Annual Meeting

The Early Modern Japan Network will hold its annual business meeting at the AAS conference in Washington D.C.

Date: April 7, 1994
Time: 6:30 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.
Room: Chevy Chase Room, Washington Hilton

Architecture Symposium

The East-West Encounter: First International Symposium on Asia Pacific Architecture

The University of Hawaii at Manoa School of Architecture and the East-West Center will present the First International Symposium on Asia Pacific Architecture: The East-West Encounter March 22-24, 1995 in Honolulu, Hawaii. The purpose of the symposium will be to discuss the impact culture has on architecture and to identify a useful research agenda to ultimately effect a design environment in the Asia Pacific region that is more contextual in concern and culturally sensitive, reflecting the people and their ideologies.

The symposium will feature speakers from many countries who will discuss a wide range of topics focusing on the culture and architecture of the Asia Pacific region. Professor Edward W. Said of Columbia University, renowned scholar on the interfacing of cultures, will be the keynote speaker at the symposium.

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Women in Saikaku: Good, Bad, or Victims of Circumstance?

Lawrence E. Marceau
College of William & Mary

Saikaku (Ibara) Saikaku (1642–693) is generally regarded today as the premier writer of the late seventeenth century. A product of Osaka merchant and townsfolk culture, Saikaku singlehandedly transformed prose narrative from the vaguely-defined kana-zōshi forms that had dominated publishing through the first century of Tokugawa rule, creating a new (and commercially successful) genre called the ukiyo-zōshi ("floating-world books") with his Tenna 1682 Kōshoku ichidai otoko ("A Single-Generation Promiscuous Man"). Western critics have also recognized Saikaku as a major figure, which we can see through the number of translations of Saikaku's works that have appeared in English. We can safely state that Saikaku is the most heavily translated early modern Japanese writer into English.

This paper was first presented at the Washington/Southeast Region Japan Seminar, Williamsburg, Virginia, April 23, 1994, with an expanded version presented at the University of Virginia, April 26, 1994. The author expresses his sincere thanks to those at both sessions who asked questions and provided advice for improvement, especially Professor Paul Schalow, Rutgers University, who served as discussant at the Seminar.


Paper topics will address the following issues:

- Sociological/political/anthropological concerns
- Business practice issues
- History and theory
- Traditional architectural responses to climatic factors
- Architectural and planning case studies from Hawaii and the Asia Pacific region

Included as part of the symposium will be the Kenneth F. Brown Asia Pacific Culture and Architecture Design Awards Program, sponsored by the University of Hawaii at Manoa School of Architecture, in cooperation with the Architects Regional Council Asia (ARCASIA). The purpose of this program is to identify, recognize and promote the most outstanding examples of contemporary architecture in the vast Asia Pacific region. The program will seek to explore the significant role architecture plays in creating a sense of place and to recognize architecture as one of the most important cultural icons of a particular time, place and people.

Jurors for the Asia Pacific Culture and Architecture Design Awards Program will be Kenneth F. Brown of Hawaii, USA, Charles Correa of India, Ashley DeVos of Sri Lanka, and Fumihiko Maki of Japan.

Further details of the above events are available from:

Symposium Coordinator
School of Architecture
University of Hawaii at Manoa
1859 East-West Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Telephone: (808) 956-7225
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Teaching Saikaku in English translation, I have encountered among my students deep-seated resistance to the depiction of various female characters, as well as to the comments about women found scattered throughout Saikaku’s works. Based on these comments and depictions, many of my students have concluded that Saikaku and his society harbored a deeply-rooted misogynistic character. I suspect that this view of Saikaku commands a sympathetic following among readers in general, in the context of the more self-aware, gender-sensitive framework in which we read and evaluate our readings today.

Consider the following passage, for example, often cited as representing Genroku era notions of “feminine beauty”:

“Looking very grave, (the retainer) explained, ‘I’m here to choose a concubine for my lord.’

‘We’ve had these requests from all the daimyō’, he was assured. ‘Now just what sort would you like?’

Then the old fellow produced from a scroll box of straight-grained paulownia wood the painting of a beautiful woman. ‘I’d like to engage one about like this’, he said, to make clear his preference. And he added, as they looked at it: ‘First of all, her age should be from fifteen to eighteen, and she should have the most up-to-date good looks—that is, the face slightly rounded, the complexion of a pale cherry-blossom, the four features all perfectly regular. Narrow eyes are not wanted; the eyebrows should be thick and spaced well apart on either side of the nose, which ought to stand fairly high. A small mouth; gleaming white teeth; longish ears, delicately rimmed and set far enough out to be completely visible. The forehead should have an unplucked, natural hairline; the nape of the neck should be slender, and free from any stray wisps of back hair. As for the fingers, long and slim, with thin nails. The length of the feet is fixed at size eight and three-tenths—the big toe curved so that you can see its underside. Her body should be taller than average: the hips firm but not too well padded, the buttocks plump. She must know how to carry herself, and to dress well. Dignified in appearance, mild of disposition, she will excel in all the arts appropriate to a woman—and be thoroughly informed on them. Also, please, a girl whose skin is without blemish.’ (Kōshoku ichidai onna 1:3)

The daimyō’s retainer is, of course, placing an order for an ideal, one that can only exist in a painting. We nonetheless discover that the nameless protagonist-narrator of Kōshoku ichidai onna (“A Single-Generation Promiscuous Woman,” 6 vols., Ōzaka: Okada Saburōemon, Jōkyō 3/1686) fits the order perfectly, and is indeed procured by the retainer for a generous sum.

The above quote strikes us with its almost obsessive

concern over superficial qualities. If we compare this to, say, Heian courtly ideals, most often exemplified by the
"Rainy-night Rankings of Qualities" (amayo no shinasadame) in the second chapter of *Genji monogatari*,
the qualitative gap between curled-up big toes or lack of hair strands on the nape of the neck in Saikaku, and the
ability to compose moving "morning after" poems for women in *Genji*, is especially great. Furthermore,
considering the fact that the purpose of the request is to procure a mistress (who might bear the daimyō a son and
heir that his consort was apparently unable to provide), then the notion of the woman as a commodity to be bought,
sold, and exchanged becomes even more readily apparent.

