Breaking the Disciplinary Boundaries: Collaborative Research in Early Modern Japanese Arts and Literature

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Dr. Jones’ paper was presented at a meeting of the Early Modern Japan Network in Washington, D.C., April 1992

Having agreed to speak on the state of my field, I find it difficult to describe in a nutshell what my field is. Let me call it gesaku studies, taking the Japanese term in the widest sense possible. In the traditional Japanese definition, gesaku refers to specific types of popular literature of the later Edo period. I propose to use the term to include all “playful” types of arts, whether literary, pictorial, or theatrical, but I will limit my discussion to the study of playful arts based in the city of Edo during the later Edo period since this is where gesaku-esque features are most conspicuous. The systematic overview by Professor Totman of the state of the study of Edo period history was in keeping with the rhetoric of his discipline. I ask you not to expect anything so dignified for the next 15 minutes: there won’t be any clear categories or balanced evaluations. If his presentation was of kangaku style, mine will be a sort of gesaku-fragmentary, self-referential, and biased. Such an approach may not be unsuitable for describing the development of gesaku studies in Japan and in the U.S., which can be characterized by fragmentariness and self-doubt, rather reflecting the nature of gesaku itself.

I began as a comparativist specializing in Edo gesaku and its counterparts in English and French literatures. My realization that literature of the 18th and early 19th centuries both in Japan and in the West could not be studied in isolation from the other arts (particularly painting, theatre, music, and architecture) led me into the even more suspicious waters of comparative arts. To mix and confuse categories is universal to bourgeois cultures: like their Western counterparts, Edoite artists bent traditions to invent their own genres and conventions. Edo gesaku, however, is an extreme case. We cannot even talk about “literature” knowing that books were intermingled constructs of pictures and texts; “author” does not seem to be an adequate term for one who not only wrote stories but drew illustrations (or at least drafted pictures for the artists to complete) and designed the entire production of the book; nor does the term “texts” in the traditional sense do justice to a large body of Edo creations that were not in a written form or to kabuki scripts, for example, which were subject to instant changes according to the gossip in town or to the inclination of the star actor. In addition, the production and the reception of Edo culture cannot be separated since the response of the reader/viewer/audience was inherently anticipated in the creation of texts, written or unwritten, because of the topical nature of products and of the closeness of communication between artists and their audience in the forms of friendly circles, correspondence, and reviews, as well as of publishers’ sensitivity to the changing tides of the market and censorship. Hence, Edo culture must be discussed in terms of “performance” (not merely on stage), “production” (including book-making, for instance), “story telling” (even in songs and advertisements), and “reception” (readership, audience, and patronage) quite beyond the traditional generic distinctions according to which Japanese culture was described for a long time. The pressure is on all of us to step into fields of study for which we are not adequately trained, but the good news is that Edo culture, seen in broad context, is an inexhaustible treasure house of materials, methodologies, and arguments, yet to be discovered or explored: none of us will be out of our jobs for a few centuries to come.

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1992 EMJ NETWORK MEETING

About two dozen participants in the Early Modern Japan Network gathered in Washington at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies in early April. Philip Brown announced that the Northeast Asia Council (NEAC) of the Association for Asian Studies had voted to recommend that the Network be accorded committee status under NEAC. This provides the Network with tax-exempt legal status and the use of AAS banking facilities. Brown noted that much of the credit for nursing the motion through NEAC belonged to Anne Walthall and expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Network. Ronald Toby proposed a motion of thanks for Professor Brown’s efforts to organize the network and gain official status for it. The motion was approved by acclamation.

EMJ NETWORK’S NEW STATUS

The Northeast Asia Council’s approval of committee status for the Network has several significant implications for network activities.

1) We now have banking facilities through the Association for Asian Studies. We can receive and disburse funds and can begin to carry our own financial weight.

2) We can proceed with plans to develop programs to support enhancement of our research skills such as the training project in handwritten manuscripts discussed at our first meeting. Planning for this particular project is now under way.

3) According to AAS guidelines, committees can involve people who are not AAS members, but those formally listed as members of the committee MUST be AAS members. Non-AAS specialists still may participate in the services provided by the Early Modern Japan Network (e.g., subscriptions to Oboegaki, the electronic mail list).

4) Committee status requires us to re-evaluate the formal organization of the network. It requires more formal structure than we have had heretofore. The usual pattern is for a committee to have six to nine members with staggered three-year terms. We need not stay with that model. For example, all early modern Japan specialists who are members of the AAS might form the committee, but elect a set of officers at annual meetings. Some might be semi-permanent officers (e.g., executive director) or all of the officers might rotate. Bylaws need to be considered and adopted. Both of these matters must be discussed at the next business meeting of the network at the AAS meeting in Los Angeles. Please give careful thought to them.

5) Subscriptions for Oboegaki must now be collected to pay for publication and related activities. Since we pay nothing for our electronic mail list, all interested parties may participate without charge.

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO OBOEGAKI

To this point, Oboegaki has been sent to interested parties without charge. Generous donation of duplication facilities and underwriting of mail charges from Ohio State University and Emory University have made this possible. Now that we have the ability, through the Association for Asian Studies, to collect and disburse funds, the Network must pay its own way.

At our first meeting in New Orleans, those assembled determined that a $15 charge for regular subscriptions and a $5 fee for student subscriptions should cover the costs of a semi-annual newsletter and distribution of a directory of Early Modern Japan specialists. In accord with this decision, all future issues will be sent only to paid subscribers. During this, our start-up year, however, regular subscriptions will be $10 and student subscriptions $5.

Checks, money order, etc. (regretfully, in U.S. dollars only) should be made payable to the Association for Asian Studies. Student subscriptions should be accompanied by a photocopy of a valid student I.D. Please use the subscription form on the last page. All subscriptions should be mailed to:

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Computing in Japanese

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Personal computers have transformed the way we work, or at least the way we work with Roman letters. The complexity of the Japanese character system has blunted the impact of computers on daily life in Japan. PCs are still surprisingly rare in Japan given that Japanese rice makers and washing machines now include integrated circuits. The situation has been especially difficult for non-natives who use Japanese. Although Japanese PCs, such as the NEC 98 series, and dedicated word-processors have been available for years, these gadgets have not been compatible with American software or, in many cases, with other Japanese machines. This situation has improved remarkably in the past eighteen months and there are now a number of ways to write in Japanese on standard American computers. In this review I will attempt a broad overview of the options for Japanese computing, focusing on Japanese operating systems. In later issues I will return to each option in greater detail.

Japanese character input methods can be grouped into three broad categories: stand-alone character generators, stand-alone word processors, and operating systems. Dependent character generators or non-system PEPs (front end processors) are applications that generate kanji to be pasted into other applications. Front end processor is the technical term for utilities which convert kana or romaji into characters. The term “front end” reflects that the PEP sits between the user and other applications, such as word processors, creating the kanji to be manipulated in the application. Dependent character generators, or non-system PEPs (front end processors), are applications that work under standard American operating systems. The best known and most widely used non-system PEP is Sweet JAM for the Macintosh. Sweet JAM runs under the standard English operating system, and the newest release supports System 7.0. It includes some 6,000 kanji and has a 20,000 word user-customizable dictionary. Sweet JAM supports four different kanji fonts, including the PostScript fonts Mincho 明朝 and Gothic. Characters can be pasted into a wide variety of applications including MS Word, WordPerfect, MacWrite, Aldus PageMaker, MS Excel and MacPaint. Sweet JAM is an excellent means of entering small amounts of Japanese text into these applications, but it becomes difficult to use on passages longer than a paragraph. The problems lie in interpreting double byte characters. In order to accommodate 6,000 kanji, PEPs use the equivalent of two ASCII characters for one kanji. Under the English operating system these characters normally appear as gibberish. The name 萩生 unrelated, for example, appears as áëžúhúq. Although Sweet JAM gets the English operating system to successfully display these characters in Japanese, the cursor must move twice in order to get through one character. Because of this the delete key becomes unreliable: it is difficult to know whether the key will delete the character to the left or to the right. This problem is known in Japanese as 文字化け mojibake. Although tapping the cursor key will usually clarify where the cursor is, mojibake becomes extremely frustrating when editing longer passages of text. Also remember that because the applications have not been modified to support Japanese (a process known as localization in computerese), operations such as search and replace may not work on kanji. Sweet JAM is from A&A Corp. of Tokyo and retails for $349.00. It is available from several retailers including Cheng & Tsui in Boston and from Qualitas Trading in Berkeley. Qualitas offers a 20% academic discount.

