

Transformations in Print:
The Re-creation, Reception, and Representation of Edo-period Fiction
in Turn-of-the-Century Japan

by

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DEDICATION

To Becky, Josh, and Seth;
and
in loving memory of Terri, Carolyn, and Don.

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Chapter I: Introduction

This is a dissertation about the material production and circulation of books in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Japan and their relationship to literary developments during this time. I came to be concerned with this topic through a series of interactions with books as objects. Like many students of Japanese literature at universities in North America, my first encounter with texts was through English translations. I read these and felt inspired to learn Japanese well enough to be able to read them in the "original." I went to the library and found modern typeset editions of the texts and set about trying to read them. These modern editions were, for the most part, either contained in anthologies or part of larger series of academic collections of classical texts. One such series is the *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 日本古典文学大系 (anthology of classical Japanese literature).¹ The collection, edited by Takagi Ichinosuke 高木市之助, was initially published in 100 volumes from 1957-1967 by Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店.² As a set of material objects, this series is quite impressive; it has beautiful, red, hardbound covers with gold lettering, archive quality paper, and collation notes and commentary. Today the series continues to expand and it now has 130 volumes,

¹ Takagi Ichinosuke, *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*.

² The collection was reprinted from 1989-2005 as the *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (new anthology of classical Japanese literature), which had blue covers, but I interacted primarily with the older red-covered series. See Satake Akihiro, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei*.

including volumes of Meiji-period writings.³ The sheer quantity of books in the series, when lined up on a bookshelf, is as intimidating as it is impressive. Due to its bibliographic quality, it is viewed as authoritative and representing the canon of early Japanese literature. Moreover, the institutional adoption of these academic anthologies by libraries and scholars make them hegemonic; despite my concerns, throughout this dissertation I have continued to rely on them. Students and scholars tend to treat this type of collection as a representative and standardized proxy of the "original text;" so, I was not alone in the respect I paid to this collection.

One day, however, I was asked to make a typescript of an obscure text, *Yamato rasha Yokohama bidan* 倭洋妾横濱美談 by Takeda Kōrai 武田交来 (1827-1882), which was printed in 1881.⁴ While the story of *Yamato rasha* was itself interesting, what really fascinated me was the format of the book and the visceral sense I had of it as a material object; as a late *gōkan* 合巻 (a type of illustrated novella, literally a “combined volume”), it was woodblock-printed and there were illustrations surrounded by calligraphic text on every page. Even the covers of its three volumes were striking; they aligned to form a full-color triptych depicting the novel’s central characters. After completing the project, as I compared the original edition with my own typed-out version without images, I felt something was missing—it was no longer a *gōkan*; its narrative structure was radically changed. From this encounter with *Yamato rasha*, I took away a conviction that the form of a text was as significant as the text’s content.⁵

³ The *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai Meiji hen* 新日本古典文学大系明治編 added 30 volumes of Meiji-period literature. In addition it has five supplemental volumes of indexes. Satake Akihiro, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai*, Meiji hen Vol. 1-30.

⁴ Takeda Kōrai, *Yamato rasha Yokohama bidan*.

⁵ Although, in this dissertation, I do not explore at length the relationship between images and the written texts, it remains an important issue in literary development and history. Yet, the loss of images in my

Moreover, I realized how, when Japanese literature is studied only through standard editions, much of the socio-literary context is missing. When accessed in their modern editions—and even more so in translations—these texts are already far removed from the physical place and temporal moment that defined them. Japanese literature is often imagined as abstract language alone, freed from any single or singular edition. But in the past, and indeed even today, there are many bibliographic codes: generic and social markers that inhere in the size, covers, and bindings of books. In reading a text of a hundred years ago, in a very different historical and cultural context, much of the original literary moment is already missing; it seems in some ways irresponsible to make the problem worse by neglecting the original and subsequent forms of the text and the remaining traces of those moments of reception and reproduction.

While the absence of forgotten texts such as *Yamato rasha* from Iwanami's *Nihon koten bungaku taikai* concerns the separate issue of canonicity, a driving concern to me is how, in standard anthologies and modern printings, more generally, the various and diverse materialities of texts from the different periods, genres, and textual traditions are homogenized into a *single* materiality and book format. Iwanami's anthology is not alone, as other such anthologies of texts in Japan have similarly effaced material differences. They at once embody a canon and at the same time dematerialize and abstract the form of literature in that canon into words alone. Moreover, anthologies efface not only one initial materiality but all other subsequent material appropriations and embodiments as well. This dissertation is a reaction to these types of anthologies, the

typeset version of *Yamato rasha* was only part of the transformation of the text as an object. The physical changes to its layout were also important and are among the types of changes on which this dissertation focuses.

uniform (novel-centric) systems of meaning they create for texts, and the diverse history of reception these collections obscure.

This study is an attempt to explore a series of loosely connected moments of the messy past of the reproduction and circulation of Edo-period literature (primarily fiction) by looking at temporally specific reappropriations of texts through reprinting (翻刻 *honkoku*) during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. In so doing, I aim to repopulate that moment with things—books, book covers, bookshelves, and with people—publishers, readers, writers—each of which helped shape and give meaning to texts of Japanese literature. Hence, this dissertation concerns both some of the more familiar and forgotten people, texts, textual formats, and technologies that influenced the development of Japanese literature during the second-half of the nineteenth century and the first-two decades of the twentieth century.

Edo-period and classical literary texts have their own story of reception and transformation during the Meiji and Taisho Periods—one that can both reveal a new literary history of this time and challenge standard assumptions. A mixture of old and new texts (both domestic and imported) characterized the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Japanese literary field. Texts and genres of Edo-period literature continued to circulate and occupy a key place in the actual and imagined literary fields through at least the first two decades of the twentieth century. It was within such an assortment of older texts (and Western imports) that new literary forms and practices developed. Consequently, it is misguided to explain literary development in terms of new composition only, without simultaneously taking into consideration the complex heterogeneity of texts in circulation that informed the writing and reading of new works. I

will show how beneficial it is to place the practices of reprinting, republishing, and long-term circulation of texts alongside that of composition within Japanese literary history.

A related concern of this dissertation is the idea of the author as the great “creator” of literature. Notions of literature are bolstered by a Romantic ideal of an author’s creative genius and pure texts created through the inspiration of that genius. Although reacting against this Romantic ideal of the author, the words of the original literary text are all that matter under a New-Critical model. A text’s embodiment, and particularly its re-embodiment in different editions, is seen as a corrupting influence from which the “sacrosanct” text must be protected and recovered. To circumvent corruption, the authorial manuscript and the first edition have been fetishized as idealized repositories of authorial intentions (for Romantics) and the key site for interpreting the true meaning of texts (for the New Critics).⁶ Later, in Historicist literary studies an understanding of the author and the initial historical moment of creation are an important means for understanding text.

Oddly enough, at least in the case of Japanese literature, such searches for “authoritative texts” often lead to the above-mentioned academic anthologies, which because of their collation notes or the belief that the text has been “properly” established, remain accepted proxies for old scrolls, books, and manuscripts. These models of literary studies too often treat texts as non-material or immaterial. There is an under

⁶ The debate between which is more *authoritative*—the authorial manuscript(s) or a first edition publication—is revealing of how unsettled this fetish actually is. Consider, for instance, the mixed reaction to studies of manuscripts in the West, such as “Tolstoy and the Genesis of War and Peace” by Kathryn B. Feuer, which shows how convoluted and unstable Tolstoy’s intentions actually were. Or, for example, Mark S. Sexton’s work on D.H. Lawrence and his editor Edward Garnett, which shows how involved editors may be in creating literature. Similarly, see also Steven Snyder’s work on translations, editors, and the recreation of Murakami Haruki for an American audience. See Feuer, Miller, and Orwin, *Tolstoy and the Genesis of War and Peace*; Sexton, “Lawrence, Garnett, and ‘Sons and Lovers’: An Exploration of Author-Editor Relationship.”

acknowledged tendency to treat texts as if they exist at only two moments in time: the moment of composition and our moment of reception.⁷ The intervening time between these two points is insufficiently accounted for or ignored. Dematerialized and de-historicized, the intermediary moments of reception and appropriation are effaced. Texts' prior material history, the signs of its reception and recreation, disappear as the text becomes materially and authorially idealized: a text created by an author at a single moment in time that is to be or has been preserved in its modern form.

Yet, texts have a material history—a genealogy as objects and as books that offers important evidence for understanding their textual histories. The history of books as part of literary studies concerns itself with successive histories of textual appropriations and momentary uses to satisfy immediate needs and ideologies. Such generations of constructive consumption of texts belies claims of the transhistorical greatness of texts, which try to disown and overcome the mundane past between composition and modern reception.

This dissertation follows D.F. McKenzie's "sociology of texts." McKenzie defines this approach as a study of "texts as recorded forms and the process of their transmission, including their production and reception;" an accounting of how "forms effect meaning" (i.e. bring about meanings); and descriptions of "not only the technical but the social process of their transmission."⁸ This analytical model is adopted within the current study by analyzing literature along three axes: first, developments in content of both old and new texts and paratextual accompaniments; second, an investigation of

⁷ Collation notes, which detail the providence of an edition, provided a counter weight to this tendency, but these as well tend to focus on textual variations of editions and do not explain how individuals recreated the text in response to temporally specific situations.

⁸ McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*, 12-13.

technical and material embodiments of texts; and third, an analyses of social conditions of literary publication and circulation. This model presumes the larger significance of any one of these three axes can only be found in terms of the simultaneous operation of the other two.

In an attempt to understand this diversity of development more fully, this dissertation explores the underappreciated relationships between literary content; the physical modes of textual production and circulation; and the social contexts of readers, writers, and publishers. Such exploration involves a fundamental rejection of the idea of aesthetic judgment and literary history removed from material and social considerations.

These three axes can be visualized (Figure I-1) as forming a triangular-shaped circuit connecting literary content, social contexts of producers and consumers, and physical modes of textual production and circulation. The primary focus, however, is not the individual or isolated vertices of the triangle but the interaction between them. The goal is to appreciate how they inform each other and how the entire circuit contains traces of a forgotten history of literature.

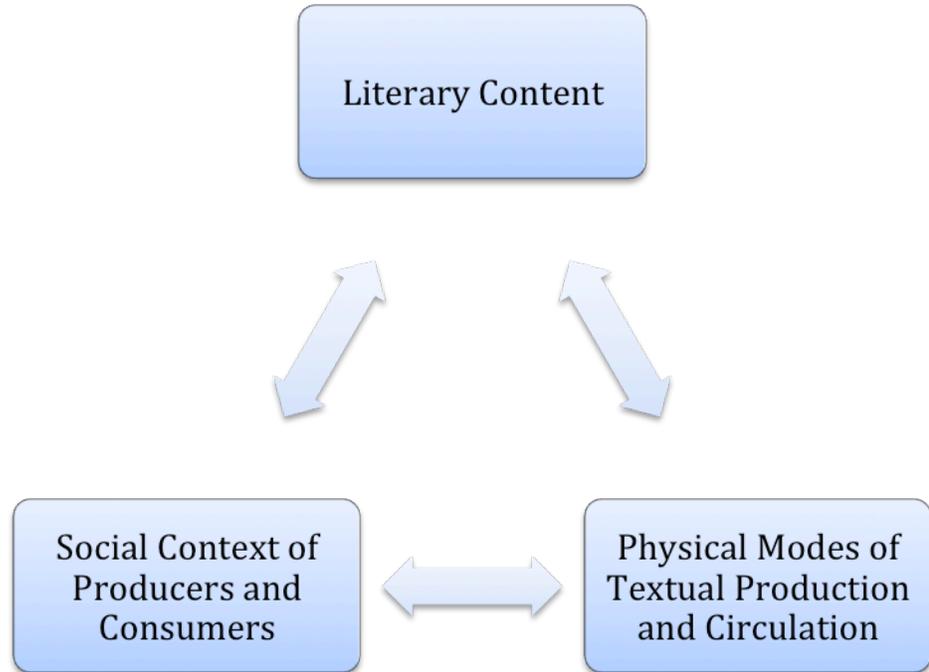


Figure I-1 Sociology of Texts

For instance, the purported rupture in new composition (content) between the pre-modern and the modern needs to be studied in light of the reproduction and increased circulation of older texts that characterizes the modern period. Or, similarly, a rupture represented by capitalization of the printing industry (a change in the social contexts of production) during the Meiji period, as reported by Ted Mack, must also be reconsidered in terms of content and the circulation of textual objects from prior less capitalistic moments of production.⁹ As Mack points out, in the 1920s “quantitative changes wrought by mass production were conflated [by literary critics] with qualitative effects, in which

⁹ Following H.D. Harootunian’s argument on “the intensification of the process of capital modernization” (Harootunian’s words), Mack asserts that change “seen as rupture, largely associated with capitalism” was “clearly evident in the literary field.” He continues, “In terms of a general concern over the relationship between art and commerce, it dates back to the Tokugawa period [1604-1868]; in its specific concern over art in a capitalist system it dates back to at least the 1920s, when critics began to distinguish the mass production of ‘popular literature’ for profit from the production of ‘pure literature’ unsullied by commodity culture” Mack, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature: Publishing, Prizes, and the Ascription of Literary Value*, 18..

cultural artifacts were transformed into cultural commodities, producing a ‘mass’ or ‘popular’ literature.”¹⁰

Moreover, this dissertation reexamines a time in literary history too often remembered by scholars exclusively as a supposed rupture between a “pre-modern” past and the era of the rise of the “modern” novel. The debates about Meiji-period literary developments and their relationships to past genres are at the heart of a larger issue haunting the history of “modern” or post-1868 Japan.¹¹ Modern scholars often narrate the literary history of the Meiji period in terms of its rejection and transcendence of late Edo-period (c.1780-1868) literary forms and styles.¹² For example, Kōjin Karatani amplifies this trope of rupture by arguing that the emergence of modern literature (specifically, the modern novel and attempts to create a unified written and spoken language) led to the “extinction of diverse genres” of Edo-period literature.¹³ His metaphor of “extinction”—no longer in existence or having no living members—is a problematic conception of literary development. Extinction implies an absence, as though something once alive is now gone, inactive in the literary environment. Extinction fosters the image of a literary vacuum, void of prior texts and literary genres. Questioning the idea of extinction, this

¹⁰Mack, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature: Publishing, Prizes, and the Ascription of Literary Value*, 12.

¹¹ The perception of the Meiji-literary field as moving away from the influences of Edo, progressing towards the ideals of the modern novel parallels a larger trend in recent Japanese literary historiography, which views the whole of Japanese literature (and history) as following a similar trajectory—leaving the pre-modern past and progressing into the modern present.

¹² This literary and historical enterprise of attempting to break away from the past has been spurred on by an anxiety about the “feudalistic” pre-modern on the part of modern literary historians and critics, who have demonstrated an almost insatiable drive to find rupture with the past as a way of legitimizing the present as “modern.”

¹³ Karatani, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, 175-90.

dissertation endeavors to demonstrate how literary developments in the Meiji and Taisho periods, in fact, were multifaceted in their connection to a living literary past.¹⁴

For instance, there is a tendency to think modern Japanese literature emerged at some point as a stable and complete, or if not, soon-to-be-so, formation. Yet, the modern literary field remains an ever-emerging mix of old and new literary forms, authors, and material formats. This dissertation aims to complicate the search to find a watershed signaling the end of the “pre-modern” and the birth of the “modern” through showing social and material connections between the Edo and Meiji literary fields. Numerous moments have been anointed as signaling a point of exodus from the “pre-modern” past, the most notable of which are an 1885 essay by Tsubouchi Shōyō 坪内逍遙 (1859-1935) on the essence of the novel, *Shōsetsu shinzui* 小説神髓 (“Essence of the Novel,” or as I will argue “Essences of Novels”); and “Japan’s first modern novel,” *Drifting Clouds* (*Ukigumo* 浮雲, 1887-89), written by Futabatei Shimei 二葉亭四迷 (1864-1909).¹⁵

James Fujii critically points out that after Shōyō’s 1885 essay, “The story line of modern Japanese letters is henceforth drawn by standard literary histories as the shared mission of writers and critics alike to fulfill these [e.g. Shōyō’s] requirements of the Western novel.” Countering this promotion of Shōyō as a beginning, I attempt to resituate Shōyō’s writing and those by other reformers within a publication industry deeply invested in reprinting—not rejecting or abandoning—past texts.¹⁶

During the decades from 1870-1910, Japan saw an expansion of widely available published literary content both in the form of new composition and a growing reprint

¹⁴ I am most deeply indebted to Peter Kornicki’s prior work on the circulation of Edo-period fiction during this time. See Kornicki, “The Survival of Tokugawa Fiction in The Meiji Period.”

¹⁵ See Tsubouchi Shōyō, *Shōsetsu shinzui*; Futabatei Shimei, *Shinhen ukigumo*; Ryan and Futabatei, *Japan's First Modern Novel: Ukigumo of Futabatei Shimei*.

¹⁶ Fujii, *Complicit Fictions: The Subject in the Modern Japanese Prose Narrative*, 12.

market of older texts, witnessed transformations in the technologies and formats of textual production and circulation, and experienced shifts in the social contexts of literary production and circulation. The interrelated nature of these three areas of development makes a narration of history in terms of only one part of one of these factors—e.g. the rise of the novel—incomplete at best and misleading at worst.

Although most of the Edo-period texts considered in this study were written by individual writers, they belong to a much larger social network of publishers, editors, and readers who also left their mark and reproduced and consumed the texts according to their own financial needs and aesthetic preferences. The sociology of texts, according to McKenzie, “directs us to consider the human motives and interactions which text involve at every stage of their production, transmission, and consumption.”¹⁷ Hence, this dissertation is, at once, a history of literature by famous writers; yet, it is also a record of all but forgotten individuals—such as publishers, whose contributions to literature were as essential in shaping texts and creating the canon as those “original” authors.

Literary History Through Reprints

As mentioned above, literature often lends itself to abstract and idealized conceptions independent of any specific iteration (or “corruption”) in print. Literary histories commonly mention reprints, but do so primarily as measures of popularity—signs of text’s ability to transcend time. When it comes to histories of literary development, however, they tend to exclude reprints (and other reappropriations of texts) and instead mark chronologies of development in terms of new compositions—not what

¹⁷ McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*, 15.

was done with reprints. Yet, there may be no better way to gauge cultural trajectories than to consider the movement of the “same” text, over time, from one group of readers to another. Therefore, the role of the reprint market in Japanese literature provides an often-overlooked window into the relationship between content, social contexts, and physical modes of production. Roger Chartier, writing about cultural appropriations of which reprints are a prime example, advocates the “contrasted uses of the same texts.”¹⁸

He writes,

[A]ppropriation involves a social history of the various uses... of discourses and models, brought back to their fundamental social and institutional determinants and lodged in the specific practices that produce them. To concentrate on the concrete conditions and processes that construct meaning is to recognize, unlike traditional intellectual history, that minds are not disincarnated, and, unlike hermeneutics, that the categories which engender experiences and interpretations are historical, discontinuous, and differentiated.¹⁹

Reprints contain records of differentiated uses of texts that can be used to construct meaning in diverse social and institutional situations. Consequently, this dissertation considers those most directly involved in appropriating texts through reprinting, reading, and otherwise making them their own.

For example, publishers and editors (whose roles often overlap in Japan) were important readers, as well as inscribers of meaning, even though they are typically treated and thought of as distinct from readers and writers who are more readily recognized as giving meaning to texts. In terms of evidence, for many texts, the publisher’s or editor’s forewords are the only records we have of *any* reader’s response to a text. These forewords, a type of paratext according to Genette,²⁰ are key records of “past readings”

¹⁸ Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer*, 89.

¹⁹ Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer*, 89.

²⁰ For Genette, the paratext “enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public.” Paratexts serve as a “threshold” or “vestibule” between the inside of the

and served as “guides to reading for contemporary [Japanese] readers.”²¹ Together with other paratexts, they can lead us in our efforts to read the subsequent moments of reception. These forwards and prefaces are one of the few constant sources of information about the investment of meaning into texts in different historical situations. Naturally, such forewords are often rhetorically partisan and economically motivated.²² Nevertheless, they still provide insight into the reinterpretation of a book for a new place and time. Rereading reprints with their successive forewords and other additions (and subtractions²³) provides the possibility of doubly reading texts, to arrive at “unfamiliar interpretations of even familiar texts,” and to thereby rethink literary history.²⁴

Chartier also advocates a “social history of the use and understandings of texts by communities of readers who, successively, take possession of them.” This is because “numerous and complex mediations must take place between texts that become ‘steady sellers’ in colportage and meaning invested in them in different historical situations and for different readers.”²⁵ Of course, because the process is retroactive, what subsequent

main text and the outside world. Paratexts act as “a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one’s whole reading of the text” Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, 1-2. Although in Genette’s model the paratext is “always a conveyor of commentary that is authorial...legitimated by the author” paratexts in reprint editions are no less ‘authoritative.’ They, too, are a zone of “transaction,” “a privileged place of pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public, and influence that [...] is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it.” Genette stresses, however, that the pertinence of any reading is, “of course, in the eyes of the author and his allies” Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, 2. Although the editor of reprints acts as the primary ally of the author, their agenda for the text is never unified with that of the authors.’ The editor and publisher are independent actors with their own agenda for the reproduction of the text and its paratexts; therefore, paratexts also need to be understood as zones for advancing a reading that is preferred by its editor and publisher. See Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*.

²¹ Bannet, *Transatlantic Stories and the History of Reading, 1720-1810: Migrant Fictions*, 12.

²² For this reason, readings of these publisher’s forewords is not corrective; it does not matter so much the actual history of the texts, so much as how the publisher instructs readers on how to read and remember them.

²³ What is removed or truncated from a text may also provide more information about literary developments than what is newly added.

²⁴ Bannet, *Transatlantic Stories and the History of Reading, 1720-1810: Migrant Fictions*, 12.

²⁵ Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer*, 92.

generations of readers thought about a text is more important for understanding its canonicity than an attempt to discover its “original” meaning and social significance.

The reprint market is one area where a greater appreciation of materiality’s role in constituting the literary field may benefit us. A consideration of the various physical formats and materialities of texts makes visible some of the ongoing negotiations between the pre-modern and the modern. Moreover, it provides reasons for not organizing the history of Japanese literature around a rupture that is supposed to have taken place in the last few decades of the nineteenth century.²⁶ Texts from the Edo-period were particularly prevalent as reprints across the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth; highly reprinted authors included Kyokutei Bakin 曲亭馬琴 (1767-1848), Santō Kyōden 山東京伝 (1767-1848), Tamenaga Shunsui 為永春水 (1790-1843) and, later, Ihara Saikaku 井原西鶴 (1642-1693). These authors need to be seen as contemporary forces in the Meiji-period literary field and not merely historical personages. Edo-period texts in their initial and reprinted formats were materially and discursively active within the Meiji-period literary field. Any historical bifurcation between a “premodern” past and an increasingly “modern” present disguises the constant literary present of the marketplace—texts both old and new continued to circulate and change as they returned to the market through republication.

The circulation of these prior texts tells a separate history of literary change. For instance, the broad Meiji-period critical reception of Kyokutei Bakin can be seen as a reaction to his current place in circulation and not a retort to his historical position as an

²⁶ A consideration of the reprint market and industry allows us to see the accumulation of capital earlier than has been assumed. The reason for this is that the traditional purview of literary studies began on the edge of the printing industry and its rise is the narration of its migration to a more centralized location. Hence, this creates an appearance of the development of capita, but arguably it is more of a shift in the access to it for cultural production.

Edo-period author, per se. That is, although Bakin passed away in 1848, his continued/increasing popularity forced critics during the 1870s through the 1890s to respond to his writings as a potent force within the contemporary world of literature. The active adaptation of Bakin's works into new material formats made him all the more present in the world of texts, increasing his reputation and historical significance. Therefore, although critics often couched their arguments in terms of Bakin's historicity, their aims and motivations were primarily contemporary; they were seeking to negotiate the acceptance of alternative literary forms of "modern Japanese literature" through the rejection of Bakin. Hence, although each chapter in the dissertation includes an analysis of first or early editions of texts, they are equally concerned with how successive generations reproduced those texts and made them their own.

This dissertation is not a strict, close-knit discussion of a single topic; but rather, it is a back-and-forth consideration a several interwoven topics—economies of reprinting, publishing laws, print technology, buying and reading books, marginalia, and even representations of books. Each of these topics is treated in slightly different ways. Yet together, these diverse topics give depth to the literary field, telling a history of the reception, re-creation, and representation of Edo-period fiction across the Meiji and Taisho periods. Throughout the dissertation, my goal is to investigate how literature has always been more than just a linguistic act, more than words on a page; it involves people: authors, readers, publishers, and booksellers, as well as a collection of text-objects circulating in a community. The interpretation of a given work should be informed by its physical embodiments and patterns of circulation and consumption as well as its "content."

As I argue in chapter two, “The Meiji Period ‘Forest of Words,’” the first decade and a half of the Meiji period was an important time of technological development and copyright reformation. The individuals involved in negotiating these technological and legal transitions, especially publishers, played a key role in shaping the reception and reproduction of Edo-period fiction during this time.

The third chapter, “Why Saikaku was Memorable but Bakin was Unforgettable,” rereads a central literary development, the “rediscovery” of Ihara Saikaku in the late 1880s and 1890s, in terms of the proliferation of reprints of the author Kyokutei Bakin. It considers how the increased circulation of Bakin was a motivating factor in the rediscovery of Saikaku.

Chapter four, “Ōgai’s Bookshelf,” uses Koganei Kimiko’s descriptions of Mori Ōgai’s bookshelf as well as Ōgai’s marginalia contained in books from the Ōgai Collection at Tokyo University to examine the relationship between reading and a plurality of literary interests in the 1880s. Through reconstructing and rereading Ōgai’s collection from the 1880s (alongside his marginalia), and examining the books on his bookshelf as physical objects, this chapter endeavors to provide a perspective largely missing from our historical records—the reaction of an individual reader to the choices made by publishers and editors during the reprinting process.

Chapter five, “Judging Books by Their Covers,” looks at depictions and representations of books as physical objects—particularly their covers—in Natsume Sōseki’s writings.²⁷ It finds, in Sōseki’s writing, examples of material consciousness about texts and the relationship between their physical format and their place in society.²⁸

²⁷ A study of this process of material and discursive transformations of texts during reprinting inevitably includes a detailed consideration of materiality and technologies of print, the mode by which text became

The latter-half of the nineteenth century saw a great many literary movements and trends, but the teleology of the modern Japanese novel wants to subsume each of these developments into its totalizing history.²⁹ All too often, histories of the time are overdetermined, beginning with a stereotypical and abandoned or “extinct” past and inevitably arrive at the *telos* of the modern novel by underrepresenting competing moments of development and negotiation. An emphasis on movement towards a particular conception of a Western or modern novel fails to account for the diversity of the hybrid literary forms and models that existed. This problem derives from tracing development along the single axis of content alone, which reduces literary development to abstracted representation and narration. At the same time, it flattens out developments along the other axes, the material and social registers. This is because these other axes are each assumed to also flow along an identical spectrum towards Westernization and modernization. Part of the problem is that, by focusing on new styles, forms of

part of a new moment. Hence, the dissertation considers what it means for a text to be printed with xylography (woodblock printing), moveable type, lithography, or copper etching at a given time. While such bibliographic concerns are, of course, not the end goal, they clarify chronological and social differences between “the context of production and that of the reception of the text and what was made of it by their readers”²⁷ Along with technology of production, additional concern is given to the changing significance of a litany of binding styles and book formats used, including Japanese book bindings (*wahon* 和本, *watoji* 和綴じ); temporary bindings (*kari toji* 仮綴じ); cardboard back bindings (*bōru byōshi* ボール表紙); newspaper and magazine formats; Western books and bindings (*yōhon* 洋本, *yōtoji* 洋綴じ); and additional hybrid formats.

²⁸ Divisions within the literary field in Meiji- and Taisho-period Japan correlate to some degree or another with material markers, often in ways that we have yet to fully appreciate. Materiality of books, and descriptions of materiality *in* books, points to lines of social, economic, and cultural divergence, the physical formats of books reflecting and creating spheres of meaning. Authors write texts, but publishers and bookmakers help situate them in a literary economy, on the page and in books. Inscribed within the materiality of texts are concrete symbols of difference between discursive spheres of meaning. The divide between high and low, new and old, masculine and feminine texts are printed within the narrative and language on the page, but perhaps even more so in the book’s cover, binding, and paper. In turn, textual materiality mediates the book reader’s interactions with those texts. At the same time, however, their position as readers and owners (or borrowers) vis-à-vis the literary field is also mediated through the physical formats of the books with which they interact.

²⁹ Frequently discussed movements and trends include political novels (*seiji shōsetsu* 政治小説 c.1877-c.1886), translations of western fiction, the rise of “Realism” (*shajitsushugi* 写実主義 c.1885), “Romanticism” (*romanshugi* ロマン主義), “Nationalism” (愛国主義), “Naturalism” (*shizenshugi* 自然主義), “Anti-Naturalism” (反自然主義).

representation and narration in Japan at the end of the nineteenth century literary histories neglect the continued circulation of prior texts in readers' hands and in publishers' catalogues. Without recognizing how past texts and modes of narration were ever-present, literary histories depend on external and often overly global causes to explain developments.

The shift in print technology and book manufacturing, at the close of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, created a new literary materiality and discursive space—the literary field—wherein texts were reproduced and rearranged to reflect new hierarchy for evaluations. Altering of the text in reprinting was done according to shifting views of literature and to meet the wants of a real or imagined community of readers. It is for this reason the reprinting of older texts, perhaps more than that of new ones, may allow us to see the inner workings and internal tensions of literary production and reproduction—particularly regarding the relationship between technologies of print, conceptions of literature, and institutions of literary production.

Chapter II: The Mid-Meiji “Forest of Words”

The year 1882 in Japan is rather insignificant in literary historical terms. It saw the founding of Tokyo Senmon Gakkō 東京専門学校, which became Waseda University 早稲田大学 in 1902. Tsubouchi Shōyō’s political novel *Seijiyu no kōshaku* 清治湯の講釈 was serialized in the *Tokyo e-iri shinbun* 東京絵入新聞.¹ But, otherwise, 1882 is basically an empty year in terms of famous events and compositions. And, yet, we know that this seemingly insignificant year saw multiple reprints of older texts. An editorial entitled “A Forest of Words” (*Fumi no hayashi* 文の林) in the October 31st, 1882 issue of *Yomiuri shinbun* 読売新聞 (*Yomiuri* newspaper), reflects on this current, “strange” fad of reprints of older books of literature. As Narushima Ryūboku 成島柳北 (1837-1884), the author of the editorial,² suggests, the trend of publishing or reprinting older texts (*furuki shomotsu* 古き書物) was a complex aesthetic and economic phenomenon connected to the entire spectrum of the mid-Meiji-period (1868-1912) literary world. On a micro level, it was tied to individual authors, titles, and genres but also, on a more macro level, to publishers and the larger economies of print.

The trends and fashions of the world are incomprehensible. There are many things that even if we ask ‘What is the basis for this?’ we cannot know exactly why. ...Who started the fashion and who is following it? Fads are popular for a

¹ Shōyō wrote this work under the pen name Haru no yaoboro 春のやおぼろ. Itō Sei, *Nihon bundanshi: kaisō no bungaku*, 225.

² Ryūboku wrote this under his pen name Bokujō Gyōshi 墨上漁史. Bokujō Gyōshi (Narushima Ryūboku). "Fumi no hayashi." 1.

moment and that is why they are strange. Today when we look around the world to see what is popular, it is the publication of old books. From [Japanese] historical chronicles, Chinese classics, [Chinese] histories and primers, down even to [Kyokutei] Bakin's writings and [Tamenaga] Shunsui's *gesaku* 戯作, they are publishing everything they can get their hands on. Everywhere there are advertisements for books and new printing houses forming; in the east, west, south, and north, none can escape the sound of voices crying, "Print and Publish, Print and Publish!" It is thanks to the graces of the Meiji government that such learning is propagated. Books piled up as if on a sweaty ox struggling [under their weight]; they will fill up homes to the rafters!³ All the paper under heaven [i.e. Japan] will be made into books!⁴

Much like it was to the 1882 author of this editorial, Narushima Ryūboku, the Meiji-period "forest of words," seemingly overgrown with reprints, is also in some ways "incomprehensible" or at least disorienting to later scholars of the period. Such scholars are prone to see the Meiji Restoration (1868) as a key marker of rupture from Japan's literary past. Traditional scholarship about the Meiji period is practiced at explaining new literary developments, particularly in terms of content and narrative forms. Yet, this boom in reprinting is perplexing as it symbolizes an increase in past texts, which is often unaccounted for in standard literary histories.

The extent of this reprinting boom spoken of in the editorial is born out by even the most cursory survey of mid-Meiji printing government records and advertisements from the 1880s, or of extant library holdings. Each shows how early modern texts generally took on a new life through reprints. In such printing records from the 1880s there are a host of lesser-known and all-but-forgotten authors and titles. But, certain names and titles are so ubiquitous that they comprised the Meiji-period canon of Edo-period literature: Tamenaga Shunsui 為永春水 (1790-1843), Santo Kyōden 山東京伝

³ These metaphors, the sweaty ox and books to the rafters, come from the Chinese writer Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819).

⁴ Bokujō Gyōshi (Narushima Ryūboku). *Fumi no hayashi*. 1.

(1761-1816), Shikitei Sanba 式亭三馬 (1776-1822), Jippensha Ikku 十返舎一九 (1765-1831), and Ryūtei Tanehiko 柳亭種彦 (1783-1842). The most widely reprinted author seems to have been Kyokutei Bakin 曲亭馬琴 (1767-1848). His *Nansō satomi hakken den* 南総里見八犬伝 (Record of Eight Dogs of the Satomi Clan of Nansō, 1814-42; here after *Eight Dogs*), *Chinsetsu yumihari zuki* 椿説弓張月 (“Strange Tales of the Crescent Moon,” 1807-11), *Kinse setsu bishōnen roku* 近世説美少年録 (“Recent Records of Brave Youth,” 1829-32), and other titles are particularly prominent.

These older texts and authors coalesced into a common literary canon of Edo-period literature. This canon from the near past circulated alongside translations and recent compositions, giving meaning to the entire Japanese literary field. In describing the formation of the modern English canon, Trevor Ross asserts that modern canon-formation “is an aspect of reception, of introducing readers to the literature of the near or distant past, and of preserving that literature in the hope of maintaining the culture that helped produce it.”⁵ If an analogous process of canon-formation—literary reproduction as an attempt to preserve the culture of its production—occurred in Japan, then this time of intense reprinting and reception is a prime candidate for that time of canon formation.⁶

As reprints, temporal transplants of texts into the mid-Meiji “forest of words,” these texts gained a level of autonomy from the past, but they were interpolated into an emerging contemporary discourse on literature. Yet, at the same time, a discourse based on the names and titles of Edo-period reprints framed the emergence of modern Japanese

⁵ Ross, *The Making of the English Literary Canon: From the Middle Ages to the Late Eighteenth Century*, 5.

⁶ A more specific standard for canonicity is described by John Treat, who defines the “canon” of Japanese literature as texts that are reprinted, transcend their original moment of production, and become “subject to a sustained and high level of critical study.” Treat, *Writing Ground Zero: Japanese Literature and the Atomic Bomb*, 415.

literature — new trees that grew in this forest. That is to say, the constituent constellation of older texts in the “forest of words” and their particular patterns of reproduction deeply impacted subsequent literary developments and reformations; these texts helped define the very conception of literature during the Meiji period and beyond.

Understanding the mass-reproduction of prior literature requires broad consideration of a coalescence of technological innovations and legal reforms that contributed to this new economy of book production. This pattern of reprints raises a series of interrelated questions about the nature of literary reproduction and reception—the consideration of which is essential for understanding literary developments during this monumental time in Japanese literary history: What legal, social, and technological changes encouraged and allowed reprinting to happen to this extent? Who were the new publishers that were “publishing everything they can get their hands on,” and how did they shape the reprinting process? How did technologies and economies fostered by moveable type (*katsuji* 活字),⁷ which were only in the 1880s used to print fiction, influence the selection of titles and authors for reprinting? Ultimately, how did the reprinting process alter the text, authors, and genres that were reproduced?

In approaching such questions, this chapter, first, offers a general explanation of how these reprints were connected to contemporary literary developments by exploring discursive and economic links between reprints and Tsubouchi Shōyō’s 1885 essay on literature. Next, in the section “Copyright and the Right to Copy,” it analyzes how legal changes fostered an environment of reprinting. Third, “Publishers of Reprints,” considers the growth of the reprint publishing industry by tracing the work of Mori Senkichi 森仙吉

⁷ For a summary of the history of movable type in Japan see Itakura Masanobu, *Kappan insatsu hattatsu-shi: Tokyo Tsukiji kappan seisakujo no hatashita yakuwari*; Aiba Atsushi, “Meiji shoki kappan insatsushi danshō.”

(dates unknown), a relatively unknown publisher who built a successful publishing house on the backs of reprints. Finally, in “Economies of Genre Reprinting,” this chapter shows how reprinting with movable type altered individual works as well as the historical presence of authors by altering the ratio of various genres in their *oeuvre*.

In the historiography of Japan, the late 1870s and 1880s are presented as a time of rapid modernization and Westernization. The same is true in literary histories, which have often focused on translations of Western literature into Japanese during these years and which spotlight the efforts of literary reformers such as Tsubouchi Shōyō and Futabatei Shimei 二葉亭四迷 (1864-1909).⁸ Yet, in the late 1870s and 1880s there was also this surprising boom in reprints of various older literary texts.⁹

I take up the issue of reprints and Tsubouchi Shōyō in more detail in the following chapters. In passing, however, it is useful to explore briefly the connection of the reprinting industry to the publication of Tsubouchi Shōyō’s *Shōsetsu shinzui* 小説神髓 (Essence[s] of Novel[s]).¹⁰ This seminal text is discussed, in nearly every history of modern Japanese literature, as one of the primary points of origin for a certain type of “realist” novel that emerged in the decade following its publication. That is to say, *Shōsetsu shinzui* is anachronistically taken as a beginning of modern Japanese literature.¹¹ This chapter is, in part, an attempt to back up and situate *Shōsetsu shinzui* more firmly in the 1880s—not as part of some literary future. *Shōsetsu shinzui* was not created in a

⁸ See for example Ryan and Futabatei, Japan's First Modern Novel: Ukigumo of Futabatei Shimei; Tsubouchi, *The Essence of the Novel*.

⁹ See Kornicki, "The Survival of Tokugawa Fiction in The Meiji Period."

¹⁰ See Chapter Three for a broader discussion of the significance of how its title is translated into English.

¹¹ For a closer reading of the problematic history of *Shōsetsu shinzui* as the beginning of modern Japanese literature see Ueda, *Concealment of Politics, Politics of Concealment: The Production of "Literature" in Meiji Japan*. Ueda stresses that *Shōsetsu shinzui* initially was assigned this role after the 1905 Russo-Japanese War and again after the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake. Ueda is part of a group of scholars who are rethinking Shōyō’s argument and are less likely to take his words at face value, but are intent on sorting out his ambivalences.

vacuum; both its content and physicality as a book were products of the 1880s literary field in Japan and should inform any reading of it.¹²

Shōsetsu shinzui is typically translated as “The Essence of the Novel,” which is the title used by Nanette Twine for her English translation.¹³ This translated title suggests that the significance of the essay, in literary histories, is reduced to a tract on an idealized single essence of the novel. Highlighting the supposed singular of its message, Tomi Suzuki even asserts that the title could also mean “the (Western) novel as the essence of the *shōsetsu*.”¹⁴ But these English titles mask the ambiguity and openness of the Japanese original. The Japanese language has neither plurals nor direct articles. Hence, in that title, the words *shōsetsu* (novel) and *shinzui* (essence) are indistinct with regards to their plurality or singularity. The decisions whether to translate these words as either “novel” or “novels” and “essence” or “essences” is up to the discretion of the translator. Similarly, the choice about direct or indirect articles, “the” as opposed to “a” or “an,” is also subjective. Hence, the title of *Shōsetsu shinzui* has a range of grammatically plausible translations, each of which has the power to frame the text and highlight certain aspects of its diverse and eclectic message: “The essence [one singular] of the novel [also singular, e.g. European novel].” “An essence [one of many,] of the novel [a singular or general conception];” “essences [multi-faceted] of novels [a group of different types of novels; Japanese, Chinese, and European].” The singularity of “the novel” and “the essence” are anachronistic for interpreting this essay and doing so projects subsequent

¹² Ueda also situates *Shōsetsu shinzui* as part of the 1880s, arguing that Shōyō’s rejection of Bakin was aimed at the Freedoms and People’s Rights Movement (*Jiyū minken undō* 自由民権運動) whose members took inspiration from Bakin’s “Eight Dogs.” Unlike Ueda, however, I situate *Shōsetsu shinzui* more as a part and product of a publishing industry that was highly invested in reprinting, not rejecting Bakin. See Ueda, *Concealment of Politics, Politics of Concealment: The Production of “Literature” in Meiji Japan*.

¹³ Tsubouchi, *The Essence of the Novel*.

¹⁴ Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity*, 20.

aesthetics and later developments into the text. Shōyō was not writing about a single idea of the novel but rather speaking of a range of literary forms from Japan, China, and Europe, each of which he thought could be appreciated as *shōsetsu*. Similarly, the seemingly solitary essence of the novel, too, was in fact more descriptive of a plurality of principles—not *one* as “the essence” of the novel implies.

Semantics is only one way to address the meaning of *Shōsetsu shinzui*. Its route of production also provides purchase in tackling this question. *Shōsetsu shinzui* was released in 1885 by the publisher Tokyo Haishi Shuppansha 東京稗史出版社. The term *haishi* 稗史, novel or story, in this publishing house’s name is semantically and etymologically similar to that of *shōsetsu*.¹⁵ The characters for *haishi* 稗史 are used forty-seven times in *Shōsetsu shinzui*, most often in combination with those for *shōsetsu* (i.e., *haishi shōsetsu* 稗史小説). But the kanji for *haishi* are also used in isolation; in which case they are often given the *furigana* reading of *yomihon* or other specific genres. Based on Shōyō’s use of the term *haishi*, the publication company, Tokyo Haishi Shuppansha, saw itself as publishing “novels.” Moreover, their catalog of fiction matched many of Shōyō’s examples of *shōsetsu* in the essay.¹⁶ This connection between their catalog and Shōyō’s argument is significant.

The Tokyo Haishi Shuppansha was one of many companies who freely took advantage of available texts in the public domain both for reprinting and re-narration. They also used movable type, which facilitated producing multiple titles. They created a decent-sized catalogue of novels to sell. In addition to publishing current popular stories

¹⁵ Both the terms *haishi* and *shōsetsu* were originally used in China to disparage insignificant local histories by provincial historians and trivial small talk collected from the streets; in time they were used to refer to fiction as well.

¹⁶ For a detailed examination of the company’s publication list see Isobe Atsushi, “Meiji jūnendai no shinkō shuppansha: Tokyo haishi shuppansha nitsuite.”

such as vernacularized retellings of Chinese texts by Sanyū Enchō (1839-1900), the company printed reprint-editions of texts by Bakin, including *Eight Dogs* and at least seven other stories.¹⁷ During the years 1882-85 they annually published from one to six installments of these long works by Bakin.

It was after of a long run of reprinted texts by Bakin in the year 1885 that Tokyo haishi shuppansha published two books by Shōyō: *Shōsetsu shinzui* and his novel *Ichidoku santan tōsei shosei katagi* 一読三嘆当世書生氣質 (Once Read Thrice Admired Student's Lives These Days, 1885-86).¹⁸ These two books were also parts and products of Tokyo Haishi shuppansha's literary (re)production business.

Physically, *Shōsetsu shinzui* resembled many of the reprints and fictional publications of Tokyo haishi shuppansha; it came in nine Japanese-style (*watoji* 和綴じ; string-bound and side-stitched) volumes and was printed with moveable type on Japanese paper (i.e., non-pulp paper). This shared printing history between Shōyō and Bakin created perhaps the greatest irony of literary history: many of the same matrices and individual pieces of movable type employed to produce reprints of Bakin were most likely also used to print *Shōsetsu shinzui*, a text that is remembered in literary history for rejecting Bakin. The connection of these two texts, *Shōsetsu shinzui* and *Ichidoku santan tōsei shosei katagi*, by Shōyō to the diverse literary moment is an aspect of his “revolutionary”¹⁹ text's past that needs to be integrated fully into literary history.

¹⁷ Ikube, "Meiji jūnendai no shinkō shuppansha:."

¹⁸ Ikube, "Meiji jūnendai no shinkō shuppansha:."

¹⁹ For instance, *Shōsetsu shinzui* is described as “revolutionary” by Kaneda Tamio, who argues, “*The Essence of the Novel* had a revolutionary impact at the time on a literary scene that was still drawn toward a confused taste for playful fiction of the previous age (*gesaku*).” Kaneda, "Fenollosa and Tsubouchi Shōyō," 53.

This is not to say these two texts by Shōyō were not also, in part, products of an influx of Western ideas and translations. *Shōsetsu shinzui*, like the 1880s in general, has an interesting tension within it. On one hand, Shōyō’s essay uses foreign concepts—particularly English terminology and ideas—to reinterpret the Japanese literary past and present, and there is a prevalence of imported ideas. For instance, much of Shōyō’s literary terminology in *Shōsetsu shinzui* is clearly demarcated as English in origin, i.e. “In English *kancho shōsetsu* 勸懲小説 are called ‘didactic novels’.... *mosha shōsetsu* 模写小説 are ‘artistic novels.’”²⁰

On the other hand, *Shōsetsu shinzui* also depends on the Japanese idiom and literary corpus to naturalize these imported concepts, particularly for illustrative examples of European literary practices. The Japanese titles, genres, and names of Japanese authors are perhaps the most prevalent examples of native idiom in *Shōsetsu shinzui*. For instance, Shōyō cites authors and titles of Japanese books in order to explain the distinction between the social, contemporary novel, “*ima (sosharu)*” 現世 (世話) and the historical, period novel, “*mukashi (hisutorikaru)*” 往昔 (時代):

Historical *monogatari* 物語 make events that have already happened into a book, or have historical persons as the protagonist and make these into dramatic booklets. Social *monogatari* take situations of the current age as their material in making their plots. The novels of our country are for the most part historical *monogatari*; that is, period novels (*jidai shōsetsu* 時代小説). Of course, that is what a few of Bakin’s compositions are. In the vernacular they are called *yomihon* 読みほん 稗史. Such large half-folio books written in a mixture of Chinese characters and *kana* scripts are generally of this type. However, Murasaki Shikibu’s *Tale of*

²⁰ Tsubouchi Shōyō, *Shōsetsu shinzui*, 25-26, Ōgai Collection. I selected these passages, not only because they are famous, but because Mori Ōgai highlighted and annotated them in his copy of the “Essence of the Novel.” In the top margin of this extended passage Ōgai wrote “Didact. Nov.,” “Artistic Roman”, and “Hist. Ū. Social”

Genji and Tamenaga Shunsui's *ninjōbon* にんじやうぼん 情史 and the like are in the category of social *monogatari*.²¹

Shōyō uses the names of Bakin, Tamenaga Shunsui, and Murasaki Shikibu, and their genres, (*yomihon*, *monogatari*, and *ninjōbon*) to make the distinction between historical and social novels clearer to readers familiar with Japanese literature, even as he reclassifies that history into these newly imported categories. Through constantly citing names, titles, and genres in *Shōsetsu shinzui*, Shōyō brings his text into dialogue with the varieties of Japanese reprints and new compositions circulating at the moment in the forest of words, including those published by the Tokyo Haishi Shuppansha and other publishing houses in the 1880s.

By discounting *Shōsetsu shinzui*'s dialog with the contemporary literary field, we risk misreading it as a conversation about an abandoned or fading Japanese literary past. The hasty rush to see Edo-period literature as a forsaken past and to situate *Shōsetsu shinzui* as a wedge separating the modern and the pre-modern, for Kōjin Karatani, comes from the dominant narratives of modernization theory from the Post-War period. Stressing the inherent rupture caused by the intrusion of a European modernity into Japan, Karatani critiques these narratives of modernization by identifying this as a “nearness of origin.”²² He writes, “[I]t is in the latter half of the nineteenth century itself that we should look for the ‘origins’ of modern literature, and not before.”²³ In customary literary histories *Shōsetsu shinzui* is assigned this role. Yet, the ubiquitous placement of *Shōsetsu*

²¹ Tsubouchi Shōyō, *Shōsetsu shinzui*, 28.

²² Karatani, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, 194-95. For a longer discussion on Karatani's nearness of origins see Zwicker, *Practices of the Sentimental Imagination: Melodrama, the Novel, and the Social Imaginary in Nineteenth-century Japan*.

²³ Karatani, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, 195.

shinzui at the fountainhead of modern Japanese literature obscures the deep literary well from which it sprung. It is not a start of literary history, but is, at once, an inseparable product of the past and clear-evidence of a diverse moment, rich with a myriad of competing literary interests and potentials of which only a small subset became the modern “realist” novel.

Shōyō was writing at a time characterized by a rapid increase in the number of novels in circulation. As an early advertisement for *Shōsetsu shinzui* points out, the essay was an attempt to make sense of this diverse literary moment and to help readers appreciate the assorted literary narratives circulating in Japan.

The celebration of made-up stories (monogatari 物語) is human nature both in the East as in the West in ancient times as in the present. Moreover, people like those of our country [Japan] have loved made-up stories to the highest degree. That is precisely why haishi shōsetsu 稗史小説 are written in increasing numbers and increasing in popularity. We search after new authors and new works. We are in a swamp of haishi shōsetsu like a sweaty ox loaded with an enormous library of books—they have become that popular!²⁴

This last image of the ox loaded heavily with books (which also appeared in the 1882 editorial on the “Forest of Words”) is perhaps the best metaphor for the abundance of old and new texts in the 1880s literary market.²⁵ Many standard literary histories focus on the increase in imported novels and foreign ideas, but clearly, like this proverbial “sweaty ox,” the burden *Shōsetsu shinzui* bore was transtemporal in addition to being transspatial: it involved the growing number of old and new novels from both the “East” and the “West” in circulation. *Shōsetsu shinzui* is often remembered as an origin point of modern Japanese literature, but in terms of its production both as an object and literary discourse,

²⁴ Quoted in Aoki Toshihiro, “Fujoyōdō no shōsetsu haishi.”

²⁵ Again this phrase from Liu Zongyuan is a set image that has a particular history and represents a moment that was highly conversant in Chinese idioms.

it was clearly deeply connected to the 1880s literary moment of reading and rereading, publishing and republishing a historically diverse and evolving canon of late Edo-period literature.

As early as 1981, Peter Kornicki asserted that the “survival” of Edo-period Fiction in the Meiji period changes the way we should think about literary history, but the significance of this observation has not yet been fully incorporated into most literary histories.²⁶ For example, in her recent study of Meiji literary history, Indra Levy in her *Sirens of the Western Shore* deploys this standard explanatory model of rupture from the past to explain Meiji-period literary developments.²⁷ Although the study has a number of important insights about the representation of women, it still retains this notion of rupture in a problematic way. She points to such things as the reconceptualization of literature as art, the appearance of political novel, early translations of Western literature, and the development of vernacular literary forms. The rush to show rupture from the past in her argument belies an assumption, which is not hers alone, of progress towards the more “civilized” and West as the goal. This desire for rupture colors each development with a celebratory hue of liberation from the unsophisticated past and triumphal entry into the modern age. There is a tendency towards over-determination in this model, as assumption that literary “progress” (*shinpo* 進歩) and “developments” (*kaihatsu* 開発) led away from the past towards a Westernized modern future. But this view occludes both the contested, ambivalent nature of each of these literary developments within the contemporary moment as well as the plurality of results they created. Such a model is unable to account

²⁶ Kornicki, "The Survival of Tokugawa Fiction in The Meiji Period."

