

EXCERPTS FROM
LIFE OF A SENSUOUS MAN

Kōshoku ichidai otoko

(1682)

BY

IHARA SAIKAKU

INTRODUCTION AND APPENDIX
BY
CHRIS DRAKE

TRANSLATIONS
BY
CHRIS DRAKE
JOHN SOLT
LUCY NORTH

introduction and appendix © Chris Drake
translations © Chris Drake, John Solt, Lucy North
copyright reverts to the author
and translators upon publication
publication © highmoonoon, 2010
back cover illustration © Yomogida Yasuhiro
cover design by Yamaguchi Kenjiro and T.B Design
all rights reserved

printed in an edition of 1,000 copies
by Aksornsamai Press
Bangkok, Thailand



9121 Sunset Boulevard
Hollywood, California 90069, U.S.A.
tel. 310-276-9522
fax. 310-276-0242
highmoonoon.com

an episodic festschrift for Howard Hibbett

Japanese literature
of the Edo period (1600-1868)
rendered into English
by his former students
of which this is
the twenty-fifth volume

INTRODUCTION

BY

CHRIS DRAKE

Even today *Life of a Sensuous Man* (*Kōshoku ichidai otoko*) by Ihara¹ Saikaku remains an often mysterious and only partially understood book of prose fiction, and when it was first published in the tenth lunar month of 1682 in a limited edition by an Osaka seller of sword-polishing stones, Magobeh Kashin, it must have surprised many readers, appearing as if out of nowhere. In 1682 Saikaku was becoming well-known as an innovative haikai poet in the humorous and worldly Danrin haikai school – though he was infamous to some traditional haikai poets, who

called him “Dutch-school” or outlandish – and in the previous year he had published the results of an amazing haikai performance in 1680 during which he composed four thousand linked haikai verses in a single day. And a year and a half after publishing *Life of a Sensuous Man*, he would go on to link 23,500 verses in a single day at the Sumiyoshi shrine, an almost shamanic performance that was too rapid to record. Saikaku had yet to write a long work in prose, however, and he turned to a whetstone wholesaler to sponsor the publication of his first prose fiction work, which proved so popular that it was reprinted in both Osaka and Edo, including a tasteful handwritten calligraphic edition intended for Edo Castle.

The manuscript that became the book that established a new genre of realistic, uninhibited, humorous fiction called “Floating World Books” surprised even Saikaku’s close friend and fellow haikai poet, Mizuta Saigin, who wrote an afterword for it. In it Saigin recalls:

Once I visited Saikaku’s house,
and as we lay there enjoying the
long autumn evening, he pointed
to some piles of old discarded

manuscripts he referred to as “pillow-stuffing.” He said he’d read them out to the moon but had never shown them to anyone. Among these discarded papers I found some crazy, risqué scribblings (*tengō-gaki*), which I collected and put in order, and from these I made a single rough copy. When I read some of it out loud to a farming woman, she came running up from her paddy to hear more. She laughed so hard and long, especially at the sexy parts, that she forgot everything and dropped the hoe on her shoulder.

Saigin’s account includes humor and hyperbole, but it clearly indicates that Saikaku had been working on the manuscript for some time and thought it important enough to publish. Saikaku evidently also hoped the book would be enjoyed on different levels and understood in various ways by women and men of all classes, even by those for whom it would be an oral text.

As a poet, Saigin was no doubt impressed by the rich, multilayered texture of the writing – it probably draws on as many different styles as James Joyce's *Ulysses* – and felt glad to help edit it and to make a final copy for the printer, but in his afterword he goes out of his way to stress the earthy, everyday sense of *kōshoku* in the title – a dynamic but unpredictable flow of desire that has no single equivalent in English. The word is wide-ranging and in the 17th century was used to refer to that which is 'beautiful; romantic; amorous; sensuous; sensual; erotic; lustful; sexually explicit' – to refer, that is, to almost all modes of bodily desire. Strict dualisms between mind and body, spirituality and carnality, love and lust, have rarely played a central role in Japanese society, and desire, pleasure, and sexuality have usually been regarded as natural and worthy, if limited, goods in Japanese culture at least as far back as the *Kojiki*. Although esthetics was a way of life for many Heian aristocrats, bodily desire and the full range of physical sensations were rarely explicitly admitted to be major social and cultural goods in themselves until the rise of the commoner city classes, a social change Saikaku represents in his book as having taken place in the early decades

of the 17th century, during the time his protagonist's father was a young man.

Desire as a legitimate end in itself with no need for justification or apology is the concept that holds all of the many styles and themes in Saikaku's book together. In *Life of a Sensuous Man* desire is so transcendent and takes so many forms that it comes close to representing life itself. The book is not simply a dramatized catalog of sexual mores and practices in 17th-century Japan. While it deals realistically with the various erotic aspects of human life, it is ultimately about the erotic dimension in all forms of human interaction. The protagonist Yonosuke, Man of the World, is a mythical as well as a realistic contemporary character, and as such he is both rooted and excessive: he devotes his whole life to bodily desire and love so intensely that he becomes a one-generation (*ichidai*) man who leaves behind no wife, children, or worldly legacy. When he finds his desire fading, he decides to leave Japan behind completely.

The 17th century was a time of literary revivals as well as energetic invention, and to give shape to Yonosuke's desire for infinite desire, Saikaku called on many precursors, above all *Ise Tales*, *The Tale of Genji*, and a wide variety of *nō*

plays, reinterpreting Japanese literary tradition in the process. Ariwara no Narihira provided Saikaku with the model of a sensitive and prolific poet-lover who traveled widely and freely loved women of various social classes. Medieval commentaries often put the total number of Narihira's lovers at 3,733 and sometimes refer to him as androgynous, while Yonosuke, in an age when it was respectable to write about same-sex love, loves a total of 3,742 women and 725 men during his life. Yonosuke often tries to be a commoner Narihira, and in one chapter he is even shamanically possessed by Narihira's soul, while in another he gains the nickname "modern Yukihiro," a reference to Narihira's amorous brother. Although Yonosuke is usually more a parody than a reincarnation of the elegant Narihira, as he grows older he sometimes genuinely strives to follow a deeply esthetic and even spiritual approach to love, and the only book he takes with him when he leaves Japan for the legendary Island of Women is *Ise Tales* – two hundred copies of it.

Several extended references to *The Tale of Genji*, such as the partial rewriting of the Suma and Akashi chapters in the description of Yonosuke's disastrous boat trip on the Inland Sea,

establish a parodic and often dialogical relationship between *Life of a Sensuous Man* and the earlier work, but it is in the structure of *Sensuous Man* that the influence of *Genji* is most apparent. The fifty-four chapters of *Sensuous Man* are an obvious gesture of homage to Murasaki's longer work, which has the same number of chapters. Although Saikaku's chapters are shorter, they are also more clearly defined. Taking a hint from contemporary editions of *Genji*, which usually included a chronology of Hikaru Genji's life at the front, Saikaku uses a format in which each year of Yonosuke's life, beginning with his seventh, is evoked in one chapter, with the 54 chapters arranged (except in Book 6) in chronological order in eight books, each with seven chapters, except for the eighth book, which has five. And, just as there is a major break in *Genji* between chapters 41 and 42 – a gap during which Genji, heartbroken at the death of his wife Lady Murasaki, himself begins to prepare for death – the narrative in *Sensuous Man* virtually breaks in two after the 28th chapter, in which Yonosuke's father dies, leaving his son an enormous fortune and completely changing the nature of Yonosuke's quest for sensuous love in the last 26 chapters. Thus *Sensuous Man* in some

ways resembles a giant nō play, with two distinct and opposing halves that are linked by a main actor whose attributes and even identity must often change radically during the crossing between them. Nō chanting was extremely popular among tradition-hungry merchants and other commoners in the cities of Japan in the 1660s and 1670s, and Saikaku uses many nō references both in his haikai linked verse and throughout *Sensuous Man*, so it is entirely possible that in creating the basic structure of his book he consciously mixed the chronology of *Genji* with an expanded version of the two-part structure of nō plays.

THE TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FIRST HALF

The first five English translations in this volume are taken from the first half of *Life of a Sensuous Man*, which begins with seven-year-old Yonosuke's confession of love to his personal maid in his father's large Kyoto house. At eight he persuades his calligraphy teacher to write a love letter for him, at nine he uses a telescope to watch a maid taking a bath and pleasuring herself in the yard of the house next door, and at ten he has his first love affair with an older man. He grows

more and more interested in physical love as he matures and then comes of age, exploring teahouses, baths, special inns where sex is sold, and a brothel. He is also seduced by a widow but rejected by a married woman before he is finally sent to Edo by his father to oversee the Edo branch of his dry goods store. On the way, however, he falls in love with two ballad-singing sisters, and by the time he reaches Edo a year later, he finds he's been disowned by his father, and so he becomes a monk, though he soon falls in love with several young men who visit the temple. Thus begin Yonosuke's years of wandering and hand-to-mouth existence. Yonosuke travels with Yamabushi mountain monks to Osaka, where he lives for a while in a slum with a streetwalker until he's forced to become a wandering beggar who sings passages from *nō* plays for pennies at the beginning of the first translated chapter.

It is fortunate that John Solt's translations (chapters 3:1 and 3:2) come first in this volume, since the poetic compression, colloquial accuracy, and suggestive lineation he achieves give an excellent sense of the rhythm and resonance of Saikaku's Japanese text, which is a unique blend of dramatic storytelling that draws above all on *nō* and *jōruri* puppet-play narration mixed with

a dense and poetic yet energetic and rhythmic haibun narrative style. Saikaku peppers the text with small period-like dots that do not always coincide with grammatical breaks but, rather, probably represent hints on how the text is to be read aloud, and Solt's decision to translate the text into verse has obvious advantages. The rhythms he creates capture the scale and energy of Yonosuke's movements first toward Kyoto, where he no longer has a home, and then toward Kyushu in the west as well as the humor in Yonosuke's failed attempt to double-deal with the women in the licensed quarter in Shimonoseki. As Yonosuke discovers, it's almost impossible to outwit a woman of the quarters, where intelligence, good judgment, and sharp observation are necessities of daily life.

After escaping from Shimonoseki, Yonosuke encounters a traveling kabuki troupe and rekindles an old love affair with an actor he knows – until he's ejected by the troupe for interfering in its operations. Finally he returns to Osaka and lives in the warehouse district, where he meets "lotus women," short-time mistresses for visiting buyers from the provinces, and then returns to Kyoto, perhaps staying with people who once worked for his parents. As described

in chapters 3:4 and 3:5, translated in this volume, Yonosuke visits a traditional night orgy at a Shinto shrine and decides to live with a woman he meets there. Mounting debts, however, force him to leave for Sado Island in the northern Japan Sea to look for work in the mines there, and he has an uncanny experience in a small licensed quarter in a port on the Japan Sea, a zone which also seems to form the border between the visible world and the Other World. Here on the border, Yonosuke also shows signs of androgyny. I have included Saikaku's pictures for the chapters I have translated, since they are not simply illustrations but add information or even give a new perspective on the verbal narrative. For example, the picture for 3:4 overlaps the shrine stage where the fertility festival orgy is taking place with a traditional Buddhist "Entrance into Nirvana" picture showing the Buddha on his deathbed. And the picture for 3:5 shows the impoverished Yonosuke as a rich playboy with two swords, a contradiction with the verbal text that Saikaku asks readers to think about. Comments on the pictures for all the chapters I have translated can be found in the Appendix.

The Sado mines are all closed, so Yonosuke becomes a dried-fish salesman

wandering the north country, then an assistant to a traveling female shaman who also sells sex, and then a wandering beggar who sells oracles. He finally reaches the low point in his relation with women when he tries to rape a female shaman at a big shrine in the northeast. The woman's husband and the other priests shave one side of his head and expel him from the province, and because of his half-shaved head he becomes a suspect in a robbery and jailed. Yonosuke then falls in love with the woman in the next cell and runs away with her when both are freed, but the woman is killed and Yonosuke left for dead. After finding the dead woman's body in a graveyard, Yonosuke enters a period of doubt and self-reflection on his karma, wondering why his relationships with women have caused more hurt than happiness. Changing pace, he visits the first older man he ever loved, but when he falls asleep in the man's tiny house he is attacked by the angry ghosts of three women he deceived and harmed.

Yonosuke's karmic debts to women have not yet been fully repaid, however. In chapter 4:4, translated with great energy by Lucy North, Yonosuke has found work as an assistant to a famous commoner gang leader and male fashion-

setter in Edo. Yonosuke considers himself dashing and attractive, but he more than meets his match when he goes to a private room in a teahouse with a waiting woman working in a daimyo lord's Edo mansion. North's fast-paced, witty, and gender-aware translation handles this complex encounter with the humor and sensitivity to nuance that Saikaku's text demands, and her translation shows clearly that Saikaku regards women's sexual desire to be just as natural and as urgent as men's. Yonosuke continues to learn this lesson in the next chapter when he returns to Kyoto as a guide for a rich retiree from the north country. Even he is surprised to learn about the many imaginative ways Kyoto women secretly meet lovers or connect with male sex workers, and when Yonosuke visits the Shimabara licensed quarter for the first time, he is humiliated by a lower-ranking performing woman² who refuses to sleep with him not simply because he's poor (his patron has paid for him) but because he doesn't realize that meeting a performing woman is a two-way commitment and that men with true attractiveness and style (*sui*) enjoy entertaining the women they meet as much as they enjoy being entertained by them.

