

A CRITICAL STUDY OF KAMIGATA RAKUGO AND ITS TRADITIONS

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ABSTRACT

There are two distinct rakugo traditions in Japan, one based in Tokyo, the other in Osaka. Many people believe them to be the same, which is understandable since they look similar on the surface. Both are one-person arts with the same basic conventions. *Hanashika*, or *rakugoka* (storytellers) perform in kimono and narrate stories using two properties, a fan and a hand towel. There is a common belief that rakugo is essentially an Edo/Tokyo art, this being a consequence of the tendency to focus on Japan's dominant center. The present study will show that Kamigata rakugo is not an insignificant regional offshoot of the Edo/Tokyo art, but something that developed on its own separate trajectory, grounded in the distinctive cultural context of Kamigata-Osaka.

A review of Kamigata-Osaka history and the region's comic storytelling from the early modern era (1600-1868), along with critical analyses of selected Kamigata stories told today, will show that Kamigata rakugo is a product of the Kamigata-Osaka sociocultural milieu. Stories are more geared toward local audiences in that they are routinely musical and *hade* (colorful, flamboyant). Kamigata rakugo is also 'merchant centered'. There are any number of stories in the repertoire set in and around merchant homes. Even stories that are not tend to have references to the merchant world or contain qualities beneath the surface that can be associated with Osaka's historic *chōnin* class. Interestingly, however, merchant stories usually do not reflect *shōnin katagi*—the way idealized merchants are perceived to act, think, and feel. Instead of being presented as hard workers, innovative, and skilled, they are regularly portrayed as unskilled, obtuse, and irresponsible. This incongruity creates the basis for much of the humor in Kamigata rakugo stories, but also points to a transgressive undercurrent in the art.

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WHY STUDY THAT AWFUL OSAKA RAKUGO?

On the whole, Osaka's comic storytellers are, in a word from that city, *mossari* (boorish). They're *abura koku* (importunate) and *shitsukko* (obstinate). They use polite language poorly and carry on with vulgar, indecent topics. From beginning to end, their stories are as good as cesspools. On top of this, most have voices that are *kanbashitte imasu* (awfully high-pitched). When a shop boy or the like appears [in a story], it sounds like a monkey is getting his liver ripped out.¹

—Japanese dramatist and critic En Tarō (1892-1934)

Rakugo is a popular comic storytelling art that developed during the course of the early modern (1600-1868) and Meiji (1868-1912) periods.² Today, *hanashika* (storytellers, also called *rakugoka*)³ wear kimono and perform in halls called *yose* (short for *yoseba*) or *seki* (short for *jōseki*), usually for small audiences of one hundred to three hundred people. After kneeling on a *zabuton* (large cushion, placed downstage-center) and bowing head to floor, the *hanashika* presents an introductory *makura* (lit. pillow), which contains topical material and ties into the *hondai* (story proper). The *hondai* (also called *hanashi*, *neta*, or simply *rakugo*) usually lasts 30 minutes or less, but may take up to an hour. *Rakugo* customarily ends with an *ochi* (lit. a drop), similar to a punch line in that it is used to evoke laughter (or groans) or make the audience think. The *rakugo* repertoire includes hundreds of *koten* (traditional) and a growing number of *shinsaku* (newly-written, also *sōsaku*) pieces.

¹ En Tarō, “*Mata Osaka no yose yori*,” *Bungei kurabu*, January 1917, 314-5. All translations in this dissertation are my own, unless otherwise noted. Terms in Japanese are italicized only when first introduced. Exceptions are words such as *sake* (the drink) and *hade* (flamboyant), which would look like different words or misspellings if left unitalicized. Readers may refer to Appendix C for a glossary of selected terms and names.

² In this dissertation, early modern era refers to Japan's Edo period (1600-1868).

³ Based on my experience, in Kamigata *rakugo*, the term *hanashika* is generally preferred over *rakugoka*, and vice-versa in Tokyo *rakugo*. I have heard storytellers in both traditions use the terms interchangeably, however. I refer to Kamigata storytellers as *hanashika* and Tokyo storytellers as *rakugoka* in this dissertation.

One hanashika plays all characters, distinguishing gender, age, and social position through voice, posture, and gaze. Typically just two properties are employed, a *sensu* (paper folding fan) and a *tenugui* (hand towel), which are used to represent objects that characters take in their hands. A *sensu* can become a writing brush, pipe, sword, umbrella, and much more. A *tenugui* can become a wallet, book, letter, and even a roasted sweet potato. Rakugo is a *denshō geinō* (orally transmitted art). *Shishō* (masters) teach stories to *deshi* (pupils, apprentices) without the use of scripts. All hanashika are grouped in *ichimon* (artistic schools) such as Hayashiya, Katsura, Shōfukutei, Tsukitei, and Tsuyu no, and usually belong to a professional rakugo association.

Many people are unaware that there are two distinct rakugo traditions. One reason for this is that they look similar on the surface. Both are one-man comic storytelling arts that have served the same function for generations: to provide inexpensive amusement for the common population. Kamigata rakugo (commonly referred to as Osaka rakugo [and sometimes Naniwa rakugo] in early twentieth century) shares basic conventions with Tokyo rakugo. In both, hanashika wear kimono, kneel on a zabuton, and tell a story selected from the traditional repertoire, or newer pieces. The structure of Kamigata rakugo stories is the same as Tokyo rakugo's in that it consists of a makura, hondai, and ochi. Kamigata rakugo and Tokyo rakugo also share themes such as life in the *nagaya* (wooden row houses), scheming to get free food or drinks, sneaking into women's rooms at night, pilgrimages, and more. Considering the conventional similarities that Kamigata rakugo and Tokyo rakugo share, it is no wonder that many people today think of all rakugo as the same.

The epigraph above is excerpted from a critique written by En Tarō (also known as Seto Eiichi). In the same article he lays bare his disgust for Osaka hanashika by describing them as

shirōto (amateurs), *muyami* (thoughtless), *shitsurei* (rude), and *nasakenai* (shameful), implying that it could hardly be helped because Osaka yose audiences were *kiki ni kuru yori asobi ni kuru hō* (not there to listen so much as they were there to fool around). He also derisively recounted an anecdote about a Tokyo performer who came to Osaka, wrote the opening verse upon arrival, then dashed off the closing prior to leaving:

Fuji Tsukuba sutete mi ni kuru Tenpōzan
*Konna tokoro ni iru wa baka nari*⁴

So long Mt. Fuji and goodbye Tsukuba too, all for Mt. Tenpō
To be in a place like this is not short of ludicrous

Articles of this kind appeared from time to time in *Bungei kurabu* and similar Tokyo magazines, telling readers loud and clear that Tokyo rakugo was far better than the Osaka knock-off, which was cheap (or at least writers felt as if they paid too much for it), unpolished, loud, obnoxious, or a plain waste of time. If Osaka rakugo was so awful, why did writers in Tokyo even think that they needed to defend Tokyo rakugo? After all, their rakugo was receiving attention from Tokyo's literary elite. The language of Tokyo yose inspired a number of Meiji writers who were struggling to find freedom from the old, tired tradition of *gabun* (refined elegant letters). This is true for Futabatei Shimei (1864-1909), Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916), Nagai Kafū (1879-1959), and others.⁵ Osaka rakugo could not possibly compare with this, could it?

⁴ En Tarō, “*Mata Osaka no yose yori*,” 316. Mt. Tenpō is a manmade ‘mountain’. Its elevation was about twenty meters in the Tenpō era (1830-44), but is now about a quarter of that.

⁵ For more on these see Ueda Masayuki, “*Futabatei Shimei to rakugo: rakugoteki naru mono no jissitsu*,” *Kokubungaku kaishaku to kanshō* 68, no. 4 (April 2003): 127-134; Mizukawa Takao, *Sōseki to rakugo: Edo shomin geinō no eikyō* (Tokyo: Sairyūsha, 1986); and Okitsu Kaname, *Nihon bungaku to rakugo* (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1970).

There is a common belief that rakugo is essentially an Edo/Tokyo art, or that the Tokyo variety is the better of the two. It is not difficult to see how this belief arose. As pointed out above, men in the Meiji literary world placed value on Tokyo rakugo. This coincided with the 1884 introduction of, and subsequent boom in, rakugo *sokki* (stenographic transcriptions).⁶ Tokyo-based magazines such as *Bungei kurabu*, *Hyakkaen*, *Azuma nishiki*, and *Hanagatami* regularly featured rakugo and *kōdan* (another form of storytelling, more serious in nature) *sokki*. Magazine articles about rakugo were saturated with Tokyo-centrism and this extended to scholarship well into the twentieth century. Tokyo scholars began analyzing Tokyo rakugo soon after the first *sokki* appeared, one example being Tsuchiko Kinshirō's book *Wajutsu shinron, ichimei, kōdan rakugo no ron* (A New Theory of Narrative Arts: One-man Kōdan and Rakugo, 1889). Because there was a tendency to focus on the dominant center (i.e., Tokyo), a study on Osaka rakugo would not appear for another fifty years.

A few Osaka rakugo *sokki* made it into Tokyo magazines, but the vast majority were from the Tokyo tradition. The Osaka magazine *Momochidori*, issued semi-monthly, was dedicated to *kōdan* and rakugo, but Osaka dialect was usually edited out of stories. This stripped the Osaka art of its identity and fueled the conception that Tokyo rakugo was better. Tokyo rakugoka went to Osaka to study the art—and make money—especially in the years following the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, but they too contributed to the Tokyo-centric discourse. Katsura Bunraku VIII (1892-1971) commented in 1926, *Osaka e itte... dōmo Tokyo e*

⁶ For more on *sokki* see J. Scott Miller, “Japanese Shorthand and *Sokkibon*,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 49, no. 4 (winter 1994): 471-87.

kaeritakutte shō ga nai... Tokyokko wa watashi hitori... taihen na mono de (I went to Osaka, but couldn't help wanting terribly to return to Tokyo. I was the only Tokyo native, it was horrible).⁷

The harsh treatment that Osaka rakugo received in the capital inspired some Osaka-based enthusiasts and scholars—and performers—of the art to write public responses to Tokyo-centric detractors. They used the pages of (usually local) magazines and newspapers to defend Osaka rakugo. A few eventually published formal studies. Some criticized Tokyo critics for lacking the basic ability to understand Osaka language, while others aimed to persuade readers that Osaka rakugo was an altogether distinct tradition not so easily compared to Tokyo rakugo. All supporters of the art presented the same basic argument: Osaka rakugo has value. It is just as valuable and entertaining as Tokyo rakugo, if not more so. Osaka rakugo is not, as En Tarō wrote, *doko made mo shirōto ke o hanarete inai* (bound in every way by the air of amateurism).⁸

In 1943, Watanabe Kin (1894-1950?) published *Rakugo no kenkyū*, the first book-length study of Osaka rakugo (although Osaka/Kamigata is left out of the title). This work set the tone for Kamigata rakugo scholarship for decades. Scholars who followed regularly cited classical and medieval folklore as the likely origins of the tradition and presented the art's history dating back to the Genroku period (1688-1704). They also presented copies or transcriptions of rare Kamigata rakugo-related documents such as *mitate banzuke* (parody ranking sheets) dating from the early nineteenth century.⁹ Like Watanabe, writers often included discussions about Osaka

⁷ Katsura Bunraku VIII, “*Suzumibanashi: yoku no kawa*,” *Nōryōgō: kōdan to rakugo*, September 1926, 14. This was a special forty-page issue sent to subscribers of the daily newspaper *Tokyo Nichi Nichi shinbun*.

⁸ This appears in the article “*Mata Osaka no yose yori*,” cited above.

⁹ Like the actual *sumō banzuke* they were based on, *mitate banzuke* were one-sheet tables of any number of things (e.g., kabuki actors, hanashika, food, dialectal phrases) and their ranks.

rakugo's *tokuchō* (characteristic elements) and progressively encyclopedic lists of Kamigata stories and *ochi*.¹⁰

The aim of most authors who wrote about Kamigata rakugo was to provide useful references on the art and to lay out the elements that make Kamigata rakugo stand out from Tokyo rakugo. Most scholars agree that chief among these is the incorporation of *yosebayashi* (yose-style hayashi music), which will be discussed in detail later. Kamigata rakugo is set apart by its profusion of *hamemono* (music and sound effects played during stories) and other music such as *debayashi* and *ukebayashi* (entrance and exit music, respectively). Scholars often claim that there is a special *geijutsusei* (artistic quality) in Kamigata rakugo, adding that Tokyo rakugoka adapted numerous stories from Osaka, but not the converse. Kamigata rakugo studies made strong statements about the art's uniqueness, presented detailed histories, and provided reference addenda (story lists, chronological tables, etc.), which were useful but generally unrelated to any arguments being made. There is little story analysis in earlier works, but this has been changing in recent years.

Western scholars—most notably Heinz Morioka and Miyoko Sasaki, J. Scott Miller, Lorie Brau, and Ian McArthur, among others—have written a few books, dissertations, and a handful of articles about rakugo in English, but they focus almost entirely on the Edo/Tokyo

¹⁰ Other notable scholars of Kamigata rakugo and/or its precursors include Shōfukutei Shokaku V (1884-1950), Masaoka Iruru (1904-58), Maeda Isamu (1908-72), Ui Mushū (1909-1992), Mita Jun'ichi (1923-1994), Katsura Beichō III (1925-), Mutō Sadao (1926-), Satake Akihiro (1927-2008), Nakajima Heihachirō (1935-), Akiba Akio (1941-), Miyao Yoshio (1948-), Hayashiya Somemaru IV (1949-), Hoshi Manabu (1951-), Osada Sadao (1952-), Horii Ken'ichirō (1958-), Toda Manabu (1963-), and Yamada Riyoko (date of birth unknown, currently active), whose key works are included in the Bibliography.

tradition.¹¹ One is bound to gather that Tokyo rakugo is the dominant, mainstream variety, or worse, the only form of rakugo. This, of course, is incorrect. Kamigata rakugo is a distinct tradition with an equally notable past. Why have Western scholars neglected Kamigata rakugo then? This is partly a reflection of Japanese scholarship. An increasing number of Japanese works on Kamigata rakugo have appeared in the post-World War II era, particularly from the late 1960s on, but there are far more books that cover Tokyo rakugo. To give one illustration, numerous annotated anthologies of Tokyo rakugo appeared in hardcover throughout the nineteenth century, but the first work of this nature to focus on Kamigata rakugo did not appear until 1980, and consisted of just one hanashika's stories.¹² This is doubtless a result of scholars' and publishers' lack of interest in Kamigata rakugo as a subject for serious study and their strong identification of rakugo with 'Edo'.

Regrettably, when Western scholars do mention Kamigata rakugo, they are occasionally misinformed. To give one example, Amin Sweeny claimed that there were still two yose in Osaka in 1979, but in reality there was not a formal yose (traditionally called *seki* there) in this city from the end of World War II until 2006.¹³ Morioka and Sasaki differentiated the Kamigata and Tokyo traditions by highlighting that *tabi-neta mono* (travel stories, also *tabibanashi*) are an indispensable part of the Kamigata rakugo repertoire.¹⁴ True, travel stories do make up an important genre in Kamigata rakugo. Budding hanashika usually learn these stories first so that

¹¹ The major exceptions are Noriko Watanabe, "Character Introduction and Establishment in Japanese Narrative" (Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1998), and Catherine Hallett, "Music in Kamigata *Rakugo* Performance," *New Voices* 6 (January 2014): 91-115.

¹² Katsura Beichō, *Beichō rakugo zenshū*, 7 vols. (Osaka: Sōgensha, 1980-82).

¹³ Amin Sweeny, "Rakugo Professional Japanese Storytelling," *Asian Folklore Studies* 38, no. 1 (1979): 29.

¹⁴ Heinz Morioka and Miyoko Sasaki, *Rakugo: The Popular Narrative Art of Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1990), 124.

they can practice presenting protagonists that are in constant motion and come into contact with any number of characters, all without having to explore character psychology in much depth.¹⁵ Tabibanashi are important in Kamigata rakugo, but, leaving it at this, Morioka and Sasaki mislead their readers. Tabibanashi are by no means the art's most remarkable genre. There is much more to Kamigata rakugo.

I. One More Step away from Tokyo-Centrism

One of the most important facts that I am trying to articulate in the present study is that Kamigata rakugo is not an insignificant regional offshoot or a pale imitation of the Edo/Tokyo art, but has its own traditions. It developed on its own separate trajectory, grounded in the distinctive cultural context of Kamigata-Osaka. The significant differences between it and Edo rakugo, both in content and performance style, are not just deviations from a commonly presumed Edo standard but elements that make us realize that there is more to what rakugo can be, and is, than the Edo-centric view has led people to believe.

Kamigata-Osaka studies itself is a relatively recent movement in Western scholarship and, although a few books, dissertations, and articles have taken Osaka or Kamigata as their primary focus in the last several decades, it was arguably James L. McClain and Wakita Osamu's edited collection, *Osaka: The Merchants' Capital of Early Modern Japan* (1999), that branded Osaka (and Kamigata) as a subject worthy of serious intellectual attention. Since the publication of their book, more focused studies have appeared and more scholars are distancing themselves from Tokyo-centric notions, carrying out a Kamigata studies movement of sorts. The present study

¹⁵ Matthew W. Shores, "Jippensha Ikku, *Hizakurige*, and Comic Storytelling," *Early Modern Japan: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 20 (2012): 59.

serves as an addition to this movement, which is a function of the larger postmodern tendency to look at the larger picture beyond dominant centers, ‘great men’, and ‘high culture’, or, as Fredric Jameson puts it, allow for the presence and coexistence of a range of very different, yet subordinate features.¹⁶

Roger Keyes and Keiko Mizushima have pointed out that there were many ‘amateur’ visual artists in early modern Osaka.¹⁷ It turns out that this was also the case in Osaka’s storytelling world. In fact, there were hundreds of amateurs involved in storytelling circles from the late eighteenth century well into the nineteenth century. We know this because countless names—pseudonyms—are recorded in books compiled by storytelling clubs, and on *shirōto mitate banzuke* (amateur parody rankings sheets) such as the *Naniwa shirōto hanashi mitate sumō* (Naniwa Amateur Story Parody Sumō, 1818).¹⁸ Amateur participation in the arts is a hallmark of old Osaka and it is not surprising that this extends to storytelling. There is almost no information available about most of these men, and presumably women, but most amateur storytellers doubtless wanted to maintain anonymity just as participants in other artistic circles did.

Andrew Gerstle writes of named though otherwise unknown poets, probably Osaka townsmen, who produced poetry and art to display adoration for a famous Osaka kabuki actor.¹⁹

¹⁶ Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 4.

¹⁷ Roger Keyes and Keiko Mizushima, *The Theatrical World of Osaka Prints: a Collection of Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Japanese Woodblock Prints in the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1973), 19.

¹⁸ See Geinōshi Kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei*, vol. 8, *Yose, misemono* (Tokyo: San’ichi Shobō, 1976), 345, 351.

¹⁹ Andrew Gerstle, “Creating Celebrity: Poetry in Osaka Actor Surimono and Prints,” in Keller Kimbrough and Satoko Shimazaki, eds., *Publishing the Stage: Print and Performance in*

The 1818 mitate banzuke mentioned above may be evidence of something similar. The amateurs listed appear to be flocking around their idol—hanashika Katsura Bunji II—who is listed prominently at center as *gyōji* (referee). So, the very ‘amateurism’ that En Tarō derided turns out to be a distinguishing feature that calls for our attention. As we can see, Kamigata rakugo, and its enthusiastic ‘amateur’ practitioners, is a necessary topic to consider when focusing on Kamigata studies.

Kamigata rakugo is also a promising subject for scholars of oral traditions new and old. The art is no longer—and may have never been—a true oral culture, as hanashika have been literate for centuries and texts exist in various forms (perhaps Walter Ong would refer to Kamigata rakugo as a literate culture that retains massive oral residue)²⁰ but hanashika continue to undergo arduous apprenticeships full of demeaning domestic chores and learn stories in the traditional *kuchi utsushi* (mouth-to-mouth) method that artists have used for generations. The teaching method of Kamigata rakugo has always been and remains traditional in the sense that *shishō* (masters) orally transmit stories to *deshi* (pupils, apprentices) by presenting and repeating standardized formulas and themes. A *shishō* tells a story and a *deshi* recites it back, memorizing it after a few practice sessions, which can take place in a single week or be spread out over several months. No formal scripts are used in the art, so stories constantly undergo change. Of course, the *shishō* must approve the way the *deshi* performs a story before it can be performed in public.

Early Modern Japan (Boulder: Center for Asian Studies, University of Colorado Boulder, 2011), 140.

²⁰ Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the World* (1982; online ed., London and New York, Routledge, 2001) 36. Accessed April 4, 2014, Ingram Digital. Ong discusses oral residue in literate cultures at multiple points in this book.

Kamigata rakugo is alive and well in 2014. In fact, Kamigata hanashika numbers are higher than ever. Most new hanashika are young deshi in the traditional sense, but people in their thirties and forties have recently been allowed to begin apprenticeships, including some high profile television personalities, such as Tsukitei Hōsei (1968-, formerly Yamazaki Hōsei) and Katsura Sando (1969-, formerly Sekai no Nabeatsu, or Watanabe Atsumu). A growing number of hanashika are giving performances abroad in second languages or with subtitles and there are even some non-Japanese—mostly trained informally in Osaka—performing rakugo in their own languages and/or in Japanese. Kamigata rakugo, thus, is not an old, dying art struggling to find relevance in contemporary society. It remains an important form of live entertainment and is growing more international and inclusive in terms of age and gender. Kamigata rakugo is therefore a topic that should be of interest to a range of specialists who focus on contemporary Japan.

Kamigata rakugo is distinct from Tokyo rakugo because the Kamigata-Osaka sociocultural milieu affected the art's development throughout the early modern era. Kabuki, jōruri, and hayashi music, among other arts, were vibrant parts of the milieu and thus had an influence on Kamigata rakugo. Kamigata rakugo would be practically unrecognizable if it were stripped of its music and countless shows within shows, which are similar to the “story within the story” literary device, but are employed for sheer entertainment.²¹ Examples of this will be given later. As we will see, Kamigata rakugo is also heavily saturated with traditional Osaka merchant culture. Considering that Kamigata rakugo contains numerous elements absent in

²¹ See William Nelles, “Embedding” in David Herman, Manfred Jahn, and Marie-Laure Ryan, eds., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory* (New York, Routledge, 2005), 134-5.

Tokyo rakugo, and that there are historical and cultural explanations for this, the art needs further study.

II. Understanding Kamigata Rakugo on Its Own Terms

Kamigata rakugo stories that have been published in the twentieth century—in print and other media—give us an idea of which stories were/are most popular. Indeed, some stories appear in collection after collection. *Osaka rakugo meisaku sen* (Selected Masterpieces of Osaka Rakugo, 1948), published privately by Shōfukutei Shokaku V (1884-1950), is an interesting collection because it includes sixteen masterpieces that he handpicked from the sixty-eight stories originally published about a decade earlier in his magazine *Kamigata hanashi*. All of the stories included in *Osaka rakugo meisaku sen* continue to be performed today, and all of them exhibit distinctive Kamigata elements that make them stand out in glaring contrast to Tokyo rakugo stories. I have for this study selected a number of Kamigata stories to analyze, one of the criteria for selection being that they are time-tested Kamigata rakugo classics. Of course, the stories analyzed in this dissertation can be found in *Osaka rakugo meisaku sen* and *Kamigata hanashi*, and/or other well-known collections.

One of the distinguishing features of Kamigata rakugo stories is that they are remarkably musical, loquacious, and *hade* (colorful, flamboyant—a term that will be used throughout this dissertation because it sums up the art’s lively nature, including its musicality and loquaciousness) and, thus, geared toward Osaka audiences. Although En Tarō meant to deride Osaka audiences in that 1917 article by writing that Osakans are *kiki ni kuru yori asobi ni kuru hō*, he could tell that Osakans feel at home in yose (seki), that they revel in their rakugo. This, it will be argued, is an upshot of Kamigata hanashika retaining a sharp sensitivity to customers’

desires, a holdover from early modern Osaka, home to an extremely high percentage of merchants. Hanashika continue to put customers first today—they are trained to think and act as *shōbainin* (tradesmen/women):

My *shugyō* [apprenticeship] was relatively short. It only lasted a year and ten months. My *shishō* wasn't that hard on me. He never really yelled at me or hit me. He wasn't that type of person. He would rather hover over me and pick apart what I was doing, asking how I could make so many mistakes. I think I would have preferred him to whack me one. He always nitpicked and that was trying. My master wasn't one to talk much about *rakugo*, but he would talk about the best ways to go through life as a *geinin* (entertainer). He told me how to behave around other people, how to flatter people. Basically, he taught me how to live. You could say he was passionate about teaching me the best way to walk through life. He taught me how to think like a *shōbainin*.²²

What follows is that Kamigata *rakugo* is 'merchant centered'. This stands out in contrast to the Edo/Tokyo tradition, commonly thought to deal more with artisans, journeymen, and samurai. It is well understood that the city of Edo had merchants, and that some warriors lived in Osaka, so, as one would expect, Tokyo *rakugo* has merchants and Kamigata *rakugo* has samurai. It is not my contention that Edo *chōnin* (townsman) had no influence on Edo *rakugo*'s development, or that samurai society had no bearing on Kamigata *rakugo*. The demographics and sociocultural milieus in Edo and Kamigata were, however, considerably different and this impacted the ways in which the two *rakugo* traditions developed. Class comes into play in both *rakugo* traditions, but it is not necessarily Kamigata *rakugo* and Tokyo *rakugo*'s defining difference. Regionalism, which aggressively promotes its own cultural expression (e.g., local characters, dialects, regional details, etc.),²³ is also at work.

²² Hayashiya Somemaru IV, 2012. Interview by author. Suita, Japan, January 18. See Appendix A for the full interview, translated.

²³ Wendy Griswold, *Regionalism and the Reading Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 14.

Any number of stories in the Kamigata repertoire are set in and around merchant homes. Even stories that are not set in the merchant quarters regularly feature references to the merchant world or contain qualities beneath the surface that can be associated with Osaka's historic chōnin class. Finally, Kamigata stories contain more earthy material, but they also come across as more polished and realistic, and characters—both male and female—are more fleshed out. Kamigata rakugo stands out as extraordinarily bold, energetic, entertaining, and lifelike, a reflection of Osakans and the kind of entertainment they traditionally preferred. Evaluating the art on these terms will allow us to see that Kamigata rakugo is significantly different from what people usually think of as rakugo (i.e., the Edo/Tokyo version).

Kamigata rakugo is an oral tradition, a performing art, and it is also literature. How does one go about conducting a study of an art such as this? I decided that Kamigata rakugo would be best approached from three angles. To get an understanding of the art as an oral tradition, I conducted historical surveys on the art and its locale. To gain insight on Kamigata rakugo as a performing art, I became a participant observer—I was an unofficial deshi of Hayashiya Somemaru IV (1949-) from October 2010 to March 2012. Prior to this, I also studied with Katsura Bunshi V (1930-2005). Both of these masters were traditionalists in the sense that they were primarily concerned with *preserving* the art, though other performers are more willing to make adaptations to the tradition in order to perpetuate it. This has naturally influenced my position as a scholar of Kamigata rakugo.

To scrutinize the art as literature, I spent hundreds of hours reading rakugo texts, listening to recordings, watching videos, and attending live shows. I also spent a good deal of time transcribing, transliterating, and translating rakugo stories. One of the limitations of studying Kamigata rakugo in this (or any) fashion is that it can only provide one with a snapshot of the art,

which—not unlike Tokyo rakugo—undergoes constant change. Rakugo is fluid, not fossilized. This notwithstanding, evaluating Kamigata rakugo as literature allows one to focus more closely on a number of issues, such as characterization, dialogue, interpretations of life, language, local and temporal settings, plots, trends, and more. If Kamigata rakugo were analyzed exclusively as a performing art, more time would necessarily have to be devoted to other matters, such as dramatic construction and technique. Studying Kamigata rakugo with a trilateral approach enables one to better appreciate the art's traditions, performance style, and content.

III. Overview of Chapters

A. Chapter One: Kamigata, Osaka

One of the arguments presented in this study is that Kamigata rakugo is largely a product of old merchant Osaka. In spite of this, the art is now referred to as Kamigata (modern Kansai) rakugo. Chapter One will address this issue and provide an overall framework in which to consider Kamigata rakugo. Kamigata has been portrayed as practically opposite to Edo since it was established as the seat of the shogunate in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and this only intensified after the center of cultural production shifted there in the 1780s.²⁴ The modern outcome of the longstanding east-west binarism is that Kamigata has been rendered substandard and therefore of less consequence than Edo/Tokyo, the center of power. Chapter One will review Kamigata and Osaka history with a special focus on the early modern era, Osaka chōnin identity, and a brief discussion of traditional performing arts that share qualities with Kamigata rakugo. It will be through a discussion of these subjects that we will be able to gain a clearer understanding

²⁴ To be precise, when the Bakufu was established in Edo in 1603, Kyoto was still considered the political center of Japan, a holdover from the Muromachi era. Thus, the seventeenth century saw the gradual (but not complete) displacement of Kyoto.

of what Kamigata rakugo is and why it differs from Tokyo rakugo. Reconfirming Kamigata and Osaka's historical and cultural heritage will help us see that Kamigata rakugo is a product of its environment.

B. Chapter Two: The History of Kamigata Rakugo

Building on Chapter One, Chapter Two presents a history of popular storytelling in the Kamigata region, with discussion of important figures and translations of a number of early stories. As we shall see, Kyoto and Osaka storytellers developed an art with distinct characteristics and this can be connected to the fact that, for a good part of its history, the art was performed outdoors. Kamigata storytelling has virtually always been inclusive and open to the public. Countless amateurs took part in Osaka storytelling circles; in fact, participation was regularly solicited. Consequently, storytelling there has always been closely connected to the masses. It was arguably this special bond that helped a small number of hanashika steer the art out of some of its darkest hours before, during, and immediately after World War II. Kamigata rakugo still operates at ground level and retains its traditional elements. Tokyo rakugoka had a hard time after the war, but, unlike the case in Osaka, yose were quickly rebuilt in the capital. Osaka hanashika did not have a permanent 'home' until 2006, when the Tenma Tenjin Hanjōtei opened its doors.

C. Chapter Three: What Constitutes a Kamigata Rakugo Story?

The objective of Chapter Three is to highlight how Kamigata rakugo differs from Tokyo rakugo today. Some differences are plain to see, but an in-depth analysis of the subtle differences is key to understanding how they differ on multiple levels. Numerous stories told in both

traditions are therefore presented to draw attention to the ways that they contrast in aspects of performance style and aspects of content. I have intentionally selected merchant stories to analyze so as to highlight the fact that Kamigata rakugo is ‘merchant centered’. Chapter Three will also include descriptions of ten recurring characters and character types in Kamigata rakugo.

Edo/Tokyo is often thought to be the city of rakugo and Osaka as the city of *manzai*. This misapprehension is partly because of Tokyo-centrism, but also because the modern two-man comedy *manzai*—and the powerful entertainment company Yoshimoto Kōgyō, which has made *manzai* its flagship since its beginning—has over the last century served as a kind of official marker of how we are supposed to conceive of Kamigata-Osaka culture. This has led to conceptions that Kamigata rakugo is somehow the product of *manzai*. It has also served to obscure Kamigata rakugo, reinforcing the notion that Osaka is a *manzai* city and that Edo/Tokyo rakugo is the core or sole rakugo tradition. One must look beyond this to discover the true Kamigata rakugo. It is hard to deny that Kamigata rakugo occasionally bears a resemblance to modern *manzai*, and vice versa, but to assume that Kamigata rakugo has been *manzai*-ized, or is a *manzai*-like spin-off of Tokyo rakugo, is incorrect. Necessarily, there will be discussion of Kamigata rakugo and modern *manzai* in this chapter.

D. Chapter Four: Critique of Selected Kamigata Stories

In Chapter Four, five Kamigata classics—*Keikoya* (The Practice Salon), *Tako shibai* (Octopus Kabuki), *Tennōji mairi* (Pilgrimage to Shitennōji), *Kusshami kōshaku* (The Sneezing Narrator of War Tales), and *Funa Benkei* (Benkei on the Boat)—will be presented for close analysis. Substantial sections of these stories are translated and transliterated in order to emphasize the special elements that are associated with this art. Included with each story is a

supplementary section focusing on versions told prior to 1945. Just two of these stories, *Keikoya* and *Kusshami kōshaku*, are performed in the Tokyo tradition. *Tako shibai* is the only one that can be called a merchant story. While most of the stories selected for this section are not set in the merchant world, they still show signs of its influence. All of the stories selected for this chapter are unmistakably ‘Kamigata’ in that they are energetic and musical, not to mention other points.

E. Conclusion: Reinterpreting ‘Merchant Centered’ as Transgressive

The Conclusion will begin with a review of the contents of Chapters One through Four with special emphasis on the elements claimed to be uniquely ‘Kamigata.’ Next, it will be proposed that, while it is a chief claim in this study that Kamigata rakugo is decidedly ‘merchant centered’, merchant stories usually do not reflect *shōnin katagi*—the way idealized merchants act, think, and feel. Instead of being presented as hard workers, innovative, and skilled, they are generally portrayed as irresponsible, unskilled, and weak. The incongruity of this image creates the basis for much of the humor in Kamigata rakugo stories, but—just as Edo/Tokyo rakugoka targeted the established order (i.e., samurai) with indirect jokes and pranks as authorities grew weaker at the end of the early modern era²⁵—this also points to an undercurrent of transgression—defined by Michael Foucault as a nonpositive affirmation of limits, not a violent attack on them²⁶—which developed in step with the loss of faith in and subsequent breakdown of Osaka merchant traditions.

²⁵ Morioka and Sasaki, *Rakugo*, 139-40.

²⁶ Michael Foucault, “A Preface to Transgression” in Donald F. Bouchard, ed., *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 35-36.

CHAPTER ONE

KAMIGATA, OSAKA

Osakans of yesteryear were incredibly hard workers. They accumulated knowledge from a variety of sources so they could apply it to their work. They enjoyed the changing seasons, enjoyed learning various arts, enjoyed local festivals, observed various annual events—that seems to be what Osaka used to be about. That’s the Osaka that I love most.¹

—Kamigata hanashika Hayashiya Somemaru IV (1949-)

The name Kamigata was first recorded in the Muromachi period (1338-1573) and came into regular use in the early modern era (1600-1868). *Kami* referred to the seat of the emperor (or the emperor himself), or Kyoto, long associated with high court culture and tradition. *Kami* attempts to bask in the reflected glory of Japan’s emperors, who resided in Kyoto for most of the period from 794 to 1868. *Kata* (-*gata*) means, simply, direction or vicinity. In the course of the early modern period, Kamigata was used to refer to a wide geographical area that included the five provinces that made up the Kinai plain.² Kyoto remained the center of cultural production until the Enpō years (1673-81), but thereafter, partly because a new hub of publishing houses and book dealers was established, Osaka broke away from Kyoto’s sphere of influence.³ As Osaka grew into a bustling commercial center, the Kamigata name was increasingly associated with this

¹ Hayashiya Somemaru IV, 2012. Interview by author. Suita, Japan, January 18. See Appendix A for the full interview, translated.

² The Kinai plain included Yamashiro (today southern Kyoto prefecture), Yamato (modern Nara prefecture), Settsu (parts of modern Osaka and Hyōgo prefectures), Kawachi (today eastern Osaka prefecture), and Izumi (today southern Osaka prefecture), as well as the two nearby provinces of Ōmi (modern Shiga prefecture) and Tanba (largely made up of modern Kyoto prefecture and a section of Hyōgo prefecture).

³ This does not go to say that Kyoto ceased being important—Kyoto remained the capital because it was where the emperor resided. Consequently, there was a triangular Edo-Osaka-Kyoto dynamic in play until the end of the early modern era.

Inland Sea port city.⁴ Early modern Osaka's culture was not absolutely 'unique', but there were cultural characteristics and values present there that were not widespread in other places, including Kyoto.⁵ Osaka's characteristics and values came to be associated with Kamigata in the early modern era. As far as many people were concerned, Osaka was Kamigata.

In the early modern era, Osaka was dubbed *tenka no daidokoro* (kitchen of the realm) because it was where the national rice market at Dōjima was located. As expected, most of the city's population consisted of merchants and others in the chōnin class. Osakans gained a reputation for being cheerful (*yōki*) and hardworking. The city's writers, artists, playwrights, and performers, too, exhibited special attention to detail and often disregarded lines between professional and amateur. Osaka was situated far from the shogun's capital, so there was a greater sense of freedom and widespread cultivation of an individualistic, do-it-yourself approach to work, art, and life.

Kamigata and Osaka have been contrasted with Edo and modern Tokyo so often that it is easy to draw the conclusion that the regions/cities could not be more different. One would like to avoid the overplayed binary as much as possible, but these places did develop on different trajectories and were home to considerably different populations in the early modern era. There

⁴ Kamigata is rarely used today as a geographical term; names such as Kinai, Kinki, Kansai, and Nishi Nihon are used instead. In 2011, approximately 100 people who identify as Osakans responded to a short survey about the meaning of Kamigata, posted on my personal blog. All respondents tended to associate Kamigata with performing arts. They answered, *Kamigata to ieba, kabuki, mai, rakugo, manzai* (when I hear the word Kamigata, kabuki, traditional dance, rakugo, and manzai [come to mind]). Perhaps this should not be surprising. As Inoue Hiroshi points out, unlike the more neutral terms Kansai and Kantō, the word Kamigata is now culturally loaded, associated with a long history and tradition—*seikatsu no nioi ga arimasu* (it is redolent of daily life). Inoue Hiroshi, *Osaka no bunka to warai* (Suita: Kansai Daigaku Shuppanbu, 2003), 80.

⁵ Kojima Yoshio, et al., *Mainichi hōsō bunka sōsho*, vol. 10, *Osaka no bungei* (Suita: Mainichi Hōsō, 1973), 11.

there are naturally differences. Issues such as Kamigata, Osaka history, Osakan identity, and fine and performing arts in the region have previously been treated in Japanese and Western scholarship, but in the interest of accurately defining Kamigata rakugo, it is important to revisit these. They illustrate the historical and cultural heritage of Kamigata and Osaka, and in turn underline the fact that comic storytelling here is a product of its environment. In short, this chapter will set up the framework for answering the question of what the *Kamigata* of Kamigata rakugo is.

I. Kamigata-Osaka History

A. Ancient Times to the Late Sixteenth Century

For more than a millennium Osaka was commonly known by its former name, Naniwa, possibly established by Emperor Nintoku (r. 313-399?), purported to be the son and successor of the Yamato ruler Ōjin, and only one of a handful of rulers referred to in the *Kojiki* (712) and *Nihon shoki* (720) as sage kings.⁶ A city with a port for both domestic and overseas trade, this was also home to a number of Emperors and Empresses, including Kōtoku (r. 645-54), Mommu (r. 697-707), Genshō (r. 715-24), and Shōmu (r. 724-49), who moved the capital to Nara in 745.⁷ Even after Naniwa was no longer the capital, it continued serving as Japan's chief port due to its location on a natural bay at the mouth of the Yodo River. Wakita Osamu has pointed out that Naniwa only became an urban center of lasting and permanent significance when the prelates of the Honganji branch of the Jōdo Shinshū sect founded the temple Ishiyama Honganji on the

⁶ Michael I. Como, *Shōtoku: Ethnicity, Ritual, and Violence in the Japanese Buddhist Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 177-8.

⁷ One cannot be certain, but Naniwa appears to have been the capital from 645-55, a sub-capital from 683 to 710, and a temporary capital from 744 to 745.

Uemachi Plateau in 1496 and a prospering town grew up around it. It was from this time that Naniwa was also referred to as Osaka.⁸

Nearly a century later, in his campaign for national unification, Oda Nobunaga (1534-82) would wage war on Ishiyama Honganji, reducing it to ashes in 1580. Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-98) fought to secure his control over central Japan in the months and years following Nobunaga's death in 1582, and built Osaka Castle on the site of the former temple. Hideyoshi strove to create a contiguous urban environment that reflected not only his military accomplishments, but also his promotion of commercial and religious life. He made Osaka a prototype for other castle towns and defined a number of characteristics that came to distinguish Osaka's future urbanism.⁹

Hideyoshi manipulated tax policies as a means of compelling people to pull up stakes and migrate to Osaka so he could construct his new defensive bastion. As Conrad Totman has pointed out, construction of a castle town required the assembling, equipping, feeding, housing, and supervising of armies of ill-paid corvée labor and innumerable technical specialists.¹⁰ In 1591, Hideyoshi declared that the merchant and artisan families of Osaka would be exempt from property taxes. In contrast, peasants had to pay high taxes. The merchant and artisan families that lived in other cities also faced higher levies than did their counterparts in Osaka. Needless to say,

⁸ Osaka was also referred to as Ozaka (no long ō sound) in the medieval era. Two different kanji were used to write the *saka* of Osaka (lit. large slope) in the early modern era, but the Meiji government officially eliminated the older of the two when Osaka was given city status in 1889. Today, the former kanji is commonly used when referring to early modern Osaka.

⁹ Wakita Osamu, "The Distinguishing Characteristics of Osaka's Early Modern Urbanism," in *Osaka: The Merchant's Capital of Early Modern Japan*, ed. James L. McClain and Wakita Osamu (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 261-3.

¹⁰ Conrad Totman, *Early Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 63.

such differentials, deliberately created by Hideyoshi, encouraged merchant and artisan migration to Osaka from surrounding towns and villages and beyond.¹¹

B. The Early Modern Era

Shortly after Hideyoshi's death in 1598, Tokugawa Ieyasu made his move to secure absolute control of the country. He was victorious at the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600 and was subsequently awarded the title of shogun in 1603. Ieyasu allowed Hideyoshi's heir, Hideyori (1593-1615), to stay on at Osaka Castle until 1614, when their relations soured. Hideyori was ordered out, but refused. In 1615, Ieyasu's army of one hundred thousand—led by Hidetada (1579-1632), who had become shogun in 1605—attacked and burned the castle to the ground. The third shogun, Iemitsu (1604-51), established supremacy for the Tokugawa in the 1630s, by instituting national seclusion policies, abolishing going abroad for trade, and expelling all foreigners with the exception of Chinese and Dutch traders. It was shortly after this that the newly rising *chōnin* began to flourish in Osaka.

Osaka was quick to become a busy web of canals in the early modern era and it was there that *chōnin* built their lives and culture. The waterways of this city arguably kept people just as, if not more, close knit as those in Japan's other urban centers, namely the *shitamachi* (low city, to borrow Edward Seidensticker's term) of Edo. People and products were constantly moving through the streets and on the water. Bakufu policies and a number of other factors enabled Osaka to become the economic heart of Japan and, for a long time, the country's most important city. This was primarily due to the fact that Osaka was where rice—the basis for the tax system—was gathered and sold. It was also where provincial domains sent other goods for sale

¹¹ Wakita, "Osaka's Early Modern Urbanism," in McClain and Wakita, 264-5.

and distribution. Toward the end of the century, Kawamura Zuiken (1617-99) helped increase Osaka's importance by developing shipping routes that connected this city to Edo and Ōu (modern Tōhoku).

Thanks to Osaka's economic success, Japan's economy began to pick up steam as a whole. Soon, farming villages were raising and processing more commercial crops, including vegetables, sugar cane, mulberry, tea, sumac, indigo, cotton, hemp, and rapeseed. This production led to new markets springing up, large and small. Osaka's product-currency economy was naturally more robust than other local economies, but all were connected in one way or another and therefore advanced simultaneously. Osaka's growth was particularly swift, and the city was soon recognized by all as the supreme hub for the collection and distribution of commodities. Osaka *chōnin* were also dubbed *tenka no chōnin* (townsmen of the realm). In addition to supplying Edo with staples like rice, wheat, *sake*, oil, lumber, cotton textiles, dried sardines and more, Osaka merchants provided people all around Japan with fancy goods, sundries, and everyday essentials. This helped create strong ties between Osaka and the domains that produced goods for sale, and Osaka's neighboring farming villages.

Numerous daimyō built warehouse facilities in Osaka, the famous Dōjima rice market was established, numerous money-changing offices were opened, and regular contact with Edo was maintained thanks to the so-called *hishigaki* (bamboo fence-sided) and *taru* (barrel) ships that made frequent trips back and forth. As the years passed and modes of transportation continued to improve, commerce thrived and Osaka *chōnin* became increasingly influential. Osaka was the *tenka no daidokoro*, but, soon, it was also referred to as the *shoshiki nedan sōba no motokata* (price market master for all things). With all its warehouses and wholesalers, Osaka was unquestionably Japan's commerce capital.

As the Bakufu had hoped, Osaka's success also spelled prosperity for the city of Edo. When Edo chōnin—there were some run-of-the-mill merchants, but most were *goyō shōnin* (official merchants) in service of the warrior class—began emerging and asserting influence of their own, the shogun's capital grew faster than ever. The early eighteenth century saw Edo's population become the largest in the world at the time, and, by the end of the eighteenth century, Edo was Japan's undisputed cultural center. However, Edo failed to produce much of importance (arts and literature were exceptions, of course). It imported virtually everything from the provinces. Various domains built warehouse facilities in the city, new money-changing offices were opened, and commerce and transportation improved, but Edo was always a center of consumption.¹² In spite of this, samurai called Osaka's chōnin a good-for-nothing lot, and parasites, who did little more than live off the food and clothes produced by others.¹³ These so-called parasites only grew wealthier and more influential, however.

Osaka chōnin were not completely autonomous, but they had more freedom than Edo chōnin to manage their own affairs, political or otherwise. One illustration of this freedom is the way in which disagreements over monetary loans and lawsuits were handled. Extraordinary cases were in principle taken to the *hyōjōsho* (judicial council), the Bakufu's highest judicial office, but Osaka chōnin generally adjudicated their own claims.¹⁴ The distance between Edo and Osaka ensured that economic capital of Japan remained, in many ways, its own world.¹⁵ So long

¹² Miyamoto Mataji, *Kamigata to Bandō* (1969; repr., Tokyo: Seiabō, 1982), 209-11.

¹³ For original quotes, see Eijirō Honjō, *Economic Theory and History of Japan in the Tokugawa Period* (1943; repr., New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1965), 106.

¹⁴ Miyamoto Mataji, *Osaka no kenkyū*, vol. 3, *Kinsei Osaka no shōgyō shi, keiei shi teki kenkyū* (1969; repr., Osaka: Seibundō, 1975), 493.

¹⁵ It took Tosa official Mori Hirosada sixteen days (including delays) to travel by land from Osaka to Edo in 1732. Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, *Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo, and the Culture of Early Modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press,

as Osaka remained productive and posed no threats to the central government, there was little reason for the Bakufu to meddle in Osaka's affairs.

II. Osakan Identity

A. Chōnin Identity and Ideals

Scholars have written on a number of topics related to Osaka, and many have also given portraits of traditional Osaka chōnin values, traits, and qualities. It should suffice to review a few of these. Wakita writes the following about “Osaka personality,” best read as a comment on Osaka's chōnin class, not all Osakans as members of the same essentialized group:

The rise of Osaka as Japan's economic hub, together with merchants' ever increasing demographic, political, cultural, religious, and philosophical importance, may have created an “Osaka personality,” whose elements include a boastful self-confidence, a determined self-reliance, and pride in family, shop, and neighborhood, as well as a cold, empirically rational approach to the management of money, a tightfisted closeness with a penny, and a devilish persistence to see things through to the end.¹⁶

In the preface to his translation of selected stories by twentieth-century Osaka author Oda Sakunosuke, Burton Watson writes, “Osaka from early times came to be dominated by the merchant class and its ideals. An air of worldliness and hedonism has characterized the Osaka spirit down through the centuries, and its citizens—whether justly or not—as avid in their pursuit of material gain and prodigal in their enjoyment of the pleasures it can buy.”¹⁷ Miyamoto Mataji writes that Osaka chōnin were concerned about nothing more than their businesses and wanted little to do with the ruling class:

2009), 49. With fine weather, a ship could travel from Tosa (modern Kōchi prefecture) to Edo in a week or two in the early nineteenth century. *Ibid.*, 234. A ship traveling from Osaka to Edo would have taken the same length of time.

¹⁶ Wakita, “Osaka's Early Modern Urbanism,” in McClain and Wakita, 270-1.

¹⁷ Oda Sakunosuke, *Stories of Osaka Life*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), x.

Osaka chōnin demeanor might be summed up in Osaka *haikai* poet Konishi Raizan's (1654-1716) poem:

Obugyō no na sae mo shirazu toshi kurenu
Our high magistrate, knowing not even his name, the year has ended¹⁸

Osaka chōnin were non-confrontational to the point where they may have seemed passive. They may have even come across as somewhat ingratiating at first glance. Osaka chōnin were not, however, willing to accommodate their rulers to the point that they would lose influence. The Mitsui family, originally Kamigata merchants, exhorted their house to never forget that they were merchants and official business should therefore be regarded surplus. This essentially illustrates that independent business was the Osaka merchant's *hontai* [lit. true form] and official business was incidental. ... The Edo chōnin's disposition was heavily anchored in political affiliations, but Osaka chōnin cared little about these matters.¹⁹

These descriptions give us a picture of what Osaka chōnin were like during the early modern era, but something fundamental is missing: the people of Osaka had a reputation for being affable and good-humored people. This will receive due attention in the following pages.

B. In-House Ranks

Osaka chōnin may have been prudent and discreet in their dealings with officials, but this is not necessarily how they dealt with each other. As Inoue Hiroshi points out, early modern Osaka developed more as a *yokogata shakai* (horizontal society), which can be juxtaposed with Edo's more hierarchical system, a result of the city being populated by a high number of ranking officials (i.e., samurai).²⁰ A horizontal system, Inoue writes, was better suited for Osaka's merchant-centered society. While there were *danna* (masters), *goryōnin* (masters' wives), *bantō* (head clerks), *detchi* (apprentices), and *jochū* (female servants), who ranked in a sort of vertical

¹⁸ *Obugyō* refers to *machi bugyō*, or the town magistrate. *Machi bugyō* were samurai officials appointed as the central authority in urban areas during the early modern era. They oversaw the chōnin class and had various administrative and judicial duties.

¹⁹ Miyamoto Mataji, *Kansai bunmei to fūdo* (Tokyo: Shiseidō, 1971), 222-3.

²⁰ Inoue, *Osaka no bunka to warai*, 65.

structure inside the home, expanding the business and establishing strong working relationships with people outside sometimes worked against strict hierarchies.

Some merchant families had house codes that they passed down to ensure the commercial success of future generations. The following article appears in the Sumitomo family codes, dated the tenth month of 1750. It addresses the issue of rank, but it is quite clear that hierarchy has less weight than carrying out business properly:

Questions about the various jobs should be addressed to the person in charge, and his decisions, if appropriate, should be implemented immediately. If they do not seem appropriate, those involved should state their objections at once. They should never hesitate to speak out, for unless they say what they think, their superiors will never know their abilities. They have no reason to be afraid of speaking; for no one is perfect—everyone has his own strengths and weaknesses. Even if they are wrong, the experience of speaking up will still have been an educational one for them. Anyone who thinks he has something to say should not hesitate to speak out.²¹

C. Merchant Women and Samurai Women

As with families throughout Japan, Osaka's chōnin husbands were officially considered masters of their households. Women, subordinate, were expected to comply with their husbands' *kafū* (family customs). In merchant homes, however, this meant that women generally played a role in operating the family business. This put women into a position of relative power. Consequently, this is how they were commonly depicted in popular fiction and on stage. In his 1688 book, *Nippon eitaigura* (Japan's Eternal Storehouse), Ihara Saikaku (1642-1693) depicted merchant wives as having equal footing with their husbands—they work side by side. One of the hallmarks of Kamigata kabuki *sewamono* (domestic pieces), made popular by Chikamatsu

²¹ J. Mark Ramseyer, "Thrift and Diligence: House Codes of Tokugawa Merchant Families," *Monumenta Nipponica* 34, no. 2 (Summer 1979): 228.

Monzaemon (1653-1725), is that chōnin wives (and courtesan lovers) are generally portrayed as more robust than their ineffectual male-lead counterparts.²²

Merchant wives in Osaka were called *oyahan*, *goryōhan*, or *goryōnin* (titles for the ‘honorable lady of the house’). Family and business were rarely separate affairs in early modern Osaka, so there were frequent occasions for women to contribute wisdom and resourcefulness in business matters. By custom, wives at large merchant homes blackened their teeth and shaved their eyebrows—a practice originating in the coming-of-age ceremony of Heian court nobles, and a common indicator of married status into the Meiji period—but they rarely retired to the dark inner reaches of the house. They looked after house employees and were constantly visible. Though they were rarely mentioned in household codes, tough women with storehouse keys jingling at their waists were a regular fixture at merchant homes in early modern Osaka.²³

Chōnin women had more privileges than their samurai-class counterparts. For instance, a chōnin woman’s dowry was referred to as *shikigane* (a deposit). The rule stood that a man could not divorce his wife unless he returned this deposit, and it therefore provided some security against annulment. Next, a woman’s wardrobe and various belongings were forever her own. If divorced, she was allowed to take everything with her.²⁴ In regards to children in Osaka, men would generally take the sons and women the daughters. Women also could receive inheritances

²² Julie Iezzi defines *sewamono* as “plays that present the ‘familiar world’—familiar to a person of the Edo era, that is. *Sewa* characters thus include samurai, farmers, artisans and merchants. Urban commoners, including playwrights and actors, had limited access to the world of the high-ranking samurai and shogunate officials. Thus, for all practical purposes, the ‘familiar’ worlds portrayed in the *sewamono* were the homes and shops of artisans, merchants and laborers—and, of course, the licensed quarter.” Julie A. Iezzi, “The Art of Kabuki Speech: Rules and Rhythms” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, 2000), 42.

²³ Miyamoto Mataji, *Osaka no kenkyū*, vol. 5, *Fūzoku shi no kenkyū*, *Kōnoike ke no kenkyū* (Osaka: Seibundō, 1970), 54-5.

²⁴ This is in addition to dowries (money and goods), generally refundable in cases of divorce initiated by men.

in place of children if the latter happened to die at a young age. In Edo, men were given rights to custody of all children upon divorce. Based on this, it is plain to see that, while officially lower in status, Osaka chōnin women were generally in a better social position than women of samurai stock.²⁵ In Osaka and some other cities in western Japan, a woman could even serve as head of the household, although it was considered preferable to have a male do so.²⁶

D. Laughter: Tool of the Trade

Laughter has long been an important part of Osaka life. People in Edo certainly knew how to be funny, but, with its strictly vertical social structure, they had to be careful about how and when they laughed in public and formal settings. Ruth Benedict claimed that laughter is traditionally associated with shame in Japan.²⁷ However, she left out the point that this was more so the case in Edo/Tokyo, where laughter was more easily taken as an insult, a challenge to authority, or a personal attack. Honor was of utmost importance in the samurai code, so simply *not* laughing—or doing something to be laughed at—was a sure way to avoid shaming others or oneself. In a horizontal society like Osaka, on the other hand, particularly among chōnin, laughter was not taken as threatening or shameful. Rather, it was a tool with which one could express one's good will and cooperation. Laughter, or *warai tobasu* (laughing things off) rather,

²⁵ Mataji, *Osaka no kenkyū*, vol. 5, 56.

²⁶ James L. McClain, *Japan, a Modern History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002), 96. Sumitomo Toku (1849-1899), fourteenth head of the Sumitomo family, and Yoshimoto Sei (1888-1950), chairperson of Yoshimoto Entertainment following her husband's death, are famous examples of powerful merchant women in modern Osaka.

²⁷ Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (1946; repr., Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1969), 287.

also developed as a coping mechanism for dealing with adversity and failure in merchant society.²⁸

Inoue Hiroshi believes that friendly smiles and laughter were ways to bring people closer together in Osaka. Consequently, a culture of friendliness and cooperation by way of cheerfulness emerged there. Smiles and laughter enabled people to make good first impressions, and, with a bit of luck, find success in this competitive merchant city. Inoue attentively points out that competitors here not only worked side by side, but, after closing their shops for the day, also had to be civilized neighbors. Laughter was therefore helpful in cultivating both professional and private relationships. Osakans' good humor and open-mindedness also allowed them to get along well with—or at least tolerate—the countless newcomers who flooded into Osaka during the early modern period and after. Naturally, laughter became an intrinsic part of Osaka identity, and it remains so today.²⁹

E. Osaka, a Hub for Learning

Thirst for knowledge and openness to new or foreign ideas were other key characteristics of Osaka's chōnin. Osaka was the merchant capital, but it was also a center for scholarly endeavors. Even after foreign trade was closely regulated and restricted in scale, goods were regularly brought to Osaka by way of Nagasaki, the official port for trading with the Chinese and Dutch. For this reason, and due to its role as a center of *Rangaku* (Dutch Studies, particularly the study of medicine and science), early modern Osaka had a remarkably international character.³⁰

²⁸ Inoue, *Osaka no bunka to warai*, 125-6.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 67-70.

³⁰ Tetsuo Najita, "Ambiguous Encounters: Ogata Kōan and International Studies in Late Tokugawa Osaka," in McClain and Wakita, 213.

Scholars in Osaka believed that learning was important for the sake of learning, and benefitting others.

Osaka... was different. Knowledge there was not pegged to immediate political patronage and utility. ... Unlike Edo, where the acquisition of knowledge invariably was tied to political advantage, in Osaka the students sought knowledge without such an explicit goal, which made their quest that much more intense and committed.³¹

Tetsuo Najita points out that Ogata Kōan and scholars at the Tekijuku, his Rangaku school for commoners, believed that to save others was a human imperative. This was a concept taught in all Confucian academies and was the driving force underlying Dutch Studies³² (it was also the driving force behind Buddhism). Rangaku was no mere attempt on the part of Japanese scholars to be more Western, but it did effectively make them more cosmopolitan. This helped prime Osaka to flourish and gave progressive thinkers and entrepreneurs an engaging milieu in which to carry out their work. New concepts and high quality products, though not necessarily for the purpose of making a profit, were highly valued in Osaka. The idealistic vigor with which people in Osaka pursued learning and excellence became an additional feature of Osaka chōnin identity.

There is no single mold for this identity. Still, we are able to point to a number of characteristics and values that Osaka's chōnin exhibit. Writers have taken note of these since at least the eighteenth century and most have given similar accounts: Osakans were *yōki* (cheerful), hardworking, had an eye for detail, and tended to be service-oriented.³³ Osakans were naturally

³¹ Ibid., 218.

³² Ibid., 219.

³³ Takeuchi Makoto, *Edo to Osaka* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1989), 139-40. Early examples include Iwagaki Mitsusada's *Akindo sugiwai kagami* (Mirror of Merchant Livelihoods, 1757), Kanzawa Tokō's *Okina'gusa* (Jottings of an Old Man, 1772), and Takizawa Bakin's *Kiryō manroku* (Random Jottings on Travel, 1802). Interestingly, Bakin writes that, when compared to

expected to obey laws set forth by the shogunate like everyone else in the realm, but they enjoyed a greater sense of freedom than others, especially those in and around Edo. Osakans had more leeway to steer their lives in the directions they wanted them to go, to laugh and be merry, and invest in leisurely pursuits. While one can argue that the center of culture shifted to Edo, Osaka's ethos of equality, excellence, laughter, and much more, remained intact.

III. Osaka Arts and Literatures

A. Ancient Times to Medieval

Osaka did not become a bustling economic center until the early modern era, but Naniwa's cultural and religious history predates the Nara period (710-84), when the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* were written. Even after Naniwa ceased being home to Japan's early emperors, people continued inhabiting the area. Naniwa also remained home to important religious centers, such as the temple Shitennōji and the Kōzu and Sumiyoshi Shrines, which had neighborhoods and markets surrounding them. Through the centuries, aristocrats continued to visit Naniwa on pilgrimages and wrote poetry about it. A number of poets, such as Lady Ise (d. ca. 938), Nōin (988 - ca. 1150s), and Saigyō (1118-90), are thought to have had ties to places near Naniwa.³⁴ As the medieval era drew to a close, an increasing number of *waka* (classical poetry) and *renga* (linked verse) masters made their way to places around Naniwa, where propagating their arts would be more lucrative.

Kyotoites, Osakans have a disposition somewhat similar to Edoites, because they both exhibit *kakki* (a lively nature).

³⁴ Kojima, et al., *Osaka no bungei*, 7.

B. Early Modern Era: Renga and Haikai

By the early modern era, renga had lost much of its social function and it soon grew irrelevant as an art form. Osaka-based renga master Nishiyama Sōin (1605-82) found a way of keeping up with the times, however. He founded the Danrin School of haikai poetry, which stood in stark contrast to the haikai of the Teimon School of Kyoto-based Matsunaga Teitoku. Teitoku pushed for a playful poetry that fundamentally paid homage to the classics, but Sōin aimed for irreverence if not bold vulgarity. In Haruo Shirane's words, "Danrin haikai developed in Osaka, the new center of commerce, where a new society of increasingly wealthy and powerful urban commoners was creating its own culture. Sōin... stressed spontaneity and freedom of form and movement, linking verses without excessive concern for rules or precedent."³⁵ Breaking the rules, or innovation one might say, was fundamental to Danrin haikai and the popular poetry and prose that would follow. While Sōin was not an Osaka native, his art is viewed as a product of the city that he made home.

C. Early Modern Era: Popular Fiction

Sōin's most famous student was Ihara Saikaku, an Osaka native whose father was a merchant. Saikaku left the family business to dedicate himself to haikai and became a local celebrity for his public poetry marathons and unparalleled innovation. He gained *ukiyo-zōshi* widespread fame after he published his first book, *Kōshoku ichidai otoko* (Life of an Amorous Man, 1682).³⁶ Saikaku fashioned a new haikai-influenced prose style and was a master at

³⁵ Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 175.

³⁶ Ukiyo-zōshi is vernacular fiction from the Kamigata region, popular from the late seventeenth to the late eighteenth century.

weaving together unexpected themes. The rapidly growing chōnin readership loved his playful style, which served as one more indicator of Osaka's rise to cultural prominence.

Yomihon (lit. reading books) and *sharebon* (books of wit and fashion) are commonly remembered as great Edo genres, but these originated in Osaka. The first yomihon is believed to be Tsuga Teishō's (also known as Kinro Gyōsha, 1718-95?) *Kokon kidan hanabusa sōshi* (A Book of Flowers: Strange Tales Old and New, 1749), which preceded Edo's first yomihon, Takebe Ayatari's *Honchō suikoden* (Japanese Water Margin, 1773), by almost twenty-five years. Yomihon were inspired by Chinese *baihua xiaoshuo* (Jpn. *hakuwa shōsetsu*, vernacular novels), imported to Osaka from the continent, most likely by way of Nagasaki, by the rich and eccentric merchant-intellectual Kimura Kenkadō (1736-1802).

Scholars in both Kamigata and Edo were fascinated with this new import, but their interests lay in different places. In Edo, Ogyū Sorai's school pored over *hakuwa shōsetsu*, but generally as a supplement to their study of Chinese language as it related to classical Chinese texts. In Osaka and Kyoto, scholars treated *hakuwa shōsetsu* as a distinct specialization. They translated them into Japanese, compiled reading dictionaries, and even rendered Japanese drama into Chinese vernacular, one example being Tsuga Teishō's (1718-1794) *Shimeizen* (Four Cries of Cicadas, 1771), an anthology of nō and jōruri plays. During the Kyōhō to Meiwa years (1717-1772) especially, Kamigata scholars imitated the Chinese vernacular style, adapting it to their own Japanese novels. Teishō's *Kokon kidan hanabusa sōshi* and Ueda Akinari's (1734-1809) *Ugetsu monogatari* (Tales of the Rain and Moon, 1768-76) are examples that exhibit strong

influence of Chinese vernacular fiction. These scholars frequently adopted the Chinese literati spirit wholesale and made it the centerpiece of their lives.³⁷

Early modern Kamigata-Osaka poets and writers doubtless profited from taking on students and writing for publishers, but it remains clear that Osaka literati—often chōnin—were concerned, if not obsessed, with learning for the sake of learning and quality of work. Even Saikaku’s marathon haikai expositions, in which speed and quantity took precedence over quality, can be looked at as exercises to improve his art and encourage high-level participation from others. Writers’ concern for quality was arguably a result of their living in a city constantly concerned with efficiency and offering high quality products and services. Chōnin turned to literary and other artistic pursuits to get their minds off their everyday business, but their general insistence on excellence meant that they frequently raised their ‘diversions’ to professional levels.

IV. Performing Arts in Kamigata

A. A New Instrument Comes to Kamigata

The Chinese *sanxian* (Jpn. *sangen*) and its Ryukyuan offshoot (*sanshin*) were brought to the port of Sakai near Osaka in the second half of the sixteenth century. Early on, the blind musician Ishimura Kengyō (d. 1642) adapted this fretless three-string snakeskin banjo-like instrument to popular *Heikyoku* (Heike ballads).³⁸ Soon the *jabisen* (lit. snakeskin strings), as the instrument had been called, was renamed *shamisen* (lit. three-flavor strings), cat skin was used in place of snakeskin, and the instrument was used for accompaniment in various forms of popular

³⁷ Kojima, et al., *Osaka no bungei*, 12-13.

³⁸ As with the *biwa*, a wooden lute with a short fretted neck, it was common to find people with impaired vision specializing as shamisen and *koto* musicians.

music. This three-stringed drumhead lute was popular in Osaka almost as soon as it landed in Sakai. Though the shamisen gained momentum in the blind musician circuit of Kyoto, the rising merchant capital turned out to be the ideal city for this new shamisen music to flourish. Osaka was, after all, the hotbed for new cultural production. The music of the chōnin was played on this alluring instrument for the next few centuries. Perhaps it is not too far of a stretch to liken the shamisen's popularity and influence to that of the guitar—particularly jazz and blues riffs and heavy metal solos—in twentieth century American music and culture. The shamisen became especially loved after it was made the chief instrument of jōruri and kabuki. Oppositely, it might be argued that it was the shamisen's popularity that brought more people to the theater.

B. Jōruri and Kabuki

Ningyō jōruri (puppet theater, also referred to as *bunraku* and simply *jōruri*) is a descendant of puppet traditions from Japan's Awaji Island that date perhaps to the fifteenth century and storytelling traditions that predate this. Shamisen was being used to accompany *jōruri* earlier in the seventeenth century, but the art became widely popular when shamisen music was paired with the chanting of Takemoto Gidayū (1651-1714), who had a theater in Osaka. Kabuki began as a form of dance drama around 1603, when it was first performed on the banks of Kyoto's Kamo River by Okuni and her troupe of female performers. Kabuki's popularity grew rapidly and, in a matter of decades, troupes (eventually all male) were presenting kabuki to enthusiastic crowds in the three major cities. Later, playwrights occasionally wrote for both theaters and, because kabuki and *jōruri* competed constantly (material was regularly stolen), the arts share many of the same stories.

Kamigata kabuki stands apart from its Edo counterpart in a number of ways. Two of the most fundamental points that kabuki scholars make are that Kamigata is home to the *wagoto* (soft style) acting tradition and Edo is home to *aragoto* (rough style). These, of course, are upshots of the different demographics and tastes in Japan's urban centers. In Osaka, Sakata Tōjūrō I made *wagoto* roles popular in 1678 with his numerous performances of the role of Fujiya Izaemon, an ineffectual hero-lover with a good sense of humor.³⁹ Izaemon and subsequent *wagoto* heroes—and their *jōruri* puppet versions—were *chōnin*, just like most of the people who made up Kamigata kabuki audiences. *Chōnin* could relate to these characters and, indeed, some even aspired to be like them. *Wagoto* was so well received that it was soon the focal point of both Kamigata kabuki and *jōruri*. *Aragoto* was a hallmark of Edo kabuki, not surprising in a city with so many samurai. Audiences there were naturally more interested in the samurai class and loved seeing plays with grand martial heroes.

The second difference is that, while styles did get fused, Kamigata kabuki and *jōruri*, with their frequent depictions of daily life, exhibited more realism than the arts in Edo. Beginning in the Genroku period, Kamigata playwrights found great success by staging dramatized versions of actual lovers' suicides and samurai scandals. In contrast to Edo's *aragoto* characters, Kamigata characters were written to be believable, real people. While some Kamigata period plays featured impressive martial heroes (e.g., Chikamatsu's *Yotsugi Soga* [The Soga Successor, 1683] and *Kokusen'ya kassen* [Battles of Guoxingye, 1715]), the most enduring

³⁹ Ihara Toshirō, *Kabuki nenpyō*, 4th ed., ed. Kawatake Shigetoshi (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1972), 132. The play, *Yūgiri nagori no shōgatsu* (Farewell to Yūgiri at New Year, 1678), was staged just one month after the Shinmachi courtesan Yūgiri fell ill and died. Tōjūrō, thirty-two at the time, first performed the role of Izaemon on the third day of the second month and starred in four different productions of this play during the same year, all in Osaka. He performed the role a total of eighteen times during his lifetime.

characters were the gentle and ineffectual wagoto heroes, who could not uproot bamboo trees with their bare hands or cut down armies of enemies with a single swipe of a gargantuan sword—or blossom-clad staves—as aragoto heroes in Edo could.

Kamigata sewamono featured the most convincing characters, but even Kamigata *jidaimono* (contemporary plays disguised as historical drama) characters strike one as more realistic than their Edo counterparts. Kamigata characters are more believable because, although they are capable of showing strength, they often battle with human weaknesses and other personal challenges. This pleased local audiences and made plays hits. Chikamatsu Monzaemon mastered the character type of the ineffectual hero when he wrote *Sonezaki shinjū* (Lovers' Suicide at Sonezaki, 1703) for Takemoto Gidayū's puppet theater in Osaka. Unlike Tōjūrō's popular roles, this new character was, in Laurence Kominz's words, a "lowly romantic hero with no sense of humor, no sense of style, and no money, who was totally obsessed with the love of just one woman."⁴⁰ Needless to say, audiences related to this unembellished anti-hero. Finally, there is a third difference that we should keep in mind when discussing Kamigata rakugo in later chapters: Kamigata kabuki is, on the whole, more musical than Edo kabuki.

Andrew Gerstle wrote that the celebrated jōruri chanter and theater manager Takemoto Gidayū was a product of the young Osaka merchant culture, which made self-reliance a prime virtue.⁴¹ Though his master, Uji Kaganojō (1635-1711), obliged him to adhere to a carefully guarded tradition (i.e., his own Kaganojō style), Gidayū broke with him to write his own treatises emphasizing the importance of innovation and catering to contemporary audiences. Gidayū's

⁴⁰ Laurence R. Kominz, *The Stars Who Created Kabuki: Their Lives, Loves, and Legacy* (New York: Kodansha International, 1997), 171.

⁴¹ C. Andrew Gerstle, *Circles of Fantasy: Conventions in the Plays of Chikamatsu* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1986), 31.

contemporary style, and his partnership with the famous playwright Chikamatsu, resulted in his winning fame and surpassing his master in popularity. Subsequent jōruri performers followed Gidayū's lead—they championed individualism and self-reliance, never establishing the kind of family or communal traditions found in nō and Edo kabuki. Kabuki troupes in Osaka did not have a strong sense of keeping alive household traditions (as opposed to individual style) as their counterparts did in Edo.⁴²

As Osaka chōnin gained influence and financial freedom, they not only attended the theater, but they also paid for lessons, founded amateur performance clubs, and put on shows of their own. This was especially true for jōruri since materials were easier to come by at shops, some of which specialized in jōruri books, but amateurs also practiced kabuki, nō, and a variety of dance forms. As Gerstle has pointed out, amateur jōruri performers got to see their names in print. In 1786, *Kishin shirōto jōruri hyōbanki* (Amateur Jōruri Critiques), publications about amateur performances, went on sale in the three major cities.⁴³ As we can see, Osaka chōnin enjoyed coupling their poised do-it-yourself approach with their wholehearted enthusiasm for the arts.

V. The Breakdown of the Merchant System

In 1787 there was a major uprising in Osaka, the result of rice market cornering. This ushered in the Kansei reforms (1787-93). At this time, merchants were receiving increased censure from the government and community for being too extravagant or unscrupulous. The state of affairs inside merchant homes also began deteriorating around this time. The latter issue

⁴² C. Andrew Gerstle, "Takemoto Gidayū and the Individualistic Spirit of Osaka Theater," in McClain and Wakita, 120.