A roughly parallel package for DOS machines is Bikan JALM from Knox Computer. JALM, which stands for Japanese Library Manager for Arts and Letters) is an PEP which runs under Windows. JALM generates kanji and kana from romaji input, and these can be pasted into most Windows and many DOS applications. Unfortunately, the characters must be pasted as graphics, making it very difficult to edit Japanese text once you have pasted it into your document. Graphics also swell the size of your text files and make scrolling and editing slower. JALM is extremely good at what it does, which is generate beautiful, scalable Japanese characters. The interface and documentation are clear and simple. If you work on graphic applications such as brochures or newsletters, JALM is ideal for generating small pieces of Japanese text. Unfortunately, it cannot be used as a word-processor. Bikan JALM retails for $695.00 and is available both direct from Knox and from Qualitas and Cheng & Tsui.

Stand-alone word processors are a more extensive means of entering kanji. The most popular stand-alone system in the US is EW+ by ITL of New York. This word processor runs on most 80286 or higher DOS machines and supports the most commonly required text management features including footnotes and indexing. EW+, however, runs independently from all other PC software: you cannot paste EW+ kanji into another document. Nor is EW+ compatible with multitasking environments such as Desqview or MS Windows. To input kanji in EW+ you must close all other applications and documents. (I have used only a demo version of EW+, but ITL reports that the package is not compatible with multitasking environments). Finally EW+ has a rather unintuitive interface. EW+ has its advocates: it is extremely fast and generally reliable, making it a favorite of English to Japanese translators. EW+ retails for $695.00 with a $45.00
surcharge for English documentation. It is available direct from ITL or from Qualitas or Cheng & Tsui. Cheng & Tsui also carry two PC compatible stand alone packages that I have not examined: Yukara for DOS and Twinbridge, which runs under Windows. These application apparently allow you to paste kanji text into other applications, albeit as graphics.

Any of these word processors is probably adequate for letter writing. Their universal limitation is that they don’t allow for true bilingual work. None of these stand-alone word processors is adequate for general academic writing, so you will, of necessity have two sets of files, one for Japanese and one for English. A truly bilingual system allows the user to switch from English to Japanese at a keystroke. The advantages here are immense. When taking notes, you can switch from paraphrase to translation to transcription without changing applications: your notes on one monograph can be in one file. You can also enter personal or place names with problematic readings in the original, and sort out the authoritative reading at leisure. Truly bilingual word processing at present requires a Japanese operating system. With a Japanese operating system, anything, including files or directory/folder names can be in Japanese, and kanji can be used in any localized application. The two Japanese operating systems for American machines are KanjiTalk for the Apple Macintosh and DOS-V 5.0 for IBM PS/55 and some clones.

KanjiTalk is the older and more established system. First introduced in 1986, it is now up to release 6.0.7.1 A Japanese compatible System 7.1 is scheduled for release next year. To the end user, KanjiTalk appears virtually identical to the English operating system save two features. First, the menus are in Japanese. Second, the system is designed to support a variety of FEPs, including TurboJIP, MacVJE, EGBridge and 2.0変換. All of these FEPs present an array of kanji choices corresponding to given kana or romaji input. All FEP’s present kanji in an order which reflects past usage. My FEP, for example, now presents 菓 as the first choice for はん, corresponding to my previous choices. Most FEP’s also allow the creation of custom user dictionaries: my FEP now generates 倫 for そうろう.

KanjiTalk can reside happily on your hard drive along with the English operating system. Various shareware utilities, such as System Switcher or Blessor, allow you to boot up in either system. KanjiTalk will run, albeit slowly on 68000 processors, but a 68030 is far preferable. It needs a minimum of 2 MB RAM and 4 MB in order to run most applications smoothly. I have found 5 MB adequate, but not spacious. System 7.1 will probably need still more memory.

In the halcyon days before 1991 any software distributor could sell KanjiTalk and its was widely available for about $100.00. With release 6.0.7, however, Apple decided to restrict sales to authorized Apple dealers and to raise the price to roughly $225.00. The official double-talk was that this would provide for better support. The real story, apparently, is that KanjiTalk was available in the US for a fraction of the price in Japan. In order to prevent Japanese users from buying KanjiTalk in the US, Apple deemed it necessary to raise the US price. In order to make full use of KanjiTalk it is necessary to buy localized software: applications which have been modified to manipulate kanji. The list of localized applications is extensive. Word processors include MacWrite II, SoloWriter (a Japanese version of Nisus), WinSoft and EGWord. EGWord was developed by ERGSOFT of Tokyo largely for the Japanese market and its capabilities reflect its origins: it lacks basic features such as footnotes. For these reasons it is a poor choice for an academic word processor. Its major virtue is its widespread popularity in Japan.

MacWrite II and Solo Writer are more satisfactory choices for American users. MacWrite II is virtually identical to the American version so I will give it short shrift here. It is, suffice it to say, an easy to use, competent general purpose word processor. Solo Writer/Nisus, although largely overlooked in the US, has received rave reviews in Australia and the UK. It is quite fast, has extremely sophisticated search and replace capabilities, and a powerful, if complex, macro language. The search and replace wildcards are included in pull down menus, so it is easy to, for example, search for every word in italics followed by one space and then a word in kanji. Its weaknesses include the awkward and complicated handling of columns and outlines. I also found the spell checker to give curious suggested corrections. I have been revising a manuscript under Solo Writer and have found it more than adequate for academic writing. Solo Writer can also handle basic desk-top-publishing, such as this newsletter. Lastly, the long awaited Japanese version of WordPerfect has been announced, to be released in November 1992.

One of the pleasant surprises of KanjiTalk is that much standard American, non-localized software works quite well. Japanese Macintosh magazines generally group applications into four categories: 1) fully localized; 2) not localized, but can display kanji with some mojibake (see above); 3) non-localized, works in English, but cannot display kanji ; 4) either will not load or crashes the system. Most standard, American release applications fall into the second or third category. MS Excel 3.0, for example, displays kanji save for some cursor irregularity, as do many graphic applications. MS Word 4.0 is a curious case: it will display kanji with mojibake in PostScript but not bit-mapped fonts.

KanjiTalk will be rendered obsolete sometime next year with the release of System 7.1 and “World Script.” With System 7.1 the independent operating systems for Japanese and Korean will be incorporated as system extensions. System 7.1 will thus be
passively omni-lingual, displaying Japanese, Chinese, Korean and right to left languages such as Hebrew simultaneously. In order to input different languages you will have to switch system extensions, but this will be possible without rebooting the computer. Apple will release Japanese and Korean system extensions with System 7.1. A Chinese input system is on the back burner, although World Script will be able to display text generated under MacChinese, the Chinese OS.

World Script should make Japanese compatible software more usable and widely available. Currently, when developers localize their software for Japan, they rewrite the interface in Japanese, rewrite the manuals in Japanese, and market the product largely in Japan at Japanese prices. All this makes the product less appealing to most American users. With World Script, developers need only make their software “World Script aware,” in essence, double-byte character compatible. Menus and manuals will remain in English and software should ultimately be available through standard retailers. World Script should also make it easier to acquire high-end applications. A school which might balk at $1500 for Japanese database might site-license the application if it also handled Russian, Hebrew, Arabic and Chinese. Finally, System 7.1 should be the ideal system for any one doing truly multilingual (Sino-Japanese or Japanese-Korean) work.

