



# Firsts London

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**Contact**

Dr. Titus Boder

titus@maggs.com

Euphemia Franklin

euphemia@maggs.com

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## The Red Light Districts of Japan

10 items relating to the history of red light districts and brothels in Japan; from guidebooks of Yoshiwara from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, to photography of geisha and pamphlets published by critical Westerners.





## Skilled entertainers in 18<sup>th</sup> century Yoshiwara

- GOKYO-AN**  
**Shinpan Sancha daihyoban: Yoshiwara shusse kagami** [A new publication of esteemed sancha: How to succeed in Yoshiwara].

First edition. One double-page woodblock illustration and numerous vignettes throughout. 160 by 110mm. Fukuro-toji binding, original subtly patterned brown paper wrappers with mss title slip pasted to upper, chipping and wear to wrappers, marginal worming but not affecting text, overall a good copy. Edo, Maruya Shobei, Horeki 4 [i.e. 1754].

£5,500

¶ A fascinating insight into Yoshiwara of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. The present book falls under the general category of *hyoban-ki*, or 'reputation books', which essentially reviewed the various brothels and the women who worked there.

The word 'sancha' in the title refers to a high rank of *joro* (prostitute) called *sancha-joro*, which comes after *taiyu-joro* and *koshi-joro*, but ranks above a class known as *umecha-joro*. These terms all reference types and processes of making tea. *Sancha*, from which the term is borrowed, is a type of ground, powdered tea like matcha. Before the advent of powdered teas, tea was made by placing the leaves in a cloth bag that was placed in hot water and shaken around. *Sancha*, however, could be brewed by simply mixing the powder with water. The ease with which *sancha* was brewed



came to mean that no shaking of tea leaves = no refusal of customers. While *sancha* were a high class of *yujo*, they were not especially selective of customers. This is very likely the reason why the *sancha* class of *joro* are the central focus of the present book, as it implied a certain level of access and possibility. It is also worth noting that the use of this terminology in the book is very particular to the period, as these terms later went out of fashion.

The present book lists the names of *sancha-joro* and the tea houses (*chaya* – brothels) with which they were affiliated. Crucially, it details the skills of the individual women. While *joro* are most typically associated with sex work, they were broadly entertainers. At the highest levels, certain skills and talents expected of these women, whether that be the ability

to play instruments, sing, perform the tea ceremony or recite poetry. This book provides detailed information on the women and their talents, so that visitors to the tea houses would not know what to expect and could request to see a specific *sancha-joro* based on what they had read.

This book also sheds light on publishing and book distribution relating to the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters. It was published before the famous Tsutaya Juzaburo set up his bookshop and started producing numerous popular guides to Yoshiwara. While it was published by Maruya Shobei in the Nihonbashi area, it was distributed by a bookshop that was inside Yoshiwara, called Honya Yashichi.

Rare. No copies in institutions outside of Japan.



# The sensuality of spring-time in Yoshiwara

## 2. YAMAMOTO (Kyuzaemon). Yanagi sakura [Willow Cherry Blossom]

First edition. Yokohon measuring 103 by 162mm. Fukuro-toji binding, original brown paper wrappers, chipping and wear to binding, worming affecting read cover and ink stain on final few pages, text still legible, in later chitsu folding case, a good copy. [2], 29ff. Edo, Yamamoto Kyuzaemon, Horeki 4 [i.e. 1754].

£3,200

¶ An excellent overview of Yoshiwara in 1754, with a preface by someone named Yoshinobu who explains that on a clear spring day, watching the women (*joro-tachi*, i.e. prostitutes) walking by, they exude a certain sensuality as though they are a mix of willow and cherry blossom, which is the reason for the title of this book.

After the preface is a map of Yoshiwara, followed by a directory of brothels on each of the main streets. It also lists the names of some of the women who worked at each of the brothels, as well as a small vignette of the crest as it would appear on the noren door hanging.

Extremely rare. No copies in OCLC.

There seem to be only two copies in Japanese institutions: one at the Edo Tokyo Museum, the other at Osaka University. **Our copy contains four extra pages of advertisements after the colophon**, which do not appear in the digitised copies in the Kokusho database.





# Brothels in the ancient capital of Kyoto

**3. UNKNOWN JAPANESE ARTIST.**  
**[Scenes at Shimabara].**

Watercolour on silk. Horizontal scroll measuring ca. 355 by 5000mm. Rich brocade mounting on the outside (minor wear), gold leaf paper embossed with flower design inside. Overall in very good condition. Kyoto, ca. 1800.

**£3,800**

¶ A glimpse into Kyoto’s Shimabara district in the Edo period.

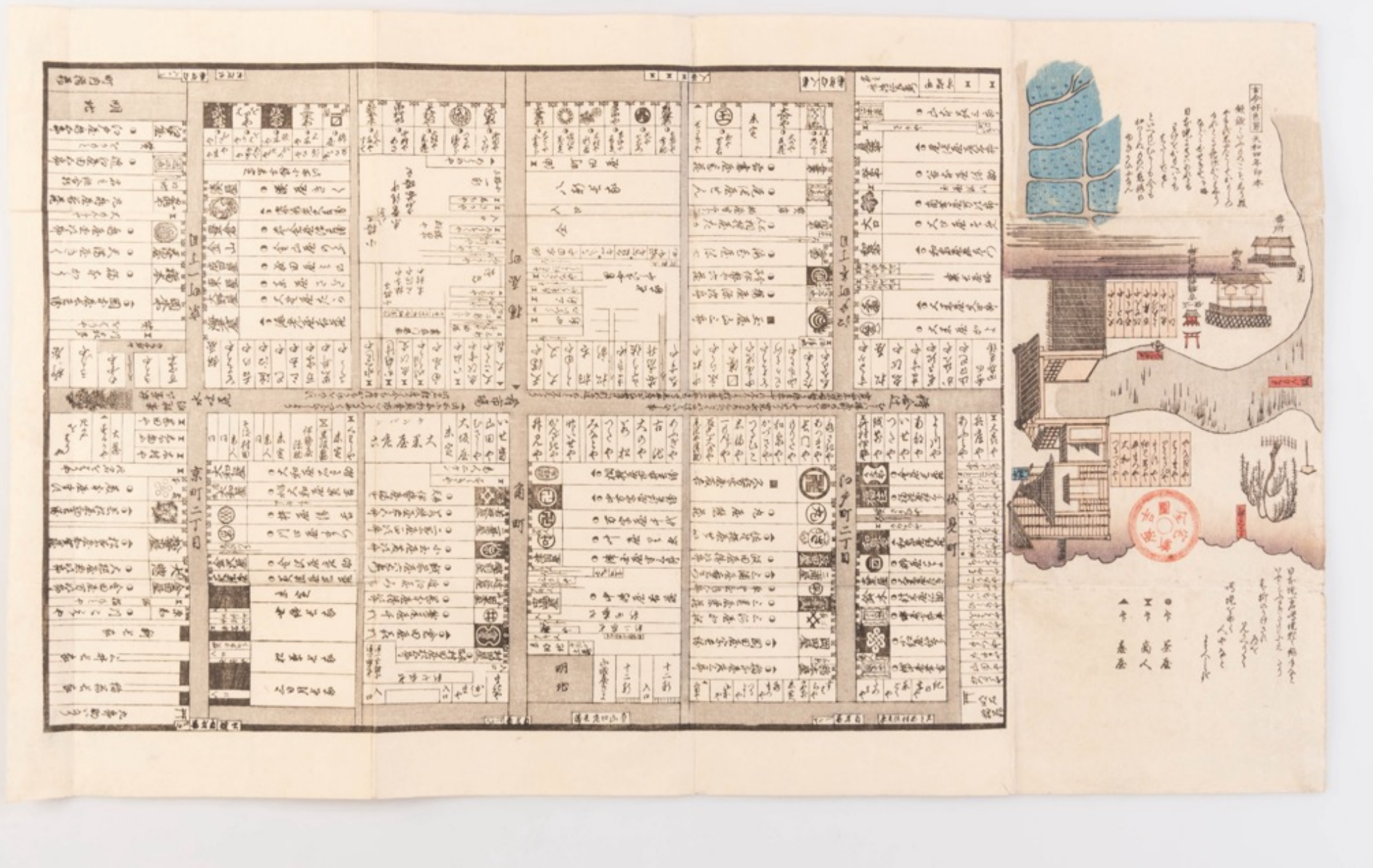
The present scroll appears to show scenes of the Shimabara, the main brothel area in Kyoto. It portrays the rituals and customs of the courtesans both inside and outside the house, from washing to putting on make-up, entertaining guests, playing the shamisen etc. The attribution to the Kyoto school is chiefly due to the decoration of the kimonos as well as the gentle style of painting. Scenes from the Yoshiwara in Edo tend to be painted in a more vivid/gaudy Ukiyo-e style.

