FUNKY TOWN OSAKA: KANSAI REGIONAL IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION
IN JAPANESE POPULAR MUSIC

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Nancy Judith Elizabeth Marsden

Thesis Committee:

Frederick Lau, Chairperson
Ricardo D. Trimillos
Christine R. Yano
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated in loving memory to Taylor Lane Anderson, a friend and victim of the devastating tsunami that resulted from the Tōhoku Earthquake on March 11th, 2011. Taylor was living her dreams as an English teacher for the JET program in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture in the Tōhoku region of Japan. Her love of the Japanese language, culture, and people will live on in her students, family, and friends. She is sorely missed by all those she touched during her life.

Taylor (left) and the author enjoying yuzu kakikori (Japanese citrus flavoured shaved ice) outside of Ginkakuji Temple in Kyoto during the summer of 2010.
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ABSTRACT

While regionalism is not a phenomenon unique to Japan, the influence it exerts over language, culture, and society is quite strong. The Japanese nation-building project of the late 19th century and early 20th century has resulted in centre-periphery power imbalances, as the cultural, political, and economical power of the Kansai region was transferred to Tokyo. This inequality became particularly heightened after Tokyo became the authoritative centre with the restructuring of Japan following World War II. Tokyo's central pull has had a significant effect on the regional image, perception, and identification of many rural areas.

In this thesis I focus specifically on the Kansai region and the tensions that arise between it and the dominance of Tokyo in defining Japan's national identity through exploring the production and performance of regional identity in Japanese popular music. Images of the Osaka/Kansai region in the media and music industry, and data collected during fieldwork based on concerts, print media, and fan interviews are used in order to better understand how regionalism affects perception and construction of identity in Japan.

While this thesis examine a variety of musicians from the Kansai region, idol groups managed by Johnny's Entertainment are studied in depth as a case study. In particular I focus mainly on Kanjani∞ while comparing them to Kinki Kids, KAT-TUN, and others. By comparing these three groups to the trainee groups Johnny's Juniors and Kansai Johnny's Juniors, I explore the shifting processes of presenting Kansai identity in
popular music and media and argue that geographic origin and images associated with a specific region are an integral part of relational identity in a nation that views itself as a racially homogenous body. Through examining the reception and representation of musicians from the Kansai region in both Tokyo and Kansai's media, I argue that the Kansai region and its people specifically are subjected to complex, multi-layered and capricious interpretations of their identity due to the widespread familiarity of the region in Japanese consciousness, and because of the rivalry between Kansai and the dominant Tokyo/Kantō area.
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In this thesis I use the Hepburn system of transliteration for Japanese words. Exceptions are words that have already entered the English lexicon (e.g., Tokyo, samurai, etc.). Long vowels are indicated with macrons. Macrons are not used for the names of Johnny's Entertainment performers, and instead follows their romanization as listed on the official Johnny's Entertainment website (http://www.johnnys-net.jp/).

Japanese names are presented with the family name first, and then the personal name as per Japanese custom (except in the acknowledgments). Occasionally, capitalization of certain musicians will be non-standard and appear as they are published in Japan (e.g., KAT-TUN).

Translations, photographs (not including maps), and transcriptions have all been done by the author. Translations of lyrics are given with the original Japanese text, and words in Kansai dialect or references to areas in Kansai are bolded.
INTRODUCTION

0.1 Problematizing Regionalism and Identity in Japan

“Welcome to Japan Welcome to Kansai” a large map greets me as I arrive in the lobby of Kansai International Airport for my fieldwork in the summer of 2010. Drawings of the Great Buddha in Nara, the Golden Pavilion of Kyoto, and Osaka castle in Osaka beckon the newly arrived traveller to explore the rich cultural and historical heritage of the Kansai region.

Figure 1. Visitor’s Map located in the lobby of Kansai International Airport. Photograph by author.
Some symbols, such as Himeji Castle in Hyōgo Prefecture or the geisha of Kyoto's famous Gion district, are well-known symbols to foreigners arriving to explore Japan, but the female pearl divers (ama) of Mie Prefecture or the Awa Odori dancers of Tokushima Prefecture may only be familiar to Japanese. Aside from Kobe Port Tower, all of the symbols of Kansai's prefectures and cities are from the past. Surely Kansai's modern identity has something as exciting to offer as the days of the samurai and ninja, as the map presents.

In some aspects, however, the map is succinctly appropriate at welcoming the visitor; you have not just arrived in Osaka, but the entire Kansai region, which welcomes you as a unified body, which in turn represents the whole of Japan. Tokyo does not exist on this map, and why should it, when everything you need to experience in order to understand Japan is right at your fingertips in the Kansai region.

In this thesis I examine the processes of regional identity construction and negotiation in Japanese society by examining media constructions of the Osaka/Kansai region in popular music, and fans' reactions to these images. How does popular music contribute to the discourse on regional and national identity in Japan's Tokyo-centric media?

To a casual or unfamiliar Western listener, mainstream Japanese popular music may appear to be nothing more than formulaic, overproduced bubblegum music mass marketed for youth consumption with little deviation from the standardized kata (pattern or style) of highly choreographed dance routines, flashy matching costumes, singable melody lines, and consistent repetition. However, many groups from the Kansai region
either make strong reference to their regional identity through dialect and use of markers of symbolic “Osakan” identity in their music, or may base their entire group image off the Kansai region. The media and music industries are, therefore, significant stages for musicians and fans to perform and negotiate their regional identities.

The central goal for this thesis is to examine how the perception of regional identity is constructed, produced, and negotiated among the Japanese. This will be conducted from two different angles; one will be an examination of the perspectives of locals viewing their own region (specifically focusing on the Osaka/Kansai area), and non-local (Tokyo/Kanto region) through popular cultural and musical practices. The second will be a comparison between artists with marketed Kansai identities- focusing specifically on the group Kanjani∞, in addition to examining groups such as the Ulfuls and Kinki Kids- and the consumption of these artists by fans. How does regionalism affect fans' perception and consumption of musical groups? How do artists (or producers) choose whether or not an artist's roots in Osaka/Kansai will play an integral part in their image production, and what are the effects of these decisions?

While this thesis focuses on groups active during my fieldwork in 2010, groups or artists no longer active will be included as a point of historical reference. In terms of currently active artists, one management agency that is studied to provide a useful means of examining the construction and production of regional identity is Johnny's Entertainment. Two groups within the agency, Kinki Kids and Kanjani∞, are specifically marked as regional groups through their naming and their use of regional dialect and, in Kanjani∞'s case, imagery. While both groups hail from the Kansai region, Kinki Kids'
production has not been based upon regionalism like Kanjani♂'s, affecting the opportunities of both groups and their reception into Tokyo's music industry.

Debuting as a “modern enka pop group,” Kanjani♂’s marketing and naming has been specifically tied to regional identity, as opposed to the majority of Johnny's Entertainment groups who are devoid of regional identity markers. Kanjani♂'s formation, production, and the position they hold within their agency has been dictated by the members' geographic origins outside of the Kantō region. As a result, Kanjani♂’s public persona is that of idol, “Johnny's,” Osaka-jin, Kansai-jin, comedians, hybrid enka-pop musicians, and exotic other. While any of these identities may be exaggerated or downplayed based on the situation, at the core of Kanjani♂’s identity is their regionalized marker as Kansai-jin. Through examining the stereotypes, symbolism and meanings attached to the various elements combined in creating Kanjani♂'s image as idols, enka musicians, Johnny's Entertainment performers, and people from the Osaka/Kansai region, I contend that regionalism is an integral marker of identity within a nation that views itself as a homogenous body. How is regionalism and difference constructed and negotiated in Japan, and how are these discourses an integral part of Japanese identity?

0.2 Significance:

This thesis focuses on regional identity in contemporary Japanese culture, and uses an interdisciplinary approach to understand Japanese identity on a local, regional, and national level through deconstructing the complex mechanism by which identity is negotiated. Regionalism is a potent force in Japan's national identity. Historically, local
dialects were incomprehensible to those outside of a settlement, even to nearby villages. Japan was not unified until 1600 under Tokugawa Ieyasu, and the process of moulding Japan into a nation-state did not occur until the Meiji Period. As a result, however, centre-periphery power imbalances have arisen, as the Kansai region was the central focus of Japan culturally, politically, and economically until the capital was switched from Kyoto to Tokyo in 1868. The economic power of Osaka also waned at the end of the 19th century, but was not completely eclipsed by Tokyo until the restructuring of power following World War II resulted in Tokyo becoming the incontestable centre of Japan. Parks, museums, and festivals have been created that highlight a specific regional trait or symbol to encourage tourism to rural areas of Japan that have struggled to transition from their traditional commercial practices of fishing, farming, and mining.

By using theories and resources from a variety of disciplines (musicology, anthropology, Japanese studies, linguistics, etc.), I will address identity construction from multiple perspectives in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding. Studies on regional identity appear to be lacking in English publications, and I will provide a means of addressing regional identity production and consumption on a national level. This will be a novel approach to Japanese music scholarship, as genre is the predominant subject of Japanese popular music studies, although there has been research done on Okinawan music (Ito 1988; Masuda 1996; Potter 2002). I speculate that geographic origins and images associated with a specific region are integral part of relational identity in a nation that sees itself as a racially homogenous body, and I hope that this thesis can be a
contribution in the subjects of Japanese studies, nationalist theory, identity construction, popular music, and ethnomusicology.

0.3 Literature Review

There are four main bodies of literature from which I would like to draw references: identity construction theory, Osaka/Kansai history and imagery, Japanese popular music, and fan culture.

I use theories on identity construction to examine the symbols and meanings associated with various identity markers (dialect, entertainment agency, fans, etc.). In his chapter in *Questions of Cultural Identity* (1996) Simon Frith explores theories for approaching the study of identity from a postmodern perspective. He argues that identity is a non-static entity; it is constantly shifting and requires contextualization. Frith’s theory is useful for examining how artists’ identity shifts depending on their context, which I use to focus specifically on how regionalism affects identity.

Stuart Hall provides a critical look on identity formation in his contribution to the book *Modernity: an Introduction to Modern Societies* (1996). Although he focuses a significant portion of his writing on the historical changes in how identity has been viewed in the West, he also tackles nationalism as well as national identity issues. Many of the aspects of constructing national identity he writes about, such as establishing a collective history and appropriating symbols as markers of identity, can also be applied towards the Kansai region of Japan. I will apply his theories to examine how groups such as Kanjani∞ are constructed to be a representation of the Kansai region.
Thomas Eriksen focuses mainly on ethnicity as a marker of identity in his book *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives* (1993), and many of his concepts can be applied to Kanjani☆'s construction and relationship with other performers on television, particularly Eriksen's examination of the classification of “us and them,” stereotyping, boundary maintenance and transcendence, and “that which is not ethnic” (globalization and localization, identities and loyalties, etc.). It is a theoretically rich examination of how humans interact and classify one another.

There are very limited resources on books on Osaka or Kansai region in English. Regional identity markers do not appear to be subjects that have received attention in English scholarly publications. One book on the Kansai region is for Japanese language students to learn Kansai dialect and is entitled, *The Dialects & Culture of the Kansai Region* by Palter and Slotsve (2006). This book is an introduction to the dialect of the Kansai region (sometimes also called the Kinki region) for English speakers. It features mostly grammar patterns and sample exercises, and brief explanations on differences within the Kansai region and symbols (such as food, baseball teams, etc.) that are closely associated with Kansai culture, which I use as a source of stereotypes and images associated with the Kansai region. Joel Stocker's article on “Yoshimoto Kōgyō and Manzai in Japan's Media Culture” (2001) on *manzai* (comedy duos) and the comedy agency Yoshimoto Kyogo Ltd. also explores the tensions between Osaka and Tokyo, making it a useful reference for Osaka's national image. Although it is a difficult source to locate, Matsuno Tsuneyoshi's translation of Harada Tomohiko and Sakudō Yotarō's book *The Culture and History of Kansai* (1994) into English is one of the most
comprehensive examinations of the historical evolution of the Kansai region, and how it struggled to adapt to Tokyo's dominance in the modern era.

Within the subject of popular music, publications tend to be on one specific genre within the field, such as Taylor Atkins book *Blue Nippon: Authenticating Jazz in Japan* (2001), Ian Condry’s book *Hip-Hop Japan: Rap and the Paths of Cultural Globalization* (2006), Hiroshi Aoyagi's book *Island of Eight Million Smiles: Idol Performance and Symbolic Production in Contemporary Japan* (2005), Christine Yano's book *Tears of Longing: Nostalgia and the Nation in Japanese Popular Song* (2003), or Jennifer Milioto Matsue’s book *Making Music in Japan's Underground: The Tokyo Hardcore Scene* (2008). I would like to examine music not by genre (although certainly Johnny's Entertainment musicians fall into the category of idols), but by the overarching themes of regional identity and imagery that can be applied to musicians of any genre, although regionalism may be more prevalent in or connected with certain genres.

The processes of producing musicians and performing their public identity are an integral part of my research, as I aim to understand how regionalism is manipulated as a result. Christine Yano has written an article in 1997 on the subject about *enka* singers entitled, “Inventing Selves: Images and Image-Making in a Japanese Popular Music Genre,” which is useful reference for how stage identities are constructed within the *enka* industry. Fabienne Darling-Wolf has written on the construction of SMAP, one of Johnny's Entertainment's most successful acts, in the 2004 article “SMAP, Sex, and Masculinity: Constructing the Perfect Female Fantasy in Japanese Popular Music,” the *sempai* (seniors) of groups such as Kanjani∞ and Kinki Kids, who are also idols in
Johnny's Entertainment. Yuen Shu Min has also focused on SMAP in her 2007 thesis *Pop-Idol Concerts in Contemporary Japan: Queering Gender, Sexuality and Ethnicity.* Methods of SMAP's identity construction in performances and media can be used as a point of comparison for other groups within the same talent agency, although this thesis is not focusing on gender issues. Carolyn Stevens' book *Japanese Popular Music Culture, Authenticity and Power* (2008) is the most comprehensive look at Japanese popular music and the agency's role in shaping artists' image.


While Aoyagi includes a chapter on fans and what he calls the “adoration cult,” Christine Yano has done extensive research on the relationship between fans and their object of adoration. She focuses specifically on *enka* and its devoted fandom for much of her research. Her article “Charisma's Realm: Fandom in Japan” (1997) was one of the first looks at the relationship between fans and an idol. William Kelly's book *Fanning the Flames Fans and Consumer Culture in Contemporary Japan* (2004) contains articles on
many different forms of fan consumption in Japan, some of which include music. Understanding patterns of consumption and how fans perceive musicians will be an integral part of my research, as I examine how fans perceive of Kanjani∞ and their regional image.

0.4 Fieldwork and Methodology

I conducted fieldwork for this thesis in the summer of 2010 in Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka, by attending concerts, interviewing fans and musicians, observing television shows, and collecting print media (travel brochures, magazines, CDs, DVDs, etc.) in order to gain an understanding of how regional identity and music are conceptualized, produced, consumed, and perpetuated in Japan. Television plays an integral role in shaping perceptions about musicians, and so special attention was paid to music shows and interviews of artists. Such shows include but are not limited to: Hey Hey Hey Music Champs, Music Station, Hanamaru Cafe, Shonen Club, Shonen Club Premium, Nippon no Uta, Shin Domoto Kyoudai, Utaban, and NHK Kansai shows.

I also observed fan production and consumption through interactions with fans. My research also includes examining fan groups or clubs online, specifically looking at official fan groups, in addition to other fan communities in order to determine the relationship between an artist's regional identity, fans' regional identity, and consumption and fan practices based upon these identities. Comparison is an important element of examining regional identity, between perceptions of regions (Kansai/Kantō), the musician/fan divide, and between musicians, specifically focusing on the differences
within the same agency between a group marketed as “local” (Kanjani∞) and a local
group marketed as “mainstream” (Kinki Kids). Interviews were conducted both in person
and through email. Scholarly research was conducted in both Japanese and English at The
International Research Center for Japanese Studies in Kyoto, Japan for two months.
Library resources at the National Museum of Ethnography in Osaka and archival research
at Ōya Sōichi Bunko, a collection of popular magazines and print media from over the
past 30 years located in Tokyo, were also used.

