

Gentlemen and Courtesans: Themes of *Yūjo* and *Kinkishoga Mitate*

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Abstract: Around the end of the Momoyama and early Edo periods, for the first time in Japanese history, generic *yūjo* 遊女 (courtesans) from the *yūri* 遊里 (pleasure quarters) began to be depicted as subjects of paintings. Among many paintings featuring *yūjo*, there were paintings which are today known as *yūroku-jinbutsu zu* 遊楽人物図 or *fujō-yūroku zu* 婦女遊楽図, the paintings of people (or women) at leisure.

Yūroku-jinbutsu zu / *fujō-yūroku zu* are located last in the development of genre paintings of the Early Modern period, *kinsei-shoki fūzoku-ga* 近世初期風俗画. The *kinsei-shoki fūzoku-ga* developed from the Muromachi period *rakuchū-rakugai zu* (paintings of scenes in and around the then capital) to the *yagai-yūroku zu* (paintings of outdoor amusements) around the end of Muromachi to the Momoyama periods, then to the *shitsunai-yūroku zu* (paintings of indoor amusements), and finally reached *yūroku-jinbutsu zu* / *fujō-yūroku zu*, featuring such works as the *Hikone byōbu*, *Honda Heihachirō sugata e*, *Hataori zu*, *Sakuragari-yūroku zu*, *Yuna zu*, and *Ōkadangen zu*. This is the chronological development generally acknowledged by scholars.

The present paper, however, attempts to classify the *yūjo*-themed works by the presentational scheme and to look into the context of production of such works as the *Hikone byōbu* and *Ōkadangen zu*, the paintings which use the *mitate* (parody) of *kinkishoga* 琴棋書画 (the Chinese four gentlemanly accomplishments) as the presentational scheme. Analyses and discussions of the problems hidden in the presentational scheme could help to elucidate the issues of commissioners, painters, the contexts they were appreciated in, and production date.

Keywords: Paintings of Japanese courtesans, *yūjo*, *yūri*, pleasure quarters, *kinkishoga*, *mitate*, aristocratic intellectuals

Introduction

Around the end of the Momoyama and early Edo periods (around the beginning of the seventeenth century), a time compared to “the paradise of Maitreya” in which “all people enjoyed life’s pleasures”,¹ generic *yūjo* 遊女 (courtesans) from the *yūri* 遊里 (pleasure quarters) began to be depicted as subjects of paintings for the first time in Japanese history. So many paintings featured them that the trend created a category of art today known as *yūroku-jinbutsu zu* 遊楽人物図 or *fujo-yūroku zu* 婦女遊楽図 (paintings of people or women at leisure) including the *Hikone byōbu*, the folding screen of *Hikone* (owned by Hikonejō Museum).

Yūroku-jinbutsu zu / *fujo-yūroku zu* are located last in the development of genre paintings of the Early Modern period, *kinseishoki fūzokuga* 近世初期風俗画, produced from the end of the sixteenth century to the early seventeenth century.² The development started from the Muromachi period *rakuchū rakugai zu* (paintings of scenes in and around the then capital Kyō, the present-day Kyoto) that depict a variety of scenes together including famous sites, festivals, activities, and amusements in and around the capital. The outdoor amusement scenes were then taken from the panoramic compositions of *rakuchū rakugai zu* to create a sub-genre known as the *yagai-yūroku zu* (paintings of outdoor amusements) around the end of Muromachi to the Momoyama periods (1336-1600), example works of which include the *Maple Viewing at Mount Takao* painted by Kano Hideyori and *Merrymaking Under the Cherry Blossoms* by Kano Naganobu. The focus of painters then moved increasingly on to human activities, especially entertainment in brothels of the *yūri*, and forming the next type, *shitsunai-yūroku zu* (paintings of indoor amusements), which include the *Sōōji byōbu*, the paired screen painting of *Sōōji* (Tokugawa Museum). Finally, paintings of indoor amusements came to focus closely on the activities of a few figures and produced such *yūroku-jinbutsu zu* / *fujo-yūroku zu* works as the *Hikone byōbu*, *Honda Heihachirō sugata e* (Tokugawa Museum), *Hataori zu* (MOA Museum), *Sakuragari-yūroku zu* (left screen Brooklyn Museum, right screen private collection), *Yuna zu* (MOA Museum), and *Ōkadangen*

¹ From the beginning section of *Keichō-kenmon shū* (Miura [ca. 1614] 1969), Maitreya is the future Buddha who is believed to be now waiting to return to earth as the savior of all living things.

² On the development of *kinseishoki fūzokuga*, see Takeda 1967.

zu (Idemitsu Museum).³ *Yūroku-jinbutsu zu / fujo-yūroku zu* is believed to be a significant genre that formed the basis of later *bijin-ga* (paintings of beauties, especially courtesans) and *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints.

Yūjo were depicted in a variety of ways in Early Modern genre paintings. These basic schemes can be divided as follows:

1. Depicting *yūjo* via a thematic device of *mitate* 見立て (parody of another theme) that was originally established outside the *yūri*. For example, in the *Hikone byōbu* and *Ōkadangen zu* a thematic device of parodying *kinkishoga* 琴棋書画 (zither, chess, reading/writing, painting), the Chinese four gentlemanly accomplishments, is superimposed on the depiction of *yūjo*, and in *Hataori zu* a thematic device of the activity of weaving is used to depict *yūjo*.
2. Depicting *yūjo* who are engaged in such performing arts as *nō* and *kabuki*. For instance, a series of paintings known as *Shijōgawara-yūroku zu* (paintings of amusements at the Shijō riverbed) and *Onna-kabuki zu* (paintings of *kabuki* performance by women).
3. Depicting *yūjo* who are at leisure either inside or outside a brothel. For example, a series of paintings of indoor amusements such as *Sōōji byōbu*, and paintings of *yūjo* at ease in gardens or outside a house such as *Sakuragari-yūroku zu* and *Yūroku-bijin zu* (formerly owned by Uemura Masurō).
4. Depicting *yūjo* engaged in neither performing arts nor pastimes, such as *Yuna zu* and *Nawanoren zu*.

Among the schemes mentioned above, this paper looks into the paintings that adopt scheme 1, depicting *yūjo* through a thematic device that was originally established outside the *yūri*. Taking up the *Hikone byōbu*, *Ōkadangen zu*, and *Hataori zu*, the paper especially focuses on the device of parodying *kinkishoga*.

The paper will, first, make an analysis to confirm that the depicted women are really contemporary *yūjo*, and, then, study the phenomenon to draw attention to *yūjo* in early Edo period society. Lastly, the depiction of *yūjo* through the device of parodying *kinkishoga* will be discussed.

Analyses and discussions of the problems hidden in the presentational scheme could help to elucidate the issues concerning

³ The author wishes to express special thanks to the curators of the Idemitsu Museum for allowing her to examine *Ōkadangen zu* (December, 2008), and to the curators of the MOA Museum for letting her to study *Hataori zu* (March, 2009).

commissioners, painters, the contexts they were appreciated in, and production dates.

Chapter I: Identification of the Depicted Women

This chapter analyzes the appearance of the women depicted in the *Hikone byōbu*, *Ōkadangen zu*, and *Hataori zu*. It is acknowledged that the people and things depicted in the *Hikone byōbu* typically represent those seen in the Rokujō misujimachi 六条三筋町 *yūri* in early seventeenth century Kyō, the former capital.⁴ The women in *Ōkadangen zu* and *Hataori zu* which are said to date from the same period, however, the identification of them is not yet very clear.⁵ Examining the women in *Ōkadangen zu* and *Hataori zu* and comparing them with the *yūjo* in the *Hikone byōbu* opens the possibility of that they are *yūjo* from the same period.

