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Edo in the Manga World: Appare Jipangu! and Early Modern Japanese Literature

Parker Christian Cassidy
Bard College

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Edo in the Manga World: *Appare Jipangu!* and Early Modern Japanese Literature

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Languages and Literature
Of Bard College

by
Parker Cassidy

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Introduction

Since being introduced to history and culture of Japan in high school, I have desired to pursue learning about it, and this inspired me to attend Bard. Although I initially focused on learning the Japanese language, the more I learned, the more compelled I felt to explore other aspects of Japanese culture, and I found a love for Japanese literature, including poetry, novels, and manga, the latter of which became one of my hobbies. As I continued learning Japanese and reading Japanese literature, I came to enjoy expanding both my linguistic capability and literary knowledge together, and chose to cultivate my passions by studying abroad in Japan in the fall of my junior year through Temple University, studying language and literature from early Japan to modern manga, and taking a Japanese translation class in the spring. My translation class with Mika Endo was particularly fun, as I was able to combine my love for Japanese language and literature, applying what I knew and gaining appreciation for Japanese literature, such as an excerpt of Kenzaburô Oe that I translated. This four-year exploration of Japan's language and literature ultimately led me to translate Yuu Watase's manga *Appare Jipangu!*. After learning so much about Japanese language and literature, I knew I wanted to create a passion project that would allow me to share the language and literature I love with those reading it. Through this essay and its accompanying manga, I believe that I have accomplished this.

In reading and translating the manga, I observed many interesting parallels between Watase's manga and the literature of the Edo period. She proclaims her manga to be a "Edo style" comedy, and follows the same conventions found in Edo period literature to achieve this. The characters and situations she creates strongly mirror that of Edo period writers, promoting similar moral themes, using the same kind of comedic techniques as the characters featured in

Edo literature, narrative devices found in Edo literature to establish tone and genre. Edo literature itself also seems to have influenced her choice to set the manga during the Edo period. Certain Edo genres had unique forms of character building and character psychology, while certain authors used unique literary elements and created their own genres. Watase's characters and narratives exhibit much the same conventions as these stories and authors. My translation also had many challenges, having to take the historical context of the manga into account when translating, use methods to create a linguistically accurate translation, and translate words in a way that represented the actions they were being associated with. I also applied the same conventions I had been taught in Mika Endo's class to the translation, and despite the many challenges I faced, the methods I used make for an faithful translation.

Watase's manga and my translation and essay have shown me how the broad expanse of literature that existed in the Edo period continues to influence Japanese authors today, even in the realms of manga. Although Japan itself continues to change, the impact of its history is still incredibly prominent in many ways. The characters and themes are compelling and influential, and were intended to be by certain authors, and while Watase does put her own unique touch on the Edo styles, the way in which she imitates them and the extent to which she does so signify how the importance of the writings. In translating *Appare Jipangu!* and analyzing its Edo counterparts, the presence of the Edo period in the manga world is brought to light, as is the influence that its literature continues to have on Japanese stories even today.

Chapter 1

Creating “Edo-style”: How Watase’s Manga Embodies Elements of Edo Literature

Introduction

Watase Yuu's 1997 manga *Appare Jipangu!* was a self-proclaimed 江戸はっちゃんきコメデー, *edo hacchaki komedii*, or “hot new Edo-style comedy” comedy in English, set in a fictitious representation of Edo, and the author tries her best to emulate the elements found in Edo period literature to achieve an ostensibly “Edo” style. In many parts of the manga, the attributes of Edo period fiction genres, such as *kibyôshi*, are strongly mimicked and conveyed in Watase's own fashion. These include the moral themes of right and wrong found in the *kibyôshi* of Santo Kyôden (1761-1816), that teach the reader about doing the things that the author believes are morally right.¹ In addition to using similar themes, Watase also uses similar types of humor as Edo writing, like how Kyôden uses the inherent nature of his characters to create humorous situations for the audience. Following these elements of Edo literature establish Watase's intended Edo style. Not every aspect of Edo literature is so closely imitated in her manga, however. Watase's portrayal the city of Edo itself was one of her most prominent deviations from Edo literature, lacking the intricate detail about the city's physical and cultural infrastructure that genres such as the *sharebon*, known for its depictions of Edo licensed quarters possessed. In addition, the way in which Watase portrays the social classes of Edo differs, depicting more egalitarian interactions or empowered roles compared to the classes depicted in Edo literature. These deviations from early modern literary conventions mark a disconnect between Watase's manga and actual Edo literature, and thus her “Edo-style” writing. There are even points in the story where Watase simultaneously imitates and deviates from the way stories were written during the early modern period, thus simultaneously establishing and detracting

¹ Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 687.

from the “style” of Edo literature. Certain authors during the Edo period, such as Kyôden, established themselves as characters within their own stories, existing alongside their characters and influencing events that drive the narrative. Watase does insert herself into the realm of her manga and also influences points within her narrative, but does so in an indirect fashion, wherein she is not an actual character in *Appare Jipangu!* She also simultaneously imitates and deviates from Edo literature in the way she establishes fantasy in her manga. She uses the same kinds of fantastical characters and objects that Edo authors such as Hiraga Gennai (1728-1779) used to establish fantasy within their stories, but simultaneously using objects beyond the usage of Edo authors.² *Appare Jipangu!* strongly adapts many elements of Edo literature, all of which establish her manga as the “Edo-style comedy” that she claims it to be.

Watase’s Echoes of Edo: Mimicking Moral Messages

Many moral themes of early modern Japanese literature are incorporated into the *Appare Jipangu!*, such as knowing what is good and what is evil, the impacts of evil actions and the virtues of good ones. Prior to the Kansei Reforms (1787-1793), a theme of “urban commoner culture,” a form of culture that glorified “the commercial triumphs of the lower merchant class” came into prominence in the *kibyôshi*, “picture books in which the image and text are intended to be enjoyed together.”³ This type of writing came to be “the most salient form of political satire” as a type of counterculture to shogun ideals.⁴ However, during the reforms, the *bakufu*, spearheaded by Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758-1829), issued a number of “political, economic and moral reforms,” that forced *kibyôshi* writers to shift themes from “obvious political and social

² Shirane, ed., 461.

³ Shirane, ed., 672, 711.

⁴ Adam L. Kern, *Manga from the Floating World* (Harvard University Asian Center, 2006), 8, 9.

satire” to “a thick layer of ethical didacticism,” emphasizing “filial piety, diligence, frugality and honesty.”⁵ The themes of *kibyôshi* shifted dramatically in early modern Japan (1600-1867) from promoting a counter-traditional mindset to establishing conformist moralistic ones during government reformations.⁶

An example of the more moralistic writing is Santo Kyôden’s *Fast-Dyeing Mind Study* (*Shingaku Hayasomegusa*) (1790)⁷. In this story, a boy named Ritarô is blessed with a good “soul” created by the Heavenly Emperor, and this good soul helps him to honor “his parents,” be “thoroughly frugal” and “a model of contentionsness and honesty.”⁸ However, five “bad souls” trap the good soul and take over Ritarô, influencing him to almost fornicate with a courtesan named Ayashino, and the bad souls kill the good one after a letter from the courtesan weakens Ritarô’s mind.⁹ With the bad souls in control, Ritarô’s behavior changes, and “he drank heavily, started fights, gambled and swindled,” leading his parents to disown him.¹⁰ After turning robber, he is stopped by Master Dôri, a man “who naturally felt deep compassion and love and had the ability to act on his beliefs,” and is brought to his house, where the widow and sons of the good soul defeat the bad souls.¹¹ Master Dôri teaches Ritarô that “without intending to, people inflict great pain on themselves with their own minds” and “the mind is the soul,” reforming him.¹² Kyôden’s narrative establishes a prominent theme of good and evil, and the importance of good behavior. The good soul, who helps Ritarô practice filial piety, honesty and frugality, shows that these are good behaviors because a “good” soul does them. In contrast, actions such as gambling

⁵ Shirane, ed., 655, 711., Kern, 9.

⁶ Shirane, ed., 1.

⁷ Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature*, 711.

⁸ Santô Kyôden, *The Fast-Dyeing Mind Study*, trans. Chris Drake in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 713, 714, 717.

⁹ Kyôden, *The Fast-Dyeing Mind Study*, 718, 720, 721, 723, 724.

¹⁰ Kyôden, *The Fast-Dyeing Mind Study*, 726.

¹¹ Kyôden, *The Fast-Dyeing Mind Study*, 727, 728.

¹² Kyôden, *The Fast-Dyeing Mind Study*, 727, 278, 729.

happen because of bad souls, implying that such actions are evil. Master Dôri's teachings also convey the necessity of being aware of the impact of one's actions. The actions of the bad souls cause Ritarô's parents to disown him, indicating to the reader that the things Ritarô did was bad, and that they could end up in his position if they behave badly. With what Master Dôri tells Ritarô about the duality of mind and soul, this *kibyôshi* encourages a higher level of self-awareness in one's actions. The positive connotations of the good soul and Master Dôri's teachings, along with negative consequences of the bad souls establish the importance of good behavior, completing the message of knowing good and evil.

Watase conveys a similar message of the importance of doing good deeds through her protagonist, Yusura. Yusura is a "sadness fighter," *hikeshi-ya* in Japanese, who helps people by "healing their sadness," with the help of a magical staff called Kongômaru that can detect, absorb and redirect "sadness."¹³ When performing her duties, she tells the people whom she is pursuing to "know the sadness of others and your own sin," and releases a wave of energy to strike her foe.¹⁴ According to her, the impact of this energy differs depending on who receives the sadness.¹⁵ In Chapter One, a lord named Kishima Yoriyasu attempts to manipulate and kill his nephew, Samon, and is struck by the sadness energy of both his nephew and a servant he loved named Oteru.¹⁶ Afterwards, according to Samon, Yoriyasu felt "sorry for what he did" and became a better person.¹⁷

The character of Yusura and her interactions with others establish a theme akin to Kyôden's. Her statement of "knowing the sadness of others and your own sin" teaches the audience that they must be aware of the feelings of those around them and how their actions

¹³ Yuu Watase, *Appare Jipangu!* Vol.1, trans. by Parker Cassidy. (Shogakukan Inc., 1997), 21, 50.

¹⁴ Watase, 8.

¹⁵ Watase, 51.

¹⁶ Watase, 22, 25, 38, 43, 49.

¹⁷ Watase, 53.

affect the people around them. Much like the actions of Ritarô's good soul, Yusura's phrase establishes that emotional awareness is what is "good," and her job of healing sadness as a *hikeshi-ya* adds further to this, conveying to the audience that they should help to heal the sadness of others. Yoriyasu's manipulation and assassination attempts carry bad connotations, and the fact that he causes Samon and Oteru to feel the sadness that he is later struck with establishes that actions like Yoriyasu's are evil, similar the implication Kyôden created when the bad souls possessed Ritarô. Yoriyasu subsequent apology also mirrors the sons of the good soul taking over Ritarô's body, adding to the dichotomy of good and evil actions and self-awareness. Because of Yusura's sadness infusion, Yoriyasu understands how he has hurt Samon emotionally, and knowing this, becomes a "nice guy." Like Ritarô and Master Dôri, Yusura and Yoriyasu's interactions demonstrate the importance of the good moral behavior of "knowing the sadness of others and your own sin." Through them, the reader learns that doing this will make them a morally upstanding paragon. Unlike Master Dôri's philosophy, which focuses on the pain people inflict on themselves, Yusura's still reflects the importance of being mindful of the effects of your actions and performing good ones. Through these elements, the Edo theme of knowing what is good and evil, and being aware of the consequences of evil actions, is created.

Another place where Watase imitates this theme is in Chapter Four. Yusura inflicts the sadness that Kongômaru had absorbed onto a criminal named Tokubei, after which he turned himself in.¹⁸ Later, Tokubei's son, Hachirô, steals Yusura's Kongômaru and uses it to inflict sadness on Edo's magistrates and police, allowing the criminals they had imprisoned to return to crime.¹⁹ Tokubei, however, does not commit any crimes, and reveals to Yusura that he tied his hands behind his back to "keep himself from sinning again," thanking Yusura for helping him to

¹⁸ Watase, 149, 150, 154.

¹⁹ Watase, 159, 174, 175.

understand the sadness his actions caused.²⁰ Tokubei reveals his life of crime to Hachirô, and promises that he will atone for his “sins.”²¹ The dynamic of Yusura and Tokubei in this chapter adds further to the message of knowing good and evil and acting appropriately. Similar to Master Dôri’s teachings helping to reform Ritarô, Yusura’s infliction of sadness helped Tokubei to realize the sadness he was causing others. He knows that his criminal actions are evil because of the sadness energy Yusura transmitted into him, and even when an opportunity to return to crime presented itself, he abstained. His claim that he did so prevent himself from “sinning” again indicates that he is trying to be a better person. These actions are similar to Ritarô in the climax of Kyôden’s story, with Ritarô correcting the actions his evil souls performed through honoring his family, which made him “a living example of a virtuous man.”²² While Tokubei’s goodness is implied by his actions rather than directly stated, the connotations of his restraint and his promises to face the consequences establish a similar, Edo-style message.

Character Comedy

Another aspect of early modern literature that *Appare Jipangu!* imitates is its character-oriented meta humor. In *Fast-Dyeing Mind Study*, after Master Dôri teaches Ritarô the philosophy of “the mind is the soul,” he states that he must “put it to the author of this book,” who “sounds like a mighty scoundrel who has ignored the Way”.²³ Master Dôri’s statement clarifies that he knows that he is a fictional character in the story, and he adds humor to the situation by saying how he will Kyôden the same lesson he taught Ritarô. Although aware of his

²⁰ Watase, 176, 185.

²¹ Watase, 185, 86.

²² Santô Kyôden, *The Fast-Dyeing Mind Study*, 729.

²³ Santô Kyôden, *The Fast-Dyeing Mind Study*, 728, 729.

fictional state of being, Master Dôri still acts in accordance with the character traits that Kyôden wrote for him as a man who “had the ability to act on his beliefs.” Master Dôri knows that he is written to behave that way, and is deciding to act on his beliefs he was written with to teach Kyôden his beliefs. This creates a humorous effect, surprising the audience with the fictional character’s awareness of their own existence while remaining in character.

In addition to direct references to their fictional nature, certain characters acknowledged that they are fictional in more subtle ways. Edo literature often satirized the “licensed” or “pleasure” quarters of Japan, and the people within it.²⁴ One satirical subject was the courtesan, who used their skills in “music, dance” or “poetry” to make a living.²⁵ Because of their jobs and their associations with prostitution, courtesans were considered “non-humans” by Edo society, and were thought to “contaminate” members of respectable society.²⁶ The position of courtesan had many negative stigma attached to it during the Edo period, which made them a prominent satirical subject. An example of this courtesan satire is another of Kyôden’s works, *Grilled and Basted Edo-born Playboy (Edo Umare Uwaki no Kabayaki)*, written in 1785.²⁷ In the story, Enjirô, a young millionaire’s son, is inspired to “become a great playboy,” and seeks help from his playboy friend, Kitari Kinosuke.²⁸ Following a failed attempt to cause rumors about affair with a *geisha* named Oen, Enjirô tells Kinosuke and his friend, Warui Shian, to visit the courtesan Ukina of “the House of Floating Fame.”²⁹ The two of them make cracks about her courtesan status, Shian saying “people say you’re incredibly good at stringing men along” and Kinosuke remarking that she “must know every trick in the book” as a top courtesan, only for

²⁴ Shirane, ed., 655, 672.

²⁵ Shirane, ed., 9, 10.

²⁶ Kern, 30.

²⁷ Shirane, ed., 687.

²⁸ Santô Kyôden, *Grilled and Basted Edo-born Playboy*, trans. Chris Drake in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 688, 689.

²⁹ Kyôden, *Grilled and Basted Edo-born Playboy*, 691, 693, 695.

Ukina to tell them to stop with the “tasteless jokes.”³⁰ Ukina’s remark creates this subtler brand of self-referential humor. Both Kinosuke and Shian stereotype Ukina’s position, stating the prostitution implications of the courtesan occupation in “stringing men along,” satirizing what Edo period people thought about courtesans. Ukina’s demand to stop with the “tasteless jokes” implies that she is aware of the stereotypes associated with her job, and this self-awareness stands out to the audience, informing them that she is aware of what people reading Kyôden’s work thought of people like her, as Kinosuke and Shian did.