⁴³ Gerstle, "Takemoto Gidayū," in McClain and Wakita, 121.

was exacerbated by a sudden change in Osaka's demographics. During the economic rebound following the Kansei reforms, *shakuyanin* (home renters), most of whom were day laborers, *hōkōnin* (merchant house employees), or aspiring merchants flooded into Osaka from the surrounding areas and provinces. Shakuyanin soon outnumbered home- and landowners. They were not required to pay town levies, so their say in local politics and other matters was severely limited. Officially, they were not part of the town and therefore had to depend on their landlords or employers (often the same person) for virtually everything.⁴⁴

The first three decades of the nineteenth century were some of Osaka's most prosperous. This was due to the population increase, but also to merchant houses instituting or reinforcing strict house codes, which Mark Ramseyer points out addressed the future prosperity of houses by exhorting successors or *hōkōnin* to work diligently, be frugal, obey the government, and protect the reputation of their houses.⁴⁵ *Hōkōnin* were directed to give customers the best service possible, which would double as a precaution against possible future disgruntlement that could lead to *uchikowashi* (house dismantlings). To give one instance, in 1797, the Obashiya, a wealthy dealer in kimono fabrics and used articles, drafted a document that insisted that their house would uphold the highest standards in all matters. Among other things, speculative buying (i.e., playing the market) was prohibited—if rice prices went up, the house promised to buy rice at high prices then mix in barley to make it last longer, like the rest of the population. In 1803, the

⁴⁴ Okamoto Hiroshi, “*Kinsei kōki ni okeru machi to jūnin: Shiragachō o megutte*,” *Rekishi hyōron* 547 (November 1995): 27-28.

⁴⁵ J. Mark Ramseyer, “Thrift and Diligence: House Codes of Tokugawa Merchant Families,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 34, no. 2 (Summer 1979): 210.

Obashiya gave their hōkōnin a customer service manual, which they were required to read aloud together at monthly meetings whether they liked it or not. There are signs that they did not.⁴⁶

By the 1830s, hōkōnin made up more than half of Osaka's population. The number of hōkōnin had essentially doubled from fifty years earlier, which had a number of unintended consequences.⁴⁷ Most significantly, it damaged ties between individual hōkōnin and the families for whom they worked. Before the influx of new workers, hōkōnin could hope to be given 'tenure-track' positions. After years of service—and in many cases living—in the *honke* (head house/store), they might be given a *bekke* (branch house) of their own to manage. It was a common aspiration of hōkōnin to be granted such a privilege. This system began disappearing with the influx of hōkōnin at the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, and the confidence of long-term employees therefore waned. Experienced hōkōnin increasingly left service to marry into other merchant families as *yōshi* (adoptees), or to start businesses of their own. In an attempt to head this off, merchant houses threatened would-be defectors with blacklisting, effectively setting up enormous obstacles to anybody trained in the businesses of those houses.⁴⁸

Osaka's wealthiest merchants sought to control the market and increase their wealth by forming private circles. These families also began limiting opportunities for hōkōnin. *Bekke* (or *bunke*, family-operated branches) were gradually given only to sons or other blood relatives, not long-term hōkōnin, who may have put in ten or even twenty years with the family. The terms of employment for hōkōnin became shorter and shorter and merchant houses were faced with

⁴⁶ Idota Fumiko, "Kinsei chūkōki ni okeru Osaka shōnin 'Obashiya ittō' no ketsugō kankei," *Kansei Gakuin shigaku* 31 (March 2004): 43, 53.

⁴⁷ Inui Hiromi, "Kasei-Tenpō ni okeru Osaka chōnin shakai no dōkō," *Rekishi kenkyū* 18 (1980): 230-1.

⁴⁸ Idota Fumiko, "Kinsei chūkōki ni okeru Osaka shōnin," 53-4.

increased difficulty in securing experienced (and loyal) help. Not all hōkōnin dreamed of managing a bekke, but those who did started waking up to reality: in the nineteenth century, the odds were that hard work and loyalty would not pay off.

The Tenpō reforms, and particularly the 1841 order to dissolve *kabu nakama* (merchant guilds), only made matters worse. By 1854, approximately fifty percent of hōkōnin had less than three years of experience. The rest did not have a great deal more.⁴⁹ The political and economic outlook was so bleak that, by 1868, the entire population of Osaka had dropped by some sixty thousand. Senba, which once shipped all over Japan servicing the Bakufu and various *han* (domains), faced a grave situation. Hōkōnin were widely disgruntled and this was a major factor in the breakdown of the old merchant system.⁵⁰

VI. Conclusion

Words and concepts that came to characterize Osaka chōnin (and Osakans in general) in the early modern era include easygoing, energetic, enterprising, hardworking, individualistic, innovative, meticulous, mirthful, multitalented, open-minded, optimistic, proud, realistic, self-reliant, skilled, and the list goes on. It is not as though Edo was without mirthful or self-reliant people, but Osakans have been defined more frequently as having this set of qualities. Osakans were routinely criticized for being too tight with money or for profiting at the expense of others, but this criticism usually came from people outside the city, such as jealous samurai or urbane

⁴⁹ Inui Hiromi, “*Bakumatsuki Osaka chōnin shakai no dōkō*,” *Rekishi kenkyū* 26 (1988): 39.

⁵⁰ Not all merchant neighborhoods faced the same situation as Senba. To give one example, Shimanouchi’s Kikuyachō (modern Shinsaibashisuji 2-*chōme*), a neighborhood of small retailers and specialty product craftsmen who catered to Osaka and the immediate vicinity, managed to prosper even after the Meiji period. *Ibid.*, 15-16.

Edokko, who were known for throwing money around on a whim to display panache. Osaka chōnin may not have been willing to throw their money around like Edokko, but they probably would have preferred the term penny-wise to penny-pincher. Frugality was a virtue in Osaka, after all. Osaka merchants may have profited, but there is no question about their pride in the services that they provided. They were proud of their jobs, homes, and traditions. As we have seen, they were also passionate about learning, arts, and literature. Kamigata-Osaka's sociocultural milieu gave birth to various arts of lasting consequence in the early modern era. Homegrown rakugo, as we will see, is another.

Readers will do well to keep in mind Kamigata-Osaka's sociocultural milieu for the remainder of this dissertation. It will come as no surprise that one of the principal genres in Kamigata rakugo is the merchant story, discussed in detail in Chapters Three and Four, but there is an important question to consider: do merchant stories—and merchant-related material in other genres—genuinely reflect shōnin katagi? In nearly every case, the answer will be no. Merchants are expected to be upstanding hard workers, but they are nearly always presented as the comical opposite. This sort of parody is timeless and therefore continues to be enjoyable to today's audiences despite its dated subject matter, but readers might like to consider, too, how audiences around the turn of the twentieth century—made up largely of hōkōnin—would have received this material. Considering the aforementioned breakdown of the merchant system, such lampoonery would have been particularly well received.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORY OF KAMIGATA RAKUGO

Edo hanashika names strike me as elegant. They are elaborate and fashionably witty, like the names of *kyōka* poets. One does not find the same pattern of taking literati-like names in Kamigata [rakugo]. Both forms of rakugo have backgrounds as commoner arts that were performed outdoors, but the Edo variety was moved indoors early on. From about the 1780s, rakugoka, *kyōka* poets, and others intermingled and created a distinct product. The Kamigata art, on the other hand, had a stronger focus on pure performance—making people laugh for a fee. Naturally, there were differences in the ways that these arts developed.¹

—Kamigata hanashika Katsura Beichō III (1925-)

Comic storytelling in Kamigata developed outdoors through much of its history.

Consequently, it was important for artists not only to be able to lure in listeners, but also to keep their attention. Storytellers had to be novel and stories needed to be interesting. Early on, stories were quite short and almost purely for laughs, but as time went on and amateur participation increased, audiences could be counted on to come to formal shows (and pay for admission), and stories were made longer and more complex. Kabuki themes and music, and other arts, were also incorporated. In due course, a traditional repertoire was established. Like many other things, the center of Kamigata storytelling shifted to Osaka from Kyoto. Once situated in Osaka, comic storytelling developed characteristics to suit the tastes of the people there, namely *shōnin* (merchants) and other *chōnin*.

¹ Katsura Beichō, “*Fūryū mukashibanashi*” in Geinōshi Kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei*, vol. 8, *Yose, misemono* (Tokyo: San’ichi Shobō, 1976), 87.

I. Early Traditions (pre-1600)

Popular storytelling—rakugo and the more serious, dramatic-themed *kōshaku* (modern *kōdan*)—are commonly linked to premodern Buddhist *sekkyō* (sermon) traditions. En no Gyōja (ca. 634-707?), founder of the syncretic Buddhist sect Shugendō, and the monk Gyōki (668-749) may have been the first men to reach out to the masses with sermons, in and around Yamato (modern Nara prefecture). There are almost no extant texts with details about what the earliest Japanese *sekkyō* consisted of, but there is mention of these monks in *Shoku Nihongi* (comp. 797). The following is an entry dated the second day of the second month, Tenpyō Shōhō 1 (February 23, 749):

[Gyōki] was a priest of Yakushiji... ..his temperament was pure and genuine, and he was naturally endowed with superior intelligence. ...[H]e traveled widely in the capital and countryside and proselytized among the masses. The priests and laypeople who revered him deeply and followed in his path numbered in the thousands. ... Gyōki manifested many wondrous marvels and miracles and thus the people of that time called him “Gyōki Bodhisattva.”²

It was with the rise of the Tendai and Shingon sects in the Heian period (794-1185) that lectures on the Lotus Sutra became a popular pastime for nobility and, thereafter, the common people. The young yet high-ranking monk Seihan (962-999), reported to have a splendidly beautiful voice and good looks, was a *sekkyō* star of sorts.³ It was not long before monks were integrating secular tales into their *sekkyō* as a form of comic relief. As hoped, this helped popularize Buddhism. Notwithstanding, as people grew disillusioned with life and enthusiasm for religion waned in the late medieval era, storytelling was set on a decidedly secular path. Feudal warlords such as Takeda Shingen (1521-73), Oda Nobunaga (1534-82), and Toyotomi

² Ross Bender, “*Shoku Nihongi* – The Year *Tenpyō Shōhō* 1,” *PJMS Papers* (June 2012): 6-7. Accessed July 15, 2014. http://www.pmjs.org/pmjs-papers/papers-index/bender-tenpyo_shoho1.

³ Sekiyama Kazuo, *Sekkyō no rekishiteki kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1973), 26.

Hideyoshi (1537-98) kept *otogishū* and *hanashi no shū* (storyteller companions) in their retinues; but, once the country was united under Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616) and peace ensued, these men were released from duty.⁴ Nevertheless, a much larger audience would be taking pleasure in their stories shortly.

II. Early Modern Era

A. Popular Storytelling's First Major Source: Seisuishō

In the first decades of the early modern era, former *otogishū* and sermon monks compiled *waraibanashi* (funny tales, anecdotes, also called *shōwa*) in books such as *Gigen yoki shū* (Collection of Good Humor, ca. 1615-24), *Kinō wa kyō no monogatari* (Today's Tales of Yesterday, 1624-44), and *Seisuishō* (Wake, Sleep, Laugh, 1623-28). Modern rakugo has been traced to narrative and literary traditions that predate the early modern era, but most rakugo scholars agree that rakugo history should begin with *Seisuishō*, a wide-ranging collection of more than one thousand *waraibanashi*. Later, 310 of these were published in an abridged version with the same title.⁵

Seisuishō was compiled by Anrakuan Sakuden (1554-1642), the fifty-fifth abbot of the Kyoto temple Seganji. In 1619, he received the highest honor of his career: Imperial sanction to wear the coveted robe of purple. As he approached retirement, his favorite pastimes were entertaining guests in his tearoom (the Anrakuan), dabbling in poetry, and tending his beloved

⁴ *Otogishū* and *hanashi no shū* were generally different people with different functions; the former were practiced tellers of tales, the latter simply good talkers.

⁵ Miles Kenneth McElrath Jr. translated a substantial selection of stories from the unabridged version of *Seisuishō* in "The *Seisuishō* of Anrakuan Sakuden: Humorous Anecdotes of the Sengoku and Early Edo Periods" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1971), 100-433.

camellias.⁶ In the preface to *Seisuishō*, Sakuden writes, “This year at age seventy, I spend my free time resting my mind, day in and day out behind my brushwood door. Looking at the trails left by my writing brush, I cannot help laughing myself out of sleep. I have therefore titled this book *Seisuishō*.”⁷ Sakuden is sometimes referred to as the founder of rakugo, but this strikes one as an attempt to keep with trends of art groups/advocates claiming aristo predecessors (e.g., kabuki and Ama no Uzume, *biwa hōshi* [traveling biwa performers] and Prince Semimaru). First of all, the word *rakugo* was not in regular use until the Meiji period. More importantly, rakugo denotes a commoner-centered form of comic storytelling, and Sakuden was not a part of it. Sakuden should be credited instead as being a distinguished transmitter of the elite medieval comic tradition.

Sakuden’s waraibanashi come from a number of sources including Japanese medieval *setsuwa* (anecdote) collections such as *Konjaku monogatari shū* (Collection of Tales of Times Now Past, ca. 1120), *Uji shūi monogatari* (Tales From Uji, early thirteenth century), and *Shasekishū* (Collection of Sand and Pebbles, 1279-83), not to mention Chinese comic lore. Some stories in *Seisuishō* may be Sakuden’s originals, but most represent earlier Buddhist and secular *setsuwa* traditions and especially the tales of the otogishū and hanashi no shū, with whom Sakuden had regular contact in the world of *chadō* (tea ceremony).⁸

Seisuishō was originally compiled for one of Kyoto’s elite officials. It focuses largely on the commoner world and its format is *kana*. This made it a good prospect for a common audience whose literacy was on the rise. The publishing industry was just beginning to develop, however, so the actual reach of *Seisuishō* was limited. It is reasonable to think that Sakuden had

⁶ Ibid., 85.

⁷ Miyao Yoshio, ed., *Seisuishō*, vol. 1, *Honkokuhēn* (Tokyo: Shirakaba Bunko, 1976), 11.

⁸ Sekiyama Kazuo, *Anrakuan Sakuden: hanashi no keifu* (Tokyo: Seiabō, 1961), 168.

preservation and not perpetuation in mind while compiling this work, but the result is that it inspired others to compile new collections of comic tales (commonly referred to as *waraibanashibon*, or simply *hanashibon*). Around twenty new titles appeared in the Manji to Kanbun years (1658-73) alone, including *Waraigusa* (Random Funny Tales), *Hyaku monogatari* (One Hundred [Ghost] Tales), *Shikatabanashi* (Gesticulated Tales), *Ikkyū hanashi* (Funny Tales by Ikkyū), and *Sorori kyōkabanashi* (Sorori's Comic Poetry Tales), all of which bore a resemblance to Sakuden's *Seisuishō* in that they represented earlier traditions and were often didactic in nature.⁹

To give an idea of the kind of stories that appeared in early *waraibanashibon*, the following are two examples from *Seisuishō*. The first story is comical because a monk is shown to have less common sense than his young acolyte:

Seisuishō Story 24 (vol. 1, *Kashikodate* [Acting Smart] section)

A certain monk heads out with an acolyte to the bath. The monk hurriedly unravels his *obi* and gets into the tub with his hat still on. Since the monk always insists on attaching logic to everything, the acolyte pretends not to see what has happened. The monk changes tubs and the acolyte finally speaks up, "How about removing your hat?" The monk nonchalantly reaches up to his head and says, "Maybe it's about time I took this off."¹⁰

The second example is funny for similar incongruity, though the joke is on the less-intellectual man at the end of the tale:

Seisuishō Story 75 (vol. 3, *Fumonji* [Not Knowing How to Write] section)

A man visits a scribe to ask for help with writing a letter. When the scribe asks to whom the letter should be addressed, the man tells him to write Shinnoku. "I can write *Shinroku*, but I don't know of a character that's read *noku*," the scribe confesses. "Well, you're

⁹ Ibid., 169-70.

¹⁰ Miyao, *Seisushō*, 22.

deplorable,” the man retorts. “Well,” the scribe fires back, “you don’t even know the character for *mui* in Muikaichi!”¹¹

B. Hanashibon

The first purely comical hanashibon were published in the Enhō era (1673-81). Hanashibon at this time were collections of relatively short comical anecdotes called *waraibanashi*, *karukuchibanashi*, and, few years later, *otoshibanashi* and *kobanashi*. Comic stories were also known by the generic term *hanashi*. Hanashi from the 1670s on were different from earlier stories in that they conspicuously steered away from proper nouns and didactics, became more freestanding, and had more developed *ochi*. They became increasingly steeped in humor rooted in the daily lives of the common people. Great importance was attached to sheer amusement. Stories once set in the upper reaches of society were increasingly placed in the world of the commoner. The new generation who composed and published these hanashi also differed from the men who had previously collected funny tales. It was not only a group of educated monks and the like; anybody with a love (and knack) for hanashi could take part and this led to increased popularity.

Judging from the three extant Enhō hanashibon, it was common practice for publishers to omit the names of authors/compiler. There is evidence that Nomoto Michimoto (also known as Dōgen, 1655-1714) wrote *Sugi yōji* (Cedar Toothpick, 1680), but the authors of *Aki no yo no tomo* (Companion for Autumn Evenings, 1677) and *Hayashi monogatari* (Tales from a Grove,

¹¹ Ibid., 44. *Roku* and *mui* are both readings for the number six. Muikaichi was a village in what is now Shimane Prefecture. This story is an early version of the modern rakugo story *Daisho* (The Scribe).

1680) remain unknown.¹² In line with the increased popularity of hanashibon, of a new group of skilled *zekkō geinin* (oral entertainers, also *zekkōsha*) emerged. Zekkō geinin began giving regular performances in public spaces, usually shrines and busy thoroughfares, around the Tenna years (1681-4). The most popular storytellers published hanashibon of their own and their names were often included in the title.¹³

C. The Dawn of Popular Storytelling

In the seventeenth century, innumerable *daidō geinin* and *tabi geinin* (street performers and itinerant performers, respectively) gathered in and traveled between Japan's large cities (i.e., Osaka, Kyoto, Nagoya, Edo), and to other castle towns and pilgrimage sites, striving to stand out as unique with a myriad of *misemono* (lit. things for showing, i.e., cheap sideshow spectacles, exhibitions, and freak shows). Most performers and acts were quickly forgotten, but some managed to flourish in an atmosphere of intense competition. Kabuki, which went on to become the nucleus of Japanese popular culture, began as a similar kind of vaudeville or burlesque show.¹⁴ Perhaps all smalltime performers hoped to find similar success.

¹² Transcriptions of these hanashibon and some explanatory notes can be found in Mutō Sadao and Oka Masahiko, eds., *Hanashibon taikai*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 1976). The publishers were Hayashi Bunzō, Yorozuya Seishirō, and Manzokuya Seibei, respectively. Seishirō may have been of relation to (or actually was) Yorozuya Seibei, who published works by Saikaku and other authors who wrote for the Hachimonjiya. Hayashi Bunzō has elsewhere been identified as the publisher of an earlier version of *Aki no yoru no tomo* (see *Hanashibon taikai*, vol. 4, 346), so one wonders if Yorozuya Seishirō, Manzokuya Seibei, and Hayashi Bunzō might not be the same person.

¹³ This and the previous two paragraphs are informed by Suzuki Kumi, *Kinsei hanashibon no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 2009), 56-7.

¹⁴ Laurence R. Kominz, *The Stars Who Created Kabuki: Their Lives, Loves, and Legacy* (New York: Kodansha International, 1997), 18.

People in early modern Japan's major cities were eager to hear new stories and be entertained. The public craved novelty in entertainment and this is why *misemono* were so popular around busy streets and in entertainment districts. Popular comic storytelling originated in part as one of these *misemono*.¹⁵ In the Meireki to Manji years (1655-1660), storytellers began depicting characters in funny tales with detailed *shikata* and *miburi* (both refer to gesticulations, the former more energetic and the latter more mimetic). Not long after this, the following poem appeared in the publication *Komachi odori* (Komachi Dance, 1666):

Omoshiroki shikatabanashi ya Fuji no yuki
How enjoyable, those *shikatabanashi*, snow on Mt. Fuji

Shikatabanashi being mentioned in a poem published in a book suggests that comic storytelling was gaining steam as a viable art.¹⁶

The first popular comic storytellers who gained status as stars of sorts were Tsuyu no Gorōbei (ca. 1643 - 1703, Kyoto), Yonezawa Hikohachi (d. 1714, Osaka), and Shikano Buzaemon (1649-99, Edo).¹⁷ These men emerged from the multitude of *misemono* acts mentioned above and it is clear that they were inspired by collections, such as *Seisuishō* and others published before the 1680s. To give one instance, one can find a number of *Seisuishō* stories adapted in Tsuyu no Gorōbei's *hanashibon*, which will be discussed in more detail below.

Storytellers in Kyoto and Osaka narrated stories outdoors. Their *tsujibanashi* (outdoor stories) followed the tradition of *tsuji dangi* (outdoor sermons) told by monks. *Tsuji* literally means 'crossroads', but the term also refers to outdoor spaces like market places, temple grounds, and entertainment districts, which were not always separate. Popular comic storytelling in

¹⁵ Andrew L. Markus, "The Carnival of Edo: Misemono Spectacles From Contemporary Accounts," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 45, no. 2 (Dec., 1985): 501.

¹⁶ Teruoka Yasutaka, *Rakugo no nenrin* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1978), 39-40.

¹⁷ Buzaemon moved to Edo from Osaka.

Kamigata was for the next century almost always done outdoors. The case was different in Edo, where storytellers more commonly performed indoors.

One reason that artists in Kamigata developed an enduring outdoor tradition is, simply, because they could. Kyoto and Osaka were far away from the seat of the shogunate, which required feudal lords and their retinues from all over Japan to spend every other year in Edo. Samurai walked the streets of every district in Edo with shogunal officials among them. This was in stark contrast to the situation in Kamigata, where chōnin dominated the urban environment and samurai were relatively rare. Kamigata storytellers enjoyed more freedom. They were certainly not faced with the same kind of monitoring that Edo storytellers were.¹⁸ They faced little pressure from authorities, in fact, performing wherever they could to draw the biggest crowds. In order to be successful in Kamigata's urban spaces, storytellers there had to be boisterous. Storytellers attracted attention with loud shouting, musical instruments, and other noisemakers such as wooden clackers. Kamigata storytellers devised various strident yet appealing narrative techniques to gain favor with audiences and win tips from them.

Of course, story content had to be interesting, too. Judging from the hanashibon of the time, material included amusing stories set in the pleasure quarters, at kabuki shows, sumo wrestling matches, and public events such as festivals and *kaichō* (special exhibitions of Buddhist statuary). Storytellers did more than just tell funny tales, too. They regularly performed

¹⁸ Shikano Buzaemon was banished to the island of Ōshima in 1693 because a story he published (and likely performed) was cited as the source for a rumor that caused the price of pickled plums to jump twenty times higher than their previous value. See Heinz Morioka and Miyoko Sasaki, *Rakugo: The Popular Narrative Art of Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1990), 235-6.

other acts such as kabuki actor impressions, dances, and more.¹⁹ In addition to being entertainers, storytellers also served as reporters of sorts, providing commentary on current events.²⁰ Popular storytelling in Kamigata contained much variety from early on and this would remain one of its longstanding hallmarks.

D. Kamigata's First Storytelling Stars and Their Arts

Tsuyu no Gorōbei was primarily a teller of tsujibanashi. Active in Kyoto for about thirty years, from around the mid-1670s until his death in 1703, he was a regular fixture at Shijō Kawara, Kitano Tenmangū, Makuzugahara, and other bustling areas of Kyoto. No documents remain to tell of the life he led during his first thirty years, and nothing is known about his family background. The *Rakugoka jiten* states that he was originally a Nichiren *dangisō* (sermon monk) who returned to secular life before gaining fame as a storyteller.²¹ Yamasaki Kōki points out, however, that evidence of this actually being the case is nonexistent, and therefore it is speculation.²²

Gorōbei's first known hanashibon was *Karukuchi Tsuyu ga hanashi*, (Comic Tales: Tsuyu's Funny Stories, 1691, five vols.). In the years that followed, he published seven more, one posthumously. They are, in order, *Tsuyu to Shika kakeibanashi* (Tsuyu and Shika's Story Match, 1697, five vols.), *Tsuyu shin-karukuchibanashi* (Tsuyu's New Comic Tales, 1698, five

¹⁹ Comic storytelling's popularity was also evident in Kamigata kabuki around this time. Sakata Tōjūrō performed long, gesticulated monologues (i.e., *shikatabanashi*, *nagabanashi*) to comic effect in Chikamatsu's *Keisei hotoke no hara* (Courtesan on the Buddha Plain, 1699) and *Keisei Mibu dainenbutsu* (Courtesan and the Great Buddhist Service at Mibu Temple, 1702).

²⁰ Miyao Yoshio, *Genroku zekkō bungei no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 1992), 112-3.

²¹ Shogei Konwakai and Osaka Geinō Konwakai, eds., *Kokon tōzai rakugoka jiten* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1989, 1996), 247.

²² Yamasaki Kōki, "Tsuyu no Gorōbei denkō," *Okayama Rika Daigaku kiyō* 28B (1992): 101.

vols.), *Karukuchi adagoto dangi* (Comic Tales: Sermons on Trivial Matters, 1699, three vols.), *Karukuchi ararezake* (Comic Tales: *Sake* with Mochi Bits, 1701, five vols.), *Tsuyu no Gorōbei shinbanashi* (Tsuyu no Gorōbei's New Comic Stories, 1701, one vol.), *Miyako meibutsu Rokyū shikatabanashi* (Specialty of the Capital: Rokyū's Gesticulated Tales, 1702, five vols.), and *Rokyū okimiyage* (Mementos of Rokyū, 1707, five vols.).²³ Many of these were reprinted during the twenty-five years following Gorōbei's death, some under different titles.

Gorōbei performed at temples and shrines and, perhaps because of this, many stories in his hanashibon have religious settings and themes. In his day, religious spaces also served as entertainment districts. Gorōbei also performed in the entertainment district of Shijō in Kyoto, where countless others showed off their skills in *uta nenbutsu*, amateur *nō*, *Taiheiki* readings, large- and small-target archery, and more.²⁴ One ukiyozōshi states that Gorōbei performed in the evenings at Shijō, which was a *karakuriteki ni oni no deru tokoro* (place where ogres come out like clockwork).²⁵ Here, the *oni* being referred to are the numerous performers (Gorōbei included) and vendors to be found at Shijō. Gorōbei was an extremely active, public figure. Like

²³ Miyao Yoshio has conducted the most exhaustive study of Gorōbei and other early modern *zekkōsha*. For this section I rely heavily on *Genroku zekkō bungei*, 119-31.

²⁴ *Uta nenbutsu* performers wore monk's robes and struck a hand gong as they rhythmically sang or recited passages. Dramatic readings of *Taiheiki* (Chronical of Grand Pacification, fourteenth century), *Shinchōki* (The Chronicle of Nobunaga, ca. 1600), and other *gunkimono* (war tales) were popular throughout the early modern era and eventually developed into *kōshaku/kōdan*.

²⁵ Unpūshi Rinkō, *Kōshoku ubuge* (Sensual Downy Hair, vol. 3, ca. 1688-1704), quoted in Miyao, *Genroku zekkō bungei*, 119-120. *Karakuriteki ni oni no deru tokoro* is an allusion to the line *Karakuriteki oyama ga oni ni uragaeri*, ... in Uji Kaganojō's (1635-1711) *Shijō Kawara ryō hakkei* (Sites in the Cool Air at Shijō Kawara, date unknown). Fujii Otō, *Hyōshaku Edo bungaku sōsho*, vol. 2, *Ukiyozōshi meisaku shū* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1970), 788-9.

other serious entertainers in his day, he made sure that he had a space to perform at major public events such as *hōe* (Buddhist memorial services), *kaichō*, and local festivals.²⁶



Figure 2.1. Rokyū (Tsuyu no Gorōbei) kneeling, performing *karukuchibanashi* at an outdoor teashop. There are townsmen, women and children, a samurai, and a monk in the audience. *Rokyū okimiyage*, (vol. 1, 1707) by Rokyū (published posthumously). Photocopy from Miyao Yoshio, *Genroku zekkō bungei no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 1992).²⁷

It is clear that Gorōbei was famous during and for sometime after his day, but what were the stories he told? His *hanashibon* are filled with his stories, but are not in the language (i.e., loud, engaging, succinct) he would have used when performing. Rather, and this is the case with most *hanashibon*, they are bare-bones distillations written in a more formal level of discourse than Gorōbei would have used when narrating at shrines and other public spaces. The first line of Gorōbei's *Junrei sutego no hanashi* (Tale of the Pilgrimage and Abandoned Child, in *Karukuchi Tsuyu ga hanashi*, vol. 4, 1691) reads, *Kuhantō no kotoba ni namari no ōki junrei futari*

²⁶ These and other accounts can be found in *Tsuyu to Shika kakeaibanashi* (*hanrei* [explanatory remarks], 1697), *Rokyū okimiyage* (1707), *Honchō bunkan* (Mirror of Japanese Prose, 1718), and other works quoted in Miyao, *Genroku zekkō bungei*, 120-21.

²⁷ This image was identified as part of Tokyo Daigaku Gogaku Kenkyūshitsu's copy of *Rokyū okimiyage*, but the image has since been removed.

tsuredachi, hajimete Kyō e nobori, Gojō no hashi o tōrikeru ni, orifushi sutego ari. This, and the remainder of the story, runs as follows:

Two men with heavy Kantō accents are on a pilgrimage. This is their first time to visit Kyoto. As they pass over the Gojō Bridge, they happen upon an abandoned child. One of them looks at the child then calls out to his counterpart, who is continuing on. “There’s *kome* (an abandoned child, homonymous with rice) here!” Hearing this, his companion says, “If it’s *kome*, pick it up and let’s go.” “But it’s *akagome* (a baby, homonymous with red rice),” he insists. “Come on, it’s *kome* just the same.” “Fine,” the pilgrim replies, “if you say it’s okay, I’ll grab it.” What a mess they are getting into!²⁸

Here are two more stories published by Gorōbei:

Shōben no ryōken chigai (Mistaken Notions About Pissing, in *Rokyū okimiyage*, vol. 2, 1707)²⁹

A man goes to buy a hat. “How much is this one here,” he asks. The owner of the shop hears this and replies, “6 monme and 5 bu.” “That’s too expensive!” he complains, “I’ll buy it for 5 monme.” “Okay, fine, I’ll give you a discount.” The buyer takes the hat in his hands. “No,” he says, “it doesn’t have a top! I’ll just set it down here.” The owner gets angry and says to himself, “This bum is doing *shōben* (breaking deals, homonymous with pissing) at the shop of a merchant! Fine,” he pipes up, “I won’t sell it to you!” “Yes, forget the hat,” the shopper says, “I’ll buy these long underpants though. How much?” “Those are 600.” “Oh come on, give them to me for 300.” The owner smiles and says, “Sure, okay, I’ll lower the price for you, but no more *shōben*, you got it?” Hearing this the buyer responds, “No, there’s no way I can buy underpants that won’t let me go *shōben!*” (See Figure 2.2)

Oyako tomo ni ōjōgo (Parent and Child Both Big Drinkers, in *Rokyū okimiyage*, vol. 2, 1707)

A father returns home, drunk. He calls for his son, but he is nowhere to be found. “Oh, he’s gone out has he, that scoundrel!” Just as he says this, his son comes home exceedingly drunk. The father looks at him. “Hey, stupid ass! Where were you off to drinking so much *sake*? I’m not going to leave my house to a drunk like you!” The son hears this and says, “Some father! Quit your blabbing! It’s no big deal if I don’t get a house like this. It just spins around and around in circles!” The father trips over his

²⁸ Miyao, *Genroku zekkō bungei*, 432. The modern rakugo version of this story is *Sutegome* (Discarded Rice), the final section in a three-part series. Part one is *Fushigi na goen* (Strange Five-Yen Fate), part two is *Sakasa na sōren* (An Upside-Down Funeral).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 679. The modern rakugo version of this story is *Dōguya* (The Second-Hand Shop).

tongue and splutters, “You little bastard! You’ve got two heads!” They both appear to be drunk beyond reason.³⁰



Figure 2.2. A customer gives the shop master a difficult time in *Shōben no ryōken chigai*. *Rokyū okimiyage* (vol. 1, 1707) by Rokyū (published posthumously). Courtesy of Tokyo Daigaku Gogaku Kenkyūshitsu, Tokyo.

If Ryūtei Tanehiko’s (1783-1842) commentary in *Sokushin’ōki* (Records of Old Man Sokushin, year unknown) is correct, Yonezawa Hikohachi was born in Osaka and was active as a

³⁰ Ibid., 685. The modern rakugo version of this story is *Oyakozake* (Parent and Child Sake).

young performer when Gorōbei was advanced in years.³¹ Contemporary accounts tell us that Yonezawa Hikohachi could be heard performing stories at entertainment districts of Dōtonbori, Shinmachi, Ikutama and Kōzu Shrines, the temple Shitennōji, and at teashops and bathhouses. Like Gorōbei, Hikohachi performed on straw mat stages, usually beside other acts, such as *Taiheiki* readers, amateur *nō*, *manzai*, *saimon* singing, and marionette shows.³² He performed most frequently at Ikutama, to pilgrims and fun seekers.³³

Hikohachi was as popular in Osaka as Gorōbei was in Kyoto. In addition to performing *tsujibanashi*, Hikohachi was also known for his *shikata monomane* (lit. gesticulated impressions of kabuki actors).³⁴ Hikohachi also did impressions of a larger range of humanity. His *hyōban no daimyō* (famous *daimyō* [feudal lord]) act may have been his most popular. It is unclear whether this was an impression of an actual or imagined *daimyō*. Hikohachi was one of Ikutama's star attractions, and the fact that he (like Gorōbei at Kitano Tenmangū) was granted a fixed location indicates that he was widely accepted as a professional. Hikohachi and his Kyoto counterpart appear to be the first *hanashika* to perform in fixed locations.

Extant illustrations of Gorōbei (see *Figure 2.1*) and Hikohachi usually show them kneeling during performances, but Hikohachi can also be seen standing in some. When Hikohachi is shown kneeling (see *Figure 2.3*), he appears to be narrating with a fan in hand, as

³¹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 193.

³² *Manzai* here is a *shukufuku gei* (lit. blessing art), not to be confused with the modern *manzai* popular today. *Saimon* eventually became the art *Naniwabushi*, also called *rōkyoku* from about 1927.

³³ A number of accounts can be found quoted in Miyao, *Genroku zekkō bungei*, 194-5.

³⁴ Also called *shikata* for short, and *miburi monomane*, *shikata monomane* were impressions of kabuki actors (lines and stage movements) performed by professional entertainers and amateurs in early modern times.

Gorōbei does. When Hikohachi is shown standing (see *Figure 2.4*), however, other properties can be seen either in his hands or placed nearby.



Figure 2.3. Yonezawa Hikohachi I kneeling, performing *karukuchibanashi* or perhaps *shikata monomane* at an outdoor teashop. There are men and women in the audience. *Karukuchi gozen otoko* (Honorable Man of Comic Tales, vol. 1, 1703) by Yonezawa Hikohachi I. Courtesy of Tokyo Daigaku Gogaku Kenkyūshitsu, Tokyo.

Judging from the stories included in his three hanashibon—*Karukuchi gozen otoko* (Honorable Man of Comic Tales, 1703, 5 vols.), *Karukuchi ōyakazu* (Comic Tales Arrow Upon Arrow, ca. 1711-16, 1 vol.), and *Ihon karukuchi ōyakazu* (Comic Tales Arrow Upon Arrow,

Alternate Edition, ca. 1711-16, 1 vol.)—we can gather that Hikohachi’s forte was telling funny tales about amateur *nō* chanters, people worshiping at shrines and temples, and silly monks. His daimyō impressions and other *shikata monomane* are not included in his *hanashibon*, so we have to look to accounts elsewhere to gain an understanding of those.

Yuzuke Gansui’s *Gonyūbu kyara onna* (Entering the Chambers of a Refined Woman, 1710, 6 vols.) contains an illustration of the entertainment district on the grounds of Ikutama Shrine (see *Figure 2.4*). Hikohachi appears to be performing *tōsei shikata monomane* (contemporary gesticulated impressions), which is written on a sign to his left. We know this is Hikohachi because his name is written on another sign, hanging directly behind him.

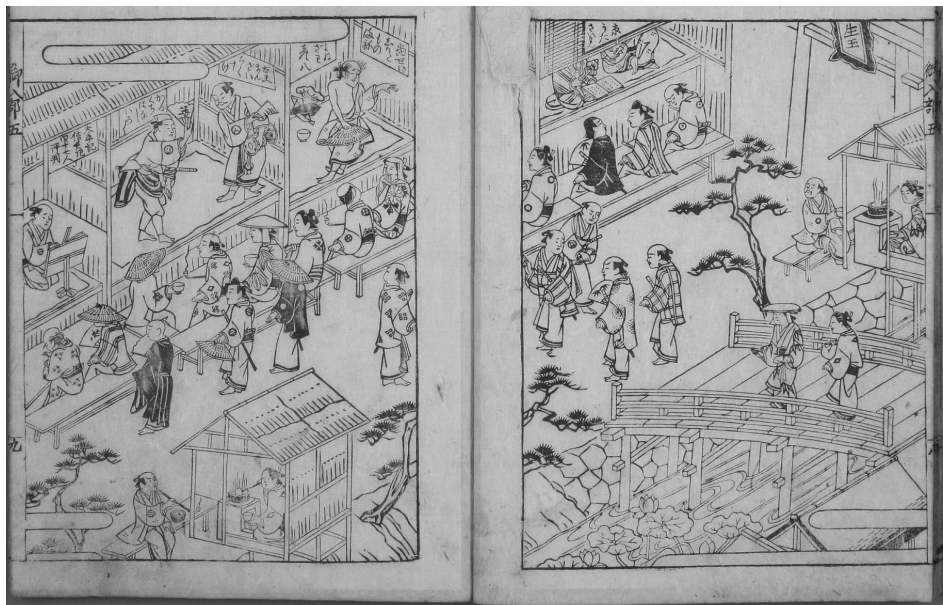


Figure 2.4. Yonezawa Hikohachi I (top center) performing on the grounds of Ikutama Shrine, Osaka. *Gonyūbu kyara onna*, vol. 5 (1710) by Yuzuke Gansui. Courtesy of Waseda University Library, Tokyo.

Hikohachi is not the only one performing in the illustration. There are others in similar *misemonogoya* (performance stalls, *koya*), presenting their respective arts, separated by walls of what look to be bamboo blinds. Hikohachi is holding out a sedge hat and appears to be dancing and/or laboring to engage his audience. His bare right shoulder and chest are exposed. There are

properties—a teacup, court noble’s or daimyō’s *eboshi* (cap), and a *Daikoku zukin* (Daikoku hat)—arranged behind him on the stage. The same properties appear in the *Karukuchi gozen otoko* frontispiece where Hikohachi is kneeling (see *Figure 2.3*), so it appears that he stood and kneeled for performances. Miyao Yoshio wonders, however, if Hikohachi might not be standing and holding out the sedge hat to solicit tips *after* his performance.³⁵

Hikohachi traveled on occasion to places outside of Osaka to perform comic stories and shikata monomane. There is a record of him appearing in Kyoto and Nagoya. In fact, he died suddenly on one of his trips to the latter city. On the third day of the sixth month in Shōtoku 4 (1714), Asahi Shigeaki—a lower samurai in the domain of Owari—noted in his journal, “Yonezawa Hikohachi recently came from Osaka. Many people gathered to listen to his otoshibanashi. Today he suddenly died” (*Ōmu rōchū ki*, Record of a Caged Parrot, 1691-1718).³⁶

The following are examples of stories that Hikohachi published in his hanashibon:

Goshinmotsu no daikon (*Daikon* Fit for a Noble, in *Karukuchi gozen otoko*, vol. 1, 1703)

Miyashige, in the province of Owari, is a place famous for its *daikon* radishes. Some people there grew a daikon that was about one foot around and almost six feet long. Because this was so rare, they decided to present it to the Imperial Palace. At the Hall for State Ceremonies, they could not manage to carry it up the stairs. The nobles were bewildered. Each time they tried to push the daikon up, it came right back down, making the stairs looked like a huge grater. The daikon simply would not budge. They could hardly help laughing at the freakish vegetable.³⁷ (See *Figure 2.5*)

Gion Kagekiyo (Kagekiyo at Gion, in *Karukuchi ōyakazu*, ca. 1711-16)

A man had a terrible eye disease. He therefore made daily pilgrimages to Kiyomizu Temple. After a time, he lost all resolve along with his eyesight and developed a deep grudge against Kannon, the Goddess of Mercy. Having compassion for this man from the beginning, Kannon called to him in a dream. “You pitiful man, I searched assiduously for a set of eyes to reward you with, but to no avail. This year, I managed to obtain the eyes

³⁵ Miyao, *Genroku zekkō bungei*, 196.

³⁶ Quoted in *ibid.*, 194.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 636.

that Kagekiyo plucked from his own head. I shall bestow these unto you.” With this the man woke from his dream, elated. He removed his own eyes and, replacing them with Kagekiyo’s, made a quick recovery. He proceeded immediately to Kiyomizu and there he came upon a group of Kagura dancers and shrine attendants. Suddenly, he became filled with rage and cried, “I’ll not let you escape!” The attendants, bewildered, replied, “Who are you?” With alert eyes, the man fired back, Are you or are you not Yoritomo! I’ve held this grudge for ages, and I shall have my revenge!³⁸



Figure 2.5. Transporters and court nobles struggling to carry a gigantic daikon up a set of stairs at the Imperial Palace. *Karukuchi gozen otoko* (vol. 1, 1703) by Yonezawa Hikohachi. Courtesy of Tokyo Daigaku Gogaku Kenkyūshitsu, Tokyo.

³⁸ Ibid., 716-7. Hikohachi’s contemporaries would have been familiar with these characters in the *Heike monogatari* (Tales of the Heike, mid-thirteenth century), and the Chikamatsu play *Shusse Kagekiyo* (Kagekiyo Victorious, 1685), in which Kagekiyo tries desperately to assassinate Yoritomo, but gouges out his own eyes as a sign of loyalty after the same man spares him. Hikohachi’s story brings an amusing new twist to the tale.

When Hikohachi died in 1714, one would think that it dealt a blow to the Kamigata comic storytelling world. This is especially so because neither he nor Gorōbei were known to have taken any pupils. Still, there must have been a number of less popular storytellers who remained active at shrines and other places. The popularity of hanashibon (and comic literature in general) continued to grow in Japan's major cities. There were some 466 hanashibon (reissues included) published between 1714 and 1800, most of which came out in the latter part of the century.³⁹

Perhaps the popularity of hanashibon inspired a second Yonezawa Hikohachi (fl. 1722-67)—no relation to the first—to make his debut in Kyoto around 1722. Hikohachi II, who quickly became a celebrity of sorts, remained active until about 1767. As we can see from an entry in *Zaikyō nikki* (Record of My Stay in Kyoto, 1752-57) on the seventh day of the seventh month, Hōreki 6 (1756), even the famed *kokugaku* scholar Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) knew of him:

Bon will soon be upon us. Everywhere people are clamoring around town. I visited Shijō Kawara to cool off and found Yonezawa Hikohachi [II] performing, making quite a racket. He did various *yakusha ukiyo monomane* (impressions of actors of the floating world), and an act featuring a young boy of five or six who performed *Edo manzai*, a kind of *karuwaza* (acrobatics) performance. This drew quite a crowd. Benches had been set out by the teashops and the riverbank was prospering.⁴⁰

This commentary makes it clear that Hikohachi II was featuring other performers than himself on stage. In addition to presenting other performers and variety acts, he also incorporated music. An illustration in Shimokōbe Shūsui's *Ehon matsu kagami* (Illustrated Mirror of the

³⁹ Miyao Shigeo, *Edo kobanashi shū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1971), 377-88; *Edo kobanashi shū*, vol. II, 405-8. There were few new Kamigata hanashibon published until early An'ei (1772-1781).

⁴⁰ *Motoori Norinaga zenshū*, vol. 16 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1974), 77.

Capital, 1779, see *Figure 2.6*) shows what appears to be a professional musician playing shamisen directly behind Hikohachi II. A young boy also appears with them on stage, at an outdoor teashop. People watch the entertainers from benches as they eat, drink, smoke, laugh, and carry on with one another. The woman making tea seems oblivious to the entertainers, perhaps because she hears the same routine every day. This looks as if it might be an early version of today's *seki*.

Hikohachi II's specialty was *kowairo* (kabuki actor speech impressions), but these do not survive in his *hanashibon*, which include *Karukuchi fuku okashi* (Comic Tales of Funny Fortune, 1740, five vols.), *Karukuchi harubukuro* (Spring Pouch of Comic Tales, 1741, five vols.), and *Karukuchi mimi kahō* (Joke Tale Treasures for the Ears, 1742, five vols.). Hikohachi II's stories include funny anecdotes—some old, some new—about public events at temples such as *kaichō* and *hōe*, and the daily lives of commoners. The following are two examples:

Hyakudake Nyorai (The Hundred-bamboo Buddha, in *Karukuchi fuku okashi*, vol. 4, 1740)

During the restoration of Higashi Honganji Temple's East Gate, the scaffolding collapsed, causing numerous men to fall. One of the men died. This man was a practitioner of the Nichiren sect, and his family was therefore grief-stricken that he had died at a temple of the *nenbutsu*. Their landlord, however, adhered to this temple's teachings and was delighted, proclaiming that the man had passed with the six holy characters of the *nenbutsu*—*na-mu-a-mi-da-butsu*. The day laborer's wife was furious and retorted, "No, he died with these six: *ha-ne-za-i-mo-ku* (head severed by lumber)!"⁴¹

Oyaji katagi (Fatherly Traits, in *Karukuchi mimi kahō*, vol. 3, 1742)

At a rigid old man's house, a friend stops by and says, "I am going firefly viewing tomorrow. Won't you allow your son to come along?" The father nods and replies, "Well, if you are set on going, I will leave him in your charge. [To son] Hey boy! Master Sazaburō has offered to take you firefly viewing with him tomorrow. You can go, but

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 753. In Japan scaffolding is traditionally constructed with bamboo.

don't drink too much, and don't start any fights. And be home before the sun goes down!"⁴²

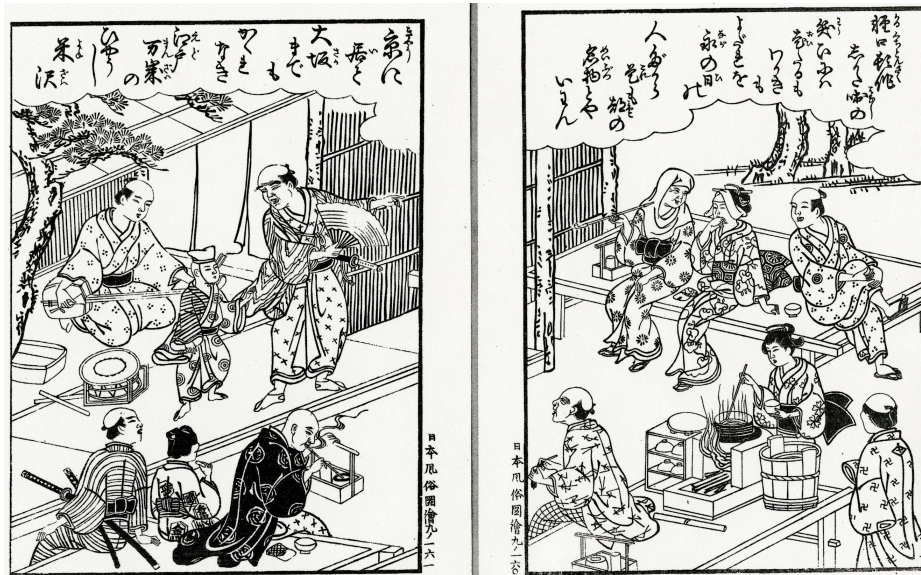


Figure 2.6. Yonezawa Hikohachi II performing *Edo manzai* with child performer and musician at an outdoor teashop. There are men and women in the audience. *Ehon matsu kagami* (1779) by Shimokōbe Shūsui. Courtesy of Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Tokyo.⁴³

Hikohachi II appears to be the first storyteller to take formal pupils, of whom he had three. One, Sawatani Gihachi (active late eighteenth century), went on to become a *gunsho yomi* (reader of war tales). The other two eventually took their master's name; Bunshirō became Hikohachi III and Katsugorō became Hikohachi IV. The years for both of these men are unknown, but it is clear than they were active in the late eighteenth century and that they both opened *mise* (lit. shops) in Gion. These were essentially performance spaces, early versions of the modern *seki*.⁴⁴

⁴² Ibid., 795.

⁴³ See Kurokawa Mamichi, *Nihon fūzoku zue*, volume 9 (Tokyo: Nihon Fūzoku Zue Kankōkai, 1915), 160-61.

⁴⁴ Miyao Yoshio, *Kamigata zekkō bungei shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 1999), 33.

E. Amateur Storytelling Clubs in Kamigata

There does not appear to have been a storytelling ‘star’ in Osaka for at least a half century following the death of Hikohachi I in 1714, but enthusiasm for hanashi did not fade. There were numerous storytellers who performed in Osaka during the eighteenth century, one of whom was Naniwa Shinnai (fl. 1764-81), who moved to this city after appearing on stages with Hikohachi II in Kyoto. Shinnai could regularly be seen at the Tenma Tenjin (i.e., Osaka Tenmangū) Shrine during the Meiwa to An’ei years (1764-1781).⁴⁵

It was around this time that amateur storytellers began gathering in large numbers in Osaka for *hanashi no kai*, which were essentially storytelling parties. This was largely an amateur undertaking, but professional hanashika were also invited as instructors or special guests. Stories were usually pre-submitted to a panel of judges, who in turn selected winners. Winning stories were presented at hanashi no kai and later published in books called *hanashi no kaibon*. As time passed, more people submitted stories and competition intensified. Some submitted stories to multiple hanashi no kai and formed clubs of their own. Of course, clubs like these were not a new concept. Haikai, kyōka, and *niwaka* clubs were also quite popular around this time.⁴⁶ Story competitions go back to at least Saikaku’s time, when people participated in *hanashi no tentori* (funny story contests).⁴⁷

Selections from three *seki* (gatherings) were published in separate volumes in 1776 and these appear to be the first Kamigata hanashi no kaibon. At the end of the first volume, *Toshi*

⁴⁵ *Rakugoka jiten*, 249.

⁴⁶ In early eighteenth-century Osaka (and later in Kyoto) *niwaka*, short for *niwaka kyōgen*, was a form of improvisational sketch comedy performed by amateurs. By the turn of the nineteenth century, people began specializing as *niwaka* artists and, beginning in the 1830s, *niwaka* was performed in *seki* and began contending with kabuki.

⁴⁷ Mutō Sadao, ed., *Mihonkoku An’eiki Kamigata hanashi no kaibon rokushū* (Tokyo: Kinsei Fūzoku Kenkyūkai, 1973), 272-3.

wasure hanashi sumō (A Story Match To Forget the Year), the editors (i.e., judges), Okamoto Taisan and Shiinomoto Kabutsu, call for submissions for the next volume in the series. They state that the stories in the first volume were presented at seki and ask readers to contribute more stories with *shin shukō* (new variations).⁴⁸ In the back of the second volume, *Risshun hanashi daishū* (Great Collection of Early Spring Stories), one can see that this group also hoped to make money from their hanashi no kaibon:

Last winter, during the An'ei Year of the Sheep [1775], Okamoto Taisan and Shiinomoto Kabutsu took their story selections to the Shin-Kiyomizu Kannon and asked for them to be well received. Our first hanashi no kaibon was released this year, Year of the Monkey, second day of the New Year.⁴⁹

Taisan and Kabutsu likely served as judges because they were well-known members of the haikai scene. It is not clear if the hanashi no kaibon made much (or any) money, but the group continued publishing them. In 1777, they added four more titles to the Kamigata hanashi no kaibon series. After this, additional titles were published intermittently until 1832. Kamigata hanashi no kaibon include adaptations of previously published hanashi and new pieces. Early books consist mostly of text, but as the turn of the nineteenth century drew near, illustrations with visual puns grew increasingly popular.⁵⁰ This can probably be attributed to the rise in popularity of illustrated books, namely *kibyōshi* (lit. yellowbacks).

Writers' pseudonyms are regularly given with stories in Kamigata hanashi no kaibon. Names such as Tairyō, Bayū, Fudehiko, Rodō, Keizan, and Kakō appear again and again, so these men (or women) were likely leaders in Osaka's amateur storytelling world. Unfortunately, information about them beyond their names is hard to come by. In the sharebon *Kyojitsu sato*

⁴⁸ Mutō, *Kamigata hanashi no kaibon*, 275.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 274.

⁵⁰ Miyao Yoshio, ed., *Kamigata hanashi no kaibon shūsei* (Osaka: Izumi Shoin, 2002), i-iii.

namari (Local Dialect True and False, 1794), Fudehiko is reported to have been *tōji kōmei no hanashika* (a renowned storyteller in his time).⁵¹ There are hundreds of other names recorded in Kamigata hanashi no kaibon, but next to nothing is known about them. What we can say about the five hundred-plus people who made submissions and presumably performed at hanashi no kai is that they were enthusiastic about their art.

As might be expected, there were hanashi no kai in Japan's other large cities. There were storytelling groups in Edo as early as the Genroku period, but these consisted of a limited number of people and were generally private. This was still the case a hundred years later when Utei (also Tatekawa) Enba's (1743-1822) exclusive club was having its parties, which were even attended by kabuki star Ichikawa Danjūrō V (1741-1806).⁵² There was at least one group in Kyoto that held regular gatherings. This particular hanashi no kai was built around the kyōka poet Hyakusendō Kanga (also known as Bun'ya no Shigetaka, years unknown).

The following two hanashi are examples of the kinds of material that Kamigata hanashi no kai judges selected for presentation and publication. Both hanashi have zany characters, but they also carry messages about the importance of diligence and patience—both considered virtues in the merchant city of Osaka.

Yoku no minogashi (Turning a Blind Eye to Greed) by Keiyō; *Hanashi no kai san sekime: Yūsuzumi shinbanashi shū* (Hanashi no kai Third Gathering: Collection of New Stories to Help Cool Summer Evenings, vol. 2, 1776)

A greedy old man walks down a busy street, but he does not simply walk. He keeps a watchful eye on things as he goes. Across the way he sees some coins on the ground. Thinking this lucky he runs over and finds 100 copper coins. He then looks at his own

⁵¹ Miyao, *Kamigata zekkō bungei shi*, 129.

⁵² Nobuhiro Shinji goes into much detail about writer and hanashi no kai leader Utei Enba in *Rakugo wa ika ni shite keisei sareta ka* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1986), 7-124.

much more valuable note worth 1 monme 5 bu. “Damn!” he cries, “How come I never find any of *you* laying around!”⁵³

Koban no hashi (Close to a Gold Coin) by Kimisato; in *Hanashi no kai nana sekime: Imayō hanashi kōmoku* (Hanashi no kai Seventh Gathering: Synopses of Stories of the Latest Fashion, vol. 1, 1777)

Today being an auspicious day, a family held a coming-of-age-ceremony for their son.⁵⁴ The son, quite pleased, went off to pay a leisurely visit to a friend in a neighboring part of town. The woman of the house greeted him and said, “Now Toku-san, when did you go and grow up all the sudden?” With this she slapped him on the pate. *Whack!* Next, the man of the house came out. “Well look at you! Don’t you look handsome!” Once again, *whack!* Having had enough, the young man rushed out the front gate, where he ran into his friend. “Toku!” exclaimed the friend. “When did you get this done?” One more *whack!* “Enough already,” he cried. They went back into the house, only for the young man to run into the pillar of the door. *Whack!* “Dammit!” he cried. He ran back outside, but this time he collided with the yoke of a daikon seller. *Whack!* Crestfallen, he fled to his sweet-hearted grandmother’s house, which fortunately happened to be in this very neighborhood. “Hey Grandma, I became a man today. Let me hide here for two or three days, will you?”⁵⁵

F. A Professional Tradition Develops

Matsuda Yasuke, active from the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century, was a street performer who specialized in storytelling. He moved to Osaka from Kyoto around 1792. Nothing is known about his life in Kyoto and little is known about his life in Osaka. Yasuke is remembered mostly because he was the mentor of Osaka’s first storytelling ‘superstar’, Katsura Bunji I, discussed below. In *Settsuyō kikan* (Wonders of Settsu Province, 1833) Yasuke is reported to have moved from Kyoto to Osaka, where he performed *ukiyobanashi* (funny

⁵³ Miyao, *Kamigata hanashi no kaibon*, 80.

⁵⁴ From about the sixteenth century, commoner families began imitating a samurai practice by shaving their son’s forelocks in a ceremony called *genpuku*, generally held between the ages of eleven and seventeen.

⁵⁵ Miyao, *Kamigata hanashi no kaibon*, 214. The title of this story is the second part of the adage *Ichimon sen mo koban no hashi* (Even a copper coin sits close to a gold *koban*), which essentially implores one not to be wasteful or careless. Perhaps the title suggests that growing up is not as easy as it seems.

stories of the floating world), *tsukushimono* (lists of various items), and a story called *Sentakujo no uttaegaki* (Laundry Lawsuits, also *Sentakubanashi*) at Goryō Shrine.⁵⁶

The exact date that Yasuke came to Osaka is uncertain, but an entry in *Naniwa kenbun zatsuwa* (Miscellaneous Records and Observations about Naniwa, ca. 1750s-1817) indicates that *hanashi no kai* were popular before he had arrived:

The first *hanashi no kai* was held in the winter of 1774, Year of the Horse. It continued for fourteen or fifteen sessions. After that, a man by the name of Matsuda Yasuke made a living telling *miburi shikata* (gesticulated stories) at various shrines and temples. Even beggars would gather and, learning from Yasuke, they would go door to door, performing the same stories. Consequently, *fūryū* (popular) storytellers left, and [Yasuke] gave up telling *koga* (elegant) stories altogether.⁵⁷

It is not exactly clear what the writer means by *fūryū* or *koga*, or what he is trying to get at. It somehow feels as though he is criticizing Yasuke for initiating a shift of sorts in comic storytelling trends. He also seems to be making a stronger distinction between professional and amateur storytellers than had been made hitherto.

The single-page print titled *Ukiyo shin hanashi* (New Funny Stories of the Floating World, ca. 1789-91) is the earliest known document bearing Yasuke's name. It appears to be an advertisement for his shows and closely resembles the prints that his pupil Bunji I produced for his own performances. Next to the title it is written, *Osaka Shitaderamachi Dairenji minami no mon mae, Matsuda Yasuke saku* (Composed by Matsuda Yasuke, in front of Dairenji temple's south gate, at Osaka's Shitaderamachi). *Suke Tanibashi* is written on the far left of the print. *Suke*, short for *tasuke*, refers to somebody who helps or assists, or performs when the main act is

⁵⁶ Quoted in Miyao, *Kamigata zekkō bungei shi*, 128. *Settsuyō kikan* is a collection of *zuihitsu* (essays) written by kabuki playwright Hamamatsu Utakuni (1776-1827) and others about everyday life in Osaka. It is especially valued for its detailed descriptions of performing arts.

⁵⁷ Quoted in *ibid.*, 129.

unable. Miyao surmises Tanibashi was a fledgling pupil of Yasuke's at the time.⁵⁸ Five stories, all untitled, are included on the print. The following two are among the five and exhibit humorous *ochi* reminiscent of the ones heard in *rakugo* today:

Ukiyo shin hanashi 1

“Hachibei! Yesterday I visited the Kōshin Shrine, and saw something out of the ordinary! A naked pilgrimage!” Hachibei replies, “Well, sometimes they have strange naked pilgrimages like that.” “No, no, I’ve never heard of one like *this*! There was a naked woman on a pilgrimage! Wearing not even a light robe, she was completely nude, fair skinned and beautiful. She had a body just like a boiled egg!” To this Hachibei says, “Wow, that’s something else! And how about her face?” “Uh,” the man replies, “I didn’t look.”

Ukiyo shin hanashi 2

The rain, hail, showers, clouds, and snow all get together. The rain asks, “How far do you think it is to the earth down below?” The showers reply, “Well, it could be ten thousand *ri*.” “No, no,” the clouds interject, “it must be twenty thousand *ri*.” “No, no,” the hail says, “it’s neither ten nor twenty thousand. Hey Snow, how far do *you* think it is to the ground?” The snow answers, “Well, it’s hard to tell from here. As soon as it gets cold enough, I’ll get down and pile up so you can get a closer look.”

Shirōto hanashi mitate sumō (Amateur Story Parody *Sumō*, ca. 1804-18), a *mitate banzuke*, makes it clear that Yasuke had established a large artistic family by the early nineteenth century. Tanibashi, the presumed fledgling pupil mentioned above, is not listed on this sheet, but it is possible that he is listed with a new name. Yasuke’s star pupil, Bunji I, takes the most prominent position in the middle of the print as *gyōji*, his name brushed in bold strokes, flanked by the names of his own pupils. Storytellers with the Matsuda name on this *mitate banzuke* include Yashichi, Yasuke II, Yahachi—all given the rank *tōdori* (manager)—as well as Yaroku, who is ranked *sewanin* (operation assistant).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 136.

Yasuke's *Sentakujo no uttaegaki* consists of a mock lawsuit filed by a launderer against a group of lice, fleas, and mosquitoes, and their rebuttal. Written in the highly formal language of official mandates, it presents the tiny insects not as pests that are better off dead, but as legitimate groups entitled to protection under the law. *Sentakujo no uttaegaki* was so popular that it inspired writers such as Jippensha Ikku (1765-1831), Naniwa Baiō (years unknown), and a few other unknown authors to publish spin-offs.⁵⁹ It is not known exactly how Yasuke performed *Sentakujo no uttaegaki*, but it is not hard to imagine it being funny if he animated the insects with their own characters and voices.⁶⁰

G. Osaka's First Storytelling Superstar and the Nagabanashi Movement

Katsura Bunji I (d. 1816) is an important name in the rakugo world not only because hundreds of contemporary Kamigata and Tokyo storytellers trace their artistic lineage to him, but also because he was Kamigata's first storytelling superstar. Next to nothing is known of his early life, but a fair amount can be gathered about his adult life from his twenty-seven extant hanashibon. For example, in *Heso no yadogae* (The Navel's Change of Address, 1812) it is written that he lived in Osaka's Shinmachi, in Shinhorimachi district.⁶¹ Bunji opened a *hanashigoya* (storytelling hut) on the grounds of Ikasuri (popularly called Zama) Shrine at the end of the Kansei era (1789-1800). In Takehara Shunchōsai's *Settsu meisho zue* (Illustrated

⁵⁹ Ikku's offshoot was *Mushi megane nobe no wakakusa* (Young Grass by the Wayside, Through a Microscope, 1796).

⁶⁰ Miyao, *Kamigata zekkō bungei shi*, 133-4. Both parts of *Sentakujo no uttaegaki* are transcribed in full on pp. 138-41.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 156. *Heso no yadogae* is an idiomatic expression that refers to uproarious laughter.

Guide to the Famous Sights of Settsu, 1798) it is depicted as a relatively large structure with an awning and row of lanterns, but this appears to be an exaggeration.⁶²

Bunji trained a number of pupils, including his own son, Bunkichi, who would eventually become Bunji II. His other pupils include Bunrai, Bunto, Ikusei, Rikizō, Bungo, Hokkeisha, and Risu, whose names often appear with Bunji I's on *mitate banzuke* and other documents. Bunji I was especially talented at telling *shibaibanashi* (kabuki stories). Naturally, he incorporated music and a number of properties when he told stories. Bunji I's *shibaibanashi* were highly entertaining and had various themes, comical and dramatic. His *hanashi* on the whole were markedly longer than those of earlier generations, which can be attributed to a number of factors, such as the way Kamigata kabuki scripts were written, the rise in new genres of *gesaku* (lit. playful compositions), and the *nagabanashi* (long story) boom that was underway in the early nineteenth century.

Ogita Kiyoshi has pointed out that Kamigata kabuki scripts are notoriously *kudokudoshii* (long-winded), but insists that this is where their essence and greatness lie. He also believes that it was natural for kabuki to influence the development of Kamigata storytelling.⁶³ *Gesaku* writers and *hanashika* were known to attend *hanashi no kai* together, where they exchanged stories and other comic material. Of course, this was another factor that led to *hanashi* becoming longer and

⁶² Like other *meisho zue*, this was drawn from an imagined bird's-eye perspective and therefore inflated. When I visited Zama Shrine in February 2013, a *kannushi* (Shintō priest) shared with me that the small shrine currently sits on a larger piece of land than it did in the early modern era. This is hard to believe when looking at the shrine in Shunchōsai's work.

⁶³ Ogita Kiyoshi, "Kamigata rakugo no tokushitsu," in Nobuhiro Shinji, Yamamoto Susumu, and Kawazoe Yū, eds., *Rakugo no sekai*, vol. 1, *Rakugo no tanoshimi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2003), 89.

more interesting.⁶⁴ Nagabanashi were originally popular in Edo storytelling and grew fashionable in Kamigata following the arrival of jōruri and kabuki playwright Shiba Shisō (ca. 1760 - ca. 1808) sometime around 1789. Shisō gained additional popularity during the first decade of the nineteenth century for his original nagabanashi performances, which were decidedly theatrical and moving.⁶⁵ Considering all this, it is no wonder that Bunji I's hanashi tended to be longer than those of earlier hanashika. The following is one of Bunji I's shibaibanashi (and nagabanashi):

Sara yashiki Okiku ga yūrei (Okiku's Ghost at Dish Mansion) in *Otoshibanashi Katsura no hana* (Funny Tales: Flower of the Katsura, vol. 2, ca. 1804-1818)

The lady-in-waiting Okiku was accused of breaking a piece in a noble's precious collection of ten red plates. She was sentenced to die and subsequently executed. Each and every night after that her spirit appeared and cried out, "One plate, two plates, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine plates... *ohhh* wretched me!" As terribly frightful as this was, people were soon raving about it in the streets of Banshū and waiting in lines to listen to her. Indeed, crowds packed in front of her residence so tightly that there was hardly room to move. They built stands, laid out carpets and colorful mats, and even constructed a formal entranceway. Soon the place looked like a regular theater! People paid five hundred mon to hear her show each night, and her reputation only became greater. People took *sake*, fish, and bentō for snacks during the show. As people filed in one after another, the scene became terribly lively. People could be seen leaving their homes around 7:00 p.m. to go pack into the stands. One night, the crowd was left waiting because Okiku was running late. Finally, around midnight, there came a sad voice from stage left. "One plate, two plates three plates..."

"Okay everybody, that's three plates down! Put away your bentō boxes!"

"Four..."

"There's four! Gather your *sake* cups!"

"Five..."

"That's five, tie up your bundles!"

"Six plates, seven plates..."

"Okay. That's seven down! Only two more left! Hey, are our sandals ready to go?"

"Yep!"

And so they got everything ready to leave.

"Eight plates..."

⁶⁴ In Edo, gesaku writers and storytellers were often friends and attended the same hanashi no kai. For more on this in topic English see Matthew W. Shores, "Jippensha Ikku, *Hizakurige*, and Comic Storytelling," *Early Modern Japan: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 20 (2012): 46-75.

⁶⁵ Maeda Isamu, *Kamigata rakugo no rekishi* (Osaka: Sugimoto Shoten, 1966), 46-48.

“Here we go!”

“Nine plates, ten plates... *ohhh!*” (Okiku shrieks loudly, startling the crowd)

She continues, “Eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen-sixteen-seventeen-eighteen...”

“Tomorrow evening, I’ll be taking the night off.”⁶⁶

Bunji I’s *Sara yashiki Okiku ga yūrei* was published before the kabuki version of this famous ghost story was staged, but *Banchō sara yashiki* (Dish Mansion at Banchō, 1741)—the tragic and chilling jōruri version—had been on stage since the mid-eighteenth century. The ghost story of Okiku dates to at least the sixteenth century. In the modern rakugo story, *Sara yashiki* (Dish Mansion), a group of friends go to see Okiku perform and it is clear that some of them are absolutely terrified of her. As in Bunji I’s version, their plan is to listen to her plate counting as long as possible, but escape just before she gets to number ten (the missing plate) and screams out in anguish and resentment. The *ochi* in use today is virtually the same as Bunji I’s. The fact that they are so similar strengthens the impression that stories in hanashibon were no more than barebones synopses of much longer stories told on stage, outdoors or at private gatherings. Based on the length of Utei Enba’s *Taihei raku no makimono* (Scroll of the Great Peace), which he presented at a hanashi no kai in 1783, Nobuhiro Shinji believes that Enba and members of his Edo-based hanashi no kai may have been allotted around twenty minutes each when they presented stories.⁶⁷ This is an interesting idea, but one can only speculate how hanashika filled their time.

Following Bunji I, there was an influx of new professionals who were typically grouped together in artistic schools. In Kamigata, the Katsura school continued to thrive into the modern era with the Katsura Bunshi branch. All but two rakugo schools active in Osaka today trace their

⁶⁶ Miyao, *Kamigata zekkō bungei shi*, 536.

⁶⁷ Nobuhiro, *Rakugo wa ika ni shite keisei sareta ka*, 21.

lineage to Katsura Bunshi I (1819-74). The other two major schools, Shōfukutei and Hayashiya, were formed just after Bunji I's time.

III. Meiji Period to World War II

After fixed venues—*mise*, *hanashigoya*, *seki*, *yose*, etc.—became the norm with Matsuda Yasuke and Katsura Bunji I, competition increased among artistic schools and even individuals within the same schools. This competition—jockeying for prominence and influence might be a better way to put it—only intensified as the nineteenth century progressed. Prior to the Tenpō reforms (1841-43), when venue numbers were significantly reduced, there were around fifty *seki* in Osaka.⁶⁸ There was by this time a glaring contrast between comic storytelling (commonly referred to as *hanashi*, *otoshibanashi*, or *mukashibanashi*) in Osaka and Edo. Both traditions were now performed in specialized halls, but the style in Osaka was far more theatrical and musical, and it contained more variety. In other words, Osaka storytellers were not merely storytellers—they were multitalented entertainers just as their artistic ancestors were. This continued to be the case well into the modern era.⁶⁹

At the beginning of the Meiji period, the Hayashiya school was at the heart of the Kamigata *hanashi* world. Members of the Katsura school worked to gain control, but this was made increasingly difficult by the untimely death of Katsura Bunshi I. To make matters worse, Bunshi I's top two pupils, Bunza I (1844-1916) and Bunto II (1843-1900), fell to fighting over who would become the next Bunshi, which would also mean being head of the Katsura family

⁶⁸ Katsura Fukudanji, *Kamigata rakugo wa doko e yuku* (Osaka: Kaifūsha, 1989), 14.

⁶⁹ Some Kamigata *hanashika* still perform dances, sing songs, and present other acts after or in place of their *rakugo* today. A few Tokyo *rakugoka* present non-*rakugo* material today, but such cases are less common than in the Kamigata circuit.

and its subfactions. Bunza and Bunto were the same age and entered Bunshi I's artistic school during the same year. In the end, basically because there were family politics involved (they were in-laws), Bunza won the name Bunshi II, which made Bunto leave the Katsura school in protest. He took a new name, Tsukitei (lit. moon pavilion) Bunto, to degrade the name Katsura, which represents a tree that exists on the moon in Chinese lore.⁷⁰ Numerous cases of jockeying for control and side shifting may not have been good for personal and professional relationships, but they brought hanashika creativity to an all-time high.⁷¹

Osaka hanashika regularly performed at *shakuba* (kōshaku halls) in the nineteenth century. Consequently, they used the same *shakudai* (small table) and adapted certain narrative techniques that *kōshakushi* (kōshaku artists) used, such as striking the shakudai for emphasis and rhythm, and narrating with fixed tempo. Kōshaku was immensely popular in the early Meiji period, but audiences would come to prefer comic storytelling as the twentieth century approached.

A. Late Meiji Factions and the Variety Boom

Shortly after Bunza won the name Bunshi II, his rivals Tsukitei Bunto II, Katsura Bundanji II (later Bunji VII, 1848-1928), Shōfukutei Shokaku III (1845-1909), Shōfukutei Fukumatsu I (1858-1904), and others challenged his cohort—the Katsura-ha—by forming the Naniwa San'yū-ha (Three Friends School) in 1893. The San'yū-ha sought to make shows more entertaining by integrating more *iromono* (variety acts). This was in contrast to the Katsura-ha

⁷⁰ Maeda, *Kamigata rakugo no rekishi*, 74.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 73-4.

approach, which was more concerned with preserving *seitō no* (orthodox) rakugo, as the art was now being called.⁷²

Numerous artists and promoters emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century in hopes of making shows more entertaining and profitable. Because of the great creativity and energy exerted, and the positive public reaction, many Japanese scholars refer to this period as the golden age of Kamigata rakugo. The golden age was cut short by the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), however. New seki continued to be built one after another, but it was *Naniwabushi* that gained ground.⁷³ As Katsura Fukudanji IV (1940-) has pointed out, this art was better suited for expressing *sen'i* (fighting spirit), while rakugo served more as an outlet to laugh off war.⁷⁴

In the April 1909 issue of *Bungei kurabu*, Seto Hanmin (real name Fusakichi, years unknown), who was En Tarō's father, wrote the following about two seki that he visited in Osaka. The first was the Awajimachi Dai-yon Kokukōseki, a Katsura-ha venue, on the evening of March 1:

Stage facilities: Going in after paying an astonishingly high 28 sen for a first-class ticket (second-class, 20 sen), I found that the place looked relatively clean as it was furnished with rattan mats, but for some reason it looked cold. The *kōza* (dais) was about four and a half mats wide, and there was a *tokonoma* at stage left. There was a strange-looking bronze thing being used as a vase. The clock on the staggered wall shelves chimed and gave the audience a start, so that was in poor taste.