Apple and WordPerfect have been showing a World Script aware release of WordPerfect at conventions throughout this year and System 7.1 has been in circulation in various beta for months. The system is currently being released to developers in a final “golden master” version. Apple is keeping mum about a public roll-out. It is reportedly concerned about laymen buying a Mac for its user friendly reputation and getting stuck in Cyrilic. We should, however, see System 7.1 with double-byte system extensions by next spring.

The DOS counterpart to KanjiTalk is IBM DOSN, which was originally released in 1991. Like KanjiTalk, DOSN supports a variety of FEP’s and can reside on the same hard drive as standard DOS. Typing SWITCH at the C> prompt executes a warm reboot and loads the double-byte characters set necessary for Japanese. The command syntax of DOS/V 5.01 is almost identical to DOS 5: you enter commands in Roman letters but the computer will respond in Japanese. The major word processor available for DOS/V is WordPerfect. Ichitaro, a popular NEC 98 based word processor is also available, but, like EGWord, it is designed largely for the Japanese market.

Much of the furor over DOS/V centers on whether it will run on PC clones. Although DOS/V is an IBM product and is officially supported only on IBM PS/55 machines, many users have had good results with near clones. The problem with DOS/V is less that it will not run on many machines than that most software manufacturers will not commit themselves to supporting non-IBM users. IBM has an obvious vested interest in discouraging clones, whereas companies like Lotus are simply unwilling to confront the potential support costs resulting from the dozen or so BIOS configurations and hundreds of video cards available. WordPerfect has its toe in the water. In early September it described WordPerfect as an IBM PS/55 based product for the Japanese market. It has recently begun to describe it as a DOS/V word processor.

Because DOS/V runs on many clones but is not yet supported by most manufacturers, a split has developed between computer professionals and laymen. Many computer retailers in Japan see DOS/V as the death knell for the NEC 98 standard, which is enormously overpriced compared to clones. The Japanese computer retailer STEP, for example, launched a major DOS/V sales campaign earlier this year. As the chairman of STEP, Terada Yukio, observed, a fast 486 NEC 98 series machine runs over ¥2,150,000 while STEP’s comparable DOS/V machines were closer to ¥380,000. To allay consumer fears, STEP offered 24 hour phone support with its DOS/V clone packages. To STEP’s chagrin, however, they continued to sell 30 NEC’s for every DOS/V clone. These unrealized expectation are understandable. Since Terada had gotten DOSN to run on his clones, he felt he was offering his customers a great value. To the end-user reading the box describing DOS/V as IBM PS/55 software, however, the clones seemed like the ultimate in caveat emptor.

Much of the confusion over DOS/V may resolve itself when Microsoft releases its own version, MS DOS/V. Unlike IBM DOS/V, MS DOS/V will have been tested on a variety of near clones and should run smoothly on a wide variety of machines. (Microsoft, unlike IBM, sells only software, and has no vested interest in protecting a hardware standard. Bill Gates, of course, is something of a megalomaniac, but that is another issue.) MS DOS/V should be released sometime late this year. In the interim, if you want to be the first on your block to run DOS/V, the following may be helpful. DOS/V is said to run out of the box on AMI BIOS machines. With the Phoenix BIOS you will probably have to rewrite your HIMEM.SYS file. Other BIOS situations are unclear: check BBS like Compuserve for software patches if you have problems. The DOS/V keyboard driver can be finicky: some users have had to buy new IBM keyboards. Some video boards cause problems. The Trident video card has been known to run in VGA mode but not SVGA. Finally, it is possible to get DOS/V running but still have problems with individual applications: Lotus 1-2-3 seems particularly problematic.

Perhaps more interesting than DOS/V itself is the release of Microsoft Japanese Windows 3.0. Japanese Windows runs under DOS/V and is extremely similar to Windows 3.0, save, of course, for the Japanese menus. Like standard Windows 3.0, 日本語
Windows 3.0 remains slow and somewhat buggy. In order to run Japanese Windows without gnashing your teeth, you will probably want at least a 486 33 MHz system and at least 8 MB RAM. Again, as in standard Windows, the release of Windows 3.1, should increase speed and reduce the number of unrecoverable crashes. The importance of Japanese Windows is that it is platform independent. Although there are separate versions of Japanese Windows for NEC 98 machines and DOS/V machines, there is only one series of Windows applications: MS Word for Japanese Windows is the same irrespective of platform. It is here that many analysts see the threat to the NEC standard. As users switch from DOS to Windows they will want new machines. Since Windows applications, unlike DOS applications, can run on either machine, resistance to DOS/V clones should drop. Both MS Excel and MS Word, the two most popular windows applications, have been released for Windows-J. In both cases the Japanese versions are approximately one release behind the standard versions.

The stability of non-localized applications under DOS/V remains unclear. Most non-localized DOS applications will not run under DOS/V. The problem lies in the display protocol modifications which allow DOS/V to display double-byte characters. Many non-localized applications cannot emulate the DOS/V video protocols, thus generating a blank or unintelligible screen. Ironically, the applications often do not crash, but continue to run while producing a blank screen. MS DOS/V may improve the situation. It will reportedly be roughly as tolerant as KanjiTalk, running most non-localized without kanji and some with kanji but mojibake. Japanese Windows should provide a similar situation for non-localized Windows applications.

Should you switch to KanjiTalk or DOS/V? If you found the switch from pen and paper to computers a release rather than a burden, then you will probably feel similarly about the switch to a Japanese operating system. Should you choose Mac or PC? I will leave this silicon version of the Thirty-years War for another issue. Some parting advice, however. Do not be intimidated by the prospect of switching word processors, even across platforms. Commercial translation software will salvage virtually all of your text, including footnotes. Page layout and esoteric functions will be lost, but the transition is less burdensome than one might expect.

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Early Modern Japanese Studies in France

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Despite French people’s growing interest in Japan, specialized publications on Japanese society, history, religion, thought, etc., are still dramatically few. This is especially true regarding the early modern period, a field where scholars often work in complete isolation. The situation for literature, however, is slightly better. Much modern Japanese literature (including Edo period literature) has been translated into French during the last decade and this work has reached a wide audience.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Francine Herail’s Bibliographie Japonaise (Japanese Bibliography) is a valuable reference book in Japanese Studies. It provides the titles of basic European and American studies of Japanese language and civilization (HERAIL <2>.

GENERAL HISTORY

As far as I know, no major research work on Tokugawa Japan has been published in France during the past decade. Short papers dealing with different aspects of Tokugawa period were published in specialized reviews, but it would take too long to comment on them here.

We must however mention the recent publications of two good surveys of Japanese History. The first one (HERAIL <1>) is a convenient textbook for students (and teachers) in Japanese Civilization. It contains many translations of primary sources, genealogies, maps etc. Herail does not put forward any revolutionary thesis. In general, she follows the standard views of Japanese historians but she has her own distinctive approach and knows a lot about the ancient Imperial administration. HERAIL et al <2> is a collective work from Japan’s origins to modern times. This work, of a high quality (especially for the ancient and medieval periods), is intended for specialists as well as the general reader. Each contribution reflects recent trends in research in Japanese History. The modern period begins with the unification of Japan by Oda Nobunaga.
LITERATURE

Let us first mention Rene Sieffert’s impressive translation work. After having translated several masterpieces of Japanese Ancient Literature such as the *Genji monogatari* and the *Heike monogatari*, Sieffert is now concentrating on the Edo period, especially the writings of Bashō, Saikaku and Chikamatsu (SIEFFERT <1>-<8>).

Sieffert’s translations of Bashō (SIEFFERT <1>, <3>,<5> and <6>) are particularly noteworthy. The French reader can now get a faithful concept of what the Haikai was, both as a poetic construction and as a chapter in the history of Japanese Literature.