Losing hope of ever returning to Shimabara, Yonosuke decides to become a monk in a temple in Kumano, south of Kyoto. On the way, however, he stops in a fishing village in which the men have all gone on a long fishing expedition. Custom allows the women to meet other men when their men are away, and Yonosuke sleeps with scores of women, telling each she is the only one – until the women all confront him. To apologize, Yonosuke gives a party at which the women exchange cups of sake and share stories about their hardships. To entertain the women further, Yonosuke leads a small flotilla of boats carrying the women out for a trip on the Inland Sea – an outing cut short by a sudden violent wind and lightning. The boats are never seen again, and Yonosuke's half-dead body eventually revives on a beach south of the port of Sakai, which he finally reaches, going to the house of two former employees of his family. The couple contacts his mother and informs him his father recently died on the sixth of the sixth month. Reunited with his mother, Yonosuke receives from her the keys to his dead father's storehouses, which contain a huge fortune in silver – with only one condition attached. Yonosuke's mother, a former performing woman

of the highest rank, requires her son to sign a document pledging to visit licensed quarters across Japan and return the silver to the performing women there, to whom it rightfully belongs.

THE TRANSLATIONS FROM THE SECOND HALF

Although Murasaki Shikibu identified to a certain extent with her character Lady Murasaki, she generally writes from a distance in what English calls the third person about her main character, prince Genji. Saikaku, too, uses the third person to write about Yonosuke, but he often writes from a semi-autobiographical perspective. Just how far Yonosuke and Saikaku are overlapped is a matter of lively debate, but few critics doubt there is a significant connection. Further, the narration of *Sensuous Man* also moves according to at least four different chronologies simultaneously. The complex intertwining of these different flows of time becomes more marked in the second half of the book, where they form part of the narrative itself, which is often a meditation on temporality, desire, and mortality. In addition, and counter to what is often claimed about *Sensuous Man*, the placement of the

individual chapters in the second half of the book seems very important and was probably carried out by Saikaku carefully and in detail. This means that the chapters interact with each other and that the sequences or larger contexts in which the chapters are placed give the chapters more complexity and resonance than when read only as individual episodes. This intricate mutual referencing system will be discussed in outline below to give readers in English some idea of what Saikaku seems to be doing in the second half of the book and how this design plays out in the last four chapters translated in this volume. The most easily available English translation, *The Life of an Amorous Man*, translated by Kengi Hamada,³ is closer to an adaptation, since it deals rather freely with the text and dispenses with Saikaku's pictures altogether, making it difficult for readers to understand the overall structure of the book or appreciate the imagistic logic and haikai-like interactions between certain chapters, so a certain amount of basic information on the second half of the book has been included here.

Saikaku is known to have referred to himself as Yonosuke, and critics have long pointed out various similarities between Yonosuke and Saikaku himself, although the correspondences

are generally oblique. For example, Saikaku was born in Osaka, not Kyoto, and his father was not enormously wealthy, although the family ran a business on Spearsmiths Block that was presumably related to the smithing or wholesaling of swords or spears and their accessories. Further, Saikaku stated that he began to write haikai linked verse at 15, and at age 15 (chapter 2:2) Yonosuke has an affair with a widow he meets at Ishiyama temple who turns out to be possessed by the spirit of Murasaki Shikibu, who was in turn widely believed to have been a manifestation of the merciful androgynous bodhisattva Kannon. Yonosuke fathers his only child with this woman, although they must leave it at Rokkakudō (Hexagonal Hall) temple, one of the main temples in Kyoto devoted to Kannon, so that the child, whose mother is a manifestation of Kannon, can be cared for by one of the wet nurses who gather at the temple. The juxtaposition suggests that Saikaku regards *Sensuous Man* as a kind of haikai version of *Genji* that was illegitimate by normal standards of comparison but was nevertheless the result of his own literary love affair with Murasaki and her work, an affair that seems related to the

number six, which plays an important role in structuring the second half of *Sensuous Man*.

Yonosuke's ages often parallel or refract known events in Saikaku's life, and I refer to the Yonosuke who lives according to this time flow "Yonosuke-Saikaku." At times, however, Yonosuke's chronology diverges significantly from Saikaku's. For instance, when Saikaku published *Sensuous Man* in 1682 he was 41, which contradicts the age (60) given for Yonosuke in the last chapter and the length of Yonosuke's life (54) given in the first chapter. These three chronologies coexist and have their own sets of references. Maeda Kingorō, who has published the most comprehensive commentary on *Sensuous Man*,⁴ has persuasively shown that all three chronologies are legitimate and that the contradictions between them are not simply mistakes that can be ignored. Maeda also points out that 54 and 60 are both used, often interchangeably, as the number of chapters in *Genji*. The discrepancy arises because some editors and scholars counted the six apocryphal *Hidden in Clouds* (*Kumogakure*) chapters dealing with Genji's death that one exegetical tradition placed between chapters 41 and 42 of *Genji*.

A FOURTH CHRONOLOGY

To these three chronologies a fourth needs to be added: Yonosuke sometimes seems to represent the chronology of Saikaku's wife, who died at 25 in 1675, when Saikaku was 34 and when Yonosuke at 34 has a near-death experience while the women he is with all die in a storm. This fourth chronology parallels that of Yonosuke-Saikaku, and it comes into play when Yonosuke at times acts as if he were androgynous and living in both the visible world and the Other World and when these moments correspond to significant times in the life and death of Saikaku's wife. Thus Yonosuke has his first love affair with a man in 1:4 at age 10 (by Japanese count), Saikaku's age when his wife was born, and Yonosuke returns 19 years later to see the same man in chapter 4:3, which may represent 4/3, the memorial day for Saikaku's dead wife, since the chapter contains a very bloody dream in which three female ghosts die.⁵ Moreover, in the ninth chapter (2:2), when Yonosuke first meets the widow with whom he has his only child, she draws three divination sticks all marked with '3,' which suggests that she is both a manifestation of Kannon, who has 33 forms, and Saikaku's wife,

who was nine (three threes) years younger than he. Some of Yonosuke's actions when he is 25 in the second part of chapters 3:4 and 3:5 (translated in this volume) also suggest Saikaku at 34 and Saikaku's dying wife at 25, and the settings uncannily resemble the Other World.

Later on, Saikaku's picture for chapter 4:7, which represents Yonosuke at 34 – Saikaku's age when his wife died of a fever that began as a cold (*kaze*, literally a 'wind') – shows not Yonosuke but a woman in a boat who seems very sick or even dying, to the horror of three younger women in the boat. The title of chapter 4:7 is "Fire Lightning Hidden In Clouds" (*Hikaminari no kumogakure*), and it refers both to a fierce windstorm with lightning hidden inside it which suddenly appears out on the Inland Sea and to an ancient euphemism used when someone important has died and "vanished into the clouds" – in this case, the village women on an outing with Yonosuke whose boats vanish during the storm, an image suggesting Saikaku's wife dying of a sudden, lightning-like fever at 25. Moreover, the dying woman in Saikaku's picture (see reproduction) seems to wear hexagonal turtle-shell crests on her robe,⁶ and the name – at least the haikai-writing name – of Saikaku's wife

seems to have been Kame, or Turtle.⁷ At the time, Saikaku called himself Kakuei, Eternal Crane, and the name Turtle may be playing on the traditional pairing of turtles and cranes as a symbol of marital harmony and longevity. Saikaku and his wife had three daughters, so the three younger women in the boat in the picture for Chapter 4:7 (see reproduction) may refer to their daughters, who are also suggested in 5:2.



Saikaku's picture for chapter 4:7. A sick or dying woman, perhaps struck by lightning, lies in the prow of a boat during a sudden storm. She seems to wear hexagonal turtle-shell designs on her robe. Yonosuke – presumably carried away by the waves – is not shown.

Moreover, the fact that Yonosuke's father dies on 6/6 in the year in which Yonosuke is 34 parallels the dying woman's hexagonal turtle-shell crest in Saikaku's picture for 4:7 and Kame's death when Saikaku is 34, as does the fact that in the next chapter, 5:1, Yonosuke is overlapped onto a Kyoto man who grieved deeply after losing his wife and wrote a requiem waka for her, thus setting the tone for the second half of the book. Further, since Kame died at 25, a reference to her death would help explain why Yonosuke's father's fortune comes to exactly 25,000 *kamme* of silver.

Yonosuke's boating party for the village women in 4:7 may thus be an oblique reference to Saikaku's wife's death and his sudden, impromptu haikai requiem, *Haikai dokugin ichinichi senku* (*A Thousand Haikai in a Single Day*),⁸ written to soothe her soul, and Yonosuke's near-drowning experience may recall Saikaku's own shock and grief at his wife's death. The requiem was Saikaku's first major literary work, and it changed his life and career as profoundly as Yonosuke's life is changed – he became a Pure Land sect lay monk and showed no interest in remarriage, and he turned over the family business to the head clerk and concentrated on being a professional haikai master – and on

writing a work of prose fiction. Saikaku's attachment to his wife was obviously strong, and souls were an important reality for 17th-century readers and writers, so readers who were familiar with Saikaku's life or his haikai requiem could be expected to realize that his dead wife's chronology continued on after chapter 4:7 – the time of her death – to the ages the dead woman's soul would have been had she lived. Thus the historical Tayū Yoshino, who appears in 5:1, at the beginning of the second half of the book, was 26 when she left the Kyoto licensed quarter and married. Yonosuke-Saikaku is 35 then, and Saikaku's wife would have been 26 during the same 5:1 time frame. Saikaku writes that Yoshino is the "root and basis" of licensed quarter culture, and Yoshino's underskirt is used by Yonosuke as the pennant for his boat in the final chapter, suggesting that her spirit and legacy govern all 26 chapters of the second half of the book.

Saikaku's picture of Yonosuke's boat in the last chapter (see reproduction) also seems to suggest an expanded role for the dead Yoshino and for Saikaku's dead wife. In the picture for 8:5 only two numbers are visible: the man standing under Yoshino's underskirt in the prow wears a crest with '3' in it, while Yonosuke and the boat's

flag show five-petaled wild pinks – Yonosuke’s crests – thus suggesting 3 and 5, or 35 – Yonosuke’s age when he marries Yoshino in 5:1.



Saikaku's picture for 8:5. Yonosuke points downward as he sets off for the Island of Women with some friends on the S.S. Good Desire (Yoshi-iro Maru), which carries many kinds of herbal formulas and adult toys.

One of the two wild pinks visible on Yonosuke's robe shows only two petals, so the crests together may be read as 25, the age at which Saikaku's wife died, and the man in the prow wears three crests with '3' in them, recalling the fact that Saikaku's wife was nine years younger than Saikaku as well as the three divination sticks with '3' pulled by the widow with whom Yonosuke has a child in 2:2 – a woman said to be possessed by the spirit of Murasaki Shikibu. The number 9 is also suggested by the fact that the man in the prow of Yonosuke's boat holds up his right arm in a way that closely resembles Narihira holding up his right arm as he watches 'capital birds' (*miyakodori*) from the prow of a boat crossing the Sumida River in an illustration for Section 9 of *Ise Tales* in the famous Saga-bon edition in the early 17th century.⁹

The other main scenes in *Ise Tales* 9 are invoked in 7:4 (translated in this volume), in which Yonosuke meets a messenger from the Shimabara Tayū Ko-Murasaki, named after Murasaki Shikibu. Ko-Murasaki also wears five-petaled crests on her robe in the picture for 8:2, and, like Yonosuke in 8:5, only two petals of one of the crests is visible, linking her with 25 as well. Several such parallels suggest that the chronology

of Saikaku's dead wife, who shares several similarities with Yoshino, may also play an important role in the book as a whole. Therefore it is worth noting that the number of women Yonosuke is said to have loved during his life (3,742) is nine more than the most common number given for Narihira (3,733) in apocryphal medieval traditions, a difference that parallels the nine-year age gap between Saikaku and his younger wife. Further, the number of men Yonosuke slept with (725) partially repeats the age of Saikaku's wife when she died at 25. From the perspective of this chronology, the title of Saikaku's book might mean something like "Man Who Crazily Loved And Desired His Wife His Whole Life – Even After She Died." This would accord with the image of Saikaku and his wife's soul flying together toward the Pure Land in his haikai requiem, and it would extend on images of a love that continues on into the Other World in Bo Juyi's "Song of Endless Sorrow," which plays an important role in *Genji* and which moves the young Yonosuke in the first chapter of *Sensuous Man*.

In contrast to *Genji*, in which the major internal gap occurs after the death of the main character, in *Sensuous Man*, the main break occurs

after Yonosuke survives a near-drowning, while the women he is with, as well as his father, die. Yonosuke revives on a beach after hearing the sounds of cranes crying, an image that suggests the close overlapping of Yonosuke and Saikaku, the Western Crane, since traditional beliefs required that the name of the nearly-dead person had to be spoken into his or her ear in order for the charm to work. Third-person and semi-autobiographical narration are inextricably mixed, and Saikaku does not turn over the narrative for the rest of *Sensuous Man* to two lesser characters (Niou and Kaoru in *Genji*) but instead dramatizes a split within Yonosuke, who, like Saikaku himself, remains alive after a traumatic experience. Yonosuke is split both by his inheritance and his ability to live in the visible world and the Other World at the same time. This is apparent from the proleptic chapter 3:5 (translated in this volume) and in the second half, which begins in 5:1 with time travel back to a time before Yonosuke-Saikaku's birth, a time that to most of Saikaku's readers surely suggested the world of the dead. Saikaku overlaps Yonosuke with an historical Kyoto man of culture and wealth, Haiya Jōeki (or Shōeki), who bought out the contract of the many-talented Tayū Yoshino

in 1631, and then lived with her as his wife until she died in 1643, a year after Saikaku was born. An elegiac waka by Jōeki, who grieved so deeply that he drank Yoshino's ashes after her cremation, is placed by Saikaku at the very beginning of the chapter – and the second half of the book – to stress that Yonosuke is now in the Other World.

