

Reconsidering Late Muromachi Nō: The Plays of
Kanze Nagatoshi (1488–c. 1541)

Introduction

Kanze Yajirō Nagatoshi 観世弥次郎長俊 (1488–c. 1541) has been called the last nō playwright of the medieval period and even the last true nō playwright in general.¹ Although authorship of nō plays increased exponentially, if anything, in the Edo period, by positioning Nagatoshi at the end of the line of great playwrights beginning with Kan’ami 観阿弥 (1333–1384) and Zeami 世阿弥 (c. 1363–c. 1443), a line is drawn at the mid-sixteenth century marking the end of an era in nō’s history. Indeed, of the over two-hundred plays in the combined current repertoires of the five schools, only an odd handful were written after Nagatoshi’s lifetime.²

In fact, some views maintain that Nagatoshi was already beginning to veer into the territory of that-which-is-not nō. Nishino Haruo, for example, sees the characteristics of Nagatoshi’s plays as anticipating the kabuki of the Edo period. In this view, the representative theaters of the medieval and Edo periods are nō and kabuki, so as the last medieval playwright, Nagatoshi bridges the gap between—he is placed in a grand, continuous narrative of the development of all Japanese theater. To be fair, some prominent features of Nagatoshi’s plays do share superficial similarities with the general aesthetic of kabuki: a stage decorated with visually stimulating props and costumes, large casts, an abundance of dynamic movement—what Nishino dubs “suitable for the masses” (*taishūsei* 大衆性).³ The so-called “masses” appear frequently in narratives of late Muromachi nō, often as an explanation for the deviations from the “authentic” nō of Zeami exhibited by Nagatoshi and his fellow playwrights. In the chaotic Warring States period—generally understood to refer loosely to the period from 1467 to 1568—nō playwrights had no choice but to appeal to the “masses”, who preferred showy spectacles more fit for kabuki over the elegant lyricism and abstract beauty of Zeami’s nō.

Such narratives lose sight of the actual conditions of late Muromachi nō and its development. As Yamanaka Reiko points out, nō after Nagatoshi’s lifetime did not, in fact, become kabuki, which developed out of its own independent trajectory, but rather lived on as the classical performing art it remains today.⁴ It is hard to believe that Nagatoshi perceived his creations as anything other than works of the same art passed down to him by his father, the great playwright Kanze Kojirō Nobumitsu 観世小次郎信光 (1450–1517), although he was no doubt aware of how his works built on and differed from those of his predecessors.

Much of the modern foundational scholarship on the history and plays of nō focused on the era of Zeami, the “great completer” (*taiseisha* 大成者) of the art, his father Kan’ami, and his artistic successor Konparu Zenchiku 金春禅竹 (1405–c. 1470), but in recent years a number of scholars have shed more light on the playwrights of the late Muromachi. Lim Beng Choo has produced

¹ Yokomichi, Nishino, and Hata, *Nō no sakusha to sakuhin*, 281. Yamanaka, “Muromachi makki no nō to kankyaku,” 51.

² Examples include *Ume* 梅 (*The Plum*), composed by Kanze Motoakira 観世元章 (1722–1774), and *Taiten* 大典 (*The Grand Ceremony*), written by professor of German literature Fujishiro Teisuke 藤代禎輔 (1868–1927) for Emperor Taishō’s enthronement.

³ Yokomichi, Nishino, and Hata, *Nō no sakusha to sakuhin*, 281, 288.

⁴ Yamanaka, “Muromachi makki no nō to kankyaku,” 59.

the only book-length study of Nobumitsu and has also introduced the works of his contemporary Konparu Zempō 金春禪鳳 (1454–1532?), who has also been the subject of a book-length study by Ishii Tomoko. Scholarship has moved down the line of great medieval playwrights chronologically, and at last has arrived at Nagatoshi. A number of scholars have taken up his plays in articles, such as Quillon Arkenstone, Yamanaka Reiko, Kobayashi Kenji, and Eguchi Fumie, whose dissertation is the first lengthy work to my knowledge with significant attention devoted to Nagatoshi.

Nevertheless, much more about Nagatoshi remains to be said. In this study, I aim primarily to introduce Nagatoshi's repertoire—which is more diverse than much previous scholarship suggests—with full translations of the four plays still performed today; and secondarily to urge a reconsideration of how the history of late Muromachi *nō* is narrated, toward a view which takes into consideration the actual state of *nō* at the time.

In this introduction, I begin with a brief overview of the changes and continuities experienced by *nō* beginning in the late fifteenth century, starting from social and political conditions and moving to the works of the playwrights of this period who preceded Nagatoshi, including an introduction to the concept of *furyū*, both as a historical phenomenon and modern term to describe a certain type of *nō*. I keep this overview to a minimum in the interest of not simply repeating previous scholarship and soon transition to the main subject, Nagatoshi. I briefly introduce his life before giving an overview of all of his surviving works. Next, I bring up standard narratives often applied to late Muromachi *nō* and examine some of their flaws using evidence from Nagatoshi's works.

Lastly, I will mention here the texts I used to read and translate the plays. I generally prioritized the most recent annotated edition available. Of the four plays in the current repertoire, *Shōzon* 正尊 can be found in Amano Fumio and others' 2013 series *Nō o yomu* as well as Yokomichi Mario and Omote Akira's 1960 *Yōkyokushū*; *Rinzō* 輪藏 (*The Revolving Sutra Case*) can also be found in the *Yōkyokushū*; and for all four, including the remaining *Enoshima* 江野島 and *Ōyashiro* 大社 (*The Great Shrine*), I consulted Sanari Kentarō's 1930 *Yōkyoku taikan* as well as Nogami Toyochirō's 1935 *Kaichū yōkyoku zenshū* when necessary. For the plays not in the current repertoire, *Yōkyokushū* contains *Kasui* 河水 (*The River's Waters*) and *Chikatō* 親任, and for the rest I consulted Haga Yaichi and Sasaki Nobutsuna's 1914 *Kōchū yōkyoku sōsho*, which has some annotations but unreliable or no structural information, such as roles and types of dances. For this information I consulted Eguchi Fumie's 2010 dissertation, which contains manuscript transcriptions for the majority of Nagatoshi's defunct plays.

Nō in the Late Muromachi

Narratives of *nō* in the late Muromachi typically begin with the descent into chaos and warfare in the realm best represented by the Ōnin War (1467–1477) which destroyed much of the capital. While the world of *nō* theatre (or *sarugaku* 猿樂 as it was called) never suffered catastrophic effects from the political and social strife, there is no doubt that the new environment of the late

Muromachi period forced performers to adapt their lifestyles and spurred new trends in the plays themselves.

Most immediately, the constant warfare threw many performers into financial hardship, especially those based in Kyoto and Nara where the fighting was most fierce. On the occasion of the Bunmei 2 (1470) Firewood Sarugaku (*takigi sarugaku* 薪猿楽), an annual event which played a central role in the formation of the Yamato troupes, the superintendent of Kōfukuji, Jinson 尋尊 (1430–1508), wrote in his diary that the impoverished state of the nō performers due to the chaos was alarming and that supplies such as costumes were not sufficient. His temple was not doing too well for itself either: taxes collected from its territories in the provinces stalled, rendering it unable to hold its own Buddhist ceremonies, much less pay nō actors. In Bunmei 6 (1474), the four troupes outright boycotted the performance.⁵

As shown by this example, the traditional sources of patronage under which nō developed such as large temples in Nara and the shogunate became unreliable, forcing the troupes to seek livelihood elsewhere. Fortunately, there was no shortage of people eager to steep themselves in the art, which over the century since Zeami's time had raised its cultural status considerably.⁶ Warrior houses adopted nō not only as entertainment but also as a means of expressing social relationships at gatherings.⁷ Wealthy merchants seeking cultural capital became apprentices to professional nō actors and sometimes even gained fame equal to them, performing for aristocrats or in large scale fundraising performances. The powerful Pure Land Sect temple Honganji, which generously donated to professional actors and also regularly held performances put on by their own monks, is also a prominent example of a new patron of nō which emerged during this time.⁸

Nevertheless, the old establishment, while considerably weaker politically and financially, still continued to patronize nō as before. Just as their predecessors Yoshimitsu 義満 (1358–1408) and Yoshinori 義教 (1394–1441) patronized Zeami and his nephew On'ami 音阿弥 (1398–1467), respectively, Ashikaga shoguns such as Yoshimasa 義政 (1435–1490) and Yoshihisa 義尚 (1465–1489) lavished support on their favorite actors of the Kanze troupe, providing many opportunities for them to perform in the capital. The court also continued to hold nō performances in the imperial palace, although it seems financial hardship drove them to hire amateur performers rather than the professional troupes.⁹ On an individual level, historical records tell of intimate friendships formed between nō actors and members of the old cultural elite such as aristocrats and Zen monks.¹⁰

⁵ Omote and Amano, *Nōgaku no rekishi*, 66–68.

⁶ For a study of the changing social status of nō and its performers, see Lim, "They Came to Party."

⁷ See Miyamoto, "Buke tesarugaku no keifu," or the discussion based on it in Pinnington, *A New History of Medieval Japanese Theatre*, 160–62.

⁸ Omote and Amano, *Nōgaku no rekishi*, 73–76.

⁹ Omote and Amano, *Nōgaku no rekishi*, 68, 75.

¹⁰ See Lim, "They Came to Party."

Furyū and Nagatoshi's Predecessors

As the social circumstances surrounding *nō* theater changed, so did the style of its new generation of playwrights. Many of their plays are now known as *furyū* plays (*furyū-nō* 風流能), a modern category created as an antithesis to the elegant and lyrical play focused on the internal world of the *shite* championed by Zeami and his artistic successor Konparu Zenchiku.¹¹ The word *furyū* here connotes an aesthetic focused on visual appeal, and throughout its long history it found use in a variety of contexts, ranging from gorgeous works of craftsmanship admired by the Heian aristocracy to cultures of mass dancing and singing which emerged in the medieval period.¹² Although *furyū* as applied to *nō* is a modern term, this latter context of a festive, mass spectacle co-existed with *nō* in the late medieval period. It shared the same physical space, the capital and the southern capital of Nara, as well as audience, suggesting that the two types of performance interacted in a meaningful way.

The phenomenon known as *furyū odori* (風流踊り), where hordes of commoners took to the streets to dance and sing, may have begun as a chaotic affair, a brazen flaunting of authority, but at least by the early sixteenth century it had become a spectacle which even aristocrats enjoyed viewing. Many records of the phenomenon come to us through the diary of courtier Yamashina Tokitsugu 山科言継 (1507–1579), who was also an avid fan of *nō*.¹³ As will be discussed later, his diary is also one of the primary sources where performances of Nagatoshi's plays can be found.

A similar phenomenon was *nenbutsu furyū* (念仏風流), which involved chanting the *nenbutsu*—the invocation of Amida Buddha's name—as ostentatious processions of floats and people dressed in costumes went by, usually thematically based on famous historical legends. It was particularly popular in Nara, the base of operations for Zenchiku's grandson Konparu Zempō, and Ishii Tomoko has argued for the phenomenon's influence on his works. Zempō's chief patron was a warrior elite based in Nara named Furuichi Chōin 古市澄胤 (1452–1508), who enthusiastically participated in and organized *nenbutsu furyū* events. Ishii views the *furyū* elements in Zempō's plays as him catering to the tastes of this patron.¹⁴

Regardless of how the term arose in modern scholarship, the above discussion shows that labeling plays written in the late Muromachi period which shared an aesthetic with this culture as *furyū* is not so farfetched. In *nō* plays, the *furyū* aesthetic manifests in a number of features which produce a greater visual “spectacle” for the audience: large casts where traditionally passive roles such as the *waki* may feature as prominently in the story as the *shite*; use of large, intricate props to produce exciting scenes; ostentatious costumes, often accompanied by exotic characters

¹¹ The term was first proposed by Yokomichi Mario in his 1960 *Yōkyōkushū*. For a discussion of his definition, see Lim, *Another Stage*, 161–68.

¹² For an overview of the word's various connotations from ancient China to medieval Japan, see Harries, “Fūryū, a Concept of Elegance in Pre-Modern Literature.”

¹³ For more on *furyū odori*, including excerpts from Tokitsugu's diary, see Berry, *The Culture of Civil War in Kyoto*, 244–59.

¹⁴ Ishii, *Fūryūnō no jidai*, 126–34.

who wear them; more dramatic and action-packed plots, often with an abundance of movement on stage, including battle scenes and an increased number of dances per play; heavy use of child actors (*kokata* 子方); and *kyōgen* interludes (*ai kyōgen* 間狂言) which progress the overarching plot or serve as an entertaining scene in their own right, often called *furyū ai* (風流間). Some of these elements have clear parallels to *furyū* dancing: large casts echo the crowds dancing in the streets, and both forms of performance feature exciting props and costumes.

Nagatoshi's two major predecessors, his father Kanze Nobumitsu and the aforementioned Konparu Zenpō are viewed as the pioneers of the *furyū* play. Nobumitsu was an actor and drummer in the Kanze troupe, but it is his prolific career as a playwright which gives him his lasting influence: thirty-one plays are attributed to his name, of which twenty-five survive today and thirteen remain in the current repertoire, with some such as *Funa Benkei* 船弁慶 (*Boat Benkei*), a textbook example of a *furyū* play, still counted among the most popular in the entire canon today.¹⁵ Nobumitsu favored the exotic and the powerful; many plays draw from Chinese legends, and mighty dragons and demons are ubiquitous. Many combine these elements: in *Ryōko* 龍虎 (*Dragon and Tiger*), a visitor to China is greeted with the spectacle of a dragon and tiger engaging in battle. However, Nobumitsu's repertoire is too diverse to sum up in a few words. He also composed plays in the *mugen* (夢幻), or "dream", style of Zeami such as *Yugyō-yanagi* 遊行柳 (*The Traveling Priest and the Willow*), which portrays an elderly willow spirit reminiscent of Zeami's *Saigyōzakura* 西行桜 (*Saigyō and the Cherry Tree*).¹⁶

Although today viewed as a fellow writer of *furyū* plays, Zenpō exhibited a different style than Nobumitsu. In fact, in one of his treatises he criticizes Nobumitsu's overuse of demon and dragon characters.¹⁷ As this comment suggests, he did not have as much of a fondness for epic clashes between powerful figures, although he did not avoid them altogether—*Ikkaku sennin* 一角仙人 (*The One-Horned Immortal*), where dragons escape imprisonment by a wizard, and *Kurokawa*, which dramatizes a warrior legend of the Aizu region, are two exceptions. Most of his known works fall under the category of auspicious god plays, but they exhibit marked differences from more canonical god plays such as Zeami's *Takasago* 高砂. *Hatsuyuki* 初雪 (*First Snow*), for example, is the only play in the canon with an entirely female cast, and it also has no *waki*.¹⁸ Zenpō did seem to share Nobumitsu's interest in China as an exotic setting, as apparent in *Tōbōsaku* 東方朔 (*Dongfang Shuo*), where in the second half Dongfang Shuo and the Queen Mother of the West dance an exotic *gaku* (楽) in tandem, a so-called *aimai* 相舞 (partner dance).

Kanze Nagatoshi

The *furyū* style pioneered by Nobumitsu and Zenpō found a successor in Nobumitsu's eldest son, Kanze Nagatoshi. Unlike his father, who was foremost a drummer, Nagatoshi specialized

¹⁵ *Funa Benkei* was one play through which Yokomichi defined his category of *furyū-nō*. For a discussion of the play's *furyū* aspects, see Lim, *Another Stage*, 168–72.

¹⁶ Many more of Nobumitsu's plays are given detailed treatment in Lim, *Another Stage*.

¹⁷ Ishii, *Fūryūnō no jidai*, 27.

¹⁸ For a study in English of Zenpō's main plays, see Lim, "Performing 'Furyū No.'"

in acting, specifically as a *waki* actor, studying from a young age under famed *waki* actor of the Kanze troupe Kongō Motomasa 金剛元正 (dates unknown). At the time, the *waki* actor, or more precisely the *waki no shite*, did not exclusively perform the *waki* role as they do today. Rather, they performed roles as needed, including the *shite*, and more importantly they were responsible for leading the chorus, the role today known as *jiutai-gashira* 地謡頭 (lit. head of the chorus).

That the *waki* actor required skills equal to those of the *shite* is evident in how Nagatoshi mentored the young Kanze troupe leader Mototada 元忠 (1509–1583, alt. Sōsetsu 宗節), who inherited the position at the young age of fourteen after his father’s death in Taiei 2 (1522). After Mototada came of age, Nagatoshi accompanied him on performances, many of them for elite audiences in the capital. For example, there was a Kanze fundraiser performance (*kanjin sarugaku* 勧進猿楽) at Gojō Karasuma on Kyōroku 3 (1530)/5/3 at which Nagatoshi played the *waki*. The aristocrat Washi-no-o Takayasu 鷺尾隆康 (?–1533) was in the audience, and in his diary, the *Nisuiki* 二水記 (*Two Water Record*), he praised Nagatoshi and the musicians: “They are all skilled performers without peer.”¹⁹

Although Nagatoshi did not leave behind artistic treatises like Zeami or earn widespread praise for his performances like On’ami, he resembled his father in being a prolific playwright, leaving behind twenty-five plays in his name, of which eighteen survive today and four remain in the current repertoire. For determining which plays he wrote, scholars mostly rely on a text called the *Nōhon sakusha chūmon* 能本作者註文 (*List of Nō Authors*), which, according to its colophon, is a record based on direct conversation with Nagatoshi himself written down by someone named Yoshida Kanemasa 吉田兼将, perhaps an amateur student of his. It is dated to Taiei 4 (1524), but as will be discussed with *Enoshima* later, it is known that at least some plays were written much later than this date, so the text likely underwent multiple additions. Nagatoshi’s works often get brushed aside in discussions of late Muromachi playwrights as little more than an extension of Nobumitsu’s style.²⁰ It is true that Nagatoshi seems to inherit many ideas from Nobumitsu, as is perhaps to be expected from father and son, but his plays display more diversity than he is credited with and deserve more serious consideration.

In what follows, I introduce key characteristics of Nagatoshi’s style by using individual plays as examples. I focus on the plays not in the current repertoire, i.e., those beside *Enoshima*, *Ōyashiro*, *Rinzō*, and *Shōzon*, because these four will be treated in detail along with their translations. The categories I have set up are not meant to be strict classifications of any sort but rather simple headings to organize the discussion. I begin with two plays which research suggests were written early in Nagatoshi’s career and proceed from there by following similarities in motif and plot.

¹⁹ The entry is cited in Suzuki, *Nōgakushi Nenpyō. Kodai Chūsei Hen*. The name of his diary “Two Water” (二水) comes from breaking down the character *ei* (永) used in the era name Eishō (1504–1521), i.e., the first two strokes form 二 and the rest is 水.

²⁰ Pinnington, *A New History of Medieval Japanese Theatre*, 170. Nagatoshi only gets two sentences and a brief footnote. Given the nature of the work as an overview, perhaps this is unavoidable, but there is more to be said about Nagatoshi.

Early Experiments

Rōshi 老子 (Laozi)

Nagatoshi's first serious work may have been the god play *Rōshi*, alternatively called *Chōji* 重耳 (*Double Ears*). The colophon of an extant manuscript points to an original bearing Nobumitsu's signature dated to Eishō 3 (1506), when Nagatoshi was around nineteen years old. This suggests that the young Nagatoshi received guidance from his father when learning the basics of play-wrighting.

It begins with a self-introduction from a man in Zhou dynasty China, a commander (*reiin* 令尹, C. *lingyin*) of Hangu Pass (函谷関) named Xi 喜 (the *waki*). This figure appears in a well-known legend where Laozi, attempting to flee from the declining Zhou state, is stopped at Hangu pass by Xi and requested to write him something, whereupon he grants Xi the *Deo De Jing* 道德經 (*Classic of the Way and Virtue*). The play dramatizes a version of this legend. Xi is travelling to the east to investigate a purple light and aromatic fragrance, which lead him to believe that either a Buddha or an immortal has appeared. Along the way a celestial maiden (the *shite*) appears in front of him to show him a miracle (*kidoku* 奇特), as the heavens have recognized his uprightness (*sunao*), loyalty to the sovereign, and compassion to the people. She announces that Xi will soon encounter and receive the *Dao De Jing* from Laozi, who is on his way back home to India, causing Xi to be moved to tears. She then flies away, ending the first half.

In the second half, Laozi (the *shite*) appears riding an ox-cart (no doubt intended to be represented by a prop) as promised. This is followed by a *kuri-sashi-kuse* sequence, a long section of song often used to narrate the backstory or emotions of the protagonist. Here it is used to narrate Laozi's backstory: how he was born looking like an eighty-year-old man, served the Zhou state, taught Confucius, and so on. He then grants Xi the *Dao De Jing*, singing some direct quotations from it in the process, including the now famous maxim "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step". Before he leaves, he wishes to show Xi one last miracle, so he beckons to the sky, and down comes the celestial maiden (the *tsure*), the same one from the first half. She performs a dance, most likely a *tennyo-no-mai* 天女舞 (celestial maiden dance), and the play comes to an end.

Parallels can immediately be recognized with Nobumitsu's *Kōso* 高祖 (*Gaozu*) and *Chōryō* 張良 (*Zhang Liang*), both of which dramatize well-known Chinese historical legends. *Gaozu* appears to be Nobumitsu's first serious work, suggesting that he drew on his own experience when guiding Nagatoshi through the basics, and *Chōryō* follows a similar plot, where a divine old man grants the protagonist a book of secrets.

One aspect where *Rōshi* differs from the norm is in Nagatoshi's use of the celestial maiden character. She frequently appears in god plays of the late Muromachi as a *tsure* in the second half to perform a dance before the play concludes with the entrance of a more important male deity, what Eguchi Fumie calls the "later *tsure* celestial maiden pattern" (*nochitsure tennyō-gata*).²¹ *Rōshi*

²¹ Eguchi, "Kanze Nagatoshi No Kaminō: Haikyoku 'Itsukushima' 'Rōshi' o Chūshin Ni," 34.

deviates from this pattern in two ways: first, the celestial maiden appears in the first half as the *shite* in addition to the second half as the *tsure*; second, she appears last, after the male deity Laozi. This switching of character roles may seem clunky, but it can be seen in other plays by Nagatoshi such as *Rinzō*, where a disguised old man appears in the first half as the *shite*, then appears in his true deity form in the second half as the *tsure*. As Eguchi points out, *Rōshi*'s divergence from the standard pattern makes it, along with the next play to be discussed, stand out among Nagatoshi's god plays, which almost all follow it. This break with the norm can be viewed as experimentation on Nagatoshi's part as he began to write plays.

Although he eventually conformed to the later *tsure* celestial maiden pattern, one characteristic of *Rōshi* which seems to have stuck with him until the end of his career is the tendency to use quotes unaltered from a textual source, no matter how difficult they may have been for the audience to understand by ear. The legend of Laozi presented in the play can be found in texts such as the *Shiji* 史記 (*Records of the Grand Historian*, c. 94 BCE), but it is unlikely that Nagatoshi read these texts directly. Eguchi speculates that there was a secondary vernacular source which introduced these stories, and research shows that this was often the case in other plays dealing with China such as Zenchiku's *Yōkihi* 楊貴妃 (*Yang Guifei*). At any rate, the play contains a number of difficult phrases quoted from the *Dao De Jing*. As we will see, taking material "as is" from source material, whether textual or visual, appears to be a key characteristic of Nagatoshi's style.

Itsukushima 巖島

Itsukushima is another of Nagatoshi's god plays which shares these peculiarities. As the name suggests, the play features as protagonist the goddess of the Itsukushima Shrine found on a small island off the coast of present-day Hiroshima City. A monk (the *waki*) travels to Itsukushima and encounters a woman (the *shite*) who sings praise of the *Lotus Sutra*, in particular about its promise of salvation for females despite their supposed inherent hindrances to achieving enlightenment. She hints at her identity, then reappears in the second half in her true form as the goddess of the shrine and performs some sort of dance. To conclude, a dragon deity (a *tsure*) appears, probably to perform a vigorous dance.

Although there is no concrete evidence as to the date of the play's composition, Eguchi Fumie speculates based on its peculiarities that it may have been one of Nagatoshi's earlier works. First, it deviates from the later *tsure* celestial maiden pattern in that the celestial maiden—here the goddess of Itsukushima—is the *shite* and the male dragon deity is relegated to the *tsure*. Second, like *Rōshi*, *Itsukushima* makes heavy use of direct quotations from textual sources, in this case the *Lotus Sutra*. While a line or two from sutras or Buddhist prayers left in the Sinitic word order and pronunciation is not uncommon in *nō* plays, *Itsukushima* is overwhelming. A significant chunk of the text is quotations left as-is, and the reader/viewer is given no help with the difficult language. Eguchi argues convincingly that the extreme opaqueness of the lyrics effectively rendered the play unperformable as-is, pointing to the heavy revisions evident in later extant manuscripts. *Itsukushima* was one of many defunct plays put on stage again in the mid-Edo period, when a boom in reviving dead plays was spurred on by not only the personal tastes of shoguns Tsunayoshi 綱吉 (1646–1709) and Ienobu 家宣 (1662–1712) but more importantly a boom in publishing massive collections of *nō* lyrics. Scripts and performance records from this time suggest

that the play was dramatically simplified: sections of difficult sutra quotations were cut liberally while the focus shifted to the more exciting appearance of the dragon deity at the end.

While *Itsukushima* no doubt shows signs of Nagatoshi's immaturity as a playwright, it along with *Rōshi* give us a glimpse of the process of trial-and-error he underwent while polishing his craft. In later god plays, he ended up opting for the later *tsure* celestial maiden pattern, perhaps recognizing its value after his experiments, but he would continue the tendency to portray his source material "as-is", while learning to not make the lyrics overly opaque.

Expelling Evil

Gōma 降魔 (Banishing Evil)

Gōma is one other play which shares *Itsukushima's* tendency to use passages from the *Lotus Sutra* left as-is. Shakyamuni (the *waki*) is meditating under the Bodhi Tree surrounded by his followers (multiple *tsure*), about to reach enlightenment. Where *Gōma* differs from *Itsukushima* is how the direct sutra quotations are limited to the introductory scene. Buddhist vocabulary continues to appear throughout the play, as is appropriate given the subject matter, but the lyrics soon shift to a more vernacular tone, in contrast to *Itsukushima* where the strings of Chinese characters to be read as if chanting the sutra persist throughout the entire play. Perhaps this greater balance in the lyrics can be taken as a sign of Nagatoshi's growth as a playwright.

Three demons disguised as beautiful women (the *shite* and two *tsure*) appear to stop Shakyamuni's enlightenment, a development reminiscent of Nobumitsu's *Momijigari* 紅葉狩 (*Autumn Foliage Hunting*), where Taira no Koremochi 平維茂 encounters beautiful women in the mountains who later reveal their true demonic form and attack him. Unlike Koremochi, however, Shakyamuni is not fooled. The women make a futile attempt to convince him to return to his life as a prince, citing his wife's loneliness as a reason. They feel compelled to plead on her behalf, also being in the "dreary body of a woman" (*onna no ukimi*). Shakyamuni of course does not listen and reveals their true appearances, causing them to be embarrassed and flee, marking the end of the first half.

The content of the *kyōgen* interlude is not recorded in the manuscript aside from a brief remark noting that an elephant, horse, ox, sheep, and lion (numbers of each unknown) are to appear. While the interlude was not important enough to transcribe—which was the case for some plays such as *Kasui*—it is notable that the opening line of the second act sung by Shakyamuni references these animals: "Even the herd of four animals—the elephant, horse, ox, and sheep—lose their power before my might." This suggests that the interlude was not a mere recap of the first half but a dramatic scene connected to the overarching plot, probably created specifically for this play. The appearance of a variety of animals also illustrates how interludes in plays of this period were often utilized to bring out exotic characters. Perhaps the lion even danced a lion dance, an exotic performance rarely seen in the repertoire.

In the second half, the demon king (the *shite*) appears riding a black cloud to obstruct Shakyamuni, who asserts that the demon king cannot harm him because he followed the Kashō Buddha

(迦葉仏) in a former life and is now a great leader of the three realms. The demon king asks for proof, and Shakyamuni says that he gave Kashō's *kesa* (袈裟) robes to an earth deity named Kenrō Chijin 堅牢地神 (a *tsure*), who will appear when he points to the ground. Sure enough, the earth deity appears and offers the *kesa* to Shakyamuni. Upon being shown this, the demon king puts his head to the ground and worships Shakyamuni. Furthermore, Shakyamuni says that he will become a Buddha because of his training accumulated through the eons, and that the sky deity Kokūjin 虚空神 (a *tsure*) can prove it. The sky deity promptly appears, and, along with the earth deity, punishes the demon king, who swears he will not obstruct Shakyamuni again. The two reveal their mighty light throughout the earth and heavens, and the chorus concludes the play with the explanation that this moment was the beginning of the flourishing of the Buddhist law.

Kazuraki Tengu 葛城天狗

Kazuraki tengu, which features the legendary founder of the mountain ascetic practices known as Shugendō (修験道), En no Gyōja 役行者, also portrays two followers of a divine figure chasing away an evildoer. A *yamabushi* 山伏 (the *waki*) enters into the mountains of Kazuraki (Nara Prefecture) with his companions to practice austerities. As he meditates, a *tengu* goblin (the *shite*) suddenly appears before him and, after introducing himself as a follower of a large *tengu* living in the mountains, warns that he will tell his master about the *yamabushi*'s party. This concludes the first half, and after the interlude, which seems to have featured dialog and singing, the large *tengu* himself (the later *shite*) appears as the earth shakes and the wind roars. His beak and legs are sharp as blades, and his eyes glow as the sun and moon. The *yamabushi* intones a magical spell, and in response a boulder in a nearby cave suddenly splits open, revealing En no Gyōja (a *tsure*) and two children (*kokata*) at his side. Upon seeing them, the *tengu* tries to flee, but one of the children catches him. En no Gyōja then scolds the *tengu*, saying, "Don't you know? This is a divine realm. Why did you obstruct the Buddhist law?" The *tengu* promises to become a guardian deity of the Buddhist law and flies away. Meanwhile, En no Gyōja and his followers return to their cave.