Interestingly, people are not drawn to scale, which means that the important characters are larger than their young attendants (*kamuro*) or passers-by. This makes for a pleasing shift in perspectives when viewing the scroll. We have not been able to identify the crest on the curtain (*noren*) in front of one of the geisha houses. It appears to resemble the Tachibana mon (Orange crest).

This is a charming scroll which offers much research value into the customs of Kyoto’s *chaya* (‘tea houses’ i.e. brothels).







## A well-known illustrated map of Yoshiwara

4. [UNKNOWN PUBLISHER].  
**Yoshiwara shintaku zenzu** [Complete map of the Yoshiwara New Residence].

One large folding woodblock printed map, measuring 315 by 538mm. Small paper repairs around margin and wear around folds, overall in very good condition. Edo, publisher unknown, n.d. [but Koka 4, i.e. 1847].

£2,500

¶ An excellent colour woodblock map of Yoshiwara, illustrating the entrance to the district, alongside the names and *e-mon* (crests) of notable *chaya* (brothels).

This is a highly informative map which lays out the gridded street system of Yoshiwara, and a bit about its history. To the top right corner there is an extract from a book published in 1684, *Kokonkoshoku-otoko* (loosely, 'Lustful Men of the Past and Present') by Sugimua Haranobu (dates unknown). Down the central avenue, known as Nakanochō, there is some explanatory text about how it was different in the Kan'ei era (1624-1643). It is worth noting here that the present map shows Shin-Yoshiwara –

'New Yoshiwara'. Before a devastating fire in 1567, the district was located in the Nihonbashi area, after which it moved closer to Asakusa.

In the illustrated colour section of the map there is a willow tree leading up to the Omon gate (in fact the only way one could enter or leave Yoshiwara). This is a famous tree, labelled in the map as the *mikaeri-yanagi*, or the 'Backward Glance Willow', and it appears in many ukiyo-e prints of Yoshiwara. The willow served as a landmark for those approaching Yoshiwara, knowing that when they saw the tree they were not far away. It was called 'backward glance' because it was usually the spot where a man leaving Yoshiwara would

turn back to wave goodbye to a particular geisha or brothel-worker they were fond of. The date is not printed on the map, but according to the Taito City Central Library catalogue (item 2014\_u\_012), the names of the brothels and layout of the district indicate that it shows Yoshiwara in 1847. This map is reproduced in the revised edition of de Becker's famous book, *The Nightless City*, but the caption states 'Map of the Yoshiwara in 1846'. Owing to more recent research, it is likely that de Becker's date is incorrect.

One copy in the Edo-Tokyo Museum (collection ID – 17200612). There do not seem to be any copies of this map in OCLC.





## A guide to Yoshiwara published by a prominent brothel owner

5. **TAMAYA** (Yamasaburo). **RYOKATEI** (Tanekazu), preface. **Yoshiwara saiken** [Detailed Guide to Yoshiwara].

Possibly second Tamaya edition. Map of the entrance to Yoshiwara and numerous e-mon vignettes throughout. 185 by 127mm. Fukuro-toji binding, original blue paper wrappers, some wear to wrappers and title slip missing, internally bright, a very good copy. [1], 39ff. Edo, Tamaya Yamasaburo, Kaei 4 [i.e. 1851].

£550

¶ An illustrated guide to the Yoshiwara red light district published by Tamaya Yamasaburo (dates unknown), proprietor of the famous brothel Kaen Tamaya which was located in the Edo-machi1-chome. At the peak of his notoriety, Tamaya was sonashi Yoshiwara – this was a title given to the local leader (effectively a mayor), who was responsible for the governance of Yoshiwara and its businesses.

Detailed guides called Yoshiwara Saiken were published in many varied editions. Before Tamaya, it was Tsutaya Juzaburo (1750-1797) who dominated the publishing of guidebooks in Yoshiwara. As a bustling entertainment district, there was constant demand for the latest information for visitors. From around 1844-8 (Koka period), Tamaya published a number of popular guides to Yoshiwara, of



which the present book is one such example.

The preface to this book was written by Ryokatei Tanegazu (1807-1858), a comic writer and poet. Alongside publishing amusing multi-volume stories such as *Jiraiya Goketsu Monogatari*, he collaborated with leading ukiyo-e artists of the day to supply text for their prints. Following this brief text, the book contains a street-by-street map of Yoshiwara, its brothels and notable geisha.

Rare. No copies of this edition in OCLC, but there is one copy listed at Waseda.



# Original albumen prints of geisha by Ogawa

6. **OGAWA** (Kazumasa).  
**Tokyo Geigi chu hyaku bijin** [100 Beautiful Women amongst Geishas].

2vols. 95 original albumen prints, each with manuscript captions in Japanese. Oblong folio. Original cloth binding, minor wear and dust-soiling. Scattered foxing (largely confined to tissue guards), each volume with a red manuscript label entitled: "please handle with care" pasted inside the upper cover. Tokyo, Ogawa Isshin, 1895.

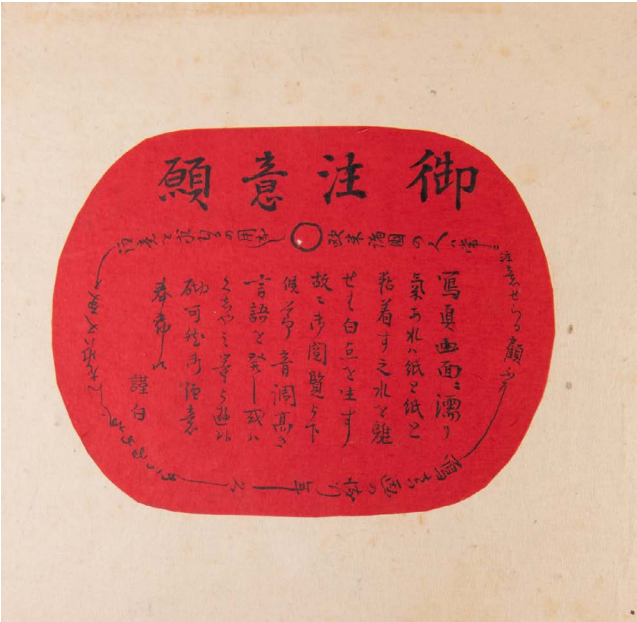
£18,500

¶ It is extremely rare to find original albumen prints by Ogawa, especially presented in such albums.

The present set consists of Ogawa's portraits of beautiful women, including geisha. Ogawa Isshin (1860-1929) was an early pioneer of photography and photographic printing in Meiji Japan. He set up and printing and publishing house, Ogawa Shahn Seihan-jo, disseminating popular books of studio photography and was one of the founding members of Nihon Shashin-kai (Japan Photographic Society).

Vol. 1 has the following English ms. note: "Hundred beauties (singing girls) in Tokyo exhibited at Ryouunkaku in Asakusa park in which five were omitted because their negatives were broken. 95 sheets price Yen 23.75, colored Yen 33.25 Ogawa Isshin. There is none of these photographs in Tokai." The Tokai region would seem to refer to the area between Tokyo and Kyoto, i.e. the cultural centre of Japan.

When the famous Ryouunkaku tower (designed by W. K. Burton) was opened in November 1890, its big attraction were two public elevators serving eight of the twelve floors. However, due to frequent malfunction the elevators were closed down after only six months in operation.



Persuading customers to walk up the stairs became difficult until somebody came up with the idea of holding 'Hyakubijin' exhibitions on the ninth floor. The Yomiuri Shimbun announced on July 7, 1891: "Photographer Ogawa Kazuma was recently asked by Asakusa Park's Ryouunkaku to take portraits of geisha. Since different locations would naturally result in different photographs, he took great care to ensure that all 100 geisha were photographed in the same way. He built a particular new room [in his studio], and photographed everything in a large format, including a round window and bonsai decorations."

Most portraits include a fan with the characters for 'Ryouunkaku' written in elegant calligraphy. The event organisers invited viewers to cast votes for their favourite beauties. The top five geisha received gold watches, rings, diamond necklaces and obi sashes. The exhibition turned out to be a huge success. The present group of Ogawa's 'Hyakubijin' was shown at the third exhibition in 1894. On this occasion the first prize went to Tamagiku of Shimbashi, followed by Momotaro, Kotoyo, Azuma, and Kotsuru.

The little red label advises customers on how to clean the photograph's surface using water.





