

Nara ehon
Illustrated Books

Introduction to a Genre

Radu Leca

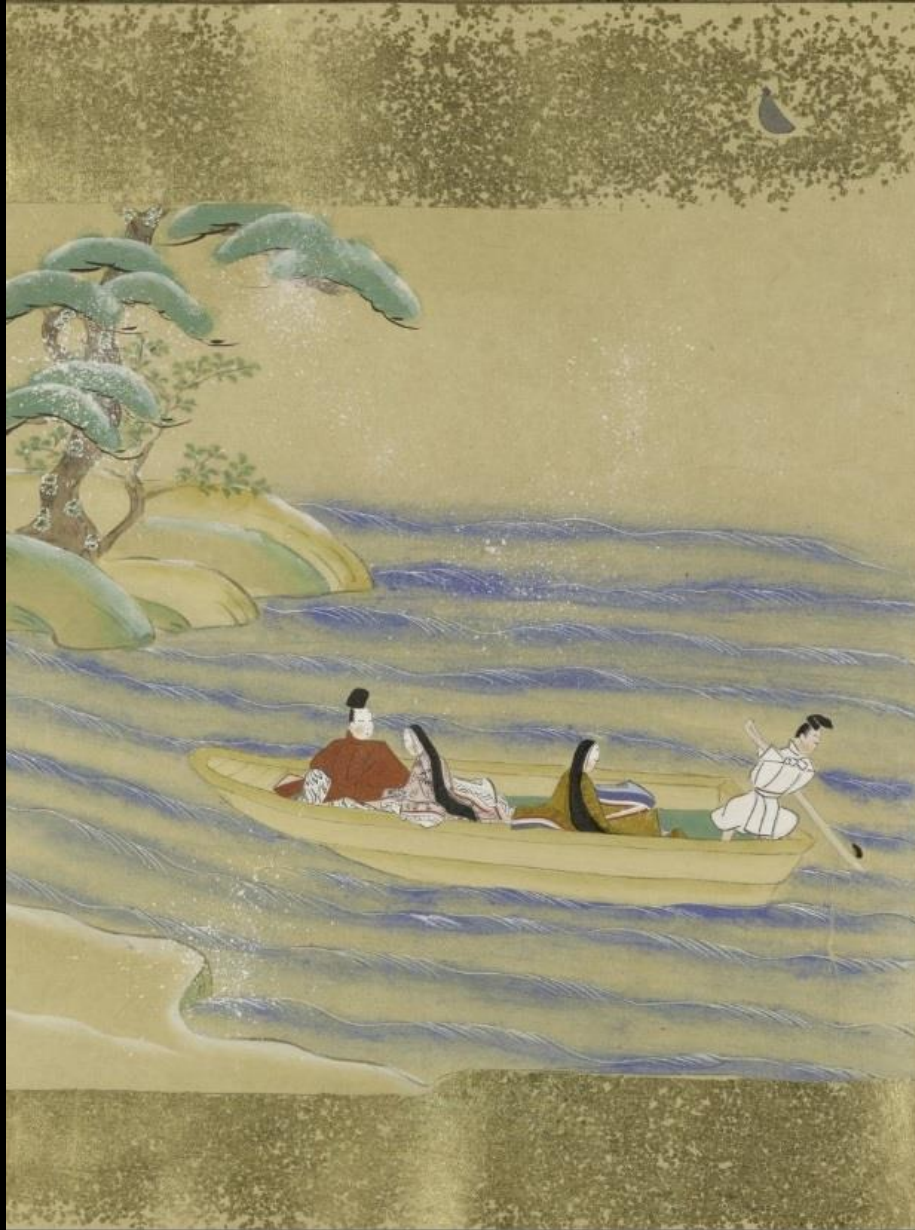
SOAS

radu_leca@soas.ac.uk

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Outline:

- Who's afraid of *nara ehon*?
- Content
- Format
- Chronology
- Study Case 1: Isome Tsuna, a late 17th c. female painter
- Study Case 2: the auspiciousness of Mount Penglai
- Connections to other genres: the iconography of the Paradise Bird