Although written more than twenty years ago, the late Hubert Maës’s study of Hiraga Gennai is worth mentioning as an original contribution of a French scholar. Gennai’s multifaceted life and personality are carefully studied in MAES <1>. Maës has also translated into French a Furai Sanjin short story (one of Gennai’s numerous pseudonyms), entitled “Fūryū shidōkenden.” The posthumous edition of his translation (MAES 2>) contains two of his previously published papers. “Attractions foraines au Japon sous les Tokugawa” (Fairground attractions in Tokugawa Japan), an investigation into the *miseemono* of the Edo period based on literary texts and “Les voyages fictifs dans la littérature japonaise de l’époque d’Edo” (Imaginary journeys in the Japanese literature of Edo period), a comparative study of novels dealing with imaginary journeys in the western tradition (Rabelais, Swift) and the Japanese one (Furai sanjin and others).

Another example of an original approach to Japanese Literature is Anne Sakai’s Ph. D. thesis on rakugo, to be published soon under the title *La parole comme art: le Rakugo japonais* (The monologue as an art: the Japanese rakugo) (SAKAI <1>). The book provides an historical, linguistic and sociological analysis of rakugo. Sakai examines first the possible ancestors of rakugo as an art of story-telling, reconstructs the emergence, at the end of the 18th century, of the *yose* setting and of the profession of story-teller, and describes its evolution until the present day. She also tries to surround the specificity of the rakugo as a narrative performance of a single story-teller substituting himself for multiple characters. She finally uses the classical body of stories as a tool to study the common representation of social relationships amongst town inhabitants.

INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

A Ph.D. thesis entitled “L’idée de Shizen chez Andō Shōeki” (The concept of *shizen* in Andō Shōeki’s work) has recently been submitted to the University of Paris by Jacques Joly. Like Anne Sakai, Joly has a philosophical background and he was originally driven by a philosophical interest in Andō Shōeki. His thesis includes a critical presentation of the previous studies on Andō Shōeki, an investigation of the meanings of the word *shizen* in the Taoist, Confucianist and Buddhist traditions in China and Japan, and a close analysis of Andō Shōeki’s system of thought. Joly’s conclusion is that scholars have overestimated his significance as a philosopher.

Annick Horiuchi first received training in mathematics and then turned to the history of Mathematics in Japan. She wrote a Ph.D. thesis (HORIUCHI <1>) and several papers on Seki Takakazu (?-1708) and Takebe Katahiro (1664-1739), two mathematicians of the Edo Period. She tried on the one hand to clarify their intellectual background as well as their social environment, and on the other hand, to analyze the mathematical content of their work. Horiuchi showed that both men thought of mathematics as a powerful instrument appropriate for capturing and describing the visible changes of the natural world. She also stressed the influence of 13th Chinese mathematical treatises on Seki’s project of reforming mathematics. She analyzed Takebe’s roles as a faithful servant and companion of Shogun Ienobu and as a scientific advisor of Shogun Yoshimune, especially his role in the scientific choices and projects of the latter.

In the field of History of Medicine, we can mention H.O. Rotermund’s recent work of gathering and translating into French a wide range of primary sources related to smallpox epidemics in Japan during the Edo period. Rotermund’s primary research field is Japanese Buddhism.

HISTORY OF ART

Christine Shimizu’s steady work as a curator of Guimet Museum deserves special mention. Shimizu is in charge of the Japanese Collection and she edited the two volumes of Ukiyoe taikan Gime Bijutsukan (SHIMIZU et al.<1>), recently published by Kodansha. She is also the author of many books and papers analyzing the Japanese Collection at the Guimet Museum and exploring the history of relationships between Japan and Europe in the 19th century.

The insufficient character of my report is partly due to the lack of communication amongst French specialists of Japanese Studies. Fortunately, since 1990, a group of young scholars has tried to gather and diffuse the available information through the publication of the yearly Bulletin of the French Society of Japanese Studies (SFEJ). The Bulletin (n°2) for the year 1991 was recently published. It provides summaries of presentations by the members of the Society, including their research field and their publications. I hope that the SFEJ will be able in the near future to publish a scientific review.
Membership in the SFEJ is 150 francs for ordinary members; 80 F. for students. Checks, orders and inquiries should be directed to S.F.E.J., c/o Institut des Hautes Etudes Japonaises, 52 rue du Cardinal Lemoine, 75005 PARIS, FRANCE.

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SIEFFERT René <8>, Enquêtes à l’ombre des cerisiers (Inquiries in the shadow of cherry trees), POF, 1990.

Breaking the Disciplinary Boundaries cont. from p. 1

For the purpose of this workshop, I will omit a survey of individual achievements in translation and scholarship in favor of concrete examples of collaborations, referring to my own experience, in order to put a spotlight on current struggles and directions for the future. I will also give you a glimpse of my life to illustrate how a gesaku specialist might fit in the curriculum and program of an institution. Peculiarities of gesaku studies, as loosely defined here, derive from the facts that (1) it is still a new field of study, (2) available original materials are numerous and continue to be unearthed, (3) much training is needed to decipher the variety of literary, pictorial, and calligraphic styles of original texts, (4) much knowledge is required to understand the linguistic, pictorial, and other jokes rampant in many of these materials, (5) contemporary Edoites themselves have left us with their own views of their cultural production (ratings, reviews, and parodies), which need to be examined not only as reference materials but also as texts in their own right, and, in addition, (6) the generically mixed nature of the culture of the period challenges scholars to examine all of its aspects, for which literary critical or art historical approaches alone will not be sufficient. We are masochists, indeed, but also ambitious adventurers, to choose for our keep this nebulously complicated area of scholarship.

In Japan, serious studies of the popular arts and literature of Edo are a relatively recent phenomenon (kabuki since Kawatake Shigetoshi 河竹繁俊, ukiyoe since Suzuki Juzo 鈴木重三, and literary gesaku since Noda Hisao 野田寿雄 and Nakamura Yukihiko 中村幸彦, for example). The early specialists set the groundwork for us essentially in naming and mapping the Edo arts—that is, in categorizing and establishing terms for various creative forms and techniques, and in identifying authors and subjects, in addition to arranging the artists and genres into genealogical trees. Thanks to them, Edo studies acquired respectability. Prejudice had been particularly strong in academia against gesaku. I was told that even at Waseda University, the most prestigious in Edo literature and distinguished for the gesaku specialists on the faculty, the students of gesaku were advised to write theses and dissertations on Saikaku or other more widely acceptable subjects for the sake of their careers. Some of this sort
of prejudice still persists, but in Kinsei Bungakkai 近代文学学会 and in the journals of the field, gesaku and other types of later Edo writings occupy a prominent place. For the reasons described below, however, gesaku is yet to be firmly situated in the general understanding of the history of Japanese arts and literature.