The most interesting point about the play is the splitting boulder from which En no Gyōja and his two followers appear, which was implemented as a prop, similar to the one used in the canonical play of unknown authorship *Sesshōseki* 殺生石 (*The Murder Stone*) but larger since it had to fit three people. While no doubt a spectacle, it seems that in actual performance the prop and the number of followers inside were shrunk for convenience. The lyrics make it fairly clear that two followers, Gigaku 伎楽 and Dōji 童子, are to appear with En no Gyōja, and old performance records generally use two child actors. However, at least one performance record has only one follower on stage, and furthermore does not specifically note whether he is to be played by a child actor or not. This change has two consequences: first, it would allow the boulder prop to be made smaller; second, it would make the characters match with the more popular play *Tanikō* 谷行 (*Valley-Bound*).²² The authorship of this play is unknown, although some sources attribute it to Zenchiku and it is clear that it was written before 1481.²³ In *Tanikō*, a group of *yamabushi*

²² Eguchi, "Kanze Yajirō Nagatōshi no sakushihō to kōsei no hyōka," 51.

²³ See the introduction to *Tanikō* in Umehara et al., *Nobumitsu to Zeami igo*.

entering the Kazuraki mountains must drop one of their own, a young boy, off a cliff because he has fallen ill—the custom called *tanikō*. Afterwards they are stricken with grief and pray to En no Gyōja, who then appears with a follower named Gigaku Kijin (伎楽鬼神) to revive the boy.

The example of the splitting boulder in *Kazuraki tengu* not only provides an opportunity to introduce Nagatoshi's characteristic use of large, intricate props, but also illustrate some of the ways in which his plays were revised to be less of a burden on performers. In *Itsukushima*, long sections of difficult sutra quotations were deleted for simplicity, and here large props were shrunk and the cast reduced.

Miuegatake みうへが嶽 (Mount Miue)

Miuegatake (alt. *Maruko*) dramatizes the legend of Prince Maruko 麻呂子親王 (the *waki*), son of Emperor Yōmei (r. 585–587), who was sent by Empress Suiko (r. 592–628) to defeat demons infesting Mount Miue, also known as Mount Ōe (大江山). As he and his retainers (the *tachishū* 立衆) arrive at Mount Miue, they encounter an old man (the *shite*) with another man (the *tsure*). In their opening lines, they sing of the beauty of the mountains and their reliance on the sovereign's blessing. When the Prince informs the old man of their mission, the old man tells them of the hordes of demons infesting the mountains with three as their leaders named Teiko (ていこ), Tsuchiguma (土熊), and Karu Yasha (迦楼夜叉). Upon the old man's urging, the Prince vows to build statues of the Seven Medicine Buddhas (Shichi-Butsu Yakushi 七仏薬師) and construct a temple to house them. The old man says that he will return later to display his divine virtue, foretells that the Prince himself will also become a guardian of the realm, the Luminous Deity of Takano (竹野), then disappears.

The manuscript does not record anything about the *ai kyōgen*, but Kobayashi Kenji speculates that the script of an *ai* named "Miue" found in a text called the *Manshūru* 万集類 (*Classified Myriad Collection*) dated to Shōhō 2 (1645) may reflect the original interlude. The *ai* found here is a parody of the story, where the protagonist defeats the demons with the help of sardines (*iwashi*).²⁴ Such parodies where the original characters are replaced by comical animals may have been one pattern of *furyū ai* popular at the time. The original *ai* of Zenpō's *Arashiyama* 嵐山, which survives as the independent *kyōgen* piece *Saru Muko* 猿聳 (*The Monkey Son-in-Law*), was a parody of the play's story where monkeys come to Arashiyama from Yoshino instead of deities.

In the second half, the three demon generals (*tsure*) appear and do battle with the Prince and his men, expressed in a dynamic *maibataraki* (舞働). Realizing they will lose, the demons retreat and hide in the mountains. The old man then arrives in his true form as a Luminous Deity (the *shite*) with his large dog (a *tsure*). The dog has a mirror on its head, and the deity uses it to illuminate the mountains, revealing the hiding demons. In one last battle, the Prince and the deity fight together to defeat the demons. A praise of the well-governed realm, where both the kingly law (*ōbō* 王法) and the Buddhist law (*buppō* 仏法) flourish eternally, closes the play.

²⁴ Kobayashi, "Kanze Nagatoshi no sakunōhō ni okeru ichi-tokushoku: bangaikyoku 'Maruko' o megutte," 64–65.

Few people would likely think of Prince Maruko when talking about defeating demons at Mount Ōe. The more famous legend, which is dramatized in the *nō* play *Ōeyama* (*Mt. Ōe*), involves the warrior Minamoto no Raikō 源頼光 (948?–1021) and his four loyal retainers. The legend of Prince Maruko was an alternate legend which never circulated beyond the Tango region in northwest Kyoto Prefecture. Today, it survives in illustrated scrolls stored in local temples and shrines, including the Takano Shrine in present-day Kyōtango City which enshrines Prince Maruko. Kobayashi argues that these illustrated scrolls may have served as inspiration for Nagatoshi, in particular illustrations of the striking character of the dog with a mirror on its head.²⁵ In the plays discussed so far, we have seen Nagatoshi's tendency to quote textual sources "as-is", but here we see that this tendency extended to visual sources as well.

The local nature of the Prince Maruko legend raises the question of how Nagatoshi came to learn of it in the first place. In fact, a great number of Nagatoshi's plays feature provincial stories, and this trend can be seen in late Muromachi *nō* in general. This is not to say that plays of previous generations were never set in the provinces. For example, Zeami's *Obasute* 姨捨 (*Abandoned Old Lady*) is set in the eponymous mountain in present-day Nagano Prefecture, but it was a place of poetic fame, or *utamakura*, found in classics such as the *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集 (*Collection of Past and Present Waka*, c. 914). The difference with the provincial stories taken up in Nagatoshi and others' plays is that they were not a part of the central elite's cultural imaginary.

In most cases, there are unfortunately no hints as to the playwright's connection to the provincial setting in the play, but Kobayashi has proposed one theory for *Miuegatake*. The key lies in the preeminent scholar of the day, Sanjōnishi Sanetaka 三条西実隆 (1455–1537). Nobumitsu had a close personal relationship with Sanetaka, and Nagatoshi carried on those ties.²⁶ In Bunki 1 (1501), Sanetaka wrote a fundraising document (勸進状) for Endonji (円頓寺), a temple in the Kumihama area of Kyōtango City. The temple is dedicated to one of the Seven Medicine Buddhas supposedly made by a prince of Emperor Yōmei, and the document relates a version of the legend. Another figure in Sanetaka's circle was the painter Kubota Muneyasu (窪田統泰), who met with Nagatoshi in Sanetaka's residence at least a couple times. He had deep ties with Wakasa Province immediately to the east of Tango, once being in service to the Takeda (武田) clan there, but paintings of his have also been found in temples in Tango Province. Thus both Sanetaka and Muneyasu had connections to the Tango region, and Kobayashi speculates that Nagatoshi may have known about the Prince Maruko legend through one of them.²⁷ It is also noteworthy that Nobumitsu's god play *Kuse-no-to* 九世戸 (*The Gate of Salvation*) also takes place in Tango Province, at Chion-ji (智恩寺) at the southern end of the famous Amanohashidate sandbar in Miyazu City. The temple seems to have come to prominence in the Muromachi period, attracting elites such as the shogun Yoshimitsu and Sanetaka on pilgrimage. For Nobumitsu as well, it may have through Sanetaka that he learned of the provincial locale.

²⁵ Kobayashi, 59.

²⁶ For a discussion of Nobumitsu's relationship with Sanetaka, see Lim, "They Came to Party," 120–21.

²⁷ Kobayashi, "Kanze Nagatoshi no sakunōhō ni okeru ichi-tokushoku: bangaikyoku 'Maruko' o megutte," 62.

Ryokō 呂后 (Empress Lü)

Ryokō is another play where Nagatoshi likely drew inspiration from visual sources. Its plot is similar to Nobumitsu's *Kōtei* 皇帝 (*Emperor*), where Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗皇帝 (r. 713–756) defeats a demon afflicting his beloved Yang Guifei 楊貴妃 (719–756). A minister (the *waki*) in service to Emperor Wen of Han 文帝 (the *shite*) (r. 180–157 BCE) is on his way to check on Empress Lü (a *tsure*), who is gravely ill. On the way he encounters a strange creature called a “lump of flesh” (肉塊) (the *ai*) with no eyes or mouth. When the minister tries to cut it down, the lump grows into a mouth and it begins to speak. It names itself as the vengeful spirit of both Han Xin 韓信 (d. 196 BCE) and Peng Yue 彭越 (d. 196 BCE)—two generals who rendered great service to Gaozu in uniting the realm but were killed at the empress' command—and says that it will come to disturb the empress.

The minister reports this to the emperor, who then speaks with the empress and laments her fate. Afterwards, the sky suddenly darkens, thunder roars, and rain pours. A large cloud appears above the palace, and out from the cloud appears a large boat on top of a large fish. Riding in the boat are the vengeful spirits of Han Xin and Peng Yue as well as Lady Qi 戚夫人 (224–194 BCE) (all *tsure*), a rival of the empress who was also killed. The emperor himself takes up a sword and fends off the spirits, causing them to flee and promise never to return. Praise of the emperor's supreme authority concludes the play.

Nishino focuses discussion of the play on the grotesque nature of the lump of flesh character,²⁸ but perhaps more striking is the large boat on top of a large fish in a large cloud which the three ghosts enter the stage on. According to Eguchi Fumie's research, performance records show that the strange vehicle was indeed recreated as a prop. Pointing to an illustration of the same vehicle found in the *Qian Han Shu pinghua* 前漢書平話 (*Vernacular Book of Former Han*)—a text identified as a source for the story of *Ryokō* by Wang Donglan—Eguchi speculates that Nagatoshi wanted to recreate this striking visual “as-is”. Nagatoshi was unlikely to have directly read this Chinese source, but secondary vernacular sources relating the tale likely existed. One can imagine the effort necessary to construct such a large, intricate prop, and indeed Eguchi speculates that actual performances in the Edo period probably left out the prop, citing a performance record from the Yonezawa Domain which makes no special note of any prop.²⁹ This simplification of props was already discussed in the case of the splitting boulder in *Kazuraki tengu*.

Warriors of the Provinces

The plays in the “Expelling Evil” section all dramatize legends featuring conflict between supernatural beings: demons, *tengu*, and vengeful spirits. Nagatoshi also showed interest in warrior tales, not only those belonging to well-known narratives such as the *Heike monogatari* 平家物語 (*The Tale of the Heike*) and *Soga monogatari* 曾我物語 (*The Tale of the Soga*), but also lesser known legends from provincial warrior clans.

²⁸ Yokomichi, Nishino, and Hata, *Nō no sakusha to sakuhin*, 287.

²⁹ Eguchi, “Kanze Yajirō Nagatoshi no sakushihō to kōsei no hyōka,” 52–53. For discussion of the source, see chapter two of Wang, *Nō ni okeru Chūgoku*.

Chōkyōji 長卿寺

Chōkyōji is one play where a legend from a provincial warrior clan mixes with the supernatural elements seen in the previous plays. A monk (the *waki*) of Chōkyōji, a temple in present-day Kunohe Village, Iwate Prefecture, appears on stage and introduces the situation. A fierce warrior of the Nanbu clan, who patronize the temple, passed away some time ago and in his will requested to be sunk to the bottom of a lake along with his sword, an heirloom passed down in his lineage for generations.

An acolyte of the temple (the *ai*) enters to report that a newly ordained monk named Suieki ずいゑき (a *tsure*) has gone mad, apparently possessed by the aforementioned warrior, hereafter simply called Nanbu. The monk summons Nanbu's son Ujiharu 氏春 (a *tsure*), and together they interrogate the possessed Suieki. Nanbu's voice tells his story: the sword buried with him was the wrong one, causing him to transform into a large serpent and repeatedly do battle with a large *tengu* living on Mount Iwaki 岩木山 (Hirosaki City, Aomori Prefecture). Because he does not have his legendary sword, he keeps losing. He vows to become protector deity of the temple should Ujiharu sink the correct sword before their next battle that night. Just as Nanbu's spirit leaves Suieki, he becomes possessed again, this time by the large *tengu* of Mount Iwaki, who is bound by karma from a former life to repeatedly battle Nanbu. He vows to become their protector deity should they *not* sink the correct sword. Ujiharu admits to sinking the wrong sword on purpose in order to use it for himself on the battlefield, but he resolves to be a filial son and sink it as his father wishes. The play ends with an epic clash between Nanbu the large serpent (a *tsure*) and the large *tengu* of Mount Iwaki (the *shite*), the latter of which loses his power and flees before the legendary sword.

The ghost of a warrior who died with some regret appearing in front of the living to ask them to correct the matter is a pattern common in the warrior plays created by Zeami such as *Tadanori* 忠度 and *Kiyotsune* 清経. In those canonical plays, the warrior usually breaks free from their attachments by telling their story, usually ending with a reenactment of their death, and having the listening monk pray for them. The focus is on their feelings of regret and the suffering that it has brought them in being unable to achieve enlightenment. In contrast, *Chōkyōji* does not focus so much on the internal world of Nanbu. His condition for breaking free is not relating his story but rather defeating the *tengu* in battle. Furthermore, his karmic attachments have transformed him into a large serpent, adding to the fantastical nature of the final showdown. Nagatoshi's preference for such clashes between powerful, often supernatural characters cannot be denied, and in *Chōkyōji* we see how he takes a common trope and changes it to conclude in such a battle.

Hiramoto 広元

Not all of Nagatoshi's battle plays feature dragons and demons, however. Set in the Tsugaru region of present-day Aomori Prefecture, *Hiramoto* tells the story of how Tsugaru Tokinori 津軽時則 (a *tsure*) plots to rescue his relative Hiramoto (the *shite*), who has been wrongfully imprisoned by Yasuhara Hidefusa 安原秀房 (the *waki*). The play begins with Tokinori introducing the situation and calling his men (the *tachishū*) to think of a plan. One of them suggests sending in a

shirabyōshi 白拍子 performer (a *tsure*) to break Hiromoto out by first getting Yasuhara to pass out drunk. The stage then shifts to the residence of Yasuhara, who introduces himself. The *shirabyōshi* comes and gains permission to enter after an exchange with a servant (the *ai*). She sings and dances at Yasuhara's request, and after a few drinks he passes out, giving the woman the opportunity to sneak Hiromoto a knife with which to cut his bonds. The stage shifts once again to outside the residence, where Tokinori waits with his men to welcome the fleeing couple. Upon reuniting they rejoice and send the woman home first, who will be heavily rewarded. As they return, however, they are pursued by Yasuhara and his men (more *tachishū*), and a battle serves as the grand climax, with Hiromoto beheading Yasuhara himself.

Hiromoto most likely has the largest cast of the plays discussed so far. Many have featured multiple *tsure*, such as the three demons disguised as women in *Gōma* or the three vengeful spirits in *Ryokō*, and *Miuegatake* featured Prince Maruko's retainers as *tachishū*, but in this play it is quite likely that Yasuhara's men also appeared as *tachishū* in addition to Tokinori's. It is not clear how many were supposed to appear on each side, but there easily may have been over ten actors on the stage in the final battle. Add in the musicians and chorus, and it becomes difficult to imagine how everyone could have fit on stage. It was beginning around Nagatoshi's time that the modern *nō* stage began to take shape, and one development was the long bridge (*hashigakari*) attached to the left side (when viewed from the front) of the stage. In their overview of the history of the *nō* stage, Omote Akira and Amano Fumio comment that the plays of Nagatoshi with massive casts were only possible because of this development, for the long bridge provided more space for all the actors to stand.³⁰ In *Hiromoto*, perhaps both armies could squeeze in, or perhaps wider spaces were utilized. Performance records for the play seem to be almost nonexistent, but it was apparently put on at a performance by the Kanze troupe at Ishiyama Honganji in Tenbun 12 (1543).³¹ They could have made use of a wide temple hall, and for sure there was no shortage of actors to play the *tachishū* roles—Honganji monks often trained in *nō* and put on performances by themselves.

The rural settings of *Chōkyōji* and *Hiromoto* as well as their content—legends of local warrior clans likely not widespread—raise the question of what prompted Nagatoshi to dramatize them. I do not know of any research done on these plays set in the Tōhoku region, but one can speculate that the situation was similar to Kobayashi Kenji's hypothesis for *Miuegatake*, i.e., that Nagatoshi gained knowledge of the legends through his connections with elites, such as those in Sanjōnishi Sanetaka's circle. For example, Sanjōnishi Sanetaka's close relationship with the poet Sōgi 宗祇 (1421–1502) is well known—it is he who gave Sanetaka the secret transmissions for the *Kokin wakashū*—and Sōgi was well travelled in the Tōhoku region (one of his portraits was stored in the Nanbu house). One person from the Tōhoku region, although further south, who appears in Sanetaka's diary around the same time that Nagatoshi was active is the *renga* poet Inawashiro Kenjun 猪苗代兼純 (1487–?). In Taiei 3 (1523), he visited Sanetaka bringing poetic souvenirs from

³⁰ Omote and Amano, *Nōgaku no rekishi*, 211.

³¹ Yamanaka, "Muromachi makki no *nō* to kankyaku," 53.

Tōhoku, the *umoregi* tree fossil of the Natori River and *shinobuzuri* paper.³² While I do not mean to propose either figure as the specific person through which Nagatoshi learned of these legends, it is not unthinkable that such a person existed.

Chikatō 親任

Chikatō is another provincial warrior play with a large cast and concluding battle scene, but the first half has a different flavor than *Hiromoto* in that it focuses on lyrical expression of the characters' emotions. The setting is a temple named Daishōji (大聖寺) in Kōzuke Province, probably somewhere within the vicinity of present-day Maebashi City, Gunma Prefecture. The play opens with an acolyte (the *ai*) introducing the situation. Two young boys are being raised in the temple, the older Hanagiku 花菊 (either the *shite* or a *kokata*) and the younger Senmitsu 千満 (a *kokata*). Their father was killed by one Nawa Narizumi 那波成澄 (a *tsure*). This Narizumi has snuck into the main hall of the temple and threatens to burn it down if Hanagiku is not killed. The monks all agree that they will not harm their beloved Hanagiku, but they must figure out how to save the statue of Kannon enshrined in the hall. Also, another character named Nasu Chikatō 那須親任 (either the *shite* or a *tsure*), who was raised under the same wet nurse as the brothers, has also been residing in the temple recently to admire the flowers now at full bloom.

The acolyte speaks with one of the monks who lives with the brothers, Songyō 尊堯 (the *waki*), who then gathers the brothers and explains the situation to them. He says he will sacrifice himself to resolve the situation, urging the brothers to escape and pray for his soul in the afterlife. Hanagiku counters, saying that Narizumi will not be satisfied with Songyō's death. He fears the sin that will befall them should they let the statue burn, so he pleads with the monk to take his own life and pray for his afterlife. Next, Senmitsu suggests that he pretend to be his brother and be sacrificed, for Narizumi does not know what Hanagiku looks like. Songyō praises Senmitsu for his resolve but says that his job is to lay low until he can revive the household and take revenge.

The acolyte returns to report that the monks have decided to do battle with Narizumi. Then, Chikatō appears with his own suggestion, that he should help the brothers escape then sacrifice himself to kill Narizumi. They each plead for themselves to be sacrificed, and the tears start flowing, leading into the poetic *kuri-sashi-kuse* sequence lamenting their poor fate and the ephemerality of life. The *kuri* spells out the core motif of the play:

Truly, all of these emotions, never change throughout the ages. Master and disciple; older and younger brother; sovereign and subject: the love between them all stem from deep karmic bonds.

The love they feel for each other prompts them to plead to be sacrificed themselves, creating a sentimental mood in the first half. However, this mood is broken again by the acolyte, who reports that he has successfully saved the Kannon statue by getting Narizumi's men drunk and then sneaking it out. Now, they can all get ready for battle and surround the hall without worry.

³² Haga Kōshirō, *Sanjōnishi Sanetaka*, 72, 188. For more on the *umoregi* and its use in poetry, see Kamens, *Utamakura, Allusion, and Intertextuality in Traditional Japanese Poetry*, chap. 2.

In *Hiromoto*, the sequence where the *shirabyōshi* gets Yasuhara drunk and breaks Hiromoto out of prison is shown on stage, likely serving as the highlight of the first half, but here the heroic deed is performed offstage, by the *ai* no less.

As they head out to battle, a monk (the *waki tsure*) asks Songyō why Hanagiku is with him. Songyō tried to convince the brothers to stay behind, but they responded, “Being born as bow-wielding children [i.e., warriors], how could we stay behind?” The brothers adhere to a sort of warrior code, leading the monks to praise their bravery despite being so young (*kenage*). Next, the play finally enters the climax: Narizumi emerges from the hall prepared to fight to the death, and the monks charge. It is likely that both the monk army and Narizumi’s men appear as *tachishū* here, either of *waki tsure* or *tsure* actors. Songyō gets the first kill of the day, and at the end the two brothers get their revenge on Narizumi with the help of Chikatō. The four of them rejoice and go home.

While still ending with a grand battle, *Chikatō* differs from the warrior plays previously discussed in that the first half has a different focus. In *Chōkyōji* and *Hiromoto*, the focus is always on the dramatic storyline building up to the final battle, but in *Chikatō* the play first focuses on the sentimental mood as each of the four protagonists pleads for themselves to be sacrificed out of love for the others. The scenes are drawn out through long passages of song, and even the rescue of the Kannon statue is left out. Other plays where a similar structure can be found include Nobumitsu’s *Funa Benkei*, where the first half features Lady Shizuka’s sorrowful farewell dance and the second half features the showdown between Yoshitsune and the ghost of Taira no Tomomori.

Okazaki 岡崎

Like *Chikatō*, the story of *Okazaki* centers around a young boy. The *waki* appears on stage and introduces himself as a priest in service to the Luminous Deity of Ōharano (大原野明神), then proceeds to introduce the shrine’s ties with the Fujiwara clan. Located in the southwest of Kyoto City, this is the same shrine that appears in Zenchiku’s *Oshio* 小塩. It is peak cherry blossom season at the shrine, and the priest has come to announce that breaking off branches to take home is forbidden.

Next, a group of retainers (*tachishū*) in service to the Okazaki house arrive with their young lord (the *kokata*). They have a flower-viewing banquet where the *ai* (perhaps one of their own or a shrine personnel) dances and sings. After the entertainment, the young Okazaki asks a retainer named Tadahiro 忠広 (the *tsure*) to pick a branch for him. The priest informs Tadahiro that picking branches is forbidden, but Tadahiro does not back down, and the two get into a heated argument which takes the form of a poetry battle. From a strictly poetic perspective, this is perhaps the most interesting passage in all of Nagatoshi’s repertoire, so I present a translation below:

Priest: You may call me heartless, but they say that even when offering flowers to a god you should not pick them off the branch.³³

³³ This is more of a reference to a poetic trope rather than a specific poem, but in his annotations Haga Yaichi lists the following attributed to Sōjō Henjō in the *Go-Senshū*: “If I were to pick it, my hand would sully it. Left

Tadahiro: What a witty response! Then tell me, why did Priest Sosei sing, “Shall we only see and speak of them to others, these cherry blossoms? No, let us each pick some and take them as souvenirs.”³⁴

Priest: Indeed, indeed, there is such a poem too. But there is also, “If I were to pick them, it would be a shame, these cherry blossoms. I will borrow lodging and watch them ‘till they scatter.”³⁵ A greater treasure than thousands or ten thousands of jewels, these flowers are.³⁶ Besides, in our shrine’s vow it says, “Pilgrims are welcome, but how could we part with even one leaf?” Such is the will of the god, so how could I ever allow a flower?

[Tadahiro remains unfazed, and all at once his party attempts to pick flowers.]

Priest: I will not let you flower scattering bandits escape!³⁷

[The priests all draw their swords. Fearing that the child will be harmed in a battle, Tadahiro restrains his men and says he will be back tomorrow.]

Tadahiro: Don't think that I am scared. If I do not come today, tomorrow I shall fall upon you as snow and scatter those blossoms!³⁸

In the second half, Tadahiro and his men show up as promised and engage in battle with the priests. As in previous plays, it is likely that both sides had multiple actors on stage as *tachishū*. Eventually, the young Okazaki himself shows up, saying that he will die in battle with Tadahiro. This expression of his deep, affectionate bond with his retainer (*nasake mo fukaki chigiri no iro*) moves both ally and enemy alike. As the battle rages on, the shrine begins to tremble, and out from its doors appears the Luminous Deity of Ōharano (the *shite*). He declares he will allow one branch of flowers to be picked, then proceeds to break one off himself and give it to the young boy before flying off.

Like the sentimental singing in *Chikatō*, the poetry battle in *Okazaki* provides a different kind of highlight in the first half which nevertheless leads up to a battle scene in the end. Just as *Chōkyōji* takes the trope of a warrior asking for release from his regrets and turns it into build-up for an

on the branch, I offer a flower to the Buddhas of the three worlds” (折りつれば手ぶさにけがる、たてながらみよの仏に花奉る) (#123). Numbers are according to the *Shinpen kokka taikan*.

³⁴ Poem #55 in the *Kokin wakashū* by Priest Sosei (見てのみや人にかたらむ桜花手ごとに折りて家づとにせむ).

³⁵ Poem #65 in the *Kokin wakashū* (をりとらばをしげにもあるか桜花いざやどかりてちるまでは見む).

³⁶ Reference to poem #116 in the *Wakan rōeishū* by Sugawara Fumitoki: “Shining in the sun, sparkling in the wind, high and low, thousands and ten thousands of jewels, dying branches, dying waves, like crimson dyed on the surface and underside of a garment, one time, many times” (瑩日瑩風、高低千顆万顆之玉、染枝染浪、表裏一入再入之紅). Numbers are according to the *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū*.

³⁷ Borrows language from poem #129 in the *Wakan rōeishū* by Ōe Asatsuna: “Fallen blossoms scattered after a frenzied gust of wind; chirping birds fatigued as rain falls” (落花狼藉風狂後、啼鳥竜鐘雨打時).

³⁸ Reference to poem #63 in the *Kokin wakashū* by Ariwara Narihira (今日来ずは明日は雪とぞ降りなまし消えずはありとも花と見ましや).

exciting battle scene, *Okazaki* takes a witty back-and-forth of poetry and turns it into an argument which sparks a fight.

The Fantastic and the Foreign

Hanaikusa 花軍 (Flower Battle)

In *Okazaki* men fight over flowers, but in *Hanaikusa* personified flowers fight amongst themselves. A man of the capital (the *waki*) is visiting Fukakusa with a few companions (*waki tsure*) to look for flowers to use in a flower gathering he is supposed to host. He encounters a woman (the *shite*), who invites him over to where the white chrysanthemums are and suggests he pick a maiden flower (*ominaeshi*) before disappearing. In the second half, a variety of flowers, including peonies and chrysanthemums (all *tsure*), begin to fight over which flower is superior. The language reads just like a battle scene with human warriors: the peony general “advances its horse”, newcomers announce their name, and flowers are cut down by *naginata*. Eventually, the white chrysanthemum (the *shite*) appears in the figure of an old man—playing on the alternate name for the flower *okinagusa* (翁草), literally “old man grass”—to put an end to the fighting and holds a banquet, where presumably he dances, perhaps a slow *jo-no-mai* as is used for spirits of old plants in other plays such as *Saigyōzakura* and *Yugyō-yanagi*.

The most obvious difference between *Hanaikusa* and Nagatoshi’s other battle plays is that the combatants are flowers. This no doubt provided an opportunity to use some interesting costumes. Nishino Haruo likens the fantastical nature of the play to a scene from an *otogizōshi* (御伽草子), the name assigned to a wide variety of vernacular short-stories produced in the Muromachi period.³⁹ Indeed, a number of surviving *otogizōshi* feature conflicts between personified animals, such as the *Aro kassen monogatari* 鴉鷺合戦物語 (*Tale of the Battle of Crows and Herons*), where a conflict between Crows and Herons develops into an all-out war involving every type of bird. It is not unlikely that Nagatoshi knew of such stories and gained inspiration from them.

Kasui 河水 (The River’s Waters)

All the plays so far have featured named individuals and specific locales, giving the impression that, even when not well-known, some historical legend serves as the basis of the play. In *Kasui*, the setting becomes remarkably ambiguous, suggesting that the overall plot is Nagatoshi’s own creation, making it a *tsukurinō* 作能 (lit. created *nō*). The location is given simply as “the realm of Shindan” (震旦国), Shindan being the Sinitic transcription of the Sanskrit word for China. The reigning emperor remains unnamed; in fact, the only character with a name is the enemy general, who receives the generic name of Chin Keishi without any particular Chinese characters assigned to it.