As mentioned, Yoshino in 5:1 is the same age as Saikaku's dead wife would have been in the year after her death, and certain similarities between the two women are suggested. In Saikaku's picture for 5:1 (see reproduction), Yoshino is portrayed wearing an upper robe with a rather unusual spider web design on it. Since chapter 5:1 follows chapter 4:7, entitled "Fire-Lightning Hidden In Clouds," Yoshino's robe may be making a visual pun that overlaps the spider (*kumo*) web with the storm clouds (*kumo*) that suddenly appear in 4:7. A major connotation of spider webs in Japanese poetry is "dislike of wind," and all the women with Yonosuke in 4:7 die in the violent wind and electrical storm, while Saikaku's wife died of a sudden cold and fever (literally 'wind,' *kaze*) when Saikaku was 34, Yonosuke's age in 4:7.



Saikaku's picture for chapter 5:1. The Tayū Yoshino, spider-web design on her upper robe, sits beside the reclining Yonosuke in the old Misuji-machi licensed quarter in Kyoto. Behind Yoshino are volumes of a book, presumably The Tale of Genji or the Kokinshū waka anthology.

The chapters of *Sensuous Man*, somewhat as in haikai linked verse, contain several images or words that are linked to similar or related words and images in contiguous chapters, so a pun on *kumo* would not be out of place. A pun here, however, would imply not only that Yoshino is already dead in 5:1 but also that she is overlapped with the soul of Saikaku's dead wife. Moreover, the only other Tayū to refer to herself as a spider (Hatsune in 6:5) is depicted by Saikaku as wearing a robe covered with hexagonal turtle-shell designs, suggesting Saikaku's wife and the ailing woman in the boat in the picture for 4:7. Yonosuke-Saikaku's revulsion in 6:5 at hearing Hatsune humorously say she is a spider is so strong that he seems to share Yoshino's and Saikaku's wife's "dislike of wind."

In 5:1 the newly rich Yonosuke is also split by the presence of a double who is an inverted image of himself, an apprentice smith who also loves Yoshino and finally saves up enough money to buy a meeting with her. Yoshino allows the smith to meet her despite his occupation, which was generally considered unclean, and since he will never be able to meet her again, she asks him to sleep with her. The smith resembles the young Yonosuke in 1:1 who declares that "Love is

darkness,” since he is visiting Yoshino on the night of an annual ceremony when forge fires are put out during a night of prayers and also because Yoshino blows out the light in her room, allowing the two to make love. The smith, in fact, probably resembles Saikaku more than Yonosuke, since Saikaku’s family had a shop or workshop on Spearsmith’s Block in Osaka. The proximity is temporal as well. Yonosuke arrives soon after the smith leaves, and Yoshino tells him everything, causing the somewhat jealous Yonosuke to immediately buy out Yoshino’s contract, and they are soon married. Chapter 5:1 ends just as the wedding does, with a song expressing the hope that Yoshino will live until she is 99 – an ironic hope, since readers have already read Jōeki’s elegiac waka to Yoshino, who died at 38.

The next appearances of Yonosuke with a double (the man from Owari) are not found until chapters 6:7 and 7:1, both translated in this volume. In the twelve chapters between 5:1 and 6:7, however, Saikaku seems to have created his own version of the six apocryphal “Hidden in Clouds” chapters claimed by some to be part of *Genji* – and to have paired a double chapter with each of these chapters, for a total of twelve. According to the tables of contents for Books 5

and 6, Yonosuke's ages are the same in six out of seven chapters in each book. That is, Yonosuke lives in two times (two chapters) for six years:

Age	Chapter	Status
35	5:1	Paired with a double (smith's assistant)
36	5:2, 6:1	Separate situations but with parallels
37	5:3, 6:2	"
38	5:4, 6:3	"
39	5:5, 6:4	"
40	5:6, 6:5	"
41	5:7, 6:6	"
42	6:7	Paired with a double (man from Owari)
49	7:1	Paired with same or similar double (man from Owari)

No chapters for Yonosuke ages 43-48.

In terms of content, the last six chapters of Book 5 deal with Yonosuke living and acting in the mundane visible world, including small regional licensed quarters, while the first six chapters of Book 6 deal with Yonosuke's trips to the ideal

world of the three most prestigious licensed quarters in Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo, where women are the main actors and Yonosuke a lesser presence. The Shimabara quarter in Kyoto was customarily referred to as "the Pure Land in this world," and Saikaku plays on this double identity of the top licensed quarters to provide alternate worlds for Yonosuke from the time he is 36 until he reaches 41, Saikaku's age in 1682, when *Sensuous Man* was published. Saikaku seems to have regarded the publication of *Sensuous Man* as a unifying act, since in the book the following year, when Yonosuke will be 42, deals with the reconciliation of Yonosuke with his double, the man from Owari.

Although there is still no widely accepted explanation for the double years in Books 5 and 6, they do not appear to be due to simple authorial or editorial carelessness. *Sensuous Man* is obviously Saikaku's most carefully written book, and it was written during a time when he was known to practice for many hours before engaging in solo performances of thousands of haikai verses. Maeda's exhaustive commentary has shown that the various obvious contradictions in the book are not haphazard, and Yoshie Hisaya has stressed the importance

of similarities in the six paired chapters that appear to be intentional.¹⁰ In fact, close examination shows so many systematic similarities between the pairs of chapters and so many active links between contiguous chapters that it appears that Saikaku has created his own six Hidden in Clouds chapters, with the chapters in Book 6 set in the three major licensed quarters, which suggest the Other World in relation to the visible world, which is evoked in the chapters in Book 5. The apprentice smith in 5:1 himself suggests this inverse relation between the double years when he repeats the number 53 three times, as if it were a magical phrase. The number is the inverse of Yonosuke's age (35) in 5:1, and it also refers the price of meeting a Tayū (53 *momme*) as well to the intense work pace of the smith. It also may pun on *gosan*, 'miscalculation.' If so, it would be an ironic reference by Saikaku to the apparent contradictions in the chronologies of Books 5 and 6.

The repetition of *gosan* also seems to refer to chapter 5:3, in which Yonosuke visits the licensed quarter in Murotsu during the Bon festival of All Souls, when the spirits of ancestors were believed to return for several days from the Other World, which was thought to be the inverse

of the visible world. Even the performing women in Murotsu leave the licensed quarter and participate in the great Bon circle dance dressed, like the other women, as men with hoods (and some even carry two swords), while the men wear women's hats. This reverse-dressing is required and enables living humans to dance with the invisible dead souls who have returned and temporarily reversed the visible world into the Other World. The same inverse relation is stressed by the first scene in 5:2, the first half of the first year of the six double years, in which Yonosuke, disguised as an ordinary traveler with little money, sets out on a trip with a jester named Kanroku, also disguised as an ordinary traveler. Kanroku is a common name, but in reverse it also means 'Book 6'; it might also be a near-reversal of the term for the six basic forms of the bodhisattva Kannon. The reversals in 5:2 and 5:3 are clear enough to suggest the inverted relationship between all of the six paired chapters.

The chapters in Books 5 and 6 are all singular, often odd, and they contain many unexpected details. Rarely do they fit the common image that has Saikaku writing about the stereotypical activities of a rich playboy for a reading public that craves information about

glamorous men and women in the demimonde. At 36 Yonosuke in Book 5 (5:2) disguises himself and rather strangely visits the small, uninteresting licensed quarter in Ōtsu, as if to declare to readers that the remainder of Book 5 is about relatively ordinary life outside the extraordinary, otherworldly zone inside the three largest quarters in the country. And when Yonosuke asks who the most popular woman is there, he is told it is “the bodhisattva Kannon.” He may unconsciously be desiring to talk shop with Murasaki Shikibu, believed to be a manifestation of the Kannon at nearby Ishiyama temple, since he creates a special room for three girl *kaburo* assistants from Shimabara who are on a pilgrimage to Ise shrine, a creation that seems to be a metanarrative statement about the structure of the second half of *Sensuous Man*. The girls complain that they have a hard time talking together because they ride one after the other on separate horses, so Yonosuke has two roomy palanquins clamped together and the inner walls removed to create a single room which can be carried on a horse, a room that allows all three girls to sit together and talk as they toast rice cakes.



From Saikaku's picture for Great Mirror of Amorous Women (Shoen ōkagami) 8:2 of a Bon dance in the Shimabara quarter in Kyoto shows performing women cross-dressing as young men with swords, thus reversing the customs in the visible world and the Other World. A comedian wears a mask.

The separate horses seem to be a reference to the linear sequence of chapters in the first half of *Sensuous Man*, while the moving room for three seems to be an image of the way six chapters each in Books 5 and 6 are nonsequentially clamped together and the way Book 7 also engages in nonsequential back-and-forth conversations with Books 5 and 6.

At the same time, when he is also 36 in Chapter 6:1, Yonosuke is in disguise again because, strangely, he's run out of money. The main protagonist is Mikasa, a tough "Yakko" Tayū said to be as strong as any man, who is severely punished by her manager because she refuses to stop loving Yonosuke, even though he can't pay his bills. Tied almost naked to a tree in the garden during a snowstorm, Mikasa vows to commit suicide rather than renounce her love, and Yonosuke, wearing white corpse clothing, rushes to the house where she lives to die with her, though both are saved by the quarter elders. In 6:1, as in 5:2, Yonosuke is not who he seems to be, and his unexplained poverty may also be a metanarrative comment: the great mounds of silver that are Yonosuke's inheritance in 4:7 are not what is of real value in the six chapters in Book 6 (6:1 - 6:6) that are paired with chapters in

Book 5. In these six chapters, the licensed quarters of Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo are realistically evoked, while another cloud layer of Hidden in Clouds – as disguised as Yonosuke himself is in 5:2 and 6:1 – seems to be overlapped onto the events in the three big quarters, and there is a subtle but detectable continuation of the theme begun by Yonosuke's time-travel to the Other World to visit the dead Yoshino in 5:1. Three of the six chapters in Book 6 paired with chapters in Book 5 suggest that they are also, on one level, about regions of the Other World hidden in clouds, since 6:1, 6:2, and 6:4 (and later 6:7 and 7:1) all contain snowstorm clouds. Snow and clouds were commonly linked in haikai verse, and Saikaku's readers, many of whom were haikai poets, would surely have noticed that Chapter 6:1, with its thick rainy-season clouds, its snow, and the near death of Mikasa and Yonosuke, continues the Hidden in Clouds images in 4:7 and 5:1, and chapter 6:1 sets the tone for Yonosuke's later visits to the big licensed quarters in the following five doubled chapters. There are also some reversals of Book 5 in the corresponding chapters in Book 6, just as the Bon festivities mentioned in 5:3 reverse normal gender roles and customs in order to create a temporary Other World of the dead

within the visible world during the duration of the festival. For example, in Book 5 Yonosuke is clearly the protagonist, but in Book 6 the famous and talented Tayū women entertainers are literally the Tayū, the main actors, while Yonosuke is mainly a facilitator resembling the Waki or supporting actor in a nō play.

At 37, in 5:3, Yonosuke goes, as mentioned, to Murotsu during Bon or the Feast of All Souls, when ancestors' souls are believed to return and humans can interact with them. In the Murotsu quarter Yonosuke holds an incense-smelling competition, and the performing woman he stays with that night wears the crest of the bodhisattva Jizō, who is worshiped at the end of Bon. He gives her a packet of 40 gold coins, a very large sum, but when she refuses to touch it and gives it away to a mendicant monk, he doubts she is someone of this world, leaving readers with the suggestion that she herself may be a manifestation of Jizō, just as Murasaki Shikibu was believed by many to be a manifestation of Kannon. So when Yonosuke buys out her contract and sends her back to her home in Tamba province during the Tama-matsuri or Soul Festival (the older Japanese name for Bon), the province sounds suspiciously like it is the

Land of Souls. Then, in 6:2, the other chapter dealing with Yonosuke's 37th year, he visits the Ikudama shrine in Osaka at Bon with five other men three days before going to Murotsu in 5:3. The six men spend the afternoon talking about the Shimmachi quarter and begin to cry when they discuss the Tayū Yūgiri. At the mention of Yūgiri, Yonosuke leaves and, after making many trips to Shimmachi, he is able to arrange a very secret meeting with her. It is also a short meeting, since Yūgiri's scheduled customer soon arrives, and Yonosuke must make himself invisible by hiding under Yūgiri's cold footwarmer. In the picture for 6:2, only Yonosuke's torso is shown protruding from the footwarmer, perhaps suggesting he has no feet, a common characteristic of dead souls in jōruri libretto illustrations that is also used by Saikaku to represent three legless ghosts in his picture for 4:3. If Yonosuke is a dead soul in 6:2, it is only temporarily, while he visits the quarter, but Yūgiri herself is probably a truly dead soul: in this chapter Yonosuke-Saikaku is 37, placing it in 1678, but Yūgiri died on 1/6 in 1678. It is thus likely that the men at Ikudama shrine earlier in the chapter cry as they speak of Yūgiri at Bon, the Feast of Souls, since she has died six months earlier – and equally likely that

Yonosuke's trips to try to see her through wind, rain, and snow are trips to the Other World, where normal custom is reversed and there is no fire in Yūgiri's footwarmer even though it is bitterly cold and Yūgiri's "snowlike" skin literally resembles snow.