The chief reason is the tradition in academia of narrow specializations not only in terms of authors and genres but also in the emphasis on scrupulous revisions of existing biographical and historiographical data and on minute commentaries on texts. Currently, because many texts still call for modern transcriptions and commentaries, much energy is being spent in introducing materials and producing definitive editions. The phenomenon is very like that of a few decades ago in English literature when anthologies and collections of chief Eighteenth century authors appeared in definitive editions with abundant notes. Judging from the number of hitherto untranscribed texts in gesaku, there is no end to the need for, and enthusiasm in, this type of activities. A Japanese colleague once declared that there were three levels of scholarship, in the order of importance: (1) discovering new materials and introducing them (i.e., publicly announcing their existence), (2) making materials accessible to the public by honkoku 翻刻 transcriptions and chishaku 注釈 commentaries, and (3) interpreting texts, which, my friend judged to belong to “criticism (hyōron) rather than scholarship (gakumon).” Although the seemingly reversed ranking shocked me at the time, I came to recognize its validity while studying in Japan recently. In the first place, if the ultimate approach to Edo culture is by reenacting its linguistic structure (George Steiner once remarked that the highest form of literary criticism is sheer recitations of poems), then the conservative Japanese trend certainly recreates the fashion of kōshō 幸証 method (historical and bibliographical studies) and kotsu 燕蛮 taste (archaism) in Edo not only in scholarly jugaku 儒学 and wagaku 和学 but also in gesaku and other popular parts of city life. There are practical reasons as well. Because much of Edo culture has become a respectable object of study only recently, currently active Edo specialists are under a great pressure to unearth original materials and publish definitive honkoku editions. In the case of classical literature, for instance, there is not much chance left for scholars to discover hitherto unknown original texts, releasing them to the open arena of interpretive scholarship. Edo specialists seem to agree instinctively on a joint venture of unearthing all existing texts before the whole body of Edo materials can be submitted to categorizations and methodologies. This will not be accomplished during the for loosening up the rigid boundaries of academic fields. The phenomenon is very like that of a few decades ago in English literature when anthologies and collections of chief Eighteenth century authors appeared in definitive editions with abundant notes. Judging from the number of hitherto untranscribed texts in gesaku, there is no end to the need for, and enthusiasm in, this type of activities. 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Edo specialists seem to agree instinctively on a joint venture of unearthing all existing texts before the whole body of Edo materials can be submitted to categorizations and methodologies. This will not be accomplished during the lifetime of anyone here. For example, Tanahashi Masahiro’s 榎橋正博 gigantic three-volume index, Kibyōshi Sōran 黄表紙綜覧, took ten years of travels to the basements of museums and the attics of private homes throughout Japan to discover little known kibyōshi. An index volume to this index (necessary because the entries in the volumes are arranged by the year rather than the author or title) is likely to occupy him for as many years since he rightly finds it necessary to make it into a concordance of words as well as pictures. Similar efforts are being made in creating indices and concordances of other types of books, prints, and performances, while transcribed texts are being added, with much speed, to the existing body of accessible texts. At the same time, Edo studies are popularly fashionable in Japan now, perhaps as the result of the “Discover Japan” incentive a decade ago, so that books on all aspects of Edo culture crowd bookstore shelves. This new interest has, on the one hand, accelerated publications of books explaining for the general audience specialized and quaint corners of Edo history, society, and arts; and, on the other, encouraged new, and often theoretical, studies from such perspectives as architecture, economics, semiotics, and folklore. Rapidly proliferating studies, aimed at the general reading public, on print-making, book publishing and lending, city developments, and such topics are bound to influence literary commentators of texts.

In short, there are two parallel trends in Edo studies in Japan now. The traditional approaches, consisting of bibliographical, biographical, and honkoku/commentary activities, are dominant not only in classroom training but also in the Kinsei Bungakkai and academic publications. Along with these approaches, there has been, since the early masters mentioned above, a strong current of synthetic and interpretive scholarship, which forms part of training at universities. Jinbo Kazuya’s 神保五疏散会 seminars at Waseda University, which I had occasions to observe, seemed to reflect these currents proportionally consisting largely of deciphering original texts with occasional critical comments and discussions. His last seminar dedicated to critical examinations of existing studies of later Edo culture seemed to be an unusual experience both for the teacher and the students. The theoretical/critical approaches find their place more in the general book market than in academic conferences or university-based journals. Authors of the latter type of studies are largely academics who are considered to be “critics” rather than “scholars” by the conservative group. There are commercial publishers and journals (Perikansha and its quarterly Edo Bungaku 江戸文学, for example) who specialize in idea-oriented Edo studies and others who publish generally theory-oriented books and journals in hermeneutics, semiotics, psychoanalysis, and ideology often including studies of Edo. Theoricians are not the only ones who are responsible for loosening up the rigid boundaries of academic fields. The popular curiosity which fuels the ongoing “Edo Boom” seems to have inspired new fields of study. Let me cite one example. The “Edo Boom” enthusiasm appears to be behind the support by the city and ward offices and the cooperation of land owners and construction companies in “archeological” investigations of
critics speak of the "superficiality" and "danger" of the Edo Boom, but the phenomenon is largely to our advantage. Exhibitions during the Edo period, the task of textual transcriptions and descriptions of Edo culture was, for a long time, in the hands of amateurs or in the form of scholars' pastime. This tradition still prevails in certain types of texts, especially in the erotic category. Currently, creative writers aggressively take part in research on Edo: historical novelist Sugimoto Sonoko 杉本圣子, detective story writer Takahashi Katsuhiko 高橋克彦, and science fiction writer Ishikawa Etsu 石川恵緒, for example, provide us with interesting angles for looking at our subject. The comic illustrator Sugiura Hinako 杉浦日向子 is brilliant in recreating images of Edo and novelist Inoue Hisashi 井原宏志 is one of the most learned critics of gesaku. Walls between experts and beginners as well as those between academics and non-professionals seem to be completely down in many collaborative study groups now active in Tokyo: I profited from attending Nobuhiro Shinnii’s 延広真治 kibyōshi group where members coming from various universities helped one another with reading texts and pictures requiring different kinds of expertise. I also heard of another group of kibyōshi readers including Edo-style musicians and chanters. I know of two major tegami no kai for deciphering hand-written letters. In the one I attended, a curio dealer was the greatest authority from whom academics learned. A group for senryū 川柳 reading, led by a physician, Yagi Keiichi 八木清一, known also as collector and commentator of Edo materials, mixed people of all ages and walks of life. In Suzuki Junzo's すずき純訳 "nazo" 諜絵 workshops, housewives, retired people, librarians, and academics collectively indulged in interpreting complex and esoteric picture puzzles. I was not a regular participant in any of the groups, but I believe they would provide foreign scholars a practical opportunity for training with the aid of eager and kind colleagues in a non-threatening atmosphere.

Critics speak of the "superficiality" and "danger" of the Edo Boom, but the phenomenon is largely to our advantage. Exhibitions are constantly mounted in museums and department stores ranging from a representative selection of the world's famed collections (such as one of the British Museum) to a rare showing of specialized materials (such as Bakumatsu photographs or bijudoro ビリュードロ glassware). Theaters and museums offer educational programs including performances and demonstrations. (The Kabuki Kyōshitsu 歌舞伎教室 at the National Theatre, for example, includes excellent introductions and, sometimes, backstage tours.) The radio and television almost daily offer a wide range of performances, demonstrations, lectures, and discussions on Edo culture. Some are superficial attempts at making Edo familiar—the announcer referring to "Bashō-san" and "Yonosuke-san" to the rhythm of the obliging nods of the uncomprehending female companion. By and large, however, the media are learning faster than the academia to mix specialists with qualified amateurs. A dialogue between an economist and a rakugo narrator on the topic of money in common-class life in Edo, for example, revealed much more than either could have within his own jargon. The media's technique can give us ideas for collaborating across disciplinary boundaries and with non-academic specialists.

Another product of the efforts to "Discover Japan" is enthusiasm for regional culture. Local governments and businesses invest in improving and enlarging the holdings and facilities of museums and libraries as well as promoting festivals, arts, and crafts of their communities. In this area, the media's coverage is largely nationwide, and the influence of the opinions of listeners/viewers is strong. Under the public's pressure, even the NHK Broadcasting Company is making an effort to correct its Tokyo-centered perspective and its insistence on a "standard" language. Both in scholarly and commercial sectors, numerous publications and other types of productions are on regional culture are shedding new light on the creation of the city of Edo, the city's life and language, and the forms and styles of Edo arts. For example, some of Hokusai's 北斎 last works are traced to Obuse 小布施 in Nagano, the architectural features of Edo period theatres can be seen when the TV introduces Kompira 金毘羅 kabuki, and Edoesque playfulness in architecture is most vividly illustrated in journal photographs of Sazaedo 茶ノ窓 in Aizu Wakamatsu. All in all, the study of Edo culture has never been so lively and widespread; now is the best time for Edo specialists to study in Japan.

