* '*wa*', as shown in Fig. 3. Thus, the seal in question doubtlessly belonged to the censor Wada Genshichi, one of the seven print inspectors (*kakari-nanushi*) active at the time.[2] According to the official register known as *Shichū torishimari ruijū*,[3] the names of the seven censors were Takeguchi Shōemon, Fukatsu Ihei, Ōtsuka Gorobei, Watanabe Shōemon, Takano Shin'emon, and Murata Sahei, in addition, of course, to Wada Genshichi himself, whose seal is introduced here.

From this circumstance, we can deduce that the *kakari-nanushi* censors applied their seals to the preliminary designs for prints awaiting publication. Prior to the third month of Tenpō 13 (1842), the individual censorship seals were never put on early sketches, but solely on the completed design (*hanshita*): the artist's final drawing. This was then sent to the blockcutter, who thereupon glued it, complete with seal, to a woodblock and cut it out; the results,

2 Wada Genshichi is also known as the seller of the famous face powder, Bien senjo-kō. See Yuasa 2003.

3 The official documents regarding regulations in the city at that time.

Fig. 3: Flame formate of the seal of the Chinese character 'wa'.

of course, were the keyblocks for finished prints. Naturally, these keyblocks reproduced the censorship seals.

By contrast, when the censorship seals were stamped only on preliminary sketches and not on the finished drawings, the seals did not appear on the keyblocks (de facto permission already having been granted). Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that this is why the prints in this period were published without censorship seals. In concrete terms, prints lacking censorship seals can probably be dated to a period from the fourth to the twelfth month of Tenpō 13 (1842).

2. Kuniyoshi's Comic Prints of Cats

Utagawa Kuniyoshi played an important part in the evolution of the genre of humorous prints (known today in Japanese as *giga*), which flourished after the Tenpō Reform era. His *giga* prints of cats, for instance, or of other animals with recognizable facial characteristics of individual human actors, have been widely discussed. Such prints are often regarded as a camouflage tactic, employed as a means of evading the ban on actor prints or their surrogates. As a matter of fact, even before the ban Kuniyoshi had already produced several prints of this type. I would like to examine briefly the key factors behind his earlier works in this area, by discussing some examples of his cat prints predating the sixth month of Tenpō 13 (1842).

The first example presented here in Fig. 4 is a sheet from two *ōban* prints *Ryūkō neko no kyokutemari* (*Fashionable Cat Juggler with a Ball*)[4] published by Kawaguchi Uhei with a *kiwame* censorship seal. These adroit feline acrobats are parodies based on the vaudeville performances given by the stage artist Kikukawa Kunimaru at Asakusa Okuyama in Edo during the third month of Tenpō 12 (1841). Incidentally, Kuniyoshi depicted Kunimaru's performance (this time in normal human form) in a vertical *naga-ōban* print (See Suzuki

4 The other sheet of this set is titled *Ryūkō neko no kyokumari.*

Fig. 4: Utagawa Kuniyoshi: *Ryūkō neko no kyokutemari*, *Fashionable Cat Juggler with a Ball*, Ōban print, publisher: Kawaguchi Uhei, censorship seal: kiwame. (Private collection, Tokyo).

1992, Plate 372). The same publisher, Kawaguchi, also issued at least two other cat prints under the series title *Ryūkō neko no kyōgen zukushi* (*Assorted Fashionable Kabuki Dramas Played by Cats*).

Our next example comes from Kuniyoshi's fan print series *Neko no hyakumensō* (*One Hundred Cat Faces*). In the preface to his serial *gōkan* novel, *Hana momiji nishiki no date-gasa*, the author Mizugaki Egao mentions the current fame of Kunimaru's juggling feats along with the popularity of Kuniyoshi's design in feline form of the heroic guardsman Otokonosuke from the *Hyakumensō* fan print. This book, illustrated by Kuniyoshi's pupil Ichieisai Yoshitsuya, was published in 'spring' (i.e. approximately the first month, at about the New Year season) of Tenpō 13 (1842). Therefore the date of this fan print can plausibly be assigned to Tenpō 12 (1841) (Suzuki 1992: 230). In this series, Kuniyoshi represents the portraits of famous actors as cat faces reflected in mirrors. Not only does the artist capture the facial expressions of the actors, he also employs related patterns and family crests on their costumes to help viewers identify their favorites.

In Tenpō 12 (1841), as it happens, Kuniyoshi was working on the illustrations for the serial *gōkan* novel *Oborozuki neko no sōshi*, *A Cat Tale of Misty Moonlight* by the popular author Santō Kyōzan, the long-lived younger brother of Santō Kyōden; the earliest part of the serial appeared also in 'spring'

of Tenpō 13 (1842). In this book, many of the central characters are shown as anthropomorphic cats. In his frontispiece to the second volume (Fig. 5), Kuniyoshi recasts the portraits of several popular actors in feline form. When his illustrations for Kyōzan's cat novel are compared with fan prints from the *Neko no hyakumensō* series, it becomes clear that there must have been a close relationship between them.

Fig. 5: Utagawa Kuniyoshi: Frontispiece of the second volume of the gōkan novel Oborozuki neko no sōshi, A Cat Tale of Misty Moonlight by Santō Kyōzan, 'spring' of Tenpō 13 (1842). (Private collection, Tokyo).

At this point, let us turn to yet another fan print series: *Neko no odori* (*Dancing Cats*), *Neko no keiko* (*The Cats' Music Lesson*), *Neko no suzumi* (*Cats Enjoying the Evening Air*), and *Neko no ken* (*Cats Playing the Ken Game*[5]*)*. (Inagaki and Isao 1991: Pl. 1-4) As far as can be judged from surviving specimens, these fan prints apparently had neither censorship seals nor publisher's marks. However, one design from this series, *Neko no odori* (*Dancing Cats*), is obviously a parody of the *kabuki* dance-drama *Mōteorisoe iro no tanemaki*, performed at the Ichimura Theatre in Edo during the intercalary first month of Tenpō 12 (1841). (NKS 1996: 264-5) The faces of the cats are facial caricature portraits of the *kabuki* stars Ichikawa Kuzō II, Nakamura Utaemon IV and Ichimura Uzaemon XII, while the family crests on their headgear are those associated with these widely admired actors. Therefore, we are probably safe in dating this particular fan print series to Tenpō 12 (1841).

In conclusion, let us look at two prints shown in figure 6a and 6b. Both of these prints depicts the actor Ichikawa Kuzō, this time in the role of Awashima

5 On *ken* see Linhart 1998.

Shōdayū in the dance-drama *Midarete kesa koi no Yamazaki* performed at the Ichimura Theatre in the eighth month of Tenpō 12 (1841); affirmative material also appears in the illustrated theatre program (*ehon banzuke*) shown in Fig. 7. In his dance, Kuzō made use of round fans depicting cat expressions that were, in fact, likenesses of the actor himself (Fig. 8). The performance was, we may assume, nothing short of a smash hit with the public.

Fig. 6: Utagawa Kuniyoshi: Actor Ichikawa Kuzō in the role of Awashima Shōdayū in the dance-drama *Midarete kesa koi no Yamazaki*, performed at the Ichimura Theatre, Tenpō 12 (1841) (archive of Ann Herring, Tokyo),

6a: Left sheet of an *ōban* triptych, publisher Yamaguchiya Tōbei.
6b: Right sheet of an *ōban* triptych, publisher Yamamoto Heikichi.

3. Conclusion

The instances discussed here all point to the same conclusion. They demonstrate that Kuniyoshi had already begun designing anthropomorphic cat prints incorporating actors' portraits well before the ban on actor prints. These earlier prints were not necessarily produced as subterfuges to avoid the consequences of the ban; there were other background factors behind their publication. One of these factors derived from the publication of Kyōzan's serial *gōkan* novel, *Oborozuki neko no sōshi*, while another can be linked to the popularity of Kuzō's 'cat ballet' on the *kabuki* stage. Naturally, the deliberate recasting of an actor's portrait in the form of an animal face became extremely convenient as a means of evading censorship *after* the regulation came into force: Kuniyoshi designed a number of prints that employed this approach. Such later prints may look very similar to the earlier prototypes; however, their backgrounds, origins, and aims are completely different.

Fig. 7: Program (*ehon banzuke*) of the dance-drama *Midarete kesa koi no Yamazaki*, performed at the Ichimura Theatre, 8th month, Tenpō 12 (1841) (The Tsubouchi Memorial theatre Museum, Waseda University, Tokyo).

Fig. 8: Detail from Fig. 7

It is said that Kuniyoshi loved cats very much. Nevertheless, it does not follow that they appear solely because of the artist's preferences and tastes. In this respect, we must also take the commercial aspects of publishing and the needs of the publishers into consideration.

The genre of cat *giga* (humorous prints) with which I have dealt here is just one example out of many that are equally worthy of investigation. The social climate in the so-called Bakumatsu Period during the last decades of the sho-

gunate was undergoing rapid changes. Many of the resulting transformations radically influenced the design and production of *nishiki-e* color prints; their publication invariably reflects currents in contemporary social and political conditions. Finally, I should like to note that it is always essential to observe and interpret *nishiki-e* prints within the cultural framework that supported and gave rise to them. This includes taking into account the *kabuki* drama, popular literature, and other contemporary cultural phenomena that set the tone for the times in which they flourished.

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Kuniyoshi's Fan Prints of the 1840s

Sepp LINHART

1. Kuniyoshi as caricaturist

When Kuniyoshi died in 1861, he left an enormous oeuvre of ten to fifteen thousand designed woodblock prints, many of which he probably produced together with his pupils. Even more important than this incredible productivity, which can also be seen with his rival Kunisada I/Toyokuni II (III) with even higher figures, are the impulses that Kuniyoshi gave the world of the woodblock color print. One can say that Kuniyoshi performed a paradigmatic shift, which as of yet has not been fully recognized. Instead of conventional *ukiyo-e* and complicated *mitate*[1]-techniques, which indicate either elegant parody or a form of highly developed travesty, he focused on simpler satiric pictures, which offer more explicit contents as well as critical statements. This shift took place as a reaction to the Tenpō Reforms and left a strong imprint on the world of *ukiyo-e*, until they disappeared after the Russo-Japanese War in 1905.

Although even a short preoccupation with Kuniyoshi's oeuvre should make it evident that Kuniyoshi was an artist in constant opposition to the ruling regime under which he was forced to live, this remarkable feature of his personality and his oeuvre is often concealed by many authors, be they Japanese or non-Japanese. In general, his many caricatures are only mentioned at the end of works about him, while his pictures of warriors, beauties, landscapes, and actors are highly praised. One gets the impression that many art historians and art critics are almost ashamed of the fact that Kuniyoshi also dealt with such mundane matters and that he seemed to be interested in the politics of the day. Thus, Suzuki Jūzō, who is regarded as the leading expert on Kuniyoshi in Japan, wrote in 1969 about Kuniyoshi's 'naïve sense of rebellion' (Suzuki and Oka 1969: 51), which finds expression in his caricatures. In my opinion, this derogatory statement does not do justice, neither to Kuniyoshi's intention, nor to the importance of these pictures. In his great Kuniyoshi monograph of 1992, the standard work in Kuniyoshi research, Suzuki still ranks caricatures eighth after seven other genres. Nevertheless, he does mention that the genre

1 For the meaning of traditional *mitate* see Schmidt 1968.

of caricatures together with that of warrior pictures form an important and powerful backbone of Kuniyoshi's oeuvre (Suzuki 1992: 253).

Already, Kuniyoshi's contemporaries mentioned the importance of his caricatures. Discussing the developments in the *ukiyo-e* world during the Tenpō Era in *Bukō nenpyō*, Saitō Gesshin writes laconically: "In this period the *ukiyo-e* artist Kuniyoshi painted crazy pictures (*kyōga*), and Hiroshige painted landscape pictures." (Saitō 1968: 102) Here, we can see that the contemporaries evaluated Kuniyoshi's caricatures as highly as Hiroshige's landscapes. However, in the West, the landscape prints are still regarded much higher than Kuniyoshi's satiric prints, and this Western view has been taken over by Japanese art critics. In the famous diary kept by the antiquarian Sudō Yoshizō, who was known as Fujiokaya, the *Fujiokaya nikki*, there are numerous references to Kuniyoshi's pictures and the great excitement they caused among the townsmen, the consumers of these prints, as well as among the censors, the pillars of the system, who had to watch over the *ukiyo-e* world.

The reception of this aspect of Kuniyoshi's work in the modern period begins with Tsuji Nobuo's *Kisō no keifu Matabei – Kuniyoshi* (*Genealogy of Originality: From Matabei to Kuniyoshi*; 1970) and especially with Iizawa Tadasu's *Hankotsu no eshi Utagawa Kuniyoshi* (*Utagawa Kuniyoshi, a Painter with Backbone*; 1972). Iizawa Tadasu (1909-1994), a well-known author of comedies, is also the author of the booklet *Buki to shite no warai*, (*Laughter as Weapon*, 1977). The research conducted by the historian Minami Kazuo is very important, as he explored the historical background of a number of Kuniyoshi pictures (Minami 1997, 1998). In a recent three-part essay, historian Abe Yasunari even speaks of „the theater of war named Kuniyoshi" (*Kuniyoshi to iu senba*) (Abe 2000-01). In Western research, there exist only a thin exhibition catalogue (Thompson and Harootunian 1991) and the recent work by Brandl (Brandl 2005, 2006, 2009).

We can only speculate, whether Kuniyoshi's predilection for the depiction of the Chinese rebels from the Liang Shang Moor has anything to do with his own rebellious character. However, other speculations are of greater importance. We can say for certain that Kuniyoshi had a hostile attitude towards the Tokugawa military regime, the *bakufu*. This can be concluded from his use of the so-called Yoshikiri-seal, among other things. Kuniyoshi started to use this seal in 1844 as a reaction against Kunisada's takeover of the Utagawa School. On the seventh day of the first month of Tenpō 15 (1844), Kunisada changed his name to Toyokuni, which he made known by means of a great party he gave on the eighth day of the fourth month of the same year. From this time onwards, he used the signature '*Kunisada aratame nidai Toyokuni*', which means 'Toyokuni II, who changed his name from Kunisada'. In this

manner, Kunisada undeniably made himself head of the Utagawa School and the successor of Toyokuni I[2]. Kuniyoshi took this as a motive to cease using the Toshidama-seal, the seal which identified him as a member of the Utagawa School. Instead, he began using his own seal, a change which indicated also that he had founded his own independent school. In my opinion, we should refrain from using the name Utagawa Kuniyoshi for the period starting on the fourth month of the year Tenpō 15, when he started to use his own seal. The seal consists of a stylized paulownia (*kiri*) leaf and flower in the shape of the Chinese character ‘HŌ, *kōbashii*’, which is read ‘*yoshi*’ in names (Fig. 1). The paulownia crest was not only used by Kuniyoshi in his seal, but also by the Toyotomi family. The Tokugawa had usurped power after Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s death, and after having established their government had forbidden any mention of Hideyoshi or the Toyotomi family. We can assume that Kuniyoshi had a certain respect for Hideyoshi, not only because of his use of the *kiri* crest, but also because he illustrated the *Ehon Toyotomi kunkō ki* (*The Illustrated Chronicle of the Merits of Toyotomi*), a voluminous work consisting of fifty booklets, which were bound together into five books. The first four of them were illustrated by Kuniyoshi from 1857 almost up until his death in 1861. It is probably due to the weakness of the shogunate after the conclusion of the first treaties with five Western powers in 1854 that this work could be published at all.

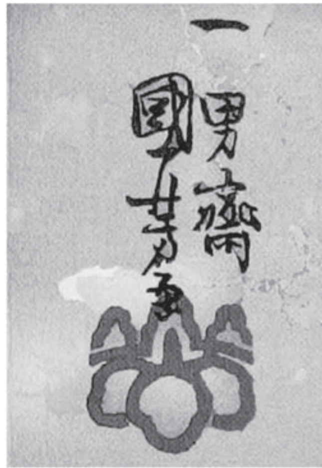

Fig. 1: Kuniyoshi’s Yoshikiri seal

2 Already after the death of Toyokuni I in 1825, his adopted son Toyoshige, who was also his son in law, had become his successor Toyokuni II. However, he died in 1835, and the position of the head of the Utagawa School was vacant from 1835 till 1844. Kunisada disregarded the fact that there had already existed a Toyokuni II, but he waited respectfully for nine years until he called himself Toyokuni II. In order to be able to discern the two successors of Toyokuni I, *ukiyo-e* specialists call Toyoshige Toyokuni II and the much more prominent and prolific Kunisada Toyokuni III.

The Yoshikiri-seal can be read as '*kiri ga yoshi*', 'The paulownia has the shape of yoshi'. Yet, if one refrains from clinging to the meaning of the characters and translates only the spoken language, it can also mean 'The paulownia is good' or 'The Toyotomi with their paulownia crest are good'. During the Tenpō Reforms, this is, of course, a formidable provocation aimed at the ruling Tokugawa. This is especially so, if one reads the Yoshikiri-seal as '*kiri (no hō) ga (aoi yori) yoshi*', 'The paulownia of the Toyotomi is superior (to the mallows of the Tokugawa)'.

If one considers other meanings of *kiri*, it can also mean 'fog', 'drill', or 'to break off'. These are all meanings which make sense in the context of the totalitarian *bakufu* rulers at the time of the Tenpō Reforms. Kuniyoshi could have meant that he is looping through the ruling system like a drill, and, perhaps, that the real meaning of his pictures is hidden behind a screen of fog, becoming clear only after intensive study. Further, it could be read as an incentive to knock down the ruling system and to cease the suffering. Of course, it can also mean that Kuniyoshi had cut off the ties to Toyokuni III and the Utagawa School. The Yoshikiri-seal can be interpreted as Kuniyoshi's disentanglement from the Utagawa School under Toyokuni III, but it can also be interpreted as a symbol of his hostile feelings towards the Tokugawa.

Before Kuniyoshi started using the Yoshikiri-seal, he had already been forced to overcome several difficulties with the *bakufu* authorities. On the fourth day of the sixth month of Tenpō 13 (1842), an edict (no. 4708) had been issued which defined the desirable contents of the brocade pictures. *Ukiyo-e* artists had to refrain from drawing pictures of prostitutes, female geisha, and actors, i.e. motifs which had until then dominated the world of *ukiyo-e* as well as pornographic pictures, though the latter were forbidden as it was. Censorship had been newly established with representatives of the publisher's guild, who had to change office every month. These censors had to pay attention to the fact that only pictures conforming to the rules were published (Ishii and Harafuji 1994: 298-299).

Additionally, the forms and prices of the pictures were regulated. On the last day of the eleventh month of the same year, edict no. 4717 stated that no woodblock prints were to be published consisting of more than three prints in the *ōban*[3] standard format. For one print, a maximum of seven to eight woodblocks could be used, which limited the number of colors and thus made expensive prints cheaper. One *ōban*-print had to be sold for a maximum of sixteen *mon*, in spite of the fact that until then an average print cost 24 *mon*. A third edict (no. 4718), which followed two weeks later, proclaimed that

3 Appr. 25 x 37 cm.

young and grown-up women were no longer to be depicted; only pictures of girls were still allowed (Ishii and Harafuji 1994: 302-303). These prescriptions were valid until the end of the Edo Period, but during the 1850s and 1860s, the government either no longer bothered to enforce them, or it was no longer in a position to do so.

Already before the announcement of these measures, in the fifth month of Tenpō 13 (1842), Kuniyoshi, Kunisada, and their respective publishers and printers were summoned to a fine of three *kanmon* each, according to the *Fujiokaya nikki*. Kuniyoshi was found guilty of having drawn the triptych *Hida no takumi hashiratate no zu*, *View of the Erecting of Pillars by the Craftsmen of Hida* (Pl. 1; Suzuki 1992: Fig. 322) in such a way that the authorities were of the opinion that the faces were those of actors. Kunisada had done the same in the print *Sugawara tenjin-ki ayatsuri ningyō no zu*, (*Puppet Play Concerning the Life of Sugawara Tenjin*, Minami 1998: 63). Iwakiri is of the opinion, that Sudō Yoshizō made a mistake when making this note in his diary; in reality, the whole affair had only taken place in the eighth month of the same year, after the issuance of the first edict. (Iwakiri 2002: 6-7[4]).

When in the third month of Tenpō 14 (1843) Murata Sabei took over the function of censor, he summoned the most famous *ukiyo-e* artists of Edo at the time – Eisen, Hiroshige, Kunisada, Kuniyoshi, Sadahide, and Yoshitora – at the responsible Northern Magistrate (*machibugyōsho*). The reason behind this was, that among the *ukiyo-e* and fan prints (*uchiwa-e*) produced at the time, there were also those prints that were 'not conducive to the mores' ('*fūzokujō yoshikarazu'*). He insistently told the artists which pictures were undesirable. Especially undesirable was the new trend to bypass the prohibition of drawing actors by means of drawing children with actors' faces, a technique in which Kuniyoshi was particularly productive. Consequently, in the fifth month, pictures of children that had anything to do with theater performances were forbidden altogether.

Two months later, in the seventh month of Tenpō 14 (1843), Kuniyoshi drew a triptych titled *Koma kurabe banjō Taiheiki*, (*The Taiheiki on the Game Board, Comparing the Chess Pieces*), which showed Japanese chess (*shōgi*) pieces fighting each other (Pl. 2; Inagaki & Isao 1991: Fig. 112). Because the chess pieces and their inscriptions did not correspond to the game's rules, rumors spread at once of the picture being a *hanjimono*, an encoded message expressed by means of a rebus. This rumor made the picture very popular, and at least two forgeries of the Kuniyoshi original appeared, of which more than 1000 copies were sold (Minami 1997: 106-108).

4 See also the contribution by Iwakiri in this volume.

One month later, in the eighth month of Tenpō 14, another strange Kuniyoshi triptych was published. It bears either the title *Bokusen no zu*, (*The Battle of Black Ink*, Pl. 3), or *Kinri suminuri*, *Painting with Black Ink in the Palace* (Fig. 77 in Inagaki & Isao 1991). Similar to the picture with the chess pieces, this triptych is also marked as a *giga*, a funny picture. According to an ancient picture scroll, there seemed to have existed a kind of game among the Nara aristocrats, in the course of which they threw black ink at each other. Some contemporaries held the opinion that Kuniyoshi drew only this game, but the author of the famous *Ukiyo no arisama* (*The Whereabouts of this World*), a doctor from Ōsaka, thought the figure next to the general with the blue kimono with a wave pattern represented the Tenpō reformer Mizuno Tadakuni, the woman in front of him represented his favorite courtesan, etc. The message of the picture is that nowadays, all samurai have become weak like the aristocrats of the past, and like these they fight only with black ink. The really powerful people nowadays are priests and women, and the source of the contemporary Ōmi Uprising can be found in their avarice (Minami 1997: 108-111).

The same month saw the appearance of Kuniyoshi's most famous picture of this kind, a triptych with the title *Minamoto Raikō kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu*, *The Encampment of Minamoto Raikō, where the Earth Spider Appears as a Ghost* (Pl. 4; Suzuki 1992: Fig. 441; compare also Linhart 2004). The appearance of the giant earth spider in the encampment of the Heian Period hero Minamoto Raikō was a motif found frequently in *ukiyo-e*. The story stems from the *Genji monogatari* and the *Taiheiki*, and it was later incorporated into the *nō* and *jōruri* canon. The picture is divided into a blue or green foreground with the Heian Period heroes, and in a grey to black background with various ghost-like figures. A rumor which surfaced at once explained this division of the picture as follows: 'Since the government (upper class) is so dark (= stupid), the people (lower class) have already become quite pale (= to be in a bad condition, almost dead)'. According to the people's interpretation, Raikō, half asleep and wearing a nightgown adorned with a mallow pattern, can be no one else but Shogun Ieyoshi. The fact that he is sleeping expresses his indifference towards policy matters, which he yields completely to Mizuno. Hence, Raikō's four generals are Mizuno and his allies, while the ghosts in the background are the losers of the Tenpō Reforms.[5] The rumor about this picture spread quickly, but when it was in such great demand, the publisher started to worry. He stopped the sale of the picture and destroyed the woodblocks, which explains why neither the publisher nor Kuniyoshi were

5 Brandl (2006) has convincingly argued that the picture is about the Opium War in China. Probably, this war was unknown to the common people in Japan, so that there existed no contemporary interpretation of this kind.

punished. Kuniyoshi's 'strange' pictures were, of course, imitated by other artists, and guessing pictures became a widely practiced activity in Edo. Since the pictures usually showed a well-known motif on the surface, the authorities could hardly act against them. When a picture became too popular however, the *bakufu* intervened, as it suspected the picture made fun of the authorities (Minami 1997: 117-129).

2. Kuniyoshi's fan prints

Already at the time Kuniyoshi and his five colleagues had been summoned in the third month of Tenpō 14, not only *nishiki-e*, but also fan prints had been explicitly designated as problematic. However, we do not know exactly which fan prints were meant and whether those made by Kuniyoshi were involved as well. Two of his fan prints that had caused a stir are mentioned in the contemporary source *Ukiyo no arisama*. Accordingly, on the day the displaced chancellor Mizuno Tadakuni was reinstalled in office in the sixth month of Tenpō 15 (1844), two fan prints in a cover were published in Edo with drawings which could be interpreted as a critique of this decision. The cover with the inscription *Furyū o-uchiwa*, *Elegant Fan for You* (Harada and Asakura 1970: 915), is decorated with peonies (*botan*) and morning glories (*asagao*) (Fig. 2), two kinds of flowers which blossom at different times. Whereas the first one blossoms in April and May and symbolizes wealth and high rank, the morning glory blossoms in summer and symbolizes quick withering. Thus, the cover seems to indicate that Mizuno gained in importance by returning to office, but that he would again have to abdicate before long. This cover contains two fan

Fig. 2: A wrapper which contained two fan prints designed by Kuniyoshi:
Furyū o-uchiwa, Elegant Fan for You, Tenpō 15 (1844) (Harada and Asakura 1970: 915).

prints by Kuniyoshi, both of which bore Tanaka Heishirō's censorship seal.

The first one shows a man without arms and legs sitting on something which looks like the roof of a palanquin (Harada and Asakura 1970: 915). This was interpreted as a parable indicating that the men on top of Japan have no supporters. The umbrella without a handle seems to mean that the shogun wants to rule over the whole of Japan, though he is in no position to do so. Instead, he is forced to nominate many people who assume these duties, which makes it clear that he better resign (Pl.5a).

In the second picture (Harada und Asakura 1970: 916), two tattooed men bear an open palanquin which is held by a rope from above (Pl. 5b). The author of *Ukiyo no arisama* compares this with the whipping of a bridled horse. The common subjects always try to acquire more rights, but this is impossible because there are good ones as well as wicked ones among them. Would it not rather be better to release the subjects into liberty, alone with the palanquin, instead of troubling them? After all, the world is full of fear. The characters for '*uma*', 'horse' and '*iwa*', 'stone' on the lantern are to be read as '*umai wa*', 'Fantastic!', and this is what Mizuno is thinking on occasion of his reinstitution. However, as he will have to abdicate again before long, this is also what the people will say when that time comes (Harada and Asakura 1970: 913-916).

Iwakiri (2002) is of the opinion that the two pictures show nothing other than toys which were popular in Edo, but unknown in Osaka, and that the pictures were wrongly interpreted. We know for sure that the two fan prints as well as another one, which bears the second picture as its background and has not been fully researched yet, were published in the fifth month of Tenpō 15, as only in this month Tanaka Heishirō was in charge of censoring woodblock prints. In any case, it is interesting that the discussed pictures were fan prints, and I would like to take this opportunity to present some other interesting fan prints made by Kuniyoshi.

One of the most conspicuous fan prints of Kuniyoshi depicts a giant octopus and a little black bear in a sumo match, in which a dragonfly or mayfly acts as referee (Fig. 3, Suzuki 1992: Fig. 248). These three animals live in different environments – water, earth, air – and under normal circumstances have nothing to do with each other. Therefore, the observer immediately gets the impression, that the meaning of the picture must be different from that which can be seen. Also, the leaves in the upper background are strange as they do not contribute to the picture's composition and seem superfluous. The print neither has a title to help us decipher it, nor does it bear a censorship seal which could give us a hint as to when it was published. The most convincing explanation is that the picture is a symbolic depiction of the Gunnai-Upris-

ing of the year Tenpō 7, 1836.[6] In this year, an uprising occurred with about 50,000 participants in the province of Kōshū, which was under direct control of the shogunate. In this region, silk production was an important secondary source of income for the peasants, and they paid their taxes not in rice, but in cash, with which they also bought their rice. At the beginning of the Tenpō Era (1830-1844), the price of Gunnai silk dropped, while the rice price rose, so that the peasants found themselves in a very difficult situation. Due to a famine, the peasants, starting on the twentieth day of the eighth month, began to flock together and attack rich farmers in the village of Kumandō. More than 500 insurgents were punished, and the lawsuit ended in the fifth month of Tenpō 8 (1837). The picture is likely to depict the struggle between the *bakufu*, represented by the octopus as in other prints as well, and the rebels. The uprising started in Kumandō, which contains the name for 'bear', '*kuma*'. The dragonfly could symbolize the silk production in this region. The suspending wings of the dragonfly are an indication of the low price of the famous Gunnai silk. This silk is much thinner than normal silk, and therefore it can be compared with the wings of a dragonfly. Having come this far, the riddle of the leaves is also easily solved. These are leaves of a plant called *gunnai fūro*, a kind of rhubarb, named after its origin in the Gunnai region. This interpretation fits Kuniyoshi's critical attitude towards the Shogunate very well.

Fig. 3: Kuniyoshi: Untitled fan print depicting a sumo match between a giant octopus and a little black bear with a dragonfly as referee, probably from Tenpō 8 (1837) (Suzuki 1992: Fig. 248).

6 This interpretation I owe to Noriko Brandl, Department for East Asian Studies, University of Vienna.

It is most likely that this fan print was produced during the lawsuits against the rebels in the spring of Tenpō 8, because fan prints were a seasonal product made especially in preparation for the hot season. In any case, the print clearly indicates Kuniyoshi's interest in politics, and it unequivocally shows his sympathies with the little bear that has no chance to succeed against the giant octopus, the Tokugawa Government.

Seeing that the depiction of actors and courtesans was strictly forbidden since the middle of Tenpō 13 (1842), and that it was no longer possible to depict children as an alternative since the middle of Tenpō 14 (1843), Kuniyoshi used several tricks to be able to express these traditional themes in woodblock prints, which were so popular with the townsfolk of Edo. His methods were simple. Instead of drawing actors and courtesans, he drew animals and things, which could be easily interpreted as actors or courtesans judging from their facial expressions and clothes, the crests and patterns on their clothes, or from their surroundings. In order to leave no doubts concerning who was meant, the artist overemphasized certain characteristics of well-known actors, a method widely used in caricatures. Thus, the following works by Kuniyoshi, made between 1842 and 1850, are a definite mocking of the Tenpō Reforms.

