Prostitutes, Stepmothers, and Provincial Daughters: Women and *Jōruri* Puppet Plays in 18th Century Japan

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation investigates the development of early modern Japanese *jōruri* puppet theater in the eighteenth century, focusing on representations of female characters in the works of three major playwrights. *Jōruri* developed as a theatrical form combining chanting, music, and puppetry that was regularly performed for urban commoners. The plays were also commercially printed for leisure reading. The genre achieved immense popularity and exercised significant influence over early modern popular consciousness. The contemporary *bakufu* government licensed theaters and controlled what could appear on stage. In the shadow of this censorship, *jōruri* developed genre conventions that reinforced the social order based on Confucian ideals, a strict class and gender hierarchy in which individuals were of less importance than the family, clan, or state. For this reason, *jōruri* is often viewed as becoming progressively more formulaic and conservative. However, I argue that *jōruri* playwrights straddled the fence between preserving a formula that reinforces the Confucian ethical order and its rigid gender and class hierarchy in order to avoid being banned and subverting it to speak to the audiences' anxieties about authority and the existing societal order. The instances of subversion often involved renegotiation of the genre conventions surrounding female characters whose tribulations arose from their low positions in the social order and whose tragic circumstances were highlighted by the drama. By examining the representations of innovative female characters by three major playwrights over the course of *jōruri*'s development, I show that the essence of these plays lies in

these moments when *jōruri* creates an alternative world where the repressed voice emerges, gender and class expectations are revisited, and the societal status quo is called into question.

Chapter One provides an overview of the history of *jōruri*, particularly in relation to women, its major playwrights and theaters, and its formal conventions. Chapter Two focuses on the representations of prostitutes as heroines in love suicide plays by Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724). I argue that Chikamatsu subverted the contemporary class and gender hierarchy by depicting prostitutes, who were at the bottom of the social hierarchy, as morally exemplary romantic heroines. Chapter Three examines the recurrent representations of stepmothers in Namiki Sōsuke's (1695-1751) plays in the context of the existing conventional representations of stepmothers in *jōruri*. I argue that Sōsuke's unconventionally realistic depictions of the dark psychology and transgressive behavior of seemingly-exemplary stepmothers highlight the conflict between individual desire and social obligation and call into question the absolute priority of social obligation. Chapter Four examines the work of Chikamatsu Hanji (1725-1783) written during a time when *jōruri* and *kabuki* were engaged in a particularly strong cycle of mutual influence and borrowing. I argue that Hanji's reinvention of provincial daughters as unconventionally outspoken in the female realm of love, and yet pawns in the male realm of politics, subtly criticizes societal norms that subordinate the value of the individual to the maintenance of the social order. Through examination of how each playwright established and renegotiated *jōruri*'s genre conventions in creating his innovative female characters, this dissertation sheds light on the multiple functions of *jōruri*: as didactic theater, popular entertainment, and a site for subtle criticism where early modern conceptions of gender and class and societal norms were reexamined and reimagined.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation examines the development of *jōruri* 浄瑠璃 puppet theater in eighteenth century Japan, focusing on its associations with women and its representations of female characters. Although *jōruri* is a genre that is exclusively written and performed by men,[1] it has a strong connection to women, in terms of its origin and audiences and in the centrality of the female characters to the plots, drama, and pathos. By examining the history of *jōruri*, particularly in relation to women, as well as the representation of women of different social types in plays by three major playwrights writing at three important historical junctures, this dissertation explores the ways in which *jōruri* inherited, expanded, replaced, and established theatrical conventions regarding the depiction of women, and how that is linked to the role of *jōruri* as popular theater.

Jōruri is a form of early modern Japanese theater that combines three theatrical elements: chanting, *shamisen* 三味線,[2] and puppetry. *Jōruri* developed from medieval oral performance (*katarimono* 語り物) genres, such as *heikyoku* 平曲 (warriors' tales chanted by blind *biwa* performers), *sekkyō* 説経 (sermon ballads and religious miracle stories chanted to simple percussion instrument accompaniment), and *kōwaka-mai* 幸若舞 (recitative dance related to warriors' tales). In the late fifteenth to early sixteenth centuries, *jōruri* chanting was originally

[1] Here I am talking about *jōruri* in officially licensed theaters in Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo, and not the performances done ourside of the central theaters. As discussed later, female performers were central in local and private performances.

[2] A three-stringed instrument that was imported from China via Okinawa in the sixteenth century.

performed to *biwa* accompaniment or the beating of fans.[3] The *shamisen* later replaced the *biwa*, probably during the seventeenth century. The name "*jōruri*" comes from a popular story entitled *Jōruri monogatari* 浄瑠璃物語, a romantic story about the Princess Jōruri and the medieval war hero Minamoto no Yoshitsune, that was chanted to musical accompaniment in a then-new popular style.[4] In the sixteenth century, there was a shift away from chanting military epics such as the *Tales of the Heike* towards storytelling of romantic adventures in this new musical style. Blind minstrels, especially those of the lowest rank of *zatō*, became involved in developing *jōruri*'s new chanting style.[5] *Jōruri* underwent significant evolution in the late seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries, eventually becoming a predominant form of popular entertainment for urban commoners, especially in Osaka. The genre suffered a creative decline in the late eighteenth century, followed by extinction when the Tenpō Reforms (1841-1843) imposed

[3] The "musical" aspect of the *biwa* or fan accompaniment was minimalistic, just something to keep the rhythm and the tone of the chanting, and was performed by the chanters themselves.

[4] The diary of an aristocrat named Yamashina Tokitsune 山科言経 (1543-1611), entitled *Tokitsune-kyō ki* 言経卿記 (1576-1608), contains the oldest record that refers to a text as "a book of *Jōruri*" in the entry for the first day of the ninth month of Tenshō 16 (1588). Muroki Yatarō, "*Jōrurihime mongatari*: katarimonoshi o fukumete," in Torigoe Bunzō et al. eds., *Jōruri no tanjō to kojōruri* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), 13. The text of *Jōruri monogatari* was first chanted by blind minstrels who were more innovative and eager to expand the genre of oral performance beyond military epics (Ibid., 16-17).

[5] Muroki Yatarō introduces several contemporary diaries and materials that show that blind people were the main performers of *jōruri* chanting in the sixteenth century. For instance, the entry for the twenty-fifth day of the seventh month of 1571 in the diary of an aristocrat named Yamashina Tokitsugu 山科言継 (1507-1579, Tokitsune's father), entitled *Tokitsugu-kyō ki* 言継卿記 (1527-1576), says that the "*jōruri* by *zatō* (blind minstrels) was the best" among the performances he saw at a samurai's mansion that day. Muroki, 16-22 (quote p. 17). According to *Shikidō ōkagami*, "Takino *Kōtō* 滝野匂当" started chanting *jōruri* from Bunroku 3 (1594). The "*jōruri*" section of *Wakan sansai zue* (1712) says that "there were two blind people in Kyoto named Takino and Sawasumi *Kengyō* 滝野澤角両検校. They were both good at playing instruments and chanting. They wrote down a romantic story of Yoshitsune and Jōruri (the princess), beat their fans, and chanted it in front of people." Terashima Ryōan, *Wakan sansai zue* (Tokyo: Chūgai shuppansha, 1901), 365. *Kōtō* and *kengyō* are among the four ranks of blind people. The four ranks, from the highest to the lowest, are: *kengyō* 検校, *bettō* 別当, *kōtō* 匂当, *zatō* 座当. They were originally ranks for blind minstrels who performed *heikyoku* that were established in the fourteenth century, and continued to exist as the ranks for the blind people until the end of the Edo period.

onerous regulations and outright bans on performers.[6] *Jōruri* was revived in 1901, gaining the alternative name *bunraku*,[7] and can still be seen today.

The watershed moment in the development of *jōruri* was Chikamatsu Monzaemon's (1653-1724) play *Shusse Kagekiyo* 出世景清 (*Kagekiyo the Victorious*) in 1685. *Jōruri* plays prior to *Shusse Kagekiyo* are called *kojōruri*, or "old *jōruri*,"[8] while plays coming after are called *tōryū jōruri*, meaning "new *jōruri*," or simply *jōruri*. This change in nomenclature reflects two major transitions, one in chanting style and one in content.

Prior to this time, there was significant competition between different chanting styles.[9] Following *Shusse Kagekiyo*'s immense success, the style of its chanter, Takemoto Gidayū (1651-1724), became predominant in puppet theater, and *Gidayū-bushi* (Gidayū style) became synonymous with *jōruri*.[10]

More importantly, there was a fundamental shift from *kojōruri* to *jōruri* in terms of the

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[6] Strict edicts were issued both in Edo and in Osaka in 1842-1843.

[7] During the Edo period, puppet plays were called "*ayatsuri* 操り," "*ayatsuri ningyō jōruri* 操り人形浄瑠璃," "*ayatsuri shibai* 操り芝居," etc. "*Bunraku* 文楽" is another, newer name for "*jōruri*" coined in the early twentieth century, derived from the name of the chanter Uemura Bunrakuken 植村文楽軒 (1751-1810) who originally built a new puppet theater (Bunraku-za), later revived in 1871, that restored *jōruri*'s popularity.

[8] The use of the term "*kojōruri*" is somewhat controversial. The term "*kojōruri*" first appears in *Gedai nenkan* (Hōreki 7 (1757) version) and is used to signify *jōruri* before *Shusse Kagekiyo* (Yasuda Fukiko, "Ningyō jōruri no tenkai: kojōruri," in Suwa Haruo and Suga Yukio, eds, *Kinsei no engeki* (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1995), 251). However, as Suzuki Mitsuyasu explains, during the Edo period the term "*kojōruri*" was used to signify older pieces, rather than newly-composed pieces. See Suzuki Mitsuyasu, "'Kojōruri' no goi shikō," *Bungaku* 12-2 (March and April, 2011): 126-132.

[9] For instance, popular styles of chanting in the Genroku period included *Tosa-bushi* 土佐節 in Edo, *Kadayū-bushi* 嘉太夫節 and *Kakudayū-bushi* 角太夫節 in Kyoto, and *Bun'ya-bushi* 文弥節 in Osaka. Hara Michio, "Ningyō jōruri no tenkai: Genroku jidai," in Suwa Haruo and Suga Yukio, eds, *Kinsei no engeki* (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1995), 257.

[10] Ibid.

content and the focus of the plays. *Kojōruri* retained the characteristics of medieval theater and oral performances, and mainly dealt with religious (especially Buddhist) tales, including *engimono* 縁起物 (origin stories of various temples and shrines) and *reigentan* 霊験譚 (stories of religious miracles). *Kojōruri* plays were mostly retellings of medieval stories, and were all *jidaimono* (historical) plays that were set in the distant past or a mythical imaginative world, reflecting spiritual or supernatural concerns. The characters were generally high-ranked elites, and more emphasis was placed on recounting the grand adventures of the heroes than on representing each character realistically or in detail.[11]

In contrast, new *jōruri* is more interested in depicting contemporary issues immediate to the commoner audiences' lives, such as money, love, and family, and the setting is often in the contemporary world. Even when the setting is in the historical past or a mythical world, that setting is still a reflection of the contemporary world, often including locations and practices specific to the Edo period, such as pleasure quarters, *terakoya* schools, and so forth. The new genre of *sewamono* 世話物 domestic plays, which features low-ranked and transgressive characters, such as prostitutes, as tragic heroes, was made popular by Chikamatsu Monzaemon in Genroku 16 (1703). In addition, the focus of the plays shifted towards depicting individual characters, rather than representing a grand epic story. This shift began in the late *kojōruri* period (Kanbun period, 1661-1673), but the trend became more pronounced and widespread in Chikamatsu Monzaemon's time.

[11] Kinpira *jōruri* (a late form of *kojōruri*) "revolve around sociopolitical enmity or conflict," "men are cast as main protagonists," and they "present only the upper strata of society." (Janice Kanemitsu, "Guts and Tears: Kinpira *Jōruri* and Its Textual Transformations," in Keller Kimbrough and Satoko Shimazaki, eds, *Publishing the Stage: Print and Performance in Early Modern Japan* (Boulder: University of Colorado Center for Asian Studies, 2011), 25-26).

During the Edo period, permanent *jōruri* puppet theaters were located in all three major cities: Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo. Since its beginning, new *jōruri* was centered in Osaka, where two major theaters, Takemoto-za and Toyotake-za, competed with each other. This dissertation focuses on three master *jōruri* playwrights of those theaters in the eighteenth century: Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724), Namiki Sōsuke (1695-1751), and Chikamatsu Hanji (1725-1783). As explained in Chapter One: Each playwright wrote at a different stage in the development of *jōruri*. In new *jōruri*'s early stages, Chikamatsu contributed greatly to establishing its genre conventions; writing later, Sōsuke negotiated with these solidifying genre conventions in order to push the boundaries of how characters were depicted in *jōruri*; writing later still, Hanji subverted and twisted the now-entrenched genre conventions to create innovative works from well-worn source materials.

As a form of popular theater that operated at the *bakufu* government's sufferance, *jōruri* puppet theater had to comply with governmental regulations and censorship. As a result, *jōruri* developed genre conventions that reinforced the social order that the government promoted. This social order was a strict class and gender hierarchy based on Confucian ideals in which individuals were of less importance than the family, clan, or state. However, at the same time, individual playwrights also straddled the fence between preserving a formula that reinforced the existing power structure to avoid being banned, and subverting it to speak to audiences' anxieties about authority and the existing societal order. The instances of subversion often involved renegotiation of the genre conventions surrounding female characters, often transgressive characters, whose tribulations arose from their low positions in the social order and whose tragic circumstances were highlighted by the drama. By examining the representations of female

characters in works by three major playwrights written over the course of *jōruri*'s development, I show that the essence of these plays lies in these moments when *jōruri* creates an alternative world where the repressed voice speaks, gender and class expectations are revisited, and the societal status quo is called into question.

Female characters – exemplary samurai mothers, righteous prostitutes, self-sacrificial wives, and filial daughters – have always been at the center of *jōruri* puppet theater and create the dramatic tension that draws forth the audience's sympathy. Compared to male characters, whose public duty is their highest priority because of their direct connection to the public realm through their class, social status, and master's position, female characters' primary concern is generally the people they love, and their public duty is an extension of their love. *Jōruri* depicts women who would gladly sacrifice themselves to fulfill their husband's duty, such as Kinshōjo in *Kokusen'ya kassen* 国姓爺合戦 (*Battles of Coxinga*, 1715),[12] or women who are sacrificed because of the ones they love, such as Omiwa in *Imoseyama onna teikin*'s 妹背山女庭訓 (*Mt. Imo and Mt. Se: An Exemplary Tale of Womanly Virtue*, 1771).[13] As Uchiyama Mikiko characterizes them, female characters in *jōruri* are "the ones who seek love from men," while the male characters "only pay great attention to fulfilling their duty of loyalty, showing bravery, and upholding their reputations as samurai, and the existence of their lovers is secondary."[14] The theme of this disunion between the female realm of love and the male realm of public duty is one of the major drivers of tragedy in *jōruri* puppet theater. Female characters, whose love needs to

[12] Chapter Two discusses Kinshōjo briefly.

[13] Chapter Four discusses Omiwa in significant detail.

[14] Uchiyama Mikiko, "Jōruri ni arawareta josei," *Rekishi kyōiku* 8 (August 1965): 55.

be suppressed or ignored for the sake of a greater political goal, show their emotions (especially sorrow and grief) more explicitly than men.

However, this does not mean that emotion, while female-associated, is the exclusive purview of women, and thus only appealing to female audiences. In *Ashiwaki Obune* 排蘆小船 (*A Small Boat Punting Through The Reeds*, 1757), the early modern *kokugaku* (Japanese nativist) scholar and fan of *jōruri*, Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長 (1730-1801) says that "the expression of human emotions reveals weakness like that of a woman or child. Manly and proper steadfastness does not represent human emotion... when a dearly beloved child dies, the parents are extremely saddened, and both father and mother surely must feel the same sadness. But while the father appears little affected, the mother is overcome by grief and lost in tears. The reason is that the mother does not suppress her true emotions and expresses them just as they are, while the father is concerned about how he appears to others."[15] In this sense, female characters who express their emotions more explicitly than male characters speak to the emotions of everyone in the audience.

This dissertation is also concerned with the role of popular theater in early modern society. Respecting popular culture and social change, media scholar John Fiske claims that popular culture triggers a "popular change... an ongoing process, aimed at maintaining or increasing the bottom-up power of the people within the system. It results in the softening of the harsh extremities of power, it produces small gains for the weak, it maintains their esteem and identity. It is progressive, but not radical."[16] Rather than causing drastic or revolutionary changes

[15] Motoori Norinaga, *A Small Boat Punting Through The Reeds* (*Ashiwake Obune*, 1757), in Shirane Haruo, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 615.

[16] John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture, Second Edition* (London; New York: Routledge, 2010), 148.

to society, popular culture potentially induces incremental social change that is subversive of the current power structure. This is a fitting description of popular culture in the Edo period, including *jōruri*. As urban theater subject to governmental control, *jōruri* reinforced the governmentally-promoted power structure in which samurai were at the top and merchants were at the bottom, and presented exemplary characters to serve as models of proper Confucian behavior for the audiences. As a profit-driven enterprise, *jōruri* absorbed and reused existing popular materials, themes, and characters in order to sell tickets. As a form of popular theater intended for urban commoners, *jōruri* subtly contravened its overt didactic framework to question the prescribed power structure and serve as a form of social criticism.

Scholarly attention to *jōruri* puppet theater is overwhelmingly focused on its early stages, especially works by its most prominent playwright, Chikamatsu Monzaemon. In addition to their literary value, the brevity and simple structure of his plays makes them especially appealing objects of study. But the interesting renegotiations with the genre conventions could only come after those conventions became established. This study draws on the works of Japanese scholars that examine the development of *jōruri* across time by means of close textual analysis combined with contemporary theatrical materials[17] and attempts to provide a fuller account of the development of the genre by examining works by later generations of major playwrights. This is the first English language study that focuses on *jōruri*'s relation to women across time. My analysis is based on both the text of the plays and also other visual and textual publications such as prints, posters, cast lists, and theater reviews, as well as contemporary books of history and

[17] For example, Uchiyama Mikiko's *Jōrurishi no jūhasseiki* (*The History of Jōruri in the Eighteenth Century,* 1999), a groundbreaking work that drew scholarly attention to the important dramaturgy of Namiki Sōsuke, and Kuroishi Yōko's *Chikamatsu igo no ningyō jōruri*, (*Jōruri Puppet Plays After Chikamatsu,* 2007).

criticism about *jōruri*.

The chapters are organized as follows: Chapter One provides critical background and context by introducing the history and conventions of *jōruri* from a number of different perspectives: the genre's female origins, *jōruri* as commercial enterprise, the history of authorship and the major theaters, audiences and reception, and *jōruri*'s relationship to governmental power and censorship. Chapters Two through Four discuss the works of a master playwright from a particular phase in *jōruri*'s development. Each of these chapters consists of two parts: first, the historical and social background and the state of *jōruri* during which the playwright wrote; and second, a textual and performance analysis of the playwright's plays, focusing on innovative representations of a particular female character type.

Chapter One, "*Jōruri* and Women," provides critical background and context, as well as an overview of the history of new *jōruri*, particularly in relation to women. *Jōruri* developed from medieval oral storytelling genres that were mainly performed by traveling female performers and blind minstrels. The chapter begins by exploring *jōruri*'s association with women, as audience, performers, and characters, in its origins and throughout its development. When *jōruri* developed into a male-operated commercial enterprise in the late seventeenth century, it rapidly formed business conventions, as well as genre conventions for character types and plot patterns and for coping with governmental censorship. The limited number of conventional female puppet heads affected the way female characters were represented. The chapter ends by discussing the general reception, criticism, and expectations for *jōruri*; official censorship; and the self-defensive genre conventions *jōruri* formed as a reaction to censorship.

Chapter Two, "Making Prostitutes Into Heroines: Chikamatsu Monzaemon and

Sewamono" focuses on the representations of prostitutes as heroines in love suicide plays by Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724). The pleasure quarters were a new topic for popular literature and theater during the Edo period. The chapter begins with an examination of the social and literary context of the pleasure quarters in the early Edo period as well as the practice of *shinjū*, or love suicide. The popular interest in love suicides as sensational news was widespread in the late seventeenth century. The image of the prostitutes who participated in love suicides, as well as the image of love suicide itself, were negative in contemporary *ukiyozōshi* fiction, but they were depicted more sympathetically in *kabuki* plays, especially domestic plays called *sewamono*. Inspired by the newly-emerged genre of *sewamono*, Chikamatsu Monzaemon depicted prostitutes in his love suicide plays as morally exemplary romantic heroines, rather than as villainesses who bring men to ruin. The chapter examines three love suicide plays by Chikamatsu Monzaemon: his first love suicide play, *Sonezaki shinjū* (1703), and two other love suicide plays created as anniversary memorials for *Sonezaki Shinjū*. Writing at the time when *jōruri* was still in its embryonic stage, in *Sonezaki Shinjū*, Chikamatsu drastically departed from the scornful depictions of prostitutes in contemporary fiction, and lay the ground for the conventional depiction of low-ranked female characters as morally exemplary characters in *jōruri*. Later, Chikamatsu shifted his focus from idealizing and deifying prostitute heroines to depicting their struggles and suffering as human beings, recreating them as characters that the audience can sympathize with.

Chapter Three, "Real Voices of Stepmother Heroines: Namiki Sōsuke and Toyotake-za Theater" examines the recurrent representations of stepmothers in Namiki Sōsuke's plays, in the context of the existing conventional representations of stepmothers in *jōruri*. The chapter starts

with a discussion the conventional representations of stepmothers in *jōruri* puppet theater, especially in Takemoto-za theater, the older and more established puppet theater of the time. Contrary to the stereotypical image of the "evil stepmother" common in world folklores and fairytales, Takemoto-za theater's *jōruri* puppet plays conventionally depict stepmothers as exemplary and virtuous characters who uphold Confucian norms, cherishing their stepchildren and placing their welfare ahead of their natural children's welfare. As a Toyotake-za theater playwright, Sōsuke sought to depart from Takemoto-za theater's conventional representation of stepmothers and give a more realistic portrayal of the dark psychological conflict between the "real" desire to favor one's natural child and the strong social pressure to put one's stepchild first. The chapter examines several plays written at different points in Sōsuke's career in order to discuss the ways in which he dealt with the psychological conflict the stepmothers experienced. Sōsuke subverts and twists the formal conventions of *jidaimono jōruri* historical plays in order to find effective ways to fit more realistic, conflicted characters into a model requiring that "good" characters who follow Confucian norms triumph in the end, and "bad" characters who challenge those norms are ultimately punished. I argue that Sōsuke's unconventionally realistic depictions of the dark psychology and transgressive behavior of seemingly-exemplary stepmothers highlights the conflict between individual desire and social obligation, and calls into question the absolute priority of social obligation.

Chapter Four, "Mythical Heroines and Provincial Daughters: Chikamatsu Hanji and *Hamemono*," examines the works of Chikamatsu Hanji (1725-1783), written after the height of *jōruri*'s popularity in the mid eighteenth century. The chapter begins by discussing the historical context in which Hanji was writing. The loss of permanent theaters for the Takemoto-za and

Toyotake-za troupes led to fiercer competition, not only with each other, but also with *kabuki* theaters. Because of this, *jōruri* and *kabuki* were engaged in a particularly strong cycle of mutual influence and borrowing of commercially successful material. Hanji wrote at a time when genre conventions and audience expectations were largely ossified, and modern scholars sometimes criticize him for a perceived lack of originality and overly complicated plots. However, Hanji was not a mere copycat of earlier playwrights; rather, he was adept at the writing skill of *hamemono*, a technique for synthesizing existing source materials to create new plays that surprise audiences with new twists express new themes. The chapter examines two provincial daughter characters, Kiyohime from *Hidakagawa iriai zakura* (1759) and Omiwa from *Imoseyama onna teikin* (1771), who were mythical heroines in their source materials, but were depicted quite differently in Hanji's reinventions. Hanji juxtaposed the images of a provincial daughter who is deserted by an aristocratic lover and a jealous woman who destroys a man, both from classical Japanese literature, and combined them in his provincial daughter characters. He also overlays contemporary samurai elites onto the historical aristocratic elites, thus creating highly political plays in which female characters are sacrificed in furtherance of political schemes. I argue that Hanji's reinvention of provincial daughters as unconventionally outspoken in the female realm of love, and yet sacrificial pawns in the male realm of politics, subtly criticizes societal norms that subordinate the value of the individual to the maintenance of the social order.

By examining the history of *jōruri* through its association with women and its female characters of different social types, this dissertation explores the ways in which these playwrights created, followed, subverted, and twisted *jōruri's* theatrical conventions. As popular

entertainment for urban commoners, *jōruri* plays served three roles: didacticism, entertainment, and subtle social and political criticism. Although *jōruri*'s overall structure was designed to reinforce the class and gender hierarchy and value system promoted by the *bakufu* government, playwrights also constantly challenged and expanded its conventions in order to incorporate more morally realistic characters that resonated with commoner audiences, and to create plays that were not only didactic and entertaining, but also subtly critical of the value system they ostensibly reinforced. Underneath the didacticism, *jōruri*'s female characters were often represented in ways that gave voice to the desires and emotions of commoner audiences that were suppressed by prevailing social norms and the existing power structure.

CHAPTER ONE
Jōruri and Women

This chapter provides an overview of the development of new *jōruri* ("*tōryū jōruri* 当流浄瑠璃" or "Gidayū *jōruri* 義太夫浄瑠璃"), both within and outside the official theaters. The chapter begins with a brief introduction of *jōruri*'s evolution from medieval performance genres into a theatrical genre that incorporates early modern interests and issues. In the second section, I describe *jōruri*'s origins in oral storytelling traditions that were strongly associated with women, women's continuing roles on *jōruri*'s periphery after they were banned from the stage, the central role that female audiences had, and how *jōruri*'s female origin legends were appropriated and deployed to lend prestige to eighteenth-century male *jōruri*. Then I address *jōruri* as an early modern commercial enterprise, with fierce competition between the two major theaters in Osaka, examining the contemporary production routine. Next, I turn to examining *jōruri* as popular texts, focusing on the history of publication of *jōruri* texts and how they were received. Continuing from this topic, the following section examines the concept of authorship in *jōruri* and the major playwrights in the eighteenth century, especially focusing on the playwrights whose works are examined in the second, third, and fourth chapters. After that, I examine the correspondence between puppet heads and character types in *jōruri* and consider how the significantly smaller roster of female puppet heads affected the way female characters were represented. The final two sections discuss the general reception, criticism, and expectations for *jōruri*, official censorship, and the self-defensive genre conventions *jōruri* formed as a reaction to censorship. As a whole, this chapter is intended to introduce key issues that will reappear in the second, third, and fourth chapters and to provide important background information and

historical context that is relevant throughout.

***Jōruri* and Women: Origin Legends, Female Performers, and Female Audiences**

During the Edo period, female performers were banned from performing on stage in officially licensed theaters, beginning with an edict issued in Kan'ei 6 (1629). Since then, both *jōruri* and *kabuki* were exclusively performed by male performers, and developed as "male" arts. This tradition continues even today, with the main association of *jōruri* puppet theater (Bunraku Kyōkai) requiring all registered chanters, *shamisen* players, and puppeteers to be men.[18] The playwrights were also exclusively male.[19] Nonetheless, *jōruri* maintained its strong association with women by emphasizing its feminine origin. This section examines how *jōruri* proponents deployed its historical relationship with women, how *jōruri* was performed by women outside of official theaters, and how it was received by female audiences.

Both *kabuki* and *jōruri* originated with female performers. While the story of Okuni, the founder of *kabuki*, is well known, *jōruri* also has female creators according to legend. Beginning in the mid-seventeenth century, texts that recount the history of *jōruri* often attribute authorship

[18] The requirements for applying to the training program of the National Bunraku Theatre (*yōsei puroguramu*) are: a male under 23 years old who has finished junior high school. Nihon geijutsu shinkōkai, "Bunraku no gigeiin (tayū, shamisen, ningyō) no kenshū ni tsuite," http://www.ntj.jac.go.jp/training/outline/group08.html (accessed August 8, 2014). As of April 2013, 49% of the *jōruri* theater performers were graduates of the training program. However, when considering *jōruri* theater more broadly than the "official" National Bunraku Theatres in Tokyo and Osaka, one can find female performers in local theaters, as well as semi-professional chanters of *su-jōruri* performances (chanting without puppets). Awaji *ningyō jōruri* 淡路人形浄瑠璃 today has more female performers than male ones, and female *gidayū* chanters known as *joryū gidayū* 女流義太夫, or *jogi* 女義 for short (formerly called *musume gidayū* 娘義太夫), hold occasional performances today.

[19] Interestingly, Okamoto Kidō 岡本綺堂 (1872-1939) imagined a female playwright in his short play, *Chikamatsu Hanji no shi* (The Death of Chikamatsu Hanji, 1928). In the story, the playwright, Chikamatsu Hanji, has a female apprentice (Osaku) whom he entrusts with finishing his last play, *Igagoe dōchū sugoroku* 伊賀越道中双六 (*Revenge at Iga Pass*, 1783). This story is based on the mysterious playwright, Chikamatsu Kasaku, whose name appears only once as the co-author of *Igagoe dōchū sugoroku* alongside Hanji.

of the *monogatari* tale from which *jōruri* takes its name to a woman named Ozū, and attribute the earliest *jōruri* chanting performances to a woman named Namuemon. Although Ozū's legend is inaccurate,[20] and Namuemon's legend is contested and unverifiable, the existence and popularity of these legends, especially Ozū's, are an indication of how strongly the performance arts were associated with women in the early modern Japanese mind.

By the mid eighteenth century, *Jōruri monogatari* was widely believed to have been written by a woman named Ono no Ozū (小野於通). The earliest written record of the attribution of Ozū as the author of *Jōruri monogatari* is in a historical record, *Yōshū fushi* 雍州府志 (*History of Kyoto*, 1684), followed by two *ukiyozōshi*, *Kokyō gaeri no Edo banashi* 故郷帰の江戸咄 (*Story of Edo upon Returning Home*, 1687) and *Shikidō ōkagami* 色道大鏡 (*The Great Mirror of the Art of Love*, 1688).[21] These earlier texts do not give any details about Ozū, other than that she was a maidservant of Nobunaga. In the eighteenth century, when *jōruri* became extremely popular, the accounts of Ozū as *jōruri*'s founder became more embellished, and more well known. For instance, *Chikuhō koji*[22] (Hōreki 6, 1756) describes Ozū as a talented and

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[20] Ryūtei Tanehiko debunked this legend. He points out that *Jōruri monogatari* existed before the time of Nobunaga (see footnote 3). He also notes that it is not constructive to designate this one person as the sole author of the text, since the story was constantly revised as it was passed down, and multiple versions of the text co-existed.

[21] *Yōshū fushi* says "the text was written by Ono no Ozū, Oda Nobunaga's wife's maidservant." Ozū is described as Toyotomi Hideyoshi's maid, not Nobunaga's, in *Kokyō gaeri no Edo banashi*. See Muroki, 23; Watsuji Tetsurō, *Nihon geijutsushi kenkyū, vol. 1: Kabuki to ayatsuri* jōruri (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1955), 3-9.

[22] *Chikuhō koji* was published by Naniwa sanjin Ichiraku in 1756 during the "Golden Age" of *jōruri* puppet theater when *jōruri*'s popularity was at its height. It gives a historical account of *jōruri* theater, particularly the history surrounding the two major theaters in Osaka, Takemoto-za 竹本座 theater and Toyotake-za 豊竹座 theater. The name of the book, 竹豊故事 (The History of Chiku (Takemoto) and Hō (Toyotake)), comes from these two theaters. See Naniwa Sanjin Ichiraku, *Chikuhō koji*, In Geinōshi kenkyūkai ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei vol. 7: Ningyō jōruri* (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1975), 20-34.

beautiful female writer:

> The beginning of *jōruri* goes like this: During the Eiroku period (1558-1570), there was a maid serving Lord Oda Nobunaga named Ono no Ozū. She was gentle and smart. People say that she was a beauty who could rival the famous beauty Ono no Komachi. When Lord Nobunaga was killed, she was summoned to personally serve Taikō Hideyoshi. She wrote a *sōshi* text, following the example of Murasaki Shikibu writing *Genji monogatari*..., and named it *Jōruri monogatari*.[23]

This kind of anecdote not only emphasizes the genre's connection to women, which had actually been lost by the mid eighteenth century, but also lays a foundation for a narrative that lends *jōruri* legitimacy and authority through this female origin.

These embellishments on Ozū's story enhance *jōruri*'s stature in two respects. First, they create a parallel to the world of Heian women's literature. Both Ozū's physical beauty and inner talent are compared to notable female writers from the Heian period, such as Ono no Komachi and Murasaki Shikibu. This juxtaposition with the Heian female writers seems to be an effort to legitimatize *jōruri* by tying it to the "high" culture of the aristocrats. *Monogatari* tales had a long history of being regarded as a "low" genre, in contrast to "legitimate" genres, such as history and poetry. Prose fiction was often criticized as being "frivolous lies 狂言綺語" that lead readers into moral misbehavior. However, by the Edo period, Heian *monogatari* tales had found their way into the canon and were widely celebrated. *Jōruri*'s proponents aimed overcome criticism that *jōruri* was a low genre that presents "frivolous lies" through this origin story that connected it to the celebrated Heian *monogatari* tales that formerly faced the same criticism. Second, these embellishments borrow some of Nobunaga and Hideyoshi's prestige for Ozū, and, by extension, for *jōruri*. Hideyoshi, in particular, was a local hero in Osaka. Additionally, the juxtaposition of

[23] *Chikuhō koji*, 22.

Ozū's literary activity as a serving maid in the salon of a contemporary military leader with the status of ladies-in-waiting who served in the salons of the Heian empresses reinforces the association with Heian *monogatari*.

Before *jōruri* became a well-established "male" art regulated by the *bakufu* government, its main performers were traveling female performers and blind minstrels, whose chanting and music were eventually combined with puppetry at performances held on the riverbanks (*kawara*) in Kyoto, most famously at Shijō *kawara*. (Figures 1 and 2)[24]

[24] Figures 1 and 2 are from *Shijō kawara yūraku zu byōbu*, currently owned by the Dōmoto Family (Figure 1) and the Boston Museum of Fine Art (Figure 2). The Boston Museum version is considered to have been painted later, based on Figure 1, so the female chanter and the *shamisen* player appear to be almost identical. I am showing both, primarily because of the better condition of the Boston Museum version. Ningyō butaishi kenkyūkai, ed., *Ningyō jōruri butaishi* (Tokyo: Yagi shoten, 1991), 124.


16図　堂本家本四条河原遊図　2（部分）

Figure 1: *Shijō kawara yūraku zu byōbu* (part), early Kan'ei period (ca. 1630), owned by the Dōmoto Family. From *Ningyō jōruri butaishi*, p. 19. A close-up of a female chanter and a *shamisen* player.



Figure 2: *Shijō kawara yūraku zu byōbu* (part), Kanbun era (1661–73), owned by the Boston Museum of Fine Art. A female chanter and a *shamisen* player are performing on *tatami* mats. The smaller figures behind the railings are puppets.)

In this close-up of a painting (Figure 1), the female performers are depicted much bigger than the puppets. Normally, the curtain (shown rolled up above the performers) would be pulled down in order to highlight the puppets (the smaller figures in front of the performers). In this performance, the female performers themselves are part of the visual spectacle, so the curtain is

pulled up.[25] Figure 2 depicts the female performers in the similar manner, also showing a pulled-up curtain above their heads. In fact, female chanters were quite popular at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Even after the ban on female performers in Kan'ei 6 (1629), some female *jōruri* chanters continued to perform. Among them, Rokuji Namuemon 六字南無衛門 (birth and death dates unknown) appears in records of early *jōruri* performances, such as *Naniwa miyage* and *Chikuhō koji*. Rokuji Namuemon is noted as an important figure who performed at around the time when puppets were first incorporated into *jōruri* performances.[26]

Even after enforcement of the ban on female performers removed them from the stage, women remained important practitioners of *jōruri* outside of the theater throughout the Edo period. For men, amateur *jōruri* chanting was a hobby, but for women it could be an important means to make living, or to marry well. *Shikidō ōkagami* lists *jōruri* as an important musical skill for courtesans to entertain their guests.[27] As I will discuss in Chapter Two, courtesans and prostitutes were popular female characters in *jōruri* plays, and sometimes plays contained scenes that depicted prostitute characters doing *jōruri* chanting. One example of this discussed in

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[25] It is believed that the presentation of the female chanter and the *shamisen* player happened during the highlight of the play. *Ningyō jōruri butaishi*, 27.

[26] *Chikuhō koji* describes Namuemon's popularity as follows: "During the Eiroku period, a female chanter named Rokuji Namuemon performed *jōruri* puppet plays at the river bank of Shijō in Kyoto. The performances became popular as a rare form of entertainment. She was summoned by various wives of lords, and eventually performed for Taikō Hideyoshi. In the end, she even was summoned to the court and performed for the emperor during the Keichō period (1596-1614), and was given the title of *jōruri tayū* by the emperor." (*Chikuhō koji*, 23) *Naniwa miyage* even credits Namuemon as one of the possible candidates for the chanter who first combined the puppets with *jōruri*: "As for combining chanting with the puppets, some say that it started when a female chanter named Rokuji Namuemon did a performance at the Shijō riverbank during the Keicho period (1596-1614), and others say that it started when the puppeteers from Nishinomiya came to Kyoto and performed at around the same time. (*Jōruri monku hyōchū Naniwa miyage* (1738), Ueda Kazutoshi ed., (Tokyo: Yūhōkan, 1904), 1-2.)

[27] Fujimoto Kizan, *Shinpan Shikidō ōkagami*, ed. by Shinpan Shikidō ōkagami kankōkai (Tokyo: Yagi shoten, 2006), 232-236.

Chapter Two is Oshima from Chikamatsu Monzaemon's love suicide play *Shinjū nimai ezōshi* 心中二枚絵草紙 (*Love Suicide and the Double-Folded Picture Books*, 1706).

As *jōruri* chanting became more and more popular in the eighteenth century, it became part of popular training for young urban women. In the late Edo period, wealthy townspeople sought to send their daughters to serve at samurai mansions as a kind of finishing school (*hanayome shugyō* 花嫁修業). These women were able to secure a better husband after learning etiquette and social graces through serving at a samurai mansion. Since *jōruri* was popular among the *daimyō* and their wives, possessing skill at *jōruri* chanting would improve these women's candidacy.[28]

There were also professional female performers, such as female master chanters who taught mainly female students, and performers who performed at less formal gatherings. These practices were more popular in Edo than in Osaka. In 1754, thirteen female apprentices' names are recorded among the 196 apprentices of the Toyotake-za chanters in Edo. By the late eighteenth century, both male and female chanters were performing *jōruri* at temples and rented houses in Edo.[29] Despite governmental bans, the female chanters in *yose* 寄席 variety shows

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[28] *Morisada mankō* 守貞謾稿 (mid nineteenth century) explains this custom as follows: "It is a custom from more than one hundred years ago to learn *shamisen* and *jōruri*. The tendency is even stronger recently, and girls start learning these from the age of seven or eight. Mothers work especially hard to send their daughters to the master. Especially in Edo, even a daughter of petty citizens does not fail to be trained in a performative art, and use that as a means to serve a samurai family. If one does not serve a samurai family, it is hard to find a good husband. If one does not learn at least one performative art, it is hard to serve a samurai family. This is why girls learn things like *shamisen* and *koto* instruments." See Hata Hisako, *Edo okujochū monogatari*, (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2001), 23-29.

[29] There were some edicts banning performances by female chanters issued starting from 1794, showing that such performances were popular around that time. Mizuno Yūko, *Edo Tokyo musume gidayū no rekishi* (Tokyo: Hōsei daigaku shuppankyoku, 2003), 18-24.

became extremely popular in the Bunsei and Tenpō periods (1818-1843).[30] When the ban on female performers on stage was finally lifted in the Meiji period, female chanters again became a social phenomenon. They were extremely popular for their beauty, and *ukiyoe* prints and "bromides" (photographic portraits) of female chanters were sold. Figure 3 is one from a series of *ukiyoe* prints by Kitagawa Utamaro 喜多川歌麿 (1753?-1806) entitled *Edo no hana musume jōruri* 江戸の花娘浄瑠璃 (*Flowers of Edo: Girl Ballad Singers*, c. 1800). Figure 4 is an *ukiyoe* print by Utagawa Toyokuni IV 歌川豊国 (1823-1880) of a famous Kiyomoto-bushi *jōruri* master from Tokyo, together with her younger sister, teaching two young girls in the early Meiji period. Both prints are made in the "*bijin-ga* 美人画" or "print of a beautiful woman" style, drawing attention to the beauty of the female performers. The performer in Figure 3 wears an extravagant hairstyle with huge hairpins, signifying that she might be courtesan. The performer-master in Figure 4 is dressed in a more subdued manner, befitting a master in a town. The picture of a *kabuki* actor on the fan on the floor indicates its strong association with the theater.

[30] In Tenpō 8 (1837), a critique of 190 female *jōruri* chanters entitled *Musume jōruri gei shinasadame* 娘浄瑠璃藝品定 was published, and in Tenpō 12 (1841), thirty-five female chanters were arrested for ignoring the governmental ban. Mizuno, 41-48.



Figure 3: *Edo no hana musume jōruri* (c. 1800) by Kitagawa Utamaro. Boston Museum of Fine Arts.



Figure 4: *Joshō sanjūroku kisen: Tokyo Hasegawa chō onna shishō* (女粧三十六貴賤　東京長谷川町女師匠) by Utagawa Toyokuni IV (1823-1880). Early Meiji period. Tokyo Metropolitan Library.

Generally speaking, *jōruri* is considered to be a "linguistic" art, as compared to *kabuki*, in which actor's bodies are a focal point.[31] This is especially true for *jōruri* theater after the ban on female performers and establishment of male theatrical troupes performing at permanent theaters. While contemporary critics' reviews often focus on the physical features of *kabuki* actors, they focus on the voices of the *jōruri* chanters, not their appearances. However, *jōruri* also has strong "bodily" aspect that cannot be ignored, and that is particularly salient in its female origin story and the female performers outside of the official theaters. As I discuss a little later, *jōruri* received mixed reviews from the contemporary literati, especially Confucian and *kokugaku* scholars. It was highly praised for its literary value,[32] but condemned for its corrupting music that stirs up carnal desires, and thus deemed dangerous.[33] Surprisingly, rather than downplaying *jōruri*'s "dangerous" side, *jōruri*'s embellished origin myth emphasizes its "carnal" aspect. Just like female performers from ancient to medieval Japan who could both be sacred (priestesses/spiritual mediums) and earthly (prostitutes), *jōruri* could potentially be spiritual and noble, but could also be earthly and carnal.

In addition to expanding *jōruri*'s prestige by associating Ozū with Heian female writers, *Chikuhō koji*'s account of Ozū as the author of *Jōruri monogatari* acknowledges *jōruri*'s

[31] Torigoe Bunzō calls *Kabuki* a bodily (身体表現) art and *jōruri* a linguistic (言語表現) art in his "Kinsei engeki no shisō," in Torigoe Bunzō et. al. eds., *Kabuki to bunraku no honshitsu* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1997), 43-46. Taguchi Akiko explains that "*jōruri* is a performance art that focuses on the storytelling by the chanters by words and music, while *kabuki* is "carnal (*nikutaiteki* 肉体的)." Taguchi Akiko, *Kabuki to ningyō jōruri* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 2004), 40.

[32] Ogyū Sorai, for example, is said to have praised Chikamatsu's *michiyuki* scene from the *Sonezaki shinjū* as superior literature, according to Ōta Nanpo's 太田南畝 (1749-1823) *Zokuji kosui*, in Nihon zuihitsu taisei henshūbu, ed., *Nihon zuihitsu taisei daisanki* 4 *Zokuji kosui / Shōkan zakki* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1995), 146.

[33] Certain types of *jōruri* chanting, such as chanting by women, and particular musical styles, such as Bungo-bushi, were strictly criticized as lascivious. See page 75.

"bodily" aspect. First, *Chikuhō koji* describes Ozū as "a beauty who could rival the famous beauty Ono no Komachi." Her comparison with Komachi is significant, since, while Komachi is a well-known female poet, she is also renowned for her beauty and is often represented as a "*femme fatale*" in several *nō* plays and *setsuwa* anecdotes. Second, *Chikuhō koji* explains that Ozū "was summoned to personally serve Taikō Hideyoshi." The expression used here, "*renchū* 簾中 (inside the curtain)," suggests that Ozū was perhaps not merely a serving maid, but also a mistress for Hideyoshi.[34] Her beautiful appearance and physical relationship with the male authority resonates with the carnal image of medieval female performers. Traditionally, female entertainers, such as *shirabyōshi* dancers, were also involved with prostitution. Female entertainers often used their performances to attract potential customers. They could also gain the favor of high-ranking samurai lords, as seen in the famous example of the *shirabyōshi* dancers Giō and Hotoke in the *Tales of the Heike*, who became mistresses of Kiyomori. Although the legend describes Ozū as the author of *Jōruri monogatari*, and not the performer, *Chikuhō koji* seems to shade the image of a talented female writer, Ozū, with the image of the physically alluring female (*geinō*) performer.

Interestingly, the heroine of *Jōruri monogatari* can be read as an embodiment of the nature of the *jōruri* genre and its female performers as simultaneously sacred and earthly. Princess Jōruri is not a typical aristocratic princess, but a daughter of a provincial governor (*kokushi* 国司) and an ex-prostitute. Also, while human, she was born as a divine child (god-sent

[34] In fact, in actual history, there seem to have been several women who were named "Tsū" or "Zū" who were professional performers (traveling performers) who served the contemporary authorities in the sixteenth century, such as Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and Ieyasu. At least some of them were mistresses, such as the performer who served Sanada and is recorded as having borne him a son. Muroki, 23-25.

child) of Yakushi Nyorai Buddha as a result of her parents' prayers. If one considers the legendary "Ozū" as a collective identity of the contemporary traveling female performers, who collectively created *Jōruri monogatari* through repeated performance of the piece, it is no coincidence that their circumstances were reflected in the heroine.

Although Princess Jōruri did not remain a popular heroine in the new *jōruri* plays after Chikamatsu Monzaemon's time, her representative traits reappear in later plays. The trope of the heroine as a prostitute-deity continues in Ohatsu, a prostitute heroine in Chikamatsu's first love suicide play who was idealized and equated with the *kannon* deity after her death; the trope of the heroine as a daughter of a provincial governor who has a short-lived romantic relationship with a hero can be found in Kiyohime, who fell in love with a traveling prince and was victimized in the end.

Women were also an important part of *jōruri* theater and culture in the role of an enthusiastic audience. Because the contemporary class and gender hierarchy granted less freedom for women, and because of the ban of female performers on stage, one might think that the women were also banned, or at least discouraged, from attending theater as well. However, on the contrary, urban women constituted a large part of theatrical audiences. Female audiences, especially *daimyō* wives and their maids, seem to have been considered part of the typical *jōruri* fanbase. *Onna daimyō tōzai hyōrin* 女大名東西評林 (*Female Daimyō's Critique of East and West*, 1758), a critique of *jōruri* performers (*ayatsuri hyōbanki* 操り評判記[35]), is written in the form of a discussion between a *daimyō* wife and her maids about various *jōruri* performers. At

[35] As compared to *kabuki*, which had a long history of *hyōbanki* publications, *ayatsuri hyōbanki* appeared and disappeared in the short period between the Enkyō and Tenmei periods (1744-1789).

the beginning, the *daimyō* wife plans to punish two maids who slipped out without her permission, and summons them in front of the other female attendants. However, on finding out that the maids went to see *jōruri* performances at the Takemoto-za and Toyotake-za theaters, the wife gets excited and starts asking their opinions about the performers at the two theaters:

> I am the wife of Lord Hachiman.[36] Good, the female attendants and maids have all arrived, correct? I summoned you, because I heard that two serving maids went out somewhere without asking my permission, and they just came back this morning. I will definitely punish them... What, you went to see *jōruri* plays? If I knew that earlier, I would have given you a lot of money to spend for the tickets and the special box seats. Now now, you must have had tons of fun, didn't you?... Which did you think was better, the West (Takemoto-za theater) or the East (Toyotake-za theater)? I heard that both of them started new plays last winter. What are the titles? [37]

An enthusiastic theatergoer herself, the mistress inquires about the performances at the two theaters while joining the discussion. A similar pattern is used in *Ayatsuri awase kendai* 操西東見臺 (*Lecterns of the Western and Eastern Theaters*, 1757), in which a male *daimyō* lord summons his attendants to critique the *jōruri* performers of the Takemoto-za and Toyotake-za theaters.[38] Although most of the characters are men, a maid passes by and jumps into the discussion.[39] A "maid (*jochū* 女中)" is in fact one of the stereotypical fictional characters[40] who

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[36] This is a fictional domain. The name was probably taken from the location of one of the publishers, Hachiman-suji Street, which was very close to the two *jōruri* theaters by the Dōtonbori River.

[37] *Onna daimyō tōzai hyōrin*, in Funakoshi Seiichirō, ed., *Naniwa sōsho* vol. 15 (Osaka: Naniwa sōsho kankōkai, 1927), 39.

[38] *Ayatsuri awase kendai*, in Geinōshi kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei vol. 7: Ningyō jōruri* (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1975), 396-407.

[39] *Ayatsuri awase kendai*, 405.

[40] Other stereotypical characters are the *tōdori* 頭取 (the discussion leader, who is often the *daimyō* lord or the master of the house), the *hiiki* 贔屓 (a fan of a particular performer), the *waruguchi* 悪口 (a badmouth), the *rōjin* 老人 (an old man), and the *kōsha* 巧者 (an expert or connoisseur).

give their criticisms of *jōruri* performers in *ayatsuri hyōbanki*. Other critiques, such as *Naniwa sono sueba* 浪花其末葉 (*The Terminal Leaves of Naniwa*, 1747)[41] and *Shin hyōbanki kawazu uta* 新評判蛙歌 (*New Reviews of Frog Songs*, 1762)[42] are set in the pleasure quarters, where the prostitutes, courtesans, and their customers (rich merchants) discuss the performers. (Figure 5) As presented in these critiques, female audiences are as opinionated and enthusiastic about the *jōruri* performers and the contents of the plays as male audiences. A priest/fan character points out in *Ongyoku sarugutsuwa* 音曲猿轡 (*Mouth Gag of Music*, 1746) that "performers cannot earn money without female fans,"[43] which shows that the importance of female audiences and fans was generally acknowledged.

[41] *Naniwa sono sueba*, in Funakoshi Seiichirō, ed., *Naniwa sōsho* vol. 15, Osaka: Naniwa sōsho kankōkai, 1927, 1-30.

[42] *Shin hyōban kawazu uta*, in Geinōshi kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei vol. 7: Ningyō jōruri* (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1975), 412-416.

[43] *Ongyoku sarugutsuwa*, in Geinōshi kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei vol. 7: Ningyō jōruri* (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1975), 372.

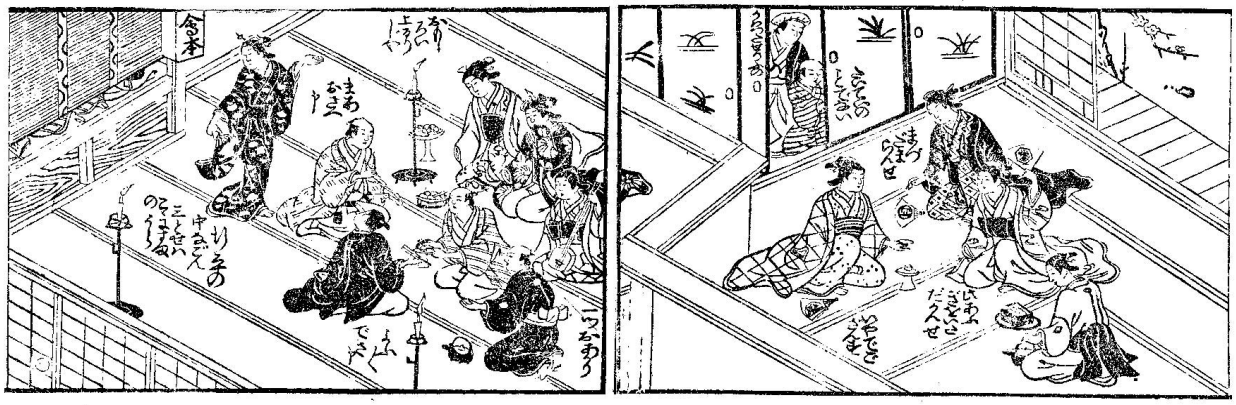


Figure 5 Illustration of courtesans and customers discussing *jōruri* performers in *Naniwa sono sueba*.

Pictures and paintings also reflect women's presence in the audience. For instance, early paintings of the entertainment district during the early seventeenth century illustrate higher-ranked women in the more expensive box seats (*sajiki*), while commoner women are in cheaper seats on a mat. A screen painting depicting performances at the Sensōji Temple in Edo (depicted ca. 1645?) shows a variety of audience members, many of whom are women. Figure 6 shows a high-rank woman and her female attendants in a box seat behind a see-through curtain (*misu*), with mixture of men (on the left) and women (on the right) in the cheaper seats on the mat in front of the stage. Figure 7 shows men and women with children in the audience, and one woman (the third woman from the right) appears to be breastfeeding a child on her lap. The illustration of a rehearsal (more precisely, a *naiyomi*, which will be discussed later) (Figure 10, top) depicts two women (probably maids who work at the teahouse in the theater district) sneaking a peek from just outside the sliding door on the right. Although illustrations of *jōruri* audiences after the Enpō period are lacking (existing illustrations concentrate more on the stage itself rather than the audience),[44] illustrations of *kabuki* audiences in the later periods show that women of different

[44] *Ningyō jōruri butaishi*, 143.

classes can be found throughout the audience. Despite the production side being completely male, *jōruri*'s target audience was not exclusively male; on the contrary, since the beginning of the genre, female audiences were major consumers of theatrical productions.

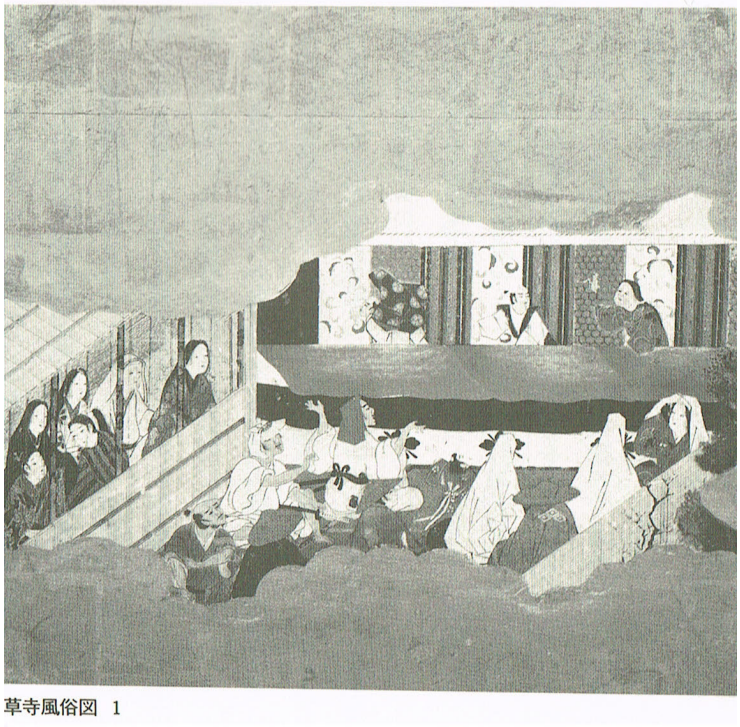


Figure 6: *Sensōji fūzokuzu byōbu* (part), ca. 1630-1645?. From *Ningyō jōruri butaishi*, p. 34. Depicts the *sajiki* box seat on the left side and the cheaper seats on the ground.


21図　浅草寺風俗図　2

Figure 7: *Sensōji fūzokuzu byōbu* (part), ca. 1630-1645?. From *Ningyō jōruri butaishi*, p. 35. The female audience member in the lower right corner is breastfeeding a child.

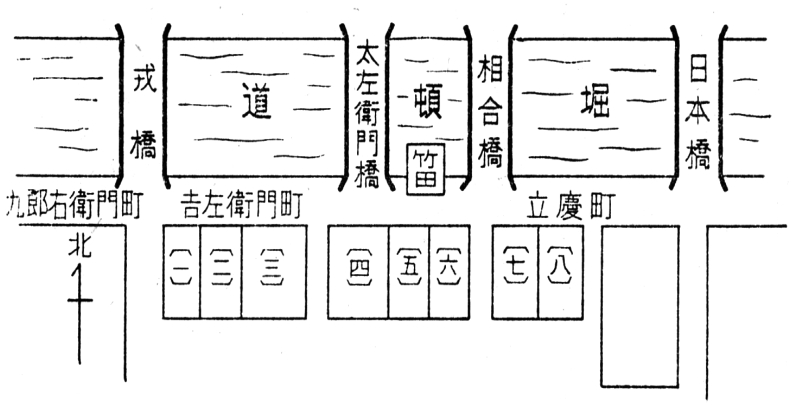
Although early modern theater was developed as a "male" art in official theaters, both *jōruri* and *kabuki* originally started as medieval performance arts (*geinō*) that had an oral storytelling (linguistic) aspect as well as a bodily (carnal) aspect, particularly when the performers were women. Rather than completely dismissing its female origin, early modern *jōruri* proponents acknowledged and advertised it by juxtaposing the legendary writer of *Jōruri monogatari*, Ozū, with the aristocratic female writers from the Heian period. This marketing strategy aimed to reimagine *jōruri* from "a seed of weeds that people brush off as some mean thing,"[45] into a respectable genre that speaks to people of all classes, from urban commoners to

[45] *Kotakeshū* (Collection of works by Uji Kaganojō, f/k/a Kadayū), in Geinōshi kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei vol. 7: Ningyō jōruri* (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1975), 128.

aristocrats. It is not surprising that one of the new classes of heroines of the new *jōruri* plays were prostitutes, who were also performers of *jōruri* themselves. Perhaps female performers can be considered a representation of the genre of *jōruri* itself, considering their literary and carnal associations. Although women were kept off stage, the representations of female performers were included on stage, and female audiences were one of the main target audiences that producers had in mind.

