

San'yo, Bakin, and the Reanimation of Japan's Past

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会議概要（会議名，開催地，会期，主催者等）	ハワイ州マウイ，2000年11月
page range	201-222
year	2007-06-01
シリーズ	International Symposium in North America 2000
URL	http://doi.org/10.15055/00001450

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By the time McKim, Mead, and White carved his name (with those of 499 other notable men and women) into the frieze of their new building for the Boston Public Library, Rai San'yō's (1780–1832) reputation was settled. Four years earlier, in 1890, he had been named one of the twelve “masters” of world literature, along with Carlyle, Wordsworth, Goethe, Tolstoy, and (on the Japanese side) the philosopher Ogyū Sorai (1666–1729), the novelist Takizawa Bakin (1767–1848), and the historian Arai Hakuseki (1657–1725). What earned him such honors was, primarily, his *Nihon gaishi*, the *Unofficial History of Japan*. Released in 1827, it became the first truly popular history of the nation. By the mid-Meiji period, the text was a fixture of the upper middle-school curriculum, for both boys and girls, and it featured in the entrance exams for numerous colleges. Nakamura Shin'ichirō tells a story that may serve as an index of just how widespread the *gaishi*'s influence was. He recalls how, as a middle-school student in the early years of the twentieth century, he was puzzling through some passages in the history, when his grandmother—in his words a “typical, illiterate old woman from the countryside”—began reciting those passages from memory.

Required reading (sometimes literally) for the generations that spanned the Meiji Restoration, the text attracted such widespread acclaim because it was credited with having stirred a nation to revolution. The *Unofficial History* was acknowledged as a key text in shifting a nation's sympathies away from the Tokugawa and back to Imperial line. Its compassion for the plight of the medieval court, whose prerogatives were usurped by warriors, had, it was said, aroused similar feelings for the court under Tokugawa hegemony. San'yō's moving descriptions of the fate of Emperor Godaigo's (1288–1339) attempted restoration of imperial authority and his pathetic account of the valor of medieval loyalists gave courage to activists who sought an end to Tokugawa rule. Ōshio Heihachirō (1793–1837) named the work as inspiration for his deeds. Yoshida Shōin (1830–1859) read the *Unofficial History*'s concluding lines—“And thus it seems that the military having come to rule all the realm has reached the apex of power”—as “filled with warning.” “The prosperous inevitably fail,” he cautioned. “Indeed, isn't the peak of power [a time to be] most afraid?”

San'yō has thus come down to us as one of the forces behind the Meiji Restoration: spokesman for an emperor-centered history, one of late-Tokugawa culture's most eloquent imperialists. I do not wish to quibble with this depiction of San'yō. I would like, however, to look at him in a somewhat different light: to suggest that we consider him not simply as imperial publicist but as one of a widely various group seeking a new understanding of the present's relationship to the past. There is profit, I contend, in viewing San'yō in the company of antiquarians and authors of historical fiction, in tandem, that is, with a heterogeneous group experimenting with new modes of making sense of the past.

A Passion for Curiosities

Once a month for some twenty months, from the spring of 1823 through the fall of 1824, Takizawa Bakin, Kuwayama Shūri, and a group of writers, scholars, and others “addicted to curiosity”—they called themselves the Tankikai, “society of those addicted to curiosities”—assembled to show off to each other the rarities each had collected. The result of these gatherings, published in 1832 as the *Tanki manroku* (Random Recollection of the Society of Those Addicted to Curiosities), is a jumble of old records, rubbings of inscriptions and seals, antique maps, samples of calligraphy and painting, descriptions of interesting birds, tools, rocks, weapons, and costumes.¹ A spear said to have belonged to Minamoto no Tametomo (1139–1170), hero of the Hōgen War (1159), jostles with illustrations of coal from Chikuzen and Echigo; a document bearing Hideyoshi’s (1536–1598) seal competes for attention with drawings of twenty-two kinds of seaweed, a sketch of a Qing court cap, and a roof tile from the old imperial palace. A letter from Kusunoki Masashige (1294–1336) sits next to a headrest “handmade,” we are told, “by Master Sorai.”

What can have been the aim of the gatherings that produced such a miscellany? Assembled without order, ranging indiscriminately across history, geology, art, anthropology, and other disciplines, the entries that make up *Tanki manroku* attest to a curiosity that seems faintly absurd. The compilers are fascinated by things, but do not seem to know quite what to do with them. Yet such miscellanies were a common product of the publishing industry of Tokugawa Japan: by one author’s reckoning (Ishihara Masaakira [1759–1821], in *Nennen zuibitsu* (Year-by-year Miscellany, 1801–1805), several hundred such titles had been produced in “recent years.” Their authors included prominent political figures, leading authors, as well as scholars and intellectuals of all sorts. All of the most important authors of historical fiction composed antiquarian miscellanies. Takizawa Bakin, Japan’s most successful author over the first half of the nineteenth century, alone composed several, mostly multivolume, antiquarian miscellanies. These works, essays on topics that caught his attention and notes culled from his reading, give evidence not only of the breadth of his reading, but of the range of Bakin’s curiosity. *Saritsu udan* (Notes Taken in the Rain, 1803), the first, includes essays on Japanese heroes, advice about travel, and a potpourri of material about places of historical interest. *Nimaze no ki* (Potpourri, 1811) presents readers with, among other things, essays about the origins of outcasts (*hinin*) and women warriors in the Sengoku period, as well as a treatise on goblins (*tengu*). In *Enseki zasshi* (False Pearls, 1810), Bakin’s curiosity extends to gods and demons, old poetry, the etymology of the word “badger” (*tanuki*), the dialects of Eastern Japan, and ancient laws concerning the children of slaves. *Gendō hōgen* (Humble Ramblings, 1818) offers advice for travelers (carry a strong rope, fitted with grapples at either end, to facilitate river crossings), as well as essays about the Japanese gods, short histories of famous places, information about *sarugaku* and *dengaku*, love suicides, and the history of map-making in Edo.²

These works are fascinating as displays of random erudition—in one of his collections, a question about a particular contemporary hairstyle sends Bakin to half-a-dozen classical texts, both Japanese and Chinese; in another he lists 298 sources for the first two volumes (about 100 pages in a modern edition) of a five-volume miscellany. But they are also bound to frustrate anyone searching for broader meanings. The collections on display belong in some sort of outlandish museum, the kind that is all cobwebs and clutter, intriguing—even

fascinating—but insufficiently ordered to make any sense. One is tempted therefore to write off the enterprise as merely antiquarian, to regard the Tankikai's collectors with the same amused exasperation with which Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) describes Jonathan Oldbuck's passion for antiquities:

Behind Mr. Oldbuck's seat . . . was a huge oaken cabinet, decorated at each corner with Dutch cherubs, having their little duck-wings displayed, and great jolter-headed visages placed between them. The top of this cabinet was crammed with busts, and Roman lamps and paterae, intermingled with one or two bronze figures. . . . A large old-fashioned oaken table was covered with a profusion of papers, parchments, books, and nondescript trinkets and gewgaws, which seemed to have little to recommend them, besides rust and the antiquity which it indicates. . . . The floor, as well as the table and chairs, was overflowed by the same *mare magnum* of miscellaneous trumpery, where it would have been impossible to find any individual article wanted, as to put it to any use when discovered.³

Scott's description finds something comical, even endearing, in the antiquary. Awash in a sea of things, indiscriminately attracted to everything, the genuine and the dross alike, so that the collection overwhelms the collector, the antiquary evinces the amateur's unbridled enthusiasm. The unbridled nature of that enthusiasm—that can be wholly absorbed by “trinkets and gewgaws, . . . miscellaneous trumpery”—separates, it's conventionally held, the antiquary from the adherents of the modern disciplines, which as the name implies pride themselves on having learned to cut through the clutter to achieve a more streamlined and rigorous approach to the past.

