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Dreaming One's Way to Good Health

A Translation of Jippensha Ikku's *Hara no Uchi Yōjō Shuron*

ANGELIKA KOCH

ABSTRACT: This article presents a fully annotated English translation of Jippensha Ikku's "yellow-cover book" (*kibyōshi*) *Hara no uchi yōjō shuron*, one of a number of late-Edo works of popular fiction and prints that used the inner workings of the human body as their subject matter. A close reading of the work shows how it relies heavily on Sino-Japanese medical concepts—particularly those propounded in Kaibara Ekiken's Confucian-inflected health cultivation text *Yōjōkun*—and how it draws on the moral teachings of Shingaku ("Mind-Learning"); thus the present article reveals the flow of knowledge between medical, moral, and literary discourses. It demonstrates, moreover, the interest that *Hara no uchi yōjō shuron* holds not only for literary scholars as an example of popular fiction's turn toward more serious subject matter in the wake of the Kansei Reforms but also for scholars of medical history as a text that incorporates notions of health cultivation and the medical body that were current in Ikku's day.

KEYWORDS: Jippensha Ikku, *kibyōshi*, *yōjō*, *kusazōshi*, early modern popular fiction, Sino-Japanese medicine, Kaibara Ekiken

Jippensha Ikku's 十返舎一九 (1765–1831) "yellow-cover book" (*kibyōshi* 黄表紙) *Hara no uchi yōjō shuron* 腹内養生主論 (The Essentials of Healthy Living Inside the Abdomen; 1799) is one of a number of works of popular fiction and prints in the late Edo period that explored the inner workings of the human body as their subject matter. Both visually and textually, *Essentials* takes the reader on a humorous journey inside Ikku's own ailing body, which is suffering the adverse consequences

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of the author's excessive love of food (and, to a lesser degree, sex). His overindulgence spells trouble for the unruly organs and body parts that inhabit Ikku's narrative world; as personified characters, they embark on steamy affairs, intrigue, and foodie feasts of Edo delicacies before the body is eventually pacified and order restored.

In opening up the impenetrable depths of the medical body to the reader's curious gaze, Ikku relies on long-standing Sino-Japanese medical ideas about physiology, disease, and health. *Essentials* thus represents part of a larger literary trend in the 1790s that turned for inspiration to more "serious" subject matter, such as moralistic Shingaku 心学 (Mind-Learning) teachings, encyclopedias, school primers, and medical works. With the escalation of government censorship of print publications in the wake of the Kansei 寛政 Reforms (1787–1793), this was likely one means of steering clear of persecution by the authorities; at the same time, as Suzuki Toshiyuki 鈴木俊幸 has pointed out, it reflected a readership that at the end of the eighteenth century was both interested and well-versed in such popular educational books.¹ Medicine was one of the (at least ostensibly) respectable themes explored by *kibyōshi*, and Ikku drew upon a variety of sources from within the library of knowledge that commercial printing had created for the reading public. First and foremost among these was the oeuvre of Confucian scholar-physician Kaibara Ekiken (or Ekken) 貝原益軒 (1630–1714) on health and the body, references to which are one of the unique and fascinating features of *Essentials*.²

In this respect, Ikku's work offers a rich source for investigating the circulation and reception of medical knowledge and holds interest for scholars of cultural studies as well as historians of medicine and the body. More specifically in this context, it also provides an intriguing example of the visual and textual imagination that surrounded disease and the body in early modern Japanese popular fiction and sheds light on common perceptions of human physical processes. From the viewpoint of literary scholarship, it adds another perspective to recent literary studies that have increasingly stressed the protean nature of such popular works and the permeability of genre boundaries between fiction and nonfiction—in this case the lay-oriented medical segment of the market. This crossover would have lent an air of supreme respectability to works of fiction, but—as the reader will undoubtedly discover in this translation—it also opened up space for social satire, irreverence, and, above all, lighthearted entertainment.

¹ Suzuki Toshiyuki, *Edo no dokushonetsu*, particularly chapter 1.

² Kaibara appears as a central character in *Essentials*, where Ikku refers to him by one of his lesser-known appellations, Kaibara Tokushin 貝原篤信.

The Author

Although Jippensha Ikku was one of the leading writers of popular fiction in the late Edo period, little is known about his early life.³ He was born in Suruga Province (present-day Shizuoka Prefecture) in 1765 to the Shigeta 重田 family, which served the Sunpu 駿府 city magistrate. He first appeared on the creative scene in Osaka at the age of twenty-five as the coauthor of a *jōruri* 浄瑠璃 puppet play performed in 1789, but by 1793 he had made his way to Edo, which was to become his base for a successful publishing career spanning four decades. Apprenticing himself to Tsutaya Jūzaburō 蔦屋重三郎 (1750–1797), a prominent publisher of Edo fiction and ukiyo-e, Ikku initially worked as an artist and illustrator of *kibyōshi*, the “yellow-cover” graphic narratives that were in vogue at the time, before making his debut as a fiction writer at the age of thirty with *Shingaku tokeigusa* 心学時計草 (Mind-Learning Clock Grass; 1795) and two other *kibyōshi* of his own. Thus when Ikku wrote *Essentials* four years later, he was still a relative newcomer to the world of Edo illustrated fiction.

These early works, however, marked merely the beginning of a staggeringly prolific and versatile output. Ikku continued to be active as an author, an artist, and a copyist, often preparing the block-ready text (*hanshita* 版下) to be carved into the woodblocks and (as in the case of *Essentials*) illustrating his own works. He tried his hand at virtually every literary genre that enjoyed a wave of popularity in Edo during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, from the aforementioned *kibyōshi* and longer *gōkan* 合巻 graphic narratives to the witty and stylish *sharebon* 洒落本 set in the pleasure quarters, romantic *ninjōbon* 人情本 fiction, collections of comic stories (*hanashibon* 噺本) and comic poetry (*kyōka* 狂歌 and *senryū* 川柳), longer historical fiction (*yomihon* 読本), and comic novellas (*kokkeibon* 滑稽本). His *kibyōshi* alone number almost two hundred works penned over a period of a mere eleven years, during which time he churned out as many as nineteen in a single year. However, the runaway hit that made Ikku a household name was his *Hizakurige* 膝栗毛 (Shank's Mare) series of comic travel novellas, which began with the publication of *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige* 東海道中膝栗毛 (Shank's Mare on the Tōkaidō) in 1802 (initially under a different title) and continued in the form of various prequels and sequels until Ikku's death in 1831. These novellas follow the misadventures of the comic duo Yaji 弥次 and Kita 喜多 as they bumble their way along the Tōkaidō 東海道 highway and, in subsequent installments, venture further afield to other regions of Japan such as the Kiso 木曾 Road and Nikko 日光. As well as works of fiction, Ikku also produced texts of a more utilitarian nature, such as primers, letter-writing manuals, women's textbooks, advertising flyers—and even

³ Unless otherwise stated, the biographical and bibliographic details in this section rely on Tana-hashii, *Jippensha Ikku* and the chronology in Nakayama, *Jippensha Ikku kenkyū*, pp. 49–263.

the occasional household medical book, particularly in the late 1810s and 1820s.⁴ All told, he was one of the first professional authors in early modern Japan who succeeded in making a living almost entirely by means of his writing brush.

Some of Ikku's *kibyōshi* in particular have received attention in English translations in recent years, including his self-referential exploration of the early modern publishing trade *Atariyashita jihon doiya* 的中地本問屋 (It's a Hit! The "Local Book" Wholesaler; 1802) and the comic monster-themed stories of which he was, in Adam Kabat's estimation, "the undisputable master."⁵ As a genre of Edo graphic narratives (*kusazōshi* 草双紙), these "yellow covers," in which text and image are closely intertwined on the page, had developed from earlier illustrated narrative forms that were initially aimed mostly at children (but then increasingly also at adults) and flourished from the 1770s until the early 1800s (ca. 1775–1806), just as Ikku was setting out as a writer. Early *kibyōshi* were humorous satirical works directed toward a rather circumscribed and sophisticated adult audience; among them are a number of what Adam Kern has called "protest pieces" that parodied contemporary politics.⁶ Following the Kansei Reforms, however, *kibyōshi* produced in the 1790s turned to "safer" themes, often with a moral tone and aimed at a wider readership. It is against this backdrop that we have to situate Ikku's *Essentials*.

The Work

Essentials opens with a fictionalized version of Ikku as an idle and uncouth fellow who "had the urge to eat everything he laid his eyes on." Ikku's insatiable appetite and his love of outlandish dishes, detailed humorously in the preface (fol. 1a), have taken their toll on his health to the extent that he is no longer able to write illustrated books. One day he dozes off and has a strange dream, which sets in motion the common device in *kibyōshi* of the dream narrative.⁷ Somewhat unusual in this case, however, is the inclusion of a medical viewpoint on dreams, in tune with the general theme of the work—namely, the notion that dreams are a reflection of

⁴ For an example of an advertising flyer crafted by Ikku, see Suzuki Toshiyuki, *Shoseki ryūtsū shiryōron josetsu*, pp. 144–45.

⁵ For the English translation of *Atariyashita jihon doiya*, see Marceau, "Behind the Scenes," pp. 407–20; for a discussion of this and other *kibyōshi* by Ikku that thematize the publishing trade and the professional author's creative process, see also Atherton, "Author as Protagonist." For English translations of three of Ikku's monster-themed *kibyōshi*, *Tanomi ari bakemono no majiwari* 信有奇怪会 (Monsters to the Rescue; 1796), *Bakemono no yomeiri* 化物の嫁入 (The Monster Takes a Bride; 1807), and *Kappa no shirikodama* 河童尻子玉 (The River Imp and the Stinky Jewel; 1798), see Kabat, *River Imp*, pp. 67–132, 221–308.

⁶ For a recent discussion of Edo graphic narratives, such as *kibyōshi*, and their development, see Moretti and Satō, *Graphic Narratives from Early Modern Japan*; I have adopted the term "graphic narrative" proposed by Moretti and Satō. Several English translations of early *kibyōshi* can be found in Kern, *Manga from the Floating World*. On the impact of the Kansei Reforms on the production of *kibyōshi*, see Satō, *Edo no shuppan tōsei*, pp. 8–66.

⁷ For a discussion of the role of dreams in *kibyōshi* fiction, see Araki, "Dream Pillow."

suffering in the Five Organs. In Chinese medical thought, dreams were generally considered to be of diagnostic value in pointing the doctor toward the cause of a disease.⁸ Ikku's story reflects this notion in both text and image, as the personified Dream leads the illustrious medical expert Kaibara Ekiken inside Ikku's body to diagnose the disease and heal him from within (fols. 1b–2a). Non-narrative fragments of medical knowledge are woven into the text in the form of direct quotations from medical works and proverbs, which at the same time become narrative building blocks that drive the plot.

But what qualified Ekiken to feature as the expert guide to the inner workings of the medical body in Ikku's work? Ekiken was a polymath who wrote on subjects including Confucian philosophy, travel, agriculture, and natural history.⁹ Yet his reputation concerning expertise on medicine and health relied mostly on *Yōjōkun* 養生訓 (Precepts of Health Cultivation; 1713), which he completed at the age of eighty-four, one year before his death, and which contained simple health guidelines for everyday living, including advice on food, alcohol and tea, sleep, and sex. Arguably the most illustrious Edo-period text on health cultivation, it is to this day regularly published in Japan in a host of modern-language translations, and self-help guides continue to tout its benefits for contemporary readers.

Though it is difficult to generalize about the somewhat diverse landscape of early modern health-cultivation discourses, which did not constitute a homogeneous genre,¹⁰ there are certain features and associations that this type of text would have conjured up for lay readers in the late eighteenth century. The most widely read works of this kind were generally printed books written in the vernacular and aimed at a lay audience of health seekers. The authors were mainly healing experts and scholars, although a certain shift can be observed in the late Edo period, as the increasing accessibility of such knowledge permitted dilettantes to assume an authoritative position as writers—or, in Ikku's case, to incorporate such information into a work of fiction. Perhaps most importantly for our purposes, however, these health-cultivation manuals aimed at a general audience were often steeped in Confucian-inspired didacticism. In Ekiken's particular case, this was not surprising given his own Confucian scholarly pedigree, but it is worth noting the overall strong connection between Sino-Japanese medical scholarship and Confucian learning in early modern Japan.¹¹

⁸ For more details, see note 44 in the translation.

⁹ On Ekiken, see Inoue, *Kaibara Ekiken*; Yokoyama, *Kaibara Ekiken*; Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation*. For his views on health cultivation, see also Koch, "Sexual Healing: Regulating Male Sexuality"; Niehaus, "They Should Be Called Gluttons."

¹⁰ For overviews of early modern health-cultivation discourses, see Takizawa, *Yōjō no tanoshimi* and *Yōjōron no shisō*; Kabayama, "Yōjōron no bunka."

¹¹ Reasons for this were manifold: There was at the time already an intrinsic Confucian stance in the Chinese medical system imported from the continent; much learning and education in the Edo period was in general solidly grounded in Confucianism; and Sino-Japanese medicine

Although the 1790s had seen a number of new publications on health cultivation,¹² it is not surprising that Ikku should have drawn inspiration from Ekiken's *Yōjōkun* despite more than eighty years having elapsed since its initial appearance. *Yōjōkun* achieved an unprecedented degree of popularity during the early modern era, and at least thirteen dated editions had appeared by the end of the Edo period—more than for any other health-cultivation text. In the run-up to the work's hundred-year anniversary in 1812, the publisher even launched a new extended version, amended by a substantial “appendix” (*furoku* 附録) dealing with sexual matters, which went on to be reproduced in other late-Edo editions.¹³ Ekiken himself had gained a lasting reputation as a well-respected Confucian scholar, and his personal fame certainly played a part in the publication's reception. *Yōjōkun* in particular had a substantial impact on subsequent health-cultivation books, and in fact it became a benchmark for many later works on the subject—although not all of them necessarily agreed with Ekiken's theories.