1090



東京百美人藝妓日守橋お志ん 9

1091



東京百美人藝妓吉原近志ん 9

(singing girls)  
Hundred beauties in Tokyo.  
exhibited at Ryounkaku  
in Asakusa Park.  
in which 5 were omitted because  
their negatives were broken.  
95 sheets price yen 23.<sup>75</sup>  
colored " 33.<sup>25</sup>

Ogawa Isshin.

There is none of these photographs in Tokyo.





# From the Western gaze

**7. UNKNOWN AUTHOR.** Possibly by [DE BECKER (Joseph Ernest)].  
**How the ‘Social Evil’ is Regulated in Japan.**

First edition. Small 4to. Original flexible printed wrappers, cracks to spine. Overall still a very good copy. 22, 16pp. Yokohama, Z P Maruya, no date [but ca. 1900].

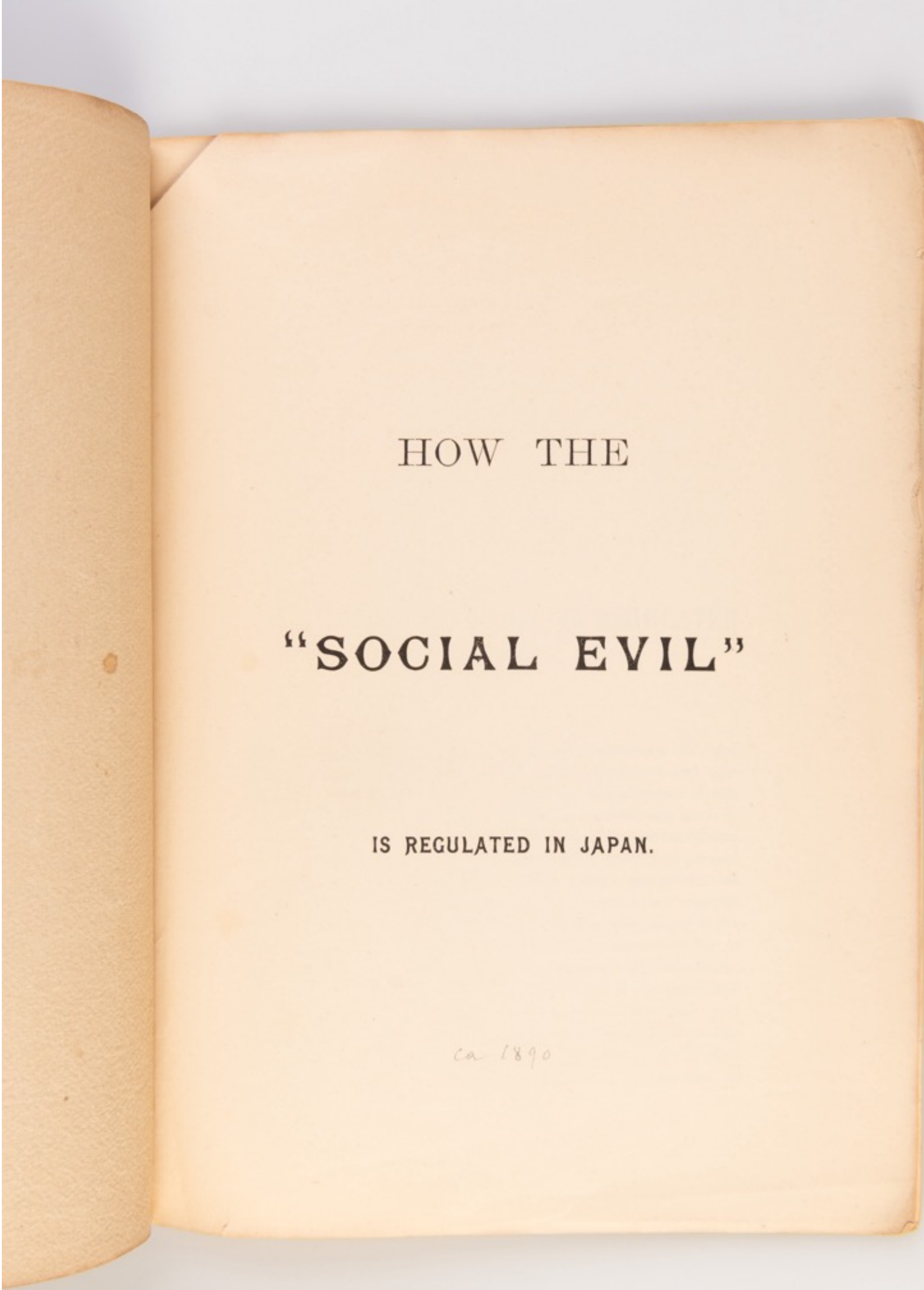
£460

¶ A very frank and knowledgeable assessment of prostitution in Japan at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The author describes the different classes of women from ‘Jigoku’ to ‘Shogi’ and ‘Geisha’, as well as the rules, regulations and proscriptions and the changes in legislation from the 18th to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This is followed by a translation of a contract against the ‘loan’ of ¥400 for the sale of a girl into a brothel as well a the 40 articles and other laws governing the running of a brothel. “The one redeeming trait of the Japanese courtesan is that she never appears to fall to the low and vicious level of the Western prostitute, and her position is such that she is likened by an Eastern allegorical expression to ‘The Lotus in the mud’ - in the mire truly, but not besmirched by it and she is cheered by the old hypocrites around her...” (p. 18).

The second part of the booklet quotes extensively other Western observers on the subject incl. Mitford, Rein, Norman, and even Engelbert Kaempfer. This title was published between 1885 and 1904 in various configurations. Our copy is stamped on the front cover “Z. P. Maruya, Yokohama”, the same company who published *The Nightless City* by Joseph de Becker in 1899. It also includes the text of an ‘Agreement’ which is largely identical with the one mentioned above and may support the assumption that it was written by him.

Uncommon in the trade.



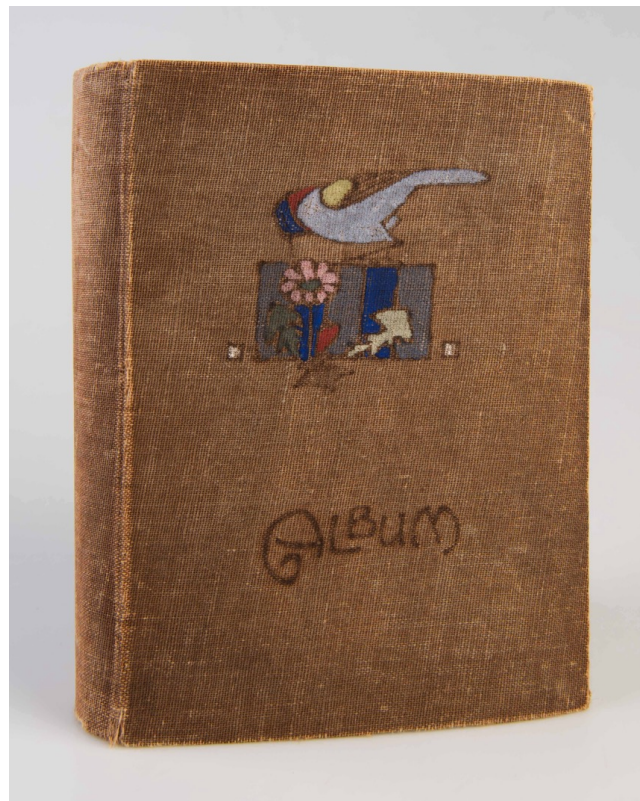


## With love from the pleasure quarters

### 8. [UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHERS] Yuyaku ehagaki arubamu [Red Light District Postcard Albums]

Two albums containing 200; 104 original postcards, many printed in colour. Some wear and tear to albums, but the postcards in very good condition. Tokyo, Meiji 44 [i.e. 1911].

£4,500



|| An impressive collection of postcards which chart the highs and lows of Yoshiwara, as well as scenes from other lesser-known entertainment districts.

As well Yoshiwara in Tokyo, the postcards also show geisha in Shimabara of Kyoto, Shinmachi and Matsushima in Osaka, Fukuhara in Kobe, and the pleasure quarter in Moji harbour (Kyushu). Together they form a fascinating insight into these historical areas and the long tradition of entertainers, many of whom would also engage in sex work. The postcards are important photographic records of these women from different parts of Japan, and document the culture of entertainment in the Meiji period, when Japan was no longer isolated from the outside world.

Across the two albums are several vibrant portraits, group shots with attendants and festival processions. The Yukaku pleasure districts consisted of a large number of women and their attendants ranging from *shinzo* (teenage attendants), *tayū* (courtesans), and *oiran* (highest rank). Of particular interest are the portraits of individual geisha wearing elaborate kimonos, obis, and hairpieces with large combs and hairpins (*kanzashi*). Today, there are far fewer geisha and maiko (essentially geisha-in-training), but one can spot them from time to time in the Gion district of Kyoto in their wonderful, traditional finery.