At first, Kuniyoshi produced a series of fan prints with personified cats in various entertainment scenes: dancing, boating in the evening to refresh from the summer heat, playing the fist game *ken*, and taking lessons in *jōrūri*-recitation (Fig. 1-4 in Inagaki & Isao 1991). Concerning the first picture, Suzuki (1996: 264-5) has convincingly shown that the cats are all actors from a *kabuki* play of 1841, so that we can assume that the other pictures have a similar meaning.

In chronological order, the next series was probably *Sono omokage teasobi zukushi* (*A Set of Toys with Their Faces*), which consists of at least three fan prints (Suzuki 1992: Fig. 409, Suzuki 1996: Fig. 264-5, Inagaki & Isao 1991: Fig. 139). Since the three pictures all bear the censorship seal *tora* (tiger), they must be pictures from the tiger year Tenpō 13 (1842). '*Sono omokage*' means 'their faces' and indicates that the faces are portraits (*nigao-e*) of actors. In this series, he depicted popular actors as toys (*teasobi*). Since these toys express the characteristic features of the actors very well, it must have been rather easy for the people of Edo to identify them.

Even today, it is possible to identify the actors depicted on the fan prints. In the first picture, there is a lion doll on the right, behind it is a servant with a palliasse, and in the middle a rabbit is pounding rice cakes, which is what the rabbit in the moon does according to Japanese legend. On the left side, we see a rabbit on wheels and a man grilling eels. All these dolls are made of papier mâché, as are most dolls in the other two prints. The big white rabbit in the

middle is the top star of the time for female roles, Iwai Shijaku, who in 1844 took on the name Iwai Hanshirō VII (1804-45).[7] The little rabbit in the background is Onoe Eisaburō III, the later Kikugorō IV (1808-61). The lion's head is probably Onoe Tamizō II (1800-86), his fellow dancer in the foreground is Ichimura Uzaemon XII, the later Ichimura Takenojō (1812-51). The servant is most likely Nakamura Shibajūrō (1799-1847) and the eel-griller Ōtani Hiroemon V (1804-55).

In the second picture, the famous Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII (1823-54), depicted as a papier mâché dog in the foreground, is the central character. He can be easily recognized by the peony pattern on his mantle. Clockwise, the other actors are Ichikawa Hakoemon as Otafuku, Bandō Sajūrō as the *shamisen* playing fox doll, Onoe Kikugorō III (1784-1849) as a doll on a stick in the role of Tenjiku Tokubei, Sawamura Sōjūrō V (1802-1853) as a fox, and Onoe Kikujirō II (1814-75) as a doll frying *dengaku*, a special grill dish covered with sweet *miso* paste.

The third picture (Fig. 4) is of special interest as it contains information about a contemporary incident. A *daruma* doll on the left side dominates the picture. It shows the character for long life, *kotobuki*, in the form of a lobster,

Fig. 4: Kuniyoshi: *Sono omokage teasobi zukushi 3, A Set of Toys with Their Faces 3*, Fan print, Tenpō 13 (1842).

7 This and the following interpretations were made as part of the project Caricatures on Ukiyo-e 1842-1905 at the University of Vienna (UCDB).

in Japanese *ebi*. This is an indication that the doll represents the actor Ichikawa Ebizō V (1791-1859), father of aforementioned Danjūrō VIII, in favor of whom he had abandoned the name Danjūrō VII in 1832. In front of him lies a lion mask with the face of Nakayama Bungorō II (-1862). On the right side, Nakamura Utaemon IV (1796-1852) enjoys himself by blowing upwards a strip of paper attached to his forehead (*fukigami*). Behind him stands his favorite partner, Ichikawa Kuzō II (1800-71), depicted as an owl, easily recognizable by his large protruding eyes. It seems as if Kuniyoshi had drawn three actors with large eyes in this picture, Ebizō, Bungorō, and Kuzō. The female figure in the middle is probably Azuma Tōzō (1821-62), a young *onnagata*, who, shortly before the publication of this fan print had visited a women's bath together with *onnagata* colleagues Bandō Shūka and Onoe Kikujirō. At that time, there was a ban on mixed bathing and consequently, the three were punished. His cloth, on which wisteria blossoms are drawn as an allusion to his name,[8] is a clear indication of this incident.

In the series *Neko no hyakumensō*, *Hundred Faces of Cats*, which consists of at least three fan prints (end of Tenpō, Suzuki 1992: Fig. 368, Inagaki & Isao 1991: Fig. 5 and 6), the cat lover Kuniyoshi again uses his favorite animal to draw seven to nine portraits of popular actors. Fig. 5 shows a print from this series which contains only roles from the popular play *Kanadehon*

Fig. 5: Kuniyoshi: *Neko no hyakumensō, Hundred Faces of Cats*, A fan print from this series which contains only roles from the popular play *Kanadehon chūshingura.* End of Tenpō Era (1842-44).

8 'Wisteria' is '*fuji*' in Japanese and has the Sino-Japanese reading TŌ, which is used in the name 'Tōzō'.

chūshingura.

The series *Ryūkō men zukushi*, *A Set of Popular Masks*, is very similar and also bears the date seal *tora*, meaning it was also published in 1842. At present, two pictures of this series are known (Inagaki & Isao 1991: Fig. 137-138). Instead of the cat pictures, Kuniyoshi makes use of theater masks which again can be easily identified as popular actors of the time of the Tenpō Reforms (Fig. 6). Additionally, a counterpart of these fan prints exists in the form of a triptych drawn as a votive picture with thirty masks bearing the faces of actors from the period between 1847 and 1852 (*Ataru hōnō negai o gakumen* / *Praying for Hits: a Votive Picture of Lucky Masks*; Suzuki 1996: Fig. 268).

In another fan print with the title *Tōsei Daruma geizukushi*, *A Set of Artistic Accomplishments of Daruma Monks in Our World* (Fig. 7, Klefisch 2003: 183), Kuniyoshi makes use of another form of alienation. Here, five popular actors are drawn as monks in the style of the famous Zen monk Daruma, but their facial characteristics are again easily recognizable. Their artistic accomplishments are mentioned in inscriptions, and the fact that these accomplishments are all well-known drinking games enhances the humorous mood of the picture.

At least two fan prints exist of the series *Nita ka kingyo* from the end of the Tenpō Era (Fig. 8; Suzuki 1992: Fig. 395 and Yamada Fig. 1669; Suzuki

Fig. 6: Kuniyoshi: *Ryūkō men zukushi, A Set of Popular Masks,*
Fan print, Tenpō 13 (1842) (Inagaki & Isao 1991: Fig. 137-138).

Fig. 7: Kuniyoshi: *Tōsei Daruma geizukushi*, *A Set of Artistic Accomplishments of Daruma Monks in Our World,* Fan print, end of Tenpō Era (1842-44), (Klefisch 2003: 183).

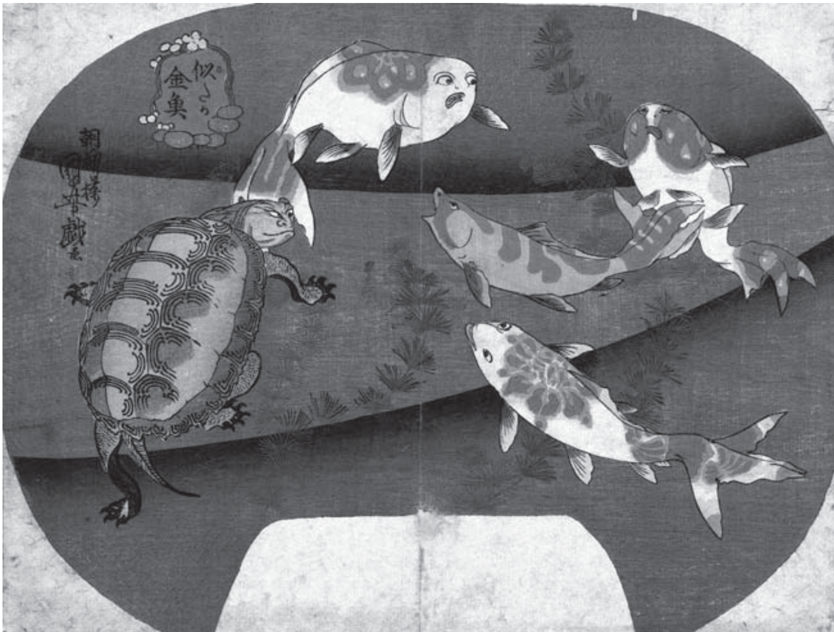

Fig. 8: Kuniyoshi: *Nita ka kingyo, Aren't They Resembling Someone, the Goldfish?*,
Fan print, end of Tenpō Era (1842-44).

(1992: 233) notes that there are three prints of this kind). In these pictures, goldfish and a turtle bear the faces of popular actors of the time, and even the title invites the observer to contemplate on similarities. It can be translated as: ‚Aren't they resembling someone, the goldfish?' Suzuki stresses the play on words which arises from the association with the goldfish sellers' cry '*medakaaa kingyooo*' who usually sell very small *medaka* fish and goldfish together. The actors are not only recognizable by their faces, but also by their family crests and single characters drawn on the fish. It should also be mentioned that '*kingyo*', 'goldfish', could also mean 'forbidden fish', and we can assume that Kuniyoshi used this pun to tell the pictures' consumers that it was forbidden to draw fish with actors' faces. This impression is reinforced by the fact that the goldfish are combined with a turtle. The Sino-Japanese reading of '*kame*', 'turtle', is KI, the same as for the character '*abunai*', 'dangerous'.

These series show portraits of actors in an alienated way and thus ridicule the measures of the Tenpō Reforms among the townsmen of Edo. However, there are other fan prints by Kuniyoshi from the same period that have a political meaning and seem to be in the tradition of the picture depicting the wrestling match between the octopus and the bear. One of them is *Suzume no hyakkyō*, *Hundred Follies of the Sparrows*. The title of this print seems to indicate that it is part of a series as well, though the only print known is

Fig. 9: Kuniyoshi: *Suzume no hyakkyō: Torisashi*, *Hundred Follies of the Sparrows: Catching Birds with a Lime-Twig*, Fan print (Nakau 1995: Fig. 170).

Torisashi, *Catching Birds with a Lime-Twig*. In it, little sparrows have caught a big bird, probably a black crow (Fig. 9; Nakau 1995: Fig. 170), and at first glance it seems to be of a rebellious or even revolutionary content. Of course, it resembles the famous triptych *Sato suzume negura no karitaku*, *The Yoshiwara Sparrows' Temporary Nest* (Suzuki 1992: Fig. 411), in which visitors of the red light district and its inhabitants are drawn as sparrows. This was, in fact, a typical way in which Kuniyoshi mocked the prohibition of drawing courtesans. Judging from this picture, we can assume that the sparrows are the normal citizens, while the big bird indicates an important person. Here, Torii Yōzō comes to our minds. He was installed by Chancellor Mizuno as Southern Magistrate of Edo (*minami machi bugyō*) and immediately initiated a strict and remorseless implementation of the Tenpō Reforms. Thus, he soon became the most hated person among the people. Since he was the Lord of the province of Kai, the people called him '*yōkai*', 'ghost', a contraction of his first name 'Yōzō' and his province. The '*hyakkyō*' in the print's title is an allusion to '*hyakki yagyō*', the custom to assemble in hot summer nights and tell each other ghost stories. After each story, a candle was extinguished until it was completely dark.

Another interesting fan print is a *mitate* (travesty) about the rebels of the Liang Shang Moor, *Suikōden mitate tamafuki no zu*, *A Picture of Soap Bubbles as a Travesty of the Story of the Liang Shang Moor Rebels* (Fig. 10; Bidwell 1968: Fig. 122), in which a seller of soap bubbles demonstrates his art to two children: dozens of rebels grow out of the soap bubbles. The depiction of the rebels of the Liang Shang Moor has an important status within Kuniyo-

Fig. 10: Kuniyoshi: *Suikōden mitate tamafuki no zu*, *A Picture of Soap Bubbles as a Travesty of the Story of the Liang Shang Moor Rebels,* Fan print (Bidwell 1968: Fig. 122).

shi's work, since it was with a series of the rebels that he established himself as an *ukiyo-e* artist. In this fan print, too, we can see an allusion to political events. The print was issued only shortly after the rebellion planned by Oshio Heihachirō, which Kuniyoshi certainly had heard of.

Two more fan print series of Kuniyoshi have to be mentioned here: From the series *Rokkasen*, *Selection of Six Famous Poets* (Iwakiri 2002: Fig. 28), which supposedly consists of six prints, only one print is known. It bears the censorship seal Hama and shows a portrait of Danjūrō VIII. Of the series *Hitoguchi jōruri*, *One Act of a Play* (Iwakiri 2002: Fig. 29), we know seven pictures, all bearing the Mura seal and showing actors' portraits. Both series were published no later than Kōka 3 (1846). What makes these series interesting is the fact that, against the edicts forbidding the depiction of actors, they all show actors' portraits in such a way that they are at once recognizable. This is also the case only one year later, in Kōka 4 (1847), for the usual *ōban* size prints. It seems that censorship was less strict with fan prints than with the usual prints.

3. Fan prints as a medium of propaganda

Why do I stress the fact that the mentioned works are all fan prints? Fan prints were woodblock prints that were cut out according to the size of the fan (*uchiwa*) on which they were pasted. Since *uchiwa* could be decorated with prints on both sides, it is likely that many fan prints were issued in two-print set combinations, like the one mentioned in the beginning. This custom had two consequences. Firstly, prints were destroyed as soon as they had to be replaced, and therefore only few fan prints have remained up until today. Secondly, in contrast to usual prints which were collected and preserved at home, or pasted on walls and screens to be enjoyed alone or together with friends, fan prints were no longer private. In the hot season, from May to September, fans were in constant use and overtly seen in public. It is due to this special quality that shops and firms even today use fans as an important means of advertisement, and in the summer commercial fans can be seen in abundance.

With the help of fans, Kuniyoshi and/or his publishers were able to multiply their messages. In other words, by means of fan prints, the mockery of the Tenpō Reforms evident in many of Kuniyoshi's pictures was effectively transported into the public sphere. Obviously, not all publishers were pleased with this thought. As a consequence, several of the mentioned works do not bear a publisher's logo, and not even a censorship seal, which means that they were produced without informing the authorities. We can also assume that Kuniyoshi might have drawn pictures he did not sign, even though he called himself

Ichiyūsai, The Brave One. In any case, we can imagine that between 1842 and 1846, a number of Edo townsmen, who were critical of the Tenpō Reforms like Kuniyoshi and who even dared to show their opposition to Chancellor Mizuno Tadakuni's policies, flocked to the cooler river banks in the evenings, 'armed' with Kuniyoshi's prints on their fans. With thousands of other townsmen around them, this was a brilliant way to express their resistance to the *bakufu*'s policies against the people.

A final word on Kuniyoshi seems to be appropriate. His fan prints from the period of 1842 to 1846 constitute a very small part of his enormous oeuvre, and we can dare to make the above interpretations only when seeing them as part of his other critical works and caricatures. Furthermore, we have to be aware that he founded his own school of *ukiyo-e* artists in 1844 and thus influenced many pupils with his artistry and his views on life. After his death, Yoshitora, whose pictures are very similar to Kuniyoshi's, Yoshitsuya, Yoshimori, Yoshifuji, Yoshitoshi, and, finally, the great Kawanabe Kyōsai, all produced caricatures like Kuniyoshi until the middle of the Meiji Period. And we must not forget that Kuniyoshi was the central figure behind the outburst of rebellious earthquake pictures (*namazu-e*/catfish pictures) in the tenth month of Ansei 2 (1855), as Takada Mamoru (1995) has convincingly shown. For Kuniyoshi, his pictures were definitely 'weapons' which enabled him to tease the *bakufu* constantly and to provoke laughter about the ruling class among the consumers of his works.

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Nishiki-e Caricatures of Kuniyoshi during the Last Stage of his Life

Noriko BRANDL

1. Introduction

Kuniyoshi, the most important *nishiki-e* caricaturist at the end of the Edo Period, was born in Edo Nihonbashi in Kansei 9.11.15 (1798.1.1). Since the age of thirteen, he was a member of the *ukiyo-e*-school of Utagawa Toyokuni I (1769-1825). In Bunsei 10 (1827), he gained fame after publishing the series *Tsūzoku Suikoden gōketsu hyakuhachinin no hitori* (*One Hundred and Eight Heroes of the Popular Suikoden*) and since then was called the 'great master of the pictures of heroes' (Musha-e no Kuniyoshi).

Since the sixth month of Tenpō 13 (1842), the production of actor pictures (*yakusha-e*) and beauty pictures (*bijin-ga*) was prohibited as one measure of the Tenpō Reforms. This was a big loss for the *nishiki-e*-world, because those were the most popular motives. But during that time, Kuniyoshi continued to be very successful. He painted a great number of interesting and high level caricatures, also directed against the Reform politics.

In the autumn of Ansei 2 (1855), he suffered from cerebral apoplexy. Although he lost his high technical capacity of painting during his decline, he continued to work. He carried on painting, but only caricatures with primitive outlines and simple compositions, and he also continued teaching and supporting many of his students until his demise. It is evident that Kuniyoshi was the key figure of the catfish picture (*namazu-e*) boom in 1855 and that his work was responsible for the great success of the caricatures during the Boshin War (*Boshin sensō-e*) in the years Keiō 4 - Meiji 2 (1868/69), years after his death in Bunkyū 1 (1861).

In this text, I will analyze Kuniyoshi's painting style during the final period of his life and examine his probably last two *nishiki-e* caricatures *Kyōga-e tehon 1* and *2* (*Model for Crazy Pictures*) of the year, Ansei 6 (1859) as well as *Tosa emakimono no utsushi* (*Copy of a Tosa-Scroll*) of the year Man'en 1 (1860).

2. The Painting Style of Kuniyoshi in his Last Five Years

When I saw *Kyōga-e tehon* for the first time, I could hardly believe that it was a work of Kuniyoshi. However, by examining some of his other cari-

catures from the same period I recognized his qualification expressed in this picture. I also noticed that it is not easy to judge the real quality of Kuniyoshi's style of painting in his last five years, as many unpublished preparatory drawings (*hanshita*) in better quality from the Tenpō, Kōka, and Kaei Periods were only then published. For example, in Ansei 3 (1856), the three series *Shin'yū kurabe*, *Retsumō-den*, and *Honchō musha kagami* were published, each series bearing the censorship seals of the Kōka Period (1844-1847). In the fourth month of the year Ansei 5 (1858), Maruya Kyūshirō published the triptych *Ryūgūjō Tawara Tōta Hidesato ni sanshu no miyage o okuru*, which shows the precise and elegant flowing line of Kuniyoshi's style during the Kaei Period (1848-1853) (Suzuki 1992: Fig. 174). The two well-known pictures of heroes of the Tenpō Period (1830-1843), *Ushiwaka Kurama-yama shugyō no zu* and *Akazawa-yama ō-zumō*, were also published in the same month by the same publisher. The two preparatory drawings of the Tenpō Period were used for the series *Rokuyōsei Kuniyoshi jiman* in Ansei 6 and for the triptych *Shitennō to yōkai* in Man'en 1.

There are many examples which illustrate that the preparatory drawings made by other famous painters were also published later. This can be found very often in the work of Kuniyoshi. Although he was unable to paint as in former times, his reputation was still excellent and many people wished to have his pictures.

3. The Wrong Interpretation of *Dōke kyōga*

At first sight, we can see the similarity of composition and the way of expression in Kuniyoshi's *Kyōga-e tehon 1* and *2* (Fig. 1, 2) and the well-known *nishiki-e* caricature *Dōke kyōga* (*The Comical Crazy Picture*) (Pl. 8) made by his pupil Ichijusai Yoshikazu. This caricature was published in the fourth month of the year Ansei 5 (1858). The works of the two artists are not only similar in their way of expression, but there is probably a connection concerning their contents as well. Therefore, I will start by analysing *Dōke kyōga*, which was painted about a year earlier than *Kyōga-e tehon 1* and *2*.

Minami Kazuo commented on *Dōke kyōga* in the essay Nyoza rōsen kyo kibun[1] (Notes of One Sitting in a Sinking Boat) in his book *Bakumatsu Edo no bunka - Ukiyo-e to fūshi-ga* (*The Culture at the End of the Edo Period - Ukiyo-e and Caricatures*) (1998: 249-257). This essay was written in the eighth month of the year Ansei 5 and was found in the Edo residence of the Lord

1 In possession of the Tōkyō daigaku shiryō hensanjo (Historiographical Institute, The University of Tokyo, HIUT)

of the Matsushiro domain. First, Minami explains with respect to the picture description of the events (concerning mainly the poisoning of the thirteenth Shōgun Iesada by Tokugawa Nariaki) that all of these events occurred after the publication date of *Dōke kyōga* in the fourth month of Ansei 5. Minami argues that the picture descriptions of the Edo Period cannot be accurate, as it is impossible to paint a picture before an incident occurs.

Furthermore, the book *Sanjō-ke monjo* (*Documents of the Sanjō Family*) from Kyōto, which also comprises a description of the *Dōke kyōga*, states that ordering this picture was a political tactic of Ii Naosuke to denigrate Tokugawa Nariaki. Minami is not primarily interested in the accuracy of the two versions, but indicates the existence of these two completely different points of view in Edo and Kyōto. The same picture was interpreted in Edo (preference for the Shogunate) and Kyōto (preference for the *tennō*) in very different ways.

Minami himself did not try to interpret the seven scenes of this caricature. Until now, Miyao Shigeo was the only scholar who tried to decipher this picture in his book *Nihon no giga* (*Humorous pictures in Japan*) (1967: 166). However, he did not pay attention to the date of publishing either and came

Fig. 1: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: *Kyōgae tehon 1*, *Model for Crazy Pictures 1,* 1859/6, publisher: Daikokuya Kinjirō (left).
Fig. 2: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: *Kyōgae tehon 2*, *Model for Crazy Pictures 2,* 1859/6, publisher: Daikokuya Kinjirō (rigth).

to the same conclusion as the *Nyoza rōsen kyo kibun* of the Edo Period. He described the seven scenes with the events that occurred some months later.

The source of this wrong interpretation of *Dōke kyōga* is a rumor of that time: Tokugawa Nariaki, Lord of Mito, wanted his son Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu to become the fourteenth shogun, and so he ordered some members of his party to poison the thirteenth Shōgun Iesada. Fortunately, the Great Chancellor (*tairō*) Ii Naosuke discovered Nariaki's murderous plan. Nariaki and the members of the Hitotsubashi Party were thoroughly punished and the state and Japan were saved.

This rumor spread as sensational news among the citizens of Edo after the sudden and mysterious death of the thirteenth Shōgun Iesada on the sixth day of the seventh month of the year Ansei 5 (officially the eighth day of the eighth month). Following the occurrence of this rumor, many *nishiki-e* caricatures were produced.

It is worth mentioning that there are some examples of Kuniyoshi's earlier *nishiki-e* caricatures which were intentionally misinterpreted like *Dōke kyōga*, which indicates that there was an actual connection referring to the rumor. For example: *Dōke musha zukushi* (*A Mixture of Funny Heroes*, HIUTDB) from the Tenpō Period (1830-1843) and the two scenes *Kanadehon chūshingura*: *shichi danme* (*The Seventh Act of Chūshingura*) and *Yoshitsune senbon zakura*: *sushiya no dan* (this act takes place in the sushi bar of *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* [*Yoshitsune's one thousand cherry trees*]) from the series *Dōke jōruri zukushi* (*A Collection of Strange Plays*) of the year Ansei 2 (Fig. 3, 4).

The following seemingly contemporary interpretation was written on the reverse side of the upper picture *Kanadehon chūshingura shichi danme* (Fig. 5):

"Chūshingura shichi danme
Yuranosuke wa Mito go-inkyo-kō
O-Karu wa Hitotsubashi no waka
Kyūdayū wa Ōta Bingo no kami Suketomo
Sono wake
Koishikawa-kō Hitotsubashi ni tenka o torasen to urabashigo yori chikamichi ni shiyō to omoishi tokoro sono Hitotsubashi yarisokonaite ochita tokoro wa shita ni iru Yura no Mito-kō ōi ni umeki ii zama narishi koto mata en no shita ni oru Kyūdayū wa ima made inkyo shite ita Ōta-kō kurai tokoro kara haidashite kono sōdō o mite takawarai shite iru tokoro nari
Yura no go-monsho aoi no katachi nari
Kyūdayū monsho Ōta no ya no yari tagai ni mitateru
yoku yoku hanji mirubeshi"

Fig. 3: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi, *Dōke jōruri zukushi: Kanadehon chūshingura: shichi danme, A Collection of Strange Plays: The Seventh Act of Chūshingura,* *Chūban*-size color woodblock print 1855, publisher: Hayashiya Shōgorō. Private collection.

Fig. 4: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: *Dōke jōruri zukushi: Yoshitsune senbon zakura sushiya no dan, A Collection of Strange Plays: Yoshitsune's One Thousand Cherry Trees: At the Sushi Bar,* *Chūban*-size color woodblock print 1855, publisher: Hayashiya Shōgorō. Private collection.

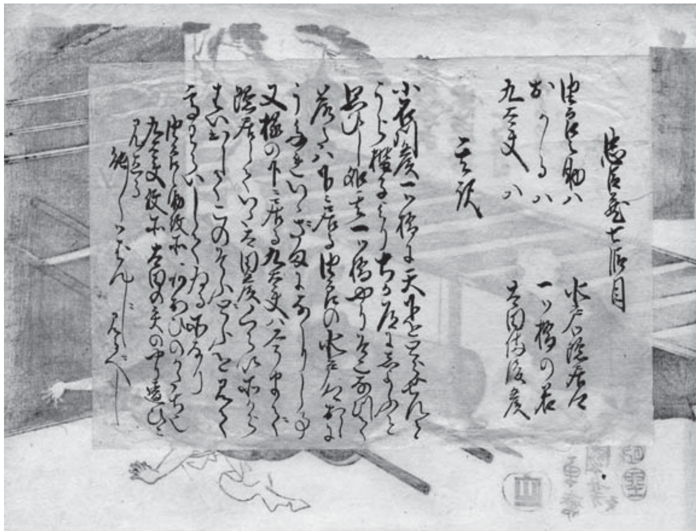

Fig. 5: Paper slip with interpretation attached to the reverse side of the print shown in Fig. 3.

(Translation)
The seventh act of Chūshingura
Yuranosuke is the former Lord of Mito
O-Karu is the young chief of the Hitotsubashi family
Kyudayu is Ōta Suketomo, the former lord of the prefecture of Bingo
Explanation
The lord of Koishikawa[2] wanted his son Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu to conquer the world[3], and let O-Karu[4] climb up a secret ladder[5].
Unfortunately, O-Karu stumbled and fell on the head of Yuranosuke. Yuranosuke, the Lord of Mito, screamed in pain.
On the other side of the picture, Kyūdayū is hiding beneath the veranda; he is the real Lord Ōta[6] .
He comes out of his hiding-place[7] and laughs about the two others.
The coat of arms of Yuranosuke shows the shape of three leaves of a mallow[8].
The coat of arms of Kyūdayū shows crossed arrows[9] .
One really should pay attention to interpreting this picture correctly.

2 The district where Lord Mito, Tokugawa Nariaki, resides
3 To make him shogun
4 Played by Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu
5 Not the honest way
6 The representative of the Nanki party
7 He returns to active policy after his retirement
8 The coat of arms of the Tokugawa family
9 The coat of arms of the Ōta family

This interpretation reflects the rumor that Tokugawa Nariaki's plan of conquering Japan failed.

There is another example on the back of the picture below which offers a similar interpretation (Fig. 6):

"Senbon zakura sushiya no dan
Kajiwara wa Ishikawa Tosa no kami ka
Yazaemon wa Hongō Tango no kami ka
O-Moto wa Hitotsubashi-kō ka
Gonta wa oku-wakashū Shiga Kinpachi kaeri chūshin seppuku shite hateru to iu
Sono wake
Suifu-kō Ki no ke ni imada go-yō-kun on-irazaru ni sono kubi utte daseyo to Ishikawa yori Shiga ni kotozukeshi o Gonta no Shiga Kinpachi isai shōchi shite utte mairishi o sashi dasu kubi-jikken seshi tokoro motte no hoka naru shina nite mina kimo o tsubuseshi nari kore ra mo Gonta no Kinpachi kaeri-chū shite tōnasu kabocha ni shita tote bakaseshi to iu koto ka
yoku yoku hanji mirubeshi"

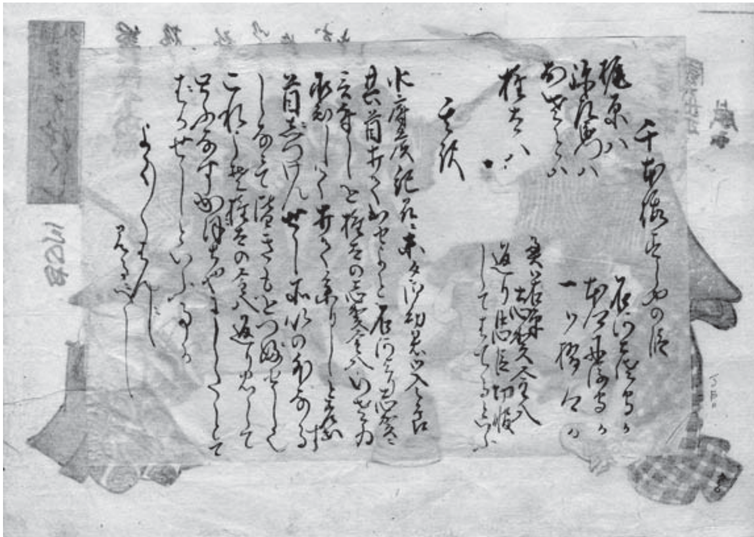

Fig. 6: Paper slip with interpretation attached to the reverse side of the print shown in Fig. 4.

(Translation)
The act takes place in the sushi bar of *Yoshitsune senbon zakura*
Kajiwara is probably Ishikawa Tosa no kami
O-Moto is probably Hitotsubashi-kō
Yazaemon is probably Hongō Tango no kami
Gonta is the young servant Shiga Kinpachi in the private sphere of the shogun. He is said to have poisoned the thirteenth Shōgun Iesada according to the order of Tokugawa Nariaki, but he regretted his death and committed suicide.
Explanation
Through his follower Ishikawa, Tokugawa Nariaki gave an order to Shiga Kinpachi: Kinpachi should cut off the head of Yoshitomi[10] before he was nominated to be the next shogun.
Gonta agreed and brought a barrel in which Yoshitomi's head was supposed to be. But instead of the head there was a pumpkin in the barrel.
This scene is probably a symbol of Shiga's repentance: By presenting the pumpkin, he wanted to cause Tokugawa Nariaki great trouble by making him look ridiculous.
One really should pay attention to interpreting this picture correctly.

There is one more speculation in this interpretation: Tokugawa Nariaki did not only try to poison Shogun Iesada, but also tried to murder Yoshitomi, who was the candidate opposed to Yoshinobu.