In this paper let us review a succession of women and the circumstances of their various stories as we find them
in a number of Saikaku's selections. While issues of early Saikaku vs. late Saikaku, or issues of non-Saikaku authorship
are indeed important, I propose that, in this study, we put such concerns on hold and focus instead on the various
women we encounter in these stories. As a result of this examination I predict that we shall discover women depicted
in a surprisingly broad spectrum of characterizations, notwithstanding the didactic and generally deprecatory
comments that narrators make in these narratives. In other words, we shall find that Saikaku's narrators are often
manipulating the reader into framing a particular incident in a negative ideological perspective, while the actions of
the characters themselves in fact provide different, more morally problematic, readings of events and the people
captured in them.

Since we have already seen her idealized "advertisement" portrait, let us first examine Saikaku's

"promiscuous woman." In episode 1:3, "Provincial Lord's Favourite," the narrator/protagonist is indeed placed in the
daimyō's Edo mansion, and enjoys undreamed of luxuries and diversions. She sees little of her lord, however, and
comments on the fact that for her and other women in the strict warrior household, the lack of access to men drives
them to auto-eroticism, stimulated by Moronobu shunga prints. When her lord finally takes her to bed with him,
she discovers to her dismay that he is impotent. Even his virility drugs are ineffective, and he continues to waste
away while she tries in vain to excite him. Eventually the daimyō's inner circle accuse her of physically draining
him with too much sex, and dismiss her back to the care of her own family. The narrator's tongue-in-cheek conclusion
is, "Experience teaches that a lack of virility is sad indeed--especially for a woman!" (Hibbett, 171).

In this particular incident, the woman, through no fault of her own, is branded as dangerously lustful, and ironically
dismissed from her sexual duties. While her own comment on how "sad" it is to be stuck with an impotent man would
seem to support the very sources of criticism aimed at her, the daimyō was certainly impotent before she had arrived.
In fact, the careful nature of the search to find a woman who would realize the daimyō's specific fantasies supports
the hypothesis that the daimyō's impotence had thrown the domain into a potential succession crisis, and that the woman
was hired to arouse the daimyō to the point where she would bear his child. The failure of this plan led the senior
retainers to send the woman back home under false charges. Even though they were certainly aware of the daimyō's
condition.

Ironically, the woman later uses the same sexual power that above she had been wrongfully accused of having
employed, in order to punish another man. In 2:4, "Lady Etiquette-Teacher and Letter-Writer," she ghost-writes love
letters for young men who come to her office for
assistance. Her letters are so convincing that she herself comes to lust for one of her customers. He assents, but in a manner so distasteful to her (he wants her to realize from the outset that their relationship is to be purely physical, and that she must expect no gifts or money) that she is about to reject him, when the lights suddenly go out, and he grabs her. While he declares that she will “do to (she’s) a hundred” (Hibbett, 197), she vows to make the relationship so physical that it will mean his downfall.

I began to frolic with him night and day. When he weakened, I fed him mud-fish soup, eggs, and yams. As might have been expected, he gradually withered away.

It was pitiful! The next spring, when everyone had changed to light kimono, he went on wearing layers of thickly padded clothes. One doctor after another gave him up. His beard was shaggy, his nails long. He listened with his hand cupped behind his ear—and if there was any talk about good-looking women, he turned away reproachfully. (Hibbett, 197)

The reader (either 17th- or 20th-century) might here censure the woman for having intentionally brought a person to ruin out of personal spite. After all, she is willing to sleep with the man until he so coldly makes clear that he is not about to pay anything for their affair. The fact that material concerns even enter his mind make him despicable in the woman’s eyes.

However, here too, the story is more complex than it first may seem. As a master of the epistolary arts, the woman is capable of bringing life into her letters. Before meeting the young man she later destroys, she recounts an experience with a man with whom she had previously had relations as a courtesan. Their affair had been sincere, and when he had been unable to visit her (for financial reasons?) she had written letter after letter to him, to the point that the letters he carried to bed with him took on her form and he was able to converse aloud with her in his sleep. The woman comments, “And that was only natural. If you concentrate when you write a letter, put your whole mind to it and forget everything else, your thoughts will certainly not go astray.” (Hibbett, 196)

This interpretation adds three important dimensions to the narrative situation. First, we must recognize that the woman has already had a relationship with another man which was all-consuming and mutually fulfilling. (“I trusted him completely and opened my heart to him.”/Hibbett, 196) Second, the power of her love for this man, as well as her letter-writing skill, have created the conditions by which her letters have communicated the intensity and purity of her thoughts. To the man, her letters had the power to transform themselves into her spirit, which was then able to communicate with him in his dreams of longing for her. Finally, he later told her directly of his experience, which she then confirmed.

Given this surprisingly complex personal experience, it is no wonder that the woman would become seduced by her own love letters written for any customer who has happened to come in. Unfortunately, the customer with whom she becomes infatuated is clearly incapable of satisfying either her physical desires or the depth of her love. The customer may indeed deserve punishment for his uncouth attitudes, but the woman’s power of expression and sensitivity to the rhetoric of love make her especially vulnerable, and pave the way for her violent reaction, after he takes advantage of her in the darkened room. In other words, the same power contained in fervently written love letters, that had succeeded in transporting her spirit to her earlier lover, now works to bind her, mistakenly in this case, to someone who cannot reciprocate her feelings.

At one point, the “promiscuous woman” herself becomes a victim to overindulgence. In 2:3, “Bonze’s Wife in a Worldly Temple,” she assumes a contract over

Hibbett. 193-97; Morris, 153-58.
three years to become the secret mistress to a corrupt Buddhist priest. The narrator describes her situation as follows:

(T)he priest will have a deep recess built in the corner of his private apartment; this is provided with a narrow skylight, so designed as to be invisible from the outside. In order that no sound of voices may escape, he has his apartment built to a considerable depth, with earth piled heavily on the roof, and the walls a foot in thickness.

It was in such a place that I was now immured each day; only at night I would emerge to visit the priest's bedchamber. This was indeed a constrained existence, and it was grievous to think that it was not love that brought me to it, but the need to gain a livelihood. (Morris, 150)

Basically kept as what we would call today a sex slave, the woman laments the uncertain and dangerous nature of her profession, by which she is unable to choose the type of relationship that suits her. The priest fornicates with her so much that she becomes "wasted and thin from overmuch indulgence." (Morris, 150) Resigning herself to the situation, she even comes to berate those mountain acetics and impoverished monks who have no choice but to observe Buddhist rites and abstain from eating meat and consorting with women. "(T)hey come to look like dried-up pieces of wood." (Morris, 151)

One day the woman encounters in a daydream the living spirit (ikiryō) of the priest's former mistress, who is actually twenty years his elder. This spirit recounts the details of her past, and declares that henceforth she will also have her way with the woman, in order to make up for the loss of sexual outlet that had resulted when the priest had rejected her for the younger woman. At this turn of events, the narrator knows she must escape, and does so by feigning pregnancy. The priest encourages her departure, thinking it temporary, and even provides her with infant's clothes that had been donated to the temple as an offering by a couple who had lost their own child.