***Jōruri* as Theater: Commercial Enterprise**

As discussed in the previous section, *jōruri* was mainly performed by traveling blind minstrels and female entertainers during its early development in the seventeenth century. There were no permanent theaters. Instead, minstrels would be summoned by their audience, often wealthy aristocrats and samurai who wanted entertainment at their mansions. As *jōruri* chanting combined with puppetry, performances shifted to permanent theaters that collected admission from their audiences, generally urban commoners. Torigoe Bunzō calls the former medieval style of visiting the audience for performances "*kyūkyaku* 求客 (seeking audiences)," and the latter early-modern style of inviting the audience to performances "*kyūkyaku* 吸客 (attracting audiences)." The "attracting audiences" style led to fierce commercial competition among urban theaters, not only between different *jōruri* theaters, but also between *kabuki* and *jōruri*. The map of the Dōtonbori theater district in Osaka in the Kyōhō period (1716-1736) shows that there were eight theaters of *jōruri* and *kabuki* side-by-side. (Figure 8)



享保頃、大阪道頓堀の図（『摂陽奇観』による）

Figure 8: Map of Theaters around the Dōtonbori River in Osaka, Mori Shū, 94. The wide horizontal band across the top is the Dōtonbori River, with four bridges. There are eight theaters across the street from the river. From left (west) to right (east), they are numbered from one to eight. One, three, four, and seven are *kabuki* theaters, and two, five, six are *jōruri* theaters, and eight is unknown. Two is Takemoto-za, and six is Toyotake-za. The side of the street nearer the river also had numerous performance theaters, including Takeda *karakuri* theater, which is shown in the above map between the second and the third bridge.

By the early eighteenth century, *jōruri* puppet plays had become a well-established part of early-modern urban life in Osaka. Two primary theaters, the Takemoto-za theater (established in 1684 by Takemoto Gidayū) and Toyotake-za theater (established in 1703 and 1707[46] by Takemoto Uneme) were established along the Dōtonbori River and developed in competition with each other throughout the eighteenth century. (Figure 9.) Because Toyotake-za was the newer theater established by a younger chanter, during its first twenty years (1703-1724) its writers and actors were "striving to establish their uniqueness, being strongly conscious of the more advanced existence of Takemoto-za."[47] By around 1725, Toyotake-za had succeeded in

[46] Toyotake-za theater was not successful the first time it was established in 1704 and was forced to close the next year, but it reopened in Hōei 4 (1707) and became as popular as Takemoto-za theater. Shirakata Masaru, "Toyotakeza o megutte," in Torigoe Bunzō et. al. eds., *Chikamatsu no jidai* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), 143-146.

[47] Hara Michio, "Sōsetsu" in Hara Michio, ed., *Toyotake za jōruri shū I*, (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1991), 398.

establishing a signature style, and thereafter the two rival theaters competed on equal terms with each other, with the "beautiful eastern style" of Toyotake-za contrasting the "simple and grand western style" of Takemoto-za.[48] Each chapter will return to discuss the new developments in the ongoing history of Takemoto-za and Toyotake-za theaters.



Figure 9: Image of Takemoto-za (picture right) and Toyotake-za (picture left) with banners. From *Chikuhō koji* (Hōreki 6, 1756)

The establishment of unique styles for each theater was a result of *jōruri*'s fundamental difference from *kabuki*. If *kabuki* was an individualistic art, *jōruri* was a collaborative art. Each

[48] Ibid. The two theaters were designated the "east" and the "west" according to their locations along the Dōtonbori River.

kabuki theater made a contract with a different set of actors each year. Because of this, it was important for each *kabuki* actor to develop a unique performance style that, hopefully, would make him indispensable. In contrast, the members of each *jōruri* theater were generally fixed. Chanters adopted the surname Takemoto or Toyotake, according to the theater they belonged to, and if they moved between theaters, they also changed their names.[49] Rather than developing their own unique styles, the junior chanters learned the theater's style from the senior chanters. The playwrights were under contract with one theater or the other, and wrote in accordance with that theater's traditions and characteristics.[50] Chapter Three discusses an example of how the distinct style of each theater impacted playwrights' script-writing, particularly with respect to Namiki Sōsuke, who changed theaters during his career.

During the eighteenth century, *jōruri* troupes in Osaka generally prepared a brand new play for each production.[51] Audiences were excited every time the new play (*shinsaku* 新作) was out. Performances were not held for two or three days before the new play began while

[49] For example, Toyotake Wakatayū, who established Toyotake-za theater, changed his stage name from Takemoto Uneme to Toyotake Wakatayū when establishing his theater.

[50] This also is significantly different from *kabuki* playwrights, who wrote for different theaters.

[51] This was not the case in Edo or in local cities. The *jōruri* theaters in Edo after the *kojōruri* period up until the late eighteenth century held performances by the performers from the Toyotake-za theater, who performed older successful pieces that had first become popular in Osaka. It was only after the 1780s that playwrights, including Fukuuchi Kigai 福内鬼外 (Hiraga Gennai 平賀源内), started writing new plays for performances in Edo. See Fuchida Yūsuke, "Edo no ningyō jōruri kai," in Torigoe Bunzō et. al. eds., *Ōgon jidai no jōruri to sono go* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), 193-195. The Takemoto-za and Toyotake-za troupes also occasionally traveled to local cities. In contrast to the performances in Osaka, where one new piece was performed sometimes for months, the local performances showed old and popular pieces in a much shorter span. For instance, in Tokushima in 1693, seven pieces were performed in a fourteen-day performance period. See Akimoto Suzushi, "Gekijō to kōgyō," in Torigoe Bunzō et. al. eds., *Chikamatsu no jidai* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), 217. The theatrical troupes tested the popularity of new plays in Osaka, and performed pieces that guaranteed a profit during their Edo and local performances. This approach is popular in modern theater, with Broadway musical shows for example. Theatrical companies try out their new plays on Broadway (or perhaps "off-Broadway"), and embark on a U.S. or international tour after a play becomes popular on Broadway.

preparations were made.[52] The new play required a new script, costumes, props, stage sets, etc. This made it hard for *jōruri* to have a fixed annual routine like *kabuki*. *Kabuki* theaters made an annual contract with a new set of actors each year, and had a rough annual schedule based on the seasons. The new year for *kabuki* started from the eleventh month when "*kaomise*" face-showing performances were held to introduce the actors with whom each theater had contracted for the upcoming year.[53] In contrast, since the performers were expected to belong to one theatrical troupe, "*kaomise*" was unimportant and infrequent in *jōruri*.[54] Rather than showing new plays according to a seasonal routine, the length of a *jōruri* play's run depended on its popularity. For instance, *Kokusen'ya kassen* by Chikamatsu Monzaemon famously ran for seventeen months in a row. However, despite its popularity, there were only seven productions in the next fifty years, while various *kabuki* theaters put on twenty-six productions of the *kabuki* adaptation of *Kokusen'ya* during the same period.[55] (This comparison may be a bit misleading because *kabuki* theaters outnumbered *jōruri* theaters. Nevertheless, it still reflects different attitudes towards constantly producing new plays versus repeating a repertoire with new actors.) This flexibility in

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[52] In a samurai's diary entitled *Ōmu rōchūki* 鸚鵡籠中記, the author, Asahi Shigeaki 朝日重章, went to Dōtonbori when he was in Osaka for a business trip on the sixth day of fourth month in Hōei 7 (1710), but complained that "there are no *jōruri* today or tomorrow at Takemoto-za theater, because a new play will start on the eighth." *Ōmu rōchūki*, cited in Akimoto, "Gekijō to kōgyō," 210.

[53] *Shibai nenchū gyōji* 芝居年中行事. Although there were some differences between the Edo and the Kamigata (Osaka and Kyoto) conventions, in both cases, the year started in the eleventh month, and new plays were shown roughly once every two months except for the summer (the first month, third month, fifth month, and ninth month). See Akimoto, "Gekijō to kōgyō," 208 and Masaki Yumi, "Genroku kabuki: Kamigata," in Torigoe Bunzō et. al. eds., *Kabuki no rekishi I* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1997), 76-77.

[54] *Jōruri* held *kaomise* performances starting from 1705, but they were not regularly done. Akimoto, "Gekijō to kōgyō," 208-210.

[55] *Gidayū nenpyō Kinsei hen* (Gidayū nenpyō Kinsei hen kankōkai, ed. 7 volumes (Tokyo: Yagi shoten), 1979) and *Kokuritsu gekijō jōen shiryōshū 538 Tōshi kyōgen Kokusen'ya kassen*, Kokuritsu gekijō chōsa kiroku ka, ed. November 2010.

the performance schedule enabled producers to mitigate the loss caused by unpopular plays and to maximize the profit from the popular plays. In addition to writing a new play as the current production lost steam, new *jōruri* plays were also written to coincide with special events[56] and after scandalous incidents such as love suicides that commanded the public's attention.

Both *jōruri* and *kabuki* developed a systematized corporate-like organization to produce plays efficiently and continuously. There were some prerequisites for opening a theatrical production. All theatrical productions required official permission from the local government. In the Kamigata area (Osaka and Kyoto), the permission to perform (*nadai* 名代) was obtained by merchants (*nadai-nushi* 名代主), who then rented the permission to the manager of the theatrical troupe, called the "*zamoto* 座元/座本" or "*tayūmoto* 太夫本," who actually ran the show. The initial investments for the preparation of the new play, such as preparing new puppets, costumes, stage sets, and props, were solicited from financial backers called "*kinshu* 金主." The *zamoto* was in charge of business management, casting, and giving stage directions. Early in *jōruri*'s history, the main chanter was often the *zamoto*. For instance, the first *zamoto* of the Takemoto-za theater was Takemoto Gidayū, the main chanter who worked with Chikamatsu Monzaemon to establish new *jōruri* (*tōryū jōruri*). The first co-*zamoto*s of the Toyotake-za theater were Toyotake Wakatayū, the main chanter (and Gidayū's former apprentice) and the senior puppeteer, Tatsumatsu Hachirobei. While Toyotake-za theater continued having senior chanters double as the *zamoto*, Takemoto-za theater developed a separate management system. Since Gidayū was

[56] For instance, there was a traveling exhibition of treasures of the Zenkōji 善光寺 Temple in Shinano (current Nagano prefecture) for five years from 1701-1706 while the temple was under construction after it burned down. The treasures of Zenkōji Temple were also exhibited in 1741, 1780, and 1794 in Osaka and Kyoto. On each occasion, many *jōruri* plays were written to commemorate the event. See Hayashi Kumiko, "Zenkōji kaichō to jōruri: Genroku 7 nen kaichōji no han'ei," *Bungakushi kenkyū* 46 (March 2006): 1-14.

not fond of business management, Takeda Izumo I 竹田出雲[57] took over the manager role in 1704. From this time forward, Takemoto-za theater was managed by members of the Takeda family, who sometimes engaged in playwriting,[58] but were never performers. Interpersonal conflicts between the *zamoto* and the performers caused serious problems for the Takemoto-za theater beginning in the mid eighteenth century, which are discussed in Chapter Four.

Each day's *jōruri* performance typically lasted about six hours, starting from *shiki sanban* 式三番 and ending with *shūgen* 祝言 (both celebratory ritualistic dances inherited from *nō* theater). The day's performance featured one historical *jidaimono* piece. It was sometimes accompanied by a short *sewamono* piece at the end (*kiri* 切). Before the time of Chikamatsu, the pieces were short, so there were also interludes called *ai no kyōgen* 間の狂言, which consisted of magic tricks and dances using puppets. As the historical piece became longer and the puppets were more integrated into the performance, the tricks shown in the interludes were eventually absorbed into the main play beginning in the Hōei period (1704-1711).[59] The day's performance typically started at around 8AM and ended at around 2PM. However, this was again influenced by the size of the audience, at least in *jōruri*'s early stages. When there was not a large enough audience, the performance could end early or start late.[60]

The audience's theater experience for *kabuki* and *jōruri* were rather different. In *kabuki*

[57] Takeda Izumo I was a member of the family that owned the Takeda *karakuri* theater in the Dōtonbori theater district. For information about the Takeda family, see Yūda Yoshio, *Jōrurishi ronkō* (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1975), 322-358. The Takeda *karakuri* theater is discussed in Chapter Four.

[58] Takeda Izumo I and II are both famous playwrights as well as *zamoto*.

[59] Akimoto, "Gekijō to kōgyō," 210-214.

[60] Ibid., 214.

theater, the separation between the stage and the audience was minimal. The audience surrounds the stage on all sides, even from behind, with mezzanines above. The stage was also extended by the *hanamichi* 花道 platform that ran through the audience. This resulted in a rock-concert-like atmosphere in which excited audience members mights reach out to touch the actors. In contrast, there was a division between the stage and the audience's seats in *jōruri*. The seats were located only on one side of the stage (like a modern theater) with no mezzanines. The audience did not seek a close encounter with the performers, but rather to appreciate the story and the music. In accord with *jōruri*'s role as an expression of lament (discussed later in this chapter), paintings typically depict some of the audience members as moved to tears.

Jōruri's transition from traveling performers to fixed theaters located in urban centers gave rise to a corporate, commercial aspect. The theaters adopted practices and procedures, ranging from the way performers were hired, to the nature of the daily performances, to the duration of a play's run, that reflected the realities of theater as a commercial endeavor. Competition was fierce, both between the Takemoto-za and Toyotake-za theaters and between *jōruri* and *kabuki*. We must be careful to remember that each new play was not the product of a playwright working in a vacuum, but also reflected its theater's signature style and conventions, and commercial strategies.

***Jōruri* as Popular Texts**

Jōruri was received both as theatrical performance and as written text. This is a major difference from contemporary *kabuki* drama, which had its roots in dance, and focused on highlighting each actor's individual skills. *Kabuki* scripts were fluid, often rewritten afresh for

each production, in order to accommodate the different talents and acting styles of the main actors.[61] In contrast, because puppet theater is a collaborative art, with chanters, puppeteers, and *shamisen* players performing in unison, it required fixed scripts. With the advent of commercial printing, *jōruri*-related books[62] were widely published and circulated throughout the Edo period (1603-1868). Today,[63] there are about six hundred thirty new *jōruri* (*tōryū jōruri*) plays whose entire scripts are extant, and ongoing archival research by Kōzu Takeo has recorded more than twenty thousand *jōruri* books[64] extant all over Japan.[65] *Jōruri* is the only textual genre that consistently spread all over Japan throughout the Edo period. This section discusses how *jōruri* scripts came to be published, circulated, and received as texts.

As I mentioned in the earlier section on female audiences, the audience for *jōruri* texts consisted of two (overlapping) types of fans, those who read the stories for their entertainment value and amateur chanters who wanted real scripts to practice with. Audiences were engaged in amateur chanting from early on, and craved for complete scripts. An early *hanashibon* (collection of short funny stories), *Kinō wa kyō no monogatari* 昨日は今日の物語 (*Today's*

[61] In *kabuki* scripts, there is a cast list at the beginning, and the remainder of the script references actors' names, rather than the roles names, in front of each line.

[62] There were three kinds of texts published concerning *jōruri*: *tōshibon* 通し本, a book that includes the complete text of one play; *nukihon* 抜き本, a book that includes part of one play; and *michiyuki zoroe* 道行揃, a book that is a collection of highlights from multiple plays.

[63] The importance of the texts is physically demonstrated in modern performances, as the chanters hold the texts above their heads and bow to them before and after each performance.

[64] "*Jōruri* books" here refers to the full scripts (*tōshibon*) and collections of famous passages (*michiyuki zoroe*) of the Gidayū-bushi *jōruri* (beginning from Takemoto Gidayū's first performance at the Takemoto-za theater in 1684-85), and excludes collections of excerpts (*nukihon*).

[65] For the most recent and detailed history of *jōruri*-related publications, refer to Kōzu Takeo, *Jōruribon shi kenkyū*.

Tales of Yesterday, circa 1615), features a story of a man who loves chanting *jōruri* all day long.[66] Published *jōruri* texts arose in response to this demand and developed in ways that enabled them to serve these dual roles. Initially, the texts were not closely related to the production of the actual stage performances; rather they were created by book sellers using *emaki* picture scrolls of similar stories as templates.[67]

During its early stages, *jōruri* troupes considered their scripts to be "trade secrets," and did not share them with outsiders. The scripts for chanters were "closed" and the training of apprentice chanters was done mostly through oral transmission (*kuden* 口伝), in keeping with *jōruri*'s origins in performances by blind minstrels.[68] In order to attract audiences to the theater, to prevent rivals from copying their plays, and to maintain the chanters' prestige, the scripts were kept within a small circle of senior chanters. Nevertheless, since there was a demand, publishers found ways obtain scripts, more or less by piracy:

> The audience wanted to imitate the chanter [Inoue Harimanojō[69]], but this was a time when chanters kept the scripts (*yukahon* 床本) tightly shut and barely even allowed their apprentices to see them. There was, of course, no such thing as texts for [hobbyist] practitioners (*keikobon* 稽古本), so one had to [attend the play repeatedly to] jot down the lines little by little. One would memorize the script a line or two at a time, creating a companion for night-time strolls. There were no *jōruri* bookstores in Osaka yet. When a new play was on stage, a publisher would use his connections to beg for the previous play's script, and publish it in Kyoto. These were called flea

[66] In the story, a man is so absorbed in chanting *jōruri* all day long that his wife becomes jealous. Comedy ensues. Kokatsuji-ban jūgyōbon, jō 77 dan. In Yokoyama Shigeru, ed., *Kinō wa kyō no monogatari*, (Tokyo: Koten bunko, 1954), 48.

[67] Akimoto Suzushi, "Kan'ei ki no *jōruri*," in Torigoe Bunzō et al ed., *Jōruri no tanjō to kojōruri* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998) 57.

[68] C. Andrew Gerstle, *Circles of Fantasy: Convention in the Plays of Chikamatsu* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 13.

[69] Inoue Harimanojō (?-1685?) was a popular chanter of *kojōruri* who opened a puppet theater in Osaka.

> books (*shiramibon* 虱本), with the text of the five acts alternating with illustrations of each act, and were circulated for entertaining children...[70]

While this quote from a text on the history of *jōruri* entitled *Imamukashi ayatsuri nendaiki* 今昔操年代記 (*A Chronicle of Puppetry Long Ago*, 1727) claims that the published texts were "circulated for entertaining children" and were not particularly useful for practicing chanting, these were the only published texts available at the time.[71] Therefore, they must have had a dual role: as a text for entertainment reading, and as practice librettos for amateur chanters. However, these copies could not include the musical notations.

The *jōruri* texts published around this time were called *eiri jōruribon* 絵入浄瑠璃本 or *yomihon jōruri* 読本浄瑠璃, since they had plenty of illustrations, but lacked musical notations. Following *eiri jōruribon*'s success, the same publishers also began publishing illustrated plots of *kabuki* plays called *eiri kyōgenbon* 絵入狂言本 that imitated the styles and formats of *jōruri* books. Some scholars speculate that these books were also distributed to special guests to the theater as promotional tickets.[72]

Eventually, *jōruri* troupes realized that the publication of *jōruri* texts was both profitable

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[70] *Imamukashi ayatsuri nendaiki*, in Geinōshi kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei vol. 7: Ningyō jōruri* (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1975), 7.

[71] Since the beginning of the publication of *jōruri* books in around the Kan'ei period (1624-1643) until the publication of *shōhon* scripts for chanting became more common in the late seventeenth century (in the late Enpō period, or 1680s).

[72] Some scholars, including Torigoe Bunzō, speculate that the second title slip (*waki daisen* 脇題簽) on the cover of the picture book for *jōruri* (*eiri jōruribon*) and *kabuki* (*eiri kyōgenbon*) that resembles a theater ticket meant that the books themselves actually served the role of tickets (perhaps free promotional tickets for important patrons). See Hayashi Kumiko, *Kinsei zenki jōruri no kisoteki kenkyū: Shōhon no shuppan to engekikai no dōkō*, (Osaka: Izumi shoin, 1995), 161-163. See also Torigoe Bunzō, "Eiri kyōgenbon kenkyū" in Torigoe Bunzō, *Genroku kabuki kō* (Tokyo: Yagi shoten, 1991) 231-300.

and inevitable. In the late seventeenth century the chanter Uji Kadayū 宇治嘉太夫(later known as Uji Kaganojō 宇治加賀掾) (1635-1711) began the practice of publishing full official texts with musical notations (*shōhon* 正本) intended for the purpose of practicing amateur chanting.[73] Collections of excerpts, with musical notations, from the famous scenes of multiple plays (*michiyuki zoroe*) were also published. Compared to the *eiri jōruribon*, which had tiny characters (hence the name *shiramibon*, or "flea book"), these official texts (*shōhon*) had bigger characters, to make it easier to keep one's place while chanting.

As the chanting texts (*shōhon*) become more popular, the demand for *eiri jōruribon* declined. These illustrated versions started becoming more abridged, and eventually, by the end of the Shōtoku period (about 1715), *eiri jōruribon* were completely replaced by *ezukushi* picturebooks that depict representative scenes with minimal text.

For a short period between Kyōhō 1-7 (1716-1722), a different form of *jōruri* text that Hayashi Kumiko calls "*ukiyozōshi* style *jōruri* books" was published in the Kamigata area, featuring complete text with musical notations *and* illustrations. The economics of printing these books is very interesting. After the *ukiyozōshi* style *jōruri* book was published, the publisher would disassemble the woodblock into text and illustrations, and reuse the text to make the text-only *shōhon* for amateur chanters, and reuse the illustrations to make the *ezukushi* picturebooks. After the mid Kyōhō period (1720s), however, text-only *jōruri* books became the norm for published scripts.

By the late seventeenth century, there were already several bookstores specialized in

[73] The earliest extant *jōruri* text with musical notations is *Ushiwaka sennin giri* 牛若千人切 (*Ushiwaka Vanquishes One Thousand Foes*) published in Enpō 7 (1679). Nagatomo Chiyoji, *Kinsei Kamigata jōruribon shuppan no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō shuppan, 1999), 85.

selling *jōruri*-related books. *Kaimono chōhōki* 買物重宝記 (*Handy Guidebook for Shopping*) published in Genroku 5 (1692) has a list of *jōruri* bookstores in Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo, most of which continued to exist throughout the Edo period.[74] Travelers also visited these stores to buy *jōruri* texts as souvenirs.[75] In addition to specialized bookstores, *jōruri* books were also circulated by traveling book lenders called *kashihon-ya* 貸本屋, who traveled all over Japan.

The publication of complete *jōruri* texts (*shōhon*) generally followed the first performance of the play with a delay. Most *jōruri* scripts have a date for the play written at the end of the book, but it is the date of the first performance rather than the publication date. The publication dates can sometimes be found in bookstores' business records, as well as handwritten notes in some of the extant books. Recent scholarship revealed that complete *jōruri* texts[76] were not published until about fifty days after the first performance. When the full text of a popular play was finally released, urban commoners rushed to the bookstores:

> At the bookstores, not only were the chief clerk, journeyman clerks, and apprentice clerks all busy distributing the books, but the printers and the binders were needed to help distribute books too. They barricaded the entrance with logs and let the customers in one at a time. The customers would present their advance reservation tickets (*kitte* 切手) that said "so many hundreds of books" or "so many tens of

[74] There are more than ten *jōruri* bookstores in Osaka, and more than three each in Kyoto and Edo, listed in this record. The most advanced scholarship concerns the publisher Yamamoto Kuhei (山本九兵衛), who had the exclusive right to publish Takemoto-za theater's *jōruri* texts (by Chikamatsu Monzaemon and Takemoto Gidayū). His business was so profitable that there were even pirated versions that were published by "Yamaki Kuhei" (山木九兵衛). Nagatomo, 86.

[75] *Yōshū fushi*, miyage II (Miyagemon ge) section, Jōkyō 4, 1687. This section lists various items for sale that are unique to Kyoto, and where people can buy them. It has an entry on "*jōruri* no hon," which lists two *jōruri* bookstores in Kyoto where there are "no *jōruri* books that they do not have." Kurokawa Dōyū, *Kundoku Yōshū fushi*, Tachikawa Yoshihiko, ed., (Kyoto: Rinsen shoten, 1997), 284; Nagatomo, 87.

[76] This study only considers the texts that include the entire complete script, with musical notations (*tōshibon*). The practice of publishing nukihon (excerpts from the play) has not been examined fully. See Kōzu Takeo, *Jōruribon shi kenkyū*. (Tokyo: Yagi shoten, 2009), 89-112.

books," and the staff would directly hand them the books.[77]

With the overwhelming crowds and reservation tickets sold in advance, the scene evokes the modern phenomenon of "Potter-mania" accompanying the release of a new volume of the Harry Potter series. There are three likely purposes served by the delay between the first performance of the play and the publication of the text. First, the delay served to keep the contents secret at the beginning of the performance so that the audience would actually come to the theater. Also, some enthusiasts might come to the theater several times to memorize the lines and tunes. Second, the delay minimized the risk of financial loss if a play was banned. On rare occasions, plays were banned after their first performance.[78] Accordingly, it made sense to refrain from investing money into publishing the text until it was clear that the censors would leave the performances alone. Third, the delay gave publishers an opportunity to gauge a play's popularity and anticipate how many copies to print.

Jōruri texts were circulated all over Japan from as early as the beginning of commercial mass printing in the seventeenth century until the end of the Edo period. For provincial residents who did not have ready access to theater performances, the *jōruri* texts were the entryway and the main avenue to their receptions of *jōruri*. In addition to entertainment reading, *jōruri* texts include musical notations, intended for use by practitioners of amateur chanting. They were also

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[77] "Namiki no so Sōsuke ga den 並木の祖宗輔が伝"in Nishizawa Ippō, *Denki sakusho*, in Kokusho kankōkai, ed., *Shin gunsho ruijū* vol. 1 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1906), 36. It also says that, since *jōruri* books were cheap, they were popular even among non-theater-goers.

[78] For instance, the performances of *Nanbantetsu Gotō no menuki* 南蛮鉄後藤目貫 (*Barbarian Metal and Goto's Sword Hilt*, 1735, Toyotake-za) and *Taihei kabuto no kazari* 太平頭鍪飾 (*Ornate Battle Helm of Taihei*, 1770, Takemoto-za) were banned, and the scripts were not published.

used as scripts for local *kabuki* performances (*jishibai* 地芝居).[79] Because of its texts' wide dissemination, *jōruri* can be considered a form of "Japanese national literature" in the early modern period. In fact, *jōruri* became an indispensable part of daily entertainment for commoners, and remained so until after the Meiji period. In the Taishō period (1912-1926), about half of the newly-published *jōruri* books were shipped abroad to Japanese residents in South America, showing how ingrained *jōruri* books were as part of Japanese emigrants' popular consciousness.[80] Widely published texts made *jōruri* a peerless genre in its broad audience outside of the urban areas and continuing popularity even after its theatrical performances in urban areas lost popularity.

***Jōruri* and Authorship**

Although *kabuki* was reluctant to recognize the importance of writers, the role of the author came to be acknowledged in *jōruri* during Chikamatsu's time.[81] While *kabuki* scripts were often written specifically for, and often by, main actors and were rewritten when the actors changed, *jōruri* scripts were mostly fixed and passed down through many generations. Given

[79] As Kōzu points out, the scripts of *jishibai* are all based on the *jōruri* scripts, since there were no *kabuki* scripts available for the public. Although performed by people, *jishibai* is a "variation of puppet plays in which puppets were replaced by humans." (Kōzu Takeo, "Kinsei, Kindai no kokumin bungaku: jōruribon shōryō niman ten," *Nihon kosho tsūshin* 73-6 (June 2008): 10).

[80] Ibid.

[81] Although Chikamatsu is commonly cited as the first playwright to have his name credited on published play scripts, one earlier example can be found in the time of *kojōruri* in Edo in Jouō 4 (1655). Oka Seibei's name is credited as the writer (*sakusha*) at the end of the published text of *Nishikido kassen* にしきど合戦 (*Battles of Nishikido*). Oka is also credited as a playwright for several other plays written for the chanter Izumitayū, such as *Uji no himekiri* うぢのひめきり (*Slaying of the Uji Bridge Lady*), etc. Oka Seibei's detailed biography is unknown, but he is recognized as a *jōruri* author (*sakusha*). See Muroki Yatarō ed., *Kinpira jōruri shōhon shū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1966), 508-509. That said, Chikamatsu is the first playwright whose importance was widely recognized by later authors and scholars.

jōruri's reliance on fixed scripts, it is no wonder that the notion of authorship started earlier in *jōruri* than in *kabuki*. Even though Chikamatsu Monzaemon began his career as a *jōruri* playwright for Uji Kaganojō several years earlier, he was not credited as the playwright on the first page of *shōhon* scripts until the script of *Sasaki Ōkagami* 佐々木大鑑 (*Great Mirror of Sasaki*) in 1686. This marks the beginning of widespread recognition of authorship in *jōruri*.

The practice of crediting playwrights was controversial at the time.[82] One *kabuki hyōbanki* 歌舞伎評判記 (a contemporary critique of *kabuki* actors) entitled *Yarō tachiyaku butai ōkagami* 野郎立役舞台大鏡 (*Great Mirror of Male-Role Actors*, 1686) shows a mixed attitude towards Chikamatsu's prominent billing as a playwright in *jōruri* and *kabuki* performances:

> One person said, "It is not praiseworthy, even for *jōruri*, to proclaim the name of the author proudly, but recently, they've started crediting the names of the authors for *kabuki* scripts. What's more, even on the signs and street posters for the performances one can see it says 'written by Chikamatsu (*sakusha* Chikamatsu 作者近松).' It looks like bragging." Another answered, saying, "Your complaint makes sense, but making a living is very important. If it were long time ago, he would not have carelessly added 'written by Chikamatsu,' but this is his occupation, and he has made up his mind to work in the world of theater till his dying day. Since that is the case, it is better for him to be known to people..." The two reconciled in the end and agreed that "the *jōruri* texts this man [Chikamatsu] has written recently are flowery and beautiful, and it's clear that he is a genius who knows Buddhist texts, Confucian texts, military epics, *etcetera* very well."[83]

Earlier in the same book, "printing the *jōruri* playwright's name" is listed under "things that should be discouraged." The fictitious debate quoted above reflects the controversy over Chikamatsu's visible presence as an author. The first speaker is more critical about a playwright

[82] The recognition of authorship in *jōruri* coincides with the recognition of authorship English theater, beginning with Ben Jonson. There was a controversy when Ben Jonson published a collection of his work and included his name in the title: *The Works of Benjamin Jonson*, 1616.

[83] *Yarō tachiyaku butai ōkagami*, in Kabuki hyōbanki kenkyūkai, ed., *Kabuki hyōbanki shūsei dai ikki* vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1972), 244.

being credited on *kabuki* scripts, and advertisements and posters, but eventually concedes that Chikamatsu's *jōruri* scripts have literary value. The second speaker defends Chikamatsu in crediting his name as a playwright because he is committed to writing theater. Ultimately, they agree that Chikamatsu is knowledgeable and his texts are "good," meaning that they are beautiful and that Chikamatsu is well-versed in Buddhist, Confucian, and military texts. Although the first speaker is more often quoted as evidence that the importance of playwrights was only begrudgingly acknowledged, the overall dialogue shows that the importance of Chikamatsu as a playwright was already starting to be recognized positively, and that "*jōruri* playwright" was starting to develop as an independent occupation.

By the time he died, Chikamatsu was widely recognized as the first prominent *jōruri* author (*sakusha* 作者), and was extremely popular. For instance, *Imamukashi ayatsuri nendaiki*, published only two years after Chikamatsu's death, says that "Chikamatsu Monzaemon is a god of writers. He wrote more than one hundred *jōruri* in his life. Although there are ones that became hits and there are ones that didn't, there's nothing that is bad to read."[84] Here, the author, Nishizawa Ippū, admits that not all of Chikamatsu's works were necessarily successful as performances, but they were appreciated as literature. *Honchō seji danki* 本朝世事談綺 (*Stories of Worldly Affairs in Japan*, 1734), like other contemporary texts on *jōruri*, says that "Chikamatsu is the beginning point of early modern writers... he is commonly called 'the saint of authors.'" Similarly, an essay on playwriting techniques in the late Edo period entitled *Kezairoku* 戯財録 (*Valuable Notes on Playwriting*, 1801) claimed that "by reading one hundred *jōruri*

[84] *Imamukashi ayatsuri nendaiki*, 12-13.

scripts written by Chikamatsu, one would acquire the three ways[85] without [formal] education,"[86] emphasizing the spiritual merits of reading Chikamatsu's works. Chikamatsu's name had commercial value as well. Ryūtei Tanehiko 柳亭種彦 (1785-1842) remarked that, "Ever since Chikamatsu became popular, books do not sell well unless they say 'written by Chikamatsu,' so the bookstores pasted a publication note that says 'by Takemoto Chikugonojō[87] and Chikamatsu Monzaemon' on all the books [even the ones he did not write]."[88]

Playwrights were considered to be part of the theatrical troupe, and were deeply involved in the process of each theatrical production. According to *Shibai gakuya zue,* chanters, other performers, and patrons would gather in a teahouse (*chaya* 茶屋)[89] and listen to the playwright read the new play aloud. This event was called the *naiyomi* 内読, or inside reading. Performers would give input on the script respecting its performability. The *sōyomi* 惣読, or general reading, happened after the playwright revised the original draft based on this feedback. At the *sōyomi*, the playwright read the entire play in front of the other troupe members. The playwright was also present and read the script at the first rehearsal of the puppets to determine their movements

[85] Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism.

[86] *Kezairoku*, in Kokusho kankōkai, ed., *Zoku enseki jisshu* vol. 1, Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1908, 417. This is a *kabuki* treatise written by Nyūgatei Ganyū, most probably Namiki Shōza (Shōzō) II, who was himself a *kabuki* playwright. See Katherine Saltzman-Li, *Creating Kabuki Plays: Context for* KEZAIROKU, *'Valuable Notes on Playwriting'* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010), 3-9.

[87] A later name for Takemoto Gidayū, the chanter who established the Takemoto-za theater and worked with Chikamatsu.

[88] Ryūtei Tanehiko. *Ryūtei jōruribon mokuroku* (1818). Mitamura Engyo and Yamada Seisaku, eds., *Mikan zuihitsu hyakushu* vol. 18 (Tokyo: Beisandō, 1928).

[89] This was not just a place that offered tea, but rather a "*shibai-chaya* 芝居茶屋," a restaurant that was closely associated with a theater and that offered food and drinks for the theatergoers.

(*aradate* 荒立). Although it is not clear when these particular practices started, we can infer from this record that the playwrights were required to work closely with the performers, and orchestrate the rehearsals, especially during the early stages of the production.[90]

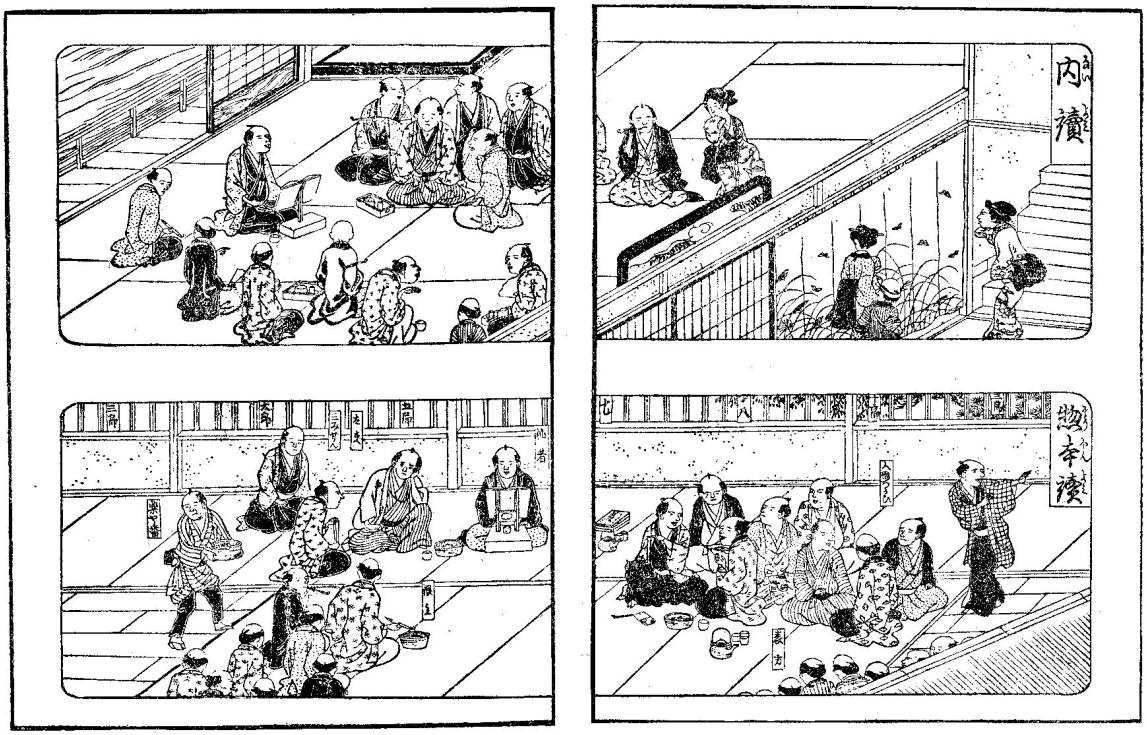


Figure 10: *Shibai gakuya zue, naiyomi* (top) and *sōhonyomi* (*sōyomi*) (below). The figure in front of the book stand in both illustrations is the playwright (*sakusha*).

Chikamatsu was given a dedicated room for writing (s*akusha beya* 作者部屋) in around 1714, after *Kokusen'ya kassen* was a huge hit. This room was not merely an indication of Chikamatsu's importance in the theater; it was also a place for Chikamatsu to train his apprentices. In his later days, he starts appearing as an "advisor/editor (*tensaku* 添削)" for the

[90] For more detailed English account of the preparation for the first day's performance of a puppet play, see Gerstle, 22-24.

younger generation of playwrights, such as Takeda Izumo I and Matsuda Wakichi 松田和吉 (later known as Bunkōdō 文耕堂).[91] Having a *sakusha beya* enabled multiple playwrights to collaborate with each other. In time this became indispensable, as the plots of the *jidaimono* plays became increasingly long and complicated, requiring multiple authors.

New *jōruri* (*tōryū jōruri*) had roughly three generations of major playwrights, starting from when Chikamatsu Monzaemon was first credited as a playwright in 1686. The first generation is represented by Chikamatsu Monzaemon and his rival, Ki no Kaion 紀海音 (1663-1742). After Chikamatsu's death, two playwrights are often cited as the most notable: Namiki Sōsuke from the second generation and Chikamatsu Hanji from the third generation.[92] After Chikamatsu Hanji's death, *jōruri* became more "classical theater" than "contemporary theater." The repertoire ossified through repeated performances of popular existing plays, and not many new plays were written after 1799.[93] This dissertation examines the works of three major

[91] See Nagatomo, 38-39.

[92] Kawatake Shigetoshi claims that, "While there were more than twenty playwrights who signed their names to *jōruri* texts after Chikamatsu, ultimately speaking, it would not be inappropriate to say that Namiki Sōsuke (Senryū) and Chikamatsu Hanji are the only two among them to whom one need pay attention." Kawatake Shigetoshi, *Nihon engeki zenshi*, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1964), 486. Uchiyama Mikiko's *Jōrurishi no jūhasseiki* (Tokyo: Bensei shuppan, 1989) focuses on the playwrights, Chikamatsu, Sōsuke, and Hanji. Uchiyama also examines Takeda Izumo II along with Sōsuke. Her study on Sōsuke helped raise scholarly attention to Sōsuke's work, especially after the 1990s. More recently, attempts have been made to examine other playwrights' plays as well, especially Bunkōdō. Kuroishi Yōko's *Chikamatsu igo no ningyō jōruri* focuses on Chikamatsu, Bunkōdō, and Hanji. (Kuroishi avoids discussing Sōsuke because Sōsuke was addressed by Uchiyama very well), and Ito Risa's *Ningyo jōruri no doramatsurugi* examines Bunkōdō in addition to Chikamatsu, Sōsuke, and Hanji. Modern publications of anthologies of works of specific playwrights include Chikamatsu Monzaemon, Ki no Kaion, Namiki Sōsuke, Takeda Izumo, Bunkōdō, Suga Sensuke, and Chikamatsu Hanji, although multiple playwrights are often paired together, such as in *Sōsuke Izumo meisakushū*. Nishiki Bunryū, Nishizawa Ippū, and Hiraga Gennai also have anthologies that are mixed with other genres such as *ukiyozōshi* and *dangibon*.

[93] Recent scholarship is extending the examination of new plays written after Chikamatsu Hanji's death, especially *Taikōki*-related plays that experienced a boom during the Kansei period (1789-1801), such as *Ehon Taikōki* (1799). Nevertheless, the number of new plays written after the nineteenth century decreased significantly.

playwrights, one from each generation, Chikamatsu, Sōsuke, and Hanji, discussing the ways in which each playwright created, negotiated, made use of, or subverted genre conventions and social expectations when writing their plays.

The first generation lasted from 1686 to around 1725. This is the "birth of the genre" time. During this time, new *jōruri* (*tōryū jōruri*) was just beginning to differentiate itself from *kojōruri*, and playwrights could be said to be establishing the genre conventions rather than working within them. Chikamatsu wrote exclusively for the Takemoto-za theater, and its manager-chanter (*zamoto*), Takemoto Gidayū. Ki no Kaion, who would become Chikamatsu's main rival, began writing for Toyotake-za theater when it was reopened in 1707 following its earlier failure.[94] Kaion retired in Kyōhō 8 (1723), and Chikamatsu died in Kyōhō 10 (1725). As Yūda Yoshio points out, the rivalry and competition between Takemoto-za/Chikamatsu and Toyotake-za/Kaion pushed the development of the "new" *jōruri* genre forward.[95] Their rivalry was compared to famous historical pairings: "Monzaemon is like Hitomaro 人麻呂 and Kōmei

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[94] Toyotake-za was reopened by the head chanter, Toyotake Wakatayū (1681-1764), and head puppeteer, Tatsumatsu Hachirobei, who sought out Ki no Kaion to be their playwright.

Toyotake Kōzuke no shōjō started his career using the stage name Takemoto Uneme, and learned *jōruri* under Takemoto Gidayū. He became independent in Genroku 16 (1703) using the name Toyotake Wakatayū and created the Toyotake-za theater. In Shōtoku 5 (1715), Wakatayū took the name Kōzuke no shōjō, and finally became known as Echizen no shōjō in Kyōhō 16 (1731). See Kawaguchi Setsuko, "Toyotake Echizen no shōjō no katsuyaku," in Torigoe Bunzō, et. al. eds., *Ōgon jidai no jōruri to sono go* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1998), 25-46. Wakatayū was renowned for his naturally beautiful voice: "Perhaps because [Wakatayū] was born with a top-of-the-world talent, his voice was naturally extraordinary." *Chikuhō koji*, 25.

Hachirobei was the master puppeteer who specialized in female-role puppets, and played an important role in the performances of Chikamatsu's plays at Takemoto-za theater.

[95] Yūda, 253-255.

孔明. Kaion is like Akahito 赤人 and Chūtatsu 仲達."[96] During this time, the genre conventions were established, the performance routines of both theaters were organized, and the playwrights wrote each complete piece alone.

The second generation lasted from around 1725 to 1751, during which *jōruri* theater reached the peak of its popularity. The process of writing plays at Takemoto-za theater changed in the 1720s as Chikamatsu prepared to step down. The biggest change was the regular practice of co-authoring (*gassaku* 合作). As the plays became longer and more complicated, the playwrights started collaborating with each other to write each play, especially longer historical pieces. A senior playwright would serve as the main playwright (*tate-sakusha* 立作者), while the younger less-experienced writers would serve as supplemental playwrights (*waki-sakusha* 脇作者). While the exact way the plays were divided among the multiple playwrights is not well-documented, scholars have inferred that the main playwrights generally wrote the third and fourth acts, which are the most important acts in a *jidaimono* historical piece.[97]

Namiki Sōsuke is the most prominent playwright from the second generation's "Golden Age." Sōsuke first wrote for Toyotake-za theater, but after spending four years writing *kabuki* in Edo, he returned to writing *jōruri*, for the Takemoto-za theater. The works Sōsuke wrote for Toyotake-za theater incorporate dark realism, while his later works for Takemoto-za blended his

[96] *Hōgukago*, early Bunka (1804-17) period. In Nihon zuihitsu taisei henshūbu, ed., *Nihon zuihitsu taisei dai ni ki, 8.* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1994), 249. Kakinomoto no Hitomaro and Yamabe no Akahito are famous Manyoshu poets who are often referred to as a pair. Kōmei (Zhuge Liang) 諸葛亮孔明 and Chutatsu (Sima Yi) 司馬懿仲達 are rival military commanders from the Three Kingdom period (2-3CE), also often referred to as a pair.

[97] Uchiyama Mikiko makes a comparison between her hypothesis of the workings of the co-writing system and Mori Shū's hypothesis in her book (Uchiyama, 1989, 300). Also see Mori Shū "*Jōruri* gassakusha kō 1" *Jinbun kenkyū* 1 (1950): 81-106 and "*Jōruri* gassakusha kō 2" *Jinbun kenkyū* 2 (1951): 45-75.

signature dark realism with Takemoto-za's lighter, more idealized style. Co-writing with Takeda Izumo II and Miyoshi Shōraku 三好松洛, he produced some of the *jōruri*'s most popular plays, including the so-called "Three Masterpieces" of *jōruri*, *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* 菅原伝授手習鑑 (*Sugawara no Michizane and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, 1746), *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* 義経千本桜 (*Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees*, 1747), and *Kanadehon chūshingura* 仮名手本忠臣蔵 (*Chūshingura: The Treasury of Loyal Retainers*, 1748). *Jōruri* as a whole was extremely productive and popular during this period, which is called the "Golden Age" of *jōruri*. Sōsuke returned to Toyotake-za theater in 1750, but died in 1751 while writing his last play, *Ichinotani futaba gunki* 一谷嫩軍記 (*Chronicle of the Battle of Ichinotani*).

The third generation of significant *jōruri* playwrights lasted from around 1752 to 1783. During this period, Chikamatsu Hanji (1725-1783) wrote for Takemoto-za theater (1752-1783), while Suga Sensuke wrote for Toyotake-za theater (1770-1776). Chikamatsu Hanji is the most representative playwright from this period, and is often considered to be the last prominent *jōruri* playwright who consistently produced new and original *jōruri* plays.[98] Unlike earlier *jōruri* playwrights such as Chikamatsu Monzaemon and Namiki Sōsuke, Hanji studied as an apprentice in the s*akusha beya* (writers' room) for twelve years before making a debut as a *tate-sakusha* in

[98] Edo saw a brief resurgence in the creation of new plays in the Meiwa-Tenmei periods (1764-1788), which are still performed today. Among the *jōruri* playwrights in Edo were Fukuuchi Kigai (1728-1780) better known as Hiraga Gennai, a multi-talented scholar, artist, and writer; Utei Enba I 烏亭焉馬(1743-1822), a carpenter and a *gesaku* writer; Matsu Kanshi I 松貫四 (?-1798), also the owner of a teahouse servicing the Ichimura-za theater; Ki no Jōtarō 紀上太郎 (1747-1799), the pen name of Mitsui Takanari, a rich merchant who was the master of the Mitsui Nanke 三井南家 family; and Yō Yōtai 容楊黛 (dates unknown), who was also a doctor. Unlike the playwrights in Osaka who made their livings mainly as playwrights and wrote exclusively for a particular theater, these Edo playwrights were *jōruri* connoisseurs who engaged in other business or literary activities in addition to writing *jōruri* plays.

1762. *Jōruri*'s genre conventions were largely solidified by the mid eighteenth century, and were reflected and amplified by publications of *jōruri* histories and essays on playwriting techniques. The system of co-authorship that became the norm after Chikamatsu's death accelerated the establishment of generally accepted theatrical conventions that playwrights could share while co-writing and pass down to their apprentices. Because Hanji was a well-trained *sakusha* in this context, he was less innovative in creating and establishing new styles. Instead, Hanji was adept at *hamemono*, the art of weaving together plot elements adapted from multiple existing works into a synthetic whole. Hanji adapted plots, styles, and character-types from both earlier *jōruri* and contemporary *kabuki* plays (which were, in turn, heavily influenced by earlier *jōruri*),[99] as well as popular myths and folktales. Because of their close connections to *kabuki* plays, Hanji's works were readily adaptable and became popular as *kabuki* plays. Many of Hanji's works are still regularly performed in modern theater, as both *kabuki* and *jōruri*. In terms of sheer numbers, Chikamatsu Hanji's works are the most common plays still performed today.

Attitudes towards authorship underwent a revolution following the emergence of new *jōruri*. At the start of Chikamatsu's career, even the idea of crediting a playwright was controversial. By the time he died, he was revered as "a god of writers." Although the position of playwright began as little more than an adjunct to the chanters, its importance grew to the point that a playwriting manual entitled *Kezairoku* (1801) analogizes a theatrical troupe to a samurai army, and describes the playwrights as the strategists (*gunshi* 軍師).[100] New *jōruri* had roughly

[99] Suga Sensuke at Toyotake-za theater was another prominent playwright at the time. However, in contrast to Hanji, who wrote new plays, Sensuke was mostly engaged in rewriting existing *jōruri* plays, especially Chikamatsu Monzaemon's popular plays.

[100] Although written by a *kabuki* playwright, *Kezairoku* discusses both *kabuki* and *jōruri* productions in general. On theater production, *Kezairoku* says: "The theatre is our castle, the financial backer (*kinshu*) and the manager

three generations of major playwrights. The first established the genre and set it apart from *kojōruri*. The second brought the "Golden Age" and its multi-author masterpieces. The third worked within a mature genre by weaving together well-known plot elements into novel configurations. Chapter Two examines the works of Chikamatsu from the first generation; Chapter Three examines the works of Sōsuke from the second generation; and Chapter Four examines the works of Hanji from the third generation.

Female Character Types and Puppet Heads

Although contemporary commentaries on puppet heads are scarce, *Jōruri fu* 浄瑠璃譜 (*The History of Jōruri*, late eighteenth century) and *Shibai gakuya zue* 戯場楽屋図会 (*Illustrations of Backstage*, 1801-04?) indicate that in the late eighteenth century puppet heads were categorized according to character types, and were repainted and reused for characters from different plays within the same type. Thus, *jōruri*'s character types were limited by the number of distinct puppet heads. The list of the typical puppet heads provided by *Shibai gakuya zue* has nineteen male puppet heads, but only seven female puppet heads.[101] Individual characters sharing the same puppet head are further differentiated through different paint, costumes, and wigs. *Shibai gakuya zue*'s list of puppet heads significantly overlaps with the modern *bunraku* puppets.[102] Most of the puppet heads that are used today were made after World War II by Ōe

(*zamoto*) are the generals, the actors (*yakusha*) are the brave soldiers, and the playwrights (*sakusha*) are the strategists." 芝居は城郭、金主・坐元は大将、役者は勇士、作者は軍師なり *Kezairoku*, 416.

[101] Hattori Yukio, ed. *Shibai gakuya zue* (Tokyo: Kokuritsu gekijō geinō chōsashitsu, 1973), 86-87.

[102] Saitō Seijirō, *Bunraku kashira no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Atorie sha, 1943), 7-8. The only new puppet heads that were invented after the nineteenth century are special puppet heads created for unique characters, such as Oiwa in

Minosuke IV (1907-1997).[103] Modern puppets are about two-thirds life size, and are manipulated by three puppeteers (the *omozukai*, or main puppeteer, who manipulates the head and the right arm, the *hidarizukai*, or secondary puppeteer, who manipulates the left arm, and the *ashizukai*, the most junior puppeteer, who manipulates the feet) to create life-like movements. This section introduces the development of puppets used in *jōruri* plays, and their correspondences to character types, especially the female character types that I discuss in later chapters.

Female characters are often as important, if not more important, to a play's dramatic highlights than male characters. Explaining the general division of roles between male characters and female characters, the modern scholar Chikaishi Yasuaki explains that male characters "push the specific theatrical incident forward" while female characters' "main mission is to lament and grow sad with the male tragedy, and to express the tragic emotions."[104] In other words, the male characters serve to drive the plot forward while the female characters serve to deliver the emotional content. Accordingly, *jōruri* plays often place female protagonists at center stage during their dramatic heights.

Scholars generally believe that the correspondence between character types and particular puppet heads developed in the early-to-mid eighteenth century, largely driven by the main puppeteer at Takemoto-za theater, Yoshida Bunzaburō I (active 1724-1754). (Since male puppet heads are often named after a particular character from a particular play, it is possible to estimate when the correspondences between heads and character types arose.) Puppet designs were much

Tokaidō Yotsuya kaidan 東海道四谷怪談 (*Ghost Stories of Yotsuya*, 1825), Kamezasa in *Satomi Hakkenden* 南総里見八犬伝 (*The Eight Dog Chronicles*), etc.

[103] Most of the pre-war puppets were burned in 1945 during World War II.

[104] Chikaishi Yasuaki, *Ayatsuri jōruri no kenkyū zokuhen* (Tokyo: Kazama shobō, 1965), 158.

simpler throughout the *kojōruri* period and at the beginning of Chikamatsu Monzaemon's career. Puppets were manipulated by one puppeteer, and thus unable to move in a smooth or human-like manner. Wada Osamu suggests that puppets moved constantly throughout the play to provide rhythm and action to accompany the chanting.[105] It was during Chikamatsu's time, particularly in the 1720s and 30s, that advancements in puppet design and puppetry technique enabled playwrights to write more realistic plays that made use of the more human-like puppets. In turn, playwrights' desire to write more realistic plays pushed puppet makers and puppeteers to develop suitable puppets and techniques. In Kyōhō 12 (1727), a puppet's mouth and fingers were made to move for the first time, and the eyes were made to blink for the first time in *Settsu no kuni Nagara no hitobashira* 摂津国長柄人柱 (*The Human Pillar of Nagara in Settsu*). In Kyōhō 15 (1730), the eyeballs of a male puppet were made to move for the first time in *Kusunoki Masashige gunpō jitsuroku* 楠正成軍法実録 (*A True Record of Kusunoki Masashige's Military Discipline*). The most important development of puppetry technique, three-person manipulation of puppets, was invented in Kyōhō 19 (1734).[106] In Genbun 1 (1736), the puppet of Hangaku, the female warrior, in *Wada kassen onna maizuru* 和田合戦女舞鶴 (*The Battles of Wada and the Female Dancing Crane*) was made twice as big as a normal puppet.[107] Despite some lingering

[105] Wada Osamu. "Chikamatsu to jōruri: Shōne naki deku no waza," in Kōbe joshi daigaku koten geinō kenkyū sentā, ed., *Chikamatsu saihakken: Hanayagi to kanashimi* (Osaka: Izumi shoin, 2010), 120-143, especially 131-133.

[106] Saitō, 7-9. These changes were not necessarily applied to all puppets immediately following their introduction, but they generated enough excitement that people took notice and recorded them.

[107] Saitō, 9-10.

efforts to introduce additional puppet heads,[108] the roster of character types and corresponding puppet heads generally solidified following the "Golden Age."

There are some important differences between the male puppet heads and female puppet heads. While male puppets can be categorized into general types according to their age, class, and moral alignment, there are also more detailed distinctions between several heads within these general categories. All of the names are taken from plays of Takemoto-za theater that were first performed between 1705 and 1753.[109] Below is a table of the names, salient characteristics, and the origins of the names of the male puppet heads. Although the nineteenth-century list of puppet heads in *Shibai gakuya zue* significantly overlaps with the list of modern *bunraku* puppets, there are some inconsistencies and some name changes between the two lists. This table uses the modern names in cases of discrepancies.

[108] Some special puppet heads, especially female villains and monsters, such as Oiwa from *Tokaidō Yotsuya kaidan*, were created in the nineteenth century under the strong influence of Edo *kabuki*. Also, there were some new *bunraku* puppet plays that required the invention of new puppets after the Meiji period.

[109] Saitō, 7-9.

Male Puppet Heads and Character Types[110]

General Class	Name	Characteristics	Origin
Morally Good, Middle- Aged	Bunshichi[111] 文七	Main tragic hero who makes big sacrifices in the play. Widely used.	Kanpō 2 (1742) Takemoto-za *Otokodate itsutsu karigane*
	Danshichi 団七	Ō-Danshichi (big Danshichi) is often used for a strong samurai hero.	Enkyō 2 (1745) Takemoto-za *Natsumatsuri Naniwa kagami*
	Kenbishi 検非違使	Similar to Bunshichi, but more honest and straightforwardly kind. Widely used.	Hōei 2 (1705) Takemoto-za *Yōmei tennō shokunin kagami*
	Kōmei[112] 孔明	Elegant and wise. Often used for higher-ranking wise samurai.	Kyōhō 9 (1724) Takemoto-za *Shokatsu Kōmei kanae gundan*
Morally Evil, Middle- Aged	Kintoki 金時	Originally used for a good character (Sakata no Kintoki), but later came to often be used for rough villain samurai.	Hōei 4 (1707) Takemoto-za *Shuten Dōji makura kotoba*[113]
	Danshichi 団七	Ko-Danshichi (small Danshichi) is often used for petty villains.	Enkyō 2 (1745) Takemoto-za *Natsumatsuri Naniwa kagami*

[110] This chart is based on Saitō's *Bunraku kashira no kenkyu* and Ōnishi Shigetaka, *Bunraku ningyō no geijutsu* (Tokyo: Engeki shuppansha, 1968).

[111] Bunshichi is the most widely used puppet head. According to *Jōruri fu* (in Iwamoto Kattōshi, ed., *Enseki jisshu* vol. 2 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1907)), 117-120, Karigane Bunshichi was not the first character that the puppet head was used for. The puppet head was first used for the hero Susanoo-no-mikoto in Takemoto-za theater's *Nihon furisode hazime* 日本振袖始 (*The Origins of Furisode in Japan*, 1718) and was reused for Issun Tokubei in *Natsumatsuri Naniwa kagami* 夏祭浪花鑑 (*The Summer Festival: A Mirror of Osaka*, 1745, Takemoto-za), before being reused for the character Bunshichi. Accordingly, this puppet was sometimes also called "Issun." *Shibai gakuya zue* lists "Susano-o," "Issun," and "Bunshichi" separately, but "Bunshichi" is the only variant that is still in use today.

[112] Kōmei is not included in the list of puppet heads in *Shibai gakuya zue*, but there are two puppet heads in the list that are considered to be similar to Kōmei: Yuranosuke in *Kanadehon Chūshingura* and Tenjin (Sugawara no Michizane) in *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* (1746). Today, "Kōmei" is used for both of these characters.