In various late-Edo educational tracts, the omnipresent *Yōjōkun* was recommended reading, particularly for young men, as health cultivation became part of a larger ideal of normative early modern masculinity.¹⁴ Research into early modern book catalogues and private records, moreover, demonstrates that the reading stratum of society owned various health-cultivation books, including *Yōjōkun*, and that this group was by no means limited to the warrior elite but encompassed in addition upwardly mobile, elite commoners by at least the early eighteenth century.¹⁵ Our insight into people's reading practices with respect to such books is limited, but available sources suggest that some did indeed turn to them for health reasons and heeded their advice to improve their well-being. The scholar Hōjō Katei 北条霞亭 (1780–1823), for example, wrote in a letter to his brother (dated 1815) that he had recently been taking active steps to look after his health and to this purpose had read Ekiken's *Yōjōkun*, which he extolled as “the work of a great Confucian scholar,” praising its contents as being “accessible and interesting.” Convinced that

and Confucianism in particular shared genealogical affinities and institutional proximity as “Chinese-style learning.” On the connections between Confucianism and medicine, see Anzai, *Nihon jui kenkyū*; for recent perspectives in English, see also Paramore, “Chinese Medicine”; Elman, “Sinophiles and Sinophobes.”

¹² These included *Hiden eiseiron* 秘伝衛生論 (1795) and *Hiden chōjuhō* 秘伝長寿法 (1797), as well as new editions of *Rōjin yashinaigusa* 老人養草 (1716) and *Byōka jikun* 病家示訓 (1713) in 1793.

¹³ Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*. This 1812 edition was issued by the Osaka publisher Tada Kanbe'e 多田勘兵衛, who also solicited the new appendix.

¹⁴ This point has been argued extensively in Koch, “Sexual Healing: Regulating Male Sexuality” and “Sexual Healing: Sexuality, Health and the Body.” For an example, see Tsuda Masanari's 津田正生 *Kon'in danshikun* 婚姻男子訓 (1808), which includes the work in a list of books for young men (Tsuda, *Kon'in danshikun*, fol. 33a [*maki* 巻 1]).

¹⁵ Yokota, “Ekiken-bon no dokusha” and *Nihon kinsei shomotsu bunkashi*, pp. 408–11; Tsukamoto Manabu, “Edo jidai hito no seimei iji.”

he “was feeling its positive effects on his body,” he seemed in fact so utterly taken with the book that he announced his intention to arrange for a copy to be sent to his sickly, elderly parents.¹⁶

For the reasons detailed above it is safe to conclude that *Yōjōkun* was a widely known exemplar of health-cultivation books at the time Ikku was writing. But how precisely does the author use this intertextual reference point in his work? In its narrative progression, *Essentials* brilliantly parallels elements of Ekiken's text and the medical wisdom of health discourses more generally. Personified body parts act out the dos and (more commonly) the don'ts of healthy living, demonstrating in a tangible way the putative effects of an unhealthy lifestyle on the body. Ikku's fictional body is thrown into the disarray of disease as a result of his gluttony—a vice perennially discussed in medical discourses as a major hindrance to health cultivation.¹⁷ Ekiken in particular emphasized the importance of controlling inner desires (*naiyoku* 内欲) for maintaining a healthy body and cited overindulgence in food, sex, and sleep as triggers for disease, stating that “as long as one withstands one's inner desires and avoids bad external influences, illnesses won't occur.”¹⁸ Accordingly, Ikku's dream narrative, which illustrates the effect of overeating on the body (fols. 2b–3a, 7b–8a), casts the senses as the body's saboteurs: the Nose, Eyes, and Mouth, which represent Ikku's voracious desire for food, become the unlikely villains scheming to wreak havoc on his body (fols. 5b–6a, fol. 11a). Only once they are suppressed in a fight that sees the evildoers subdued (fols. 13b–14a) can peace and order return to the body and Ikku be restored to health.

The second “great desire” that Ikku metaphorically represents in his narrative is sex, overindulgence in which was also believed to be harmful to health cultivation. In Ikku's fictional body, Miss Essence (*seiki* 精気)—the sexual vitality that according to Sino-Japanese medical thought is stored in the kidneys—and Master Life Energy (*genki* 元氣, literally “original *ki*”)—the life energy received from one's parents at birth—appear as a pair of lovestruck youngsters (fols. 3b–4a, 6b–7a, 8b–9a). They embark on a passionate affair until their nightly tête-à-têtes begin to take their toll (fols. 4b–5a), reflecting the Sino-Japanese medical belief that frequent sex drained the kidneys' “water” (sexual fluids) and caused a host of wasting symptoms.¹⁹ The early nineteenth-century appendix to *Yōjōkun*, for example, described the “fear-some harbingers” of sexual exhaustion, which included bad eyesight, dizziness, loss

¹⁶ This letter is reproduced in Mori Ōgai's *Hōjō Katei* 北条霞亭 (1918); see Mori, *Ōgai zenshū*, vol. 18, p. 295.

¹⁷ On the role of food in early modern health discourses, see Niehaus, “They Should Be Called Gluttons”; Kinski, “Admonitions Regarding Food”; Schlachet, *Nourishing Life*.

¹⁸ Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 117.

¹⁹ This notion was accorded particular credence in seventeenth-century medicine (so-called latter-day, or *goseiha* 後世派, medicine) but continued to circulate throughout the Edo period. For the historical development of these ideas about sex, see Koch, “Sexual Healing: Sexuality, Health and the Body.”

of hair, ringing in the ears, nosebleeds, a pale complexion, dryness of the throat and mouth, insomnia, nocturnal emissions, and the expulsion of blood and phlegm.²⁰ Such symptoms would eventually lead to the serious medical condition “depleted kidneys and moving fire” (*jinkyō kadō* 腎虛火動), dramatized by Ikku as the rivalry between two brothers who do not see eye to eye (fol. 9b). This story arc cloaks the medical logic of sexual exhaustion in fictional metaphors; yet at the same time, slippery “water” puns that create sexual innuendo abound, replacing and undermining the sober Confucian propriety and alarmist urgency that underpinned health discourses.

Ekiken, despite being introduced as the reader’s guide to the inner workings of the body, only reappears from the depth of Ikku’s bowels at the very end of the work, where he exhorts the author to be more moderate in his eating habits in the future (fols. 14b–15a). The book finishes on the didactic note that a healthy body forms the basis for excelling at one’s trade and for rising up in the world, with the riches that are the reward of hard work raining down from the sky in an auspicious shower of gold coins (fol. 15b). This closing image stands in stark contrast to the ailing figure of Ikku at the beginning of the book and ultimately conveys a simple message that equates health with good fortune and financial success on the one hand and disease with poverty on the other. Such rhetoric mimicked the educational tone of didactic works for merchants, in which nurturing life and maintaining a healthy body were often accorded economic significance, as for example in several of Ihara Saikaku’s 井原西鶴 (1642?–1693) seventeenth-century tales of righteous merchants in *Nippon eitaigura* 日本永代蔵 (The Eternal Storehouse of Japan; 1688).²¹ In fact, as Kuriyama Shigehisa 栗山茂久 has previously argued at length, the healthy body and the economically active body came to be intimately connected in early modern Japan.²²

Overall, *Essentials* encapsulates the late eighteenth-century interest in medical knowledge and educational literature more generally together with the perception of Ekiken as the foremost learned authority on health cultivation. Ikku has his characters act out Ekiken’s main medical precepts for well-being—above all an ethics of moderation and frugality—in a narrative spiked with wordplay and humor that builds on the principles of Sino-Japanese medicine. In this respect, the work did exactly what its title promised: It captured and metaphorically repackaged the basics of health cultivation according to contemporary standards of

²⁰ Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*; for a transcription, see Sugimoto, *Yōjōkun furoku*.

²¹ On Saikaku’s view of health cultivation, see also Suzuki Tōru, *Kinsei zenki bungaku*.

²² More specifically, Kuriyama points out that in the wake of the early modern intensification of labor, work and movement came to be valued as beneficial to the body, while lack thereof was pathologized in the medical notion of “stagnation”; see Kuriyama, “Historical Origins” and “When Money Became a Humour.” On the economic aspects of health cultivation in particular, see also Tsukamoto Akira, “Ken’yaku to yōjō.”

medical knowledge. It thus followed a host of *kibyōshi* in the 1790s that provided parodic versions of educational or “serious literature,” such as primers for school-children, Shingaku teachings, and encyclopedias. Suzuki Toshiyuki has interpreted such works of popular literature as “illustrated explanations” (*etoki* 絵解), i.e., accessible versions for a broad audience that sought educational reading in the late eighteenth century.²³ Be that as it may, such works were certainly indicative of an audience that was assumed to be well-versed in printed knowledge and particularly in lay-oriented medical print culture; for such readers, part of the appeal of these fictional works must have been the added layer of intertextual amusement that came from being acquainted with the original texts. In this sense, Ikku's work falls within the category of literary works so memorably discussed by Fukuda Yasunori 福田安典 as “impossible to fully appreciate, if not altogether unintelligible in the first place” without medical knowledge.²⁴

Medical knowledge in this way served to impart a flavor of learned respectability in fiction—but it also provided a potential framework for a range of far less respectable meanings. Despite the fact that Ikku's fictional tale presents some basic medical notions about the body and disease, it would not do this multilayered work justice to consider it merely an entertaining version of health discourses. Ekiken's teachings are, in fact, ultimately treated with a good deal of irreverence in the diegetic world of the tale: In the final scene Ekiken, in the garb of a Confucian scholar-physician, arises in a wisp of smoke from the regurgitated contents of Ikku's stomach (fols. 14b–15a). Ever the strict Confucian teacher,²⁵ the fictional Ekiken delivers his parting lecture, preaching moderation and railing against popular fiction as “lies”—while hovering above a pile of vomit thrown up by Ikku. This ultimately leaves the reader wondering if this scene represents Ikku's last “word” on Ekiken's teachings and, by extension, on Neo-Confucian morality and scholarship. Like his band of unruly body parts in the story, Ikku presents himself in the end as a merry transgressor of health guidelines, an idler, and a deliberate, if remorseful, glutton who seeks to mend his ways. Even though such fiction thus arguably presented a form of medical popularization, as medical knowledge passed from esoteric to exoteric circles and from experts to the general population, it did

²³ Suzuki Toshiyuki, *Edo no dokushonetsu*, pp. 17–33. Suzuki limits himself to Shingaku-inspired fiction, mostly by Santō Kyōden 山東京伝 (1761–1816), and interprets this as the publishers' attempt to target the market for light educational reading.

²⁴ Fukuda, *Igakusho no naka no “bungaku,”* p. 7. It should be noted that Fukuda's seminal book, however, only cursorily mentions *kibyōshi* graphic narratives and draws most of its examples from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century genres such as *sharebon*, *kokkeibon*, and *ukiyo-zōshi* 浮世草子.

²⁵ The historical Ekiken, although usually described as a Neo-Confucian scholar, in fact expressed doubts about the doctrine of the preeminent Neo-Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi 朱子 (1130–1200) in his *Record of Grave Doubts* (*Taigiroku* 大疑録; 1714) later in life; see Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation*, pp. 65–66, 75–78.

not remain unchallenged. After all, the circulation of knowledge never represents a unidirectional process, and increasing dissemination brings with it the potential for humorous subversion.

Ikku's Sources

In the title of his work, Ikku consciously makes reference to early modern printed health manuals and the traditional concept of health cultivation they epitomized, namely, that of “nurturing life” (*yōjō*). Whether the titular *Yōjō shuron* referred to a specific health manual, however, seems doubtful. A manual by this name had been published in 1683 by the Kyoto physician Nagoya Gen’i 名古玄医 (1628–1696), but it was not reprinted during the eighteenth century, and little reference is made to it in later manuals. Another potential namesake is the Yuan-dynasty Chinese text of the same name (*Taiding yangsheng zhulun* 泰定養生主論, Jp. *Taitei yōjō shuron*; 1338), which was reprinted in Japan during the Edo period but had little impact on vernacular health-cultivation texts. Thus it is also possible that Ikku’s title was nothing more than a general nod to health-cultivation discourses. In any case, no conclusive textual evidence exists to link *Essentials* to either of these works.²⁶ Instead, Ikku’s actual inspiration appears to have been primarily Kaibara Ekiken, whose work on health cultivation he cites on several occasions in his text (fols. 3b–4a, 4b–5a, 6b–7a, 10b), although he explicitly references *Yōjōkun* as a source only once.²⁷

It seems likely that Ikku made use of other works, too. Illustrations and factual details about the interior organs in particular correspond to standard information about the body found in contemporary general knowledge encyclopedias such as *Zōho tōsho kinmōzui taisei* 増補頭書訓蒙図彙大成 (Complete Illustrated Encyclopedia, Enlarged and with Headnotes; 1789) and in popular household medical books, of which *Idō nichiyō kōmoku* 医道日用綱目 (The Principles of Everyday Medicine, also known as *Idō nichiyō chōhōki* 医道日用重宝記 [Treasury of Everyday Medicine]; preface dated 1709) was among the most common examples. I cite the latter work throughout my notes to the translation for comparative purposes. Ikku weaves such fragments of bona fide medical knowledge into his narrative, using them as a template for a plot in which he transforms bodily processes into a series of social scenarios from contemporary Edo society. It is precisely in this tension between long-established medical knowledge and novel contemporary interpretations that the entertainment value of Ikku’s *kibyōshi* resides.

In the literary field, Ikku appears to have particularly taken inspiration from Shiba Zenkō’s 芝全交 (1750–1793) *Jūshi keisei hara no uchi* 十四傾城腹之内 (Inside the

²⁶ Ikku (allegedly) cites *Yōjō shuron* once in *Essentials*, but this passage does not appear to be taken from Gen’i’s work or the Chinese work. See also note 52.

²⁷ In addition, a unique feature of *Essentials* is that Ekiken appears as a character in the narrative and the illustrations, which makes the work additionally noteworthy in terms of the iconic scholar’s Edo-period reception and the afterlife of his work.



FIGURE 1. *Jūshi keisei hara no uchi*, fol. 8b. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections. <https://doi.org/10.11501/9892738>. This illustration of the Kidneys being assailed by Fire closely resembles fol. 9b of *Essentials* in its subject matter (compare figure 17).