More than the disorder, though, it is, as Scott suggests, the *inutility* of the antiquary's collection that both amuses and galls. When, for example, Tō Teikan (1732–1797) shows that the number of lines of text per page for official documents changed over the course of the tenth century (from eighteen or nineteen lines per page to thirteen or fourteen), it's hard not to be perplexed.⁴ What could have led him to count lines in the first place? And what exactly could one do with this information? In general, it is difficult to know where to place the knowledge antiquarians produce. Leon Zolbrod, who has written of Takizawa Bakin's miscellanies, adopts one typical strategy: he, in effect, sets the works aside, noting only that “antiquarian studies and scholarly essays . . . commanded respect in both China and Japan. By indulging in such studies the educated man of leisure could safely spend his time without fear his reputation would suffer.” The kind of curiosity on display in a miscellany, that is to say, was acceptable in a member of the intelligentsia, and afforded someone like Bakin a respectable cover for his more disreputable work as a novelist. But surely the desire to present a respectable front cannot by itself account for Bakin's interest in arcana—not to mention the interests that motivated readers to purchase these works and publishers to publish them. Unfortunately, the texts themselves do not offer much enlightenment. The preface to Tō Teikan's *Daily Record of the Love of Old Things* (Kōko nichiroku, 1796) states only that “all people share a fondness for antiquities.”⁵ In a similar manner, Kitamura Nobuyo (1784–1856) offers his *Gareki zakkō*, a remarkable investigation into customs, clothing, foodstuffs, and other aspects of everyday life (his subject matter and the use he makes of medieval picture scrolls anticipate Amino Yoshihiko's (1928–2004) work nearly two centuries later), as if it were self-

evident that readers would be fascinated by the minutiae of past times.⁶

Only occasionally does an author indicate how a collection might be put to use. In *Gendō hōgen*, for instance, Bakin proposes that the collection might serve as a crib for writers faced with an unmanageable flood of books and information: “Ah, but writing is a difficult task,” he declares, and “even those with talent may simply turn out elegant flummery. . . . [The writer] whose gaze does not comprehend a wide variety of materials will have only ill-informed thoughts.” Unfortunately, he continues, the information explosion of recent times, “in which books pile up without number,” has made it impossible for individuals to keep pace; a miscellany may prove just the ticket: it can stand as a reference writers could delve into for the kinds of detail that might give their work weight and substance. This kind of explanation, though, is rare. More often, the authors of miscellanies indicate that they were inspired only, as one writer put it, by a “love for the writings of olden times.”

Another way to rein in the disorder might be to anchor the miscellanies in a recognized literary tradition. In late Tokugawa Japan what I am calling miscellanies were generally classified as belonging to a genre known as *zuihitsu* (which means “following the brush”). The essence of the *zuihitsu* was its desultory form. As Ishiwara Masaakira defined it in his *Year-by-Year Zuihitsu*, “a *zuihitsu* is something in which you write down things you have seen and heard, said or thought, the useless and the serious alike as they come to you; you record things that are constantly on your mind and things it would be bad to forget.” By the late Tokugawa period, the genre had been given a genealogy that linked it to illustrious forebears—Sei Shōnagon’s *Pillow Book* and Yoshida Kenkō’s *Essays in Idleness*. These works, from the tenth and fourteenth centuries, respectively, were heralded for their brilliant style and praised, as Linda Chance notes, for “provid[ing] exemplary nuggets of Japanese aesthetic wisdom . . . for demonstrating Japan’s flashes of genius.” To Tokugawa commentators, their fluid style, the contradictions and conundrums their desultory organization encouraged, even the fact that they came in short, easily digested passages—all these recommended the texts as models for how thoughts might be conveyed. (There was, as this suggests, a decidedly didactic thrust to the Tokugawa construction of *zuihitsu*. *Essays in Idleness*, in particular, was put to use as a textbook as early as the seventeenth century.)

Like their putative ancestors, the miscellanies of the Tokugawa period typically consisted of a series of short entries, usually arranged in no particular order. One entry might be an elegant meditation “On skies clearing and rain falling,” to give one example. An inquiry into naming practices in “olden times” (it begins: “people who study ancient times frequently wonder why so many names end in “maro” or “hiko”) might lead to an essay on defilement in the Heian and medieval periods. Miscellanies offered, in addition to etymologies and practical advice, observations of society (love suicides, for instance, or contemporary hairstyles), curious stories (a man who was carried off by a strong gust of wind), and pithy observations about life (“comments made by bystanders often turn out to be true”).

But there are elements in many of later Tokugawa miscellanies that set them apart from the tradition with which they identify themselves. Of course, it is hard to generalize about a genre the very essence of which is diversity. But starting sometime in the later eighteenth century, a new, antiquarian impulse seems to have become commonplace. Certainly, there was no letup in the production of miscellanies that fall within the tradition established around *Essays in Idleness*, but alongside these appeared other works, like Teikan’s *Daily Record of the*

Love of Old Things, Kitamura Nobuyo's *Gareki zakkō*, or Bakin's *Random Recollections*, filled with meticulous discussions of inscriptions, documents, coins, drawings, seals, clothing, and the customs and lore of olden times. Santō Kyōden's (1761–1816) *Kottō shū* (Antiquities), likewise, is marked by a deep interest in the customs of the past: in one entry, he cites medieval picture scrolls and *noh* and *kyōgen* as sources for information about how people in the past dressed. He writes about umbrellas and tofu, lanterns and women's hats, in each case seeking out historical sources for the topic. Notably, the history evident in these antiquarian miscellanies is almost exclusively concerned with material culture or daily life. The version of the past on offer is therefore quite different from the political narrative that was the mainstay of most histories. A closer look at one of Takizawa Bakin's miscellanies reveals part of what influenced this turn. In *Gendō hōgen*, the last of his miscellanies, Bakin places his work within two lineages: one is *zuihitsu*, the other encyclopedias. In part this may have been because he had grand designs for this particular collection. Its scope and organization signal that he intended it to be a work of some gravity—unique among his antiquarian pieces, it is divided, after the fashion of Chinese encyclopedias, into sections on heaven, earth, plants, man, artifacts, and miscellaneous, and Bakin outfits the work with an accordingly grand introduction. He speaks of his desire to see the work passed on to posterity, and he names illustrious forebears, citing his debt to encyclopedists such as Amano Sadakage (1661–1733), whose 170-volume encyclopedia, *Shiojiri* (Mounds of Salt), may have been the model for Bakin's own ventures. He cites as well the historian and official Arai Hakuseki and his histories; Hong Mai (1123–1202), a Song-era encyclopedist; Kaibara Ekiken (1630–1714) and Kuriyama Senpō (1671–1706), author of *Hōken taiki* (Great Chronicle of Hōken). Despite the list of predecessors (but true to the *zuihitsu* form), Bakin does not seem to have paid much attention to organization within sections, which jump from topic to topic with no apparent order, and he also claims that the work was tossed off—he wrote things down he says “as I came across them, as the thought occurred to me.” In part, then, the elaborate architecture was simply puffery: Bakin's attempt to borrow the prestige and dignity of encyclopedias for his ramblings.

