

# Intimations of War: Sukenobu's Warrior Imagery

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Contemplated from the comparative security of a century of peace and civilian routine, warrior tales - the Tales of Heike, Hôgen and Heiji, Yoshitsune, the Soga brothers, the Taiheiki - offered their readers a glimpse of a lost world of heroic valour and exotic possibility. For the artist, they held similar appeal: Hishikawa Moronobu (1618-1794) promised to reveal to his viewer the pain, the pleasure, the love, the anger of the warrior as never before, to transport him or her through the verisimilitude of his imagery to the battlefield itself.<sup>1</sup> Here was a world of heroic entertainment whose often youthful protagonists seem designed to appeal to a young audience: the painful separation of Kusunoki Masashige and his son Masatsura (*oyako no wakare no hodo aware tomonakanaka nari*), Kajiwara Kagetoki rushing to the assistance of his son Genda -*kodomo ga tame nite*; the superhuman feats of Minamoto Raikô and his generals. Available for the first time in the popular printed book, Moronobu's dynamic iconographies - many of which would be cited by later artists - did much to contribute to the gradual homogenization of the popular imagination in the early modern period.

But if warrior iconography afforded Moronobu occasion to display his artistic bravura - and the prefaces invariably proclaimed the skill of the artist from Awa - there is evidence that for later artists, the same warrior topos was invested with clusters of meanings that had less to do with exotic appeal and more with current imperatives. Consider, for example, two depictions of the death of Etchû no Zenji Moritoshi at the Battle of Ichinotani, one by Moronobu in his *Yamato musha-e* 大和武者絵 (Japanese Pictures of Warriors) of 1689, the other by Nishikawa Sukenobu (1671-50) in his 1729 *Ehon tôwa kagami* 絵本答話鑑 (Picture Book of Witty Ripostes) (figs. 1 [p. 50] & 2 [p. 51]).

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\*1 See preface to *Kokon bushidô ezukushi*, 古今武士道絵 ずくし transcribed in Matsudaira Susumu ed., *Moronobu Sukenobu ehon shoshi*, p. 81 (Musashimurayama: Seishodô; 1988).

Both depict the moment when Zenji, grappled to the ground lies supine amidst rice seedlings as Inomata Koheiroku Noritsuna lunges to deliver the final blow. For Moronobu, the scene illustrated the valour and resource of Inomata - a warrior who, at the opening of the passage, has entered the battlefield with a resounding cry in search of a fit opponent, and emerges ultimately victorious: 'Zenji, formidably strong, repeatedly tried to overpower him but the experienced Inomata finally won through, ripped open his armour and pierced him with his sword to the hilt.'<sup>2</sup>

In Sukenobu's later image, the significance of the trope has been radically inflected. The accompanying text now reads:

A spiteful mother-in-law who suddenly starts ingratiating herself with the young wife - about as easy to swallow as a bowl of clam soup for a monk.

小意地のわるい姑のにはかに嫁のひいきせらる々は坐頭の坊に虱の吸物すわすやうなもので身やら皮やらしれぬといへり

Undesirable things: a lecherous acupuncturist treating the belly of a young widow, and lending money to an unreliable guy. Like entrusting the brazier to the god of wind.

浮気な針立に若後家の腹さすらすと不埒な男に銀かすハすかぬ物あたかも風の神に火桶預るがごとし

These general counsels to behave with circumspection are illustrated, on the right of the image, by the confrontation between the supine Zenji and the lunging Inomata while on the left, a man lights his pipe from a portable brazier held by the wind god. The brazier trope is clear enough as an illustration of things not to be trusted. But the Zenji trope is now enlisted not as a simple illustration of combative valour but as an allusion to the devious deceptions that lurk on every corner, deceptions of which the canny citizen must be wary. For if the accompanying textual gloss now invokes the conniving subterfuges of the stepmother, the depicted encounter between Inomata

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\*2 Ibid. The Japanese text reads:

いのまたの小平六大をんじょうにてかけ出いずれもかたきにふそくなしかけよてなみみせん  
とてたがひにうちものさしかざしんぎをけずりつばをまりきつさきよりもくわゑんを出しこ  
こをせんとぞたたかいけるしばし勝負はなかりけりよれくまんもつともとおしならべむずと  
くみふり田の中へころびおちなゑを下ゑとかへしけりぜんじもとより大力いのまたをとつてふ  
せうたんふせうたんとしけれどもものになれたるいのまたにてやがてぜんじを取ふせてよろい  
とをしをひんぬきつかもとをれともかたなさしけり

and Zenji must surely allude to the ruse by which Inomata tricks Zenji into sparing his life in order to catch him off guard and overwhelm him. The Heike passage is well known:

“Very well I will spare you.” Moritoshi raised Noritsuna to his feet and the two sat down to rest on a footpath [...] Presently, a warrior [ ] came galloping towards them [ ] Moritoshi tried to keep one eye on each of the two men but [ ] he lost track of Noritsuna. Noritsuna seized the opportunity. He sprang to his feet and with a yell, dealt a powerful blow to Moritoshi’s breastplate with the combined force of his two hands and toppled him backwards into the rice paddy.<sup>3</sup>

For Moronobu, the fight represented a duel to the death between two famously strong warriors. For Sukenobu, it had become a cautionary example of the sleight of hand that could cost a life. The iconography remained the same but the context had changed.

That a given trope should signify different things depending on its context is hardly new. The foregoing example suggests simply that warrior tropes could be complex signifiers. But shifting connotations had perhaps less to do with the search for artistic novelty than with changing eighteenth century perceptions of society, authority, and the common man.

Sukenobu’s production of *ehon* spanned the first half of the eighteenth century, decades which saw the transformation of the printed book from a luxury to a commodity. It coincided with the rise of a commoner intelligentsia: public lectures, private study groups led by independent scholars and the emergence of merchant academies were just some of the factors that by the end of the seventeenth century had combined to provide the common man - if he chose - with access to radical contemporary thinking on a broad range of subjects.<sup>4</sup>

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\*3 H. C. McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, p. 313 (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press; 1988).

\*4 The intellectual climate of the early eighteenth century has been discussed in a number of English language studies: see, for example, Harry D. Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press; 1988); Maruyama Masao and Hane Mikiso, *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press; 1974); Tetsuo Najita, *Visions of Virtue in Tokugawa Japan: The Kaitokudô, Merchant Academy of Osaka* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1987); Peter Nosco, *Remembering Paradise: Nativism and Nostalgia in Eighteenth-century Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies Distributed by Harvard University Press; 1990); Peter Nosco ed., *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture* (Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawai’i Press; 1997).

