

SAIKAKU'S 'ECONOMIC MAN'

A Comparative Study in Socio-Economic History
with Illustrations from Saikaku and Augustan English Literature

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I

Saikaku's *economic man*¹ differs from his western counterpart less in matter than in manner. In point of formal chrematistics one notices scarcely any difference between Saikaku and say, Adam Smith,² in so far as they both advocate Industry (*saikaku*) and Parsimony (*shimatsu*) as the twin principles of capital accumulation. But Smith, like a true Scot, gives priority to Parsimony as an efficient cause of wealth, whereas Saikaku, as an Osaka *chōnin* or citizen³ of the Genroku period, emphasizes Industry or what he calls *saikaku*, in preference, it seems to me, to Thrift or *shimatsu*, although he writes a great deal also in praise of this latter economic virtue. The two writers are in substantial agreement, but their emphases are not the same.

But when I say "the western counterpart of Saikaku's *economic man*" I have in mind rather such particularly economic-minded characters as we encounter in many literary works of 17th and 18th century England, the "Nation of Shopkeepers." Elsewhere⁴ I have tried to show what I regard as a striking parallelism between Saikaku's *Nippon Eitaigura* and Defoe's *The Compleat English Tradesman*, but of course, Defoe is not the only writer of the Augustan age that stimulates comparison of the kind I have undertaken. In the pages of *The Spectator*⁵ of Addison and Steele the reader

¹ Being himself very much an economic man in his upbringing and in the environment in which he lived, Saikaku treated of this human type in all his writings, but here I use for my main sources his so-called *Chōnin-mono* (literary works dealing with tradesmen), -viz. *Nippon Eitaigura* (NEG), *Seiken Munesan-yo* (SMS), *Saikaku-Oridome* (SOD), etc. Quotations from these are given in my own English translation.

² *The Wealth of Nations*, Bk. II, § 3. "Parsimony, and not industry, is the immediate cause of the increase of capital. Industry, indeed, provides the subject which parsimony accumulates. But whatever industry might acquire, if parsimony did not save and store up, the capital would never be the greater."

³ The word "citizen" here is used in its 17th and 18th century sense in which it was a near-equivalent of the Japanese term *chōnin*. That the two words corresponded closely to each other semantically may be gathered from the fact that *citizen* could be shortened into *cit* to bring out the same idea of contempt as in *suchōnin*, a low-down tradesman.

⁴ Saikaku's '*Nippon Eitaigura*' and Defoe's '*Compleat English Tradesman*,' in *The Rising Generation*, special issue for 1954.

⁵ Cf. Ueda, *Mr. Spectator as an Economist*, in *Annals of the Hitotsubashi Academy*, Vol. III, No. 1 (October 1952). The most typical example is *Spectator* Essay No. 450 written by Steele in the form of a letter to the Editor from a tobacco merchant. In thought, as well as in style, it is surprisingly like one of Saikaku's pieces. See footnote, p. 31.

may also frequently come upon passages reminding him of Saikaku's ideas or phrases. Nor is Saikaku's type of *economic man* an utter stranger in the poetry of Alexander Pope,⁶ e.g. in *An Essay on Man* and the *Moral Essays*, in which the human material with which the poet works, though, of course, for a different purpose, is common, at least in part, to the Japanese novelist.

And when we read in Smollett who wrote nearly a century after Saikaku a description of London, such as

The gayest places of public entertainment are filled with fashionable figures, which, upon enquiry, will be found to be journeymen tailors, service-men, and abigails, disguised like their betters (*Humphrey Clinker*, 1771);

we can hardly resist the temptation to quote from Saikaku:

The second box of the gallery to your left is occupied by a party of fashionably-dressed young men who look as though they wouldn't care a rap if their parents disowned them for their extravagance. They are the envy of the groundlings, as the boy-actors who have been specially paid in advance to do so, make eyes at them from the stage. Someone who knows of them whispers to his neighbours that they are all men of a meaner sort from the west side of the River. But it is ludicrous how they pretend to look like great merchants of the city. People not knowing this may take them for grandees of Kyoto. (SMS III-1)

Or, take another pair of paragraphs from *Seken Munesan-yo* and Colman and Garrick's *The Clandestine Marriage* on the vanity and extravagance of City Madams. Saikaku is speaking of some fashionable wives of commission merchants:

Nowadays these housewives have all become extravagant. Though already well supplied with clothes, they yet throw away precious money on what does not show on the surface at all. For the New Year season they must have a fancy *kosode*-dress in the height of fashion and pay more for dyeing than for the material itself... They want an expensive *obi* (sash) of genuine brocade, a rare old material imported from abroad. It measures twelve *shaku* in length, so that they wear around their waists two pieces of silver, so to speak, while they carry on their heads an equivalent of three full-

⁶ Here recognition of Pope's indebtedness to Mandeville is important, because there is much in common, as I may show later, between Saikaku and Mandeville.

⁷ This may be supplemented by a passage from Mandeville: "Let us go from House to House and observe the way of the World only among the middling People, creditable Shop-Keepers, that spend Two or Three Hundred a Year, and we shall find the Women when they have half a Score Suits of Clothes, Two or Three of them not the worse for wearing, will think it a sufficient Plea for new Ones, if they can say that they have never a Gown or Petticoat, but what they have been often seen in, and are known by, especially at Church; I don't speak now of profuse extravagant Women, but such as are counted Prudent and Moderate in their Desires."—*The Fable of the Bees*, Remark (T).

packed bales of rice, as their hairpin costs two gold pieces which would buy that much of rice at the present market price....These are luxuries hitherto unknown even to the wives of feudal lords. (*SMS* I-1)

Similarly a character in the above-mentioned play soliloquizes:

Oh, I have no patience with the pride of your city-knights' ladies. Did you never observe the airs of Lady Lustering dressed in the richest brocade out of her husband's shop, playing crown-whist at Haberdasher's Hall?—While the civil smirking Sir Joseph, with a smug wig trimmed round his broad face as close as a new-cut yew-hedge, and his shoes so black that they shine again, stands all day in his shop, fastened to his counter like a bad shilling? (Colman & Garrick, *The Clandestine Marriage*, Act I. Sc. 1)

Examples of this sort may be multiplied without difficulty. But similarities represent only one side of the picture, and the other side is just as important or even more so, for contrasts and differences which are products of history and environment offer much food for thought and serve the better to bring into relief the essential oneness of Man.