In this episode as well, the woman is depicted more as a victim than as a perpetrator. Even the older former mistress, while threatening the woman with her own sexual advances, evokes our pity in the cold-hearted way in which the priest had "dumped" her. We can also understand why she might have been attracted to the younger woman in the first place; the episode opens with an account of how the narrator plied her trade of sexual favors from temple to temple disguised as a young rōnin, complete with shaved crown (forelocks remaining) and two swords. If the older woman had caught a glimpse of the young woman in male disguise, she might well have been attracted by the sight. At any rate, it is clear that both women, especially the narrator, are depicted in terms that arouse our sympathy rather than our scorn as readers.

We can identify many other episodes in Ichidai onna that support the notion that women, even those who have embarked upon a career of sexual gratification, are prone to the same vicissitudes of good and bad fortune as are men. The second last episode, "Song for a Woman of the Streets" (6:3), in the narrative, in which the woman lives alone in a hovel waiting to die of starvation, is a case in point. In contrast to so many other episodes, in which the woman is drawn into prostitution or other sexual relationships by chance, misfortune, or in reaction to a wrong committed against her, we here encounter the woman near despair, with no means of livelihood at hand. She has a terrifying vision of the ninety-five fetuses she had aborted over her career. (Fig. 1) Her regret is not so much in having deprived them of a chance at life, but rather at the fact that, had she raised them in this world, they would have supported

6Morris, 148-53.

7Morris, 192-203.
Ichidai onna deals with such military themes as loyalty, duty, and honor. The reader might expect to find women in these stories treated as objects of derision in this male-centered social order, but, in fact, this is not the case.

In story 4:4, "The Woman Wore a Cap and Lived by Deceit" we encounter the following situation. The twelve-year-old granddaughter, nicknamed Kozakura ("Little Cherry"), of a samurai who had distinguished himself at the Battle of Sekigahara is born into rural poverty, and, discovered by a smooth-talking procurress, is sold by her widowed mother into prostitution. The procurress convinces the mother (or, at least, this is what the mother wants to believe) that Kozakura is to enter into the service of a certain daimyō's mother in Osaka. Kozakura herself is delighted to do something to aid in the family’s finances, so does not realize the true nature of her commitment until long after she has been in residence at the house. When a close girlfriend is raised to the high rank of tenshoku and prepared for her first night with a patron, Kozakura suddenly realizes her own fate and takes to her bed, refusing food or medicine. As she approaches death, the brothel proprietor pledges to release her from her contract so she can return home to her mother. At this, however, Kozakura is adamant in her refusal: "Her last words were, ‘I am the daughter of a samurai.’" (Callahan,108) She dies, preserving both her fidelity to martial codes of conduct, and her honor to the commitment her mother had made with the procurress.

The woman’s inability to fulfill her (Confucian) duty as mother returns to haunt her in this episode, but the issues confronted here are still far from our contemporary (Christian) discourse on “right to life” versus “freedom of choice.”
willingly chosen this livelihood. Nowadays, however, many are forced into prostitution by grinding poverty: they must sell their bodies in order to provide for their parents. Not all prostitutes are low born, nor do all come from families in which prostitution would seem to be the obvious career. There are women who were forced by the exigencies of fate to become what they are. (Callahan, 105-06)

The courtesans encountered in *Ichidai otoko* are portrayed as unattainable deities, the opportunity to spend an evening with being considered well worth the fortune it would cost to achieve. In *Ichidai onna*, we find that same life portrayed from the perspective of the courtesan herself, one in which she must be at pains to remain cool, aloof, and highly selective of her patrons. Here, however, the narrator outlines a grim true-to-life portrait of the tragedy of institutionalized prostitution, focusing especially on the tolls this life exacts on the women themselves.

This does not mean, of course, that samurai women are any less passionate than their counterparts in the civilian classes. In 6:2 “A ‘Married’ Couple Whom the Ties Could Not Bind,” we read of a man of over seventy living in seeming wedlock with a girl not yet sixteen. They publicly feign marriage in order to discourage potential suitors, but in reality, the man is an elderly retainer of the girl’s father, who has been killed in battle. The family is dispersed, and the retainer interprets his responsibility after the master’s death to be protecting the daughter. The façade holds for several years, but with increasing difficulty for the retainer.

One summer evening, the couple is at home when a sudden storm hits, blowing out the lamps and flashing lightning outside their dilapidated house. The terrified young woman clutches at the retainer, which sets his heart beating

The narrative here is simple, and devoid of any suspense. We know that Kozakura will remain true to her martial heritage. The surprising aspects of this story occur in the discursive lead-in, in which the narrator discusses the life of a courtesan in unexpected ways.

(A woman of pleasure’s) spirit and body are worn out on unloved men; her tears are a mere sham; the moments spent in waiting for a customer or in parting from him are empty of feeling and lead nowhere. What woman could ever have instituted such a system? Living out the miserable years of a contract is almost unbearable.

At least the girls in the old days who became prostitutes were promiscuous sorts who had
frantically. Only after a great deal of self-restraint and chanting of the sutras\(^\text{10}\) does he regain his composure and avoid consummating his relationship with his charge. Later, when a certain noble family approaches her to enter into service, their only concern is the rumors that the two have been living together as husband and wife. The old retainer proves his sincerity by severing his left arm, which convinces the noble house. When the noble and the young woman spend their first night together and it is clear that she was indeed a virgin, the retainer’s fidelity is confirmed and all are rewarded.

Again, the story is not as satisfying a narrative as those found in *Ichidai otoko*, *Ichidai onna*, or *Gonin onna*.\(^\text{11}\) We might be tempted to believe that the woman plays a totally passive role in this story as I have summarized it here. However, the illustration to this story makes it clear that the two are in a potentially highly compromising position.\(^\text{12}\) The young woman is seated upon the retainer’s lap, who in turn is reclining on the tatami mats of their house looking out into the garden in the warm summer rains. She has slipped one hand into his kimono collar, as though she were checking his heartbeat. The scene makes it clear that she is playing the role of the aggressor. While she is also of a martial house, as is Kozakura above, she has allowed the elderly man to bear the brunt of the discipline entailed in serving as a loyal kashin (house retainer). Instead, she is young, beautiful, healthy, and realizes that, to the outside world, they are considered already married. It is only natural that she would be drawn to him in such a situation. While we find the retainer almost superhuman in his duty, this does not detract from the young woman’s sensual human nature. In other words, Saikaku’s readers have no cause to censure the young woman for desiring to sleep with the man under those tempting circumstances.