As a reflection of its commoner origins, intellectual enquiry - informed and structured by Confucianist or Neo-confucianist principles and inflected to varying degrees by nativist (Shintoist) assumptions - became increasingly concerned with the validation of the individual's role in society and the implications of citizenship. For the many who fell sway to Yamazaki Ansai's (1619-1682) Suika Shinto 垂加神道 - which constructed its tenets around a cultic reverence for the emperor as divinity - this inevitably called up the duty of the subject towards his sovereign. Asami Keisai 淺見 綱齋 (1652-1712), Ansai's erstwhile disciple, characterized the relation between sovereign and subject as one of ontological interdependence: a man feels pain when he stubs his toe, he feels the same physical pain when severed from his lord.<sup>5</sup> At a time when criticism of the shogunal regime was not tolerated, pro-imperial lines of enquiry such as these broached dangerous ground.<sup>6</sup>

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\*5 Asami Keisai, "Jindô montô shisetsu" in Nishi Junzô ed., *Yamazaki Ansai Gakuha*, p. 260. For an account of Keisai's pro-imperio anti-bakufu (*sonnô hanbaku* 尊王反幕) views see Ishida Kazuo and Ushio Hirotaka, *Asami Keisai, Wakabayashi Kyôsei* (Tokyo Meitoku Shuppansha; 1990). The best introduction to Suika thought is Taira Shigemichi and Abe Akio eds., *Kinsei Shintôron Zenki Kokugaku* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten; 1972). For discussions of the broader implications of Suika philosophies for the individual, see Maeda Tsutomu, *Kinsei Shintô to kokugaku* (Tokyo: Perikansha; 2002); and Maeda Tsutomu, "Shugo sareru arahitogami", *Edo no shisô: Kokka (jiko) zo no keisei*, vol. 4, 1996, pp. 71-81. The development of Suika at court under the Ôgimachi is the subject of Isomae Jun'ichi and Ogura Shigeji, *Kinsei chôtei to Suika Shintô* (Tokyo: Perikansha; 2005).

\*6 It is of interest that a number of Sukenobu's collaborators appear to have had Suika affiliations. Nakamura Sankinshi studied briefly under Ansai, referring to him in his works as *Suika sensei*. From his publishing pseudonym *Keikinsai*, it seems likely that he also studied under Asami Keisai: *kei* and *sai* invoke the characters of Keisai, *kin* is the character *nishiki*, which occurred in the title of Keisai's studio - *Kinpaku kôdô* 錦陌講堂 - located on *Nishiki street* (*Nishiki koji*) 錦小路. See Abe Ryûichi, "Kimon gakuha shoke no ryakuden to gakufû", in Nishi Junzô ed., *Yamazaki Ansai gakuha*, p. 582 (Tokyo Iwanami shoten; 1980). Tada Nanrei, a collaborator of the latter years (1745-50) is known to have studied Suika Shinto under the courtier Nakayama Yônin 中山要人 and had close professional connections with the court, advising both Nakazono Kidai 中園季題 and Nakayama Kanechika 中山兼親 on matters of *kojitsu*, or ancient learning. See Furuso Masami, *Kokugakusha Tada Yoshitoshi Nanrei no kenkyû* (Tokyo: Kinshi Shuppan; 2000); and Kamiya Katsuhiko, "Tada Nanrei no ukiyozôshi: tôdai haidan to no kankei wo jiku ni", *Kinsei Bungei*, vol. 2000, p. 13. Nakamura Ranrin, aka the children's author Mizumoto Shinzô refers to both Ansai and Keisai (whom he refers to as *Keisai okina*) in his *Kôshû yohitsu* 講習余筆 (Lectures and Miscellaneous Writings) of 1747. For *Kôshû yohitsu*, see Mori Senshô and Kitagawa Hirokuni, *Zoku Nihon zuihitsu taisei*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kôbunkan; 1979). Another *zuihitsu* work by Ranrin - *Kansô zatsuroku* 間窓雑録 - can be found in Seki Giichirô ed., *Nihon jurin sôsho*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Tôyô Tosho Kankôkai; 1927).

Popular perception of the warrior, informed by a growing political awareness, began to change. Nostalgia for bygone days of martial prowess fuelled by influential theorists such as Yamaga Sokô 山鹿素行 (1612-1685) doubtless enhanced the popular appetite for Moronobu's earlier warrior imagery.<sup>7</sup> But by the eighteenth century the warrior ideal, in some quarters, was waning. Asami Keisai denounced the military presence as a blot on the contemporary landscape: the disproportionate level of taxes levied on the peasants to feed the military (*gunpei*) were the cause of acute social injustice.<sup>8</sup> Japan had become a country of samurai (*bushikoku*), ruined by greed and arrogance.<sup>9</sup> Decades later, Kamo no Mabuchi, in his *Kokui kô* 国意考 (published 1765 but circulating earlier), discussed the calculation of a *sengoku*-period warrior's reward (ostensibly in the context of a refutation of karmic retribution) in terms of the number of slaughtered:

Those who did not kill anyone at all then are now commoners. Those who killed a few are the hatamoto and samurai of today. Those who killed a few more became daimyo. Those who killed even more became lords of entire provinces. Finally, the one who killed without end became the most exalted person in the land and prospered for generations.<sup>10</sup>

Mabuchi's equation of the fiefdoms of today and the bloody deeds of the past was hardly an endorsement of the Tokugawa polity. But if the eighteenth century viewer was at times dismissive of the samurai estate per se, martial valour in itself was acquiring new connotations.

From the early years of the eighteenth century, a number of writers had begun to invoke the innate warrior spirit of everyman. Nativist concepts such as *yamato damashii* (Japanese spirit) and *masurao* (manliness) which would subsequently become familiar through the writings of

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\*7 For Yamada Sokô's martial philosophies, see Maeda Tsutomu, 'Yamaga Sokô in okeru shidôron no tenkai', *Nihon bunka ronshô* vol. 18, 2010, pp. 1-19.

\*8 Asami Keisai, Satsuroku 劄録, in Nishi Junzô ed., *Yamazaki Ansai Gakuha*, pp. 370-73. (Tokyo Iwanami shoten vol. 31; 1980). The following typical of Keisai's polemic:  
天下一統ノ知行十分ノ四ニテハ中々不足、大方ハ十分ノ四ト云ヘド、七八上下ニモ及程ニナラシ成テ、民食ハ麦ヲ喰ヨリ外ノコトハ無ニ究ル。皆地ニ付テ直ニ年貢ヲ取。是亦貢法ノナリナレ共、古ノ貢法ハ田地ノ割付正シテ、年貢ノ究メ明也。

\*9 Ibid., p. 371.

\*10 In Dai Nihon Shisô Zenshû Kankôkai ed., *Kamo Mabuchi shû. Motoori Norinaga shû tsuketari Tachibana Moribe, Ueda Akinari*, p. 41 (Tokyo: Dai Nihon Shisô Zenshû Kankôkai,; 1931). This translation from Peter Flueckiger, "Reflections on the Meaning of Our Country: Kamo no Mabuchi's Kokuikô", *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 63, 2008, p. 256.

