



# THE FLOATING WORLD REVISITED

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# THE FLOATING WORLD IN ITS EDO LOCALE

## 1750-1850

*Henry D. Smith II*

True to its name, the Floating World of Tokugawa Japan was constantly shifting in location. It had its origins in Kamigata, the Kyoto-Osaka region, where it was given its classical definition by Asai Ryōi in *Tales of the Floating World* (Ukiyo monogatari, 1661), as a world of "singing songs, drinking wine, and diverting ourselves just in floating, floating. . . like a gourd along with the river current."<sup>1</sup> Its quintessential locale was the pleasure quarters, the rigidly enclosed districts of prostitution that had been set up under official license, first in Kyoto in 1589 and in Osaka a few decades later. The classic Floating World of the Kamigata region took shape in the Genroku era of the later seventeenth century and powerfully influenced a parallel culture in Edo in the same years, centered in the Yoshiwara pleasure quarter, which had first been licensed in 1618.

The leadership in cultural innovation then passed from Kamigata to Edo in the course of the eighteenth century, and the Floating World took on a coloring distinctive to the shogun's capital. It emerged in full form in the last decades of the century, in the ukiyo-e paintings and prints and in the playful *gesaku* literature that are the foci of this exhibition. Its primary locales were the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters and the three downtown kabuki theaters, the sites that set the rigorous standards for the quickly changing and fastidiously enforced styles of the day. Many other venues of urban life make their appearance in the prints and fictions of the era, but it remains the *akusho*, the "bad spots" of official and commonsense opinion, that provided the essential self-definition of the Floating World in the Edo culture on view here.

Where does this fulfillment of a truly Edo-esque Floating World begin, and where does it end? Among modern historians of Edo culture, certain standard narratives have evolved, although the chronology differs with the specialty. Scholars of ukiyo-e see the 1780s and 1790s as the classic golden age of the genre, with the death of Utamarō in 1806 serving as a common demarcation of the end of the era. From this point, "pictures of the floating world" enter a dismal phase of decadence and decline in which any artist of interest (among them Hokusai, Kuniyoshi, and Hiroshige) is qualified as either exceptional or of superior decadence.

In literature, the accepted story line hangs on the names of eras by which years—and hence history—were arranged (and continue to be arranged) in Japan. The golden age of Edo literature is seen as An'ei-Temmei, the seventeen years from 1772 to 1789, with the Kansei Reforms of the early 1790s interpreted as the crushing blow that destroyed the sophisticated wit and subtle rebellion of gesaku literature in its prime. The narrative then skips over the years of the succeeding Kansei-Kyōwa eras (1789-1804), which are thus relegated to a historical vacuum, and homes in on the combined Bunka-Bunsei (sometimes reduced to the shorthand of “Kasei”) period of 1804-30 as the time in which an utterly different literary regime emerged, now commercialized, popularized, and vulgarized (although again with apologetic exceptions, in this case particularly for Takizawa Bakin). At this point, the story line merges with that of ukiyo-e in a general judgment of “decadence.”

The burden of this essay is not to challenge these established story lines, which remain persuasive in their own ways, but to suggest a different way of looking at what was going on in Edo culture, in the context of the broader social and cultural history of the city itself. The basic argument is that in the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, the Floating World was expanded and relocated so that it became more of a generic “floating world,” much less attached to the particular locales of the Floating World (as a proper noun) anchored in the pleasure quarters.

In a way, this relocation of the floating world was a return to the more elementary meaning of *ukiyo*, a sense that had never been abandoned in common usage, of the floating world not as a place of escape and release from everyday life, but precisely as daily life *itself*. Despite the clear change in emphasis that typified its Genroku usage, the word “ukiyo” had never lost either its original Buddhist meaning of the world as experienced in the here and now, nor the sense of ultimate pessimism about that world as ephemeral. As one Japanese scholar has suggested, the medieval ukiyo as a “world of sorrow” was simply the other side of the coin of the early Tokugawa ukiyo as a “floating” world (using a different character for *uki*) of pleasure and release: both were rooted in an essentially religious faith in the meaningfulness of an afterlife or “other world” (*anoyo, gose*).<sup>2</sup>

This shift of emphasis from the world of escapist fantasy to the world of life-as-lived represents a major change in the cultural history of late Edo, with the year 1800 as a convenient benchmark. The most revealing example of the newly relocated floating world is *The Bathhouse of the Floating World* (Ukiyoburo, 1809), the most famous work of the gesaku writer Shikitei Samba, followed by *The Barbershop of the Floating World* (Ukiyodoko, 1814). What a change in the locale of the floating world! The theater and the brothel, places where huge sums were expended to purchase fantasies of escape from everyday life, were now replaced by the bath and the barbershop, the places of ordinary community that every common citizen could (indeed, was obliged to) afford.

What were the dynamics behind both the efflorescence of a truly Edo-like Floating World in the Temmei era, and its evolution as a more generic “floating world” into the Bunka-Bunsei era? I wish to explore three areas of change, of which the first is the social structure of the city of Edo, particularly the relationship between samurai and non-samurai: it is precisely the interaction between the two estates that helps explain the emergence of a truly “popular” culture, one that is the exclusive property of no specific social grouping.

The second dynamic of change is the emergence of "Edo nativism," a cultural ideology that sought to define what was special about the city, particularly as personified in the self-image of the Edokko, the Japanese counterpart of London's Cockney. The best single tag for the phenomenon of Edo nativism, however, is "Great Edo" (Ō-Edo). It differs essentially (although phonetically only in vowel length) from "O-Edo," Edo with a simple honorific prefix that marked it as the capital of the shogun. Great Edo was a boast of the prosperity and vitality that was the city's lot from the middle of the eighteenth century until the 1860s. In deference to the impact of the two great famine-and-reform cycles, I would most narrowly date Great Edo as the city between the two major famines, 1787-1833, a period of about half a century.<sup>3</sup> Most of the works in *The Floating World Revisited* date from this era.

The third ingredient of this broad change in Edo culture is the role of print culture brought about by the steady evolution in Edo of the technologies of printing and publishing, and the increase in literacy. Of particular interest is the way in which restrictions on what could be printed led to a special role both for private printing and for orally transmitted culture.

### *The Political Economy of Edo*

Many descriptions of Tokugawa society begin with a recitation of the official hierarchy of "four classes": samurai, farmer, artisan, merchant (*shi-nō-kō-shō*). However, this is an artificial formula adopted from Chinese Confucian ideology, and distorts the real processes of social change. The most basic distinction was between samurai and everyone else, a distinction enforced by elaborate rules prescribing the marks of samurai status (most visibly, the wearing of two swords), the places of samurai residence, and special procedures for samurai inheritance, marriage, and punishment. The samurai did not constitute a "class" in any economic sense, because it was such a large and diverse group, reaching from the true political elite at the top to the majority of samurai who were either unemployed or at best held jobs as guards or petty functionaries. It is best to conceive of the samurai as an "estate" rather than a class, set apart from "commoners" by special status and privileges but highly differentiated within.

The essential nature of the city of Edo was determined by its two political functions, one as capital of the Tokugawa domain, the other as national capital. The site itself lies at a strategic point on the Kantō Plain where the Sumida River flows into what is now Tokyo Bay, and had been the location of a substantial castle of a local lord in the fifteenth century. It was chosen by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1590 as the site of his new capital for control over the Kantō Plain, and work was begun immediately on the construction of the great castle and the adjoining commoner settlement. Building on the remains of the earlier castle, vast earthworks were carried out, digging moats and rechanneling rivers to provide the foundations for the massive stones of the castle walls, which may still be seen in Tokyo today. The castle was finally completed in the 1630s under the third shogun, Iemitsu, and was resplendent with the gilded roof ornaments and azure walls of the main keep (*tenshukaku*), which towered more than 250 feet above the city below, the tallest such

structure ever erected in Japan.