The play begins with a court minister (the *waki*) on a mission to investigate the cause of a terrible drought at an unnamed large river in the realm. It turns out that a princess of the underwater

³⁹ Yokomichi, Nishino, and Hata, *Nō no sakusha to sakuhin*, 286.

dragon kingdom (a *tsure*) has stopped the river's waters and demands the minister bring her a suitable husband from among the court's officials. The minister reports back, and one brave official (a *tsure*) volunteers himself to be offered to the dragon daughter. He rides out to the river on horse, whereupon the dragon daughter takes him into the waves. This marks the end of the first half, and the interlude *kyōgen* features a banquet of fish (multiple *kyōgen* actors) celebrating the harmonious reign of the emperor. As tribute, they offer a large drum from the dragon palace.

The second half opens with another banquet, this time at the imperial palace with the emperor (the *shite*) and his ministers (multiple *tsure*) celebrating this new offering. Here the emperor dances a *gaku* (楽), a dance loosely inspired by traditional court music which features much rhythmic stomping and a gradually increasing tempo. Perhaps because it is based off ancient court music imported from the continent, the *gaku* is often danced by foreign characters and can be said to exude an exotic atmosphere. An earlier example is Zeami's *Naniwa* 難波, where the later *shite* Wani (王仁)—the Paekche scholar attributed with bringing Chinese classics to Japan—dances a *gaku*. In his study of *nō* portraying China, Leo Shingchi Yip also notes that the *gaku* often accompanies a celebratory mood, not just an exotic one.⁴⁰ Indeed, the dances in both *Naniwa* and *Kasui* occur in scenes celebrating the sovereign's reign. Nagatoshi frequently uses the *gaku*, and he sticks to the pattern of having foreign characters perform the dance. In *Kasui* it is the Chinese emperor, and even in plays set in Japan such as the god plays *Enoshima* and *Rinzō*, it is the Indian goddess Benzaiten and the Chinese inventor of the revolving sutra case Great Master Fu (傅大士). An exception would seem to be *Ōyashiro*, where the deity of the Izumo Shrine dances a *gaku*, but this can perhaps be explained through the connection between the shrine and Susa-no-o, who had strong associations with the Korean peninsula.⁴¹

After the emperor dances, the merriment is interrupted when news arrives that a large enemy army from a neighboring realm led by Chin Keishi (a *tsure*) is marching on the city. A full-fledged battle scene between the two armies (both *tachishū*) commences, with the allied forces gradually dwindling. The day seems lost, but then an army of dragons arrives, led by none other than the official who went off to marry the dragon daughter and has now become a dragon king. The dragon king rushes to the aid of the emperor, who is engaged in battle with the enemy general. Then, as if a dragon king were not enough, the large drum offered as tribute by the fish suddenly splits open and out pops the drum's spirit (a *tsure*), who also joins the fray. Together they defeat the enemy general, and peace is restored to the realm.

The drum in the final battle scene is another example of Nagatoshi's use of intricate and large props to great dramatic effect. Like the boulder in *Kazuraki tengu* which splits open to reveal En no Gyōja and his two followers inside, not only does the drum used in *Kasui* have to split open, it also has to be large enough to fit the grown man playing the drum spirit inside. Given that such a drum would only find use in this particular play, one can imagine the trouble it would have been to prepare, and indeed Eguchi's research shows that actual performance was

⁴⁰ Yip, *China Reinterpreted*, 49.

⁴¹ See Grayson, "Susa-No-o."

subjected to revision in a similar manner as *Kazuraki tengu*. In Edo period performance records, the drum spirit character was deleted entirely, allowing for a much smaller drum that does not have to split, such as the one used in the much more commonly performed *Tenko* 天鼓.⁴²

Another prominent feature of *Kasui* is the praise of the sovereign, which manifests not only in the lyrics but also in how fantastical creatures devote themselves to the emperor: talking fish sing praise of the reign and offer a drum as tribute, and a dragon army comes to aid the court in battle. Similar praise of the sovereign and his harmony with the fantastical are often seen in Nagatoshi's plays, such as in *Miuegatake*. Praise of the sovereign is in no way unique to Nagatoshi. Especially in god plays, it was a staple since Zeami's generation, but as with the salvation of Nanbu in *Chōkyōji*, we see Nagatoshi put his own twist on the trope through his heavy use of dragons and other fantastical creatures of his liking.

Lastly, the interlude *kyōgen* deserves mention, for it is a good example of what scholars call *furyū ai*, a new type of interlude *kyōgen* often seen in *furyū* plays of this time. As briefly touched upon earlier, salient features of *furyū ai* include a dramatic occasion closely related to the main plot of the play, as may have been the case with *Gōma*, and the use of fantastical characters, as with the fish seen in *Kasui*. Obvious similarities can be seen in Nobumitsu's *Tama-no-i* 玉井 (*The Well with the Jewel*), where the interlude *kyōgen* consists of a gathering of shellfish. *Furyū ai* add another exciting scene to the play while expanding the overarching story rather than simply retelling it. It is noteworthy in this regard that the various manuscripts of *Kasui* all record the lyrics of the song sung by the fish in the *ai kyōgen*, suggesting the importance placed on these *furyū ai* as opposed to more mundane interludes.⁴³

Ikoku Taiji 異国退治 (Subjugation of the Foreign Realm)

Another play whose central motif is praise of the sovereign is *Ikoku taiji*, which dramatizes the departure of the legendary Empress Jingū (神功皇后) when she supposedly led an army to conquer the Korean Peninsula. A court minister (the *waki*) who serves Empress Jingū introduces the situation. A fleet is docked near Shiga, an island in Hakata Bay, ready to conquer the foreign realm. The empress also planted a pine tree as a divination: if it turns green overnight, it will be an auspicious sign. The minister goes to check on the tree, whereupon he encounters an old man (the *shite*) who explains to him why the pine's longevity makes it a suitable symbol of the sovereign. These opening sections of song also give ample opportunity to use common tropes for praise of the sovereign's reign, such as how the waves of the four seas are tranquil, and reference well-known poetry related to pines, such as a couplet from the *Wakan rōeishū* 和漢朗詠集 (*A Collection of Japanese and Sinitic Poems to Sing Aloud*, c. 1018) about "Duke Eighteen" (十八公).⁴⁴ In the *kuri-sashi-kuse* sequence, the old man begins to talk about the upcoming conquest. The jewels of low and high tide must be borrowed from the dragon palace if the subjugation is to

⁴² Eguchi, "Kanze Yajirō Nagatoshi no sakushihō to kōsei no hyōka," 52.

⁴³ See the introduction to *Kasui* in Yokomichi and Omote, *Yōkyokushū*.

⁴⁴ The characters in "Duke Eighteen" fit together to form the character for "pine" (松). The poem is #425 of the *Wakan rōeishū* by Minamoto Shitagō: "Duke Eighteen's prestige reveals itself after the frost; the color of a thousand years is deep amongst the snow" (十八公榮霜後露、一千年色雪中深).

succeed, and the Luminous Deity of Shiga has been chosen to be the emissary. Saying he will return with the jewels—and thereby revealing his true identity—he rides the waves into the depths. This concludes the first half, which is meant to be followed by an *ai kyōgen*, but the manuscript records nothing of its content, suggesting it was nothing particularly important to the overall plot or exciting to see. In the second half, the dragon deity appears with his daughter to bestow the jewels of high and low tide, respectively. The play then concludes with the fleet departing for Korea guarded by the dragon deity.

The manuscript leaves much unclear about this second half. First, it is sung entirely by the chorus, so there are no dialog tags to tell which character is played by which role. For example, the lines of the *shite* and *waki* are typically marked as such, while a *tsure*'s lines are marked by their character's identity, since there are often multiple *tsure*. The instinct may be to say that the male dragon deity is the *shite* and his daughter the *tsure*, as is often the case in plays with this duo of characters such as in Nagatoshi's own *Enoshima*, but we have also seen him use different patterns, such as in *Itsukushima*, where the dragon daughter figure (the goddess of Itsukushima) is the *shite* and the male dragon deity who appears at the end is a *tsure*. One also wonders if the Luminous Deity of Shiga makes an appearance, as it would be odd if the disguised deity in the first half did not come back in his true form in the second. This is also suggested by the lyrics mentioning "gods rejoicing" after the dragon deity appears. If this is the case, the deity may be the *shite*, and both dragons *tsure*. It is also unclear when the dragon daughter comes on stage; the lyrics describe the dragon deity's appearance but first mention the dragon daughter when she is already offering the jewel. Perhaps they come on stage together and maybe even perform a dance together, for there is only one gap in the lyrics where a dance could plausibly go, but the type and location of the dance are also unclear, as is whether or not there is even a dance in the first place, for that matter. These are no more than speculations, but if true, they would mean that the structure of the play differs significantly from the standard later *tsure* celestial maiden pattern.

Carrying on Tradition

Shikimizuka 柘塚 (The Star Anise Mound)

Shikimizuka is an oddity among Nagatoshi's plays, so much so that scholars attempting to classify Nagatoshi's works have made a separate category just for it.⁴⁵ It tells the legend surrounding a particular mound today known as the Shikibu Mound (式部塚) in a place called Harajiro 喰代 (alt. Hōjiro) located in present-day Iga City, Mie Prefecture. A monk (the *waki*) on his way to the east stops in Harajiro and, seeing a mound covered in *shikimi* (aniseed), decides to pick one to offer to the Buddha, as was customary. A local villager (the *ai*) comes out and warns the monk that any who pick the *shikimi* are cursed by the ghost of the woman buried there. Some time ago, the supervisor (*daikan* 代官) sent from Kōfukuji, which owned the land, and his wife were murdered by the locals for an unspecified reason. Despite this, the monk resolves to risk his life and

⁴⁵ Eguchi, "Kanze Nagatoshi No Kaminō: Haikyoku 'Itsukushima' 'Rōshi' o Chūshin Ni," 34, and Yokomichi, Nishino, and Hata, *Nō no sakusha to sakuhiin*, 284.

help the couple reach salvation. The ghosts of the supervisor (the *shite*) and his wife (the *tsure*) emerge to tell their story and rejoice at finally being able to escape from the tortures of hell. The climax of the play is when the wife recalls a banquet, probably the scene of their murder, and reenacts the singing and dancing in the form of a fast-paced *ha-no-mai* (破之舞).

Shikimizuka stands out among Nagatoshi's repertoire because there is nothing particularly "spectacular" about it: no dragon deities or *tengu*, no epic battles with dozens of actors on stage at a time, and no extravagant props. Thematically, it is closer to the salvation plays of past generations, and indeed the lyrics contain expressions borrowed from *Aya-no-tsuzumi* 綾鼓 (*The Twill Drum*) and *Motomezuka* 求塚 (*The Suitor's Mound*), both early plays featuring characters who died with attachments to their past lives.⁴⁶

Another notable feature of the play is the number of *waka* quotations. Engagement with poetry is often viewed as a quality of non-*furyū* plays, but as the exchange in *Okazaki* shows, Nagatoshi also had an interest in weaving poetry into his lyrics. A number of his plays feature references to poetry, particularly in places such as the travel song or the *shite's* entrance *sashi* which often feature such language, but they are particularly numerous in *Shikimizuka*, concentrated in the *kuse* where the couple tell their story. The *waka* quoted include two composed by Izumi Shikibu, which could be no more than a coincidence, but could also suggest that legends surrounding the mound began to include her as early as Nagatoshi's time.⁴⁷ As evident in the mound's current name, by the Edo period, some sources purported it to be the grave of Izumi Shikibu, no doubt due to the similarity in sound with *shikimi*.

In previous plays we have seen how Nagatoshi takes familiar tropes and puts his own twist on them, usually by making them conclude in a grand battle, but *Shikimizuka* shows that Nagatoshi also had interest in composing plays which had next to nothing in common with the *furyū* style. Parallels can be drawn with similar exceptions in Nobumitsu's repertoire, namely *Yugyō-yanagi* and *Kochō* 胡蝶 (*The Butterfly*), both of which are two-part dream plays reminiscent of Zeami's style.

The Canon

Only four of Nagatoshi's plays remain in the repertoire of at least one school today: *Enoshima*, a god play about the creation of Enoshima and the marriage between Benzaiten and a wild serpent; *Ōyashiro*, a god play about the Tenth Month in Izumo where the gods gather; *Rinzō*, a god play about the revolving sutra case of Kitano Shrine; and *Shōzon*, a warrior play about Minamoto Yoshitsune and Benkei defeating an assassin sent by Yoritomo. Furthermore, only *Shōzon* is in the current repertoire of all five schools. *Ōyashiro* is performed by Kanze, Kongō, and Kita, and the remaining two are only performed by Kanze. Aside from these, *Hanaikusa* was recently

⁴⁶ Eguchi, "Kanze Yajirō Nagatoshi no sakushihō to kōsei no hyōka," 47.

⁴⁷ For a discussion of representations of Izumi Shikibu in medieval literature, see Kimbrough, *Preachers, Poets, Women, and the Way*.

revived once in 2011 by the Kongō school, and *Kasui* remains in the repertoire of the Kurokawa nō.⁴⁸

Based on the performance records I have been able to find, it appears that from early on after Nagatoshi's lifetime, already these four generally became the canonical plays from his repertoire, with *Enoshima* and *Ōyashiro* being the favorites. The only other play with a significant record in the century following Nagatoshi's lifetime is *Kazuraki tengu*, and the others appear only sporadically, with some such as *Miuegatake* and *Chōkyōji* not performed at all. This is in stark contrast to Nobumitsu, whose popular plays such as *Funa Benkei* and *Chōryō* found their way into programs more often than not.

Further evidence for Nagatoshi's exclusion from the canon can be seen in late sixteenth century transcription projects, part of a general trend toward enjoying the scripts of nō plays as texts to be read on their own in addition to actual performances. On Bunroku 4 (1595)/3/26, a large-scale script annotation project begun at Rokuon-in by order of Toyotomi Hidetsugu 豊臣秀次 (1568–95). In addition to the monks of the temple, notable participants include the courtier Yamashina Tokitsugu and Torikai Dōsetsu 鳥養道晰 (?–1602), who had already been involved with compiling scripts for Hidetsugu. The plays copied during this project, the initial stage of which lasted around ten days or so, can be said to be suggestive of what plays were considered canonical by the cultural elite. On the first day, they copied *Takasago*, *Unoha*, *Miwa*, *Tadanori*, *Saigyōzakura*, *Yōkihi*, *Ukifune*, *Sekidera Komachi*, *Eguchi*, *Sanemori*, and *Genji kuyō*. Six (seven if you count *Eguchi*) out of eleven can be attributed to Zeami. A number of popular Nobumitsu plays made it into the list, including *Yugyō-yanagi*, *Chōryō*, *Momijigari*, *Funa Benkei*, and *Kōtei*, but no plays by Nagatoshi.⁴⁹

While all of the four plays in the current repertoire can be labelled *furyū* plays, they do not have much of the over-the-top elements of some of his non-canonical plays. In terms of structure, *Enoshima* and *Ōyashiro* are rather standard god plays for the late Muromachi period, marked by the later *tsure* celestial maiden pattern in which a female deity dances before the central main deity enters for the climax. Similar plays can be found by other late Muromachi playwrights, such as Nobumitsu's *Kuse-no-to* and Zenpō's *Arashiyama*. In terms of warrior plays, *Shōzon*, which is based on an episode from a well-known warrior tale, was chosen over plays based on provincial legends or those featuring battles between fantastical creatures.

For the “over-the-top” plays, it has been mentioned that actual performance frequently demanded revisions, either deleting passages that were difficult to understand or shrinking large props and thus the cast size as well. Judging from this, one reason such plays may have been excluded from the canon is simply the burden they placed on the performers. It can also be pointed out that many of Nagatoshi's plays have a similar canonical play. For example, *Miuegatake* is an alternate version of the legend dramatized in *Ōeyama*; *Kazuraki tengu* and *Tanikō* are both about En no Gyōja saving mountain ascetics in the mountains of Kazuraki; and *Shikimizuka* shares its basic premise of souls trapped in a mound with *Motomezuka*. Although they may each

⁴⁸ For a historical and ethnographical study of Kurokawa nō, see Grossmann, *Kurokawa Nō*.

⁴⁹ Suzuki, *Nōgakushi Nenpyō*. *Kodai Chūsei Hen*, 363–65.

have new, distinct elements, such as the splitting boulder in *Kazuraki tengu*, in the end they were not enough to displace the more popular plays. This is not to pass judgement on Nagatoshi's repertoire; the present-day concept of creativity is not so useful when examining medieval *nō* plays, and Nagatoshi's skill as a playwright did not lie only in thinking up over-the-top visual effects.

Reconsidering Furyū

Although *furyū* plays have become almost synonymous with late Muromachi plays, with such a wide range of characteristics grouped under the umbrella of *furyū*, it seems hard to believe that none of them appeared in plays of previous generations. As a lead-in to a reconsideration of how we narrative late Muromachi *nō*, I discuss the question of just how new the *furyū* style supposedly pioneered by Nobumitsu and Zenpō was.

Early Traces of Furyū

As we have seen, one type of play often viewed as representative of the late Muromachi is the warrior drama, where a large cast is on stage and the focus is on dialogue and action rather than lyrics and dance. Nagatoshi has many of these; *Shōzon* is one based on a well-known warrior tale, while others such as *Chikatō* or *Hiramoto* draw on more obscure provincial stories.

Miyamasu's Warrior Plays

There was a much earlier playwright who dramatized many well-known warrior tales from the body of narratives surrounding the Soga Brothers and Minamoto no Yoshitsune: the mysterious Miyamasu (宮増). The record is not sufficient enough to get a clear picture of his life—or, for that matter, whether or not there was only one Miyamasu. In any case, it seems to be the case that actors known by Miyamasu were active in the Nara area throughout the fifteenth century who acted, played the drums, and wrote plays. Which plays they wrote is a different matter—different sources attribute a number of plays to Miyamasu but only agree on two, *Genbuku Soga* 元服曾我 (*Soga Comes of Age*) and *Chōbuku Soga* 調伏曾我 (*Soga Curses His Enemy*), both about the Soga Brothers.

An article in the *Kanmon gyōki* 看聞御記 (*Record of Things Seen and Heard*)—the diary of Prince Sadafusa 貞成親王 (1372–1456), who often hosted *nō* performances at his palace in Fushimi—records a performance of *Genbuku Soga* on Eikyō 4 (1432)/3/10. It was one of many in the program, which also included *Eboshi-ori* 烏帽子折 (*Folding of the Eboshi*), a Yoshitsune play still performed today which some sources attribute to Miyamasu. This shows that warrior plays similar in style to those of the late Muromachi were already being performed in the early fifteenth century, and at a party hosted by the father of an emperor, no less.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ A translation of this entry can be found in Pinnington, *A New History of Medieval Japanese Theatre*, 88–89. The program is given on page 120.

The style of warrior plays attributed to Miyamasu shares many of the characteristics used to define *furyū* plays, such as large casts where the *shite* is not the only important character and a focus on story rather than lyrical monologue. This has already been pointed out multiple times: scholars have called him an early exponent of *furyū* and the artistic predecessor of Nobumitsu and Nagatoshi.⁵¹ The *Nōgaku daijiten* has this to say about Miyamasu's style:

When compared with the *yūgen* style of Zeami, we can see that [Miyamasu] wrote plays which shared something in common with Kanze Nobumitsu and Kanze Nagatoshi, who answered the demands of the audience of a chaotic age: an exciting aesthetic fit for a drama for the masses.⁵²

This view of the *furyū* style as catering to the “masses” in a chaotic age is prevalent in scholarship of late Muromachi *nō*, and this standard narrative will be examined in detail in the following section. Given the aforementioned performance at Prince Sadafusa's residence, if the atmosphere of the chaotic age birthed the *furyū* style, then it seems that the chaotic age will have to be extended back to 1432. Needless to say, this time was not without its armed conflicts, but then the same chaotic atmosphere should have affected Zenchiku as well, who was a contemporary of this early Miyamasu. Clearly the picture is more complicated, for Zenchiku, being Zeami's artistic successor, belongs to the group *against* which the *furyū* style was originally defined. But as with the standard narrative, this definition too stands on shaky ground. I now turn to one more example of early traces of *furyū*: the supposed antithesis of *furyū* himself, Zeami.

Zeami's Celestial Maiden

Given the prolific playwrighting career of Zeami, it should be no surprise that his repertoire displays great diversity which cannot be reduced to a handful of representative plays, such as *Takasago* or *Izutsu* 井筒 (*The Well-Cradle*). Such reductions can be said to reflect what the commentator *wants* to see in the playwright's work. We have discussed how Nobumitsu and Nagatoshi, despite receiving attention almost exclusively for their most extravagant *furyū* plays, also composed plays reminiscent of the previous generation such as *Yugyō-yanagi* and *Shikimizuka*. Now we will discuss how Zeami composed plays reminiscent of the *furyū* style. This point has been raised by Takemoto Mikio in relation to his research on the so-called *tennyo-no-mai* 天女舞 (dance of the celestial maiden).

Today the celestial maiden dance is a three-part dance typically performed by a celestial maiden in the later *tsure* role who appears toward the beginning of the second half of a god play and serves as a prelude to the chief male deity, the later *shite* who will appear following her. This is the “later *tsure* celestial maiden pattern” mentioned earlier, which had become widespread by Nagatoshi's time. Nagatoshi himself initially experimented with deviations from it in *Rōshi* and *Itsukushima* but eventually conformed to it in his later god plays such as *Ōyashiro* and *Enoshima*.

This celestial maiden dance, the one still used in performance today, is said to be derived from the *chū-no-mai* (中之舞) and therefore has entirely different roots than Zeami's. The celestial

⁵¹ See, for example, Pinnington, 121, and Yokomichi, Nishino, and Hata, *Nō no sakusha to sakuhin*, 254.

⁵² *Nōgaku daijiten*, s.v. “Miyamasu”.

maiden dance of Zeami originated as the specialty of Inuō (犬王), a star actor of an Ōmi (Shiga Prefecture) *sarugaku* troupe, and Zeami appropriated it more or less wholesale. The sophisticated dance was unlike any dance native to the Yamato tradition, which specialized in *monomane*, or mimicry, rather than elegant song and dance. Recall that the quality of *yūgen* is also something that Zeami purportedly learned from Inuō. Thus, Inuō's style, with the celestial maiden dance as the centerpiece, had a profound influence on Zeami, and thus the future of *nō* as a whole. In his article, Takemoto discusses in detail how Zeami's entire theory of dance was constructed in tandem with his appropriation of the celestial maiden dance, but here I will focus on characteristics of the plays themselves. In terms of characters, Zeami's celestial maiden plays are distinguished from those of the "later *tsure* celestial maiden pattern" in that the female deity is the main character, rather than a mere secondary presence to the male deity. In terms of style, Takemoto speculates that Zeami "aimed for an entertaining quality not present in previous plays."⁵³ This manifested in all aspects of the play: the cast, lyrics, props, and dance.

An example of Zeami's celestial maiden plays is the god play *Kureha* 呉服, which was one of the most popular plays to end a program (*kirinō* 切能) for centuries and remains in the repertoire today. Plays placed at the end of a program usually had an auspicious tone, often accompanied by elements of performance which could be considered *furyū*, to put it simply. Another popular ending play was *Shōjō* 猩々, in which the plot is just a pretext for the legendary orange monster to get drunk and dance. When performed with the *midare* variation, as it usually is, the dance involves the actor sliding around the stage tip-toed, an extremely rare technique and an interesting sight to see.

Today *Kureha* does not seem to have much in common with the *furyū* style, but old performance records hint at an original full of deviations from conventional Zeami plays. First, the two sisters Kurehatori and Ayahatori name themselves without hesitation in the initial dialogue with the *waki*. The conventional image is that the disguised *shite* gradually hints at their identity through poetic allusions and such before indirectly naming themselves in a pun and disappearing. Quillon Arkenstone even identifies how the disguised deity in the first half of Nagatoshi's *Rinzō* names himself without hesitation as one element which marks the play as breaking convention.⁵⁴ However, here we see it in one of Zeami's plays.

The loss of the *shite*'s dominance is another characteristic of *furyū* plays, but Takemoto conjectures that the two sisters in *Kureha* were originally meant to be of the same status and performed their actions together. They danced together, making it an *aimai* 相舞, or "partner dance"—a technique often used in *furyū* god plays—and before the dance they acted out their profession, loom weaving, an example of a visually effective use of props, another feature of *furyū* plays. Similar visually appealing performances can be found in other celestial maiden plays of Zeami; for example, Takemoto conjectures that in *Furu* 布留, the female deity took up a sword and acted out Susa-no-o's slaying of the giant serpent.⁵⁵

⁵³ Takemoto, "Tennyō-no-mai no kenkyū," 118.

⁵⁴ Arkenstone, "Late Muromachi and *Furyū Nō*," 470.

⁵⁵ Takemoto, "Tennyō-no-mai no kenkyū," 116–17.

Both the warrior plays of Miyamasu and the celestial maiden plays of Zeami are conducive to the elements of *furyū* that they display. Warrior plays which dramatize parts of well-known warrior tales, as opposed to Zeami's which imagine the after story of an individual warrior who died with regrets, necessarily lead to large casts and a focus on dialogue and plot rather than lyricism in order to portray the source material. In the case of celestial maiden plays, techniques which visually impress the audience are perhaps more conducive to creating an auspicious mood. It is no coincidence that the majority of *furyū* plays of the late Muromachi contain elements reminiscent of god plays, regardless of whether or not they are actually categorized as such. In Nagatoshi's case, six plays can be classified as god plays (*Enoshima*, *Ōyashiro*, *Rinzō*, *Rōshi*, *Itsukushima*, and *Ikoku taiji*), while others feature deities displaying their power or auspicious praise of the sovereign, such as *Miugatake* and *Kasui*. Visual spectacle heightens the impact of the divine being appeared to show miracles and grant blessings on the characters, and the audience by extension.

A Style for the Masses in a Chaotic Age?

The above discussed has shown that the *furyū* aesthetic in *nō* cannot be limited to the plays of the late Muromachi. This should shed some doubt on standard narratives of why the style arose. Its emergence is often attributed to changes in the tastes of *nō* audiences in the late Muromachi, whether due to the general mood brought about by constant warfare or shifts in the composition of said audiences. This view is expressed by Nishino Haruo, who, in a summary of Nobumitsu's style, writes:

To many spectators who lived in that chaotic age of incessant warfare, rather than plays which depicted a self-awareness of the sin of human existence, subtle movements of the heart, or feelings of nostalgia, the refreshing *nō* of Nobumitsu with a strong *furyū* character were more welcome. . . . Political order was lost, social anxiety deepened, and the decline of the shogunate and temples prompted the development of new audiences. In order to gain the support of the general masses, it was necessary to make easy to understand *nō*. The vector shifted from interior to exterior; from aural to visual; and from intellect to sensation.⁵⁶

Numerous variations of these claims can be found, some of which will be addressed later, but Nishino's formulation gives us a good starting point to discuss their accuracy and usefulness.

Such explanations seem to be founded upon no more than "common sense" — or, put more negatively, modern prejudices — rather than investigation into the actual conditions of late Muromachi *nō*. Take, for example, the claim that the chaotic mood of the times resulting from incessant warfare turned the tastes of audiences away from the religious and emotional themes characteristic of the previous generation of playwrights and toward the spectacular showdowns of the *furyū* style. This claim is usually stated as if obvious, without justification, but the exact opposite could just as easily be argued. If people are tired of fighting, why should they want to see it

⁵⁶ Yokomichi, Nishino, and Hata, *Nō no sakusha to sakuhin*, 267–68.

glorified on stage? In chaotic times, would audiences not be *more* compelled to see themes of salvation and nostalgia?

Emotion and Salvation

This is the line of reasoning pursued by Quillon Arkenstone in his study of two of Nagatoshi's canonical god plays, *Rinzō* and *Ōyashiro*. Although starting from the same basic assumption of an audience "fatigued by everyday chaos", Arkenstone arrives at a different conclusion: the level of "psychological engagement" in Nagatoshi's plays was no less than in earlier plays, but its orientation shifted from the *shite* to the audience itself. Earlier plays interrogate the emotions of a troubled *shite* who obtains salvation at the end. In contrast, the overwhelming power of the Buddhist law praised in *Rinzō* and the ideal of a peaceful realm where the sovereign and deities are in harmony celebrated in *Ōyashiro* offer "solace and encouragement" to viewers.⁵⁷

Arkenstone's conclusions show how vague arguments about the effects of a chaotic mood on new trends in play composition can lead to completely opposite conclusions. Nevertheless, Arkenstone's argument is important because it points out the flaws in another part of the standard narrative, which is that late Muromachi plays lack significant emotional engagement. Human emotion is often raised as one of the reasons for the greatness of Zeami's style: Zeami "focused on the interior of the human heart and tried to save the human soul clouded by delusion", and his son Motomasa 元雅 (?–1432) "accurately portrayed the movements of the human heart."⁵⁸

Earlier plays certainly did portray the emotions of their protagonists to great effect, but such claims seem to prioritize certain emotions over others: women longing for a past lover as in *Izutsu* and *Hanjo*; warriors unable to let go of their regrets as in *Kiyotsune* and *Tadanori*, etc. Arkenstone's argument points out that the emotions engaged with in Nagatoshi's god plays are no less powerful than these. In *Ōyashiro*, examples of scenes with such engagement include when the monk visiting Kitano Shrine bursts into tears at learning that he speaks with none other than the guardian of sutras Katen himself, or when the audience itself gapes in awe at the appearance of Great Master Fu with his two children.