Mabuchi had emerged much earlier in the works of Keisai and related Kimon 崎門 and Suika Shinto thinkers. For Keisai, they represented defining indigenous characteristics: ‘a tradition of martial valour and manliness (*masurao*) and a sense of honor and integrity that are rooted in our very nature’.<sup>11</sup> In 1719, the popular Shinto preacher Masuho Zankō exhorted his readers to embrace their *yamato damashii* in order to expel the teachings of other countries - *yamato damashii wo motte itan wo kudaku kokoro zo naraba*.<sup>12</sup> Other contemporary works in the Suika vein, for example Matsuoka Chūryō’s *Shintō gakusoku Yamato damashii* 神道学則日本魂 of 1733, urged their readers, peasants and merchants alike, to honour their *yamato damashii* and protect the emperor (*shikyoku wo gosuru*). It was an endeavour which would earn them, after death, a place amidst the manifold gods (*yaoyorozu no kami no masseki*).<sup>13</sup> Nakamura Sankinshi 中村三近子, an author and educationalist who collaborated with Sukenobu on some five works, and who appears to have taken Keisai’s name as a pseudonym,<sup>14</sup> urged readers of his 1731 *Rikuyu engi koi* 六諭衍義小意 to avenge the injuries suffered by their parents with a manly and stalwart heart (*otoko rashisa, otoko no misao*).<sup>15</sup> Even more conservative thinkers such as Kaibara Ekken noted that the farmer was inherently courageous, a soldier in ancient times who, put to the test, would still fight as well as any warrior.<sup>16</sup>

Allusions such as these to the martial spirit of the peasantry, at a time of mounting unrest in rural areas, were portentous. Visions of militant farmers organising to overthrow an abusive regime had crept into the repertoire of fiction: in the 1713 *Hachimonjijabon, Hyakushō seisuiki* (The Rise and Fall of the Farmers), farmers stricken by poor harvests and crippled by heavy taxes - the evil that is the law (*hō nareba koso hi nagara*), as the narrative describes it - burn down the

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\*11 Asami Keisai, *Chūgoku ben*. Cited in William Theodore De Bary ed., *Sources of Japanese Tradition: 1600-2000*, p. 94 (New York: Columbia University Press; 2005).

\*12 Taira Shigemichi and Abe Akio eds., *Kinsei Shintōron Zenki Kokugaku*, p. 206.

\*13 Cited in Maeda Tsutomu, *Kinsei Shintō to kokugaku*, p. 14 (Tokyo: Perikansha; 2002).

\*14 See note. 4.

\*15 *Rikuyu engi koi* is reproduced in Ishikawa Matsutarō ed., *Ōraimono taikei: Kyōkunka ōrai*, vol. 35.(Tokyo: Ōzorasha; 1993).

\*16 In “Bukun”, Ekken Zenshūkai ed., *Ekken zenshū*, vol. 3, p. 370 (Tokyo: Ekken Zenshū Hankōbu; 1910-11). Cited in Ekiken Kaibara and Masajirō Takikawa, *Kaibara Ekiken shū*, p. 69 (Tokyo: Seibundō Shinkōsha; 1936). The Japanese text reads:

農人は商工にかはりて其志いやしからず。養をうけ恩をかうむれば戦にのぞんで其勇気をはげましてつたなからず。

residence of the local daimyo while a band of several thousand, armed with spears march on a temple where he has taken refuge.<sup>17</sup> Both scenes were graphically illustrated by Sukenobu (fig. 3 [p. 54]). In 1729, the peasants of Tsuyama had revolted. The first decades of the eighteenth century witnessed the birth of what Fukaya Katsumi has called a politically conscious peasantry (*hyakusho no seijiteki shudai*): for the first time, violent peasant uprisings exceed petitions for legal redress.<sup>18</sup> Keisai had urged his audience to consider well the state of things: politics were no longer just a matter for discussion.

Given the troubled domestic landscape, frequent references in Sukenobu's works to the theme of righteous government and the overthrow of tyrants should not be easily dismissed. By the 1730s, there were clear pockets of disaffection with the political regime. The most high-profile objection to the bakufu's manner of rule issued from the cousin of the shogun, the daimyo of Owari Tokugawa Muneharu (1696-1764), who published in 1731, within his own domain, a political tract entitled *Onchiseiyô* 温知政要 (Essentials of Government through Compassionate Wisdom). Intended as a guide to good government for domain officials, it took issue with what he considered to be some of the most conspicuous failings of Yoshimune's regime: lack of tolerance, inclemency, excessive interference in civil affairs (such as sumptuary regulations); and an aggressively authoritarian stance.<sup>19</sup> Commercial publication of the work was banned by the Kyoto authorities in 1732, nonetheless, it had made a considerable impression.<sup>20</sup> Just months after its publication, an encomium of the work was

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\*17 In Hasegawa Tsuyoshi ed., *Hachimonjiya-bon zenshû*, vol. 4, pp. 296-300 (Tokyo: Kyûko Shoin; 1992). *Hyakushô seisuiki* (authorship anonymous) was released when Kiseki and Hachimonji Jishô had temporarily parted company. For a brief discussion, see Fujiwara Hideki, "Shôtoku sannen zengo no Kiseki to Hachimonjiya: jidaimono no seiritsu to Tanimura Kiyobei, Nakajima Matabei", *Kokugo to Kokubungaku*, vol. 80, 2003, pp. 58-68.

\*18 Fukaya Katsumi, *Hyakushô ikki no rekishiteki kôzô*, p. 224. (Tokyo: Azekura Shobô; 1979). See also Herbert P. Bix, *Peasant Protest in Japan, 1590-1884* (New Haven, Conn. (USA); London: Yale University Press; 1986); and Anne Walthall, *Social Protest and Popular Culture in Eighteenth-century Japan* (Tucson, Ariz.(USA): Published for the Association for Asian Studies by the University of Arizona Press; 1986).

\*19 Tokugawa Muneharu, "Onchiseiyô", in Naramoto Tatsuya ed., *Kinsei seidôron* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten; 1976).

\*20 The publication of *Onchiseiyô* is discussed in *ibid.*, , p. 453. See also Makita Inagi, *Keihan shosekishôshi*, p. 131 (Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten; 1982).

published by Sukenobu's collaborator, Nakamura Sankinshi, entitled *Onchiseiyô hoyoku* 温知政要輔翼.<sup>21</sup>

Three years after the appearance of Muneharu's *Onchiseiyô* - three years, too, after both his own *Onchiseiyô hoyoku* and the vehement exhortations in *Rikuyu engi koi* to take vengeance on the enemy of ones parents - Nakamura Sankinshi had collaborated with Sukenobu on an illustrated book entitled *Ehon Shimizu no ike* 絵本清水の池 (Picture Book of the Pool of Clear Water). The work closed with canonical allusions to the overthrow of the unrighteous ruler:

By mingling with the righteous, a person should naturally become righteous. But a fish swimming in the sea doesn't become salty and some people can consort with saints and redress none of their shortcomings. These are the irredeemably stupid (*kagu no itari*), those who have abandoned the way (*jibôjiki*).<sup>22</sup> Thus it was with the four evil retainers who polluted the virtuous reigns of Yao and Shun; with Kings Wu and Tang, who overthrew the wicked monarchs King Zhou of Shang and King Jie of Xia. And thus it was when Confucius avoided the usurper Yang Huo and Rin Bei.<sup>23</sup>

The accompanying image (fig. 4 [p. 56]) shows a stem of twisted flax being plucked from a flax field, a pictorial conceit elaborated in the postscript:

If a flax plant growing in a grove of flax fails to grow straight, you discard it (*tenka*

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\*21 *Onchiseiyô hoyoku* is published in Nagoya-shi Kyōiku linkai ed., *Nagoya sōsho*, vol. 1, pp. 59-113 (Nagoya: Nagoya-shi Kyōiku linkai; 1960).