On April 9<sup>th</sup> 1911, a large fire broke out inside the Yoshiwara which completely destroyed the area. Photographers recorded the event and a series of postcards were produced, showing the start of the fire, the firefighting operations and the aftermath. Around 6000 people worked in the compound of which 300 were killed. Some of the photos show rather gruesome scenes of the wreckage, which at the time were not subject to censorship.







狀慘ノ落燒ヤ今藏土失燒戸今方地 (大 大 ノ 原 吉)



其面方輪ノ三及點規有銀正曉 ヲ 堤原吉 (災大天原吉京東日九月四年四十四)





# The futility of regulation

9. **MURPHY (U.G.)**  
**The social evil in Japan and allied subjects with statistics, social evil test cases, and progress of the anti-brothel movement.**

Fourth revised edition. 3 plates with 6 photographic illustrations printed on recto and verso. Small 8vo. Original cloth. Browning throughout due to poor paper quality, hinges cracked, first 6 leaves loose. [vi], 172pp. Tokyo, Methodist Publishing House [Privately Printed], 1908.

£125

¶ This publication provides an excellent account of the circumstances and background to prostitution in Japan at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The author, U.G. Murphy, describes the wrong expectations relating to the sale of girls, the license system, the exploitation, how they are exported illegally to Korea, China and even the US. The second part deals with the spread of venereal diseases, the third with the 'Cessation movement' and their efforts to use a legal process to liberate the women.

A slightly surprising conclusion is presented here, that regulating such a well-established system would be somewhat futile – "The more one studies the Social Evil problem, the more difficult and complex it seems to become. It seems to me that unless a nation can have reason to believe that absolute prohibition and prevention of the evil is a reasonable possibility, all attempts at regulation had as well be given up. Still I feel very little is to be gained by dogmatising." (Introduction).



REAR WALL OF SEGREGATED HOSPITAL FOR PROSTITUTES—NAGOYA.

## THE SOCIAL EVIL IN JAPAN

AND

## ALLIED SUBJECTS

WITH

STATISTICS, SOCIAL EVIL TEST  
CASES, AND PROGRESS OF THE  
ANTI-BROTHEL MOVEMENT

BY U. G. MURPHY

FOURTH EDITION, REVISED

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR  
METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE  
1908



In the navy...

10. LACOUR (Lawrence L.)  
Navy Sex Laxity in Japan

Lithographed handbill in blue ink. Photograph illustration to verso. Single sheet measuring 290 by 225mm. Toned and some wear to edges, very good. Washington DC, Anti-Conscription Committee, n.d. [but 1946].

£175

¶ A plea to “every American citizen” regarding the morality of young naval officers deployed in Japan after the War. The writing in this handbill expresses concern for the ease with which service men were able to frequent brothels around the naval base in Yokosuka, and the 100% chance of them contracting syphilis.

The original article was published in the Des Moines Register, and the present handbill reproduces this article for wider distribution. It was issued by Anti-Conscription Committee, who opposed peacetime conscription. The sensationalist story of debauchery among young naval officers stationed in Japan was likely disseminated to induce moral panic among those with Christian values, with the view to ending peacetime conscription. The author, Rev. Lawrence L. Lacour (1907-1999) was a prominent figure in the Methodist church. From 1950 (approx. 4 years after this article), he moved to Japan to oversee a project to build 29 churches, before returning to the US to serve as the Methodist General Board of Evangelism.

This surviving piece of ephemera sheds light on an interesting point in the history of brothels in Japan, when there was a large population of American army officers stationed across Japan after the War.

*Mothers! Teachers!  
Parents!*

*In view of the  
present drive to  
enact Peacetime  
Conscription, we  
believe this letter  
should be read  
by every  
American citizen.  
Are these the stan-  
dards that are  
going to be held  
before every 18-year  
old boy?*

*Write your Senators  
and Representatives.*

*Order 100,500 or  
1000 copies to dis-  
tribute in your  
Club Church, P.T.A.,  
or Labor group.*

Order from  
Anti-Conscription Committee  
1013 18th Street, N. W.  
Washington 6, D. C.  
or  
Room 635  
410 S. Michigan Ave.  
Chicago 5, Illinois

Price: \$1 per 100;  
\$3 per 500; \$5 per 1,000

Navy Sex Laxity in Japan

By CHAPLAIN LAWRENCE L. LACOUR  
Member of Iowa-Des Moines Conference

SINCE a large percentage of the Navy are reserves, many of them under twenty, and since we chaplains are entrusted with the moral and spiritual welfare of these men, we believe the American public should be informed when conditions and policies exist that jeopardize the morality and faith of our servicemen.

As a policy of venereal disease control, the Navy is permitting unrestricted access, by all men on liberty in the Yokosuka area, to houses of prostitution where the venereal incidence among the prostitutes is considered 100 per cent. The control is the prophylaxis administered by naval corpsmen on duty in the house.

Since September 11, liberty parties have been permitted ashore in this area. Our ship was the first to be granted liberty, and, as we are tied up in the navy yard, I have been able to observe the situation from the beginning. On September 2, the medical officer in charge of venereal control told me that it would be his policy to supervise the places of prostitution by examining the prostitutes, by segregating those infected, by insisting on cleanliness within the houses, and by establishing adequate numbers of prophylactic stations throughout town.

When liberty parties went ashore men gathered the impression that the medical department had eliminated all immediate danger. Military police and naval corpsmen informed the men in the lines in front of the houses that everything was medically inspected. As a result many enlisted men and officers had sexual contact without using any prophylaxis.

Prior to sending men ashore some ships ran training films on venereal disease, and announced that a high percentage of venereal disease could be expected in Japan. On other ships, the commands refused to discourage promiscuity, and gave no warning about expected venereal incidence.

On September 14 it was disclosed that out of a typical group of prostitutes fifty-one out of sixty had syphilis, were not being treated, that there would be no further examinations, and that no policy of treatment or segregation would be followed.

Coincidental with Archbishop Spellman's visit here, by September 16 all "red light" districts were declared "out of bounds." A group of us chaplains inspected the restricted area after a week of suppression. We found that although the method was not totally effective, the number of offenders that



Harold M. Lambert  
For many Navy men, this year's Thanksgiving will mean happy family reunions; for others out across the Pacific there looms a Navy policy that every Christian should protest

*Rec'd Jan. 1946*



11–16

## Sekino Junichiro

Privately printed books by the artist and printmaker Sekino Junichiro (1914-1988), one of the leading figures of the *sosaku-hanga*, 'Creative Prints' Movement. Having worked under Onchi Koshiro, he established himself as an artist in his own right, and was invited to teach printing in a number of universities across the US.



# A decadent Wartime production

11. **SEKINO** (Junichiro).  
**Ehon seiyu-ki** [Picture Book of Travels to the West].

Limited edition, no.11 of 50 copies, signed. Ten kappa-zuri stencil-dyed plates, plus title page and colophon in kappa-zuri also, text in letterpress. Folio, measuring 310 by 240mm. Modified yamato-toji binding, quarter stencil printed paper-covered boards with printed title slip over green brocade silk, complete with printed card box, rubbing to box and loss to bottom edge of box lid, the book itself a fine copy. Unpaginated [17]ff. Tokyo, Aoz onoso, Showa 18 [i.e. 1943].

£5,500

¶ A superb production limited to 50 copies: Sekino Junichiro's illustrated version of the *Seiyuki*, or the Journey to the West.

This is a famous 16<sup>th</sup> century Chinese text, which is thought to have been first translated into Japanese in the 18th century, and much later into English by Arthur Waley (1889–1966) under the title *Monkey: A Folk-Tale of China* (1942). The story follows a Buddhist monk named Tan Sanzang, or Tripitaka, (based on the 7<sup>th</sup> century monk Xuanzang), who travels from China to India in search of precious sutras. He is accompanied by three companions who protect him along the way: Sun Wukong the 'Monkey King', Sha Wujing the 'Sand Monk' and Zhu Bajie, the 'Pig Monk'. Across the 100 chapters, the four protagonists embark on an epic journey filled with adventures and obstacles they must overcome together.

This book was printed by Sekino and bound by Naito Masakatsu (dates unknown), and according to the colophon it was the publisher Aozonosō's 17<sup>th</sup> title. The book was privately circulated and there is a note to say that the book is not for sale. Regardless, this would have been an immensely costly production, made even more impressive by the wartime context. The paper is of especially high quality and clearly no expense has been spared.