Bellies of Fourteen Courtesans; 1793).²⁸ This *kibyōshi*, published six years prior to *Essentials*, was described by Kyokutei Bakin 曲亭馬琴 (1767–1848) as one of Zenkō's most popular works and as having influenced both him and many later writers. The title is a pun on the Sino-Japanese medical notion of the fourteen circulation channels (*jūshikei* 十四經), and the book opens with two illustrations that parody medical charts of these channels and their acupuncture points. Set inside the body of a courtesan, the work describes the discrepancy between outward appearances and inner feelings in the commercial context of the pleasure quarters; at the same time, it deals with the interior workings of the body and with diseases such as *shaku no mushi* 癩の虫, a type of abdominal cramp that was particularly associated with women, and *jinkyō* 腎虚 (depleted kidneys), most commonly caused by sexual excess. As Ikku does in *Essentials*, Zenkō anthropomorphizes the body's interior organs from the perspective of Sino-Japanese medical thought and uses them as characters in his narrative. Thus, the body is presented as a microcosm of urban pleasure-quarter society in which the various body parts are likened to occupations:

²⁸ A modern annotated version can be found in *Edo no parodii ehon*, vol. 4. For a recent discussion of the work, see also Marceau, "Kinsei Nihon no eiri bungaku," pp. 26–34.

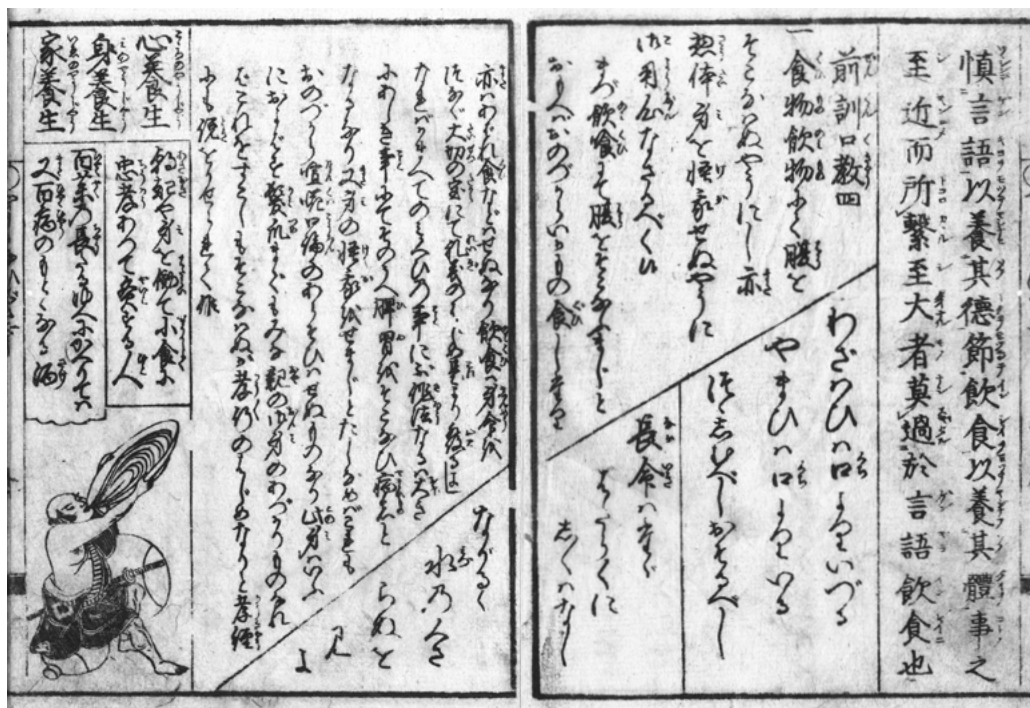


FIGURE 2. Folios 9b–10a of *Yashinaigusa*. Courtesy of the Koizumi Yoshinaga 小泉吉永 Collection. The first line of the right-hand page and the second poem at the bottom of the same page both appear in *Essentials*. The excerpt from Shingaku scholar Tejima Toan's *Zenkun* 前訓 (see note 37) at the top of the page warns against bad eating habits, including the consumption of exotic dishes, which Ikku parodies in his preface.

The kidneys, as the organ associated with water in medical thought, appear as a water merchant, the liver as a chief clerk, and the heart as a courtesan.

Ikku must have been familiar with Zenkō's work and appears to have taken inspiration from it in devising his own storyline. *Essentials* not only resembles Zenkō's work in the overall plot device of setting the narrative inside the body, it also replicates some of its jokes and puns, both visually and textually (see figure 1 for an example). And then there are conspicuous thematic overlaps: For example, both make use of the medical notion of dreams as a diagnostic tool for discerning afflictions of the internal organs, and both link problems of sexual exhaustion and depletion of the kidneys with a specific type of food (*kuwai* 慈姑, or arrowhead tubers).

In addition, in authoring *Essentials* Ikku likely referred to the Shingaku teachings contained in the first installment (shohen 初編) of Wakisaka Gidō's 脇坂義堂 (?–1818) *Yashinaigusa* やしなひ草 (Gleanings for Cultivation; 1784). Gidō was a prolific writer of edifying tracts in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and a proponent of Shingaku, a moralistic educational movement that gained popularity in the latter half of the Edo period. He compiled *Yashinaigusa* from excerpts of Shingaku teachings by Tejima Toan 手島堵庵 (1718–1786) and others and interspersed them



FIGURES 3, 4, and 5. The Tamaya 玉屋 shop sign depicted in *Tokujiden* 徳治伝 (see note 108) (left, courtesy of Tokyo University General Library) and in an undated actor print of Nakamura Matsue 中村松江 by Torii Kiyomitsu 鳥居清満 (center), image from the ARC Collection, Ritsumeikan University (object number: Z0165-380). At right, detail from folio 11b of *Essentials*; image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections. <https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

with didactic poems (*dōka* 道歌), pithy moralistic mottoes, and illustrations. The first installment appeared in 1784, and the second followed in 1789; both were reprinted several times throughout the late Edo period. Although Ikku makes no mention of this work in his own, close textual similarities suggest that he was influenced by its sections on health cultivation (see figure 2), and the citation at the beginning of *Essentials* as well as the didactic poems at the very end appear to have been directly lifted from the first installment of the Shingaku text.

Finally, Ikku made use of the Edo cityscape itself as a source of material for his visual and textual wit. See figures 3, 4, and 5 for an example of how *Essentials* borrows from a shop sign that would have been familiar to his readers to spin a pun that makes its way into both the text and the accompanying illustration.

Bibliographic Data

The present translation is based on my own transcription of the National Diet Library copy of *Hara no uchi yōjō shuron* (three volumes bound into one with a replacement cover). I chose this copy because of its easy accessibility, and all images reproduced here, unless otherwise stated, are taken from it. The four other known extant copies are held by the Tōhoku University Library, the Daitōkyū Kinen Bunko 大東急記念文庫 at Gotoh Museum (Gotō Bijutsukan 五島美術館), and the Tōkyō Shiryō 東京誌料 and Kaga Bunko 加賀文庫 collections at the Tokyo Metropolitan Central Library; the Tōhoku copy preserves the illustrated title slips of all three volumes



FIGURE 6. Printed illustrated title slips of *Essentials* (volumes one to three). Courtesy of Kanō Bunko 狩野文庫, Tōhoku University Library. Visible in all three are the title of the work and the mark of the publisher, Nishimuraya Yohachi.

(see figure 6).²⁹ Ikku appears as author in the preface of the work, which is signed and dated “spring of Kansei 11, year of the sheep.” On the last folio of the third volume, he is identified as both author and illustrator (Ikku *saku*, *jiga* 一九作、自画). The publisher can be identified by his mark (*shōhyō* 商標), which appears above the preface and at the beginning of each volume, as Nishimuraya Yohachi 西村屋与八, one of the leading publishers of Edo popular literature and prints in the Kansei and Bunsei 文政 eras. Nishimuraya published works by the acclaimed *gesaku* 戯作 (“playful literature”) authors of the day, including Santō Kyōden 山東京伝 (1761–1816), Ryūtei Tanehiko 柳亭種彦 (1783–1842), and Kyokutei Bakin; Nishimuraya is also obliquely referenced in the final scene of *Essentials* by the appearance of his shop name (*yagō* 屋号), Eijudō 永寿堂, on a traveling bookseller’s pack of books.

²⁹ For the edition on which the present translation is based, see Jippensha, *Hara no uchi yōjō shuron* (National Diet Library). The Kaga Bunko copy preserves the illustrated title slip of the middle volume only. The same title slip is attached to the cover of the Tōkyō Shiryō copy, but due to its poor condition it is no longer possible to verify the volume. See Jippensha, *Hara no uchi yōjō shuron* (Kaga Bunko) and *Hara no uchi yōjō shuron* (Tōkyō Shiryō). The Kaga Bunko copy is incomplete (fols. 14 and 15 are missing) and contains two different owners’ seals, one illegible (affixed to fols. 2a, 3b, 7a, 7b, 13a) and one in the shape of a *tengu* 天狗 (affixed to fols. 1a, 6a, 13b). The latter is recorded in the Zōshōin Dētabēsu Kensaku Shisutemu 蔵書印データベース検索システム as a seal bearing ID no. 08489, but its owner is unknown. See the Zōshōin Dētabēsu Kensaku Shisutemu, International Institute for Digital Humanities, <https://seal.dhii.jp/sealdb/>. I have not been able to view the Gotō copy in preparing this article.

Puns and Double Entendres

As the basis of human perception and cognition, the body provides fertile ground for metaphors in many cultures—and the Japanese language is no exception. Ikku makes full use of this fact in *Essentials*, assigning roles to anthropomorphized body parts and couching his narrative in a dense semantic network of self-referential idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and proverbs. For example, the Tongue, who appears as the Mouth's wife, is characterized in language replete with set phrases connected to her eponymous body part: *shita o ugokasu* 舌を動かす (to wag one's tongue), *shita o nimai tsukau* 舌を二枚使う ("to talk with two tongues," meaning to lie and deceive), *shita o dasu* 舌を出す ("to put out one's tongue," i.e., to talk behind someone's back), and *shita naga* 舌長 ("to have a long tongue," i.e., to be boastful). Concepts from Sino-Japanese medicine in particular, such as *ki* 気 (life energy), had by Ikku's day seeped into Japanese idiomatic expressions and were thus a rich available source of linguistic creativity and wordplay for his text: When the personified Master Life Energy literally "blocks up" the chest in the narrative, this at the same time designates a state of melancholia in the common parlance of the day (*ki o fusagu* 気を塞ぐ). And when the character called Blood Ki is lively, this represents a "hot-blooded" (*kekki sakan* 血気盛ん) person. In this way, much of the humor is created at the level of language by reframing conventionalized turns of phrase—as well as by resurrecting "dead metaphors" related to the body that had in Ikku's time lost much of their original imagery in everyday usage.

The present translation attempts as far as possible to recreate the linguistic features of the original text. Double entendres based on homophones in Japanese have been rendered likewise in English where appropriate and are otherwise explained in the annotations. Overall, I have prioritized the readability of the English version while attempting at the same time to replicate the multiple layers of meaning in the original.

The Essentials of Healthy Living *Inside the Abdomen*

JIPPENSHA IKKU

Translated by ANGELIKA KOCH

Preface

Food and drink are life's greatest treasures.³⁰ They sustain the human body and are the wellspring of social propriety. For some years now, I have taken great delight in the more unusual pleasures of the palate. Needless to say, I have enjoyed not only maple leaves and peonies³¹ but also more exotic dishes, such as giant snake broiled and basted in sweet sauce,³² wolf's meat turtle stew,³³ snake sushi³⁴ with a side of grilled *tengu* goblin in sweet miso paste,³⁵ boiled and sweetened pistol shot,³⁶ and a crunchy, cheap copper-coin pickle.³⁷ But the human body is not made from iron

³⁰ Folios of Ikku's text and illustrations are reproduced in figures 7–24. Throughout, the translator has supplied Chinese characters for Japanese terms as appropriate for readability; these may not reflect the orthography used in the original text, which was written primarily in *kana*.

³¹ Maple leaves (*momiji* 紅葉) and peonies (*botan* 牡丹) were euphemisms for deer and wild boar meat. The consumption of meat was traditionally considered defiling in Japan, and although this taboo was never strictly heeded, particularly with regard to game, Edo-period restaurants and other purveyors commonly used such euphemistic terms on their shop signs and billboards to gloss over the true nature of the commodities they were providing. At the time Ikku was writing in the 1790s, the market in Edo's Kōjimachi 麹町 district was increasingly becoming a locale for restaurants offering a range of game dishes; see Shimizu, "Meat-Eating," pp. 100–107.

³² *Kabayaki* 蒲焼き, a style of preparation commonly used for eel, is here applied to (similarly shaped) giant snake for comic effect.

³³ Turtle stew (*suppon-ni* 泥亀煮) usually designated a stew made from snapping turtle or a fish stew flavored to resemble turtle-meat stew; Ikku's version is instead made with wolf's meat.

³⁴ "Snake sushi" was common parlance for strange food (as snake meat would not have been an appropriate topping for sushi). It also appears as a dish served to callers after the monsters' wedding in Ikku's *Bakemono no yomeiri*; see Kabat, *River Imp*, p. 200.

³⁵ *Shigiyaki* しぎ焼き, a preparation method that entailed grilling and topping with sweetened miso paste (*nerimiso* 練り味噌), was typically used for eggplant.

³⁶ *Zazenmame* 座禅豆, usually made from sweetened and boiled black soybeans.

³⁷ *Hariharizuke* はりはり漬 is a pickle usually made from thinly sliced and dried *daikon* radishes. All of these outlandish dishes (including *zazenmame* made from pistol shot and *hariharizuke* made from copper coins) are Ikku's fantastical creations. The term Ikku applies to himself as a lover of "exotic dishes" (*ikamonogui* 如何物食い) is colorfully defined in the 1603 *Nippo jisho* 日葡辞書 as a "person who will eat anything, even dirty or revolting things" (Doi, *Hōyaku Nippo jisho*, p.