Once again, I would like to emphasize that the two pictures mentioned were published approximately three years before this rumor spread in Edo.

The previously mentioned picture *Dōke kyōga*, together with these two examples that were intentionally misinterpreted, reflect the situation of political *nishiki-e* caricatures at that time. The fact that the strong censorship made it impossible to paint the events accurately resulted in various opinions and offered different ways of interpretation. We are unable to confirm who was responsible for spreading these false interpretations. Was it the publisher of the picture, who wanted to raise his profits, or was it Great Chancellor Ii Naosuke and his followers, who wanted to use the picture for their political propaganda, or even the citizens of Edo themselves, whose curiosity increased more and more?

10 The candidate opposed to Yoshinobu

4. Interpretation of *Dōke kyōga*

Firstly, I will begin to analyse what Yoshikazu actually painted in the seven scenes of his *Dōke kyōga* in order to find its connection with Kuniyoshi's *Kyōga-e tehon*. In this caricature, it is necessary to point out the events that occurred before this picture was published.

The first two scenes of the picture illustrate the conflict of the succession of the thirteenth shogun. The octopus, boiling in an iron pot in the first scene, is Tokugawa Nariaki, Lord of Mito and head of the Hitotsubashi Party. In a state of agitation, he supported his son Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu in the conflict of succession. The four logs used for heating represent the four main politicians of the Hitosubashi Party at that time: Chancellor Abe Masahiro from Fukuyama, Matsudaira Yoshinaga from Echizen, Shimazu Nariakira from Satsuma, and Yamanouchi Toyoshige from Tosa. The woman, astonished by the appearance of the octopus, is Honjuin, the mother of the thirteenth Shogun Iesada, who hated and feared Tokugawa Nariaki.

The young Urashima in the second scene, who is having a drinking bout with two turtles (he is recognizable through these animals), is, in fact, Tokugawa Yoshitomi of the Nanki Party. The dragon palace *ryūgū* hints at Edo Castle, which was also known under the name of *ryūei*. Due to the fact that Abe Masahiro, the most important figure of the Hitotsubashi Party, died suddenly on the seventeenth day of the sixth month in Ansei 4 (1857), the Nanki Party is celebrating the appointment of Yoshitomi as shogun.

In the third scene, we can see a scarecrow in the paddy field aiming a bow and arrow at something as well as two men fleeing. There are scarecrows on an already harvested field. This is a winter landscape and one can imagine hoarfrost (*shimo*) lying on the fields (*ta*) as a hint at the small town Shimoda, where the American Consul General Harris is based. After the harvest, the scarecrow (Harris) becomes useless. This indicates the circumstance that Harris, together with his Japanese-American commercial treaty, is not needed in Japan. The fact that he is aiming an arrow at something hints at the Japanese proverb '*ya no yō na saisoku*' (to long for something), and refers to the fact that Harris strongly desired an audience at Edo Castle. The city manager (*bugyō*) of Shimoda, Inoue Kiyonao, and the inspector (*metsuke*) Iwase Tadanari on the right side of this scene, are rushing to Edo Castle to communicate Harris's request. On the fourteenth day of the eighth month of Ansei 4, Harris is granted an audience.

In the fourth scene, the god of thunder Kaminari grasps a bathing woman by her leg. That means Harris, represented as a demon, or as Kaminari, is finally granted an audience at Edo Castle on the 21st day of the tenth month

in Ansei 4. The Japanese expression '*kichiku* Bei-Ei' means that Americans and Englishmen are demons and beasts. This dictum was used in the Second World War as a tool of propaganda. However, already in Kaei 6 (1853), Commodore Perry was represented as a demon, when he anchored before Uraga with his 'black ships'. Aside from thunder, rain is also an attribute of Kaminari. 'Rain' is also read '*ame*' and therefore hints at 'Ame-rika'. Kaminari grasps a woman's leg, who has just taken a cool bath and is now about to flee. Japan, represented by the woman, got into an expensive dilemma because of Harris respectively America ('*nige-ashi o torareru*') ('*ashi*' = 'leg', '*oashi*' = a term for money in the Edo Period). In the twelfth month of Ansei 4, Shogun Iesada officially announced to all prefectural lords that a commercial treaty with America is unavoidable.

In the fifth scene, two men are fighting with a giant rat, which has swallowed oil and throws it up again. The hidden meaning is that the huge rat represents the 88 nobles at the emperor's court in Kyōto. In the first month of the year Ansei 5, Hotta Masayoshi, the chancellor of the Shogunate, applied for the emperor's permission of the finalization of the commercial treaty with America. First, the nobles assured their support, because they received a lot of money from the Shogunate. But on the twelfth day of the third month, they all neglected the treaty due to the emperor's order of disaffirmation. The huge rat swallows the oil from the lamp that has fallen down, which symbolizes the bribe presents of the Shogunate accepted by the nobles. Afterwards, the rat regurgitates the oil, which hints at the refusal of the nobles. The rat has a slightly negative reputation as a robber. The two men are Hotta and his attendant, the Finance Minister (*kanjō bugyō*) Kawaji Yoshiakira, who are fighting desperately with the rat.

In the sixth scene, the exhausted man who is carried in a palanquin, could be seen to represent Chancellor Hotta. He leaves Kyōto on the fifth day of the fourth month in Ansei 5 without the necessary permission. Here, the Japanese scene symbolizes the phrase '*noseyō to shita no ga noserareta*', which can be translated as follows: 'He who intends to harm another ends up harming himself' (English saying: 'to be hoist with one's own petard'). The two carriers of the palanquin are Ii Naosuke and his theorist Nagano Shuzen, who was ordered by Ii Naosuke to work against Chancellor Hotta in the court of the emperor. In mocking verses and *iroha*-card plays of that time, it also says about Hotta "*Shinku shite hotta kai nashi kara ido e kumo no shōnin hamari komaneba*" ("Although Hotta dug an empty [= not a real] well with all his might, the nobles did not fall into it"). Analogously, in another one it says "*Honeori zon no kutabire mōke Hotta Bitchū*" ("Vain efforts" – Hotta Bitchū"). He ar-

rived on the twentieth day of the fourth month in Edo.[11]

In the seventh scene, a man wearing a big basket on his head points at another man with a *nō*-fan. It is Ii Naosuke, recognizable due to the big basket (*dairō*), which indicates his position as the highest ranking chancellor (*tairō* = the Great Chancellor). On the 23rd day of the fourth month of Ansei 5, Shogun Iesada suddenly appointed him Great Chancellor through the inofficial intervention of the Nanki Party. Before the start of his career, he spent his time with Zen and the fine arts such as *nō*-theatre or the tea ceremony. Therefore, the second distinctive feature of Ii Naosuke in this scene is the *nō*-fan. The startled man is Chancellor Hotta Masayoshi, who has just returned from his long journey to the emperor's court in Kyōto. He is shocked to suddenly find a superior on his return to Edo.

According to the interpretation just presented, Yoshikazu painted these seven humorous scenes in an objective and chronological fashion, taking into account the events of the Shogunate Government starting from the second half of the year Ansei 4 up until the fourth month of the year Ansei 5. This form of representation was revolutionary in the history of *nishiki-e*-caricatures.

5. *Kyōga-e tehon 1* and *2*

About one year later, in the fifth month of Ansei 6 (1859), Kuniyoshi painted and published his pictures *Kyōga-e tehon 1 and 2*. In these, he used the same composition and style as in *Dōke kyōga* and proceeded with the time and events. The six scenes that are displayed in the caricature *Kyōga-e tehon 1* can be presumed to deal with the political events of the preceding year Ansei 5.

The half-naked man in the first scene represents the sick thirteenth Shogun Iesada, the toppled pillow signifying death. The snapping turtle biting the man in the finger represents Ii Naosuke, who was nominated for the position of Great Chancellor (*tairō*) on the 23rd day of the fourth month by the order of Shogun Iesada. The big basket (*dairō*) might be a play on words with his ministerial office (*tairō*). In the last scene of *Dōke kyōga* by Yoshikazu, Ii Naosuke appears with a big basket on his head.

In Kaei 6, after the death of the twelfth Shogun Ieyoshi, Iesada was appointed the thirteenth shogun at the age of 30. Iesada was mentally and physically handicapped and had no successor. The conflict of succession concerning the shogun, which had already started between the Hitotsubashi Party and the Nanki Party, reached its apex in the spring of Ansei 5. Several important lords belonged to the Hitotsubashi Party, with Chancellor Abe Masahiro as

11 The scenes six and seven in the *Nyoza rōsen kyo kibun* are discussed in reversed order.

its leader. Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu, the son of Tokugawa Nariaki, the former Lord of Mito, was nominated and supported because of his intelligence and maturity. He was 21 years old. The Nanki Party nominated und supported Tokugawa Yoshitomi, Lord of Kishū, because of his close family association (cousin) with the thirteenth Shogun Iesada. An intrigue was plotted by Mizuno Tadaoki, the highest ranking Edo resident of the Kishū principality, together with the mother of Shogun Iesada, against the Hitotsubashi Party. Shogun Iesada issued an order to appoint Ii Naosuke as Great Chancellor (*tairō*) in order to win the ongoing feud.

Ii Naosuke, who became *tairō* on the 23rd of the fourth month in Ansei 5, abused his legal authority, and on the 25th of the sixth month he appointed Yoshitomi as the fourteenth shogun. Ii Naosuke suppressed his political opponents as well as the Imperial Court by his handling of the question of shogunal succession. He also neglected the wishes to sign the America-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce granting ports and extraterritoriality to American merchants and seamen. As a consequence, a silent opposition grew among the Shogunate Government, the Imperial Court, and various lords.

When Naosuke came to know that the emperor's order - strangers had to leave Japan - was given not only to the Shogunate, but also to the Lord of Mito, he became furious and started the Ansei Mass Imprisonment (*Ansei no taigoku*) in order to support his dictatorial power. This action started in autumn Ansei 5 and lasted for more than a year. The followers of Mito and the Hitotsubashi Party as well as members of the *sonnō-jōi*-movement ('Praise the emperor and drive away the barbarians = foreigners') were put into jail, and many people were eliminated.

At the start of his period of office, the citizens of Edo honoured and praised him as the saviour of the Shogunate and of Japan. Kuniyoshi and his pupils produced many caricatures, and many poems and verses expressed the people's sympathy. For example: "Hoshi no kazu hodo otoko wa aredo tsuki to miru no wa nushi hitori – Hikone" (There are as many men as the countless stars, but only you are the moon – Hikone[12]").

Because of his inhuman and brutal actions which lasted a year, the citizens of Edo changed their opinion about him. The funny expression '*Tsuki to Suppon*' ('The moon and the soup turtle') fits his fame exactly, when he turned from best to worst. The character of *suppon*, like revengefulness and stubbornness, also fits his character.

In the second scene, two men in front of a Jizō-statue are running away in great haste. This scene deals with the crucial incident which occurred on the

12 The province of Naosuke

17th day of the sixth month. The American Consul General Harris, who was positioned at the temple Gyokuzen-ji in Shimoda, unexpectedly navigated the battle ship Powhatan in front of the bay of Koshiba at Yokohama and forced the signing of a trade agreement between America and Japan. The city manager of Shimoda, Inoue Kiyonao, and the inspector (*metsuke*) Iwase Tadanari are running in hot pursuit towards Edo Castle to pass the news. The famous Jizō statue, situated at Hashiba in Edo, might be used as a play on words for the similar sounding place name Koshiba, where the action took place.

The third scene shows four seamen playing the fistgame *ken*. The pirates in this scene allegorize the four countries Holland, Russia, England, and France. They are fighting with the help of the *ken*-game to be the first to get the same trade agreement as was concluded between Japan and America on the 19th day of the sixth month. The island in the background, overgrown by reed, symbolizes Japan which was called Ashiwara no kuni (Land of the Reeds) since ancient times.

In the fourth scene, a half-naked man with an opened fan is standing next to a giant rat, which is suppressing a weasel with a square object. This scene deals with the official announcement of the succession of the shogun. Ii Naosuke was nominated for the position of Great Chancellor (*tairō*) due to the inofficial, familial intervention by the Nanki Party at the shogun. Yoshinobu of the Hitotsubashi Party was rejected and Yoshitomi of the Nanki Party was elected as successor. The Nanki Party named itself Taichū Party ('great obedience'). The sound '*chū*' can be associated with the squeak of a mouse, which leads to the name 'giant rat'. This giant rat pushes down a weasel with a piece of *mochi*. The *mochi* here refers to Yoshitomi, who later changed his name to Iemochi. The *mochi* pushes down the weasel (*itachi*) in the middle, preserving only the outer parts of the word forming an '*ichi*' (one). Thus, the weasel represents Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu ('Hitotsubashi' is written with the Chinese characters for 'one' and 'bridge'). The half-naked man with the opened fan decides upon victory or defeat in the dispute of succession. It is, just as in the first scene, the thirteenth Shogun Iesada, who is still alive at this point in time.

The *mochi*-eating man in the fifth scene is Ii Naosuke, recognizable by the pattern on his kimono (*igeta*, which has the form of the first character of his name and is his family crest), and because of his big belly. He conducted the Japanese-American Trade Agreement without the approval of the emperor. The five plates, from which he has already eaten the *mochi*, may hint at the trade agreements with the five countries America, Holland, Russia, England, and France made in the year Ansei 5 (Ansei no gokakoku jōyaku), conducted without the agreement of the emperor. The man who visited him without admission and cross-examines him might be either Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu or

Matsudaira Yoshinaga, leader of the Hitotsubashi Party.

The giant octopus in the sixth scene might be a symbolic illustration of the cholera epidemic which ran rampant between the seventh and the eighth month in Edo. It could also symbolize the Ansei Mass Imprisonment (*Ansei no taigoku*), conducted by Ii Naosuke, or the incident of the poisoning of Shogun Iesada. The natural death of the thirteenth shogun was announced on the eighth day of the eighth month, but Iesada had already died a sudden and mysterious death a month earlier, on the sixth day of the seventh month. In Edo at that time, the question about a possible poisoning conducted by the leader of the Hitotsubashi Party, Tokugawa Nariaki, was of great interest to the public. In caricatures and humorous pictures, Nariaki is repeatedly represented as an octopus. Yet it is unlikely that the well-informed Kuniyoshi believed the false rumors for a whole year before painting the picture. Furthermore, if it were to represent the scene of the poisoning, the man caught by the octopus should not be wearing any clothes, as he does in the first and the fourth scene, identifying him as the thirteenth Shogun Iesada. Probably, this last scene represents the event of the beginning of the Ansei Mass Imprisonment on the eighth day of the ninth month, when Umeda Unpin, a samurai from Obama province, was arrested. Unpin is represented as a fisherman from Obama (= 'small beach', therefore a fisherman).

In the following passages, I will continue to analyse *Kyōga-e tehon 2*. The five scenes of the picture at hand deal with the 'punishment for appearing at Edo Castle beyond the compulsory time'. This was the official reason for the punishment of the Hitotsubashi Party which led to the fortification of the Shogunate dictatorship. The clean sweep ordered by Great Chancellor Ii Naosuke was conducted on the fifth day of the seventh month, Ansei 5.

The first scene shows the persecutors hanging onto a rope tied around a running horse from which a man is falling down. In this illustration, the famous *kabuki*-scene Ōiso e kakeru Soga Gorō (Sogo Gorō who is galloping to Ōiso) was chosen. Gorō, who is falling from the horse, is, in fact, Tokugawa Yoshikumi, Lord of the Owari domain, who was discreetly sent into retirement. The symbol of Owari, the radish (*daikon*), can also be seen falling down from the horse.

In the second scene, a man with a shouldered gun is running away from a great boar, another man is tossed by the fangs, and yet another man is carrying an opened umbrella while clinging to the boar. The background of this sequence is the fifth act of the play *Kanadehon chūshingura*. It is the famous scene in which Hayano Kanpei mistakes the bandit Ono Sadakurō on a rainy country road with a boar and shoots him. Beforehand, Sadakurō steals 50 *ryō* from Yoichibei, the stepfather of Okaru,

who is Kanpei's beloved. After Kanpei shoots Sadakurō by mistake, he takes the stolen money back. In the picture at hand, Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu (who was banned from the palace) does not shoot at Sadakurō, but at a big boar. However, he fails, shoulders his gun, and runs away. The big boar represents Great Chancellor (*tairō*) Ii Naosuke, recognizable due to the allusion of the 'big' boar related to the first Chinese symbol of his official title '*tairō*', which also means 'big', as well as the first and last sound of 'boar' ('*inoshii'*), which sounds the same as his name Ii. The men thrown into the air are Tokugawa Nariaki, placed under house arrest, the former Lord of Mito, and Yoshiatsu, banned from the palace, present Lord of Mito. Nariaki is the father of Yoshinobu and Yoshiatsu.

The man in the third scene, who is chased by a woman and caught by the scruff of the neck, can be recognized as the influential Lord of Tosa, Yamanouchi Toyoshige of the Hitotsubashi Party, placed under house arrest. This is indicated by his family crest *shiro kuro ichimonji* (white-black with horizontal strokes) found on the lantern which has fallen to the ground.

The man in the fourth scene, caught by a *kappa* at his loincloth (the string loincloth = Etchū *fundoshi* is hinting at his Echizen province), is the leader of the Hitotsubashi Party, General Matsudaira Yoshinaga, who was discharged and placed under house arrest.

The man falling out of the palanquin in the fifth scene is Shimazu Nariakira, founder of the Hitotsubashi Party who suddenly died on the 15th day of the seventh month, Ansei 5. He is recognizable by his family crest on his kimono *maru ni ju no ji* (symbol of a cross in a circle), as well as the fact that he is sitting in a palanquin (*kago*), an allusion to his province Satsuma in Kagoshima.

By examination of *Kyōgae tehon 1* and *2*, Kuniyoshi's political position can be clearly understood. There are some caricatures which do not correspond with the facts of history and were produced for commercial purposes based on a rumor. In these caricatures, Kuniyoshi did not deal in the least with the rumor about the poisoning of the thirteenth Shogun Iesada. Instead, he reported objectively on the political reality of the Shogunate Government under the leadership of Ii Naosuke from the beginning of his office period on the 23rd day of the fourth month of the year Ansei 5 to the beginning of the Ansei Mass Imprisonment in the ninth month of the same year. In Kuniyoshi's work, one can find the same tendency as in the picture *Dōke kyōga* of Yoshikazu.

6. *Tosa emakimono no utsushi*

On the third day of the third month of the year Ansei 7 (1860), after the Ansei Mass Imprisonment, Great Chancellor Ii Naosuke was killed in an act of revenge by a group of ownerless samurai, who before belonged to the Mito and Satsuma clan. This happened in front of the Sakurada Door of Edo Castle.

About seven months later, in the tenth month of the year Man'en 1, Kuniyoshi painted his probably last *nishiki-e*-caricature *Tosa emakimono no utsushi* (*Copy of a Tosa-Scroll*) (Fig. 7.)

In this work, Kuniyoshi presents the Ansei Mass Imprisonment as 'a fight with black ink'. This action resulted in the greatest number of victims in the history of the Shogunate.

In the upper part of the triptych, on the right side, there are some figures producing black ink, while the other figures are fighting each other with huge ink brushes. When Kuniyoshi painted the *nishiki-e* caricature *Bokusen no zu* (*The Battle of Black Ink*, Pl. 3) in the year Tenpō 14 (1843), which in composition and expression is rather similar to *Tosa emakimono no utsushi,* the rumor spread in Ōsaka that the picture was a political satire (Minami 1997: 108-109).

When comparing these two pictures, it is evident that in the *Bokusen no zu* version, fighting nobles and persons belonging to the court, like ladies and monks, are depicted. The *Tosa emaki mono* version, however, shows the quarrel of three groups: nobles, samurai, and foreigners. The heraldic figure *mitsudomoe* (three commas) on the flag on the right side of the picture shows the chaotic political situation and hints at these three groups.

Under the influence of the Nanki Party and his mother, the thirteenth Sho-

Fig. 7: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: *Tosa emakimono no utsushi*, *Copy of a Tosa-Scroll*,
Ōban-size triptych color woodblock print 1860, publisher: Echizen'ya Kajū. Private collection.

gun Iesada nominated Ii Naosuke for Great Chancellor on the 23rd day of the fourth month in the year Ansei 5. Through this nomination, he was made dictator of Japan. On the 19th day of the sixth month, Ii Naosuke conducted the Japanese-American Trade Agreement without the approval of the emperor. On the 25th day of the sixth month, Naosuke finished the long quarrel about the succession of the shogun, a quarrel between the Hitotsubashi Party and the Nanki Party. He nominated the young Kishū-Lord Yoshitomi to be the next shogun. In the autumn of 1858, Naosuke started the Ansei Mass Imprisonment. During this terrible action, he put the many followers of the Hitotsubashi Party and the members of the *sonnō-jōi*-movement into jail and killed ten of them (Konishi 1974: 133-150).

The male dancer wearing a *daruma*-doll on his head– Daruma is the founder of Zen-Buddhism – represents Ii Naosuke, who himself was an active Zen-Buddhist. Immediately after his murder, satirical verses were published about him. These verses sharply criticized the many wrong decisions of the Zen-Buddhist: “As he was a pupil of Daruma, his style of governing was quite different from the style of the first Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, who after his death himself became a Shintō-god. Naosuke lit fires to pray to Buddha, he practiced Zen-meditation, but he was not able to drive away our worst enemies, and he permitted that they came to us from all five countries” (Suzuki and Okada 1984: 415). This picture also shows the black Americans, who were especially hated. They were called ‘*bokui*’ (‘ink-black barbarians’). In the lower part of the picture, there is a figure in red. It is supposed to be Nagano Shuzen, one of Naosuke’s theorists who worked in the background of the Ansei Mass Imprisonment. On the left part, there is an old woman, who was probably Nagano’s concubine Murayama Kazue. She is fighting against the monk Gesshō, Saigō Takamori standing behind him. Both were victims of the Ansei Mass Imprisonment. With this work, Kuniyoshi criticized the politics of the Shogunate Government with a clear and emotionless mind. He criticized politics, which sank into the mud of chaos and could not take care of the poverty of the citizens, which had no concept against the threat from outside, and which aimed only at fighting for power.

On the fifth day of the third month of the year Bunkyū 1, four months after publishing *Tosa emakiono no utsushi*, Kuniyoshi, the great master of *ukiyo-e*, laid down his paint brush, and with great sorrow for Japan’s future he left this *ukiyo*, ‘the floating world’, forever.

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Hirokage Utagawa's *Picture of the Great Battle between the Vegetable and Fish Armies*: A Historical Study of Expression and an Analysis of its Origins

SHIMIZU Isao

In the middle of the Edo Period, the Japanese masses developed a sense of pleasure in comic pictures. *Toba-e* (comic picture) books such as *Toba-e sangokushi*, *Comic Pictures of Life in Three Cities*, and *Toba-e akubidome*, *Comic Pictures for Not Yawning* (Fig. 1), published in Osaka in Kyōhō 5 (1720), gained nation-wide popularity and subsequently, many comic-picture books were published. Alongside comic-picture *nishiki-e* (colored woodblock prints) and colored woodblock caricature prints, cartoons were enjoyed in the daily life of the people of Edo. These cartoons were published in the form of replicated art, mass-produced through the medium of woodblock prints.

The historical study of cartoon expression is one subject of research in Japanese cartoon history which spans over 300 years, from the Edo Period to the present. No ground has been broken yet in the research on the development process of how the expressions of comic pictures and caricatures evolved into

Fig. 1: *Toba-e akubidome, Comic Pictures for Not Yawning*, published in Osaka in Kyōhō 5 (1720).

the present-day styles, which is absolutely essential for elucidating the true nature of cartoons.

The 'balloon', for instance, existed even in the Edo Period. Being, at first, an expression of 'something in one's bosom' or 'something on one's mind', it was represented as coming from the character's chest. In the last days of the Tokugawa shogunate, an expression emerging from the mouth finally appeared. This developed into the cloud-like 'balloon' shape from around Meiji 18-19 (1885-1886).

At the moment, I am grappling with the issue of how a certain colored woodblock caricature print came into existence. It is the *Aomono sakana gunzei ōkassen no zu, Picture of the Great Battle between the Vegetable and Fish Armies* (Pl. 9), a triptych released by Utagawa Hirokage in Ansei 6 (1859). In the historical setting of the cholera epidemic of Ansei 5 (1858), the illustration has been explained as depicting the conflict between vegetables (food that does not contract cholera) and fish (food susceptible to cholera). According to recent research, however, it has become commonly accepted that this drawing made reference to the fierce hostility within the Tokugawa shogunate between the Nanki Faction, led by 'the General of the Vegetables, Mikan Dayū' (i.e. the fourteenth shogun Tokugawa Iemochi), and the Hitotsubashi Faction, led by 'the General of the Fish, Shachi Taishi' (i.e. Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu).

These interpretations aside, the aspects of the picture which fascinate me are the thorough caricature expression from one corner to the other, as well as the high level of skill. Almost all the caricature expression techniques of woodblock print which developed in the Edo Period are brought together in this work.

The incorporation of motion-like expression is particularly amazing. Takoiridō Yatsuashi, an octopus samurai-warrior, shoots a ray of light from its mouth, on which little octopi ride in a charge against the Vegetable Army, poised to strike with swords and wooden rods. This conveys the impression of motion in animation.

What kind of comic-picture expressions were amassed to create this picture, and which expressions hatched from it? The occurrence of the triptych-*ukiyo-e* expression can be seen as a precondition. The diptych and triptych are thought to have emerged in the Tenmei Era (1781-89) as formats spawned by the golden age of *ukiyo-e*. However, they also appear in comic pictures and caricatures of the Bunka and Bunsei (1804-30) Eras. The triptych *Taikō gosai rakutō yūkan no zu, Hideyoshi and his Five Wives Amusing Themselves in the East of the Capital* for which Kitagawa Utamaro was punished, was a work made in Bunka 1 (1804), and the diptych *Tōkaidō meisho ichiran, The Famous Places on the Tōkaidō Road in One View*, a bird's-eye-view panoramic

illustration of the Tōkaidō by Katsushika Hokusai, was a work of Bunsei 1 (1818).

Considering the works in terms of drawing technique, we find they have been composed and illustrated using the following seven overlaid comic-picture styles.

(1) *Yōkai-e*, goblin pictures (Illustrations of goblins ramming into each other): The scene is a depiction of two groups of goblins ramming into each other. This is a popular theme which developed around Tenpō 14 (1843), when Utagawa Kuniyoshi drew two kinds of triptych caricature pictures: *Minamoto Raikō-kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu, Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon* (Pl. 4) and *Koma kurabe banjō Taiheiki, The Taiheiki*[1] *on the Game Board, Comparing the Chess Pieces* (Pl. 2). The latter developed into a trend which continued in the following works: *Taiheiki mochi sake tatakai, Taiheiki of Sweets and Liquor in Contest* by Utagawa Hiroshige in the Kōka Era (1844-48) (Pl. 6), *Zen'aku jasei no gassen, Battle Between Good and Evil, Right and Wrong*, a triptych by Shigemitsu, and *Kanzen chōaku shingari banashi, Shingari*[2] *Story of Poetic Justice* (Fig. 2), a diptych by Utagawa Yoshifuji in the Kaei Era (1848-54).

Fig. 2: Utagawa Yoshifuji: *Kanzen chōaku shingari banashi, Shingari Story of Poetic Justice*, a diptych from the Kaei Era (1848-54).

1 The use of the expression Taiheiki in the title of this print is a pun on the medieval historical epic 'Chronicle of the Great Peace'.

2 *Shingari* can be translated as 'rear' or 'rear guard'

Fig. 3: Utagawa Yoshimori: *Yamahata dōke gassen zu,*
Picture of Battle Between Buffoons of Mountain Fields, a triptych from 1859.

(2) *Kassen-e*, battle pictures: At the beginning of the Ansei Era (1854-60), a transition occurs from illustrations of goblins ramming into each other to battle pictures[3]. Triptych battle pictures of various kinds were published in Ansei 6 (1859), the year Hirokage's *Picture of the Great Battle between the Vegetable and Fish Armies* was released. These are, among others, Utagawa Yoshimori's *Yamahata dōke gassen zu, Picture of Battle Between Buffoons of Mountain Fields* (Fig. 3), a battle between vegetables and fruit, and Tsuki-

Fig. 4: Tsukioka Yoshitoshi: *Daidokoro daigassen*, *Great Battle in the Kitchen,* a triptych from 1859.

3 For battle prints compare the contribution by Inagaki in this volume.

oka Yoshitoshi's *Daidokoro daigassen, Great Battle in the Kitchen* (Fig. 4), a battle between kitchen utensils and drawing room appliances. The publication of Hirokage's work coincides with this time.

(3) *Chōjū-giga*, scrolls of frolicking animals (comic pictures of animals, illustrations of beings with animal heads and human bodies): Hirokage's work offers a variation of comic pictures of animals with anthropomorphic expressions. The characters' faces appear to be either vegetable or fish and their bodies are human. This remains in the tradition of 'illustrations of beings with animal heads and human bodies', which can be found in the Kitora Kofun (Kitora Tomb Mound) in Nara. Most of the anthropomorphic expressions in Japan are in the style of the beast-head and human body, which is believed to have been adapted from China or Korea. Illustrations depicting whole animals such as scrolls of Frolicking Animals in the collection of the Kōzanji Temple of Kyoto are extremely rare.

Considering these circumstances, where did the rendering of a large octopus emitting light from its mouth in Hirokage's work originate? I postulate that the following two works of the Kōka Period were significantly influential.

(4) Kuniyoshi's *Gama sennin to Soma Tarōemon, Toad-Wizard and Tarōemon Soma* (Fig. 5), a triptych from the Kōka Period,

and

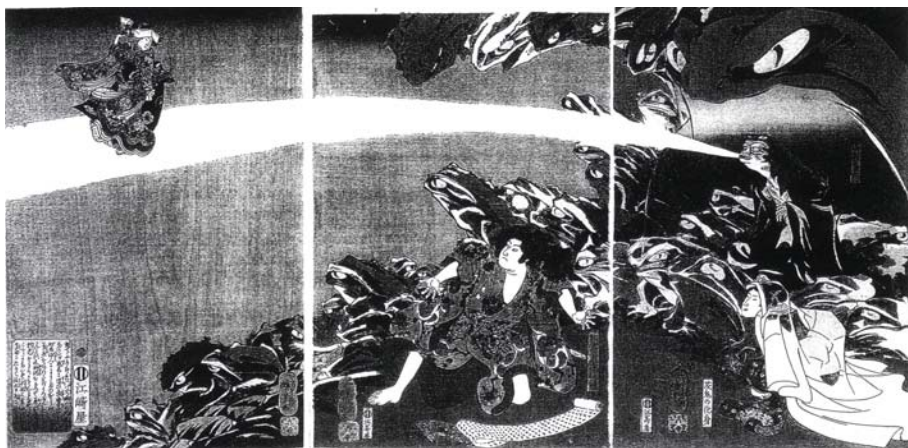

Fig. 5: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: *Gama sennin to Sōma no Tarō Yoshikado, The Toad Magician and Sōma no Tarō Yoshikado*, a triptych from the Kōka Period.