As capital of the Tokugawa domain, which came to encompass about one-fourth of the agricultural production of the entire country, Edo had by far the largest assembly of direct retainers of any castle city in Japan—about two hundred and fifty thousand in all (including families and servants). What set it apart from any other city was its function as the national capital, enforced by the critical institution of *sankin kōtai*, which required most of the 260-odd daimyo to maintain permanent residences in the city for their families, and to reside themselves in Edo every other year. Growing out of older feudal practice, the *sankin kōtai* had become an intricate system of requirements by the time of the completion of Edo Castle. These rules specified that each daimyo must maintain at least three separate estates in Edo, one for official domain business and for the residence of the daimyo himself, one as permanent residence for the family, and one as a suburban retreat in case of fire. Each daimyo was assigned a particular month for entering and leaving the city, and a set number of samurai to accompany him. These military processions, the largest of which numbered in the thousands, were a constant feature of life in the city, particularly in the peak months from spring to early summer.<sup>4</sup>

The effect of the *sankin kōtai* was to double the samurai population of the city of Edo, and to multiply the goods and services required by such an immense consumer population. Although the domains made efforts to supply the Edo mansions directly from their own provinces, they were still dependent on the local Edo economy for a wide variety of goods (especially perishable produce) and services. As a result, the costs of both the permanent Edo mansions and of the processions themselves consumed up to half of all domain income, working as a powerful engine to recirculate the wealth of the nation to the advantage of Edo. The system worked just as powerfully to circulate culture, making Edo a microcosm of the products and habits from all Japan, and in turn carrying Edo back to the provinces in the form of memories and souvenirs.

### *A Social Map of Edo, Circa 1800*

A “social map” of the city, a simple list of the groupings into which it might be divided, is a way of getting at the complexity of social change in later Edo. It is a more complex rendering than conventional conceptions of Edo as polarized between samurai and *chōnin*, but it remains only a crude scheme of the highly complex society the city had become by about 1800. The population figures need to be taken with several grains of salt: the only official enumerations that we have are for the total population of the commoner *chō* (known collectively as the “*machikata*”) alone, which was about five hundred thousand in the middle years of the eighteenth century, dropped to a low of four hundred and fifty-seven thousand in 1786, and then grew at a slow but steady increase to a high of five hundred and seventy-four thousand in 1854.<sup>5</sup> The samurai class, however, was never enumerated, nor do we have any clear sense of the dimensions of the large servant population of the city, much of which was probably excluded from the commoner census.<sup>6</sup> The estimations offered here are, at best, educated guesses at rough orders of magnitude for around the year 1798, when the *machikata* population was 492,449, with a ratio of 135 males per 100 females.<sup>7</sup>

**Direct shogunal retainers.** About two hundred and fifty thousand. These were the true natives of Edo, for whom the political city was created. By the end of the seventeenth century, virtually all of this group had been born and bred in the city, and they played a role in the creation of its higher culture that has yet to be properly assessed; one stellar example in this exhibition is Ōta Nampo. The shogunal retainers were broadly divided into the two categories of *hatamoto* (bannermen) and the lower-ranking *gokenin* (housemen), numbering respectively perhaps six thousand and twenty thousand. The larger of these would themselves have a number of retainers, so that the average household size has been estimated as about ten persons.<sup>8</sup> On maps of Edo, such as the one in this exhibition, the higher-ranking shogunal retainers, who were given individual house lots (as opposed to the row-house barracks in which most *gokenin* lived), are recorded with their individual names. This minutely detailed inscription of personal names, totalling in the thousands, is visible witness to the local presence of this crucial group.

**Proper chōnin.** About one hundred and twenty thousand. The great majority of non-samurai in Edo lived in the residential units known as *chō* (also read *machi*), typically consisting of all houses (including the back-lot tenements) along each side of a block-long section of a street. In the later Edo Period, the *chō* numbered about seventeen hundred, with an average population of about eighty households each. Although the word *chōnin* (person of the *chō*) is often used to refer to all residents of the *machikata*, in official *bakufu* usage it designated only those who owned real estate, whether land (*jinushi*) or buildings (*ienushi*). Most of these “proper” *chōnin* ran businesses as merchants, and represent the political and economic elite of the city. Of the total of almost twenty thousand household heads who constitute this group, a certain number were the Edo branches (*Edo-dana*) of merchant houses from west Japan, which provided the all-male staff of clerks and apprentices and dealt in imported finished goods, primarily from the Kyoto, Osaka, Ōmi, and Ise regions. The majority, however—increasingly so as the Edo Period progressed—were merchants of local origin who dealt primarily in goods from the Kantō region and helped nurture the Edo nativist sentiment that emerged in the eighteenth century.

**Property superintendents.** About eighty thousand. In a pattern that was probably first set by the absentee merchant owners of Edo branches, many of the landlords of Edo came to hire superintendents to watch their properties and collect rents. Known as *yamori* (also more formally as *ienushi* and less formally as *ōya*), this group of about sixteen thousand men came to serve also as the agents of the *bakufu* in maintaining public order at the local level, and hence were increasingly treated as “proper” *chōnin*, even though they owned no property (receiving housing as one of their perquisites). They generally held jobs as small merchants and artisans, and, though not wealthy, were a crucial middling group in Edo life, likely to be Edo natives with a strong sense of urban identity.

**Petty merchants and artisans.** About two hundred and twenty thousand. These were the lower middle class of Edo, who lived in rental housing, whether on main streets (important for those with shops) or in the back alleys. Some were artisans who sold their wares from their own homes, while others were craftsmen who moved from job to job, such as carpenters (the elite of the group), masons, or gardeners. Some (although certainly a minority) were recent immigrants from the provinces who probably came to the city as appren-

tices. This group tapers off into the lowest social levels, of entertainers, menial workers, and coolies. The majority were married with families, with an average household size of about four. As we shall see, this group provided the class base for the Edokko of the late Tokugawa Period.

**Daimyo mansion staff.** About fifty thousand.<sup>9</sup> These were the domain samurai known as “resident in Edo” (*jōfu*), as opposed to those who accompanied the daimyo in alternate years. Chief among these were the daimyo heirs, who were typically born in Edo and remained there until succeeding to the domain headship. Beneath them were the substantial staffs needed to conduct ongoing domain business in Edo and to maintain the various residences. Since such samurai lived in Edo for years at a time, with some posts even becoming hereditary, they lived with their families and were intimately familiar with the city. Among the leading lights of eighteenth-century Edo culture in this group was Hōseidō Kisanji, a principal retainer on the Edo staff of the Akita domain.

**Domain samurai on sankin kōtai duty.** About three hundred thousand. Whenever a daimyo came to Edo for his year of alternate attendance, he was required to bring a number of soldiers appropriate to his rank. These were almost all single men, most of whom had very few official duties to perform in Edo. For many, the stay in Edo seems to have been a once-in-a-lifetime experience, in the course of which they would consume the savings brought from the domain on the many pleasures of the city. This was an exclusively consuming class in Edo, and a pivotal group in the recirculation of culture throughout Japan. Domain samurai were also the most common target of ridicule by Edo natives, who stereotyped them as provincial bumpkins, a tone reflected in such epithets as *asagi-ura*, *buza*, and *shingoza*.