²⁷ See Levy, *Sirens of the Western Shore: the Westernesque Femme Fatale, Translation, and Vernacular Style in Modern Japanese Literature*.

for the continued and, in fact, increasing circulation of older texts within the “forest of words.”

Following Kojin Karatani’s “nearness of origin,” Levy asserts “translation as origin” of modern Japanese literature. According to this argument, modern Japanese literature was a product of translation in three ways: First, “literature” (*bungaku* 文学) was reconceptualized into a European-like category of “arts that included poetry, drama, and fiction.”²⁸ According to Levy, the translation of the concept of literature into *bungaku* “marked a watershed in the social history of fiction, raising the novel from its lowly status as frivolous entertainment to the high culture of civilized nations.”²⁹ Second, modern Japanese literature began with the translation of European and American fiction into a “Japanese permutation of literary Chinese.”³⁰ But when it came to the novel, the “transformative potential” of this writing style was “substantially limited to the sphere of narrative content,” which was unable to convey the *tone* of vernacular originals. Hence it was good for “exotic narrative content (i.e. stories about the West),” but not for conveying the aesthetics of the language. Third, modern Japanese literature began with translation when writer-translators like Futabatei Shimei purportedly created a “vernacular Japanese literary language” through translation. That is, Futabatei created a written Japanese vernacular language into which he could translate Russian literature.

²⁸ I discuss this observation in Chapter Three.

²⁹ Levy, *Sirens of the Western Shore: the Westernesque Femme Fatale, Translation, and Vernacular Style in Modern Japanese Literature*, 27.

³⁰ Levy, *Sirens of the Western Shore: the Westernesque Femme Fatale, Translation, and Vernacular Style in Modern Japanese Literature*, 29-30. Levy writes, “Clearly, the popularity of Chinese diction and written style in the Meiji teens was not the manifestation of some Japanese preoccupation with China, but rather with a particular style of translating the civilization and enlightenment of the ‘West’ that marked its exotic prestige by means of the semiforeign lingua franca of Chinese.” The idea that *kanbun-kuzushi* 漢文崩字 is “semiforeign” is problematic and underrepresents the extent to which this was a legitimate and widely-read and written form of “Japanese” that played a key role in the formation of the intellectual, cultural, and legal life of Edo.

The end result of this three-step progression of translation, according to Levy, was the creation of a “radical divide between modern Japanese fiction and all that preceded it.”³¹

This model and others that emphasize rupture have a difficult time explaining why, far from fading, many works from pre-1868 increased in popularity and circulation. Rejecting this tendency Peter Kornicki argues, “reliance on 1868 as a boundary of literary as well as political significance has produced a distorted picture of literary currents in Meiji Japan. Such a picture cannot but emerge when it is taken as given that late Tokugawa [Edo] fiction is worthless as literature, or when Meiji fiction is discussed in terms of trends that were to be dominant later or of works which have importance for us they lacked for contemporary readers.”³²

If we can find the “origin” in the 1880s, then it is from the simultaneous arrival of the new and the reappearance of the old. This reprinting boom in the early 1880s suggests a separate, and perhaps more distantly grounded “origin” for modern Japanese literature. As is discussed below, in many ways, modern Japanese literature lies in past literary texts and their reproduction and transformation during the reprinting process. That is to say, reprinting produced a significant and under explored connection between modern Japanese fiction and all that preceded it. Meanwhile, literature became “modern” as its material formats and books as objects came to resemble their Western counterparts as they donned a semiforeign formatting during reprinting.

The traces of a new origin perhaps can best be found in the mid-Meiji “forest of words” and the reprints that connect it to the past. What is needed to understand the literary significance of this moment is a willingness to enter anew and explore the 1880s

³¹ Levy, *Sirens of the Western Shore: the Westernesque Femme Fatale, Translation, and Vernacular Style in Modern Japanese Literature*, 34.

³² Kornicki, "The Survival of Tokugawa Fiction in The Meiji Period," 481.

“forest of words,” a willingness to embrace the disorienting force of this moment, and the flexibility to allow it to *reorient* our study of Meiji-period literature. This reoriented approach is neither a retrospective approach, a justification of subsequent literary trends, nor is it simply a history of the reception of past literature. Instead, it is a focus on a local moment of receptive recreation—a study of how past texts became something they never were before. A detailed consideration of publishers and editors, those most directly responsible for reproducing and thereby recreating older texts, should replace or at least supplement the more-common author-centric history of literary development.

Kornicki’s observation that in this period of great political and cultural change, “the literary loyalties of the Meiji reader did not rapidly follow suit and for some time remained attached to the literature before the [Meiji] Restoration” does not go far enough.³³ Although for most genres the words of the stories and tales remained the same, the form and layout of that literature changed during the reprinting process. Hence, even as readers’ “loyalties” remained, the objects of those loyalties underwent a remarkable change as objects to be read. These physical changes, as Kornicki and others have demonstrated, affected readers’ practices of consumption as well as the literary ecosystem of genres and texts. In order to better understand this literary moment, it is necessary to understand the effects of reprinting on individual texts and genres.

Perhaps an additional reason why the reprinting of older texts was so surprising to the author of “Forest of Words,” is that in the early 1880s older Edo-period (1600-1868) literary texts faced a two-fold problem: copies of books circulating in lending libraries were wearing out through constant use; at the same time, the wooden printing blocks used to print new copies of these texts were, through overuse, producing poorer and

³³ Kornicki, "The Survival of Tokugawa Fiction in The Meiji Period," 480.

poorer quality reprints. Without being ironic, one writer in 1882 even lamented, “The blocks have worn away; the books are tattered and devoured by bookworms. They are all but gone from this world.”³⁴ Yet, as the author of “Forest of Words” points out and as the archival record attests, in a few short years reprints of these select older texts flooded the literary marketplace.

Although it is difficult to come by concrete numbers, a survey of records of copies of books in the National Diet Library’s Kindai Digital Library³⁵ (including those on-line and for building use only) indicates that in the 1870s there was a relative dearth in production of all “Japanese literary” publications (日本文学 *nihon bungaku*; “Total Number of Records”) and Japanese novels (小説物語 *shōsetsu monogatari* “Novels NDC 913”),³⁶ including copies of older texts. By the middle of the 1880s, however, there was a boom in printing, which included reprints. (Figure II-1)

³⁴ Mori Senkichi, “Jō,” preface.

³⁵ The National Diet Library’s Kindai Digital Library, although not a perfect measure of books in circulation, does provide a useful point of departure. <<kindai.ndl.go.jp>>

³⁶ As defined by the Nippon Decimal System 900-999 *bungaku* 文学, which includes 910-919, and Japanese novels 913.

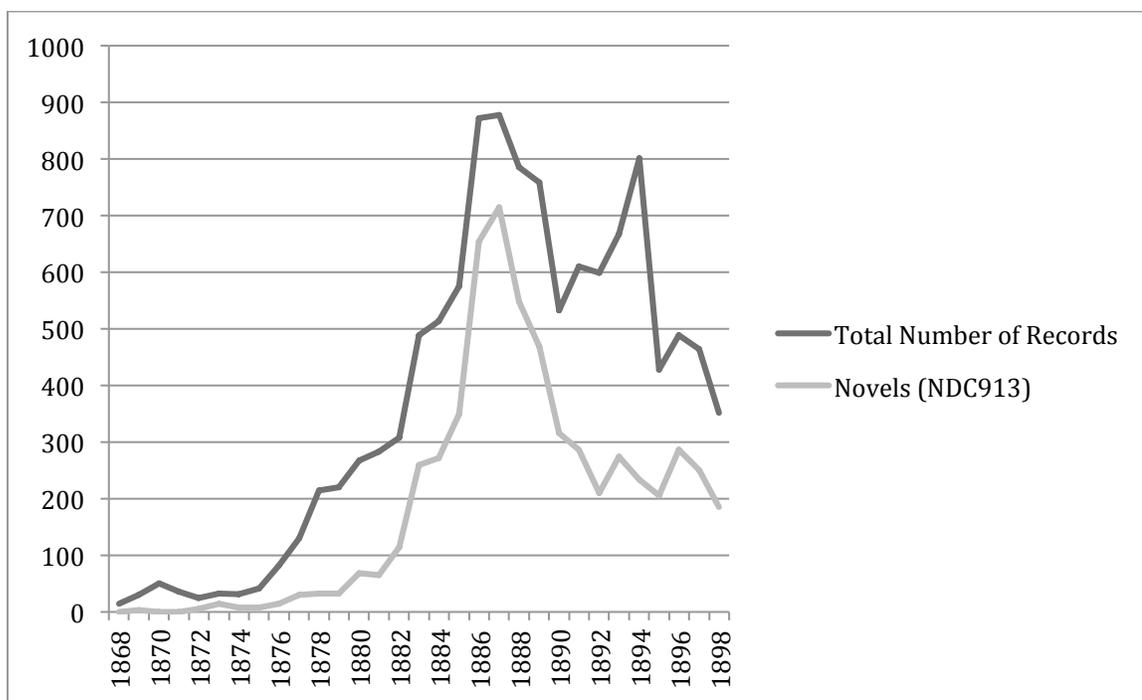


Figure II-1 Number of Literary Titles by Year in Kindai Digital Library

As can be seen in Figure II-2, once nearly-non-produced authors gained a new life during the second decade of the Meiji period, 1878-1887. The intervening decade, when this shift from lack to abundance occurred, needs to be recognized as the time when reprinting created the framework and contents of the Meiji canon of Edo literature (which continues to influence ours to this day). That is to say, the modern *oeuvre* of Edo period fiction—at least on a popular level—was created anew through reprints during this time; it was not a product of the continued circulation of older editions.

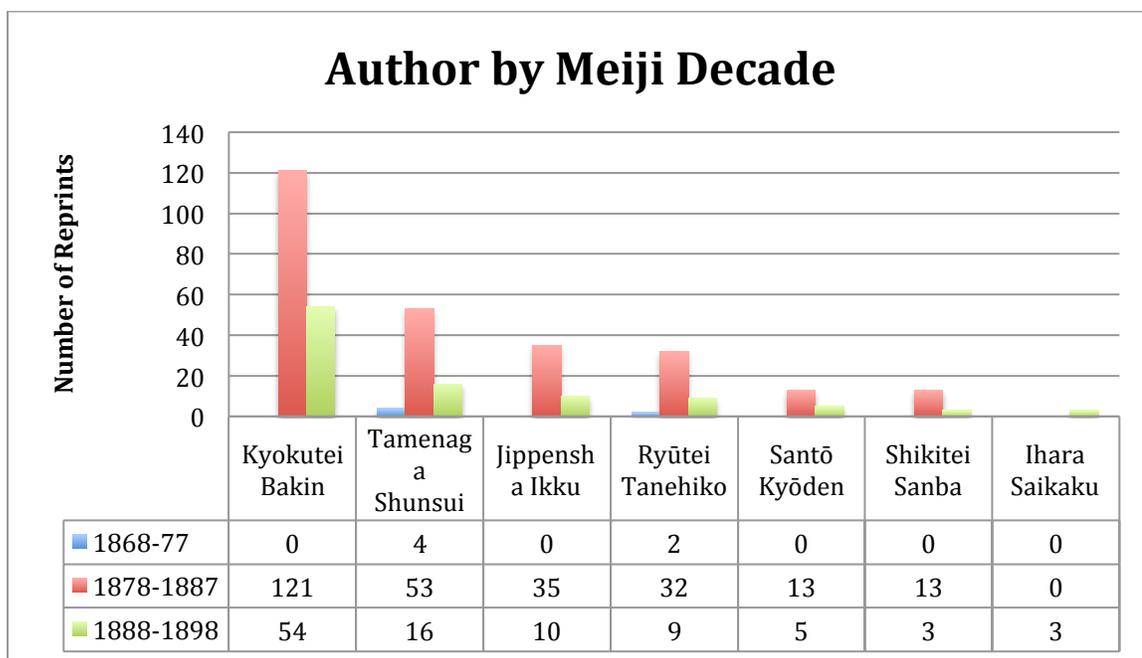


Figure II-2 Book Reprints by Decade according to Kindai Digital Library

Part of the decisions of what and how to reprint are characterized by serendipity, and often these economic decisions do not follow a clear historicist or aesthetic agenda. For readers from the 1880s, what was reprinted—for instance, an at times haphazard collection of Edo fiction (whatever publishers could get their hands on)—came to stand in for an actual literary *oeuvre*. For younger readers in particular, with no memory of the original moments of textual creation and circulation during the Edo period, this popular canon of reprints created in the late 1870s and 80s colored their historical perception and image of Edo literature. Literary modernizers, such as the young Tsubouchi Shōyō and the readers whom he inspired, increasingly set forth their task of reforming the composition and consumption of Japanese literature against the foil of this imagined literary past based on texts circulating in the present, and which was, thus, as much a creation of their own time, as anything. To the extent that we are influenced by the

Meiji-period view of Edo-period literature, and we cannot help but be, the work of early-Meiji publishers and editors (those who selected and published past texts) help(ed) shape even our current understanding of pre-Meiji literature.

What these publishers and editors created through reprinting did not correspond to the actual historical literary field from any particular time or place, nor was it a reproduction of the whole Edo literary field. Instead, it was an anachronistic hodgepodge of a literary past drawing heavily from writers of the Bunka 文化 (1804-1818) and Bunsei 文政 (1818-1830) periods, while initially neglecting those of the Genroku 元禄 period (1688-1704). This explains why, in figure Figure II-2, Saikaku is nearly absent until the mid 1890s. Thanks to reprinting, texts from the Bunka and Bunsei periods returned to best-seller status;³⁷ and adaptations of classical texts, such as editions of the *Taiheiki* 太平記 (Chronicle of Great Peace, 1368-1375) and other such *gunki* 軍記 (warrior tales) became commonplace; and once-illegal *jitsuroku* 実録 (factual accounts of vendettas), which circulated previously only in manuscript form, found new life in print.³⁸ Publishers favored “famous” authors over their less famous counterparts—even though their authorial fame was increasingly a byproduct of advertising and success in the Meiji-period reprint market.³⁹ Ultimately, decisions about reprinting were as impacted by what was legal to reproduce, which changed significantly during the first decades of the Meiji

³⁷ A methodological problem for determining circulation of texts from the first three decades of the nineteenth century is that they continued to circulate in lending libraries and were often no longer for sale outside of the used book market or to lending libraries. However, they remained popular through their afterlife in digests and adaptations made during the 1840s and 50s.

³⁸ The Kindai Digital Library (as of 4/1/2012) contains 139 copies of *Taiheiki* including variations that were printed between 1868-98. It also contains over 200 copies of books with *jitsuroku* in their title from this same time period.

³⁹ While not entirely new, the concept of a literary author as a single historical individual whose writings could be understood and marketed as a whole increasingly replaced the disparate personas and pen names under which the texts were produced. *Jitsuroku* were the exceptions to this fixation on famous authors; when composed their authors hid and obscured their real identities to avoid legal repercussions. In such cases title, not author, was the key to marketing.

period, as they were by loyalty to aesthetics or a desire to exactly reproduce the Edo-literary past as it once existed.

Copyright and the Right to Copy

One important question to address concerns how publishers obtained the rights to reprint texts. What happened to the original owners and their rights to produce and sell books? From a long-term perspective, this is a story detailing how individual publishers, protected as part of a once strong Printing Guild (*Honya Nakama* 本屋仲間), lost the exclusive rights to print through legal changes and the weakening of the guild. More proximate to the reprinting of the 1880s, the 1875 Copyright Law (*Shuppan jōrei* 出版條例) significantly impacted legal concepts and practices of copyright and transferred many texts protected by copyright into the public domain.⁴⁰

In contrast to Mori Senkichi's rags to riches story, which I will explain below, the fate of one of the most famous publishing names in early to mid-nineteenth century publishing, Tsuruya Kiemon the third 鶴屋喜右衛門 (dates unknown), helps us understand the rise and fall of an established and venerated printing house and how a no-name publisher could find such success in the reprinting industry. The Tsuruya family started a printing company in Kyoto in the Kan'ei 寛永 period (1624-44), where it published *jōruiri* 浄瑠璃 libretto for the puppet theater, including *Shinjū ten no Amijima* 心中天網島 by Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門 (1653-1724). It later established a print shop in Edo, which subsequently became independent. The Edo shop was so famous for their woodblock prints that their storefront was included in the first volume of the

⁴⁰ For a copy of the law see Hayashi Nobuo, "Shuppan kankei hōrei shūsei," 155-59.

*Famous Views of Edo (Edo meisho zu-e 江戸名所図会, Figure II-3) as a place to buy nishiki-e 錦絵 polychrome prints.*⁴¹

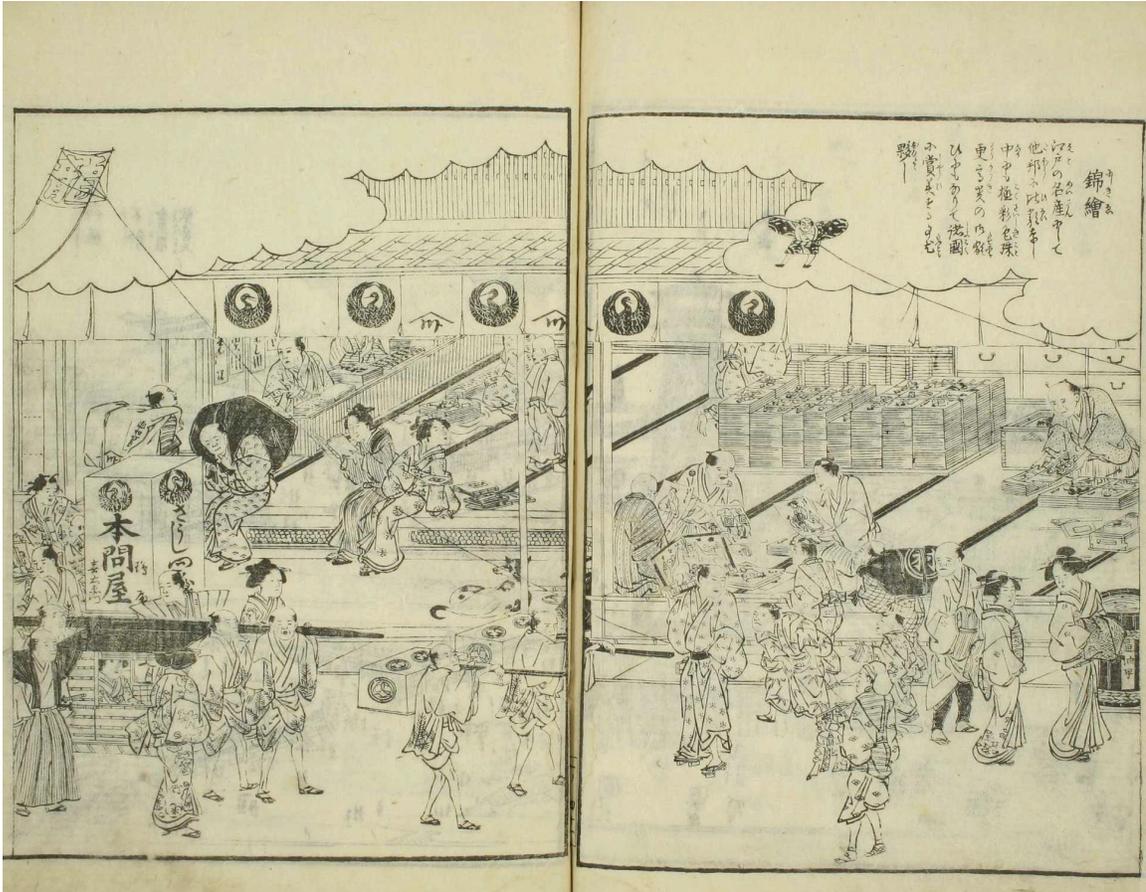


Figure II-3 Tsuruya in *Edo meisho zu-e*

From the 1780s through the 1840s the Tsuruya family of shops owned the rights to and published texts by the most well-known and best-selling authors of the day including Kyokutei Bakin, Santō Kyōden, Shikitei Sanba, Jippensha Ikku, and Ryutei Tanehiko, not to mention the dozens of lesser known authors, including Ryokutei Senkyō 緑亭仙橋, Ryūtei Tanekazu 柳下亭種員 (1807-1858), Goryūcatei Tokushō 五柳亭徳升 (1793-1853), and Senkakutei Hakurin 仙客亭柏琳 (dates unknown). They also printed ukiyo-e by

⁴¹ Saitō Yukio, Hasegawa Settan, *Edo meisho zu-e*, 63, <http://archive.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kosho/bunko10/bunko10_06556/bunko10_56_0001/bunko10_56_0001_p0063.jpg>.

artists such as Katsushika Hokusai 葛飾北齋 (1760-1849). In short, over a sixty-year period, from the end of the eighteenth century through the middle of the nineteenth, Tsuruya grew to be one of the largest and most powerful networks of printing shops of the time. Their Senkakudō 仙鶴堂 shop was among the most famous in the city of Edo (present day Tokyo).

In the Edo period there were multiple layers of regulations governing, controlling, and protecting printing rights. On an institutional level, publishers needed to belong to Publisher's(?) Guild(s) in order to legally print. On one hand, barriers to entering the guild protected the livelihood of its members. But, on the other hand, the guild was a mechanism for controlling content and self-censorship of its members. The copyright function of the guild was an important mechanism for protecting capital investments needed to produce books. Individual texts were protected through a system of exclusive rights tied to ownership and possession of the woodblocks used for printing. These “woodblock rights” (*hankabu* or *itakabu* 板株) were closely tied to the means of production. Since a publisher could not print without having woodblocks made for the text—a significant capital investment—protection of the investment was an important incentive for membership in the guild. Violations of rights were similarly classified according to the printing block as well. The most severe violation was a pirated “double [block]” (*jūban* 重版/板), in which a publisher recreated the text—that is, the blocks of another. Slightly less nefarious, although also prohibited, were the spectrum of “similar [block] prints” (*ruihan* 類版/板). *Ruihan* ranged from changing only the title to copying the contents in a different format. Punishment for violations of copyright (or for transgressing moral standards) most often came in the form of forfeiting the blocks, along

with surrendering to the offended party already printed books and revenue. To have the wooden blocks taken away or broken up, as was often the case, represented a substantial capital loss for a publisher.⁴²

After completing a printing run, printing houses had several options as to what to do with the woodblocks. They could store the blocks for use at a later date. As long as the blocks were properly stored to avoid warping, publishers could do a second or third printing at their leisure. But long-term storage often tied up important capital resources.

If the book did not look like it would sell enough to warrant a second printing, the publisher could then carve the block into a different text. Similar to how vellum was scraped clean and reused in Europe, Japanese woodblocks were planed down and reused multiple times. The cost of cherry wood and its value as a printing material was such that reuse was often a viable option to recoup costs from less successful titles. A final option was for a publisher to sell all or part of the blocks to another publisher.⁴³ For instance a publisher in Edo could sell the printing rights of a text to an Osaka-based publisher. This sale could involve transferring all or part of the original blocks. If only part of the blocks were sold, the new publisher could re-carve new blocks by using a copy of the book as a guide.

The Senkakudō did not retain the rights for many of their famous texts—in other words the blocks. Instead, they sold these, as was a common business practice.

Eventually, however, due to a series of business mistakes and poor management,

Senkakudō fell on hard times. As is well known, by the 1840s and the start of the Tempo

⁴² For a discussion of these regulations, types of copyrights, and violations see Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: a Cultural History from the Beginning to the Nineteenth Century*. Also, see Suzuki Toshio, *Edo no honya*, for a more detailed history of the development of the printing and bookseller industry.

⁴³ See Takagi Gen, *Edo yomihon no kenkyū: 19-seiki Edo shōsetsu yōshiki kō*, 389-90.

Reforms (1841-44), they had even pawned the blocks to *Nise murasaki inaka Genji* 倭紫田舎源氏 (Tales of country-bumpkin Gengi by a fake Murasaki, 1829-42), its current bestseller and main source of income. After the new printing guild was formed in 1851, the ownership of Senkakudō left the Tsuruya family as it was sold and passed from Turuya Kiemon 鶴屋喜右衛門 to Tsuchiokaya Bunsuke 辻岡屋文助.⁴⁴

A perusal of the printing records of fiction for the Meiji period presents a less prestigious view of the Senkakudō, run by Bunsuke. Although they continued to maintain their social position within the printing industry as a member of the *motogumi* 元組 or original publishing houses, the quantity of literary books that they published was relatively small. Nevertheless, lists of publishers in Tokyo continued to feature it in a prime location, well above their decreased current status as a publisher, particularly of literature. In the Meiji period the types of books Senkakudō published had shifted away from Edo popular fiction towards more practical books: dictionaries, texts for learning the English language, prose manuals, flower arrangement, and a few volumes of *haikai* 俳諧 poetry. They also branched out into new texts of contemporary fiction by the author Mantei Ōga 万訂大賀 (1818-1890).⁴⁵

Remarkably absent from the list of Senkakudō's publications in the Meiji period, however, are reprints by the famous authors it had once published: Bakin, Kyōden, Sanba, Ikku, Shunsui, and Tanehiko. Senkakudō had moved into another line of publishing that opened up the literary reprint market to other new publishers.

⁴⁴ Tsuchiokaya continued to also use the Tsuruya name. In an 1883 copy of *Yotsuya kaidan* 四谷怪談 he is listed as one of the six booksellers in Tokyo who were selling the book.

⁴⁵ In the 1870s Tsuruya published at least three books by Mantei: *Honen gokoku matsuri* (A five-grain festival for a bounteous year, 1872-73), *Chie no hakari* (The scales of wisdom, 1874), and *Kanekura sandaiki* (Three generations in the cash box, 1874).

The decline of publishers like Senkakudō at the end of the Edo period and the rise of those like Mori Senkichi's Kakuseisha (who is discussed below) in the Meiji period stem from a series of legal changes, which actually began with the disbandment of the printing guild during the Tempo Reforms (1841-43), the (re)adoption of new forms of print technology (e.g., movable type), and book production in the Meiji period.

Since the shift to moveable type was gradual, its impact on copyright laws and practices was initially rather limited. Woodblock-based ideas about copyright continued in the Meiji period. In a way, moveable type appears as an afterthought and not the primary concern of the government when making new laws concerning printing regulations. For instance, the 1869 Publishing Law included, tacked on at the end, the injunction that "All publications made with movable type are subject to this law."⁴⁶ Additionally, fiction was noted as its own category that was governed by the law: "All books and images, portraitures, *gesaku* and the like also qualify for this law."⁴⁷ After the Meiji Restoration in 1868 the new government had spent a great deal of effort deciding exactly how to oversee, regulate, and manage copyright and censorship. The laws and regulations changed frequently. For example, during the first decade, it seemed almost every office of government took their turn trying to administer and regulate printing. The slew of laws and regulations reflected and perhaps even at times helped cause the chaos and lawlessness of the time.

The Meiji 1869 Publication law (5th month 13th day) granted protection in this manner: "Publishers of books will have these protected by the government (*kan* 官) and will have exclusive rights to profits. These protections will be limited to the lifetime of

⁴⁶ Reprinted in Hayashi Nobuo, "Shuppan kankei hōrei shūsei," 153 Par. 13.

⁴⁷ Reprinted in Hayashi, "Shuppan kankei hōrei shūsei," 153 Par. 13.

the author; however, if family members want to continue these rights this will be allowed.”⁴⁸ The regulation stipulated the following punishments: “[publishers of] pirated blocks (*jūhan*) will lose the blocks, all completed books, and will be subject to a monetary fine. (The same applies to those who sell such books) The amount of the fine will vary according to the amount of damages suffered by the author and the [original] publisher. Fines will be paid to the author or publisher as recompense.”⁴⁹

Yet, this law was insufficient because it did not specify how copyright was protected or the precise amounts of the fines. The 1875 copyright law, the third major revision in five years, came about largely as a response to these problems. As Inaoka Masaru points out, prior publishing laws “were too brief and did not specify clear punishments for violations of the law. They also lacked mechanisms for protecting copyrights, which caused problems and a rash of lawsuits.”⁵⁰ The most famous of such lawsuits was brought forth by Fukuzawa Yukichi 福沢諭吉 (1835-1901), who is given (perhaps too much) credit for helping lobby for a new law. There was much more at stake in terms of print capital than the small value of Fukuzawa’s writings and his public posturing.

The 1875 law specified a new notion of copyright: “Those who compose *chosaku* 著作 and publish books and images, as well as those who translate and publish foreign books and images, shall be granted a thirty-year right to exclusive sale. This right of exclusive sale is called *hanken* 版權 [copyright]. However, whether to request or not request a copyright is left up to the intentions of that person. Those who request a

⁴⁸ Reprinted in Hayashi, "Shuppan kankei hōrei shūsei," 152, Par. 3.

⁴⁹ Reprinted in Hayashi, "Shuppan kankei hōrei shūsei," 153, Par. 9.

⁵⁰ Inaoka Masaru, "'Oseisan tenko' no shuppan negai to hanken menkyoshō," 169.

copyright must submit an application form requesting this license. Those who do not request it permit all others to publish [the book or image].”⁵¹

To booksellers and publishers of the day who still at times relied on ownership of the blocks for protection, the idea of an abstract right was extraordinary. As Inaoka writes, for those for whom “prohibitions against *jūhan* and *ruihan* were natural,” the idea “that something without copyright was freely reprintable was unthinkable.”⁵² While the 1875 publication law helped solidify protections for those who requested copyright, it essentially created an immense corpus of texts that were freely available to republish. But the true size of this corpus came into relief only as those who previously held guild-granted rights did not request this new government-sponsored copyright.

⁵¹ Reprinted in Hayashi, "Shuppan kankei hōrei shūsei," 155-59, Par. 2.

⁵² Inaoka, "'Oseisan tenko' no shuppan negai to hanken menkyoshō," 170.

The 1875 law required all who owned previous rights to request them anew.

“Previously published books and images in order to become compliant with this law, must within four months time have a new request submitted. All things [books and images] that do not meet said requirements shall be deemed to have no copyright.” Although the deadline for applying for a new copyright was later extended until April 30th of the next year, countless texts automatically were freed from their prior copyrights. Owners of the rights, particularly those who became eligible to claim them under the new law, often failed to act because they did not know they needed to. The government announced these new laws and the need for new applications to get copyright in the “regulations” (*ofure* おふれ 官令) section of newspapers around the country. For instance, on December 30th, 1875, The *Yomiuri* newspaper posted a public announcement (Figure II-4) on the need to renew copyright:

Figure II-4 Announcement in Newspaper on Need to Renew Copyrights

Vol.2 Number 170 To those who hold copyright (*hanken*) for images and books. A separate copyright record is being compiled and will be printed. At this time, you are to send notice to each regulatory office for each

明治八年十二月二十二日

○乙第七十號

圖書版權ヲ有スルモノハ別ニ版權書目ヲ編成シ發行可致ニ付各廳

從前藏版ノ分並ニ自今出版共續刻ヲ許サレ九圖書ハ一々可届出此

旨相達候事

明治八年十二月二十四日

内務卿大久保利通

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内務卿大久保利通

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and every image and book, which you have previously published or will afterwards publish, that you do not permit others to copy (honkoku 翻刻). Meiji 8th year, 12th month, 24th day Minister of the Interior Ōkubo Toshimichi⁵³

In short, these announcements and laws said that if you own a copyright and want to protect it you must notify us and have your copyright recorded in this new record. This law completed the transition from a *hanken* based on physical ownership of wooden printing blocks to a right maintained solely through government records. Many people—including authors and their family members—did not realize they even had a right to claim copyright.

While these changes in the copyright law and the creation of two categories of books—copyrighted and non-copyrighted—was an attempt to start anew and return order to the chaotic and conflicting systems of copyright regulation, there were unintended literary consequences of this reform. Since copyright was given to authors and their descendants (not only publishing houses or owners of blocks) only if they applied anew for that right, many old books were no longer under copyright and, therefore, transferred into the public domain.

Perhaps Kyokutei Bakin is the most notable author whose texts lost copyright protection. Since Bakin's descendants did not subscribe to a newspaper, they did not know they needed to renew claim to Bakin's vast oeuvre, and so Bakin's texts entered the public domain. Bakin's great-granddaughter, Takizawa Kitsu's 滝沢橋 in her "Memories" (*Omoide no ki* 思ひ出の記) explains the loss of copyright as follows:

Sometime in the Meiji period, we did not submit a request for copyright. Mother [Sachi 幸, Bakin's granddaughter] and I both thought this was regrettable. If Atsumi [Seikan, Bakin's grandson] knew about this, he didn't notify us. At that

⁵³ Anonymous. "Otsu dai hyaku nana jyū gō 乙第百七十號." 1.

time we did not subscribe to a newspaper, so we had no idea. At that time things were different then they are now; many households did not subscribe to a newspaper.⁵⁴

In short, Tthe family lost their claim to Bakin's vast oeuvre because they did not know they needed to claim it.⁵⁵

There is a bit of a mystery regarding this incident. Atsumi Seikan 渥美正幹, Bakin's grandson, was not the successor or even legally part of the Takizawa family; he had been adopted into another family and taken their surname. Yet, Kitsu implies he borrowed and possibly even stole many of the books from her. In the same paragraph Kitsu explains:

Mother's [Sachi] older brother Atsumi was constantly borrowing from mother things Bakin wrote, but he never returned them. Since he was her older brother and a scholar, she trusted him and had peace of mind about this. But he took advantage of that. Around Meiji 10 [c. 1877], I think, he started publishing things under his own name that Bakin wrote and he sold many of the things he had borrowed. Especially he said he wanted to borrow Bakin's diary and that he wanted to borrow it until he died. So when he passed and we went to get it back, there was nothing left because he had sold it long ago! When we tried to buy it back it had become so expensive that there was no way we could do so. Mom was completely heartbroken and devastated by this.⁵⁶

Atsumi continued to publish Bakin's texts, so while the main family lost what could have been their exclusive right, he took advantage of the lack of copyright and his access to rare texts by Bakin. For instance, he published at least two posthumous works by Bakin: *Kyokutei zakki* 曲亭雜記 (Various Records by Bakin, published 1888-89), *Jinjutsu kiryo manroku* 壬戌羈旅漫録 (Idle Records from a Poetic Journey; published 1885).⁵⁷ Atsumi, however, utilized new copyright protections afforded to him as an editor, which secured a

⁵⁴ Takizawa Kitsu, "Omohide no ki," 395.

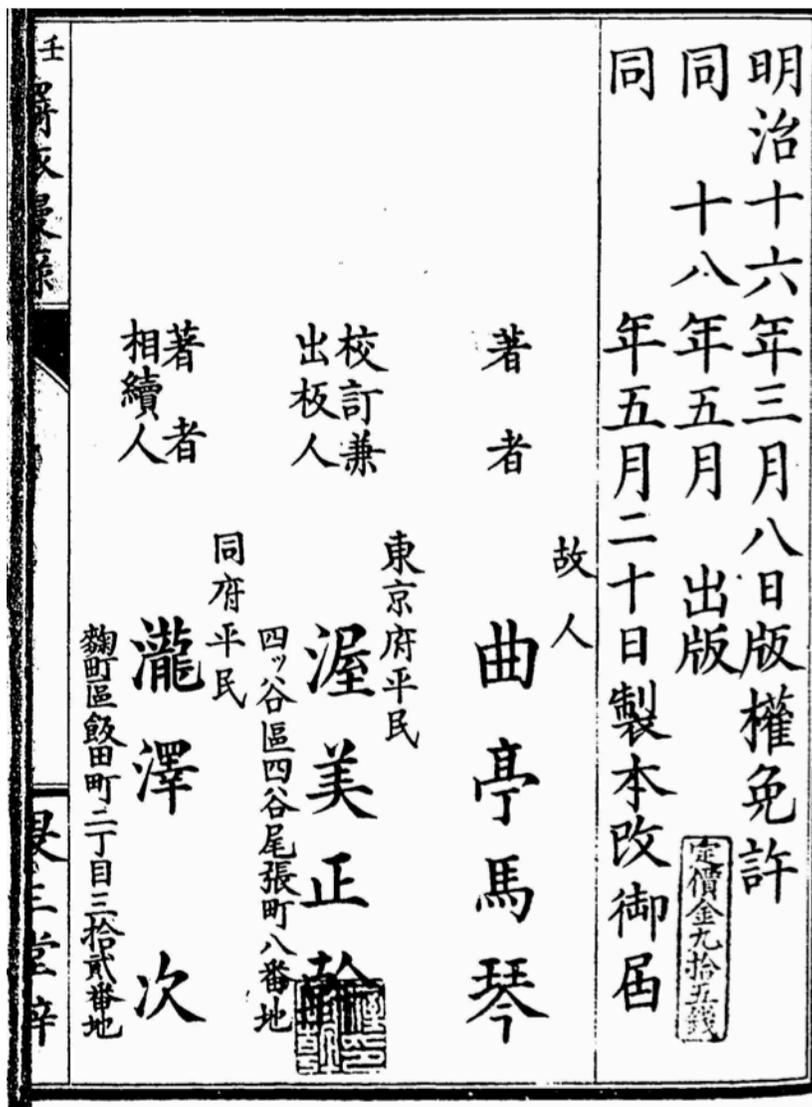
⁵⁵ Takizawa Kitsu, "Omohide no ki," 395.

⁵⁶ Takizawa Kitsu, "Omohide no ki," 395-96.

⁵⁷ See Atsumi Seikan, *Kyokutei Bakin, Kiryo manroku jinjutsu*; Atsumi Seikan, *Kyokutei Bakin, Kyokutei zakki*.

copyright for both of these works. (Figure II-5).⁵⁸ As the colophon notes, however, this issue of copyright was further complicated by the issue of family ownership, this last text, *Kiryō manroku jinjutsu*, was sold together with Takizawa Hide (?) 瀧沢次 (?-?) another family member. But texts that were published during Bakin's life were freely available for publication; this was a right that Kitsu felt they had lost.

Figure II-5 Colophon Claiming Copyright on Behalf of Atsumi Seikan for Bakin's *Jinjutsu kiyo manroku*



⁵⁸ Atsumi Seikan, Kyokutei Bakin, *Kiryō manroku jinjutsu*, colophon.

On one hand, from a financial standpoint, the general loss of copyright for the family seems like a great loss to the family, since Bakin was one of the most popular authors of the Meiji period. On the other hand, perhaps his popularity came precisely from his availability to a wide range of publishers. Arguably, the fact that Bakin's texts were now freely reproducible made him an even-more attractive product for publishers and helped make Bakin one of the most popular (widely published and read authors) of the Meiji period.

Publishers of Reprints

One new publisher, whose work provides a good example of the impacts of reprinting and copyright changes, is Mori Senkichi. From the early 1880s into the 1890s, Senkichi was a prolific publisher and editor. He was the owner, or *hanmoto* 版元, of a Tokyo-based publishing house, Kuseisha 鶴声社. In spite of the large number of books he was involved with seeing to print, relatively little is known about him today. From the 1885 colophon of *Te'atebodai gobōnuki* 手当芳題 護寶奴記, one of his earliest publications, we learn that he was an “immigrant” (*imin* 移民) to Tokyo. That is to say, he was an upstart publisher in Tokyo—not part of the long history of Edo period publishing. Through tracing his name in library catalogs and publication records, the remnants of his work come into focus. Senkichi produced a significant range of titles and genres. He printed law books for the new Meiji government. As an editor, he provided diacritic reading guides for Chinese classics. He also printed and collected transcripts of public lectures from the Freedom and Popular Rights Movement. Much of his literary

enterprise, however, involved the reprinting of new editions of older texts of popular fiction (novels) from the Edo period using movable type.

Senkichi also rewrote fiction under the *nom de plume*, Shōtei Kakusen 松亭鶴仙.⁵⁹ These stories, for the most part, were retellings of existent *jitsuroku* “factual records” of vendettas (*adauchi* 仇討ち) and supernatural hauntings (*kaidan* 怪談). In the Edo period, since many of these texts recounted contemporary events, they were prohibited from printing and commercial publication. As a result they circulated largely in manuscript format. In the Meiji period, now legal, these texts enjoyed a boom in print.⁶⁰

Senkichi and other authors and publishers who compiled, rewrote, and reprinted these texts occupied a liminal space between production and reception. Literary histories typically turn a blind eye to the work of people like Senkichi, who edited and published reprints, as this was not the work of an author creatively engaged in penning unique works of fiction. Yet, these editors and publishers are more important than the original authors in creating and contesting the position of literature and individual texts within the Bourdiean “field of cultural production” over time. Editors and publishers act as a type of “gatekeepers” who choose which stories make it into print. But more importantly, within the reprint market, they decided which books returned to print or continued in print. In

⁵⁹ The *Ukiyo-e Jiten* lists Shōtei Kakusen as a pen name used by Baitei Kinga. However, other scholars argue that Kakusen was in fact Mori Senkichi. This second explanation seems more reasonable since some texts, such as the 1888 edition of *Asao iwakiri makoto kurabe* 浅尾岩切真実競 list Shōtei as the editor (*hen* 編) and Baitei as the author (*cho* 著者)—an unlikely arrangement if they were the same person. Furthermore, the colophon of *Yotsuya kaidan*, written by Kakusen, lists Senkichi as the editor (author) and publisher, again showing that they are the same person. The name Kakusen is a combination of *kaku* 鶴, the first character from the name of his printing house, *Kakuseisha* 鶴聲社, with the *sen* 仙, from Senkichi's 仙吉 name. This pen name, together with his association with a more well-known author Baitei Kinga 梅亭金鷺 (1821-1893), link Senkichi to a broader cohort of contemporary writers. See Yoshida Teruji, *Ukiyoe jiten*; Baitei Kinga, Matsutei Kakusen, *Asao iwakiri makoto kurabe*

⁶⁰ See Kikuchi Yōsuke, "'Katsuji honkokubon' jitsuroku no shosō: Tamai Botarō mono wo rei ni."

Meiji Japan, they also selected which titles and physical formats were printed in numbers sufficient to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding readership.

As mentioned in the introduction, the concepts and study of literature tend to be informed by a romantic ideal of the author's creative genius and the pure text created through the inspiration of that genius. Under this model the "original" literary text is all that matters. Its embodiment, particularly re-embodiment in different editions, is often seen as a corrupting influence from which the sacrosanct text must be protected and recovered. To circumvent corruption the first edition and the authorial manuscript have been fetishized as idealized repositories of authorial intentions—the key for interpreting the "true" meaning or intention of the text.

Hence, traditional literary studies took appreciation of the author and the initial historical moment of creation as the ultimate means for understanding textual meaning. Oddly enough, in well-established fields of literary studies such as Japanese literature, the search for the standard text often leads to academic anthologies, which are accepted proxies for old scrolls, books, and manuscripts. The problems of this traditional model of literary studies are legion, but two issues stand out: first, it neglects the non-material or immaterial history of texts. Texts are often treated as if they exist at only two moments in time—the moment of composition and our moment of reception. Second, the intervening time between these two points is unaccounted for and largely ignored. Dematerialized and de-historicized, the intermediary moments of reception and appropriation are effaced from view. A text's prior material history, the signs of its reception and recreation, disappear as the text becomes idealized as a text created by a single author at a single moment in time that has supposedly been preserved and reproduced in situ.

Texts have a material history, a genealogy as objects, that needs to be understood in order to understand their textual histories. The history of books, as part of literary studies, suggests a history of textual appropriations—undertaken to satisfy immediate needs and ideologies. This goes against claims of transhistorical greatness of texts, which tries to disclaim the mundane past between composition and modern reception.

To put this differently, a published edition of a book creates a synchronic textual unity that allows readers from across a country to literally be on the same page. Benedict Anderson speaks of this simultaneous reading experience as a key component of the "imagined community" of the modern nation state.⁶¹ However, different editions of books—that is to say reprints—have a diachronic disunity. Embedded within a text and its material form are the "bibliographic codes," to use the words of Jerome McGann, of a particular generation of book producers and consumers.⁶²

By focusing on reception—material and textual—book history takes us away from the author and the myth of authorial intention. We no longer worship the "author's genius." The author is dead, as Barth reminds us, and is best thought of as a "function" according to Foucault. Our focus shifts to publishers, editors, and readers⁶³ as the makers of meaning. Leslie Howsam, writing about the historiography of books, points out that "readers work not only with the disembodied text but also with the embodied words on a printed page.... Readers' interpretations are formed partly by the text, but also partly by the elements imposed on a book by its design and by the conventions of genre...."⁶⁴ The physical embodiments of texts come from somewhere. The book in the reader's hand was

⁶¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.

⁶² McGann, *The Textual Condition*.

⁶³ Reader response criticism already invested the reader with the role of creating meaning.

⁶⁴ Howsam, "What is the Historiography of Books?: Recent Studies in Authorship, Publishing and Reading in Modern Britain and North America," 1090.

a product of a specific moment and people. Publishers communicated and assigned meaning to texts through the process of publishing and a study of them can help us understand these often-forgotten moments of textual recreation and signification.

So who was Mori Senkichi? What can he tell us about the reception of Edo period texts and their reception (re-creation) in the first decades of the Meiji period? How did his reprints alter the field of literature? Also, what can we learn from him about networks of contemporary authors and writers?

Yokoyama Gen'nosuke 横山源之助 (1871-1915), a Meiji period journalist and public intellectual, gives a detailed story about Kakuseisha's printing history and economic success. In 1907 Gen'nosuke wrote of his experience perusing books in a used bookstore. Using different covers of books and their various formats as a "material evidence of literary history," he traces the history of books and printing in the Meiji period.⁶⁵ In the section on reprints, *honkoku mono* 翻刻物, he explains the success of Mori Senkichi's publishing house, Kakuseisha. The practice of *honkoku*, he says, was a response to the success of authors such as Takabatake Rasen 高島藍泉 (1838-1885) and Somezaki Nobufusa 染崎延房 (1818-1885), who were popular in newspaper serializations. The development of newspapers and magazines during the Meiji period has a deep connection to the formation of modern Japanese literary forms.⁶⁶ Like the better-known stories serialized in newspapers, subscription-based reprint magazines were also a common way for readers to experience texts.

⁶⁵ Yokoyama Gen'nosuke, 345.

⁶⁶ Magazines were where most of literary experimentation transpired, particularly in the late 1880s and 1890s. Yet, because this relationship between these media forms and new literature has been studied and is well documented in literary histories, this study will focus on the reception of prior texts and will touch on magazines and newspapers only when they are used in the reprinting of prior texts. For a greater consideration of magazines in Meiji Japan see Nagamine Shigetoshi, *Zasshi to dokusha no kindai*.

Gen'nosuke claims, without access to the writers of Rasen and Nobifusa's caliber, publishing houses turned to reprinting older work:

Publishers without a way to turn a profit [through newspapers] began making various reprints [honkoku]. The first to do this was Kanedama [located] in Nakazaka in Iidamachi; it reprinted *Shunkan [sōzushima] monogatari* [by Bakin, 1808] and [older texts] like the *Heike monogatari*.⁶⁷

One of the more important impacts of these reprints was that “These were reprinted in the same format as everyday novels; and they were a great hit.” It is significant that these texts were reprinted in the “same format” (*teisai wo onajiku* 体裁を同じく) as ordinary novels (*haishirui* 稗史類) were.⁶⁸ This unification of the material forms of a variety of texts from different periods was one of the greatest impacts of reprinting. In Japan, texts were generally associated with some particular element of their material format, which in turn often figured in the names of their genres (e.g., the genre of *kibyōshi* 黄表紙 derived its name from the yellow covers of their booklets). In the Edo period, as discussed in detail in chapter five, an entire generic discourse was based on the material format of books.⁶⁹ But the differences in cover color, paper size, and textual layout that once were each distinctive markers of genre disappeared when reprinted. This assimilation of material differences worked to free texts from their prior generic identities and allowed them to circulate as if they were contemporary literature.

This is not to say that all reprints necessarily looked the same. Reprints came in various formats that included publication as separate books, inclusion in collections, and anthologies, and serialization in newspapers and magazines. Instead we should notice that,

⁶⁷ Yokoyama Gen'nosuke, 348.

⁶⁸ Yokoyama Gen'nosuke, 348.

⁶⁹ See Kyokutei Makin's *Monono hon Edo sakusha burui* for a discussion of book formats and how they relate to the various genres of Edo period literature.

because any text could be reprinted in any one of these formats, some of the differences between texts and even genres were effaced. As we will see, such a unification of textual format was a distinguishing attribute of Senkichi's reprints.

Senkichi's literary reprints began with *Te'ate bōdai gobōnuki* 手当芳題 護寶奴記 (here after *Gobōnuki*), a serialized literary magazine that started in 1882, the same year as the editorial "The Forest of Words," and ended in 1883.⁷⁰ *Gobōnuki* was unique in that it included the first reprinting of the Japanese author Santō Kyoden done with movable type. But the format and the concepts behind the collection were also significant. *Gobōnuki* contained serializations from five different stories. The stories were printed two to three times a month in short installments of five-leafs (*gochō* 五丁; i.e. ten pages). After one story came to an end it was replaced by another story.⁷¹ The collection was also innovative in that the reader was to unbind the magazine and rebind the collected pages into complete copy of the books.⁷²

Gen'nosuke writes, "Soon a publishing house known as Kakuseisha from Jinbochō 神保町 in Kanda was formed, and it published *Gobōnuki*, which included reprints of texts such as *Genpei seisuiki* 源平盛衰記, and Fūrai's [Hiraga Gennai] *Rokubushu* 六部集."⁷³ With this reprint magazine, Senkichi joined the ranks of publishers

⁷⁰ The title, *Te'atebōdai gōbnuki* has a double meaning: a determination to record and preserve the treasures (of literature). First, a *gobō* 牛蒡 (Japanese burdock) is a plant with a long eatable root. It is pulled, *nuku* 抜く (*nuki*) from the ground when harvested. The difficulty of pulling out a burdock has led to the expression, *gobōnuki*—an idiom meaning to do something with great determination and force. In a play on words, the Chinese characters for *gōbo* used in the title of the literary collection 護寶 mean to protect or preserve the treasures. (Other volumes also use the character for the Dharma, *hō* 法 instead of treasures, *hō* 寶.) Similarly, the characters for *nuki* 奴記 imply recorded excerpts.

⁷¹ The copy I examined is held at Tokyo University Library. See also Takagi Gen, *Edo yomihon no kenkyū*, 392-95.

⁷² It was also shipped across the whole of Japan to be sold at local bookstores and was also directly available to readers (consumers) through the mail, reflecting the development of alternatives to the lending libraries.

⁷³ Yokoyama Gen'nosuke, 349.

reprinting a range of literary texts. Its preface makes clear both Senkichi's business plan and some of his motivation for this undertaking.

Senkichi wrote the preface to *Gobōnuki* under his pen name Shōtei Senkaku. He compares the place and value of Kyōden, Bakin, and Ikku among authors of Edo fiction to that of Confucius and Buddha to the writings in their respective traditions. This association of writers of fiction with such revered teachers is an interesting act of discursive positioning. In a sense, he is arguing that if such great texts of Edo fiction were to disappear, it would be comparable to losing the teachings of Confucius and the Buddha.

Senkichi believed that older texts were disappearing and his proposed solution was to make a collection of the best books. The problem with extant copies, he argued, is that they are falling apart and worm eaten; and more importantly, the xylographic blocks needed to print new ones are worn out. His answer was to reprint the texts and, thereby, preserve and protect them from extinction.