Nonetheless, it is true that encyclopedia writing had some very important effects on miscellanies in general. The introduction of important Ming encyclopedias (via Nagasaki) in the early seventeenth century helped to spark what one scholar has called “the discovery of ‘materiality’” in Japan. Between about 1630 and 1715, in particular, numerous redactions, adaptations, and extensions of the Ming encyclopedias appeared, and the influence of these texts can be observed throughout the miscellanies of the later Tokugawa period. Starting with works such as Nakamura Tekisai's (1629–1702) taxonomy of natural objects, *Kinmō zui* (Illustrated Encyclopedia, 1666), Japanese scholars began to express intense interest in natural and man-made *objects*. Inspired by the Confucian imperative to name things and to maintain names in their proper relation to one another, these works inspired further interest in the *material* world. Kaibara Ekiken's massive enumeration of the flora and fauna of the Japanese isles draws directly on this trend, as does his “objectivist” attitude toward knowledge: “to have inadequate information, to be overly credulous about what one has seen and heard, to make a determination in a precipitate manner—all these four modes of thinking are erroneous.”⁷

The miscellanies, with their overt interest in antiquities, in etymologies, in the customs of olden times, and in the care with which they identify and discuss sources, clearly reflect

the influence of encyclopedias. Their emphasis on conveying information and the possibility they hold out that the information might be useful likewise betrays the kind of approach to knowledge found in encyclopedias. Where they depart from the model afforded by the Ming encyclopedias lies, of course, in the chaotic nature of the miscellanies. One might find in a miscellany entries that would be perfectly at home in a work like *Wakan sansai zue* (Japanese-Chinese Illustrated Compendium of the Three Components of the Universe), but the overall thrust is not toward systematization or taxonomy; it remains the fact that miscellanies were not encyclopedias.

Antiquarians and History

Another way of bringing order to the antiquary's clutter might be to link the undisciplined knowledge it contained to subsequent developments. By projecting forward and discovering in the antiquarian works a taste of what was to come when the rust had been removed and the clutter contained, one can retroactively find meaning in their accumulations of knowledge. Joseph Levine's study of the evolution of English historiography proposes just this sort of significance for antiquarian knowledge. The antiquaries of Medieval and Renaissance England figure in his account as the forerunners of modern historiography: "Without the long preparation first laid by the great collaborative enterprise of the antiquaries, without their stubborn insistence upon getting back to the sources and seeing for themselves, and without the cumulative learning they piled up in their massive tomes, modern historiography as we know it today would never have come to pass." Antiquaries developed the methods—for recovering and making sense of lost languages, for example, or for judging the reliability of different sources—that would be indispensable to later scholarship. At the same time, however, "there was undoubtedly still a distance to travel." First, while antiquaries may have learned to decipher ancient scripts or devised methods to authenticate texts and expose anachronisms, they did not work these technical advances into a systematic methodology (such as might mark a true discipline); their achievements remained piecemeal in nature. Second, and more important to Levine, the "antiquarian enterprise" lacked the key characteristics of modern historiography: keen awareness of the gulf that separates past from present and with this awareness a sensitivity to the problem of perspective (that that of the people historians study is not that of the historian). The long prehistory of English historiography culminates, in this account, in Edward Gibbon (1737–1794), by whose time the accumulated achievement of antiquarians had advanced historiography "to the point where it could clearly differentiate the past from the present, not only roughly but in exact detail, and it had established a difference, both practical and theoretical, between fact and fiction. . . . Yet Gibbon still stands apart from us by an awkward gulf. . . . He remains confident that the values of his own time and place are still the only standards for all history, that ancient Romans and medieval Christians, Arabs, Turks, and Byzantines must all be held to the same moral, social, and aesthetic standards. As a result, whole cultures were virtually incomprehensible to him." As a result, too, antiquarians must be judged incomplete or imperfect historians.

The Japanese version of this account constructs a similar role for antiquarian knowledge. In the standard reckoning, modern historiography arose in Japan when European historical method organized an indigenous field overly attracted to "fragments and minutiae," as Shigeno Yasutsugu (1827–1910), founding president of the Historical Association in Japan

and one of the first professors of history at Tokyo Imperial University put it in 1890.⁸ And yet, as Shigeno himself admitted, this concern with “minutiae” was also an important and necessary feature of the new historical profession. The general term for the kind of study that Shigeno both acknowledged and disavowed is *kōshō*, the Japanese rendering of the Chinese *kaozheng*, a scholarly practice that began to gain hold in the early Qing period. Meaning, literally, “examine the evidence,” *kaozheng* was founded on painstaking source criticism. Its original inspiration seems to have been to recover the Confucian classics from centuries of accumulated emendation and interpretation, but *kaozheng* methods were brought to bear in a wide range of areas, including language, astronomy, geography, and mathematics. *Kaozheng* scholars sought to base their studies in a bedrock of fact, shorn of all speculation, and they developed methods designed to distinguish, for example, those parts of a text that were genuinely products of a certain era from those portions that were later additions. In Japan, as Shigeno saw it, *kōshō* scholarship contributed to the development of the historical discipline by encouraging an “inductive” approach, an approach marked by its attention to detail and to careful scrutiny of texts in order to establish the facts. Ōkubo Toshiaki (1900–1995), perhaps the leading authority on the development of the modern historical discipline in Japan, characterizes *kōshō* scholarship in much the same way. It helped to create, he declares, rigorous standards for the weighing of evidence, and he singles out for praise certain philological studies that settled questions of authorship or, in the manner of Valla’s study of the Donation of Constantine, exposed widely regarded sources as fabrications. But, by and large, he portrays antiquarians, particularly those who were authors of miscellanies, as enthusiastic amateurs. In writing his miscellanies, Bakin was taking part in a “hobby popular among urban intellectuals.”⁹

There is, to be sure, something to be said for this view. The authors of antiquarian miscellanies frequently adopt practices that come tantalizingly close to the methods prescribed by modern disciplines. Bakin’s scholarship, for instance, is exemplary. In all of his miscellanies, he reads carefully and widely, consults multiple sources, and searches out contrary opinions. Occasionally, too, he looks beyond the written record. For instance, in an essay on the history and customs of Sado, contained in *Nimaze no ki*, he mentions the assistance he received from a “native” informant, a man from the island who answered Bakin’s queries and corrected his misimpressions.¹⁰ Other features of his work likewise anticipate modern practice: each volume contains a long list of works cited, and he is meticulous about identifying the sources he referred to in writing each entry. After his first collection, moreover, he issued “errata” sheets, in which he identified errors in previous volumes, although (in typical antiquarian fashion?) he sometimes takes this to extremes. Long sections of *Nimaze no ki*, for example, are given over to “conversations” with fellow antiquarians, who have written in pointing out errors in Bakin’s prior works. One by one, Bakin acknowledges the objections, which range from the trivial (a word forgotten in the title of a source) to the more substantive (Bakin erred in misattributing a source), and replies, accepting or rejecting his correspondents’ suggestions. Something like peer review (though after the fact), it testifies not only to the existence of networks of like-minded scholars, but to the value they placed on the open exchange of ideas. Of course, as this suggests, Bakin was not the only scholar to adopt such practices. Bibliographies, source citations, and public debate (conducted at gatherings like that of the Tankikai or via the pages of publications) are common features of the antiquarian miscellanies of the