Appare Jipangu!’s characters exhibit similar self-referential humor. In Chapter Four, Yusura, Samon, her friend Minekichi and Samon’s bodyguard Kazanosuke set out to retrieve Kongômaru.³¹ As they do so, Minekichi prepares to use a mechanical dog, Pooch, invented by Yusura’s father, that can detect and follow scents.³² Minekichi verbally declares that he is about to use it, saying “This looks like a job for,” a running gag of his, only for the other three to cut him off, saying the machine’s name.³³ Upon doing so, Minekichi tells them to not steal his line, as according to him, “it’s the one cool thing I have in my scenes!”³⁴ This type of character self-awareness is much the same as Master Dôri’s in Kyôden’s story. Minekichi has an established joke around his character announcing the use of Pooch, and it has become an expectation to read him doing this. When Yusura, Kazanosuke, and Samon interrupt him, the expectation is subverted, and Minekichi’s complaint about stealing the “one cool thing” in his scenes of the story create the humor. He knows how his character operates in the story and wants to act on the gag Watase has written for him, much like Kyôden wrote Master Dôri to act on his beliefs.

³⁰ Kyôden, *Grilled and Basted Edo-born Playboy*, 695.

³¹ Watase, 146, 178.

³² Watase, 30, 40, 223.

³³ Watase, 30, 178.

³⁴ Watase, 178.

In addition to the direct character awareness, Watase's characters also exhibit the more subtle self-awareness of Ukina. In Chapter Three, Yusura, Samon and Minekichi, come across Kazanosuke, who says he is a ninja, and explains how he is on a mission to chase down his friend Hanji.³⁵ As Kazanosuke and the others search for Hanji, Kazanosuke explains to Yusura the customs of his ninja clan, such as how they must live by their laws, but transitions into complaining about how being a ninja is “corny these days.”³⁶ He even goes so far as to say how being a ninja is “so out of style,” and how girls don't like ninjas.³⁷ Kazanosuke's explanation of law-abiding ninja customs initially ground his awareness within the world of the story, but when he says being a ninja is considered corny, it indicates that he is talking about the ninja character in general, and not just in *Appare Jipangu!*. The ninja's statement of “these days,” as well as being a ninja is “out of style” and how girls do not like them implies that he is talking about the ninja as a character in manga, indicating that they are overused and have become bland. This could be something the reader is thinking about Kazanosuke, and Kazanosuke's comments bring the potential thoughts of the readers to the page in a humorous way the audience would not expect them to. This is similar to how Ukina's remark towards Shian and Kinosuke's jokes could reflect her awareness as a character of the jokes surrounding it, and is letting the audience know.

Watase's Different Directions: Social Strata Stigmas and Stories

One of Watase's major deviations from the formats of Edo literature was her depiction of the relationships between Edo Japan's social classes. During the Edo period, the *bakufu* government “and the provincial domains created a rigid, hierarchical class society made up of

³⁵ Watase, 112, 113, 115, 116.

³⁶ Watase, 126.

³⁷ Watase, 126.

samurai, farmers, artisans, and merchants, in descending order,” with a samurai-exclusive hierarchy of “the *shogun*, *daimyô*, *hatamoto*, and *gokenin*.”³⁸ People even “further down the social scale” existed, such as the courtesans.³⁹ As the top of the hierarchy, the samurai class was able to exert great power over the lower ranks, such as “the right to cut down a farmer or *chônin*,” the urban commoners of Edo, “for an insult.”⁴⁰ This social system operated on “the principle of ‘knowing one’s place,’” and the peoples within each class were not able to move up in class, nor go “below one’s station.”⁴¹ Social hierarchy was an influential force in Edo. The positions of samurai, farmer, artisan and merchant strongly determined the ways in which social classes interacted with each other, and kept everyone in the place they were assigned to. The samurai had considerable influence over the classes beneath them, with the punishments they could administer indicating that all the classes beneath the samurai had to be respectful of those above them. Ironically, despite the *bakufu*’s enforcement of this hierarchy, the people of Edo could have “a woman of a lower station to bear the shogun or the daimyô an heir, becoming an official concubine or other tilted existence,” while a samurai “could marry down, abandoning his class identity to choose a commoner profession or to be adopted by or marry into a merchant family.”⁴² Despite the *bakufu*’s intention and power of the higher classes, peoples of different social strata, low and high, were more cordial in their interactions. Classes were also capable of being transcended, as seen with the samurai who could marry down from their status. Despite this flexibility, the power that higher classes held over lower ones remained, such as with women

³⁸ Shirane, ed., 4.

³⁹ Shirane, ed., 9, 10.

⁴⁰ Shirane, ed., 1,4.

⁴¹ Nishiyama, Matsunosuke. *Edo Culture: Daily Life and Diversions in Urban Japan, 1600-1868*. Trans. by Gerald Groemer. (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press), 1997, 32.

⁴² Sumie Jones, Kenji Watanabe, and ed., *An Edo Anthology: Literature from Japan’s Mega-City, 1750-1850* (University of Hawai’i Press, 2013), 6.

of lower classes becoming official *daimyô* concubines. Although elevated by marriage, these woman were still beneath the *daimyô* and subject to their rules, reinforcing their lower status.

Edo literature brought attention to the status of its characters, and the interactions of the characters mirrored the *bakufu*'s intentions of the Edo hierarchy. These interactions were prominent in Ihara Saikaku (1642-1693).⁴³ In his work, *Life of a Sensuous Man (Kôshoku Ichidai Otoko)*, written in 1682, a silver miner named Yumesuke and several of his friends form a relationship with Kazuraki, Kaoru, and Sanseki, three courtesans of the pleasure quarters, and one bears a son named Yonosuke.⁴⁴ When Yonosuke turns thirty-five, he falls in love with a courtesan named Yoshino and plans to marry her, but their “relationship greatly displeased Yonosuke’s relatives.”⁴⁵ Because she is a courtesan, Yonosuke’s relatives “refused to meet him or recognize her as being in any way related to them.”⁴⁶ Yonosuke and Yoshino’s relationship, given their different classes, reflects the ideologies of the *bakufu*. As the son of a miner, Yonosuke would be either farmer or merchant class, and Yoshino is lower than him. Yoshino’s occupation also added stigma to her personhood, and she is perceived as a lesser being by Yonosuke’s relatives as a result. The lower one is in the hierarchy, the less human one is.

Saikaku also wrote about how the samurai interacted with lower classes. In his book *Great Mirror of Male Love (Nanshoku Ôkagami)* written in 1687, a samurai’s son, Nagasaka Korin, becomes a servant to the samurai envoy Horikoshi Sakon, and the *daimyô* that Sakon serves under becomes increasingly infatuated with him.⁴⁷ Korin, however, does not reciprocate his master’s feelings, as he loves “a man named Sôhachirô,” and the two ultimately “pledged

⁴³ Shirane, ed., 43.

⁴⁴ Ihara Saikaku, *Life of a Sensuous Man*, trans. Chris Drake in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 45, 47, 48.

⁴⁵ Saikaku, *Life of a Sensuous Man*, 50, 51, 52, 53.

⁴⁶ Saikaku, ed., *Life of a Sensuous Man*, 53.

⁴⁷ Ihara Saikaku, *Great Mirror of Male Love*, trans. Paul Schalow in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 120, 122, 123.

love to each other.”⁴⁸ Enraged, Korin’s daimyô interrogates him, and Korin confesses the bond he and Sôhachirô share, knowing that it “must anger” his lord “terribly.”⁴⁹ Ultimately, the daimyô cuts off Korin’s right arm and head as punishment.⁵⁰ Korin’s lord demonstrates the ways in which the samurai were capable of interacting with lower classes. As his master, the daimyô is above Korin and is capable of doing as he pleases with him. When things do not go the way the daimyô wants them to, he is within his power as a samurai to punish Korin as he sees fit, including lobbing his arm and head off, simply because he pledged his love to another man. Saikaku’s characters show that while the higher-class samurai could be cordial, they were still the top of the hierarchy, and could treat the lower classes as they pleased.

These social stigmas are less pronounced in Watase’s work, and more closely resemble the reality of Edo hierarchy. This is particularly prominent in Samon and Yusura. In Chapter One, Samon explains that he is the son of Lord Kishima, and is referred to by Yusura’s parents as a “samurai,” indicating that Samon’s position within the Edo hierarchy is very high.⁵¹ In contrast, Yusura’s father tells Samon that he is a pharmacist, which by extension, would make Yusura belong to the same class that he belongs to.⁵² Despite the established class difference between them, when Samon realizes that Yusura is the one who saved him, he expresses gratitude towards her, and claims that he “owes” her “his life” in return for her actions.⁵³ Romance between two different classes are similarly less controversial, and Watase again portrays this through Yusura and Samon. When it comes to women, Samon believes that “it wouldn’t matter how rough or dirty looking she was, as long as she has a good heart,” and thinks

⁴⁸ Saikaku., *Great Mirror of Male Love*, 124, 125.

⁴⁹ Saikaku., *Great Mirror of Male Love*, 125, 126.

⁵⁰ Saikaku., *Great Mirror of Male Love*, 126.

⁵¹ Watase, 23, 24, 38.

⁵² Watase, 17.

⁵³ Watase, 18.

of Yusura as an example.⁵⁴ The social divide between Yusura and Samon has less of an impact on how the two interact with one another. Samon is the son of a samurai, the top of the social hierarchy, whereas Yusura, by being the daughter of a pharmacist, belongs to the merchant or class. Although above her socially, Samon is incredibly humble towards Yusura, and expresses his thanks for saving him. Before he does this, Yusura's father introduces his pharmacist status, indicating that Samon would have gained knowledge of her status prior to thanking her, and does so anyway despite being a higher class. In addition, he does not consider class a factor in his ideal romantic partner, and instead values qualities such as "a good heart," such as in someone like Yusura, putting aside the superficialities of the class system. This marks a notable distinction in Watase's work compared to Edo fiction. Unlike Yonosuke's relatives or Korin's daimyô, Samon does not consider Yusura, an established lower-class citizen, as being beneath him, either as a person or as a romantic partner, and does not abuse his status as a samurai over her.

The roles of female characters in Watase's manga were also very different from those of early modern literature. During the Edo period, "the social position of women was low," such as how "in a samurai family, a woman had no right to inherit the family name, property, or position."⁵⁵ Many women in the Edo period were also limited in their education, as during the eighteenth century, where "literacy rates for women appear not to have been high" and "even literate women lagged significantly behind men in their level of education."⁵⁶ This low position on the social hierarchy was less visible in Edo literature, where women often had "a major role as characters in drama and fiction," but they were written in roles beneath men, such as a "female protagonist as a person who loves her husband and makes every sacrifice for him."⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Watase, 23.

⁵⁵ Shirane, ed., 5.

⁵⁶ Shirane, ed., 14.

⁵⁷ Shirane, ed., 14.

This kind of role first appeared in the theater literature of jôruri, such as in Ueda Akinari's (1734-1809) *Tales of Moonlight and Rain (Ugetsu Monogatari)*, where a woman named Miyagi "waits faithfully for her husband and endures difficulties to the point of sacrificing her own life."⁵⁸ The overall statuses and capabilities of women in the Edo period was very low. Women in samurai families lacked the ability to hold position in the family or control property, restricting their capabilities compared to the men. Women in general were limited in their abilities to gain education, furthering their low position in the hierarchy. Even in literature, where women played major roles, characters such as Akinari's Miyagi were still put in positions subservient to men, as the character simply waited for her husband and endured all the hardships in his absence.

The roles of women of *Appare Jipangu!*, however, were more empowered. In Chapter One, Yusura explains that she runs a business in which she provides "a service for people that heals their sadness."⁵⁹ As the manager of her "sadness-healing" business, Yusura has complete control over how it is conducted. After agreeing to help Samon, the latter goes off to find the people who attacked him and Oteru, only to be stopped by Yusura, who reminds him that he is only "the customer" and that she is "in charge."⁶⁰ Yusura exerts similar control over the people she works with, particularly Minekichi, who in Chapter Two, sells Yusura out to the bathhouse La-yu by claiming she works for free.⁶¹ In response to his actions, Yusura fumes that what Minekichi did is "coming out" of his "salary."⁶² Watase's women have much more power compared to those shown in Edo literature. They are capable of running their own businesses, such as Yusura's sadness healing business and have great influence over the male characters. Yusura demonstrated this by telling Samon that as the business owner, she is in charge of the

⁵⁸ Shirane, ed., 14, 19.

⁵⁹ Watase, 21.

⁶⁰ Watase, 23.

⁶¹ Watase, 69.

⁶² Watase, 69.

operation to find Oteru, and he must abide by her rules. With Minekichi, as he works for Yusura, she controls different aspects of his employment, as indicated by her threat to meddle with his salary. Women in Watase's *Appare Jipangu!* had authority on par with the men compared to the ones portrayed in Edo literature.

Insight Into Internal Infrastructure

Another major distinction from Edo period literature in Watase's manga was her lack of portrayal of the city's physical and cultural infrastructure. The city of Edo had a very specific layout, such as its castle in the Musashino Plateau, surrounded by the Ueno and Kanda terraces, to give it a "nearly invulnerable position" on the Sumida River.⁶³ As the city grew in the Edo period, the infrastructure itself changed to necessitate the *daimyō*'s need to relocate their homes within the city, leading to the construction of shrines for Buddhist and Shinto pilgrimages within the first century of Edo.⁶⁴ These attributes gave Edo a distinct infrastructure. The geography of the Musashino Plateau and Sumida River influenced how the city oriented itself physically. The shogun castle stood above all, and the homes of lower *daimyō* and temples of varied religious orientation became more widespread in the city as it grew. In addition, within the city's physical infrastructure, the people of Edo developed an unique cultural infrastructure. Aesthetic ideals were created in areas for leisure and enjoyment, and while initially done for fun, the people's association with them created cultural rules that needed to be followed to truly achieve them. During the Edo period, the concepts of *iki* and *tsū*, which were "part of a refined culture of sensation" and the "aesthetic consciousness of things put into practice," respectively, came to be.

⁶³ Nishiyama, 23, 24.

⁶⁴ Nishiyama, 76, 78.

⁶⁵ The aesthetic consciousness of *tsû* came from the “realms accessible to everyone,” the “worlds of play” that consisted of “the pleasure quarters,” which were “designated licensed quarters” for brothels in “the periphery of large cities,” “the theater, restaurants and the musical world.”⁶⁶

Although rooted in entertainment, there arose “rules of behavior, formalities, sensibilities, or was in which money is handled,” and these regulations became necessary to achieve *tsû*.⁶⁷ With the development of these ideals, the people of Edo created a distinct cultural infrastructure.

Edo literature used specific physical and cultural locations in the city to establish that the stories took place there. There were even types of writing about places in Edo, particularly the *sharebon* books, a “short-story form that satirized the life of the sophisticate in the licensed quarters, particularly Yoshiwara in Edo.”⁶⁸ In ancient Japan, “licensed quarters such as the Yoshiwara in Edo were a world run by money and separate from everyday life in society,” and the *sharebon* of Edo “satirized customs of the pleasure quarters,” particularly the ideal of *tsû*.⁶⁹ An example of such depictions of Edo occurred in “The Playboy Dialect” (*Yûshi Hôgen*), written in 1770 by Inaka Rôjin Tada no Jijii.⁷⁰ In the story, a man-about-town coerces a young man into coming to the Shôtô-ji temple, taking a boat across the “Konokimi-Yamabushi” river, which refers to a courtesan the man-about-town brags about.⁷¹ During the boat ride, the man-about-town tells his companion about places in Edo and Yoshiwara, such as the hill where “the famous Ippyô, who can mimic any kind of performing art” lives, the “brothel owners” who “come running” when the man-about-town visits, and “the Tsurube noodle shop.”⁷² Inaka’s story

⁶⁵ Nishiyama, 58.

⁶⁶ Shirane, ed., 8, Nishiyama, 58.