[113] The origin of this puppet is not so clear. It is not included in the list in *Shibai gakuya zue*, and not mentioned in *Jōruri fu*. I listed the oldest known play featuring Sakata no Kintoki among Gidayū *jōruri* based on Saitō Seijirō's study. (Saitō, 22).

Morally Good, Young	Genda 源太	Handsome young man. Often used for a "*yatsushi*" type of character, an aristocrat disguised as a low-class man.	Genbun 4 (1739) Takemoto-za *Hirakana seisuiki*
	Wakaotoko 若男	Literally means "young man." Almost the same as Genda, but a bit younger. Often used for characters who die young.	N/A (Probably started as a type of Genda.)
	Oniwaka 鬼若	Young man in his teens, with extreme physical strength.	Kyōhō 16 (1731) Takemoto-za *Kiichi Hōgen sanryaku no maki*
Morally Evil, Young	Darasuke 陀羅助	Petty villain.	Hōreki 3 (1753) Takemoto-za *En no Gyōja Ōmine sakura*
Morally Good, Old	Kiichi 鬼一	Old samurai on the good side. Stern-looking, often used for a tragic character in historical plays.	Kyōhō 16 (1731) Takemoto-za *Kiichi Hōgen sanryaku no maki*
	Shūto 舅	Literally means "father-in-law." Often used for a kind old man.	N/A (Probably started as a type of Kiichi)
	Shiratayū 白太夫	Serious and plain old man who lives in the countryside.	Enkyō 3 (1746) Takemoto-za *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami*
	Masamune 正宗	Disgraced old man who used to be a prestigious samurai.	Kanpō 1 (1741) Takemoto-za *Shin usuyuki monogatari*
	Shōnin[114] 上人	High priest. Elegant and dignified.	Kyōhō 3 (1718) Takemoto-za *Nichiren shōnin ki*
Morally Evil, Old	Ōjūto 大舅	Variation of "shūto." Often used for a primary villain.	N/A (Variation of shūto)
	Toraō 虎王	Stubborn and vulgar old villain samurai. Often used for a betrayer.	Kyōhō 10 (1750) Takemoto-za *Daidairi Ōtomo no Matori*
Morally Good, Clownish	Matahei 又平	Humorous good-hearted samurai.	Hōei 5 (1708) Takemoto-za *Keisei hangonkō*
	Decchi 丁稚	Humorous servant.	N/A

[114] Shōnin includes both young and old priests.

Morally Evil, Clownish	Yokanbei 与勘平	Often used for low-ranked servants and humorous villains.	Kyōhō 19 (1734) Takemoto-za *Ashiya Dōman ōuchi kagami*

There are also puppet heads for children and trivial characters, and specialized puppet heads for more specific uses. As you can see from the chart, male characters, and morally good male characters in particular, are subdivided by fine distinctions according to their personalities and physical characteristics.

In contrast to the male puppet heads, the types of female puppet heads seem to have solidified earlier in the eighteenth century. There is a smaller variety of female puppet heads, and most of them are named after a general character type, rather than a specific character's name. There are only five basic types of female puppet heads. Three puppet heads are distinguished by age[115] – the young woman in her teens called *musume*; the adult woman in her twenties to forties, generally called *fukeoyama* or *toshima*; and the elderly woman called *baba* or *rōjo* – and two puppet heads are attributed to specific occupations – the courtesan called *keisei* and the maid called *ofuku*. There is also a special puppet head called *gabu* attributed to a young female character who transforms into a monster that was used for characters such as Tamate gozen,

[115] That the types of female puppet heads are primarily distinguished by age reflects the typical view of a woman's life cycle in the Edo period. In *Seken musume katagi* 世間娘気質 (*Characters of Worldly Young Women*, 1717), a contemporary *ukiyozōshi* depicting different types of young urban women, the author Ejima Kiseki begins the book as follows: "*Musume* (young woman) turns to *yome* (wife). *Yome* turns to *shūtome* (mother-in-law). *Shūtome* transforms into *baba* (old woman)." Ejima Kiseki, *Seken musume katagi*, in Hachimonjiyabon kenkyūkai, ed, *Hachimonjiyabon zenshū, vol. 6* (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1994), 479. This makes a stark contrast with his other "character book" of young men (*Seken musuko katagi* 世間子息気質, *Characters of Worldly Young Men*, 1715) that begins with: "At the age of eight, people start learning Shōgaku, and at the age of fifteen, Daigaku." Ejima Kiseki, *Seken musuko katagi*, in Hachimonjiyabon kenkyūkai, ed, *Hachimonjiyabon zenshū, vol. 6* (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1994), 3. The life of a woman is clearly divided into several stages based on her age and domestic (familial) role, while the life of a man is not so defined.

Kiyohime, and Kasane.[116] Finally, there are also special puppet heads for the rare female villains, *Yashio* and *Bakuya*. Here is a chart of female puppet heads:

Types of Female Puppet Heads[117]

Age/General Type	**Morally Good**	**Morally Evil**
Young (teens)	musume	N/A
Adult (twenties to forties)	fukeoyama/toshima (adult woman)[118]	Yashio (adult female villain, rarely used. Name origin: The female villain, Yashio, in *Meiboku Sendai hagi*, first performed at Yūkiza theater in Edo in Tenmei 5 (1785).[119])
	keisei (courtesan)	
Old	baba	warubaba (subtype of baba, comical vulgar old woman, petty but not villainous)
		Bakuya (evil old woman who commits murder. Rarely used. Name origin: The old female villain in *Mikenjaku zo no mitsugi*, first performed in Takemoto-za theater in 1729)
Clownish	Ofuku (often used as a comical maid)	N/A
Special Effects	*Gabu* (a beautiful woman who transforms into a monster.) (Figure 11)	

[116] Kasane is listed as one of the representative types of female puppet heads in *Shibai gakuya zue*, 216 (manuscript) and 86-87 (print).

[117] This chart is based on Saitō's *Bunraku kashira no kenkyū*, and Onishi Shigetaka's *Bunraku ningyō no geijutsu*, among others.

[118] *Shibai gakuya zue* differentiates adult women into *midai* (*daimyō*'s wife) and *nyōbō* (low-ranked samurai or townsman's wife) (*Shibai gakuya zue*, 216 (manuscript) and 86-87 (print)), but in modern plays there is only one puppet head for adult women, and further differentiation is done via wigs, paint, clothing, and so on. It is unclear whether *midai* and *nyōbō* were once two distinct puppet head types and one has been lost, or *Shibai gakuya zue* was describing two character types that used the same head.

[119] Although the name comes from a later play, this puppet head was first used for the character of Iwane in *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu*, who is discussed in Chapter Three.

Female puppets are generally less capable of fine movement than male ones. Most of the female puppets do not have feet, and their faces generally do not have any moving parts, as compared to some male puppet heads that could have their eyeballs, eyebrows, and mouths move. The only moveable facial part on some of the female puppets is the eyelids – some of the female puppet heads (the "*nemuri* ネムリ," or "sleep" variant, Figure 12) are able to blink in order to express sadness, pain, agony, or blindness. The underlying problem is a technical one – female puppet heads are supposed to look beautiful, but the seams and joints that come with moving parts make puppet faces look ugly or aged. Male puppet heads that are supposed to be handsome share a similar lack of capacity for fine motion. A clever workaround that adds expressiveness to the female puppet head without making the face ugly is a very small thin hook called a "mouth-needle" (Figure 13) where objects could be attached in order to express the action of biting a handkerchief or kimono sleeve to stop from crying out in a moment of grief or agony. Exceptions to this lack of moving parts are the *Yashio*, *Bakuya,* and *gabu* heads. Being evil, *Yashio* and *Bakuya* are not required to be beautiful,[120] thus their heads can contain more movable parts like the male puppets: their mouth and eyeballs can move. *Gabu* puppet heads possess the greatest capacity for movement of all because the entire point of the puppet is the dramatic transformation special effect.

[120] In *kabuki*, these female villains were performed by male-role actors, for the female-role actors were specialized in performing beautiful women. In the same manner, old women were not performed by female-role actors, but by specialized actors for performing elderly women called *kashagata* 花車方.



Figure 11: *Gabu* puppet head before and after transformation. (Barbara Adachi Collection, Columbia University Starr East Asian Library)



Figure 12: A *nemuri* (sleep) variant of a *fukeoyama* puppet head with closeable eyes.

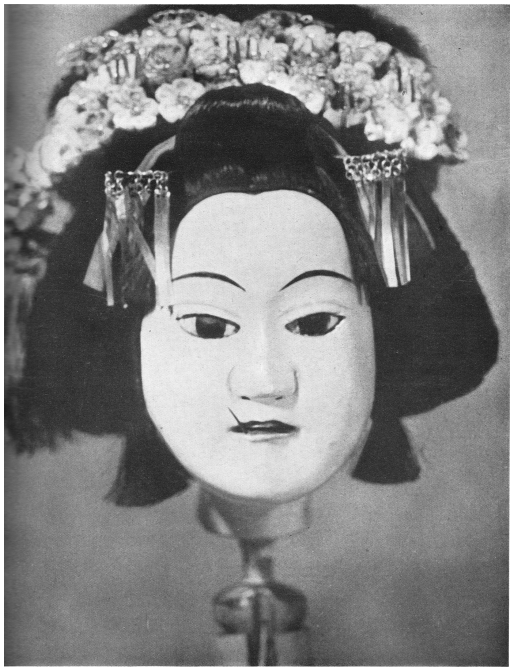


Figure 13: A *musume* puppet head with mouth needle.

The lack of variety of female puppet heads has two major consequences. First, because the same puppet head must be used for several character types, there is some bleed-through between those character types. For example, the *musume* puppet head is used for young women in general, regardless of their occupation – for young prostitutes in their teens, townsgirls, samurai daughters, and provincial daughters. All of these young women subtypes share some underlying traits: They are all beautiful, passionate, filial, and fundamentally good-natured. The chart below shows the mapping of some specific character types (generally shared between *jōruri* and *kabuki*) to their puppet heads. Second, because they are not so thoroughly defined by their puppet heads as the male characters, there is more room for individual characters to be defined through the script, chanting, and puppetry techniques. For example, the modern puppeteer, Yoshida Bungorō IV (1869-1962), told the puppet maker Minosuke IV that "the *musume* puppet head should be 'made vaguely.' I will put life into it."[121] So long as the playwright obeyed the baseline rules about the general type that corresponds to the puppet head, he was free to write a more complex, individual character. Note, however, that the baseline rules were inviolable. For instance, one simply could not write an evil young woman character. While young and adult women may have faults, only *baba*, old women who are passed the age of feminine beauty, may be villains (with the exceedingly rare and late-breaking exception of the *Yashio* type). In this way, female characters presented playwrights with simultaneously greater latitude for creativity and greater limitations. These two dynamics created a sort of feedback mechanism. Unlike the male characters, for which a really innovative character would result in a new puppet head, a really innovative female character would feed back into the overall image of

[121] Kameoka Noriko, *Bunraku zanmai* (Kyoto: Tankōsha, 2005), 19.

her puppet head, adding new layers to that general type of woman, which would in turn bleed through to all the other subtypes that shared that head.

Selected Examples of Female Character Types and Corresponding Puppet Heads

***Jōruri* Puppet Head**	**Specific Character Type (Shared with *Kabuki*[122])**	**Basic Characteristics**
musume (morally good, young) 娘	akahime (red princess) 赤姫	A young daughter of an aristocratic or samurai family who is passionately in love
	onna budō (female samurai) 女武道	A woman who is as skilled in martial arts and the way of the sword as a man.
	machi musume (townsgirl) 町娘	A young woman who lives in town. Outgoing, cosmopolitan, has relationship experience.
	inaka musume (country girl) 田舎娘	A provincial daughter. Naive, passionately in love.
	yūjo (prostitute) 遊女	A young prostitute. Often used in love suicide plays.
keisei (morally good, adult)	keisei (courtesan/prostitute) 傾城	High-rank or adult courtesan or prostitute.
toshima / fukeoyama (morally good, adult) 年増, 老女形	okugata (A wife of a samurai lord) 奥方	A wife of a samurai lord.
	Kata hazushi (Loose sided hairdo) 片はずし	A high-rank lady-in-waiting or high-rank samurai wife. A *kabuki* type, does not appear in *jōruri*.
	okujochū (lady's maid) 奥女中	An adult woman who works at a *daimyō*'s mansion.
	nyōbō (wife) 女房	A wife of a low-rank samurai in a *sewa* scene.
Yashio (morally evil, adult)	onna katakiyaku (female villain) 女敵役	A female villain who sides with the male villains and often tortures a protagonist. In *kabuki*, this role is not performed by female-role actors, but rather by male-role actors. Very rare in *jōruri*.

[122] The categorization of *kabuki*'s role types is taken from Watanabe Tamotsu, "Shintai no jōken," in Torigoe Bunzō, et. al. eds., *Kabuki no shintai ron* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), 50-56.

baba (morally good, old)	jidai baba (elderly woman in a historical play)	An elderly woman in a historical play, typically an old samurai mother, wife, or wet nurse, who is upright, loving, and strict. In *kabuki*, this role was traditionally not performed by female-role actors, but performed by *kashagata* actors, who specialized in performing elderly characters.
	sewa baba (elderly woman in a domestic play or domestic scene)	An elderly woman, typically a townsperson's mother or old wife, who is indulgent and doting. Also traditionally performed by *kashagata* actors in *kabuki*.

All of the puppet heads that are used for major female characters are represented among the female characters I discuss in Chapters Two, Three, and Four. The prostitute heroines discussed in Chapter Two and the provincial daughters discussed in Chapter Four are all *musume*, which is the most common female head type for major characters. Kiyohime, a provincial daughter who transforms into a monster discussed in Chapter Four, uses the special *gabu* puppet head. The stepmothers discussed in Chapter Three cover three different puppet heads. The older stepmothers are naturally *baba*, while the younger stepmothers are *fukeoyama*. Iwane, the only stepmother who is truly evil, uses the special *Yashio* puppet head.



Figure 14: Male puppet heads. From top to bottom, then left to right: Bunshichi, Ō-Danshichi, Kintoki; Chari (clown), Kōmei, Yokanbei; Wakaotoko, Kiichi, Masamune; Danshichi, Matahei, Kebiishi.



Figure 15: Female puppet heads. From top to bottom, then left to right: Fukeoyama, musume, baba; Yashio, keisei, ofuku.



Figure 16: A special puppet head called “Kasane,” a kind of “*gabu*.” The puppet head appears to be a beautiful young woman, but can instantly change into a monster thanks to a hidden mechanism.

Reception and Censorship

As *jōruri* grew extremely popular as urban entertainment, it also came to be harshly criticized by elite literati as a corrupting influence on society.[123] For instance, the Confucian scholar Dazai Shundai 太宰春台 (1680-1747) warned against the popularity of *jōruri* and samurai's involvement with it:

> Countless numbers of men and women in Edo have engaged in licentious behavior ever since *jōruri* came to be performed frequently. Among noble officers (貴き官人), not to mention lower-ranked officials (士大夫), there have countless cases since the beginning of the Genbun era (1736-1741) of men who have had relationships with other people's wives, have had their wives stolen, or have had relations with their relatives. This [*jōruri*] is truly an evil source of lasciviousness and hedonism.[124]

Criticisms often focus on the "licentious music" and the involvement of samurai class elites with the commoners' "low" entertainment. One style of chanting that was considered particularly licentious, the Bungo-bushi 豊後節 style, was banned by an edict issued during the Kyōhō Reforms.[125]

Despite these criticisms for *jōruri* as music, *jōruri* texts were often praised for both their literary and moral values, even by Confucian scholars. An early example is Hozumi Ikan 穂積以

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[123] This seems to be the fate of all forms of popular entertainment. For example, in *Brown v. Entertainment Merchants Association*, 131 S.Ct. 2729, 2737-38 (2011), U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia recounts how penny dreadfuls, motion pictures, radio dramas, comic books, television, music lyrics, and video games have each in their turn been denounced as a corrupting influence.

[124] Dazai Shundai. *Dokugo*, in Nihon zuihitsu taisei henshūbu, ed., *Nihon zuihitsu taisei daiikki* 17 *Kokon enkaku kō / Dokugo* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1975), 274.

[125] The Bungo-bushi style of chanting started in the end of the Kyōhō period and became extremely popular in Nagoya and Edo. It was used mainly for chanting stories of scandalous romantic affairs, such as double suicides and adultery. It met with several governmental restrictions during the Kyōhō Reform, starting from 1731, culminating in a complete ban in 1737. See Kasaya Kazuhiko, "Tokugawa Yoshimune no Kyōhō no kaikaku to Bungo-bushi torishimari mondai o meguru ichi kōsatsu," *Nihon kenkyū* 33 (Oct 2006): 11-28.

貫 (1692-1769), a Confucian scholar and admirer of Chikamatsu, who published *Naniwa Miyage* 難波土産 (*Souvenirs of Naniwa,* 1738), a book that includes Chikamatsu's ideas about *jōruri* puppet theater. In praising Chikamatsu, Hozumi says that "the writing style is superior; reflects Confucian, Buddhist, and Shinto ways; and incorporates proverbs and history, but not in a heavy-handed way," with realistic depictions of people of all ranks with humor, so "even noble people of high rank read them for entertainment."[126]

Because popular theater was so influential, the *bakufu* government required theaters to be licensed and controlled what could appear on stage. The first influential regulation of *jōruri* plays was issued in Kyōhō 7 (1722) as part of the Kyōhō Reforms. An edict was issued to regulate the publication of books. The provision most relevant to *jōruri* was a ban on depictions of matters related to the ruling Tokugawa family. This ban was reiterated[127] during the Kansei Reforms in Kansei 2 (1790).[128] In 1723, there was an edict banning performances of love suicide plays. The rationale behind this ban was that the exceedingly popular plays that romanticized love suicide were thought to encourage some people to actually commit love suicide.

Unlike *kabuki*, whose fluid nature necessitated in-person evaluation by censors at the theater,[129] *jōruri* plays were primarily censored in advance based on their scripts.[130] *Jōruri* scripts

[126] *Naniwa miyage*, 3.

[127] Enforcement of edicts regulating public morals tended to grow lax over time, sometimes leading to repeated edicts banning the same thing.

[128] Satō Yukiko, "Edo kōki gesaku no ken'etsu (Censorship of Gesaku in the Late Edo Period)," in Suzuki Tomi et. al. eds., *Censorship, Media and Literary Culture in Japan: From Edo to Postwar* (Tokyo: Shin'yōsha, 2012), 45.

[129] Umetada Misa, "Edo kabuki no ken'etsu (Censorship in Edo kabuki)," in Suzuki Tomi et. al. eds., *Censorship, Media and Literary Culture in Japan: From Edo to Postwar* (Tokyo: Shinyōsha, 2012), 33.

[130] In this sense, it was similar to the other forms of popular fiction that were subjected to advance censorship.

were submitted to the local censors in advance, and were performed only after they were approved. Accordingly, *jōruri* plays were rarely banned after performances began. On the rare occasions when plays were banned after performances began,[131] the supplemental playwrights were forced to retire and the scripts were never published, but the main playwrights seem to have gone unpunished.[132] More often, a belated objection resulted in modifications to the script to appease the censors.[133]

Enforcement of these edicts was inconsistent, and sometimes lax. For instance, despite the ban on depicting contemporary issues and matters related to the Tokugawa family, such plays were performed, thinly veiled as historical or mythical pieces with fictionalized character names that audiences could readily map to contemporary political figures.[134] Even love suicide plays were still performed after the ban in less central areas outside of Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo,

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However, *jōruri* had a different censorship system. In the Edo period, books were normally censored by the guild managers (*gyōji* 行司) of the publishers'guild (*nakama* 仲間), and received an official seal, before being published (Satō, 45), but *jōruri* did not have a guild system.

[131] For instance, the performances of *Nanbantetsu gotō no menuki* (1735, Toyotake-za) and *Taihei kabuto no kazari* (1770, Takemoto-za) were banned, and the scripts were not published. However, these plays were later rewritten under new titles. Uchiyama, 1989, 268.

[132] Such as Matsuda Wakichi 松田和吉 and Namiki Jōsuke 並木丈輔 in the case of *Nanbantetsu gotō no menuki*. Ibid.

[133] Several scholars, such as Uchiyama and Kōzu, examine different versions of the same script as well as the woodblocks to determine which parts were modified later. Some of these modifications are simple corrections of mistakes, but others reflect changing overt references to Tokugawa family members into more obscure ones. It is difficult to distinguish instances of script changes in response to governmental censorship from self-censorship in anticipation of governmental censorship.

[134] For example, there is a group of *jōruri* plays called "*Ōsaka gunki mono*" that are about the battle between the Toyotomi heir and the Tokugawa in Osaka (The Siege of Osaka, 1614-1615), starting from *Yoshitsune shin takadachi*, first performed in 1719 at Toyotake-za theater. The story was often set in the Kamakura period to avoid censorship.

particularly in Nagoya.[135] Generally speaking, there are three plausible explanations for the laxity of enforcement: first, geographical and political distance from the center of power; second, performative distance from "licentious" and "bodily" arts; and third, a tendency towards self-censorship that deflected governmental attention. Finally, it should be acknowledged that we cannot know the true volume of censorship because advance censorship often left no records.

Theater regulations were most strictly enforced in the city of Edo, the seat of the *bakufu* government. *Jōruri* was centered in Osaka, where the local people had their own cultural identity and identified strongly with the Toyotomi clan who had been defeated by the contemporary Tokugawa government. It seems plausible that local officials in Osaka were simply less enthusiastic about enforcing the *bakufu*'s rules.

Although the age of medieval prostitute-performers had passed, the performance arts were still associated with prostitution, and theater regulations were designed to guard against it. Accordingly, *kabuki* was subject to significant scrutiny. By contrast, *jōruri*'s use of puppets largely removed the problematic issues surrounding performers' bodies. Also, the trend towards appreciation of *jōruri* as written texts independent of the theater, encouraged by *jōruri*'s proponents who emphasized the virtues of its written form, contributed towards a view that considered it as "drama literature" to be appreciated more linguistically than sensually. Although the "licentious" chanting style of Bungo-bushi met with several restrictions during the Kyōhō Reforms, starting in Kyōhō 16 (1731) and ending with a complete ban in Genbun 2 (1737), the

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[135] Tokugawa Muneharu 徳川宗春, the lord of Owari, promoted theater and entertainment to boost the domain's economy, so love suicide plays were also performed indiscreetly. The most famous example is a new play written based on a failed love suicide incident in Kyōhō 17 (1732) entitled *Mutsumashizuki renri no tamatsubaki* 睦月連理玉椿. Kasaya, "Kenryoku to geinō," "Kenryoku to geinō." In Torigoe Bunzō, et. al. eds., *Kabuki to bunraku no honshitsu* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1997), 94.

mainstream Gidayū-bushi style of chanting was largely left alone.

As will be discussed more fully in the next section, *jōruri* developed genre conventions that, at least when viewed uncritically, reinforce the state-promoted social order. This can be considered a kind of self-censorship, or preemptive censorship; creating plays that embraced the socially-accepted ideology promoted an image of the genre as something clean, educational, and wholesome that did not require censorship. Despite the brief but intense popularity of *sewamono* domestic plays prior to the ban on love suicide plays in 1723, for most of its history, *jōruri* was focused on *jidaimono* historical plays in which virtue always conquers evil in the end.

Eventually, regulations that were fatal to organized *jōruri* puppet theater were issued during the Tenpō Reforms, starting in Tenpō 12 (1841). In Edo, performances at festivals, including *jōruri*, were banned during that year. In addition, *kabuki* and *jōruri* theaters were forced to move to a more peripheral area in Asakusa. In the following year, both female *jōruri* performers and the use of puppets were banned for all performances taking place at temples and shrines. In addition, the chanters and puppeteers were banned from wearing luxurious stage costumes, and a harsh salary cap was imposed. A series of strict edicts respecting performances in Osaka were also issued beginning in Tenpō 13 (1842). Performers were banned from owning rice fields and houses within the city limits, and they were banned from wearing formal kimonos outside of the theater. All performances at temples and shrines were banned in the same year. This effectively confined all performances – both *jōruri* and *kabuki* – to the five theaters in the Dōtonbori area. Forced to compete with *kabuki* for theater space, few *jōruri* plays were performed. In the following year (1843), the number of theaters was further reduced to only two,

forcing performers to go back to the old style of traveling entertainers.[136]

These edicts may strike modern readers as puzzling. The key to understanding the motivations for such seemingly arbitrary regulations is the idea that the mere existence of successful performers was a threat to the class system upon which the *bakufu* government depended. Performers were supposed to be outcasts, situated below the bottom of the social hierarchy. For a performer to be wealthy, popular, or stylish and trendsetting confused and undermined the class system. The economic recessions preceding each round of major reforms exacerbated matters by impoverishing the samurai class so that they were in reality poorer than the merchants who patronized the theater, and even some performers. Through this lens, these regulations make sense as a way of preserving the social order by putting should-be outcasts back in their place.

Self Censorship: Didacticism and *Jōruri* Conventions

Jōruri puppet theater has two major types of plays, domestic plays called *sewamono* and historical plays called *jidaimono*. *Sewamono* domestic drama is a newer genre that originated in *kabuki* and was introduced to *jōruri* in the early eighteenth century by Chikamatsu.[137] It depicts contemporary urban life, especially sensational incidents such as love suicides and murder cases. In this sense, they were something like today's tabloid newspapers. *Sewamono* were often subtly subversive because they portrayed low-ranked and outcast people as morally exemplary

[136] For more details about the influence of the Tenpō Reforms on *jōruri* theater, see Norizuki Toshihiko. "Bunraku no shibai to tenpō no kaikaku." In Torigoe Bunzō, et. al. eds., *Ōgon jidai no jōruri to sono go* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), 271-284.

[137] Please see Chapter Two for more details about the establishment of the *sewamono* genre.

characters. In contrast, *jidaimono* plays are set in the historical or mythical past with famous historical or legendary figures as characters. In a typical *jidaimono* piece, the principal characters can be divided into two sides, the good side called the *tachiyaku* and the bad side called the *katakiyaku*.[138] The *katakiyaku* usually plan to overturn the state, while the *tachiyaku* try to preserve the current social order. The play often focuses on low-ranked samurai on the *tachiyaku* side, whose sacrifices bring victory, but at a great price. Often circumstances require the low-ranked samurai to sacrifice the lives of their own wives or children rather than, or in addition to, themselves. The good are always rewarded in the end, but the dramatic tension of the victory and the bitter sacrifices the lower-ranked samurai have to make form the dramatic height of the play, rather than the victory itself.

The genre conventions of both *sewamono* and *jidaimono* were established during the time of Chikamatsu Monzaemon. *Chikuhō koji*, a contemporary text of *jōruri* history explains the difference between *sewamono* and *jidaimono* plays as follows: "The *sewa* plays love love, and the *jidai* plays are pure in honoring obligations."[139] To put it simply, *jidaimono* historical plays are more lofty, idealistic, and didactic, reinforcing exemplary models of Confucian behavior and depicting a plot structure that adheres to the principle of *kanzen chōaku* 勧善懲悪 (the promotion of good and punishment of evil), while *sewamono* domestic plays are more base and

[138] The terms "*tachiyaku*" and "*katakiyaku*" are slightly problematic if one employs their narrowest meanings, especially as they are used in *kabuki*. In *kabuki*, "*tachiyaku*" means "good male role," and the term "*tate-oyama*" is used to refer to good female roles, while "*katakiyaku*" means "(male) villains," since there are no female villains. (Female-role actors traditionally did not play the role of female villains. Instead, a male-role actor performed the role of female villains as well.) However, in modern *jōruri* scholarship, the terms are used in a wider sense: "*Tachiyaku*" refers to the good characters in general, both male and female, while "*katakiyaku*" refers to the evil characters in general.

[139] *Chikuhō koji*, 31.

realistic, depicting emotional aspects of human relations. *Jidaimono* historical plays are an older genre that originated in the *kojōruri* period and remained central to *jōruri* performances, while *sewamono* plays are much shorter pieces, performed as interludes or at the conclusion of longer historical pieces. After love suicide plays were banned in 1723, the number of standalone *sewamono* domestic pieces declined, and its conventions were incorporated into *sewa* scenes in historical *jidaimono* pieces. *Jidaimono*'s centrality is clear from the number of plays produced: Among the scripts that are extant today, there are more than 800 *jidaimono* plays, while there are only about 120 *sewamono* plays.[140] As Chikamatsu wrote in one of his plays, *jōruri*, especially *jidaimono jōruri*, were generally intended to provide "models of good and bad people 善悪人の鑑.[141]

Underlying the "good versus evil" narrative structure are the ideals of a feudal society, especially samurai warrior ideals. The *sine qua non* of "goodness" is "*giri* 義理," a sense of societal or feudal obligation and duty. Heroes are always loyal to their masters and filial to their parents, above all else. A *jidiamono jōruri* historical drama often focuses on a situation where a hero is confronted with a conflict between his sense of societal and feudal duty and his personal attachments and private emotions. As Chikaishi Yasuaki explains, the early-modern feudal ideal that exalts loyalty as the highest virtue is highlighted when the hero must sacrifice his family or

[140] Chikaishi, 1961, 162.

[141] In *Ikudama shinjū* 生玉心中 (*Love Suicide at Ikudama*, 1715), Chikamatsu wrote that, "generally speaking, both kabuki and jōruri are models of good and bad people (Chikamatsu Monzaemon, *Ikudama shinjū*, in Torigoe Bunzō, et. al., ed., *Chikamatsu Monzaemon shū, vol. 2, Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū 75* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1998), 353-354.

personal attachments and private emotions in order to fulfill his duty.[142] Edo-period text of the history of *jōruri* entitled *Chikuhō koji* explains the role of *jōruri* as follows: "While the text and plot of *jōruri* depict interesting societal events on the surface, they have the truth of *kanzen chōaku* at a deeper level... [*Jōruri* is] a means that teaches the truths of the gods, Buddhist sutras, ephemerality, affection, sorrow, and battles, and sets aright the five relationships of master-retainer, father-son, husband-wife, brothers, and friends. *Jōruri* should be trusted, viewed, listened to, and wholeheartedly chanted."[143]

In traditional Japanese literature, works of fiction are at the bottom of the traditional genre hierarchy. They were typically slighted as "*kyōgen kigyo* 狂言綺語," frivolous lies lead readers into moral misbehavior. *Jōruri*, which often fictionalized events in order to entertain audiences, was branded "*kyōgen kigyo*" in the same way. In response, *jōruri*'s proponents emphasized the linguistic sophistication and moral value of the texts, focusing on the playwrights' deep understanding of Confucian, Buddhist, and literary classics. This is especially true after the emergence of *sewamono* domestic dramas, when *jōruri* became especially popular by depicting contemporary scandalous affairs, which made the *bakufu* government uneasy. A popular defense of *jōruri*, echoed in *Chikuhō koji*, was to present *jōruri* as an expedient means to provide audiences proper Confucian, Buddhist, and Shintoist guidance. A mid-eighteenth-century text commemorating the growth of Toyotake-za theater uses the term "*kanzen chōaku*" (the promotion of good and punishment of evil) as the central lesson of *jōruri*: "Today's popular song

[142] Chikaishi, 1961, 99. This does not mean that the hero can choose his or her public duty over personal attachment without difficulty. The inner suffering and conflict the hero experiences in sacrificing his or her personal attachments serve to enhance the nobility of the sacrifice and glorify the victims who were sacrificed.

[143] *Chikuhō koji*, 28.

is a twelve-act *jōruri*, and it consistently depicts the way of *kanzen chōaku*."[144] The term *kanzen chōaku* also appears in *Ongyoku hanakenuki* 音曲はなけぬき (*Some Un-Serious Notes on Music*,[145] 1797) which claims that *jōruri* is a means to teach Confucian ways to low-class people and children: "Jōruri is a performance that popularlizes the ways of righteousness, filial piety, chastity, and loyalty; educates the foolish populous; and teaches them a lesson... Through performance, *jōruri* presents the way of *kanzen chōaku* in front of people's eyes, and teaches a lesson for young and old, and for children."[146] Because *jōruri* was considered to be a "low" form of entertainment that was potentially disruptive to the social order, the genre developed a self-defensive rhetoric, similar to defenses of *monogatari* fiction, originating in Mahayana Buddhism and claiming a didactic role by repainting its fictional and sensational nature as an expedient means of religious instruction.

In addition to its didactic and educational roles, *jōruri* was also promoted as something that moves people's hearts and provides "*nagusami*," a combination of amusement and spiritual salvation in a Buddhist sense.[147] Texts explaining the role of *jōruri* often parody the *kana* preface of *Kokinshū* as a way of comparing *jōruri* to *waka*, which the preface depicted as a source of

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[144] *Hōgyoku fuji no kodama*, in Geinōshi kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei vol. 7: Ningyō jōruri*, (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1975), 169.

[145] Literally "Music Nose-Hair Tweezers." Although actually serious, the author pretends to make light of his arguably frivolous topic in the preface, fictitiously claiming that he jotted down these thoughts on his handkerchief. This title was something of a challenge to translate.

[146] *Hanakenuki*, in Geinōshi kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei vol. 7: Ningyō jōruri*, (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1975), 231.

[147] "*Nagusami*" is not just amusement or entertainment, but also has an aspect of religious consolation of the spirit. C. Andrew Gerstle, "Gidayū and the Individualistic Spirit of Osaka theater" in James L. McClain and Osamu Wakita, eds., *Osaka: The Merchants' Capital of Early Modern Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 121.

nagusami.[148] Like the *Kokinshū* preface, *jōruri* proponents claimed that *jōruri* can move people's hearts, regardless of their class, rank, or sex. It is something that everyone can enjoy: "[A]mong all living beings, how can we doubt that every one loves this genre? Without using force, it moves people's hearts, making a mother-in-law who hates her daughter-in-law feel pity, smoothes the bonds between man and woman, and consoles the hearts of old skinflints – such a thing is *jōruri*."[149]

The traditional five-act structure of *jidaimono jōruri* historical plays, which was established around Chikamatsu Monzaemon's time,[150] was intended to convey the lessons of *kanzen chōaku* through entertainment. "*Seikyoku shinshiki daidō no koto* 声曲新式大道之事" ("On the New Great Way of Chanting")[151] compares the overall structure of the five acts to the

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[148] A Heian period *waka* anthology, *Kokin wakashū* (*Kokinshū* for short), has a *kana* preface that explains the beneficial effects of *waka* as follows: "The songs of Japan take the human heart as their seed and flourish as myriad leaves of words. As long as they are alive to this world, the cares and deeds of men and women are endless, so they speak of things they hear and see, giving words to the feelings in their hearts. Hearing the cries of the warbler among blossoms or the calls of the frog that lives in the waters, how can we doubt that every living creature sings its song? Not using force, it moves heaven and earth, makes even the unseen spirits and gods feel pity, smoothes the bonds between man and woman, and consoles the hearts of fierce warriors – such a thing is poetry." "Kokinshū The Kana Preface," Lewis Cook, tr., in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Traditional Japanese Literature: An Anthology, Beginnings to 1600* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 148-149. *Chikuhō koji*, for instance, has a parody section of this entitled "*Jōruri* Kokin no jo." It says "*Jōruri* takes the human heart as its seed and turns it into myriad *shukō*. As long as they are alive to this world, the cares and deeds of men and women are endless, so they create things they hear and see, giving words to the feelings in their hearts. Seeing the *sewa* plays that love love, and the *jidai* plays that are pure in honoring obligations, among all living beings, how can we doubt that every one loves this genre? Without using force, it moves people's hearts, making a mother-in-law who hates her daughter-in-law feel pity, smoothes the bonds between man and woman, and consoles the hearts of old skinflints – such a thing is *jōruri*." *Chikuhō koji*, 81.

[149] *Chikuhō koji*, 31. *Tōkan zasshi* (Hōreki 9; 1759) also parodies the *kana* preface. See *Tōkan zasshi*, in Geinōshi kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei vol. 7: Ningyō jōruri* (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1975), 35.

[150] During *kojōruri*'s time, a six-act format was standard in Edo, while a five-act format was standard in the Kamigata area. See Chikaishi, 1961, 19.

[151] These are supposedly the words of Toyotake-za theater's founder Toyotake Wakatayū recorded in Nagatotayū and Mizutani Hōgin, *Zōho jōruri ōkeizu*, vol. 5 in Engei chinsho kankōkai, ed., *Ongyoku sōsho*, vol.3 (Tokyo: Engei chinsho kankōkai, 1914), 7-12.

five Confucian concepts.[152] By the mid eighteenth century, the characteristics of each act and the order of importance of each scene were well established and explained in books such as *Chikuhō koji*. Indeed, from the early eighteenth century, "the five-act style was observed as the iron rule of the way of *jōruri*, and affected the way the playwrights wrote, the chanters chanted, and the puppeteers performed" and even determined the ranks among the playwrights and performers.[153]

The five acts are designed to form a mountain-like progression, with the climactic point at the middle. The third and the fourth acts, especially the third act, represent the climax of the play, while the first and the second act introduce and organize the characters and events that will lead to the dramatic height, and the fifth act is the conclusion of the play that represents a happy and auspicious ending. This corresponds with the performance order of the five kinds of *nō* plays.[154] Each act consists of multiple scenes, referred to as a *kuchi* 口 (mouth, or introduction), *naka* 中 (middle), and *kiri* 切 (closing). The *kiri* is the most important part of the act, since each act develops like a crescendo that ends with its own climax that connects to the *kuchi* of the next act.

Because of this, the main playwright was believed to have been in charge of writing the

[152] "A little while ago, Elder Chikamatsu established the five act style by attributing each act to the five concepts of Confucianism." Nagatotayū, 8-12. According to this text, each act of a *jidaimono jōruri* play is associated with one of the five Confucian principles – *jin*, *gi*, *rei*, *chi*, *shin*, in that order.

[153] Chikaishi, 1961, 52.

[154] Chikaishi, 1961, 21-22. The first act is like *waki nō* (god *nō*); it is introductory and auspicious with many high-rank characters (often including the emperor). The second act is like *shura nō* (battle *nō*); typically, it depicts a battle between the good characters and the bad characters, and ends with the defeat of the good side. The third act is like *kazura-nō* (women *nō*); it depicts the tragedy of the low-ranked hero and his family members, often including a woman's lament or bitter sacrifice. The fourth act is like *zatsu nō* (miscellaneous *nō*) or *genzai nō* (contemporary *nō*); it often focuses on the "contemporary" side characters. The sacrifices made in the third act start taking effect, often granting supernatural power to the good side in order to defeat the bad side. The fifth act is like *shūgen*, a celebratory piece; the proper order is restored, sacrifices are recognized and rewarded, and the play concludes with celebratory remarks.

third and fourth acts. In addition, the most well-trained and skilled chanter was in charge of chanting the *kiri* of the third act, which was considered the heart of the play:

> The parts the chanters consider the most important are the grand opening (*daijo* 大序[155]) and the *kiri* of the third act; the second most important are the *kiri* and *michiyuki*[156] of the fourth act; thirdly, the *kiri* of the second act and the *kuchi* of the third act; and fourthly, the *kiri* of the first act and the *kuchi* of the fourth act... The two founders [Gidayū and Wakatayū] performed accordingly, and distributed parts accordingly. [157]

The *kiri* of the third act is so important and difficult that a contemporary text laments that only a few chanters were able to perform the third act satisfactorily: "Although it's been nearly two hundred years since *jōruri* started, up until today there have been only five or six chanters who could chant the third act properly."[158]

Over time, the fifth act, in which the villain is punished and power is restored to the good side (the emperor, lord, etc.), became increasingly short and formulaic, and eventually started being omitted from stage performances in the late eighteenth century. However, it was included when the texts were published.[159] The sacrosanctity of the five-act structure, which lasted a century, is demonstrated by the fifth act's survival even after playwrights clearly had little use for

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[155] The *kuchi* of the first act is customarily called the "*daijo*," or grand opening.

[156] The fourth act often has a "*michiyuki*" or journey scene of the main characters as a choreographic and musical piece.

[157] *Chikuhō koji*, 28.

[158] *Hanakenuki*, 232. Two hundred years is counting from the beginning of the *kojōruri* period.

[159] Lamenting the omission of the fifth act, *Hanakenuki* states, "Recent *jōruri* plays lack the fifth act. On the rare occasions when the fifth act is written, it only contains meaningless things for about half a page, and it is not written until the text is published. The fifth act is reluctantly written, only because it is necessary in order to publish the script. Recently, the audience of the theater is short-tempered. One would jump to the conclusion, and understand the fifth act as punishing evil, thinking it is not necessary to see, and it is not necessary to be performed." *Hanakenuki*, 235.

it.

The relative importance of the acts that was widely recognized in the eighteenth century is reflected in today's repertoire. Since *jidaimono jōruri* plays were generally too long to perform from beginning to end, performances started being done in the "*midori* 見取り" (selected-scenes) style starting in the 1930s. Selected popular acts or scenes from a play were performed independently and repeatedly, while other acts and scenes were simply not performed, and sometimes even lost and forgotten. The popular scenes that were typically performed often tended to be the *kiri* of the third act, followed by the *kiri* of the fourth act. The center of the third act was the "*shū-ba* 愁場," or "*shūtan-ba* 愁嘆場," where the heroes face great difficulties, such as the need to sacrifice their children or wives, and either reveal their inner conflicts or conceal them and seemingly act coldly, only to reveal their true agony in the end. This feeling of "*shū*" or "*urei*," both represented by the *kanji* 愁, meaning "sorrow" or "grief," is the central feeling and theme in *jōruri* plays. *Jōruri* is mainly a tragedy that calls for the audiences' sympathy and stirs up their pathos; and the heroes' sorrow over the sacrifices they must make in the third act to bring victory to their masters is where the heart of the play exists.

Another important aspect of the third act was to show the purest manifestation of Confucian ideals and morality. While the first and second acts depict the initial defeat of the good people who follow Confucian morals, the third act depicts the beginning of the reversal of fortune between the *tachiyaku* and *katakiyaku*, focusing on how the good low-ranked samurai remains loyal to his master throughout his difficulties, often through a sacrifice of or by a low-ranked woman he cares for, thus opening a pathway for the victory of the *tachiyaku* side.

According to a contemporary treatise on the composition of *jōruri*, the third act should represent themes such as obligation, loyalty, and chastity, and the characters, music, and text should all be exemplary according to "the way of heaven."[160] Combined with the central theme of "*shū*," the important task of the third act was to present the highly moral and exemplary heroes acting in the most Confucian, idealized way, through faithfully paying a painful price in terms of their family and personal attachments and emotions.

The Confucian theme of the fourth act is "*chi* 智 (wisdom)," with the central concepts of "*yūgen* 幽玄 (ephemerality)" or "*yūbi* 優美 (graceful beauty)." It often contains a *michiyuki* journey scene, an exquisitely choreographed scene in which the main characters (often a romantic couple) make a journey. In this act, the reversal of fortune between the good and the bad characters comes to completion as the sacrifices of the low-rank characters made in the third act bear fruit. This act often contains a scene in which the main villain dies or repents. Elaborate puppetry technique is incorporated to defuse the tragic tension of the third act and prepare the audience for the celebratory conclusion in the fifth act. Lingering mysteries are resolved in the fourth act, often through major characters' "confession" monologues.

Two key writing conventions are "*sekai* 世界," or "world," and "*shukō* 趣向,"[161] or "plot devices." The *sekai* forms the setting and the theme that frame the work. For example, the *sekai* of *Chūshingura* is the fourteenth-century world of *Taiheiki*. Even though the play was really about contemporary events, the names of characters, places, and, events were drawn from

[160] Chikaishi, 1961, 90-91.

[161] This concept started in *haikai*, and remained very important in many early modern popular genres, including *ukiyozōshi*, *kabuki*, and *jōruri*. Chikaishi, 1961, 233-239.

Taiheiki. *Sekai* were not strictly historical.[162] Fictional or anachronistic elements were often added,[163] as were mythical elements. Sometimes multiple *sekai* were mixed together in a single play. *Shukō* were a collection of plot devices that added dramatic highlights and accents in specific places. Examples of *shukō* include, "*migawari* 身替り," the substitution one person in place of another who is condemned to die (often the child of a low-rank samurai is substituted for the child of the master), and "*yatsushi*," a high-ranked noble disguising himself as a commoner.[164] Certain sub-groups of *shukō* were associated with the didactic themes and purpose of each act within the five-act structure. Beginning with the nineteenth-century *kabuki* treatise *Kezairoku*, *sekai* and *shukō* are often explained in terms of vertical and horizontal threads: "For example, take Ishikawa Goemon as a horizontal line that intersects *Taikōki*[165] as a vertical line. Characters such as *shirabyōshi* dancers, Kiminari, Sakurako, Katsurako, Keyamura Rokusuke are all horizontal lines. The vertical line becomes the *sekai*, and each horizontal line becomes a *shukō*."[166] While the *sekai* forms a vertical line that holds the overall play together, several *shukō* are interwoven as horizontal lines that make the play richer. In this sense, *shukō* are more fluid and more fertile ground for surprises and plot twists as compared to the *sekai*, which is not easily

[162] In fact, historical accuracy was not even a goal. Rather, *jōruri* focused on providing alternative interpretations and stories of the well-known history and legends. For instance, Heike samurai whose death scenes are told in the *Tales of the Heike*, such as Taira no Tomomori and Taira no Atsumori, "survive" these death scenes in *jōruri* retellings such as *Yoshitsune Senbon zakura*.

[163] For instance, almost all plays have a scene in the pleasure quarters called a "*kuruwa-ba*," even though the pleasure quarters was an Edo-period-specific location.

[164] Chikaishi made a list of more than one hundred *shukō* types in Chikaishi, 1961, 268-269.

[165] This example can be seen in *Kinmon gosan no kiri* 金門五山桐 (*The Golden Gate and the Paulownia Crest*) by Namiki Gohei I (first performed in 1778 in Kado no shibai theater, Osaka).

[166] *Kezairoku*, 424.

altered.[167]

Chikaishi points out that there are two types of *shukō*, "standard" ones and "unique" ones. Standard *shukō* are often-used plot devices, such as substitution or a confession-before-death monologue in the third act. When these standard *shukō* were overused, audiences became tired of them, and longed for new twists. For instance, in a fourth-wall-breaking[168] line, a character in *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu* 鵙山姫捨松 (*Abandoned Princess at the Pine Tree on Mt. Hibari*, 1740) dismisses the idea of substitution, saying "substitution is too old fashioned."[169] Later playwrights generally followed the genre conventions their audiences expected to see, including *shukō*, but also renegotiated and subverted them to create surprising and entertaining plays. *Shukō* in early modern theater is like the *kigo* (seasonal terms) in *haikai* linked verse. There was a generally fixed roster of *shukō* that playwrights were expected to refer to, but a straightforward application was boring. *Shukō* provided a locus for playwrights to practice their creativity by twisting and subverting the standard *shukō*, or, rarely, adding an entirely new *shukō*.

Despite the seeming formal and ideological rigidity built into its genre conventions, *jōruri* retained space for creativity and subtle social criticism. The first generation of playwrights

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[167] *Kezairoku* regards *shukō* as more important than *sekai* in terms of creating a new play: "The vertical (*sekai*) pulls things together from the first to the last act, but it is immobile; even though the horizontal (*shukō*) only starts moving in the middle, it has big meaning, and makes the play fresh. This is important." *Kezairoku*, 424.

[168] The idea of the "fourth wall" was first raised by the French philosopher and art critic Denis Diderot (1713-1784). Diderot suggested actors "imagine a wall across the front of the stage, dividing you from the audience, and act precisely as if the curtain had not risen (*Diderot's Writings on the Theatre*, F. C. Greene, tr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936, 189)." *Kabuki* and *jōruri* often "break" this wall, with actors making comments directly to the audience about their performances and contents of the play.

[169] Namiki Sōsuke, *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu*, In Mukai Yoshiki, ed., *Toyotakeza jōruri shū*, vol. 2, Sōsho Edo bunko 11 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1990), 226.

established *jōruri*'s conventions, with overall plot structures that reinforced the state-promoted ideology and class system through entertainment. Chikamatsu's later works include more experimentation with incorporating social criticism, but his immediate Takemoto-za successors, centering around Takeda Izumo I, felt pressure to return to a strong pro-social-order formula. Subsequent *jōruri* playwrights straddled the fence between preserving the pro-social-order formula to avoid being banned and subverting it to speak to the audiences' anxieties about authority and the existing social order. Like other conventions, the roster of standard *shukō* was designed to reinforce the "*kanzen chōaku*" principle, presenting the "good" characters as praiseworthy models of exemplary behavior, and the "bad" characters as models of bad behavior who are severely punished in the end. In contrast, the subversion, mockery, or twisting of the standard *shukō* by individual playwrights sometimes blurs the boundary between the "good" and the "bad" characters, questioning the established class and gender structure and its unrealistic social and feudal obligations, and reflecting commoners' anxiety about the social structure.

CHAPTER TWO
Making Prostitutes into Heroines: Chikamatsu Monzaemon and *Sewamono*

During the Edo period, when a secular townspeople's culture flourished, increasing numbers of townspeople started attending the theater to watch plays about people like themselves. Popular themes of the plays included contemporary crimes and love affairs in town – domestic *sewamono* plays, a new genre that began in the Edo period. Law and social conventions in the Edo period prevented people, especially women, from engaging in romantic relationships freely. At the same time, licensed pleasure quarters (*yūkaku* 遊廓) were created for men to indulge in temporary extramarital relationships with professional women. The pleasure quarters soon became a cultural center, as well as a popular subject of both popular fiction and drama. *Jōruri* puppet plays adopted this subject, but its portrayal of the pleasure quarters and low-ranked prostitutes is distinctive, as compared to other genres such as *ukiyozōshi*. Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門 (1653-1725) was most prominent in the popularization of the genre of *sewamono* domestic drama, especially *shinjū* 心中, or love suicide, plays in which commoners and low-ranked prostitutes became the center of the story, the center of sympathy, and the object of idealization.

This chapter will discuss the depictions of prostitute heroines in Chikamatsu Monzaemon's love suicide *jōruri* puppet plays, a newly-emerged theatrical genre[170] that enjoyed brief popularity in the early development of *jōruri* in the late Genroku to mid Kyōhō periods

[170] The term "genre" can be somewhat confusing because it has both topical and formal meanings. *Sewamono* is a topical genre. Stories about contemporary sensational events involving commoners, such as love suicides, began appearing in several forms of theater and popular fiction, such as *jōruri*, *kabuki*, and *ukiyozōshi*, around the same time.

(1703-1720s). The first part of the chapter discusses the social and literary background of the practice of love suicide, and the historical context of the emergence of the new genre of *sewamono* domestic drama, discussing how prostitutes were represented in other popular contemporary genres. The second part of the chapter analyzes three of Chikamatsu Monzaemon's closely-related love suicide plays that center around prostitute heroines, *Sonezaki shinjū* 曽根崎心中 (*Love Suicide at Sonezaki*, 1703),[171] *Shinjū nimai ezōshi* 心中二枚絵草紙 (*Love Suicide and the Double-Folded Picture Books*, 1706) and *Ikudama shinjū* 生玉心中 (*Love Suicides at Ikudama*, 1715). The chapter discusses the early development of *jōruri* puppet plays, especially the transition from medieval ritualistic theater to early modern human-centric theater, through an examination of Chikamatsu's representations of prostitute heroines.

Pleasure Quarters and Popular Culture

Pleasure quarters as official enclosed districts that provided entertainment and professional love were an early-modern invention in Japan.[172] According to Ono Takeo's study on the history of prostitutes and pleasure quarters in the Edo period, the first pleasure quarter, Shimabara, was constructed in Kyoto by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1589. The pleasure quarter district in Osaka opened a little earlier under Hideyoshi's permission in 1585, but it was not

[171] *Sonezaki shinjū* is a convenient subject for analysis of the theater performance, since it has one of the oldest *banzuke*, an illustrated record of the performance in 1704.

[172] This does not mean that prostitution did not happen before the early modern period. Obviously, it did. Prostitutes such as *asobi-me* and *ukare-me* appear in The *Tale of Genji* in the Heian period, and some traveling nuns, prophets, and dancers also worked as prostitutes. However, centralized official pleasure quarters were an early modern invention.

constructed as an enclosed area. It was ordered to move to Shinchi in Osaka in 1617 so that it could be enclosed, like the one in Kyoto. Also in the same year, an enclosed pleasure quarter in Yoshiwara in Edo was permitted. The *bakufu* attempted to put the pleasure quarters under control by licensing them. One of the major rules that applied to the pleasure quarters was about control of the women: as a general rule, all the prostitutes and courtesans working in the pleasure quarters were prohibited from leaving. The pleasure quarters were surrounded by moats and walls, and the gates to the district were only open during the night. A prostitute was allowed to go out of the pleasure quarter when accompanying her customer, but was otherwise separated from the rest of society. Male customers could enjoy temporary extramerital relations with the prostitutes and courtesans while visiting the pleasure quarters, so long as it would not interfere with their social and familial responsibilities. As Lawrence Rogers puts it, "Going to the quarter was a game that was to be pursued in moderation. The game was to be played seriously, to be sure, as a man might play any game, but his deeper emotions were not to be engaged."[173]

Shikidō ōkagami,[174] a collection of contemporary encyclopedic writings about pleasure quarters, explains the hierarchy of the pleasure quarters. There were four ranks among the prostitutes and courtesans: *tayū* 太夫, *tenjin* 天神, *kakoi* 囲い, and *hashi-jorō* 端女郎, from highest to lowest. The first three were treated well, and their customers were required to give specific gifts such as clothes, cosmetics, and ornaments on certain seasonal occasions such as

[173] Lawrence Rogers, "She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not. Shinjū and Shikidō Ōkagami," *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 49, No. 1 (Spring, 1994): 34.

[174] Eighteen volumes by Fujimoto Kizan. Sixteen volumes were published by Enpō 6 (1678) and two more volumes were published after Jōkyō 6 (1688). For more details about *Shikidō Ōkagami* and its writer, Kizan, see Rogers, 31-60.

New Year's. The higher-ranked courtesans were expected to learn arts to entertain customers, such as dance, musical instruments, poetry, and *jōruri* chanting. No seasonal gifts were required for *hashi-jorō*. Judging from the fact that they were also called *kechigiri* 仮契, meaning "temporary love," and *suisei* 彗星, meaning "comet," they were usually meant to be for one-night stands, not worthy of sustained interaction. The ranks were fluid, and the lower-ranked prostitutes could train hard at the arts to move their way up to get better treatment, but the majority remained as *hashi-jorō* for their entire careers. In addition, most *hashi-jorō* did not develop relationships that could lead to be ransomed out by a customer, since their role was to accompany the customers for one night only. Having no hope for the future, it is no wonder most professional women who committed love suicide with their customers were *hashi-jorō*, the lowest-ranked prostitutes.

The earliest dramas that were set in pleasure quarters are typified by the *Yūgiri kyōgen* 夕霧狂言 (*Yūgiri* plays) that focus on the higher end of the pleasure quarters. *Yūgiri* plays are various re-tellings of a story in which Izaemon, the son of a rich merchant, spends an enormous amount of money for a courtesan (*tayū*), Yūgiri, and becomes disowned. Yearning for Izaemon, Yūgiri falls ill, but the story comes to a celebratory happy ending with the reunion of the two. Originally, Yūgiri plays were created to commemorate the death of a young legendary courtesan, Yūgiri (1654-1678). Ironically, however, the male protagonist, Izaemon, became the center of the plays.[175] In most Yūgiri plays, the main attraction was the pleasure quarter scene (*kuruwa-ba* 廓

[175] This probably has something to do with the relative prestige of male-role and female-role actors for *kabuki*. In the early stages of *kabuki*, male-role actors were predominantly more powerful and higher-ranked than female-role actors, and female-role actors' purpose was to emphasize the prominence of the male-role actors.

場), in which Izaemon disguises himself (the *shukō* of *yatsushi*) by wearing a *kamiko* 紙子 (paper kimono) to visit Yūgiri, for lack of decent clothes to wear since he has been disowned.

Sakata Tōjūro I 坂田藤十郎 (1647-1709) established the *wagoto* 和事 "soft style" of kabuki acting in the Kamigata (Kyoto-Osaka) area[176] by performing Izaemon, beginning with the first *Yūgiri* play, *Yūgiri nagori no shōgatsu* 夕霧名残の正月 (*Farewell to Yugiri in the New Year*, 1678). Tōjūro I became so popular for his *yatsushi* performance of Izaemon that he is often depicted as Izaemon, wearing paper clothes and a woven hat that hides his face (Figure 1). Following the popularity of this theme in *kabuki*, *jōruri* started creating plays with the same theme. Such plays functioned as a continuation of the medieval interest in court stories of high-ranking people in disguise, a popular theme dating back as far as the Heian *monogatari*, such as *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 (*The Tale of Genji*, early 10th century) and its aristocratic protagonist, Genji, in exile.

[176] In contrast, the *aragoto* "rough" style of acting was pioneered by Ichikawa Danjūrō I (1660-1704) in the Edo area, imitating earlier popular Kimpira *jōruri* puppet plays in which samurai heroes with superhuman powers bravely fought and conquered enemies and monsters. See Satō Eri, "Genroku Kabuki – Edo" in Torigoe Bunzō et. al. eds., *Kabuki no rekishi I* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1997), 97-98.



Figure 1: Sakata Tōjūrō *I as Izaemon in* Ogakuzu (Genroku 12; 1699)

Another type of early drama set in the pleasure quarters focused more on the tragedies of lower-class men who formed deep relationships with low-class prostitutes, usually ending in love suicide. Such plays began emerging a little bit after the *Yūgiri* plays. Incidents of love suicide by commoners and low-class prostitutes provided fertile material for both popular fiction writers and playwrights who were looking for new and contemporary subjects to appeal to commoner audiences. *Kabuki* was quick in adapting these new subjects into theater, and *jōruri* immediately

followed. Although it is not clear when exactly the first case of double-suicide occurred, the practice of dying together as *shinjū* started appearing in *haikai* poetry in the Enpō era (late 1670s),[177] and *Kabuki nenpyō* claims that the first *shinjū* incident and *shinjū kabuki* plays appeared in Tenna 3 (1683).[178] *Jōruri* followed the example of *kabuki*, with Chikamatsu Monzaemon's *Sonezaki shinjū*, first performed in 1703, as the first successful example of a love suicide *jōruri* play (although there were several earlier love suicide *jōruri* plays that did not achieve popularity).