In the parallel paragraphs just cited, for instance, we cannot forget that the Japanese and English City Madams live and move in quite diverse sets of social conditions. Saikaku says in the same passage that it is an arrant piece of presumption for mere tradesmen's wives to wallow in luxuries such as even noble ladies of the land have never enjoyed, and that their excesses should sooner or later bring retribution upon their heads. The underlying thought here is that of an economy based upon fixed social status. Contrary to this, Colman and Garrick make the same female character in the play, a merchant's daughter dreaming of marrying a nobleman, utter words of self-exaltation in this fashion:

Oh, how I long to be transported to the dear regions of Grosvenor Square—far—far from the dull districts of Aldersgate, Cheap, Candlewick, and Farrington Without and Within!—My heart goes pit-a-pat at the very idea of being introduced at Court!—gilt chariot!—piebald horses!—laced liveries!—and then the whispers buzzing round the circle: "Who is that young lady? Who is she?" "Lady Melvil, ma'am!" Lady Melvil! my ears tingle at the sound.—then at dinner, instead of my father perpetually asking: "Any news upon 'Change?" to cry: Well, Sir John! anything new from Arthur's?—or to say to some other woman of quality: Was your ladyship at the Duchess of Rubber's last night?—Did you call in at Lady Thunder's? In the immensity of crowd I swear I did not see you—Scarce a soul at the opera last Saturday—Shall I see you at Carlisle House next Thursday?—Oh, the dear beau-monde! I was born to move in the sphere of the great world. (*ibid.*)

Hers was a world in which successful bourgeois could with relative ease intermarry with members of the upper classes. No daughter of a *chōnin*, however wealthy and purse-proud, ever gives vent to thoughts like the above in Saikaku's stories.

Let us take another example. The first story of *Nippon Eitaigura* has for its theme the lending and borrowing of money at a high rate of interest through the medium of Kannon, Goddess of Mercy. Mizumadera, an old Buddhist temple in Settsu Province, is said to attract a great many pilgrims from far and near, because the Goddess of Mercy enshrined there is widely reputed as a bringer of prosperity and all earthly blessings, but more especially because the Temple functions as a local bank for needy people who borrow therefrom a few coppers as occasion arises. The custom is that after a year the debtors pay back to the Temple twice the amount borrowed, *i.e.* principal plus interest at 100% *per annum*. A usurious practice, no doubt, but not only has no-one ever grumbled about it, but every debtor, without a single exception, fulfils his obligations with meticulous punctuality, since it is the Goddess of Mercy's money he has been allowed to use to tide over his financial difficulty.

An enterprising boathouse-keeper of Koamicho, Edo (Tokyo), travels all the way down to Settsu Province, presents himself at Mizuma Temple and borrows a good round sum of 100 *mon* from its bank, much to the astonishment of the priest in charge. He at once hastens back to Edo and sets up in his shop a loan-fund for the benefit of the fishermen for whom he caters, making it clear to them that the fund is of divine origin. The fishermen borrow from it in tens of *mons* under the same conditions as at the Temple and with the same satisfactory results, as these fishermen are all pious, God-fearing people. At the end of thirteen years Amiya, the boathouse-keeper of Koamicho, realizes 8,192 *kan* of cash, his total earnings from the one *kan* originally borrowed from Mizumadera. Of this aggregate sum he keeps not a single penny for himself, but delivers it all, post-haste, to the Temple in settlement of his old debt, and the house of Amiya prospers ever afterwards.

The basic idea of the above story relates to religion in its bearing upon economics, a subject familiar to all students of economic history. Priests openly practising usury may or may not surprise them, but usurious priests were not unknown in Europe, either. The interesting point of the story is that both the Temple priests and Amiya capitalize on the piousness of the unsophisticated masses and come out so well financially.

II

Before going on to discuss Saikaku's *economic man* in his various

aspects, I should like to pause for a moment upon a thought-provoking observation made by Sir George B. Sansom on the relative homogeneity of our *chōnin* writers' world and that of the Augustans in England. It throws a flood of light upon the historical background of my present study. In his series of lectures at Tokyo University, later published in book form under the title *Japan in World History*, this authority on Japanese history and culture remarks:

Both Japan and England (during the period 1640–1740) had settled down to enjoy a century of peace—Japan in almost complete seclusion after 1640, and England, not secluded but rather aloof, somewhat later after Marlborough's victories had made her the leading power in Europe and she felt secure and confident. Both countries tended to devote themselves to the art of living rather than to the science of killing. In both there was evolved a society in which painting and poetry and the novel flourished mightily. *Surpr singly enough*, in Japan, a feudal country, it was a bourgeois, one might almost say a democratic, culture that developed, whereas in England, no longer a feudal country but a parliamentary state, it was the rich and aristocratic families who patronized, encouraged and even practised the arts. In what is called the Augustan age of English social life, our great writers and artists worked for a small cultivated and affluent society and not for a large public. The poets wrote on themes suggested by the King or great nobles, the painters did portraits of their wealthy patrons. The patrons were the arbiters of taste, and only the boldest of men of letters could afford to challenge the assumptions upon which current society was based....All this was at a time when Japanese artists and novelists found their most enthusiastic admirers and their strictest critics in the market places of Yedo and Osaka.⁸

The strange contrast which surprises Sir George in this paragraph is of special interest to students of Saikaku as a bourgeois writer, as it testifies, as nothing else does, to the uniqueness of his position in world literature. Saikaku, by common consent, was the greatest *chōnin* man of letters in Japan's Augustan Age, the Genroku period, when the so-called *Chōnin* Literature attained its fullest and most gorgeous efflorescence. If Genroku literature could hold its own, as is pointed out, with its opposite number in England in that it was a vigorous artistic expression of the sturdy spirit of social independence asserted by the newly-risen *chōnin* class, then may we say that Saikaku must have felt far more at home with his bourgeois heroes than his English contemporaries with theirs. The truth of this inference is well borne out by a comparative study like the one I am here trying to make.

⁸ G.B. Sansom, *Japan in World History*, Tokyo, 1951, pp. 41–42.

A brief comparison between the authors of *Nippon Eitaiigura* and *The Compleat English Tradesman* may be revealing as an illustration. Both were typical representatives of bourgeois literature in Japan and in England, but the worlds in which they lived and worked were by no means alike. Defoe was an extraordinarily active and versatile man and played many and various parts in his life. Besides literature which was his main concern, he was deeply interested and actually involved in politics, at one time working as "Harley's man," so that he could produce, along with *The Compleat English Tradesman*, works of political significance like *The History of the Union of Great Britain* and *A Plan of the English Commerce* in which he freely expressed his opinions on matters of Government policy. Even his discussion of the business world was never entirely free from considerations of a political or social nature.

In Saikaku's life, however, one looks in vain for such an amazing diversity of roles. He was, from beginning to end, a *chōnin* writer and nothing else. He might have done a little business on his own in his early youth, but the greater part of his life was dedicated to literary activities of one kind or another. Saikaku was proudly conscious of his native Osaka, knowing and loving its true accent not only in speech, but in the life and temper of this citadel of *chōnin*.⁹ By nature and by nurture, therefore, he was an economic man in his outlook upon life and projected his peculiar mentality all over his pages. Unlike Defoe, he never dabbled in politics or sought to be made a protégé of any influential person at Court or in Government. The world of *chōnin* was complete in itself, and Saikaku never did and could transgress its well-marked confines.