とちりしるにぬまきしにうらまをたりのけよん
いこせきりんにいとくろくはれいこうきよそ
よけられつりねやいとくろくはれいこうきよ
よそきりぬまきしとみまらぬきこうきよそ
のうらまをたりのけよんいこせきりんに
家つりぬまきしとみまらぬきこうきよそ
たしぬまきしとみまらぬきこうきよそ
いこせきりんにいとくろくはれいこうきよ
よそきりぬまきしとみまらぬきこうきよそ
うらまのぬまきしとみまらぬきこうきよそ

Isome Tsuna, Illustration to Ukifune (Drifting Boat) chapter from *Genji Monogatari* (The Tale of Genji), ink and colours on paper, from a set of 54 volumes, 24.1 by 17.8 cm, late 17th c.



Tosa Mitsunobu, Illustration to Ukifune (Drifting Boat) chapter from *Genji Monogatari* (The Tale of Genji), ink and colours on paper, from an album with 54 painted leaves, 24.2 cm by 18.0 cm, 1509-10.



Isome Tsuna, *Genji Monogatari* (The Tale of Genji),
ink and colours on paper, from a set of 54 volumes, 24.1 by 17.8
cm, late 17th c., detail



村を去る女はみづをこぼしていけり
こぼしてゆきまふんぬいね思はれ
とらふあわあしにまふせてまふいぢるまふい
まふちまふちめいこふらつこふらに
まふちまふちいけりまふちいけりまふち
いぢるまふちいけりまふちいけりまふち
かきまふちいけりまふちいけりまふち

めいこふらつこふらに

Isome Tsuna, *Hachikazuki* (The bowl bearer), ink and colour and gold on paper, from a set of 54 volumes, 24.1 by 17.8 cm, late 17th c.



Isome Tsuna, Hachikazuki (, ink and colours on paper, from a set of 54 volumes, 24.1 by 17.8 cm, late 17th c., detail

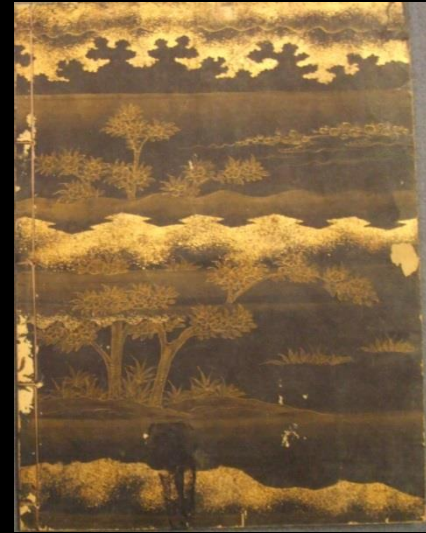
Nara ehon

Illustrated manuscript stitched books (*fukurotoji*) and scrolls

From end of 16th c. to beginning of 18th c.

Aesthetics derived from the *yamato-e* style of the Tosa school, but with simplified elements and a focus on character interaction, due to the interrelationship with the text.

The term *nara ehon* ('Nara picture books') was coined in the Meiji period (1909) due to stylistical similarities with images made by monks in Nara. **But** almost certainly made in Kyoto.





Who's afraid of *nara ehon*?

Nara ehon

also

Classical court tales

Medieval War Tales

Noh theater plays

Kowakamai dance librettos

Buddhist sermons

Otogi
bunko
(23 tales)

Otogi zoshi
(Companion Tales)
around 400

Tanrokubon
(edoribon)



とりはとせんにびくまよせ終ふらわうちやあを
 みふくいら塵ろく急須とつとあけりこはう
 ちやう天地ハるるんれうとまをひくくくく
 そるけ幾けぬさてハわうまこハわうむままたる
 ころハくかわ先おくさのいむわ成りむよひ
 てげれかたいととらうアとの終人もちあう
 ちやあはたう天ちくのうくまあきわう一海と
 プールへいつあ人のしくあうあうくひくくか
 らせ終ふアとひの里のまやはらんらうる二
 分のわらきま成りや一の山はわらきま
 せてはわのひ小のわ終ぬのうまはら終ひて終り

Tsukimitsu no soshi (The Tale of the Sun and Moon), *tanrokubon* (hand-coloured woodblock print), 28 by 18 cm, 1620-1640.