Shinjū derived from the practices among courtesans and prostitutes in the pleasure quarters.[179] However, *shinjū*'s original meaning was not "love suicide." The term literally means "inside one's heart," and when read *shinchū*, the word dates as far back as the Nara period, meaning "one's heart."[180] The term "*shinjū*" did not necessarily mean "love suicide" in the early Edo period, even in pleasure quarters; it was often used as *shinjū-date*, or "proving one's heart." Courtesans and prostitutes who were obliged to take multiple customers sought to prove their dedication to their lovers. As defined by the sixth volume of *Shikidō ōkagami*, entitled "*shinjū no*

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[177] "S*hinjū* nara ware o izanae gokuraku e 心中なら我をいざなへ極楽へ" ("If this is *shinjū*, please take me to heaven") by Sogen 素玄. *Haikai Tenma senku* 俳諧・天満千句, vol. 10, no. 41, 1676.

[178] According to *Kabuki nenpyō*, "the beginning of *shinjū* as an art form (*shinjū-gei*)" occurred in Tenna 3 (1683) at Arashi Sanzaemon-za, Araki Yojibee-za, and Yamatoya Jinbee-za theaters (Ihara Toshirō, *Kabuki nenpyō* vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1956), 147). It is said to be a dramatization of one of the first love suicide incidents in the Edo period, in which a prostitute and a blind performer died together.

[179] The word was also used in homosexual relationships. It was quite popular among men to hurt themselves in order to show their love to their homosexual partners. See Kobayashi Kyōji. *Shinju e no shōtaijō – karei naru ren'ai shi no sekai*. Tokyo: Bunshun shinsho, 2005.

[180] *Nihon kokugo daijiten* lists an example of *shinchū* that means "inside one's heart" as early as *Manyōshū*: 18, 4128 right *kotobagaki* by Ōtomo no Kuronushi.

bu 心中の部” (“On *Shinjū”*), *shinjū* is a “gesture to show that one is true to one’s love in a male-female relationship and the heart-to-heart intimacy... It is a practice for courtesans, and other kinds of women have no need of it.”[181] *Shikidō ōkagami* introduces six different kinds of *shinjū* practiced by the prostitutes and courtesans in the pleasure quarters: pulling out one’s nails, writing oaths (sometimes using blood), cutting one’s hair, getting a tattoo relating to one’s lover, chopping off one’s finger, and ultimately, stabbing oneself (non-fatally).[182] *Shinjū* as love suicide, as it is commonly known today, is not included in this list. Later in volume fifteen, in the “*zōdan no bu* 雑談部” (“miscellaneous dialogues”) section, Kizan acknowledges that some courtesans engaged in love suicide as a form of *shinjū*, but dismisses this practice as foolish:

> Somebody asked me, “You said that the best way for a courtesan to prove her heart is to chop off her finger, but, on quite rare occasions, there are courtesans who die together with men. Wouldn’t you think that this is the best?” I answered, “Dying is not the best. The best way to prove one’s heart (*shinjū*) is the finger... Every case where a courtesan dies with a man is caused by base nature and stupidity. We cannot help but call them insane”[183]

In the late seventeenth century, *shinjū* was considered a part of the tactics that a courtesan or prostitute used in order to “prove” her heart to gain greater affection (and gifts) from her regular customers. It was acknowledged that *shinjū* was inherently an art of deceit[184] that was passed down within the pleasure quarters. By prescribing the proper ways to practice *shinjū*, *Shikidō*

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[181] *Shikidō ōkagami*, 207.

[182] Ibid., 207-223.

[183] Ibid., 507.

[184] “There are two kinds of *shinjū*, true and untrue. Only one in ten is a result of a true love for the man. Eight to nine out of ten are not out of true love, but merely a scheme to induce the man to take care of her by getting close to him.” Ibid., 207.

ōkagami reminds the courtesans to practice it moderately so as not to deter their customers, and, at the same time, cautions the male readers not to take it too seriously.

The use of "*shinjū*" as "love suicide" was popularized through popular theater and fiction that dramatized actual cases of love suicide beginning in the Genroku period (1688-1704). *Jōruri* plays the most significant role in spreading the idealized image of love suicide. The majority of early *sewamono jōruri* up through the early eighteenth century take the theme of *shinjū*, specifically love suicide in which a young couple, often a townsman and a low-ranked prostitute, die together. Chikamatsu Monzaemon wrote twenty-four *sewamono* domestic plays, eleven of which are about love suicide. Chikamatsu's eleven love suicide plays can further be divided into roughly four categories according to the class of the heroine and the couple's marital status. Four are about a low-ranked prostitute and a single townsman; two are about a low-ranked prostitute and a married townsman; two are about a townswoman and a townsman; three are about a married couple, but all of them belong to the bottom class of the society, having some sort of financial problems, and lacking agency over their own lives.[185]

It is important to note that the above categorization reflects the modern scholarship, not the contemporary mindset. For contemporary commentators, the term "*shinjū*" seems to have been defined more broadly than just love suicide. Rather, it seems to have included any instance where an extra-marital relationship led to an unnatural death. For instance, although three of the

[185] Four plays, *Sonezaki shinjū* (1703), *Shinjū nimai ezōshi* (1706), *Shinjū yaiba wa kōri no tsuitachi* (1709), and *Ikudama shinjū* (1715) belong to the first category with a prostitute and a single townsman; while two plays, *Shinjū kasane izutsu* (1707) and *Shinjū Ten no Amijima* (1720), belong to the second category, with a prostitute and a married man with children. In the third category, the couple are both townspeople who are single, but their parents do not allow their marriage for one reason or another, usually because of money. *Shinjū mannensō* (1710) and *Imamiya no shinjū* (1711). In the fourth category, the couple are married, but are bullied by one's mother (or stepmother or mother-in-law) and commit suicide before being forced to divorce. Such plays are *Uzuki no momiji* (Hōei 3; 1706), *Uzuki no iroage* (1707), and *Shinjū yoigōshin* (1722).

sewamono plays by Chikamatsu depicting love between a married woman and a man are categorized as *kantsū-mono* 姦通物 (adultery plays)[186] by modern scholars, the contemporary categorizations of similar incidents differ. In a contemporary anthology of twenty-one real-life love suicide stories, *Shinjū ōkagami* 心中大鑑 (*Great Mirror of Shinjū*, 1704)[187] that collects the "strange recent trend"[188] of *shinjū*, two cases of adultery are included. One of the stories even depicts the husband killing the adulterous wife, rather than the wife committing suicide with her lover. Considering this, it seems that any unnatural death (murder or suicide) that was induced by extra-marital love was considered "*shinjū.*"

Interestingly, there is a significant gap between the participants of the actual love suicide incidents recorded in *Shinjū ōkagami* and the participants of theatricalized versions, in terms of their class and relationship. Among the twenty-one love suicide incidents recorded in *Shinjū ōkagami*, eight are about a townsman and a low-ranked prostitute, while nine are about a townswoman and a townsman. The remainder includes one love suicide by a married couple, two adulterous incidents between a married woman and a townsman, and one incident of homosexual love involving three samurai. No man involved in love suicide in *Shinjū ōkagami* is married except for the ones in the married-couple stories.[189] In other words, Chikamatsu's love suicide

[186] *Horikawa nami no tsuzumi* (1707), *Daikyōji mukashi goyomi* (1715), and *Yari no Gonza kasane katabira* (1717). The word "*kantsū*" does not appear in Japanese publications until after the nineteenth century, and does not become common until written in the criminal law in the Meiji period (Meiji 40; 1907). Before that, adultery was referred to as "*mittsū* 密通" or "*fugi* 不義."

[187] This work is categorized as *ukiyozōshi*, written by Shohōken. *Shinjū ōkagami*, 181-233.

[188] *Shinjū ōkagami*, in *Kinsei bungei sōsho* vol. 4 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1910), 181.

[189] It is not quite clear if the master, or *teishu* 亭主, of the teahouse (a kind of a brothel) in the fifth story of volume

plays do not necessarily reflect the demographic inclination of the actual love suicide cases. While the number of townswomen involved in actual love suicides exceeds the number of prostitutes involved in love suicides in *Shinjū ōkagami*, Chikamatsu's *jōruri* plays have a slight inclination toward casting prostitutes as heroines.[190]

This inclination is related to the generic characteristics of *sewamono jōruri* drama. As Donald Keene points out, one of the significant aspects of *sewamono* domestic drama is to elevate "little people from the gossip of a scandal sheet to the level of tragedy,"[191] in contrast to Western tragedy in Aristotle's sense in which only people of noble birth can be the heroes of tragedy. *Sewamono* is also significant in that it gave voices to women, especially low-ranked prostitutes who, in real life, were enclosed in the pleasure quarters and remained voiceless in public. In this sense, *sewamono* provides a space close to what Victor Turner terms "liminoid," a space for experimentation with alternative models that go beyond existing social and legal boundaries. This could be one of the reasons why *sewamono* became popular among townspeople; it presented an alternative reality where weak people like themselves could speak their minds, particularly about the troubles they suffered, in public. Chikamatsu also wrote about his presentation of "reality" on stage. According to Hozumi Ikan's *Naniwa miyage*, Chikamatsu said, "The words of *jōruri* depict reality as it is, but being a form of art it also contains elements

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2 is single, since "*teishu*" can mean simply an owner of a store, or a husband. However, judging from the fact that his "wife" is not mentioned in the story at all, I presume that he is more likely single. Also, there are some widowers, such as the one in the first story of volume 2 (*Shinjū* ōkagami, 194-198).

[190] While it is true that *Shinjū ōkagami* is not necessarily a record of all the love suicide incidents of the time, and it only reflects the cases that happened before Hōei 1 (1704), it is the most exhaustive example of a collection of love suicide incidents that is available.

[191] Donald Keene, tr., *Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu*, 1961 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 6.

that are not found in real life. Specifically, female characters often say things a real woman would not say, but such instances are examples of art. Since they speak openly of things that a real woman would not talk about, the character's true feelings are revealed."[192] Chikamatsu further states that the essence of art and entertainment can be found between lies and reality. He was aware of the entertainment function of popular theater in the Edo period, and, to attract audiences, Chikamatsu intentionally altered the characters to fit into the alternative reality of the theater, even when that contradicted the reality of contemporary society. In the case of *shinjū*, it was prostitutes who attracted audiences' sympathy by speaking of their hard lives and, paradoxically, acting as idealized women.

In contrast, contemporary popular fiction such as *ukiyozōshi* has a more realistic tone, and does not idealize love suicide. For instance, Ihara Saikaku's *Shoen ōkagami* 諸艶大鑑, also known as *Kōshoku nidai otoko* 好色二代男 (1684), describes prostitutes who commit love suicide rather critically:

> When considering love suicide carefully, it is not about obligation, nor is it about compassion. Everyone feels so uncertain about life since they are not free, and they do such a thing [as to commit love suicide] because they have no other choice. This is clear because all the prostitutes who commit love suicide are the low-rank ones (*hashi-jorō*).[193]

This passage is a direct criticism of love suicide, pointing out the harsh reality that love suicide is not a glorious and desirable choice, and only petty prostitutes and hopeless men would do such a

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[192] Hozumi Ikan, *Suvenirs of Naniwa* (*Naniwa Miyage*, 1738), Michael Brownstein, tr., in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 349.

[193] Ihara Saikaku, *Shoen ōkagami*, in Shinpen Saikaku zenshū henshū iinkai, ed., *Shinpen Saikaku zenshū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Bensei shuppan, 2000), 340.

thing. *Shinjū ōkagami* is also mostly critical toward love suicide, ending most of the stories in a cold and unsympathetic manner, such as: "The couple displayed their love letters and letters of farewell, as well as their family's razor, beautifully, and died nicely. 'But the timing wasn't really good, so songs about them probably won't sell and we can't make profit,' a wise man said."[194] Another story ends with an unsympathetic narrator saying, "it's a dead-end, there's nothing they can do; love suicide again, let's not make a big deal out of it."[195] This attitude directly conflicts with *jōruri* love suicide plays, which are filled with sympathetic comments towards the couple who die mainly for love and obligation. In an effort to gather audiences' compassion towards the main characters, Chikamatsu's *jōruri* focus on idealizing the death, which was not theretofore widely regarded as a glorified thing.

The above passage from *Shoen ōkagami*, however, shares with *jōruri* the image of the typical female participant in love suicide as a low-ranked prostitute, mentioning that only "*hashi-jorō*," low-ranked prostitutes, would commit love suicide. Volume fifteen of *Shikidō ōkagami* also claims that "good courtesans do not commit suicide, and never did; most of those who commit suicide are low-ranked prostitutes (*hashi-jorō*)."[196] Low-ranked prostitutes who did not have much freedom were more likely to choose suicide as a way out of their terrible situation, and those who could find company would die together with him, some hoping to be glorified in plays and folk songs after their death. The heroine of the third story of volume one of *Shinjū ōkagami* seems to fit the mold of the typical person who commits love suicide to escape a

[194] Vol. 1-3. *Shinjū ōkagami*, 191.

[195] Vol. 4-3. *Shinjū ōkagami*, 221.

[196] *Shikidō ōkagami*, 507.

hopeless situation. The prostitute, Yotsu, in an attempt to find someone to die with, tells her customers about how she was sold into the brothel because of her family's poverty, how she lost her father, and how she was still confined to the brothel in order to support her mother. When she finally manages to "deceive" a man, she carefully prepared for their deaths as if in a love suicide play, with "their letters of oaths and razors beautifully arranged."[197] Although she is highly criticized in this story, her life story is strikingly similar to the situations of the prostitute heroines depicted in love suicide plays, in which such situations become objects of great sympathy.

The Invention of Sewamono – *Sonezaki shinjū* in Its Context

Before moving on to close readings of the texts of Chikamatsu's love suicide plays, it is necessary to discuss *sewamono jōruri* in the context of early-modern theater. Chikamatsu Monzaemon's first *sewamono*, *Sonezaki shinjū*, was first performed on the 7th day of the fifth month of Genroku 16 (1703) in Takemoto-za theater in Osaka. The story was originally taken from a real incident that is also recorded in *Shinjū ōkagami*. The style of *sewamono* was not yet established in *jōruri* when *Sonezaki shinjū* was written, since *sewamono* itself was rather new. The performative style of *Sonezaki shinjū* was called "*kiri-jōruri* 切浄瑠璃" and "*ichidan-mono* 一段物," meaning a one-act play that was performed as an attachment to a longer main *jōruri* play (*tate-jōruri* 立浄瑠璃). Although the term "*jidaimono*" did not exist in this period, early *jōruri* are now categorized as such. In *kabuki*, beginning in the mid Empō period (late 1670s),

[197] *Shinjū ōkagami*, 191.

jidaimono were performed as the main play of the day, called *tate-kyōgen* 立狂言 (main performance), which then was followed by a *kiri-kyōgen* 切狂言 (closing performance), a shorter one-act play to conclude the day's performance.[198] This performance style was adopted by *jōruri* around the late Genroku period (early 1700s). The *tate-kyōgen* was a longer five-act *jidaimono* performance depicting battles and political intrigues in the world of high-ranked samurai. In contrast, the main characteristics of *kiri-kyōgen* and *kiri-jōruri* lay in their scandalous and sensational nature as news media that dealt with contemporary townspeople's incidents. The most popular topic of early *kiri* plays was love suicides. *Kiri* plays can be equated with "*sewamono*" – or rather, the plays that were later categorized into *sewamono* domestic plays were performed in the style of one-act *kiri-kyōgen* or *kiri-jōruri*, at the end of a day's performance after the historical *jidaimono* play.

This simple style of *sewamono* as one-act *kiri* plays was developed by Chikamatsu Monzaemon into a three-act (*san-kan* 三巻) style. His first *sewamono*, *Sonezaki shinjū*, already shows the seeds of this three-act style; although the play is not divided into multiple acts, there are four independent scenes called "*ba*." Since one of the four scenes is what is called a "*keigoto* 景事" ("ceremonial scene") that is not directly related to the storyline, scholars such as Yokoyama, Wakatsuki, and Chikaishi point out that it is actually a three-part play. Chikamatsu started using a three-act style with a *jō-kan* 上巻, *chū-kan* 中巻, and *ge-kan* 下巻, beginning from his second love suicide play, *Shinjū nimai ezōshi*. Typically, the first act includes an introduction of the characters and their tragic situation, with presentations of exciting puppetry

[198] See Shinoda Jun'ichi, *Chikamatsu no sekai* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1991), 205.

skills, which serves as an introduction of the puppeteers; the second act brings tension and crisis to the main characters; and the third act includes the *michiyuki* (journey) scene where the main characters wander about before their tragic ending – escaping from the officials in criminal plays, or looking for an appropriate place to die in love suicide plays – followed by the main characters' death and its aftermath. This style was changed around the late Kyōhō period, about ten years after Chikamatsu's death, into a more complicated, multiple-act style (*tadan keishiki* 多段形式), since *jidaimono* had become more popular, and *sewamono* playwrights tried to make *sewamono* appear closer to *jidaimono*. The style was once again modified back to the three-act style around the beginning of the Meiwa period (mid 1760s) when *sewamono* regained its popularity, although the multiple-act style still survived.[199]

Sonezaki shinjū was a pivotal work for the Takemoto-za theater; it was so successful that it paid off all the theater's debts, and it marked the beginning of the golden pairing of Chikamatsu and Takemoto Gidayū who worked together to make a series of big hits in the succeeding years. Because of its legendary success, *Sonezaki shinjū* was often inaccurately recorded as the first *sewamono jōruri* play in books on the history of *jōruri* written later in the Edo period. One of the most famous early writings about *Sonezaki shinjū* was written two years after Chikamatsu's death in *Imamukashi ayatsuri nendaiki*, a book on the history of *jōruri* by Nishizawa Ippū 西沢一風 (1665-1731):

> When Takemoto-za theater was worried what they could do to make a popular *jōruri*, there was a grand *shinjū* at the Tenjin Shrine in Sonezaki. What good medicine it became! They made this into a one-act *jōruri*, entitled *Sonezaki shinjū*. The entire town became excited, and the townspeople came rushing and pushing into the theater

[199] Chikaishi, 1961, 173-230.

> so much so that they overfilled the seats. It is said to be the first *sewamono* play, and the *jōruri* chanting was interesting. The theater made a huge amount of money in short time, and paid off all its debts with a smile.[200]

Here, Ippū claims *Sonezaki shinjū* to be the "first *sewamono* play," and describes it as if making a *shinjū* incident into a play was a new invention. This text was written over twenty years after *Sonezaki shinjū* and at a time when *sewamono* was established as a popular genre. Being a *jōruri* playwright himself, intentionally or not, Nishizawa Ippū glorified the achievements of *jōruri* by crediting Chikamatsu and *jōruri* for inventing the popular genre of *sewamono*. Most likely influenced by such descriptions, similar writings about the history of *jōruri* published in the Edo period, such as *Gedai nenkan* 外題年鑑 (*Almanac of Play Titles*, 1757), *Takemoto fudan zakura* 竹本不断桜 (*Continuing Blossom of Takemoto*, 1759), and *Tōkan zasshi* 倒冠雑誌 (*Fallen Crown Journal*, 1759), also state that *Sonezaki shinjū* (1) was the first *sewamono* play, and (2) became popular because of the new idea to quickly make the real-life love suicide at Sonezaki into a play. These historical writings collectively canonized *Sonezaki shinjū* as a legendary and landmark work. Even in modern scholarship, *Sonezaki shinjū* is often introduced as the first *shinjū* play, especially in introductory books: "There was a reason for *Sonezaki shinjū*'s success; it was the first *sewamono* play that appeared in the history of *jōruri*."[201]

However, detailed examinations by Yūda Yoshio, Shinoda Jun'ichi, Suwa Haruo, and Takano Hiroshi, especially during the 1960s, revealed that this is an exaggeration; upon looking closer, *Sonezaki shinjū* was probably not the first *sewamono jōruri* play, and it was definitely not

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[200] *Imamukashi ayatsuri nendaiki*, 10.

[201] Hattori Yukio, *E de yomu kabuki no rekishi* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2008), 47.

Chikamatsu's new invention to dramatize contemporary sensational incidents. *Sonezaki shinjū* did not appear as a sudden mutation in 1703, but rather as a fruit that developed from earlier theatrical tropes and conventions. In fact, the dramatization of contemporary sensational incidents such as double suicides was already common in *kabuki* in Osaka prior to the birth of *sewamono jōruri*, from as early as 1683,[202] which also contributed to the establishment of the genre of *sewamono* in *jōruri* puppet plays. Even the main puppeteer, Tatsumatsu Hachirobei 辰松八郎兵衛 (d. 1734) who performed the heroine, Ohatsu, in *Sonezaki shinjū* acknowledged in his introductory speech to the play (*kōjō* 口上) that it was not "uncommon [to make love suicide into plays], and we can see such things in *kabuki*."[203] Shinoda Jun'ichi has pointed out that there are at least two *kiri-jōruri* predating *Sonezaki shinjū* whose texts are extant that can be regarded as *sewamono*, *Dōchū hyōban katakiuchi* 道中評判敵討 (*Famous Vengeance on a Journey*) and *Ōsaka Sennichi-dera shinjū* 大坂千日寺心中 (*Love Suicide at Osaka Sennichi Temple*). The former is considered to have been performed before 1702, and the latter is speculated to have been performed around 1700. Although the framework of the former play is a revenge play, it is based on a contemporary incident, and the love between the hero and the enemy's daughter is depicted as one of the main storylines, so Shinoda counts this as a kind of *sewamono.* The latter is definitely a *sewamono* that is based on the real-life story of a romantic relationship between Sukeroku and his prostitute lover, Yūgiri. In addition, Shinoda compares the texts of *Ōsaka*

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[202] See footnote 178 regarding the first dramatization of a *shinjū* incident.

[203] *Sonezaki shinjū kōjō* from *Mugikogashi*, in Nihon zuihitsu taisei henshūbu, ed., *Nihon zuihitsu taisei dai ni ki, 4*. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1994), 218-219.

Sennichi-dera shinjū and *Sonezaki shinjū* to prove that Chikamatsu actually took some of the text and ideas from *Ōsaka Sennichi-dera shinjū*.[204] Similarly, Suwa Haruo points out the close relationship and references *Sonezaki shinjū* has to the plots of the earlier *kiri-kyogen kabuki* drama. Although the scripts are now lost, by comparing a few extant picturebooks of the *kiri-kyogen* that explain the storylines of the *kabuki* performances, Suwa shows that *Sonezaki shinjū* bears strong resemblances to preceding love suicide *kabuki* plays such as *Uzuki kokonoka sono akatsuki myōjō ga chaya* 卯月九日其暁明星が茶屋 (*At Dawn on the Ninth Day of the Fourth Month, at the Morning Star Teahouse*, 1697), *Shinjū chaya banashi* 心中茶屋咄 (*Love Suicide and the Rumor at the Teahouse*, 1700), and *Kawara shinjū* 河原心中 (*Love Suicide at the Riverbank*, 1703). Considering such precedents, while *Sonezaki shinjū* was certainly the first successful *sewamono jōruri*, it was not the first *sewamono jōruri*; nor was it newly invented by Chikamatsu out of whole cloth, but rather a fruit that grew from the conventions and traditions of contemporary plays. The genre of *sewamono* mainly developed within *kabuki* and was the subject of experimentation in *jōruri* for at least three or four years before *Sonezaki shinjū's* great success.

[204] Shinoda actually compares the text of *Semi no nukegara*, one of the variations of *Osaka Sennichidera shinjū*, because of its closer resemblance to the wordings in *Sonezaki shinjū*. See the table of comparison of the two scripts in "'Kiri jōruri *Sonezaki shinjū*' no seiritsu ni tsuite," Shinoda, 131-134. The development of the play as a three-part (*sankan*) play, starting from the woman's *michiyuki* and ending with the lovers' *michiyuki*, is very similar between these plays. Moreover, the use of specific words in similar scenes is too frequent to ignore.

Chikamatsu's Three *Sonezaki*-Related Love Suicide Plays

After the commercial success of *Sonezaki shinjū* (1703), Chikamatsu Monzaemon wrote two love suicide plays as memorial performances for *Sonezaki shinjū*: *Shinjū nimai ezōshi* (1706) for the third year memorial and *Ikudama shinjū* (1715) for the thirteenth year memorial. (For readers unfamiliar with these plays, plot summaries are provided in the appendix.) By advertising the latter two love suicide plays as memorials (*tsuizen*) of the deaths of *Sonezaki shinjū*'s protagonists, Chikamatsu managed to simultaneously advertise the new love suicide plays and supplement the original love suicide play to develop it more fully. Chikamatsu created an idealized romantic heroine out of a scandalous prostitute who ruined a commoner man's life, their families' honor, and the reputation of the brothel by committing love suicide. Beginning with Chikamatsu, idealization of prostitutes became a genre convention for *jōruri*. Later in his career, Chikamatsu continued to depict idealized prostitutes, but also incorporated the realities of being a prostitute and the social antagonism towards them. Examining the representations of idealized prostitute heroines in Chikamatsu's three related love-suicide plays reveals how love suicide plays began under the strong influence of the value system of the medieval theater – as seen in *nō* plays, in which salvation in afterlife is a legitimate resolution of the play – and gradually developed into a more early-modern value system that places emphasis on the living world.

Sonezaki shinjū limits its time frame to the final two days of the couple's lives, and mostly depicts scenes where Ohatsu could directly meet and speak with Tokubei. Although, at the beginning of the play, she complains that Tokubei has not come to see her for a long while,[205]

[205] Chikamatsu Monzaemon, *Sonezaki shinjū*, in Torigoe Bunzō, et. al. eds., *Chikamatsu Monzaemon shū II* (Tokyo:

the play itself focuses on times when they could meet, and Chikamatsu focuses on depicting Ohatsu as an individual woman, rather than a working prostitute. Even though she was technically "with" a customer when she meets Tokubei for the first time in the play, in the scene at Ikudama Shrine, as a practical matter, her customer was away to "see impersonators,"[206] which gave her full opportunity to talk privately with Tokubei. Perhaps in order to keep the script short and to limit the number of main characters, the play focuses on times when Tokubei and Ohatsu can be together, and how they decide to die together. Consequently, Ohatsu appears throughout the play, and talks about her own thoughts and feelings directly, which has the effect of presenting Ohatsu as if she were no different from a non-prostitute woman.

In contrast, Oshima, the heroine of *Shinjū nimai ezōshi*, Chikamatsu's second *shinjū* play, which was performed as a three-year memorial of *Sonezaki shinjū*,[207] was depicted more as a prostitute deprived of her freedom. In fact, although she is the "successor of Ohatsu,"[208] her private and intimate meetings with her lover, Ichirōemon, are never depicted throughout the play. Even the final *michiyuki* scene was done separately from her lover, since she could not successfully escape from the teahouse that she worked at. The *michiyuki* scene is depicted in a dream-like manner in which the two lovers exchange conversation with the imagined other. By constantly depicting Oshima within the confines of being a prostitute, Chikamatsu reinforces the

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Shōgakukan, 1998), 19-20.

[206] Ibid., 20

[207] The title strip (*daisen* 題簽) says "*Sonezaki shinjū* sannen ki," or three-year memorial of *Sonezaki shinjū*.

[208] *Shinjū nimai ezōshi*, in Torigoe Bunzō, et. al. eds., *Chikamatsu Monzaemon shū II* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1998), 48.

difficulties that were understated with Ohatsu, and increases the pathos of the audience. While Ohatsu is given more voice to state her sincere and faithful love to Tokubei, Oshima is given more voice to talk about the difficulties of being a prostitute. Ohatsu and Oshima collectively represent one type of prostitute, who takes her job as means to support her family, but who wishes she could be involved with, and be faithful to, one man.

The thirteen-year memorial of the *Sonezaki* incident, *Ikudama shinjū*, presents a stronger parallel to *Sonezaki shinjū*. But it also depicts another aspect of the prostitute heroine that was left unexplored in *Sonezaki shinjū*. The potential for a triangular relationship that was briefly introduced in *Sonezaki shinjū* is expanded upon in *Ikudama shinjū*. In *Sonezaki shinjū*, Tokubei's uncle asks Tokubei to marry his niece, knowing he was already seeing Ohatsu, and the niece, whose name is never mentioned, does not appear in the play. In contrast, the male protagonist of *Ikudama shinjū*, Kaheiji, was already engaged to the woman his father had chosen when he met the prostitute, Osaga. This puts Osaga in a weaker position as a lover, and makes her more of an intruder into Kaheiji's prearranged marriage. In addition, his fiancée, Okiwa, appears as an important character in the play, speaks of her own love for Kaheiji, and shows a strong sense of morality through her words and actions. By juxtaposing Osaga with Okiwa, Osaga is presented as a character who has an equally strong sense of morality as Okiwa. This manner of highlighting Osaga's morality brings her closer to a realistic woman than Ohatsu or Oshima, and more relatable and sympathetic to audiences.

Beginning with an idealized prostitute almost completely devoid of prostitute-like aspects, Chikamatsu gradually developed the character into a more nuanced and real-life

character, and, by doing so, presented love suicide in a more nuanced way than simple beatification and elevation of the tragic couple. Although the *bakufu*'s ban on love suicide plays in 1723 prevented them from developing further, prostitutes continued to play an important role in *jidaimono* history plays as paragons of women who sacrifice themselves in order to preserve the social order in the male world, in contravention of early modern society's negative view of prostitutes.

Ohatsu as an Ideal Woman Who Pursued Love in *Sonezaki shinjū*

As Chikamatsu's first *sewamono jōruri* play, *Sonezaki shinjū* is rather short, experimental, and simple compared to his later works. However, despite this, or perhaps because of it, Ohatsu in *Sonezaki shinjū* is the purest and most idealized heroine among Chikamatsu's love suicide plays that feature prostitutes as their heroines. Ohatsu became something of a prototype of prostitute characters in love suicide plays. Chikamatsu eliminates most of the realistic elements that would remind audiences that Ohatsu is a prostitute, so as to create an imaginative, idealized world. Although Chikamatsu's *jōruri* are typically characterized as the "tragic conflict between *jō* [(feeling or passion)] and *giri* (duty, obligation, rational behavior, principle), which is best regarded as a tension between desire and reason... with its rules, morals, and responsibilities inculcated by society,"[209] Ohatsu does not suffer much such conflict, since her familial and professional obligations are not fully developed in the play. By emphasizing Ohatsu's pure, passionate, and single-minded love towards Tokubei, Chikamatsu elevates Ohatsu

[209] C. Andrew Gerstle, "Introduction to Chikamatsu," in Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 241.

into a heroine who achieves salvation in the end of the play: "the lovers will surely be saved in the future. They became the model of love."[210]

Although *Sonezaki shinjū* emerged under the strong influence of love suicide *kabuki* plays, Ohatsu's role in leading the plot is much stronger compared to the preceding heroines. The following section analyzes Ohatsu's central role in two respects: staging effects and text. First, I examine the central role the puppet of Ohatsu played on stage, in relation to the renowned master puppeteer, Tatsumatsu Hachirobei. Next, I examine the role Ohatsu played in pivotal moments of the play and how she is depicted as an idealized respectable woman despite her low status.

Ohatsu as the Central Female Puppet – The Role of the Puppeteer and Puppetry Technology in the Development of Ohatsu

While *Sonezaki shinjū* has been read in many Japan-related classes in the United States because of its reasonable length and the widely-available translation by Donald Keene, it is often discussed as a text, in a similar manner as contemporary written fiction such as Saikaku's *ukiyozōshi*, or as a performance that we can see in the modern theater, which is significantly different from what it would have been at Chikamatsu's time.[211] I would first like to focus on the performance aspect of *Sonezaki shinjū*, especially the puppeteer, Tatsumatsu Hachirobei, and his puppetry technology. This section will introduce the highlights of the play in terms of its staging

[210] *Sonezaki*, 43.

[211] *Sonezaki shinjū* as we know it today was revived in *kabuki* in 1953 by Uno Nobuo, and was revived in *jōruri* in 1955. Uno's version has significant differences from Chikamatsu's, most importantly the addition of a scene in which the evil plot of the villain, Kuheiji, is revealed in front of other people, including Tokubei's uncle, who only appears in a story told by Tokubei in Chikamatsu's original text. On learning of this plot, Tokubei's uncle tries to save Tokubei and Ohatsu, but fails.

effects to show how they are linked to and interwoven with the textual highlights.

Tatsumatsu Hachirobei, the leading female-role puppeteer of the time, manipulated Ohatsu for the first performance of *Sonezaki shinjū*. In order to make use of Hachirobei's skills and fame, Chikamatsu created many scenes in his script that highlight the manipulation of Ohatsu.[212] The *jōruri* puppets are manipulated by three puppeteers in modern performances, as described in Chapter One. This style was first used in *Ashiya Dōman ōuchi kagami* 芦屋道満大内鑑 (*Mirror of the Imperial Court During the Time of Ashiya Dōman*, 1734) for a limited number of puppets. Around the time when *Sonezaki shinjū* was performed, each puppet was commonly performed by a single puppeteer (Figure 2).

[212] Satō Akira claims that Tatsumatsu Hachirobei's role was so big that "*Sonezaki shinjū* can be considered to be a product of the equal contributions of Chikamatsu and Hachirobei." Satō Akira, "*Sonezaki shinjū* ni okeru hyōgen no sekai – 'kannon meguri' kara mita kōzō," in *Nihon bungaku* 30-7 (July, 1981): 47-54.

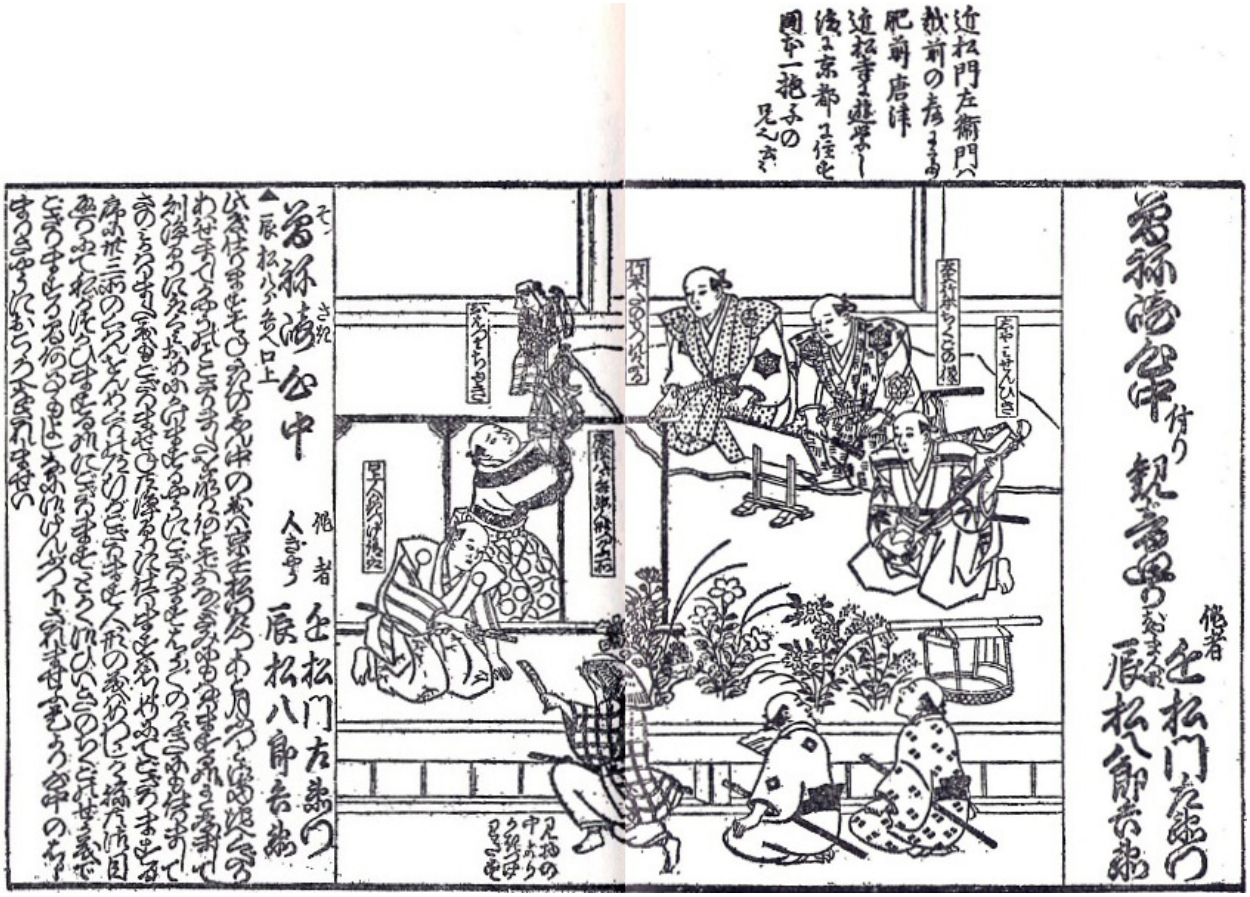


Figure 2: Woodblock print of a performance of *Sonezaki shinjū*. The puppeteer behind the screen is Tatsumatsu Hachirobei, manipulating the puppet of Ohatsu by himself.

The opening *michiyuki* scene of *Sonezaki shinjū*, where Ohatsu makes a round to thirty-three temples and shrines of *kannon* in Osaka, has Ohatsu as its only character, and was added in part to highlight Hachirobei's skills. This scene is usually not performed in today's performances,[213] since it is independent from the main plot, and nothing actually happens in terms of the relationship between Ohatsu and Tokubei. In contrast, this scene was considered one

[213] In August 2011 at KAAT (Kanagawa Arts Theatre) there was a performance that claimed to have revived the first *michiyuki* scene for the first time since 1723 when *shinjū* plays were banned, in which the puppet of Ohatsu was manipulated by one puppeteer in a style that is considered to be more faithful to the original performance. In this performance, however, the puppeteer wore a black hat with dangling cloth in front of his face to hide it, unlike Hachirobei who completely exposed his face while manipulating the puppet.

of the highlights of *Sonezaki shinjū* at the time when it was first performed. It immediately follows Hachirobei's introductory speech, or *kōjō*, in which he proudly tells audiences to enjoy his skills. An existing image that depicts Hachirobei performing the first *michiyuki* scene shows that Hachirobei was wearing a *kamishimo* (formal kimono), and was completely out on stage (*de-zukai* 出遣い) when performing this scene (see Figure 2). Although it is inadvisable to believe that this is an accurate record of Hachirobei's original performance, for these images are not necessarily intended as such, we can safely say that this style of manipulating puppets out on stage, wearing a *kamishimo*, when the manipulation itself is highlighted, as can be seen in several other contemporary images of *jōruri* plays.

What exactly was so attractive about this first *michiyuki*? In his *kōjō*, after saying that it is not rare to dramatize a story of *shinjū*, Hachirobei introduces the first *michiyuki* as the highlight of the play: "There is a *michiyuki* of visiting thirty-three *kannon* at the beginning. The puppets are not that special, but I will show you a performance this time."[214] Here, the highlight of the first *michiyuki* is the puppeteer, rather than the puppets, music, or the text. Hachirobei was famous for his "*tazuma* 手妻" style of puppet manipulation. According to Shinoda Jun'ichi, *tazuma* is a kind of trick manipulation (*karakuri* からくり), almost like stage magic. For instance, the first scene concludes in the following manner:

> The thirtieth temple is the Mitsu Temple. Here people ask for *kannon*'s great mercy, and threads hang from the statue's hands[215] [Then she came to the Daifuku-ji Temple

[214] *Sonezaki shinjū kōjō*

[215] Touching the threads hanging from the statute's hands was reputed to connect one with *kannon* and assist with salvation.

> in] Shiraga-machi[216]. "My dark hair is disheveled by love." She comes to Bakurō town. "Oh baku[217], please get me out of this delusory dream." This is also an Inari shrine with *kannon*'s temple next to it, showing that gods and buddhas are one and the same. And finally her journey ends at the thirty-third Shin-goryō Shrine. *Kannon* came down to the floating world to save people and multiplied herself thirty-three fold. She leads people by her love, and teaches people by her compassion. Making love the bridge to heaven, *kannon* saves people. Her gracious oath[218] is glorious beyond words.

Shinoda Jun'ichi points out that Hachirobei was famous for quickly transforming the puppets he manipulated. A record of a *kabuki* performance performed in 1706, two years after *Sonezaki shinjū*, shows that Hachirobei demonstrated his technique by quickly transforming a male puppet into a demon god, then into *kannon* deity, then back into the original male puppet, in time with the lyrics of the chanting. Based on this record, Shinoda speculates that it was a practice of *tazuma* puppetry technique to enact the lyrics of the chanting, and the puppet of Ohatsu actually turns into *kannon* at the end of the chant quoted above when the phrase "*kannon* came down to the floating world" is chanted.[219] The description of *Sonezaki shinjū* in *Shinjū nimai ezōshi* provides another piece of evidence for Shinoda's hypothesis. At the beginning of the play, the heroine, Oshima, a prostitute of Tenma-ya, like Ohatsu, goes out to see the performance of *Sonezaki shinjū*, "being attracted by the subtitle that says 'Hatsu becomes a golden Buddha and attains salvation.'"[220] This may have been a reference to Hachirobei's first *michiyuki* scene where

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[216] The town of white hair.

[217] A legendary animal that eats people's bad dreams.

[218] To save the people of the world.

[219] Shinoda, 314-315.

[220] *Shinjū nimai ezōshi*, 48.

he performed prestidigitation to change the puppet of Ohatsu into a puppet of golden *kannon*.

Ohatsu is also interesting as a female puppet with respect to the use of her foot. There is a famous scene in which Ohatsu hides Tokubei under the porch when Kuheiji, the antagonist, intrudes into the pleasure quarter. Although this was adapted from an earlier *kabuki* play, it became an emblematic scene of this play, praised by Edo period literati like Nanpo.[221] In this scene, Ohatsu converses with Kuheiji on surface, but secretly asks Tokubei who is hiding directly beneath her if he is determined to die with her:

> [As Kuheiji slanders Tokubei, Tokubei] becomes so angry he grinds his teeth and his body shakes. Ohatsu touches him with her feet to calm him down. How admirable when she soothes him secretly... Ohatsu cries deeply and tells Kuheiji not to say such bad things about Tokubei. “Poor Tokubei was deceived because of his good-nature, but since there’s no evidence, he cannot prove it. There’s nothing else for Tokubei but to die. I wish that he would tell me about his determination to die,” Ohatsu says to herself outwardly, but actually addressing Tokubei underneath the porch. Tokubei nods, takes Ohatsu’s ankle, and draws her foot across his throat to let her know that he is determined to commit suicide.[222]

Even today, most female puppets do not have feet. Rather, feet are expressed by the movement of the hem of kimono. In the early *jōruri* performances, male puppets did not have feet either, since it was impossible in the one-person *sashikomi* style, in which the puppeteer inserted his arm from underneath the kimono of the puppet to manipulate the head and arms (Figure 2). Therefore, Hachirobei must have employed a rather new style called *tsukkomi* style, in which the puppeteer inserts his arm from the top of puppet’s kimono, in order to manipulate Ohatsu’s foot in this scene.

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[221] Ōta Nanpo, *Zokuji kosui*, in Nihon zuihitsu taisei henshūbu, ed., *Nihon zuihitsu taisei daisanki* 4 *Zokuji kosui / Shōkan zakki* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1995), 146.

[222] *Sonezaki*, 32.

In this scene, Ohatsu exists in two realms from the audience's point of view, both textually and visually. Outwardly and publicly, Ohatsu works as a prostitute and a hostess who is conversing with an unwanted customer, Kuheiji. However, while doing so, the audience can see that Ohatsu is actually taking the role of Tokubei's lover, making serious conversation with Tokubei underneath the porch. This multiplicity is emphasized by the vertically-divided use of the theatrical space. Chikamatsu makes similar use of vertical space in another love suicide play, *Shinjū kasane izutsu* 心中重井筒 (*Love Suicide at Kasane Izutsu*, 1707), and this technique (*shukō*) later became more popular, as can be found in popular *jōruri* scenes such as the seventh act of *Kanadehon Chūshingura* (1748). At the same time, the text and *jōruri* chanting also underscore this duality by starting from describing Tokubei underneath the porch, moving to Ohatsu and Kuheiji's outward conversation, and finally directing audiences' attention back to the secret communication between Ohatsu and Tokubei underneath the porch.

Ohatsu's Role in Leading the Love Suicide

This scene is also a pivotal scene in the storyline, since this is when Ohatsu and Tokubei clearly agree that they will commit suicide together. Interestingly, it is Ohatsu who takes the initiative in their promise to die; Ohatsu is the one who declares that Tokubei must die, and Tokubei agrees with her, "nods, takes Ohatsu's ankle, and draws her foot across his throat to let her know that he is determined to commit suicide" in silence.

However, although this scene is the most memorable, this is not the first time when Ohatsu and Tokubei each contemplate suicide. In fact, Ohatsu and Tokubei each mention the

possibility of committing suicide twice earlier, but for different reasons. Although *shinjū* is supposedly for love, there are multi-layered reasons for the couple's desire and decision to die in addition to love. Moreover, there seems to be a difference between the Ohatsu's motivation for death and Tokubei's, and the gender difference here seems to reflect the general differences in representations of heroine and hero in Chikamatsu's *shinjū* plays. In general, it seems that the motivations for the heroines are rather romantic or self-sacrificial, while motivations for the heroes are for their own honor.

It is Ohatsu who mentioned the possibility of death, which is consistent with her overall active and central role in *Sonezaki shinjū*. When Tokubei told her that he made his uncle furious and that he has to leave Osaka for good, Ohatsu said that she might be able to hide Tokubei in Osaka in some way, but, if that fails, Ohatsu and Tokubei's relationship "does not end in this life. There have been previous examples,"[223] implying that Ohatsu and Tokubei can give up this life and continue their relationship in the next life. Just like the "foot" scene, she suggests death, not only her own, but also Tokubei's. However, unlike the "foot" scene, she does not suggest Tokubei's death in order to recover his honor. Rather, her motive for dying here seems to be purely for love; if Tokubei has to leave Osaka and cannot be with Ohatsu, she would rather die with him to be together in the afterlife. Death is not a goal, but an expedient means for her to be with Tokubei.

Ohatsu hints at suicide for the second time when her fellow prostitutes visit her and tell her of the rumors about Tokubei after he was humiliated by Kuheiji and she says, "Please, don't speak anymore. When I hear about Tokubei's news, my heart aches so, that I might die before he

[223] *Sonezaki*, 24.

does. I'd rather die."[224] Even though she says she would rather die, it is only because she knows that Tokubei would rather die than live to receive such humiliation. She would rather die first, before Tokubei does, hoping to be with Tokubei in the afterlife. Her logic is consistent in both cases when she suggests suicide. For Ohatsu, a prostitute who cannot choose whom to be with during her life, the only "choice" she has to be with the one she loves is to die with him.

This makes a clear contrast with Tokubei's motivation when he hints at his intention to die. Tokubei neither agrees nor disagrees with Ohatsu when she first mentions the possibility of dying together to be together. It is not until after he is deceived by Kuheiji and is falsely accused of committing forgery that Tokubei hints at committing suicide. After he was severely attacked both verbally and physically by Kuheiji and his friends, Tokubei says to the gallery that he will "prove his innocence to all of Osaka within three days,"[225] meaning that he will commit suicide to prove his innocence. He subsequently tells Ohatsu of his determination, saying "the more I talk, the less trustworthy I look... I cannot live tonight, I have made up my mind."[226] The death Tokubei mentions is not necessarily a death together with Ohatsu, but a death of his own that serves to redeem his honor – he should die for himself regardless of Ohatsu's choice to die with him.

This difference in motivation for choosing death between a man and a woman seems to be inherited from earlier love suicide plays. In an earlier *kiri-jōruri* based on the love-suicide of Sukeroku and Agemaki, *Semi no nukegara*, Sukeroku decided to die because he was financially

[224] Ibid., 30.

[225] Ibid., 28-29.

[226] Ibid., 31.

ruined, and Agemaki decided to die with him, saying "how can I live without you, even for a moment? I will die no matter what. Please let me die, Sukeroku, with you, please."[227] Earlier *shinjū kyōgen* (love-suicide kabuki), such as *Shinjū chaya banashi* and *Kawara no shinjū*, also present the man as having a strong reason for dying, usually because of his financial problems, while the prostitute begs him to take her with him on the journey to death so that she can be together with him after their deaths.

Despite this gender difference, and Ohatsu's lack of self-oriented motivation to die, Ohatsu's motive for suicide predominates the *michiyuki* scene. The scene is filled with a dream-like atmosphere. The first part emphasizes how ephemeral this world is, listing ephemeral things like frost, dreams, and the sound of bells to represent this world. This imagery is inherited from earlier literature and theater, such as *Heike monogatari*.[228] The eternal stars in this scene represent the afterlife in which they can become husband and wife.[229] Most of the following parts represent what is in Ohatsu's heart. When Ohatsu and Tokubei overhear *jōruri* chanting from a teahouse, it is sung from the point of view of a woman who commits *shinjū*, which is juxtaposed with Ohatsu's own thoughts, merging her into the prostitutes who committed *shinjū* and were sung of in popular songs:

Song: You can never make me your wife anyway. Even though I don't need you

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[227] *Semi no nukegara*, in Mizutani Futō, ed, *Sewa jōruri taizen* (Tokyo: Seika shoin, 1907), 27.

[228] For example, the *Tales of the Heike* famously begins by expressing the ephemerality of the world, using ephemeral imagery: "The bells of the Gion monastery in India echo with the warning that all things are impermanent. The blossoms of the sala trees teach us through their hues that what flourishes must fade. The proud do not prevail for long, but vanish like a spring night's dream. The mighty too in time succumb: all are dust before the wind." 710. Burton Watson, tr.

[229] *Sonezaki*, 36-37.

> anymore...
>
> Narrator (*ji*): True, even though [Ohatsu] thought that way, and even though she cried, she could not do anything with her life in this world, and until today, this very day, there was no night that she was happy. In her unexpected love, in her suffering...
>
> Song: I don't know why, but I'm never able to forget you, but you try to go without me? No, I won't let you go. Please kill me first before you go. I will never let go of you.

The song is about a man leaving a woman in this world, but combined with Ohatsu's situation, "to go (*iku*)" here becomes "to die." The use of the popular song in this scene effectively emphasizes Ohatsu's motive for suicide to be with Tokubei, while simultaneously downplaying Tokubei's individual motive for suicide to redeem his reputation. By dying together, Tokubei's death is reinterpreted as a lovers suicide.

Ohatsu further reiterates this reinterpretation by stating that "we should pray that our wish to become husband and wife in this world will come true in the other world, and let's be born on the same lotus together in afterlife."[230] Tokubei actually remains silent in the *michiyuki* section up until this scene is over, and it is Ohatsu, together with the narrative *ji-no-bun* and the song, who reemphasize that they are dying together to be together in the afterlife. Tokubei finally vocally confirms this idea in the final scene, "At the Woods of Sonezaki Shrine," saying "now that we hurry to death, let our spirits be together."[231] Also, here in this scene, Tokubei is referred to simply as "*otoko* (a man)," wiping away his personality and merging him with the preceding men who committed love suicide with their prostitute lovers. Thus, the narrator concludes in the

[230] Ibid., 38.

[231] Ibid., 39.

ending that their death became "a model of love (*koi*)," and does not mention anything about Tokubei's name being cleared or not. Despite her lack of clear motivation for death, Ohatsu did not die passively. On the contrary, she initiates the suicide plan, and leads Tokubei to engage in a love suicide, in order to fulfill her wish to be like a normal woman who is married to one man. By concentrating on the last two days of Ohatsu and Tokubei's life, *Sonezaki shinjū* constantly depicts the two lovers from the point of view of the prostitute who wished to be like a wife, and who fulfilled her wish through the love suicide.

While prostitutes are often thought to be untrue because it is their job to provide one-night pleasure to male customers, the prostitute heroines of Chikamatsu's *shinjū* plays are represented as true to one lover. Their lack of a clear self-oriented motive for death seems to reflect their desire to break away from the idea of "prostitute," and become an ordinary woman, just like the women outside the pleasure quarters.

Oshima as Ohatsu's Other Side

Shinjū nimai ezōshi, written to commemorate the three-year memorial of *Sonezaki shinjū*, retains the theme of love and a prostitute's desire to be free from her obligations as a prostitute in order to be true to one man, but it approaches this theme from a different angle. While Ohatsu's aspect as a faithful lover was the main focus in *Sonezaki shinjū*, and thus she was mainly depicted as off-work, the prostitute heroine Oshima is mainly depicted as a prostitute on duty in *Shinjū nimai ezōshi*. The "*nimai* (two sheets)" in the title signifies the two different rumors about the fate of the male protagonist in the end, because his dead body was hidden and buried by his

younger brother before anyone else found it; "*nimai*" also seems to signify that it is a story that depicts the two sides of a prostitute heroine of *shinjū* plays, a faithful lover and a professional prostitute.

The structure of this play is quite similar to that of *Sonezaki shinjū*. The prostitute heroine, Oshima, works at Tenma-ya, where Ohatsu used to work, and is famously called the "successor of Ohatsu" for her beauty.[232] Ichirōemon's status is similar to that of Tokubei, since they are each an heir to a relatively wealthy commoner family,[233] each has financial issues for spending too much money at the pleasure quarter,[234] and each is semi-disowned by his family. The time frame of the play also parallels *Sonezaki shinjū*: the play depicts the final two days of the couple's lives. However, in contrast to *Sonezaki shinjū*, which mostly focuses on Ohatsu and Tokubei's meetings, *Shinjū nimai ezōshi* never depicts Oshima and Ichirōemon meeting privately during the entire play. Instead, it focuses on Oshima's suffering and dilemmas on account of being a prostitute.

The play begins right after she comes out from a theater where she accompanied her customer to watch *jōruri* performances, including *Sonezaki shinjū*, and she is with her customer on a boat. Ichirōemon finds her with the customer, and, being jealous, he antagonizes them, only to start a fight with the customer. This argument is a one-sided one, since the customer has a

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[232] *Shinjū nimai ezōshi*, 48.

[233] Ichirōemon is a son of a rich farmer who owns land (*tochimochi* 土地持ち) and hires employees to run the farming business.

[234] Ichirōemon is "crazy about the pleasure quarter and spent all his money, borrowed money from here and there, mortgaged some land near Nagara bank for seven hundred *me*, promising to repay four *kanme* for it." *Shinjū nimai ezōshi*, 61.

right to Oshima by paying for her time, regardless of Oshima's will. Knowing that Oshima and Ichirōemon are lovers, the customer provokes Ichirōemon by "holding Oshima tightly and taunting [Ichirōemon], 'here, does this make you angry?'"[235] All Oshima can do is to gently remind Ichirōemon that it is her job to entertain her customer. She asks Ichirōemon, "Is it so strange that a woman from the pleasure quarter goes to the theater with her frequent customer?"[236] Oshima represses her desire to be true to her lover in order to act properly as a professional prostitute and soothes her customer: "You seem to think that guy [Ichirōemon] has something to do with me, but there's not even a trace of such a thing... He's just jealous of us."[237] Although both *Sonezaki shinjū* and *Shinjū nimai ezōshi* open with a scene where the prostitute heroine is away from the pleasure quarter with her customer, the scenes function in opposite ways. While the outing with the customer provided a convenient setting and liberty for Ohatsu to act freely away from the pleasure quarter setting and meet with Tokubei, Oshima is restrained by her outing. Oshima's helplessness is emphasized by the staging, where she is physically enclosed in a boat with the customer and her male colleagues, and unreachable by Ichirōemon, who is on the shore. Her status as a commodity that can be sold is emphasized in the scene, when Ichirōemon mentions Oshima's concrete price ("three *monme*"[238]). This opening scene emphasizes prostitutes' professional duty and its psychological conflict with their human desires. By emphasizing Oshima's inability to act on her own accord, the first scene makes the prostitute

[235] Ibid., 56.

[236] Ibid., 55.

[237] Ibid.

[238] According to the headnote on Ibid., 57, three *monme* was a price for spending a night with a *hashi-jorō*.

heroine less idealized and closer to real-life.

The focus on depicting Oshima in her professional setting persists throughout the play. Ichirōemon pays a visit to her right after he is disowned by his father, who accused him of stealing money in the beginning of Act Three (*ge no maki* 下の巻). However, this scene is not depicted in the play, but rather is introduced through the conversation of the people at Tenma-ya, who gossip that Oshima was dispatched to the teahouse where Ichirōemon is visiting, and that she should be recalled immediately, since Ichirōemon was just disowned by his father for stealing money.[239] It is notable that Chikamatsu eschewed this opportunity to depict a meeting between the two characters in order to maintain the focus on Oshima's professional life and obligations.

Oshima's intention to die is first mentioned by the narrator right after this unshown lovers' meeting. The narrator says that Oshima was "in woe and determined to cross the Sanzu River (the river of death) together tonight,"[240] meaning that she was determined to die with Ichirōemon. The next scene depicts Oshima in Tenma-ya implying her intention to die in an apologetic way in front of her master and mistress after they give her tea:

> I'm very thankful to you, master and mistress, for taking care of me so well. Come to think of it, it is such a rude thing to one's masters to commit *shinjū* and die, when one is working like this. It is a crime and sin to cause a loss to one's masters. However, dead people won't come back to life to make excuses. There's nothing more precious than life. There must be some inexplicably strong reason to throw away such a precious thing and finish one's life. Such prostitutes shouldn't be hated. It's not that I intend to commit *shinjū*… How can we continue this job of ours for a day, or even for a minute, if it's just for appearances, for fashion, or for ourselves? It's only for the

[239] Ibid., 70.

[240] Ibid., 71.

> love of our families. We never complain so that we won't bring suffering on our families. Since you saved my precious family from poverty, masters, I will never forget your kindness... If I happen to die suddenly, this tea that you gave me would be a mark of our farewell.[241]

It is notable that she first mentions social criticism for prostitutes who commit suicide. Oshima is always depicted as a professional prostitute and she expresses her keen awareness that she is a commodity. Her body does not belong to her, but to the masters who bought her. Yet, being a woman who wishes to remain faithful to one man, she sympathizes with the prostitutes who end up committing love suicide. Oshima is given a voice to talk about the suffering of working as a prostitute who has no choice but to bear the hardship to support her family that she loves, and emphasizes the self-sacrificial nature of the prostitutes. In order to be filial to her parents and her masters, a prostitute cannot be faithful to the man she loves, and death is the only thing that can release a prostitute from this dilemma. Here, Oshima not only tries to proactively justify her future *shinjū*, but also retroactively defends all the prostitutes who committed love suicide, including Ohatsu, and enhances the feeling of pathos inherited from *Sonezaki shinjū* by giving voice to this aspect of prostitutes.