Having thus briefly defined Saikaku's world and placed him in his proper sphere, we now find ourselves in a better position to grasp his view, expressed or implied, of *economic man*. After saying this, I immediately hasten to add that our author nowhere gives us a definite notion of *economic man*, but that he merely shows us a large variety of men and women grappling with life motivated by all forms of pecuniary pursuit. Of course, Saikaku is writing as an artist interested in a realistic portrayal of human nature, not as a moralist or a professional economist whose business it is to teach, convince or analyse. Nevertheless it may be hoped that amidst the immense wealth of data he presents it will not be impossible to sort out some guiding idea or ideas which may help us to piece together the scattered fragments into a comprehensive picture or pictures, albeit imperfect, of Saikaku's *economic man*. This is what I shall attempt to do in the remaining portion of my paper.

⁹ For an adequate appreciation of Saikaku's genius it is essential that his characteristics as a *chōnin* of Osaka receive due attention from his readers and students. The late Oda-Sakunosuke, novelist, stressed this point in his *Saikaku Shinron* (A New View of Saikaku), first published in 1942 and reprinted in 1956.

Epigrammatically, Saikaku's *economic man* may be described as a man of *saikaku* or a person richly endowed with this superior business quality. Our keyword here, then, is "saikaku", *lower case*, and we may profitably take it as the starting point of our discussion.

Almost a homonym of his own pen name, though differently accented, this word is said to have been in special favour with our author. He loved it also, it would seem, because it was a familiar localism of his native city, and because as such, it bore on its head the unmistakable stamp of its *chōnin* origin. It is a dynamic phrase with various connotations¹⁰—ingenuity, resourcefulness, an acute business sense, gumption, cunning, and what not—one feature common to all of these being their application, direct or indirect, to money matters.¹¹

In this sense Saikaku's *saikaku* comes very close to Mandeville's "industry" which is explained in *The Fable of the Bees* as follows:

Diligence and Industry are often used promiscuously, to signify the same thing, but there is a great Difference between them. A poor Wretch may want neither Diligence nor Ingenuity, be a saving Pains-taking Man, and yet without striving to mend his Circumstances remained contented with the Station he lives in; but Industry implies, besides the other Qualities, a Thirst after Gain, and an indefatigable Desire to meliorate our Condition. (*Op. cit.*, p. 274)

In the above quotation two points are particularly to be noted, *viz.* distinction of "industry" from "diligence" and "a thirst after gain" as an essential attribute of "industry." It seems to me that in both points the Japanese phrase answers Mandeville's purpose so much better than the English word that, had he known our language and its Osaka dialect, I have no doubt he would have adopted it in preference to the ambiguous term "industry." Only there is this difference between the two. Whereas *saikaku* as a popular expression does not date much further back than the beginning of the Tokugawa regime, "industry" has its root in the late mediaeval "industria," as used by Duns Scotus, Bernardinus of Siena, Antoninus of Florence and other Schoolmen discussing the economic realities of their age. "Industria" in this case was almost synonymous with *saikaku* and of more dynamic import than "mere diligence."¹²

¹⁰ For a detailed textual study of this term see Naoyoshi Tsukamoto's article entitled "Saikaku no Chōnin-Mono ni arawaretaru *saikaku* no Kenkyū" (A Study of the Word *saikaku* as Used in Saikaku's *Chōnin* Stories). It was printed in the "Saikaku Memorial Number" of the magazine *Kamigata* (August 1931). The writer's aim in this article is "to study the fundamental nature of this keyword in Saikaku's *chōnin* writings and to trace thereby his mental changes."

¹¹ The word may be used also as a transitive verb, *saikaku suru*, but in this case it is applied exclusively to money matters, hence this statement of mine.

¹² I have not so far come across any other eighteenth century writer in English who employed the word "industry" in this dynamic sense, and who moreover was so conscious of it that he wrote a special comment to distinguish it from "diligence." As regards the economic signific-

Thus, *saikaku* we may regard as the cardinal virtue for Saikaku's *economic man*. What, then, is its relation to *shimatsu* or thrift, another major economic virtue Saikaku writes so much about and apparently with such enthusiasm? It is indisputable that he thinks it an indispensable condition for the making and keeping of a great fortune. Probably no other writer in Japan has produced such masterly descriptions of misers who pinch and scrape to become *chōja*, distinguished men of wealth. Judging from these, one might be tempted to class Saikaku with the author of *The Wealth of Nations* to whom we owe this classical sentence: "But the principle which prompts to save, is the desire of bettering our condition, a desire, which, though generally calm and dispassionate, comes with us from the womb, and never leaves us till we go into the grave."¹³ But Saikaku and Smith wrote with distinctly different ends in view and the two men belonged to worlds poles asunder.

As I read Saikaku's *chōnin* stories, the feeling grows upon me that his real heroes are men of *saikaku*, creative geniuses in business enterprise, rather than his exponents of the simple virtue of *shimatsu*. His depiction of the two types of man is equally fascinating, but when he sings the praises of great merchants and their magnificent undertakings, he sounds as if he were writing with real enthusiasm. When, on the other hand, he treats of characters of extraordinary thrift or parsimony, his chief delight is in giving artistic expression to their oddities or the inhuman lengths the misers can go to in making their piles. Or, as more often happens, Saikaku introduces them as preludes to his stories of prodigal sons who are as much his heroes as merchant-adventurers. But it is only when *shimatsu* appears as a practical method of *saikaku* instead of as a mere manifestation of morbid avarice, that he feels like using it as a peg on which to hang his *Shin Chōja-kyō* or "new-way-to-wealth" tales. Even then Saikaku never writes like Samuel Smiles.

III

Saikaku's favourite type of *economic man* is a large-calibred business man doing things in a big, manly way and animated, if you will, with that "heroic avarice of the projectors" to which Burke refers in his great speech on the *Nabob of Arcot's Debts*. Saikaku uses many expressions to denote his ideal merchant, such as *sekai no shōnin* (literally, a merchant of the world), *fusō daiichi no daishōnin* (merchant-princes of the realm), *tenka no chōnin* (a world *chōnin* or citizen), etc. *Tenka* or *sekai* used in this

ance of "industria" in the writings of late mediaeval theologians, see Schreiber, *Die volkswirtschaftlichen Anschauungen der Scholastik seit Thomas von Aquin*, p. 146 ff. and particularly, Keller, *Unternehmung und Mehrwert*, p. 67 ff.

¹³ *Op. cit.*, Bk. I, § 3.

connection is somewhat like the English word "universe" in its 17th and early 18th century meaning, as in Defoe's *The True-Born Englishman*: "A man akin to all the *universe*."

Perhaps nothing ever written by Saikaku expresses his sentiment in this regard so well and vividly as his description of Kitahama Rice Market in *Nippon Eitaigura*. Here is a part of it.