1. Fashion Depicted in the *Hikone byōbu*

The images in the six-paneled *Hikone byōbu* can be divided into roughly two scenes: an outdoor scene (the first and the second panels), and an indoor scene (from the third to the sixth panel). The latter depicts a scene inside a brothel in the *yūri* and the women and girls there are *yūjo* and *kamuro* 禿 (attendant-apprentice girls to *yūjo*).

It is often pointed out that the fashion painted in brothel scenes is the latest contemporary fashion favored by *yūjo* and people related to the *yūri* in the early seventeenth century. In this section, an analysis of *kosode* 小袖 (short-sleeved garments) worn by *yūjo* and *kamuro* as well as of their hairstyles will be conducted to examine the favored trends of the time.

Before starting the analysis, we briefly look into the social background of the early seventeenth century capital Kyō in terms of women's fashion. In the spring of the year 1603, Kyō was filled with a festive atmosphere to celebrate the inauguration of shōgun Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616). The Kitano Shrine was crowded with the people thrilled with the start of the new era. There, a troupe headed by Okuni, a self proclaimed shrine maiden of the Izumo Shrine, caused a great

⁴ Okudaira 1996.

⁵ Women in *Ōkadangen zu* are often described as “most likely *yūjo*” in descriptions, and women in *Hataori zu* are usually described as women or working women.

sensation by performing a new style of dance and performance. This event is recognized as the birth of modern-day *kabuki*. Okuni, disguised in man's clothes, played the role of a *kabukimono*, the swashbuckling young ruffians who often lingered in the capital at that time, and who flirted with women at teahouses, establishments that also served as brothels. The etymological meaning of *kabukimono* is a person (*mono* 者) who behaves in an eccentric way (*kabuku* 傾く, the verb form of *kabuki*).⁶ Okuni imitated the *kabukimono*'s eccentric fashion. On the stage, she wore a *kosode* and a *haori* (half-coat) woven with such flashy colors as red, gold and light-green, tied with a purple sash. Around her neck hung a large-bead Buddhist rosary and two long gaudy swords as well as other accessories decorated her waist.⁷ She had her hair done in a man's style as well. Her impersonation is depicted in contemporary paintings such as *Okuni-kabuki sōshi* (Yamato Bunkakan Museum).

The owners of brothels in Rokujō misujimachi lost no time in having their *yūjo* girls imitate Okuni's *kabuki*, and put up playhouses on the Shijō riverbed of the Kamo river to attract more men by *yūjo kabuki*. *Yūjo kabuki* immediately became more popular than that of Okuni.⁸ *Yūjo* girls also imitated *kabukimono* attire and hairstyles. Shortly thereafter, *yūjo* became recognized as the stars and fashion leaders of the day.

Now, we return to the *Hikone byōbu* and look into the fashion painted in the latter four panels (figure 1).⁹ The *kamuro* in the third panel is wearing a white *kosode* patterned with alternating triangles in dark red, white, black, dark green, and light green. The *kosode* features an arabesque pattern in gold, and over the triangles there is a pattern of gold lines which represent the technique used in textile production known as *surihaku* 摺箔, the process of attaching metal foil to the garment.

In the fourth panel, the woman leaning over an armrest is wearing a red *kosode* with a chrysanthemum arabesque in gold with designs of framed-and-stylized Chinese characters. Another woman writing a letter is wearing a silver and dark blue *kosode* with cloud-like patterns dyed in brown *kanokoshibori* 鹿子絞り (fawn-spot tie-dye), and with red sections

⁶ *The Dictionary of Japanese and Portuguese*, published in 1603 for Portuguese missionaries, contains the term “*kabuki* and *kabukimono*” and explains that the terms mean “to behave in an eccentric way” and “a person who is terribly abnormal”.

⁷ This description of Okuni's *kabuki* costume is attributed to *Kafukino-saushi* (book formerly owned by Baigyoku).

⁸ As for *Yūjo kabuki*'s popularity, refer to Takano 2005.

⁹ As for designs and patterns of *kosode* in *Hikone byōbu*, see Emura 2008.

that feature a flower pattern. Her hair is pulled back and tied in a round loop, a style known as *tamamusubi* 玉結.

In the fifth panel, the woman watching a *sugoroku* game (double sixes) with her mouth covered by her inner brown *kanokoshibori kosode* is wearing a dark blue *kosode* with red cloud-like patterns, over which there is a flower pattern in gold and silver. This woman has her hair tied to make a standing loop at the top of her head, the hairstyle called *karawa-mage* 唐輪髷. The woman playing *sugoroku* is wearing a *kosode* that is divided into multi-colored horizontal sections, a design called *dangawari* 段替り. Some divisions are filled with *kanokoshibori* in black, dark brown, light brown, red and white, and the others are filled with silver *surihaku* over black. The *kosode* of the *shamisen*-strumming woman is brown and covered with a haze-like pattern in gold *surihaku*. On top of it there are paulownia designs with leaves of four different colors. Her mannish hairstyle is derived from the contemporary young men's hairdo called *wakashū-mage* 若衆髷.

In the sixth panel, a *kamuro* girl is wearing a light brown *kosode* with dark blue and green circular patterns. The woman playing *shamisen* with her back to the viewer is wearing a light blue *kanokoshibori kosode* and a braided *obi* around her waist. This *obi* was known as a *nagoya-obi* 名護屋帯 which was originally made in the region of Nagoya in Hizen (a region in present-day Nagasaki prefecture) by Korean artisans brought to Japan when Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-98) invaded Korea (1592-98). *Nagoya-obi* were in fashion until around the Kan'ei era (1624-44).¹⁰

In summary, the surfaces of most *kosode* worn by *yūjo* and *kamuro* in the *Hikone byōbu* feature gold and silver *surihaku*, *kanokoshibori* tie-dye, and embroidery. These three luxurious techniques were banned later in 1683 by the Tokugawa shogunate because of their opulence. The colors frequently used are red, brown, white, dark blue, black and gold. The combination of those techniques, colors, and patterns show the typical characteristics of *keichō-kosode* that were popular around end of the Keichō to the Kan'ei eras (1596-1644).¹¹ The depicted hairdos are examples of the early styles that started around the beginning of seventeenth century.¹²

¹⁰ As for *nagoya-obi*, see Nagasaki 2009.

¹¹ As for *keichō-kosode*, see Nagasaki 2002.

¹² As for development of women's hairdos, refer to Hashimoto 1984 and Murata 1991.

2. Fashion Depicted in the *Ōkadangen zu*

Next, we look into the fashion depicted in the *Ōkadangen zu* (figure 2). In the right panel, a *shamisen*-strumming woman, whose hair is in the *wakashūmage* style, wears two *kosode* (figure 2). The *kosode* worn on the inside has a pattern of six-petal flowers called *karahana-mon* 唐花紋 in white, light blue, yellow, and red. Over this are circular patterns in which flower-like patterns and designs of *eiraku-tsuho* 永楽通宝 coins are painted in gold and green. *Eiraku-tsuho*, a currency of early fifteenth century China, was imported by the Muromachi government in Japan for domestic use. Because of its auspicious meaning, the characters “*eiraku*” were often used as a design. She wears another *kosode* on top of it. The outer *kosode* has a pattern of *matsukawabishi* 松皮菱, a variant of a diamond pattern, and designs of folding fans are painted over this. All of these patterns and designs can be created with techniques of weaving, *surihaku* and embroidery.

The woman standing in the left panel wears a *dangawari kosode* the divisions of which are filled with *kanokoshibori* and *surihaku*. The design and colors used in it are almost identical to the one worn by the above-mentioned *yūjo* playing *sugoroku* in the *Hikone byōbu*. Both *kosode* in the two paintings would be close to extant examples of *keichō-kosode*. She is holding a long pipe known as *hanami-kiseru*, literally a pipe for cherry blossom viewing outings, one of the symbolic items of *kabukimono*. The pendant-like object worn around her neck seems to be a sacred relic container brought by *nanbanjin* 南蛮人 (referring to Europeans who visited Japan then). She wears it not because of her commitment to Christianity but for fashion purposes.