The conflict between Oshima's sense of duty to her masters and parents and her desire to die with her lover is expressed even during the final *michiyuki* scene: "Although I know I will cause trouble for my master and my parents after my death, how can I just watch my lover die alone?"[242] Since *Sonezaki shinjū* concentrates on the prostitute's desires and dreams, and makes Ohatsu lead the love suicide plan and even supersede Tokubei's reason for "his" suicide to make

[241] Ibid., 73.

[242] Ibid., 77.

it into “their” suicide, Ohatsu’s action may have seemed selfish by comparison, especially from points of view of non-prostitutes. In fact, Ohatsu was later criticized by the employees of Tenma-ya in *Shinjū nimai ezōshi* for bringing trouble to the teahouse. However, by specifically depicting the prostitute heroine within her professional setting, and making her state her awareness of the selfish nature of *shinjū* and explain why she still does it, *Shinjū nimai ezōshi* makes prostitute heroines more pitiable and sympathetic.

The depiction of Oshima in a professional setting represents the type of prostitutes who sacrifice themselves to support their families because of their financial situations, and who are essentially no different from non-prostitute women who work to support their families. When taken out of the context of the pleasure quarters, prostitute heroines are filial to their parents, have a sense of responsibility to their masters, and want to be faithful to one man. Developing this idea further, *Ikudama shinjū* (1715), which was written as a thirteenth memorial for *Sonezaki shinjū*, juxtaposes a prostitute and a non-prostitute in relation to the male protagonist and wipes out the differences between the prostitute and non-prostitute heroines, emphasizing the overall self-sacrificial nature of female characters generally in *jōruri*.

Akoya – A Prostitute in Chikamatsu’s Earlier *Jidaimono* Play

A forerunner of Chikamatsu’s idealization of prostitute heroines as respectable characters who are equal to ordinary faithful women can be found in his earlier *jidaimono* plays, most notably, in *Shusse Kagekiyo*, first performed in 1685. This is an adaptation of a story that was popular in earlier theatrical and performative genres such as *kōwaka-mai* and *kojōruri*. The most

notable change Chikamatsu made from the earlier theatrical versions of the Kagekiyo story is the representation of the prostitute character, Akoya (Akoō in the earlier adaptations). Akoya is Kagekiyo's wife[243] who has two sons with him. In the *kōwaka-mai* and *kojōruri* versions, Akoō is depicted as a simple villain who betrays Kagekiyo for money and security for herself and for her children, and is punished for it,[244] but Chikamatsu added more complexity to this character by expanding on the triangular relationship between Kagekiyo, Akoya, and Kagekiyo's proper wife named Princess Ono, and adding a new character, Akoya's brother, as a villain.

In *Shusse Kagekiyo*, despite being a prostitute, Akoya is depicted as a proper woman with a strong sense of morality and self-respect, and her betrayal is more justified by the surrounding circumstances. In addition, on regretting her betrayal, Akoya acts in an extreme way in trying to redeem herself. When Akoya's brother urges Akoya to turn in Kagekiyo for money, Akoya firmly rejects him. It is only when Akoya sees Princess Ono's letter for Kagekiyo and learns that Kagekiyo has lied to her and has been having a relationship with Princess Ono behind her back that she decides to betray him:

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[243] Kagekiyo has two wives, a daughter of a shrine in Owari province and Akoō (Akoya).

[244] In the *kojōruri Kagekiyo*, Akoō, who was together with Kagekiyo for nine years, decides rather easily to betray him in the following manner: "There is only Kagekiyo left in the Heike clan. Even if I try to hide him, his whereabouts will surely become known to the Genji, and he is sure to be caught. Rather than having a hard time after Kagekiyo is caught, I could enjoy prosperity for my immoral action [of turning him in]. Thinking that way, Akoō immediately left for Rokuhara [to turn Kagekiyo in.]" *Kagekiyo*, in Yokoyama Shigeru, ed., *Kojōruri shōhon shū*, 4 (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1964), 249-250. In a different version, Akoō adds that she turns in Kagekiyo and befriends the Genji so that their two children will be promoted in the future (*Kagekiyo* in Araki Shigeru, et. al. eds., *Kōwaka-mai* 2 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1983), 113), which makes a certain amount of sense as a warrior's wife to make an effort to continue their family line, but is criticized as "heartless (*nasake-nashi*)" in the narrative. Kagekiyo pardons Akoya for her betrayal, but kills their two sons in the attack caused by her betrayal, thinking that they will not survive long without him. However, Kagekiyo himself survived this battle and fled to his other wife in Owari Province. Akoya then turned him in again, claiming that "Kagekiyo is a licentious man, and has relationship with the third daughter of the head of a shrine in Owari Province, despite having me... he must have fled to her and her father's place (*Kagekiyo*, in *Kojōruri*, 255)." Yoritomo found her too evil for repeatedly turning in a man whom she was intimate with for nine years, and punished her by execution.

> A letter arrived from the master priest of the Atsuta Shrine... It was a letter from Princess Ono. It said with utmost care that: "You're gone to Kyoto for awhile and don't write to me. Is it because you're being intimate with the prostitute named Akoya that you've told me about? How can you forget about our promise of spending rest of our lives together?" In anger, Akoya could not finish reading, saying, "How resentful, upset, regretful, and envious this makes me! Ranks shouldn't matter in the way of love. How can you call me a prostitute? A woman with children is indeed a true wife. Oh ignorant fool! How could I cherish him, love him, and care for him without knowing this. How I regret loving you! I won't bear a grudge against anyone but that beast, that fickle jerk! How I resent you! How mortifying!" In remorse and anger, Akoya tore the letter in pieces and cried. How understandable this is.[245]

It is notable that Akoya's status as a prostitute and her self-consciousness as to her occupation are both emphasized in this quote, as compared to the *kojōruri* version where Akoō is only referred to as a prostitute once in the narration, and nowhere else. Since Akoya is well aware of her low status compared to Kagekiyo and Princess Ono, she could only rely on the idea that "ranks shouldn't matter in the way of love." She can be equal to Kagekiyo as long as he regards her as his true wife, and respects her as a woman, regardless of her former occupation. Her anger was triggered not only by Kagekiyo's affair with Princess Ono, but also, and more strongly, by the fact that she was slighted by Kagekiyo because of her former occupation. This dual attitude towards her occupation, acute awareness that her status is low, and a constant desire to deny it by becoming a "wife," which would supposedly wipe out her status as a prostitute, is common for prostitute heroines in Chikamatsu's love suicide plays. Although Akoya ends up betraying Kagekiyo, her betrayal is grounded in her desperate desire to be regarded as a respectable woman, rather than a prostitute. Chikamatsu transformed the character of a purely villainous woman, Akoō, into a sympathetic prostitute, Akoya.

[245] Chikamatsu Monzaemon, *Shusse Kagekiyo*, in Torigoe Bunzō, et. al. eds., *Chikamatsu Monzaemon shū III* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2000), 29.

The difference between Akoya and the prostitute heroines of Chikamatsu's love suicide plays is their treatment by the male protagonist. Despite Akoya's desire to be treated as equal to an ordinary woman, and the idealized representation of her sense of morality and loyalty in general, Kagekiyo still treats her as a secondary woman, compared to his proper wife, Princess Ono, the respectable daughter of the chief priest of a shrine. Kagekiyo lies to Akoya when she asks him if he has another woman, when he is actually married to Princess Ono, saying he has "never even talked with Princess Ono."[246] Kagekiyo treats Akoya as a temporary wife, similar to the low-ranked prostitutes who offered one-night love for their customers. Kagekiyo does not seem to feel any guilt for lying to Akoya; he is just acting in accordance to the code of pleasure quarters, engaged in the game of temporary love.

Osaga as a Sacrificial Woman in *Ikudama shinjū*

A similar triangular relationship between an ordinary woman, a prostitute, and a male protagonist is depicted in *Ikudama shinjū*, but the prostitute, Osaga, is represented as more equal to the ordinary woman in this play, and acts in a similar manner as her juxtaposed rival heroine, Okiwa. *Ikudama shinjū* (1715) was written as a thirteenth year memorial for the *Sonezaki shinjū* incident, four years after Chikamatsu wrote his previous *shinjū* play in 1711, and five years before his next *shinjū* play.[247] The basic structure and the characters intentionally mirror those of

[246] Ibid., 26.

[247] *Imamiya no shinjū* (1711), and *Shinjū Ten no Amijima* (1720). Prior to this, Chikamatsu consistently wrote eight *shinjū* plays in eight years ending with *Imamiya no shinjū*, but only two more *shinjū* plays years apart after *Ikudama shinjū*. 1715 was also a year when Chikamatsu wrote a popular *jidaimono* play, *Kokusen'ya kassen*, which was a great success, and continued performing for seventeen months straight.

Sonezaki shinjū, but the details that were left out of *Sonezaki shinjū* are expanded. The prostitute heroine, Osaga, is not depicted as a pure and innocent heroine of a romantic story like Ohatsu, but rather is depicted as a character with greater inner conflict that is induced by more complicated human relations and surrounding environment. While Ohatsu was associated with the *kannon* deity, Osaga is depicted as a mere human, who is more relatable from the audiences' point of view.

Like the earlier prostitute heroines, Osaga never suffers unequal treatment from her lover. Even when Kaheiji's father chooses a perfectly matched fiancée for him (Okiwa), Kaheiji vows that "there is no other woman than [Osaga] in this world."[248] However, at the same time, Osaga is self-conscious about the poor impression that ordinary people hold respecting prostitutes, and is fully aware that Okiwa is the better match for Kaheiji in terms of her social status. Osaga tries to make Kaheiji behave proprietously so that she will not be criticized:

> [Osaga:] "It's lamentable and sad that you will be criticized by people. Ten out of ten townspeople would think that the women who work at the teahouses [prostitutes] seduce young men to follow an evil path and make them unfilial. Thinking about it makes me shed tears. If you really love me, please be kind to your father and your younger brother." [Narrator:] Such sincere words with tears – it's hard to believe they come from a professional woman.[249]

The gap between the social image of prostitutes as evil and Osaga's sincere attitude is emphasized here. Similarly, when the antagonist, Chōsaku, tries to hold Osaga's hand in public, she rejects him and says that she "feels embarrassed that the townspeople think the morals of a

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[248] *Ikudama Shinjū*, in Torigoe Bunzō, et. al. eds., *Chikamatsu Monzaemon shū II* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1998), 340.

[249] Ibid.

prostitute are so low and will look down on me."[250] Because she is aware that prostitutes lack social trust, Osaga is extra careful about her behavior and reputation.

Although the final result is still a love suicide between a prostitute heroine and a merchant, *Ikudama shinjū* repeatedly offers alternative solutions for the protagonists other than love suicide, each of which fails in one way or another. One of the alternatives is the sacrifice of one of the female characters, Osaga or Okiwa. In the second act when Kaheiji's father presses Kaheiji to marry Okiwa and run the family business, Osaga and Okiwa successively contemplate their own deaths in order to restore what they consider the "proper" life for Kaheiji and the people surrounding him.

When overhearing Okiwa suffer over Kaheiji's unwillingness to accept her as his wife, Osaga says to herself, "poor girl, she must be jealous of me... Oh, I missed the right time to die. I hope the ocean will come and swallow me here and now."[251] Here, on one hand, Osaga's desperate feeling (*kokoro midare*)[252] might have caused her desire to die, and dying seems to be a means to be released from the suffering of this world in which she cannot be with Kaheiji. At the same time, she also seems to have felt something akin to self-sacrifice, since Osaga does not initially think of the same option as Ohatsu, who desired to die with Tokubei since she could not be with him. Osaga realizes that her death could become a solution to bring Kaheiji back to a "normal" life, enabling him to follow his father's wishes and marry Okiwa, an ordinary townswoman.

[250] Ibid., 351.

[251] Ibid., 364.

[252] Ibid., 365.

The women's inclinations towards self-sacrifice are depicted more explicitly in a later scene where both Osaga and Okiwa insist that they should be the one to die. When Kaheiji's father threatened to commit suicide to apologize to Okiwa and her parents' spirits if Kaheiji refuses to marry her, "Okiwa grabbed the knife, crying out loud 'I cannot let you die! Everything will go well if I die.' Osaga felt desperately sad, and thought 'I'm the only one who has to die. I'll die in front of Kaheiji's father,'"[253] Osaga and Okiwa's feelings of obligation, their belief that their death can solve the problem, their desire not to burden their loved ones, their sincere love for Kaheiji, and their desire for him to live a normal and happy life are expressed explicitly in this scene.

Also importantly, the women's inclination towards self-sacrifice seems to be an inclination towards fulfilling one's social obligations, not merely individually, but also upholding the overall social order. In love suicide *jōruri* plays, were she an individual woman free from social obligations, a prostitute heroine's happiness often would lie in being together with the man she loves by dying with him. However, as a woman who feels responsible in keeping her social obligations, she tries to be a filial daughter and loyal employee, and not to upset the class hierarchy on her part. More than that, she feels responsible for making the man a filial son, a loyal employee, and a responsible person who fulfills his social obligations, and realizes that her presence is preventing that. Here, the male social order seems to be more important, and it is a respectable woman's job to make the man fulfill his role in the social order. By doing so, the woman can also earn social value and honor for herself.

This representation of self-sacrificial women was further developed in several of

[253] Ibid., 366.

Chikamatsu's *jidaimono* period plays, most strikingly, *Kokusen'ya kassen* 国性爺合戦 (*The Battles of Coxinga*, 1715), which was first performed half a year after *Ikudama shinjū* in the 11th month of 1715. While the main plot is about a half-Japanese and half-Chinese hero named Watōnai, modeled after Zheng Chenggong (1624-1662), and his quest to restore the Ming Dynasty, women play important roles in pivotal parts of the play. In the highlight of the play during the third act, Watōnai's Chinese half sister, Kinshōjo, and Watōnai's Japanese mother, Nagisa, commit suicide so that Kanki, who is an important general and Kinshōjo's husband, will cooperate with Watōnai.[254] As a result of the two women's deaths, Kanki does indeed ally with Watōnai, which leads to their victory in battle.

It is notable that it is a woman's role to sacrifice her life to restore order, while men's expected role is to restore order by surviving. The idea that women's sacrifice becomes the key to solving the problems for the male world, such as to restore order to male lives, or to bring victory in battle, became popular in later *jidaimono* plays. Ironically, such sacrificial actions do not necessarily succeed in solving problems, and sometimes only lead to more tragedy, as I will discuss in Chapter Three. The prostitute heroines in the two previous *Sonezaki*-related *shinjū*

[254] Kanki used to be an important general for the Ming Dynasty, but now works for the nation of Dattan, who destroyed the Ming. Believing that Kanki is loyal to the Ming at heart, and also counting on Kinshōjo, Watōnai and his parents visit Kanki's castle to persuade him to cooperate with Watōnai. Kanki says that he wants to cooperate with Watōnai, but since his wife is Watōnai's sister, if he betrays the nation of Dattan now, people would think that he betrayed them because of his wife, which would be a disgrace. Kanki insists that he should kill Kinshōjo in order to cooperate with Watōnai without losing face, but it is too hard for him to kill her. Observing this situation, Kinshōjo commits suicide to be out of the way, and Watōnai's mother commits suicide partly to apologize to Kinshōjo that she could not prevent her death, and partly to encourage Watōnai to fulfill his goal of defeating the nation of Dattan to restore the Ming. Before she dies, Nagisa (Watōnai's mother) says, "Kanki and Kokusen'ya [another name for Watōnai], don't you ever grieve over our deaths. You must feel stronger motivation to defeat the king of Dattan if you think that he is the enemy of your mother and wife (*Kokusen'ya kassen*, in Torigoe Bunzō, et. al. eds., *Chikamatsu Monzaemon shū III* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2000), 318)." The sacrifice of the two women causes Kanki and Watōnai to bond immediately and strongly, with the thought that they "should not betray a mother's last words, or break a wife's heart (Ibid., 319)."

plays who ultimately desired to die together with one man to be with him in the afterlife, and who brought death to the men, are transformed in the third Sonezaki-related play into a heroine who tries to repress her desire in an attempt to save the man's life.

This idea of self-sacrifice to save another's life might have come from an early-modern value system that places more emphasis on this world more than the next, which seems to reflect a shift away from the medieval Buddhist ideal that seeks salvation in the world after death. In *Sonezaki shinjū*, death was considered a blessing for Ohatsu, since she could be with Tokubei, and Oshima's standpoint seems to be the same. However, while Osaga does mention death many times, she puts her focus on this world, hoping to marry Kaheiji in this world rather than the next. In the preceding *shinjū* plays, the lovers are already determined to die when they leave together, and actually die before the dawn. However, Osaga and Kaheiji left on the spur of the moment, and "wandered about without no clear purpose,"[255] for several days in the beginning of the second act of the three-act play. It was only after Osaga accepted that they had no hope of solving Kaheiji's monetary problems that she suggested dying together so that they would not "disgrace [Kaheiji's] relatives."[256] The reason for death is not a positive one, to be reunited in the afterlife, but a negative one, to prevent causing further embarrassment. If not for the social pressure, Osaga and Kaheiji would rather live together in this world.

Osaga's attachment to her love in this world is emphasized right before her death. Being appalled by the darkness of the night, Osaga says "we've never had a day that we didn't see each other, but it's a dark, rainy night on which we die together, and we can't see each other's faces. It

[255] *Ikudama*, 359.

[256] Ibid.

evokes the darkness of the future, and makes me feel sad."[257] Although the narrator says that the "bonding of the two will continue to the afterlife,"[258] neither Osaga nor Kaheiji mentions anything about being reborn together in the afterlife.

This tendency to value the living world is shown in Osaga and Kaheiji's dreams. Osaga says that the couple has "a big dream of becoming husband and wife in the end,"[259] and Kaheiji also claims a similar dream by telling Osaga that he wanted to "take [Osaga] home publicly, introduce her to [his] family and to the entire town, put [her] in charge of the home, expand his business, and make people say that 'Kaheiji's wife does not look like a prostitute. She really seems like a wife who can take care of a household of any size.'"[260] Such dreams to make a prostitute heroine into a legitimate wife in this world, while ignoring the dream of reincarnation, were never described in the previous *shinjū* plays. These new desires and dreams seem to present a value system in which death is likely the end, so happiness in this world is more meaningful than pursuing happiness in the afterlife. Self-sacrificial acts by the women are more understandable in such a context; dying together does not have as strong a meaning as before when the protagonists strongly believed in the afterlife, so she would sacrifice her life in order to ensure her lover's survival.

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[257] Ibid., 380.

[258] Ibid.

[259] Ibid., 339.

[260] Ibid., 362.

Conclusion

Chikamatsu's representation of prostitute heroines in *shinjū* plays is neither a repetition of one stereotype, nor a random selection of different types of women. The depictions of women in Chikamatsu's *shinjū* plays are overlapping and juxtaposed, and told from different angles to supplement the original *Sonezaki shinjū*, and, over the course of the three plays, to develop a representation of prostitutes that is fuller and more multi-dimensional. At the early stages of *jōruri* (following the *kojōruri* period) Chikamatsu's experiments with *shinjū* and prostitute characters were influential in establishing a new type of play that describes contemporary townspeople's lives, and its genre conventions for the representation of women.

Chikamatsu's three *Sonezaki*-related plays collectively establish one whole picture of the prostitute heroine in *jōruri* puppet plays. Chikamatsu subverted the existing representations of prostitute as a woman who is a rightful object of contempt, is greedy for money, is untrue, and ruins men. Chikamatsu began with the most simplified and idealized representation of a prostitute heroine. Thus, Ohatsu was depicted mostly outside of the pleasure quarter setting, and provided the impression that she was no different from an ordinary woman. The entire structure of the play is modeled after the ceremonial prayer songs to placate the soul of the dead,[261] and Ohatsu is elevated to the level of a deity and a model woman in the end. Chikamatsu then heavily refocuses on the pleasure quarter setting in *Shinjū nimai ezōshi*, reminding readers of the hardships of a prostitute, despite her sense of morality and faithfulness equal to those of an ordinary woman. Her strong sense of obligation to her masters and parents makes her choice to

[261] Wada Osamu, "Chikamatsu – hito to sakuhin," in Sakaguchi Hiroyuki, ed, *Kinsei engaki o manabu hito no tameni* (Tokyo: Sekai shisōsha, 1997), 72.

commit suicide a difficult one. Osaga in *Ikudama shinjū* has an even stronger sense of social obligation, which is channeled, at least temporarily, into determination to sacrifice herself to restore order to her lover's life. This progression reflects a growing focus on life in the here and now, and a fading interest in religious salvation after death. The self-sacrificial behavior exhibited by Osaga and Okiwa is more fully developed in the female characters in later *jidaimono* plays by Chikamatsu and the succeeding generation of playwrights.

CHAPTER THREE
Real Voices of Stepmother Heroines: Namiki Sōsuke and Toyotake-za Theater

By the time Chikamatsu Monzaemon died, *jōruri* had become an established popular theatrical genre that was not only performed, but printed and published regularly. In order to ward off governmental censorship and defend itself from public criticism that it was full of frivolous lies that enticed people away from correct moral thinking, *jōruri* started to focus mainly on productions of *jidaimono* historical plays[262] that reflected the early modern social hierarchy and Confucian ideals of the family and state, with plots that reinforced the fundamental Confucian-based didactic principle of *kanzen chōaku* 勧善懲悪, the promotion of good and punishment of evil. The defining trait of characters on the *tachiyaku* side (the "good side") was "*giri* 義理," a sense of societal or feudal obligation and duty. In this context, *jōruri* puppet plays often depicted stepmothers in one of two ways: as a "good" stepmother, an exemplary, virtuous character who upholds Confucian norms by cherishing her stepchildren and by placing their welfare ahead of that of her own natural children; or as a "wicked" stepmother, who undermines her stepchildren and is simply evil by nature, thus conforming to a negative social stereotype.

The *jōruri* master playwright Namiki Sōsuke 並木宗輔 (1695-1751) was ground-breaking in that he departed from the stylized conventional representations of stepmothers (both good and bad) and gave a more realistic portrayal of the psychological conflict between the stepmother's "real" desire to favor her natural child and the strong social pressure to put her stepchild first. This chapter focuses on Sōsuke's unique representations of stepmothers in several

[262] As explained in Chapter One, *sewamono* domestic plays that dramatize scandalous incidents became rare after love suicide plays were banned by the *bakufu* government in 1723. *Jidaimono* period plays that focus on depicting moral heroes who restore order to the societal hierarchy became mainstream from the 1720s.

plays written at different points in his career, *Hōjō Jirai ki* 北条時頼記 (*Chronicle of Hōjō Tokiyori*, 1726), *Nanto jūsan gane* 南都十三鐘 (*Thirteen Bells at the Southern Capital*, 1728), *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu* 鵆山姫捨松 (*Abandoned Princess at the Pine Tree on Mt. Hibari*, 1740), and *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki* 双蝶々曲輪日記 (*A Diary of Two Butterflies in the Pleasure Quarters*, 1749). I argue that, while these plays adhere to principle of *kanzen chōaku* with an overall plot structure of good conquering evil, at the level of individual characters, Sōsuke's depictions of stepmothers subvert traditional Confucian ideals. His "good" stepmothers are not inherently exemplary; instead, they favor their stepchildren because they (as stepmothers) want to conform to social pressure and wish to be seen as exemplary. Likewise, his "wicked" stepmothers are not simply abusive stepmothers; they have their own motives and circumstances. Through these less conventional and more realistic, conflicted characters, Sōsuke speaks to the anxieties of his audience and calls into question the rigid value system that strictly subordinated individual desire to social obligation. Instead, he explores the psychology of stepmothers who place – or wish to place – their individual desires first.

Stepmothers in Early Modern Japanese Life and Fiction

Because of their focus on the conflict between family and the duty of loyalty, exemplary mothers and stepmothers often appear in *jidaimono jōruri* as main characters, as the hero's wife, sister, daughter, or mother. In the early modern feudal society, the most important job for a woman was to bear and raise children, especially boys, to continue the family line. Samurai

families with no heir were subject to discontinuance.[263] Infertility was one of the legitimate reasons for a man to divorce his wife: "The reason for taking a wife is for the reproduction of the offspring, so it is natural to divorce a wife who cannot bear children."[264] When a wife was unable to produce an heir to the family, her husband was allowed and expected to either divorce her and marry another woman, have a mistress (or several) to produce an heir, or adopt a child, often from his relatives:

> If [the infertile wife] is kind, well-behaved, not jealous, follows the way of the woman, and satisfies the hearts of her husband and her father-in-law, it is permissible to adopt one of the husband's relatives with the same surname and raise him to succeed the family, without divorcing the wife. Also, if the husband's mistress has a child, his wife doesn't have to be divorced even if she doesn't have any children.[265]

In other words, fertile women were expected to become mothers, and infertile women who were good wives were expected to become stepmothers.[266]

Similarly, if a man was widowed with children, he would usually remarry to have a new wife and a mother who could manage the household. The last two volumes of the twelve-volume *kanazōshi* collection of historical short stories of exemplary Japanese women, *Honchō jokan* 本朝女鑑 (*Mirror of Women in Our Country,* 1661), are entitled "Instructions for Women" (*joshiki* 女式) and indicate how women should behave on various occasions. The fact that this volume

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[263] In *Buke shohatto*, samurai families were required to register an appropriate adopted child and heir if they had no children by blood, before the death of the head of the household. (Kanbun 3 (1663), 18; Kyōhō 2 (1717), 12)

[264] *Wazoku doji kun* 和俗童子訓 Vol. 5. Hōei 7 (1710). In Ekiken kai, ed., *Ekiken zenshū* vol. 3 (Tokyo: Ekiken zenshū kankōbu, 1911), 219.

[265] Ibid.

[266] This distinction between "fertile" and "infertile" women ignores the possibility that the husband is infertile. During the Edo period, infertility was always blamed on women, and male infertility was simply unheard of, at least judging from the contents of the textbooks for women.

includes a section entitled “How to Raise Your Stepchildren” is an interesting indicator as to how common it was for women to raise stepchildren, and how inherently difficult this experience could be:

> If a woman becomes a wife of a family that already has children, she should pay extra attention. If she tries to firmly instruct her stepchildren the right way, people will condemn her. If she is lax with the stepchildren and lets them do as they please, people will condemn her for deserting the stepchildren and not guiding them. In any case, it’s often quite frustrating since people will criticize her on all occasions. Relating to that point, there have been many examples of stepmothers and their stepchildren not getting along and causing trouble... If a stepchild thinks of his stepmother as if she were his real mother, and if the stepmother thinks of her stepchild as if he were her real son, they will not think of each other without tenderness, but a woman tends to have a jealous and crooked heart, and has an evil plan in her mind in the hope of making her own child succeed her husband’s line. And so she starts hating her stepchild.[267]

This represents common early-modern beliefs about women and stepmothers that are presented in different *jōruri* plays, especially the belief that the stepmothers are perceived to be cruel (because women are by nature jealous and crooked), so they become easy targets of social condemnation no matter how they actually treat their stepchildren. Because becoming a stepmother was not uncommon, the hardship of being a good stepmother seems to have been widely recognized.

Turning to the world of fiction, stepmothers were common as a topic of Japanese literature. There are traditionally two general types of representations of stepmothers in Japanese literature: a young and beautiful stepmother in romantic tension with her stepson, and a parental stepmother who acts as a mother. The former can be further divided into two subcategories: a stepmother who is pursued by her stepson, and a stepmother who pursues her stepson. The latter

[267] Asai Ryōi, *Honchō jokan*, in Dōbunkan henshūkyoku, ed., *Nihon kyōiku bunko kōgi hen* ge (Tokyo: Dōbunkan, 1910), 271-272.

can also be further divided into two subcategories: An evil stepmother who bullies her stepchildren and prioritizes her own natural children on all occasions, and an exemplary stepmother who treats her stepchildren lovingly as if they were her own.

The first subcategory of the former category – a young and beautiful stepmother pursued by her stepson – is famously seen *Genji monogatari*. Genji pursues his stepmother, Lady Fujitsubo, who is young, and said to bear a strong resemblance to his biological mother. Similarly, Utsusemi is pursued by her son-in-law, who is almost her age.[268] This type in which the stepson pursues his young stepmother seems to be unique to *Genji monogatari*. The second, more common representation of the stepmother-as-romantic-possibility type overlaps with the first subcategory of the latter category, the evil stepmother type. The usual pattern is: a young stepmother falls in love with her beautiful stepson, gets rejected, and, once spurned, turns into a typical wicked stepmother who bullies her stepchild. Examples of this can be found in some *setsuwa* stories, such as the story from *Konjaku monogatari* 今昔物語 (*The Collection of Tales of Times Now Past*, ca. 1120) about the Indian prince Kunara and his stepmother, and the stories of Aigo-no-waka and Shintoku-maru from *sekkyō-bushi*. The story of Prince Kunara also appears in the medieval educational text for women entitled *Jokunshō* 女訓抄 (*Teachings for Women*), specifically, in the section on "The Necessity of Taking Care of One's Stepchild." *Jōruri* adapts the Aigo-no-waka and Shintoku-maru stories, in which the lustful young stepmother attempts to

[268] Utsusemi's stepson shows interest to her in the Hahakigi chapter, and, in the Sekiya chapter, Utsusemi explains to Genji that her stepson's clear advances towards her after her husband's death were what drove her to renounce the world: "[T]he Governor of Kawachi [Utsusemi's stepson], who had always had an eye for [Utsusemi], showed her any consideration...'I understand how inadequate I am, but please do not hesitate to let me know if I can do anything for you.' His flattering advances blatantly revealed what he had in mind, and... without a word to anyone she became a nun." Murasaki Shikibu, Royall Tyler, tr., *The Tale of Genji* (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 317.

seduce her beautiful stepson, gets rejected, and starts tormenting him, sometimes with an early-modern *jōruri* narrative twist added.

The first subcategory of the latter category – wicked parental stepmothers – is a common image in fairytales worldwide, such as Cinderella. In Japanese literature, *Sumiyoshi monogatari* 住吉物語 (*The Tale of Sumiyoshi*, end of the tenth century) and *Ochikubo monogatari* 落窪物語 (*The Tale of Ochikubo*, end of the tenth century) are probably the oldest wicked stepmother stories. *Ochikubo monogatari* tells the story of Ochikubo, who is bullied by her stepmother for the sake of her two real daughters. *Genji monogatari* also had several episodes where heroines are bullied by their stepmothers, although these instances were not central to the story or particularly harsh. For instance, there was a fear that Lady Murasaki would be slighted by her stepmother, which is why she was raised on a mountain by her grandmother, away from her father's mansion in the capital: "at [Murasaki's] awkward age, among all her father's other children, she might well be treated more as a nuisance than anything else."[269] When Genji and Lady Murasaki pick appropriate tales to give his daughter, Akashi Princess, he pays extra attention to eliminate stories about evil stepmothers, "since the old tales are full of [ideas about evil stepmothers] 継母の腹ぎたなき昔物語も多かる."[270] There are also *setsuwa* tales, such as *Hachikazuki* 鉢かづき (*The Bowl Bearer*), that depict a typical wicked stepmother as a character.[271] The depiction of evil stepmothers often serves the purpose of highlighting the virtue

[269] *Genji*, 101.

[270] Ibid., 463.

[271] Other examples include stories from the *otogizōshi* genre, such as *Asagao no tsuyu* 朝顔の露 (*Dew of Morning Glories*), *Akitzuki monogatari* 秋月物語 (*Tale of the Autumn Moon*), *Chūjōhime no honji* 中将姫の本地 (*The*

of the stepchild, who remains religious and filial despite the hardship he or she has to go through because of the stepmother.

An early example of the second type of parental stepmother, the exemplary one, is found in *Genji monogatari*. Lady Murasaki not only agrees to raise Lady Akashi's daughter with Genji, but does so perfectly, as if she were her own daughter: "[Murasaki] had looked after her with selfless devotion, really loved her..."[272] The typical place to find the good and exemplary stepmother in the medieval period is in educational texts for women. In the aforementioned *Jokunshō,* there are three episodes about stepmothers, one of which is an exemplary stepmother who prioritized her stepson over her own son. When the stepmother had to choose which one of the two sons should be executed, she chose her own son, since her late husband told her to regard the stepson as himself, and to consider her real son as herself.[273]

Stepmothers in *Jidaimono Jōruri* Plays

Jōruri plays featuring stepmothers mostly follow exemplary women's stories. Uchiyama Mikiko points out:

> The theme of stepmother and stepchildren is not unique to *jōruri,* but a universal theme to any country and any time. However, when *jōruri* deals with this theme, there is a certain rule, a rule that the stepmother on the hero's side[274] always adheres

Origin of Chūjōhime), and *Bijin kurabe* 美人比べ (*A Comparison of Beauties*).

[272] *Genji*, 569.

[273] *Jokunshō*, "Keishi o kairimiru beki koto." Manji 1 (1658). In Minobe Shigekatsu and Sakakibara Chizuru, eds., *Jokunshō* (Tokyo: Miyai shoten, 2003), 114-121.

[274] While wicked stepmothers could work as a central villain in stories, and thus, theoretically in *jōruri* as well, in early *jōruri*, there were no female villains, since the typical *jōruri* villains in history plays are ambitious men who want to overturn the existing political power and take over the rulership. Even the medieval wicked

to her duty and treats her stepchild better than her real child no matter what.[275]

This tendency is especially strong for Takemoto-za playwrights, starting from Chikamatsu Monzaemon. They conventionally depicted the love between parents and children, which includes stepparents and stepchildren, as a main theme. There always exists a sense of "obligation (*giri*)" in such relationships, so it is not rare for the stepmother (or stepfather) to sacrifice herself (or himself) or her (or his) real child to save the stepchild. The most famous example is the mother of the hero Watōnai in *Kokusen'ya kassen*. Even though she had only just met her stepdaughter, Kinshōjo, when Kinshōjo's husband tried to kill his wife, the old mother protected her stepdaughter, stepping in front of her and saying, "This is my precious daughter. Don't be afraid my dear girl. Hide behind me."[276] As an exemplary samurai woman, Watōnai's mother does not hesitate to protect her stepdaughter, even if it could cost her life.

Another typical representation of the good stepmother type in *jōruri* is the stepmother who tries to protect her stepchild even more strongly than the stepchild's biological mother does. In *Sanshō dayū gonin musume* 三荘大夫五人嬢 (*Five Daughters of Sanshō dayū*, 1727, Takemoto-za, Takeda Izumo I), for example, the wife adopts and loves the son that her husband's mistress bore as if he were her real son. When the husband ordered them to kill the son as a substitute for his master's son, it is the wife who strongly objects, while the biological mother is resigned to killing her son. While the biological mother cries and says that "Tamichiyo [her

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stepmother story is merged into the frame of the story of an ambitious male character, so the wicked stepmother, Iwane in *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu*, cooperates with the male villain, Nagaya-no-ō, who wishes to rule Japan.

[275] Uchiyama, 1989, 295.

[276] *Kokusen'ya*, 312.

child] is fortunate. To be born as a son of a retainer, dying to save the master's life is just as valuable as being a lord himself. How fortunate for him,"[277] the stepmother secretly helped him to escape: "Tamichiyo and I became a parent and child just now. I will not let him be killed, even if I must sacrifice myself... this stepmother will not desert you, even if I have to desert this life (291)."

Acts of sacrifice, even sacrificing one's own child as a substitute, are not as purely tragic and heartless as they may first appear to modern audiences. Although it is still tragic when the stepparents sacrifice themselves or their real children, the action is always well-praised and well-rewarded in the end, often in Act Five. The sacrificed child is often recognized and praised by the lord whose child was saved, and, not only that, the sacrifice often plays a pivotal role in defeating villains who plotted to kill the lord's child and overturn the social structure. The sacrifice is always successful, at least in the early *jidaimono* plays up to the 1720s. In addition, the parents are not depicted as cruel people who easily desert their children for the sake of their social and feudal obligations. Rather, by portraying their suffering caught between parental love and feudal obligation, both their parental love and loyalty are emphasized. In such *jōruri* plays, Confucian values are depicted as the ultimate good, and death or sacrifice for the sake of these values is depicted as a positive and particularly meaningful death.

In contrast to this straightforward Confucian model, Namiki Sōsuke, originally a Toyotake-za playwright, took a different approach to his frequent theme of stepmother-stepchild relationships by adding another layer to the typical exemplary stepmother type. The stepmother tries to act in the typical exemplary way, prioritizing her stepchild over her real child, but fails

[277] Takeda Izumo, *Sanshō dayū gonin musume* in Hirata Sumiko, ed., *Takemoto za jōruri shū* I (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1988), 290.

and breaks down in the end, confessing her true feelings that she favors her real child over her stepchild. Unlike Takemoto-za's playwrights who "deeply believed that, among all human relationships, parents and children are tied with the purest affection such that they would never betray each other,"[278] and "if the characters are good, the relationship between stepchildren and stepmothers is bound with even deeper love than the relationship between the mother and her real children,"[279] Sōsuke seems to have had a more realistic approach to the natural, sinful[280] human feelings that sometimes stand in opposition to feudal and societal duty. This chapter begins by focusing on Sōsuke's earlier works that he wrote for Toyotake-za theater, analyzing the way in which Sōsuke depicted a more realistic "good" stepmother type who, just before her death, reveals her dark but true feelings that she loves her real child better than her stepchild, contrary to the Confucian moral code. Subsequently, this chapter turns to address Sōsuke's depiction of an "evil" stepmother, who unabashedly bullies her stepchild. This depiction departs from typical depictions of evil stepmothers in *jōruri* plays in that the stepmother explains how her blind love for her own child motivated her actions. Finally, this chapter returns to a "good" stepmother in one of Sōsuke's later works in which he finally strikes a balance between depicting stepmothers' feelings realistically and *jōruri*'s black-and-white moral conventions.

[278] Uchiyama, 1989, 186.

[279] Ibid., 188.

[280] This was sinful from the contemporary Confucian perspective because it entailed placing one's family ahead of society, and from the contemporary Buddhist perspective because it was born of attachment that would impede enlightenment.

Namiki Sōsuke

Namiki Sōsuke was born in Osaka. He originally studied *haikai* linked verse, but then became a *jōruri* writer under Nishizawa Ippū. Sōsuke's first play co-written with Yasuda Abun in 1726, *Hōjō Jirai ki*, was a smash hit; starting in the fourth month, it kept on running "stretching across three years."[281] After this success, Sōsuke became the main playwright for the Toyotake-za theater for about fifteen years, mostly with Abun as the supplemental writer. During these fifteen years of working as Toyotake-za's main playwright during its early development, Sōsuke played a major role in establishing the uniqueness of Toyotake-za's style and breaking away from the conventions established by the older Takemoto-za theater. In Genbun 5 (1740), Tamenaga Tarobee started taking over Sōsuke's job as the main playwright, and Sōsuke began new endeavors, going to Edo in 1741 to write *kabuki* scripts, and changing his name to Senryū.[282] In Enkyō 2 (1745), Sōsuke resumed his career as a *jōruri* playwright, but this time, for the Takemoto-za theater. Under the name of Senryū, Sōsuke co-wrote many *jōruri* plays with Takeda Izumo II and Miyoshi Shōraku, including popular plays that are performed even today, such as *Natsu matsuri Naniwa kagami* (1745), *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* (1746), *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* (1747), *Kanadehon chūshingura* (1748), and *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki* (1749).[283] Because of *jōruri*'s extreme popularity, the period from 1745 to 1751 is known as the

[281] *Imamukashi ayatsuri nendai ki*, 12. The play was first performed in the eleventh month in 1715, and continued to be performed for 17 months until the third month of 1717.

[282] Sōsuke changed his name to Senryū 千柳 when he became a kabuki playwright in 1741, and continued to use this name even after becoming a Takemoto-za theater playwright in Enkyō 2 (1745). However, his name is credited as Sōsuke 宗輔 for his final work at the Toyotake-za theater, *Ichinotani futaba gunki* (1751). For the sake of consistency and clarity, Sōsuke/Senryu will be referred to as "Sōsuke" throughout.

[283] Selected scenes from these plays are included in James R Brandon and Samuel L. Leiter, eds, *Kabuki Plays on Stage: Brilliance and Bravado, 1697-1766*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002.

"Golden Age 黄金時代" by modern scholars.[284] This is the time when a contemporary text remarked that "it is as if *kabuki* doesn't exist. Outside of the theaters there are hundreds of banners, and countless gifts. The two theaters exist in the east and the west, just like sumo, as east-Toyotake and west-Takemoto. All the townspeople and people from nearby have become fans, and the popularity of the *jōruri* puppet plays goes without saying."[285] Sōsuke's final work was at his old theater, Toyotake-za: He wrote the first three acts of *Ichinotani futaba gunki* (1751), but died before the first performance in the eleventh month of Hōreki 1 (1751).

Scholars have divided Sōsuke's life as a playwright into several phases,[286] since the themes of his plays change drastically depending on the time of his life. Uchiyama Mikiko, the pioneer of Sōsuke studies, presents the most detailed division into six periods: the Toyotake-za co-writer period with Yasuda Abun (1726-1732; 15 works),[287] the Toyotake-za co-writer period with his disciple, Namiki Jōsuke (1733-1735; 5 works),[288] the Toyotake-za solo-writer period (1736-1740; 8 works), the Edo *kabuki* period (1741-1742; 8 works), and the Takemoto-za co-writer period primarily with Takeda Izumo II and Miyoshi Shōraku (1745-1750; 12 works). *Ichinotani futaba gunki*, for which Sōsuke returned to Toyotake-za theater, stands on its own as the last period.

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[284] Uchiyama Mikiko, "Namiki Sōsuke," Torigoe Bunzō et. al. eds., *Ōgon jidai no jōruri to sono go* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), 86.

[285] *Jōruri fu*, 120.

[286] As Uchiyama Mikiko points out, Sonoda Tamio divides Sōsuke's career into three periods, Tsunoda Ichirō into five periods, and Uchiyama Mikiko into six periods. See Uchiyama, 1989, 61.

[287] Sōsuke's name was written as 宗助 in this period.

[288] Sōsuke changed his kanji to 宗輔 in Kyōhō 20 (1735).

This division is important not only to keep track of Sōsuke's physical relocations and the different co-writers he worked with, but also to follow the transformations in Sōsuke's writing style. The plays Sōsuke co-wrote with Abun at the earliest stage of his career, are "pessimistic fate plays and serious destiny-driven tragedies."[289] The overall atmosphere is dark, and runs contrary to the optimistic ideals that the Takemoto-za playwrights consistently represented in the *tachiyaku* characters, whose sacrifices and suffering were rewarded in the end. After Sōsuke became a *kabuki* playwright and came back to write for the Takemoto-za theater with other established playwrights, Takeda Izumo II and Miyoshi Shōraku, Sōsuke accommodated the traditional characteristics of Takemoto-za to depict more optimistic, Confucian ideals, while maintaining his unique interest in the conflict of human desire and Confucian societal ideals.

The Stepmother in *Hōjō Jirai ki*

Sōsuke's exploration of the darker aspects of a seemingly-exemplary stepmother figure began in his first play, *Hōjō Jirai ki*, written for the Toyotake-za theater. A mother who is caught between her real daughter and stepdaughter forms the dramatic heart of the play in Act Three. As one of the "good" characters, the stepmother shows the same qualities as a conventional exemplary stepmother in the beginning of the act. However, when circumstances grow desperate for her real (natural) daughter, the stepmother casts aside exemplary stepmotherly behavior and tries to help her real daughter at the cost of her own honor. By both employing and subverting the *jōruri* conventions for "good" characters, Sōsuke draws attention to those individual desires that are normally suppressed under social pressure. Rather than presenting an exemplary

[289] Kawaguchi, 37.

stepmother who reinforces the Confucian social order, Sōsuke attempted to depict a darker but more complex stepmother who breaks social taboos because of a natural love for her own daughter, subtly casting doubt on the morality of prescribed Confucian behavior.

In the third act of *Hōjō Jirai ki*, two young women and their mother[290] come to a castle to identify a headless body that might be one of the daughters' husbands. Judging from the clothes, they identify the body as the younger daughter's husband. Other evidence shows that it was the older daughter's husband who killed his brother-in-law. The younger daughter resolves to avenge her husband by killing her older sister's husband, while the older daughter begs for mercy for her husband. Lord Tokiyori, the master of the castle, encourages the younger sister, laying out the case for why vengeance would be appropriate. The mother, however, sides with the older daughter, explaining that the older daughter is adopted and so should take priority over her natural daughter.

Lord Tokiyori's argument in support of the younger sister, who intends to avenge her husband, reflects the traditional samurai view on justice and vengeance, with a Confucian emphasis on social order. He says:

> Although I can understand both sisters' points of view, the older sister, Ikuyo, should understand this: Regardless of one's class or status, if one commits murder, that person should be caught and punished. This is the law of our society. Even if your younger sister does not seek out her husband's killer for vengeance, he will not be allowed to escape punishment. As for your sister's husband, any man who is killed in vain, even if he is the lord of a feudal domain, will have his lands confiscated and his family banished. This is well-known... Therefore, the younger sister should kill her husband's enemy to redeem her family's honorable name.[291]

[290] This mother is never referred to by name. It is rather common for mothers in *jōruri* to be referred to simply as "mother." While often referred to as "elder/younger daughter/sister," the daughters do have names. The elder daughter is named Ikuyo and the younger Matsuyo.

[291] Nishizawa Ippū and Namiki Sōsuke, *Hōjō Jirai ki*, in Hara Michio, ed., *Toyotakeza jōruri shū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo:

Such vengeance would not be merely based on personal anger, but for the greater purpose of redeeming the honor of the younger daughter's husband and his family. Without identifying the killer and taking revenge on him, her husband, and by extension the whole family, would forever be slighted as a "coward" who died an inglorious death outside of battle and went unavenged, and his death would be classified a "death in vain (*inu-jini*)," which would result in the confiscation of his lands and the banishment of his family. It was the proper "way (*michi*)" of a samurai wife to take a revenge for her wrongfully killed husband.

At the beginning of the third act, the stepmother is depicted as a typical exemplary stepmother, who prioritizes her stepdaughter over her real daughter. Despite Lord Tokiyori's judgment that "the younger sister should kill her husband's enemy to redeem her family's honorable name,"[292] the stepmother defends the older sister, conforming to the expectations of an exemplary stepmother. Lord Tokiyori's judgment, which is based on the way of the samurai, is less important for her than her social obligation towards her stepdaughter. After revealing that the older sister was adopted, the mother continues:

> If people somehow learned that my older daughter was adopted, and if my older daughter were to learn about it, people would try to blame me as a stepmother, finding fault and speaking ill of our relationship. It would be regrettable and shameful. Even though I didn't treat my daughters differently, if other people speak ill of us, that is the way people would view us. I have been taking extra care of her for twenty-three years, and it has burdened my heart beyond measure... although I know it would be the right thing to support my younger daughter in her desire to kill her husband's murderer, I can't, because I fear that it would ruin all of my effort until now and people would say that my wicked-stepmother nature appeared at this crucial moment. This is why I have deserted my younger daughter's cause and support my older daughter.[293]

Kokusho kankōkai, 1991), 108.

[292] Ibid.

This idea resonates perfectly with contemporary principles of proper behavior for stepmothers as widely disseminated in textbooks for women including the "How to Raise Your Stepchildren" section of *Honchō jokan*, a standard handbook for women.[294]

Through the stepmother's words, Sōsuke highlights the social pressure that impels stepmothers to act properly and to avoid criticism. This stepmother is self-conscious about such social norms and considers it her obligation (*giri*) to treat her older daughter better so as not to bring shame (*haji* 恥) on herself and her family. Significantly, she uses the word "*giri*" three times to explain her bond with her stepdaughter, while she does not express her "love (*on'ai* 恩愛)" towards her stepdaughter. By concentrating on her social duty, the mother manages to maintain exemplary behavior, like her predecessors in conventional *jidaimono jōruri* plays. At the same time, however, by presenting the mother's comments purely in terms of social pressure and expectations, Sōsuke suggests the existence of a selfish human emotion that this seemingly flawless stepmother might possess: a sincere, overpowering love for her own daughter that she would reveal if not for the social pressure and her own pride and aversion to being criticized as a bad stepmother. In this regard, she suggests that she may be an ordinary woman, not unlike the audience, who would try to imitate the behavior of exemplary women in the textbooks without necessarily possessing the exemplary emotional bond to her stepchild.

The point at which Sōsuke's depiction of the stepmother in *Hōjō Jirai ki* diverges from the conventional description of exemplary stepmothers in earlier *jōruri* plays is the lack of the emotional bonds underneath the externally imposed obligations. For example, in Chikamatsu's

[293] Ibid., 109.

[294] See pages 146-147.

Kokusen'ya kassen, the mother of the hero, Watōnai, is clearly cognizant of social expectations: she explains that she cannot let her stepdaughter be killed in front of her eyes, since she does not want to sully her reputation and be called an evil stepmother.[295] At the same time, the mother's emotional bond with her stepdaughter is depicted as no different from a natural parent-child relationship. Their relationship is constantly referred to as "parent and child 親子," and they gladly die together in the end in order to clear the path for a crucial military alliance: "Mother and daughter take each other's hands and nestle together... then expire at the same moment, the happy smiles on their faces a memento for this world."[296] The relationship between Watōnai's mother and her stepdaughter exemplifies the principle of *jōruri* convention that "if the characters are good, the relationship between stepchildren and stepmothers is bound by an even deeper love than the relationship between the mother and her real children."[297] Watōnai's mother's exemplary behavior is not at odds with her sincere love for her children (including her stepchild), and the non-blood family tie is celebrated as unbreakable.

On the other hand, the stepmother's assertion of Confucian values in *Hōjō Jirai ki* turns out to be a superficial facade that contradicts her true feelings. This presents Sōsuke's radical view of a non-blood family tie that, "even on the protagonist's side, no matter how harmonious the relationship between stepchildren and their stepmother appears, there exists a irreconcilable

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[295] This scene is not strictly analogous to the scene from *Hōjō Jirai ki* in that Watōnai's mother can only be said to be choosing her stepdaughter over her natural son in a roundabout fashion – by sparing her stepdaughter she denies her son an important ally for his army. In any case, this scene does demonstrate the strong obligation to treat one's stepchild well, in addition to the emotional bond between Watōnai's mother and her stepdaughter.

[296] Chikamatsu Monzaemon, *Kokusen'ya kassen* (*The Battles of Coxinga*), in Donald Keene, tr., *Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu*, 1961 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 107.

[297] Uchiyama, 1989, 188.

jarring feeling at the bottom of their hearts."[298] Later in the same act, the true identities of the dead body and the murderer are revealed. The dead body is actually the older daughter's husband, who was killed by the younger daughter's husband and dressed in his clothes. With the murderer and the victim switched, it becomes the younger daughter's turn to beg her older sister's mercy, while vengeance becomes the older daughter's prerogative. If the stepmother were truly exemplary, she would support her stepdaughter in taking revenge on her natural daughter's husband. Instead, the stepmother stabs herself, confessing that her exemplary behavior was a sham:

> How fearsome human hearts are. Evil should be restrained, but, against heaven, I have kept darkness in my heart, and I will now make a confession. It's no secret that my older daughter, Ikuyo, was a foundling... I adopted her and raised her dearly, to the age of twenty-five, without beating her, even when I sometimes hit her younger sister. I went out of my way to treat her well out of the sense of obligation to an adopted child. But an obligation taken up for saving appearances is easy to discard in an emergency. I was secretly hoping that my younger daughter would be successful in seeking vengeance, even though I said I would support my older daughter... It was only out of a sense of obligation that I cherished the older daughter. Whom else can I love from the bottom of my heart but my daughter by my own blood?[299]

In this confession, the stepmother admits that she does not love her two daughters equally. It was only her sense of obligation (*giri*) that made her pay extra attention to the older daughter. Here Sōsuke breaks the *jidaimono jōruri* rule that "the stepmother on the hero's side always adheres to her duty and treats her stepchild better than her real child no matter what."[300]

The quality of Sōsuke's tragedy of obligation (*giri*) and human emotion (*jō* 情) is subtly

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[298] Ibid., 189.

[299] *Hōjo Jirai ki*, 120-121.

[300] Uchiyama, 1989, 295.

different from the conventional presentation of this tragedy in *jōruri* puppet plays. Conventionally, the tragedy lies mainly in the conflict between societal obligation and personal affection (often attachment to one's child, represented by the oft-used expression, "blindness due to one's child" 子ゆえの闇) and the suffering of the hero when he makes a difficult decision to sacrifice someone he loves out of loyalty or societal obligation. However, this sacrifice also highlights his nobility. The triumph that the sacrifice brings in the end of the play strongly affirms the Confucian values that it embodies. However, in the scene in *Hōjō Jirai ki* where the mother confesses her feelings before her death, the tragedy arises because the stepmother cannot make such a heroic decision. She realizes that the sense of obligation that she was clinging to all her life was superficial, and that her true feelings contradict the Confucian ideal she wished to believe in. While the stepmother's realization of her real desire brings her a sense of despair, it also highlights her strong love towards her real daughter, and calls for sympathy from the other characters and from the audience. By foregrounding the exemplary stepmother's individual desire that runs counter to societal duty, Sōsuke subtly problematizes the social structure that causes this conflict.

This confession-before-dying scene also betrays one of the conventional theatrical rules regarding confession-before-dying scenes in *jidiamono jōruri* plays. Such confessions are a common *shukō*, called a "*modori* 戻り (return)," and are usually made by a character who serves the main villain but is actually good at heart (or repents in the middle of the play) and seeks to accomplish a secret good purpose by serving the villain. Often, right before the seeming villain's death, he confesses his true intentions (or repents) to the protagonists and redeems his honor. A

typical example is Gonta from *Yoshitsune senbon zakura.* When he was stabbed by his father, who despaired of his son's villainous behavior, Gonta confessed that he was continuing to act like a villain in order to secretly save the life of their Heike master, Koremori.[301] Although he dies, his last confession restores his honor, and redeems him as a hero who has saved his master.

By contrast, the confession of the mother in *Hōjō Jirai ki* seems to be a reverse-*modori*, where a seemingly good heroine is made into a pathetic woman, since it works to degrade a character who has, up until that point, been acting as an ideal good stepmother. While the conventional *modori* scene functions to restore honor, this reverse-*modori* functions to irreversibly destroy honor. The stepmother will never have an opportunity to redeem herself. Rather, she sacrifices her life and her honor together as a means to gain sympathy and make an impossible last request. She says to her older daughter, "Appease yourself by slicing me to pieces, but please spare your younger sister's husband... I will go to Hell for the sin of forgetting the proper way of living, but if you pity me, please simply tell me that you will spare your brother-in-law before I die."[302] By admitting that she has never truly lived her life by Confucian values, she is able to make a credible plea for something inconsistent with those values. Stripped of her mantle as an exemplary stepmother, she becomes a mere woman with human emotions and failings who is able to speak directly to others and seek their emotional empathy.

In his first work as a *jōruri* playwright, Sōsuke made some departures from the conventional depictions of stepmothers and presented an iconoclastic alternative to the

[301] The *kiri* (final) scene of Act Three of *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* (Takeda Izumo, Namiki Sōsuke, and Miyoshi Shōraku, *Yoshitsune senbon zakura*, in Tsunoda Ichirō and Uchiyama Mikiko, ed., *Takeda Izumo Namiki Sōsuke kessaku shū*, Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei 93, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1991): 472-493). This scene was written by Sōsuke.

[302] *Hōjo Jirai ki*, 121.

conventional “good” stepmother type by depicting a woman whose human emotions overrule her Confucian values at a time of crisis. Through the stepmother’s confession, Sōsuke suggests that this kind of Confucian exemplary behavior can be more self-serving than genuine. The stepmother’s confession represents an implicit rebellion against these rigid social expectations, and a reflection of audiences’ anxiety over those expectations.

The Stepmothers in *Nanto jūsan gane*

This type of “good” stepmother who fails to adhere to the standards of exemplary behavior because of her selfish human heart, as is revealed in the end, is central to several of the *jōruri* plays that Sōsuke wrote for Toyotake-za theater. *Nanto jūsan gane*, first performed in Kyōhō 13 (1728), two years after *Hōjō Jirai ki*, depicts other variations on the “good” stepmother type. One of the stepmothers, Osano, plays a major role at the height of the play in the third act, and the other one, Otsuji, plays a major role in the fourth act.

The beginning of the third act depicts Osano as an exemplary stepmother who raises her husband’s nephew. Without a child of her own, Osano, together with her husband, Kunisuke, and her husband’s mother, raised her husband’s sister’s son, Kamematsu. This accords with the image of a woman who becomes a stepmother because of infertility, as described in female instructional texts such as *Wazoku dōji kun*.[303] Osano has been raising Kamematsu for three years, “cherishing him as if he were her own child”[304] and is on good terms with her mother-in-law as well. However, later in the third act, Kamematsu accidentally kills a man and is about to be sentenced

[303] See the quote on page 146.

[304] Namiki Sōsuke and Yasuda Abun, Kawaguchi Setsuko ed., *Nanto jūsan gane* (Tokyo: Tamagawa daigaku shuppanbu, 2011), 56.

to death. In order to save Kamematsu, his grandmother and Osano each lie and claim that she killed the man. The judge orders the two women grab Kamematsu's arms, saying whichever manages to pull him away from the other can be his substitute. However, while the stepmother wins this tug-of-war, the judge declares the grandmother the winner, explaining she wins because she truly loves Kamematsu and therefore could not cause him pain by pulling on his hand too hard.[305] The judge rebukes the stepmother, saying that she "would throw away her life for only vanity and fame, so she is not worthy of being the child's substitute."[306] On hearing this, Osano is struck with shame, stabs herself with a sword, and confesses her true heart:

> My mother-in-law cherishes [Kamematsu] so dearly that she doesn't mind sacrificing her life for him. But since I was always praised as being a good stepmother, I couldn't ignore my obligation. I thought I should name myself the murderer [to save my stepson] so that I could win the honors of a filial and wise woman, and be praised as an exemplary wife. If my life were spared somehow, I would be honored for the rest of my life, I thought, in my selfish arrogance. My arrogance was seen through by the judge whom I only just met today. My mother-in-law and my husband Kunisuke must have known about it all along. They must have always praised me more than I deserved so that I wouldn't cause any harm, as if to control a poisonous insect with sweet herbs... For this shame, I cannot face anyone. At least I'd like to make what little amends I can make by dying.[307]

This confession is similar to the confession of the mother who revealed true feelings of preference for her real daughter right before her death in *Hōjō jirai ki*, since Osano also completely undermines her reputation for treating her stepson well through this confession. However, Osano is different from the stepmother in *Hōjō jirai ki* since she does not have her own

[305] This episode is taken from *Ōoka seidan*, which is also similar to the story of the Judgment of Solomon. *Ōoka seidan* refers to a group of episodes and stories related to a historical magistrate of Edo, Ōoka Tadasuke (1677-1751). Although the stories are about a real-life figure, they are mostly fictional, and many of the stories are adopted from other sources, such as Chinese stories of Judge Bao.