At the same time that Senkichi and other publishers seemed antiquarian, describing these texts as treasures from an ever fading past that needed to be preserved and remembered (through consumption), they also praised and marketed reprints of older texts using the selfsame discourses of “Civilization,” “Enlightenment,” and “Progress.” Senkichi's Janice-faced marketing positioned these reprints favorably within the zeitgeist of the day. He compares the values of old texts that would be reprinted in *Gobōnuki* with those of “rapid progress” (kyūshin ^{たうせい} 急進) which he glosses with *furigana* as “the present age” (*tōsei* 当世) It is significant that this same discourse of progress, through which the literary past was supposedly abandoned, is in fact marshaled to save it. The preface reads:

The chief jewels (*oyadama* 親玉) in Confucian books are those by Confucius and the main jewels in Buddhist sutras are those by Shakyamuni. Their value is not even the least bit exaggerated; so, no one would haggle or dispute that. Fiction (*gesaku*) has Santō Kyōden and Kyokutei Bakin as its main jewels. The main jewel of humorous (*kokkei* 滑稽) tales of travel is represented by Jippensha Ikku. It is not a lie to say these are correct appraisals. What a gem it would be to collect into one book those finest of texts written by these masters! ... The blocks for these texts are worn away; the books are tattered and devoured by bookworms. They are all but gone from this world! What a waste it would be to abandon them! Planning for the future, I think that those jewels of karmic cause and effect and those from these days of rapid progress are both good. For that reason I have entitled this a “Collection that Takes the Lead in Protecting the Jewels” (*Gobōnuki*)!⁷⁴

As the contents of *Gobōnuki* suggest, the “jewels” Senkichi was intent on preserving were rather diverse. The first installment of *Gobōnuki* included excerpts from Santō Kyōden’s (1761-1816) *Inazuma byōshi* 稲妻表紙 (1806), Jippensha Ikku’s (1765-1831) *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige* 東海道中膝栗毛伊 (Shanks’ Mare, 1802-14), Ryukatei Nyosui’s *Keian Taiheiki* 慶安太平記, Kyokutei Bakin’s (1767-1848) *Nankano yume* 南柯之夢 (1808), and Hiraga Gen’nai’s *Rokubushū* (1780). Later editions included more works of classical fiction including the warrior tale, *Taiheiki*.⁷⁵ This eclectic collection, which crossed genres, made these various texts into strange bedfellows who shared the sheets at press.

Although it is unclear why, Gen’nosuke explains, “[Readers] felt that something was lacking in the publication of novels (*haishirui* 稗史類) at the time [the 1880s] and so, the reading public greatly welcomed these publications from Kakuseisha.”⁷⁶ From an economic perspective, we can assume that perhaps contemporary fiction was not selling as well as Senkichi’s reprints did. If this is what Gen’nosuke is suggesting, then the

⁷⁴ Mori Senkichi, “Jō,” preface.

⁷⁵ Mori Senkichi, “Jō.”

⁷⁶ Yokoyama Gen’nosuke.

popularity of reprints was perhaps eclipsed only by their profitability. The profitability came from selling a large number of inexpensive magazine booklets⁷⁷ to an increasingly larger audience.⁷⁸

Gobōnuki was part of this boom in reprinting that was mentioned in the “Forest of Words.” One can see why the author of the editorial might think it unusual to reprint books in this manner.

At first Kakuseisha was a narrow, six-foot wide store, with a signboard propped up in front of a glass sliding door but, with the success from the publication of *Gobōnuki*, it moved from that small store in Jinbochō to a huge one that was six times larger in Yokoyamachō in Nihonbashi. Yokoyama explains how this economic success translated into social success in the publication industry:

It was an unexpectedly great success that a single destitute publisher with just two or three publications could build a great store in the heart of Nihonbashi. Rumors

⁷⁷ *Gobōnuki* was listed as having a fixed-price of eight *sen* 錢 five *rin* 厘. However, larger orders received a small discount, with orders of five issues at forty *sen*, ten issues at seventy-seven *sen*, and twenty issues at one yen fifty *sen*. All orders larger than one required advanced payment (*zenkin*). At the single issue price of 8 *sen* 5 *rin*, a complete collection of the thirty-three volumes in 29 issues would cost two yen eighty *sen* and five *rin*, which if divided by the nine books a reader then owned, would equal thirty-one *sen* 17 *rin*—a revolutionarily great value. When Kakuseisha began selling non-serialized, commercially-bound copies of the texts in *Gobōnuki*, their fixed price ranged from a low of twenty-five *sen* 錢 for half of Jippensha Ikku’s *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige* to a high of thirty-five *sen* for the edition of Ryukatei Nyosui’s *Keian Taiheiki*. Seen from this perspective, purchasing the texts serially in *Gobōnuki* was economical. But, the later editions published by Kakuseido came bound in much nicer book formats with more images.

⁷⁸ The first edition of *Gobōnuki* lists seventeen bookshops in Tokyo (seven large and ten regular-sized) through which copies were distributed. But it also listed forty-two stores for the rest of the country that were carrying the book, including stores in Kyoto, Osaka, Owari (Nagoya), Chiba, Shinshu (Nagano), and Jyoshu (Gunma). The book was also available through the mail. The further development of the Japanese postal service gave publishers, even small ones, an ability to reach a national market for their goods beyond the network of bookstores. For an additional fee of one *sen* postal tax, readers outside of Tokyo could also get the book.

By volume 11 (Meiji 15, 10th of September) the number of booksellers in Tokyo had decreased to six. However, Seikakusha now advertised that they could ship to locations even without post offices, for an additional fee of one to two *sen* depending on the “circumstances” of where the text was to be shipped. In effect, this meant that the *Gobōnuki* and other Tokyo produced publications had become available to a nation-wide audience.

of Kakuseisha's [success] left every publishing house in wide-eyed astonishment.⁷⁹

Senkichi's arrival at Nihonbashi, the heart of the Meiji printing world, evidences how prosperous he was. Such success seems to fit the ideal of *risshin shusse* 立身出生, "rising up and making one's way in the world," that was so popular in the Meiji period both as a literary trope and a fact of business. The first of Senkichi's texts listed in library catalogs to include his new address in Nihonbashi was, surprisingly, not a small literary reprint but an 1884 printing of *Bōkun Keihō chizaihō* 傍訓刑法治罪法, a massive tome of Meiji laws. This legal text was close to 200 pages and shows how far Kakuseisha had really grown in the short time since 1882 when *Gobōnuki* was started as a small reprint magazine.

The reprinting industry was growing rapidly by the mid-1880s. Although many older titles were being printed for the first time in decades, not all of the texts being reprinted had necessarily gone out of print or circulation. Nevertheless, even these perennial texts became all the more prevalent. These include numerous translations of and phonetic and semantic reading guides for Chinese novels and Confucian texts. For instance *Kankaradaiko* (咸唐題庫), which was published in 1884, was a serialized collection modeled after *Gobōnuki* that included reprints of Edo-period translations of *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, *Journey to the West*, and *The Water Margin*. *The Four Books* and *The Five Classics* continued to be a staple of printing houses and were adapted into new formats.⁸⁰ Similarly, Rai Sanyō's *Nihon gaishi* 日本外史 (Unofficial History of

⁷⁹ Yokoyama Gen'nosuke.

⁸⁰ Yokoyama Gen'nosuke, 349.

Japan, composed 1827, printed 1836-37) became an even more popular best seller as numerous new editions flooded the market.

Gen'nosuke argues that later collections of reprints, particularly Hakubunkan's *Teikoku bunko* 帝国文庫 (Imperial Anthology, 1893-1897), eclipsed the work of earlier publishers such as Mori Senkichi. The popularity of these later publications, he asserts, was in part due to the reprints of Kakuseisha and other earlier Meiji period pioneers of reprinting. This suggests that early publishers of reprints, through selecting which older texts to reprint during this early period of reprinting, helped lay the foundation of the pre-Meiji canon of Japanese literature which more industrialized publishers including Hakubunkan later disseminated.⁸¹

Economies of Genre Reprinting

Senkichi stopped publishing *Gobōnuki* in May of 1883, just one year after the project started. In all, the twenty-nine installments of *Gobōnuki* included nine stories. As mentioned above, one result of *Gobōnuki* was that it assisted Senkichi as he became successful enough to move to a bigger shop. There he continued reprinting Edo-period fiction, including newer and more extravagant editions of those found in *Gobōnuki*. Subsequent reprints were printed in a newer format for single title volumes: the *bōru byōshi* ボール表紙 (cardboard-cover format), which had Western style pulp paper and hard covers, with polychrome images printed lithographically.

Eventually, this cardboard-cover format subsumed and eclipsed the surviving genres of Edo-period fiction in reprinting, from stand alone books (*tankōbon* 単行本) and

⁸¹ One noticeable exception to this canon of old authors created during the 1870s and 1880s was Iharu Saikaku, who was not reprinted until the 1890s.

anthologies to magazine and newspaper serializations. As a result of this binding shift, works with content and narrative structure that were the most insulated from the transition to the *bōru byōshi* format continued to succeed as reprints.⁸² Before this relatively expensive format gained prominence in the reprint market, however, the shift to moveable type and the concurrent boom in reprinting helped create a class of relatively inexpensive books.

According to Yamamoto, the ability to reproduce longer texts, which were initially printed in dozens of booklets, in new formats comprised of fewer booklets was a primary factor in this reduction in price. For instance, Bakin's *Eight Dogs* decreased from 106 booklets to twenty-one or fewer booklets. The Tokyo Haishi Shuppansha advertised in 1882 that, while the price of *Eight Dogs* in their old Japanese-style book format was twelve yen, their new version was only four-and-a-half yen. The result of such reductions in price was that books became objects to purchase and own instead of things to rent from lending libraries or objects from which to create manuscript copies.⁸³ Over these decades, although lending libraries and the practice of copying books did not disappear entirely, the abundant production of inexpensive books expanded the class of book owners to include younger and less affluent readers.

The adoption of movable type created a different and new economy of textual production, which in many ways was completely opposite of that operating during the Edo period. Gradually buying became more economical than copying. Uchida Roan 内田

⁸² As Takagi Gen points out, while these early cardboard-backed books may have been printed on poor quality paper and have not aged well, at the time they were high quality and expensive books (c. fifty sen to one yen). Even those yomihon volumes bound in a Japanese-style binding, which were slightly less expensive (twenty sen to seventy-five sen), were of a high quality Takagi Gen, *Edo yomihon no kenkyū*, 390.

⁸³ Yamamoto Kazuaki, "Kyōden yomihon no 'Meiji': Meiji 20nen izen," 12-13.

魯庵 (1868-1929) explains the older economy of manuscript copies in terms of an equation of the time needed to copy the text.

A long time ago, people were not as busy as they are now. It seems that everyone had at least some measure of free time. [Then,] what we call popular texts came into fashion and were read. But, since money was tighter and people had the time, rather than buying books they would borrow them from commercial lending libraries. And, if something was interesting, then they would simply copy the whole thing or excerpts from it. For households with older members, in particular, copying books was one type of a cottage industry. I am sure they are gone now, but when I was a kid most old households would have manuscript copies done by some old grandfather or great grandfather. It seemed a given that there would be copies of edicts and records of the day, and even if those weren't there, then there would be manuscript copies of popular texts, such as *jitsuroku* or works of *gesaku* by famous writers.⁸⁴

This transition from manuscript making and lending library circulation was an uneven and staggered process—not a sudden break. These two systems of book production and circulation had existed in tandem for several centuries, but the shift to movable type, the mechanization of printing, and legal changes disrupted the balance between these systems. Using a metaphor of battle, Aiba Atsushi reminds us, “Technological revolutions do not over run prior technologies in a single attack; but only through gradual infiltration.” The two technologies of printing and manuscript existed together during a continuing period of transition from woodblock printing to moveable type.⁸⁵

One way to appreciate the unevenness of this shift is to consider the impact on individual genres. The technological changes of book production impacted each genre of

⁸⁴ Uchida Roan, "Hakkenden yodan," part one.

⁸⁵ Aiba, "Meiji shoki kappan insatsushi danshō," 94. In fact, Aiba points out that wood continued to play an important role in printing until the advent of the computer. If printers needed to print a character for which they did not have a preexisting metal piece, then they would make the character out of wood. “It was only with computer type composition and the ability to draw characters using software, that the last forms of xylography finally disappeared [from commercial printing]” (92).

Edo-period literature differently, producing a slightly separate trajectory and impact for each genre.⁸⁶

The highly-illustrated *gōkan* 合巻 genre changed at least three ways in the Meiji period.⁸⁷ The result of these gradual changes, according to Sasaki To'oru and others, was that during the first-two decades of the Meiji period, *gōkan* went from a genre that was to “be viewed” to one that was “to be read.”⁸⁸ Without going into too much detail, the *gōkan*'s generic transformation occurred as its production shifted from woodblock printing to moveable type (beginning in 1879 in Tokyo and earlier in Osaka). At first, it was a hybrid form. Xylography was still used for the covers, prefaces, frontispieces, and illustrations for much longer. Yet, with movable type, the numbers of images were reduced until most pages lacked images completely. Sasaki explains that “although

⁸⁶ Ideally a history of the reception and recreation of Edo-period literature would account for every genre and famous and minor authors. But such a comprehensive study is beyond the scope of this chapter. Ideally, we should take into account the advice given by Takagi Gen and look at more genres and authors. In his authoritative study of the *Yomihon* genre, Takagi explains the limitations of a single genre or single author approach to literary reception in the Meiji period:

The [reception of] Edo-period *yomihon* [during the Meiji period] was situated in the midst of *jisturoku*, *ukiyo-zōshi*, *kokkeibon*, *ninjyōbon*, *kusayōshi*. Even if one were to consider only the *yomihon* in isolation, there would be little point. At the same time, we must also pay attention not only the works of Bakin and Kyoden, but to the vast number of works by minor authors that surround them. In other words, collections, like *The Collected Works of Bakin*, which were organized around a single author were relatively few in number. Instead—because, we can assume that publishers were sensitive in responding to the fashions of the day—we can see that, on the reception side, there was a tendency towards reading eclectic collections [on account of the large number of eclectic collections and series from the time].

In addition to saying it is a misconception to treat author-based collections as the norm for Meiji reception, Takagi advocates a comprehensive, trans-generic approach that accounts for authors of all rank.

⁸⁷ In a more technical sense the *gōkan* changed from an “Edo style” *gōkan* (*Edo shiki* 江戸式), into a “Meiji style” (*Meiji shiki* 明治式), then into a “Tokyo style” (*Tokyo shiki* 東京式). The Edo-style were printed with woodblocks, primarily written in hiragana, and booklets of five folded-leaves (c. ten pages). Meiji-style were also printed with woodblocks, but had more kanji with readings, and were printed in three-booklets with nine folded-leaves (c. eighteen pages). The Tokyo-style were done with moveable type, had kanji with readings, and were bound into a single large booklet (see Sasaki page 3).

⁸⁸ Sasaki Tōru, *Meiji gesaku no kenkyū: kusazōshi o chūshin to shite* 2. Sasaki also points out that a reduction in the number of separate booklets (*satsu* 冊) was also part of this shift: stories that were once sold in three-booklet sets were now sold as single booklets.

images (on every page) were once a hallmark of the *gōkan*,” the images were “sacrificed” to save production time and money.⁸⁹

The second shift occurred as the quantity of kanji increased when the *gōkan* format was used to reprint and continue newspaper serializations. These new kanji nearly always included phonetic readings (*furigana*). The Meiji-period author Takabatake Rasen 高畠藍泉 (1838-1885) recounted the developments of the *gōkan* in 1884, noting how “phonetic reading guides were added with the aim of [making the genre] more convenient for primary school students.”⁹⁰ The *gōkan* had a long afterlife: they were widely read during the Meiji and Taisho periods and even well into the Showa period (1924-1989).⁹¹

Third, this new economy of print altered the production of individual genres and also authors (and their oeuvre) in circulation. For instance, as Yamamoto Kazuaki points out, *gōkan*, which were once the staple cheap book during the Edo period, were relatively *more* expensive to reproduce with movable type compared to other image-light and text-heavy genres, such as the *yomihon* and the *ninjōbon*. While the *yomihon* (and *ninjōbon* to a lesser extent) were once produced in the most expensive formats and beyond the reach of many consumers, they became a staple of the reprint industry. Ultimately, this shift in the economy of generic productions, as Yamamoto has pointed out, altered the social memory of authors and the makeup of the canon of Edo literature.⁹²

⁸⁹ Sasaki Tōru, *Meiji gesaku no kenkyū: kusazōshi o chūshin to shite* 4.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Sasaki Tōru, *Meiji gesaku no kenkyū: kusazōshi o chūshin to shite* 3.

⁹¹ For instance, as a child living in the city of Nagoya, Tsubouchi Shōyō frequented the Ōnoya Sōhachi lending library where he was a voracious reader of *gōkan*. The *gōkan* he read as a child are an under-appreciated source of his literary inspiration. Kimura Yaeko, *Kusazōshi no sekai: Edo no shuppan bunka*, 137.

⁹² *yomihon no kundai and kyoden no meiji*

Hence, as individual genres were impacted, the new economy of reprinting brought about by transition to moveable type also had an important, yet subtle, impact on the social position of authors based on the genres in which they wrote. As mentioned above, the *gōkan* (and its progenitor—the *kibyōshi* genres from the late eighteenth century) were, on account of their ubiquitous images, more expensive and less well-equipped for reproduction with movable type than other genres. They subsequently were less frequently reproduced. As a result of this, the Edo-period author Santo Kyōden, whose early writings were primarily image-heavy genres (*kibyōshi*, *sharebon*, and then *gōkan*), was slower to be reproduced and, ultimately, was transformed primarily into an author of *yomihon* and other more easily reproduced image-light genres. It was no accident that when Kyōden was first reprinted in 1882 in Senkichi's serialized reprint magazine, *Te'atebodai gobōnuki*, it was as an author of a *yomihon*. The 1883 collection of his stories, *Kyoden ō sōsho* 京伝翁叢書, according to Yamamoto's analysis, clearly eschewed reproducing Kyōden's *sharebon* and *kibyōshi*.⁹³ The end result: the Meiji social memory of Kyōden as a writer of *kibyōshi* continued to diminish while his reputation as an author of *yomihon* grew all the more pronounced. This increased circulation of Kyōden's *yomihon* made all the more pronounced a shift that took place in his writing after the Kansei reforms and a larger break at the end of the 18th century.⁹⁴

Kyokutei Bakin's popularity, in part, was due to how well many of his stories lent themselves to reproduction with movable type. The texts that became the most famous were his *yomihon*. Bakin's other genres were much slower and less likely to be

⁹³ See Yamamoto, "Kyoden yomihon no 'Meiji'."

⁹⁴ See Zwicker, *Practices of the Sentimental Imagination: Melodrama, the Novel, and the Social Imaginary in Nineteenth-century Japan*.

reproduced.⁹⁵ Hence, Bakin's place in the Meiji period literary world was also skewed towards *yomihon*. As has been suggested, these texts had fewer images and a stronger reliance on written narrative. Bakin's *yomihon* also had a pronounced didactic emphasis. Because of all this, Bakin became all the more an embodiment of the kind of didacticism and scholarly erudition associated with this genre. The selection of his most famous texts and how they came to define him were influenced by the new economy of reprints. As discussed in the following chapter, a rejection of Bakin and his didacticism by many literary reformers in the 1880s and 90s was aimed foremost against this new Meiji-period manifestation of him in reprints, and not against his more diverse historical personage and practices.

Another great irony of the Meiji period reprint market is that Bakin's reputation as an excessively didactic writer came to occlude his own semi-risqué past, which had even brought Bakin into conflict with the censors.⁹⁶ Mori Ōgai addresses this irony in his 1911 preface to a reprint of *Eight Dogs*:

Bakin should be revered for writing a book of this caliber. But during his lifetime, Confucian scholars at the Seidō 聖堂, the highest government institution of learning at the time, mistook it as a book that destroys morals. So they gave it to the Rinke 林家 censors in charge of moral education to have them destroy the printing blocks. Fortunately, someone at the bookseller's request interceded, and *Eight Dogs* escaped that peril.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ A major exception to this trend were prefaces from Bakin's texts, which were collected and reprinted, with little regard for the genres of their original books. See Chapter Four.

⁹⁶ Bakin recorded this drama in a journal entry in 1843: "[The publisher] Chojiya Heibei came. About *Eight Dogs*; Confucian scholars at the Seidō 聖堂 had told the Rinke 林家 to destroy the blocks; some two or three other people also had these charges [brought against them]. I was quite worried about this. Some person(s) quietly talked to the Rinke. After a while I was notified that it was okay. I was told that when many copies of *Eight Dogs* were printed that they had eight [color] prints and [extravagances] of the sort. But this is not true. Those types had not been made for a long time." Kato and Kyokutei, "Bakin nikki 馬琴日記," <http://www.ne.jp/asahi/kato/yoshio/bakin/tenpou7.html>.

Ōgai lists the journal entry as on the "seventh day of the fourth month" but Kato Yoshio lists it as the twenty-seventh day of the seventh month.

⁹⁷ *Ōgai zenshū*, 38: v. 38, 240.

Bakin ran afoul of the strict prohibitions against extravagant books, which were targeted as part of the Tenpō Reforms. Although the morality of sumptuary laws is now thought of as independent from laws against content, they were an important part of Tenpō-era ethics. The violation of these ethics in any way was a serious charge. For instance, the author Tamenaga Shunsui and Ryutei Tanehiko were locked in manacles and put on house arrest during this same time. The charges against Bakin and his famous story of *Eight Dogs* were quite serious. Ironically, as Ōgai writes, “*Eight Dogs* is [now] published as a book that will preserve morality (*kyōfū* 教風).”

As suggested in this chapter’s introduction, reprinted texts in the mid-Meiji period came to constitute and circulate as the common canon of Edo fiction. This canon eclipsed the historical Edo period literary field. The reprinted texts were physically distinct from their Edo period counterparts and came to represent the historical past against which all literary reformations would be measured and directed. The following chapter, “Why Saikaku was Memorable, but Bakin was Unforgettable,” takes up this issue of literary reform and the importance of reprinted texts in attempts to change literary aesthetics and preferences.

Return to the “Forest of Words”

The ways publishers, individually and collectively, transformed the literary landscape are among the lasting literary impacts of these technological and legal changes in the printing industry during the Meiji period. One of the most notable changes was the increased diversity of texts and titles made available to a growing national readership. As a byproduct of this diversity, the reprinting market reduced the felt temporal distance

between the reading tastes of the Meiji literary world and prior texts, especially those from the late Edo period. By so doing, publishers who embraced reprinting created the modern canon of Edo period literature, deifying a pantheon of late Edo-period authors—including Bakin, Sanba, Kyoden, Kyozan, Shunsui, and Ikku. These authors were so widely read and consumed that they shaped all subsequent literary developments in the realm of fiction during the 1880s and 90s. These developments—from the rediscovery of Saikaku, to the reception of Emile Zola (1840-1902)—must be examined in the context of popularity and circulation of Edo reprints in the literary marketplace. That is to say, the abundance of texts by these six authors in people’s hands helped shape the development of the novel and the conceptualization of literature during this time, perhaps as much as the entirety of imported and translated books. Their lasting impacts are visible in not only newly composed novels, but in literary essays and debates as well. As will be explored in the following chapters, readers, authors, and literary reformers saw the literary field in terms of these late Edo writers, and as a result, texts by these authors defined what the novel was for this generation—the very essence of their novel. Therefore, modern Japanese literature is in many ways incomprehensible without appreciating this group of authors and their place in the literary moment.

Although the titles of the books and their authors were well known, the names of the publishing houses and editors who produced these reprinted books were surprisingly new. The Edo-period publishing houses, such as Tsuruya senkakudō 鶴屋仙鶴堂, were far less important in the fiction reprint market than were the newly established printing houses of Kakuseisha 鶴聲社, Tokyo haishi shuppansha 東京稗史出版社, and the like. Narushima Ryūboku, the writer of the 1882 editorial, saw the current trend of reprinting

and publishing as incomprehensible because reprinting of past texts to this degree was an unprecedented development and because it solidified the connection of the Meiji literary field with the that of the Edo period.

Chapter III: Why Saikaku was Memorable, But Bakin was Unforgettable

In 1895, ten years after Tsubouchi Shōyō published *Shōsetsu shinzui*, the Hakubunkan publishing house released the two-volume *Saikaku zenshu* 西鶴全集, “A Complete Collection of Saikaku.”¹ This collection of prose narratives, as its title suggests, purported to contain the whole *oeuvre* of Ihara Saikaku. In light of the reprinting boom in the 1880s of authors from the Edo period such as Kyokutei Bakin, Santō Kyōden, and Tamenaga Shunsui, the reprinting of another author and their collected works should not seem that significant. Although the term *zenshū* was new, such collections were not. Separate collections (*sōsho* 叢書) of Bakin’s and Kyōden’s works were published more than a decade earlier, in 1883,² and a two-volume collection containing twenty-five of Bakin’s stories, *Kyokutei Bakin-ō sho* 曲亭馬琴翁書 (Collected Works of Master Bakin), was published a few years earlier, in 1889.³ Indeed, the Saikaku collection was part of a much larger series of reprints: the *Teikoku bunko* 帝国文庫 (“Imperial library”), which was published by Hakubunkan at the pace of two volumes per month from 1893-1897 and totaled fifty volumes. This series was, in many ways, an industrialized culmination of the larger reprinting boom discussed in Chapter Two.

¹ Ihara Saikaku, Ozaki Kōyō, Watanabe Otowa, *Kōtei Saikaku zenshū*.

² See Santō Kyōden, Mochizuki Seiichi, *Kyōden ō sōsho*; Takizawa Bakin, Mochizuki Seiichi, Shibano Kingo, *Bakin ō sōsho*.

³ Takizawa Bakin, Nomura Ginjirō, *Bakin ō sōsho*.

Yet there are several details that make this 1895 reproduction of Saikaku's works particularly interesting and unusual. Unlike Bakin and other late Edo-period authors who were widely read and available in print, both in older woodblock printed copies and new typeset versions in the mid-Meiji period, many of Saikaku's fictional works had all but disappeared from print.⁴ Moreover, although Hakubunkan's "Complete Works" presented Saikaku solely as an author of prose narratives, it contains none of his poetry. In fact, he only wrote prose in the last thirteen years of his fifty-one-year life (from 1682-1695) and was first and foremost a master of *haikai* 俳諧 poetry, which he wrote throughout his life and for which he was remembered in Japanese literary history until this time. In short, this 1895 *Saikaku zenshū* helped reframe him in two ways: it reinstated him as a series of book objects into the literary field and marketplace,⁵ and it recast him as an author of fiction. This two-fold reintroduction together with the imitation of Saikaku's style by young authors and the public discourse about Saikaku are known as the "Rediscovery of Saikaku."

In Japanese literary studies, there are two controversial issues regarding this "rediscovery" of Saikaku in the late 1880s and 90s: "What caused this sudden return to a once forgotten literary past and author? And, what does it tell us about the literary field at that time?" Although this rediscovery was part of a larger trend, a revival of the culture of the Genroku 元禄 period (1688-1704), the remembering of Saikaku stands out due to the singular extent of the influence his stories had on late Meiji-period authors such as

⁴ For a longer discussion of the historiography on the rediscovery of Saikaku see Hirata Yumi, "Handō to ryūkō: Meiji no Saikaku hakken."

⁵ Saikaku was reprinted in Kenyūsha's coterie magazine, *Garakuta bunko*, beginning in 1888. See Hirata, "Handō to ryūkō: Meiji no Saikaku hakken," 183.

Yamada Bimyō 山田美妙 (1868-1910), Ozaki Kōyō 尾崎紅葉 (1867-1903), Kawakami Bizan 川上眉山 (1869-1908), and, later, Shimazaki Tōson 島崎藤村 (1872-1943).

Perhaps the earliest English account of the Genroku revival was in an article entitled “The Evolution of Modern Japanese Literature,” by the Japanese-American poet and author Yone(jiro) Noguchi (1875-1947). His article appeared in the American literary and arts journal, *The Critic*, in 1904. Noguchi mistakes some of the specific details (e.g., who found copies of Saikaku in used bookstores—it was Awashima Kangetsu not Koda Rōhan). Nevertheless his explanation is useful for appreciating how early the dominant narrative of the events came together; Noguchi explains the rediscovery of Saikaku as a reaction to Westernization during the first decades after the Meiji Restoration (1868).

Change after change, evolution extraordinary in its rapidity, are the pages of Japanese history. And there could be no more sudden change in taste than that displayed in the literature of Japan since the restoration (1867 [sic]), especially during the last fifteen years [the late 1880s-the early aughts].... The years between 1891 and 1896 may be rightly called the period of the revival of the Genroku literature. It was in the Genroku era under Feudalism, two hundred years ago, that the knights, wearing a long sword, doubtless rusty within its sheath, lazily roamed beneath the flowers, and all the civilians drank of prosperity and love. The literature was the life of that time [Genroku?]. Now [in the 1890s] the people were growing a bit tired of the Western adapters, who could not give sufficient promise of future achievement. How could they? They themselves did not grasp the real meaning of English literature. The public were looking for some sort of reaction. They began to take up their own kimonos again, leaving the badly fitting trousers behind. Saikaku Ihara—the foremost of the Genroku writers—was suddenly resurrected from the darkness of oblivion. It is said that Saikaku was brought to life by Roban [sic] Koda, who picked out his books one day from a waste-basket of a certain second-hand shop in "Kanda," the Latin Quarter of Tokio. The young literary aspirants gathered around Roban, and also Koyo Ozaki,—another devotee of Saikaku,—to study the Genroku literature. They built a shrine to the delightfully wanton Saikaku. Koyo Ozaki established the Kenyusha, a literary club, and once published its magazine. He promulgated his own method of conception and school of style. His work was founded on the Western idea at bottom; however, his phraseology was something of a reflection of the Genroku literature.⁶

⁶ Noguchi, "The Evolution of Modern Japanese Literature," 262.

In explaining Saikaku's rediscovery many scholars echo the sentiment of Noguchi nearly one hundred years prior and frame the rediscovery as a reaction to the unfulfilled promises of Westernization. For Tomi Suzuki, for instance, this rejection of the West prompted a larger quest by authors such as Ozaki Kōyō for a vernacular writing style or *genbun-itchi* 言文一致 (unification of spoken and written languages).⁷ As the "Japanese reacted to the excessive westernization" of the 1870s and 1880s, argues Suzuki, writers experimented with various new literary styles and specifically those in "the manner of the long-forgotten Ihara Saikaku."⁸ From this perspective, Saikaku's rediscovery was symptomatic of a broader nationalist rejection of the West and Western influences. Writing about the revival of interest in the works of Saikaku, Michael Bourdaughs adds, "Young writers like Ozaki Kōyō and Kōda Rohan now looked to Japan's past for literary models."⁹ Rediscovery of Saikaku, thus, represents an attempt to escape from Westernization through a forgotten past, which could serve as a model for the future.

On the other hand, in his translation of Saikaku's *The Life of an Amorous Woman* (*kōshoku ichidai onna*, 好色一代女, 1686), Ivan Morris argues this rediscovery was part of a Western-inspired project of realism. "Inspired by the realistic quality of [Saikaku's] writing," Morris contends, Japanese authors such as Kōyō and Kōda Rohan were "trying

⁷ Suzuki argues that Kōyō developed a "new amalgam of 'elegant' and 'vulgar' (in the manner of the long-forgotten Ihara Saikaku)." (parentheses in original), Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity*, 44. For a longer discussion on Kōyō's literary style see also Kikawa Azusa, "Ozaki Kōyō no buntai ishiki."

⁸ Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity*, 44.

⁹ Bourdaughs, *The Dawn That Never Comes: Shimazaki Tōson and Japanese Nationalism*, 4. Bourdaugh also points to the impact advances in printing had on Saikaku's rediscovery: "The Saikaku revival, after all, could not have occurred in the absence of the modern publishing industry, which made the great seventeenth-century writers work available for the first time to a wide audience." Yet, technology alone does not explain the revival; there is no reason to assume that the printing industry could not have done the same even a hundred years earlier. Bourdaugh is quick to point to the "rejection of the West" by this generation as a motivating factor in the rediscovery of Saikaku and the past as an alternate tradition.

to reintroduce a form of realism into Japanese literature.”¹⁰ In short, the rediscovery of Saikaku was inspired by ideas of realism found in the West and it grew out of a desire to more fully discover “realism” in Japanese past literature in order to emulate and incorporate those standards into contemporary Japanese writing. Hence, the rediscovery starts with inspiration from the West—not from a reaction to “excessive” westernization—and, although it cycles through a Japanese past, ultimately it returns to the West as its goal. Thus, according to this explanation, the rediscovery of Saikaku was Western at its core. Although Noguchi begins his account by asserting a reaction to the West, he too concluded with the assertion that the “work was founded on the Western idea at [its] bottom,”¹¹

But the divergence of these two argumentative strands—vernacular writing styles and models of realism—is not at issue here since vernacular experimentations and realism were often interrelated projects.¹² Instead, the issue is how the rediscovery of Saikaku and the emulation of this forgotten past was discussed divergently both as a rejection of the West and as an attempt to more fully embrace Western literary modes. This contradiction brings to the fore a larger set of problems for understanding the last two decades of the nineteenth century. We are stuck within a nationalist-flavored binary of traditional Japan vs. the modern West.¹³

¹⁰ Ihara, *The Life of an Amorous Woman: And Other Writings*, 50.

¹¹ Noguchi, "The Evolution of Modern Japanese Literature," 262.

¹² Suzuki writes "...the revival of the long-forgotten Genroku writer Ihara Saikaku as a 'realistic novelist' also occurred in the late 1880's, as part of an attempt to find concrete examples of the depiction of *ninjō* and 'realism,' two terms that had begun to circulate as powerful and privileged signifiers." Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity*, 26 and 196..

¹³ Considering larger social institutions of literary study, Brownstein points to the formation of a classical canon of Japanese literature in the 1890s as a result of the newly formed departments of Japanese literature at the University of Tokyo. He asserts, "The revival of interest in pre-modern literature in the 1890s was part of a larger public reaction to the excesses of Japan's Westernizing policies, but it was students at Tokyo University in the 1880s who played

What this binary occludes from our perspective, however, is how the rediscovery of Saikaku ultimately unfolded in a series of steps—each as an immediate and personal reaction to the contemporary Meiji-period literary field. That is to say, it was first a personal discovery of antique copies of Saikaku’s texts by Awashima Kangetsu 淡島寒月 (1858-1926), followed by collective sharing, emulating, reprinting, and publically advocating Saikaku by a group of writers affiliated with Kenyūsha 硯友社. The ways in which members of this literary group acted, moreover, was colored by the increased circulation of reprints of texts by writers from the early 1800s, such as Kyokutei Bakin 曲亭馬琴 (1767-1848). As discussed in Chapter Two, by the 1890s, Bakin’s widely reprinted *oeuvre* saturated the literary marketplace and social imagination. For the young aspiring writers of the Kenyūsha, this saturation could be thought of as a “Bakin problem.” This is because they struggled to gain acceptance within a literary field dominated by prior authors. Hence, although Western and foreign literary forms were also an important force in the literary field, the individuals most directly involved in the rediscovery of Saikaku were also deeply motivated by a desire to escape from a Bakin-centered literary moment, as much if not more than by a desire to escape from or to emulate the West. In some ways, the West was to them, like the newly rediscovered Saikaku, a means and justification for creating an alternative literary space to Bakin. In other words, the rediscovery of Saikaku happened in a complex literary moment. For reasons discussed below, the rediscovery should not be reduced into a binary conceptualization of Western and traditional, but instead it should be localized as a contemporary reaction to the Japanese literary field and marketplace.

a crucial role in preparing the way of this revival” Brownstein, "From Kokugaku to Kokubungaku: Canon-Formation in The Meiji Period," 436.

In order to explore these issues more fully, this chapter first problematizes the tendency toward using large-scale geo-political mechanisms (including nationalism) to explain disparate local literary events and instead advocates situating the rediscovery of Saikaku within a local reaction to the contemporary literary field. Next, this chapter locates the initial rediscovery of Saikaku as a hobby and predilection of Awashima Kangetsu, an individual reader and used book buyer, to address an immediate set of personal concerns and interests. Third, it analyzes how a set of young writers (Uchida Roan 内田魯庵 (1868-1929), Ozaki Kōyō, and Yamada Bimyō) discovered in Saikaku a solution to their Bakin problem. It explores how they tried to create a new literary space through simultaneously advocating Saikaku, whom they emulated, and rejecting Bakin and the literary forms he represented. Finally, it concludes with the observation that this reframing of Saikaku and rejection of Bakin caused a literary inversion that has continued to this day. Global mechanisms for change make us forget why in the late 1880s and early 1890s Saikaku was memorable—able to be reproduced and thought of as a modern author—but Bakin was unforgettable—a seemingly omnipresent and unavoidable force in the contemporary literary field.

An Odd Fellow

The material rediscovery of Saikaku crosses an important threshold in 1894 with the publication of *Saikaku zenshū*. Since 1889, Saikaku had appeared primarily as serialized reprints scattered throughout literary magazines. Although the rediscovery of Saikaku climaxed with the highly public publication of *Saikaku zenshū* and was part of the larger social phenomenon of the “Genroku revival,” the rediscovery of Saikaku began

on an entirely personal level. Awashima Kangetsu is the man most directly credited with the physical rediscovery and intellectual recognition of Saikaku. After Kangetsu's death in 1926, Yamauchi Shinpu 山内神斧, a *nihonga* artist, wrote a eulogy that expressed a widely felt sentiment: "Within his [Kangetsu's] life history the most important thing was his introduction of Ihara Saikaku to the Meiji *bundan* 文壇. Without [Kangetsu] Saikaku would not be known to this day's generation as he is now."¹⁴ That is, Kangetsu is credited with the *way* in which Saikaku is known.

Uchida Roan, as well, points out that Kangetsu's own writings were influenced by Saikaku and, more importantly, that Kangetsu was the first to "recognize Saikaku's true merits."

Kangetsu was a great reader. He said that a human after reading 10,000 booklets would finally have arrived at an appropriate amount of knowledge. He also said 'Any book without a life of a hundred years is worthless.' The many short works he wrote in Kōyō's *Garaku tabunko* 雅楽多文庫 and other magazines were identical to Saikaku. It cannot be over emphasized that it was he who first discovered the true merits of Saikaku. Bakin and [Aeba] Kōson 饗庭篁村 (1855-1922) and others each read Saikaku, but since Saikaku's death [Kangetsu] was the first person to recognize his true merits. Kōyō, Rohan, myself, and others gained our knowledge of Genroku literature through his [Kangetsu's] library.¹⁵

As will be discussed below, Uchida Roan had a very specific view of what the "true merits" of Saikaku were and he actively argued for what he thought those merits to be.

In Kangetsu's own accounts of these years, however, he describes his turn to Saikaku in two seemingly contradictory ways, a paradox that is at the heart of Saikaku's rediscovery and what the Japan-west binary prevents us from appreciating: Awashima Kangetsu's rediscovery of Saikaku has been traditionally explained in terms of his

¹⁴Yamauchi Shinpu, "Awashima Kangetsu ō," 255.

¹⁵Uchida Roan, "Awashima Kangetsu ō no koto," 259.

relationship with the West. As a younger man he was engrossed in the newly imported technology and ideas of the West, to the point that he wore western clothes and planned on immigrating to America. Uchida Roan even writes,

A long time ago he was a 'high collared' person and he wore Western clothes from head to toe. In his home as well he had Western tastes and he set up a chair and table on top of his tatami mats and even rounded the square pillars of his house. He also tried to dye his hair red and put blue things [lenses?] in his eyes. In 1878 or 1879 I first went to his house in Moritachō in Asakusa, but his house did not have a normal name plaque written in *kanji*, but had a sign made in roman lettering. This was a remnant from his 'high collared' years.¹⁶

As Roan vividly reminds us, Kangetsu once had a deep affinity for the West. At first glance, Kangetsu's seemingly excessive Westernization would seem to support the theory that the general rediscovery of Saikaku was somehow a reaction fed by his once excessive Westernization, but the issue is more complicated than that.

Kangetsu explains this time in his own words as follows:

I learned better, in fact, the horizontal alphabet than I did *kanbun* and in reality from a very young age I was infatuated with that [Western] civilization and I even had the desire to immigrate to America. I thought, after I go to America most likely everyone will ask me about Japan. For that reason I began in earnest to study Japan. One of my motivations for studying Japanese writing came out of this.¹⁷

According to this narrative of rediscovery Awashima was led to Saikaku through his interest in the West—to be better able to explain Japan to an American audience when asked about it. But this turn was not nationalistic; it was, in part, a product of what he describes as a personal love of the eccentric.

Originally, more than novels I just liked new things. By new things, I mean unusual things. The books of Saikaku were filled with unusual things that I had never heard of before. This is because they were filled with the unvarnished

¹⁶ Uchida Roan, "Awashima Kangetsu ō no koto," 259.

¹⁷ Awashima Kangetsu, "Meiji jūnen zengo," 35.

naked reality of nature since they wrote about humans as they were. It was because Saikaku wrote about humans as they were without any fixed or predetermined notions [of what humans were]. This stemmed from his prowess at *haikai* poetry.¹⁸

Kangetsu here explains his interest in Saikaku as growing from his penchant for the new and novel. This manifested itself in his hobby of *haikai* and a desire to better understand *haikai* through the writings of Saikaku who was a master of *haikai* poetry.

In a separate account, *Saikaku zatsuwa* 西鶴雜話, Kangetsu explains further how he also came to enjoy Saikaku's *haibun* 俳文 prose narratives as well:

I originally liked *haibun*, so I read the works of Saikaku with great interest. The first time I saw Saikaku was when the Sakai Kōko (lit. enjoyment of the old) house was a used bookshop...at that time I picked up and read a copy of "[Saikaku] *Oki miyage* 置土産 [1693]" from that store. I thought it was exceedingly interesting, hence, after that I sought out Saikaku, picking up his works from [*Kōshoku*] *Ichidai otoko* 好色一大男 [1682] and *Nidai otoko* 二代男, to those such as *Ichidai onna* and *Gonin onna* 五人女 [1686] as well as works such as *Bukegiri monogatari* 武家義理物語 [1688], *Hitome tamaboko* 人目玉鉾, *Sakura kage kono koto* 櫻蔭比事, *Saikaku shokudome* 西鶴織留 [1694], and *Eitaigura* 永代蔵 [1688]. As I read each volume, I became more and more interested and longed all the more for Saikaku. I decorated my room with images depicting Saikaku and even took on the nom de plum of *Aikakuken* 愛鶴軒 (Lover of [Sai]kaku).

At any rate, at that time, the collection of old books was the rage of the day, and I was enthralled with finding old books; I would wander about looking for them and I could tell a book's age just by looking at its cover in a used book shop. At this time there was a bookstore... that people called "Bible" since it sold Bibles. I once saw a lot of old *haikai* books there, including two by Saikaku, *Ōyakazu* 大矢数 [1680] and *Waran maru niban sen* 和蘭丸二番船 [sic].¹⁹

In the above account, Kangetsu says he first stumbled upon books by Saikaku in a used bookstore. This is the root of the episode that Noguchi wrote about in the 1904 essay

¹⁸ Awashima Kangetsu, "Meiji jūnen zengo," 34-5.

¹⁹ Awashima Kangetsu, "Saikaku Zatsuwa," 87. *Saikaku zatsuwa* (Various Reflections on Saikaku) was originally published in the June, 1917 issue of *Shumi no tomo* 趣味之友.

quoted from in the beginning of this chapter, although it was Awashima Kangetsu—not Rohan—as Noguchi incorrectly wrote.²⁰

Noguchi's, and other's, versions of this event attribute the rediscovery to dumb luck and serendipity. Part of the reason behind this is that other motives for the discovery, particularly those associated with prior literary practices, would run counter to the nationalist narrative of a reaction to excessive Westernization. In fact, the rediscovery was not a fluke but a consequence of Kangetsu's literary upbringing and life experiences. Kangetsu was a product of the trans-temporal and trans-spatial literary simultaneity of the Meiji period. As Kangetsu explains, he grew up surrounded by books written from the tail-end of the eighteenth century and first-half of the nineteenth century, which he read along-side contemporary authors such as Fukuzawa Yukichi.

Around the age of twelve or thirteen, I first learned about the new culture of the West through Fukuzawa's books. My house was a merchant's household, but because it was an old household, it had many books: *kusazoshi* 草双子, *yomihon*, and other works written by sophisticated literati from the Kansei 寛政[1789-1801] and Tenmei 天明[1781-1789] periods and [later writers like] Ikku, Kyōden, Sanba, Bakin, Tanehiko, and Utei Enba. Among these Kyōden's *Kottōshū* 骨董集 [written c. 1813, published 1817-19] was a splendid treatise of evidentiary scholarship (*kōshoūgaku* 考証学). Surely he did not get his sources second-hand, so he took his material directly from [Saikaku's] *Ichidai otoko* 一代男, *Ichidai on'na* 一代女, and other old *haikai* books. While I was reading the *Kottōshū*, I was introduced to Western civilization through Fukuzawa's *Seiyō tabi an'nai* 西洋旅案内 (A guide of my Journeys to the West, 1867), *Gakumon no susume* 学問のすすめ (On the Advancement of Learning, 1872-76) and *Katawamusume* かたわ娘 (Deformed girl, 1872).

I was introduced to a new civilization, in this way, through Fukuzawa, but it was because I read [Kyōden's] *Kottōshū* that I first became interested in reading Saikaku.²¹

²⁰ Noguchi wrote: "Saikaku Ihara —the foremost of the Genroku writers —was suddenly resurrected from the darkness of oblivion. It is said that Saikaku was brought to life by Roban [sic] Koda, who picked out his books one day from a waste-basket of a certain second-hand shop in "Kanda," the Latin Quarter of Tokio [sic]." Noguchi, "The Evolution of Modern Japanese Literature."

²¹ Awashima Kangetsu, "Meiji jūnen zengo," 32-33.

As Kangetsu explains, the reading practices of his youth were connected to both Japan's literary past and the West. In this account, his desire to read Saikaku was prompted not by a negative reaction to Fukuzawa, exposure to Western culture, or Japan's Westernization, but instead it grew from an introduction to Saikaku through the historicist writings of Santo Kyōden. "Through Fukuzawa I knew of a new civilization. After getting Kyōden's text of *Kottō[shū]* and through Saikaku I was able to know humanity."²²

The idea of rupture that underpins many of the accounts of Saikaku's rediscovery is problematic. In writing about "strange postulates" necessary to presume that a moment or event, such as the rediscovery of Saikaku, can only be understood in terms of itself ("self-intelligibility"), the Annales historian Marc Bloch argues that this "supposes that, within a generation or two, human affairs have undergone a change which is not merely rapid, but total, so that no institution of long standing, no traditional form of conduct, could have escaped the revolutions of the laboratory and the factory. It overlooks the force of inertia peculiar to so many social creations."²³ That is to say, to see a moment as self-intelligible we must assume that a moment could be disconnected from the past. Such a rupture is a key tenet of the supposed nationalist turn in the 1890s; Japan had broken away from its past institutions, traditional forms of conduct, and now returned to them.

As Kangetsu writes, however, he never felt that his life could be understood apart from the inertia of the Edo past: "I am probably seen as a nostalgist for Edo, but I am one

²²Awashima Kangetsu, "Meiji jūnen zengo," 34.

²³Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, 32.

who lived in a period that had experienced the revolution of Edo [the 1868 Meiji Restoration]. I am one who lived in the mist of a new emerging Japanese civilization. I have a strong sense of nostalgia that is hard to overcome.”²⁴ In other words, his discovery of Saikaku can be characterized as a natural outgrowth of prior institutions of reading and literature, namely *haikai* poetry and *koshōgaku* studies.

A Cause of Their Own

Even today, the currency retained by Noguchi’s interpretations of the events surrounding Saikaku’s rediscovery in the 1890s, particularly his assertion that it was a “reaction” to Western adapters, is both amazing for its longevity and problematic for its widespread and ready acceptance. There is a standard model for describing the intellectual currents of the Meiji twenties (c. 1888- c.1898), the time in which Saikaku was rediscovered. According to this model, which can be seen for example in the work of Hirata Yumi, the reactionary zeitgeist of this decade contrasts with the first two decades of Meiji (roughly 1868-1888).²⁵ These first-two decades are seen as a period of rapid and often uncritical Westernization, in which Japan adopted western culture, technology, government, and political structures, and in so doing abandoned their seemingly obsolescent “traditional” Japanese counterparts. Then, as things began to settle, during the third decade of the Meiji period (c. 1888-98) there was a reflexive period during which nationalism developed, and there was a move to rediscover and preserve what was lost during the process of Westernization.

²⁴ Awashima Kangetsu, "Meiji jūnen zengo," 35.

²⁵ See Hirata, "Handō to ryūkō: Meiji no Saikaku hakken."

This assumption of a nationalist-reaction during the third decade of the Meiji period to prior excessive westernization is used to explain a host of disparate events from this time. For instance, Hirata notes that in the political sphere this decade represents a “second round of popular political agitation and nationalistic movement aimed at reversing the unequal treaties [signed by Japan with Western nations in the 1850s and 60s]. It is a reaction to the superficial Europeanisms of the 1880s....²⁶” Similarly, Miyako Inoue marshals this causal mechanism to explain efforts by elite males to reform and rectify the reportedly crass-sounding language used by Meiji schoolgirls (*jogakusei* 女学生).²⁷

This nationalist and geo-political explanation, however, is in no way unique to linguistic reform movements. For instance, Hirata continues this argument in the sphere of literary history: “in literary history the revival of Genroku-period arts during Meiji twenties is treated as supporting this model. That is, the prospering of a mixed elegant and vulgar style of writing, epitomized by Saikaku, and the interest in studying Genroku literature were also counter reactions to a writing style of unified written and spoken languages whose formation was inspired by ideas seen in European prose and translations.”²⁸ Thus, this geopolitical nationalism is also used as an explanation for literary developments as well.

²⁶ Hirata, "Handō to ryūkō: Meiji no Saikaku hakken," 181.

²⁷ Inoue argues, “By the middle of the Meiji period (the mid-to-late 1880s), the overzealous appropriation of Western Enlightenment thinking and institutions met with a nativist backlash. The Sino-Japanese war (1894-95) gave rise to nationalism, and nationalists reinvented “traditional” Japanese ethos and institutions, including the emperorship and Confucianism. ...[T]he political climate took a reactionary turn against a perceived rapid Westernization/ modernization, and state officials and intellectuals attempted to promote a vision of Japan as modern yet distinct from the West” Inoue, "What Does Language Remember?: Indexical Inversion and the Naturalized History of Japanese women," 47.

²⁸ Hirata, "Handō to ryūkō: Meiji no Saikaku hakken," 181.

James Reichert comments that this model of “the last decade of the nineteenth century as a temporary respite from the tyranny of the West” has become the “general consensus” among specialists of Meiji history.²⁹ Nevertheless, Reichert’s work on representations of male sexuality in Kōda Rohan’s work adopts the underlying binary of Japan vs. the West that is at the heart of nationalist explanation. He astutely notes, “In place of Western models, neoclassical writers turned to Japan’s own cultural heritage for inspiration. Rohan, in particular, was unstinting in his admiration of certain aspects of Japan’s pre-Meiji cultural legacy.”³⁰ But, the underlying problem in this model is its inability to explain why the historical target to return to for this nationalist turn was not the decades immediately preceding the 1868 Meiji Restoration, but the Genroku period, which became the “cultural legacy.” Similarly, Chieko Irie Mulhern also argues, “The neoclassical literature of Koyo and Rohan championed, if unwittingly, the nationalistic revival of classical literature and native Japanese culture—a popular reaction against the government-imposed precipitate Westernization movements.”³¹ Although Mulhern recognizes that Koyo and Rohan may have participated “unwittingly,” she nevertheless reduces their literary experimentation to a “nationalistic revival” of classical and native Japanese culture. Their personal reasons for composing in the style they chose are excluded from view and effaced by the totalizing narrative of nation and nationalism.