\*22 Sankinshi's 'irredeemably stupid' is an allusion to Confucius comment in Book 17 of the *Anlaects* 'that only the most excellent and the most stupid do not change'. *Jibôjiki* literally means those who do violence to themselves and those who throw themselves away. The term is an allusion to Mencius' Li Lou 1: 'With those who do violence to themselves, it is impossible to speak. With those who throw themselves away, it is impossible to do anything. To disown in his conversation propriety and righteousness, is what we mean by doing violence to one's self. To say "I am not able to dwell in benevolence or pursue the path of righteousness," is what we mean by throwing one's self away.' Hence the gloss provided here, 'those who have abandoned the way'. Li Lou 1, trans. James Legge, is available at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/mengzi/li-lou-i>

\*23 Nishikawa Sukenobu, *Ehon Shimizu no ike*, 1734. The Japanese text reads:  
善人とむつべハ其身をおのずからよくなるものといへ共海の魚の塩にしまぬ風情にて成人と同居しても直らぬ者あり是ハ下愚の至自暴自棄ものなり堯舜の時四凶あり湯武の世に桀紂あり孔子の陽貨儒悲  
Confucius' ruses to avoid encounters with Yang Huo and Rin Bei are also the subject of *Anlaects* 17.

*kokin no sutemono hazubeki no hanahadashisa nari*). Any fool knows that you should embrace good and eradicate evil.<sup>24</sup>

To some, these exhortations, draped in the garb of a children's conduct book, may have seemed undistinguished. But to a person disenchanted with bakufu rule, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that they could have read as an incitement to political action. Since open criticism of the regime was an offence punishable with death, dissent was bound to take refuge in the language of metaphor. *Shimizu no ike*, a work that rehearses the hundred sayings of Saimyôjido<sup>25</sup> and was ostensibly aimed at the education of the young, could have been read as a work only masquerading as a general conduct book. The vehemence of its exhortations is conspicuous.

Conditions in the countryside were not the only cause of popular discontent, however. In Kyoto at least, there was a perception that shogunal autocracy was responsible for a marginalized imperial institution. Shogunal disrespect towards the court - along with its arrogant handling of townfolk and peasants - had been satirized in a jôruri play of 1723 by Takeda Izumo 竹田出雲 and Matsuda Wakichi 松田和吉: *Ootônomiya no asahi no yoroi* 大塔宮曦鎧 (Prince Morokoshi and the Armour of the Morning Sun). The *tsuwamono no manzai* (Soldiers' Manzai) scene, in which a group of the disaffected perform a satirical manzai lampooning the autocratic behaviours of the bakufu, had become the subject of a popular illustrated broadsheet (*eirizu*) known as the *Chiryaku no manzai* (The Intelligent Man's Manzai). The broadsheet finally came to the attention of the authorities and was promptly banned, but its chorus had become a familiar ditty. It was transcribed by the *Getsudô kenbunshû* memorialist:

“the Kyoto of today is all bad (*yorozu yokoshima de*), the emperor is not respected (*ano*

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\*24 *Ehon shimizu no ike* postscript. The Japanese text reads:

人ハ麻中の蓬ハすぐになるに麻中の麻の却て直らざるがことし天下古今の捨もの恥べきの甚きなりいかなる愚人悪人も善のしたがふべき悪の去べき嘗てしらざるにハあらずただその心におもはく我ごときの無性ものハ仁義のみちハとても及ぶべきことにあらずと我と身をすて不義不道を止めず是他人の左右するに及ばざる処なり故に心なりといへり我と志をはげまし善を好ことハ好色をこのむがごとく真実ならば徳すすまずといふ事なく悪をにくむ事悪臭をにくむがごとく真実ならば悪さらずといふ事なからん能々考て麻の中蓬に恥自暴自棄の氣習にかち善にすすみ悪を去てただなをる麻となるべし

\*25 Formerly the Kamakura regent Hôjô Tokiyori.

*gotenshi wo habakarazu*), it's become the self-indulged Kyô of the Taira, it's ruled entirely by the eastern provinces, the palace is belittled, courtiers are overruled, farmers are oppressed and the townsfolk are bullied, the people are wretched, things are looking dire.<sup>26</sup>

Popular theatre was clearly broaching sensitive political issues: there are numerous indications in Sukenobu's works that popular art was also engaging with wholly contemporary political referents. Consider, for example, an image from Sukenobu's 1724 *Ehon Yamato warabe* (Picture Book of Japanese Children), the third volume of which is dedicated to the exploits of famous warriors. Here is the familiar scene of Asahina, accompanied by Wada Yoshimori, breaking down the gate to the Hôjô residence in Kamakura (fig. 5 [p. 57]). The representation is anomalous, however, in that the walls of the Hôjô residence are shown here bearing the *gohonsen* or five lines, together with the beaded ridge motif (which in fact contains a chrysanthemum) of the wall of the imperial palace (fig. 6 [p. 58]). Read literally, the image depicts Asahina breaking down not the gates of the Kamakura bakufu, but one of the gates to the imperial palace, while shogunal guards flee within. This is historically inaccurate: it does not mean that it was unintentional.

The same gate featured in a later work, *Ehon Tsurezuregusa* (A Picture Book of Essays in Idleness) of 1738. The image illustrates Kenkô's meditation on the metonymy of desire:

Being born in this world, there are many things that a man might desire. The position of emperor is exalted, even the remote descendants of the imperial line are sacred, they are not of the seed of man.<sup>27</sup>

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\*26 Cited in Miyazawa Seiichi, "Genroku bunka no seishin kôzô", *Genroku Kyôhōki no seiji to shakai*, pp. 245-46 (Tokyo: Yuhikaku; 1980). The chant was recorded by the *Getsudô kenbunshû* memorialist, see Mori Senzô and Kitagawa Hirokuni eds., *Zoku Nihon zuihitsu taisei: bekkân*, vol. 3, pp. 252-3 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kôbunkan; 1981).

\*27 This translation is adapted from Donald Keene's translation in Haruo Shirane ed., *Traditional Japanese Literature: An Anthology, Beginnings to 1600*, p. 882 (New York: Columbia University Press; 2006). Keene's translation has: *It is enough, it would seem, to have been born in this world, for a man to desire many things. The position of an emperor of course, is far too exalted for our aspirations. Even the remote descendants of the imperial line are sacred, for they are not of the seed of man.*

Sukenobu illustrates this text with a throng of commoners straining to see through the cracks in a fence: not any fence, but a fence marking off one of the gate enclosures that punctuated the wall of the imperial palace (denoted by the five bands or *gohonsen*) (fig. 7 [p. 59]). Kenkô's text excludes the imperial system from the purview of common ambition; in the image, the bakufu guard and its structures exclude the commoners from the palace compound. Metaphorically and literally, the gate separates them from the emperor.