⁶⁷ Nishiyama, 58.

⁶⁸ Shirane, ed., 631.

⁶⁹ Shirane, ed., 632.

⁷⁰ Shirane, ed., 632.

⁷¹ Inaka Rôjin Tada no Jijii, *The Playboy Dialect*, trans. Herschel Miller in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 635, 637, 639.

⁷² Inaka Rôjin Tada no Jijii, *The Playboy Dialect*, 638, 639.

provides a highly detailed insight into the places that exist in Edo. Temples like Shôtô-ji were dotted around Edo, and rivers pass through it, as his characters needed to cross by boat to get to Yoshiwara. The culture of Edo is also portrayed through the man-about-town's descriptions of the licensed quarter, containing popular brothels, performers such as Ippyô, and well-known restaurant such as the Tsurube noodle shop. Works like *The Playboy Dialect* greatly emphasize the attributes of the Edo city, from its physical infrastructure to its cultural identity.

Although set in Edo, based on her calling her manga an “Edo-style comedy,” and references to the city by name in each chapter, Watase describes the cultural and geographical infrastructure of areas that exist outside of Edo in greater detail.⁷³ In Chapter 3, when Kazanosuke meets Yusura and Samon, he states that he comes from “the Western village Koka,” and is a member of the Koka ninja clan, which he explains was formed “a long time ago” in the area of Koka.⁷⁴ The culture of Koka and its inhabitants are displayed through Kazanosuke, such as how in his clan, it is “forbidden for a ninja to leave the group.”⁷⁵ The Koka village ninjas also have customs unique to their village, as seen when Kazanosuke sits on the ceiling of Yusura's pharmacy, which Kazanosuke claims it is the way shinobi sit.⁷⁶ Kazanosuke's village is greatly described by Watase. With the knowledge that the main story takes place in Edo, Kazanosuke's description of his village as “Western” gives it a geographical depiction as being west of Edo. In addition, its customs and laws are deeply explored by Watase, such as how the ninjas sit on the ceiling. Outside of Watase explaining that the manga is set in Edo, more detail in terms of geographical and cultural infrastructure is placed on Kazanosuke's village than the city of Edo, unlike *The Playboy Dialect's* description of Edo's Yoshiwara quarter. Another location given

⁷³ Watase, 3, 105.

⁷⁴ Watase, 112.

⁷⁵ Watase, 115.

⁷⁶ Watase, 113.

greater characterization than Edo is a district called Kama in Chapter Five. According to Samon, Kama is “just outside of Edo,” and is a “popular dating spot.”⁷⁷ This characterization is reinforced later when Yusura, Minekichi and Samon travel there and find that most people there are couples.⁷⁸ While Kama is not given specific customs and geography like Koka is, greater insight is still given into Kama than Edo. In the infrastructure of Watase’s Edo Japan, it is located outside of the city, and is noted for being a popular romantic getaway spot. Without Watase’s indication of the manga being set in Edo, these characterizations of Kama indicate that the manga simply takes place anywhere in early modern Japan, and not necessarily Edo.

Duality of Adaptation: Imitation and Deviation - Author Autonomy in Edo Literature

There are also points in *Appare Jipangu!* where Watase simultaneously imitates aspects of Edo literature and deviates from its style. One such aspect is the author-centric writing and humor. Edo period authors themselves occasionally played a role in the story, such as the kind featured in a *kokkeibon* book written by Jippensha Ikku (1765-1831) called *Travels on the Eastern Seaboard (Tôkaidôchû Hizakurige)*, written between 1802 and 1809.⁷⁹ In the story, two young men from Edo, Yajirobei and Kitahachi, embark on a trip “to visit all the celebrated places in the country.”⁸⁰ In Book Four, Yajirobei and Kitahachi are in the city of Ueno, where they meet a man, named Kabocha Gomajiru, who had been following them and listening to poems that Yajirobei was reciting.⁸¹ When Kabocha asks Yajirobei his name, Yajirobei tells him he is

⁷⁷ Watase, 190.

⁷⁸ Watase, 200.

⁷⁹ Shirane, ed., 731.

⁸⁰ Jippensha Ikku, *Travels on the Eastern Seaboard*, trans. Thomas Satchell in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 733.

⁸¹ Ikku, *Travels on the Eastern Seaboard*, 740, 741.

Jippensha Ikku, and that he ““came on this journey especially to write *Travels on the Eastern Seaboard*,”” establishing the author as a character within his fictional world.⁸² Kabocha also tells Yajirobei that the name Jippensha Ikku is “a very celebrated name,” and believes that Yajirobei is Ikku, along with Awfully Funnyman, Master Gaptooth, Master Snottyface and Master Scratchy, further establishing the presence of Ikku within the fictional world.⁸³ Ikku’s references to himself and the responses other characters have to Yajirobei are one of the ways that Edo authors inserted themselves into their story. By having Yajirobei call himself Ikku, as well as having Kabocha say that that name is “very celebrated,” the story establishes that *Travels on the Eastern Seaboard* takes place in the real world, or that the setting in the *kokkeibon* is based on the real world, and people like Ikku exist in it. In either effect, the author is established as a character. The situations where people like Awfully Funnyman fall for the lie further reinforce Ikku’s status as a character, making a well-known and respected author.

Another example of the author being in the story occurred in Santo Kyôden’s *kibyôshi*, *Those Familiar Bestsellers (Gozonji no shôbaimono)*, written in 1782 under his pen name Kitaô Masanobu.⁸⁴ Kyôden, as Masanobu, appears in the very first image of the *kibyôshi*, where he is slumped over a writing desk, and a bubble-like shape appears over his head, indicating that he is dreaming.⁸⁵ Masanobu dreams of personified books, including “a reading book, published by Hachimonjiya,” and Glossy Book, “an illustrated book sporting a glossy cover.”⁸⁶ In addition to creating characters, Kyôden’s self-insert Masanobu character also creates dialogue and storylines for the characters, such as how Reading Book says to Glossy Book that they have been

⁸² Ikku, *Travels on the Eastern Seaboard*, 740, 741.

⁸³ Ikku, *Travels on the Eastern Seaboard*, 740, 744.

⁸⁴ Kern, 263, 275, 315.

⁸⁵ Santô Kyôden, *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, Adam L. Kern, *Manga from the Floating World* (Harvard University Asian Center, 2006), 276.

⁸⁶ Kyôden, *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, 276.

“humiliated by the recent successes of those trifling upstarts, Bluebook and Fashionbook,” and must find “a way to smear them and those other local chap-books!”⁸⁷ Kyôden himself, as Masanobu, acknowledges that he is a character in his story at the end of the *kibyôshi*, where he says “just as I was waking up from my dream, someone was exclaiming: ‘your publisher, Tsuruya Kiemon, here to bid you a happy new year!’”⁸⁸ Like Ikku, Kyôden writes himself into the story as the character that drives the plot. His inclusion of himself in the drawing of Masanobu, even under a pen name, firmly establishes that Kyôden is a character in *Those Familiar Bestsellers*. At the same time, the ending where Masanobu chronicles the arrival of his publisher works him back into the story, reaffirming his status as a *kibyôshi* character.

Watase’s approach to inserting herself, the author, as a part of the story is different. Her “character” appears several times, and her appearance is relevant to the story’s events, but she herself is not part of the story. In Chapter Two, Yusura, Samon, and Minekichi go to a bathhouse called La-Yu, which they discover is being beat out by another bathhouse called Sarada-yu.⁸⁹ When introducing Sarada-yu, Watase does so in an advertisement fashion, with a salesperson character highlighting the bathhouse’s services, such as “free body shampoo and barley tea”.⁹⁰ At the bottom of the page, she has the salesperson say that “for a limited time you can get a free Tamagochi or Pokémon as a gift.”⁹¹ Upon saying this, a caricature of Watase drawing at her desk appears at the bottom of the page, with her editor angrily hitting her on the head, saying “those didn’t exist back then!”⁹² She appears again in Chapter Three, where Yusura, Minekichi and Samon, along with Kazanosuke, discover his friend Hanji at a soba restaurant.⁹³ As they try to

⁸⁷ Kyôden, *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, 276.

⁸⁸ Kyôden, *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, 312.

⁸⁹ Watase, 62, 63, 67.

⁹⁰ Watase, 67.

⁹¹ Watase, 67.

⁹² Watase, 67.

⁹³ Watase, 120.

apprehend him, Hanji unleashes a ninja technique called “Bubble Blizzard” and escapes.⁹⁴ At the bottom of the page, Watase appears again with her editor, who asks her why she gave Hanji that power, and she justifies her choice by saying that cola fizzes when shaken.⁹⁵ The way Watase presents herself in these instances marks a divide between her authorial insertion and early modern stories. Unlike Ikku and Kyôden, who exist within and influence the narrative of the story directly, Watase exists outside of the narrative. Her drawings of her and her editor imply that she and they are in her workspace, given the presence of her desk and her editor. Both of these drawings are also positioned at the bottom of the page, away from the prime drawings, implying a “break” between what is happening in the manga, and what is happening in the real world while Watase is making the manga. This depiction of herself and her editor, creates the effect that Watase is not a character in the manga, and is a completely separate entity.

Although Watase’s presence within the narrative is detached from her fictional Edo, she does interject herself through audience-addressing prefaces, which was a tactic some Edo writers used for their stories. In *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, Kyôden appears as a caricature of himself and directly addresses the audience.⁹⁶ He jokes that “since you kids might not be familiar with my works I’ve been racking my brains about what to present here in order to earn your patronage.”⁹⁷ He also jokes about the current state of the book’s publication, remarking that as he is writing this preface, he says “hoping my New Year’s dream would make a funny story, I’m of to my publisher, Mr. So-and-so, this very moment.”⁹⁸ Kyôden’s caricature represents a way in which the authors of the Edo period communicated with their audience. Similar to the preface of a non-picture book, he directly informs the reader what he is doing and what he hopes to

⁹⁴ Watase, 122.

⁹⁵ Watase, 122.

⁹⁶ Kyôden, *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, 275.

⁹⁷ Kyôden, *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, 275.

⁹⁸ Kyôden, *Those Familiar Bestsellers*, 275.

accomplish. However, he does so sarcastically, noting that he's doing this to earn the "patronage" of "you kids," referring to the readers, creating a humorously blunt tone. He also uses this preface-like format to remark about his novel. He is off to see his publisher in the hopes that the dream he had on New Year's would be a story he could publish, treating the story in a way that, as if it is ridiculous, hence why he is "hoping" this would be a good story. The humorous, preface-like format is another way early modern authors participated in their stories.

Similar to Kyôden, Watase writes commentary at points that have no actual bearing on the story, interjecting her into the manga. Like Kyôden's caricature self, Watase makes jokes about her book as a product for consumption by the audience, specifically a grocery store product. In the first few pages, she prefaces the book by giving the reader instructions on how they should read the story, saying things such as "we are not responsible for any damage this product may cause when used for sports, cooking, gardening, etc. If damage does occur, please buy a new copy of this product."⁹⁹ Watase uses similar commentating methods in the pages before Chapter Five, discussing how she was encouraged to write a fictional Edo story by her previous employer, and how she had hoped to get it in a special edition magazine called *Noteki*.¹⁰⁰ She even directly addressed the readers on the current status of her manga, letting them know that at the time of writing her message, the next installment of her story would "be finished soon."¹⁰¹ Watase mirrors the writings of Kyôden's *kibyôshi* and the tactics he used to insert himself into the story. She treats her book in an amusing way, using instructions similar to those found on store commodities, to establish the comedic nature of her story, similar to the humorous overtones of Kyôden's preface. She understands the content that she is putting in the story is silly, and her saying this is similar to Kyôden's directness in explaining that his book is

⁹⁹ Watase, 3.

¹⁰⁰ Watase, 190.

¹⁰¹ Watase, 194.

based on a dream. At the same time, she mirrors the informative nature of Kyôden's work, explaining the original inspiration for her story that came from her employer. All of Watase's writings in her prefaces reflect the type of amusing and informative styles that the authors used to interject themselves into their stories through an explanation of their work.

Forging Fantasy Fiction

The creation of fantasy is another aspect of Edo period literature that Watase both mirrors and deviates from. Edo authors used different devices to develop fantasy within the realms of their stories. In certain genres of kabuki plays, the characters themselves establish the fantastical nature narrative, with stories that “featured courageous heroes, bold, masculine characters who displayed superhuman powers in overcoming evildoers.”¹⁰² In other stories, objects with supernatural powers are the source of the fantasy, such as Kyôden *Fast-Dyeing Mind Study*, where a deity called the Heavenly Emperor uses a bamboo stick and a special liquid to “blow” souls into existence.”¹⁰³ Other stories use supernatural beings, typically monsters, to create fantasy, with “stalwart warriors who were dispatched to conquer these menacing creatures” of “grotesque shapes, exaggerated movements and gaudy colors.”¹⁰⁴ Edo literature used many means to establish fantasy overtones. Authors could apply unworldly qualities to ordinary everyday things to make them fantastical, both human and object. They could also create deities and creatures of their own imagination for their heroes to encounter, and could make them “gaudy” or “grotesque” in appearance to make the story a fantasy. Regardless of what they used, these devices made a story into a fantasy. The *dangibon*, or “satiric teachings,” story “The

¹⁰² Shirane, ed., 236, 237.

¹⁰³ Santô Kyôden, *The Fast-Dyeing Mind Study*, 713.

¹⁰⁴ Jones, Watanabe, ed., 23, 137.

Modern Life of Shidôken” (*Fûryû Shidôken*), written by Hiraga Gennai in 1763 uses all of these elements to build its fantasy world.¹⁰⁵ In the story, a man named Shidôken, originally named Asanoshin, is given an egg by a swallow, and the egg contains a tiny woman.¹⁰⁶ The tiny woman becomes human-sized and leads Shidôken to a “great jeweled temple,” where he meets a sage, pictorially depicted as standing on a cloud, who teaches him that “life continues as long as the firewood burns, but when the fire goes out nothing is left but burned up charcoal,” referring to one’s body.¹⁰⁷ Shidôken heeds the sage’s teachings about how he must “appeal to the people with lightness and humor,” and “give them guidance,” and the sage gives Shidôken a magical fan containing the sage’s powers, such as transforming the fan into wings or a boat, or turning its holder invisible.¹⁰⁸ Throughout his travels on his flying fan, Shidôken encounters monster-like creatures, such as in the “Land of Giants,” populated by people “at least twenty feet tall,” and the lands of the “Long Legged People” and “Long Armed People,” whom each had fifteen feet worth of their respective limbs.¹⁰⁹ Gennai’s story uses many of the same elements that appeared in Edo literature to establish the fantasy of his narrative. The sage embodies both the superhuman fantasy and the object-based fantasy, being pictorially represented as standing on a cloud, a supernatural ability, indicating that there are people with such abilities in the world of the story. At the same time, his fan has magical power, being able to transform into different objects for Shidôken to use or alter his physical appearance. This establishes that the world in which Shidôken inhabits contains both supernatural beings and mystical objects. Like the heroes in certain kabuki, Shidôken is using the superhuman abilities he is given though the fan to

¹⁰⁵ Shirane, ed., 450, 486.

¹⁰⁶ Hiraga Gennai, *The Modern Life of Shidôken*, trans. Chris Drake in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 486, 487, 490.

¹⁰⁷ Gennai, *The Modern Life of Shidôken*, 491, 492.

¹⁰⁸ Gennai, *The Modern Life of Shidôken*, 495.

¹⁰⁹ Gennai, *The Modern Life of Shidôken*, 496, 499.

overcome evil, doing so though “appealing to others.” The monsters he meets also establish that fantastic beasts exist in Gennai’s story, creating a fantasy world in which giant and long-limbed people exist in their own special lands. Ultimately, mystical objects, superhuman powers, and monstrous beings are staples in creating fantasy worlds of Edo literature.