In the next set of two chapters, Yonosuke is involved in mysterious, otherworldly situations in both. In Book 5 Yonosuke joins a party at a temple on a very cloudy night that includes kabuki actors of female roles and sees spectral shining shapes and a monk who becomes a soul-mate with one of the actors, while at 37 in 6:3, the paired chapter, Yonosuke meets a jester who is acting as a servant for his wife to make up for previously letting her do all the housework, and Yonosuke reveals that he and a famous Tayū seem to be having telepathic communication in his dreams.

Developing the gender role reversals in the previous two chapters when he was 38 (5:4 and 6:3), Yonosuke at 39 has both male and female aspects in 5:5. He takes a group of jesters to see the Inland Sea during cherry-blossom season and stops in a small licensed quarter in the port city of Sakai, but when they hold a party with a group of performing women there, virtually nothing

happens except for the ceaseless coming and going of the women. The house, pretending it's busy, constantly calls women to other parties and sends them back, only to be called again. Looking down from the second floor, however, Yonosuke sees that the women are actually not doing anything at all. After dark, the men and women stay in separate corners of the second-floor party room, and Yonosuke compares the room to a Buddhist temple or Shinto shrine in which people are doing ascetic practices. The bedding causes Yonosuke's feet to get cold – recalling how he puts his feet under Yūgiri's cold footwarmer in 6:2 – and the sleeping arrangements remind him of being on a river boat traveling overnight between Kyoto and Osaka. Finally Yonosuke tightens his sash and declares he will refuse any woman who comes near him, much as he earlier refuses Kokin in chapter 3:5.

Almost everything is reversed in this anti-chapter, which is connected to the rest of the book above all by its chapter number and by Saikaku's picture (see reproduction).



Saikaku's picture for 5:5. On the second floor of a performance house in Sakai, Yonosuke lies between two male jesters and two house women. Although Yonosuke is a mature male, his hair is, impossibly, in the style of either a young man or a woman. Saikaku seems to be deliberately challenging readers with this flagrant contradiction.

The chapter number, 5:5, suggests five 5's or 25, the age at which Saikaku's wife died, as well as the 25,000 *kamme* of silver Yonosuke received during the year when he and Saikaku were both 34 and Saikaku's wife died at 25. If the events in 5:5 are overlapped with Saikaku's wife's death, then Saikaku's picture, which critics usually pass over in silence or refer to as a practical joke, is instead quite accurate and relevant. In it, Yonosuke wears a robe with his five-petaled wild pink crest on it as he lies on the floor between two male jesters and two performing women on the second floor of the performance house, while down below a performing woman rests and receives a letter from another customer brought by her helper. Impossibly, Yonosuke is depicted with long, tied hair as if he were a young man or a woman. At 39, however, Yonosuke is a mature man who began shaving the top of his head at 16, but this depiction of him either as a young man interested in older men or as a woman provides a coherent explanation for Yonosuke's refusal to sleep with a house woman that night. Moreover, in the picture Yonosuke also lacks feet – only an empty robe lies behind him at an angle at which legs cannot curve – and this might account for the fact that Yonosuke's feet feel cold in the text.

Since having no feet is, as mentioned, a mark of being a ghost, this lack may indicate that Yonosuke is here androgynous and representing the soul of Saikaku's dead wife.

The house woman sitting closest to Yonosuke (and farther from the window) wears a double-snowflake design on her robe. Though stylized, the snowflakes are hexagonal and thus suggest the hexagonal turtle-shell design apparently worn by the ailing woman in the prow of the boat in the picture for 4:7. Snowflakes, which connote clouds, coldness, and death, are one of the basic images found in Books 5 and 6, and the double-snowflakes may be a subtle reference to the six paired chapters constituting the 12 Hidden in Clouds chapters and – in relation to Yonosuke's androgynous hair – to their relation to Saikaku's dead wife's soul. Yonosuke's lack of feet in the picture – which seems to show him in his aspect as the soul of Saikaku's wife – and the snowflake design also explains why his feet are uncomfortably cold and why the house feels to him like a temple or shrine – and also like a boat, since dead souls were believed in popular Buddhism to ride in boats (*guzei no fune*) from This Shore in the visible world to the Other Shore beyond death. Further, the city name Sakai means

'border,' and in chapter 4:7 the text refers to it as "Sakai, the border between life and death" (*shōji no sakai*) when Yonosuke, barely able to walk, enters it after floating unconscious on the waves for four hours after the women he was with all died from lightning or drowning. In 5:5 Sakai again seems to be on the border between the visible world, depicted in Book 5, and the Other World of the great licensed quarters in Book 6, a liminal status suggested by the depiction of the first floor of the house, which alludes to an illustration of Shimabara in the famous *Kyō warambe* guidebook.¹¹

Saikaku's picture for 5:5 must have confused many readers, although when Hishikawa Moronobu made his illustration for this chapter in *Sensuous Man* in his *Kōshoku sewa e-zukushi* (see the reproduction of the left frame) he obviously understood the implications of Yonosuke's impossible, well-coiffed hair in 5:5.

けいせいのすべ
 りかまひりかめ
 づらさまぬら
 らりまきとく
 であまきゆ
 ちてそなる
 まひまろそ
 りかまひり
 けいせいのす
 べりかまひり
 づらさまぬら
 らりまきとく
 であまきゆ
 ちてそなる
 まひまろそ
 りかまひり
 けいせいのす
 べりかまひり
 づらさまぬら
 らりまきとく
 であまきゆ
 ちてそなる
 まひまろそ
 りかまひり



Moronobu's illustration for chapter 33 (5:5) in *Kōshoku sewa e-zukushi*, his picture book version of Saikaku's pictures for the second half of *Life of a Sensuous Man*. Only the left frame of the double-page picture is shown. A bit of Saikaku's text decorates the top of the page.

To account for it, Moronobu transforms the picture and takes Yonosuke in Saikaku's depiction to be female – a *kaburo* girl helper – and places her in the upper right in the left frame of his illustration, while Saikaku's jester in a light-colored robe is transformed by Moronobu into Yonosuke, who now has an adult-male shaved head and a robe with a five-petaled crest design that differs from his wild pink crest in *Sensuous Man*. Yonosuke turns to his left and looks down at the first floor, while the girl helper sits by the railing. 'No doubt Moronobu felt he was improving the picture, but Saikaku's own version is much closer to what is implied though not stated in the verbal text. Saikaku clearly felt it was important to show readers that androgyny is central to Yonosuke's character, and through the chapter number, the reference to Sakai and death in 4:7, and Yonosuke's sudden aversion to sleeping with women, Saikaku seems to be trying to represent Yonosuke at the border (*sakai*) between genders as he follows the time stream of Saikaku's dead wife's soul.

The second of the double chapters in which Yonosuke at 39 is obviously paired with the first, since in it Yonosuke says he's been watching the quarter for five years, which places

6:4 in the same year with 5:5. Chapter 6:4 also continues the boat image used by Yonosuke in 5:5. In the Shimmachi quarter in Osaka, Yonosuke meets a Tayū named Mifune, or Beautiful Boat, and he spends the night during a great snowstorm persuading the depressed Mifune – who has just been banished from Kyoto and sent to Osaka – not to commit suicide. The snow in 6:4 continues the double-snow crests in the picture for 5:5 and the larger, elegiac Hidden in Clouds motif of which snow clouds are a part. Moreover, in 5:5 cherry trees, suggesting clouds and snow, are implicitly in bloom in Sakai (some are actually included in Moronobu's illustration), and Yonosuke goes to Sakai in order to show his jesters the type of sea bream that are caught while the cherries are blossoming. The visual similarity between blossoms and snow was so striking that snowflakes in general were often referred to as "six-petaled blossoms" (*mutsu no hana; rikka*). The snowlike blossoms and double-snowflake crests in 5:5 combine with the snowstorm in 6:4 to refer back to 5:1 and Yonosuke's beloved dead wife Yoshino, named after Mt. Yoshino, whose cherry blossoms were often compared to both snow and clouds. In addition, Yonosuke's interest in gazing down

from the second floor in 5:5 continues in 6:4. After Mifune returns to her lodgings the next morning, Yonosuke remains and gazes down at a group of Tayū stranded by the snowstorm in the kitchen on the first floor. Fascinated by what they say and do when they think no one can see them, he watches in complete silence. The picture shows Yonosuke with feet, but his hidden vantage point suggests height and hovering as well as invisibility, common traits of ghosts and dead souls. The second-floor images in 5:5 and 6:4 may be suggesting that Yonosuke is “up” in the Other World in both chapters, with 5:5 forming a point of intersection between the visible world and the Other World.

The first chapter dealing with Yonosuke at 40 continues these images, including the theme of androgyny. Yonosuke goes all the way to Kyushu to see a licensed quarter founded by a former female pirate, a woman so strong she captured the captain of a Chinese ship, and later he visits the Itsukushima shrine fair on Miyajima that begins on 6/6, his father’s death day and a date that reiterates the double-snowflake crests on the performing woman in Sakai in 5:5. The jester Kanroku, whose name reverses “Book Six,” appears again as one of his two companions, and

once more the men are in disguise. When they visit some performing women in a temporary house at the fair and ask the women to guess what kind of people they are, one woman says they are “like human beings,” an answer which also suggests that the three men may be temporarily visiting from Book 6, which overlaps with the Other World, disguised as humans – a rather common occurrence at Shinto shrine festivals. The performing women are so boring that Yonosuke gets out a portable stage with three sets of curtains and with his two companions puts on a six-act jōruri play for the women with puppets designed by himself about a she-fox from Shinoda Forest, halfway between Sakai and Osaka, who takes the shape of a human woman and marries a human man. It seems to be based on the long version of the puppet play, *Shinoda-zuma* (*Wife from Shinoda*), which has six acts, though it doesn’t take place in Edo, as Yonosuke’s version does, suggesting that Yonosuke, along with Kanroku and another jester, are in the Other World (Book 6) – see the hexagonal turtle-shell designs on the robe of the Tayū Hatsune, whom Yonosuke also visits in the same year in 6:5 – as well as in the visible world (Book 5). The woman doll resembles a certain Tayū Yoshiwara, and Yonosuke may be metaphorically

describing himself and his two companions by explaining how the Edo Tayū picked out a daimyo lord from among three identically dressed customers by letting her warbler out of its cage, watching the men chase after it, and choosing the man who had no sandal thong marks on his socks. Later the Tayū said she knew which man was the great lord because his pristine socks showed he was a man “who never walks on the earth.” This is almost exactly what the performing woman Kokin tells Yonosuke about himself in Chapter 3:5, translated in this volume, and it also describes female-part jōruri puppets that have no feet as well as ghosts with no feet.

Earlier in the same year, in 6:5, Yonosuke goes to Shimabara at New Year’s to try to see the Tayū Hatsune, whose name refers to the first cry of the warbler in early spring and recalls the warbler in the story told by Yonosuke in 5:6. Hatsune is busy until the 25th, and Yonosuke must wait to the 26th and 27th to see her, an image suggesting Saikaku communicating with his wife’s soul in the first two years after she died at 25, an image which resembles the fox spirit pretending to be a human wife in the puppet play Yonosuke puts on. Hatsune isn’t, apparently, possessed by a fox, but she is something of an

actress, and she scares Yonosuke by grabbing him and claiming she's a spider (*kumo*), an image which returns to Yoshino and her spider web robe in 5:1 and the possible pun on clouds (*kumo*) that precedes the six double Hidden in Clouds chapters. The image also returns to one of Yonosuke's male lovers who raises fly-eating spiders in 4:3, the chapter number that recalls 4/3, the memorial day of Saikaku's wife. Moreover, in Saikaku's picture for 6:5, Hatsune's robe has hexagonal turtle shell crests on it, suggesting both Saikaku's wife Kame, who vanished into clouds in 4:7, and the six Hidden in Clouds chapters in Book 6.

In the final double year, represented in chapters 5:7 and 6:6, Yonosuke is 41, which is Saikaku's age in 1682, the year *Sensuous Man* was published, but since Yonosuke also lives to be 54 and 60, these are not the final chapters in the book. The two chapters do share a remarkable point of resemblance, however, one that suggests that Saikaku is trying to draw attention to the fact that 5:7 and 6:6 are the last of the six double-chapters and suggesting once more that these twelve chapters are to be read not only sequentially, with Book 5 coming before Book 6, but also as a series of six pairs. In 5:7, Yonosuke is

impressed by the many pleasure boats in Osaka harbor carrying partiers and kabuki actors, who act as both entertainers and partners. He decides to spend this trip to Osaka with famous actors, but a friend persuades him to go to the Shimmachi licensed quarter, and they drop in at the Yoshida performance house, where Yonosuke asks to meet a second-rank Tenjin woman he knows. The room he is shown into was once used by a Tayū but now is tawdry, and he longs for the past. Finally the woman arrives but is drunk, and neither she nor Yonosuke feels interested in making love until it's too late and the night watchman is asking customers to leave. The woman seems glad Yonosuke is leaving, and she sends him off not with an exchange of cups of sake but by sticking her hips out of the covers and deliberately farting twice at him – the situation depicted in Saikaku's picture.