0.5 Chapter Outline

Chapter One focuses specifically on the history of the Kansai region, and the role
it has played in contributing to Japan's national identity. It explores centre-periphery
issues and relationships, as Tokyo has gradually become the definitive centre of Japan,
robbing the Kansai region of its previously role as cultural, political, and economic
leader. It further explores the struggles of regions around Japan in reasserting their
identities within the context of modern Japan, and examines the means by which
regionalism fits into the larger context of Japanese nationalism. This historical and
cultural examination is followed directly by an exploration of the rivalry and tensions
between the Kansai and Kantō regions in their modern incarnations. An in depth analysis
of the modern images, stereotypes, perceived personality, and linguistic differences of the
Kansai region is also presented in Chapter Two.

Having established the contextual background of the history, stereotypes and
rivalries of the Kansai and Kantō regions, I look at the presence of the Kansai region in
popular music and the Kansai region's musical scene in Chapter Three. This chapter also observes trends in music from the Kansai region, such as a prevalence of spoken word or rap, Kansai dialect, humour, and Osaka/Kansai as the thematic material of songs. Chapter Four focuses in depth on the role regionalism plays in the management of Johnny's Entertainment, as well as the company's construction of local Kansai identity through its Kansai musicians. Chapter Five continues this focus on the musicians of Johnny's Entertainment by concentrating on a musical, lyrical, and image analysis of the music and musicians examined in the previously chapter.

Finally, Chapter Six begins with a general overview of image construction in popular music, followed by a more specific look at the mechanisms at work within the Japanese popular music scene. This chapter then continues with an examination of how regional identities are manipulated in order to create intimacy between fans and performers in concert settings, in addition to an analysis of fan reactions and perceptions of Kanjani∞'s local identity construction.
CHAPTER ONE. HISTORY OF THE KANSAI REGION

1.1 Defining the Kansai Region

The origins of the term “Kansai” reach far back into Japanese history, although which areas constitute the Kansai region have undergone numerous changes, and continues to be ambiguous today. The kanji for Kansai, 関西, literally means “western barrier,” and originates from the three barriers or checkpoints that protected the capital, Otsu, in the seventh century. These three barriers were Suzuka Station (current Mie Prefecture), Fuwa Station (current Gifu Prefecture), and Arachi station (current Fukui Prefecture). When the capital was moved to Heijo (present-day Nara), in 745 Arachi station was replaced with Osaka station in Omi, and the other two gates decreased in importance. In ancient Japan, the term Kansai was a term applied to all of western Japan, including Kyūshū and Shikoku. (Yūichi Hinoue, email message to author, July

![Figure 2. The Kansai region, with the three major cities, Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe, highlighted in red.](http://www.kippo.or.jp/e/travel/images/support/kansai_map.jpg)
12th 2010). Historically, “kamigata” was a name used to describe the area around Kyoto in reference to the imperial palace. Because of its economic influence, Osaka was also included in kamigata (Harada and Sakudō 1993: 1-3).

Today, the Kansai region mainly centres on the three major cities, Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe, and the urban regions that surround those cities, also known as “Kei-han-shin,” (京阪神), using a kanji (character) from each city respectively (Palter and Slotsve 2006: 11). The Kei-han-shin region accounts for the second largest population in Japan (approximately 20 million), after the greater Tokyo area (approximately 40 million), collectively compromising half of Japan's total population.

With Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe at the heart of the Kansai region, the number of prefectures included in the Kansai region varies, generally from seven to ten regions. According to Osaka Regional Economic Planning Research Committee's 1963 publication “Osaka- Kansai Vision 10 Years Hence,” the Kansai region included Osaka, Hyōgo, Kyoto, Shiga, Nara, Wakayama, Mie, and Fukui (Harada and Sakudō 1993: 290). In 1977 the Third Overall Development Plan of the Minister of International Trade and Industry, however, listed Osaka, Hyōgo, Kyoto, Shiga, Nara, Wakyama, and Fukui, but did not include Mie (ibid: 294).

Fukui, Mie, Tottori, and Tokushima are the four prefectures that appear to be included (or excluded) as a part of Kansai arbitrarily; an English guidebook entitled “How to See Kansai Area” issued by the Japan Travel Bureau in 1949 includes Mie Prefecture and excludes the other three prefectures (Japan Travel Bureau 1949: 1). Forty-five years later, the Kansai Host Council for Osaka APEC Meetings published a book,
“Kansai: Cooperation and Coexistence” that includes Fukui, Mie, and Tokushima Prefectures.

Kinki is another term often used interchangeably with Kansai, although there are distinct differences in nuance. The kanji for “Kinki” (近畿) means “close” while the second kanji means “the place of the Emperor” since the Emperor resided in Kyoto until the Meiji Period, garnishing the surrounding area with the name “Kinki” (Yūichi Hinoue, email message to author, July 12th 2010).

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) sponsored-website web-japan.org, the term Kansai currently “refers to an area centering roughly on the cities of Osaka, Kyoto and Kobe... Kansai is used in a cultural and historic context, and in contradistinction to Kantō,” (Web Japan Fact Sheet: 3) while the term Kinki is used to refer to the geographic region of Kyoto, Osaka, Hyōgo, Wakayama, Mie, Shiga, and Nara (ibid: 3). The term Kansai also implies its opposite, the Kantō region, which carries more connotations of comparison to Eastern Japan, as well as situating the Kansai region within the context of regionalism in Japan.

For the purposes of this thesis, the term Kinki will refer to the geographical region of western Japan, defined as the prefectures of Kyoto, Osaka, Hyōgo, Wakayama, Mie, Shiga, and Nara. Kansai will refer to the cultural area of Western Japan centring on the cities of Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe, and consisting of the kinki region and neighbouring prefectures. While Osaka and Kyoto are both prefectures and cities, the prefectures will be referred to as “Osaka Prefecture” and “Kyoto Prefecture” prefecture unless included in a list of prefectures. The cities will simply be referred to as “Osaka” or “Kyoto.”
1.2 Centrality and the Kansai Region

The Kansai region has played an integral role in the national narrative of Japan, particularly in the areas of politics, culture, economics, and history. While it was the centre of Japan culturally, politically, and economically until the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Kansai's role in modern Japan has shifted greatly due to the heavy concentration of national media, company headquarters, and political power in Tokyo. This shift to total centrality in Tokyo has developed into a challenge for all regions in Japan who struggle to assert their modern identities in a nation where Tokyo's standards have become

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2 This Map was taken from Google's Image Search, and can be found at: http://jenninjapan.files.wordpress.com/2009/12/prefectures.gif
representative for all of Japan. As the most influential region outside of Tokyo and the Kantō region, and because of its long history and importance in Japan, the Kansai region is the best equipped to present an alternate centre of power and influence, resulting in a rivalry between the two regions. This chapter examines the shift in centrality from the Kansai region to the Kantō and the resulting repercussions for the Kansai region, as well as the identity struggles of regions around Japan.

The majority of Japanese historical events and cultural properties are located in the Kansai region. It is believed that the first Japanese people began living in the Kansai region approximately 10,000 years ago in what is known as the Jomon Period (7,000 B.C – 300 B.C) (*Kansai Cooperation and Coexistence* 1995: 23). Around the third century, the inhabitants of the Kansai region were consolidated under the power of one clan known as Yamato (ibid: 23). In 645 the leader of the Yamato clan, Emperor Kotoku, moved the capital to Naniwa (present-day Osaka) and renamed the city “Naniwa-kyo,” or “Naniwa Capital.” Naniwa, was first written in the *Nihon shoki*, a historical narrative completed in 720 (McClain 1999: 1).

The imperial forces at length proceeded eastwards, the prow of one ship touching the stern of another. Just when they reached Cape Naniha they encountered a current of great swiftness. Whereupon that place was called Nami-haya (wave-swift) or Nami-hana (wave-flower). It is now called Naniha, which is a corruption of this. (*Nihongi* 1956: 112-113)

The characters for Naniwa, 浪速, came from the “swift waves” at Osaka Bay where Jimmu landed his forces, but could also be written as 難波, or “dangerous waves”
(McClain 1999: 1). Today, these names refer to areas within Osaka; the former characters continue to be read as “Naniwa” and refer to a ward (ku) in central Osaka, while the latter is read as “Namba,” and is a major train station located in the southern area of Osaka. The corruption of “Nami-hana,” 浪花, is pronounced “Naniwa” and is also used to refer to Osaka, but is also used for classical styles of music from Osaka, such as Naniwa-bushi, a genre of narrative singing accompanied by shamisen. While Naniwa is an archaic term, it is also used to reference Osaka in popular culture, as will be examined in Chapters Three and Five.

Historically, Naniwa-kyo was an important location for diplomats and merchants, as its prime location at the mouth of the Yodo river allowed for greater transportation between other regions in Japan as well as other Asian countries (Osaka Today, Naniwa Yesterday 2003: 17). However, the capital was moved to Omi (near present-day Otsu) in 667. While the capital continued to be moved multiple times, it remained in Heian-kyo (Kyoto) from 794-1868, until it was moved to its current location, Tokyo (known as Edo until 1868).

During the Heian Period (794-1185) and Kamakura Period (1185-1333) Sumiyoshi Shrine (present-day southern Osaka city) and Shitennoji (present-day central Osaka city) became popular sites for religious pilgrimages, resulting in monzen machi, or temple towns, developing around the religious complexes. By the 15th century these settlements included a permanent seaside market, and became known as Tennoji (McClain 1999: 6-8). Goods from the local areas were traded locally, as well as being shipped farther
inland. They included sake, salt, dyed textiles, straw matting, salted fish, paper, cast metal goods, bamboo, wood, and the most important commodity, of all, rice (ibid: 8).

With the collapse of central authority following the Onin War (1467-1477), Honganji Temple (located in present-day Osaka city) developed not only as a religious centre but also as a centre of secular power. As a result, the temple's expansion drew merchants to meet the mercantile needs of the temple, and residential areas grew rapidly in the early and mid 16th century. In the surrounding regions of Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi approximately a dozen or more monzen machi associated with the same Pure Land Buddhism sect as Honganji temple emerged, establishing the sect as a powerful political threat (McClain 1999: 10-11).

Honganji Temple is also important because the first written recording of the term Osaka is from a document written by Rennyo Kenju, a religious leader of the prestigious temple (Osaka Today, Naniwa Yesterday 2003: 70). Although it is unknown as to when Osaka replaced Naniwa as a name for the settlement, according to the Rennyo Shonin gōbunshō, Rennyo established a chapel in 1496 “on Ikutama manor, at a place called Osaka” (McClain 1999: 9). The characters 大坂, “great” hill were used until the 1870s when 大阪 became the standard (ibid: 9). One explanation for this change in characters is that 坂 could be misread as 士反, or “samurai rebellion.” Today, the kanji 大坂 is used only in historical instances.

At the end of the 16th century, the first of three great samurai to unify Japan, Oda Nobunaga, began the period of Japanese unification in the Kansai region; prior to this, the central power of the royal court in Kyoto was extremely weak, and Japan was ruled by
regional warlords or autonomous temple towns. Nobunaga succeeded in gaining control of Honganji Temple in 1580 after an eleven year siege, and with the fall of Honganji, the surrounding temple city quickly followed suit. By the time Oda Nobunaga died in 1582, he had gained control of approximately a third of Japan, the majority of which was in the “heartland” of Japan, the Kansai region. Upon his death the task to unite Japan went to his loyal follower Toyotomi Hideyoshi. In 1585 Toyotomi continued Nobunaga's campaign into Shikoku, and in 1587 he had secured Kyushu. By 1590 Toyotomi had gained control of eastern Japan (the Kantō region), effectively unifying all of Japan under his control (ibid: 12).

Under Toyotomi's rule, Osaka again became the central focus of Japan. Although the capital remained in Kyoto, culturally, militarily, and economically, Osaka was the most influential region of Japan. In 1583 Toyotomi began the construction of Osaka castle on the spot where only three years earlier Honganji Temple had been burned to the ground at Nobunaga's victory. At the time of its construction, Osaka castle was built on an enormous scale; taking more than three years to complete, the castle itself was 3.3 square kilometres, and its grounds occupied an area with a circumference of 12.7 kilometres (Kansai: Cooperation and Coexistence 1995: 33). The largest of any castle in Japan, Osaka castle became not only a symbol of Toyotomi's power and the place from which he governed, it became the model for approximately two hundred other feudal castles throughout the country.

Merchants, warriors, and clerics flocked to the castle town that developed around Osaka castle, changing the landscape of the city while establishing a new cultural
identity. Toyotomi established residential areas for each group, which became the foundation for the layout of modern Osaka, in addition to being the model for other castle towns during feudal times. Toyotomi also constructed several new canals, such as Higashi-Yokobori canal in 1585, Temma Canal in 1598, and the Nishi-Yokobori and Awabori canals in 1600 (Harada and Sakudō 1993: 188). With increased water transport, the establishment of free urban trade outside of traditional guilds, and more extreme measures by Toyotomi, such as encouraging whole residential areas from Sakai and Fushimi to move to Osaka after a devastating earthquake in 1596, trade through Osaka increased greatly, both within Japan and internationally (McClain 1999: 17). At the turn of the 16th century, Osaka was a place for opportunities for people of all social classes.

As of November 8th 2010, according to the official website for Osaka Castle, Osaka flourished greatly under Toyotomi's reign, but after his death in 1598 both the city and castle of Osaka were eventually destroyed in 1615 by Tokugawa Ieyasu in the Summer War of Osaka.3 However, the importance of Osaka castle as a symbol of Osakan pride can be see through its numerous reconstructions over years, from its first reconstruction from 1620-1629 by the Tokugawa government, to its most recent renovation in 1997. The importance of the castle to the people of Osaka can be seen the most through its reconstruction in 1931, where the residents of Osaka raised the necessary funds to rebuild the castle themselves (ibid).

During the Tokugawa Period (1600-1868), Osaka was quickly rebuilt, and by the 1630s had re-established itself as an important military, economic, and cultural focal point in Japan. Osaka's rise as the economic hub of Japan became the biggest marker of

3 The website can be accessed at http://www.osakacastle.net/english/history/index.html
its identity, as it became known as the city of merchants. However, early signs of power shifts to the Kantō region that would result in the Kansai-Kantō rivalry were also visible, with the bakufu (shogunate government) in Edo (present-day Tokyo); while Tokugawa ran his shogunate empire out of Edo, the royal court remained in Kyoto, and Osaka continued to be a critical outpost for the administrative and military affairs of Western Japan, as it was Japan's second largest city.

As the economic focal point of Japan, Osaka played the unique role of collecting and distributing goods throughout the nation for the first time in Japan’s history. Although goods such as rapeseed oil, cotton cloth, leather goods, medicine and furniture were distributed, Osaka's image became especially connected to food through the trade of rice, tea, sake, vinegar, and soy sauce, gaining it the title of “Tenka-no-Daidokoro,” or the “Nation's Kitchen.” Within Osaka the Dojima Rice Market, Temma Vegetable Market, and the Zakoba Fish Market emerged, establishing further foodstuff trade with local areas
(Kansai: Cooperation and Coexistence 1995: 34). Osaka became known for “kuidaore,” or “eat until you drop,” a phrase still often used to describe the culinary offerings and image of Osaka.

Part of the reason why Osaka was able to rise to the forefront of Japan's economy was also because of the increased productivity within the surrounding Kinai region. Because the surrounding regions emerged as the largest craft and agricultural producers in the country, Osaka was able to draw upon the resources of the surrounding areas in order to flourish as a centre of economic trade (McClain 1999: 266). This symbiotic relationship not only benefited the region economically, but established regional economic bonds that would continue into the present. Although Osaka's economic power weakened in the end of the Edo Period, Osaka remained a critical hub for economic development and mobility in Japan, and retained its “merchant” image.

During the Edo Period, however, Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka rose as the three major cities in Japan and adopted specific regional characteristics; Edo, as the administrative centre of Japan, became known as “The Shogun's Backyard;” Kyoto, as the official residence of the imperial court, was the “The Millenary Capital;” and Osaka, as the commercial centre of Japan, became “The Nation's Kitchen” (Kansai: Cooperation and Coexistence: 34). Many of these local stereotypes remain today within Japan's national consciousness, in addition to the hierarchical relationships that formed between Japanese regions.

At the end of the Edo Period, Hirose Kyokuso wrote on the differences between Kyoto and Osaka in his book Kyuukei-sōdō Zuihitsu:
Kyoto people are delicate, Osaka people are poor in heart; the former are chivalrous, the latter are easy to fall into a truculent mood; the former respect their own land because they think there's no place like home, the latter make much of wealth because they think nobles and officials [sic] are poor inspite [sic] of their high position and they want to join their business. Nothing is more precious than wealth in this world (Harada and Sakudō 1993: 191-192).

