

Blood, Tears and Samurai Love

A Tragic Tale from Eighteenth-century Japan and its Digital Future

Dr Angelika Koch, Leiden University



Universiteit
Leiden

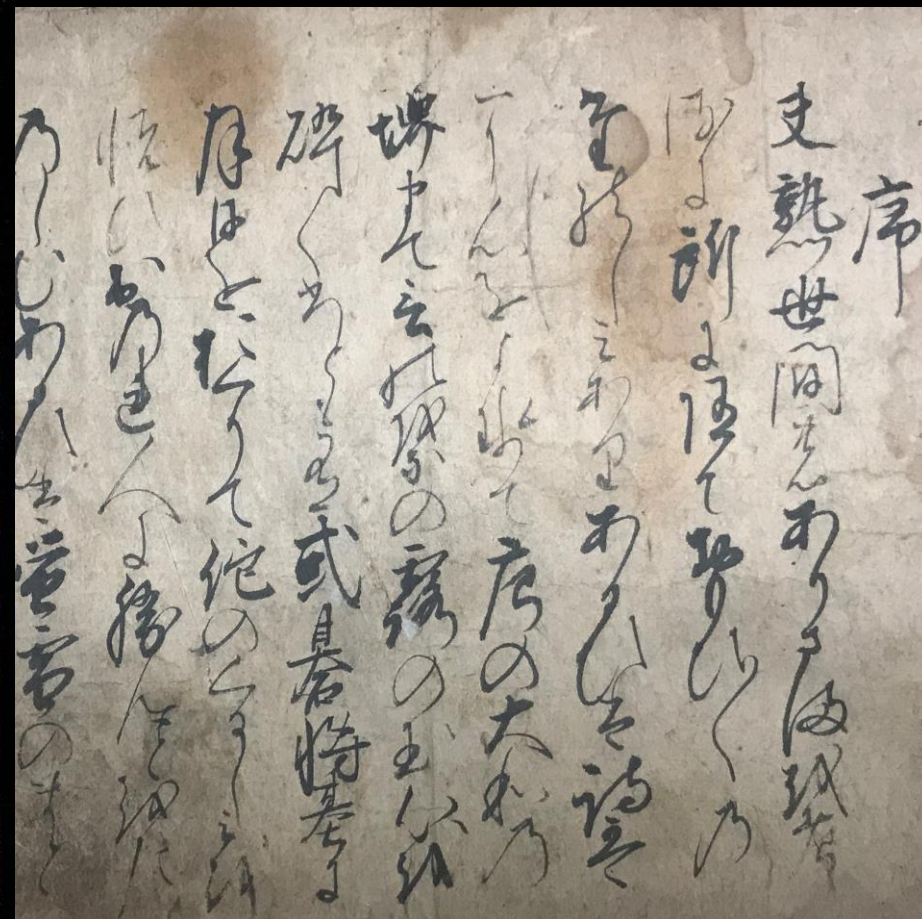


Yale University



The Manuscript

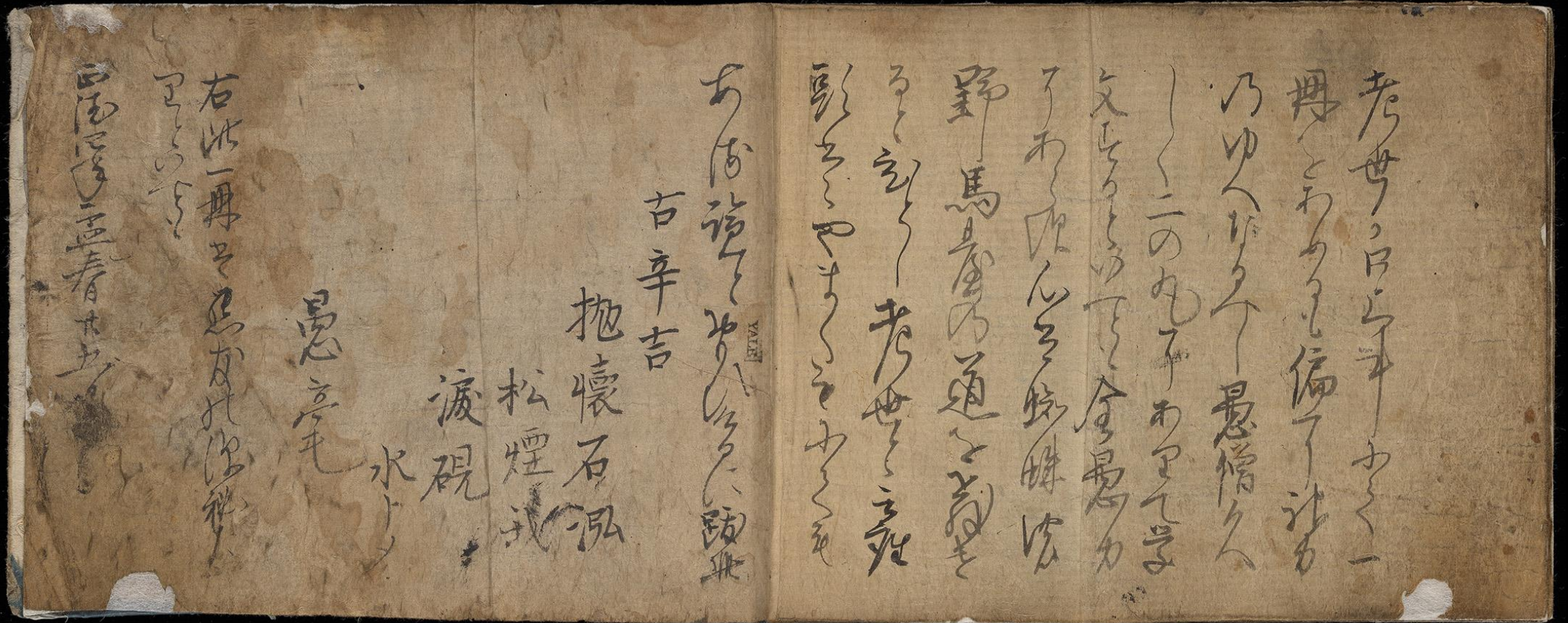
<https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/32457253>



[Shūdō tsuya monogatari], Shōtoku 4 [1714].

[衆道通夜物語], 正徳4 [1714]

Top-Secret Content?