The final chapter in the series of six double chapters, 6:6, is translated in this volume, and it is similar to 5:7 in several ways. Above all, both chapters are about loud farts by performing women – a serious and striking, if not unforgivable, breach of quarters etiquette. Moreover, the Osaka woman in 5:7 farts in the Yoshida house, while the famous Edo Tayū who

farts in 6:6 is named Yoshida. Further, the Osaka woman farts twice, as if prefiguring Yoshida's fart, and her farts are intentional, as Yoshida's fart may also be. *Sensuous Man* is filled with understatement and irony, and since 6:6 is about Yoshida's intelligence, the implication may be that her fart was planned as a countermeasure to force Yonosuke to admit his true intention, which is to entrap her in a mistake and then separate from her. In addition, in 6:6 Yonosuke is a powerful member of the warrior class, either a daimyo domain lord or a hatamoto retainer of the shogunate – ranks which would have been physically impossible for a commoner like Yonosuke. Although often considered a careless mistake, Yonosuke's appearance as a powerful warrior actually deepens images in the previous two years in Book 5. As mentioned, in 5:5 Yonosuke is portrayed in Saikaku's picture as androgynous and without feet, that is, as being from the Other World, and in 5:6 Yonosuke tells a story in which he indirectly compares himself to a daimyō lord whose feet never touch the ground. And later, in 7:7, the "present" Tayū named Takahashi sends so many people to politely greet Yonosuke that he feels "as if he were a daimyo." Moreover, the suggestion that Yonosuke is like a

daimyo lord whose feet never touch the ground since he is living in the Other World as well as the visible world is reiterated in 6:6 by the way that Yonosuke is unable to make a squeaking sound on the floor when he steps on it. His soundless feet subtly suggest he is in the Other World in a way that is more powerful for its indirection, since the Other World can never be depicted directly. And Yoshida's playing with a dog at the end of the chapter by getting it to walk only on its hind legs is an offbeat detail that perhaps tells readers all they need to know about how Yonosuke is trying to walk in two worlds at once.

By presenting Yonosuke, impossibly, as powerful lord in 6:6, Saikaku refers back to 6:1, in which Yonosuke is, equally impossibly, living in poverty and thus strongly marks 6:1 and 6:6 as the first and last of the Book 6 chapters paired with chapters in Book 5, thus framing the six Book 6 chapters as a single sequence. At the same time, the parallel farting images in 5:7 and 6:6 strongly link them as the final chapters of the six pairs of chapters and suggest that they belong in a single sequence of six doubled chapters, a number which might lead some readers to associate the six chapters in Book 6 with the six

apocryphal Hidden in Clouds chapters that some believed were an integral part of *Genji* – chapters alluded to by the title of chapter 4:7, “Lightning Hidden in Clouds.” Further, Saikaku seems to be drawing on popular notions of the big quarters as being areas beyond the values and norms of ordinary life and referring to the belief of some (as expressed in 8:1) that Shimabara was a paradise superior to even the Buddhist Pure Land. By setting Book 6 exclusively in these three quarters, and by prefacing the six doubled chapters with a chapter (5:1) in which Yonosuke marries Yoshino in the realm of the dead, Saikaku seems to be giving readers a strong hint that in 6:6, as in all of Book 6, Yonosuke is visiting various great Tayū in the Other World. The chapter number 6:6 also suggests 6/6, the date of Yonosuke’s father’s death in 4:7 and the hexagonal turtle-shell crest on the dying woman in the boat in the picture for 4:7 and thus to Saikaku’s dead wife Turtle. Some contemporary readers who had read or knew of Saikaku’s haikai requiem or knew something about his life generally might well have noticed that the three great licensed quarters, which functioned as fictional reverse-worlds within the androcentric, semi-feudalistic world of 17th-century Japan, were being overlapped

with the Other World in subtle ways in Book 6. Some of these readers might even have associated Yonosuke-Saikaku's trips to the greatest quarters as fictions suggesting Saikaku's own attempts to soothe his wife's soul and help it reach the Pure Land during the crucial first seven years after her death, somewhat as the Daoist "wizard" visits the dead Yang Guifei in the Other World in Bo Juyi's "Song Of Endless Sorrow," quoted twice in *Genji* and mentioned by Yonosuke in 1:1.

Judging from the size of Yonosuke's 25,000 *kamme* inheritance in 4:7 and his channeling of Haiya Jōeki in 5:1 and Jōeki's requiem waka for the dead Yoshino there, it is possible to read Books 5 and 6 as systematically evoking Saikaku's own feeling after his wife's death of living half in the visible world and half in the hidden-in-clouds Other World, where he tries to communicate with his wife's soul and to aid her on her journey to the Pure land. In Saikaku's haikai requiem for his wife, he rather shamanically believes his literary efforts will help his wife's soul progress toward the Pure Land, and Saikaku's subsequent marathon *yakazu* or 'myriad-arrow' haikai performances after his wife's death might also have been intended partly as requiem offerings. If they were, then his truly shamanic 23,500-verse

haikai performance a year and a half after the publication of *Sensuous Man* may have been a requiem-like attempt to reach 25,000 verses, a number which suggests his wife's age when she died at 25.

UJI CHAPTERS?

But why would Saikaku have Yonosuke be rejected and farted on both in this world (5:7) and the Other World (6:6) at the age of 41, the age at which he published *Sensuous Man*? No doubt it is partly a humorous comparison by Saikaku of his own worldly, bodily-oriented prose work with the more refined courtly love in Murasaki's masterpiece, but it may also have a specific reference not only to the apocryphal Hidden in Clouds chapters of *Genji* but to the chapters in the latter part of *Genji* following Genji's death, including the ten "Uji chapters." In 5:7 the woman's two farts are not only loud, but smell (*nioi*), and the title of 6:6, in which Yoshida farts, is "Responsibility for a Smell (*nioi*)," and both these chapters dealing with Yonosuke at 41 refer forward to prince Niou and Chapter 42 of *Genji*, and both 5:7 and 6:6 also take place eight years

after Yonosuke's near-death experience, the women's deaths, and his father's death in 4:7. In *Sensuous Man*, however, there is no character suggesting Niou's rival Kaoru in 6:7, the 42nd chapter and the first chapter following the six double-chapters. The chapter, translated in this volume as "An Extravagant Cloak of Classical Poems," seems to be the first of the ten Uji chapters in *Sensuous Man*, which consist of 6:7, 7:1-7, and 8:1-2. In 6:7 Niou is invoked by the discussion of expensive incense, while the fragrant Kaoru is suggested by the performance house mistress, who cooks fragrant rice cakes for the dead Buddha on his memorial day. Although Yonosuke, in contrast to Genji, does not die, he does undergo a near-death experience and a rebirth in 4:7, and he, like Saikaku, seems to have aspects of both Kaoru and Niou, who act as rival parts of his psyche. In 6:6, Yonosuke has to take responsibility for Yoshida's smelly fart, suggesting Niou, while, according to 1:1, Yonosuke's own mother may be a former Kyoto Tayū named Kaoru (she is one of three possible women mentioned in 1:1). A separate Shimabara Tayū named Kaoru appears in chapters 7:2 and 7:7.

Yorimasa, so her physical death may also be implied, since she (or at least Nozeki) is not known to have been in the Shimmachi quarter after 1656, twenty-six years before the publication of *Sensuous Man*. Noaki is said to be now only a legend people talk about, and she seems to be compared with the dying Buddha, since on the Buddha's memorial day, 2/15, when women are supposed to have customers, neither lover comes to see Noaki, and she grinds tea leaves with the house mistress. In return, the mistress gives her some of the fragrant roasted rice cakes (recalling Kaoru) that she will place as an offering before the house altar to the Buddha. Thus Chapter 42, representing the future (age 42) for Yonosuke-Saikaku, swerves back into the past and Noaki's birthplace in Uji, famous for its fine tea, a word that was a common euphemism for female sexual liquids.

The transition from 6:7 to 7:1 is an impossible one. In the tables of contents Yonosuke is listed as being 42 in 6:7, the 42nd chapter, and being 49 in the next chapter, 7:1, the 43rd chapter. Most explicators assume Saikaku made an error of some sort, but the six-year gap may be a straightforward attempt to suggest the relationship between the six years in Book 6 that

are paired with the same six years in Book 5. The eight years (ages 35 to 42) dealt with in Books 5 and 6 after Yonosuke's near-death match the number of years that are left undescribed in *Genji* between Chapter 41 and Chapter 42 nine years later. In other words, *Genji* leaves the eight years that include and follow Genji's death blank, while *Sensuous Man* creates a new version of the six Hidden in Clouds doubled chapters with a single-chapter introduction and a single-chapter ending, in each of which Yonosuke appears together with a double. The gap in Yonosuke's chronology in the tables of contents takes into account the six doubled years in Book 6 and treats them as though they were also single and linear – but still in the Other World and invisible in the material world. Thus Saikaku, in true *tengōgaki* fashion, injects six Otherworldly years into time in the visible world, which is impossible but creates a turbulence in the book's chronology, an invisible gap that is perceptible but can't exist. In visible-world terms, Yonosuke's actions in the Other World in the six paired chapters in Book 6 are presented in the framing or bookend chapter at each end of the twelve paired chapters as a situation in which Yonosuke and an even more worldly double – a smith's assistant in 5:1 and

the man from Owari in 6:7 – both meet the same Tayû simultaneously within a single chapter, as though two chapters were being overlapped into one.

Although there are many oblique images in Book 6 which suggest that the three big licensed quarters are also visible versions of the Pure Land, Saikaku uses two basic images – in addition to the chronological blank in the tables of contents – to characterize the six invisible years Yonosuke-Saikaku has spent in the Other World while also living in the visible world: snow and green tea whisked during a tea ceremony to a light froth suggesting lovemaking. Noaki's erotic energy is compared to fine tea, and her origins are discovered by Yonosuke to be in the tea fields surrounding Uji, while in 7:1 another outstanding Tayû leads a tea ceremony that is also an attempted performance of the narrative contradiction entailed by adding years in the Other World by omitting them from chronologies in this world. And in both chapters the drinking of fine tea takes place after the first snow of the year.

The chronological blank of the six missing years in Yonosuke's life is repeated by the images of the year's first snow both in 6:7, when Yonosuke

is 42, and in 7:1, when he is 49. These snow images act as a mutual white space or empty scroll on which the six missing years are linked together into a sequence by those at the tea ceremony in 7:1. At the highly imaginative and iconoclastic ceremony held by the former Tayū Takahashi, the first snow of the year is part of the ceremony, which is a response to the snow. Takahashi proposes a short six-verse haikai linked verse sequence (the first “page” of a 36-verse kasen sequence) in which she apparently – it is only implied by the text, as it also is in chapters 5:3 and 7:2 – uses the white paper of the empty scroll as the material hokku or first verse praising the snow, to which Yonosuke and four Tayū from the Kambayashi house link their own calligraphically written verses. The six verses in the sequence clearly parallel the six chapters in Book 6 that are doubled with six chapters in Book 5, and Takahashi’s material hokku also parallels the description of the year’s first snow that falls in 6:1, the first of the six “Hidden in Clouds” chapters in Book 6. In 6:1, Mikasa, a Shimabara Tayū just as strong and fearless as Takahashi, is punished for loving Yonosuke but stands in the snow and writes a love letter to him on a scrap of her white robe with her own blood as she

prepares to die. And just as chapter 6:2 links back to 6:1 and 6:3-6 link back to the previous chapters and to the paired chapters in Book 5, each of the five haikai verses composed at Takahashi's tea ceremony must link back to the previous verse. By using white paper as the opening hokku, Takahashi also seems to be attempting to reverse the inside/outside relationship between the paper and the white snow outside as well as the relationship between ground (paper) and figure (calligraphy) and between past and present. And Saikaku seems to be suggesting that the relationship between the visible world and the Other World is likewise reversed in Book 7 as well as in Book 6 and in many parts of Book 5.

Later Takahashi reiterates the importance of the blank opening or hole formed by the missing six years by hanging an empty flower holder on the wall that holds literally nothing except, presumably, a hint of temporality itself. The image is also deeply anatomical, of course, and Takahashi is honoring the invisible flowering-place of sexuality in the bodies of each of the visiting Tayū, a place commonly called "tea." Extending the image at the end of 6:7, Takahashi seems to have assembled Tayū from

the Kambayashi house in Shimabara in order to reverse the relationship between Shimabara and Uji and create a female Shimabara version of the famous Kambayashi tea masters living in Uji, southeast of Kyoto, where Noaki was born. The names of the Tayū are not given, but it would have been very appropriate to include Kaoru, who lived in the Kambayashi house. The water for the tea ceremony is drawn from the Uji River below the small shrine on Uji Bridge to Hashihime, the female god of the bridge, thus alluding to Chapter 45 of *Genji*, but the water in 7:1 has sexual overtones in Takahashi's ceremony not found in *Genji* or in the tea ceremonies of the male Kambayashi masters in Uji. Takahashi's direct linking of tea and snow therefore brings into relief the triple meaning of *yuki* as 'snow,' as 'passing away,' a euphemism for death, and as the 'small death,' as the Elizabethans put it, of sexual ecstasy, exemplified by Noaki's nine deaths in 6:7.