The attention to salvation and praise of the divine in these plays also conflicts with claims that the chaotic times prompted more "this-worldly" tastes in audiences.⁵⁹ Susan Blakeley Klein arrives at such conclusions in her examination of *Dōjōji* 道成寺, specifically the transformation underwent by the legend it portrays—a process which robbed the sinful woman protagonist of the enlightenment originally granted to her in earlier versions in the name of theatrical spectacle. Klein views this as part of a shift in late Muromachi period *nō* toward more secular interests. The theater's new patrons, warrior elites such as Toyotomi Hideyoshi, favored warrior tales and

⁵⁷ Arkenstone, "Late Muromachi and Furyū Nō," 476, 483.

⁵⁸ Yokomichi, Nishino, and Hata, *Nō no sakusha to sakuhin*, 198, 232.

⁵⁹ Arkenstone, "Late Muromachi and Furyū Nō," 467.

powerful conflicts between characters. In this new context, spectacle was valued above religious argument or didactic moralizing.⁶⁰

The examples discussed so far in this paper attest that many plays of the late Muromachi did indeed feature warrior tales and conflicts between powerful characters, and there is something to be said for the secularization of political authority in the sixteenth century.⁶¹ However, the themes of salvation and unity with the gods seen in Nagatoshi's plays suggest that these aspects continued to draw the interests of audiences, and it is not the case that the new warrior elites did away with the canon and only liked to see warrior plays—after all, why else would Hideyoshi perform the virtuoso piece *Sekidera Komachi* 関寺小町 if not out of respect for its status in the tradition?⁶²

Besides the spectacles of salvation seen in god plays, we have also seen multiple examples of what may be called “subtle movements of the heart” or “feelings of nostalgia” in Nagatoshi's works. An example is *Chikatō*, which praises the love between master and disciple and between siblings, as most prominently portrayed in the first half where each protagonist pleads to be sacrificed so that the others may live. Long sections put these emotions into song, where the characters express their tears for their poor fate and imminent parting in poetic language. In *Okazaki*, the witty back and forth between the priest and Tadahiro may perhaps be seen as a form of nostalgia for court culture, for it depicts a sort of fantasy world in which conversations are carried out through citing the classical poems of the *Kokin wakashū* or the *Wakan rōeishū*. Along the same lines, depictions of an ideal reign, where the realm is well-governed and even the supernatural are in harmony with the sovereign, can also be viewed as a type of nostalgia when considering the obvious differences with the reality of Warring States Japan. A prominent example is *Ikoku taiji*, which literally returns to the distant past in depicting Empress Jingū's legendary conquest. Nevertheless, even if some nostalgia can be recognized in these plays, there is also no doubt a present and future-oriented element: the audience, perhaps including courtiers and warlords, is free to imagine themselves with the cultural knowledge of Tadahiro and the priest in *Okazaki* or building a well-governed realm.

Who are the Masses?

Above, we have discussed the flaws of attributing *furyū* plays to a vague chaotic atmosphere which supposedly turned people away from the spiritual and emotional. Now we turn to the other foundation of the standard narrative, which is that *furyū* plays were created to fit the tastes of “the masses”.

Even though old establishment patrons such as the shogunate, nobility, and Kōfukuji lost political and financial power in the late Muromachi, they continued to sponsor *nō* performances, and

⁶⁰ Klein, “When the Moon Strikes the Bell,” 322.

⁶¹ Conlan, “The Failed Attempt to Move the Emperor,” 200–201. Beginning in the early sixteenth century, warlords increasingly neglected the religious rituals of the court which had previously legitimated power in favor of pure military strength.

⁶² Hideyoshi also enjoyed performing classic woman plays such as *Izutsu* and *Genji kuyō*. Omote and Amano, *Nōgaku no rekishi*, 83–84.

nō actors maintained intimate relationships with cultural elites. Nobumitsu, for example, had close relationships with Zen monks—a prominent Gozan Zen monk of the capital named Keijo Shūrin 景徐周麟 (1440–1518) wrote an inscription on a portrait of Nobumitsu.⁶³ Scholars suspect that the knowledge of Chinese classics and history seen in his works may reflect his relationships with these monks.

Nobumitsu was also friendly with the aristocrat-scholar Sanjōnishi Sanetaka, perhaps the most respected authority on the Japanese classics of his time. He would visit Sanetaka’s residence not as a performer to entertain his host but as a friend.⁶⁴ This friendship was carried on by his son Nagatoshi, who often visited Sanetaka, whether alone or with the young Mototada who he was responsible for mentoring. An often cited instance is in on 1.12 Tenbun 3 (1534) when Nagatoshi brought souvenirs from his trip to the Izu Peninsula—a bundle of the prized Shuzenji paper and something called *shiina nattō* (椎名納豆), presumably a variety of the infamous dish—and revealed his new composition, the “Enoshima Benzaiten *sarugaku*.” It is unclear whether he performed or sung it; or if he just showed Sanetaka the script.⁶⁵ In any case, it is an example of the friendly relations between the two, and shows that

Sanetaka—who wrote his own nō plays as well—was interested in Nagatoshi’s works, even the *furyū* ones. Below I list a few instances I found of Nagatoshi’s interactions with Sanetaka and other aristocrats, excluding the one just discussed and full-fledged performances which were discussed previously in relation to his acting career.⁶⁶

Year	Date	Event	Source
Eishō 17 (1520)	12.4	Zen monk Shūzan Tōki 宗山等貴 (1464–1526) of Rokuon-in (Kinkakuji) host a meal attended by Sanetaka; poet Reizei Masatame 冷泉政為 (1446–1523); poet Kanroji Motonaga 甘露寺元長 (1457–1527) and his son; and someone named Niwata, perhaps Niwata Shigechika 庭田重親 (1495–1533). They drink all day. Nagatoshi comes and sings.	<i>Nisuiki</i>
Taiei 4 (1524)	1.4	Kanze troupe leader Mototada visits Sanetaka’s residence for the first time and receives a fan. Perhaps Nagatoshi was with him, given that he was his mentor at the time.	<i>Sanetaka kōki</i>
Taiei 6 (1526)	1.13	Kanze troupe leader Mototada and Nagatoshi visit Sanetaka’s residence.	<i>Sanetaka kōki</i>

⁶³ This is discussed in chapter one of Lim, *Another Stage*.

⁶⁴ Their relationship is discussed in detail in Lim, “They Came to Party.”

⁶⁵ The passage is cited in Kobayashi, “Kanze Nagatoshi no sakunōhō ni okeru ichi-tokushoku: bangaiyoku ‘Maruko’ o megutte,” 62.

⁶⁶ These examples were found in Suzuki, *Nōgakushi Nenpyō. Kodai Chūsei Hen*.

	2.1	At night, Kanroji Korenaga 伊長 (?–1548) and others come for a banquet. Mototada and Nagatoshi come and pour drinks.	<i>Sanetaka kōki</i>
Kyōroku 1 (1528)	3.18	Mototada, his younger brother Hōshō troupe leader Shigekatsu 重勝 (?–1572?), and Nagatoshi's son, the ten-year-old Motoyori 元頼 (1518–1573) attend a flower viewing banquet hosted at the residence of Kono Hisamichi 近衛尚通 (1472–1544).	<i>Hisamichi kōki</i>
	11.5	Nagatoshi visits Sanetaka's residence.	<i>Sanetaka kōki</i>
Kyōroku 3 (1530)	3.15	Nagatoshi visits Sanetaka's residence. Sanetaka requests he perform a song. Kubota Muneyasu also comes and has a drink.	<i>Sanetaka kōki</i>
	6.15	Nagatoshi sings at Sanetaka's residence. Washi-no-o Takayasu secretly listens.	<i>Nisuiki</i>

As for their contemporary Konparu Zenpō, Ishii Tomoko discusses in detail the social circles he belonged to, mostly through his patron Furuichi Chōin. His circles involved the foremost practitioners of tea ceremony, *renga*, and other arts. When introducing *furyū*, I previously mentioned Ishii's speculation that Zenpō tailored the visual spectacle style of his plays to fit the tastes of Chōin, who showed great enthusiasm for the form of mass dance known as *nenbutsu furyū*. If true, then in Zenpō's case, the impetus to create *furyū* plays was indeed to respond to the tastes of his patrons, but his chief patron was this member of the warrior elite, not the "masses".

Fundraising performances, or *kanjin sarugaku*, are often cited as the venue where the "masses" would view these *furyū* plays, and that the *furyū* plays must have been written specifically for these performances. To be sure, fundraising performances—which had been a prominent performance venue since Zeami's time—drew large audiences from *all* classes. Records of fundraiser performances in aristocrat diaries show that elites attended them as well as commoners.

The aristocrat Yamashina Tokitsugu left behind a massive diary, the *Tokitsugu kyōki* (言経卿記), in which he recorded, among many things, *nō* performances he saw. One such occasion was on Tenbun 14 (1545)/3/8, when he attended a fundraiser performance held at a shrine belonging to Shōkokuji. The entry is as follows:

Saw *sarugaku* with the Fujiwara Middle Counselor from the viewing stands. The Middle Counselor brought three of his kids and others. Had noodles and soup served in an *oribitsu* [type of lunch box] along with sake. During the fourth play, it started raining. Unfortunate, unfortunate. *Kasui*, *Tomonaga*, *Eguchi*, *Ataka Hōgan*, and others.

Here we see an aristocrat going with companions to see a fundraiser performance. Many other examples can be found; in fact, diaries of elites are the primary source of performance records from this time.

It is also worth noting that the program includes both *furyū* plays such as *Kasui* and *Ataka* as well as more conventional plays such as Zeami's *Eguchi* and *Tomonaga*. In fact, Yamanaka Reiko has surveyed the programs of fundraiser performances through the end of the Tenshō era (1592) and found that, while they exhibit a great variety of plays—including not only well-known *furyū* plays but also obscure plays belonging to non-Yamato *sarugaku* traditions—those most often performed are canonical plays.⁶⁷ For another concrete example, let us look at the program of a *nō* performance carried out over two days from 3.27 to 3.28 in Keichō 9 (1604) at the palace of *nyōin* (a status granted to important women related to the emperor) Shin-Jōtōmon-in (新上東門院), also known as Kanjuji Haruko (勧修寺晴子), mother of Emperor Go-Yōzei (r. 1586–1611):

Day One: *Enoshima*, *Tamura*, *Matsukaze*, *Ryōko*, *Yoshino Shizuka*, *Jinen Koji*, *Genji kuyō*, *Ataka*, *Okazaki*, *Taema*, *Tenko*, *Yamanba*, *Takasago*.

Day Two: *Shirahige*, *Eguchi*, *Oshio*, *Rinzō*, *Utō*, *Funa Benkei*, *Tatsuta*, *Kashiwazaki*, *Zegai*, *Yugyō-yanagi*, *Kureha*.

The main actor was the Kanze troupe leader Kokusetsu 黒雪 (1566–1626), also known as Tada-chika (身愛). His mother was Nagatoshi's granddaughter, and he learned singing from Nagatoshi's son and grandson, which may have something to do with why so many of Nagatoshi's plays (*Enoshima*, *Okazaki*, and *Rinzō*) were performed. In general, they were performed much less than favorites by Nobumitsu such as *Funa Benkei* and *Chō Ryō*. At any rate, one can see a blend of *furyū* (Those by Nagatoshi, *Ryōko*, *Funa Benkei*, etc.) and conventional plays (everything else). This is typical for a program involving *furyū* plays: conventional plays occupy the majority, with a few *furyū* mixed in.

Because the late Muromachi playwrights are so strongly associated with the *furyū* style, it is easy to forget that *furyū* plays did not take over the world of *nō*. Although a few of Nagatoshi's plays snuck into the standard repertoire, by his time canonization had already progressed to a large degree. When writing new plays, Nagatoshi and others preferred this style, but the majority of their careers was dedicated to the conventional plays, the plays of previous generations which audiences seemingly did not tire of. They also held great respect for their predecessor's art. Nagatoshi attributed over a hundred plays to Zeami in the *Nōhon sakusha chūmon*, and as has been mentioned for various plays, he continued to use the fundamental structures and tropes handed down to him, while sometimes applying his own twists.

⁶⁷ Yamanaka, "Muromachi makki no *nō* to kankyaku," 55.

Enoshima 江野島 (Eno Isle)

Enoshima is an island located just off the coast of present-day Fujisawa City, Kanagawa Prefecture, a short train ride away from the popular tourist hub of Kamakura. In addition to the near millennium old shrine complex whose origin serves as the focus of this play, today a visitor to the island can find numerous restaurants selling such delicacies as *shirasu* (tiny white fish), chic cafes, a botanical garden, and a lighthouse from which one can get a breathtaking view of the Shōnan coastline.

Historical records of activity on the island seem to begin with the Kamakura period. The official history of the Kamakura shogunate *Azumakagami* (*Mirror of the East*, c. 1300) contains numerous references to the island, the first of which is found in Juei 1 (1182) when the monk Mongaku (late 12th century, 文覚) was invited by shogun Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147-1199) to pray for the divine punishment of his enemies, the Fujiwara clan which maintained power in northeastern Honshū. In the following years, the successive shogun continued to go on pilgrimage to Enoshima, which facilitated the custom spreading to the warrior class at large as well as commoners. In the mid-fifteenth century the island turned into a battleground for contesting warlords and a site to pray for military fortune. By the turn of the sixteenth century, the Hōjō clan (the so-called Later Hōjō, not the Hōjō who ruled the Kamakura shogunate) secured control over the area.

However, none of this military conflict appears in the play. Rather, it recounts the mythic origins of the island, which stretch much farther back than the records of the *Azumakagami*. These origins can be found in the *Enoshima engi* (*Dependent Origination of Enoshima*, 江島縁起), one of many such *engi* written in the medieval period to establish a temple's history. Its time of writing is unknown, but likely falls somewhere in the late Kamakura or Muromachi periods.

As the story goes, in 552, the thirteenth year of the reign of Emperor Kinmei, the earth trembled violently for over ten days straight before a host of deities, led by the celestial maiden Benzaiten and her children, appeared and formed the island out of the sea. It is no coincidence that 552 is also the year in which, according to the *Nihon shoki* (*Chronicles of Japan*, 720), Buddhism was officially introduced to Japan through an emissary from the Korean kingdom of Paekche. The variety of supernatural beings which appear to form Enoshima all belong to the Buddhist pantheon, including the leader Benzaiten.

Benzaiten (Celestial of Speech and Talent, 弁才天) is the identity of the ancient Indian river goddess Sarasvatī after she was incorporated into the Buddhist pantheon. She is widely known as a goddess of music, as the many statues depicting her playing the biwa lute suggest, as well as language and the arts in general. Starting in the late medieval period, she also came to be associated with fortune and wealth, joining the newly emerged Seven Gods of Fortune (*shichi-fukujin*). It is also around this time that statues start depicting her with a crown of jewels on her head and treasures such as the Jewel of Wish Fulfillment (*nyoi hōju* 如意宝珠, Sk. Cintāmani), the jewel said to grant all the wishes of its owner. In the second half of the play, Benzaiten appears to offer this jewel to the imperial envoy as tribute to the emperor.

Benzaiten maintained a strong connection with water even as she acquired all these other traits, and she is often depicted as a water serpent, one type of dragon ubiquitous in the religious culture of Japan. Historical records suggest that Benzaiten worship at Enoshima—which begun when the aforementioned Mongaku summoned her there in 1182—originally centered around praying for rain. In

particular, the large cave on the side of the island opposite the mainland, which one can still enter today, was called the Dragon's Grotto (龍穴) and believed to be where Benzaiten resided.

Other prominent sites of Benzaiten worship are also found near water: Chikubushima, a small island off the northern shores of Lake Biwa, and Itsukushima just off the coast of Hiroshima. Together with Enoshima, these three were dubbed the "Three Benzaiten of Japan". Additionally, her association with water led her to be viewed as identical to Ichikishimahime-no-mikoto (市杵島姫命), one of the three goddesses of Munakata (宗像) who watch over the sea passage between Fukuoka and the Korean Peninsula. Indeed, it is these three goddesses who are officially the main deities of Enoshima Shrine today, as the complex turned into a purely Shinto shrine during the Meiji period separation of kami and Buddhas. Unlike many other complexes which completely erased any elements of Buddhism, worship of Benzaiten was by no means eliminated and remains strong today.

The other protagonist of the play is the Luminous Deity Dragon Mouth (Tatsu-no-Kuchi Myōjin 龍口明神). Although now a guardian of the island, he was once a wild serpent known as the Five-Headed Dragon (Gozuryū 五頭龍) who would terrorize the local population by snatching people to eat. To pacify this threat, Benzaiten promised to marry him if he changed his heart. The dragon promptly agreed and became a guardian deity of the realm. This story, although mostly viewed as a cute love story today, can be viewed as a narrative of the triumph of Buddhism over the wild indigenous spirits.

Although not depicted in the play, it is said that the dragon transformed into a mountain on the mainland facing the island, and the area corresponding to his mouth became called Dragon Mouth. A shrine devoted to the him was supposedly built there and today still stands as the Ryūkō Myōjin Shrine (Ryūkō is the Sinitic reading of Tatsu-no-Kuchi; Myōjin means "Luminous Deity"), although it was relocated in 1978 to its current location corresponding to the dragon's abdomen. On the island, there is now a "Bell of the Dragon's Love" (*ryūren no kane* 龍恋の鐘) atop "Lover's Hill" (*koibito no oka* 恋人の丘) where couples can go to ring the bell and attach a lock to a fence to solidify their relationship.

Source Texts

Enoshima is one of the few pieces of Nagatoshi's—or of the entire canon for that matter—for which the circumstances of its composition, including the occasion and the sources consulted, can be identified with relative certainty. As briefly mentioned earlier, the legendary origins of the island can be found in the *Enoshima engi*, but this text's connection with the play runs deeper than merely telling the same story: previous scholars have pointed out that a significant chunk of the lyrics, especially those parts in which the legend is narrated, are borrowed without modification from the *Engi*.¹ Kobayashi Kenji has compared different manuscripts of the *Engi* to determine that Nagatoshi must have viewed the manuscript housed in the Iwamoto-bō (岩本坊), the temple which managed the complex on the island until the Meiji period.

This is a prime example of Nagatoshi's tendency to quote his source material wholesale as discussed in the introduction, and here it extends to not just the text but also to illustrations, as was the case in *Ryokō* and *Miuegatake*. Kobayashi argues this by noting a subtle difference between the lyrics and the *Engi* text: when Benzaiten appears with her children, the *Engi* text describes one child on each side,

¹ See Kobayashi, "Geinōken no otogizōshi." Sanari also notes these spots in his annotations, and I have done the same.

whereas the play lyrics describe fifteen children, which matches not the text but an illustration in the *Engi*. Thus the lyrics reflect Nagatoshi's attempt to recreate the scene in the illustration.

However, some doubts remain. Current performance has only two children, one on each side like in the *Engi* text. In the illustration in question, Benzaiten is also depicted riding a dragon, but in the play the dragon enters separately after Benzaiten dances. One could speculate that originally more children appeared. Such changes are not unknown: Ishii Tomoko speculates that *Tōbōsaku*, which now uses no *kokata*, originally had children appear with the Queen Mother of the West.² As for the dragon, it is hard to imagine that they originally entered at the same time. According to Eguchi Fumie, there are essentially no differences between the current lyrics and those in the manuscript written by Nagatoshi's son Motoyori, which purports to have directly transcribed Nagatoshi's original.³

It appears the desire to recreate the illustration "as-is" was not as strong as in other cases, such as in *Ryōkō* where the strange vehicle of a boat on top of a fish in a cloud was actually made into a prop. One effect of keeping Benzaiten and the dragon's entrances separate is that the "later *tsure* celestial maiden pattern" is adhered to, although whether this was the explicit aim or not cannot be said.

It has also been noted that an account of Enoshima's founding with much of the same language can be found in another text, the *Nichiren Shōnin chūgasan* (*Annotated and Illustrated Praise of the Sage Nichiren*, 日蓮聖人註画讃), the first known illustrated biography of Nichiren, the text of which was written by a monk named Nichō (1441-1510, 日澄). Nichiren (1222-1282) and his followers had a strong connection with the Dragon Mouth (Tatsu-no-Kuchi) area across from Enoshima, which at the time was a well-known executing ground. In the Ninth Month of Bun'ei 8 (1272), Nichiren was to be executed for slandering the shogunate. As the website of the Nichiren sect temple located at the site, Ryūkōji (龍口寺), relates, right as his executor was about to perform the deed, he was blinded by a sudden light resembling the full moon coming from the direction of Enoshima.

Interestingly enough, the painter Kubota Muneyasu—the one mentioned in the introduction as perhaps giving Nagatoshi knowledge of the local legends of the Tango area seen in *Miuegatake*—illustrated this text in Tenbun 5 (1536) at a temple named Chōgenji (長源寺) in present-day Obama City, Fukui Prefecture.⁴ Perhaps he learned of the Enoshima legend from Nagatoshi, for he was present when Nagatoshi revealed his new play to Sanjōnishi Sanetaka in Tenbun 3 (1534). This occasion was described in the introduction, so here I will omit it and discuss Nagatoshi's vacation a couple years earlier, when he wrote the play.

Time of Writing

Two surviving copies of *Enoshima* relate in their colophons that the play was written on 10.2 Tenbun 1 (1532) when Nagatoshi was relaxing in the hot springs of Atami on the Izu Peninsula, perhaps recovering from an illness. Kobayashi speculates that Nagatoshi may have visited Enoshima during this time and viewed the *Enoshima engi* in person.⁵ Two years later when Nagatoshi showed his play to Sanetaka, he brought a bundle of Shuzenji paper (修善寺紙), named after the area in present-day Izu City where it was produced, as a souvenir, so it appears that he really did go on this trip. Thus, not

² Ishii, *Furyūnō no jidai*, 16–17.

³ Eguchi, "Kanze Nagatoshi no kami nō," 40.

⁴ *Nihon jinmei daijiten*, s.v. "Kubota Muneyasu," accessed April 19, 2020.

⁵ Kobayashi, "Geinōken no otogizōshi: Kanze Nagatoshi-saku 'Enoshima' to 'Enoshima engi,'" 101, 105.

only is the play unique in that we know the circumstances of its writing, but also because the author visited the locale of the play in person. For the majority of plays this was likely not the case, especially for those set in famous poetic places (*uta-makura*) which poets had composed about for centuries without actually leaving the capital. In the late Muromachi, when more *nō* performers sought a livelihood in the provinces, perhaps more cases like *Enoshima* appeared, but much remains unclear.

The Ai Kyōgen

The *ai kyōgen* provided in the translation is a rather simple one essentially equivalent to a *massha ai*, in which the deity of an auxiliary shrine recaps the story of the first half and then dances a three-stage dance. The difference is that instead of a lesser deity there is a cormorant spirit.

The cormorant bird (*u 鶺鴒*) has figured prominently in culture on the archipelago since ancient times, perhaps most famously in the traditional fishing method of *ukai* (鶺鴒飼) which utilizes the bird's ability to fit entire fish in its throat (the origin of the phrase *unomi ni suru*, literally "to swallow whole" but meaning "to take at face value without thinking") to make them catch and regurgitate fish.

As suggested in the play, there is also evidence of divine beliefs surrounding cormorants. In the 1950s, the bones of a Yayoi period (roughly fifth century BCE to third century AD) woman who was buried clutching a cormorant to her chest were unearthed at the Doigahama (土井ヶ浜) archaeological site in Yamaguchi Prefecture. There are also folk beliefs that cormorant feathers are beneficial for a safe birth, most famously represented in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* myth where the ocean princess Toyotama-hime (豊玉姫), grandmother of Emperor Jinmu, thatches the roof of her birth hut with cormorant feathers.

Finally, at the Keta Shrine (気多大社) in present day Hakui City, Ishikawa Prefecture, there is a Cormorant Festival (*umatsuri* 鶺鴒祭) held every December where a cormorant is designated a kami and presented in front of the shrine. This festival has a long history, and it is dramatized in the *nō* play *U no matsuri* which is still in the repertoire of the Konparu school. The first reference to the play is seen in a 1577 Konparu treatise, but the author and date remain unknown. *U no matsuri* and *Enoshima* are similarly unique in that a female deity dances a *gaku*—the only other canonical play where this happens is in *Tōbōsaku*, where the female *tsure* dances together with the male *shite*. However, *U no matsuri* differs from *Enoshima* in that the female deity, the Luminous Deity of Keta (Keta Myōjin) is the *shite* and thus the main deity of the play, while the *tsure* who enters before her is a male deity. Thus the "later *tsure* celestial maiden pattern" followed by *Enoshima*, in which a female *tsure* paves the way for the male *shite*'s entrance in the climax, is reversed.⁶

The concept of the *furyū ai*, where interludes were made essential to the story's progression or highlights in their own right, was mentioned in the introduction. Given the prevalence of *furyū ai* in plays written by Nagatoshi, Nobumitsu, and Zenpō, it seems odd that *Enoshima* should have no more than a *massha ai* with a cormorant spirit instead of a deity. Indeed, this appears to be a later simplification, and the original survives as an alternate performance, or *kaeai* (lit. exchange *ai*), called *Dōsha* (Pilgrims, 道者).

In this *ai*, a priest (the main *ai*, or *omoai*) appears and greets a group of pilgrims (multiple actors) who have come from the west. He attempts to solicit donations, telling them of the awesome powers of

⁶ Yokota-Murakami, *The Formation of the Canon of Nō*, 153–55.

Benzaiten, and says that if the pilgrims have faith, then a cormorant will surely appear. Sure enough, a cormorant (the side *ai*, or *adoai*) appears, sings of the cormorant's virtues, and dances a type of *komai* (lit. small dance) unique to this play called either *U no tori* or *U no mai* depending on the kyōgen school.

Additionally, the cormorant spirit wears a crown called a *ryūtai* (竜戴, lit. dragon worn on the head) with a cormorant on top. The *ryūtai*, as the name implies, usually has a dragon figure on top and is used for dragon characters, Luminous Deity Dragon Mouth in this play being one example. This unusual costume and the unique dance no doubt made the original *ai* much more interesting than the current simplified version, suitable to the *furyū ai* of Nagatoshi's time. Lastly, *ai* of the same name are also found in *Shirahige* and *Chikubushima*, both god plays set in Lake Biwa. In *Shirahige*, the story is essentially the same as in *Enoshima's ai*, except that a large *funa* (Carassius) fish replaces the cormorant spirit. In *Chikubushima*, no spirit appears to dance, but it is similar in that a priest explains the virtues of Benzaiten to a group of pilgrims.

Characters

shite	Old Fisherman
tsure	Fisherman
waki	Imperial Envoy
waki tsure	Attendants (two)
later tsure	Benzaiten
kokata	Children (two)
later shite	Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi
ai kyōgen	Cormorant Spirit

Other Information

Play Category	waki play (first category)
In Current Repertoire of	Kanze
Place	The Capital → Enoshima
Time	Emperor Kinmei's reign, summer

[An *ōmiya* structure—a simple bamboo frame with a roof—representing the shrine building is placed on top of an *ichijōdai* tatami platform at the back center of the stage. A curtain (*hikimawashi*) is draped over the frame, concealing Benzaiten and her two Children waiting inside. After that has been set up, the Imperial Envoy and Attendants enter to the *shidai* music, the most common entrance music for non-divine characters.]

Imperial Envoy and Attendants (*shidai*/prelude)

We have obtained peaceful times at Enoshima,⁷

⁷ The *e* of Enoshima is homophonous with the conjugated form of the verb “to obtain” (modern *eru*).

we have obtained peaceful times at Enoshima,
the unmoving realm eternal.⁸

Imperial Envoy (nanori/self-introduction)

Here I am, a minister serving Emperor Kinmei. Now, in Sagami Province at the bay called Eno, a little after the tenth day of this past Fourth Month, there were a variety of strange miracles, and an island emerged out of the sea. After the place Eno, it has been named Enoshima. In the clouds above the island, the celestial maiden appeared. The island is a place of Benzaiten's manifestation, a holy site of complete fortune and longevity; because of this I have received orders to hurry and take a look, so I now travel down the Eastern Sea Road.⁹

Imperial Envoy and Attendants (michiyuki/travel song)

Down the eastern road,
we travel to the faraway sky together with the clouds,
we travel to the faraway sky together with the clouds,
their shadows cool upon the Little Grebe Sea;¹⁰
a distant journey we undertake to Suruga,¹¹
where Fuji stands, the moon above its high peak
crossing mountain after mountain along with us.
We have arrived at Sagami Province,
we have arrived at Sagami Province.

Imperial Envoy (tsukizerifu/arrival line)

Hurrying along over many days, we have already arrived at Enoshima in Sagami Province. I will now wait for a local of the bay and inquire about the situation.

Attendants

Good idea.

[The Imperial Envoy and Attendants kneel at the designated *waki* spot at the stage's right edge close to the audience. Next, the Old Fisherman and accompanying Fisherman enter to the true *issei* (*shin-no-issei*) music—a stately entrance music used almost exclusively for deities—and face each other on the bridge. The Old Fisherman wears an *asakurajō* mask, an old man mask with a slight smile often used for fishermen in the first act masking their true appearance. They both carry fishing poles.]

Old Fisherman and Fisherman (*issei*/entrance)

⁸ The doubly indented text is sung (*fushi*), while the singly indented text is spoken (*kotoba*).

⁹ Sagami Province corresponds to modern-day Kanagawa Prefecture. Enoshima literally means the island (*shima*) at Eno. The Tōkaidō was an important highway connecting the capital in Kyoto to Kamakura (or, in later times, Edo/Tokyo) which goes along the Pacific coast. After leaving Kyoto, it goes through the neighboring Ōmi Province, modern-day Shiga Prefecture, home to Lake Biwa.

¹⁰ An alternate name for Lake Biwa, called so because of the large number of little grebes living there. It is currently the official bird of Shiga Prefecture.