late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

What is perhaps most frustrating about antiquarianism is not simply that it does not seem to amount to much. Rather, it is that the very methods endorsed by modern disciplines fail to produce the kinds of knowledge those disciplines seek. If we follow Levine or Ōkubo and insist on viewing the antiquarian enterprise in light of the aims of modern disciplines, we are bound, I think, to be frustrated. A closer look at Bakin's miscellanies, though, suggests that we may be able to contemplate a different role for antiquarian research than that proposed either by Levine or Ōkubo. As Steven Mullaney remarks about a similarly curious and confused institution, the *Wunderkammern* of early modern Europe, "Although many *Wunderkammern* did indeed provide the raw materials for later collections and institutions, what we encounter in them is not the proleptic beginning of a civilizing process—the confused and somewhat frivolous origins of the museum—so much as . . . a historical dynamic specific to the period in question."¹¹ The path leading from the antiquarian miscellanies of Bakin and his contemporaries to the modern historical discipline is not likely, that is, to be simply a matter of refining techniques and adopting a more purposeful and less cluttered approach to the material. To typecast antiquaries as muddled historians who do not quite make the grade leads to a dead end. Viewed from the standpoint of the modern discipline, their undisciplined productions can only seem quaint and confusing; we will never cease wondering why they pursued such minutiae with such zeal. In producing miscellanies instead of monographs, however, Bakin was doing something very different from what a modern historian would do with the same materials. We need to try to understand that difference; otherwise, we will miss the true import of the work Bakin and his fellow antiquarians pursued.

Bakin's antiquarian enterprises were intimately connected with his fiction. Like Walter Scott (but also like the other important writers of historical fiction in Japan, including Ueda Akinari (1734–1809), Tsuga Teishō (1718–1794?), and Santō Kyōden), he interspersed scholarly essays and notes throughout his historical fiction. He repeatedly strays from the story to display his learning, with discussions of Chinese literature or disquisitions on the writing of history and historical fiction. The third volume of *Chinsetsu yumiharizuki* (Crescent Moon, 1806–11), for example, begins with a gazetteer of the Ryukyus, a comprehensive guide to the climate, customs, and history of the islands. Earlier in the novel, in a preemptive strike against critics who might complain about the liberties he takes in extending the life of his hero, Tametomo, beyond the actual hero's lifespan, he offers a lengthy citation from Hayashi Razan's (1583–1657) authoritative *Jinja kō* (On Shrines) to establish the possibility that Tametomo *might* be figure honored at a shrine in the Ryukyus. Throughout the work he breaks in, with a characteristic "come to think of it" (*anzuru ni*), to discuss sources that contradict, agree with, or simply comment on some aspect of the tale. Similarly, in *Nansō satomi hakkenden* (Tale of the Eight Dog Warriors, 1814–42), he starts off with a detailed account of the history and geography of the Southern Bōsō region, to serve as a backdrop to the story. Sometimes, there is a direct connection between the material in his miscellanies and his fiction. Essays in *Enseki zasshi* and *Gendō hōgen* on the correspondence between names and things reappear in *Hakkenden* as rationale for the names he assigns his villains. More often, though, his antiquarian research shows through in the sheer amount of detail he marshals in his fiction, especially the elaborate descriptions of places and events.

Bakin's fiction, it is important to note, speaks to something new. His historicism is

different from that of the medieval war tales he so loved (to the extent of borrowing their language and style whenever he could) and different again from the countless works from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that used historical settings. The war tales were about (more or less) contemporary events; the “historical” stories make no attempt distinguish between past and present. Accounting for the “new historicism” of Bakin’s day—and recognizing what was new about it—requires us to take notice of developments that reach back over the preceding century. First, it had been commonplace since the late seventeenth century for writers to adopt historical settings for their works. In part this was the result of censorship, which beginning with edicts issued in the mid-seventeenth century and reiterated several times over the ensuing century forbade (among other things) commentary on anything concerning the shogun, the bakufu, or contemporary politics, as well as anything that featured sensational or scandalous events.¹² Since the present had been declared off limits, authors responded by placing their stories in the past and associating them with well-known, and acceptable, heroes and incidents from history. By the late eighteenth century, so widespread was the practice of “hiding” potentially objectionable or risqué works in the past that the authorities moved to stamp out the practice. In 1790, as part of a new crackdown on the book trade, the bakufu declared: “Recently some wicked . . . books have appeared which are ostensibly set in ancient times; henceforward these are to be regarded as undesirable.”¹³ We know that at least one well-known author was punished as a result of this edict, and the era’s most powerful publisher was fined heavily and had his stock confiscated.

It has been argued that the censor’s new rules galvanized authors and booksellers into finding more subtle ways of using history to mask their wicked works. It seems just as plausible that changing notions of what constituted history were rendering the old subterfuges too absurd for even the censors not to notice. At any rate the late eighteenth century saw a variety of experiments in literature that bespeak a change in the ways people understood and sought to represent the past. According to Naoki Sakai, the popular fiction of the seventeenth and early-to-mid-eighteenth centuries is marked by what he calls the “absence of historicity.” Written in a standardized classical literary language, the popular fiction was notable for a “striking lack of historical differentiation between the language of the classics and the language of the present. . . . No doubt, people of the time knew that classic writings in fact belonged to the past, that the language of the classics was not their own. . . . Nonetheless, they knew neither how to express this sense of ‘unfamiliarity’ nor how to legitimate the integration of vulgar and mundane expressions into literary discourse.”¹⁴ By contrast, late eighteenth-century writers began to develop techniques that made it possible to represent and take advantage of the unfamiliarity of the past. Authors like Ueda Akinari, for example, began to use specific versions of the classical language as a distancing technique: exploiting the language of noh plays, for example, as a means of creating a strange and exotic atmosphere for ghost tales, or consciously adopting the vocabulary and cadences of military chronicles to set a historical tale authentically in the past. Bakin, it should be noted, was a master of this technique.

In the broader antiquarian world of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Japan, we can also detect a new interest in the past and a new understanding of its relationship to the present. For example, Tō Teikan, a poet and scholar of classical Japanese literature, prefaces his *Daily Record of the Love of Old Things* (*Kōko nichiroku*, 1796) with the declaration that “A love of the past—this is a trait all men share.”¹⁵ I think we realize—as Teikan

himself must have, why else make the statement?—that a love of the past is not necessarily an innate human characteristic. In fact, Teikan was giving voice to something relatively new in Japan. The period in which he lived, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, saw history become a part of mass culture, and along with this, emerged what Carolyn Steedman has referred to as “the self-conscious embrace of history”¹⁶—the development, in other words, of the sense that history is an integral part of everyday life in the present. During this period, as Omote Tomoyuki notes, historically oriented approaches began to take hold in a stunning range of endeavors, from the study of language to sword-collecting and architecture.¹⁷ Teikan’s own intellectual range is typical. In addition to a number of studies of classical literature, Teikan also published at least two volumes devoted to the exploration of old things. These books are random collections of notes about old seals, documents, books, textiles, tea implements, ink stones, even field boundary markers. He shows a particular fondness for what we now call archaeology: *Kōko nichiroku* is filled with rubbings from old tombs, copies of the inscriptions on stone monuments, descriptions of grave goods, and drawings of the terracotta figurines that guard imperial burial mounds. Teikan’s own studies thus embrace archaeology, diplomatics, geography (he is always concerned with identifying historical place names), the study of antiquities in general. Teikan was not unique in his display of antiquarian zeal. In the salons of Edo, as we have seen, literati shared their investigations into such things as the “campaigns of Tametomo, conqueror of the Western marches,” “a piece of petrified wood found near the Natori River in Mutsu,” or a “statue of Tachimarō carved by Unkei [a medieval sculptor].”¹⁸