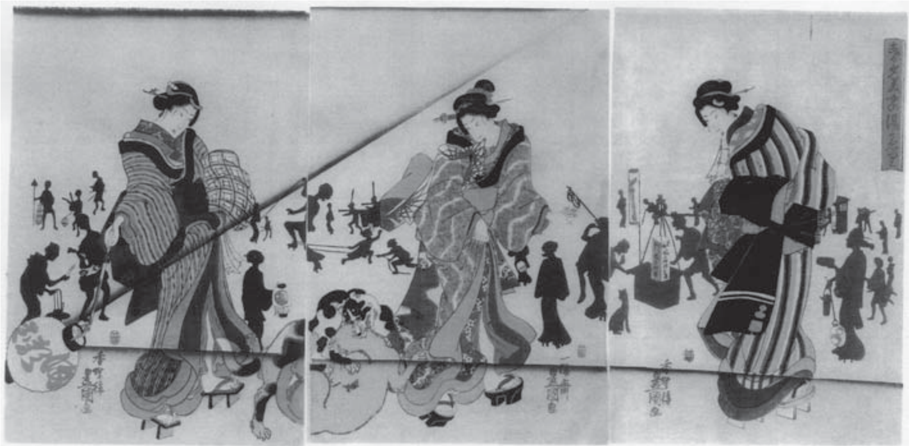

Fig. 6: Utagawa Toyokuni III: *Shun'yū bijo no yu no kaeri*, *Beauties Returning From a Bath on a Spring Evening*, a triptych from the Kōka Period.

(5) Utagawa Toyokuni's *Shun'yū bijo no yu no kaeri, Beauties Returning From a Bath on a Spring Evening* (Fig. 6), a triptych from the Kōka Period.

By looking at both works, the influence they had can be readily discerned, but what is remarkable about Hirokage's work is the expression of the little octopi inside the ray of light.

Fig. 7: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: [Utsushi-e o miru bijin to kodomo, Women and children enjoying an old-style movie], a fan print from 1832.

(6) Magic lantern pictures: The idea of the charging little octopi presumably derived from the expression of mobility illustrated in magic lantern pictures. These, again, consist of techniques resembling animation, the effects of movement obtained by moving the magic lantern's illustrations attached to frames of glass, or by making its light source flash. The magic lantern, invented in Germany and brought to Edo from Holland via Nagasaki, was shown in public at a teahouse in Kagurazaka in March of Kyōwa 3 (1803). As a consequence, shadow pictures and magic lantern pictures (Fig. 7) flourished and were soon considered public entertainment. Hirokage may have seen magic lantern pictures frequently, and he may have even been involved in their production. I cannot help but imagine magic lantern pictures in some way having inspired an incorporation of the animation-type expression into comic-picture ukiyo-e.

(7) Katsushika Hokusai's *Fugaku sanjūrokkei, Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji*. The expression of the wave on the left side of the scene, moreover, resembles quite strongly Katsushika Hokusai's *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji – Beneath the Wave off Kanagawa* (Fig. 8).

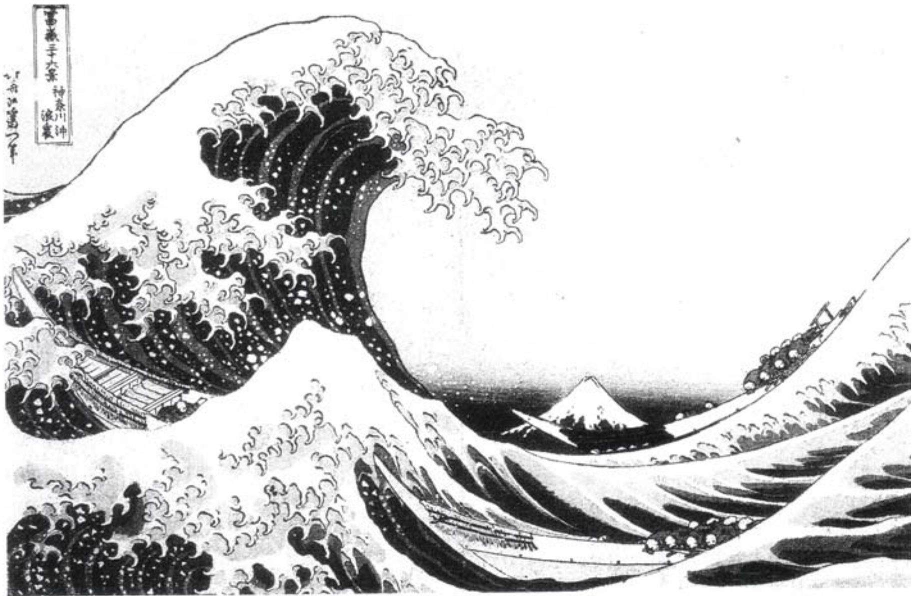

Fig. 8: Katsushika Hokusai: *Fugaku sanjūrokkei Kanagawa oki namiura, Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji – Behind the Wave off Kanagawa, ōban*-print from the early 1830s.

The analysis of expression techniques of single works from the viewpoint of the historical study of expression has hardly ever been attempted before. This is due to the lack of historical studies of expression in the first place.

The rapid development of caricatures in Japan from the last days of the Tokugawa Shogunate onwards was caused not only by the appealing content of caricatures, but also by their appealing expressions. As long as they were a commodity, colored woodblock caricature prints were forced to uphold their entertainment quality while caricaturing in a provocative fashion. The chronological discovery of relevant concrete examples is what I believe to be the research field of historical studies of expression.

All illustrations in of this chapter are from prints privatly owned.

‘Topic Prints’ in Bakumatsu Japan

TOMIZAWA Tatsuzō

1. Introduction

Ukiyo-e, the paintings for the pleasure of the town masses, appeared from the middle of the Edo Period onward. These paintings encouraged the development of production techniques, with design and duplication becoming feasible due to the eventual evolution from brush to woodblock printing, namely multi-colored woodblock prints called *nishiki-e*, created by Suzuki Harunobu (1725?-1770) and others. *Nishiki-e* were enjoyed by large numbers of people mainly in major cities such as Edo and Osaka. In Edo, particularly, many excellent works were born as a result of the collaboration of the three professionals, the *e-shi* (painter), *suri-shi* (printer), and *hori-shi* (wood engraver).

The themes of *nishiki-e* include *bijin-ga* (pictures of beauties), *meisho-e* (pictures of famous places), and *yakusha-e* (pictures of kabuki actors), among others. At the time of the Bakumatsu Period, the waning years of the Tokugawa Shogunate, artists such as Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III), who illustrated pictures of beauties and actors, *gokan sashi-e* (illustrations in multi-volume *kusazoshi,* a compilation of illustrated storybooks), and Utagawa Kuniyoshi, who struck a new path of *musha-e* (pictures of warriors) and *giga* (caricatures), were extremely active, producing a tremendous number of *nishiki-e.* Another notable feature of Edo *nishiki-e* of the Bakumatsu Period is the emergence of what can be considered *jiji nishiki-e* (‘topic prints’), works based on the themes of major events and incidents in Edo. In this paper, I will develop my discussion in order to establish ‘topic prints’ as a new genre of *nishiki-e*[1].

2. Kuniyoshi’s Caricatures

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1798-1861) was an *ukiyo-e* painter who left his mark from the Bunsei up until the Ansei Period. Having studied under Utagawa Toyokuni I, he was a popular painter in the league of Hiroshige and Kunisada (Toyokuni III, later referring to himself as Toyokuni II). He was especially versatile with pictures of warriors and caricatures. However, during the Tenpō

1 For a more thorough discussion see my book (Tomizawa 2004) on the same prints.

Reforms (Tenpō 12-14 = 1841-43) brought about by *rōju* Mizuno Tadakuni, the first minister of the Shogun's Council of Elders, policies were imposed banning luxuries, and strict control was exercised over entertainment and amusement. Since *nishiki-e* were considered a luxury item, in Tenpō 13 (1842), the themes, sales methods, prices, styles of depicting women, etc. were subject to drastic restrictions, and the *nishiki-e* world became depressed. Under such social conditions, Kuniyoshi illustrated the frustrations toward the Reforms in caricature nishiki-e, which were a big success among the common people.

In the following, we shall look particularly at three works as actual examples and consider the role they played in Edo's plebeian society beset by the depression of the Tenpō Reforms.

The triptych *nishiki-e Minamoto Raikō-kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu* (*Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō, where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon*) (Pl. 4) was published in the eight month of Tenpō 14 (1843). It is based on the Legend of the Earth Spider Monster (*tsuchigumo yōkai densetsu*), which is about a large spider monster appearing on the night when Minamoto Raikō is suffering from fever and ague. Just when it is about to pounce on Minamoto Raikō, his henchmen Shitennō (the Four Devas), Watanabe Tsuna, Sakata Kintoki, Usui Sadamitsu, and Urabe Suetake succeed in slaying the monster.

Though this legend was a famous theme that had been illustrated by another *ukiyo-e*-painter, the rumor spread that Kuniyoshi's *Minamoto Raikō-kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu* lampooned the Tenpō Reforms. The Edo masses at that time inferred that the various goblins and apparitions illustrated in the background represented the people of various occupations who suffered under the control exercised over entertainment and amusement as part of the Tenpō Reforms.

The situation of those times was recounted in *Fujiokaya nikki* (*The Diary of Fujiokaya*), in an entry of the tenth day of the first month, Tenpō 15 (1844) as follows: *Minamoto Raikō-ko yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu is a hanjimono* (pictorial puzzle) imitating the slaying of goblins and apparitions, and due to its great popularity in Edo, the publisher collected them back, fearing the authorities. There were even those punished for producing and illicitly selling at high prices works which looked like *Minamoto Raikō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu* (Sudō 1987-1995:2: 413-414). Thus, one can gather from this that the common people of Edo were unhappy with the depression following the Tenpō Reforms and enthusiastically applauded Kuniyoshi's caricature *nishiki-e*.

The respective research of Ishii Kendō, Kobori Sakae, Sawada Akira, Minami Kazuo, and others deciphers this work, and there is no doubt that

the Four Devas as well as the goblins and apparations have hidden meanings. For example, Minamoto Raikō, oppressed by a monstrous spider, represents the twelfth Tokugawa Shogun Ieyoshi, and Urabe Suetake, one of the Four Devas, is illustrated with the family crest of Omodaka, which implies that he represents Mizuno Tadakuni. There is an earlier painting of the slaying of the spider, in which Urabe Suetake is illustrated with the family crest of Omodaka, and the family crest of the Mizuno family happens to be the same. Kuniyoshi probably drew this picture in such a way so that if he was pressed for an explanation by the authorities, he could use this as an excuse.

Of course, the Edo Period is a time in which the sale of political caricatures to many unspecified people as well as any publication of rumors going around in society were strictly forbidden. *Minamoto Raikō-kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu*, however, was a *nishiki-e* that had been published after passing censorship. It was epoch-making for a political caricature, the publishing of which was strictly prohibited, to pass censorship, to be published openly, to be viewed by many unspecified people, and to be interpreted in various ways.

In the sixth month of Kaei 3 (1850), Kuniyoshi illustrated the triptych *nishiki-e Kitai na mei'i nanbyō ryōji* (Treatments of Obstinate Diseases by Unusual Quacks). In the seventh month, a rumor circulated that this *nishiki-e* satirizes the interrelationships of high-ranking officials of the Bakufu (the Shogunate, Japan's feudal government). The *nishiki-e* sold like hotcakes and the hand-printing process was barely able to keep up with the demand.

Kitai na mei'i nanbyō ryōji is a picture with a large amount of information, offering voluminous amounts of text with *kanji*- and *kana*-characters engraved around it, incorporating picture and text. In his research, Iwashita Tetsunori compared the content of this picture and its text with the actual high-ranking officials of the Bakufu Government. According to Iwashita, this picture was not only viewed by the plebeian strata, but also by the intelligentsia as information concerning the central political circles (Iwashita 1991, 1995).

The *nishiki-e Ukiyo Matabei meiga kitoku* (*Strange Interpretations of Ukiyo Matabei's Masterpieces of Ōtsu-e*, Pl. 7) was produced in the sixth month of Kaei 6 (1853). It was made in anticipation of Ichikawa Kodanji's performance of *Tsurekata yori koko ni Ōtsu-e* in the seventh month at Nakamura Theater, and features the portrait of the popular *kabuki* actor.

With the arrival of Commodore Perry's fleet at the shores of Japan on the third day of the sixth month of that year, Edo was thrown into confusion. When *Ukiyoe Matabei meiga kitoku* went on sale on the eighteenth day of the seventh month, the public began assessing the content of the illustration in various ways. The word *kan* is written on the left sleeve of the young man

on the upper left of *Ukiyoe Matabei* (the person on the lower right), prompted by Shogun Tokugawa Iesada having been called '*kansho-kubō*' (frail chief warlord). One rumor generated other rumors, and soon all the characters appearing in the *nishiki-e* were subject to some sort of conjecture. This picture was released upon passing censorship and neither Kuniyoshi nor the publisher were particularly punished for it.

How was it possible for Kuniyoshi to have illustrated *nishiki-e* such as *Minamoto Raikō-kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu*, which were either politically satirical, or lampooned current events? Minami Kazuo pointed out that satirical *nishiki-e* became popular due to anxieties of the social situation against the backdrop of recession caused by the Tenpō Reforms. This as well as the pressures from the outside world drove the satirical attitude of pictorial puzzles to grab hold of the spirit of the common people of Edo. Referring to the *Fujiokaya nikki*, Minami Kazuo has analyzed that among the 28 kinds of *nishiki-e* popular during the Kaei Period (1848-54), 17 kinds (68%) were satirizing the events of the day (Minami 1998: 175). During the Edo Period, frustrations towards statesmen were voiced in the form of gossip or anonymous posters. It was, however, possible to buy Kuniyoshi's satirical *nishiki-e* openly at booksellers in town. Duplicates of *nishiki-e* were probably circulated and read, and, consequently, several tens of thousands of common people of Edo interpreted the illustrations with a high level of interest in political information such as misgovernment or scandals concerning statesmen or approaching foreign powers.

Numerous people, regardless of social class or location, shared political information through the medium of publications. This became a power potentially capable of shaking the establishment and was conceived as a frightening prospect to the authority figures. And although secret agents of people in power had interrogated Kuniyoshi, he was never subject to severe punishment. Kuniyoshi's pictorial puzzle-format nishiki-e made it possible to make illustrations on themes satirizing politics and daily events which were strictly banned by the Bakufu. Kuniyoshi, who keenly sensed the atmosphere of the times can be considered the pioneer of 'topic prints'. These were published one after the other during the waning years of the Tokugawa Shogunate and the Meiji Restoration.

3. The Appearance of 'Topic Prints'

Kuniyoshi became prolific during the Kōka and Kaei Periods that followed the failure of the Tenpō Reforms. Appearing among the Edo *nishiki-e* were works that were based on incidents, rare events, and strange stories of

Edo. The following are noteworthy examples.

1. Publication in Kōka 4 (1847) of non-censored *nishiki-e* and *kawaraban* on the incident of the destruction of the statue of Enma-Daiō (the king of hell) of Taisōji Temple.
2. Appearance in Kaei 2 (1849) of *nishiki-e* of *hayarigami* (deities that became in vogue) in Edo, namely Datsueba (declothing hag) of Naitō Shinjuku, Otake Dainichi Nyorai (Otake Dainichi Buddha), Nihonbashi Okina Inari (Nihonbashi old man and fox deity).
3. Numerous appearances in Kaei 7 (1854) of *shini-e* (memorial pictures) and ‘topic prints’ of the suicide of prominent kabuki actor Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII
4. *Namazu-e* (pictures of earthquake catfish folklore) in Ansei 2 (1855) became an extremely hot item after the Ansei Edo Earthquake on the second day of the tenth month.
5. *Hashika-e* (pictures of measles), based on the big outbreak of measles in Edo, witnessed a boom in the summer of Bunkyū 2 (1862)
6. *Kodomo asobi-e* (pictures of children at play) and such *nishiki-e,* based on the Boshin Civil War, witnessed a boom in Keiō 3 (1867)

In this paper, I shall refer to these *nishiki-e*, which continually depict, in drawing and text, the major incidents, rare events, and strange stories published one after another in Edo as ‘topic prints’. Further, I will assess their appearance and acceptance as the distinguishing characteristic of the Edo *nishiki-e* world during the Bakumatsu Period, and examine them in terms of the consciousness of Edo common society. Throughout the history of research in this field, it has been pointed out repeatedly that *nishiki-e* incorporated the current events that became the talk of the town. Taking this into consideration, I have coined the new technical term ‘topic print’.

These various ‘topic prints’ depicted incidents occurring in and around Edo, with several dozen up to over 100 kinds of works published. Their designs manifest commonalities, from which we can infer that the *e-shi* (painters) copied each other.

3.1. The Relation to *Kawaraban*

Large numbers of *kawaraban* (illegal bulletins) were published in major cities such as Edo and Osaka and served as the source of information for the populace during the Bakumatsu Period. Prior to this, the bulletins of the Osaka Natsu no Jin (Osaka Summer Battle) of Genna 1 (1615) is considered the old-

est, though in recent years it has been regarded as belonging to a later period. Among those which have been determined up until now, the illegal bulletin of the Great Fire of Edo in Meiwa 9 (1771) is thought to be the oldest. The term *kawaraban* stems from the Meiji Period; during the Edo Period they were also called *yomiuri* or *ichimai-zuri*, among other names.

Nishiki-e (multi-colored woodblock prints) were produced and sold by *jihon donya*, publishers of pastime books, of Edo. The Shogunate Government in Edo issued a policy in which all publications were to be subject to censorship, and *nishiki-e* were sold after passing censorship. It is known that there were about 150 publishers of pastime books at around Kaei 6 (1853). *Kawaraban*, on the other hand, differed from *nishiki-e* in the way that amateurs and people on the periphery of the publishing field made and sold them. *Ōban*-size (approx. 26 x 39cm) was the standard size of *nishiki-e*, whereas *kawaraban* were of various sizes and even took the form of pamphlets. Furthermore, *nishiki-e* were printed vibrantly in many colors. Kawaraban, however, were usually printed monotonously with *sumi* (Japanese ink), and the paper quality was poor as well. Additionally, *kawaraban* were illegal publications which eluded censorship, and neither the author and nor the publisher are inscribed. A lot of them even lack a written date of publication, which needs to be inferred from their content.

Kawaraban reported on disasters such as fires and earthquakes, vendettas, joint suicides, strange stories of the appearance of ghosts and monsters, the arrival of *kurofune* (the foreign black ships), etc. There were hardly any works that criticized politics or the Tokugawa Government.

During the latter half of the 19th century, incidents such as the Zenkōji Temple Earthquake in Kōka 4 (1847), the arrival of Commodore Perry by black ship in Kaei 6 (1853), and the Earthquake of Ansei 1 (1854), became the subjects of *kawaraban* and were sold in Edo and Osaka as well as transmitted to the other regions. In this way, obtaining information and reading and understanding information flourished among the common people, whereby the active use and dissemination of information increased. The active use of information is considered one factor for the emergence of ‘topic prints’ that incorporated the major incidents of Edo and the surrounding areas.

4. Examples of ‘Topic prints’

4.1. The Destruction of the Statue of King Enma of Taisōji Temple

In the night of the 6th day of the 3rd month of Kōka 4 (1847), the eyes of the statue of Enma-Daiō, the king of hell, in Taisōji Temple of the Jōdo sect in Yotsuya were destroyed. The culprit was a man named Katsugorō. The man’s two children contracted smallpox and he had prayed to the statue for their recovery. However, not only the two children, but also his wife died. One night, passing by Taisōji on his way home after drinking, Katsugorō became enraged that his prayers had not been heard. He entered Taisōji, scrambled up the statue, and began destroying its eyes. Then, perhaps due to the miraculous power of the king of hell, Katsugoro suddenly cringed and tumbled down. He was captured by the attendants of the temple, who had been roused by the commotion (Sudō 1987-95:3:131-132).

In Edo, a number of ‘topic prints’ (Fig. 1) and *kawaraban* on the subject of this incident have been identified. These all contained illegally published matter that did not undergo censorship. At the time, uncensored *nishiki-e* were strictly forbidden, and publishers who violated the rule were fined. Apparently, the publishers thought little of this, as they were able to make a large profit by selling great volumes of illegal ‘topic prints’, as long as they paid the fine.

Fig. 1: Kuniteru: *Enma-Daiō*, *ōban*-print 1847 of the destruction of the statue of the Enma-Daiō (King of Hell) of Taisōji Temple.

4.2. Nishiki-e of Deities in Vogue

In Kaei 2 (1849), the wooden statue of Datsueba (declothing hag) in Shōjuin Temple of Naitō Shinjuku became the talk of the town and a deity in vogue (*hayarigami*). Datsueba refers to the old woman who strips the clothes off of the dead descending to hell before they cross the River Styx. A deity in vogue refers to deities which were temporarily popular and had an explosion of worshippers. In this year, Nihonbashi Okina Inari (Nihonbashi old man and fox deity) and Otake Dainichi Nyorai (Otake Dainichi Buddha) also became extremely popular.

Approximately 30 'topic prints' of these three deities in vogue have been identified, some having gone through censorship, while others had not. Many of these are works by Kuniyoshi, and it is known that he was particularly energetic about the production of 'topic prints'. Others have been identified as the works of Kuniyoshi's disciples, Yoshitora and Yoshifuji. The works' designs can generally be categorized as follows:

4.2.1 Designs of *Ken Asobi* and *Kubihiki*

This type of illustration depicts Datsueba, Otake Dainichi Nyorai, and Okina Inari playing *ken*, a fist game, or *kubihiki*, a tug-of-war game in which the players face each other with ropes shaped into rings hung around the back of their necks. In both cases, the illustrations show them in the state of 'draw' (ending in a tie). The depiction of these characters in a 'three-way struggle' or

Fig. 2: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: *Jiisan bāsan anesan ryūkō-ken*, *ōban*-print 1849 of new deities that came into vogue.

in a ‘draw’ (tie) signifies that they are in a state of contention, hinting at the entities ‘currently in fashion in society’ (Fig. 2).

There are variations of the game in which the winner and loser are decided by ‘three kinds of hands’ or *janken* (rock, paper, scissors), and this game was enjoyed by many people up until the beginning of the Showa Period. In Kōka 4 (1847), the *kabuki* play *Warau Kado Niwaka no Shichifuku* also dealt with a game of hands. This game was called *totetsuru ken*, and *kabuki* plays thereafter had occasionally used it as a theme. It had become extremely popular in Edo and was depicted in many nishiki-e. Linhart, who examined Japanese culture through the game of hands (Rinharuto 1998), has pointed out that *nishiki-e* depicting this game frequently use words such as “in vogue”, “very popular”, “a hit”, or “a smash hit”. He has analyzed that the pictures of the game of hands depict the fad items and persons who became popular at the time.

4.2.2. Designs of Praying Commoners

These are designs of people praying to Datsueba for personal favors (Fig. 3). The report-like pictures indicate the immense popularity of Datsueba, Otake Dainichi Nyorai, and Okina Inari. Pictures drawn of the deities in vogue are also thought of as embodying the aspect of being an object of faith or charm which protects against evil. Even those who were not able to go to Shōjuin presumably felt they could get some divine favor by buying and keeping the pictures of these deities in vogue.

In reading the content of the wishes mentioned by the visitors coming for

Fig. 3: Ichiyūsai Kuniyoshi: (Datsueba), untitled, *ōban*-print 1849 of a new deity that came into vogue.

worship in the picture, one finds that they hope for the fulfillment of simple wishes concerning everyday life. The publishers and painters seem to have caricatured those people who casually pray to the deities in vogue in the hopes of having such desires fulfilled.

4.2.3. Designs of Anecdotes

These are pictures of Datsueba and Okina Inari perplexed by the throngs of people coming to them with their wishes. The text inscribed around the picture is often an anecdote. Similar to the aforementioned designs of commoners praying, it can be considered a caricature of the people converging on the deities in vogue to have their prayers answered.

Comprehensively considering the design of the illustration and the textual content, we can observe that the 'topic prints' of the deities in vogue in Kaei 2 state: "Datsueba, Otake Dainichi Nyorai, and Okina Inari are deities in vogue that can make miracles happen and any wish come true", and "At present, worshippers flocking to Datsueba in Shōjuin Temple, the gracious deities of Okina Inari of Yokkaichi, Nihonbashi, and Otake Dainichi Nyorai to pay homage". This can be interpreted as sharply ridiculing the fad in the light of large crowds of people seeking to fulfill their selfish wishes.

It was strictly forbidden to depict any timely gossip or information concerning new religions in *nishiki-e*. Looking at the text on the 'topic prints' of Datsueba and Okina Inari, one finds cursory information on Yokkaichi and Shinjuku, the locations of the respective statues. Yet, there is no mention at all of how they won the devotion of many followers, nor of what kinds of this-worldly benefits and miracles they had achieved. It is conceivable that the painters and publishers had purposefully conveyed only vague information on current events through comical illustrations and text. By using moderate expressions, they were able to pass censorship, in order to transmit information about the deities in vogue to the townspeople of Edo.

4.3. 'Topic Prints' on the Suicide of Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII

Over a hundred 'topic prints' were published in Kaei 7 (=Ansei 1, 1854) concerning the suicide of Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII. They referred to the incident in the 8th month of Kaei 7, in which the popular actor Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII had committed suicide in Osaka. As a consequence of the policies strictly controlling pleasure and entertainment pursuant to the Tenpō Reforms, Ichikawa Danjūrō VII was banished from Edo. Therefore, his son Danjūrō VIII had to support the Ichikawa Family, which was prestigious in the world of *kabuki*. A gifted actor who also took good care of family and disciples, the son prayed

for his father’s pardon at the Narita-san Temple. Recognized for his modesty, frugality, and filial piety, he was rewarded by the Edo Bakufu. As a consequence, he was extremely popular and well-loved by the public. His suicide came on the heels of the lifting of his father Danjūrō VII’s banishment from Edo, just when he was about to soar to new heights. Numerous *nishiki-e* eulogizing him were published, and their varieties numbered over a hundred (Fig. 4).

During the Edo Period, when a famous person (such as *ukiyo-e* paint-

Fig. 4: Unknown artist: (Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII), *ōban*-print 1854 on the suicide of Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII.

ers, writers, *kabuki* actors, etc.) died, a memorializing *nishiki-e* called *shini-e* (memorial picture) was issued. Its design features a depiction of the deceased person in the center, with the person’s dying words or memorial writing in the upper section. As they were published soon after the death of the person concerned, there are some works that did not pass censorship, though apparently, the feudal government was lenient toward them. However, after the suicide of Danjūrō VIII, there was a large number of *nishiki-e*, aside from the usual *shini-e*, that scandalously speculated on the actual reason for his suicide. These suspicious ones had not passed censorship, and neither the painter and nor the printer were indicated. The *nishiki-e* on the suicide of Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII may be considered a typical case of ‘topic print’ of the waning years of the Tokugawa Period.

4.4. The *Namazu-e* of Ansei 2 (1855)

The Ansei Edo Earthquake occurred on the night of the 2nd day of the 10th month of Ansei 2 (1855) and caused heavy damage to Edo. Right after the earthquake, *namazu-e* (pictures of earthquake catfish folklore) sold like hotcakes as a result of a popular belief that earthquakes are caused by the giant catfish underground, held down by *kaname–ishi*, the cornerstone of Kashima Daimyōjin Takemikazuchi no Mikoto, the brave god of the Kashima-shrine, having a fit.

Up until now, nearly 200 pieces of *namazu-e* have been identified, which can be considered the 'topic prints' generating the greatest boom. In terms of their design, notable ones depict the Kashima Daimyōjin scolding the earthquake catfish that caused the Ansei Edo Earthquake (Fig. 5). Some also depict people who had fallen victim to the earthquake, beating the earthquake catfish. In other cases, there are also those which offer the complete opposite in terms of iconography, depicting workmen in the construction trade, such as carpenters and plasterers, warmly welcoming the earthquake catfish. What, then, is significant about the multifarious designs of *namazu-e*? The answer seems to lie in the situation of aftershocks and the rebuilding of Edo.

The aftershocks of the Ansei Edo Earthquake on the 2nd day continued both night and day for about a month, causing the disaster victims who had lost their household effects to spend days in anxiety. One *namazu-e*, depicting the Kashima Daimyōjin punishing the earthquake catfish, bears the inscription "a charm against earthquakes". This clearly indicates that they were "amulets to avert earthquakes", with the Kashima Daimyōjin as the main character. The

Fig. 5: Unknown artist: *Shoshiki gotakusen, Impertinent talk of various occupations, ōban*-print 1855 of the Great Ansei-Edo Earthquake (*namazu-e*).

common people of Edo, who had suffered damage from the earthquake and beat up the earthquake catfish, are depicted in such a way that they exude the sentiment of taking out one’s frustration on the earthquake. *Namazu-e* distinctly depicting the earthquake catfish that caused the disaster as the “culprit” probably sold during the period of the aftershocks.

The rebuilding of Edo, which began right after the Ansei Edo Earthquake, eventually was in full swing. The need to remove debris and move earth generated a large demand for labor, and craftsmen such as carpenters or plasterers were highly sought after. They were able to receive wages several times higher than normal and reap large profits. With the lack of workers, many people appeared to have become ‘temporary craftsmen’. The mansions of the *daimyō*, the feudal lords, which occupied half of the land of Edo, called craftsmen from their respective principalities and offered them high wages for mansion repairs. Such workers enriched themselves immensely, spending their earnings at open-air stalls and in brothel districts, and as a consequence, Edo had an economic boom.

However, wealthy people, like merchants, for example, were badly hit by the loss of homes and warehouses. In times of emergency, caused by earthquakes and fires, they had the obligation to perform *segyō* (charity) by donating to the disaster victims in town. One *namazu-e* even lampoons this practice and shows the earthquake catfish forcing the rich to cough up gold. With the affluent giving their fortunes to the needy and the reconstruction boom heating up, a large number of people came to feel that “the Ansei Earthquake brought social reform” and took fancy to *namazu-e* illustrated with a positive tone. Subsequently, *namazu-e* underwent a dramatic transformation, in which

Fig. 6: Unknown artist: *Jishin-yoke no myōhō, A good method to keep off earthquakes, ōban*-print 1855 of the Great Ansei-Edo Earthquake (*namazu-e*).

the "villainous" earthquake catfish was depicted as a "virtuous being" and was ultimately drawn as a "*yonaoshi-namazu*" (social-reform catfish) (Fig. 6). Kashima Daimyōjin and the cornerstone that had chastised the earthquake catfish disappeared from *namazu-e* as well. The earthquake catfish became the main character in the picture and finally, *namazu-e* appeared which illustrated it in the same light as the deities in vogue. During the aftershocks of the Ansei Edo Earthquake and the reconstruction of Edo, the iconography of *namazu-e* had made a 180 degree turn in a period of about two months.