Now, Kitahama being a rice market in the greatest port-city of Nippon, it is no rare thing there for a book transaction involving 50,000 *kan* of silver to be effected in a twinkling of an eye. Rice bales heaped up look like mountains. These change hands overnight, as merchants risk buying or selling them after carefully studying the weather with all its uncertainties and the shape of the clouds in the sky. Huge crowds throng the Market, bargaining with one another for a margin of a *fun* or two of silver. Even between parties known to each other only by sight, 10 to 100 thousand *koku* of rice may be offered for sale and accepted, but once the contract is closed, there never occurs a breach of faith. How different is this from the customary money transaction which must be guaranteed by an I. O. U. with the counter-signature of a surety! And yet how rarely is this pledge honoured, the pledge to pay at any time on demand, as the debtor is apt to defer payment beyond the date agreed upon, thereby often causing litigation! Not so at Kitahama, however, and this, in spite of the fact that people there come to terms, trusting to uncertain weather conditions. When the day for settlement comes, they acquit themselves, nobly disregarding profit or loss.

These men do business in a magnificent way, as well befits the merchant princes of the Empire which indeed they are. Big men have big hearts and go through life accordingly.

Evidently Saikaku is proud of Kitahama and prouder yet of the Osaka people who do business there—all "big men who have big hearts and go through life accordingly" (*Daishōnin no kokoro mo daifukuchū nishite, sore hodo no yo wo watarunaru.*) Here he must feel pretty much like Addison on the Royal Exchange, where he says "it gives me a secret Satisfaction, and in some measure, gratifies my Vanity, as I am an *Englishman*, to see so rich an Assembly of Country-men and Foreigners consulting together upon the private Business of Mankind, and making this Metropolis a Kind of *Emporium* for the whole Earth."¹⁴ In this passage replace "an Englishman" with "a citizen of Osaka", "Mankind" and "the whole Earth" with the characteristic Japanese expression "tenka", and delete "and Foreigners"; then it might be Saikaku writing about Kitahama, as the sentiment expressed is exactly alike, Saikaku sharing with Addison the same high opinion of merchants or *tenka no shōnin*. Certainly he would not hesitate

¹⁴ *Spectator* Essay No. 69.

to endorse expressions such as

This grand Scene of Business gives me an infinite Variety of solid and substantial Entertainments. As I am a great Lover of Mankind, my Heart naturally overflows with Pleasure at the sight of a prosperous and happy Multitude;¹⁵

Or

For these Reasons there are not more useful Members in a Commonwealth than Merchants. They knit Mankind together in a mutual Intercourse of good Offices, distribute the Gifts of Nature, find Work for the Poor, add Wealth to the Rich, and Magnificence to the Great.¹⁶

Returning to our own author, his love of *daifukuchū* or "big-heartedness" is revealed in all his writings, especially in those dealing with *chōnins'* world. Cognate expressions are *ōki* (a large spirit), *shōnin no kokorodama* (the great soul of a merchant), *daishōnin no kokoro* (the heart of a great merchant), and perhaps also *futeki*¹⁷ (fearless or audacious (in spirit or conduct)).

The big-heartedness of great merchants includes, of course, other elements than mere love of "bigness." It is a big-heartedness guided by the worldly wisdom of *saikaku* which Saikaku the novelist characterizes as *daishōnin no kokoro* or *shōnin-gokoro*. In illustration of his point he tells us the following story,¹⁸ which incidentally may serve also as an illustration of *saikaku*, as distinct from ordinary "diligence." At Nagasaki there was once a small raw-silk trader of Kyoto, an old hand at the port trade, having been engaged in it for the previous twenty years. He was a shrewd man and very economical, so much so that whenever he was leaving Kyoto for Nagasaki, he would beforehand eat his meal at home and otherwise equip himself thoroughly for the journey, as he wanted to pinch every penny he could on the way. While at Nagasaki, he never took a single look at Maruyama (gay quarters); instead he went to bed every night at his inn with his abacus and account books constantly beside his pillow. For all his diligence and prudence this man was a dismal failure. About the same time there were a group of Kyoto raw-silk merchants who went down with him to Nagasaki, but who proved infinitely more successful. In a short time they made so much money that they gradually came to delegate their actual business to their clerks, while they themselves stayed at home in Kyoto, denying themselves none of the usual luxuries millionaires enjoyed. Even while they were having a good time, their wealth, of its own accord, went on increasing more than ever.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ I almost hesitate to include this word in the list here, as it occurs in *NEG IV-5* where Saikaku seems to deprecate the recklessness of Edo people who "are said not to take thought for the morrow." (*gonichi no fumbetsu senu zokashi*).

¹⁸ *SMS IV-4.*

“Now, whence this difference between our successful merchants and the other man doomed to failure?” Saikaku asks himself and finds the answer in just one phrase—*shōnin-gokoro* or the “true spirit of a merchant,” for this is what makes merchants take good stock of market conditions, single out items which they feel sure will go up in price next year and invest in them boldly and with absolute confidence. Their sense of the market seldom fails them and their silver and gold piles up by leaps and bounds. “Unless you make this plunge and go through it all, you will stay where you are, all your life” (*Koko no futatsu monogake sezushite wa isshō kawaru koto nashi*) is Saikaku’s considered opinion and solemn judgment.

It may be noted that these eulogies of merchants, their courage, and the broadness of their vision mostly have for their background some aspects of maritime trade including shipping. The Kitahama scene here quoted forms part of Saikaku’s account of Karakaneya, a wealthy merchant of Settsu and the owner of an ocean-going vessel the *Jintsū-maru* carrying a full cargo of rice from north Japan into the port of Osaka. Nagasaki merchants are another favourite theme of his, and whatever he writes about the exotic port is strangely colourful and intriguing. We must remember, of course, that he was writing at a time when Japan had practically no free intercourse with the outside world, none of her subjects being permitted to sail abroad, except on pain of severe punishment. I can well imagine how Saikaku must have felt under such restrictions, he who loved the sea and must have had an intense curiosity about the unseen world beyond its blue immensity. I can imagine, too, how he would have liked to be able to describe his Kitahama Rice Exchange on the same world-embracing scale on which Addison discussed his Royal Exchange. Had Saikaku read the *Spectator* published in a country whose name he probably did not know, though Addison himself mentions Japan¹⁹ in the same Royal Exchange essay, how he would have envied Sir Andrew Freeport his proud declaration that “the Sea is the British Common”!

That this is by no means a wild conjecture is shown by many of his sayings in the *chōnin-mono* and elsewhere. For example, Saikaku compares the spirit of a great merchant to a ship sailing across the sea. “Make that spirit your own,” says he, “and you may cross the sea with the same lightness of heart as if you were stepping over the narrow ditch in front of your own house, and march on to your Treasure Island! Otherwise, you would never become a rich man. Pitiabile is a man who all his life stays

¹⁹ Cf. Ueda, “Japan” in *Some English Works of the 17th and 18th Centuries*, in the *Rising Generation*, Vol. CI, No. 11 (Nov. 1, 1955). In this article I discuss, on the data collected by myself, the views of Japan, mostly inadequate and inaccurate, held by many eminent Englishmen of the centuries specified. In the nineteenth century even the otherwise well-informed *Punch* in 1852 published a picture of a Japanese as a black man, and Samuel Butler, in his *The Way of All Flesh*, puts his hero up at a Japanese hotel a few years prior to the Meiji Restoration!

tied to his cash-scales, knowing nothing of the wide world."²⁰

It will not be improper in this place to recall that Saikaku has his own version of *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*. It is a short story of Tōsuke, son of a fish-hook maker at the port of Toba, Ise Province, and Saikaku tells it as one of his twenty narratives of undutiful children. (*Honchō Nijū Fukō*)²¹ It resembles Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* in a few of its main points, *viz.*, Tōsuke's uncontrollable roving spirit, his going to sea against the earnest entreaties of his parents, his shipwreck and unspeakable hardships on a desert island. But the conclusions of the two adventures are not at all similar. Whereas Crusoe survives all his adventures and eventually returns to England, triumphantly and an immensely rich man, the poor boy-sailor of Toba never comes home, having been tortured to death by savages on the god-forsaken island, a truly sad ending to show that no-one can violate the decree of filial piety with impunity.