The wealth of details amassed in an antiquary’s miscellanies made it possible to represent past times in ways that made them seem much more fully present. The interest in hairstyles, in food and clothing, in etymologies and antique language—these translated into the ability to present readers with a fully realized historical realm. Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935), the pioneering critic, translator, and founder of the academic study of literature in Japan, in 1886 identified “elaborate description” as the “forte of the novel.”¹⁹ The ability to record the “small facts” and “trifling matters” that “make a deep impression on people” is the reason, he writes, people prefer historical fiction over official histories.²⁰ The history encompassed by the antiquary’s archive is not that of the modern disciplinarian; its goal is not so much to explicate or to lay our causes and consequences as it is to describe and represent. Richard Maxwell urges us to think of the antiquary’s collection as “a period room in a museum, where the feel of a specific era is evoked by assembling furniture from several different decades.”²¹ This is why, I contend, the great writers of historical fiction also wrote antiquarian tracts. The antiquarian enterprise opened a different route to the past than that available in standard histories. It supplied authors with the materials they needed to evoke the feel of a period and to imbue it with excitement and drama.

San’yō and the *Nihon gaishi*: History as Drama

Born (in 1780) into a family of considerable scholastic distinction—his father was a Confucian scholar in the employ of Hiroshima-han and his two uncles were both well-known poets—San’yō was probably destined by heredity to distinguish himself as a writer of Chinese prose and poetry. He began studying Chinese at age six and was soon recognized as something of a prodigy; at seventeen, accompanied by one of his uncles, he was sent to Edo

to study at the preeminent center of Confucian scholarship. He appears, however, to have preferred the pleasures of the capital to the rigors of Confucian scholarship and within a year was sent down. A couple of years later, in 1800, he suddenly, without permission from his domain, ran away to Kyoto, where until he was reeled in by his stalwart uncle he apparently led a thoroughly dissipated life. Brought back to Hiroshima in disgrace, he spent the next three years under house arrest confined to his quarters, and several years after that disinherited, grubbing out a meager existence. It was during this time that he began gathering his sources and outlining what would eventually become *Nihon gaishi*. By 1807, it seems that he had completed a first draft of most of the history proper; by 1811, he appears to have finished the sections of commentary. Over the next several years, though, San'yō continued to revise and rework the text—toiling he wrote in a letter to a potential patron at the pace of one volume (*kan*) per month—even as the work began to circulate, and gain adherents, in manuscript.²² Finally, in 1827, with the support of the former bakufu chief elder, Matsudaira Sadanobu (1759–1829), he made the text public.

A quick glance at the work offers few clues as to its enormous appeal. For the truth is that *Nihon gaishi* is not a particularly reliable or even original history. It recounts the history of Japan from about 1100 through the 1780s (although the last century and a half, the period since the consolidation of Tokugawa rule, consists almost entirely of genealogical information; the history is barely sketched in). It proceeds via the stories of the great military families, from the Minamoto and Taira in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, through the Ashikaga in the fourteenth, and the Takeda, Toyotomi, and Oda families in the sixteenth. It concludes with the Tokugawa. Each section ends, in good Confucian fashion, with a commentary assessing the achievements and shortcomings of the family under consideration. In these respects, the work is not readily distinguishable from other histories written during the Tokugawa period. Indeed, compared to Arai Hakuseki's historical works, particularly the *Tokushi yoron* (Lessons from History), which offers a sophisticated philosophy of history and a theory of historical causation, San'yō's sense of history seems crude—he offers the reader a string of events and genealogies, with no real explanation for or discussion of historical change. There are, moreover, other shortcomings. From the outset, scholars of Chinese declared his prose clumsy (i.e., not literary enough) and full of "Japanisms"; historians pointed out factual errors and accused him of plagiarizing other histories, especially Hakuseki's *Tokushi yoron*. The portions on the civil wars of the fourteenth century that drew such praise from late Tokugawa loyalists were by and large cribbed from the *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace), a medieval war chronicle.

Nonetheless, for nineteenth-century audiences *Nihon gaishi* was without rival the most influential and popular history of Japan. It caused an immediate sensation when it was first published, and it continued to provoke admiration and controversy through the century's end. The historian and critic Yamaji Aizan (1865–1917) captured many people's sense of the uniquely inspiring nature of *Nihon gaishi* when he declared (in 1890) that San'yō "wielded his brush as a samurai wields his sword. . . . He showed us Japanese heroes for a Japanese nation; he wrote a history of Japan for the Japanese. . . . And we learned [of our past] not solely by force of reason, but through words [that read] like poetry, like song." Tokutomi Sohō (1863–1957), another leading Meiji intellectual concurred: "San'yō *sensei* painted for us, for the first time, a picture of the nation of Japan as a entity alive in its history."²³ Such

testimonials suggest that San'yō's particular achievement was to move people, to stir them to action, as he did young loyalists like Yoshida Shōin, or to make them feel a connection with the nation's past.

If the content of the work is not remarkable, little different from a number of other histories available at the time, the way San'yō chose to tell the story is. The reason for work's success, for the passions it aroused, lies in his skill as a storyteller. Not only was San'yō a superb writer—Donald Keene calls him “the outstanding writer of Chinese poetry and prose of the Tokugawa period, and perhaps of all Japanese literary history”²⁴—but he succeeded in *animating* Japan's past in a way no one else had. He did this by employing a number of techniques designed to make his history more interesting and accessible. First, he purposely avoided the dense, florid prose seemingly required of truly scholarly history in favor of a simpler, more “colloquial” style that could be appreciated by a wider audience. (His Chinese reads as if he meant from the start for it to be rendered back into Japanese as it was read.) Frequently, too, he introduced language, colloquialisms or terms that might figure in a warrior's gruff vocabulary that made “true” scholars sneer.²⁵ Finally, San'yō employed his considerable talents as a writer to make the history exciting. Japanese history, in his hands, became a suspenseful story, a narrative that impels the reader along through a succession of virtuous and dastardly deeds. Testing the boundaries of convention with his language, writing with an eye to bringing out the dramatic possibilities of a given scene, made for a history that was more entertaining and accessible.

Nihon gaishi is justly renowned for its vivid style and exciting handling of material; just as importantly it is a history that strives to eliminate the distance between the past and present-day readers. He wrote in such a way as to make the past as *present* as possible: for example, moments of high drama—such as the various revolts of the mid-twelfth century, the Genpei wars, or the wars between the courts in the fourteenth—he tended to write as dialogues, with the characters' lines freely adapted from war tales and other sources. In other words, his is a way of telling history that strives to make it seem both personal and immediate, that seeks to conjure up history as a fully embodied, fully real experience, and that therefore makes history something with which readers can more readily identify. The difference between San'yō's unpretentious, dramatic style and the pedanticism, the distanced, sober, rational history-telling of Hakuseki and others could not be more marked.