In addition to these meanings of *yuki*, Saikaku adds still another. In the table of contents for Book 7, the chapter title is "Her Shape – First Past (Hatsumukashi)," the name of the very finest Uji tea leaves, but in the text the title has changed to "Her Form – Snow Past (Yukimukashi)." There

is no known tea called “Snow Past,” and Saikaku seems to be using either a colloquial term or an image of his own creation. In any case, Snow Past plays against the standard term and suggests that the past and the passage of time in general are invisible and without form, so Takahashi’s form is actually formless. The second, altered title also refers to the fact that Takahashi means “High Bridge” and that she is the former Takahashi from the past and not the present Takahashi, who appears in 7:7 at the other end of Book 7, thus creating an overall image for Book 7 of a high bridge arching over the white or invisible flow of time.

In the next chapter, 7:2, the representation of the absent Kaoru with a description of her ninth-month robe – designed by a recently dead woman painter, Kano Yukinobu – strengthens this empty image of time and death as being indescribable. Instead of a narrative about Kaoru, Yonosuke’s feelings about mortality are presented, as well as his sponsorship of a reverse-world haikai-writing event. He rents the large room on the second floor of the Letter Eight performing house (where he meets Takahashi in 7:1) and then lets nine jesters spend the day freely putting various objects out

the window and then responding to the objects people in two other performance houses put out in response, always following image-links similar to those used in haikai linked verse. The jesters follow Takahashi's notion of using a material hokku at the beginning of a linked verse sequence and extend the principle to all the other links as well, and they end up stopping all the normal activities in Shimabara and creating a zany Other World in which any object can have value and be related to any other object in the proper context. The big spenders who want to reestablish the gold and silver standards as the basis of reality in the quarter are mocked so badly they have to escape in shame. Combined with the many reversals in Takahashi's avant-garde tea ceremony and Yonosuke's rejection of decorum about money in 7:1, the topsy-turvy reversals in 7:2 (does Saikaku mean them to suggest Kaoru's true "shape"?) and elsewhere strongly suggest that Book 7, too, is overlapped with the Other World.

CHAPTER 7:4 IN CONTEXT

Chapters 7:4, 7:5, and 7:6 are especially powerful and weave together vivid contemporary detail with uncanny intimations of otherworldly space and time to bring back dead Tayū as if they were still living. For example, in 7:4, translated in this volume, Yonosuke is literally possessed by the soul of the Heian-period poet Narihira as well as psychologically fused with the famous Tayū Takao in Edo, wearing her autumn-leaf design robe, though in the style of a Heian-period traveling robe worn – according to the *nō* play *Unrin'in* – by Narihira's lover, Fujiwara Kōshi, the “future empress from the Second Ward.” In 7:4 Yonosuke is both shamanically possessed and androgynous, and he travels through ancient and contemporary time, including areas that appear in *Ise Tales*. In Edo he stays with a dyer, who helps him become further “dyed” with knowledge about Takao, with whom he identifies so intensely that his face flushes the color of red autumn leaves when he hears her name. Takao, also androgynous, is herself compared with a legendary male demon named Shuten Dōji, while Yonosuke and his five jester companions are compared to Yamabushi

mountain monks climbing the Mountain of Love, that is, Mt. Takao, and Yoshiwara is presented as a zone of uncanny and otherworldly occurrences. In Shimabara Yonosuke stays at the Owariya performance house, recalling the Owari man in 6:7 and 7:1, and he's told it's impossible to meet Takao for several months, because she has a lover and patron so rich and powerful he could only be a daimyo.

In addition to Narihira's shamanic, otherworldly time, Saikaku overlaps two other times in the chapter that are separated by two decades: historical references in the text put Yonosuke's trip to Edo in 1680, at the time of the fourth Takao, but most of Saikaku's readers knew that only the second Takao had had a very powerful suitor, that is, Date Tsunamune, the daimyo of the Sendai domain. Tsunamune became famous for ardently loving the second Takao, who expressed friendship for him but finally refused to give up her love for the man she already loved. Tsunamune was forced to resign as daimyo in 1660 because of his alleged decadence, including his visits to Takao, and Takao herself died in the twelfth month,¹² a little more than a month after Yonosuke's fictional top-secret meeting with her on 10/29. In her last hokku,

written as she was dying, the second Takao compared herself to the image that she and Yonosuke wear on their robes:

Scarlet leaves
scattering all too soon--
cold wind

Yonosuke hurries to Edo to meet Takao because, he says, he fears she will soon be blown down like leaves in a windstorm, an image suggesting that in one time flow he is already aware of Takao's death and her final poem. Yonosuke's brief meeting with Takao takes place past midnight, when all other human sounds have died out, and Takao appears suddenly out of the darkness like a soul briefly returning life in a *nō* play. Thus when Yonosuke feels Takao is "completely out of this world" he may literally be right. Moreover, gender roles are reversed as Takao directs all the action and orders the androgynous Yonosuke around as if he were her helper.

Various reversals not only overlap Yoshiwara in 7:4 with the Other World but, using the large-scale linking logic used in 7:2, connect it with other chapters, which gain new meanings when read in juxtaposition with 7:4. Although

this network-like distant linking to other chapters is a basic general method of organization in *Sensuous Man* by the haikai poet Saikaku, 7:4 is a particularly clear example. Thematically, it links immediately to 2:6, in which Yonosuke is in Edo at 19. The second Takao was the same age as Saikaku and Yonosuke-Saikaku, making them all 19 when she died and perhaps suggesting that Takao, like the Owari man (and Yonosuke stays at the Owari House), is a double of the androgynous Yonosuke, especially since Yonosuke leaves the world at 19 and becomes a monk on 4/7, a date that (a) reverses Chapter 7:4, (b) is the day before the date (4/8) on which Saikaku wrote his haikai requiem in 1675, and (c) occurs a few months before the second Takao's death in 1660. The urgency of Yonosuke's identification with Takao in 7:4 and his fears about her impending death cause him to go back in time in 7:4 to meet the dead Takao in Yoshiwara, halfway between this world and the Other World and halfway between their genders.

In addition to theme, numerical reversals also provide connections between distant chapters, since in the second half (Books 5-8) of *Sensuous Man* the Other World seems to be overlapped onto the material, historical world,

setting up a mirror-image relationship between certain chapters and numbers in the first four books and the last four books. For 7:4, the numerically inverse chapter in the first half of *Sensuous Man* is 4:7, a chapter which, like 7:4, is largely about death: in it Yonosuke nearly drowns, the women he is with disappear in a sudden storm at sea, and his father dies. Moreover, in 4:7 Yonosuke-Saikaku is 34, so it refers to 1675, when Saikaku was 34 and his wife died at 25 – the reverse of Yonosuke’s age of 52 in 7:4. This double reversal (7:4/4:7, 52/25) links Takao with the women who disappear during the ocean thunderstorm and with Saikaku’s wife dying of a sudden fever (*kaze*, literally ‘wind’). Moreover, the image in 4:7 of boats scattering and sinking gains pathos and resonance when further linked to the image in 7:4 of Takao’s impending death as red leaves scattering and falling in a windstorm.

Yonosuke at 52 in 7:4 also links back numerically to himself at the reverse age of 25 in Chapter 3:5 (translated in this volume), in which he visits the edge of Japan along the northern Japan Sea coast, an area that, like Sakai, suggests the border between life and death. Chapter 3:5 is also the 19th chapter in *Sensuous Man*, linking it to Yonosuke-Saikaku at 19 in Edo in 2:6, the year

(1660) the second Takao died at 19 and the year Yonosuke revisits in 7:4. Yonosuke's age in 3:5 (25) is also, of course, the age at which Saikaku's wife died, suggesting that Yonosuke at 25 is androgynous and represents both Saikaku and his dead wife. Moreover, in 3:5 Yonosuke says he was rejected in Edo by Takao "until thirty-five, and even after that we haven't slept together," which could mean either 35 times (unlikely for the monk Yonosuke at 19 and not mentioned in 2:6) or age 35, the age at which Yonosuke marries the dead Yoshino in the Other World. The number might even refer to the chapter number, 3:5, read as 35, since Yonosuke-as-Saikaku's-wife's-soul would be in the Other World already at 25. Thus Yonosuke's cryptic statement in 3:5 might mean, "Takao refused to even meet me until I visited the Other World when I was thirty-five, and even after that we haven't slept together." In this interpretation Yonosuke at 25 in 3:5 would already be remembering his future difficulties at 52 in 7:4, in which he must try very hard to arrange a meeting with Takao. Since Yonosuke in 3:5 seems to be representing both Saikaku and Saikaku's newly dead wife, he may well be halfway in the Other World already, before he makes his trip in 5:1 to marry the dead Yoshino.

If so, then his memories in 3:5 of his future relationship with Takao in 7:4 would be one of several indications that both 3:5 and 7:4 are also taking place in a different, parallel time sequence in the Other World, a logic that would not be difficult to grasp by contemporary readers familiar with soul-time in *nō* plays.

In 7:4, the representation of Narihira and Yonosuke as androgynous also suggests that Yonosuke may be representing both Saikaku and Saikaku's wife's soul here and that 7:4 links back to 5:5, where Saikaku's picture presents Yonosuke as either female or a young man and the chapter number – five fives – suggests 25, the age at which Saikaku's wife Turtle died and the reverse of his own age, 52. Actually, there may be a kind of double androgyny at work here, with Yonosuke possessed, on the one hand, by Narihira and his rumored lover Fujiwara Kōshi, and, on the other, by Takao and Saikaku's wife's soul. In 7:4 – in distinction to 5:5 – Yonosuke retains his male shape, but he wears an outer robe similar to Takao's autumn-leaf robe, although it is tailored in the Heian style of the robe supposedly worn by Kōshi. At the same time, two turtle images in 7:4 suggest that Saikaku's wife's soul is overlapped with Takao, and the recurring image

of Yonosuke traveling to Edo in a group of six also may refer to Saikaku's wife, since six suggests hexagrams and thus turtle shells. At the same time, Yonosuke-Takao's robe refers to a famous interpretation of section 6 of *Ise Tales*, while Yonosuke's trip to Edo follows parts of section 9, in which Narihira leaves Kyoto and makes his "journey to the east," (*azuma-kudari*), rumored to be an attempt to escape the anger of Kōshi's clan. As Saikaku's readers know, however, *azuma* means not only east but also "my wife," and Azuma is the name of a Tayū Yonosuke loves deeply as a wife in 7:6. Two chapters earlier, in 7:4, it is Takao who seems to be overlapped with the image of "my wife." Following Narihira's route on his journey to the east, Yonosuke takes the ancient path over Mt. Utsu instead of the quicker Tōkaidō highway. Strangely enough, on this inconvenient old path he meets a contemporary man hurrying in the opposite direction, returning to Kyoto after a stay in Edo. In *Ise Tales* 9, Narihira meets a wandering ascetic monk on the path over Mt. Utsu, but Yonosuke meets Kameya no Seiroku, whose name suggests turtles: his personal name, "Pure Six," suggests hexagon-covered turtle shells, and he runs a shop called the Turtle House on Third Avenue in Kyoto, a location that adds

three to the six in his name to yield nine, thus repeating the numbers (6 and 9) of the two *Ise Tales* sections alluded to, the time of the journey (the ninth month), and the nine-year age difference between Saikaku and his dead wife.

This conjunction of ancient and contemporary is even more uncanny because Mount Utsu was believed to be an entrance to the Other World and a good place to make prayers for the dead (see Saikaku's *New Kashōki* 2:6). This encounter between Yonosuke and Kameya going in opposite directions and in different streams of time is evidently important to Saikaku, since he puts it in the chapter title, perhaps because he wants to alert readers to his practice of linking distant chapters which have opposite chapter numbers or ages in them. The encounter also helps to overlap Yoshiwara with the Other World and Kameya, a male, with the soul of Saikaku's wife. Just as the Bon festival dancers cross-dress in 5:3 and as Yonosuke wears the female traveling robe of Takao-Kōshi here in 7:4, things in the visible world and the Other World are believed to be opposite, so the soul of Saikaku's wife on Mt. Utsu may be taking the form of a male, Kameya no Seiroku, while the husband, Yonosuke, is dressed in a woman's robe. When

Yonosuke-Saikaku/Narihira meets Kameya he see his mirror image – a man named Turtle who is going west, a relationship that repeats the mirror-image reversal of Yonosuke's age (52) and Saikaku's wife Turtle's age (25) when her soul, Saikaku believes, left for the Pure Land in the west (popularly identified with Shimabara). Moreover, Kameya carries a special sake cup with the crest of the Yoshiwara Tayū Murasaki and her Kyoto lover on it, giving Kameya a symbolically androgynous status and suggesting that he might be overlapped with Saikaku's dead wife. The sake cup and message from Murasaki carried by Kameya are also a reminder that Yonosuke's age, 52, is the last age at which Hikaru Genji is described as being alive, so Yonosuke and Kameya may, at one level, represent the half-dead Saikaku and his dead wife's soul meeting in time out of time on Mt. Utsu, a famous entrance to the Other World.