Comparison between Crusoe and Tōsuke, tempting as it is, cannot detain me long here, as Tōsuke is not one of Saikaku's economic men, though Crusoe *is* in many ways a complete English tradesman. I would only point out that here our story-teller appears to be spinning his sea yarn with real gusto, and that his description of winds and waves is supremely good. Anyone unfamiliar with the changing moods of the sea could not bring them home to the reader so effectively.

Somewhat the same impression will be gathered from a reading of the story of Tengu-no-Gennai,²² the champion whale-harpooner of Kii Province. Saikaku almost makes you see him with your own eyes, as this veteran fisherman pursues his Moby Dick far off the coast and finally plants his first successful harpoon into the giant bowhead, when lo! up goes a paper windmill to every housetop in the fishing village in joyous celebration of the great catch of the day. Then follows Saikaku's inimitable pen-sketch, pithy, yet vividly descriptive, of how the whale is brought ashore and duly disposed of—an exposition as brilliant as Swift's on the Lilliputians working on Gulliver washed ashore in their country.

After all this it will not be necessary to labour the point—Saikaku's love of the sea and his secret longing for the world beyond.

IV

Saikaku counts it among the qualifications of his successful *economic man* that he should be an employer of numerous men and women, in other words, that he should be worthy of being called *danna* (master). "Danna,

²⁰ NEG IV-2.

²¹ *Honchō Nijū Fukō* II-3.

²² NEG II-5.

Danna to yobare" (People called him Master, Master) is one of Saikaku's usual expressions for indicating a state of easy competence attained by an industrious tradesman or the position of considerable influence he has come to hold in his business. If he has a troop of servants or dependents to keep he is facetiously but fittingly honoured with the title of *kamado-shōgun* (literally, "The General of the Oven," *i. e.* the Commissary General) and ranks far above the ordinary run of *danna* who at best are colonels and usually much lower officers. A *Kamado-shōgun* may be a man or a woman, according to Saikaku's usage, and this seems quite reasonable in view of the fact that in a *chōnin's* family the mistress was as much in business as the master.²³

"A successful tradesman is he," observes Saikaku, "who arranges matrimonial matches for those in his service and who, like a true master, sets them up in business." Feeding less than three mouths is not much of a domestic economy; you can call it a decent kind of living, if you have more than five people to look after in your house. A man employing not a single servant does not deserve the name of a house-keeper. Nobody calls him Master and he eats a solitary meal at home morning and night. No maid waits on him at table, and it's his own wife who serves him rice with her own hand without using so much as a service-tray. That way he may fill his belly all right, but I'm afraid there isn't much fun in that kind of life."

A fine example of *kamado-shōgun* is the mistress of Ōmi-Sensuya,²⁴ a model business woman after Saikaku's heart. She runs a humming shop making and selling mosquito-nets in the heart of Kyoto, of course hiring a great many hands—over 80 needlewomen, 50 hemstitchers and an army of apprentices and assistants. Saikaku depicts with a hearty relish a scene of extraordinary animation in the mess-room of her establishment where all these people eat together. This is his tribute to the mistress of Ōmi-Sensuya: "People may call a man Danna by courtesy, if he supports a small family of four or five. But this woman is a great public benefactor, because single-handed she gives sustenance to hundreds of people." Or we may say, using the expressive common parlance of his day, "Because she is a truly great *kamado-shōgun*."

Mitsui-Kuroemon, on the other hand, is represented by Saikaku not only as a *kamado-shōgun*, as he is a large employer, but as an exceptionally far-sighted business administrator. It is common knowledge that Saikaku is here telling the real story of Mitsui-Hachiroemon, founder of the famous Mitsui family whom in our day the Occupation viewed with the deepest distrust and suspicion as a leading *Zaibatsu* of modern Japan. "This Mitsui-

²³ See Ueda, *Some Business Women in Saikaku*, in *Japan Quarterly*. Vol. II. No. 4 (October-December 1955).

²⁴ *SOD* I-4.

Kuroemon", says Saikaku, "looks no different from other mortals, having eyes and nose in his face, and hands and feet to his body" —Recall Shylok's words 'Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew organs?' "but for astuteness in trade matters he is a rare genius."²⁵

The beginning of Kuroemon's success, according to Saikaku and this agrees with historical fact, was his opening in Edo the first draper's shop to sell on a cash basis, discarding credit-sales altogether, and on the principle of "one article, one price". His was also the first shop to keep in stock a wide range of commodities in his special and subsidiary lines of business, that is, to start the business of an embryonic "department store" (*yorozuya*). More than that, he sold cloth, cut to any length convenient to a customer, and his forty intelligent clerks and scores of skilled workmen and workwomen, each of whom was assigned to one special job, were always on hand to give every visitor prompt attention and complete satisfaction.

The Spectator, too, tells a story, remarkably similar to this, about John Moreton, a prominent London merchant of the day. It was written by Steele in 1712 (Essay No. 546), while Saikaku's piece was published in 1688. Says Mr. Spectator:

The Misfortune, of this Citizen (John Moreton was narrowly saved from the disgrace of bankruptcy by the generosity of some chivalrous business friends²⁶) is like to prove of a very general Advantage to those who shall deal with him hereafter. For the Stock with which he now sets up being the Loan of his Friends, he cannot expose that to the Hazards of giving Credit, but enters into a Ready-Mony Trade, by which Means he will both buy and sell the best and cheapest. He imposes upon himself a Rule of affixing the Value of each Piece it self; so that the most Ignorant Servant or Child will be as good a Buyer at his Shop as the most skillful in the Trade... To encourage Dealing after this way, there is not only the avoiding the most infamous Guilt of Bartering; but [a great saving of money for the customer, so that] Sixteen will do as much as Twenty Shillings.

We may say, therefore, that Necessity was the mother of invention to the ingenious London merchant, and that was true also of Saikaku's Mitsui-

²⁵ There is no lack of literature, in Japanese and in English, on the history of this great business family. But a classic for students of Japanese economic history is *Chōnin Kōken-roku* (A Tradesman's Reflections and Observations) written by Mitsui Takafusa during the Kyōho period (1716-35). It contains valuable pieces of advice on how to keep a business family prosperous through many succeeding generations, illustrating them with the ups and downs of several well-known mercantile houses. The author also discusses with deep penetration the declining *naisho* of Daimyo or feudal lords. About this now strange expression, once current in the trading circles of the Tokugawa period, I have written briefly in my Saikaku-Defoe article already cited.