[306] *Nanto*, 84.

[307] Ibid., 84-85.

child. When she admits that she observed her "obligation" only for the sake of saving face, fulfilling her vanity, and bolstering her reputation, she merely sullies her name, unlike the stepmother from *Hōjō jirai ki* who hoped to save her biological daughter's husband by admitting her selfish mind. In this sense, Osano's confession and death are less meaningful in the plot of the play, and yield a stronger sense of "reverse-*modori*," since all it serves to do is reveal that her exemplary behavior as a stepmother was only superficial.[308]

Act Four presents a different way in which a "good" stepmother admits that her sense of "obligation" was superficial. Kamematsu's biological mother, Otsuji, became the second wife of Hayato, and has raised his son, Takewaka, for three years. She is ordered to kill her stepson, Takewaka, to make him a substitute for Hayato's master's son,[309] but she refuses, for fear of being accused of being an evil stepmother who heartlessly kills her stepson. However, she and her husband would be accused of disloyalty if they fail to provide a substitute for the master's child.[310] She is caught between her duty of loyalty and her obligation as a stepmother. While she is wrestling with this order, her brother arrives with her real son, Kamematsu, following Osano's death in the end of Act Three. This provides Otsuji the only solution for fulfilling both her duty of loyalty to her husband's lord and her obligation as a stepmother, but at the cost of her own son's life: "If I behead Kamematsu and present his head as Takewaka's to be substituted for the master's son, I can be loyal, and fulfill my obligation as a stepmother at the same time. If I

[308] Actually, Osano's death was not completely in vain, since the judge took pity on the dying woman and decided to make her the substitute for Kamematsu, sparing his life. However, Act Four renders her death and the confession a complete waste, since Kamematsu is killed anyway as a substitute for another child.

[309] Hayato's master's son is sentenced to death, since he accidentally killed a deer in Nara. Since deer are considered to be messengers of a god, killing a deer is a crime punishable by death.

[310] *Nanto,* 95.

compare my own child by blood to my stepchild, he is a hundred times more dear to me... but this is my fate (*inga*)."[311] At this point, Otsuji is put into the typical situation that a *tachiyaku* hero faces, where he or she is caught between a feudal duty and a personal attachment, and her choice resonates with the conventional *tachiyaku* characters, who, despite the personal costs, act as exemplary Confucian models. However, at the same time, Sōsuke makes Otsuji admit that her true feeling is that she loves her son by blood one hundred times more than her stepson, which reflects Sōsuke's fundamental idea about the inherent impossibility of the Confucian stepmother-stepchild ideal.

Her bottomless love for her real son, whom she had not seen for three years, naturally causes her to hesitate when she tries to kill him: "Although [Otsuji] took the sword, how pitiful was her son as he followed her around while she was preparing to kill him, on the very day she was reunited with him. She hesitated, with her tears falling on her hand holding the half-drawn sword."[312] It is not unusual for a typical good mother to hesitate when she tries to sacrifice her child in a *jōruri* play. In fact, in Takemoto-za plays, such hesitation typically forms the highlight of the scene, since the focus on her suffering emphasizes the tragedy of an exemplary mother compelled to sacrifice her child by social and feudal obligations. What is unusual in this scene of *Nanto jūsan gane* is that Otsuji's brother remains in the scene, doubting her ability to kill the child, and takes him away as soon as Otsuji hesitates, making it impossible for her to complete her duty as an exemplary samurai stepmother.

This intervention by Otsuji's brother reflects the idea that human emotion, especially a

[311] Ibid., 101-102.

[312] Ibid., 103.

mother's attachment to her own child, is stronger than the sense of obligation to observe the Confucian moral code. His words and actions belie a belief that Otsuji could not really place her social and feudal obligations ahead of her own child. Acting in Otsuji's place, Otsuji's brother kills Kamematsu to make him a substitute for the master's son. When he presents Kamematsu's head, he says, "My sister was honorable as a samurai daughter to wished to cherish her stepson and sacrifice her real son, and I praised her at heart, but she understandably became overwhelmed with great sorrow when she actually tried to kill him... I'm sorry it took me a while [to kill Kamematsu], but please credit my sister for this."[313] This speech seem to affirm human attachment to some extent, expressing, through the brother's words, the idea that it is rather unnatural for a stepmother to sincerely consider her stepchild above her own child. Under the Confucian value system, Otsuji is a failed stepmother, who was unable to kill her son for the sake of her stepson. However, by making Otsuji's brother kill Otsuji's son and give her the honor, Sōsuke undermines the typical representation of "good" stepmothers as exemplary models by portraying Otsuji as a character who, while still on the *tachiyaku* side, failed to do her duty, and is more sympathetic, approachable for audiences, and "human" for it.

In addition to a "reverse-*modori*," *Nanto jūsan gane* also subverts another conventional *jōruri* plot device (*shukō*). In the third or the fourth act of a *jidaimono jōruri*, a substitution plot is often utilized to increase the dramatic tension. This became so conventional that, in a later play, Sōsuke himself made one of the characters in *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu* remark that "there have been so many different types of substitutions done in the past. No matter how much I

[313] Ibid., 107.

think about it, substitution has been done to death."[314] The characters in *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu* end up trying to use a substitution plot anyway, but it fails in the end. The seeds of this distrust of substitution were already present in *Nanto jūsan gane*. Osano's effort to save Kamematsu in exchange for her life in Act Three was wasted when Kamematsu was killed as a substitute for Otsuji's stepson, Takewaka. Likewise, Kamematsu's sacrifice to save Takewaka was made in vain because Takewaka was also killed as a second substitute for the son of Otsuji's husband's master in the final act. The double failure of the substitution by the two major stepmothers in the play undermines the convention that substitution was meaningful and critical to opening a path to victory for the *tachiyaku* side, and always praised and rewarded in the end. The substitutions' failure is in accord with Sōsuke's general divergence from *jōruri*'s conventions and experimentation with greater realism in puppet plays.

The Wicked Stepmother in *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu*

Sōsuke's representation of the evil stepmother Iwane in *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu* departs from conventional representations of evil stepmothers in a way that mirrors his departure from conventional representations of good stepmothers. Sōsuke makes his exemplary stepmothers more sympathetic by depicting individual desires that run contrary to Confucian ideals. Similarly, he makes Iwane more sympathetic and relatable, rather than inherently malicious, through her expression of similar human emotions. While adhering to the frame of *jidaimono* period plays in which the bad characters (those who do not respect Confucian values) are punished in the end, Sōsuke's representation of Iwane is surprisingly similar to that of his

[314] *Hibariyama*, 226.

exemplary characters. Through Iwane, Sōsuke explores the extreme case of a transgressive (evil) stepmother who completely prioritizes her individual desires over her social obligations.

Hibariyama hime no sutematsu, which was first performed in 1740, was the final full play Namiki Sōsuke wrote for Toyotake-za theater before he temporarily changed careers to become a *kabuki* writer.[315] This play is based on a medieval Chūjōhime-related legend (*setsuwa*) about the origin of Taema Temple, which was earlier adapted into numerous other forms of religious and popular literature and art.[316] The original themes of Chūjōhime-related stories are largely religious (Buddhist), focusing on how the beautiful and devout princess, Chūjōhime, renounced the world, wove a mandala, and became enlightened. The evil stepmother element was added later, but it had already become an important part of the Chūjōhime story as early as the thirteenth century. Through her persistent bullying of her exemplary stepdaughter, the stepmother in these stories functioned to highlight the virtue of Chūjōhime, who shows unfailing filial respect to her evil stepmother. In some versions, the stepmother repents and is saved by the mandala that Chūjōhime weaves, and in others, the stepmother is simply punished by death. However, the focus of these stories is on Chūjōhime's virtue, and there is never adequate explanation as to why the stepmother acts the way she does.

Sōsuke's *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu* eliminates many of the religious aspects of the

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[315] After returning to *jōruri*, and later to the Toyotake-za theater, Sōsuke began writing *Ichinotani futaba gunki* (1751), but he passed away before the play was completed, so *Hibariyama* is the last complete play that Sōsuke wrote for the Toyotake-za theater.

[316] Adaptions of the Chūjōhime story include different versions of *setsuwa* stories, mandala, picture scrolls, *nō* plays, sermon ballads called *sekkyōbushi*, and *kojōruri*. For an account of the religious adaptations of the Chūjōhime story, especially in the visual arts, see Hioki Atsuko, "Chūjōhime setsuwa no tenkai: *Taimadera Nakanobō-zō Chūjōhime eden* o tansho to shite" in Keller Kimbrough and Satoko Shimazaki eds., *Publishing the Stage: Print and Performance in Early Modern Japan* (Colorado: Center for Asian Studies, University of Colorado Boulder, 2011), 37-54.

story and instead focuses on the more worldly and humanistic theme of family relationships. Acts Three and Four focus on the relationship between the evil stepmother, Iwane, and her virtuous stepdaughter, Chūjōhime. Compared to the earlier Chūjōhime works, the role of the stepmother (Iwane) is significantly more important, and she is given a strong voice to explain her motives. Earlier in the play, Chūjōhime was entrusted with a statue of the *kannon* deity by the Emperor, but Iwane stole it from Chūjōhime.[317] Knowing that it was her stepmother who stole the statue, Chūjōhime, as a filial daughter, remains silent, even as she is tortured by Iwane. Chūjōime is rescued by her faithful maids and secretly whisked away to Mt. Hibari, but she is found, and ordered beheaded for the crime of losing the statue. The faithful retainers and their wives twice attempt to prepare a substitute for Chūjōhime, only to be discovered by Iwane. Iwane is finally killed by one of Chūjōhime's father's maids[318] in Act Four, and Chūjōhime renounces the world to pray for her.

Today, this play is known solely for its third act, especially the scene entitled "Torturing Chūjōhime in the Snow 中将姫雪責" (Figure 1) in which Iwane accuses Chūjōhime of losing the statue of *kannon* and tortures her to make her confess who took the statue. This scene is frequently performed both in *jōruri* and *kabuki*. The visual impact of an older woman violently beating the young beautiful woman is striking, and Iwane is made into a more central character of similar importance as Chūjōhime.

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[317] Earlier in Act One, Iwane caught Rinpei, a low-ranked serving samurai, having a serious affair with a maid who serves the princess. It was a crime punishable by death for a samurai to have a relationship with a maid behind their master's back, but Iwane promised Rinpei not to report it to the lord if he did her bidding.

[318] This maid was actually the lover of Rinpei, who was blackmailed into stealing the statue from Chūjōhime in the first place. After being used by Iwane, Rinpei committed suicide, since he could not stand betraying Chūjōhime and serving the *katakiyaku* (evil) side. His lover considered Iwane as his enemy, since she was the one who corrupted him, and stabbed Iwane to take revenge for Rinpei.



Figure 1: The “torturing in the snow” scene from *Hibariyama hime no sutematsu*, original *banzuke* playbill, cover (left) and internal page (right), 1740.

Iwane’s direct physical involvement in torturing Chūjōhime is unprecedented. Conventionally, this sort of action scene was reserved for male characters. In earlier Chūjōhime adaptations, the stepmother bullies Chūjōhime in a less direct manner, such as spreading rumors to drive Chūjōhime away from home, or ordering men to kill her. By contrast, in this version, unsatisfied by the way her retainers beat Chūjōhime, Iwane takes a bamboo whip to beat Chūjōhime herself, “grabbing [Chūjōhime’s] hair and dragging her around, making her gulp snow and slush”[319] (Figure 1, right) in front of the ladies-in-waiting and retainers, while ignoring Chūjōhime’s pleas to torture her privately so as to avoid being seen as a bullying stepmother.

[319] *Hibariyama*, 218.

Sōsuke seems to have been inspired by *kabuki* in depicting Iwane as an actively violent female villain. Takei Kyōzō points out that Sōsuke most likely adopted the torturing-in-the-snow scene directly from *kabuki* where torturing a young woman in the snow was already a popular plot device (Figure 2). Sōsuke's innovation was to make the torturer the stepmother, rather than a man. In addition, Takei points out that male-role actors had started taking over the evil stepmother roles in *kabuki* around this time, which "all the more emphasized the evilness and the strength of the stepmothers."[320] Iwane can similarly be viewed as a more "manly" stepmother character. Sōsuke, who changed careers to become a *kabuki* playwright two years after writing this work, seems to have been eager to adopt this new character type from *kabuki*, perhaps because he felt confined by the conventions of *jōruri* stepmother types.



Figure 2: The torturing-in-the-snow scene from *Keisei sakura mondō* (*Cherry Blossom Correspondence of a Courtesan*), 1740. From Yakusha hitoe zakura, 1740.

Because of Iwane's role as a main villain, she is completely unbound by Confucian morality. This gives her greater liberty to speak and act on her attachments and desires, and to

[320] Takei Kyōzō, "*Hibariyama hime no sutematsu* no kanōsei," in *Kabuki kenkyū to hihyō* 5 (1990): 33.

say things that Sōsuke could not express through a "good" stepmother figure. Unlike the "good" stepmother characters, Iwane affirmatively embraces and fully voices the view that stepmothers hate their stepchildren. When ordered by a male villain to steal the statue of *kannon* from her stepchild Chūjōhime, Iwane gladly accepts, saying, "It's the way of the world to hate one's stepchildren. I will gladly steal the statue of *kannon* for you."[321]

What makes Iwane truly stand out from earlier wicked stepmother characters is the fuller account of her motivation for bullying her stepchild. Like the stepmothers in *Hōjō Jirai ki* and *Nanto jūsan gane*, Iwane makes a significant speech in which she confesses her true feelings just before her death in the end of the fourth act. This scene can be regarded as a variation of *modori* – or rather an anti-*modori*.[322] Undercutting the conventional expectations for the "*modori*" scene, Iwane refuses the chance to repent and redeem her honor, reinforcing her idea that loving her own child over her stepchild is quite natural, and dies without regret for bullying her innocent stepdaughter. After Iwane is stabbed in Act Four, Harutoki, a faithful retainer of Chūjōhime's father, urges Iwane to renounce the world before she dies so that her soul can be saved, but she refuses:

> [Harutoki says,] "Madame, you're badly wounded, and won't survive. Please renounce the world and repent all of your evil deeds so that you may erase your sins and be saved in the afterlife." Harutoki helped Iwane to get up. Breathing hard and with tear-filled eyes, Iwane said, "How stupid you are. My evil heart comes from a blindness caused by my child. Now that my precious child is dead,[323] why should I renounce the world? My wrath has only increased... It's always the case that human

[321] *Hibariyama*, 168.

[322] Theater critic Kamimura Iwao calls this scene a "*modori*," while acknowledging that term's problematic application at the same time. He points out that Iwane never "*modoru* (returns)" to become a good person during this confession, unlike the conventional "*modori*" scenes where the confession right before death leads to the realignment of the character from the villain's side to the good side. See Kamimura Iwao, "Iwane Gozen no shōne – fukkatsu jōen no tameni," in *Kabuki kenkyū to hihyō* 5 (1990): 39.

> desires are limitless. Day and night, I hoped to take Chūjōhime's life, bring out my real daughter whom I left in my hometown, and make her the heir to the Yokohagi household... Although people say that they cherish their stepchildren, where in the world is there a single person who can truly think of their stepchildren as their own? … I will follow my daughter even to the deepest circle of Hell. Kill me if you want... My spirit will stay in this world and prevent Chūjōhime from succeeding the Yokohagi household... Let me be a snake; let me be a serpent. I will haunt you and…." Before she could finish, her tongue shriveled and her spirit left this world.[324]

Here, Iwane is not presented as inherently evil, but rather as an ordinary person who has become morally blind due to her intense love for her child. In fact, the expression "blindness due to one's child 子故のやみ" is used only twice in the entire play. In the other usage of the phrase, Iwane's ex-husband, Isotayū, who is on the good side, says before his death, "The only thing I care about is my child. Among all the living things in this world, there is nothing that does not become blind for its child."[325] By making both a hero and a villain speak about the blindness caused by one's child – the same child – Sōsuke suggests that the motive for Iwane's "wickedness" is not a trait of inherently bad people, or an unrealistic trait reserved for fictional villains, but an ordinary human trait that can exist in anyone, even in the heroes, or in the audience.

The point in Iwane's monologue when she asks, "Although people say that they cherish their stepchildren, where in the world is there a single person who can truly think of their stepchildren as their own?"[326] is Sōsuke's most pointed criticism of *jōruri*'s tendency to create an idealized world of theater in perfect accord with Confucian and feudal values, but not so much

[323] Iwane's natural daughter committed suicide earlier in the same act.

[324] *Hibariyama*, 238-239.

[325] Ibid., 195.

[326] Ibid., 239.

with reality. The traditional portrayal of exemplary stepmothers ignores the very real conflict between human desire and Confucian and feudal values. By contrast, Sōsuke blurred the boundary between good and bad stepmothers by introducing the concept of universal human desire. By portraying stepmothers who openly acknowledge that they love their natural children more than their stepchildren, and then dealing with the consequences of that in various ways – Osano's suicide, Otsuji's hesitant resolve, Iwane's villainy – Sōsuke explores the space between traditional *jidaimono* and real life.

The Stepmother in *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki*

Sōsuke continued to wrestle with the conflict between human desire and societal duty in his representations of stepmothers after he resumed his career as a *jōruri* playwright at the Takemoto-za theater. The representation of the stepmother in the eighth act of *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki* forms a stark contrast to the dark endings that met the stepmothers who expressed their desire to favor their biological children in Sōsuke's earlier *jidaimono* plays. Sōsuke explores the balance between personal desire and social obligations by taking advantage of the genre of *sewamono* domestic drama and the more flexible status of its characters. Rather than going to the extreme to pursue individual desire and discard social duty altogether, the stepmother in *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki* shows one way of balancing the two.

Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki was one of the plays written by the team of Sōsuke, Takeda Izumo II, and Miyoshi Shōraku for Takemoto-za theater during the so-called "Golden Age" when *jōruri* enjoyed its peak of popularity. It is a nine-act *sewamono* play; and, while there is a controversy in terms of which playwright was in charge of writing which act, scholars agree that

Act Eight, which deals with the theme of a stepmother who is caught between her stepson and real son, was written by Namiki Sōsuke.[327]

The *sewamono* genre in puppet plays was established and popularized by Chikamatsu Monzaemon, and remained popular during the early Kyōhō period (1716-1735) before Chikamatsu's death in 1725. However, *sewamono* fell out of favor after love suicide, the single most popular topic of *sewamono* plays, was banned from stage performances in 1723. *Sewamono* recovered popularity during the "Golden Age."[328] The *sewamono* plays created during this period included fewer love suicide plays,[329] and more longer plays that reflected wider aspects of townspeople's lives, and were set not only in the pleasure quarters, but also throughout the city of Osaka, as well as country villages. *Sewamono* plays depict the lives of contemporary commoners more realistically, focusing on the psychological dilemmas of characters who face familiar problems caused by issues of money, human relationships, love, and Confucian familial or societal duties. In this regard, the plight of Sōsuke's stepmother characters is better suited to *sewamono* than *jidaimono* with its focus on issues of political conflicts and Confucian samurai ideals enacted by idealized characters.

The eighth act of *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki* is entitled "Hikimado 弓引窓," and is one of

[327] The issue of the main playwright (*tate-sakusha*) of Takemoto-za theater during the "Golden Age" is controversial. See footnote 97. Although Matthew Johnson writes that "the original script of Skylight … was the responsibility of playwright Takeda Izumo II (Introduction to his translation in James Brandon and Samuel Leiter eds., *Kabuki Plays on Stage I*, (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 237)," it seems more likely that Act Eight was not written by Izumo II but by Sōsuke.

[328] Uchiyama, 1989, 237.

[329] Although not repealed, the ban on love suicide plays was not strictly enforced at this time.

the most often performed parts from the entire play, both in *jōruri* and *kabuki*.[330] In the beginning of the act, Nuregami Chōgorō, one of the heroes of the play, who has killed four evil samurai, flees to visit his mother[331] and to bid her farewell. Chōgorō and his mother were reunited a year ago after their separation when Chōgorō was a child. Chōgorō's mother lives with her stepson (her late second husband's son), Nan Yohei, and his wife, Ohaya. Ohaya is an ex-courtesan who knows Chōgorō from her time working in the pleasure quarter. Not knowing that Chōgorō is wanted for murder, his mother and Ohaya welcome him, and let him wait on the second floor while they prepare a meal. Meanwhile, the stepson Yohei, a merchant, returns with news that he has been promoted to a samurai[332] and a local magistrate. His first job is to search for and arrest Chōgorō during the night. (Others are responsible for the search during the day.) Although his stepmother pleads with Yohei to spare Chōgorō, Chōgorō eventually convinces his mother to follow her duty as a samurai's stepmother, and she binds Chōgorō with the rope of the *hikimado* window.[333] Knowing his stepmother's love for Chōgorō, Yohei intentionally fails to arrest

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[330] The *jōruri* version of *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki* was first performed on the 24th of the seventh month of 1749, and the *kabuki* adaptation debuted in Kyoto Hoteiya Umenojo za on the 3rd of the eighth month, only ten days after the original *jōruri*. The second act entitled "Sumo-ba" and the eighth act entitled "Hikimado" have been frequently performed, and the *kabuki* script for "Hikimado" is translated into English as "The Skylight" in the *Kabuki Plays on Stage* series (*Kabuki Plays on Stage I*, 234-258). The translation is not based on the original *jōruri* script, but rather "on the unpublished script (*daihon*) produced at the Kabuki-za, Tokyo, September 1994, and on a videotape of a November 1984 performance at the same theatre (Ibid., 238)." Because the original *jōruri* script is more narrative-based compared to the dialogue-based *kabuki* script, and the *kabuki* version has gone through many changes and digressions from Sōsuke's original script over time, I will not use the published English translation for quotations. Nonetheless, the common theme of a stepmother caught between her stepson and her real son definitely occupies the bulk of the *kabuki* script as well.

[331] Like the stepmother in *Hōjō Jirai ki*, Chōgorō's mother is never referred to by name. In later *kabuki* adaptations, she is given the name of Okō.

[332] As discussed below, his new rank is actually one similar, but not quite equivalent, to a samurai.

[333] A *hikimado* was a high-set window common in Yahata area homes. Due to its height, a rope was required to open and close it.

Chōgorō, claiming that he is "off-duty" during the day. At the end of the act, Yohei cuts the pull-rope as if to take Chōgorō away, but when the window opens, he intentionally mistakes the moonlight for sunlight, and mishears the bell's tolls as signs of dawn, and releases Chōgorō.[334]

The act starts with a scene demonstrating that Yohei's stepmother sincerely cares for Yohei and Ohaya, her family by marriage and obligation (義理の仲). Having decided to tell Yohei about her long-lost son when Yohei returns, the mother even announces that she will be "the happiest person in the world, with three children, including my daughter-in-law."[335] Yohei's stepmother appears to possess the same emotional bonds coexisting with her obligations to her stepson and her stepdaughter-in-law as conventional exemplary stepmothers in *jōruri*.

However, at the same time, Yohei's stepmother shares the same quality as the stepmothers in Sōsuke's earlier works: a blind love for her biological child that exceeds her sense of duty towards her stepchild. She clearly distinguishes Yohei and Chōgorō in terms of her relationship to them, referring to her relationship with Yohei as "unrelated by blood なさぬ仲" three times, while she repeatedly expresses her unconditional love for Chōgorō. For example, when Yohei showed her Chōgorō's wanted-for-murder posters, the mother does not pretend to hide her love towards her real son. She immediately asks Yohei if she can buy all of Chōgorō's wanted posters before he distributes them to the villagers, implicitly asking if he would let Chōgorō escape. When Yohei asks if it is really all right for her to spend the money she has saved up to buy Buddhist offerings, she answers, "Even if I were to be damned to Hell, I can't ignore

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[334] It is also notable that the next day was "*Hōjō-e* 放生会," a Buddhist ceremony for releasing living creatures, such as sparrows, to gain religious merit. Yohei "releases" Chōgorō for this reason as well.

[335] Takeda Izumo II, Miyoshi Shōraku, Namiki Senryū (Sōsuke), *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki*, in Torigoe Bunzō et. al., eds., *Jōruri shū*, Shinpen nihon koten bungaku zenshū 77 (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2002), 274.

my feelings at this moment."[336] Yohei's stepmother shares the same level of "blind love" towards her own child as the wicked stepmother, Iwane. Although Yohei's stepmother also shows her concern for Yohei when he agreed to sell her the posters and spare Chōgorō by asking him about his duty,[337] saving Chōgorō remains her first priority.

This appears to contradict both the conventional theme that stepmothers on the hero's side always act according to Confucian social values and the pattern in Sōsuke's earlier stepmother plays that this sort of blind love leads to tragedy (or villainy). Both apparent contradictions are at least partially explained by the different social classes of these stepmothers. The requirement of being Confucian exemplars seems to apply much more strictly to samurai characters, and *jidaimono* plays. Looking back, all the stepmothers that Sōsuke depicted in his earlier plays are women of the samurai class as represented in *jidaimono* plays. On the other hand, this mother is a townswoman (*chōnin*), whose status has only just changed to the samurai class when Yohei was promoted. She shares the same personality type with Gonta's mother from the third act of *Yoshitsune Senbonzakura*, a merchant's wife who dotes on her scoundrel son ("Parents are always sweet, but mothers are even sweeter [to their child]"[338]). Both characters are creations of Sōsuke, and reflect Sōsuke's idea of a mother's unshakable attachment and goodwill towards her children. As commoners, these mothers are not subject to the rigid samurai value system that asks women to control their emotions (*jō*) and to act according to social expectations, and so they act relatively true to their emotions.

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[336] Ibid., 282.

[337] Ibid., 283.

[338] *Yoshitsune senbon zakura*, 476.

Sōsuke focuses on depicting Yohei's stepmother's emotions (*jō*), especially her blind love for Chōgorō, throughout most of Act Eight, rather than her sense of obligation. While Chōgorō feels obligated to Yohei and decides to surrender himself, the mother continues to resist, even threatening Chōgorō that she will commit suicide if he surrenders himself.[339] If she were an exemplary Confucian mother in a *jidaimono* play, she would be expected to immediately agree with Chōgorō, and even encourage him to surrender himself to Yohei, to fulfill her parental obligation to her stepson, and to help her son live up to the standard of a moral and honorable samurai. Instead, as a townswoman who is true to her emotions, the mother desperately tries to stop her son from acting in accordance with societal expectations.

Sōsuke makes use of transitional class status in order to create flexibility for the characters when faced with the conflict between individual desire and societal duty. Act Eight happens on the day when Yohei's class changed; he is appointed a local magistrate, or *gō daikan* (郷代官). He "is given samurai attire, long and short swords, and his father's samurai name, Nanpō Jūjibei. He is appointed village headman and magistrate, governing seven villages."[340] Sword-wearing and the use of a surname were samurai privileges; so when Yohei was allowed to wear swords and the family name of Nanpō was restored, he was considered a samurai. However, local magistrate (*gō daikan*) was a more ambiguous status in actuality. It was one of the "in-between class statuses (身分的中間層)," between samurai and commoner, that were

[339] *Futatsu chōchō*, 285.

[340] Ibid., 276. For generations, the head of Yohei's family served as a local magistrate, taking the name of Nanpō Jūjibei, but Yohei was fired for his wanton behavior, and was living as a merchant. However, when the feudal domain got a new lord, Yohei was summoned and regained his status as a local magistrate.

newly created during the mid-eighteenth century.[341] Kanda Yuzuki classifies Yohei's status as "a mere sword-wearer, allowed to wear swords when on-duty for a task given by the lord."[342] Under these circumstances, "samurai" is merely an additional temporary identity for Yohei when he is on-duty; his identity as a merchant continues to exist deep at heart.

When Yohei decided to spare Chōgorō for his stepmother's sake, Yohei takes advantage of his in-flux status to justify not fulfilling his job duties as a magistrate: "When I wear two swords, I am Jūjibei. Now that I'm not wearing swords, I'm Yohei, just as before. I'm the same Yahata townsman. These [wanted posters] are just a merchant's merchandise. If you want them, you can have them... it is not my duty [to catch Chōgorō] during the day."[343] Today the change of behavior between a "samurai" and a "townsman" is considered the heart of the performance. Nakamura Ganjirō I (1860-1935), a *kabuki* actor who revived "Hikimado" and is famous for his performance of Yohei, emphasized the importance of shifting the style of acting between a stiff samurai and a soft merchant.[344] As a samurai, Yohei is strict, dignified, and rigidly obeys societal rules. However, as a merchant, Yohei is accommodating, flexible, and a person who can follow his human emotions outside of the framework of feudal rules. Sōsuke gave Yohei an in-between status in order to enable him to handle more realistically and with more complexity the conflict between feudal duty and human emotions.

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[341] Kanda Yuzuki, "Kenkyu Nōto: Kinsei no mibun kankaku to geino sakuhin – *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki* ni miru," *Ochanomizu shigaku* 53 (March 2010): 125-126.

[342] Kanda, 2010, 126.

[343] *Futatsu chōchō*, 282-283.

[344] Matsuda Toshiaki, "Hikimado – *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki*" in Kokuritsu Gekijō chōsa shiryōka ed., *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki – Hikimado* Kokuritsu Gekijō jōen shiryōshū vol. 433 (Tokyo: Nihon geijutsu bunka shinkōkai, 2001), 12.

Yohei strays from the duty given by his lord, at least in spirit, because he honors his obligation towards his stepmother, and pities her desperate love for Chōgorō. This goes against the idea that feudal relationships and duty are considered more important than familial relationships and obligations. However, Sōsuke minimized the seriousness of this transgression by minimizing Yohei's status and his duty, as less than those of a full samurai. First, Yohei lacks the generations-old bond with his lord, since the lord is new to this domain and is not related to Yohei's father's lord. Second, Yohei's task is not the official business of the feudal domain. The lord asked Yohei to assist the siblings of the slain evil samurai, who are visitors to his domain, in a private, secret act of vengeance (敵討ち同然、隠密) more as a favor than as an act on behalf of the domain. Yohei's task therefore falls somewhere between official and private. Finally, the task is depicted more as an opportunity for Yohei to gain honor and a reward if he can accomplish it than something the lord expects to be accomplished. Yohei says that catching Chōgorō would "bring lifelong honor... and my mother would be exceedingly happy."[345] As Uchiyama Mikiko points out, while catching Chōgorō is depicted as Yohei's potential "achievement (手柄)," there is no mention of Yohei's sense of obligation towards his new lord.[346] Yohei is more driven by the possibility of reward than by duty. Accordingly, Yohei's feeling of duty towards his mother is the only full obligation he has throughout the play, so he is able to act on that without paying a higher price than foregoing his potential reward.

Interestingly, the other characters in "Hikimado" also have in-flux identities. As Yohei's status changes from a merchant to a samurai, his stepmother and wife's status also change,

[345] *Futatsu chōchō*, 280.

[346] Uchiyama Mikiko, "*Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki* kō," in *Geinōshi kenkyū* 5 (1969): 9.

because a woman's status depends on the family she belongs to.[347] Just like Yohei, who changes his attitude from a samurai (at night) to that of a merchant (during the day) in order to accommodate his stepmother's attachment to her son, the stepmother also changes her attitude at the end of the play to that of an exemplary samurai's mother. Realizing that she was wrong in only thinking about her real son and in forgetting her duty to her stepson, the mother tells Chōgorō:

> When I think about it, I wrongly ignored my duty. To face the truth, it is the right way of human beings to desert one's child to aid one's stepchild in gaining renown. Why did I try to hide you as if I were an animal at heart, like a cat carries her kitten in her mouth?… It is an expression of my devotion and love (恩愛) that I tried to save you once; it is for my sense of duty (義理) toward the child who is not mine by blood that I bind you now. I protected you during the day and I bind you at night, and so I divide my hours for my stepchild and my real child into day and night. In this way, I can be affectionate and fulfill my duty at the same time.[348]

Here, the mother realizes the importance of her obligation to Yohei, and changes her attitude to that of an exemplary stepmother, who prioritizes her stepson over her natural son. However, she does so in a way that she does not discard her emotions as a mother. By dividing her day in two, assuming the roles of a commoner mother who prioritizes her emotions during the day, and a samurai mother who prioritizes her sense of duty during the night, Yohei's stepmother, like

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[347] Ohaya, the mother, and Chōgorō also have dual identities of their own, aside from the samurai-merchant duality. Ohaya has a dual identity as a former courtesan and a wife. When she accidentally uses a pleasure-quarter dialect term (*shōshi* 笑止, or funny) in her conversation with her mother-in-law at the beginning of "Hikimado," the mother-in-law lightly admonishes Ohaya for using such a word when she is not a professional woman anymore (*Futatsu chōchō*, 272). The mother has a dual identity as the "mother" of a magistrate and as the mother of a criminal. While she prioritizes her identity as the mother of a criminal at first, she decided to fulfill her duty in the end, acting as a proper stepmother of a magistrate. Chōgorō's status is also in flux. He is a sumo wrestler who maintains his bangs (a signifier of both youths and sumo wrestlers) at the beginning of the act, but he shaves them off to disguise himself before he tries to escape. Through this action, his status is shifted from child to adult. This is made clear when he uses the word "coming of age (元服)" to refer to his shaving off his bangs. (*Futatsu chōchō*, 287)

[348] Ibid., 288.

Yohei, maintains a balance between the two poles by assuming an ambiguous dual identity.

Conclusion

A contemporary text of *jōruri* history explains the difference between a *sewamono* setting and that of a *jidaimono* play as follows: "the *sewa* plays love love, and the *jidai* plays are pure in honoring obligations."[349] *Sewamono*'s purpose as a genre was not to present exemplary characters who honored obligations at great personal cost, but to emphasize the emotional aspects of human relations. In his representations of "good" stepmothers in the earlier *jidaimono* plays, Sōsuke established his unique type of a "good" stepmother who falls apart when she must face her selfish inner desires which give priority to her child over her stepchild. He also depicted a "bad" stepmother who outright rejects the Confucian duty to prioritize her stepchild. Through these unusual depictions of stepmothers, Sōsuke highlights the unrealistic nature of conventional exemplary mothers in *jōruri* plays who conform to samurai and Confucian ideals, and implicitly casts doubt on the validity of a value system that places such expectations on stepmothers. Sōsuke ultimately resolves the conflict between a mother's feelings of blind love for her natural child and her obligations towards her stepchild by choosing the genre of *sewamono* where he could depict characters who were on the periphery of the rigid feudal class system, bound by Confucian norms, but not rigidly so. By attributing the flexible social status of "local magistrate" to the main character, Sōsuke suggests the importance of a more flexible and more humanly sensible attitude towards Confucian social rules.

[349] *Chikuhō koji*, 31.

CHAPTER FOUR
Mythical Heroines and Provincial Daughters: Chikamatsu Hanji and *Hamemono*

This chapter examines Chikamatsu Hanji's 近松半二 (1725-1783) recreation of provincial daughters from mythical heroines into political victims and discusses how Hanji's multi-layered depiction of the heroines reflects the roles of *jōruri* in the late eighteenth century as entertainment, didacticism, and social criticism. While these three aspects were always present in *jōruri* from the time of Chikamatsu, Hanji is more political than his predecessors. Hanji's representations of provincial daughters as victimized heroines hint that sacrifices by those at the bottom of the social hierarchy, always exalted by *jōruri* convention, may go unrecognized and unrewarded, while the elites who benefit may not be morally deserving. These characters, and their popularity with audiences, reflect the times during which Hanji wrote. The dissonance between the ostensible official power structure with the samurai class on top and the actual power structure in which wealthy urban commoners held greater economic power had grown so strong that the commoner audiences started questioning the existing social structure more intently. This coincides with the beginning of the shift of Japan's cultural center from the Kamigata area to Edo, and the emergence of a new prose genre called *gesaku* and poetic genre called *senryū*, both of which were critical of contemporary society, economy, and politics.[350] Hanji's *jōruri* plays tap into this broader trend towards politics entering into literature through the chinks and cracks in *bakufu* censorship.

[350] Tanahashi Masahiro explains this phenomenon as arising from population growth and economic development in Edo. Tanahashi Masahiro, *Santō Kyōden no kibyōshi o yomu: Edo no keizai to shakai fūzoku* (Tokyo: Perikan sha, 2012), 161-164 and 198-261. Especially after the Kyōhō Reforms (1716-1745), Edo's economy flourished, in contrast to the bad economy in Osaka. Ibid., 251. This coincides with the so-called "Tanuma period," the time when Tanuma Okitsugu (1719-1788), who was known for emphasis on promoting economic growth and laxity with respect to censorship and regulation of public morals, served as the senior councilor (*rōjū*) of the *bakufu* (1767-1779). The "Tanuma period" falls between the Kyōhō and Kansei Reforms (1787-1793), during which literature and theater were more strictly monitored and controlled (especially the Kansei Reforms).

Chikamatsu Hanji is a representative playwright from the third generation of *jōruri* playwrights, and the last prominent playwright who regularly wrote new plays. The playwrights of this time are sometimes criticized for a perceived lack of originality, heavy influence from *kabuki*, and formulaic and conventional story patterns. However, writing after the peak of *jōruri*'s popularity, Hanji had to work within the established playwriting tradition that came before him, rather than establishing new conventions. Contemporary audiences had grown accustomed to *jōruri*'s conventions and expected playwrights to adhere to those conventions and to present plays based on familiar materials. Playwrights were judged according to how skilled they were at weaving together multiple sources to create a cohesive and creative play. This skill, which first became popular in *kabuki*, is called *hamemono* (adaptation or retelling). The first part of this chapter provides the historical context in which Hanji wrote, a time of crisis for *jōruri* theater, especially after losing their permanent theaters. The first part of this chapter also discusses the state of playwriting at the time, and the skill of *hamemono*, which is critical to understanding Hanji's plays.

The second part of this chapter focuses on examining the representations of Kiyohime and Omiwa, the respective heroines in Hanji's popular plays, *Hidakagawa iriai zakura* 日高川入相花王 (*Cherry Trees Along the Hidaka River,* 1759) and *Imoseyama onna teikin* 妹背山婦女庭訓 (*Mt. Imo and Mt. Se: An Exemplary Tale*, 1771). Kiyohime and Omiwa are provincial daughters (*inaka musume*), a new type of heroine in *jōruri* plays that became popular in the late eighteenth century, and remains popular in today's performances. Provincial daughters are depicted in classical literature and theater – including *Kojiki*, Heian *monogatari* tales, *nō* plays,

and *setsuwa* anecdotes – and there are certain images and themes conventionally associated with these characters. Kiyohime and Omiwa strongly reflect these conventional images at the beginning of the plays, but later are subverted in ways that bring in more early modern aspects. Although *Hidakagawa* and *Imoseyama* take place in different settings, based on different legends and myths, and use different characters, Kiyohime is a prototype for Omiwa. While Hanji remade Kiyohime, a mythical provincial heroine, into a political victim in a subtle way, Omiwa is remade as such in a more pronounced way, as a political victim who is ill used by scheming heroes (high ranked elites) in the end.

Age of Crisis and Adaptation from *Kabuki*

The extreme popularity of *jōruri* puppet theater in the mid eighteenth century came to an end in the Hōreki period (1751-1763). A number of misfortunes involving interpersonal conflicts, deaths of central figures, fires, a bad economy, and the resurgent popularity of *kabuki* together caused *jōruri* to lose its momentum. The biggest change was the loss of permanent theaters for both the Toyotake-za theater (Meiwa 2; 1765) and the Takemoto-za theater (Meiwa 5; 1768). To be clear, this does not mean that *jōruri* was banned from these theaters, nor does it mean that the theatrical troupes ceased to exist. Rather, the *jōruri* theatrical troupes' exclusive rights to these two theaters were lost, and they had to compete with *kabuki* troupes to secure performance space. With the loss of the permanent theaters, it became more urgent for both troupes to create plays that would attract large audiences so that they could secure a location for the next production. In addition, *kabuki* in Osaka caught up with *jōruri* in recognizing the importance of playwrights; the first prominent *kabuki* playwright, Namiki Shōza 並木正三 (1730-1773), wrote

many popular original plays. Finally, the late eighteenth century saw the cultural center shift from the Kamigata area to Edo, with more Edo-based writers engaged in literary activities, particularly satire. In this context, Chikamatsu Hanji strove to compete with the reenergized *kabuki* in part by borrowing from it, and by pushing the boundaries of *jōruri*'s genre conventions to subtly work in political comments that reflected the commoner audiences' anxieties about the contemporary authorities.

The seeds of *jōruri*'s decline can be found during the "Golden Age." As *jōruri* became more popular, individual performers attracted devoted fans, and the power balance between the chanter, the *shamisen* player, and the puppeteer started breaking down, leading to "rebellions" and power struggles within the troupes. The first prominent incident happened in Kan'en 1 (1748) in Takemoto-za theater when a public feud between a popular puppeteer and a senior chanter, which would have been inconceivable in the earlier days of *jōruri*,[351] forced the manager to pick sides. This ultimately led to a chain reaction of resignations, replacements, and bruised egos that resulted in the main chanters of the Takemoto-za and Toyotake-za theaters switching places, resulting the theaters' distinctive styles being mixed together, and making audiences confused.[352]

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[351] Mori Shū observes that, judging from the order of appearance in the *jōruri* scripts and *banzuke* (a poster-like print work that contains a list of performers and playwrights) from the 1700s to 1740s, the ranking of the troupe members was "chanters, playwrights, puppeteers, and *shamisen* players, in that order." (*Jōruri*, Heibonsha, 1970, 52-53) Notably, both Takemoto-za theater and the Toyotake-za theater were established by chanters (Takemoto Gidayū and Toyotake Wakatayū).

[352] About two months after *Chūshingura* was first performed in the tenth month, the puppeteer who played Yuranosuke, Yoshida Bunzaburō I, complained vocally about the way the chanter, Takemoto Konotayū, chanted in Act 9. Such a dispute would have been inconceivable in the earlier days of *jōruri* when the chanters held greater prestige and power, especially because Konotayū was an established chanter and a *zagashira*, or troupe leader, who was "the representative and the supervisor of the troupe alongside the *zamoto* (the manager)." (Kawatake, 480.) Since Bunzaburō I was exceedingly popular, the manager, Izumo II, decided to side with Bunzaburō I, and hired Kōzukenosuke from Toyotake-za as a temporary replacement for Konotayū. Upset by

Beginning in the Hōreki period (1751-1763), an extended series of misfortunes contributed to the declines of both Takemoto-za theater and Toyotake-za theater.[353] Takemoto-za theater continued to suffer from internal conflicts, particularly with the puppeteer from the previous incident.[354] The subsequent manager eventually expelled the puppeteer, but felt it necessary to publish a pamphlet justifying his decision to quell the controversy.[355] Additionally, the theater caught fire twice and the manager was involved in several scandals,[356] including a

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this, Konotayū left Takemoto-za with the other chanters to join Toyotake-za theater. Displaced by these new chanters, the remaining chanters at the Toyotake-za theater followed Kōzukenosuke to Takemoto-za theater. For an English language account of this incident, see Gerstle, 1990, 3.

[353] Takemoto-za theater suffered from interpersonal conflicts, the loss of key artists central to the "Golden Age," scandals, and repeated financial difficulties. Namiki Sōsuke died in Hōreki 1 (1751), and Takeda Izumo II, who also served as the manager (*zamoto*) of Takemoto-za, and mentor to the new-generation playwrights, especially Chikamatsu Hanji, died in Hōreki 6 (1756).

[354] Bunzaburō I seems to have been involved in incidents of conflict within the troupe on several occasions. For instance, *Jōruri fu* explains that "there was a bit of conflict at this time, and Yamatonojō [a chanter] and Bunzaburō left in the middle of the performance season" in 1756 (*Jōruri fu*, 126.)

[355] The new manager Takeda Ōmi IV expelled Bunzaburō I from Takemoto-za theater after he was caught moonlighting. Omi felt it necessary to post his reasons in writing backstage and to publish a pamphlet justifying his decision. Ōmi's list of Bunzaburō's misbehavior show how deeply-rooted the conflicts were, and, at the same time, the fact that he felt a public explanation was required shows how significant the firing of such a popular puppeteer was. *Tōkan zasshi*, the pamphlet Omi published justifying his decision to expel Bunzaburo, introduces the account that was put up backstage as follows: "While we assumed that [Bunzaburō] would have his son take over his roles and concentrate on writing, he had a different idea. In addition to being an honorable master of the art of puppetry, he also served as a playwright. [Bunzaburō] conspired with other performers with Yoshida stage names, and planned to perform at the Onishi theater. Someone within the Yoshida group informed on this, so Ōmi was greatly surprised. Though Ōmi tried to discuss the matter and find a resolution, since [Bunzaburō's] ambition over the years was uncontrollable, there was nothing else he could do. The four performers, Bunzaburō, Bungo, his younger brother Daizaburō, and his family member Hikosaburō, were expelled at the same time, and so they left this theater for the moment. The following account will be posted backstage at the theater to explain these facts and inform the other performers that the Yoshida performers will change their stage names in order to rejoin our troupe." *Tōkan zasshi*, 38-39.

[356] Takemoto-za's misfortunes did not stop there. In 1759, the same year that Ōmi expelled Bunzaburō I, Takemoto-za theater caught fire, along with another two *kabuki* theaters (Naka no shibai and Ōnishi shibai), as a blaze swept through the neighborhood. The theater was rebuilt as a temporary theater half a month later, at considerable expense. Two years later, Ōmi was arrested on suspicion of bribery when he invited local officials to an extravagant feast and a show. (*Hōreki zatsuroku* in Iguchi Hiroshi, et. al. eds., *Kamigata Kōdanshu*, Tokyo: Yagi shoten, 1982.) Also around this time, from the end of 1761 to the beginning of 1762, the government levied a huge tax on the townspeople of Osaka for "governance service (*goyōkin*)." This caused the whole city of Osaka

major incident[357] in Meiwa 4 to 5 (1768-1769) that ruined his reputation and, by extension, seriously hurt Takemoto-za's popularity. In the wake of the resulting public antagonism and its financial difficulties, Takemoto-za's theater was taken over by a *kabuki* troupe in Meiwa 5 (1768).[358]

Toyotake-za theater suffered a similar fate, although more through bad luck than human conflict. Toyotake-za theater burned down on two occasions, in Hōreki 11 (1761) and again in Hōreki 13 (1763), second fire being the same one that burnt down Takemoto-za theater. Misfortune continued when the founder of the Toyotake-za theater, Toyotake Echizennojō[359] died in Meiwa 1 (1764), which resulted in the closure of the theater in Meiwa 2 (1765), three years before Takemoto-za theater was closed.

Despite losing their regular theaters, both the Takemoto-za and Toyotake-za troupes

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to cut their spending on luxuries such as theater. Because of Ōmi's arrest and the reduced budgets of the townspeople, Takemoto-za theater suspended performances for a year (*Gidayū nenpyō*). In 1763 the theater caught fire again and needed to be rebuilt.

[357] This scandal was referred to as "kajichi sōdō 家質騒動." Although he denied it, Ōmi was widely believed to have been part of a cabal that procured an edict imposing a stamp tax on secured loans through means of bribery and corruption, and he and appears in contemporary fiction and diaries as a member of the meeting at which this edict was discussed. Public anger over the edict ran so high that mobs vandalized the homes of those thought to have been behind it, including Ōmi. The edict was published in the twelfth month of 1767. It announced the establishment of an office in Osaka that provided seals (家質奥印差配所), and required that secured borrowers (1) obtain a seal from the office when borrowing money from lending houses, (2) pay a fee for the seal of 1% of the amount borrowed, and (3) renew the seal once every six months (and pay the fee again). Since this would increase their financial burdens, the people of Osaka protested. Tajihi Ikuo, "Hōrekiki no Osaka to Takemoto-za, Takeda Ichizoku," in Torigoe Bunzō et. al. eds., *Ōgon jidai no jōruri to sono go* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), 124-126.

[358] There has been confusion over the year of Takemoto-za theater's closing, especially because of *Jōruri fu*'s account that says Takemoto-za was closed in Meiwa 4, instead of Meiwa 5. However, Uchiyama's detailed analysis (Uchiyama, 1989, 18-21) based on several contemporary accounts of records of performances reveals that *Jōruri fu*'s account was mistaken. It was in Meiwa 5 that Takemoto-za theater lost their permanent theater to a *kabuki* troupe. The performance records show that Takemoto-za theater only stopped being active in Meiwa 5.

[359] f/k/a Takemoto Uneme, Toyotake Wakatayū, and Toyotake Kōzuke no shōjō.

continued to create new plays and made an effort to perform regularly. However, rather than performing as one theatrical group, each troupe was fragmented into smaller groups, led by senior chanters who served as managers. The "Takemoto-za" members performed under chanters Takeda Shinmatsu, Takemoto Tsunatayū, and Takemoto Masakichi, who acted as managers. Similarly, "Toyotake-za" members performed under the chanters Toyotake Konokichi (Konotayū)[360] and Toyotake Wakaza, who acted as managers.[361] In addition, a year after the loss of the permanent Takemoto-za theater to a *kabuki* troupe, several of the Takemoto-za groups reclaimed the theater and performed a total of thirteen productions between them from the end of Meiwa 6 to Anei 1 (1769-1772). Takemoto-za's main playwright, Chikamatsu Hanji, continued to write plays for the "Takemoto-za" performances at Takemoto-za theater during this period. In Anei 2 (1773), ownership of the Takemoto-za theater was sold to a publisher of *jōruri* texts, and performances became irregular. Takemoto Sometayū then broke away from the "Takemoto-za" theater to start performing in Kita-Shinchi (around present-day Umeda, north of Dōtonbori where the original Takemoto-za theater was located), and Hanji began primarily writing for Sometayū. Meanwhile, "Takemoto-za" troupe members resumed performances in the original Takemoto-za theater in Dōtonbori again from the end of Anei 7 (1778) to Tenmei 1 (1781) with Masatayū as the manager, and things looked as if they had "finally rebuilt the dying Takemoto performance tradition."[362] Unfortunately, there was another fire in Tenmei 1 (1781) that stalled

[360] Suga Sensuke, who exclusively wrote for Toyotake-za theater, continued to write for Konotayū.

[361] These groups were somewhat like latter-day iterations of rock-and-roll bands from the 1960s and 70s (such as the Beach Boys, the Platters, and the Drifters), with two or more competing lineups, each led by a few original band members, touring under the original band name.

[362] *Jōruri fu*, 122.

their progress. Hanji's last work, *Igagoe dōchū sugoroku* (*Revenge at Iga Pass*), was performed in Takemoto-za theater in Dōtonbori in Tenmei 3 (1783). After that, the Takemoto-za troupe stopped producing new plays, and stopped performing regularly.

Chikamatsu Hanji and the Art of *Hamemono*

Since the beginning of new *jōruri* (Chikamatsu Monzaemon's *Shusse Kagekiyo*, 1685) until the mid eighteenth century, popular plays were usually created by *jōruri* puppet theaters, with *kabuki* later adapting popular *jōruri* plays. The *kabuki* writers were often themselves actors, and the primary modifications to the scripts were to accommodate the main actors' individual styles and quirks. In addition to producing original scripts, *kabuki* reused *jōruri* scripts that had proved popular. Beginning in the Hōreki period, however, *kabuki* regained popularity, and began taking the lead in writing new plays and inventing new stage technologies, while *jōruri* started to draw more heavily from *kabuki* for ideas, plot twists, new character types, and new stage technologies. This state of affairs led to an interesting interrelationship between *jōruri* and *kabuki* in the Hōreki-Tenmei periods (1751-1783), with each drawing ideas, plot devices, character types, and stage innovations from the other, often in a cyclical fashion where *jōruri* would re-borrow *kabuki*'s innovations upon something that *kabuki* had originally borrowed from *jōruri*. With his *kabuki*-like signature style, Chikamatsu Hanji actively participated in this cyclical borrowing and reborrowing from and by *kabuki* plays.

Kabuki's renewed popularity during this time was rooted in the emergence of talented playwrights[363] who dedicated themselves to *kabuki*. Inspired by *jōruri* plays from the "Golden

[363] In contrast to *jōruri* that had had a strong sense of "the playwright" (*sakusha*) from the time of Chikamatsu Monzaemon, it took longer for *kabuki* to develop a sense of "the playwright," whose exclusive job was to create

Age" and earlier, *kabuki* playwrights, most prominently Namiki Shōza I (1730-1773), developed new stage technologies and better, more cohesive plots, as a result of the art of "*hamemono*," a method of adaptation. Although his name is not as well-known today, Shōza I was highly venerated and his name became one that was succeeded to in the same manner as other prominent performers' names. Because *kabuki* essentially lacked a playwriting tradition, Shōza's "art of playwriting" was inevitably taken from the *jōruri* tradition. In 1750, a year after debuting as a *kabuki* playwright under the name of Izumiya Shōza, Shōza became a *jōruri* playwright in order to study the art of writing plays as an apprentice to Namiki Sōsuke, changing his surname to Namiki. Shōza returned to being a *kabuki* playwright in 1751 after Sōsuke's death. Although Shōza's apprenticeship under Sōsuke was less than two years, Shōza acquired the "rules [of playwriting] passed down from master to student 師の教ゆる規矩,"[364] and the "models that the apprentices should learn 弟子の習ふ準縄"[365] for *jōruri* writing. Shōza wrote about ninety plays over the course of twenty years until his death in 1773, and restored *kabuki* to popularity in Kyoto and Osaka.[366]

Shōza was later recognized for his writing technique called "*hamemono*." *Hamemono* is

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an interesting story to be performed. *Denki sakusho* comments on how the playwriting art was nonexistent for *kabuki*: "Unlike the writers of novels and historical fiction (*shōsetsu haishi* 小説稗史) and the *jōruri* playwrights, there were no rules of playwriting passed down from master to student, and no models that apprentices should learn. There were no playwrights for old *kabuki*; instead, a group of actors gathered together, picked a *sekai*, decided on which actor would play which role, and the actors spoke lines to each other [to form a script]..." *Denki sakusho*, 15.

[364] See footnote 363.

[365] See footnote 363.

[366] Although active for only seven years, Takeda Jizō (active 1755-1762), originally an apprentice of Takeda Izumo and later an apprentice of Shōza I, also played an important role.

described in Shōza's biography included in *Denki sakusho* 伝奇作書 (*On Playwriting*, 1851) by Nishizawa Ippō 西沢一鳳 (1801-1853), a *kabuki* playwright and scholar:

> There is a method of playwriting called "*hamemono*"[367] that makes use of pre-existing plays. I heard that Lord Teika taught that *waka* should use old words and express a new heart. For *kabuki*, it is the opposite. It is called "*hamemono*" to express an old heart with new words. I heard that Namiki Shōza explained that Shintō Genpachi and Sekiguchi Heita in his *Sanjikkoku*[368] are indeed Nuregami and Hanaregoma from *Futatsu chōchō* wearing samurai attire.[369] This kind of application cannot be done without splendid writing skills. His talent is extraordinary indeed. In contrast, recent "*hamemono*" works just change the names of the roles with the exact same *shukō*, *shigumi*, and *kotobatsuki*. They should be called "cut-and-paste copies" instead. It should be considered most embarrassing.[370]

As Ippō's description indicates, Shōza's *hamemono* technique was not simply a patchwork of source materials in which the playwright changed the names of the characters. Rather it is a technique of "using the old *kabuki* plays while devising the *shukō* and wordings to make a completely new play – making the audience think that it is a completely new play, or impressing the audience with its extraordinary transformation by intentionally leaving some remnants of the original plays."[371]

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[367] The original *kanji* used for this part is 譯文 (with the *furigana* phonetic guide, はめもの), which literally means "translated, interpreted, or adapted, sentences or literature."

[368] A *kabuki* play called *Sanjikkoku yofune no hajimari* 三十石艤始 (*The Origin of the Thirty-Koku Ship*, 1758).

[369] In *Futatsu chōchō kuruwa nikki* (1749), Nuregami Chōgorō, a superior sumo wrestler, deliberately loses to Hanaregoma Chōkichi in a sumō match so that Chōkichi might do Chōgorō a favor for his master. Chōgorō continues to serve his master, Yogorō, sacrificing himself. Shōza uses this plot element in *Sanjikkoku yofune no hajimari* (1758), depicting the swordfight by two samurai, Shinto Genpachi and Sekiguchi Heita in which Genpachi deliberately loses to Heita so that he might do his master a favor. There are many parallels in the two works, and, at the same time, Shōza makes it very much an original play by remaking the townspeople's world in *Futatsu chocho* into the samurai's world in *Sanjikkoku*.

[370] *Denki sakusho*, 37.

[371] Mizuta Kayano, "Hōreki *kabuki* – Kamigata," in Torigoe Bunzō et. al. eds., *Kabuki no rekishi I* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1997), 155. On a side note, a good parallel example of a play using this "*hamemono*" technique in the

Concordant with Ippō's view, Shōza was widely regarded as a master of *hamemono*. He created particularly novel and unexpected juxtapositions. For instance, *Tenjiku Tokubei kikigaki ōrai* (*Rumors of Tenjiku Tokubei*, 1757) follows the conventional "*oie sōdō*" or "household disturbance" plot, but Shōza adds the *shukō* of using a villain (a person who tries to take over Japan), Tenjiku Tokubei, as the main character, and incorporates many supernatural elements (the protagonist, Tokubei, practices magic). This incorporation of spectacular supernatural elements as well as using a villain as a central character heavily influenced contemporary *jōruri* playwrights, particularly Chikamatsu Hanji. Hanji's training was similar to Shōza's, as was his playwriting style that created innovative plays through surprising juxtapositions and retellings of well-known popular materials.