If we are to discover any misogyny in Saikaku, we shall certainly find it in his “Great Mirror of Male-Male Loves” (*Nanshoku okagami*, 8 books in 10 vols., Ozaka: Fukaeya Tarōbei, Kyō: Yamazakiya Ichibei, Jōkyō 4/1687). The work opens with a satirically humorous preface declaring the divine origins of “male force,” continuing with the “licentious communion” of male and female, and lamenting the influence women with their attractive features have possessed over men.

> Women may serve a purpose for the amusement of retired old men in lands lacking handsome youths, but in a man’s lusty prime they are not worthy companions even for conversation. Our entry into the gateway of boy love has been delayed long enough! (Schalow, 49)

Thus we are introduced to the perspective that, when it comes to having a fulfilling relationship, nothing is as satisfying for “lusty” men than having a youth as paramour. Women are rated as inferior, if for no other reason than because they are poor conversationalists (for those men, that is).

**Story 1:1, “Love: The Contest Between Two Forces,”**\(^\text{12}\) continues in this vein in a defense, based on honored Chinese and Japanese precedents, of man-youth relationships. The narrator (first-person in this introductory story) goes on to list twenty-three options between male and female lovers, and asks the reader to choose between:

> ...Lying rejected next to a courtesan, or

\(^\text{10}\) A similar scene narrated from a totally different perspective appears in *Ichidai onna* 3:1 (Hibbett, 200-01; Morris, 162-63). The woman, searching for sex, tries to seduce an old man asleep in the pantry, who prays to the bodhisattva Kannon for protection. (Fig. 2)

\(^\text{11}\) *Kōshoku gonin onna* (“Five Amorous Women”), 5 vols., Ozaka: Morita Shōtarō, Edo: Yorozuya Seibei, Jōkyō 3/1686. These five short stories dealing with deeply passionate commitments have been considered by many to be Saikaku’s masterpiece.

\(^\text{12}\) Schalow, 51-56.
blossoms, it is twisted and bent. A youth may have a thorn or two, but he is like the first plum blossom of the new year exuding an indescribable fragrance. The only sensible choice is to dispense with women and turn instead to men. (Schalow, 53-54, 56)

Perhaps the only sensible choice for a woman is to avoid such men if at all possible!

Nevertheless, the misogynistic ideology expressed in this introductory story is not supported by the events of the narratives that follow. For example, in 6:4, “A Secret Visit Leads to the Wrong Bed,” the kabuki actor of female roles (onnagata) Kichiya learns the secrets of beauty by picking and choosing the most attractive details of the various women he observes. Kichiya is one day called to the mansion of a member of the nobility, requesting that he come “in drag,” dressed in his onnagata robes. Unsure of the nature of the request, he is summoned into the recesses of the apartments of a princess and her household of maidservants. Kichiya is flushed with expectation as he arrives.

The ladies rushed forward, curious, to look at him. It had been a long time since most of them had seen a man, and they seemed to go suddenly and uncontrollably mad. Some of them were so excited that they turned pale with desire. It was truly vulgar behavior. (Schalow, 240)

Aside from the last narratorial comment, the scene is remarkable in the fact that the women know that this beautiful onnagata is, in essence, a male. If he had been recognized as a man, however, he would never been allowed on the premises. In fact, the princess’ brother suddenly returns, and, while the women try to hide Kichiya, the noble finds

13Schalow, 237-41.
him so beautiful that the noble decides to have Kichiya for himself.

He did not hesitate to begin love-making immediately. Kichiya, unable to reject his advances, was in a quandary. Having no other recourse, he removed his lady’s wig and showed himself to the nobleman.

“Why, this is even better!” the gentleman said when he saw him, and proceeded to give Kichiya the full measure of his affection. (Schalow 240-41)

We can recognize behavior that is much more “vulgar” in the manner by which the noble can decide who strikes his fancy, without giving that individual the opportunity to decide whether he or she wishes to remain with the noble. The narrator berates the women’s vulgarity, while the narrative exposes the noble’s hypocrisy. The dashed expectations in this story are caused by the the socio-economic position of the noble vis-à-vis his sister, and by the helpless position in which Kichiya finds himself. The fact that Kichiya is taken for the night regardless of his gender strongly supports the thesis that even Nanshoku ōkagami is not really involved with suppressing women.

We have thus considered the portrayal of women in three of Saikaku’s works, Kōshoku ichidai onna, Buke giri monogatari, and Nanshoku ōkagami. In each of these works women are often described by the narrator in negative, even disparaging, terms. However, when we examine the carefully constructed stories and episodes in which these characters figure, it is clear that the women themselves are not the targets of some authorial attacks. On the contrary, the women (and actors of female roles) in Saikaku’s stories distinguish themselves by their determination to make the most of often difficult social circumstances. If as a result of not being able to marry and settle down with a family, they must make a living on their own, they do so with perseverance and ingenuity. In a major respect, the “promiscuous woman” is representative of all of Saikaku’s contemporary women who, each in her own way, conducted her affairs with as much dignity as she could muster. Ichidai onna is often characterized as a dark, tragic work, but in this reading, it is more accurately an ode to all of the women in Saikaku’s day, who not only made a living without relying on the support of a single male-oriented household, but who also found ways to fulfill their needs for sexual intimacy.

Perhaps it is appropriate at this point to close with this quotation from Saikaku’s female narrator:

...I’ve seen enough of the world to know that (men) can’t do without (wives)... As I picked my way along the edge of a lonely cliff I came to a man living in a little sloped-roof hut. It looked as if there were no amusements besides listening to the wind in the cedars by day and watching the flame of a pine-torch by night. ‘You could be living in the capital’, I told him. ‘How can you stand it here, of all places?’

The yokel grinned. ‘It’s not so bad’, he said. ‘I’ve got my old woman to take my mind off it.‘

...A woman doesn’t enjoy living alone either. (Ichidai onna 3:1, Hibbett, 198)

Gender is only one of a great many social, religious, economic, and other power issues that in combination and juxtaposition yield Saikaku’s literary floating worlds.
Recommended Reading

This reading list was created based on member responses to an EMJ survey. Our thanks to all who sent in recommendations.