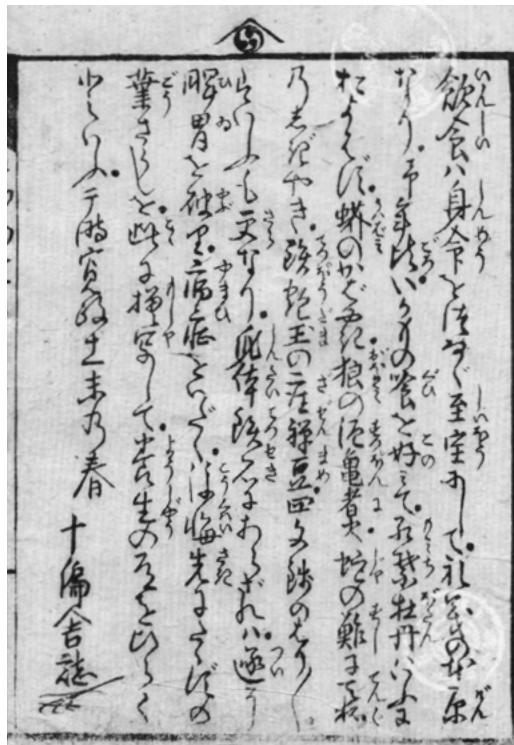


FIGURE 7. Folio 1a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

and stone, and I ended up falling ill having damaged my spleen and stomach.³⁸ Full of regret in hindsight, I hereby disclose and faithfully record my past wrongdoings, thus paving the way toward a healthier lifestyle.

Spring of Kansei 11 [1799], year of the sheep

By Jippensha [Ikku's mark, in the shape of a rake]

322). Contemporary educational texts criticized such behavior as uncouth. Shingaku advocate Tejima Toan's *Zenkun* 前訓 (1773), for example, warned against this vice: “Food and drink are life's greatest treasures. They sustain the human body and are the wellspring of social propriety. Therefore, being uncouth in these matters is completely unacceptable; it also damages spleen and stomach and causes disease.” Ikku's preface may in part be a parodic nod to this passage, which is included in the Shingaku compilation *Yashinaigusa* alongside other fragments cited by Ikku (Wakisaka, *Yashinaigusa*, fols. 9b–10a (*maki* 2); underlining added by translator to indicate text cited or paraphrased in *Essentials*).

³⁸ Within early modern Sino-Japanese medical thought, the spleen and stomach formed a Yin-Yang pair of organs responsible for digesting food and distributing its nutrients around the body (see Hongō, *Idō nichiyō kōmoku*, fol. 146a–b). Overeating was generally thought to damage the spleen and result in disease.

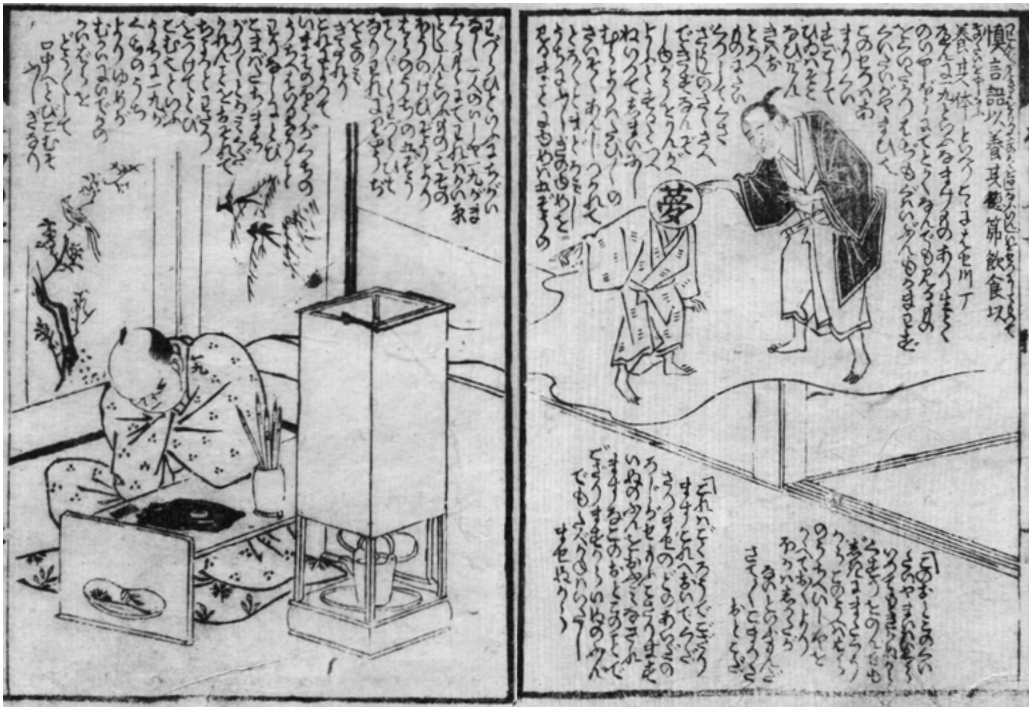


FIGURE 8. Folios 1b–2a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[Figure 8 (above) depicts the fictional Ikku (*bottom left*) seated at a low writing table, doubled up and clearly in pain. Kaibara Ekiken, in the somber garb of a physician-scholar,³⁹ and the personified Dream hover inside a bubble (*top right*), which according to the visual conventions of *kibyōshi* signifies a dream.]⁴⁰

³⁹ It is also noteworthy that Ekiken sports a sword, which may indicate his samurai status; the historical Ekiken was a retainer of the Fukuoka 福岡 domain on Kyushu. See Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation*, pp. 33–41.

⁴⁰ Ekiken's role as guide to the body is reminiscent of the convention of late medieval prose tales (*otogizōshi* 御伽草子) in which a spiritual guide would take the protagonist on a tour of the Buddhist hells and other supernatural realms. Such tales allowed readers to experience other worlds that “could not be directly accessed in everyday life” (Kimbrough and Shirane, *Monsters, Animals*, p. 3) and often ended with protagonists returning to their normal life to share their newly found insights. In his preface, Ikku mockingly presents the whole raison d'être of his tale as a way of disclosing his “past wrongdoings” (*gōsarashi* 業晒し, literally, “exposing one's bad karma”). Buddhist elements, however, are otherwise largely absent from Ikku's text. On such late-medieval hell-tour fiction, see Kimbrough, “Tourists in Paradise”; Kimbrough and Shirane, *Monsters, Animals*, pp. 124–48, 197–216. I am indebted to one of my anonymous reviewers for this insight.

Ikku's work in this sense also shares points of contact with the exploration of “utopian” new worlds that enjoyed great popularity in late eighteenth-century fiction, for example in the highly successful *Wasōbyōe* 和莊兵衛 (1774) series, which sees its protagonist travel to various realms beyond the borders of the known world and presents the moral from each of his stays.

It has been said that “modesty with words nurtures virtue, while moderation in food and drink nurtures the body.”⁴¹

Here in Edo’s Hasegawa-chō,⁴² there lived an idle fellow called Ikku. A glutton by birth, he had the urge to eat everything he laid his eyes on and was oblivious to the disgrace [of such behavior] and the damage to his reputation. This reckless desire to eat was a disease. In time, he overindulged to such an extent that it took its toll on his spleen and stomach and weakened his overall vitality. Any activity tired him so that he was even unable to continue writing his books of graphic narratives. Whenever he attempted to think of a story for a new book, he just fell asleep from fatigue. Exhausted by worry about his publisher Nishimura’s⁴³ persistent demands [for a new manuscript], he nodded off and had a strange dream.

Dreams truly are a reflection of the internal organs’ afflictions.⁴⁴ A doctor appeared at Ikku’s bedside and introduced himself as Kaibara Tokushin.⁴⁵ “Your gluttony has caused all your internal organs much suffering, so they have asked me to cure you,” he explained. “I therefore plan to enter your body through your

This spawned a number of sequels, among others a *kibyōshi* by Santō Kyōden (*Wasōbyōe gojitsu banashi* 和莊兵衛後日話; 1797), which appeared only two years before Ikku’s work. The format of the utopian trip as a way of packaging the tenets of health cultivation is also employed in the text *Kotobukigusa* 巨登富貴草 (ca. 1789–1801) by the high-ranking physician Taki Motonori 多紀元徳 (1732–1802). This text is transcribed in *Nihon eisei bunko*, vol. 3, pp. 3–32.

⁴¹ This saying appears, for example, in the fourth section of Zhu Xi’s seminal work *Reflections on Things at Hand* (Ch. *Jinsi lu* 近思錄, Jp. *Kinshiroku*; 1176). However, it is likely that Ikku’s immediate source for this adage was again the section on health cultivation in the Shingaku text *Yashinaigusa* (see figure 2).

⁴² Jippensha Ikku was living in Hasegawa-chō 長谷川町 (now Nihonbashi Horidome-chō 日本橋堀留町) in Edo at the time of writing *Hara no uchi yōjō shuron*, having married into a merchant household there around the year 1795. He probably moved away around 1801 when his marriage ended in divorce (Tanahashi, *Jippensha Ikku*, pp. 29–40).

⁴³ Nishimuraya Yohachi was one of the leading publishers of popular literature and prints in the Kansei and Bunsei eras. He published *Hara no uchi yōjō shuron*, as well as many works by leading *gesaku* authors.

⁴⁴ In Chinese medical thought, dreams were viewed as a diagnostic tool that could help point the physician toward the cause of various afflictions of the internal organs, much like Ikku’s personified Dream in the story. The locus classicus of this belief appears in the *Basic Questions* (Ch. Suwen 素問, Jp. *Somon*) in the foundational text *The Yellow Emperor’s Inner Canon of Medicine* (Ch. *Huangdi nei jing* 皇帝內經, Jp. *Kōtei daikei*), which holds that people’s dreams reflect their inner state of vitality and describes, for example, how deficient lung *ki* can result in dreams of white objects and deficient kidney *ki* in dreams of drowning (compare the translation in Unschuld and Tessenow, *Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen*, pp. 286–87, 709–11). This idea was also taken up in Sino-Japanese medical texts in Japan and in health-cultivation manuals for medical laymen, such as Mizuno Takusai’s 水野澤斎 (n.d.) *Yōjōben* 養生弁 (1842), which states: “It is proverbial that dreams are the afflictions of the Five Organs (*gozō no wazurai* 五臓の煩い), and when one dreams extensively night after night, one should consider this the onset of illness” (*Nihon eisei bunko*, vol. 3, p. 336).

⁴⁵ Kaibara Tokushin is the name that appeared in eighteenth-century editions of Ekiken’s *Yōjōkun*, in both the work’s front matter and postscript.

mouth, but I was afraid you would crunch me to pieces in an instant if I jumped in without warning, so I thought I should first ask your permission.” While the doctor was speaking, a Dream slipped out of Ikku’s mouth to meet Kaibara, and then they both hopped back inside. This was a rather curious development!

[Kaibara:] “Any advice falls on deaf ears with him, and even when he’s taken his [stomach] medication he goes ahead and gorges himself again straight afterward. So the only way to fix this glutton’s disease is to have a doctor deal with it right inside his belly. What a troublesome fellow!”

[Dream:] “Thank you for taking the trouble, Doctor. This way, please! The passageways inside the throat are quite narrow, so please make sure not to step in any dog poo on your way down, because with all that crap this fellow eats, you never know . . .”



FIGURE 9. Fols. 2b–3a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[Figure 9 (above) shows the Heart (*center right*) as the Great General accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Soul (*right*), and surrounded by his warrior-class vassals, the Stomach (*top left*) and the Spleen and Lungs (*bottom right*). The Mouth (*bottom left*) is kneeling before them. The visual representations of the organs are reminiscent of Chinese-style medical depictions.]

Even though it was a dream, Ikku found this turn of events rather strange, so he flipped his eyes inside out and took a peek inside his abdomen. There he saw the Heart, presiding as the Great General [over the other organs] in accordance with the ancient saying that “the Heart is the master of the body.”⁴⁶ Seated beside him were the Spleen, the Lungs, the Liver, and the Kidneys, all of whom had been affected by the Mouth’s excesses and looked pale and sickly.⁴⁷ The organs had summoned the Mouth to appear before them, and the Heart was passing judgment on him: “Ultimately all this suffering inside the body stems from your gluttony. Everyone knows that ‘all diseases enter the body through the mouth.’⁴⁸ Therefore, this whole misfortune is your fault. From now on you must be more circumspect and refrain from recklessly and thoughtlessly gorging yourself on things that will harm the body.”

The Heart is situated in the chest, and in its innermost part we find Mrs. Soul, his wife.⁴⁹ They are a married couple who have truly given their heart and soul to each other. Compared to the other Five Organs, the Spleen and Kidneys looked particularly dignified, but recently they too have become increasingly afflicted and greatly weakened—all because of the Mouth’s doings. This is why “one should not

⁴⁶ This principle derives from *The Yellow Emperor’s Inner Canon*, as found for example in chapter 8 of *Basic Questions* (see Unschuld and Tessenow, *Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen*, p. 155) and chapter 28 of *Spiritual Pivot* (Ch. *Lingshu* 靈樞, Jp. *Reisū*). It explains the special position of the heart within the body and describes how excessive emotions agitating the heart will inevitably throw the other organs into turmoil. Ikku takes this sociopolitical metaphor originally put forth in medical thought and applies it to the Tokugawa hierarchy, with the Heart in his dream-tale appearing as the military leader (*taishō* 大将, “Great General”) of the ruling warrior class and the other organs as his officials or vassals.

⁴⁷ The heart, spleen, lungs, liver, and kidneys constituted the so-called Five [Yin] Organs (*gozō* 五臟) in traditional Sino-Japanese medicine. Together with the Six [Yang] Viscera (*roppu* 六腑, namely, the large and small intestines, gallbladder, stomach, urinary bladder, and triple burner [Ch. *san jiao*, Jp. *sansho* 三焦]), they were the main functional units that defined the body’s inner workings.