The palace wall in itself was of considerable discursive significance. A bakufu guard (*kinritsuke*) had been appointed to junctures around the palace in 1643, a move designed to monitor movements to and from the court;<sup>28</sup> The emperor, meanwhile, was not permitted to set foot outside of the palace. Estranged from his people for nearly two hundred years, not until 1863, when emperor Kômei, in a highly political gesture, visited the Kamo shrines, did an emperor of the Tokugawa period leave the palace compound and take part in a *miyuki*.<sup>29</sup>

Given that mistreatment of the imperial institution was on the popular mind, it seems legitimate to consider metonymic references to the imperial institution - for example, the palace wall - as deliberate rhetorical devices. In fact, the imperial wall features time and again in the *ehon*. Take, for example, an image from a poetic work of 1739, *Ehon Arisoumi* 絵本有磯海 (fig. 8 [p. 59]). A court lady stands in heavy rain, sheltered by an umbrella held by a maid; but the specific object of her melancholy mediation is the wall that stands before her. The poem (by Lady Ise) invokes gentle spring rains and raindrops strung from willow fronds:

Spring rain on young willow boughs, glistening like jewels on a string

青柳の枝にかかる春雨はいともてつなく玉かとぞ見る 伊勢

*Aoyagi no eda ni kakaruru harusame wa ito mote tsunagu tama ka to zo miru*

The image is anomalous on a number of counts: the delicate spring rains of the poem have become a torrent; the raindrops - central to the poem's imagery - are elided; and the wall - which so preoccupies the woman - has no equivalent in the poem. Yet again, however, it seems

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\*28 Tsuji Tatsuya ed., *Nihon no kinsei: Tennô to shôgun*, pp. 134-5 (Tokyo: Chûô Kôronsha; 1991).

\*29 Takano Toshihiko, "Chôtei wo torimaku hitobito", in Takano Toshihiko ed., *Chôtei wo torimaku hitobito*, p. 216 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kôbunkan; 2007). For a discussion of *miyuki* in the bakumatsu period, see Fujita Satoru, *Kinsei seijishi to tennô*, pp. 196-222 (Tokyo Yoshikawa Kobunkan; 1999).

key to understanding the image. The *gohonsen* indicate a residence of imperial status, the beaded motif on the ridge of the wall (*nokigawara*) - to which the woman's gaze is directed - suggests the roundels which adorned the ridge of the outer walls and roofs of the palace. The roundels are clearly strung across the ridge like beads: brushed by the tips of the willow fronds, they suggest a displaced reference to the string of jeweled raindrops in the poem. The wall and its jeweled motif, symbols of imperial presence and pictorial correlates of the glistening willow fronds of the poem, become implicit objects of desire. Yet here too, the wall bars the woman from the object of her affections, while auspicious spring rains become a relentless torrent. The image could have read as an invocation of imperialist loyalty in difficult times.

In such a context, the pictorial allusion to Asahina destroying the wall and scattering its shogunal guard, removing the barrier between the sovereign and his people, was suggestive. *Yamato warabe* itself closes with an allusion to a wall that could be either imperial or courtly - the view is curtailed. This is the scene when Benkei, having captured Yoshitsune's would-be assassin, Tosabô Shôshun, brings him back to the Horikawa mansion for execution (fig. 9 [p. 60]). In Sukenobu's later work, the structure is depicted with the lower stone flanking wall of a castle. Peculiarly, in *Yamato warabe*, the wall bears the tell-tale lines of a courtly or imperial residence.

*Yamato warabe* was the first volume of warrior images produced by Sukenobu; it was fourteen years before he produced another. In 1738, he published *Ehon Yûsha kagami* 絵本勇者鑑 (A Pictured Mirror of Valiant People), followed by *Ehon Musha kôkan* 絵本武者考鑑 (A Pictured Mirror of Warrior Matters) in 1744, while in 1750, the final year of his life, he published a further two: *Ehon Musha bikô* 絵本武者備考 (A Picture Book of Further Reflections on Warriors) - with text and preface by one Minamoto Sekkô 折江 - and *Ehon Yûbu kagami* 絵本勇武鑑 (A Pictured Mirror of Valiant Warriors).<sup>30</sup> Sekkô's preface to *Musha bikô* casts some light on the political intention of the work.

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\*30 The preface to *Musha bikô* makes mention of a further work, no longer extant, that had apparently been formidably popular. See Matsudaira Susumu ed., *Moronobu Sukenobu ehon shoshi* (Musashimurayama: Seishodô; 1988). *Musha kôkan* is not listed in Matsudaira's bibliography.

[Sukenobu] calls to mind the worthy and loyal, whose names have been forgotten - in the manner of Sima's lament. Thus, his brush is vivid testimony to the many who have fought: may tales be told of them for a thousand years.<sup>31</sup>

The assimilation of Sukenobu's work to the poetry of complaint of Sima Qian (*Jap. Shiba Sen* 司馬遷) is a weighty claim and should not be dismissed lightly. Sima Qian (c145 or 135 BC – 86 BC), government official and grand historian of Emperor Wu of Han (漢武帝 156–87 BC), had been castrated for defending the integrity of a defeated general. In a letter to his friend Ren An, he explained his choice of castration over death:

'the reason I have not refused to bear these ills and have continued to live, dwelling in vileness and disgrace without taking my leave, is that I grieve that I have things in my heart which I have not been able to express fully, and I am shamed to think that after I am gone my writings will not be known to posterity. Too numerous to record are the men of ancient times who were rich and noble and whose names have yet vanished away. .... when the Earl of the West was imprisoned at Yu-Li, he expanded the Changes; Confucius was in distress and he made the Spring and Autumn; Qu Yuan was banished and he composed his poem 'Encountering sorrow'....If it may be handed down to men who will appreciate it, and penetrate to the villages and great cities, then though I should suffer a thousand mutilations, what regret should I have?<sup>32</sup>

The work to which Sima Qian referred was the Records of the Grand Historian (*Shiki* 史記), a history of two thousand years of the empire written not to flatter but to instruct, a work in which he elaborated the theory of the gradual degradation of dynasties and the inevitable overthrow of the evil ruler. Produced in the face of adversity, it was the moving testimony of one who felt compelled to tell the truth.

Chinese poetry of complaint occupies an important position in eighteenth century

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\*31 Ibid. The Japanese text reads:

名の煙滅てつたはずしかも高義なるは司馬氏が恨もおもひあわされ侍りてさらばもののふの八十氏を西川の筆に芳を流ばいく千とせふるものがたりにもとたかけきをわすれぬ

\*32 The letter to Ren An is translated in Burton Watson, *Ssu-Ma Ch'ien, Grand Historian of China*, pp. 57-67 (New York: Columbia University Press; 1958).