²⁶ For this episode see *Spectator* essay No. 248. "The City Romance" is the sort of episode Saikaku might have included in *Nippon Eitaijura*.

Kuroemon who had to strike out something new and taking for his business or suffer extinction in the general wave of depression that was sweeping away most of his fellow drapers in Edo.

So far I have considered Saikaku's "economic man" as *danna* or *kamado-shōgun*. There are also a few other aspects of his character which interest me particularly, but before embarking upon their discussion, I feel that a word about Saikaku's terminology is in order. In addition to the two words just mentioned, he uses quite a variety of appellations for his successful tradesmen, such as *chōja*, *bungen*, *temaesha*, *tanoshiya*, *daijin*, etc. Each of these terms has its peculiar shade of meaning, but in one respect they all agree, *viz.* in implying possession of a large amount of money. Saikaku himself explains the difference between *chōja* and *bungen* by saying that "one who has made by his own efforts upwards of 500 *kan* of silver is called *bungen*, whereas one who has in the same way earned more than 1,000 is known as *chōja*." (NEG I-1). A *temaesha* is a person enjoying a good and sound financial condition, *temae*, almost a synonym of *naisho*, meaning "one's private finances". *Tanoshiya* is a good descriptive word, suggestive of the happiness (*tanoshi*) of one who has substantial wealth. Contrary to all these, a *daijin* is a spendthrift, a symbol of lordly extravagance, whose favourite resort is *yūkaku* or gay quarters.

Saikaku seldom uses this word when he speaks about his millionaire-heroes. Characters behaving like a *daijin* or who are actually named such do occur in his *chōnin* stories, as, for instance, Shiogama-no-Daijin and Ōgiya II, but *nominally* they are not the chief actors on the stage here, because Saikaku's primary business as author of *Nippon Eitaiigura* is writing about and illustrating the economic virtues of *saikaku* and *shimatsu*. *Daijin*, if useful for his immediate purpose, can only serve as a warning-piece to all aspirants to the status of *bungen* or *chōja*,

Au pied de la lettre, this presumably is not an erroneous interpretation of *Nippon Eitaiigura* and the rest of the trilogy. But personally I doubt if it does full justice to Saikaku who may or may not have intended it to be purely didactic in character. Probably it would be nearer the truth to say that he wrote his *chōnin* novels for his own artistic satisfaction. This impression gains on me as a result of repeated reading of his original texts which convey not only his literal meaning but the very mood in which he must have written them. When he describes beautiful courtesans or dwells upon the voluptuousness of gay life, he does not at all sound as if he were warning the reader, Bunyan-fashion, against dangers of the nocturnal "City of Destruction." His delineation is so elaborate and life-like that one gets a feeling that he is enjoying the atmosphere himself.

V

Here one is confronted with a point of fundamental difference between Saikaku's *economic man* and Defoe's or that of any other Augustan. Saikaku's *economic man*, whatever else he may be, is certainly no Puritan; at least, he has no religious scruples about seeking diversion in the world of *oiran* or courtesans in which he escapes from the monotony and harassment of his daily grind or where he glories in cutting a dash like a lord, sometimes in open rivalry with *samurai*, his social superiors. To him this "gay place of public entertainment," to borrow Smollett's phrase, is a necessary adjunct to his world of business and money-making, as a popular resort for pleasure and pecuniary display.

This is something entirely lacking in the life of "grave and sober" tradesmen in the works of Defoe and other middle class writers of his day. A good example, for purposes of comparison, would be George Lillo's *The London Merchant*, said to be the first middle class play, worthy of the name, in English literature. It looks to me like the nearest approach to our *sewamono* plays in the Kabuki tradition that England ever produced. In spite of all this outward resemblance, however, it presents a number of features which clearly mark it off from its Japanese counterpart. The most significant of such features is the idea of sin that persistently attaches to the "misdeeds" of Burnwell, a young apprentice of Truman, the London merchant. Apart from his murder of his own uncle, the amours of this innocent prey to the allurements of a wily professional woman, Millwood, would, on the Japanese stage, make a fit theme for dramatic enjoyment, but not so in the 18th century society of England. Everyone is preaching and sermonizing in the play, and the dying words of the hero clinch it all: "The impenitent alone die unforgiven, /To sin's like man, and to forgive is like Heaven,"—nothing at all like the last words exchanged between Ohatsu and Tokubei in Chikamatsu's *Sonezaki Shinjū!* No wonder Charles Lamb, an inveterate theatre-goer, got fed up with *The London Merchant*.²⁷

Of course, there are historical reasons to explain why courtesans and gay quarters became an essential element of *chōnin* literature, while middle class literature in England, especially after the seventeenth century, is, on the whole, so monotonously sober and moral in its general tone. In the latter case, it is true that the effect of Puritanism and the dissenting tradition is to be reckoned with, but what seems to me of greater importance is the fact that the English bourgeoisie had its social outlet in its relatively easy admission into the aristocracy of their country—a privilege usually denied to the Japanese bourgeoisie of the Tokugawa period. The wealth of

²⁷ Lamb, *On the Tragedies of Shakespeare*.

a successful merchant could buy him a title of nobility or otherwise establish intimate connections with distinguished families. On the part of the upper classes, too, there was far less of that supercilious contempt of commerce and trade which characterized feudal Europe and pre-Meiji Japan.

The money Japanese *chōnin* made, on the other hand, could seldom, if ever, elevate them into the rank of *samurai*. Even so wealthy and influential a merchant as Kawamura-Zuiken did not succeed in prevailing upon Arai-Hakuseki, then a struggling student and son of an impecunious *samurai*, to marry his richly-endowed niece and become a *chōnin*. What good, then, was their money for; how could they enjoy the fruit of their economy and industry or good fortune? "Gay quarters" was one of the answers to the question; there they could not only enjoy themselves, but rub shoulders on an equal footing with *samurai* whom they could easily beat in conspicuous consumption. Elia's witty remark on Jews, "The mercantile spirit levels all distinctions", may fit here better than in the *Essays*.

Bearing this bit of historical background in mind, it may be revealing to read Saikaku's scattered thoughts on *oiran* and *yūkaku* in relation to his "economic man." In most cases he discusses them as fatal snares for would-be *chōja* or prodigal sons of substantial merchants (*kusunoki-bungen*). Philandering of this kind he calls a disease, of which nothing short of death can cure its addicts (*Shinaza yamumai*), a figure of speech which reminds me of Adam Smith's description of "self-interest."²⁸ Speaking of Nagasaki merchants, he says, "If there were no place like Maruyama (gay quarters) at Nagasaki, the money of Kamigata (the Kyoto-Osaka area) would come home safely." Equally humorous is his satirical comparison between an *oiran* and an ordinary housewife, the subtlety of which defies translation at my inexpert hand.