There are two little girls in *Ōkadangen zu*. The one preparing ink for the woman reading a letter wears a *kosode* with a *katamigawari* 片身替り pattern, which uses differently colored cloths for each side of the body. *Katamigawari* was popular from the late Muromachi to the early Edo periods. Her red-and-white *katamigawari kosode* has a flower design probably created by dyeing and embroidery. The woman reading a letter in front of the girl wears a red *kanokoshibori* tie-dye *kosode* with designs of peacock. The other girl opening a *shamisen* box wears a green and red *kanokoshibori* tie-dye *kosode* with the designs of phoenix probably created by embroidery.

The women and girls in *Ōkadangen zu* wear *kosode* made with lavish techniques like the ones in the *Hikone byōbu*. The girls, intently attending to the women by preparing ink and *shamisen*, have their hair cut

in the typical style for *kamuro*, which is also seen in *Hikone byōbu*. Shamisen playing, letter writing, and flower viewing suggest typical activities favored by *yūjo* then. In conclusion, they are believed to be *yūjo* and *kamuro* of the early seventeenth century.

3. Fashion Depicted in *Hataori zu*

Hataori zu (figure 3), formerly said to be paired with *Ōkadangen zu*,¹³ is described as a painting that “features idealized depiction of women engaged in daily labor.”¹⁴ In fact, when compared to the weavers in the painting of *People of Various Occupations* by Kano Yoshinobu (1552-1640), the women in *Hataori zu* wear more expensive-looking *kosode* and have their hair done in *tamamusubi*, and their faces are painted like those of beauties. In other words, the painter of *Hataori zu* intended to paint the women with a sophisticated appearance rather than with an actual weavers’ appearance.

First, we look at the woman weaving on a loom. She wears a *kosode* with layered diamond patterns called *kasanebishī* 重菱, in brown, light blue, and white, and poetic characters 花鳥風月 (flower, bird, wind, moon) scattered on top of it. The girl standing on the opposite side of the loom wears a colorful *kanokoshibori* tie-dye *kosode*.

The woman with her back to the viewer is spinning thread. She wears a white *kosode* with red lateral stripes around the shoulders and legs. A similar *kosode* is worn by a dancing *yūjo* on the street of Rokujō misujimachi in the *Rakuchū rakugai zu*, Funaki version, and by the wife of Hosokawa Akimoto in a portrait painting from the late sixteenth century (*Portrait of the Wife of Hosokawa Akimoto* owned by Ryōanji Temple). The design with the stripes around the shoulders and legs is called *katasuso* 肩裾, which was popular from the late Muromachi to the early Edo periods.

In the upper left corner, there are two women tying cloth with threads for tie-dyeing. The woman on the right wears a dark red *kosode* with dyed flowery designs called *tsujigahana-zome* 辻が花染, a

¹³ Description of pairing those two screens is seen in *Nihon Byōbu-e Shūsei No.14* (Takeda et al. 1977) and *Kinsei-fūzoku Zufu vol.7 Yūjo* (Kirihata and Iso 1984), and a view to question pairing those is proposed in Tazawa 1996. Even though there is some stylistic resemblance between the two, the author supports the idea of separating *Ōkadangen zu* and *Hataori zu* since it seems there is no common theme connecting them.

¹⁴ Kobayashi 1979.

technique that was popular from the late Muromachi to the early Edo periods. The entire surface of the dark red ground is meticulously filled with *ryūtatsubushi*, a type of ballad popular around the Keichō era (1596-1615) started by Takasabu Ryūtatsu, and also *waka* poems written in black and gold.¹⁵ The contents of all *ryūtatsubushi* and *waka* poems on her *kosode* are about lovesickness. The woman on the left wears two *kosode*; the inner has hexagonal patterns and designs of circular snow crystals in *kanokoshihori*, and the outer features red with gold lines done in *surihaku* with circular patterns of butterflies. In summary, the *kosode* in *Hataori zu* are of the same high quality and period as the ones in the *Hikone byōbu* and *Ōkadangen zu*.

Hataori zu is said to depict weaver women at work following the tradition of Chinese paintings of sericulture and weaving, and in order to sophisticate the appearance of the women, they are depicted as elegant, amorous beauties. However, the reason for such sophistication is not very clear, and another interpretation is possible.

The work of weaving and tying with thread reminds us of the Tanabata Festival on the seventh day of the seventh month, one of the five Chinese-inspired festivals celebrated in the Japanese Court since the Nara period (710-784). On that day, people pray for the happy annual reunion of the celestial lovers, Tanabatatsume, more widely known Orihime (Weaver Princess star), and Kengyū (Cow Herder Prince star), who are separated in the sky by the Milky Way the rest of the year. Since the Tanabata Festival was also one of the important annual events for *yūjo*,¹⁶ who were always protagonists of romantic dramas set in the *yūri* (though it was often a pretend romance), it is possible to interpret the women in *Hataori zu* as *yūjo* who play the role of the lovesick Tanabatatsume. If so, depicting them as beautiful amorous women clad in fashionable costumes, meticulously writing love songs on their *kosode*, and also including a bamboo—an item traditionally associated with the Tanabata Festival—in the bottom left corner would make more sense.

In conclusion, the women depicted in these three paintings can be recognized as *yūjo* seen in the capital Kyō around the early seventeenth century. These paintings depict *yūjo* engaged in a variety of activities. In

¹⁵ Information about the written text on this *kosode* was given by Mr. Uchida of MOA Museum, when the author made a field research there. The author wishes to use this space to express hearty thanks to Mr. Uchida of MOA Museum.

¹⁶ On annual events at *yūri*, see Akeda 1990.

the *Hikone byōbu*, there are four activities: playing the *shamisen*, the *sugoroku* game, reading a letter, and the painting, and in the case of the *Ōkadangen zu*, there are only two: playing the *shamisen* and reading a letter. Among the many activities *yūjo* actually engaged in, four particular activities are chosen. The four activities suggest the theme of *kinkishoga*, a theme favored by men of influence in the Muromachi period. The theme of *kinkishoga* must have intentionally been chosen by the commissioners for their own appreciation. The same thing can be said about *Hataori zu*. The theme of weaving is chosen to represent *yūjo* in a painting. In this paper, however, the focus will be on depictions of *yūjo* engaged in activities associated with the painterly theme of *kinkishoga*. In the following chapters, we will explore the background of *yūjo* emerging as stars of the time as well as the pictorialization of *yūjo* through the thematic device of parodying *kinkishoga*.



Figure 1: *Hikone byōbu*, the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth panels



Figure 2: *Ōkadangen zu*



Figure 3: *Hataori zu*

Chapter II: *Yūjo* as Social Phenomenon

This chapter explores why *yūjo* attracted people's attention by focusing on their skills in the arts performed both inside and outside the *yūri*. In particular, this section looks into who—that is, what kind of people—were interested in their arts and for what reason. Bringing to light the background of the people who exhibited interest in *yūjo*, the reasons for their tastes become clear, and provide a stepping-stone for the next chapter, “Visualization of Interest in *Yūjo* via Device of *Kinkishoga*”.

1. Attention to *Yūjo*'s Arts Outside the *Yūri*

In 1602, two years after the Battle of Sekigahara, the Tokugawa shogunate moved the *yūri* to Rokujō misujimachi in order to keep the *yūri* away from Nijō Castle. This act was most likely for moral reasons and to create an increase of tax revenue by moving it to a larger area—attesting to the popularity of the *yūri*.¹⁷ The *yūjo*, pretty birds captive inside the Rokujō misujimachi *yūri*, also performed *nō* and *kabuki* outside the *yūri*, for example, at the Kitano Shrine and on the dry bed of the Kamo river at Shijō. Today, we can observe the social interest in the arts of *yūjo* at that time in paintings such as the previously-cited *Shijōgawara-yūroku zu* and *Onna-kabuki zu*.