In this country, the study of Japanese literature came to flourish during the late fifties and the sixties thanks to the work of eminent translators and literary historians. The American scholars, however, were too much occupied by the urgent task of introducing the established canon of Japanese literature to correct the canonical prejudice against gesaku. The focus, by Donald Keene, Ivan Morris, and others on Bashō, Chikamatsu, and Saikaku tended to leave the latter half of the Edo period blank in the general understanding of Japanese literature in this country. Those of us who became
interested in gesaku in the seventies or earlier worked in isolation—not only from the main current of Japanese studies in the U.S. but also from one another, from related disciplines, and often from the texts in their original form.

There was also the problem of methodology in literary criticism. Howard Hibbett’s book on early Edo fiction could have been followed by an outburst of translations and studies of later Edo genres had it not been for the domination, during the sixties and seventies, of New Criticism and its companions (iconography, psychoanalysis, archetypal criticism, and comparative literature). In some ways the dashing methodology was beneficial: its pseudo-scientific approach made it possible, for the first time, to analyze non-Western literatures outside the confines of influence and above the superficiality of thematic similarities. Now Japanese literature was on equal footing with the canonical Western literature—or so we thought at the time. In fact, we had to justify gesaku by squeezing the works into periods, genres, archetypes, and such recently defined Western categories. The ardent New Critical search for “meaning” made scholars favor Basho’s haiku (俳句) and “Zen” painting, mistakenly identified as “symbolic,” to the neglect of the larger body of Edo arts, which quite obviously declared themselves to be without meaning. Applying all the available strategies for reading “meaning” behind sounds, images, symbols, and metaphors, gesaku could not be categorized as epic, tragedy, novel, or even romance, and its meaning invariably turned out to be nothing more than “Life is silly, isn’t it?” Even as comedy, gesaku seemed to lack all necessary components such as “character,” “plot,” and “theme.” In the mid-seventies, my esteemed New Critic teacher was morally obliged to advise me to choose “something more important” to occupy my critical talent for a dissertation. The formation, in 1979, of a gesaku group under the leadership of Howard Hibbett vastly advanced gesaku studies, not to speak of easing our anxiety about specializing in an uncertain and strange field that defied the standard critical apparatus of the West. During the past 13 years, the members of the group have developed common areas in terms of texts while encountering difficulties and frustration. The discussion leaders and editors of the group under the leadership of Howard Hibbett vastly advanced gesaku studies, not to speak of easing our anxiety about specializing in an uncertain and strange field that defied the standard critical apparatus of the West. During the past 13 years, the members of the group have developed common areas in terms of texts while working on individual topics and specific approaches. Hibbett has investigated the general subject of the theory and practice of humor, William Sibley has applied Bakhtin to comic senryū poetry, Haruko Iwasaki has examined group activities of the Edoite literati, Robert Leutner has translated Shikitei Sanba 流水軒馬, Robert Campbell has moved from late sharebon 落合本 to kanbun-style gesaku, Andrew Markus has specialized in Ryūtei Tanehiko’s 柳亭種彦 gōkan 合巻 as well as in the history of popular culture, Ellen Widmer has analyzed Kyokutei Bakin’s 曲亭馬琴 creative work and theory in relation to Chinese models, and I have operated as a semiotician in interpreting the verbal and pictorial sides of gesaku. Among recent members of the group, Timothy Clark has combined art theory and art history in his study of Nakazu 中津, and T.B.M. Screech has focused on representations of “Dutch” learning (rangaku 落学) in artistic images. Some of us have books already published or forthcoming, and many of us have written articles in Japanese as well as in English. The group’s collaborative research will come out soon as a volume under Sibley’s editorship. Since the late eighties, the field has attracted many younger scholars. Those who come to my mind in relation to my own collaborations are: Earl Jackson, Jr. and Paul Schallow, each on homoeroticism, Charles Inoue with his theory of “pictocentrism,” Roger Thomas on late Edo waka 和歌 and its poems, Shelley Fenno Quinn with her current research on the nō 能 in relation to kabuki, Eiji Sekine on irotoko 色男 in Saikaku and Tamenaga Shunsui for his study of bodily pain in Kobayashi Issa 小林一茶, and Fumiko Togasaki on the relationship between the visual and the verbal in kibyōshi. In short, gesaku is finally receiving the sort of scholarly attention it deserves.

It goes without saying that scholars in Japan are most helpful for our training and writing. The traditional Japanese approach in the academy is in fact vital to us since we need more help than our Japanese colleagues in coping with the complexity and difficulty of our texts. Chiishaku scholars offer far more in personal conversations and seminars than in their printed commentaries. More interpretive types of scholarship which now flourish in Japan can inspire us. Involved exchanges of views between Japanese and American scholars of literature did not take place until recently. Earl Miner has made particular effort since the seventies to bring together scholars from both sides of the Pacific. Among his cross-national projects, I recall an adventurous one on Japanese literary theory and practice consisting of three symposia in 1980 and 1981, in which Noguchi Takehiko 野口武彦 and I were the Edo persons. In addition to the difficulty of bilingual discussion, sometimes relying on interpretations by a few of us, the differences in research agenda and scholarly custom between the Japanese and American sides made our exchanges difficult and frustrating. The discussion leaders and editors of our resulting books in the two languages (Miner, Konishi Jin’ichi 小西甚一, and Nakanishi Susumu 中西進) must have expended more painful energy than the rest of us in synthesizing the differences.

Cross-cultural exchanges can never be easy as habits and beliefs have a strong hold on our ability to listen to others. Some of the conditions, however, have improved during the past decade. Although Edo specialists in Japan have not become any more proficient in English, at least American scholars are much better trained than before in spoken and written Japanese. Thanks to widespread opportunities, offered by various grant agencies in Japan and in the U.S., for studying and teaching abroad, we are familiarizing ourselves with each other’s academic customs.
American universities seem to be far more active than their Japanese counterparts in exchanges of scholars across the Pacific, but several national research institutions in Japan (such as Kokubungaku Kenkyû Shiryōkan, Kokusai Nihon Bunka Kenkyû Sentā, and Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyûjo) promote their motto of internationalization of Japanese studies in the forms of symposia, conferences, and publications. At the same time, the art of simultaneous translation is far more advanced than before, particularly in Japan, so that a lack in language proficiency is no longer a barrier to cross-national collaboration. I was impressed, two years ago, by a multinational and multidisciplinary conference, chaired by James McClain, on the cities of Paris and Edo/Tokyo. Communication seemed remarkably smooth considering the size of the conference and the range of disciplines and languages. As for research work in print, Japanese translations of writings in foreign languages on topics concerning Japan are appearing little by little, and they are occasionally cited by Japanese scholars.

On our side, some of the important studies by Japanese scholars ought to be translated, but a more immediate task is to introduce, in our own work, the original literary texts. Without crossing the ocean, any collaboration should be efficient and effective if we cross the disciplinary lines. My earliest experience was the “Tokugawa Spaceship” panel in 1985 conceived of by architecture specialist Ann Cline and chaired by Conrad Totman. Ronald Toby’s examination of village space and mine of money in gesaku did not seem to fit comfortably into the general scheme. I, for one, understood the topic of the panel only when I listened to the exchanges between Totman and Herman Ooms, discussant. Nevertheless, it was a start in the right direction.

Edo culture is full of topics that would benefit from combinations of disciplinary perspectives. The event made me very conscious of the need of a conceptual framework for working with specialists of disciplines outside literature and arts, for which purpose more exposure would be the best means. Historians may be traditionally more adept at conceiving of issues in multidisciplinary perspectives and at making use of scholarship in other disciplines; literature scholars have tended to flock around themselves. Mary Elizabeth Berry held a conference in 1988 on play in Japanese culture, in which the Edo period was represented by Howard Hibbett and Donald Shively. By the thematic organization of the history of play from the medieval to contemporary times seen from historiographical, sociological, literary critical, and other perspectives, gesaku was simultaneously shown in horizontal as well as vertical schemes of Japanese culture, widening my perspective. It is my hope that gesaku studies are included more and more in collaborative projects outside the fields of literature and arts, whether the topic is government policies, city planning, finance, demography, or literacy.