Allinson, Gary The new *Iwanami Nihon tsūshi* has some very good essays
Cort, Louise 岡佳子 and others, 『隔冥記にみる寛永文化の世界』 (series) 日本美術工芸 655 (April 1993)
Davis, James L. 杉山滋郎、日本の近代科学史 (朝倉書房, 1994)
Doak, Kevin 尹健次『民族幻想の蹉跌』 (思想 December 1993)
Earns, Lane Ōta Katsuya, *Sakoku jidai Nagasaki boekishi no kenkyū*
Graham, Patricia 日本美術の一九世紀, exhibition catalogue, Hyogo Prefecture Museum of Art, 1990 (Himeiji)
Harrison, Elizabeth 千葉徳爾&大津忠思 Chiba Tokuji and Ōtsu Tadao 『間引と水子一子育てのフォーカロ』 Mabiki to mizuko Tokyo:農山漁村文化協会 a 民俗学 study of the practice of *mabiki* (infanticide) during Tokugawa era; includes review of standard views.
Hauser, William B. Norma Field, *In the Realm of a Dying Emperor*
Hess, Laura E. Inoue Yasushi’s *Kōshi*
Jones, Sumie 松田修『江戸異端文学ノート』(青土社, 1993)
Kornicki, Peter Kotenseki sōgō mokuroku
Kinsei Kyōto shuppan bunka no kenkyū
Marceau, Lawrence 井沢昭一郎著（いざわばんりょう）『広益俗説弁(1715年刊)』「東京：平凡社, 1989」白石良夫校訂
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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nakai, Kate Wildman</td>
<td>Two recent book that I think would be of interest to a wide range of people: 山口啓二、「鎌倉と開国」(岩波, 1993), a broad overview that links developments in different areas of kinsei history in a fresh way, and 藤田覚、『松平定信』(中公新書, 1993)</td>
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Reviews


reviewed by J. F. Morris
Miyagi Gakuin Womens’ Junior College
Sendai, Japan.

Philip Brown’s book *Central Authority and Local Autonomy* represents a welcome addition to the English-language literature on early modern Japan. The core of the book is a study of land taxation and land survey methods in Kaga domain from c. 1580 to c. 1650, and it is not surprising that the strengths of the book lie in its evaluation of these two areas. Fortunately Brown also takes up the task of trying to find an adequate framework for describing the nature of the Japanese state in this period, and makes some progress away from the simple “all-or-nothing” dichotomy which is ironically suggested by the title of his book. The book does not provide us with a complete or even adequate overview of the formation of the early modern Japanese state, nor does it even give us a comprehensive analysis of Bakufu-han relations: Brown’s subject matter is too limited to permit this. Brown himself remains aware of these limitations, so that mercifully, we are spared the burden of another “definitive study” which slams the door on any further questioning or research. Brown gives us something far more useful: a book which opens the door on questions which too many seem to think were closed beyond reasonable doubt.

At the narrowest level, this book provides us with a case study of the development of the three related areas of land surveying, taxation, and local administration of rural areas in Kaga domain during the formative first century of the early modern period. Brown finds that in these three areas, the custom of “warichi,” whereby villagers “owned” shares in the cultivable land area of each village rather than specific fixed plots, and which had been the prevalent form of peasant land-holding in the region from at least the mid c.16th, gave the development of Kaga domain institutions a very distinctive touch. In Kaga domain, the daimyō made no effort through land surveys to determine individual plots of land or their cultivator. Domainal surveys simply aimed to determine the overall area and productive capacity of each village, and left it up to the villagers themselves to determine which person cultivated any particular piece of land. Concerning taxation, Brown finds that the adoption around 1600 of regular annual inspections of standing crops in order to determine taxes for each individual village resulted in markedly lower levels of taxation, and that the highest levels of taxation in Kaga domain were achieved in the last two decades of the c.16th, i.e. the period immediately subsequent to the Maeda family entering their new holdings there. On the matter of local administration, Brown finds that in Kaga domain this was marked by a dependence on “districts” rather than individual villages as the basic unit of rural administration. The practice of villagers regularly redistributing land within the village in accordance with each villager’s share in the overall arable land available meant that the villagers themselves kept accurate records of the available land and its distribution. Therefore, for Kaga domain, effective rural administration was best achieved by utilising this naturally-occurring pattern of land management as the basis for rural control. Seen from Brown’s perspective, domainal rural policy was more than non-interventionist; local rural social development played an important contributing role in determining the development and content of Kaga domain’s
rural administration. It is this interpretation that brings Brown into collision with mainstream thinking on the nature of the early modern Japanese state.

Given the bottom-up orientation of mainstream Japanese scholarship (i.e. the persistence of the idea that the social base determines social superstructures), Brown’s line of thinking here does not appear to be much of a surprise. What sets Brown off from mainstream thinking is that it is the conservative element in rural society that he sees as contributing most positively to the successful development of stable and effective rule in Kaga domain. In Brown’s version of the founding of Kaga Domain, there is no place for Hideyoshi’s land surveys (the “taikō kenchi” 太閤検地) nor his so-called status laws (身分法 or what Brown would probably call class separation laws). Hideyoshi is portrayed primarily as a military commander, and not as a powerful suzerain with administrative powers reaching deep into the lands of his retainers, and determined to use those powers to effect a policy of social engineering throughout the reach and breadth of Japan. It is Brown’s treatment of these dimensions of his findings that give his book an interest beyond its immediate focus as a local case study of Kaga domain.

John W. Hall introduced what were called “local studies” into American scholarship as a way of demonstrating how changes dictated at the centre were implemented at a regional level. In approaching Kaga domain, Brown has turned this approach on its head; he looks at Kaga domain to see if changes purportedly dictated at the centre have any relevance at all for Japan in general, as represented by Kaga domain. Deviations found in Kaga domain from what the hegemons (mainly Toyotomi Hideyoshi) were supposed to have ruthlessly implemented as national policy are not dismissed as mere chance or attributed to local “backwardness,” the traditional excuse for failing to have thought any further. If no evidence can be adduced from Kaga domain to support the argument for Hideyoshi’s land surveys having been implemented in the region, or if no evidence can be found to suggest that Hideyoshi’s sword hunts were conducted in the area, or that the Tokugawa Bakufu could and did readily move about daimyō at will, then Brown goes looking for evidence to see if these policies were indeed implemented anywhere. The “local region” or “periphery” has changed from being an imperfect mirror of “the centre” into an autonomous actor who can serve to question the presumptions of “the centre.” Now that Brown has demonstrated that “local history” has more uses than simply providing illustrative examples, I hope that any claims made for the history of “the centre” will be subjected to a more rigorous and realistic standard of proof.