Very rare. Only one copy in OCLC (National Diet Library, Tokyo).







説三蔵が輩は只管に天竺へむかへて道を急ぎける。夜明と  
同時に歩み、行き暮れては木の間に伏し、満しては水をも  
とめ、飢えては食を探して西へ西へと進み行く内に春は過  
ぎ夏もゆき、さはやかなる秋とはなりぬ。夜なりける。流沙河といふ河  
ありてその川岸に濱して、「八百流沙界、三千弱水溪、鵝毛飄不起、蘆  
花定底沉」とあり。その河を見るに津々として月光を渡し、清々として  
影天に浮ぶ。鹽波は悲憤を呑み、長流百千を震き、千層の河浪は浪上り  
て万疊となり、岸口には漁火もなく、砂洲には唯鶯のみ囀り居て、四方  
渺茫として海の如く、一望さらに遠望なし。その河の主、河童にして、  
沙悟淨と云ひ、頭に皿を置き、舌青々しき甲を背にもち、時に水中より  
出て旅人に惡邪をなす。皿に水のある内は神力自在にして人間の生體を  
最も好む、爲に旅人大いに怖れ憚みたり。  
法師等の河を渡るをこぼみけるも、觀音の使、木叉に命ぜられ、弟子  
とはなり従へる。





# A calming book for the busy age

12. **SEKINO** (Junichiro).  
**Kojiki emaki** [Picture Scroll of the Kojiki]

Limited edition, no. 102 of 120 copies, signed. Illustrations all printed in stencil (kappa-ban). Folio measuring 360 by 300mm. Modified yamato-toji binding , quarter silk brocade with stencil printed paper wrapper covered boards, protected in blue silk furoshiki wrapping cloth and encased in a signed wooden box, faint foxing to edges, a near fine copy. Unpaginated, [16]ff. Tokyo, Seien-so, Showa 24 [i.e. 1949].

£7,500



¶ Sekino Junichiro’s illustrated edition of one of the earliest examples of Japanese literature. Limited to only 120 copies, the present title is a fine production that could only have been achieved by a highly accomplished printmaker and artist. It is highly rare to find a copy with an original signed box.

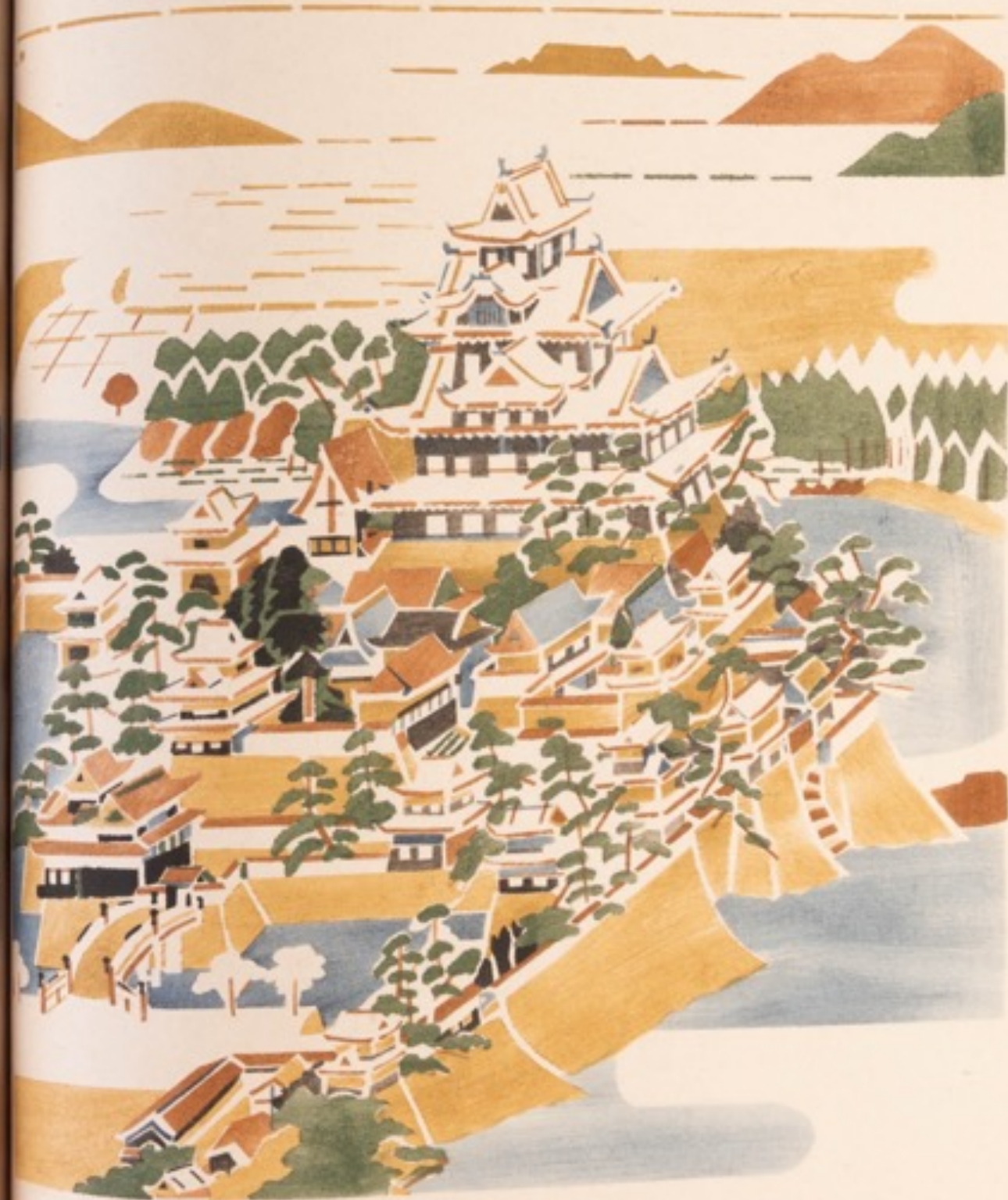
Sekino’s book draws its story from the middle section (or ‘Nakatsumaki’) of the *Kojiki*. Translated to English as ‘Record of Ancient Matters’, the *Kojiki* is an early collection of folkloric stories, ancient customs and genealogies, compiled in the 8<sup>th</sup> century by the court scholar Ono Yasumaro. Written in three parts, the middle section details the establishment of an imperial line by the first Emperor Jimmu.

The first part of Sekino’s book is entirely illustrated, with a small section of text at the back. In his afterword, he writes how he wanted to create a book using a story from the Kamakura period (1185–1333) as a departure from the busyness of modern life in Japan. He writes how, bent over his desk, as he was painstakingly cutting the stencils, he felt as though he was a painter from the Kamakura period and enjoyed an immense sense of calm.

Only 2 copies in OCLC (Harvard & Hawaii).















Boo!

13. **SEKINO** (Junichiro).  
**Yurei no sho** [Ghost stories].

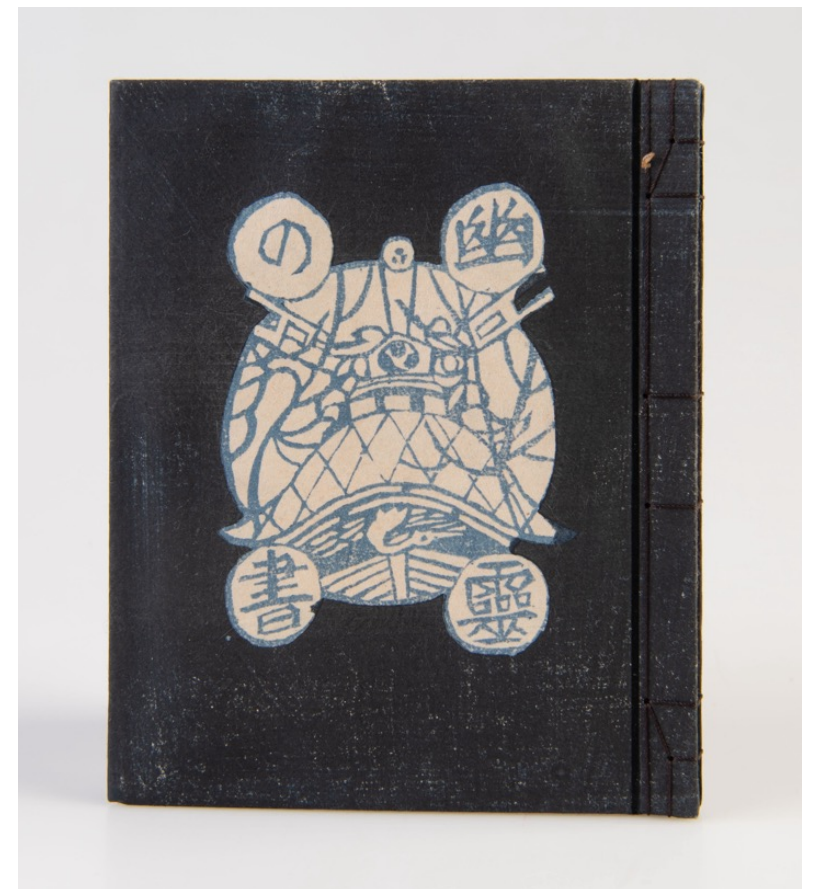
First edition, no. 25 of a limited edition of 50 copies printed by the artist, signed. Colour woodblock printed throughout. 155 by 125mm. Fukurotoji binding, original blue printed paper covered boards, with indigo blue chemise, very faint rubbing to chemise, the book itself a fine copy. Unpaginated [26]pp. No place, self-published, 1950.