**Male contract laborers.** About eighty thousand. Several of the above categories already implicitly include a variety of servants, such as hereditary servants of bakufu retainers, male and female live-in servants of chōnin families, and daughters of chōnin families who spent a period of service in the samurai mansions as a form of training. Other than these, however, was a male population, many of them single, who worked as contract laborers in two rather different capacities. Some were hired by the domain mansions while the daimyo were in residence in order to fulfill the required quotas of guards. They were, in effect, “rent-a-samurai,” men who were given two swords and the lowest of samurai status for their term contracts of one year or less. Of a different sort were unskilled day laborers who worked primarily in construction trades. This contract labor market was under the control of employment agencies, and the men they handled tended to be rowdy and prone to gambling in the eyes of the bakufu, which periodically devised measures to control them.

**Priests.** About fifty thousand. About two-thirds of this number were Buddhist priests who staffed the very large number of temples scattered throughout the city. Most were celibate, and well known for their enjoyment of the pleasure quarters, both male and female. In addition, this number includes Shinto and Shugendō priests, as well as such priest-like categories as doctors and diviners.

**Shin Yoshiwara.** About ten thousand. The Shin Yoshiwara brothel was a self-contained community, headed by the wealthy owners of the teahouses and brothels, who often were active figures in the making of Edo popular culture. About one-third of this popu-

lation were actual prostitutes, the remainder being largely male servants and entertainers.

**Outcastes and vagrants.** About twenty thousand. The outcaste class was divided into a small community of *eta* in a ghetto northeast of the Asakusa Kannon Temple and a larger number of *hinin* (whose status, unlike that of *eta*, was not hereditary) scattered in small groups on riverbanks and in temple precincts throughout the city. Not too different in social status were a sizable number of "homeless" (*mushukunin*) people, mostly men, who had no legal place of registration and hence difficulty in finding regular work. These groups formed the underclass of the city of Edo, and their numbers swelled in times of famine.

These ten categories yield a total of about one million two hundred thousand for the population of Edo in about 1800, a figure that should be taken only as a rough estimate. The figures for the enumerated machikata population, as mentioned before, increased by about 15 percent over the following half-century, but the samurai population may well have declined as the domains made efforts to cut back on Edo expenditures. Apart from considerable variations by season and year because of the vagaries of weather and natural disaster, the population of the city remained fairly stable throughout the era we are discussing, from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century.

### *The Blurring of Chōnin and Samurai*

To understand how this population structure worked as a dynamic system in the formation of Edo popular culture, we need to look more closely at how different groups were arranged geographically, and how they interacted. Of particular interest is the interaction of the samurai and chōnin estates.

In early Edo, samurai and chōnin territories were sharply segregated. The chō were laid out in a long belt along the Tōkaidō highway as it entered the city, about five hundred yards wide from Shimbashi on northward to Nihombashi. North of Nihombashi, the belt of chō extended in two directions, northeast toward Asakusa and highways to the north, and northwest through the Kanda district in the direction of the Nakasendō highway. The chō were arranged with geometrical regularity into blocks, a pattern that remains evident in downtown Tokyo today. This initial center of chōnin Edo came in time to be known as "Shitamachi," particularly the area around Nihombashi where the oldest and wealthiest merchant houses stood. To the west of the Shitamachi lay the grounds of Edo Castle and the surrounding area devoted to samurai residence. Another block of samurai land lay southwest of Nihombashi along the banks of the Sumida, intended primarily for warehousing, while clusters of temples were placed in the interstices.

This neatly arranged plan gradually gave way to a pattern of sprawl as time passed. A great fire in 1657 destroyed almost two-thirds of the city, including the great donjon of Edo Castle (which was never rebuilt), and led to various measures to deconcentrate the population. Temples were moved to the edges of town, firebreaks were opened at major road intersections, and the low-lying area east of the Sumida was opened to both samurai and chōnin settlement.

At the same time, new chō began to sprout like mushrooms along the more travelled roads of the city, particularly in the hilly area to the west that had formerly been almost

entirely samurai settlement. As a result of this continuing sprawl, Edo tended in the direction of a patchwork of alternating samurai and commoner settlements. Some 70 percent of the city's land area remained in samurai hands, with the remainder split evenly between chō and religious lands, but the central arteries all tended to be lined with commercial activity. This was particularly conspicuous east of the Sumida, where commoner lands lined the various canals, and samurai estates filled in the area between.

Residential segregation was nevertheless a key fact of life in Edo, and the elites of both estates lived in fundamentally contrasting forms of housing. In the chō, the great merchant houses faced directly on the main streets, set adjacent to one another with almost no space between so as to maximize the commercial frontage. The front part of the structure was the *mise*, devoted to the display and selling of wares, while the back part provided living quarters for family and servants. In the samurai neighborhoods, by contrast, the residences were sharply separated from the streets by encircling walls that cut out all views of the inside except for the garden trees that protruded above. Inside, a detached dwelling with space all around was laid out in the classical *shoin* style, with reception areas in front and living quarters behind. The single-family form of the elite samurai dwelling, as best seen in the hatamoto ranks of shogunal retainers, was the prototype for the twentieth-century Japanese ideal of the detached single-family suburban home.

At the sub-elite level of both samurai and chōnin, however, one finds a convergence of residential style in the row-house form. The majority of chō dwellers, for example, lived in the back-alley rental units known as *nagaya* (long houses), structures with thin common walls separating as many as eight small single-family units in a row, sometimes back-to-back with another row. Not too different were the row-house units (*kumi-yashiki*) in which many of the lower shogunal retainers lived. Such quarters were scattered throughout the city, and, like the back-street *nagaya*, were provided with entrances direct from narrow side streets. Most of the samurai residents of the great daimyo mansions were quartered not in the mansions proper, but in row units built into the surrounding walls. Some were larger than others and designed for the families of the regular staff, while others accommodated groups of single samurai on sankin kōtai duty.

In these ways, both samurai and chōnin at the middle to lower levels tended to live in dense clusters of row housing. The two also came to resemble each other more closely as many lower samurai of the shogun were obliged to take on handicraft jobs such as the making of umbrellas or clogs in order to make ends meet. In general, contact between samurai and non-samurai at the lower class levels was regular and familiar, increasingly consolidated by the emerging common language of the city.<sup>10</sup> The visiting domain samurai, as provincial transients, were not part of this process.

The most important realm for the forging of what might be termed the "common culture" of Edo, however, was in the world of leisure and entertainment. The enclosed realms of the pleasure quarters and the theater were perhaps the starting point for this common culture, but as time passed a far broader and more public realm extended the scope of interaction among the citizens of Edo on a basis of anonymity and social equality. This was the realm of the "famous places" (*meisho*) of Edo that were celebrated in growing numbers of landscape prints from the later eighteenth century. Many of these were religious or

scenic sites, visited on ritual or seasonal occasions. A complex landscape of dozens of these covered the city, offering certain pleasures for each season, whether cherry blossoms on Gotenyama or wisteria at Kameido, summer fireworks at Ryōgoku, or autumn insects at Dōkanyama.

Perhaps the greatest of the popular “famous places” was the combined area at either end of Ryōgoku Bridge, the premier center of street activity in Edo. Vast throngs of people would gather there on summer evenings to enjoy boating, sideshows, and an endless variety of stalls for food and shopping. Ryōgoku Bridge was depicted more than any other single place in woodblock prints, and finds its classic literary description in Hiraga Gennai’s humorous tale *Nenashigusa* of 1763. After an exhaustive list of all the sideshows and street-vendors at Ryōgoku, Gennai turns to a sketch of the people who gather there:

Where there are priests, there are laymen, and where there are men there are women. For every countrified samurai there is a stylish townsman wearing a long comb and a short *haori*. The Young Master’s attendant carries along a goldfish in a glass bowl; the noblewoman’s followers dangle pipe cases of gold brocade; the buxom maid-in-waiting hauls her buttocks along; the overweening bodyguard-for-hire, rather than wearing his two swords, seems himself to be an appendage to them.<sup>11</sup>

And so the list continues, through many other social and occupational types, constituting a veritable catalogue of all Edo, high and low, samurai and commoner.