⁴⁸ This adage was often reproduced in Edo-period health manuals to underline the paramount importance of diet for the body’s well-being. Intemperance in one’s eating and drinking habits was portrayed in these writings as a major cause of disease, with Kaibara Ekiken asserting, for example, in *Yōjōkun*: “When one is not circumspect with food and drink . . . , one easily falls into excess and diseases will occur. As the people of old said, all misfortune arises from the mouth, all diseases enter through it” (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 64). Substantial parts of these manuals were accordingly dedicated to miscellaneous advice on diet, ranging from how many side dishes to have with one’s meal and the danger of eating late at night to which combinations of food (*kuiawase* 食い合わせ) should be strictly avoided.

⁴⁹ The heart was regarded as the locus of innermost feelings and mental activity and as the seat of the “spirit” (*shin* 神). The close association of the heart with emotional functions is represented in the text by the marriage relationship with the soul.

simply rely on the strength of the spleen and kidneys and thoughtlessly indulge one's appetite for food and drink.”⁵⁰

[Organs:] “It's all that foul Mouth's fault.”⁵¹ You should just behave yourself and then everything will be fine.”

[Mouth:] “Even if I resolve not to eat, the Eyes still see [all kinds of delicacies] and the Nose still smells [their aroma] and inevitably they urge me to taste the food. I entreat you to have a word with those two as well.”

[Organs:] “He's just making a show of agreeing to everything. It's just like the Mouth to pay lip service.”



FIGURE 10. Fols. 3b–4a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[In figure 10 (above), Master Life Energy (*second from left*) and Miss Essence (*second from right*) are seen meeting by chance on an outing in the company of his servant

⁵⁰ This adage closely resembles a passage from Ekiken's *Yōjōkun* (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 46). Calling for moderation in food and drink, it warns against overestimating the resilience of one's digestive and sexual health (in Chinese-style medicine represented by the spleen and kidneys, respectively).

⁵¹ *Kuchi ga warui* 口が悪い is a pun with the double meaning, “It's the mouth's fault” and “He is foulmouthed.”

(on the left) and her wet nurse (far right, suitably represented with breasts on her head). The servant Lower Parts holds a votive plaque for dedication to a temple or shrine with the inscription “The body is the foundation.” Master Life Energy is depicted as a fashionable young samurai.]

The *Essentials of Nurturing Life*⁵² states that “exercising restraint in one’s intake of food and drink—those things that sustain life—nourishes a person’s life energy (*genki* 元氣) received at birth and enables the person to enjoy a long life and live out a natural lifespan.” Life Energy is closely related to the Spleen;⁵³ to be precise, he is Mr. Spleen’s son. When the Spleen was in a weakened state, young Master Life Energy also lost his vigor and idly lazed about. Being in the first bloom of youth, he should have been bursting with energy but instead he had completely lost his stamina. One day he therefore decided to go for a leisurely stroll with his vassal and servant Lower Parts,⁵⁴ to prevent his condition from deteriorating further. During this outing, he laid eyes on Miss Essence for the first time and was instantly smitten.

Miss Essence is the daughter of Mr. Kidneys.⁵⁵ Her father had also been in a bad state of late, lacking in strength and stamina, so she had gone out, looking to distract herself. When she caught sight of young Master Life Energy, she, too, was lovestruck. Since their feelings were mutual, they reached agreement in no time; suddenly reinvigorated and full of energy, they both appeared to have all but forgotten their ailments.

[Essence:] “What a charming young man!”

⁵² *Yōjō shuron*. The only extant Japanese health manual of this title that could have been a potential source for Ikku is Nagoya Gen’i’s 名古屋玄医 (1628–1689) *Yōjō shuron* 養生主論 (1683), but the passage does not appear to be a direct quote from this work. It is much more likely that Ikku’s inspiration was Ekiken’s *Yōjōkun*, as the extract appears almost verbatim in the general section (*sōron* 総論) of this work (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 28).

⁵³ In Chinese medical thought, the spleen was closely connected with digestion, and hence with food and drink. The function of the spleen was to transform ingested food and distribute its energy to the other organs; this is why food was thought to nourish a person’s life energies (*genki*) (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 64) and why the spleen is here linked with *genki*.

⁵⁴ This term (*gebu* 下部) sometimes appears as a body part particularly associated with Essence and the kidneys in medical thought; compare *Yōjōkun*: “When one expends large amounts of Essence, the *ki* in the lower parts will weaken” (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 28). The Chinese characters for *gebu* have the alternative reading *shimobe* (servant) and thus also allude to this person’s role and lowly status.

⁵⁵ The kidneys were the seat of sexual functions in Chinese medical thought, and “Essence,” the sexual vitality stored in the kidneys, could in its most material form refer to semen. This association sets the stage for the sexual innuendo in the passage that follows.

[Life Energy:] “She definitely looks the part of Mr. Kidneys’s daughter—her waters are overflowing. She’s virtually dripping with sensuality and youthful charm!”⁵⁶

The servant Lower Parts has accompanied his young Master.

[Lower Parts:] “And I’d like to have a go at giving her wet nurse’s breasts a good squeeze.”



FIGURE 11. Fols. 4b–5a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[The illustration in figure 11 (above) depicts Mr. Kidneys (*right, kneeling*) as an emaciated and enfeebled old man. Here he discusses his daughter’s behavior with his daughter herself (*right*) and her aunt, Mrs. Soul (*left, sitting*) in the Cinnabar Field mansion. Concealed outside, Master Life Energy (*bottom left*) listens in on their conversation.]

⁵⁶ Each of the Five Organs was linked with one of the Five Phases (Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water) in the Sino-Japanese medicine of correspondences. According to this scheme, the kidneys corresponded to water, which explains the connection made here between Mr. Kidneys’s daughter and water; at the same time, “kidney water” was also a general term for sexual fluids in the Edo period. Through these medical and linguistic associations, as well as the physical reality of the sex act, “water” conveys a sense of sexual stamina and sensuality in this passage.

According to medical writings,⁵⁷ “the cinnabar field is situated a few inches below the navel. The *ki* that moves between the Kidneys is located here.”⁵⁸ This is the foundation of the Twelve Channels.”⁵⁹ Mr. Kidneys’s residence is called the Cinnabar Field. Ever since young Master Life Energy exchanged vows of love with Miss Essence, he had been secretly paying nightly visits to the Cinnabar Field mansion. On these occasions, Miss Essence was all too happy to prove her love for him, over and over again, so that in time their energies flagged and they completely wore themselves out.⁶⁰ Despite this, they persisted in their nightly activities. This prompted Mrs. Soul, the wife of the Heart, to make her way to the Cinnabar Field, as she was Miss Essence’s aunt. As she settled in below the navel,⁶¹ she lectured her niece at length.

[Soul:] “At this rate, even if you had a deep well dug around here, you’d run it dry!”⁶² You dish out your water quite liberally, it seems.”

⁵⁷ Given the lexical similarities, it is likely that the direct source for this unidentified quote is, once again, the general section of Ekiken’s *Yōjōkun* (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 56). In turn, Ekiken cites the first-century Chinese *Classic of Difficulties* (Ch. *Nanjing* 難經, Jp. *Nankyō*), using it to introduce a passage on breathing techniques in his health manual.

⁵⁸ The cinnabar field (Jp. *tanden* 丹田, Ch. *dantian*) was an area below the navel in which the reproductive and life energies of the body were thought to be concentrated; hence it was associated with the kidneys as the reproductive functional ensemble of the body. It was a central concept in Daoist internal alchemy (Ch. *neidan* 内丹, Jp. *naitan*) and meditation and also in early modern Japanese martial arts and Zen practices. For a detailed discussion of the cinnabar field’s role in Edo-period health-cultivation texts, see Katafuchi, *Ki nagarerushintai no kōkogaku*, pp. 177–212.

⁵⁹ Channels were the passageways through which the body’s vitalities circulated; according to the medical canon, there were twelve such main channels in the body. The “foundational” character of the cinnabar field (and of the kidneys in general) resided in the place it claimed as the very source of life and the reservoir of reproductive vitality.

⁶⁰ In medical thought, sex was viewed as a loss of semen and hence of life energy; in excess, this could result in exhaustion and illness. Moderation in sexual activity, together with temperance in food and drink, were thus considered mainstays of healthy living—a fact stressed by Ekiken in *Yōjōkun* (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, pp. 96–100). For a discussion, see Koch, “Sexual Healing: Regulating Male Sexuality” and “Sexual Healing: Sexuality, Health and the Body.”

⁶¹ This is probably a variation on the phrase *heso no shita e ki o otoshitsuku* 臍の下へ気を落とし着く (“to calm the *ki* below the navel”) and an oblique reference to self-cultivation techniques that aimed to regulate and accumulate the *ki* in the cinnabar field. The passage from *Yōjōkun* cited here by Ikku, for example, continues with a description of a breathing technique for “collecting *ki* in the cinnabar field” and recommends it for practitioners of the arts, martial arts, and meditation, as well as for remaining calm in everyday situations (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 56). Ikku’s scene therefore likely represents a parodic nod to such ideas about self-cultivation, while also describing Mrs. Soul paying a leisurely visit to the Kidneys’ residence below the navel.

⁶² This phrase (*jīn no zō ni horinuki o itashitemo tamarimasenu* 腎の臓に掘り抜きをいたしても溜まりませぬ) alludes to the loss of water from the kidneys as a result of the daughter’s sexual escapades.

[Kidneys:] “Well, well, my daughter has put me in a difficult spot—she’s wasting her water quite shamelessly.”⁶³

[Meanwhile,] Master Life Energy had sneaked onto the premises to see what was going on.



FIGURE 12. Fol. 5b of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[In figure 12 (above), the Nose (*left*) and Eyes (*right*), portrayed as somewhat rough and common types, are seen plotting against the Mouth. One is smoking and the other is plucking his beard with tweezers.]

The Eyes and Nose were very close to each other.⁶⁴ In fact, these two scoundrels were thick as thieves and would lead others astray, tempting them through sights and smells. When they heard about the Mouth’s disgraceful behavior, they concocted their own plan: “He is such a blabbermouth, always prattling on all by himself about something or other. What an irritating fellow! From now on we won’t

⁶³ The girl’s behavior is described as *mizutsukai no arai* 水使いの荒い, a pun that here carries connotations of wastefulness and sexual activity.

⁶⁴ *Me to hana no aidagara* 目と鼻の間柄 is a play on the idiomatic expression *me to hana no aida* (*saki*) 目と鼻の間(先) that signifies proximity (literally “being as close to each other as a nose and a mouth). Ikku creates humor here by using this phrase in a literal sense.

hold back from taking in all the [delicious] sights and smells and we'll make him eat, just to spite him."

[Eyes:] "Ears, Eyes, Nose, Mouth, and Tongue—we are all part of the same Six Roots Club,⁶⁵ but the Mouth bad-mouths everyone and everything. On and on he goes—he really is all mouth."

[Nose:] "When you overslept, he applied saliva to your eyes because you hadn't opened them, and when I fell over, that dirty fellow slapped saliva on again!⁶⁶ I really am sick and tired of him!"



FIGURE 13. Fol. 6a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[In figure 13 (above), the Mouth (*right*) and his wife, the Tongue (*left*), are feasting on Edo delicacies. The label on the box indicates that these include intestines, and the text later reveals that the bowl held by the Mouth contains *kuwai*, or

⁶⁵ A Buddhist concept referring to the six sense organs comprising the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. These act to create sensory impressions and feelings—and thereby cravings.

⁶⁶ This alludes to a popular belief in the curative effects of saliva (*tsubaki manbyō no kusuri* 唾万病の薬, or “Saliva is medicine for all diseases”). Based on this belief, saliva was frequently applied to small wounds and bruises.

arrowhead tubers.⁶⁷ The Nishimuraya publisher's mark appears at the top of the page.]

As the saying goes, “The mouth is the gate to misfortune, the tongue the root of disaster.”⁶⁸ And truly the Mouth was a foul fellow who was loathed by one and all. The Eyes and Nose led him on in a reckless manner with a flood of enticing sights and smells, and since he was a glutton by nature, the urge to eat eventually overcame him. With no further thought for the damage this would inflict on the Stomach and Spleen, he gorged himself without restraint. His wife, Mrs. Tongue, was a true match for the scoundrel—“like husband, like wife,” one might say. As a constant companion of this foul Mouth, she too loved to wag her tongue. Deceitful and double-tongued, she didn't hold back from a lie here and there either. What's more, she was sharp-tongued and had the habit of ridiculing people and talking about others behind their backs. For this reason, everyone loathed her—she really could not rein in that boastful tongue of hers!

[Tongue:] “I'd like to dip in my tongue and have some—just a little taste
 . . . ”⁶⁹

⁶⁷ “Intestines” (*hyakuhiro* 百尋) in culinary contexts most likely refers to the small intestine of a whale. According to the dietary text *Honchō shokkan* 本朝食鑑 (1697), whale intestines were preserved in salt or dried for eating, which may have facilitated their transport to the metropolises (Hitomi, *Honchō shokkan*, vol. 4, p. 175). The shogunal chronicles *Tokugawa jikki* 徳川実紀 (completed 1849) record several gifts of (dried) whale intestines presented to the shogun in Edo by the Kii 紀伊 domain during the seventeenth century. See *Tokugawa jikki*, Meireki 明暦 1 (1655).7.1 (p. 150), Meireki 2 (1656).5.10 (p. 182), Meireki 2 (1656).10.18 (p. 197). From around the same time, whale intestines (*kujira no hyakuhiro* 鯨の百尋) also appear in lists of marine products and famous regional products in textbooks produced in the cities, such as *Edo ōrai* 江戸往来 (1669) and *Genkin shōbai ōrai* 現金商売往来 (1808); see *Edo ōrai*, fol. 17a, and *Genkin shōbai ōrai*, fol. 12a. While their culinary use is thus well established, as also evidenced by several recipes recorded in the local Kyushu whale cookbook *Geiniku chōmihō* 鯨肉調味方 (1832) (see *Geiniku chōmihō*, fols. 18a–18b), it remains unclear to what extent they were consumed by commoners in late eighteenth-century Edo, as in Ikku's setting here. Given the subject matter of *Essentials*, it is also conceivable that the food box of “intestines” is merely intended as a visual pun on the human body rather than a reference to culinary culture.