Mutual consultation and collaboration among Edo specialists of all disciplines are necessary to give justice to the multi-media nature of Edo culture. Pictures are as important in telling a story as verbal portions of texts. Pictures imitate and allude to kabuki scenes, ukiyoe prints, and social events just as verbal texts do, while kabuki actors imitate pictures and act out stories in books. And yet, both in Japan and in this country, scholars have tended to guard their disciplinary territories. For example, kibyōshi and gōkkan books, with large proportions of verbal text, are left to literary commentators while other types of ehon books, with more space occupied by pictures, and individual ukiyoe prints are the responsibility of art historians. Commentaries on the former genres refer to the details of illustrations for the sake of understanding the verbal story, while on the latter, commentaries mention literary sources as backgrounds and use the verbal text chiefly as means for identification. The 1979 conference chaired by Theodore Bowie on surimono prints revealed methodological differences among historians, literature scholars, and art experts and collectors. Much as I learned from Matthias Forrer, Jack Hillier, and Suzuki Juzo, the few days of the conference were not enough to provide me with a springboard for stepping into art criticism. An opportunity came to me very recently while conducting research in Tokyo. Besides Haga Toru, my chief advisor in comparative arts, art historians Kobayashi Tadashi, T.B.M. Screech, and Henry Smith gave me some basic training by passing on references and ideas, identifying pictures and their sources, and even giving lessons in photographing art works. More importantly, we had ample occasions to meet, hear, and read one another. “Ways of Seeing in Late Edo Culture,” a panel for the AAS meeting last year, was the first fruit of our interdisciplinary collaboration. As implied by our panel, the issue of “reading” of pictures seems to be effective because it reveals disciplinary differences in interpreting techniques, which are mutually suggestive for a better understanding of Edo materials.

Tetsuo Najita proposed in 1978 that we, American scholars with less access to and capacity to read Edo materials than specialists in Japan, ought to understand “metaphorically” a limited number of texts in our power. This was, as I recall, the first proposal for the theoretical study of Edo. Innovative studies of this kind have been done by specialists of intellectual thought, but few in literature and arts have followed their lead. Various “post” theories (post-structuralism, post-Freudian revisionism, and the theory of the postmodern, for example) began to replace New Criticism during the seventies without affecting specialists of Edo literature. The NEH summer institute in 1979 on theory and curricular models for Japanese literature, directed by Earl Miner and Masao Miyoshi, was an eye-opening experience. For the first time, established Western categories and hierarchies of genres and periods as well as notions of the nature of literary texts were put to test against Japanese language and literature. The participants...
were constantly challenged to rethink their own notions of "literature," "story," "narrator," and "text." Some of us were inspired to present a pair of back-to-back panels on "Literary Theories and the Study of Japanese Literature" during the AAS meeting in 1980. The structuralist theories available at the time were still limited for analyzing Edo literature, it seemed, and we had trouble weaning ourselves from our old methods. Our uneasiness which accompanied both the summer institute and the panels is characteristic of any venture into the unfamiliar.

The advantage of the "post" theories is that they release Japanese literature from the peripheralized position of an anomaly in relation to Western literatures. We are no longer obliged to justify it by showing how it may fit the Western requirements of literature or how it may relate to Western texts (either in "influence" or as "parallel" phenomena). The Western "center" is gone as Western theory has ceased to believe in any central meaning. In fact, Japanese literature can be shown as an important case of modernity as it is in the "Postmodernism and Japan" issue of the South Atlantic Quarterly. (Incidentally, the journal Hihyō/Kikan, published by Fukutake Shoten in Tokyo, is an interesting case of cross-national and theoretical collaboration of basically the same Jamesonian group of American and Japanese critics.) De-centered notions of literature destroy canonical prejudices. Even Gothic romance can be made equal to Greek tragedy at the hands of post-Freudian feminist criticism. It is time to show that Hiraga Gennai has the danger of universalizing phenomena too easily. I would during this AAS meeting. In comparative studies on Asia, the mixture of literary fields allowed us to reexamine theories of modernism and postmodernism in the light of literary texts and methodologies of the varied fields.
A few words ought to be said about teaching. The mecca of gesaku studies outside Japan is Harvard University, where many specialists have been trained by Howard Hibbett, Gen Itasaka, and Donald Shively, and more recently by Haruko Iwasaki and Rigine Johnson. The collections of the Yenching Library and Fogg/Sachler museum are unrivaled. Gesaku has slipped into the curriculum at other institutions as well, either as specialized courses or, more often, as part of general culture or literature courses. Except for the Harvard collections and the Mitsui Bunko of the East Asiatic Library of the University of California, Berkeley, university libraries in the U.S. hold only slim collections of original Edo books. However, some hold, in microfilms, important collections such as Ebara Bunko, Ozaki Bunko, Waseda Meiji, and Waseda Meiji. The Maruzen 丸善 microfilm series of the entire collection of the National Diet Library in Tokyo of materials published during the Meiji period, one set already installed at Harvard Yenching Library, will be donated to six other university libraries (one of the sets being split between two institutions). The collection should contain many reprints, transcriptions, and studies of Edo materials. Computer search, copying, faxing and other services on the part of the libraries will facilitate and promote our research immensely. As for current studies, the quantity and speed of publication in Japan are forbidding for any university library budget. Besides Harvard and Berkeley, where books and journals in our interest are purchased efficiently, some of the universities with focus on Edo period studies are making effort in collecting newest materials.

Among state universities, Indiana University has a strong concentration on multidisciplinary Edo studies. There are five Edo specialists on the East Asian faculty: Laurel Cornell specializing in Edo period society and demography, Jurgis Elisonas in the cultural history of Sengoku and early Edo periods, Richard Rubinger in the history of Edo period education and literacy, George Wilson in late Edo and Meiji intellectual thought and myself in later Edo literature and comparative arts. In addition, emeriti Kenneth Yasuda and Theodore Bowie are consulted for their respective expertise in haiku and Edo garden design and in ukiyo e art. All of us have joint appointments/titles, obliging us to split our teaching load between two departments. In my case, my repertoire covers Japanese language (modern and classical) and premodern literature (having been recently relieved from classics by the addition of Edith Sarra to our faculty) for the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures and various elementary and graduate courses on theory and technique of criticism as well as on East-West literary relations for the Program in Comparative Literature. This means that I have the chance to dedicate a whole course to later Edo literature and arts only about once every two years so that training of students in my special field is largely left to independent reading and thesis/dissertation advising. Gesaku instructors all over the country are spending much time in this sort of one-to-one training as the reading of texts requires the knowledge of classical wabun and kanbun, with which the students are not necessarily equipped, as well as the acquisition of Edo colloquialisms and the idiosyncratic styles of Edo authors. In teaching Europe-based comparative literature, the trick is to squeeze Edo literature into all possible crevices even in elementary world literature courses and seminars on theory. Here, however, works in translation are so few that the instructor must wrack her brains to translate selected passages and to explain the intricacies of the original texts. In this regard, I am eagerly looking forward to the completion of an anthology being edited by Regine Johnson and John Solt.