Although the critic of Osakans is quite harsh, Hirose also critiqued Kyoto, calling people from Kyoto “haughty” and that they “consider[ed] Edo and Osaka to be rustic and backward,” while complaining that people from Edo “are filled with mere bravado” and “value office and bureaucratic rank above all else” (McClain 1999: 271). Hirose praises those from Osaka by conveying they “put their hand to merchant activity, and there is no one else in the world who prizes wealth more than do the people of Osaka” (ibid: 271).

As Hirose's writing is over 150 years old, the regional stereotypes he writes of must have been established for some time, most likely making Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo's regional reputations over 200 years old (images that will be discussed in the next chapter). However, his writing is important in showing the distinctions that exist within the Kansai region, particularly between Kyoto and Osaka. While both are a part of the Kinki region, they have different histories that have shaped their local image, and the relationship between the two of them. Regional tensions in Japan are not limited solely to the Kansai/Kantō regions, but also exist within a singular region. While Hirose wrote of the distinctions between Kyoto and Osaka in the Edo Period, the influence from these
stereotypes can still be seen today, particularly the view (supposedly) held by people from Kyoto that they are culturally superior or “haughty” in regard to Osaka and its image, as these stereotypes were conveyed to me during my fieldwork (personal communication, Tokyo, Japan, 2010).

During the Meiji Period (1868-1912) Japan underwent a rapid period of modernization and a restructuring of its government, economy, and society. Hyōgo Port (now Kobe) and Osaka were opened to international trade, and international communities formed in both cities. In 1868 the capital of Japan moved to Tokyo, where it remains to this day, establishing Tokyo and the Kantō region as the centre of modern Japan. During this period, Kyoto struggled to re-establish its identity, as much of the vitality of the town was lost due to the loss of its status as the capital. Osaka also underwent a period of transformation into a modern commercial and industrial centre, mainly due to government-led projects, such as the Mint Bureau and an armoury, as well as the vision of Godai Tomoatsu, the first president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Kansai: Cooperation and Coexistence 1995: 35). Osaka's developmental prowess during the Taishō Period (1912-1926) and the pre-World War II portion of the Showa Period (1926-1989) garnished the nickname Dai Osaka, or “Great Osaka” (Koichi, Kana 2008: 1).

Since World War II, Osaka has been rebuilt in a manner that has allowed it to regain many of the previous roles it has held throughout its existence; an economic hub of Japan, albeit it is the second largest economy in Japan, as Tokyo has become the nation's largest economic centre; the “water” city (due to its reinvigorated focus on port
activities); as well as an international gateway for Japan. In 1960, the Association for the Promotion and Development of Kinki was organized, showing a greater unification of the Kansai region through regional development and planning (Harada and Sakudō 1993: 289). Through hosting the Japan World Exposition in 1970 and the International Garden and Greenery Exposition in 1994, in addition to constructing the Kansai International Airport in 1994, Osaka has risen to challenge Tokyo as a major metropolis within Japan, asserting great influence over the Kansai region and western Japan.

1.3 Regionalism and Japanese Nationalism

While the construction of Japanese identity has been formed on a national and international level to entail racial homogeneity and social harmony, regionalism plays a critical role in identity construction within Japan's geographic borders, from its people to the regions themselves. Due to cultural, linguistic, and historical reasons, Japan has been divided into several larger regions: from north to south, Hokkaido, Tōhoku, Kantō, Chūbu, Kansai, Chūgoku, Shikoku, Kyūshū, and Okinawa (see next page for map).

While regionalism is not a phenomenon unique to Japan, the influence it exerts over language, culture, and society is quite extraordinary. Examples of regionalism are prevalent in modern Japan, and are typically involved in the process of self-exoticism. Omiyage, or souvenirs, of local delicacies and famous goods are conveniently packaged for visitors to take a small piece of the region they visited home, or for people travelling outside of their hometown to bring an offering of their region to others. These goods may be foods unique to the region, or candies or chocolates familiar throughout Japan sold
Figure 5. Map of the regional divides of Japan. Rival regions Kansai and Kantō are marked by dark blue and green, respectively. 

* The map was taken from Google's Image Search, and can be found at: http://wapedia.mobi/thumb/9ac5499/en/fixed/442/599/Regions_and_Prefectures_of_Japan.svg?format=jpg
locally as souvenirs with regional flavours, such as Pocky, Hi-chew, or Kit-Kat chocolate bars. Quiz shows feature questions on regional dialects or customs, puzzling contestants and forcing them to guess the meanings of words as if they were foreign languages.

Historically, local dialects were incomprehensible to those outside of a settlement, even to nearby villages. As Japan was not unified until 1600 under Tokugawa Ieyasu, and the process of moulding Japan into a nation-state did not occur until the Meiji Period, and thus many localized dialects, foods, traditional musical styles, festivals, and customs remain prominent in defining a region's identity.

![Omiyage from Ishinomaki in Miyagi Prefecture, Tōhoku region. The top are zunda (sticky bean) rice cakes with feudal lord Date Masamune (right) and his retainer Katakura Kojūrō (left) on the packaging. On the bottom is zunda flavoured Kit-Kat, sold only in the Tōhoku region. Photograph by author.](image)

Defining the extent of the Kansai region's influence is difficult, as the influence of its cultural diffusion has reached across Japan. Historically, much of Japan's history has focused on the events in the Kansai region, making it a significant region in the narrative of Japanese identity. Kansai plays an integral role in contributing to the construction of
“traditional” Japan; over half of the country's designated national treasures (kokuhō) that are buildings (such as temples, shrines, castles, and residences) are located within the cities of Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, and Kobe (Kansai: Cooperation and Coexistence 1995: 60). Cultural forms promoted internationally as being symbols of Japanese identity, such as the tea ceremony, Noh, kabuki, bunraku, kyōgen theatre, flower arranging, Zen, and traditional crafts all hail from the Kansai region (ibid: 129, 134).

Regional cultures from other areas of Japan, such as tsugaru shamisen from the Tsugaru peninsula in Aomori Prefecture, or minyō (folksongs) from across Japan, have also been absorbed from their local roots into Japan's national identity, with the music from more rural and distanced regions from Tokyo, Osaka, and other major urban areas viewed as being more “untouched” and therefore more “pure” Japanese. Despite the elevation of minyō from its humble local origins, these regional folk songs in particular are in danger of fading into obscurity with fewer musicians able to correctly form them. While thousands of preservation clubs have been formed throughout Japan in order to prevent their total loss, popularizing a song or genre broadly outside of their place of origin have been one of the best methods of preservation. One example of a highly successful spread of a local folk tune is “Esashi Oiwake” from the town of Esashi in Hokkaidō. The Esashi Oiwake Kai, or preservation club, boasts 155 branches throughout Japan with over 4000 members. There is also a museum in Esashi called the Esashi Oiwake Kaikan that provides information and demonstrations of the song, in addition to teaching its visitors how to correctly sing the song. The museum also hosts a yearly
competition in order to select the best performer, with winners from different areas of Japan emerging as well (David Hughes 2011).

Of all the regional genres of music, Okinawan music in particular has become popular not only throughout Japan, but has also become a representative genre of Japanese music on a global scale (Stevens 2008: 24-25). While various regions throughout Japan have contributed to varying degrees to Japan's national narrative, the culture, history, language, and politics of the Kansai region have played the most integral role.

Stuart Hall calls this the “narrative of the nation,” a constructed identity in order to unite people under the imagined community of the nation (Hall 1996: 613). Japan in particular has formed an overpowering sense of one unified, homogenous identity through the widespread acceptance of nihonjinron, or “theories of Japaneseness” used by scholars, the media, and general public, which gained popularity in the 1970s. In this theory, “Japan is represented and represents itself as culturally exclusive, homogenous, and uniquely particularistic through the operation of a strategic binary opposition between two imaginary cultural entities, “Japan” and “the West” (Iwabuchi 2002: 7). However, this presentation of Japan as one unified body is problematic and has been disputed by many scholars precisely because they do not take into account variations within Japan, such as ethnic minorities and regional differences. Hall also disputes this process of forming one national narrative by stating “modern nations are all cultural hybrids” (Hall 1996: 617). In Japan's case, there appear to be tensions between local Japan and national Japan, as being part of the national assumes connection with the local,
and yet efforts have been made to unite Japan under a single national narrative (Robertson 1991; Potter 2000: 159; Iwabuchi 2002: 9; Yano 2003) As a result, many regions attempt to fit their local histories into the overarching national narrative.

During the twentieth century regions all across Japan struggled to assert their identities, mainly through the appropriation and recontextualization of regional symbols, particularly of traditional or historic nature. Tokyo's central pull has had a significant effect on rural areas and their methods for asserting their identities in what many scholars have dubbed *furusato zukuri*, hometown building, although the term *mura okoshi* or “village revitalization” proposed by David Potter is more fitting, as town are not creating but are reasserting their local heritages (Potter 2000: 157). Domestic tourism and self-exoticism, *kokusaika* (internationalism), and rallying around a central city within the region (usually the prefectural capital) are also important factors in the continual process of local image renewal in Japan.

There are numerous examples in which regional characteristics have been highlighted in consumer and tourist cultures throughout various regions of Japan. Hasekura Tsunenaga is an excellent example of the use of a single historical figure in the revival of local identity in the Tōhoku region of northern Japan. A missionary to Rome in the early 17th century, Hasekura's contributions to early Japanese diplomacy were largely ignored until 1989 when his image was recontextualized into Tōhoku's modern identity through tourism and consumer culture. As the location of his grave is unknown, up to as many as seven sites claim the distinction (ibid: 155).
The cities of Sendai, Ishinomaki, and Kawasaki in Miyagi Prefecture highlight various reincarnations of Hasekura in order to further specific goals of the locales in their efforts to address regional problems and assert their unique local identity with the larger national discourse; Sendai's use of public monuments of Hasekura emphasize his loyalty to the Tōhoku region's first *daimyō*, (feudal lord), Date Masamune, and his national and international ambitions, as an effort to increase the recognition of the Tōhoku region's contribution to national Japanese endeavours. Ishinomaki created a “San Juan Park” featuring Hasekura, Ishinomaki's history of ship building, and an exhibit on Hasekura's mission to Rome to boost tourism and economy and highlight Ishinomaki's contributions to Japan's shipbuilding and history. Kawasaki established the Hasekura promotion council (*kenshōkai*) in order to “broaden the town's appeal to people from outside,” culminating in the annual Hasekura Tsunenaga Matsuri founded in 1992, and the establishment of relationships with other locales associated with Hasekura (including Sendai and Ishinomaki) (ibid: 163-167).

Across Japan in Kuzaki, located in the eastern part of Mie Prefecture (Kansai region), the gaze from outsiders has played a huge role in altering the manner in which Kuzaki residents view themselves and their position in Japanese national identity. While tourism to the region has made heavy use of the *ama* (female divers), anthropological research has placed Kuzaki in the unique position of representing “traditional” Japanese identity; dubbed the “most traditional village left in Japan” by the Japanese Folklore Society, Kuzaki now hosts leagues of anthropologists, folklorists, and researchers who produce articles that elevate Kuzaki's significance within Japan's national identity.
construction (Martinez 1990: 105). As a result, Kuzaki has been elevated from a once extremely isolated coastal village to the national representative of “old” Japan.

Okinawa in the far south has perhaps had the greatest struggle of all in asserting its identity, as it was culturally and politically a separate entity from Japan for most of its history, and is geographically separated from the main Japanese archipelago. Despite their separate history, culture, and language, during the U.S. Occupation of Okinawa, the majority of Okinawans felt that their “cultural identity supported the feelings of belonging to Japan,” which resulted in political movements for reuniting with Japan (Nakashima 2003: 105). As a result, Okinawa was returned to Japan on May 15th, 1972. However, Okinawa is constantly presented as “an outfield or islands which have at first glance a different culture from Japan, or are regarded as the military hub, or a tropical island resort” by mainland Japanese (ibid: 105).

Tokyo and the Kantō region have also not escaped the regional conflicts that have emerged throughout Japan, despite its new position as the leader of Japan. Tokyo’s newly created role as the centre of authority in Japan, particularly following World War II, has also created tensions between the locals who have lived in the area since the early Tokugawa Period, and the influx of newcomers in the 1950s and 1960s. Jennifer Robertson examines these shifts and the resulting tensions that arose in her book Native and Newcomer: Making and Remaking a Japanese City, in which she examines Kodaira City in central Tokyo. Mainly an agrarian village of 8,600 people in 1940, the population increased fix times within twenty-five years due to an enormous influx of newcomers, resulting in a regional identity crisis for the long-term residents (Robertson 1991: 6).
Economically and politically, the Kansai region, as well as other areas of Japan, have also struggled to assert their local identities within a nation so dominated by Tokyo. Prior to WWII, distribution of power throughout Japan was more even; for instance, economically the Osakan economy was at its strongest, accounting for approximate 41% of all of Japan's trade, 95% of which went to Tokyo. After the war, those numbers dropped to 25.3% and 52.4% respectively. Part of the reason for the decrease was caused by the centralization of administration and finances, in addition to the restructuring of Japan with Tokyo as the total centre of Japan (Harada and Sakudō 1993: 286). With industry, economy, and politics centred in Tokyo, Osaka and the Kansai region struggled to hold onto not only the enterprises, which moved their headquarters to Tokyo, but their well-educated, intelligent worker who moved to Tokyo for better job opportunities.

Regional hierarchy, therefore, is very much at work when examining the negotiation between local identity and its place within the national discourse. Tokyo is undeniably the top of the pyramid; with political, economic, popular culture, media influence and population size, Tokyo has emerged as the beacon of modern Japan. Regions farther away from Tokyo, Okinawa to the south and Hokkaido to the north, are often the most exoticized locales because they were the last to be integrated in Japan, and have native Okinawan and Ainu cultures that are viewed as foreign. The Tōhoku Region, also one of the later regions to be absorbed into Japan, with Ishimoda Tadashi calling the Tōhoku area “remote and inferior” in the 1950s (Yoshihara 2003: 5). The Tōhoku region has also frequently been described as “gloomy” and “far and away, in addition to being
referred to as “backward Tōhoku” due to falling behind Japan's modernization in the Taishō Period (1912-1925) (ibid: 5-6).

The Japanese media shows the modern relationship between the local and national, in addition to regional hierarchies, through the highly popular morning television show *Zoom-in Morning*. Almost always beginning in Tokyo, the viewer is greeted before a finger pointed towards the camera and a shout of “Zoom in!” switches the satellite relay to the next location. From Nagoya to Kumamoto to Hokkaido, announcers stand in front of local landmarks before passing the baton on to the next announcer. In the process, all of Japan is united in the morning, and as Andrew Painter argues, “boundaries in space and time are collapsed together as the entire country says ‘good morning’ to itself via the technology of television” (Painter 1993: 201). All regions are not equal, however, as Tokyo takes the lead in the show, opening and closing the broadcast. Occasionally Osaka will take the lead role, showing its position as second most influential in the country, but other stations are often relegated to small roles, such as only reporting the weather, with Tokyo ultimately representing Japan as the top of the hierarchical pyramid (ibid: 203).

As the Kansai region has played an important role in the construction of Japan's national narrative due to its historical, political, and cultural significance, I would argue that its centrality in national discourse has created a complex layering of images, as opposed to the use of a specific symbol or historical figure as a source of regional identity. As there are a plethora of images the Japanese population is familiar with when representing Osaka or Kansai, there is a greater variety of interpretation and subjectivity
in how the region is represented and interpreted. This subjectivity will be explored in
greater details in the following chapters, through examining the complex variety of
images associated with the Kansai region, the stereotypes (positive and negative), and the
impacts these images have had on groups that boast of their Kansai roots in the national
music industry.

The next chapter will focus specifically on Kansai regional identity, and how
Osaka, Kyoto, and the Kansai region itself have evolved under the central pull of Tokyo,
and the regional identity that has emerged as a result of the modern development of these
regions.
CHAPTER TWO. KANSAI IDENTITY AND STEREOTYPES

2.1 The Regional Rivalry of Kansai vs. Kantō

As the previous chapter began to unravel the Kansai region's history, positionality, and its multi-layered images, it is ultimately impossible to define what the Kansai region is without stating what it is not, namely, the Kantō region. This chapter examines the identity of the Kantō region and its relationship with the Kansai region, as well as the stereotypes and images associated with both areas.