⁶⁸ *Kuchi wa wazawai no kado, shita wa wazawai no ne* 口は禍の門、舌は禍の根. This proverb warns against careless speech and appears as early as the *Jikkishō* 十訓抄 (1252), a progenitor of educational literature with strong Confucian undertones that was reprinted numerous times during the Edo period.

⁶⁹ It is likely that the Japanese here, *suwaseru* 吸わせる, not only refers to tasting food but is also a request for a kiss (*kuchi o suwaseru* 口を吸わせる); this pun seems particularly appropriate given that the addressee is the Mouth, and it resonates with the wordplay on sex and food later in the passage.

[Mouth:] “For turtle stew, Hishiya in Bakurochō is the best, and for *soba* noodles, there’s nowhere better than Miyama in Ningyōchō.”⁷⁰

[Mouth:] “Food is even better than sex. ‘If you leave without eating, you will not feel refreshed. You’ll know you are a real lover of delights if you find that for a short while even your innermost thoughts are eating you away.’”⁷¹



FIGURE 14. Fols. 6b–7a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[In figure 14 (above), the Spleen (*right*), having taken to his bed in a weakened state due to his son’s escapades, angrily sends the young man (*kneeling*, *left*) away, despite his wife’s protestations.]

⁷⁰ Hishiya ひし屋 was a teahouse in Edo’s Bakurochō 馬喰町, a bustling area with many inns and eateries particularly popular with travelers from the provinces. Ikku also mentions Hishiya’s turtle stew in his *kibyōshi Atariyashita jihon doiya* (Jippensha, *Atariyashita*, fols. 3b–4a) and in the section on Bakurochō in his illustrated travel guide to Edo (1813) from the first installment (*shohen*) of his *Kane no waraji* 金草鞋 series, saying, “Hishiya’s turtle stew is also tasty” (Jippensha, *Kane no waraji*, fol. 17a). The identity of Miyama みやま is unclear; presumably it is the name of a *soba* noodle shop in Edo’s Ningyōchō 人形町.

⁷¹ This passage is a pun on a line from the Tomimoto 富本-style *jōruri Haru no yo shōji no mume* 春夜障子梅 (first performed 1784); see Takano, *Nihon kayō shūsei*, p. 490. In the original piece, the courtesan Yūgiri’s 夕霧 lover Izaemon 伊左衛門 expresses his sorrow at not being able to meet her in this verse.

In the end, the Mouth persisted in his gluttony, which caused Mr. Spleen to suffer greatly. He grew thin, weak, and extremely irritable. When the news of the affair between his son and Miss Essence reached him, he was outraged. His wife, Mrs. Stomach,⁷² made various excuses for them and tried to intervene on her son's behalf—but alas, to no avail. Mr. Spleen disinherited the young Master Life Energy and banished him from the house. This is the meaning of “The Spleen is depleted and loses its Life Energy.” The Spleen and Stomach are fundamental to the Five Organs: They take in and digest food and drink and dispatch their Essence to the other organs. Therefore, the way of Nurturing Life should focus first of all on regulating the Spleen and Stomach.⁷³ Children, it is imperative that you follow this advice. Do you understand? It is of the utmost importance!

Young Master Life Energy, in a greatly weakened state, resigned himself to his fate without a word and left his father's house having been disowned. This is what is known as “falling into despair.”

[Spleen:] “You good-for-nothing! If I were younger, I would tear you to pieces. But with all these stomach problems I'm very weak at the moment, so this is your lucky day.”

[Figure 15 (following page) shows the Bladder, the Colon, and the Body's Vitality (*bottom left*) kneeling before two samurai officials—the Kidneys (*top left*) and the Liver (*right*)—petitioning them to take measures against the disruption of the body's food transportation network that threatens their livelihoods. Petitioning was an institutionalized form of social protest and a means of bringing grievances and demands to the attention of superiors in early modern Japan, although this was normally done in writing.]⁷⁴

All the food stagnated in the Spleen and Stomach so that it either descended into the bowels undigested or was unable to pass at all, causing constipation. When all sixteen bends⁷⁵ of the Colon's passageway had thus become completely clogged up, the Colon sought out the Heart to lodge a complaint, together with

⁷² The marriage relationship is again used here to emphasize the vital link in medical thought between the spleen and stomach according to the theory whereby each of the Five Yin Organs is paired with one of the Six Yang Viscera (see note 47). It should be noted that the Stomach is depicted as a samurai retainer in an earlier illustration (fols. 2b–3a), despite appearing as the Spleen's wife here.

⁷³ This passage closely resembles Ekiken's introduction to his section on food and drink; see Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 64.

⁷⁴ See chapter 3 of Walthall, *Social Protest*.

⁷⁵ The colon in early modern Sino-Japanese medicine was thought to descend to the anus in sixteen bends that transported and processed food, turning it into feces. Compare the description in Hongō, *Idō nichiyō kōmoku* (fol. 145b): “The colon is situated behind the navel and spirals



FIGURE 15. Fols. 7b–8a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

the Bladder. “We receive food from the Spleen and Stomach and make a living by transporting it downward along the appropriate route. But when everything stag-
 nates in the Spleen and Stomach so that nothing comes [our way] and constipation
 blocks all routes, trade comes to a standstill and we suffer hardship. And to top it
 all, we have to deal with the Anus down below being a real pain in the arse about
 it, which is a great burden for us. The Bladder has come along to support me in
 making my request.⁷⁶ We humbly beg you to issue an order to restore the Spleen
 and Stomach.”⁷⁷

downward anticlockwise in sixteen coils. It functions as a transport route and is responsible for transforming [food into feces], which it excretes from the anus via the rectum.”

⁷⁶ The bladder was believed to receive the fluids that had passed through the small intestine, turn them into urine, and excrete them through its opening in the pubic region. *Idō nichiyō kōmoku* relates the following: “The bladder stores the fluids of the body. These are separated out from the small intestine and pour from above into the bladder, where they are turned into urine and excreted. The bladder’s lower extremity opens up into the pubic region, and the urine leaves the body from there.” Hongō, *Idō nichiyō kōmoku*, fol. 146b.

⁷⁷ This passage is written in a style reminiscent of the formulaic deferential language of official petitions (*nangi tsukamatsuri sōrō* 難儀つかまつり候, *ōsetsukerare kudasaru beshi* 仰せ付けられ下さるべし, and so on). An in-depth discussion of petitions and their “language of hardship” can be found in chapter 3 of Walthall, *Social Protest*.

As the body had lost much of its drive when the Stomach and Spleen were depleted, the Body's Vitality⁷⁸ joined the others in their appeal.

[Liver:] “My, oh, my, a most unfortunate situation!”



FIGURE 16. Fols. 8b–9a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[Figure 16 (above) depicts Miss Essence (*first from left*) and Master Life Energy (*center*) traveling along the Coccyx Way with the servant Lower Parts (*right*) after being banished by their parents.]

It became impossible for the Kidneys to retain their Essence once the Spleen had lost its Life Energy.⁷⁹ And so, Mr. Kidneys also decided to disown his daughter, believing that she deserved the same punishment as her partner in crime. Out of options and with no particular place to go, Master Life Energy and Miss Essence

⁷⁸ *Konki* 根気.

⁷⁹ The Essence from food and drink filtered in the spleen was believed to contribute to the Essence stored in the kidneys; in this way the vitality of the two organ systems was viewed as being intimately connected. Compare, for example, Kaibara Ekiken's statement that “the kidneys receive the Essence from the other organs and store it; therefore, the kidneys will be full of energy when the other organs are also full of energy” (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 155).

took to the open road, accompanied by the young master's servant, Lower Parts. Figuring they would be more likely to attract attention on the main highways,⁸⁰ they traveled instead along the side of the belly to the backbone [via the coccyx] and, in this way, put more and more distance between themselves and their home. Since the Chest region was wide and hospitable, they decided to stop off there and find their way to the Breasts, the hometown of Miss Essence's wet nurse.

[Lower Parts:] "Up ahead is the Loincloth Knot, which is famous for its buckwheat noodles.⁸¹ We should definitely have a bowl there—even though it's a notoriously filthy place. It's about four more *ri* from here. Beyond that is just the backside of nowhere."⁸²

[Life Energy:] "I see. I have to say, this is a steep and perilous path—it's quite bone crushing. It's as if we've been walking on bone day in and day out!⁸³ Haven't we got to the fork between the Feces Path and the Urine Path yet?"

[On the right-hand side in figure 17 (following page), Mr. Fire (*standing*) is tormenting and taunting Mr. Kidneys (*kneeling*). On the left-hand side, the Nose (*kneeling*) takes advantage of his chance encounter with Mrs. Soul (*standing*), who is visibly deranged with her hair in disarray. She holds a bamboo branch (*kuruiwasa* 狂い笹), which was used in *noh* and *kabuki* to signify a person mad with grief. A

⁸⁰ This is a reference to the early modern highway system, which distinguished between the five main highways (such as the famous Tōkaidō) and more minor routes. This passage can be read as a parody of the tragic travel scenes common in fiction, *kabuki*, and the puppet theater in which the young lovers attempt to escape following a misfortune or some other dramatic turn of events.

⁸¹ Loincloths were commonly tied at the lower back, the place through which our characters will pass on their way from the lower abdomen to the chest. *Soba* (buckwheat noodles) are here comically linked with the term *sobakiri iro* 蕎麦切色 (literally, "the color of buckwheat"), which also alludes to the color of a stained undergarment.

⁸² Four *ri* 里 corresponds to 15.6 km. Here, *shiri* 四里 (*shi* meaning "four") is a homophone of *shiri* 尻 (buttocks, backside).

⁸³ *Hone* 骨 assumes the double meaning of "backbreaking, strenuous" and "bone" to describe the "Coccyx Way" along which the characters are walking. The whole passage compares the human body to a geographical space to be traveled, creating analogies with the nation's system of highways that by the late Edo period lay at the center of a veritable tourism industry. The pointers provided by the servant along the route can be viewed as a spoof of the information typically found in contemporary tourist literature describing famous places, local goods, and distances to be covered. For discussions of analogies between the human body and topography in various contexts, see Screech, *Edo no karada*; Katafuchi, "Kinsei kōki ni okeru kaibōgaku"; Kuriyama, "Imagination of the Body."



FIGURE 17. Fols. 9b–10a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

bamboo pattern also appears on her kimono, while the Nose sports a stylized nose design on his clothing.]⁸⁴

Having lost his beloved daughter Miss Essence, Mr. Kidneys declined dramatically in strength. Unable to put her out of his mind for even a second, he was in a constant state of anxiety and was soon struck down by illness. Since Mr. Kidneys's waters were running low, his younger brother Heart Fire put in an appearance.⁸⁵ The two were truly like fire and water—they could not stand each other and would

⁸⁴ This visual reference to the theater alludes to plays on madness, or “crazed-person plays” (*kyōran mono* 狂乱物), which often featured a mother crazed with grief over the loss of her child.

⁸⁵ This scene is a fictionalized version of the symptoms known in medical thought as *jinkyo kadō* 腎虛火動 (depleted kidneys and moving fire), which were commonly associated with the kidneys' loss of Essence through sexual excess. This was a pathogenic state in which a weakening of the water element in the kidneys meant that the fire element would flare up as it could no longer be kept in check. In Ashigawa Keishū's 蘆川桂洲 (n.d.) comprehensive encyclopedia of diseases, *Byōmei ikai* 病名彙解 (1686), this was defined as “a form of depletion exhaustion (*kyorō* 虚勞), in which the kidney waters are depleted and the ministerial fire flares up and moves” (Ashigawa, *Byōmei ikai*, fol. 11b [*maki* 1]). Ikku dramatizes this interplay of the body's water and fire elements as animosity between brothers. A similar scene can be found in Shiba Zenkō's *Jūshi keisei hara no uchi* (Shiba, *Jūshi keisei*, fol. 8b), where the kidneys are assailed by fire—in this case anthropomorphized as a thug called Yake no Yanpachi やけのやん八 (see figure 1).

normally have kept their distance. On this occasion, however, Mr. Fire seized the opportunity and took advantage of Mr. Kidneys's weakened state. Flaring up without restraint, he taunted Mr. Kidneys, speaking to him in a totally unreasonable manner.

[Fire:] "In the opening page of this volume,⁸⁶ that bastard the Mouth ate a large bowl of arrowhead roots.⁸⁷ That's probably why your waters have decreased, because at your age, it's unlikely to have happened in any other way!"⁸⁸

[Kidneys:] "I am so weak, I couldn't even swat a fly.⁸⁹ I don't have the strength to fend you off. Show some mercy!"

When Mrs. Soul heard that her niece Miss Essence had eloped and her whereabouts were unknown, she was stricken by the news. Grief clouded her mind, and she became quite deranged. This is where the line originates about others "having misjudged the Soul" when a person becomes mad like this.⁹⁰ Just then, the Nose happened to pass by. He had been in love with Mrs. Soul for a long time, so he took advantage of her mental instability to invite her back to his place. He was as pleased as punch to have finally got her right in front of his nose. Things certainly get complicated inside the abdomen!

⁸⁶ That is, the scene in fol. 6a. *Kibyōshi* typically consisted of three short volumes of five folios each, and Ikku is referring here to the opening page of the second volume.

⁸⁷ According to a commonly held belief in the Edo period, eating arrowhead (*kuwai*) could result in a decrease of Essence. This is recorded, for example, in the miscellany *Gareki zakkō* 瓦礫雑考 (1817) by the Edo scholar Kitamura Nobuyo 喜多村信節 (1783–1856), who contrasts what he believes to be erroneous proverbial knowledge with the medical wisdom of Chinese pharmacology from the *Compendium of Materia Medica* (Ch. *Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目, Jp. *Honzō kōmoku*; 1596). Kitamura, *Gareki zakkō*, fols. 4a–4b (*maki* 2). The same notion of arrowhead causing a depletion of Essence also appears in Shiba, *Jūshi keisei*, fol. 8a. Ikku himself placed it center stage in his later work *Kotoshi no aomonogatari* 今年青物語 (1819), in which he personifies Mr. Arrowhead and devises a specious origin story for the vegetable's purported properties, with Mr. Arrowhead blaming his wife's sexual voraciousness for compounding his already depleted virility (see Kang, "Gōkan 'Yaoya ryōri aomonogatari'").