### *The Emergence of a Regional Kantō Identity*

Cementing and consolidating the common culture of Edo was a strong consciousness of the special identity of the city and those native to it. This identity had two dimensions, that of the city itself and that of the Kantō region in which it was situated. The broader regional identity set the parameters of Edo’s urban identity. To begin with, Edo was in east Japan, beyond the line (roughly from the current prefectural boundaries between Shizuoka and Aichi on the south, and Toyama and Niigata on the north) that bisects Japan into two distinct cultural zones, differing in speech, customs, and social organization.<sup>12</sup> Historically, west Japan was always more advanced, the east relatively undeveloped. From the Kamigata standpoint, all of eastern Japan was considered a remote and provincial backwater. The Kantō Plain in particular was seen (not without good reason) as a place of deep-rooted military tradition, dominated by the samurai class and symbolized by the Kashima and Katori shrines, which were near the mouth of the Tone River and were dedicated to gods of war. The typical man of the “East” (*Azuma*) in medieval times was thus a warrior, rough and uncultured but with a certain directness of manner.<sup>13</sup>

In the early decades of Edo’s history, however, most of its higher culture was directly transplanted from the Kamigata region, including the early culture of the Floating World. This naturally created a certain tension with the older “eastern” traditions of the Kantō, and by the final decades of the eighteenth century a self-conscious Edo identity had begun to assert itself. The critical development was the emergence of the form of kabuki theater known as *aragoto*, or “rough stuff,” describing the blustery style of acting developed by the Ishikawa Danjūrō line and explicitly set off against the softer style and more domestic preoccupations of the Kamigata *wagoto* (soft stuff) kabuki. The origins of the Danjūrō line

are said to have been in Narita, east of Edo, where the great Fudō temple of Shinshōji was center of a Kantō-wide cult that, abetted by Danjūrō patronage, became a popular pilgrimage site for Edo residents.

In time, Danjūrō—of whom nine generations were to span the Edo Period from Genroku on—became the superhero of the city, the “flower of Edo,” in many ways its symbol. The importance of Danjūrō was the way in which the tradition could encompass both commoner and samurai Edo. On the one hand, Danjūrō as an actor was very much a commoner and in many roles (such as the famous Sukeroku) was often set in contemptuous opposition to samurai. Yet the bravado that was part of the Danjūrō style was itself well suited to the rough-and-tumble military self-image of the Kantō region, reinforced by the Danjūrō enactment of such eastern samurai legends as the revenge of the Soga brothers. Danjūrō could serve both as symbol of resistance to samurai, and as the samurai spirit itself.

Another crucial aspect of the regional character of Edo lies in the long-term process by which the city became ever more deeply integrated with its local hinterland through economic development. Over the years, the initial backwardness of the Kantō region was gradually overcome, thanks in large part to the immense consumption demands of the city. As the hinterland developed economically, the city was able gradually to decrease its reliance on products imported from west Japan by way of Osaka. In such commodities as soy sauce and seed oils, by the end of the Tokugawa Period the Edo region had reversed the initial pattern of reliance on the west. In the process, the Edo branches of west Japan’s merchant houses declined in influence within the city, while the wholesalers of native origin grew in wealth and local pride.

A turning point in Edo’s economic and demographic history came some time in the first half of the eighteenth century. Until then, the city had grown so rapidly in population that more than a million people were living there within a century of its founding. No real census was conducted for it until 1721, at which point the population had already stabilized, so there is no way of knowing the exact pattern of its early population change. Such rapid growth inevitably required a steady in-flow of migrants, such as to warrant the proverbial characterization of Edo as the “dumping ground of the provinces” (*shokoku no hakidame*)—an expression that could also refer to the constant circulation of domain samurai through the sankin kōtai.

At any rate, in the eighteenth century, Japan as a whole entered a period of population stability and mature economic development. It was an era of generally stable prices and gradually rising real wages, with a decline in wage differentials between skilled and unskilled, urban and rural.<sup>14</sup> This is not to say that all was easy for the city. On the contrary, the era of the 1770s and 1780s in particular was one of frequent natural disaster, as fire, epidemic, and famine followed one another.<sup>15</sup> The great famine beginning in 1783 in Edo culminated in a large riot in the early summer of 1787 in protest against the spiralling rise in the price of rice. Apart from these difficult years, however, Edo generally knew peace and prosperity from the 1730s for a full century until the Tempō famine of the 1830s.

### *Edo Nativism and the Birth of the Edokko*

Regional character and development provided the context for the growth of a specifically Edo identity, but ultimately it was the cultural dynamics within Edo itself, as a city distinct from the countryside and the provinces, that was critical in the birth of the Edokko, the "child of Edo," in the course of the eighteenth century.

Japanese historians have carefully traced the various inflections of "Edo" used to characterize Edo and its residents.<sup>16</sup> In the seventeenth century, for example, we find the early appearance of the term "O-Edo," with an honorific prefix added to Edo to indicate respect for the city as the capital of the shogun. Clearly such a top-down conception was weak in potential for commoner urban identity, and although "O-Edo" was often used in formal ways, such as in the titles of maps of the city, it had little power to stir local emotions.

The earliest textual usage of the word "Edokko" yet discovered is in a *senryū* (a form of short comic verse, about which more below) that may be dated to the year 1771, although the term had likely been around for a while already in common speech. After that, the word appears with increasing frequency in comic verse and gesaku fiction, with a classic definition of Edokko qualities coming in a 1787 *sharebon* by Santō Kyōden, *Tsū-gen Sōmagaki*. From this complex and punning passage, the historian Nishiyama Matsunosuke has distilled four broad characteristics of the prototypical Edokko, of whom Kyōden clearly considered himself a fine example: a sense of pride in being born in the capital of the shogun, looking up at the gold roof finials of the castle and taking his first bath in water supplied from the city aqueduct; an irresistible urge to part with his money as soon as it is earned, by spending a fortune to taste the first bonito of the season or selling a fine downtown house for a single fling in the Yoshiwara; having a classy upbringing, complete with a wet nurse under an umbrella and the best toys; having as his base the very center of the city, near Nihombashi.<sup>17</sup>

As these features suggest, the Edokko of this era was a well-to-do type, a big spender at the Yoshiwara, and perhaps best represented, Nishiyama has argued, by the "Eighteen Great Tsū." A person with *tsū* was one versed in all the ways of the world and the heart, particularly in the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters, and the "Great Tsū" were the ultimate in this urbane quality. The "eighteen" did not refer to any fixed number of individuals, but, rather, to a loose and shifting group of leading playboys of the sort celebrated in gesaku literature of the 1770s.

Of the historical figures recorded as "Great Tsū," the most common single occupation was that of *fudasashi*, the merchants who brokered the official rice stipends of the shogunal retainers for cash. Their shops were near the great bakufu granaries along the Sumida River north of the confluence with the Kanda River, the area known as Kuramae ("in front of the warehouses"). These were merchants whose livelihood was indissolubly linked with the bakufu itself, and whose daily dealings were not with ordinary chōnin, but with bakufu retainers. In other words, they occupied a special position precisely at the intersection of the samurai and merchant classes, knowledgeable about the ideals and cultural practices of both.