Watase’s manga world contains similar fantasy elements. Like Gennai, Watase incorporates objects that have unnatural powers into her story, primarily through Yusura’s staff, Kongômaru. In Chapter Three, Kazanosuke and his friend Hanji are cornered by the Great Four, the most elite group of ninja from their village, and the group pressures Kazanosuke to kill Hanji.¹¹⁰ Before he can, however, Hanji throws himself off of the cliff that he and Kazanosuke were cornered on.¹¹¹ Yusura then takes out Kongômaru, and the Great Four are shocked to see the staff, calling it the ““legendary Kongômaru,”” before being struck by Hanji and Kazanosuke’s sadness.¹¹² Like Shidôken’s fan, the nature of Yusura’s staff creates the fantasy in *Appare Jipangu!*. The Great Four’s characterization of the Kongômaru staff as “legendary” indicates that there are other objects similar to it in the world of the manga, and are not unique to Yusura. Kongômaru’s natural abilities contribute to the fantasy as well. As it is stated to absorb and redirect sadness in the first chapter, this does liken its world building potential in much the same way as Shidôken’s transforming fan. In addition to its abilities and other people’s knowledge of it, the staff is mystical in that it is seemingly sentient. In Chapter Two, Yusura remarks about the lack of customers she’s had, and states that ““Kongômaru’s getting lonely.””¹¹³ While the comment seems to be an affectionate remark about one’s personal possessions, when Yusura and her friends visit the La-yu bathhouse, Samon spots the Sarada-yu’s, the rival

¹¹⁰ Watase, 115, 116, 135, 137.

¹¹¹ Watase, 139, 140.

¹¹² Watase, 143, 144.

¹¹³ Watase, 61.

bathhouse's leader's heir, Tsuyunosuke.¹¹⁴ After he walks by, Kongômaru turns blue, indicating that it detected sadness from somewhere at that moment.¹¹⁵ This demonstration of such abilities through an inanimate object is another instance in which Watase uses similar fantasy elements from Edo to build her manga world's fantasy. By detecting sadness as Tsuyunosuke passes by Kongômaru, Watase affirms Yusura's implied sentience of Kongômaru. This raises the implication that the mystical objects in the world of *Appare Jipangu!* have a mind of their own, an ability that goes beyond the natural and into the supernatural. As a result, Watase's reader is now aware that the Edo world of *Appare Jipangu!* is one of fantasy, containing semi-sentient staffs that can react to people sadness simply by being near them. Much like Shidôken's fan in Gennai's *dangibon*, the semi-sentient, "legendary" Kongômaru of Watase's manga brings the world of the story into unique, inhuman, fantastic forms.

Watase also portrays certain characters with superhuman abilities, much like the sage who stood on a cloud. Kazanosuke and Hanji are examples of these characters. In Chapter Three, Yusura, Kazanosuke, Samon and Minekichi find Hanji at a soba shop and attempt to capture him.¹¹⁶ Before they can, however, Hanji uses a "Kola-ninbô," or "Kola ninja technique" called Bubble Blizzard, a move that releases a flurry of bubbles out of nowhere.¹¹⁷ Kazanosuke demonstrates the same ability in Chapter Four, when he uses it to stop a group of criminals from attacking Yusura.¹¹⁸ Kazanosuke also has unique abilities of his own in Chapter Three, where he is sitting on the ceiling while talking to Yusura and Samon, and states that sitting on the ceiling is "the shinobi way," implying other ninjas can do the same thing.¹¹⁹ Kazanosuke and Hanji's

¹¹⁴ Watase, 62, 68.

¹¹⁵ Watase, 69.

¹¹⁶ Watase, 121.

¹¹⁷ Watase, 122, 123.

¹¹⁸ Watase, 122, 123.

¹¹⁹ Watase, 113.

superhuman ninja powers are narrative elements that build the fantasy of *Appare Jipangu!* Through them, the ninjas of the manga are capable of creating bubbles out of nowhere, and sitting on the ceiling for extended periods of time. Both of these abilities are unnatural by ordinary human standards, and by being aspects of Kazanosuke and Hanji's characters, indicate that certain people in the world of the manga possess such abilities. Yusura is also depicted with some level of superhuman ability. In Chapter Four, Yusura and Samon encounter Mr. Tagawa, whom teases Yusura about being on "a date with him."¹²⁰ Enraged, Yusura punches Mr. Tagawa, sending him flying to the point where he is a small dot drawing in the panel.¹²¹ On the following page, a small text box pops up where Mr. Tagawa landed, saying that it was a "new record" of "fifteen meters."¹²² Although portrayed comically, Yusura's strength is still a superhuman ability that builds the fantasy of the world. Her punching Mr. Tagawa that far indicates that people of immense strength exist in the world of *Appare Jipangu!* In addition, Yusura's actions tangentially mirror the kabuki heroes supernatural abilities in fantasy building, the punching itself being a bold action to overcome her "criminal," or in the case of Mr. Tagawa, antagonist.

Watase also uses monsters to create fantasy. In Chapter Five, Samon informs Yusura that there have been sightings of a furry, three-eyed, six-armed, monster in the district of Kama, and after hearing a report from Mr. Tagawa that the monster attacked a young couple, she resolves to put a stop to it.¹²³ As Yusura and Samon investigate, they meet a young girl named Yuba, who reveals herself to be the monster, showing them that she has a tail.¹²⁴ Despite Yuba's appearance, after Minekichi becomes terrified at the sight of her, Yuba becomes enraged, and shape shifts

¹²⁰ Watase, 154.

¹²¹ Watase, 154.

¹²² Watase, 155.

¹²³ Watase, 195, 196, 197.

¹²⁴ Watase, 201, 203, 204.

into the three-eyed, six-armed monster.¹²⁵ Watase's monster is another way in which she establishes the fantasy genre in her manga. Through Samon's report and Yuba's tail, it is established that the world of *Appare Jipangu!* contains mystical, inhuman creatures that live alongside people. Yuba's own abilities and appearance add further to this fantasy. Like Gennai's giants and long-limbed people, she appears human, but has a distinct physical feature that makes her a monster, her tail. This appearance comes from her ability to shape-shift back and forth between a more monstrous form with features such as her six limbs and three eyes making her an inhuman, fantastical creature with fantastical powers. Other strange-looking monsters in this chapter, adding further to the mythical fantasy that Watase is building. After Yusura agrees to help Yuba blend in with human society, she and Samon examine the qualities the monster girl has, one of them being a talent for playing with hitodama, a type of Japanese spirit that resembles floating balls of fire.¹²⁶ As Yusura, Samon and Yuba try to help her adapt into human society, a cacophony of other monsters visit, proclaiming that they want to "become friends with humans."¹²⁷ The physical appearances of the monsters are very diverse and odd, including a hairy-faced goblin, a long-necked creature with the face of a *geisha*, and an anthropomorphic lantern.¹²⁸ The minor monsters Watase creates help to further create the world of *Appare Jipangu!* as a fantasy. By featuring them alongside Yuba, much like Gennai exhibiting a range of different monsters, their appearance indicates that many different kinds of monsters exist in the manga. They can be humanoid, such as the goblin or the long necked *geisha*, or be sentient objects, such as the lantern. All of these creatures appear grotesque and inhuman, making them monsters of high fantasy that fit into the Edo narrative that Watase is trying to emulate.

¹²⁵ Watase, 207, 208.

¹²⁶ Watase, 210, 211.

¹²⁷ Watase, 213.

¹²⁸ Watase, 213.

Although much of Watase's fantasy content is similar to early modern writings, some parts of her manga's fantasy are more anachronistic and would be seen in modern times as opposed to the Edo period. Examples of contemporary objects in this fictional Edo world are Yusura's father's inventions. In Chapter 5, Yusura's friend Mr. Tagawa gives an in-depth description of the scent-hunting dog Minekichi uses, Pooch, stating that "if given a scent, he will follow it until the object is found."¹²⁹ Other abilities of Pooch are displayed in Chapter One, where Minekichi brings it out to find Oteru in Yoriyasu's house.¹³⁰ Pooch is shown to have a button on its back that says "press here," and the dog makes a howling noise when it is pressed, and moves around using wheels attached to its abdomen.¹³¹ Pooch has the ability to move using wheels, recognize smells and make noises when a button is pressed. Unlike Kongômaru or Shidôken's fan, both items that seem to fit comfortably within both a fantasy and Edo period environment, Pooch is distinctly mechanical in its abilities. Such technology would make more sense if the fantasy was not set during the Edo period, fitting more closely with a modern time period. The inclusion of a more modern object in a historical fantasy set several centuries ago thus breaks the illusion of an Edo fantasy, marking a difference in Watase's work compared to Edo fantasy world building. Rather than have the manga's fantasy remain grounded in the Edo period, Watase instead uses objects from modern times, creating a fantasy in which magical staffs and robotic dogs are can both exist despite the time period the manga is set in. Yusura's father also has other modern-day inventions that further this anachronistic fantasy world building. In Chapter One, after Yusura saves Samon, her pharmacist father has him sleep in a futon.¹³² When Yusura's father presses a button, the futon rises up by an unseen, but implied to

¹²⁹ Watase, 223.

¹³⁰ Watase, 39, 40.

¹³¹ Watase, 40.

¹³² Watase, 15, 16, 17.

be mechanical method, and the father calls it an “automatic rising futon.”¹³³ Similarly, as Minekichi investigates around the town to find Yoriyasu’s men, he uses an invention called a “voice sound enhancer,” allowing him to eavesdrop on a conversation that Yoriyasu is having with his men.¹³⁴ Both of these objects are modern forms of technology, adding further to the mix of Edo and modern fantasy. Devices within beds that allowed them to be elevated were not available during the Edo period, nor were audio-based eavesdropping devices.

Watase’s Efficacious “Edo-Style” Manga

Watase’s *Appare Jipangu!* adapts numerous aspects of Edo literature into her manga to make it “Edo-style.” Through Yusura, she promotes the heavily moralistic message of “knowing the sadness of others and your own sin,” demonstrating a dichotomy of good and evil and the importance of doing the right things, much like the *kibyōshi* writers in Edo that were pressured to promote morals of filial piety or diligence. Watase also closely follows self-aware character-based comedy, having characters such as Kazanosuke be aware of the characters they are, comedic authorial comedy prior to the start of the manga, and elements of high fantasy through magic objects such as Kongōmaru or fantastical beasts such as Yuba. These parts of her manga all resemble the kinds of stories told by Edo period authors such as Gennai, Kyōden and Ikku. While she follows these elements closely, Watase does deviate from the portrayal of certain narratives of Edo literature. Unlike Saikaku, who portrayed the governmental class system through Yoshino’s shamed status or Korin’s angering of his master, social hierarchy plays much less of a role in how her characters behave, as Samon, despite his high status, does not look

¹³³ Watase, 17.

¹³⁴ Watase, 32.

down on Yusura's lower one. In addition, Watase's female characters have more agency than those written in Edo literature, being more independent and dominating over the male characters. Watase also did little to depict the city of Edo structurally, unlike the detailed descriptions in works like *The Playboy Dialect*. In addition, although she mimicked much of the fantasy found in Edo literature, some of the things in her fantasy contrasted the way Edo writers wrote it, using contemporary inventions such as the robotic Pooch, while writers like Gennai used no such objects. Even with these differences, Watase adapts much of Edo literature into her manga, and in doing so, stays true to her claim of an "Edo-style" comedy.

Chapter 2

Why Watase Wrote an Edo-Centric Manga

Introduction

Although released in the mid-1990s, Watase Yuu chose to write a story set in a time period three centuries prior to the manga's publication, raising the question of why she would choose to do so. While she did state that her former employer said she should write such a manga, early modern literature itself influenced her decision to write a story set in the Edo period. The literature of the Edo period was multi-faceted and malleable, covering a wide array of topics from the romance writings of *sharebon* and *ninjôbon* to crime stories. The topics of these stories contained intense and varied depictions of the different types of romantic relationships that characters could have with one another or numerous characterizations of the individuals that the story focuses on, such as the criminals of crime literature. These situations established a basis for how romance or criminality was to be depicted in Edo period literature, and provided Watase with a system that she could shape her characters around to suit her intentions for the manga. Edo literature also focuses on earlier periods in Japanese history, either through anachronism or parody. Writers in Edo were capable of drawing reference from preexisting formats and use them within their own story, or taking a form of literature present within the Edo period and imitating it in their own unique way. These two aspects of literature allowed Watase greater freedom of expression in terms of the objects or people that she could include within the world of the manga, referencing items and people that did not exist during the Edo period. This implies that the anachronistic nature of Edo writing strongly influenced her decision to write an "Edo-style" story. In addition, the fact that many Edo period writers used existing forms of literature as a means to write their stories also influenced Watase's choice of an Edo setting. By writing a story set in Edo, she had the ability to draw from Edo sources to help her write the comedy or themes

she wanted to have in the manga without having to rely entirely on her own capabilities as a writer. All of these attributes of Edo literature gave her a better platform for the kind of story she wanted to tell, made more sense within the context of the manga, and allowed her more creative freedom in writing the story than other settings would provide. The many topics, anachronisms, and parody-oriented formats of Edo literature made the period prime choice of setting for Watase's *Appare Jipangu!*

Diversity of Focus

Edo literature contained numerous topics, including emotionally focused stories of the psychological pleasure and eroticism. One of these genres was the *sharebon*, also called “books of manners,” which thrived between the years of 1725 and 1789.¹³⁵ This type of literature focused on a narrative of “conversations between courtesans and their clients,” chronicling the narrative of “a connoisseur playboy who is an independent city boy without family ties” and a courtesan “free of any rural background, ending “one night of pleasure ending at dawn.”¹³⁶ Although these books emphasized erotic romance, later *sharebon*, particularly *At a Fork on the Road to Hiring a Hooker (Keiseikai Futasujimichi)*, written by Umebori Kokuga (1750-1821) in 1798, which depicted more of the “psychology of erotic love” between two people.¹³⁷ This shift toward romantic psychology became more pronounced in the 1820s through 1840s with the advent of *ninjōbon*, or “sentimental books,” which focused on “emotions in erotic relationships,” as well as “characters’ psychological relationships.”¹³⁸ Romance and emotions were a common

¹³⁵ Jones and Watanabe, ed. 32.

¹³⁶ Jones and Watanabe, ed., 32, 33.

¹³⁷ Jones and Watanabe, ed., 32, 33, 65.

¹³⁸ Jones and Watanabe, ed., 33.

focus in different forms of Edo literature, and portrayed different parts of the romantic spectrum. Although initially focused on erotic inclinations with the *sharebon*, the psychology of *ninjôbon* expanded the range of the romantic genre. Characters in *ninjôbon* had greater attention placed on the “love” and “emotions” of literary eroticism and allowed for readers to gain deeper insight into how characters such as the courtesan and playboy played off of each other.

Drawing from the nature of *sharebon* and *ninjôbon* gives *Appare Jipangu!* the ability to focus on emotional relationships. The implications of romance are initially subtle, beginning in Chapters One and Two. In the former, after Yusura and Samon recover from the scuffle with Yoriyasu’s men, Samon explains his preferences in a woman, such as how he likes women with “a good heart” or who are “cute,” off handedly referring to Yusura’s appearance, much to her embarrassment.¹³⁹ Later in the chapter, Samon reunites with Oteru, a servant woman whom he had planned to elope with, and when Yusura sees this, she thinks to herself that she wants to be “happy that they’re together again,” but she feels a pain in her chest, indicating heartache about Oteru and Samon being together.¹⁴⁰ In Chapter Two, Yusura is forced to work as a *nagashi-onna*, a woman who works in a bathhouse washing men’s backs.¹⁴¹ After her work day ends, she complains to Samon about having to wear a ““skimpy little outfit all day and wash men’s backs,”” to which he asks her ““you looked pretty cute, didn’t you?””¹⁴² His remark flusters Yusura to the point where she fell off a bridge they were walking on and into a river.¹⁴³ These moments illustrate that Watase wrote *Appare Jipangu!* in Edo-style literature because of its ability to cover specific themes and deeply explore them, such as how *ninjôbon* and *sharebon* explore romance and relationships. The interactions between Yusura and Samon indicate that

¹³⁹ Watase, 36.

¹⁴⁰ Watase, 20, 42.

¹⁴¹ Watase, 62, 70.

¹⁴² Watase, 78.

¹⁴³ Watase, 78, 79.