The underlying problem here is that one cause (nationalism) is made to fit too many different and separate events. It is too readily invoked and accepted as a primary

²⁹ Reichert, *In The Company Of Men: Representations Of Male-male Sexuality In Meiji Literature*, 137.

³⁰ Reichert explains, “Indeed his [Saikaku’s], entire oeuvre amounts to a series of variations on a single theme; his important works limn the tales of heroic figures from the past who achieve greatness through absolute commitment to a traditional Way, such as the Way of the Artisan (*geidō*) or the Way of the Warrior (*bushido*).” Reichert, *In The Company Of Men: Representations Of Male-male Sexuality In Meiji Literature*, 137.

³¹ Mulhern, *Kōda Rohan*, 9.

cause. One of the main problems with such standard models of development for literature (and other late Meiji events) is that their mechanisms—Westernization and reactive nationalism—(as they are frequently employed) are too totalizing and tidy.

Moreover, there is a subtle tautological logic behind such nationalist historiography where various and disparate events in the late-1880s and 1890s (from the reforms of schoolgirl's language, to the rediscovery of Saikaku, and the like) are all byproducts of a unified larger nationalistic turn away from the West towards the Japanese "past." This is problematic because at the same time nationalism is collectively causing all of these things, our primary evidence for the influence of nationalism remains the selfsame group of events it is purported to have caused. In other words, we know this nationalist-turn happened because of these events—because Saikaku was rediscovered, people started wearing kimono again, etc. And, yet, these events are said to have happened due to a nationalist turn. This meta-mechanism of nationalism is at once the cause *and* the effect. These circular histories read as follows: Japan turned to the past from the West because Japan turned from the West to the past.

But, to argue for a more complex understanding of the 1880s and 1890s does not mean there were not later nationalist turns and movements in Japan³²; instead, we need to distinguish the shadow of future nationalism cast backwards in shaping the narration of prior events (such as the rediscovery of Saikaku). The totalizing pull of the story of the modern nation state, which mandates an assertion of the self through a rejection of an Other, has claimed and reoriented events from the 1890s into its orbit. This chapter

³² There is a large body of scholarship on the concept and history of nationalism in Japan. See Bourdagh, *The Dawn That Never Comes: Shimazaki Tōson and Japanese Nationalism*. For a detailed consideration of nationalism and Japanese literature. For a broader discussion of nationalism see also: Wilson, *Nation and Nationalism in Japan*; Narangoa and Cribb, *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia, 1895-1945*.

approaches that decade as an extension of the 1870s and 1880s, not as a precursor of the 1900s.

Bakin's Shadow

The implications of the rediscovery of Saikaku, however, go far beyond questions of why he was rediscovered to include the more significant issue of the impacts of the rediscovery on authors of the day. A great many authors, active in the late 1880s and 1890s, credit Saikaku for influencing³³ and inspiring them, including Ozaki Kōyō, Kōda Rōhan, Higuchi Ichiyō 樋口一葉 (1872-1896),³⁴ and, later, Shimazaki Tōson.³⁵

For instance, Higuchi Ichiyō's literary writing style has been called "Neoclassical," by Sharalyn Orbaugh, due to her affinity for Genroku period writers such as Ihara Saikaku, Heian period texts (such as *The Tale of Genji*), and the *Kokinshū* 古今集 poetry collection.³⁶ Tim Van Compenolle, in writing about the influences of Genroku literature

³³ For example, as Donald Keene notes, "The rediscovery of the Genroku classics, especially the work of Saikaku, exercised a far more conspicuous influence on the Ken'yushu writers than did any theories borrowed from the West" Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era, Fiction*, 121.

³⁴ For a discussion of Ichiyō see Copeland and Ortobasi, *The Modern Murasaki: Writing by Women of Meiji Japan*, 133.

³⁵ Viewing these authors as influenced by Saikaku (and other Genroku writers) without taking into consideration the other books they were reading produces a distorted literary heritage, one that is skewed either to the West or the distant Genroku period. These distortions neglect contemporary and late Edo-period fiction, which, through its increased circulation dominated the literary field. This attenuated literary present is unaccounted for, which, in turn, allows a clear rupture with the immediate literary past to be imagined and a new modern Japanese literature inspired by the West and/or the Genroku to come to the fore. The 1890s' neo-classical movement is significant to the issue of materially generic conventions as well. Saikaku and other authors who were "rediscovered" were largely out of current circulation. That is to say, they were immaterial and largely external to the current generic matrix of the 1890s. This allowed them to be rediscovered and rematerialized as literary forms divorced from or independent of the current literary field. The immaterial transmigration of texts was accomplished without needing to negotiate materially mediated expectations of the readers. They were discoverable as non-materially, freely situated literature.

³⁶ Orbaugh, "Higuchi Ichiyō and Neoclassical Modernism," 79-83.

on Ichiyō, speaks of literary influence in terms of “memory” to negotiate the East-West, modern-classical dualities of the 1890s:³⁷

For Ichiyō, to put writing brush to paper, whether crafting a short story, composing a verse, or recording the day’s events in her elegant and very literary diary, was necessarily to summon an anterior literary corpus and to breath new life into it. Literary writing was first and foremost the art of literary memory....³⁸

Van Compernelle posits *genbun-itchi* as the mechanism effacing the literary memory that characterizes Ichiyō’s writing. Radical changes in society at the *fin de siècle* created a “sense of crises.”

[The crises] turned the literary imagination outward, amplified the urge to create new kinds of art, and even aroused the desire among many for a complete break with past aesthetic practices.... In the sphere of Meiji letters, new narrative apparatuses, new modes of representation, and, above all, the new literary language of *genbun-itchi* were developed to repress the classical literary tradition....³⁹

Neo-classicalism, defined in part by the Genroku (1688-1704) “revival” and the “rediscovery of Saikaku” during the 1890s, sought a way out of this present through the Japanese past of the late 1600s. *Genbun-itchi*, as Van Compernelle has suggested, was an attempt to “create a new origin for Japanese literature, a world freed from the influences of the (Japanese and East Asian) past and instead affiliated with the contemporary literature of Europe and America.”⁴⁰ In other words, *genbun-itchi* is an attempt to plot the course of future development through a negation of the past upon which the present is

³⁷ Van Compernelle’s concern with “memory” in Ichiyō’s writing is his way to move beyond struggles over the literary reception and framing of Ichiyō by critics and scholars. In the 1950s and 60s, on the one hand, scholars framed her as a “hold over from premodern times” and “the last woman of old Japan.” On the other hand, post-1970s scholars cast her as the “first significant modern woman writer” Van Compernelle, *The Uses of Memory: The Critique of Modernity in the Fiction of Higuchi Ichiyō*, 4. Van Compernelle seeks to bridge these two conflicting opinions by showing how Ichiyō used her literary memory in writing to address very modern topics.

³⁸ Van Compernelle, *The Uses of Memory: The Critique of Modernity in the Fiction of Higuchi Ichiyō*, 1.

³⁹ Van Compernelle, *The Uses of Memory: The Critique of Modernity in the Fiction of Higuchi Ichiyō*, 11.

⁴⁰ Van Compernelle, *The Uses of Memory: The Critique of Modernity in the Fiction of Higuchi Ichiyō*, 11.

built. Similarly the “rediscovery” of this new more-distant past of Genroku as a model for literary emulation was also an attempt to escape from the present moment and the recent past.

Yet, this conflict between *genbun-itchi* and the “classical literary tradition” of which Van Compernelle writes neglects a third force—a common foe with which each of these literary movements was grappling. Both *genbun-itchi* and the neoclassical writing style of Ichiyō shared an aversion to the dominant literary forms for 1890s contemporary literature, which was still saturated with the literary forms and styles of the first half of the nineteenth century. Although the objects of their affinity differed, *genbun-itchi* reformers and the neo-classicalists represented similar attempts to escape the end-of-the-century literary moment dominated still by Bakin, Kyōden, Shunsui, Tanehiko, Ikku, Sanba, and their successors.

The rediscovery of Saikaku and of a Genroku literary past is an important issue because the ways in which it is interpreted largely shapes our understanding of the 1880s and 1890s literary field; it is a time viewed in Japanese literary histories as having great significance in the development of modern Japanese literature. If the field is seen solely in terms of abstract ideas of Western literary influences (e.g., realism, romanticism, or naturalism) then we miss the materiality of the moment and, therefore, the literary field is depopulated of books and the ranges of literary interaction they presented to readers and writers of the day. In time, *genbun-itchi* weakened the fabric of textual memories, the language of narration, but it did not impact material memories, the physical formats and

the material aspects of genres of the second half of nineteenth century; changes in print technology and media layout did that.⁴¹

The Complex Ecology of the Meiji-period Literary Field

When thinking about the Meiji-period, there is a tendency towards two poles of influence: the West and the distant past (a traditional “pre-Meiji cultural legacy”). This binary can be problematized by identifying what it excludes.⁴² What is most clearly missing from this binary is an appreciation for the temporal and spatial complexity of texts in the 1890s literary present; the binary effaces a range of internal immediate conflicts and personal motivations. The trans-spatial pole of influence from the West and the trans-temporal pole of the past occlude the simultaneity of the present literary moment. There must also be recognition of multiple temporalities and competing personal stakes in developments.

The late-1880s literary field, as discussed in Chapter Two, was exceedingly complex in terms of the variety of languages and texts in circulation and also in the discursive use of these titles, authors, and languages to define literature. Nearly every literary debate and discussion in the mid to late Meiji period in Japan draws on titles and names of authors, as we will see below, in order to give a hierarchical structure to this chaotic moment. Literary historiography will benefit from a combined attention to these

⁴¹ Granted, the language style of composition was one important feature of nineteenth century literary forms. Yet, it seems highly problematic to assume, as so many have, that a few authors merely tweaking the written word, in an attempt to unify it with some conception of spoken language alone, could eradicate so many genres that were based on material generic markers in addition to language. The limits of *genbun-itchi* as the mechanism of generic extinction becomes further apparent when we consider how much nineteenth-century literature (e.g. *ninjōbon*, *sokkibon* 速記本, and *kōdan* 講談) was already rendered in verbal styles that replicated the vernacular, often as well, if not better, than some forms of *genbun-itchi*. Would not these prior verbal styles have had the same inherent potential to eradicate other literary forms?

⁴² It is also useful to keep in mind the mutability and contradictions in each of the binary’s two poles.

two textual registers—the discursive and the physical. Literary developments are influenced by what people are saying about books, and by how, when, and where they interact with them as physical objects. Literary histories about this time face the constant risk of under or over appreciating the social significance, what Bourdieu calls “consecration” of texts (the discursive recognition granted by institutions and people of authority),⁴³ or under- or over-appreciating their physical presence in circulation. These two issues—consecration and number of copies in circulation—are quite different. The first, what readers wrote and thought, tells us about a text’s social position; but, the second offers insight into how widely available a text was to readers. Neither alone is sufficient.

A noteworthy historical source for appreciating these two textual registers, and to understand the place of various texts in this literary crossroads, is reading lists of favorite and important books. These lists are concrete constructions of the boundaries of scholarship and literature. For instance, in 1889 the social magazine *Kokumin no tomo* 国民之友 (The Nations Friend) ran a series entitled “Shomoku jisshu” 書目十種, which contains lists of “ten books” that famous men said were important to them and that they would recommend to young people to read.⁴⁴ These lists suggest that, in the mid-Meiji literary field, European, Chinese, and Japanese texts each had their place and adherents. As we will see, however, certain works and authors such as Bakin had a near universal appeal, appearing on almost every list. In contrast, of the forty-two lists, however, only Ozaki Kōyō’s included Saikaku.⁴⁵

⁴³ See Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, 120-25.

⁴⁴ *Kokumin no tomo*, “Shomoku jisshu.” Vol. 48, 1-18; Vol. 49, 30-32

⁴⁵ *Kokumin no tomo*, “Shomoku jisshu,” Vol. 48, 2.

On one hand, these lists are not transparent or unqualified representations of literary tastes, but are public acts of self-posturing or polemical prescriptives about literature and learning. Individuals clearly highlighted their idiosyncratic linguistic abilities (Russian, French, German, and English) and topical specialties (law, politics, science, and social sciences) as a means of position taking. For instance, Futabatei Shimei (listed under his name Hasegawa Tatsunosuke 長谷川辰之助), the author of *Ukigumo* 浮雲 (1887-89), lists three Russian novels and a translation of Victor Hugo.⁴⁶ Or, similarly, the compilers of these lists made selections and exclusions to create a hierarchy of value for titles, authors, and genres. More specifically, unlike nearly every other respondent who listed fiction, neither Ozaki Kōyō nor Futabatei Shimei included Bakin on their list.

Yet, on the other hand, one key benefit of these lists in “The Nation’s Friend” is that the lists were written independently of each other. Although the magazine chose whose lists to publish from a self-selected group of reader-respondents, and provided some editing, the independent compilation of each list allows their aggregate to transcend the idiosyncrasies of the individual and provide a snapshot of this complex moment, thereby suggesting both the availability of books and their relative social value. That is to say, as a group these reading lists provide evidence of patterns of textual consecration and possible reading. If eight people list a title or an author, we can measure that it was more generally recognized—at least among the reader-responders to The Nation’s Friend—than those idiosyncratic texts mentioned by a lone individual. For this same

⁴⁶ He also includes Wei Xi 魏禧 (1624-1680) as an author who should be read. *Kokumin no tomo*, “Shomoku jisshu,” Vol. 48, 2.

reason, those ubiquitous authors or titles that are on nearly every list, save one or two, are significant when they are absent from a list.

When looking at the titles on these lists, it is interesting to find pairings of counterpart texts, i.e., the presentation of European texts alongside Japanese and Chinese in such a way that they appear similar in their purpose (e.g., moral or political instruction) or their type (e.g. fiction). For instance, Kaneko Kentarō 金子堅太郎 (1853-1942), a politician who helped write the Meiji constitution, included Bakin's *Musōbyōe* alongside "Charles Dicken's [sic] Works" and *The Classic of History* (c. *Shujing* j. *Shokyō* 書經) with "Edmund Burk's Works" and "Woolsey's *Political Science*."⁴⁷ The cross-cultural predilections of the men who made these lists represent the height of mid-Meiji cosmopolitanism. Much as Seiji Lippit has argued about Japanese intellectuals during the later Taisho period, they represent a generation conversant in Japanese, Chinese, and at least one European language and culture.⁴⁸ They were not ignorant *imitators* who "did not grasp the real meaning of English literature" as Yone Noguchi's "The Evolution of Modern Japanese Literature" condescendingly implies.⁴⁹ Such a "real meaning" is always contested—a prescriptive issue not a descriptive one.

⁴⁷ Kokumin no tomo, "Shomoku jisshu," Vol. 4, 4.

⁴⁸ See Lippit, *Topographies of Japanese Modernism*. The 1880s literary field was in a state of turmoil, which was, in part, a result of a dramatic increase of writings imported from the West. Yet, despite a relatively large number of translated titles and western literary texts available at select bookstores, the West was materially not as large a literary force as assumed. The idea of the West was a much larger force in literature than were its products in the literary field. Compared to the thousands of lending libraries and bookstores in Tokyo and the millions of books, magazines, and newspapers in circulation, Western literature (in original and translation) was materially insignificant, occupying a limited space in the hands of elite and well-educated readers. As these elites also wrote the literary history of the time, the place of imported literature and its social significance seems more important than it was across society. Arguably, the discourse of and on the West was substantially more influential than was its material presence. This gap between what was on the minds and lips of the elite and what was in the hands of nearly everyone needs to be examined more fully.

⁴⁹ Noguchi, "The Evolution of Modern Japanese Literature."

Returning to the booklists published in “The Nations Friend,” we can see the importance of the West for this group of readers. As can be expected of booklists made by educated males during this time, European and Western books are rather conspicuous. For instance, the importance of key texts of European philosophy stands out in the geographer Noguchi Yasuoki’s 野口保興 booklist, which was written in French and Japanese as follows:

Pascal.—Pensées (パスカール氏著 思想)
Descartes.—Discours sur la methode (デカルト氏著 方法論)
J.J. Rousseau.—Emile ou Education (ルッソー氏著 教育論)
Staël.—Allemagne (スタエル氏著 獨乙國)
Fénélon—Education des filles. (フェネロン氏著 女子教育論)
Erangile de St. Jean (サントジョハニーノ經書 新約全書の内[A book in the New Testament])
Racine –Tragdies (ラシーヌ氏著 演劇)
夢想兵衛
莊子
Bernadin de St.—Pierre Paul. Et Viginie. (ベルナヂンドサンピエール氏著 ポール及ビルジェニー)⁵⁰

Yet, even in Noguchi’s list, buried between the French playwright, Jean Racine, and the French writer and botanist, Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, are two non-European titles: the *Zhuangzi* and Bakin’s *Musōbyōe kochō monogatari* 夢想兵衛胡蝶物語 (1810). We are reminded that even for elite males with some measure of Western education, this moment continued to include a Sino-cultural appreciation and affinity, in addition to Japanese popular literature.

Bakin has a shared place on most of these lists. Even in more Asian-centric lists, as well, Bakin has popularity. The book list submitted by Miura Moriharu 三浦守治 (1857-1916), a German-trained doctor and colleague of Mori Ōgai, included two works

⁵⁰ Kokumin no tomo, "Shomoku jisshu," Vol. 49, 30-31.

by Bakin: *Eight Dogs* and *Nanka no yume* 南柯夢 (1808).⁵¹ Additionally, Ukita Kazutami 浮田和民 (1860-1946), a political scientist, exchange student at Yale, and later professor at Tokyo senmon gakkō 東京専門学校 (Waseda University), wrote “the things I read deeply for learning rhetoric and writing include: ...collected writings of Bakin (馬琴諸書), *Chūshingura* 忠臣蔵, ...Writings by Fukuzawa [Yukichi], Fukuchi [Ōchi 福地桜痴, 1841-1906], and Tokutomi [Sohō 徳富蘇峰, 1863-1957].”⁵² Ukita’s list positions Bakin alongside these three important contemporary writers. Bakin’s writings maintained a central place in the complex literary field of Meiji, even as that field expanded to include European texts and new compositions by living Japanese authors.

This is an instance when Peter Kornicki’s observation about the continued circulation of Edo-period fiction in the Meiji period is quite useful.⁵³ Edo-period fiction remained an important part of the literary ecology alongside Western and Chinese texts.⁵⁴ Along with the prevalence of Bakin in these lists, the large number of reprints of Bakin’s stories across the Meiji period, as discussed in Chapter Two, at once problematizes the standard model’s assumption of a wholesale abandonment of the literary past. Moreover, as will be discussed in Chapter Four, there was a wide range of adaptations and more plebian modes of enjoying Bakin, including picture books and digest versions of his more famous stories. At least, this prevalence of Bakin on these lists (and in the numbers from Chapter Two) suggests a continued, if not growing, fascination with early nineteenth

⁵¹ Kokumin no tomo, "Shomoku jisshu," Vol. 48, 15.

⁵² Kokumin no tomo, "Shomoku jisshu," Vol. 49, 31-32

⁵³ See Kornicki, "The Survival of Tokugawa Fiction in The Meiji Period."

⁵⁴ Most of these “Chinese” books in the list, we must remember, were printed in Japan and circulated as a natural part of the ecology. In the 1890s they were most definitely not considered a foreign invasive species by those individuals who included them on their book lists. They were the foundation of education and civilization in Japan and, in that sense, were as “Japanese” as any book in Japan.

century literature. Moreover, the inclusion of Bakin alongside the Chinese classics and European fiction in these lists indicates how high Bakin's social position actually was.

If anything, a much stronger case can be made that the literary past Bakin represented was becoming all the more entrenched in the literary field, despite the written musings of a few young writers in *Kenyūsha*, who were unknown or relatively marginalized at the time, and even more well-known literary reformers like Shōyō. This heightened consecration and the increased presence of Bakin was in part a function of the growing mechanized book publishing industry, which produced a large quantity of reprint titles and runs, as we have seen. This large number of reprints, in many ways, made Bakin into a hybrid author; he became both an historical as well as a powerful contemporary author. The standard model (modern West vs. traditional Japan) is unable to appreciate this duality.

As mentioned above, Saikaku was essentially absent from the book lists in "The Nation's Friend;" only Ozaki Kōyō included him. The uniqueness of this inclusion in 1889 suggests the limits of Saikaku's literary importance in 1889 when the lists were published. There was a larger reason for this than just taste; Saikaku's physical presence in printed books was nearly non-existent. There were few antique copies in existence; for instance, Awashima Kangetsu's copy of *Ichidai otoko* was an early printing from Osaka from the 1680s.⁵⁵

This material absence from the 1880s-printing world allowed Saikaku to be "rediscovered" as a historical author with a past worth remembering but with little contemporary baggage. Saikaku's late arrival to the Meiji literary world rendered him an empty signifier, which could be "rediscovered" according to the immediate needs of

⁵⁵ Awashima Kangetsu, "Saikaku Zatsuwa," 91.

critics and authors. Saikaku's rediscovery at once involved the act of physically finding, collecting, and cataloging his books. A small group of individuals, namely Kangetsu, Uchida Roan, Koda Rohan, and Ozaki Kōyō—found old copies of Saikaku's books, read them, circulated them among themselves, and published them in small literary journals and later as books. This entailed a great number of days perusing Tokyo's used book shops. In fact, when Kangetsu shared copies of Saikaku with him, Rohan needed to make his own copies by hand because they were otherwise unavailable.⁵⁶

Members of the Kenyūsha literary group reimagined Saikaku in terms of their notion of modern literature. The Saikaku we read today is, in many ways, an imaginary figure created and worshiped in the minds of these literary reformers and not necessarily a person situated in or reflecting his own historical moment. Most notably, Saikaku changed in social memory from a *haikai* poet into an author of prose narratives. It is difficult, if not impossible, to escape the framework in which they recreated him.

The rediscovery of Saikaku helped cause a seldom-acknowledged inversion of later perceptions of the Meiji literary field: Saikaku, a once forgotten author, came to represent a golden age of Edo-period fiction in literary histories, while the extremely popular Bakin was forgotten or treated as the most-obvious barrier to the development of modern Japanese literature. But this inversion was neither spontaneous nor uncontested; it was the product of a long systematic diatribe against Bakin—not because he was an author from the past, but because he remained highly influential, widely read, and published in the 1880s and 90s. That is to say, because he was unforgettable, the rediscovery of Saikaku was an attempt to make people forget or, at least, give up Bakin.

⁵⁶ Hirata, "Handō to ryūkō: Meiji no Saikaku hakken," 183.

The Bakin Problem

As mentioned, Bakin remained highly influential and popular. Readers, it seemed, had an insatiable desire for reprints and adaptations of his works, and he remained a widely respected literary ideal. Bakin and those works that imitated him seemed to saturate the marketplace for stand-alone books (*tankō* 単行), blocking access to capital needed for publishing new experimental compositions as books. As a result of this, for young authors in the late 1880s and 1890s, like those involved in rediscovering Saikaku, the primary avenue for publishing was in magazines and newspapers. Most of the famous, i.e., successfully experimental works of literature from this time were initially published as newspaper or magazine articles and serializations. The difference in social position and value between writing in ephemeral periodicals, like newspapers, magazines, and more substantial single book publications during this time, was significant. For young authors, reprints of their successful serializations were one path into the literary book market. As discussed in Chapter Two, the marketplace was saturated with books of established writers and translators, as well as reprints of Edo-period authors. Young authors often depended upon collaboration (*gōsaku* 合作) with more-established writers—at times “collaboration” meant no more than borrowing their name. For instance, in order to get *Ukigumo* (1887-89) published, Futabatei Shimei initially had to publish it under the name of Tsubouchi Shōyō, who was already established. Otherwise, authors like Futabatei Shimei and other young writers had little choice than to first write for newspapers and literary magazines, or to self publish, which in some cases involved starting their own coterie magazine, *dōjinshi* 同人誌. This is what the *Ken'yūsha* did: in

1885 they started a small magazine to share among friends, humorously entitled *Garakuta bunko* 雅楽多文庫.⁵⁷

Even in the semi-private and collective venture of *Garakuta bunko*, Bakin was an intimidating shadow against which Kenyūsha-writers' literary endeavors were unavoidably measured, even when they were trying to write in novel ways. The specter of Bakin became all the more pronounced as they tried to expand their readership and become a more public writing venue. These writers had what can most succinctly be called a "Bakin problem."

In *Jogaku zasshi* 女学雑誌, one of the leading women's literary magazines of the 1880s and 90s, there is a great deal of discussion about Bakin's reputation and value in the new age of Meiji. An 1889 article entitled "Bakin no shōsetsu" 馬琴の小説 (Bakin's Novels) brings to the fore one of the key issues in deciding how to evaluate Bakin: the vast size of Bakin's literary corpus. The article challenges the popular assumption that Bakin's greatness as an author is connected to the size of his material footprint in the world of books.

Bakin is a great master of the Japanese novel. His sentences are spectacular; his storylines are also not bad. But it is astonishing that some seem to think that there is no other author in Japan save Bakin. Now, surely only Bakin wrote a hundred plus large books, and only Bakin wrote over two hundred stories. However, good and bad in art [*bijutsu* 美術] isn't determined by length or size.⁵⁸

So how was quality in literary art to be decided if it was not based on popularity or total pages? To say the least, this was a highly contested issue during this time. But one thing most attempts to define it had in common was the need to position themselves vis-à-vis

⁵⁷*Garakuta bunko* involves a play on words between the sound of the title, *garakuta* (trash and litter) and the kanji for *garakuta* used in the title 雅楽多(a myriad of elegant amusements).

⁵⁸ Fuchi (Uchida Roan), "Bakin no shōsetsu," 14.

Bakin. To *Kenyūsha* authors, Saikaku became one of their solutions to this Bakin problem.

Writer of Our Discontent

Meiji period literary reformers, including Shōyō, worked to define the modern novel as an “artistic” (*geijutsu* 芸術) form that depicted “human passions” (*ninjō* 人情) and “manners and customs” (*setai fuzoku* 世態風俗). Saikaku was reevaluated according to this standard and definition of the modern novel. A generation of writers, including Ozaki Kōyō and others affiliated with the *Kenyūsha*, emulated and praised Saikaku and, perhaps more importantly, republished him to the world within the terms of this new discourse of the novel. Saikaku could now be remembered as a writer who was uniquely Japanese and preceded western influences. But in fact, what this narrative of remembering occludes from our view is that the very act of rediscovery created a new Saikaku—a Saikaku that never was. Today when we read Saikaku it is within the frame of this discourse on the modern novel. For these young literary reformers Saikaku provided a welcome standard against which to justify and explain the value of their own writings.

In literary histories, Tsubouchi Shōyō’s 1885 tract *Shōsetsu shinzui* 小説神髓, which was mentioned above, is one of the best known critiques of Bakin, whom it mentions more than fifty times.⁵⁹ Shōyō’s concern with Bakin was less about him as a historical writer and more focused on his continued influence in the literary field of the 1880s. In other words, Shōyō, too, had a type of Bakin problem—a need to explain his

⁵⁹ In recent years, thanks to the work of Atsuko Ueda and others, the reception of Bakin has become more nuanced as scholars are less willing to take Shōyō at face value and have worked to sort out his ambivalence.

vision of literature to an audience deeply engrossed in Bakin's literary style. More than Shōyō's complaints against Bakin personally, Shōyō was troubled by the number of would-be authors writing in the style of Bakin and others of Bakin's generation. Shōyō complains:

There is certainly no shortage of writers of popular fiction, but most of them write adaptations of other people's work. Not one can be called an author in his own right. Every recently published novel has been either a reworking of Bakin or Tanehiko, or an imitation of Ikku or Shunsui.⁶⁰

Yet, even these now famous critiques by Shōyō seem pale compared to the wide-ranging public assaults on Bakin by Uchida Roan. Much like Charles Huxley was to Charles Darwin, Roan was a bulldog, advocating Saikaku and attacking Bakin. Roan opposed both Bakin and those who blindly placed Western literature ahead of Saikaku. He was neither nationalistic nor anti-West.⁶¹ Instead Roan was responding to his own Bakin problem.

Uchida Roan's pro-Saikaku writings, for instance, contain extensive rhetorical attacks aimed at both the West and Bakin. An example of such a bifurcated attack—praising Saikaku and attacking Bakin—can be seen in his 1889 review of Koda Rohan's short story, *Fūryūbutsu* 風流仏, which was published earlier that same year. *Fūryūbutsu* appeared in the serialized book collection of new *shōsetsu* entitled *Shincho hyakushu* 新著百種 and is remembered as the epitome of Saikaku's influence on Koda Rohan's writing. In his review, Roan praises Koda Rohan for his elegance and skill at emulating Saikaku's style and themes. He praises “the chivalry and humor of the innkeeper,

⁶⁰ Tsubouchi Shōyō, *Shōsetsu shinzui*, preface.

⁶¹ Roan was in fact a prolific translator throughout his life, bringing into Japanese such works as Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, and other works by Voltaire, Hans Christian Anderson, Charles Dickens, Alexandre Dumas, Emile Zola, Guy de Masupassant, Henryk Sienkiewicz, and Oscar Wilde.

Kichibei” as examples of what “Saikaku loved and used” and posits that “Saikaku would have written it the same way,” asserting “the author has captured the essence of Saikaku and is equipped with the same marvelous skill!”⁶² Roan celebrates the fact that after more than “two hundred years since the death of Saikaku, at last there is this wonderful writing again. Heaven has yet to destroy this style!”⁶³

But even when literary reformers and critics, like Roan, wrote positive reviews of contemporary fiction, suggesting its superiority to the West, they often simultaneously felt the need to reject Bakin and the larger contemporary literary field he represented. For instance, Roan identifies two groups whom he thinks are unable to objectively evaluate *Fūryūbutsu*—“those devoted to Bakin or who worship [William Makepeace] Thackeray [1811-1863].”⁶⁴ That is to say, those obsessed with literary imports from the West and also those who continue to read and enjoy to Bakin.

Roan’s arguments place Saikaku as the definitive standard of Japanese literature against whom all other writers—both domestic and imported—should be measured. This highlights the three-way comparison, between the West, Bakin, and Saikaku that is critical for understanding Roan’s argument and appreciating literary reform movements during the last-two decades of the nineteenth century.

Roan continues, “The appearance of *Fūryūbutsu* should be called the singular phenomenon since the coming of Saikaku, [even in] this world that has risen to the heights of Thackeray and Dickens.”⁶⁵ That is to say, Roan thinks *Fūryūbutsu* is the best

⁶² Sono Kawako (Uchida Roan), "Rohan-shi no 'Fūryūbutsu'," 11.

⁶³ Sonokawako and Uchida, "Rohan-shi no 'Fūryūbutsu'," 11.

⁶⁴ Sonokawako and Uchida, "Rohan-shi no 'Fūryūbutsu'," 10.

⁶⁵ Sonokawako and Uchida, "Rohan-shi no 'Fūryūbutsu'," 10.

piece of literature, even when compared to William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63) and Charles Dickens (1812-70), because it is closest to Saikaku.

The world today is greatly prejudiced in favor of Westernism. This prejudice is ever increasing and now we are at the point where some want to abandon traditional Japanese literature. People are blabbering on about painting but they don't even know [Maruyama] Ōkyo; people are foaming at the mouth about literature but they haven't even tried [Matsuo] Basho. They think they can argue splendidly about art and literature just by lining up various Western words and names. Taking oil painting as a standard they mock the Kano and Maruyama schools. With poetry as their orthodoxy they scoff at *waka* and *haikai*. But, they make no distinction between good and bad oil paintings or poetry, they just praise it all. But, if it is a Japanese painting or *waka*, then they simply mock it. How can we express satisfaction with today's literary establishment that is chock full of so many literary critics with these types of prejudices? (We can't!) We should cast our aspersions on it!⁶⁶

In another *Jogaku zasshi* article Bakin shōsetsu no kōka 馬琴小説の効果 (Effects of Bakin's Novels"), Roan asserts that Bakin's innovations were ultimately damaging to the novel in Japan.

Kyokutei Bakin was a reformer of the Japanese novel in the Bunka period [1804-1818] and is a notable writer and great author within literary history. When evaluated compared to the whole [history of literature], however, his reforms caused regressions within the Japanese novel!⁶⁷

Roan makes this judgment based on literature that preceded Bakin, namely literature from the Heian period (794-1192) and Genroku period. Roan is reinterpreting past literature according to the standard that good literature depicts human emotions, as Shōyō argued in *Shōsetsu shinzui*:

When we look at the erudite writings of Saikaku, rather than plot variations, we find that he was intent on and fully able to fathom the subtleties of human emotions! His writings were rather intricate and that is the extent of his praise from previous readers, but when he is read diligently and repeatedly, his numinous skill at describing emotions is unforgettable.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Sonokawako and Uchida, "Rohan-shi no 'Fūryūbutsu'," 10.

⁶⁷Fuchi (Uchida Roan), "Bakin shōsetsu no kōka," 14.

⁶⁸Fuchi, "Bakin shōsetsu no kōka," 14.

Even this passage on Saikaku contains an implicit confrontation with Bakin. Bakin's literary reputation was, in part, based on his skill with *shukō* 趣向, intertextual plot construction. He had the ability to take events, people, and ideas from multiple famous stories and texts and incorporate them in a novel and disorienting way into a new context, such as rewriting and transposing Chinese stories to Japan. Roan explains these plot conventions as the key to Bakin's success. "He combined the plots from [Chinese vernacular fiction] like *The Water Margin* (*Suikoden* 水滸伝) with elements of didacticism. These stories spread throughout Japan like a tidal wave, reaching the point that people thought anything apart from Bakin's style was not even a novel."⁶⁹ This literary aesthetic of novel plots and didactics, in short, was the dominant mode of literary appreciation and valuation for most of the nineteenth century.

Roan insists, "Bakin's writing and plots were both first rate. And yet, people should not imitate him since that is all Bakin was good at!" Moreover, Roan thinks Bakin's influence ruined all subsequent literature. "The power of fads weighed down upon followers of [Shikitei] Sanba and [Tamenaga] Shunsui until every novel in Japan became like Bakin." Hence, literary reforms must undo the damage caused by Bakin's popularity. For this reason, from Roan's perspective, Bakin is the root of all problems in Japanese literature both past and present: "Although people say Japanese literature regressed due to the lingering effects of the [Boshin 戊辰] War [of 1868], but in fact all problems were caused by Bakin. He is the reason why writers were unable to stop writing *kanzen chōaku* 勸善懲惡 didactics [i.e., promoting good and dissuading evil]." Roan

⁶⁹ Fuchi, "Bakin shōsetsu no kōka," 14.

dismisses nearly every famous author from the last half-century by including them in his list of those corrupted by Bakin: Takabatake Ransen 高島藍泉(1838-1885), Ryūtei Tanehiko 柳亭種彦(1783-1842), Shinoda Senka 篠田仙果(d.1884), Ryūtei Senka 笠亭仙果(1804-1868), Itō Senzō 伊東専三 (1850-1914), Somezaki Nobufusa 染崎延房(1818-1886, a.k.a. Tamenaga the second), and Tamenaga Shunsui. “This,” writes Roan, “is why although Bakin was a reformer of Japanese novels his reformations unfortunately caused the regression [*taiho seshimeshi* 退歩せしめし] of Japanese novels!”⁷⁰

This article is an example of polemical literary history in its purest form; it clearly remembers and reframes the past in such a way as to use it in a contemporary literary debate. But in so doing this article disguises its contemporaneous concerns behind a historical façade. More specifically, Roan’s argument about the “negative” historical impacts of Bakin’s style is most immediately concerned with Bakin’s continued popularity and prevalence in the present literary field, not with the Bakin who died in 1848. In other words, Roan is writing about the continued “pernicious” influence of Bakin and his ilk. In this forceful, and misguided, reading of history, Bakin becomes a synecdoche not just for his generation but also for what Roan sees as the whole of nineteenth-century literary failures. Clearly if Bakin’s literature were dead and gone, like a proverbial dead horse, then there would be no need to beat it in such a manner.

Roan’s speculation about an alternative literary past that takes Saikaku and not Bakin as its guiding light reflects his desire for a new present and future for Japanese literature that would have grown out of the literary forms that were popular when Bakin first started writing at the end of the eighteenth century. “If perchance Bakin had not

⁷⁰ Fuchi, "Bakin shōsetsu no kōka," 14.

been,” Roan conjectures, “then Japanese literature would have evolved from the *sharebon* 洒落本 genre and would need only structural reforms.”⁷¹ *Sharebon* or books of wit and fashion depicted reality (primarily the Yoshiwara red-light district) without the didactic varnish and structure that later fiction was required to employ. In crafting this argument, Roan ignores the strong political pressures that shaped Japanese literature at the end of the eighteenth century.

Kyōden’s most popular and widely published text during the Meiji period, *Inazuma byōshi honcho suibodai* 稲妻表紙本朝醉菩提 (1806), is also Roan’s example of Bakin’s corrupting influence on Kyōden’s literary output. Kyōden wrote *sharebon* and other genres that were less didactic. But the corrupting popularity of Bakin was so great, according to Roan, that even he was forced to “imitate” Bakin by writing yomihon like *Inazuma byōshi*.⁷² Roan’s take on Kyōden’s motives is misleading in that he ignores the fact that Kyōden was a direct target of government censors and spent fifty days in chains during the Kansei Reforms (1787-1793). Kyōden’s writing became more didactic as a result of these government measures, not as a result of Bakin, who was also working within the same political constraints.

Instead of historical accuracy, Roan’s praise for Kyōden masks an attack against the present literary field and a desire for literary reform in the form of escape from a Bakin-centric literary field. It was no accident that the two authors (Kyōden and Saikaku) that Roan mentions by name as alternative literary models to Bakin were relatively less present (Kyōden) or absent (Saikaku) from the contemporary Meiji literary space as compared to the ubiquitous Bakin.

⁷¹Fuchi, "Bakin shōsetsu no kōka," 14.

⁷²Fuchi, "Bakin shōsetsu no kōka," 14.

In order to appreciate Roan's argument, we need to recognize that his position corresponds to a geographically localized literary field that was haunted by Bakin. In a eulogy to Tokyo's fading landmarks and objects after the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake, Roan later lamented "Of all of Tokyo's historical places damaged by the catastrophe one of the most regrettable is the well from which Bakin drew water for his ink stone. Bakin's house has been remodeled so many times that it has lost the feel of the past, so it is not so sad that it was destroyed. But the well outside the kitchen was the same as it was in Bakin's lifetime. So I was greatly saddened when I heard it was destroyed." Roan explains that this "well for Bakin's ink stone" was in between Iida-chō and Nakazaka and that this area was an important site of shared history between Bakin and the Kenyūsha, or "friend of the ink stone literary group":

Mysteriously, the same area of Nakazaka 中坂 that has the historical vestiges of the great literati Bakin, was also the birthplace of the Kenyūsha, which was 'epic-making' in Meiji literary history.

On the southern side of Nakazaka'ue 中坂上 there is a printing house called Hideki-sha 透光舎. In its prior form this Hideki-sha was the Dōeki Publishing Company (*Dōeki shuppansha* 同益出版社). This [Dōeki] printing house was famous in the literary world for reprinting [*fukkoku* 覆刻] old novels such as Bakin's *Shunkansō zushima monogatari* 俊寛都島物語 (1808) and Hirata Gennai's *Rokkubushū* following after the [Tokyo] Haishi Shuppansha located in Minami Denma-chō 南伝馬町, which was a forerunner in reprinting older novels forty years ago. On the direct northern side of their [Dōeki's] printing shop was a white mortar walled storehouse, which was destroyed in the earthquake. In the summer of 1888 a small sign bearing the name "Kenyūsha" was first hung over the door of this storehouse. Two months prior, they had started publishing [their coterie magazine] *Garakuta bunko* from this building. Few people know that before this they used the Ozaki house in Iida-chō, one block over from the Kokugakuin daigaku 国学院大学, as their editing and printing office. They first drew people's attention after moving to Nakazaka'ue.

Bakin's descendant's pottery shop was only thirteen or fourteen houses away....[S]urely it was thanks to the great Bakin that Kenyūsha was able to open there. At the very least, Kenyūsha grew in an area imprinted by Bakin's sandals and that had heard the sound of his voice. It is very mysterious. Bakin and

Kenyūsha are related like a great merchant house and a child apprentice (*Ōya to tanako no kankei* 大家と店子の関係)!⁷³

This shared geographic closeness between Bakin's old neighborhood and the Kenyūsha offers an important clue for reinterpreting the rediscovery of Saikaku. It is in this shared space where the members of Kenyūsha literally grew up in the shadows of Bakin (his home and well and the various publishing houses reproducing his oeuvre).⁷⁴

A Forgotten Literary Inversion

As argued above, Saikaku's limited material footprint and narrow discursive presence made him more freely re-creatable as a modern author. In contrast, Bakin's larger and more varied and extensive physical and discursive footprints made him less freely transformable into modern author—he had too much baggage.⁷⁵

This created a two-folded inversion of the Japanese literary field as understood in the West: In English translations Bakin is largely absent, while Saikaku is over-represented. Second, as a corollary, Saikaku is remembered most clearly in literary history only as an author of novels, and Bakin is remembered only as a writer of stereotypes and moral didacticism.

Indeed this historical image of Saikaku as author of prose fiction has come to dominate the view of his work in the West. Asatarō Miyamori, in his book “Classic

⁷³ Uchida Roan, "Kenyūsha no bōkkō to michinori," 44-45.

⁷⁴ Much as the ghost of Bakin “mysteriously” haunted the neighborhood where Kenyūsha developed, Bakin continues to haunt modern Japanese literature. His absence from the English-language canon of Japanese literature and superficial or scant treatment in historiography leaves him invisible like an apparition, a mist over the whole of the nineteenth century. Until we acknowledge not just the fact that he was widely read and enjoyed, but why he was so appreciated, we will not understand the formation of what we call modern Japanese literature.

Haiku: An Anthology of Poems by Basho and His Followers,” mentions, in passing, that Saikaku was a disciple of the poet Nishiyama Sōin 西山宗因 (1605-1682), but introduces him as a “novelist.” In the footnotes Miyamori explains “Saikaku was also a haikai poet,...but he was greater as a novelist.”⁷⁶ Similarly, in his history of early modern Japan, Conrad D. Totman introduces Saikaku as a “writer of fiction.” Although later Totman includes a description of Saikaku as a “haikai poet,” he quickly explains that, Saikaku “became a prolific writer of *ukiyo zōshi* [浮世草子, prose narratives] during his last decade.”⁷⁷ His defense of this inversion is quite common.

In Japan as well, the standard explanation of Saikaku is that he was an author of novels. In a book written for a popular (non-scholarly) audience, the historian Kawai Atsushi takes on this perception of Saikaku qua author, writing, “While Saikaku is a famous author of *ukiyo zōshi* [i.e., *haibun*] such as “The Life of an Amorous Man,” “The Eternal Storehouse of Japan,” and “This Scheming World,” his main profession was that of a teacher of *haikai*; for Saikaku being an author was nothing more than a mere side business!”⁷⁸ It is clear that in terms of the amount of time and number of words written that Saikaku was first and foremost a *haikai* poet, but, more importantly, his posthumous reputation for almost three hundred years was also that of a *haikai* master. The elevation of Saikaku’s novels above his *haikai* poetry coincided with the rise of the novel in Japan at the end of the nineteenth century. That is, it has a precise historical point of origin at the time of the “rediscovery of Saikaku.” Ironically the history of the production of this new Saikaku in the 1880s and 90s is too often forgotten.

⁷⁶ Matsuo and Miyamori, *Classic Haiku: An Anthology of Poems by Bashō and His Followers*, 32.

⁷⁷ Totman, *Early Modern Japan*, 214.

⁷⁸ Kawai Atsushi, *Me kara ruroko no hnihonshi: koko made wakatta! tsūsetsu to shinjijitsu*, 113.

In contrast, today in English translations for teaching, it seems Bakin is clearly avoidable, if not impossible to get. Franco Moretti speaks of the “Slaughter House of Literature” in which most novels drop out of the canon and become scraps on the floor of literary history, destined to be forgotten.⁷⁹ The literary inversion cast Bakin aside. Saikaku, however, was rescued from the floor of literary history. A newly invented and reprinted Saikaku became the “traditional past,” as Bakin seemed to have faded from our view.

When viewed from the perspective of literature as “art” and the novel needing to represent “human emotions,” Bakin, ever the target of literary reformers, appears to fail as a modern novelist. So maybe it is only natural that his place in the canon should wane. Yet, there is a potentially under-appreciated aspect of this contrast between the modern reception of Saikaku and Bakin. Bakin represents another facet of the modern novel—his works count as some of the earliest products of mass production. The increasingly mechanized modes of print reproduction (and copyright reforms) in the 1880s and beyond increased Bakin’s saturation into the world of books. As mentioned above, for many Bakin’s widespread presence in print—both in terms of books he wrote and number of editions of them in print at the end of the century—were evidence of his greatness as an author.⁸⁰

Although Bakin was a target of negative evaluations by certain writers in the late 1880s and 1890s and his near absence from the English-language canon of Japanese

⁷⁹ Moretti, “The Slaughterhouse of Literature.”

⁸⁰ The gap between the mass-produced best sellers and artistic literature grew all the more pronounced in Japan across the first half of the twentieth century in the debates between pure literature and mass literature. This distinction between mass-produced literature and the often obscure, ephemeral works has roots in the Edo period and it grew more defined with mechanized printing in the Meiji period. With the return of popular and mass culture as an object of study over the last 20 plus years, Bakin again is becoming memorable. But until someone translates Bakin for use in the classroom, Saikaku will remain unforgettable and unavoidable.

literature, he never went away. Even Uchida Roan, who assumed the role of Kenyūsha's and Saikaku's bulldog in the 1890s when it came to attacking Bakin and defending Saikaku, later wrote of Bakin as an important cultural icon of Japan.

Bakin's writings, as discussed above, were widely criticized for their didactic tendencies and for describing humans according to fixed ideals. But rather than disqualifying Bakin from contemporary admiration, this moral focus is part of what made Bakin all the more loved and venerated even in the 1890s. It is important to keep in mind that Bakin's didacticism and the ideals about which he wrote were deeply rooted in scholarship and erudition. They were connected to the same modes of evidentiary scholarship (*kōshōgaku*) that Kangetsu enjoyed and which helped lead him to Saikaku. Many authors superficially scripted right and wrong and paid lip service to the idea of *kanzen chōaku*. But to readers of the day, Bakin was the real deal. His novels included deep explication of the philosophies and the poetic aesthetics behind *kanzen chōaku*. His historical research was tied to a didacticism that transcended simple narrative structures of the rewarding of good and punishment of evil. As a storyteller Bakin was highly respected, but his abilities as a scholar, historian, and philosopher (for lack of a better word) gave him social capital unavailable to most common writers.⁸¹

Bakin's stories such as *Shunden jitsujitsuki* 旬殿實々記 (1808-9), which include citations that identify such things as where his ideas of human nature originate,⁸² were

⁸¹ It is useful to visit the physical archive of reprints for a better understanding of Bakin's place as a scholar. Among Bakin's reprints are a number of collections of famous passages from his work, but, rather than containing just memorable events or scenes from his stories, these collections highlight his skill at composing prefaces, poetry, and moral treatises. For instance, *Bakin myōbunshū* 妙文集 of 1898 is a prime example of this type of erudite collection. It contains forty-three entries, including nineteen prefaces (five from *Eight Dogs*), and fourteen moral and historical discourses. They are written in Japanese, Classical Chinese, and Kanbun 漢文—or Sino-Japanese.

⁸² *Shunden jitsujitsuki* contains a passage on “the monkeys of the human mind” (*kokoro no saru* 心の猿), which provides an important clue for why readers enjoyed him. Like many of Bakin's stories, integrated

praised by his critics, including, Uchida Roan, even if much later. For instance, in 1928 Roan wrote: “Bakin is widely praised as a skillful historian and author, but more than his rough warrior tales he excels at ‘stories of human emotions’ [*ninjomono* 人情物]. More than the broad lines of history, he shows his skill in *Nanka no yume* 南柯之夢 and *Shunden jitsujitsuki* where he draws in fine lines the details of the human heart.”⁸³

Clearly, even later in his life, Roan could not forget Bakin and neither should we.

textual and historical citations invoke long-standing debates about morality and human nature. This passage on the monkey in the human heart has multiple layers of intertextual meaning that move well beyond simple allusions.

“The monkey in the heart is conceived in the human realm and is born in ten months. An animal monkey is not like this (Confucian House Sayings: fifty-nine forty-five, five makes the most noise; five is the most noisy so it is the monkey. Monkeys for that reason are born in five months). ... Some say it is good but is easily drawn to evil (Mencius’s theory). Others say it is evil but can return to goodness (Xun Zi’s theory).” Quoted in Kyokutei Bakin, “Kokoro no saru no ben,” <http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/879428/1>.

On the surface, this passage is a discourse about the follies of the human heart, but between the lines, we are introduced into debates in Chinese philosophy about the innate nature of humans. In the various citations and quotes Bakin gives depth to his moral discourse and intellectual excitement to his readers. Through citing evidence and quotations from books in this manner, Bakin shows that he is also a man of letters and scholarship, in addition to being a mere storyteller. This focus on his erudition is not to say that Bakin’s stories were not popular as narratives. Bakin’s stories were famous, particularly, for the scenes of epic battles and heroic fighting. In short, Bakin had a wide readership that often had different reasons for liking him. This helped preserve a broad base of literary consumers and fans.

⁸³Uchida Roan, “Hakkenden yōdan,” http://www.aozora.gr.jp/cards/000165/files/47122_35991.html

Chapter IV: Mori Ōgai's Bookshelf

Toward the end of her life, Koganei Kimiko 小金井喜美子 (1870-1956), Mori Ōgai's 森鷗外 (1862-1922) younger sister, published a series of reminiscences about her late brother entitled *Ōgai no omoide* 鷗外の思ひ出 (My Memories of Ōgai). In one suggestive scene, she described the contents of Ōgai's bookshelf (circa 1884) when he would have been in his early twenties and before he went to Germany:

On one end of his bookshelf were Chinese books (*Tōhon* 唐本), such as *Sankoku shishū* 山谷詩集 [a poetry collection by Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅, (1045-1105)]; these were wrapped in folding book boxes. In the middle were Western books—mostly medical books. At the other end, were books such as *yomihon* by Bakin including *Hakkenden*, *Shimameguri no ki* 巡島記, *Yumiharizuki* 弓張月, and *Bishōnenroku* 美少年録.¹

Picture in your mind, if you will, Ōgai's bookshelf. Its contents lined up by language beginning on one side with texts written in Chinese, in the middle those in Western languages, and on the other end those in Japanese. Visualize their material format: Chinese books wrapped in folding boxes laying on their side; Western books with hard covers standing erect; and stacked on their sides, Japanese fiction with soft covers. This mixture of books, languages, and material formats gives us a glimpse into the diversity of the mid-Meiji-period (1868-1912) literary world. The division between language and national origin of texts, I should point out, is rather misleading in that such a separation obscures the interconnectedness and inter-textuality of these texts, particularly between Japanese language texts and those from China.

¹ Koganei Kimiko, *Ōgai no omohide*, 77..

There is something very important about the Edo-period works Koganei recalled seeing on Ōgai's shelf. Although some of the Edo-period Japanese fiction owned by Ōgai in the 1880s were Edo-period editions, a larger number were Meiji-period reprints, which he purchased new. So, while the words and stories were from the past, the format, layout, and materiality of the books were objects of the present and reflected 1880s literary expectations and technologies of book production and textual layout. That is to say, they were products of the Meiji period printing industry and not a direct reflection of the labor of Edo-period authors, publishers, or illustrators. These texts traveled across time, were reproduced according to the rules of an ever-changing literary field, and were consumed alongside both old and new imported texts.