Chikamatsu Monzaemon and Namiki Sōsuke were both key playwrights who contributed to *jōruri*'s rise during the period from late seventeenth century (from *Shusse Kagekiyo* in 1685) until 1753 (Sōsuke's death) by establishing its genre conventions and the two distinctive styles of the Takemoto-za and Toyotake-za theaters. In contrast, the representative playwrights during *jōruri*'s "decline," Chikamatsu Hanji (1725-1783) and Suga Sensuke (active 1767-?) had to work within genre conventions that were firmly established and ossified, rather than making new stylistic innovations. Fierce commercial competition with *kabuki* performances also compelled

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modern American context is the 1957 musical, *West Side Story*, inspired by Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Using the terms of early-modern Japanese theater, *West Side Story* changes the "sekai" from aristocratic families in sixteenth century Italy to street gangs of different racial origins in twentieth century New York, while preserving many "*shukō*" from *Romeo and Juliet*, such as how the boy and the girl meet at dance party, how they secretly meet at the balcony after falling in love, how the boy accidentally kills one of the girl's family members after losing his close friend and is banished, and how the lovers died tragically amid the feud between the two groups. While using the same "*shukō*" and making strong parallels to *Romeo and Juliet*, addressing similar themes of tragic young lovers and the vanity of such feuds, *West Side Story* also addresses very contemporary social issues, particularly the plight of racial minorities and issues of class. It is not a simple remake of a well-known play, but rather, a clever "*hamemono*" that adds twists, reinterpretations, and reinventions to the original play and presents it afresh to contemporary audiences, speaking to contemporary issues.

jōruri to absorb the styles, stories, and characters that became popular in *kabuki*. As a result, the "new" plays created during this period relied heavily on reusing preexisting and conventional themes, settings, and stories. In fact, most of Sensuke's plays that are still performed today are direct rewrites of Chikamatsu Monzaemon's works.[372] While most of Hanji's works are not direct rewrites of earlier plays, his "new" plays rely on the conventions, popular legends, staging, characters, and story types that were already familiar to contemporary audiences.

Some modern scholars criticize this as a lack of originality indicating the inferior quality of the playwrights: "The playwrights were not so talented. They were either so-called 'technically-oriented' playwrights who engaged in overly complicated plots, or the ones who tried to get by day-to-day by rewriting preexisting plays."[373] An alternative view is that Hanji, at least, was participating in the contemporary trend towards the use of *hamemono*, and that he was quite good at it in that he infused recycled elements with added weight, such as contemporary themes and novel juxtapositions. Although plots created by *hamemono* are complex because they are woven together from multiple source materials, they were not as overly complicated to contemporary audiences as it may appear to modern audiences because contemporary audiences were quite familiar with the source materials. [374] Writing in a time of ossified genre expectations, Hanji's skill at *hamemono* was invaluable in creating new plays that satisfied audiences' expectations of seeing familiar material, yet, at the same time, subverted their expectations about

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[372] *Sesshū Gappō ga tsuji* 摂州合邦辻 (*Gappō at the Crossroads*, 1773) is the only play by Sensuke in the current repertoire that is not substantially a rewrite.

[373] Kuroki Kanzō, *Jōrurishi* (Tokyo: Seijisha, 1943), 529.

[374] As Moriyama Shigeo points out in his discussion of *sekai*, a skilled playwright would "effectively marshal materials commonly well-known both to the writers and the audiences to create a new play." Moriyama Shigeo, "Sekai to iukoto – *Ōmi Genji senjin yakata* o megutte" *Kikan zasshi kabuki vol. 18* (Oct 1972): 85.

the familiar material and surprised them with something new.

Hanji's skill of *hamemono* is distinct from earlier rewriting of existing materials in three ways. First, Hanji took popular plot devices (*shukō*) from his source materials and transplanted them into new worlds (*sekai*). Since the roster of *shukō* was mostly fixed by Hanji's time, space for creativity existed in using *shukō* imaginatively rather than inventing new ones. *Kezairoku*, a contemporary text for playwrights, advises that "even the old *shukō* need to be pruned so as not to bore the audience – dress them in new costume, and make them into a new play."[375] Second, Hanji weaved together materials from multiple sources into a single new play. While this may seem overly complicated to modern audiences, the source materials were all drawn from familiar materials for contemporary audiences. Importantly, the various sources were integrated and interconnected within the new play, rather than being just a patchwork. A good example, which is discussed later, is the use of the Tanabata legend as a means of undermining the Odamaki legend in *Imoseyama onna teikin*. Third, *hamemono* embodied an interactive "game" between the playwright and the audience that had waxed since the "Golden Age." After decades of *jōruri*, audiences developed familiarity with common source materials and conventions and came to expect them; playwrights surprised audiences by playing into these expectations with familiar materials, then betraying those expectations with a plot twist; and audiences, in turn, came to expect such plot twists.

Hanji was born Hozumi Shigeaki 穂積成章,[376] the second son of Hozumi Ikan

[375] *Kezairoku*, 428.

[376] His exact name is controversial. Some say it is 季章. The reading of the *kanji* also varies: Shigeakira, Shigeaki, Nariakira, and Nariaki.

(Koretsura) 穂積以貫, a Confucian scholar and *jōruri* connoisseur, who associated with Chikamatsu Monzaemon and wrote *Naniwa Miyage*, which is famous for its inclusion of an essay on Chikamatsu's *jōruri* writing philosophy. Hanji took the name Chikamatsu as his penname, with the last name Hanji. The characters for Hanji are 半二, which literally mean "half" and "two." This seems to represent Hanji's respect for Chikamatsu Monzaemon, saying that he can only be half the playwright Chikamatsu was. Hanji studied to become a playwright under Takeda Izumo II. He was one of the young playwrights, along with Takeda Bunshi, who debuted as successors to Namiki Sōsuke after he died in the ninth month of Kan'en 4 (1751). The first play for which Hanji was credited as a writer was *En no Gyōja Ōmine zakura* (*En no Gyōja and the Cherry Trees at Mt. Ōmine*, 1751) , first performed a month after Sōsuke's death. Takeda Izumo II is credited as the main writer (under his pen name, Geki), and Hanji and Bunshi are both credited as his "students."[377] This appellation demonstrates Izumo's intent to emphasize the legitimacy of the young writers as Takemoto-za theater's official playwrights. Hanji is different from earlier generations of playwrights in that he was the first (and last) major playwright to be extensively trained as such: he studied the art of writing *jōruri* plays for twelve years before he made a debut as a *tate-sakusha* (main playwright) in 1763.[378]

Chikamatsu Hanji is often regarded as the last major *jōruri* playwright who consistently wrote new plays. Hanji himself was very conscious of his mission to restructure and revive Takemoto-za theater, and *jōruri* theater as a whole. He even became a *zamoto* in Anei 3 (1774)

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[377] Above Hanji and Bunshi's names is written "*monjin* 門人," or "students," on the last page of the first published text in *En no Gyōja Ōmine zakura.*

[378] This was due to the great success of *Ōshū Adachi ga hara* in 1762, based on a legend about a demon woman.

and 4 (1775), which indicates how central Hanji was for the business management of Takemoto-za theater performances.[379] In an Edo-period comical fiction work (*kokkeibon* 滑稽本) entitled *Anasaguri* 穴意探 (1770) in which the contemporary Takemoto-za playwrights including Hanji visit Chikamatsu Monzaemon in the world of the dead, one of the visiting playwrights, Miyoshi Shōraku, says that they are living in a "deteriorated age (*suibi no jisetsu* 衰微の時節)" and laments the instability of small theatrical performances, saying that *jōruri* theaters are like small, faint fires that sometimes spread and sometimes go out.[380] Hanji is also depicted as a character in Okamoto Kidō's 岡本綺堂 modern play, *Chikamatsu Hanji no shi* 近松半二の死 (*The Death of Chikamatsu Hanji,* 1928), which depicts an aged Hanji lamenting the deterioration of *jōruri*, and his death marking the end of *jōruri* as a creative endeavor.

Just as Namiki Shōza I adapted plots, performance styles, characters, and plot devices from earlier *jōruri* plays, Hanji consciously adapted many performance styles, characters, and plot devices from contemporary popular *kabuki*.[381] Stylistically, Hanji's scripts became closer to *kabuki* scripts than earlier *jōruri* scripts, with increased direct dialogue between the characters. Hanji's plays are also renowned for visual entertainment and the effective use of music, which

[379] It was unprecedented for a non-Takeda-family playwright to serve as a *zamoto*. "Chikamatsu Hanji chosaku nenpu to kenkyū no tebiki," in Kokuritsu gekijō geinō chōsashitsu, ed., *Jōruri sakuhin yōsetsu 3 Chikamatsu Hanji hen* (Tokyo: Kokuritsu gekijō, 1984), 707.

[380] "There used to be only two puppet theaters in the vast port of Osaka, Takemoto and Toyotake in the east and the west. But now in this deteriorated age, theaters are everywhere, like leaping flames or local fires – one moment they are flaming faintly, and the next moment they're extinguished. The plays aren't so popular around town, but only with the performers, and they drag on. Chanters who have only chanted trivial parts are suddenly in charge of significant parts – it's like a small kitten trying to swallow a whale, when it's obviously not possible. And they only perform the third act from morning till night, which bores the audience." *Anasaguri*, cited in Uchiyama, 1989, 8.

[381] Many scholars have pointed out the *kabuki*-like nature of Hanji's works. See Kawatake Toshio, "Chikamatsu Hanji no sakufū," *Kikan zasshi kabuki vol. 18* (Oct 1972): 44-53.

are again elements similar to *kabuki*. The original nature of *jōruri* was that of *katarimono* (oral narrative performance) in which the characters are weaved into the narrative performed by a single chanter, and the visual components on stage, such as the puppets, were considered secondary and supplementary to the chanting. In fact, chanting could be done without the accompaniment of the puppets, but puppetry could not be performed without chanting. By putting an emphasis on the visual aspects and the dialogue, Hanji's plays break away from oral storytelling (*katarimono*), and tend to be closer to the action-based, actor-driven performances of *kabuki*. These stylistic aspects enabled Hanji's scripts to be readily translatable to *kabuki*, and many of them were adapted into *kabuki* plays that are still performed today.

In addition to these stylistic resemblances to *kabuki* plays, Hanji's most representative plot type is also shared with *kabuki*. Uchiyama Mikiko points out that many of Hanji's works, especially earlier ones, can be characterized as "*muhonnin geki*," or "rebel plays," in which the drama centers around villains and rebels who ambitiously scheme to seize power.[382] For example, in Hanji's first play, *En no Gyōja Ōmine sakura*, Prince Ōtomo, who discovered that he was not the son of the emperor, but the son of an evil minister, becomes determined to become emperor, because that is something no commoner has achieved before. This exploration of the villain's motivation and determination to achieve his goal is unprecedented in earlier *jōruri* and *kabuki*, since earlier villains usually acted evilly simply because they were evil by nature. This emphasis on the villain and his motive and determination seems to have been influenced by *kabuki*, particularly contemporary plays by Shōza, who wrote many plays that revolve around their villains, such as *Tenjiku Tokubei kikigaki ōrai*. Nikawa Kiyoshi examines Hanji's rebel plays and

[382] Uchiyama Mikiko, "Chikamatsu Hanji no doramatsurugi," *Kikan zasshi kabuki vol. 18* (Oct 1972), 68.

points out that they have three distinct features: (1) An active protagonist (*shutaisei*); (2) scheming (*bōryaku*) in order to achieve power and self-actualization; and (3) relativization of the concept of "rebellion." In his rebel plays, Hanji created characters who scheme in pursuit of goals that contradict the *bakufu*'s class structure, and yet these rebel heroes are attractive and compelling characters. In doing so, Hanji questions the conventional notions of good-versus-evil reflected in *jidaimono jōruri* plays, namely that "good" seeks to perpetuate the existing order, while "evil" seeks to overturn the state.

The antiheroes in Hanji's rebel plays have a strong sense of their objectives, and do not hesitate to sacrifice anything or anyone around them in order to achieve their goals.[383] This is also true for Hanji's conventional pro-state heroes in the later plays, such as *Imoseyama onna teikin*. While the play centers around Fujiwara no Kamatari and his son Tankai, who are both unequivocally "good" characters in service of the Emperor, neither hesitates to sacrifice innocent people in order to achieve their goal of protecting and restoring power to Emperor Tenji. In Hanji's *jidaimono* plays, the distinction between the good and the bad is not as clear as the distinction between the strong and the weak. The "strong" characters use their power and knowledge to achieve their goals, while taking advantage of or victimizing weak people. Women are never strong, and are always taken advantage of. When discussing *jōruri*'s representation of women, Uchiyama Mikiko points out that the worlds of men and women never intersect in *jōruri*. Female characters are always the ones who are concerned with love (both romantic and familial), while the male characters are preoccupied with political and public relationships. One of the big themes of *jōruri* plays is to depict the tragedy that arises from the disharmony between

[383] Ibid.

these two worlds, particularly female characters who are sacrificed.[384] Contrary to *jōruri*'s tradition of justifying sacrifices on the protagonists' side as driven by fate, the sacrifices in Hanji's works are depicted as the results of the heroes' machinations. This emphasis on human agency and its consequences departs from the established *jōruri* theme of narrating the tragic and inescapable fate of the world, and comes closer to *kabuki*'s depictions of human drama.

Provincial Daughters as Mythical Heroines

The second part of this chapter focuses on examining the representations of Kiyohime and Omiwa, the respective heroines of *Hidakagawa iriai zakura* and *Imoseyama onna teikin*. Kiyohime and Omiwa are provincial daughters (*inaka musume*), a new type of heroine in *jōruri* plays that became popular in the late eighteenth century, and remains popular in today's performances. In classical literature and theater (such as *Kojiki*, Heian *monogatari* tales, *nō* plays, and *setsuwa* anecdotes) provincial daughters are often associated with the supernatural mythical world and romance with a noble in exile. Kiyohime and Omiwa strongly reflect these conventional images at the beginning of the plays, but later are subverted in ways that bring in more early modern aspects. Kiyohime is a relatively straightforward adaptation of the protagonist of the Dōjōji myth, which has its origins in medieval Buddhist anecdotes that depict her as an embodiment of female jealousy. Omiwa, on the other hand, is more uniquely Hanji's creation, loosely based on (or inspired by) a myth in which a provincial daughter marries a god. Omiwa is a hybrid of multiple sources and elements, including Kiyohime. This section introduces the conventional images and associations of provincial daughters and jealous women

[384] Uchiyama, 1965.

in myths and tales, which Hanji both used and subverted in creating Kiyohime and Omiwa.

In myths, *setsuwa* stories, and *nō* plays, provincial daughters often appear as local wives of gods, aristocrats, or high-ranked samurai who are on an expedition or in temporary exile. The provincial daughters provide temporary comfort to the male protagonist in a time of misfortune, and often bear a child. Often these tales end with the man's departure and a sacrifice by the woman (often for the benefit of her child). For example, in *Genji monogatari*, Genji meets Akashi during his exile to Suma. Akashi is the daughter of a lay priest who was formerly a provincial governor of Harima[385] and a high-ranked aristocrat in Kyoto. Eventually, Akashi bears a daughter to Genji, who gives him supreme political power by marrying the Emperor. However, Akashi's lowly upbringing is an issue throughout the story, and she is forced to give up raising her own daughter so that she can have a proper upbringing in the capital. In a *nō* play entitled *Matsukaze* 松風, the fisherwomen sisters, Matsukaze and Murasame, talk about their romantic relationships with Ariwara no Yukihira, an aristocrat in exile in Suma Bay. They were abandoned when Yukihira returned to the capital.

In early modern theater, provincial daughters do not appear as central characters as often as prostitutes, mothers, samurai women, townsgirls (*machi musume*), and townswives, at least not until later in the Edo period. This is because the plays are often set in an urban location, depicting issues familiar to urban commoners, such as financial problems, a triangular relationship with a prostitute, a conflict with the master of one's husband, etc. When provincial daughters appear as heroines in early *jōruri*, they are often depicted as the embodiment of the

[385] Present-day Hyōgo.

exotic countryside, and the source of inexplicable supernatural power.[386] An example is Chidori, a fisherwoman from rural Kikaigashima Island who marries an aristocrat in exile in *Heike nyogo no shima* 平家女護島 (*The Heike and the Island of Women*), written by Chikamatsu Monzaemon and first performed at the Takemoto-za theater in 1719.[387] She is described in detail as almost naked, wet, and with disheveled hair. Her local dialect is emphasized to show that the setting is in an exotic countryside far away from the capital and the urban cities where the play was performed. In the second act (which is the only act that is performed today), Chidori is a daughter-like figure to Shunkan, the protagonist, who sacrifices himself to enable Chidori go to the capital with her husband. Unlike the classical stories, she does not seem to possess any mythical or supernatural power. However, later in the fourth act, she is killed by the villain Kiyomori and becomes a ghost who haunts him and causes his death.

A new type of representation of provincial daughters became popular in the 1760s, when the conventional image of the provincial daughter as a noble person in exile's local lover was merged with a love triangle and female jealousy. This type of provincial daughters shares with provincial daughters in classical stories the traits of falling in love with a nobleman in exile (or in disguise) who has a formal wife back in the capital, and making a sacrifice in the end. Another shared aspect is supernatural power, which, in this iteration, is connected with female jealousy. Chikamatsu Hanji's representations of jealous provincial women, however, are less self-sacrificial and powerful. He begins with the classical image of the provincial daughter as a

[386] Following the earlier typical representations of provincial daughters.

[387] The play is based on the episode of Shunkan in the *Tales of the Heike* and the *nō* play *Shunkan*. Taira no Naritsune, an aristocrat who was in exile to Kigaigashima Island in Satsuma, marries Chidori, a local fisherwoman. In the famous scene often performed in contemporary *kabuki* and *jōruri*, the protagonist, Shunkan, who is also in exile with Naritsune, sacrifices himself to enable Chidori to go to the capital with Naritsune.

temporary love to a nobleman, who is exotic, beautiful, and possesses supernatural power, but rewrites mythical heroines by minimizing their mythical powers and exotic nature, and depicting them as more commonplace, ordinary women.

Jealous Women in *Jōruri* Puppet Theater

Although jealousy is a universal feeling, it has traditionally been more strongly associated with women in Japan. The association of women with sin, particularly the feelings of jealousy and attachment, was particularly emphasized in Buddhist literature, and permeated classical Japanese culture. For instance, in a dictionary of associated words for composing *renga* poetry (linked verse), *Renju gappeki shū* 連珠合璧集 (1476) by Ichijō Kaneyoshi 一条兼良 (1402-1481), "being jealous (*netamu*)" and "dragon (*tatsu*)" are listed as associated words for "woman (*onna*)."[388] The theme of jealous women can be seen in Heian literature, such as Lady Rokujō from *Genji monogatari,* and various *nō* plays depicting religious salvation of jealous women's spirits (such as *Kanawa* 鉄輪, *Aoi no ue* 葵上, and *Dōjōji*). Jealous women are dangerous, and often transform into demons (*oni*), mountain witches (*onibaba*), or snakes and attack their rivals or lovers. In *jōruri* plays, however, straightforward display of female jealousy does not fit well with the genre conventions for representing women. As discussed earlier, the female characters in *jōruri* must be fundamentally good, so as to accord with their beautiful appearance. As a result, displays of female jealousy (a negative and dangerous feeling) are often suppressed by the woman, or only manifested unconsciously. For instance, in *Karukaya Dōshin*

[388] Ichijō Kaneyoshi, *Renju gappeki shū* vol. 2. Hand copied by Ichijō Fuyuyoshi, 1476. Available National Diet Library online (http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2544949?tocOpened=1), 11-12.

Tsukushi no iezuto (*Karukaya Dōshin and a Souvenir from Tsukushi*, 1735) the hair of a man's wife and his mistress transforms into snakes that fight while the women are sleeping. In this context, Kiyohime and Omiwa's unequivocal displays of jealousy and enmity towards their rivals are distinct from other *jōruri* heroines.

Takada Mamoru's study of the theme of snakes and women in early modern literature, theater, and art shows how Kumano nuns' *etoki* (picture-sermons) of mandala,[389] particularly pictures of hell (*jigokue* 地獄絵), contributed to the popularization of the negative image of jealous women as dangerous snakes.[390] In Buddhism, there are three hells that exist exclusively for women: Blood Pool Hell (*chi no ike jigoku* 血の池地獄), Barren Woman Hell (*umazume jigoku* 不産女地獄), and Two-Women Hell (*futame jigoku* 両婦地獄). The Two-Women Hell in particular is the hell that jealous women go to. There, two women are turned into snakes who must spend eternity fighting over one man.[391] See Figure 1.

[389] Kumano nuns were traveling nuns who engaged in *etoki* performances originally to solicit donations for Kumano shrine, and were particularly active from sixteenth to seventeenth centuries.

[390] Takada Mamoru, "Jigokue no naka no 'onna' to 'hebi' – Kinsei tsūnen ni okeru hiteiteki naru mono" in *Onna to hebi: Hyōchō no Edo bungaku shi*. Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1999, 111-131.

[391] Takada, 109-115.

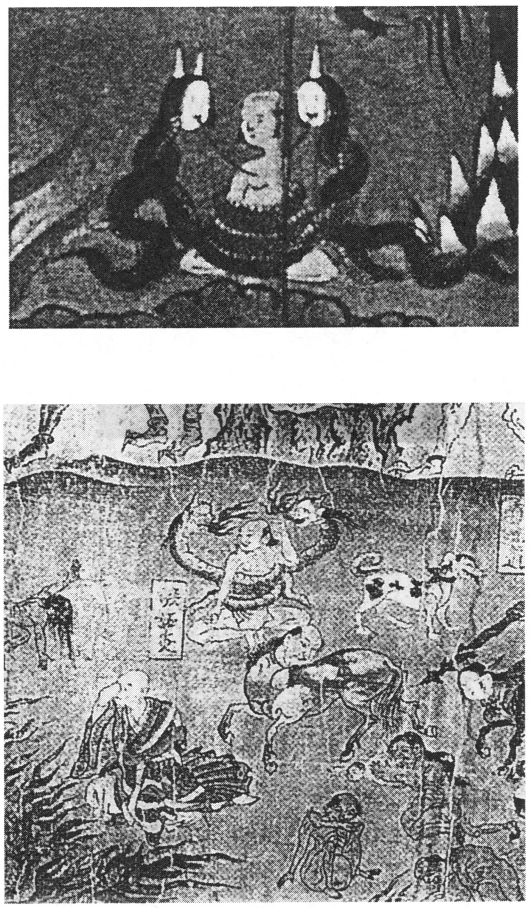


Figure 1: Images of Two-Women Hell in Takehisa-bon *Kanshin jikkaizu* (above) and Rikudō Chinnōji kōhon *Kanshin jikkaizu* (below)

In *jōruri*, depictions of jealous women were popular, but were done carefully so as not to break the conventional depiction of exemplary female characters. Because young female characters are almost exclusively good in *jōruri* plays,[392] and jealousy is exclusively a negative emotion that could cause disaster, jealous women did not fit well with the genre conventions of *jōruri*. Generally, a young woman whose love is interested in another woman controls her jealousy and acts properly in *jōruri* plays. For instance, in a triangular relationship in Chikamatsu Monzaemon's *Shinjū Ten no Amijima* (*Love Suicides at Amijima*, 1721), the wife, Osan,

[392] See Chapter One.

encourages her husband, Jihei, to buy the prostitute Koharu's contract so that Koharu will be saved. In the third act of Namiki Sōsuke's *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* (*Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees*, 1747), Osato, who fell in love with her servant, gives him up the moment she learns that he is actually Taira no Koremori – who is married and has a son – in disguise. It is true that Akoya in Chikamatsu Monzaemon's *Shusse Kagekiyo* acts in accordance with the conventions of medieval jealous women who bring disaster to men when she turns in Kagekiyo because she is angry that he lied to her and secretly had a proper wife. However, *Shusse Kagekiyo* was the very beginning of the new *jōruri* genre; Akoya was more of a remnant of the earlier representations of female jealousy, and did not persist as a conventional character type in new *jōruri* plays. In *Dōjōji genzai uroko* 道成寺現在蛇鱗 (*Snakeskin at Dōjōji Temple in the Modern Day*, 1742), playwrights Namiki Sōsuke and Asada Icchō introduce an earlier version of Kiyohime, whose jealousy turns her into a snake that kills her love and his lover, taking the story from the popular Dōjōji legend. However, the whole scene of Kiyohime's transformation into a snake turns out to be only a dream, which makes Kiyohime realize the danger of her own jealousy, puts her to shame, and drives her to commit suicide. In other words, in reality, Kiyohime in *Dōjōji genzai uroko* remains a properly-behaved woman, whose jealousy can only be released unconsciously in her dreams. Sōsuke did not go so far as to break the *jōruri* convention to depict a completely jealous woman.

In contrast, by separating the women's world of emotion and passion from the political world of men completely, Hanji managed to depict truly jealous women in *jōruri* plays without making them villains. In Hanji's plays, female jealousy does not affect male world, but rather, is made into a device for accomplishing larger goals by the male protagonists. Kiyohime and

Omiwa are both known for their jealousy, but instead of making their jealousy a character flaw they strive to overcome as exemplary *jōruri* characters, Kiyohime and Omiwa's jealousy is cultivated by male heroes to be used as part of their political plots. By juxtaposing the jealous woman who is potentially dangerous with the provincial daughter who is deserted by her elite lover and incorporating them into a heroine who is sacrificed for a male political plot, Chikamatsu Hanji managed to incorporate the popular image of jealous women without breaking the conventional depiction of young women as beautiful and exemplary.

Mythical Source Material of the Fourth Act of *Hidakagawa iriai zakura* (1759)

Hidakagawa iriai zakura, or *Cherry Trees Along the Hidaka River*, is a play that Chikamatsu Hanji co-wrote[393] that was first performed in 1759 in Takemoto-za theater. This play is a rewrite of Namiki Sōsuke's *Dōjōji genzai uroko* (first performed in 1742 at Toyotake-za theater). On a larger scale, however, this play (especially the fourth act) is part of the Dōjōji genre, the group of various literary and theatrical works that are based on the classical Dōjōji legend. Later, *Hidakagawa*'s heroine, Kiyohime, is developed into Omiwa in *Imoseyama*, the most representative provincial daughter (*inaka musume*) for *kabuki* and *jōruri* theatergoers today. While the play is based on the popular Dōjōji legend and its image of the heroine, Hanji builds up the audience's expectations through these conventional images up until the end of the act, only to surprise viewers with a series of unexpected twists in the end. This section will analyze the ways in which Hanji remakes the legend, especially focusing on the representation of the heroine, and discuss how Hanji retells the popular legend of Dōjōji to create an early modern

[393] Although he is credited as the secondary author, it is likely that Hanji was the primary author in reality.

puppet play that reflects the audience's anxiety about the contemporary social order.

Dōjōji is a temple in Kumano in today's Wakayama prefecture. It is a Tendai-sect Buddhist temple that reveres the Lotus Sutra as its central teaching. The first version of the story is recorded in *Dainihonkoku Hokkegenki* 大日本国法華験記 (*Miraculous Tales of the Lotus Sutra*), a collection of *setsuwa* anecdotes compiled in the mid eleventh century (1040-1044). The story also appears in other Buddhist collections of anecdotes, as well as different versions of *emaki* picture scrolls from the medieval period. The basic elements are as follows: There is a beautiful monk making a pilgrimage to Kumano shrine. On the way to the shrine, he stops at a house and asks to stay the night. The daughter (or, in some versions, widow) of the house falls in love with the young beautiful monk, and visits his room at night seeking to seduce him. The monk rejects her, explaining that he should not be with a woman during his pilgrimage. He promises her that he will return on the way back from the shrine to marry her. However, the monk is lying to escape from the woman and never comes back. Learning that she was deceived, the woman becomes angry and chases after the monk, while her anger transforms her into a snake (or dragon). (In some versions, the woman commits suicide and her spirit transforms into a snake.) The monk crosses the Hidaka River and flees into Dōjōji Temple, while the snake woman swims across the river after him. At the temple, the monk is hidden inside a bell, but the snake woman wraps her body around the bell and breathes fire. The monk is burned to death inside the bell, and the snake woman drowns herself in the river. After their deaths, the two appear in a dream to the head priest of Dōjōji temple and ask him to pray for their souls. Their souls are put to rest by the miraculous power of the Lotus Sutra.[394] This story became tremendously popular as

[394] The *Lotus Sutra* became popular for the salvation of women in classical Japanese culture.

source material for the theatrical and visual arts. Numerous picture scrolls and plays were produced and performed from the medieval period onward. The most famous theatrical representation is a medieval *nō* play entitled "Dōjōji" that tells the story of the woman (or rather her restless spirit) after the incident. The monk and the woman were both unnamed in early versions of the tale, but they were later known as "Anchin" and "Kiyohime." While the name "Anchin" first appeared in a medieval text on Buddhist history entitled *Genkō shakusho* 元亨釈書 (early fourteenth century), the name "Kiyohime" first appeared much later in Sōsuke's *jōruri* play, *Dōjōji genzai uroko* (1747), and quickly became popular.

The Dōjōji legend remained popular in the early modern period, especially in performance arts and visual culture. In particular, *kabuki* dancers created a number of dances, most famously, *Kyō ganoko musume Dōjōji* 京鹿子娘道成寺 (*Maiden in a Kanoko-Style Kimono at Dōjōji Temple*, 1753) which focuses on the transformation of the young and beautiful Kiyohime into a ferocious snake-demon. The scene was sensational and it highlighted the actor's quick-change skills.[395] Around the middle of the eighteenth century, there was a boom in the Dōjōji's legend's popularity as source material for many different genres. By the eighteenth century, Kiyohime became a supernatural creature, often depicted with the temple bell, and was, for example, enumerated as one of the one hundred representative ghosts and monsters in Toriyama Sekien's 鳥山石燕 (1712-1788) *Konjaku hyakki shūi* 今昔百鬼拾遺 (Collection of One Hundred Demons, Now and Past) by Toriyama Sekien, 1780) (Figure 2).

[395] It is a dance piece (*buyōmono* 舞踊もの) set years after the destruction of the temple bell by Kiyohime. A *shirabyoshi* dancer named Hanako visits Dōjōji temple while it is holding a prayer for the new replacement bell. While dancing, Hanako reveals her true identity as Kiyohime's spirit, and transforms into a snake monster.



Figure 2: “Dōjōji no kane” from *Konjaku hyakki shūi* (Collection of One Hundred Demons, Now and Past) by Toriyama Sekien, 1780.

Hidakagawa’s adaptation of the Dōjōji legend appears in the fourth act, which is one of the highlights of the five-act jidaimono historical play format. As discussed in the first chapter, the theme of this act is elegance and beauty (*yūbi* 優美), and its role is to introduce visual spectacles and reveal answers to the plot’s mysteries. The largest frame of this play is a political intrigue set in around the tenth century that is unrelated to the Dōjōji legend. The Emperor (Emperor Suzaku) is sick and plans to give the throne to Prince Sakuragi, while his rival tries to curse the Emperor to death and banishes the Prince so that he may seize the throne for himself.

The Prince flees from the capital in disguise as a monk, to Kumano. This is where the fourth act, and the adaptation of the Dōjōji legend, begins. The Prince visits the home of a local official (*shōji* 庄司) who offers free lodging for the people on pilgrimages to Kumano Shrine. Kiyohime, the daughter of the local official, falls in love with the "priest." When an envoy of the enemy suspects that the "priest" is the Prince, Kiyohime's father asserts that the priest is his daughter's fiancé, which Kiyohime is all too happy to believe. Meanwhile, Prince Sakuragi's lover, Odamakihime, also visits the official's house, and reunites with the Prince. The two leave the house, and Kiyohime chases the couple, swims across the river, and kills the couple at Dōjōji Temple, or so it seems. The play ends with a plot twist by Hanji that subverts what the audience is expecting. Hanji's retelling of the Dōjōji legend in *Hidakagawa*, especially the reimagination of the snake woman, has three aspects: first, a commercial entertainment aspect of borrowing a popular image from the medieval legend; second, a didactic aspect that reinforces the state-promoted social norms; and, third, a social criticism that subtly called the social hierarchy into question.

Kiyohime as Demon Woman – Entertainment and *Karakuri*

Hidakagawa makes use of the popular perception of the heroine, Kiyohime, as a beautiful woman who turns into a ferocious monster, and the play reinforces this visual image. This is because it was a sensational image that was well-known to contemporary audiences and guaranteed to sell well. The play's *ezukushi* picture book, which depicts the representative images from the performance, shows how the visual representation of Kiyohime mostly follows the contemporary popular image of Kiyohime as a "snake woman."

In addition to giving audiences something that conformed to their expectations, Hanji likely chose to reinforce the contemporary popular image of Kiyohime because it gave him an opportunity to create a visual spectacle by taking advantage of Takemoto-za's close association with Takeda *karakuri*. Takeda *karakuri* was a theater that put on shows of "trick" puppetry and prestidigitation, and was located in the Dōtonbori theater district along with the other *jōruri* and *kabuki* theaters. Takeda *karakuri* was owned by Takeda family, and, after Takeda Izumo I became the *zamoto* of the Takemoto-za in 1705, Takeda *karakuri*'s puppeteers lent their expertise to Takemoto-za for scenes involving puppet legerdemain. Takeda *karakuri* had long done a signature show based on the Dōjōji legend, and the play Chikamatsu Monzaemon wrote to celebrate Takeda Izumo I's arrival as Takemoto-za's new *zamoto, Yōmei Tennō shokunin kagami*, (*The Mirror of Craftsmen of Emperor Yōmei*, 1705) is an adaptation of Dōjōji that incorporates puppetry techniques from Takeda *karakuri*'s Dōjōji performance. It features a scene where a snake woman appears from a temple bell and spits fire and water using *karakuri* techniques. (Figure 3.) The image of Takeda *karakuri*'s Dōjōji performance shows Kiyohime as flying around the trees and the bell, spitting fire. The text by the surging water and fire in the lower central part of the left panel says "the *karakuri* trick of water and fire springing out of a rock prop." Similarly, in *Hidakagawa*, Kiyohime is depicted as climbing up and down a pine tree spitting fire and water in front of the bell: "The blood of attachment spread over the bell and changed into flaming water, and her angry tears sprung up. The battle of water and fire shook and moved the heavens with thunder, and the bell sounded without being rung."[396] It is likely that

[396] Takeda Izumo III et. al. Kokuritsu gekijō geinō chōsa yōseibu geinō chōsashitsu, ed., *Mihonkoku gikyokushū 7: Hidakagawa iriai zakura*. Edited by (Tokyo: Kokuritsu gekijō geinō chōsa yōseibu geinō chōsashitsu, 1981), 105.

Hanji hewed to the contemporary popular image of Kiyohime so that he could make use of Takeda *karakuri*'s puppetry tricks for Kiyohime.

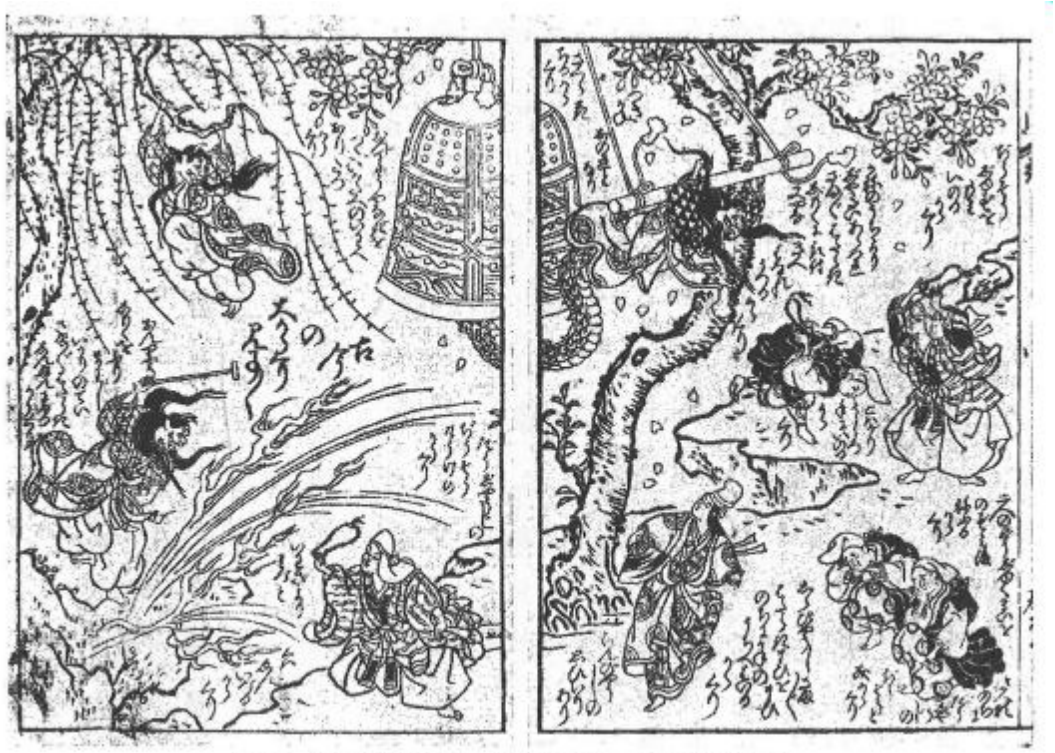


図 15 「道成寺」『花艸末広扇』宝暦・明和か（絵尽し）

Figure 3: *Ezukushi* Picturebook of Takeda *Karakuri*'s Dōjōji in *Hanamomiji suehiro ōgi*, Hōreki-Meiwa period (1751-1771) ?

The visual images of the key scenes of *Hidakagawa* remain the same as the medieval depictions. The *banzuke* poster that advertises the play features an image of an enraged Kiyohime in front of the bell at Dōjōji Temple as the play's representative image, which is a typical depiction of Kiyohime from the medieval period (Figure 4). The *ezukushi* picturebook that portrays representative scenes from the performance also directly adopts images of Kiyohime as a scary monster from the medieval picture scrolls. For example, Figure 5 shows a comparison of the portrayal of Kiyohime's transformation into a snake-demon (with her

disheveled hair (a signifier of jealousy crossing the line into the supernatural) and the demon in the mirror) in the *ezukushi* picturebook that adapts images from the *emaki* picture scroll. Kiyohime's crossing-the-river scene is also a focus both in the *ezukushi* and the earlier medieval picture scroll (Figure 6). Finally, Kiyohime is depicted as breathing fire, both in the *ezukushi* and the picture scroll (Figure 7). Among the foregoing representative scenes, the most iconic image that continues to performed today in the *midori* (selected scenes) style performances of Bunraku theater is the crossing-the-river scene. The visual transformation from a beautiful woman into a demon was realized by a special puppet head called "*gabu*," which was discussed in Chapter One. Although it is not clear when this special puppet head was invented, judging from the fact that the known roles the special puppet head was used for are plays written after *Hidakagawa* or adaptations of *kabuki*,[397] it is likely that the puppet head was invented around the time of *Hidakagawa*.

[397] Saitō lists seven characters that use the *gabu* puppet head in today's repertoire. Saitō, 62. Among them, *Hidakagawa* is the oldest *jōruri* play (1759). *Kyōganoko musume Dōjōji*'s year of first performance (1753) is earlier, as it was originally a *kabuki* dance piece, but it was not performed in *jōruri* until 1810 (*Gidayū nenpyō* vol. 2, 304-305). Another character for which the *gabu* puppet head is used, Kasane, appears first in *Meiboku Kasane monogatari*, which is a much later play, first performed in 1790.



Figure 4: *Tsujibanzuke* (poster) of *Hidakagawa*, 1759.



Figure 5: Kiyohime's disheveled hair signifies transformation into a monster in the *ezukushi* picturebook of the *jōruri* performance (left) and *Dōjōji engi emaki* (mid Muromachi period, hand copied during the Edo period?) (right). The reflection in the mirror on the left illustrates Kiyohime as a demon.



Figure 6: Kiyohime's crossing-the-river scene from the *ezukushi* picturebook of the *jōruri* performance (left) and *Dōjōji engi emaki* (mid Muromachi period, hand copied during the Edo period?) (right).



Figure 7: Kiyohime's final fire-breathing scene from the *ezukushi* picturebook of the *jōruri* performance (left) and *Dōjōji engi emaki* (mid Muromachi period, hand copied during the Edo period?) (right).

It is possible that the crossing-the-river scene was even more of a spectacle than it is in today's performances. According to Yamada Kazuhito, *kojōruri* theaters in the late seventeenth

century such as Dewa-za, Kakudayū-za, and Uji-za[398] used actual water in trick puppetry (*mizu karakuri*), especially in the scenes that showed miracles of the deities. One of the popular tricks was to prepare a water tank and manipulate puppets inside or on top of the water. Yamada points out that the water tank was used especially frequently for the scene with the fisherwoman swimming to recover the jewel in *Taishokan*.[399] As I will discuss later, the fisherwoman from *Taishokan* is one of the early examples of a provincial daughter who falls in love with an aristocrat in disguise. (She is one of the sources of inspiration for Omiwa, and a popular "provincial daughter" type of character at the time. Hanji must have had her in mind when writing Kiyohime.) Although the scene where Kiyohime swims across the river is more symbolic in today's performances, with a long light blue cloth representing the river, it is possible that this scene was originally performed with real water in order to enhance the visual appeal of the puppet play. The association between Takemoto-za and Takeda *karakuri* implies that the resources to do so were available.

The visual spectacle of a young woman instantly turning into a demon is striking, and universally entertaining. It is understandable why this scene is the only one that is still performed today. In fact, the scene was so popular it was later reused in *Imoseyama* where a beautiful girl swims across a river. On the other hand, because the transformation-into-a-snake scene is performed out of context today, today's *jōruri* audiences are only given a limited impression of

[398] Dewa-za was established by Itō Dewanojō in Osaka (Dōtonbori theater district) at some time in the Manji to Enpō periods (1658-1681). It was famous for its advanced puppet tricks, especially the ones called "Nankin *karakuri* 南京からくり" that they adopted from China. Yamada Kazuhito, "Ningyō karakuri," in Torigoe Bunzō, et. al. ed., *Chikamatsu no jidai*, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), 233-236. Kakudayu-za and Uji-za were rival theaters in Kyoto in the 1670s and 1680s.

[399] Ibid., 232-235.

Kiyohime as an angry demon-snake, an aggressor who chases the aristocratic couple – essentially the same as the medieval image from the legend. I would like to emphasize, however, that this is just one aspect of Kiyohime in the play. Examination of the text reveals other aspects of Kiyohime that depart from the image from the medieval legend.

Kiyohime as a Beautiful and Exemplary *Jōruri* Heroine

In contrast to the visual images that depict Kiyohime as a ferocious monster, the *jōruri* texts add different dimensions to the representation of Kiyohime. First, the text reimagines Kiyohime as a conventional filial daughter, contravening her conventional image as lustful and aggressive. Kiyohime is depicted as a typical character of the *tachiyaku* – the "good side" – who adheres to the contemporary Confucian expectations about the social role of a commoner woman, as a daughter and a wife. Presenting Kiyohime as a model daughter is an example of *jōruri*'s preemptive self-censorship and didacticism in the face of *bakufu* censorship.

In order to remake the sinful image Kiyohime into a filial daughter and fiancée, Hanji introduces two major male characters, Kiyohime's father and an evil priest, Gōjaku. The inclusion of Kiyohime's father serves to negate Kiyohime's lustful nature in the original legend by legitimizing her claim to the priest Anchin. When an envoy of the enemy sees Anchin and suspects that he is actually Prince Sakuragi, Kiyohime's father tries to protect the Prince by lying to the envoy in front of Kiyohime:

> [Kiyohime's father says] "This mountain priest is named Anchin. For reasons I won't bore you by explaining, I betrothed him to my daughter Kiyohime when they were children, so he is my future son-in-law. Don't give him unnecessary trouble."
>
> His daughter came closer and asked him, "You mean that Mr. Anchin is the man I am

betrothed to?"

> "I haven't told you before, but yes, this priest is the man you are going to marry, he is to be your husband." Her father lied to dodge the problem at hand, but, being a young girl, Kiyohime believed that it was true.[400]

Kiyohime, who had fallen in love with Anchin when she saw him at the capital earlier, is overjoyed to learn that Anchin is her fiancé. Because it was a daughter's filial obligation to marry the man selected by her parents, Kiyohime's pursuit of Anchin is justified, and even required, by social norms. Additionally, the fact that her father lied to her absolves Kiyohime of the transgression of chasing after a man above her social rank. This is a big departure from the earlier representation of Kiyohime in Sōsuke's *Dōjōji genzai uroko*, on which *Hidakagawa* is based. Kiyohime in *Dōjōji genzai uroko* has one extra tooth, which is a sign that she is abnormally jealous and attached to things by nature.[401] Unlike Kiyohime in *Hidakagawa*, who is told that Anchin is her fiancé, Kiyohime in *Genzai uroko* is discouraged from pursuing Anchin[402] at an early stage. Her mother reveals Anchin's identity to Kiyohime, saying that he is the son of an aristocrat her brother used to serve, and tries to dissuade her from pursuing a man way above her social rank. Kiyohime in *Genzai uroko* refuses to obey her mother, and pursues Anchin despite the social taboo. Hanji departs from this conventional depiction of Kiyohime's passionate and aggressive nature, and tones her down into a conventional *jōruri* heroine who displays

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[400] *Hidakagawa*, 91.

[401] Her attachment to Anchin caused her to fall ill. A dentist sought to cure her by pulling out the extra tooth, but Kiyohime refused to let him. Asada Icchō and Namiki Sōsuke, *Dōjōji genzai uroko*, in Yamada Kazuhito, ed., *Toyotake-za jōrurishū* vol. 3 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1995), 68.

[402] Anchin in *Dōjōji genzai uroko* also has a double identity. He is an aristocrat's son, who lost a political power struggle, fell out of favor, and became a mountain priest.

socially appropriate, exemplary behavior.[403]

The inclusion of the evil priest Gōjaku serves to negate Kiyohime's socially inappropriate anger and jealousy from the original legend and the earlier *jōruri* play. Kiyohime shows strong adherence to the prescribed exemplary woman's behavior despite her emotions and Gōjaku's provocations, unlike Kiyohime in *Genzai uroko*, whose passion overrules good sense despite her mother's admonition. When Kiyohime finds out that Anchin fled with another woman, Kiyohime tries to suppress her own anger and jealousy by remembering her father's teachings. She says to herself, "my father always tells me that it is a young woman's fault to be jealous and envious. I must look very inappropriate right now."[404] Kiyohime continues to resist Gōjaku's attempts to provoke her anger by insisting on acting in accordance with the social expectations of a good daughter and fiancée:

> Overhearing her, the high priest Gōjaku said, "Oh, Kiyohime, your dear Anchin left with a girl. Why don't you chase them and kill them?"
>
> [Kiyohime said,] "such inappropriate words! Anchin and I have permission from my father to be husband and wife. I have no intention to hold a grudge against him or be jealous. Please don't tell me such a scary thing, even as a joke."
>
> "What a baby you are! You're wrong to think that you can be Anchin's wife. He rejected you as a fiancée, lied to you, and left this house. He fled towards the Hidaka River with that woman. Surely, the two of them must be sleeping together... intimately by now."
>
> "You mean, the pilgrim woman was Anchin's wife? Oh, how angry this makes me,

[403] The difference between the depictions of Kiyohime in the two plays may also be able to be explained to some degree by the difference between Takemoto-za and Toyotake-za conventions. As Chapter Three (pages 150-152) discussed, the Takemoto-za tradition lies in a more straightforward manifestation of the Confucian social and familial order, with characters on the good side unequivocally and unquestioningly following norms of exemplary behavior, while Toyotake-za plays incorporate more realistic human desires mixed into the good characters.

[404] *Hidakagawa*, 94.

> how resentful it makes me!" Kiyohime glared outside, with tears of anger dripping on her fists.
>
> Seeing that his trick was working, [the priest] came closer and said, "Your fiancé was stolen by that woman. Don't you feel resentful? If you feel that way, chase them and kill them both!"
>
> Thus provoked, she cried and said, "If I act in such an inappropriate manner, he might find me unattractive. It would be so sad if he decided not to make me his wife. Please say no more. My heart hurts the more I hear you speak." She tried to pull herself together.

In the medieval legend and the earlier *jōruri* play, Kiyohime unhesitatingly chases Anchin. In contrast, Hanji reduced Kiyohime's aggressiveness by making her resist the urge to chase the couple and argue back against Gōjaku's provocations to do so. Even after becoming emotional and angry in response to Gōjaku's provocations, Kiyohime manages to control herself and adheres to the rules for proper women. Kiyohime's reasoning here echoes what could be found in contemporary manners textbooks for women:

> Never under any circumstances should a woman be jealous. If her husband engages in licentious behavior, she should admonish him, but she should not be angry or hold a grudge against him. If a woman is too jealous, her behavior and words become scary and extreme. Her husband will treat her more coldly and his love will decline because of it... An aggressive and angry woman will be disliked by her father-in-law and her husband, criticized by her servants, and bring disorder to the family. This strongly goes against the proper way of a woman.[405]

In fact, being jealous is listed as one of the seven legitimate reasons for men to divorce their wives. When comparing this with the more typical image of Kiyohime as an aggressive pursuer, Kiyohime in *Hidakagawa* is less aggressive and selfish; she is more conscious about her own role in the family. Even after Gōjaku presents her with a mirror and she acknowledges her transformation into a snake, Kiyohime still retains some vestiges of exemplary women's

[405] *Wazoku dōji kun*, 223.

behavior. Despite Gōjaku's repeated urgings to "kill the couple," Kiyohime is only determined to kill the woman, who she believes is acting against Confucian norms regarding the sanctity of the family structure by trying to steal her fiancé. Her wish is to restore order to her own family, which is justified by the contemporary societal norms.

Kiyohime's adherence to Confucian norms also extends to respecting class differences. When Anchin's true identity as a prince and his lover's true identity as a minister's daughter are revealed, Kiyohime says, "I became jealous and envious because I believed what my father said was true. If I had known that he was a prince, I wouldn't have pursued him, even if I'd have died of yearning for him."[406] This is again a significant departure from Kiyohime in *Genzai uroko*, who defiantly declares that "there's no difference between high and low in the way of love."[407] Respecting the class order, she accepts that she cannot marry the Prince, and dies without resistance. While her passion towards the Prince and the furious chase of the couple is the sole focus in today's performances, the text carefully draws attention to her moral behavior and represents her as a morally exemplary woman.

Kiyohime as Political Victim: Anxiety Towards Authority and the Social Order

A surprising plot twist at the end of the act suddenly and unexpectedly reveals the third aspect of Kiyohime – a victim of a political conflict. Hanji completely remade the popular religious legend not only into a didactic play, but also into a tale that highlights the political victimization of a commoner.

[406] *Hidakagawa*, 107.

[407] *Genzai uroko*, 73.

Following the conventions for the end of the fourth act of a *jidaimono* historical play, *Hidakagawa* shows how power will be restored to the "good side" by revealing truths theretofore unknown to the audience (and most of the characters). Although Kiyohime catches the couple and kills them, it is revealed that she actually killed decoys. At the end of the fourth act, Kiyohime's father stops her rampage at the temple by stabbing her. Then the evil priest Gōjaku gives an explanation that subverts all of the audience's expectations that had been aroused by the use of the Dōjōji legend. First, Gōjaku reveals that he is the head priest of Dōjōji Temple, and a double-agent who secretly works for the Prince and the Emperor. Although he pretended to be on the "bad side," his true identity was a character of the "good side."[408] Second, Gōjaku explains that Kiyohime did not turn into a snake because of her jealousy, but rather because she was near a missing magical sword. Third, Gōjaku explains that he orchestrated these events from the beginning to bring victory to the "good side." Gōjaku made people (and, more importantly, the enemy) believe that Kiyohime killed the prince and destroyed the bell. Also, by melting the golden bell, they can fund the prince's military needs. Kiyohime's death was essential in order for this plan to work.

This plot twist functions in three ways to reimagine Kiyohime: First, it completely removes blame from Kiyohime for her transformation into a snake, thus portraying her as a perfectly exemplary woman. Second, it remakes Kiyohime from an aggressor with mythical power to a powerless victim of a political plot. And third, it portrays Gōjaku, who turned out to have been orchestrating the victory of the "good side," as an unusually unsympathetic hero – or even an antihero. The juxtaposition of Gōjaku's unconventionally unheroic and callous means of

[408] This is a common *shukō* in *jōruri*, *modori*. See Chapter Three for more discussion.

bringing victory to the "good side" and the portrayal of Kiyohime as an exemplary woman and a pawn sacrificed for a political plot reflects the anxieties of the commoner audience about the social hierarchy.

On the one hand, the fact that Kiyohime's transformation was caused by the magical sword rather than her own jealousy removes blame from Kiyohime and perfects her depiction as an exemplary woman. However, at the same time, it also removes power and agency from Kiyohime. In the original legend, the woman's inherent passion and anger turns her into a snake, which enables her to chase her faithless man and kill him. Gōjaku's explanation outright denies this power, and leaves her as nothing more than a powerless victim who was constantly manipulated. Previously, Gōjaku had told Kiyohime that her transformation into a snake was caused by her jealousy in order to trick her into doing what he wanted her to do. Kiyohime was led to believe that she had the power and agency to chase the couple, when her transformation and assault were orchestrated by Gōjaku for political ends.

In fact, it is not even clear whether Kiyohime actually transformed into a snake at all. In retrospect, Gōjaku's explanation leaves some room for doubt, as do the play's visual materials. His precise words were that "her reflection in the mirror appeared to be a snake" because of the sword's magic. The only places in the text that clearly mention Kiyohime's physical transformation into a snake are Gōjaku's provocations spoken to Kiyohime and Kiyohime's comments on her reflection. Gōjaku thrusts a mirror at Kiyohime, saying "can't you see that you turned into a snake out of your jealousy?" and Kiyohime admits that she is transformed into "the shape of snake."[409] The *ezukushi* also depicts her as a demon only in the mirror (Figure 5). The

[409] *Hidakagawa*, 95.

text also indicates that Kiyohime recognizes her reflection in the water as a snake when she swims across the river. However, a bystander in this scene described Kiyohime as "a girl of sixteen or seventeen with a scary face,"[410] but not a snake. Even the *ezukushi*, illustrates her in the same scene as a young woman, not a snake (Figure 6). Gōjaku not only denies Kiyohime's agency for her transformation, but perhaps also denies the transformation itself as only an illusion. Gōjaku may have verbally "transformed" Kiyohime into a snake in her mind, and used it to manipulate her.

Note how the final scene of the play completely undoes and subverts the traditional image of Kiyohime. In the original legend, Kiyohime is a violent aggressor with mythical power. And that is what the audience was expecting, and thought they saw. Then suddenly Gōjaku reveals that she was really a powerless pawn in a political plot. This play overwrites the expected story of romance and jealousy in the female realm into a story of manipulation in the male realm of politics.

The callousness with which Kiyohime is sacrificed can be read as a subtle indictment of the ruling elite and the state-promoted value system that calls for great sacrifices, but only from those at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Bitter sacrifices by low-ranked people for the sake of the social order is one of the main themes of *jōruri* puppet plays, especially *jidaimono* historical plays. However, *Hidakagawa* violates a number of *jōruri* conventions that typically soften the unfairness of the situation. By standard *jidaimono* historical play convention, a protagonist generally chooses to sacrifice himself or one of his own family members only after a heartrending conflict between familial love and the sense of loyalty to his master. This internal

[410] Ibid., 100.

conflict creates the emotional highlight of the play. Also, by standard *jidaimono* historical play convention, the play generally concludes with the restored emperor or feudal lord leading the other surviving characters on the "good side" in expressing gratitude and sympathy for those who were sacrificed. This conventional acknowledgment served to place the sacrifices in a more positive, celebratory light; to demonstrate that the elites were not ungrateful; and to reassure commoner audiences that sacrifices by low-ranked people did not go unnoticed or unappreciated by society. In contrast, despite being a "good character," Gōjaku's selection of Kiyohime to sacrifice in furtherance of his plot violates all of these conventions for a "good" character. He has no relationship with Kiyohime; he does not struggle with the decision to sacrifice her; and he shows neither regret nor sympathy after her death. In fact, Gōjaku reveals that he has a magical mirror that could revive Kiyohime, but rejects her father's pleas to save her, because her death is necessary for his political plot. Gōjaku's callousness is emphasized by his attitude following Kiyohime's death. Everyone else "lamented her death endlessly," but Gōjaku puts an end to it, saying, "Your grieving will not bring her back to life. Killing the enemy will be the best mourning for her."[411] His cruelty towards powerless commoner characters, especially women, is also emphasized in the *ezukushi* picturebook of the performance (Figure 8). In the *ezukushi* picturebook, Gōjaku is often depicted as a big, strong, and coarse man who physically abuses female characters.

[411] Ibid., 109.



Figure 8: Gōjaku's physical abuse of female characters depicted in *ezukushi* picturebook from Act 2 (left) and Act 4 (right)

By stripping away these genre conventions, *Hidakagawa* subtly emphasizes the unfairness of Kiyohime's death. Gōjaku's rather unheroic means of accomplishing his goals calls into question the legitimacy of the value system he represents. This is reinforced by the contrast between Gōjaku's unheroic portrayal and Kiyohime's depiction as a morally praiseworthy filial daughter. Since *jōruri* audiences were themselves near the bottom of the class system, they would have identified with Kiyohime. And they would have identified Gōjaku with the contemporary government and its social policies. *Hidakagawa* spoke to urban commoner audiences' anxiety about authority and the inequality of the social hierarchy. But it had to speak in a whisper in order to evade censorship.

Omiwa, the Provincial Daughter in the Fourth Act of *Imoseyama Onna Teikin* (1771)

Hanji's creation of Omiwa reflects the same three elements that Hanji evoked in remaking Kiyohime, but with less emphasis on didacticism and a stronger voice for his social criticism. When creating the character of Omiwa, Hanji reused various *shukō* (plot devices) that he used to create Kiyohime, but combined them with *shukō* from multiple other source materials and transplanted them into a new setting. This section examines the layers of Omiwa's source materials, and discusses how Hanji reused and subverted these sources and incorporated a stronger tone of social criticism without upsetting the entertainment and didactic elements.

Imoseyama onna teikin was first performed in the first month of Meiwa 8 (1771) at Takemoto-za theater.[412] The credited authors are Chikamatsu Hanji, Matsuda Baku 松田ばく, Sakae Zenpei 栄善平, Chikamatsu Tōnan 近松東南, and Miyoshi Shōraku 三好松洛,[413] with Hanji as the *tate-sakusha* (main playwright). According to Nishizawa Ippō's *Denki sakusho*, it "became one of the greatest hits ever and was performed at least once or twice annually both in *kabuki* and in *jōruri*; it never bores people."[414] Just as Chikamatsu's *Sonezaki shinjū* saved Takemoto-za theater from going bankrupt in 1703, Hanji's *Imoseyama onna teikin* revived Takemoto-za theater after it lost its permanent theater in 1768.

The play is set in the seventh century during the Asuka period, when Fujiwara no

[412] As discussed earlier, this was after the original Takemoto-za theater collapsed. The manager of this performance was Takeda Shinmatsu.

[413] Miyoshi Shōraku is the most senior playwright, and credited as "kōken," or supervisor.

[414] *Denki sakusho,* 358.