In viewing the *namazu-e* the people of Edo successively published, we see that they were recovering from the damage caused by the earthquake, considering it positively as "having brought social reform". In contrast to the glorification of the boom, there were *namazu-e* which remembered those who had died in the earthquake, or which indicated that the temporary boom was coming to a close. In doing so, they added more depth to the world of *namazu-e.*

It is notable that none of the *namazu-e* had passed the censorship of the feudal government and were, in fact, illegal publications neither indicating printer nor painter. Most *namazu-e* were produced by the publishers of pastime books. The artists in the *nishiki-e* field in Edo were reduced to poverty by the earthquake, and in the interests of these artists' livelihood at that time, the government was lenient toward the illegal publication of *namazu-e*. However, about two months after the Ansei Edo Earthquake on the 14th of the 12th month, the government ordered all the printing woodblocks for *namazu-e* to be destroyed.

4.5. *Hashika-e* of Bunkyū 2

In the summer of Bunkyū 2 (1862), many *hashika-e* (pictures of measles) were published concerning measles break-outs in Edo, and about 90 pieces have been discovered up until now. A significant amount of influence from the previously discussed *namazu-e* can be seen in their design. However, unlike the illegal *namazu-e* which neither mentioned the publisher or painter, nor passed censorship, *hashika-e* were in many cases produced legally, identifying both painter and printer and fixed with a censorship stamp. The expert of "topic prints", Utagawa Kuniyoshi, had died in Bunkyū 1 (1861), but his disciples, Yoshitora, Yoshimori, Yoshifuji, Yoshitsuya, Yoshiiku, Yoshitoshi, and others, produced hashika-e. Many of the publishers appeared to have been newly established publishers of pastime books. The confirmation stamps consisted of two types, 4th month and 7th month Bunkyū 2, and the print size of many of them were prevailing *ōban* size.

4.5.1. Types of Illustrations

In these hashika-e, measles were thought to have been caused by the measles god, and in order to avert this pestilence, the picture was drawn in various designs. Generally, they can be categorized into the following seven types (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7: Yoshifuji: *Hashika okuridashi no zu, Pushing out the measles*, *ōban*-print 1862 of the measles epidemics in Edo (*hashika-e*).

4.5.1.1. Illustrations of Combating Measles (Beating with Fists, Coercion, Etc.)

Foods, vessels, and gods are shown punishing and suppressing the measles god and driving him away. Some are also composed of merchants, whose business became depressed due to measles, ganging up and beating up the measles god.

4.5.1.2. Illustrations of Praying to Gods, Heroes, Etc.

These are illustrations of people praying to Shōki, Minamoto no Tametomo, Handa Inari no Gannin Bōzu, and Kukurizaru, to name a few, trying to avert catching measles.

Shōki is a god in China believed to dispel epidemics, and even in present-day Japan the picture of this god is used as an ornament on the Tango no Sekku, the Boys’ Festival on the fifth of May.

Minamoto no Tametomo was a famous military commander of the late Heian Period. Defeated in the Civil War of Hōgen (Hōgen no ran 1156), he was sent from the island of Izu Ōshima into banishment on the island of Hachijōjima. His physical prowess and military power were said to even purge the gods of disease. The character of Minamoto no Tametomo was used as a representative design for *hōsō-e* (pictures of smallpox), which were intended for supplication in order to avert or recover from smallpox. However, as measles are similar to smallpox and lead to a rash, this design was drawn as *hashika-e* with the hope of being efficient against measles as well.

Handa Inari no Gannin Bōzu is a low-level man of religion who publicized the Handa Inari shrine, which gathered devotees due to the belief that it was effective against smallpox and measles. He wore red garments believed to ward off smallpox and measles and held a bell and prayer flag.

Kukurizaru is a stuffed-doll monkey. It is attached to the lower portions of flags during Tango no Sekku and on the backs of children's clothing.

4.5.1.3. Illustration of Charms against Measles

These are drawings of charms believed to avert measles. They include designs of measles-averting verses written on a holly leaf, a *daruma* doll, etc. People hoped that these pictures had magical power against measles and thought that merely by having them they would only suffer mildly, if they contracted the disease.

4.5.1.4. Illustrations of Foods Good and Bad for Measles

These are drawings of foods that are good to eat, or not good to eat, when afflicted with measles.

4.5.1.5. Illustrations of People Recuperating from Measles

These drawings depict people recuperating from measles, or those who have completely recovered and are healthy. They stress the importance of taking care of one's health.

4.5.1.6. Illustrations of a Three-Way Struggle Satirizing the Current Social Situation

By depicting a struggle, these drawings poke fun at the circumstances in Edo during the spread of measles.

4.5.1.7. Caricatures of Social Situations

These drawings show the following characters and situations: merchants who suffered losses due to measles, merchants who gained as a result of

measles (such as pharmacists and doctors), the god of measles and the god of smallpox, three people including those who have recovered from measles conversing with each other, and a scene of people playing game of hands and neck tugging, among other things. By illustrating people in deadlock as well as three people in respectively distinct situations, the drawing spoofs various interests and viewpoints of people in relation to the measles epidemic in Edo.

Furthermore, there are caricature-type works based on great scenes from *kabuki* plays. Looking at *hashika-e* mocking Edo's social situation, which was thrown into chaos by measles, we observe that these pictures offered the people of Edo the opportunity to laugh at their social difficulties. As well as being a means of cheering the people up, these pictures included a prayer for the end of measles.

4.5.2. Types of Written Information

Aside from their designs, the written information on *hashika-e* can be categorized into five types. Similar to the designs, the writing combines various ways of averting measles, and they convey information on treatment and recuperation.

4.5.2.1. Songs for Averting Measles and Information on Charms

The writing describes a method of slightly damaging a holly leaf, writing a measles-averting charm song on it, and casting it into a river. Other charms are also introduced, including putting a trough for horse feed on one's head, boiling various kinds of beans, and other ways of producing a decoction.

4.5.2.2. Dietary Treatment for Measles and Information on Contraindications

There are listings of foods, which are helpful and harmful when treating measles, based on medical books of the time and commonly known forms of folk medicine, as well as listings of acts to be desisted. In examining all the *hashika-e*, one can find the following "acceptable foods": "*azuki* beans, kidney beans, dried gourd shavings, Japanese radish, Chinese yam, carrots, and lily bulbs". In contrast, "foods and behavior to be avoided" are "*sake* (rice wine), sexual intercourse, bathing, moxibustion, hairdressing," to name a few.

4.5.2.3. Progression of Measles

Here, summaries of the appearances of measles, its symptoms, as well as its progression are shown. Many mention that the disease takes a favor-

able turn after twelve days since its onset and that 75 days are necessary for recuperation after recovery, the importance of the latter being particularly emphasized.

4.5.2.4. Years of Past Epidemics

The major measles outbreaks of the years and months prior to Bunkyū 2 are listed.

4.5.2.5. Stories and Humorous Writings

These essays, songs, and stories are intended to induce laughter. They tried to brighten spirits and encourage people by giving them a chance to laugh off the gloomy social situations in Edo, which saw itself in an economic depression caused by measles. Additionally, they were imbued with wishes for driving away measles.

The analysis of the designs and writings of *hashika-e* reveals the following: Numerous *hashika-e* with stamps of “4th month of Bunkyū 2” carry (1) illustrations of combating measles, (2) illustrations of praying to gods, as well as designs of gods or charms. In terms of written information, many deal with magical methods such as songs for averting measles, charms and treatment methods such as dietary treatment for measles and information on contraindications, and lastly progression of measles. We can surmise that the publishers foresaw that Edo would have a major measles epidemic in the summer of Bunkyū 2. Consequently, the *hashika-e* with “4th month” stamps presented iconography and writing as charms for averting measles, offering information on foods effective for treating measles as well as information on harmful foods and actions which ought to be avoided.

Compared to those of the 4th month, *hashika-e* with “7th month” stamps consist of fewer works carrying magical designs and writings. By the 8th month, the peak of the measles epidemic in Edo had passed and the publishers changed the contents toward designs and writings advocating “recuperation” after sickness. *Hashika-e* with “7th month” stamps offer a larger proportion of content, consisting of comical pictures as well as laughable stories and humorous songs. The publishers who had forecast the recovery of Edo from measles had probably foreseen that the people would have the leisure to enjoy satirical and comical works. Thus, they published such works beginning at the period when the measles outbreak was dying down.

Hashika-e were not only a constant vehicle for conveying an incident through iconographic and textual information that threatened the daily lives of Edo commoners. Moreover, they were also ‘topic prints’ that comprehensively presented ethnological knowledge, charms, and information on folk medi-

cine. The Edo *Bakufu*, the feudal government of Japan, had strictly banned incorporating “societal gossip” into publications and transmitting it to many unspecified people. Yet, it had probably permitted the publishing of *hashika-e*, judging that the information would be helpful in quelling the commotion of measles in Edo.

4.6. ’Topic prints’ of the Boshin Civil War Period

In recent years, the ‘topic prints’ of the Boshin Civil War Period, based on the themes of the feudal government during the Imperial Restoration period and the political dispute between the Satsuma and Chōshū administrations, have been attracting attention.

With the fall of the Shogunate Government in Edo in Keiō 3 (1867), the censorship of *nishiki-e* almost entirely stopped functioning amid the political chaos. As a consequence, ’topic prints’ appeared depicting the civil war, which under ordinary circumstances would had have been impossible. These pictures were published continuously since the first year of the Meiji period. They were designed depicting large numbers of children playing or adults engaged in Japanese chess and other competitive games. In this way, they portrayed the strife between the old guard siding with the feudal government and the forces siding with the new government. These ’topic prints’ are currently referred to as *kodomo asobi-e* (pictures of children at play) (Fig. 8) and *otona asobi-e* (pictures of adults at play), and the characters are shown either with family crests on their clothing or with special products of their

Fig. 8: Hiroshige III: *Osana asobi ko o toro ko o toro*, *The children‘s play ‘Catch the child!’*, diptych *ōban*-print 1868 of the Boshin War (*kodomo asobi-e*)

feudal domains. From a glance at these items, the people of those days would have immediately recognized which feudal domains the characters belonged to. Moreover, many of the works sympathized with the feudal government.[2]

Over a hundred *kodomo asobi-e* and *otona asobi-e* have been identified, most of them uncensored works of unknown painters and printers. It is amazing that "topic prints" treating political subjects had appeared in such great numbers. Nevertheless, although censorship was lax, the publishers and painters presumably sensed the danger in directly alluding to political strife which at the time was top secret. In *kodomo asobi-e* and *otona asobi-e*, which sold in the thousands and were viewed by many unspecified people, they hence used roundabout expressions through comical illustrations and resemblance.

5. Conclusion: The Significance of 'Topic prints'

During the Edo period, when major incidents such as famine, disaster, or epidemics occurred, the feudal government as well as the administrations of feudal domains did not officially make any reports on casualties, damage, or other such conditions. During the waning years of the Tokugawa Shogunate, foreign ships had occasionally reached Japanese shores. The administrators, however, were not obligated to notify the public of the purposes of the foreign ships' visit to Japan and made no official announcements. Thus, the common masses had to resort to information from the accounts of various people as well as letters and printed material.

In the waning years of the Tokugawa Shogunate, the amount of publications rose significantly and it became impossible to thoroughly censor all of them. In the major cities of Edo and Osaka, illegally published *kawaraban* were issued, which served as sources of information on disasters, the approach of foreign ships, rare events, strange stories, and other incidents that occurred from time to time. Amid the enhancement of information activities in the major cities, 'topic prints' concerning the major incidents in and around Edo appearing in Edo after the failure of the Tenpō Reforms, may be considered an important source of information for the common people. In comparison with the illegally published bulletins, 'topic prints' were legally printed matter, whose publishers and painters could be identified in many cases, and thus can be considered as having higher credibility than bulletins.

Among 'topic prints', however, there are those with printing and engraving of poorer quality compared to conventional *nishiki-e*, and, as in the case of *namazu-e*, some were occasionally issued without going through censorship

2 For details, please see the paper by Nagura Tetsuzō in this volume and Nagura 2004.and 2007

and without any indication of the painter’s or printer’s identity. The publishers were eager to swiftly publish, sell, and make money with ’topic prints’ depicting a particular incident, at the time the populace had an interest in it. Thus, we can conjecture that they resorted to simplifying illustrations, and even published materials illegally. Consequently, ’topic prints’ are easily viewed as mere ’off-beat works’ in terms of conventional *ukiyo-e* research. Yet in recent years, they have started to come into the limelight as historical material revealing the world of information held by the public as well as describing the folk customs of those times.

In this paper, I have shown with concrete examples how ’topic prints’ depict the major incidents in Edo as well as rumors floating about town – ranging from gossip on the miracles of deities in vogue, earthquakes, epidemics, and civil strife, to facts about the major incidents that the populace had no way of resolving. ’Topic prints’ were not rapidly produced illustrations of major incidents, but rather a form of media that, in accordance with the interests of the Edo populace, with incidents, and with occuring crises, consistently transmitted information on incidents through iconography and text, at times even providing magical formula. “Topic prints” did not contain direct information concerning incidents and were often inaccurate. The public, however, cross-referenced information with the help of other pictures, or else combined the information with information transmitted by word of mouth, thereby increasing the accuracy of their interpretation.

I consider the rigorous purchasing of ’topic prints’ conducted predominantly by Edo’s common people manifested their rising desire for information - for knowing about incidents that were extraordinary and beyond the circumstances of daily life, such as disasters, epidemics, rare events, and strange stories, as well as political information pertaining to the top-ranking government officials, to name only a few. Furthermore, the purchasing of ’topic prints’ mirrored the people’s enthusiasm toward obtaining information in the form of charms, practical procedures, and forward-looking satirical inspirations that would help in recovering normalcy in social life.

On entering the Meiji Period, the publishing laws of the former feudal government period had changed and the publication of ‘topic prints’ concerning disasters and political incidents had become common practice. Taking this into account, it is my aim to elucidate upon their actual conditions.

(Translator: Elon Simon)[3]

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Part Three:

CARICATURES FROM THE MEIJI PERIOD

Boshin War Caricature Prints in the Context of World History: Reflections on the People's Thoughts in the Formative Years of the Modern Japanese Nation

NAGURA Tetsuzō

1. Introduction

The approach taken in this report tries to illuminate what level of political thought the common people had reached by the closing years of the Tokugawa Bakufu (government) and the ensuing period leading up to the Meiji Restoration. In particular, an attempt to analyze the popular thought reflected in the Boshin War caricature prints from the perspective of world history will be conducted by means of comparing them to European caricature art of the same period.

In my previously published book *Fūshigan ishin henkaku – Minshū wa tennō o dō mite ita ka* (Nagura 2004), the main reason I devoted 140 pages to an investigation of Boshin War caricature works was the fact that many of them included depictions of the emperor, and, by analyzing them, it was possible to see how the common people perceived the emperor. In this current report, I will first present a summary of two masterpieces of Boshin War caricatures and then show the background circumstances that led to the birth of the perspective revealed in these works. After that, I will attempt to put the popular thought reflected in these Boshin War caricatures from the formative years of the modern Japanese nation into a world-history perspective by comparing them with European political caricature art.

2. Boshin War Caricature Prints: An Overview and Perspectives Revealed in Two Masterworks

2.1. Overview

With regard to this section of my report, I would like the reader to refer to pages 281-417 of my previously mentioned book for detailed explanations concerning the overview and the two works discussed here. However, I would like to give a minimal summary of the main points as they pertain to this report.

The Boshin War caricature prints that I have studied include the 135 prints

investigated up until the printing of my previously mentioned book as well as eight prints that I have studied since.

All of these caricature prints have as their subject the conflicts between the Shinseifu (the New Government) forces and the old Bakufu (the Tokugawa Shogunate) forces or the Ōu Reppan Dōmei (the Confederated Forces of the Northeastern Region of Japan) forces. The print publishers (*hanmoto*) and artists (*eshi)*, who created these works in collaboration, were fully aware of the identities of the respective domains (*han*) making up the forces involved in the conflicts. They were also aware of the circumstances under which they were fighting, and they used the device of caricature to express specific opinions about them. In doing so, the print creators went to considerable lengths to make sure that the common citizens who bought the caricature prints could, with some effort, eventually decipher their intended meaning, by providing inventive hints in the clothing, expressions, and written dialogue.

In this sense, these prints are clearly different from those of earlier *ukiyo-e* artists such as Utagawa Kuniyoshi, which were created on the premise that a number of different interpretations could be possible concerning the meaning of any given print. In contrast, the Boshin War caricatures were designed not only to provide clear evidence of the *han* and individuals represented in the prints, but also to provide leeway for denial of accusations about the identities in case of interrogation by the authorities of either the old or new regimes. This was done by developing a code of images to enable clear interpretation by the public. Using their growing knowledge of this codification, the people competed with each other in identifying the *han* and individuals depicted, thus interpreting the meaning of the caricature. For details about this codification, I ask the reader to refer to the code tables I prepared in my aforementioned book.

2.2. Two Masterpieces of Boshin War Satirical Caricature Prints

2.2.1 *Kodomo asobi tango no kioi*

Kodomo asobi tango no kioi (Fig. 1) is an illegal print, in that it neither includes the official seal of approval of the local authorities nor the names of the painter or the publisher. However, judging from other works, we can assume that it is the work of the painter Utagawa Yoshifuji. One look at the composition of this print tells us clearly of the subject of the handing over of Edo Castle on the 11th of the fourth month Keiō 4 (1868) to the New Government forces.

On the right-hand side of the print, we see figures representing the Satsuma

Fig. 1: Yoshifuji: *Kodomo asobi tango no kioi*. *Children‘s Play: The Powerful Spirit of the Boys‘ Festival, Ōban* color print 1868, Historiographical Institute, University of Tokyo.

and Chōshū domains in the New Government forces as they enter a home representing Edo Castle, which they intend to take over. The figure representing the New Government's selected castle administrator, Tokugawa Yoshikatsu of the Owari-*han*, has stepped forward from the group to peer into the house with an inquisitive expression on his face, as if to ask who the young occupant is. With the index finger of his right hand just barely visible protruding from the left-hand side of the building's corner pillar, he points in a way that implies that he is addressing the child inside, saying, 'You must be Kamenosuke.' However, there are no written lines for what Yoshikatsu is saying. Facing him from the left-hand side — in other words, from inside the castle — are Lady Tenshōin with Tokugawa Yoshinobu, the last Tokugawa shogun, behind her. In a position indicating that he is under the protection of Lady Tenshōin, the six-year-old (by the old Japanese age system) Tayasu Kamenosuke sits beside her. From the slightly raised position of his head, Kamenosuke seems to be asking, 'And who are you to be addressing me in this way?' Here, also, there is no written text. Tayasu Kamenosuke was the head of the Tayasu family — one of the three main Tokugawa families — and was placed in temporary charge of Edo Castle when the last shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, moved out of the castle to Ueno's Kaneiji Temple on the 12th of the second month Keiō 4 (1868) as an expression of his total submission to the New Government. Later, Kamenosuke would be renamed Tokugawa Iesato[1].

1 Please refer to Nagura 2004 and 2007 for reasoning behind the identification of these characters.

The production dates of this print are believed to lie in the middle of the intercalary fourth month of that year of the lunar calendar system, about a month after the handing over of the castle. Based on the fact that there was a custom among samurai and wealthy merchant families to celebrate the Boys' Festival (*tango no sekku iwai*) by displaying dolls dressed in samurai armor and flying carp streamers before entering the fifth month, this print is composed around a scene depicting a confrontation between children in this season. In it, the children representing the New Government forces have come to the house representing Edo Castle to take its Boy's Festival samurai dolls (upper left) by force.

Among the New Government forces, the Satsuma and Chōshū figures are depicted with fierce expressions on their faces, while the Tosa domain figures look somewhat distracted and are not even facing the house representing Edo Castle. This can be seen as an expression of the fact that the Tosa domain did not deploy its forces immediately at the outbreak of the Boshin War.

Also, on the old Bakufu side, the figures of Lady Tenshōin and Yoshinobu are depicted with meek, submissive expressions, while the Aizu domain leader Matsudaira Katamori looks on with an expression of chagrin at the fact that the Boys' Festival dolls (with their swords and armor — symbols of military strength and weaponry) are being confiscated.

From these elements, it becomes evident that the message this print intends to communicate is that the handing over of Edo Castle has, in fact, been a hostile take-over by the New Government forces, and that it is a very regrettable development.

Next, let us consider how Emperor Mutsuhito — later to be renamed Meiji Emperor — is portrayed in this print. First of all, we note that the emperor, who was17 (by the old Japanese age system) at the time, is actually portrayed as being less mature than Kamenosuke. We can see this as a device to stress the fact that the emperor has no capacity of making decisions on his own.

Furthermore, he stands between Satsuma and Chōshū, as if being protected by them, and is being led by the hand by Satsuma while wearing a hat with a basket (*kago*) pattern, which is a coded allusion to Kagoshima, the capital of the Satsuma domain. Also, beside Satsuma we find the inscription "Come into the house and get the heraldic flag (*nobori*) and Boy's Festival dolls (swords and armor)." The fact that the emperor is shown wearing a *kago*-design hat and that Satsuma is commanding him to "come" are clear expressions of the artist's wish to convey to the public that the emperor is no more than a puppet of Satsuma. Expressing this opinion is the reason the print has been created and the point of the caricature. However, the emperor was not in Edo at the time of the castle's hand-over. Therefore, we must consider why he was delib-

erately added to the scene.

The reason surely lies in the desire to warn the people that the forcible take-over of Edo Castle by the New Government, with the emperor as its figurehead, forebodes a probable campaign using the emperor to establish rule over Edo, and to warn them also that such a rule in which the emperor is a mere puppet of Satsuma is certain to be an oppressive one.

In the prints like these produced by publishers and painters, there was not the slightest hint of any concept of the emperor as a demi-god with sacred rights to power, such as those being promoted rapidly during the Bunkyū Era (1861-64). This is clearly evidenced in the print through the manner in which the emperor is identified. Here, the young child holds a goldfish (*kingyō*) on a string, which becomes a play on words with the common nickname for the emperor "kin-chan" (little boy Kin).

2.2.2. *Kodomo asobi hyakumonogatari*

Kodomo asobi hyakumonogatari (Fig. 2) is another illegal print lacking the seal of approval as well as the names of the painter and publisher. The composition of this print involves a folding screen representing the Shirakawa Barrier Station (Shirakawa no seki), which was a guard post and customs station at the entrance to the Northeastern domains. Behind the screen, one can see children representing the domains of the Ōu Reppan Dōmei (Confederated Forces of the of Northeastern Region Japan), whereas children representing the domains of the New Government and certain figures of leadership are depicted in front of the screen. It shows the children of the New Government side stumbling back in fear or starting to run away at the sight of the goblins brought forward one after another by the children of the Ōu side. In short, this caricature print expresses the hopes and expectations harbored by the people for the success of the Ōu Confederation's resistance to the New Government as well as the viewpoint that the New Government forces are afraid of the confederation. Another feature of this print is the especially strong satire directed at the nobles of the imperial family, as exemplified by the fact that the chief military commander of the campaign against the Hokuriku domain and Aizu domain, Takakura Nagasachi, is depicted as a frightened crybaby. This satirical handling of the imperial family and the emperor comes across with unparalleled strength in this work.

The image of the emperor given a piggyback ride by Satsuma while the children flee is a strong expression of the emperor's position as a puppet of Satsuma. The inscription has the emperor saying, "No more. I want to go home, quickly." In reply, Satsuma says, "But if you go home now, you will be scolded."

Everyone at the time was fully aware of the fact that the emperor had never gone to the Shirakawa Barrier, let alone to Edo. So, why did the creators of this print go out of their way to include the emperor? It was surely an expression of their deep opposition to the coming campaign against Ōu by the emperor.

The creators clearly recognized that if members of the imperial family were now becoming involved in the military campaign in the North, it was only a matter of time before the emperor also left the palace in Kyoto to become involved. Having the emperor say “No more. I want to go home, quickly” in the print was a well-aimed warning shot at the emperor at a time before the start of the northern campaign. Many other Boshin War caricature prints express a similar point of view, though we cannot include them here given the limited length of this essay. Those with interest in other examples may refer to my previously mentioned book (Nagura 2004) as well as my new book containing commentary on more than 50 works of Boshin War caricature prints and discussions of investigations of the consciousness of the citizens of Edo during the late Edo Period through the Ishin Period of the Meiji Restoration (Nagura 2007).

Fig. 2: Unknown artist: *Kodomo asobi hyakumonogatari*, *Children‘s Play: a Hundred Ghost Tales, Ōban* color print 1868, Historiographical Institute, University of Tokyo.

3. The Background and Premises of the Satirical Viewpoint[2]

3.1. The Background of the Critical View of Satsuma

It is a well-known fact that the burning of the Satsuma estate in the Mita area of Edo on the 25th of the twelfth month of the third year of the Keiō Era (1867) was an incident which occurred in reaction to the efforts of the Satsuma-*han* to provoke the Bakufu into war by engaging in a series of robberies in Edo and the surrounding Kantō region. At this time, Satsuma was pushing for military action to promote the move toward a restoration of the emperor as the head of a new regime (*ōsei fukkō*), as opposed to a returning of political rule to the Imperial Court by the shogun (*taisei hokan*).

This incident has been almost completely ignored by historical researchers. However, the important fact when considering the sentiments of the people of Edo is that it was widely known among the people that the series of break-in robberies, which began in the eleventh month, were the work of the Satsuma samurai and their hired *rōnin* samurai. Using the Satsuma estate in Mita as their base of operations, they struck at sites around Edo. Due to the fact that local officials (Edo *machibugyōsho*) issued warrants for the arrest of those Satsuma samurai still hiding out around Edo after the burning of the Satsuma estate, and with the stipulation that those who resisted arrest could be cut down on the spot, even the lowliest citizens in the Edo row houses (*nagaya*) knew all about the situation. In other words, from the eleventh up until the twelfth month of Keiō 3 (1867), Edo was full of fear and hatred for the Satsuma-*han*. What is more, the city was steadily preparing for war with Satsuma by organizing civilian militia made up primarily of local fire brigades (Edo *machihikeshi*) around the end of that year up until the New Year (KSK 18, 19, 2002-02). While this was happening, the Boshin War broke out on the third day of the New Year in the Toba and Fushimi districts of Kyoto.

These are the factors behind the appearance of many caricature prints critical of Satsuma that appeared after the New Government troops entered Edo Castle on the 11th of the fourth month.

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2 The contents of this section have been previously introduced by the author in January 2006 as a joint researcher for the National Museum of Japanese History. Please refer to Nagura 2010.

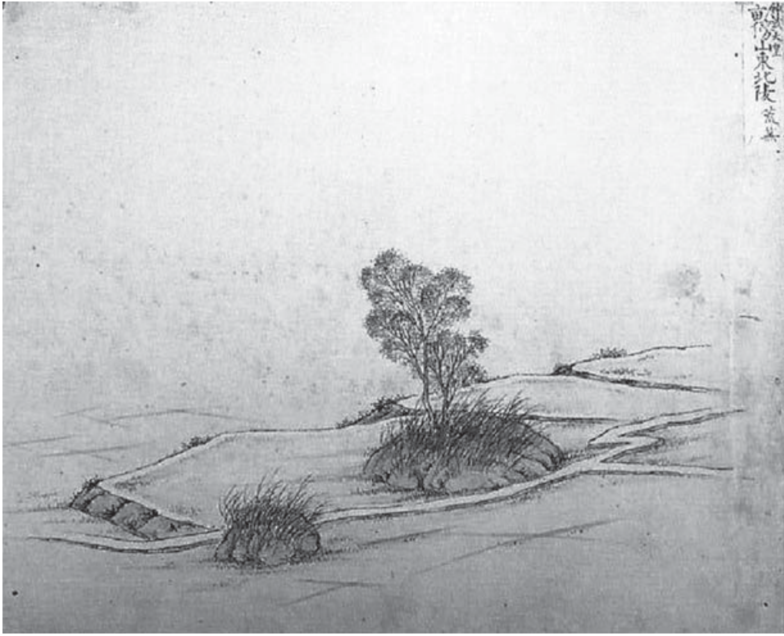

Fig. 3: The grave of Emperor Jinmu before its restoration (Nagura 2004: 95).

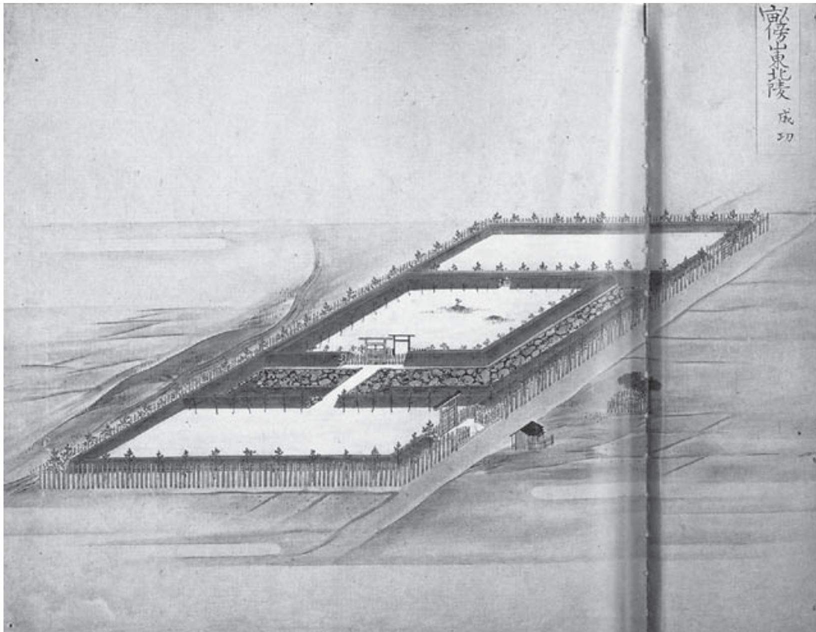

Fig. 4: The grave of Emperor Jinmu after its restoration (Nagura 2004: 96).

3.2. Precedents for Satirizing the Emperor

As precedents for the kind of satirizing of the emperor as a puppet of the Satsuma as well as criticizing the possibility of an imperial expedition that we have just seen in the two caricature prints, we can cite earlier cases of satirical criticism of Emperor Kōmei and the Imperial Court in literature and art, and criticism of the ideal of reverence for the emperor (*sonnō shisō*) as precedents for the Boshin War caricatures. I have cited many examples of this satirizing of the emperor and the Imperial Court in my previous book that the reader can refer to for further details, but I would like to cite just one more example here.

One of the philosophical anchors that the people, who eventually took control in the political conflict at the end of the Edo Period, depended on was certainly the concept of complete devotion to the emperor (*sonnō-ron*). However, this concept was also actively heightened and built upon through specific rites and projects, like the restoration of the past emperors' graves, which was undertaken from the third year of Bunkyū (1863) up until the first year of Keiō (1865). Let us look at the case concerning the grave of Emperor Jinmu.