Finally, San'yō makes history something that impinges directly on the present, in part by carrying the story down to the present day, in part by ending, as we have seen, on a distinctly ambiguous note (declaring that the bakufu was at the peak of power even as he hinted, none too subtly, that it might be ripe for a fall). These gestures encourage readers to believe that history is not over, that, however paradoxical the thought might be, history might be remade by action in the present. By contrast, earlier histories, including especially the official histories sponsored by the bakufu, presented Japanese history as a completed story. *Tokushi yoron*, for example, concludes in the 1590s, more than a century before the present day of its publication (1712). Following Chinese precedent, in which regimes wrote the histories of their predecessors, official histories tended to be cast as assessments of the morality of previous regimes. And for the work of assessment to begin, the history under consideration had to be at an end. A “living” history of the kind San'yō conceived is foreign to this conception. San'yō carried history into the present precisely by leaving it unresolved. The plot lines of two

master narratives structure his history. The one traces the rise of the military and is seen to culminate in the Tokugawa regime; the other follows the fortunes of the imperial house and seems to hit bottom as the military peaks. These plot lines intersect repeatedly in the course of the history, and the note of ambiguity at the end implies that they will again. Though his sympathies clearly lie with the imperial side, he leaves pointedly unresolved the question of which master narrative will triumph in the end or, indeed, when that end will come. By these means, San'yō maintains his readers' investment in history. Earlier conceptions held that the past might instruct the present by providing examples of virtuous and wicked behavior. *Nihon gaishi* certainly offers plenty of virtue and wickedness, but it also proposes a relationship between past and present that is much more intimate, for history is shown in this text to be an on-going concern, something that is as much unrealized potential as it is a record of past deeds. *Nihon gaishi*, that is, might be regarded as a pioneering effort at writing a new sort of history, one intended not merely to instruct or enlighten, but to entertain and capture the imagination.

San'yō and Bakin

When the first professional, academic historians set about such tasks as organizing the curriculum and judging which texts were worthy of inclusion in the newly formed pantheon of Japanese history, they tended to disparage *Nihon gaishi* for its imaginative excesses. For example, Shigeno Yasutsugu and Kume Kunitake (1866–1934), two of the leading academic historians of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, declared in 1907 that “many students would probably be shocked to learn that *Nihon gaishi* isn't a history but an historical drama. . . . It would mean the destruction of national history if we continued to let them roam about in these historical fictions.”²⁶ Several decades earlier, in 1884, Shigeno was a bit more explicit about San'yō's faults: “San'yō,” he wrote, “is certainly a skilled writer, and he captures the mood of the times well, . . . but he uses sources indiscriminately and he passes off mistaken interpretations as fact.”²⁷ San'yō, in sum, fictionalizes history, embellishing, even “lying” about the past to achieve dramatic effect. At nearly the same time, 1885–86, another author came under fire for many of the same reasons. In his *Essence of the Novel* (*Shōsetsu shinzui*), Tsubouchi Shōyō, even as he praised Bakin's fiction, decried his fantastic plots, “mechanical style, absurd mannerisms, and moralistic bent.”²⁸ Whatever one may think of these judgments, one must admit that Tsubouchi et al. were on to something when they accused San'yō and Bakin of virtually the same failings.

The desire to dramatize the past, to make history appealing as well as instructive, is one of the key attributes Bakin claimed for his historical fiction. Bakin was the acknowledged master of the genre known as the *yomihon*. A book for reading (and not, as with picture books, simply for looking at), the typical *yomihon* was a deluxe production, conceived and executed on a grand scale. (So grand in fact that even though they were published in serial form they were too expensive for most readers to afford; they circulated by means of lending libraries.²⁹) Bakin's *yomihon* are sweeping historical dramas. Almost all are set in the middle ages—his favorite periods being the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—and are built around real historical figures and actual places. There, of course, the “history” frequently ends. His first great success in the genre, *Chinsetsu yumiharizuki*, offers insights into Bakin's method.

He bases the tale on the life of the twelfth-century hero, Minamoto no Tametomo. The first part sticks closely to the places and broad events of Tametomo's career, ending with his death in exile. Bakin, of course, livens up the record: early in the story he outfits Tametomo with a pair of wolves who serve as companions and familiars; he has him do battle (repeatedly) with dragons and monstrous snakes, with demons disguised as beautiful women, and the like. In other ways, too, Bakin departs from what is strictly justifiable, at least to our sense of history. He has no difficulty, for instance, introducing anachronisms into the story: we have ritual disembowelments, Edo-period coins, and any number of other things that rightly have no place in a tale about the twelfth century.

The overwhelming popularity of the first installment of the story persuaded Bakin to resurrect Tametomo and continue the adventures. Here again, we encounter the strange mixed message of much of Bakin's historical fiction. He goes to some length to justify the further career of his hero, which, as he admits, "cannot be found in any of the military histories or chronicles of our land."³⁰ Bakin scours Chinese histories, roots out legends about Tametomo's sword, tracks down the annals of shrines associated with his hero, and draws on other sources to extrapolate from them the possibility that Tametomo may have made it to the Ryukyus. Despite the implausibility of much of what happens in his novels, then, Bakin struggles to maintain a certain kind of plausibility. In this instance, instead of simply admitting that he was making up a set of further adventures for his popular hero, he seems determined to prove that Tametomo could indeed have had a second career as king of the Ryukyus. To further the effect, he supplies copious amounts of detail about time and place—he prefaces the first sequel to *Crescent Moon*, for example, with a guide to the geography and customs of the Ryukyus.

Like San'yō's history, Bakin's historical fiction presents us with a puzzle. He seems at once excessively devoted to history and excessively cavalier about it. One is tempted to do as the Meiji-era critic Uchida Roan (1868–1929) did, and set it aside, declaring it primitive. Yet, Bakin's work merits a closer look, I believe, for his attempts to fictionalize history speak to developments that are crucial to the articulation of history in Japan. Luckily, Bakin tended to be as garrulous about his craft as he was in his tales. His method, he writes at the end of the second part of *Crescent Moon*, is to offer "half truth, half fiction"—this in contrast to "those picture books, which make up everything without discrimination."³¹ In the preface to the third sequel, he elaborates:

Historical fiction (*haishi*) attempts to explicate what appears in official histories and make their contents widely available to the general public. Vulgar histories (*bōkan yashi*) by contrast follow the wind and seize the shadows, deluding the public. There is no question which of these [*haishi* or *bōkan yashi*] is erroneous and groundless, or which confuses people. Although *Crescent Moon* is a work of fiction, it draws on historical records and is faithful in every respect to the official histories. It does not contain clever fabrications. . . . It does not mislead or confuse the reader.³²

The particulars of time (*jidai*), place (*nengetsu*), and character (*seimei*) he takes from history, but instead of simply repeating what the official histories say, he "weaves them into a wonderful tale." He describes himself as "fleshing out the historical record," "introducing a measure of drama, yet without losing sight of the old records."³³ I would like to stress just

how bold these claims are. Bakin, though he humbly represents himself as simply adhering to the historical record, in fact suggests that his “half truth, half fiction” is much to be preferred. Official histories, he indicates, are too stuffy, too narrowly conceived, to be of wide appeal. Only an imagined history, of the carefully circumscribed sort he himself wrote, could capture the imagination of a broad populace.