考世の口から一少く一
母とわくも偏つて注も
乃ゆりりて一愚僧久
一の丸平の字
文はらふて全最力
了わん心と物味法
野馬身乃通と為る
るを刻く考世の言
歌をやくと少く

古辛吉
あ海流をゆかひの跡也

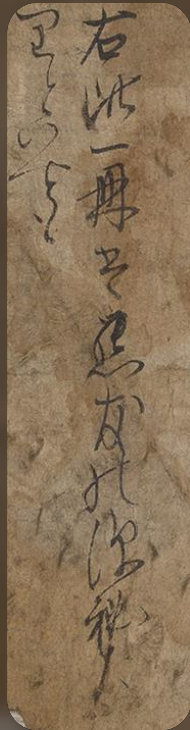
抛懐石
松煙
渡硯

水
愚亭

右此一冊を思ふに此は
可なり
正徳四年

Colophon: 正徳4 [1714] Shūdō tsuya monogatari, Shōtoku 4 [1714].
[衆道通夜物語], 正徳4 [1714]

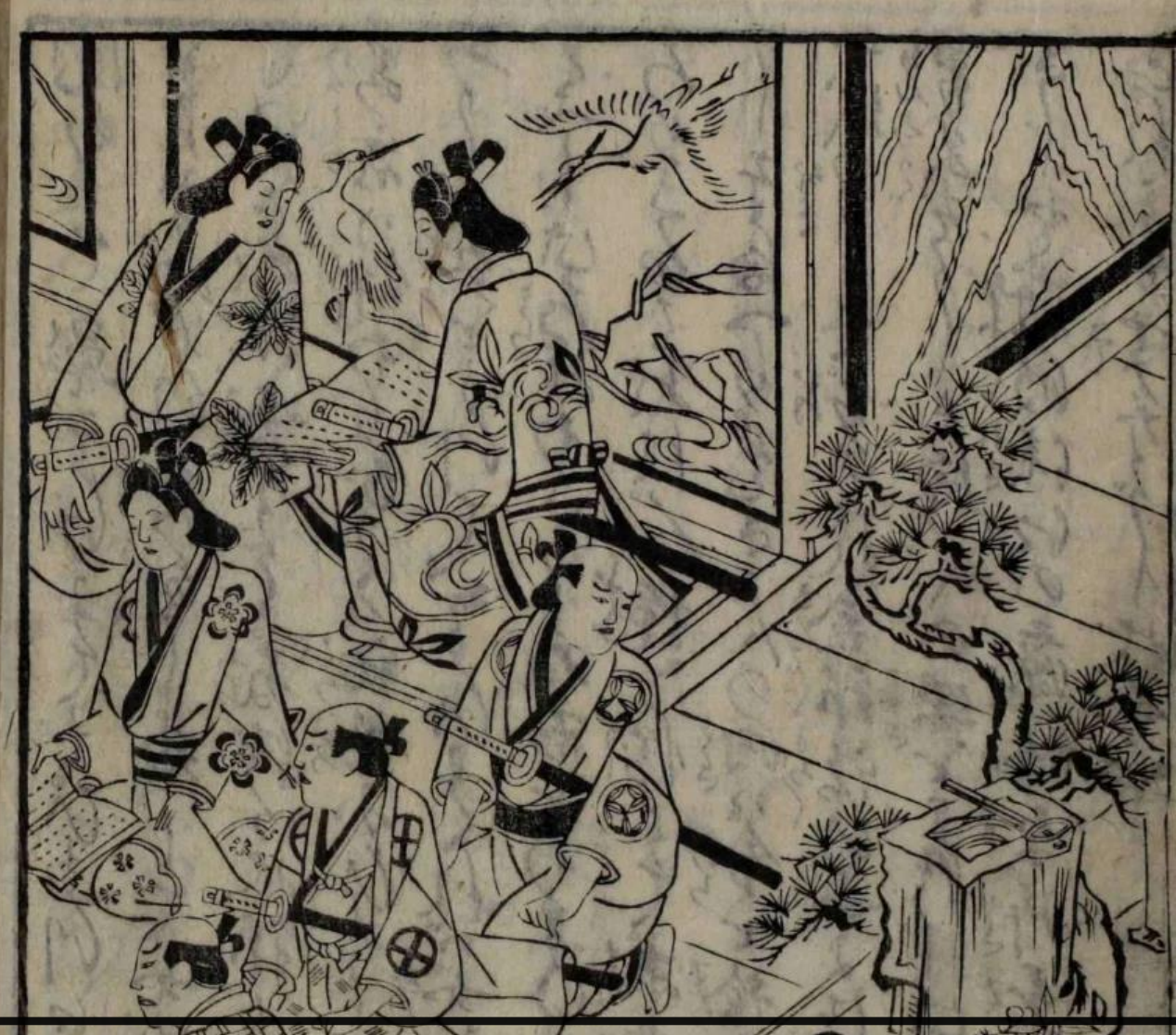
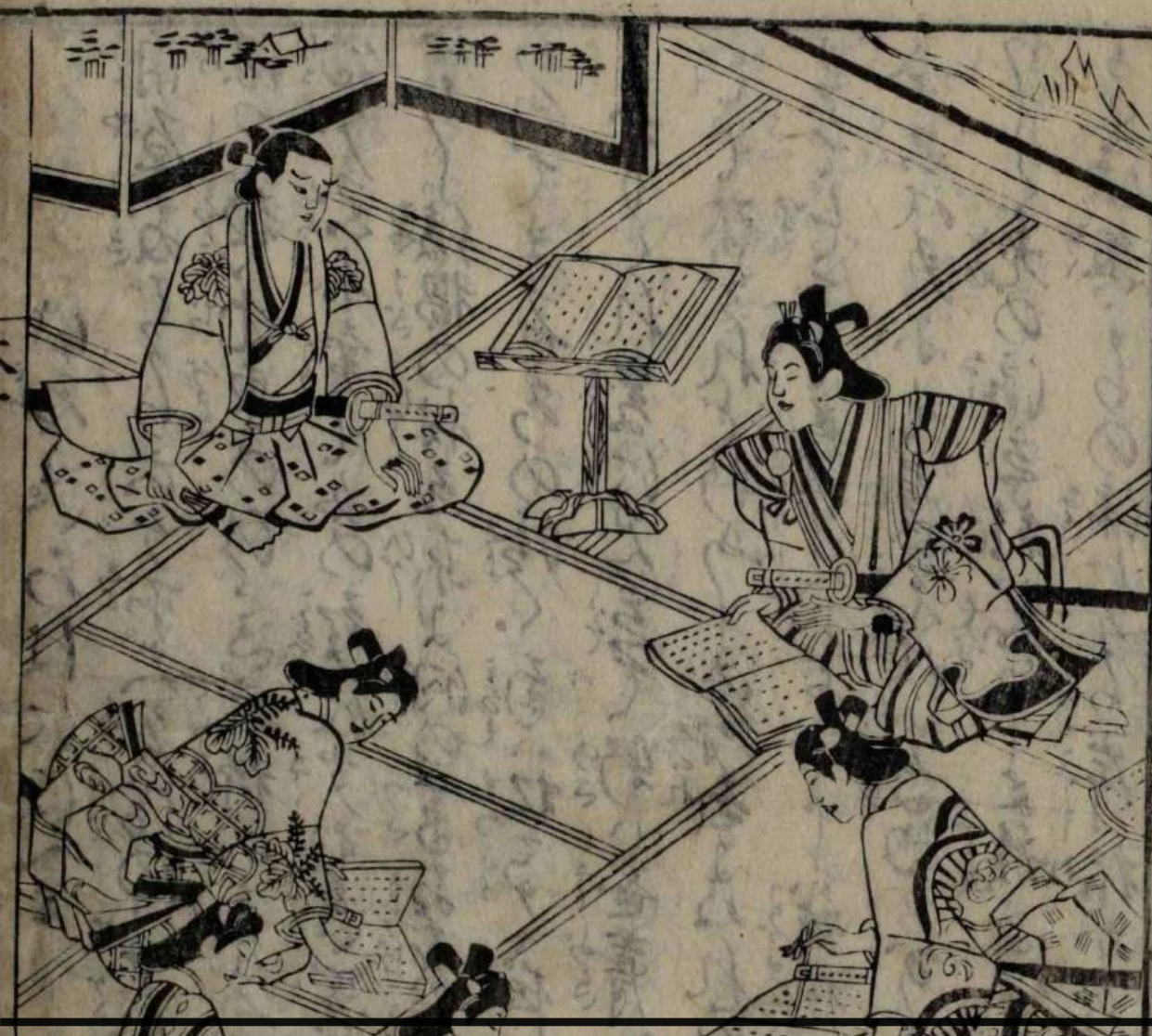
Top-Secret Content?