Types of people in the audience: There was a mix people, about seventy percent men and thirty percent women, most of whom seemed to be merchants. There were less than five men with facial hair. People in the audience would shout polite requests such as

⁷² 落語 was being read *rakugo* in a few circles in the late early modern era, but most people read these characters *otoshibanashi*. The term rakugo was becoming more popular by the 1890s, but it was not until the age of radio broadcasting (1925-) that rakugo became the standard term used throughout Japan.

⁷³ In this form of narrative singing, a performer stands at a table and dramatically presents tales, which often have poignant or spirited themes, to shamisen accompaniment. The shamisen player sits onstage, to the side.

⁷⁴ Katsura Fukudanji, *Kamigata rakugo wa doko e yuku*, 16.

“*Shinmachi nozoki*, please!” or “Please do some *Kawachi ondo!*” When men with the air of a talented rakugoka took the stage and said, “Tonight I will be performing such and such,” the audience would reply with “thank you.” They pay a high price to get in *and* say thank you for it! Truly, I must hand it to them (i.e., rakugoka).

Seto gives an interesting if subjective look at Osaka seki during the first decade of the twentieth century. He makes it clear in his review that this is his first time visiting Osaka seki in about twelve or thirteen years. He also wrote that he was so disappointed by the show above that he decided to leave early. Seto visited the Hiranomachi Konohanakan, a San’yū-ha seki, on the evening of March 13 and wrote the following (same article):

Dekata (attendant) and admission: I thought the 23 sen charged here was conveniently cheaper than the Kokukōseki, but then they charged 2 sen for *gesoku* (checking footwear) and a zabuton, and wanted to charge another 25 sen for a two-person *sajiki* (raised box seat). Basically, this place will cost one at least 25 sen for a second-class ticket and 37 sen 5 kan for a first-class ticket. Even with a *dekata*, this is not cheap. Notwithstanding, they had a full house.

Types of people in the audience: As expected, there were many merchants. In the mix was a group of people with aprons hanging from their waists. Most of these *tanamono* (merchant house employees) headed out one after another, right before 10:00 p.m., no doubt loitering while out running errands. On each side of me sat merchant house proprietors, out with their wives or mistresses. I saw quite a few people with facial hair, but not a single person made a request for this or that. Still, they would laugh uproariously, even at the mundane.⁷⁵

Seto did not stay until the end of this show either. He had little good to report about either show, but this is consistent with the reviews of Osaka seki that were run in Tokyo’s popular magazines. Tokyo reviewers generally disliked Osaka seki and were surprised to see so many women attending shows, which doubtless had an influence on material and atmosphere.

In 1910, Osaka promoter Okada Masatarō (ca. 1867 - ca. 1920) formed a new faction of entertainers called the Hantai-ha (Opposition Group). Following the San’yū-ha’s lead and popular demand, Okada put an even wider assortment of iromono on stage. The shows he

⁷⁵ Seto Hanmin, “*Osaka no yose*,” *Bungei kurabu*, April 1909, 255-8. Japanese men wore facial hair prior to the Meiji period, but there was an influx of new styles at this time.

produced included all kinds of dances, music, balancing acts, and other types of comedy, such as *karukuchi*, a two-man comic routine.⁷⁶ This was great for business, but drew audiences away from rakugo.

B. The Near-Elimination of Kamigata Rakugo

Kamigata hanashika would soon have more to worry about than inter-faction rivalries. They were about to go up against much more formidable foes, such as modern manzai, motion pictures, World War II, and television. In 1912, Yoshimoto Kichibei (later Taizō, 1886-1924) and his wife Sei (1889-1950) opened a performance hall called the Daini Bungeikan in the bustling entertainment district located behind the Tenma Tenjin Shrine, forming a sort of coalition with Okada's Hantai-ha. Soon, others such as Miyazaki Hachijūhachi's (active early twentieth century) Daihachi Kai, a seki entertainment group, brought more competition. Variety acts proved to be more popular and profitable, so rakugo was gradually phased out of programs. This was particularly the case once modern manzai was introduced and made the flagship of Osaka entertainment.

In 1918, Yoshimoto Kōgyō purchased the Hōraikan (previously a Katsura-ha venue) near the temple Hōzenji and renamed it the Nanchi Kagetsu. Following this, Yoshimoto worked to corner the market by acquiring one performance space after another, which were also named Kagetsu (place name + Kagetsu).⁷⁷ Yoshimoto took over Okada Entertainment in 1921 and, in the following year, the San'yū-ha had little choice but to become part of the Kagetsuren

⁷⁶ Osaka Furitsu Kamigata Engei Shiryōkan (Wahha Kamigata), ed., *Kamigata engei taizen* (Osaka: Sōgensha, 2008), 29.

⁷⁷ *Kagetsu* (lit. flower and moon) is an expression indicating *fūryū na asobi* (popular entertainment).

Yoshimoto-ha (Kageitsu Yoshimoto Group). Yoshimoto acquired the San'yū-ha home base, the Kōbaitei, and proceeded to dominate the entertainment market. By 1922, Yoshimoto essentially owned the world of Osaka entertainment. Shōchiku, perhaps the only entertainment company that could compete with Yoshimoto, would soon enter the seki market, but this would not help the rakugo cause much.

After the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, American popular culture continued pouring into Japan. Jazz and motion picture comedies featuring actors, such as Charlie Chaplin, Harold Lloyd, and Buster Keaton, were all the rage. The popularity of American comedy, particularly slapstick, led to new developments in manzai, which was on its way to becoming Japan's favorite outlet for laughter.⁷⁸ Manzai appealed to a new generation of consumers who were hungry for engaging, modern entertainment. Rakugo, whose stock characters lived in the distant past, was painfully old-fashioned. Yoshimoto did pick a few hanashika to be their token rakugo stars, but the others who were left to fend for themselves had no problem seeing that rakugo was being done away with. Yoshimoto was about making money, not preserving traditional arts.

C. 'Manzai Hanashika'

Yoshimoto did not fire hanashika—it technically could not do this—but prewar seki programs show that Yoshimoto's primary interests were in expanding the manzai market. As time went by, they gave hanashika less time on stage, and lower pay. Such mistreatment, needless to say, angered the artists who were being pushed out. Yoshimoto invested in a few hanashika, but this was arguably because their styles felt more like one-man manzai.

⁷⁸ *Kamigata engei taizen*, 30-2.

Yoshimoto's biggest rakugo stars were Katsura Harudanji I (1878-1934) and his successor Katsura Harudanji II (1894-1953).

Rakugo stories regularly feature *monshiri* (know-it-alls) and *aho* (dim-wits), which may have been an inspiration for modern manzai's two primary roles, *tsukkomi* (straight man) and *boke* (stooge).⁷⁹ It is clear from numerous accounts—and his numerous studio performances on record album—that Harudanji I performed an extremely fast-paced rakugo. One wonders if this was not in keeping with the trends in popular comedy, namely manzai. Harudanji II's rakugo had a non-stop feel, too, but his characters were usually all *aho*. His stories lacked structure, but this was the nature of his style. The two Harudanjis performed rakugo more like manzai, but this is doubtless what Yoshimoto wanted. These 'manzai hanashika' enjoyed great celebrity, and it was not long before the general public associated Kamigata rakugo with them. Harudanji I (and by association Harudanji II) was even immortalized in a popular song, *Naniwa shigure Harudanji* (Naniwa Showers, Harudanji, 1964), which basically glorifies heavy drinking and womanizing.⁸⁰

Longtime yose-goer Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1965) was one of Harudanji II's best-known fans. In fact, Tanizaki rated him as the finest hanashika in Osaka. In March 1953, less than a month after Harudanji II's death, Tanizaki wrote *Harudanji no koto sono hoka* (Harudanji and More) for the newspaper *Mainichi shinbun*:

His looks and the sidesplitting humor that poured from his mouth were in absolute harmony. He constantly generated thick Osaka-style atmosphere. The skill level of his stories aside, there was no rakugo that could exude thick Osaka atmosphere the way his did. This is still true. He wasn't all mouth either; he used his entire face and entire body to make his stories come alive.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Hayashiya Somemaru IV calls Kamigata rakugo the mother of manzai. See Appendix A.

⁸⁰ Written by Shibutani Ikuo (years unknown), arranged by Murasawa Ryōsuke (fl. 1953-2003), performed by rōkyoku artist Kyōyama Kōshiwaka I (1926-91).

⁸¹ *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū*, vol. 21 (1968; repr., Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1974), 423.

D. The Fight to Preserve Traditional Kamigata Rakugo

If Harudanji II was Osaka's chief hanashika celebrity, Shōfukutei Shokaku V (1884-1950) was the dogged guardian of Kamigata rakugo tradition. In April 1936, in response to the dire situation the art was facing, Shokaku V—along with Katsura Yonedanji IV (1896-1951) and some others—began publishing the magazine *Kamigata hanashi* out of his own home, which he dubbed the *Rakugosō* (Rakugo Cottage). The first issue was released on April 1 and cost 10 sen, about the price of a cup of coffee.⁸² The preface reads as follows:

People frequently say that the rakugo world is in decline. People say that manzai is flourishing, and rakugo is withering. This is not only being said. Indeed, it is an eloquently narrated story of truth. This reality is generally said to be the consequence of our own misdeeds. Granted, it is problematic that the characters Hachi and Kuma appear over and over again.⁸³ Stories also stick to the old, not going beyond the households and human emotions of the Bakumatsu era. It is hard to expect that any of this would hold up in the reign of Shōwa, in 1936. Rakugo may have occupied the throne of popular entertainment into the Taishō years, but how can we even call rakugo a form of entertainment today? Perhaps we could blame it on the fact that many of today's youth are faced with harder times. Still, arriving at the conclusion that rakugo is without value is, simply wrong. This should go without saying. In terms of artistic value, rakugo transcends this. It surpasses the highest standards. This is not by any means sophistry. Nor is this a mere refusal to gracefully accept defeat. The mission of this magazine's first issue is to demonstrate evidence of this. With each successive number, our magazine will expound on the value of our art in clear, painstaking detail. While we may only have the space of a few humble pages, we would still like to ask for support from our readers.⁸⁴

It is obvious that Shokaku V was desperate to save rakugo. His last resort, it seems, was to adopt the stuffy, intellectual language found in magazines of the day. He was identifying three problems. First, rakugo was rapidly losing ground to manzai; second, rakugo had fallen behind

⁸² Shōfukutei Shokaku VI, *Kiwametsuke omoshiro jinsei* (Kobe: Kobe Shinbun Shuppan Sentā, 1986), 101-2. The magazine was never profitable since each copy cost 12 sen to produce. There were up to 500 subscribers at its peak.

⁸³ These are stock characters in Kamigata rakugo stories.

⁸⁴ Shōfukutei Shokaku V, ed., *Kamigata hanashi*, vol. 1 (1936-40; repr., Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, 1971-72), 12.

the times and the incessant push to be modern; third, people had lost sight of rakugo's intrinsic value.

The so-called evidence to confirm rakugo's importance appeared in this and subsequent issues in the form of essays on history and culture, written by hanashika and guest contributors. There was also an array of rare materials reproduced, such as mitate banzuke, and copies of photographs of past and present hanashika. There was plenty of lighter material, too, such as playful caricatures, essays, word games, and regular advertisements from drug manufacturers, beer companies, and restaurants. Today's rakugo scholars—and hanashika—especially appreciate the fact that there was at least one Kamigata rakugo story transcription in every issue, the forty-ninth and final of which was published in October of 1940.

Shokaku V had a contract with Yoshimoto while he was publishing *Kamigata hanashi*, but, since he and other hanashika were getting fewer and fewer slots at seki, he decided to start producing his own all-rakugo shows. He dubbed his shows *rakugo kenkyū kai* (lit. rakugo research shows), perhaps after the program of the same name in Tokyo. Shokaku V feigned illnesses in order to get out of his commitments to Yoshimoto and be able to run his own shows. He eventually determined it would be safe to put on a large public showcase at the Osaka Mitsukoshi department store, but Yoshimoto caught word of this and sent a representative to ask what was going on. Shokaku V told the representative that he was not trying to interfere with Yoshimoto's business, but, if things were left the way they were, Kamigata rakugo and its traditions would disappear. He added that his shows were for the mere purpose of preserving the art, and that he was determined to pass Kamigata rakugo on to future generations. Shokaku V received approval directly from Yoshimoto's top man, Hayashi Shōnosuke, but the art was subsequently phased out of Yoshimoto programs even further. Without guaranteed spots at

Yoshimoto's seki, Shokaku V and other hanashika had no choice but to continue producing their own shows, which were advertised in *Kamigata hanashi*.⁸⁵

In *Kamigata hanashi* issue 48, there is an apology for the publication's one-month delay, and a promise to meet all future deadlines. Yet, the next issue would turn out to be the last. This news must have come as a surprise to readers and editors alike, since there was no indication in issue 49 that the magazine would be discontinued. The war in China was dragging on (Japan would bomb Pearl Harbor the following year), however, and the supply of paper was strictly regulated. Shokaku V and crew could not procure the paper they needed and *Kamigata hanashi* was therefore canceled without advance notice.⁸⁶

IV. Post-World War II Shōwa

As the Pacific War got underway and intensified, all Osaka seki were closed. Hanashika basically had two choices: if they wanted to continue telling rakugo, they could leave Japan and tour Manchuria, or they could stay home and do factory visits or traveling shows in the provinces. There was not always a guarantee that people in the provinces would be able to comprehend hanashika from the city, though: one Tokyo rakugoka wrote that on a visit to a factory in northern Japan, the labor supervisor had to explain to these workers that rakugo was supposed to be funny, and signaled to them when it was time to laugh.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Shōfukutei Shokaku VI, *Kiwametsuke omoshiro jinsei*, 102-4.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁸⁷ Ui Mushū, *Kamigata rakugo kō* (Tokyo: Seiabō, 1965), 404-5.

A. Step One: Increase Numbers

After the war ended, the Kamigata hanashika who were still alive returned to Osaka, but all of the seki had been reduced to ashes. More than a year after the end of World War II, there still had not been a seki rebuilt in Osaka. Shōfukutei Shokaku VI (1918-1986), Shokaku V's biological son, recalled the predicament well:

The entertainment district that burned to the ground wasted no time with reconstruction, but almost everything was turned into movie theaters. They didn't restore a single yose. Yoshimoto was moving forward with movies, too, so performance arts were abandoned. We [hanashika] didn't have a place to work.⁸⁸

In fall of 1946, Shokaku V assembled all the hanashika he could locate—many had been evacuated and their whereabouts were still not known—and began giving free shows to the community. Their first show was in the charred remains of an elementary school. On the gate out front a sign advertised that the show was free and open to all. This was the beginning of what might be called a Kamigata rakugo miracle. Hanashika numbers would soon begin increasing dramatically and the art would even catch up to manzai in popularity.

If they managed not to die during the war, most hanashika in Shokaku V's generation died shortly thereafter. Still, this small group was able to recruit enough young men to continue their efforts. Shōfukutei Shokaku VI, Katsura Beichō III (1925-), Katsura Bunshi V (1930-2005), and Katsura Harudanji III (1930-) were four of them and are today hailed as the *Shitennō* (Four Heavenly Kings, i.e., four greats) of postwar Kamigata rakugo. Of course, there were other hanashika in the circuit, but the endeavors of the *Shitennō*—rebuilding a sound fan base and recruiting an unprecedented number of pupils—warrant their being given such a title. Other important hanashika in the postwar Kamigata rakugo circuit included but were not limited to

⁸⁸ Ogita Kiyoshi and Osada Sadao, “*Intābyū: Shitennō wagashi o kataru,*” *Kamigata geinō* 93 (November 1986): 24.

Hayashiya Somemaru III (1906-68), Hayashiya Somegorō III (1918-1975), Katsura Bunga II (1933-1992), Katsura Bunkō IV (1932-2005), Katsura Yonenosuke III (1928-1999), Shōfukutei Matsunosuke II (1925-), Tachibana no Ento (1883-1972), and Tsuyu no Gorōbei II (1932-2009).

B. Kamigata Rakugo Under the Allied Occupation

Rakugo artists had some help that they were not aware of during the Occupation era (1945-52). The Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP, i.e., Gen. Douglas MacArthur and the bureaucracy he headed) and its subdivisions—namely the Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD) and Civil Information and Education Section (CI&E)—did examine rakugo, but placed no bans on the art. In fact, particularly after the bilingual Japanese-American Frank Shōzō Baba (1914-2008) was transferred to CI&E in December of 1945, they acknowledged rakugo’s cultural importance.⁸⁹

A staff member in the Radio Division of CI&E expressed an opinion that rakugo, like other variety entertainments, was worthless and should therefore be done away with, but it was Baba who spoke up, saying that it would not do for them to write off popular entertainment. It was, after all, an important aspect of Japanese culture, and the masses needed some form of amusement. Baba warned that it could cause problems if rakugo and similar arts were banned. This conversation must have taken place between the time Baba arrived at CI&E in December 1945 and October 11 of the following year, when the Press, Pictorial, and Broadcast (PPB)

⁸⁹ More on this and the following two paragraphs can be found in Matthew W. Shores, “Laughter After Wars: Rakugo During the Occupation,” in Samuel L. Leiter, ed., *Rising From the Flames: The Rebirth of Theater in Occupied Japan, 1945-1952* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 231-55.

Division in Tokyo filed a report with notification that a War Department Civilian familiar with PPB's policies and fluent in Japanese would begin spot-checking yose shows.

Going on Baba's recommendations, and listeners' appeals for less occidental music and more Japanese variety, the Radio Division made rakugo and game shows with hanashika guests a part of their regular programming. Hanashika had to adjust to the new fifteen-minute quarter system, but this was a small price to pay for the chance to reach a significantly larger audience. The first live broadcast of a yose-style show, NHK's radio show *Kamigata engei kai* (Kamigata [yose] Entertainment Show), aired on September 14, 1949. Hanashika were given spots on the show, but the program featured a high percentage of manzai acts. Shows after this were similar in nature. To make matters worse, the big names of prewar rakugo that radio audiences were interested in listening to were dying one after another.⁹⁰ Regular television broadcasting began in Japan in 1953. This development helped rakugo reach the households that had sets, but it remained difficult for this traditional art to compete with manzai and new variety shows for airtime. The number of manzai duos quickly grew to an all-time high. In 1953, there were 150 duos in Osaka and 100 in Tokyo.⁹¹ Hanashika numbers kept gradually increasing, too, but it did little to help—at first.

C. Kamigata Rakugo Association and the Return to Popularity

Even after the Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai (association) was formed in 1957 under the leadership of Hayashiya Somemaru III, Kamigata rakugo's progress continued to be slow for some time. Yoshimoto Kōgyō, on the other hand, was quick to reestablish itself as a force in the

⁹⁰ Mita Jun'ichi, *Shōwa Kamigata shōgei shi* (Tokyo: Gakugei Shorin, 1993), 155-7.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 380.

entertainment industry in the years after World War II. In May 1963, it acquired the Sennichimae Grand Theater and renamed it the Nanba Grand Kagetsu. Yoshimoto's commitment to rakugo remained half-hearted, but this situation served to fuel hanashika's determination to succeed by organizing their own rakugo shows. Some hanashika continued contracting with Yoshimoto, which, for most, meant receiving infrequent spots at shows, while others formally cut ties with the agency.

In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a spike in the number of young men—and eventually women—entering artistic schools to train as professionals. Often times these were students who dropped out of high school or college to pursue their dreams of working in show business.⁹² The rise in interest in rakugo can be attributed to a number of factors, but one that deserves special mention is that rakugo was counter-culture by this time. Taking a career in rakugo had little to do with the government's push to build an educated workforce and powerful economy. Rakugo may have appealed to aspiring artists—and the general public—too, because it was more or less removed from the radical struggles surrounding the amendment of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan in 1960, and the added drama from America's involvement in the Vietnam War (1961-73), the 1971 Okinawa Reversion Agreement, the Japanese Red Army, and more.

By the late 1960s, Kamigata rakugo finally started flourishing again. The Shitennō were coming into their own as masters and were regularly featured on radio, television, and at major venues—usually performance spaces operated by Yoshimoto and Shōchiku, or concert halls—around town and in other cities. These men becoming recognizable celebrities gave numerous

⁹² Today it remains a sort of stamp of authenticity in the rakugo world if one can say they dropped out of school to begin *shugyō* (apprenticeship).

young Japanese hope that going into rakugo might be more lucrative (and exciting) than going into the line of work that their fathers were in. Scholars and popular writers began publishing more about rakugo around this time, too, which put a sort of stamp of respectability on Kamigata rakugo's comeback.

One of the ongoing problems that Kamigata hanashika faced was that they did not have a formal venue to call their own. Building a new seki from the ground up, however, was too expensive and therefore out of the question. Nevertheless, hanashika remained tenacious about finding places to perform. The first place that hanashika could call 'home' was a rented space in the Shimanouchi Christian Church. In 1972, Shokaku VI (Kyōkai chairperson at the time) began organizing semi-regular shows there, which he called the Shimanouchi Yose. The arrangement at the church would only last for about two years, but the Shimanouchi Yose moved to other venues and continued to be successful. Some of the venues were quite unconventional, for example, a basement bowling alley, supermarket, restaurant, trade school, and temple.⁹³ Still, the shows were put on and audiences continued showing up.⁹⁴

Without a formal rakugo seki, hanashika made do with the resources they could procure. Kamigata rakugo programs were almost always homespun operations. Of course there were a few hanashika, such as Katsura Beichō III, who managed to regularly have his shows produced on grand stages, and this no doubt created opportunities for some of the hanashika who were affiliated with him, but most others stayed at ground level. This was certainly the case for

⁹³ The Shimanouchi Yose continues welcoming audiences today, usually once a month at the Torii Hall, in Nanba.

⁹⁴ There are a few other cases similar to Shimanouchi Yose, most notably the volunteer staff-run Tanabe Yose, which has been putting on semi-regular shows since 1974. This particular 'yose' was launched on the third floor of a bakery near Minami Tanabe Station (south Osaka), but soon moved to a local youth center due to lack of space and poor accessibility. Katsura Bunta (1952-) has been this show's main attraction since its start.

Beichō's contemporary, Katsura Bunshi V, who told me on numerous occasions that this ideal audience consisted of three hundred people at most.

University *rakugo kenkyū kai* (rakugo clubs, *ochiken* for short) became popular during the 1960s and 1970s and this popularity helped spread interest in rakugo to a younger audience. The new generation of hanashika—some came with *ochiken* experience, others without having finished high school—were young, good-looking, and in tune with the most recent trends. Some in this group were more interested in composing new stories than learning Kamigata rakugo's traditional repertoire. They wanted to create a rakugo to which people in their generation could immediately relate.

These avant-garde hanashika were willing to perform at radically unconventional venues in order to reach new fans. To give one example, on March 7, 1981, a small group of hanashika put on the *Sōsaku rakugo no kai* (Original Rakugo Show) at a bourbon lounge (i.e., chic bar) in Umeda, Osaka. The establishment was packed with young men and women who were excited to find out what this thing called *sōsaku rakugo* was.⁹⁵ Instead of entering to traditional hayashi music, the hanashika—Katsura Sanshi I (1943-, now Bunshi VI), Katsura Bunchin I (1948-), and Tsukitei Happō I (1948-)—entered to songs played on a synthesizer. Until this point, rakugo had never been presented in such a manner.

The *sōsaku* rakugo movement that ensued created a rift of sorts between those in the traditional school and those who preferred the new (some hanashika kept feet in both camps), but the public response to *sōsaku*, particularly that from the younger generation, was undeniably

⁹⁵ *Sōsaku*, like *shinsaku*, refers to pieces that are newly composed. *Sōsaku* composed after World War II are usually set in contemporary society. Characters tend to drink bourbon and beer rather than *sake*, sing karaoke, not *kouta* (lit. little songs, with shamisen accompaniment), and live in modern housing, not *nagaya*.

positive. Kamigata rakugo, thanks in part to the new interpretation of it, was booming as never before.⁹⁶ A few sōsaku sensations became so popular that they would end up leaving the rakugo world in order to take better paying jobs in radio and television. These people are often referred to as *urekko*, a term generally used to refer to someone who gets a break in show business and is thereafter highly sought after. Urekko is also sometimes used in a negative context, to imply that one is a sell-out.

Thanks to the *urekko*, *hanashika*, at least in name, were now more visible in mass media. It was suddenly considered chic to have a rakugo name. This change helped popularize the art further, though it arguably also gave the general population the wrong idea about Kamigata rakugo. Despite the improving box office numbers, traditional rakugo masters and their fans were anything but thrilled about sōsaku. To them, it was never necessary in the first place. Sōsaku rakugo was, in their opinion, the kind of rakugo *hanashika* did when they were not up to doing the ‘real work’—studying history, taking lessons in related traditional arts, portraying a bygone age—that older stories require.⁹⁷

V. Kamigata Rakugo Today

A. Tenma Tenjin Hanjōtei and Association Growth

Hanashika in Osaka and the surrounding areas continued to work the circuit in the 1980s and 1990s, building even closer ties with the community. Artistic families continued to grow and the only thing that seemed to be lacking at the turn of the twenty-first century was a formal

⁹⁶ Aiba Akio, *Shin gendai Kamigata rakugo jinroku* (Tokyo: Kōbun Shuppan, 1985), 34-5.

⁹⁷ Personal communication, 2003-14. All interviews (except for the one I conducted with Katsura Bunshi V on July 10, 2003) were confidential; the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.

rakugo seki. If Bunshi V had one dying wish, it was for a seki that Kamigata rakugo could call home.⁹⁸ In 2006, the year following his death, this wish would be fulfilled. Thanks to donations from individuals and corporations, the Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai erected the Tenma Tenjin Hanjōtei (Hanjōtei for short) on the grounds of the Tenma Tenjin Shrine, in the same location where seki of previous generations had stood. Since the Hanjōtei opened its doors, it has presented rakugo (and an assortment of guest variety acts including manzai) almost daily, often morning, noon, and night. The public response has been remarkable. The 216 seats do not sell out for every show, but there is usually a good crowd.



Figure 2.7. The Tenma Tenjin Hanjōtei. Photograph by author.

The Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai became a *shadan hōjin* (incorporated body) in 2004 and was recognized by the Japanese government as a *kōeki shadan hōjin* (public interest incorporated association) in 2011. The Kyōkai continues to thrive; in 2012 construction was completed on the

⁹⁸ I gather this from conversations that we had.

Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai Kaikan (hall), designed by the famous Osakan architect Andō Tadao (1941-). The Kaikan is a short walk from the Hanjōtei and serves as the new Kyōkai headquarters. It has offices, a Kamigata rakugo reading room, and practice spaces for Kyōkai members (i.e., hanashika and musicians).

In recent years a few senior hanashika have established small *seki* or *keikoba* (practice spaces) where their *deshi* can practice rakugo on a daily basis. The most successful of these is Katsura Zakoba's (1947-) Dōrakutei, which serves a 'home ground' of sorts for hanashika contracting with Beichō Jimusho (the agency serving members of the Katsura Beichō school). Dōrakutei, located in south Osaka, is open daily and regularly features hanashika from other schools, too. This small venue is on the second floor of a condominium complex. Originally a condo unit, the space was professionally remodeled to be a rakugo *seki*. There is only room for about fifty people in the audience (one hundred could probably squeeze in), on the floor, which makes for a wonderfully intimate rakugo experience.

B. The Magazine Nna aho na and Other Kamigata Rakugo Media

Before the age of websites and blogs, artistic families relied heavily on newsletters to share information about upcoming shows and other contents that fans would be interested in. Some hanashika continue to send newsletters out to subscribers, but more are relying on internet media and professional advertising to reach a wider audience. In September 2004, the Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai began issuing an informational magazine titled *Nna aho na* (That's Ridiculous). Early issues contained hanashika interviews, articles about the Kamigata rakugo world, and news about the imminent opening of the Hanjōtei. Virtually everything was written and edited by hanashika. The magazine continues to be issued in similar fashion, though it now often includes

scholarly articles by outside contributors about subjects such as Kamigata rakugo history and rare rakugo-related documents. *Nna aho na* is issued three times a year and reached its thirtieth issue in 2014. Issues are usually twenty to twenty-five pages long and cost three hundred yen.

Record albums and cassette tapes helped Kamigata hanashika reach a wider audience as Japan went through rapid modernization in the twentieth century. CD and DVD media, commonly available at music/video store chains such as Tsutaya or bookstores such as Junkudō and Kinokuniya, continue to serve a similar function. In addition to this, many Kamigata hanashika write books and appear as emcees or guests on radio and television programs. Rakugo fans (and hanashika perhaps) regularly upload Kamigata rakugo on internet video sites such as YouTube and Niconico and one can even stream rakugo live or with same-day delay on the internet for a nominal fee and sometimes for free. Since 2000, there has been a steady stream of television shows and movies about the rakugo world, and this exposure has helped Kamigata rakugo gain a wider audience, and more performers.⁹⁹

Many Kamigata hanashika post regularly in web logs and a good number have taken to internet social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. There are over one hundred Kamigata hanashika (nearly half of the total) who have Twitter accounts in 2014. The most senior of these is Katsura Zakoba, who currently has 8,350 followers and “tweets” almost every evening about what he is having to eat with his *sake*. On April 17, 2014 at 6:10 p.m., Zakoba tweeted the following:

Dōrakutei kara, kaette kimashita. Furo ni hairi, kimochi ee, nomimassa, ate wa niku iri yasai itame, rōru kyabetsu, kanpai, hona, mata.

⁹⁹ Part of this paragraph will appear in Matthew W. Shores, “Spotlight – Popular Arts: *Rakugo* and *Misemono*,” in Jonah Salz, ed., *Cambridge History of Japanese Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

I'm home from the Dōrakutei. Took a bath and feel great. Gonna have a drink. To go with it: vegetable-meat stir-fry and cabbage rolls. Cheers. Okay, see ya later.

VI. Conclusion

Today, Kamigata rakugo may seem like a far cry from the outdoor comic storytelling traditions that Tsuyu no Gorōbei and Yonezawa Hikohachi initiated in the late seventeenth century. Gorōbei and Hikohachi, and the next generation of hanashika, were essentially street performers, so it was critical that they be loud, engaging, and succinct enough to hold the attention of people who may have wanted to simply pass through. The ways that early modern Kamigata hanashika devised and performed stories had major implications for the evolution of the art. Kamigata rakugo continues to be remarkably *hade*—it is energetic, lively, and musical. Today, Kamigata rakugo is different in various ways from earlier forms, but it still contains and perpetuates certain characteristics that are products of the Osaka sociocultural milieu.

CHAPTER THREE

WHAT CONSTITUTES A KAMIGATA RAKUGO STORY?

There was a time when I hated Osaka rakugo. At least I did not find it very amusing. I was used to Tokyo rakugo, so the Osaka art simply felt like nonstop yelling. It was irritating at best. I did not think there was any way all that carrying on could portray the highly detailed folds of human life. I could not stand the hayashi music—hamemono—that was played in stories. Rakugo is, after all, supposed to be *wagei*, which means performers should use nothing but the tongues in their mouths. I believed that relying on musical accompaniment went against tradition. However, it appears as though I was measuring Osaka rakugo with a Tokyo rakugo ruler. Truth be told, there is no way to translate the nature of Osaka rakugo into Tokyo language. Osaka rakugo is completely its own art—it is all about having fun.¹

—Japanese critic Yano Seiichi (1935-)

When comparing Tokyo rakugo to Kamigata rakugo, eight out of ten people are bound to prefer Tokyo rakugo because it incorporates familiar language and has rich expressiveness. However, rakugo's true fans would say that the distinct comic flavor and mellow nuance of words that the Kamigata tradition is loved for, these are the essence of rakugo. I feel the same way.²

—Shōchiku *shinkigeki* founder, actor, and playwright Shibuya Tengai II (1906-83)

I. Distinct Traditions in Kamigata and Tokyo

Kamigata storytelling on the whole has a separate history, and therefore developed with characteristics distinct from, the Edo/Tokyo tradition. Hence, rakugo is not simply rakugo. Kamigata rakugo and Tokyo rakugo today exhibit various differences. Some of these are performance aspects that are noticeable on the surface, but others become clear only after listening to or reading multiple stories in each tradition. Kamigata rakugo regularly comes with

¹ Shōfukutei Shokaku VI, ed., *Koten Kamigata rakugo*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1973), 284-5.

² Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai, ed., *Kamigata rakugo omoroi shū* (Tokyo: Shinpū Shuppansha, 1968), 2.

shows within the show that exhibit hanashikas' mastery in various arts. Osaka audiences like to see hanashika do more than just storytelling—they prefer a rakugo that exhibits cultivation, *sui* (refinement), and *jōzetsu* (loquacity). Kamigata hanashika frequently digress from stories if they are sure it will please audiences. Tokyo rakugo is more centered on storytelling alone. The Tokyo tradition celebrates the chic, *iki* (stylishness), and *ma* (timing)—Tokyo rakugoka and their audiences place a high value on unadorned narrative virtuosity.

Kamigata rakugo is historically a more musical art than Tokyo rakugo. This is an outcome of Kamigata being so far away from Edo, but it was also the status quo in Kamigata arts, such as kabuki. Popular comic storytelling in Edo is traced to Kamigata-native Shikano Buzaemon (1649-99) and it is well documented that (although it is not known in what way) he incorporated music into his performances. As storytelling evolved in Edo, however, music was gradually phased out. This is not to say that Edoites did not like music; they did. This is evidenced by the fact that the city had major theater districts and any number of cheaper outlets where people could enjoy and even learn to play popular music. Still, music ceased being a part of Edo rakugo. This is doubtless because storytellers wished to avoid censors, especially after local magistrates began issuing prohibitions on comic storytelling in the early nineteenth century.³

Tokyo rakugo therefore developed as a *zashiki gei* (parlor art) and not an outdoor one. As expected, the Tokyo tradition became a quieter if not more serious one than that in Kamigata. Specialty subgenres such as shibaibanashi being the major exception, Tokyo rakugo grew to be a comparatively restrained art. Consequently, today Tokyo rakugoka remain primarily concerned

³ Heinz Morioka and Miyoko Sasaki, *Rakugo: The Popular Narrative Art of Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1990), 240.

with *wagei* and *wajutsu* (narrative artistry and narrative style). Anything outside of plain speech and vocalization (such as music and artificial sound effects), it is argued, takes away from the art.⁴ Under this line of thought, music invades listeners' imaginations, robbing the story of potential. If a scene requires music, a master rakugoka should be able to, in theory, convey this orally, by singing and creating her/his own sound effects. Since the Meiji period particularly, when the art was increasingly treated as *bungeo* (literary art), there has been a general aim in Tokyo for a higher degree of straight narrative artistry.⁵

The essence of Tokyo rakugo lies in the pursuit of such artistry, inspired in part by the move during the Meiji period to create fuller, psychologically complex stories. San'yūtei Enchō (1839-1900), Henry Black (also known as Kairakutei Burakku, 1858-1923), and others inaugurated this movement by devising increasingly dramatic and romantic *ninjōbanashi* (lit. tales of human nature) and *kaidanbanashi* (ghost stories), which were often inspired by Western novels. These men also performed *hon'an* (adaptations) of Western literature. Enchō adapted Charles Reade's *Hard Cash* and at least three other Western novels for the rakugo stage.⁶ Black adapted Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* and numerous other works, and used his rakugo to comment on current social issues peculiar to Japan.⁷

Consequently, Tokyo rakugo, closely associated with the modern novel and new modes of expression, came to be viewed as a high art. Rakugoka doubtless prided themselves on establishing a tradition that could be appreciated by even Japan's most prominent intellectuals.

⁴ Katsura Beichō, *Zoku Beichō Kamigata rakugo sen* (Tokyo: Rippū Shobō, 1975), 185.

⁵ Shōfukutei Shokaku VI, *Koten Kamigata rakugo*, 286-7.

⁶ J. Scott Miller, *Adaptations of Western Literature in Meiji Japan* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 84-5.

⁷ Ian McArthur, *Henry Black: On Stage in Meiji Japan* (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2013), 148.

Tokyo rakugo was a commoner art, but it developed into one that was fashionably precise and markedly literary. Audiences went to shows to be entertained, but this, as critics wrote in popular magazines, was a more refined form of entertainment than the uncultivated, vulgar style of rakugo performed in Osaka. Tokyo rakugoka were *artistes* and audiences were expected to be sophisticated enough to appreciate their arts. In many ways, this continues to be the case today.⁸

Numerous Tokyo rakugoka went to Osaka to undergo formal and informal apprenticeships with Kamigata rakugo masters during the Meiji, Taishō, and early Shōwa periods. This is commonly referred to as the era of rakugo *kōryū* (exchange), a time when Tokyo rakugoka flocked to Osaka, generally to return after some time with a new stock of stories. They typically rearranged these stories to suit tastes back in Tokyo, however, in most cases also changing the title. One of the biggest importers of Kamigata stories was Yanagiya Kosan III (1857-1930), part of the Tokyo rakugoka group active in Osaka that was dubbed the Tokyo *ren* (gang). The men of this group tended to be welcomed like stars in Osaka, and some, not surprisingly, remained in Osaka for years.

Osaka rakugo had fallen into a state of decline with the appearance of Yoshimoto Kōgyō and rise in manzai popularity, but there were still more opportunities in this city for Tokyo rakugoka than their own. After all, Tokyo was virtually destroyed by the Great Kantō Earthquake.

⁸ One day when I had the nerve to sit in the front row at the Asakusa Engeijō hall, Kawayanagi Senryū I (1931-) asked me during the middle of his act if I could actually understand everything that he was saying. He seemed unconfident in my ability, and perhaps somewhat perturbed that a non-Japanese person would want to try to comprehend his art. I have seen Tokyo rakugoka confront audience members on numerous occasions, usually for being disruptive or sleeping during shows, but I have seen only one case of this in Osaka. Tokyo rakugoka often swagger onto stage on their heels then proceed to narrate stories in voices that are somewhat difficult to hear, expecting listeners to lean in and pay close attention. On the other hand, Osaka hanashika tend to enter swiftly on the balls of their feet, and their speech is generally upbeat if not loud. Audience satisfaction and comfort is of utmost concern in Osaka.

While this disaster was a factor influencing many Tokyo rakugoka to go to Osaka, the so-called *kōryū* was less of an exchange than the word implies. Numerous Tokyo rakugoka went to Osaka, but few Tokyo stories were adapted to the Kamigata repertoire while they were there. In contrast, numerous (adapted) Kamigata stories were well received in Tokyo and became part of the traditional repertoire there. Few Kamigata hanashika found success in the capital, however.⁹ Perhaps this is because Kamigata artists were viewed as less sophisticated in the capital, the center of the literary world and where rakugo and *kōdan* were commonly treated as *bungei*. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Tokyo critics usually wrote of Kamigata rakugo with strong disapproval.

Tokyo rakugoka imported *debayashi* (entrance music) from Kamigata in the Taishō era, but, as with the stories that they adapted, they also modified the music. Today, Kamigata hanashika and musicians often comment that *yosebayashi* is played too slowly in Tokyo and is therefore *inki* (gloomy).¹⁰ Except in a few rare cases, *hamemono* is not usually heard in Tokyo rakugo. For this, and the reasons mentioned above, some Kamigata rakugo enthusiasts find Tokyo rakugo to be condescending, lackluster, and tedious. To Tokyo rakugo aficionados, however, the art is composed, sophisticated, and tasteful.

A. Kamigata Rakugo and Manzai

Modern rakugo and manzai are both connected to premodern outdoor narrative performance traditions. Manzai's historical roots date back perhaps to the eleventh century, when *senju manzai* was first documented by Fujiwara no Akira (989-1066). Little is known about

⁹ Katsura Beichō, *Zoku Beichō Kamigata rakugo sen*, 173-5.

¹⁰ Personal communication, 2010-12. All interviews were confidential; the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.

exactly how manzai was performed prior to the early modern era, however.¹¹ The general consensus is that it was an auspicious *shukufuku gei* (blessing art). Out of *senju manzai* grew a number of regional traditions, which consisted of two (or more) travelling performers carrying out magico-religious acts—dances, songs, greetings, etc.—around New Year. In the early modern period, as with rakugo’s precursors, manzai was featured as entertainment at temples, shrines, and other places where people gathered. In fact, the koya immediately next to Yonezawa Hikohachi I’s at Ikutama Shrine featured an act called *tayū manzai*. Manzai grew increasingly comical—and popular—as the early modern era progressed.¹²

Modern manzai is often associated with the *karukuchi* (two-person comic dialogue) tradition, originally performed as a prologue before niwaka plays and later as a separate act.¹³ Manzai is also believed to derive from the Nagoya *Owari manzai* tradition, which emphasized *okashii* (comical) aspects over the *medetai* (auspicious). By the late 1880s, Nagoya had a number of Owari manzai troupes that went on tour, performing in *koyagake* (makeshift halls) and *gekijō* (theaters). Owari manzai became extremely popular because it was dramatic and boasted a repertoire large enough to put on full productions. A number of entertainers traveled from Osaka to Chita (outside of Nagoya) in the early twentieth century to study Owari manzai. One of these was Sunagawa Sutemaru (1890-1971), around 1909.

It was at this time that new variety halls were being built one after another in Osaka. Manzai was still a marginal art and considered *teikyū* (cheap), but a rapidly growing number of *manzaishi* (manzai artists), including Sutemaru—who in 1923 teamed up with Nakamura Haruyo

¹¹ Terence A. Lancashire, *An Introduction to Japanese Folk Performing Arts* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 88-9.

¹² Maeda Isamu, *Kamigata manzai happyakunen shi* (Osaka: Sugimoto Shoten, 1975), 111-17.

¹³ Maeda Isamu, *Kamigata engei jiten* (Tokyo, Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 1966), 589.

(1897-1975)—helped increase manzai’s following in Osaka.¹⁴ When Yoshimoto’s first major manzai stars Yokoyama Entatsu (1896-1971) and Hanabishi Achako (1897-1974) debuted together in 1930, they became an instant hit. They were the first manzaishi to become national celebrities and their novel topics and witty dialogue—with some help from manzai writer Akita Minoru (1905-1977)—sparked the movement that led to *shabekuri manzai* (talk-your-ear-off manzai).

As discussed in the previous chapter, Yoshimoto dominated Osaka’s entertainment world by 1922. Over the next decade, and particularly after Entatsu-Achako’s debut, manzai became Osaka’s preferred entertainment. If hanashika wished to appear on big stages (and receive better payment), they had little choice but to appear in Yoshimoto and Shōchiku productions, which were inevitably manzai centered. This was the case well into the twentieth century. There have been numerous hanashika over the years who have demonstrated an energetic, fast-paced narrative style similar to that heard in shabekuri manzai, but is this necessarily a result of manzai influence? Perhaps in part, but Inoue Hiroshi would remind us that such energy is not just an attribute of Osaka manzai. High energy and talkativeness are fundamental aspects of Osakan culture. The stars of Kamigata *warai* (comedy) have always been commoners, and their everyday lives the stage. This is true for Kamigata kabuki, rakugo, *kigeki* (comedy), and manzai. The adage *Osakajin futari yoreba manzai ni naru* (Put two Osakans together and you’ll get manzai) is indication that manzai is rooted in the daily lives of commoners.¹⁵ It is also indication that manzai narrative energy and speed are not products of modern manzai alone.

¹⁴ Tomioka Taeko, *Manzai sakusha Akita Minoru* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1986), 99-101.

¹⁵ Inoue Hiroshi, *Manzai: Osaka no warai* (Kyoto: Sekai Shisōsha, 1981), 22.

Kamigata rakugo and manzai exhibit a number of similarities and differences. A key difference, of course, is their traditions. Manzai legend Kimi Koishi (1927-2011) said in a recent interview that he and his brother, Yumeji Itoshi (1925-2003), never took deshi because they did not feel as though there was anything in their art to teach:

We don't accept deshi. Well, put it this way, what can you teach a deshi about manzai? There's that line of thought, you know. There's no way to teach manzai, really. Because we're all human—every one of us knows how to talk. I suppose I could give somebody advice on *how* to talk, but, even if I had a deshi, manzai isn't an art where you give detailed instructions along the lines of "you do this here, and shouldn't do that there." After all, *denshō geinō to wa chigau kara* ([manzai] isn't an orally transmitted art). In oral traditions, you can say things like, "no, that's not right!" but for manzai, where individuality is key, you can't say, "no, you're saying that wrong!" This is my approach anyway. So, I don't take deshi. My older brother felt the same way.¹⁶

Koishi is being modest by saying that there is nothing to teach in manzai, but he is correct that manzai is inherently different from such orally transmitted arts as Kamigata rakugo, kōdan, and Naniwabushi. Manzai is, after all, structured as an extension of a conversation that could take place in somebody's living room or between two friends on the street. Ui Mushū distinguishes rakugo from manzai in the following way:

From time to time, I am asked to read shinsaku rakugo manuscripts that young people write, which basically consist of nothing more than dialogue between characters A and B. There is no narrative. They seem to be confusing [rakugo] with manzai. Rakugo stories are hanashi with ochi—otoshibanashi. Hanashi need to have *kishō tenketsu* (introductions, adequate development, and conclusions). Rakugo cannot be called a hanashi if it does not have an *atama* (beginning) and an *o* (end). Manzai does not have this structure.¹⁷

Kamigata rakugo has a repertoire consisting of koten and shinsaku stories, while manzai, although some material is kept in the repertoire, is forever contemporary. Manzaishi face intense pressure to present new, fresh material and be novel with their *iimawashi* (phrasing). Manzaishi

¹⁶ Kimi Koishi, and Toda Manabu, *Itoshi Koishi omoidegatari* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2008), 173.

¹⁷ Ui Mushū, *Rakugo no genwa* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1970), 3.

therefore use contemporary language and focus on the present day. Other obvious differences between Kamigata rakugo and manzai include costuming: hanashika wear kimono and manzaishi usually wear suits and ties (this was not the case in Meiji-Taishō, however). Kamigata rakugo is a one-man sit-down art and manzai is two-man stand-up. Hanashika address audiences directly during their makura, but, once they begin the hondai, they begin presenting another world. Hanashika are free to make asides at any time they like, but they perform rakugo dialogue behind the “fourth wall,” a term that French playwright Jean Jullien (1854-1919) coined for Denis Diderot’s (1713-84) concept of the imaginary wall separating stage from audience.¹⁸ This is not the case with manzai, though, as manzaishi carry out a continuous dialogue with the audience, frequently seeking nonverbal agreement or actual input. Hanashika often perform dialogue quickly and can present it with an unruly feel, but there is, in the end, just one hanashika on stage. It is impossible for them to make characters *kakeai* (talk over one another), which is a hallmark of two-man *shabekuri manzai*. *Dassen* (digressions), another manzai technique, are not nearly as common in Kamigata rakugo.

Despite their differences, Kamigata rakugo and manzai share some characteristics. Kamigata rakugo and manzai almost always concern the lives of commoners. Artists in both traditions strive to be quick, clever, and skilled speakers. Manzai as a rule has a tsukkomi and a boke, which can also be said for many stories in Kamigata rakugo. Parallels can be drawn between some Kamigata rakugo and manzai techniques, such as timing, ingenious use of words, word play, *konsen* (confusion) and, to a lesser degree, *akutai* (verbal beatings), *hora* (outlandish

¹⁸ Paul Krunitz, *The Making of Theatre History* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1988), 323.

exaggerations), and *he rikutsu* (lit. fart logic, i.e., quibbles).¹⁹ We shall see below and in the following chapter that Kamigata rakugo exhibits a number of manzai-like qualities, but it is best not to interpret these as an outcome of modern manzai influence. They are part of the intertext of popular stage performance in Osaka.

B. Kamigata Rakugo Characters

There are any number of characters that appear in Kamigata rakugo stories. It would be helpful to review the important ones before analyzing the stories selected for this study. I have chosen ten character types for introduction, all of which appear in the stories to be discussed in this and the following chapter. Many of these characters appear in Tokyo rakugo, but they are found more frequently in Kamigata rakugo and are usually presented with different traits.²⁰

1. Oyadanna (The Merchant Father)

The *oyadanna*, or simply *danna*, is the head of a merchant house and appears in numerous Kamigata rakugo stories. He is generally portrayed as a big-hearted and straitlaced man, but not always. It is made clear in some stories that the *danna* had his share of fun when he was younger. Although he puts on an air of being tough in front of his son and apprentices, he is actually quite soft. The *danna* touts Osaka merchant values, but often falls short of satisfying stereotypes of merchant as hard worker, self-confident, and self-reliant.

¹⁹ There is a discussion of manzai humor types in Inoue, *Manzai*, 37-79. I have borrowed some of Inoue's terms.

²⁰ I referred to Hoshi Manabu, *Kamigata rakugo kōkyū: warai no sekai, hanashi to hanashi no hanashi* (Tokyo: Ōtori Shoin, 2013), 106-18; and Takahashi Hiroyuki, *Rakugo jinbutsu jiten* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 2005) while writing this section.

2. *Wakadanna (The Merchant Son)*

The *wakadanna* appears as frequently if not more so than his father, the *danna*. The *wakadanna* has a somewhat weak character and is often shown as having a predilection for drinking, partying with geisha, or spending all day at the kabuki theater. He is therefore kept on a short leash by the *danna* and the *bantō* (introduced below). In some stories, the *wakadanna* is so profligate that he has to be severely punished. This notwithstanding, he is slow to reform because he is aware that his father wants nothing more than to keep the business in the family and preserve his legacy.

3. *Goryōnin (The Merchant Wife)*

The *goryōnin* makes regular appearances in Kamigata rakugo merchant stories. She is typically portrayed as a younger wife in middle-level merchant houses. As mentioned in Chapter One, merchant wives had influential voices at home and in the community—this is no different in Kamigata rakugo. The *goryōnin* makes important decisions and is not one to be crossed. She is typically mentally stronger than all of the men in the house put together, though the same might be said about all women in Kamigata rakugo. The *goryōnin* is frequently portrayed as having financial know-how and sometimes has financial means of her own.

4. *Bantō (The Head Clerk)*

The *bantō* is also a regularly appearing character in merchant stories. In traditional Osaka merchant homes, the job ranks from bottom to top were *detchi*, *teshiro* (worker), *bantō*, and *bekke*. The *bantō* was therefore the highest-ranking employee who still lived in the *danna*'s house. The *bantō* was basically responsible for the actions of everybody under him. In Kamigata

rakugo he is also regularly ordered to keep a close watch on the wakadanna. Since the bantō has an opportunity to be rewarded with his own house (i.e., bekke), it would seem that he has a great deal to lose. This becomes a point of humor in numerous merchant stories and is exacerbated by the fact that the bantō often leads two lives: his public one as the respectable head clerk, and a secret one as a worldly and socially active man.

5. Sadakichi and Other Detchi

Sadakichi appears more than any other detchi in Kamigata rakugo. Whether it is Sadakichi or other stock apprentices, detchi appear in virtually every merchant story in the traditional repertoire. Detchi in old Osaka were usually ten to seventeen years old. Small merchant houses had two or three detchi while large houses had up to eight or so. In Senba, merchants regularly referred to their detchi as their own *bonsan* (child, boy). The bantō and the danna in Kamigata stories regularly rebuke Sadakichi and other detchi, but they usually do this in a fatherly way. Still, adolescents that they are, Sadakichi and the lot can be heard complaining to each other about being mistreated or overworked. Kamigata rakugo detchi are frequently off task and their shenanigans are amusing. Detchi appear in Tokyo rakugo, but they are featured less prominently.

6. Okiyo and Other Female Servants

Just as there is a list of stock detchi and other male employees serving in merchant houses, there is a list of *jochū* and *gejo* (female servants). These characters have any number of duties including cleaning, taking care of children, serving food, and playing music. They are arguably treated the same as, if not better than, male employees in Kamigata merchant stories and are

frequently included in the comical pandemonium that inevitably arises. Female servants can be found off task, but not nearly as often as their male counterparts. Females were generally not eligible to become apprentices, but they were still considered members of the family in traditional merchant Osaka. This is reflected in Kamigata rakugo. As might be expected, female servants are more prominent in Kamigata rakugo than they are in Tokyo rakugo.

7. *Kiroku, Seihachi, and Men of the Nagaya*

Kiroku (affectionately called Kiikō or Kiiyan) and Seihachi (Seiyan) are best friends and appear in various Kamigata rakugo stories. Most famously, they make an epic pilgrimage together to the Grand Shrines at Ise in the series *Higashi no tabi* (Journey to the East), which leads people to believe that they may be modeled on Jippensha Ikku's famous traveling duo, Yaji and Kita.²¹ Kiroku is around thirty years old and Seihachi is slightly his senior. Kiroku often calls on Seihachi when he cannot figure something out on his own. The latter usually shows the former the ropes, but not without teasing or digging into him first. Kiroku and Seihachi live in separate nagaya units and sometimes have wives in stories. Kiroku and Seihachi are not merchants, but they are commonly painted with similar qualities. They are the quintessential Osaka chōnin.

Kiroku is the more unreliable of the two, but he cannot help it; part of his brain seems to be missing. Kiroku occasionally appears without his friend and, in fact, may appear more than any other single character in the repertoire. He gives his all to each and every undertaking, even

²¹ This has been debated. I discuss the matter in Matthew W. Shores, "Jippensha Ikku, *Hizakurige*, and Comic Storytelling," *Early Modern Japan: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 20 (2012): 46-75.

if the task is illogical. Kiroku's *aho* (stupidity) is slightly different from the *baka* (stupidity) of his Tokyo rakugo counterpart, Yotarō, who strikes one as being a complete idiot. Kiroku at least has some common sense. In addition to Kiroku and Seihachi, there is a list of other men, both named (e.g., Kuma, Hachi, etc.) and unnamed, who live in Osaka nagaya and bear similarities.

8. *Jinbei-han*

Jinbei-han (*han* is Osaka dialect for *-san*), or simply Jinbei, is an older man who lives down one of Osaka's backstreets, in a nagaya. He presumably lives close to Kiroku and Seihachi, because they often show up at his house to get advice on any number of matters or simply to pass the time. Jinbei-han is a knowledgeable old man and is more or less similar to Tokyo rakugo's *Inkyo* (Old Man). It is not clear what Jinbei-han does for work, but he claims to be a veteran thief in a few stories. There is no question that he is a goodhearted character, though. After all, he answers any and all questions brought to him, he gives Kiroku repeated introductions for work, and he can even be seen doting on his wife.

9. *Omatsu and Other Nagaya Wives*

In Kamigata rakugo there is a cast of nagaya women to go with the men (one might say it is the converse). Some of these women are named, but most are not. Nagaya women, like merchant women, are domineering and outspoken (some, like Omatsu, can be downright dreadful), but it is also clear that they will do just about anything—including the absurd—for their men. Nagaya women are smarter than the men and therefore are usually the ones to make important decisions and to handle the money.

10. *Geisha and Taikomochi*

Geisha (also call *geigi* or *geiko*) and their male counterparts, *taikomochi* (also *hōkan*), regularly appear in stories set in pleasure districts. In Kamigata rakugo these are Shinmachi, Kitano Shinchi, Sōemonchō, Nanba Shinchi, and Sakamachi. There are so many Kamigata stories set in pleasure districts that one might say there is a separate ‘teahouse rakugo’ subgenre. Teahouse stories are, of course, connected to merchant stories, because it is usually well-to-do merchants (or their sons or employees) from Senba and Dōjima—or Zakoba fish market bosses—who frequent these places. Though the level of teahouse is lower, Osaka *shokunin* (craftsmen) and even Kiroku and Seihachi occasionally get to visit pleasure districts. In a number of stories, geisha and taikomochi also accompany their patrons on outings (e.g., blossom viewing parties, pleasure boat trips, etc.).

II. Aspects of Kamigata Rakugo Performance

One of the first physical differences noticed between Kamigata rakugo and Tokyo rakugo is that hanashika in the former often use a *kendai* (short table/podium) and a *hizakakushi* (lit. knee concealer, i.e., short wooden screen). One reason *kendai* are used in the Kamigata tradition and not in Tokyo is that, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Kamigata rakugo was closely tied to *kōshaku* during the late early modern and Meiji periods. Hanashika commonly narrated in *shakuba* and therefore shared the *shakudai* that *kōshaku* narrators used. Hanashika continued to use *shakudai* (*kendai*) after the arts were presented in separate venues.²² Some Kamigata stories told today are so dependent on the use of *kendai* that it is nearly impossible to perform without them. As for *hizakakushi*, these are essentially used because they look nice, but they also serve a

²² Maeda Isamu, *Kamigata rakugo no rekishi* (Osaka: Sugimoto Shoten, 1966), 69-70.

practical purpose: they conceal performers' legs. Kamigata stories tend to be more physical than Tokyo rakugo, and therefore undergarments are more prone to exposure. Not all Kamigata stories require the use of kendai and hizakakushi—most can be performed without them if absolutely necessary—but their utilization is a sure way to tell Kamigata rakugo from Tokyo rakugo.



Figure 3.1. Hayashiya Kikumaru III (formerly Someya, 1974-) performs the Kamigata classic *Toki udon* (Time Noodles) with a kendai and hizakakushi. Courtesy of Hayashiya Kikumaru III.

Kendai and hizakakushi played an important role in Kamigata rakugo as the number of seki sharply declined following the Russo-Japanese War and the art was increasingly being performed in larger, unconventional spaces. This was also the case following World War II,

when there were no longer any *seki*. Kendai lent presence if not an air of prestige to *hanashika* performing in large venues. Kendai also added sound—*hanashika* frequently strike its surface with two *kobyōshi* (small wooden clappers). These are essentially miniature versions of the larger *tsuke* (clappers) used in the kabuki theater. *Kobyōshi* are used to signal the beginning of a story, indicate scene changes, and complement stage business, such as knocking on imaginary doors and peeking through *kōshi* (lattice work).²³

A. Kamigata Rakugo, the Hade (Flamboyant)

Kamigata rakugo is on the whole more *hade*—which, depending on the context, can mean flamboyant, lively, musical, loquacious, showy, loud, or gaudy—than Tokyo rakugo. *Hade* can also be rendered ‘colorful’. Modern developments show the art to be more colorful, literally. Since the introduction of color television to Japan in 1960, there has been a good deal of color added to costumes in Kamigata. Anybody who has been to see rakugo in Osaka and Tokyo in recent years may have noticed that *hanashika* in the former are generally bolder with their wardrobe colors. On the whole, there are more pastels—pinks, greens, blues, and purples—in Osaka kimono than Tokyo, which seem to consist of more dark colors such as dark blues, browns, and black. Dark colors, it might be argued, distract less from the stories being told. This makes sense in Tokyo, where storytelling without embellishment is considered more sophisticated.

Funa Benkei (Benkei on the Boat), not performed by Tokyo artists, ranks among the most *hade* stories in the Kamigata tradition. Seihachi goes to Kiroku’s place to invite him to join him on a *yakatabune* (pleasure boat) cruise. Kiroku’s *nagaya* unit is uncharacteristically quiet,

²³ Katsura Beichō, *Zoku Beichō Kamigata rakugo sen*, 115-16, 176.

but this, he says, is because his wife, Omatsu, is not at home. Kiroku tries to change into his kimono and get out of the house before his overbearing, vociferous wife returns, but he has no such luck. The scene that follows is one of the highlights of *Funa Benkei*. Hanashika not only have to present a believable heavy-handed woman, they also have to possess finely honed narrative skills in order to present the substantial section of *tateben*—a narrative technique in which one speaks so quickly and efficiently that the sound of their speech can be likened to the sound of *tateita ni mizu* (water streaming down a washboard). Tateben is regularly heard in Osaka manzai and is occasionally heard in Tokyo rakugo, too, but it is a hallmark of Kamigata rakugo, a decidedly loquacious tradition.

The high-speed tateben monologue, which we will take a closer look at in Chapter Four, is difficult for even native speakers of Japanese to follow in the original. This is fine, however, because Omatsu is relating uninteresting details about dealings that took place the day before and that morning—these have absolutely no bearing on the story. The tateben monologue serves as a show within the show. The faster, more precisely, and powerfully a hanashika can deliver this bit—with attention to tempo and crescendo—the better. Hearing this section performed, one can hear the numerous consonant sounds (t, k, ch, p, g, etc.) bounce off of each other, creating something of a tremor. Or, as the term tateben implies, one can hear the sound of water rushing down the ribs of a washboard. Tateben monologues stand out as narrative highlights in a number of Kamigata stories. They are *hade kikasedokoro* (focal aural highlights).

Kusshami kōshaku (The Sneezing Narrator of War Tales), told as *Kushami kōshaku* or *Kusame kōshaku* in Tokyo, is another fine example of Kamigata rakugo being more *hade* than

Tokyo rakugo.²⁴ Kiroku plots (and gets) revenge on a kōshaku master for ruining his chances with a love interest. He does this by burning chili pepper in a *hibachi* (brazier) and fanning the smoke toward the stage. This story is a Kamigata classic for its inclusion of multiple entertaining bits—again, shows within the show—of two non-rakugo arts, *nozoki karakuri* (peep-show box) and kōshaku.²⁵ There is also a hilarious sneezing fit and a peculiar song sung at the end of the story. Kiroku high-spiritedly sings the song (a capella) after his victory as he and Seihachi walk down the street, which highlights the musicality of Kamigata rakugo. This, not included in the Tokyo version, will be discussed further in the next chapter:

Mole cricket, hairy caterpillar, centipede,
 Mosquito, wriggler, cicada, and frog.
 Mountain butterfly, cricket, and locust,
 Goldbeetle's back so shiny.

Okeru kemushi geji
Ka ni bōfura semi, kawazu
Yama chōchō ni kirigirisu ni hatahata
Bunbu no senaka ga pikapika

B. Yosebayashi (Yose Music)

The inclusion of a great deal of music is another aspect that makes Kamigata rakugo stand out as *hade*. There are a number of reasons why there is so much music in the art. Kamigata storytellers have long incorporated music in their art. It was inspired by kabuki, jōruri, and probably a number of other lesser arts that were performed in open-air theater stalls.²⁶ Next, Osaka storytellers simply had more freedom to develop their art into a more festive, musical one.

²⁴ This story is told as either *Kusshami kōshaku* or *Kushami kōshaku* in Kamigata, depending on the school/teller.

²⁵ Nozoki karakuri was a popular form of entertainment from the late early modern era into the early Shōwa era. For a coin or two, people could look through lenses into a large wooden box that held fascinating illustrations, which were rotated by presenters who sang in *shichigochō* (lines of five and seven syllables). Nozoki karakuri genres included theater pieces, war tales, novel adaptations, and stories based on actual news. For more on nozoki karakuri, see Morinishi Mayumi, ed., *Kamigata geinō jiten* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2008), 463-5; or Kokugeki Kōjōkai, ed., *Geinō jiten* (1953; repr., Tokyo: Tōkyōdō, 1963), 529-30.

²⁶ Katsura Beichō, *Katsura Beichō shūsei*, vol. 1, *Kamigata rakugo* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2004), 133.

Finally, the musical aspect of Kamigata rakugo is an illustration of performers' *saabisu seishin* (service-oriented spirit), long considered a desirable quality in the merchant city of Osaka, as discussed in Chapter One. Combining music with comic storytelling gives audiences more for their money. It also followed the model of Kamigata kabuki, which was remarkably musical—dozens of instruments were employed in the *geza* (hayashi ensemble) from the late eighteenth century.



Figure 3.2. *Ohayashi-san* (with shamisen) and hanashika play yosebayashi outside the Hanjōtei. Photograph by author.

Kuchi ireya (The Hiring Agency), told in Tokyo as *Hikkoshi no yume* (Dreaming of Moving), has a scene where the bantō of a merchant house goes on a *yobai* (night crawl) to a female employee's quarters. In the Kamigata version, the hayashi ensemble plays music in the background while this scene takes place. The song is *Tottsurugan* (onomatopoeia for shamisen

notes), which is played specially for yobai scenes in a number of stories.²⁷ The lecherous bantō makes his way into the kitchen, but finds the ladder leading to the woman's quarters on the second floor missing. The music effectively anchors the audience to the yobai sequence (and this goes for all musical scenes in the repertoire), providing a comfortable place from where they can voyeuristically look on, similar to the effect background music has in cinema.²⁸ This, too, is taken from kabuki, which has been 'cinematic' for at least two hundred years. In the Tokyo version, the man comically gropes his way through the dark, but in silence.

Hayashiya Somemaru IV, the foremost authority on Kamigata yosebayashi, recognizes that without kabuki there would probably be no music in rakugo. When asked what is *dokutoku* (special) about Kamigata yosebayashi, he responded with the following:

Rakugo hamemono conveys popular songs and old *nagauta* pieces that are no longer heard in other sectors of *hōgaku* (Japanese music) or kabuki. Most people were probably familiar with these songs around the end of the early modern era. Songs that come from *nagauta* and kabuki were adapted for the yose. I'd really like to give the *ohayashi-san* [yose musicians who specialize in shamisen, see *Figure 3.2*] who did these arrangements a medal or something. I imagine the songs were adapted after *ohayashi-san* had all become women. The following is [ohayashi-san Hayashiya Tomi's (1883-1970) recount:

We'd go to plays, right? And they would play such nice music. And we would memorize it on the spot. They would play it over and over, so we learned it by heart. Once we got home we would remember everything and put it down on paper. We used (our notes) whenever we needed them.

It's said that this happened quite a bit, so I imagine this is how the yosebayashi repertoire grew over time.²⁹

There is so much yosebayashi in Kamigata rakugo that can be traced directly to kabuki that it may warrant a study of its own. The Kamigata classic *Tako shibai* (Octopus Kabuki), not

²⁷ In Kamigata rakugo dressing rooms this song is also referred to as *yobai shamisen*.

²⁸ Rick Altman, ed., *Sound Theory, Sound Practice* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 62.

²⁹ Hayashiya Somemaru, *Kamigata rakugo yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1, *Kaisetsu hen* (Osaka: Sōgensha, 2011), 36.

performed in the Tokyo repertoire, is a playful kabuki parody with about ten different songs, mostly adapted from kabuki. The story is set in a large merchant house in Senba. Everybody in the house from the danna down to the detchi is infatuated with kabuki. They regularly stay up late after work to stage amateur kabuki plays, so they often have a hard time getting up early each morning.

On the morning this story takes place, the danna wakes up the house by donning a makeshift costume and dancing *Sanbasō*, a nō-inspired celebratory dance usually performed to open the kabuki season, or at the opening of a new theater. The danna dons an empty paper sugar sack to represent the required tall court noble's eboshi and an oversized *furoshiki* (wrapping cloth) as his *suō* (august robes). The hayashi ensemble strikes up the song *Sanbasō*, which consists of nō style drumming (with the *kotsuzumi* [shoulder drum], though the *shimedaiko* [small tension drum] can be substituted for this), drum calls, *nōkan* (nō flute), and shamisen accompaniment. This song is an excerpt from the kabuki (also nagauta and *kiyomoto*) song *Shitadashi sanbasō*.³⁰

The danna does *jigakari* (nō chanting) to the music: *Osoi zo ya, osoi zo ya, yo ga aketari ya, yo ga aketari ya, jochū, detchi, okiyo, onba* (It is late! It is late! Dawn is breaking, dawn is breaking! House girls and shop boys must now wake, nursemaid too!), which is a parody of Sanbasō's lines in the original: *Osaе osae, yorokobi ari ya, yorokobi ari ya. Waga kono tokoro yori, hoka e wa yaraji to zo omou* (All hear! All hear! Let there be joy! Let there be joy! I will perform the auspicious dance! I vow not to give this wonderful duty to anyone else!).³¹ Detchi

³⁰ Ibid., 164.

³¹ Sakurada Jisuke II, "Sanbasō with His Tongue Stuck Out (*Shitadashi Sanbasō*)," trans. Mark Oshima, in *Kabuki Plays on Stage: Darkness and Desire, 1804-1864*, ed., James R. Brandon and Samuel L. Leiter (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 54, 56. The

Sadakichi and Kamekichi find the danna's well-studied display amusing, so they reply with a kabuki-style compliment—they do *kakegoe* (well-timed shouts of support, approval): *Sanbasō!* Thinking the boys are teasing him with their *kakegoe*, the danna puts them to work without further delay.

Today, one or two professional *ohayashi-san* are usually hired for shows. In the case that *ohayashi-san* are not available, *hanashika* will play CDs with entrance music and other tracks needed for stories, or they simply choose to do stories without music to avoid sounding too amateurish. In a proper *seki*, there are any number of instruments, typically a smaller sampling of the ones that can be found in kabuki theaters—drums (a smaller *hiratsuridaiko* [flat hanging drum] is generally used in place of the large *ōdaiko*, to save space), *atarigane* and other gongs and bells, flutes, and other noisemakers. All instruments with the exception of *shamisen* are generically referred to as *narimono* (lit. noisemakers). In previous generations, only *hetari* (*hanashika* specializing in music) played *narimono*, but today all *hanashika* are expected—with varying results—to learn *narimono*. Young *hanashika* usually learn *narimono* from their masters or other *hanashika*, but also sometimes on the fly. Flutes require more training, so not everybody plays these. *Hanashika* who specialize in flutes usually bring their own to shows.

Not all stories in the Kamigata repertoire require *yosebayashi*, but a large percentage do. Convinced of *yosebayashi*'s importance, a few Kamigata *hanashika* and scholars have written chapters or books on the subject. Perhaps because *hetari* have disappeared from *seki*, there remains a sense of urgency to pass on the *yosebayashi* tradition. This was one of Katsura Bunshi V's greatest concerns:

kabuki original moves through a great variety of moods and methods, from solemn and ritualistic sequences to a folk-like atmosphere of work songs to comic and romantic sections.

There's nothing that I want more than for the next generation to carry on the tradition of hamemono. But it's hard to say just how far they will take it. From now on, hanashika need to insist that all music be live. We have to play it live and breathe as one with the music, paying special attention to every note and cue. It is difficult to do these things with a tape recording. But the problem is whether hanashika will rise to the challenge of insisting on doing their hanashi with nothing but live music. This is quite challenging, so there's a possibility that people will shift to doing more *subanashi* (non-musical stories). If this happens, I fear that yosebayashi will gradually stop being needed. So, if some people could step forward to preserve the tradition, I would be pleased. If they don't, there will be a lot of stories that we won't be able to do. Hanashika just need to learn how to incorporate the music, that's all there is to it. If they don't, there'll be no way for them to master the art.³²



Figure 3.3. Katsura Bunshi V (1930-2005). Photograph by author.

³² Katsura Bunshi V, 2003. Interview by author. Nara, Japan, July 10. The complete interview is included in the master's thesis that I wrote at Tezukayama University, Nara (2004).

Fortunately, hanashika such as Somemaru IV and Katsura Yoneza I (1965-), and a growing group of ohayashi-san (all women at this point), have taken the initiative to preserve yosebayashi. Today, group yosebayashi lessons are sometimes held for young hanashika at the Hanjōtei, typically during morning hours when shows are not scheduled. Pupils may also ask their masters or other hanashika for private lessons. Any opportunity for training is valuable as hanashika play for each other at shows and want to sound good. One way a young hanashika can improve her/his chances of being offered a spot at shows is by demonstrating that s/he is accomplished on one or more narimono instruments. Being able to perform onstage and off is always preferable to the former alone. Since hanashika typically do not learn to play shamisen at the professional level, there is a continual need to employ ohayashi-san.

C. Longer Stories in Kamigata

Stories in the Kamigata repertoire on the whole run longer than stories in the Tokyo repertoire. There are a number of reasons for this. It is partly due to the fact that Kamigata stories tend to have more narrator asides.³³ It may also be a result of there being so few hanashika in Osaka during and immediately after World War II. Slot times at live performances necessarily had to be longer, and longer versions of numerous stories stuck even after hanashika numbers increased. What it boils down to, though, is *saabisu* (service): the more hanashika can give audiences, the better.

Kamigata's *Tachigire (senkō)* (Time is Up [Incense]) is longer than the Tokyo version, *Tachikiri*. Part of the reason for this is the final scene, in which the wakadanna learns of his

³³ Katsura Beichō, *Zoku Beichō Kamigata rakugo sen*, 186.

geisha girlfriend Koito's tragic demise and is convinced that it is a result of his prolonged silence. The proprietress of the teahouse gives an emotional and heartrending account of what happened to Koito. Although she, too, initially blames the wakadanna for Koito's death, she forgives him once she hears that he was confined to his family warehouse for one hundred days. She invites him to offer incense at the altar and the wakadanna's final gift to Koito, a shamisen, is brought out to signify their bond. As he sobs and apologizes through his tears, the shamisen begins sounding by itself. This is where a major difference between the two versions can be observed. In the Kamigata version, an ohayashi-san backstage performs the *jiuta* song *Yuki* (Snow). The lyrics are as follows:

<i>Hon ni mukashi no mukashi no koto yo</i>	So very long ago now
<i>Waga matsu hito mo ware o matsu ken</i>	The one I waited for also waited for me
<i>Oshi no ōtori ni / mono (omoi hane no)</i> ³⁴	The mandarin duck and rooster (feathers ruffled from longing)

The Kamigata scene is longer, and *Yuki* is played throughout, much like background music is employed in focal kabuki scenes in order to stretch time. The poignant lyrics in this scene add both time and drama. The wakadanna is at first terrified to hear the shamisen sound without a player, but is able to overcome his fear enough to carry out a dialogue with the song that represents Koito's ghost. In the Tokyo version, in one of the rare cases where music *is* played during a story, a musician plays but a few bars of the equally poignant *jiuta* (also *nagauta*) song *Kuroi kaminoke* (Black Hair), omitting the lyrics and making the scene shorter and less climactic.