Who's afraid of *nara ehon*?

Nara ehon

also

Classical court tales

Medieval War Tales

Noh theater plays

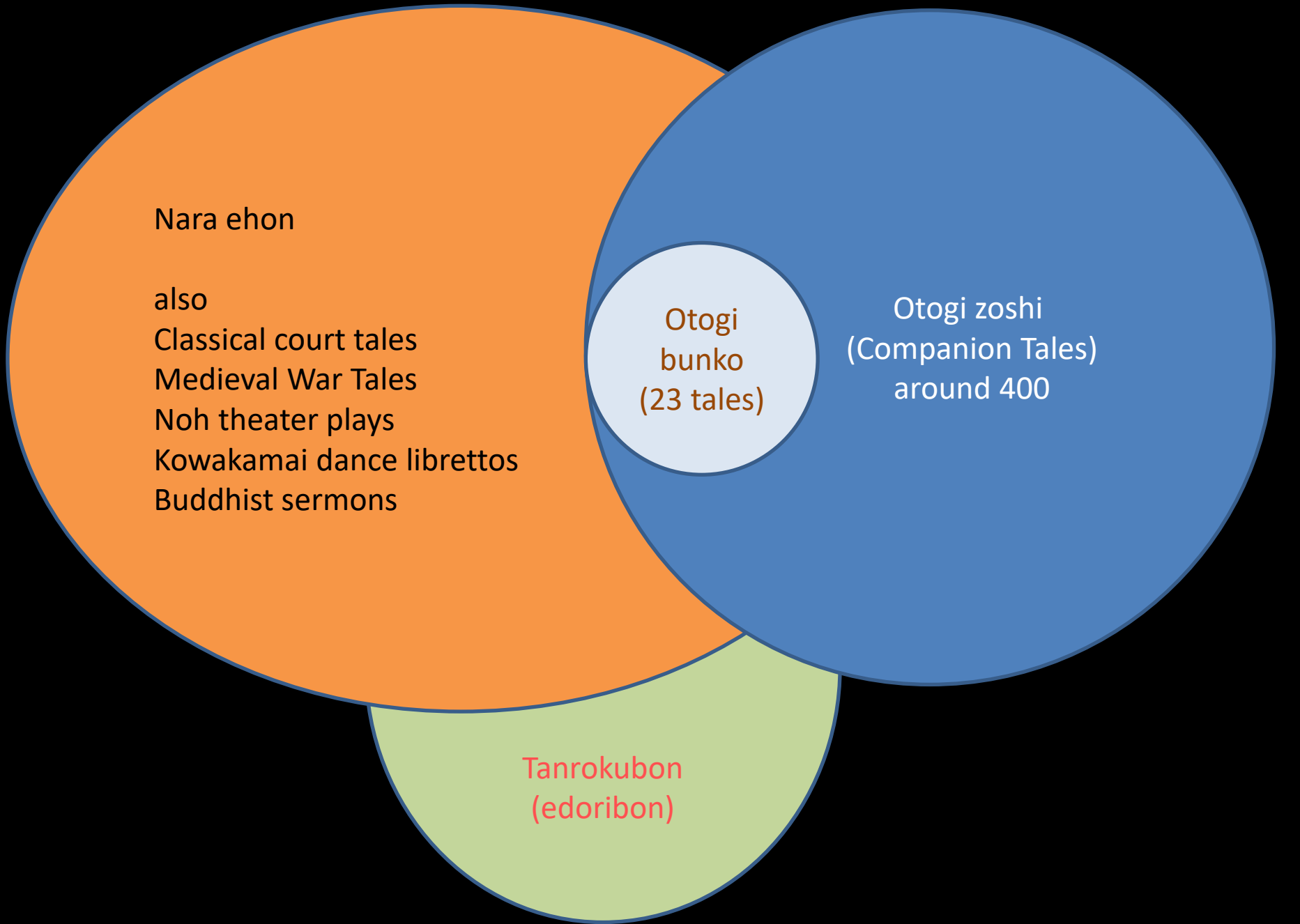
Kowakamai dance librettos

Buddhist sermons

Otogi
bunko
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Formats:

Ōbon (large size upright) 28 cm high, 20 cm wide

Hanshibon or *chubon* (medium size upright)
23.5 cm high, 16.5 cm wide

Yokohon (oblong) 16 cm high, 22 cm wide

Chronology by Ishikawa Tōru

I Dawn period – up to Tenshō era (up to 1595)

II Dazzling period – Keichō era (1595-1625)

III Production period - Kan'ei era (1625-1655)

IV Apex period – Kanbun era (1655 – 1685)

V Terminal period – Genroku era (1685 – 1715)

VI Offspring period – Kyōhō era onward (1715 -)

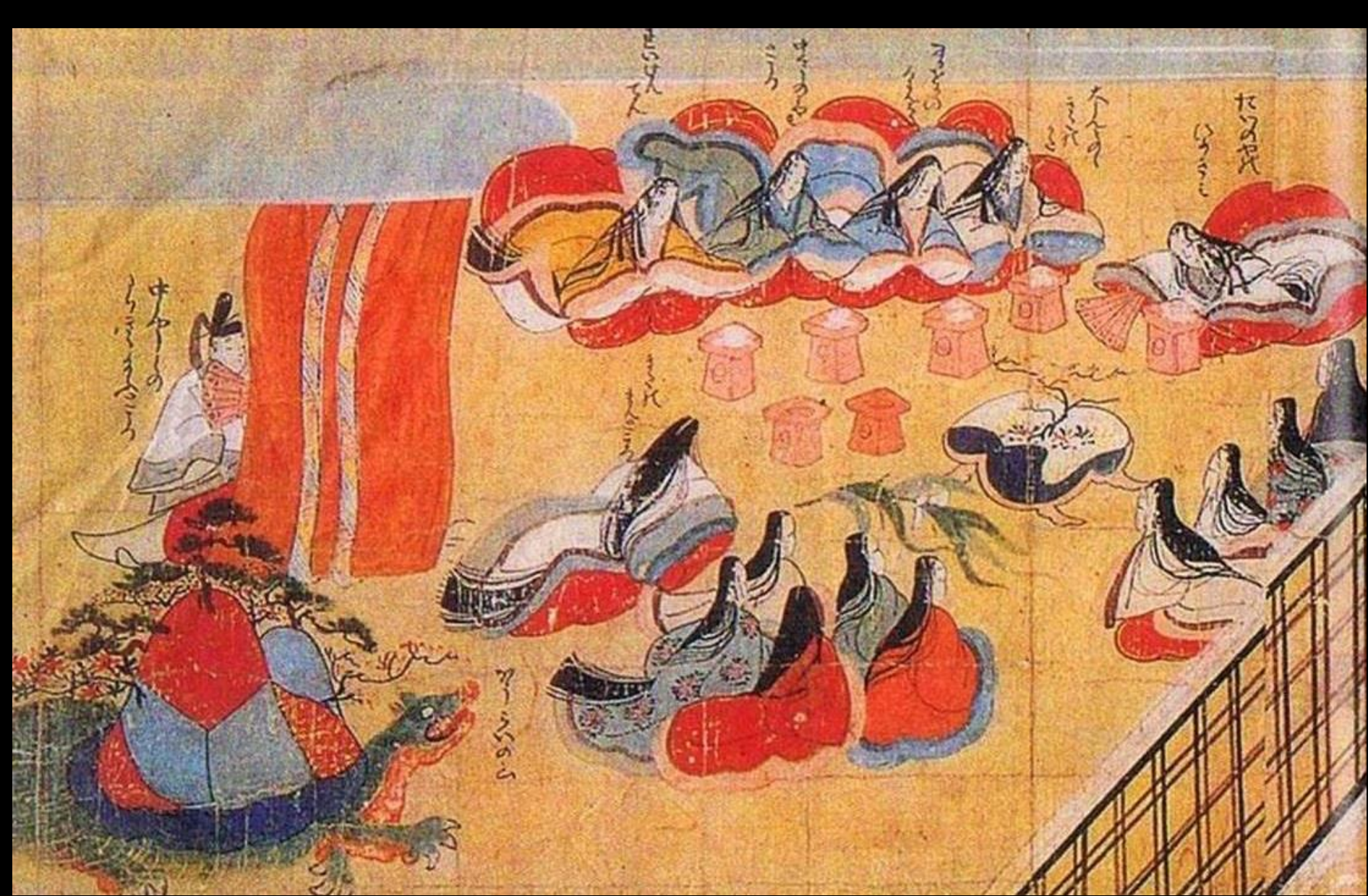
The Kanbun era: The apex of *Nara ehon* production, largest number surviving, some calligraphers known. Contemporaneous to the first *ehon* (picture books) of the *ukiyo-e* genre by Hishikawa Moronobu.