Comparisons between the Kansai and Kantō regions exist on a more interconnected level than most regions in Japan. The two terms are literally connected with one another, as Kansai and Kantō mean “Western Gate” and “Eastern Gate,” respectively. As has been previously stated, there are other terms, such as kinki or kinai, that could be used to refer to the same region, but the term Kansai holds the more powerful connotation because “the word 'Kansai' is in contrast to the word 'Kantō'” (Yūichi Hinoue, email message to author, July 11th 2010) It is important then, to not only examine the identity of the Kansai region, but also the Kantō region and the rivalry between the two areas.

Aside from Tokyo, the Kantō region consists of six prefectures: Gunma, Tochigi, Ibaraki, Saitama, Chiba, and Kanagawa (see map on next page). The region boasts the largest population in Japan, approximately 42 million people (12.8 million of whom reside in Tokyo proper), which accounts for roughly one third of Japan's entire

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5 Yamanashi Prefecture is also included in the map, just as Fukui Prefecture and Tokushima Prefecture are occasionally included in the Kansai region. The map was taken from Google's Image Search, and can be found at: [http://ofuna.tripod.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderpictures/kanto_region_map.gif](http://ofuna.tripod.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderpictures/kanto_region_map.gif)
population in 2009 (e-Stat 2010). The Tokyo-Yokohama district comprises of the largest industrial zone in Japan, while Tokyo itself is the centre of politics, mass media, education, and culture and entertainment (Web Japan Fact Sheet: 2).

With the dominance of Tokyo and the Kantō region in modern Japan, Osaka is often relegated to “second-class, second-city status” (Stocker 2001: 249). However, as part of the less influential of the two regions, Kansai “people and institutions significantly distinguish themselves by playing on the fact that Osaka and the Kansai region overall are not Tokyo and the Kantō region; that is, not the central source of Japanese cultural authority and political economic power, but a region of people (many not ‘natives’) and

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institutions able to grasp on to and successfully sell alternatives to 'standard' Japanese culture” (ibid: 249). The Kansai region, despite being subsidiary to Tokyo, therefore, asserts its influence and strengths in other arenas, such as humour.

The change in the focus on the Kansai region to the Kantō area can also be seen through the shift in terminology in the Japanese language. For instance, in ancient Japan when travelling to Kyoto the verb “noboru,” (な上る) or “to ascend” was used, as Kyoto was the residence of the Emperor. To travel from Kyoto to Edo (present-day Tokyo) was “kudaru,” (下る) or to descend (Harada and Sakudō 1993: 3). Today, however, these terms are no longer used to refer to travel between Kyoto and Tokyo. Instead, there is a special kanji compound, jōkyō (上京), which translates to English as “advancement to the capital.” This term is often used on television when discussing musicians' or comedians' move to Tokyo in order to pursue their respective careers in the spotlight. One comedy show, Bakushō Red Theatre, made an entire episode out of the jōkyō of one of the manzai duos featured on the show, forcing them to drive from Osaka to the studio in Tokyo while their fellow comedians cheered them on or hindered their progress along the way (Bakushō Red Theatre, 3/10/2010).

Besides the Kansai region's central role in the construction of Japan's traditional identity, the Kansai region exerts influence in more immediate ways over all of western Japan and into regions directly to the east. This divide between east and west applies in a myriad of ways, from dialect to the shapes of tools and utensils. For people in western Honshū, Kyūshū, and Shikoku, and even as far east as Nagano, local dialects have more in common with Kansai-ben than with standard Japanese (Palter and Slotsve 2006: 10).⁷

⁷ See either of the maps in Chapter One on page 26 or 37.
These regions look more towards the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe area than they look towards Tokyo. In terms of cuisine, salmon and nattō (fermented soybeans) are consumed more in the east, while the west consumes more seabream and vinegar (Shibatani 1990: 1998-1999). Linguist Shibatani Masayoshi observes “food maps prepared in the manner of dialect maps indicate that they match the linguistic maps fairly closely,” showing how multiple aspects of regional identity coincide in consistent geographical patterns (ibid: 1999).

Figure 8. NHK Osaka's Headquarters in downtown Osaka. The far left section of the building also houses the Osaka Museum of History, which features displays on Osaka's prominent role in Japan's history.

The Kansai region's influence can be seen through mass media, as Osaka's local media shows its influence outside of the Kinki borders on the daily news; the weather report includes other prefectures, such as Fukui, Tokushima, and Kagawa. NHK Osaka employee Yūichi Hinoue's reasoning for this was that because the information from Kansai was more pertinent to those regions than news from Tokyo, the people in those regions had wanted to be included, and thus they were absorbed into the Kei-han-shin's cultural sphere, despite not officially being a part of it.
It is based on which region's culture they depend on, or what kind of daily information the people who live in Fukui and Tokushima Prefectures want to know. Because people in prefectures like Tokushima and Fukui tend to live toward Osaka and Kobe within the Kei-han-shin area, despite belonging to Shikoku or the Chūbu region, and are intensely dependent on the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe cultural sphere. For that reason, people who come from Tokushima or Fukui to Osaka or Kei-han-shin to work are extremely numerous, so for weather reports and daily living information Tokushima and Fukui are often included within broadcasts. The exception is the Osaka broadcasting office including Tottori prefecture in the weather forecast, which is because there was a very strong demand from the residents of Tottori, so it was included but, from my guess, there was probably a demand from the residents similar to Fukui and Tokushima, despite that it appears to not be authorized\(^8\) generally within society (Yūichi Hinoue, personal communication to author, July 14\(^{th}\) 2010).

In terms of mass media, Osaka is the only city with the capabilities to even come close to rivalling Tokyo in production and distribution of television shows. Mr. Hinoue also explained to me that programming for the Kansai region takes regional characteristics into consideration when producing shows. “NHK produces programs geared towards both the Kansai region and all of Japan. Particularly in the case of creating local programs for the Kansai region, going with the preferences of the people in

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\(^8\) Mr. Hinoue specifically used the English word authorize, which is why I have kept it in the translation, although I believe his meaning is that unlike Fukui and Tokushima Prefectures’ acknowledged absorption into the Kansai region's cultural influence, Tottori is not viewed as being depend on the Kansai region, despite the demands of residents from that region indicating otherwise.
the Kansai region, we aim to put out shows that “are not uppity,’ (*takakutomarazu*), 'never put on airs' (*kitorazu*), as well as provide utilitarian information” (ibid, personal communication author, July 11th 2010). Furthermore, NHK Osaka is able to broadcast its shows nationally, helping to defuse local Kansai culture on a national level. Mr. Hinoue informed me that the NHK Osaka broadcasting office also produces television dramas that are broadcast nationally, alternating every half year with NHK in Tokyo. The dramas primarily feature stories with the Kansai region as the main setting, with the next drama “Teppan” being broadcast from the beginning of September 2010 for six months (ibid, personal communication July 12th 2010).

Despite other regions looking to the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe triangle, the influence of the Kansai region is still secondary to Kantō, and rivalries between the regions run high, although the Kansai region never rises above the Kantō region. A classic example of Kansai-Kantō rivalry can be seen in baseball, with the Hanshin Tigers pitted against the Tokyo Giants. Specific terms have been created that refer specifically to the Hanshin Tigers and their rival. The match between the Tigers and Giants is called *dentō no issen* (traditional bout), with the home team's name coming first (Hanshin-Kyōjin game when playing in Nishinomiya, and vice versa when in Tokyo). When the tigers are playing poorly, non-Kansai residents will refer to them as *dametora*, or “no-good tigers.” Tiger fans, however, would never refer to them as such, continuing to cheer them on despite their poor results, or praising them while they are playing well by calling them *mōko*, or “fierce tigers.” A good performance by the Hanshin Tigers also appears to manifest itself in another iconic symbol of Kansai: bargains. Palter and Slotsve suggest that, “if Hanshin
wins the pennant, look for bargain sales at Hanshin Hyakkaten... their department store,”
displaying how Kansai identity and pride is multi-layered, and influenced by Tokyo
(Palter and Slotsve 2006: 81-83).

Similarly to the cultural, political, and economic relationship between the two
regions, however, the Hanshin Tigers are the established underdogs, which only spurs on
greater pride and devotion to the team by Kansai fans. In one television show filmed in
Osaka, celebrity comedians entered a small izakaya (Japanese-style bar) where the owner
was adamantly watching a Hanshin Tigers baseball game. When one of the comedians
mentioned that another comedian was a Giants fan, the izakaya owner sprinkled aonori
(green seaweed) on top of his beer before serving it to him, exhibiting a physical
manifestation of the (generally) playful antagonism between the rivals.

The rivalry between the two regions has not always been so one-sided, however.
As previously mentioned in the history of the Kansai region, Kyoto was the political,
religious, and cultural centre of Japan for over a millennium, while Osaka dominated
commerce, both nationally and internationally. It was not until the Meiji Restoration in
1868 when the capital was moved to Tokyo, and finally the redistribution of political and
economic power to Tokyo after World War II, that the Kansai region relegated to Kantō's
authority and dominance (Harada and Sakudō 1993: 310).

The Kansai region has not only suffered from relinquishing its economic and
political power, but it has also been losing its grasp on its important cultural art forms.
Not only were enterprises in Kansai moving their headquarters to Tokyo, but the focal
centre of cultural art forms, such as kabuki, relocated outside of the Kansai region to
Tokyo (ibid: 310). Historically, kabuki has been performed in both regions, and there are established differences between Kansai and Tokyo styles. One example of the differences between the two styles is yuki no oto, or the “sound of snow,” an accompaniment performed on a large taiko drum to help set the mood of scenes (Watanabe Yūtaka 2011).

![Taiko](image)

Figure 9. Yuki no Oto (the sound of snow) with Tokyo's style on the left, and Kansai style on the right. Transcription by author.

While both Kansai and Tokyo performance styles are established and respected traditions, the social shift in kabuki’s centrality from Osaka to Tokyo mirrors Tokyo’s modern dominance and authority.

More recently one of the ways the central pull of Tokyo can be seen is through the naming of events. Yoshimoto Kogyo Co. Ltd. (a company based in Osaka) holds a yearly summer comedy festival called “Live Stand.” In 2010, it held two events, the first in Tokyo July 17th-19th and the second in Osaka from October 15th-17th. Despite Yoshimoto Kogyo's establishment in Osaka, the event in Osaka was renamed “Live Stand Osaka,” making the event in Tokyo “unmarked,” and therefore the unspoken norm.

In defining Kantō, however, it is important to remember the central role of Tokyo in forming the image of the region. Just as “Kansai” often refers heavily to the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe triangle, to speak of the Kantō region is typically to defer to the influence of Tokyo. Despite its location in Chiba Prefecture (directly north-east of Tokyo), Narita International Airport was known as the New Tokyo International Airport until it was renamed in 2004. Additionally, Tokyo Disneyland is also located in Chiba Prefecture,

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displaying how the influence and familiarity of Tokyo influences the names of major buildings near Tokyo, despite being geographically outside of its borders.

In that regard, people from regions both right next to Tokyo and far away can bond over asserting their connection to their hometown or prefecture amidst the influence of Tokyo's dominance. On the “Artist Hometown Special” episode of Music Station, a popular music talk show, on October 10th 2010, Kanjani∞ (an idol group from the Kansai region) member Maruyama Ryuhei bonded with Arashi (idol group from Kantō) member Aiba Masaki over being included with the majority of their respective groups' members' hometown, Osaka in Maruyama's case, and Tokyo in Aiba's. After Maruyama explained his troubles with Kanjani∞ being introduced as a group from Osaka when his hometown is Kyoto, the host of Music Station, Tamori, then began the following discussion:

Tamori: Aiba from Arashi, you're from Chiba, so do you understand [Maruyama's] feelings?
Aiba: I understand a bit.
Maruyama: Ah, thank you.
Tamori: Oh really?
Aiba: Since the other four [Arashi] members are from Tokyo, I am often also mistaken for being from Tokyo, so, if I don't kind of... appeal that point...
(Arashi Member) Matsumoto: So, you're particular about being from Chiba then?
Aiba: Particular, or rather...
Matsumoto: You want to say “I'm from Chiba!” then?
Aiba: Yes yes yes yes. Because, that's an undeniable fact.
Matsumoto: Yeah, well, that I can understand.
Aiba: It's just that I also am sometimes troubled when it's mistaken. But because the majority- Arashi always goes by the majority- when we're asked “Where's your hometown?” the answer is “Tokyo.”
Well, it can't be helped but... that happens.
Matsumoto: Aiba's pretty fussy about Chiba.
Tamori: For instance...?
Matsumoto: Um, well at our concert. For our costumes we put rhinestone letters on our back. Shō-kun put “Rock the World” on his, and I put 'ippan no haiyatsu,' kind of like 'higher rather than deeper...' everyone put a message, and Aiba put “I love Chiba.”
Maruyama: That's good!
Aiba: Isn't it?
Maruyama: Your hometown is important, definitely...
Aiba: That was the only place I could appeal to it.
Maruyama: ...because it's your roots.
Just as individuals from the Kansai region are influenced by Tokyo when defining their identity, individuals from regions surrounding Tokyo also feel its pull. However, the treatment of musicians from the Kansai region, such as Kanjani∞, who take pride in their roots in Western Japan, differs greatly from groups such as Arashi who hail from the Kantō region. These differences in hierarchy positioning and work opportunities, as well as the ambiguity in positionality for Kansai groups that present themselves with a regional flare face, will be examined in the following chapter. First, it is important to examine the stereotypes of the Kansai region, its role as an alternative source of culture and power from Tokyo's dominance, and how these images about the Kansai region are manipulated within the media.

2.2 Images and Stereotypes of Kansai

While Osaka and the Kansai region have continued to evolve in the years after Hirose, many new stereotypes have been layered upon the “Nation's Kitchen,” the “Merchant's City,” and the “Millenary Capital.” This section explores how the Kansai region presents itself to the rest of Japan and the effects stereotypes have on Osaka/Kansai’s cultural capital within Japan's national discourse.

Stereotyping is a natural process that Thomas Eriksen summarizes into three main points: 1) classifies all individuals in order to categorize and understand what would be an “excruciatingly complicated social universe,” 2) is used as a method of justifying the uneven distribution of resources through a society, and 3) allows an individual to define boundaries of self and group identities (Eriksen 1993: 24). While Eriksen specifically
examines ethnic stereotypes, these same principles can be applied to the use of regional stereotypes in Japan.

As necessary as stereotypes may be in providing some form of social order for sorting out the world, they are also double-edged swords; generally fixed, they can limit the understanding of a people or place through remaining unchanged and uncontested. While stereotypes are based upon some pattern of behaviour, distinct characteristic, or recognizable symbol, they are often exaggerated past reality. Furthermore, once they are established, they feed upon themselves; people or places that follow the established stereotype serve to reinforce the image, strengthening its validity, while discrepancies with the stereotype are dismissed as exceptions.

The Kansai region and Kansai people have been subjected to a barrage of stereotypes, particularly due to the Kansai region's historical importance. These historical stereotypes have expanded as time has gone on, resulting in a complex, multi-layered conglomeration of stereotypes that “represent” the Kansai region. I would argue, that because so many different stereotypes are applied to the Kansai region and its residents that the image of the area is muddled from so many perceptions, particularly in the case of people, as no single person can possibly fit every stereotype. As a result, Kansai stereotypes often result in a disparity of expectations, and undermine the position of the Kansai region and Kansai-jin in the media (especially the national media).

As stated in the previous chapter, the Kansai region is home to a vast number of temples, shrines, and cultural art forms that have become representative of Japan, particularly when representing Japan on an international level. Because of Kyoto's
historic position as the capital of Japan, and Osaka's important military and economic role, the Kansai region has had an extremely strong influence on Japan's history, culture, and religion. The images of Kansai as representing “old” Japan are still very much applicable in modern Japan.

Images from Osaka's past are still used to justify differences in the regional character of Osaka. Osaka's role as a centre of commerce and trade, and its large merchant population during the Edo Period, are often cited as the reasons for Osaka's pride in purchasing items for less than their value. Supposedly people from Tokyo would never admit that they paid anything but full price for goods, purportedly because “Tokyo has been a collection of people from the countryside trying to impress each other” (Palter and Slotsve 2006: 94-95) A traditional greeting used in Osaka, mōmarimakka, literally meaning “Are you making any money?” is rarely used today, but is a frequently cited example of Osaka regional dialect, an example especially given by Japanese outside of the Kansai region.

Because of its mercantile roots, Osaka character has emerged with both positive and negative images within Japan. My informant at NHK, Mr. Hinoue, also explained “From this sort of history, the image Japanese possess of Osaka/Kansai includes a strong commercial feel, as well as 'not putting on airs,' enjoying laughter, and being friendly. As you may already know, these images may well be said to be necessary conditions for those people involved in trade. However, from the other point of view it can be said that there is also the image of “saying things too bluntly, being meddlesome, and thinking of
nothing but loss and gain” (Yūichi Hinoue, personal communication to author, July 11th 2010).