In terms of specific content, what Brown has to say about revising our ideas about “the centre” may be summarised in the three points given above. Before yet another American Ph. D. student embarks on a litany of the overwhelming power of the Tokugawa Bakufu as an introduction to a thesis, that person should have a look at Brown’s “Introduction,” especially p. 24 on the limitations on the Bakufu’s use of its power of fief transfer and attainder. Also, Brown’s tying together of recent research on the “kokudaka system” (石高制) on pp. 75-88 finally liberates those restricted to English-language sources from having to think of this system as representing a radical break from its precursors, that it was necessarily predicated on the payment of taxes in rice, and that Hideyoshi enforced this system/standard uniformly throughout Japan. For those who might find Brown’s argument a bit too strong, it should be pointed out that he has consistently taken a rather
conservative stance in arguing his case. In fact, his argument is an example in moderation, as he consistently takes the most minimal conclusion that the data he presents will support. A closer look at the data for actual "taikō kenchi" can support conclusions even more radical than those advanced by Brown. Even those who find Brown's detailed data on Kaga survey and taxation purposes too detailed, should take the time to look at these pages to deepen their understanding of the limits to Hideyoshi's much-touted surveys. Furthermore, I would think that Brown's handling of the birth of the "kokudaka-system" will make far more sense to historians from other fields looking for an explanation of the birth of early modern Japan that reads like a description of something from the real world rather than say, science fiction.

Brown is on solid ground when dealing with matters related to taxation and land surveys, but he becomes shaky when he enters into the other two areas to which he devotes a considerable part of his book. Kaga domain is marvelously rich in data on surveys and taxation for the period in which Brown is interested, but is suffers from a great paucity of documentation on the actual villages and villagers about whom Brown is writing. This fault is not of Brown's making; to rectify it would require forgery. However, whether intentional or otherwise, the lack of information on village society is a problem for Brown's argument. Brown's focus on the district as the basic unit of integration of local and domain administration is interesting and suggestive, but this reviewer could not help but wonder how a "fuchi-byakushō" (扶持百姓) or "tomura" (村) could be fully informed about conditions in all of the several villages attributed to his care. There was clearly some dependence on village headmen, but these people remain nebulous and undefined. Brown needed to address at least the issue of whether the perspective his documents reveal is unnaturally slanted towards the district to the detriment of the village, or whether the lack of documentation on villages is in itself an integral part of the story. Likewise, Brown attributes changes in the form of tax assessment mainly to changes in domainal policy. We are not told whether these changes might conceivably be related in any way to changes in village society, yet are left with the question of why villagers could pay under higher rates of taxation in the late c. 16th, and yet had to resort to usurious lenders in order to pay substantially reduced tax rates in the first half of the c. 17th. For the explanatory weight given to villagers as playing an active, formative role in Kaga domain institutions, they are most conspicuous in Brown's book by their absence. Brown is too honest to rectify this problem by outright forgery or its academic equivalent, unsupported assumption or assertion. If indeed nothing at all can be said with any degree of certainty about the role of the administrative village or the implications of changes in village society in Kaga domain, then even just acknowledging the possibility of these lines of argument would have given Brown's arguments more depth and resonance.

However, the part of Brown's argument with which I have the most trouble is his section on the development of the status system (身分制) or what Brown calls the "class system." To begin with, I have trouble with confusing "class" with "status. No matter how far Marxian theories may have fallen into disrepute, I still think it is more productive to distinguish between "class" as an essentially economic category, and "status" as essentially a socially-determined category related to, but definitely not the same as "class." Brown argues that the separation of "bushi" (武士) and peasant in Kaga domain took place over almost a century and in accordance with developments largely within and
around Kaga domain, rather than in response to any directives that Toyotomi Hideyoshi may have issued to attempt to bring this change about by fiat. This argument parallels Brown’s arguments concerning the genesis, implementation and content of the “kokudaka system,” and is one with which, in principle, I agree. I do have considerable reservations, however, about the way Brown arrives at this conclusion. One problem about Brown’s book for the uninitiated reader is that key terms are too often introduced without explanation: for example, the key term “Kaisaku Hō” (改作法) is introduced without any explanation. At this level, this is a problem of readability for the uninitiated, but in the case of the status system, this lack of attention to defining terms becomes a serious problem. The debate about the status system, what it was and how it arose is every bit as convoluted and littered with false leads and unproven assertions about hegemonial intervention as the debate concerning the “kokudaka system.” The difference is that the debate over the status system has never been pursued to the extent of that over the “kokudaka system,” so that there are no comprehensive studies to which one can look for ready overviews and guidance (or misguidance...). By failing to define what were the defining aspects of the early modern status system, Brown leaves both himself and his reader to flail about in the dark. From the later c17th, a person’s status was defined by which family register (人別帳 or variant) that person was listed on; even if resident in the same village, as in Sendai domain, people of “hyakushō” (百姓) status would be listed on a different register from people of “bushi” status. This type of register is never referred to in Brown’s book. Official status was determined by the type of “service” (役) one provided for the lord of one’s region. People of “bushi” status and peasant status were expected to render different kinds of “service;” this difference being the very heart of the system so far as officialdom was concerned. Brown is silent also on this crucial area. However, paying some attention to this aspect of the status system might have led Brown towards one possible answer to one of the unsolved puzzles of his book, the problem of the rise and fall of landed fiefs in Kaga domain.

According to Brown, there was a veritable explosion in the number of landed-fiefs granted to retainers in Kaga domain around 1612. Brown deals with this sudden expansion in the extent of landed-fiefs which rose from a total of 235,000 koku in 1612 to some 900,000 koku by 1616 (p. 186-7) largely in terms of the domain searching (unsuccessfully) for a more effective and rational tax collection system. It would be interesting to know whether this burst in granting fiefs had anything to do with problems in securing peasant labour for Maeda retainers trying to fulfill military service obligations, and whether the subsequent abolition of fiefs was predicated on the growth of urban labour markets as a suitable alternative to enforced peasant corvee service. Personally, I hesitate to suggest that this classic argument for the “role” of landed-fiefs as put forward by Sasaki Junnosuke represents the total argument, but it does serve to show that there are other lines of argument that can be pursued in dealing with the matter of landed-fiefs other than just viewing them as a part of the overall domainal taxation structure. This is all the more important since Brown needs to explain why the domain persisted in maintaining the institution of landed-fiefs in Kaga despite their obvious failure in delivering taxes, which is the main role he ascribes to them.