右此一冊
其意
如何
此
正徳
四年

Shūdō tsuya monogatari], Shōtoku 4 [1714].
[衆道通夜物語], 正徳4 [1714]

Colophon: 正徳4 [1714]



The Context: A lively culture of male love in fiction and theatre

Great Mirror of Male Love (Nanshoku ōkagami, 1687)



A MAN FELL
HEAD OVER HEELS
IN LOVE WITH HIM

The Story

- Takenomata Genta (age 14-16)



-
- Bodhisattva Jizō as omniscient narrator



- Genta's murder



The Timeline

1713/10/1

Genta's murder

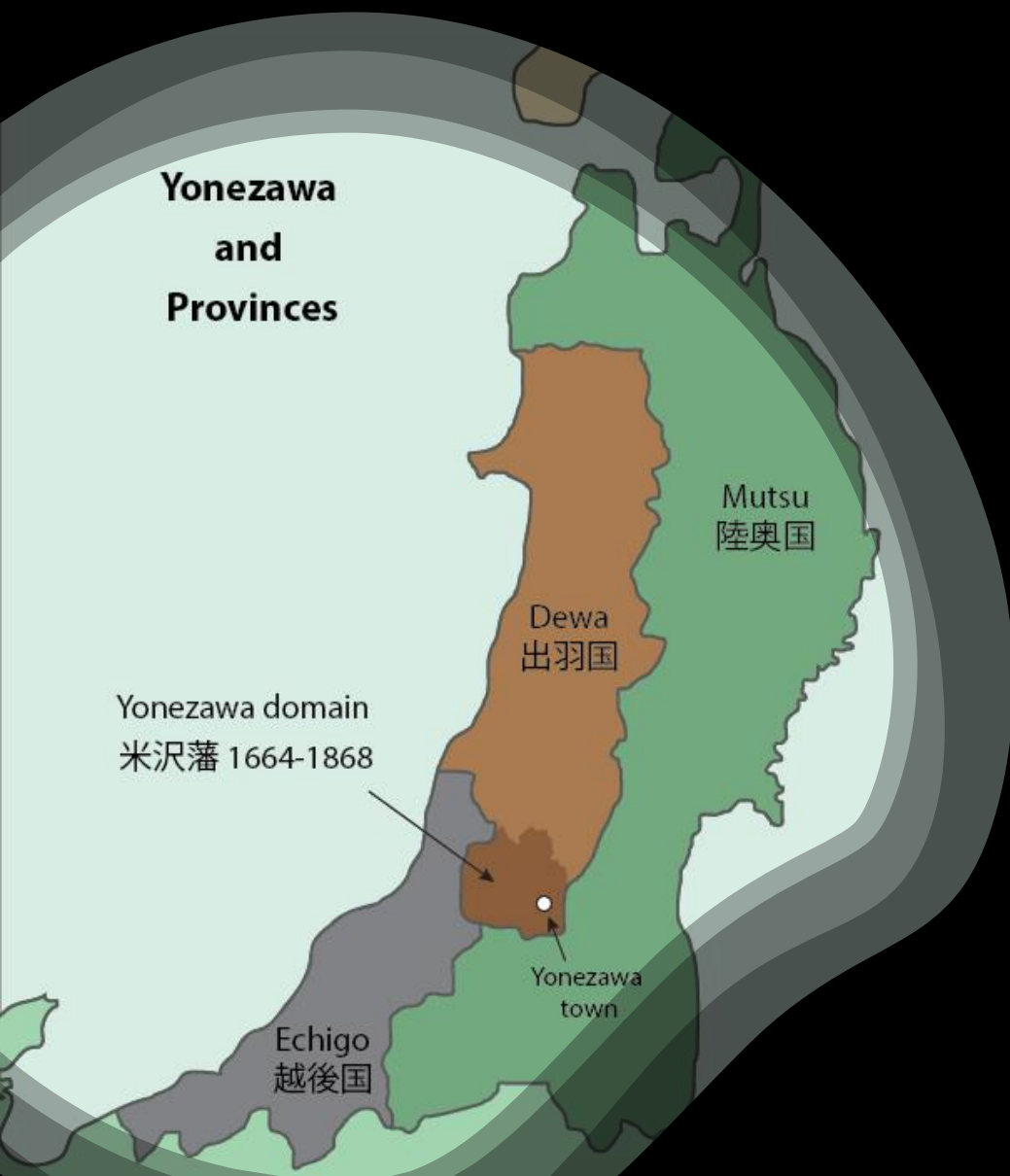
2-3
months

1714 spring

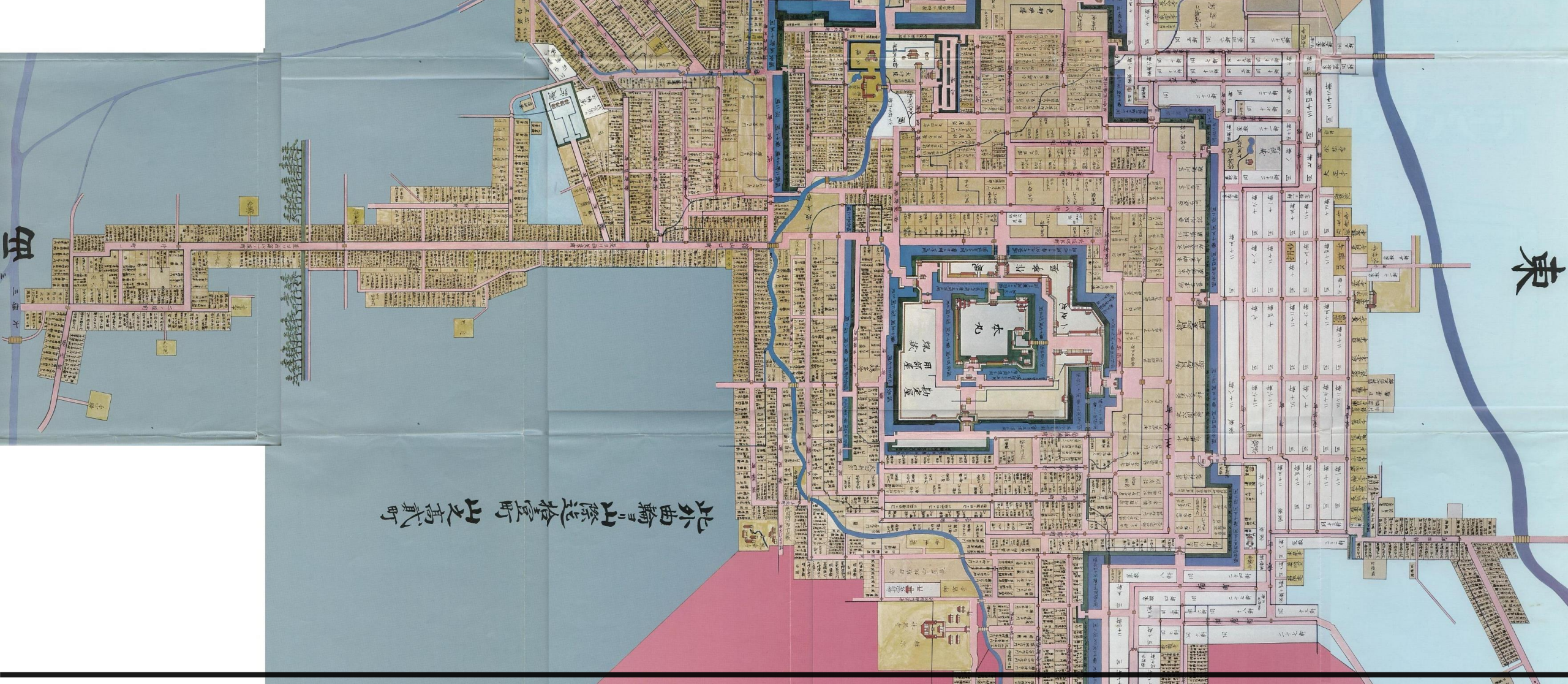
Manuscript colophon



The Setting

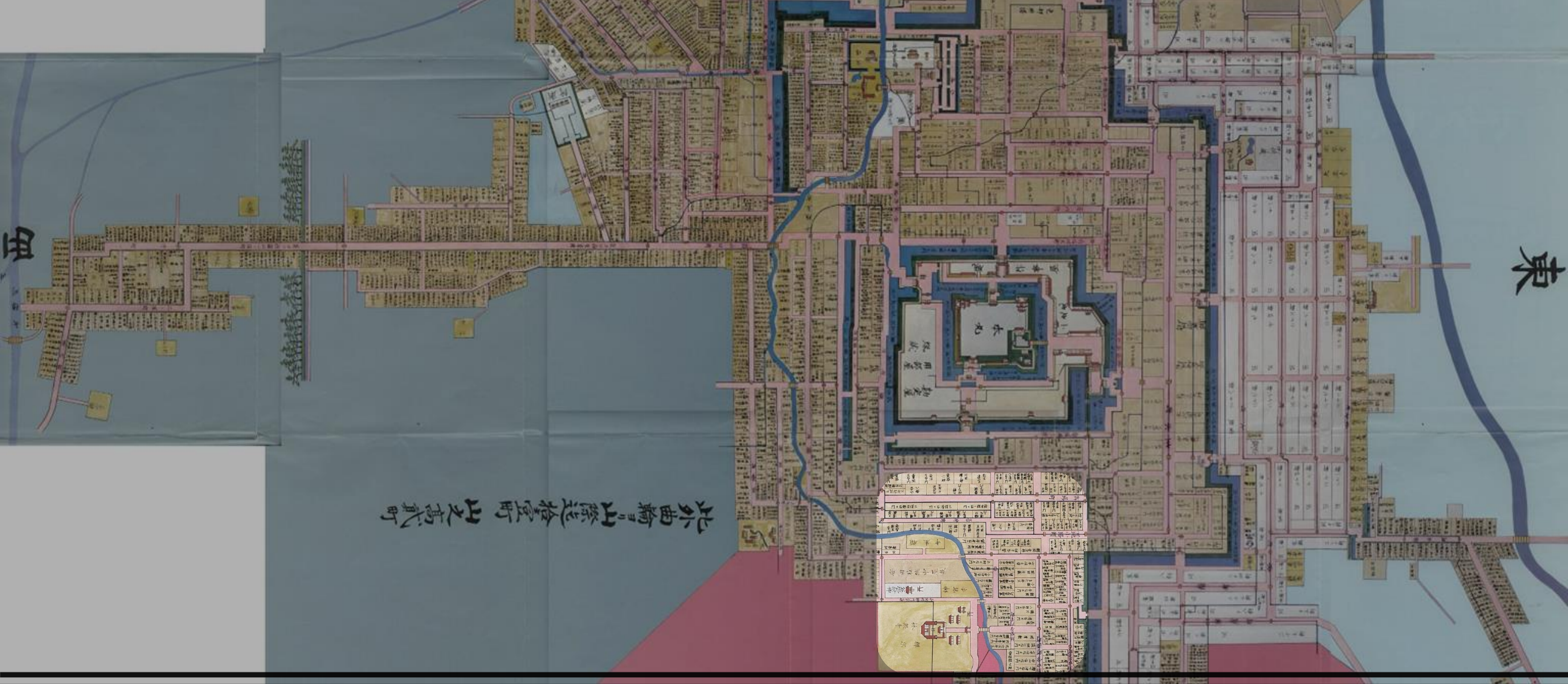


- Yonezawa domain in northern Japan (Uesugi clan)