The merchants of Osaka did not just culminate money and resources, however. As Hinoue mentions, they were “laughter enthusiasts,” and were also credited with establishing a comedy culture. One explanation for why Osaka was the prime location for a flourishing comedy culture is as follows from *The Encyclopedia of Japanese Pop Culture*:

Osaka is outside the government and business power loops, which are centered in Tokyo. Osakans have long resented their second-class status vis-à-vis Tokyo, but it has also given them a sceptical view of authority- a useful tool for a comedian. Also, unlike the stolid, straitlaced samurai of Edo... who lived off their government stipends, distrusted novelty, and dreaded change, the merchants of Osaka had to hustle for their rice and were forever on the lookout for the next new thing. At the same time, they liked to live in style and have a good time, which often meant having a good laugh. Their modern descendants have carried on this tradition, including the traditional respect for people with a comic gift (Shilling 1997: 45).

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the Kansai region, and more specifically Osaka, has become known nationally for its humour, specifically *manzai*, a local form of comedy that has gained popularity nationwide. *Manzai* consists of a duo group with one member the *boke* (fool) who is constantly reprimanded with a slap on the
head by the *tsukkomi* (straight character). While the “*manzai* boom” of the 1980s brought the genre of comedy to national attention, *manzai* has been the most popular form of comedy in Osaka since the 1920s, when it eclipsed *rakugo* (traditional comic storytelling) (Stocker 2001: 253). In 1995 Yoshimoto Kogyo Co. Ltd., one of the largest entertainment companies in Japan which focuses mainly on comedians, had even branched out to Tokyo, establishing a training program for comedians in Tokyo similar to the program that began in Osaka in 1982 (ibid: 255).

![Yoshimoto Grand Hanazuki, one of Yoshimoto Kyogo Ltd.'s many theatres in the Namba district of Osaka.](image)

The popularity of Kansai comedians on national television changed perceptions of the Kansai region nationally on multiple levels. With the dominant influence of Kansai comedians within the world of comedy entertainment and television, the Kansai region, and specifically Osaka, became so closely entwined with humour that all people from the Kansai region are assumed to be naturally funny. In a self-mocking manner, however,
Kansai comedians reinforce the stereotypes of Osakans as being “fast-talking, dialect-speaking, downtown-rooted merchant and yakuza gangster characters who possess a vulgar sense of humour embedded in everyday topics” and recreate them into the two most prized objects in Osaka: laughter and money (ibid: 251). Thus Kansai stereotypes are constantly being reasserted and reinforced through comedy in the media.

2.3 Kansai-ben: Dialect, Image, and Identity

Perhaps the greatest change Kansai comedians have done for the image of Kansai, however, is to familiarize Kansai-ben (Kansai dialect) on a national level with people from all over Japan. With approximately 20 million native speakers, Kansai dialect, or Kansai-ben, is the most widely spoken dialect in Japan. After standard (Tokyo) Japanese, it is also the most well known speech across Japan, thanks greatly in part to comedians. The manager of Akishiya Sanma (a rakugo storyteller from Nara) credits Sanma as being the first to use Kansai-ben “without creating any sense of incongruity while interacting with entertainers speaking Tokyo-dialect” (ibid: 261). The most successful manzai group to date, Downtown (consisting of Matsumoto Hitoshi and Hamada Masatoshi), has also had a great and lasting influence on national television, and make full use of stereotypical Osakan humour in a thick Kansai dialect (Shilling 1997: 45).

Kansai dialect is not only used on television for humour, but also as a communication tool that is seen as creating a friendly atmosphere. This perceived friendliness is used to improve intercommunication, particularly on television shows where rural areas are explored. In the television show Tsurube no Kazoku ni Kanpai,
“Cheers to Tsurube's Family,” Kansai native and rakugo storyteller Shoufukutei Tsurube visits various places in Japan. Because he is from Kansai, he is able to call out to local people passing by in an easy-going manner, allowing him to easily bond with people from other regions. His use of Kansai dialect not only localizes him, but aids him in appearing more as the “common man” rather than as a huge celebrity. The open and friendly image of the Kansai region therefore allows its people to relate to people from other regions more easily than standard Japanese. Perhaps it is fitting then, that Kanjani∞'s first nationally broadcast television show features them exploring the various furusato (rural hometowns) of Japan, using Kansai dialect as their tool for establishing intimacy. They interact with the locals of small, rural towns, and frequently participate in the manual labour of the professions of the people they are visiting. Almost all of their episodes feature Kanjani∞ working on a farm or assisting fisherman, working for the local delicacies they enjoy. Through eating the local food and experiencing how they work and live, Kanjani∞ uses their Kansai roots as a means of representing the local, working class Japanese.

Not all Kansai dialect is created equally, as there is a plethora of regional variation and nuance all too often lumped together under the title of Kansai-ben, or more often, “Osaka-ben” by non-Kansai Japanese who cannot tell the difference. Kansai-ben features many distinct words and grammar patterns that make it unintelligible to speakers of the standard Tokyo dialect. Words that are common with standard Japanese often have different intonations. Kansai-ben is considered a blunter and less polite dialect of speech, which has earned it the label of sounding country-hickish. While speakers from the
Kansai region view it as more friendly since it bypasses the strict hierarchy and formality of Japanese, for non-Kansai speakers it may be considered an undesirable form of Japanese speech because of this informality. Speakers of Kansai-ben are usually looked down upon and made fun of by Tokyoites in a similar way that someone with a deep southern accent may be teased in the United States.

The introduction to *Colloquial Kansai Japanese* sums up many of the linguistic stereotypes and regionalisms in a concise manner:

*Maido, maido* and welcome to Kansai Japan, the land of historic temples, beautiful *geiko*, majestic mountains, and a vibrant, growing economy. Kindly leave your shoes and Tokyo dialect by the door. Remember to open your mouth when you speak here. If you like, you can roll your r's all the way down to Mt. Rokko. The more expression in your voice the better.

Tell jokes. Go ahead, don't be afraid. You're among friends- this is Kansai (Palter and Slotsve 2006: 9).

Rooted in classical Japanese, the two most prominent dialects within Kansai-ben are from Kyoto and Osaka. Kyoto dialect is said to be softer and more refined, and the most indirect of any dialect in Japan. One reasoning for this is because of the city's history as the capital; in order to avoid offending anyone who was (or could become) important, polite speech became more engrained into daily conversation. One example of this is the verb ending -haru, which is considered *keigo* (polite speech) throughout the Kansai region, but is used so frequently in Kyoto that it is almost no longer an honorific
(ibid: 49). Pronunciation in Kyoto is also said to be softer and more melodic, with typically silent vowels (such as the u in -masu) being pronounced clearly (ibid: 50).

Within Osaka-ben there is a great variety of vocabulary, grammar patterns, and nuance. Dialects between northern and southern Osaka Prefecture have varied greatly throughout history, with southern Osaka-ben having a reputation for being rough and less polite (ibid: 47). Elegant or refined Osaka-ben is typically from the northern part of Osaka or very southern part of Hyōgo prefecture, such as Ashiya or Shukugawa.

Although announcers use standard Japanese, when they refer to local topics, such as the Hanshin Tigers, they may lapse into Kansai-dialect, but only the refined forms of Kansai-ben. Dialects from Osaka's downtown area, such as Kawachi and Yao, are viewed as inelegant, and are therefore not used by announcers. Other variations of Osaka-ben include “Hanoi pronunciation” found in shitamachi in Osaka, or “Naniwa pronunciation” used by merchants (Yūichi Hinoue, personal communication to author, July 12th 2010).

Within the Kansai region the use of regional dialect is said to be the strongest in Osaka because Osaka-jin are proud of their heritage, and unwilling to simply “accept Tokyo's mandates” (Palter and Slotsve 2006: 48).

Indeed, Kansai pride seems to intrinsically rely on both Kansai-ben and comparisons with Tokyo. During my research, I surveyed 48 students in the “light music club” (Keion-bu) at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto in order to understand how they perceive the Kansai region and the Kantō region and found that their perceptions matched those I have heard through talking to other individuals, observing the media, and researching the regions. While the students were from multiple regions of Japan (some as
far away as Hokkaido) the majority of them hailed from Kyoto, Osaka, and the Kansai region. Their perceptions of what defines the Kansai and Kantō region were varied, but they were congruous with many of the images presented in popular culture and discussed in this chapter. Responses tended to fall into four categories: symbolic (a place or thing that has become associated or representative of the Kansai region), emotional (their own personal relationship to the area, or adjectives to describe the region), linguistic (referencing local dialects as a marker or identity), and positional (where the Kansai and Kantō regions were placed within the nation's regional hierarchy).

![Graph: Distribution of Students Surveyed by Region](image)

Figure 11. A graph displaying the distribution of students interviewed based on their regional geographic affiliations, both by region and prefecture.

Relatively few students' answers were symbolic; one student from Kyoto listed *takoyaki*, (octopus dumplings), one of Osaka's numerous famous regional cuisines, while another simply put “Tigers” (the Hanshin Tigers baseball team). Two students from outside of the Kinki region cited comedy; one student used the phrase “*nandeyanen!*” a
quintessential phrase in Kansai-ben that is used by the *tsukkomi* (straight character) to reprimand the *boke* (fool) in comedy routines, as well as in daily conversations. The other student mentioned money in addition to laughter, referencing the mercantile history of Osaka. All of these symbols, however, are more representative of Osaka than Kansai, showing the dominance of Osaka in Kansai's image. Even the students from Kyoto listed examples more related to Osaka than to Kyoto.

The majority of images of the Kansai region were emotional or intangible regional characteristics. A few students from Kansai (two from Kyoto and one from Osaka) did list hometown (*kokyō*) or love for their home area (*kimotōai*), showing their personal connection to the region. An overwhelming number of responses, however, were descriptions of perceived regional characteristics or traits, with students from outside the Kinki region in the majority in terms of describing their adopted home. Not surprisingly, the majority of the responses were positive images of the Kansai region, with cheerful (*genki* or *akarui*) being the most popular answer, followed by warm (*atakatāi*) and friendly (*furendoiri* or *shitashimiyasui*). Other positive adjectives were lively, big-hearted, eager, and kind. Common neutral images were frank/direct, and noisy/loud, with negative perceptions of students from the Kinki region being dirty (*kitanai*) and non-Kinki students listing scary (*kowai*).¹⁰

Students from within the Kinki region were the only students to comment on the connection between Kansai and its regional dialect, with one student from Kyoto stating, "Kansai-ben is, in a good meaning and bad meaning, able to directly express emotion to

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¹⁰ The two students who wrote that they viewed the Kansai region as being scary were from Yamaguchi and Shikoku, so perhaps moving from a rural area to a more populated, crowded urban area was frightening, although this is only speculation.
Figure 12. The Namba District of Osaka is a popular tourist destination, living up to the city's reputation of being friendly, lively, and busy, with numerous shops and regional symbols incorporated to its appearance.

others.” Another student, also from Kyoto, had a negative opinion of Kansai-ben, stating “I have an image of Kansai-ben as dirty.” An additional question on the survey asked if the respondent had ever written lyrics in Kansai-ben if they were from the region, to which she responded “No, I don't want to write it.” In a follow-up email to her, I asked why she had a negative image of Kansai-ben, and if she herself spoke it since she was from Kyoto. She replied that she does speak Kansai-ben, although because she grew up in a region of Kyoto where standard Japanese is spoken she can speak both standard Japanese and a form of Kansai-ben that is somewhat mixed with standard Japanese.11

Her response to why she viewed Kansai-ben in a negative light was quite fascinating, because it was based upon her view of how she believed people from Kantō perceived it:

I feel that Kansai-ben is perceived by people from Kantō region as being “speech comedians use.” To me, I don't think comedians have a very high-class image, and that their image is more working class. After that, I think

11 When I asked her if the mixed Kansai/standard speech she used had a name, she replied that she could not remember what it was called, although she believed it did not have a specific, fixed name.
Kansai-ben is different from standard Japanese because it sounds harsh to me. From those facts, I have come to feel that they're uncivilized and dirty words (personal communication to author, October 27th 2010).

While people from the Kansai region are frequently described as holding pride in their dialect and hometown, this individual's definition of her regional dialect has not been defined from within her region, but from her perceived perception of an external eye. In this regard, the Kantō region has usurped the Kansai region's ability to define itself, in addition to affecting regional identity conceptualization in a negative way.

This student was not the only individual to base her definition or perceptions of Kansai on the Kantō region. After defining the Kansai region, I also asked students to define the Kantō region. As previously stated when examining the semiotic examples, one student defined Kansai as the Tigers, and simply defined Kantō as the opposing baseball team, the “Giants.” One student defined Kansai as “friendlier than Tokyo” before describing Kantō as “hard/stiff” (katai). Another student from Osaka described Kantō as the “place I don't want to lose to,” although they did not specify the conflict in their response.

Issues of centrality within Japan were brought up quite frequently; many students summed up Kantō in one word, “tokai,” or “city,” showing Tokyo's modern image and dominance. A few students from different areas of Japan called the Kantō region the “centre” or “core,” although one student questioned its centrality by adding two question marks onto the end of his response. Indeed, a few students suggested that Kansai was the
cultural centre of Japan, with one student from Osaka expressing Kansai as having a unique culture.

The Kantō region had plenty of adjectives given to describe it, although there were many more negative images of Kantō. Positive images included pretty (kirei), and fashionable or cool. The most common negative image was that the Kantō region is cold (tsumetai) or unfriendly. Two students from Kansai also mentioned standard Japanese, and therefore connected Kantō with dialect, and therefore imagined it as being difficult or hard to communicate.

Having established some of the many images, symbols, and stereotypes of the Kansai region and its people, the next chapter will explore these symbols in popular music, and how their appropriation affects not only artists' constructed identity, but also their positionality.
CHAPTER THREE. KANSAI IMAGERY AND MUSICAL ANALYSIS

3.1 Osaka's Music Scene

Within popular music several groups from the Kansai region have played off of exotic representations of their hometown within Japan's Tokyo-centric music industry, using their hometown and its associated images as a means of drawing attention to themselves in the competitive industry of popular music. While genres of music such as *enka* frequently feature references to regions and locales, popular songs about Osaka were not prevalent until the 1970s. Boro, the singer-songwriter of “Osaka de umareta onna,” one of the first hit songs about Osaka that was released in 1979, stated on the June 20th, 2010 episode of the popular talk variety show *Shin Dōmoto Kyōdai*, “There weren't really songs that young people sang about Osaka, so I thought I'd like to make one.” Osaka has since established its own music scene, and is particularly well known for its underground scene, with many indie bands performing in small clubs located throughout the city.

Just as people from Osaka tend to resist Tokyo and hold pride in their local, “alternative” culture, Osaka's musicians are also known for their individuality and confidence. According to Yoichi Shinda, executive producer of Pop Company, a production company located in Osaka:

There are a lot of bands in Osaka who are not playing music with the idea of being stars... to me, Tokyo isn't interesting, because it seems like the bands there are only thinking about scoring a hit. If the audience doesn't
like their music, they'll quickly change their style. But with Osaka bands, it's more like 'Shut up and listen to how great we are!' Osaka audiences like that powerful style (McClure 1998: 101).

As a result, bands from Osaka tend to be known for their less mainstream approach to music making, and more creative alternative musical sense.

One way in which the physical space of the Kansai region has shaped local musicians is the venues they perform in; small clubs are prevalent throughout major cities, particularly Osaka and Kyoto. Kyoto in particular has narrow streets due to its long history as the capital; narrow streets made it more difficult for invading forces to navigate the city. During World War II American forces did not target Kyoto as it was recognized as being an important cultural and historical significance. Because the city did not sustain as much damage there was minimal rebuilding, and thus the narrow streets and layout of the city have remained a feature of the city (Armstrong 2003: 19). With small venues dispersed throughout the cities, the landscape of the city and its performance venues has influenced and encouraged small underground or indies groups.