Actually, in his treatment of landed-fiefs in Kaga domain, Brown has broken new ground without realising it. Apart from seeing the rapid expansion of landed-fiefs
from around 1612 as representing part of the domain's experimentation with new forms of taxation, Brown treats the persistence of landed-fiefs as though it were related to the process of separating status groups. Landed-fiefs (地方知行制 ジカタチギョウセイ) and the separation of status groups are two unrelated problems, unless the fief-holders farm their fief land, or one is talking about giving fiefs to farmers, neither of which was the case in Kaga domain. Moreover, even in these two special cases, closer examination of the actual content of the system may reveal a society with a clearer division between different status groups than in supposedly well-ordered domains like Kaga. Granted that Brown's handling of the interpretative importance of landed-fiefs is very badly dated (I would like to point out here that Brown is merely following mainstream American research on this point, as his footnotes demonstrate), by sticking faithfully to his material he does provide enough relevant data to point up a problem central to thinking about landed-fiefs in Kaga. Edo period landed-fief systems, to work, require a detailed listing, plot by plot, of the land assigned in fief and the person responsible for paying taxes due on each plot of land. The fief thus assigned was typically held in the family for generations unless some special circumstances intervened. Brown's work on Kaga land surveys make it clear that the institutional infrastructure necessary to support a viable landed-fief system, principally a plot-by-plot listing of all arable land within the domain, simply did not exist. Retainers granted land in fief had only a vague idea of the location of their fiefs, and these fiefs were rotated too often to allow retainers (or their tax agents) to get any experience in taxing any given particular village. If Kaga domain never had the institutional infrastructure to support a viable land-fief system, then what requires explanation is not why the fief system was abolished, but why the Maeda family ever tried to set up this system on such a huge scale in the first place (by 1616, the greater part of domain lands must have been granted in fief), and why they persisted with this system until 1654 despite its being a fiscal disaster (as Brown makes clear). The ramifications of the problem that Brown has thrown up here are not quite at the same level as his work on surveys, taxation, and "taikō kenchi," but his findings do make an important contribution by making clear for the first time what was "atypical" about landed-fiefs in Kaga as a starting-point for understanding why they were abolished.

As I have suggested above, Brown's argument is not without problems. Those areas where his argument is weakest are where he has depended most heavily on standard (aged?) American sources for his interpretative framework. A better grounding in more recent Japanese historical research might have made for a more convincing argument overall. Notwithstanding the shortcomings of his argument, Brown does succeed in those areas where he ties together his own research in primary sources with innovative Japanese scholarship which supplies the material and ideas to further develop his own findings. As a result, the English-language literature on early modern Japan now finally has a work which argues the case for a more limited interpretation of the powers and intentions of the founders of the early modern state. Brown's argument is neither conclusive nor complete, but it is put strongly enough so that subsequent research can only ignore it at peril. Hideyoshi, in future, will have to be a little more circumspect, and in itself, this is an important step forward.

About the reviewer: John Morris was awarded the degree of Doctor of Literature from Tohoku University in 1986
for his thesis on the landed-fief systems of Sendai and Nambu domains, and published as『近世 日本知行制 の研究』清文堂, 大阪, 1988. He teaches on Japanese culture and Australian society at Miyagi Gakuin Women’s Junior College, Sendai, Japan.

Kumayama chō shi: Ōaza hen 熊山町史一大字
編: 通史偏, 参考史料偏 470 pages, ¥5,000

Philip Brown
Niigata Japan

Local histories (city, town, and village histories) in Japan tend to follow a few, set patterns which are reflected in both the structure and the emphases of the volumes. My own personal tendency probably reflects the approach of many local history users. I start by seeking out histories that have fairly extensive collections of documents, especially those that have separate shiryō volumes with document titles indexed chronologically within subject categories. Most local history users quickly recognize that within a given region, much of what is written in general treatments of village or town histories (tsūshi) quickly gets repetitive and that what we really want is to identify those documents which directly illuminate our research problem. The end result is that single volumes which appear to be general treatments are far less likely to be given a serious look.

Kumayama chō shi: Ōaza hen would at first appear to be just such a general volume, yet the concepts underlying it (the first of three) are distinctive, the materials collected here rather unusual, and the outcome fortuitous, at least for early modern specialists interested in land use patterns, the relationship between settlements and their surroundings, and local cultural history. Under the general guidance of Ishida Hiroshi 石田寬, emeritus professor of Hiroshima University, the editorial committee and its staff faced a formidable challenge: How do we develop an overview of the region incorporated as Kumayama Town (1954), in the face of the very limited number of documents that often are employed to prepare such a history?

The inspiration for meeting this challenge came from Ishida’s background as a geographer. Using several early modern maps, maps from the early Meiji era and modern maps, Ishida has reconstructed the relationship between Kumayama villages and their natural environment. The major effort here was to reconstruct the shifting course of the Yoshii River, the northernmost of the three large rivers that drain modern Okayama Prefecture, and its impact on settlements.

A second innovation was to structure the volume in geographical units that were constant over the early modern and modern eras down to the immediate post-war years, the ōaza. This consistency in the units facilitated the use of oral history in the absence of other documentation. Even when the ōaza lost their superior administrative position (they were incorporated into larger administrative villages before World War II) many residents still viewed them as their “neighborhood” and through the ōaza and its subdivisions, they identified the location of their farm plots.

To recreate a record of how ōaza expanded their territory and transformed land from one use to another, Ishida conducts a careful analysis of the meaning of local place names in conjunction with the available written documentation and close examination of the topography. Although not as certain an precise as contemporary documents, I believe readers will find the results of his analytical approach interesting.
Except for the introductory chapter, each chapter focuses on a single oaza, and all chapters are uniformly divided into three sections: “Historical Geography,” “Cultural Assets”, and “Chart of Aza Names and Oaza Map”. This approach not only helps preserve the distinctiveness of each community (a major concern of the authors), but also facilitates comparison between them. The final sections of each chapter include meticulously redrawn kiri ezu detailing the layout of paddy and dry fields and local names. (Four oaza maps are reproduced in larger format and included in a supplementary folder.) To accommodate the detail of these maps, Oaza hen is published in an unusually large format (Japanese A4 dimensions). In addition, the editorial board chose to make generous use of aerial photographs and color reproductions of Edo period maps. All of this makes for a beautifully produced book.