The mixed temporalities of books Koganei recalls seeing raises a series of questions that this chapter examines through analyzing Ōgai's marginalia in books on his 1884 bookshelf as well as those added to his later literary collection: How do variations in textual production and reproduction provide insight into the mid-Meiji literary field? How did an individual reader respond to textual transformations that occurred during the reprinting process? What can we learn from Ōgai's interactions with past texts that will help us better contextualize new literary developments in the 1880s?

First, this chapter situates Ōgai as a young reader, discussing how he purchased many of his books. Next, it looks at how Ōgai responded to a specific instance of textual fragmentation (a missing table of contents) in a copy of a story by Bakin, arguing that even this seemingly utilitarian paratext was, to this young reader, an important site of literary interest and appreciation. Third, it looks at a larger phenomenon of commercially published collections of prefaces from novels, suggesting that prefaces were a key site for

judging authorial prowess and erudition. Finally, it returns to Ōgai's reading of Tsubouchi Shōyō's 1885 essay on the novel, *Shōsetsu shinzui*, and identifies a plurality of novelistic essences that appealed to Ōgai.

More broadly, this chapter discusses the phenomenon of textual fragmentation during the reprinting process. A fractured or divided text points to multiple avenues of reception and sites of literary interest. This fracturing occurs when various subtexts (prefaces, illustrations, as well as extended narratives) are given a new position and function when reprinted. As discussed below, during the Meiji period prefaces and illustrations in certain reprints became the main or central text. Conversely, in other reprints prefaces and illustrations disappeared. This chapter explores how this fracturing reveals the ambiguous boundaries between the paratext and the main text. In so doing it argues that the target of literary appreciation and consumption was more broad and diverse than novel-centric literary studies assume.

English-language historical studies of textual reception on this period of discursive and material change focus at the levels of institutions, genres, and new books of "modern literature." The missing perspective is what happened at the sub-book level of reprints. The modern conception of literature assumes that, in prose fiction at least, the extended written narrative is the main or central text. While this narrative-centric conception recognizes the paratextual framing utility of subtexts—including images, prefaces, titles, tables of contents, and the various pennames of authors—it assumes they are secondary to and derivative of the central narrative.² As we will see below, however, in reprints of Edo-period fiction the written narrative as the central text was only one of many possible and actual textual relationships populating the Meiji world of print.

² See Suzuki Sadami, *Nihon no 'bungaku' gainen*.

On a micro level, within the covers of individual books, Ōgai's bookshelf is instructive, reminding us that in the 1880s the very notion of the "main" literary text was not yet fixed and publishers, as well as readers, were negotiating the boundaries and relationship between main texts and paratexts. Moreover, this generation of readers read texts in a plurality of ways and for multiple reasons, as evidenced by their interactions with different parts and pieces (subtexts) of the texts.

Books of Edo-period fiction are made of several subtexts—tables of contents, introductions, titles and secondary titles, images, page numbers, and long narratives (stories). Although these various sub-texts are bound within the same book and share the same material home, they are not equal tenants therein. In 1880s Japan, distinctions between the paratextual and the main text were neither universal nor uncontested. Extended narratives, images, frontispieces (*kuchi-e* 口絵), prefaces and introductions (*jo* 序), and tables of content—each according to the needs of the publisher, editor, or reader—became a "main" text in reprinting, reading, and in manuscript copies (*shahon* 写本).

When we look at Meiji-period reprints of Edo works, we should pause to remember that these various subtexts were once united in the material object of the Edo-period book although they were arguably treated differently according to the needs and abilities of their various readerships. However, the technological changes in printing and book production in the late nineteenth century created a space where editors and publishers advanced one or more subtexts over others through editing and publishing, thereby creating a plurality of "reproductions" each of which showed traces of shifting boundaries between the "main texts" and the paratextual.

For instance, Takagi Gen, writing about Edo-period fiction, argues that the content and orthography of some prefaces made them inaccessible to all but the most educated of readers, apart from their visual force, while images and the extended narratives, especially when read out loud, were the most accessible.³ As Meiji period publishers experimented with new book formats and textual layouts, they privileged one sub-text or another. Competing hierarchies for valuing different sub-texts led to a fracturing or scattering of the sub-texts from each other in print. In Meiji-period reprints of Edo literature we find editions that only reproduce the extended narrative, leaving out the prefaces, tables of contents, or images. For example, a collection of Bakin's stories, *Kyokutei Bakin ō sōsho* 曲亭馬琴翁叢書 published in 1889 by Ginkadō 銀花堂, contains only the narratives, a few scant illustrations (all newly produced) and no prefaces.⁴

Surprisingly enough, in contrast to this kind of narrative-centric reprint, there are also collections of only prefaces by Bakin and others presented without the extended narratives with which they first appeared. These include the 1879 *Haishi sandaika bunshū* 稗史三大家文集 published by Hagiwara Otohiko (1826-1886)⁵ and the 1878 *Kyokutei Bakin gesaku jobunshū* 曲亭馬琴戲作序文集 edited by Watanabe Hakuō 渡部白鷗 (?-?).⁶ We also find collections of picture books (*ehon* 絵本) that contain neither extended narratives, nor prefaces. A striking example is an 1888 edition of Bakin's *Yumiharizuki*. This edition, entitled *Ehon chinsetsu yumiharizuki* 絵本椿説弓張月, does not have a single word of the story but only a selection of sixteen images and illustrations

³Takagi Gen, "Kinsei goki shosetsu jyuuyōshi shikiron-Meiji no jyobun myōbun wo meguru," 83-84.

⁴ Takizawa Bakin, Nomura Ginjirō, *Bakin ō sōsho*.

⁵ Santō Kyōden, *Kyokutei Bakin, Shikitei Sanba, Haishi sandaika bunshū*.

⁶ Takizawa Bakin, Watanabe Hakuō, *Kyokutei Bakin gesaku jōbun shū*.

from the text by Katsushika Hokusai 葛飾北斎 (1760-1849).⁷

In discussing the historiography of books, Leslie Howsam suggests, "All copies of a modern book are, roughly speaking, the same, which makes it possible to generalize; but no two editions are identical, and each reveals the fingerprints of its manufactures and its consumers."⁸ Each modern printing run produced an ever larger number of texts that, while identical to each other, were markedly different from previous editions. Different editions of books—that is to say reprints—have a diachronic disunity. According to Jerome McGann, embedded within reprinted texts and their material packages are the "bibliographic codes" of that particular generation of book producers and consumers.⁹ The codes contained in reprints produced during the 1880s help us make sense of that decade.

By looking at reprints as independent literary productions and embracing the new perspective they offer on literary history, we can reject the notion that a text belongs to a single age and question the idea of homogenous reproducibility of a text over time and across space. In so doing, however, we must simultaneously move beyond focusing only on what is gained or lost in the text, which is often an important first step, and instead seek to understand what changes suggested about the functionality of and social position of texts in their new context. By analyzing how Edo-period literary texts were altered during reprinting in the Meiji period, we can begin to trace the impact of technological shifts and changing conceptions of literature. Ōgai's collection gives us the added insight of seeing how one young reader responded to these shifts.

⁷ Katsushika Hokusai, *Ehon chinsetu yumiharizuki*. The publisher Haneda Ken 羽田賢 is a now an otherwise unknown person of samurai background from Mie.

⁸ Howsam, "What is the Historiography of Books?: Recent Studies in Authorship, Publishing and Reading in Modern Britain and North America," 1089-101.

⁹ See McGann, *The Textual Condition*.

Ōgai's Bookshelf

On Ōgai's bookshelf we find glimpses of personal book ownership and evidence of textual interactions that can help us begin to make sense of the eclectic sphere of mid-Meiji literature where so many different literary forms, both high and low, Eastern and Western, new and old, could exist in the same place. This diversity should remind us that our understanding of this complex literary sphere remains incomplete if we fail to give each literary form, language, and material book format its place on our collective bookshelf of literary history.

Ōgai died in 1922, and after the 1923 Great Kanto earthquake, his family donated his book collection to the Tokyo Imperial University Library. The donation as donated shows the sheer volume of books he amassed; it consisted of 15,924 booklets in Chinese and Japanese and 2,681 books in Western languages.¹⁰ We do not know how or when each of these titles came into Ōgai's possession or, necessarily, when he wrote his marginalia in them. Surprisingly enough, however, through tracing publication dates and looking at Ōgai's marginalia, we can find in this collection some of the texts that would have been on his bookshelf in 1884, including ones matching the descriptions given by Koganei.

Koganei mentions only the titles of a few books on Ōgai's bookshelf and only the name of one Japanese author, Kyokutei Bakin. Rather than signaling the limits of Ōgai's collection, however, we should remember that the name of Bakin and his most famous texts— especially *Hakkenden*—often function in literary discourse as metonyms for the whole of Edo and early-Meiji period narratives written in Japanese.

¹⁰ Tokyo University Library, "Ōgai bunko ni tsuite," <http://rarebook.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ogai/ogai.html>.

Although not specifically mentioned by Koganei, one text from Ōgai's collection most likely on his bookshelf in 1884 was a copy of Bakin's *Beibei kyōdan* 皿々郷談 (hometown story of Kakezara and Bennizara).¹¹ *Beibei kyōdan*, which was initially published in 1813, was modeled on three works: the noh play *Tōsen* 唐船 (Chinese Ship); the folk tale of *Sarasarayama* 皿皿山 (The Two Plates of the Mountains); and *Ochikubo monogatari* 落窪物語 (The Tale of Ochikubo). The edition of *Beibei kyōdan* that Ōgai owned, and which is now held in the Ōgai Collection at Tokyo University Library, was a reprint from 1883 released by the publisher Kokkeidō 滑稽堂.

Understanding how this and other books arrived on Ōgai's bookshelf offers an important insight into mid-Meiji publishing. The reprint market for Edo period fiction depended on transforming book borrowers, who typically got books from the lending libraries, into book owners with their own private collection. Koganei describes how Ōgai purchased a portion of his books as follows:

These were *yoyakubon* 予約本 [subscription publications]; bound in Japanese-style side-stitched bindings with their names written beautifully on the trim. They were piled up on top of each other. Their covers were each a different color, but they were done in non-ornamental, plain paper. Since these texts were really popular at the time, they were published in large numbers. But after that time these types of books weren't even found in used bookshops. I wonder what happened to all of these pre-order subscription books that were on his bookshelf? We moved several times, and then at some point they were gone.¹²

The young Ōgai seems to have been an ideal target for this type of *yoyaku* publication: a youth with some money who wanted to own personal copies of books.

The Meiji period economist, Taguchi Ukichi 田口卯吉(1855-1905)¹³ explains that subscription-based publication, *yoyaku shuppan* 予約出版, was a way for publishers to

¹¹ Kyokutei Bakin, *Beibei kyōdan: zen*.

¹² Koganei Kimiko, *Ōgai no omohide*, 78.

¹³ Also known as Teiken 鼎軒.

collect from their readers an investment, in advance, to cover printing costs. Many publishing houses lacked the capital resources requisite to first print a book and then wait for the copies to sell to recoup their costs. To avoid this problem, publishers started pre-selling books before publication. In 1885, Taguchi reminisced that as soon as the practice of canvassing for subscriptions began, it became widely used. "It even reached the point that small books, which publishers were actually [financially] able to print" were being sold through subscriptions. This led to a boom in advertisements for books in newspapers and magazines. Taguchi reasons that "since the prices were lower and the titles seemed interesting a great number of people responded to these advertisements [and ordered books]." ¹⁴

Although we cannot know for sure, most likely Ōgai purchased his 1883 edition of *Beibei kyōdan* by subscription. This 1883 edition was done in three booklets with movable type, compared to the Edo period editions, which were divided into eight booklets and printed with woodblocks. ¹⁵ Although the format and means of production were different, this 1883 edition included reproductions of the illustrations, prefaces, and the complete extended narrative as found in the initial publication.

One seemingly minor difference from the initial publication in terms of content, however, was that this 1883 edition lacked a *mokuroku* 目録 (table of contents). ¹⁶ This absence of a *mokuroku* may seem insignificant to us today; as long as the main story is

¹⁴ Quoted in Sugimura Takeshi, *Kindai Nihon daishuppan jigyōshi*, 231-32.

¹⁵ Ōgai bound these three volumes into a single book. In fact, according to Koganei, rebinding multiple booklets into a single volume was a habit of his. She writes, "My older brother (Ōgai) would always stack together and bind the booklets [from a story] into one book; then, he would attach a cover on it. But, my other older brother (Miki) thought the books were hard to handle in that format, so he would separate them. This was always a source of contention between them" Koganei Kimiko, *Ōgai no omohide*, 44.

¹⁶ See Kyokutei Bakin, *Beibei kyōdan: zen*.

intact, why need we worry about the lack of such a seemingly minor paratext? ¹⁷

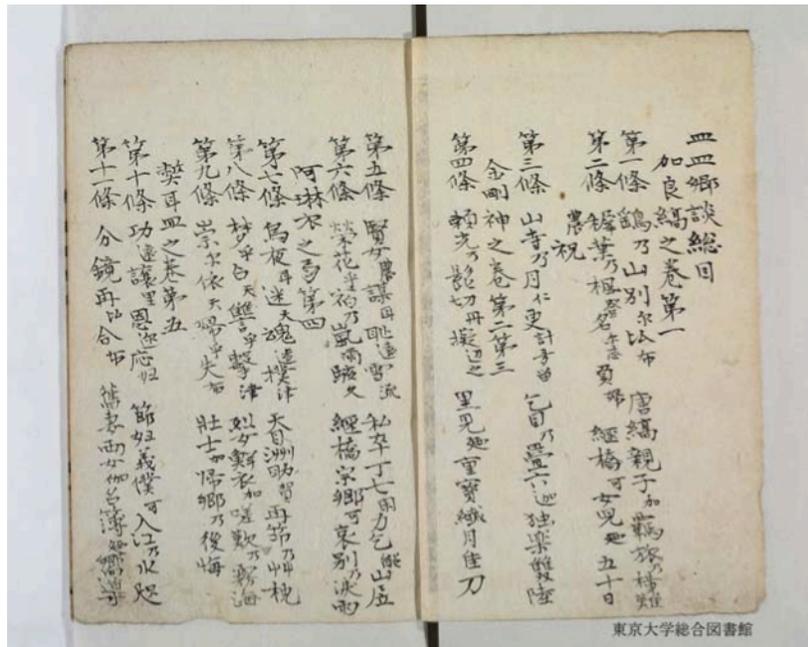


Figure IV-1 Ōgai's Table of Contents for *Beibei kyōdan*

Suggestively, however, Ōgai felt this omission of a table of contents in his copy of *Beibei kyōdan* was significant enough that it needed to be rectified. So, he compiled his own *mokuroku*. It is unclear whether he copied from another edition or if he used the chapter introductions included in his 1883 copy. Either way, Ōgai produced a table in structure and content more or less identical to ones found in earlier editions.¹⁸ He then bound this table of contents into his copy of the book (Figure IV-1 and Figure IV-2).¹⁹

¹⁷ Gérard Genette defines the paratext as those productions that reinforce and accompany the main text and, by so doing present and introduce it to the reader. For Genette tables of contents were one of many paratexts. See Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*.

¹⁸ Kyokutei Bakin, *Beibei kyōdan: zen*. Please note, two lines (chapters 12 and 13) are slightly different from tables of contents found in the 1859 edition.

¹⁹ Kyokutei Bakin, *Beibei kyōdan: zen*. Accessible at:
http://rarebook.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ogai/data/E24_337/0003_m.html
http://rarebook.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ogai/data/E24_337/0004_m.html

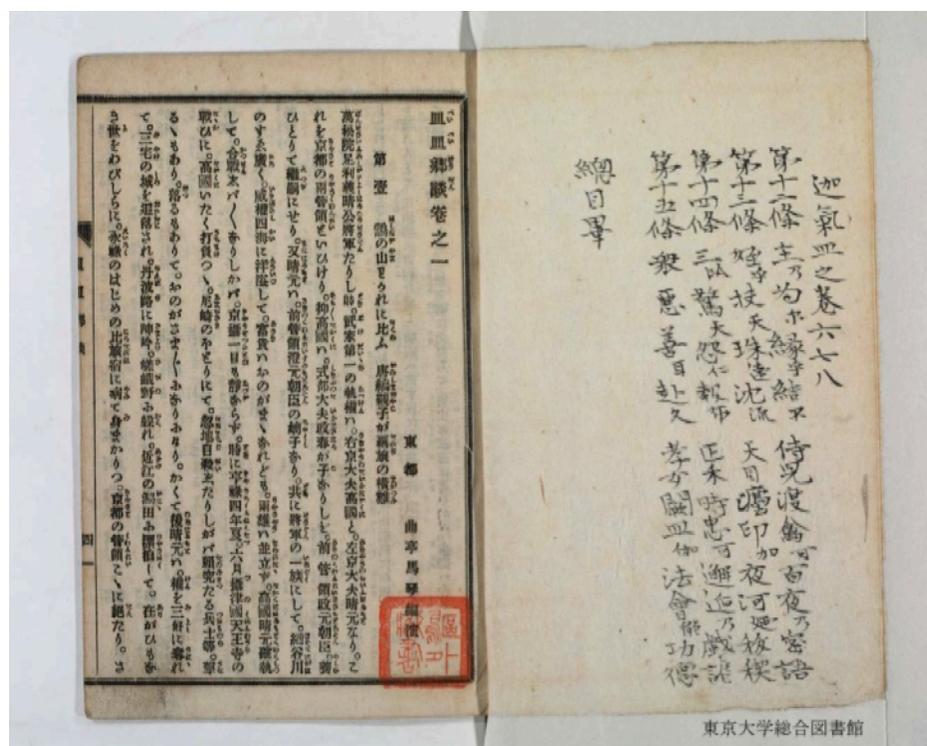


Figure IV-2 Ōgai's Table of Contents for *Beibei kyōdan* Continued

When we compare Ōgai's table of contents with earlier woodblock-printed versions (Figure IV-3), several differences are apparent. These become evident when Ōgai's table of contents is compared with a copy of the table of contents from an 1858 edition published by Gunkiyokudō 羣玉堂.²⁰ This 1858 edition is a re-carving (*hokoku* 補刻) of the 1829 edition and, therefore, is a good representation of earlier editions. Yet, this woodblock-printed table of contents clearly contains more information than Ōgai's table in that it provides the complete Japanese phonetic reading for each chapter's descriptive title.

Ōgai's table contains only the *okurigana* 送り仮名 phonetic markers to show particles and the inflected verb endings. Ōgai also chose to write these phonetic markers in *man'yōgana* 万葉仮名 rather than the running hiragana script we see in the 1858 edition.

²⁰ Kyokutei Bakin, *Beibei kyōdan: zen*. Accessible at <http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/he13/he13_00196/index.html>.

Despite these differences, when read out loud the chapter introductions in these two editions would sound the same as the following passage illustrates:

1858 mokuroku (Figure IV-3)²¹

だいいちでふ 第一條 はしたか やま 鶴 の山わかれに たくら 比ふ からしまおやこ 唐綺親子 が たびち まがつみ 羈旅の横難

Ōgai's 1883 mokuroku (Figure IV-1)²²

第一條 鶴乃山尔別比布 唐綺親子加羈旅乃横難

Chapter One: Comparable to the fledgling hawk, leaving its mountain home, a mother and child suffer on their journey's road.

These chapter titles in *Beibei kyōdan*, written by Bakin, are brief two-line summaries of the events in each section. These descriptions provide important interpretive clues for reading the text. Before chapter one begins, for instance, the chapter title introduces and provides a framework for interpreting the state of the young girl and her journey with her mother. When assembled in a list, moreover, as in a *mokuroku*, these chapter introductions indirectly present a way to rapidly read events of the story. Perhaps this

²¹ Kyokutei Bakin, *Beibei kyōdan: zen*.

²² Kyokutei Bakin, *Beibei kyōdan*.

utilitarian function is what Ōgai was after.

The image shows two pages of a handwritten table of contents for 'Beibei kyōdan'. The right page is headed '加良編之巻 第一' (Volume 1, Chapter 1) and lists chapters 1 through 5. The left page is headed '加計之巻 第六' (Volume 6, Chapter 6) and lists chapters 6 through 15. Each entry includes a chapter number, a title, and a brief description or reference.

Chapter Number	Title	Description/Reference
第一條	鶴の山子と比山	唐鶴親子の鬮旋の横難
第二條	稚葉の楓とあふ	徳橋の女児の五十日の祝
第三條	山寺の月とあはする	乞目の登六ヶ独楽饗陸
○金剛神之巻 第二		
第四條	頼者の髪切と投下	里見の重宝 鐵月住刀
第五條	賢女謀と取を奪は	私本丁七ヶ力乞の山居
第六條	采華と宿の嵐と敷	徳橋宗輝ヶ哀別の涙雨
○阿珠衣之巻 第四		
第七條	鳥夜と遠く懸た接	天目淵助ヶ再杖の草枕
第八條	夢と白くと伏ぐ撃	郷女輝衣ヶ嘆嘆の霧海
第九條	崇とく毒を喜ふ	萬春良雄ヶ帰郷の後悔
○葵途之巻 第五		
第十條	功ハ謬り思ふ茶ハ	節婦義僕ヶ入江の水足
第十一條	分後ぬくひ合	舊妻両女ヶ名簿 御事
○加計之巻 第六		
第十二條	主のる赤地 添ふ	侍児渡鳥ヶ百夜の密語
第十三條	姫を佐 美を此る	天目法印ヶ夜川の秘殺
第十四條	三ヶ心戦と怨蔵	正未時忠ヶ逢途の戲謔
第十五條	哀思とる 怨蔵	孝女 缺血ヶ法會の功德

Figure IV-3 Bakin's Table of Contents to *Beibei kyōdan*

Unlike our current tables of contents, which list page numbers and chapter titles, the *mokuroku* found in the early editions of *Beibei kyōdan* also give booklet numbers rather than page or leaf numbers. But, as I mentioned above, Ōgai's copy was published in only three booklets (*satsu* 冊), which he, in turn, rebound into one single booklet. Nevertheless, as part of his table of contents Ōgai also copied the numbers showing how the chapters were distributed in the original eight booklets. Thus, the information contained in the *mokuroku* compiled by Ōgai actually points us away from his 1883 edition towards an absent *urtext* from the Edo period and its materiality.

Although it is possible that for Ōgai this *mokuroku* may simply have satisfied a utilitarian need by providing a way to indirectly read the story, there is also some evidence to suggest there is more at work here than only providing information. It is the

way this information is presented that seems important. For each chapter title in the 1858 edition, the first line highlights the Japanese language by using more hiragana readings and ending the phrase with grammatical inflections marked with *okurigana* 送り仮名. The second lines each include eight Chinese characters in octasyllabic stanzas with only minimal Japanese grammatical particles. Each Chinese stanza always ends with *furigana* readings and not phonetic endings (*okurigana*). This gives the second lines a strong Sino-Japanese flavor—a deliberate contrast with the more purely “Japanese” phrasing of the first line.

If we consider Ōgai’s interest in Chinese poetry (Koganei mentions one volume of Chinese poetry), we can find one additional clue as to why this table of contents was of potential value to him.²³ He understood the poetic conventions of tables of contents in China and Edo-period literature, especially those based on Ming-Qing fiction. Ōgai possibly saw in the *mokuroku* an independent poetic literary form, reflecting the mixed Sino-Japanese origins of Bakin’s source material for *Beibei kyōdan*. In the table of contents in *Beibei kyōdan*, at least the first nine²⁴ chapters’ introductory headings form three stanza groupings with a clear rhyming pattern that may be read as a type of poetry (See rhyming matrix in footnotes).²⁵ This rhyming pattern, however, would be nearly

²³ Koganei Kimiko, *Ōgai no omohide*, 77.

²⁴ The first nine chapters of *Beibei kyōdan* are based on the Noh play *Tōsen*, which is the story of a Chinese ship captain who is held in Japan. His two children come from China to seek permission for him to return. When permission is granted, the ship captain’s two Japan-born children want to go, too. When the Japanese children are not allowed to go, the captain throws himself into the sea in an unsuccessful attempt to commit suicide. This moves the Japanese authorities such that they let his Japanese children accompany him back to China.

²⁵ The following matrix lists the rhyme pattern for the last Chinese character (not Ōgai’s *Manyōgana*) in the bottom stanza of the table of contents for first nine chapters of *Beibei kyōdan*.

Chapter	Rhyme	Last kanji	On 音読	Middle Chinese	Pinyin (tone)
1	A	難	ナン	Nan 平	nan 2
2	B	祝	シュク	tsyuwK 入	zhu 4

impossible to discern, let alone enjoy, without reading these descriptive chapter titles assembled together into a *mokuroku*.

Although we cannot know for sure whether it was for utilitarian or aesthetic reasons, Ōgai recognized something in this missing *mokuroku* as an important part of the text that needed to be recovered; he sought to make his copy of the text whole—that is, composed of the same parts (subtexts) as found in earlier woodblock-printed versions.

In another case of textual fragmentation, however, Ōgai seemed less concerned about recovering missing subtexts, perhaps conceding that some types of textual fragmentation are unavoidable or, at least, less egregious than omitting a table of contents. At the end of a separate anecdote found in *Ōgai no omoide*, we find mention of a copy of a book that has lost its title, a seemingly key subtext. In Koganei’s account, we are taken to another bookshelf and an even-earlier collection of books belonging to Ōgai. Koganei recounts, “It was around the time I was ten [c. 1880], when we lived at Mukōjima 向島 [in Tokyo] and I had started attending primary school. One Sunday my older brother returned home from Hongō. He took out a book from a pile of books he kept on the shelves in the living room. . . .”²⁶ Their discussion turns to a book with a missing cover, worn with age. It highlights a different mode of passive or unintentional textual

3	B	陸	リク／ロク	ljuwk 入	lu 4
4	C	刀	トウ	Taw 平	dao 1
5	D	居	キョ／コ	Kjo 平	ju 4
6	D	雨	ウ	hjuX 上	yu 3
7	E	枕	チム／シム	tsyimX 上	zhen 3
8	F	海	カイ	xojX 上	hai 3
9	F	悔	カイ	xwojX 上	hui 3

²⁶ Koganei Kimiko, *Ōgai no omohide*, 30.

fragmentation than we saw in the first-half of this chapter and provides a humorous and accepting response by Ōgai, who is content to leave the book as is.

“Among the books he showed me was one that was very old; its front and back covers were torn off. It contained lists, which seemed to go on forever, of words that were appropriate for topics when composing *uta* 歌. “What’s the name of this book?” I asked. “Why should I care about its title?” He replied laughing, “The used bookseller threw this in for free!”²⁷

One can picture Ōgai, then just eighteen years old and still happy to get a free book even if it does not have a cover or if he does not know the name or provenance of the text.

Perhaps this book’s “price” outweighed any need to know its title. There also seems to have been a utilitarian side to this equation in that the lists in the book worked even if it did not have a title or cover. ‘Who cares as long as it still serves its purpose?’ Ōgai may well have asked. While Ōgai most likely proactively sought and purchased his edition of *Beibei kyōdan* before it was even published, this nameless book fell into his hands by chance; so, he had lower expectations for the book and how it should be read. Instead of concern for fixing it, he seems happy just to have it.

Based on the book’s age, most likely, this unknown book was woodblock-printed and had a long life before it came into Ōgai’s hands. The loss of title and cover represents a different trajectory of textual fragmentation than what happened with his missing table of contents to Ōgai’s copy of *Beibei Kyōdan*. Since the information for the table of contents for *Beibei Kyōdan* was available readily enough for even a young reader such as Ōgai to make his own and, similarly, the technology needed to print the table was also not an obstacle to its reproduction, it seems the publisher chose to willfully exclude the table of contents without reason. Even though we do not know why, it is clear the table of contents was actively truncated and excluded due to a choice made by an editor or

²⁷ Koganei Kimiko, *Ōgai no omohide*, 30-31.

publisher. In contrast to the missing table of contents, this nameless poetry manual highlighted by Koganei's account seems to have fragmented inadvertently and passively through wear associated with its age.²⁸

Ōgai's table of contents and his book with a missing cover and title raises an important question for literary history: how do we determine which sub-texts are merely paratext that is derivative or superfluous to the main text, and which sub-texts are part of independent literary productions?

Genealogies of Fragmentation

As discussed in the first half of this chapter, the reprinting process in the last few decades of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century often allowed one or more subtexts to be excluded from a reprinted book. Mori Ogai's extensive marginalia in his copy of *Beibei kyōdan* point toward a desire to recover what is missing and to approximate as closely as possible the text as it existed, or was imagined to exist, in an Edo-period *urtext*. In contrast to Ogai's rejection of this fragmentation and his recovery efforts, there are numerous examples of subtexts being republished in formats that seem to make such recovery of an *urtext* impossible. These fragmented reprints suggest that, rather than seeking for a potentially recoverable whole, publishers recognized in readers a desire for access to specific parts of the text, e.g. images, extended as well as partial narratives, prefaces, or moral commentaries. That is to say, based on the number of different fragmented editions of texts, readers warmly welcomed the opportunity to

²⁸ Most likely, because the book was printed with xylography, the title of the book was originally included between the "fish tails" on the fold line of each page. It is possible that these were worn to the point of illegibility through use. At any rate, Ōgai did not seem, according to Koganei's account, concerned about its title, even if he did know it.

consume texts a la carte.

There are patterns of subtextual fragmentation during reprinting. These patterns reveal a range of modalities in which publishers were producing texts. More importantly, from the perspective of literary reception, these patterns also direct us to potential sites of reader's interactions with texts. It is possible to create a genealogy (or taxonomy) of textual fragmentation. Genealogy does not mean inheritance, where one text is the parent of another, but the emergence of related groups that develop over time. These groups suggest commercially recognized and targeted genres or modes of reception and reproduction.

What does such a genealogy help us to understand about competing modes of reception? In an attempt to answer that question, this section of the chapter will follow theoretical and methodological arguments specifically "distant reading" and the use of "trees" to visualize literary data, put forth by Franco Moretti. Rather than "close reading," Moretti suggests using distant reading: new skills of "sampling; statistical work; work with series, titles, concordances, incipits—and perhaps 'trees'" ²⁹ These new skills are in the inventory of the distant reading toolbox, but the goal of this reading method is to account for hundreds of books when writing literary histories. In this section, I trace the reproduction and reprinting of books during the 1880s, asking what the formal properties of reprints, when looked at over time, tell us about emerging channels of textual reception and reproduction.

It must be noted, however, that this study takes a rather liberal view of reprints, in that it ignores distinctions between a "sacrosanct" original and its offspring. In addition to multiple editions of the "same" text, I include piratic rewrites such as digests by other

²⁹ Moretti, "The Slaughterhouse of Literature," 208-09.

authors, summaries, and excerpting as legitimate forms of “reprinting,” so long as the text identifies itself as being the original, a substitution, or a point of access to some part of the original. Arguably, the most secretive of plagiarist or imitator, to use a nicer word, was responding to the popularity of the “original,” providing not just their interpretation of the text but, more importantly, their interpretation regarding how readers might want to interact with the text. For this reason, rewrites (digests and picture books) are treated as reprints and represent legitimate modes of reception—ways in which readers embraced and experienced the text.

The goal is to see how various modes of reception/reproduction deviate from each other and from previous formats. Franco Moretti suggests the use of “trees,” such as Darwin’s tree of life, are fruitful for representing patterns of divergence. These “evolutionary trees,” as Moretti writes, “constitute *morphological* diagrams, where history is systematically correlated with form.”³⁰ In our case, the form in question is that of books. In such a tree of reprints the vertical axis could be the passage of time and the horizontal axis charts “formal diversification that will lead to ‘well marked varieties,’ or to entirely new species.”³¹ Perhaps this tree will also, as Moretti suggests, allow us to see new patterns of generic formation.

The following graph (Figure IV-4) shows a “tree” delineating the fragmentation of production/reception of Bakin’s “Eight Dogs.” “Eight Dogs” was published piecemeal from 1814 through 1849, containing ninety-eight chapters, and was printed in 106 booklets (*satsu* 冊). The data for this tree was culled from a survey of two digital archives: The National Diet Library’s Kindai Digital Library (近代デジタルライブラリ

³⁰ Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models For A Literary History*, 69.

³¹ Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models For A Literary History*, 69.

一; twenty-seven reprints from the years 1879-1893) and Japanese and Chinese Classics archive at Waseda University Library (古典籍総合データベース; fifty records for “八犬伝” from 1814-1881). “Eight Dogs” was chosen because it has numerous copies preserved in archives, suggesting that it was reprinted enough to allow us to see a more or less complete range of patterns of textual receptions and fragmentation of a single text, or at least more modes than in the case of other less popular titles. This graph provides a general outline of modes of reception and reproduction, which will allow us to situate the various formats of other less-widely reproduced texts.

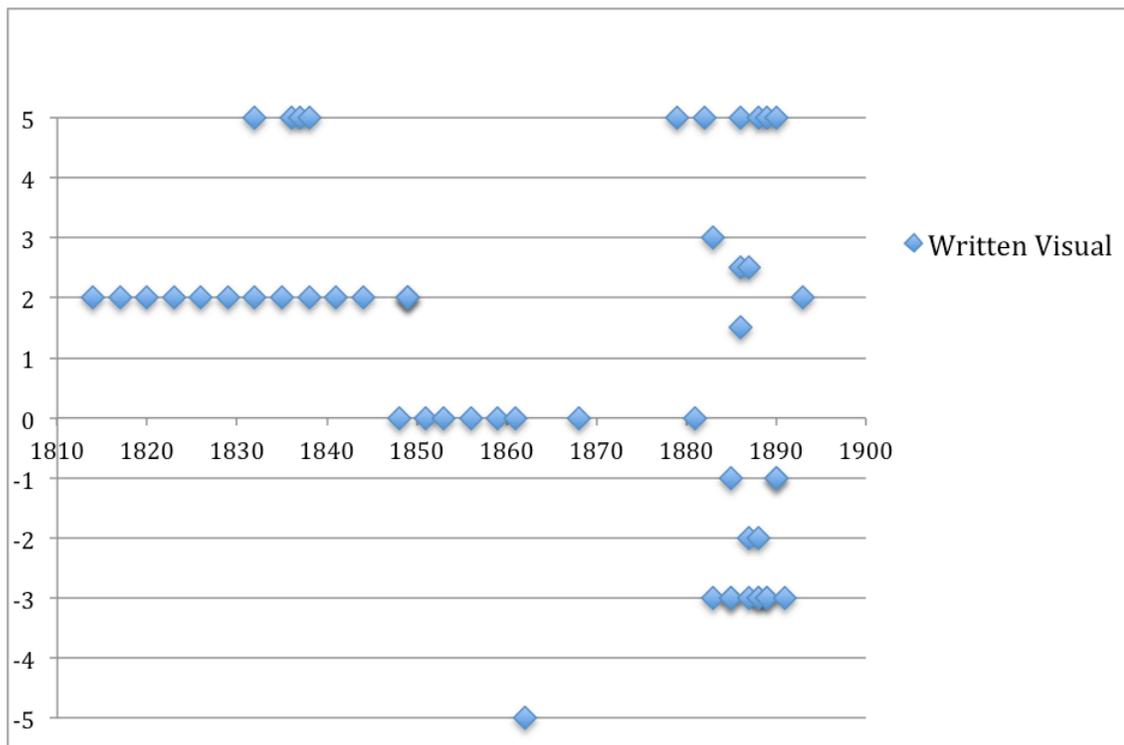


Figure IV-4 Written (+) and Visual (-) Spectrum for Reprints of *Eight Dogs*

The trunk of this tree is the line of dots at number positive two on the graph; the trunk line begins with the initial publication of “Eight Dogs” in 1814.³² The branches of the tree are the lines and dots on numbers other than two. This tree shows at least four

³² This “trunk” continues through at least the 1880s, when reprints with movable type are first made, but the archives do not have precise enough printing information to fill in the chart.

clear branches of reception. In this tree, the branches divide according to the balance between the “visual text” and “written text” in the reprinted editions. The “written text” is defined to include the extended narratives, epigraphs, tables of contents, and prefaces. The “visual text” is composed of inserted illustrations (*sashie* 挿絵), frontispieces (*kuchi-e* 口絵), and highly-stylized calligraphy. I analyzed each reprint and assigned it a score (0-5) for each its visual (V) and written (W) elements. Then I calculated the difference (D) between its written score and its visual score by subtracting the visual score from the written one (W-V). This results in a possible range of scores between positive five (entirely composed of written text, e.g. only the written narrative) and negative five (entirely composed of “visual” texts, e.g., a picture books with no words). Initial printings of “Eight Dogs,” were assigned a written score of five (w=5) and a visual score of three (v=3); their differential score equaled positive two (+2). This means that although the text had a strong written narrative, numerous prefaces, evidentiary asides, and tables of contents, it also had a relatively high number of visual components—primarily illustrations, frontispieces, and stylized calligraphy.

The first major “branch,” at the top of the tree, consists of collections of critical essays on “Eight Dogs” such as the *Hakkenden kyōkakuden hyōtō* 八犬伝俠客伝評判 (1832, manuscript)³³ and the *Hakkenden Jōsui kun hyō* 八犬伝壘翠君評 (1836-7, manuscript).³⁴ These evaluative manuscripts contain discussions of the aesthetics, morals, and historiography in “Eight Dogs” and are an under-studied window into contemporary discourse on the text. They contain only written text and no visual elements; therefore, I assigned them a score of five (D5).

³³ Kimura Michiaki, Ozu Keiso, Tonomura Yasumori, Takizawa Bakin, *Hakkenden kyōkakuden hyōtō*

³⁴ Ishikawa Jōsui, Takizawa Bakin, *Hakkenden Jōsui kun hyō*

The next branch, to the bottom of the trunk, represents a series of illustrated *gōkan* digests of “Eight Dogs” by famous authors including Ryūtei Tanehiko the second 柳亭種彦 (1806-1868), Tamenaga Shunsui 為永春水 (1818-1886), and Kanagaki Robun 仮名垣魯文 (1829-1894).³⁵ Tanehiko’s *Inu no sōshi* 犬の草紙 (1848-1866), for instance, increased the visuality of the rendition by adding images to every page, which were surrounded by text. This type of illustrated book—an object to view and read—was quite different from the *yomihon* (literally “books to read”) version of “Eight Dogs.”³⁶

As the tree shows, between 1879 and 1893 reprints of “Eight Dogs” received scores ranging from positive five to negative three. Low positive scores, closer to that of the initial printing, preserved the visual/written balance.

Reprints with negative scores are picture books or *ehon* 絵本. Unlike the *gōkan* versions, these picture books contain scant written texts, mostly descriptions or famous lines of dialog, but otherwise are entirely composed of images. An example of this genre is the 1873 *E-hon hakkenden* 絵本八犬伝 (Picture Book of Eight Dogs) by Shimamura Yoshimatsu 島村吉松 (dates unknown).³⁷ This picture book (Figure IV-5) contained only eight pages (chō 丁) but just six contained pictures and brief descriptions of the characters.³⁸

³⁵ See for instance Tamenaga Shunsui, *Kanayomi hakkenden*; Kanagaki Robun, *Kanayomi hakkenden*.

³⁶ Ryūtei Tanehiko, *Inu no sōshi*.

³⁷ Shimamura Yoshimatsu, *E-hon hakkenden*

³⁸ Shimamura Yoshimatsu, *E-hon hakkenden* 6.



Figure IV-5 Shimamura Yoshimatsu's *Picture Book of Eight Dogs*

Although this relative distribution between the visual and the written might strike a reader of the 1870s as unusual, it well reflects many of the issues in modern literary scholarship about this time. Traditional literary histories, with their logo-centric view of literature, often speak of a general move away from the visual towards the written. This visual-written tree points to the need to account for simultaneous developments in the production and reproduction of both visual and written texts.

In nineteenth-century Japan the hierarchy between the visual—specifically images or *ga* 画—and the words was not fixed, but it was clearly not logo-centric. For Shiba Kōkan 司馬江漢 (1747?-1818) one of the main attractions of Western copper plate images was that they transcended the words in providing meaning. Writing about Dutch anatomy and biological texts, he says that the diagrams are “exquisitely detailed, indeed approaching true reality. It is quite difficult to translate the accompanying explanatory

writing into Japanese, but if one proceeds by looking at the diagrams and thinking hard, often the meaning of the words will come through.”³⁹ For literature, as well, images often played as important a role for conveying meaning as the written stories. Although images were often considered a plaything of “women and children” (i.e., the uneducated), as the quote from Kōkan reminds us, even the most educated of men also drew meaning from images.

How could a few images and brief character descriptions from a text such as “Eight Dog’s” satisfy readers enough to warrant so many competing *e-hon* editions? One part of this answer lies in what we can call the social text, that is the text as it exists within the mind of the readers. Although inaccessible to us, we need to keep in mind this largely invisible social glue of expectations and ideas circulating about texts. This social text helped hold these dispersant reprints together as all part of “Eight Dogs.” Reading for both the young and the old was often a more social act. *Ehon* most likely were a temporary supplement to reading or alternative to rereading the larger story that would have been conveyed to them through communal reading of the original or verbal retelling of the story.

Reprints with a score of positive five, those comprised of entirely written text, are primarily excerpts of famous passages and prefaces. For instance, these reprints of “Eight Dogs” include the 1879 *Haishi sandaika bunshu* 稗史三大家文集 by Hagiwara Otohiko 萩原乙彦. This collection of prefaces by Bakin, Santō Kyōden, and Shikitei Sanba begins with the preface from “Eight Dogs.”⁴⁰

³⁹ Shiba, "Seiyoga Dan [Discussion of Western Painting]," 179-80.

⁴⁰ See Santō Kyōden, Kyokutei Bakin, Shikitei Sanba, *Haishi sandaika bunshū*.

Prefaces Unto Themselves

Continuing the discussion of textual fragmentation and circulation of subtexts, the following section considers the collection and publication of collections of prefaces. This section addresses the question of what the practices of collecting and publishing collections of prefaces tell us about textual interactions and reading. The idea of a collection of prefaces may seem counterintuitive, particularly when the role of a preface suggests “words spoken beforehand.” Takagi Gen points out that “the format of prefaces provides a special discursive space that is independent from the main narrative.”⁴¹ Collections of prefaces suggest this independent space was an important site of literary discourse and intellectual imagination even in the Meiji period.

Takagi notes that prefaces in Edo period fiction are modeled on Chinese fiction. Prefaces began appearing in *yomihon* and other Sino-centric literary forms that were translations of or reworkings of texts of Chinese fiction, but they soon spread to become nearly ubiquitous in Edo fiction regardless of the social position of the texts. Prefaces even appeared in melodramatic fiction, such as *ninjōbon* 人情本, and humorous fiction *kokkeibon* 滑稽本. Takagi asserts that the spread of prefaces is a rather unexpected development, particularly in those literary forms that are aimed at a more general—less erudite readership—and those that have images at the core of their narrative mechanisms.

Takagi speculates that prefaces such as those done in *kanbun*, and the like, were written in a highly-stylized calligraphic script that could only be read by a very limited subset of readers. In fact, he asserts they were totally inaccessible to most of the readership. Based on quotes from Bakin, he claims many readers may have skipped over

⁴¹ Takagi Gen, "Kinsei goki shosetsu jyuuyōshi shikiron-Meiji no jyobun myōbun wo meguru," 83-84.

prefaces entirely as they moved on to the frontispieces. But Bakin was famously cantankerous and condescending to others, so he may have understated the potential readership for prefaces among what he considered the *hoi polloi*. Takagi reasons that prefaces lost their artistic and visually aesthetic functions as they came to be printed with movable type, eventually becoming, in effect, primarily a space for expression of authorial intentions and philosophies.

In the Edo period, collections of prefaces existed but remained largely in manuscript format. They were private collections of passages copied by erudite readers who could approach and appreciate the script and content of the prefaces. Collections of excerpts from scholarly writings have long existed in Japan, but the elevation of the texts of “frivolous writings,” or *gesaku*, alerts us to the shifting social position of these texts and their authors across the nineteenth century.⁴²

The standard explanation concerning the practice of reading prefaces is that they were accessible to only a small fraction of readers because of their highly-stylized-calligraphic orthography and language. In this section, through exploring collections of prefaces, I problematize that standard explanation in two ways: First, I highlight a visual register of reading that valorized the role of calligraphy as an image-like site of signification. Second, by examining the different literary forms, I highlight the prevalence of prefaces that were clearly legible and, based on their orthography, suggest they were designed to be read by the general reader.

The idea that prefaces to fiction were aimed at a small, erudite audience seems skewed towards higher genres of fiction, particularly the *yomihon*, which would typically have a Sino-Japanese *kanbun* preface as well as an introduction written in Japanese.

⁴² For a longer discussion on the problematic use of the term *gesaku* see Nakamura Yukihiro, *Gesakuron*.

Other literary forms, particularly “lower” ones such as *gōkan*, however, had only a Japanese language preface that was much more approachable. They were written in standardized calligraphic orthography that was comparable to that of the main text. Granted, many prefaces contained a larger number of Chinese characters making them perhaps more complicated than the main text, which was written primarily in *kana*.

Before we move onto a larger discussion of the causes of textual fragmentation, let us return to an important piece of evidence found in Koganei’s account. Koganei recounts her own experiences reading books written in calligraphic *kana*. She writes about the ease of reading calligraphic orthography, or handwriting, as compared to typeset print. She wrote:

The next thing he [Ōgai] showed me was a copy of *Utsuho monogatari* 宇津保物語. It was illustrated and had many volumes. Its thick covers were worn plain, as though painted silver; not even the designs were visible. Each booklet only had just a few pages in it. I was used to reading books written in *kana*, so it was no trouble for me. This was because in the old *kusazōshi* 草雙紙 we had in our house no matter where in the book one opened to there were images. The space around those images was chockfull of the written text of the book [本文], which was written in *kana*! I was used to reading the text just like kids today are with reading something like a newspaper.⁴³

⁴³ Koganei Kimiko, *Ōgai no omohide*, 31.

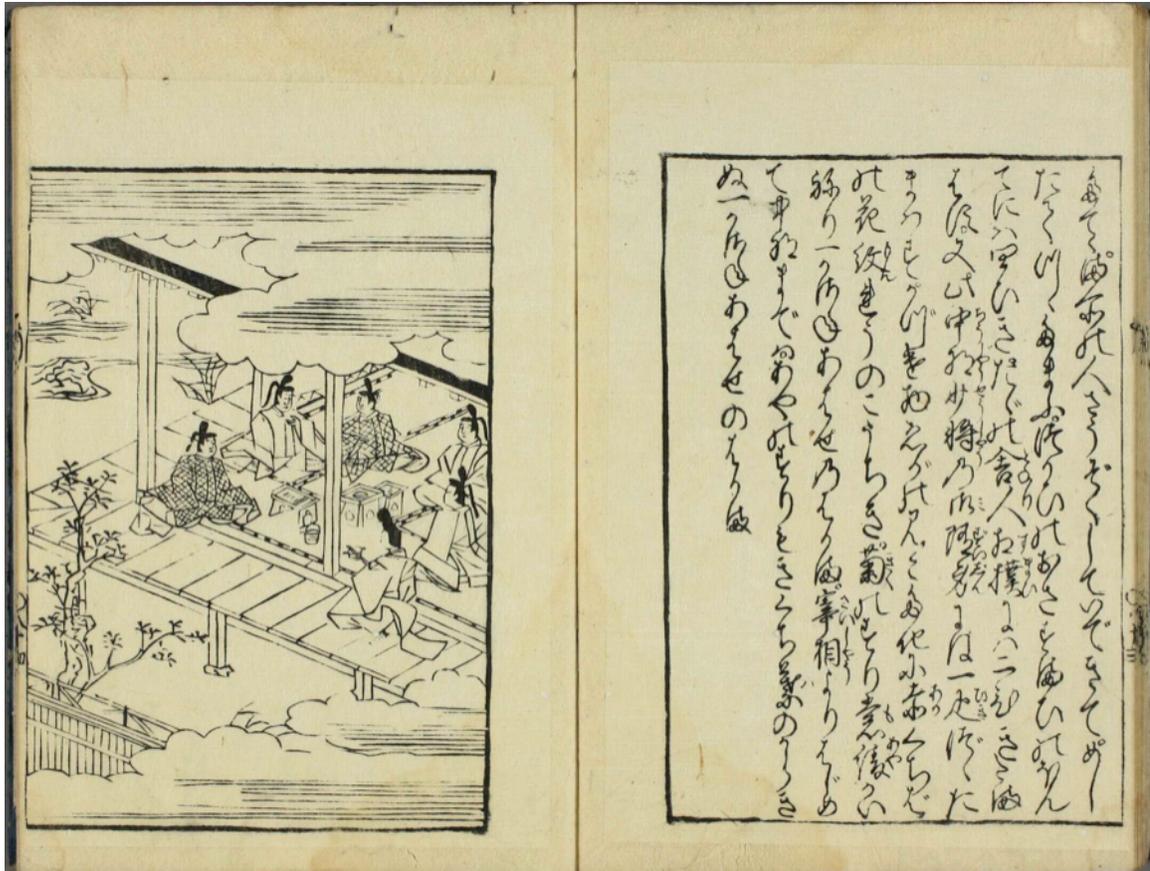


Figure IV-6 *Utsuho monogatari*

Printed versions of *Utsuho monogatari* from the Edo-period (Figure IV-6), with their serpentine script, make Koganei's claim about her generation's ease all the more provocative.⁴⁴

Perhaps Koganei was just overly precocious and was an exception to the standard theory that the typeset text such as that found in newspapers was inherently easier to read than the intricate coils of orthographies replicating handwriting.

This purported simplicity of reading typeset print is connected to larger social transitions in reading practices. John Pierre Mertz, following the work of Maeda Ai,

⁴⁴*Utsuho monogatari*, <http://archive.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kosho/bunko30/bunko30_c0121/bunko30_c21_003/bunko30_c21_003_p020.jpg>, Accessed 4/30/21012.

argues that the transition to movable type encouraged the move from social reading, done out loud in groups, toward isolated silent reading. “The most fundamental change encouraging this practice was the adoption of typeset printing, which allowed people to read at many times the speed of earlier publications. Compared to the richly stylized handwriting that was reproduced in earlier woodblock text, the typeset printing was distinct, unambiguous, and could be read at a glance, making reading aloud seem unnecessarily slow and laborious.”⁴⁵

Yet, as Koganei points out in her account, when she was writing in the 1950s, she could read these woodblock printed texts with the same ease as kids reading newspapers. We should keep in mind the orthography of woodblock printed media was far more standardized than has been assumed. While there were displays of the author’s idiosyncratic calligraphic ability in which the visual quality of the text was of equal import to content and may have been harder to read, however, such “richly stylized” calligraphic orthographies were seldom used for extended narratives.⁴⁶

The larger impact of a shift to moveable typeset printing seems to have been the acceleration of the effacement of orthographic variation and a decline in visual play and erudition through orthography in printed volumes. It is not that it became easier to read typeset texts (a proposition with which I disagree), but that which was read became only the “content” of the words and handwriting was no longer part of the message.

One avenue for enjoying even the most inapproachable preface was through the visual aspects of orthography, the unique hand and skill of the calligrapher. Such prefaces

⁴⁵ Mertz, *Novel Japan: Spaces of Nationhood in Early Meiji Narrative, 1870-88*, 191, (emphasis added).