1-a. *Yūjo Nō*

Originating in the fourteenth century, *nō* was patronized by shoguns and powerful feudal lords. Originally, performers in professional *nō* troupes such as the Schools of Kanze and Konparu were limited to men. However, *nō* performed by women appeared to have been appreciated as well. According to the *Kanmongyoki*, a diary written from 1416 through 1448 by Prince Fushimino-miya Sadafusa, *nō* performed by a troupe of women in Toba in 1432 was regarded as highly as Kanze's *nō*. *Nō* by women (including *yūjo*) prospered most from the end of Tenshō era to the Kan'ei era (around 1585 to 1644). Aristocrats of the Court, who also liked *nō* performed by women, were not satisfied only to see it in amusement quarters in the precincts of shrines, and therefore, invited *yūjo* to their residences. In 1605, for example, a *yūjo* named Ukifune was invited by the emperor's mother to the Court through the mediation of an aristocrat,

¹⁷ Akeda 1990.

Konoe Nobutada (1565-1614).¹⁸ The *Tōkaido-meisho ki* refers to *nō* by *yūjo* from Rokujō misujimachi at the Shijō riverbed as well.

From the keisei-machi (*yūri*) of Rokujō, a man called Sadoshima put up a stage on the riverbed of the Shijō and had keisei (*yūjo*) dance there. A *yūjo* house called Wakajōrō set a stage and performed *nō*.¹⁹

Wakajōrō was a brothel to which one of the top seven *yūjo* of the Rokujō misujimachi *yūri*, Katsuragi, belonged.

In the tale of *Tsuyudono monogatari*, a work of *kanazōshi* (a literary genre of popular fictional stories),²⁰ an announcement of a *nō* performance by *yūjo* at the Shijō riverbed is found.

When passing the Shijō riverbed, [Tsuyudono finds] here and there many playhouses with curtains stretched around, and which have elevated spectator platforms and small gates. The sound of drum to attract people [comes from those playhouses]. Tsuyudono comes near a signboard which reads: “From the fifteenth day, there will be a Kanze *nō* performance here. *Tayū* (leading performers) are Yoshino, Tsushima, Tosa, Teika, Onoe, Takashima, all are excellent. Those who wish to see it should come.” Another [signboard] reads Sadoshima *kabuki*...²¹

Among the *tayū* mentioned in the above text, the names Yoshino, Tsushima, and Tosa were the names of actual *yūjo* who ranked among the top seven in Rokujō misujimachi. Since only the names of the *yūjo* performers are listed on the announcement board, we can understand that they emphasized the *yūjo* performers rather than the actual *nō* program itself. In short, the main attraction in the program was a *nō* dance by popular *yūjo*. *Nō* performances by *yūjo* were often featured in paintings, for example, the seventeenth century *Shijōgawara-yūraku zu* (Boston Museum).

1-b. *Yūjo Kabuki*

The *kabuki* started by Okuni in 1603 was soon copied by *yūjo*. The owners of brothels in the Rokujō misujimachi *yūri* were quick to capitalize on Okuni’s success and put up larger stages to have their *yūjo*

¹⁸ This event is written in *Tokitsunekyo ki*, the diary of aristocrat Yamashina Tokitsune. Details are available on page 208 of Moriya 1976.

¹⁹ Asai (ca. 1660) 1979. Translated by the author.

²⁰ As for *kanazōshi* and *Tsuyudono monogatari*, refer to the chapter three.

²¹ Aoyama 1971. Translated by the author.

girls perform *kabuki* with a view to attracting more people—especially men. Their stages on the Shijō riverbed were expected to act as *harimise*, a ground-floor room of a brothel with wooden-latticed windows in which *yūjo* awaited customers—in effect, a display case. These stages moved the function of the *harimise* from a narrow *yūri* to an open-air stage and promoted the *yūjo* arts. Men were attracted by *yūjo* girls dancing in a lively and fascinating way, instead of sitting motionlessly in the *harimise*. The sentence, “After *kabuki*, [we] played all night with *keisei* (*yūjo*) at Maruyama”, in the seventeenth century *Tōkaidō-meisho ki*, illustrates the success of the brothel owners’ scheme in drawing many customers to *yūjo kabuki*. Although *yūjo kabuki* was an imitation of Okuni’s *kabuki*, it was designed to attract more people. As Moriya Tsuyoshi points out that there was a difference between Okuni’s way of dressing and acting as a man and the approach of the *yūjo*.²² In the *Tōdaiki*, a governmental chronicle covering the period from the Momoyama to early Edo periods, Okuni’s appearance at *kabuki* is described:

Recently, a dance called *kabuki* was performed. This originated with a maiden of the Izumo Shrine named Okuni, though she was not a good-looking woman. She came up to the capital and performed it. [She] was in the guise of an eccentric man, especially, wearing eccentric swords and costume. [She] performed the role of an eccentric man flirting with the woman of a tea house very well. People in the capital enjoyed it very much. [She] was even invited to play at Fushimi Castle often.²³

Okuni’s appearance was based on that of *kabukimono*, “men of eccentricity” hanging about in the town. Their image displayed manliness, suggesting something of the previous war torn era. When the Warring States period was over around the end of the sixteenth century, lower-ranking *samurai* who were unable to find employment lost their roles as warriors. They were loud, roamed aimlessly around the towns in eccentric clothes, and often annoyed people by committing acts of violence. Their desperate wish to return to the former times is well expressed in the phrase, “age 23, been alive too long”, carved on a sheath worn by a *kabukimono* in the middle of fight appearing in *Hōkokusairei zu* painted by Iwasa Matabē (attributed). In this way, the image of *kabukimono* was far from delicate and elegant but, on the other hand, their image reminded people of the audacity of the previous Momoyama period. Okuni did not

²² Moriya 1976.

²³ Sentences from *Tōdaiki*, translated by the author. A teahouse, *cha-ya* in Japanese, functioned in the same way as a *yūjo* house at that time.

imitate *kabukimono* from the street to make a mockery of them, but rather, she stylized their coarseness and outrageousness in her own way. To them, her impersonation appeared to give voice to their frustration, and to the common people the *kabukimono* on stage symbolized the new era.

On the other hand, what was a *yūjo*'s imitation of *kabukimono* like? The early seventeenth *Keichō-kenmonshū* described *kabukimono* in *yūjo kabuki* as follows:

Now, at Nakahashi when a signboard reading “Ikushima *kabuki* is here” was put up, people gathered. [Both] the high and low made a big crowd. All were anxious [to see *yūjo kabuki*]. When it began, an *oshō* (a lead *yūjo* of the troupe) opened the curtain and stepped onto the *hashigakari* (a walkway leading to the main part of stage). [Her appearance] was so brilliant. [She] was wearing a large golden sword and a small sword, a bag containing flint, and a gourd around [her] waist. Accompanied by a clown, [she] strolled leisurely and merrily. [Her appearance] didn't look like a woman, instead, it looked like an amorous man. [It reminded people of] the appearance of Narihira from the classical era.²⁴

Her appearance, with eccentric accessories like golden swords, a flint-bag, and a gourd, represented the eccentricity of *kabukimono* in the same way that Okuni did. However, the overall impression of that is compared to the Heian aristocrat Narihira, a handsome man famous for his amorous sway over women.