¹¹ The province corresponding to modern-day central and eastern Shizuoka Prefecture where Mount Fuji stands. Immediately west of Sagami Province. The first two syllables *suru* are homophonous with the verb “to do”, completing the thought “undertake (to do) a journey”.

Bird of the island,¹²
 a cormorant floating drearily amongst seaweed,¹³
 on top of the cool waves,
 morning moonlight lingers,
 as the day breaks.

Fisherman

Waves rise, cutting
 the robes of summer,¹⁴

Old Fisherman and Fisherman

on their underside we live in misery, across the bay,¹⁵
 the sea winds blow.

[They walk onto the main stage from the bridge.]

Old Fisherman (sashi/introduction)

Now, Enoshima replicates the wonder of Mount Kunlun,
 and the layered wall of the Five Castles stands tall,¹⁶

Old Fisherman and Fisherman

conveying the contours of Penglai,
 its shape of the three jars is divine.¹⁷
 If the Qin emperor had doubted Xu Fu,
 would the spring winds still blow idly
 across the summit of Mount Li?¹⁸
 If the Han emperor had not employed Qi Shao,
 the autumn moon over the fields of the Ba Mausoleum

¹² “Bird of the island” (*shima-tsu-dori*) is an epithet, or *makurakotoba*, for the cormorant bird *u*, which pivots into the verb “to float” *uki*.

¹³ “Floating seaweed” (*ukimiru*) can also mean literally to “see” (*miru*) “unhappy events” (*uki*). Due to the convenient seaweed pun, it is often used in association with fishermen (who supposedly live an unhappy life due to their lowly profession), which I have tried to convey in “drearily”.

¹⁴ The verb *tatsu* can mean both “to rise”, as in waves, or “to cut”, as in clothes.

¹⁵ The phrase *uraburewataru* is an intricate pivot word (*kakekotoba*) with three meanings. First, *ura* can mean “underside”, playing off the preceding “robes of summer”. Next, the verb *urabureru* means “to live in misery”, referring to the humble station of the fishermen. Lastly, *ura* can mean “bay”, and, combined with *wataru* “to cross”, leads into the “sea winds” blowing across the bay.

¹⁶ Kunlun (J. Konron) is a mythical mountain in western China said to be home to immortals, namely the Queen Mother of the West. The “Five Castles and Twelve Pavilions” (五城十二楼) on the mountain are where they dwell. Furthermore, this whole section until “swiftly attain the non-retreating rank” almost exactly matches the text of the *Enoshima engi*. For details on the translation of this line, see supplementary note 1.

¹⁷ Penglai (J. Hōrai) is a mythical island of immortals thought to be somewhere in the sea east of China. The “three jars” refers to three such islands, Penglai included, on account of their supposed jar-like shape.

¹⁸ Qin Shi Huang (259-210 BCE) ordered the sorcerer Xu Fu (徐福/徐市) to search for the elixir of immortality at Penglai. Mount Li (驪山) is the emperor’s burial site. This and the following lines about the Han emperor seem to be satirizing the two emperors for their futile attempts at achieving immortality. The effect is to emphasize the divinity of Enoshima, a true land of the immortals right before their eyes. See supplemental note 2.

surely would not shine with such desolate light.¹⁹
 Truly, this island is a wonder of the human realm,
 and a secret trace of the immortal realm.

(sageuta/low-pitch song)

Those who visit even once,

(ageuta/high-pitch song)

within the three thousand worlds, shall immediately
 within the three thousand worlds, shall immediately
 gain the treasure of infinite fortune,
 and after a lifetime, swiftly attain the non-retreating rank.²⁰
 Bearing such vows, these seas and mountains,
 until the end of myriad ages,
 bend in obedience to this country's
 unending reign: how blessed it is!
 unending reign: how blessed it is!

[The Imperial Envoy stands and faces the Old Fisherman.]

Imperial Envoy (mondō/dialog)

As I climb ashore Enoshima, gaze at the mountains and seas' beautiful scenery, and survey
 the situation, a group of fishermen comes. You, old man, are you a local of this bay?

Old Fisherman

Yes, I am a local of this bay who comes to this island every day and cleans the various
 shrines above the mountains, below the mountains, and in the caves. Now then, from where
 have you come on pilgrimage?

Imperial Envoy

I am a minister in service of Emperor Kinmei. His Majesty heard of this island's appearance
 and sent me as Imperial Envoy down here with orders to ask about all the details of the situ-
 ation and take a look around. Tell me the details in full.

Old Fisherman

So you are an Imperial Envoy of His Majesty. As for this island,²¹ in the thirteenth year of
 Emperor Kinmei's reign, from the Hour of the Dog on the twelfth day of the Fourth Month
 until the Hour of the Dragon on the 23rd day of the same month,²² cloud and mist shrouded
 in darkness the seas, lakes, and river mouths of Eno, and rain fell chaotically. The ground
 shook for over ten days. After a while, the celestial maiden appeared on top of the clouds
 with two children at her side, and the Celestial Legion,²³ dragon deities, deities of water, fire,

¹⁹ This seems to be referring to Shao Weng (少翁), a sorcerer from Qi (齊) employed by Emperor Wu of Han (157-87 BCE), but the Ba Mausoleum (霸陵) is the tomb of Emperor Wen of Han (200-157 BCE). It was likely mistaken for Emperor Wu's Mao Mausoleum (茂陵). See supplemental note 3.

²⁰ A rank at which one can no longer lose the fruits of enlightenment attained thus far (*futaiten no kurai*).

²¹ From here until "Taking after the place Eno, it is called Enoshima" is very similar to the text of the *Enoshima engi*.

²² The hour of the dog is from 8-10 p.m., and the hour of the dragon is from 8-10 a.m.

²³ The term *tenshu* 天衆 refers generally to all the beings who reside in the various Buddhist heavens.

and thunder, mountain deities, demons, yasha, and rasetsu²⁴ all threw down boulders from above the clouds and blew chunks of sand up from the ocean depths.

Fisherman

Mighty flashes of lightning flew through the myriad heavens.

Old Fisherman

Thunder roared as if cloth ripping; the waves seemed as if gold boiling.

Fisherman

Numerous boulders floated forth, creating an island of yasha and demons.

Old Fisherman

Some used copper mallets to pulverize;

Fisherman

some used iron staves to tear and rip.

Old Fisherman

Others pushed two boulders together;

Fisherman

others stood one stone upright.

Old Fisherman

After they each had a hand in creating the island, Bonten, Taishaku,²⁵ the Four Celestial Kings,²⁶ the celestial beings of the upper realm, and the dragon deities of the lower realm

Fisherman

all revealed themselves here,

Old Fisherman and Fisherman

and each protected it. Afterwards, the mist and clouds settled, and a single island upon the sea was formed. Taking after the place Eno, it is called Enoshima.

Imperial Envoy

Upon hearing this story, I am filled with gratitude.

This miraculous occurrence is none other than a sign of the bright lord's righteous reign.

Even more I gaze up at His Majesty's glory.

²⁴ Yasha, from the Sanskrit yakṣa, were originally hideous, evil demons, but in Buddhism they came to be protectors of the heavens in service to Bishamonten, guardian of the north. Rasetsu, from the Sanskrit rākṣasa, were originally human eating demons, but in Buddhism came to be one of the Twelve Celestials 十二天 who protect the heavens from various directions, in particular guardians of the southwest.

²⁵ Bonten 梵天 (brahman) was originally viewed as the creator of all things in ancient India, but in Buddhism came to be known as a guardian deity along with Taishakuten 帝釈天 (Śakra-devānāmindra).

²⁶ The Shitennō 四天王 are the four guardians of the four directional heavens existing on the slopes of Mount Sumeru (Shumi-sen 須弥山), i.e., Jikoku ten 持国天 (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) to the East, Zōchō-ten 增長天 (Virūḍhaka) to the South, Kōmoku-ten 廣目天 (Virūpākṣa) to the West, and Tamon-ten 多聞天 (Vaiśravaṇa) to the North.

Now then, she of the Celestial Group²⁷ manifests on this island, but what other honorable deity

has manifested themselves as a protector?

Old Fisherman

That is correct. Among the many deities present on this island, Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi is spouse to she of the Celestial Group; the expedient means he uses to save the masses cannot be worshipped enough.

Imperial Envoy

I am truly filled with awe
for these deeply blessed seas and mountains,
which shout praise of ten thousand years,

Old Fisherman

their voice heard in the wind blowing through the pine trees, sound

Imperial Envoy

refreshing as the waves lapping up against the boulders; they too

Old Fisherman

show to us signs of the well-governed realm,

Imperial Envoy

where we live in abundance,

Old Fisherman

in this time,

[During the following chorus chant, the Fisherman retires to a seat in front of the chorus while the Old Fisherman performs movements in accordance with the song.]

Chorus (ageuta/high-pitch song)

let us pray that today is the start of myriad ages,
pray that today is the start.
In the future too, the vow of this island will never exhaust,
nor will the numerous immeasurable pleasures,
received by the eternal realm.
The deities of good bestow all fortune;
the deities of evil blow away all disasters within myriad leagues,
this gust of bay wind too being the vow of she of the Celestial Group.
Have faith, for the unobstructed jewel of truth clouds not.

Imperial Envoy

There must still be yet many more joyous details about Enoshima. Tell them all.

[The Old Fisherman kneels at center stage.]

²⁷ The Celestial Group (tenbu 天部) is an umbrella term for the various protector deities of Buddhism, basically synonymous with the aforementioned Celestial Legion. Throughout the play the term is used to refer specifically to Benzaiten, so I have rendered it as “she of the Celestial Group”.

Chorus (kuri/rising lead-in)

Now then, speaking of Enoshima,
it has a perimeter of over thirty blocks,²⁸
and a height exceeding tens of spans.²⁹

Old Fisherman (sashi/scenic exposition)

The waters contain the reflections of the mountains,
and the mountains subject themselves to the will of the water.

Chorus

The sands on the coastline are clear and shallow;
where white clouds break, a cave door opens and jade screens appear.³⁰
Entering deep into the depths of the cave,
out from the gaps of imposing boulders,
the falling water is said to be none other
than that of the Pond of No Heat in the western heaven.³¹

Old Fisherman

Immortals who have attained the stable zen of no affliction³²

Chorus

occupy this land and makes it their home;
Amida, the enlightened teacher who grants all a karmic connection,
comes to this island and guides the living.

Old Fisherman

On this island, paradise of two lives,³³

Chorus

who wouldn't cast their faith?

(kuse/rhythmic narrative)

Now then, in ancient times, on the border of Musashi and Sagami,
in between Kamakura and Kaigetsu was a lake called Fukasawa.³⁴

²⁸ From here until "jade screens appear" more or less matches the text of the *Enoshima engi*.

²⁹ What I render as "blocks" and "spans" are the units of length *chō* 町 (also used as a measure of surface area) and *jō* 丈, respectively. Furthermore, from here until "jade screens appear" is roughly the same in content matter to the *Enoshima engi*.

³⁰ "Jade screens" (*suibyō* 翠屏) is a poetic compound referring to the sight of green mountains lined up as if a *byōbu* folding screen.

³¹ The "western heaven" refers to India. The Pond of No Heat (*munecchi* 無熱池) is a legendary pond said to be north of the Himalayas. According to the *Enoshima engi*, Benzaiten is the daughter of the dragon king of this pond.

³² The two compounds are *zenjō* 禪定, a meditative state of spiritual focus, and *muro* 無漏, *mu* denoting the absence of something, and *ro* meaning the "afflictions" or "delusions" which prevent one from reaching enlightenment. This and the following three lines exactly match the text of the *Enoshima engi*.

³³ The present and future life.

³⁴ Kaigetsu 海月 is thought to refer to Kuraki 久良岐, an old district located around modern-day Isogo Station (Kaigetsu is the Sinitic reading of 海月, which can also be read *kurage*). Fukasawa (literally "deep marsh" 深沢) is said to be near where the Great Buddha of Kamakura (Kōtokuin) now stands.

In the lake a large serpent dwelled.
 It had one body and five heads, a high nose and a tufted chin;
 its eyes were so bright they pierced the white sun,
 and in black clouds it enveloped its body.
 As such, from the reign of Emperor Jinmu to Emperor Suinin,
 eleven generations of emperors in all, over seven hundred years,
 it roamed all over the country and snatched people.

Old Fisherman

When it came to the reign of Emperor Keikō,

Chorus

the dragon's evil grew ever worse,
 so all the people lived hidden in caves,
 and there was no end to their weeping voices.
 Then, she of the Celestials Group turned toward the dragon and vowed firmly,
 "If you should reverse your evil heart, cease your killing,
 and become a guardian deity of this country,
 I will exchange words of marriage with you."
 The dragon king acquiesced to this, and from that point on,
 he ceased his killing, stirred his heart of good,
 and became the Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi,
 and protected the realm.

(rongi/reveal exchange)

Time passes swiftly as the evening clouds,
 time passes swiftly as the evening clouds enveloping such a divine mystery;
 how could a mere person of the bay say such things,
 as divine as offerings to the deities?
 Could it be a message from them?
 How joyous!

Old Fisherman

Yes, it is so. Because I am awed at His Majesty's word, I will now reveal a sign of acquiescence to the imperial order. Please wait here through the night.

Chorus

A sign of acquiescence to the imperial order?
 Wait, who are you, old man?

Old Fisherman

Who am I? A foolish question.
 I am the Five-Headed Dragon,

Chorus

and now spouse to she of the Celestial Group,
 Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi: look no further than this old man.
 "Under tonight's moon, both she of the Celestial Group and I shall manifest,"
 he says, disappearing into the evening waves—how divine!
 He disappears—how divine!

[The Old Fisherman exits to the *raijo* music, followed by the Fisherman. The *raijo* is an entrance/exit music consisting of two parts. In the first, a disguised supernatural being exits slowly to stately music. In the second, the *ai kyōgen*, usually a *massha* (lesser shrine) *ai*, enters to lively music. The Cormorant Spirit enters to the this second part. It wears the costume typical for a *massha* deity.]

Cormorant Spirit

This fellow here is a cormorant spirit living in the mountains and seas of Enoshima. Recently, this island rose from the water and a celestial maiden appeared. It was during the reign of the thirtieth human sovereign Emperor Kinmei, starting from the Hour of the Dog on the twelfth day of the Fourth Month of the thirteenth year, and lasting until the Hour of the Dragon on the twenty-third day of the same month. The seas, lakes, and harbors of Eno were shrouded in dark cloud and mist, heavy rain was frequent, and the earth trembled for ten days. At that moment, a single island rose out of the water. It is called Enoshima. At that moment, a celestial maiden appeared on top of the clouds. She is the Benzaiten currently here.

Also, there was a lake in between Musashi and Sagami. In it, a large serpent called the Five-Headed Dragon lived and snatched countless people. The celestial maiden turned to the dragon and said, "If you should reverse your evil heart and become a guardian deity of this realm, I will exchange words of marriage with you," so the dragon responded, "Well then I shall become a guardian deity," and they exchanged words of marriage. The Five-Headed Dragon manifested as the Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi, and until this day has displayed potent divine powers.

A great number of people visit to pray. In addition, just now there is a minister in service to His Majesty come here on pilgrimage. Receiving command from the celestial maiden that cormorants such as us too should come out and perform a song to entertain him, I have come here. I will hurry and perform a song.

What a joyous time!

[The Cormorant Spirit performs a three-stage dance often used to express a joyous occasion.]

Oh, how joyous, how joyous!
 Because it is such a joyous occasion,
 even cormorants like us have come out to perform a song.
 "That's it for me," the cormorant spirit says,
 "That's it for me," the cormorant spirit says,
 and flies off into the distance.

[The Cormorant Spirit exits. Next, the Imperial Envoy stands and faces the prop representing the shrine building.]

Imperial Envoy

Long ago Qi Bo³⁵ showed great skill,

³⁵ Qi Bo 岐伯 was a legendary doctor in service to the Yellow Emperor. From here until "she will reveal in various forms" almost exactly matches the text of the *Enoshima engi*.

and Zhang Yi³⁶ transmitted his heroic fame to later ages.
No inferior to them is the wise and brave Benzaiten:

Chorus

immeasurable, boundless, and miraculous merits
she will reveal in various forms.

[To the *deha* music—the standard entrance music for a supernatural being in their true form—Benzaiten begins to speak while still concealed inside the prop.]

Benzaiten

Amplified by the moon's illumination,
the Jewel of Wish Fulfillment's light—
who would not behold it with wonder?³⁷

Chorus

Behold! Behold!
All will be as you wish, so I hear,

Benzaiten

and now all will be as His Majesty's wishes,
for I have encountered His glory.

Chorus

Even the jewel of Bian He is nothing in comparison³⁸
to the legendary Jewel of Wish Fulfillment—
coming to offer it to His Majesty,
out from the shining shrine doors flung wide open,
fifteen children and she of the Celestial Group reveal themselves.

[The supporting actors (*kōken*) remove the curtain, revealing Benzaiten and her two Children. Benzaiten is holds a platter with a flame-shaped jewel prop (*kaen-dama* 火焰玉) representing the Jewel of Wish Fulfillment. She wears a *tsure* mask, a type of *ko-omote* woman mask used for young women in the *tsure* position, and on her head a *tengan* (celestial crown), a circular golden crown with elaborate decorations used for divine or noble women.]

Her expedient means for saving the masses,
her expedient means for saving the masses,

[Benzaiten and the two Children walk out of the shrine prop.]

³⁶ Zhang Yi 張儀 (late fourth century BCE) was a famous strategist of Warring States period known for his tactic of “horizontal alliance” (連衡), individually negotiating with the other states to dissolve their unified resistance against the Qin.

³⁷ The *nyoi hōju* 如意宝珠 (Sanskrit *cintāmaṇi*) is a legendary jewel in the Buddhist tradition which grants all wishes.

³⁸ Variants of this story are told in many classical Chinese sources. In the eighth century BCE, Bian He of Chu presented a jade to the king, but it was deemed worthless and he was punished for it. Later, however, it was found to be of great value and it became a contested treasure throughout the realm.

first grant the wish of complete fortune and longevity,
 “The unclouded jewel of unparalleled pleasure in this life
 and birth in the Pure Land in the next,
 I wish to offer it to my lord,” she says,
 bestowing it upon the Imperial Envoy,
 then, performing a court dance, she sets the rhythm,
 twirls her feather sleeves, and dances.

[Benzaiten performs a *gaku* dance, then continues to dance as the chorus begins to sing. Meanwhile, the two Children kneel in front of the flute player.]

Chorus

The dance of the celestial beings and bodhisattvas,
 the dance of the celestial beings and bodhisattvas must also be like this.
 Offshore, where white waves crash,
 clouds darken, a swift wind blows, and the current whirls in reverse:
 could it be the Five-Headed Dragon king’s appearance?

[Benzaiten beckons toward the curtain with her fan, then sits down on a stool in front of the chorus. Next, the Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi enters vigorously to the *hayabue* music, the most fast-paced entrance music used for fierce supernatural beings. He wears an *ōtobide* mask, a mask with bulging eyeballs and a surprised expression used for fierce deities, as well as a wig of long red hair (*akagashira*) and a crown with a dragon figure on top of it (*ryūtai*).]

Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi

Long ago, I lived in the pond at Fukasawa as the Five-Headed dragon king;
 now I am guardian deity of the realm, Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi.

Chorus

It is his pre-enlightened form, no different than in the legends,
 it is his pre-enlightened form, no different than in the legends:

Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi

five dragon heads,

Chorus

a tufted chin, eyes so bright they pierce the white sun,
 and a body enveloped in black clouds.
 A boulder towering high enough to flatten even mossed pines:
 on top of one he appears.

[Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi performs a *hataraki*, then continues movement as the chorus sings.]

Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi

Kami and Buddhas are no more different than water and waves.

Chorus

Because Kami and Buddhas are no more different than water and waves,
 as one and the same entity, with various benefits,

Benzaiten of the Celestial Group reveals her awesome light,
 together with the Luminous Deity,
 she vows firmly to protect for ten thousand kalpas,
 snaking between the rocks, to the refreshing green ocean she flies,
 causing waves to beat against the rocky shore,
 then Luminous Deity Tatsu-no-Kuchi suddenly displays his might, blowing clouds,
 the light from his eye shining through the storm, filling all between heaven and
 earth.

At that moment, she of the Celestial Group, along with her children,
 reveals herself on top of purple clouds,
 so the Luminous Deity rides upon approaching black clouds,
 emits light, and circles around the island, circling and circling.
 After a while, they both reveal themselves in the clouds,
 they both reveal themselves in the clouds:
 what a joyous manifestation!

Supplementary Notes

1. The object of “replicate” is “the *ki* of Kunlun”, where *ki* has no Chinese character associated with it. Sanari suggests that it is meant to be 墟 (*kyo*), meaning a mountain or the land around it. He cites a passage from the ancient Chinese dictionary *Erya* (Approaching Elegance, c. second century BCE) which uses this expression: “As for beauty in the northwest, there is Mount Kunlun” (西北之美者有崑崙之墟). Nogami provides an alternative suggestion that it is meant to be 奇, meaning “wonder”. The *Enoshima engi* cited by Kobayashi also uses this character (*Geinōken no otogizōshi*, 103), so I follow this.
2. As Sanari notes, the connection with the surrounding lines is questionable, but I have taken the interpretation given in the footnote following Sanari’s view that the lines are mocking the two emperors. He cites a Bai Juyi poem criticizing the pursuit of immortality which includes a similar line: “Have you seen the summit of Mount Li and the vicinity of the Mao Mausoleum? In the end, only a sorrowful wind blows over the grasses.”
3. Gerry Yokota-Murakami translates the line as, “If the Han emperor had not employed the wizard, his spirit would have been disturbed, unable to rest in peace,” reading it as a positive evaluation of his employment of superhuman powers which leads into the following line, where the “wonders” refer to the emperor’s act (*Formation of the Canon*, 140). However, the interpretation of the moonlight as peaceful seems to be at odds with the description *kokoro sugoku*, which I have rendered as “desolate”. This word connotes a chillingly lonely, even ominous atmosphere, in contexts such as a monkey’s sorrowful cry sounding in the mountains (*Kurama tengu*), a lone male deer calling for a mate on an autumn night (*Kinuta*), or the scenery under the autumn moon (*Kinuta*, *Matsukaze*). Also, the previous line about the Qin emperor is harder to interpret in a positive light, and given the parallel construction, they should share the same sentiment.

Ōyashiro 大社 (The Great Shrine)

The Great Shrine refers to what is today called the Izumo Shrine, located in Izumo City, Shimane Prefecture. Along with the Ise Shrine, it was and remains one of the most prominent Shinto shrines in Japan, with roots tracing so far back that a clear historical account of its origins is impossible. The shrine is most known for the related body of mythology found in ancient texts such as the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Izumo fudoki* 出雲風土記 (*Izumo Gazetteer*, 733). Variants of each myth abound, but here I will give a brief summary of the version given by the *Kojiki*, the most well-known today. It starts with Susa-no-o, one of the children of Izanagi and Izanami born together with Amaterasu. After wreaking havoc in the heavens, Susa-no-o was banished to earth and found himself in Izumo, where he encountered a pair of deities, Ashinazuchi and Tenazuchi, who offered their daughter's hand in marriage in exchange for slaying a giant serpent that was going to come snatch her away. After successfully saving her, Susa-no-o built a palace for his new wife, whereupon he sang the very first thirty-one-syllable waka poem, which is alluded to in the *shite's* entrance in the play.

Sometime later, one of his distant descendants comes to ask for Susa-no-o's daughter's hand in marriage. Susa-no-o puts him through harsh trials, but in the end recognizes the man, giving him his daughter as well as the name Ōkuninushi (大国主), "Master of the Great Country". This deity is none other than the principal deity of the Izumo Shrine, although in the play he is never actually named, which can perhaps be read as leaving open the possibility for multiple overlapping identities. For example, the allusion to Susa-no-o's famous waka in the *shite's* entrance strongly associates himself—his true identity being the deity of the shrine—with Susa-no-o. Ōkuninushi grew his domain to rule over the main islands of Japan, but one day was approached by an emissary from Amaterasu requesting that he cede the land to heaven. He deferred the decision to his sons Kotoshironushi and Takeminakata, the first of which immediately acquiesced, and the second of which tried to challenge the messenger to a match of strength but ended up running halfway across the land to Suwa Lake in modern day Nagano Prefecture, where he is now enshrined. The deal went through, and in exchange for ceding the land, a large palace was built for Ōkuninushi, and it is this palace which became the Izumo Shrine.

A central part of the play's story is the belief that in the Tenth Month of the lunar calendar, gods from across Japan all gather at Izumo Shrine to discuss various matters such as deciding the future marriage relations of the people. Whereas the Tenth Month is generally named *kaminazuki*, the Chinese characters commonly used to write it (神無月) meaning "Month Without the Gods" (although the original meaning is probably "Month of the Gods"), because of this gathering of the gods, in Izumo the month is named *kamiarizuki* (神有月), "Month With the Gods". It is not clear how or when this belief emerged, but given that the first known usage of the word *kamiarizuki* seems to come from a mid-fourteenth century commentary on the *Man'yōshū* 万葉集 (*Collection of Myriad Ages*, late eighth century), its spread can be speculated to have begun in the early medieval period.

The Ten Rasetsu Women

Although this belief still remains strong today—the Izumo Shrine conducts annual ceremonies in November related to the gathering of gods—the play depicts other beliefs which may not be so familiar. In the second act, before the principal deity’s appearance, a celestial maiden comes to entertain the guests, and through dialog reveals herself to be a manifestation of the Ten Rasetsu Women (Jūrasetsunyo 十羅刹女). These are ten women in the Buddhist pantheon, who, according to the *Lotus Sutra*, were originally demons who preyed on people but had a change of heart upon encountering the Buddha, after which they became guardians of the sutra’s devotees. Her (their) connection with the Izumo Shrine is not immediately apparent, but the cape of Izumo where she “manifests her trace” mentioned in the play provides a clue.

This cape refers to the Hinomisaki (日御碕) Cape northwest of Izumo Shrine, where Hinomisaki Shrine stands. This shrine had its own independent practices associated with Shugendō (修験道) in the ancient period, but upon being incorporated as an auxiliary shrine of Izumo Shrine in the medieval period, its principal deity became the Ten Rasetsu Women, believed to be a daughter born between Susa-no-o and the daughter of a dragon king. Later on in the late fifteenth century the shrine successfully sued for independence from Izumo Shrine and began to assert that its principal deities were Susa-no-o himself and Amaterasu, who remain the principal deities to this day, but the association with the Ten Rasetsu Women seems to have persisted for at least over a century.¹ In the *Kaikitsudan* 懷橘談 (*Talk of an Orange in the Bosom*), a 1661 record of a Confucian scholar’s travels in Izumo, the author writes that he heard from a priest at the shrine the following theory: the three upper shrines enshrine the three female deities born out of the contest between Susa-no-o and Amaterasu plus Susa-no-o himself; the five lower shrines enshrine the five male deities born at the same time plus Amaterasu; and both the shrines together, with a total of ten deities, are worshipped as the Ten Rasetsu Women.²

After the celestial maiden dances, the principal deity appears and also dances, then finally a dragon deity, perhaps meant to be the Ten Rasetsu Women’s grandfather, appears to end the play. He reports that every Tenth Month he comes to Izumo Shrine to offer a small dragon to the deity. As with the other beliefs already discussed, the origin of this is unclear, but in fact the scripts of other nō plays depicting these events survive, attesting to how widespread they must have been in the late medieval period. In *Kamiarizuki* 神有月 (*The Month With the Gods*), a court minister travels to Izumo and hears the story behind the different names for the Tenth Month from the deities Tenazuchi and Ashinazuchi, the couple who Susa-no-o first encountered. *Misaki* 御崎 (*The Cape*) tells the story of how Susa-no-o repelled a massive invading army from India by summoning all the deities to Izumo and enlisting the help of his daughter the Ten Rasetsu Women, who was born between him and a dragon princess. Lastly, *Izumo Ryūjin* 出雲龍神 (*The*

¹ For a brief ethnographic report of the Hinomisaki Shrine, see Grayson, “Susa-no-o,” 470–72. A shrine custodian discusses the connection between Susa-no-o and Tan’gun, but says nothing of the Ten Rasetsu Women.

² Kurosawa Sekisai 黒沢石齋, *Kaikitsudan*, in *Zoku zoku gunsho ruijū*. *Zoku zoku gunsho ruijū*, 17 vols. (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1978), v. 9, p. 440.

Dragon Deity of Izumo) depicts the annual spectacle of the dragon deity offering a small dragon to the deity. The existence of these plays perhaps attests not only to the spread of Izumo myths across the country, but also to the increased attention given to provincial locales by *nō* actors in the late medieval period.

The Ai Kyōgen

The default *ai kyōgen* in current performance is a standard *massha ai*, i.e., an interlude where a deity of a lesser shrine recaps the story of the first half then dances a three-stage dance. However, there is an alternate *ai* called *Miko kagura* 神子神楽 or *Miko kannushi* 神子神主 in the Ōkura and Izumi schools, respectively. This is thought to be the original *ai* of the play and is the one which appears in the translation. The basic story is as follows. The head priest (main *ai*) enters and praises the fame of the Great Shrine. Next, a pilgrim (side *ai*) enters and, after praying, asks the head priest to explain why the Tenth Month is called the “Month With the Gods” in Izumo. After a lengthy explanation, the head priest calls a priestess (side *ai*), or *miko*, at the request of the pilgrim and orders her to dance to the divine music, or *kagura*. The alternate *ai* is simple enough and not much more exciting than a standard *massha ai*, unlike some of the *furyū ai* often found in late Muromachi plays. However, the song the *miko* sings while dancing the *kagura* is somewhat intriguing:

Even far offshore,
there are stones:
the august Leech Child’s sitting stone.³

A “sitting stone” (*koshikake-ishi* 腰掛石) is a stone bearing a legend that some famous historical figure or deity once sat on it. The Leech Child (Hiruko 蛭子) is the mythical failed child of Izanagi and Izanami. After seeing that he was a failure, they sent him off to the sea in a boat.⁴ In the medieval period he became associated with Ebisu, one of the Seven Gods of Fortune. Although mostly known as a deity of commerce, he seems to have been associated with fishing as well—fisherman referred to deities who brought bountiful catches as Ebisu. These could take various forms, including stones picked up from the sea.

