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The *Ise-e* Tradition and *Ise* Manga

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Introduction

The *Ise monogatari* 伊勢物語 (The Ise stories, aka Tales of Ise, tenth century)—read historically as the adventures of the poet and lover Ariwara no Narihira 在原業平 (825–880)—is the oldest continuously illustrated secular narrative in Japanese history. An illustrated version makes an appearance in the “Picture Contest” (*E-awase* 絵合) chapter of the *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 (The tale of Genji, early eleventh century). We know from the diary of its author, Murasaki Shikibu 紫式部 (978?–1016?), that a substantial part of *Genji* was written by 1008, providing some idea of how far back *Ise-e* 伊勢絵, or “*Ise*-pictures,” go.¹ This paper will examine where contemporary manga-versions of the *Ise* fit within this long visual tradition.

There are any number of educational manga—so-called *gakushū manga* 学習マンガ—series devoted to classical Japanese literature, for example, *Komikku sutōrī watashi-tachi no koten* (Comic story, our classics, コミックストーリーわたしたちの古典). Curiously, we shall see that they rarely avail themselves of the rich illustrative traditions associated with such classics as the *Genji* or the *Ise*. This is all the more puzzling since a connection between premodern illustrated scrolls (*emaki* 絵巻) and modern manga and anime has been asserted by some scholars since the 1920s.² I would like to review three of the five manga versions that have been produced of *Ise monogatari* to date, demonstrating how, perhaps surprisingly, only one genre—“gag” (*gyagu* ギャグ), or comic, manga—can fully respond to the rich visual tradition of *Ise* illustration.³

“Our Classics”

The first manga version of the *Ise* that I am familiar with appeared in the fifteen-volume series *Komikku sutōrī Watashi-tachi no koten* in 1991



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(hereafter, *Watashi-tachi no Ise*). The series was under the direction of a retired professor of Japanese language and literature at Hyōgo University of Teacher Education, Hasegawa Takashi 長谷川孝士 (b. 1926). The manga artist is Maruyama Kei まるやま佳 (b. 1951).⁴ The back of the *obi* points out the educational aspects of the series: it is aimed at middle- and high-school students.⁵

The episodes (*dan* 段) selected are the following (some of the English equivalents given are explanatory, not translations of the Japanese, which sometimes quote specific poems):

1. *Ui-kōburi* 初冠 (1 *dan*) ♥: “Coming of age” and hunting in Kasuga
2. *Oni hito-kuchi* 鬼にひとくち (6 *dan*) ♥: “Eaten by a demon in one bite”
3. *Azuma-kudari* 東下り (9 *dan*): “Journey to the East”
4. *Tsutsuizutsu* 筒井筒 (23 *dan*) ♥: “Well-curb”
5. *Ichizu na koi* いちずな恋 (40 *dan*) ♥: “Single-minded love”
6. *Hana-tachibana* 花たちばな (60 *dan*) ♥: “Mandarin-orange blossoms”
7. *Haru no kokoro ha* 春の心は (82 *dan*): Koretaka et al. hunting in Katano
8. *Yuki fumi-wakete* 雪ふみわかつて (83 *dan*): Narihira visiting Koretaka after his tonsure
9. *Tsuge no o-gushi* つげの小櫛 (87 *dan*): Visit to Nunobiki Falls
10. *Saku hana no* さく花の (101 *dan*): Yukihiro’s drinking party
11. *Namida-gawa* 涙川 (107 *dan*) ♥: “The River of Tears”
12. *Tsui ni iku michi* ついに行く道 (125 *dan*): “The road all must take”

Romance episodes in this list are indicated by a heart (♥), and as can be seen, the twelve episodes are fairly evenly divided between what we might call the heterosexual and the homosocial. That is, on one hand, we have episodes of Narihira’s erotic exploits, and on the other, his association with Prince Koretaka 惟喬親王 (844–897) and the other male members of the prince’s salon/entourage.

In the early modern period, an iconography for the *Ise* was somewhat standardized due to the 1608 printed edition of the *Ise* known as the Saga-bon 嵯峨本.⁶ The producers of this edition chose forty-two episodes, with forty-nine illustrations.⁷ These episodes became the most frequently

pictorialized for the remainder of the Edo-period (1600–1868). It is, therefore, noteworthy that *Watashi-tachi no Ise* includes two episodes not illustrated in the Saga-bon, and that both of these are romantic. Moreover, the content of the two episodes is curiously contradictory. Episode 40 is about a young man who falls in love with a young servant in his house. His parents dismiss the female servant and the boy passes out and remains unconscious for a day. The episode concludes with a narratorial comment, translated in the manga as follows: “Young people are those who can love single-mindedly like this. Can older people love so wholeheartedly?”⁸ On the other hand, in Episode 107 a mature man is depicted somewhat comically as he pursues a young woman in Narihira’s household, who happily accepts him. The reason for the inclusion of these seemingly discordant episodes is not obvious.

For each episode, *Watashi-tachi no Ise* usually includes the beginning of the original prose text, along with a translation into modern Japanese. The inclusion of the “original” seems particularly pedantic, as is seen in Episode 107 (Fig. 1) where *otoko* is corrected to *wotoko* (following *rekishi-teki kana-zukai*, or historical *kana* usage) and the *okuri-gana* “ri” parenthetically provided in *arikeru* 有(り)ける, as if the manga were based on some medieval manuscript base-text (*teihon* 底本)—which of course it is not. Poems are given in the original, along with a “meaning of the poem” (*uta no imi* 歌の意味) paraphrase. The inclusion of some of the original prose and poems is presumably to accustom young readers to characteristics of the classical Japanese language that they will study in school.

Visually, there is little noticeable influence of the Saga-bon or traditional iconography in the way episodes are illustrated. Curiously, though, both end-sheets (Fig. 2) have illustrations from the *Ihon Ise monogatari emaki* 異本伊勢物語絵巻 (Variant Ise stories illustrated scrolls, 1838 copy of thirteenth-century original), with elements numbered and identified in the manner of a pictopedia (*ebiki* 絵引), designed to provide information on the quotidian life and material culture of a period.⁹

The only explanatory material (two pages in total) states that the *Ise* is said to be the first *uta-monogatari* 歌物語 (poem-tale) written in *kana* in Japan—the standard categorization of the *Ise* in the secondary curriculum. These pages also include a trimmed illustration of the Sumida River (episode 9) scene by founder of the Rinpa school of art, Tawaraya Sōtatsu 俵屋宗達 (1550s–1639/42), and a manuscript section of the same episode in the hand of famous literatus Karasumaru Mitsuhiro 烏丸光広

(1579–1638), without comment or explanation.¹⁰ The rich illustrative tradition associated with the *Ise*, then, literally bookends the manga in a paratextual way, but otherwise plays no role.