Function:

Nara ehon were often produced and purchased for auspicious occasions, they functioned as dowry items and as New Year's gifts.

Hōrai Monogatari (Tales of Penglai), ink and colour on paper, 23.5 by 17.5 cm, middle 17th c.



Iwaya Monogatari (The Story of Iwaya), ink and colour on paper, middle 17th c.



Hōrai Monogatari (Tales of Penglai),
ink and colour and gold on paper, illustrated scroll, middle 17th c.



Hōrai Monogatari (Tales of Penglai), illustrated scroll, middle 17th c.

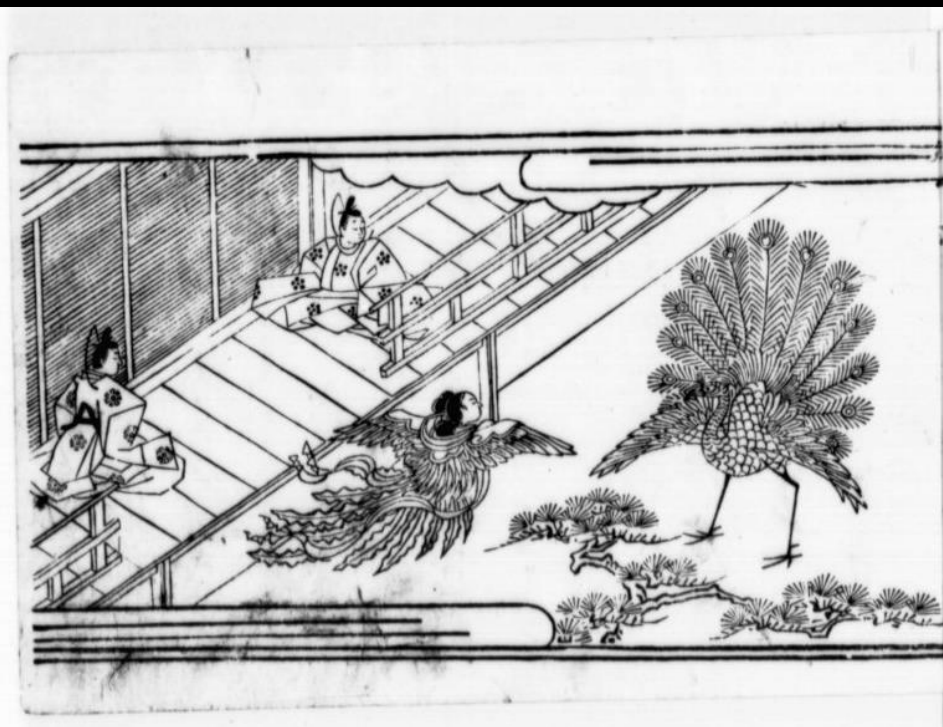


Hōrai Monogatari
(Tales of Penglai),
woodblock print, 1665

The iconography of the Paradise Bird across various genres



Bontenkoku (Story from the Land of Brahma), ink and colour and gold on paper, 24.3 x 32.2 cm, set of two albums, mid-17th c.