Finally, this volume includes one feature often missing from local histories: a good index.

Orders can be sent to: Kumayama machi yakuba, Chōshi hensan shitsu 東史編纂室, Matsuki 松木 623, Kumayama machi, Akaiwa-gun 赤磐郡, Okayama-ken 岡山県 709-07; FAX (08699) 5-2309

KanjiWORD 2.0 for Windows
Pacific Software Publishing, Inc

Raymond Scott
Texas Instruments

For the last few weeks I have been using KanjiWORD 2.0 for Windows. Below is the publishers information and the program’s features and requirements, followed by my comments.

FEATURES:
Front End Processor to enter Kanji and Kana phonetically.

Ability to display, print, or fax to Windows compatible monitors, printers or fax modems.
Capability to use any Windows fonts such as TrueType, Postscript, and Bitmap.
Pop-up 50,000 word English to Japanese dictionary.
Ability to import/export files to other Japanese applications.
Online English spell checker.
Multiple document editing.
Menus/prompts can be in English or Japanese

REQUIREMENTS:
IBM PC or compatible - 386 or above
Windows 3.1 or above
3.5" floppy drive
5MB free on Hard disk
VGA, Super VGA, or any Windows compatible color monochrome monitor.

COMMENTS:
KanjiWORD comes on three 3.5" floppies and includes a typeset softcover manual that has both English and Japanese. It uses a standard Windows setup program to install. KanjiWORD’s document editing screen appears much like Word for Windows or JWP, with buttons across the top just under the menu bar.

The program does not need any 'extras' to run. No DOS/V or Windows/J. It uses a Front End Processor (FEP) to enter Japanese text. This FEP is a software product also known as Katana. The FEP can be turned on or off by pressing the F1 key. English and Japanese can be readily mixed on a line with differing font sizes or bolding etc. All of the fonts you normally use under Windows can be used in KanjiWORD. Currently there is only one Japanese font but it can be scaled from 6 to 96 points. Japanese is entered phonetically, using romaji. Since I have been using NJStar, I had no problems with entering Japanese. You may enter in Hiragana or Katakana. Currently, only Katakana can be
entered as ‘Han-kaku’ or half-sized characters. The entered Hiragana or Katakana is highlighted as you enter it. For example, entering KISHA NO KISHA GA KISHA DE KISHASHITA (spaces added for readability) would leave the entire line highlighted. You then press the space bar to convert to Kanji. The program will parse the sentence and look for a convertible combination and convert it on the screen. Subsequent presses of the space bar will cycle through kanji/combinations with the same sound. A line at the bottom of the screen will display up to 9 possible kanji at a time out of the total possible combinations. You may select a kanji by pressing 1 - 9 also. In the above example, each KISHA would be highlighted in sequence and you are given the chance to select the proper kanji. Pressing enter ‘confirms’ your selection, un-highlights it and moves on to the next one.

KanjiWORD can enter Kanji you do not know how to pronounce by entering the ‘hen’ and the number of total strokes. Entering TEHEN11 and pressing F1 will produce a list of all Kanji that have the ‘TE’ hen and have 11 strokes.

The program can also expand Japanese postal codes. By entering the postal code,; ex. 101, and pressing F1, KanjiWORD will convert the 101 into the kanji for ToukyoutoChiyodaKu.

By typing MARU and pressing F1, a selection of Japanese circles and bullets can be selected. The same for HOSHI (star) and SHIKAKU (square).

KanjiWORD’s dictionary is English to Japanese. You enter an English word and the KANJI are displayed. No phonetics, English or Japanese are shown. This seems a bit odd, since the program is designed for English speaking users. If I need to look up the Japanese equivalent of an English word, it means I don’t already know the Japanese. If I am then shown a list of Kanji with no phonetics or definitions; which one do I choose for the best meaning I want to convey? - End result, I run JDIC in a separate window.

The FEP has a small menu that pops up when you press F1. One of the selections is FURIKANA (sic). However, furigana does not seem to be supported at this time. My Japanese teaching wife feels this is a drawback to the program as she often needs to add furigana for her beginning classes.

While it is true that you have the capability to use the same fonts you use with windows, some are not displayed or printed well. I attempted to use the A Garamond font and found that characters overlapped each other on the screen and on print. The print function offers a print preview capability to see how the layout looks. Nice feature.

I was unable to find a way to enter my own conversion dictionary, a la NJStar’s user dictionary. If the phonetic you entered is not converted to the Kanji you are looking for, you have to break it up or try different readings etc.

There is a way to enter JIS codes by typing KIGOU and pressing F1. A selection of JIS symbols is displayed at the bottom of the screen and you scroll though them to pick the one you want.

KanjiWORD’s documents are in a proprietary format. They cannot be used by any other product. However, you can export into all the usual formats; ascii text, Old-JIS, New-JIS, EUC, Shift-JIS, NEC-Jis, BMP and PCX (good for faxing). You can also import files in these formats, but KanjiWORD does not automatically recognize the encoding method. You have to tell it what type of file you are importing. Of course cut and paste is available, but it is only useful between KanjiWORD document windows. If you have a fax-modem program installed as a printer, you can send faxes directly from KanjiWORD.

I found two major bugs in KanjiWORD:

1. KanjiWord stores its documents in a proprietary format.
It is supposed to be able to export to other formats, SJIS, EUC etc. It is also supposed to export to PCX & BMP. The times I have tried to export, the program crashed with a UAE (unrecoverable application error).

2. I use my Japanese wordprocessor to create study lists and kanji lists to be used with KanjiGuess. I often need to look up/verify the reading of a kanji combination. KanjiWord's dictionary is only English to Japanese, with no phonetic readings for kanji. NJSTAR is the word processor I currently use.

BOTTOM LINE:
Being able to have scalable fonts is worth a lot to me. The dictionary's draw backs can be covered by using JDIC in another window, but I still miss being able to lookup an unknown kanji combination right on the screen with NJStar. I suspect that future releases will have better/additional features, and for $199.00 (msrp), I think it is quite capable and functional.

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About Our New Look:
Our new masthead was realized by David Williams, an Atlanta artist and graphic designer. It is based on Hokusai's famous "Mt. Fuji Seen from Below a Wave at Kanagawa" from the series "Thirty-six views of Mt. Fuji." Mr. Williams' previous work includes projects for Coca-Cola and Union Carbide.