£750

¶ A playful take on Japanese ghost stories.

100 copies were printed of the first edition; 50 by the artist himself, and the remaining 50 by his assistants. This copy is no.25 of the 50 printed by Sekino, with his signature.

Rare. No copies in OCLC. A single copy of the second edition (1965) can be found at Harvard.





# The darker side to cherry blossom season

14. **SEKINO** (Junichiro) illus.  
**KAJII** (Motojiro), author.  
**Sakura no ki no shita ni wa** [Beneath the Cherry Trees]

Limited edition, no.75 of 88 copies. Four plates, two in woodblock and two copperplate etching. Folio, measuring 285 by 230mm. Original cream card wrappers with thick card dust jacket titled in black with gilt motif of a lemon in the centre, with chemise in quarter brown embossed calf over brown textures paper spine and upper board titled in gilt, light brown slipcase with printed title to upper, occasional very faint foxing, otherwise a near fine copy. [14], 15-41, [10]pp. Tokyo, Taigado, 1969.

£1,250



¶ A limited, privately printed edition of *Beneath the Cherry Trees* by Kajii Motojiro (1901-1932). The artist Sekino Junichiro (1914-1988) illustrated four plates for this book, two of which are printed in woodblock, the other two in copperplate etching.

First published in 1931, Kajii's story opens with the famous first line, *Sakura no ki no shita ni wa shitai ga umatte iru!* – “There are dead bodies buried beneath the cherry trees!”. Cherry blossom season in Japan usually invites celebrations and merry viewing parties, but in Kajii's imbues this image with a deep sense of melancholia and a certain sinisterness. Written in the first person, the narrator paints a visceral image of cherry trees feeding off the decomposing corpses of various creatures that lie underneath, before gazing back out onto the unsuspecting crowd who are enjoying the view above.

As a highly skilled printmaker, Sekino was able to create four very different plates to accompany Kajii's story. The book opens with an upward view of cherry blossom, through which we see a distant horizon. This might be a depiction of the Izu peninsula, where Kajii wrote the story. The following images take a much darker tone, with stylised images of the corpses and what happens under the trees.

Rare. No copies in OCLC.





## Printed by rubbings from woodblocks

15. **SEKINO** (Junichiro).  
**Takuzuri-ban kosetsu shiki** [Ink rubbing  
book – The Story of the Blind Man from  
the Records of the Grand Historian]

First edition, no.7 of 95 copies, signed. Entirely  
printed with rubbings from woodblocks. 220 by  
315mm. Fukuro-toji binding, original colour woodblock  
wrappers with printed title slip, with decorative  
printed paper covered card protective sleeve, light  
foxing to half title and colophon (first leaf), otherwise  
a near fine copy. Unpaginated, [18]ff. Tokyo, Gallery  
Gohachi, Showa 50 [i.e. 1975].

£550

¶ An unusual work that showcases Sekino  
Junichiro's extraordinary breadth and skill as  
a printer.

Many of Sekino's works are printed in  
woodblock or stencil, but for this book he opted  
for *takuzuri*. This is a printing method similar  
to Chinese inkstone rubbings, but applied to  
woodblocks. In the case of *takazuri*, the paper  
is dampened slightly before it is placed onto  
the block. This means that when rubbed with  
a *baren* (a flat, circular disk used for printing  
instead of a press), a deeper impression is  
made, including the blind impression of the  
places where the block has been carved. This  
allows us to see every mark the block cutter  
made into the block, which is not usually visible  
in woodblock printing. Thus we are able to see  
Sekino's every mark and cut much more clearly.

Muramatsu Ei (1923-2008), a scholar of Japanese  
and Chinese literature, had published a book  
under the same title *Kosetsu shiki* in 1968 with  
cover designed by Sekino. The book references  
the Chinese classic *Shiji*, known in English as  
the *Records of the Grand Historian*, written by  
Sima Qian in the 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.

Rare. No copies in OCLC.





# Around the world

16. **SEKINO** (Junichiro).  
**Gaiyu miyage** [Souvenir from Travels Abroad].

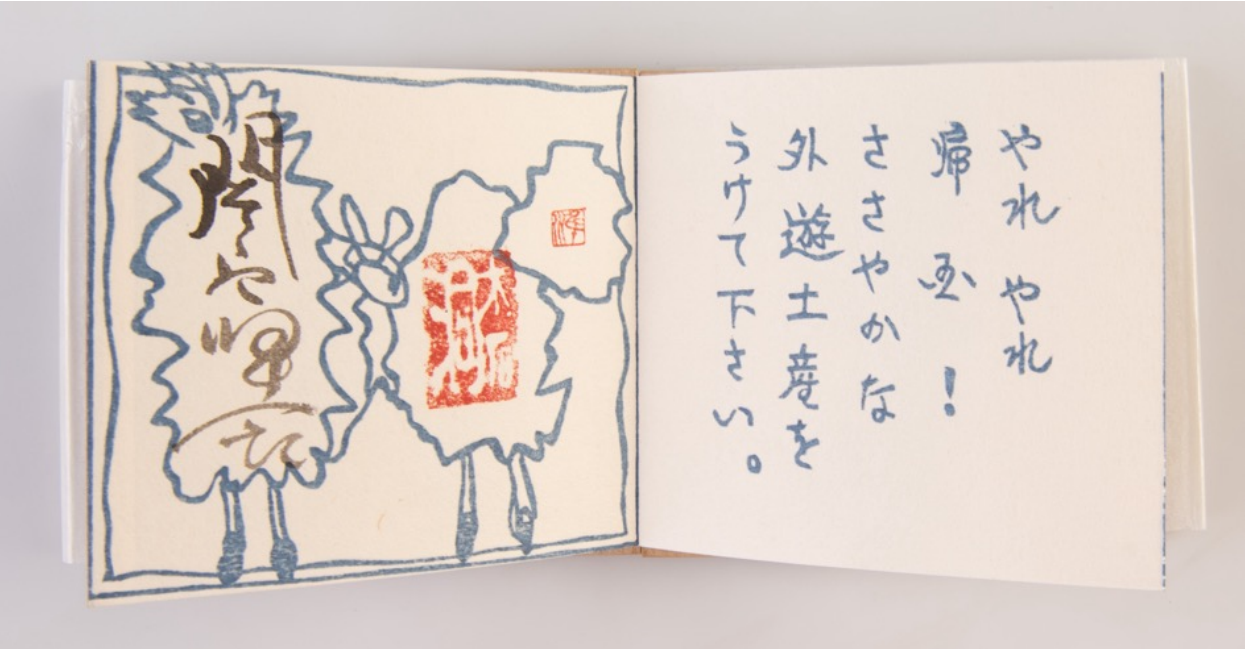
Limited edition, no.96 of 128 copies, signed. Colour woodblock printed throughout. 105 by 113mm. Orihon binding, original printed and hand-coloured thick wooden boards, housed in a card box with printed title, a fine copy. Tokyo, Honsekido, Showa 53 [i.e. 1978].

£450

¶ An epic voyage across continents, told through eleven different countries and their respective traditional dolls. A lovely, small format book by Sekino Junichiro.

The book opens with the exclamation, “Ahh, I’ve returned! Please accept these humble souvenirs from abroad” and closes with “In any case, let’s have a Japanese meal. First, cheers!” (our translation). The book is accompanied by a small fold-out pamphlet entitled *Muda-sho* (‘waste writing’), which contains some short passages by Sekino.

Rare. Only one copy in OCLC (National Diet Library).