Figure 13. Ritsumeikan University's Keionbu (Light Music Club) group Amayatori performs at the small live house Takutaku in Kyoto on July 4th, 2010.
While the landscape and character of Osaka have had a heavy influence on the musicians it produces, the musicians themselves are also changing the landscape and soundscapes of Osaka. Indeed, Osaka's music scene continues to evolve, as is best exemplified in the recent introduction of NMB48, a female idol group under the umbrella of Yasushi Akimoto's management. While Akimoto began managing super female idol group AKB48 from Akihabara, Tokyo (hence the initials “AKB”), idol groups under his management have spread to include SKE48 from Nagoya, and in 2010 spread to Osaka, with NMB48 (named after the Namba district of Osaka). While in the past would-be idols, such as Kinki Kids, had to travel to Tokyo in order to receive training and become popular nationally, the localization of idol training in Osaka through the debut of Kanjani∞ and now NMB48 shows a shift in Osaka's identity from its underground reputation.

As the leader of NMB48 stated in an interview after their first concert ever at New Years' on 2011, “Osaka has been said to be the town that can't raise idols, but we would like to change it so that if you say 'idol' it means “Osaka.” NMB48 has already begun to alter the face of Osaka, taking over one of Yoshimoto Kogyo Co., Ltd.'s theatres, Base Yoshimoto, in the middle of the Namba district, where comedy has reigned supreme as the heart of Osaka. While they are a young group that has only been performing since the New Year of 2011, their presence marks a change in the types of music and image Osaka is known for. It will be interesting to see how successful they are at changing the image of Osaka, if at all, as they are a branch of a Tokyo-based operation, but it is difficult to predict what the influence of this fledgling group will be.
Unlike NMB48 or the Kansai idols in Johnny's Entertainment, most Kansai musicians are not supported from external, Tokyo-based companies, but must first establish themselves in the Kansai music scene. If musicians from Kansai do gain mainstream popularity or manage to become successful on a national basis, they remain labelled according to their Kansai roots. A special feature in CD Journal Magazine in 2009 entitled “Kansai Invasion! The attractiveness of the richly colourful underground scene of Kansai,” explores how groups from Kyoto, Osaka and Hyōgo prefectures have evolved due to their geographic and cultural surroundings, and how the influence of the attitude and characteristics of the Kansai region have manifested in their music-making practices:

The unique linguistic feeling and sensitivity, as well as the impulsive passion that has historically coloured the underground music scene have been passed on unbroken there. The magnetic force that powerfully burst forth from the Kansai cultural sphere has profoundly diffused into their spirit, which has resulted in the birth of colourful artists who carry on the feverish emission...

The people living in Osaka, have inherited from the town itself its positive vibes and sensibility that values comedy and surrealism. They have fostered exposing their inner side in order to connect with their audience. Of course, not all of the artists from the Kansai region have been taken in by this, but if you objectively look at the local scene from a distance, the
most fascinating thing that you will see is the transparent influence between the two (musicians and city).

Indeed, Osaka is known for its local groups and their unique style, starting with visual-kei\textsuperscript{12} group SharanQ and all-female indie band Shonen Knife in the 1980s, and the quirky comedy-rock group the Ulfuls in the 1990s. Their legacy continues on with more local musicians ready to break from the local scene into the national spotlight. In 2009 Hanako West magazine specifically focused on these up and coming artists and their evolving musical style in an article that also focused specifically on musicians from the Kansai region. “Recently, there has been a successive appearance of artists that are changing the image of the Kansai style of the past. We pick up the hot stock of the next generation that will inevitably become even more popular this year!” Rather than being viewed as individual or independent artists, musicians from the Kansai region are not only grouped together, but are viewed as being relating to each other through lineage, either by being the “second generation” or being “passed on unbroken.” Whether they are inheriting their characteristics from the town of Osaka or from the previous generation of musicians, musicians from Kansai are presented in magazines as being part of a line of descent.

When Kansai musicians do gain recognition outside of the Kansai region, they purportedly tend to resist altering their musical style in order to gain national success. According to Sato Mari, from Osaka production company Music Stuff, “Osaka bands are very independent... Even after they're signed to major labels they don't change their style.

\textsuperscript{12} Visual-kei is a genre of Japanese rock music that places heavy emphasis on visual performance, with androgynous make-up, hairstyles, and costumes being its main feature.
They don't like to be told by record companies or management what to do or not to do” (McClure 1998: 101).

Even within popular music, Osaka's media attempts to assert some independence from the Tokyo-centred industry. While Oricon (the Japanese equivalent of Billboard) is the standardized source for rankings on popular music, NHK variety show *Ahoyanen! Sukiyanen!* features its own countdown every Wednesday that ranks CD sales from music stores in Osaka. While the countdown usually consists of the same songs that appear on Oricon, the separate ranking shows that Osaka is asserting some musical independence from Tokyo's authority, even if it's on a relatively miniscule scale.

While the numerous musicians active in Osaka and throughout the Kansai region have nurtured their own unique local scene and style, Tokyo's media has also played an important role in shaping the musical identity of Kansai, both through absorbing local musicians into the national scene and through non-Kansai musicians' appropriation of Kansai cultural symbols for the purpose of standing out. One talent agency that has significant influence within the popular music industry and has had a hand in shaping the Kansai region's image in popular music is Johnny's Entertainment, which will be examined in further depth in chapters four and five. First, this chapter will examine some non-Johnny's Entertainment musicians from the Kansai region and how they manifest their Kansai identities in their music.
3.2 Kansai Musical Characteristics

Songs by artists from the Kansai region that attempt to convey their local identity have several common themes or styles. While not all are present in all songs, and not all artists include these features or subjects in their music, there appear to be recurring trends of spoken word or rap, Kansai-dialect, humour, and Osaka/Kansai and its associated symbols in the lyrics.

The purpose of examining these traits is not to pigeonhole Kansai musicians' creativity, but to examine ways in which local identities are negotiated through the music. As Simon Frith states, “the issue is not how a particular piece of music or a performance reflects the people, but how it produces them, how it creates and constructs an experience” (Frith 1996: 109). This section will explore the common themes of Kansai musicians, such as the Ulfuls, ET-King, and Koda Kumi in order to understand the forces behind how they musically and visually negotiate their performance identities. It serves as a precursor to launching an in-depth examination of the regional imagery invoked in Johnny's Entertainment artists in the next two chapters, particularly focusing on the evolution of Kanjani∞'s regional identity performance and construction.

Several musicians have capitalized on incorporating the regional imagery of Osaka into their music and image. One such group is the Ulfuls, who formed in Osaka in 1988 and released their first album in 1992. Their 1995 single “Gattsu da ze!!” (“Got guts!!”) with its tongue-and-cheek video involving ninja, geisha, samurai, and other Edo Period clichés was their big break, and put them into the national spotlight. They are known for their quirky comedy-infused music, in what the April 1996 edition of Junon
magazine called their “Aho Aho Pawā” (“Idiot Power” in Kansai dialect). Part of their playful humour can also been seen in the unusual stage names they use: lead vocalist Tortoise Matsumoto, guitarist Ulful Keisuke, bassist John. B. Chopper, and drummer Sankon Jr.

The Ulfuls have managed to be very successful at featuring local Osakan identity into their music, particularly in their use of Osaka dialect, and their ability to compose songs that highlight its unique tonal inflections in the melody. Linguistic and musical aspects of their music be examined after first looking at their use of iconic symbols of Osaka in their lyrics and visual imagery.

Figure 14. The cover of the Ulfuls’ 1995 single “Osaka Strut Part 2. In the background are the neon lights of Dōtonbori, a famous tourist destination in Osaka, with the iconic Glico man visible on the far right."

Visually, the Ulfuls heavily reference the character, locations, and people of Osaka in their music video “Osaka Strut.” Layering Kansai-dialect, instantly recognizable tourist spots in Osaka, and stereotypical Osaka personalities, such as yakuza (Japanese

15 The cover art was taken from Google's Image Search, and can be found at: http://www.ulfuls.com/discography/images/sg_osakastrat.jpg.
gangster) members, gossipy middle-aged women, and fast-talking, garishly dress individuals\textsuperscript{14}, they create a music video consisting of one large conglomeration of almost every stereotype known to Osaka.

The music video starts with a close-up of Tsūtenkaku Tower with the Ulfuls' name superimposed as the sign on the tower, and then the view pans down to the group's lead vocalist, Tortoise Matsumoto, dressed as a gaudily clothed individual carrying a large boombox on his shoulder. Tortoise assumes multiple characters during the video that mimic hyper-stereotyped fictional characters of Osaka. While singing, he begins as the gaudily dressed individual before singing exclusively as a \textit{yakuza} character in a dark blue suit, who is accompanied by a bevy of underlings dressed in bright, rainbow-coloured suits who dance behind him. Before entering the chorus, Tortoise proudly declares, “Whatever it is, Osaka is the best! Compared to other places it's like a foreign country,” highlighting the perceived differences between Osaka and the rest of Japan.

The song also features two long dialogues between fictional stereotypical Osaka characters, again both played by Tortoise, referencing various symbols or items associated with Osaka. One of the characters wears a Hanshin Tigers baseball cap and a leopard print jacket, as both are symbols associated with Osaka. The other character also wears flashy clothing, although there are no specific markers that would tie it directly to fashion choices associated with Osaka. Other characters he assumes within the dialogues are a woman working at a noodle shop, the father of one of the main dialogue characters, and a very opinionated and pushy old lady, or \textit{oba-chan}. At the very end of the video

\textsuperscript{14} Leopard print is the garish pattern of choice when referencing Osaka, and has become synonymous with the city.
when he sings “minna minna minna” (everyone everyone everyone) repeatedly, the video shows each of the characters he plays, implying that Osaka consists of the characters he has portrayed throughout the video, and that they are representative of the city and its character.

The two main characters he plays within the dialogue portions converse rapidly in thick Kansai dialect, playing out the stereotype of Kansai speakers as being fast-talking, and making their dialogue almost impossible to understand the first time. They also infuse their speech with easily identifiable Kansai dialect markers, such as grammar patterns, intonation, and vocabulary, making the rapid-fire monologue even more difficult to understand for non-Kansai speakers. The lyrics for the first dialogue, with Kansai grammar, expressions, or words in bold, are as follows:

'さあー、どっか行こうか どこ行こうか ヘーこって帰ろう ええから寝よか'
'o ma e jaya ro,
茶ーでも飲み行けへんか
やよちゃんバイトしてる店、
あれ、どこやったっけ
この辺やろうか?'
'a a a a a e, kono de ba waa to to i u de
あーあーまーあ、かんぴっりしたー'
'めちゃ腹へったな、なんか食うか
うどんは?'
'i raa na a ma kudoi e de kaa tuu to
はい、お兄ちゃん、ネギおまけー'
'うわっ'

'So, where should we go, where should we go?
Pass gas and go home, or take a dump and sleep?'
'You're free aren't you?
What about going to drink tea?'
'That store Kayo-chan is working at,
it's- where was it?
Wasn't it around here?'
'Aa, that. If you go 'bwaa' up this street
Turn like 'gwaa' there's a big building
Standing like 'bwaa' so then,
Then you go 'shu' around the corner.'
'Aa, I see. Hey, you,
Isn't that your dad?'
'Oh, Miyauchi-kun, are you doing fine?'
'Ah, yes. Whoa, that surprised me.'
'I'm really hungry. How about eating
Something. How's udon?'
'Nah, McDonald's tastes good.
Well, but udon's fine then.'
'Ok, mister, extra onions for you.'
'Whoa!'
'おばちゃん、ごちそうさま'  'Ma'am, thanks for the food'
'いつもありがとうございます'  'Thanks every time'
'おばちゃん なんぼこれ?'  'Ma'am, how much is this?'
'はい、おおきに、三百マンエーン'  'Yes, thank you, it's three million yen!'

The first dialogue in the Ulfuls' song, "Osaka Strut, Part 2." Translated by author.

Immediately following the first dialogue, a guitar solo interlude by Ulful Keisuke, clad in a cowboy hat and large yellow feather boa, gives the listener their first reprieve from the fast pace of the song and its rapid-fire vocal lyrical delivery. While playing the guitar solo, he stands in front of Osaka castle as cherry blossom petals fall in a cloud around him, adding to the surrealism and over-the-top nature of the song.

Based on the background scenery, the video appears to be filmed entirely in Osaka; iconic buildings, such as the previously mentioned Osaka Castle and Tsūtenkaku Tower, visibly mark the setting as Osaka. The characters played by Tortoise Matsumoto appear to frequent the crowded and loud Namba district, with many local signs and symbols appearing in the background. Before entering the final chorus, a rapid montage of the flashing lights of the Dōtonbori area occurs before the Ulfuls perform in front of Ebisu Bridge and the famous Glico Man sign. Lyrically, Umeda Station, the major transportation hub for Osaka, is mentioned, along with a well-known tea shop, Cante G. The frequent references to Osaka and Naniwa within the lyrics also situate the regional identity of the song and its singers, as they tell of how they know the good spots in Osaka, and that the listener should come visit.

Humour is also visible throughout the music video, as Tortoise Matsumoto dances around town, grinning slyly to alert the viewer that this over-the-top representation of Osaka is tongue-and-cheek. Through his dramatic acting skills during the dialogue

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15 For the full translation of the lyrics, please look at Appendix A.
portions, particularly as he yells “Naniwan guitar!” followed by the father character looking confused and asking “what? (nani?), or the overbearing oba-san character who states to one of the main dialogue characters, “mister, your hair’s so long I thought you were a girl! I'm at a loss for words!” Tortoise Matsumoto exaggerates the many cliché personalities of Osaka in a comical manner.

While the Ulfuls' video is a sensory overload of Osaka culture crammed into a little over four minutes, it has been successful in appealing to people on a local and national level. One of the Ulfuls' more well-known songs, “Osaka Strut” employs over-the-top and easily recognizable Osakan symbols that make the song's regional affiliation instantly recognizable, while its self-deprecating humour reflects Osaka's position within the national hierarchy. Conversely, for people from Osaka or Kansai the song expresses their unique local culture and dialect with pride, although the song emphasizes the centrality of Osaka in representing Kansai, as the band members cry “Osaka is the best!” and proudly strut through its streets with their chins in the air. Osaka Strut has, essentially become the theme song for the city, as it has been sampled countless times on television when Osaka is the subject of attention.

Other songs by the Ulfuls also highlight their Osaka roots, such as “Énen” (It's All Right) and “Samurai Soul,” although not in such an over-the-top manner as “Osaka Strut.” Instead of relying on stereotypes and clichés, they simply use Osaka dialect to reference their local identity. In using Osaka dialect, the Ulfuls are highly successful as incorporating not only the words and grammar patterns unique to the Kansai region, but also the tonal inflections of the dialect.
Japanese intonation typically varies between upper and lower pitches, with accented syllables of words on the upper pitch. The classic example of Kansai vs. Kantō pronunciation is *ame*, which can mean either “candy” or “rain” depending on the intonation. In Kantō, the pitch of the first syllable would be higher for “rain” (A-me), while “candy” would feature the last syllable on a higher pitch (a-ME). In Kansai, a higher pitch on the last syllable would mean “rain” (a-ME) while the word “candy” would be equal (a-me) and is typically referred to with an honorific as *ame-chan*.16 Additionally, accentuation in Kansai-ben is known for being stronger than accents in Tokyo pronunciation, which may be barely audible (Palter and Slotsve 2006: 15-16). As a result, Tokyo pronunciation is considered to be flat and more monotone, while Kansai dialect is more pronounced and melodic, lending itself to music very well.

Because the song “Osaka Strut” was not written by the Ulfuls, and was adapted from Ōtaki Eiichi's song “Fussa Strut,” the melody does not mimic the intonation of Osaka dialect, although the Ulfuls mainly use Osaka dialect during the dialogue interludes between the verses and choruses.17 The Ulfuls' song “Ēnen” (“It's all right” in Kansai dialect), is logogenic and mimics how pitch would taper off at the end of speech, making the music almost speech-like. Composed by the Ulfuls' lead singer, Tortoise Matsumoto, the beginning of the word ēnen is heavily emphasized in speech, and the vowels of the word are usually drawn out for extra emphasis, which is reflected in the music as the words are on quarter notes with vocal stresses.18

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16 Inanimate objects are commonly referred to with honorifics in Kansai, making *ame-chan* an iconic word exemplifying Kansai tonal pronunciation and speech practices.
17 The official title of the Ulfuls' version is “Osaka Strut Part II,” most likely referencing that “Fussa Strut” was the original, although the song is commonly referred to as just “Osaka Strut.”
18 For the full translation of the lyrics, please look at Appendix A.
The pitch placement of the “ē” of “ēnen” on the upper pitch, in addition to falling on the downbeat, highlights the intonation and rhythm of Kansai dialect. Additionally, the repetitive eighth notes remain relatively on or around the same pitch, further mimicking speech and, in particular, the rapid speech delivery associated with the Kansai region. Aside from a short bridge (which also remains relatively on the same pitch), the lyrical material transcribed above makes up for the entire melodic material of the song, making the lyrics the main focal point of the song. As the lyrics change in different verses, some of the pitches of the melody also change in order to accommodate the natural intonation of the words, but the melodic phrase is generally as depicted in the transcription above. With its upbeat tempo and rhythmic accompaniment, “Ēnen” is a song that encourages the listener to not give up, even after they have stumbled or made mistakes.