In short, Okuni embodied the contemporary reality bearing the air of machismo through an impression of *kabukimono* shouting and roaming in the street, while the *yūjo* invited the audience to the pseudo-classical world via a romanticized image of *kabukimono*. *Kabukimono* played by *yūjo* might have looked like the one depicted in the early seventeenth century *Kabuki zukan* (Tokugawa Museum; figure 4).

Yūjo kabuki attracted people not simply with the romanticized image of *kabukimono* reworked from Okuni's original. The more eye-catching gimmick was a grand performance danced by many young *yūjo* girls to the accompaniment of *shamisen*, a new and expensive instrument at that time that Okuni could not afford, played by a leading *yūjo*. The eroticism of the extraordinary performance and the audience's infatuation with it are well conveyed in the *Keichō-kenmonshū*:

²⁴ Miura (ca.1614) 1969. Translated by the author.

girls, whom the moon and flowers would be envious of, are uniformly costumed. [They were] about the age of sixteen, their appearance too beautiful to be depicted with a brush. Flapping [their] flowery long-sleeves, lining pretty skirts [of costumes], 50 to 60 girls look so erotic. Delicate flowery-toned costumes are incensed with *manaban*, *kyara*, or red-plum *kyara* (names of aromatic incense). [Therefore, when they] dance, with a flap of the sleeves and a wave of fans, the fragrance is spread in all directions. ...As the music for the dance is nearing the final climax, [their] dance-steps come together with the rhythms of drums and flutes, and capture men's hearts. [For men] this world is like a dream, a floating world. All rich and poor, young and old never begrudge spending their life and fortune [on *yūjo kabuki*].²⁵

This elaborate performance by *yūjo*, described as something that is worth risking even your fortune and life for, was often depicted in paintings, such as the *Shijōgawara-yūraku zu* from the same period (Seikadōbunko Museum; figure 5).

As observed above, *nō* and *kabuki* performed by *yūjo* outside the *yūri* attracted men of all ages. What kind of people, then, paid attention to *yūjo* and their arts inside the *yūri*? Moriya argues that “the inclination toward the classical world” exhibited in *yūjo-kabuki* “derived from cultivation and taste of *yūjo* of Rokujō misujimachi.”²⁶ The next section explores the characteristics of this cultivation and why such cultivation and taste was required.

2. Attention to the Arts by *Yūjo* inside the *Yūri*

Today, in Shimogyō in Kyōto a building called Sumiya 角屋 preserves some remnants of an *ageya* 揚屋 house from the *yūri* of the Kan'ei era. An *ageya* house is a place where high-ranking *yūjo* entertained their customers. In the architectural designs of Sumiya, Hayashiya Tatsusaburō finds “refined taste” that is shared by the Katsura Imperial Villa built by the Imperial Hachijōnomiya family during the period between 1615 and 1624.²⁷

The villa functioned as a salon where aristocrats and *machishū*, wealthy upper class merchants, gathered. The Court with the Emperor Gomizunoo (1596-1680) as the center and aristocratic residences also

²⁵ Miura (ca.1614) 1969. Translated by the author.

²⁶ Moriya 1976.

²⁷ Hayashiya 1953, 349.

functioned as salons.²⁸ In these salons, various ranks of people such as warriors, monks, scholars as well as masters of tea, flower arrangement, and poetry gathered to enjoy sharing their wide-ranging education as well as aesthetic pursuits including *chanoyu* (ritual art of preparing and drinking tea), composing poems, arranging flowers, painting, ceramics, archery, chess, and *sugoroku*. Though they differed in social status, they generally belonged to the class consisting of wealthy men of aristocratic culture. In the *yūri*, they were also patrons who could afford to call high-ranking *yūjo* to expensive *ageya* houses like Sumiya.

High-ranking *yūjo* in the Rokujō misujimachi *yūri* were supposed to entertain important patrons with their skills in various arts and games. From the early age of *kamuro* apprenticeship, a *yūjo*—if a *yūjo* house owner recognized her talent—worked hard to acquire skills in the arts as well as a variety of games. The skills that good *yūjo* were required to achieve were *shamisen*, *koto*, *kokyū* (Chinese fiddle), a shell-matching game, *karuta* cards, *sugoroku*, *hanetsuki* (a kind of battledore), an incense game, and the like.²⁹ Interestingly, the utensils of these arts and games corresponded to the bridal trousseau which brides of upper class families, such as aristocrats and *daimyō* (provincial lords), brought to their new homes. In *Shikidō-ōkagami*, the level of *yūjo*'s achievement of arts is commented on.³⁰ Yachiyo (born in 1635), a *yūjo* who reached the highest rank of *tayū* around 1650, was known for her skills with *shamisen*, *koto*, and *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute), her ability to sing, perform *chanoyu*, and her talent for writing such beautiful calligraphy that she even founded her own school. It also mentioned that her ability to compose poetry was good enough to have her poems published in a poetry collection, and to understand lectures on such classics as *Ise Monogatari* (*The Tales of Ise*), *Tsurezuregusa* (*Essays in Idleness*), *Kokinwakashū* (an anthology of *waka* poetry compiled by the court), and *Genji Monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*). In this way, high-ranking *yūjo* were required to have not only good appearances, but also good skills and knowledge of various arts, games and literature; skills that corresponded to the culture of aristocratic intellectuals.

²⁸ Kumakura 1988. The salons are known as Kan'ei culture salons today. Kumakura thinks that Kan'ei culture lasted, in a broader sense, for about 70 years from 1596 to 1673, or, in a narrower sense, for about 40 years from 1615 to 1658.

²⁹ On the education and arts of *yūjo*, see Hatakeyama (1678) 2006 and Nishiyama 1985.

³⁰ Hatakeyama (1678) 2006.

Yoshino den, a biography of Yoshino (1606-1643) who was one of the top seven *yūjo* of Rokujō misujimachi, shows that *yūjo* and their patrons enjoyed arts and games in the *yūri* like aristocrats did in the Court:

men of noble blood and *daimyō* often came here (Rokujō misujimachi). [Therefore,] *yūjo* who served [these] good people inevitably had to become elegant. Their arts were classical; *jucchū-kō* (the art of appreciating incense), shell-matching game, composing poetry and collaborative poetry, playing the *biwa* (lute) and the *koto*. All *yūjo* had elegant taste and turned a blind eye to the vulgar.³¹

It says that *yūjo* who served upper-class patrons were soon to learn gracefulness, and scorned lower-class customers.

In the previously mentioned Sumiya, today we can still find a trace that suggests *yūjo* and their patrons enjoying the arts of the aristocrats of those days. On the second floor, there is a room called “Misuno ma”. The room is furnished with sliding doors on which classical green *misu* blinds (a typical curtain-like item hung in aristocratic residences) are painted, giving the room its name, and is thought to have existed at least as early as the 1670s³² though there is no data to indicate when it was first named “Misuno ma”. However, it is written in a book by Sumiya’s seventh master, Tokuya, that the present *misu* paintings on the sliding doors of that room were painted by Yamada Gazan, a Kano school painter in Kyō, in 1765.³³ It is possible to deduce that before then, around the time when Sumiya moved to the area called Shimabara in 1640, *yūjo* and their patrons enjoyed playing as if they were aristocrats in a room surrounded by *misu* blinds, and therefore, Sumiya had an eighteenth century painter paint *misu* on the doors.

The key word here, *misu*, reminds us of a seventeenth century two-paneled screen painting, *Nawanoren zu* (Museum of Arc en Ciel Foundation). On the right panel, there is a *yūjo* passing through a rope curtain (*nawanoren*) and a small dog, and on the left panel, only a *misu* is painted. The combination of a *yūjo*, a rope curtain, and a dog is said by art historians to be a parody of Onna Sannomiya (the Third Princess) in *The Tale of Genji* who was glimpsed through a *misu* that was accidentally lifted by a cat. The left panel, which has lost its original image, is thought

³¹ Yuasa (ca. 1826) 1980. Translated by the author.