⁴⁶ Even Shikitei Sanba, whose writing was overly circular, was consistent from one page to the next. Arguably, this uniqueness compared to other styles may have mandated a period of time, however brief, to get accustomed to his style, but this was part of the fun of reading him. In fact, readers often consumed the form of the orthography as part of the joy of reading.

were to be enjoyed visually as an image of text—as much as, if not more than, for their content. We can see the importance of this visual aspect when we look at one of the earliest identified collections of prefaces by Bakin, an 1844 collection entitled *Kyokutei daibatsu* 曲亭題跋 (Kyokutei’s Epigraphs and Postscripts; Figure IV-7).⁴⁷ *Kyokutei daibatsu* was compiled by an unknown literatus, who used the sobriquet, Egawatei Yoshitomo 江川亭佳友. This collection included 48 prefaces and epigraphs from texts by Bakin. Egawatei made the two-volume collection by tracing over published copies. Hence, he was able to replicate the original orthography of these texts. He traced images, seals (chops), signatures, and texts.

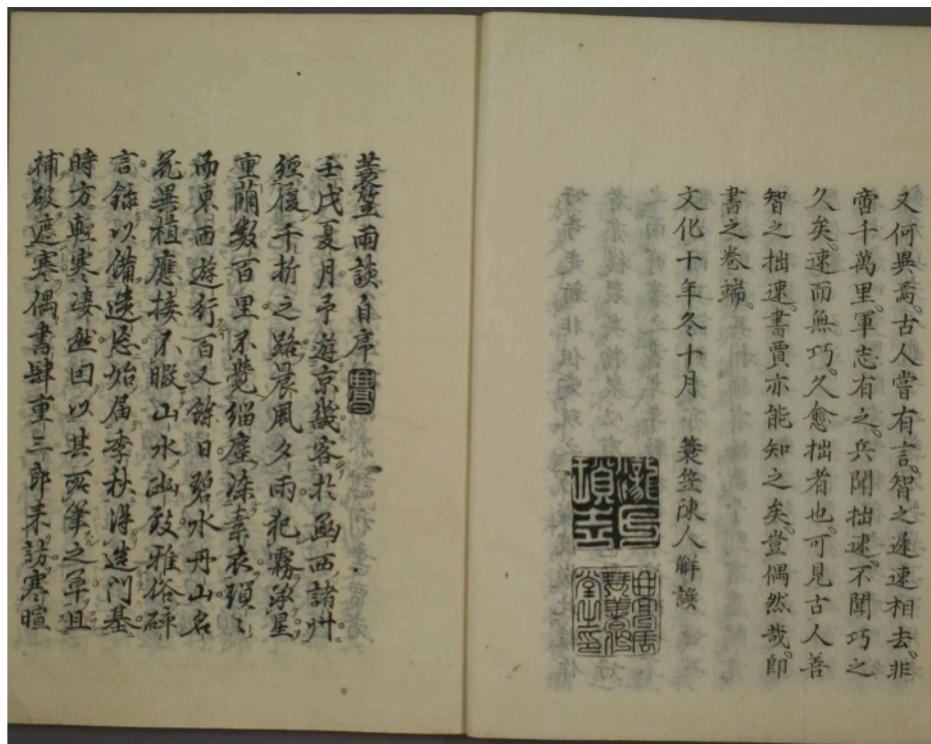


Figure IV-7 Egawatei's *Kyokutei daibatsu*

Although we cannot know what motivated Egawatei to make this copy, he seems intent on preserving and collecting the unique orthography of each text. In this way the

⁴⁷ Takizawa Bakin, Egawatei Yoshitomo, *Kyokutei daibatsu*.

collection is a visual tour de force that demonstrates the prowess of Bakin as a calligrapher as much as an author.⁴⁸ Even without being able to read many of the texts, a reader (like this one) can enjoy the function of the text as image. This ability to enjoy, appreciate, or even just experience a text visually, without interacting entirely with the written content, was a key component of and legitimate mode of “reading” such prefaces and excerpts. The above image from the *Kyokutei daibatsu* presents parts of two prefaces. On the right is the end of the preface to *Beibei kyōdan* with Bakin’s chops. On the left is the preface to *Saryū udan* 簑笠雨談 (1804).⁴⁹ Each book had its own flavor of calligraphy, and this collection was intent on preserving the uniqueness of the prefaces.

A later collection of prefaces from 1878, *Kyokutei Bakin gesaku jobunshū* 曲亭馬琴戲作序文集, has a unified script for all the prefaces even though it is a wood-block printed volume (Figure IV-8).⁵⁰ This collection is arranged chronologically. Through its pages a reader can trace the development of Bakin as a writer (not calligrapher) as he slowly moves from one literary form to another and responds to shifts in the literary field. In so doing, it helps create the persona of Bakin as an author by fleshing out and bringing together various meta-discourses on fiction that he wrote. These prefaces not only served to introduce an individual text, but also provided an opportunity for authors to justify and explain the practice of writing as well. The collection contains examples of Bakin’s

⁴⁸ This evaluation of the author’s hand was far from direct, however. There were multiple intermediary steps between Bakin’s manuscript and the printed edition, which was copied. First, Bakin wrote the introduction. Then, it was copied (possibly enhanced) by a professional calligrapher, who made a copy for the carver who transferred and carved it in reverse to a block of wood. A proof was pulled and possibly edited. Then a skilled printer printed the page. This was what the compiler of the collection of prefaces finally copied. Although the visual register of the preface may have been fetishized as representing Bakin’s hand directly, there were others (calligraphers and carvers) whose skill made this personal and unique script publishable as a standardized commercial product.

⁴⁹ Takizawa Bakin, Egawatei Yoshitomo, *Kyokutei daibatsu*, Vol 2, 12.

<http://archive.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kosho/i04/i04_00600/i04_00600_0046/i04_00600_0046_p0012.jpg>

⁵⁰ Takizawa Bakin, Watanabe Hakuō, *Kyokutei Bakin gesaku jōbun shū*, 1.

<http://archive.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kosho/bunko11/bunko11_a1100/bunko11_a1100_p0002.jpg>

discourse and defense of composing novels. For instance, his 1814 preface to *Sarayashiki ukina no sometsuke* 皿屋鋪浮名の染付 defends the practice of supposedly writing novels for “children” as follows:

きやふじん お はし くわ かたち ひと
 狂人を逐ふて走るものは、こころ狂ふにあらずといへども。その態狂人に等
どうし ため しよ つづ かたちすで おとらう に
 し。童子の為に書を綴るものは。貌既に老といへど。そのなす所童子に似
ぐ かなら わら ち そのぐ
 たり。視るもの愚なりとして必ず是を笑ふ。その智には及ぶべく。其愚には及
われどうし ため つづ いま かつ こころ
 びがたし。余童子の為に書を綴れども。未だ嘗て童子の意を得ず。多くは以
ああじつ かたいかな
 てかたしとせらる。吁實に難哉⁵¹。

Sarayashiki ukina no sometsuke

One who follows chasing after a crazy person, although he may not be crazy at heart, his appearance is the same as a crazy person's. One who writes books for children, although the appearance of his face may already be old, resembles children in what he does. Those who look at them will laugh at it as foolishness. [Viewers] grasp its wisdom, but do not grasp its foolishness. I write books for children, but I have not gained in the least the mind/heart of a child. Many people are [too] stubborn for this. Oh, it truly is hard.⁵²

⁵¹ Takizawa Bakin, Watanabe Hakuō, *Kyokutei Bakin gesaku jōbun shū*, 1.

⁵² Play on words between stubborn and hard.

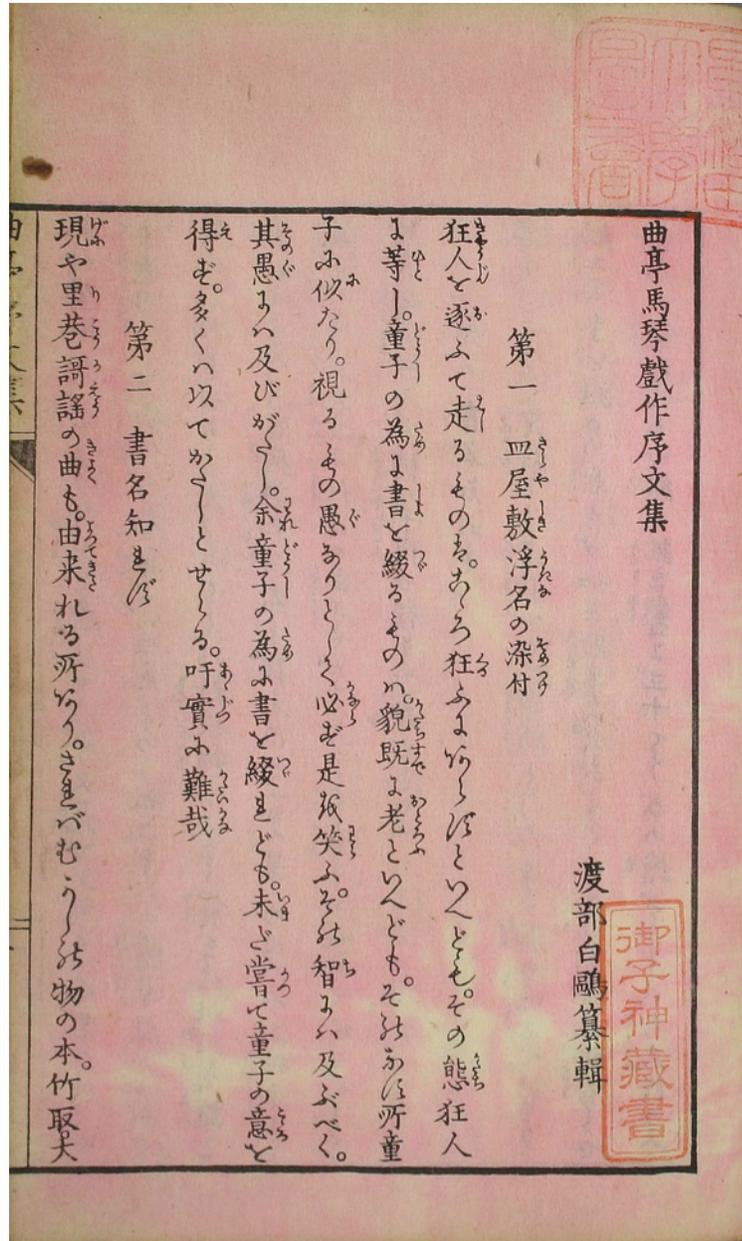


Figure IV-8 Watanabe Hakuō's *Kyokutei Bakin geshaku jobunshū*

In this preface, Bakin argues that the act of composing books, which in Edo society were nominally claimed to be the purview of women and children, does not make him infantile. Instead Bakin playfully inverts this discourse suggesting that the heart of a child is actually an ideal to be sought after. But, he asserts, many people are too obtuse to understand this.

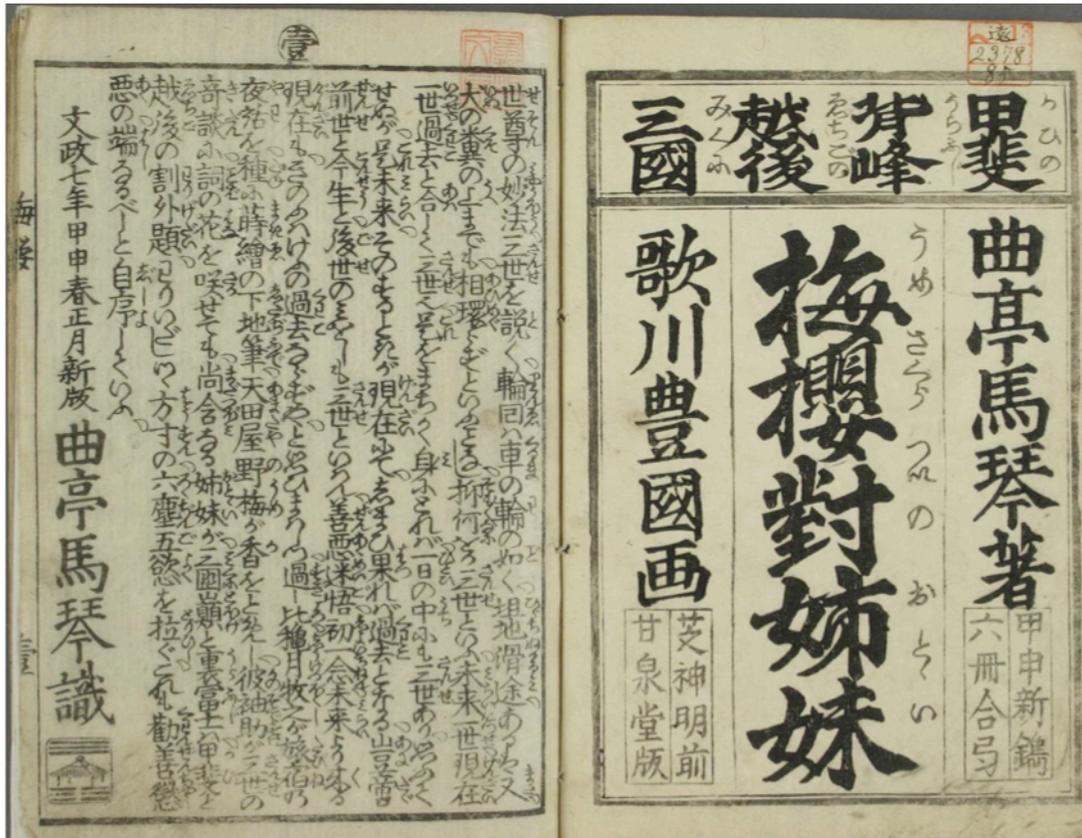


Figure IV-9 Preface to Bakin's *Ume sakura no ototoi*

In another preface, this one to *Kai no Urafuji Echigo no mikuni ume sakura tsui no ototoi* 甲斐背峰／越後三国・梅櫻對姉妹 (1822), Bakin creates an argument bridging the Buddhist discourse of samsara (the rounds of rebirth) with the idea that literature should promote good and chastise evil. (Figure IV-9)⁵³ This didactic tone is something for which Bakin and many of his contemporary writers are often criticized because it often involves stereotypical characters and lack of depth. However, as the complicated preface suggests, there is a deep metaphysical aspect to moral didacticism that is often ignored in critiques of Edo period literature. The preface reads as follows:

⁵³ Takizawa Bakin, *Kai no Urafuji Echigo no mikuni ume sakura tsui no ototoi*, 1. http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/he13/he13_02378_0085/index.html

せそん みやうほう さんせ と りんゑ くるま わ ごと ひらちなめらと またいぬ くそ
 世尊の妙法、三世を説く、輪廻ハ車の輪の如く、埧地滑途、あるは又犬の糞
 の上までも相環らずといふ事なし、抑何をか三世といふ、未来一世、現在
 一世、過去と合して三世也、是をまちかく身にとれば一日の中にも三世あり、
 思ふてせねが、是未来、そのするときに現在にて、しまひ果れば過去となる、
 豈啻前世と今生と、後世のみをしも三世といはん善悪迷悟、初一念、未来より
 来る現在も、きのふはけふの過去ならずや、と思ふまわしつ過し比、穠月牧之
 が旅宿の夜話を種に蒔絵の下地筆、天田屋野梅が香をとめし、彼袖助が三世の
 奇談に、詞の花を咲せても、尚含なる姉妹が、三国巔と裏富士ハ甲斐と
 越後の割外題わりいだしつつ方寸の、六塵五慾を拉ぐこれも勸善懲惡の端
 なるべしと自序していふ⁵⁴

The World Honoring's [i.e., the Buddha's] Lotus Sutra explains the three times of life. The rounds of rebirth (samsara) are like the wheel of a cart. There are low places and slippery roads. There is no guarantee that one will not possibly at some point be reincarnated upon dog excrement. So what then is meant by the three times? The time in the future, the time in the present, and the past taken together are the three times. As we wait for these we assume a (human) body. [It is said that] In one day there are also three existences, but I do not know if this is so. There is the future; [but] it is the present in which we act, and after the end of this it becomes the past. I began to think that previous lives, this life, and the life to come are the three existences. I thought about good and evil, delusion and enlightenment, and the first arising of ignorance and contemplated about the present that comes out of the future, and I realized that even yesterday is the past of today.

I thought all of this while recently traveling below the harvest moon. I heard the chatter of a cowherd in the inn at night and I have taken his vain musings as the idea [for this story] like a brush for drawing the foundation pictures on lacquered ware. The famous Sodesuke talks of the three times, making his words blossom as flowers, like the wild plums at Amataya that have grown fragrant. The Sisters that are the blossoms of his story have been divided from each other like the peaks of Mikuni and Urafuji divide the countries of Kai and Echigo, I have followed this and split the subtitles of the book. Surely the removal from the heart of the six defilements and five desires should be considered as part of the promotion of good and chastisement of evil. That is what I wish to say in this preface that I have written.

⁵⁴ Takizawa Bakin, *Kai no Urafuji Echigo no mikuni ume sakura tsui no ototoi*, 2.

The discouragement of evil and promotion of good was a much larger social discourse, which these prefaces allowed readers to experience even if the narrative's didactic structure seemed jejune.

In this collection, *Kyokutei Bakin gesaku jobunshu* from 1878, all the prefaces look the same in that the calligraphy is homogenized. A copy of the preface (Figure IV-9) from an earlier woodblock edition of *Kai no Urafuji Echigo no mikuni ume sakura tsui no ototoi* had a much more idiosyncratic calligraphic personality.

Collections of prefaces, much like commonplace books, are, by their very nature, constructed through actively fragmenting and disassembling larger texts. When we look at published collections of prefaces from the 1870s and 1880s, there are examples of both active and inadvertent textual fragmentation occurring within the same collection. For instance, the above-mentioned 1878 *Kyokutei Bakin Gesaku jobunshū* included numerous prefaces listed as *shomei shirazu* 書名知らず (“title unknown”).⁵⁵ This is passive fragmentation at its best—a title unintentionally separated from its preface. For some reason, however, while the names of the source text for these title-less prefaces were lost, the compiler accurately knew the name of the author.⁵⁶ This points to the probable existence of an intermediate text between the original books and the published collection of prefaces; if the compilation was made directly from the original book, its title would most likely have been known.

The fact that a preface from an unknown book could have circulated so far from its original context suggests a great deal about the nature of prefaces. Prefaces have a value apart from their original context. They frame not only the reading of an individual

⁵⁵ Takizawa Bakin, Watanabe Hakuō, *Kyokutei Bakin gesaku jōbun shū*, 27.
<http://archive.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kosho/bunko11/bunko11_a1100/bunko11_a1100_p0027.jpg>

⁵⁶ See Takagi Gen.

text but form a meta-frame for the whole of literature. Prefaces function as a type of literary criticism or *hihyō* 批評. It is significant that these collections of prefaces were in commercial circulation around the same time that Tsubouchi Shōyō and other literary reformers were active. In these collections of prefaces there is an important compilation and summation of prior standards and ideas of writing also coming together. These various prefaces, while still scattered across their original locations, might have had a more muted discursive form and function; but in this collective format, prefaces bring into deeper relief the ideas and justifications for literature in general. It seems undeniable that these reprinted collections of prefaces may have been reproduced to explain the essence of the novel, which is the selfsame question that Shōyō was trying to address.

Essences of Novels

Although there is no evidence that Ōgai owned a collection of prefaces, he had an interest in literature that went beyond the written narrative or story. Ōgai's marginalia are at times banal and seemingly less sophisticated than his vast corpus of literary works and essays. But, it is the very banality of his comments that, at times, makes them so valuable. They offer evidence of a set of private literary concerns. On the other hand, whereas his published writings are part of a public performance of erudition, they show what he said when others were reading, as opposed to what he thought when no one else was. The private view the marginalia provide shows a man with a philological disposition toward books—concerned with poetry, non-Western history, and evidence. In short, these were aspects of the text that informed the reading habits of Ōgai as a reader, who then marshaled these interests into his work as a modern author. His style of marginalia

reflects this diverse interest in literature.

For instance, in his copy of Santō Kyōden's *Mukashikatari inazuma byōshi*, Ōgai attached a sheet of notes, dated May 16th, 1884, into the book for the story.⁵⁷ His notes begin with lists and details about main characters but also included lists of illnesses, maps, and charts, as well as geographical terms.⁵⁸ These lists point to a plurality of non-narrative concerns with the text.

Evidence of this type of diverse interest in reading can also be seen in Ōgai's marginalia in his copy of *Shōsetsu shinzui*, which contains his annotations and notes on thirty-five pages. Although it is unclear when Ōgai made these marginal notes, it was most likely after his return from Germany in 1888.⁵⁹

Ōgai's marginalia in his copy of *Shōsetsu shinzui*, and that found in other books of his from around this time (including *Beibei kyodan*) highlight how eclectic his literary concerns were. These literary interests were not his alone, but are, in many ways, reflective of his generation's literary predilections. The young Ōgai, and the generation of readers in the 1880s, valued much more in novels than realism or ability to depict human emotions. For them the novel had many essences. This plurality of interests in the novel should cause us to question how representative the standard narrative-centric literary histories are for describing literature and reading during this period. This diversity of interests is the key for understanding the larger phenomenon of textual fragmentation

⁵⁷Santō Kyōden, Mori Ōgai, *Mukashikatari inazuma byōshi*. <http://rarebook.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ogai/data/E24_249/0003_m.html>

⁵⁸ The note's sections are as follows: shogun families (*shōke* 将家), warriors (*shijin* 士人), commoners (*shomin* 庶民), musicians (*gakkō* 楽工), monks (*sōdō* 僧道), females (*joryū* 女流), illnesses (*shinkei* 神經), charts and maps (*zūsho* 図書), and place names (*chimei* 地名).

⁵⁹In October of 1885 in a letter to Ōgai in Dresden, his younger brother mentions the publication of *Shōsetsu shinzui*, *Tōsei shosei katagi*, and Sanyūtei Enchō's 三遊亭円朝 (1839-1900) *Annaka sōzō den* 安中草三伝 (1886). Quoted in Yamazaki Kazuhide, *Nishō wo yuku Mori Ōgai*, 82.

during reprinting. For instance, each of the branches on the tree in the graph showing the balance between the “visual text” and “written text” points to a line of interest in a different aspect of novels. These interests include erudition, as evidenced by the collection of prefaces and Ōgai’s above-mentioned marginal notes in Kōden’s *Inazuma byōshi*. Versions of and subtexts within novels were also admired for their visual aspects; these included visuality as a narrative form in genres such as *e-hon* picture books.

In her work on American sentimental novels, Jane Thompkins confronts a series of literary assumptions that, to some degree or another, are also at play in Japanese literary studies of the mid-Meiji period as well. She writes:

The inability of twentieth-century critics either to appreciate the complexity and scope of a novel like [Harriet Beecher] Stowe's, or to account for its enormous popular success, stems from their assumptions about the nature and function of literature. In modernist thinking, literature is by definition a form of discourse that has no designs on the world. It does not attempt to change things, but merely to represent them, and it does so in a specifically literary language whose claim to value lies in its uniqueness. Consequently, works whose stated purpose is to influence the course of history, and which therefore employ a language that is not only not unique but common and accessible to everyone, do not qualify as works of art. Literary texts, such as the sentimental novel, that make continual and obvious appeals to the reader's emotions and use technical devices that are distinguished by their utter conventionality, epitomize the opposite of everything that good literature is supposed to be. ‘For the literary critic,’ writes J. W. Ward, summing up the dilemma posed by *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, ‘the problem is how a book so seemingly artless, so lacking in literary talent, was not only an immediate success but has endured.’⁶⁰

A similar set of questions needs to be asked by modern scholars of Japan about the 1880s and the various fractured reprints: Why Bakin? Why didacticism? Why picture books? Collections of prefaces? Why so many reprints of these types of fiction?

⁶⁰ Tompkins, *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790-1860*, 126.

Like Thompkins, this chapter's purpose is not to claim these various subtexts "are good in the *same way*" as more canonical Japanese literature from the time, but rather that they are "complex and significant in ways *other* than those characterizing the established masterpieces."⁶¹ Hence, we need to "set aside some familiar categories for evaluating fiction—stylistic intricacy, psychological subtlety, epistemological complexity" and see these poetic, erudite, and moral subtexts, "not as an artifice of eternity answerable to certain formal criteria and to certain psychological and philosophical concerns," but as important sites of literary interest and obsessions that were important at the time and are, therefore, indispensable for understanding the time.⁶²

As mentioned at the end of Chapter Two, *Shosetsu shinzui* might well be translated as "Essences of Novels," and Ōgai's marginalia point to a plurality of important aesthetic aspects of novels beyond realistic depiction. In Mori Ōgai's personal copy of Tsubouchi Shōyō's essay on the "Essence(s) of Novel(s)" from 1885, held in the Ōgai Collection at Tokyo University Library, he highlights several passages and jots notes throughout the book. These passages and Ōgai's marginalia offer insight into how one young reader interacted with the text. In the words of H.J. Jackson, his marginalia provide a rare "contemporary response."⁶³ They give an opportunity to question what the essences of the novel were to him as a reader.

On one hand, in many ways, Ōgai's reading and highlighting validate the standard model of reading Shōyō's essay as a tract on realism and depiction in novels over didactic moralism. In Shōyō's chapter on the purpose of the novel (*shōsetsu no shugan* 小説

⁶¹ Tompkins, *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790-1860*, 126.

⁶² Tompkins, *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790-1860*, 127.

⁶³ Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books*, 2.

説の主眼, which Ōgai identifies in the margin as the “*Stoffe d. Romane*” (materials of the novel), Ōgai scrawled brackets around the following line:

せうせつ しゆなう にんじやう せたいふうぞく つ
小説の首脳ハ人情なり世態風俗これに次ぐ

“The novel’s leader is human emotions. Manners and customs are next after this.”⁶⁴

Ōgai also notes “*Romancier als Pycolog.*” (the Novelist as Psychologist) above the quote:

はいくわんしゃりう しんりがくしや
それ稗官者流ハ心理学者のごとし

“Now, the novelist is as a psychologist....”⁶⁵

Similarly, Ōgai penned the word “*Studie*” (Study) above the passage that encourages “that efforts should be made to observe then depict things as they are” (傍観してありのまゝに模写する心得にてあるべきなり). These often cited passages in *Shōsetsu shinzui* are celebrated in literary history as a clarion call for the development of realism in Japanese literature. According to this reading, the novel was to be an unvarnished (*ari no mama* ありのまま) depiction of human emotions, manners, and customs as observed by authors who act as psychologists—not as idealistic didactic moralists. At first glance, it seems Ōgai’s reading corroborates this particular “realist” view of the purpose of literature. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the standard historical interpretation is that this type of realism also came about through a rejection of didacticism as the purpose of the novel.

⁶⁴ Tsubouchi Shōyō, *Shōsetsu shinzui*, Vol. 1, 19, <http://rarebook.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ogai/data/E20_32/0011_m.html>.

⁶⁵ Tsubouchi Shōyō, *Shōsetsu shinzui*, Vol. 1, 20, <http://rarebook.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ogai/data/E20_32/0012_m.html>.

On the other hand, however, Ōgai’s marginalia points to several other lines in Shōyō’s text that appeared, at least from what he wrote in the pages, as important aspects of the novel to Ōgai. For instance, at the top of one page in the chapter on the benefits of the novel (*shōsetsu no hieki* 小説の裨益), Ōgai scrawled in large letters “moral” and highlights the following line by Shōyō:

どくしゃ しぜん はんせい
 讀者をして自然に反省せしむるものなり
 [novels] cause the reader on their own to self-reflect.⁶⁶

Although this self-reflection (e.g., mending of one’s ways) is not the same as the Japanese term *kanzen chōaku* 勸善懲惡 (the promotion of good and the dissuasion of evil), Ōgai’s marginalia reveals a continued interest in the moral function of the novel. For instance, in a passage on types of novels according to their primary intention (*shui* 主意), Ōgai’s marginalia is as concerned with the category of the “Diact. Nov.” (didactic novel) as he is with those of the “Artistic ro.m.” (artistic novel). Ōgai’s marginalia gives each category equal consideration as a valid form of the novel.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Tsubouchi Shōyō, *Shōsetsu shinzui*, Vol. 1, 25, < http://rarebook.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ogai/data/E20_32/0016_m.html >.

⁶⁷ For example, Ōgai takes notes and annotated both the categories of the “historical and social” (Hist. ū. Social) novels, as he highlighted the following passage:

Moreover, the novel can be further divided into two additional types of novels according to the nature of the events recorded in the book. These are called the *mukashi* (*hisutorikaru*) 往昔 (時代) and called the *ima* (*sosharu*) 現世 (世話). Historical *monogatari* make events that have already happened into a book, or have historical persons as the protagonist and make these into a dramatic booklet. Social *monogatari* take situations of the current age as their material in making their plots. The novels of our country are for the most part historical *monogatari*; that is, period novels (*jidai shōsetsu* 時代小説). Of course that is what a few of Bakin’s compositions are.

In the vernacular they are called *yomihon* 稗史. Such large half-folio books written in a mixture of Chinese characters and kana scripts are generally of this type. However, Murasaki Shikibu’s

Tale of Genji and Tamenaga Shunsui’s *ninjyōbon* 情史 and the like are in the category of social *monogatari*.

Tsubouchi Shōyō, *Shōsetsu shinzui*, Vol. 1, 28, < http://rarebook.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ogai/data/E20_32/0018_m.html >.

Ōgai's additions to his copy of *Shōsetsu shinzui* reveal an important tension between foreign literary terms and Japanese titles and names in explaining the novel. Ōgai's markings are equally concerned with these two vocabularies. Where Shōyō writes about the nomenclature for different types of novel, Ōgai wrote the English and German names for several words in the top margin in the passage. Ōgai wrote "Didact. Nov." "Artistic Roman", and "Hist. Ū. Social" for the didactic, artistic, historical, and social novels.⁶⁸

Literature, as a field of study, both defines and is defined by the object of its investigation—"literary" texts. Suzuki Sadami identifies the rise of a new conception of "literature" (*bungaku* 文学) during the Meiji period that slowly effaced older literary formations, such as *haishi* 稗史 and *koshōgaku* 古証学. These older literary conceptualizations and textual practices defined literature as inclusive of a wide range of texts including those now considered historical, religious, philosophic, and even geographic. These traditional literary constellations were eclipsed by modern literature, more narrowly conceptualized and limited in its scope to poetry, fictional narratives, and theater. The rise of modern Japanese literature, according to Suzuki, lies in an institutional and categorical shift from a broad definition of literature to the more

⁶⁸ An additional issue that informs Ōgai's reading of *Shōsetsu shinzui* and makes it different from Shōyō's approach comes from the fact that Ōgai was trained in Germany. In German the term *roman* is not equivalent with either novel or *shōsetsu*. Writing about the broad history of the novel in Europe, Hans Eichner notes "[T]he German word for 'novel,' *Roman*, had a much wider range of meanings...[in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries] than it has now—a wider range, in fact, than the English 'novel' and 'romance' combined. It is for this reason that the word cannot be translated in the present context...." He notes that the German *Roman* denoted "any work of fiction in the vernacular" including "plays intended to be read rather than performed and to plays whose form was radically un-Aristotelian such as those of Shakespeare." Eichner continues, "all the truly significant achievements of the moderns either were *Roman* or were at least 'coloured' by the *Roman*—were they rhymed medieval epics, Shakespearean tragedies, or modern novels like *Wilhelm Meister*."

Eichner, "*Romantic*" and Its Cognates: *The European History of a Word*, 110-11.

Based on his experience with German notions of the *Roman*, Ōgai, arguably, had a much more inclusive view of the *shōsetsu* than did Shōyō who tries to maintain the English distinction between "romance" and "novel."

narrowed one.⁶⁹ Under this new conception, prefaces, illustrations, and tables of contents became secondary to the “literary” main text of the extended narrative. And, yet, on the bookshelf (and in the margins) of the young Ōgai, and in the fragmented reprinted texts that circulated among his generation, an eclectically broad and diverse definition of the literary persisted. This suggests that in the mid-Meiji, novels continued to retain their multiple essences, key sites of enjoyment, and literary evaluation.

Reading Materialities

Koganei’s memory of Ōgai includes one more scene of books and reading from circa 1880. This scene highlights the materiality of texts, an additional aspect of the novel that the following chapter takes up:

Ogai took out a book from a pile of books he kept in a drawer in the living room, asking, “Do you want to try reading this type of book?” It was a rather thick booklet, which was bound in a Japanese binding. Its cover had brown brocade patterns and was bound with fine woven string. It had a purple tag affixed to it with “Seeds of the Heart” [*Kokoro no tane* 心の種] written on it. The text was composed by Tachibana Moribe 橘守部 [1781-1849]. Until then I had never seen a book in that shape and format; I was so happy I could cry. “I wonder if I will be able to understand it?” I said, adding “It’s a book on poetry [*uta* 歌], right? In the preface to the *Kokinshū* 古今集 it says ‘The *uta* of Yamato [i.e., Japan] takes seed in the heart of people, becoming a myriad of leaves of words.’”⁷⁰

“What? You know about that?”[asked Ōgai]

“It’s not that I know about it. It’s just something I have run across, and I only happened to remember it.”[I replied]

“This book was your grandfather’s.”[said Ōgai]

“So I will take special care of it.” And, I did take good care of it, but didn’t think it was interesting at all. I kept it in a pile of books on my desk, as a decorative reminder that there are also books like this too.⁷¹

⁶⁹ See Suzuki Sadami, *Nihon bungaku' no seiritsu*.

⁷⁰ One can begin to appreciate the place and circulation of prefaces when recalling that Koganei was only ten years of age when she quoted the preface to the *kokinshū*.

⁷¹ Koganei Kimiko, *Ōgai no omohide*, 30.

This account provides us with a view of the two-fold nature of Koganei's discovery of books—first, as material objects and, second, as words on the page. We see the material and visceral nature of Koganei's interaction with this book. Her physical interactions with books were shaped first by her responses to the material format of books— their thickness, binding style, type of string used for binding, color covers, and textures. At times, it seems this was as much, if not more important, than her interaction with the content of these books.

This last scene of reading raises an important question: How did readers and writers respond to shifts in the material formats of texts? The following chapter, “Judging Books by their Covers,” considers how the material format of books—both those in real life as well as those in novels—played an important role in socially situating texts and their readers.

Chapter V: Judging Books By Their Covers

In Natsume Sōseki's 夏目漱石 (1867-1916) semi-autobiographical novel *Grass on the Wayside* (*Michikusa* 途草), published serially in the *Asahi Newspaper* in 1915, a tense discussion occurs about books and reading standards.¹ This confrontation transpires between Kenzō (Sōseki's surrogate) and his wife, Osumi. In this particular scene, Osumi, recuperating from an illness, is lying on the tatami mats of her bedroom floor reading books from a lending library (*kashihonya* 貸本屋). As a masculine, erudite scholar of literature, Kenzō had certain expectations about reading and literature (perhaps in some ways reflective of Sōseki's own), which Osumi, who reads to escape boredom and pass the doldrums of the day, does not share.² Upon seeing what she is reading, Kenzō rebukes Osumi for what he considers poor literary taste:

¹ Sōseki's stories, even if they are less than perfect reflections of the social reality, offer a view of how one author perceived and represented the literary field at the turn of the century. That is to say, the stories let us see what one author thought was a believable representation of the moment, a view of the social imaginary. Writing in the *Yomiuri shinbun* in 1906, Sōseki explains "When I say real, I do not mean it in the sense that there is someone just like that in the real world, but rather I refer to the power that the fictional characters, which the author creates using imagination, have to make the reader think that somewhere in the world there is someone like this, even if they have never before seen such a person or heard of such a person in the past; I think any work that lacks this is completely worthless." *Sōseki zenshū*, 25: 195. This chapter frequently uses fictional stories and their representations to point towards larger social trends, following the warnings of Roger Chartier that "these representations never involve immediate and transparent relations with the practices they describe. All are lodged in the specific models of the production, the interests and intentions that produce them, the genres in which they were inscribed, and the audiences at which they were aimed.... We must decipher the strong but subtle bond that ties these representations to the social practices that are their object." Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer*, 94.

² In many ways this scene between a male and a female reader echoes a similar discussion between Genji and Tamakazura about literature from the "Hotaru" chapter in the *Tale of Genji*. The scene from *Genji* is famous for the discussion on the distinction between truth (*makoto* 実言) and falsehood (*soragoto* 空/虚言)

Bored, his wife would often lie on the floor to read novels [*shōsetsu* 小説], which she borrowed from the lending library. Kenzō’s attention would sometimes be drawn to their covers, thick and filthy looking, piled up beside her pillow. At such times, he would turn to his wife, asking her “Do you find such things entertaining?” It seemed he was scoffing at the lowbrow nature of his wife’s literary tastes.

“They’re fine, aren’t they?” she would reply. “Even if you don’t find them interesting, all that matters is that *I* find them enjoyable.”³

In this scene, Kenzō performs an act of reading imbued with great significance; he was able to look at the covers of the booklets Osumi was reading and—from a single glance—know something about their content, genre, and social position. More interestingly, Sōseki, as an author, could communicate this same information to his readers through a few scant words describing the material condition and physical attributes of these booklet’s covers—thick and filthy. These covers were made of thick paper, either pulp cardstock or from several sheets of recycled Japanese *washi*. They were covered in dirt from the oils and sweat leached into them from reader’s fingers, which acted like glue trapping dust and grime. Over the years, as these booklets circulated from reader to reader, this grunge made these thick-paper covers “appear filthy” (*kitanarashii* 汚らしい).

in fictional tales and, more importantly, Genji’s defense of fiction. For a detailed analysis of this scene see *Okada, Figures of Resistance: Language, Poetry, and Narrating in The Tale of Genji and Other Mid-Heian Texts*, 224-29.

³ *Sōseki zenshū*, 10: 256-57.

Although there is an excellent translation of *Michikusa* by Edwin McClellan, I have translated these passages for sake of consistency.

This is how McClellan translates this passage:

“Having nothing to do all day, Kenzō’s wife began taking novels out of the lending library. He once said to her, eyeing the shabby, paper-covered volume lying by her bed, “Do you really enjoy reading stuff like that?”

She had been reminded too often of how different she and Kenzō were to tolerate such a remark from him. “Yes I do, even if you don’t. What I read is my own business, don’t you think?”

Natsume and McClellan, *Grass on the wayside = Michikusa: a novel*, 183.

While today we often prioritize the written word, to Japanese readers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the physical formats of texts were also an important way of reading and seeing divisions within the world of books.⁴ This physical mode of textual interaction has yet to be fully appreciated and integrated into literary research. At the turn of the century readers possessed a communal material consciousness of texts; an awareness of the relationship between a book's physical attributes; and its place, age, and relative value. In our own reading of stories we can pick up on clues internal to the story—clues about the social imaginary—that can help us make sense of the world outside the text. In the end, these physical details lead us back inside the book and can inform our reading of it. That is to say, a scene of reading in a novel can help us read the novel but also help us make sense of the larger world of books in which that novel was situated is understood.

In the scene in *Grass on the Wayside*, the physical form of these books caught Kenzō's attention and inspired his interrogation of Osumi's reading habits. Kenzō's expression of disapproval was directed beyond the individual objects to a portion of the literary field these covers represent. That the conflict between the two was prompted, not by a list of titles or authors, but rather by the booklets' thick and grimy covers is suggestive of how the material and physical format of the books established and laid bare the division between the tastes of these two readers—hers "hikui" 底い (low) and his implicitly high.

⁴ This awareness is not unique to Japan. Readers and writers in vastly different contexts have also called upon physical descriptions of books to convey meaning. For example the Roman poet Gaius Vlerius Catullus (c.84-c. 54 BCE) drew on the physical descriptions of books when he wrote an introduction to his poetry by detailing his "pretty new book, freshly polished with dry pumice." Such details, William Batstone argues, refer not only to the physical "outward appearance" but also "programmatically reflecting... the qualities of the poetry;" thereby evoking "a literary and social background, establishing the tone in which the following poems might be read" Batstone, "Catullus and the Programmatic Poem: The Origins, Scope, and Utility of a Concept," 235.

The physical divisions between Kenzō's and Osumi's literary tastes become all the more clear when this scene is read against an image of Kenzō in his study surrounded by hardback books from England.

In his small six-mat study, when he opened the crates of books, which he brought back from that far off place, he found himself sitting in the midst of mountains of western books. There he lived for one, then two weeks. Each time he took a book in his hand to put it away he would read two or three pages. On account of this [habit], no matter how much time passed he could never complete the organization of this study that was so vital to him. In the end, a friend came to visit, and unable to bear seeing Kenzō in such a state, quickly lined up every last one of the books on the bookshelves with no regard for order or volume numbers. Most of the people he knew thought he was having a nervous breakdown. But, he believed this was just his disposition.⁵

These western books, or *yōsho* 洋書, hard-covered typeset books, occupied a unique place within the literary field of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Japan. This was a position afforded to them on account of their contents and, more suggestively, by their physical format.⁶ Kenzo's Western books stand in stark contrast to Osumi's filthy-looking, soft-covered books. Like the scene of Osumi reading, this scene, too, introduces the books only as objects; we see nothing of their content and know nothing of their authors. This second scene makes clear that a study filled with western books was "vital" to Kenzō, thereby signaling to readers Kenzo's place as a modern Meiji man of

⁵ Sōseki zenshū, 10: 3.

⁶ A shift to movable type and the adoption of new forms of binding were in many ways contemporaneous processes in nineteenth-century Japan. For this reason they are often mistakenly thought of as a single unified process. Despite their frequent overlap in application and the timing of adoption, printing and binding are two separate technologies that were independently applied. (Consider the scene in *Grass on the Wayside* quoted below, where Hida has a copy of Bakin's *Eight Dogs* that was printed in movable type on Japanese paper and bound in a Japanese binding style. (See Sōseki zenshū, 10: 73-76.) Moveable type was not synonymous with any one book or media format.) As independent technologies printing and bookbinding provide different insights into the alterations to the materiality of texts and material consciousness about literature in the second-half of the nineteenth century. This chapter looks at depictions of Western-style hardback bindings in Sōseki's works; Chapter Two addressed questions of printing and moveable type technology, and two additional binding styles—the *karitoji* 仮とじ (temporary) and the *bōrubyōshi* ボール表紙 (cardboard back).

erudition and highbrow literary pursuits. Sōseki’s contemporaries would read between the lines of the story and see the larger literary divisions inscribed in the hardback covers of Kenzō’s western books because they were familiar with the relationship between this physical format of a book and its contents.

Although Kenzo has brought these books with him back from England – just as Soseki himself had after his own studies in England between 1900 and 1903 – “western books” were also available in Japan sold at Maruzen – a bookseller which opened in the 1870s and still operating in Tokyo today. Suggestively, there is an advertisement (Figure V-1) for Maruzen on the same page of the *Asahi Newspaper* on which this scene first appeared.⁷



Figure V-1 Maruzen Advertisement, June 6, 1915

What do the covers coated in dirt from years of circulation in lending libraries tell us about divisions within the literary field? What do hardback western books piled like mountains on the floor of Kenzō’s study tell us about their place in Meiji society? The

⁷ "Maruzen shinchaku yōsho."

description of the covers points toward the need for a broader consideration of the correlation between literary texts and the format of their physical homes in books.

Sōseki's novels are filled with similar descriptions of books and their covers. For instance, in his 1910 novel *Mon* 門 (Mon or The Gate), we see descriptions of “western books with red covers” (赤い表紙の洋書), “small booklets with yellow covers” (小形の黄色い表紙), and “a book with a black cover” (黒い表紙の本).⁸ Similar descriptions of books populate Sōseki's other writings as well.⁹ Moreover, these types of physical descriptions of books are hardly unique to Sōseki; they appear in the writings of authors at the turn of and into the twentieth century. Writers from Shimazaki Tōson 島崎藤村 (1872-1943) to Mori Ōgai also describe covers and other physical attributes of books as a means of pointing to genres and the social position of texts and readers. For instance, Ōgai's *Vita Sexualis* キタ・セクスアリス 1909 includes numerous descriptions of covers: “thick covers” (厚い表紙) and “multi-colored covers” with “women's faces” on them (表紙にも彩色がしてあって、見れば女の大きい顔が書いてあった; and 本には、表紙に女の顔が書いてあって).¹⁰ We learn, while the protagonist does not, that these books with their gaudy, vivid covers depicting women are *shunga* 春画 or semi-pornographic books.

Newspaper advertisements for literature also sometimes stress the material format of books as much as their contents—selling objects in addition to words. Personal

⁸ *Sōseki zenshū*, 6: 355, 568, and, 80.

⁹ *Eijitsu shōhin* 永日小品 (1909) speaks of “covers with dirt from fingers” 指で^{きた}汚ない表紙 and “a stack of about ten booklets 45 centimeters long and 30 centimeters wide with blue covers” 長さ一尺五寸幅一尺ほどの青表紙の手帳を約十冊ばかり. *Sōseki zenshū*, 12: 214-16. In *Gubijinsō* also there is a ubiquitous “diary with a yellowish cover” 黄な表紙の日記, and “a thick book with richly done golden lettering on its brown cover” 茶の表紙に豊かな金文字を入れた厚い書物. *Sōseki zenshū*.

¹⁰ A different register of books are represented in *Seinen* 青年 (1910), which mentions an “edition of *Charpentier et Fasquelle* in a temporary binding with a blue cover.” (シャルパンチィ エ ファスケル版の仮綴の青表紙) Mori Ōgai, *Seinen*, 246.

reminiscences from the period, such as those of Koganei Kimiko cited in Chapter Four, also dwell on physical interactions with texts as objects as a key part of reading. In short, this frequent and wide-ranging—at times almost seemingly obsessive—presence of descriptions of the physical format of books points to a strong, shared material consciousness in an era when all kinds of different books were circulating and sharing space on bookshelves. It suggests an awareness of the connection and correspondence between a book's physical format and its relative place within the world of texts.

In this digital age where texts seem to move freely from the printed page to computer screen and back again, it can be hard to appreciate that the color of a cover or its thickness may convey meaning or delineate literary boundaries. Despite the appearance that texts may be freely poured from one vessel to another, the shape and form of the vessel give meaning to its contents. In advocating “a sociology of the text,” D.F. McKenzie argues that it is impossible to “divorce the substance of the text on one hand from its presentation on the other. The book is an expressive means. To the eye its pages offer an aggregation of meaning both verbal and typographic.... But we must learn to see that its shape in the hand also speaks to us from the past.” McKenzie suggests as literary scholars, we should “marry the verbal preoccupations of literary and textual criticism, [to] the material concerns of historical bibliography and the economic and social dimensions of production and readership.”¹¹ Reading texts in terms of their physical format tends to clarify their social place and function. It is necessary to foster a mode of reading by which the material and physical formats of books, both those in the archive of books and those found in literary depictions, help us both understand these works of literature and situate them historically within a particular cultural and literary

¹¹ McKenzie, "Typography and Meaning: the Case of William Congreve," 200.

field. These divisions include questions of genre, high-low positionality, and other forms of ranking and evaluation.

In order to approach issues of textual materiality more fully, we must trace, albeit briefly, the historical roots of this material consciousness of books in Japan and look at its various manifestations across the Edo period and into the Meiji period.¹² During the Edo period, early Edo-period literary genres were identified by such things as cover color and thickness; paper size; nature and number of images; number of booklets comprising a text; binding styles; and non-material details including topic, writing style, and language. This points toward a strong material appreciation of the relationship between a book's physical format and its position within the literary field, especially regarding the study of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This material consciousness has been adopted in modern scholarship of the Edo period as well.

Next, we must ask: What can we gain from incorporating the materiality of texts into our understanding of literature in the Meiji period? Considering descriptions of Western-style bindings in Japanese literature, this chapter next begins to approach questions of how the importation of new modes of textual production disrupted and reconfigured Edo-period material consciousness during the Meiji-period. In doing so, it turns to depictions of western books (*yōhon* 洋本; *yōsho* 洋書) in Sōseki's writing.¹³

¹² Material consciousness is essential to understanding how literature was received, consumed, and integrated into life, but this has largely been ignored in the English-language study of the Meiji period. Yet, modern scholars, in Japan and the U.S., have long recognized the role material format played in discourses of genre during the Edo period.

¹³ Although the terms *yōhon* and *yōsho* are often translated as “foreign books,” they, in fact, refer to “Occidental” (*seiyō* 西洋) books and texts, as books from China and other Asian countries were neither *yōhon* nor *yōsho*, even if they were “foreign.” *Yōsho* refers to texts from outside of Asia. *Yōhon* is an ambiguous category, at times referring to a format for producing and binding books—hard covers and stiff spines—and at other times referring to the non-Asian language of composition. The *Daigenkai* 大言海 dictionary (1932-37) defines *yōsho* as 1) books brought from the West. Western books (in distinction to

These foreign books represent one stream of material influence that disrupted prior indigenous understandings of the relationship between physical form, content, and the social function of texts. In particular, I look at how characters are positioned within the stories through their relationship with books as objects. Moving beyond literature to larger social considerations, a close reading of materiality—both of real books and those described in literature—will lead to a better understanding of late nineteenth and early twentieth century’s literary developments. Sōseki’s descriptions and uses of these western books in his stories provide insights about his, and his generation’s, anxiety and fascination with this book format and western literature. A common thread in Sōseki’s representation of western books is ambivalence towards them. This love-hate relationship with western books arises from the questionable correlation between their physical format—stiff leather-bound covers—assuring valuable and sophisticated content and the function of their content and existence, which often fail to meet the high expectations their materiality promises.

Finally, building off this social function of the genre, this chapter turns to photographs of Sōseki in his study and the issue of western books as a means of self-fashioning. Two particular photographs present Sōseki in a study (*shosai* 書齋) surrounded exclusively by western books.¹⁴ Puzzlingly, the Chinese and Japanese booklets he owned are excluded from view. Later pictures of his actual study, however, present a more eclectic space filled with books from Japan and China, as well as the West. The vast range of material formats and books as physical objects found in this later

Japanese and Chinese ones) p647, vol 4. *Yōhon* 1) Western books; also *seiyōhon* 西洋本, 2) Books done in a western binding (*yōtoji* 洋とじ) Ōtsuki Fumihiko, *Daigenkai*, 648.

¹⁴ One photograph taken at the Mochizuki Photography Studio is actually a motif of a study, it is not an actual one.

photograph highlights the constructed and limited image created in the earlier photograph. Like Sōseki's fictional characters, who long to own western books and have their social position solidified through these books as objects, these photographs suggest Sōseki, too, was engaged in a type of self-fashioning as a modern Meiji intellectual.

Edo-Period Material Consciousness of Books

The various descriptions of book covers and other physical aspects of texts in Sōseki's and his contemporaries' writings are strikingly similar to mid to late Edo-period discussions of genre. As mentioned, during the Edo period, descriptions of the physical format of books were regularly integrated into generic classifications. As a result, Edo-period systems of literary classifications developed around material descriptions of books. Despite the near absence of materially-informed genre names for the Meiji period, Edo period descriptions functioned in much the same way as they do in Sōseki's descriptions, in that they demarcated literary forms and the social positions of texts. This similarity, between the Edo period and the turn of the century consciousness about physical format and social position, points to a unifying concern with the materiality of texts, that links the two periods, even as the specific forms and modes of book production change.

The author Kyokutei Bakin 曲亭馬琴 (1767-1848), whose *Beibei kyōdan* we saw earlier in Ōgai's collection, made one of the earliest attempts to catalogue and make sense of the relationship between literary classifications and the physical properties of books. In his 1832 *Kinsei mono no hon Edo sakusha burui* 近世物之本江戸作者部類 (Modern Fiction and Edo Authors Arranged by Categories; hereafter *Mononohon*), he lays out a history of four major genres: *akahon* 赤本, *sharebon* 洒落本, *chūhon* 中本, and

yomihon 読本.¹⁵ This narrative of the development of these categories outlines their material alterations as physical objects as much as their content as texts. Although Bakin's account also includes descriptions of content and themes, a significant portion of his time is spent recounting changes in material and physical formats of books across time. For Bakin, these material characteristics are primarily indications of genre.