There are two *yūkaku* stories in Saikaku concerned with the *making* of a fortune. One is that of a Nagasaki merchant from Hakata, Chikuzen Province, who, after losing nearly his all in the trade, goes into Maruyama to spend his last fifty *ryō* on a spree. It happens that his courtesan friend owns a folding screen of rare artistic value with a genuine autograph poem of Fujiwara-Sadaiye on it. Evidently she has no knowledge of her own precious possession and lets herself be easily wheedled out of it by the half-desperate Nagasaki merchant who now pretends to be her lover. With this folding screen he hastens to Kamigata and selling it to a feudal lord in Kyoto, realizes considerable cash, which he employs as his new business fund, eventually retrieving his lost fortune.

The other story relates to the spendthrift heir of a hard-working *saké* merchant of Itami. He nearly brings ruin to his paternal house, but one night, at Shimabara, he overhears a conversation going on in the adjoining room between a merchant and his *oiran*. This merchant was surprised a

²⁸ *The Wealth of Nations*, Bk. I, §3.

while ago by a messenger who brought him the urgent news from his clerk in Edo informing him of a big storm in the whole Kanto area, and advising him to buy all the rice he could, as the storm was bound to boost up the price. The merchant is excited over the prospects of this enormous windfall, but his *oiran* keeps him from taking prompt action. The young master of the Itami *saké* shop, however, is too shrewd a business man to let slip this unique opportunity. He rises from his bed immediately, though it is midnight, leaves with utmost despatch for Osaka and through his agents at Kitahama, purchases rice in a big way, netting a tremendous profit.

Thus, Saikaku seems to say, "Not all my economic men are *daijin* for nothing." But the ethics of the first story calls for some comment.

Would the Maruyama *oiran* have parted with her valuable folding screen so free-handedly, had she known its intrinsic worth, the price it would fetch in the market? Probably not. Then, wouldn't you say that her "lover" was taking unfair advantage of her ignorance and made capital out of it? Saikaku himself feels a little guilty about it and tries to smooth it over by contriving a happy ending for his story.

The question still remains, "How strictly does the quality of *saikaku* he requires of his 'economic man' accord with the principle of honesty or with business ethics in general?"

My answer was given, in part, in my former article on Saikaku and Defoe, as follows: "On the question of commercial honesty, therefore, I feel that Defoe and Saikaku hold about the same position. They both connive at minor offences on which custom does not put too fine an edge, but they are equally positive in their rejection of sharp business practices."

Incidentally, on this very question of what Defoe calls "latitudes" permissible for a tradesman, Mandeville also makes some poignant remarks which I suppose would not be altogether unacceptable to Saikaku. Restated in our own words, they are about men who have *saikaku* and men totally deficient in *saikaku*. I quote only what Mandeville says about the former.

In the active stirring Man (*viz.* a man of *saikaku*—T.U.)...a very little Avarice will egg him on to pursue his Aim with Eagerness and Assiduity: Small Scruples are no Opposition to him; where Sincerity will not serve, he uses Artifice; and in compassing his Ends the greatest Use he will make of his good Sense will be, to preserve as much as is possible the Appearance of Honesty, when his Interest obliges him to deviate from it. To get Wealth, or even a Livelihood by Arts and Sciences, it is not sufficient to undersand them: It is a Duty incumbent on all Men, who have their Maintenance to seek, to make known and forward themselves in the world, as far as Decency allows of without bragging of themselves, or doing

Prejudice to others.²⁹

This argument clearly leans on the side of defending the action of Saikaku's Nagasaki merchant who gives a wide margin to his conception of *saikaku* as a business asset.

VI

From what has been said it will not be difficult to guess the attitude assumed by Saikaku's *economic man* towards religion or religious matters. It is approximately the same as that of Defoe's English tradesman, in that it is consistently utilitarian and subordinated to the needs of business life, as may be seen from such popular sayings as "Piety brings profit" (*Shin areba toku ari*) or "Buddhism for Economy, Prayer for the Belly" (*Setai Buppō, Hara Nembutsu*).

As a matter of fact, all the deities that cross his way or he addresses himself to are, like him, economic men or women in disguise. They are uniformly responsive to economic stimuli. Ebisu, God of Trade and Good Fortune, rewards Tengu-no-Gennai, the veteran whale-harpooner of Kii Province, for his piety by initiating him in the secret art of carrying fish alive over long distances, forestalling Sir Richard Steele in his controversial "Fishpool Scheme." The God of Poverty is so overwhelmed with the unexpected hospitality of an eccentric dyer of Kyoto that he expresses his gratitude by promising to remove the curse of poverty from the dyer's family to a second-generation millionaire. Needless to say, both these "pious" men are blessed with prosperity ever afterwards.

Priests and bonzes come in for a good bit of criticism for their mercenary spirit. "Temple priests," writes Saikaku, "are not far removed from laymen in dealing with the world. They pander to their *danna* or rich parishioners, because ordinary priests have no other means of living." Priests of some sects were better off than those of others. "*Monto no temae yoshi* (Shinshu priests are well-off)," people used to say in Saikaku's day, hence a humorous dialogue like this in one of his books: "Have you no rich relative on your wife's side, or haven't you got a brother turned priest and who is well-to-do?" asked Mr. Know-All of a man who sought his counsel on a point of private finance. When the man replied No, he went away saying, "I am sorry, Sir; in that case there's nothing I can do for you!"

Usurious priests were not less common in Saikaku's Japan than in mediaeval Europe. Recall the Mizuma Temple story in the first part of

²⁹ *The Fable of the Bees*, Vol. II, p. 108.

this article. That Saikaku despises mercenary priests appears from such phrases as *maisū*, *katari*, *inyō-shi no tagui* (mercenary bonzes, cheats, soothsayers and the like) which reminds one of Mandeville's lines:

.....While others follow'd Mysteries,
To which few Folks bind 'Prentices;
That want no Stock, but that of Brass,
And may set up without a Cross;
As Sharpers, Parasites, Pimps, Players,
Pick-pockets, Coiners, Quacks, South-sayers.

In this connection it is interesting to find Saikaku saying:

True piety is rare nowadays, though there are many people who look deeply concerned over their salvation in future life. Donors of tiles for the walls of their family temples do not forget to put their crest upon each tile, and builders of stone bridges in the temple ground have their names inscribed on them—all for ostentation. If they wish blessing for their souls, they might just as well send rice to the poor temple priests and make donations without writing their names and addresses in the Book of Subscriptions.

These words, again, may be compared with those of Mandeville in *Charity and Charity Schools*:

A rich Miser, who is thoroughly selfish, and would receive the Interest of his Money even after his Death, has nothing else than to defraud his Relations, and leave his Estate to some famous University: they are the best Markets to buy Immortality with little Merit...and the Measure of the Gift is ever the Standard of their Praises, whether the Donor be a Physician or a Tinker, when the once living Witnesses that might laugh at them are extinct.

Now for a few final thoughts on Money in relation to Saikaku's *economic man*. That the two topics are insolubly bound up together goes without saying. The point, however, is "How good is Saikaku's performance in dealing with this perennial theme?" and the consensus of literary opinion in Japan is that he has been uniquely successful in this respect.