Watase intended Samon and Yusura to be romantically involved with each other, but needed a better method to advance their relationship. Watase uses a format similar to *sharebon*, building up a relationship of contrasting social class through Samon and Oteru, and their intention to elope. This provides insight into the psychological romance of the pair, much like *ninjôbon*, loving each other to the point of wanting to run away together, but also provides an exploration of the psychological relationship between Yusura and Samon. Her flustered response to being called “cute” by him, along with her reaction to Oteru and Samon, highlight the emotions in their relationship. Yusura is flattered by being called cute to the point of being shocked, and her reaction of her chest hurting at the sight of Oteru and Samon indicates her desire for Samon. At the same time, the action of Samon calling her cute establishes his admiration for people like Yusura. He likes women who are cute and good-hearted, and Yusura meets his standard. Yusura’s side of the relationship contains feelings of jealousy and embarrassment, whereas Samon’s include interest in personality and looks, the exploration of which is assisted by Watase following the formats and topics of Edo romance literature.

The events in Chapter Four further mirror the psychological relationship approach of *ninjôbon* and *sharebon*, and how these writings influenced Watase’s choice of Edo-centric storytelling. After having her staff, Kongômaru, stolen, Yusura becomes despondent, and proclaims to Samon that she feels unable to fulfill her goal of finding her birth parents.¹⁴⁴ Samon promises to help her look for it, and tells her that ““even if you don’t find Kongômaru...I’ll be your Kongômaru,”” proclaiming that he will protect her, and moves in to kiss Yusura.¹⁴⁵ At the end of the chapter, Yusura reflects on how she didn’t resist when he tried to kiss her, and

¹⁴⁴ Watase, 158, 159, 167.

¹⁴⁵ Watase, 167, 172.

questions if she is in love.¹⁴⁶ Following the *ninjôbon* and *sharebon* genres, Watase is able to add more to the psychological relationship of her characters as the story progresses. Samon shows that he cares deeply for Yusura as a person, telling her to be strong despite her circumstances, and reassures her that he will always be there for her. His move to kiss Yusura in that panel indicates that he also feels erotically inclined towards her, adding a new level of attraction toward their relationship. Similarly, Yusura feels greater emotions of love and attraction towards Samon, noting that she almost allowed him to kiss her. Like Samon, it is implied that she feels a more sexual, erotic love. The exploration of character relationships in Edo romance cement that the different focuses of Edo literature was why Watase chose to write about Edo, allowing for an exploration of her characters she couldn't get otherwise.

Another type of narrative that influenced Watase setting the manga in Edo was high fantasy. During the Edo period and prior, “folk tales featuring ghosts and monsters had been collected by priests and writers,” and during the Edo period, authors continued a “tradition of mixing contemporary rumors with published Chinese tales.”¹⁴⁷ This tradition helped Edo authors to create fantasy stories centered around monsters and ghosts, particularly Tadano Makazu’s (1763-1825) *Tales of the North (Ôshûbanashi)* (1818), and “strange creatures in human-like shapes such as *kappa* (tricky river monsters).”¹⁴⁸ In late-Edo kabuki plays, there arose a public “desire for the extraordinary by highlighting grotesque shapes, exaggerated movements, and gaudy colors” that were more “vengeful,” adding a new form of monster fantasy to Edo literature.¹⁴⁹ Other forms of fantasy literature were also existent in Edo, such as the *kodan* books,

¹⁴⁶ Watase, 188.

¹⁴⁷ Jones and Watanabe, ed., 22.

¹⁴⁸ Jones and Watanabe, ed., 22, 23, 378.

¹⁴⁹ Jones and Watanabe, ed., 23.

which derived its fantasy elements from “history” and “folklore” sources for its narrative.¹⁵⁰ Edo literature contained a wide variety of characters that make for a fantasy. Monsters of both benign and vicious nature were able to exist, and these characters had the potential to be based on concrete history and existing folklore, but also rumors, implying that they could be something that did not appear in such tales. This diverse potential for the monster character thus gave writers creative opportunity for their monster stories.

Because Edo literature grounded itself in folklore, mythologies and monsters, Edo as the setting of the manga allowed Watase to portray various kinds of characters. This is particularly apparent in Chapter Five. In it, Yusura and Samon, following the request of Mr. Tagawa, investigate monster sightings in Kama.¹⁵¹ Samon describes the monster as having three eyes, fur, fangs, six arms and a tail.¹⁵² During their investigation, Yusura and Samon come across a girl named Yuba, who reveals that she has a tail, and is in fact the monster that people were complaining about.¹⁵³ Yuba also reveals that, when enraged, she transforms into the monster that was described in the report Yusura, Samon and Minekichi received.¹⁵⁴ Watase’s character of Yuba strongly indicates why Watase chose Edo as the setting of her story. Yuba fits the criteria of the monster characters portrayed in the Edo period. She has human-like form, albeit offset by a visible tail, and a happy-go-lucky attitude when introducing herself to Yusura and Samon. At the same time, she is a vengeful, aggressive, and grotesque character, given her features of three eyes and fangs. Watase felt her character would make more sense if the story was set in Edo rather than another setting because she based Yuba’s attributes off of the different kinds of monsters that appeared in Edo literature. By setting the manga in Edo, she kept a character that

¹⁵⁰ Jones and Watanabe, ed., 35.

¹⁵¹ Watase, 195, 197.

¹⁵² Watase, 196.

¹⁵³ Watase, 203, 204, 205.

¹⁵⁴ Watase, 208.

she wanted to be in the story in the story without having to scrap her. With its array of monsters and their portrayals, the genre of fantasy from the seems to be a major influence on Watase Yuu's choice to place her narrative in the Edo period.

The crime stories of Edo literature were also a major influence on Watase's decision to have Edo as her manga's setting. Like monsters, "the image of criminals came to be elaborately glorified to appeal to a mass audience," and "both theater and literature produced criminal heroes admired for their evil strength and impressive appearances."¹⁵⁵ In Tsuruya Nanboku IV's (1755-1829) play *Epic Yotsuya Ghost Tale (Tôkaidô Yotsuya Kaidan)* (1825), the *rônin* character Iemon, who drove his wife to death, was "played by a handsome lover-boy actor" to accentuate his villainy.¹⁵⁶ This combination of good looks and evil actions "underlined the character's cruelty and indifference, which intensified the heroine's resentment to draw the audience's sympathy with the fantastic revenge her ghost takes upon him."¹⁵⁷ Edo criminal literature constantly shaped its characters to be incredibly evil forces. The goal of writers was to make them especially evil to create certain emotional effects within the audience. The actions of Nanboku's Iemon of driving his wife to death, alongside his cruelty and indifference, establish an incredibly evil character. Driving one's wife to death and these personality traits, carry negative connotations that create an unlikeable image of the character of Iemon for the reader, which in turn makes his comeuppance more gratifying. In Edo criminal literature, criminals had to be as antagonistic as possible to make the triumph of good over evil more impacting.

The intensity of the Edo period criminal genre's characters allowed for Watase to create antagonists of similar caliber in her manga to achieve the same emotional effects. In Chapter Two, Sarada Tsuyunosuke's father and head of the Sarada-yu bathhouse, Sarada Danjûro, is

¹⁵⁵ Jones and Watanabe, ed., 23.

¹⁵⁶ Jones and Watanabe, ed., 23, 168.

¹⁵⁷ Jones and Watanabe, ed., 23.

revealed to be “tearing down other bathhouses” to eliminate competition, and is planning to strike La-yu next, getting permission from the village government to do so.¹⁵⁸ Following an attempt by Danjûro’s men to coerce Yusura into working for Sarada-yu, the father of the La-yu bathhouse attendant, Oyumi, plans to negotiate with Danjûro.¹⁵⁹ The next day, however, Oyumi’s father is found dead, drowned in the river by stones that were tied to his feet.¹⁶⁰ When Yusura confronts Danjûro, striking him with combined sadness of Tsuyunosuke and Oyumi with Kongômaru, Danjûro is overcome with sadness, reveals that he had gotten Oyumi’s father drunk, tied the stones to his feet and set him in the river, and goes to confess to the village officials.¹⁶¹ The actions of Watase’s Danjûro are extreme, and firmly establish him as a criminal antagonist. He is revealed to destroy rival bathhouses to weed out his competition, and shows no remorse in doing so, even going as far as to coerce the local government into helping him. Bribery and destruction of property are both crimes, and the fact that he gets away with his crimes adds to the negative connotations his character already has. Watase further amplifies this when Danjûro reveals that he is personally responsible for the death of Oyumi’s father, even when the latter was trying to peacefully negotiate. In the end, Watase makes the punishment he receives satisfying, much like Nanboku does with Iemon, where through the power of Kongômaru, Danjûro feels ashamed of what he has done and goes to turn himself in. By seeing a character with strong criminal connotations ultimately learn his lesson, the end result is satisfying to readers. The intensity of Edo literature criminals made it possible for Watase to portray her antagonists in an incredibly evil light.

¹⁵⁸ Watase, 75, 76.

¹⁵⁹ Watase, 84, 90, 91.

¹⁶⁰ Watase, 91, 94.

¹⁶¹ Watase, 101, 102, 104.

Another villain of similar countenance appears in Chapter Five. After failing to help Yuba blend into Edo society, Yusura, Samon and Yuba meet a man named Usan Kusai, who runs an “entertainers school,” and invites Yuba to join it.¹⁶² Although initially hesitant, Usan compliments her monster features, convincing her to go with him.¹⁶³ After Yuba leaves, however, Yusura and Samon find out that Usan “actually collects creatures” like Yuba “to put on display” and “sells them,” and they track Usan down, demanding he Yuba go.¹⁶⁴ Usan refuses, and his henchman physically incapacitate Yusura and Samon, enraging Yuba to the point of transforming.¹⁶⁵ Usan is frightened by her monster form and demands his henchmen to kill Yuba, revealing that his compliments were a ruse.¹⁶⁶ Usan’s criminality is subtler compared to Danjūro, but it makes him an intensely evil Edo literature-styled criminal. His kindness to Yuba indicates that he does not look down on her for being a monster, and telegraphs that Usan is a good person. The reveal of his true nature is thus made more jarring and infuriating, as Watase’s twist subverts the reader’s expectations of his true personality. His antagonistic criminal nature is amplified further when Yuba transforms, and he becomes eager to kill her. In order to make her criminals especially despicable, Watase had to follow the patterns in Edo period literature.

Usages of Anachronism

Another reason that Watase chose to write manga that took place in Edo was the anachronistic nature of Edo literature. Certain writers in the Edo period based their own characters off of existing literary characters from earlier times in Japanese history, and references

¹⁶² Watase, 219, 220.

¹⁶³ Watase, 220.

¹⁶⁴ Watase, 222, 226.

¹⁶⁵ Watase, 228, 229.

¹⁶⁶ Watase, 229.

these characters in the text, with one of the most prominent being Baba Bunkô (1718-1759).¹⁶⁷ In the section “The Case of an Auntie Monster,” of his book *One Hundred Monsters of Edo in Our Time (Tôdai Edo Hyaku Bakemono)*, written in 1758, the story centers on “an unfaithful husband and his jealous wife,” the latter disguising herself as “an aging aunt” to discover her husband, Amagasaki Ikkô, was having an affair with a prostitute.¹⁶⁸ The prostitute’s name is Otsuna, which is in reference to “the name of the great ancient hero Watanabe no Tsuna (953-1025), who attacked the monster Ibaraki Dôji and took away his arm.”¹⁶⁹ In the last portion of the story, the narrator remarks how the wife’s actions of disguise, “was like the demon in the well-known story about the warrior Watanabe no Tsuna who took of the arm of an ogre.”¹⁷⁰ The terms and objects Edo writers used to craft their narratives were not limited to their own period. The stories behind certain figures in popular Japanese literature, such as Watanabe no Tsuna, made them recognizable names in the Edo period Japanese readership. Because the figure of this character is so well known, Bunkô saw it as viable to use in his narrative to create Otsuna and Ikkô’s wife and their conflict. He even directly references the original story that his characters were based on at the end of the story, noting how the actions of Ikkô’s wife mirrored those of Ibaraki Dôji in the story of Watanabe no Tsuna. His description of those characters and their narratives as make an anachronism, speaking of a character written in the eighteenth century in terms of one told in the tenth or eleventh century. Characters like Bunkô’s illustrated the freedom Edo authors had to use references to characters and objects from beyond the Edo period.

With its freedom of expression for anachronism, Watase frequently makes use of the Edo behavior to make references beyond her story’s time, but in terms more relevant to her mid-

¹⁶⁷ Baba Bunkô, *The Case of an Auntie Monster*, trans. William J. Farge in Sumie Jones, Kenji Watanabe, ed., *An Edo Anthology: Literature from Japan’s Mega-City, 1750-1850* (University of Hawai’i Press, 2013), 103.

¹⁶⁸ Bunkô, *The Case of an Auntie Monster*, 104, 105.

¹⁶⁹ Bunkô, *The Case of an Auntie Monster*, 105.

¹⁷⁰ Baba Bunkô, *The Case of an Auntie Monster*, 107.

1990s time period. Like Bunkô's reference to Watanabe no Tsuna, Watase's characters reference characters from manga written before hers. In Chapter Five, Yuba introduces some of her friends to Yusura who want to befriend the humans they live amongst.¹⁷¹ However, Yusura refuses and tells them to "ask Mizuki Shigeru-sensei for help."¹⁷² This is a reference to the manga author Mizuki Shigeru, who authored the manga *GeGeGe no Kitarô* during the 1960s, which famously depicted Japanese monsters.¹⁷³ Yusura even refers to the manga by name, remarking about how *Appare Jipangu!* is not *Kitarô of the Graveyard*, the English title of Mizuki Shigeru's manga.¹⁷⁴ This reference to both the Mizuki and the manga are a prominent example of why Watase chose Edo as her setting. To create comedic effect that tied into their narratives, writers like Bunkô drew from material found in literature written long before the Edo period, and the way his narrator causally remarks about Otusna's name being similar to Watanabe no Tsuna creates this comedy. Watase saw that because an Edo writer was able to do something like that, she could as well, and created a similar situation of familiar plotlines and characters by referencing the manga of Mizuki Shigeru. Both *Kitarô of the Graveyard* and its author did not exist during the Edo period, but Watase could see that what she was doing with Yuba and the other monsters was similar to what Shigeru had done. Using the freedom of anachronism that Edo authors had to her advantage. Yusura to reflect the similarity of her situation to Shigeru's narrative, despite the reference being out of place for the manga's time period. Yusura's reference is similar to Bunkô's, highlighting the similarities of characters in his narrative to ones before it. Another instance of anachronism occurs in Chapter Two. In the chapter, Yusura, Samon and Minekichi visit a bathhouse named La-yu, and discover they are competing with a rival bathhouse named

¹⁷¹ Watase, 213.

¹⁷² Watase, 213.

¹⁷³ Watase, 213.

¹⁷⁴ Watase, 214.

Sarada-yu.¹⁷⁵ In response, she, Samon and Minekichi help La-yu's owners to bring in customers with special advertising.¹⁷⁶ In one of his pitches to customers, Minekichi elucidates about how La-yu's *nagashi-otoko*, men who wash women's backs, are "cute enough to be in Johnny's," in reference to a Japanese pop group called Johnny's Junior.¹⁷⁷ The J-Pop group, like *Kitarô of the Graveyard*, did not exist in the Edo period, would not make sense for Minekichi to reference it. At the same time, however, Watase referencing these people through Minekichi mirrors Bunkô's comparison of the conflict between Ikkô's wife and Otsuna, comparing the characters they create, to individuals that had already been around for some time when the story was published. The liberated use of objects out of the story's time authors like Bunkô gave Watase the same liberty to reference them.

In addition to anachronisms based on characters and real people, Watase uses object-based anachronism, referencing items that did not exist in the Edo period. In Chapter Two, the Sarada-yu bathhouse uses extravagant advertising to attract their customers, including a promotion is claiming that guests can "get a free Tamagochi or Pokémon as a gift," only for a caricature of the author and her editor to appear, the former saying that "those didn't exist back then."¹⁷⁸ Watase herself admits that the joke she made in the advertisement is an anachronism. This reference to products instead of characters is something of a deviation from the anachronisms made during the Edo period. However, while Bunkô based his Otsuna off of something that came centuries prior to his writing, Watase followed the opposite principle and used objects ahead of Edo time, adding further as to why she chose to write a manga set in Edo. By following the styles of Edo literature, she was free to be anachronistic. Chapter Three

¹⁷⁵ Watase, 62, 67, 68.