⁸⁸ The implication is that an old man would not have the opportunity to "decrease his Essence" in the usual way through sexual intercourse.

⁸⁹ Literally, "I am only chasing flies with my chin" (*ago de hae o ou* 顎で蠅を追); this idiom expressed a state of utter exhaustion and was most commonly associated with a loss of sexual energy.

⁹⁰ This may be an allusion to a line from act 10 of the popular puppet play *Kanadehon Chūshingura* 仮名手本忠臣蔵 (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers; 1748). The words in question are spoken by the merchant Gihei 義平, who at great personal risk has helped the forty-seven *rōnin* 浪人 obtain weapons for their vendetta. When Yuranosuke 由良助, the leader of the band of conspirators, offers him parting gifts, he is initially incensed at the suggestion that he has helped them out of a mercenary desire for personal gain and complains that they have "misjudged his character and soul" (*shōnedama o michigaetaka* 性根魂を見違えたか).

[Nose:] “It’s actually a good thing that you are a little confused. Even if your mind is a little unbalanced, I’m sure there’s nothing wrong with the rest of you. . . . Naturally, I’m already dripping like crazy.”⁹¹

[Nose:] “Come back to my place for a while and I promise I’ll live up to my reputation.”⁹²



FIGURE 18. Fol. 10b of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[Figure 18 (above) shows Master Life Energy (*center*) and Miss Essence (*right*) appearing before Mr. Throat Pipe (*left*) and seeking refuge.]

Meanwhile our young couple Master Life Energy and Miss Essence had finally decided to stop off at the Throat’s place in Stomach Pit Village. Mr. Throat Pipe⁹³

⁹¹ *Hanamizu ga koboreru* 鼻水がこぼれる (to have a runny nose; literally, “to drip nose water”). Given the bawdy context, it is likely that the “water” here has sexual connotations.

⁹² This likely hints at the Edo-period folk wisdom that men with large noses also had large genitalia, as represented by the large nose the character wears on top of his head. A similar joke is included in Santō Kyōden’s 1789 work *Shinzō zui* 新造図彙 (Santō, *Shinzō zui*, fol. 17a).

⁹³ *Nodobue* 喉笛 (literally “throat pipe”) usually refers to the windpipe, but given the food-related imagery of “swallowing” and “chewing” in this passage, it appears likely that Ikku uses it here to designate the esophagus. The term *nodo* (or *nondo*) itself was commonly linked to food intake

was a chivalrous local who always offered a helping hand to those in need as they were passing through here. Being the kind of man who would swallow anything, he was most understanding of their situation and ended up offering them refuge.⁹⁴ In the [Chinese medical text] *Prescriptions Worth a Thousand Pieces of Gold* it is said: “When Life Energy gathers and stagnates in the chest, it causes disease and becomes a source of suffering.”⁹⁵ By settling there, young Master Life Energy and Miss Essence created a major blockage—how utterly depressing!⁹⁶ It is certainly true that one should avoid accumulations of Life Energy in the chest.

[Essence:] “My dearest Mr. Throat Pipe, please look into our hearts and chew it over.”

[Throat Pipe:] “Don’t worry. I’ll swallow it in one gulp, whatever it may be . . .”

[In figure 19 (following page), the Mouth (*right*) takes advantage of the Heart’s (*left*) weakened state and schemes to expand his own power. The Nishimuraya publisher’s mark appears at the top of the page to indicate the beginning of the third volume.]

Great turmoil broke out inside the abdomen. Since the Heart was preoccupied with the abduction of his wife, Mrs. Soul, that bastard the Mouth took advantage of the situation and approached him with bad advice, giving his big mouth free rein: “According to *Yōjōkun*, the Heart is the ruler and the ‘Lord of Heaven,’ while the Ears, Eyes, Nose, Mouth, and Body are the ‘Five Officials’ serving him.”⁹⁷

in the late Edo period; *Yōjōben kōhen* 養生弁後編 (1851), for example, defines it as the “gate where food and drink pass” (*inshoku no tōru kado* 飲食の通る門) and uses *nondo no ana* 喉門 (“the opening of the throat”) to designate the passageway for food and *hai no ana* (“the opening of the lungs,” written with the same Chinese characters) to refer to the windpipe (Mizuno, *Yōjōben kōhen*, fols. 42a–43a [maki 1]). The Chinese character 咽 (*nodo/in*), which Ikku’s Throat Pipe wears on its head in the illustration, was also associated in *Yōjōben kōhen* with the “pathway for food” (*shokudō* 食道) in contrast to the character 喉 (*nodo/kō*) as the “pathway for air” (*kidō* 氣道).

⁹⁴ *Nomikomu* 飲み込む (to swallow, take in) is used here in the double meaning of the Throat Pipe “taking in food and drink” and being tactful and “understanding of something.”

⁹⁵ *Prescriptions* (*Senkinhō* 千金方; ca. 650) was a work by the Tang-period physician Sun Simiao 孫思邈 (d. 682). It was imported and reprinted numerous times in early modern Japan and was often quoted in works on health cultivation. Ekiken refers to it by name several times in *Yōjōkun*. Once again, the quote here appears to be based on Ekiken’s text rather than the Chinese source. Compare this passage from *Yōjōkun*: “Anger, grief, sadness, and worry make the *ki* stagnate and gather in the chest. . . . This causes disease” (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 42).

⁹⁶ *Ki o fusagu* 気を塞ぐ. Stagnation of *ki*, particularly in the chest area, was believed to cause a type of melancholia, and young lovers were a group typically associated with these symptoms in the popular imagination. For an in-depth discussion, see Kitanaka, *Depression in Japan*, pp. 23–39, and “Utsu no yamai.”

⁹⁷ This statement is based on a passage in *Yōjōkun* (Kaibara, *Yōjōkun*, *Wazoku dōjōkun*, p. 101).



FIGURE 19. Fol. 11a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

Therefore we five should be ranked above the internal organs, and you should appoint us to govern everything inside the abdomen on your behalf from now on.”

[Mouth:] “In recent years, medicinal tonics to revitalize the health have become very popular,⁹⁸ so these brazen organs have gained considerably in strength.”

[Heart:] “Indeed, let us call a meeting to discuss this matter, just as you have proposed.”

⁹⁸ This is a reference to medicines aimed at “supplementing” and boosting the body’s stamina (*hoyaku* 補薬). More specifically, the passage is likely referring here to the popularity of commercially available medications. The physician Tani Ryōkan 谷了閑 (1747–1805), for example, remarked in his health-cultivation text *Yōjōdan* 養生談 (1801) that “commercial medications will not sell well if their leaflets do not list ‘supplementing the kidneys’ as one of their effects” (Tani, *Yōjōdan*, fol. 39a). The term “supplementing” (*ho* 補) appeared in the name of various contemporary medications (for example, *Tenju hogentan* 天寿補元丹) and was used to describe the efficacy of materia medica in medical advertisements and works on pharmacology. The handbook *Idō nichiyō kōmoku* also lists this term in its section on suitable naming conventions for medications and suggests combinations such as “supplementing the spleen, kidneys, blood, *ki*, and yin and yang” (Hongō, *Idō nichiyō kōmoku*, fols. 13a–14b).

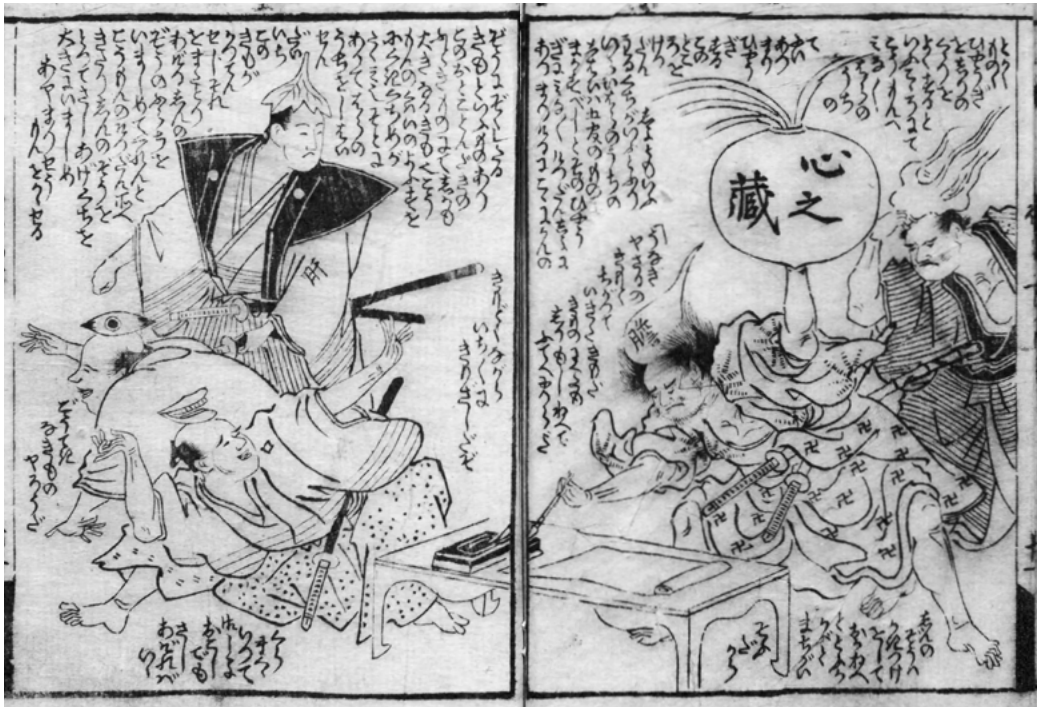


FIGURE 20. Fols. 11b–12a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[Figure 20 (above) depicts the Gallbladder (*second from right*), having fiercely opposed the Mouth's plans, preparing a letter of apology for him to sign while lifting up the Heart with his other hand. The Liver (*upper left*) and Mr. Fire (*upper right*) look on, while the Mouth and Eyes (*lower left*) flee in terror.]

When wanting to get to the very “bottom” of a matter once and for all,⁹⁹ the residents of the abdomen would gather, every last one of them, for a meeting at the public office at the Anus Gate, which is also known as the Arse Court.¹⁰⁰ Now they all flocked there to discuss the foul Mouth's proposal to hand control of the inner workings of the abdomen to the Five Officials. The Liver's sidekick, Mr. Gallbladder—a big, bold, and extremely fearless fellow—was also present on this occasion.¹⁰¹ He had thought to himself: “This meeting is a plot by that scoundrel

⁹⁹ *Shirikukuri* 尻括, literally “to tie up the bottom,” which connects with the semantic field of the “anus” in this passage.

¹⁰⁰ *Ketsudansho* 決断所, “a decision-making assembly,” with a pun on *ketsu* 尻 (buttocks, but in a slightly vulgar register akin to “arse”).

¹⁰¹ The gallbladder was associated with courage, brazenness, and ferocity in idiomatic language, and Ikku makes full use of these characteristics in his puns. In Sino-Japanese medical thought, it was paired with the liver. According to Hongō, *Idō nichiyō kōmoku* (fol. 147b), the gallbladder was situated among the seven lobes of the liver and was “the official charged with handling

the Mouth to set a trap at the Anus Gate, as Xiang Yu did for Liu Bang.¹⁰² I cannot condone the Mouth's plan to let others rule over the inside of the abdomen from the outside. I will make that wayward Heart see reason about favoring the Mouth." Having come to the Arse Court, he lifted the Heart up high above his head and severely rebuked the Mouth, making him write an official letter of apology.¹⁰³

[Gallbladder:] "Unlike eel or monkey gallbladder, this one is actually so fresh it's still alive and kicking.¹⁰⁴ You impudent fellows truly have no idea what's cooking when it comes to this Gallbladder!"¹⁰⁵

decision-making." This is reflected in Ikku's portrayal of the Gallbladder character as an insightful (if rather forceful) arbiter who sets the body back on its proper course. Ikku uses the term *kimo* 肝/胆 here to specifically refer to the Gallbladder (*tan* 膽/胆) as opposed to the Liver (*kan* 肝), although it is more commonly applied to the liver and is also used as a general term for internal organs. The encyclopedia *Wakan sansai zue* 和漢三才図会 (Terajima, *Wakan sansai zue*, fols. 21a, 24b [*maki* 11 (*keiraku* 経絡)]), for example, lists *kimo* as the "Japanese name" (*wamyō* 和名) for the liver and *i* 胆 for the gallbladder. In Chinese medical thought, the two were considered separate but interconnected entities, although it is likely that in common parlance the distinction was linguistically vague. It should be noted that the usage of the term to designate the gallbladder can also be found in a range of other popular Edo-period medical texts, for example *Inshoku yōjō kagami* 飲食養生鑑 (n.d.) and *Shinkyū chōhōki kōmoku* 鍼灸重宝記綱目 (1749). See, respectively, *Inshoku yōjō kagami* and Hongō, *Shinkyū chōhōki kōmoku*, fol. 12a. Given Ikku's distinct usage and the fact that the Gallbladder is the protagonist in this passage, I have privileged the translation of *kimo* as gallbladder for the sake of consistency in subsequent occurrences.

¹⁰² Here Ikku employs a homophone: *kōmon no kai* 肛門の会 (the gathering at the Anus Gate) and *kōmon no kai* 鴻門の会 (the gathering at the Hong Gate). The latter refers to an episode in Chinese history in which the rebel general Xiang Yu 項羽 (ca. 232 BCE–202 BCE) lured his rival (and later the first Han 漢 emperor) Liu Bang 劉邦 (256 or 247 BCE–195 BCE) to a banquet in order to have him assassinated; used figuratively, it stands for a trap or an insidious political gambit. This image of political scheming alludes to the Mouth's machinations.

¹⁰³ Most commonly used in private settlements of disputes, letters of apology in the Edo period typically recorded the offense, an apology, and a pledge to refrain from such activities in the future. The forceful extraction of such a letter from a concerned party in court proceedings, however—as happens in Ikku's scene—was prohibited for officials in the shogunate's legal code, the *Osadamegaki hyakkajō* 御定書百箇条 (One Hundred Articles; 1742), also known as *Kujikata osadamegaki* 公事方御定書.