In *Kikue butsudan* (Chrysanthemum on the Altar), told in Tokyo as *Kikue no butsudan* or *Shirozatsuma* (White Satsuma Kimono), the opening scene is far longer in the Kamigata version

³⁴ Hayashiya, *Yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1, 177. The song ceases at the word *mono*.

than the Tokyo version. The reason for this is that Kamigata hanashika spend extra time on the opening exchange between the father and son. The father, a well-to-do merchant, is furious about his son's repeated visits to the pleasure quarters. To make matters worse, the wakadanna is unwilling to visit his wife, Ohana, who is now gravely ill and resting at her parents' home. The son's excuse for not visiting his wife, to use his words, is that he does not like sick people; they do not bathe and they smell like medicine. He adds that he is his father's son, claiming that his father's obsessive devotion to Buddhism is comparable to his own addiction to the pleasure quarters:

DANNA: You are the one who came to me saying, "Make Ohana my wife, I only want *her* for my wife, I promise I'll do everything to reform." ...

So, I went once more to talk things over with her parents. You knew they were a family of high status, too. They said things like, "It seems as though your wakadanna has been out and had his share of fun. Our daughter was raised by the hands of her parents—she comes from a simple home and doesn't know anything of the world outside. Surely, she could only blemish your name. We don't think she is good enough for your son. We are honored by such a proposal, but, given the circumstances, we must humbly turn down your request." There was nothing I could do. We were out of luck.

They were so polite and said they wished they only had a worthy daughter, but there you were with that look on your face. Sure, when a little shoot begins to grow, it makes some noise as its roots set in, but there I was stuck with a crybaby—loud-mouthed grass! And when you begged me to go back again, I was stupid enough to go ask her father once more about the possibilities of our children marrying. He said, "Since you've gone to so much trouble in making your proposal, I know I will regret it if I say no again. So, yes, I will let you take our daughter. But please keep in mind, she knows nothing of the world outside. We haven't even taught her proper etiquette. If you insist, we can only say yes and blemish your name."

But what is there for a woman to know when becoming a wife? You don't need them to read or write, or calculate anything. Tea ceremony, flower arrangement? And there she was, that sweet-hearted girl, thinking of me as her own father, saying, "*otōchan, otōchan...*" (daddy).

I used to tell your late mother every day what a good wife she was, and how happy she made me... You were the same way, weren't you? When Ohana first came, all you could say each morning was "Ohana, Ohana!" And when the sun went down, it was always "Ohana!" All you could say was "Ohana," but that didn't even last half a year before you were out fooling around again, all day and night!

WAKADANNA: Well, it's just that... If my own father puts it to me that way, there's not much I can say. Maybe it's true that I'm no good, and, maybe I am evil... but, you know, it's all because I'm my father's son. I'm not saying that you're no good—I'm just saying that our evil sides look alike. ...

Just listen to what I'm saying, will you Dad? You see, you're a believer, and well, it's just fine to be religious. But even *you* know who's performing each day, and as soon as you find out at which theater, you're out the door. I guess it's just fine for you to go out, Dad... But then, why don't you put yourself in the position of your children, who are forever waiting for you to reform? Right?

And maybe my wife did get sick, but you just made matters worse by getting involved. You worry about things too much! Aren't I right? If you're going to worry about something, why don't you try worrying about that family altar of ours?

Remember the time that the priest came over and asked if you were interested in buying a new altar? Mom told him we didn't need a new one because we already had a nice one. But, no, there was good ol' Dad right there to buy in. That monk suggested that you buy a bigger one because it would show more gratitude to the gods. You fell right into his scheme. Oh, but you had an eye for a deal, didn't you?

Even though Mom said we couldn't possibly keep such a big altar in the house, you didn't once think about turning that monk away, did you? You went out and came back crying because you were convinced that our altar wasn't going to bring us enough fortune. *You* were crying like a baby. You told Mom that we needed a bigger altar just in case the worst happened.

She finally gave in to your pleas, but told you, "I won't be able to do a thing for that altar." And you came back and said, "But what is there for a woman to do when she gets a splendid Buddhist altar? Oh, you just say it's made with fine craftsmanship, that the wood is beautiful—you won't have to do a thing."

Then you ordered so many accessories that your altar ended up being too small to hold everything. You had to go and have a huge altar cabinet built. When you put your altar and everything in that cabinet there was still enough room for a person to stand up inside!

When everything was finally settled, you got up each morning, kneeled in front of it, and all you could say was, *Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu...* And when the sun went down, it was nothing but *Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu...* Okay, maybe it wasn't *exactly* like that, but you didn't have that altar for half a year before you were out fooling around again! Now, am I wrong to call that evil?³⁵

Kamigata hanashika spend more time filling out the female characters in the opening scene of *Kikue butsudān*. Ohana is depicted as a woman of refined character and pleasant disposition. As the father highlights, there could not possibly be a better match for a merchant.

³⁵ Katsura Bunshi V, *Kamigata rakugo meijin sen: shitennō hen, Kuchi ireya, Kikue butsudān*. Toshiba Emi Family Club, 1997, VHS.

Her list of traits is flawless. Furthermore, he points out, it would be hard to find a man who could make abacus calculations faster than she. Ohana also exhibits absolute loyalty to her father-in-law. As for the wakadanna's mother, though she is now dead, her presence remains strong in this merchant home. None of this is even hinted at in the Tokyo version, however. One has a hard time getting a clear picture of who Ohana is, and the deceased mother is not even mentioned.

III. Aspects of Kamigata Rakugo Content

Kamigata and Tokyo rakugo traditions are different in a number of ways that are not so noticeable on the surface. In this section we will focus on several aspects of Kamigata rakugo content, beginning with the fact that it is merchant centered. Second, Kamigata rakugo tends to contain more *shajitsuteki na yōso* (realistic components), which is arguably true of Osaka arts in general.³⁶ Next, while hierarchy tends to be played up in Tokyo stories, the hierarchy in Kamigata rakugo is blurred. Finally, women have a much more prominent place in the Kamigata tradition than in the Tokyo tradition.

A. 'Merchant Centered'

Kamigata rakugo is merchant and commercial culture centered, or at least contains more elaborations of that world than does Tokyo rakugo, which is commonly thought to deal more with artisans, journeymen, and samurai. Focusing on merchant stories told in both traditions, one can easily see that scenes are frequently stripped down, or left out completely in Tokyo. This is not surprising when we recall Edo's background as a hub for samurai. As one can guess, merchant stories in the Kamigata tradition are much more full—merchant centered—which is not

³⁶ Katsura Beichō, *Katsura Beichō shūsei*, vol. 1, 127.

surprising for an art that developed in and around Japan's commercial capital. Kamigata seki audiences were simply keener to hear narrated the fine details of the merchant world than were people in Edo/Tokyo. Based on the fact that merchant stories—and stories in other genres that have merchant-related content—tend to lampoon the merchant class, audiences also fancied rakugo that did not reflect shōnin katagi. This, I contend, is connected to the breakdown of Osaka's merchant system.

In *Kusshami kōshaku*, a greengrocer's shop virtually becomes a misemono hut, complete with a disorderly crowd of people pushing their way in. Despite the commotion, it remains clear that one thing is important to the greengrocer above all others—his vegetable business. He tells people to stay clear of his vegetables for fear they will be damaged and no good to sell. He repeats again and again that they are his *urimono* (merchandise). This is a classic Kamigata rakugo portrayal of the Osaka merchant, quick to smile and befriend customers, but also willing to stand up to them and put them in their place if needed.

The Osaka greengrocer talks on more or less the same level with Kiroku and shows willingness to get tough with passersby when they pose a threat to his business. This greengrocery scene is included in the Tokyo version, but the greengrocer is different. The Tokyo greengrocer is more of a pushover; he is calmer if not courteous. He does not dig into Kiroku's far stupider Tokyo counterpart or the passersby. Instead, he encourages the young man to calm down and gather his bearings, and to take his time remembering what he came for. He is apologetic to passersby.

Kuchi ireya is named for its opening scene, which takes place in a *kuchi ireya*, an early modern temporary hiring agency. The hanashika performs a comical back-and-forth between women waiting for appointments—most likely as servants—and the bantō in service there. The

scene provides listeners with a unique look inside a *kuchi ireya* when clients are not around. This scene has been completely eliminated from the notably shorter Tokyo adaptation, *Hikkoshi no yume*, probably because it has little to do with the story as a whole, or perhaps because Tokyo audiences did not find the illustration of this sector of the merchant quarters interesting.

In the *kuchi ireya* scene, the *bantō* admonishes a group of talkative women who are waiting to be dispatched. He tells them to be quiet as he cannot focus on his ledger. One question that first-time listeners of this story may ask is, why are so many women present? As *hanashika* often explain in their *makura*, women were typically the ones in demand and available for temporary work in Osaka. In the early modern era and into Meiji, women were generally not eligible for the formal apprenticeships offered to men, and therefore worked on temporary contracts, usually until marriage. *Kuchi ireya* typically dealt with men and women separately, so it is safe to conclude that the one in this story was an agency for females.³⁷

The women in the scene are excited with anticipation of the possibilities that working in new merchant homes might bring. The *bantō*, giving up on his books for the time being, asks the women what kind of homes they are hoping to work in. The first woman wants to go to a house where she will not have to work at all, and may even be taken to see kabuki. The second wants to work in a rich merchant's home where the wife will soon fall ill and die, so she can take her place and become rich. The third announces that she is fine with going to a small merchant home so long as she can sneak enough money to build up a substantial savings before leaving service. The *bantō* admonishes each woman in turn for taking work so lightly. It is at this moment that a young *detchi* arrives from a nearby merchant house with orders to hire a *beppin* (beautiful girl).

³⁷ Katsura Beichō, *Beichō rakugo zenshū*, vol. 7 (Osaka: Sōgensha, 1981), 77-8.

Without delay, he is on his way with the new help. It is not until this point that the Tokyo version, *Hikkoshi no yume*, begins.

In a final example of Kamigata rakugo being merchant centered, *Oyakojaya* (Parent and Child at a Teahouse)—called (*Kuruwa no*) *Yozakura* (Evening Blossoms [in the Pleasure District]) in Tokyo—a merchant father admonishes his son for wasting time and money in the pleasure quarter. He orders his son not to leave the house, only to head to a teahouse himself. Soon, in a classic rakugo-style twist, the father and son unexpectedly meet at the same teahouse. Practically speechless, the father tells the son, since he can no longer admonish him about pleasure quarter visits, to never gamble. Both Kamigata and Tokyo versions share the same general flow, but *Oyakojaya* and *Yozakura* hardly seem like the same story. In the Tokyo version there is little to tell listeners that the father and son are merchants, aside from their being referred to as the *danna* and *wakadanna*. In the Kamigata version, on the other hand, listeners are constantly reminded of their merchant status and their world is colorfully illustrated.

Both versions begin with the *danna* lecturing his son about the inappropriateness of wasting time and money in the pleasure district. In the Kamigata version, the threat this poses to the family business is rehashed again and again. The father is frustrated that, while he is doing everything in his power to ensure the family's prosperity, his boy does nothing to help. His son, he complains, merely purloins money to support his party lifestyle and geisha addiction, adding, *ano geisha to ka iu onnagoto, tatta hitori no kono oya to, dotchi ga daiji ka* (Who's more important to you, those girls you call geisha or whatever, or this one and only parent of yours?). At his wit's end, he yells, *kaite attara oya uritobasu* (You'd sell out your old man if you had the chance!).

The bantō of the house steps in and tries to cool rising tensions. Much like a concerned relative, he acts as mediator, expressing confidence that matters surrounding the son will soon improve. With this, the father decides to leave the house, claiming that he has some business to tend to at a nearby temple (in the Tokyo version he has an unavoidable cherry blossom viewing excursion that he has to attend). We know where the danna is really going though. The house is made busy as the bantō announces the danna's departure and calls for his shoes. Virtually all of this is left out of the Tokyo version. In fact, the bantō and other house employees are completely absent.

B. Kamigata Rakugo More Realistic

Like other Kamigata arts from ukiyo-e to kabuki, Kamigata rakugo has a reputation for being realistic. Numerous scholars and hanashika have written that Kamigata rakugo is more realistic than Tokyo rakugo. Katsura Beichō attributes this to the status quo, but also suggests that the pay system at Kamigata seki made hanashika more competitive and creative; seki owners did not pay hanashika on the *wari* (cut) system (i.e., everyone gets their 'cut' according to rank and ticket sales), which was employed in Tokyo. Kamigata hanashika were paid according to how well they performed.³⁸

Realistic depictions of daily life in Osaka include, of course, the most vulgar parts of chōnin society. It is no secret that Kamigata rakugo tends to be earthier than Tokyo rakugo.³⁹ Earthy humor is a component of culture in Osaka, where it has long been considered a desirable quality to be true to oneself and others by *ee kakkō o sezu* (not trying to look good, superficially).

³⁸ Katsura Beichō, *Zoku Beichō Kamigata rakugo sen*, 187.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 183.

Sexual jokes and scatology have long been a fixture in Kamigata rakugo, but politically incorrect and offensive material has gradually been phased out (in both traditions) since rakugo began being broadcast to audiences outside of seki.

Kamigata rakugo is more realistic, too, because hanashika give special attention to detail when presenting scenes that depict daily life. They spend more time miming characters' actions, such as preparing food, eating, playing instruments, dancing, rowing boats, walking and running, plying trades, and more. Kamigata rakugo is a storytelling art, but an important component of this is *showing* with precision what it is that characters are doing. Kamigata hanashika spend a good deal of time on this, so much in fact that they bring the oral narrative to a halt for a period of time, continuing scenes to background music, or in near silence. So long as there is something interesting happening on stage, it is never an issue if hanashika are not speaking. Indeed, audiences break out in applause from time to time to praise hanashika for their attention to detail and adept miming skills. Tokyo rakugo can be realistic, and Tokyo rakugoka are typically good at miming too, but Kamigata hanashika spend more time presenting quotidian activities and arguably execute them with a higher degree of precision.

Rakugo is commonly referred to as a *kiku gei* (art to be listened to), so, in theory, people in the audience should be able to close their eyes and still be able to enjoy the show. This is possible in both traditions, but, because so much more happens on stage in Kamigata rakugo, one cannot get the full experience by listening alone. As a rule, performers do not leave the surface of the zabuton in either tradition (this rule is sometimes broken, mainly in Kamigata), but, if one could watch live rakugo in complete silence, Kamigata hanashika would generally appear more animated and energetic, moving in ways that correspond to the ways that people move and act in the real world. Kamigata hanashika can be seen rising up to their knees and plopping back down

on their heels, swinging their bodies to the right and left, filling their characters with life. Tokyo rakugoka, in contrast, tend to sit stiller, which essentially requires the audience to listen more closely and do more imagining.

All of the stories introduced thus far serve as fine examples of Kamigata rakugo's attention to detail. The portrayal of merchant life inside the house is excellent in *Tachigire* and the same is true for *Kikue butsudān*, *Kuchi ireya*, and *Oyakojaya*. The nozoki karakuri, kōshaku, and sneezing scenes are presented meticulously in *Kusshami kōshaku*, and, although she is terribly overbearing, Omatsu in *Funa Benkei* is satisfyingly lifelike. There is hardly a break between the numerous kabuki scenes in *Tako shibai*, but there is not a moment in the story when one feels that the Senba merchant house might not be real.

The *Tako shibai* scenes inside the house are particularly convincing. Sadakichi is told to go clean the family's Buddhist altar, but, instead of cleaning as he is supposed to, he becomes preoccupied with the family's *ihai* (mortuary tablets). Taking them in hand one at a time, he recalls aloud who was nice to him and who was mean. This gives the audience a private and realistic look inside a merchant house, away from the public storefront. Kamigata audiences surely loved this *ihai* scene because it depicts life at the back of the house, where customers are not usually allowed to go. Considering that traditional audiences were made up of a large percentage of merchant employees, though, this area would have been well known to many in the audience and therefore would have provided nice food for laughter.

The scene is funny because Sadakichi is anything but reverent at the altar. He reads the inscription on the first *ihai* and sees that it belongs to the deceased grandfather. He reminisces about what a sweet man the grandfather was, how he always chose Sadakichi to accompany him on visits to the temple Shitennōji (or theaters, depending on the teller). He would treat him to

mamushi (eel over rice) and dotingly remind him to tell everybody back home that they only had *udon* (noodles). Sadakichi lovingly presses his cheek to the grandfather's *ihai* then places it high in the altar, so as to show his gratitude. Next, Sadakichi picks up the grandmother's *ihai*. *Nikutarashii oban yatta de kore* (what a hateful old lady this one was!), he says with loathing. *Senbajū ni shiran mon inakatta de kore* (there wasn't a person in Senba who didn't know her). To show disrespect he puts the *ihai* back on the altar upside down, to give her headaches in the afterlife.

Tabibanashi effectively serve as performed guidebooks, so there is necessarily factual information about sites, attractions, and local specialties. *Tennōji mairi* (Pilgrimage to Shitennōji), not included in the traditional Tokyo repertoire, is no exception. Of particular interest in the story is a presentation of a line of *koya* where enthusiastic vendors and barkers sell food, souvenirs, and an assortment of entertainment. This scene often changes with the *hanashika*, but audiences can always count on getting a convincing look at how entertaining temple grounds could be at the turn of the twentieth century and earlier. The scene includes the calls (and eccentricities) of sushi vendors, *kyokugoma* (top spinners), circus acts, *nozoki karakuri* presenters, beggar performers, and more. The *hanashika* becomes figurative ringmaster, bidding listeners to look here, now there, at all the fun to be had. The scene also exhibits some of the vulgarity that Kamigata rakugo is traditionally known for (e.g., the sushi maker sneezes onto sushi and continues as if nothing happened; a beggar performer merrily picks and squishes lice), but this is to be taken as part of the snapshot of Shitennōji in the past.

The realistic nature of Kamigata rakugo stories makes them enjoyable to listen to and watch, but the art's realism serves another important function—it primes stories for comedy. Rakugo is usually set the realistic world, but reality in rakugo inevitably gets distorted, or grossly

exaggerated. Morioka and Sasaki call this “unreality,” their translation of the Japanese term *kyo* (hollowness, or falsity), which is the opposite of *jitsu* (substance, truth, or reality).⁴⁰ Distortion and exaggeration in rakugo produce a range of effects, from comical irony and satire to absolute absurdity.

Plots revolve around heroes, typically unremarkable commoners, who are somehow dissatisfied with reality. They set out to fulfill their desires, so stories move toward happy endings—which Northrop Frye writes are desirable but not true⁴¹—but, rather than something desirable being born at the end of rakugo, *ochi* ensure that reality prevails. Consistent with Frye’s first phases of ironic comedy and satire (i.e., there is no displacement of the humorous society [those being parodied]),⁴² rakugo heroes are rarely able to escape reality, but they manage to make it appear flawed with their misbehavior. Rakugo audiences are attuned to the fact that the heroes rarely win, but, because audiences are conditioned to this being repeated again and again, it is funny.⁴³ Kamigata rakugo’s exceptional realism serves to enhance the art’s comedy.

C. Blurred Hierarchies

Another characteristic aspect of Kamigata rakugo content is its presentation of social boundaries and hierarchy. These are presented far less in Kamigata rakugo than in Tokyo stories. As noted earlier, Kamigata stories do not wholly disregard hierarchy, but lines between characters and their ranks are drawn in lighter shades. For instance, employees in merchant

⁴⁰ Morioka and Sasaki, *Rakugo*, 101-11.

⁴¹ Northrop Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 169.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 225.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 167.

homes are on the whole treated like family members and are freer to speak their minds. There is much less of a socio-linguistic gap between characters of different status than that presented in Tokyo stories.

Kinshu sekisho (Alcohol Prohibition Checkpoint), told as *Kinshu ban'ya* (Alcohol Prohibition Watchman) in Tokyo, is set partly in the merchant world, but neither the *danna* nor *wakadanna* make appearances in this story. Instead, it is the *bantō* and lower-level *hōkōnin*—and two government officials—who are the stars of this story. In both versions, a prohibition on alcohol is in place because of a recent public disturbance resulting from overindulgence. At the beginning of the story, a man of relative influence stops by his usual *sake* vendor to sneak a drink, then orders a large bottle to be sent to his residence that evening. He does not care how it arrives, as long as it gets there. As a reward, he will give the *bantō* one *ryō* in gold, a breathtaking sum.

When the customer leaves in the Kamigata version, the *bantō* calls for all employees to gather around to put their heads together and come up with a plan. The first plan, to hide the *sake* in a large box for sweets, fails. The second attempt, putting *sake* in oil-covered jugs and saying it is a delivery of oil, does no better. Each time, the checkpoint guard sees through their scheme, drinks up their *sake*, and grows incredibly intoxicated. Finally, the Kamigata merchant group decides to trick the guard by sending urine. All house employees are called together to make their ‘contribution’. Even the female servants are asked to urinate into the bottle. When one employee complains that the mouth of the bottle is too small to urinate into, the mastermind of this particular plan calls for a funnel, almost certainly one used to fill orders of actual *sake*. He nonchalantly says that they will worry about washing it later.

Virtually all of these merchant house scenes are left out of the Tokyo version. Why is this? Did they not register as fitting (or funny) for Tokyo audiences? There were merchants in Edo/Tokyo, so there should have been an audience for merchant-oriented humor. Based on the cuts made, though, merchant employees appearing as equals, and without a sense of rank, did not sit well with traditional Edo/Tokyo audiences. This does not mean that class is this story's—or in the bigger picture, Kamigata rakugo and Tokyo rakugo's—defining difference. Regionalism (including dialect) is also at work. To remedy this in the Tokyo adaptation, most of the merchant material was simply cut and more time was dedicated to the *sake* inspection scenes. This shift in focus evidences that Tokyo audiences preferred to see scenes highlighting the hierarchy and the inversion thereof.

At the beginning of *Tachigire*, the wakadanna returns from one of his usual visits to the pleasure quarter and asks one of the house detchi where the bantō is. This is, after all, the person who keeps a close watch on affairs inside and outside of the house—the bantō is precisely the person that the wakadanna wishes to avoid. The wakadanna learns that his father is at his wit's end about his profligacy and that the bantō has suggested throwing him out, so he can experience life as a beggar. In the Kamigata version, the beleaguered father confers with the bantō and his *nakama* (group of merchant associates) about the measures he should take with his troublesome son. In the Tokyo version, the father meets not with other merchants, but with relatives, some of whom offer to return to the provinces with the embarrassing son in tow. This is an important difference that shows that family problems in merchant Osaka were less likely to be considered private affairs than they were in the Shogun's capital. It also emphasizes the responsibility of the family members for each other close to the seat of power.

There is also a considerable difference in the Kamigata and Tokyo versions in terms of the bantō and wakadanna's relationship. In the Kamigata version, the bantō speaks to the wakadanna as if he is on the same level, or superior. In one case the bantō explodes in anger and yells at the young man. In the Tokyo version, however, the bantō comes across as powerless in contrast to his employer's son. There is also an extreme gap in their speech. The Tokyo bantō uses polite language, to which the wakadanna uses a direct, and somewhat condescending style. Later in the story, when the wakadanna completes his hundred-day sentence in the family storehouse, the Tokyo bantō has to be forced to raise his head and stop apologizing for the young man's punishment. In the Kamigata version, on the other hand, the bantō comes across more as an uncle or father figure, and certainly less apologetic. This illustrates that Tokyo rakugo has a more hierarchichal bent, whereas Kamigata rakugo is more egalitarian.

Hyakunenme begins with the bantō of the house chastising detchi and other employees for being off task. One is admonished for reading books in public view during store hours; another is chastised for failing to deliver the mail; yet another is taken to task for sneaking out in the middle of the night to carry on with geisha and sing *kiyomoto* songs. This opening scene is similar in both traditions, but the bantō in the Kamigata version is more fleshed out. A complainer of sorts, he nags about the fact that the men and boys in his charge do not do more productive things with their time, such as review ledgers and take inventory. These things, after all, would ensure their becoming *yoi akindo* (fine merchants). The bantō in the Tokyo version, on the other hand, is a much more fearsome character who rules with an iron fist. There is a considerable gap between him and the men he supervises. The Tokyo bantō is far more condescending toward the people in his charge, and they are more cooperative and cautious in their speech.

In the final scene, which takes place the next day (after the bantō himself is caught on a yakatabune with geisha), the danna calls for his number one man. Before the danna, the bantō acts differently in the two versions. In the Kamigata version, the bantō comes across as embarrassed and ashamed, but the Tokyo bantō is utterly terrified. In both versions, the danna offers the bantō tea and sweets, creating one guilt trip after the next. This scene is nearly twice as long in the Tokyo version—the Tokyo danna slowly and sadistically tortures his bantō, and this takes its toll. At the end, listeners cannot help but feel sorry for the Tokyo bantō. Both versions have the same *ochi*. When the danna asks why the bantō said *ohisashiburi* (it’s been a long time) to him at the river the day before, the bantō brings the story to a close with the title line: *hyakunenme da to omoimashita* (I thought it was my hundredth year), which is equivalent to “I thought I was a goner”. The *ochi* is the same in both versions, but the effect is different. The *ochi* comes across as lighthearted and funny in the Kamigata version, but in the Tokyo, though it is not without laughs, it is cathartic.

D. Female Characters More Prominent in Kamigata

Strong female characters are more prevalent in Kamigata stories. This is likely because artists desire to create believable drama, but it also points to a reality in Osaka. Women have since early modern times played a prominent role in Osaka society, in merchant homes and elsewhere. Hanashika—who are still mostly male—often point out their perceived bad looks during their *makura* and this adds to the humor when they depict female characters during the story proper. Depending on the hanashika, female roles can come across as caricatures or the hanashika’s ‘ideal woman’. Some performers pride themselves on being able to present female characters in remarkably convincing fashion. Indeed, hanashika often study *Nihon buyō* (traditional dance) on the side in order to learn how to appear more graceful in kimono if not

pick up idealized feminine mannerisms. Some hanashika (e.g., Shōfukutei Shokaku V, Katsura Bunshi V) are remembered by critics and fans especially for their meticulous and sensitive approach to women in rakugo.⁴⁴

As mentioned in the discussion of *Kuchi ireya* above, the entire opening scene is cut from the Tokyo version. Is this because Tokyo hanashika and audiences did not care about the chat that the group women for hire have with the bantō? Perhaps, but there are other changes made to the story that indicate that Tokyo rakugoka thought women were too prominent in the Kamigata original. For example, it is the merchant's wife who interviews the new female employee in the Kamigata version, but it is the bantō who interviews her in the Tokyo version. This reflects the different realities of women's social status in each respective city.

In the Kamigata version, when the wife asks the beautiful girl about her qualifications, the young woman holds back at first only to let loose in a tateben monologue about all that she can do. She rattles off one skill after the next, both those common and those outlandishly impossible. Asked about her sewing skills, the young woman initially gives the expected response by answering, yes, her mother did teach her a bit of sewing. From there, however, she lists an incredible sewing repertoire, not stopping short of absurdity. The list of needlework includes everything from single- and double-layered kimono to reweaving *tatami* flooring! The length of the list and speed at which the young woman recites it leave the wife of the house staring at her new help with eyes wide and mouth agape. The show within the show does not end

⁴⁴ The first women to be accepted as formal rakugo apprentices were in Osaka. The first was Tsuyu no Miyako (1956-) in 1974, then Katsura Ayame (1964-) in 1982, followed by a few more in the 1990s, then more after several television shows and movies—particularly NHK's *Chiri-tote-chin* (The Sound of a Shamisen, 2007), about a young woman who undergoes rakugo apprenticeship—made rakugo appealing to a younger generation. There are now female professionals in the Tokyo rakugo circuit, but there have always been more in Osaka.

here, though. When the wife asks the girl if she can play shamisen—her husband likes to have a little music when he drinks—the girl boasts in *tateben* a repertoire of “only” 150 *jiuta* songs and 200 *Edouta* songs, and the ability to play practically every Japanese instrument in existence. She is also trained, it turns out, in the Kanagawa Kikue school of calligraphy, Urasenke school of tea, and has formal training in a range of arts from flower arrangement to ambush attack, and even smoke signals! The Kamigata *bantō* soon receives a report from a house employee that he will need to wear a suit of armor and helmet when taking trips to the toilet at night.

Keikoya (The Practice Salon) is another example of Kamigata *rakugo*’s special focus on female characters. Kiroku goes to Jinbei-han’s house to ask how he can improve his chances with women. He is told to go learn a *gei* (performing art). As we know, Kiroku is generally a silly character, but his usual antics are not the main focus of this story. In fact, if *Keikoya* consisted only of Kiroku acting stupidly and saying vulgar things, it would cease to have much interest. The star of the story, rather, is the refined female master at the *keikoya*, Ogawa Ichimatsu (who sometimes goes unnamed). Her usual students are neighborhood children and adults who wish to learn kabuki songs and proper dance form, but, on this unlucky day, Kiroku comes expecting to learn how to woo the opposite sex.

Both Kamigata and Tokyo *hanashika* portray the master as she instructs students, now pleased, now perturbed. The master portrayed in the Tokyo version is not without interest, but her teaching scenes (and the story as a whole) are shorter. In the Kamigata version, Ogawa skillfully sings *kuchijamisen* (voiced shamisen notes) to the music being played offstage and this is thoroughly entertaining. Kamigata *hanashika* take pride in their meticulous portrayal of the master’s instruction scenes and psychology. They spend extra time practicing this section of the story and look forward to showing it off as their *misedokoro* and *kikasedokoro* (lit. focal scenes to

show and make heard).⁴⁵ Most of this is left out of the Tokyo version, including the entertaining kuchijamisen bits.

As shown, *Funa Benkei*'s Omatsu is a force to be reckoned with. The tateben monologue that she delivers makes this quite clear. It conveys that she is overbearing, does not care if others might have something to say, and is not one to be crossed. It is easy to see why people call her *Kaminari no Omatsu* (Thunder-crash Omatsu) and why Seihachi runs for cover when he hears her voice outside of Kiroku's nagaya. One finds it humorous that she is blind to the fact that she does to others exactly what her own relatives do to her—leave them with little room to escape.

At the end of *Funa Benkei*, when she discovers Kiroku making a spectacle of himself aboard a yakatabune near Naniwa Bridge, she goes into a mad rage, creating a comical juxtaposition with the festive party scene and happy tune that the hayashi ensemble is playing offstage. The music stops as she impatiently orders a boatman to punt her out to the large yakatabune. As soon as they shove off, the hayashi ensemble switches to a more dynamic piece, the jiuta song *Yashima*. The shamisen sounds and steady beats on the ōdaiko represent her boat's quick passage through the water. Accentuating the impending battle scene, an ohayashi-san sings:

How I remember at Dan-no-ura
That ship battle now long ago

*Omoi zo izuru Dan no ura no
Sono funa ikusa ima wa haya*

As Omatsu approaches Kiroku's boat, the ensemble shifts back to the livelier party music. She releases her fury upon arrival and the music ceases once again. Kiroku, thanks to the *sake* he has consumed, now has some nerve. He knocks her into the shallow water and a roll on the ōdaiko indicates the large splash that she makes. As she stands up, hair tie now broken, her hair hangs in wet clumps. She grabs a bamboo stick that happens to be floating by and transforms

⁴⁵ Focus on hanashika virtuosity in a number of arts (i.e., shows within the show) might be likened to Kamigata kabuki and its penchant for sideline entertainments.

into Taira no Tomomori from the play *Funa Benkei*. Indeed, there may be no stronger woman than Omatsu in all of Kamigata rakugo.

IV. Conclusion

Kamigata rakugo is easy to distinguish from Tokyo rakugo because of the frequent incorporation of *oki dōgu* (set properties) such as the kendai, kobyōshi, and hizakakushi. Also, Kamigata hanashika often wear vibrant—though generally tasteful—colors on stage. Another fundamental difference, of course, is that Kamigata hanashika use Kansai dialects and Tokyo rakugoka do not. These differences, along with the general intensity of the art, may lead one to wonder if Kamigata rakugo is a modern manzai hybrid of sorts. It is true that Kamigata rakugo is often paired with modern manzai under the umbrella of Osaka *owarai* (comedy), but, as discussed, the two arts are traditionally and conceptually different. Kamigata rakugo is a *denshō geinō* and manzai grew largely out of classical magico-religious traditions and *karukuchi*, not to mention modern comedy and Western variety. I discussed some of the differences and similarities between Kamigata rakugo and manzai, but concluded that these arts share similarities in style and content largely because they developed in Osaka's sociocultural milieu and had the same audiences.

Let there be no mistake, the Kamigata and Tokyo traditions are both rakugo. However, as demonstrated, Kamigata rakugo and Tokyo rakugo distinctions exist in two dimensions: performance style and story content. In terms of performance style, Kamigata stories are *hade*, musical, and tend to be longer, which is often a result of hanashika liking to show off aspects prominent in their art such as *tateben*, song, and dance. In terms of content, although not every Kamigata story is a merchant story, the repertoire is decidedly merchant centered. This is a result

of the art being cultivated in Japan's merchant capital. Merchants are almost always the targets of humor in Kamigata merchant stories. They are more fleshed out than they are in Tokyo rakugo and their homes strike one as more than just incidental backdrops. Finally, Kamigata rakugo is on the whole more realistic, plays down hierarchy, and has a more prominent cast of women characters. All of these characteristics are linked to Kamigata-Osaka's traditional sociocultural milieu.

CHAPTER FOUR

CRITIQUE OF SELECTED KAMIGATA STORIES

You know what I dislike more than anything in Tokyo? I don't like hearing Kansai dialect in Tokyo. I detest it... [People from Kansai] come to Tokyo and say things like *sō yanen!* and *doya koya!*... I enjoy hearing dialects when I go to other places, but I don't like them in Tokyo.¹

—Tokyo rakugoka Kokontei Shinchō III (1938-2001)

Our art gets a good deal of discrimination from people in Tokyo. They hate it. They have a different way of listening to rakugo there. Take their *ochi*, for example; there's usually a long pause between the *ochi* and the exit music. That's basically done to give audiences time to get the joke. Of course, there are reasons why Tokyo rakugo is different. In the past, it wasn't acceptable for rakugoka there to perform *nigiyaka* (lively) rakugo. They couldn't. Officials would be on their case. In Osaka, they could belt it out however they pleased.²

—Kamigata hanashika Hayashiya Somemaru IV

In the present chapter I will scrutinize in closer detail five Kamigata stories that are widely considered to be classics in the traditional repertoire: *Keikoya* (The Practice Salon), *Tako shibai* (Octopus Kabuki), *Tennōji mairi* (Pilgrimage to Shitennōji), *Kusshami kōshaku* (The Sneezy Narrator of War Tales), and *Funa Benkei* (Benkei on the Boat). These stories—three of which (*Tako shibai*, *Tennōji mairi*, *Funa Benkei*) are not included in the traditional Tokyo repertoire—can be found in most Kamigata rakugo anthologies, CD and DVD collections, and on internet audio/video sites such as YouTube and Niconico. The texts that I chose for analysis are live performances that were recorded between approximately 1980 and 2005. The

¹ Toda Manabu, *Zuihitsu Kamigata rakugo no shitennō: Shokaku, Beichō, Bunshi, Harudanji* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2011), 176-7. *Sō yanen* is *sō sō* (that's right) and *doya koya* is *aa da kō da* (this and that) in standard Japanese.

² Hayashiya Somemaru IV, 2012. Interview by author. Suita, Japan, January 18. See Appendix A for the full interview, translated.

hanashika—Katsura Bunshi V (1930-2005), Katsura Kitchō I (1954-2005), and Katsura Fukudanji IV (1940-)—were/are respected masters thought to be especially talented at telling these stories. Almost every one of these stories is performed with a good deal of hamemono. All have shows within the show, which demonstrate the *hade* quality of the art, but also indicate that Kamigata stories were pieced together over time with shorter stories and formulas, which Walter Ong understands to be more or less exactly repeated set phrases or set expressions in verse or prose, and key to oral memorization.³

We shall find that the stories in the present chapter, like those discussed in the previous one, are *hade* and therefore geared toward Osaka audiences. Although only one of these stories can be classified as a merchant story, all of them contain merchant-related material, as though it were sprinkled on to give stories extra seasoning. Some of the stories exhibit other Kamigata elements such as female characters in prominent roles. Finally, stories in this chapter strike one as realistic and polished, yet they can also be unabashedly vulgar at points. After reading this section, readers will have a positive understanding that Kamigata rakugo is not only a distinct tradition, but also a very entertaining one.

I. *Keikoya* (The Practice Salon)

Alternative titles: *Keikojo*, *Uta kaji* (Song Fire)⁴

³ Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the World* (1982; online ed., London and New York, Routledge, 2001) 26, 56, accessed April 5, 2014, Ingram Digital.

⁴ The most reliable references for rakugo stories (Kamigata and Tokyo) are Tōdai Rakugokai, ed. *Rakugo jiten* (1969; repr., Tokyo: Seiabō, 2001), Imamura Nobuo, *Rakugo jiten* (Tokyo: Seiabō, 1957). Readers may also like to consult Aiba Akio, *Gendai Kamigata rakugo benri jiten* (Tokyo: Shōnensha, 1987), Maeda Isamu, ed. *Kamigata engei jiten* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 1966), Mutō Sadao, *Teihon rakugo sanbyaku dai* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), and Ui Mushū, *Rakugo no genwa* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1970).

Characters: Kiroku, Jinbei-han, Ogawa Ichimatsu, people in crowd, students at keikoya, couple in Kiroku's neighborhood

This story is set partly in a keikoya, which were private practice salons usually situated in teachers' homes, where anybody could pay to learn various traditional and popular performing arts such as singing, dancing, or instruments. Keikoya could be found all over in urban areas during the early modern era and into modern times. Keikoya were commercial operations and therefore might be thought of as precursors to *bunka kyōshitsu/saron* (culture salons) found near many train stations around Japan today. Keikoya can also be likened to today's more exclusive *keikoba*, where people go to practice arts such as nagauta, *tokiwazu*, Nihon buyō, kyōgen, and nō.

Kiroku goes to Jinbei's house to ask how he might make himself more appealing to women. Jinbei tells Kiroku that he would have better luck if he could perform at least one proper *gei*. He tells him about a master Ogawa Ichimatsu, who runs a keikoya not far from his nagaya. Kiroku is soon on his way. Once at the keikoya, Kiroku commits numerous faux pas. For example, when he hears the master chastise a student, *koshi o oru* (lower your center of gravity!), he breaks the latticework (*kōshi o oru*) on the master's front window; later, he filches a young girl's roasted sweet potatoes and eats them on the spot. When his turn comes around, Ogawa asks him what he would like to learn. He responds, *irogoto no dekiru yatsu o* (something that will help me get the ladies).

Older versions of the story end here with the teacher replying, *iro wa shinan no hoka* (love, i.e., sensual pleasures, is not something that can be taught), a pun on the saying *iro wa shian no hoka* (love is not something one need ponder). Today *Keikoya* is usually told with a different ending: Kiroku is sent home with directions to practice a song where he will not bother others. He climbs up to his roof to practice there, but when a neighbor hears him belting out the

line *kemuri ga tatsu* (smoke is rising!), he fears that a fire might be approaching. “Where’s the fire!” he cries. The next line of the song that Kiroku hollers—*umiyama o koete* (crossing sea and mountains!)—puts the neighbor at ease and sets up the *ochi*: *sonna tōkattara daijōbu ya* (if it’s that far away, we’ll be fine).

Although this Kamigata classic is decidedly musical, *Keikoya* has also been performed in the Tokyo tradition with some regularity since an Osaka artist introduced it there in the Meiji period.⁵ As is the case with the stories discussed in the previous chapter, there are important differences between the Kamigata and Tokyo *Keikoya*. First, the music is different; the music in the Kamigata version is livelier. Depending on the *hanashika* and number of *narimono* players available backstage, the Kamigata version can include drums, bells, and flute in addition to *shamisen* accompaniment and vocals. Music in the Tokyo version feels more like *kouta*, a comparatively subdued style of *shamisen* and singing popular in Edo/Tokyo. The way that the main characters interact is also different. In the Kamigata version, Kiroku is far blunter than his Tokyo counterpart. Jinbei is more willing to banter than his Tokyo counterpart, and he constantly digs into his younger friend. The Kamigata master is more tolerant if not sympathetic to Kiroku’s character defects and faux pas. Kiroku’s Tokyo counterpart has no shortage of flaws, but the social distance between him and his teacher is emphasized.

In the opening scene of the Kamigata version, Kiroku visits Jinbei to ask him for advice. Their dialogue is realistic, fast-paced and reminds one of *shabekuri manzai*. They banter back and forth, keeping the dialogue moving with well-timed *norikomi* (lit. jumping in, i.e., leaving virtually no space between lines, a narrative technique that *hanashika* employ to boost comedy),

⁵ Tōdai Rakugokai, *Rakugo jiten*, 163. *Uta kaji* was performed in Tokyo by Osaka *hanashika* Shōfukutei Shokaku (III or IV, not specified) in the late Meiji period. Katsura Konan subsequently performed it there as *Keikoya*.

and *tsukkomi* (digs, or cutting remarks). Kiroku and Jinbei have an intelligence gap, but they are both presented as good, entertaining talkers in the opening scene. Their energetic tone and swift rhythm make *Keikoya* stand out as a Kamigata story from the beginning.

Although it soon becomes clear that Kiroku's chances with women are slim, Jinbei offers him reasonable advice nonetheless. Jinbei tells him that men in the past used to have a list of things that would make them attractive to women. If Kiroku could demonstrate at least one of these, Jinbei explains, he may have a chance despite having a *sanben funda ban to ketta mochi mitai na kao* (face that looks like *mochi* that has been stomped on three times and given a good kick). The list is as follows:

1. *mie* (good show, i.e., fashion sense)
2. *otoko* (manliness, i.e., good looks)
3. *kane* (money)
4. *gei* (artistic skill)
5. *sei* (energy, i.e., vigor to work and provide, and make love)
6. *oboko* (innocence)
7. *serifu* (lines, i.e., ability to win others over with words)
8. *chikara* (strength)
9. *kimo* (guts, i.e., bravery)
10. *hyōban* (good reputation)

When Kiroku hears number four on the list (*gei*), he claims that he has a few *kakushi gei* (secret arts), but these turn out to be things that would do little more than chase women away. The most excellent of these arts, he boasts, is a dance that his father (or uncle, depending on the version) taught him—the *hotaru odori* (firefly dance). In this dance, he explains, he strips naked, paints his body black, ties a red tenugui around his head, and squeezes a lit candle between his butt cheeks. He dances and spins about, and, at the climax of the dance, he extinguishes the flame with a fart. Jinbei digs into Kiroku, pointing out that, even if a woman were in love with

him, she would run away after seeing him do such a ridiculous dance. Their dialogue continues in this fashion, tempo and volume building as the scene progresses.

KIROKU: So, what's number nine?

JINBEI: Nine: *guts*—bravery you see.⁶

KIROKU: What kind of bravery are we talking about?

JINBEI: Okay, say at night, the middle of the night, you go out where nobody else would go and come back all by yourself. That's bravery. But I bet you don't have that kind of guts.

KIROKU: Okay, well, I'd like to tell you a little bit about the other night then.

JINBEI: What, did you go out somewhere?

KIROKU: Well, yeah, there was a big storm the other night, right?

JINBEI: Yeah, yeah, there was.

KIROKU: Yes, that was the night. See, I woke up with a start because my clock was ringing: *bon-bon-bon*. It was 2:00 a.m.

JINBEI: Now, see, you've already got things mixed up. If it went *bon-bon-bon* it should have been 3:00.

KIROKU: Yeah, other people's clocks do that, but mine is broken and throws in an extra toll.

JINBEI: Fine, who cares about that! If it's 2:00 just leave it at 2:00. What'd you do next?

KIROKU: When I woke up, it was 2:00. From there, on that evening of the big storm, I went out and came back all by myself. Now, tell me what you think of that for bravery.

JINBEI: I see. That *was* quite a big storm we had the other night. And you went out and returned all by yourself?

Wow, where did you go?

KIROKU: To take a piss.

KIROKU: *Honna, kyū wa nan da?*

JINBEI: *Kyū, kimo tte, dokyō ya na.*

KIROKU: *Donna dokyō yattara yoroshii omasu?*

JINBEI: *Maa, yoru, yonaka ya na, dare mo ikan yō na tokoro ni, hitori de itte, hitori de modotte kuru chū no wa dokyō yattara ee ga, omae wa honna kimo tte yū no wa nai yaro.*

KIROKU: *Sore yattara konnaida no koto o chotto anta ni hanashitai naa!*

JINBEI: *Kono aida doko ka e ittan kai?*

KIROKU: *Iya, doko ka ittan tte, konnaida sugoi arashi no ban omashita yaro?*

JINBEI: *Oo, atta atta.*

KIROKU: *Sa, ano ban den ga na. Hode, futto me samashitara uchi no tokei ga bon-bon-bon toko e, niji natte mannen ya ga na.*

JINBEI: *Sa, sokora ga, omae, okashii. Bon-bon-bon tte mitsu yakara sanji yaro.*

KIROKU: *Iya, yosō no tokei wa sanji ni. Tokoro ga, uchi no tokei tsuburetete hitotsu yōki narimannen ya ga na.*

JINBEI: *Maa, sonna wa dō demo ee nen. Niji yattara niji de ee nen. Dōnai shiten?*

KIROKU: *Futto me samashita tokoro, niji da. Sore kara sugoi arashi no ban ni wate ga hitori de dete hitori de modottan de, kore wa dō desu? Dokyō kōtoku nahare.*

JINBEI: *Naruhodo. Zuibun kono aida wa sugoi arashi yatta. Ee, yonaka niji ni hitori de dete hitori de modotte kita. A, erai na oi. Doko itte kiten?*

KIROKU: *Shonben shi ni.*

⁶ Readers should recall that all character parts are being narrated by one hanashika, unless noted otherwise.

JINBEI: A piss! Even little kids go out for that!
 KIROKU: Yeah, sure, kids do it too, but see, I had my grandma take me out with her.
 JINBEI: No, that won't cut it. No way, that won't do.

JINBEI: *Shonben tte! Konna chiisai kodomo demo iku ne ya.*
 KIROKU: *Kodomo demo ikun ya kedo na, wate wa konnaida oban ni tsuite itte morōttan ya.*
 JINBEI: *Sore de wa akan wa. Akimahen sora. Akan.*⁷

Jinbei digs into Kiroku for being so absurd and the scene has its own *ochi* (Kiroku was not brave after all). It is shortly after this that Jinbei suggests that Kiroku go learn a worthwhile *gei* at the *keikoya* down the street. He assigns him a *haimyō* (artistic name), lends him the money he will need as a *hizatsuki* (courtesy payment), and sends him on his way. Kiroku arrives at the *keikoya*, where the Ogawa Ichimatsu is teaching a young student how to dance to the piece *Echigojishi* (Echigo Lion Dancer).⁸

NARRATOR: Our protagonist slips the money into his kimono, and heads out. He turns down a side street and approaches the *keikoya*. The front of the house is covered with latticework and a crowd of people is standing outside. In the front room are two stages for dancing. A girl of about ten is on stage for her *Echigojishi* dance lesson. This is when our protagonist shows up.
Hayashi ensemble begins playing Echigojishi.
 OGAWA: Okay, dance your best now.
 OHAYASHI-SAN: (*Singing offstage*)

NARRATOR: *Mi no otoko ga hizatsuki o futokoro e to, poi to tobidashiotta. Yokomachi e magari masu to keikoyasan. Omote ga zuutto kōshizukuri ni natte orimashite, soto wa takusan na hitozakari. Hyōmen ga niken no odoributai. Tō gurai no musumesan o butai ni agemashite, Echigojishi odori no keiko masaichū. Soko e mi no otoko ga sakusaku yatte kiotta.*
Hayashi ensemble begins playing Echigojishi.
 OGAWA: *Sa, shikkari mainahare ya.*
 OHAYASHI-SAN: (*Singing offstage*)⁹

⁷ This and subsequent *Keikoya* excerpts are taken from a 1980 telling by Katsura Kobunshi III (later Bunshi V). Katsura Bunshi V, *Keikoya, Tako shibai*. Sony Records International, SICL-117, 2005.

⁸ The yosebayashi version of this song incorporates the melody of *Godangaeshi* (The Five Act Song), which is based on the drum sequence of the *nagauta* and *jiuta* song. There were a number of versions of *Godangaeshi* played when it was popular in the late early modern to Meiji periods. It is slightly different than the *Echigojishi* original, but was most likely a song that most people knew. Its incorporation into *rakugo* is a reflection of this. Hayashiya Somemaru, *Kamigata rakugo yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1, *Kaisetsu hen* (Osaka: Sōgensha, 2011), 176.

⁹ I am including stage directions in parentheses twice in hopes of making my translations and transliterations more accessible to readers. Stage directions are regularly included in *rakugo*

What is your grievance?
 You may not hold the chrysanthemum,
 But the Echigo Lion...

OGAWA: (*Hanashika sings kuchijamisen with music*) *Tsu-tsu-n-tsu-n-tsu-tsu-tsu-chin-totsu-tsu-tsun, tsun-to-chin-ten-tsun-n-ya, tsu-te-tsu-to-tsuru-tsu-te-tsure-totsu-ten.*
 Yes, yes, that's right.

KIROKU: (*Music continues, outside*) Wow, so many people crowding in. Hey! Back the hell up! I'll kick your stomach in!

MAN: Wow, that guy's aggressive.

KIROKU: Hey, watch out... (*to dancer inside*)
 Keep it up! You're great!

OGAWA: (*Inside, tapping desk with frustration, music stops, to student*) No, that's not right! You're supposed to raise your hand there, aren't you? I just taught you that part the other day. See, you take a day or two off and forget. You raise your hand *there*. Okay? Fine, one more time. (*Music starts, this time the hanashika sings*) Ma-king the blos-soms bloom, no! (*Music stops*) Wrong, wrong. You raise it on *bloom*. Do you understand? Once more. (*Music starts, hanashika sings*) Ma-king the blos-soms bloom, no! (*Music stops, tapping desk with frustration*) For heaven's sake, that's not it! Raise on *bloom*, on **BLOOM!** You have to raise on **BLOOM!**

*Nantara guchi da e
 botan wa motanedo,
 Echigo no shishi wa...*

OGAWA: (*Hanashika sings kuchijamisen with music*) *Tsu-tsu-n-tsu-n-tsu-tsu-tsu-chin-totsu-tsu-tsun, tsun-to-chin-ten-tsun-n-ya, tsu-te-tsu-to-tsuru-tsu-te-tsure-totsu-ten.*
A, sō sō.

KIROKU: (*Music continues, outside*) *Waa, gyōsan yotton na. Korya, doki kora! Dō kettosu kora!*

MAN: *Waa, erai te arai hito onnaa.*

KIROKU: *Oi, dokee... (to dancer inside)*
Shikkari yarei! Umai-mai!

OGAWA: (*Inside, tapping desk with frustration, music stops, to student*) *Ie, chigaiman ga na, soko no toko de te ue ageman yanai ka? Kono aida kara anna gyō oshietean no ni, maa, ichinichi futsuka yasundete mō wasuretenaharu. Soko no toko de te agemannen de. Yoroshii na? Honna, mō ippen. (Music starts, this time the hanashika sings) Sa-ka-a-se-e-ta-a-ri, ie! (Music stops) Chigau chigau. Ri de agerun. Yoroshii na? Mō ippen. (Music starts, hanashika sings) Sa-ka-a-se-e-ta-a-ri, ie! (Music stops, tapping desk with frustration) Chigau, chigaun ga na, ri de agerun, RI de. Ri agenya akihen yanai ka, RI agenahare!*

The male hanashika portrayal of such a strong female character, with her feminine Osaka dialect, is particularly entertaining for its gender bending and realism. In this version, the hanashika presents Ogawa with a gentler, higher-pitched voice than most male characters, but when she grows frustrated with her student's inability to perform, the hanashika brings the

transcriptions, but they are never verbalized during actual performances. Stage directions simply denote the hanashika's actions.

master's pitch lower, making her sound more like a man. This incongruence, of course, draws laughs.

One might like to see the hanashika portray the struggling student as well, but this is left out. Nonetheless, the audience is compelled to picture the student through the eyes of Ogawa and other characters in the scene. Only being able to see and hear the master allows the audience more room to imagine and gives them an opportunity to laugh at something that they would not normally be allowed to laugh at—lessons in a formal setting, a master's obsession with details, and a child's being humiliated. These scenes are especially amusing for those who have studied traditional performing arts with professionals in Japan. The portrayal of the master is remarkably precise.

Kamigata rakugo tends to be more realistic than Tokyo rakugo, but it also tends to be more vulgar. Kiroku is the personification of vulgarity and this is humorously juxtaposed with the polished master. In fact, there is nothing that Kiroku says or does in *Keikoya* that is not vulgar. This qualifies him as a caricature, but, without his antics, *Keikoya* would lose its comedy. Depending on the hanashika and listener, Kiroku's bad manners can be taken from playfully humorous to somewhat embarrassing and even borderline offensive. As shown in the transcript above, he has an extremely short temper. He threatens people that he does not know with severe physical injury when he cannot get a good look at what is going on inside the keikoya. In a different version, he exposes himself and urinates on people in the crowd in order to get them to back up so he can get a better look at the action inside (later, Ogawa chastises him when one of her students points out that he has placed his urine-soaked sandals on top of her iron kettle to dry). There are other instances when Kiroku's anger erupts: he yells at students when they do not perform correctly and he snarls at one young student when she tattles on him for stealing her

roasted sweet potatoes—which make him flatulent in some versions. In at least two cases, young girls have to be excused from lessons and sent home in tears. The absurdity and surprise from these situations only add to the humor.

Taking formal lessons from a trained master generally requires a high level of discipline on the part a student. Even if people listening to *Keikoya* have never taken lessons from an actual master, they understand that teachers are to be given a certain level of respect. It is surprising and funny then, when Kiroku makes his presence known by snapping several pieces of lattice on the master's front window, and when he enters and bluntly announces, *kyō kara anta no tokoro no deshi ya ga na* (Starting today, you see, I'm gonna be pupil here at your place). He does not quietly wait for his turn, he tells other men waiting for lessons how funny their faces look, and he is constantly disruptive. The only time he is not disruptive is when he falls asleep on the floor after stuffing himself with the young girl's potatoes. When his turn comes up, he has the nerve to tell Ogawa that he would like fifty percent of his money to go to dance lessons, thirty percent to singing, and twenty percent to shamisen. The fact that he believes he has the right to set the rules in such an environment is hilarious.

As mentioned above, *Keikoya* has two established ochi. The *iro wa shinan no hoka* ending is quickly falling out of use because knowledge of the old saying *iro wa shian no hoka* is needed on the part of the audience. Most people are not familiar with this old adage, so the alternative roof scene ochi is generally the preferred ending. Below, Ogawa tries to teach Kiroku a kiyomoto song, but he performs so disappointingly that she decides to send him home to

practice a simpler jiuta song, *Suribachi* (The Mortar), instead.¹⁰ Essentialized actions are used to help define the characters and voices are sometimes changed, depending on the hanashika.

OGAWA: Why don't we do this, okay? This is the jiuta song *Suribachi*. I have the words written down on a piece of paper, see, they're written here, okay? "Having crossed the sea and mountains, grown accustomed to living in this world... a woman of low birth, she sends smoke rising from her fire..." Okay, take this home with you and practice there. Yes, but practice as loudly as possible—not quietly. Nice and loud, but not with that gruff voice of yours, okay? And practice where no one else is around, say, in an elevated place. Your voice will be loud, after all. Take this home with you and practice there. That will be the fastest way to learn.

KIROKU: Oh yeah? Okay. So, I should just take this home and practice there?

OGAWA: Yes, try that out.

KIROKU: Well, okay, thanks! Bye! (*leaves keikoya*) Ha-ha, I see. Hm... the jiuta song *Suribachi*. Ho-ha-ha! She said take it home and practice in a loud voice, right? But, if I practice in the middle of our nagaya, it'll scare the tenants. Ah, that's why she said practice in a high place. A high place... okay, I've got it! I'll climb up to the roof of our nagaya. If I'm loud up there, yeah, well... (*climbs up ladder to roof*) Here we go, and up and two and up and go. (*On roof*) Wow, this is just a nagaya, but this is pretty high! Okay, so I've got to practice loudly up here, huh? Ha-ha. Let's see, "Having crossed the sea and mountains, grown

OGAWA: *Kō shimahyō ka. Ano na, koko ni na, jiuta no na, Suribachi. Un, ee, sono monku no kaita kami omasu sakai ni, koko ni kaite omasu yaro? "Umiyama o koete, kono yo ni suminarete... kemuri o tatsuru shizu no me ga..." tte. Kore o na, motte kaette, ippen keiko shite minahare. Un, yūtokimakkedo, dekiru dake ōkii na koe de keiko shinahare ya. Chiisa na koe de keiko shita akimahen de. Koe o baa to agete. Tokoro ga, sono doragoe o dasan yō ni na, yoshīmasu ka? Dekiru dake hito no oran yō na takai tokoro de agatte keiko shianto, ōkii na koe ga demasu yotte na. Kore o motte kaette, ippen keiko shian no ichiban hayō omasu wa.*

KIROKU: *A sayō ka. Honna kore, ano, motte kaette keiko shitara yoroshīmannen na?*

OGAWA: *Sō dasu. Sō shite minahare.*

KIROKU: *Sayō ka. Iya, ōkiini! Sainaraa! (leaves keikoya) Wahha, naruhodo na. Hee, jiuta no Suribachi. Ho-ha-ha! Ee, kore o motte, ōkii na koe dase to yūtta na. Ma, sō ya na, nagaya no mannaka de ōkii na koe dashitara mina bikkuri shioru sakai na, ōkii na koe dase tte, takai toko agatte to yūtta. Takai toko... a, sō ya na. Uchi no ōyane ni agattarō. Ōyane de ōkii koe dashitara, maa, keredo... (climbs up ladder to roof) Yosshotoo, occhoi, isshoi, asshoi, yosshotoo. (On roof) Aa, nagaya no yane demo, korya takai naa. Kore de takai koe dashitara een ya na. Ha-ha. Nani nani? "U-umi yama o koete! Kono yo ni suminarete!" ka... "Kemuri o*

¹⁰ This *kiyomoto* song is *Ano ya kimi sama* (That Night, Dear), an adaptation of the drum sequence in the *nagauta* song *Kagaya kyōran* (Kagaya's Frenzy). Hayashiya, *Yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1, 176. In the role of Ogawa, the hanashika sings skillfully to shamisen accompaniment, but, as Kiroku, s/he sings in a comically high-pitched, monotonous tone.

accustomed to living in this world.”
Right? Okay, “Smoke rises...” this is the part that I’m supposed to belt out...
(Hollers) “Smo-, smoke is rising! Smoke is rising! Smoke is rising!” There we go, I think I’ve got it. “Smoke is rising! Smoke is rising!”

NEIGHBOR: (To person inside nagaya) Hey, it’s pretty windy today. Better be careful with that fire.

KIROKU: “Smoke is rising! Smoke is rising! Smoke...”

NEIGHBOR: That’s strange... somebody’s shouting, “smoke is rising, smoke is rising” over there. There must be a fire somewhere. What? Smo... hey, look at that, Kiiikō’s up on the roof yelling, “smoke is rising, smoke is rising.” (To KIROKU) Hey Kiiikō! Do you see smoke rising?

KIROKU: “Smoke is rising!”

NEIGHBOR: (To his nagaya) Oh no, we’ve got trouble. If it’s close, we’ll have to let everybody know. (To KIROKU) Hey Kiiikō, is the smoke far away? Is it close?

KIROKU: “Crossing sea and mountains!”

NEIGHBOR: If it’s that far away, we’ll be fine.

tatsuru!” Hee, “kemuri o tatsu...” kono hen o baa to chōshi agenna ikan to ka na ora... (Hollers) “Kemuri-, kemuri ga tatsu! Kemuri ga tatsu! Kemuri ga tatsu!” Don don chōshi dekite kitan to chigau? “Kemuri ga tatsu! Kemuri ga tatsu!”

NEIGHBOR: (To person inside nagaya) Oi, kyō wa kaze ga kitsui na oi. Honna, iya, kaji ni ki tsuke na.

KIROKU: “Kemuri ga tatsu! Kemuri ga tatsu! Kemuri...”

NEIGHBOR: Okashii na guai da, oi... soko de “kemuri ga tatsu, kemuri ga tatsu” tte yūtteiru. Doko no kaji to chigau kai na oi. He? Ke... are, mite mii, ōyane agatte Kiiikō ōkii na koe dashite, “kemuri ga tatsu, kemuri ga tatsu” yūtteirun ya. (To KIROKU) Oi, Kiiikō! Kemuri ga tatteiru ka?

KIROKU: “Kemuri ga tatsu!”

NEIGHBOR: (To his nagaya) Erai kotcha de, oi! Chikaku yattara mina ni shirasento ikan ga na. (To KIROKU) Oi, Kiiikō! Kemuri ga tōi no ka, chikai no ka?

KIROKU: “Umiyama o koete!”

NEIGHBOR: Sonna tōkattara, daijōbu ya.

The lyrics of *Suribachi* are key to this *ochi*, but no outside knowledge is needed since these are presented in the course of the story. Hanashika need not go into the meaning of the lyrics because it is not important. Kiroku does not comprehend them either, and, in fact, he mistakes the lyrics while on the roof. *Kemuri o tatsuru* (sends smoke rising) becomes *kemuri ga tatsu* (smoke is rising).

Considering the history of catastrophic fires and the havoc they wreaked on people in Japan’s cities throughout recorded history, the ending above may seem to be in poor taste. Then again, nobody in the story is in any real danger and the neighbor who thought that there might be

a fire moved quickly to check, and was ready to notify people in his area in case his suspicions were confirmed. The ordinarily frightening matter of fire adds drama to this story just as it is about to end. Amusingly, Kiroku is not bright enough to realize that what he is shouting from his rooftop could incite panic. Even as the story ends, he continues hollering, thinking his chances with women are somehow going to improve.

As pointed out, the Kamigata version of *Keikoya* stands out as ‘Kamigata’ for several reasons. The energy level is high throughout the story and the narrative rhythm is fast-paced. This is especially true for the dialogue between Kiroku and Jinbei in the first scene. Second, although the Tokyo version does include some music, the Kamigata music is much livelier and there is a wider variety played. Third, the portrayal of master Ogawa is remarkably realistic in the Kamigata version. Listeners are bound to feel as if they have been transported to a keikoya and are sitting among the students waiting for their own lessons. Listeners can also learn a little about dancing and singing and how *not* to act during formal lessons. The Kamigata version has more realistic exchanges between characters, but at the same time contains a good deal of vulgarity and scatology. For these reasons, *Keikoya* stands out as a Kamigata classic.

A. *Keikoya in the Past*

Keikoya is listed in Katsura Shokō I’s (active mid-nineteenth century) *Fūryū mukashibanashi* (Popular Funny Tales of Old, 1861), a handwritten catalogue of rakugo tales.¹¹ The story does not yet seem to be titled *Keikoya*, however. Instead, it is labeled *Ureshikari, hime dekiru o tazuneru* (A happy-go-lucky asks how to get a girl). The ochi is listed as *chabin ga*

¹¹ As the title of the work indicates, the term *rakugo* was not yet in regular use. It started becoming popular about thirty years later, in the 1890s.

odoru (dances the teapot [dance]). According to Katsura Beichō, Shōfukutei Fukumatsu II (ca. 1868 - 1945) and his son, Fuminoya Kashiku (later Fukumatsu III, 1884-1962), used to incorporate this ending when they were running short on time.¹²

Keikoya is listed as a *chū neta* (medium-level story) on the late-Meiji *Naniwa San'yū-ha rakugo endai shū* (Naniwa San'yū-ha Story List).¹³ It also appears as third-tier *maegashira* (high-division wrestler) on both *Rakugo endai mitate banzuke* (Rakugo Title Parody Rankings Sheet, 1911)¹⁴ and *Osaka rakugo endai mitate banzuke* (Osaka Rakugo Title Parody Rankings Sheet, 1919), so it is clear that this was a popular story in the Meiji and Taishō periods.¹⁵

Keikoya was recorded numerous times in Osaka and Tokyo beginning in the Taishō era. The first SP (single play, 78 revolutions per minute) record of *Keikoya* appears to have been recorded by either Tachibanaya Kakitsu II (1884-1951, Nipponophone 2545-6 [1918]) or Katsura Enshi II (1882-1944, Orient A1391-2 [ca. 1912-19]), both Kamigata hanashika.¹⁶ Katsura Harudanji I and Shōfukutei Shikaku II (later Shokaku V) both recorded multiple versions of this Kamigata classic as well. Studio recordings by these Kamigata hanashika typically end about halfway into the story proper. This is not surprising, considering that records could only hold about three minutes of material during the 1920s and about five by the late 1930s.¹⁷ Some hanashika apologize for cutting the story short before announcing that they will

¹² Katsura Beichō, “*Fūryū mukashibanashi*” in Geinōshi Kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei*, vol. 8, *Yose, misemono* (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, 1976), 111.

¹³ Hoshi Manabu, *Kamigata rakugo kōkyū: warai no sekai, hanashi to hanashi no hanashi* (Tokyo: Ōtori Shoin, 2013), 181.

¹⁴ Kamigata Kyōdo Kenkyūkai, ed., *Kamigata: kyōdo kenkyū* 5, (May 1931): 108.

¹⁵ Geinōshi Kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei*, vol. 8, 374.

¹⁶ Miyakoya Utaroku, *Rakugo rekōdo hachijūnenshi*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1987), 80, 85.

¹⁷ Tokyo artists Kingentei Bashō (1864-1946) and Yanagitei Shibaraku V (later Shunpūtei Ryūshi VII, 1893-1941) also recorded *Keikoya* on SP.

switch places with the next performer. This was doubtless to add a *seki* feel to recordings. Others end the story by simply making Kiroku leave the *keikoya* with a quick *sayōnara*. Some later albums hold the full story, on two sides. It is clear from early recordings that *hanashika* in the past employed an upbeat narrative style, portrayed Ogawa Ichimatsu as a strong woman, and incorporated a great deal of music.

Tsuyu no Gorō I's (1893-1936) version of *Keikoya* appeared in *Meisaku rakugo zenshū* (Anthology of Rakugo Masterpieces, 1929-30). It is included in volume five, which is dedicated to *shibai ongyoku* (kabuki and music) stories.¹⁸ Gorō I's *Keikoya* shares a plot similar to the SP recordings mentioned above and to versions told today: Kiroku goes to Jinbei's house to ask how he can improve his chances with women; Jinbei sends him to a *keikoya*; and Kiroku makes a fool of himself. At the end of the story, Kiroku's chances with women remain the same: slim.

Gorō I's Jinbei does not go through the list of ten traits that make men appealing to women, which was originally told as a separate, shorter story called *Irogoto nedoi* (Inquiry on Love).¹⁹ This was included in other versions told in Gorō I's time, however. Harudanji I recorded at least one version that included the *Irogoto nedoi* bit,²⁰ so Gorō I either preferred not to include it or he (or the anthology's editor) simply left it out to save space. Instead of going through the

¹⁸ Imamura Nobuo, ed., *Meisaku rakugo zenshū*, vol. 5, *Shibai ongyoku hen* (Tokyo: Sōjinshashokyoku, 1930), 357-72.

¹⁹ Hoshi, *Kamigata rakugo kōkyū*, 97. Hoshi Manabu categorizes this bit as a *nedoimono* (inquiry piece). *Nedoimono* can be heard during rakugo *makura*, or, as in *Keikoya*, incorporated into stories themselves. Some *nedoimono* have evolved into full-length rakugo stories (e.g., *Sagi tori* [The Heron Hunter], *Tsuru* [The Crane]). Ui Mushū goes into much more detail about *nedoimono* in *Kamigata hanashi kō* (Tokyo: Seiabō, 1965), 209-15.

²⁰ I listened to an undated cassette copy (spT201-A) of this at the *Osaka Furitsu Engei Shiryōkan* (Osaka Prefectural Archive of Kamigata Comedy and Performing Arts), hereafter Wahha Kamigata. I believe it to be one of Harudanji I's three documented recordings of this story: Nitto 5575-6 (S1299-300 [1918]), Tahei 3277-8 (1918), or Comet 30196-7 (ca. 1920-21).

list, Gorō I's Jinbei gets right to the point; he tells Kiroku that he would have better luck with women if he learned at least one gei.

In Gorō I's version, Kiroku claims that he has not one, but three gei under his belt. The first is *kowairo*, which turns out not to be polished impressions of kabuki actors as the term implies, but impressions of the cries of an elephant and a camel in a quarrel. His second gei is the *goku shinshiki no jidōsha odori* (latest car model dance). For this, he says, he strips off his clothes, paints his body black, ties a tenugui around his head, attaches two lit candles to his forehead for headlights, and runs around in circles. His third gei is the *hotaru odori*—instead of two candles on his head, one gets plugged into his rear end. The first two gei have been cut since Gorō I's time and the reasons for this are easy to see: first, most people today do not know what *kowairo* is and, second, the *jidōsha odori* bit is not nearly as funny as the *hotaru odori*. At least it is not funny to audiences now that cars are so commonplace. Besides, including both *odori* in this section is redundant.

Next in Gorō I's version, Jinbei explains that Kiroku will need to take some money for the *hizatsuki*, so Kiroku asks how much he will need. Jinbei advises him to *hōte iki* (i.e., *haute iki*, crawl over) with two yen or so. Kiroku says he is going to give up the idea of going because his knees would not be able to take it, even if the *keikoya* is nearby. Jinbei scolds Kiroku for being so stupid and explains that the verb *hōte iku* connotes *sukunō motte iku* (bringing a small amount of something). Kiroku comes back with a play on the expression—if one takes a lot should one say *senobi shite iku* (go on tiptoe)? *Hōte iku* is no longer used in Japanese with the meaning that Jinbei explains, so this has also been dropped.

Kiroku asks Jinbei to lend him money as he does in the contemporary version above, but this is drawn out in Gorō I's version. Kiroku also refers to himself in the third person:

KIROKU: *Tekisan* (i.e., *ano otoko*, that man there) doesn't have anything in his wallet, so, lend him two yen, will you?

JINBEI: What *tekisan*? Who?

KIROKU: It was hard to speak for myself, so I had a *burōkā* (broker) do the talking.

JINBEI: I'm going to whack you one!

Kiroku referring to himself in the third person is funny, but once again, since the exchange contains dated terminology (*tekisan*), it is no longer incorporated.

After arriving at the *keikoya*, Kiroku finds a group of men loitering outside, watching the lessons going on inside. Gorō I's scene begins similarly to versions told today, but the former is more amusing. Kiroku joins the men standing outside and overhears Ogawa inculcating in her young student proper dance form for the song *Echigojishi*. The student cannot seem to get that her hand needs to be raised on the final syllable of *sakasetari* (making blossoms bloom). Kiroku misinterprets *ri o age* (raise on *ri*) to mean *ri o age* (raise the interest) and comes to the conclusion that Ogawa is running a pawn operation on the side. He asks a man standing nearby if the little girl has pawned something. The man says no, but guesses that her parents must have. This amusing scene is left out of all recent versions that I have heard. The early modern *shichiya* (pawnshops) that served as commoner financial institutions of sorts are a thing of the past, but *shichiya* come up enough in *rakugo* to make one think that this could still be getting laughs today. That said, *hanashika* would never (unless required by law) drop material that always gets laughs.

The way that Kiroku treats Ogawa in Gorō I's version—and on the record albums mentioned above—strikes one as cheekier, harsher, and even misogynistic at times. Kiroku can come across as impish and impudent in contemporary versions, but in early versions he is often condescending and mean. Some examples of his disdainful language are, *dotchi demo ee sakai, totte oke* (Fine, whatever, just take it! [the money]); *oyoban to wa, nani o nukasu, saa tore* (quit carrying on, what are you blabbing about? Come on take it!); *nan no kan no to, omotteru kuse ni*,

omoe omoe, dokonjō warui (Whatever... I know you're thinking it [that I borrowed the money from Jinbei]—fine, just go ahead and think it, you're terrible); and *anna garakuta no toko de mattemahen, koko de kotachi no keiko o mitemasu* (I can't wait in a garbage can like that—I'll watch the kids practice here). To this, Ogawa remains generally accommodating and even seems to enjoy Kiroku's banter at points. She is never rendered powerless in Gorō I's version, however. In fact, she rebukes Kiroku when pushed too far.