Japanese intellectual thought. In 1686, Keisai had written his *Seiken igen* 靖献遺言 - Testaments of Unwavering Political Devotion - an account of the writings of eight Chinese vassals of the Warring States period who had retained their integrity in the face of injustice and corruption. Not published in its entirety until the *bakumatsu era* (when it became a bestseller and the bible of restorationists), it was nonetheless influential. It had formed the subject of a number of Keisai's lectures, for example, his *Seiken igen kôgi* 靖献遺言講義 recorded by his student, the Suika Shinto scholar Wakabayashi Kyôsei 若林強斎, and published (posthumously) in 1744.<sup>33</sup> This text dwelt on just one of the original eight heroes, Qu Yuan 屈原 (340 -278 BCE), a virtuous statesman of the Warring states period banished as a result of slanderous allegations made by his enemies. In exile, he composed poetry, most famously the *Li Sao* 離騷 - a lament on exile, separation from, and devotion to his emperor - devotion expressed in metaphors of nature, romantic love, and superhuman feats (*senjutsu*). In an independent discussion of *Li Sao*, Kyôsei had preempted objections that the use of vulgar metaphor risked contaminating the referent by contriving the following defence:

Seen from the perspective of such a person, the discussion of romantic love between a man and a woman, the discussion of supernatural powers (*senjutsu*) may seem inappropriate, even regrettable. Yet none of the teachings of the sages surpass this text in loyalty and filial piety.<sup>34</sup>

Metaphor was not a method of choice: it was imposed - as Keisai had acknowledged - by force of circumstance. "Emotive words are words which conceal a reason, they are not straightforward. They are useful when you wish to reveal something to your lord."<sup>35</sup> Metaphor, that is, helped to maintain a semblance of conformity while permitting a measure of expression: it was a form of doublespeak: "If it were not for this love (*kokoro*), things would appear, on the surface, to be in order; and there, is, fortunately, no trace of subversion. Yet at all times the heart is constrained".<sup>36</sup>

Keisai's original intention had been to furnish his paradigm of unswerving loyalty and

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\*33 *Seiken igen kôgi*, in Shintô Taikei Hensankai ed., *Suika Shintô*, vol. 13.(Tokyo: Shintô Taikei Hensankai; 1978).

\*34 Wakabayashi Kyôsei, *Soji joshô kôgi* 楚辞序章講義, *ibid.*, p. 262.

\*35 *Ibid.*, p. 262.

\*36 *Ibid.* The Japanese text reads:

此心ガナケレバ、境界ガ順ナレバ幸ニ背ク跡ハミエヌガ、何時デモ狭間クグル心ハモッテイルゾ

self-sacrifice with examples drawn from Japanese history: Kusunoki Masashige and Murakami Yoshiteru 村上義光 (d. 1333), who had sacrificed his life for the Prince of the Great Pagoda at the Battle of Yoshino Castle, were two of his early choices.<sup>37</sup> The threat of political repercussions, however, had led him to opt for Chinese models.<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless, Japanese versions of Qu Yuan began to feature in popular fiction. In Ejima Kiseki's *Aigo uikaburi onna fude hajime* 愛護初冠女筆始 - illustrated by Sukenobu - the hero (Daidôji Tabatanosuke Masatane) has abandoned his master's service in disgust at the ascendancy of corrupt retainers: he is, the text informs us, just like Qu Yuan.<sup>39</sup> Both Kusunoki and Murakami would feature in Sukenobu's later warrior works (figs. 10 & 11 [p. 62]). Given powerful contemporary discourses around sovereign-subject relations, given, too, an alertness to the contemporary political significance of Chinese poetry of complaint, it seems unlikely that Sukenobu's endeavour in *Ehon musha bikô*, in some way resonant of Sima Qian's, was intended simply as entertainment for the young.

In 1748, in collaboration with the author and *kojitsu* (ancient learning) and Shinto scholar Tada Nanrei 多田南嶺, Sukenobu published *Ehon hana no kagami* 絵本花の鑑.<sup>40</sup> It was a work that ostensibly explored the origins of different types of painting: screens, *kakemono*, various Chinese and Japanese subjects. One of its categories was votive images, or *ema*. The illustration has a young man lying in his room, dreaming that he stands hand in hand with his courtesan before a votive image of a tethered horse (fig. 12 [p. 64]). A brief narrative explains that the man has been confined to his room by his father for excessive spending in the brothel quarters. In a dream, he meets his beloved and shows her a votive painting of a tethered horse hung on the eaves of a temple. The horse is a metaphor of his own situation, He himself, the narrative notes: tethered, confined within his own room, desperate to escape. It goes on to inform us that images of warriors

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\*37 H. C. McCullough, *The Taiheiki: A Chronicle of Medieval Japan*, Chapter 7 (New York: Columbia University Press; 1959).

\*38 According to his *Jôwa Zakki* 常話雑記 (Miscellaneous Notes of Perduing Debates) Keisai had considered using figures such as Kusunoki Masashige and Murakami Yoshiteru 村上義光 (d. 1333). Cited in Ishida Kazuo and Ushio Hirotaka, *Asami Keisai, Wakabayashi Kyôsei*, p. 50 (Tokyo: Meitoku Shuppansha; 1990).

\*39 In Hasegawa Tsuyoshi ed., *Hachimonjiya-bon zenshû*, vol. 13, pp. 13-14 (Tokyo: Kyûko Shoin; 1992).

\*40 For Tada Nanrei, see note. 5.

were also presented as votive offerings:

In ancient times, warrior pictures were different to those we see now, which use a variety of forms - for example women. When someone made a wish, they would submit an image of a tethered horse and when the wish was granted, they erased the rope. Warrior pictures began, I think, with the combat of Abo [Tadasane and Akiyama Shinkurandô Mitsumasa] at the Riverbed Battle. This is recounted in the *Taiheiki*.<sup>41</sup>

The allusion is to Volume 29 of the *Taiheiki*: Akiyama Mitsumasa has challenged the imperial forces at the riverbed and the challenge has been accepted by Abo Tadasane. The encounter between the two had subsequently become - according to the *Taiheiki* narrative - a popular votive subject:

And thus it was at this time, that votive offerings to temples shrines, even the roughest painting on a fan - would invariably invoke the Riverbed Battle between Abo and Akiyama.

さればそのころ其比、靈仏靈社の御手向、扇団扇おんたむけのばさら絵にも、阿保・秋山あふぎうちほが河原軍とて書せぬ人はなし。かはら かか

The clear association drawn by *Hana no kagami* between the votive and the warrior image is of interest, for there is a high level of congruity between tropes in Sukenobu's warrior works and the traditional subjects of votive images.<sup>42</sup> *Yûbu kagami*, for example, opens with empress Jingû commencing her inscription on the rock - 'The barbarians of Korea' - following her successful invasion of that country (fig. 13 [p. 64]). By the medieval period, Empress Jingû's invasion of Korea was understood not as an act of territorial aggression but as a retaliatory attack for some earlier (imagined) injury to Japan by Korea.<sup>43</sup> It had become a trope of vengeance. The second volume of

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\*41 Anonymous, *Taiheiki Kokuminbunkobon: maki 29*, qttk2902.html (chûkan).

\*42 For a discussion of *ema* in the Edo period, see Iwai Hiromi, *Ema* (Tokyo: Hôsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku; 1974).

\*43 The shift in signification of the Jingû kôgô narrative is visible in the mid- to late Kamakura Hachiman originary myth, *Hachiman gudôkun* 八幡愚童訓, attributed to priests of the Iwashimizu Hachiman shrine in Kyoto. See Melanie Trede, "Banknote Design as a Battlefield of Gender Politics and National Representation in Meiji Japan", in Doris Croissant, Catherine Vance Yeh and Joshua S. Mostow eds., *Performing "Nation": Gender Politics in Literature, Theater, and the Visual Arts of China and Japan, 1880-1940*, pp. 67-8 (Leiden; Boston: Brill; 2008). By the nineteenth century, the same trope was invoked by imperialists as validation of Korean invasion. It was also seen as both precedent and justification for Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea. Richard W. Anderson, "Jingû Kôgô *Ema*" in Southwestern Japan: Reflections and Anticipations of the "Seikanron" Debate in the Late Tokugawa and Early Meiji Period", *Asian Folklore Studies*, vol. 61, 2002, pp. 247-70.