Gradually, however, the image of the Edokko began to change: in essence, this quin-

tessential representative of the city began to move *down* in class and status, until in the early decades of the nineteenth century he came to be personified as a small merchant or craftsman. (The same seems to have been true of the Cockney, London's counterpart of the Edokko, who was originally among the "merchants and first-rate tradesmen" but who in time became the more familiar plebeian type we know today.<sup>18</sup>) The callings most characteristic of this new Edokko were firemen (temperamentally given to living for the moment and always busy because of the many fires in the city),<sup>19</sup> carpenters (just as busy as firemen, for the same reason), and fishmongers (who dealt in the most perishable of daily foodstuffs).

The vast and varied literature on the Edokko tends to deal exclusively with this later evolution of the type rather than its elite origins.<sup>20</sup> By the mid-nineteenth century, the essential Edokko came to be typified by the "Three Men of Edo": the Danjūrō line of actors, the commoner firemen, and the young fishmongers of Nihombashi.<sup>21</sup> This transformed Edokko has been particularly encouraged by the patterns of modernization in Tokyo, where the old artisanal and petty merchant class was left as the only bearer of true Edo traditions in the commoner part of the city. The "Shitamachi," as the place of Edokko residence, similarly underwent a transformation, from the elite merchant district around Nihombashi to the entire vast sprawling flatlands to the north (Asakusa), the south (Shiba), and across the Sumida (Honjo, Fukagawa).

As the Edokko broadened his class base, his ideology took on an increasingly nativist cast, with an exclusivist bias against all who came from the outside. This was seen in the emergence of such stereotypes as "Sagami maids" (*Sagami gejo*, single women from the countryside south of Edo, known for their lust); "Shinano types" (*Shinano-mono*, single men from the mountainous region of Shinano Province who came to Edo as servants, known for their big hearts and appetites); and "yellow-liners" (*asagiura*, from the unstylish light-yellow cotton lining of their jackets), provincial samurai hicks on sankin kōtai duty who were considered inept dressers and shameless lechers.

According to the proverb that is widely repeated today as one of the essential attributes of the Edokko, it is necessary to have lived in the city for three generations. In effect, native Edo birth of native Edo parentage became the definition—a constraint that in reality would have drastically limited the actual pool of Edokko. This tendency should be seen, however, in light of a crucial change in the demographic reality of Edo throughout the last half of its history: the sex ratio of the commoner population was moving steadily in the direction of parity. The figures we have are scattered but consistent: for 1733-47, the ratio moved from 173 (males per 100 females) to 169; in 1798 it dropped to 135; and in the period 1832-67 it continued a steady decline, from 120 to virtual parity on the eve of the Meiji Restoration. This is a remarkable feature of late Edo society, the causes and consequences of which remain little studied.<sup>22</sup>

One great imponderable is the death rate of Edo compared with that of the countryside. Until quite recently, studies of European cities have assumed that all premodern cities had much higher death rates than did rural areas, which necessitated a constant excess inflow of population to make up for the loss. This was doubtless true of many cities, but may not have been the case for Edo, which had one of the cleanest and most reliable public water-supply and waste-disposal systems of any large premodern city in the world.

The water-supply system was constructed in the seventeenth century, first with the Kanda Aqueduct (built in the early Edo Period) and then with the Tamagawa Aqueduct of 1653-54. The Tamagawa Aqueduct in particular, lined with cherry trees and lovingly maintained, was a true lifeline for the city and served as its major water supply until the 1960s. Both these major aqueducts (various other minor ones came and went) passed into Edo through a remarkable underground system of stone and wooden conduits, linked in turn to the countless "wells" of Edo, which were found both in samurai mansions and downtown commoner chō. There were true wells in Edo, but on the whole the ground was too unsettled and close to the bay to yield good drinking water.

The waste-disposal system was based on the practice of all East Asian cities since ancient times of recycling the city's organic wastes back into the soil of the hinterland. In Edo, human waste was systematically collected by farmers from the surrounding area, who in turn paid the landlords for this by-product of their tenants. So precious an urban crop was human excrement that its sale provided as much as one-half of the total income of Edo landlords from their properties.

Thanks in large part to these appropriate technologies for dealing with urban water and waste, Edo was spared any truly devastating attacks of disease.<sup>23</sup> Smallpox, measles, influenza, and dysentery were all part of the calendar of epidemic disease in Japan, but none posed sudden or drastic threats to the health of the city until the arrival of cholera from the West in 1858. Most disastrous in any premodern society is not disease alone, but disease in combination with the weakness occasioned by famine or poor diet. In the case of Edo, this phenomenon was clear in two great famines of late Edo, Temmei (1783-87) and Tempō (1833-37). Even then, the problem was less acute in Edo, whose people could somehow contrive to get the rice they needed (although in Temmei it required violent action to achieve).

Even if the death rates in Edo did not differ greatly from those in the countryside, it is certain that the birth rate was lower, partly because of the sex ratio and partly because of a later average age of marriage. By the same token, however, the gradual equalization of the sex ratio in the later Edo Period means that the birth rate must surely have been rising, a tendency further supported by late Edo statistics for the percentage of native-born residents of the city, which grew from 70 to 78 percent in the period 1843-67. These trends mean that the picture commonly drawn by Japanese historians of late Edo as a city increasingly besieged by swarms of rural immigrants is misleading. On the contrary, it was a city that was steadily *less* reliant on immigrants to make up for any deficit in the natural rate of increase.

In these ways, Edo was becoming in a sense more "Edo-like" as a growing native population continued to evolve its own sense of a distinctive identity, and as the social base of the prototypical Edokko continued to move downward into the working-class masses. The term that best captures this new and broader sense of identity is "Great Edo" (Ō-Edo), suggesting the boastful sense of superiority of the Edokko. The earliest usage the historian Takeuchi Makoto has found for the term was in a 1789 sharebon of Santō Kyōden.<sup>24</sup> The term nicely conveys the sense of prosperity that characterized Edo's popular culture from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century. The attitude is well expressed

by the words of a character in Shikitei Samba's *The Bathhouse of the Floating World* who criticizes a fellow Edoite for not saving money: "You're not determined enough, that's all. That's why you can't manage to put anything aside. How can anybody not build up a little capital in this bountiful city of Edo? It's such a wonderful place—money just seems to accumulate naturally here. Isn't that why so many people can come here from all over the country and make successes of themselves?"<sup>25</sup>

Indeed, as suggested earlier, *The Bathhouse of the Floating World* itself, published in 1809, is indicative of the broadening conception of the floating world in late Edo. The work consists of a loosely connected series of vignettes of the diverse customers who make their way into an Edo public bath, and is constructed largely through colloquial conversation. In his introduction on "the larger meaning" of the bathhouse, Samba puts forth a theory of the bath as a place of absolute social equality: "It is, after all, the way of Nature, and of Heaven and Earth, that all are naked when they bathe—the wise and the foolish, the crooked and the straight, the poor and the rich, the high and low."<sup>26</sup> The bath is where all members of society come together as equals, a floating world not of the most up-to-date and sophisticated pleasures, but of ordinary, everyday Edo.

### *The Dynamics of Print Culture*

Printing and publishing were of fundamental importance to the emergence of the popular culture of the Temmei era and its transformation into Bunka-Bunsei in ways that can only briefly be suggested here.<sup>27</sup> It seems clear that in scale, early modern Japan had a culture of print in every way comparable to that of many European countries of the time, working through the power of reproduction to circulate Edo culture far more broadly than ever before, stimulating a rapid increase in literacy, and moving in the inexorable direction of a mass culture.

Commercial woodblock printing in Japan grew rapidly in the seventeenth century, first in Kyoto from the 1630s and then in Osaka from the 1660s. Publishing in Edo, which in the seventeenth century was little more than a market for books produced in the Kamigata region, expanded dramatically from the mid-eighteenth century, surpassing both Kyoto and Osaka by 1800. Whereas Kamigata publishing was distinguished by its large number of serious classical, Buddhist, and Confucian texts, Edo was notable in the realm of popular literature of all sorts, a category known as *jihon* (local books, that is, not imported from Kamigata).