There is a character in Gorō I's version that I have yet to find in any other—a man referred to as *Sensei*. Ogawa informs Sensei that it is his turn for practice. The narrator proceeds to tell us that Sensei is a refined gentleman of forty-six or -seven, adding that he is not the type of person to be found in a place like this. Instead, he comes to the keikoya from time to time in secret because he wishes to be paid compliments by others when he reveals *kakushi gei* at banquets and the like. Sensei speaks to master Ogawa in ultra-polite language, but his superficial elegance is rendered useless when he is asked to sing a tokiwazu song from the kabuki dance play *Modori kago iro ni aikata* (The Returning Palanquin, 1788). Sensei's singing is so awful that Ogawa tells him it sounds more like *nō* chanting. She tells Sensei to go home and return when he has memorized the lines. The character Sensei has been cut, but, as shown above, the scene is still in the story; it has been given to Kiroku (i.e., he is sent home to learn a kiyomoto song).

Gorō I and his contemporaries use the older *iro wa shinan no hoka ochi*.²¹ I have not been able to locate a pre-World War II recording with the rooftop *kemuri ga tatsu ochi*, but there is

²¹ Shikaku II's *Keikoya* was released in 1924 (Orient 2691-2) and 1930 (Hikōki 70324). Miyakoya, *Rakugo rekōdo hachijūnenshi*, vol. 1, 89, 168.

evidence that this ochi dates to at least the Meiji period.²² As pointed out in footnote five of this chapter, this story was also being performed with the title *Uta kaji* in the Meiji period.

Yamanouchi Gohachi also recalled hearing Shōfukutei Shokō I (ca.1860-1913) tell *Keikoya* with the rooftop ending in Meiji, adding that no other version was as lively and funny as his—people in the audience would shout requests for *Keikoya* when he took the stage.²³ Shokō I's Kiroku shouted *hi ga mieru, hi ga mieru* (I can see flames, I can see flames!). This is different from today's *kemuri ga tatsu* and suggests that the song *Suribachi*, the lyrics of which are key to today's rooftop ochi, was incorporated sometime after Meiji.

Kamigata hanashika have maintained the fundamental storyline of *Keikoya* for at least the past one hundred years. Listening to this story on Taishō and early Shōwa records, it is clear that this story was as *hade* and musical then as it is today. All recordings of *Keikoya*, from the earliest SP versions to those contemporary, are lively and loquacious, and Ogawa Ichimatsu has always been a strong woman who could easily outwit Kiroku and put him in his place when necessary.

II. *Tako shibai* (Octopus Kabuki)

Alternative titles: *Detchi shibai* (Apprentice Kabuki)

Characters: Danna, Sadakichi, Kamekichi, Uoki (a fishmonger), tako

One of the most entertaining and busiest of all shibaibanashi is the Kamigata story *Tako shibai*. This is a physical piece filled with virtually nonstop music and sound effects. This

²² The ochi *Tōku ka, tōku nara ii sa* (It's far away? That's good if it's far away!) of the old anecdote *Kaji wa tōi* may be an inspiration for *Keikoya*'s ochi. Seki Keigo, *Nihon mukashibanashi shūsei*, vol. 3-I, *Waraibanashi mukashibanashi* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1957), 235.

²³ Yamanouchi Gohachi, "Omoide no Meiji no rakugoka o yonde," *Kamigata: kyōdo kenkyū* 6, (January 1931): 100.

shibaibanashi is little more than a comical kabuki showcase—a parody of recognizable scenarios. There is hardly any plot. Still, it is a celebrated story and Kamigata rakugo aficionados know that only seasoned hanashika with considerable knowledge of kabuki are able to perform it. They also know that hanashika need to be in relatively good physical shape to do this piece.

The story is set in a large merchant home in Senba. As pointed out in the previous chapter, all of the people who live and work in this house are kabuki fanatics who love to put on their own amateur shows. As we know, the danna wakes up the house with his *Sanbasō* routine. In the scene that follows, the detchi Sadakichi and Kamekichi unenthusiastically clean the entryway to the store, which, as in most traditional merchant homes, is at the front of the residence. As they sweep, their conversation quickly moves to the subject of kabuki. The detchi try to come up with a kabuki scene to perform that suits the moment. They take kabuki names, do kabuki voices, and splash water around rowdily. Not even a minute has passed since the *Sanbasō* scene, but this is what the audience can expect for the rest of the story—little dialogue and lots of kabuki parody.

SADAKICHI: We clean this place every single day, morning and night, but look, trash still manages to pile up, doesn't it? But, just cleaning quietly like this isn't any fun. Isn't there a kabuki play we can do while we clean?

KAMEKICHI: Sure there is.

SADAKICHI: There is?

KAMEKICHI: Yeah, remember, you've got to have a retainer outside scattering water when curtains open on samurai residences.

SADAKICHI: Oh, that's right, when the retainer cleans and mutters something to himself. Let's do that, huh? Yeah, okay, you're Kamekichi, so you be Kamenai. I'm Sadakichi, so I'll be Sadanai. Okay, I'll go first. *(Clears throat, speaks in kabuki-style)*

SADAKICHI: *Asa to yūgata to mainichi konna sōji shiten no ni, kore, gomi chūttara tamaru mon den naa. Konna damatte sōji shitetemo omoroi koto omahen ga naa. Sōji shinagara suru shibai chū no wa omahen yaro ka.*

KAMEKICHI: *Omasu ga na.*

SADAKICHI: *Arimasu ka.*

KAMEKICHI: *Sō, ano, buke yashiki no maku aki wa mizumaki yakko to sōba ga kimatte aru.*

SADAKICHI: *Aa, naruhodo naruhodo, yakko ga goja goja iibotte sōji shiteru toko. Are yarimahyō ka. Ee, honna, anta Kamekichi ya sakai, Kamenai ni nanahare. Wate wa Sadakichi ya sakai, Sadanai ni narimassa. Jaa, ikimasse. (Clears throat, speaks in kabuki-style)*

speech) You there, Kamenai.
 KAMEKICHI: What is it, Sadanai?
 SADAKICHI: What is to come of a life in service? Cotton in summer...
 KAMEKICHI: A padded garment in winter...
 SADAKICHI: A cup of *sake* to stand the cold...
 KAMEKICHI: Fun, too, it is to play in snow...
 SADAKICHI: Well then, the cleaning...
 BOTH: We shall do! (*Hayashi ensemble begins playing Mizumaki [Scattering Water], shop boys sweep and scatter water in time to music*)
 SADAKICHI: (*Still in character*) Here we go now! (*Music fades out*) With all we've got! Sweep and sweep we may, but the leaves continue to fall. Is this not the most wretched thing?
 KAMEKICHI: Once we are finished cleaning here, shall we go help ourselves to some of Okiyo's candy as usual?
 SADAKICHI: Precisely what I was thinking.
 KAMEKICHI: Well then, Sadanai, follow me. (*Tilts broom [fan] on his shoulder*) This way! (*Hayashi ensemble begins playing Futari tsuredatsu [Two Go Together]*)²⁴
 DANNA: Hey, hey, hey, hey! (*Music stops*) Just where do the two of you think you're going?
 SADAKICHI: We were just pretending that the alley was a kabuki runway.

speech) Nanto Kamenai.
 KAMEKICHI: *Nanja Sadanai.*
 SADAKICHI: *Gerō bōkō ga nan ni narō.*
Natsu wa nuno...
 KAMEKICHI: *Fuyu wa dotera no ichikan de...*
 SADAKICHI: *Samusa o shinogu chawanzake...*
 KAMEKICHI: *Yuki to asobu mo ikkyō ka...*
 SADAKICHI: *Saraba sōji ni ...*
 BOTH: *Kakarō ka! (Hayashi ensemble begins playing Mizumaki [Scattering Water], shop boys sweep and scatter water in time to music)*
 SADAKICHI: (*Still in character*) *Yatto makase no! (Music fades out) Hachibei to na! Iya, hakedomo hakedomo, ochikuru ki no ha, nan to utoi kotcha arumai ka.*
 KAMEKICHI: *Sōji ga sundara itsumo no yō ni, Okiyodon no me o nusumi, tsumami gui to dekakeyō ka.*
 SADAKICHI: *Sore ga kotchi no tanoshimi jaa.*
 KAMEKICHI: *Sonnara Sadanai, ore ni tsuite (tilts broom [fan] on his shoulder), kō koi yai! (Hayashi ensemble begins playing Futari tsuredatsu [Two Go Together])*
 DANNA: *Aa, kore kore, kore kore! (Music stops) Doko e iku nen! Doko e iku nen, futari to mo.*
 SADAKICHI: *Chotto, roji o hanamichi ni mitatete.*

²⁴ *Futari tsuredatsu* sounds similar to some songs played in kabuki, but there are no cases of this particular piece being played in the theater. This is listed with the title *Han uta* (yose term for the music played during character entrances and exits) in Tsukitei Harumatsu, ed., *Rakugo keizu* (1929; repr., Tokyo: Meicho Kankōkai, 1974), 120. *Han uta* were also played in a number of other shibaibanashi. Cited in Hayashiya, *Yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1, 164.

DANNA: What are you doing! Stop it already, we'll be doing kabuki soon enough. Get back over here. Now's not the time to be doing that. We have a lot to do, after all. Um, Kamekichi, you clean up inside. Sadakichi, you go clean up the area around the Buddhist altar.

BOTH: Yes sir.

DANNA: *Nani o sunnen kore. Maa, hotoite. Jiki ni shibai suru sakai, donnanaran. Kotchi kaettoide, kaettoide. He, sonna koto shiteiru bāi yanai. Yōji nanbō demo arun ya sakai. Anoo, Kamekichi wa, naka ni sōji shinahare. Sadakichi wa obuttan no ma o sōji shimahyō.*

BOTH: *Heeei.*²⁵

This scene is somewhat silly, but it sheds light on what life may have been like for young detchi. Like most children, the detchi in *Tako shibai* have wandering imaginations and they were more interested in eating candy than doing menial chores. This scene also illustrates that it is not merely merchant training that detchi received—they were disciplined as if they were the danna's own children.

In the following scene, Sadakichi sits before the altar. Instead of cleaning like he is supposed to, his mind shifts once again to kabuki. He wonders out loud if there is a scene that he can do with the *ihai*. Of course, there is:

SADAKICHI: (*Hanashika holds fan upside down, open three or four notches, to represent ihai*) Wait, there's a scene I can do with these *ihai*. Yes, there is, that revenge play where the masterless samurai laments in front of his master's *ihai*. Yes, I'll do that one. (*Places ihai back on altar, holds hands together in supplication, speaks in kabuki style*) Master Reikō Inden Kizen Daikōji...²⁶ (*Temple bell sounds and hayashi ensemble begins playing Nabebuta*)

SADAKICHI: (*Hanashika holds fan upside down, open three or four notches, to represent ihai*) *Matte yo, kono ihai o tsukōtte suru shibai ga atta de. Aa, atta atta. Adauchi mon ya. Yadoya no nikai de rōnin ga shūjin no ihai mae ni shite, kuyanderu toko. Are yattarō.* (*Places ihai back on altar, holds hands together in supplication, speaks in kabuki style*) *Reikō Inden Kizen Daikōji sama...* (*Temple bell sounds and hayashi ensemble begins playing Nabebuta*)

²⁵ This and subsequent *Tako shibai* excerpts are taken from “Katsura Kitchō, *Tako shibai*,” YouTube, accessed January 19, 2014, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrIrMUVgAns> (part one) and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqZ8pwGDzmY> (part two).

²⁶ This is his masters *kaimyō* (posthumous Buddhist name).

aikata [*Pot Lid Aikata*])²⁷ Last year during the imperial visit to Mt. Tenpō, your life was taken by one yet to be identified. That was our final meeting. (*Wipes away tears*) I wished to retaliate, but this Sadakichi still had his forelock. I am pleased to tell you that that youth has been taken into this house, but is suspicious of its master, Baldy. If I can find any evidence that it was him, I will sever his head and (*bows in supplication*) even a warrior's old score!

DANNA: (*Slaps SADAKICHI on head*) Hey, who are you calling Baldy!

SADAKICHI: Danna, were you listening?

DANNA: What do you mean, "were you listening?" Who are you talking about? We'll do kabuki later—this won't do! Just let this area be. The nursemaid has something to do; go look after the baby for her.

SADAKICHI: Yes sir.

aikata [*Pot Lid Aikata*]) *Sennen Tenpōzan miyuki no ori, nanimono to mo shirenu mono no te ni kakari, aenai gosaigo. (Wipes away tears) Onore yare to wa omoimashita naredo, mada kono Sadakichi wa maegami no bunzai, sono maegami wa saiwai ni tōke koso wa irikomishi ga, gaten no yukanu wa kono ya no hagechan. Ima ni teshō o osanaeba, hage no sokkubi uchiotoshi, shura no gobunen (bows in supplication) harasasemashō!*

DANNA: (*Slaps SADAKICHI on head*) *Dare ga hagechan ya, kora!*

SADAKICHI: *Danna, kiite nahatta ka.*

DANNA: *Kiite nahatta ya nai, honma ni! Dare no koto yūttennen. Moo, jiki ni shibai suru sakai ni, donnaran! Mō, koko wa ee sakai na. Onbahan wa yōji ya, bon no mori o kawannahare.*

SADAKICHI: *Heeei.*

When hanashika perform kabuki characters in *Tako shibai* and other shibaibanashi, they go to great pains to do so handsomely and skillfully. The results are usually realistic impressions of unspecified kabuki actors. This provides excellent entertainment and also recalls an older tradition of storytellers doing kowairo that dates back to at least the Genroku era, as discussed in Chapter Two. Virtuoso kabuki actor impressions may not actually fit well with the story *Tako shibai*, since it is adolescents who are doing the impressions, but this is not important. We are not supposed to see the youthful Sadakichi and Kamekichi in these 'kabuki moments'. We are supposed to see and hear how well hanashika can present kabuki. This is part of the show within the show.

²⁷ There is a wealth of *aikata* (generic term for background music) in both Kamigata rakugo and kabuki. *Nabebuta aikata* was likely created to mimic kabuki aikata. Hayashiya, *Yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1, 164. *Nabebuta aikata* was listed as simply *Aikata* in Tsukitei, *Rakugo keizu*, 120.

Irritated at Sadakichi for being off task a second time, the danna tells him to go watch the baby. Considering the former's previous lines about lopping off the danna's head, one can only fear for what might happen next. Looking after the baby seems as though it should be the last responsibility that Sadakichi be given. This is rakugo, however, and Sadakichi going to look after the baby adds some tension to the comedy. When he takes the baby in his arms, he quickly grows frustrated because the child will not stop crying. He tries soothing the baby, but this only makes matters worse. He asks the baby if it is crying because it is hungry. *Hana kuso kuwashite agemahyō ka* (want me to feed you a booger?), he asks as he picks his nose and puts a piece of nasal mucus into the baby's mouth. Sadakichi laughs and says, *Aa, hakidashiyotta* (oh, you spit it out). In some versions, hanashika add the line *mō, hana kuso kirai dekka* (what, you hate boogers already?). Once again, the detchi's mind drifts to kabuki:

SADAKICHI: Come here baby, come here.
(Cradles child in arms, pats bottom)
 What a pain. I hate nothing more than taking care of the baby. Seriously! Even the great Hideyoshi hated looking after kids, so what do they expect? This kid sure likes to cry. Hey, stop crying. Let's stop these tears... *shut up!* Oh, come on. What, are you hungry? How about a booger? *(Checks to see that nobody is looking, picks nose and feeds mucus to child)* There. Oh, you spit it out! Wait, there's some kabuki I can do with a baby. The clan dispute! The scene where the loyal retainer holds his master's child and flees. That part makes any actor look handsome. I'll do that. *(Straightens back and speaks with poise, in kabuki style)* This fleeting world... *(temple bell sounds, hayashi ensemble begins playing)*

SADAKICHI: *Bon-bon, bon-bon! Kotchi oide, kotchi oide (cradles baby in arms, pats bottom). Kannan na, bon no mori ga ichiban kannan neya, moo. Na, kore. Taikohan ga iyagatta chū gurai sakai na. Mata yō naku koe ya na kono ko. He, nakinahanna, nakinaa. Nakuna homa, kora! Moo kannan na. Onaka suiteman no ka. Hana kuso kuwashite agemahyō ka. (checks to see that nobody is looking, picks nose and feeds mucus to child) Hai. Aa, hakidashiotta. Mate yo, kō yū kodomo o daite suru shibai ga atta de. oiesōdō ya. Na, chūgi na yakko ga wakosama o futokoro e irete ochite yuku toko. Dare ga yattarō. (Straightens back and speaks with poise, in kabuki style) Aa, ukiyo ja naa... (temple bell sounds, hayashi ensemble begins playing)* Komori

Komori aikata [*Lullaby Aikata*])²⁸ Since the clan fell into turmoil, the family has scattered like leaves. (*Fighting back tears*) This poor child, held by a retainer not of his own blood, a bosom for his cloistered bed, fast asleep. Deplorable. Fine, the master's watchman shall sing you a lullaby. (*Hayashi ensemble begins playing Mori uta [Lullaby], hanashika sings*) "Go to sleep, little one..."

KAMEKICHI: (*Sweeping, sees SADAKICHI performing kabuki with baby. Ohayashi-san sings next verse of Mori uta while hanashika says KAMEKICHI's lines*) Huh? Sadakichi's holding that baby and is really into his kabuki. Oh, I see, this is the part where he tries to flee—this is where they're assailed. Okay, I'll be the pursuer. (*Raises broom [fan] as sword high above head*) On guard! (*Kabuki fight scene ensues, complete with tsuke beats*)

SADAKICHI: (*Dodges attacks elegantly while continuing to hold child, hanashika sings next verse of Mori uta*) "Over that mountain, back to the village..."

KAMEKICHI: (*Circling around SADAKICHI with broom, this time as stave, launches attack. Ohayashi-san sings next verse*) On guard!

SADAKICHI: (*Holding child in left arm, calmly catches stave with right hand. Hanashika sings next verse as they sway back and forth in a graceful power struggle*) "To a hand drum and windpipes play..." (*Loses composure, hurls child*). On guard! (*Strikes a fierce pose to powerful drum roll and tsuke beats*)

DANNA: Hey, hey, hey! (*Music stops*) What are you are doing, throwing the baby into the garden! Hurry, pick him up!

aikata [*Lullaby Aikata*]) *Itsu zo ya no sōdō irai, goikkajū wa chiri chiri bara bara. (Fighting back tears) Okawaisō na wakō no wakasama, chi ga nai ichimon yakko no futokoro o tama no nedoko to oboshibeshi. Suyara suyara to gyoshi nasaru. Oitawashū zonzimasu. Dorya, bei ga komori uta o utōte shinzemashō. (Hayashi ensemble begins playing Mori uta [Lullaby], hanashika sings) "Nen ne ko see. O-ne yare yaa..."*

KAMEKICHI: (*Sweeping, sees SADAKICHI performing kabuki with baby. Ohayashi-san sings next verse of Mori uta while hanashika says KAMEKICHI's lines*) Ara, Sadakitton, bon o daite erai kibun de shibai shiteru ga na. Aa, ochite iku toko ya na, naruhodo. Kō yū toko e wa otte ga kakaru mon ya. Yosshi, totta ni nattarō. (*Raises broom [fan] as sword high above head.*) Iya! (*Kabuki fight scene ensues, complete with tsuke beats*)

SADAKICHI: (*Dodges attacks elegantly while continuing to hold child, hanashika sings next verse of Mori uta*) "Ano yama koete sato e itta..."

KAMEKICHI: (*Circling around SADAKICHI with broom, this time as stave, launches attack. Ohayashi-san sings next verse*) Iya!

SADAKICHI: (*Holding child in left arm, calmly catches stave with right hand. Hanashika sings next verse as they sway back and forth in a graceful power struggle*) "Den-dendaikō ni shō no fue..." (*Loses composure, hurls child*). Iya! (*Strikes a fierce pose to powerful drum roll and tsuke beats*)

DANNA: A, kore kore kore kore! (*Music stops.*) Bon o niwa e butsukete dō sunnen kore. Hayō hirowan kai na.

²⁸ This was probably composed for the yose, though there are a number of *komori uta* (lullabies, also *warabe uta*) with similar lyrics. The music is based on kabuki aikata.

SADAKICHI: (*Rushes to pick up child*) There now, baby... (*Looks at child, smiles*) He doesn't have a head.

DANNA: He's upside down, upside down! What are you doing? You'll kill him. Quick, give him to the old lady. For goodness' sake! No more! See, you do kabuki and neglect the business! Go keep an eye on the store!

BOTH: Yes sir.

SADAKICHI: (*Rushes to pick up child*) *Aa, bon bon, bon bon* (*Looks at child, smiles*) *Kubi ga nai.*

DANNA: *Sakasama ya sakasama ya, moo. Nani o shiten, koroshite shimaun ga na. Hayō onba ni watashi nahare, honma ni moo! Kore kara nain ya de, shibai shitara mise hōridasu de. Miseban shinahare!*

BOTH: *Heeei.*

As with the previous scene, audiences get an amusing look inside the private quarters of a merchant house. It was suggested earlier that this story may not have been adapted in the Tokyo repertoire because it is too *hade* and playful. Another reason why this story has rarely been performed in Tokyo may have to do with the fact that it is set in a merchant's home where the *danna* exerts little influence over his *detchi*. Considering the amount of merchant material cut by Tokyo artists from the stories discussed in the previous chapter, one wonders if this story was simply too merchant centered for Tokyo *rakugoka* to adapt it to their repertoire.

Sadakichi reveals himself to be a perceptive kabuki critic when he comments that *dare ga yattemo ee otoko ni mien de* (playing the role [of loyal retainer holding his master's child] makes any actor look handsome), but this observation only leads to further reprimand for him and Kamekichi. It is apparent that, no matter what task is at hand, their infatuation with kabuki will get in the way. This is taken to the point of absurdity. The *danna* is at his wit's end, but it is clear that there will be no real consequences for the boys. The *danna* is too soft. Consequently, he becomes the object of humor. In Kamigata merchant stories—not unlike the master-servant plays of *kyōgen*—the last laugh is almost always on a person of authority in the house. In the case of *Tako shibai* it is the *danna*.

Discovered and scolded once again, Sadakichi and Kamekichi decide to give up performing kabuki for the moment. Instead, they lure in the local fishmonger, Uoki, who is known by all to be obsessed with kabuki. Of course, he cannot resist the temptation to perform when the boys call out to him with *kakegoe*. As he approaches, the hayashi ensemble plays *Tai ya tai* (Snapper, Snapper), a song adapted from kabuki.²⁹ He arrives with fish to sell, kabuki style. When the *danna* asks what kind of fish he has today, he answers, Ichikawa *Taizō*, Kawarazaki *Ebijūrō*, and Nakamura *Takosuke*, all fresh from the Teshimaya Rush Mat Theater.³⁰ Tired of kabuki games (for the time being), the *danna* refuses to respond to the fishmonger in character. He orders a sea bream fillet cut into three servings and one live octopus.

When Uoki is preparing the sea bream in the kitchen, the fish organs remind him of *Kanadehon chūshingura* (Kana Copy Book of the Store House of Loyal Retainers, 1748) act six, when Kanpei disembowels himself. He accidentally knocks a bucket down the well and vows (in character) to go down and bring it back. As he does so, the song *Suiki* (Moisture) is played.³¹ Sadakichi and Kamekichi cannot help but join in. The *danna* is fuming about the kitchen becoming a theater, too. Uoki has in the meantime left his baskets of fish unattended out front and learns that a stray dog has swiped a yellowtail. Without further delay, he gives chase, of

²⁹ *Tai ya tai* can be heard in kabuki plays such as *Onnagoroshi abura no jigoku* (The Woman Killer and the Hell of Oil, 1721) and *Natsu matsuri Naniwa kagami* (Summer Festival: Mirror of Osaka, 1745). The lyrics have been slightly altered for *Tako shibai*. Hayashiya, *Yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1, 165.

³⁰ These are puns on kabuki actors' names and sea creatures (sea bream, shrimp, octopus, respectively). *Tejimaya goza* (Tejimaya Rush Mat Theater) is a multifaceted pun that alludes to Teshimaya Shichizaemon (a character in Chikamatsu's *Onnagoroshi abura no jigoku*), *goza* (rush mats, used for placing fish for sale or transport), and (*go*)*za* (theaters).

³¹ *Suiki* is a variant of the song *Chidori* (Plover). Hayashiya, *Yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1, 165.

course kabuki style, to the song *Odori ji* (Dance Sequence).³² Sadakichi tries to follow, but the danna orders him and Kamekichi to go buy some vinegar to make *sudako* (pickled octopus). The danna retires to a back room to try to relax with a few puffs of tobacco.

The title of the story comes from the next and final scene. As the hanashika explains, the octopus has been listening from under a mortar the entire time. Upon hearing that it will be pickled and sliced up, the octopus comes to life and turns out to be as crazy about kabuki as the fishmonger from whom it came. It elevates the heavy mortar that it has been placed under and declares in grand kabuki style (i.e., with powerful vocalization and *mie* [head snaps] to tsuke beats) that it will not allow itself to be chopped into bits. The octopus poses heroically, holding the mortar (i.e., wide open fan) to its right. It opens his eyes widely then crosses them dramatically, pushing its lips out as far as possible. The effect of the pose is extremely comical and may be the most anticipated moment of the entire story. The octopus kabuki has, at last, begun.

A temple bell sounds and the song *Ko no ha* (Leaves) follows.³³ Now free, the octopus does not simply squirm away. It carries out a gallant kabuki style escape, which does not happen quickly. It ties two of its legs together at its front—these are its *maruguke obi* (thick rope sash), the kind worn by aragoto kabuki characters. It takes a *renge* (wooden pestle, also *surikogi*) and stuffs it in its *obi*. This is its sword. It ties a cleaning rag around its head for its *mebakari zukin* (lit. eyes-only hood). It blows ink over his body for *kuro shōzoku* (black clothes, also *kuro yotten*). It takes a *debabōcho* (pointed carver) and saws a hole in the wall. Once all this is done, it

³² *Odori ji* is a kabuki song that signifies the pleasure quarters. It has many variations, but is used similarly in both arts. The debayashi *Saya ate* (Rivalry) is a variant of *Odori ji*. Ibid, 165.

³³ *Ko no ha* is the same song as kabuki's *Ko no ha aikata* (Leaves Aikata), also referred to as *Ishidan aikata* (Stone Steps Aikata). Ibid., 165.

strikes one more pose and a bell tolls.³⁴ At this dramatic moment the hayashi ensemble plays *Shinobi sanjū* (Cloak Music), a classic kabuki arrangement used to convey the state of darkness.³⁵ The hanashika performs this scene without the use of properties (i.e., all actions are pantomimed) and remains seated on the zabuton.

Just when he is finally enjoying some peace and quiet, the danna hears the noise being made in the kitchen. Wondering if it might be mice, he goes to have a look. When he finds a kabuki octopus, he can hardly believe his eyes. This does not keep him from joining the play in progress, however. What ensues is a *tachimawari* (kabuki style fight scene) between the tako and the danna.

DANNA: (*Hayashi ensemble playing Shinobi sanjū*) What, is this house cursed or something? Just when I thought everybody here was crazy about kabuki, even the octopus I bought is performing. So, it thinks it can get away, does it? Not after I've paid for it.

NARRATOR: (*Music stops*) It would have been best if the danna just plopped the mortar back over the octopus, but his true heart is one with kabuki. He slips behind the octopus and seizes the top of its scabbard—the tip of the pestle.

DANNA: *Ya!* (*Tsuke strikes, TAKO looks back, surprised*)

NARRATOR: One, two, three steps back they go, then the octopus thrusts his scabbard to the side (*tsuke strikes*) sending the danna spinning. It follows with a shower of ink.

TAKO: *Fuuu!* (*tsuke strikes*)

DANNA: (*Hayashi ensemble playing Shinobi sanjū*) *Nani ka, uchi wa norowareten no ka. Kanaijū shibai suki ya to omottara, kōtta tako made shibai shittorun. Ee, nigeru ki ya na. Naruhodo. Sekkaku kōtta tako nigashite tamaru kai.*

NARRATOR: (*Music stops*) *Danna wa sono mama itte, suribachi o pa to fusete shimottara yokattan desu ga, ne ga shibaizuki de gozaimasu. Soo to tako no ushiro e mawarimasu toko no, katana no kojiri, renga no hashi o ba.*

DANNA: *Ya!* (*Tsuke strikes, TAKO looks back, surprised*)

NARRATOR: *Ton, ton, ton, miashi ato e sagarimasu to, katana no kojiki oba o fun!* (*tsuke strikes*) *Danna o kiriri to mawashite sumi o hitotsu.*

TAKO: *Fuuu!* (*tsuke strikes*)

³⁴ Temple bell tolls—used for temple scenes, cues, and dramatic emphasis—are played on the *dora*, a bronze gong with a knobbed center.

³⁵ *Shinobi sanjū* is supposed to have been inspired by the *kana kana* (high-pitched crying sound) of cicada. *Ibid.*, 165.

NARRATOR: (*Hayashi ensemble begins playing Ataka*)³⁶ It sprayed ink everywhere, so the room was pitch-dark—it was a blackout. Next, the *danna* and the octopus grope about for one another as in a kabuki scene in the dark. (*DANNA and TAKO move gracefully through the dark, music continues to play. DANNA finds TAKO and grabs it from behind*)

DANNA: *Iya!* (*TAKO struggles then nods once*)

TAKO: *Ee!*

NARRATOR: It spins the *danna* once again and delivers a swift blow to his chest.

TAKO: *Un!*

DANNA: *Ah!* (*Music stops and DANNA collapses to rapid tsuke strikes*)

TAKO: This weakling was all talk! Now is my chance to make a run for Akashi Bay!³⁷ (*TAKO does final pose to intensifying tsuke strikes. Exit is made in grand kabuki fashion, complete with tsuke, drums, and flute*)³⁸

NARRATOR: The octopus did a *tobi roppō* (lit. flying in six directions) exit and escaped.

NARRATOR: (*Hayashi ensemble begins playing Ataka*) *Sumi o fuita mon desu kara, atari ga makkura. Anten ni natte shimotta. Koko de, Danna to tako no kurayami no naka no saguriai. Danmari to yū kimochi to naru.* (*DANNA and TAKO move gracefully through the dark, music continues to play. DANNA finds TAKO and grabs it from behind*)

DANNA: *Iya!* (*TAKO struggles then nods once*)

TAKO: *Ee!*

NARRATOR: *Danna o kiriito mawashitoite, munaita o ippatsu.*

TAKO: *Un!*

DANNA: *Aa!* (*Music stops and DANNA collapses to rapid tsuke strikes*)

TAKO: *Kuchi hodo ni nai moroi yatsu! Kono ma ni chittomo hayō Akashi no ura e osō ja!* (*TAKO does final pose to intensifying tsuke strikes. Exit is made in grand kabuki fashion, complete with tsuke, drums, and flute*)

NARRATOR: *Roppō funde tako ga nigete shimotta.*

Tako shibai traditionally ends with Sadakichi and Kamekichi returning to find the *danna* on the kitchen floor, an area where people wear outdoor footwear. Without delay, he orders them to bring him three *kuromame* (black soybeans). When asked why, he replies, and this is the *ochi*, *Tako ni aterareta* (I've been stricken [also means poisoned] by an octopus). Apparently, it was

³⁶ *Ataka* is an aikata based on a section of the *nagauta* song *Ataka no matsu* (The Ataka Pine). In kabuki, bamboo flute is often added to the arrangement for *danmari* (pantomime) scenes in the dark.

³⁷ Akashi is famous for octopus and seafood in general.

³⁸ The music for this is titled *Tobi sari* (Flying Exit), which Katsura Kitchō used to present a grander kabuki-style exit. This has become standard in some schools both because it is entertaining and easier for the hayashi ensemble to play than the traditional song *Hikitori sanjū* (Exit Song), which includes complex shamisen accompaniment.

once believed in Japan that eating three black soybeans could cure food poisoning from octopus. Katsura Beichō III integrated a simplified version of this ochi. In his version, when asked what happened, the danna replies, *dokukeshi motte koi... tako ni ateraretan ya* (bring me some antidote! ... I've been stricken by an octopus). Beichō has made it clear that he changed the traditional ending because he thinks it is too esoteric for modern audiences to comprehend.³⁹ Many hanashika still prefer to tell *Tako shibai* with the kuromame ochi, however, because it helps keep alive knowledge about an old custom in Japan.

Hanashika perform *Tako shibai* with great dexterity and physicality. The scenes with the ridiculous octopus faces are amusing, but, even if one cannot see the action on stage, they are bound to take pleasure in the story for its dramatic lines, lively music, and penetrating sound effects. The climax of *Tako shibai*, as playful as it is, is essentially a tongue-in-cheek jab at Edo kabuki. It is no coincidence that a powerful yet goofy octopus, with its maruguke obi and tobi roppō, is made to correspond to classic aragoto roles, a product of Edo's most illustrious family line—that of Ichikawa Danjūrō. This final scene would not work nearly as well if the octopus was cast as a native Kamigata wagoto character. Perhaps the lampooning of Tokyo's greatest kabuki roles (and family) is one more reason why *Tako shibai* is celebrated as a Kamigata classic and never became a part of the repertoire in Tokyo.

A. *Tako shibai in the Past*

The kyōgen play *Tako* features a talking octopus, or its ghost rather, which tells a traveling priest of its capture, detailing how it was prepared, chopped up, boiled, and eaten. The octopus also sings and dances to music. This kyōgen play—clearly a parody of *nō*—is quite

³⁹ Katsura Beichō, *Beichō rakugo zenshū*, vol. 5 (Osaka: Sōgensha, 1981), 318.

different than *Tako shibai*, but it is conceivable to think that the kyōgen octopus was part of the inspiration for the Kamigata rakugo piece. Numerous sources point to Katsura Bunji I as the composer of the story that became *Tako shibai*,⁴⁰ but I have not been able to locate an octopus story in any of his hanashibon, though there are numerous shibaibanashi. The closest I have found are two stories in *Otohibanashi Katsura no hana* (vol. three, ca. 1804-18); *Shibaizuki detchi* (The Apprentice Who Loved Kabuki) and *Shibaizuki teishu* (The Master Who Loved Kabuki).⁴¹ Neither of these stories have an octopus or a fishmonger. *Tako shibai* is listed in Katsura Shokō's 1861 *Fūryū mukashibanashi*, but not with this title. It is listed as, simply, *Shibaibanashi*, with the note that it ends with the *ochi sudako ni atte mitsubu kure* (I've been stricken by pickled octopus, give me three [beans]).⁴²

Tako shibai is listed with other shibaibanashi on the late-Meiji *Naniwa San'yū-ha rakugo endai shū*.⁴³ It is also given a spot among other shibaibanashi as *sewanin* on the *Rakugo endai mitate banzuke*⁴⁴ and *kensa yaku* (official) on the *Osaka rakugo endai mitate banzuke*, so it is apparent that this story was placed in its own genre and popular by the Meiji period.⁴⁵ The three earliest recordings of *Tako shibai* appear to have been done by Tachibanaya Kakitsu II in ca. 1918 (Nipponophone 3619-10) and 1930 (Hikōki 70281). Listening to these, one can hear that this story was accompanied by music from virtually beginning to end and was a remarkably

⁴⁰ Sources include Maeda Isamu, ed., *Kamigata engei jiten* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 1966), 381; and Aiba Akio, *Gendai Kamigata rakugo benri jiten* (Tokyo: Shōnensha, 1987), 259.

⁴¹ Miyao Yoshio, *Kamigata zekkō bungei shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 1999), 566, 569.

⁴² Katsura Beichō, "Fūryū mukashibanashi," 109. Beichō believes that *atte* should be *atatte*.

⁴³ Hoshi, *Kamigata rakugo kōkyū*, 186.

⁴⁴ *Kamigata: kyōdo kenkyū* 5, (May 1931): 108.

⁴⁵ *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei*, vol. 8, 374.

energetic piece.⁴⁶ The physicality of this story is conveyed in the recordings—one can hear Kakitsu II’s spirited shouts as he flourishes and poses to music and tsuke strikes—but, like other rakugo recordings from this period, they are far shorter than versions told today. This is not any indication, however, that the story was short when performed live in seki.

Tako shibai appears alongside Goro I’s *Keikoya* in the aforementioned *Meisaku rakugo zenshū*, volume five.⁴⁷ This particular version is one by Katsura Koharudanji I (1904-1974), who was Harudanji I’s pupil when the anthology was published. Unlike *Keikoya* in this volume, *Tako shibai* includes a makura:

Advances in medicine are mindboggling. Just take electrotherapy, for instance. They have x-rays, ultraviolet treatments, fluid electric treatments, responsive electric treatments, and all kinds of other electricity treatments. It said in the paper that the doctor who invented rejuvenation has now come up with a technique to make stupid people smart—by giving them a shot in the brain. I tell ya, with a poor brain and slow blood circulation like mine, I would love to have one of those shots. A long time ago, medicine was rather primitive. I heard that a doctor once visited a girl who was bitterly depressed—he stuck his tongue out at her to make her laugh. Yes, and there are people in the world who will pluck three hairs from the back of their head to stop nosebleeds, people who will place sandals on their head when feeling faint from epilepsy, and people who will eat three black soybeans when they’ve eaten bad octopus. You might call these psychological treatments, but what’s funny is that they actually work.

This makura functions to provide listeners with the information that they will need for the *ochi* to make sense. That Koharudanji I had to include a short bit about *kuromame* in his opening bit tells us that contemporary (ca. 1930) audiences could not be expected to know about the old custom of using them as an antidote for octopus poisoning.

The basic storyline of the Koharudanji I version is the same as the Katsura Kitchō I version presented above: all of the people who live and work in the merchant house are

⁴⁶ Kakitsu II’s recordings can be found at Wahha Kamigata. Cassettes spT162-A and spT170-A.

⁴⁷ Imamura, ed., *Meisaku rakugo zenshū*, vol. 5, 210-22.

infatuated with kabuki; Sadakichi and Kamekichi take this infatuation too far and get into trouble with the danna; a fishmonger gets pulled into the action, bringing with him an octopus who in the end deals a debilitating blow to the danna and makes a grand kabuki style escape. It is clear by cues written throughout the text that Koharudanji I's version was full of music and kabuki sound effects, such as tsuke strikes.

There are some interesting differences between Koharudanji I's version and Kitchō I's, but these do not necessarily change the trajectory of the plot. They do allow us to see the kinds of cuts and additions that hanashika make as time passes, though. In Koharudanji I's version, the danna wakes up the house with his *Sanbasō* dance and song then says, *saa hayō okite omote o sōji se, omote o, gokinjo wa mō hayō ni okite gozaru* (okay, you hurry and get up, go clean out front, out front! Our good neighborhood has already been up for some time). In contemporary versions, the line is usually something to the tune of *okitara omote no sōji o shimahyō* (Once you get up, let's do the cleaning out front). Nothing is said of the *gokinjo* (good neighborhood) anymore.

Something that has since been added to recent versions is the brief explanation (embedded in dialogue) of why Sadakichi and Kamekichi change their names to Sadanai and Kamenai. As we are told, one's name becomes more appropriate for the scene if one switches their suffix -kichi, used in commoner names, to -nai, which is more samurai sounding. There is no explanation of this in Koharudanji I's version. His contemporary audiences would have known about the status implied by given name.

In the Koharudanji I version, when Sadakichi is made to clean the family altar, his account of the deceased grandmother is more detailed than most versions told today—there is a reference to her unfair money lending practices:

SADAKICHI: Now there's an old house for you—they've got so many *ihai*. Whose *ihai* is this? Ah, it's the dead old lady's. She sure was a strange old woman. She was an ogre of a hag, known all around Senba as Fuming Old Kiku.⁴⁸ At times she would talk to you in a coaxing voice, but then she would make your life miserable by charging you high interest for the money she lent you.

SADAKICHI: *Sasuga kyūka ya na. Ihai mo takusan aru koto naa. Kono ihai wa dare no ihai ya na? Shinda koko no baba ya. Kettai na baba yatta na. Takeya no Okiku-baba to iūte, Senbajū demo daihyōban no onibaba ya. Aida wa nekonadegoe de otonashisō ni shite ite, takabu no kane o kashitsukete komarasu yatsu yatta.*

Another scene that was in Koharudanji I's, but is not included in versions told today, is when the *danna* orders Sadakichi to put the child's toys away in the toy box. Sadakichi says the names of the toys as he picks them up: *den-dendaiko* (toy drum), *oni no men* (ogre mask), and *koma no nagai himo* (long top cord), the last of which is used to enact yet another kabuki scene. This scene was probably cut because mention of these toys stopped getting recognition over time—audiences no longer relate to these as everyday items. Today these toys are usually sold as cheap souvenirs.

When the *danna* is at his wit's end about his baby being thrown around in Koharudanji I's version, he yells at the *detchi*, *mise e itte suwatte nasai* (go sit in the store [and stay put]). In Kitchō I's version, he simply says *miseban shinahare* (go keep an eye on the store!), which arguably robs the story of an interesting 'merchant moment'. The impression that one gets from the earlier line—since there are countless scenes in Kamigata rakugo that have *bantō* dutifully looking over their shops—is that the *mise* was a place where the boys would be less likely to get

⁴⁸ *Takeya no Okiku-baba*. I have not been able to find a reference to *Takeya no Okiku* (or *Okiku-baba*), but it is likely a play on the term *takeya no kaji* (lit. fire at a bamboo shop), which refers to one who is both easily angered and unable to hold their tongue. This could also be a reference to the kabuki play *Banshū sarayashiki* or a related *Okiku* ghost story.

away with (or attempt) their shenanigans, perhaps because the bantō or other senior house employees were on hand.

Another difference between Koharudanji I's version and those told today is that female character presence in *Tako shibai* has been reduced. In all versions, the danna calls for his employees, including the *onagoshi* (women), to wake up. In Kitchō I's version, there is hardly any mention of the female characters after this—none appear in the story. In Koharudanji I's version, when the danna scolds Sadakichi for doing kabuki rather than cleaning the altar, he sends him away and says that he will just have one of the *onagoshi* do the cleaning. Later, during Uoki's *Chūshingura* parody, an unnamed *gejo* adds to the fun by chiming in with *kuchijamisen*. Finally, Okiyo is scolded for brandishing a *sasara* (bamboo whisk) as a kabuki sword and is ordered to go upstairs and put things back in order. There are still many women in Kamigata rakugo audiences today, so it cannot be said that the female characters were cut from *Tako shibai* to appease a changing demographic. It is more likely that *hanashika* withdrew Okiyo and the other women because they did not get as many laughs as the other zany characters.

Despite a few cuts, *Tako shibai*'s contents have remained largely intact for the past one hundred years. It is an entertaining, *hade*, and musical *shibaibanashi* that continues to be one of the most loved stories in Kamigata rakugo's traditional repertoire. It is no small accomplishment that a story with so much kabuki material and music has been retained. Based on my observations and conversations with people in the Kamigata rakugo world, this is a result of *hanashika* and *ohayashi-san* practicing diligently, and believing that audiences should get more for their money.

III. *Tennōji mairi* (Pilgrimage to Shitennōji)

Alternative titles: *Inu no indōgane* (Requiem Bell for a Dog), *Tennōji meisho* (Famous Sites of Tennōji)

Characters: Kiroku, Jinbei-han, vendors and entertainers on temple grounds, monk

Like many *koten rakugo* stories, *Tennōji mairi* is set in the late early modern era or Meiji period. This story is classified as a *tabibanashi*, as the Osakan protagonists tour a historic part of their city. This story is not a part of the Tokyo tradition, though it was performed there with some regularity by the Osaka native San'yūtei Hyakushō II (1895-1964). Today it is not heard in Tokyo unless Kamigata *hanashika* perform it there. The reason for this is that the story's focus is localized and it is packed with all of the elements that make Kamigata *rakugo* stand out from the Tokyo tradition.

Kiroku visits Jinbei at home. Kiroku's language is blunt and inconsiderate, and his knowledge of virtually all things is half-baked at best. This is frustrating to Jinbei, but, as usual, he is not pushed to the point of telling Kiroku to get lost. Instead, he digs into him when necessary, creating an amusing slapstick, *manzai*-like back and forth. Kiroku asks Jinbei if he would like to see something interesting. He reports that a *higan* keeps sneaking in and out of his kitchen. This so-called *higan* turns out to be a weasel. Kiroku mistook the name of the mustelid carnivore because someone told him that he should not kill it, because it is *higan* (the equinox, observed on most Japanese Buddhist calendars). Jinbei corrects Kiroku and does his best to teach him about *higan* and the special rites held at Shitennōji during this time. Listeners who know Kiroku can only smile as it is doubtful that any of this will actually register:

KIROKU: So, what's *higan*?

JINBEI: Shitennōji observes the seven days of *higan* for souls with no one to perform

KIROKU: *Higan tte nandan nen?*

JINBEI: *Tennōjisan de na, nanoka no aida muen no hotoke no kuyō o suneya.*

rites on their behalf.

KIROKU: Souls with no one to perform rites?

JINBEI: They ring the requiem bell at Shitennōji and say it can be heard tens of millions of miles away in Paradise.

KIROKU: Come on, now you're talking a bunch of nonsense.

JINBEI: What do you mean, nonsense?

KIROKU: Can't you see? My place is almost right in front of Shitennōji. I can't even hear a clink out of that dumb bell.

JINBEI: You don't get it. Monks can teach people how to get to *Jūman okudo*—Paradise.

KIROKU: Ha-ha, those loudmouthed monks are full of it.

JINBEI: Loudmouthed monks? Says who?

KIROKU: Sure, just the other day, I was walking down Shinsaibashi street. A monk walked my way, right? He said, "excuse me, may I ask you something? What is the best way to Hachiman street from here?" Come on now, if somebody doesn't know how to get to Hachiman (*laughs*), there's no way they'll know anything about that *Jūman okudo*.⁴⁹

JINBEI: You know, talking about things with you just makes me upset. Monks teach people how to find their way to Paradise.

KIROKU: Fine, okay, so what do people do when they visit Shitennōji?

JINBEI: What do they do? They ring the requiem bell.

KIROKU: And what does that do?

JINBEI: They receive a blessing.

KIROKU: Oh, I see. So, what, will they let anybody ring that bell?

JINBEI: Well, sure, they'll let anybody ring it.

KIROKU: Oh yeah? Well, you know, there's somebody I would like to ring that bell for.

KIROKU: *Muen to hotoke iimasu to.*

JINBEI: *Tennōjisan de indōgane o tsukunen. Sore, tokoro de, Jūman okudo kikoeru to yū na.*

KIROKU: *Iya, sonna aho na koto o yūte nahanna, anta wa.*

JINBEI: *Nani ga aho ya?*

KIROKU: *Sō dessha nai kai na. Uchi to Tennōjisan wa honmeta hana no saki desse. Sore, chottomo uchi kikoeshimahan ga na.*

JINBEI: *Sō ya nai nen. Goshukke wa na, Jūman okudo no michi o oshieru to yū neya.*

KIROKU: *Haha, Nan no kan no to yamako bōzu ga.*

JINBEI: *Yamako bōzu chū yatsu aru kai.*

KIROKU: *Sō den ga na. Wate kono aida na, Shinsaibashisuji aruitetan desu wa. Tara, mukō kara bonsan ga kiharimashite ne, "Chotto mono tannemasu kedomo, Hachimansuji wa dō ittara yoroshii gozaimasu," to yūtte, kiitemashita ga na. De, Hachimansuji tte wakaran chū, anta, (laughs) Jūman okudo owakari suru hazu ga nain ya de.*

JINBEI: *Omae to mono yūttetara iya ni natte kuru na. Goshukke wa gokuraku no michi o oshieru to yū neya.*

KIROKU: *Hee, hode, Tennōjisan mina omairi shite, nani shimannen.*

JINBEI: *Nani o shimannen tte, indōgane o tsukun ya ga na.*

KIROKU: *Hode, dō narimannen.*

JINBEI: *Kudoku ni narun ga na.*

KIROKU: *Aa, sayō ka. Hode, nan dekka, sore wa dare demo tsuite kuremakka.*

JINBEI: *Hora ma, sore dare demo tsuite kureru.*

KIROKU: *Aa, sayō ka. Iya, sore yattara wate hitotsu tsuite yaritai mon ga oriman neya.*

⁴⁹ Play on numbers 80,000 (*hachiman*) and 100,000,000,000,000 (*jūman oku*).

JINBEI: Just who needs you to ring the bell?
 KIROKU: Somebody in my family—a man.
 JINBEI: A man in your family? I know most
 of your family... what man?
 KIROKU: He's black in color and has slanted
 eyes. Hey, you used to carry on about
 how cute he was. At least until he took
 off with that *namabushi* you had just
 bought.⁵⁰ Yeah, you were saying just the
 other day how obnoxious he is.
 JINBEI: You're talking about your dog, aren't
 you?
 KIROKU: That's right.
 JINBEI: What do you mean, "that's right?"
 You said he was a man, so why would I
 think it was anything other than human!
 KIROKU: Well, he's a male.
 JINBEI: It doesn't matter if he's a male...
 What, did that dog die?
 KIROKU: Yeah... I told him not to go out
 front, but he went ahead and went out
 anyway. We've got these mean kids in
 the neighborhood, and five or so of them
 went after him with a stick. They
 whacked him on the head and he went
KWAAN! That was his final day. (*Cries*) I
 could never strike him so cruelly.
 JINBEI: Oh, my, I am so sorry for the poor
 thing.
 KIROKU: They're awful kids. They came
 down on his head with that stick and he
 went *KWAAN!* I could never strike him
 so cruelly.
 JINBEI: Wow, you're really crying...
 KIROKU: Let's go right now and ring that bell
 at Shitenōji.
 JINBEI: Hey, I understand why you want to
 ring the bell, but in what world to people
 ring requiem bells for dogs?

JINBEI: *Tsuite yaritai mon tte, ittai dare?*
 KIROKU: *Ie, uchi ni ite, otoko den ga na.*
 JINBEI: *Omae no toko ni ite, otoko? Taigai
 nara shitteru ga, donna otoko?*
 KIROKU: *Iro no kuroi me no tsutta yatsu de
 ne, anta koitsu kawaii yatcha noo, kawaii
 yatcha noo, tte yūtte, yō kawaigatta anta
 ga. Sore, kaitate no namabushi totte, sore
 kara koitsu nikutarashinatta tte, anta
 kono aida yūtenahatta ya nai kai.*
 JINBEI: *Omae no yūten no wa, sore, inu ya
 nai kai.*
 KIROKU: *Sō den ga na.*
 JINBEI: *Sō den ga na to, omae otoko ya yū
 sakai, washi wa mata ningen ka shira to
 omou ya nai kai!*
 KIROKU: *Sore tte, are on desse.*
 JINBEI: *Nan bon on ka tte... Nani ka, ano inu
 shindan ka.*
 KIROKU: *Sō dennen. Wate omote dettara
 akan de to yūtte kō yattan da zo, sore de,
 deyottan ya ga na. Uchi no kinjo ni warui
 kodomo ga itemashite na, gonin hodo
 detekiyottara, bō o motte atama o buee
 yōishottan do, honde KWAAN chūtte,
 anta, kono yo no wakare. (*Cries*)
 Muggesho ni wa dotsuken mon denna.*
 JINBEI: *Sō ka, hora, kawai sō na koto o shita
 na.*
 KIROKU: *Warui kodomo desse. Bō o
 mottekiyotte atama buee kuwashichattara
 KWAAN to yūtte na. Muggesho ni wa
 dotsuken mon denna.*
 JINBEI: *Omae, naiten na kore...*
 KIROKU: *Kore kara ne, Tennōjisan e itte,
 kane tuite yarimahyō.*
 JINBEI: *Ano na, kane tsuite yarimahyō tte,
 doko do no sekai ni inu no kane o tsuku
 yatsu ga aru kai na.*

⁵⁰ *Namabushi* (also *namaribushi*) is boiled and half-dried *katsuo* (skipjack tuna, *Katsuwonus pelamis*).

KIROKU: Well, they call it a re-canine bell,
don't they?⁵¹

JINBEI: You! You're crying and cracking
jokes at the same time!

KIROKU: *Seya kedo, are inudōgane yūman
yarō.*

JINBEI: *Omae, naitete share yūtterun kai na.*⁵²

Kiroku and Jinbei's exchange is fast-paced and nonstop—almost no time passes between utterances. Such loquaciousness is one of the elements that makes this piece stand out as a Kamigata story. This is a scene that provides Kamigata hanashika with a nice opportunity to exhibit their narrative speed and timing—their narrative skills.

Jinbei tells Kiroku that if he really wants to ring the bell for his dog, he should go to the temple, but informs him that he will need to take a little money with him. Kiroku says, *maa, sore wa kantan na koto denna, chotto tatekaete* (well, that's easy enough, just lend me the money). Jinbei reluctantly agrees, but adds that he will need to put down some information about the deceased, such as its *kaimyō* (posthumous Buddhist name) and date of passing. The dog does not have a *kaimyō*, so they go with its *zokumyō* (secular name), *Kuro* (Black). The serious business of preparing offertory money for a temple trip during higan provides Kiroku with further opportunities to make moronic yet amusing comments. As if thinking he needs to make his own display of far-reaching knowledge, Kiroku launches a discourse on the meaning of a few waka poems. This backfires, but his ulterior motive—to nag the disinclined Jinbei into making the trip with him to Shitennōji—is not without fruit.

KIROKU: Hey, you know, Ono no Komachi
said something smart: We are but a
lamplight before the wind.
Lamplight before the wind, a flame in

KIROKU: *Ono no Komachi onnen kedo, ii
koto iimashita de: Ningen wa fūzen no
tomoshihi, desu to.
Fūzen no tomoshibi to wa kaze no mae*

⁵¹ *Inudōgane* (lit. dog-guiding bell), a play on *indōgane* (requiem bell).

⁵² This and subsequent *Tennōji mairi* excerpts are taken from a 1997 telling by Katsura Bunshi V. *CD bukku: Eikō no Kamigata rakugo CD 8: Hanairo moen, Tennōji mairi, Tachigire*. Asahi Hōsō Rajio/Kadokawa Magajinzu PCDZ-2029, 2008.

the wind, never sure if tomorrow will come—is this my end?⁵³

Ikkyū knew that Ono no Komachi was a woman and therefore patient:

If we are lamplight in the wind, there is no talk of tomorrow. No certainty of now—is this my end?

And what did Gokaisan say? (*Chanting in dramatic crescendo*):

Transient cherry blossoms longing for tomorrow, should a storm come in the night, all that remains are prayers to A-mi-da!

JINBEI: Don't lecture me, you stooge! (*To himself*) All he can say are things to make people angry. Fine, I guess I'm going to have to go, led by an ox to the temple Zenkōji.⁵⁴

KIROKU: Ha-ha, and a dog is leading me to the temple Shitennōji, right?

JINBEI: This guy's got a comeback for everything!

no hi, asu o mo shirenu mi no owari ka na.

Ikkyūsan ga, Ono no Komachi wa onna de ki ga nagai:

Fūzen no tomoshibi nara, asu o mo dokoro ya nai. Ima mo shirenu mi no owari ka na.

Gokaisan ga nan to osshatta? (Chanting in dramatic crescendo):

Asu aru to omou kokoro no adazakura, yowa ni arashi no fukanu mono ka ya, tada Namu Amida Butsu!

JINBEI: *Sonna toko de hōdan sunna. Aho ya na. (To himself) Hito no ki warunaru yō na koto bakkari yūn ya koitsu wa. Shanai, kō nan yattara, maa, ushi ni hikarete Zenkōji mairi ya wa.*

KIROKU: *Haha, wate wa na, inu ni hikarete Tennōji mairi denna.*

JINBEI: *Kakeai de shabeteru koitsu wa.*

And so the two are on their way to Shitennōji, but not before Kiroku borrows a *haori* (jacket) and tells Jinbei to bring along a little extra cash for their outing.

The next scene, a tour of the sights in the neighborhood just west of Shitennōji and the temple grounds, also makes this story stand out as a Kamigata piece. I have written elsewhere

⁵³ This appears to be a variant of *Inochi wa fūzen no tomoshibi no gotoshi* (life is like a flame before the wind), in the Chinese Buddhist text *Fa lüan chu lin* (Jpn. *Hōon jurin*, Forest of Pearls in the Garden of the Law, 668). I have not been able to connect this or the subsequent verse to Komachi. Her only poems vaguely resembling these are *Akikaze ni au tanomi koso kanashikere wa ga mi munashiku narinu to omoeba* (I longed to meet the autumn wind and was left as an empty husk of rice, *Kokinshū* 822) and, *Wa ga mi koso aranu ka to nomi tadorarure tōbeki hito ni wasurareshi yori* (I wonder if I am even still part of this world now that I have been forgotten by my love, *Shinkokinshū* 1405). Tsurayuki (e.g., *KKS* 838) and other poets have used the phrase *asu shiranu wa ga mi* (I, who may not live to know tomorrow).

⁵⁴ This is a reference to the allegory about a woman who is led to Zenkōji (and salvation) by an ox, which hooks some of her laundry on its horn and is startled when she chases after it. Utagawa Kuniyoshi parodied this in *Ushi ni hikarete Zenkōji mairi* (Led by an Ox to the Temple Zenkōji), a print in the series *Dōke jūnishi* (Comic Twelve Zodiac Animals, 1855).

that *tabibanashi*, like various travel media, served as a guide to what might be encountered on trips in early modern Japan. *Tabibanashi* were humorous, but also spoke to the commoner class of the varied geographical and cultural landscapes that surrounded them.⁵⁵ The characters and their actions are usually comically outlandish, but places and historical matter described stand as credible. *Tennōji mairi* is no different. Jinbei does his best to educate Kiroku along the way, but is forced to dig into his younger friend time and again because he always has something ridiculous to say.

The protagonists walk south down the street Gappōgasuji (today called Matsuyamachisuji) and make their way through an area called Shitaderamachi (lit. lower temple town). The area is full of temples and monks walk busily to and fro. As Jinbei and Kiroku approach a large intersection, the former points out the Shinsekai amusement area and its centerpiece tower, Tsūtenkaku.⁵⁶ They turn left and pass the temple Isshinji and shrine Yasui Tenjin as they approach Shitennōji to the east. Soon they arrive at the famous entrance gate called Ishi no Torii (Stone Gateway). Jinbei points out that Ishi no Torii is one of the Nippon no Santorii (Japan's three great gateways), which include Kane no Torii (Bronze Gateway) at the temple Kinpusenji in Yoshino and Kusu no Torii (Camphor Tree Gateway) at Miyajima in Aki.⁵⁷ Before entering the temple grounds, Jinbei gives Kiroku a lesson about Shitennōji's famous *torii*, its framed *gaku* (inscription), and the immediate vicinity. This subject matter is too complicated

⁵⁵ Matthew W. Shores, "Travel and *Tabibanashi* in the Early Modern Period: Forming Japanese Geographic Identity," *Asian Theatre Journal* 25, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 107.

⁵⁶ Shinsekai (lit. new world) was established in 1912. Creators used New York City as the model for its southern half and Paris for its north. Needless to say, mention of this place could not have been included in the story prior to the Taishō era.

⁵⁷ All of these have been named *jūyō bunkazai* (important cultural properties) by the Japanese government. Kusu no Torii, more commonly known as Shutan no Ōtorii (Great Vermillion Gateway), is part of Itsukushima Shrine, named a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1996.

for Kiroku, so he responds with jokes. This is how the tour continues for the rest of the story. Jinbei gives Kiroku a remarkably detailed tour, and it is funny to listeners that this is all but wasted. The tour is meant more for the audience, however. This is one of the ‘get more for your money’ parts of this Kamigata classic.

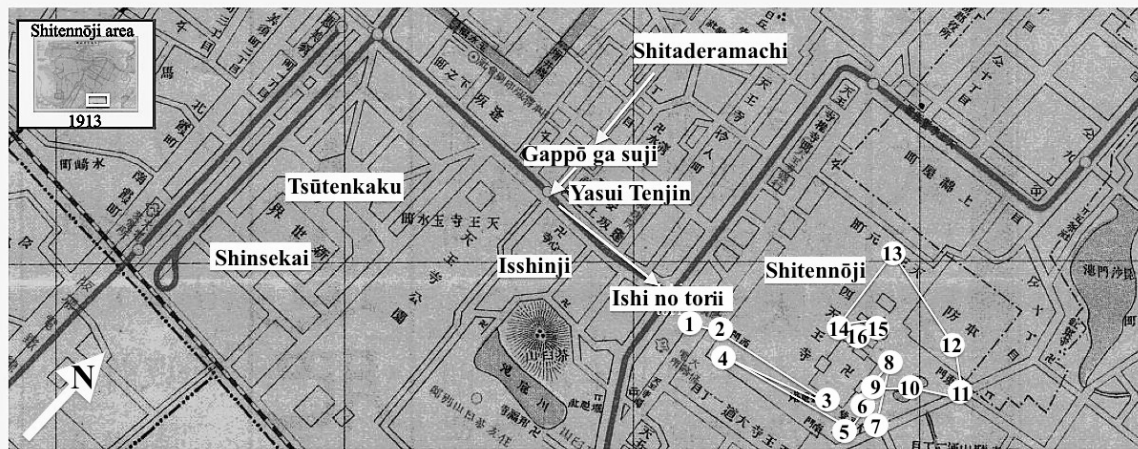


Figure 4.1. *Tennōji mairi* course: south from Shitaderamachi, east from Gappōgasuji to Shitennoji. Map detail from Gotō Shichirōemon’s *Osaka shigai zenzu* (Complete Map of Osaka, 1913). Courtesy of the East Asian Library at University of California, Berkeley. Course marks are by the author.

The *Tennōji mairi* course is numbered in chronological order on the map detail above (see Figure 4.1). At the temple, Kiroku and Jinbei make stops at, or at least mention, the following:

- 1) Nōkotsudō columbarium
- 2) West Gate and *rinbōwa* (Dharma wheel)
- 3) Gojū no tō (five-story pagoda) and Niō guardian statues near the South Gate
- 4) Kamiko-san (formally known as Mantōin [lit. temple of ten thousand lamps])
- 5) Tora no mon (Tiger Gate), Taishi no indōgane (Shōtoku Taishi requiem bell), and Neko no mon (Cat Gate)
- 6) Yōmeiden (Yōmei Pavillion)
- 7) Shigetssan (Shigetsuan Hermitage) and statue of Shōtoku Taishi at age 16
- 8) Kameisui Fountain
- 9) Ussan (Goōson Ox enshrinement, also called Ichigamidō)
- 10) Hyōtan ike (Gourd Pond)
- 11) East Gate
- 12) Other structures including the Kuginashidō, Honbō, and Shakadō
- 13) Ōtsurigane (Great Hanging Bell)

- 14) Ashigata no ishi (Foot-Shaped Stone) and Kagami no ike (Mirror Pond)
- 15) Reijin no mai no dai (court music and dance stage, also known as Ishi butai) and Kame no ike (Turtle Pond, also known as Hasu ike)
- 16) Kitashōdō (the Northern Belfry, formally called Ōshikirō, which houses the bell that Kiroku wishes to ring for Kuro)

Selected locations are given special attention. One good example is the stop at Kame no ike, an interesting place to visit on the grounds because, true to its name, it is a pond with countless turtles swimming around and sunbathing. Kiroku is interested in seeing this place, but, instead of simply asking where it is, he sings an old children's song about it so loudly that templegoers gather and laugh at him:

Turtles in Tennōji's Lotus Pond
 Sun their shells and eat gobies
 Ring the indōgane bell
 Ding-a-ding-a-dong!

*Tennōji no Hasuike ni
 Kame ga kō hosu, haze taberu
 Indōgane gon to tsukya
 Hohorai no hoi!*

Kiroku is so caught up in his performance that he fails to see that the pond is right in front of him. The embarrassed Jinbei chastises him, *omae ga warawarette iru chū no wa, washi mo warawarette iru* (if people are laughing at you, they're also laughing at me). Thoroughly impressed by the number of turtles in the pond, Kiroku suggests that they walk around to the other side where most of them are gathered together. Jinbei informs him that the turtles will come if he claps his hands at them—they are trained to come for food. Kiroku claps his hands and is delighted when they swim his way. Unfortunately he has nothing to reward them with. He shouts from excitement when he thinks they are dancing for him. Jinbei corrects him with a jab—they are not dancing, after all, they are begging for food. Scenes like this are funny yet believable.

Tennōji mairi is celebrated for its energy and variety. The stops in the story are all real ones, but hanashika are not required to follow a set course. What hanashika present, and in what

order, is up to them. As with other tabibanashi, this story can easily be cut short or extended as needed. There is a good deal of room for artistic choice, which explains the many different versions told in Kamigata. *Tennōji mairi* remains one of the more difficult stories in the repertoire for its inclusion of so much cultural and historical information. Some hanashika feel pressure to be accurate as they know the occasional rakugo *otaku* (fanatic—most of whom would prefer the term *tsū* [connoisseur, aficionado]) will be inclined to check the facts.⁵⁸ Indeed, a number of rakugo fans have taken their own trips to Shitennōji, followed similar routes, taken pictures, and posted findings on their blogs.⁵⁹

As mentioned in Chapter Three, there is another show within the show in *Tennōji mairi*.

This is the presentation of the various stalls offering food, souvenirs, and entertainment:

NARRATOR: During higan, street vendors bring out their wares, poor monks solicit offerings, and temple goers push their way through the crowd.

INCENSE VENDOR: Incense! (*Hayashi ensemble begins playing Zen*).⁶⁰

NARRATOR: There are all kinds of stalls set up here and there. Ah, the one shouting loudly doing business on one end is a sushi maker.

NARRATOR: *Higanjū wa, butchake akindo ga mise o dashiteru yara, shinbō ga deteiru yara. Sankeinin de oshiai heishiai.*

INCENSE VENDOR: *Ohyōkō!* (*Hayashi ensemble begins playing Zen*).

NARRATOR: *Iron na mise ga gyōsan ni dete orimashite, hitokiwa ōkii na koe de shōbai shiten no ga nigirizushiyan desu na.*

⁵⁸ Personal communication, 2010-12. All interviews were confidential; the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.

⁵⁹ Two examples are “*Tennōji mairi o kikinagara, Shitennōji-san o aruku*” (Walking Around Shitennōji While Listening to *Tennōji mairi*), *Rakugo nikki* (Rakugo Diary, anonymous blogger), accessed January 19, 2014, <http://rakugo.cocolog-nifty.com/blog/2011/05/post-181a.html>; and Tōsen Shinsokusai’s “‘*Tennōji mairi*’ de *Shitennōji sankei*” (A Shitennōji Pilgrimage with *Tennōji mairi*), *Shinsokusai tōki* (Shinsokusai’s Log), accessed January 19, 2014, <http://sinsokusaitouki.wordpress.com/2013/11/18/4ten-2/>.

⁶⁰ *Zen* is played throughout this scene. There are at least three versions of this song, played in several Kamigata stories. It is based on the piece *Zen no tsutome aikata* (The Work of Zen Aikata), which is also used for temple scenes in kabuki. The version used for *Tennōji mairi* is also thought to be inspired by *Misemonobayashi* (Misemono Hayashi), another kabuki song. Hayashiya, *Yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1, 171.

SUSHI VENDOR: (*Pressing various kinds of sushi in quick sequence*) Here now, freshly pressed, deliciously fresh-pressed sushi! Yes indeed, freshly squeezed sushi, right here! Edo-style sushi, quick sushi! How 'bout these, right here? (*Repeats a few times*) A-CHOO! (*Sneezes into hand holding sushi*)

NARRATOR: Straight from his nose, he presses it right into the sushi! And looking in another direction...

TAKEGOMA: Our house, the originator of the bamboo top! *U-u-u-uu* (*sound of top spinning wildly*). Our house, the originator of the bamboo top! *U-u-u-uu*.

NARRATOR: And look over there, it's a circus! The barker shouts in front of a large curtain that says they've travelled to some far-off country in the West.

CIRCUS BARKER: Here you go, step right up, the trapeze act is about to begin!

NARRATOR: (*Humming the waltz Uruwashiki tennen [Beautiful Nature]*)⁶¹ "La, ladee da daa, ladee da," the music plays. Look in that direction and you can see the peep box!

NOZOKI KARAKURI: (*Striking out rhythm with bamboo stick [fan], singing ardently*) "In Tokyo, the greatest of the three cities, a brave man soon to set sail, drifted in futile love, with miss Kataoka Namiko, first daughter of army Lieutenant General Viscount Kataoka..."⁶²

SUSHI VENDOR: (*Pressing various kinds of sushi in quick sequence*) Ora, oshitatte, mai no oshitatte, mai na oi! Ora, nigiritatte, mai no nigiritatte, mai na oi! Ora, Edozushi jai na, hayazushi jai na! Konnan dō jai na, konnan dō jai na! (*Repeats a few times*) HAKUSHON! (*Sneezes into hand holding sushi*)

NARRATOR: *Hana no! Hana made nigitteoru! Kotchi no hō o mimasu tokoro wa mata...*

TAKEGOMA: *Honke wa takegomaya de gozai... U-u-u-uu* (*sound of top spinning wildly*). *Honke wa takegomaya de gozai... U-u-u-uu*.

NARRATOR: *Mukō no hō o mimasu to, sōkasu desu na. Nani nani yōkō to donchō ni kaitan o tsuriyotte kyaku o yobikomi shiteoru.*

CIRCUS BARKER: *Saa, irahai, irahai, tadaima kūchū sōkasu no hajimarii!*

NARRATOR: (*Humming the waltz Uruwashiki tennen [Beautiful Nature]*) "Chii tachi ta taa, chii ta ta chi..." *tte yattoru. Mukō no hō o mimasu tokoro, nozoki karakuri denna.*

NOZOKI KARAKURI: (*Striking out rhythm with bamboo stick [fan], singing ardently*) "Eei! Sanpu no ichi no Tokyo de, nami ni tadayō masurao ga, hakanai koi ni tadayoi shi, chichi wa rikugun chūjō de, Kataoka shijaku no chōjo ni te, sono na Kataoka Namikojō..."

⁶¹ Composed by Tanaka Hozumi (1855-1904) with lyrics by Takeshima Hageromo (1872-1967), this 1902 piece was regularly played at Japanese circuses. This waltz reminds one of Juventino Rojas's *Sobre las Olas* (Over the Waves, 1888), also a popular circus song.

⁶² This is a nozoki karakuri version of *Hototogisu* (The Cuckoo), Tokutomi Roka's (1868-1927) bestselling novel about two lovers poignantly torn apart by tuberculosis and the modern ideology of lineage. Ken K. Ito discusses this novel in detail in "The Family and the Nation in Tokutomi Roka's *Hototogisu*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 60, No. 2

PASSERBY: I know that one!

NARRATOR: And so they carry on. Look that way and you can see a humble beggar.

He places a tenugui on his head and sits his child down next to him.

KOJIKI: (*Singing emotionally, almost screeching, rings a bell [partially open fan held upside down] and scratches at neck*) “With obedient reverence, the tale of Jizō and the Children’s Limbo!” (*To child*) Don’t be crying, I’m going to get the alms now, ain’t I? Just wait a sec’. (*Scratching more intensely, sings*) “Lay one stone for father, stack another...” (*Picks louse off neck*) Wow, this sucker’s big! *Squish!* (*continues singing*) “That one’s for mother...”⁶³

NARRATOR: He’s singing a song in praise of Jizō and killing Kannon at the same time!⁶⁴

PASSERBY: *Soryra wakaruru de!*

NARRATOR: *Tte yattoru. Mukō no hō o mimasu tokoro, okojikisan deshite ne. Atama e tenugui noseotte kara ni, kodomo yokote ni suwarashite...*

KOJIKI: (*Singing emotionally, almost screeching, rings a bell [partially open fan held upside down] and scratches at neck*) “*Kimyō chōrai Jizōsan, Sai no kawara no monogatari!*” (*To child*) *Naiten ya arahen ga, ima mōtaru ya nai kai, chotto machinahare.* (*Scratching more intensely, sings*) “*Hitotsu tsunde wa, chichi no tame! Futatsu tsunde wa...*” (*Picks a louse off neck*) *Ōkii yatcha na, kore! Puchi!* “*Haha no tame...*”

NARRATOR: *Kotchi gawa de goeika agete, kotchi gawa de Kannonsan koroshiteoru.*

Other contemporary versions of *Tennōji mairi* sometimes include different attractions, such as a booth with Kameyama no Chonbeihan bamboo ‘action figures’, or extended presentations of activities at the sushi and nozoki karakuri stalls. One might wonder why this lively scene, which has absolutely nothing to do with the story proper, is included. It is simply extra service, a lively scene added for the pleasure of the audience. Although the transition is not the best, the scene brings vivid color to the temple grounds. It is parallel to numerous other stories’ extended merchant scenes that introduce the idiosyncrasies of employees—it is part of Kamigata rakugo’s realism. It also gives audiences a look into the past—as if looking through a lens of a nozoki karakuri box—to a time when street entertainers and vendors still captured the

(Dec., 2000): 489-536, and in his book *An Age of Melodrama: Family, Gender, and Social Hierarchy in the Turn-of-the-Century Japanese Novel* (Stanford University Press, 2008).