Figure 1. Maruyama Kei, *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Gakkō tosho, 1991), 127. Courtesy of Gakkō tosho.



Figure 2. Below. *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Gakkō tosho, 1991), endpapers: the *Azuma kudari* episode from the *Ihon Ise monogatari emaki* (1838 copy of a thirteenth-century original). Courtesy of Gakkō tosho.



NHK *Ise*

The next *Ise* manga is from the *NHK Manga de yomu koten* NHK まんがで読む古典 (NHK’s Reading the classics through manga) series, first published in 1993. The style is much closer to *shōjo* (girl-oriented) *manga* 少女漫画 than the earlier *Watashi-tachi no Ise*.¹¹

NHK Ise is in eight chapters, including twenty-nine episodes, in some traditional and some interestingly new narrative combinations:

1. *Uhi-kauburi* うひかうぶり 初冠 (1 *dan*), *Tsutsuwidzutsu* つつみづつ 筒井筒 (23 *dan*): Hunting in Kasuga, “The Well-curb”
2. *Nijō no kisaki* にじょう きさき 二条の後 (3–6 *dan*): “The Nijō empress”¹²
3. *Azuma-kudari* あずまくだ 東下り (9 *dan*): “Journey to the east”
4. *Tanomou no kari* たのむのかり たのむの雁 (10, 14 *dan*): “The goose on the fields”
5. *Sukeru mono-omohi* すける物思ひ すける物思ひ (40, 107, 63 *dan*): “Transparent love”
6. *Kari no tsukahi* かり つかひ 狩の使 (69, 106, 71, 72 *dan*): “The Imperial huntsman”
7. *Nagisa no in* なぎさ 渚の院 (82–83 *dan*): “Nagisa lodge”
8. *Tsuhi ni yuku michi* つひにゆく道 つひにゆく道 (88, 2, 25, 99, 41, 87, 84, 8, 65, 73, 125 *dan*): “The road all must take”

The manga starts with an historical explanation for Narihira’s family being reduced to commoner status—the so-called “Kusuko Incident.”¹³ Interestingly, residents of Nara, the previous capital, are depicted in historically appropriate costume, rather than the Heian-period styles in which they usually appear in the visual tradition.¹⁴ We are also given a translation of the assessment of Narihira found in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* (The true record of three reigns in Japan 日本三代実録, 892, see below). Finally, we are told that Narihira was the *moderu* (model モデル) for the *Ise*, which is comprised of his love stories. In other words, on one hand, the *Ise* text is reduced to nothing but love stories, with pretty much only the *Nagisa no in* episode (Prince Koretaka’s hunting and drinking party) not focused on heterosexual romance, while on the other hand, a variety of supplementary history information is given. Indeed, the tendency to reduce Heian *belles-lettres* to sources of historical data has a long tradition, including the approach of the first translator of the *Genji monogatari* into English, Suematsu Kenchō 末松謙澄 (1855–1920).¹⁵

The prefatory material concludes with a visual quotation from the traditional iconography of episode 4 (Narihira returning to the deserted house of his love exactly one year after having last met her there, and composing his most famous poem, “Is this not the moon” [*tsuki ya aranu*]) (Fig. 3 and Fig. 4), but this will be the only reference to such iconography we will see through the entire work.



Figure 3. Saga-bon *Ise monogatari* (1608), episode 4. Image from Joshua S. Mostow and Royall Tyler, *The Ise Stories: Ise monogatari* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 21.

I have argued that what are probably the earliest extant illustrations of the *Ise*, the *Hakubyō Ise monogatari emaki dankan* (Hakubyō *Ise* stories illustrated scroll fragments 白描伊勢物語絵巻断簡, thirteenth-century copy of a twelfth-century original, Fig. 5.) embody a particularly feminine way of reading the text, bringing the *Ise* closer to the female-authored *nikki* (diary 日記) genre.¹⁶ And, in fact, the *Ise* was long read as the *Zaigo chūjō no nikki* 在五中将日記, or *Diary of the Ariwara Middle Counselor*. *NHK Ise* follows this tradition by making Narihira its first-person protagonist after the initial episode. In other words, all the chosen elements work together: the near-exclusive selection of romantic episodes, the *shōjo manga* style, and the readers' access to the male protagonist's interiority where he suffers over his love of women.



Figure 4. Hosomura Makoto, *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1993), 8. Courtesy of Kadokawa shoten.

One of the distinctive features of the *Hakubyō Ise monogatari emaki dankan* is how it manages, in the *kaimami* (peeping 垣間見) scene of episode 1, to actually make the man the object of the women’s—or at least, one woman’s—gaze.¹⁷ That is, while the text has the young man peeping in on the women, the *Hakubyō* version has a woman peeping out at the man. This is also accomplished in the *NHK Ise* (Fig. 6), where it is the young Narihira who is spied upon by the sisters, indicated by the “giggles” (*kusu-kusu* くすくす).

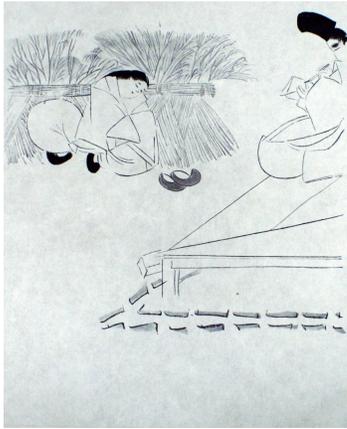


Figure 5. Left and below. Nomura Nagisa. Reconstruction of *Hakubyō Ise monogatari emaki dankan* (Hakubyō Ise stories illustrated scroll fragments), episode 1. Courtesy of Nomura Nagisa.