³² Fujioka 1973.

³³ Fujioka 1973.

to have featured a picture of *misu* by a later painter who understood the witty parody well.³⁴

Okudaira Shunroku argues that “the scene depicted in *Nawanoren zu* is not a common scene in an actual *yūri* but rather an imaginary scene fabricated by the painter.”³⁵ In the actual *yūri*, however, *yūjo* and their patrons must have enjoyed aristocratic arts and games together in a quasi-aristocratic space surrounded by *misu* blinds, which naturally may have led the later painter to refer to the parody of Onna Sannomiya and repaint the lost left panel with an imagery of *misu*.

Let us return to the episode about Yoshino. Yoshino, the most famous of the top seven *yūjo*, was born in 1606 and was left to a brothel house owned by Hayashi Yojihei at the age of seven. She attained the rank of *tayū* at the age of 14 and changed her name from Rinya, her *kamuro*-name, to Yoshino. Her beauty and intelligence were so well known that it says in *Yoshino den* that her reputation reached Ming China, and her portrait was commissioned by a man named Li Xiangshan in 1627.

There is an episode about her close association with aristocratic intellectuals who were central figures of Kan’ei culture salons. Yoshino withdrew from *yūri* because a man by the name of Haiya Jōeki (1606-91) married her in 1631. Jōeki was a son of Hon’ami Kōeki (dates unknown), a nephew of Hon’ami Kōetsu (1558-1637), a great connoisseur and artist. Later Jōeki was adopted as a son of the wealthy merchant, the Haiya whose real name was Sano. Haiya is a pseudonym they used because the family had traded ashes (*hai*) for dyeing textiles since the fourteenth century. At the beginning of the Edo period, the Haiya family was established among the wealthy merchant town elites of Kyō. Jōeki learned *waka* poetry from aristocrats such as Karasumaru Mitsuhiro (1579-1638) and Asukai Masaaki (1611-79), and calligraphy from Kōetsu. Jōeki was well versed in such arts as *chanoyu*, the art of incense, and *kemari* (classical football). Jōeki obtained association with the Imperial Hachijōnomiya Toshitada (1620-62), a cousin of the Emperor Gomizunoo, through *kemari*, and participated in the project of building the Katsura Imperial Villa promoted by the Royal Hachijōnomiya family. Jōeki, in a word, was a member of the town elite and a member of the world of Kan’ei culture salons.

³⁴ Okudaira 1996.

³⁵ Okudaira 1996.

Yoshino received marriage proposals not only from Jōeki but from Konoe Nobuhiro (1599-1649), who was a younger brother of Emperor Gomizunoo and became the adopted son of the aristocrat Konoe Nobutada (1565-1614). Nobuhiro was an intellectual versed in calligraphy, *chanoyu*, and *waka* poetry. Nobuhiro was appointed as the *kanpaku*, the chief adviser to the Emperor, in 1623 and in *yūri* he seemed to be popular enough to be nicknamed “Mr. Sekishiro,” Japanese reading of *kanpaku*. It is said that when Jōeki married Yoshino, Nobuhiro wrote a letter about his broken-heart to his friend, calligrapher and painter, Shōkadō Shōjō (1584-1639).

In summary, aristocratic intellectuals who were members of the Kan’ei culture salons were treated as important patrons at the *yūri*. They were entertained by *yūjo* who were versed in aristocratic arts in pseudo-aristocratic spaces, and sometimes they even married *yūjo*. *Yūjo* were fully able to respond to the education and refined taste of their patrons, which, in turn, made the patrons obsessed with them. Aristocratic intellectuals’ relation to and interest in *yūjo* and *yūri* must have been very strong.



Figure 4: Kabukimono in *Kabuki-zukan*



Figure 5: Yūjo-kabuki in *Shijōkawara-yūroku zu*

Chapter III: Visualization of Interest in *Yūjo* via Device of *Kinkishoga*

We have so far looked into the way *yūjo* and their arts were regarded in society both from inside and outside the *yūri*, and we found aristocratic intellectuals had a deep relation to and interest in them. Finally, in this chapter, we will investigate how patrons of *yūjo* imagined them as well as how they had the *yūjo* painted.

1. Aristocratic Intellectuals and Contemporary Literature

As examined in the previous chapter, in the early seventeenth century aristocratic intellectuals gathered in salons and enjoyed sharing their knowledge and refined taste. Around this time, another new cultural phenomenon that stimulated aristocratic curiosity appeared—printing. Printing with movable type was brought to Japan from Korea as the result of the Japanese invasions of Korea (1592-98). This new technique fascinated the aristocratic class and brought them the pleasure of engaging in publishing books of various genres, including Confucianism, medicine, Buddhism, fictions, journals, travel literature, poetry, military chronicles, history, and dictionaries. Since the new technique was time-consuming and costly, they could only print books in limited numbers and distributed them within small groups. Exemplary of books published with this new technique is *sagabon*, a series of gorgeous books that revived classical literature and were produced by Suminokura Soan (1571-1632) and Hon'ami Kōetsu beginning in 1608.

At the same time, the old style of publication, copying by hand and making *emaki* scrolls, was still cherished among aristocratic intellectuals.³⁶ *Otogizōshi* 御伽草子, a Japanese literary genre of some 400 short illustrated fictional narratives with didactic, educational, imaginary, and quasi-historical content, was a typical literary style which was often produced in the traditional *emaki* style. Produced from the Muromachi period to the beginning of the Edo period, *otogizōshi* tales did not reflect the reality of early Edo society.

Appearing after *otogizōshi*, *kanazōshi* 仮名草子, a genre of popular prose in *kana* script produced from around 1600 through 1682,³⁷ was in

³⁶ Noma, Ichiko 1976.

³⁷ In terms of literary history, *kanazōshi* is considered the precursor of *ukiyo-zōshi*, whose origin was marked in 1682 when Ihara Saikaku's *Kōshoku ichidai otoko* brought a significantly new style.

the beginning literature for and by the aristocratic class and was produced either by hand copying or printing. *Kanazōshi* is distinct from earlier *otogizōshi* in that the stories often reflected customs and events of contemporary early Edo period society. For instance, *Chikusai*, a humorous story about the journey of quack doctor and his servant, includes observation of contemporary events such as court ladies having open-air gatherings and the introduction of the most recent and popular shops in Kyō. Another *kanazōshi*, *Uraminosuke*, a love story with the backdrop of attractive places in Kyō, is thought to be based on an actual illicit love affair between a court lady and a shogunal retainer.³⁸

Among the early *kanazōshi* stories, the Kan'ei era *Tsuyudono monogatari* (The Story of Tsuyudono) is the earliest piece about a romance between a man and two *yūjo*, revealing a strong interest in the new social phenomenon: the *yūri* and *yūjo*.

It is agreed by many scholars of early modern literature that the author of *Tsuyudono monogatari* was an aristocrat or someone related closely to an aristocrat.³⁹ We will examine how the author's interest in the *yūri* and *yūjo* is represented in the work in the next sections.

2. *Tsuyudono monogatari*

The *Tsuyudono monogatari* (Itsuō Museum) takes the format of a 3-scrolled *emaki*. It seems that the work was not produced in the format of book, either by hand copying or printing. In this sense, the intention of its production and the context it was appreciated in must have been different from other *kanazōshi* stories that were reproduced by means of hand copying or printing. The historical analyses of *Tsuyudono monogatari* can be summarized as follows: the author must have been from the aristocratic class as mentioned before, the production date would be 1624, it must have been made into an *emaki* soon after the establishment of the story, the author of the story and the writer of the text in the *emaki* must have been different people, and the illustrations were not painted by a mainstream painter such as one from the Kano or Tosa schools, but by an unknown town painter.⁴⁰

³⁸ Noma, Ichiko 1976.