⁶³ This is a section of the Buddhist song *Sai no kawara Jizō wasan* (Hymn of Praise to Jizō on the Banks of the River Styx).

⁶⁴ Lice were popularly associated with the *Senju Kannon* (Thousand-armed Kannon) because the shape of the former magnified resembles that of the latter.

heart of the masses. Finally, this show within the show makes *Tennōji mairi* more musical and *hade*.

Following the story break, listeners are brought quickly back to religious from secular. The story's protagonists are now in front of the North Belfry, home of the bell that Kiroku wishes to ring for Kuro. They enter, but Jinbei has to remind Kiroku why they are even there. With comically little reverence, he hands the monk his money offering with the names of the deceased—his father's name is listed *after* Kuro's. Audiences can hardly help laughing when Kiroku is paired with the venerable monk. Without delay, the monk gets started with the rite. He recites sutras with reverence and reads Kiroku's prayer request with close attention.

It is important in this scene that the hanashika is able to perform a somewhat believable monk. The more convincing the presentation is, the more it adds to the comedy of the scene. This scene is an opportunity for the hanashika to exhibit her/his cultivation and narrative skills, too. While chanting as the monk, her/his voice goes between diaphragm-propelled bass notes and high-pitched droning:

Gan ga shin jo nyo kō ro
Gan ga shin nyo chie ka
Nen nen bon jō kai jō kō
Kuyō jippō sanze bu
Issai kyōkei, Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu...

Pray our bodies be as pure as an incense pot
Pray our hearts be as pure as the flame of wisdom
Aspiring to observe Buddhist precepts and attain tranquility of mind, we humbly offer
incense
Worshiping in the ten directions of the universe over the three periods of time,⁶⁵ with
utmost reverence, *Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu...*

⁶⁵ This is a slightly altered version of the translation of the incense offering prayer (*kōge*) available on “Daily Prayer,” Jodo Shu (*sic*) North America Buddhist Missions, accessed January 19, 2014, <http://english.jodoshuna.org/prayer/daily-prayer/>.

After the first toll, for which the hanashika issues a powerful bass *boo-uoo-uoo-uoon*, Jinbei points out that it sounds like Kuro's voice. They listen to the *boo-uoo-uoo-uoon* of the second toll and Kiroku is overcome with emotion. He is sure that his dog is trying to communicate with him through the bell. It is a droll yet touching reunion. Kiroku begs the monk to allow him to ring the bell and the monk kindly agrees. Up to this point, listeners have been treated to impressive sutra chanting, powerful bell tolls, and have witnessed a happy (if imagined) reunion with the departed. Now is the perfect time to end the story quickly in classic rakugo fashion. Kiroku strikes the bell with all his might, but is only able to make it give off a shabby *KWAAN!*—the same sound Kuro made when he was beaten by the neighborhood children. Defending his shabby strike, Kiroku ends the story with the same line from earlier: *mugessho ni wa dotsuken mon denna* (I could never strike him so cruelly).

A. Tennōji mairi in the Past

There is a story in Anrakuan Sakuden's *Seisuishō* (1623-28) that reads the same as the opening exchange between Kiroku and Jinbei. Like Kiroku, a character in Sakuden's story naively concludes that a weasel is called *higan* when his friend tells him not to kill it (as it is *higan*). Jippensha Ikku wrote a book titled *Saiken kenbutsu Tennōji mairi* (Viewing the Reconstruction Project: Pilgrimage to Shitennōji, 1814, 3 vols.) and Katsura Bunji included the story *Shitennōji annai denki* (Account of a Shitennōji Guide) in his hanashibon *Otoshibanashi Katsura no hana* (vol. 2, ca. 1804-18), so it is clear that pilgrimages to Shitennōji were being taken up in popular literature in the early nineteenth century. In Bunji's story, a hired guide gives an *inaka mono* (country bumpkin) a tour of the Shitennōji complex. The only components this story shares with *Tennōji mairi* are the temple tour and presence of two characters—one smart

and one dumb—but it is still conceivable that this may be an early form of today’s Kamigata rakugo story.

There is a story in the 1861 *Fūryū mukashibanashi* titled *Hōebanashi* (Buddhist Memorial Service Story), which could also be an early version of *Tennōji mairi*. The comment next to the title reads *mata soto ni iroiro kore ari* (also includes various things outside). As Katsura Beichō has pointed out, this could refer to a number of stories now told in the Kamigata repertoire.⁶⁶ Of course, the most famous of these is *Tennōji mairi*, which is set during higan and has a lively tour of booths outside. *Tennōji*, presumably the same story as *Tennōji mairi*, is listed as a *chū neta* on the late-Meiji *Naniwa San’yū-ha rakugo endai shū*.⁶⁷ *Tennōji meisho*, also likely to be the same story, is listed as *gyōji* next to three other story titles written in large characters on both *Rakugo endai mitate banzuke* and *Osaka rakugo endai mitate banzuke*.⁶⁸

Tennōji mairi is celebrated as an *ie gei* (house specialty) of the Shōfukutei line because men with the name Shokaku have been specializing in this story since the turn of the twentieth century. The earliest audio recordings of *Tennōji mairi* appear to have been done by Shōfukutei Kōkaku II (later Shikaku II and Shokaku V [Orient A1401-2, ca. 1912-16]) and his master, Shōfukutei Shokaku IV (1869-1942 [recorded as *Tennōji meisho*, Naigai 1051-2, ca. 1924-30]).⁶⁹ The recording by the former reveals that he was not only a talented storyteller with great timing, but was also an expert guide of the sites at Shitennōji. His impersonations of the barkers at various stalls, too, were thoroughly entertaining and believable. He was a true master of the loquacious narrative technique *tateben* and, like *hanashika* today, he incorporated music during

⁶⁶ Katsura Beichō, “*Fūryū mukashibanashi*,” 93-4.

⁶⁷ Hoshi, *Kamigata rakugo kōkyū*, 180.

⁶⁸ *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei*, vol. 8, 374.

⁶⁹ Miyakoya, *Rakugo rekōdo hachijūnenshi*, vol. 1, 85, 134.

the booth scene.⁷⁰ Not surprisingly, *Tennōji mairi* became Shokaku V's *ohako no ohako* (masterpiece of masterpieces). In fact, his contemporaries would refrain from performing this story if he was appearing in the same line-up. Some hanashika occasionally performed it when he was not around, and a few did well at it, but it was never received as enthusiastically as Shokaku V's.⁷¹

A transcript of Shokaku V's *Tennōji mairi* appeared in the March 1937 issue of *Kamigata hanashi*.⁷² It is remarkable how little the story has changed since publication. Katsura Bunshi V, who learned the story from Shokaku V, told a nearly identical version. Shōfukutei Kakushi (1955-), who learned the story from Shokaku VI, also tells a version similar to Shokaku V's. There have been a few puns and scenes cut (or shortened), doubtless because they no longer received the laughs they once did, or because audiences no longer know (or care) about the subject matter therein. Some jokes about diseases (e.g., *kaku* [cancer] and *rinbyō* [gonorrhea]) that are no longer considered to be in good taste are now usually left out, too, depending on the performer.

In most contemporary versions, Jinbei scolds Kiroku for singing the childish turtle song and drawing a crowd. There is a bit immediately after this in Shokaku V's 1937 version that has since been cut:

KIROKU: Turtles love to drink, don't they?
The other day I gave a turtle some soft-shell turtle *sake*.
JINBEI: Hey, stop spouting off things that

KIROKU: *Kame, sakezuki danna. Ate sendo, suppon no sake, kame ni nomashita.*
JINBEI: *Kore, omae wa wake no wakaran mono no iikatta o suru na, suppon no*

⁷⁰ Wahha Kamigata, cassette spT147-A (this is a cassette copy of the album recording). There is a possibility that this cassette is a copy of a later (early Shōwa) LP recording (Kokka 8242-3).

⁷¹ Tsuyu no Gorō, *Godaime Shōfukutei Shokaku shū* (Tokyo: Seiabō, 1971), 362.

⁷² Shōfukutei Shokaku V, ed., *Kamigata hanashi*, vol. 1 (1936-40; repr., Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, 1971-2), 192-200.

make no sense at all. What do you mean you gave a turtle soft-shell turtle *sake*?

KIROKU: You're the one who doesn't get it! You see, I gave a turtle some *sake* that was in a *sake* jug called a *suppon*!

JINBEI: If that's the case, just say so. I didn't get it because you said you gave it soft-shell turtle *sake*.

KIROKU: I poured *sake* into a cup, and put it to its mouth. The turtle jutted out his little jaw like this, and was really drunk!

JINBEI: Why do you have to carry on about things like that?

KIROKU: It left a little bit in its cup and started walking away. So I blasted him, "Hey, how rude of you to leave *sake* in your cup! Now you drink it up!" And he replied, "Even with you doing the pouring, there's no way I can drink more than my shell will hold."

JINBEI: Hey, let's cut it with the *niwaka*.

KIROKU: Isn't there something we can feed these guys?

JINBEI: There, in front of you, feed them some of those gobies.

KIROKU: I didn't know these were in here. Okay, let's use these. There you go, eat all you like!

JINBEI: Hey! How much are you going to give them? It's one *sen* per serving!

KIROKU: What, do I need to pay for these?

JINBEI: My, you're a gullible idiot.

sake, kame ni nomashita te nan ya.

KIROKU: *Anata ga, wakaran hito ya, suppon to iu, sake o ireru mono, sono naka no sake o kame ni nomashita no dasu.*

JINBEI: *Sonnara, sō ii na, supponzake kame ni to yū kara, wakaran no ya.*

KIROKU: *Sakazuki ni sake o tsuide, kame no kuchi no tokoro e motte iku to, kame kō mijikai otogai o tsukidashite, yoppodo meitei!*

JINBEI: *Nan no sonna koto o yū kai na.*

KIROKU: *Sukoshi sakazuki ni nokoshite mukō e ikimasu no de, "Oi sonna gyōgi no warui, sake o nokoshite, mina nonde shimai" to se kara kaketara, "Sō susumete morōtemo, kō no ue wa nomemahen."*

JINBEI: *Kore, sonna niwaka o shinai na.*

KIROKU: *Nanzo yaru mono ga nai kai na.*

JINBEI: *Omae no mae ni haze ga aru, sore o yari.*

KIROKU: *Konna mono ga aru no o shirananda, sore yaro, nanbo na to kue kue, sore yaro.*

JINBEI: *Kore, nanbo yaru ne, ippai issen ya de.*

KIROKU: *Aa, kore okane ga irimasu ka.*

JINBEI: *Aa iu aho ya ga na.*

Perhaps this section was cut because there is now little tolerance for cruelty to animals—especially cute ones. Or, perhaps one dog being bludgeoned in the story was figured to be more than enough. Seeing Kiroku feed the turtles is heartwarming, but it is arguably more comical if he is simply not given the chance.

Shokaku V sang a long section from a *nozoki karakuri* piece featuring towns and specialties to be found along the Tōkaidō. He also did a *nozoki karakuri* rendition of the *jōruri*

play *Katsuragawa renri no shigarami* (The Unbreachable Vow at Katsuragawa, 1776),⁷³ and drew out the ending longer than is usually done today. In Shokaku V's final scene, Kiroku tries to be as 'Buddhist' as possible as he readies himself to ring the requiem bell for Kuro. He does his best (beggar) priest impression and tries to repeat the prayers the Shitennōji monk just chanted, but fails miserably. Shokaku V's *ochi* is worded somewhat differently, but is essentially the same: *KWAAN! Aa, mugessho ni naguren mon ya na* (I could never hit him so cruelly).

San'yūtei Hyakushō II memorized *Tennōji mairi* around 1914, after hearing Shokaku IV's version. He returned to Osaka just to have Shokaku IV's pupil, Tsuruko I, help him perfect it. Hyakushō admitted that it was a difficult story to perform and that there were consequently parts that he could not help cutting. For example, he did away with the *nozoki karakuri* sections and most of the temple tour. He also cut all of the booths, at least for a version that he published in 1960.⁷⁴ To make up for this cut, he adapted other material; the sneezing sushi maker and a Suntory whiskey pun on Nippon no Santorii were apparently his ideas.⁷⁵ Hyakushō doubtless cut important Kamigata parts out to please Tokyo audiences—the extended, extraordinarily real/daily actions popular in Kamigata rakugo were not prevalent in Tokyo. There was too much regionalism at work.

The Kamigata Rakugo Association edited a Kamigata rakugo anthology in 1975 and one of the stories was Shokaku VI's *Tennōji mairi*.⁷⁶ After close inspection, one can see that this is actually a reformatted version of the story his father had published almost forty years earlier in

⁷³ A *sewamono* play written by Suga Sensuke. Namiki Gohei revised this play for the kabuki stage in 1784.

⁷⁴ Yoshikawa Yoshio, Andō Tsuruo, eds., *Rakugo meisaku zenshū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Futsūsha, 1960), 23-36.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 24-5.

⁷⁶ Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai, ed., *Koten rakugo*, vol. 10, *Kamigata hanashi* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1975), 21-46.

Kamigata hanashi. In Shokaku VI's live performances of *Tennōji mairi*, however, he often changed these or left them out all together.⁷⁷ This implies that the rakugo that hanashika publish in books may not always be the rakugo that they themselves perform on stage. It also indicates that people continue to feel that Shokaku V's *Tennōji mairi* was unbeatable.

IV. *Kusshami kōshaku* (The Sneezing Narrator of War Tales)

Alternative titles: *Kushami kōshaku*, *Kusame kōshaku*, *Kushami kōdan*, *Kushami gidayū* (The Sneezing Jōruri Chanter)⁷⁸

Characters: Kiroku, Seihachi, greengrocer, kōshaku hall staff, and kōshaku master Gotō Issan

Kiroku has a grudge against the kōshaku master Gotō Issan. When the former was talking to his love interest, the latter interrupted and ruined Kiroku's chances. Wanting revenge, Kiroku goes to Seihachi's house to ask for help with devising a good plan. Seihachi suggests that he try to interfere with Issan's kōshaku by burning *koshō* (pepper) over hibachi coals and fanning the smoke at him in the middle of his show.⁷⁹ Kiroku goes to buy some *koshō*, but the greengrocer is sold out. He buys *tōgarashi* (chili pepper) instead. As planned, once the smoke from the *tōgarashi* enters Issan's nose he is unable to continue. He apologizes to the audience and tells them that they may pick up free tickets for tomorrow's show on their way out. Kiroku and Seihachi stay behind to curse at Issan. When Issan asks if they have *koshō* (a problem,

⁷⁷ “*Tennōji mairi* Shōfukutei Shokaku VI,” You Tube, accessed March 14, 2014, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_X5oqgsAyEo.

⁷⁸ I refer to the story as *Kusshami kōshaku* throughout this section for the sake of consistency. It should be noted that the title often varies, even with the same teller.

⁷⁹ Hibachi, tobacco trays, and cushions could be rented for a nominal fee in the *seki* of yesteryear. Food and drinks were also available for purchase.

homonymous with pepper) with him, Kiroku replies with the following line, which is the *ochi* of the story: *koshō nakatta kara tōgarashi o kubeta* (we didn't have *koshō*, so we used *tōgarashi*).

Kusshami kōshaku is a Kamigata story, but it has also been performed in Tokyo for many years. The hayashi ensemble does not play any music for this story, but, as we learned in Chapter Three, there are a few shows within the show. As Katsura Beichō has pointed out, the inclusion of various *gei* in this story makes it a difficult one to perform—*Kusshami kōshaku* is not simple enough for *kikioboe* (memorization by [simply] listening).⁸⁰

The first show within the show is a section of the *nozoki karakuri Yaoya Oshichi*, a *shibaimono* (theater piece). Today this particular version of *Yaoya Oshichi* cannot be heard anywhere else, so the Kamigata version serves as a receptacle of sorts for an intangible cultural asset.⁸¹ The *Yaoya Oshichi* bit is included in *Kusshami kōshaku* for the simple reason that it serves as a mnemonic that is supposed to help Kiroku remember that he is going to the greengrocer to buy pepper.⁸² Oshichi's love interest in the story is, after all, the *koshō* (page, another pepper homonym) Kichiza.⁸³ The plan seems foolproof, but Kiroku is no common fool. By the time he arrives at the greengrocer's, predictably, he has forgotten what he came to buy, and so begins the first show within the show:

GREENGROCER: Just tell me what it is you
want.

KIROKU: Now what am I going to do? I've

GREENGROCER: *Shinamono namae*
yūtokunahare.

KIROKU: *Nani ya na, koko made kite dō suru.*

⁸⁰ Katsura Beichō, *Kamigata rakugo: Katsura Beichō korekushon*, vol. 7 (Tokyo: Chikuma Bunko, 2003), 145.

⁸¹ Katsura Shijaku, *Kamigata rakugo: Katsura Shijaku bakushō korekushon*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2005), 35. Mita Jun'ichi also writes that this is a *Kamigata tokuyū no* (markedly Kamigata) *nozoki karakuri*. Mita Jun'ichi, ed., *Kamigata hanashi*, vol. 3, *Bessatsu kaisetsu* (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, 1971-2), 111.

⁸² This is a motif that can be seen in *kyōgen*, too. Two examples are the plays *Himenori* (Rice Paste) and *Bunzō* (The Tricky Memory Trick).

⁸³ Kichiza is short for Kichisaburō.

come this far... There was a young girl
burned at the stake, remember?
 GREENGROCER: There was?
 KIROKU: Yeah, there was, the girl that was
set on fire. Back when Tokyo was called
Edo.
 GREENGROCER: I wasn't born yet.
 KIROKU: You're *that* old?
 GREENGROCER: Come on, don't be silly.
Who do you know that was born in the
Edo period?
 KIROKU: She was living back then, the girl
burned at the stake. You know, this one:
(*claps hands and belts out nozoki*
karakuri) **HOWAAI!**⁸⁴
 GREENGROCER: What's gotten into you!
 KIROKU: (*Claps again and continues*)
HOWAAI! She was pulled out of
Odenmachō,⁸⁵ (*clap*) **HOWAAI!** Her crime
posted on notice boards and paper
banners, (*clap*) **HOWAAI!** Taken by
constables and police, (*clap*) **HOWAAI!**
two sen worth please.
 GREENGROCER: Huh? I don't have any of
that here. This is a vegetable shop. You
must be mistaking this for a party hall.
 KIROKU: No, you have it here, I know it.
(*Clap*) **HOWAAI!**
 GREENGROCER: Again? Come on!
 KIROKU: Put on bareback horse, (*clap*)
SORE! She buries her face in her collar of
white. (*Clap*) Like a doll from Ningyōchō
(*clap*) **SORE!** Today will be her last at
Owarichō (*clap*) **HOWAAI!!** Okay, give
me two sen worth.
 GREENGROCER: Look, you're rambling on
like an idiot and now there's a big crowd
standing around. (*To passersby who have*
gathered to listen) Keep moving, keep
moving! I can't have people blocking up
the way like that. Come on, I can't do

Maekata hiaburi ni natta musumehan
otta na.
 GREENGROCER: *Sonna orimashita ka.*
 KIROKU: *Ottan ga na, hiaburi ni natta*
musumehan. Tokyo ga Edo to yūtta koro.
 GREENGROCER: *Umaretemahen.*
 KIROKU: *Omae, sonna toshi ka.*
 GREENGROCER: *Aho na koto yūna anta.*
Dare ga Edo jidai ni umaretemakkai na.
 KIROKU: *Sono koro orun ga na, hiaburi ni*
natta musume, hora konna: (claps hands
and belts out nozoki karakuri) **HOWAAI!**
 GREENGROCER: *Donnai shimashitan anta!*
 KIROKU: (*Claps again and continues*)
HOWAAI! *Odenmachō yori hiki dasare,*
(*clap*) **HOWAAI!** *Saki ni wa seisatsu,*
kami nobori, (clap) HOWAAI! *Dōshin*
yoriki o tomo ni tsure, (clap) HOWAAI!
Chūtte, kore nisen gan.
 GREENGROCER: *Sonna, uchi omahen anta.*
Koko yaoya dennen. Anta, enkaijō ka
dokka to machigōtte kimashita yaro.
 KIROKU: *Omae no toko ni anneya, sore ga.*
(*Clap*) **HOWAAI!**
 GREENGROCER: *Mata kai na, anata.*
 KIROKU: *Hadaka uma ni to noserarete, (clap)*
SORE! *Shiroi eri ni te kao kakusu. (Clap)*
Miru kage sugata ga Ningyōchō no,
(*clap*) **SORE!** *Kyō de inochi ga Owarichō*
no, (clap) HOWAAI! chūte, nisen gan.
 GREENGROCER: *Chotto, anta, aho na koto*
yū kara kuroyama no hitodakari ya nai.
(*To passersby who have gathered to*
listen) *Tōtokunahare, tōtokunahare!*
Sonna toko hito tomatatte shimōttara
komariman ga na. Shōbai dekehen ga na.

⁸⁴ The claps and shouts (written in capital letters) establish and keep the rhythm.

⁸⁵ There was once a prison at 1-chōme in Odenmachō.

business here. This fella? He's singing like this because he forgot what he came for. How much is he? Come on, he's not for sale! (To KIROKU) Hurry up and remember!

KIROKU: (Clap) HOWAAI!

GREENGROCER: Come on! Not again!

KIROKU: Bridge after bridge she crosses (clap) SORE! How sad is the Bridge of Tears. (Clap) Even courtesans run out to catch a glimpse at Shinagawa (clap) HOWAAI! Two sen.

GREENGROCER: (To people in crowd) Hey, no pushing! Watch the door, it's going to come off—great, you've knocked it off track. For the love of... hey bub, just where are you going? Hey you, don't put your feet up on the Chinese cabbage. That's for sale! Don't step on the daikon! You over there, get those potatoes out of your pocket! Take 'em out! You've still got onions in your other pocket. Hand 'em over! This is a mad house! Come on already! (To KIROKU) Dammit, remember!

KIROKU: (Clap) HOWAAI!

GREENGROCER: Oh, not again!

KIROKU: (Pitching the next act) Okay folks, next up, the famous execution grounds, Suzugamori! How about it, step right up!

GREENGROCER: This guy is really something else!

KIROKU: Hey greengrocer, I'm giving it all I got. Would you hurry up and remember what I'm performing here?

GREENGROCER: You're performing nozoki karakuri, aren't you?

KIROKU: I know it's karakuri! I'm asking you what karakuri it is that I'm supposed to be doing.

Ee? Kono osan? Shina wasure de kōnan shite koe dashitemannen. Kono otchan nan bo? Urimon to chau chūnen anta! (To KIROKU) Hayō, omoidashi!

KIROKU: (Clap) HOWAAI!

GREENGROCER: *Aa, mata kai na, anta!*

KIROKU: *Ima don don to wataru hashi, (clap) SORE! Kanashiganashi ga Namidabashi. (Clap) Shinagawa jorōshū mo tonde deru, (clap) HOWAAI! Nisen gan.*

GREENGROCER: (To people in crowd) *Oi, oshitara ikan! Oi, oshitara ikan. To ga, to ga hazureru wa. To ga hazureta ga na. Moo, kore kore, ossan, doko ni ikun, doko ni ikun? Anta, sonna, hakusai mon ni ashi noshitara ikan. Urimon, urimon, urimon! Daikon fundara ikan, daikon fundara ikan! Anta, futokoro kara jagaimo dashinahare, jagaimo dashinahare! Mukōgawa mada tamanegi haiteru ga na. Dashinahare! Moo, mutcha gutcha ya, honma ni moo! (To KIROKU) Omoidashi!*

KIROKU: (Clap) HOWAAI!

GREENGROCER: *Aa, mata kai na!*

KIROKU: (Pitching the next act) *Saa, kore yori kakaru to, tenka no shiokiba jai, Suzugamori ja, dōjai dōjajiii!*⁸⁶

GREENGROCER: *Nigiyaka na hito ya na, kono hito.*

KIROKU: *Yaoya, ore isshōkenmei yattennen. Nani yatteru ka omoidashite kurehen kai, hayō.*

GREENGROCER: *Anta yatten no, sore, nozoki karakuri ya.*

KIROKU: *Karakuri wakatteru wa. Ore ga ima yatteru kono karakuri, nan no karakuri ya chūnnen.*

⁸⁶ Some hanashika sing, in lieu of the barker's pitch, one more line of the nozoki karakuri: *Shichō, yohō wa takeyarai, HORYA! Naka ni tattaru hibashira no, te na, nisen gan* (Her world now a bamboo enclosure, *HORYA!* With a stake of fire at its center. Give me two sen of that). Katsura Beichō, *Beichō rakugo zenshū*, vol. 2, 238.

GREENGROCER: What karakuri? Like I said, nozoki karakuri.
 KIROKU: The title, the title!
 GREENGROCER: Title? Well, isn't it The Greengrocer's Daughter Ohichi?⁸⁷
 KIROKU: No, not Ohichi. It's not Ohichi... What is the name of Ohichi's lover, the man?
 GREENGROCER: Her lover? Well, that's the *koshō* Kichiza, of the temple Kichijōji in Komagome.
 KIROKU: (*Screams*) *Koshō!*
 GREENGROCER: You came to buy pepper? ... We're sold out.
 KIROKU: W-what!

GREENGROCER: *Hona, nan no karakuri to yutte, nozoki karakuri tte.*
 KIROKU: *Daime, daime!*
 GREENGROCER: *Daime, sore, tashika, Yaoya no Ohichi to chigaimakka.*
 KIROKU: *Ohichi chigau na. Ohichi chigau na... Ohichi no aite otoko wa nan to yū nen.*
 GREENGROCER: *Ohichi no aite no otoko yattara, Komagome Kichijōji, Koshō no Kichiza.*
 KIROKU: (*Screams*) *Koshō!*
 GREENGROCER: *Anta, koshō kai ni kinahatta? ... Urikire.*
 KIROKU: *Chotto matta!*⁸⁸

Kiroku takes so much time at the greengrocer's that it is almost evening by the time he returns to Seihachi's place. Without further delay, they head to the shakuba with *tōgarashi* in hand. They push their way through the crowd to find a place at the very front. They sit down on the *tatami* mat flooring and call for a hibachi to be brought over. Kiroku wonders if *tōgarashi* smoke will actually make someone sneeze, so he experiments with a small amount. He sprinkles the *tōgarashi* over the coals and waves the smoke toward Seihachi. As can be expected, it is pungent. Not long after this, Kiroku's real target, Issan, takes the stage:

ISSAN: (*Strikes shakudai several times, addresses audience*) It pleases me to no end that you have been so kind to arrive early. (*Multiple strikes*) The stories that I recite each evening may take us to islands, valleys, and far off places, but here we are

ISSAN: (*Strikes shakudai several times, addresses audience*) *Ohayabaya kara no otsumikake sama ni te, arigataki shiawase ni gozarimasu. (Multiple strikes) Maiyo yomi agemasuru tokoro wa izuku no shimajima tanidani tsutsu'uraura ni*

⁸⁷ Ohichi is Osaka dialect for Oshichi.

⁸⁸ This and subsequent *Kusshami kōshaku* excerpts are taken from a telling by Katsura Fukudanji IV. *Rakugo Katsura Harudanji (yondaime) Kusshami kōshaku*, Nikovideo Viewer, accessed December 19, 2013, <http://nicoviewer.net/sm8738635>. During his makura Fukudanji states that he has been performing rakugo for more than forty years, so this telling cannot date earlier than 2000.

once again deep in the tale of the Keichō and Genna battles at Nanba. (*Multiple strikes*) The year 1614 has come to an end and we are now at a gathering on the seventh day of the fifth month, 1615.⁸⁹ (*Multiple strikes*) In the thousand-mat hall at Osaka Castle, we find the honorable Minister of the Interior, Lord Hideyori. To his left, his noble mother, Yodogimi. Aides include Ōno Dōken, Shume, Shūrinosuke, and Kazuma. (*Multiple strikes*) Tactician and Third-rank Officer of the Left Division of Outer Palace Guards, Sanada Saemon Unnō Yukimura, and his son Daisuke Yukiyasu.⁹⁰ (*Multiple strikes*) Great heroes such as Lord of Nagato Kimura Shigenari, Junior Assistant to the Imperial Household Chōsokabe Hata Motochika,⁹¹ Imperial Guard Chief Susukida Kanesuke, and Gotō Matabei Mototsugu.⁹² (*Multiple strikes*) Generals of the seven armies, Lord of Tango Itō, Lord of Kai Hayami, and others in command of fortified blockades. Just as they voice concerns that it might be too late (*multiple strikes*), some 53,000 mounted troops from the Eastern Army approach. In the first Hour of the Dragon the troops rush toward the castle, and, in their midst...

SEIHACHI: (*Whispering*) Hey. What're you doing? What are you doing!

KIROKU: (*Pushing Seihachi away*) Shut up, will you? We're trying to listen to kōshaku here.

mairimashitemo, onajimi no fukaki tokoro, Keigen ryōdo Nanba no hanashi.
 (*Multiple strikes*) *Koro wa Keichō jūkunen no aiaratamari akureba Genna gannengogatsu nanoka no gi ni sōrō ya.*
 (*Multiple strikes*) *Osakajōchū senjō, ongojōdan no ma ni wa naidaijin Hideyori kō, onhidarigawa ni wa gobokō Yodogimi, Ōno Dōken, Shume, Shūrinosuke, Kazuma.* (*Multiple strikes*) *Gunshi ni wa, Sanada Saemon no Jō Unnō Yukimura, dōmyō segare Daisuke Yukiyasu.*
 (*Multiple strikes*) *Shitennō no menmen ni wa Kimura Nagato no kami Shigenari, Chōsokabe kunai no shōyū Hata no Motochika, Susukida Hayato no shōki no Kanesuke, Gotō Matabei Mototsugu.*
 (*Multiple strikes*) *Mata nanategumi bangashira ni wa Itō Tango no kami, Hayami Kai no kamira izure mo mochiguchi, mochiguchi katameshi, ima ya ososhi to aimattaru tokoro e* (*multiple strikes*), *Kantōgata no gunzei, goman sanzen yoki, tatsu no itten yori jōchū megakete oshiyosetarishi ga, naka ni mo...*

SEIHACHI: (*Whispering*) *Oi. Nani shitennen? Nani shitennen!*

KIROKU: (*Pushing Seihachi away*) *Yakamashii na, oi. Kōshaku kītonnen yaro.*

⁸⁹ This is the day after the Battle of Dōmyōji. Hideyori's forces suffered considerable losses on this day, at Dōmyōji and other places.

⁹⁰ Yukimura's son's name was Yukimasa, not Yukiyasu. He also went by Daisuke. It should be noted that kōshaku/kōdan is often fictional, or simply historically inaccurate.

⁹¹ This should be Morichika (1575-1615); Motochika (1539-1599) was Morichika's father.

⁹² Mototsugu could not have been present because he perished the previous day at the battle of Dōmyōji.

SEIHACHI: You dumb ass. Hey, we're not here to listen. We're here to make this guy sneeze. It's time to throw that stuff on the coals.

KIROKU: Oh, right now? Ha-ha, I totally forgot. I was just wondering how *Nanba senki* was going to end. (*Glares at ISSAN*) Look at him up there, blowing hot air. (*Pours tōgarashi onto coals*) Okay, okay, there we go (*fans smoke upward*).

NARRATOR: Now, if you think I'm making this up, just try it yourself and you'll see. Get this smoke in your nostrils and you won't stop sneezing. I tried it myself and got into a heap of trouble. And so the smoke begins rolling upward from below. Gotō Issan is giving it all he's got...

ISSAN: (*One strike*) In their midst is the commanding general. His attire that day consists of a black leather-based suit of armor, gauntlets and shin guards polished with sandalwood lacquer, and a helmet decorated with deer antlers and a five-tiered neck guard... (*wrinkles nose and furrows brow to keep from sneezing*) on his head. (*One strike*) He straddles his illustrious horse, Stormshadow... (*tries desperately to fight off sneeze*) and settles into a saddle with gold trim on the pommel and cantle. (*One strike*) To one side he effortlessly carries a 314-pound iron club with 38 spikes. (*Fighting sneeze becoming useless*) With his other hand he grips the two-tiered black and white rein. *Aaaa-aaaa... ACHOO! A-CHOOO!* (*Pulls himself together, to audience*) My goodness, I have committed quite an impoliteness. It appears that I may have caught a cold when dozing this afternoon. (*Clears throat*) However, I am fine now. (*Clears throat, one strike*) To one side he effortlessly carries a 314-pound iron club with 38 spikes. (*Struggling to fight off sneeze*) With his other hand he grips the two-TIERED! Black and white rein. TH-

SEIHACHI: *Aho ka, omae. Kiki ni kitan chau na, oi. Kusshami sashi ni kiten ga na. Ima ya, kuben no.*

KIROKU: *Aa, ima ka. Ha-ha, kurotto wasurettota. Nanba senki dōnai naru no ka na to omotte. (Glares at ISSAN) Iitteketsukaru honma ni moo. (Pours tōgarashi onto coals) Horararara, agete, oraiii (fans smoke upward).*

NARRATOR: *Usō ya to omottara, tameshiyaru to wakarimasu. Kono kemuri ga hana no ana ni hairu to hontō ni kushami ga deru. Watashi mo erai me ni aimashita. Shita kara moya moya moya to kemuri ga agatte mairimashita. Gotō Issan wa isshōkenmei...*

ISSAN: (*One strike*) *Naka ni mo sakite no taishō, sono hi no idetachi miteoreba, kurokawa odoshi no ōyoroi, byakudan migaki no kote suneate, ka no tsuno maedate uttaru gomaishikoro no kabuto o ikubi (wrinkles nose and furrows brow to keep from sneezing) ni kinashi... (One strike) Koma wa na ni shi ō Arashikage to nazuketaru meima ni wa... (tries desperately to fight off sneeze) kinpukurin no kura o kake. (One strike) Yūrarigasshi to uchi matagarite. (One strike) Koma no mote ni wa sanjūhachi kanme sanjūhattsubō uttaru kanasaibō karugaru hissage. (Fighting sneeze becoming useless) Kokubyaku nidan no tazuna o kaiguri... Aaaa-aaaa... HEKUSHON! HEKUSHON! (Pulls himself together, to audience) Kore wa kore wa, shitsurei o itashimashita. Yatsugare mo utatane o shite, kaze o hīta to aimiemasu. (Clears throat) Da ga, mō daijōbu de gozaimasu. (Clears throat, one strike) Koma no mote ni wa sanjūhachi kanme sanjūhattsubō uttaru kanasaibō karugaru hissage. (Struggling to fight off sneeze) Kokubyaku ni-DAN! no tazuna o kaigori a-TAA-KAA! mo jōchū megakete YO—HAYO—!*

EN, he rushes, for the castle. *Aaaaa... A-CHOO! A-CHOOO!*

(Composes himself once again, to audience). I have been rude once again. It looks as though I have managed to contract the avian flu. Ladies and gentlemen, be on guard...⁹³

NARRATOR: And so he makes half-baked excuses. The smoke only grows thicker and thicker.

ISSAN: *(One strike)* Swiftly he goes, clippity clop clippity clop, racing forward. He pulls to a quick stop at Otemon Gate and lets out a voice loud enough to stir heaven and earth! *(Vainly tries to fight off sneeze)* *Aaa—AA—AA—A-CHOO! A-CHOO!* People can hear me from afar, but close... *A-CHOO!* people can hear me from afar, but close... *A-CHOO!* I, the ruler of the domains Sun, En, and San... Should there be a man worthy of... *A-CHOO!* If there is any man worthy *A-CHOO!* I am Honda *A-CHOO!*⁹⁴ *Aaa—AA—A-CHOO!* Oh, why is it that I cannot stop sneezing? Please be so kind to allow me to retire at this point tonight. *A-CHOO!*

NARRATOR: There is nothing better than repeat audiences. Today the master isn't feeling well. So, his fans headed home without saying a word. Two remained behind, however—our two culprits.

SEIHACHI: Hey, you sure gave it to him!

KIROKU: Yeah I did, huh?

SEIHACHI: There he is.

KIROKU: Go ahead, tell him off.

SEIHACHI: *(To ISSAN)* Hey you! *Kōshaku*

HEKUSHON! HEKUSHON!

(Composes himself, to audience) *Tabi tabi shitsurei o itashimashita. Dō yara tori infuruenza ni kakatta yō de gozaimasu. Okyakusama mo goyōjin...*

NARRATOR: *Ee kagen na koto yūtteorimasu keredo na, sore kara dan dan dan dan to kemuri ga fueru ippō de gozaimashite na.*

ISSAN: *(One strike)* *Hayō to-to-to-to-to-pa-pa-pa-pa-paa to oshioetarishi ga, Ōte no monzen ni hirakasama ni tsuttachiagari, tenchi mawaruru daionjō!* *(Vainly tries to fight off sneeze)* *YA—A—YA—HEKUSHON! HEKUSHON! Tō kara mono wa oto ni mo kikete chikaku ni yotte... HEKUSHON! Tō kara mono wa oto ni mo kikete chikaku ni yotte... HEKUSHON! Ware koso wa Sun, En, San sankagoku ni... saramono aru to naritaru HEKUSHON! Saramono aru to HEKUSHON! Honda! HEKUSHON! Aaaa-HEKUSHON! Aa, nade konna kushami ga deru no de arō. Konya no tokoro de dōzo hikitori no hodo, HEKUSHON!*

NARRATOR: *Jōren no kyakusan, arigatai. Kyō no sensei wa chōshi ga warui. Damatte kaette kuretan desu wa. Ato ni nokottan ga wa kono futari de gozaimashite.*

SEIHACHI: *Oi, totto yattota.*

KIROKU: *Yatteta na, oi.*

SEIHACHI: *Oru de.*

KIROKU: *Yūttare yūttare.*

SEIHACHI: *(To ISSAN)* *Oi, kora! Kōshaku no*

⁹³ As mentioned in a footnote above, Katsura Fukudanji IV told this story sometime after 2000. Since he makes a reference to avian flu, he probably did this performance sometime after January 2004, when an influenza A (H5N1) outbreak among poultry was confirmed on a Japanese farm.

⁹⁴ This refers to Honda Tadatomo (1582-1615), son of the famous general Honda Heihachirō Tadakatsu (1548-1610).

master! I didn't come to listen to you sneeze, I came to listen to kōshaku! What are you going to do to make up for this? (To KIROKU) Go ahead, tell him.

KIROKU: Huh?

SEIHACHI: You too!

KIROKU: Hey! Kōshaku master! I didn't come to listen to your kōshaku, I came to listen to your sneezing!

SEIHACHI: Are you crazy? What are you talking about! Don't say stupid stuff!

sensei yo. Ora anta no kusshami o kiki ni kitan to chigau nen. Kōshaku o kiki ni kitan. Dōnai shite kuremannen. (To KIROKU) Yūttare.

KIROKU: *He?*

SEIHACHI: *Omae mo.*

KIROKU: *Kora, kōshaku no sensei yo. Ora, omae no kōshaku o kiki ni kitan to chigau de. Kusshami o kiki ni kitennen.*

SEIHACHI: *Aho ka. Nani yūtonnen? Aho yūna!*

With this, the protagonists are on their way. This scene is celebrated in the Kamigata repertoire for a number of reasons. First and foremost, it features a realistic and entertaining presentation (parody) of kōshaku. Such a display is unique and interesting to audiences today, but this may not have been the case around the turn of the twentieth century, when rakugo was regularly performed in shakuba. In fact, numerous hanashika were known to perform kōshaku in addition to rakugo. The inclusion of this kōshaku bit in *Kusshami kōshaku* is an important remnant of Kamigata rakugo's past.

Kamigata kōdan master Kyokudō Nanryō III (1917-2005) was cited, saying that this kōshaku bit is not actually included in the tale *Naniwa senki* (Record of the War at Naniwa) as suggested,⁹⁵ but if one reads the 1899 sokki of a telling by Kanda Hakuryū III (1856-1901), they can confirm that at least part of it is from the kōshaku/kōdan story.⁹⁶ As one might guess, when Kamigata hanashika tell *Kusshami kōshaku*, they use a kendai (Tokyo rakugoka do not), a simple

⁹⁵ Katsura Shijaku, *Bakushō korekushon*, vol. 1, 36.

⁹⁶ The scene with Hideyori, et al., inside Osaka castle can be found in the opening section of *Naniwa senki* part eight, which includes a much more impressive list of warrior names. Kanda Hakuryū, *Naniwa senki* (Osaka: Hakata Seishōdō, 1899), 170. It is Honda Kamonnosuke that appears in the battle scene at the end of part nine of Hakuryū's version, but this does not rule out Tadatomo's appearance in other versions.

yet key property that makes Gotō Issan even more real. After all, *kōshaku* artists never perform without their *shakudai*.

The next reason that the *kōshaku* scene is entertaining is because it includes the sidesplitting sequence of sneezes. One cannot help laughing out loud at the incongruity of a pompous *kōshaku* master being rendered powerless by uncontrollable *tōgarashi* smoke-induced sneezing. As it happens, this is easy to overplay and frequently is in both traditions. It takes a seasoned *hanashika* to read the audience correctly and deliver the right amount of sneezes. Precise *ma* (timing) in this section not only brings more laughs, but also catharsis: Issan's sneezing fit has given the less intelligent and (in case we have forgotten) heartbroken Kiroku sweet revenge. Kiroku has won by making Issan sneeze away his dearest possession—his voice.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Kiroku sings a curious song as he and Seihachi leave the *shakuba*:

Mole cricket, hairy caterpillar, centipede,
Mosquito, wriggler, cicada, and frog.
Mountain butterfly, cricket, and locust,
Goldbeetle's back so shiny.

Okeru kemushi geji
Ka ni bōfura semi kawazu
Yama chōchō ni kirigirisu ni hatahata
Bunbu no senaka ga pikapika

This sounds like a *warabe uta* (children's song) that categorizes insects, but it is nowhere to be found among the hundreds of insect songs listed in the *Nihon warabe uta zenshū* (Japanese Children's Song Anthology). Instead, it appears to be a variant of a song featured in the 1849 woodblock print titled *Neko sanbiki no uta* (Three Cats Song) by Utagawa Yoshifuji (1828-87, see *Figure 4.2*). Yoshifuji specialized in one-sheet games and cutout figures for children, but *Neko sanbiki no uta* was produced earlier than most of these. The insect song on the print is as follows:

Mole cricket, hairy caterpillar, centipede,
Ant, wriggler, cicada, crab, and frog.

Okeru kemushi geji
Ari bōfura semi kani kawazu

Giant katydid, slug, mantis, cricket,
Dragonfly, firefly, and butterfly.

Kutsuwa namekuji kamakiri kirigirisu
Tonbo hotaru chōchō

This is slightly different from the song in *Kusshami kōshaku*—Yoshifuji’s version has fifteen insects, Kiroku’s has eleven—but they are clearly the same song. There is another short song on Yoshifuji’s print:

Last night you snuck out to see a woman
You stepped on and killed three cats, well?
Buy me some new ones!
A tortoiseshell cat, a spotted cat,
And why not, an alley cat too.

Yunbe yobai shite
Neko sanbiki fumi koroshita ja nai ka
Kōte modoshi yare
Mike neko kobuchi neko
Omake ni dora neko

The second song is obviously where the title of the print comes from. The part about sneaking out at night to make love to a woman does not sound to modern ears like a children’s song. Sepp Linhart has pointed out that this print includes an illustration, song texts, and shamisen notation. In other words, Yoshifuji’s print is illustrated sheet music. The illustration features a man, cat, and a frog. The cat and the frog are displaying hand gestures from what look like *kitsuneken* (the fox hand game), especially popular from the 1840s.⁹⁷ It appears as if they are trying to decide the fate of the accused (the ‘nightcrawler’), who has been stripped of his clothes and is looking on anxiously—he is sitting where the referee for ken games would usually be. The cat, no doubt a representative of the victims, is dressed in a kimono with cat patterns. The frog (once classified as a *mushi* [today insects, previously insects *and* small creatures]), is dressed in a kimono with insect patterns, no doubt to signify the first song on the print.

⁹⁷ Sepp Linhart, “Interpreting the World as a *Ken* Game” in Joy Hendry and Massimo Raveri, eds., *Japan at Play: The Ludic and Logic of Power* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 40-1. *Ken* games consisted of three possible antagonists (generally represented by hand gestures), each stronger but at the same time weaker than one of the others. In *kitsuneken*, the three antagonists are a village headman, a hunter, and a fox.



Figure 4.2. Color woodblock print *Neko sanbiki no uta* (1849) by Utagawa Yoshifuji. Courtesy of Tokyo Metropolitan Library (584-C13).

Sepp Linhart points out that *mushiken* (small creature hand games) may be the oldest example of ken games.⁹⁸ Considering this, and that the curious insect song is included on

⁹⁸ Sepp Linhart, “From ‘Kendō’ to ‘Jan-ken’: The Deterioration of a Game from Exoticism into Ordinarity,” in Sepp Linhart and Sabine Frühstück, eds., *The Culture of Japan as Seen through Its Leisure* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 325. The

Yoshifuji's print with an illustration of a ken match, Kiroku's song at the end of *Kusshami kōshaku* looks to be a mushiken song. Today, this short ditty seems little more than cute if not strange to audiences (and hanashika themselves), but for Kiroku and audiences of yesteryear, this was in vogue. In contemporary versions of *Kusshami kōshaku*, Seihachi says, *omae, kettai na uta utau na* (you sing weird songs), but this line was most likely added once mushiken fell from popular memory.

A. Kusshami kōshaku in the Past

Kusshami kōshaku is listed among the chū neta on the late-Meiji *Naniwa San'yū-ha rakugo endai shū*.⁹⁹ It also appears as a fourth-tier maegashira on the *Rakugo endai mitate banzuke*¹⁰⁰ and *Osaka rakugo endai mitate banzuke*.¹⁰¹ The earliest recording of *Kusshami kōshaku* appears to have been done by Shōfukutei Shikaku II, sometime between 1914 and 1919 (Orient 2513-4). Shikaku II's *Kusshami kōshaku* was released at least seven times by seven different labels between 1914 and 1935.¹⁰² Katsura Harudanji I also recorded at least two versions, in 1926 (Nitto 2043-5) and 1933 (Taihei 4067-8).¹⁰³ Listening to some of the Shikaku II versions, it is clear that he performed Kiroku and Seihachi's dialogue with a fast, shabekuri

general public in Japan no longer plays mushiken and most other ken games aside from *janken* (rock, paper, scissors). Some ken games are still played in teahouses and outside parties attended by geisha. The more *sake* a guest drinks, the more enjoyable (and challenging) these games seem to become.

⁹⁹ Hoshi, *Kamigata rakugo kōkyū*, 180.

¹⁰⁰ *Kamigata: kyōdo kenkyū* 5, (May 1931): 108.

¹⁰¹ *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei*, vol. 8, 374.

¹⁰² These include Orient, Nipponophone-Eagle 17476-7, Standard 2853-4, Comet 30096-7, Taihei 15142-3, Kokka 8099-100, and Étoile 1007. Miyakoya, *Rakugo rekōdo hachijūnenshi*, vol. 1, 88, 165, 233, 251, 254, 286, 291.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 138, 248.

manzai-like narrative style. He also performs the nozoki karakuri section with admirable virtuosity, as he did in *Tennōji mairi*.¹⁰⁴

Kusshami kōshaku was published in *Kamigata hanashi* in April 1940.¹⁰⁵ The basic storyline was the same then as it is now, but this early Shōwa version contains some material that is not included in Fukudanji IV's or other contemporary versions. As with the other stories discussed in this chapter, the cuts were doubtless made because hanashika determined that audience interest in these sections had waned too much to justify continued inclusion. The first instance is at the beginning of the story when Kiroku shows up at Seihachi's nagaya. Kiroku comments that the neighborhood has changed since he has been away in Sakai—he actually calls it *kaiSa* (Sakai backwards), in an attempt to sound clever. He says that the well-known *bakemono yashiki* (haunted house) near Seihachi's place is now bustling with apparitions carrying around cushions and tobacco trays, and one with a long neck stands outside, bowing and asking people to hurry in. Seihachi digs into Kiroku for being stupid then informs him that a shakuba has been built where the decrepit house used to be. Kiroku asks who performs there and this leads to the discussion of Kiroku's archrival, Gotō Issan.

The following has also been cut from Shokaku V's 1940 version: Kiroku expresses that he would like to somehow obstruct Issan's kōshaku, but Seihachi warns against taking any action. It could, he says, be considered *shōbai tsubushi* (lit. trade smashing). Kiroku persists however, *ichi jikan de mo kōshaku o yaren yō ni shitara washi no hara no mushi ga tokushin suru ne* (if I

¹⁰⁴ A few cassette copies are on file at Wahha Kamigata, though it is not clear which versions these are. Copy spT141-B ends after Kiroku returns to Seihachi's place from the greengrocer's. Copy spT142-A and B contain the full story, including the mushiken song at the end.

¹⁰⁵ This version has been reprinted in a few other publications, including Shōfukutei Shokaku VI, *Koten Kamigata rakugo*, vol. 1, (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1973), 236-56. In this particular book, the story is erroneously attributed to Shōfukutei Nikaku (1937-, Shokaku VI's pupil).

could keep him from doing *kōshaku* for even an hour, it'll take care of what's eating at me). The phrase *hara no mushi* literally means 'stomach bugs', which implies anger or irritation. *Hara no mushi* has largely fallen out of use, but this appears to be a strategically placed allusion to the *mushiken* song that Kiroku will sing at the end of the story. Cutting this old phrase may streamline the first part of the story for contemporary audiences, but it only makes the song more obscure at the end. If the phrase were still included, there would be fewer questions about the song. It would also be easier to see that the *mushiken* song signifies Kiroku's cathartic release of his 'stomach bugs'.

After Kiroku returns from the greengrocer's, he and Seihachi head to the *shakuba*. In a narrative aside, *Shokaku V* includes numerous details about the hall, inside and out. This still has much interest and is amusing, but is not included in contemporary versions, no doubt because of the waning interest in *kōshaku/kōdan*:

Kiroku gets an earful from Seihachi on the way. They turn at the crossroads and come to the *shakuba*. It is somehow gloomy. At the entrance an old man covered in facial hair hangs over a warm *hibachi*, looking out through his forehead as if he were a frog beckoning the rain. *Ohairi, ohairi*. He is calling in customers. They say this is where the management puts old employees whom they no longer need at *shakuba*. That is a good way to put it. Not many young people come to shows. When you see the occasional young person, you can bet they're ill. Old folks just get in young married couples' way at home, so once the sun sets, they're pushed out of the house. There's nothing they can do about it, so they head to *shakuba*. Once there, they say arrogant things like, "Oh, Kawachi-san, you're here quite early today. Izumiya-san, you're here early, too. Did you hear last night's show? Yes, can you believe that Osaka general Sanada Yukimura's stratagem?" They sit there discussing the holes in Sanada Yukimura's strategy but can't manage to see that it was their daughters-in-laws who strategized to get them out of the house!¹⁰⁶

Kiroku and Seihachi make their way to their seats and an elderly person in the audience comments, *Oo, wakai kata ni kōshaku to wa omoshiroi? Omae kata wa yōki na hanashi rakugo*

¹⁰⁶ Shōfukutei *Shokaku V*, *Kamigata hanashi*, vol. 2, 670.

demo kiki ni ittara dō ya ne? (Hey, you youngsters think *kōshaku* is interesting? Why don't you go listen to the lively stories of rakugo, huh?). This sounds like something that somebody in an actual shakuba audience might say, but it also feels like Shokaku V is delivering a mid-story plug for rakugo, which is still commonplace—and part of the comedy—today.

The final difference that is worth pointing out occurs following Issan's sneezing fit and withdrawal for the evening. In Shokaku V's version, Kiroku and Seihachi stay behind to rub it in after other people in the audience leave, but they are much harder on Issan than they are in versions told today. Seihachi makes fun of the *kōshakushi* by calling him a *kaishakushi* (scallop-shell ladle) and a *kayu mo sukuenu otamashakushi* (ladle that can't even scoop up rice gruel). Then, he spits on him! Kiroku is not able to manage the puns on *kōshakushi*, but he tells Issan to *konnan tabe* (eat this!) and spits on him as well. Spitting on people was not any more acceptable in 1940 than it is today, but it had to have gotten laughs to be included in the story. The spitting scene is no longer included in versions told today.¹⁰⁷

V. *Funa Benkei* (Benkei on the Boat)

Alternative titles: none

Characters: Kiroku, Seihachi, Omatsu, Otoku (named Osaki in some versions), boatmen, friends and geisha on yakatabune, passersby on bridge

Funa Benkei, like other stories discussed in this chapter, stands out as a Kamigata classic because it is remarkably *hade*. Although the story is set in a nagaya and on a yakatabune, references to the merchant world are also included as if they were seasonings of sorts. *Funa*

¹⁰⁷ As discussed earlier, rakugo and *kōshaku* were closely affiliated around the turn of the twentieth century. This spitting scene—and the story as a whole—may point to an entrenched Kamigata rakugo-*kōshaku* rivalry. There are a number of other stories in the traditional repertoire in addition to *Kusshami kōshaku* that would substantiate such an argument.

Benkei also features fearsome Omatsu. Finally, the inclusion of tateben monologues and a kabuki (and *nō*) parody—shows within the show—make this story stand out as a true Kamigata rakugo classic. As one might readily suspect, this story is not performed in the Tokyo tradition.

On an unpleasantly hot day, Kiroku is working at home with little enthusiasm. Seihachi shows up and invites him to go cool off on a yakatabune cruise. Seihachi tells him that they will be going with a group consisting only of close friends and a few geisha—there will be none of the *dannashū* (merchant) type, he adds—but Kiroku shudders when he hears the outing will cost three yen (or bu, depending on the version) per person. Kiroku is put off by the talk of money and adds that, even if he does manage to pay his own way, people will still call him *Benkei*, a term once used in pleasure quarters to refer to hangers-on and people who always seem to get out of paying their own way.¹⁰⁸ Seihachi promises Kiroku that he will not be called *Benkei* at the party, and insists that the trip will be well worth it. Their dialogue during this scene is funny and fast paced, calling to mind a *shabekuri manzai* routine. As usual, Seihachi plays the straight man, Kiroku his tentative and slower, though not entirely stupid, counterpart.

Though they try to get out of the house before Omatsu returns from her relative's house, they have no such luck. They hear her outside just as Kiroku is changing into his kimono. They are trapped. The monologue that follows is reminiscent of those by characters in early nineteenth-century *kokkeibon* (lit. funny books), such as the disingenuous housewife in Shikitei Sanba's *Ningen banji uso bakkari* (In the World of Men, Nothing But Lies, 1813). Like Sanba,

¹⁰⁸ This term is associated with the legendary warrior monk Musashibō *Benkei*—nothing of a hanger-on—who loyally followed his sworn master, Minamoto no Yoshitsune, virtually everywhere he went. One wonders if this term is not also connected to the blank list of donations that *Benkei* read from in Namiki Gohei III's *Kanjinchō* (The Subscription List, 1840), a kabuki play based on Kanze Nobumitsu's *nō* play *Ataka* (The Ataka Checkpoint, 1465).

hanashika give a great deal of attention to linguistic, social, and psychological nuances as they present Omatsu:¹⁰⁹

OMATSU: Oh, it's so hot, ain't it!

NARRATOR: As soon as he heard this voice, Seihachi was startled and took cover beneath the stairway. Kiikō, for his part, fell to the floor and made like a caterpillar, playing dead right there in his workspace.

OMATSU: (*Still outside, to neighbor*) Hi Otoku-san, it's kind of you to ask, why yes, yesterday too, they called me over to Uncle's in Uemachi, and wouldn't you know, that old goat had only caught himself a cold. It was bad, yes, and he lay there moaning, sounding like he was gonna die, but when he saw my face, he snapped right out of it, and he went on saying, "It's nice of you to come, I've wanted to see you, we've got cold watermelon, won't you have some? I'll have a slice with you." Ha-ha, how silly! I was so taken aback. I couldn't even close my mouth from astonishment. And he said, "Well, since you're here, stay a while," and we gabbed until evening. Then they had me stay for dinner, but it's not like I could leave the minute I put my chopsticks down, so we chatted some more, but mostly about how perfect their son is, and then it got late. They told me it was too dangerous for a woman to walk home alone, and that Kiiyan wouldn't likely come pick me up, so why don't I stay? So I did, and though I thought to leave after

OMATSU: *Oo, atsui ya na!*

NARRATOR: *Kono koe o kiku nari, Seihachi bikkuri shiotta kara ni, danbashi no sumi ni chisō ni kakurete shimotta. Kiikō wa Kiikō de shigotoba e imomushi ga tonshi shita mitai ni, betaa, hetabatte shimaiyotta kara ni...*

OMATSU: (*Still outside, to neighbor*) *Maa Otoku san, ōkii ni habakarisan ya, kinō mo na. Uemachi no ossan no toko kara yobi ni kitan itta tokoro ga, aho rashii, hon no kaze hītennen yanai ka, maa, sore mo taizō ni na, ano sa, ima shinisō na koe dashite, u natteman... wate no kao mittara kerotto shita kao shite na, "yō kite kureten na, omae ni aitakattan ya de, suika ga hietaru sakai tabehen ka? Ore mo hitokire otsukiau de." Maa, konna koto yūte mannen. Ha-ha aho rashii, aita kuchi mo fusagarahen ya wa. "Sekkaku kita ya sakai yukkuri asonde inii na," te berabera shabetetara anju ban ni natte shimaimashita na, ban gohan yobaretara hashi okunari kaeru wake ni ikimahen yanai ka. Sekenbanashi chūttara itsumo ano musuko jiman den ga na, tōdo yō ga fukete shimotte. "Onna no hitori aruki abunai sakai tomatte inii, Kiiyan datte, okuri mo seyahen wai na," yū sakai, anta, wate tomete mōtte na. Asa gohan yobarete kaerō to omottara oisshahan ga kiyahatte, obahan kusuri morōtte kuru kara sore made miseban shiteten*

¹⁰⁹ Shikitei Sanba, "In the World of Men, Nothing But Lies," trans. Joel Cohn, in Sumie Jones, and Kenji Watanabe, eds., *An Edo Anthology: Literature from Japan's Mega-City, 1750-1850* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013), 349-63.

breakfast, the doctor showed up. Auntie said she had to go pick up medicine and could I keep an eye on the store? So I did, but wouldn't you know it, customers started coming in one after another, and then it was noon! They had me stay for lunch and I thought to leave after that, but they said I should wait a bit since the sun was blazing, and "Why don't you have a nap until we get a little shade?" How silly! Just as I was telling them I've never been one to take naps during the day, can you imagine, there I go falling asleep! It was three o'clock by the time I woke up with a start and headed for the door, but then they tell me, "Oh, you're up, you've gotta try these noodles, here they're done, have some before you go." Aren't I a greedy one!—I had three bowls this big! "Oh, stay a little longer," they say, so I practically had to beat them off to get home. Oh, is he home? Okay, I'll let you go, sorry. Oh hey, why don't we go to Naniwa Bridge or some place tonight to catch the evening breeze? Okay, thank you very much. (Enters own unit, to KIROKU) My, my, it's so hot, but there you are hard at work. You heard me carrying on out front, didn't you? Well, of course I want to carry on with you a bit, too. Yes, I went yesterday and that goat had only caught himself a cold. He lay there moaning, sounding like he was gonna die, but lit up when he saw my face, and there he went, "it's so nice of you to come, I've wanted to see you, we've got cold watermelon, won't you have some? I'll have a slice with you." Ha-ha, I was so taken aback. I couldn't even close my mouth from astonishment... (Focusing on KIROKU) Well, why don't you take a little break? Hey, how about a breather? You can go back to work after a little rest, can't you?

ka. *Miseban shitetara tokkake hikkake okyakusan ga kiman no. Tōdo hiru ni natte shimotte, hiru gohan yobarete kaerō to omottara* "Ohisan ga kankan detennen sakai, katakage ni naru made yukkuri hirune shite iki na," *te, aho rashii. Wate tsuide kono toshi ni naru made hirune shita koto nai to yūteiru aida ni, anta, utsu utsu shite shimotta na. Me aitara sanji ya omahen kai na. Bikkuri shite kaerō to omottara,* "Omae ga okitara tabesasō omotte sōmen ga yū waitannen, mō dekiagaru sakai tabete inii na." *Iya, wate mo iyashii ya omahen ka, konna ochawan ni sanbai mo yobarete. "Motto asonde inii no," furikiri uchi te kaette kimashita ya nai. Uchi ni imakka, sayō ka, ōkii ni erai sumahen deshita. De, mata ban ni na, anoo, Naniwabashi demo yūsuzumi ni ikimahen ka. Iya, ōkii ni dōmo, suimahen. (Enters own unit, to KIROKU) Maa, konna atsui no ni yō sei na hito hataraitte kureteiru ya nai ka. Ima omote de ōkii na koe de yūttan kikoeta yaro. Anta ni konna ōkii koe de yūttai yanai ka. Kinō mo itta tokoro, aho rashii, hon no kaze hiki ya nai ka. Sore ni taisō, ano ossan wa ima shinisō koe dashite u natten no. Wate no kao mittara kerotto shita kao shite,* "Anta yō kite kureta ya nai ka, omae ni ippen aitakatta, suika hietaru sakai tabehen ka? Ore mo hitokire tsukiau de." *Ha-ha konna koto yūtte aita kuchi mo fusagarahen ya nai kai, maa, ha-ha... (Focusing on KIROKU) Chotto ippuku shite yattara dō yannen? Naa, ippuku shite yattara dō yannen? Ano, shigoto ga na, ato ippuku chotto shite ya... Ippuku... Maa, soto ga akarui sakai, uchira e haittara kurai mon ya sakai shigoto shiteiru to bakkari omottara, anta, kimono kigaetteru na? Doko iku nen? Wate ga chotto me hanashitara kore*

Take a... Well now, it was bright outside, so I couldn't see very well since it's so dark in here, and there I was thinking you were sitting there working away, but, you're in your kimono... Where are you going? See, I take my eyes off of you for one second and this is what I get? Indeed! (*Explodes in anger*) Where are you going! *Gara-gara-gara-gara-gara-gara!* (*sound of rumbling and banging*)

yannen, honma ni! (*Explodes in anger*)
*Doko iku nen! Gara-gara-gara-gara-gara-gara!*¹¹⁰

Although the chief purpose of this rapid-fire tateben monologue is to show that Omatsu is a shrew, we are able to glean some information about her background. She explains that her aunt asked her to keep an eye on their store and that customers kept coming in one after another until it was lunchtime. It would seem that Omatsu is from a merchant family. She also indicates that her relatives think that Kiroku is undependable because he will not come to pick her up at night. It is implied in this version (he has a workspace in his nagaya unit)—and is stated explicitly in earlier versions—that Kiroku is a shokunin. Shokunin were officially higher in status than shōnin in the early modern era, but the reality was the opposite, particularly in a place like Osaka. Was the writer of this story (or whoever appended this section) trying to say that shōnin and shokunin do not mix? As mentioned above, Seihachi uses the fact that *dannashū* would *not* be going on the yakatabune cruise, to try to lure Kiroku into going, which sends a similar message about shōnin and shokunin. If this segment is not expressing such a sentiment, it is making a statement about the monied and not monied.

Kiroku explains to Omatsu that Seihachi has invited him to a jōruri *kai* (recital, amateur no doubt), but this only sets her off on a rant about Kiroku's good-for-nothing friend. She is

¹¹⁰ This and subsequent *Funa Benkei* excerpts are taken from a 1980 telling by Katsura Kobunshi III (later Bunshi V). Katsura Bunshi V, *Funa Benkei, Tsujiura chaya*. Sony Records International, SICL-113, 2005.

embarrassed when Kiroku points out that Seihachi is right behind her. Despite her gift for gab, she is no better than clumsy as she tries to smooth over her faux pas. Seihachi, making nothing of it, explains that they are actually needed to help mediate a dispute in the neighborhood. Omatsu can hardly say no, so the two are on their way. Omatsu yells at the top of her lungs to Kiroku, *hayaku kaette kunnen de!* (You better get home early!), and he replies with *heeeeeeeei* (yes ma'am/sir), the programmed response of *detchi* when given orders or scolded. Of course, Seihachi makes fun of him for this.

Seihachi and Kiroku head for the river Ōkawa. On the way, Kiroku relates to Seihachi several stories that illustrate just how terrible Omatsu is. In one, she punished him for forgetting to buy tofu by burning moxa on his back. When he cried that it burned, she dragged him outside to the well and dunked him in cold water. When he yelled that the water was freezing, she dragged him back inside and brought out the moxa again, repeating the sequence again and again. This scene, too, bears a close resemblance to modern *manzai*, or the comparable modern Japanese sketch comedy, *konto* (from French *conte*). As Kiroku relates the stories of his scary wife, people begin following them, listening on with much interest.

As they approach the river, the sound of water is played on the *ōdaiko* drum: *don-don-don...* Seihachi and Kiroku do not board the *yakatabune* right away; they first have to hire a *kayoibune* (transport boat) and be punted out to the larger craft. This adds a nice touch of reality to the story and teaches listeners a bit about traffic on rivers in earlier times. As the boatman shoves off, the sounds of waves and water, *zu-don-don! don-don-don...* are played on the *ōdaiko*. This is followed by the unhurried and pleasant song *En kai na* (Is This Karma?):

Summer fun is found at Naniwa Bridge	<i>Natsu no asobi wa Naniwabashi</i>
Matching summer robes on a pleasure boat	<i>Tsui no yukata no suzumibune</i>
Lower the shade, shamisen playing softly	<i>Sudare oroshite shinobigoma</i>

Is this karma brought by sharing *sake*? *Sasa ga torimotsu en kai na*¹¹¹

Some hanashika perform this short trip without any dialogue, while others like to include casual conversation with the boatman. Hanashika meticulously and handsomely (or foolishly, depending on the teller) pantomime with their sensu the boatman's actions of punting and steering the boat. The hayashi ensemble plays *En kai na* and the sound of water throughout the scene.

As is the case with any number of scenes in rakugo, this short scene has its own *ochi*. When Kiroku sees Seihachi hand the boatman a handsome sum of money, he is befuddled. *Ima wa, nani yatten... ichi en mo yattan?* (What did you just give [him]... you gave him one whole yen?) he asks. *Funachin... shūgi issho ni haittannen* (It's the fare, plus a tip), Seihachi explains. To this Kiroku exclaims, *koko made kuru no ni ichi en kakaru to shitetara wate oyoide kuru neya* (if I knew it was going to cost one yen to get here, I would have swum!).

Finally aboard the yakatabune, running late as they are, Kiroku rushes to drink his fair share of the *sake*. He has agreed to pay his own way, after all. In next to no time, he is thoroughly intoxicated. Geisha play music and merrymaking ensues. Kiroku and Seihachi soon strip down to their loincloths to perform the *Genpei odori* (Genpei dance) to the song *Makenai bushi* (Won't Be Defeated), an energetic and happy piece:

If you're going to dance a dance,
dance with grace! *Odori odoru nara shina yoku odore*
The one with grace will be my wife. *Shina no yoi no o yome ni toru*¹¹²

¹¹¹ This is a popular Meiji-period *hauta* song. Tsuruji Shachū troupe member Kobayashi Masako (years unknown) altered the lyrics. Hayashiya, *Yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1, 177. The first line of the original is *Natsu no suzumi wa Ryōgoku* (the place to cool off in summer is Ryōgoku [in Tokyo]).

¹¹² This appears to be part of a popular song from around the end of the early modern era, although the details of this are unclear. The lyrics change depending on the story, but *Makenai bushi* is played in most if not all *sanzai* (money squandering) scenes in Kamigata rakugo. This

As mentioned previously, Omatsu spots the two dancing nearly naked on the boat.

Furious, she orders a kayoibune to take her out to the craft that Kiroku is on. The mad rage she goes into creates a comical juxtaposition with the happy tune that the hayashi ensemble is playing offstage. Omatsu is anything but graceful as she heads toward Kiroku. Soon, she arrives at the boat, but Kiroku knocks her into the shallow river:

NARRATOR: (*With a commanding voice*) In the middle of the river, she stands fully erect!

OMATSU: (*Chanting nō style as Taira no Tomomori*) Now before you is the ghost of Taira no Tomomori, ninth-generation descendant of Emperor Kanmu.

PASSENGER: Hey, Kiikō, am I wrong or has your wife lost her mind?

KIROKU: (*To geisha*) Hey, sis, let me borrow your waistband for a minute, will you?

NARRATOR: Kiikō uses the waistband as a Buddhist rosary and...

KIROKU: (*Chants nō style as Yoshitsune, then chorus, playing role of Benkei*) In that moment Kiroku, panics not one bit, rubbing prayer beads *sarasara*, he prays: Gōzanze in the east, Gundari Yasha Myōō in the south, Daiitoku Yasha Myōō in the west, Kongō Yasha Myōō in the north, and Dainichi Daishō Fudō Myōō in the center!

NARRATOR: (*With a commanding voice*) *Kawa no mannaka ni, sukutto tatte!*

OMATSU: (*Chanting nō style as Taira no Tomomori*) *Somo sono kore wa, Kanmu tennō kudai no kōin, Taira no Tomomori yūrei nari!*

PASSENGER: *Oi, Kiikō, omae toko no yomesan ga okashīnattan to chigau ka.*

KIROKU: *Oi, chotto nehan, chotto sono shigoki kashiten ka.*

NARRATOR: *Shigoki o juzu no kawari shiotte, Kiikō ga...*

KIROKU: (*Chants nō style as Yoshitsune, then chorus, playing role of Benkei*) *Sono toki Kiroku wa, sukoshi mo sawagazu, juzu sarasara to oshimonde, tōhō Gōzanze, nanpō Gundari Yasha Myōō, saihō Daiitoku Yasha Myōō, hoppō Kongō Yasha Myōō, chūō Dainichi Daishō Fudō Myōō!*

Hanashika musicians strike the shimedaiko and play the nōkan with great force to create the atmosphere of a nō play. Omatsu transforms into the Heike leader Taira no Tomomori, whose vengeful spirit appears in the nō and kabuki plays *Funa Benkei* with the objective of avenging his defeat at the Battle of Dan-no-ura by pulling Yoshitsune into the sea. In both plays

may speak to the popularity the song once enjoyed. It is not included in this telling, but the song *Fukegawa* (Blowing River), inspired by the kabuki song *Fuke yo kawa kaze* (Blow, You River Breeze), is sometimes played in *Funa Benkei*. Ibid., 174-5.

it is Benkei who intervenes, rubbing his prayer beads together with vigor. Kiroku wastes no time picking up the part of Benkei, and so the classic scene is reenacted. As one can easily gather, this is where the title *Funa Benkei* comes from. This is an absurd twist at the end of the story, but listeners cannot help delighting in the amusing kabuki-nō parody. It is funny to even think that Omatsu and Kiroku would be chanting Tomomori and Benkei's lines so skillfully to nō-style hayashi music at such a moment. With a legendary battle scene from a play that is centuries old, the hanashika transports the audience away from the conflict at hand in an instant, but in a parody that makes such conflicts endless and timeless.

Passersby on a bridge above mistake the couple for two taikomochi performing niwaka and therefore cannot resist shouting down to cheer them on, *Kawa no naka no Tomomori-san mo ee kedomo, fune no naka no Benkei-han, Benkei-han!* (Tomomori in the river is good too, but how about that Benkei, Benkei!). The story comes to an end when Kiroku delivers the ochi: *nani yutte ketsukannen! Benkei aru kai, kyō wa san en no warimae jai!* (What the hell are you talking about? I ain't no Benkei—we're paying three yen apiece today!).¹¹³

A. *Funa Benkei in the Past*

An early version (or variant) of *Funa Benkei* is listed in *Fūryū mukashibanashi*. The title, *Ōmisoka funayukibanashi* (Boating on the Last Day of the Year Story), indicates that the story was not originally set at the peak of summer as it is today. If this is indeed an early version of *Funa Benkei*, and Kiroku shoved Omatsu into the frigid waters of the river Ōkawa, it would have had a stronger impact. Perhaps the story was changed because it was deemed too cruel to treat

¹¹³ An alternate ochi for this story is, *Oi, Seiyān, kyō no warimae torantoite ya* (Hey, Seiyān, don't bother taking my share today). Here, Kiroku feels that he is entitled to a freebie now that somebody has called him Benkei, which Seihachi promised would not happen.

even a woman like Omatsu in such a vicious manner. In any case, it is written that *Ōmisoka funayukibanashi* had a *Funa Benkei* ochi.¹¹⁴ Miyako Karoku believes that the title *Funa Benkei* was taken from the 1885 kabuki play of the same title, an adaption by Kawatake Mokuami starring Ichikawa Danjūrō IX.¹¹⁵ This may be true, but, since there is evidence in *Fūryū mukashibanashi* that *Ōmisoka funayukibanashi* was being told with a *Funa Benkei* ending more than twenty years earlier, the inspiration for the ochi had to have been Kanze Nobumitsu's (1450?-1516) nō play *Funa Benkei*.

