

International Symposium of the
Nihon kinsei bungaku kai 日本近世文学会

Early Modern Graphic Narratives (kusazōshi): Making the Most of Digital Data.



18-20 September 2025
Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
The University of Cambridge

We are delighted to announce the international symposium *Early Modern Graphic Narratives (kusazōshi): Making the Most of Digital Data*, co-organized by the [Nihon kinsei bungaku kai 日本近世文学会](#) ([The Japanese Early Modern Literature Association](#)) and the [Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge](#). The symposium also enjoys the support of the [National Institute of Japanese Literature \(NIJL\)](#).

Nihon kinsei bungaku kai is the largest association dedicated to the study of early modern Japanese literature. This is the first international symposium that the Association organizes in an English-speaking country. The aim of the symposium is to foster an inclusive and supportive atmosphere that enables dialogue between different scholarly traditions.



The focus of the symposium is on early modern Japanese graphic narratives (*kusazōshi*), a field of study that is thriving both in Japanese- and English-language academia.

- We welcome panels and/or individual presentations that deal with any aspect of Japanese graphic narratives across their development, from early *kusazōshi* aimed at children to Meiji-period *gōkan*.
- We also welcome connections with cultural areas surrounding *kusazōshi*, including ukiyo-e, kabuki theatre, and other forms of illustrated books.
- All presentations must show some form of engagement with digital tools, including but not limited to digital images, metadata, and/or GIS. They also need to offer reflections on the use of these tools and/or present innovative ideas for digital projects that assist and enhance the study of *kusazōshi*.



The first day (18 September) gives the opportunity to engage with the rich collection of early modern Japanese materials held at the [Cambridge University Library](#). The second and third days (19 and 20 September) focus on research presentations. The research presentation (max. 40 mins with Q&A) can be delivered in either Japanese or English language. Slides must be both in Japanese and English. The symposium will close with a roundtable led by NIJL, designed to invite reflections on the use of digital tools for research on early modern Japanese literature and culture.



[Click here to submit a panel or a paper](#)

The submission will require also a Japanese-language abstract of approx. 200 characters.

[Click here to attend without giving a presentation](#)

Deadline for applications: **31 January 2025**.

Proposal decisions will be communicated by 28 February 2025.

We have secured accommodation at [Selwyn College](#) and we will circulate the booking form, with all details, after decisions are communicated.

日本近世文学会