Figure 3 shows a painting of the grave of Emperor Jinmu before the restoration. Figure 4 shows a painting of the grave after the restoration.[3] What we see is a completely new construction rather than a restoration. To begin with, Jinmu is not a historical emperor but a legendary one, and to say that this site was supposed to be his grave and to then restore it is indeed undertaking the construction of an entirely new monument.

Some of the graves were little more than the tops of small rises where the local farmers spread fertilizer to grow crops, and in some cases even the local lords gave permission to the farmers to grow rice there to pay their taxes. So, when the orders suddenly came for gravesites to be renovated and reconstructed, it was surely a troubling development for many local people.

This can be seen in the book of sayings and adages titled *Mitate iroha tatoe*, which was published in the Kinai area where many of the approximately 100 supposed "imperial graves" were restored by the first year of Keiō (1865). In this book of sayings and adages, the saying "*wiwashi no atama mo shinjin kara*" (some people pay reverence to odd and meaningless things), is found under the syllable for "wi"; coupled with the comment "*sanryō no goshūfuku*" ("restoring imperial graves").[4]

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3 Both illustrations of the grave before and after the restoration, *Bunkyū sanryō zu*, are in the possession of the Imperial Household Agency's Shōryō-bu and contained in Toike Noboru, "*Bunkyū no shuryō - kōbu to seikō*" in: *Rekishi kenshō tennō ryō*, Shinjinbutsu ōraisha 2001. Cited after Nagura 2004: 95 and 96.

4 Possession of the Historiographical Institute, University of Tokyo, *Shin Kikigaki* Vol. 3. Cited after Nagura 2004: 94.

Thus, there are numerous examples of this kind of biting satire in a wide variety of forms directed at the emperor and the court predating the Boshin War caricature prints, including humorous songs and poems. In short, behind the sudden increase in the volume and quality of caricature prints in the Boshin War period, we can find a corresponding spurt of quantitative and qualitative growth in satire in all literary and artistic forms besides prints.

4. The Boshin War Caricatures of the Formative Period of the Japanese Nation State in the Context of World History

4.1. A Comparison with the Caricatures of Europe

The history of 19th century Europe is a history of wars between nations, where the fortunes of the royalty and nobility translated increasingly into wars for the protection of the citizen's interests and fortunes. From a broader perspective, however, it can also be seen as a period when the wars prompted a rapid advancement of the common citizenry, the establishment of civil nations and, eventually, the movement to end war and to pursue the path of peace. From this perspective, it can be considered a period in which the form of governance shifted from kingdoms to republics, and relations between nations shifted gradually from an era of constant war to an era of coexistence between nations. Within this historical shift, we see the emergence of satirical caricatures as a medium for criticism of kings and political leaders from the viewpoint of the citizenry as well as criticism of war itself.

Within satirical caricature art, we find some examples which are similar in concept to those criticizing the emperor, the Satsuma-*han*, and the Chōshū-*han* in Boshin War caricature art. However, I would also like to present some examples of types that are not seen in Boshin War caricatures.

4.1.1. Similar Concepts

4.1.1.1. Great Britain, a Print by James Gillray 1803

After conquering Austria in 1797, Napoleon continued to expand his power strategically at an alarming rate, with his Egyptian Campaign in 1798 and the establishment of his dictatorship in 1799. At the time this caricature (Fig. 5, Takahashi and Ishizuka 1994, Fig. 169) was created by Gillray, Napoleon had become a threat to Great Britain as well. The small figure in the caricature is Napoleon. By depicting him in such an extremely small form and with a caption attached defining him as a harmful and dangerous reptile, Gillray is making fun of Napoleon's sudden rise to power, while at the same time reveal-

ing his dangerous nature. A similarity can be found here with many Boshin War caricatures depicting the emperor as a child and making fun of his power and influence at a time when, in fact, he was being hailed as a demi-god with sacred powers to rule.

Fig. 5: Caricature of Napoleon by James Gillray, 1803 (Takahashi and Ishizuka 1994, Fig. 169).

4.1.1.2. France, Honoré Daumier, 1833

This is a famous work by the great French caricature artist Honoré Daumier, first published in the journal *Caricature*, Vol. 140, on July 11, 1833 (Fig. 6; Abe 1992, Fig. 23). The fat man on the left wearing a hat is the French King Louis Philippe, while the thin man on the right is the Russian Emperor Nicolas I. The little man supported by Philippe is the King of Portugal, Don Miguel, and the little man supported by Nicolas is the Brazilian King Don Pedro. Clearly, the intention behind this picture is to reveal who the real backers of the feud between the brothers Miguel and Pedro are, which is well known.

This is again similar to the concept seen in the Boshin War caricatures in which the emperor is depicted as a child given a piggyback ride or led by the hand by Satsuma.

Although there is no room in this essay to introduce them all, there are, in fact, about 30 Boshin War caricature prints that show the emperor as an infant being carried on the back or shoulders, or being held in the arms of a young

figure.

From the examples we have seen here, it is clear that the ideas of portraying someone in the process of acquiring tremendous power as a dwarf while looking down on them, or showing kings being manipulated like puppets and revealing who the true wielders of power are, existed in Europe 50 and 30 years respectively before the appearance of the Boshin War caricatures which showed the same sensibilities. It is also clear that the background in which these developments took place saw the strong emergence of the civilian classes at a much earlier stage in Europe than in Japan.

4.1.2. Concepts not Seen in Boshin War Caricatures

Fig. 6: Caricature by Honoré Daumier, 1833 (Abe 1992, Fig. 23).

By the time of the Boshin War, the earlier development of a strong civilian class in Europe had led to more sophisticated concepts in caricature art than those seen in Japan during the same period. These are works that went beyond the framework of national or ethnic affiliations to express the cruelty and evilness of war itself. As examples of this trend, let us consider two works by Daumier.

4.1.2.1. Daumier, 1866

This is a work dated two years prior to the beginning of the Boshin War (Fig. 7) from the November 1 edition, 1866, of the famous journal *Charivari* (Abe 1992, Fig. 192). A figure that can be seen as the grim reaper, a morbid grin on his face, surveys a field of corpses and half-dead civilians. This was the year of the Austro-Prussian War in which Bismarck's Prussian army used the Dreyse needle-gun to kill Austrian soldiers and civilians alike and defeated the country in a matter of weeks. This work clearly depicts this devastation, and the figure of the grim reaper becomes Bismarck by association. Despite the fact that, as a Frenchman, Daumier has no direct involvement or stake in this war, he creates a powerful image of the inhumanity of war itself.

Fig. 7: Caricature by Honoré Daumier, 1866 (Abe 1992, Fig. 192).

4.1.2.2. Daumier, 1867

This is a work from the following year, the year before the Boshin War, which appeared in the August 1 edition, 1867, of Charivari (Abe 1992, Fig. 193). A female figure representing a goddess of peace is performing the sword-swallowing trick using a saber, the symbol of violence (Fig. 8). In this picture, we see a high-level humanitarian appeal by Daumier for the end of all war.

Fig. 8: Caricature by Honoré Daumier, 1867 (Abe 1992, Fig. 193).

4.2. Was there Direct Contact with European Caricature Art?

In the examples of European caricature art we have looked at thus far, Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 are very close in concept to the Boshin War caricatures. However, the similarities can be seen as concepts based in the inherent sensibilities from which satire arises and do not necessarily imply that any direct contact with European prints inspired their creation.

Nevertheless, in the process of studying large volumes of European caricature art, I happened to come across a print which suggests that a Japanese artist had seen it and taken an idea directly from it.

As I was studying with great interest page after page of the book *Fūshizuzō no Yorooppa–shi*, a translation of Eduard Fuchs famous work *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, edited by Norio Takahashi Norio and Ishizuka Masahide, I was suddenly taken by surprise when I turned to image 671 (Fig. 9). Although it is not a particularly famous work, the French artist Jules Renard Draner succeeds in creating a powerful caricature which makes fun of the Prussian military threat by depicting a Prussian artillery officer pulling a toy cannon. It was this toy cannon that caught my eye, and particularly the fact that the officer is pulling the toy cannon by a string.

If the reader will look once again at the print *Kodomo asobi tango no kioi*

Fig. 9: Caricature by Jules Renard Draner, 1865 (Takahashi and Ishizuka 1994, Fig. 671).

we examined earlier in this essay, you will find in the lower right-hand corner a similar toy cannon made of a beer bottle resting on a cart. For easier examination, I include a detail of that corner of the print here (Fig. 10).

Of course, the intention of the artist Utagawa Yoshifuji in using the device of a toy cannon made from a beer bottle is fundamentally different from Draner's use of a toy canon image in terms of satirical message. In the context of a satire on the New Government forces' take-over of Edo Castle expressed as a children's fight over the Boy's Festival dolls, the toy cannon represents the strength and fearsome threat of the Chōshū forces, having developed a new weapon in the form of wheeled 80-pound cannons, as I have noted in my previous book. In my opinion, however, it does not appear to be a coincidence that in both prints the cannon is being pulled by a string. Looking more closely at the prints, we also see that in both cases the cannon is in the lower right-hand corner. It can be said that in the case of an artist borrowing a compositional element from another artist's work, the position of that element within the picture plane is an important factor.

Comparing the two in detail, we can see that the sag in the line of the string is also similar. Another important point is the way the cannon string comes up behind Draner's officer and is tied to his saber, which is shown as an unstable and weak sword, almost like a toy. On the other hand, although Yoshifuji also

Fig. 10: Detail of Fig. 1.

has the string come up behind the Chōshū figure, his long sword is held firmly in an upright position, which expresses strength rather than weakness. We get the impression from this that Yoshifuji has taken another hint from Draner in the sword but has chosen to deliberately change the image from an unstable and weak-looking saber to a strong, sturdy-looking long sword.

This apparently deliberate reversal of the impression given by the sword can also be seen in the reversal of the direction of the cannon. Draner's cannon points in a random direction, which makes it meaningless, even as a toy. In contrast, when looking at the overall composition of Yoshifuji's print, we see that he has pointed his cannon directly at the house that symbolizes Edo Castle, as an expression of the strength and fearsome threat of the Chōshū forces.

Furthermore, Draner uses the sarcastic device of placing the gunnery officer himself on a wheeled platform, as if he were a toy. We can imagine that Yoshifuji saw this wheel device and decided to put his cannon on wheels to refer to the new wheeled cannon the Chōshū forces had just developed. When we consider the fact that none of the Boshin War prints by other artists use the combination of Chōshū and cannon as a visual device, it increases the possibility that Yoshifuji actually saw this Draner print and took the cannon idea from it.

Reviewing the facts, Draner published his print in 1865 and Yoshifuji cre-

ated his in 1868, which means a gap of three years during which Yoshifuji might have seen Draner's print. We can also consider the fact that the Edo Bakufu had strengthened its relations with France at the time and there were many French people visiting Edo. Furthermore, it is a well-known fact that the French art world had a strong interest in Japanese prints at the time.

The next work is one for which there is only circumstantial evidence of the possibility of having been seen by Japanese artists. However, I wish to present this famous work by Daumier as evidence of the French interest in Japan.

4.3. European Recognition of Japan – A Work by Daumier of 1867

This is a print made by Daumier in 1867 (Fig. 11), one year before the outbreak of the Boshin War. In adding my own interpretation to the former ones of E.H. Gombrich (1988) and Kiyasu Akira (2002), it can be said that this print represents the opinion that while Europe is in a state of tension in 1867, European countries are still managing to hold on to their balance and stability in Japan. The important point to note here is that the very fact that such a print was made in France at this time is an indication of the considerable interest the French artists had in Japanese politics.

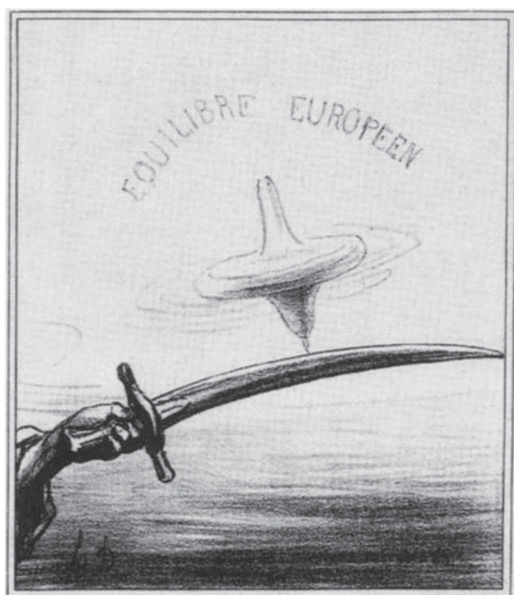

Fig. 11: Caricature by Honoré Daumier, 1867 (Kiyasu 2002, fig. 101).

The Boshin War caricature prints, which were issued in Japan in the following year, had sold a total of 300,000 copies by the end of March, and they were so popular that by the intercalary second April, sales seem to have more than doubled (Sudō 1995: 505). Also, the French, who were clearly interested in both Japanese politics and Japanese prints, would only naturally be interested in the Boshin War caricature prints.

The print by Draner we looked at earlier was a separately issued lithograph print, which means that it was unlikely to have been printed in a newspaper or other publications. This fact also strengthens the possibility that copies of it found their way to Japan. Considering these circumstances, and looking at the cannons depicted in the two prints, I believe quite strongly that Yoshifuji saw a copy of the Draner print that was brought to Japan from France.

5. The Historical Positioning of the Common People's Thoughts Reflected in the Boshin War Caricatures

Leaving the question of whether there was actual direct viewing of European caricature prints by artists like Yoshifuji at the level of an unproven possibility, I would like to examine in this final section the essential differences between European and Boshin War caricatures, while also attempting to position the common people's thoughts reflected in the Boshin War caricatures in a historical context.

In direct terms, European caricature prints are the works of individual artists, reflecting their unique viewpoints and individuality. In terms of content, they are also the products of a developed intellectual level, which differs slightly from that of the common people. Unique in their political perspective, they usually satirize the people in power and the political conflicts between nations from a civilian point of view.

In contrast, the Boshin War caricature prints are collaborative works created by a group of people including the *ezoshiya* (publisher = *hanmoto*), the *ukiyo-e* artist, and the woodblock carver, and the printer. Another characteristic of the prints of this period is the small number of distinguished works by *ukiyo-e* artists with strong individual styles, like those of the earlier Kuniyoshi and the contemporary Kawanabe Kyōsai.

This is due to the fact that when a print was created to express the interest of the people in the developments of the Boshin War as well as the criticism the people felt toward the New Government, the creative process began primarily with the publisher. The publisher decided what the subject of the print would be, and he chose the most suitable artist for the job. From there, the publisher and artist discussed what kind of composition the subject would best

be represented in, and the creative decisions were made in this collaborative process. In order for the publisher to create a print that would sell to the masses in great quantities, an *ukiyo-e* artist who could create easy-to-understand images was preferable to one with a strongly individualistic style. I would like to continue to look at these differences from a historical perspective.

When viewed from a general historical perspective, European caricature art developed within the context of the movement to win civil rights for the populace. Also, they appeared during the shift from parliaments based on social class to democratically selected parliaments, in other words, during the establishment of civil, democratic nations. Within these movements, the development of newspapers played an important role, and caricature art in Europe developed largely for this medium.

However, Japan did not even have a class-delineated parliament, and the caricature prints were not intended for news publications but sold individually as commercial prints. This is a very considerable difference.

In the case of Japan, while Bakufu magistrate town offices in Edo prepared for war with Satsuma, followed by the eventual outbreak of the Boshin War, the common people of Edo were completely shut out from political and governmental processes, despite a growing concern in politics. Furthermore, it is important to note that unlike in Europe, Japanese caricature prints were not published in newspapers where they would naturally have been seen by the citizenry. Rather the prints were sold individually one by one directly to ta public that was still completely outside of the political process.

Within this socio-political structure, the caricature prints that developed in Edo may not have had the type of universal anti-war message as seen in some prints by Daumier. Nevertheless, they did succeed in winning great popularity as a medium — thanks, in part, to the appeal of decoding the meanings hidden in the works. They also helped shape public political consciousness due to the efforts of the print publishers (*hanmoto*) and artists (*eshi*) to spread messages to the public. In this way, the people's awareness was raised regarding the emperor being a mere puppet of the Satsuma with no will of his own, and that a Satsuma-directed expedition by the emperor to win support would be detrimental to Edo.

Of course, another reason for the popularity of these prints was the fact that this was a period of leadership-vacuum in which no single authority had absolute power. The formerly stringent censorship that the publishing industry was subjected to under the Bakufu government began to crumble rapidly after the arrival of the Tosei forces in the second and third month of Keiō 4 (1868). Additionally, even after the New Government forces entered Edo Castle on the 11th of the fourth month, they were unable to exert any real

control over the citizens of Edo. This was the case throughout the fourth and the intercalary second fourth month up until the fifth month, when the New Government forces were further distracted by the outbreak of the Tōhoku War in Northeastern Japan. Control over the citizens of Edo strengthened rapidly after the establishment of the Edo governing system by the New Government forces, known as the Edo Chindai, on the 22nd of the fifth month. However, due to the ambiguity and increasingly complex codification of the Boshin War caricature prints, these prints were able to escape suppression and continued to be produced in considerable numbers.

In short, the great popularity of the caricature prints and the successive appearance of major works was the result of the unique socio-political conditions of Japan in the 1860s, characterized by the fact that the people of Edo were completely shut out of the political process despite their strong concern for political developments and the lack of newspapers or any form of mass media. This development was also hastened by the disintegration of the censorship function of the parties in power.

I believe that the Boshin War caricature prints attained the highest sophistication among all popular illustrations ever produced in Japan. After this period, the citizenry gradually began to be allowed some degree of participation in government and the production and selling of single-sheet prints itself declined, which, in turn, prompted the disappearance of popular high-quality political satire caricature prints.

I also regard the era starting from the end of the feudal period through the Boshin War as the period prior to the birth of the Japanese nation state. Furthermore, I consider the Boshin War caricatures as a form of political satire that was generated and shared among the citizenry on a mass level with content that pointed in the direction of the creation of a civil nation by and for the people.

The reason for the hatred of the Satsuma that circulated among the people of Edo was due to a very real fear deriving from actual events experienced by the people of Edo. Hence, it was only natural that the people would oppose being ruled by a new government whose central figures were from the same Satsuma domain. This government had orchestrated the series of break-in robberies that had terrorized the population, and used the emperor and his growing image of a leader with the divine right to rule, carrying the brocaded imperial standard, as their justification for establishing a new regime. Also, it was only natural that the people would detest the idea of an expedition to Edo by the emperor carried out by the Satsuma. This is the content of the political opinions of the common citizenry of Edo that we can read from the great popularity of, and support for, the satirical prints of the period.

However, despite being an expression of political opinion, these prints did not really present any constructive ideas, nor did they provide any clear vision of a civil nation for and by the people.

Rather, because a new regime based on the divine right of an emperor (who was, in fact, propped up by bureaucrats from Satsuma and Chōshū) did come to power and the dream of a civil nation for and by the people was pushed far into the future. It must be concluded that this satirical viewpoint contained ideas that would remain underground for another 77 years, until the defeat in World War II brought an end to the *kokutai* legislative body and a truly democratic government was installed. Furthermore, it is significant to remember that the satirical caricatures of this period were not the works of a few exceptional intellectuals but the products of a movement among the common people that spread in an extremely mass-cultural context.

In this sense, the Boshin War caricature prints had meaning as expressions of popular thought among the common people during the nascent period of the modern Japanese nation.

The political opinions expressed in the Boshin War caricatures were ones that could have actively contributed to the establishment of a national state for the people, since they were democratic and populace-based in nature. In other words, they were opinions that arose from the people. In that sense, they were democratic in thought and not the kind of narrow-minded nationalism we should be working to overcome. For this reason, I believe that there is a great deal that can be learned from the popular thought of the Edo people.

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The Caricatures of Kawanabe Kyōsai in the Works of Mantei Ōga

OIKAWA Shigeru

Mantei Ōga (1819-1890), whose real name was Hattori Chōsaburō or Hattori Kōsaburō, is known as an extremely conservative novelist of the end of the Edo Period and the beginning of the Meiji Period. He was the son of Hattori Nagasa Kōtō,[1] a rich moneylender. His father bought him samurai status in the Shimotsuma clan in the Hitachi district (today Ibaraki Prefecture), but Chōsaburō did not want to work as a retainer. He soon left the Shimotsuma clan and returned to Edo. He tried to live as a *kyōka* poet[2] and *gesaku* novelist (Okitsu 1966: 444).

Presumably, his first works were small guidebooks such as *Hauta Teodori Hitori Keiko* (*An Introduction to Hauta Song and Teodori Dance*) and *Chaban Hitori Anbun* (*How to Compose Comic Phrases*) published in 1837 at the age of eighteen, possibly just after he refused to enter the Shimotsuma clan. His first masterpiece was *Shaka Hassō Yamato Bunko* (*Eight Aspects of Buddha in Japanese Version*) published in 1845 by Kinjudō. At that time, he already had relations with *kyōka* poets and popular *gesaku* novelists such as Shōtei Kinsui (1795-1862), who was much older than him, and Baitei Kinga (1821-1893). Fortunately, the first volume of *Eight Aspects of Buddha* won popularity and he continued to write the following ones for more than twenty years up until the 58th volume in 1871. The success of this work made him an acknowledged young *gesaku* novelist.

Ōtei Kinshō (1869-1954) writes in his *Meiji no Omokage* (*Vestiges of Meiji*) that when they ate and drank in Edo restaurants, Ōga used to pay the bill for everyone, which shows that his superiority was recognized by the whole group. Ōga belonged to a rich family and behaved as a patron to satisfy his pride. It is even possible that he paid the cost of his first books to have them published.

Ōga believed that the Tokugawa regime would continue forever and that

1 The word *kōtō* corresponds to the third grade in the hierarchy of blind men. In the Edo Period, blind men were permitted to become moneylenders and were divided into four categories: *kengyō, bettō, kōtō,* and *zatō*.

2 *Kyōka* is a comic poem and *gesaku* a comic novel.

everyday life would never change. But while he enjoyed the old Edo novels, which were feudalistic and verbose, full of old fashioned morals and cheap puns, times were changing. In the summer of 1853, Commodore Perry came to the bay of Edo with American steamships and demanded that the Edo Government open the country. The Chōshū (today Yamaguchi Prefecture) and Satsuma (today Kagoshima Prefecture) clans began to move to overthrow the Tokugawa Government with the help of the emperor. In 1868, Emperor Meiji replaced the Tokugawa Shogun, and Meiji Japan rapidly engaged in modernization. Many people in Edo admired the new civilization and the European way of life. Kanagaki Robun (1829-1894) was the first on the list to praise the new lifestyle of western cultures. In his *Agura Nabe* (*Pot-au-Feu of Meiji*), modern Edo people eat beef and drink beer.

But Ōga thought that the new government was rustic and could not accept the rapid Europeanization of everyday life. After the 58th volume of *Eight Aspects of Buddha* was issued in Meiji 4, his publisher had to face a big fire and lost the woodblocks. The story was interrupted, but Ōga had already lost his readership to begin with. Within a few years, more than half of the population of Edo had come with the emperor from Chōshū, Satsuma, or other western countries, and was thus very new. In contrast, many samurai of Edo had left the capital after the retirement of the Tokugawa family to Shizuoka.[3]

Ōga's first encounter with Kyōsai took place in 1864, when Ōga asked him to illustrate the 53rd volume of *Eight Aspects of Buddha*. This novel had already been illustrated by Toyokuni III and Kunisada II. The subject of the 53rd volume is Handoku the fool. Handoku (Cudapanthaka) and his brother are made disciples of Buddha, but Handoku is a fool and despised by the other students. Buddha asks him to clean the garden with a broom. When Handoku obeys and continues to clean the precincts, he eventually reaches spiritual awakening. This is a famous subject of *nō* plays and Ōga wanted to illustrate it with *nō* scenes. But *nō* was a genre for the samurai class, and popular painters such as Toyokuni or Kunisada could not depict the scenes. Kyōsai came from a samurai family and was fond of *nō* plays himself. He had even built a *nō* theatre in his house.

Fig. 1 shows Kyōsai's illustrations of covers of the 53rd volume. They represent rather realistic images of *nō* actors and are very different from Toyokuni's or Kunisada's style. Though Kyōsai had published his first comic album

3 There is no reliable data concerning the population of this period. It is known that at the end of the Edo Period, the city of Edo had a population of about 600,000 inhabitants (excluding samurai). In 1871, the Family Register Law was proclaimed, and in 1872, about one million inhabitants were registered in Tokyo. The Meiji Government allowed people to move freely, which led to a great movement from the provinces to Tokyo.

Fig. 1: *Shaka Hassō Yamato Bunko, vol. 53*, *Eight Aspects of the Buddha in Japanese Version*, cover 1864-65.

Kyōsai Gafu in 1860, he was looking for his own style as a popular *ukiyo-e* artist. He illustrated not only this volume but also some of the covers of the following ones (Fig. 2). With the publication of the *ōban ukiyo-e* prints *Kyōsai Manga* by Tsujibun of around 1863, he made many comical caricatures and was on the verge of establishing his own style. His illustrations in the 53rd volume were very serious and far from the comical style, but between 1863 and 1867, through his relations with popular artists, novelists, and publishers, he published several illustrated books and more than a hundred prints in comical style. His comic subjects became very popular and together with Yoshitoshi, Kunichika, and Hiroshige II, he was considered one of the most important *ukiyo-e* painters of the time. Aside from *Eight Aspects of Buddha*, Ōga wrote many texts for *ukiyo-e* prints, for example, of Toyokuni, Kunisada, and Hiroshige. But from this period till the beginning of Meiji, we can see no direct relation between Ōga and Kyōsai.[4]

In 1872, Ōga published his first Meiji novel with illustrations by Kyōsai, *Ōdontaku Shinbun Kidan* (*Great Sunday, New Curious Stories*) (Fig. 3). Two bonzes, Anrakubo and Narakubo, visit Hell and Paradise, where they meet

4 Some of Kyōsai's prints, such as *Shinbun Kyōka-sen*, bear texts by Ōga, but they were published after 1874. At this time, it was rather Robun who added texts on the prints of Kyōsai.

Fig. 2: Cover of the 58th volume.

Fig. 3: *Ōdontaku shinbun kidan*, *Great Sunday, New Curious Stories:* The trip around the Hell and the Paradise, 1872.

many people, such as the mother of their master suffering in Hell, or heavenly maidens drinking, dancing, and singing in Paradise, an allegory of the corruption of modern Tokyo. Throughout their trip, Ōga tells his critics about the modern time. But the story itself has almost nothing to do with the new Meiji Period, except for a few new terms that had recently appeared such as *dontaku* (Sunday) and *shinbun* (newspaper). Puns were very popular among the people of Edo, and Ōga continued to use them.

Ōga's next work was *Seijin Kimo-tsubushi* (*Big Surprise for a Saint*), also of 1872, in which he began to criticize directly new aspects of the Meiji Period. He tells the story of Shunji, the son of an owner of a Chinese goods shop, who studies hard with a great teacher of Chinese morals, Shun-ō, a modern Confucius, and becomes the head of 3,000 students. But when he opens his own school, the children are bad and malicious and refuse to obey him (Fig. 4). His stepmother does not like him, his wife no longer wants to live with him, and his children want to leave home with their mother. He returns to his teacher and tells him that he wants to give up studying and live an ordinary life. In this comic novel, Ōga wanted to say that studies are useless, that the only important thing in human life is to work hard without paying attention to useless learning. He criticized directly the corruption of morals due to the changes in society.

Fig. 4: *Seijin Kimo-tsubushi, Big Surprise for a Saint:* Shunji's primary school, 1872.

During the past ten years, Japan had witnessed hard days and people had been struggling with ideologies. They did not respect the authority of the shogun, and low rank samurai had become high officials. Ōga's ideal was that people live simply in the traditional feudal regime, and he could not understand why people wanted to change a regime he himself considered to be perfect. Criticism against armchair theory is nothing new, and although Ōga was fully aware of the reality, he could not stop criticizing the times.

In the first years of the Meiji Period, Ōga must have had a difficult time making a living as a novelist. Robun became a popular writer and published many modern stories such as *Agura-nabe* and *Seiyō Dōchū Hizakurige* (*Shank's Mare Round the West*). Kyōsai made illustrations for both books. Ōga, however, was looking for something else. He could not ignore the influence of the new civilization, and wrote new poems for modern *kyōgen* plays.[5] He published five booklets of *New Farce Songs*: *Toribuyaku, Iroha-guruma, Ari-no-mi, Ureshiki-Azuma-goto* and *Eboshi-dori*, all of them illustrated by Kyōsai. Yet, they failed to attract an audience, and Ōga tried to look for other genres.

Times were changing so rapidly that Ōga had to admit that it was impossible for him to follow the mainstream. He then decided to try and persuade people to refuse modern times. He gathered ridiculous current trends and put them together in a book, *Bunmei Kaika Wadan Sansai Zue* (*Civilisation, Comical Encyclopedia of Modern Japan*),[6] also illustrated by Kyōsai, in which he criticized the changing aspects of the Meiji Period. He even made a parody of Emperor Meiji. In the chapter "Human beings", he depicted Emperor Ucho (Emperor Rapture) (Fig. 5) almost as an idiot. The time was still tolerant toward such kinds of disrespect. This small encyclopedia is full of parodies such as "robber of salary" (New Government official), or "large gold coin bird and small gold coin bird", which show birds carrying gold coins on their back representing modern misers. Ōga filled the book with his dissatisfaction, but it is obvious that he could not gain much sympathy from the public. In 1874 and 1875, Ōga published many small novels of twelve or sixteen pages, illustrated by Kyōsai. They are not particularly interesting as stories, and are noticeable only due to the puns or wordplays in the titles as well as the excellent illustrations by Kyōsai.

In *Gonbē Tanemaki-ron* (*Gonbē Sowing Seeds*), Kyōsai depicted a skel-

5 Kyōgen is a farce play accompanying *nō*. In the beginning of Meiji, there was a boom of new *kyōgen* called *Azuma-kyōgen* accompanied by songs and popular instruments such as *shamisen*. However, it remained ephemeral. With the resurrection of authentic *nō* and *kyōgen*, this new form of *kyōgen* disappeared.

6 The title is a parody of the famous encyclopedia of *Wakan Sansai Zue*, published by Terashima Ryoan at around 1712.

Fig. 5: *Bunmei Kaika Wadan Sansai Zue, Civilisation, Comical Encyclopedia of Modern Japan:* Part 3 Human beings, The Emperor Rapture 1873.

eton holding time and money in two baskets, running to Hell without using the knowledge he gained but could not put to use in his lifetime (Fig. 6). The two following volumes of this novel are *Tarobē Mizukake-ron* (*Tarobē, the Son of Gonbē, Pouring Water*) and *Magobē Kakkei-ron* (*Magobē, the Son of Tarobē, Running the House*). In the latter, Ōga divides people who study into three categories (Fig. 7): those who boast about their studies, those who study but learn nothing, and those, fewest of all, who study and learn. Ōga says the ratio of the last amounts to less than an interest of the bank. The bank was introduced to Japan a few years earlier, and Ōga knew it was a system to collect money from the poor people.