My teaching is often supported and supplemented by modern Japan specialists: Yoshio Iwamoto in literature, Gregory Kasza in political science, and Natsuko Tsujimura in linguistics. Interdisciplinary and cross-cultural collaborations are a must in teaching gesaku. Among Sinologists in our department, Susan Nelson, a specialist of traditional landscape painting, and Lynn Struve, a Ming historian, have worked most closely with us. Comparative Literature, Religious Studies, Folklore, Anthropology, Theatre, Women’s Studies, and Philosophy, as well as English and foreign language departments abound with historians, theoreticians, and critics whose expertise and interest relate to our own. It is my policy to invite speakers from other disciplines and departments to my courses as well as my students’ thesis committees. Once every two or three years, I have a chance to team-teach a course with one or more colleagues. This semester, the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures has been generous in spending the labor force of two faculty members for the benefit of five graduate students. “The Formation of ‘Edo’” is a seminar taught as a dialogue between Jurgis Elisonas and myself with student members as involved discussants. Debates revolve around differences of methodology as well as oppositions in opinion (whether ‘Edo’ was a growth of earlier Kamigata conventions or it was a separate invention, for example). I believe the students profit from the rather extraordinary and uneasy position of being arbitrators and judges of two strong-minded teachers presenting contrasting positions and tastes on shared materials. Laughter pervades this class as Elisonas’ penchant for punning is contagious.

This brings us to the final dimension of the study and teaching of gesaku. Edoites are playful and witty: their writings are full of parody, allusion, and other stylistic variations. Every time I face my Macintosh, I recall Jay Rubin’s complaint about the stylistic dullness of my dissertation. Accustomed to dissecting texts as stationary objects, the critic having the upper hand, it took the death of New Criticism for me to discover that my texts were something fluid to which the critic had to submit herself by
learning to swim in them. If we are to do justice to the nature of our texts, we must not wear any stiff mask of whatever scholarly methodology and rhetoric we choose. Among Japanese scholars, there are creative wits--Nakano Mitsutoshi’s 中野三敏 kyōbun 狂文 and Noguchi Takehiko’s kyōshi 狂詩, for example, could have been included in Ota Nanpo’s 太田南風 reviews and Hanawa Hokinoichi’s 堂保己一 Gunsho Ruijō 鬼書類従. In scholarly writing, our field seems to attract those with sophisticated personal culture, who create polished writing styles. In this country, the leaders and a few other fortunate members of the gesaku group are true wits but the rest of us tend to be hopeless in explaining Edo texts. I heard a joke many years ago about the distinction between Harvard men and Yalies: the former were bright enough to appreciate jokes while the latter could make them. The punch line was that Yalies made them without knowing it. (I am sure this was not the version told at Yale.) We cannot all be makers of jokes but we must be good readers of jokes. We need to strive at finding a scholarly style in which the modes of Edo culture can be conveyed more attractively and convincingly. This is the hardest part of our task; and here, too, we greatly benefit from brainstorming with colleagues.

Gesaku was a culture created in circles, by collaboration, and in combination with many different worlds. It mixed writers with illustrators and actors, scholars with artisans, and bushi with chōnin. We can approach it best with a similar attitude. Three decades ago, René Etiemble insisted that comparative literature required an encyclopedic knowledge of human culture, for which purpose he called for multi-national and multidisciplinary collaborations. We cannot subscribe to his proposal of unifying the language for scholarly communication worldwide (Chinese was suggested by him) nor to his dream of erecting a world center to collect and dispense all knowledge. When, however, the study of gesaku is growing as comparative literature was at Etiemble’s time, it seems useful to recall his plea for collaborations. What we need is an uninstitutionalized network for exchanges of information and ideas. If you are being brilliant all by yourself in some hōjō 方丈 hut, you ought to come out and work with the others. If you are forming a disciplinary or ideological faction, you ought to knock down the walls. Joining the Early Modern Japan Network would be a good start.

Recent Articles from Japanese Journals

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Kurushima Hiroshi 久留島浩, “Kinsei kōki no ‘chiiki shakai’ no rekishi teki sei kaku ni tsuite: Bakuryō in okeru gunchū iriyō kumiai mura iriyō no kentō kara” (The Historical Characteristics of ‘Local Society’ in the Late Tokugawa: A Case Study of the Kunitsu Family of Fukuda Village, Ashiga District, Bingo).

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Harada Seiji 原田誠司, “Kinsei zenki sonraku no shoruikai: Fukuyama hanryō o chūshin ni shite” (The Formative Thought of the ‘Middle Class’ in the Early Meiji: With Reference to Enlightened Instruction and National Consciousness).

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Tsurumaki Takao 鶴巻孝雄, “Kinseikai seiritsu chūkansō no shisō keisei ni tsuite: caikateki kyōdo to kokka ishiki o chūshin ni hirutei kajaran no shisō keisei ni tsuite: caikateki kyōdo to kokka ishiki o chūshin ni” (The Historical Characteristics of ‘Local Society’ in the Late Tokugawa: A Case Study of the Kunitsu Family of Fukuda Village, Ashiga District, Bingo).

Tomiyoshi Kazutoshi 富善一敏, “Kinsei chūkōki no okeru ‘oyamura - edamura kankei ni tsuite’: Shinshū Takashima-ryō Kinoma-mura to sono edamura jirō to shite” (The Transformation of Tokugawa Court-

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Iwabuchi Yoshiharu 岩淵均治, “Kinsei kōkogaku no shinten to Rekishi hyoron” (Some Early Tokugawa Village Types: A Case Study of Fukuyama Domain).

Shigaku zasshi 史学雑誌
Vol. 100 No. 10 (October 1991):
Tochi seido shigaku 土地制度史学

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS IN ENGLISH


INQUIRIES

Galen Amstutz (Religion, Harvard) wants to explore with Network members the question of why the Hongan temples' importance in Tokugawa culture has not been reflected in Japanese social history. He writes, “I am not trying to accuse . . . social historian[s] of making a mistake here; I am looking for some other kind of answer. Is it in the paradigms that have been used? Is it the Marxist bias in social history? Is it the sheer privatization of the Honganji world? Is it that religious life is somehow structurally not reflected in the kinds of documents Tokugawa social historians usually use? Is it that religion was less important in Tokugawa Japan than in contemporary Europe and America?”

Galen Amstutz
319 Coolidge Hall
Edwin O Reischauer Institute
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138

NOTE: This kind of inquiry can be effectively handled on e-mail rather than waiting for items to appear in print

OBOEGAKI and E-MAIL: A CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Dissemination of information constitutes one of the major activities of the Network. The two major vehicles for providing news are OBOEGAKI and the electronic mail network.

Content: Please submit notices of the following kinds of activities (your’s; others’):

- Conferences (subject, theme, dates, place, sponsors; relevant paper summaries, etc. if possible)
- Papers presented (title, author, affiliation, dates, place and a brief summary)
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- Brief notices of recently completed dissertations, theses (synopsis)
- Calls for papers/panel formation
- Research inquiries

Other research/teaching activities (e.g., grants available/received)

Please bear in mind that our aim is to encompass a wide array of international activities and to stimulate broadly-based cooperation beyond our typical area studies and disciplinary boundaries. Professional activities involving an early modern Japan component for groups outside Japanese and Asian studies would be of particular interest as examples of outreach.

Submissions: Please submit materials formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style. In addition to hard copy, submissions may be by E-mail (the fastest way to get information to others) or on floppy disks. E-mail and floppy submissions minimize problems in text preparation and editing. Submit 5.25” DOS format floppy discs to Phillip C. Brown and 3.5” DOS or Mac format disks to Mark Ravina (for addresses see page 2). Please use ASCII format with carriage returns for DOS disks, ASCII, WordPerfect, MS Word or Nisus for Mac formats. Please keep the layout simple.

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Those of us who assembled in New Orleans widely agreed that OBOEGAKI and E-mail could provide a valuable service if they became effective media for disseminating recent bibliographic information. This might work best if there were coordinators for each major discipline. If anyone would like to work in this capacity, please contact Philip Brown (address below). The only recompense would be formal listing as coordinator.

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a PC equipped with a modem (which permits your PC to telephone a mainframe) or an ethernet board (which allows direct access to the mainframe). Public access terminals are available at most institutions, so you don't need your own PC. However, for those who do or who have an office PC, a modem can be installed for $60-$80. Some universities encourage use of ethernet boards in institutionally-provided PCs. In any event, institutional support often is available.

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