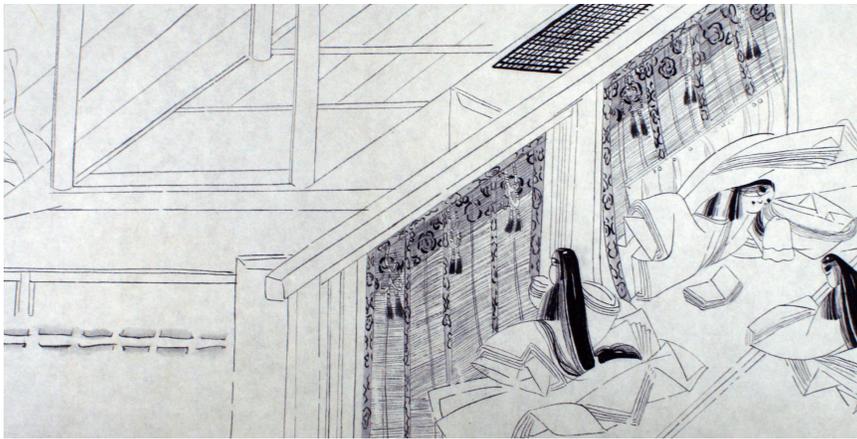


Figure 6. Hosomura Makoto, *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1993), 10–11. Courtesy of Kadokawa shoten.

During the Edo period, episode 23 was far and away the most referenced episode in women's instructional manuals (*jokunsho* 女訓書), as it taught girls that the proper response to a husband's infidelities was patience.¹⁸ The corresponding *NHK Ise* episode ends, however, by linking love to unhappiness as a seemingly inescapable combination, which of course leads to a series of episodes about Narihira's relationship with his most famous partner, Takaiko 高子, the Nijō Empress 二条妃. Which is to say that the reader is left in no doubt that Takaiko was Narihira's one and only true love, thus transforming a collection of tales about a serial philanderer into something presumably more palatable to a contemporary feminine reader.

In the manga's concluding section we find an older Narihira in poor health, with a wife who calls him *anata* (darling あなた) and is happy to hear about his love affairs and travels from the past. There follows one-page enactments of ten poems, with two about Takaiko at the very end. In the last scene, Narihira falls off to sleep (and death), reciting his death poem while on horseback in his dreams. In short, despite an almost total lack of reliance on traditional *Ise* iconography, the *shōjo manga Ise* fulfills some of the same function as premodern *onna-e* 女絵, or women's pictures; as Tamagami Takuya 玉上琢弥 (1915–1996) wrote: “pictures for women, pictures that were thought to please women, were called ‘onna-e’... the men who appear in ‘onna-e’ are men who make women their partners, men who long for and suffer over women.”¹⁹

The “Gag” *Ise* and Visual Pastiche

The most recent *Ise* manga of which I am aware is by Kurogane Hiroshi 黒鉄ヒロシ (b. 1945) in the *Manga koten bungaku* (Manga classical literature マンガ古典文学) series from Shōgakukan, published in 2013 (reprinted 2019). This work is in the “gag,” or humorous, manga genre. Unlike the earlier manga, this work claims to be complete (it is not, as we shall see), a “Heian masterpiece poem-tale with all its episodes turned into manga for the very first time, by the Heisei artist who knows all about love, Kurogane Hiroshi,” as the *obi* proclaims. It also has a contribution by Hashimoto Osamu 橋本治 (1948–2019), and an afterword by a lecturer from Yoyogi Seminar (a famous cram school for college entrance exams), so the educational aim of the work is seemingly fairly clear.

Hashimoto was well known for his 1998 “peach-ass” (*momojiri* 桃尻) translation of the *Makura no sōshi* (The pillow book 枕草子, early eleventh century) done into teen-age girl patois.²⁰ The Kurogane work also shows

the influence of the on-going eroticized manga of *Genji monogatari* by Egawa Tatsuya 江川達也 (b. 1961)—being equally aimed at a male audience—and declaring the same commitment to “completeness,” rather than just choosing selections.²¹

Kurogane, unlike the other *mangaka* (manga artists) we have seen, takes full advantage of the pictorial heritage of the *Ise*, creating a witty collage of visual allusions both to that tradition and beyond. Where in the earlier manga we saw only a minimal utilization of classical *Ise* iconography and works, Kurogane creates a rich texture of cultural cross-referencing. The frontispiece (Fig. 7 and Fig. 8) reproduces the famous Sōtatsu album leaf of the Akutagawa episode, complete with a reproduction of its calligraphy, but also with the addition of some of the characters (a man, called Horahira; a dog; and a boar) who will function as interlocutors throughout the work. The prologue also starts with the national treasure *Yatsunashi* 八つ橋 box by Ogata Kōrin 尾形光琳 (1658–1716) before returning to the Akutagawa lovers and their elopement.



Figure 7. Kurogane Hiroshi. *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2013), frontis. Courtesy of Shōgakukan.



Figure 8. Tawaraya Sōtatsu (attrib.). *Ise monogatari* album leaf, episode 6. Early Edo period. Gold, ink, and color on paper. 24.6 x 20.8 cm. By permission of Yamato bunkakan.

Let us look at the first two episodes. Episode 1 (Fig. 9) starts with a visual quotation from the famous Kubo version *Ise monogatari emaki* (thirteenth century) (Fig. 10). Like Egawa, Kurogane also includes *hentai gana* 変体仮名, or variant-style *kana*, characteristic of premodern writing, but difficult for the non-specialist to read. The text alternates the original with a modern translation. After the first episode, the assessment of Narihira's poetry from the Kana Preface 仮名序 of the *Kokin waka shū* (Collection of Japanese poems, ancient and modern 古今和歌集, ca. 905) is repeated, and he is represented (Fig. 11) both by a Kōrin poem-card (歌がるた *uta-garuta*) card, and by a *kasen-e* 歌仙絵 (imaginary portrait of a poetic immortal), with a listing of the Rokkasen 六歌仙 (the Six Poetic Immortals), and the critique of him in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*: “In features elegant and handsome; in behavior willful. Not very knowledgeable of Chinese characters, but he composed *waka* well,”²² with Kurogane using his own face here (Fig. 12). He then relates the *Ise* to the *kishu ryūri-tan* 貴種流離譚, or “exile of the young noble,” genre.²³ The episode ends with Narihira asking: “At this kind of speed, can you really finish the other 124 episodes?” (in Kansai dialect: *konna spīdo de ato*

hyaku nijūyon dan mo dekiharimasu ka こんなスピードであと百二十四段もできはりますか?), to be answered by the rabbit from *Alice in Wonderland*, in the Mad Hatter’s hat.²⁴

In this first episode, then, we see Kurogane providing a great deal of supplementary information—very much testable information, one suspects. Which is of course the ostensible purpose of such “educational” manga—to help their readers succeed at school entrance exams.