此外由輪目山際迄拾壹町山之高貳町

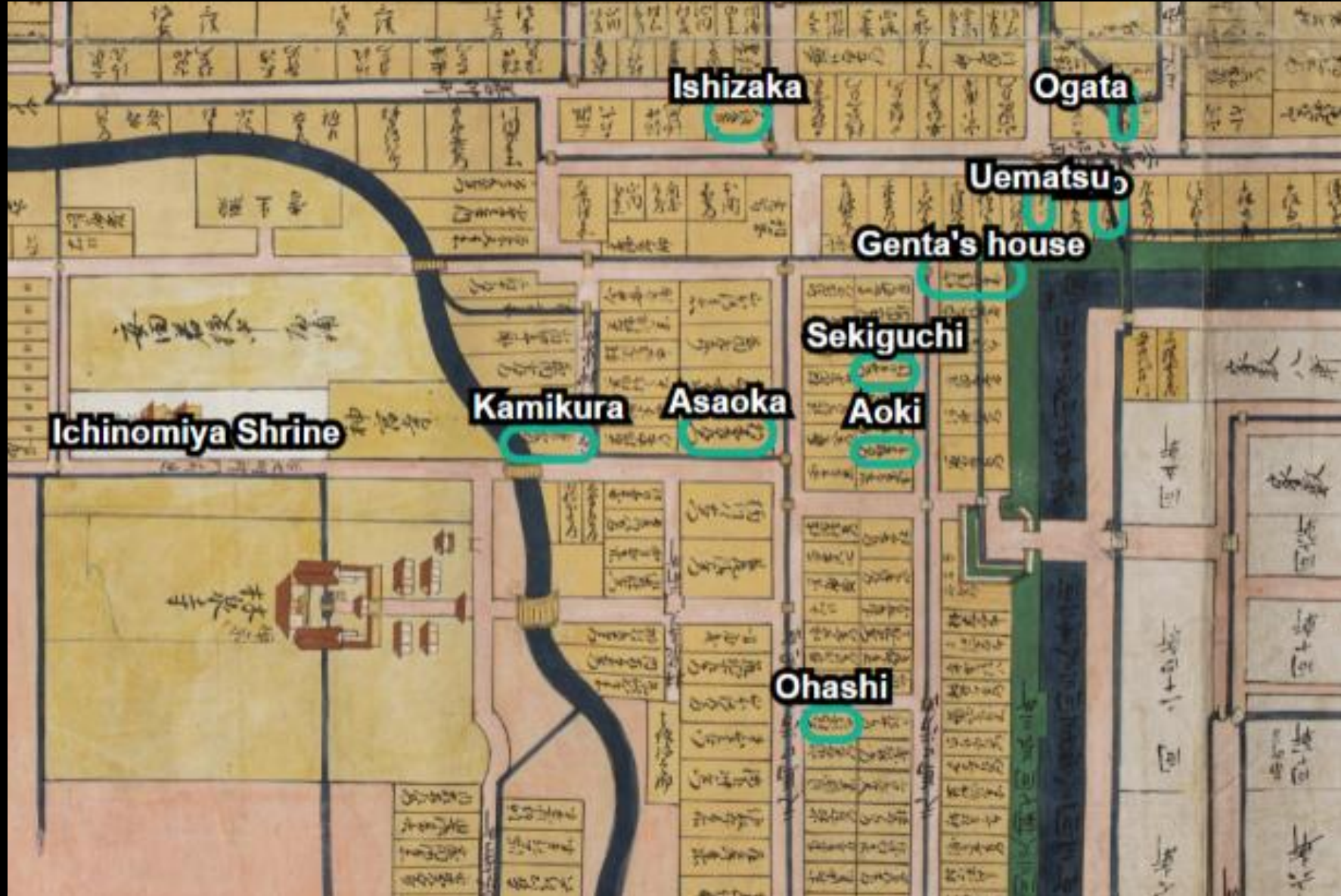
Yonezawa castle town



此外由輪山際迄捨置町山之高武町

Yonezawa castle town

- Mid-ranking samurai in service of Yonezawa domain (*uma-mawari* 馬廻り)



NAME ¹	DATES ²	RANK	STIPEND (<i>koku</i>)	POST(S)	SOURCE ³
Takenomata Genta 竹俣源太	?-1713 (1709-1713)	<i>uma-mawari</i>	100		UG 23, p. 413
Takenomata Ihei 竹俣伊兵衛 (猪兵衛)	?-1709 (1685-1709)	<i>uma-mawari</i>	100	Page (<i>koshō</i>) of Uesugi Yoshinori.	UG 23, p. 412
Ōhashi Toshimasa 大橋利昌 (<u>Hyōzaemon</u> 兵左衛門)	?-1721 (1661-1711)	<i>uma-mawari</i>	200 > 100 > 250	Appointed page (<i>koshō</i>) of Uesugi Tsunakatsu in 1659. Climbed ranks through various offices and became Oguni castle keeper (<u><i>yakuya no shō</i></u>) in 1671.	UG 23, pp. 294-295
Ōhashi Uzaemon 大橋宇左衛門	?-1719 (1695-1719)	<i>uma-mawari</i>	25		UG 23, p. 295
Takenomata Gentazaemon 竹俣源太左衛門	?-1720 (1718-1720)	<i>uma-mawari</i>	50		UG 23, p. 412
Shingai Heikichi 新貝兵吉 (兵橘)	(1706-1733)	<i>uma-mawari</i>	5		UG 24, p. 368
Kurata Kyūemon 蔵田久右衛門	?-1748 (1708-1748)	<i>uma-mawari</i>	25		UG 24, p. 54
Aoki Tōzaemon 青木藤左衛門	?-1761 (1704-1761)	<i>gojūki</i>	5		UG 24, p. 236
Ogata Koshichirō 尾形小七郎	?-1760 (1722-1760)	<i>uma-mawari</i>	25		UG 23, p. 306
Ishizaka Kansuke 石坂勘介 (<u>Zenzaemon</u> 善左衛門)	(1740-1748)	<i>uma-mawari</i>	70	Appointed private secretary (<i>yūhitsu</i>) in 1729 and to an office in the Middle Interior (<i>nakanoma</i>) in 1748.	UG 23, p. 182
Sekiguchi Daiemon 関口大右衛門	(1726-1753)	<i>uma-mawari</i>	5 > 25 > 200	Served as a page (<i>koshō</i>) to Uesugi Noritaka from 1707 to 1708. In 1719,	UG 24, p. 451

Source:
御家中諸士略系譜
(Uesugi monjo)

Why was the truth a problem?