Take, for instance, Bakin's section on the history of *Akahon*, where he lays out the development of five¹⁶ seemingly separate literary formats from the early 1700s until around 1800. Modern scholars treat each of these five forms as their own independent genres, but Bakin categorizes each of these as a variation of the single *akahon* or red cover genre:

In the Kyōhō 享保 period (1716-36) small picture-books (*e-zōshi* 絵双紙) were printed each year with reddish-colored covers; in common parlance they were known as *akahon* [red-books]. Beginning in the Kan'en 寛延 period (1748-51)... these [*akahon*] were replaced by booklets made with yellow covers (*kibyōshi* 黄表紙). Each booklet had a fixed number of five leaves. Two booklets were sold for twelve coppers, and three booklet sets for eighteen coppers. Among these were reprintings with black covers [*kurohon* 黒本] that sold at a price of five coppers apiece. These [three, *akahon*, *kibyōshi*, and *kurohon*] are called *kusazōshi* 臭草紙 (stinky books). Even the covers of the booklets were made with thin old/used paper and they were printed with poor quality black ink with an odor. That is why they are called *kusazōshi*. Around this time, the titles for booklets were written in vermilion. They were written on high quality paper printed monochrome with black ink....¹⁷

During the period of Meiwa 明和 (1764-1772) humor [*kokkei* 滑稽] became a topic in works of *kusazōshi*; elite elders and refined gentlemen also passed their time reading these. In time, they became popular. Their covers were printed in four colors. These, especially new publications, were printed on large folio paper [*daihanshi* 大半紙] cut in half; they were bound in a reddish cover of a single

¹⁵ Kyokutei Bakin, Kimura Miyogo, *Kinsei mono no hon Edo sakusha burui*

¹⁶ The five are: *akahon*, *kibyōshi*, *kurohon*, which are three types of *kusazōshi* (a general category); *kokkeibon* (humorous books); and *gōkan* format of collected volumes of *kusazōshi*.

¹⁷ Kyokutei Bakin, Kimura Miyogo, *Kinsei mono no hon Edo sakusha burui* 25.

sheet. These were put into polychrome wrappers with three booklets as a single combined-volume [*gōkan* 合巻].¹⁸

This account includes a passing reference to the theme of humor as important to one of the genres, but apart from this brief mention of theme, all other details concern physical attributes of the books: cover colors and quality, paper size, the smell of ink, and binding styles. In subsequent passages, such as Bakin's record of the genres of *sharebon* (books of wit and fashion)¹⁹ and *chūhon* 中本 (mid-sized books), there is slightly more description of content. But, these descriptions also remain similarly focused on material changes across time:

From around the time of Meiwa until the beginning of Kansei, these recounted the details of customers of the red-light districts. They were printed on half sheets of paper folded in two and bound in small booklets. ...In common parlance they are called *sharebon*. There were some of these also made from half sheets of large pieces of paper. There was a prohibition [of these] by the government at the beginning of the Kansei period, which led to the discontinuance (絶板) of *sharebon*, but after this...interesting [books] were made with stories that model the life of the floating world [*ukiyōmono mane* 浮世物真似]. These were two booklets that together composed one volume. They were called *chūhon*. They were called mid-sized books because they are in between the booklets made [at the size] of one half of a half sheet of paper and those booklets made of a half sheet of paper. Although these were not about the customers of the red-light district, in the end they were still variations of *sharebon*....²⁰

Hence, according to Bakin, the difference between a *sharebon* and the *chūhon* is the size of their paper—more than seemingly minor shifts in content.

These materially based and physically influenced genre names are where our difficulty arises with Edo-period literary categories. In reading these selections from *Mononohon*, it is easy to see why Leon Zolbrod wryly described this “chaotic”

¹⁸ Kyokutei Bakin, Kimura Miyogo, *Kinsei mono no hon Edo sakusha burui* 26.

¹⁹ For a more detailed discussion on *Sharebon* see: Araki, "Sharebon: Books for Men of Mode," 31-45.

²⁰ Kyokutei Bakin, Kimura Miyogo, *Kinsei mono no hon Edo sakusha burui* 91-92.

classification schema as “adding peanuts and pears and wondering what to call the sum, one would hardly know what to make of the jumble of different terms.... No wonder Japanese scholars, to say nothing of foreign students, spend inordinate amounts of energy trying to clarify this bewildering hodgepodge.”²¹

The larger problem is that these terms were originally coined to describe synchronic material differences among the myriad forms of literature available to readers—not to be part of a transhistorical discourse. We would likely recognize the futility of trying to use a term from early cinema history, such as the “talkie,” to understand film genres twenty years after the transition from silent cinema was complete, let alone genres of twenty-first century cinema. But this is similar to how Edo-period literary categories are often used in literary historiography. In Bakin’s *Mononohon* we can see this tension between the local, temporally-specific use of a material description of a book for differentiating its genre and its utility for understanding historical development of genres. *Mononohon* points to the limitations of such a complex mixture of material descriptions when they are transformed into a transhistorical framework for describing literary developments.

Even as Bakin was writing *Mononohon*, his contemporary generic systems were also shifting. Kido Yūichi and others identify a general reconfiguration of the generic system during Bakin’s lifetime. Generic systems based on book formats shifted to genres based on contents and themes, such as the *ninjōbon* (books of emotion) and *kokkeibon* (books of humor).²² Nevertheless, even after this shift towards more topically based

²¹ Zolbrod, "Yomihon: The Appearance of the Historical Novel in Late Eighteenth Century and Early Nineteenth Century Japan," 485.

²² Takagi Gen, "Kinsei goki shosetsu jyuuyōshi shikiron-Meiji no jyobun myōbun wo meguru," 5. See also Yamamoto Kazuaki, "Kinsei gesaku no 'kindai'."

genres, the physical formatting of books continued to play an important role in demarcating the social divisions and positions of texts. That is, even as content became increasingly important for naming genres, the physical attributes of texts tended to maintain a close correspondence with these genres.

Questions of genre are inherently complex and thorny issues, and much scholarship is devoted to explaining literary forms in the West as well as in Japan. The notion of genre involves both a description of various textual attributes and discourse about those attributes, which serves to give these attributes meaning. The history of Japanese literary forms brings to the fore many of these problems, and the primary issue here is lack of fixity in the construction of generic categories, both relative and absolute, within and between genres. As the literary field shifts over time, surrounding textual forms against which a particular genre is defined fade from view and the ability of a genre name to communicate meaning also changes. Perhaps modern scholars' frustration with Bakin's genre names stems from this dual instability of Edo period genres: on one hand, they change according to revolutions in content and themes, and on the other, they shift according to changes in material signifiers. It is this second aspect, the fact that the economies of book production and technologies of print also impacted genre formation, that is a source of our problem. From our current understanding of genres and literature, which sees genre primarily in terms of content and textual form, this material component may seem insignificant, irrelevant, and distracting.

Nevertheless, if we recall the scene of reading from *Grass on the Wayside*, then as in Bakin's genre schematics, Sōseki's concerns with materiality suggest that physical form played an important role in affecting the meaning of texts. We can see several

connecting points between Bakin's genres and Sōseki's descriptions. Their shared interest in and an awareness of the materiality of texts strongly suggest this type of material consciousness was not a uniquely Edo-period phenomenon. Instead, this preoccupation with the material register of texts, with their physical attributes as books, connects Sōseki's day with earlier moments in literary history.

I do not mean to suggest, however, that the specific material frameworks are universal or transhistorical. Instead, I argue they are part of a much larger process of accumulation of layers of meaning from multiple individual iterations of difference in literary forms. Each moment's concern with the materiality of texts should be understood as situated in a specific local context. Yet, in their aggregate, we can see the existence of an ongoing material consciousness of texts as physical objects. By seeking to understand this consciousness across time, and those individual expressions of it, new interpretive strategies become available helping us to connect texts with readers and understand their place in society.

On one level, Sōseki's descriptions of covers, from the first decades of the twentieth century, and Bakin's materially informed generic names from the Edo period are analogous. Both, originally at least, were descriptions of books used to designate differences within literary forms at a specific time and among a limited community of readers. At the moment texts were first published, these descriptions, such as those of the reddish covers of *akahon*, were meaningful within the lexicon of textual differences. That is, these terms were potent because other books did not match the descriptions and lacked such markers, as much if not more than the fact that the book being described matched the type. In short, Sōseki's descriptions are similar to the earlier ones in that they provide

meaningful information within a local, temporally specific literary field. In *Mononohon*, for instance, Bakin continually reminds us that most of these terms originated with common readers: “In common parlance they are called Akahon” (*sezoku kore o akahon to kansa shitari* 世俗これを赤本と喚做したり).²³ Only later these terms became institutionalized in literary historiography (a transtemporal enterprise), and, thereby, became further divorced from the local moment when they first signified differences between textual forms.

The ubiquity of physical descriptions as genre names in scholarship on Edo-period literature contrasts greatly with the paucity of terms for describing the physicality of books from Sōseki’s time. While the earlier Edo-period terms have been coopted into a transhistorical technical discourse of literary historiography, Sōseki’s remain largely ignored and unincorporated into literary history. As part of the historicist project of “Japanese literature” the earlier terms are used to serve a diachronic agenda: to show progression over time. As discussed above, the history of Edo literature is narrated frequently in terms of these materially informed genres, as one material format follows another. But, if the history of Edo-literary studies may be classified by its obsessive concern with the materiality of texts, these seemingly nonliterary or extra-literary generic markers, then the Meiji and Taisho periods could similarly be characterized by an underestimation of the importance of such material markers in mapping out the literary field.

While our mental map of the Meiji literary field includes a few key material markers—such as new media including newspapers and magazines—it lacks an appreciation for the materiality of books and the material consciousness of texts reflected

²³ Kyokutei Bakin, Kimura Miyogo, *Kinsei mono no hon Edo sakusha burui* 25.

in their pages. We have often ignored, for example, the social position and influence of new works of literature in terms of their place or format of publication within a world of texts. When a literary text is abstracted into language alone, a story initially published in an ephemeral low-circulation magazine reprinted in an academic collection mistakenly appears equal and identical to one published in a hardcover format, even though their social position at the time of publication, as demarcated by the material form of their original publication, is clearly different.

The consideration of how materiality functioned and corresponded to the social world of texts will provide us with insights unavailable from just the words of the texts alone, especially as texts are recreated over time as discussed in Chapter Two. At the same time we recognize the limitations of turning specific material descriptions of books and texts into transhistorical generic categories, there is much to be gained by embracing the materiality of texts as meaningful guidance to the local literary field of particular times and readers. In addition to the role these descriptions of the materiality of books may have in setting the stage in a story, they also remind us that the world of texts—even imaginary ones—have material components and real-world counterparts. Paying attention to the imaginary world of texts will lead toward a better understanding of divisions within the real literary field (genre, high-low positionality, etc.). This, in turn, will open doors to insights about the place of literary texts within a larger non-literary field of texts and books. The descriptions of the materiality in stories are meaningful markers of difference, which individually will help us interpret literary stories and collectively will help us understand better the history of literature.

The various descriptions of books and their physical attributes in Sōseki's writings point us to a complex world of texts where old and new, foreign and domestic are interacting and being sorted out into a new physical hierarchy of texts embedded within a range of materialities. On one hand, appreciating these portrayals of books offers new insights into his stories. On the other hand, they point toward the complexity and heterogeneity of material formats taken by books.

Reading Books within Books

The descriptions of books as objects found in Sōseki's novels give insight into how the materiality of books, both old and new, are used as props to set the stage, develop characters, and advance the narrative. By describing the visceral presence of books, as much as if not more than their contents, Sōseki brings into relief the relative position and genre of the books he describes. Often Sōseki manifests the tensions his characters feel through describing textual materialities—covers, bindings, paper types, the look, the feel, the condition and age of books. Through Sōseki's portrayals of books, characters discuss and debate the literary field. Because books as objects surrounding the characters reflect their place and status as readers, Sōseki's material details provide important clues for interpreting the position of these readers within the literary field. We can see also how these characters are connected, through their interactions with books, to a larger social milieu. Sōseki elucidates the relationship of imagined book owners and readers to the larger literary field and society.

For example, the connection of characters to society comes into focus through their interactions with books in a separate scene in *Michikusa*. This third scene of reading

also provides a way to move beyond the binary of highbrow hard covers, lowbrow dirty soft covers, a way to discover greater diversity, and perhaps the middlebrow reader. Here Kenzō has an awkward and ironic discussion about books and reading with Hida, his brother-in-law. Kenzō's half-sister, Onatsu, has asthma and is currently suffering from a potentially life-threatening attack, which has lasted for several days. The discussion about books and reading begins after Kenzō returns to Hida's study from checking on Onatsu. Kenzō enters the study where he finds Hida reading a book, unconcerned about his wife's grim condition.

Hida was reading a book with a nonchalant look on his face. "What? It's just her same old illness" he said, showing no concern for Kenzō's consolatory visit. Over the years as this same struggle had played out over and over again, this man seemed to lack even the smallest seedling of sentiment for this poor woman who was naturally withering away. In fact, this man, though he had lived with her as his wife for nearly thirty years, had never once said a single kind word to his wife.

Seeing Kenzō enter, Hida immediately put down the book he was reading and removed his iron-rimmed spectacles. "While you were in the living room, I was doing some light reading."

Hida and reading—the two seemed completely incongruous to Kenzō.

"What is it?" [Asking about the book]

"It's not something a person like you would read Ken, my boy; it's old." Hida laughed picking up the book he had laid down on the desk, handing it to Kenzō. Unexpectedly it was *Jōzan kidan* at which Kenzō was a little surprised. This showed better than anything the personality of this man who, while his own wife was even now about to expire in a fit of coughing, could listen to her [suffer] as though it was none of his business and calmly read such a book.

"I am old fashioned, and that is why I like these timeworn *kōdan* vernacular stories." He had mistaken *Jōzan kidan* for an everyday *kōdan* vernacular tale, but at least he wasn't misguided enough to confuse the book's author, Yuasa Jōzan, for a common storyteller.

"Jōzan was a scholar that is for sure. Who was better, he or Kyokutei Bakin? I have Bakin's *Eight Dogs*."

As could be expected, Hida had a paulownia box filled nicely with a pile of booklets of *Eight Dogs*. These were printed with movable type on Japanese-paper; Hida had purchased them through subscription.

"Ken, my boy, do you own *Famous Sights of Edo*?"

“No”

“Oh, they are interesting books. I love them. If you want I can lend them to you. You can learn all about Nihonbashi or Sakurachō during old Edo!”

From a separate book box in the alcove, he pulled out one or two old booklets printed on fine Mino paper with pale yellow covers. He treated Kenzō as though he would have never even heard of the title *Famous Sights of Edo*. But one of Kenzō’s fondest childhood memories was of the days spent taking out this book from the storeroom and carefully turning the pages finding illustrations to look at....

“Recently, even as medicine for my own health, I am unable to take the time to read books not directly connected to my research, particularly in such a leisurely manner as I did back in those days,” Kenzō thought to himself. He felt envious and wretched, these days he was just too busy being busy.

[While they were waiting for Kenzō’s brother]... Hida kept his attention by continuing to try to talk about books. It seemed he had some [mistaken] belief that so long as he was talking about books, he was not bothering Kenzō. Unfortunately the limits of his knowledge were such that he thought *Jōzan kidan* was a collection of performed historical tales. Despite this, he owned a bound collection of every early edition of *The Pictorial Magazine of Japanese Fashion* [*Fūzoku gahō* 風俗画報]. After [Hida] had exhausted the discussion of books he changed topics randomly.²⁴

Here Kenzō’s character and Hida’s personality (and lack of concern for his wife’s health) are contrasted, in part, through a consideration of books and their consumption, poking fun at Hida’s old-fashioned literary interests and his superficial knowledge of literature that belies his relatively expensive collection of books. The book Hida is reading, *Jōzan kidan* 常山紀談 (Records and stories of Jyōzan), is an eighteenth century collection compiled by Confucian scholar Yuasa Jōzan 湯浅常山 (1707-81), which Hida mistakes for a collection of *kōdan*, a genre of vernacular storytelling very popular in the late nineteenth century.

The scene also offers important clues to understanding the literary field. It introduces a variety of texts— primarily through their physical attributes—within a

²⁴ Sōseki zenshū, 10: 73-76.

generic and social framework in the early twentieth century. At the same time, it reminds us how complicated the literary field was, filled with a great number of different physical formats of books in circulation. We see old texts, newer reprints, contemporary magazines, books printed with movable type, and woodblock printed booklets. (I return to this point below.)

And, yet, in the English translation of *Grass On the Wayside* by Edwin McClellan, much of the physical descriptions of these books is left out. While “*Sights of Tokyo*” is described as printed on fine Mino paper, which shows the book to be a high-quality older edition, the details of the other books are downplayed. For instance, the English translation does not include the description of Hida’s copy of *Eight Dogs* apart from saying that it was a “limited edition,” that is, purchased through subscription; the discussion of paper types, mode of printing (moveable type on Japanese paper), and the paulownia wood box are truncated.²⁵ But these are important details for understanding Hida’s place as a new consumer of literature. If he owned older copies of *Eight Dogs*, not a luxury reprint, the scene would have been different. Hida may have just been fortunate to have inherited the books or purchased them when he was young, but instead he was spendthrift enough to order *Eight Dogs* new through subscription. First, what did these details tell the readers?

²⁵ This is certainly not to imply McClellan’s translation is wrong. He did not make a mistake. Instead, it seems some information about the physical details of the book was purposefully abbreviated. The question is why were they elided from McClellan’s authoritative translation? This larger question about the disappearance of materiality from the purview of modern Japanese literature is beyond the scope of this current study. See Natsume and McClellan, *Grass on the wayside = Michikusa: a novel*.



Figure V-2 Advertisement for Limited Edition of *Eight Dogs*

To a contemporary 1915 reader (especially one reading serially in a newspaper where subscriptions for such nice reprints were advertised daily), such details of books as physical objects would have accentuated the gap between Hida's limited literary sophistication and his seemingly limitless ability to consume and purchase literature, including the expensive series of *Pictorial Magazine of Japanese Fashion* and his reprint of Bakin's *Eight Dogs*. An advertisement (Figure V-2) from the September 9th, 1909 *Asahi Newspaper* for a subscription limited edition copy of *Eight Dogs* points out the materiality of the text: "Complete in Four Volumes. Leather-bound Spines. Western Binding. In a Box. Beautifully Made," and notes that "Supplies are strictly limited to

5000 Copies.” The advertisement asks “How can you as a reader not be ashamed at not having *Eight Dogs* in your study?”²⁶ Hida, it seems, was intent on not feeling ashamed.

On one hand, this scene in *Grass on the Wayside* highlights an uncomfortable gap between the place of a relatively poor scholar, struggling to make ends meet, and that of a person like Hida who could afford to buy such nice books (the above advertised copy costs seven yen, an outrageous price for the day). Adding to the irony, Kenzō was sending his sister a small sum of money each month. For Kenzō, a man of letters, this gap between Hida’s leisurely consumption and his ignorance seems very frustrating. Hida treats Kenzō as a literary neophyte, because Kenzō was at the moment not in a position as a consumer to purchase these texts. We learn in reality, however, Kenzō clearly was more experienced about the world of texts since he grew up reading *Sights of Edo* as a child and knew better the actual history of *Jōzan kidan*. Kenzō probably wished he could afford such a nice copy of *Eight Dogs*. Yet, he could not afford such books. More importantly, as he comments at the end of the passage, even if he wanted to read for pleasure or for his health, he could ill afford the time to do so. In contrast, Hida was reading to pass the time even while his wife was dying in the next room.²⁷

The social position readers/book owners acquired through their interaction with texts was directly related to the relative social position of the books themselves. As I have suggested, the place of books was linked to materiality as much as to content. While

²⁶ Anonymous. "Shosai ni haken no naki dokushojin no wa haji ni arazu ya." 1.

²⁷ One additional issue brought up by this scene is the changing relationship between book ownership and book knowledge as a symbol of cultural capital. Kenzō clearly knew the books better, which in a lending library-based economy of textual circulation or one in which book ownership was an exception, an intimate knowledge of a book could be more impressive than ownership of it. There are numerous examples of readers memorizing parts of books and vying with one another to show master of the story through public oral recitation. (See Uchida Roan, "Hakkenden yodan.") Ownership of texts, however, represents a different mode of cultural capital. Hida owned books but he did not know them in the way Kenzō did. In this view, the struggle for cultural superiority or equality through owning books (which Hida was asserting by showing off his book collections) was competing with knowledge as a marker of sophistication.

Hida's collection showed multiple book formats and materialities, in this scene, he is not said to own copies of Western bound books. His reprints of *Eight Dogs* were done with movable type, but they were still printed on Japanese paper and were kept in a box—not on a bookshelf, as hard covered western-style books would have been. Hida is a middlebrow reader outside the pull of modernity, but who falls flat in his aspirations to an older definition of cultural sophistication. Sōseki shows Hida's failure by pointing out Hida's mistaken knowledge about the books he owned, but the irony of this scene depended upon the description of the books in the collection.

In contrast to Hida's collection, as we have seen, Kenzō owned a large number of hardbound western books from his time in England. These are a different register of texts and physical objects than those owned by Hida or the booklets from the lending library read by Kenzō's wife. Kenzō's collection of western hardback books symbolized his position as a new kind of scholar.

An Overused Trope

We can go into the canon of Japanese literature, look at the formation of modern literature, and recognize within it a process of self-fashioning—authors and readers positing themselves and literary forms vis-à-vis recognizably Japanese literary forms and imported western literary forms. In order to understand this process we must consider specific modes of self-fashioning in the creation of literature.

Sōseki's stories are filled with young male scholars who own similar collections of western hardback books. In addition to Kenzō (“Grass on the Wayside”), these include Ono (*Gubijinsō* 虞美人草 1907), Sanshirō (*Sanshirō* 三四郎 1908), Daisuke (*Sorekara* そ

れから 1909), *Sosuke* (*Mon* 門 1910), and *Yoshio* (*Meian* 明暗 1916). Sōseki's descriptions of these men were, however, in many ways ahistorical in their exclusive focus on western books. Readers are not shown clearly the Japanese and Chinese book formats or the wide spectrum of mixed physical formats with which these characters would also have interacted. In addition to a range of Western book formats and their variants, these elite, educated males would have owned collections of books similar to those owned by Hida. It is important to keep this fact in mind.

Sōseki's fixation on western books in his descriptions of elite males in his stories (and in his public image created through photographs of him) do not represent the complexity and variety of book formats in circulation at the time. Sōseki's own collection reflects this diversity.

Stepping outside the pages of his novels by looking at photographs of Sōseki, the author, in his studies over the years, we see that, like his novels, photographs inevitably conceal aspects and highlight others. We can learn as much from what is excluded from these photos as what is included. For instance, a photograph from 1917 of Sōseki's study (Figure V-3) after his death presents a revealing view of how diverse the physical formats of books were at the turn of the century.²⁸ This space is characterized by a plethora of book forms, a mixture of old and new, Japanese, Chinese, and European books and languages.

²⁸ *Sōseki zenshū*, 4 furoku: 79.

Figure V-3 Sōseki's Study in 1917

In the foreground of the photo is a small writing table. To the table's right there are two short piles of books stacked on their side. At the left of the table is a hibachi and teapots. Behind the table on the floor there are two mountain ranges of books stretching from one side of the room to the other. This row of books turns to the left and comes



along the table by the teapots. Behind the mountains of books, on the back wall are four bookcases of various heights. The one on the right is small and has glass sliding doors; through the reflection on the glass can be seen horizontal stacks of books. To its left there is a smaller bookcase with two shelves. The bottom shelf has a set of ten identically bound western books, nine of which are vertical and one is resting horizontally on top of the others. The next shelf is filled with Japanese bound books laid horizontally. The third

bookcase has a set of drawers at the bottom and four bookshelves on top, closed in behind glass doors. The shelves are filled with western bound books lying horizontally on their side. The final bookcase is perhaps the same large seven-shelf bookcase that will be discussed below. Its bottom two shelves are filled with neat rows of Western books standing erect. The next four shelves and the top of the bookcase are filled with Japanese bound books lying on their sides. The heavy western books are on the bottom and the lighter Japanese ones are on top, perhaps for safety purposes in case of an earthquake.

Even though this study is that of an elite male intellectual, its library of books includes hardbacks alongside various soft-covers, old books alongside new ones. Yet, unlike this diverse reality, Sōseki's descriptions of books owned by elite males in his stories are skewed towards the hardbound western books. Moreover, even Sōseki's descriptions of western books highlight only part of this diverse format. When Sōseki gives specifics, he inevitably describes the finest and most expensive western books—those with leather covers with gilded lettering and designs.

In contrast, others, including Mori Ōgai, seem less interested in such expensive books. In Ōgai's 1916 account of an Edo-period physician, Shibue Chūsai 渋江抽齋 (1805-1858), Ōgai explains his own penchant for less expensive western books, such as those by the German publisher Reclam—a publisher of inexpensive reprints. Ōgai justifies the affinity he felt towards Klaus J. Bartel, a historian of German literature, because Bartel also used inexpensive reprints of books. Describing his own reading and book buying habits, Ōgai writes:

From the time I was young, I was of the habit of reading extensively, and, thus, bought a great number of books. The greater portion of my income ended up in the hands of domestic book dealers and reading rooms in Berlin and Paris. However, I have never once sought for rare books. Once when I was reading the

preface to Bartel's *Literary History* of Germany, I saw that Bartel tried to purchase as many books as he could and would wander about hunting for inexpensive books; most of the books, whose authors he quoted in "Literary History," were no more than Reclam editions! Though I may be a stranger in a strange land, when I read this in my heart I felt as if I have found a friend of my own tastes.²⁹

Ōgai's interest in inexpensive books seems markedly different from that of Sōseki. Perhaps this difference can be explained by the place of Reclam style reprints in Ōgai's Germany as opposed to Sōseki's England. Regardless of the reason for the difference, based on their prevalence in his stories and photographs of him, Sōseki was more interested in hardbound and more expensive western books. Despite the seeming difference between Ōgai's and Sōseki's books, they are each using them to stake out a social position for themselves. Ōgai highlights his frugality, and Sōseki his position as an elite scholar. But the reality is each of their collections were far more diverse than either of these polarities suggest.

In the midst of this complicated literary field inhabited by so many physical formats of books, it is all the more significant that Sōseki devoted as much attention as he did to the western book, both as an object and as a social signifier in his stories. Rather than reflecting the historical material diversity, Sōseki surrounded a host of fictional elite male characters with idealized libraries, clearly skewed towards the western book. This nearly exclusive focus on western books in describing Sōseki's male protagonists situates them as elites. Each of them claimed their privileged social place in their respective stories in part through owning, reading, and longing for relatively fine western books—not the inexpensive ones that Ōgai idealized or the hybrid ones other characters read. The non-western books, instead, were frequently the purview of other characters of lower

²⁹ *Shinsen Mori Ōgai shū*, 312.

status in the stories, particularly women such as Osumi and less-literary elite men such as Hida. Sōseki's descriptions depended upon and work within the material consciousness of his readers, who understood the significance of books and their covers.

Western Books and the Disruption of Nineteenth-Century Material

Consciousness

Looking at representations and descriptions of physical formats of books in Sōseki's writings, it is useful to bear in mind that the material formats of books was more than an abstract issue for Sōseki. He not only wrote stories but also was increasingly involved in the production and reprinting of these stories in book format. As a producer of both symbolic and physical commodities, the function of different physical formats was certainly on his mind.

One of the most disruptive technological and material impacts upon the nineteenth century Japanese world of books and in Sōseki's life was precisely the spread of western books (*yōhon* and *yōsho*). These "occidental books" were both physical objects and textual contents. Therefore, they were doubly disruptive: both their contents and material formats influenced prior and contemporary genres. In terms of their literary contents, these foreign books introduced new themes, ideas, and modes of representation. Literary scholarship on the late nineteenth century has paid great attention to the impact of the ideas found in books, but scant attention has been given to how books as objects impacted the literary field. As discussed above, the physical formats of books were an important marker of genre and social function of a text. How did the permeation of western-style hardbound books disrupt the material hierarchy of texts?

In addition to those representations of books looked at thus far, one particular format—described in pronounced detail and number in Sōseki’s stories and which meant a great deal to him personally—is the western hard-covered book. No doubt Sōseki’s relationship to these foreign objects evolved over the course of his lifetime as he interacted with these books in different contexts: as a young reader, as a student at the University of Tokyo, as a schoolteacher in the provinces, as a government sponsored student in England, as a professor at the University of Tokyo, and as a full-time author.³⁰ Even during the last dozen years of Sōseki’s life, when he worked as a full-time author, there is a discernable shift in his attitude towards western hard-covered books. Inasmuch as Sōseki’s stories often echo his own past, his depictions of western books help us begin to unravel his ambivalence toward the format. At times he admired the format, while at others he expressed mental anguish about it.

Sōseki’s own depression and battles with mental illness were likely one source of inspiration for his negative depictions of western books. His years in England, surrounded by hardback books, were a particularly trying and mentally taxing time for him. Yet, there may have also been a more immediate economic cause for his ambivalence toward the place of western books after he became a professional author. It seems no coincidence that ambivalences towards hardbound western books in Sōseki’s stories occurred at the same time as his own writings, which were originally newspaper serializations, were being reprinted in book formats. This transformation into books placed his writings into a new generic matrix, one governed more by the physical format

³⁰ Writing in the *Asahi* newspaper in 1911, Sōseki reflected back on his experience as a student at the University of Tokyo and describes one of his professors, Raphael Von Koeber. In the essay, entitled *Geberu sensei* ケーベル先生 (Professor Koeber), Sōseki wrote “The decorative spines of occidental books always made me feel learning and arts were more splendid than Chinese books and Japanese books did.” Sōseki zenshū, 12: 462.

of bindings and covers, where his books would compete economically, symbolically, culturally, and materially with western books.

Looking at depictions of material and physical formats of books in Sōseki's writings, it is important to bear in mind that questions of formatting, covers, paper, and book boxes were more than abstract issues for him; they were, instead, deeply connected to his livelihood. He not only wrote stories but also was increasingly involved in the transformation of these stories as they were reprinted into books. As a producer of both symbolic (stories) and material commodities (books as objects), his consciousness of the functions of various physical formats and book attributes was certainly heightened.

One particular incident from 1914 highlights the connection between the reprinting of Sōseki's own writings with his concern about the physical format they were taking. In the summer of that year Sōseki agreed to let a young, unknown publisher, Iwanami Shigeo 岩波茂雄 (1881-1946), print the book version of his novel *Kokoro*. This permission was granted on the condition that he, Sōseki, (and not Iwanami) design the format and layout for the book—it was Iwanami's first book after all. After a period of negotiation between publishing houses and Sōseki, his willingness to let Sōseki design the format of the book ultimately secured Iwanami the publication rights.³¹ Sōseki's wife, Kyoko, recounts these discussions as follows:

I remember it was the summer of the third year of Taisho [1914]. There were many requests from bookstores with which there had been long-standing

³¹ Most of Sōseki's books were designed by Hashiguchi Goyō 橋口五葉 (1880-1921), and to a lesser extent Tsuda Seifu 津田青楓 (1880-1978). Goyō designed book designs for Nagai Kafū 永井荷風 and Izumi Kyōka 泉鏡花 as well. In all Goyō designed covers and did illustrations for sixteen of Sōseki's books, beginning with illustrations for *我が輩は猫である* (I am A Cat, 1905-06) in the literary magazine *Hototogisu* ホトトギス and its subsequent three-volume book edition (1910) and ending with *Kōjin* 行人 (The Wayfarer, 1914). Seifu later took over after Sōseki began publishing with Iwanami. Seifu designed *Grass on the Wayside* and *Meian* as well as numerous reprints of Sōseki's books. See Hara Hiromu, "Sōseki hon no sōtei," 19-25.

relationships [for permission] to publish *Kokoro* and even Mr. Iwanami also wanted to publish it. . . . In the end, it was decided that Iwanami would publish it. Up until then [Sōseki's] publishers did all the work of publishing. But this time, although Iwanami was still left with the hassle of collecting capital, it was decided that [Sōseki was to do the design work] because hammering out each and every detail seemed to be a great deal of work as [Iwanami] was a neophyte publisher.

In addition to the hassle of deciding on each and every detail there was an ongoing debate between Sōseki and Iwanami about how nice a book should be printed. She continues:

Iwanami was an idealist; he wanted to use the best materials for every part of the book, and thereby make something exceedingly magnificent. Now there is nothing wrong with good materials, but if it were done in that way, then its price would be expensive, and in the end it wouldn't sell; therefore, it would be a bad situation where money would be lost. That is why Sōseki lectured him, saying "If you are such a person to try to make something so extravagant through making this, that, and the other things so good, then I will not let you publish it. If you make the cover nice, you must make the paper less so. If you use fine paper, then you must make the box more economical. You have to think and plan in this manner and having a good design [*ii gu'ai* いい具合]. That is how books are made. Even if you invest capital, if you are not thinking about the fact that it is a product to be sold, then you will not make any money in the end." But, Iwanami, no matter how much he was preached to, nevertheless, wanted to make it a beautiful book in every way. So, every time they met with each other, there was a lecture. Despite this, [Sōseki] personally designed *Kokoro* and so he personally gave instructions for the [designs of the] outside and inside covers.³²

Sōseki was frank in admitting that his and all books were commodities (*urimono* 売り物). He recognized the importance of striking the right balance between crafting a fine quality book and producing an item that would sell. His hesitancy in allowing Iwanami to publish *Kokoro* in a pretty format does not seem to have been due to a lack of self-confidence about his writing, but was a cold recognition of the economic limitations of the literary marketplace. The physical format of books, their materiality as much as content value, was an important aspect of this economic question. Sōseki, as a producer and buyer of books, understood this economic aspect as well as anyone. In the end,

³²Etō Jun, *Sōseki to sono jidai*, 150.

however, Sōseki consented, and Iwanami published *Kokoro* in a beautiful format. It was an attractive hybrid book, neither a leather-bound western book nor a soft-covered Japanese booklet. Instead, its cover was made from firm cardboard and it came with a nice cardboard box for storage. Within the social hierarchy of domestically produced Japanese literary texts, this format was near the top. Perhaps this concession to make such a nice book was made by Sōseki and Iwanami because they both also understood that format was a powerful statement about the contents and that readers judged books by their covers.

Imported western books circulating in Japan, in many ways, were independent of or insulated from such economic questions of form and content value because they were produced originally in and for a different economy. (Domestically produced hardback books, however, were a different issue.) Naturally, the owners of bookstores and consumers of imported hardback books were concerned about price, but their concern did not necessarily impact the material formats used for these imported books. The elegant and expensive format of western hardbound books testified to the worth of their contents. And, yet, despite these claims by the physical format, their content value was not guaranteed.

In Sōseki's earlier works, from at least 1907 as well, characters and narrators question the actual social value of the contents of western books. Drawing the reader's attention to the feel of the book as a physical object highlights this gap—not by explicitly describing its content or language. A scene from *Gubijinsō* provides a glimpse of the lofty position of fine western books. But, at the same time, the scene brings into question the relationship between the values associated with their material form and the value of

the content of these books. It also challenges the place of the owner of such books, highlighting a shell of sophistication and moral uprightness book owners seem to claim for themselves via the physical attributes of these books. In *Gubijinsō*, the physical description of Western books functions symbolically in its representation of the personal character of Ono. For instance, in one scene, Munechika, a conservative man representing the old guard, suggests that Ono, a modern scholar of literature, is like fine western bound books with beautiful covers because he wears nice gold-rimmed glasses. But, rather than complimenting Ono, Munechika suggests Ono's glasses, like an excessively nice book cover, are a facade intended to make up for his flawed character.³³

The success of this comparison between Ono and the western books depends upon a larger discourse about books and their material forms. Even as late as 1907, Western-style books with their hardbacks and leather covers continued to assert the value of their contents vis-à-vis Japanese bound books. I quote the following passage from *Gubijinsō* at length, paying attention to the rich details given about the materiality of the new publications—particularly their bindings, covers, and spines. Ono and Munechika are looking at books through a store window:

Behind a glass door on the other side [of the train tracks], western-style books printed with metal type suddenly caught the poet's [Ono] interest.

"It looks like several newly published books have come in across the way. Why don't we have a look?" [Ono]

"Books, huh? Are you going to buy something?"[Munechika]

"If something looks interesting I just might buy it."[Ono]

"It is rather ironic to buy books right after buying a wastepaper basket!"[Munechika]

"How is that?"[Ono]

³³ See *Sōseki zenshū*.

Before Munechika could answer he ducked between the train cars to the other side, with [Ono's] wastepaper basket in tow. Ono followed behind at a trot.

“Wow, look at all these beautiful books on display. So how about it, is there something you want?”[Munechika]

“Let's see,” said Ono, studying the books without reservation, bending down and leaning forward till his gold-rimmed spectacles almost touched the glass window.

The covers of some books were made of soft tanned lambskin that was a deep sage green; in their centers were water lilies thinly drawn in gold, with straight lines running from the flower's sepals where the petals attached to the bottom of their covers, and then these lines spiraled around from the front to the back cover. Some [other books] had flat spines of deep crimson with lines resembling golden hair spread along them. [The spines of other books] had shield emblems in thick metal foiling, which had been stamped into the texture of the cloth with hard brass plates. [Others] had plain calfskin spines divided with azure grey on the top and blue green on the bottom, with inlaid lettering on the two halves. The title pages of other books, printed on coarsely textured paper with fine vermilion lettering, were also visible.

“You seem to want them all don't you,” said Munechika, not looking at the books but rather staring at Ono's glasses.

“They all have the new styles of bindings. What do you think?”[Ono]

“It seems to me they just make the covers pretty so as to compensate for their contents!” [Munechika]

“These are different than your books, [they make them like this] because they are books of literature.” [Ono]

“So they need to make the facade of literary books pretty? So I suppose that because you are a scholar of literature it is also a necessity for you to wear those gold-rimmed glasses?” [Munechika]

“That is a bit of a stretch. But in one sense of the word, literary scholars are more or less like works of art as well,” replied Ono, as he at last stepped away from the [store] window.

“That makes sense for a work of art, but compensating for something by wearing gold-rimmed glasses is rather pathetic.” [Munechika]

“Having to wear glasses is a curse. Munechika, aren't you nearsighted?”

“I don't study. So I couldn't go nearsighted even if I wanted to.” [Munechika]

“How about farsighted, then?” [Ono]

“Stop your joking, and lets get walking.”[Munechika]

The two of them walked off shoulder to shoulder.³⁴

³⁴ Sōseki zenshū, 65-69.

Based on the descriptions of these leather-bound books, we can only assume that these are supposed to be typical of the finest quality of literary books available at the time in Japan. Their exquisite packaging implies that their contents would be equally valuable. It is with this assumed correlation of material value and content value, however, with which this passage is playing. Literary books are often invasive species into the economy and ecology of texts suggesting through their material form that they are the most valuable. And modern educated individuals make a similar claim through their ownership and interaction with these texts.

Despite their physical closeness at the end of the scene, Ono and Munechika are on a collision course in the story. Ono wants to appear upright and moral, with his scholarly airs, gold-rimmed glasses, and interest in fine western books. However, by story's end, Ono's moral vacuity is uncovered. Munechika's awareness of the gap between the form, content, and social position of people and books proves prophetic.³⁵

Western-style hardback books were certainly not new in Japan in 1907 when *Gubijinsō* was written. Hardbound books had been circulating, although in a limited number and fashion, since Japan's earliest interactions with the West. Even though they initially were rare, their format and material presence was not unknown and they entered into the material consciousness as a point of counter distinction to Japanese and Chinese binding and book formats. By the turn of the century, however, western hardbound books were readily available in stores. Despite their increased circulation they maintained a sense of newness, and promise. Their fine leather covers seemed to speak of greatness, pointing to equally lofty contents. Their exquisite covers placed them on the opposite side

³⁵ For a reading of Ono's flexible morality see Ito, *An Age of Melodrama: Family, Gender, and Social Hierarchy in the Turn-Of-The-Century Japanese Novel*.

of the social/economic spectrum from the filthy, dirty covers found in *Grass on the Wayside*. These were men's books, belonging to the literary scholar—a modern man of late Meiji who overly populated the fiction of the day. Owning such fine books was one way to assert value and cultural superiority, as Ono and Kenzō wanted.

Objects of Distress and Desire

Across Sōseki's stories at the end of the Meiji period there is a growing ambivalence towards western books on the part of Soseki's characters—suggesting perhaps a shift in Sōseki's own material consciousness, and perhaps those of his readers, concerning these hardbound books as objects. This ambivalence has its roots in the materiality of the books, which Sōseki often describes at great length and with which his characters interact. The books as objects epitomized by their attractive physical forms—more than their foreign language—captivate the fictional book owners; but these western books seem to often betray their owner's expectations, as they become objects of distress.

For instance, in Sōseki's trilogy of *Sanshirō*, *Sorekara*, and *Mon*, western books are objects of promise and hope. Yet, even in this trilogy there is a sense that the fine materiality of these books is somehow disconnected from their lofty and sophisticated social function and value.

In fact, this trilogy reveals a discernable shift in the relationship of its protagonists to western books. Even as the protagonists in these three stories have different names, they share characteristics and provide a connected pattern of growth and development; this growth is manifested, for instance, through their shifting appreciation of western books. In *Sanshirō*, the protagonist falls in love with the idea of being a scholar with a

study filled with western books. Despite its overall arc of loss, in *Sorekara* this dream of scholarship is realized, as the protagonist owns a room filled with western books. Finally, *Mon* depicts the protagonist as less interested in the content of western books although he is still attracted to their physical presence. This apparent material success—their accumulation of book objects—provides all the more contrast against which the greater themes of betrayal and forfeiture transpire across these three works.

For instance, we can see the attraction of these objects on a young, aspiring man in the character Sanshirō, who wants to be surrounded by such books, in the novel of the same name. In one particular scene in this Bildungsroman story of growth and education, western books mark a lofty goal of development. Sanshirō is visiting Nonomiya, a university professor, when Nonomiya has to leave to visit his sister in the hospital. Upon leaving, Nonomiya encourages Sanshirō to make himself at home, saying, “You may read any of the books in my study. They aren’t particularly interesting, but please peruse something. There are a few novels as well.”³⁶

After dinner there is an accident on the train tracks behind the house in which a young woman is cut in half by a train. This incident reminds Sanshirō of a “critic” (*hihyōka* 批評家) whom he met on a train earlier:

Sanshirō used the word critic in an unusual way. Using it thus he felt good about it. I too would like to be a critic in the future someday... [He thought]

[Returning to Nonomiya’s study]

Sanshirō looked around the room, the table in the corner, the chair in front of the table, a book box next to the chair, and western books lined up neatly in that box. He thought the owner of this quiet study, like the critic [from the train] was safe and happy.³⁷

³⁶ Natsume Sōseki, *Sanshirō*, 71.

³⁷ Natsume Sōseki, *Sanshirō*, 76-77.

In this scene, the Western books are part of a world of safety removed from the dangers outside where one was free to be a “modern scholar” or a “critic.” Sanshirō wants the life these western books seem to promise.

In the next book of the trilogy, *Sorekara*, the protagonist, Daisuke, has succeeded in acquiring a room full of western books, but in the end this dream begins to unravel. Despite their extravagance, western books for Daisuke are the one treat he allowed himself because they were doubly appealing: offering beauty as a physical object and worthy contents:

He [Daisuke] was a man who wanted to satisfy his sophisticated wants in life. But in another sense, he was a man who wanted to purchase satisfaction of his moral wants. It was anticipated that at some forthcoming moment these two sides would cross swords releasing sparks like fireworks. For this reason, he contented himself with a low level of worldly wants. His room was a typical Japanese one. It had no great decorations. But if asked he would say he did not display things of great value. Yet, the western books lined up on his bookshelf were the only things colorful enough to strike the eye as beautiful. He sat vacantly in the midst of these books. He looked around this room, while thinking that what he needed to awaken his dormant consciousness was to adjust in some way the objects that surrounded him. And then, his gaze stopped fixed on the wall.³⁸

On one hand, Daisuke’s success in creating a space where he could be surrounded by western books stands out. These colorful books as objects, however, stand in stark contrast to his bleak mood and his feeling of insecurity. The gap between the books and their contents is secondary here to that fissure between the place of these books and the social position of their owner. These western books were supposed to make him safe and happy—as a critic or modern scholar. Yet he felt as apprehensive as ever.

The last story in the trilogy, *Mon*, provides a view of an older protagonist, Sōsuke, living a marginal life. Again, literary scholars have long recognized that the character

³⁸ Sōseki zenshū, 6: 178.

Sōsuke is in many ways a reincarnation of Daisuke.³⁹ Now older, Sōsuke feels less inclined to buy or handle western books, although he still frequently looks at them in store windows.

Sōsuke exited the train at Surugadaishita station. His eyes were immediately drawn to western books beautifully displayed in a store window on the right. Sōsuke stood in front of them for a while looking at the gold lettering vividly stamped upon [covers] of red, green, and stripes. Naturally, he understood what their titles were, but he did not have the slightest curiosity to take them in his hand and read their content. It was a lifetime ago, Sōsuke would say, when he couldn't pass in front of a bookstore without wanting to enter it to look at books, and then once inside the store he would inevitably want something. But now only one book seemed appealing to him, *History of Gambling*, and that was only because it was so exquisitely done and exhibited right in the middle of the display. Laughing to himself, Sōsuke crossed to the other side of the busy street, and now was looking in the window of a clock store....⁴⁰

Even now, as an older reader, Sōsuke was still drawn to the books' material presence, not the contents per se. It is the exquisiteness of its binding that attracts him.

The Light and Darkness of Western Books

These feelings of distress echo Sōseki's own mental stress from his time studying English literature in London and as a scholar in Japan, when these foreign books surrounded and overwhelmed him as they do his protagonists. Further examples can be found in Sōseki's *Grass on the Wayside* and *Meian*, where Western books are objects associated with despair and stress. The presence of western books in these stories seems at once to reflect the neuroses of the protagonists and at the same time to perhaps be the cause of their troubles.

³⁹ See, for instance, McClain, "Rethining Soseki's Mon."

⁴⁰ Sōseki zenshū, 6. @ 358-359

In Sōseki's later works there is a general use of descriptions of foreign, hardbound books to increase the sense of irritation or despair a character is feeling. In *Grass on the Wayside*, for instance, when Kenzō is suffering a nervous breakdown from the stress of having things to do “piled up like a mountain on the floor of his study,” “a mountain of western books” also surrounds him. In this way, the material presence of western books mirrors the problems Kenzō is facing:

Upon returning home he [Kenzō] changed his clothes and straightway went into his study. He continuously felt as though the things he was supposed to do were piled like a mountain upon the tatami floor of his narrow six-mat study. But in reality, what stirred him the most was not doing work, so much as it was an incessant, irritating feeling that he must perform and do.

In his small six-mat study, when he opened the crates of books, which he brought back from that far off place, he found himself sitting in the midst of mountains of western books. There he lived for one, then two weeks. Each time he took a book in his hand to put it away he would read two or three pages. On account of this [habit], no matter how much time passed he could never complete the organization of this study that was so vital to him. In the end, a friend came to visit, and unable to bear seeing him in such a state, quickly lined up every last one of the books on the bookshelves with no regard for order or volume numbers. Most of the people he knew thought he was having a nervous breakdown. And he as well believed that was his condition.⁴¹

This parallel drawn between Kenzō's problems and his western books by presenting both as mountains on the floor of his study, has less to do with the physical format of the books than with their potential to invoke feelings of alienation in readers. Perhaps readers of the day, if put in a mountain of western books, might well have felt equally unable or unsure of how to organize these books and might have also just randomly stacked them on bookshelves. Yet, there is also a personal edge to this account. These books symbolize Kenzō's time abroad and the learning he did there. Now at home, he (as Sōseki did) faces

⁴¹ Sōseki zenshū, 10: 7-8.

the prodigious task of sorting and arranging not only books but also himself as he searched for his place back in Japan.

Similarly in *Meian*, Sōseki's last novel, which was incomplete when he died, the protagonist Tsuda Yoshio is in his study, frustrated by the difficulty of the content of his western books. He feels as though he is a failure as an amateur scholar (he works fulltime in a company). After Yoshio gives up reading the words of a large western book that he keeps on his desk he starts flipping through its pages and interacting with the book not as written content but as an object. Sōseki describes his interaction with the text as looking at "its thickness," which highlights its impenetrability:

He [Yoshio] had one relatively large western book on top of his [Japanese] desk. Sitting down, he opened it to a page where a bookmark was inserted and began reading from there. But since he had neglected it for three or four days it had become a mental briar patch, he could not tell how what he read was connected with what came before. In order to recall that, he would have to reread the first part again more diligently, but this discouraged him. Instead of reading he just flipped through the pages one by one. He looked at the overwhelming thickness of the book as if it were causing him pain. Doing so, a feeling that his destination was a million miles away welled up inside him.

He remembered that he had first picked up this book three or four months after his marriage. Thinking about it, already two months had passed from then until today, and yet he had read less than two-thirds of the total pages....⁴²

It seems fitting that it is a western book as an object, not necessarily its language (although it most likely was written in a language other than Japanese), that elicits and highlights Yoshio's feelings of frustration in this scene. It seems doubtful the scene would have had the same resonance if the object were a familiar Japanese book he was struggling to read. The western book and foreign content contributes to the isolation and impotence he feels.

⁴² *Sōseki zenshū*, 11: 16.

Ironically, however, Yoshio wanted to interact with this object to feel more secure and respected. Later in the same scene, the narrator informs us of Yoshio's feelings: "However, the knowledge he was endeavoring to absorb from the book open in front of him was unnecessary for his daily enterprises. It was too specialized and too sophisticated.... He just wanted to store it up as some form of self-confidence. He wanted to have it as a form of ornamentation to attract the attention of others."⁴³ It seemed that, even if the content was of no value, he was left relying on owning the books to create an image of himself, in the eyes of others, as a successful scholar. When he realized that the knowledge he sought from this western book was unobtainable, "He said to himself, 'This is not going well at all.' He silently puffed on his tobacco. Then quickly standing up, as though he just remembered something, he put the book down. Then he stormed down the stairs."⁴⁴ The knowledge he sought and his image (and failure) as a scholar were communicated to the reader through that "one relatively large western book" (*hikakuteki ōkina yōsho* 比較的大きな洋書) that was at the heart of this scene.⁴⁵

These physical descriptions of books in Sōseki's writings reveal a keen material awareness about the social implications of the material formats of different books. Sōseki worked these assumptions about the specific attributes of books and their social function, especially their covers, into his stories, giving the books as objects an important narrative role beyond just setting the scene as props. Countering the more well-known narrative of loss and betrayal, the trilogy contains a tacit bildungsroman narrative of successful accumulation of western books and subsequent liberation from them. This sub-story adds

⁴³ Sōseki zenshū, 11: 16-17.

⁴⁴ Sōseki zenshū, 11: 17.

⁴⁵ Sōseki zenshū, 11: 16.

depth to the main narrative: books should have been symbols of success and erudition and not an ironic background against which the protagonists pass, often in sorrow.

Pictures of Sōseki as a Modern Meiji Man

Photographs of Sōseki with his personal collection of books provide one additional clue for interpreting the social functionality of western hardbound books. Sōseki's appreciation of the social function of hardbound western books went beyond his use of them to create characters and narrate stories. When posing for photographs he also benefited from being surrounded by western hardbound books in his study. This frame of him in front of books helped cultivate an image of him as modern scholar.

In the stories written by Sōseki looked at above, studies (*shosai* 書齋) of the protagonists' were frequently presented as an unique space for interacting with, storing, and presenting western bound books as objects and symbols of social status. The images of a man in his study (*shosai*) found in Sōseki's stories were not new in Japanese literature. Instead, this setting was common in the Edo period and the last few decades of the nineteenth century. A man's study—a mixed social and erudite space—and its contents were important sites and objects for self-fashioning both in novels and in society. They offer significant clues to the social imaginary during the Meiji period for understanding both real-life individuals and their fictional counterparts.