The same song can be found in the *kyōgen* play *Ishigami* 石神 (*Stone Deity*), the story of which goes as follows. A man was left by his wife after leading a life of debauchery, so he asks someone to help get her back. The wife, who comes to finalize the divorce, is told by this person to make a divination to the stone deity at Izumoji (出雲路). She agrees to this and, arriving at the shrine, prays that if the stone should rise she will divorce her husband, while trying to raise the stone herself. It turns out, however, that the stone deity is really her husband disguised as a stone deity, and he stands firm so as to not be lifted up. Next, the wife prays that if the stone should not rise she will divorce her husband, while pressing down on the stone, but this time the husband stands up. The wife has no choice but to return to her husband. As a sign of thanks to the

³ 遙かなる沖にも石のあるものを、蛭子の御前の腰掛の石。

⁴ Heldt, *The Kojiki*, 9.

deity, she dances a *kagura* and sings the short song in question. As she dances, the husband cannot help but partially remove his mask to take a look and eventually ends up dancing along. The wife of course finds out his true identity and chases him away.

The shrine in this play is the Sainokami Shrine (幸神社) located northeast of the present-day Imperial Palace in Kyoto City, just west of the Kamo River, in the area known as Izumoji. Izumoji literally means “Izumo Road”, and *sai-no-kami* is also a common noun referring to a deity who watches over the roads to prevent the entrance of evil spirits or pestilence into a community, so it is clear that the deity of the shrine functioned as a guardian of the roads (also known as *dōsojin* 道祖神). The area was important for traffic in and out of the capital, and the name suggests that it was one end of a road to Izumo. In fact, it is thought that migrants from Izumo settled the area and brought the advanced agricultural technology of the Yayoi peoples with them.⁵

The main deity enshrined at Sainokami Shrine is Saruta-hiko, the deity said to have guided Nigihahiro on his descent from the heavens.⁶ In addition, the shrine also enshrines a host of other deities, including Ōkuninushi and one of his sons Kotoshironushi, who was also believed to be a possible identity of Ebisu along with the Leech Child. Furthermore, there is an auxiliary shrine just to the east of Izumoji Shrine named Izumoji Shrine (出雲路社), also known as Izumoi 出雲井 (Well of Izumo) Shrine. It enshrines Kunado (岐神), where *kunado* is a common noun which refers to a guardian of roads, same as *sai-no-kami*. In the play, this shrine is, in a roundabout way, associated with Kotoshironushi (the details are in supplemental note five).

Most likely, the kyōgen play *Ishigami* already existed in some form, and the *kagura* portion was borrowed for the play. The play name *Ishigami-mori* 石神守 (*Protector of the Stone Deity*) appears in the *Tenshō kyōgen-bon* 天正狂言本 (1578), a collection of the plots of kyōgen plays and the oldest extant source for information about them, so this is not improbable.⁷ Being set in Kyoto, the kyōgen play at first glance has no connection to *Ōyashiro*, but as discussed above, links can be drawn between the shrine at Izumoji in Kyoto, the stone deity enshrined there, the mysterious Ebisu, and Ōkuninushi’s son Kotoshironushi.

Characters

shite	Old Priest
tsure	Priest
waki	Court Minister
waki tsure	Attendants (two)
later tsure	Celestial Maiden

⁵ *Kokushi daijiten*, s.v. “Izumoji,” by Noda Tadao (野田只夫), accessed March 22, 2020.

⁶ Heldt, *The Kojiki*, 49.

⁷ For a discussion of this book and the types of plays found in them, see Pinnington, *A New History*, 192–207.

later shite	Deity of the Great Shrine
later tsure	Dragon Deity
main ai	Head Priest
side ai	Pilgrim
side ai	Shrine Maiden

Other Information

Play Category	waki play (first category)
In Current Repertoire of Place	Kanze, Kongō, Kita The Capital → Izumo Shrine
Time	Tenth Month (winter)

[A *komiya* (小宮) structure—a small bamboo frame with a roof—on top of an *ichijōdai* tatami platform at the back center of the stage represents the shrine building. A curtain (*hikimawashi*) is draped over the frame. After that has been set up, the Court Minister and Attendants enter to the *shidai* music, the most common entrance music for non-supernatural characters.]

Court Minister, Attendants (shidai/prelude)

The festival of the gods with their many vows,⁸
the festival of the gods with their many vows—
let us go to Izumo Province.

Court Minister (nanori/self-introduction)

Here I am, a minister in service to His Majesty. Now then, in Izumo Province, this month is called the “Month With the Gods”, and the various deities manifest themselves. I have heard that there are a great variety of sacred rites to be conducted, so I have decided to go on pilgrimage.

Court Minister, Attendants (michiyuki/travel song)

We depart in the morning, cutting across the land
in our travel robes ever so far,
in our travel robes ever so far,
the way ahead covered in drizzling cloud and mist,
we cross mountain and mountain again,
to that place where the name “Month With the Gods” holds true,
at Izumo Province we have arrived,
at Izumo Province we have arrived.

⁸ A “vow” (*chikai*) in this context refers to the promise of deities to use their divine powers to save humanity. The concept originated in the vows of Buddhas and bodhisattvas, but it came to be applied to other deities as well.

Court Minister (tsukizerifu/arrival line)

Hurrying along, we have already arrived at the Great Shrine of Izumo Province. Now I wish to observe the situation around here.

Attendants

Good idea.

[The Court Minister and Attendants kneel at the designated *waki* spot at the stage's right edge close to the audience. Then, to the true *issei* (*shin-no-issei*) music—a stately entrance music used almost exclusively for deities—the Old Priest, holding a broom, enters with the Priest and stands on the bridge. The Old Priest wears a *kojō* 小尉 (lit. small old man) mask, one of the more elegant-looking old man masks often used for disguised deities, such as in *Takasago*.]

Old Priest, Priest (*issei*/entrance)

**Eightfold clouds rise,
over the eightfold fence at Izumo where his wife resides,⁹
upon the shrine roads we walk.**

Priest

Up in the pine branches on the mountain peaks—

Old Priest, Priest

is that the voice of the divine wind beckoning?

[The two come onto the main stage.]

Old Priest (*sashi*/scenic exposition)

**Indeed, although born as humans of the sullied world,
those who have sworn vows,**

Old Priest, Priest

**the deities we serve, and so receive their all-embracing blessing,
our hearts content as we watch the springs and autumns pass by—
it is these ages of inexhaustible months and days on which we rely.**

(*sageuta*/low-pitch song)

**Let us walk forth,
let us walk forth.**

(*ageuta*/high-pitch song)

Is there such a place,

⁹ The first two lines of this *issei* borrow language from the mythical *waka* that Susa-no-o supposedly sung upon settling in Izumo, the very first thirty-one-syllable *waka* according to later sources: “Eightfold clouds rise, over this eightfold fence at Izumo, for my wife’s residence, I build an eightfold fence, that eightfold fence” (八雲立つ出雲八重垣、つまごめに八重垣つくる、その八重垣を). The “his” refers to Susa-no-o. For this section in the *Kojiki*, see Heldt, *The Kojiki*, 27.

a shadow where no god dwells,
 a shadow where no god dwells?
 The mountain peaks,
 the pines and cedars,
 the mountain streams, oceanside villages, and rice fields,
 all are equally blessed with their presence.
 What a great many priests on this road,
 what a great many priests on this road!

[The Old Priest moves to center stage while the Priest moves to the *metsuke* pillar at the front left of the stage. The Court Minister stands and faces the audience.]

Court Minister (mondō/dialog)

As I arrive at the Great Shrine of Izumo Province and observe the situation, a number of priests come forth. [Facing the Old Priest] I have something to ask you all.

Old Priest

You are an unfamiliar face around here. From where have you come on pilgrimage?

Court Minister

Yes, I am busy in my service to the court, but because I heard that in this province this month is the “Month With the Gods”, and that the various deities all manifest themselves, I decided to request leave from His Majesty to come on distant pilgrimage.

Priest

How joyous! The deities and His Majesty,

Court Minister

their harmony in this age evident,

Old Priest

in your coming here, to the Deity,

Court Minister

blessings all-encompassing,

Old Priest

the moonlight too

[The Priest retires to the spot before the flute player, and the Court Minister also kneels down. The Old Priest performs movements at the back left of the stage.]

Chorus (ageuta/high-pitch song)

**evokes the age of the gods,
 shining over the shrine pillars of Izumo,
 shining over the shrine pillars of Izumo,**

thick they stand, from Yamato of Shikishima¹⁰ to Shimane,
 the unmoving realm is eternal.
 Indeed, crimson grows deeper on the branches,
 from which drizzles shower the mountainside,
 where the village begins to bear the appearance of winter,
 where the village begins to bear the appearance of winter.¹¹

Court Minister

I have no knowledge of this place, so please tell me in detail about the divine wonders
 of this shrine.

[The Old Priest kneels at center stage and lays down his broom, which a supporting actor (*kōken*) re-
 moves.]

Chorus (kuri/rising lead-in)

To begin with, the Great Shrine of Izumo Province
 is a place where the deities of thirty-eight shrines have been summoned.¹²

Old Priest (sashi/scenic exposition)

Among them are the five princes.¹³

Chorus

The first manifests as the Great Luminous Deity Ajika.
 He is the Mountain King Avatar.

Old Priest

Second is the Great Luminous Deity Minato.

Chorus

He manifests as the Luminous Deity of Munakata in Kyūshū.
 Third is the Hayatama Deity of Inasa.
 They say he is the Luminous Deity of Kashima in Hitachi.

¹⁰ Shikishima (敷島) is a place near modern-day Sakurai City, Nara Prefecture where it is said that Emperors Sujin (legendary tenth emperor) and Kinmei (twenty-ninth emperor, mid-sixth century) had their capital. It later became an epithet, or “pillow word” (*makurakotoba*) for Yamato Province in the form *shikishima no*, which is how it is used here.

¹¹ These lines borrow from a waka by the monk Eiin (永胤法師) found in the *Go-Shūi wakashū* 後拾遺和歌集 (*Later Collection of Gleanings of Waka*, 1086): “The Month Without the Gods grows deeper, as do the branches, from which drizzles shower the mountainside village” (神無月深くなり行く梢より時雨れて渡る深山辺の里).

¹² This refers to the practice of “summoning” (*kanjō* 勧請) deities of other shrines and enshrining them in lesser shrines around the precincts of the main shrine.

¹³ The five sons of the shrine’s principal deity, Ōkuninushi. The ones listed here differ from those in the *Kojiki*, and possible sources sharing the same attributions are unknown. For a detailed discussion of the next few lines listing their identities, see Supplementary Notes 1-5.

(kuse/rhythmic narrative)

Fourth is the Great Luminous Deity Toya.
 He manifests as the Luminous Deity of Suwa in Shinano.
 Fifth is the Great Luminous Deity Izumoji.
 He manifests as the Luminous Deity of Mishima in Iyo.
 Their vows are indeed cloudless,
 as is moon of the Ninth Month.
 Secretly on its last day,¹⁴ separate from the others,

Old Priest

the deity of Sumiyoshi manifests.¹⁵

Chorus

As for the remaining deities,
 on the first day of the Tenth Month,
 at the Hour of the Tiger, they all manifest.
 All manner of divine festivities,
 even now continue at this shrine:
 their vows are too divine to speak of.

Chorus (rongi/reveal exchange)

Truly a blessed story
 truly a blessed story.
 Though it is the end times,
 the deities remain unseparated from us,
 their awesome light divine.

Old Priest

That is correct, every year,
 on this night, the divine festivities,

Chorus

the roles to be played,

Old Priest

great in number,

Chorus

the fierce gods' dancing and singing sleeves,
 tugging as if on a sacred rope,
 "What is my name? I do not know."

¹⁴ "On the last day of the month" (*misoka ni*) is homophonous with the adverb "in secret".

¹⁵ Sumiyoshi Shrine (住吉大社) in modern-day Osaka City enshrines four deities: the three male deities born from Izanagi's ablution after escaping from Yomi (Heldt, *The Kojiki*, 17–18) and the legendary Empress Jingū.

[The Old Priest stands and looks at the prop representing the shrine.]

White cloth hangs on the jewelled fence;¹⁶
 he steps up to it and says,
 “This is a message from the Deity,”
 before disappearing into the shrine,
 before disappearing into the shrine.

[The Old Priest enters the shrine, hidden by the curtain draped over it, while the Priest exits to the *raiyo* music. The *raiyo* is an entrance/exit music consisting of two parts. In the first, a disguised supernatural being exits slowly to stately music. In the second, the *ai kyōgen*, usually a *massha* (lesser shrine) *ai*, enters to lively music. The Head Priest enters to the this second part.]

Head Priest

I am a head priest at the Great Shrine of Izumo Province. It goes without saying that, although our country is small, it is a divine country, and a country where the royal throne prospers. Even among the many sacred deities of the provinces, there are none under heaven who do not know the honorable Deity of this Great Shrine, and so a great number of people come on pilgrimage. As for me, today I will again pay a visit to the shrine and purify the space before the Deity.

[The Pilgrim enters.]

Pilgrim

I am one who lives in the vicinity. There is a certain wish I have, so every month I visit the Great Shrine. I have yet to visit this month, so I wish to go on pilgrimage. Speaking of that, in other provinces this month is called the “Month Without the Gods”, while in this province it is called the “Month With the Gods”. I’ve heard that there is a reason for this, so today I want to ask the venerable head priest about it. While talking to myself, I have already arrived before the Deity. Now then, I will pay obeisance to the Deity.

[He faces the shrine.] Oh, how blessed!

[He faces the Head Priest] Excuse me, is the venerable head priest present?

Head Priest

Who is it?

Pilgrim

It is me.

¹⁶ There is a string of pivot words and connected words (*engo* 縁語) here. First, the dancing “sleeves” leads into “pull”, which then leads into “sacred rope” (*mishime no nawa*), with *nawa* being homophonous with “(my) name (is)”. Next, the first two syllables of “white cloth” (*shirayū*), a special kind of cloth used in shrines on objects such as fences and sacred trees, are homophonous with “do not know” (*shirazu*).

Head Priest

You have come on pilgrimage. Truly there cannot be a believer as devoted as you. As a joyous sign of that, your honorable sons prosper.

Pilgrim

I am honored. Now then, I have something to ask you, venerable head priest. In other provinces this month is called the “Month Without the Gods”, while in this province it is called the “Month With the Gods”. I’ve heard there are various reasons for this; please tell them to me.

Head Priest

A good question. The reason for that is related to this Great Shrine. This is because all the gods of the sixty-six provinces of Japan come here in this month. This is because they discuss how to safeguard all under heaven with great care; they also determine the karmic connections between husband and wife. Accordingly, in other provinces this month is called the “Month Without the Gods”, while in this province, since the deities gather here, it is called the “Month With the Gods”.

Additionally, they return home to the various shrines across Japan at the end of the Tenth Month. The large mountain visible over there is called the Mountain of Raising Gods. The Luminous Deity of Hayatomo¹⁷ climbs to the top of the mountain and, saying, “Return home,” to the other deities, sends them off with a sacred *sakaki* branch. Regarding this, there are various joyous divine secrets, but matters of the deities must not be spoken of lightly, so for now I will leave it at the explanation of the “Month With the Gods”.

Pilgrim

Thank you for telling me in detail. Now then, please have the divine music performed as usual.

Head Priest

Very well, first come this way.

Pilgrim

Very well. [He moves in front of the chorus.]

Head Priest

[Facing the curtain] Is the shrine maiden there?

[The Shrine Maiden enters.]

Shrine Maiden

¹⁷ Hayatomo (早鞆) is the narrowest part of the Kanmon Strait between Honshū and Kyūshū. The deity of the Mekari Shrine (和布刈神社) in Kita Kyūshū City was once known as the Luminous Deity of Hayatomo.

What is it?

Head Priest

There was a request to have the divine music performed, so I called you.

Shrine Maiden

I thought that was the case, so I came out dressed.

Head Priest

Now then, please dress me as well.

Shrine Maiden

Very well. [She helps him get dressed.]

Head Priest

Have you finished getting me dressed?

Shrine Maiden

All ready.

Head Priest

Hurry and perform the divine music.

Shrine Maiden

Very well.

[The Head Priest keeps the rhythm while the Shrine Maiden moves in front of the shrine with bells in hand.]

**Even far offshore,
there are stones:
the august Leech Child's sitting stone.**

[The Shrine Maiden dances a *kagura* (divine music) while shaking the bells in her hand.]

**The divine music marks this joyous occasion;
look upon this world of longevity and protect it.**

[The *kyōgen* actors all exit. To the *deha* music—the standard entrance music for a supernatural being in their true form—the Celestial Maiden enters. She wears a *tsure* mask, a type of *ko-omote* woman mask used for young women in the *tsure* position, and on her head a *tengan* (celestial crown), a circular golden crown with elaborate decorations used for divine or noble women.]

Chorus

**In the drizzling sky clouds clear away,
the moon, over the sparkling jewelled shrine,
adds its light: what a sight to behold!**

Celestial Maiden

I am she who manifests her trace at the cape of Izumo,¹⁸
 the deity who protects both the Buddhist and kingly law:
 my original ground is the Ten Rasetsu Women,
 and I am their manifestation.

Chorus

A female deity of beautiful countenance,
 a female deity of beautiful countenance,
 a shining jewelled pin in her hair,
 along with a fragrant flower,
 she twirls her sleeves,
 the song and dance of the night revelries:
 how entertaining!

[The Celestial Maiden dances a *tennyo-no-mai* (celestial maiden dance), a dance similar in structure to the more standard *chū-no-mai* (middle dance) but performed in a more lively manner accompanied by the *taiko*.]

Chorus

Truly peerless dancing sleeves,
 truly peerless dancing sleeves,
 as they sway, out from the gaps in the clouds,
 the various deities all appear,
 performing dance and song,
 they fly before the Deity, [The Celestial Maiden kneels before the shrine.]
 “Hurry and reveal yourself,” they say under the evening moon,
 as the clouds clear,
 the jewelled fence [She stands.] glows bright with vermillion light:
 the body of the Deity appears.

[The Celestial Maiden kneels in front of the chorus. The supporting actors remove the curtain from the shrine, revealing the Deity of the Great Shrine sitting on a stool inside. He wears a mask of the *akujō* 悪尉 (lit. evil old man) type, frightening masks used for powerful male deities.]

(rongi/exchange)

What a noble countenance!
 What a noble countenance!
 To behold the Deity’s virtue before our eyes,
 it must be His Majesty’s blessing!

¹⁸ This refers to the Hinomisaki Cape (日御碕) (Cape of the Sun) to the northwest of Izumo Shrine. To manifest one’s trace (*ato o tareru* 跡を垂れる) refers to a deity in the Buddhist pantheon appearing in the alternate form of an indigenous deity for the salvation of the masses in Japan.

Deity of the Great Shrine

Come, this divine festival of night revelry—
let us reveal it in detail and comfort our guest.

Chorus

Now then, as for the various roles of the divine music,

Deity of the Great Shrine

The deities of Sumiyoshi and Kashima,

Chorus

of Suwa and Atsuta,
and the others of the three thousand worlds,
all the deities manifest here. [He walks forward out of the shrine.]
Each of their pure robes' sleeves,
twirling and twirling:
how entertaining!

[The Deity of the Great Shrine performs a *gaku* dance.]

As the song and dance go on,
as the song and dance go on,
in the darkening sky drizzling clouds roll in,
from the sea a swift wind blows,
stirring the waves—
could it be the Sea Dragon King's appearance?

[The Deity of the Great Shrine beckons toward the curtain with his fan before sitting back down on the stool inside the shrine. The Dragon Deity then enters vigorously to the *hayabue* music, the most fast-paced entrance music used for fierce supernatural beings. He wears a *kurohige* 黒髭 (lit. black facial hair) mask used for dragon deities as well as a wig of long red hair (*akagashira*) and a crown with a dragon figure on top of it (*ryūtai*). He carries a golden box containing a small dragon.]

Dragon Deity

Here I am, the Sea Dragon King is none other than me.
Now then, every year, up from the dragon palace,
I put a small dragon in a golden box,
and offer it before the deity.

[As the chorus sings, the Dragon Deity places the box before the shrine and takes out the small dragon as the lyrics describe.]

Chorus

The dragon deity appears,
the dragon deity appears,

brushing aside the waves, pushing aside the current,
 he rises onto the shore,
 places the box down,
 and pays obeisance to the Deity, gazing up with reverence.
 At that moment, the dragon deity takes the box's lid,
 at that moment, the dragon deity takes the box's lid,
 suddenly opening it, he withdraws a small dragon,
 and offers it before the Deity.
 Both land and sea are well governed in this reign—
 what a truly joyous blessing!

[The Dragon Deity performs a *maibataraiki*, then sits to the right of the Deity of the Great Shrine, who remains seated on the stool.]

Dragon Deity

The four seas tranquil, the realm well governed,

Chorus

the four seas tranquil, the realm well governed,
 the five grains bountiful, fortune and longevity complete:
 “In this way I will protect His Majesty,”
 he says, white streamers in hand,¹⁹
 the numerous deities each clear the way,

[The Heavenly Maiden exits quietly.]

then ascend the Mountain of Raising Gods,
 while the dragon deity stirs up waves down below,

[The Dragon Deity exits vigorously.]

pulled by the reverse swirling current he goes,
 as the various deities fill the sky above,

[The Deity of the Great Shrine steps out from the shrine and begins to exit.]

and the truly divine Deity heads inside the shrine,
 the truly divine Deity heads inside the shrine,
 as the dragon deity disappears into the sea.

Supplementary Notes

1. The Great Luminous Deity Ajika can be identified with the Azuki Shrine (阿須伎神社), also known as the Ajiki Shrine (阿式社), is an auxiliary

¹⁹ The verb “to say” (pronounced *yū*) is homophonous with the beginning of “white streamers” (*yūshide*), the pieces of cloth or paper used in sacred ornaments.

shrine of Izumo Shrine slightly to the east of it. Its principal deity is Ajisuki-takahikone (味耜高彥根神), a son of Ōkuninushi according to the Kojiki. The connection with the Avatar of the Mountain King (Sannō Gongen 山王権現) enshrined in Hiyoshi (or Hie) Shrine (日吉大社) at the foot of Mount Hiei is unclear.

2. In their annotations, Sanari and Nogami identify Minato, whose name means “harbor”, or more broadly any point where a river meets the sea, with the Mitami Shrine 美談神社 to the northeast of Izumo Shrine where, according to the Izumo fudoki, a son of Ōkuninushi, Wakafutsunushi-nomikoto (和加布都努志命), is enshrined. Perhaps a more obvious choice would be Minato Shrine (湊社), an auxiliary shrine of Izumo Shrine located to the south. It enshrines the deity Kushiyatama (櫛八玉神) who was sent down by Amaterasu to serve Ōkuninushi after he ceded the land. The connection with the three female deities of Munakata in Fukuoka is unclear.

3. Inasa Shrine (因佐神社), located along the coast just west of Izumo Shrine, enshrines the Takemikazuchi (建御雷神), who, according to the Kojiki, was sent by Amaterasu to negotiate the ceding of Izumo with Ōkuninushi and his sons. Hayatama (速玉) is a separate deity, but this line suggests that he was believed to be affiliated with the Inasa Shrine. Today the shrine is apparently known as “Hayatama-san” to the locals. The deity of Kashima Shrine (鹿島神宮) in present day Ibaraki Prefecture is the aforementioned Takemikazuchi.

4. A Toya Shrine (鳥屋神社) stands in the Hikawa District a bit east of Izumo Shrine. It enshrines Takeminakata (建御名方神), one of Ōkuninushi’s sons according to the Kojiki. He challenged Takemikazuchi, who had come to negotiate, to a contest of strength, but ended up fleeing in fear. Another of his identities is the Suwa, enshrined in the Suwa Shrine (諏訪大社) in Nagano Prefecture.

5. Izumoji means “Izumo Road”. Izumoji Shrine (出雲路社), also known as Izumoi (“Well of Izumo”) Shrine (出雲井社), is an auxiliary shrine of Izumo Shrine just to the east which enshrines Kunado (岐神), known as a guardian of roads. The Luminous Deity of Mishima refers to Ōyamazumi (大山祇神), enshrined in the shrine of the same name on the islands of the Seto Inland Sea in Ehime Prefecture. His children appear in various *Kojiki* legends, for example Ninigi’s wife Princess Konohanasakuya (木花開耶姬). Ōkuninushi is a distant descendant. Alternatively, an old manuscript dated to Genroku 8 (1695) has Mishima in Izu (伊豆) instead of Iyo, which would suggest the Mishima Shrine (三嶋大社) in current day Mishima City, Shizuoka Prefecture. Two deities are enshrined here, Ōyamazumi, the same as the one in Iyo, as well as Kotoshironushi (事代主神), one of the sons of Ōkuninushi. According to the Kojiki, when Takemikazuchi came

to negotiate the ceding of Izumo, Kotoshironushi immediately acquiesced, in contrast to his brother Takeminakata. Kotoshironushi is also identified with Ebisu.

Rinzō 輪藏 (The Revolving Sutra Case)

Like the previous two plays, *Rinzō* dramatizes divine events associated with a specific religious site, in this case the Kitano Shrine, or as it is more commonly called, the Kitano Tenmangū (北野天満宮) (Shrine of the Heaven-Filling Deity at Kitano), located in present day Kamigyō Ward of Kyoto City. The Kitano Shrine is one of many across the country which enshrine the Heian period scholar-official Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真 (845-903), the other most prominent Tenmangū being in Dazaifu City, Fukuoka Prefecture, where he passed away in exile after his political rivals' slander turned the emperor against him. These shrines meant to pacify his vengeful spirit appeared soon after his death, including the Kitano Shrine, which according to one source was built in 947 by a priest from Ōmi (present day Shiga Prefecture) named Miwa no Yoshitane (神良種) and the monk Saichin (最珍) from a temple already located at Kitano.

Worship of Michizane combined with pre-existing forms of worship of the heavens and associated phenomena such as thunder and rain known by names such as the Celestial Deity (Tenjin 天神) or the Thunder Deity (Raijin 雷神) which had been practiced at the site of the shrine for over a century before its founding. The deified Michizane inherited many attributes from these predecessors, as evident in the illustrated history of the shrine *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* 北野天神縁起絵巻 (*Illustrated Scroll of the Dependent Origination of the Kitano Tenjin*, thirteenth century), where he is portrayed as returning to the imperial palace as the Thunder Deity to exact revenge on his political opponents. Over the years he gained various other attributes, perhaps most famously today literature and academics, and the shrine gained a wide following, reaching the height of its wealth in the Muromachi period when the ruling Ashikaga clan heavily patronized it. As one sign of the shrine's popularity, many cultural gatherings were held in the presence of the deity such as *renga* parties or *nō* performances.

Apart from Michizane himself, the plum trees found in the shrine are also well known, their blossoms attracting many locals and tourists every year. The association between plums and Michizane stems from the legend of how his beloved plum tree uprooted itself and flew from his Kyoto residence, dubbed the "Red Plum Hall" (Kōbaidono 紅梅殿), to his place of exile in Dazaifu to be with him. The play takes place in an auxiliary shrine of Kitano Shrine named the "Red Plum Hall". Although details of its origin are unclear, a 1674 guide to the various sights of Kyoto says the following about the Kitano Shrine: "The Laughing Buddha in the Red Plum Hall is Great Master Fu (Fudaiji; 傅大士) and his two children, Fuken (普建) and Fujō (普成)."⁵⁸ These are none other than the protagonists of the play, although in some versions Fujō's name is confused for Fumon (普文). The Great Master Fu, or Fu Xi 傅翕 (497-569), was a lay practitioner of Buddhism active in present day Zhejiang Province during the Liang (502-557) and Chen (557-589) dynasties. He lived quietly in a mountain hut with his wife while also preaching and helping the needy, even catching the attention of the emperor. Most importantly for our purposes, he is said to have invented the revolving sutra case which allowed for greater convenience of storage and reading. It became customary to have a statue of Great Master Fu and his two children in a sutra hall with this revolving case, a custom which spread along with the case itself to Japan. The oldest surviving revolving sutra case is located at Ankokuji (安国寺) in Takayama City, Gifu Prefecture, but they seem to have been in use centuries earlier, primarily among Zen sects. Statues of Great Master Fu often have a characteristic smile, hence the name "Laughing Buddha"

⁵⁸ Suzuka Sadachika 鈴鹿定親, *Kyōto ōrai* 京都往来, in *Zoku zoku gunsho ruijū*, v. 10, p. 751.

(*waraibotoke* 笑仏). The prop used to represent the revolving sutra case in the play is made to actually rotate and is in fact the most intricate prop in all of *nō* today, although the difficulties associated with such a prop mean that the play is rarely performed.