Episode 2 of the *Ise* reads:

Back then there was this man. After the Capital had left Nara, but still before there were many houses in the new one, a woman lived in the city’s western district. She was worthier than most, for her heart even more than for her looks. Apparently she wasn’t alone in the world. This earnest man spent some time with her and, once home again, felt somehow like sending her this. It was the first of the third month, and a fine rain was falling.

<i>oki mo sezu</i>	Neither full awake
<i>ne mo sede yoru wo</i>	nor stretched out asleep, I see
<i>akashite ha</i>	night pass into day,
<i>haru no mono tote</i>	then watch, until daylight fails,
<i>nagame-kurashite</i>	the rain fall, in thrall to spring. ²⁵

The rain (Fig. 13) leads to the inclusion of a *hanafuda* 花札 (flower-card) motif, with its willow but also with an added frog.²⁶ But then Horahira asks whether the reader does not find both the first and second episodes a bit tepid (*nama-nurui* 生ぬるい)—after all, this is the incomparable playboy (with a Playboy bunny hat) Narihira. He suggests that the beginning of the *Ise* probably has a *kao-mise* 顔見せ element (borrowing the concept from early modern kabuki theatre) (Fig. 14), bowing with a folded fan in front of him, but he still wonders what the point of episode 2 is.²⁷ Of course the couple made love, but still there is a sense of lethargy.

He then remembers that the young man has just had a coming-of-age ceremony and is no more than fourteen or fifteen years old. Episodes 1 and 2, he concludes, are a “run-up” (*josō* 助走), a “love warm-up” (*koi no wōminguappu* 恋のウォーミングアップ), as he throws a baseball to the frog (who is about to throw up from the impact). Horahira turns with renewed interest to episode 3.

By episode 17, the commitment to treat every *dan* becomes a trial, symbolized by a long, dark and steep staircase (*kai-dan* 階段), and for *dan* such as 17 and 18, that have little narrative, the original prose is omitted



Figure 9. Kurogane Hiroshi. *Ise monogatari* (Shōgakukan, 2013), 12. Courtesy of Shōgakukan.



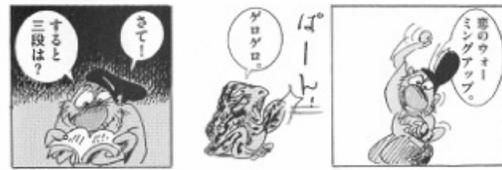
Figure 10. *Kubo version Ise stories illustrated scroll*, illustration of episode 1. Thirteenth century. Handscroll. Ink, gold, and color on paper. 27.0 x 24.9 cm. Important Cultural Property. Kubosō Memorial Museum of Arts, Izumi. Photo from Joshua S. Mostow, *Courtly Visions: "The Ise Stories" and the Politics of Cultural Appropriation* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), fig. 35.

and only a modern translation given, with the focus on the original poem and its paraphrase. Finally, by 46, 47, and 48 (Fig. 15), Kurogane starts skipping *dan* in their entirety, leaving them to be buried in the ground by the dog.

Episode 23 is treated in three sections, starting with a reproduction from the twelfth-century *Senmen Hokekyō sōshi* (Lotus Sutra inscribed on fan leaves 扇面法華經草子, 1254) (Fig. 16 and Fig. 17) and a representation of the important cultural property tea-bowl *Tsutsuizutsu* 筒井筒; the latter is not explained until section 3.²⁸ Section 2 (Fig. 18 and Fig. 19) visually quotes in great detail an Edo-period *Tesshinsai bunko-zō Ise*



Figure 13.
Kurogane Hiroshi.
Ise monogatari
(Tokyo:
Shōgakukan,
2013), 19. Courtesy
of Shōgakukan.



Ise monogatari
Hiroshi Kurogane

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Figure 14. Kurogane Hiroshi. *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2013), 20. Courtesy of Shōgakukan.

Figure 15. Below. Kurogane Hiroshi. *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2013), 166–67. Courtesy of Shōgakukan.

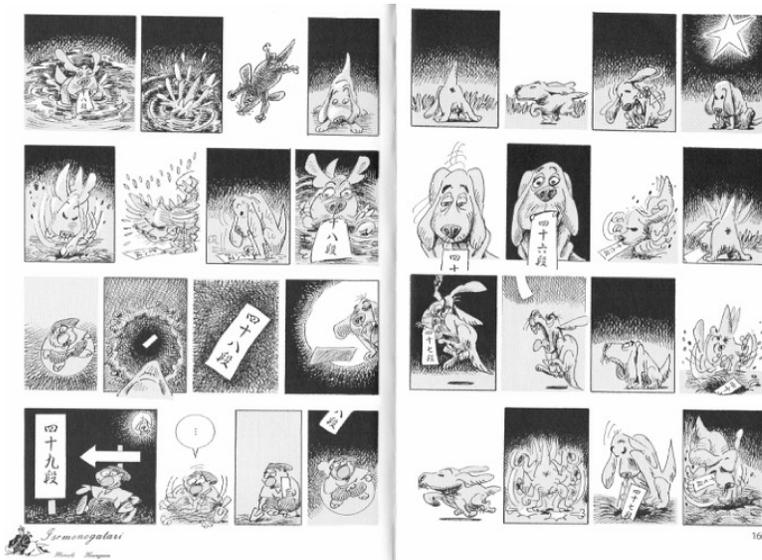




Figure 16. Left. Kurogane Hiroshi. *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2013), 107. Courtesy of Shōgakukan.