³⁹ Aoyama Chūichi proposes that Konoe Nobuhiro is the author in his essay “*Tsuyudono monogatari* wo megutte,” *Kinsei bungei* 14, June edition, 1978.

⁴⁰ *Tsuyudono monogatari* 1974.

As for the content, *Tsuyudono monogatari* is a love story featuring a number of the contemporary customs previously mentioned. The first scroll is about the young protagonist, Tsuyudono, falling in love with Azumano kimi, a *yūjo* of the Yoshiwara pleasure district in Edo. The second scroll starts with the double suicide of a *yūjo* named Musōhime and her lover, and continues with Tsuyudono's journey to Kyō. The last scroll consists of Tsuyudono's sightseeing in Kyō, Rokujō misujimachi *yūjo-hyōbanki*,⁴¹ Tsuyudono's falling in love with a *yūjo* named Yoshino, the reunion of Tsuyudono and Azumano kimi, and finally, Tsuyudono's entering the priesthood.

3. Pseudo-classicism seen in *Tsuyudono monogatari*

What kind of literary analysis is given to *Tsuyudono monogatari* by experts, then? Scholars of early modern Japanese literature evaluate it as a work that conveys the transitional phase in literature from the medieval to the modern.⁴² Their argument is that, though dealing with a contemporary love romance between a man and several *yūjo*, the work borrows a lot of ideas and expressions from classical and medieval literature such as *The Tales of Ise*, *The Tale of Genji*, *Akinoyonaga monogatari*, and *Asagaonotsuyu*. However, as the analysis proposed by another literary scholar Nishizawa Seiji emphasizes, the significance of *Tsuyudono monogatari* lies in its focus on a love romance between a *yūjo* and a man in the backdrop of a contemporary pleasure-seeking trend, and the ideas and expressions borrowed from classical and medieval literature do not extend any significant influence on the main theme.⁴³ In other words, for the author and the surrounding appreciators who were of the aristocratic class, pseudo-classical ideas and expressions were such easily-accessible methods that they naturally picked them up to narrate the love story reflecting trends in the contemporary society.

In the text of *Tsuyudono monogatari*, we have found pseudo-classicism in the narrative method. Then, in terms of the visualization, what kind of method is used for illustrations?

⁴¹ *Yūjo-hyōbanki* is a compilation of rankings and critiques of *yūjo*.

⁴² This evaluation is made by Noma Kōshin, Higashi Akimasa, Ichiko Teiji, Aoyama Tadakazu, Mizuta Hiroshi, and Yasuda Fukiko. As for a summary of analytical discussions, see Nishizawa 1979.

⁴³ Nishizawa 1979.

Tsuyudono monogatari contains 29 illustrations: 13 illustrations (nos. 1 - 13) in the first scroll, seven illustrations (nos. 14 - 20) in the second, and nine illustrations (nos. 21 - 29) in the third. All illustrations except number 25 are about 93 cm. Illustration number 25 depicts Rokujō misujimachi, and is outstandingly long at 374 cm, disclosing the author's profound interest in the contemporary *yūri* and *yūjo*. Illustrations number 12 and number 13 depict the scenes of elopement between Tsuyudono and Azumano kimi, and their capture by pursuers. Number 12 borrows from the scene of Akutagawa, the 6th section of the sagabon version of *The Tales of Ise*, depicting a man carrying a woman on his back. Number 13 borrows from the scene of Musashino, the 12th section of this book, depicting pursuers apprehending them. Tsuyudono makes a journey from Edo to the capital Kyō as Narihira from *The Tales of Ise* goes in the opposite direction. There are four scenes of Tsuyudono's journey adapted from the sagabon version of the *The Tales of Ise*. Number 15, depicting the scene of him passing the Hakone Shrine, is taken from the scene of Narihira crossing Mount Asama in the 8th section; number 16, depicting the scene of Mount Fuji, is from the scene of Mount Fuji in the 9th section; number 18, depicting the scene of Yatsushashi, is from the Yatsushashi scene in the 9th section; and finally, number 19, depicting the scene of Ogihara no watashi, is from the Sumida River in the 9th section. In short, the *Tsuyudono monogatari* incorporated classical allusions into its imagery.

Besides applying pseudo-classical models for the illustrations, *Tsuyudono monogatari* uses other models to depict *yūjo*. It borrows formal motifs from earlier Buddhist paintings. Many forms of *yūjo* in the street of Rokujō misujimachi *yūri* in illustration number 25 borrowed their forms from images of a standing Fugenbosatsu 普賢菩薩 (Samantabhadra) with a wish-granting mudra, and the sitting Yuima 維摩 (Vimalakirti), an Indian Buddhist layman known for his intelligence and eloquence. However, not one of the forms of *yūjo* (a total 30 *yūjo* on the street in illustration number 25) features the typical *yūjo* posture (putting one hand in the sleeve and holding the hem of the *kosode* in the other hand) that would become very common in later paintings, especially in and after the Kanbun era (1661-73). This may suggest that because a standard style of depicting *yūjo* was not yet circulated among painters, they borrowed the forms of existing imagery and superimposed them onto images of *yūjo*.

In summary, to depict the world of *yūjo*, both in text and illustration, *Tsuyudono monogatari* makes several allusions to classical literature suggesting that the work reflects the revival of the classical, one aspect of the multi-layered Kan'ei culture.⁴⁴ The method of borrowing forms from existing models was also valued by other Kan'ei salon people when producing portraiture.⁴⁵ Again what we have to keep in mind here is the fact that the creators and the appreciators were aristocratic intellectuals and members of the Kan'ei cultural salons. Their interests and tastes are given visual expression through *mitate*, a method of parody. While sharing the same interests and tastes, members must have chosen this witty method as a common language understood within their small circles.

4. *Mitate* in Genre Paintings of the Early Modern Period

In Japanese early modern genre paintings, *mitate* is frequently employed to depict people, especially *yūjo* in the *yūri*.

In *Yuna zu*, a *yuna* (bathhouse woman) is depicted in a manner of that parodies Kanzan 寒山 (Hanshan), a legendary Tang-dynasty Chan eccentric.⁴⁶ In *Honda Heihachirō Sugata e*, the image of a *yūjo* standing and receiving a letter copies the posture from a portrait of *Eguchi no kimi* 江口の君 (Jakkōji Temple), who was originally a *yūjo*, but later deified as Fugenbosatsu. This form, often combined with an image of a *kamuro* as the messenger, appears in various paintings which include *fuzukai* 文使 (messaging) scenes such as the *Tagasode screen* (Nezu Museum).⁴⁷ Kadokawa Mutsumi pointed out another possibility of a double *mitate* in *Honda Heihachirō Sugata e* through formal models taken from paintings of Chinese hermits; *the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove* and the *Four Graybeards of Mount Shan*.⁴⁸

In the *Hikone byōbu*, *kinkishoga*, the four accomplishments of Chinese scholarly gentlemen, are parodied as contemporary leisure activities of a Japanese *yūri*; the Chinese zither is changed to a *shamisen*, Chinese chess to Japanese *sugoroku*, Chinese books to a love letter, and

⁴⁴ As for the multiple aspects of Kan'ei culture, see Kumakura 1988.

⁴⁵ Another pictorial activity practiced by Kan'ei-salon intellectuals is discussed in a book about portraiture production by Kōgetsu Sōgan and surrounding people (Kadowaki 2002).

⁴⁶ On *Yuna zu*, see Satō 1993.

⁴⁷ Okudaira 1996.