Bakin is also noteworthy for his desire to reach a large audience. As a professional writer, he depended on that audience for his livelihood. Whatever his motivation, Bakin clearly envisioned a mass readership for his fiction. In the passage quoted above, Bakin refers repeatedly to the public at large (*shisei, sejin, hito*), whom he hoped to entertain and instruct with his histories. The full extent of that readership is difficult to estimate, but the mere fact that Bakin imagined that the “public” constituted the audience for his work is noteworthy.³⁴ Benedict Anderson points to the development of vernacular print culture as one of the primary stimuli for the re-imagining of community along national lines.³⁵ It is not too far fetched to see Bakin's fiction as performing a similar task. In addressing an admittedly still very vaguely defined public, in seeking to instruct that public in its own history, Bakin helped Japanese learn to imagine themselves as a people.

In all these respects, Bakin's romances seem not so different from San'yō's history. Each seems motivated by a desire to make history accessible, and in order to achieve this end each presses for drama instead of a dry recitation of the facts. And they did so because they conceived of their task in a specific way. Both San'yō and Bakin were addressing a problem that was relatively new in their day, but that is still with us: how to preserve the “pastness” of the past, while yet claiming that the past ought to matter to the present. Bakin's frequently rather strained insistence that he has not deviated “in the slightest particular” from the historical record marks his attempt to contend with this problem. He asks his readers to read his works as history, as works about places and times far removed from the here and now, yet he also believes that the affairs of these distant times and places can speak to and instruct people living in his day. Bakin's willingness to countenance anachronisms in his stories seems a device designed to patch over some of the distance that separates these two realms. San'yō, because what he wrote was already acknowledged to be history, did not face the same need to persuade his audience that they were reading history; nonetheless, his version of history seems calculated to engage the present, to remove without entirely erasing the distance that separates present from past.

The works of Bakin and San'yō thus might be seen as helping Japanese negotiate a new kind of relationship with the past. Yamaji Aizan, cited above, was on to something when he asserted that San'yō had produced a “history of Japan for the Japanese people.” He was noting the transformation of the past into “our” past, from a record which might serve to illustrate the applicability of universal (Confucian) principles to the record of a particular people. Carolyn Steedman, following Christina Crosby, describes nineteenth-century British melodrama as a “force that domesticated history by identifying the social with the familial and making the past a subject for nostalgia. . . . [In melodrama] the past was presented as something that was lost, but that was also there to be found: a place to find a home in.”³⁶ It is not hard to suppose that both Bakin and San'yō, in their determination to write popular works about the past, works that might truly captivate an audience, were part of the apparatus that domesticated the Japanese past. Bringing figures from Japanese history alive as heroes of

a grand romance, adding pathos to the litany of names and dates that constituted orthodox history, they helped turn those names into everyday household items. One could live with and care about the historical characters who inhabited Bakin's fiction or San'yō's history in a way that one could not with the figures archived in official versions of the past.

Print Culture and Popular History

What does all this have to do with the miscellanies with which this essay started? San'yō's history, Bakin's *yomihon*, the myriad miscellanies—in a variety of areas, in a variety of guises one finds in late Tokugawa Japan a new conviction that the past is significantly different from the present and that the past is nevertheless interesting and meaningful for the present. The notion that the past is precursor (and not simply a repository for models of good and bad behavior or for a morality that is valid for all times and places) finds expression in a number of sites. The histories that Bakin and San'yō wrote mark an important turn in this discourse, as they negotiate its passage from restricted antiquarian circles to mass culture.

San'yō and Bakin belong to a world in which books held a central and special place. Antiquarians like Bakin were bibliophiles and book collectors, and many of the objects they wrote about came from books. Not only were books the medium and form by which collections of curiosities circulated, but, as Kitamura Nobuyo, compiler of the *Gareki zakkō*, put it, "in thinking about the past, nothing is more valuable than a book." Many miscellanies are collections of texts: snippets and stories, interesting anecdotes culled from "old books." Even when the objects described are not textual, they seem to derive their significance from their associations with places, people, and events mentioned in books. The arrow is of interest because of its (possible) connection with the hero of a war tale; the roof tile attracts attention because tiles like it are mentioned in an eighth-century history. A figurine excites comment because it may come from the tomb of an ancient emperor. Like Scott's Oldbuck, who inhabits a world in which every detail of the landscape seems to suggest something he has read about in some history, these books are products of a culture in which books are everywhere and in which books have the ability to tell us about the world.

Curiosity

Just as important is that the spread and commercialization of print created the very conditions for the emergence of curiosity. Barbara Benedict argues with respect to seventeenth- and, especially, eighteenth-century England, that curiosity—the kind that sparked an interest in antiquities or that interested itself in "broken tools or implements immobilized in cabinets . . . coins in cases or framed paper money"—is the product of a distinct historical moment. Between 1660 and 1820, she declares "the practices and objects associated with precious courtly culture became increasingly available to the middle and even laboring classes. This cultural commodification made rarities common and thus . . . freed culture from serving as a means to stage and enforce state power and opened it as a space to be filled with individual meaning by a consuming bourgeoisie."

It is remarkable how well this construction seems to apply to Japan. If the growth and expansion of the book industry is any indication, then Japan over roughly the same period experienced a similar commodification of culture. This development in turn stimulated (to bor-

row Anderson's words again) "a distinctly modern pleasure in novelty and consumption."³⁷ In the print trade, the demand for novelty was met in a variety of ways: books of fashion, for instance; or stories and prints of the demimonde of actors and courtesans, which perforce changed with the seasons. Notably, as we have seen, Japan also witnessed a turn to history, as a new mode of historical fiction rose to great popularity. Of course, writers had made use of history before. But in works such as *Ugetsu monogatari* (Tales of Moonlight and Rain, 1776), the past, Chinese or Japanese, was wielded to new effect. It became another world, a realm haunted by ghosts and ruled by dark, dangerous passions. History in such works served up curiosities and marvels; it emphasized the unfamiliarity of the past.

Such experiments in literature ran parallel with the great development of antiquarianism in Japan and with the production of miscellanies with an antiquarian edge, and the most celebrated writers of historical fiction also compiled miscellanies. Part of the reason for this may simply have been that they needed stockpiles of interesting material to fill out their now longer, more involved narratives. But these were also, it should be noted, narratives produced for a market, and their popularity necessarily bespeaks a shift in what people wanted from the past. The demand for novelty, so familiar a part of commodity culture, extended as well to the consumption of the past and helped shape it into something different.

During the Tokugawa period, it has been said, Japan discovered history. Historians typically identify the period between 1650 and 1720, when the regime threw its weight behind the writing of official histories and the first historicizing schools of philosophy made their debut, as the crucial one. Important as that period was, I would like to argue that another era was just as important. The period running from the late eighteenth century through the 1830s or 1840s, the era, that is, of the great experiments in historical fiction and of the miscellanies with which this essay began, rewrote the ways history was understood and altered fundamentally the expectations peoples brought to the past. Curiosity—the item on display in the miscellanies and exploited in the historical fiction—offered readers a model for a new way they might experience and relate to the past.