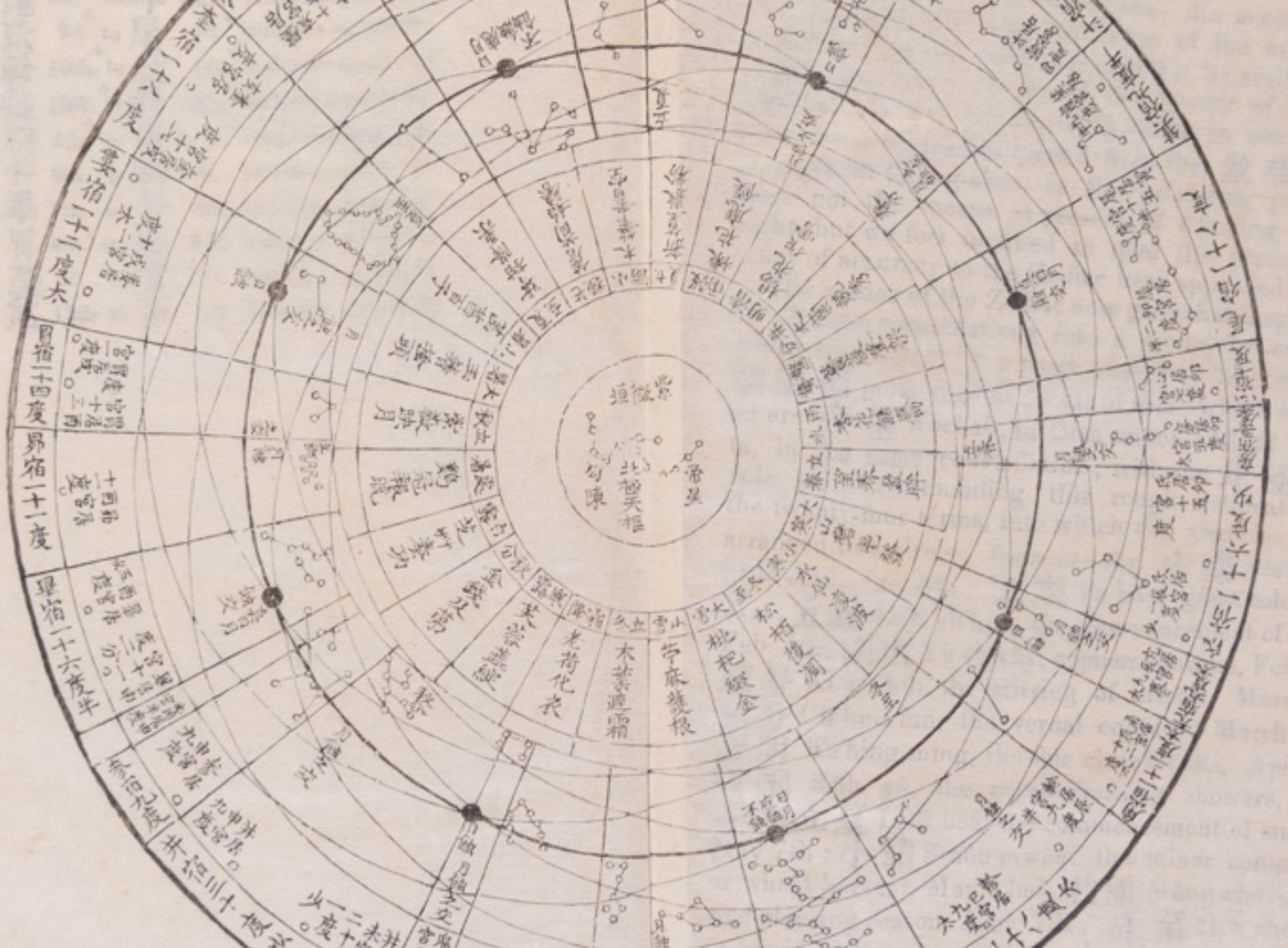




17–20

Also on our stand





The first English translation of this Chinese classic

17. MEDHURST (Walter Henry). **Ancient China: the Shoo-king, or, The Historical Classic: Being the most Ancient Authentic Record of the Annals of the Chinese Empire.**

Illustrated by later Commentators. First edition. 3 double-page plates on Chinese paper and 12 maps (double-page on Chinese paper), & several diagrams and illustrations in the text. Interspersed throughout with printed Chinese characters. 8vo. Contemporary vellum-backed boards, minor damage (repaired), but overall still a very good copy. [xvi], 413pp. Shanghai, Mission Press, 1846.

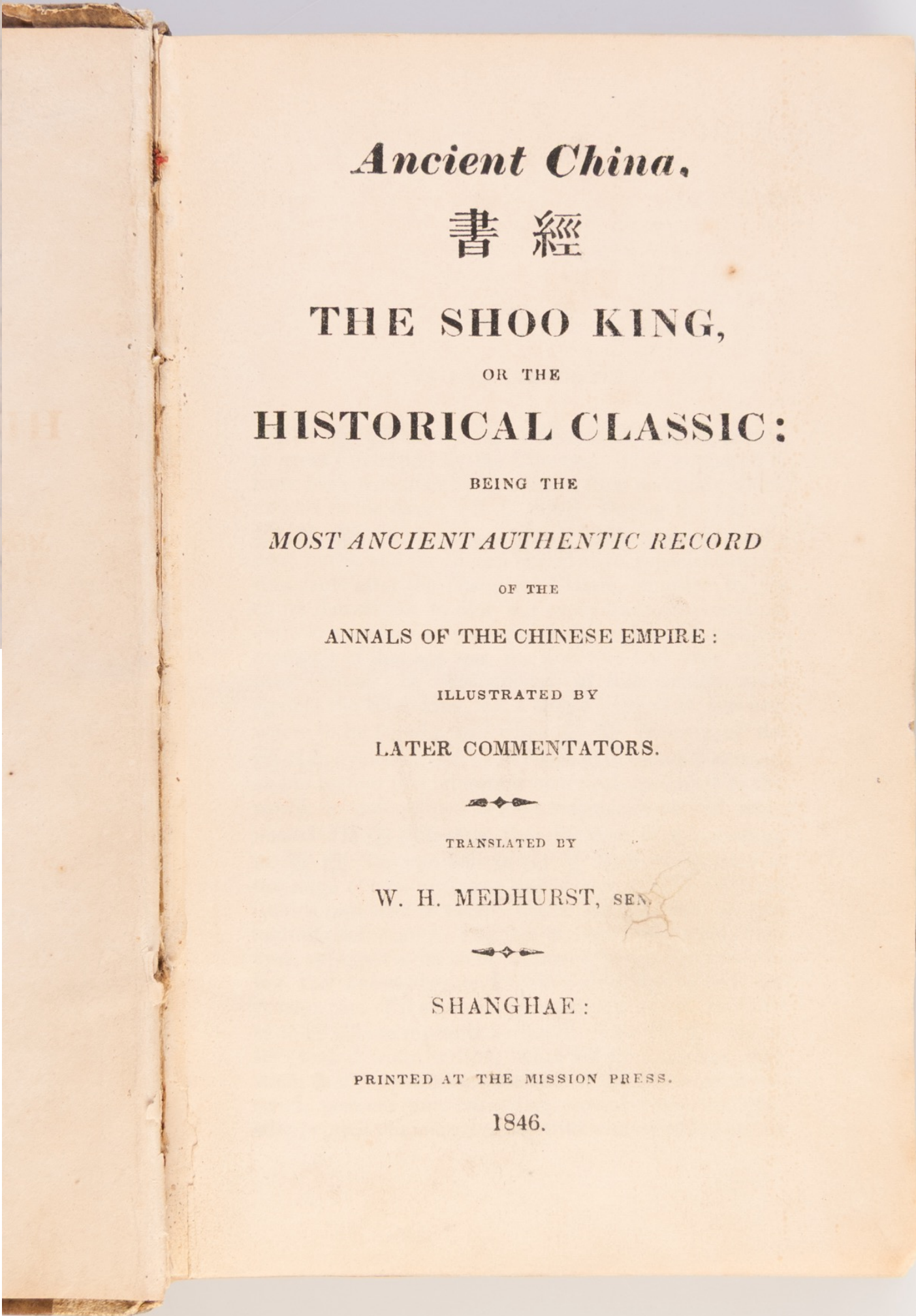
£4,800

¶ This is the first English translation of the Confucian classic, the *Shu-king* (Book of History).

“For the benefit of students in Chinese, the text is interspersed with the translation, so as to afford a pretty correct clue to the meaning of each particular character.” (preface, p. ix). Medhurst also supplies extracts from the Historical Classic covering the period of the *Shu-king* as well as two appendices on Chinese Constellations and Astronomy, in particular the Chinese Zodiac.

Medhurst (1796-1857) was a famous English missionary in China and one of the early translators of the Bible into Chinese. After spending some twenty-five years in Malacca Medhurst went to Shanghai where he founded the Mission Press.