The last character to be introduced is the Fire Celestial (Katen 火天, Sk. Agni), an Indian fire deity turned Buddhist guardian deity and one of the so-called Twelve Celestials (Jūniten 十二天), a group of various deities from the Buddhist pantheon associated with the ten directions (four cardinal and intercardinal directions plus up and down) along with the moon and sun. Katen guards the southeast direction, but in the play the emphasis is on his protection of sutras, hence his appearance in the sutra hall of Kitano Shrine. Furthermore, in current performance the old man in the first half, who appears in his true form of Katen in the second half, is played by the *tsure* actor, but originally he was played by the *shite*. This causes the roles to be inconsistent, because the *shite* appears as Great Master Fu in the second half, but such shifting of roles is not so unusual, the *shite* changing from Lady Shizuka to Taira no Tomomori in *Funa Benkei* being another example.

Lastly, while the default *ai kyōgen* today is a generic *massha ai*, the one included here is an alternate *ai* called *Fukube no Shin tsutome iri* 福部之神勤入 (*Gourd Deity, With Prayer*) in the Ōkura School or *Hachi tataki* 鉢叩 (*Bowl Beaters*) in the Izumi School. The so-called bowl beaters were a type of religious performer active mostly in the medieval and early modern periods. Said to trace back to the great preacher Kūya 空也 (903-972), they would go around from door to door beating on objects such as gourds or small gongs and dancing while chanting the *nenbutsu*, the prayer invocation of the Amida Buddha. In the process they would solicit donations, and in Kyoto, they would also sell tea whisks (*chasen* 茶筌), as they do in the play. Given their use of gourds, it makes sense that while at the Kitano Shrine, they pray to the Gourd Deity (Fukube no Shin 瓢神), an auxiliary deity of the shrine who seems to have been associated with the Red Plum Hall. Research has shown that some form of the bowl beater *ai* likely existed as an independent *kyōgen* piece as early as 1464, and that Nagatoshi incorporated into the play as a reflection of the actual association between bowl beaters and the Kitano Shrine in the minds of Kyoto residents.⁵⁹

Characters

<i>tsure</i>	Old Man
<i>waki</i>	Traveling Monk
<i>waki tsure</i>	Companion Monks (two)
<i>side ai</i>	Local
<i>later shite</i>	Great Master Fu
<i>kokata</i>	Fumon
<i>kokata</i>	Fuken
<i>later tsure</i>	Katen
<i>main ai</i>	Bowl Beater
<i>side ai (tachishū)</i>	Companion Bowl Beaters

⁵⁹ Miura, “Kanze Nagatoshi to furyū: ‘Rinzō’ o chūshin ni.”

side ai

Gourd Deity

Other Information

Play Category	waki play (first category)
In Current Repertoire of	Kanze
Place	Dazaifu, Fukuoka → Kitano Shrine, Kyoto
Time	autumn

[An *ōmiya* structure—a simple bamboo frame with a roof—representing the shrine building is placed on top of an *ichijōdai* tatami platform at the back center of the stage. A curtain (*hikimawashi*) is draped over the frame, concealing Great Master Fu and his two children waiting inside. Additionally, the revolving sutra case prop is placed near the *metsuke* pillar. After these have been set up, the Traveling Monk and Companion Monks enter to the *shidai* music, the most common entrance music for non-divine characters.]

Traveling Monk, Companion Monks (*shidai*/prelude)

The way of the dharma remaining in the east,
the way of the dharma remaining in the east—
we rely on its teachings so that we will not stray.

Traveling Monk (*nanori*/self-introduction)

I am a monk residing in Saifu of Chikuzen Province, Kyūshū. From a young age I donned the ink dyed robes and trained in the Buddhist law with dedication. Since I have yet to see the capital, this autumn I have decided to go there, see famous sites and old ruins, visit divine temples and shrines, and in particular visit the Tenjin of Kitano, for he is one with the deity of my own shrine.

Traveling Monk, Companion Monks (*ageuta*/high-pitch song)

On a boat from Tsukushi,
riding for the dharma we depart,⁶⁰
riding for the dharma we depart,
as clouds rise in the plains of heaven above the road ahead,⁶¹
the sun rising day after day,
before long we arrive at Naniwa Bay,
so from here we don our traveling robes,
strings fastened as the days overlap,⁶²
already we have arrived at the capital,

⁶⁰ The word *nori* can mean both “the dharma” (法) or “to ride” (conjugation of *noru*).

⁶¹ The “depart” (*tatsu*) from the end of the previous line leads into “cloud” (*kumo*, or in this case *kumo-ji*, literally “cloud road”, which can mean either a path in the sky or a long road ahead) because the verb *tatsu* can also mean “to rise”, as in clouds.

⁶² These lines contain pivot words often utilized in traveling songs. The words “string” (*himo*) and “overlap” (*kasamaru*) relate to clothing and thus are connected words (*engo* 縁語) with the “traveling robes” (*tabigoromo*) in the previous line. Meanwhile they can combine to form a sentence meaning “the days overlap/pile on”, with *hi* meaning “day” and *mo* being an inclusive topic particle.

already we have arrived at the capital.

Traveling Monk (tsukizerifu/arrival line)

Hurrying along, we have arrived at the capital. Now I wish to visit the shrine at Kitano I have heard so much of.

(mondō/dialog)

Is anyone there? I have a question to ask.

[The Companion Monks retire to the designated *waki* spot in front of the chorus. The Traveling Monk stands at the back left of the stage and talks to the Local, who has been sitting at the designated *ai* spot on the bridge and now stands up.]

Local

Who is it? It seems you are monks. What business do you have?

Traveling Monk

Yes, we have come from Tsukushi. Which way to the Tenjin of Kitano?

Local

You say you have come all the way from Tsukushi and want me to show you the way to Kitano?

Traveling Monk

It is as you say. I am a monk visiting the capital for the first time. I ask of you, please become our guide.

Local

From here to Kitano there are many crossroads, so much so that even those who know the way get lost. Since it is your first time, I would like to be your guide, but I have some business to take care of, so I'm afraid I cannot. You should go straight from here and ask again up ahead.

Traveling Monk

Please, I beg of you.

Local

Very well, I will abandon my business and be your guide. Please come this way.

[The Traveling Monk moves to the center of the stage while the Local moves to the back left. The stage has now shifted to the Kitano Shrine.]

Local

This is the Tenjin of Kitano.

Traveling Monk

Truly, the shrine is even more holy and blessed than I had heard back in the countryside.

Local

This is called a revolving sutra case. Take a good look around. I will take my leave here.

[The Local quietly exits the stage.]

Traveling Monk (unnamed)

How blessed this is!
 All the sutras of the Buddha's lifetime,
 brought over from Great Tang, for the salvation of the masses,⁶³
 he stored them in the revolving sutra case,
 for all those who touch it to form a karmic connection—
 such is the blessed deity's vow!
 [Putting his palms together] I take refuge in Great Master Fu, Fumon, and Fuken;
 may I receive unparalleled pleasure in this life
 and be born in the Pure Land in the next.

[The Traveling Monk moves to the *waki* spot in front of the chorus. The Old Man begins speaking while still off stage, then slowly enters. He wears a *kojō* (lit. small old man) mask, one of the more elegant-looking old man masks often used for disguised deities, such as in *Takasago*.]

Old Man (mondō/dialog)

Excuse me, I have something to say to you, honorable monk. Are you the one who has come from Saifu of Chikuzen?

Traveling Monk

That's strange, how could you know to ask someone who has come to the capital for the first time if he is from Saifu?

Old Man

[Walking along the bridge] A foolish thing to say, honorable monk. They say that if two people do not know each other, being a few feet away is the same as being separated by a thousand leagues.⁶⁴ Perhaps you do not know me, but as I am from morning to evening an unwavering friend of the dharma—how could I not know you?

Traveling Monk

Now then, you have explained why you know me, but just who are you?

Old Man

[Entering the main stage] What do I have to hide? Of the Twelve Celestials who day and night protect the sutras of the Buddha's lifetime, I am Katen, come here before you.

Traveling Monk

"Katen, you say? Then before my eyes I look upon one of the Celestials!⁶⁵"
 he exclaims, moved to tears,
 unable to tell if it is dream or reality.

Old Man

⁶³ The Great Tang (大唐) refers generally to China, not necessarily the Tang dynasty. In this case, the Great Master Fu lived during the Liang and Chen dynasties of the sixth century.

⁶⁴ This saying, which has numerous variants, comes from one of two poems entitled "Yingzhou, Parting with Zi You for the First Time" (潁州初別子由) by Su Shi 蘇軾 (1036-1101).

⁶⁵ *Tenbu* 天部, a blanket term for all of the Buddhist protector deities living in the various heavens, including the aforementioned Twelve Celestials.

I, too, before the holiness of your being,
rejoice and gaze up with reverence,

Traveling Monk

variously,

Chorus (ageuta/high-pitch song)

taught and laid out,
the flowers of the dharma come in many colors,
the flowers of the dharma come in many colors,
just as the teachings have many paths,
but there is only one enlightenment:
the moon of the heart shall not cloud,
the three realms exist only in the mind alone.⁶⁶
We are here at Kitano, this shrine in the north,
but the north star moves not,
as around it the stars filling the heavens rotate.
This revolving sutra case—
open it and quietly worship.

Traveling Monk (kakeai/exchange)

So you are Katen of the Twelve Celestials who protects these sutras. Then please let me worship these over five thousand sutras for one night.

Old Man

Truly a noble wish. To worship the over five thousand sutras in one night is quite ambitious,
but from the time you exited your parents' womb,
you have adhered to the Five Precepts,⁶⁷
stirred compassion in your heart,

(kuri/rising lead-in)

and trained in the way of the Buddha:

[The Old Man kneels at center stage while the Traveling Monk kneels at the *waki* spot.]

Chorus

that karma has already accumulated for many years.

Old Man (sashi/scenic exposition)

Now, about these sutras,
there are three who protected them back in Great Tang:

Chorus

named Great Master Fu, Fumon, and Fuken

⁶⁶ The "moon of the heart" (*mune no tsuki*) refers to one's enlightened heart/mind, and the "three realms" (三界) refers to the three realms of delusion in which all living beings cycle through, i.e., the Desire Realm (欲界), Form Realm (色界), and Formless Realm (無色界). The idea here is that the world only exists as perceived in one's mind (三界唯心).

⁶⁷ The five precepts a Buddhist practitioner is to follow are 1) no killing; 2) no stealing; 3) no impure relations; 4) no telling lies; 5) no drinking alcohol.

although laymen, for whatever reason,
the three's connection to the sutras was deep,
as were their hearts without negligence,
day and night they protected the sutras.

Chorus (kuse/rhythmic narrative)

After that, to the land of the sun's origin,
along with the dharma they traveled by boat,
far across the waves they rowed, devotion burning⁶⁸
in their hearts, they went beyond Tsukushi,
to the capital where the Buddhist law slowly traveled east,
to the shrine-temple⁶⁹ here in the north.

Old Man

Unlike long ago when the sutras were stored in the case,

Chorus

we are now in the end times,
"but you, elevated one of rare virtue,
revering the benefits of your karmic connection,
bring salvation to the masses!

[The Old Man stands and approaches the Traveling Monk.]

I too will change my appearance,
and without fail return to show you the benefits of this sutra hall,"
just as he appears to speak, he disappears,
just as he appears to speak, he disappears.

[The Old Man exits to the *raijo* music. If the Old Man is performed by the *shite*, he instead enters the shrine prop. The *raijo* is an entrance/exit music consisting of two parts. In the first, a disguised supernatural being exits slowly to stately music. In the second, the *ai kyōgen*, usually a *massha* (lesser shrine) *ai*, enters to lively music. The Bowl Beater enters to this second part.]

Bowl Beater (nanori/self-introduction)

I am a bowl beater residing in the capital. My companions all agreed to visit Kitano today,
and I am supposed to wait here. They should come shortly, so I shall wait here.

[The Companion Bowl Beaters come on stage to the *kyōgen sagariha* (下がり端) music, a lighthearted entrance music involving all four instruments used for a large crowd of characters and thought to be borrowed from the music of *furyū* performances. As seen here, after entering the characters typically begin to sing a *wataribyōshi* 渡り拍子 (lit. crossing rhythm). The "crossing" possibly originates in how this type of

⁶⁸ This line makes use of the common pivot word *kogareru*, which can mean "to row (as in a boat)" or "to burn with (usually longing for a lover, etc.)". In addition, the place Tsukushi is hidden inside the word *kokoro-zukushi* (literally "to exhaust the heart", usually with worry).

⁶⁹ A shrine-temple (*miyadera*) refers to a complex which worships both indigenous and Buddhist deities without making a sharp distinction between the two. By the Edo period most shrines and temples were part of such a complex, including the Kitano Shrine and Enoshima.

music/song was used on festive occasions with large parading crowds “crossing” the streets. The bowl beaters carry gourds, gongs (*kane* 鉦), and bamboo whisks (used in tea ceremony).]

Companion Bowl Beaters (wataribyōshi/crossing rhythm)

The well-governed,
the well-governed capital’s
spring bowl beaters—
let us hit our bowls and sing a song
while shouting, “Buy our tea whisks! Buy our tea whisks!”

Bowl Beater (mondō/dialog)

Well, well, it seems you fellows have coordinated a song.

Head Companion Bowl Beater

About that, it being a joyous time, everywhere is so festive and lively, and this made us jealous, so we hired some musicians and came out with a song.

Bowl Beater

Well that is just splendid. I was tired of waiting. Now then let’s pay a visit to the Kitano Gourd Deity.

[The Bowl Beaters circle the stage with the main *ai* in front saying, “Come, come!” When they reach the shrine, they sit down facing forward and worship. Next, they say, “Let us begin our practice,” and, standing in two rows facing each other, beat their gongs and gourds while singing, eventually starting to dance. The following is the song used in the Izumi School, thought to be added sometime in the mid-Edo period.]

Bowl Beater

The Buddha has left,

Bowl Beaters (all together)

and Miroku has yet to come into the world.
Without relying on Amida’s compassionate vow,
how could we obtain the fruits of enlightenment?⁷⁰

Bowl Beater

Paradise—

Bowl Beaters (all together)

I wondered where it was,
but all along it was where the pine leaves stand,
the Pine Lady’s house.⁷¹

Bowl Beater

⁷⁰ Miroku 弥勒 (Maitreya) is the future Buddha who will come down from the heavens to save the masses 5,670,000,000 years after Shakyamuni’s death. These four lines can be found in the eighth *dan* of *Yugyō-yanagi*.

⁷¹ A variant of this song can be found in *Ikkyū-banashi* 一休咄 (*Stories of Ikkyū*, 1668). In one episode, the eccentric Zen monk Ikkyū (1394–1481) gets drunk at a bar and sings this song: “Paradise [*gokuraku* 極楽, Amida’s Pure Land]—I wondered where it was, but all along it was where the *sugi* leaves [*sugi* leaves were used to make signs] stand, Mataroku’s [the name of the bar owner] door” (世を樂に、暮らす手立てを尋ねしに、杉葉立てたる亦六が門).

Even Hell

Bowl Beaters (all together)

is not far—one need only look before one's eyes,
to see sorrow and suffering.

Bowl Beater

To live in joy

Bowl Beaters (all together)

in this world, I searched for a way—
not clear, not muddied,
not exiting, not entering.⁷²

Bowl Beater

The long

Bowl Beaters (all together)

cowpea's flowers are short,
and the short chestnut's
flowers are long.⁷³

Bowl Beater

Deep in the mountains,

Bowl Beaters (all together)

three monkeys gather,
not looking,
not listening,
not speaking.⁷⁴

Bowl Beater

All things

Bowl Beaters (all together)

are lies—in this world,
only death is truth.

⁷² A similar song can be found in the song collection *Matsu no ochiba* 松の落葉 (*The Fallen Pine Leaf*, 1710) edited by Ōki Sentoku (大木扇徳): “The water accumulated in a node of cut bamboo: not clear, not muddied, not exiting, not entering” (竹の切りよの溜まり水、澄まず濁らず、出ず入らず). The expression is apparently a metaphor for a middle ground in between extremes.

⁷³ The cowpea is *sasage* (*Vigna unguiculate*) and the chestnut is *kuri* (*Castanea crenata*). The song can be found at the end of volume six of *Seisuishō* 醒睡笑 (*Tales to Make You Wake Up and Laugh*, 1623), a collection of mostly comedic but also Buddhist anecdotes compiled by preacher monk Anrakuan Sakuden 安楽庵策伝 (1554-1642), who is known as the founder of *rakugo*.

⁷⁴ This refers to the motif of three monkeys, one of each covering its eyes, ears, or mouth. The auxiliary verb indicating the negative is *zaru* (e.g., “not seeing” is *mizaru*), which has the same sound as “monkey” (*saru*). This motif seems to have become widespread in the Edo Period, often in the form of stone statues. It is connected with multiple belief systems, such as Tendai Buddhism and its associated Hie Shrine, whose deity is said to use monkeys as messengers, and *kōshin* (庚申) belief (*shin* is the monkey of the zodiac cycle), the set of beliefs and practices associated with that specific position in the sexagenary cycle.

Bowl Beater

Look at that!

Bowl Beaters (all together)

The smoke rising at Mount Toribe—⁷⁵
no matter how long it continues,
there is not a day it does not rise.

Bowl Beater

The Adashi Field's⁷⁶

Bowl Beaters (all together)

dew is a metaphor for the ephemeral—
even shorter than those of dew drops,
is the lives of humans.
Thinking about it, this miserable world
is but a dream world,
the flowers of fortune
are flowers of spring only—
halt your fame and wealth seeking hearts!⁷⁷
If there is Buddhist law,
then there is worldly law;
if there is affliction,
then there is enlightenment.
Willows are green,
and flowers are red—
such are their colors,⁷⁸
so hurry and pray for rebirth in the Pure Land!
*Namōda, namōda, namōda, namōda,*⁷⁹ [repeats multiple times]
*namu-amida-butsu, namōda haramitsu,*⁸⁰
*happaihō.*⁸¹

⁷⁵ A spot known for funerals, especially among the Heian elite. Generally located in the area between present day Kiyomizu Temple and Imakumano Kannon Temple.

⁷⁶ A spot at the foot of Mount Ogura west of the capital also known for funerals, often paired with Mount Toribe. The name *adashi* means “ephemeral”, or in general “easy to change”, as in a lover’s heart. Today, Adashi Nenbutsu Temple still stands.

⁷⁷ There is a similar song in a late-Edo text praising the famous Heian preacher Kūya named *Kangi yuyaku nenbutsu wasan* 歡喜踊躍念仏和讃 (*Vernacular Praise of the Joyous Nenbutsu*): “Thinking about it, this miserable world is brief. The flowers of fortune are but a spring night’s dream—halt your fame and wealth seeking hearts, hurry and pray for rebirth in the Pure Land!” (思えばうきよは程も無し、栄花は皆是春の夢、名利の心をとどめて、急いで浄土を願うべし).

⁷⁸ From “If there is the Buddhist law” until here can be found in the *kuse* of *Yamanba* 山姥 (Old Hag of the Mountains).

⁷⁹ A slurred version of *namu-amida-butsu*, the oft recited *nenbutsu* chant meaning “I take refuge in the Amida Buddha”.

⁸⁰ *Haramitsu* 波羅蜜 (*pāramī*) refers to a set of ideals that form the basis of training to reach enlightenment.

⁸¹ Apparently a standard call used in these type of songs.

Bowl Beater (mondō/dialog)

How strange! A rumbling noise comes from inside the shrine! Come over here.

[The Bowl Beaters sit in front of the chorus. The Gourd Deity enters to the *kyōgen issei* music—an entrance music often used for supernatural beings—and stops at the first pine.]

Gourd Deity (nanoriguri/rising self-introduction)

**Here I am, the deity of that lesser shrine of the Tenjin,
known to all under heaven, the Red Plum Hall,
is none other than me.**

Bowl Beater (mondō/dialog)

Who is it that has graced us with his presence?

Gourd Deity

You question what manner of being appears before you?

Bowl Beater

Yes, I wish to know.

Gourd Deity

I am enshrined as the Gourd Deity, and because I admire you bowl beaters' resolve to come worship me, I have appeared to allow you to gaze upon my figure.

Bowl Beater

We are truly blessed. First, please take a seat over here.

[One of the Bowl Beaters brings out a stool, and the Gourd Deity sits on it.]

Gourd Deity

Do you fellows not think it an honor?

Bowl Beater

There is nothing so honorable as this, so we first wish to offer you some *sake*. How would that be?

Gourd Deity

That is precisely the wish of the Gourd Deity. Hurry and bring it here.

[The Bowl Beater pours for the Gourd Deity.]

Bowl Beaters (all together)

**Come, come, now let us sing and dance
to please the Red Plum Hall,
to please the Red Plum Hall's deity!**

Bowl Beater

**To encounter such a blessed manifestation,
I am filled with joy!
The myriad things**

Bowl Beaters (all together)

true to our wishes,

Gourd Deity (noriiji/riding on the beat)

we rejoice and prosper in this reign,

Bowl Beaters (all together)

where the branches sound not,

as the pine winds blow,⁸²

“The Gourd Deity must go now,” he says and leaves,

so the bowl beaters all cling to his sleeve.

Bowl Beater

“Please stay for a gourd moment,” they beg,⁸³

Gourd Deity

and the deity returns to say,

Bowl Beaters (all together)

“I will continue to watch over you,

I will continue to watch over you,”

then enters his shrine.

[The Gourd Deity exits the stage, followed by the Bowl Beaters.]

Traveling Monk

The moon is unshrouded as the bell of early night’s⁸⁴

voice sounds clear and far, whereupon—

Chorus (kuri/rising lead-in)

how strange!

An odd fragrance pervades the area, music sounds,

and out from the gaps of drifting purple clouds

flowers fall—how divine!

Chorus (noriiji/riding on the beat)

Before the monk can finish speaking, the exquisite sutras,

before the monk can finish speaking, the exquisite sutras,

the sacred cabinet housing their protector deity,⁸⁵

its doors suddenly fly wide open—

⁸² For branches not to sound in the wind is a sign of a peaceful realm. This trope can be seen in the lyrics of many *nō* plays. The verb *fuku* “to blow (as in wind)” pivots into the name of the Gourd Deity, Fukube.

⁸³ The phrase used for “a moment” is *hyōtan shibashi*, *hyōtan* meaning “gourd” and *shibashi* meaning “a little while”. This peculiar usage apparently stems from a poem in the “Grass” section of the *Wakan rōeishū* 和漢朗詠集 (*A Collection of Japanese and Sinitic Poems to Sing Aloud*, c. 1018): “The gourd is frequently empty, and grass grows plenty in the alleyway of Yan Yuan.” The word for “frequently” is *shibashiba*, so the word “gourd” became connected with this word, whose first three syllables are homophonous with “a moment”.

⁸⁴ “Early night” (*shoya* 初夜) refers to the time roughly between eight and nine o’clock at night. It is part of the Buddhist system of dividing the day into six parts: early morning (*jinjō* 晨朝), midday (*nicchū* 日中), sundown (*nichibotsu* 日没), early night, midnight (*chūya* 中夜), and late night (*goya* 後夜).

⁸⁵ The *mi-zushi* 御厨子 (*mi* being the honorific prefix) is a type of cabinet often used to store Buddhist sculptures.

Great Master Fu and his two children appear!

[The curtains draped over the shrine are lifted, revealing Great Master Fu and his two children, Fumon and Fuken, sitting on either side of him. Great Master Fu carries a staff, while a box of sutras is placed in front of each of the two children. He wears the *shiwajō* 皺尉 (wrinkled old man) mask often used for an elderly male deity or plant spirit, such as in *Saigyōzakura*.]

Great Master Fu

The sacred boxes with the dharma of the Buddha's lifetime,

Chorus

the sacred boxes with the dharma of the Buddha's lifetime,

Great Master Fu

"I shall give them all to the elevated one," he says,

Chorus

letting the two children Fumon and Fuken hold them,
and place them in front of the elevated one, whereupon

Great Master Fu

Great Master Fu stands up,

Chorus

Great Master Fu stands up,
clutching his bamboo staff,
bends his knees,
worships the elevated one,
and, hearing him read the sutras, exclaims,
"How splendid!
How splendid!"
Performing the night festivities, he begins to dance.

[Great Master Fu performs a *gaku* dance.]

Chorus (noriji/riding on the rhythm)

Each move exquisite, his dancing sleeves,
each move exquisite, his dancing sleeves,
upon which the moon shines,
from the gaps between the clouds,
he of the Celestial Group, all revealed,
descends from Heaven—how blessed!

[Katen enters vigorously to the *hayabue* music—the most fast-paced entrance music used for fierce supernatural beings—and stops as the first pine.]

Katen (nanoriguri/rising self-introduction)

Here I am, guardian deity of the exquisite sutras of the Buddha's lifetime:
from among the Twelve Celestials, I manifest the figure of Katen.

[At the beginning of the following song, Katen moves onto the main stage and kneels in front of the revolving sutra case. Matching with the lyrics, he turns it, and then all the characters stand and walk around it.]

Chorus (noriji/riding on the rhythm)

Katen suddenly descends from heaven,
 Katen suddenly descends from heaven,
 before long appearing before our eyes,
 he faces the elevated one and says,
 "This sutra hall grants the benefit of forming a karmic connection—turn it!"
 They each go up and, beckoning to the elevated one,
 place their hands on the revolving sutra case.
 "How unworthy we are for this honor!"
 They say as they spin it, round and round,
 as the sun and moon's light,
 unclouded is the dharma—how divine!

[The Katen performs a *maibataraki*.]

Katen (noriji/riding on the rhythm)

Because he is none other than the guardian deity of the exquisite sutras,

Chorus

because he is none other than the guardian deity of the exquisite sutras,
 through the night he demonstrates the ceremony of turning the sutra case,
 and after the elevated one has viewed them all,
 the two children each take a box in their hands,
 carrying them faraway to the deity,
 with Great Master Fu accompanying,
 they stack them before the deity.
 "Ever and ever more, this shrine, this temple,
 this holy land where the Buddhist law prospers—worship it!" [Katen stands.]
 After he instructs the elevated one,
 the Celestial ascends into the clouds, [Katen runs off stage.]
 and upon the lapis lazuli throne decorated with the seven treasures,
 Great Master Fu, with his two children, [He moves to the back left of the stage.]
 Great Master Fu, with his two children,
 again takes a seat—how blessed!

Shōzon 正尊

This play is one of many which draw from the history and legends surrounding the warrior Minamoto no Yoshitsune 源義経 (1159-1189) and his loyal retainer, the warrior-monk Musashi-bō Benkei 武蔵坊弁慶 (?-1189). While records of their lives can be found in a variety of sources, ranging from near-contemporary histories to later fictional works, the two works which had the most profound influence on later cultural forms were the *Heike monogatari* 平家物語 (*Tale of the Heike*) and *Gikeiki* 義経記 (*Account of Yoshitsune*), both products of a variety of narrative practices in the centuries following the 1180–1185 civil war in which Yoshitsune led the armies of the Minamoto clan to defeat the Taira. Numerous textual variants exist for both works, suggestive of their complicated origins, but to introduce the story of *Shōzon* I will begin with the most standard *Heike monogatari* variant today, the so-called Kakuichi (覚一) text.

The relevant episode is found in the twelfth book, toward the end when the Taira clan has already been defeated.⁸⁶ Yoshitsune oversaw affairs in the capital while his older brother Yoritomo remained in Kamakura to the east. Despite Yoshitsune's leadership in the victory, Yoritomo began to harbor suspicions toward his younger brother due to the slander of his retainer Kajiwara Kagetoki 梶原景時 (?-1200), who held a grudge against Yoshitsune due to an argument they had one time during the campaign over whether or not to attach “reverse oars” (*sakaro* 逆櫓) to their boats that would allow them to swiftly retreat. Yoshitsune scoffed at the idea of going into battle prepared to flee, and his men stifled laughs at Kagetoki.⁸⁷

Rather than causing a commotion by dispatching an entire army to the capital, Yoritomo sends the warrior-monk Tosa-bō Shōzon 土佐坊正尊 (also known as Shōshun 昌俊, but I use the name used in the play) on a “pilgrimage” to Kumano. When Yoshitsune learns of Shōzon's arrival in the capital, he sends Benkei to fetch him and questions why he did not report to Yoshitsune. Shōzon maintains that he is simply on pilgrimage, but Yoshitsune is already convinced of his real intentions. To defend himself, Shōzon writes seven prayer oaths (*kishōmon* 起請文), oaths pledged to the deities written as a guarantee of one's honesty. Yoshitsune lets him go, but still knows that they will be an attack that night.

Concerned with the enemy's movements, Yoshitsune's beloved mistress Shizuka 静 sends two *kaburo* 禿 (a bob-like haircut worn by children) boys—once used by Taira no Kiyomori 平清盛 (1118-1181) to police the capital's residents and suppress anti-Taira sentiment—to investigate. They fail to report back, so she then sends a servant woman, who discovers that the *kaburo* boys have been killed and Shōzon's men are preparing for battle. Yoshitsune and his retainers ready to meet Shōzon, and the two sides fight outside Yoshitsune's residence. Yoshitsune, with help from fierce retainers such as Benkei, Eda no Genzō 江田源三, and Kumai Tarō 熊井太郎, easily defeats the enemy forces.

⁸⁶ Tyler, *The Tale of the Heike*, 656–60.

⁸⁷ Tyler, 583.

The *nō* play ends here with the capture of Shōzon, but the *Heike monogatari* account continues. Shōzon is not captured but slips away to the wilds of Mount Kurama on the northern outskirts of the capital, only to shortly be brought back by Yoshitsune's men the next day. Yoshitsune gives him the choice to return to Kamakura, but Shōzon asks for death, knowing that Yoritomo would have him killed anyway for his failure. He is then beheaded at the Rokujō riverbank, a famous execution site. The decision to end the *nō* play with Shōzon's immediate capture prevents it from dragging on long past the climax of the battle scene.