![Figure 15. The first verse of the Ulfuls' song “Ēnen” meaning “It's All Right” (0:16-0:37). Transcription done by author.](image)

19 Ėnen is written as “ee-nen” in the transcription because macro markers can't be inserted in the program.
Another song by the Ulfuls that incorporates Kansai dialect and its intonation into the lyrics and melody is “Samurai Soul,” a more contemplative and serious song about one's own faults and the yearning to love and be loved. Similar to “Enen,” the words to “Samurai Soul” feature Kansai dialect, which is mirrored in the melodic line, although the distinction between singing and speaking is much more blurred. The chorus is not in Kansai dialect and has a very distinct, sung vocal line, while the verses (where the Kansai-ben is used) vary between heightened speech and sung word.

![Sheet music of Ulfuls' song “Samurai Soul”](image)

Figure 16. The first verse of the Ulfuls' song “Samurai Soul” (0:02-0:32). Transcription done by author.

In the first verse of the song, the only unnatural emphasis on a word falls on *fuzaketa*, the past tense form of *fuzakeru*, which means to fool around or mess around. In
this instance, the Ulfuls are deliberately playing with the emphasis and duration of the word in order to emphasize the meaning, showing that they are fooling around. The other words follow the intonation of Kansai dialect more faithfully.

One of my informants from Ritsumeikan's light music club explained to me that she found the Ulfuls music to be very good at incorporating Kansai dialect into their music, and that it “didn't sound strange.” However, being a musician from Kansai does not guarantee that the use of Kansai dialect in one's songs would not be strange, and she cited female pop singer Koda Kumi as an example; while Koda Kumi is from Kyoto and speaks Kyoto-ben, her songs' lyrics “sound strange” as the inflections are out of place. One example of this is her song “Koi no Tsubomi.” Although Koda Kumi wrote the lyrics, she did not compose the music, and therefore the melody does not properly emphasize the tonal inflections of Kansai-ben.

Unlike the Ulfuls, Koda Kumi's inclusion of Kansai-ben does not mimic speech in either its tonal consideration or melody. While the Ulfuls incorporated short, repeated pitches with minimal pitch variation, Koda Kumi's melody features large jumps and rhythmic syncopation that does not match the lyrics. For instance, at the beginning of the chorus “mechakucha sukiya chunen” (“I love you so incredibly much”), the “ku” of “mechakucha” falls on the downbeat and a lengthened note. In speech, this portion of the word would not be emphasized, but would most likely be elided into the following “cha.” Additionally, while “sukiya” (“I love you”) is a common manifestation of “sukida” (standard Japanese pronunciation) in Kansai dialect, upper and lower pitches would be su-KI-YA or su-KI-ya, depending on how much the speaker wished to emphasize the
phrase. The melody of Koda Kumi’s song does not follow this pattern, with the higher pitches falling on the opposite syllables, SU-ki-YA, with YA the most heavily emphasized, as it falls on the highest pitch and is syncopated, making the lyrics sound unnatural.

![Musical notation](image)

Figure 17. Transcription of the chorus of Koda Kumi’s song “Koi no Tsubomi” meaning “Love's Bud” (1:08-1:30). Transcription done by author.

Pitch placement and intonation issues aside, this informant expressed that by using Kansai-ben, songs become expressive (hyōgenteki) and emotional (kanjōteki).

Indeed, several of the responses to my surveys indicated that Kansai-ben was seen as more blunt or candid than standard Japanese, and therefore better suited to express emotions, feelings or thoughts. This informant also expressed that Kansai-ben lends itself
more easily to certain genres, with rock sounding strange (rokku wa aenai), blues
sounding appropriate (burūzu demo okashikunai) and rap being particularly suitable due
to its ability to highlight regional dialect (hōgen ga deyasui). Indeed, rap works well in
expressing Kansai dialect, as it allows for free flow of speech and easily highlights tonal
inflection. One well known rap group from Kansai, ET-King, makes use of Kansai-dialect
in smooth, melodic lines that seem to flow effortlessly.

In ET-King's song “Itoshii hito e,” (To My Loved One), the melody repeats
pitches that mimic speech, highlighting the inflections of Osaka-dialect with emphasized
syllables on higher pitches. The word “oru” which means “to be” in Kansai dialect
(conjugated in the lyrics as “ottara,” meaning “if you're here”) stresses the first syllable,
“o,” which is reflected in the music by the syllable falling on a longer beat on a higher
pitch. The word “omoroi” (Kansai-ben for “interesting” or “fun”) also places emphasis on
the beginning of the word, which is reflected in the music in the same manner that
“ottara” was emphasized.20

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Figure 18. The chorus of ET-King's song “Itoshii hito e” meaning
“To My Loved One” (1:28-1:37). Transcription done by author.

With some of the musical characteristics of music from the Kansai region
established, the next chapter will now go into an in-depth analysis of Kansai musicians

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20 For the full translation of the lyrics, please look at Appendix A.
and imagery within Johnny's Entertainment, focusing specifically on Kanjani∞, before examining the music and imagery of these groups in Chapter Five.
CHAPTER FOUR. REGIONALISM IN JOHNNY'S ENTERTAINMENT

4.1 History and Image of Johnny's Entertainment

Since the late 1960s, the commercialization of idols has been one of the major selling points of the Japanese popular culture industry. *Kata*, the patterned method for teaching in traditional art forms, such as karate, tea ceremony and kabuki, as well as modern art forms, such as Takarazuka theatre and *enka*. The concept of kata also extends to training for Japanese popular idols, and has become the form for producing extremely successful idols who follow a patterned learning method. (Yano 2002: 24-27; Robertson 1998). Within this industry one management company, or *jimusho*, has emerged with almost a monopoly on producing popular boy groups and idols: Johnny’s Jimusho, or Johnny's Entertainment. Idols from his company achieve huge success commercially, holding concerts in Tokyo Dome and across Asia, as well as consistently topping the Oricon charts.

Idols began emerging in the 1970s with female singers such as Yamaguchi Momoe and Sakurada Junko and groups such as the Pink Ladies and the Candies, but it was not until the 1980s that idols became “genre-ized” and reached the greatest height of their popularity (Stevens 2008: 49). Frequentely critiqued by Western audiences for being nothing more than “bubble-gum pop,” or commercialized music marketed towards youth by singers with little musical credibility, idols presented cute, youthful images that saturated the media, appearing in television shows, commercials, billboards magazines, and in the music industry. These images proved to be widely popular with Japanese
consumers, particularly among younger consumers who strove to emulate the images and lifestyles promoted by idols (Aoyagi 2005: 3-5).

Although media claims that the golden age of idols had ended emerged in the 1990s, a look at the top-ranking singles of the 2010 year indicate that idols are still thriving within Japanese popular music; the top-thirteen singles were all by idol groups, with the top ten being dominated by female idol group AKB48 and male idol group Arashi from Johnny's Entertainment.

The majority of male idols for the past forty years have been produced by Johnny’s Jimusho as cute, attractive, charismatic young boys reared through his training program to become major stars and the heartthrobs of millions of Japanese women (see next page for examples). Musically, their songs are simple melodies with limited ranges typically sung in unison with no harmony, most likely because they are not necessarily selected to join the company for their singing prowess. In fact, several Johnny's are teased for their poor abilities in carrying a melody, particularly Nakai Masahiro of SMAP, who occasionally insists that his microphone is turned off during live performances. However, with their cool choreography and good looks, Johnny’s Jimusho idols are known simply as “Johnny’s,” and have an established image of being the most desirable and commodified models of male masculinity within the entertainment world.

Founded by Johnny Kitagawa in the early 1960s, the first group to debut to major success was the Four Leaves, who were active mainly between 1968-1978. Numerous successful groups have debuted since then, with the roller-skating idol group Hikaru Genji (1987-1995) the company's most iconic group of the idol boom in the 1980s.
Figure 19. Johnny's idols grace the cover of a plethora of magazines. From bottom left clockwise, senior group SMAP (TV Guide), the highest grossing musicians of 2010, Arashi (An-An), the most recently debuted group NYC Boys and trainee group Yuma Nakayama w/ B.I.Shadow (Myojo), NEWS member Yamashita Tomohisa (duet), and Kansai group Kanjani∞ (centre, TV Life). Several magazines, such as duet, Potato, Wink up, Myojo, and Poporo are dedicated solely to idols, the vast majority of which are exclusively male idols from Johnny's Entertainment. Photograph by author.
Currently, there are ten debuted groups that are still active in Johnny's Entertainment, releasing CDs and recordings. Shōnentai is an eleventh group (and the most senior of the groups) that is also currently active in the media, but they do not release CDs or hold concerts.21 Six individual performers are also active independently, although these individuals tend to be either musicians who debuted with a group and are pursuing solo activities, or are focusing on acting rather than music.22

While Johnny Kitagawa claims to have no set formula for creating groups, claiming it's “case by case,” members of the company must first pass rigorous auditions (there are the occasional, rare exceptions when individuals bypass the audition process and enter the company) typically when they are in middle school or even elementary school before they go through a period as a trainee, called a “junior” (McClure 1998: 24). Since many members are also able to do cartwheels and back flips, acrobatic abilities have also become a hallmark of Johnny’s entertainers, especially within the last few decades.

Through backup-dancing for already established acts on television and in concerts, being photographed for magazines, and appearing on television shows such as “The Shōnen Club,” juniors slowly become accustomed to life in the spotlight. As previously mentioned, there are only ten groups currently active, so the probability that they debut is quite slim. If they do manage to debut, Johnny's Entertainment groups are virtually guaranteed success within the music industry and Japanese media due to the

21 Johnny's Entertainments' official web page lists all of its debuted performers in a pull-down list, in order of their debut with the most senior group listed at the top. On this list, SMAP is listed as the senior group. Shōnentai is listed in a separate category containing the solo performers, hence my distinction of Shōnentai from the other ten active groups.

22 A list of all of the debuted groups of Johnny's Entertainment can be found at http://www.johnnys-net.jp//allartists/allartists.html.
company's powerful backing and dominant presence in the entertainment industry, although in some cases it may take them years to reach their potential and gain widespread familiarity with the public. Starring in a popular television drama is typically the catalyst for jump-starting a group's success. SMAP is a classic example of a Johnny's Entertainment group that struggled to establish its fan base immediately after its debut in 1991, but after Kimura Takuya received high accolades for his acting in the drama *Asunaro Hakusho* in 1993, SMAP gained huge popularity and has gone on to be one of Johnny's Entertainment's most successful groups. Currently, Arashi is the top selling group in the music industry, grossing the most money out of all performers in 2010, steadily rising in popularity since Arashi member Matsumoto Jun starred in the widely popular drama *Hana Yori Dango* in 2005, and its drama sequel *Hana Yori Dango Returns* in 2006 and movie *Hana Yori Dango Final* in 2008. While debuted groups all have their own unique personality or niche within the company, Johnny's idols tend to be cute and adorable, attractive and cool\(^{23}\), or both in order to appeal to fans, the majority of whom are female.\(^{24}\)

One of the more recently (2007) debuted Johnny’s group, Hey! Say! JUMP, is an excellent example of both of the typical Johnny’s images. Because of their youth, they quite easily fit the cute and adorable image, which they play up in their video “Dreams Come True.” As they cheerfully sing about dreams, happiness, and smiles, they play with  

\(^{23}\) In this thesis, cool is connected with Tokyo-based fashion and trends, and the musicians/idols/actors who display these looks for image-conscientious youth to emulate. As will be examined, because Kanjani∞ is marketed as a local Kansai group, the discrepancies between being a (Johnny's) idol and being from Kansai becomes one of the crutches by which they are teased.  

\(^{24}\) For example, Tokio is a rock group that plays their own instruments, Arashi is known as being a generally bubbly but balanced collection of personalities, and KAT-TUN is known for their more edgy rock sound and cool image.
various objects and toys, such as bikes, remote controlled cars and toy guns, further emphasizing their youth. Smiling at the camera, they exude a happy, cute idol image. In another one of their music videos, “Mayonaka no Shadow Boy” (Midnight Shadow Boy), all the members don black leather jackets and dark clothes and perform set dance routines, crafting a cool, eye-catching look. These mannerisms and images draw attention not only from females, but also from males as a model of male physical beauty for emulation, following in the footsteps of their sempai (senior), SMAP's Kimura Takuya, who redefined standards of desirable masculine beauty in the 1990s (Miller 2006: 125).

4.2 Regionalism and Hierarchy in Johnny's Entertainment

Broadly speaking, regionalism has affected the company overall in two main ways: logistics and naming. Of the ten active groups, three have names that reference geographic regions of Japan: Tokio, Kinki Kids, and Kanjani∞. Groups do not choose their own name, or even the other members of a group; all decisions are made by Johnny Kitagawa, and as a result, names tend to be superficial and/or arbitrary. For instance, V6 was formed for the World Cup of Volleyball in 1995, and so the “V” most likely stands for “volleyball,” (although the members have suggested alternative possibilities in interviews) and “6” for the number of members in the group. SMAP, the highly successful five-person group25 that debuted in 1991, is supposedly an acronym for “Sports Music Assemble People.” Of the three groups with regionalized names, Kanjani∞

25 SMAP was originally a six person group, but the sixth member, Mori Katsuyuki, dropped out in 1996 in order to pursue a career as a racer.
SMAP (1991)
Naka Masahiro  Kanagawa
Kimura Takuya  Tokyo
Inagaki Goro  Tokyo
Kusanagi Tsuyoshi  Saitama
Katoi Shingo  Kanagawa

Kinki Kids (1997)
Domoto Kichi  Hyogo
Domoto Tsuyoshi  Nara

Arashi (1999)
Aiba Masaki  Chiba
Matsumoto Jun  Tokyo
Ninomiya Kazunari  Tokyo
Ohno Satoshi  Tokyo
Sakurai Sho  Tokyo

Yamashita Tomohisa  Chiba
Koyama Keiichi  Kanagawa
Nishikido Ryo  Osaka
Kato Shigeaki  Osaka
Masuda Takahisa  Tokyo
Tegoshi Yuya

KAT-TUN (2006)
Kamenashi Kazuya  Tokyo
Taguchi Jannosuke  Kanagawa
Tanaka Koki  Chiba
Ueda Tatsuya  Kanagawa
Nakamaru Yuichi  Tokyo

Tokio (1994)
Joshima Shigeru  Nara
Yamaguchi Tatsuya  Saitama
Kokubun Taichi  Tokyo
Matsuoka Masahiro  Hokkaido
Nagase Tomoya  Kanagawa

V6 (1995)
Sakamato Masayuki  Tokyo
Nagano Hiroshi  Kanagawa
Inohara Yoshiko  Tokyo
Moriyama Go  Saitama
Miyake Ken  Kanagawa
Okada Junichi  Osaka

Tackey & Tsubasa (2002)
Takizawa Hideaki  Tokyo
Imai Tsubasa  Kanagawa

Kanjani∞ (2004)
Shibutani Subaru  Osaka
Nishikido Ryo  Osaka
Maruyama Ryuhei  Kyoto
Yasuda Shotaro  Hyogo
Okura Tadayoshi  Osaka
Murakami Shingo  Osaka
Yokoyama You  Osaka

Hey! Say! JUMP (2007)
Yamada Ryosuke  Tokyo
Chinen Yuri  Shizuoka
Nakajima Yuto  Tokyo
Morimoto Ryutarou  Kanagawa
Okamoto Keito  Tokyo
Arioka Daiki  Chiba
Takaki Yuya  Osaka
Inoo Kei  Saitama
Yasotome Hikaru  Miyagi
Yabu Kota  Tokyo

Figure 20. Graph of debuted groups from Johnny's Entertainment, the year in which they debuted, and their hometown. The overwhelming majority of members are from the Kantō region, with the Kansai region being the second most prevalent. Tokio's Joshima Shigeru, V6's Okada Junichi, and Kinki Kids were not trained as Kansai Johnny's Juniors as that program was not yet established, but were trained in Tokyo. News' Kato Shigeaki was also trained in Tokyo, but he applied to the Tokyo Junior program as his family moved from Osaka to Kanagawa when he was in elementary school. Officially, he is listed on Johnny's website as being from Osaka, although he does not use Kansai-ben when speaking on television. Hey! Say! JUMP's Takaki Yuya did go through the Kansai Juniors training, and despite debuting, is still often active with Kansai Junior concerts and events. Information for this graph is taken directly from the artist profiles on Johnny's Entertainment's official web-page, [http://www.johnnys-net.jp/j/allartists/allartists.html](http://www.johnnys-net.jp/j/allartists/allartists.html). In May 2011 a new group, Kis-My-Ft2 (pronounced “Kiss My Foot Two”) will officially debut, with the majority of the members hailing from Kanagawa Prefecture in the Kantō region.
is the most affected by being regionally marked, which will be explored in greater detail later in this chapter.