¹⁷⁶ Watase, 69, 70.

¹⁷⁷ Watase, 70.

¹⁷⁸ Watase, 67.

exhibits a similar object-based anachronism. When Kazanosuke explains his origins as a “Kola” ninja from the “Western village Koka,” Yusura and Samon confusedly piece the words together as “Koka Kola.”¹⁷⁹ In addition, he remarks about how the village founder was interested in creating a “‘refreshing and tasty’ ninja clan.”¹⁸⁰ Watase is making a reference to an object that was invented long after the end of the Edo period, in this case the soft drink Coca-Cola. By doing this, she adds to the “Edo-style” nature of her manga, using a literary function that was used during the Edo period to add to her story’s narrative in much the same way Edo period writers used material beyond the Edo period in their stories. Because writers such as Bunkô did not limit themselves exclusively to one time period, Watase took advantage of this to push the boundaries of anachronism in Edo-centric writing.

Prominent Parody Styles

Much of Edo’s literature was rooted in parody, mimicking already-existing forms of literature. Literature written as parody belonged to a type of humorous writing called *gesaku*, or “frivolous composition,” and were “written as a form of mass entertainment.”¹⁸¹ This form of literature first came to be between 1600 and 1680 in the form of *kana-zôshi*, which were books of vernacular prose written in *kana*.¹⁸² Parody literature was “one of the earliest *kana-zôshi* genres and transformed text of Heian of medieval court culture into humorous comic versions of contemporary popular culture,” such as its parody of *waka* poetry verse known as *haikai*, the

¹⁷⁹ Watase, 112.

¹⁸⁰ Watase, 112.

¹⁸¹ Kern, 95, 96.

¹⁸² Shirane, ed., 21.

“comic linked verse,” in the early sixteenth century.¹⁸³ A later example of this parody took shape in the *dangibon*, or “sermon book,” a type of “mock” address that parodied stories containing “seriously religious or moralizing content.”¹⁸⁴ Rather than have religion or morality as a subject, mock-sermon books instead used the general format of sermon books to discuss Edo “customs, people, places, and, especially, the colloquial speech of its commoners,” such as Issai Chozan’s *Hickish Zhuangzi (Inaka Sôshi)*, written in 1717.¹⁸⁵ Taking material from existing sources and poking fun at them was a revolutionary form of entertainment literature. For comic *haikai* and other types of *kana-zôshi*, it allowed writers to take a form of poetry that was rooted in older Heian custom, and reshape it in a way that was more relevant to the popular culture at the time. Similarly, the *dangibon* adopted the moral content of real sermon books, but were crafted in a way that reflected current Edo lifestyle, blending two genres into a comedic writing format. Edo literature made parodies from both relevant and aged sources, and both helped to create a unique comedy genre that could be recognizable and distinct.

The large amount of parody allowed Watase to use the setting of *Appare Jipangu!* to her advantage. Many writers of the time took existing forms of literature and parodied them to craft their stories, meaning that she could take from existing early modern literature and parody it to suit her narrative. *Dangibon* was one such genre she parodied, but her stories did focus on the “moralizing content” of the sermon books. In one *dangibon*, “The Modern Life of Shidôken” (*Fûryû Shidôken*), written by author Hiraga Gennai (1728-1779) in 1763, the titular character meets with an old sage and listens to his teachings.¹⁸⁶ The sage explains to Shidôken about how people such as Buddhists, who “talk about paradise and hell in order to teach ignorant old

¹⁸³ Shirane, ed., 22.

¹⁸⁴ Kern, 97.

¹⁸⁵ Kern, 98.

¹⁸⁶ Gennai, *The Modern Life of Shidôken*, 450, 461, 496, 492.

women and wives about nirvana” ultimately have “nothing to teach the wives” and that Confucian scholars can be “narrow minded” people “who only study books and know nothing about the real world.”¹⁸⁷ The sage further condemns such people, claiming that “their arrogance has prevented them from knowing anything,” and warns Shidôken that “after you give up being a monk, you must never, never become so arrogant as to call yourself a professional artist.”¹⁸⁸ Gennai’s story, like other *dangibon*, parodied moral messages, criticizing Buddhist and Confucian beliefs in favor of an his ideology of refraining from being “narrow-minded” and practicing humility. When the sage is encouraging Shidôken to not consider himself a “professional artist,” both he and Gennai are trying to profess that one’s personal beliefs should not allow them to become so arrogant as to ignore the rest of the world. His use of this literary format to convey this message is a parody of the sermon book *dangibon*, taking an existing form of literature and changing it to suit his own narrative. Watase parodies sermon literature through Yusura. She is a *hikeshi-ya*, or “sadness fighter,” who uses the power of her staff Kongômaru, which can detect sadness, to “heal” peoples’ “sadness,” and believes that “people who understand the sadness of others can change.”¹⁸⁹ Throughout the manga, she uses the phrase “know the sadness of others and your own sin,” and inflicts the power the power of the sadness that Kongômaru absorbed onto those who have inflicted sadness onto others.¹⁹⁰ By forcing people to feel the sadness, Yusura makes her philosophy a reality, such as when Yoriyasu apologizes to Samon for trying to kill him after feeling the sadness Samon felt.¹⁹¹ In much the same way as Gennai, Watase parodies *dangibon* sermon format to express her own ideology of “knowing the sadness of others” and the consequences of “your own sin” through Yusura. Given

¹⁸⁷ Gennai, *The Modern Life of Shidôken*, 494.

¹⁸⁸ Gennai, *The Modern Life of Shidôken*, 495.

¹⁸⁹ Watase, 21, 51.

¹⁹⁰ Watase, 50, 51.

¹⁹¹ Watase, 44, 53.

her character's occupation and her belief in the idea that people can change by knowing sadness, Watase is creating "moralizing content," much like sermon books. Yusura's statement about who "people who understand the sadness of other can change," "know the sadness of others and your own sin," and the impact she had on Yoriyasu creates a sermon-like effect to preach the message of being aware of other's sadness and changing your ways to understand how one's actions can effect others. The existing parodies of sermons that Edo period *dangibon* created gave Watase a form with which to suit the messages and characters of her narrative.

Watase's also parodied the comedy of Edo, mimicking the actions of certain writers to create the same kind of humor. One way in which she does this is imitating a trope found in certain *kokkeibon* books. In Jippensha Ikku's (1765-1831) *Travels on the Eastern Seaboard* (*Tôkaiôchu Hizakurige*), protagonists Yajirobei and Kitahachi encounter different people with peculiar names.¹⁹² Among them were Awfully Funnyman, Master Gaptooth, Master Snottyface and Master Scratchy, each character having a name specifically designed to visualize and mock their appearances.¹⁹³ In addition, some of the names Jippensha Ikku gives his characters have a double meaning in Japanese, with one man that Yajirobei and Kitahachi encounter bearing the name Kabocha Gomajiru, which also means "pumpkin sesame-sauce" in Japanese.¹⁹⁴ *Kokkeibon* like Ikku's contained a unique form of word play. He created characters of outlandish names that, because of how silly they look and sound, create a comedic image and effect. The double meaning of Kabocha Gomajiru achieves a similar humorous effect.

Watase draws from the parody qualities of different Edo literature, and names certain characters in a particular way as a parody of Ikku. In Chapter Five, Yusura, Samon and Yuba meet the character Usan Kusai, whose name is presented as a forename and a surname on a

¹⁹² Shirane, ed., 731.

¹⁹³ Ikku, *Travels on the Eastern Seaboard*, 744.

¹⁹⁴ Ikku, *Travels on the Eastern Seaboard*, 741.

business card he carries, the former being his first and the latter being his last.¹⁹⁵ However, like Kabocha Gomajiru's name, Usan Kusai's has a double meaning, as the word *usankusai* is Japanese for the adjective "suspicious."¹⁹⁶ Like Ikku, Watase takes a pre-existing word in the Japanese language and makes a name for a character based off of it, leaving the reader to imagine a character literally named "Suspicious." In addition to being a joke, double-meaning name, the designation of the character with such an obvious name telegraphs the character's defining traits to the audience, in that he is a "suspicious" character that the audience needs to watch out for. This double meaning also creates a similar comedic effect in that Watase is using the name as a joke to make the villain obvious to the reader. The parody style of other forms of Japanese literature allowed Watase the ability to parody *kokkeibon* like Ikku to create the kinds of character and humor she wanted in the manga, reinforcing that parody was a driving force in her decision to set the manga in Edo.

Watase's Challenging Choice: Why Write An Edo Story?

The many different traits of Edo literature provided Watase a basis to set her manga in the early modern period. Specific genres of literature existed that explored different situations that its characters could exist in certain characters behaved, such as *ninjôbon* and *sharebon* exploring the psychological complexities of romantic relationships, the folkloric fantasy creating a range of strange beings as part of its narrative, or building particularly evil antagonists in criminal stories. The directions these stories took allowed Watase to freely draw from and include these aspects within her manga, giving her the ability to emphasize and escalate the

¹⁹⁵ Watase, 219.

¹⁹⁶ Watase, 219.

relationship between Yusura and Samon from clumsy embarrassment to true romance or grant her the ability to make her antagonists as evil as she could. The anachronisms in Edo writing, such as Bunkô's story based on the Watanabe no Tsuna character achieved the same effect. Seeing that Edo authors had the ability to make references to things that did not fit within the time period of Edo, Watase found herself able to do the same thing, such as referencing Mizuki Shigeru's manga from the 1960's. She also applied this anachronistic writing method to modern inventions, referencing the contemporary products of Coca-Cola Soda and Pokémon in the manga. Edo literature also had a subset of literature that took place in Edo that was entirely devoted to parodying existing literature. Because of this strong focus on parody, Watase had the ability to parody different forms, techniques and themes found in Edo literature, essentially creating a manga that was not only written in the style of Edo, but within Edo itself, mimicking the moral content of sermon books with the philosophies of Yusura or the comedy of Jippensha Ikku's *kokkeibon* character names. The freedom of creativity granted by the genres, anachronisms and parodies of Edo literature all contributed to Watase's decision to write an Edo manga.

Chapter 3:
Translating *Appare Jipangu!*

Introduction

Translating *Appare Jipangu!* presented me with more challenging issues compared to previous translations I had done. In addition to words, there were images with written out sounds that I had to try and accurately equalize into English, conventions done in translated manga that I had to consider, and a strong presence from the author I had to incorporate. There was also not always a direct method with which to translate certain words, as certain Japanese words did not always have a solid English equivalent, and I was forced to use a self-made method to translate them accurately. Outside of these new issues, I also focused on issues I thought were important in my previous translation work, particularly in establishing the aspects of Japanese culture in the original text within the text and naturalizing Japanese concepts to make them accessible to a non-Japanese audience. Trying to keep my translation distinct from the original text in some way was also an important factor in the translation process in order to make what the text was saying accessible to a non-Japanese audience with my own additions while remaining faithful to the original Japanese via my direct translations, both of which were important lessons taught to me in my Japanese translation class. These focuses were the primary objective I followed when translating Watase's manga, and with the choices and methods I made and used, I believe that I have created a faithful and fun adaptation of a unique and interesting Japanese comic book.

Emphasizing Edo

When translating the manga, one of the primary challenges I had to face was translating the language and behaviors of the Edo time period. During the Edo period, the Japanese

language underwent immense change, due to the “families of *daimyō*” who were “forced to lead lives of hostages within the city,” and this development spread out into Edo “by the end of the eighteenth century.”¹⁹⁷ Major innovations included “the children of day laborers” who “added the honorific prefix ‘*o*’ to the term used in addressing their parents and elder siblings,” or “rice brokers” “calling their wives *goshinizō-sama* and their daughters *ojō-sama*.”¹⁹⁸ These innovations shaped “a language that would eventually become the common tongue of the entire land.”¹⁹⁹ As the root of the standard Japanese language, the Edo dialect established a new set of linguistic rules during the period that created new social connotations. Honorifics within existing words such as *jō-sama* were used to denote a level of filial piety such as the suffix “*o*” due to the nobility inhabiting Edo, and these honorifics became the normative linguistic behavior for those living in Edo, and eventually, the entire country. In addition to the connotations associated with certain aesthetics of politeness, specific ones such as the “*o*” honorific, were also given contextual rules. Children were meant to show reverence for their parents or other elder family members and used them as a form of address towards them, and these contexts became normalized as the use of “*o*” increased. Because the Edo period Japanese Edo dialect placed so much emphasis on the use of formal and polite terms, I translated the speech of the characters using those terms into the most polite English variant possible. In Chapter Two, the daughter of the La-Yu bathhouse owner refers to her father using the term “お父つあん,” *otoutsan*, a variation of the contemporary Japanese term お父さん, *otousan*, the formal way for one to refer to their father. The use of the “*o*” prefix within the word indicates a strong level of polite reverence that Oyumi shows towards her parental figure, and this is how she refers to him in the

¹⁹⁷ Nishiyama, 44.

¹⁹⁸ Nishiyama, 45.

¹⁹⁹ Nishiyama, 45.

rest of the manga. Because of the honorific connotations *otoutsan* carried in its prefix, I translated Oyumi's use of it as "father" whenever she was referring to her father, such as on page 91, where she says お父つあん家を出てったんです, *otoutsan ie wo dettandesu*, meaning "my father left home" in English, and I translate this sentence as "Father went out."²⁰⁰ Having Oyumi use of the more formal English term for a male parent was the most accurate way to translate the Edo-style language into my translation. Oyumi's use of the "o" honorific in the term implies respect and filial piety for her father, as it did for the samurai families who developed the term. She sees her father as someone she must respect, and speaks in a way that conveys this respect. In English, when an individual is referring to one's father, the most formal and respectful variant is "father." It denotes that the person using the word is conveying respect and formality toward their parental figure. Because of the similar connotation that the term "father" carries to the Japanese terms that use the "o" honorific, I had Oyumi use it whenever she referred to her father. In doing so, I translated the term accurately linguistically and chronologically, giving Oyumi speech that matched the historical context of her setting. There were times, however, that I made exceptions to this, particularly with Tokubei's son, Hachirô. When Hachirô refers to his father on page 185, he uses the formal お父つあん.²⁰¹ While I originally considered using "father," I instead chose to use the fore informal variant because of his manner of speech. Hachirô's uses informal contractions of verbs, such as 返せ, *kaese* in rômaji, in a demanding way when he is accosting Yusura to give his dad back to him.²⁰² This is an informal shortening of the additionally informal commanding phrase 返せなさい, *kaenasai*, roughly meaning "I demand you return this to me." This use of informal language felt unfitting for Hachirô to refer

²⁰⁰ Watase, 91.

²⁰¹ Watase, 185.

²⁰² Watase, 185.

to his father with such politeness, so the informal variation of “father,” “dad,” was used. In addition, Hachirô is portrayed as a very young boy, and to a Western audience, the more formal term for the male parental figure would seem unusual, as a child his age would generally not be that formal. However, the use of “dad” does not entirely disconnect from the formality of Edo language. The word still implies respect towards familial authority, as it designates Tokubei as Hachirô’s father, and above him. Albeit lessened, having Hachirô use this word still conveys the formality of Edo language, and faithfully represents the way people spoke.