Chie no Hakari (*The Balance of Wisdom*) (Fig. 8) is one of the best stories in this group. A mayor of a small town invents scales which measure the weight of wisdom. He asks so-called wise men to come, but nobody agrees to step on the scales. He discovers that real wise men are few and the world is full of imposters. Kyōsai depicts two men on the scales. One is a scholar who studied for many years and the other a fool who did nothing but eat. Both are of the same weight. Ōga repeated this old theory many times (Fig. 9).

Kanagura Sandaiki (*Three Generations of Safes*) in three volumes also illustrates the old morals according to which one must work honestly. Iseya Kinkichi, born at Ishibe in Ise (today Mie Prefecture), is an old Edo mer-

Fig. 6: *Gonbē Tanemaki-ron, Gonbē Sowing Seeds:* They spend much money and time to study…, 1874.

Fig. 7: *Magobē Kakkei-ron, Magobē, the Son of Tarobē, Running the House*: Ratio of studies, 1875.

Fig. 8: *Chie no Hakari, The Balance of wisdom*, cover of the 1st volume, 1874.

Fig. 9: *Chie no Hakari, The Balance of Wisdom*: The Balance of a fool and a scholar, 1874.

chant of a pawnshop. His name means ‘stone and iron’, which represent the strength of his honesty. He works day and night and makes a big fortune. But his son, Kintarō, is a debauchee and spends everything. Then Kokinji, the son of Kintarō, comes and works so hard that he succeeds in recovering his grandfather’s shop. The story is nothing special, but Ōga used many puns using the term ‘*kin*’ or ‘*kane*’ (‘gold’ or ‘money’ in Japanese), such as ‘money bears money’, ‘money does not work’, ‘money sleeps’, ‘money is busy’ or ‘money quits’, which could have been understood and appreciated only by *Edokko* (people born and raised in Edo for many generations), who were fewer and fewer. Here again, Kyōsai depicts every pun with extraordinary images (Fig. 10).

Tokyo Hanagenuki (*Pulling out Hairs in the Nostrils at Tokyo*) offers no particular story, but one illustration shows Kyōsai’s personal interpretation of Ōga’s obsession. “You often see strange creatures in the street” (Fig. 11) shows two groups of people, one dressed in modern clothes, and the other in traditional ones, though both are represented in an excessive manner. Ōga wanted the old-fashioned people to symbolize normality, but Kyōsai was more severe. To him, all Japanese were more or less frivolous and unreliable.

Seirō Hankatsū (*Mumbling of Gay House*) in three volumes is a kind of introduction to the licensed house. Edo was famous for its amusement quar-

Fig. 10: *Kanagura Sandaiki, Three Generations of Safes*:
Money bears money, money does not work, money sleeps, money is busy, money quits, 1874.

ters. Prostitution was not considered shameful and from the beginning of the Tokugawa dynasty, Yoshiwara was the biggest amusement quarter in Japan. Not only rich merchants but also samurai used to visit the houses and appreciate the gorgeous *oiran*. *Oiran* were extremely well educated courtesans who played musical instruments, wrote poems, drew calligraphy, and made rich conversation with their clients. For Edo people, to meet such courtesans was a dream. Clients had to learn to behave themselves like gentlemen in front of them. They also had to be educated, and very often they were thrown out of the house because of their rustic attitudes. Ōga invented a young countryman who comes to Tokyo to study European sciences and language but soon gets acquainted with an *oiran* called Sasugano in Yoshiwara. He spends all his fortune to visit her. Ōga, who knew the manners of the place, explained some aspects of the gay houses. "Three levels of *oiran*" (Fig. 11) shows the levels of women in the gay houses, comparing them to the *Amitabha Buddha*. *Jōhon* is the highest, *chūhon* medium, and *gehon* the lowest level. As good clients are rare, good *oiran* are also very rare and most courtesans are *gehon* (Fig. 12).

In *Baka no Dai-myōyaku* (*Wonderful Drug for the Fool,* 3 vols.), Ōga repeats the same story again. A doctor invents a wonderful drug which can turn a fool into a wise man. He goes to town to try this miracle drug but is unable to find a single patient. He sees a fool who, in fact, is a very clever man,

Fig. 11: *Tokyo Hanagenuki, Pulling out Hairs in the Nostrils at Tokyo:* You often see strange creatures in the street, 1874.

Fig. 12: *Seirō Hankatsū, Mumbling of Gay House:* Three levels of Oiran, 1874.

Fig. 13: *Baka no Dai-myōyaku, Wonderful Drug for the Fool, 3 vols.*:
Wonderful Drug for the Fool, vol. 2, cover, 1874.

and a man who seems very intelligent but who is a fool and refuses to try the drug. The story shows that people's appearance can be misleading and that it is difficult to see their true nature. Ōga referred to *Handoku the Fool* in the second volume, and Kyōsai represented the same figure (Fig. 13) as the one he had used on the cover of the *Eight Aspects of Buddha*. It is clear that Ōga and Kyōsai agreed on the fact that a truely wise man was rare and hidden among ordinary people.

The collaboration of Ōga and Kyōsai followed for more than 30 works, and Ōga wrote in the last page of *Wonderful Drug for the Fool* that "thanks to the publisher Yamazakiya Seishichi, I worked hard for two years and could earn 100 yen." In fact, the publisher announced more than 30 titles, but some were never published.[7] He had been a patron of many poets and novelists during the last years of the Edo Period, such as Baitei Kinga, Chikuyosha Kinpei, Santei Kinsho, and Furumori Kinjo (Okitsu 1966: 445). Some of them had left the group and succeeded in writing new novels which matched well with the new Meiji-enlightened period. Kanagaki Robun became the most popular novelist and described several aspects of modern Tokyo people. Fusō Hiroshi was also a successful novelist, though his talent was inferior to that of Robun.

However, Ōga was too naive to bear these changes, and after his publisher lost the woodblocks of the *Eight Aspects of Buddha*, he was no longer requested to write novels or poems. Yamazakiya was an old friend and lent him a helping hand. Knowing that Ōga was too conservative, the publisher permitted him to write anything. Ōga might have asked Kyōsai to help him, too. Kyōsai had drawn many illustrations for Robun's or Fusō's new novels. Both Robun and Ōga were his friends and differed only in their ways. Kyōsai knew that the modern scenes Robun described were superficial and that Ōga's ideas were anachronistic. His illustrations were never obedient to either. Very often, Kyōsai's caricatures were much more persuasive than the texts, and sometimes they even had nothing to do with them.

In 1875, a new journal, *Chōya Shinbun,* severely criticized Ōga, saying: "Recently, all the publications from Shōsetsusha (Yamazakiya Seishichi) are by Ōga…Their ideas are against social common sense. He wants women to keep their teeth black or to shave their eyebrows, and he despises the European hair style. He insists on keeping the sword. He despises the Western-style clothes. He loves the ancient times and hates modernization. I conclude that his books are utterly harmful, and recommend keeping them away from children."[8]

7 A few works have illustrations by Yoshitoshi, but almost all have Kyōsai's illustrations.
8 *Chōya Shinbun*, 25th February, 1872.

Fig. 14: *Ten no Ami, Ichi no Toragari, Tiger Hunting with God's Net*: Hunting a tiger, cover and frontispiece, 1878.

Fig. 15: Frontispieces of *Mumbling of Gay House.*

At around the end of 1875, Ōga fell ill, probably due to cerebral paralysis, and he could not continue writing old-fashioned novels. A few works were left unfinished. In 1878 or 1879, Ōga recovered a little and wrote the last volumes of the unfinished works. He published *Ten no Ami, Ichi no Toragari* (*Tiger Hunting with God's Net*) in 1878 (Fig. 14) and *Konna Mono* (*Something Like This*) in 1880. In 1880, he also published the third volume of *Shūshin Chiyomigusa* (*Thousand Glasses of Moral*), and this is the last publication from Yamazakiya (the first and second volumes had been published in 1875). Aside from the ordinary illustrations of Ōga's books, we must examine some impromptu images by Kyōsai. The back page of a frontispiece is always left blank, and Kyōsai added there some rapid drawings which have nothing to do with the text (Fig. 15). The quality of these improvised images shows the real genius of the painter.

The times had changed completely and after his illness, Ōga was no longer able to live as a novelist. For example, he had to write guidebooks for spas, such as Kusatsu and Shuzenji. Kyōsai was always a faithful friend to him, and anytime Ōga needed his illustrations, Kyōsai would make them. In 1880, Kyōsai illustrated a guidebook of Shuzenji Spa in Izu (today Shizuoka Prefecture). Shuzenji was a spa where Kyōsai had undertaken medical treatment in 1871, when he was released after his arrest at a painting party.[9]

Eight aspects of Buddha was suspended after the 58th volume, but Ōga developed the novel until the 62nd volume, and the complete story was published in two volume books bound in Western-style in 1885 by Kinkōdō. In it, Kyōsai added magnificent illustrations on the frontispiece (Fig. 16). The other illustrations were made by Ōgata Gekkō. The illustrations by Kyōsai were far from Japanese traditional paintings. He filled all the pages with abundant images. In general, a Japanese painting preserves blank space, whereas European paintings are said to avoid empty spaces. Kyōsai's illustration of Hell is filled with scenes of the Seven Hells. In the burning Hell, the dead suffer from heat, boiling water, and flame; in the black iron rope Hell, they are winded with an iron rope and put into a pot to be crushed to pieces; and in the people's Hell, they are tortured by horse-head and cow-head guards. Kyōsai illustrates these scenes in detail and puts them all on one page, but he does not forget the salvation. A mother, the goddess of mercy, saves a baby and brings it to Paradise.

Ōga's last novel is *Meiryō Futabagusa* (*Clear Two Buds Grass*), published between 1883 and 1888 in eight volumes. The books were illustrated by Kunichika and Yōshū Chikanobu, but Kyōsai made the covers for all of

9 On the 6th of October in 1870, at the occasion of a painting party held at Ueno, Kyōsai was arrested by the police when he depicted a caricature satirizing the New Government. He was imprisoned for three months and released next January. He stayed at Shuzenji Spa to cure his weakened body.

Fig. 16: Hell, frontispiece of *Shaka Hassō, Eight Aspects of Buddha*, new version 1885.

Fig. 17: Kyōsai: *Meiryō Futabagusa, Clear Two Buds Grass*, wrapper illustrations, 1883 till 1888.

the volumes, and these illustrations may be considered as the most beautiful woodblock illustrations of the time (Fig. 17), in a period, the second half of Meiji, when very few woodblock-printed books were produced. During this period, the *ukiyo-e* illustrators worked mainly for the frontispiece *kuchi-e* of the modern magazines, and few artists aside from Kunichika, Chikanobu, Gekkō, and Kyōsai worked on woodblock-printed books. Ōga's last books were the last traditional Edo Period *gōkan kusa zōshi* (illustrated novels).

The biographer of Ōga, Okitsu Kaname, said that the final years of Ōga were literally miserable and that he died in extreme poverty, attended by his equally miserable daughter, on the 3rd of August, 1890 (Okitsu 1966: 445). However, other documents in Kyōsai's picture diary contain lively representations of Ōga. He is shown as a long-headed old man, and his other name Manji 卍 is inscribed on this head. In the diary entry of the 9th of May, 1887 (Fig. 18), he is described as lying in bed, smiling. Kyōsai writes on his head, "Manji comes home." In the diary entry of the 3rd of January, 1889 (Fig. 19), Ōga comes to Kyōsai's home to pay him the traditional visit for the New Year's greetings.

Fig. 18: Kyōsai's Diary: 9 May 1887, "Manji comes". Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

Fig. 19: Kyōsai's Diary, 3 January 1889, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

Ōga outlived Kyōsai by one year. Kyōsai did not leave any criticism on him. He liked Robun's merry books on Meiji enlightenment, but he also appreciated Ōga's outdated ones. He understood both aspects of the new Meiji Period and was able to illustrate both equally well. Ōga's and Robun's books have survived mainly because of the quality of their illustrations made by Kyōsai.

All the illustrations are from works in the author's collection, except Fig. 18 and 19.

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Kobayashi Kiyochika: Pictures as Weapons

Reinhard ZÖLLNER

1. Preface

It is safe to say that no other artist has inspired our visual imagination of Meiji Japan as profoundly as Kobayashi Kiyochika (1847 - 1915). His graphical works embody much of the spirit of his age, or more precisely: they mirror the mentality of a representative segment of modern Japanese society. Kiyochika was born and raised as a member of the lower ranks of the samurai class, and it comes as no surprise that his political attitudes as well as his way of life more or less reflect his upbringing and the general track that many of his peers opted for. Born in 1847, young Kiyochika fought for the last Tokugawa Shogun, Yoshinobu, during the short civil war of 1868, and he followed his disempowered lord to his new fief in Shizuoka. With the suspension of all fiefs, the abolition of samurai status, and the pay-off of samurai stipends in the early 1870s, Kiyochika and his fellows had to look for other sources of livelihood. As a retainer of the old shogun, Kiyochika could not aspire to a position in the new government. Sooner or later, many previous Tokugawa supporters found themselves in opposition to the so-called Meiji oligarchs, whose overwhelming majority originated from the anti-Tokugawa movement of the 1860s. Although not an outspoken partisan of the political opposition, Kiyochika, as can be seen from his works, sided with the movement for freedom and civil rights (*jiyū minken undō*), the big political movement sustained by former samurai and the rural upper class. He propagated ideas both liberal and nationalist in content, and voiced his fellows' opinions through the most modern media of their age: posters, newspapers, and magazines. Falling back on an old passion he had pursued in his boyhood years and, as a youngster, abandoned only to concentrate on the now pointless martial arts, Kiyochika took up a career as an artist after returning to Tokyo in 1874. Around this time, Kiyochika literally turned his sword into a brush. As a painter and drawer, he gained fame and glory. Yet fight and battle continued to be important subjects of his work, although his oeuvre also comprises many peaceful, idyllic sceneries and grave portraits. This self-educated artist – unlikely to have received any formal training in painting – mastered many genres and styles, but what made his artwork so particularly popular and effective was the readiness

with which he adopted new techniques and perspectives without giving up the older traditions entirely. Kiyochika may have achieved this exactly because he was self-taught and did not feel obliged to any particular school or tradition.

Kiyochika's works are far too numerous to be considered in detail in this paper. His caricatures alone amount to thousands, some of which Shimizu Isao (1982; see also Smith II 1988) has already introduced. Between 1876 and 1881, Kiyochika became popular for his *nishikie* landscapes, genre scenes, and portraits that employed Western perspective. From 1881 onwards, however, he suddenly turned political. His first political cartoon appeared in early 1881, and in the same year, Kiyochika started publishing a single-sheet *nishikie* series called *Kiyochika Punch* (*Kiyochika ponchi*). At least two of the eleven extant prints had political meanings and may thus be considered caricatures. In 1882, Kiyochika created another series by the title of *Thirty-Two Faces* (*Sanjūnisō*), which was extended to *One Hundred Faces* (*Hyakumensō*) in the following year. Although these pictures were not political, they were comical and satirical in content and reflected attitudes and life-styles Kiyochika thought to be typical for his contemporaries. In 1884, a series on *One Person, Six Faces* (*Hitori rokumensō*) followed, demonstrating Kiyochika's preoccupation with and mastery of facial expressions, grimaces, and particularly mouth and lip movements. These are, needless to say, indispensable skills for any caricaturist. A series on *Twelve Faces of Drunkenness* (*Sake kigen jūnisō*) as well as another one on *Drinking Habits* (*Sake kuse*) both started in 1885 and made the same use of facial expressions to elaborate on a topic that was very personal for Kiyochika, who at the time was known to be a heavy drinker himself. All these works fit in the category of social parody and did not offend particular individuals or political developments.

Kiyochika's political involvement, however, became best expressed in the more than 1,600 caricatures published in *Marumaru Chinbun* (abbreviated *Maruchin*), the leading satirical magazine, between 1882 and 1893 (Shimizu 1991: 64-77). These were mostly drawn in black and white, to which, from 1885 onwards, monochrome lithographs and, between 1886 and 1890, some colorized lithographs were added. The first Sino-Japanese War in 1894 and 1895 gave Kiyochika ample opportunity to express his talent in both serious and parodist woodblock series. While his more than 70 battlefield triptychs abounded with heroic pathos that extolled the virtues of the Japanese troops, Kiyochika's single-sheet caricatures titled *Long Live Japan: One Hundred Selections, One Hundred Laughs* (*Nippon banzai hyakusen hyakushō*) amount to an even greater number and disgrace the Chinese enemies in any possible way a gifted caricaturist could think of. The reactions of Western contemplators were quite controversial. While Nathan Chaïkin, in a 1983 publication on

Japanese art during the war, calls them "appallingly bad caricatures, offensive to our taste" (Chaïkin 1983: 36), and thereby articulates an anachronistic sense of political correctness, their reception was markedly better in the age of Imperialism. The first Westerner to comment on them may have been an American by the name of D. P. B. Conkling, who noticed them during a stay in the Japanese countryside in 1895 and, in a remarkable essay, left a number of important observations about them. He was fascinated with the popularity of what he calls posters or cartoons about the war:

> "Every teahouse had its series, and all the shops in the bazaars were full of them; and wherever a poster was in sight an admiring throng was sure to be seen. A new style of drawing seemed to go hand in hand with the new idea, and even an understanding of our perspective was appreciable." (Conkling 1896: 936)

Conkling was very content with their technical qualities:

> "The accuracy of detail in the uniforms of both Japanese and Chinese soldiers, the care given to all anatomical points […] show very favorably in comparison with much of the same sort of work seen here. In color light tones are used, and there is very little sharp contrast. In printing almost the same care and finish are shown as in the long line of more carefully executed woodcuts, which, from early in the seventeenth century, have maintained a standard seldom equaled by other nations, and never excelled." (Conkling 1896: 936-937)

He then goes on with a detailed and sympathetic discussion of four prints of Kiyochika's *One Hundred Selections, One Hundred Laughs* series. He makes out "a tendency to the new style of drawing" with Western perspective (Conkling 1896: 937) and concludes "that even in art the Japanese are reaching out toward European methods." (Conkling 939) Since Conkling never mentions Kiyochika's name, we cannot know, however, whether or not he realized that all these posters were drawn by the same artist.

Long Live Japan: One Hundred Selections, One Hundred Laughs was not the only series produced by Kiyochika during the war. Another, lesser-known series was called *Amusing Pictures of the Sino-Japanese War* (*Nisshin sensō shōraku gakai*). After the war ended, Kiyochika changed the title of his most popular series into *The Magic Lantern of Society: One Hundred Selections, One Hundred Laughs* (*Shakai gentō hyakusen hyakushō*). This was not about warfare and satirical abuse of the Chinese anymore, but instead made fun of

social life and customs in Japan. Between 1897 and 1898, Kiyochika repeated this mild social criticism in a *nishikie* series called *Iroha phrases* (*Iroha dango*). They ridiculed modern, trendy behaviour where it challenged common sense.

Finally, in 1904, with the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, Kiyochika revived his popular *Long Live Japan: One Hundred Selections, One Hundred Laughs* to produce more than sixty sheets about the new war. This time, his treatment of the Russian enemy was less offensive than was the case with his derogatory depictions of the Chinese ten years earlier.

Thus, as a caricaturist, Kiyochika was active for over a period of roughly 25 years, focussing on three major topics: domestic politics, war, and social behaviour. Of course, these are classical fields for any caricaturist. But since Kiyochika was at the same time also excelling in many other genres of graphical art, it is obvious that he deliberately limited the use of caricatures to these topics because he thought them most befitting.

2. Kiyochika's Art of Drawing

Fortunately, Kiyochika has left us some hints for an analysis of his drawings. In 1895, he published a short manual in two parts called *Mōenga hitorigeiko kyōka tekiyō* (*Individual Exercises for Drawings with Brush and Pencil for School Use*) (Kobayashi 1895). In this manual, drawings with brush and drawings with pencil alternate. The drawings executed with brush in a traditional Japanese manner dealt with traditional Japanese topics. Kiyochika called the drawings *hitsuiga*, literally 'brush drawings'. The other drawings were executed with pencil, but Kiyochika called them *kōsenga*, meaning 'ray-of-light drawings'. These drawings are constructed according to the rules of Western perspective.

This is quite a significant discovery. Only after Kiyochika's death, it became common to label the very first *nishikie* prints Kiyochika published in the 1870s as 'ray-of-light drawings'. They certainly do show Western perspective; that is exactly what distinguishes them from older *nishikie*, and that is also what Kiyochika initially became famous for. It has, however, hitherto been unclear whether Kiyochika himself used this expression for his works. As Henry D. Smith II (1988: 36) has stated, "No evidence has yet been discovered to confirm the use of the word in Kiyochika's lifetime." We now know better: for Kiyochika, 'ray-of-light drawings' meant all drawings constructed according to the rules of central perspective and of light and shadow. In his manual, Kiyochika demonstrates how they ought to be constructed. This provides us with valuable information for an analysis of his pictures.

Brush drawings, as shown in this manual, consist of lines and strokes that connect very loosely. The technique of drawing is very close to writing with a brush. Accordingly, there are no full shapes – and very little chance to give them depth.

Fig. 1: Kobayashi Kiyochika: Brush Drawing: Boy and Dog (*Mōenga hitorigeiko kyōka tekiyō*, pt. 1, pl. 7).

Fig. 2: Kobayashi Kiyochika: Construction of the Brush Drawing (*Mōenga hitorigeiko kyōka tekiyō*, pt. 1, pl. 7).

‘Ray-of-light drawings’, however, show fully defined bodies as if they were three-dimensional. They need a much more sophisticated design. Kiyochika divides this design into three steps: outline, sketch, and drawing. An outline (*tairyakukei*) consists of guides for defining the relation between the objects of the picture.

Fig. 3: Kobayashi Kiyochika: Outline of Cat with Aquarium (*Mōenga hitorigeiko kyōka tekiyō*, pt. 1, pl. 10).

A sketch (*daitaikei*) is a preliminary rendering of these objects, taking perspective, in particular shadowing, into account.

Fig. 4: Kobayashi Kiyochika: Sketch of Cat with Aquarium (*Mōenga hitorigeiko kyōka tekiyō*, pt. 1, pl. 10).

The completed 'ray-of-light drawing', then, is an approximation of visual reality, putting stress on the effects of light and shadow with all its implications for saturation and darkness of the colours.

Fig. 5: Kobayashi Kiyochika: 'Ray-of-Light Drawing' of Cat with Aquarium (*Mōenga hitorigeiko kyōka tekiyō*, pt. 1, pl. 10).

In practice, the outline can be constructed by dividing a sketch into sections, which offer the very approximate contours of the objects involved. Kiyochika also suggests using an orthogonal grid for correctly configuring the objects in the picture. A third suggestion for producing the outline is to draw a cube. For the sketch, the object – such as a dog – is incorporated into this cube, with due regard for shadows. The guides of the outline will, of course, be erased before finalizing the drawing.

To sum up, 'ray-of-light drawings', as opposed to brush drawings, do not simply consist of loosely connected lines. Instead, they consist of neatly constructed shapes representing coherent, three-dimensional objects. In short, they represent space in front of the eyes of the viewer. I have dealt with Kiyochika's manual somewhat extensively because it is important to know how the artist himself proceeded when composing a drawing. In the following, I will try to establish a theoretical frame for analyzing Kiyochika's caricatures in detail and then apply this to some of his works.

3. The Analytical Frame

As a model for developing this analytical frame, I chose Kiyochika's caricature *Jiyū no enzetsu*, published in *Marumaru Chinbun* on October 7th, 1882. Its political meaning has already been discussed by Shimizu (1991: 64-65). I will try to analyze its composition using a formalized questionnaire that I have developed following suggestions from Christine Ohno (2003) in order to show how this caricature works.

3.1. Pictorial Data

Fig. 6: Kobayashi Kiyochika: *Jiyū no enzetsu* (Shimizu 1986: 1: 107).

3. 2. Pictorial Analysis

3.2.1. Form
3.2.2. Elements
3.2.2.1. Lines
3.2.2.1.1. Thick lines in center, right half, and background, merging effect (hair of right person)
Connotation: control, movement, decomposition
3.2.2.1.2. Thin lines in left part (face, hand, broken pipe, letter, and

envelope)
Connotation: weakness, passiveness
3.2.2.2. Four extruding, eye-like circles in center; another discrete circle in squares (tobacco tray) at right edge
Connotation: embarrassment
3.2.2.3. Squares forming one particular object (tobacco box) at right edge
3.2.2.4. Triangles forming body parts and, most prominently, facial parts
Connotation: decomposition, movement, anger

3.3. Figures

3.3.1. Objects
3.3.1.1. Plants: stylized blossom and leaves of plant in the center
Connotation: symbol of Tosa clan
Denotation: man belongs to Tosa
3.3.1.2. Man-made objects
3.3.1.2.1. Clothing
3.3.1.2.1.1. Woman: plain kimono
Connotation: humble, not well off
3.3.1.2.1.2. Man: gorgeous kimono
Connotation: Man is well off
3.3.1.2.1.3. Man: Jacket
Connotation: Outdoors use
Denotation: Man has come from outside or is about to go out
3.3.1.2.2. Tobacco tray (*tabako bon*) with paper slip, and text: *tau-win* = *tōin* = "party member"
Denotation: Woman is member of a political party
3.3.1.2.3. Broken tobacco pipe
Connotation: Conflict
Denotation: Woman has broken the pipe in anger
3.3.1.2.4. Letter (inscription: *Tai-sama ni, Sonji yori*) and envelope (*Tai-sama Kōtō Isoshiro yori*)
Denotation: receiver is called Mr. Tai, sender(s) Kōtō Isoshirō and Sonji
3.3.2. Subjects
3.3.2.1. Human beings
3.3.2.1.1. Woman: strong, furious, active, mask-like face
Connotation: *onibaba* (female demon)

3.3.2.1.2. Man: weak, resisting, scary, pale
Connotation: Man is in big trouble

3.4. Chromatic Analysis

3.4.1. Colour
3.4.1.1. Intensity
3.4.1.1.1. Non-Colours
3.4.1.1.1.1. Black (Thick lines, background, jacket of man)
Connotation: darkness; misfortune, trouble, anger, fear
3.4.1.1.1.2. White (Faces, tobacco tray, kimono of man, letter and envelope, pipe, foreground)
Connotation: weakness, embarrassment
3.4.1.2. Luminosity: dark
Connotation: sinister, night, sorrow
3.4.1.3. Light: Symbolic light (black/white contrast)
Connotation: polarity

3.5. Topological Analysis

3.5.1. Composition
3.5.1.1. Stable
3.5.1.1.1. Dynamic
3.5.1.1.1.1. Diagonal
Connotation: drama, movement, depth
3.5.1.2. Unstable
3.5.1.2.1. Tilted, twisted, staggering lines
Connotation: chaos, confusion
3.5.2. Space
3.5.2.1. Shading
Connotation: depth, volume
3.5.3. Viewpoint: Normal eye view
Connotation: equality
3.5.4. Configuration
3.5.4.1. Position
3.5.4.1.1. Overlapping: Woman gripping man�much's jacket, man gripping woman‘s arm
3.5.4.1.2. Foreground: All man-made objects and inscriptions
Connotation: cause
Denotation: political context (party conflict)

3.5.4.1.3. Background: All human beings
Connotation: conflict caused by foreground
3.5.4.2. Orientation
3.5.4.2.1. Horizontal
3.5.4.2.2. Centrifugal
3.5.4.3. Dimension: Woman is bigger than man (face, hands)
Connotation: dominance

3.6. Content analysis

3.6.1. Narration

The woman in humble attire is identified as a member of a political party and is infuriated due to a letter the man, called Tai according to the inscriptions on letter and envelope, has received from (an)other person(s) called Kōtō Isoshirō and Sonji. After breaking her tobacco pipe, she vigorously attacks the man, who has either just returned home or is about to leave. The man, whose kimono pattern links him to the Tosa samurai clan, is embarrassed and tries weakly to defend himself. The scene is built on the well-known folkloristic motive of the woman turning into a furious demon attacking and finally devouring her male visitor (*onibaba*).

The accompanying text is a dialogue between the woman and the man. The woman complains that the man deceived her and did not live up to his old promises, and that his ridiculously stubborn mind (*ahōtosadamashii*, a pun with the geographical names of Awa and Tosa, two provinces on the island of Shikoku) gotten him into trouble. She says she is boiling over with anger. The man answers that he had been tempted by an important friend and asks her to let go of him. He then repeatedly utters “ouch” (“*ita*” and “*itai*”) in Japanese. Judging from the written characters it becomes clear that this is another pun with the name of the person the man represents: *ita* and *tai* are Chinese characters in the name of Itagaki Taisuke, the Tosa-born leader of the Liberal Party, in Japanese: Jiyūtō. The caption reads “*Jiyū no enzetsu*”, another pun because the first meaning would be ‘free (or liberal) speech’, an essential activity for the members of the Liberal Party, but the homophonic characters used in this text give the meaning of ‘infuriated speech about a free tour abroad’.

3.6.2 Context

In November 1882, Itagaki Taisuke and his political friend Gotō Shōjirō, leaders of the Liberal Party, left Japan for a seven months’ roundtrip of Europe. It was unclear where the funding for this journey came from. Rumor had it that their political opponents, ministers Itō Hirobumi and Inoue Kaoru, had

sponsored them to weaken the opposition. Party officials protested against Itagaki's and Gotō's going abroad, but the two did not yield. The caricature was published in October, in the midst of an intra-party conflict over the intended journey.

3.6.3 Interpretation

Kiyochika evokes the impression of a party in fury and at the edge of dissolution. He relies on a mixture of new and traditional means to achieve this: He compares the state of party affairs with a married couple (a new theme), transmutating this to the traditional *onibaba* motif. The style of the drawing is a mixture of line-oriented 'brush drawing' and object-oriented 'ray-of-light drawing'. Lines are used to produce dramatic effect, objects to create space and time.

Kiyochika relies on an interplay of different visual patterns to create a dramatic atmosphere, visually implied connotations to build the basis on which, with the help of verbal denotations, he performs what Kenneth T. Rivers has called "transmutation" and defined as a central artistic function in caricature: "Transmutation occurs when any two objects or entities that would not normally become one another in nature are perceived, through art, as exchanging identities or traits." (Rivers 1991: 93) Identifying an intra-party conflict with an everyday strife between husband and wife on a first level, and with the folktale of *onibaba* on a second level, is certainly a clear instance of double transmutation.

4. Case Studies

In the following, I will briefly discuss some of Kiyochika's caricatures displaying ways of double transmutation used in his works.

4.1. *Congestion on the Single Road* (*Ipponmichi no komiai*). Published in Maruchin on November 7, 1885.