We can see the new framing function of western hardback books in the social imaginary by comparing the above-mentioned examples from Sōseki with earlier examples of protagonists of a similar social status. For example, Utsumi Bunzō from Futabatei Shimei's 1887-89 novel *Ukigumo* 浮雲 is an early literary example of this

image of the modern educated protagonist. Bunzō frequently retired to his rented room, which doubled as his study. In an illustration (Figure V-4) by Tsukioka Yoshitoshi 月岡芳年 (1839-1892), the young Bunzō is sitting at his desk trying to read a letter while the elderly maid, Onabe, distracts him.⁴⁶ This illustration comes early in the book and helps establish Bunzō as a modern youth; he was in school pursuing education and working (at least temporarily) at a government job. His status of erudition and modernity are marked in the illustration by the objects surrounding him. In the image he is dressed in his western work clothes—a symbol of his career. He sits at a low writing desk, with pens and brushes, and two bookcases (filled with horizontally stacked Japanese bound books) are behind him. On top of the book boxes is a western lamp.

In the 1880s, apart from his clothing, the artist Yoshitoshi had fewer material markers with which to adorn and surround the protagonist. Despite his garb and his western furnishings, however, Bunzō remains otherwise situated in a room filled with timeworn and traditional items: a wall hanging and flowers in the *tokonoma*, decorated sliding doors, and a low antique (*furubita* 古びた) writing desk. This eclectic space, filled with mainly old and used items, is clearly the study/room of a modern youth. Old and second hand items in Bunzō's rented room, however, highlight a gap between his elevated occupational status and his marginalized economic situation and class. Building upon this visual gap, the tensions between modernity and tradition play out in the story.

In the written narrative of the story, in contrast to the image, Bunzō changes out of his western clothing and into Japanese clothes before Onabe comes to speak with him. So, he should be dressed in a kimono. The other details in the image match too well with

⁴⁶ Futabatei Shimei, *Shinhen ukigumo*, Image between pages 14 and 15.

those in the written narrative for the difference in clothing to have been an oversight on the part of the artist, Yoshitoshi. Rather, the presentation of Buzō in western garb seems to have been a deliberate choice made in order to present Buzō as a more modern protagonist and create a contrast with Onabe's attire.



Figure V-4 Buzō in his Room from Futabatei Shimei's *Ukigumo*

Sōseki's novels, as we have seen, are overly populated by modern youth, similar to Futabatei's Buzō, who are surrounded in their studies by the trappings of modernity. In Sōseki's stories, from the early twentieth century, the markers of modernity have expanded to now include hardbound western books. Arguably, if Futabatei's Buzō had been created around 1905, instead of the late 1880s, then his study would have also included hardbound western books.

Such collections of Western books may seem an overused trope in Sōseki's writing, but Soseki's interest in the image of the study was also a personal concern for him in real life. Photographs of Sōseki similarly build on this iconic descriptive and visual image of the Meiji man in his study surrounded by the trappings of erudition and/or modernity. There are many photographs from Sōseki's life that were taken in his study. By comparing photographs taken of his studies at different times, it seems obvious that rather than presenting the study "as it was," many of the pictures show the background and contents of the study rearranged and selected to highlight certain aspects of Sōseki's image as an erudite man of Meiji. These photographs of his studies in "reality" were, like their fictional counterparts in stories, constructed to create a scene and frame the protagonist. More importantly, for the sake of our current discussion, an additional similarity between photographs of Sōseki and descriptions in his stories was the use of hardbound Western books in creating that persona.

Photographs of Sōseki show he also was constructing his own public persona through his relationship with western books as objects surrounding him in photographs.

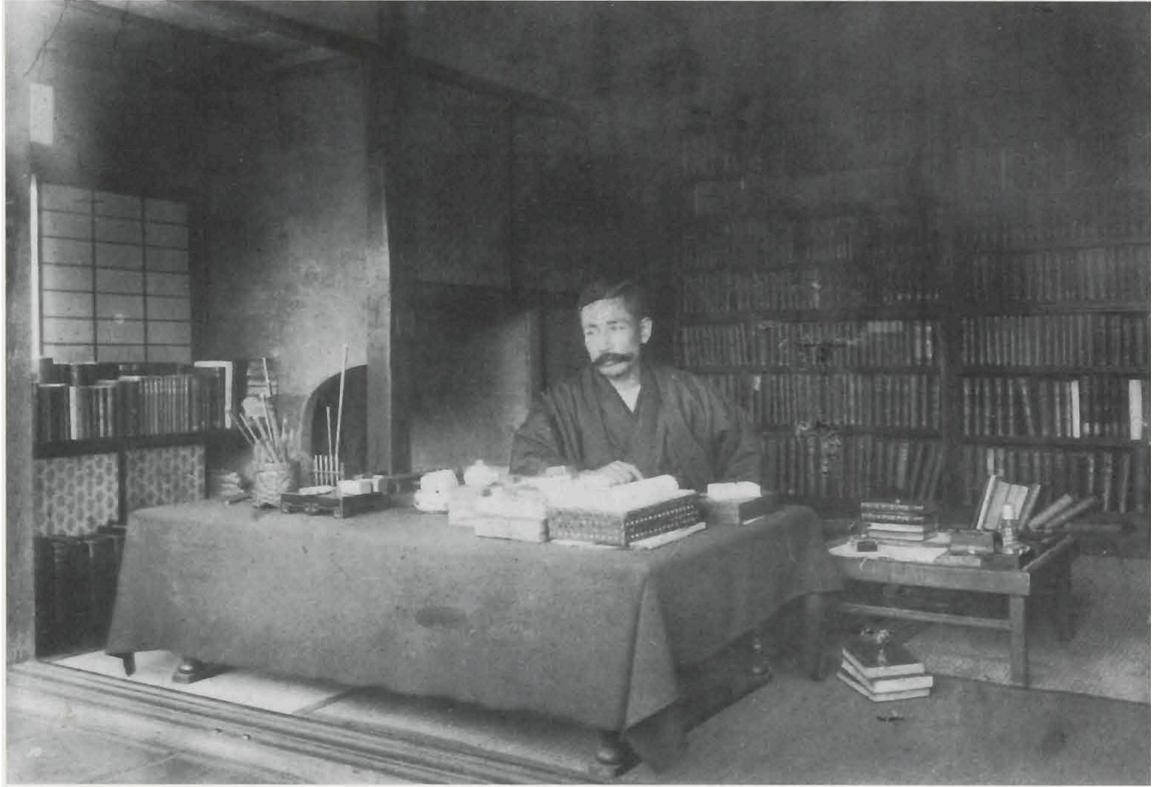


Figure V-5 Sōseki in his Study in 1907

This 1907 image (Figure V-5) shows Sōseki sitting on the floor behind his low writing desk. He is clothed in a dark kimono (as Bunzō should have been in his image according to the narrative).⁴⁷ Sōseki's right arm rests on the desk, with his index finger pointing to his place in a book that is open in front of him. His eyes are focused to the side, slightly downward, as his head leans to the right in the same direction. There are books on the desk, the floor, on a small table next to him, and on a three-shelf bookcase at the end of the desk. Behind Sōseki are two much larger bookcases with seven shelves each. Surprisingly, despite the large number of books in the photograph, there is not a single Japanese-bound book in the image. Even though Sōseki is presented in non-Western clothes, his position as a modern scholar is firmly asserted by the imposing collection of Western books behind him.

⁴⁷ Sōseki zenshū, 4 furoku: 47.

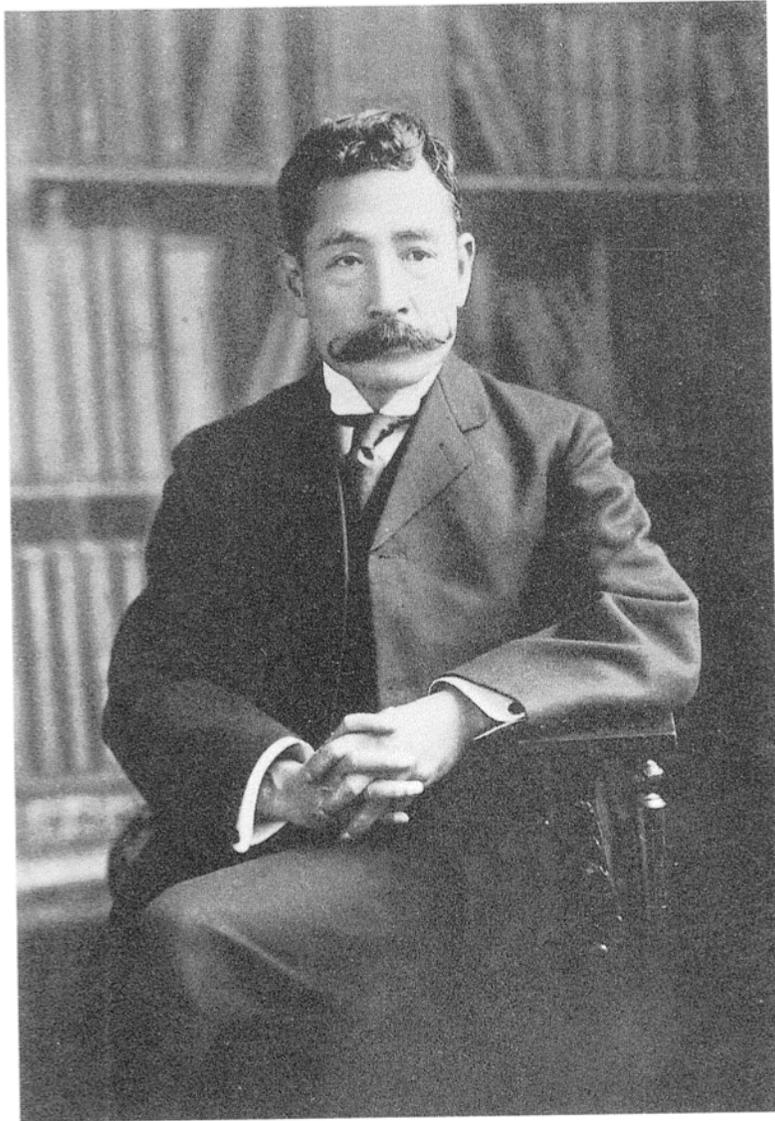


Figure V-6 Sōseki at Mochizuki Photography Studio 1910

In a later photograph (Figure V-6) taken in April 1910 at the Mochizuki Shashinkan 望月写真館, Sōseki is dressed in a fine western suit and is sitting in an ornate chair. His hands are folded, fingers interlaced.⁴⁸ His right forearm is perched on an armrest, while his left arm hovers above his lap. Although his face is towards the camera, his eyes are focused to the left, giving him an air of thoughtful contemplation. The

⁴⁸ Sōseki zenshū, 4 furoku: 54.

background is slightly out of focus, but it is clearly a bookshelf filled with large-sized western bound books. But this is not a study and those are not real books.⁴⁹ Rather, as mentioned, the photo was taken at the Mochizuki Photography studio in Tokyo.

Quite tellingly, there are no Japanese-bound books in the picture. One could well replace Sōseki's head with that of any famous American or European intellectual and the *mise en scene* would not seem out of place. Like his suit and chair, the vertical western books as background contribute to the photo, presenting Sōseki as a modern scholar and writer. This photograph must be recognized as a type of fiction—one that is doubly so. The books are a painting of an ideal, not a reality. And the photograph, too, is a presentation of that ideal.

In contrast to the earlier photograph (Figure V-5) of Sōseki surrounded by only Western books in his study (and the idealized image of him taken in the photography studio), the above-mentioned photo taken of his study in 1917 (Figure V-3) presents a different view of Sōseki's library of books.⁵⁰ That photograph raises an important question: Where were the Japanese-bound books in the earlier photograph of his study? Why were they kept from view?

Sōseki's study, as it is presented in this posthumous photograph, is visible as an eclectic space (much like Ōgai's bookshelves) where books of every imaginable physical

⁴⁹ For a discussion on “mimic” books in North America, see Striplas, *The Late Age of Print: Everyday Book Culture from Consumerism to Control*. Talking about the promotion of book displa, Striplas argues that in the 1920s publishers promoted built-in bookshelves because they would “facilitate the mass accumulation of books largely on the basis of their formal characteristics and their capacity as a whole to add flare to modern home décor.” This promotion of books was “less about the content of books than about the appearance of respectability and plentitude the presence of books could confer on homeowners.” Publishers even endorsed “‘false’ or ‘mimic’ collections designed to reproduce the ‘semblance of books and not their substance’” Striplas, *The Late Age of Print: Everyday Book Culture from Consumerism to Control*, 28. Moreover, such book mimicry was not unique to Japan or the US, but was also common in painted screens (ch'aekkori) in 19th and 20th century Korea. The painting of books behind Sōseki in the photograph ‘mimic’ books in a concern about semblance and not substance.

⁵⁰ Sōseki zenshū, 4 furoku: 47,79.

format share the same existence in piles and on bookshelves. The Sōseki collection is currently held at Tohoku University. It contains 1,650 western books and 1,200 Japanese and Chinese booklets.⁵¹ Clearly Sōseki owned a great number of Japanese and Chinese books, many more than the earlier photographs would lead us to believe. This 1917 photograph raises an important question: Where were the Japanese-bound books in the earlier photographs? Why were they kept from view?

Although we may never know, definitively, the answers to these questions, there is much to suggest that Sōseki's personal image as a modern scholar was enhanced at the time both by removing Japanese books from view, on one hand, and actively presenting western hard bound books, on the other. Such a theory gains purchase in light of Sōseki's own comment, "The decorative spines of occidental books always made me feel learning and arts were more splendid than Chinese books and Japanese books did."⁵² He also thought, one could argue, his image as a man of learning also seemed more splendid when surrounded by such occidental books.

Returning to the image of Sōseki's study after his death in 1917, we are reminded of how complex and diverse the literary field was during his lifetime. This diversity suggests the history of the Meiji literary field can be meaningfully interpreted as a time of material transformations to texts as much as the rise of new forms of literary representation and content. This physical register of literature was in the minds of authors and readers. It offers clues for a more complete understanding of the social place of literature at the time. Natsume Sōseki, born in 1867, grew up during the last few decades of the nineteenth century. Although it is more often said of those half a generation older

⁵¹Tohoku University Library, "About the "Soseki Collection","
http://tul.library.tohoku.ac.jp/modules/coll/index.php?content_id=12.

⁵²Sōseki zenshū, 12: 462.

than Sōseki, he also lived two lives in one. He was a product of two literary worlds: one part the late Edo-period literary world and one part Meiji. Many of the books of literature he grew up reading were printed with woodblocks and bound in soft Japanese bindings. Yet, by the time he left Tokyo Imperial University to become a fulltime author, he was writing for newspapers (a media that came into its own during his life time). His books were published in cloth hardcovers and were printed with movable type. In short, we can say he lived not only through a time of great literary developments, of which he was a part, but also a time of material and technological developments that deeply impacted individual texts and collectively disrupted the prior hierarchies of material forms.

A comparison of books from the 1850s and 60s with those new book formats thirty to forty years later in the 1890s and 1900s make this transition visually apparent. New styles of books from the turn of the century with their hard covers and neat rows of ant-like type organized on the page looked and felt different than the soft covered, squiggle-filled pages of their woodblock printed counterparts. They were, in many ways, completely different objects. So, although Sōseki's earliest material consciousness of books was closer to that world of texts suggested by Bakin, by the 1900s his material consciousness of texts and the hierarchy of physical formats of books upon which it was based also expanded to accommodate new formats and styles of books—in a world where old and new literary forms circulated.

In many ways, the history of modern Japanese literature is like these photographs. One of the great tropes of naturalist writers of Sōseki's day was the depiction of the world “as it was” (*arugamama* あるがまま); but rather than telling us how things were, their fiction, like these photographs, elides certain forms while highlighting others.

Sōseki is aware of how he positions his characters in their studies with books; he was not depicting them as an *arugamama*-reflection of the literary field, but rather did so consciously to fashion these characters. This selective framing and backgrounding creates an image of readers and their books that never really was.

Looking outside the text, we are also reminded of how complex and diverse the literary field was during his lifetime. This diversity suggests the history of the Meiji literary field could be meaningfully interpreted as a time of material transformations to texts as much as the rise of new forms of literary representation and content. This physical register of literature was in the minds of authors and readers. It offers clues for a more complete understanding of the social place of literature at the time. It will allow us to recognize how Japan's literary past did not disappear in the face of the modern novel but continued to circulate and give meaning to this historical moment. And, we can recognize how these older texts were reshaped by that circulation.

This line of research shows a gap in the literary history of this time; it suggests the totality of the modern novel is in many ways a façade—like the back-drop in the photography studio. The literary moment was more complex and messy than the current canon of Japanese literature would lead us to believe.

Reading books within books opens up the possibility of taking seriously other types of reading experiences: namely those of women, like Osumi, and more classically focused, yet middlebrow readers like Hida. And perhaps even Sōseki; who in addition to his English language ability, scholarship, and success as a popular author of Japanese fiction; was an active and accomplished writer of Chinese poetry. These forgotten readers

and literatures were also part of this moment and, although their books are not reproduced and studied in the classroom, we must not ignore them.

As we return to the close reading of the text and descriptions of books and reading, we can recognize that Sōseki's and his fellow authors' descriptions, counter-intuitively, provide a rare glimpse into this forgotten and ignored literary past with all its complexity and dynamics. And, together with a greater consideration of the materiality of texts, we can find new, (and hopefully) productive avenues for close reading and interpretation. In time, perhaps, we can also learn to judge books by their covers.

Chapter VI: Coda

Kafū the Scavenger

Upon his return to Tokyo in 1908, after living abroad in the United States and France, the author Nagai Kafū 永井荷風 (1879-1959) began walking the streets of his once home city. During his absence, a mere four years, the city had changed a great deal in his eyes, leading Kafū to express bewilderment at the rate at which the wooden buildings of old Edo were torn down and replaced with modern architecture. Walking through the Ginza shopping district Kafū lamented, “There isn’t a country in the world where time passes as quickly as it does in contemporary Japan. The things of yesterday, which has just now passed, must be remembered like those of a different age.”¹ He details the various changes to the cityscape: new Western theaters, beer restaurants, cafes, newspaper reading rooms, and various stores. He concludes with the observation that “a decade in Japan is the equivalent of a century in the West.”²

In 1914, Kafū wrote an essay on the appreciation of ukiyo-e, “Ukiyo-e no kanshō” 浮世絵の鑑賞 in which he bemoans the hegemony of Western models of art and culture:

When I consider the way we imitate Western civilization these days—from how we remodel our cities, to our homes, utensils, gardens, and even our clothing—and based on the general tendencies in the tastes of this generation, I feel all the more sorrow at the death of the splendors of Japanese culture.³

¹ *Kafū zenshū*, 7: 374.

² *Kafū zenshū*, 7: 376.

³ *Kafū zenshū*, 10: 145; Nagai Kafū, “Ukiyo-e no kanshō” 468. Leslie Pincus addresses the significance of this essay when it was reprinted during the 1920s in the magazine *Iki no kōzo* Pincus, *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan: Kuki Shūzō and the Rise of National Aesthetics*, 113. I have translated it anew for the sake of consistency.

His nostalgia for the past of his youth, and his desire to remember that past, led him on a search for, what Ishizaka Mikimasa describes as, “the Tokyo that had not been Westernized and modernized.”⁴

As a result, Kafū’s novels and writings are filled with descriptions of the spaces that escaped the totalizing effects of modernity. And, they reveal his search to discover, celebrate, and preserve the few remaining traces of a splendor of the city of Edo. Much like Walter Benjamin’s *flâneur*,⁵ Kafū—who also spent time in Paris—walked the shopping districts and back roads of Tokyo looking for the mystery and poetry of the old. Kafū found in landscape the means to experience the beauty of the past—of an old world that was being replaced by the noisy trains and smokestacks of modernity.

Yet, Kafū’s search for a means to a bygone experience was in no way limited to cityscapes and nature. He also sought to recover and experience Edo through kabuki theaters, *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints, and old literature. His literary search and scavenging reveal a surprising resilience of Edo period literature.

Throughout his wanderings Kafū became something of an expert on the various shops, stalls, and markets for selling and buying secondhand and antique books (*furuhon* 古本).⁶ Based on his experiences hunting for old books, he wrote *Furuhon hyōbanki* 古本評判記 (An Evaluation of Old Books; hereafter *Evaluation*) in 1917.⁷ Kafū set out in search of copies of literary texts written thirty to forty years earlier, during the Meiji-period. Since most of these texts, however, had not yet been reprinted as books, his search (which, as we shall see, seems to have been largely futile) led him into Tokyo’s vast network of secondhand bookstores.

Recently, I needed to cite the first volume of several literary and entertainment magazines. I placed orders for them at used bookstores and walked around searching for them myself. I had no problem getting magazines by Kanagaki Robun and the like...from the late 1870s. But things done after that, such as the

⁴ Ishizaka Mikimasa, *Toshi no meiro: chizu no naka no Kafū*, 6.

⁵ See Benjamin and Tiedemann, *The Arcades Project*.

⁶ The term *furuhon* 古本, “old books,” is slightly misleading, in that it included all books that have been sold at least once. So, a book published in 1917, the same year of Kafū’s *Evaluation*, was technically a *furuhon* once it had been purchased and was on the market a second time. In this sense *furuhon* seems more analogous to used books than old or antique ones. But at the same time, since *furuhon* also included truly archaic books that were hundreds of years old, the term “used book” as well does not do *furuhon* justice.

⁷ *Kafū zenshū*, 12.

first volume of *Nihon no shōnen* 日本少年 by [the publisher] Hakubunkan, are not to be found. I have been unable to find newer publications by authors such as [Izumi] Kyōka and [Gotō] Chūgai, as well as [the literary magazine] *Bungakukai* 文学界 by [Kitamura] Tōkoku and [Baba] Kochō. The Ueno Library surely has preserved these, but it is an inconvenient and unpleasant place, so I don't go there.⁸

Apart from the Imperial Library at Ueno⁹, it seems many famous texts and periodicals from the late nineteenth century had a limited afterlife even in the *furuhon* market. Modern literature is characterized by the rise of new literary forms and modes of expression, and also by the rise of new genres and economies of printing. On the upside, the low-cost formatting and materiality of newspapers and magazines allowed young authors to rapidly reach new audiences and provided a space for low-cost literary experimentation. But, on the downside, these new genres were also precarious and due to a number of factors; as Kafū discovered, these venues produced texts that as objects were less resilient in their ability to circulate long term.¹⁰

In the first decades of the twentieth century, literary development has its own chronology and governing factors, which were independent from the material transformations of the city. Similar to how modern architecture replaced the old, the history of modern Japanese literature is the story of how new literary forms replaced the previous ones. Yet there is an important duality in this literary history, which mirrors the change in landscape; it was one part textual—changing words—and the other part material—changing book formats.

⁸ Kafū zenshū, 12: 390.

⁹ Kafū's complaints about the library's unpleasantness were perhaps due to the large number of patrons who went there each day. Nagamine Shigetoshi explains that the libraries in Tokyo had an ever-growing number of readers but a limited number of seats and books. He writes, "Compared to the constant increase in patrons, the capacity of the libraries were small and their congestion was considerable. Long, snake-like queues of people waiting for an empty seat were a hallmark of Tokyo." Nagamine Shigetoshi, *Modan toshi no dokusho kūkan*, 26.

¹⁰ In an interesting parallel, the city of Tokyo saw the old wooden houses and buildings, which were prone to fires, replaced by less-easily burned modern architecture, which was (supposedly) longer lasting. The changes in prose literature, however, in some ways moved in an opposite direction, away from the security of a literature of books towards the ephemerality of newspaper serializations and magazine publications: genres of literary publication that were ideal for rapid production and a short life span in circulation. The market for these new modes of print production assumed a built-in obsolescence; today's newspaper was good for today only. The very form of the magazine anticipated that the current issue would be superseded by the next. More importantly, the very cheap pulp paper upon which they were printed made their physical form short-lived, less able to circulate for extended periods of time before wearing out.

A majority of the literary field from 1917 that Kafū rediscovered in the used book markets was destroyed in the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake and subsequent fires. This time immediately preceding the Earthquake is often forgotten in literary histories. Nevertheless, Kafū’s writing about the 1917 literary field offers key insights about literary history at the time, allowing us to see the importance of textual materiality and the continued circulation of Edo-fiction.

An Epidemiology of Literature

As mentioned in Chapter One of this dissertation, Kōjin Karatani argues that the emergence of modern literature led to the “extinction of diverse genres” of Edo-period literature. His metaphor of extinction—no longer in existence or having no living members—is a problematic conception of literary development. Extinction implies an absence, as though something once alive is now gone and no longer active in the literary environment. Extinction fosters the image of a literary vacuum, depopulated of prior texts and literary genres.

Instead of the metaphor of extinction, it is useful to approach the history of Meiji and Taishō literature (both Kafū’s used-book markets and the Earthquake) from the perspective of epidemiology, the study of disease. The general principles and vocabulary of epidemiology are still useful for exploring incidence and distribution of certain texts within a population, even though literary studies generally, and from this time period in particular, lacks the kinds of quantitative data used in epidemiology.

Epidemiology maintains a clear distinction between incidence (the new occurrence of a disease) and prevalence (the number of existing cases of the disease within a population either at a point in time or over a period). In literary terms, prevalence is the proportion of a given text within the whole population of the world of texts. Literary “incidences” are the production of a new text as well as the reproduction of an already existing one.

Prevalence “quantifies the proportion of individuals in a population who have the disease at a specific instant and provides an estimate of the probability (risk) that an

individual will be ill at a point in time.”¹¹ Prevalence may at once be defined as the proportion of a specific title, author, or genre within the literary field at a given time either in terms of numbers of copies in circulation or in terms of numbers of copies read.¹²

Kafū’s *Evaluation* offers a specific and perhaps the lowest common definition of prevalence: the availability of a text to a potential reader at a given time in a given venue (e.g., Tokyo’s used book market in 1917). An underlying argument of Kafū’s *Evaluation* is that older texts from the Edo period and early Meiji period are more prevalent than those of the late-Meiji period. That is to say, if a reader, such as Kafū, wanted to read a text from the 1890s by Ozaki Koyo, (based on Kafū’s experience) likely it would be less available in the used-book market than a copy of a text by Bakin. Hence, based on Kafū’s limited survey, Bakin may have had a higher prevalence than Kōyō.

As with epidemiology, there are two factors that impact (literary) prevalence of a text: new publication (incidence of infections) and the disappearance of a text (people dying or being cured). I will return to literary incidence below, but first let us consider how literary prevalence is reduced by the disappearance of texts.

Franco Morretti points out that the history of literature is the “slaughterhouse of literature,” because a “majority of books disappear forever.”¹³ Unfortunately we don’t see enough blood in Morretti’s definition of the slaughterhouse. Instead he focuses on life. He defines slaughterhouse in terms of readers—the “butchers” who keep a text “alive” through reading it. He writes “The slaughter house of literature. And the butchers—reader: who read novel A (but not B,C,D,E,F,G,H,...) and so keep A ‘Alive’ into the next generation, when other readers may keep it alive into the following one, and so on until

¹¹ Hennekens, Buring, and Mayrent, *Epidemiology in Medicine*, 57.

The formula for calculating the prevalence (P) is

$$P = \frac{\text{Number of existing cases of a disease}}{\text{Total population}}$$

¹² In literary studies, however, prevalence is perhaps less clear than a disease, which someone either has or does not have. A reader may own a book but never *read* it, per se; it may be on a bookshelf or in a book box. For instance, the number of copies of Bakin’s *Eight Dogs* out of the total number of books in circulation during a year is different than the number of those copies read in that time. Both numbers would be useful and tell us different things. In an ideal study we would have access to a range of numbers that would allow us to see both of these definitions of literary prevalence, but unfortunately we do not. This, however, does not mean that the idea of prevalence needs to be discarded entirely. See Hennekens, Buring, and Mayrent, *Epidemiology in Medicine*.

¹³ Moretti, "The Slaughterhouse of Literature," 207.

eventually A become canonized. Readers, . . . make canons.”¹⁴ Indirectly, he claims the readers kill the other texts by not selecting them.

Where do books go to die? Kafū’s account gives a better description of what happened to the unselected texts—the paper they are written upon is more valuable than the text printed on it and so they lose their life as a text and gain a second life as scrap paper. The walls and sliding paper doors of old Japanese houses were filled with the pages of old books. Moretti is right that readers keep texts alive, but we should not forget that the death of texts happens in a variety of ways.

These two factors—death and the continued circulation of text—determine literary prevalence. Although Moretti may seem to give readers too much of a say in what lives and dies, he uses readers as proxies for the literary “market,” which he asserts makes the canon. Readers buy books and this induces “publishers to keep [them] in print until another generation shows up.”¹⁵ But this is the continued life of a text and not its death. These reprints by publishers are literary incidences—new appearances of a text in the world of print. This focus on printers and readers keeping books alive does not help explain disappearance or “slaughter.” What happens to texts when they are not needed: they are turned into scrap paper. The 1923 Earthquake, however, reduced the prevalence of many books, by turning them to ash.¹⁶

Kafū’s *Evaluation* reminds us that new editions of Edo literature were also published, which helped maintain and explain their prevalence—as does the post-Earthquake reprinting of new editions by Iwanami and other publishers. These new editions are evidence of *incidences* of publication. In epidemiology, incidence “quantifies the number of new events or cases of [text] that develop in a population of individuals [texts],” i.e., individual books.¹⁷ That is to say, it is the ratio of published texts within the population of books. This year’s bestseller, by definition, has a high incidence even though over fifty years its prevalence may remain low. In contrast, a “long-seller,” may

¹⁴ Moretti, “The Slaughterhouse of Literature,” 209.

¹⁵ Moretti, “The Slaughterhouse of Literature,” 209.

¹⁶ As Akutagawa argues below, in some cases, reducing the prevalence of texts by half.

¹⁷ Hennekens, Buring, and Mayrent, *Epidemiology in Medicine*, 57.

The equation for incidence (I) is as follows:

$$I = \frac{\text{number of new cases during a given period of time}}{\text{total population}}$$

have a relatively low incidence, a small printing run every year, but in the end its prevalence could be greater. In this way, Kafū's *Evaluation* suggests that Bakin had become a long-seller even though he was eclipsed by Koyo's intense short-term popularity. However, there is more at play here than the long and short-term horizon of publication.

For instance, if ten books are published in a given year and three of those are older texts, then incidence for reprints (Ir) equals 3/10 and the incidence of newly written texts (In) is 7/10. This hypothetical and over-simplified example of literary incidence reminds us that, in literature, new cases or incidence includes *both* the publication of newly composed texts and the republication of preexisting texts into the literary field—and this impacts prevalence. (Not all diseases are new, but new people are infected daily. Not all texts are new, but new editions of them are printed). This dual nature of literary incidence is under-appreciated. Too often literature is seen in terms of old texts and new ones. Bakin is old and Kōyō is new, but that obscures the way the texts are both products (incidences) of a contemporary publishing industry.

On one level, Kafū, as well, follows this old-new dichotomy and fails to acknowledge the dual mechanism at the heart of literary incidences: incidences that included the reproduction of old texts as well as new ones. On one hand, Kafū, it seems, sees the circulation of Edo fiction in the used bookstalls as a validation of his own fetishized literary expectations about Edo-period literature and his desire to rediscover the past. But, on the other hand, ultimately Kafū fails to acknowledge how reprinted texts are not a one-to-one representation of the Edo period literary world he sought to recover. Instead, as products of the contemporary literary industry, these reprints were not vehicles for recovering a forgotten literary past but products made for a new type of reading experience that were in effect part of the erasure of Edo literary practices.

Kafū the Book Buyer

Kafū's 1917 *Evaluation* provides a view of the early twentieth-century literary field through the window of Tokyo's secondhand book market. A key insight afforded to us by Kafū's *Evaluation* is how material differences in books continued to shape the literary field well into the twentieth century. Kafū points out that if you "stand in front of

a store, in just one glance you can tell” what their purview is. This is because the secondhand book market was bifurcated between two types of shops. Echoing Natsume Sōseki’s understanding of the material difference between Japanese and Western books, Kafū explains, on one hand, there are stores that sell “various and sundry new printings of contemporary [*tōsei* 当世] Oriental books printed with movable type but that don’t carry Japanese-style or Chinese-style bound books.” And, on the other hand, there are those stores that “sell Japanese-style or Chinese-style bound books. But, the few typeset editions they do sell are reprints of older texts.”¹⁸ As was noted in the preceding chapter, this was the same physical-textual division that Natsume Sōseki was aware of and upon which he drew to situate himself in photographs and his characters vis-à-vis their book formats.

Yet, this divide between the two types of booksellers is complicated by the intersection of the physical nature of their books, the printing method used in producing them, and the age of the texts reproduced within the books. “Japanese-style or Chinese-style bound books” refers to books with soft covers made of Japanese paper printed primarily by woodblock printing. Hard covered books primarily contain newly written texts printed with movable type—typically printed on pulp paper. This suggests an institutionalized distinction based on the technology used to print and bind the types of books being sold: movable type on one hand and xylography on the other.

The absence of texts in the used book market was not limited to early editions of magazines but, rather, was actually a common problem with all forms of newly written literature from the 1880s and 90s. Kafū again writes:

Novels by writers such as [Ozaki] Kōyō, [Kōda] Rohan, and the like, although they were published just twenty years ago, have disappeared like smoke; so there is no way to get them. Publications these days are limited to the time of their publication. After a few years pass they are scattered and lost, not to be found even at used bookstores. Where on earth do they go? Someone once told me that books printed now don't have enough value for used bookstores to buy and sell. So they are treated as waste paper or are used for material to make new paper. That makes sense.¹⁹

¹⁸ Kafū zenshū, 12: 388.

¹⁹Kafū zenshū, 12: 390.

Although the 1890s is frequently heralded in literary histories as the “*kōro jidai*” 紅露時代 or the age of Ozaki **Kōyō** 尾崎紅葉 (1867/68-1903) and Kōda **Rohan** 幸田露伴 (1868-1947), it also seems to have been an age when newly written literature was disposable. In singling out two authors who were famous enough that early editions of their texts should still be widely available, Kafū draws our attention to an often forgotten fact: many books were considered more valuable for their paper than for their textual content. These were recycled before they could make it to the used book market. That is to say, the literary market was in competition with that for used paper. It seems shocking, but this second-life as scrap paper was likely the fate of much of the post-1885 literature—those texts whose disappearance Kafū is half-lamenting and half-celebrating.²⁰

In contrast to these missing texts, Kafū seems equally surprised at what texts were still widely available: namely, reprints made in the 1890s of Genroku-period (1688-1704) fiction and initial printings and modern reprints of texts from before the 1880s—particularly from the late Edo-period. One limitation with Kafū’s description of the used book markets is that we do not know what books he saw but failed to mention. Some books may have been so common that Kafū did not feel inclined to mention them by name. Other ubiquitous books, however, such as those by Kyokutei Bakin, received special mention, perhaps reflecting either bias against them or admiration for their longevity. Kafū notes, “*Yomihon* from the Edo period, such as Bakin’s *Eight Dogs* and *Crescent Moon*, even today are still not hard to get.”²¹ It is hard to tell whether Kafū is speaking of modern reprints or early editions. In either case, however, the abundance of Edo-period literary forms is striking compared to the absence of more-recent texts from the used book market.

On one hand, Kafū’s slight contempt towards the forgotten (modern) Meiji authors reflects his desire for an aesthetic return to a pre-1868 Edo and the past it

²⁰ Kafū’s desire to recover and salvage was not limited to Edo period literature and art alone. Kafū may have had differences with the Meiji literary establishment, particularly the naturalists, to the extent that he is characterized as an anti-naturalist (*han-shizenshugisha* 反自然主義者); yet, in Kafū’s writings, there is a discernable longing for pre-modern vestiges in Meiji as well.

²¹ Kafū zenshū, 12: 390.

represents;²² it is, therefore, part of his rejection of the modernized/ Westernized writings represented by Meiji-period authors.

Yet, in the midst of the change—the modernization and Westernization of Japanese culture, against which Kafū was protesting—he found in Kanda’s used-book market streams of continuity, particularly the continued circulation of Edo-period and early Meiji-period fiction. He celebrates this survival and the availability of these earlier texts in their various formats of old and new editions. Kornicki asserts that literary histories “have tended to underestimate the importance [Edo fiction] had in the years after the [1868] Restoration.”²³ Kafū’s observation about the used-book market suggests that even in 1917, Kornicki’s observation about the importance and continued circulation of Edo period fiction during the Meiji-period has force.

So what does it mean for our history of literature that two decades into the twentieth century works by the famous literary reformers and the most prominent figures of literary histories—Ozaki Kōyō, Kōda Rohan, Kitamura Tōkoku 北村透谷 (1868-1894), Baba Kochō 馬場孤蝶 (1869-1940), and the like—were under-appreciated in this venue? For one thing, the winners of the current history—those celebrated and valorized reformative authors in literary histories—at that moment in time seem to have, in fact, lost from the perspective of their material absence. Indeed it appears many of their famous texts were those that, at least for the moment, appear to have ended up on the floor of Moretti’s slaughterhouse. This realization suggests an alternate history of Meiji period literary development—a history less concerned with tracking the new (one small part of incidence) and more interested in understanding continuity with the past and the place of older texts (their prevalence) within the literary field.

²² Literary histories remember Kafū during this stage in his life for his turn to the past of the Edo period away from the West. Stephen Snyder describes Kafū’s later “cantankerous and elegiac” prose as marked by a “savage criticism of mindless imitation of the West and the ugly, hybrid culture it had produced in Japan” and a “melancholy attempt to salvage what remained of a rapidly fading past.” Snyder, *Fictions of Desire: Narrative Form in the Novels of Nagai Kafū*, 55. Similarly, Leslie Pincus argues that Kafū thought that Edo “existed only in relics and traces,” as he “paid tribute to a world he saw disappearing before his eyes.” In the end, she asserts Kafū “clearly recognized the impossibility of resurrecting Edo culture.” So his elegiac “appeals to the traditions and tastes of that era often served as a tactical foray against current abuses of a bureaucratic state and a self-righteous bourgeoisie.” And his goal was to “lampoon contemporary life and to find solace in his reveries of a life gone by, a life that could be reimagined only in the ruins it had left behind.” Pincus, *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan: Kuki Shūzō and the Rise of National Aesthetics*, 131-2.

²³ Kornicki, “The Survival of Tokugawa Fiction in The Meiji Period,” 461.

To the extent Kafū's observations have validity, the apparent absence of Meiji-period texts in the used book market in 1917, particularly those thought of as canonical today or which occupy a key place in literary history, should remind us that their place in literary histories at times reflects subsequent literary reproduction. That is to say the canon of Meiji literature is in some ways, as I have argued was the case for Edo-period literature, a product of later literary (re)production and not a result of the continued circulation of the original imprints. The need to locate the formation of a canon of Meiji-period authors and texts to a later time than 1917 becomes all the more necessary when seen in the light of the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake.

Scales of Destruction

Compared to the gradual loss of texts from the literary field during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the Great Kantō Earthquake was an entirely different scale of textual destruction and erasure. As has been widely discussed in Japanese history, a little before noon on September First, 1923, a magnitude-7.9 earthquake occurred in Sagami Bay. The destructive shocks and subsequent conflagrations that spread throughout the region destroyed a large swath of the eastern part of Tokyo, killing over 100,000 people. This disaster was an epidemiological disaster for the Meiji-period “forest of words.” Innumerable texts were lost, but more tragically, it also decimated the community of readers, publishers, and booksellers throughout the city.

Despite how widely this catastrophe has been discussed in Japanese history, however, the significance of its tragic impact take on additional dimensions as we consider how it impacted the Meiji-period “forest of words” and the individuals and texts that populated it. As Kafū lamented, the former city of Edo was already rapidly fading as it was replaced by the modern city of Tokyo, but this earthquake and subsequent fires was one of the largest and most thoroughly destructive forces in this process. The flames erased, and turned to ash, the history and culture of many portions of the city. The firestorm swept through the eastern side of the city and burned over 90 percent of Kanda—the area where Kafū searched for used books. The fire destroyed 117 used

bookshops in Kanda alone.²⁴ Kanda was also the area where Mori Senkichi, the publisher of reprints discussed in Chapter Two, started out as a publisher in the 1870s. Senkichi, if you recall, moved to a larger shop in Nihonbashi. Unfortunately, Nihonbashi was even more damaged than Kanda was. Records indicate that the entire area was burned to the ground.²⁵ Although the last record of Senkichi is from a book he edited in 1897, the fire completely engulfed his old neighborhood where his shop once stood. At the same time, the fires also ravaged the Nakazaka neighborhood where Ozaki Kōyō's *Kenyūsha* began and where Bakin lived.²⁶

Similarly, the Maruzen bookstore, that famous purveyor of Western hardbound books where so many Meiji intellectuals (including Mori Ōgai and Natsume Sōseki) gained access to Western knowledge, was also badly damaged by the fire. Maruzen had experienced a fire before; so in 1910 they rebuilt their store in Nihonbashi 日本橋 to withstand earthquakes and fires. While the store survived the earthquake and the first day of the conflagration, it eventually caught fire and burned to the ground leaving a skeleton of melted and twisted steel frame. Their storeroom of books was housed on the fourth floor. The heat from the flames weakened the steel frames, which eventually crumpled under the weight of the books. Their branch stores in Kanda and Yokohama 横浜 were also damaged by fire. In total, they suffered damages that were said to equal four to five million yen.²⁷

Hakubunkan the publisher of the *Imperial Library Series* (*Teikoku bunko* 帝国文庫), which included *Saikaku zenshu*, was also badly damaged by the fire.²⁸ So, too, was Iwanami's publishing house in Kanda. Iwanami started out as a used bookseller, but with Sōseki's help he transitioned his business into publishing. Iwanami, whom Sōseki helped by allowing him to publish the novel *Kokoro* こゝろ, had Sōseki write the name on the sign for his shop. The fire destroyed the sign and Sōseki's calligraphy.

²⁴ Iwasaki Katsumi, "Kantō daishinsai no risai jōkyō oboegaki: 1923 (Taishō 12) nen kugatsu tsuitachi no shuppankai," 120.

²⁵ See Mack for a discussion of areas and damage. Mack, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature: Publishing, Prizes, and the Ascription of Literary Value*. Also, see Iwasaki, "Kantō daishinsai no risai jōkyō oboegaki: 1923 (Taishō 12) nen kugatsu tsuitachi no shuppankai."

²⁶ See the longer discussion of this destruction at the end of Chapter Three.

²⁷ Iwasaki, "Kantō daishinsai no risai jōkyō oboegaki: 1923 (Taishō 12) nen kugatsu tsuitachi no shuppankai," 121-22.

²⁸ Iwasaki, "Kantō daishinsai no risai jōkyō oboegaki: 1923 (Taishō 12) nen kugatsu tsuitachi no shuppankai," 122-23.

Due to the destruction of the Kanda and Nihonbashi districts, the publishing industry was destroyed and displaced. The *Yomiuri* newspaper ran an announcement on Sept 30th detailing the temporary and new locations and addresses of more than seventy publishers. These surviving publishing houses included some of the most widely recognized names who came to dominate the Tokyo, and eventually the national, printing industry: Chūō Publishing 中央出版, Kaizōsha 改造社, Hakubunkan 博文館, and Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店. Kaizōsha, which was founded in 1919, and Iwanami, started in 1913, were before the earthquake still relatively minor publishing houses, but in the vacuum created by the Earthquake they found room to grow. As Ted Mack writes, “What was initially perceived as the destruction of Tokyo proved to be only a temporary setback—and to some an opportunity for greater development and modernization.”²⁹ As I explain below, this absence of texts created by the fire can be seen in epidemiological terms as a decrease in textual prevalence while the texts that over time filled this vacuum were created as new textual instances. As Mack and others have argued, a new canon of literature was created to fill this gap. Much like the canon of Edo period literature circulating in the Meiji period created by Senkichi and others, the new canon (which included Meiji fiction as well) created after 1923 was not a direct historical reflection of past literature but was a product and reflection of 1920s Japan. That is to say, it was shaped by the new post-Earthquake printing economy and prevalent literary tastes of the day. It is in this time that the Meiji-period canon of texts we have today was recreated as what Mack calls a “static canon,” which, together with the Earthquake, altered the ecology of the “forest of words.”³⁰

In the wake of the disaster, individual publishers also used the newspapers to reach out and let readers (customers) know they were still in business. In the Oct 1st edition of the *Yomiuri* newspaper, the publisher Iwanami Shigeo wrote of his intentions to rebuild not only his company but Tokyo and its culture as well.

Our bookshop, warehouse, and printing shop were all completely lost in the fire. However, our employees and their families are all safe. Please do not worry. Thanks to this trial that has come upon us we can participate in the great work of restoring this once great capital city. Moreover, although the whole of our

²⁹ Mack, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature: Publishing, Prizes, and the Ascription of Literary Value*, 88.

³⁰ See *Bokujō Gyoshi* (Narushima Ryūboku). *Fumi no hayashi*.

industry has been taken back a decade into the past, we will devote our whole energy to the building up of new culture. We intend to fulfill our duty as citizens. We have established a temporary office at the following address in a home that survived this unexpected disaster. Already we are hard at work. We are starting new publication of the magazine *Shisō* 思想 and are rushing to publish [a list of books]. We also intend to rerelease older books, of which at this time we are preparing newly revised editions.³¹

Iwanami's announcement in the newspaper was a clever mix of popular communalism—assertions that the publishing company was doing its part as members of the community to help—and advertisements for new and old texts. Iwanami was, as this announcement suggests, very fortunate that his employees and their families survived, even though he lost his publishing house. The destructive force of the earthquake created both a problem and a new opportunity for Iwanami. Although Iwanami had lost his warehouse filled with books for sale, his clientele had lost their supply of existing books, as well, creating an immense lacuna and demand for books, which Iwanami and other publishers raced to fill with “newly revised” editions.

The Oct 10th *Yomiuri* ran an article detailing Iwanami's attempts to rebuild:

“Iwanami Shoten from Jinbō-cho 神保町 in Kanda has only a few hundred matrixes of movable type and a few manuscripts in composition—these are what they plan on putting to use first. On this coming twentieth they will print [a series of books]. . . . Although they are now using Iwanami's home in Koishigawa 小石川 as an office; in the first-half of November, he intends to return to the ashes of old Jinbō-chō and bring it back to life. There he says he will take the opportunity to revise books of literature and philosophy and have authors improve their works into more perfect editions, which he will print over time.³²”

Again this story is a mix of advertising, self-promotion, and business determination. It shows Iwanami's resolve to return to Kanda.

Other announcements in the paper were far more grim; some bore the unhappy burden of informing the public of the deaths of publishers and those involved in the publishing industry. On Nov 21st the *Yomiuri* contained the following announcement:

“Those in the Publishing Industry Who Died in the Earthquake”

Based on a recent survey, the following seventeen people affiliated with Tokyo publishing and book production passed away in the calamity.

³¹ Iwanami Shigeo. 3.

³² Anonymous.

Kawazawa Toranosuke of Kawatsuya
Kikuhara Seisaburo of Mitsukōdō
Takahashi Fujijirō of Nichiyōdō
Turuoka Gorō of Nisshindō
Nakamura Tunashirō of Kinridō
Nishimura Takeshiro of Kaibunsha
Fukaya Zenjirō of Chūōsha
Omuromatsu Tarō of Sakaematsudō
Nishino Zenkichi of Okamura Shoten
Matsuda Hikutarō of Shūseidō
Ishiyama Shichirō of Shinpōdō
Ichijima Sadajirō of Bunseidō
Kikuchi Yasunosuke of Kuku Shoten
Saheki Yoshizō of Myōshindō
Takada Kitarō of Takadaya.³³

This morbid announcement was sandwiched between a list of newly published magazines and a pronouncement of how Iwanami Shoten was hurrying to publish reprints.

The damage caused by the Great Kanto Earthquake naturally affected more than publishing houses. Libraries, both personal and institutional, were widely damaged. Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介(1892-1927), who was a close friend and disciple of Natsume Sōseki, commented on the loss of old books in the Earthquake. He was particularly elegiac about the loss of books belonging to great personal libraries. He pulled no punches, however, in criticizing the institutional and human practices at university libraries, which made the losses of this disaster much greater than they naturally would have been:

I think the destruction and loss of antique works of art and old books in this recent earthquake are deeply lamentable. The exhibition of pottery and the like at the Beikeikan was almost entirely broken and shattered; certainly there were a great many other losses and damage. For the moment let us set aside antique works of art to consider old books. The [aristocratic] Kurokawa household's library burned up, as did the Yasuda household's; university libraries were also consumed by flames. These are all irreparably great losses. Among the merchants [households] as well the Murakō, Asakuraya, and Yoshikichi all burned. Their losses to the flames were also great. Personal libraries are one thing, but a university library burning is the fault of the university. It is ill-conceived to put a university library in close proximity to a medical school where chemicals can so easily cause a fire. Also, even on days when the library is closed, it is a poor idea to have only a few apprentices there. (Because of this, in a fire like this past one, they are unable to

³³ Anonymous. 4.

rescue the books no matter how valuable they may be.) Even the construction of the book stacks themselves is insufficient. To be more precise in my criticism, it is bad how libraries just pile up their valuable old books [out of reach] on high shelves and are not engaged in making copies of them. At any rate, scholars should be condemned for this sin of having these books reduced to ashes just because they didn't like to share their research materials with others! Even the loss of the Shakuchi Collection [on Haikai poetry at Tokyo University]—the life's work of Ōno Shachiku [1872-1913]—is unbearably disappointing. As for *Hakkukenyanagi* 八九間雨柳, a text on *haikai* that was edited by Shirō [Suzuki Ritō 鈴木李東 1781-1839], there were only two copies in the whole world: one in Katumine Shinburo's 勝峯晋風 office library and one other; but, now I believe there is only one!³⁴

Although Akutagawa does not say so explicitly, he is clearly speaking of the loss of books at Tokyo University.

According to a September 14, 1923 *Yomiuri* newspaper article, the Tokyo University Library lost at least three thousand books: “Tokyo University Library suffers loss of approximately one-hundred-ten million yen; at least three thousand books are gone for good.” “Three thousand out of the tens of thousands of priceless books in the library's collection are gone for good.”³⁵ It was in response to this loss at Tokyo University that Mori Ōgai's family decided to donate his book collection.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, although in many ways Ōgai was an élite reader and his collection of more than 18,800 booklets was unusual, the diversity of his collection and that of Sōseki's as well reminds us of the diversity that existed at the time. Nevertheless, even these two collections are unable to fully replicate the diversity in literature that existed before the Kantō Earthquake.

The post-Earthquake recovery of the printing industry and the rise in popularity of anthologies is a key example of literary incidence. They helped restore works to circulation that were on the edge of disappearing either into ash or as scrap paper. As I mentioned in the introduction, much of our study of Japanese literature depends upon academic anthologies and other collections. Thanks to these collections, texts of literature are available worldwide (the increasing number of digital texts has made the written word of literature all the more available).

³⁴ Akutagawa Ryūnosuke *zenshū*, 6: 191-92.

³⁵ Anonymous. "Tōdai tosho no songai wa yaku ichiokuman en." 4.

These collections preserve the written words, but they can never replace the materiality of books and the ways which communities of book readers and producers made the texts their own. If anything, this dissertation has endeavored to rediscover not only the local and personal spaces and ways of reading but also to remind us how literature is more than words on a page and should be appreciated in terms of its communal and material past, as well as the words on the page.

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