Figure 18 Left.
Kurogane
Hiroshi. *Ise
monogatari*
(Tokyo:
Shōgakukan,
2013), 111.
Courtesy of



Figure 19. Below.
*Tesshinsai bunko Ise
monogatari emaki*.
Seventeenth century.
Handscroll. Ink, gold,
and color on paper.
Height 34.0 cm.
Formerly Tesshinsai
bunko. Photo from
Gotō bijutsukan
gakugei-bu 後藤美術
館学芸部, ed., *Ise
monogatari no sekai*
伊勢物語の世界 (Re-
living the “Tales of
Ise”) (Tokyo: The
Gotoh Museum,
1994), 102.



monogatari emaki (Tesshinsai bunko Ise stories illustrated scrolls 鉄心齋文庫蔵伊勢物語絵巻), while section 3 starts with a representation of the Noh play *Izutsu* 井筒, a work centered on the first part of this *Ise* episode.²⁹

It is in this section that we are informed that *Tsutsuizutsu* is also the name of several tea ceremony items. Episode 63, long enough already in the original, one would think, instead of just starting at the beginning of the original episode commences with an account of a famous tea-jar called *Tsukumo-gami* 九十九髪 after a poem in that episode. Kurogane traces its ownership from an Ashikaga shogun through to the Meiji industrialist Iwasaki Yatarō 岩崎弥太郎 (1835–1885), only then proceeding to the episode’s narrative and poems.

Kurogane’s manga includes a number of female nudes—no doubt to maintain the attention of his male readers. Perhaps surprisingly, then, there is also what seems to be censorship. Episode 65—where a young man pursues the emperor’s favorite consort, at great risk to both her and himself—is one of the more famous episodes of the *Ise*, visually as well as textually, but Kurogane cuts it (Fig. 20), ostensibly because the Playboy bunny bartender tells him it is a story about a “stalker” (*sutōkā* ストーカー)! Disapproval is also manifested towards the incestuous episode 49. And *dan* 83, taught to every schoolchild for Narihira’s devotion to Imperial Prince Koretaka ends with the horse suggesting “Ugh, it would have been better to cut this *dan* as well” (ウーン、この段も省略しても良かったな). This is also the *dan* where inclusion of the original prose starts to largely give out.³⁰

The last episode (Fig. 21) begins with a *mitate-e* 見立て絵, or visual parody, of a *nehan-zu* 涅槃図, that is, a picture of the passing of the historical Buddha, and continues with a lovely transformation of an ink-stone into a tombstone and then (Fig. 22) into a courtier’s cap—an allusion to the Saga-bon illustration for episode 119 (Fig. 23). Kurogane then adds the account of Narihira’s death from the *Yamato monogatari* (Tales of Yamato 大和物語, mid-tenth century), which for its part adds a poem and a relationship with another woman to the episode. We then “encore” his death poem, and end with the two narrating characters turning into *ashide* 葦手, or reed-script, an ornamental calligraphic style with some historical connection to *Ise-e*.³¹



Figure 20. Kurogane Hiroshi. *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2013), 204. Courtesy of Shōgakukan.

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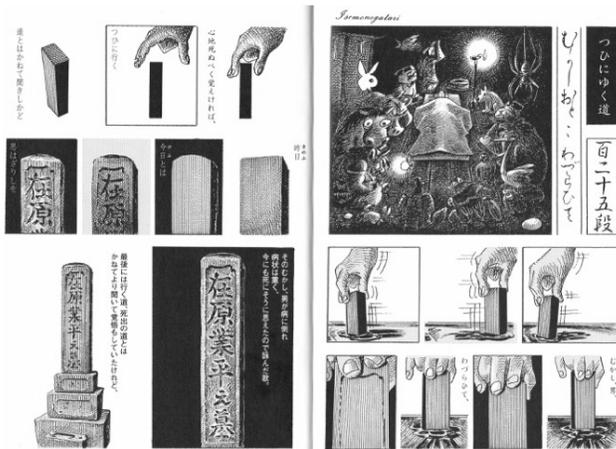


Figure 21. Kurogane Hiroshi. *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2013), 286–87. Courtesy of Shōgakukan.



Figure 22. Kurogane Hiroshi. *Ise monogatari* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2013), 288–289. Courtesy of Shōgakukan.

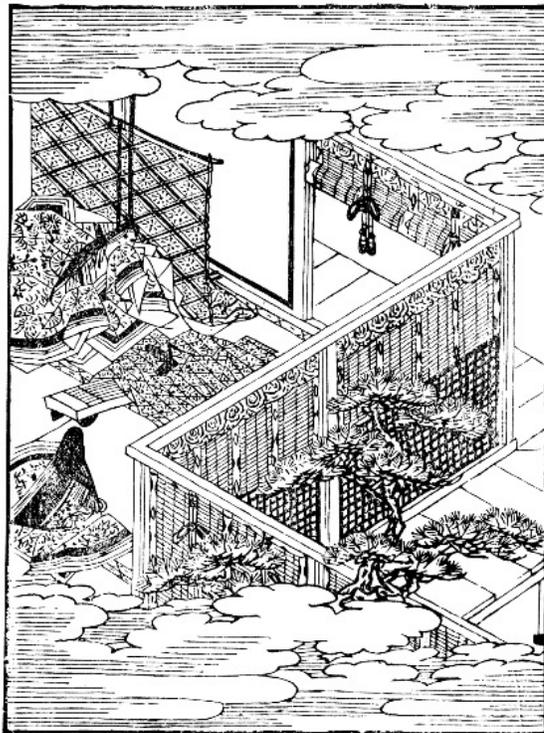


Figure 23. Saga-bon *Ise monogatari* (1608), episode 119. Image from Joshua S. Mostow and Royall Tyler, *The Ise Stories: Ise monogatari* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 239.

Conclusion

In the educational manga *Ise*, *Watashi-tachi no koten* and the Kumon editions, there is virtually no influence from the rich *Ise-e* tradition on the manga. However, important representatives of this tradition are included paratextually, but with absolutely no analysis or historical contextualization, and often with little connection to the content of the explanatory columns they are putatively illustrating.

The NHK version is distinctive in that it appears to be aimed at female readers and uses some of the same techniques found in the premodern *onna-e*, or “women-pictures” genre. These strategies, however, are what might be called rhetorical, and not iconographic, though it is the only educational version of the three to include one visual allusion to traditional iconography.