A crowd of men is running in the same direction. Some are tumbling; others have dropped out of the race and are lying topsy-turvy alongside the road. Close to the center, two men are facing the opposite direction, as if resisting the pull to the shrine. Many reach out with arms and hands in an effort to grasp their goal. Most have their mouths open as if shouting or taking deep breaths. One man in the lower center turns his face towards the viewer; he is wearing spectacles. Another man is jumping over the heads of the others as if in a hurdle race. Four birds (identified through the inscriptions as wild geese)

flying in the same direction, decorated with trailing banners, its inscriptions all ending with the character *gan*, or 'wild goose': they represent climactic stages of expressing high-flying aspirations, i.e. *naigan* ('petition'), *setsugan* ('request'), *tangan* ('appeal'), and *kongan* ('adjuration'). The signposts make it clear that they are moving along the 'road of the civil servant'. There are three more roads, labelled as 'way of the merchant', 'way of the artisan', and 'way of the farmer'; but they are completely empty. Everyone's single goal is a Shinto shrine in Ise-style, identified through banners behind a *torii* gate, with inscriptions: *gekkyū tori daimyōjin* ('Great Deity of the Gekkyū Bird') and *gekkyū tori no yashiro* ('Shrine of the Gekkyū Bird'). This is, of course, a pun on the Japanese expression for 'getting a monthly salary' (*gekkyū-dori*). Thus, the obvious meaning of this caricature is that everybody tries to make a career as a civil servant with the ultimate goal of getting regular pay.

But the comical transmutation becomes only understandable if we compare the drawing to traditional depictions of mass pilgrimages, such as the famous *okage mairi*, before the Meiji Restoration. Only then, the comical potential of the transformation of pilgrims wearing ritual dresses and straw hats into modern men wearing suits and hats can fully unfold.

Fig. 7: Kobayashi Kiyochika: *Ipponmichi no komiai* (Shimizu 1986: 129).

4.2. Kiyochika Ponchi: *Tōkyō Fukagawa Susaki*, 1881 (?).

This *nishikie* print once again shows the characteristic mixture of brush drawing and 'ray-of-light drawing', but the point I want to make here is a different one. The transmutation performed is that of a location in Tokyo famous for its seafood into the stage of political drama. Henry D. Smith (1988: 58-59) has interpreted most objects in the room as metaphors for politicians or political objects. The octopus stands for Kuroda Kiyotaka, who was commonly depicted as a black octopus (*kurotako*). The black clam shells, in Japanese *kokkai*, stand for the National Parliament, also pronounced *kokkai*. The woman heating the stove would then become a symbol for the liberal opposition (similar to the *onibaba* in the 1882 caricature) that was, at the time, attacking Kuroda Kiyotaka for a corruption case and urging the government to make preparations for a national assembly. Smith, however, was not sure how to interpret the two cats, although he gives a valuable hint: "Cats normally represented *geisha*." (Smith II 1988: 59) Actually, there was only one politician whom caricaturists never tired of associating with geisha: Itō Hirobumi. This is a double transmutation: Itō is identified through a geisha who is identified through a cat. Thus, 'the cat' Itō Hirobumi would be angered by 'the clam

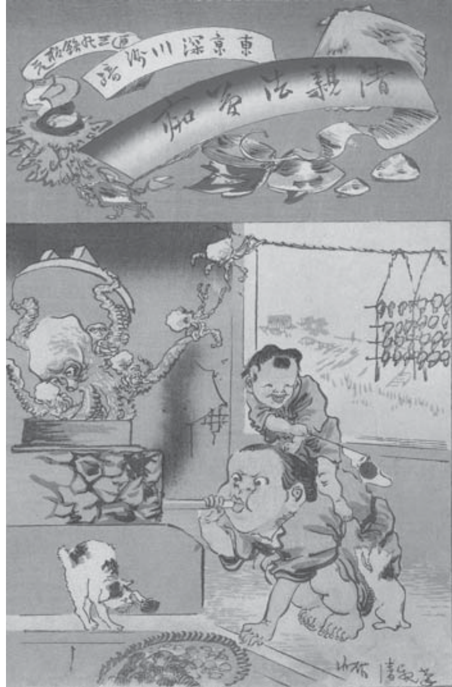

Fig. 8: Kobayashi Kiyochika: *Kiyochika Ponchi: Tōkyō Fukagawa Susaki* (Smith 1988: 59).

shell' and Japan's national flag, both representing the popular wish for a national assembly. This interpretation can be substantiated with compositional evidence: All agents in this picture appear twice. The crucial political point, that the Liberal Party was able to attack the government over two important issues at the same time, is represented by the little boy riding his mother's back. Thus, two essentially unrelated issues get amalgamated and reinforce the opposition's strong position. However, the government forces are isolated and shattered.

4.3. *Nisshin sensō shōraku gakai: Urashima*, 1894.

Executed as a brush drawing with only one element following the rules of perspective (the jewellery box), this print once again makes use of a folktale to represent a contemporary political event. The old man in Chinese court robes is easily identified as Li Hongzhang, the Chinese Chief Minister who was in charge of the war against Japan. Kiyochika made a number of portrayals of Li, always depicting him as fearful, helpless, and disoriented. In this print, he appears as Urashima Tarō, the legendary young man who rescued a turtle and was allowed to visit the underwater palace of a princess, who after some time let him return home and presented him with a jewellery box. After returning, Urashima found out that many decades had passed while he was away. When he opened the box, smoke poured out and he turned into an old man. In this drawing, the smoke materializes into mountains and a fortress identified through a flag as being under Japanese control and through its inscription

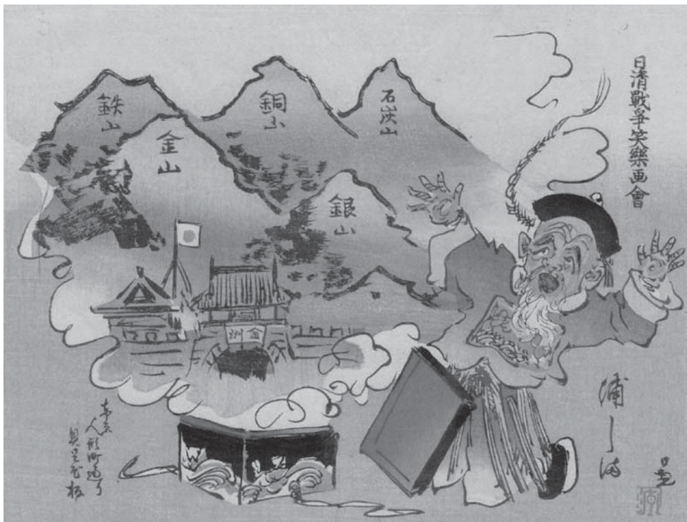

Fig. 9: Kobayashi Kiyochika: *Urashima.*

as the entrance to the 'Golden Province'. Characters on the mountains mark these as mountains of gold, silver, iron, copper, and coal.

The interpretation is obvious: Li Hongzhang, representing China, loses his treasure, the abundant mountains of Korea and Manchuria, to his enemies, the Japanese. He cannot help it, because he has opened the box, and because the outpouring 'smoke' is not depicted according to perspective, it cannot be contained in the box again. Li's body is drawn with staggering lines, giving the impression of decay, lack of control, and imminent dissolution. Once again, Kiyochika uses double transmutation. One level is explicit: Li Hongzhang transforms into Urashima Tarō. But the other level results implicitly from this first transformation: The young Urashima (representing China) has already transformed into an old man. In this picture, it is transmutation that creates the historical sense.

4.4. *Tōsei roku henge, Six metamorphisms of the Present Day*. Published in *Maruchin*, July 10, 1886

In this colourised lithograph, Kiyochika uses black to represent the present, obvious state of things, whereas red stands for the past which can only be called to mind. In a jigsaw puzzle-like structure, six people testify how times

Six Metamorphisms of the Present Day.

Fig. 10: Kobayashi Kiyochika, *Tōsei roku henge*. (Shimizu 1986: Colour plate 1).

have changed. The ice vendor was originally a rickshaw coolie. The former beggar has turned into a collector and vendor of used paper. The man who once sold eel roast is now in the trendy beef business. In former times, when cholera threatened the people during the hottest days of summer, another man used to make a living from selling *shijimi* shells; now, however, he can only use them as bait. The former maker of straw sandals is now working as a shoe-maker. What was once a catfish (*namazu*), the scary symbol of earthquakes, has now become a peaceful, lazy, and rather palatable loach (*dojō*).

What is interesting about this picture is that time and transmutation become visible. The double layers of past and present are distinguished with the help of colour. It is as if the past and, from the viewpoint of the narrator, more desirable state of things live on as a shadow, a hidden dimension that becomes uncovered only by the brushwork of the artist.

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Japanese and Westerners in *Naichi Zakkyo*-Related Caricatures

Hartmut O. ROTERMUND

For a long time, the Meiji Period has attracted the attention of Japanese and Western scholars in almost every field of Japanological research. After having overcome the traditional structure of the ancient feudal society, having realized its 'restoration', and commenced on its process of modernization, the Meiji Empire still remained bound by the Unequal Treaties for quite some time. In order to recover its full autonomy, the empire was obliged to agree to a complete opening of the country to the outside world, according to the terms of the 'revised treaties', which were effective from July 1899 onwards.

During the decades preceding the date when the new treaties were to come into force, the prospect of a future sudden immigration of Westerners had brought about the publication of a considerable amount of 'treatises on the future cohabitation with foreigners on the Japanese mainland' (*naichi zakkyo-ron*). These documents all convey the fear that the various influences of the West - mainly considered as negative - would dangerously weaken or undermine Japanese society. In a well-known illustration made by Bigot (Fig. 1), which represents the struggle of Japan to obtain a revision of the Unequal Treaties, we see a little boy representing the new, young Japan, and a gentle-

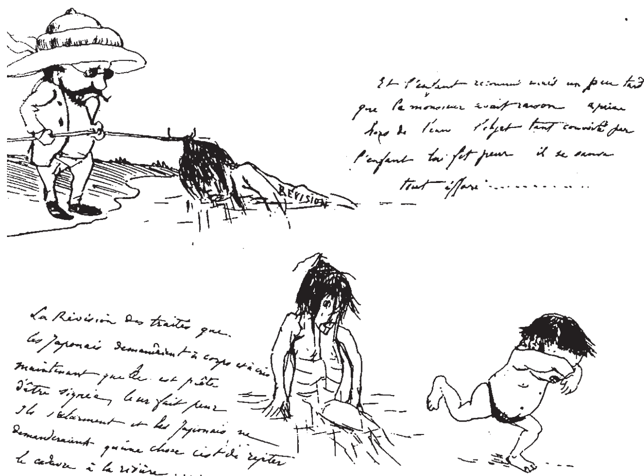

Fig. 1: Georges Bigot: La révision des traités / fin (Treaty revison / end), in Haga 1989:109 [vol. 2].

man reading, representing the treaty nations. In one case, the boy asks to fish something out of the water, something he eagerly wishes to possess. But when, finally, only a dead human body emerges, the boy is scared and runs away.

In other words, the aim so eagerly pursued by the Japanese Government, i.e. the new revised treaties, turns out to bring a lot of obligations with it, among them, primarily, a complete opening of the country, and extensive immigration, exactly *naichi zakkyo*. In the eyes of the Japanese, this meant a dangerous impact of Western civilization, which was thought eventually to destroy the older Japanese way of life. In Fig. 2, we can see one of these greatly feared Westerners, and it seems unnecessary to explain the details of this rather unflattering image.

Fig. 2: Hakei Senshi: *Gaijin hizakurige*, *A Foreigner on Shank's Mare*, 1888 (Nichibunken, Kyōto).

Our materials on *naichi zakkyo* include quite a lot of remarks on the bad behavior of foreigners on the one hand, and on the other hand remarks on the special treatment accorded to these *gaijin*, even in prison. Here, they seemed to enjoy all kinds of privileges, especially when food was concerned. For instance, whereas Japanese prisoners were granted only a small portion of vegetables and cereals, foreigners were allowed to eat meat, eggs, and bread, and were able to drink tea with sugar and milk (Fig. 3). Visitors of a foreigner were treated quite politely, whereas in the case of Japanese, the texts tell us that visitors were treated like 'dogs and cats'.

Changes and innovations occurring during the Meiji Period not only concerned politics or new ideas, but also - quite often in a spectacular way - customs and behavior as well as clothes and hairstyles. Some texts evoke the

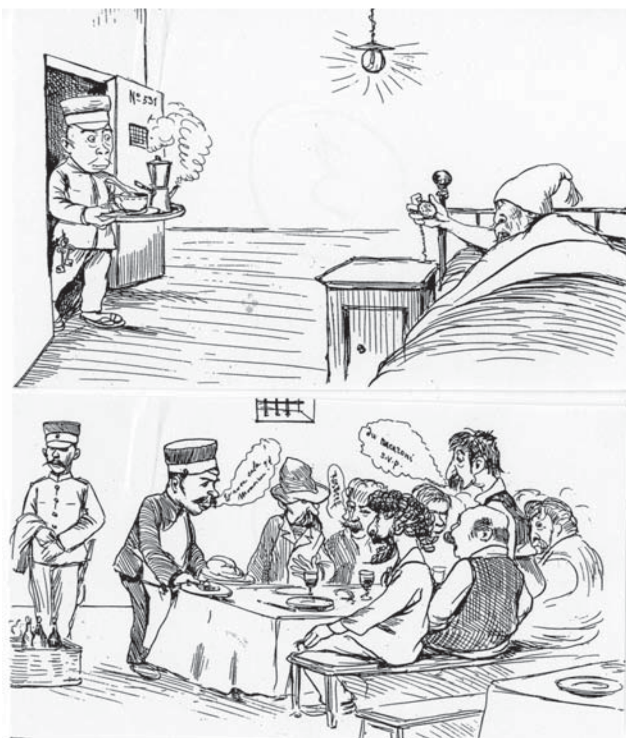

Fig. 3: Georges Bigot: Visit at Sugamo Prison for Foreigners, in: Haga 1989:149,150 [vol. 1].

so-called *gobu-gari* style, a very short haircut, which was said to have been quite popular in the West and particularly in France, where middle and higher classes all seemed to have this hairstyle - probably a somewhat wrong information, or a mix-up with some military hairstyle.

One of the most famous examples of a new hairstyle is the *zangiri-atama*, which replaced the former bun or chignon/topknot; *zangiri atama* became an outward mark of a progressive opening towards modern civilization. A famous popular song, a *dodoitsu-bushi,* was likely to have been inspired by this multitude of hairstyles.

Zangiri atama o tataite mireba, bunmei kaika no oto ga suru
(Strike a head with hair cut short, and one will hear the sound of civilization and enlightenment)

Here we find hairstyles as criteria for distinguishing conservatives and reactionaries as well as progressives, and we can easily imagine a kind of resistance to the new fashion, the emperor himself making a good example by having his hair cut.

Fig. 4: Kawanabe Kyōsai: A caricature from *E'shinbun Nipponchi* No. 1 (1874), in: Yamaguchi and Oikawa 1988: 40.

Japanese religion had always been a syncretistic one, mixing up *kami* and Buddhas in an ingenious way, which is depicted by Kawanabe Kyōsai (Fig. 4). The Meiji Government had been unsuccessful in establishing a kind of pure Shintō, and to suppress any Buddhist elements from greater Shintō-Buddhist shrines. But people did not necessarily follow this authoritarian policy, which in the end failed on the popular level.

Our picture represents a rather eclectic statue. A *kami* is depicted on the left, a Buddha on the right side, whereas the Shintō priest (*kannushi*) is worshipping the head of a sardine ("*Iwashi no atama mo shinjin kara*"/"Even the head of a sardine can ward off evil to someone who believes it can"). The lady in the middle is probably offering some money (*myōga-kin*) to the monk.

Shinbutsu shūgō, the mixture of *kami* and Buddha, was the main feature of Japanese religion throughout history, and it was this phenomenon the Meiji authorities tried to destroy. The first year of Meiji saw the release of a decree for the abolition of syncretism. One of the most prominent examples can be seen in the Great Bodhisattva Hachiman (Hachiman dai-bosatsu), in Usa or Iwashimizu, which now had to be renamed in Shintō style as the Great Deity Hachiman (Hachiman daijin). The following picture (Fig. 5) illustrates one of the numerous funny short stories (*hitokuchi-banashi*) of this epoch:

Fig. 5: Kitazawa Rakuten: *Shinbutsu konkō no kinshi*, *Prohibition of Shinto-Buddhist Syncretism*, in: Yoda 1928:3.

"In your family there is still a mixture of Shintō and Buddhism" — "Why that?" — "Hear, you are a *iki-botoke* (living Buddha) and your wife is a *yama no kami*!"

The latter refers to the fearsome mountain deity and was a common name given to a nagging, scolding wife.

Naichi zakkyo was certainly feared for its presumably bad influences in many parts of everyday social life. One aspect which was particularly threatened was Buddhism, now confronted with the newly introduced Christianity. The general tone in our texts is, of course, rather negative, critical, and hostile towards this foreign religion, and Buddhism, Shintō as well as Confucianism strived to stop these influences.

Christianity was considered to be a global, unpatriotic religion which would not fit in with the values of the Japanese Empire. Moreover, it would bring with it democracy, which was a terrible thought to some *naichi zakkyo*-writers. It was rare that an author stressed the positive, ethical aspects of the foreign religion which could be accepted. At the same time, we come across attempts of defusing further confrontations between Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity by advocating a kind of alliance of these religions.

Fig. 6: Kōuchi Jun'ichi: *Butsu-ya ryōkyō no sekkin*, *The Convergence of Buddhism and Christianity,* in: Yoda 1928:159.

Fig. 6, a picture by Kōuchi Jun'ichi, shows us a new kind of syncretism: "Namu hō-ren Amen A-butsu", written on a kind of poster and placed near a Shintō-Buddhist person with a Christian symbol, refers to the two Buddhist sects Nichiren and Jōdo-Shin as well as to Christianity.

Due to the encounter with Christianity, Buddhism generated a kind of awakening as well as a reform process, for which Inoue Enryō, among others, had been one of the fervent advocates. For him, reform ought to concern all levels of Buddhism, its doctrine, preaching, and, of course, the clergy, as many older monks still cherished their ancient 'bad customs'. This precisely is the theme of Fig. 7, a picture, taken out of a small book titled *Gyōshō-ka* (Poems that ring the bell at dawn), that was published in Meiji 22 (1889). These poems were written by Nishikata Kandō, and the one concerning *kyūhei-sō* ('bad, old custom monks') reads as follows:

Tera ni ite taorekeru made matsu-bashira kui-tsubu [?] seshi mushi zo nikukere (Remaining in their temple until the main pillar falls, disgusting insects, those monks destroying their home)

Education and learning were two priorities of the Meiji Government, and the passages devoted in our *naichi zakkyo*-materials concerning these ques-

Fig. 7: Ikeda Kinpō: *Kyūhei-sō*, ‘*Bad, Old Custom Monks*’, in: Nishikata 1889:18.

tions are among the most interesting ones. The undeniable progress of the West in the field of material civilization was one of the reasons for the Meiji Government to strengthen education on all social levels, particularly by means of establishing a nation-wide school system.

Some writers feared that the construction of schools by foreigners would badly affect the traditional moral and pedagogical values of the empire, as Japanese youngsters would necessarily be in contact with foreign children, their behavior, and their way of thinking in those schools.

On university level, the influence of the Occident is reflected also in the various kinds of hats, much in fashion at those times. Fig. 8 shows a specimen of a Japanese student, the ‘future of Japan’, as Bigot noted not without humor. Arthur Lloyd, a missionary living in Japan at this epoch, tells us that, fundamentally, Japanese students were not so different from Western ones, but that they were much more difficult to lead, a circumstance which the author explains as the effects of *Yamato-damashii* (‘chauvinist spirit of Japan’). Students were said to be enthusiastic about pessimism, they would pass their times in vain discussion and imagination, and made no secret of their critical attitude towards Meiji society. Furthermore, instead of honestly learning, they would merely prefer to criticize. But in order to become really capable of doing so, they first of all ought to truly ‘learn’ (*narau*).

Fig. 8: Georges Bigot: *Le Japon de avenir – L'etudiant, The Future of Japan: The Student*, in: Haga et al. 1988:65 [vol. 2].

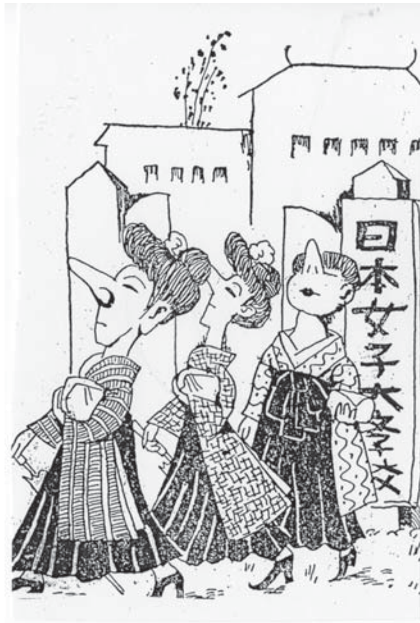

Fig. 9: Nakajima Rokurō: *Joshi daigaku sōritsu*, *The Foundation of a University for Women*, in Yoda 1928:183.

Admitted for the first time into the higher education system, female students had a reason to be proud, as we can see in Fig. 9, a drawing by Nakajima Rokurō. “Without an appropriate education”, we read in *Naichi zakkyo ni taisuru sho-taika no iken* Vol. I, 1899, “and without real knowledge, women could only speak of kimonos - no wonder, then, that one could not respect them at all.” But, and this is a rather amusing remark, when pushing their education too far, the danger is that they may easily become “pretentious and arrogant” (*nama'iki*).

In the context of the evolution of women in Meiji society — we do not insist here on this point — the incomparably greater freedom of Western women is sometimes criticized, sometimes taken as a model. The fact that Western achievements in this field were not so rapidly adopted in Meiji times is certainly the message of Fig. 10, taken from *Detarame*, which offers a vivid description of Meiji society, pseudonymously written by Hara Takashi.

A central part of learning was, of course, language training. Many authors seemed to consider the problem of learning and adopting a foreign language as a very crucial one. Surely, to learn a foreign language, and English first off, seems to be an appropriate preparation for the future arrival of the Westerners. However, one ought to be careful not to become dependent on a foreign country via this linguistic barrier, as Inoue Tetsujirō, among others, objected.

Fig. 10: Hara Takashi: *Detarame*, *Nonsense,* 1899, in: Inō 1992:449 [vol. 6].

Furthermore, it was criticized that sign-boards were often written in a foreign language, and that certain Japanese would proudly adopt a foreign language during their contact with Westerners.

Despite the crucial role of English, *naichi zakkyo* texts, in general, do not favor the study of a foreign language. Those who advocated the study of foreign languages argued that Japanese ought to learn another language in order to achieve an 'international way of thinking'.

The next two caricatures show us the cruel reality of this trend of learning a foreign language: "What you prefers, Washinston or Bismark?" – "I don't not" (Fig.11). And a foreign instructor, using his somewhat rudimentary Japanese: "*Futatze futatze yotze arimas! Wakarimas?*", receives the following ingenious answer mixing up a French conjugation with a Japanese verb: "Nous ne *wakarimasons* pas" (Fig.12).

Fig. 11: Georges Bigot: *Le Japon Moderne / Entre Etudiants* (*Modern Japan / Students' Conversation*), in: Haga et al. 1988:86 [vol. 2].

Fig. 12: Haga and Shimizu 1986: 66.

The inevitable contact and cohabitation with Westerners entailed a sort of self-reflection as well as a very large movement to 'improve and amend' (*kai'ryō*). In fact, it was the 'old, bad customs' which were thought to be in need of a reform. In the following passages, we will consider, at random, some of the situations which – in the eyes of the Japanese – called for a reform in order for Japan to appear not as a minor nation, but as civilized, modern, and capable of matching the Occident.

Jinriki-sha drivers were said to have the bad habit of chasing after clients and rushing upon them, and rightly so. But where did they take their clients? More often than not, they took them straight ahead to the red-light districts of Yoshiwara, where the unfortunate foreigners risked getting a rather peculiar impression of the arising Meiji Empire.

Many customs and situations requiring a reform so as not to attract the foreigners' contempt are found in the list of minor crimes and transgressions, the *Ishiki kaii zukai*, from which we have taken the following examples:

Fig. 13: *Ishiki kaii zukai, Illustrations of Petty Offenses*, in Ogi et al. 1990: 37-38.

not to urinate nor defecate in the street, nor give shelter to foreigners without registration (Fig. 13)

Fig. 14: *Ishiki kaii zukai, Illustrations of Petty Offenses,* in Ogi et al. 1990: 37-38.

forbidding the mixed bathing of men and women, as well as indecent nudity in public (Fig. 14)

In closing, let us consider the serious and still topical problem of a correct assimilation of Western civilization. In Fig. 15, we see a somewhat cruel caricature of a samurai smoking cigars and drinking Western drinks, even speaking English. But his Western look is somewhat concentrated in his slacks and shoes, whereas the upper part of his attire has kept a traditional note.

Many Japanese authors deplore that all the West could offer Japan was a rather materialistic view, and when comparing Japan with the West, the latter — and this is a frequent cliché —greatly lacks ethics. Therefore, most authors agree with the acquisition of Western techniques, while advocating to preserve Asian/Oriental ethics.

Fig. 15: Charles Wirgman: *Young Japan at the U. Y. Club*, Japan Punch 1866, in Shimizu (ed.) 1987:63.

Foreign observers, such as Ernest Fenollosa, are the most critical towards the unreflected assimilation of Western civilization in all its forms, pointing out the necessary return to one's own culture. Without paying attention to one's own culture, no material progress would have ever enabled Japan to play a major role in world affairs.

I cannot help feeling that this remark, made over a hundred years ago, is still somewhat topical in this age of 'globalization' and 'internationalization' (*kokusai'ka*).

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PLATES

Plate 1: Kuniyoshi: *Hida no takumi hashiratate no zu, View of the Erecting of Pillars by the Craftsmen of Hida*. *Ōban*-size triptych color woodblock print, Tenpō 13 (1842) (VUD 30018).

Plate 2: Kuniyoshi: *Koma kurabe banjō Taiheiki, The Taiheiki on the Game Board, Comparing the Chess Pieces*. *Ōban*-size triptych color woodblock print, Tenpō 14 (1843) (VUD 30009).

Plate 3: Kuniyoshi: *Bokusen no zu, The Battle of Black Ink*. *Ōban*-size triptych color woodblock print, Tenpō 14 (1843) (VUD 30014).

Plate 4: Kuniyoshi: *Minamoto Raikō-kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu, Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon. Ōban*-size triptych color woodblock print, Tenpō 14 (1843) (VUD 30000).

Plate 5a: Kuniyoshi: Fan color woodblock print with toy motif (*uchiwa-e*). Tenpō 15 (1844).

Plate 5b: Kuniyoshi: Fan color woodblock print with toy motif (*uchiwa-e*). Tenpō 15 (1844).

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Plate 4: Kuniyoshi: *Minamoto Raikō-kō yakata nite tsuchigumo yōkai o nasu no zu.*
Picture of the Mansion of Minamoto Raikō where the Earth Spider Appears as a Demon.
Ōban-size triptych color woodblock print, Tenpō 14 (1843) (VUD 30000).

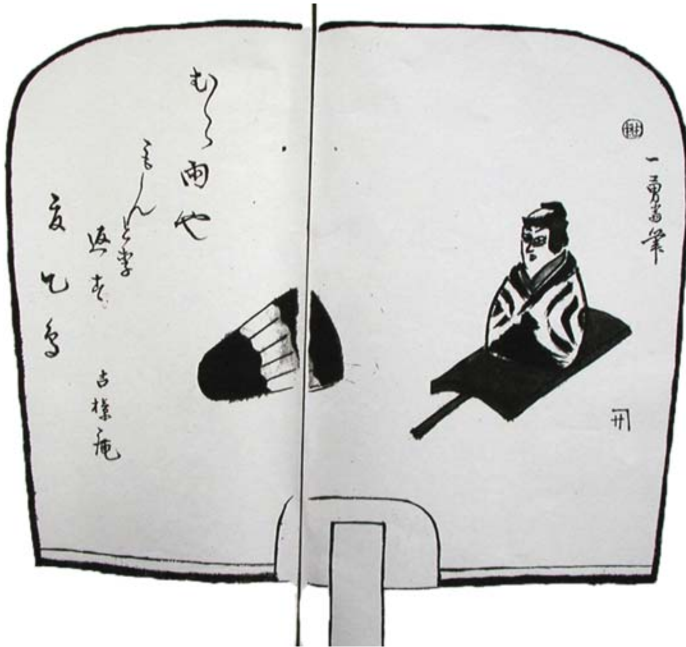

Plate 5a: Kuniyoshi: Fan color woodblock print with toy motif (*uchiwa-e*). Tenpō 15 (1844).

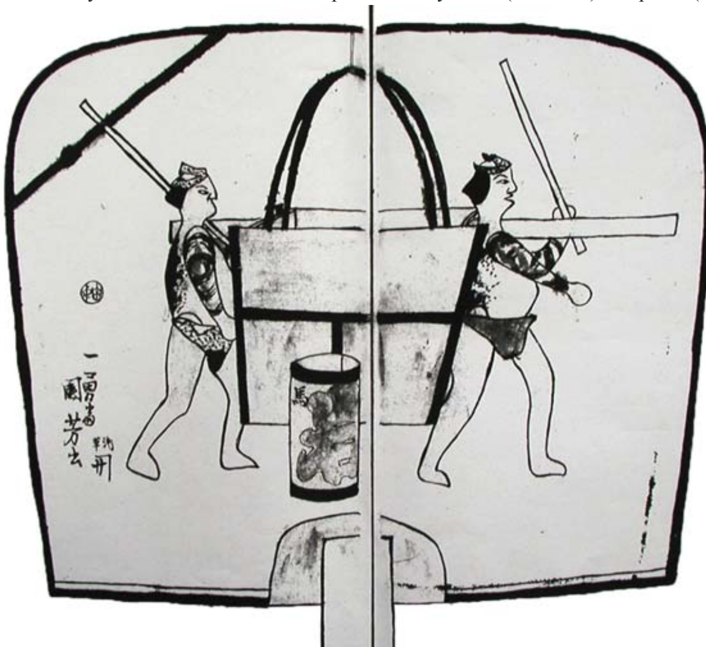

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Plate 7: Kuniyoshi: *Ukiyo Matabei meiga kitoku, Strange Interpretations of Ukiyo Matabei's Masterpieces of Ōtsu-e.*
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Ōban-size single sheet color woodblock print, Ansei 5 (1858) (VUD 10074).

Plate 9: Hirokage: *Aomono sakana gunzei ōkassen no zu, Picture of the Great Battle between the Vegetable and Fish Armies.*
Ōban-size triptych color woodblock print, Ansei 6 (1859) (VUD 30029).

List of Ukiyo-e Caricatures Mentioned

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p. 168 (Fig. 5)

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p. 155
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p. 155 (Fig. 8)
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p. 60
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