Notes of Naturalization

Another challenge I was faced with when translating was naturalizing concepts in Japanese culture that could not be immediately understood. In order to naturalize these concepts for a Western audience, I used a tactic found in how Western translation companies translate manga by explaining certain concept to the reader via a translator’s note. The main way in which I felt the need to explain things through notes was to help readers understand certain Japanese words, such as the word *hikeshi-ya*, introduced in Chapter One and used throughout the manga. When the word is first explained to Samon by Yusura and Minekichi, it is written entirely in hiragana as ひけしや, *hi-ke-shi-ya*, and Samon confuses the term for the word 火消, *hikeshi*, which in Japanese can mean “firefighter.”²⁰³ This followed up by Yusura explaining that the *hi* sound in her title does not mean fire, but “sadness,” which the symbol ひ can also mean. To non-native Japanese speakers, knowledge about the varied meanings of Japanese symbols would not be available, so I added a translator’s note beneath the text that contained ひけしや to clarify

²⁰³ Watase, 21.

that the symbol could be used to mean both “fire” and “sadness.” In doing so, I provide the reader with the necessary knowledge to understand what the word now meant, as I used the rōmaji version of the word, *hikeshi-ya* in the title and on page nine of the manga. This way, they would be able to look at the word translated into English and still recognize the meaning behind it throughout the manga. I also chose to make translators notes where it felt necessary to explain certain things about the Edo period. In Chapter Two, when Yusura visits the La-yu bathhouse, Oyumi mistakenly identifies her as a man.²⁰⁴ When she finds out the truth, Oyumi says おわびに糠袋サービスしますね, *owabi ni nukabukuro saabisushimasune* in rōmaji, meaning “how about I give you a free rice cloth bag,” and in her sentence, offers Yusura a 糠袋, *nukabukuro*, roughly meaning, “rice bran bag” to use.²⁰⁵ To the average reader, this statement would seem odd, as bags for holding rice do not carry the associations for a bathhouse or a general bath that a Western audience would normally have. However, in the Edo period, people who went to bathhouses used cloth bags, often filled with rice, as a means to apply soap to their bodies. To make this clear, I added an asterisk and a note at the bottom of the page to explain that “in the Edo period, cloth sacks filled with rice were used to scrub soap on the body.”²⁰⁶ Using this note also prevented add additional information within the translated sentence where it wasn’t in the original text. There was no mention of the function the rice bag was going to be used for in the Japanese text, and I did not want to deviate too far from what Oyumi had said by having to explain the rice bag’s usage within her dialogue. Translating the comedy of the manga was another obstacle I faced, and this necessitated the use of translator’s notes. Chapter Five’s Usan Kusai was one situation I had to apply this method to. The word 胡散臭い, *usankusai* is an

²⁰⁴ Watase, 66.

²⁰⁵ Watase, 66.

²⁰⁶ Watase, 66.

adjective that means “suspicious” in Japanese, but the character’s name is written with different kanji, 宇山久彩 that uses the same phonetic sounds of *u-san-ku-sai*.²⁰⁷ The name is meant to be a pun on the adjective, but the pun did not translate over well to English, with few English names being able to represent the same joke on “suspicious.” Lacking a close English equivalent, I wrote the name with rōmaji, Usan Kusai, and indicated a note with an asterisk that explained the meaning of “usankusai” in Japanese as “suspicious.”²⁰⁸ This allows the readers to comprehend the joke without an in-dialogue explanation. These notes were an effective method in informing the reader about concepts within the manga without straying from the characters’ dialogue.

The Sound of Manga

Sound effects were another issue that I had to address. My main concern with them was to match the tone or action that they were associated with. When translating I divided the sound effects two different ways, changing the Romanization of them based on if the specific sound had a direct translation or not. In the former case, I translated the sound effect as closely to its direct English translation as possible. Throughout the manga, the sound effect *どき*, *doki* was used, such as in Chapter One, where the word appears near Yusura’s profile after Samon states that he is relieved to see Yusura in good condition.²⁰⁹ In Japanese, the meaning of the sound effect is that of a pounding heart in response to embarrassment or stress. In English, the most commonly used onomatopoeia for a hard or fast-paced heartbeat is “thump,” which emphasizes the heavy impact of the beat of the character’s heart. When translating this sound effect, I noticed

²⁰⁷ Watase, 219.

²⁰⁸ Watase, 219.

²⁰⁹ Watase, 33.

the syllabic difference between the Japanese *doki* and the English “thump,” and felt that this difference was uneven enough to not convey the emotion of deep embarrassment that *doki* expresses. To remedy this, I wrote the Romanized sound effect with two syllables separated by a hyphen to add a sound, ultimately forming “th-thump.”²¹⁰ While *doki* is a two-hiragana word in Japanese, the sound it represents is translated as a single “thump.” However, the action it is associated with, being a fiercely beating heart, indicated that this was the kind of word that needed to be used in English, as the beating of the human heart is also associated with a thumping noise in English literature. Having the sound effect written out as “th-thump” sticks close to the original Japanese and the action associated with the Japanese word itself, but at the same time, incorporates the two-syllable sound that Western cultures tend to associate with a beating heart. Sound effects with direct English translations such as these required me to use the direct translation while simultaneously replicating the action associated with the sound effect, and my “th-thump” accurately recreates the sound and effect that Watase had intended when writing for Yusura’s beating heart. Certain sound effects in *Appare Jipangu!* were represented as Japanese verbs and nouns, and when translating these effects, I used the equivalent English verbs and nouns to signify this meaning. In Chapter One on page 30, when Yoriyasu’s guards are attacking Yusura and Samon, Minekichi arrives and throws a smoke bomb at the guards, sending them into a coughing fit.²¹¹ The cough is represented by ゲホ ゲホ, *geho geho*, which when translated into English, is the sound used to signify gagging or coughing. In English, the word cough itself lacks specific onomatopoeia, and when used in a visual medium such as a comic book, the noun cough is used in place of an actual phonetic word to signify the action. Because this both closely matched what the Japanese word signified and it is the most commonly used

²¹⁰ Watase, 33.

²¹¹ Watase, 30.

onomatopoeia for the word, I translated the *geho* as the word “cough.” Although it is a direct imitation of Watase’s wording, it achieves the same effect. As a result, translating the sound as the word appropriately followed Watase’s original manga in both cause and effect.

For sound effects that did not have a direct translation to follow, I translated the sound based on the action that was happening around it. In Chapter Two, when Minekichi feels flustered about entering the La-yu bathhouse, Yusura kicks him directly in the back, and the Japanese sound effect used for the action was written as どっかん, written as *dokkan* in *rômajî*.²¹² Unlike *doki*, *dokkan* did not have a direct English meaning, so I had to examine how the word sounded when spoken aloud to decide the best way to translate it. In Japanese, the word uses a small つ or *tsu* hiragana, which when used, adds emphasis to the consonant sound that proceeds it, giving the *kan* a harder “kuh” sound when spoken. With the hard pronunciation and Yusura’s kick, I translated that portion of the sound as “pow,” an onomatopoeia used to denote a physical action that results in a forceful impact. By doing this, I created an effect that carries the connotation of a forceful impact that the reader could associate with Yusura kicking Minekichi in much the same way as Watase intended when she wrote the sound. Translating the ど was less obvious, as it preceded the impact sound effect of the “kan,” and I didn’t want to exclude the preceding sound entirely. To create the full sound, I added the syllable of “wha” to “pow,” as the former has been used as a way of preceding an impacting sound in American comics, such as the whooshing sound of a whip before it cracks. By adding this preceding sound, I captured the two syllable sound effect of the Japanese *dokkan* with a preceding sound and an impacting sound. Translating this additional sound effect also helped to make the action more physically natural. Yusura cannot just kick Minekichi out of nowhere without having to raise her leg. Adding *do*

²¹² Watase, 64, 65.

indicates the raising of her leg , much like how in American comics, the swing of a punch is given a sound effect like “wha” prior to the action of impact of “pow.” Adding this additional effect created phonetic cause and effect that accurately represented the action in the panel.

There were also sound effects used in the manga that resembled pseudo-dialogue. For these, I used the sound of the original Japanese word when said out loud, dictating it to myself, to find the closest English match possible. In Chapter Three, the “Sulking Hawk,” ふてくされた鷹 or *futekusareta taka*, is introduced, and is a large raptor used among Kazanosuke’s clan that always has a perpetual expression of moroseness.²¹³ When first introduced to the protagonists, it makes the noise “ふんっ,” written as *ffun* in rōmaji, and uses a shot tsu to create a clipped, emphasized singular syllable expression.²¹⁴ Although it lacked an exact translation, given the creature’s personality, I analyzed this action to be a “huff,” a kind of airy sound that people make when irritated or annoyed. The most common onomatopoeia I knew for that action was “hmpf,” which both in real life and in written and visual mediums indicates a feeling of annoyance or anger. With those connotations and the sulking hawk’s defining features, I translated its sound of ふんっ as “hmpf.” The sound needed to match what Watase was having the characters do, so I also had to find onomatopoeia that represented the same thing. The connotations of irritation and anger carried in the “hmpf” matched the character of the “sulking” hawk as its name indicates actions relating to the same connotations that “hmpf” carries. Phonetically, the sound also accurately represented the original Japanese. The hiragana *fu* in Watase’s *ffun* sound is used with an exhalation sound through a narrowed mouth. The English “hmpf” is pronounced the same way. Through careful observation and transcription, these sound effects were both natural sounding in English and accurate to the original Japanese.

²¹³ Watase, 114.

²¹⁴ Watase, 114.

Creating Character Quips

Matching the English speech to the Japanese speech, both in terms of how it was written, and matching it to the character's personality was another important question. Chapter One introduces Yusura, and in the original Japanese, Yusura uses contracted forms of Japanese words, such as when she addresses a man she is punishing as オッサン, *ossan* in rōmaji.²¹⁵ This contracted word is taken from the word おじさん, *ojisan* in rōmaji, which is used to refer to men older than the speaker, with the contraction carrying an informal overtone. She also exhibits this form of speech when speaking causally to her friends, as when she addresses her friend, Mr. Tagawa, stating いつもすまねえなあ田川の旦那. おじってもらってよっ, *itsumo sumanee naa Tagawa no danna, ojitemoratteto* in rōmaji.²¹⁶ In English, the sentences roughly translate as “I am sorry for always scaring you like that, Mr. Tagawa,” and in the original Japanese, she uses the word すまねえ, *sumanee*, a contraction taken from the existing Japanese word すみません, *sumimasen*, a phrase used to express the phrase “I’m sorry” or “excuse me.” In addition, she contracts the word おじってもらってよっ from the word おじる, meaning “to scare,” from the verb conjugation of もらう. To capture the informal attitude of Yusura, I wrote the English translations both based on and with contractions. When she refers to the old man, I phrased *ossan* as “old man,” as the term carries a similar derogatory overtone in English as it does in Japanese.²¹⁷ In addition, when apologizing to Mr. Tagawa, I had Yusura say “always scarin’ ya like that,” contracting both the verb “scaring” with an apostrophe and the pronoun “you” by

²¹⁵ Watase, 8.

²¹⁶ Watase, 9.

²¹⁷ Watase, 8.

removing the last two vowels and inserting the letter “a” in their place, a common slang used in American comic books for similar, brash characters.²¹⁸ Choosing English words that reflect the same connotations that Watase was using in the original text helped me to give her characters the type of personality that she wrote them with. Yusura’s use of physical force to admonish the old man indicates her violent or pushy persona, while her use of *ossan*, along with contracted forms of speech indicate informality. In English, the term “old man” is used in contexts where the speaker is being disrespectful or condescending with the person they are talking to, and meant to be an insult. Because Yusura is punishing him, this word choice made the most sense, and captured the intended indignation Watase gave Yusura. For contractions, in some written works, characters who have informal or irreverent personalities are occasionally written with contracted slang of words, such as “doin’ somethin’” for “doing something.” Because Yusura uses contracted Japanese verbs such as *moratte* when talking to Mr. Tagawa, it indicated that she is one of those characters who speaks in condensed words, and is informal in the way she talks. Therefore, I used the apostrophe-tacked version of the verb scaring to make “scarin’” to capture Yusura’s informal nature. By contracting words and choosing appropriate English equivalents, I established the same character personalities used in Watase’s manga into my English translation.

Reevaluating Romanization

I also had to carefully decide where it was necessary to Romanize the Japanese or keep it translated into English. This was particularly challenging when translating the different suffixes characters used, but I ultimately determined which ones to Romanized based on their familiarity to a general audience and how they flowed when reading. This occurred with the three polite,

²¹⁸ Watase, 9.

respectful suffixes, of *さん*, *san*, *様*, *sama*, and *先生*, *せんせい*, *sensei*, meaning “mister” or “miss,” with the *sama* indicating even greater politeness than *san*, and *sensei* typically referring to a mentor. Various characters use these suffixes when communicating, such as Minekichi referring to Oyumi as *お弓さん*, *o-yumi-san*, thus calling her “Miss Oyumi,” or calling Yusura’s father by the suffix *sensei* when saying *先生の発明品*, *sensei no hatsumeihin*, or “*sensei*’s inventions.”²¹⁹ Terms like these, even to an audience that does not know Japanese, are somewhat familiar and recognizable when read, particularly *sensei*, which a majority of Western audiences recognize as “teacher.” Bearing this familiarity in mind, when a character like Minekichi used a suffix like “san” in a sentence, such as *この調子なら更田湯に勝てますね！お弓さん！*, *kono chōshinara fukeda yu ni katemasu ne! O-Yumi-san!*, where he is talking about beating out the Sarada-yu bathhouse, I wrote the sentence as “If this keeps up, we’ll beat Sarada-yu for sure, Oyumi-san!”²²⁰ The Romanized suffix would be recognized as a form of polite reference by Minekichi towards Oyumi, even to a general audience that does not fluently understand Japanese. I also Romanized these particular suffixes to make the dialogue flow more naturally. When Oteru apologizes to Samon’s uncle Yoriyasu, she says *申し訳ありません…頼安様*, *mōshiwakearimasen…Yoriyasu-sama*, roughly meaning “I am sorry…Yoriyasu-sama,” and she uses the *sama* suffix to show respect to him.²²¹ In certain contexts, the *sama* suffix is used to refer to one in a position much like a daimyō, being of a high social class, and in English, can be used to mean “lord,” a type of high position in a social hierarchy. While I had the option to use *lord* in place of *sama*, I compared the way the two different terms sounded when spoken aloud, and attaching the suffix “sama” to the end of Yoriyasu’s name sounded smoother, whereas the

²¹⁹ Watase, 68.

²²⁰ Watase, 77.

²²¹ Watase, 23.

English term “lord” with Yoriyasu’s name created a noticeable rift between the words. If a reader were to say the name out loud using the suffix, they would experience the same smoothness, which solidified my decision to use rōmaji for such suffixes. Keeping the words flowing through these Romanized honorifics helped me to prevent disconnects that could have occurred between words that didn’t need an English translation in order to be understood.

For suffixes that I believed were less commonly known, I translated them into their closest English counterpart. When Kazanosuke addresses Yusura, he calls her 悲消屋どの, or *hikeshi-ya-dono*, using the suffix *dono*.²²² *Dono*, is a suffix that like *san* or *sama*, as “mister” or “miss,” and is attached to the end of names to create a polite referential term. Unlike the latter two, however, it is not as well known as the term for “mister” and “miss,” and to the reader who lacks knowledge of Japanese suffixes, putting *dono* as Romanized Japanese would be less clear in its meaning. Bearing this unfamiliarity in mind, I used the most basic of its English meanings, so that when he is addressing Yusura by her *Hikeshi-ya* title, he says “miss *hikeshi-ya*” as opposed to *hikeshi-ya-dono*. “Miss” still denotes the same polite meaning that *dono* indicates, and English-speaking audiences would recognize that “miss” is a term used to politely address a woman. By using this close English equivalent, I could avoid confusing the audience with a lesser-known suffix and retain the original meaning of the manga’s words at the same time.