These "local books" of Edo were sold through bookstores known as *ezōshiya*, "picture-book stores," a term that conveys the pervasive importance of illustration in much Edo publishing. Pictures were central to the print culture of Edo, whether in the form of single-sheet ukiyo-e, or the dominant comic-book-style lineage of fiction, from the simple "red books" or "black books" that began in the later seventeenth century to the sophisticated *kibyōshi* (yellow-cover books) from 1775, which were such a pivotal genre of the ensuing decades, and then to the successor *gōkan* from the early nineteenth century.

Publishing was not limited to pictures, of course, but served as a crucial vehicle for many other networks of literary production. One particular example of special significance

for the evolution of a distinctive Edo culture was the short verse form known today as *senryū*.<sup>28</sup> The form itself is easily enough summarized as a kind of comic haiku that endeavors to capture a slice of everyday life in only seventeen syllables. Like haiku, it evolved from the practice of comic linked verse (*haikai*), but came to exist as an independent form, free of the initial stanza to which it was intended to be a sequel.

Both as a literary form and a social practice, the roots of *senryū*, as of much Edo literature, are to be found in the Kamigata area, but it was in Edo that it took on the form of a true movement by way of print. The movement coalesced around a single man by the name of Karai *Senryū* (1718-1790), whose name would become synonymous with the verse form itself long after his death. Professionally he was a judge (*tenja*) of a practice known as *maeku-zuke* (first line links), whereby the judge would pose fourteen-syllable (7, 7) first lines (*maeku*) that amateur poets would then use as inspiration for their own seventeen-syllable (5, 7, 5) creations. For such judges, this practice was a way of making money, collecting submission fees for each poem in return for a grade and the chance for a cash prize. In early-seventeenth-century Edo a number of judges were active in promoting such competitions, known as “ten-thousand-verse rankings” (*manku-awase*).

For such a judge, print was an essential medium. He would announce a competition of *maeku-zuke* by posting printed notices around the city. The aspiring poets would then compose their own contributions and submit them, together with a fee of about twelve *mon* (eventually, in *Senryū*’s case, sixteen *mon* — about the price of a bowl of noodles), at any of a number of shops that, just like American lottery vendors today, served as “intermediaries” (*toritsugisho*) for the judge. The judge would then have printed on loose sheets a list of all the prizewinning verses from those submitted. The first *Ten Thousand Verse Rankings, Judged by Senryū* (*Senryū-hyō manku-awase*) appeared in summer 1757 and offered only thirteen prize verses from a meager pool of 207. Within five years, however, submissions were up to over ten thousand in the regular contests, and *Senryū* had far outstripped all his competitors in popularity.

In 1765 *Senryū*’s growing movement was given a new boost with the publication of a distillation of the best from previous competitions, entitled *Yanagidaru*. A second followed two years after, and then became an annual event. The main innovation in these compilations was the selection of only those verses that could be understood without reference to the opening *maeku*, a decisive break from the linked-verse origins of the form. The verses were all anonymous, identified rather by the name of the submitter’s *senryū* club, the social groups that were the bottom-level source of creativity for such poetry. Although originally intended to avoid favoritism in the competitions, such anonymity worked to ensure the populist quality of the poetry. It was a local and up-to-date, even newsy, form of art, revealing *Senryū*’s own well-honed ability at keeping up with his times and providing a marketable outlet for insights on those times. By his death in 1790 his publications accounted for eighty thousand out of some two hundred thousand surviving Edo *senryū*.

*Senryū* are pivotal examples of the way in which the commercial culture of print worked to encourage the formal celebration of ordinary life in later Edo. They were appreciated not as individual literary creations, as was the case with the more elite forms of poetry, but as incisive vignettes into the life of the city. As such, they are a precious resource

for social historians of the city, and also serve to reflect one crucial way in which the social basis of Edo nativist identity was moving rapidly in the direction of an anonymous and commercial mass culture.

### *Other Outlets: Private Printing and Public Storytelling*

An important negative characteristic of publishing in Edo Japan was the bakufu prohibition of any books or pictures dealing with current events, or even with historical events that were considered to reflect adversely on the Tokugawa polity (a notable example being the prohibition of any mention of Hideyoshi). This meant, for example, that there were no newspapers in Tokugawa Japan, since the very idea of "news" was prohibited by the regime. Enforcement was achieved as much through the self-restraint of publishers, fearful of the consequences should they be punished, as through effective bakufu scrutiny. Still, the threat was always present, as the crackdown on gesaku writers by Matsudaira Sadanobu in 1789-91 vividly demonstrated.

One pervasive consequence of such a regime was the tendency of writers to use the oblique techniques of allusion and satire to disguise discussions of current events. This was widely seen on the stage, for example, in the displacement of current events to the medieval period, a classic case being the transposition of the story of the Akō rōnin from 1701-03 to the Kamakura Period when staged as *Kanadehon Chūshingura* in 1748. Not that anyone was particularly fooled, of course, when the historical Ōishi Kuranosuke became "Ōboshi Yuranosuke" onstage: the bakufu seemed to be satisfied by this transparent avoidance of any literal references. Yet this constant habit of "distancing" the political present by way of puns and historical transposition helped to enhance the popular culture in late Tokugawa Japan as a sort of never-never land.

Another consequence of the state control of publishing was the creation of a thriving market in illegal and private printing. Erotic books and pictures, for example, were produced in great numbers and circulated with apparent ease, if we are to judge from the large numbers that have survived today. Another subterfuge was to avoid printing, and to circulate works on current affairs known as *jitsuroku* (true accounts) in multiple manuscripts through the lending libraries that grew rapidly in number in the late Edo Period. The *jitsuroku* recorded tales about the private affairs and family trials of both the Tokugawa shoguns and various daimyo, much of it based on rumor and embellished to give it a fiction-like quality.<sup>29</sup>

The private circulation of information was by no means limited to politically sensitive materials. Far more important in the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century was the proliferation of private printing in a wide variety of innocent sociable contexts. Such works were known generically simply as *surimono*, or "printed things," and have their origins in the calendar prints of 1765-66 that gave rise to the multicolor printing technique known as *nishiki-e*, "brocade pictures," which almost overnight transformed the history of the Japanese woodblock print.<sup>30</sup> The impetus behind these prints was an earlier bakufu prohibition of the public production of calendars. The only information actually offered by the calendar prints was the identity of the long and short months for the com-

ing lunar year, which everyone knew anyway, so the government refrained from taking measures against the practice as long as it remained a private game.

Such private printing of New Year's greetings, whether in the form of calendar or other motifs, saw the greatest burst of activity in the wake of the Kansei Reforms, which imposed restrictions on the public production of excessively decorative printing. From the 1790s into the nineteenth century, it became a veritable boom among men of culture to distribute privately commissioned surimono to their friends. Most common were New Year's prints, combining the sender's poetry (usually *kyōka* or haiku) with a picture done by an ukiyo-e artist, but such private prints were also issued for all sorts of other celebrations and parties, whether as invitations or as gifts for the guests. Haikai masters ordered printed collections of their students' work, practitioners of the musical and performing arts would print announcements of the conferring of an art name to a pupil, and merchants would send out printed placards for the opening of a shop. In this way, printing of high quality was important in cementing and spreading networks of cultural sociability in late Edo life.