むねはなふちのけしき
らしき雲のわたりに
うらやまの心は
みくもくかきかき
こころのつらさを
うそひにまぎれ
もがれぬやまの
うらやまの
つらさを
うそひに
まぎれ
もがれぬ
やまの

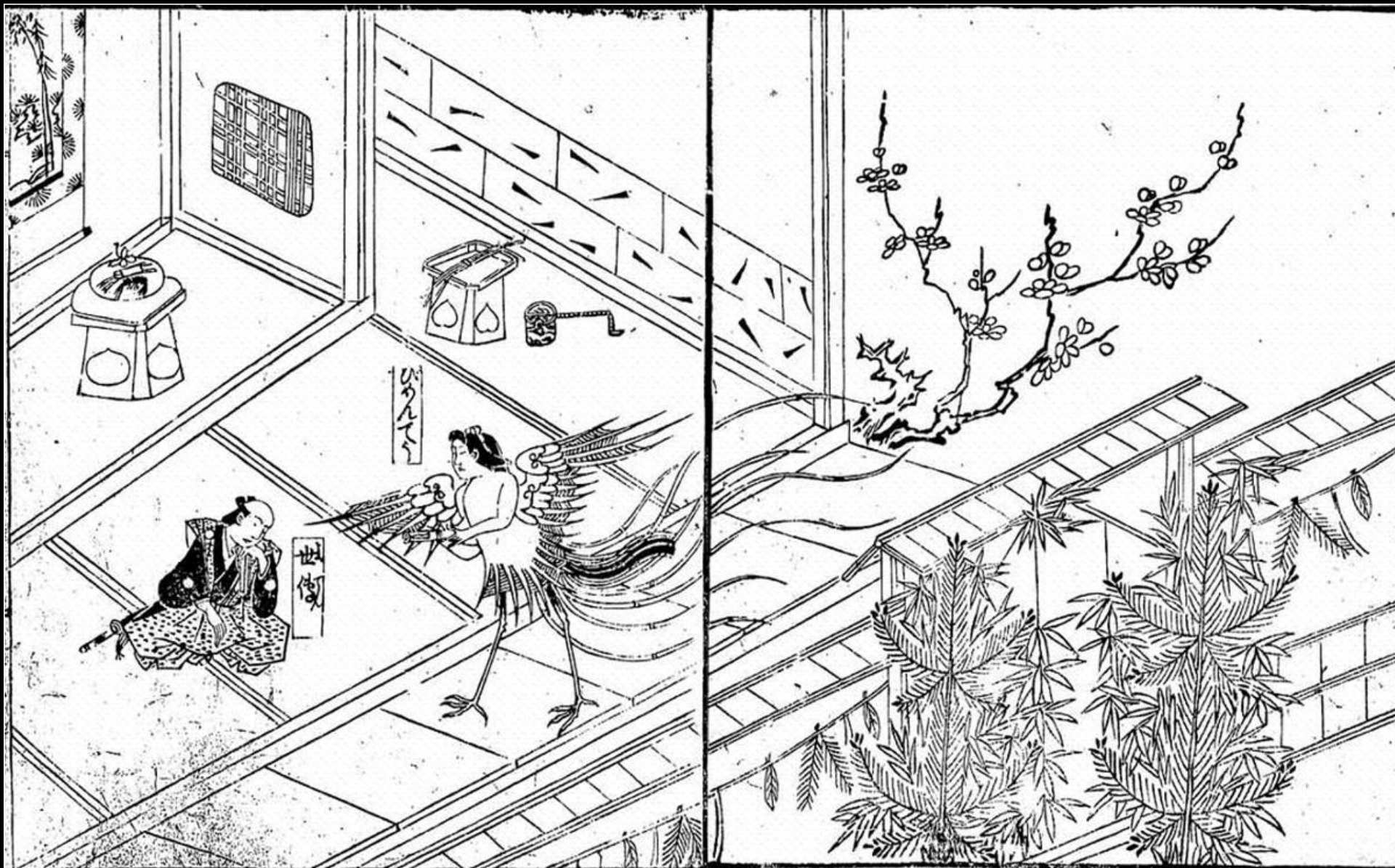
Shibukawa Sei'emon, The Legend of Bontenkoku from *Shūgen otogi bunko* (The Companion Library of Auspicious Words), 1700,