Kamatari defeated Soga no Iruka, who had started a rebellion against the imperial family.[415] Historically, Iruka's assassination by Fujiwara no Kamatari and Naka no Ōe no Ōji[416] in 645 is called the Isshi Incident (乙巳の変), and was significant in bringing about the Taika Reform that established a political system that concentrated power in the emperor. This incident provides the basis for an entire family of performance works that collectively came to be known as *Taishokan-mono*. The first major work was the *nō* play *Ama*, which was subsequently adapted into three plays in three different genres, each entitled *Taishokan*: a *kōwaka* dance, a *kojōruri*, and a *jōruri* play by Chikamatsu (1711). Several later *kabuki* and *jōruri* plays are also based on this event.[417] Hanji's first play, *En no Gyōja Ōmine zakura* (1751) is based on the world of *Taishokan*, and Hanji reused some of its scenes to write *Imoseyama*.[418] *Imoseyama* features Kamatari's son, Fujiwara no Tankai,[419] as the main character; begins when Soga no Iruka shows his true intentions to overturn the imperial government; and concludes with the triumph of the imperial family, following the conventional five-act style of *jidaimono jōruri*. Using the "*sekai*" of *Taishokan* as its vertical line, the play incorporates many myths as *shukō*. The myths of

[415] For more detailed English language introduction of the story, especially a detailed translation of the third act, see Andrew Gerstle, et. al, ed., *Theater As Music: The Bunraku Play "Mt. Imo and Mt. Se: An Exemplary Tale of Womanly Virtue*," 13-18 and 123-230.

[416] Naka no Ōe no Ōji later became Emperor Tenji. He was the son of Emperor Jomei and Empress Kōgyoku (who later became Empress Saimei).

[417] According to Moriyama, there were eleven *jōruri* plays and at least four *kabuki* plays based on the *Taishokan* story before *Imoseyama* was written. Moriyama Shigeo, "Daiō shinwa no kinsei teki saien to 'ikenie' shisō *Imoseyama onna teikin*," in *Jōruri no shōuchū*, Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1983, 315.

[418] Most notably, the basis of the "Mountain Scene" of Act 3 of *Imoseyama* can be found in Act 3 of *En no Gyōja*.

[419] Tankai is better known as Fujiwara no Fuhito, the founder of the Fujiwara clan, who obtained the apex of political power in the tenth century.

Jūsangane (*Thirteen Bells*[420]) and *Kinukake yanagi* (*Robe Hanging Willow*[421]) are incorporated as major *shukō*, and also serve as as sub-*sekai* for their respective acts, as demonstrated by their presence in the play's *tsunogaki* 角書 (the supertitle that expresses the content of the play). Additionally, the myth of Odamaki is central to the fourth act, as will be discussed later.

The fourth act's *michiyuki* (journey) scene in which the three main characters chase each other in a choreographed action scene is one of the most frequently performed scenes from the play in *kabuki* and *jōruri* performances today. Just like Kiyohime's crossing-the-river scene from *Hidakagawa*, the visual appeal of its choreographed beauty, especially the juxtaposition between a princess and a provincial girl fighting over a man, made the scene popular. Additionally, with its rich intertextuality as well as the conclusion of the hero's main quest (in which the female characters play important roles), Act Four as a whole has the most significant impact in the plot. Because the fifth act was almost non-existent by this point, and was almost never performed (except for the play's first performance), the fourth act provides the crucial conclusion of the entire play.

The fourth act is based on the myth of Mt. Miwa, also known as the myth of Odamaki.[422] Tankai disguises himself as a maker of hats (*eboshi*) named Motome, and takes up residence in

[420] The story of *Jūsangane* is about a boy who killed a deer of the Kasuga Shrine, which was punishable by death since the deer of Kasuga Shrine were considered to be gods or messengers of gods. Thirteen bells were rang at the time of the boy's execution. The motif was popular in early modern popular theater, including *Nanto jūsan gane*, which is discussed in Chapter Three. In *Imoseyama onna teikin*, the motif was used in the second act when Shibaroku's son, Sansaku, tried to sacrifice himself by falsely confessing that he killed a sacred deer in order to save his father who had actually killed the deer to procure its blood, which was necessary to defeat Iruka's evil magic.

[421] The story of *Kinukake yanagi* is about a maid (*uneme*) serving the emperor, who became his mistress. When the emperor stopped visiting her, she lamented and drowned herself in Sarusawa Pond after hanging her robe on the willow tree by the pond.

[422] For a fuller account of the legend, see page 239.

the town of Miwa. He has a relationship with the daughter of a sake shop owner named Omiwa. At the same time, a beautiful young woman visits him nightly. This woman is Iruka's younger sister, Tachibanahime. Motome and Tachibanahime's true identities are unknown to the other characters in the play until later in the act. Omiwa and Tachibanahime compete over Motome, and Tachibanahime eventually runs away to return to the court. Motome (Tankai) chases after Tachibanahime, only to discover that she is his enemy's sister. Tankai asks Tachibanahime to prove her love by retrieving the imperial treasure sword from Iruka, and she agrees. Omiwa follows Tankai, but loses his trail when she reaches the court. She is cornered by Tachibanahime's maids, who bully her and taunt her that Motome is going to marry Tachibanahime. Consumed by jealousy, Omiwa resumes searching for Motome, when Kamatari's retainer Fukashichi arrives and stabs her. The blood of a jealous woman, mixed with that of a sacred deer, was needed to craft a magical horn that can remove Iruka's evil mystical powers. As Omiwa dies, Fukashichi reveals Motome's true identity and his quest, and congratulates Omiwa that her blood will be used to save her "husband." Iruka is defeated by the horn, and Tachibanahime retrieves the treasure sword.

While it is widely recognized that Act Four of *Imoseyama* is based on the Odamaki legend and the *nō* play *Miwa*,[423] Kawai Masumi suggests a more immediate source, Namiki Shōza's first *kabuki* play, *Yamato no kuni Ide no shitahimo* 大和国井出下紐 (*The Thread of Ide in Yamato Province*, 1749, written under his former pen name Izumiya Shōza).[424] By comparing

[423] *Imoseyama onna teikin* "kaisetsu" in Torigoe Bunzō et. al., eds., *Jōruri shū*, Shinpen nihon koten bungaku zenshū 77 (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2002), 674.

[424] Kawai Masumi, "Omiwa no seiritsu: Kabuki to *jōruri* no kōryū," *Bungaku* 56-8 (1988), 8.

similar expressions and passages, Kawai shows that Act Four of *Imoseyama* is a *hamemono* retelling of the Fourth Act of *Yamato no kuni*. In *Yamato no kuni*, the heroine, Oito, falls in love with her father's servant, Natsuhei, who is actually the young lord Izuminosuke in disguise. Izuminosuke declines her love, saying he has a fiancée. Overtaken by jealousy, Oito follows Izuminosuke by means of a thread sewed to the hem of his kimono. Her face transformes into that of a demon woman (鬼女), but she is killed by her older brother before she reaches Izuminosuke. Although *Yamato no kuni* is not as explicitly based on the Odamaki legend, a woman following her lover via a thread attached to his kimono is a strong reference to the legend. An *ezukushi* picturebook of *Yamato no kuni* depicts Oito with an odamaki spindle, with the text above noting, "Ito, full of jealousy, holds an odamaki spindle and seeks the whereabouts of Izuminosuke." (Figure 9) The text also makes the connection to the Odamaki legend clear when Oito says, "It was in this village, Miwa in Yamato Province, that a thread from an odamaki spindle was attached to a man who visited only at night... this thread will lead me to my love, thank goodness!"[425] Shōza used the same *shukō* again, with the same role names, in *Keisei Hanashiroyama* (*The Courtesan of Mt. Hanashiro*) in Meiwa 1 (1764).[426] Judging from its frequent appearances, this *shukō* of using an odamaki spindle in a love triangle scene was probably a popular *shukō* by the time *Imoseyama* was written.

[425] *Yamato no kuni Ide no shitahimo* in Kabuki daichō kenkyūkai, ed., *Kabuki daichō shusei* 7 (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1983), 149.

[426] Kawai, 103.



Figure 9: Oito with a spindle from an *ezukushi* of *Yamato no kuni Ide no shitahimo*, 1749

Another *shukō* that Act Four of *Imoseyama* inherits from *Yamato no kuni* is the love triangle between a nobleman, a noblewoman, and a provincial daughter. This *shukō* can be traced further back to a *jōruri* play, *Yoshitsune senbon zakura*, which was introduced in Chapter Three.[427] In Act Three of *Yoshitsune senbon zakura,* Osato, the daughter of a sushi shop owner, falls in love with her father's servant, Yasuke, who is actually Taira no Koremori in disguise. Koremori is married and has a son, and when his wife and his son appear at the end of the act, Osato is heartbroken. Osato can do nothing but to give up her love. In addition to the basic love triangle, another aspect picked up by *Yamato no kuni* is the relationship between the lord in disguise and the girl's family. In *Yoshitsune senbon zakura*, Osato's father actually served Koremori and knowingly protected him, and her brother Gonta tried to save Koremori by

[427] See page 163.

pretending to be a scoundrel.[428] The parallel between this *shukō* and the one in *Yamato no kuni* is apparent: Oito, a hunter's daughter, unwittingly falls in love with a young lord, Izuminosuke, disguised as her father's servant. Izuminosuke already has a fiancée, and so eventually leaves Oito. Oito's father was a former samurai and serves Izuminosuke, while her brother tries to help Izuminosuke by acting like a scoundrel.[429] In *Imoseyama*, only the core interclass triangular relationship is taken from this *shukō*, so its relationship to *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* becomes more attenuated. In fact, *Imoseyama* reverses the relationship between the girl's family and the lord in disguise in that Omiwa's mother tries to turn in Tankai upon learning his identity. Therefore, unlike the provincial daughter members of the love triangles in the source works, Omiwa is otherwise unconnected to Tankai, and owes no obligation to him. While the connection between *Imoseyama* and *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* may not be immediately compelling, Shōza's *kabuki* play forms an intermediate step that makes it clear that the triangular relationship *shukō* in *Imoseyama* is ultimately a readaptation of this triangular relationship from the third act of *Yoshitsune senbon zakura.*

Hanji also often adapted from his own plays, reusing *shukō* from his earlier works. For example, as *Denki sakusho* points out, the *shukō* of the "mountain scene" in the third act of *Imoseyama* is directly adapted from Act Three of the Hanji's first play, *En no Gyōja Ōmine zakura*. The *shukō* of depicting Omiwa as a jealous woman whose face shows physical signs of jealousy, as well as the love triangle among the noble couple and a provincial daughter, strongly

[428] Please see Chapter Three (page 163) for more details.

[429] Oito's brother pretends that he is in love with Oito to try to entice her to give up on Izuminosuke, but his father disapproves and calls him a beast for trying to seduce his sister. In the end, he kills his sister in order to make her a substitute for Izuminosuke's fiancée.

evokes Hanji's earlier work, *Hidakagawa iriai zakura*. By pointing out similarly phrased lines, similarities of plot, and the naming of a character "Odamaki" in *Hidakagawa*, Kawai argues that Kiyohime was Hanji's prototype for Omiwa. Kawai also points out that *Hidakagawa* is a *hamemono* of *Yamato no kuni*, if less so than *Imoseyama.* Similarly, as Ogasawara Kyōko argues, the *shukō* of sacrificing Omiwa's blood to save her lover is directly adapted from the fourth act of Hanji's earlier work, *Ōshū Adachi ga hara* 奥州安達原 (*Adachi Field in Ōshū*, 1762).[430]

Despite its heavy reliance on earlier *kabuki* plays – and, by extension, the earlier *jōruri* plays those *kabuki* plays were based on – and Hanji's own previous plays, the fourth act of *Imoseyama* also stands out in many ways as Hanji's original creation, reflecting his attitudes towards contemporary society and human nature. *Imoseyama* is a good example of how Chikamatsu Hanji engaged in the technique of *hamemono* adaptation of using older materials to create innovative new play with new characters. The rest of the chapter will explore the innovative ways in which Hanji subverted, added to, twisted, and reinvented his original sources.

Omiwa as a Refinement of Kiyohime: Mythical Heroine Turned Political Victim

Hanji emphasized mythical and supernatural elements throughout the play, partly as an excuse to stage visual spectacles for entertainment purposes to rival those in Shōza's popular *kabuki* plays that featured supernatural aspects. However, Hanji's use of the mythical and supernatural also served to advance the social criticism that he worked into the character of Kiyohime. As he did with Kiyohime, Hanji played into audiences' expectations that these myths foreshadowed Omiwa's divinely-appointed destiny, but then subverted those expectations by

[430] Ogasawara Kyōko, "Chikamatsu Hanji no butai sei," *Kikan zasshi kabuki vol. 18* (Oct 1972): 80.

depicting the political machinations of the heroes as the force that truly controls (and ends) her life. Counterintuitively, by strongly foregrounding the myths and supernatural elements, Hanji subversively emphasized the power of human agency.

In the beginning of Act Four, Omiwa is introduced as the young and innocent heroine of a romantic myth, her love with Motome seems true, a Tachibanahime appears to be an unwelcome interloper. Act Four draws heavily on the *shukō* of the Odamaki legend. While there are many versions of the legend, the basic story includes these four elements: (1) A beautiful mysterious man visits a beautiful woman nightly, and she becomes pregnant; (2) In order to learn the man's identity, the woman secretly attaches a threaded needle to his sleeve; (3) When the woman sees that there are only three rounds (*miwa*) of thread left, she follows the thread; and (4) The thread leads the woman to Mt. Miwa, where she discovers that the man is actually the deity of Mt. Miwa. There are also some versions in which the deity is a snake,[431] and in the *nō* play "Miwa," the genders are reversed. In the beginning of Act Four, Hanji presents Omiwa and Motome as if they are the couple in the Odamaki legend, only to subvert this expectation.

Hanji gives the audience plenty of reasons to believe Omiwa is the central heroine from the legend. Her name "Miwa," the fact that her family business is a sake shop, and the name of the sake shop, Sugi-ya, are all deeply connected to the Miwa god. The deity of Miwa Shrine, Ōmononushi no mikoto, is a god of sake; and cedar (*sugi*) is the divine tree of the Miwa Shrine, which appears in the shrine's crest.[432] In contrast to Omiwa's obviously significant name, Tachibanahime is left nameless until she returns to the court. In addition, the relative ranks of

[431] Misumi Haruo, "*Imoseyama* no setsuwa sekai – jūkon to ikenie no shisō," *Kikan zasshi kabuki vol. 18* (Oct 1972): 54-62.

[432] Moriyama, 336.

Omiwa and Tankai (as known to the audience) seem to track the relationship between the woman and the god in the myth more faithfully than the relationship between Tankai and Tachibanahime: On stage, though nameless, Tachibanahime appears as a high-ranked princess, while, in disguise, Tankai (as Motome) wears plain clothes, and Omiwa appears as a provincial girl.

Hanji reinforces this presentation of Omiwa and Tankai as the mythical couple by incorporating a second myth, Tanabata. In the Tanabata legend, two stars, representing a weaver girl and a cowherd boy meet once per year on the seventh day of the seventh month, crossing a bridge of magpies over the Milky Way. To celebrate this happy day, the stars will make people's wishes come true. The fourth act begins with a scene of cleaning the well, which was customarily done on the day of Tanabata. Earlier on the day, Omiwa was invited to her former *terakoya* school for a Tanabata celebration.[433] Afterward, she tells Motome how to make vows to each other following the Tanabata custom:

> I heard this from my master when I went to *terakoya* school. In order to pray to the stars that the man's heart will stay true, people attach needles to two odamaki spindles, one of white thread and one of red, then tie them together, and pray... the white thread is the man, the red thread is the woman... this is a sign that our hearts will never stray. I'll give the red thread to you, and keep this white thread – a long thread of prayer that our relationship will be long. This promise to become husband and wife, made to the stars by exchanging the spindles, instead of magpies, as our bond, and keeping them close to our hearts, proves the depth of our love.[434]

By hinting at a parallel between Omiwa and Motome and a second pair of legendary lovers, this scene appears to cement Omiwa's position as the heroine of a romantic story.

While Hanji's addition of the Tanabata myth smoothly merges with the Odamaki

[433] *Imoseyama*, 411.

[434] Ibid., 419-420.

legend,[435] it also subtly lays the groundwork for the breakdown of the parallel to Odamaki. By introducing a second spindle via the Tanabata legend (as compared to the single spindle in the Odamaki legend), Hanji raises the question of which spindle leads to the *real* legendary love. Motome (a/k/a Tankai) attaches his red thread to Tachibanahime in order to follow her, while Omiwa attaches her white thread to Motome, which sets up the double chase by the two incongruous pairs of lovers in the *michiyuki* journey scene. Kanda Yuzuki argues that the colors of the threads signify the legitimacy of the couples: Since, in the Odamaki legend as recounted in *Kojiki*, red soil is used along with the thread to reveal the god's identity, and the god originally turned himself into a red arrow to meet the woman, the color red is significant. Thus, the red thread implies legitimacy, making Omiwa with her white thread an illegitimate participant of the myth.[436] The significance of red thread is reinforced by its presence in *Yamato no kuni* (which, as explained above, was a major source for the fourth act of *Imoseyama*) when Oito recites a legend in which red thread serves as a key item that ties a legendary couple together.[437] Ironically, the spindles that Omiwa intended to reinforce her and Motome's relationship in the context of the Tanabata legend were used in the context of the Odamaki legend to displace Omiwa and reinforce the relationship between Motome (a/k/a Tankai) and Tachibanahime.

In addition to initially presenting the audience with numerous reasons to believe Omiwa

[435] Kanda Yuzuki, "Kinsei *jōruri* ni okeru shinwa to monogatari – *Imoseyama onna teikin* ni miru," *"Taiwa to shinka" no jisedai josei rida no ikusei: "miryoku aru daigakuin kyoiku" inishiatibu* 2007, 290-299.

[436] Kanda, 2007, 294.

[437] This legend is a key story in this play, since it is a legend about a couple in Ide in Yamato Province, and provides an explanation for the meaning of the title, *Yamato no kuni Ide no shitahimo*. Oito explains that a traveling aristocrat gave a young girl a red thread to hold up her pants with a joke that he will make her his wife in the future and left. The girl took him seriously, and when the aristocrat visited the place again after the girl grew up, she showed him the red thread that she still kept. He was moved, the two married, and lived happily ever after. (*Yamato no kuni*, 127).

is the heroine of a romantic legend, Hanji portrays Omiwa as mentally inhabiting this mythological world in her insistence that she is Motome's legitimate, destined love. When she learns of Tachibanahime, despite Tachibanahime's obviously higher status, Omiwa harshly criticizes her for trying to "steal her man": "How dare you fall in love with a man who has a steady. There's not a single book that condones such a thing. Take a close look at the books of women's education and manners. You should behave yourself, miss."[438] Here, the audience is again led to believe in Omiwa's centrality because she is given a line that is apparently significant in that it references a phrase in the play's title ("an exemplary tale of womanly virtue," or "*onna teikin*").

Rather than correcting Omiwa's misconceptions by revealing his real identity, Motome reinforces her false beliefs by lying to her so that she continues to live in the illusory world of myths where their relationship is legitimate. After lying to Omiwa that the woman who pays him regular nightly visits is a shrine maiden who ordered hats from him, Motome reassures Omiwa: "'My heart will never be distracted from you even if a beautiful woman – or even a heavenly maiden – visits me. I swear to the three gods of poetry that I am not lying.' When Motome said this as an expedient lie, being the naive girl that she is, Omiwa readily believed him."[439]

In accord with Hanji's depiction of human agency as the real driving force of the action, Tankai's behavior here departs from the love triangle precedents in *Yoshitsune senbon zakura*, *Yamato no kuni*, and *Hidakagawa* in that it is part of an active scheme on his part rather than a passive disguise. Tankai engages in a similar level of scheming and manipulation as Gōjaku in

[438] *Imoseyama*, 425-426.

[439] *Imoseyama*, 419.

Hidakagawa, even though, unlike Gōjaku, he is a romantic hero and not an undercover agent pretending to serve the *katakiyaku* ("the bad side"). In the love triangle precedents in *Yoshitsune senbon zakura*, *Yamato no kuni*, and *Hidakagawa*, the noblemen in disguise are doing nothing more than hiding out, and their relationships with the provincial daughters are merely parts of their disguises. Moreover, they do not try particularly hard to conceal their true identities from their provincial lovers (who figure things out relatively early on in those plays), and do not deny the truth once it comes out. For example, in *Yamato no kuni*, while Izuminosuke was disguised as the servant Natsuhei, he begs Oito not to desert him; However, the moment Oito reveals that she knows that he is actually Lord Izuminosuke, he admits that he "ha[s] a fiancée, who is a princess … a daughter of an aristocratic family"[440] so he cannot marry her. In contrast, Tankai is actively plotting to cultivate Omiwa into a jealous woman so that he can use her blood to defeat Iruka, in the same way Gōjaku cultivated Kiyohime's jealousy. Unlike the love triangle precedents, Motome does not come clean, Omiwa does not learn Motome's identity until the end of the act, and the discovery of Motome's other woman is not the end of the relationship. Hanji portrays Tankai in disguise as Motome as a weak-willed person who shrinks from conflict by telling people what they want to hear[441] and waffling when pressed to choose between the two women who fight over him.[442] Viewed in light of his later-revealed plot to cultivate a jealous woman, Motome's seemingly weak personality makes perfect sense. By not taking a clear stand as to which woman he loves, Motome is preparing Omiwa to become the jealous woman that he

[440] *Yamato no kuni*, 140.

[441] *Imoseyama*, 419.

[442] Ibid., 421.

needs.

Both Gōjaku and Tankai can be regarded as variants on Hanji's rebel heroes. Even though they are pro-state heroes, the cold calculation and callousness with which these characters put their plans into action are comparable to rebel heroes, such as Prince Ōtomo from *En no Gyōja Ōmine sakura*. As compared to Gōjaku, Tankai is an even bolder departure from *jōruri*'s conventions for *jidaimono* heroes. In *Hidakagawa*, the Prince Sakuragi is a step removed from the cruel political plot, while Gōjaku schemes and puts things into action. The Prince remains a compassionate elite ruler, a conventional hero who shows respect to the victims sacrificed for his benefit. This also enables a separation of physical appearances between the callous character and a compassionate character. Although it is not clear which puppet heads were used for Gōjaku and the Prince since they do not appear in the scenes performed today, the *ezukushi* picturebook shows Gōjaku as a fierce warrior type of character, probably an Ō-Danshichi, while Prince Sakuragi is a typical aristocratic handsome man, probably a Genda.[443] In contrast, *Imoseyama* merges the roles of Gōjaku and Prince Sakuragi. The young handsome Genda puppet head is used for Tankai, fit for a romantic hero, but who later turns out to share a similar level of cruelty and callousness as Gōjaku. Hanji's depiction of Tankai is one step further towards introducing moral ambiguity into the black-and-white world of *jidaimono*.

Another twist Hanji adds to *Yoshitsune senbon zakura*, *Yamato no kuni*, and *Hidakagawa* is the lack of relationship between Omiwa's family and Tankai. Unlike the fathers and brothers of Osato, Oito, and Kiyohime in the earlier plays, who serve the disguised noblemen and try to protect them, Omiwa's mother hopes to catch Tankai, saying "if I find [Tankai] I'll get a lot of

[443] See pages 60-64 for an account of male puppet head types.

money."[444] While Osato, Oito, and Kiyohime are bound to the noblemen through their familial relationships, Omiwa is completely unconnected to Tankai. Omiwa's distance from Tankai's world is thus reinforced by her mother's antagonistic pursuit of Tankai. Finally, while Kiyohime and Oito are killed by family members who care for them, the person who kills Omiwa is Fukashichi, who serves Tankai and is a complete stranger to her. In fact, even though Omiwa was a "doted on" daughter earlier in the play, she dies alone, outside of her realm (the provincial village), and her death is not properly lamented. In the fifth act when all the other sacrifices are acknowledged and rewarded, Omiwa's sacrifice is left unmentioned: "The emperor said that Iruka's sister, Tachibanahime, should change her name to Toyoshirohime for adhering to the loyal way, and marry Tankai... and others, such as Kanawa Gorō, were rewarded generously."[445] Omiwa's completely arbitrary selection to be sacrificed in Tankai's plot reflects a higher level of callousness than her predecessors experienced.

When the action moves from the village of Miwa to the court, the parallel to the myths explicitly breaks down and it becomes clear that Omiwa is not the romantic heroine as she and the audience have believed. Rather than leading her to her destined love, the white thread of Omiwa's odamaki spindle breaks: "Damn! Because this stupid odamaki thread was cut off, I completely lost where he is."[446] By this time, Tankai and Tachibanahime had already reunited at the court, with Tankai promising to marry Tachibanahime if she retrieves the treasure sword from her brother, Iruka. Further misfortune follows for Omiwa. The first people she encounters are

[444] Ibid., 415.

[445] Ibid., 454.

[446] Ibid., 440-441.

Tachibanahime's maids, who, recognizing Omiwa as their mistress's lesser rival, "exchange a glance and tug each other's sleeves [as a signal] to bully"[447] Omiwa "to satisfy their mistress's jealousy."[448] Unlike in the village of Miwa, where Omiwa was the mythical romantic heroine apparent and criticized Tachibanahime from a stance as her equal (or even her superior), at court the myth has been broken and Omiwa is powerless to do anything but "shed the tears of blood"[449] and endure the maids' bullying.[450]

Soon after the maids leave her, Omiwa's sense of jealousy increases and manifests in her appearance:

> "Oh, how cruel, how cruel! My man was stolen, and I was put to shame like this on top of it. How can I bear this? The more I think about it... what a cruel man he is! I hate him for choosing that woman! How vexing!" Omiwa bites her long sleeves to pieces. Trembling and biting down on her disheveled hair that mirrors her disheveled heart, she exclaims, "Oh, how jealous and enraged this makes me! How can I let you sleep together?!" as she departs to find them, with violence in her heart and on her face.[451]

At this point, Omiwa clearly shows "the manifestation of jealous attachment 疑着の相" that is needed to defeat Iruka. As a theatrical device, the *shukō* of a jealous woman's disheveled hair, especially hair standing on end, is a sign of jealous woman who is on the verge of transforming

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[447] Ibid., 443.

[448] Ibid., 445.

[449] Ibid., 444.

[450] Kawai claims that this bullying scene is a *hamemono* retelling of Shōza's *Sanjikkoku yofune no hajimari* in which Kenpō, a samurai, is bullied by aristocrats at court and eventually fights back. The scene in *Sanjikkoku* is a *hamemono* of *Chūshingura* in which Enya Hangan is bullied by Kō no Moronao, loses his temper, and attacks Moronao. See Kawai, 98-102.

[451] *Imoseyama*, 445-446.

into a supernatural creature. In *Hidakagawa*, Kiyohime's "hair stood on end"[452] when she turned into a snake as she crossed the river to chase Prince Sakuragi and his lover (Figure 6). In *Yamato no kuni*, Oito bites a rock in half and looks into a mirror to find that her face "has transformed into that of a demon woman."[453] The *ezukushi* picture book shows her hair standing on end in this scene (Figure 10)[454]. Omiwa is also shown in some *ezukushi* picture books with her hair standing on end when she is stabbed (Figure 11). Hanji used this *shukō* of a jealous woman with disheveled hair as a way of indicating Omiwa's imminent transformation without actually making her into a monster. Omiwa is killed by Kamatari's retainer just before she attains supernatural power. Omiwa's death before she can transform into a snake or a demon seems to be Hanji's conscious choice to restrict the foundations of the play to the real world, even when it is associated with mythical supernatural phenomenon.

[452] *Hidakagawa*, 98.

[453] *Yamato no kuni*, 153.

[454] This depiction is strikingly similar to Kiyohime in Figure 5 as well.



Figure 10: Jealous Oito with her hair standing on end from an *ezukushi* of *Yamato no kuni Ide no shitahimo*

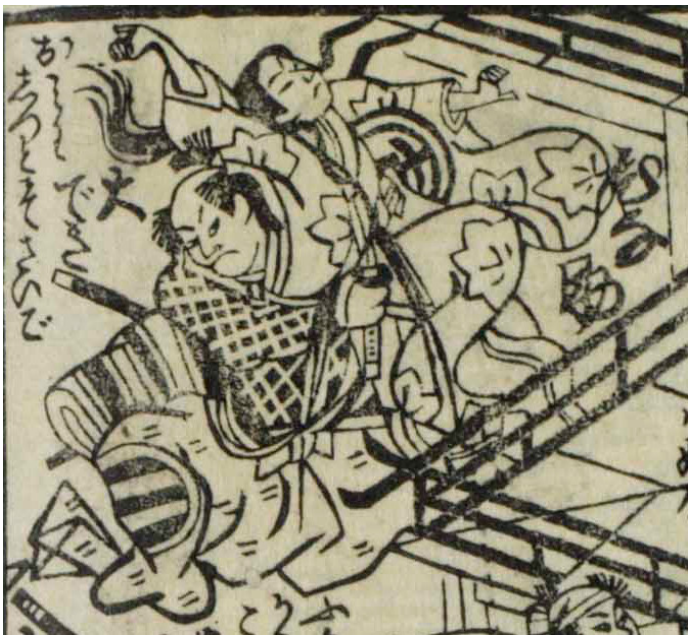


Figure 11: Omiwa's hair standing on end from jealousy as she is stabbed from an *ezukushi* of *Imoseyama onna teikin* 1771, 8 Kyoto Hokuto-za.

When Fukashichi[455] fatally stabs Omiwa, he reveals to her Tankai's identity, his plan to defeat Iruka and restore the emperor, and the reason why she was killed, and he says that everything was "planned by Lord Kamatari."[456] Tankai's weak-willed behavior in front of the two competing women was calculated to make Omiwa into the jealous woman that they needed for this plan. In contrast to the corresponding scene in *Yamato no kuni*, where Oito's brother kills her and says that her death is "fate, the way things are,"[457] Hanji depicts Omiwa's death as something planned by Kamatari and Tankai. Upon examination, Kamatari and Tankai's machinations are the driving force behind all of the significant moments in *Imoseyama*. The killing of the deer that brought Shibaroku and his family grave trouble and caused his son's death in Act Two was explained as Tankai's order.[458] Likewise, Koganosuke's father remarks that Koganosuke protected Uneme "at Lord Kamatari's order,"[459] which aroused Iruka's suspicion and led to Koganosuke and Hinadori's deaths in the third act. While Kamatari himself appears rarely throughout the play, his hand is always present, manifest in the actions of Tankai and his retainers. People's lives and deaths are not controlled by fate or myths and supernatural forces, but rather by Kamatari's political schemes.

Omiwa dies without fully accepting the reality that she was a pawn in Kamatari's plot. She clings to the Odamaki myth and Tankai's "Motome" identity: "'I'm happy to die if I can be

[455] Fukashichi is in disguise. He is actually a retainer of the Fujiwara family named Kanawa Gorō Imakuni in disguise. It is probably no coincidence that *Kanawa* is also the title of a *nō* play about a jealous woman.

[456] *Imoseyama*, 447.

[457] *Yamato no kuni*, 154.

[458] *Imoseyama*, 361.

[459] Ibid., 400.

of help to him... Even if we don't have a strong connection in this world, please be with me in the next.' Omiwa takes the odamaki spindle, and says, 'I guess I can't see the owner of this spindle, can I? Please come here, dear Motome...'"[460] Although it is clear to the audience that the parallel to the Odamaki legend was cut off along with the thread, Omiwa clings onto the myth until the end, refusing to call "Motome" by the name Tankai. This differs from Kiyohime in *Hidakagawa* who called Anchin "the Prince (*shinnō sama*)" and accepted her role as a political pawn. Omiwa's death seems to signify the tragedy of the ignorance of the commoner who does not perceive the sprawling schemes of the political world, even as she is sacrificed to advance those schemes.

After Omiwa's death, Hanji adapts a *shukō* from Dōjōji-mono plays in a very interesting way. When Tachibanahime tries to retrieve the missing treasure sword for Tankai, the sword magically turns into a snake in the water. One of the most iconic scenes from the Dōjōji legend is when Kiyohime transforms into a snake while swimming across a river in pursuit of Prince Sakuragi and his lover, which is depicted in both in *Dōjōji genzai uroko* and *Hidakagawa*. As discussed earlier, this *shukō* is often depicted in *ezukushi* picturebooks as a highlight of the plays. (Figure 6) Interestingly, the depictions in *ezukushi* picturebooks of the scene when Tachibanahime struggles with the treasure sword that turns into a big snake are strikingly similar to the depictions of Kiyohime's transformation into a big snake (Compare Figure 6 with Figure 12).

[460] Ibid., 448.

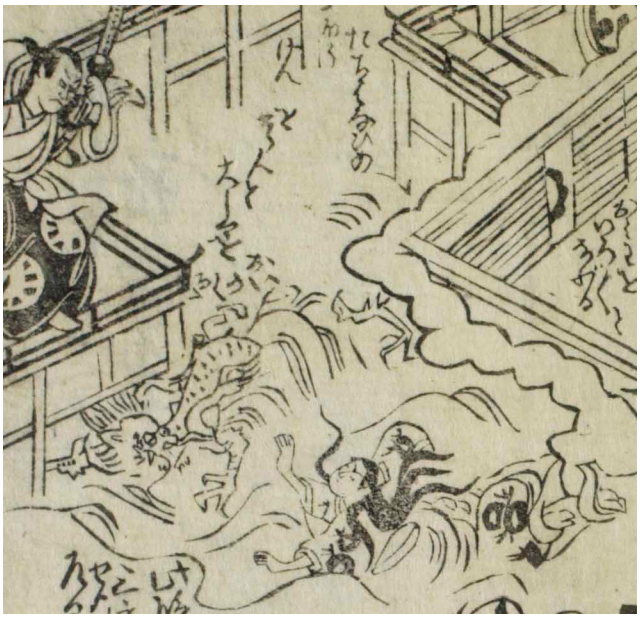


Figure 12 Tachibana-hime's struggle with the sword that turned into a snake from an *ezukushi* of *Imoseyama onna teikin* 1771, 8 Osaka Naka-za

In *Hidakagawa*, a treasure sword also plays an important role in the scene where Kiyohime transforms into a snake,[461] so the scene in which Tachibanahime struggles to seize the treasure sword appears to adapt all of the major elements from Kiyohime's transformation-into-a-snake scene in *Hidakagawa* except for the central theme of female jealousy. At the same time, Hanji provides a hint in the text that leaves the door open to an interpretation that incorporates female jealousy:

> At the sound of the horn, Iruka stumbled as if he was drunk, and fell down as his courage failed. Mysteriously, his sword flew from his hand, and immediately turned into a serpent... Tachibanahime forgot her injuries, stared at it, and thought to herself, "Yes, it looks like a dragon or a snake, but that is an illusion caused by my doubts. I know it is the treasure sword." She jumped into the water… the golden dragon darted its head to and fro, with its red tongue flickering, and its scales rattling. She swam after it, dove after it... and kept chasing it.[462]

[461] To comfort the dying Kiyohime, her father explains to her that her transformation into a snake was partly due to the magical power of the treasure sword. *Hidakagawa*, 108.

[462] *Imoseyama*, 450-451.

The horn here is the magical horn that was infused with blood of Omiwa and a sacred deer. The sound of the horn not only deprived Iruka of power, but somehow turned the treasure sword into a dragon, as if to give Tachibanahime one last obstacle before retrieving the sword. Considering the text in concert with the picture that resembles to Kiyohime's transformation into a snake, this scene seems to invite the interpretation that Omiwa's blood, and by extension, her attachment to Motome, turned the sword into a serpent, which is the symbol of female jealousy in the popular *shukō* from Dōjōji. Hanji seems to play with the audiences' assumptions that a serpent and a woman in water imply female jealousy. In the context of the entire fourth act, in which Omiwa and Tachibanahime were constantly competing with each other over Tankai, one could easily interpret the dragon as Omiwa's spirit turned into a serpent out of jealousy, just like Kiyohime. However, by not providing any conclusive explanation for the sword's transformation into a serpent, Hanji avoids making a positive assertion of Omiwa's mythical power. The text suggests that the serpent may indeed only be an illusion caused by Tachibanahime's "doubts," and not real.

Interestingly, this use of the Dōjōji *shukō* in an unusual context appears to have invited some rewriting of the final scene of Act Four to bring it closer to the original meaning of the *shukō*. Some *ezukushi* books including this scene explicitly write that "Omiwa's attachment was turned into a snake (Figures 13 and 14)," even though the original *jōruri* text does not clearly indicate that. This poses an interesting case in which Hanji's adaptation that raises complications and unanswered questions about the mystical element of female jealousy is smoothed back into the traditional meaning of the source. Perhaps this *shukō* from Dōjōji was so powerful, and Hanji's twist was too subtle, that some performances tried to simplify the matter to make the

scene more comprehensible to audiences who were accustomed to the traditional presentation of jealous snake women.



Figure 13 Tachibanahime's struggle with the sword turned dragon with text that says "Omiwa's attachment was turned into a snake," (the text is inside the small sliding window above the dragon/sword) from an *ezukushi* of *Imoseyama onna teikin* 1771, 1 Osaka



Figure 14 Tachibanahime's struggle with the sword turned dragon with text that says "Omiwa's attachment was turned into a snake," (the text is inside the small sliding window above the dragon/sword) from an *ezukushi* of *Imoseyama onna teikin* 1781, 9 Osaka Kado-za

Conclusion

At the time when *jōruri*'s genre conventions had grown ossified, Hanji continued to produce innovative plays by reusing the preexisting materials from myths, legends, kabuki plays, *karakuri* tricks, and earlier *jōruri* plays, and putting them together in unexpected ways. Hanji's remaking of provincial daughters from mythical heroines into *jidaimono jōruri* heroines has three primary dimensions: an entertainment aspect relying on visual spectacles to compete with *kabuki* for audiences; a didactic element in accord with the *jōruri*'s self-censoring conventions; and an implicit political criticism aspect that expresses a subtle indictment of the contemporary power structure, and speaks to the commoner audiences.

Although Hanji's works are sometimes deemed overly complicated and rarely performed from start to finish, and the entertainment aspect is emphasized almost exclusively in today's

performances, there are more layers to his plays. Hanji emphasized mythical and supernatural elements as a way to incorporate visual spectacles, but also as a way to emphasize that his characters' lives were controlled by the political machinations of the high-ranking heroes and villains rather than divinely-appointed destinies. Moreover, even the heroes were less than heroic in their willingness to sacrifice commoners without a second thought.

Kiyohime and Omiwa are both depicted as passionate and powerful in the realm of love, and even appear to transcend class distinctions. They have the potential to transform into beings of mythical power, like the jealous women in myths and legends. However, they are displaced into the male realm of politics, where they become sacrificial pawns.

CONCLUSION

A 2012 play by Mitani Kōki 三谷幸喜[463] (1961-) entitled *Sorenari shinjū* 其礼成心中 (*Half-Assed Love Suicide*[464]) employed the traditional performance modes of *jōruri* – puppetry, *shamisen*, and chanting.[465] *Sorenari shinjū* is a comedy and a parody. Its protagonists, a couple who own a bun shop near Sonezaki Forest, patrol the forest for couples inspired to commit love suicide by Chikamatsu Monzaemon's *Sonezaki shinjū* (1703), dissuad them from doing so, and sell them overpriced buns with a clever name (*Sonezaki manjū*). Their business falters after Chikamatsu writes another successful love suicide play, *Shinjū Ten no Amijima* (*Double Suicide at Amijima*, 1720) that moves the mecca of love suicide to Amijima. They entreat Chikamatsu to write another play set in Sonezaki, to which he replies that he would do so only if there was another glorious love suicide there. Hoping to leave a thriving business for their daughter, the couple attempts love suicide, but repeatedly proves inept at doing so. During one attempt, they encounter by chance a couple whom they had previously dissuaded from love suicide, who gives them a large sum of money to show their gratitude. And so the play ends happily.

[463] Mitani Kōki is a modern playwright, screenwriter, and director, who is particularly renowned for his comedies.

[464] Also translated as *Much Ado about Love Suicides* in some versions of the official poster.

[465] The play has been performed once a year since then, at the same PARCO Theater in Tokyo in 2013, and in Kyoto in 2014.



Figure 1: The poster of the first performance of *Sorenari shinjū* at PARCO Theater, August 2012.

Intentionally or not, Mitani breaks many rules and conventions about *jōruri* in *Sorenari shinjū,* from the kind of puppet heads typically used for *shinjū* protagonists,[466] to *jōruri*'s basic nature as tragedy, to the location of the *shamisen* players and chanters on stage behind the

[466] The husband who attempts to commit love suicide uses the Toraō puppet head, a puppet head traditionally used for male villains, and unfit for a hero of a love suicide play. Their daughter, who could also be a romantic heroine, is depicted as ugly, and a typical female clown puppet head, Ofuku, is used for her). See pages 63 and 65 in Chapter One.

puppets. (Figure 2.) In an interview, one of the main chanters, Toyotake Rosetayū 豊竹呂勢大夫 (1965-), talked about the negotiations between Mitani, who had stage directions in mind, and the performers, who wanted to do things in keeping with the genre of "*bunraku*."[467] On the one hand, Rosetayū acquiesced to Mitani's request to chant faster than the traditional slow, solemn pace in order to adjust to the comical atmosphere. On the other hand, the puppeteers sometimes rejected Mitani's ideas because what he wanted was "not *bunraku*."[468] This raises the question: Is *Sorenari shinjū* a *jōruri* play? *Sorenari shinjū* is generally described as a modern play with traditional elements called "Mitani *bunraku*." What, then, beyond puppeteers, *shamisen* players, and chanters, is necessary for a play to be a *jōruri* play? This dissertation's exploration of *jōruri* enables us to at least begin to answer this question.

[467] Recall that *bunraku* is a modern name for *jōruri.*

[468] Rosetayū's interview with The Japan Foundation. The Japan Foundation Performing Arts Netwark Japan, "Artist Interview: In Search of the Ultimate Voice, The Bunraku Gidayu," September 17, 2013, http://performingarts.jp/J/art_interview/1308/1.html (accessed August 8, 2014).



Figure 2: Performance of *Sorenari shinjū* at PARCO Theater in 2012. The chanter and the *shamisen* players are located above and behind the puppets, unlike the traditional style of having a separate side stage for the chanter and the *shamisen* player at stage right.

Jōruri was not "traditional" theater in the Edo period. On the contrary, it was creative and fresh, and entertained audiences by consistently pushing the envelope as playwrights, chanters, *shamisen* players, and puppeteers, renegotiated its theatrical conventions. In this sense, *Sorenari shinjū* is perhaps truer to the spirit of Edo *jōruri* than modern *bunraku* with its well-worn repertoire. As a creative endeavor that was also a commercial endeavor, *jōruri* in the Edo period needed to please two masters – the censors and the market. To avoid being banned, *jōruri* developed an overtly didactic framework for the overall plot structure that reinforced the existing social hierarchy, and that presented morally exemplary characters who could serve as social role models. To keep audiences coming back, however, *jōruri* strove to be entertaining, and subtly subverted the overt didacticism in ways that resonated with the urban commoner audiences' anxieties about their often lowly lives under the existing social order. Thus, *jōruri* had multiple roles as popular theater in Edo society: it was simultaneously didactic and educational, a form of

entertainment, and implied subtle social criticism. *Sorenari shinjū* aligns with the latter two roles of *jōruri*, but not the first – didacticism ceased to be a major feature of literature in the modern period.

One important characteristic that *Sorenari shinjū* shares with *jōruri* plays from the Edo period is a focus on socially low-ranked or marginal characters as major protagonists. These weak, marginal characters who are low in the social hierarchy, especially women, became important characters at the dramatic and emotional height of the play. *Jōruri* plays draw on famous historical incidents, stories, and myths, but they often depict a tragic drama that centers around low-ranked people who serve the high-ranked main heroes, or bystanders who get sucked into the events of the story. Similarly, Mitani's play treats the writing and reception of *Sonezaki shinjū* as a major historical incident, and depicts the peripheral characters of that tale, such as the middle-aged couple who own the bun shop and their ugly daughter, and gives voices to these characters. In the end, one of the central functions of *jōruri* became giving those on society's margins a voice to express their grievances (or the playwright created a vehicle for expressing those grievances, even if indirectly). *Sorenari shinjū* even allows the low-ranking characters to complain directly to the authority (Chikamatsu) who has unfair control over their lives.

On the other hand, Mitani did not have to worry about government censors and he did not have to live up to the expectation that drama should be a pragmatic way to teach morality through a didactic aspect. *Sorenari shinjū*'s characters are not moral exemplars, and there is no lesson here (such as placing personal desire over social or feudal obligations will lead to ruin). In this respect, a fundamental part of *jōruri* is bound to a world that simply does not exist anymore.

The dissertation opened with a consideration of many aspects of *jōruri* and its context –

jōruri as a theatrical enterprise, *jōruri* as popular literature, *jōruri* as a hobby for amateur chanters, and *jōruri* as professional training for young women. It also examined *jōruri*'s history, from its fictionalized origin legends to its decline and prohibition in the Tenpō Reforms, and the establishment of its conventions, including the types of puppet heads, the act structure, and the conventional plot patterns for *jidaimono* historical plays. *Jōruri*'s history in the eighteenth century can be divided into three phases: the early stage when it diverged from *kojōruri*, the "Golden Age," and the mature stage in which it began to decline in popularity. In the early stage, *jōruri* developed both business conventions and genre conventions for the efficient production of popular, censor-friendly plays, as a reaction to both market demands and governmental censorship. Once these conventions were established, the high-level framework (e.g., the overall plot structure, the didactic message, etc.) did not change. Within certain limits, authors were expected to add new twists to the smaller plot conventions, or *shukō*, in order to surprise audiences with something new. In that sense, some amount of subverting the genre conventions was itself a convention.

Jōruri playwrights were not isolated creative geniuses working in a vacuum whose task began and ended with writing the script. Rather, they were part of a theatrical troupe with individual talents and traditions, facing strong pressure to make each play commercially successful, and pressure from the *bakufu* to make each play unobjectionable. Thus *jōruri* plays were shaped by a number of factors in addition to the playwright's creative vision.

First, the theatrical troupes possessed certain capabilities and talents, and playwrights tailored scripts to take advantage of them, although not to the same extent as seen in *kabuki*. For instance, the centrality of female characters in Chikamatsu's *jōruri* puppet plays can be partly

explained by the presence Tatsumatsu Hachirobei, a popular puppeteer who specialized in female puppets. Likewise, Namiki Sōsuke's depiction of the dark psychology in stepmother characters was feasible thanks to the beautiful elegant voice of the main chanter, Toyotake Wakatayū, who was superior in expressing the voices of female characters. Hanji relied on the visually impressive puppetry techniques available to him through Takemoto-za's connection with Takeda *karakuri* when (re)inventing the characters Kiyohime and Omiwa. Because the plays were written for a specific theatrical troupe, the scripts necessarily included some parts featuring star performers or highlighting the signature style of the theater for which they were written.

Second, playwrights had to cope with the economic realities of commercial theater. Visual spectacles featuring "trick" puppetry were more-or-less mandatory because they guaranteed ticket sales. Experimental and radically original plays were rare because troupes simply could not afford a flop. Just like Hollywood movies today, *jōruri* playwrights relied on already popular source materials and formulas that sold well in order to guarantee decent sales. For instance, during the 1700s and 1710s, love suicide plays were extremely popular. During Hanji's time, many popular elements were borrowed from *kabuki*. At the same time, relying too much on played-out materials would bore the audience. Plot twists and subversion of conventional plot devices (*shukō*) – for example, Sōsuke's twists on the *shukō* of *modori* discussed in Chapter Three – served in part to provide fresh surprises for audiences.

Instances of subversion of genre conventions often also served as loci for subtle social criticism. As this dissertation shows, when Chikamatsu, Sōsuke, and Hanji broke the rules for representing particular female character types, they did so in ways that indirectly called into question the existing social hierarchy. Chikamatsu depicted prostitutes, who were nominally

below the bottom rung of the social hierarchy, as morally exemplary heroines, inconsistent with the notion that virtue parallels social rank. Sōsuke depicted samurai stepmothers who unconventionally did not live up to expectations of exemplary behavior, and, by presenting them sympathetically, hinted that those expectations were unrealistic and unreasonable. Hanji depicted provincial daughters of seemingly mythical stature, only to surprise audiences when high-ranked elites coldly sacrificed them as powerless pawns in a political plot. While this social criticism no doubt reflected the playwrights' personal views, it was also good business. *Jōruri*'s audiences were themselves commoners who felt anxious about the established social order and their place it, and longed to see those desires expressed in ways that they could not in their personal lives. However, the playwrights were careful in how overtly critical they could be without drawing the censors' attention.

Third, playwrights had to cope with governmental regulations and censorship, and fend off criticisms of *jōruri* as morally corrupting. *Jōruri* projected an image of itself as wholesome and unobjectionable by emphasizing its didactic and educational value. For instance, the overall plot of *jidaimono* historical plays always involves villains who seek to overturn the state, who initially succeeds only to be ultimately defeated due to the heartrending sacrifices of loyal low-ranked samurai (and their families) who return power to the emperor (or feudal lord) and restore the social order. Characters on the good side are invariably role models who present exemplary behavior. This limitation had particular impact on the range of female character types, since beautiful young women could never be anything other than virtuous. To some extent, Chikamatsu's depictions of prostitutes and Hanji's depiction of Kiyohime reflect this convention.

Finally, it is not possible to completely separate the extrinsic factors that shaped *jōruri*

plays from the playwrights' personal views and artistic visions. For instance, how much of the social criticism was a reflection of the authors' personal views and how much was conscious catering to urban commoner audiences? We cannot say. Some aspects, such as Sōsuke's struggle to replace unrealistic exemplary stepmothers with more relatable characters, are clearly unique to individual playwrights. On the other hand, some aspects reflect trends that are probably due in part to the individual authors and in part to the popular mindsets of the times they lived in. For instance, there is a gradual historical shift from ritualistic to realistic drama. The social criticism also becomes progressively stronger, biting back harder at the notion that virtue parallels social rank: Chikamatsu depicted prostitutes, who were nominally below the bottom rung of the social hierarchy, as morally exemplary; Sōsuke depicted upper-mid-ranked samurai stepmothers as less than morally exemplary; Hanji depicted high-ranked elites as manipulative, callous, and cruel, with a lot in common with the antiheroes of his rebel plays.

Women played a significant role in *jōruri* both in real life (as performers, audiences, etc.) and as characters. By convention, female characters represented the sphere of love, family, domesticity, and personal attachments that was subordinated to the sphere of feudal loyalty and duty that dominated the overarching plots. Also by convention, female characters spoke directly about their emotions, as opposed to male characters, who were conventionally more stoic. Thus, it was female characters who tended to voice the concerns and desires that resonated with the commoner audiences. The heart of *jōruri* lies in this speaking out on behalf of this ordinarily marginalized sphere against the elites for whom the socially subordinated are sacrificed. By examining the different ways in which playwrights expanded or challenged the theatrical conventions for representing women as moral characters, this dissertation showed the nature of

jōruri as both didactic and formulaic, but also flexible and reflective of commoner audiences' concerns and desires, and sometimes even subtly subversive.

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APPENDIX

Sonezaki shinjū **(1703)**

Main Characters:
Ohatsu: A prostitute at a tea house (brothel) called Tenma-ya. Tokubei's lover.
Tokubei: A clerk at a soy sauce shop called Hirano-ya. Ohatsu's lover.
Kuheiji: Tokubei's close friend, and also in love with Ohatsu.
Tokubei's uncle: The master of Hirano-ya.

Synopsis:

Scene: "Visiting Kannon Buddha"
Ohatsu visits thirty-three temples in Osaka that enshrine *kannon*.

Scene: "At Ikudama Shrine"
Tokubei encounters Ohatsu at Ikudama Shrine. Ohatsu was accompanying her customer to visit the shrine, and found Tokubei while the customer was away. Ohatsu complains to Tokubei that she has not heard from him for a long time. Tokubei explains that he was involved in a series of troubles and was unable to contact her. His uncle, who is also the master of the shop, ordered Tokubei to marry his wife's niece so that he can one day take over the shop. Tokubei's stepmother had already accepted the dowry. When Tokubei declined the offer because of Ohatsu, his uncle was enraged and disowned him, and demanded his dowry back. Tokubei managed to get the money back from his stepmother, but upon being urgently begged by his friend Kuheiji, Tokubei lent the money to him. As Tokubei finishes explaining the situation to Ohatsu, Kuheiji passes by. When Tokubei asks Kuheiji to return the money to him, Kuheiji pretends that he does not owe any money. Tokubei shows the promissory note with Kuheiji's seal, but Kuheiji says that the seal was stolen before the note was dated, and beats Tokubei with assistance from his friends. Realizing that he was set up by Kuheiji, Tokubei implies that he will commit suicide to prove his innocence and leaves.

Scene: "At Tenma-ya"
Tokubei secretly visits Ohatsu at Tenma-ya, so Ohatsu hides him underneath the porch and behind her long robe. Kuheiji visits Tenma-ya with his friends and speaks ill of Tokubei, saying that Ohatsu should dump him and be with Kuheiji. Tokubei and Ohatsu secretly gesture to each other that they will die together as Ohatsu speaks with Kuheiji. At night, Ohatsu leaves Tenma-ya with Tokubei to look for a place to die together.

Scene: "Michiyuki Journey"
Ohatsu and Tokubei walk together, eventually arriving at the woods of Sonezaki Shrine where they will commit suicide.

Scene: “At the Woods of Sonezaki Shrine”
Ohatsu and Tokubei vow to be a husband and a wife in the afterlife and die together.

***Shinjū nimai ezōshi* (1706)**

Main Characters:
Oshima: A prostitute at a tea house (brothel) called Tenma-ya. Ichirōemon’s lover.
Ichirōemon: A son (actually an adopted son) of Sukeemon. Oshima’s lover.
Zenjirō: A younger brother of Ichirōemon and a natural born son of Sukeemon.
Sukeemon: A rich farmer with large tracts of land.
Sada: Oshima’s regular customer.

Synopsis:

Act One: “At Takemoto-za Theater” and “At the Boat”
Oshima accompanies her regular customer, Sada, to a performance at Takemoto-za theater with male entertainers from the pleasure quarter. The party takes a boat along Dōtonbori River to return to Tenma-ya. Oshima is asked to chant one of the passages from the day’s *jōruri* performance. As she is performing, her lover, Ichirōemon, spots the party from the shore. Becoming jealous, Ichirōemon gives Oshima trouble and tries to start a fight with Sada, but the boat eventually heads away from shore.

Act Two: “At Ichirōemon’s House”
Ichirōemon’s younger brother, Zenjirō, who has fallen into debauchery, steals the money that his father had collected from his neighbors, and hides it in a sake bottle. Ichirōemon finds the money when he tries to pour from the bottle, and, thinking it is a gift from heaven, he keeps it. Minutes earlier, Zenjirō told Ichirōemon to look into his father’s wallet to find a letter from Oshima. Ichirōemon is caught looking into his father’s wallet while in possession of the money, and is disowned and expelled from the house.

Act Three: “At Tenma-ya”
Oshima learns from Ichirōemon that he was deceived by his brother and is determined to commit suicide. They cannot talk for very long, since Oshima is still at work. On the way back, Oshima encounters Zenjirō and accuses him of deceiving Ichirōemon. Ichirōemon secretly visits Oshima again at night. Oshima cannot leave Tenma-ya, since they are more highly guarded after Ohatsu’s love suicide (*Sonezaki shinjū*). Giving up on the idea of dying at the same place, the two promise to die at the same time when they finish counting the rosary ten thousand times. At the promised time, Oshima dies on the second floor of Tenma-ya, and Ichirōemon dies at the riverbank.

***Ikudama shinjū* (1715)**

Main Characters:
Osaga: A prostitute at a teahouse (brothel) Kashiwa-ya. Kaheiji's lover.
Kaheiji: A chinaware merchant. Osaga's lover and Okiwa's fiancé.
Hitotsu-ya Gohei: Kaheiji's father. Also a chinaware merchant.
Okiwa: Kaheiji's cousin and fiancée. She was adopted by Gohei when she was a child and raised as a sister to Kaheiji.
Kaheiji's unnamed older sister: Kaheiji's married older sister who lives in the next town.
Ikumatsu: Kaheiji's younger brother who is blind.
Inden-ya Chōsaku: Kaheiji's friend.

Synopsis:

Act One: "Visiting Temples" and "At a Teahouse at Tenman Shrine"
Osaga accompanies her customer to visit shrines, and stops at a teahouse at Tenman Shrine. Kaheiji visits Osaga and explains to her his recent troubles: His father, Gohei, ordered him to marry his adopted daughter, Okiwa. Because of Osaga, Kaheiji declined, so Gohei is upset. Kaheiji was also at a loss how to pay off his debt to the brothel, but fortunately, Kaheiji's friend, Chōsaku, offered to work as a broker to sell the merchandise from Kaheiji's father's shop to a *daimyō* mansion. Chōsaku is supposed to bring the money to Kaheiji at the teahouse so that he can pay off all his debt. Just then, Kaheiji's older sister and younger brother pass by, so Osaga and Kaheiji hide. Kaheiji's siblings stay at the teahouse where Osaga and Kaheiji are hiding, and speak critically of Kaheiji. Chōsaku comes to the teahouse to look for Kaheiji, but Kaheiji is unable to come out because of his siblings. Osaga asks Chōsaku to give her the money he made by selling the chinaware from Kaheiji's father's shop, but Chōsaku insists that he has already paid Kaheiji. Kaheiji comes out and argues with Chōsaku after his siblings leave, but to no avail.

Act Two: "At Kaheiji's Store by the Yamato Bridge"
Kaheiji returns to his shop with Osaga. On hearing the rumor about Kaheiji's troubles, his father, Gohei, visits him with Okiwa. Kaheiji hides Osaga outside of the house by the window. Gohei insists that he will commit suicide unless Kaheiji marries Okiwa. Okiwa declares she will commit suicide to stop Gohei, while Osaga attempts to reenter the house to commit suicide and to leave Kaheiji free to marry Okiwa, but stumbles and falls. Having resolved to commit suicide, Kaheiji pretends to relent and agrees to marry Okiwa. Overjoyed, Gohei makes Kaheiji and Okiwa perform a simple wedding ceremony, offering them sake. Gohei produces money from the sake bottle and then departs. However Chōsaku appears and takes the money by force. Once again in an impossible situation, Kaheiji and Osaga and feel compelled to die.

Act Three: "Michiyuki Journey" and "The Pine Grove at Ikudama Shrine"
Osaga and Kaheiji try to find a suitable place to die, and arrive at a pine grove at Ikudama Shrine. People from Kashiwa-ya search for the pair to stop their love suicide, but Osaga and Kaheiji escape. At dawn, Oaga and Kaheiji commit suicide.