The Gikeiki Account

The account found in the *Gikeiki* is much longer and contains significant differences. It begins with Shōzon receiving orders from Yoritomo in Kamakura.⁸⁸ At first he is conflicted, being stuck between two lords and being ordered to murder as a monk, but he resolves to carry out the mission and departs with a force of around one hundred men. They enter the capital discreetly at night, staggering their forces to draw less attention, but nevertheless are spotted by one of Yoshitsune's retainers, Eda no Genzō, who was on his way to see a woman. He eavesdrops on the lowly servants in Shōzon's entourage and gets them to spill the details on their mission. After reporting back to Yoshitsune, Genzō is sent to get Shōzon, but accepts his excuse that he got sick on the road and comes back empty-handed. Yoshitsune is infuriated and tells Genzō to never show himself in his presence again. Next Benkei is sent. The forceful manner in which he fetches Shōzon is depicted much more vividly than in the play: he walks through the horde of retainers discussing tactics and sits himself down right next to Shōzon, then literally drags him away and throws him onto his horse.

Upon interrogation, Shōzon writes three prayer oaths in his own blood to prove his innocence. After Shōzon is released, Benkei and others warn Yoshitsune not to let his guard down, but he dismisses their concerns and returns everyone home. Yoshitsune is very drunk from the banquet that night and goes to sleep. This is in stark contrast to the *Heike* account, where it is Yoshitsune who warns his men that an attack will come, but accords with the play, where the banquet provides an opportunity to show a dance from Shizuka.

Shizuka, worried by her lord's casual attitude, decides to send a servant woman (the two *kaburo* boys are not mentioned) to investigate, but she is spotted and killed by Shōzon's men. They then march on Yoshitsune's residence, but not a single warrior is present, for they all went home after the banquet. In the play, although all retire after the banquet, they do not seem nearly as unprepared; in fact, Benkei is the one who listens to the servant woman report what she saw.

In *Gikeiki*, since the servant woman is killed, Shizuka only learns of the attack when she hears a battle cry from outside. She hurriedly alerts Yoshitsune, but he is still fast asleep. Only when she throws his armor on top of him does he wake from his drunken slumber. While he prepares for battle, the only man present in the residence, a lowly servant named Kisanda 喜三太, goes out to meet the army alone. Although lowly, he proves to be a fierce warrior, and he and Yoshitsune

⁸⁸ Kajihara, *Gikeiki*, 172–200.

defend for a bit before Benkei arrives, followed shortly by retainers from across the city. The battle commences in earnest, and there is a moving scene where the fatally wounded Eda no Genzō receives the forgiveness of Yoshitsune before dying in his lord's knees. Saddened by the loss, Yoshitsune orders all of Shōzon's men to be taken alive.

Kisanda and Benkei capture Shōzon's son and cousin, respectively, and Shōzon decides to retreat to Kurama, his forces now reduced to only seven after many flee. Yoshitsune's men all give chase, and, with help from the monks of Kurama, they capture Shōzon after a bit of hide and seek. He is brought before Yoshitsune, who offers to let him return to Kamakura, but he begs to be executed so he does not have to bear the disgrace of returning a failure. His wish is granted, and he is executed at the Rokujō riverbank along with his son and cousin.

The *nō* play exhibits elements from both versions. To list a few, Yoritomo's reasoning that sending an entire army would cause too big of a commotion is only found in the *Heike* account; Shōzon claiming that he got sick on the road is found in the *Gikeiki*; and the scene where Benkei forces Shōzon to come with him is only depicted in detail in the *Gikeiki*, although it is considerably different. There are also elements not found in either text, for example, one of Shōzon's retainers named Anewa no Mitsukage 姉齒光景, a warrior from Anewa in present-day Kurihara City, Miyagi Prefecture. The most notable difference, however, is surely Shōzon's prayer oath.

The reading of the prayer oath is the first climax of the play. In fact, in current performance, which character is the *shite* is determined by who, either Shōzon or Benkei, reads the prayer oath. This performance is a special type of element called the *yomimono* (lit. "thing read aloud") which can only be found in three plays in the current repertoire: *Shōzon*, *Ataka* 安宅, and *Kiso* 木曾. In *Ataka*, which also depicts the heroic actions of Benkei, the *yomimono* is the "fundraising ledger" (*kanjinchō* 勧進帳) that Benkei makes up on the spot to relieve the suspicions of the barrier keeper who is hunting for Yoshitsune. *Kiso* also dramatizes a well-known warrior episode from the civil war, this time the Minamoto general Kiso Yoshinaka's 木曾義仲 (1154–1184) preparations before the battle of Kurikara Pass. He has a retainer compose and read aloud a prayer to the Minamoto's clan deity Hachiman, and this *yomimono* is followed by a banquet.⁸⁹ The current performance ends there, but originally a divine pigeon, messenger of Hachiman, appeared during the banquet to express the deity's acknowledgement of the prayer. Together, the unique scenes of these three plays are dubbed the "three *yomimono*" (*san yomimono*). Although *Ataka* is attributed to Nagatoshi's father Nobumitsu by some sources, both it and *Kiso* are considered to be of unknown authorship. Nevertheless, the similarities between them suggest that they were all written by contemporaries of Nagatoshi in a similar cultural environment.

Kōwakamai

Given the central place of the *yomimono* scene, it is curious that neither of the accounts in the *Heike monogatari* or *Gikeiki* provide the actual content of Shōzon's prayer oath. It is only said that he writes it, and there is no reading aloud. It turns out that both text of the prayer oath and

⁸⁹ For this scene in the *Tale of the Heike*, see Tyler, *The Tale of the Heike*, 361–62. For a detailed discussion of the scene and the significance of the prayer oath, see Oyler, *Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions*, chap. three.

Anewa no Mitsukage can be found in an equivalent piece of the narrative performance called *kōwakamai* 幸若舞 (Kōwaka dance or Kōwaka ballad) which grew out of the earlier *kusemai* 曲舞 tradition. The *kusemai* was a type of performance which involved the rhythmic narration of a story that grew in popularity around the late fourteenth century, at the same time that *nō* also begins to appear in the record. In fact, Zeami's father Kan'ami supposedly incorporated the *kusemai* into *nō*, forming the basis for section called the *kuse*, which in modern performance typically involves the chorus singing a lengthy narrative central to the story while the *shite* sits still.

Kusemai continued to evolve in the hands of a variety of performers and eventually saw the formation of organized troupes, one of which was the Kōwaka, who were active in Echizen Province (present-day Fukui Prefecture). The lineage's records attribute the creation of the art to the fifteenth century troupe leader Momoi Naoaki 桃井直詮, whose child name was Kōwakamaru 幸若丸. While Naoaki does appear in the historical record, his creation of the art is believed to be no more than a legend created in the Edo period. It seems to be the case, however, that by around the sixteenth century, *kōwakamai* became a blanket term for a variety of *kusemai* traditions, owing to the fame of the troupe.

In the Edo period, *kōwakamai* songs began to be published in collections to be read, similar to *nō* libretti, and about fifty songs survive today. The majority adapt stories found in warrior tales, including *Horikawa Youchi* 堀河夜討 (*Night Attack on Horikawa*)—Horikawa referring to the location of Yoshitsune's residence—which the *nō* play no doubt has some sort of relationship with: the text of Shōzon's prayer oath appears in almost identical wording. Other titles of surviving *kōwakamai* songs include the previously discussed *Ataka* and others familiar from *nō* such as *Atsumori* 敦盛 and *Eboshiori* 烏帽子折 (*The Folding of the Eboshi*), so it is evident that there was much interaction between the *kōwakamai* and *nō* forms in the late medieval period. Of course, it may be impossible to say for sure which version came first, if such questions are useful at all. The fact remains that the same stories were told in a variety of performance forms, often with entire sections of lyrics almost identical to the letter.

Although the Kōwaka troupe received patronage from the ruling warrior class—their status was even higher than that of *nō* troupes under the Tokugawa shogunate—the art lost popularity with the general populace throughout the Edo period and subsequently died out upon losing protection under the new Meiji government, although its influence lived on in different cultural forms.⁹⁰ Today only one *kōwakamai* lineage survives in Miyama city, Fukuoka Prefecture, where performances from a repertoire of eight songs are held at the Ōe Tenman Shrine every year on January 20th. A single shoulder drum (*kotsuzumi*) player is the only musician, and to his beat three performers sing a narrative, with only the lead moving around the stage, walking back and forth stomping to the rhythm. Designated an Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property, this tradition is a valuable inheritance, but one cannot say how much it reflects the *kōwakamai* of medieval times, especially since it is derived from the Daigashira 大頭 lineage, whose relation to the Kōwaka is unclear.

⁹⁰ For a study of *kōwakamai*'s influence in the early modern period, see Schwemmer, "Samurai, Jesuits, Puppets, and Bards."

Lastly, some differences between current performance and Nagatoshi's original should be brought to attention. It was mentioned earlier that schools today determine the *shite* by who reads the prayer oath: in Kanze, Kita, and Hōshō, Shōzon is the *shite* and Benkei is the *waki*; in Kongō and Konparu it is reversed. Originally, Shōzon read the prayer oath, but not all of it as in current performance; rather, the chorus took over after the first line. Also, Lady Shizuka has been performed by a child actor since the mid-Edo period, but originally an adult actor played the role.⁹¹

Characters

shite	Shōzon
waki	Benkei
tsure	Minamoto no Yoshitsune
tsure	Yoshitsune's Retainers
kokata	Lady Shizuka
later tsure	Anewa no Mitsukage
tachishū	Shōzon's Retainers
main ai	Servant Woman at Yoshitsune's Residence
side ai	Servant of Shōzon

Other Information

Play Category	miscellaneous play (fourth category)
In Current Repertoire of	all five schools
Place	The Capital
Time	Ninth Month of Bunji 1 (1185)

[First, Yoshitsune, Shizuka, and a few retainers come on stage. Yoshitsune sits on a stool at the spot for the *waki* at the front right of the stage, followed by Shizuka. The rest kneel in front of the chorus. Next, Benkei enters to the *nanori-bue* music—an entrance music used exclusively for beginnings where the *waki* enters and immediately introduces himself—and stands at the back left of the stage.]

Benkei (nanori/self-introduction)

⁹¹ See the introduction to *Shōzon* in Umehara et al., *Nobumitsu to Zeami igo*.

I am Musashi-bō Benkei of the West Tower.⁹² At Watanabe, my lord, the Lieutenant,⁹³ did not accept Kajiwara's opinion regarding the reverse oars, and now Kajiwara slanders my lord, causing his relationship with his brother to sour.⁹⁴ Now the Lord of Kamakura⁹⁵ has sent one named Tosa Shōzon up to the capital. My lord has heard rumors that this Tosa has been sent to take my lord's life; as such, I have received orders to hurry and bring him to my lord, so now I hurry to Tosa's inn.

(tsukizerifu/arrival line)

This looks like the place.

[In contemporary performance, Shōzon responds directly to Benkei and there is no Servant.]

(mondō/dialog)

Excuse me, is anyone there?

Servant

Who is it?

Benkei

Tell your master that Musashi has come bearing a message from the Lord Lieutenant.

Servant

You wish to have an audience? My master has been sick since yesterday on the road, so he has ordered me to not accept any guests no matter who it may be.

Benkei

No no, tell him I must speak with him.

Servant

Very well. [He turns to the curtain and kneels.] Is Shōzon present?

[Shōzon comes out of the curtain and stands at the third pine.]

Shōzon

What is it?

Servant

Musashi-bō has come bearing a message from the Lord Lieutenant.

⁹² The West Tower (*saitō* 西塔) is one of three main areas of Mount Hiei: East Tower, West Tower, and Yokawa. *Bō* (坊) refers to a monk's residence or the monk himself.

⁹³ Yoshitsune is often referred to by his post name, *hōgan* 判官 (lieutenant), the third ranking post of the Capital Police (*kebiishi* 檢非違使). He was appointed to this post in 1184.

⁹⁴ As is told in sources such as the *Heike monogatari*, when crossing from Watanabe (modern day Naniwa Ward, Ōsaka City) to Yashima (modern day Kagawa Prefecture), Yoshitsune and Kajiwara Kagetoki disagreed over whether to attach "reverse oars" (*sakaro* 逆櫓), that is, oars on the front of the boat for ease of rowing backwards. After this dispute, Kajiwara held a grudge against Yoshitsune and slandered him to Yoritomo, causing Yoritomo to distrust his younger brother Yoshitsune.

⁹⁵ Minamoto no Yoritomo.

Shōzon

Why did you not tell him of my sickness?

Servant

When I told him of your sickness, he said he must speak with you.

Shōzon

In that case, I will go out and meet him.

[Shōzon comes to the front and the servant exits the stage. From here on corresponds with current performance.]

Lord Musashi, how strange to see you! Come over here.

Benkei

Understood. First, it is joyous to see you arrived at the capital safely. I have come as a messenger of my lord. Having heard of your coming to the capital, he wonders why you have not come to greet him and also desires to hear news of Lord Kamakura, so he wishes that you pay a visit immediately.

Shōzon

Yes, I have come up to make a prayer at Kumano, and I arrived in the capital two days ago, but I became sick on the road and have not been in good condition, which is why my greeting has become late.

Benkei

Understood. Even so, however, my lord wishes that you accompany me.

Shōzon

I acknowledge my rudeness, but I will pay a visit to your lord after one or two days of rest.

Benkei

No, no, my lord wishes to hear of the realm's affairs as soon as possible, so I must bring you back no matter what.

Shōzon

In front of Lord Musashi, who will not take no for an answer,

Benkei

even the mighty Tosa-bō,

Chorus (ageuta/high-pitch song)

cannot refuse—I will go, like a rice boat,
cannot refuse—I will go, like a rice boat,
I came upriver, but will not go down,⁹⁶

⁹⁶ The song begins with *ina* (no, as in a response) which pivots into *inabune* (boat which carries rice), which transitions into “go upriver/downriver” (*noboru/kudaru*), verbs that can also refer to the act of traveling to and from the capital.

for my plans have been foiled,
 but oh well, my body of dew,
 though it will fade, I will leave at least my fame behind,
 though it will fade, I will leave at least my fame behind.

Benkei (mondō/dialog)

Reporting. I have returned with Tosa-bō.

Yoshitsune

Summon him here.

Benkei

As you command.

Yoshitsune

Well, Tosa-bō, unusual seeing you here. Why have you come up to the capital? Perhaps you bring a letter from Lord Kamakura?

Shōzon

Yes, but because it is nothing of note, I was ordered to deliver the following words not by letter but by mouth: "The peace enjoyed by the capital up until now is solely due to your presence there, so please continue to protect the city with vigilance." Those were my lord's words.

Yoshitsune

That cannot be true. I believe you to be an assassin sent to take my life. What say you?

Benkei

As my lord says, Lord Kamakura must have thought that sending an important general would lead to the bridges at Uji and Seta⁹⁷ being pulled and cause a commotion within and without the capital, which would be undesirable, so he ordered you, Tosa-bō, to go up to plot and assassinate my lord while on the surface appearing to exchange pleasantries. If that is the case, then this monk right here will show you his skill.

Shōzon

How troubling! Even if the lord has heard some slander causing him to say such a thing, if you, mighty Musashi-bō, were to say, "Surely it is not so," there would be no foul rumors between the brothers. First calm down and listen to the whole story, Musashi-bō. [He faces Yoshitsune.] I hear your words, lord, but why should there be anything of the sort? I have come up to the capital because I have a little prayer to make and wish to go on a pilgrimage to Kumano.

Yoshitsune

What do you have to say about my brother not allowing me to enter Kamakura at the

⁹⁷ The Uji Bridge crosses the Uji River in present day Uji City. The Seta Bridge crosses the Seta River, the upriver portion of the Uji River, in present day Ōtsu City. Both were important bridges for traffic, including armies, coming into the capital.

slander of Kagetoki?

Shōzon

I wonder why. I had no fault in that matter, and I shall promptly prove it to you by writing a prayer oath.

Chorus (ageuta/high-pitch song)

In order to escape the situation,
in order to escape the situation,
Tosa, a famed writer,
takes up a brush and writes the vow himself,
then hands it to Benkei.

[In present performance, except for in the Kongō school, Shōzon himself reads the vow.]

Benkei (yomimono/reading aloud)

With reverence I speak this prayer oath,
above to Bonten, Taishaku,⁹⁸ the Four Heavenly Kings,⁹⁹
Dharma King Enma,¹⁰⁰ Underworld Officer of the Five Paths Taisan Pukun,¹⁰¹
and in the lower realm, firstly to Tenshō Daijin of Ise,¹⁰²
Izu,¹⁰³ Hakone, Fuji Sengen,¹⁰⁴ the three sites of Yuya,¹⁰⁵ and Kinbusen;¹⁰⁶

⁹⁸ Bonten 梵天 (brahman) was originally viewed as the creator of all things in ancient India, but in Buddhism came to be known as a protector deity along with Taishaku-ten 帝釈天 (Śakra-devānāmindra).

⁹⁹ The Shitennō 四天王 are the four guardians of the four directional heavens existing on the slopes of Mount Sumeru (Shumi-sen 須弥山), i.e., Jikoku ten 持国天 (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) to the East, Zōchō-ten 增長天 (Virūḍhaka) to the South, Kōmoku-ten 広目天 (Virūpākṣa) to the West, and Tamon-ten 多聞天 (Vaiśravaṇa) to the North.

¹⁰⁰ Enma Hoō 閻魔法王 is the king of hell who judges the deeds of the dead and hands out punishment or reward accordingly.

¹⁰¹ Similar to Enma, Taisan Pukun 泰山府君, the deity of Mount Tai in Shandong Province, was believed to judge the dead. The Five Paths (godō 五道) refers to the five possible states of existence, namely, hell, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, and heavenly beings.

¹⁰² Tenshō Daijin 天照大神 is the Sinitic pronunciation of the imperial ancestor deity Amaterasu-no-ōmikami.

¹⁰³ The deity of Izu-san Shrine 伊豆山神社 in present day Atami City, Shizuoka Prefecture. Said to be where the founder of Shugendō En-no-ozuno 役小角 (seventh century) practiced, it was regarded as a holy site from ancient times and was well revered by the warriors of Kamakura along with the nearby deity of Hakone.

¹⁰⁴ Sengen Shrines 浅間神社 (or Asama) are those which enshrine the deity of Mount Fuji, equated with Princess Ko-no-hana-saku-ya found in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* myths.

¹⁰⁵ Yuya is the Sinitic reading of Kumano 熊野.

¹⁰⁶ Kinbu-sen 金峰山 (or Kinpu-san) refers to the mountains surrounding Mount Yoshino in Nara Prefecture. The main temple in the area is Kinpusen Temple 金峯山寺, and the main deity worshipped is the Zaō Avatar 蔵王権現, both connected in legend to En-no-ozuno.

next the protectors of the capital, Inari, Gion, Kamo, Kibune,
 the three sites of Hachiman,¹⁰⁷ Matsu-no-o, Hirano;
 I invite all the deities of Japan, large and small,
 and those of the underworld to hear me, especially the clan deity.¹⁰⁸
 Shōzon did not at all come to the capital as an assassin.
 If there be any falsehood in that statement,
 may punishment be dealt for breaking this vow:
 I shall fall into Abi Hell¹⁰⁹ in the next life.
 This is my prayer oath.
 Bunji 1,¹¹⁰ Ninth Month, Shōzon.
 As he reads thus, the hairs of those listening stand on end.

Chorus (uta/song)

From the start he knew it was a lie,
 but, impressed by Tosa's literary skill,
 Yoshitsune offers him a sake cup.
 At the time, before the lord,
 the daughter of Zen Master Iso,¹¹¹
 a shirabyōshi¹¹² named Shizuka,
 while singing *imayō*, she pours sake,
 a wreath of flowers decorating her figure,
 unparalleled,

(waka)

her dancing sleeves.

[Shizuka dances a *chū-no-mai*.]

Shizuka

May my lord's reign be eternal,
 as long as it would take for dust accumulating once in a thousand ages,

Chorus

to become a mountain reaching the white clouds above,

¹⁰⁷ The "three sites" (*sanjo* 三所) refer to the three deities enshrined at Iwashimizu Hachiman Temple: Emperor Ōjin, Empress Jingū, and Hime Ōkami 比咩大神 (identified as the three goddesses of Munakata).

¹⁰⁸ The clan deity of the Genji is Hachiman.

¹⁰⁹ Abi Jigoku 阿鼻地獄 (*avici*) is the worst of the eight hells.

¹¹⁰ 1185. The reign of Bunji 文治 (Literary Governance) lasted from 1185-1190.

¹¹¹ Zen Master Iso (*iso-no-zenji* 磯禪師) is the name of Lady Shizuka's mother, herself a shirabyōshi, not a monk.

¹¹² Shirabyōshi 白拍子 (white rhythm) refers to both a type of music and dance which gained popularity from the end of the Heian Period to the Kamakura Period and its cross-dressing female performers. One type of song they were known for was the popular songs called *imayō* 今様 (current style).

to become a mountain,
to become a mountain.¹¹³

Benkei (noriji/riding on the beat)

The immutable connection on which my lord relies,

Chorus

the immutable connection on which my lord relies,
his unobstructed heart, the deities surely know,
“Tell this to your lord,” Shizuka warns,
and Tosa-bō leaves the lord’s presence
to return to his lodging,
so the lord too retires to his chambers,
and all take their leave.

[Shōzon exits the stage. At this point the Servant Woman has already discreetly come onto the stage.]

Benkei (mondō/dialog)

Is anyone there?

Servant Woman

At your service.

[Benkei orders the Servant Woman to go check out Tosa-bō’s inn.]

Servant Woman

Understood.

(shaberi/monologue)

Oh boy, I have been given a tough job. The other day, one named Tosa-bō Shōzon was sent up to the capital by Lord Kamakura, and word around the Horikawa Palace¹¹⁴ is that he was sent by Lord Yoritomo to assassinate our lord, so, thinking this suspicious, the lord sent someone to investigate, but the situation remained unknown, so he sent Lord Musashi to follow up, ordering him to bring Lord Tosa back, but Shōzon had caught a cold on the road, so he said that he would go once he had recovered, but Benkei did not take no for an answer and said, “Just come,” forcibly accompanying Lord Tosa to an audience with our lord.

There, Lord Tosa, rather than saying this or that excuse, said that he was to make a pilgrimage to Kumano on behalf of Lord Kamakura, and that, “If you think this to be a lie, I will write a prayer oath to prove it to you,” then wrote a frightening prayer oath to explain himself. After that, he returned to his lodging, but for whatever reason our lord

¹¹³ A quotation of a poem by Ōe no Yoshitoki 大江嘉言 (late 10th century) in the “Celebration” (*ga* 賀) section of the *Go-shūi-wakashū* 後拾遺和歌集 (Later Collection of Gleanings of Waka, 1086).

¹¹⁴ Yoshitsune’s residence.

still thought him suspicious, so two *kaburo* boys¹¹⁵ were sent to spy on Tosa, but they have yet to return, so Lord Musashi, thinking it odd, decided this to be no ordinary matter, and, thinking that Tosa would not prevent a woman from leaving, came to me and ordered me to go investigate Shōzon's lodging. It is a difficult task, but since it is my master's orders, I cannot disobey. Now I will hurry and take a look then come back.

[The Servant Woman walks to the bridge.]

If the rumors are true, it would be a terrible thing. Walking along, I have arrived at Tosa's lodging. How suspicious, what could be going on? Over here there is an air of secrecy about, with people whispering things to each other, but then on the other hand I hear loud noises; it is a frightening scene. It looks to be a tough situation.

[The Servant Woman is startled by something.]

What is that? Wait, wait, what did he say? Is that true? How terrible! They have cut down the two *kaburo* boys outside the gate and everyone is donning armor, stringing bows, putting on quivers, taking up spears and naginata, putting saddles on the horses and lining them up. They seem to be extremely vigilant; is it true that they will not let anyone near? As expected, this is no ordinary matter: they are sure to march on the Horikawa Palace. We must be prepared. I have nothing more to see here; I will hurry and return to report this.

[The Servant Woman returns to the stage.]

(mondō/dialog)

Reporting. When I went to Tosa's lodging, I saw that they had cut down the two *kaburo* boys outside the gate and that everyone was donning armor, stringing bows, putting on quivers, taking up spears and naginata, putting saddles on the horses and lining them up. they seemed to be extremely worked up, so we must not let our guard down.

[The Servant Woman exits the stage through the small *kirido* at the back right of the stage.]

Benkei

I report. As Lady Shizuka suggested earlier, two *kaburo* boys were sent to investigate Tosa's lodging, but since they were too slow to return, thinking that a woman would fare better, I sent a servant to nonchalantly take a look at the situation, and upon returning she reported that a pair who must be the *kaburo* boys were cut down in front of Shōzon's gate, and that inside the inn horses have been saddled and lined up, and inside the encampment curtain they have shouldered their arrows and strung their bows; everyone is equipped and ready to depart. It did not look the least bit like a pilgrimage, she reported.

¹¹⁵ *Kaburo* 禿 refers to a bob-like children's haircut. In the *Tale of the Heike*, Taira no Kiyomori uses *kaburo* boys as spies to sniff out anti-Taira sentiment in the capital.

(kakeai/exchange)

Yoshitsune

“I was prepared for this from the start, so it is no matter,” he says, standing up,

Shizuka

and Shizuka brings his armor.

Chorus (ageuta/high-pitch song)

As Yoshitsune puts this on,
as Yoshitsune puts this on,
he takes his sword and, silently,
exits out into the middle gate corridor,
opens the gate, and, with his retainers,
waits for the coming forces,
waits for the coming forces.

[Shōzon enters with Anewa and Retainers in tow to the *issei* entrance music. They line up on the bridge.]

Shōzon, Anewa, Retainers (*issei*/entrance)

Perhaps from afar we sound like no more than thieves,
white waves in the night,
but the intent in our hearts is deep as the ocean.¹¹⁶

(unnamed)

Shōzon

At that moment, Shōzon quietly brings his horse forward, then announces his name in a booming voice.

(nanoriguri/rising self-introduction)

Here I am, servant of the Second Rank Minamoto Lord of Kamakura,
Tosa Shōzon is my name.

I have been appointed general of the forces to take down the Lord Lieutenant Kurō Tayū.¹¹⁷

“Hurry and cut your stomach,”
he calls, so loud the palace itself resonates.

Chorus (chūnoriji/middle riding on the beat)

¹¹⁶ This plays on an alternative term for “thief”, *shiranami* 白波 (white waves). This term originates in how Zhang Jue 張角, leader of the Yellow Turban Rebellion at the end of the Eastern Han, and the remnants of his followers took refuge in White Wave Valley (白波谷). They came to be called “white wave bandits” (白波賊), and later this term entered into Japanese as *shiranami*.

¹¹⁷ Kurō 九郎 refers to how Yoshitsune was the ninth son of Minamoto no Yoshitomo. Tayū 太夫 refers to his court rank of Fifth Rank.

The allied forces see this,
 the allied forces see this,
 and, thinking to take down that Tosa-bō,
 charge forward one after the other,
 with Eda no Genzō, Kumai Tarō, and Benkei at the lead,
 they cut their way out the gate,
 and engage with the coming soldiers,
 screaming as they fight.

[A battle scene, or *kirikumi*, occurs to music. The Retainers are gradually cut down and exit through the *kirido*. When they are all killed the music stops.]

Benkei (kakeai/exchange)

At that moment, Benkei advances to the front and yells, “Listen up Tosa-bō, I will hand you your punishment for writing a fake prayer oath. Let us cross blades!”

Anewa

“I must not let the general die,” he thinks, dismounting in a hurry, draws his favored weapon, then charges at Benkei.

Benkei

“A worthy foe! Who are you?” he asks.

Anewa

“I am not one to be counted among the great, but I am famed among Shōzon’s retainers,

(nanoriguri/rising self-introduction)

resident of Mutsu Province,
 Heiji Mitsukage of Anewa;¹¹⁸
 I have the strength of eighty five men!”
 he announces his name in a booming voice.

Benkei (kakeai)

“You announce your name with true bravery. Now then, you are but a follower of Tosa, not a worthy opponent for me, but all the same I will reward you for your noble spirit”, he says,

Chorus (chūnoriji)

drawing his *naginata*,
 drawing his *naginata*,
 he says, “How pitiful that you should die to my blade,”
 while Anewa parries the incoming *naginata*,
 deflecting the attack, so Benkei again
 raises his weapon again and swings,

¹¹⁸ Anewa 姉齒 is a place in current day Kurihara City, Miyagi Prefecture.

this time locking blades, but as the blows pile on,
 Anewa is pushed in—how could he withstand?—as if splitting bamboo,
 he appears to have become two.

[Anewa exits from the *kirido*.]

Shōzon (noriiji/riding on the beat)

Shōzon sees this,

Chorus

Shōzon sees this,
 so many of his chief retainers struck down,
 “There is no hope now,” he thinks
 as he dismounts and joins the fray,
 when Yoshitsune redraws his weapon,
 not giving him a moment’s rest, and the two fight,
 but Shōzon, thinking, “I cannot win,” tries to retreat,
 but Benkei pursues and engages, lining up and grappling,
 he throws him down with a grunt and pins him to the ground,
 whereupon a large force surrounds him and,
 binding him with rope, drags him in front of Yoshitsune,
 then, rejoicing, with the prisoner in tow, they enter the gate.

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