*Yûsha kagami*, likewise, opens with empress Jingû fishing, in hope of divine endorsement of her planned attack on Korea (fig. 14 [p. 64]). This is followed by Zhang Liang (Jap. *Chôryô* 張良 262 – 189BC) fetching the shoe of Huang Shigong 黃石公 at Yushui Bridge (fig. 15 [p. 64]). Having proved his worth to the sage, Zhang was rewarded with a book entitled *The Art of War by Taigong* 太公兵法, which inspired him in his subsequent defeat of the Qin leading, in turn, to the founding of the Han dynasty. These were all familiar *ema* motifs petitioning the gods for victory in battle. As opening tropes, they had powerful imprecatory qualities. But other tropes were similarly familiar subjects of Edo period, and earlier, *ema*: for example, Nitta Shirô Tadatsune killing the wild boar about to attack Yoritomo at Mt Fuji (fig. 16 [p. 65]), Chinzei no Hachirô aka Tametomo at Kagoshima (fig. 17 [p. 65]), Fan Kuai (Jap. Hankai 樊會) (fig. 18 [p. 65]), Guan Yu (Jap. Kan'u 関羽), subsequently deified as a Chinese god of war, Kumasaka Chôhan 熊坂長範, Watanabe no Tsuna at Rashômon, Shutendôji, Ôeyama, Asahina and Soga Gorô (fig. 19 [p. 65]), Yoshitsune and Benkei on the bridge, the night attack on the Horikawa mansion, Tomoe Gozen, Kumagai and Atsumori, Murakami Yoshiteru, Ichirai Hôshi, Nitta Yoshisada and Koyama Tarô, to name but a handful.<sup>44</sup> Benkei's capture of Tosabô Shôshun, the image that closed *Yamato warabe*, was also a popular subject of votive paintings: there is a well-known example by Hasegawa Tôhaku (fig. 20 [p. 66]). Seen in a votive context, Sukenobu's version of the trope acquires new inflections of meaning, for its deliberate courtly reference re-positions the petition it embodies in terms of bakufu versus court. Shôshun, the bakufu's assassin, is delivered up for judgment to the court.

If many of these subjects were votive subjects in their own right, others portrayed divine intervention - for example, Akushichi Kagekiyo breaking out of prison empowered by Kannon who appears above him (fig. 21 [p. 66]); the deity of Suzukayama (Seorihime no mikoto 鈴鹿権現 瀬織津姫命) expelling the demons (fig. 22 [p. 66]); Benkei's urgent prayers to the gods to appease the ghost of Tomonori (fig. 23 [p. 66]); and Yamatotake no mikoto 日本武尊 receiving the sacred sword Murakumo at the Ise Shrine, which would enable him to successfully repel the eastern barbarians (fig. 24 [p. 67]). Others depicted warriors who had subsequently been deified:

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\*44 See in particular Iwai Hiromi, *Ema*, pp. 220-24 et passim (Tokyo: Hôsei Daigaku Shuppanyoku; 1974).

Rokusonô Tsunemoto 六孫王常 and his son Tada Manjû 基多田満仲 ( the opening image of *Yûsha kagami*); Kamakura Kengorô Kagemasa 鎌倉権五郎影政, Guan Yu. The closing image of *Yûbu kagami* - perhaps Sukenobu's final image - enacts the moment of divine petition itself: the priest Kakumei on the point of brushing Kiso Yoshinaka's petition to Hachiman for victory in his coming battle (fig. 25 [p. 67]).

Such frequent invocations of the gods set Sukenobu's warrior works apart from those of his predecessor, Moronobu. Reread as votive tropes, moreover, ones that bear within them the incantatory vehemence of the votive offering, they resonate with other visions of bellicosity that pervade Sukenobu's works. Consider, for example, an image from his *Ehon hime komatsu* 絵本姫小松 (Picture Book of Pine Saplings) of 1742.<sup>45</sup> Under the header "Demon-quelling mode" (*oni hishigu tei*), an image of the Shitennô overpowering armed demons is accompanied by two poems (from the *Shinkokinshû*) that introduce tropes of constant readiness, imminent strife, and the divine (fig. 26 [p. 68]). The first poem reads:

神風や伊勢の濱荻おりしきて たびねやせましあらし磯部に<sup>46</sup>

*kamikaze ya ise no hamaogi orishikite tabine ya semashi araki isobe ni*

These god sent winds... do you in truth intend to rest here, laying your rush mat on Ise's stormy shore?

The second:

*Nurete hosu tamakuji no ha no tsuyujimo ni amateru hikari ikuyo henuran* Light shining

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\*45 In Kansai Daigaku Toshokan ed., *Nishikawa Sukenobu shû*, vol. 1 (Suita: Kansai Daigaku Shuppanbu; 1998). The poems and images of *Hime komatsu* were gathered under headings derived from parodies of *Teika jittei*: ten modes of poetic composition first elaborated by Fujiwara Teika and subsequently illustrated with poetic examples in this poetic manual of unknown authorship dating from the thirteenth century. See Paul S. Atkins, "The Demon-Quelling Style in Medieval Japanese Poetic and Dramatic Theory", *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 58, 2003, pp. 317-46.

\*46 Sukenobu's poem varies slightly from the usually cited *Shinkokinshû* version: 神風の伊勢の濱荻折り伏せて旅ねやすらん荒木浜べに. The suffix *mashi* - which expresses conjecture contrary to fact allows the interpretation 'Would you stay here?' (ie - you would not). Read in the context of the image - in which the demons are being routed by the Shitennô (inspired by the kamikaze) - it now expresses a challenge to the demonic impostors who have sought to rest on the sacred sands of Ise.

through the heavens, sunlight drying now the dew, now the frost of the sakaki tree that stands before the shrine: could it be the light of the gods shining in perpetuity?

The tropes of divine wind (*kamikaze*), a troubled landscape (*araki isobe*), and the enduring light of the gods – specifically (through the phonetic association of *amateru* and *amaterasu*) that of the divine imperial ancestor Amaterasu Oomikami – together with the pictorial invocation of the righteous overthrow of evil could, without unduly stretching the imagination, spell out a sanction of holy war.

No longer the simple product of reactionary romanticism, Sukenobu's works harboured a spirit of militancy. The warrior works were explicitly hortatory. The preface to *Yûsha kagami* spoke of emboldening the spirits of the viewer; *Yûbu kagami*, similarly, of inspiring courage in the young.<sup>47</sup> The riddling images of *Hime komatsu* were intended to guide the reader to right action – *yo no yôgi no imashime*, as the postscript put it. The conflation of the warrior spirit and the divine was not arbitrary. These were years, after all, when the popular Suika Shinto scholar Matsuoka Chûryô was calling on his readers to honour their *yamato damashii*, protect the emperor and thus take their place after death amidst the manifold gods;<sup>48</sup> years when the palace itself was being referred to in Suika circles as Takaamanohara, dwelling place of the gods.<sup>49</sup> Commoners may have expressed themselves in the motifs of the floating world, frivolous motifs could conceal powerful political convictions. The cover of the only extant original edition of *Yûsha kagami*, (*now in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London*), is adorned with the pine and the sixteen-petalled chrysanthemum. It was surely an unspoken manifesto, the emblem of a mindset: the people waiting for their sovereign, pining to be reunited with the incumbent of the Chrysanthemum throne.