⁴⁸ Kadowaki mentions this possibility at the 53rd national convention of the Japan Art History Society. The summary is available in (Kadowaki 2000).

the activity of painting is substituted by landscape ink painting on a screen. These transformations were made possible because of the similarities between the Chinese four accomplishments and the activities that took place in a Japanese *yūri*. The *Hikone byōbu* also includes parodies of form. The woman in the fourth panel leaning on an armrest is borrowed from a typical form of Yuima lounging over an armrest. This relaxed pose is common to the pose of a late seventh century poet Kakinomoto Hitomaro who is often portrayed in hanging scrolls, and who is revered as the patron saint of poetry.

In the *Hikone byōbu*, Yuima's pose is also superimposed onto the *kamuro* in the third panel, who sits leaning with her legs half-stretched out to the side. The *kamuro* parodying Yuima's sitting posture often symbolizes exchanging love letters, and is transmitted in other paintings such as *Yūroku jinbutsu zu* (Hosomi Museum) and *Fuzukai zu* (Princeton University Art Museum).⁴⁹ Interestingly, with the increased transmission of these conventions, artists worked out how to make the messaging scenes more easily legible to viewers. In this scene of the *Hikone byōbu*, a *kamuro* simply points her finger at something, or more possibly someone, which is not clear in the painting. However, in the Hosomi version, a *kamuro* points at a young man holding a sword, which indicates that he has entrusted the *kamuro* with a message to the *yūjo* sitting at the table in front of the *kamuro*. Then, in the version of *Fuzukai zu* at Princeton, a *kamuro*, instead of pointing her finger at someone, holds a letter in her hand and hands it to a *yūjo*. In this painting, the young man is no longer necessary because his existence is implied by the *kamuro* holding his message in her hand and clearly giving it to his favorite *yūjo*. Step by step, the meaning of this scene became clearer and more accessible to viewers. This evolution is even more pronounced in *Ōkadangen zu*. There, a *kamuro* sitting in the manner of Yuima and rubbing an ink-stick has already given a letter to her master *yūjo*. The *yūjo* is now reading it, and the *kamuro* is preparing the ink, encouraging her to write a response.

As observed above, in Japanese early modern genre paintings “classical themes are reset in the contemporary guise” of people in a pleasure quarter. “For both the creator and viewer, a device of *mitate* is a sort of ‘intervisuality’ that brings into play a meaningful convergence of references.”⁵⁰ Contemporary viewers then, upon seeing them, must have

⁴⁹ Okudaira 1996.

⁵⁰ Moerman 2008, 25-26.

understood the visual references to classical models, and contemporary artists wittily borrowed the forms from classical models to represent contemporary trends.

5. *Yūjo* Depicted via Thematic Device of Parodying *Kinkishoga*

Finally, this paper examines the process of how aristocratic intellectuals parodied the painterly theme of *kinkishoga* in paintings of *yūjo*.

There is a painting titled *Kinkishoga zu* (Cleveland Museum; figure 6), which is said to be rendered in the style of Iwasa Matabē (1578-1650), often (controversially) credited as the father of *ukiyo-e*. As said before, *kinkishoga* is a theme favored by Japanese painters who specialized in Chinese style paintings since medieval times. Traditionally, the figures engaging in the four accomplishments in *kinkishoga*-themed paintings are aged Chinese literati in reclusion in the mountains. Their lofty scholarliness is symbolized by flowing robes, drooping caps, sparse hair, long beards, and by their location in nature.⁵¹ However, in the version of *Kinkishoga zu* at the Cleveland Museum, the figures are aristocratic young people clad in contemporary outfits and located in a house with an attached garden in the city. The clothing worn by the men reveals that they are turning away from old symbolic aristocratic attire, such as tall headgear, large robes, and wide pants. Instead, they are interested in contemporary *kabukimono* styles such as a sleeveless long outer garment. Furthermore, the four activities are no longer lofty and traditional Chinese ones, but casual and contemporary Japanese ones; Chinese zither replaced by a Japanese *koto* played by a young Japanese lady, Chinese chess replaced by Japanese *go* board game played by a Japanese man and lady, heavy piles of books replaced by a man reading a light booklet, and a painting (usually in ink) on a large screen or hanging scroll replaced by drawing on a small sheet of paper.

At the beginning of the Edo period, some aristocrats who were fascinated by the contemporary *kabukimono* trend behaved so impudently that in 1603 Emperor Goyōzei (1571-1617) posted a remonstrance about it.⁵² However, their fascination with the *kabukimono* trend did not decrease. According to a diary entry dated February eighth in 1631 by the

⁵¹ Brown 1997.

⁵² Details of this event are available in *Keichōnikken-roku*, a diary written by Funahashi Hidekata (1575-1614).

aristocrat, Hino Sukekatsu (1577-1639), the Court put a ban on some activities for young aristocrats, including prohibitions of theatergoing, practicing of drums, playing *shamisen*, and playing games. The entry of March 26th in the same diary writes that Emperor Gomizunoo complained about some aristocrats' frequently visiting Rokujō misujimachi *yūri* saying with increasing irritation that “Rokujō-manias should behave themselves.”

There seems to have been frequent interaction between aristocratic society and *yūri*. Aristocrats not only resorted to *yūri*, but also invited *yūjo* to the Court for dance practice sessions or to have parties with them.⁵³

The *kabukimono* trend was not limited to male aristocrats. In 1609, a scandal broke revealing a love affair between Inokuma Noritoshi, a handsome aristocrat general of the Imperial Guard of the Left, and a court lady who was a favorite of the Emperor. Inokuma and his fellow aristocrats took court ladies out and they behaved inappropriately together. According to *Tōdaiki*, men's behavior was that of *kabukimono*, and court ladies were like *keisei* (synonymous with *yūjo*)-*kabuki* women.

The aforementioned Cleveland Museum *Kinkishoga zu* might have reflected the tendency of contemporary young aristocrats imitating *kabukimono* and enjoying certain pastimes. Aristocratic intellectuals might have soon wanted to depict *yūjo*, who were as accomplished in the various arts as they were, and as a result, produced paintings like the *Hikone byōbu* or *Ōkadangen zu*. In these paintings, we can perceive hints of the patrons' shared interests through the use of the *kinkishoga* theme, though it might be a device spontaneously picked up by them. The device portrays *yūjo* as Chinese lofty gentlemen and the *yūri* as the realm of recluses in the mountains.



Figure 6: *Kinkishoga zu*

⁵³ Moriya 1967.

Conclusion

Yūjo, the new secular icons of the age were, unlike legendary and often imaginary hermits appearing in continental classics, a tangible everyday fact for the commissioners of the paintings that features them. However, they were so new that commissioners had to request painters to borrow known models, because they did not have their own fixed witty ways of depicting them. In the beginning, genre paintings depicting people and customs in *yūri* needed to borrow existing forms from earlier periods. The four accomplishments of lofty Chinese gentlemen, having something in common with arts of *yūjo*, were a convenient and easy-to-transform device for contemporary intellectuals when commissioning paintings.

As the works lack attached documents, we do not have any direct material to inform us about the background of production and the exact context in which these works were appreciated. However, deep interest in *yūjo* and the *yūri*, and knowledge of *kinkishoga* would be indispensable factors in producing and appreciating these works.

In 1640, Rokujō misujimachi *yūri* was forced to relocate to the then remote Suzakuno (present-day Shimogyō-ku) area of Kyō. The sudden unexpected transfer caused great confusion, and therefore, the new *yūri* was named Shimabara after the disastrous Shimabara Rebellion (1637-38) that broke out in Shimabara in Hizen. For patrons, the *yūri* in the Suzakuno area might have appeared all the more attractive than it had when it was in Rokujō misujimachi in the center of the capital. The new *yūri* would appear suddenly in front of them after a dark and difficult journey. It would have looked like a gorgeous Maitreya's paradise rather than a lofty old man's reclusive realm in the mountains, and there, elegant *yūjo* with seductive smiles would have invited them into paradise like bodhisattvas.

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