17 by 23 cm, woodblock print,

とりは志きんにかくまきせ給ふらやうとやあそ
 みふくいらんてり一忽破とつとわけりといは
 ちやう天地ハるうんれうとまをひくくうら
 そあけあけあさてハわうきまハわうむまきたる
 とらろハくかわもふささのいわわ成りむまひ
 てげれやたいととらうアとの給人らあう
 とやあそハたり天ちくのうくまあきわう一と
 トラへハつあへのいしくあう海くくひくか
 らせ給ふアとのいさ里のまはさんらう二
 へのわうきま成りあうのいさはひりさきま
 せてはあひの小のわあぬりうとあさるあひてあり



Tsukimitsu no soshi (The Tale of the Sun and Moon), hand-coloured woodblock print, 28 by 18 cm, 1620-1640.



Ihara Saikaku, Illustration to the ukiyo-zōshi *Shoen ōkagami*
(The Mirror of Amorous Beauties), woodblock print, 1684

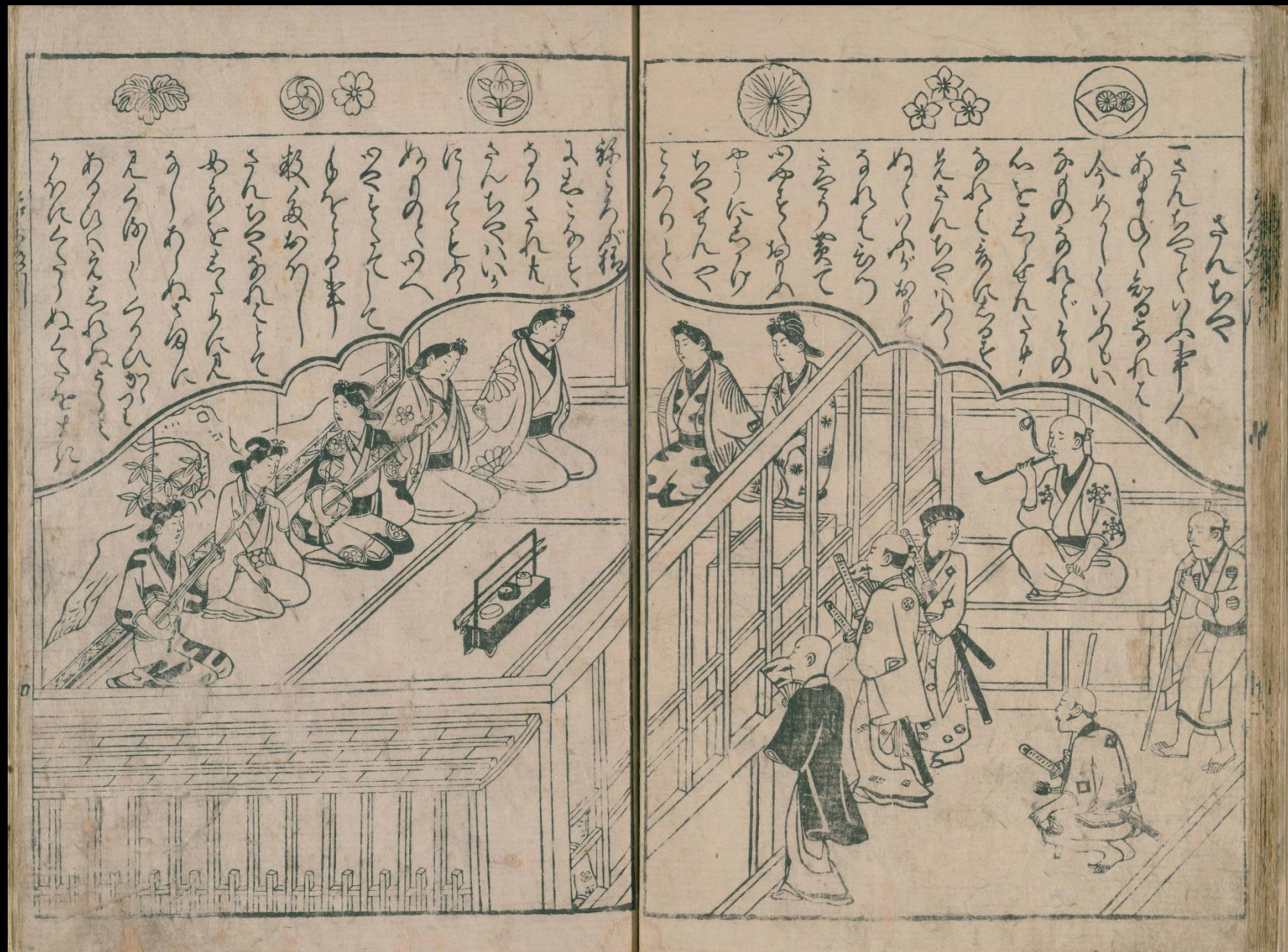




Hishikawa Moronobu, A house of assignation, detail from Scenes of the Kabuki theatre and Yoshiwara pleasure quarter, ink and colour on silk, 32.1 by 697 cm, scroll, 1672-1689.



Hishikawa Moronobu, A house of assignation, detail from Scenes of the Kabuki theatre and Yoshiwara pleasure quarter, ink and colour on silk, 32.1 by 697 cm, scroll, 1672-1689.



Hishikawa Moronobu, Scene from a house of assignation from *Yoshiwara koi no michibiki* (Guide to Love in the Yoshiwara), 28 by 16.8 cm, woodblock print, 1678.



Hishikawa Moronobu, A house of assignation in Yoshiwara from the series *Yoshiwara no Tei*, 25.7 by 38.6 cm, hand-coloured woodblock print, 1681-4.