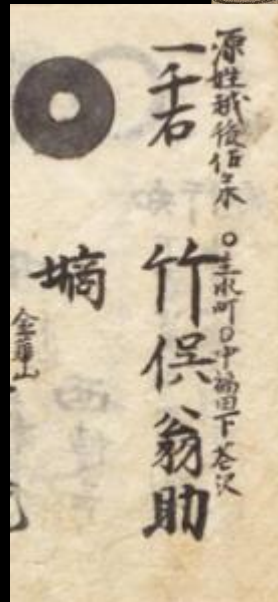
- Censorship of accounts of real-life warriors and newsworthy events



The Yale Manuscript's Illicit Truths

- ✓ Real-life warriors
- ✓ Details of their lineages
- ✓ Negative evaluation
- ✓ Suggestive scenes

Crest (*kamon* 家紋)





Underground Manuscripts

- Manuscripts outside system of censorship

'True-Record' Books 実録本

- Illegal, hand-written texts
- Based around true events and scandals
- Semi-fictionalized
- Circulated by lending libraries (kashihon'ya 貸本屋)



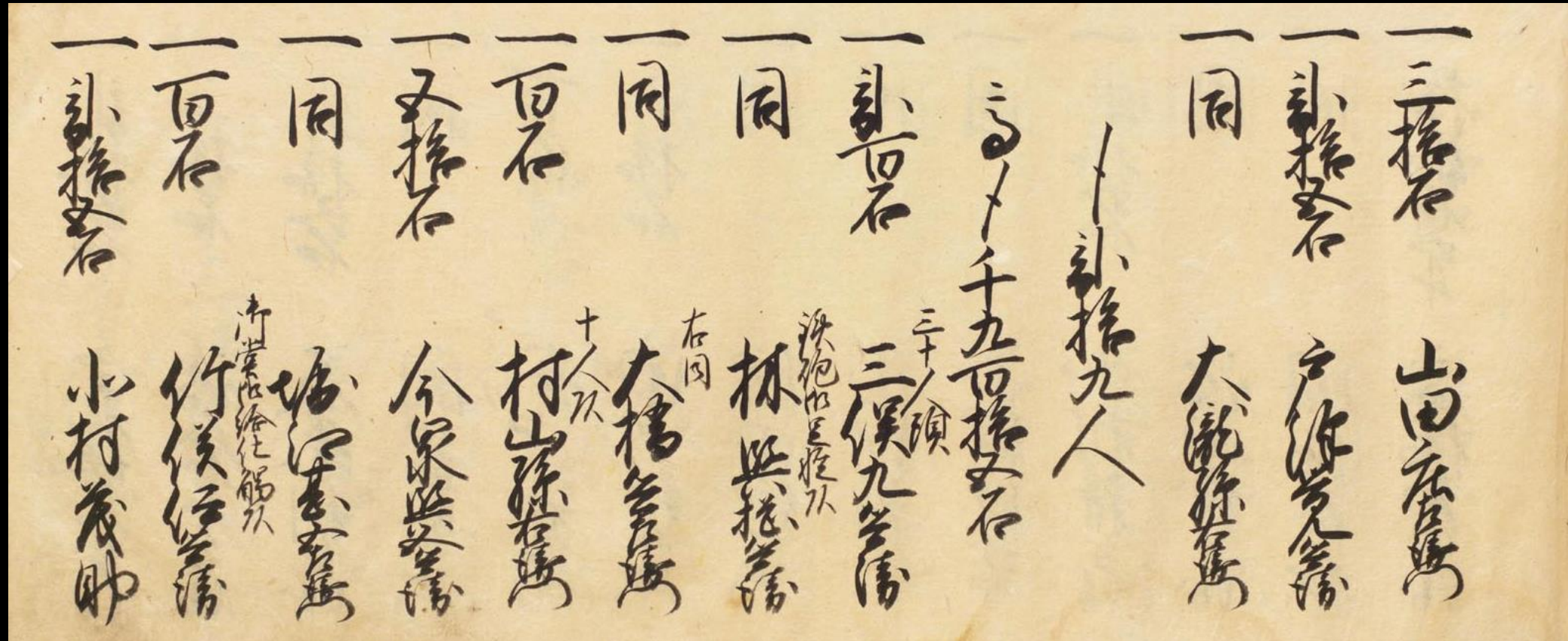
The Yale Manuscript as 'True-Record Book'

- ✓ Scandalous event
- ✓ Anonymous author
- ✓ No signs of circulation via lending library
- ✓ Unclear provenance
- ✓ Unique copy?



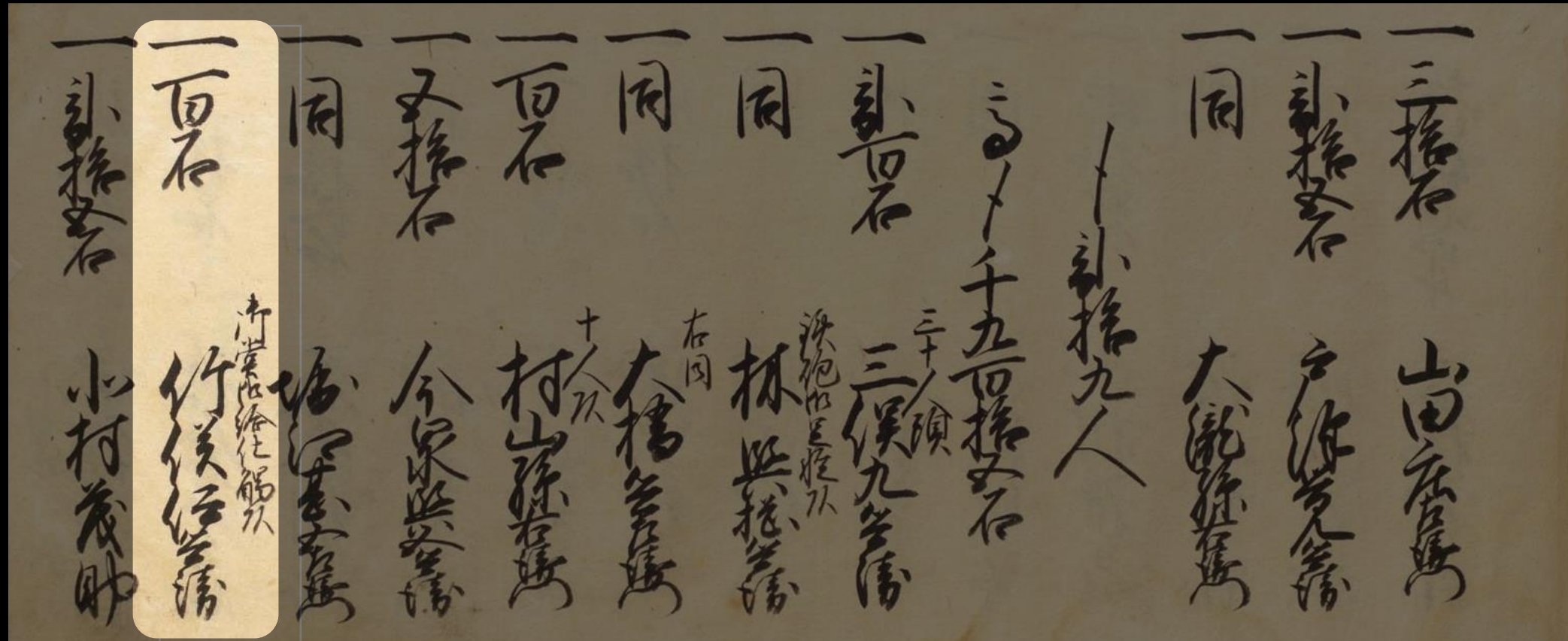
In Search of the Truth: A Fact-Check

- Protagonist Takenomata Genta and others appear in domain records



In Search of the Truth: A Fact-Check

- Protagonist Takenomata Genta and others appear in domain records



Takenomata Ihei's name in roster of retainers from 1690
(*Bungenchō Genroku san-nen* 分限帳 元禄3年)