Still another and quite different consequence of the formal prohibition of open political discussion on current issues was the encouragement it offered to the formal elaboration of oral culture. At the simplest level, this meant that, since people were prohibited from writing and publishing about politics, they tended to talk about it instead. Oral performance has provided a central dynamic in Japanese cultural evolution since medieval times, giving rise to what Barbara Ruch has called a "national literature" by the end of the Muromachi Period. (Ruch emphasizes that "oral" should not be thought of as being opposed to "literate," since written texts were often performed for literate audiences, and recommends the term "vocal literature" as preferable.)<sup>31</sup>

Late Edo witnessed a further expansion and refinement of oral performance, seen in the proliferation of commercial vaudeville establishments known as *yose* that offered a wide variety of recitation and storytelling. The typical Edo form was the monologue storytelling that came to be known as *rakugo*, which was reinvigorated with the arrival of the Osaka raconteur Okamoto Mansaku in 1798 and grew rapidly in the early decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup> Reflecting in particular the increase in popularity of *rakugo*, the number of *yose* establishments rose steadily, from 75 in 1815 to over 200 by 1840. *Rakugo* joined with *senryū* as an art form that served to express the sense of solidarity in everyday Edo life that was central to the transformed floating world.

The acute sensitivity in *rakugo* to inflections of the evolving Edo dialect—and to the speech of those provincials who had not mastered it—reflects one important way in which urban identity came to be intimately linked with the spoken language. This kind of sensitivity is evident in *The Bathhouse of the Floating World*, in which Samba strives to capture the precise inflections of Edo speech. It should come as no surprise that the author's "oldest and most constant friendships seem to have been with people associated in one way or another with the vigorous revival of *rakugo* and allied storytelling arts that coincided with his most active years as a writer," as reflected in the strong influence of storytelling on his fiction.<sup>33</sup>

### *The Case of Kuwagata Keisai*

By way of summary, a single artist appearing in this exhibition, Kuwagata Keisai, serves as a particularly revealing example of the dynamics at work in transforming Edo culture in its last century.<sup>34</sup> He was born in 1764 as Akabane Sanjirō, son of a tatami-maker, squarely within the petty merchants and artisans class that would become in time defined as the source of the quintessential Edokko. He became a student of the ukiyo-e artist Kitao Shigemasa, and from as early as 1778 began the illustration of kibyōshi, the genre most central to the emergence of Temmei gesaku literature. Over the next two decades, under the name of Kitao Masayoshi, he became the most prolific of all kibyōshi illustrators, credited with some two hundred titles.<sup>35</sup> In this way, his career was built by work for commercial book publishers.

But then a remarkable transformation took place. In 1794, the lowly ukiyo-e artist Masayoshi was appointed official painter of the daimyo of Tsuyama, Matsudaira Yasuchika, and took the new name of Kuwagata Keisai. By this, he was effectively made a samurai, and would have been given the right to wear two swords. Albeit a unique case, Keisai's crossing of estate lines suggests the importance of the borderline between samurai and non-samurai in stimulating much of the creativity of this era.

Keisai's career also provides a particularly interesting case of the growth of Edo identity in his depiction of the "famous places" of the city. In the 1780s, he followed in the footsteps of Utagawa Toyoharu in designing a series of *uki-e* "perspective prints" illustrating the greatest centers of Edo pleasure and entertainment: Ryōgoku Bridge, Nakasu, the theater district, the main street of the Yoshiwara, Shinobazu Pond, the Takanawa shore, and the Sumida embankment at Mimeguri. In 1785 he designed an elegant printed handscroll entitled "Views of the Famous Places of Edo" (*Edo meisho zue*), presenting fifty different scenes (Catalogue no. I-13).

His most imaginative leap in landscape came later, after his entry into the service of Tsuyama, when he designed a large-size print showing the entire city of Edo in panoramic perspective. The print may be dated to about 1803, and served as the model for various similar paintings executed by Keisai, notably the magnificent large work displayed in this exhibition, which was originally designed as sliding-door panels for Tsuyama Castle (Catalogue no. I-2). Probably shortly after making this print, Keisai indulged in an even more radical leap of the imagination and produced a view of the entire archipelago of Japan as if it were a continuous landscape, looking east to a distant silhouette of the Korean peninsula. This kind of expansive vision is suggestive of a breaking away from the narrow confines of the older Floating World.

Keisai's work also reveals the shift suggested at the beginning of this essay, toward a heightened interest in the daily life of ordinary Edo. His work as an illustrator for kibyōshi, many scenes of which are rich in elaborate details of daily life, had prepared him for the task. His greatest achievement in this area, and perhaps his masterpiece as a painter, is a set of three handscrolls depicting scenes of various Edo artisans at work, which may be dated to 1806. Executed in a rapid but highly animated and expressive manner, the work is now in the Tokyo National Museum, and is known as the *Kinsei shokunin-zukushi e-*

*kotoba* (Illustrated scroll of modern artisans). Each scroll includes an inscription by one of the leading stars of Temmei culture: Yomo no Akara (Ōta Nampo), Hōseidō Kisanji, and Santō Kyōden. Particularly revealing is the patron, who appears to have been none other than Matsudaira Sadanobu, the very person who is assigned conventional responsibility for bringing Temmei gesaku to a crashing halt. This suggests that the impact of the Kansei Reforms may have been not so much to bring an end to an era but to deflect its energies in new directions, away from politics and toward the depiction of ordinary life.

Keisai's later paintings also reveal another critical dimension of the broad change in Edo culture, along the axis of history. In retrospect, we can see the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century as marking a pervasive growth of interest in the past throughout Japan. On a national scale, this clearly reflects the growing strength of "national studies" (*kokugaku*), the scholarly movement calling for the systematic investigation of Japan's indigenous literary tradition. Harry Harootunian's translation of *kokugaku* as "nativism" captures the note of concern for national identity fostered by the movement, and suggests a natural linkage with what I have called "Edo nativism" at a more local level.<sup>36</sup> In Keisai's later paintings, from the turn of the century until his death in 1824, the regard for the past is seen in his frequent depictions of beautiful women in archaic styles, and in the adoption of the scroll format for his vignettes of artisans.<sup>37</sup>

In popular literature, we find similar manifestations of a growing interest in the past in the figure of Ryūtei Tanehiko, a popular writer of fiction in the Bunka-Bunsei Period. As detailed in a revealing recent study by Andrew Markus, Tanehiko was driven by an antiquarian obsession with the past, which in his case centered in the Genroku era.<sup>38</sup> We begin to see that the transformation in Edo culture at the end of the eighteenth century was not simply a movement downwards and outwards in the space of the city, but a movement backwards in time as well. In these ways, the Floating World so beautifully crystallized in this exhibition was dispersed throughout the city neighborhoods and their histories, so that by the time of the critical confrontation with the West from the 1850s, the floating world was everywhere.

## NOTES

1. Richard Lane, "The Beginnings of the Modern Japanese Novel: Kanazōshi, 1600-1682," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 20 (December 1957), 672.

2. Hashimoto Mineo, "*Ukiyo*" no shisō—*Nihonjin no jinseikan* (Tokyo: Kōdansha Gendai Shinsho, 1975), 94-95.

3. This essay does not deal with the Temmei famine, the Kansei Reforms, or the Tempō crisis of famine-and-reform: the undeniably great impact of these events, particularly at the level of bakufu policy, has been outlined in detail by Herman Ooms, *Charismatic Bureaucrat: A Political Biography of Matsudaira Sadanobu, 1758-1829* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1975), 77-104, and Harold Bolitho, "The Tempō Crisis," in *The Cambridge History of Japan* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 5:116-67.