Culture Shock

Another important issue that I faced was trying to preserve and convey the cultural context of the text. It was originally written in Japanese and meant to be consumed by a Japanese

²²² Watase, 115.

audience who would both understand the language and be knowledgeable about objects and words associated with the culture, and I wanted to translate the dialogue and other parts of the text in a way that would include this cultural identity and make it accessible to the reader. This goal also played into the kinds of words that I chose to Romanize. In Chapter Five on Page 211, Yuba explains to Yusura and Samon that she likes 「人魂」とじゃれるの大好き, *hitodama to jyareru no daisuki*, or “I love playing with *hitodamas*.”²²³ The term “人魂,” written as *hitodama* in rōmaji, is a type of being that exists in Japanese folklore that physically resembles floating balls of fire. With the physical appearance of the spirit in the manga, I could have had Yuba say “fire balls” or “fire spirits” in place of Romanized Japanese, but I felt that this did not capture the full cultural significance of the *hitodama* to the Japanese reader that the manga was originally intended for. Because the word and concept of *hitodama* is tied to Japanese folkloric beliefs, when translating it, I wrote it as Yuba saying “I love playing with *hitodamas*,” writing the Japanese word out using rōmaji.²²⁴ Similar to when I used asterisks to provide information on words such as *hikeshi-ya*, I included an asterisk next to the word with an additional note written on the bottom of the page to explain its meaning and significance to the reader. Leaving this word as it was established the Japanese identity of the text. The word *hitodama* in rōmaji looks and sounds like something that would exist in Japan and being written this way indicates that this is a word in the Japanese language, and the accompanying note also informs the audience of its cultural significance. These linguistic connotations and explanatory notes firmly establish that *Appare Jipangu!* is a Japanese text. In addition, because the manga took place in a setting inspired by Edo, I had to preserve the historical identity of the text. While a fictitious representation by Watase’s own claim, the manga was based of a distinct point in Japanese

²²³ Watase, 211.

²²⁴ Watase, 211.

history with its own kind of culture. In the same way I inserted Romanized Japanese words into the text, I did so for terms that were used during the Edo period. In Chapter Two, Yusura refers to Samon as a 御大名の跡継ぎ, *odaimyô no atotsugi*, or “heir of a *daimyô*,” which by virtue of his father Kishima’s lordship, he is.²²⁵ The word *daimyô* is a historical word in the original Japanese context, as it was used to refer to the samurai who lived in Edo. The rough English equivalent of this word is “lord,” which like *daimyô*, indicates a position of authority or nobility within a hierarchical society. I considered using this English equivalent but because the manga took place in Japan, as well as within a specific period of Japan where this word had a distinct meaning, I ultimately chose to write out the term using the *rômaj*i, and the sentence containing the word, 御大名の跡継ぎこんな薬種屋なんざにウロウロしに来てていーのかい, *odaimyô no atotsugi kon'na yakushuyanan zani urôro shi ni kite tei-no kai*, ultimately came out written as “What, does the heir of a great *daimyô* just wander around the shops now?”²²⁶ This term creates Japanese identity. The word *daimyô* was used during the Edo period, and when read by a reader, the *rômaj*i and implications raised by Watase’s Edo proclamation in the beginning help them to understand that this took place during a specific period of Japanese history.

Tantalizing Titles

Titling both the chapters and the manga itself was one of the biggest issues I was forced to address. When translating the chapters, I wanted the English version to give an indication as to what the chapter would be about without giving too much of the story away. In Chapter Four, Yusura loses Kongômaru, which she admits that she has had Kongômaru with her for her whole

²²⁵ Watase, 61.

²²⁶ Watase, 61.

life and how it is “part” of who she is.²²⁷ In Japanese, the symbols used to title the chapter are 失われた相棒之巻, *ushinawareta aibo no maki*, meaning “the volume in which the partner is lost.” The two main ideas were *ushinawareta* and *aibō*, meaning “lost” and “partner or accomplice.” In my title, I wrote the chapter as “the lost friend,” directly translating the first word of the original Japanese while altering *aibō* from “accomplice” to “friend.” This title is both linguistically accurate and effective in the narrative. Translating “ushinawareta” as “lost” gave the impression to the reader that this was a situation in which something was going to be lost be one of the characters in the manga, but “lost” also carries connotations of things such as “loss of life,” so this word allows the reader to speculate what lost could mean before reading. The translation of *aibō* as “friend” also emphasizes this. While it means “partner” in Japanese, “partner” can be used in English to refer to one’s friend or acquaintance, but I chose “friend” because it carries more sentimental connotations, which compliment the dark connotations raised by the word “lost.” As a result, the title “The Lost Friend” gives the general plot of the chapter, is linguistically accurate, and the connotations carried by the combination of those words that I chose create a feeling of dread for the reader.

The title of the manga was the most difficult title to translate. The first two kanji, 天晴, each have distinct meanings on their own, with 天, read as あまつ, or *amatsu* in rōmaji, means “heaven” or “sky,” whereas 晴, written as はれ, or *hare*, which can mean “to clear up” or “become sunny.” As for じぱんぐ, *jipangu*, historian William Griffis states that the original word was used to refer to the thirteenth-century capital of China, Jipangu, and that this term was

²²⁷ Watase, 155.

later “corrupted” into the modern name of Japan that we use today.²²⁸ With this historical context in mind, as well as the manga’s setting be in a period beyond the thirteenth century, I simply wrote it as “Japan,” as this name is the most linguistically and historically correct based on Griffis’s text. My initial titles focused too hard on one symbol over the other to create the title, and thus made the translation linguistically inaccurate. If I focused on *amatsu* too much, the title came out as *Spirit of Japan!*, due to the meaning of “heaven” denoted by the first kanji, or if I focused on the meaning of *hare* too much, it became *Cleaning Up Japan!* due to the “clearing up” meaning denoted by *hare*. To work around this discordant title, I used the manga’s parody of Edo literature and use of contemporary referential humor to my advantage. Ultimately, my title became both a parody and a reference to the contemporary American television show *It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, with my title being *It’s Always Sunny in Japan!* The use of the word “sunny” combines the two meanings of “sky” and “clearing up” in the original two kanji, as being “sunny” implies that the “sky” is “clearing up” to let the sun shine, helping to retain the meaning of both. It also helped me to create a meaning for a word that had little to no clear English equivalent to draw from. The manga’s parodying of Edo literature and contemporary references to modern things gave me the ability to use this title more freely. I could make this kind of reference and it would not seem out of place with what Watase did in her parodies and referential humor in the manga, and like my chapter titles, helped me to stay true to the manga’s overarching comedy-oriented genre. With this type of reference in the manga, I felt more inclined to do the same thing as a way of both representing the type of genre that Watase was intending, so *It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia* came to mind. Ultimately, my manga’s title

²²⁸ William Griffis, *The Mikado’s Empire: A History of Japan from the Age of Gods to the Meiji Era (660 BC-AD 1872)*. (San Diego: Stone Bridge Press, 2002), 283.

retains the comedy of the author and original Japanese meanings that could translate well into Western concepts without having to create an inaccurate meaning.

Author and Translator: Creating Compromise

The most important question in translating this manga was finding the balance between being a direct translation of the text and making the manga my own work. During my junior year, when I took an official translation class, my professor Mika Endo taught me that translating a text to be exactly the same as it was in the original language is actually a bad thing to do because not everything in a different language can completely and comfortably transferred into English, and can cause issues such as alienating readers from understanding the author's intentions and meanings. However, she also taught me that I should be as linguistically accurate as I could in my translations, and whenever I wrote a translation in class, I wrote the text in a way that remained faithful to the original while still adding my own style to the text, and I worked to apply this behavior to translating *Appare Jipangu!*, particularly on parts that were difficult to translate directly. One of the most important, and most difficult spots in where I tried to balance this was in an argument between Samon and Yusura in Chapter Five. Samon says 第一 こんな乱暴で男か女か生物不明のマナ板女, *dai ichi konna ranbōde otoko ka onna ka seibutsu fumei no manaban onna*, about Yusura, and his words roughly mean that Yusura is “a violent woman whom you cannot tell whether she is a man or a woman,” whereas Yusura refers to Samon as こんな近視乱視遠視にマザコンも併発してる男, *konna kinshi ranshi enshi ni mazakon mo heihatsu shiteru otoko*, questioning “who would want a myopic man who has an

Oedipus complex.”²²⁹ Both of their insults are in reference to aspects of their characters, as Samon wears glasses for his bad eyesight, and in the first chapter, is obsessed with finding his mother after they “were separated and taken to different parts of the country.”²³⁰ For Yusura, Samon’s insults reference to how she is mistaken for a boy, such as when the samurai himself thought so in Chapter One to the point of thinking her breasts were a small swelling in her chest, and her notoriously violent behavior, being so prominent that Minekichi for her as a “monster.”²³¹ I needed to translate these phrases in a way that would make sense and retain the negative connotations Yusura and Samon direct towards each other. The direct translations of words such as 近視, *kinshi*, making up part of the word meaning myopic can also mean “short-sighted,” which carries connotations not related to sight at all, but it felt too technical to use. In addition, directly translating phrases such as 男か女か生物, *otoko ka onna ka seibutsu*, which at its most literal could mean, “a living thing that is either a man or a woman” into the English would also be problematic, as the phrasing of it in literal English is drawn out. To remedy this issue, I had to create words and phrases that sounded more natural in English that could convey the same meaning. This way, I could be true to the original text, but also add in some level of translator creativity. Ultimately, I had Samon call Yusura “a violent, flat-chested bitch of questionable sexual status,” while Yusura calls Samon “a walking Oedipus complex who’s blind as a bat.”²³² These two phrases help to create the balance of faithful translation and translator creativity in my translation. My phrase “questionable sexual status” carries the same meaning of Yusura’s gender being confused throughout the manga and resembles the original Japanese meaning, and the use of the word “questionable” and “violent, flat-chested bitch” helps to add to

²²⁹ Watase, 217.

²³⁰ Watase, 19, 25.

²³¹ Watase, 24, 32, 196.

²³² Watase, 217.

the level of insult that Watase intended to create. Both words carry a connotation of Samon making fun of Yusura's character, and my words make the translation similarly harsh, particularly in the profanity. In Yusura's insults, the words "walking Oedipus complex" and "blind as a bat" represent this balance as well. "Walking Oedipus complex" is a more direct translation of Watase's text, using the direct English meaning and conveying the unusual fixation Samon has on his mother, but the inclusion of the word "walking" in my version adds more to the insult while still remaining faithful. "Walking" is used in some insulting contexts in the English language, and I thought that it was appropriate to use here given the situation Yusura and Samon were in. "Blind as a bat," on the other hand, is less direct of a translation from Watase's use of myopic, but still delivers the same intended idea. This insult is usually used to mock those with bad eyesight in English contexts, and thus represents Samon's glasses-assisted vision problem, but "blind as a bat" delivers my own insult. Through this blend of direct translation and altered wording, I created a balanced translation that stuck true to the original intents and meanings of the manga while also retaining my own translator writing style.

Adapting the Author

Because of Watase's strong presence in the manga, translating her as a "character" in the text was another challenge. She inserts herself into the manga various ways, such as making a joke about her anachronisms or explaining how she is writing the manga, and I had to translate each different manner of her writing in a way that captured her intention. Prior to the manga's beginning, Watase gives the reader 取り扱の説明書, とりあつかのせつめいしょ, *toriatuska no setsumeishô*, with the word 説明書, *setsumeishô*, meaning "instructions," indicating that she

is teaching us how to properly read the manga. The actual instructions, however, are nothing quite like this, and instead says things such as 本商品は生モノではございませんが、開封後は、なるべく適度にご使用頂くとより効果的です,ほんしょうひんはなまものでございませんがかいふうごなるべくてきどにごしよういただくとよりこうかてきです, *hon shōhin wa nama monode wagozaimasenga, kaifū-go wa, narubeku tekido ni goshiyō itadakuto yori kōka-tekidesu*, roughly meaning “it is best to use this item when it is fresh and you should try to finish it as soon as you open it.”²³³ Watase’s intentions within these two sentences is to liken her manga to a type of food or medicinal product that can be purchased at the store, some of which have instructions written on the back in order to help the consumer make the food or take the medicine. Comparing the reading a comic book to the instructions for food or medicinal commodities is silly due to how different each respective item is, so Watase’s intention here is to be funny by making such an outlandish comparison. When translating the sentences, I tried to imitate the same instructions that could be found on these commodities, translating these sentences as “This product is best when used fresh,” and “after opening, please use this product as quickly as possible.”²³⁴ This phrasing and diction helped me to recreate the humor and writing style that Watase had originally written. Diction such as “best when fresh” and “product” are used in relation to objects such as food, being recommended by the instructions on a label to be used when fresh, and when sold in a business, are referred to as the “products” of that business. Using this diction and phrasing in English thus creates the similar effect Watase was creating, as I am comparing the manga and the act of reading it to using some kind of either food or medicinal product that needs to be used quickly. In addition to this comedy, prior to Chapter Five, Watase has two interludes where she talks about the manga, and how she was inspired to create it.

²³³ Watase, 2.

²³⁴ Watase, 1.

Compared to capturing the comedy of the instructions, I had to translate everything she was saying into the most vernacular way possible and make it sound like she was directly addressing her viewers. In one of these interludes, Watase talks about how her manga takes place in Edo, but backtracks on what she is saying, saying まあ、ニセシエ戸ですけど, written as *maa, nisheshi edô desu kedo* in rômaji, meaning that saying that the Edo she is writing is a “false Edo,” and includes the kanji 笑, *wara* in rômaji, at the end of her sentence, which means “laughter” or “laugh.”²³⁵ The written part of her statement about the falseness of the Edo world she made initially gives the impression that the way she writes is as if she were writing a letter, but the addition of the symbol for laughing indicates that she is writing this excerpt as if it were being dictated. This indicates that Watase is trying to speak directly to the audience, and her laugh resembles a form of chuckling that a person many say after saying something embarrassing about themselves. To capture this writing-as-speaking format, I translated Watase’s sentence as “...although, it’s more of a fake Edo...(Heh).”²³⁶ Translating Watase’s written text in this form allowed me to emulate the way she intended for her interlude to be read. Translating the phrase with Japanese conjunction of “maa” into “although” recreates the effect that Watase is speaking to the reader directly, as if she had just made a verbal claim and is retracting it. The addition of ellipses in my translation also helps to emphasize this writing-as-speaking style, creating the effect of a pause in speech that a person might have when considering the words that they want to say next or have already said. Translating her “笑” as the chuckle “heh” recreates the same effect. In the original text, the kanji indicated that she was shallowly laughing at the fictional nature of her Edo period setting, in much the same way a person would do if they said or did something embarrassing and was trying to make light of a situation. In both written and

²³⁵ Watase, 190.

²³⁶ Watase, 190.

spoken English, adding the word “heh” indicates much the same thing, so I choice to write out the onomatopoeia of the chuckle the word “heh” to create the effect of speech more. Through careful diction and phrasing choices and transcription of a human vocalization, I capture the tones and styles of the author’s original work.

Conclusion

The challenges that *Appare Jipangu!* posed were difficult, but I feel that the methods I used worked. Using the “o” at the beginning of terms such as Oyumi’s “otôtsan” accurately depicted the Edo dialect, and telegraphed a level of politeness that the people of Edo emphasized. This helped me to establish Watase’s characters as people of the Edo period. However, I only applied it to the places in the text where it felt natural and changed it into a more informal variant where it seemed to make sense, as I did with Hachirô due to his younger age in comparison to Oyumi. Using asterisks and cultural notes within the text was an effective method of naturalizing the text, as it allowed me to explain objects such as the “usankusai” joke without having to use awkward words or phrases to communicate them. The Romanization of certain suffixes and words and translating other ones, such as using rômaji for “hitodamas” and “daimyô” assisted in establishing the text as both Japanese and Edo period Japanese. Using rômaji for suffixes such as “sensei” while translating ones such as “dono” allowed me to cater to the audience’s knowledge of Japanese, while simultaneously catering to those not as knowledgeable. By shifting my manner of writing from an instructional text to a diction style, I was able to capture the essence of Watase’s words and intentions, comedic or explanatory, but also found a way to balance her original intention with my own written style, such as when I used “blind as a bat” to replace the

“myopic” meaning for “kinshi.” Writing words such as “old man” to match Yusura’s personality conveyed by the original Japanese achieves this same effect. The multi-faceted sound effects method assisted me in creating sounds that were accurate to the original Japanese, but also matched the actions of the characters, such as the sulking-hawk’s huffing. Using the manga’s inherent comedic nature to translate certain parts of the manga also helped me in creating a faithful translation, as the *It’s Always Sunny in Japan!* suits Watase’s anachronistic and parody-oriented story, while simultaneously conveying Watase’s narrative in the chapter titles, such as “Battle of the Bathhouse.” By using all of these methods, my translation of this manga is accurate to its time period, sounds and tone, accessible to a wide audience, carries a Japanese identity, and a firm balance of both faithful and personalized.

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