- Fact of Genta's murder appears in domain records

Yonezawa shunjū 米沢春秋:

正徳三年十月朔日南谷地小路山田氏宅東小路二て竹俣源太永井清左衛門私鬪十一月四日清左衛門斬首

'On the first day of the tenth month of Shōtoku 3 (1713), Takenomata Genta and Nagai Seizaemon engaged in a private fight in Minami-yachi koji next to Yamada's residence. On the fourth day of the eleventh month, Seizaemon was beheaded.'

Uesugi Chronicles:

永井清左衛門正徳三年十一月四日竹俣源太切殺二付討首苗字断切

'On the fourth day of the 11th month of Shōtoku 3 (1713), Nagai Seizaemon was beheaded and his family name discontinued for the murder of Takenomata Genta.'

Yale Manuscript: A Hierarchy of Truths

翌朔日早朝に御堂へ
出勤して帰る時、永
井清左衛門思ひ切南
谷地小路山田兵右衛
門と云人の脇にて源
太を後より切殺し其
身ものどをおしつき
たりし無さん成哉。

'Early in the morning on the next day, as Genta was on his way back from his shift at the castle, Nagai Seizaemon cut him down from behind in Minamiyachi-koji next to Yamada Hyoemon's house [...]

内膳早朝に御堂へ
出勤して帰る時、永
井清左衛門思ひ切南
谷地小路山田兵右衛
門と云人の脇にて源
太を後より切殺し其
身ものどをおしつき
たりし無さん成哉。

翌朔日早朝に御堂へ
出勤して帰る時、永
井清左衛門思ひ切南
谷地小路山田兵右衛
門と云人の脇にて源
太を後より切殺し其
身ものどをおしつき
たりし無さん成哉。

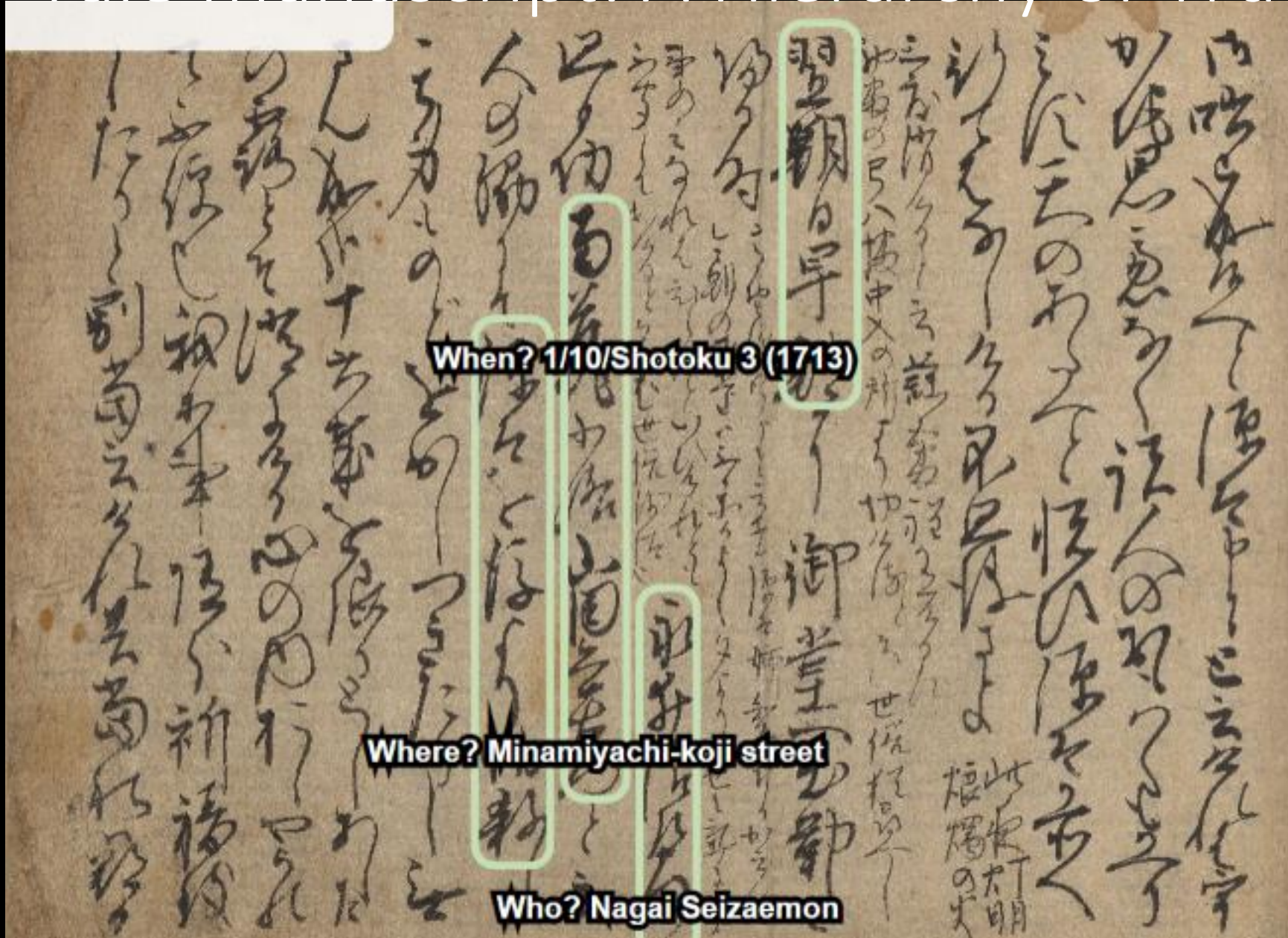
御堂の早朝に御堂へ
出勤して帰る時、永
井清左衛門思ひ切南
谷地小路山田兵右衛
門と云人の脇にて源
太を後より切殺し其
身ものどをおしつき
たりし無さん成哉。