It is only Kurogane who creates rich visual and historical intertextuality, through quotation and some *mitate*, thoroughly utilizing the long visual tradition of both *Ise-e* and Japanese culture as a whole. Such an approach shows how imbedded the *Ise* is in that cultural tradition, while at the same time finding parallels or associations with contemporary popular culture.

This “gag” methodology in fact bears a strong resemblance to the Edo-period “aesthetic strategies” associated with such terms as *mitate* and *yatsushi* 略, which involved often a humorous juxtaposition of the *ga* 雅, or refined, and the *zoku* 俗, the mundane or quotidian.³² In regards to the *Ise*, this often involved depicting the modern-day Narihira as a playboy and aficionado of the so-called pleasure quarters (*yūkaku* 遊郭) and the female characters as prostitutes of various degrees.³³ Or, as we have just seen, Narihira could take the place of Siddhartha in Buddhist iconography. In fact, early seventeenth-century vernacular translations of canonical texts such as the *Ise* were viewed as inherently parodic, as they took the refined content of a classical text and recast it in the contemporary vernacular language.³⁴ Kurogane’s approach can be seen as a descendant of these strategies.

Curiously, however, though his book has a bibliography, none of the sources of his visual allusions is given. Which raises the question, whether he is really trying to teach cultural literacy, or simply providing a humorous pastiche for those already highly literate both verbally and visually. In either event, it appears that it is only the inherently parodic genre of “gag” manga that is capable of taking advantage of the long tradition of *Ise* illustration.

NOTES

¹ Murasaki Shikibu, *The Diary of Murasaki Shikibu*, trans. Richard Bowring (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 33–34.

² Hosokibara Seiki 細木原青起 (1885–1958), *Nihon mangashi: Chōjū giga kara Okamoto Ippei made* 日本漫画史：鳥獸戯画から岡本一平まで (Tokyo: Iwanami Bunko, 2019 [1924]). More recent examples include Takahata Isao 高畑勲 (b. 1935), *Jūni seiki no animēshon: Kokuhō emaki-mono ni miru eiga-teki anime-teki naru mono* 十二世紀のアニメーション：国宝絵巻物に見る映画的・アニメ的なるもの (Koganei, Tokyo: Tokuma shoten/Sutajio Giburi konpanī, 1999). See Jaqueline Berndt, “Reflections: Writing Comics into Art History in Contemporary Japan,” *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift/Swedish Journal of Art History* (2016), 108; and by the same author, “Manga Flows: Reading the Paneled Spread Against Handscroll and Webtoon,” in *Love, Fight, Feast—Dynamics in Japanese Narrative Art*, ed. by Khanh Trinh (Berlin: Hatje Cantz, forthcoming), exhibition catalog; and Ōtsuka Eiji, “Pourquoi les *emaki* ne sont pas mangas: quelques objections à ceux qui voudraient ancrer les mangas et les *anime* dans une tradition ancienne,” in *Japon pluriel 12: Autour de l’image: arts graphiques et culture visuelle au Japon. Actes du douzième colloque de la Société française des études japonaises*, ed. by Julien Bouvard and Cléa Patin (Paris: Éditions Picquier, 2018), 341–57.

³ To the best of my knowledge, five manga versions of the *Ise* have been produced to date, not counting the *Ōten no mon* 応天の門 series by Haibara Yak (sic) 灰原葉, which involves the fictional friendship between Narihira and Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真 (845–903).

My discussion does not include the 1994 *Ise* from the Kumon no manga kotenbungakkan くもんのまんが古典文学館 series by the artist Gotō Nagao 後藤長男 (b. 1953) under the direction of Hirata Yoshinobu 平田喜信 (b. 1936), a Japanese literature professor at Yokohama National University. Although, like the Maruyama volume to be discussed, the Kumon version makes absolutely no use of any *Ise-e* in the actual manga portion, it does include a number of *kaisetsu* 解説, or explanatory, columns that present, but do not discuss, a number of *Ise-e*: Sōtatsu’s Akutagawa album leaf (*shikishi-e*) 芥川色紙絵, the Saga-bon, the *Ihon Ise monogatari emaki*, Ogata Kōrin’s *Yatsushashi-zu maki-e suzuri-bako* 八橋図蒔絵硯箱 (for these last three, see above) and a Yatsushashi hanging scroll, the *Mitate Narihira nehan-zu* 見立業平涅槃図 by Hanabusa Itchō 英一蝶 (1652–1724), and the *Kōtei Ise monogatari zue* 校訂伊勢物語図絵, ed. by Ichioka Tanehiko 市岡猛彦 (1781–1827) and illustrated by Okada Gyokuzan 岡田玉山 (1737–1812) (Nagoya: Minoyairoku, 1825).

A fifth version, *Ise monogatari (Kuīnzu komikkusu)* 伊勢物語 (クイーンズコミ

ックス) , by Kihara Toshie 木原敏江 (b. 1948) (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 2011), was unavailable to me at the time of writing.

⁴ Maruyama debuted with the publisher Shūeisha in 1969 with the *shōjo* manga *Hoshikuzu-tachi no uta* 星くずたちの歌. In the 1970s, she wrote for Kōdansha's Nakayoshi series, which is aimed primarily at teenage girls. After giving birth, she turned to *ikuji* manga 育児漫画, or “child-rearing” manga, based on her own experiences (see Satomi Ishikawa, *Seeking the Self: Individualism and Popular Culture in Japan* [Bern: Peter Lang, 2007], 89–91). In the 1990s, she started illustrating classics such as the *Genji* and *Ise*, while continuing to draw *ikuji* manga and others that took housewives as their protagonists. Maruyama Kei Archive, accessed December 13, 2020. <http://maruyama-kei.net/#works>.

⁵ An *obi* 帯 is defined as: “a strip of paper around the lower third of a book’s dustcover or box, carrying a blurb;” *Kenkyūsha Japanese English Dictionary*, 5th ed. (Tokyo: Kenkyūsha, 2003), s.v. *obi*.

⁶ The Saga-bon and the standardization of *Ise* iconography are discussed in Joshua S. Mostow, *Courtly Visions: The Ise Stories and the Politics of Cultural Appropriation*, Brill Japanese Visual Culture 12 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 177–209.