What is particularly impressive about Saikaku's handling of the money-theme is, in my opinion, his artistic realism with little more than a semblance of didacticism. This is what distinguishes him from most of his Augustan contemporaries like Swift, Addison, Steele, Pope, and others, not excluding Defoe himself. Mandeville is one of the very few English writers of the period in whose dispassioned discussion of the subject we find much that is essentially common to Saikaku, and this is probably because the author of *The Fable of the Bees*, not being a "true-born Englishman," was untrammelled by the social tradition of his adopted country.

Defoe has put into the mouth of his shipwrecked Crusoe the familiar words:

O drug! what art thou good for? Thou art not worth to me, no, not worth the taking off the ground; one of those knives is worth all this heap; I have no manner of use for thee, e'en remain where thou art, and go to the bottom as a creature whose life is not worth saving.

This is Defoe's stark utilitarianism, as he almost immediately makes Crusoe change his mind and take away all this money and "wrap it in a piece of canvas,"—just in case. Note the preaching tone of this strange "ode" to money.

On the other hand, Saikaku, even when he is dilating on the futility of money, is far more subtle and realistic than Defoe. Perhaps the best example is to be found in the opening paragraph of the first piece in *Nippon Eitaiigura*. There, after calmly philosophizing, on good classical authority, on the ephemerality of human life, the author goes on to say: "Life indeed is a dream. All of us, in the crematories, go up in smoke in a moment's time. At such a time our gold and silver is worse than brick and stone; it will be no good at all in the next world." At the end of all these reflections Saikaku cynically concludes: "And yet, money is a good thing for us to give our children and children's children." How much better this is than Crusoe's "second thoughts"!

Swift's satirical remarks on human love of money in *Gulliver's Travels*, especially in its fourth part, are bitter and biting, but at bottom, didactic, if indictment of this sort may be taken as a form of didacticism.

When a Yahoo has got a great store of this precious substance, he is able to purchase whatever he has a mind to; the finest clothing, the noblest houses, great tracts of land, the most costly meats and drinks, and his choice of the most beautiful females. Therefore, since money alone is able to perform all these feats, our Yahoos think they can never have enough of it to spend, or to save, as they find themselves inclined, from their natural bent, either to profusion or avarice. The rich man enjoys the fruit of the poor man's labour, and the latter are a thousand to one in proportion to the former. The bulk of our people are forced to live miserably, by labouring every day for small wages, to make a few live plentifully.

It is curious to observe how all the facts and ideas mentioned in this quotation find concrete expression in Saikaku, though, of course, against an entirely alien background. He weaves them all into his tales of wealth and poverty, but never with the belligerent cynicism of Swift, but always with his sparkling humour and a smile—cynical, it may be—of philosophy. He merely exposes and seldom, if ever, proposes; in other words he hardly

ever indulges in *political* reflections.³⁰

I now have to take leave of my subject, keenly conscious that there still remain a number of questions I should have taken up to make clear the character of Saikaku's *economic man*, such as Saikaku's inordinate love of figures, or his weakness for taking exact and often tedious measure of men and things, a trait common to Defoe, his zeal for book-keeping or "casting up accounts," his epicurianism and so on. A fascinating work would be study of his highly original style of writing and comparison of it with that of some bourgeois writers in Augustan England. Forgoing the pleasure of writing on these matters I shall finish by quoting some specimens of Saikaku's vivid and appealing diction on money as a living creature.

One of the wealthiest families in Mimasaku Province is said to have so much gold and silver in its treasury that nightly the precious metals are heard to *groan* in their confinement. *Kingin no Isei*, the pomp and power of gold and silver, is a fine personification of wealth, almost like Thomas Gray's, but carrying no suggestion of "the inevitable hour."

Nagasaki ni Maruyama to yū tokoro nakuba Kamigata no Kingin buji kitaku subeshi (If there were no place like Maruyama [Gay Quarters] at Nagasaki, the gold and silver of Kamigata—*i.e.* Kyoto and Osaka—would come home safely.) is another quotation which will bear repetition here.

As Fortune smiles or frowns upon man, so does Money love or hate him. The first metaphor is English or European, and the second Japanese and Saikaku's in particular. Yorozuya II in *Nippon Eitaiigura* V-5 gives himself up to debauchery to such an extent that ultimately his gold and silver come to "love him no more, though they have made his house their home for so long." (*Hisashiku kono ié ni suminareshi Kingin ni nikumarete*). A man hopelessly out of pocket on New Year's Eve complains of his "having fallen out with Silver (*kane to nakatagai shite*) which never shows him its face in the money-box." "Money is my enemy" (*kane ga kataki*), cries desparately someone plagued with an urgent need of money.

³⁰ Decidedly more Saikaku-like is a letter written by Steele to *The Spectator*, as from a tobacco merchant, on the subject of the love of money. (Essay No. 450) It is a full-strength *chōnin* piece worthy of our Genroku novelist. The following passage is particularly excellent.

"This Calamity (the great London fire of 1666) was very terrible and astonishing, and the Fury of the Flames being such, that whole Streets, at several distant Places, were destroyed at one and the same Time, so that (as it was well known) almost all our Citizens were burnt out of what they had. But what did I then do? I did not stand gazing on the Ruins of our noble Metropolis; I did not shake my Head, wring my Hands, sigh and shed Tears; I considered with myself what could this avail; I fell a plodding what Advantages might be made of the ready Cash I had, and immediately bethought myself that wonderful Penny-worths might be bought of the Goods that were saved out of the Fire. In short, with about 2000 *l.* and a little Credit, I bought as much Tobacco as raised my Estate to the value of 10000 *l.* I then *looked on the Ashes of our City, and the Misery of its late Inhabitants, as an Effect of the just Wrath and Indignation of Heaven towards a sinful and perverse People.*" (The italics are mine).

Saikaku compares gold and silver hoarded by misers to beautiful maidens shut up like nuns in the convent. Like Nature, they too *will* out, as soon as the old hunks themselves pass out of circulation, and Saikaku thinks this is all to the good of the world.

Sometimes, however, gold and silver may take a fancy to you, or even fall in love with you. In that blessed state, they will pour into your coffers, unsolicited; they almost invite themselves into your family. Such is the case with the self-made multi-millionaire of Osaka whose story is told in *Seken Munesan-yo* IV-1. One New Year's Eve, of all times, this princely money-changer is so embarrassed with a never-ending inflow of cash that the last load of silver to arrive in his shop "passes the last night of the year like dross, out in the courtyard, cold and neglected."

Saikaku's economic men and women all love their money passionately and make no apologies for doing so, as *Nippon Eitaigura* belongs to quite a different *genre* of literature from *An Essay on Man*. Obviously this frank attitude towards their dominant drive in life bespeaks that social climate of *chōnin* culture which Professor Sansom so significantly contrasts with the peculiar features of the Augustan world not yet quite freed from the persistent dominance of lingering feudalism. But the difference, I would say, is in social tradition rather than in the essential character of *economic man* as such, whether he be Japanese or British.