Rare. Cordier II, 1378; Lust 739.





17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Century  
Jesuits at the Kangxi &  
Qianlong Court

18. JESUIT GRAVE-STONE RUBBING.  
Twenty rubbings of Jesuit graves.

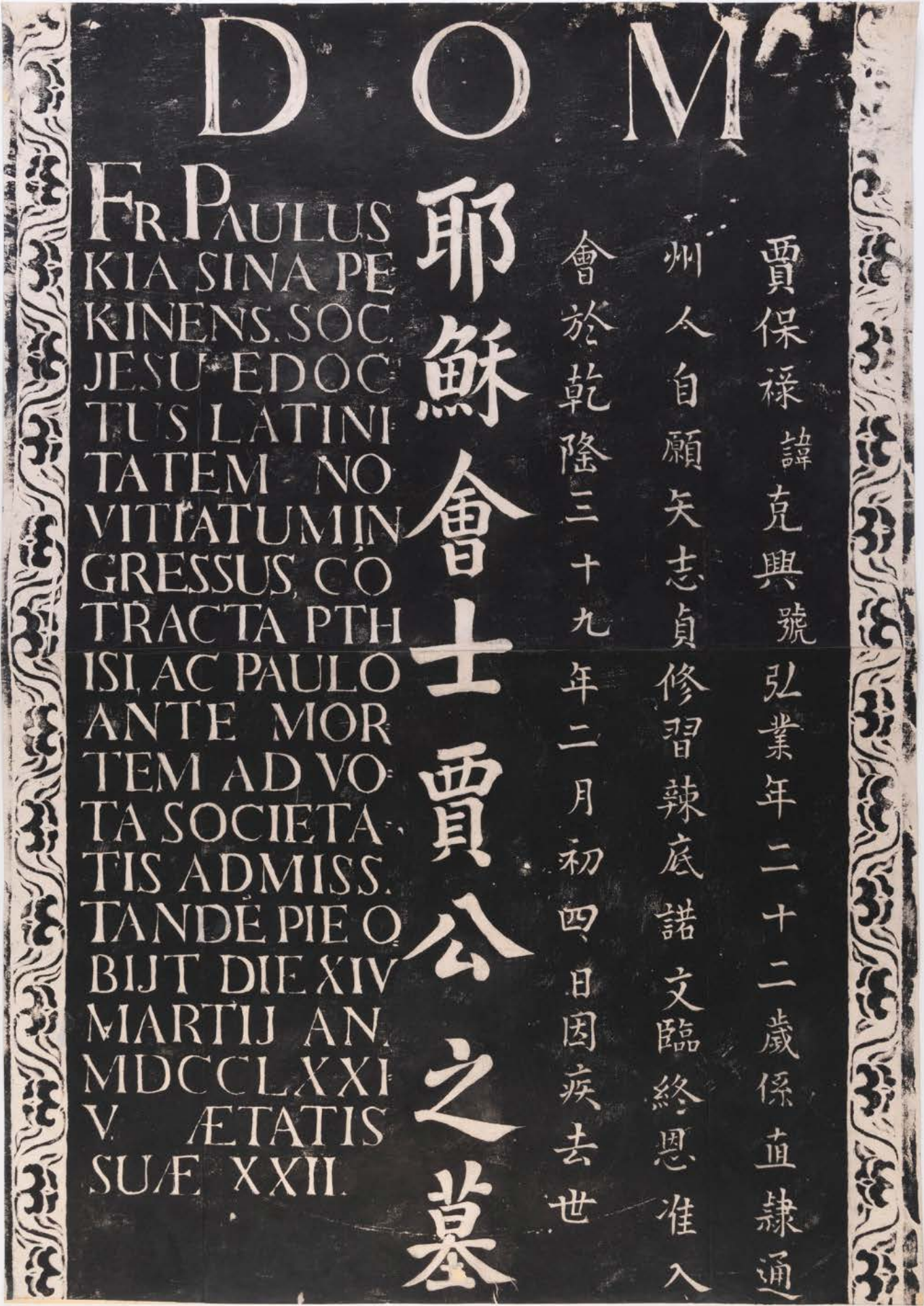
Measuring between 870 by 680mm. and 1375 by 750mm. respectively. Text in Latin and Chinese. Backed on Chinese paper. Many with small red manuscript labels pasted on verso, identifying each Jesuit, some in Chinese characters, some in Western alphabet. Folding marks to each sheet, overall in very good condition. Peking, n.d. [but second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century].

£65,000

¶ An extraordinary collection of twenty grave-stone rubbings that chart the successes and eventual decline of the Jesuits at the court in Peking.

This group provides a fascinating overview of the range of characters, nationalities, and occupations that the Jesuits represented. Far from simply living the good life at the Imperial Court some of them dealt with immense challenges, threats, hardships and obviously none of them ever returned to their home countries. Notably, our rubbings includes the tombs of four Chinese converts.

Please follow [this link](#) for a full description.





## Gun shopping in Japan

- 19. KANAMARU** (Kenjiro).  
**Juho seika hokokusho. Toriatsukai setsume**  
**mei (hibaihin)** [Firearms Price Report: With Instructions for Use (Not for sale)].

First edition. Numerous illustrations throughout. 12mo. measuring 185 by 125mm. Original printed grey paper wrappers, creating to wrappers and occasional off-setting, a good copy. 62pp plus publishers advertisements [10]pp. Yokohama, Kanamaru Juhoten, dated Meiji [c. 1900].

[With:] **KANAMARU JUHOTEN. Juhomasa hokokusho fu toriatsukai setsume** [Gun Prices and Instructions]. Numerous illustrations throughout. 12mo. measuring 185 by 125mm. Original printed brown paper wrappers with ink stamp to recto, chipping to wrappers and central crease, a good copy. 38pp. Yokohama, Kanamaru Juhoten, dated Meiji [c. 1900].

£450

¶ Two catalogues advertising various types of firearms: pistols, shotguns and rifles, as well as bullets and stylish holsters. Japan is not particularly known for gun advocacy or indeed gun crime, and so together the catalogues shed light on a little-known corner of Meiji period social history.

Founded by Kanamaru Kenjiro in Meiji 22 (1889), Kanamaru Juhoten was the sole dealer of firearms in the bustling port city of Yokohama. The company was well known for its sales techniques, issuing catalogues such as these, and published a monthly magazine called *Juryokai* or 'Gun-hunting world'. Kanamaru was able to import firearms from a number of suppliers in the US and Europe, offering an attractive array of foreign weaponry as well as high-quality arms manufactured in Japan.

Today, gun ownership in Japan is mainly restricted to the police and military and it boasts one of the lowest rates of gun crime in the world. In the Meiji period, however,



there was a time when civilians could go into a shop like Kanamaru Juhoten and purchase a firearm. What is quite interesting about these two catalogues is the targeted customer base. There are lively illustrations of women holding up guns in self-defence, as well as well-to-do men warding off bandits and trespassers.



"While making this book, I was getting more and more nostalgic to Okinawa" (sic.)

20. OKAMURA (Kichiemon).  
Okinawa no minyo  
[Folk Songs in Okinawa]

First edition, one 100 copies, signed. Colour stencil printed throughout. 296 by 195. Orihon, original white crinkled handmade paper wrappers, printed title slip, in original folding case with matching printed title title slip, some wear to folding case and very faint foxing to title page, a very good copy. Unpaginated [title page], [18], [colophon]pp. N.p., private printed, Showa 36 [i.e. 1961]

[With:] OKAMURA (Kichiemon), MIYARA (Toso) interpretor, and SESOKO (Tsune) trans. Okinawa no Minyo [Folk Songs in Okinawa]. First edition, one of 100 copies. Staple bound, original printed paper wrappers, top right slightly bumped, otherwise a near fine copy. 9pp. Tokyo, Far Eastern Booksellers, n.d. [but 1961].

£950



¶ A beautiful book bringing Okinawan minyo (folk music) to life.

Each region of Japan has its own distinctive minyo songs, passed down orally from generation to generation. These were often sung by workers – farmers, fishermen and miners, for example – while they were working. Some songs have a humorous tone, while others are imbued with messages of hope for a good harvest. All the songs featured in this book can be found on YouTube. It is particularly enjoyable to experience this book with the songs playing.

This book was especially meaningful to Okamura. On the printed explanation booklet, he is quoted on the front:

Folk Songs of Okinawa are the songs of my beloved country. I am far away from Okinawa, but my heart is always with Okinawa. While making this book, I was getting more and more nostalgic to Okinawa.

Extremely rare. No copies in OCLC.