Official histories had looked on the past as a mirror for princes, had analyzed it for models of good and bad behavior, and it mattered little whether the models were ancient or modern, foreign or domestic. As a result their presentation of the past seems remarkably flat; the idea that the past is a foreign country was not part of this conception of history. In the popular history supplied by historical fiction and the miscellanies, by contrast, the past is very much a realm of the other. Writing for a market that demanded novelty, authors responded by depicting history as place filled with curiosities. In so doing, the authors of such works helped to introduce a distinction that nowadays is regarded as essential to the study of history: the idea that the past is not (quite) like the present, that to look to the past is to peer into another, strange world.

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NOTES

1 *Nihon zuihitsu taisei* 1927–28, vol. 12.

2 *Nimaze no ki* in *Nihon zuihitsu taisei* 1927–28, vol. 12, pp. 468–555; *Enseki zasshi*; *Kottō shū*, *enseki zasshi*, *yōsha bako*, Yūhōdō Bunko, 84; etc.

3 Scott 1998, pp. 21–22.

4 Tō Teikan, *Kōko nichiroku*. In *Nihon zuihitsu taisei* 1927–28, vol. 22, p. 545.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 494.

6 *Gareki zakkō*.

7 Kaibara Ekiken, *Yamato honzō*, preface. Quoted in Yonemoto 2003, p. 50.

8 Shigeno 1938–39, vol. 1, pp. 35–47. See also Ōkubo Toshiaki's now-standard account of the rise of the modern historical discipline (Ōkubo 1988). For the role of *kōshōgaku*, see, pp. 30–35, 75–80.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Nimaze no ki*, in *Nihon zuihitsu taisei*.

11 Mullaney 1988, p. 66.

12 Konta 1981, pp. 55–87, and Kornicki 1998, pp. 331–62.

13 Kornicki 1977, p. 156.

14 Sakai 1991, pp. 121–22.

15 Tō Teikan, *Kōko nichiroku*, in *Nihon zuihitsu taisei* 1927–28, vol. 22, p. 545.

16 Steedman 1995, p. 77.

17 Omote 1997, p. 90.

18 These examples can be found in *Tanki manroku*, *Nihon zuihitsu taisei* 1993, 2 vols.

19 Tsubouchi 1926–27, pp. 21–22.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 90.

21 Maxwell 2001, p. 421.

22 For information about the circulation of texts in manuscript, see Kornicki 1982, pp. 503–33.

23 The quotations from Aizan and Sohō are in Miyagawa 1997, p. 82.

24 Keene 1976, p. 550.

- 25 Nakamura 1976–77, vol. 3, pp. 168–69, discusses the ridicule scholars of Chinese letters directed toward San'yō's prose style.
- 26 From the preface to Shigeno and Kume's textbook, *Nanbokuchō jidaishi*. Cited in Miyagawa 1997, p. 94.
- 27 Shigeno 1884, p. 2.
- 28 Tsubouchi 1950.
- 29 On the subject of lending libraries (*kashihon'ya*), see Nagatomo 1982. The works of Peter Kornicki, esp. Kornicki 1980, pp. 331–44, and Kornicki 1998, pp. 391–97, are also instructive.
- 30 Takizawa Bakin, *Chinsetsu yumiharizuki*, NKBT, vol. 60, p. 227.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 411. See also Ishikawa 1988, pp. 40–51.
- 32 Takizawa Bakin, *Chinsetsu yumiharizuki*, NKBT, vol. 61, p. 129. I have slightly modified the translation of the passage found in Suzuki 1996, p. 17.
- 33 Takizawa Bakin, *Okame hachimoku*. Quoted in Ishikawa 1988, pp. 44–45.
- 34 Nagatomo 1987, p. 19, suggests that publishers could expect to sell 7,000–8,000 copies of Bakin's works. Since many of these were sold to lending libraries, the total readership must have been considerably larger.
- 35 Anderson 1991.
- 36 Steedman 1997, p. 79.
- 37 Anderson 1991, chapters 2–3.

GLOSSARY

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|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Amano Sadakage 天野信景 | Kaibara Ekiken 貝原益軒 |
| Amino Yoshihiko 網野善彦 | <i>kan</i> 卷 |
| <i>anzuru ni</i> 案ずるに | <i>Kinmō zui</i> 訓蒙図彙 |
| Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 | Kitamura Nobuyo 喜多村信節 |
| Ashikaga 足利 | <i>Kottō shū</i> 骨董集 |
| <i>bōkan yashi</i> 坊間野史 | Kume Kunitake 久米邦武 |
| <i>Chinsetsu yumiharizuki</i> 椿説弓張月 | Kuriyama Senpō 栗山潜鋒 |
| <i>dengaku</i> 田楽 | Kusunoki Masashige 楠木正成 |
| <i>Enseki zasshi</i> 燕石雑誌 | Kuwayama Shuri 桑山修理 |
| <i>Gareki zakkō</i> 瓦礫雑考 | <i>Kōko nichiroku</i> 考古日録 |
| <i>Gendō hōgen</i> 玄同放言 | <i>kōshō</i> 考証 |
| Godaigo 後醍醐 | Matsudaira Sadanobu 松平定信 |
| <i>haishi</i> 稗史 | Minamoto 源 |
| Hayashi Razan 林羅山 | Minamoto no Tametomo 源為朝 |
| Hideyoshi 秀吉 | Nakamura Shin'ichirō 中村真一郎 |
| <i>hinin</i> 非人 | Nakamura Tekisai 中村惕斎 |
| <i>hito</i> 人 | <i>Nansō satomi hakkenden</i> 南総里見八犬伝 |
| Hong Mai 洪邁 | <i>nengetsu</i> 年月 |
| Hōgen 保元 | <i>Nennen zuihitsu</i> 年々隨筆 |
| <i>Hōken taiki</i> 保建大記 | <i>Nihon gaishi</i> 日本外史 |
| Ishihara Masaakira 石原正明 | <i>Nimaze no ki</i> 烹雜の記 |
| <i>jidai</i> 時代 | Oda 織田 |
| <i>Jinja kō</i> 神社考 | Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠 |

Ōkubo Toshiaki 大久保利謙
 Omote Tomoyuki 表智之
 Ōshio Heihachirō 大塩平八郎
 Rai San'yō 頼山陽
 Santō Kyōden 山東京伝
Saritsu udan 蓑笠雨談
sarugaku 猿樂
 Sei Shōnagon 清少納言
seimei 姓名
sejin 世人
 Shigeno Yasutsugu 重野安繹
 Shiojiri 塩尻
shisei 市井
Shōsetsu shinzui 小説神髓
Taiheiki 太平記
 Taira 平
 Takeda 武田
 Takizawa Bakin 滝沢馬琴
Tanki manroku 耽奇漫録
 Tankikai 耽奇会
tanuki 狸
tengu 天狗
 Tokugawa 徳川
Tokushi yoron 読史余論
 Tokutomi Sohō 徳富蘇峰
 Toyotomi 豊臣
 Tsubouchi Shōyō 坪内逍遙
 Tsuga Teishō 都賀庭鐘
 Tō Teikan 藤貞幹
 Uchida Roan 内田魯庵
 Ueda Akinari 上田秋成
Ugetsu monogatari 雨月物語
 Unkei 運慶
Wakan sansai zue 倭漢三才図会
 Yamaji Aizan 山路愛山
 yomihon 読本
 Yoshida Kenkō 吉田兼好
 Yoshida Shōin 吉田松陰
zuibitsu 隨筆