We know for sure that the story was titled *Funa Benkei* no later than the Meiji period because it appears with this title on *Naniwa San'yū-ha rakugo endai shū*, where it is listed as a *kiri neta* (high-level story).¹¹⁶ *Funa Benkei* also appears as a top-tier maegashira on *Rakugo endai mitate banzuke*¹¹⁷ and *Osaka rakugo endai mitate banzuke*.¹¹⁸ The earliest album recording of this story appears to have been done by Shikaku II about twenty years later, around 1931 (Parlophone E1743-4).¹¹⁹ Due to time limitations, Shikaku had to end the story even before Kiroku and Seihachi arrive at the river Ōkawa.

In Shikaku II's version, as Kiroku relates to Seihachi the terrible things that Omatsu does to him, a *Raoshikae* (*kiseru* [pipe] mender) butts in to say how funny husband-wife quarrels are.¹²⁰ They send him away, but he keeps coming back, begging to hear the story to its end, as if

¹¹⁴ Katsura Beichō, “*Fūryū mukashibanashi*,” 96.

¹¹⁵ Miyakoya, *Rakugo rekōdo hachijūnenshi*, vol. 2, 430.

¹¹⁶ Hoshi, *Kamigata rakugo kōkyū*, 185.

¹¹⁷ *Kamigata: kyōdo kenkyū* 5, (May 1931): 108.

¹¹⁸ *Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei*, vol. 8, 374.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 194. There is a cassette copy (spT141-B) on file at Wahha Kamigata. I am not positive that it is the 1931 version.

¹²⁰ *Raoshikae* (also *Raokae*, *Raoya*) was a person who replaced the bamboo pipe between the metal bowl and mouthpiece of *kiseru* when it became clogged with resin. *Rao* (*Raosu*, Laos) is supposedly where the pipe bamboo (also called *Rao*) was from.

(Seihachi comments) it were *kōshaku*. Seihachi makes fun of his friend, *Omae wa in-Benkei ya na* (you're the anti-Benkei; i.e., Kiroku has been called Benkei in the past, but it is now he who is being followed). To end this short album version, Kiroku comes back with essentially the same *ochi* that is used in the full version: *Benkei ya arehen ga na, a-ha, kore demo san en no warimae dashite iku ne ga na* (I ain't no Benkei, ha-ha, I'm still going to pay my three yen).¹²¹

Shokaku V (the same *hanashika*) published *Funa Benkei* in the June 1938 issue of *Kamigata hanashi* and then again in *Osaka rakugo meisaku sen* ten years later.¹²² Other than the fact that selected *kanji* were retyped with *kyūtaiji* (traditional forms), and two thumbnail-size illustrations were added to reveal *shigusa* (gestures) in the story that would otherwise be missed, the texts are the same. *Funa Benkei* is told in nearly the same way today, too. Considering the kinds of changes that stories typically undergo over time—dated language and obscure material gets cut, updated, or replaced—it is surprising that Shokaku V's *Funa Benkei* has remained so intact. The only change worth mentioning between Shokaku V's 1938 version and the contemporary version analyzed above is that Bunshi V removed the *Raoshikae* and made him a *kōriya* (iceman).¹²³ He most likely did this because few people know what *Rao* is anymore and even fewer smoke with *kiseru* anymore.

There are a few more components of the story that strike one as dated and therefore possible candidates for the chopping block, but they continue to be included. For example, Seihachi still encourages Kiroku to reclaim his manhood by beating some sense into Omatsu.

¹²¹ Miyakoya, *Rakugo rekōdo hachijūnenshi*, vol. 2, 439.

¹²² Shōfukutei Shokaku V, *Osaka rakugo meisaku sen* (Osaka: Osaka Shinkō Shuppan, 1948). Pages are not numbered. According to the colophon, three hundred copies were run. This page is marked *hibaihin* (not for sale).

¹²³ Osada Sadao, *Kamigata rakugo no netachō: ippun de wakaru hanashi no arasuji shōjiten* (Tokyo: PHP Kenkyūjo, 2011), 207.

Domestic violence is now against the law in Japan, but this remains part of the story and continues to be rendered funny because Kiroku's response underscores the simple fact that he can do no harm. He is pathetically weak. A good deal of the humor in *Funa Benkei* comes from seeing Kiroku depicted as the henpecked husband. True, he does manage to get out of the house to enjoy himself with friends and *sake* aboard a yakatabune, and he has it in him to thrust Omatsu into the water at the end of the story, but there is no question that Omatsu will make Kiroku pay for all of this once the story ends.

Niwaka is rarely performed anymore, but hanashika continue to reference it during Omatsu and Kiroku's dramatic battle scene at the end of the story. The fact of the matter is, most people today do not know what niwaka is, but they are able to gather that it is some kind of performance or game. In any case, it is difficult to cut this since it is sewn so tightly into the *ochi*.¹²⁴ The same is true with the term *Benkei*. It would practically ruin the story if this were cut. Considering that *Funa Benkei* has remained unchanged for so long, this story should continue being one of Kamigata rakugo's beloved classics for years to come.

¹²⁴ Niwaka was a popular form of summer river entertainment from the Kyōhō years (1716-1736) on. Groups of three or four performers would go to the river and compete in shows for pleasure boaters. Ui Mushū, *Rakugo no genwa* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1970), 388.

CONCLUSION

REINTERPRETING ‘MERCHANT CENTERED’ AS TRANSGRESSIVE

I heard about a bantō in the neighborhood... Yeah, on the surface he looks like a good little white mouse. But, the minute you turn around, sure enough, he turns out to be a filthy gutter rat. He puts on a face like he’s going to visit customers, but in fact heads over to the pleasure quarter near Horie. That’s right, he fell in love with a girl and set up a place for the two of them. He goes there every so often to see her. Can you believe the danna trusts him as the bantō of his house? The danna doesn’t have the slightest clue! ... Bantō, that’s *you*, isn’t it?¹

—The wakadanna speaking to the bantō in *Kikue butsudān*

I. Rakugo That Embodies Kamigata

In Chapter One, I reviewed Kamigata and Osaka history with a special focus on the early modern era. I demonstrated that the term Kamigata became virtually synonymous with Osaka during the course of this period, and that Osaka chōnin identity can be linked to shōnin katagi—the way that idealized merchants behave, think, and feel. In popular culture, Osaka chōnin (and Osakans in general) were commonly regarded as hard working, self-confident, self-reliant, proud of family, shop, and neighborhood, and good at saving money and getting jobs done right. They were also depicted as generally cheerful and valuing good-hearted laughter.

I also looked at a number of Kamigata arts and determined that they share qualities similar to the rakugo there. Kamigata arts tend to be high quality in terms of their attention to detail. They are realistic, and amateur participation was commonplace in many of them. Chapter One established the framework for the chapters that followed, which included a history of Kamigata rakugo and its precursors, a critical study of what constitutes a Kamigata rakugo story,

¹ “Katsura Bunshi V, *Kamigata rakugo meijin sen: shitennō hen, Kuchi ireya, Kikue butsudān*. Toshiba Emi Family Club, 1997, VHS.

and a close reading of selected Kamigata stories. I have maintained that Kamigata rakugo stands out from Tokyo rakugo in terms of performance style and content. Kamigata rakugo is *hade*, loquacious, musical, merchant centered, occasionally vulgar, yet realistic and therefore geared toward a local audience. It should be clear that Kamigata rakugo exhibits significant differences from the Edo/Tokyo tradition, and this is a result of the art developing on its own separate trajectory, grounded in the distinctive cultural context of Kamigata-Osaka.

As discussed in Chapter Two, there was major amateur involvement in the Osaka storytelling world during the 1700s and 1800s, this being an upshot of the art's situation in a city where a do-it-yourself atmosphere prevailed. Tokyo critics thrashed Kamigata rakugo on the pages of popular magazines in the Meiji and Taishō periods for its perceived amateurish quality and, in subsequent years, entertainment companies—namely Yoshimoto—lost interest in the art because it no longer seemed to be an economically viable form of entertainment. It was left to Osaka hanashika and their fans to take matters into their own hands. The effort to save Kamigata rakugo was in full swing by the 1930s and was most visible in the magazines *Kamigata: kyōdo kenkyū* and *Kamigata hanashi*. After World War II, hanashika and their supporters continued to endeavor in numerous ways to ensure that Kamigata rakugo would flourish, and without the aid of companies that only seemed concerned about profit.

Tokyo rakugo was better situated than Kamigata rakugo from the Meiji period on in that it was at home in the capital, where it received attention and backing from Tokyo's educated elite. The Rakugo Kenkyūkai (Society for the Study of Rakugo)—essentially shows for Tokyo rakugoka to practice their art without strict time limits and for scholars and others to observe—was first convened in 1905. Rakugo associations existed in Tokyo from early on, too. The Rakugo Kyōkai was established in 1923 and the Rakugo Geijutsu Kyōkai was founded shortly

thereafter, in 1930. In contrast, the Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai was not founded until 1957 and outside organizations, especially those purporting to be academic, have never been a part of the Kamigata rakugo scene.² Notwithstanding, the art has managed to survive and flourish.

Such Japanese intellectuals as Watanabe Kin, Masaoka Iruru, Maeda Isamu, Ui Mushū, Mita Jun'ichi, Inoue Hiroshi, and Toda Manabu, among others, have shown interest in Kamigata rakugo over the years, but it is the hanashika and their followers who are to be given most of the credit for saving the art. These were the people who, for decades, sought out places to have shows when there were no formal seki, and it was generally the same people who built stages, put out chairs and cushions, and cleaned up afterward before going home each night. Gradually, as hanashika developed strong fan bases after World War II, they could often count on others (typically volunteers) to take care of most logistical matters, including promoting shows in newsletters and other formats. One might add that there is also something of a tradition of hanashika spouses helping behind the scenes or at shows as program stuffers, box office staff, ushers, and occasionally even shamisen players and more.

The future of Kamigata rakugo looked brighter when the Hanjōtei opened its doors in 2006, but one could also argue that—since scrabbling for performance venues to make one's voice heard has been part of the art's essence all along—setting up a single, funded performance venue essentially put the art in a 'museum'. Regardless, Kamigata rakugo's future had to already be bright before serious talk about building a seki could begin. It was the hanashika and their community of supporters who brought Kamigata rakugo to this point. As the Hanjōtei's tenth

² One might argue that many of Katsura Beichō III's endeavors to date have been academic in nature, but he has also been criticized off record for this effort.

anniversary draws nearer, the enduring do-it-yourself nature of productions *outside* of this formal venue is arguably what makes the art continue to thrive.

Kamigata rakugo continues to flourish because professionals unite with non-professionals in the interest of preserving the art. For many, making money is of secondary importance to making a quality product for its own sake. Most hanashika remain aware of their debt to fans and volunteers. Like performers in other arts, such as *taishū engeki* (lit. theater of the masses) and *kyōgen*, hanashika can be found nurturing their audience/fan base by rushing toward venue entrances at the end of shows to personally thank people for coming. People who help in one way or another are often invited to *uchiage* (after-show parties) and become friends. Kamigata rakugo developed as an inclusive tradition and this continues to be the case today.

II. ‘Merchant Centered’ as Transgressive

I have argued that Kamigata rakugo is merchant centered, that is to say, the art contains more depictions of and references to merchant life than does Tokyo rakugo. However, do the merchant stories discussed in this study genuinely reflect *shōnin katagi*? In nearly every case, the answer is no. Merchant values are touted, but, in practice, characters repeatedly fall short of merchant class standards and ideals. Merchants are expected to be upstanding hard workers, but in case after case, they are presented as the opposite in Kamigata rakugo. In fact, Kamigata rakugo protagonists—merchants, their families, and employees—usually do exactly what merchants would be expected *not* to do. The incongruity of this creates the basis for much of the humor in the stories. Yet, merchants being made to look like just what their reputation says they are not shines light on a trope with a nature of transgression, which, despite its perceived objective to oppose, mock, and upset the solidity of foundations, nonpositively affirms them.

Michael Foucault's take on transgression can help one to better understand that Kamigata rakugo's merchant centeredness is not so much anti-merchant as it is merchant aware:

Transgression is neither violence in a divided world nor a victory over limits; and exactly for this reason, its role is to measure the excessive distance that it opens at the heart of the limit and to trace the flashing line that causes the limit to arise. Transgression contains nothing negative, but affirms limited being—affirms the limitlessness into which it leaps as it opens this zone to existence for the first time. But, correspondingly, this affirmation contains nothing positive: no content can bind it, since, by definition, no limit can possibly restrict it.³

Peter Stallybrass and Allon White—who use Mikhail Bakhtin's view of carnival as a festive critique of the 'high' culture and populist utopian vision of the world seen from below as a point of departure—equate transgression to what Barbara Babcock calls 'symbolic inversion', which she defines as “any act of expressive behaviour which inverts, contradicts, abrogates, or in some fashion presents an alternative to commonly held cultural codes, values and norms be they linguistic, literary or artistic, religious, social and political.”⁴ Arguing that it does more than simply illuminate limits, Stallybrass and White expand on transgression in the following manner:

For Foucault transgression is the interrogation of boundaries, a 'realm, no doubt, where what is in question is the limit rather than the identity of a culture'. But cultural identity is inseparable from limits, it is always a boundary phenomenon and its order is always constructed around the figures of its territorial edge. ... Transgression becomes a kind of reverse or counter-sublimation, undoing the discursive hierarchies and stratifications of bodies and cultures which bourgeois society has produced as the mechanism of its symbolic dominance.⁵

In *Kuchi ireya*, the bantō, supposed to be the most responsible employee in his house, is concerned with little more than pursuing the new female worker. In the end, perhaps as

³ Michael Foucault, “A Preface to Transgression” in Donald F. Bouchard, ed., *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 35-36.

⁴ Barbara Babcock, *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 14. Quoted in Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 17.

⁵ Stallybrass and White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, 200-1.

punishment for failing to fulfill his duties, he is faced with extreme embarrassment, caught red-handed in the kitchen in the middle of his yobai gone wrong. In *Hyakunenme*, one finds the same pattern: the bantō is concerned more with carrying on with geisha on a yakatabune than the prosperity of his master's business. In *Tachigire*, the wakadanna is sentenced to one hundred days in the family storehouse for wasting time and money in the pleasure quarters, but, upon his release, it is the bantō who tells the wakadanna about the scores of letters that came from his geisha girlfriend while he was confined, effectively urging him back to the world that he was supposed to have forgotten about. In *Kikue butsudān*, it is the bantō who suggests having a party while the danna is away. In *Oyakojaya*, the danna does exactly what he tells his son not to by visiting the pleasure quarters. In *Kinshu sekisho*, perhaps because the drama involves people outside of the house, the pattern is somewhat different: the employees do not try to shirk their duties, but are determined in every way to make their delivery, even if it means breaking the law. Moreover, they disgrace a government official when he obstructs their *shōbai* (business). The common denominator in all of these stories is that merchants in Kamigata rakugo behave uncharacteristically. Kamigata rakugo merchants do things real merchants are not supposed to do and, because of this, the jokes are on the merchant class as a whole.

What is the function of humor in merchant stories? In some ways, it is similar to the humor in non-merchant stories. In *Keikoya*, *Tennōji mairi*, *Kusshami kōshaku*, and *Funa Benkei*, listeners laugh *with* Kiroku as he does the same idiotic things over and over again but makes little progress. Audiences relate to Kiroku because he desires things that most people want: better luck with women (or men), to be able to spend money freely, and to be in control. Kiroku is not usually able to attain these things, or at least not for very long, so he has the audience's sympathy.

The same can be said about protagonists in merchant stories, but, because this happens against a backdrop that represents shōnin katagi, humor in merchant stories is rendered transgressive.

In *Kuchi ireya* and *Hyakunenme*, the bantō misuse their power, get exposed, and audiences can assume that they will be reprimanded at the end. The same might be said for the protagonists of other merchant stories. Does this mean that merchant stories also serve to *reinforce* merchant values? Perhaps on some level, but I do not consider the function of merchant story humor to be simply a matter of ridiculing individuals who fail to live up to values commonly held as legitimate and viable. When these stories are considered in historical context, it becomes clear that the deviant behavior is calling merchant values into question.

In the Genroku period, Kamigata authors and playwrights frequently glorified chōnin in the pages of books and on stages. Ihara Saikaku even painted honorable samurai with a heavily saturated chōnin brush in works such as *Budō denrai ki* (The Transmission of Martial Arts, 1687) and *Buke giri monogatari* (Tales of Samurai Family Honor, 1688).⁶ It could be argued that Chikamatsu (and many before him) criticized merchants for their obsessive materialism or for being obsessed by love, but these characters were generally presented in contrast to upstanding merchants, the true models of virtue. As Holly Blumner has pointed out, kabuki's depraved merchants are regularly portrayed as *yatsushi* (characters in disguise or hiding, which often turn out to be samurai), disowned for disgracing their families. Visually, the character's fall in status is usually shown through a costume change from elegant to threadbare.⁷ Unlike Kamigata

⁶ Miyamoto Mataji, *Osaka no kenkyū*, vol. 5, *Fūzoku shi no kenkyū Kōnoike ke no kenkyū* (Osaka: Seibundō, 1970), 36.

⁷ Holly A. Blumner, "Sakata Tōjūrō, Nakamura Shichisaburō and the Creation of Wagoto Kabuki in the Genroku Era" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 2004), 68.

rakugo's merchant stories, there is no question that these early works served to reinforce shōnin katagi.

For years to come, merchants were celebrated in similar fashion for their adherence to high standards and doubtless because they gave commoners a sense of pride by upsetting the early modern class order of *shi-nō-kō-shō* (warrior, farmer, craftsman, merchant). Richard Torrance writes that literary portrayals of Senba reveal an area that was a center of Japan's economy and progressive thinking into the late early modern and early Meiji periods, but, coming into the twentieth century, there was a fossilization of Senba customs and manners, and rebellion against their severity.⁸ Although Osaka intellectuals endorsed the virtue of merchants and their capacity for righteous action,⁹ the departure from merchant values—and the concept of shōnin as exemplary—was evident at least a century earlier. Katsura Bunji I's *Shibaizuki detchi* and *Shibaizuki teishu*, mentioned in the previous chapter, and a host of other stories increasingly portrayed merchants not as models of industry and success, but as unreliable, unintelligent, and weak. By the Meiji period, the traditional Kamigata rakugo repertoire was loaded with stories that made fun of merchants.

Considering Kamigata rakugo's merchant stories in the context of the decline of Osaka's merchant class, discussed in detail in Chapter Two, it is easy to see that characters' deviant behaviors—doing the reverse of shōnin katagi—illuminate limits and call merchant values into question. If we look again at who does what in stories, this becomes especially clear. In more cases than not, it is the bantō, detchi, or gejo—the hōkōnin—who is the deviant. This does not

⁸ Richard Torrance, "Literary Accounts of the Decline of Senba," *Monumenta Nipponica* 67, no. 1 (2012): 68.

⁹ Tetsuo Najita, *Visions of Virtue in Tokugawa Japan: The Kaitokudō Merchant Academy of Osaka* (1987; repr., Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 94.

only make them the targets of humor, however. Viewed in historical context, hōkōnin transgression also serves to portray the *danna*, *wakadanna*, and their family—the merchant class as a whole—in a negative light, making them the laughingstock. When merchant homes, shops, and employees are dysfunctional, it exposes limits and suggests that there may be faults to be found with the family/owners.

Kamigata *hanashika* tell audiences again and again that merchant stories take place in Senba, or in the house of a wealthy merchant. This is further indication that the devious actions of Kamigata rakugo's *bantō* and other hōkōnin function to sabotage the reputation and legacy of Osaka's wealthy and powerful, who offer hōkōnin promises of a bright future, but in the end—as history tells us—only look out for themselves. Unsurprisingly, there are virtually no Kamigata rakugo stories about *bantō* who get promoted to *bekke*.¹⁰ Kamigata rakugo *bantō* chase women precisely because they do *not* have anything to lose. They send the *wakadanna* off to pleasure districts because they know that their chances of sharing in the riches of the house are unlikely.

Kamigata rakugo merchant stories are naturally full of comical elements, but when read in historical context, their transgressive and satirical nature becomes evident. Hōkōnin in Kamigata rakugo are a reflection of the real-life hōkōnin whose worth was devalued in the course of the nineteenth-century. Beneath the surface of Kamigata rakugo's seemingly harmless wordplay, twists, and *ochi lies* popular resentment toward the men and women at the top of old Osaka's socio-economic ladder. This is consistent with trends in Edo/Tokyo rakugo in regards to *rakugoka* articulating anti-samurai sentiment more explicitly as the early modern era drew to a close. Edo/Tokyo rakugo reflected the lives, attitudes, and language of *Edokko* (i.e., early

¹⁰ The only one that I can come up with is the story *Obi Kyū* (Kyūshichi of the *Obi* Shop), which ends with the line *tadaima bekke de isōrō de gozaimasu* (these days he sits around and does nothing at the *bekke*), which can be read as criticism.

modern/Meiji shitamachi commoners), so it was the ruling class that was targeted. In Kamigata rakugo, hanashika made Osaka's de facto rulers—the merchants—the butts of their jokes.

Considering that it has always been the job of hanashika to remain conscious of their audiences, it is no wonder that they devised merchant centered stories with an implied social critique. Allowing actual hōkōnin to see themselves doing as they please in the pleasure quarters, drinking, enjoying festive music, and spending the boss's money gave them encouragement and imparted a sense of superiority. Seeing the danna and wakadanna sabotaging their own homes, too, must have had a similar effect, allowing those who were disillusioned with hōkōnin life the opportunity to see the merchant world in a state of disorder. Kamigata rakugo enjoyed one of its greatest heydays just as Osaka's traditional merchant system was disintegrating at the beginning of the twentieth century. It would be inaccurate to call this a mere coincidence.

What are the consequences of deviant behavior in Kamigata rakugo? Do the hōkōnin transgressors get away with their mischief? Yes and no: although they seldom if ever face expulsion, they are punished, or it is implied in the end that they will be. The transgressors not being expelled means that they usually do not see the error of their ways, and do not get with the program, but they always face some form of consequence. Thus, the challenge that transgression poses to the existing order is limited—merchant society's discursive hierarchies and stratifications are never completely undone. Rather than something desirable being born at the end of rakugo, it is usually reality that prevails. Nevertheless, just as kyōgen's Tarōkaja and Jirōkaja are chased off the stage by the authority figure with shouts of *Yarumai zo!* (you won't get away with it!), and come back again and again with more shenanigans, Kamigata rakugo's transgressive characters always return to test the limits.

Kamigata rakugo can be read as satire, but hanashika were not out to incite a revolution. It is doubtful, too, that audiences went to shows to conspire or learn ways of making real merchants look bad. Unlike samurai, who were forced make trips to and reside in Edo, among other things, hōkōnin could generally choose to leave service without having to face official consequences. Because their livelihoods were at stake, though, many hōkōnin continued carrying out their duties, disgruntled or not. For those who attended seki, rakugo served as an affordable outlet for, to use Wallace Chafe’s term, “nonseriousness”—a safety valve of sorts whose purpose is to keep people from taking seriously things it would be counterproductive to take seriously.¹¹ Kamigata rakugo’s transgressive stories were an outlet for audiences to enjoy repeated instances of comical *gekokujō* (lit. the low supplanting the high), take pleasure in the euphoria that comes with laughter, and return to their places of work to continue business as usual.

Today, Kamigata rakugo audiences are far removed from the merchant world of old Osaka. It has little relevance in their lives, but many Osakans continue to identify with the merchant class and its values and traditions as part of their cultural heritage. Kamigata rakugo is occasionally used as a vehicle for making social commentary, but the primary function of the art continues to be entertaining audiences with a distinctively *hade* style of rakugo, presenting stories that are cheerful, energetic, and musical. Kamigata rakugo is a shōbai that hanashika work hard at in hopes of retaining repeat customers and winning new ones. The business of Kamigata rakugo has long been making people laugh and feel *raku* (at ease). Kamigata rakugo

¹¹ Wallace Chafe, *The Importance of Not Being Ernest: The Feeling Behind Laughter and Humor* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2007), 11.

embodies Osaka's cultural past and pays tribute to its spirited people. All of these are reasons why there is a revival of interest in Kamigata rakugo today.

III. Future Scholarship on Kamigata Rakugo

Although this study aims to deepen our understanding of how and why Kamigata rakugo stands out as distinct from the Tokyo tradition, and how it ties into the larger subject of Kamigata and Osaka studies, Kamigata rakugo is nowhere near being exhausted as a topic for study. Quite the opposite, these findings should open doors for new work on a number of topics.

One worthwhile topic would be to analyze if (and if so, how) the Kamigata rakugo *koten* tradition underwent any major changes in the post World War II era. Based on the research presented for this study, there do not seem to be any major diversions from the prewar tradition, but the present study does not scrutinize every Kamigata school, nor does it analyze a large number of individual *hanashika*. Considering the astonishingly small number of performers left in the Kamigata circuit after the war and the subsequent booms in separate schools, one wonders if there may not have been some invention of tradition, to borrow Hobsbawm and Ranger's term.¹² It is not uncommon to read or hear conflicting accounts about the Kamigata tradition prior to and immediately after World War II, a good deal of which seems to be based on anecdote. A wide-ranging critique of schools and development of Kamigata rakugo from prewar to postwar would be an interesting study.

¹² E.J. Hobsbawm, and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983). Similar studies in the context of Japan can be found in Stephen Vlastos, *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), and Haruo Shirane, and Tomi Suzuki, eds., *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

Next, Kamigata shinsaku/sōsaku rakugo and its relationship to koten is another topic worthy of scholarly attention. There seems to be a stronger push in recent years to legitimize shinsaku rakugo. This is being headed by the most prolific of shinsaku artists—and current Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai chairperson—Katsura Bunshi VI (formerly Sanshi I). Bunshi VI’s repertoire consists almost solely of shinsaku stories, over two hundred in fact, many of which have been published in anthologies and digital collections. Since ascending to his new historic name, he has worked with increased determination to promote himself as the “Shinsaku Bunshi,” maintaining that shinsaku rakugo is the koten of tomorrow. He has over twenty pupils—as well as hanashika from other schools—who perform his stories, and a host of others perform their own shinsaku, so it is not hard to imagine that Bunshi VI may be right. However, which shinsaku stories have the best hope of becoming classics and why? Do these fit neatly into established genres? Are there radical departures? How do Kamigata and Tokyo shinsaku differ? All of these questions are worth exploring.

Kamigata yosebayashi could use further attention from a music specialist.¹³ Ohayashi-san undergo extensive training in shamisen and voice, but young narimono players often have little or no formal music training. Initially, they aim for *fun’iki* (atmosphere). Playing *ii kagen* (perfunctorily) is acceptable, provided that the right *fun’iki* is achieved. An interesting topic for study would be to examine how trained experts and non-specialists uphold the yosebayashi tradition. A great deal of yosebayashi comes from kabuki, nagauta, jiuta, and other traditions, but how well does yosebayashi reflect these genres? In many cases yosebayashi strikes one as kabuki music being played at double-time, which is understandable since Kamigata rakugo is designed

¹³ Catherine Hallett, Ph.D. candidate at the Australian National University, is currently writing a dissertation on the subject, tentatively titled “Music in Kamigata Rakugo.”

to be *yōki* (cheerful), but is tempo the only component that is different? Considering that ohayashi-san such as Hayashiya Tomi and others handpicked music from kabuki plays and other sources, questions about tradition and invention might be worth asking here, too.

A dissertation has been written on comic storytelling within three discourses that circulated in Edo during the nineteenth-century—the popular literature of city life at the beginning of the century, the popularization of historical inquiry, and the social reform movements at the end of the century—but a full-length study of early modern Kamigata storytelling and hanashibon has yet to be done in English.¹⁴ Japanese scholars have done a fair amount of work on major figures, such as Tsuyu no Gorōbei I, Yonezawa Hikohachi I and II, and Katsura Bunji I; so scholars in Japan and the West would benefit if one focused on hanashika and hanashibon that have received less attention, such as the amateur groups of Osakans who gathered at hanashi no kai and their hanashi no kaibon. Is it possible to tell who the members were? What are the prevailing themes in their stories? Did stories have a significant bearing on the professional repertoire? What were the demographics (age, gender, wealth/social status, etc.) of the audience? A study of amateur hanashi no kai in Osaka, or anything linked to early modern Kamigata comic storytelling, would serve to supplement the present dissertation and other scholarship on rakugo and Kamigata studies.

The nationalist ideology that appeared with the Russo-Japanese War had an impact on a number of arts, especially Naniwabushi, which was viewed by the intelligentsia and others as a potent medium to convey both auditorily and visually a spiritual philosophy or ideology.

Following World War I, Naniwabushi performers in Osaka were used as a medium of

¹⁴ Thomas Joshua Young, “A Touching Talk: Nineteenth-Century Edo Rakugo and the Performance of Language.” (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 2003).

propaganda.¹⁵ Considering that hanashika were in constant contact with Naniwabushi performers at seki and other venues, and that various performing arts organizations were involved with mobilizing the Japanese people for war with large scale events, such as the *Jūgo hōkō geinō taikai* (Festival of Performing Arts to Support the Military) in Osaka in 1940,¹⁶ and numerous other events in support of the war effort, an investigation of rakugo's negotiation of militarism would make a fascinating study.

Women began establishing themselves as lifelong hanashika in the 1970s, but there were women who tried their hands at rakugo prior to this. In 1952 and 1953 the *Asahi Shinbun* ran two short articles reporting that Shunpūtei Ryūkyō VI (1899-1979) had accepted a high school-age girl (Shunpūtei Shōkyō I, b. 1940?) as his deshi. Both articles made a big deal about this, though not without doubting her ability to make it as a professional.¹⁷ *Asahi Shinbun* ran an article about a female rakugoka, Wakayanagi Enjō (fl. turn of twentieth century), as early as 1898,¹⁸ and the *Yomiuri Shinbun* reported the debut of Tachibanaya Kakitsu I (1881-1906), also a woman, in 1895.¹⁹ Considering the important role that women (including ohayashi-san and iromono performers) have played and continue to play in the rakugo world, a study on gender and rakugo is

¹⁵ Manabe Masayoshi, "Naniwa-bushi and Social Debate in Two Postwar Periods: The Russo-Japanese War and the First World War," in Hugh de Ferranti and Alison Tokita, eds., *Music, Modernity and Locality in Prewar Japan: Osaka and Beyond* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 123-34

¹⁶ Terauchi Naoko, "An Alternate *Gagaku* Tradition: The Garyōkai and Modern Osaka," in de Ferranti and Tokita, *Music, Modernity and Locality in Prewar Japan*, 181-2.

¹⁷ "Onna rakugoka omemie: chikagoro rakugokai arekore," *Asahi Shinbun*, December 6, 1952, accessed August 6, 2014, Kikuzō II; "Kashōbari no makura: josei rakugoka tōjō su," *Asahi Shinbun*, January 8, 1953, accessed August 6, 2014, Kikuzō II. Shōkyō I did succeed as a professional for a short time, but retired once she got married—to a rakugoka.

¹⁸ "Enjō sugata o kakusu," *Asahi Shinbun*, December 15, 1898, accessed August 6, 2014, Kikuzō II.

¹⁹ "Shimeko no kaeri saki," *Yomiuri Shinbun*, December 30, 1895, accessed August 6, 2014, Yomidasu Rekishikan.

in order. This could open doors to the study of rakugo and *multiple* genders, transgenders, masculinities, femininities, and sexualities, pushing the discussion of rakugo beyond a monolithic master narrative of hegemonic patterns.²⁰ The general conception is that rakugo—in both real and story worlds—is ‘male-dominated’, but this should be problematized further.

²⁰ Brigitte Steger, and Angelika Koch, eds., *Manga Girl Seeks Herbivore Boy: Studying Japanese Gender at Cambridge* (Zurich: Lit Verlag, 2013), 9. In the original context, this concept refers not to rakugo, but social practices.

APPENDIX A

GEIDAN: AN INTERVIEW WITH HAYASHIYA SOMEMARU IV (1949-)



Figure A.1. Hayashiya Somemaru IV (1949-) in formal greeting pose on stage at the Hanjōtei in October 2009. Courtesy of Hayashiya Somemaru IV.

Hayashiya Somemaru IV was born Kimura Kōshi on October 10, 1949. From the time of his birth until high school, he lived in south Osaka with his family in humble dwellings. In 1966, he dropped out of high school to begin a rakugo apprenticeship with Hayashiya Somemaru III (1906-68) and was subsequently given the *geimei* (stage name) Hayashiya Someji II. Thanks to simultaneously studying arts such as shamisen and buyō, his rakugo grew into an especially *hade*

art filled with yosebayashi. In 1991 he was promoted to the name Somemaru IV and recognized as an emerging artist in the forty-ninth Ministry of Education Arts Awards. In 2007 he served as supervising editor and actor trainer for (and played a role in) the NHK morning drama series *Chiri-tote-chin*.¹ In 2008, he received special honors from the City of Osaka and, in 2010, he was recognized as a person of cultural importance in the sixtieth Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Arts Awards. In 2011 he published his “life work,” *Kamigata rakugo: yosebayashi no sekai* (Kamigata Rakugo: The World of Yose Music), which includes a detailed commentary, four CDs containing over 200 songs, and sheet music for shamisen. In 2013, Somemaru received the Medal of Honor with Purple Ribbon from the Government of Japan, in the name of the Emperor. To date, Somemaru has trained thirteen formal rakugo deshi. He has also trained seven shamisen players (unusual for a hanashika) who now have careers as ohayashi-san.

From October 2010 to March 2012, Somemaru allowed me to be his *rinji* (temporary) deshi. Although most of my ‘apprenticeship’ was spent cleaning Somemaru’s house, making tea the way he liked it, caring for his kimono, and running errands, I occasionally had the opportunity to learn rakugo and music (shamisen, drums, etc.) from Somemaru and some of his formal deshi. I accompanied Somemaru to most of his shows, which were usually in Osaka, but sometimes in other cities around Japan. Somemaru treated me as he did his formal deshi by paying for all meals and other incidental fees such as transportation costs. He also presented me with kimono, art, books, and *goshūgi* (gift money). This *geidan* (lit. talk on art) interview was conducted on January 18, 2012, toward the end of my apprenticeship. Although I did my best to guide the interview where I thought it should go, I also had to be a respectful deshi and listen

¹ This is onomatopoeia for the sound a shamisen makes, and the title of a rakugo story.

with interest when Somemaru took it in other directions. I have included the entire geidan, translated, which should give readers a unique look inside the head and heart of one of contemporary Kamigata rakugo's respected masters.

MWS: Shishō, why did you choose rakugo as a profession?

SOMEMARU: Growing up, I liked listening to recordings of various things. I also went to rakugo shows at yose. I liked plays too. You need quite a few people to put on plays, but you only need one for rakugo, right? One person impressing an audience all by himself was appealing. That's what I liked most about rakugo. Basically, I thought it would be better to become a rakugoka than an actor.

MWS: Did you like rakugo from the time you were in elementary school?

SOMEMARU: No, I didn't necessarily like rakugo. I just saw it. I didn't know that I really liked it until after junior high. Grade school kids don't know what they really like at that age.

MWS: As you've said in the past half-jokingly, you graduated from high school in two years in order to enter the rakugo world. Were you sure at that age that you wanted to become a professional and make rakugo your career?

SOMEMARU: Well, I knew at the time that there were all kinds of walks in life. One path was to graduate high school and go on to college, get a career, work until retirement. You know, the 'salary man' track. I wasn't really interested in that kind of life, though. If it were all the same, I would rather be a shokunin. I wanted to do something that I could do *by myself*. I wanted a skill that I could polish and carry out with my own hands. That's the kind of job that I wanted. Of course, I liked rakugo too. As I approached my last year of high school, it seemed as though all people were talking about was college, what kind of questions would be on entrance exams, how they could study better and get in. It felt like I was attending a college prep school. Things are quite a bit different now—students are a little freer to do what they want, but my school, Imamiya High School, didn't want to lose to any other school. The entire school and all the teachers were like that. It was a good school and students often went on to Osaka University and Kyoto University, but that's all they were concerned with. It was nothing but statistics. It may have been bigheaded of me to think so at the time, but I thought there was something wrong with that kind of education. I didn't think school should be like that. Grades weren't the most important thing to me. At least that's how I felt. So, based on all of that, I managed to graduate in two years (laughs).

MWS: Could you share some of your memories of your shugyō period?

SOMEMARU: Well, my shugyō was relatively short. It only lasted a year and ten months. My shishō wasn't that hard on me. He never really yelled at me or hit me. He wasn't that type of

person. He would rather hover over me and pick apart what I was doing, asking how I could make so many mistakes. I think I would have preferred him to whack me one. He always nitpicked and that was trying. My master wasn't one to talk much about rakugo, but he would talk about the best ways to go through life as a *geinin* (entertainer). He told me how to behave around other people, how to flatter people. Basically, he taught me how to live. You could say he was passionate about teaching me the best way to walk through life. He taught me how to think like a *shōbainin* (tradesman).

MWS: It sounds like he gave you just the advice you needed.



Figure A.2. Hayashiya Somemaru III (1906-68). Courtesy of Hayashiya Somemaru IV.

SOMEMARU: Well, now that I think of it, yes. But see, I was only sixteen at the time. My master was 61. See? A boy doesn't know about those kinds of things. I just thought he was too particular. Now I'm about the age he was when he died. Now I can look back at all that and understand what he was talking about. I'm sure everybody's the same, though. Children

never listen meekly to what their parents have to say. They reject it. But they usually figure it out when they become parents. It's the same thing with shishō and deshi. What's most important is that he took the time to teach me the things that he did.

MWS: Were you on your own as a professional once your shishō passed away?

SOMEMARU: Yes, I didn't really have a choice. I did go to some other [shishō] to ask them to teach me things and there was talk of me starting my shugyō over with a new master, but my school was the only one with the name Hayashiya. See, I would have had to become Katsura so-and-so, or Shōfukutei so-and so.

MWS: Is that what happened with Tsukitei Katchō [1938-]?

SOMEMARU: No (smiles), my shishō expelled him from our school. Yeah, he was kicked out. [Katsura] Beichō-shishō took him in after that. What happened there was inevitable. For me, starting up with another shishō would have been kind of sad. I didn't want to throw away the name I'd been given. So, I made a decision to carry on without a different shishō.

MWS: What kind of experiences did you have once you were on your own?

SOMEMARU: I had all kinds of experiences, good and bad. It's up to every person to decide what to make of their experiences after they have them.

MWS: What kind of bad experiences did you have? Did you ever feel like giving up the profession?

SOMEMARU: Well, sometimes I felt like a failure. But all human beings deal with this during the courses of their lives. Fortunately, there are people in the world who are willing to help guide you. I had people like that around me, so I got by. If those people weren't there for me, I probably would have quit. It's been quite a few years since anything has surprised me, but I have good and bad experiences every day. That's how I've spent life until now and I like to think that I've figured most things out. That's how anybody gets to the point where they can stand on their own two feet. But, I think it's wrong to do something drastic just because this or that happens. It's best to live based on the collective life experience. Of course, like the rest of the world, good things and bad things happen in the rakugo world.

MWS: Could you talk about the yose that you regularly performed at or organized as a young hanashika?

SOMEMARU: When I was young, there wasn't anything called *chiiki* (regional) yose yet.² There were only about ten people around my age doing rakugo when I started. Everybody

² Sometimes referred to as *chihō* (provincial) yose, *chiiki* yose are informal performance spaces. These 'yose' were often organized by rakugo fans and played a critical role for Kamigata rakugo in the post-World War II era. Without them the art may not have survived. *Chiiki* yose, as

else was getting up in years. There were hardly enough *wakate* (young hanashika) to count. We started putting on shows of our own and that worked out all right. See, [Shōfukutei] Nikaku [III, 1937-] and his generation formed a group. My generation formed our own group. We called our shows the *Tori no kai*. Nikaku and his group's were called *Jianji*. My group included [Katsura] Sanshi, [Katsura] Koeda [1948-],³ [Katsura] Harunosuke—Haruaki at the time [1948-]—and [Shōfukutei] Tsuruko [1948-]. We weren't exactly the same age, but our *nyūmon* (school entrance) was around the same time.

MWS: Would any of the older hanashika make special appearances at your shows?

SOMEMARU: When we had our one-year anniversary, [Katsura] Kobunshi-shishō [later Bunshi V] came and performed. That was about it. It was just us.

MWS: Has Kamigata rakugo changed since the Tenma Tenjin Hanjōtei opened in 2006?

SOMEMARU: As you know, those big entertainment companies Shōchiku and Yoshimoto have been around for a long time, so rakugoka have, for as long as I can remember, been more or less split up. We never had a yose just for rakugo. Sure, people always talked about building a rakugo *kaikan* (hall) of some kind, but then there was the issue of money. The biggest changes started happening when [Shōfukutei] Shokaku-shishō [VI] was the chairman of the Association. See, when my shishō was chairman, it was still an era when it was hard to hope for anything. After my shishō died, Shokaku-shishō took over as chairman and he looked for all kinds of new opportunities. He would always say, “let's do a show,” or “let's set up a yose.” He loved doing those kinds of things. Those kinds of efforts, by everybody, are what led to the Hanjōtei eventually being built. Before that, we only had informal venues like the Shimanouchi Yose. In Kobe there was the Ryūshōtei and Rengatei... the Ōzaki Rakugokai, and places like that.⁴ People in the Association worked together to put these kinds of shows on. Of course, the consensus was always that we needed to do rakugo and *just* rakugo. People like Shokaku-shishō and Beichō-shishō were at the center of it all.⁵ Everybody performed at those shows, from the wakate to the veterans. That's how it was at Shimanouchi anyway. Everybody performed. In the early days, the Shimanouchi Yose would run for five days at a time and the seats would always be full. Now they just do one show at a time. My shishō died before he could see the art make a comeback, but that was what his generation was faced with.

MWS: What is it like performing at the Hanjōtei?

the name indicates, are located in various places in and outside of Osaka. Venues include community centers, hot-spring resorts, school gymnasiums, banquet rooms in restaurants, personal homes, and more. Some chiiki yose have histories that date back several decades.

³ Not to be confused with the current Katsura Koeda (1955-).

⁴ These are chiiki yose.

⁵ Somemaru is referring to the Kamigata rakugo *Shitennō* (four greats, including Bunshi V and Katsura Harudanji III [1930-]) and hanashika in their generation such as Tsuyu no Gorō (later Gorōbei II, 1932-2009).

SOMEMARU: Well, you know, people who attend shows there usually understand it's a rakugo yose. Until we had the Hanjōtei, the only places that were open daily were places like Yoshimoto's Kagetsu Gekijō [i.e., Namba Grand Kagetsu and other Kagetsu theaters]. People contracting with Shōchiku had venues like the Kadoza, Shōchikuza, and Naniwaza. But these are all *hutsū no* (ordinary) yose. See, at these kind of yose, in Osaka, people want to hear manzai more than they do rakugo. Or they want to see Yoshimoto *shinkigeki* (new comedy). That's all you have in the audience. And they come in big *dantai* (group tours). It's hard for us [hanashika] to perform in venues like those. We get sandwiched between other acts and are expected to do our rakugo. Rakugo usually only gets one or two slots out of a total of ten or fifteen at places like those. Two at the most. And that's what we've been up against for years. Compared to before, it's a lot easier to perform rakugo now [at the Hanjōtei]. The size is right too. See, at places like the Kagetsu or Kadoza, they've got about a thousand seats. Those are the kinds of places we had to perform in. Considering that aspect, it's easier in the Hanjōtei, but then again, it might be too easy for the young artists. They don't know what real stage fright is.

Then you've got the people who come to the Hanjōtei without a clue about what rakugo is. Most young hanashika have been raised in an *onshitsu* (greenhouse), so they don't know how to make that kind of audience laugh. When they're faced with a crowd that doesn't like the show, they don't know how to respond. They don't have the 'know-how'. And that's the most important thing. In our profession, we never know what kind of people are going to show up in the audience. It's been about five years since we built the Hanjōtei, so we've been in the paper and have gotten a reputation. During that time, all kinds of people have showed up to check out rakugo at least once; so most of them know what's going on. It's been five years. We're no longer just a novelty, so, if people think we're boring, there are plenty of other things out there to go do instead. They've got choices. We don't know if they're going to choose to come back to the Hanjōtei or not. That's why it's up to hanashika to sell themselves and make people want to come again. This is one thing the Hanjōtei is good for.

See, for rakugoka, the point of it all isn't just to do rakugo. We have to be *shōbainin*. It's our job to *sell* rakugo. Say you have a great product, but whether that product sells or not depends on your pitch. You can lay it out nicely, or be a good talker, or advertise. Hanashika have to do all kinds of things. Of course, our rakugo has to be artistic, but we also have to do a number of other things. We have to make appealing flyers, and choose the right photographs to use. It's all about business. We have to make so many flyers... Go to the Hanjōtei and you see tons of them, don't you? It's up to us to design flyers that will make people stop and want to grab one. We have to make people want to come to our shows. Nobody's going to take every single flyer. It's a competition. There are other ways to make people come to your shows, too. One is performing well enough to make them think at the end that they would like to see you on stage again. You never want to lose an audience once you have them in front of you. You're doing something wrong if people go home thinking that your performance was boring, or "I never want to see that guy again." This will lead to decay.

MWS: How would you describe your *geifū* (artistic style)?

SOMEMARU: This is something that is up to audiences to break down. As far as I'm concerned, I am my *geifū*. That's it, nothing more. Artists have to build themselves over time. I guess my *geifū* comes down to the things I like. For example, I like kabuki, I like shamisen, and I like *odori* (dance). It's the things that one likes that develop into one's *geifū*. Some people enjoy *atarashii gyagu* (new jokes), some people like *shinsaku*. Whatever it is that people like, those things become their *geifū*. Like I was telling you the other day, *shugyō* is about figuring out what kind of artist you want to be, what kind of things you like, and what you want to do in the future. These things are the most important. You will get more out of *shugyō* if you dedicate yourself to identifying these things. You'll have better form in life if you can accomplish this.

MWS: What are your special skills or techniques that make you stand out from other artists?

SOMEMARU: Oh (laughs), I don't know that I have any. There may be plenty of people out there who can do the same exact things I do, but just don't show it. Rakugo is all about talking, right? People in other walks of life use their respective skills to make things that are tangible. Machines, woodwork, textiles, confections, cuisine... things like that. Those are the people who really know how to make something. There's nothing like that in rakugo. You can't *see* rakugo. We make something you can't *see*, right? What we do is an *ippatsu shōbu* (one-shot game). If we were making something on a machine and it didn't turn out right, we could throw it away and start over again, or fix it. If it was food, we might change the flavor, but you can't do that with rakugo. You've got one shot. If you blow it, you blow it, and your audience may not come back. That's why you have to treat each and every show as if it's the most important. This is why I think preparation is crucial.

I think people should try a number of things out until they're thirty or so, and be willing to fail from time to time. When you fail, you feel bad, and that's when new ideas are born. So, one shouldn't be afraid to fail. If you are, you won't grow. I was told from a very young age that I should try out a number of things in my rakugo; that if I limited myself, I would eventually shrivel up. It's okay to try something and fail, or do something poorly, but the point is that, if you keep trying a number of things, you will land on something that works. I don't think it would be possible for an artist to reach his forties or fifties if he didn't go through a process of trial and error. If you try to be perfect at everything, it will have a negative effect later on.

I've been told that I was good at this or that since I was young, and this was because I tried all kinds of things. I wasn't necessarily happy that people complimented me, though. If you're skilled at something, how are you going to improve? I've never thought that I was skilled; I thought I was just doing my part by trying to learn as much as possible.

Personally, I like absolutely everything that has to do with rakugo. Everything. On the other hand, I have absolutely no interest in things that don't have a connection to rakugo. Like golf. Nikaku is a golfer, and Bunshi-shishō [V] also liked golf, you know. But, that has nothing to do with rakugo. It has nothing to do with rakugo, so I hate it. Baseball too. But things like shamisen and kabuki, sure. And I like some things that aren't performing arts, for example sculpture, art, and books, but all these have to do with *geidō* (the arts). I think all of these things can be connected to rakugo.

MWS: What are your thoughts on shinsaku rakugo?

SOMEMARU: Well, I think that there has to be all kinds of rakugo. For example, say you go to the store to buy some clothes. How are you going to feel if everything is exactly the same? Yes, you want variety, and occasionally some things with a bizarre flair. That's what customers go into stores for, the variety. They go into stores so they can choose what they like. Rakugo's the same, so we've got to have a little bit of this and that, so audiences can pick and choose and find something that suits their tastes. We've got to have different types and genres. I don't really feel that shinsaku is good or bad. It's all rakugo.

MWS: Have you done shinsaku/sōsaku in the past?

SOMEMARU: I've done some of my own stuff in the past, yes, but I don't think anything we can create today could top the stories that our predecessors composed. It's impossible to make anything today that would be better. Sure, some people are performing this shinsaku or that, but if you analyze the contents of those stories, they're just a mirror of koten. People are just applying koten techniques. The way shinsaku is formed and performed, it's really just a copy. Maybe the contents or delivery of sōsaku comes across as new, but as far as technique goes, it's really the same. You can't say shinsaku is completely different. If it was, you couldn't call it rakugo. Shinsaku is just another sector of the art.

Sure, it may be kind of awkward to hear people tell certain shinsaku while wearing kimono, but hanashika are telling those stories as rakugo. They are required to wear kimono. If hanashika do something completely new and call it something other than rakugo, that would be inappropriate. Shinsaku is fine so long as the people doing it are using koten as their point of departure. And they should make this clear. They should articulate that shinsaku is only possible because koten came before it. That's how I feel anyway.

Take the koten that hanashika do. Take the koten that I do. This isn't the same as the koten that my shishō did. He passed his stories down to me, yes, but there are various things in his stories that today's audiences wouldn't be able to relate to. Some people don't understand [old] words, or ochi. There are a number of issues, right? So, it's up to artists to change certain things so today's audiences can understand rakugo. In a sense, this is a form of sōsaku, isn't it? What I'm getting at is, it doesn't matter if you are doing koten or not; rakugo is in a constant state of flux. It has to be or it wouldn't work.

Take arts like nō, kyōgen, or bunraku; these don't change. Not a bit. They use scripts. These arts are essentially frozen in time. That's why they don't suit modern audiences. Of course there are people out there who love these arts, but that's only because they have a special interest in them. Most of the time, people go to shows to learn something, or they're conducting research. I don't doubt that those kinds of people are having a good time. The reason those arts are still around is because that special group of people exists. The case is different with rakugo, though. We can't rely on a small group of specialists to support us. Rakugo is about giving today's audiences a laugh in that moment and hoping they'll come back for more.

MWS: Do you have any concerns about the future of Kamigata rakugo?

SOMEMARU: If I worried about something like that, there's no way I would be able to keep doing what I do. It's up to each generation to worry about the art in its own time. Like I told you earlier, when I started, there weren't even ten of us wakate. That was my generation and it was up to us to think about what we were going to do for the art. The reason I stuck with it was because I loved rakugo. So long as young people keep showing up wanting to do rakugo because they love it, rakugo will never go away. Sure, there will probably be times when the situation improves or gets worse, but that's how currents flow. Good times and bad times, bad times and good. That's how it will be with every generation.

Take right now, for instance; there are all kinds of young people doing rakugo these days, right? Well (laughs), some of them are coming in because they can't find jobs elsewhere, but they're also aware of the interest and charm that rakugo has. So as long as there are always a few young people around, the art will be fine. We can't change the fact that my generation had to make the art work with ten or twenty people. Who knows, a time like that may come again. And, hopefully, another generation would bring another hundred, or two hundred performers like we have today.

I view this as a good generation for rakugo. I'm grateful for all that we have. But who knows what tomorrow might bring. But that's how all humans live. Basically, there's no point in fretting about the future. Nobody can live like that. Keep your feet planted in *today* and that's when you will be truly living. Who knows, work might even turn out to be fun. Something I always try to keep in the back of my head is that this kind of work *is* fun. I always want to be involved with rakugo. Anything can happen in the future, but I will leave it to that generation to figure it out.

MWS: Kamigata is often called the musical rakugo when compared to Tokyo rakugo. Is this an accurate description?

SOMEMARU: Kamigata rakugo has a certain *ongakusei* (musicality), yes. Compared to Tokyo rakugo it has *ongakusei*. That's one of the draws of Kamigata rakugo. I'm not saying that it's good or bad; it's simply a result of the *fūdo* (local climate). But, as you know, not all Kamigata rakugo is musical. Kamigata rakugo has a number of elements that stand out from Tokyo, though. It's not like Edo rakugo is completely without music, but people from Tokyo still like to point out that our rakugo is more musical, as if it was a defect. Our art gets a good deal of discrimination from people in Tokyo. They hate it. They have a different way of listening to rakugo there. Take their *ochi*, for example; there's usually a long pause between the *ochi* and the [exit] music. That's basically done to give audiences time to get the joke. Of course, there are reasons why Tokyo rakugo is different. In the past, it wasn't acceptable for rakugoka there to perform *nigiyaka* (lively) rakugo. They couldn't. Officials would be on their case. In Osaka, they could belt it out however they pleased. This is one reason Tokyo rakugo became more subdued. They did rakugo in the manner that it was most logical under the circumstances, not that they necessarily wanted to do it that way. They couldn't make it loud and musical, so they didn't.

MWS: How many stories would you say are in your repertoire?

SOMEMARU: The stories that one can call their *mochi neta* (repertoire) are those that they can actually perform *and* satisfy audiences with. This is different than simply knowing stories. I know a lot of stories. There are a lot of stories I could do if somebody asked me to, but whether these can be my *shōbai mon* or *shōhin* (products to sell), that's a different story. I can say that I know two hundred stories, but that's just knowing them. Whether I can please audiences with them is a totally different matter. You can't call these *mochi neta*.

MWS: So, how many *mochi neta* do you have?

SOMEMARU: (Laughs) Yes, well, the number's gone down... Maybe thirty or so?

MWS: Do you have a favorite story out of those?

SOMEMARU: I have a lot of favorites. I like shibaibanashi. There are a number of things I like, right? So I like rakugo that includes those things. That's why I like stories such as *Nedoko* (That's My Bed), *Ko wa kasugai* (Children Are Staples), and *Ukare no kuzuyori* (The Merry Ragpicker).⁶

MWS: Are there any stories that you don't like?

SOMEMARU: Sure, the stories that I don't do. I dislike those (laughs). I dislike them, so I don't do them. It's natural to not like stories. But then, somebody may do one of those stories in an interesting way and that could make me think that it's not such a bad story after all. That happens from time to time. The stories that one likes to do change over time, too. I liked different stories in my twenties, thirties, forties, and fifties. There are stories that I used to do that I wouldn't think of doing now. I guess it depends on the frame of mind one is in. You know, Matt, you may think about something in a certain way today, but that may change when you're fifty. You thought about things differently when you were sixteen than you do now, right? It's the same thing. That's one of the great things about rakugo.

Look at shokunin; they spend years making the same thing, perfecting it. There's no way we can ever make the same product in rakugo. Like I said, it's an *ippatsu shōbu*. Like the adage goes, *ichi go ichi e* (one lifetime, one encounter). That's what rakugo is. That one moment in that hall with that one audience, that's what's most important. In fact, it would be wrong to try to preserve that moment. That moment holds the emotions of the performer, and the emotions of the audience. The rakugo that happens there belongs to the moment. You see people selling rakugo on DVDs, trying to leave behind their rakugo. The truth is, this is inappropriate. What's on those DVDs belongs to a different moment. I suppose people need to make a living somehow... Just remember that rakugo is something that happens between one performer and one audience. It is a privileged encounter. Nothing could ever top that one moment. All those DVDs do is provide a vestige of what happened. They can tell you what the atmosphere of the performance was like, what kind of

⁶ *Nedoko* contains an amusing *jōruri* parody; *Ko wa kasugai* is a touching story that often brings audiences to tears, and *Ukare no kuzuyori* has an assortment of *yosebayashi*, dance, and more.

enthusiasm the crowd had, but nothing of the mutual breathing that the performer and the audience shared, the game of catch that they played. You can't get that from a DVD. So, you see, DVDs and the like are just a memory of rakugo, not something to exhibit what the art really is. Nothing but a memory. You could say the same for kabuki. That's why people pay to see it live, to experience the moment. It's not right to try to record it. It does nothing for the art.

MWS: Are there any characters that are particularly difficult to perform?

SOMEMARU: There's a story called *Kogoto Kōbei* (Kōbei the Complainer). I've wanted to make it a regular part of my repertoire for a while, but I really haven't managed to do so yet. All the character really does in the story is complain. Recently, I've been trying to figure out how to portray somebody like that as interesting, how to make him human. There's nothing really funny about a person who spends all his time grumbling. It's my job to figure out how to make somebody like that interesting. I suppose that's the case with any story you haven't done before. You have to decide exactly who the characters are. If you can figure out what a certain character is supposed to be like, then it's a lot more enjoyable to portray them. The process of exploring who that character is is fun, too. Maybe one day it hits you that such-and-such character should be presented in this way. Rakugo is a daily process of discovery. There's no single way to portray characters.

MWS: Could you tell me what it was like for you to become a shishō?

SOMEMARU: I think it's very important to have deshi. Because it sets you on a new path of learning. If you don't have deshi, you'll always be *hannin mae* (half-fledged). When you have a deshi, you have to work and teach with that individual in mind. You have to have consideration for that person. Being a shishō is a priceless experience. Of course, people in the world need to look out for themselves, but being a shishō requires you to think about somebody else on a deeper level. It's not a simple case of them being your deshi and getting to tell them what to do. Having a deshi costs money, sure, but it's not like you can really spend more than you have. I like to treat my deshi to things, but when the money is tight, we just make do with less. A bowl of rice and an *umeboshi* (pickled plum) will suffice. I suppose one has to at least be able to feed their deshi if they want to be a shishō. You feed them and hope for the best. Sometimes they need to be told that they're doing things wrong, but sometimes they do well and make you proud. You teach them what you know. If they manage to win an award or something, that feels great. It is always nice to get good results. It's like harvesting fruit; you plant a seed and water the plant as it grows, hoping that it will bear delicious fruit. It's a lot of work to be a shishō, but the pay-off can be great.

MWS: Would you mind sharing some of your thoughts on Yoshimoto Kōgyō?

SOMEMARU: I can't say that Yoshimoto has really done much for me, so I don't think too much about them (laughs). They're a company, but it's not a company that I work for or anything. If they call me with a job, sure, I'll take it. You can think of me as a small

independent company, and Yoshimoto as a company that contracts me from time to time. That's all Yoshimoto is to me.

MWS: Does Yoshimoto have the best interests of hanashika and rakugo in mind?

SOMEMARU: Well, yeah, but I guess it depends on the situation too. There are times when they have us in mind; there are times when they don't. But that's the way a company like that works.

MWS: Are Yoshimoto and other entertainment companies necessary now that the Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai has achieved status as a *kōeki shadan hōjin* (public interest incorporated association)?

SOMEMARU: Well, I don't know. It doesn't matter either way, does it? It's not as if rakugo was able to survive because Yoshimoto was there. This isn't something for hanashika to even worry about, really. Companies work like this: they buy what they need and dispense with the things that they don't. The only thing important to companies is profit. That's the aim of all companies, isn't it? If somebody feels like Yoshimoto isn't working for them, they can sever ties and move on. Everybody is free to do that. It's just a waste of time to blame Yoshimoto if things go wrong. People should take it upon themselves to do their own marketing anyway. That's how it's always been. I've never said that Yoshimoto was good or bad. Yoshimoto has gotten a bad rap from hanashika from the very beginning, basically for buying up yose and opening venues that featured nothing but *yasumon* (cheap acts). The company knew that the top hanashika would always be hard to please, so they were faced with difficulties of their own.

MWS: I've heard a lot of people in the Kamigata rakugo world say, *mina raibaru ya* (we are all rivals). Do you feel the same way?

SOMEMARU: Sure, this is true for all *geinin*. This is a given. It's true in *manzai*, theater, everything. You show me one person who is in the entertainment business for the sole purpose of bettering the art. There's nobody. *Geinin* don't entertain for the sheer benefit of others, or just for themselves. I like to think that we look for a harmony of the two. This is the case in *nō* and *kabuki*, what have you. But, deep down, and this goes for each and every one of us, nobody wants to lose to the next guy. This is how it is in all lines of work.

I consider my own *deshi* as rivals at some point. I may have been the one to train them, but, if they get better than I, I might just go and ask them to teach *me* something. What would I get out of pointing my finger at them and yelling, "dammit, I'm the *shishō*, you're the *deshi*, you're not supposed to be more popular than me!" I get nothing. This would limit me as a human being. If one is willing to be humble and learn from others, they can only grow as a result. Of course, health and energy come into play, but it's extremely important to remain human. Rakugo isn't a skill; it's about being human.

Sure, there are bad people out there, and maybe they even manage to get popular, but they will vanish at some point. Everybody in the world dies. What is important is what people say after you're gone. If people say, "that person lived a good life," then you've done

all right. If somebody ends life thinking, “I should have done this, I should have that, if I had only been a little nicer,” it’s unfortunate. That’s why it’s important to make the most of each and every day.

As I age, I suppose I get a stronger sense of religion or life philosophy. I’m older now, so I’ve managed to figure some things out. I spend a lot more time thinking about these kinds of things. Maybe it’s just because I’m old, but I think this is what makes us tick. The most important thing in life is to discover something good and move toward it. That’s what life is about, I feel. This is critical and the person who manages to do it has great appeal. What I refer to as ‘good’ isn’t material though. It’s mental. Forget money, property, fame, assets—these have absolutely nothing to do with it. You can’t take any of that stuff with you when you die. But those who pursue higher ideals, who work to improve their skills, think on a deeper level about things, study... anything achieved with these can be taken to the next life. That is why they are hard to imitate (smiles). These are humanity’s true assets. When good people die, those left behind are truly sad and think, “oh, if that person had only lived a little longer.”

MWS: Is there anything you would like to change about Kamigata rakugo?

SOMEMARU: No matter what the *geigoto* (art) is, no one should ever try to change it. This is an unwritten rule. This is a different matter than something naturally undergoing change, however. If something changes on its own, no one should try to stop it. This, like all things, has a dual nature. Everything is like this. Of course, this applies to rakugo too. In rakugo there are countless depictions of people and situations at a time when there weren’t any modern conveniences. This is part of rakugo and our past, so we need to try to keep these in the art. We shouldn’t change certain aspects of rakugo style, like kimono. Hanashika choose a kimono to wear and present a story, looking this way then that, sitting in one place. These conventions should be left as they are, of course. At the same time, there are things that have to be changed, you know, the things that are too complicated for people to understand anymore.

You know what [Tokyo rakugoka] Tatekawa Danshi (VII, 1936-2011) said? He said it doesn’t really matter how people say things—if it’s just one person talking, then you’ve got rakugo. I guess there’s that way of looking at it, but I don’t feel the same way. For it to truly be rakugo, hanashika need to build a solid sense of style that they can be recognized for. Hanashika have to study constantly to maintain their art.

MWS: I’ve heard people say that Kamigata rakugo has a manzai feel. Is this true?

SOMEMARU: Well, manzai doesn’t really even have a definition. It’s undefined. It’s the opposite, really: manzai has Kamigata rakugo *aji* (flavor). Anybody who says Kamigata rakugo is like manzai doesn’t know what he or she is talking about. After all, Kamigata rakugo is *manzai no haha* (manzai’s mother). To say that Kamigata rakugo sounds like manzai, well, sure it does. That’s a given. Because Kamigata rakugo is *manzai no haha*. It’s the parent. Of course manzai comes from a number of different places—it has a mother, a father, a grandfather, what have you. Rakugo is one of manzai’s parents. It’s natural that they look alike. I guess what those people are trying to say is that some hanashika perform

rakugo with a sort of manzai twist or something? It really makes no difference to me. If somebody wants to perform rakugo like manzai, that's up to them. If that hanashika's rakugo becomes better or funnier as a result, it's fine isn't it? Manzai is what it is today because it's a combination of various arts, and rakugo's the same—it's a combination of various arts. It references all kinds of things. Whether that changes rakugo for the better or makes it worse, who's to say? You don't know until you try. If it doesn't work, you just give it up.

MWS: If not a hanashika, what do you think you would have become?

SOMEMARU: My answer would be different if I was younger, but right now I'm going to say a temple monk (smiles). Oh, the peace and quiet would be delightful. And I would still get to meet all kinds of people. Maybe this is appealing to me because it is another line of work where I would be asked to consider the needs of others. I think being a monk would be somewhat similar to being a rakugoka. In rakugo, you always have to take your audience into consideration. You have to think about how to make this person more comfortable, how to make that person laugh more. Thinking of others is extremely important in rakugo. It's the same for monks, I believe. Sure, there are good monks and bad monks, just like hanashika, but they always have to think about the needs of others.

MWS: What comes to mind when you hear the word Osaka?

SOMEMARU: Osaka is a lot different today from what it was in the past. It's certainly different from when I was a child. Go back a little bit further, to the Taishō and Meiji eras, things were a *lot* different then. I've recently been exchanging letters with a woman who is eighty-something years old. She knows a lot about old Osaka. I gather from her, and this is my general take from being a rakugoka, that the Osakans of yesteryear were incredibly hard workers. They accumulated knowledge from a variety of sources so they could apply it to their work. They enjoyed the changing seasons, enjoyed learning various arts, enjoyed local festivals, observed various annual events—that seems to be what Osaka used to be about. That's the Osaka that I love most.

One thing that still seems to be alive in Osaka is the way that people relate to one another. I go out to the provinces for shows quite often and meet an assortment of people. Of all the people that I perform for, Osakans give me the best response. I guess it's because, deep down, they're cheerful people. By the way, you know that Edo wasn't originally made up of the abrupt Edokko type, don't you? It was a city made up mostly of people from the provinces. The people who lived in Edo basically invented an Edokko identity over time. That wasn't who they originally were. It's something that the times gave birth to. In Osaka, it was the same way; the local climate gave birth to the culture, and you can still find some of this today. I love people and places that exhibit qualities of old Osaka.

MWS: What comes to mind when you hear the word Kamigata?

SOMEMARU: Kamigata is the same as Osaka. Kamigata only exists in Osaka. Kyoto isn't Kamigata, you know. Kyoto is *Kami* (i.e., the [seat of the] emperor). *Kami no hō* (in the vicinity of Kami, same characters used for Kamigata) refers to Osaka alone.

MWS: You wrote that you got involved with hayashi music because you liked it,⁷ but did anybody ever come to you personally and say that you are going to need be the one who preserves it?

SOMEMARU: No, I got into hayashi because I had to. Not having musicians would have a negative impact on the rakugo that I was most interested in doing. If I didn't teach somebody how to play shamisen, I wouldn't be able to do my rakugo, right? That's it. That's the only reason I started teaching people yosebayashi. I did it for myself—because I'm so important (laughs).

MWS: But you trained more than one or two. You trained numerous people.

SOMEMARU: That's how important I am, see? (laughs) I suppose the end result benefitted everybody, and that's great. But the main reason I did it was for me, and for my [shamisen] deshi, I suppose.

MWS: You wrote that playing narimono in an *ii kagen* (perfunctory) manner is the best approach for yose music.⁸ Can you elaborate on this?

SOMEMARU: Rakugo is basically a world of parody. A *parodei seishin* (parody spirit) is alive on stage and off, and this extends to the music. Like I told you earlier, the *wagei* (narrative art) called rakugo changes as time goes by. There are no fixed ideas when it comes to rakugo. Somehow, it works better that way. The way that yosebayashi is applied in rakugo is also a parody, you see. Just like rakugo stories are all parodies in some form. *Narimon* [narimono] is a parody, too. It's an imitation of kabuki [music], but it's different. It would be nice to say that rakugo has a highly practiced method of drumming like kabuki, but it doesn't. Sometimes we shoot for something that sounds like kabuki drumming, other times we just play *ee [ii] kagen* and try to make it sound good.

I think that Japanese people like things *ee kagen*. They like things to be ambiguous. For example, Japanese people don't believe in just one god. Looking at this from the outside, it looks strange. One person believes in this god, another person believes in that god. People believe in gods and also have Buddhist altars at home. Some people claim to be Buddhist, but then they go to a shrine to be married in front of a different god. And to top it all off, Japanese people celebrate Christmas? (laughs) Japanese people don't like to stick to one god. I guess it's kind of like *omamori* (amulets); one works for one thing, another one works for something else. Christianity is like a cure-all religion, but Japanese people don't seem to take to it. There is no omnipotent being as far as most Japanese people are concerned. The

⁷ Hayashiya Somemaru. *Kamigata rakugo yosebayashi no sekai*, vol. 1: *Kaisetsu hen* (Osaka: Sōgensha, 2011), 20.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

reason we believe in a number of gods and Buddhas is basically because we want them to do something for us. See, if we believe in a number of gods, we have better chances of getting what we want (laughs). I think it's very Japanese to think about things in this *ii kagen* way.

In the case of the *yose*, it is especially so. Kabuki actors have worked to perfect their art for generations, but, while the art has undergone some change, the change has been limited. Rakugo has undergone greater change because the nature of the art is different. It has belonged to the masses for its entire history. The most important thing in rakugo is that the right *fun'iki* (atmosphere) be produced. There's no need to make it perfect. Keeping the art *ii kagen* ties directly into its *bakabakashisa* (foolishness) and *shitatakasa* (wiliness). As far as rakugo *fun'iki* goes, it's always better to keep things *ii kagen*.

MWS: Why is the art called Kamigata and not Osaka rakugo?

SOMEMARU: Kamigata is just a name. You know the saying *Kyoto wa Kamigata ja nai, Kyoto wa Kami dosu* (Kyoto isn't the vicinity of Kami, it is Kami), right? Well, that's just something that proud people in Kyoto used to like to say. We call any place surrounding the capital, the imperial palace rather, Kamigata. Sure, there are documents that refer to the art as Osaka rakugo, or Naniwa rakugo, but it's called Kamigata rakugo now because there are a fair number of rakugoka from Kyoto. It would be fine to call the art Osaka rakugo if all of us were from Osaka, but then there's the issue of the art's historical connection to Kyoto. As you know, Kamigata rakugo's origins are traced to both Kyoto and Osaka. Tsuyu no Gorōbei and Yonezawa Hikohachi, right? It would be strange to call the art Kyō-Osaka or Keihan (Kyoto-Osaka) rakugo, so it's referred to as Kamigata rakugo. This name started sticking after our association was named the Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai, which, I believe, came at a time when we were trying to get financial support from the City of Kyoto to run the Kyoto Shimin Yose. They required us to have a name and be a formal organization, so Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai it was.

MWS: Do you have any concerns about Japan, or the world?

SOMEMARU: Well, I wonder how long this earth is going to last us (laughs). In our age, we know all kinds of things about the universe, right? If you think about it, this earth is nothing but a speck of dust. If a terrible disaster was to happen in space, we could vanish in an instant. There could be a collision, a meteorite could hit us, stars could collide. There's no way of knowing what could happen. There's evidence of ice ages and major explosions in the distant past, right? The earth is burning at its core as we speak. We're enjoying a long, peaceful lull, but there's no way of knowing how long it will last. You can say I'm worried about that. I think we should be fine in our lifetimes, though (laughs). I've been able to do what I like in my life, namely rakugo. I've also been able to paint some nice pictures, design gardens that please me, and build the house that I wanted to. I've been able to enjoy a nice, long life. So, sometimes I wonder what I could give back to the earth. The things that we *can* do are pretty well known. These are important, so I try to remain conscious of them.

MWS: What do you love?

SOMEMARU: I love a number of things. Of course I love art, and online shopping (laughs). When I'm online, I'm usually pursuing something human—something of high quality that humans have made. Humans create some wonderful things. I love humans. Education is another good thing that humans have made. Social environments, economics, and various other things... I love to see humans working together to ensure that these things aren't ruined. I love to see people helping one another. This will ensure that humanity survives and make for a better world.

MWS: What do you hate?

SOMEMARU: Hate? Well, that would be humans too (laughs). Yes, you know, there are people in the world who don't bother to think about others. People who think that the world revolves around them... I hate those kind of people most of all.

MWS: Would you like to give any names?

SOMEMARU: (Laughs) You feel the same way, don't you? We would probably come up with the same names (laughs).

MWS: What would the title of your life story be?

SOMEMARU: That's a tough question. My life isn't really worth writing about yet... How about *Tada hitamuki ni* (in simple earnest). This is the way I want to live my life. It's the way I've tried to live it until now. Of course every year tends to be different, though. Especially as I age and time grows limited, I want to live my life in earnest. You know, I think all humans tend to grow purer as they age. The way I see it, life is a process of shedding one tainted bit at a time, dropping them like scales. Of course not everybody manages to do this, but I like to think that most people grow purer with age, and it is a thing of beauty.