4. The panoramic screen of Edo by Kuwagata Keisai in this exhibition shows numerous such daimyo processions; these, however, appear to represent the lords on their way to and from the offering of official new year greetings at Edo Castle, and not the larger processions that entered and left the city. One can get a sense of the complexity of the seasonal pattern of sankin kōtai movement by

analyzing the data for 1853 provided in Toshio G. Tsukahira, *Feudal Control in Tokugawa Japan: The Sankin Kōtai System* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), 140-73.

5. The only surviving official figures for the machikata are for the periods 1721-47 and 1832-67; see Koda Shigetomo, "Edo no chōnin no jinkō," *Shakai keizai shigaku* (April 1938), reprinted in *Koda Shigetomo chosakushu*, 7 vols. (Tokyo: Chūō Koronsha, 1972-74), 2: 263. For the eighty-five-year interval between, the era of most interest here, I have accepted the sexennial figures reported in Katsu Kaishū's *Suijinroku*, in *Katsu Kaishū zenshū*, ed. Katsube Mitake, Matsumoto Sannosuke, and Ōguchi Yūjirō (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1978), 10: 227-38.

6. The variety of types of servants in the Edo population, and their place in the machikata population statistics, present many difficult problems. Gary P. Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers in the Cities of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), offers useful data on Tokugawa servants, but fails to pursue various crucial distinctions among service types. For various insights on this issue, see Saitō Osamu, *Shōka no sekai, uradana no sekai: Edo to Ōsaka no hikaku toshi shi* (Tokyo: Riburopōto, 1987). Saitō suggests in particular (p. 72) that many short-term male domestic servants may not have been included in the machikata population figures.

7. The 1798 figures, which are the only evidence for the sex ratio between 1747 and 1832, were reported by Ōta Nampo in his miscellany *Ichiwa ichigen*; see *Nihon zuihitsu taisei*, 1st ser. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1928), 2: 45-47. For further discussion of Edo's demography, with emphasis on the end of the Tokugawa Period, see my "The Edo-Tokyo Transition: In Search of Common Ground," in *Japan in Transition: From Tokugawa to Meiji*, ed. Marius Jansen and Gilbert Rozman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 347-74.

8. Naitō Akira, "Edo no machi to kenchiku," supplementary volume to *Edo zu byōbu*, ed. Suwa Haruo and Naitō Akira (Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1972), 24, gives an estimated range of 9-13 for average household size of the shogunal retainers. I suspect that this may be too high a figure.

9. I have accepted the estimate of Naitō Akira, *ibid.*

10. For a wonderfully revealing account of the life of a lower samurai of the shogun and his frequent dealings with non-samurai in late Edo, see Katsu Kokichi, *Musui's Story: The Autobiography of a Tokugawa Samurai*, trans. Teruko Craig (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1988).

11. David Asher Sitkin, "An Edo Satire: Hiraga Gennai's *Nenashigusa*" (Master's thesis, University of Hawaii, 1977), 89.

12. For a summary of this issue in English, see Kazuo Nakamura, "Eastern and Western Japan," in *Geography of Japan*, ed. Association of Japanese Geographers (Tokyo: Teikoku Shoin, 1980), 184-96.

13. See my "Kyo ni inaka ari versus Rus in urbe: City and Country in Japan and England," *Senri Ethnological Studies* 19 (1986), 34.

14. Saitō Osamu, "Scenes of Japan's Economic Development and the 'Longue Durée,'" *Bonner Zeitschrift für Japanologie* 8 (1986), 15-27.

15. For an account of these disasters in the era of Tanuma, see John Whitney Hall, *Tanuma Okitsugu, 1719-1788: Forerunner of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1955), 119-22.

16. I have drawn here on Nishiyama Matsunosuke, "Edokko," in *Edo chōnin no kenkyū*, ed. Nishiyama Matsunosuke (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1973), 1:1-93, and Takeuchi Makoto, "Edo no chiiki kōzō to jūmin ishiki," in *Koza Nihon no hoken toshi*, ed. Toyoda Takeshi, Harada Tomohiko, and Yamori Kazuhiko (Tokyo: Bun'ichi Sōgō Shuppan, 1983) 2:291-316.

17. Nishiyama, "Edokko," 42-46.

18. Julian Franklyn, *The Cockney—A Survey of London Life and Language* (London: André Deutsch, 1953). For more on the comparison of the Edokko and Cockney, see my "Tokyo and London: Comparative Conceptions of the City," in *Japan: A Comparative View*, ed. Albert Craig (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 82-87.

19. For the important role of firemen in building Edo's identity in the early nineteenth century, see William Kelly, "Incendiary Actions in Edo: Fires and Firefighting in the Shogun's Capital and the People's City," in *Edo and Paris: The State, Political Power, and Urban Life in Two Early-Modern Societies*, ed. James L. McClain, John M. Merriman, and Ugawa Kaoru (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, forthcoming).

20. In putting forth this argument, Nishiyama provides a useful summary of different interpretations in the literature on the Edokko; see idem, "Edokko," 3-14.
21. Nishiyama Matsunosuke et al., eds., *Edogaku jiten* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1984), 580-81.
22. For more on this issue, see my "From Edo to Tokyo," 365-67, and Saitō, *Shōka no sekai, uradana no sekai*, 124-32.
23. For a study of epidemic disease in Tokugawa Japan, see Ann Bowman Jannetta, *Epidemics and Mortality in Early Modern Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).
24. Takeuchi, "Edo no chiiki kōzō to jūmin ishiki," 295.
25. Robert Leutner, *Shikitei Sanba and the Comic Tradition in Edo Fiction* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 158.
26. Ibid., 137.
27. For a fuller discussion of Edo publishing in a comparative context, see my "The History of the Book in Edo and Paris," in McClain, *Edo and Paris*.
28. Many senryū have been translated into English by R. H. Blyth; see *Senryū: Japanese Satirical Verses* (The Hokuseido Press, 1949) and *Japanese Life and Character in Senryū* (The Hokuseido Press, 1960). For an outline of the history of Edo senryū, see Hamada Giichiro, *Edo senryū jiten* (Tokyo: Tokyōdō, 1968), 507-37.
29. On jitsuroku, see Peter Kornicki, "The Enmeiin Affair of 1803: The Spread of Information in the Tokugawa Period," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42 (December 1982), 503-33.
30. For details of this process, see Kobayashi Tadashi, "Daishō-goyomi to egoyomi no kōansha," in *Genshoku ukiyo-e dai-hyakka jiten* (Tokyo: Taishukan Shoten, 1982), 3: 109-18.
31. Barbara Ruch, "Medieval Jongleurs and the Making of a National Literature," in *Japan in the Muromachi Age*, ed. John W. Hall and Toyoda Takeshi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 286.
32. For the origins of *rakugo*, see Nobuhiro Shinji, *Rakugo wa ika ni shite keisei sareta ka* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1986).
33. Leutner, *Shikitei Sanba*, 11.
34. I have written in greater detail about Keisai and his work, particularly his panoramic views of Edo and all Japan, in "World Without Walls: Kuwagata Keisai's Panoramic Vision of Japan," in *Japan and the World—Essays on Japanese History and Politics in Honour of Ishida Takeshi*, ed. Gail Bernstein and Haruhiro Fukui (London: Macmillan, 1988), 3-19.
35. For a list of all Keisai's book illustrations and paintings, see Ozawa Hiromu, "Tsuyama-han kakae-shi Kuwagata Keisai Shoshin no kenkyu josetsu," *Chōfu Nihon bunka* 1 (March 1991), 100-14.
36. Harry Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1988).
37. These points are emphasized in Uchida Ginzō, "Kinsei shokunin-zukushi e-kotoba' o megutte," *Ukiyo-e geijutsu* 104 (1992), 3-12.
38. Andrew Markus, *The Willow in Autumn: Ryūtei Tanehiko, 1783-1842* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), ch. 4.