¹⁰⁴ Monkey gallbladder was used in medicines, often as a fake substitute for the more popular bear gallbladder (Terajima, *Wakan sansai zue*, fols. 12a–12b [*maki* 38 (*jūru* 獣類)]), while eel gallbladder was popularly believed to cure eye diseases (Negishi, *Mimibukuro*, vol. 2, p. 76). Fresh gallbladder (*ikigimo* 生き胆) taken from animals immediately after slaughter was held to have particularly powerful medicinal properties. Here the gallbladder is "so fresh it's still alive and kicking" (*ikita kimo* 生きた胆, literally "living gallbladder," a pun on *ikigimo*).

¹⁰⁵ *Kimo no nieta mo shiri mo shinee* 胆の煮えたも知りもしねえ is a pun on the similar-sounding phrase *imo no nieta mo shiranai* 芋の煮えたも知らない (literally "to not know when the potatoes are cooked"), meaning to be "clueless."

[Gallbladder:] “It may be galling, but this Gallbladder will skewer you one by one.”¹⁰⁶

[Gallbladder:] “Without a label, the Heart [in the illustration] could easily be mistaken for a turnip!”¹⁰⁷

[Eyes:] “What a formidable enemy!”

[Mouth:] “He should go to Kuramae and pose as the shop sign for those sweets at the Tamaya instead.”¹⁰⁸



FIGURE 21. Fols. 12b–13a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

¹⁰⁶ *Kimo doku nagara* 肝毒ながら is a pun on *ki no doku nagara* 気の毒ながら (regrettably), and *kimozashi* 肝刺し is a play on the phrase *imozashi* 芋刺し to describe skewering someone with a sword (literally “skewer like a potato on a stick”).

¹⁰⁷ The same joke appears in Shiba, *Jūshi keisei*, fols. 2b–3a, and pokes fun at the fact that illustrations of the heart in Sino-Japanese medical texts resemble turnips.

¹⁰⁸ The Tamaya 玉屋 shop in the Kuramae 蔵前 district of Edo was famous in the late eighteenth century for *gosho okoshi* 御所糰糰, a type of sweet made from rice or millet (Hanasaki, *Edo no shōhyō*, pp. 25–26). The remark here (*Kuramae e itte, gosho okoshi demo sashiagereba ii* 蔵前へ行って、御所おこしでも差し上げればいい, literally “He should go to Kuramae and lift the rice sweets there”) likely alludes to the Tamaya shop sign (see figures 3, 4, and 5 in the introduction), which is depicted in the *hanashibon* 噺本 *Tokujiden* 徳治伝 (1787) as a crouched figure lifting a large bag of sweets above its head (*Tokujiden*, fol. 3b). The comment exploits the resemblance of this pose

[In figure 21 (previous page), the Blood Ki (*right*) is portrayed as a guard with his iron staff (*kanabō* 金棒) next to him. His clothing typifies the outfit of Edo-period manual laborers, with *momohiki* 股引 trousers and a *happi* 法被 coat, which in his case displays the kana “*ki*” of Blood Ki (*kekki* 血気) on the lapel. The Colon (*center*) is talking with him, accompanied by the Dog of Worldly Sorrows. The crest on the Colon’s garment represents an intertwined pattern formed by the character 大 (for *daichō* 大腸, or colon). On the left-hand side, an underground conduit is being dug to siphon off the accumulated feces and urine. The sign on the lantern identifies the location as “The Gate of Life District.”]

Overwhelmed by his encounter with the fearless Gallbladder, the Mouth—as might have been expected—caved in completely and admitted defeat. The first order of business was now to carry out the necessary repair work inside the abdomen. This began with the construction of a large conduit¹⁰⁹ for the feces and urine to prevent any more food blockages on the Colon’s sixteen-bend path and all other routes leading down from the Spleen and Stomach. After this, no further obstructions occurred, and the urine and feces could pass freely. During the construction work, the Blood Ki stood guard day and night and made his rounds regularly so that peace and order were finally restored to the body.¹¹⁰

[Narrator’s aside 1:] The Blood Ki inside the abdomen is a hot-blooded fellow who never backs down. That is why we say that their “blood *ki* is lively” when describing spirited people.

[Narrator’s aside 2:] Even humankind’s constant companion, the Dog of Worldly Sorrows,¹¹¹ turns tail when beaten off with a stick.¹¹²

with that of the Gallbladder lifting the Heart in Ikku’s illustration. The same comment can also be read as “I should give him a bag of sweets from Tamaya,” playing on the double meaning of *sashiageru* (“to lift” and “to give”).

¹⁰⁹ Edo’s water supply system depended on such underground conduits (*toi* 樋) made from wood or stone for transporting fresh water from the Kanda 神田 River and other rivers to public wells and for disposing wastewater.

¹¹⁰ The regular circulation (*meguri* 巡り) of blood and *ki* was viewed as a sign of health in Sino-Japanese medical thought. In this passage, the Blood Ki (*kekki*) is therefore personified as a guard at a construction site who regularly “does his rounds” (*meguru*), thus bringing order to the body.

¹¹¹ *Bonnō no inu* 煩悩の犬 is an image that compares suffering to a dog that always follows its owner and is here playfully depicted in a more literal sense. A similar strategy of personifying the Dog of Worldly Sorrows can be found in Santō Kyōden’s *Kyōden-su jūroku rikan* 京伝主十六利鑑 (1799) (Santō, *Kyōden-su jūroku rikan*, fol. 11a).

¹¹² *Inu mo arukeba bō ni ataru* 犬も歩けば棒に当たる (literally “a dog on a walk will bump into a stick”). This proverb usually signifies either an unexpected stroke of luck or a sudden misfortune but is here used in a literal sense.

[Narrator's aside 3:] Inside the abdomen there are also major roads, such as the Fourteen Channels¹¹³ and the Sixteen Bends. The Gate of Life is the last district in the Small and Large Intestine—the final one before the bottom.¹¹⁴



FIGURE 22. Fols. 13b–14a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[In figure 22 (above), the Organs (Kidneys and Gallbladder, *upper left*) are subduing the Senses (represented by the Mouth and Nose, *on the ground, far left, and kneeling, second from right*) and extinguishing the Fire (*on the ground, second from left*) with a bucket of water. The Spleen (*kneeling, lower right*) is thanking the Heart (*standing, second from right*) for taking action against the troublemakers.]

¹¹³ The Fourteen Channels included the twelve main Channels plus the so-called Conception and Governing Channels (compare note 59).

¹¹⁴ The Gate of Life (*meimon* 命門) was connected with sexual vitality and fundamental life energy in Sino-Japanese medical thought. Its precise location was ambiguous; the Chinese *Classic of Difficulties* equated it with the right kidney, but in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Chinese and Japanese doctors more commonly located it in the lower abdomen between the two kidneys. Here, however, there appears to be little connection to medical notions of the Gate of Life, and it may instead humorously refer to the passageway for feces, given that Ikku locates it near the Anus as the final section of the intestines. The reference here is to “districts” (*chō* or *machi* 町) within a city, which were spatially defined and delineated by a network of roads. *Chō* is a homophone for both “district” and “intestine” (腸).

Because food was still stagnating in the Spleen, he requested that all further intake be halted for a while so that the abdomen could be drained. Official orders to this effect were issued, but the Mouth's desire to eat remained undiminished, so in the end the Heart tied him up securely. As a result, the Spleen gradually recovered, the construction of the large conduit in the abdomen was completed, and the blood circulated smoothly without stagnating. Once the Spleen and Stomach had also settled down, Mr. Kidneys's waters began to flow abundantly again so that he was able to extinguish the Fire that had been flaring up and running riot [in the body]. Meanwhile, the Gallbladder crushed the Nose and rescued Mrs. Soul from his clutches. Master Life Energy and Miss Essence also returned to their old lives, and the abdomen finally settled down. Disease was completely eradicated from the body, and everyone was bursting with health. What a happy ending!

[Spleen:] "Thank you so much for everything!"

[Heart:] "This fellow the Mouth is also at fault—but he is rather tongue-tied now."



FIGURE 23. Fols. 14b–15a of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[Kidneys to Fire:] “A cold shower, courtesy of this old guy!”¹¹⁵

[Nose:] “This Nose is well and truly squashed. I am all floppy!”

[Figure 23 (previous page) portrays the end of the dream narrative, where we are back in Ikku’s study. The author (*right*) is vomiting, and Ekiken (*upper left*) reappears from inside his body to deliver an edifying parting speech.]

Ikku woke up, wonderstruck by this curious dream about the inside of his abdomen. Suddenly, there was a rumble in his belly. He started to feel nauseous and queasy and in the end vomited up the diverse contents of his stomach. From out of this mess, something akin to a wisp of smoke curled up, from which Kaibara Tokushin appeared and admonished him. “Until now, you have indulged your voracious appetite in the most outrageous way and have inflicted grievous harm on the body bestowed upon you by your parents. This is utterly disgraceful behavior. Since illness enters through the mouth, I have made you spit it out the same way—after all, you reap what you sow. When you do good, your body is rewarded with good things, and when you do wrong, your body is punished. According to this same logic, what begins with the mouth must be expelled through the mouth. In any case, misfortune begins with the mouth, so you should take great care and be on your guard.”¹¹⁶ When the mouth is well behaved, no illness or disaster can occur. Hence, the path of cultivating health lies in restraining the mouth.” After imparting this wisdom, he disappeared. How wondrous!

[Ikku:] “My, my! I have thrown up a venerable physician. Looks like a full-blown quack is more harmful to the body than bamboo sprouts.”¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ *Toshiyori no hiyamizu* 年寄りの冷や水 (“an old man’s cold water”) is usually used figuratively to describe an old man’s lack of discretion and inappropriate behavior, but here Ikku invokes the phrase’s literal sense.

¹¹⁶ This speech and its emphatic warnings mimic the language of “circumspection” (expressed with terms such as *tsutsushimi* 慎み “to take care” and *osore* 恐れ “to be on one’s guard”) that was prominent in *Yōjōkun*. Similar warnings are also recorded in *Yashinaigusa* (Wakisaka, *Yashinaigusa*, fols. 9b–10a [*maki* 2]), which draws on the same rhetoric of careful restraint: “Disasters arise from the mouth; disease enters through it. You should take care and be on your guard” (*tsutsushimu beshi, osoru beshi* 慎むべし、恐るべし).

¹¹⁷ *Takenoko* 筍 (bamboo sprouts) is also a shortened form of *takenoko isha* 筍医者 (“bamboo-sprout doctor”), meaning “an inexperienced doctor” or “a quack”—or someone not even qualified enough to be a “quack” (*yabu-isha* 藪医者, literally “a bamboo-thicket doctor”). As food, bamboo sprouts are generally classified as “not harmful” (*mudoku* 無毒) in pharmacological works such as *Honchō shokkan* (Hitomi, *Honchō shokkan*, vol. 1, pp. 218–19), although it is also noted that they are difficult to digest.

[Kaibara Tokushin:] “Now in your case, people also dislike you because of your foul mouth. Beware of telling lies!”¹¹⁸



FIGURE 24. Fol. 15b of *Essentials*. Image from the National Diet Library Digital Collections.
<https://doi.org/10.11501/8929758>.

[In figure 24 (above), people are eagerly gathering coins that are falling from the sky. These represent the riches produced by hard work and a healthy body. One of these passersby is a traveling bookseller (*lower right*) with Eijudō 永寿堂, the name of the publisher's (Nishimuraya Yohachi's) shop, appearing on his pack of books.]

It is said that “one cannot eat money” when one is starving,¹¹⁹ but it is mostly those without money who end up starving. Money truly is important in this world, and in order to obtain such riches it is vital to possess sound physical capital. Indeed, for those who are penniless the only way to make money from scratch is to rely on their physical health as their sole capital. When you put your health first and your

¹¹⁸ Until now the criticism of Ikku's mouth has focused on his gluttony, but here “telling lies” alludes to his sharp-tongued prose in a humorous imitation of a moralistic stance toward fiction, which had long been viewed with suspicion in Buddhist and Confucian discourses.

¹¹⁹ The same adage is recorded, with minor variation, in Wakisaka, *Yashinaigusa*, fol. 9a (*maki* 2).

legs are in good shape so that you can [move about and] work without succumbing to illness, the skies will rain riches.¹²⁰

As the poems go:

長生きはたゞ働くに如くはなし流るゝ水の腐らぬを見よ

<i>Nagaiki wa</i>	The best medicine
<i>tada hataraku ni</i>	for living a longer life
<i>shiku wa nashi</i>	is tireless work.
<i>nagaruru mizu no</i>	Just see how running water
<i>kusaranu o miyo</i>	stays fresh and does not stagnate. ¹²¹

上を見ず稼ぐ打出の小槌よりよろづの宝沸き出るなり

<i>Ue o mizu</i>	Keeping your head down,
<i>kasegu uchide no</i>	working hard at your labor,
<i>kozuchi yori</i>	will make riches flow
<i>yorozu no takara</i>	more than the God of Fortune's
<i>wakiizuru nari</i>	legendary mallet. ¹²²

[People gathering coins:]

“How lucky we are with the weather today!”

“What a blessing, what a blessing!”

[Text on bookseller's pack: Eijudō—wholesaler of books and color prints]

[Signed: A work by Ikku, illustrated by himself.]

¹²⁰ In this final passage, Ikku links physical health with economic success, as had long been the case in Edo-period formulations of health cultivation for the merchant class in popular fiction, diaries, and advertisements.

¹²¹ This didactic poem and the one that follows appear in *Wakisaka, Yashinaigusa*, fol. 4b (*maki* 1) and fols. 9b–10a (*maki* 2), respectively.

¹²² The *uchide no kozuchi* 打ち出の小槌 was a type of magic mallet that when wielded could produce anything its owner wished for. It appears in a number of Japanese folktales, such as the medieval tale *Issun bōshi* 一寸法師 (One-Inch Boy; n.d.), and is part of the iconography of Daikokuten 大黒天, one of the Seven Gods of Fortune associated with wealth and prosperity.

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