Kameya will also carry Yonosuke's letter back to Shimabara and give it to a Tayū in the Kambayashi house, which has been established in 7:1 as the center of a sensuous new style of Uji tea drinking, and Yonosuke also asks him to give a message to a matron there named Man, whose name means Ten Thousand, a standard reference

to longevity and thus a metonym for turtles. Just as Saikaku brings together in a single episode the second Takao, who died in 1660, and the Tayū Murasaki, who exchanged a cup of nuptial sake with a man in Kyoto in 1680, the otherworldly path over Mt. Utsu allows these two times to intersect: Saikaku's wife's soul is going east (as Yonosuke) and west (as Kameya) at different times in the same time place. East is the direction of Narihira's virtual exile and of Takao's imminent death in 1660, while Kameya going west suggests that in 1680 Takao has already died and that her double, Saikaku's wife's soul, is separating from her life environment and going west toward the Pure Land. Since the shamanically profligate Yonosuke seems to represent both Saikaku and his wife while also channeling Narihira's and Takao's souls in this chapter, he may be in at least two time streams at once, encountering Saikaku's wife's soul leaving for the west in one time stream even before she has died in another, earlier time stream while going to meet Takao while she is still alive for a few more weeks and sending off Takao's soul as it travels west after dying in December 1660. Yonosuke seems to half-understand this, since he puts a red leaf (representing Takao and himself) in the letter he

asks Kameya to deliver to the Kambayashi house in Shimabara, the Pure Land of the Blissful Neo-Uji Tea Masters.

BOOK 7 AS BRIDGE OF DAYS

The six ages omitted in Yonosuke's chronology – 43 to 48 – would all be from the life of the Yonosuke who is 60 when *Sensuous Man* is published. For Yonosuke-Saikaku, who is 41 when the book is published, these ages would have to have been in the past. If the chapters are related to Saikaku's life, then the missing years are better read as dates – from 4/3 to 4/8. For Saikaku, these are very important dates, and the six years missing between Books 6 and 7 may be a nonexistent yet narratively influential Book 9 of *Sensuous Man*. As mentioned, when Saikaku was 34, his wife died of a sudden fever on 4/3, and six days later he performed his thousand-verse haikai requiem for her on 4/8. A requiem would seem more appropriate on the "first seventh" day, 4/9, when a special Buddhist ceremony was held to help the woman's soul move onward, but Saikaku performed his haikai requiem on 4/8, the sixth day after her death. It might have been

because 4/8 was traditionally celebrated as the birthday of the Buddha, or perhaps it was because six suggests turtle shells and her name Turtle. In any case, Saikaku's haikai requiem, like the Buddhist ceremony on the seventh day, had a practical orientation. By writing a thousand haikai verses, Saikaku tried to accompany his wife's soul – he imagines them flying as a single nightingale (*hototogisu*) – as far as he could in order to help her soul start out in the direction of the Pure Land paradise at the western edge of the universe. In Japanese Buddhism, services were held every seventh day until the 49th day, when the soul had to decisively begin to sever its connections with its previous life in order to proceed farther toward the Pure Land. In Book 7, the narration seems to engage with and extend this requiem energy.

If Yonosuke's six missing ages are also the six missing days after the death of Saikaku's wife Turtle during which Saikaku felt himself to be half-dead (as Yonosuke is in 4:7), then the structure of Book 7 becomes a series of seven requiem-like episodes suggesting the first 49 days after death, a process that may embody a literary prayer for her safe passage away from her previous life environment and her movement

toward the Pure Land. The only actual ceremonies occur in 7:1 and 7:7, at the two ends of the seven-chapter bridge, while the movement of the dead woman's soul is suggested by the decreasing physical presence of the seven lead female characters as Book 7 proceeds. The former Takahashi in 7:1 gets her water from a material bridge in Uji and, though strong and strikingly visible, she has the form of "past snow," suggesting she is already dead at the time of the narrative. The haikai sequence in 7:1 seems to be a reference to Saikaku's requiem haikai, and Takahashi's tea ceremony, with its main image of emptiness, suggests a Buddhist service, although with an erotic twist. In 7:2 Kaoru never appears at all but is represented by a robe with autumn poems on it, in 7:3 there is no sign of a true Tayū at all, only a false pretender, and in 7:4 Yonosuke must travel far to Edo to meet Takao, who seems to return from the Other World (her daimyo lover) for only a short time in order to meet him. In 7:5 Yonosuke travels even farther to the north and sees a life-like vision of an Osaka Tayū whom he loves very much but who has recently died, while in 7:6 Yonosuke has only memories of the already dead Osaka Tayū Azuma ("My Wife"). The other end of the bridge – the Pure Land on earth – is

finally reached after a night journey and a moon-viewing ceremony back in Shimabara, where the bridge began in 7:1, suggesting that the bridge in Book 7 is through time rather than space.

The rivalry and struggle between Yonosuke-Saikaku and his double, the man from Owari, may play an important role in this initial movement of Saikaku's dead wife's soul. If the province of Owari is taken as a common noun, it means 'the end,' an appropriate term for the death of Saikaku's wife on 4/3 in 1675 and the following traumatic days, ending on the sixth day with Saikaku's thousand-verse haikai requiem on 4/8 and then the Buddhist requiem on 4/9. In fact, in 7:4, when Yonosuke goes to Edo and stays at the Owariya house (here, too, Owari suggests 'the end'), it is obvious he's staying in the House of Death, since the Tayū Takao is near the 'end' of her earthly existence in the 1660 time stream and already dead in the 1680 time stream (the sixth year in Buddhist requiem time after the death of Saikaku's wife). In 7:1, the assertive Owari man threatens to literally cut Takahashi loose from Yonosuke and end her attachment to her life. As Takahashi is dragged away, part of the Yonosuke-Saikaku must finally give up clinging to her "form," as 7:1 puts it, and he is ironically helped

by the Owari man, who, with his sword, suggests the materialistic, realistic part of Yonosuke-Saikaku that knows he must not try to cling to his wife's soul but help it cut its ties with its previous existence, while the more romantic, desirous Yonosuke wants to prolong the dead woman's soul in the narrative. As a Tayū who also suggests Saikaku's dead wife's soul, Takahashi of course prefers the romantic Yonosuke and wishes to linger with him as long as possible. The Owari man makes his point, however, and Kaoru does not appear in 7:2, the next chapter. At the same time, Yonosuke-Saikaku also makes the important point that physical death doesn't necessarily mean the end of love, care, and desire for the dead soul.

Even a brief look at chapter 7:7 suggests that it is referring not only to the Chrysanthemum Festival on 9/9 but also to the Tanabata Star Festival on 7/7, and this double image may be trying to represent the seventh seventh (the 49th) day after the death of Saikaku's wife's soul as well as the 49th day of the souls of many other outstanding Tayū and other women mentioned in *Sensuous Man* who were dead by the time the book was published. The 7/7 Star Festival date also plays the role of 7:7 as the 49th chapter in the

whole book placed at the end of the seven books of seven chapters that make up most of *Sensuous Man*, followed only by a five-chapter Book 8. The explicit setting of 7:7, however, is 9/9, the middle day of the Chrysanthemum Festival, when the Shimmachi quarter in Osaka is filled with potted chrysanthemums and prayers for longevity and when people dress and act as elegantly as they can. "Suffused with the serene light of so many female buddhas, the quarter was the Pure Land paradise itself" to Yonosuke, who visits a Tayū in a performance house there but suddenly decides to go to Kyoto. He rides through the night in a hired palanquin, crosses the Small Yodo River Bridge, and arrives in Shimabara just as the stars are fading and the sun is rising. Waiting in a teahouse in Shimabara until he can meet the Tayū Takahashi (the Tayū who took the title after the previous Takahashi, who appears in 7:1), Yonosuke sees a lower-ranking performing woman named Kasen (Waka Wizard), who tells him she is getting married and that "my hut" is behind the hexagonal Rokkakudō temple, where Yonosuke left the child he had in 2:2 with a widow possessed by the soul of Murasaki Shikibu and by the bodhisattva Kannon. The phrase "my hut" comes from the famous waka (*Kokinshū* 983) by

Kisen, one of the Six Waka Wizards, about his meditation hut in Uji, different lines of which are quoted earlier (6:7, 7:2). This verbal relocation of Uji to Rokkakudō in Kyoto suggests that, just as the masters of fine lovemaking tea live not in Uji but in Shimabara, the real Uji in the ten “Uji chapters” of *Sensuous Man* is Rokkakudō temple, dedicated to Kannon and built in a shape that is identical to the hexagonal turtle-shell crest representing Saikaku’s dead wife as well as the new home of the illegitimate child – surely, on one level, an image of *Sensuous Man* itself – which Yonosuke fathers with the widow who is a manifestation of Murasaki Shikibu.

Just then Takahashi’s helpers arrive at the teahouse to escort Yonosuke to see the Tayū, and Yonosuke is amazed to see them form a “human bridge” of messengers in the doorway of the teahouse. One after another they come inside and very politely say, “Please, this way,” using the formal phrase repeated by messengers inviting a god, represented by a small portable shrine, to visit a festival – a ritual often carried out at the nearest bridge to the shrine. Yonosuke joins in, refusing the invitation the first seven and a half times, as required by festival custom. He finally accepts the invitation only after the

seventh messenger has left but before the eighth has come all the way to him. "Only Takahashi, at the height of her power and prestige, could stage something like this," Yonosuke thinks to himself and he concludes, "This is the way a daimyo must be treated." In *Sensuous Man* daimyo lords suggest people who walk without touching the ground – in the Other World, and, as a jester puts it in 8:1, "in the Shimabara Pure Land paradise." After sleeping all day, Yonosuke is quite happy simply viewing the tenth-night moon with Takahashi and other talented Tayū and their helpers. The chapter has little erotic content and resembles other chapters where Yonosuke is androgynous. Saikaku's main interest seems to lie in presenting Takahashi (High Bridge) as herself the final section of the bridge over which Yonosuke, who also seems to represent the soul of Saikaku's wife in this chapter, can enter, like a god at a festival, the very special world of the Shimabara Pure Land, the most elegant of all the licensed quarters in Japan.

The Chrysanthemum Festival is mainly about drinking sake and praying for a long life, and the double nines of the 9/9 date again suggest Saikaku's dead wife, who was nine years younger than he. At the same time, Yonosuke's night

journey also suggests the legend of the Weaving Woman star, who crosses the Milky Way on a very high bridge created for her by a row of magpies to visit her lover, the Ox Herder star, one night a year, on 7/7, especially as invoked in Bo Juyi's famous "Song of Eternal Sorrow," in which the dead Yang Guifei asks a Daoist wizard visiting the Other World to tell her lover, the still-living former emperor, to recall the vow they made on one such night to fly forever as a single bird with one wing and one eye each. Bo's poem plays a strong symbolic role in *Genji* and fascinates Yonosuke when he is only seven in 1:1, as does the image of the former emperor and Yang Guifei flying together as a single bird. It also fascinated Saikaku when he wrote his haikai requiem to his wife, in which he compared himself and his wife to a nightingale (*hototogisu*) flying together as a single bird toward the Pure Land. And in *Sensuous Man* 7:7, Yonosuke may be representing the soul of Saikaku's wife traveling under the stars toward the Pure Land on the 49th day after her death on a high, otherworldly bridge from Shimmachi in Osaka to Shimabara in Kyoto – from one earthly version of the Pure Land on earth to Shimabara, the greatest earthly Pure Land of all. Yonosuke-Saikaku may be going as far as he, as a member of

the living, can go in the same body with the soul of his wife. The festival ritual of seven and a half invitations, normally used to welcome a god to a festival, treats Yonosuke as if he were a god – and thus also welcomes the soul of Saikaku's wife as if she were a god.

BOOK 8: OPEN CLOSURE

The seven-and-a-half times ritual greeting also describes *Sensuous Man* fairly accurately, although the work is, strictly speaking, an invitation to readers that is seven and five-sevenths books long. Book 8 has only five chapters and thus may be designed to be a single large half-book to be completed by the reader, who reaches the festival upon finishing the book and looking back on it as a whole. The character of Book 8, however, differs from that of the first seven books, since Yonosuke lives mostly with men and seems more concerned with leaving the world than with having love affairs or erotic encounters. It is almost as if in 8:1 Yonosuke-Saikaku, after seeing off his wife's soul to Shimabara, an earthly manifestation of the Pure Land, has now finished a very important life task. Apparently as a result, in Book 8,

Yonosuke progressively expresses more and more sympathy for others and enjoys giving away more and more money and things. He almost resembles his wife's soul divesting itself of ties to its former life environment.

There are also continuities, however. The number nine, for example, once again plays a striking role in 8:1, the ninth of the ten apparent Uji chapters in *Sensuous man* (6:7, 7:1-7, 8:1-2). The number nine of course recalls Saikaku's wife and goes back to the widow possessed by Murasaki Shikibu who draws three number-3 fortune-telling sticks, to Yoshino, who, people hope, will live to be 99, to Noaki, who dies nine times during lovemaking, to Kaoru, who is represented by her artistic ninth-month robe and by nine jesters who create an intricate network of linked images with other Shimabara jesters, and to an apparently androgynous Yonosuke who travels to Shimabara on 9/9. This series is continued by the nine Tayū and their nine matrons who are said to live in Shimabara at the time of 8:1. The 8:1 chapter number may be repeating the 9/9 prayer for longevity in the Chrysanthemum Festival in chapter 7:7 or even be raising the 9/9 prayers to a higher level at which 8:1 represents nine nines.