Warrior tropes, supernatural deeds (*senjutsu*), romantic love provided allegorical

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\*47 Matsudaira Susumu ed., *Moronobu Sukenobu ehon shoshi*, p. 257 (Musashimurayama: Seishodô; 1988).

\*48 Cited in Maeda Tsutomu, *Kinsei Shintô to kokugaku*, p. 14 (Tokyo: Perikansha; 2002).

\*49 Thus Wakabayashi Kyôsei in 1724. Since the emperor (*tenshi*) was a living god and the palace was his dwelling place, the connection was relatively simple (*tenshi no kôkyo wo takamanohara to iu koto*). Wakabayashi Kyôsei, "Nihon shoki ben", in Shintô Taikei Hensankai, *Shintô taikai: ronsetsu hen*, vol. 13, p. 282 (Tokyo: Shintô Taikei Hensankai; 1978).

expression for political sentiments that could not be voiced. They were intended to be read productively. The preface to *Hime komatsu* enjoined the reader to trace a passage of interpretation from poem to image:

The images (*kono aramashi*) and the poems have the same fundamental sense; you compare the poem to the image, the image to the poem, then the two combine to form something tangible (*katami ni utsushi*).

此のあらましの心得は歌のすがたとおなじまなれさればそれを此にくらべ此をかれによせて  
絵と歌を互かたみにうつし<sup>50</sup>

to fathom the humour of the learned:

There are those will see this work asking where's the crux, where's the crux? - who will not fathom (*ayamarite ataranu*) the designs that I have so clumsily chosen. They will therefore scorn the work. And this grieves me: but the humour of the learned is carefully meditated.

いづらやいづら見ん人々の撰つたなく模様のあやまりてあたらふ事をあざけり給はむはまことにこころうけれどももとはかりはかせのわらひはおもひもふけしことなれ<sup>51</sup>

In the preface to his very final work - *Yûbu kagami* - Sukenobu described himself as the vanguard (*sakigake*) of the attack on the enemy, an attack led in the name of the cherry blossom - 例の桜の花の魁となしはべりぬ.<sup>52</sup> The militancy of the trope is clear: the second volume of *Musha kôkan* 武者考鑑 had opened with Kajiwara Genda clasping a branch of plum - 'vanguard of all trees' and proclaiming: 'Verily, I shall lead the way into today's battle' (fig. 27 [p. 68]).<sup>53</sup>

But if *Yûbu kagami* opens with a pledge to lead the attack in the name of the cherry, it closes, as we have noted, with Taifubô Kakumei about to inscribe Yoshinaka's petition to Hachiman. The petition would read:

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\*50 Matsudaira Susumu ed., *Moronobu Sukenobu ehon shoshi*, p.193. (Musashimurayama: Seishodô; 1988).

\*51 Ibid.

\*52 Ibid.

\*53 The Japanese text reads:

梅は諸木の魁なればと一枝手折てをしいただき是非々々けふの軍の一番馳がけといさみすすめたる  
梶原源太が武者ぶりあつばれにみえしぞかし。

The Great Bodhisattva Hachiman is the lord of the Japanese court, the ancestor of our generations of illustrious sovereigns. To guard the imperial throne and benefit mankind, he manifests himself as the three august divinities, and assumes the temporary guise of the three deities,

For some years now, a person called the Taira Chancellor has dominated the four seas and distressed the populace. He has been a foe to the Buddhist Law and an enemy to the imperial law. Though humble, I spring from warrior stock; though inadequate I pursue my father's calling. The thought of the Taira Chancellor's foul deeds prohibits selfish calculation: I entrust my fate to heaven and dedicate my life to the state.... I act for nation and sovereign, not for family or self. Secure my victory at once! Drive the enemy back in every direction!<sup>54</sup>

The image leaves the words as yet unbrushed and the paper blank. For the intended reader, its purport was nonetheless abundantly clear. Time and again throughout the Edo period, the Taira would furnish tropes of shogunal bad behaviour: one only need recall the popular manzai chant: 'it's become the self-indulged Kyô of the Taira, it's ruled entirely by the eastern provinces.' This closing image may have presented the viewer with a blank page: it would be a fundamental mistake to read that absence as silence.

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\*54 H. C. McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*, pp. 230-31 (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press; 1988).

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[Figure captions]

- Fig.1** Hishikawa Moronobu: *Yamato musha-e*, 1689, National Diet Library
- Fig.2** Nishikawa Sukenobu: Ehon tōwa kagami, 1729, National Institute of Japanese Literature
- Fig.3** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Hyakushō seisuiki*, 1713, Kyoto University Library  
Reproduced in: *Yachimonji-ya bon zenshū*, vol.4, 1993, Kyūko shoin, 297
- Fig.4** Nishikawa Sukenobu, Nakamura Sankinshi: *Ehon shimizu no ike*, 1734, , National Diet Library
- Fig.5** Nishikawa Sukenobu: Ehon yamato warabe, 1724, Harvard University Library
- Fig.6-1, 2** Appearance of the Kyoto Imperial Palace, photographed by Aki Ishigami
- Fig.7** Nishikawa Sukenobu: Ehon tsuredure gusa, 1738, © Trustees of the British Museum.  
1938,1008,0.6
- Fig.8** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon ariiso no umi*, 1739, © Trustees of the British Museum.  
1938,1008,0.3
- Fig.9** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yamato warabe*, 1724, Harvard University Library
- Fig.10** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon musha bikô*, 1750, National Institute of Japanese Literature
- Fig.11** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûsha kagami*, 1738, Okayama University Ikeda collection
- Fig.12** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon hana no kagami*, 1748, National Diet Library
- Fig.13** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûbu kagami*, 1750, National Diet Library
- Fig.14** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûsha kagami*, 1738, Okayama University Ikeda collection
- Fig.15** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûsha kagami*, 1738, Okayama University Ikeda collection
- Fig.16** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûbu kagami*, 1750, National Diet Library
- Fig.17** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûsha kagami*, 1738, Okayama University Ikeda collection
- Fig.18** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûsha kagami*, 1738, Okayama University Ikeda collection
- Fig.19** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûsha kagami*, 1738, Okayama University Ikeda collection
- Fig.20** Hasegawa Tôhaku: *Tosano bô Shôshun and Benkei*, Kitano Tenman-gu Shrine  
Reproduced in: *Nihon bijutsu kaiga zenshu* vol.10 Hasegawa Tôhaku, 1979, Shûeisha, fig.40
- Fig.21** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûbu kagami*, 1750, National Diet Library
- Fig.22** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûsha kagami*, 1738, Okayama University Ikeda collection
- Fig.23** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûbu kagami*, 1750, National Diet Library
- Fig.24** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon musha kô kagami*, 1744, National Diet Library
- Fig.25** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon yûbu kagami*, 1750 National Diet Library
- Fig.26** Nishikawa Sukenobu : *Ehon hime komatsu*, 1742, National Institute of Japanese Literature
- Fig.27** Nishikawa Sukenobu: *Ehon musha kô kagami*, 1744, National Diet Library