御堂の早朝に御堂へ
出勤して帰る時、永
井清左衛門思ひ切南
谷地小路山田兵右衛
門と云人の脇にて源
太を後より切殺し其
身ものどをおしつき
たりし無さん成哉。

御堂の早朝に御堂へ
出勤して帰る時、永
井清左衛門思ひ切南
谷地小路山田兵右衛
門と云人の脇にて源
太を後より切殺し其
身ものどをおしつき
たりし無さん成哉。

御堂の早朝に御堂へ
出勤して帰る時、永
井清左衛門思ひ切南
谷地小路山田兵右衛
門と云人の脇にて源
太を後より切殺し其
身ものどをおしつき
たりし無さん成哉。

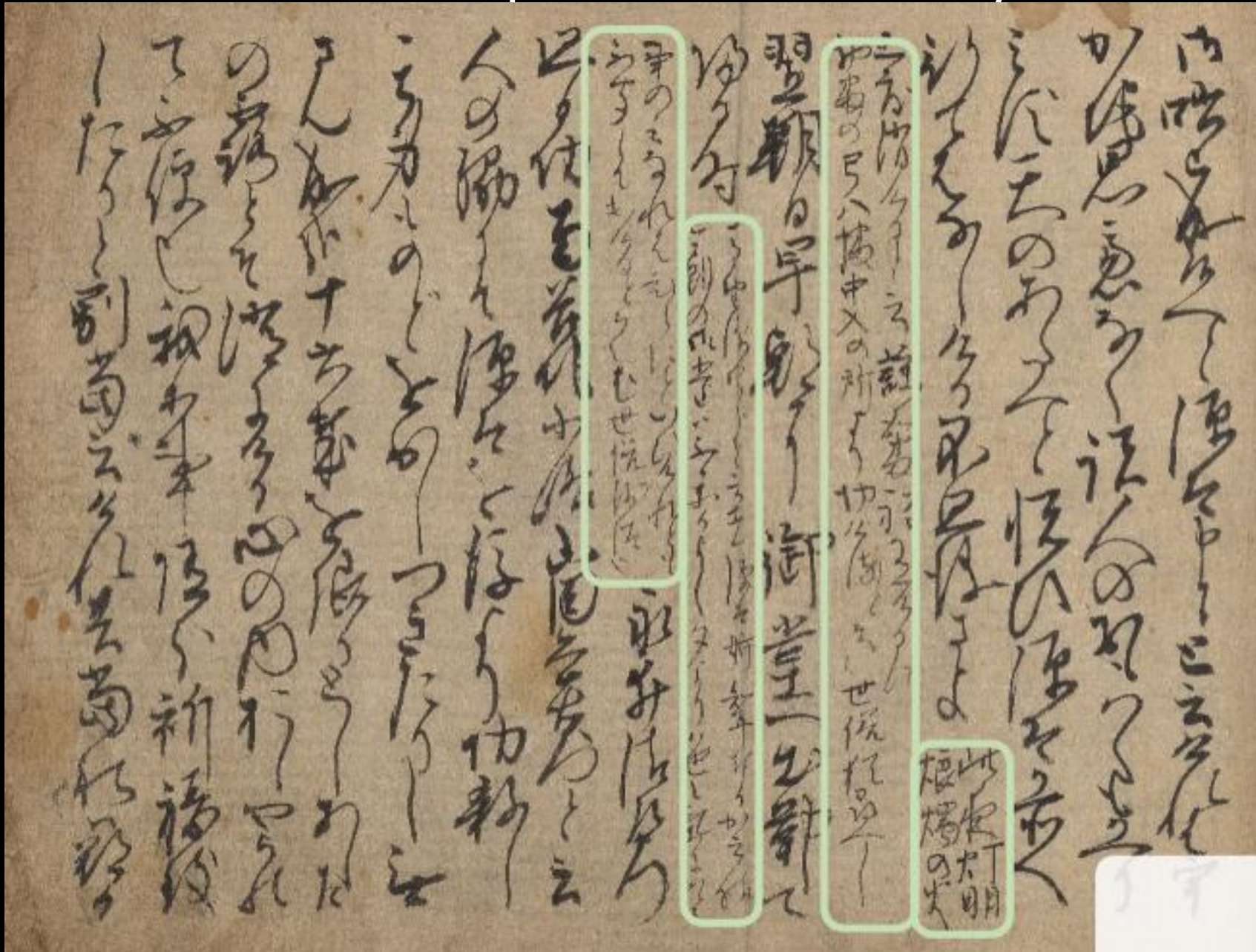
Yale Manuscript: A Hierarchy of Truths



翌朔日早朝に御堂へ
出勤して帰る時、永
井清左衛門思ひ切南
谷地小路山田兵右衛
門と云人の脇にて源
太を後より切殺し其
身ものどをおしつき
たりし無さん成哉。

‘Early in the morning on the next day, as Genta was on his way back from his shift at the castle, Nagai Seizaemon cut him down from behind in Minamiyachi-koji next to Yamada Hyoemon’s house [...].’

Yale Manuscript: A Hierarchy of Truths



此夜灯明燭の火三度消ける
と云 謡五番程有けるに初番の
『弓八幡』 中入の所より切け
ると云々。 世俗猶尋べし。

'Allegedly, all candles
went out three times!
etc.'

The Manuscript's Digital Future:

- Hosted on Japan Past & Present (JPP)
- Visual essays
- Interactive historical map
- Pedagogical resources (reading lists, lesson plans)
- **Scholarly digital edition:**
 - Original
 - Modern Japanese Translation
 - English translation
 - Annotations
 - Sources and references

Annotations (Multi-media)

- Links to relevant Images, Videos, Maps, Books from digitized collections (National Diet Library, National Institute of Japanese Literature etc.)
- Aimed at general, informed reader, students...

Transcription

Translations into Modern Japanese and English

Image of original manuscript

• Multimediality & Hypertextuality

[2] Two strategic, two-player board games.



Kubo Shunman "Go Game" (19th c)



[4] This allusion harks back to the story of the impoverished Jin dynasty scholar Che Yin, who became a paragon of diligent study in the face of hardship. Unable to afford oil for a lamp, Che Yin would study at night by the glow of fireflies he had caught, or by the moon's reflection on the snow. In Japanese culture, this poetic trope is most familiar today from the song *Hotaru no hikari* (Glow of the Firefly, 1881), which details the endurance of industrious students. Set to the traditional Scottish tune of *Auld Lang Syne*, it is still commonly sung at school graduation ceremonies and at the end of the popular New Year's Eve TV show NHK *Kōhaku uta gassen*.



Song 'Hotaru no hikari'



Sheet music and lyrics from a song book for Japanese elementary schools (1880s, National Diet Library)

(AKL)

[7] This quote comes from *The Long-Life Jizō Sutra* (*Enmei jizō kyō*), an apocryphal sutra compiled in Japan. The passage in question appears to be slightly misquoted here; in other editions the text reads 今世後世.



Late-Edo illustrated vernacular version of the sutra (延命地藏経和訓図会, 1854) (Sakata City Library)



Kundoku version (Meiji 44) NDL Kundoku version (Meiji 44) (NDL)



THANK YOU FOR
YOUR
ATTENTION!