There is no historically relevant year in which there were nine Tayū in Shimabara, so the figure seems fictional and used to stress nine as a reference to Saikaku's wife's soul, which seems to successfully reach the Shimabara Pure Land in 7:7. At New Year's in 1676, however, there were eight Tayū in Shimabara, so Saikaku may be mixing history and fiction and claiming that in 1676 his wife's soul had reached the Shimabara Pure Land and become a buddha-like Tayū there, increasing the number of Tayū to nine. Since 8:1 takes place mainly on 1/18-19, the setting may be slightly after New Year's in 1676, the year after Saikaku's wife died. This chronology would connect Book 8 back to Book 7 rather smoothly if the seven chapters of Book 7 represent the seven soul-stages passed during the first 49 days after death of Saikaku's wife, who died on 4/3 in 1675. It would also mean that Saikaku is here using Tayū to mean women who have reached the Pure Land and been reborn as buddhas, an image he uses earlier in 7:6 and 7:7.

In 8:1 a group of eight men, including Yonosuke, makes a night trip on 1/18 from Kyoto to the Hachiman (Eight Banners) shrine on Otokoyama (Male Mountain – see Solt's translation of 3:1), where a festival is being held

the next day, on 1/19. When they cross a river just south of Kyoto, they are met by the nine matrons of the nine Tayū, and these older women treat the men to tea and a light meal – a thoughtful farewell present from the nine Tayū. At the Hachiman shrine the seven jesters buy amulets for warding off fevers to give to the Tayū, while Yonosuke sends a hundred buns (*manjū*) covered with gold and silver foil to each Tayū, for a total of 900. This almost ceremonial chapter, which ends with the seven jesters giving the Tayū the amulets and wishing them good fortune forever, seems to be a gesture of farewell to the Shimabara Tayū for Yonosuke, and he does not visit Shimabara at all in Book 8 except to sponsor a performance for another man. The almost nostalgic and elegiac tone of the chapter would be very fitting if 8:1 were also a farewell gesture from Yonosuke-Saikaku to Saikaku's dead wife's soul, which, he prays, is now safely in the Shimabara Pure Land – and on its way to the Pure Land at the western end of the universe – while he must return to ordinary life and live mostly among men.

Chapter 8:2, the tenth and final of the apparent Uji chapters, features a draper named Jūzō (Tenth Storehouse), a simple, naive man who

foolishly accepts a bet he will surely lose – that he will be able to meet the Yoshiwara Tayū Murasaki (also Komurasaki), named after Murasaki Shikibu, and sleep with her the very first time. As a result of losing, Jūzō will surely be castrated, so Yonosuke, feeling pity, accompanies Jūzō to Edo, where he manages to arrange a meeting for Jūzō. Murasaki feels compassion for the foolish Jūzō and sleeps with him, something almost never done. Later, however, she chastises Yonosuke for taking part in the cruel bet and for deceiving her with his false letter of introduction, in which he claimed he was back in Kyoto. She then refuses to meet him again, thereby, perhaps, expressing Saikaku's suspicion that Murasaki Shikibu would reject the many conflicting levels of metaphor, bodily humor, and irony in *Sensuous Man*. Murasaki's firm rejection seems to end the ten Uji chapters.

In 8:3 Saikaku returns to Shimabara, but only to pay for a ceremony to celebrate the first performance there by a new Tayū, Yoshizaki, who has just moved from Osaka to Kyoto. Yonosuke sponsors the ceremony for a man from Osaka who is visiting him, and the center of the ceremony is a ritual wedding between Yoshizaki and the visitor, who know each other from Osaka.

To Yonosuke the expensive ceremony is so important that he pays for it to last nine days, an unheard of length that again suggests Saikaku's dead wife. The repetition of a journey from Osaka to Kyoto in 7:7 and then in 8:3 may indicate that Yonosuke is standing aside and letting Saikaku and his wife, both from Osaka, marry once more in the Other World (Shimabara) as a promise for the future, since marriage was regarded as a pledge lasting for two lives (*nise no chigiri*). This possibility is strengthened by the fact that Saikaku's picture for 8:3 is one of only three that does not show Yonosuke: the first, in 4:7, shows a dying woman in a boat who seems to be wearing turtle-shell crests on her robe, thus suggesting Saikaku's dead wife; the second, in 8:2, shows the Yoshiwara Tayū Ko-Murasaki, who is named after Murasaki Shikibu and thus linked to the widow possessed by Murasaki with whom Yonosuke has his only child; and the third in 8:3, which shows Yoshizaki entering the room where the ritual marriage ceremonies will take place. In any case, the description of this pair of Osaka lovers pretending they don't know each other and marrying as if meeting for the first time in Shimabara is moving in a way that even Murasaki Shikibu might admire.

The last two chapters gradually bring Yonosuke's long goodbye to a conclusion of sorts. In 8:4, Yonosuke gives away most of his remaining wealth to temples and shrines and buys out the contracts of many performing women. He also gives a small fortune to a young kabuki actor he loves and stays with. Then, taking a ship to Nagasaki, he seeks to view the moon on the "other side" – both China and, surely, the Other World – from the Maruyama quarter, where the performing women still perform semi-shamanic nō plays. After a performance of three nō plays by an all-women troupe in the quarter, Yonosuke delights the women by showing them 44 lifelike dolls of the Tayū in Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo. He stands the dolls on the nō stage as if he were comparing the licensed quarters of Japan to nō-and-jōruri puppet play stages and sending the great Tayū, represented by lifelike dolls, off to the Pure Land in the west, far beyond Nagasaki. In the Yonosuke-Saikaku chronology the seventh-year Buddhist requiem for Saikaku's wife (which takes place in the sixth year after the death) was held in 1681, the year before the publication of *Sensuous Man*, when Saikaku was 40, and Yonosuke's journey to the west to Nagasaki with lifelike dolls of the top Tayū also suggests that

private seventh-year requiem. Moreover, Yonosuke-Saikaku puts on a somewhat similar puppet drama performance for performing women near the Itsukushima shrine in 5:6, when he is also 40, the same age as he is in 8:4 in the Yonosuke-Saikaku chronology. And in 6:5, which also refers to Yonosuke-Saikaku at 40, Yonosuke meets a Tayū whose robe is covered with hexagonal turtle-shell crests, a Tayū who likes to act and who calls herself a spider (*kumo*), a word which may indicate she, like Yoshino, is playing Saikaku's wife, who vanished in clouds (*kumo*).

In 8:5, Yonosuke designs a boat and leaves Japan – a crime punishable by death – at the same time as the publication of *Sensuous Man*. First, however, he buries the final 6,000 *ryō* of his fortune in the eastern hills of Kyoto, marked only by a stone from Uji. Stones from Uji were widely used to grind tea leaves, a sexual image in Books 6 and 7, and the number six once more recalls Saikaku's dead wife, so Yonosuke-Saikaku may be saying a strong farewell to his wife in the physical form in which he knew her, and with that he sets out for the Other World – the mythical Island of Women – with almost every kind of lovemaking aid. He also continues the 8:1 image of eight men by taking seven male friends along

with him. These friends may also be the first seven books of *Sensuous Man*, since when Saikaku tells them not to expect to ever return to the capital, six of them express shock and dismay. Yonosuke doesn't say who the other person is, but it might be the sixth book of *Sensuous Man*, which contains the six "Hidden in Clouds" chapters which double those in Book 5 in the Other World. Book 6 would simply be returning home. In the picture for 8:5, the right hand of the man who stands in the prow alludes to Narihira in exile looking at "capital birds" on the Sumida River and asking them for news of his lover, while the droll Yonosuke points down at the waves, apparently indicating – quite realistically – that the boat will soon be on the bottom of the ocean. Of course, that's where legend says the Turtle Woman lives together with her father, the Dragon King, in what was believed to be still another entrance to the Pure Land. In a further twist, the boat leaves at the end of the Godless Month (the tenth month), the time when all the Japanese gods except Ebisu return to their local shrines after spending the month in Izumo. The fact that Yonosuke leaves from Izu suggests that his trip parodies the return trip of the Japanese gods, which begins in Izumo. Thus Yonosuke leaves his

exile in Japan for his true home on the Island of Women or for the Pure Land or for death by drowning. Readers who finish the book must here decide whether they are leaving the Other World or returning to it.

NOTES

1. Ibara is more likely the way Saikaku pronounced his name, since it is common in western Honshu and since Saikaku's own ancestors may have come from Ibara in Bitchū, but for the sake of convenience I follow the trend in recent decades to read Ihara, the more common pronunciation in Tokyo and eastern Honshu, where publishers are concentrated.

2. I use the term "performing woman" instead of "courtesan" because the higher-ranking women in the large licensed quarters – as opposed to the many sex workers operating privately and theoretically outside the law in houses, restaurants, teahouses, on the streets, and so on – were not simply sex workers. Women of the highest (Tayū) and second (Tenjin) rank were not required to have sex with customers at all, as long as they could attract customers to the performances (*za*) over which they presided at special performance houses (*ageya*). Customers paid for these performances – large, structured parties with singing, music, dancing, comedy acts, storytelling, and other performances by both women and geisha (in the 17th c., male

performers) as well as food and ritual exchanges of cups of sake – and not for sex. The Tayū would mainly act as the director, while elegantly trying maintaining the proper level of conversation, though they sometimes played shamisen and sang themselves. The term Tayū means “head actor” of a nō troupe, and licenced quarters were the one place where women were able to perform nō in public (Yonosuke sees a nō performance in the Nagasaki quarter in 8:4), and there Tayū could literally be the head actor. In fact, Tayū in many ways resembled a cross between Hollywood actresses under the old star system and trend-setting supermodels, with a layer of literary and musical training added on, of course, and there was much prestige to be gained by just being present at a performance presided over by a Tayū. And women were also interested in trends started by Tayū. For example, in 5:1, Yonosuke’s female relatives are even more anxious to see and meet the former Tayū Yoshino than his male relatives. Saikaku also compares one fearless Tayū (the “former Takahashi” in 7:1, translated in this volume) to the Minamoto warrior leader Yoshitsune, who was also nominally a high-ranking court official (Tayū): her robes are described in the same terms as Yoshitsune’s

armor in medieval war narratives, indicating that Takahashi is a strong leader at performances and the equal of any man.

The term “performing woman” is a literal translation of *yūjo*, the most common term for women entertainers who sometimes doubled as sex workers but were not simply courtesans. *Yū* or *asobi* originally meant ‘playing music and/or dancing for the gods,’ and *asobi-bito* meant both ‘player, performer’ and *yūjo*. By the 17th century, the licensed quarters put on secular performances that could include prostitution afterwards, but the high-ranking performing women were normally in command of the performances and ran them, not the customers. By the middle of the 18th century the quarters had become thoroughly commercialized, and fewer men were willing to pay simply to watch highly educated and elegant women in special theater-like houses, and both the *Tayū* rank and the performing house were abandoned, while *geisha* was a term appropriated by less expensive women entertainers. At the same time, the subject and object of ‘playing’ were reversed, and common usage spoke of customers “playing” with the women in the quarters. This historical reversal needs to be noted and reflected in English

translations of 17th-century texts. Likewise, “licensed quarter” is preferable to “pleasure quarter,” since the latter term reflects late Edo commercialism and the androcentric view of quarters’ women as nothing but courtesans.

3. Rutland and Tokyo, Charles E. Tuttle, 1963.

4. See Maeda Kingorō, *Kōshoku ichidai otoko zen-chūshaku, jō, ge* (Tokyo, Kadokawa shoten: 1980, 1981) *passim*.

5. This is one of several examples in the book of Saikaku apparently using chapter numbers to refer to dates, ages, or events. For example, the narrative in the next chapter, 4:4 (translated in this volume by Lucy North), seems to use the number four in its common role as a homophone for ‘death’ to indicate that both Yonosuke and the lady-in-waiting “die” during their sexual encounter – and this mutuality is essential to understanding Yonosuke’s new occupation. Saikaku’s other works often refer to quantities and numbers, and the extended, symbolic use of numbers appears even in his early haikai. For example, in Saikaku’s haikai requiem for his dead wife (*Dokugin ichinichi senku*) the day the Buddha

died (2/15) appears in haikai verse 215 of the requiem.

In this introduction, I give all double-digit numbers and ages as numerical form, since a uniform numerical representation makes the similarity in Japanese between ages, dates, and chapter numbers clearer in English. Dates on the lunar calendar are also given numerically, month and then day, separated by a slash.

6. Maeda, *zen-chūshaku*, ge 118.

7. Noma Kōshin, ed., *Teihon Saikaku zenshū* (Tokyo, Chūōkōronsha: 1954) 10:65.

8. See my annotated translation of the first hundred verses in "Saikaku's Haikai Requiem: A Thousand Haikai Alone in a Single Day," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 52:2 (Dec. 1992) 481-588.

9. Minowa Yoshitsugu, "Kōshoku ichidai otoko to Suetsugu Heizō" in Hinotani Teruhiko, ed., *Saikaku to sono shūhen* (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1991) 49.

10. Yoshie Hisaya, *Saikaku - Hitogokoro no bungaku* (Osaka: Izumi Shoin, 1988) 161-83.

11. See *Nihon meisho fūzoku zue* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1979) 7:27 (right frame). Cf. Noma Kōshin, *Saikaku shin-shinkō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1981) 480-81.

12. Fujimoto Kizan, *Kampon shikidō ōkagami*, ed. Noma Kōshin (Kyoto: Yūzan bunko, 1961) 571. There are, however, differing dates given for her death.