Torii Kiyomasu I,
Bondengoku (The Land of
Brahma), *tan-e* (vermillion
woodblock print), ink on
paper with hand-applied
color, vertical *ōōban* (58.2
by 33 cm), 1706



Katsushika Hokusai,
Kalavinka (Bird of
Paradise), polychrome
woodblock print
(*surimono*), ink and
color on paper, 21.7 by
17.9 cm, 1820-33.

講談社の絵本

梵天国物語



ぼんてんこくものがたり



Takeda Yukio (text) and
Haneishi Kōji (illustrations),
Bontenkoku monogatari (Tale
of the Land of Brahma),
Tokyo, Kodansha, 1954

大日本雄弁会講談社 発行



おくがたは みなみの えんに たつ
 て、ほん ほん ほん と てを うちま
 した。それから、ことりのよう な うつ
 くしい こえて こう いいました。
 「これ、てんにんや てんにんや、それ
 から くじゃくや くじゃく、ちよつと
 きて おくれ。」
 まもなく うつくしい てんにんと、
 きれいな くじゃくが とおくの そら
 から、さつと まいおりて きました。

Takeda Yukio (text) and Haneishi Kōji (illustrations), *Bontenkoku monogatari* (Tale of the Land of Brahma), Tokyo, Kodansha, 1954

ちゆうじようは よろこんで、てんにんと くじゃく
 を、てんしさまの ところへ つれて いきました。
 てんにんと くじゃくは、うえに なり したに な
 り、あおく すんだ そらで まいつづけました。お
 きな きれいな はなびらが はらはらと、ふって き
 たのかと おもうと、こんどは たちまち さあつと
 わになつて、うつくしい にじが できたようです。
 あまりの みごときに てんしさまを はじめ、おつ
 きの ひとたちも、みんな かんしんして、ほめる こ
 とはも わすれて しまったほどでした。



Takeda Yukio (text) and Haneishi Kōji (illustrations), *Bontenkoku monogatari* (Tale of the Land of Brahma), Tokyo, Kodansha, 1954

Thank you
for your attention!