⁷ The Saga-bon illustrations (1608) are included in Joshua S. Mostow and Royall Tyler, trans., *The Ise Stories: Ise monogatari* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2010).

⁸ 若者はこのように、恋にいちずになれるものです。年をとった者は、こんなひたむきな恋ができるでしょうか。 *Watashi-tachi no Ise*, 66.

⁹ The *Ihon* is discussed in Mostow, *Courtly Visions*, 145–75. For pictopedias, see, for example, Shibusawa Keizō 渋沢敬三 and Kanagawa Daigaku Nihon jōmin bunka kenkyūjo 神奈川大学常民文化研究所, eds., *Nihon jōmin seikatsu ebiki* 日本常民生活絵引, 5 vols. (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1984); translated as Kanazawa Daigaku, *Multilingual Version of Pictopedia of Everyday Life in Medieval Japan Compiled from Picture Scrolls* (Yokohama: Kanagawa Daigaku 21 Seiki COE puroguramu “Jinrui bunka kenkyū no tame no hi-moji shiryō no taikeika” kenkyū seika jōhōsho, 2008).

¹⁰ The Sōtatsu illustrations are discussed in Mostow, *Courtly Visions*, 213–25.

¹¹ *NHK Ise* is actually based on an earlier TV show, but manga artist Hosomura Makoto 細村誠 is given sole credit for the manga. For more details, see the article by Ivanova in the present volume. There is little information on Hosomura online. His most recent works available on Amazon are in the horror genre.

The *shōjo* manga style includes, among other features, human figures with large eyes and star-shaped highlights next to the pupils; disproportionately large heads in relation to the bodies; full-body portraits; undulating waves of hair; great attention to hair and clothing; floral backgrounds and extradiegetic

flowers; a break-up of the linear narrative flow of the panels, with layering and juxtaposing, manipulating their sizes and forms; and images breaking through the panel frame. See Mizuki Takahashi, “Opening the Closed World of Shōjo Manga,” in Mark W. MacWilliams, ed., *Japanese Visual Culture: Explorations in the World of Manga and Anime* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 114–136.

- ¹² My romanization here attempts to replicate the manga’s use of historical *kana* spelling, thus *uhi kauburi, tsutsuwidzutsu* for うひかうぶり・つつゐづつ, though note that the text is inconsistent, giving “Nijō no kisakai” にじょうのきさき rather than the historically correct にじやうのきさき.
- ¹³ “The Kusuko Incident (Kusuko no hen 薬子の変). An attempted usurpation in 810. Pleading illness, Emperor Heizei 平城上皇 (774–824; r. 806–809) abdicated in favor of his younger brother Emperor Saga 嵯峨天皇. Fujiwara no Kusuko 藤原薬子 (b. 810; daughter of the powerful court official Fujiwara no Tanetsugu 藤原種継 [737–785] of the Shikike 式家 branch of the Fujiwara family and the favorite of Heizei) persuaded Heizei to reclaim the throne. Heizei secretly assembled a military force for that purpose, but the plot was discovered. Kusuko poisoned herself, and Heizei took Buddhist orders.” Edwin O. Reischauer, et al., eds., *Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1993), I: s.v. “Kusuko Incident.” *Kanji* added.
- ¹⁴ An example can be seen in Joshua S. Mostow, “Canonization and Commodification: Illustrations to the *Tales of Ise* in the Modern Era,” in Stephen D. Miller, ed., *Issues of Canonicity and Canon Formation in Japanese Literary Studies*; Proceedings of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies 1 (Summer 2000), 89–119.
- ¹⁵ “On the whole, my principal object is not so much to amuse my readers as to present them with a study of human nature, and to give them information on the history of the social and political conditions of my native country nearly a thousand years ago.” Suematsu Kenchō, trans., *Genji monogatari: The Most Celebrated of the Classical Japanese Romances* (London: Trübner & Company, 1882), xvi. Quoted in Michael Emmerich, *The Tale of Genji: Translation, Canonization, and World Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 260.
- ¹⁶ Joshua S. Mostow, “Female Readers and Early Heian Romances: *The Hakubyō Tales of Ise Illustrated Scroll Fragments*,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 62.2 (Summer 2007): 135–177; reprinted in Mostow, *Courtly Visions*, 39–75. The original work has *dhāranī* stamped over its images. All known fragments are reproduced in Hagoromo kokusai daigaku Nihon bunka kenkyūjo Ise monogatari-e kenkyūkai, ed., *Ise monogatari emaki ehon taisei, shiryōhen* (Tokyo: Kadokawa gakugei shuppan, 2007).
- ¹⁷ The episode reads: “Back then this man, newly come of age, went hunting on a place of his in the village of Kasuga, near the Nara capital. In the village lived

two very pretty sisters. He spied on them through a crack. Their looks were so surprisingly out of keeping with their rustic surroundings that he couldn't contain himself. He cut a piece from the hem of his hunting cloak, wrote a poem on it, and had it taken to them. His hunting cloak was printed with a Shinobu leaf-tangle pattern.

<i>kasugano no</i>	Young <i>murasaki</i>
<i>waka-murasaki no</i>	sprung from Kasuga meadows,
<i>suri-koromo</i>	you impress my cloak
<i>shinobu no midare</i>	with such Shinobu tangles,
<i>kagiri shirarezu</i>	they will never come undone.

Off it went to them, just like that. He must have felt this was the time for a touch of:

<i>michinoku no</i>	Shinobu pattern
<i>shinobu mojhi-zuri</i>	printed in Michinoku,
<i>tare yuwe ni</i>	who then is to blame
<i>midare-somenishi</i>	for so tangling my heart,
<i>ware naranaku ni</i>	when I know it is not I?

People back then were so impetuously elegant.”

The Ise Stories: “*Ise monogatari*,” translated and with commentary by Joshua S. Mostow and Royall Tyler (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2010), 14–15. This translation uses a transliteration of historical *kana* usage (*rekishi-teki kana-zukai*) for the poems.