Take Misora Hibari [1937-89], for example. She was a talented singer who was a star from the time she was a child. But she couldn't possibly have been more unfortunate. She failed in marriage, lost her father, lost two younger siblings, and then her mother died. She had to carry on by herself. Her life grew more and more lonely as she aged. In the end, she got sick, but she battled her illness and continued singing. The sicker she got, the less makeup she wore. Somehow, her voice seemed to grow purer. She had all kinds of troubles in her life, but these seemed to fade away as she grew purer with age. I like the songs that she sang late in life best. The music she did when she was younger was good, too, but her songs became more human in the end. I think this is a wonderful illustration of life's natural course.

I believe that humans return to their natural states as they grow older. I would like to live my life in such a way and want my rakugo to grow into a pure rakugo. I want my rakugo to be a more human rakugo, without a single embellishment. [Katsura] Shijaku-san [II, 1939-99] was the same way. The ideal rakugo for him was to go out, sit down in the middle of the stage, and do nothing but smile happily at the audience. His ideal response was to have them

simply smile and laugh back—just smiles and exchanges of the heart. That was his ideal rakugo. Nothing said at all—just smiling and making audiences happy. That is pure to me. Of course, one can't expect to please rakugo audiences without saying a single word, but this was his ideal, his ultimate goal. Rakugo is all about this type of exchange. It's about pleasing others.



Figure A.3. Somemaru IV relaxing with a cup of tea in his dressing room at the Hanayama Onsen Hotel (Wakayama) before he taking the stage in February 2011. Photograph by the author.

APPENDIX B:

LITERATURE REVIEW

I. Review of Japanese Work on Kamigata Rakugo and Its Precursors

Watanabe Kin (1894-1950?) was the most prominent early twentieth-century scholar-advocate of Kamigata rakugo. In addition to writing articles in magazines and newspapers, his books include *Rakugo no kenkyū* (Rakugo Research, 1943) and *Rakugo no kanshō* (Rakugo Appreciation, 1949), which is a revised version of the former. Watanabe was also on the editorial staff of *Rakugo meisaku zenshū* (1929-30), a twelve-volume anthology containing a small selection of Kamigata stories. *Rakugo no kenkyū* set the tone for Kamigata rakugo scholarship into the 1970s and arguably the rest of the century. Like Tokyo-based scholars before him, Watanabe cites classical and medieval folklore as the plausible origins of the rakugo tradition and presents the art's history dating back to the Genroku period (1688-1704). More important is his presentation of documents including *Shusseki hikae* (Appearance Memorandum), a detailed log kept by Kamigata hanashika Katsura Bunga I (1849-1926) from 1879 to 1912,¹ *mitate banzuke* dating from the early nineteenth century, categorization and analyses of eleven types of *ochi*, and discussion of Osaka rakugo's *tokuchō* (characteristic elements).

The chief element that makes Kamigata rakugo stand out from its Tokyo counterpart, Watanabe writes, is its *konzen taru yūgō* (well-rounded fusion) of hayashi music.² Next, Watanabe argues that Kamigata rakugo has more *geijutsusei* (artistic quality) than Tokyo rakugo. There are, in his opinion, more *kessaku* (masterpieces) in Kamigata rakugo and depictions of scenes in stories go beyond that which dialogue alone can convey. He adds that critics in Tokyo

¹ This has been reprinted in Osaka Geinō Konwakai, ed., *Katsura Bunga shusseki hikae*, 4 vols. (Sakai: Osaka Geinō Konwakai, 1997-2001).

² Watanabe, *Rakugo no kenkyū*, 100.

have evaluated the art unfairly as boring, this being a result of their inability to make sense of the language used in Kamigata rakugo. This strikes him as odd considering that Tokyo storytellers imported so many stories from Kamigata in the early twentieth century.³

Masaoka Iruru's (1904-58) publications on rakugo were largely focused on the Tokyo tradition, but his valuations of Kamigata rakugo were mostly objective and therefore helpful contributions to the field. Before Katsura Beichō III (now a Living National Treasure) became a hanashika, he studied for a time in Tokyo under Masaoka. Beichō recalls that Masaoka invited Shōfukutei Shokaku V to Tokyo to present Kamigata rakugo on at least two occasions. Masaoka was thoroughly impressed that Shokaku came to town with his own musicians in tow, and brought a kendai and hizakakushi, which were not made for easy transport in those days.⁴

Masaoka's rakugo-related works include *Zuihitsu yose fūzoku* (Essays: Yose Customs, 1943), *Zuihitsu yosebayashi* (Essays: Yose Music, 1944), *Zuihitsu yose andon* (Essays: Yose Paper-Shade Lamps, 1946), and *Enshoku rakugo kōdan kanshō* (Erotic Rakugo and Kōdan Appreciation, 1952).⁵ In the first work, the chapter titled *Kamigata rakugo shibaibanashi kenkyū* (Research on Kamigata Rakugo Kabuki Stories) is particularly useful. Masaoka extends Watanabe's discussion of the application and significance of hayashi music in Osaka yose and concurs that the Kamigata tradition possesses a certain *gei* distinct from that of Tokyo rakugo. *Zuihitsu yosebayashi*'s chapter titled *Kamigata rakugo dansō* (Interesting Stories About Kamigata Rakugo) is of interest because it contains an interview with pre-World War II Kamigata rakugo masters. Neither of the *Yosebayashi* chapters (parts one and two) in this book

³ Ibid., 123-4.

⁴ Katsura Beichō, et al., eds., *Kanpon: Masaoka Iruru yose zuihitsu* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2006), 424. Beichō says he was there to see Shokaku V's show on October 10, 1943.

⁵ All of these have been reprinted in Katsura Beichō, *Masaoka Iruru yose zuihitsu*. Full citations for the originals are listed in the Bibliography.

contains much discussion of the Kamigata tradition aside from a short critique of an album recording of the story *Sanjūkkoku* (The Thirty-Bushel Riverboat) by Katsura Bunshi II. In *Zuihitsu yose andon*, parts three, six, and eight of the chapter *Zōtei Meiji Taishō Shōwa shinsaku rakugo ryakushi* (Historical Outline of Shinsaku Rakugo from the Meiji, Taishō, and Shōwa Periods – Revised and Enlarged) briefly discuss early twentieth-century Kamigata hanashika and stories that they composed. *Enshoku rakugo kōdan kanshō* is an anthology that includes the Kamigata stories *Shima meguri* (A Tour of the Islands) by Katsura Bundanji IV, Shōfukutei Shokaku V's *Shiri mochi* (Butt Mochi), along with commentary by Masaoka.

Maeda Isamu (1908-72) was first and foremost a linguistic scholar with numerous publications including *Osakaben no kenkyū* (Osaka Dialect Research, 1949), *Kinsei Kamigatago jiten* (Dictionary of Early Modern Kamigata Language, 1964), and *Edogo no jiten* (Edo Language Dictionary, 1979), but he also made important contributions to Kamigata rakugo and yose engei studies. His publications *Kamigata rakugo no rekishi* (Kamigata Rakugo History, 1958) and *Kamigata engei jiten* (Kamigata Entertainment Encyclopedia, 1966) are two books that scholars of Kamigata rakugo might want to have their own copies of. Like Watanabe's *Rakugo no kenkyū* (and *Rakugo no kanshō*), *Kamigata rakugo no rekishi* includes a history of the art, but more comprehensive. Maeda also presents some early mitate banzuke and expands Watanabe's discussion of ochi, including detailed lists of ochi and Kamigata stories. Maeda's final chapters in this book are studies on the humor of Kamigata rakugo ochi.

In his preface to *Kamigata rakugo no rekishi*, Maeda conveys a sense of urgency, pointing out that there are numerous monographs being written on rakugo, but these are primarily about the Tokyo tradition. He also expresses concern about the fact that there are so few hanashika in Osaka. Although there were more than one hundred in Tokyo rakugo around

the time of publication, there was only about one-fifth that number in Osaka. Maeda recognizes that a good number of people view manzai as the art of Osaka and rakugo as Tokyo's, but he thinks this view is flawed. He therefore calls on performers and scholars to help with the task of documenting the art. Maeda edited *Kamigata engei jiten* with somewhat similar motivation. Maeda took on the project of editing such an encyclopedia because he felt that dictionaries and encyclopedias tended to distort the lines between Japan's east and west, and because there was a need for a comprehensive reference on Kamigata engei.

Ui Mushū (1909-1992) wrote three monographs on Kamigata rakugo: *Kamigata hanashi kō* (A Study of Kamigata Rakugo, 1965), *Rakugo no genwa* (Rakugo's Original Tales, 1970), and *Rakugo no keifu: Kamigata rakugo to Tokyo rakugo* (Rakugo Ancestry: Kamigata Rakugo and Tokyo Rakugo, 1972). He also wrote related works such as *Nihon no shōwa* (Japanese Anecdotes, 1977), *Rakugo no furusato* (The Birthplace of Rakugo, 1978), and *Rakugo no minamoto* (The Origins of Rakugo, 1983). Ui is sometimes criticized for not citing sources, but this is not completely uncommon for Japanese scholars in his generation. Frankly, his collection of work is too vast to ignore. That said—and I have been given the same advice by scholars in Japan—scholars in the West may want to check Ui's work if citing it for publication.

Kamigata hanashi kō, *Rakugo no genwa*, and *Rakugo no keifu*, the three monographs, are essential for the study of Kamigata rakugo. Ui's writes in the preface of *Kamigata hanashi kō* that he wanted it to be a book that could tell readers everything there is to know about Kamigata rakugo. Needless to say, this monograph covers a wide range of topics from early storytelling traditions to the present state of Kamigata rakugo. Like scholars before him, Ui presents lists of Kamigata stories and *ochi*, along with analyses. At the end of the book there is a forty-three-page catalogue of stories cross-referenced to works by Maeda and others, and *mitate banzuke*. Also

important are Ui's chapters on Kamigata rakugo show production, the niwaka tradition, and the history of *aho* (the idiotic). Ui's other two monographs are essentially extensions of his first. *Rakugo no genwa* has several short sections discussing rakugo precursors, but the bulk of this work is a nearly four-hundred-page encyclopedia of stories listed with categories, synopses, and commentary. Ui includes Tokyo titles for stories when applicable and even provides a separate table of contents with Tokyo titles. *Rakugo no keifu* has special focus on the distinctions between Kamigata rakugo and Tokyo rakugo.

Mita Jun'ichi (1923-1994) wrote a number of books on Kamigata performing arts and comedy, and a fair amount on Kamigata rakugo. His notable works on the art were a self-published work titled *Kamigata rakugo endai sōran* (Kamigata Rakugo Story Guide, 1963), an extensive catalogue of Kamigata rakugo stories with commentary, a co-edited a two-volume anthology titled *Kamigata rakugo* (1969-70), and *Kamigata hanashi Bessatsu kaisetsu* (Supplemental Commentary for *Kamigata hanashi*, 1972). The anthology contains transcriptions of nearly forty stories, interviews with Katsura Beichō III and Shōfukutei Shokaku VI, chapters on Kamigata rakugo history and language, and a catalogue of Kamigata stories. *Bessatsu kaisetsu* is a volume of commentary that accompanies the sizable two-volume reproduction of the magazine *Kamigata hanashi*. Kamigata rakugo scholars may also like to consult Mita's *Kamigata geinō* (Kamigata Performing Arts, 1971), *Shōfukutei Shokaku* (1987), and *Shōwa Kamigata shōgei shi* (History of Shōwa-Era Kamigata Comedy Arts, 1993).

Mutō Sadao (1926-) is a scholar of hanashibon and has a long list of publications. A few that should be mentioned here are his co-edited 20-volume *Hanashibon taikei* (Hanashibon Compendium, 1975-9), which contains a large number of Kamigata hanashibon with commentary. Mutō also edited *Mihonkoku An'eiki Kamigata hanashi no kaibon rokushu*

(Transcriptions of An'ei-Era Books Published by Kamigata Storytelling Clubs: Six Specimens, 1973), a special edition *wahon* (Japanese-style book) collection accompanied by a volume of commentary. Finally, Mutō's *Teihon rakugo sanbyaku dai* (Three Hundred Rakugo Stories, Revised, 2007) gives synopses for three hundred rakugo stories, mostly from the Tokyo tradition, but some from Kamigata, with commentary.

Mutō's works are helpful in gaining an understanding of where modern rakugo comes from. As he writes, the *ochi*, *makura*, and *kusuguri* (jokes, gags) applied in modern rakugo can be observed in hundreds of early modern *kobanashi*. While there is evidence that some of these *kobanashi* are linked to stories told today, those without clear connections still give readers the impression that they are part of the same tradition.⁶ Countless early modern *kobanashi* survive in print, many of which continue to be part of the oral tradition. Today, *hanashika* often perform one or more *kobanashi* during their *makura* to transport listeners from the present moment to the world of the *hondai*.⁷

Miyao Yoshio (1948-) has published numerous studies on early modern Japanese popular culture, but Kamigata rakugo scholars should consult two of his monographs in particular: *Genroku zekkō bungei no kenkyū* (Research on Genroku-Era Oral Entertainers, 1992) and *Kamigata zekkō bungei shi no kenkyū* (Historical Study of Oral Entertainers in Kamigata, 1999). The first focuses on the arts of Genroku-era storytellers Shikano Buzaemon, Tsuyu no Gorōbei I, and Yonezawa Hikohachi I and II. As Miyao points out, what remains of these men's performances can only be gathered from the content of the *hanashibon* that they published. These, however, are almost certainly bare-boned distillations—and written in a more formal level of

⁶ Mutō Sadao, *Teihon rakugo sanbyaku dai* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), v.

⁷ Mutō Sadao, *Teihon rakugo sanbyaku dai* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), v.

discourse than would have used during performances—of the stories that oral entertainers actually told. Although the oral arts of the Genroku era were, to use Miyao’s term, *sakuhinka sareta* (textualized), he convincingly argues that hanashibon published around the Genroku era are linked to modern rakugo.

Kamigata zekkō bungei shi no kenkyū focuses on the oral arts in early modern Kamigata. Instead of limiting his scope to the years around the Genroku era, Miyao covers a much wider span of time, from Genroku to the end of the Edo period. Miyao includes in both monographs numerous transcribed hanashibon. One more book that scholars of early modern Japan may benefit from is Miyao’s *Kamigata hanashi no kaibon shūsei* (Collection of Books Published by Kamigata Storytelling Clubs, 2002), a facsimile of hanashibon that amateur storytellers published in Kamigata from the 1770s to 1830s. These are not glossed, so readers must be able to navigate *kuzushiji* (Japanese in the running style).

There are a number of other scholars and critics who have taken up Kamigata rakugo as the subject for various books. Those worthy of special mention include Nakajima Heihachirō (1935-), Akiba Akio (1941-), Hoshi Manabu (1951-), Osada Sadao (1952-), Horii Ken’ichirō (1958-), Toda Manabu (1963-), and Yamada Riyoko (date of birth unknown, currently active). Most of the work by these authors is aimed at a general audience, though Horii—*Rakugo ron* (Rakugo Theory, 2009) and *Rakugo no kuni kara nozoite mireba* (A Look Into the World of Rakugo, 2008)—and Toda—*Kamigata rakugo shitennō no keishōshatachi: zuihitsu* (Successors of the Four Kamigata Rakugo Greats: Essays, 2013), *Zuihitsu: Kamigata rakugo no shitennō—Shokaku, Beichō, Bunshi, Harudanji* (Essays on the Four Kamigata Rakugo Greats: Shokaku, Beichō, Bunshi, Harudanji, 2011), *Rokusei Shōfukutei Shokaku hanashi* (The Story of Shōfukutei

Shokaku VI, 2004), and numerous volumes co-edited with Katsura Beichō III and others—are more scholarly and analytical in their approach.

In addition to the names listed above, some Kamigata hanashika have made important contributions to Kamigata rakugo studies. These include Tsukitei Harumatsu (fl. 1892-1922), Shōfukutei Shokaku V, Katsura Beichō III, Katsura Fukudanji IV, Hayashiya Somemaru IV, and Katsura Bunga IV (1960-). Harumatsu published—under the name Uemura Hideichirō—*Rakugo keizu* (Rakugo Genealogical Chart, 1929), the earliest book to be written on hanashika lines and selected aspects of the art.⁸ Shokaku V was a chief contributor to and edited forty-nine volumes of *Kamigata hanashi* (Kamigata Stories, 1936-1940), each issue of which contains at least one story transcription, essays, and information about the art. Shokaku V also published the anthology *Osaka rakugo meisaku sen* (Selected Masterpieces of Osaka Rakugo, 1948), which were pulled from issues of *Kamigata hanashi*. Beichō III has been the most prolific of all Kamigata hanashika. Kamigata rakugo scholars would benefit most from *Katsura Beichō zadan* (Conversations With Katsura Beichō, 2005), *Katsura Beichō shūsei* (Katsura Beichō Compilation, 2004-5), and *Kamigata rakugo nōto* (Kamigata Rakugo Notes, 1978-98). *Beichō rakugo zenshū* (Beichō Rakugo Anthology, 2013-14 [first published 1980-82]) is also a useful reference. Fukudanji IV has amassed numerous interviews with other hanashika during the course of his career. Some of them were published in his book *Kamigata rakugo wa doko e yuku* (Where Will Kamigata Rakugo Go?, 1989) and many of his recent interviews have appeared in issues of the Kamigata rakugo magazine *Nna aho na* (That's Ridiculous). Somemaru IV has published *Kamigata rakugo yosebayashi no sekai* (The World of Kamigata Rakugo Yose Music, 2011), *Shōfukutei Matsunosuke kikisho: Itsumo seishun zutto seishun* (An Account of Shōfukutei

⁸ Scholars should be aware that *Rakugo keizu* contains some mistakes.

Matsunosuke: Always Young, Forever Young, 2000), and *Kamigata rakugo saijiki* (Kamigata Rakugo Seasonal Almanac, 1999). Katsura Bunga IV has published *Kamigata yosebayashi daizenshū* (Complete Collection of Kamigata Rakugo Yose Music, 2004), *Fukkatsu chinpin Kamigata rakugo senshū* (Revived Rarities: A Kamigata Rakugo Anthology, 2001-3), and a few other works on the art. Numerous Kamigata hanashika have written autobiographies and other books aimed at general readers, but there are too many to list.

A. Kamigata Rakugo on the Page

In his article “Japanese Shorthand and *Sokkibon*,” J. Scott Miller points out that the sokkibon genre flourished from 1884 until the early twentieth century and that many of these were transcriptions of live storytelling. He concludes that sokkibon essentially rendered most professional storytellers redundant in a single generation and brought the curtain down upon the stage of traditional oral performance.⁹ This may have been the case for some Tokyo storytellers since the vast majority of rakugo featured in sokkibon was from the Tokyo tradition. Kamigata hanashika were under less pressure to make their rakugo ‘read’ well. However, from a scholar’s perspective today, the shortage of Meiji-era Kamigata rakugo sokkibon makes it more challenging to evaluate the art during those years.

There were at least four Tokyo magazines, such as *Bungei kurabu*, *Hyakkaen*, *Azuma nishiki*, and *Hanagatami*, that regularly featured rakugo and kōdan sokki, again, mostly from the Tokyo tradition. *Bungei kurabu* ran a number of essays on Kamigata rakugo, but these, as shown in Chapter Three, tended to be biased. In Osaka, there was one magazine, *Momochidori*, that was

⁹ J. Scott Miller, “Japanese Shorthand and *Sokkibon*,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 49, no. 4 (winter 1994): 486-7.

dedicated to *kōdan* and *rakugo*, but Osaka dialect tended edited out of stories. In the 1930s, the Osaka magazines *Kamigata: kyōdo kenkyū* (Kamigata: Folk Research) and *Kamigata hanashi* published quality transcriptions and commentary on the art, but, aside from these, and a handful of magazine and newspaper articles, there is not much else that treats the art prior to World War II.

Thanks in part to the *rakugo* boom and increased scholarly interest in Kamigata *rakugo* during the 1960s and 1970s, an unprecedented number of collections of Kamigata *rakugo* began appearing in bookstores around Japan. In addition to the sources listed above, these include Kamigata *Rakugo Kyōkai*'s *Kamigata rakugo omoroi shū* (Funny Anthology of Kamigata *Rakugo*, 1968), volume eight of Ekuni Shigeru's *Koten rakugo taikai* (Classical *Rakugo* Compendium, 1970), Tsuyu no Gorō II's *Godaime Shōfukutei Shokaku shū* (Shōfukutei *Shokaku* V Anthology, 1971), Shōfukutei *Shokaku* VI's *Koten Kamigata rakugo* (Classic Kamigata *Rakugo*, 1973), Kamigata *Rakugo Kyōkai*'s *Koten rakugo Kamigatabanashi* (Classical *Rakugo* Kamigata Stories, 1975), *Shokaku* VI's *Kamigata rakugo sūpā bunko* (Kamigata *Rakugo*, Large Bunko Edition, 1987), Beichō's *Katsura Beichō korekushon* (Katsura Beichō Collection 2002-3),¹⁰ and Katsura Shijaku II's *Katsura Shijaku bakushō korekushon* (Kamigata *Rakugo*: Katsura Shijaku Explosive Laughter Collection, 2005-6).¹¹

II. *Rakugo* Scholarship in the West

The first study of *rakugo* in English appears to be Osman Edwards' *Japanese Storytellers: From the French of Jules Adam* (1899), a translation of Adam's *Au Japon: Les*

¹⁰ This is a bunko edition reprint of *Beichō rakugo zenshū*.

¹¹ All of the works mentioned in this section are listed in the Bibliography.

Raconteurs Publics (Japan: The Public Raconteurs, 1899). This is a short study, but it provides an interesting and detailed snapshot of Meiji-period yose in Tokyo. A few years after this, Francis McCullagh published a more focused study, titled “The Story-Teller in Japan,” in *The East of Asia Magazine*. Work on rakugo continued to appear sporadically in European languages, such as Johannes Barth’s *Kōdan und Rakugo* (*Kōdan and Rakugo*, 1928), but it was not until the 1970s that rakugo started receiving more serious attention in English. Articles treating rakugo include Vena Hrdličková’s “Gramophone Recordings of the Representative Tales of Katsura Bunraku, a Professional Japanese Storyteller” (1972), Paul Novograd’s “Rakugo: The Storyteller’s Art” (1974), Amin Sweeny’s “Rakugo Professional Japanese Storytelling” (1979), and Miyoko Sasaki and Heinz Balkenhol (Morioka)’s “Rakugo: Fascination for and Popularity of one of the Classical Arts of Japanese Narration” (1979), “Rakugo: Popular Narrative Art of the Grotesque” (1981), and “The Blue-Eyed Storyteller: Henry Black and His Rakugo Career” (1983).

Morioka and Sasaki published the first monograph on rakugo in 1990. As *Rakugo: The Popular Narrative Art of Japan*’s cover advertises, the monograph is a detailed study that traces the origins of the art back to Buddhist tales of the eighth and ninth centuries and describes changes through the years that eventuated in a refined art of stage performance in the nineteenth century. The yose, its stage and theatrical properties, the training of hanashika, profiles of some eminent professionals, and the motifs that inform the repertoire of rakugo stories are all described in detail and made vivid through copious illustration. Appended to the texts are lists of the main hanashika houses, the rakugo text collections published since mid-Meiji, the titles of individual rakugo pieces, and an exhaustive annotated bibliography. This monograph is an

extremely useful reference for any scholar of rakugo—especially Tokyo rakugo—who can read English.

A good deal of work on rakugo and related fields has appeared in English since the appearance of Morioka and Sasaki's monograph, though J. Scott Miller also deserves some credit for propelling rakugo studies with his dissertation "Japanese Oral Narrative in a Meiji Literary Context" (1988). Miller was writing his own monograph on storytelling when Morioka and Sasaki's book came out, but decided that there would not be enough room in the fragile scholarly market for two monographs on such an obscure subject. He redirected his effort into expanding his work for articles and book chapters. One such effort was his article "Japanese Shorthand and *Sokkibon*" (1994), mentioned above. He also published the book *Adaptations of Western Literature in Meiji Japan* (2001), which focuses on *hon'an* (literary adaptations), of which rakugo was a major part.¹²

In the twenty-four years since Western scholars began publishing book length studies on rakugo and related subjects in English, more scholars have displayed interest in rakugo. Ph.D. students, such as Lorie Brau ("Kimono Comics: The Performance Culture of *Rakugo* Storytelling," 1994), Eiichi Erick Masuyama ("Towards an Understanding of Rakugo as a Communicative Event: A Performance Analysis of Traditional Professional Storytelling in Japan," 1997), Patricia Marie Welch ("Discourse Strategies and the Humor of *Rakugo*," 1998), Noriko Watanabe ("Character Introduction and Establishment in Japanese Narrative," 1998), and Thomas Joshua Young ("A Touching Talk: Nineteenth-century Edo *Rakugo* and the Performance of Language," 2003) have written their dissertations on rakugo. Two new books

¹² Part of my review of Western scholarship on rakugo was previously published in Matthew W. Shores, Review of *Rakugo: Performing Comedy and Cultural Heritage in Contemporary Tokyo*, by Lorie Brau, *Asian Theatre Journal* 26, No. 1 (Spring 2009): 191-194.

have also appeared: Lori Brau's *Rakugo: Performing Comedy and Cultural Heritage* (2008) and Ian McArthur's *Henry Black: On Stage in Meiji Japan* (2013).

The articles and chapters that I wrote while in graduate school (2008-14, see Bibliography)—and this dissertation—were attempts to give Kamigata rakugo more focus in English. Catherine Hallett's article "Music in Kamigata *Rakugo* Performance" (2014) and James Luke Hadely's dissertation "Theorizing in Unfamiliar Contexts: New Directions in Translation Studies" (2014), a dual examination of the use of translation in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* and Kamigata rakugo, are new and welcome additions to Kamigata rakugo studies.

APPENDIX C

GLOSSARY OF SELECTED TERMS AND NAMES

akindo 商人: also referred to as shōnin, merchants; members of the chōnin class.

Anrakuan Sakuden 安楽庵策伝 (1554-1642): author of *Seisuishō* 醒睡笑.

aho アホ 阿呆: see boke.

aragoto 荒事: rough-style acting technique, common in Edo kabuki; compare wagoto.

atarigane 当たり鉦: also referred to as *surigane* 摺鉦, a small hand gong used in yosebayashi.

bantō 番頭: the head clerk in a merchant home/business.

bekke 別家: branch house.

boke ボケ: also referred to as aho, an unintelligent character, stooge; the counterpart to kashikoi, monoshiri, or tsukkomi.

chiiki yose 地域寄席: also referred to as *chihō yose* 地方寄席, non-traditional rakugo venues set up in cities or the provinces.

chōnin 町人: townsman, a social class established in the early modern era consisting of shōnin and shokunin.

chū neta 中ネタ: a Meiji-Taishō term that referred to stories of a medium level of difficulty/complexity, typically performed by hanashika who have at least finished shugyō; compare irekomibanashi, kiri neta.

daidō geinin 大道芸人: street entertainer.

danna 旦那: also referred to as oyadanna 親旦那, or dannashū 旦那衆, the owner and head of a merchant house/business.

debayashi 出囃子: entrance music; in the yose, hanashika (zenza are an exception) usually enter to a specially selected song, which becomes a trademark of sorts.

denshō geinō 伝承芸能: orally transmitted art.

denshō rakugo 伝承落語: orally transmitted (i.e., traditional) rakugo; some hanashika prefer this term over koten rakugo.

deshi 弟子: an apprentice, or pupil.

detchi 丁稚: a merchant apprentice.

dōgu 道具: properties; in rakugo, this refers to sensu and tenugui.

Dōrakutei 動楽亭: a seki in south Osaka.

Edokko 江戸っ子: a ‘pure’ Edo chōnin, born and raised in Edo.

Edo uta 江戸唄: a Kamigata term for Edo nagauta; see nagauta.

engei 演芸: vaudeville type performance arts, such as rakugo, kōdan, Naniwabushi, manzai, and various iromono, traditionally performed in seki/yose.

Fuminoya Kashiku 文の家かしく (1884-1962): later Shōfukutei Fukumatsu III 笑福亭福松.

Funa Benkei 船弁慶 (Benkei on the Boat): a Kamigata rakugo story; not included in the traditional Tokyo repertoire.

gakuya 楽屋: dressing room; in seki/yose, gakuya are typically small and shared by all performers, regardless of status; seating arrangements usually indicate people’s positions in the hierarchy.

geidan 芸談: a talk (i.e., interview) with somebody on their art.

geifū 芸風: artistic style.

geimei 芸名: artistic name, stage name.

geinin 芸人: entertainer, performer.

gejo 下女: low ranking female servant.

geza 下座: kabuki hayashi ensemble; this term is occasionally used in the yose.

goryōnin 御寮人: also referred to as oyahan 親はん, or goryōhan 御寮はん, a danna’s wife.

goshūgi ご祝儀: gift money.

hade 派手: colorful, bright, loud, lively, showy; a term that is commonly used to sum up Kamigata rakugo’s lively nature, including its musicality and loquaciousness.

hamemono ハメモノ 埋め物: music and sound effects played during the course of a rakugo story.

hamon 破門: official expulsion from an artistic school.

hanashi 噺: comic stories/anecdotes (i.e., rakugo), also written hanashi 咄 during the early modern era.

hanashibon 咄本 噺本: collections of hanashi, published during the early modern era.

hanashigoya 咄小屋: storytelling huts/halls, precursors of the modern yose.

hanashika 噺家: comic storyteller, today synonymous with rakugoka; previously written hanashika 咄家; compare rakugoka.

hanashi no kai 咄の会 噺の会: early modern gatherings for sharing and performing hanashi.

hanashi no kaibon 咄の会本 噺の会本: collections of selected hanashi presented at hanashi no kai.

hanashi no shū 咄の衆: also called *hanashi shū*, conversation companions kept in retinues by feudal lords prior to the early modern era; compare otogishū.

hanashi no tentori 咄の点取り: comical story/anecdote contests held during and after the Genroku era.

Hantai-ha 反対派: Opposition Group; troupe of entertainers formed by Osaka promoter Okada Masatarō (ca. 1867 - ca. 1920) in 1910.

hauta 端唄: short for Edo hauta, a genre of music accompanied by shamisen that flourished in the Bakumatsu era and can be traced to the early seventeenth century; songs tend to be relatively short with lyrics that are light and straightforward.

hayashi 囃子: the music played in kabuki and rakugo, and other traditional theater forms; hayashi includes Japanese instruments such as shamisen, drums, bells, flutes, among others.

Hayashiya Kikumaru 林家菊丸 (1974-): previously Hayashiya Someya 林家染弥.

Hayashiya Somegorō III 林家染語楼 (1918-75).

Hayashiya Somemaru III 林家染丸 (1906-69); Hayashiya Somemaru IV (1949-), previously Hayashiya Someji 林家染二.

Hayashiya Tomi 林家とみ (1883-1970): a Kamigata ohayashi-san who was recognized as an intangible cultural asset in 1962 and received the Order of the Precious Crown in 1969 for her contributions to Kamigata yosebayashi and rakugo.

hetari へたり: this term once referred to zenza because, since they are too inexperienced to be in high demand, they *hetari komu* (stay planted); this term was also used to refer to hanashika who did little more in the yose than play narimono.

hiratsuridaiko 平釣り太鼓: flat hanging drum, typically referred to as *ōdaiko* 大太鼓 in the yose; hiratsuridaiko are usually hung on decorative hardwood stands and come in a number of sizes, the average of which is around two to three feet in diameter and six inches to one foot in depth; hiratsuridaiko are used in the yose to save space backstage, and because the sounds they make are more appropriate for smaller audiences; compare *ōdaiko*.

hizakakushi 膝隠し: lit. knee concealer; a decorative wood screen placed before the kendai.

hizatsuki 膝付き: a courtesy payment given to teachers who give lessons in traditional arts, such as shamisen and dance.

hōe 法会: Buddhist memorial services; numerous entertainers including hanashika would gather to entertain crowds on temple grounds at these events during the early modern era.

hōkōnin 奉公人: merchant house employees.

hon'an 翻案: literary adaptations.

hondai 本題: the story proper in rakugo; compare makura and ochi.

honke 本家: head merchant house/store.

hōru rakugo ホール落語: rakugo performed in large auditoriums or theaters.

Hyakunenme 百年目 (The Hundredth Year): a Kamigata rakugo story; also told in Tokyo rakugo with this title.

ichimon 一門: an artistic family; e.g., Hayashiya ichimon, Shōfukutei ichimon.

ie gei 家芸: lit. house specialty, stories performed by multiple generations in the same artistic line; e.g., the story *Ukare no kuzuyori* is an ie gei of the Hayashiya ichimon.

ippatsu shōbu 一発勝負: a one-shot game; an idiom used to describe what a hanashika experiences with each new audience.

irekomibanashi 入れ込み噺: also referred to as zenzabanashi 前座噺, a Meiji-Taishō term that referred to a story of relatively little complexity commonly performed by zenza; compare chū neta, kiri neta.

iromono 色物: variety acts, such as manzai, magic, balancing and juggling, among others, performed at yose between rakugo stories; iromono are called such because they are advertised in the bright color (*iro*) vermilion on signboards outside the yose while hanashika names are written in black.

jidaimono 時代物: historical piece; one of the major genres of kabuki.

Jinbei-han 甚平はん: one of the stock characters in Kamigata rakugo, comparable to the Old Man (Inkyo) of Tokyo rakugo.

jiuta 地歌 地唄: also referred to as *Kamigata uta* 上方歌 上方唄, this is a form of music traditionally accompanied by shamisen, and sometimes koto and shakuhachi; jiuta was a term used in Kamigata to distinguish this local music from Edo hauta and Edo nagauta; jiuta was played in theaters during the first half of the early modern era, but was largely replaced by nagauta and hauta in later years; *sakumono* 作物, a subgenre of jiuta, is noted for its humorous themes.

jochū 女中: a female servant.

jōseki 定席: see seki.

jōzetsu 饒舌: loquacity; an attribute of Kamigata rakugo that makes it stand out from the more subdued Tokyo rakugo.

Kagetsu 花月: the name given to performance venues (e.g. Nanba Grand Kagetsu) operated by Yoshimoto Kōgyō. Kagetsu refers to *fūryū na asobi* 風流な遊び (popular entertainment).

Kagetsuren Yoshimoto-ha 花月連吉本派: Kagetsu Yoshimoto Group; the Yoshimoto Kōgyō group of entertainers that competed with the Katsura-ha and San'yū-ha during the Taishō era.

kaichō 開帳: special exhibitions of Buddhist statuary; numerous entertainers including hanashika would gather to entertain crowds on temple grounds at these events during the early modern era.

kaidanbanashi 怪談噺: ghost stories; traditionally, there are more stories in this genre in Tokyo rakugo.

Kairakutei Burakku 快樂亭ブラック (1858-1923): also known as Henry Black, an Australian-born Englishman who lived in Japan and had career as a professional rakugoka; he performed numerous hon'an of Western literary works.

kakushi gei 隠し芸: secret arts, hidden talents.

Kamekichi 亀吉: name of a detchi; a stock character in Kamigata rakugo stories.

Kamigata 上方: a geographical term used during the early modern era to refer to the Kansai area, but, more specifically, the regions surrounding Kyoto, where emperors (*kami*) resided; the term was virtually synonymous with Osaka by the nineteenth century, but today it is rarely used in a geographical sense.

Kamigata hanashi 上方はなし (Kamigata Stories): a magazine published from 1936-1940 by Shōfukutei Shokaku V and other Kamigata hanashika who were concerned about preserving their art.

Kamigata: kyōdo kenkyū 上方 郷土研究 (Kamigata: Folk Research): a magazine published from 1931-44 by the Kyōdo Kenkyūkai, which sought to promote a deeper understanding of Kamigata, its cultural history, and present state.

Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai 上方落語協会: founded in 1957 and operated by hanashika since then, this is the sole professional rakugo association in the Kansai area; in 2014 it has more than two hundred members.

karukuchi 軽口: during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, this (also called karukuchibanashi) was a comic storytelling art performed by one person; by the turn of the nineteenth century, karukuchi referred to a two-man comic dialogue thought to be one of the

inspirations for modern manzai; a few hanashika continue to perform the latter form of karukuchi to this day.

kashikoi 賢い: in comedy, the ‘smart man’; see tsukkomi.

Katsura Ayame III 桂あやめ (1964-).

Katsura Beichō III 桂米朝 (1925-).

Katsura Bunchin I 桂文珍 (1948-).

Katsura Bundanji II 桂文団治 (later Bunji VII, 1848-1928); Katsura Bundanji IV (1878-1962).

Katsura Bunga II 桂文我 (1933-92); Katsura Bunga IV (1960-).

Katsura Bunji I 桂文治 (d. 1816).

Katsura Bunkō IV 桂文紅 (1932-2005).

Katsura Bunraku VIII 桂文楽 (1892-1971).

Katsura Bunshi V 桂文枝 (1930-2005): previously Katsura Kobunshi III 桂小文枝.

Katsura Bunta I 桂文太 (1952-).

Katsura Bunto II 桂文都 (1843-1900): later Tsukitei Bunto II.

Katsura Bunza I 桂文三 (1844-1916): later Katsura Bunshi II.

Katsura Enshi II 桂圓枝 (1882-1944).

Katsura-ha 桂派: the Katsura school, led by Katsura Bunshi II in the 1890s, sought to preserve *seitō no* (orthodox) rakugo; compare Naniwa San'yū-ha.

Katsura Harudanji I 桂春団治 (1878-1934); Katsura Harudanji II (1894-1953), Katsura Harudanji III (1930-).

Katsura Harunosuke I 桂春之輔 (1948-).

Katsura Fukudanji IV 桂福団治 (1940-).

Katsura Kitchō I 桂吉朝 (1954-2005).

Katsura Koeda III 桂小枝 (1948-): this is technically the third hanashika with this name, but he is commonly referred to as the first.

Katsura Koharudanji I 桂小春団治 (1904-74).

Katsura Sando 桂三度 (1969-): also known as Sekai no Nabeatsu 世界のナベアツ, or Watanabe Atsumu 渡辺鐘.

Katsura Sanshi I 桂三枝 (1943-): currently Katsura Bunshi VI.

Katsura Shijaku II 桂枝雀 (1939-99).

Katsura Shokō I 桂松光 (active mid-nineteenth century).

Katsura Yonenosuke III 桂米之助 (1928-99).

Katsura Yoneza I 桂米左 (1965-).

Katsura Zakoba II 桂ざこば (1947-).

Kawachi ondo 河内音頭: a kind of folk song performed all over Kawachi province (today Yao city, Osaka, and its surroundings) for bon dances and other events; it is sung to shamisen, Japanese drums, among other instruments; Kawachi ondo has a common melody, returning chorus, fluid lyrics, and can be divided into three categories (north, central, and south Kawachi styles); the best singers are known for being master improvisers, who often incorporate humor and current events in addition to more traditional themes such as famous places, historic people, and local lore.

Kawayanagi Senryū I 川柳川柳 (1931-).

keikoya 稽古屋: practice salons, usually situated in teachers' homes, where anybody could pay to learn various traditional and popular performing arts such as singing, dancing, or instruments; keikoya could be found all over in urban areas during the early modern era and into modern times; they were commercial operations and therefore might be thought of as precursors to *bunka kyōshitsu* 文化教室 (culture salons), found near many train stations around Japan today; keikoya can also be likened to today's more exclusive *keikoba* 稽古場 (lit. practice spaces), where people go to practice arts such as nagauta, *nihon buyō* 日本舞踊 (traditional dance), kyōgen, and nō, among other arts.

Keikoya 稽古屋 (The Practice Salon): a Kamigata story previously titled *Keikojo* 稽古所 and *Uta kaji* 唄火事 (Song Fire); also told as *Keikoya* in Tokyo rakugo.

kendai 見台: short table/podium used by Kamigata hanashika.

kikasedokoro 聴かせ所: focal aural highlights of a rakugo story (or any performance).

kikioboe 聞き覚え: memorization by listening; in rakugo, this refers to the act of learning a story without formal *okeiko* お稽古 (lessons).

Kikue butsudan 菊江仏壇 (Chrysanthemum on the Altar): a Kamigata story; told as *Kikue no butsudan* 菊江の仏壇 and *Shirozatsuma* 白薩摩 (White Satsuma Kimono) in Tokyo rakugo.

Kinshu sekisho 禁酒関所 (Alcohol Prohibition Checkpoint): a Kamigata story; told as *Kinshu ban'ya* 禁酒番屋 (Alcohol Prohibition Watchman) in Tokyo rakugo.

kiri neta 切りネタ: a Meiji-Taishō term that referred to stories of a high level of difficulty/complexity, typically performed by veteran hanashika; compare *chū neta*, *irekomibanashi*.

Kiroku 喜六: also referred to as *Kiikō* 喜い公 and *Kiiyan* 喜いやん; a stock character in Kamigata rakugo, and best friend of *Seihachi*.

kobanashi 小咄 小話: short comical anecdotes, popular (and published in collections) during the early modern era; today hanashika often perform a few *kobanashi* during their *makura* to transport listeners from the present moment to the world of the *hondai*.

kobyōshi 小拍子: small wooden clappers; *kobyōshi* are placed on the stage left side of the *kendai* and are used to signal the beginning of a story, scene changes, and compliment stage business, such as knocking on imaginary doors and peeking through *kōshi* 格子 (latticework).

kōdan 講談: see *kōshaku*.

Kogoto Kōbei 小言幸兵衛 (Kōbei the Complainer): a Kamigata rakugo story, also told in Tokyo rakugo by the same title.

Kokontei Shinchō III 古今亭志ん朝 (1938-2001).

kōshaku 講釈: commonly referred to as *kōdan* from the Meiji period, this is a storytelling art more serious in nature than rakugo; while rakugo tends to be dialogue-centered, *kōshaku* contains far more scene description; a performer kneels at a *shakudai* 釈台 (short table) and strikes it with a *harisen* 張り扇 (lit. striking fan), keeping rhythm as s/he recites stories that usually have historical themes such as civil war and politics.

kōshakushi 講釈師: a *kōshaku* performer, called *kōdanshi* 講談師 today; *kōshakushi* were originally referred to a *Taiheiki yomi* 太平記読み (Chronical of Grand Pacification readers/reciters).

koten rakugo 古典落語: classical rakugo, a term used in contrast to *shinsaku* and *sōsaku rakugo*; traditionally, the term *koten rakugo* is used to refer to stories composed during the Meiji period and earlier, but the term is increasingly used to refer to stories composed in the Taishō and early Shōwa eras, too; compare *denshō rakugo*, *shinsaku rakugo*, and *sōsaku rakugo*.

kotsuzumi 小鼓: also called *tsuzumi* 鼓, this is a small drum with a wooden body shaped like an hourglass, used in various *hayashi* ensembles, from *nō* to *kabuki*, rakugo and folk music; similar to the *shimedaiko*, it has two drumheads bound together by hemp (or nylon) cords, bright orange in color; the player can squeeze and release the *kotsuzumi*'s cords to increase and decrease the tension of drumheads while playing, which raises and lowers the pitch.

kowairo 声色: kabuki actor speech impressions; popular in the early modern era and regularly performed by hanashika from at least the Genroku era.

Ko wa kasugai 子は鎧 (Children Are Staples): the final segment of the three-part Tokyo ninjōbanashi *Ko wakare* 子別れ ([Parent] Separated from a Child); the first two segments are usually not performed in the Kamigata tradition.

koya 小屋: early modern venues for showcasing performing arts and misemono acts/spectacles; koya can refer to small makeshift huts with reed-screen walls that could easily be put up and taken down, or larger structures built to last.

kōza 高座: traditionally this referred to the daises that sermon monks used to give sekkyō, but today in rakugo and kōdan it simply refers to the stage whether there is an actual raised platform or not; when a hanashika takes the stage, they *kōza ni agaru* 高座に上がる (ascend the dais).

Kuchi ireya 口入屋 (The Hiring Agency): a Kamigata rakugo story named for its opening scene; told in Tokyo rakugo as *Hikkoshi no yume* 引越の夢 (Dreaming of Moving).

kuchijamisen 口三味線: voiced shamisen notes (e.g. *chin, ton, shan*), similar to the solfège method (i.e., do, re, mi) used to teach pitch and sight singing in music education.

kuchi utsushi 口移し: the ‘mouth-to-mouth’ method of training used in rakugo and many other Japanese performing arts in Japan, including nō and kyōgen; a shishō recites a line and a deshi does her/his best to copy the model given.

Kusshami kōshaku くっしゃみ講釈 (The Sneezing Teller of War Tales): a Kamigata story also told as *Kushami kōshaku* くしゃみ講釈; this story is also popular in Tokyo rakugo.

kusuguri 搦り: jokes/gags meant to make people in the audience laugh.

makura 枕: lit. pillow, a rakugo prologue in which hanashika ‘soften’ any material that could possibly prove difficult for listeners in the hondai or ochi; this is also a time for the hanashika to feel the audience out and establish rapport.

manzai 漫才 万歳: Manzai 万歳, a *shukufuku gei* (lit. blessing art), dates perhaps to the eleventh century and certain forms remained popular into the Meiji period; modern manzai 漫才, two-person stand-up comedy that derived from earlier forms of manzai, karukuchi, and Western vaudeville comedy, among other arts including rakugo, was introduced and grew popular in the early twentieth century.

Matsuda Yasuke 松田弥助: a hanashika active from the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century; best known for being Katsura Bunji I’s shishō.

mekuri メクリ: usually placed at stage right, this is a stand with sheets of paper bearing the names of performers, generally written in *yose moji* (yose-style calligraphy); mekuri, which means ‘to

flip', refers to the action of turning name sheets between sets; mekuri are also referred to as *nabira* 名ビラ (name bills); see yose moji.

miburi 身振り: see shikata.

mise 店見世: lit. shops; early modern performance spaces run by performers, essentially early versions of modern yose/seki.

misedokoro 見せ所: focal scenes to be shown off in rakugo (or any performance).

misemono 見世物: lit. things for showing; cheap sideshow spectacles, exhibitions, and freak shows popular in the early modern and Meiji periods; most were quickly forgotten, but some, such as the arts that became kabuki and rakugo, managed to flourish in an atmosphere of intense competition.

misemonogoya 見世物小屋: koya where misemono were presented; misemonogoya were usually grouped together in urban entertainment districts, where the atmosphere was loud and lighthearted, similar to carnivals.

mitate banzuke 見立番付: parodies of *sumō banzuke* 相撲番付 (sumō ranking sheets), these were one-sheet tables of various things (e.g., kabuki actors, hanashika, food, dialectal phrases) and their ranks, which included *gyōji* 行事 (referee), *toshiyori* 年寄 (elder) *ōzeki* 大関 (second-rank wrestler), *sekiwake* 関脇 (third-rank wrestler), *komusubi* 小結 (fourth-rank wrestler), *maegashira* 前頭 (non-ranking high-division wrestler), *kensa yaku* 検査役 (ringside judge), *tōdori* 頭取 (manager), *sewanin* 世話人 (operation assistant), and others; mitate banzuke were cheap and popular among commoners in the early modern and Meiji periods; although mitate banzuke were 'spoofs', their rankings were legitimate, at least in the minds of their creators.

mochi neta 持ちネタ: the stories in a hanashika's repertoire that s/he can expect to be paid for performing.

Momochidori 百千鳥: a semi-monthly Osaka magazine dedicated to kōdan and rakugo, issued from 1889 to 1891.

monomane 物真似: see shikata.

monoshiri 物知り: a 'know-it-all'; see tsukkomi.

mushiken 虫拳: a hand game with signs that represent *mushi* (insects and small creatures including frogs), similar to *janken* (rock, paper, scissors), and *kitsuneken* 狐券 (the fox hand game).

nagabanashi 長咄 長噺: lit. long stories, these became especially popular in the comic storytelling world in the early nineteenth century; nagabanashi were influenced by trends in kabuki, jōruri, and gesaku, and were decidedly theatrical and moving.

nagauta 長歌 長唄: in Kamigata, nagauta 長歌 is a longer form of jiuta and is often contrasted with hauta; taken to Edo, nagauta, or Edo nagauta 江戸長唄, was incorporated in Edo kabuki and developed further as the music of that theater.

nagaya 長屋: cheap wooden row houses, home to most of Japan's urban commoners (i.e., artisans, merchant employees, and day laborers) in the early modern era and well into modern times; many rakugo characters live in nagaya, which have thin walls and house several individual families in cramped quarters; residents share a well, toilet, trash area, and sometimes a small shrine.

naka iri 仲入り: intermission during a show.

naka tori 仲トリ: the hanashika (generally second highest in rank) who performs in the slot just prior to the naka iri; the naka tori should, in theory, be entertaining enough to make the audience want to return after the break; the naka tori slot is sometimes given to the highest-ranking hanashika, so they can leave the seki/yose early if desired/needed; compare tori.

Naniwa 難波 浪速 浪花 浪華: the historic name for Osaka, used from ancient times into the Meiji era; Naniwa was the imperial capital at least twice before it was moved back to Yamato (Nara) in 745; Naniwa was commonly referred to as Osaka from the turn of the sixteenth century.

Naniwabushi 浪花節: also called *rōkyoku* 浪曲 from about 1927, this is a form of narrative singing; a performer stands at a table and dramatically presents tales, which often have poignant or spirited themes, to shamisen accompaniment; the shamisen player sits onstage, to the side; the art now known as Naniwabushi was previously referred to as *ukarebushi* 浮かれ節 and has roots in *kojōruri* 古浄瑠璃, *sekkyōbushi* 説教節, and *saimongatari* 祭文語り.

Naniwa San'yū-ha 浪花三友派: the Three Friends School, this was a group of hanashika formed in 1893 by members of the Tsukitei Bunto, Katsura Bundanji, and Shōfukutei schools in order to compete with the powerful Katsura-ha; called the San'yū-ha for short, this group sought to make shows more entertaining by integrating a greater variety of iromono; compare Katsura-ha.

Naniwa Shinnai 浪花新内 (fl. 1764-81).

narimono 鳴物: as in kabuki, narimono in the seki/yose refers to all instruments (drums, bells, flutes, etc.) played in the hayashi ensemble with the exception of the shamisen; some definitions of yose narimono include the shamisen.

nedoimono 根問物: lit. inquiry piece, rakugo stories with (typically) two characters, one of whom is slow on the uptake and asks numerous questions about one or more things; the smarter of the two does her/his best to provide answers and explanations, but this is usually in vain; traditionally, zenza learn nedoimono after they have had an opportunity to practice tabibanashi.

Nedoko 寝床 (That's My Bed): a Kamigata story, also performed in Tokyo rakugo with this title.

neta ネタ 根多: rakugo stories, hanashi, material.

netachō 根多帳: registers that hanashika use to log neta and iromono acts that are presented at shows, as well as performers' names, the date, and other notes, such as the names of ohayashisan, narimono players, *ochako* お茶子 (see *ochako*), and *gakuyaban* 楽屋番 (dressing room keeper, usually a low-ranking zenza); neta-chō are kept for immediate future reference, to ensure that the same neta are not repeated too often, and as a record for posterity.

neta-oroshi 根多おろし: lit. 'unloading a neta,' this term refers to a hanashika's first performance of a newly learned story.

ninjōbanashi 人情噺: lit. tales of human nature, this is a genre of rakugo especially popular in the Tokyo rakugo tradition.

niwaka 俄仁輪加: short for *niwaka kyōgen* 俄狂言, also referred to as *chaban kyōgen* 茶番狂言, this was a form of improvisational sketch comedy performed by amateurs indoors and outdoors in early eighteenth-century Osaka (and later in Kyoto); by the turn of the nineteenth century, people began specializing as niwaka artists and, beginning in the 1830s, niwaka was performed in seki and began contending with kabuki; Japan's first modern comic theater troupes have connections to niwaka.

Nna aho na んなあほな: (That's Ridiculous): an informational magazine published by the Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai since 2004; *Nna aho na* reached its thirtieth issue in 2014.

nōkan 能管: a transverse flute that produces a piercing timbre and imprecise pitches; known as the flute of the nō theater, this instrument is used in a wide variety of hayashi music.

norikomi 乗り込み: lit. jumping in, a narrative technique used in rakugo and manzai that keeps the dialogue moving at a fast pace and increases the energy of a performance.

nozoki karakuri 覗き機関: peep box, also called *nozoki* or *karakuri* for short, a popular (late early modern era to early Shōwa era) misemono act that could be found on the grounds of temples and shrines when festivals and other special events were held; in the *chūya mono* 昼夜物 variety, spectators would crowd around a colorfully decorated stand/box to look through lenses and magnified picture boards while a *nozokiya* (覗き屋) rotated pictures, struck out a rhythm with a stick, and sang in *shichigochō* (lines of five and seven syllables); genres of *chūya mono* included theatre pieces, war tales, literary adaptations, and stories based on actual news; the *pon'ichi* 本一 (short for *ippon nozoki* 一本覗き, also called *nagashi* 流し) variety was a larger attraction with up to thirty stalls that customers would walk past, looking through peep holes at pictures as they went; a *nozokiya* would explain or sing about the pictures, a popular subject for this variety being the *meisho* 名所 (famous places).

nyūmon 入門: formal entrance into an artistic school.

ochako お茶子: lit. tea girl, this refers to a woman dressed in a beautiful kimono who performs *kōzagaeshi* 高座返し (dais change) duties between acts (a zenza will do this if an ochako is not available); the zabuton is turned over or changed, the mekuri is flipped and, if needed, the kendai and hizakakushi are put in place or stricken—a few high-ranking shishō also have tea or

sayu 白湯 (plain hot water) brought out; in Tokyo yose, it is usually the zenza who do *kōzagaeshi*.

ochi 落ち: lit. a drop; also referred to as *sage* 下げ, an ochi is similar to a punch line in that it is used to evoke laughter (or groans) or make the audience think at the end of a rakugo story.

ochiken 落研: short for *rakugo kenkyūkai* 落語研究会, (rakugo research circles), extracurricular (university) student clubs dedicated to the study and appreciation of rakugo and, in some cases, performance; After the first ochiken established at Waseda University in 1948, ochiken gradually became popular at other large universities around Japan; numerous professional hanashika active today were once members of ochiken.

ōdaiko 大太鼓: lit. large drum, the ōdaiko of the kabuki theater is true to its name (i.e., large; typically three to four feet in diameter and depth), but, in the yose, ōdaiko refers to a smaller drum, the hiratsuridaiko; compare hiratsuridaiko.

oki dōgu 置き道具: set properties; in Kamigata rakugo this term refers to the kendai, hizakakushi, and kobyōshi.

Okiyo お清: name of a female servant; a recurring character in Kamigata rakugo merchant stories.

ohako 十八番: also read *jūhachiban*, a term that derives from *kabuki jūhachiban* 歌舞伎十八番, (The Kabuki Eighteen [great plays]); in rakugo, this term refers to the stories that a hanashika (or his fans) consider to be her/his best.

ohayashi-san お囃子さん: yose musicians who specialize in shamisen; today all ohayashi-san are women and are in high demand since there are so many hanashika and relatively few professional shamisen players trained in Kamigata rakugo yosebayashi (less than fifteen in 2014).

Omatsu お松: name of a woman who lives in a nagaya; Kiroku's wife in *Funa Benkei*.

ongyokubanashi 音曲噺: lit. music stories; a genre of rakugo that features a good deal of music; *Keikoya* is a story in this genre; compare shibaibanashi.

Osaka 大坂 大阪: also called Naniwa (and Ozaka 小坂 in medieval times), Osaka was Japan's commercial capital during the early modern era. Two different kanji were used to write the *saka* of Osaka in the early modern era, but the Meiji government officially eliminated the older of the two (大坂) when Osaka was given city status in 1889. Today, the former kanji is commonly used when referring to early modern Osaka.

otogishū 御伽衆: practiced tellers of tales kept in retinues by feudal lords prior to the early modern era; compare to hanashi no shū.

otoshibanashi 落とし咄 落とし噺 落とし話: comic stories/anecdotes; an early modern name for the art that became rakugo.

owarai お笑い: also simply *warai*, comedy, especially rakugo, manzai, kigeki, and other forms of comical entertainment popular in modern Japan; owarai is often associated with Yoshimoto Kōgyō.

Oyakojaya 親子茶屋 (Parent and Child at a Teahouse): a Kamigata rakugo story; called (*Kuruwa no*) *Yozakura* (Evening Blossoms [in the Pleasure District]) in Tokyo rakugo.

rakugo 落語: the modern term for Japan's traditional comic storytelling art, referred to as otoshibanashi and karukuchibanashi, among other things, in early modern times; 落語 was being read *rakugo* in a few circles in the late early modern era, but most people read these characters *otoshibanashi*; The term rakugo was becoming more popular by the 1890s, but it was not until the age of radio broadcasting (1925-) that rakugo became the standard term used throughout Japan.

rakugoka 落語家: comic storyteller, today synonymous with hanashika; compare hanashika.

Rakugo sō 落語荘 (The Rakugo Cottage): the name that Shōfukutei Shokaku V gave his house, which doubled as a meeting place for hanashika and headquarters for his magazine, *Kamigata hanashi*.

rōkyoku 浪曲: see Naniwabushi.

Rokyū 露休: see Tsuyu no Gorōbei.

Sadakichi 定吉: the name of a detchi who appears in numerous merchant stories, in both Kamigata rakugo and Tokyo rakugo.

sage 下げ: see ochi.

San'yū-ha 三友派: see Naniwa San'yū-ha.

San'yūtei Enchō I 三遊亭円朝 (1839-1900).

San'yūtei Hyakushō II 三遊亭百生 (1895-1964).

Seihachi 清八: also referred to as Seiyan 清やん, a stock character in Kamigata rakugo and best friend of Kiroku.

seki 席: short for *jōseki* 定席, this was the common term for Kamigata yose until the influx of Tokyo rakugoka to Osaka following the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923; e.g. *hanashi no seki*, *kōshaku no seki*.

Senba 船場: one of two districts (the other was Shimanouchi, listed below) designated Osaka's commercial center during the early modern era.

Sennichimae 千日前: located in what is now the Nanba area of Osaka, this is one of Osaka's entertainment districts. Until the Meiji period, Sennichimae was home to a graveyard, execution grounds, and crematory.

sensu 扇子: a (plain white) paper folding fan, one of two key properties used in rakugo, the other being a tenugui (listed below); closed, a sensu can represent a *kiseru* 煙管 (pipe), sword, writing brush, and even a telephone; open part way, it can be a bottle of sake, rice scoop or an abacus; wide open, a sensu can be a dish, sedge hat, and letter, among other things.

sewamono 世話物: a hallmark of Kamigata kabuki, a genre that presents the world familiar to early modern Japan's urban commoners; sewa characters include samurai, farmers, artisans and merchants; playwrights and actors had limited access to the world of the high-ranking samurai and shogunate officials, so the worlds portrayed in sewamono tended to be the homes and shops of artisans, merchants, and laborers, and the licensed quarter.

shabekuri manzai シャベくり漫才: lit. talk-your-ear-off manzai, a style of manzai that is fast-paced and consists of speech alone; this form of manzai became immensely popular following the 1930 debut of the duo Entatsu-Achako—Yokoyama Entatsu 横山エンタツ (1896-1971) and Hanabishi Achako 花菱アチャコ (1897-1974); today, young manzai artists often include *konto* コント (sketch comedy) in their material and the popularity of this (and variety programs on television) has resulted in a sharp decline in the number of artists who perform 'pure' shabekuri manzai.

shakuba 枳場: also referred to as *shaku no seki* 枳の席, this is a seki/yose dedicated to kōshaku/kōdan; Kamigata hanashika performed at shakuba from the time they first appeared in the Bunka era (1804-1818) into the Meiji period, which had implications for the art developing differently than the Tokyo rakugo tradition.

shamisen 三味線: a fretless three-stringed drumhead lute that was introduced to Japan's mainland in the late-sixteenth century and subsequently became the chief musical instrument in various performing art traditions, such as kabuki, ningyō jōruri, and Kamigata rakugo, among others; the shamisen is also widely associated with geisha and Japan's pleasure quarters.

shibaibanashi 芝居噺: lit. theater stories; complete with hayashi music, dramatic head snaps, and tsuke beats, this is a genre of rakugo that comically parodies kabuki; *Tako shibai* is a classic Kamigata shibaibanashi; a few hanashika (all in Tokyo now) perform the less comical (though impressive) *dōgu iri shibaibanashi* 道具入り芝居噺, which are shibaibanashi performed with miniature kabuki sets and the occasional *hayagawari* 早変わり (onstage quick costume change).

Shiba Shisō 司馬芝叟 (ca. 1760 - ca. 1808).

shigusa 仕草: gestures performed by hanashika during the course of a rakugo story to represent characters' actions.

Shikano Buzaemon 鹿野武左衛門 (1649-99).

shikata 仕方: short for *shikata monomane* 仕方物真似, also called miburi monomane or simply monomane, this refers to impressions of kabuki actors (lines and stage movements) performed by professional entertainers and amateurs in early modern times.

shikatabanashi 仕方咄 仕形咄: popular from around the mid-seventeenth century, tales with many (and grand) gesticulations, performed by storytellers; the Kamigata kabuki star Sakata Tōjūrō I 坂田藤十郎 (1646-1709) incorporated shikatabanashi into some of his plays.

Shimanouchi 島之内: one of two districts (the other was Senba) designated Osaka's commercial center during the early modern era.

shimedaiko 締め太鼓: a small drum with a wood body used in various hayashi ensembles, from nō to kabuki, rakugo and folk music; the shimedaiko, or *shime* for short, is similar to the kotsuzumi drum in that it has two drumheads bound together by hemp (or nylon) cords, bright orange in color; compare kotsuzumi.

shinobue 篠笛: like the nōkan, this is a transverse flute made of bamboo, but its timbre is softer and pitches more precise; this instrument is used in a wide variety of hayashi music.

shinsaku rakugo 新作落語: synonymous with sōsaku rakugo 創作落語, this term is used in contrast to koten rakugo; today, shinsaku rakugo generally refers to rakugo stories composed after the Meiji and Taishō periods.

shishō 師匠: a master of an art who formally trains deshi.

Shōchiku 松竹: short for Shōchiku Geinō 松竹芸能, a Tokyo-based entertainment company that specializes in kabuki, movies, engei entertainment, and more; Shōchiku, founded in Kyoto in 1895, is Yoshimoto Kōgyō's chief competitor.

Shōfukutei Fukumatsu I 笑福亭福松 (1858-1904).

Shōfukutei Matsunosuke II 笑福亭松之助 (1925-).

Shōfukutei Nikaku III 笑福亭仁鶴 (1937-).

Shōfukutei Shokaku IV 笑福亭松鶴 (1869-1942); Shōfukutei Shokaku V (1884-1950), previously Shōfukutei Kōkaku II 笑福亭光鶴 and Shōfukutei Shikaku II 笑福亭枝鶴; Shōfukutei Shokaku VI (1918-1986).

Shōfukutei Shokō I 笑福亭松光 (ca.1860-1913).

Shōfukutei Tsuruko I 笑福亭鶴光 (1892-?); Shōfukutei Tsuruko II (1948-).

shokunin 職人: craftsmen, or artisans; members of the chōnin class.

shōnin: 商人: also referred to as akindo, merchants; members of the chōnin class.

shōnin katagi 商人気質: the way idealized merchants are perceived to act, think, and feel.

shōwa 笑話: also read *waraibanashi*, comic tales/anecdotes popular during the early modern era.

shugyō 修行: apprenticeship; in rakugo this is a formal period of training that typically lasts from one to three years, depending on the shishō and deshi.

Shunpūtei Ryūkyō VI 春風亭柳橋 (1899-1979).

Shunpūtei Shōkyō I 春風亭笑橋 (b. 1940?)

sokki 速記: based on Western stenography, this was the first method of Japanese shorthand for simultaneous transcription; in use by 1884, it was employed for transcribing political debates and, soon after, rakugo and kōdan, the transcriptions of which were published in books dubbed *sokkibon* 速記本.

sōsaku rakugo 創作落語: see shinsaku rakugo.

subanashi 素噺: lit. plain stories, a term that refers to rakugo that consists of hanashika speech alone (i.e., no music or other embellishments).

tabibanashi 旅噺: lit. travel stories, a genre of rakugo that zenza often learn first because it provides them with the opportunity to practice presenting characters who are in constant motion and come into contact with any number of characters, all without having to explore character psychology in much depth; the stories that make up the series *Higashi no tabi* 東の旅 (Journey to the East) are classic examples of tabibanashi; stories in this genre contain numerous facts about famous places, so they serve as oral guidebooks of sorts.

Tachibana no Ento I 橋ノ圓都 (1883-1972).

Tachibanaya Kakitsu I 立花家花橋 (1881-1906), Tachibanaya Kakitsu II (1884-1951).

Tachigire (senkō) たちぎれ(線香) (Time is Up [Incense]): a Kamigata rakugo story, told in Tokyo rakugo as *Tachikiri* たちきり.

taikomochi 太鼓持ち: also referred to as *hōkan* 幫間 and *otoko geisha* 男芸者, this is the male counterpart to geisha.

Tako shibai 蛸芝居 (Octopus Kabuki): also known as *Detchi shibai* 丁稚芝居 (Apprentice Kabuki) prior to World War II, this is a Kamigata rakugo story; *Tako shibai* is not part of the Tokyo rakugo repertoire.

tateben 立弁: a narrative technique in which one speaks so quickly and efficiently that the sound of their speech can be likened to the sound of *tateita ni mizu* 立て板に水 (water streaming down a washboard).

Tatekawa Danshi VII 立川談志 (1936-2011).

tenka no daidokoro 天下の台所: a nickname that Osaka received during the early modern era for its role as Japan's commercial center.

Tenma Tenjin Hanjōtei 天満天神繁昌亭: called the Hanjōtei for short, this is Osaka's sole seki operated by the Kamigata Rakugo Kyōkai; opened in 2006, the Hanjōtei is open for business 365 days a year, sometimes morning, noon, and night.

Tennōji mairi 天王寺詣り (Pilgrimage to Shitennōji): titled *Inu no indōgane* 犬の引導鐘 (Requiem Bell for a Dog) and *Tennōji meisho* 天王寺名所 (Famous Sites of Tennōji) prior to World War II, this is a Kamigata rakugo story not performed in the Tokyo rakugo repertoire.

tenugui 手拭い: a hand towel, one of two key properties used in rakugo, the other being a sensu; tenugui can be used to represent a number of objects, including a letter, coin purse, hat, tobacco pouch, and even a roasted sweet potato; tenugui are often dyed with colorful, unique designs, a mark of hanashika individuality; hanashika regularly present tenugui to supporters and friends; many hanashika carry two tenugui with them to the kōza, one to represent the objects that characters take in their hands, the other to wipe sweat from their face if/when needed; compare sensu.

Toki udon 時うどん: a Kamigata rakugo story, told as *Toki soba* 時そば in Tokyo rakugo.

tori トリ: this term refers to hanashika (usually highest in rank) who perform in the final slot of the show; fans often attend shows to hear the tori perform, so having the tori appear in the last slot gives people in the audience incentive to stay until the end; it also, in theory, ends the show on a high note, making the audience want to come back again; compare naka tori.

tsujibanashi 辻咄: perhaps named after *tsuji dangi* 辻談義 (outdoor sermons), comic tales told outdoors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, at market places, temple grounds, and entertainment districts; storytelling in Kamigata was performed outdoors for a good part of its history and this had implications for the art developing on a different trajectory than storytelling in Edo/Tokyo, where storytellers usually performed indoors; compare zashiki gei.

Tsukitei Bunto II 月亭文都 (1843-1900): previously Katsura Bunto II.

Tsukitei Happō I 月亭八方 (1948-).

Tsukitei Harumatsu 月亭春松 (fl. 1892-1922).

Tsukitei Hōsei I 月亭方正 (1968-): also known as Yamazaki Hōsei 山崎邦正.

Tsukitei Katchō I 月亭可朝 (1938-).

tsukkomi 突っ込み: a dig or cutting remark; tsukkomi (sometimes referred to as kashikoi, or monoshiri) also denotes the comic role of 'straight man' or wit, the counterpart to boke, or aho.

Tsuyu no Gorōbei I 露の五郎兵衛 (ca. 1643-1703); Tsuyu no Gorōbei II (1932-2009), previously Tsuyu no Gorō II.

Tsuyu no Miyako 露の都 (1956-).

uchiage 打ち上げ: after-show party.

Ukare no kuzuyori 浮かれの屑より (The Merry Ragpicker): a Kamigata rakugo story, not performed in the traditional Tokyo rakugo repertoire.

ukebayashi 受け囃子: exit music played immediately after the hanashika says her/his ochi; ukebayashi is played until the ochako completes kōzagaeshi duties (e.g., flipping the zabuton and mekuri, setting up/striking the kendai, etc.) for the next act; the debayashi for the next performer commences once these are finished and the ochako has exited.

urekko 売れっ子: term used to refer to someone who gets a break in show business and is thereafter highly sought after; urekko is also sometimes used in a negative context, to imply that one is a sell-out; well-known Kamigata urekko include Katsura Sanshi (now Bunshi VI), Shōfukutei Tsurube 笑福亭鶴瓶 (1951-), and Katsura Bunchin.

Utei (Tatekawa) Enba 烏亭 (立川) 焉馬 (1743-1822).

wagei 話芸: narrative arts, such as kōdan, rakugo, *mandan* 漫談 (comic monologue), and manzai.

wagoto 和事: soft-style acting technique, common in Kamigata kabuki; compare aragoto.

wajutsu 話術: narrative skills or techniques, such as tateben, a hallmark of Kamigata rakugo and manzai.

wakadanna 若旦那: the merchant son, heir of the house and business; in rakugo, the wakadanna has a somewhat weak character and is often shown as having a predilection for drinking, partying with geisha, or spending all day at the kabuki theater.

wakate 若手: in Kamigata rakugo this refers to a younger hanashika, from zenza to hanashika with up to fifteen or twenty years of performance experience.

Wakayanagi Enjō 若柳燕嬢 (fl. turn of twentieth century).

waraibanashi 笑咄 笑噺 笑話: comic tales/anecdotes popular during the early modern era.

Yanagiya Kosan III 柳家小さん (1857-1930).

yobai 夜這い: a ‘night crawl’, when a woman or a man sneaks into the quarters of a love interest for sexual favors at night; there are amusing (botched) yobai scenes in a number of rakugo stories.

Yonezawa Hikohachi I 米沢彦八 (d. 1714); Yonezawa Hikohachi II (fl. 1722-67).

yose 寄席: short for yoseba 寄場 and synonymous with seki (jōseki), this is a performance hall dedicated to rakugo and/or other arts classified as engei; traditional yose typically seat one hundred to three hundred people.

yosebayashi 寄席囃子: hayashi music played in seki/yose, most of which was adapted from kabuki and other popular music genres such as nagauta; Kamigata yosebayashi is known for being more lively than Tokyo yosebayashi; chief instruments include the shamisen, shimedaiko, ōdaiko, atarigane, nōkan, and shinobue, among others; see narimono.

yose moji 寄席文字: one type of *Edo moji* 江戸文字 (two others being *shibai moji* 芝居文字 and *sumō ji* 相撲字) yose moji is a style calligraphy used at seki/yose to write mekuri, *nafuda* 名札 (name boards), and *nobori* 幟 (banners). Unlike other forms of Japanese calligraphy, the same line can be brushed more than once—the idea is to leave as little empty space as possible as this represents the way that *sekitei* 席亭 (seki managers/owners) would like to see the seats: full.

Yoshimoto Kōgyō 吉本興業: an Osaka-based entertainment company that specializes in comedy, engei, and television entertainment; Yoshimoto for short, the company celebrated its hundredth anniversary in 2012.

zabuton 座布団: a floor cushion used for kneeling/sitting; in rakugo this is a large, plush cushion covered in silk or satin that allows hanashika to be comfortable while doing *seiza* 正座 (kneeling Japanese style) during a performance; backstage at the Tenma Tenjin Hanjōtei, there are zabuton in various colors that hanashika can choose from, to match with their kimono.

zashiki gei 座敷芸: lit. parlor art, this refers to performance arts presented indoors, typically in a space floored with tatami mats; the term zashiki gei is often used in contrast to *tsuji gei* 辻芸 (street performance); until the nineteenth century, Kamigata storytellers were best known for performing tsujibanashi, but, beginning with Shikano Buzaemon, Edo storytellers were known for their *zashikibanashi* 座敷咄 (parlor tales); compare tsujibanashi.

zekkō geinin 舌耕芸人: also referred to as zekkōsha 舌耕者, oral entertainers who display remarkable eloquence and use it to make a living.

zenza 前座: lit. ‘first seat’, in Kamigata rakugo this refers to a hanashika of the lowest level; the youngest (or least experienced) zenza are typically warm-up acts at shows and responsible for doing menial tasks (making/serving tea, cleaning, dressing their shishō and other senior hanashika, folding kimono, and more) backstage and in the *gakuya*; there was an official rank system—zenza, *nakaza* 中座 (lit. middle seat), *shin’uchi* 真打ち (headliner)—in Kamigata rakugo prior to World War II, but, since there were no seki in Osaka until 2006, the system fell out of use; Tokyo rakugo still employs an official rank system in its yose: zenza, *futatsume* 二つ目 (second [act]), and *shin’uchi*.

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