- ¹⁸ Episode 23: “Back then the son and daughter of two families out in the country played together beside the well. When they grew up, they became bashful with each other, but the young man wanted the girl for his own. The girl wanted him, too, and she ignored her parents’ attempts to marry her to someone else. From next door the young man sent her:

<i>tsudzuwitsu no</i>	Once upon a time
<i>widzutsu ni kakeshi</i>	I would stand by our well-curb,
<i>maro ga take</i>	measuring a height
<i>suginikerashi na</i>	surely grown too tall for that,
<i>imo mizaru ma ni</i>	love, since you and I last met.

She replied:

<i>kurabe-koshi</i>	And the childish hair
<i>furi-wake-gami mo</i>	I so often held to yours
<i>kata suginu</i>	now falls past my shoulders.
<i>kimi narazu shite</i>	Who could ever, if not you,
<i>tare ka agubeki</i>	come and put it up for me?

They kept writing to each other like this till at last they had their wish.

The years passed, and the young woman lost her support when her father died.

What’s the good of staying on with her *now*? the man said to himself, and he began

visiting a woman in Takayasu county of Kawachi Province. His original wife, though, saw him off without ever reproaching him. Suspecting her of having a lover, he pretended to set off for Kawachi but hid instead in the nearby shrubbery to spy on her. She made herself up very prettily and, gazing sadly before her:

<i>kaze fukeba</i>	When the wild wind blows,
<i>okitsu shira-nami</i>	out upon the sea white waves
<i>tatsuta yama</i>	rise—Mount Tatsuta!
<i>yoha ni ya kimi ga</i>	can you, by night, truly mean
<i>hitori koyuran</i>	to cross those hills all alone?

He was so moved that he gave up going to Kawachi.

When for once he did visit Takayasu, he noticed that that woman's originally flawless manners had become so casual that she now took the rice paddle herself to heap her bowl full. This put him off, and he stopped going for good. That explains why she kept gazing off toward Yamato:

<i>kimi ga atari</i>	I shall spend my time
<i>mitsutsu wo woran</i>	gazing toward where you are.
<i>ikoma yama</i>	The Ikoma hills:
<i>kumo na kakushi so</i>	clouds, do not hide them from me,
<i>ame ha furu to mo</i>	not even on days of rain!

She went on looking out that way until at last he, in Yamato, let her know that he would be coming. She awaited him joyfully, but time after time he failed to appear. She sent him:

<i>kimi komu to</i>	Every night you said
<i>ihishi yogoto ni</i>	this time you would be coming
<i>suginureba</i>	has gone by in vain,
<i>tanomanu mono no</i>	and I do not expect you,
<i>kohitsutsu zo furu</i>	but I long for you always.
He never came back.”	

Translation from Mostow and Tyler, *The Ise Stories*, 65–69.

¹⁹ Tamagami Takuya, “‘Onna-e’ gōgi kō: bijutsushigaku to kokubungaku,” *Yamato bunka* 53 「女絵」 語義考～美術史学と国文学 (November 1970): 8; quoted and translated in Mostow, *Courtly Visions*, 75.

²⁰ Hashimoto Osamu, (*Momjiri goyaku*) *Makura no sōshi*, 3 vols. (Tokyo: Kawade shobō shinsha, 1987). For more on this translation, see the article by Ivanova in the present volume.

²¹ Egawa Tatsuya, *Genji monogatari*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 2002). For more on Egawa's *Genji* manga, see the article by Milutin in the present volume.

²² Mostow and Tyler, *Ise Stories*, 3.

²³ The term “exile of a noble personage” was coined by the folklorist Orikuchi

Shinobu 折口信夫 (1887–1953) to describe a narrative pattern found as far back as the *Kojiki*, where a young noble is exiled for some perceived crime and forced to wander, encountering various challenges that provide them the things necessary to return home and triumph over their enemies. See Norma Field, *The Splendor of Longing in the Tale of Genji* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1987), 33–45.

- ²⁴ Kurogane is a native of Kōchi.
- ²⁵ Mostow and Tyler, *Ise Stories*, 17–18.
- ²⁶ The card depicts a well-known anecdote about the famous calligrapher Ono no Michikaze. Accessed December 13, 2020. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ono_no_Michikaze.
- ²⁷ *Kao-mise* is defined as “‘face-showing performance,’ an annual Edo period production at which a theatre announced its newly engaged company of actors and they performed together for the first time.” Samuel L. Leiter, *New Kabuki Encyclopedia: A Revised Adaptation of “Kabuki Jiten”* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1997), s.v. “Kaomise.”
- ²⁸ The original *Senmen Hokekyō sōshi* has, as its name suggests, the Lotus Sutra inscribed over the underpaintings. The definitive study of the work is Akiyama Terukazu, Yanagisawa Taka, and Suzuki Keizō, *Senmen Hokekyō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kajima shuppankai, 1972). Here I am using a reproduction of the underpaintings with the sutra inscriptions removed, Kōkogakkai, ed., *Senmen kōsha-kyō shita-e* (Tokyo: Kōkogakkai, 1920).
- ²⁹ Tesshinsai bunko image from Gotō bijutsukan gakugei-bu 後藤美術館学芸部, ed. *Ise monogatari no sekai* 伊勢物語の世界 (Tokyo: The Gotoh Museum, 1994), 102. For a translation of *Izutsu*, see *Japanese Nō Dramas*, ed. and trans. by Royall Tyler (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 120–32.
- ³⁰ Tawara Machi, *Koi-suru Ise monogatari* 恋する伊勢物語 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1992), 229.
- ³¹ *Ashide* is used extensively in the Kubo version; see Mostow, *Courtly Visions*, 97–127.
- ³² See Alfred Haft, *Aesthetic Strategies of the Floating World: Mitate, Yatsushi, and Fūryū in Early Modern Japanese Popular Culture*, Brill Japanese Visual Culture 9 (Leiden: Brill, 2013).
- ³³ See Mostow, *Courtly Visions*, 243–57.
- ³⁴ Joshua S. Mostow, “Waka no gendaigo-yaku to hon’yaku: *Ise monogatari* o chūshin ni/Modern Renditions and Translations of Japanese Classical Poetry, with Special Reference to *Tales of Ise*,” *Imēji toshite no “Nihon”*: *Nihon bungaku—hon’yaku no kanōsei/Imagined Japan: Japanese Literature—the Possibility of Translation*. Osaka University 21st Century Center of Excellence Program, Interface Humanities Research Activities 2002–2003 Report, 65–81.