Tokio's name seems to be the most distanced from any regional affiliation (despite being an alternative spelling for Tokyo), as no “Tokyo” identity markers are ever used in the band's image (although, perhaps because Tokyo is often viewed as “neutral” or lacking regional flair due to its establishment as the national norm for Japan). However, the leader of the group, Yoshima Shigeru, hails from Nara Prefecture in the Kansai region, while member Matsuoka Matsuhiro is from Hokkaido. Only one member is actually from Tokyo (Kokubun Taiichi) with the two remaining members, Yamaguchi Tatsuya and Nagase Tomoya hailing from the surrounding Kantō prefectures of Saitama and Kanagawa, respectively.

Logistically, since the mid-1990s Johnny's entertainment has split its training program into “Johnny's Juniors” and “Kansai Johnny's Juniors.” The differences and similarities between the two groups will be examined in further detail in the concert analysis in chapter five, but logistics greatly affects the work opportunities for each group, generally limiting them to working in their local region unless they travel with debuted groups on concert tours. As Tokyo broadcasts nationally and Kansai programming is limited to only local exposure, Juniors in the Tokyo region receive better exposure and are at a greater advantage than their counterparts in the Kansai region, although a national tour for Kansai Juniors was announced for the spring of 2011, marking their first major venture out of the Kansai region and onto the national stage.
As the new branch of Johnny's Junior, Kansai Juniors struggled to establish their activities in the Kansai region, and viewed themselves as being in a lower position than their peers in Tokyo. In the early 2000s, work for Kansai Juniors had decreased so much that members of Kanjani∞ (which had not yet debuted) found part time jobs and assumed that their efforts as becoming idols would not reach fruition, with one member even finding employment with a construction company in Osaka. When Johnny Kitagawa realized Kansai Juniors were lacking in performance opportunities, he established a summer musical for them, but they were still struggling greatly, particularly in comparison with their Tokyo peers. On one television show, Uramasho! (August 21st, 2010), Kanjani∞ member Yokoyama You explained how difficult it was for Kansai Juniors to gain popularity in the beginning, and their relationship to Tokyo Juniors:

When we had our musical tickets weren't selling at all, so the president got very worried and called in Juniors from Tokyo who were really popular, like Kamenashi Kazuya [currently a debuted member of KAT-TUN] to join us... In the past, when we were interacting as Kansai Juniors and Tokyo Juniors, the Kansai Juniors spoke to the Tokyo Juniors using keigo [polite speech]. I don't really know why but... it felt like we were losing to them.

By calling in juniors from Tokyo to rescue their production from failure, Kansai Juniors felt inferior in relation to their Tokyo peers, which was shown through their use of keigo to their Tokyo counterparts. Keigo is used to express politeness and respect to those in a position of superiority, with the individuals addressed in keigo socially established (e.g.,
professors, grandparents, company presidents and departmental bosses, upperclassmen in school, customers, etc.). Therefore, the Kansai Juniors manifested their own perceived position of inferiority through their use of *keigo*. After explaining this anecdote, one of the comedians on the television show immediately responded to Yokoyama You's story with “I understand! I understand!” and proceeded to tell his own story of feeling inferior to comedians from Tokyo, displaying a universal experience of performers from Osaka as feeling inferior to Tokyo entertainers in the media.

Divisions between the two groups are still present today, as can be seen through events like the “East and West Singing Matches” (*tōzai utagassen*), with the most recent competition held between Juniors at the end of 2010. While Kansai Juniors most likely do not use *keigo* to Tokyo Juniors anymore like their predecessors did, they are still separated on a regional basis. However, two groups, Kinki Kids and Kanjani∞, paved the way for Kansai Juniors, and were met with two different reactions upon their debut. With their training in Tokyo and early exposure on national television, Kinki Kids' image was more rooted in Tokyo's idol scene with hints of Kansai flair. Kanjani∞'s image and activities were rooted in Osaka and the Kansai region, limiting their success and acceptance outside of the Kansai broadcasting world. These two groups, and the influences of their image and management upon their positionality within their company and the Japanese media and music industry, will now be examined in greater detail.
4.3 Striking a Balance Between Regional and National: Kinki Kids

The duo that forms Kinki Kids, Domoto Tsuyoshi and Domoto Koichi, are from Nara Prefecture and Hyōgo Prefecture respectively, which influenced their training as well as their image. As they were the first group from Kansai to debut, they paved the way for Kanjani∞ and other Johnny's Juniors from Kansai. In 1992 Johnny Kitagawa26 scouted out the two in a move to establish the Kansai region as the next hub for training Johnny's idols.

Although one explanation proposed in a magazine stated that because Kitagawa's family hailed from Wakayama Prefecture in the Kansai region he was sentimentally disposed to expanding Johnny's Entertainment into the Kansai region, Kitagawa's move was not an arbitrary ambition, or necessarily sentimental. It occurred right when Osaka's cultural capital (Bourdieu and Randal: 1993) was high in the Japanese media, in the mid-1990s, when the manzai duo Downtown had its big break, and young comedians from Osaka reached great popularity among middle and high school female students. These young girls were also the exact same demographic for the majority of the fans of Johnny's Entertainment's idols. One magazine article written by Asō Kotarō in 1997 suggested that “While Hikaru Genji was disbanding and SMAP was struggling greatly, Sanma, Shinsuke, Kamioka Ryūtarō- lead by Downtown, and Shōchiku Entertainment's Yamada Masato and Moriwaki Kenji- swept the Tokyo variety entertainment market.” Kitagawa's

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26 Johnny Kitagawa is actually a Japanese-American born and raised in Los Angeles who came to Japan with the U.S. government in the 1950s during the U.S. Occupation of Japan following World War II. Very little is known about his private life, as he does not make public appearances, and because of Johnny's Entertainment's influence in the entertainment industry, major networks and media firms do not make efforts to uncover or report on his private life.
move was, therefore, most likely, a practical move in order to keep his company successful by adapting to the fan market and their desires.

The creation of the group Kinki Kids proved to be an extremely smart move on Kitagawa's part. Combining light references to their Kansai roots (as contrasted to Kanjani∞'s more stressed localization) with the training and job opportunities they received in Tokyo, they were highly successful. Rather than using stereotypes and images of the Kansai region, Kinki Kids were marketed for using Kansai processes of communication (humour and speech) that distinguished them from other idols. As a result, although they initially gained attention for Kansai mannerisms, their image has been more heavily impacted by their idol training in Tokyo. Thus, I would contend that they are presented more as “idols from Kansai” than as “idols for Kansai.” They are Kansai idols who entered Tokyo's idol hierarchy, and therefore were removed from the stigma associated with Kansai.

Kinki Kids were not only active in Kansai, but also in Tokyo extremely early in their careers, impacting the level to which they are seen as exoticized. While they were active in both national and local television shows in the Kansai region, the fact that the first television show they regularly appeared on was broadcast only in the Kansai region was reported in Junon magazine's January 1995 edition as being “extremely frustrating,” showed that a large portion of Kinki Kids' audience was located outside of Kansai.

Because training programs for Johnny's Juniors had not yet been established in the Kansai region, they took the shinkansen (bullet train) to Tokyo every Saturday and Sunday, exposing them to other Johnny's Juniors from the Tokyo region and immersing
them within the company's standardized training program. What made Kinki Kids unique from their Tokyo counterparts, however, was their use of Kansai dialect and their incorporation of comedy into their concerts and television appearances. While they could match the Tokyo Juniors step for step in dancing and could strike idol poses and smiles among the best of their Tokyo counterparts, their humour and speech were what separated them from their peers. An article from Junon magazine's October 1996 issue claimed that “super idol Kinki's most appealing point is their Kansai-ben.” The February 17th 1995 issue of The Television magazine highlighted their dual identity as idol/Kansai natives in their article entitled “They speak well like a manzai duo? Full coverage of Kinki's most recent live [performance]!” by stating, “In addition to the intense Johnny's idol-esque dance moves they displayed, they also provided us [the audience] with a talk session like true Kansai-jin.” By incorporating mild mannerisms, such as humour and Kansai-ben, into their concerts and television appearances, Kinki Kids were presented with a slight touch of exoticism to make them interesting and unique to a national audience. Through expressing some regional characteristics they were not over-the-top with their Kansai image, which allowed them to be more easily accessible nationwide.

Despite their somewhat mainstream image, however, Kinki Kids have still been influenced by national stereotypes of the Kansai region and its people. Although they are always viewed in a positive light for their use of humour and Kansai dialect, such conscious stereotyping shows that just a hint of regional flavour can be enough to satisfy the national viewer. In an article in the July 24 1998 issue of An-An magazine entitled “‘Interesting guys = handsome men', defining Kansai nationally!” the author Catherine
Ayako states, “When I saw Kinki Kids' first performance live, I felt anew the height of the comedic Kansai blood in them through their complete mastery of their speech style and the way they spoke to each other as [manzai] partners.” When reporting on the show that Kinki Kids and Tokio collaborated on together, *The Television* magazine in its October 1996 edition stated that the majority of Tsuyoshi and Koichi's lines were ad-lib, declaring “as expected of Kansai entertainers!” implying that humour is an inherent trait in all performers from the Kansai region. This image is blurred by the use of **geinin** (entertainer), which typically refers to comedians, as opposed to **geinōjin** (performer), which typically refers more to actors or musicians.

While their individual identities are rooted in the Kansai region and they make no pretexts of assimilating their speech to standard dialect in variety and talk shows, they compartmentalize their identities as performers, displaying a discrepancy between their views on speaking Kansai-dialect and singing it. Domoto Tsuyoshi spoke of his views on the appropriateness of Kansai-ben and standard Japanese in various situations in the November 6th 1998 issue of *The Television* magazine.

Kansai-ben is good, isn't it. Even if you're saying something clumsy, it doesn't sound that way. Rather than 'I like you' [standard Japanese pronunciation: *sukidayo*] saying 'You know, I like you' [Kansai dialect: *anonâ, sukiyanen kedonâ*] somehow seems more fitting. It's also effective in voicing complaints... but when it comes to singing standard Japanese is so much cooler. Songs in Kansai-ben... they have impact but they're not cool. But in concerts, when we sing songs in Kansai-ben like 'Tayorini
*shitemasse,* it seems so strange to me that screams of 'kyaa~!' come from the audience. Of course, it makes me happy. But, I always think 'That's not the place you say 'kyaa~!"  

Through his explanation, Domoto Tsuyoshi expresses his desire to emulate or project the image of Tokyo idols, singing standard dialect in order to project a desirable image that he associates with idols, while at the same time acknowledging the benefits of Kansai-ben for communication. Kinki Kids' identities as idols appear to be contingent, therefore upon producing a cool, idol image based upon Tokyo's standards through use of standardized Japanese in songs and training in Tokyo, but Kansai-ben in speech. While they are indisputably Kansai-jin, they do not commit to that persona on stage, unlike their *kohai* from the Kansai region, Kanjani∞.

4.4 Positional Ambiguity: An Examination of Kanjani∞

Kanjani∞, another group within Johnny's Entertainment, has quite a different position within the company. Completely integrating their Kansai identity into their performance image, Kanjani∞ goes a step beyond the Kansai image of Kinki Kids and exists as almost a separate entity from the other groups in Johnny's Entertainment. Although they too are attractive idols with choreographed routines, they are often ambiguously located in the company’s hierarchical structure due to their upbringing in the Kansai region, their strong regional image, and their training in Osaka, rather than Tokyo.
Unlike the majority of Johnny's acts, who typically hail from Tokyo and the surrounding prefectures, Kanjani∞ has been marketed as a group of stereotypically loud, funny, outspoken and quirky Osaka-jin. They speak in the Kansai-dialect, sing about their love of their hometown, and engage in un-idol-like behaviour through comedic antics in their performances and songs. While most groups in Johnny's are bestowed with unique names or acronyms, typically in English or Roman letters perceived as trendy or cool, Kanjani∞'s name itself is a condensed form of their identity; “Kan” comes from Kansai, the region from which the members hail, “jani” is a *katakana* abbreviation for “Johnny's,” and 8 is the number of members initially in the group (although an infinity symbol is used it is pronounced as “eight”), making them Kanjani∞, or 関ジャニ∞ in Japanese. Because Kansai Johnny's Junior are also abbreviated to Kanjani, Kanjani∞ is sometimes abbreviated to “eighto” the Japanese pronunciation of eight in order to distinguish the two. However, Kanjani∞ is also often referred to as Kanjani (especially outside of Johnny's Entertainment), leading to some confusion.

Their debut in 2004 was a limited release single in the Kansai region entitled “Naniwa Iroha Bushi,” an *enka* pop song. Despite sales being limited to the Kansai region, the song placed at number eight on the Oricon charts. Upon national release on September 22nd, 2004 the single rose to number one. No other Johnny's act has debuted locally before being released nationwide, demonstrating not only the unique connection between Kanjani∞ and the Kansai region, but also the limitations that have been placed on the group. Kanjani∞ has risen in popularity since approximately 2008, when the DVD of their summer tour reached number one on the Oricon charts. However, they have faced
greater challenges in gaining popularity and national exposure than their compatriots in Johnny's, most likely because of their marketing as a Kansai group.

The fact that they are Johnny’s entertainment idols categorizes them as cool, suave male idols who sing and dance. Through talk shows, however, their supposedly “Osaka” side emerges, as they crack numerous jokes, subjugate themselves to harsh rebukes and comments from the hosts as they conduct themselves more as geinin, or comedians, than idols.

One television show that many Johnny’s groups appear on is Hey! Hey! Hey! Music Champ, a show hosted by a comedy duo known as Downtown. Upon Kanjani∞’s first appearance on the show on March 7th 2005, one host asks them, “are you really Johnny’s?” after he observes their mannerisms, and further comments, “boy you guys sure talk a lot!” Additionally, after the hosts realize that they have not given the members a chance to introduce themselves, the other host comments, “At this rate, the audience is going to think you’re comedians.” Without a formal introduction, the group members' use of Kansai-ben and their style of speech associate them with comedians rather than as idols. Kanjani∞ members Yokoyama You and Murakami Shingo in particular are chastised frequently on talk shows for their hand gestures, body motions, and speech patterns that mimic comedians.

The hosts of the show themselves, famous comedy duo Downtown, are in fact from the Kansai region and speak in Kansai-ben, but this does not stop them from making fun of Kanjani∞ for being from Osaka. On another appearance on Hey! Hey! Hey! Music Champ on April 9th 2007, the hosts chose to introduce Kanjani8 by saying, “Phew,
something reeks of Osaka..." Only moments into Kanjani∞'s appearance the hosts began to mock them for their hometown and its uncool image, ridicule that continued throughout the interview. Although the fact that Downtown hails from the exact same region is irony they use to turn into laughs, their repartee shows that within Tokyo-based media, making fun of people from Osaka is not only acceptable, it is routine, even if the people making the jokes are from Osaka themselves.

Association with Kansai has hampered Kanjani∞'s success and opportunities within the media, relegating them to “second-class citizens” in the same manner that the Kansai region is seen as inferior to Tokyo. Kanjani∞ has had particular difficulty in establishing its position within its agency and in Tokyo's media. Initially, the majority of the jobs they received were only in the Kansai region, and when they did receive work in Tokyo they were relegated to positions of peripheral “exotic other.” In an interview in the October 2005 issue of Poporo magazine, Kanjani∞ member Maruyama Ryuhei recounted an experience he had as a trainee or “junior:”

The first time I went to Tokyo was for the first recording of the radio program 'Mayonaka no Shonen.” I was the only Kansai person there, all the other juniors were from Tokyo, and as I spoke with them I gradually lapsed into their Tokyo dialect. Afterwards, the company president said, “You! If you don't speak in Kansai-ben there's no point. Especially on radio!” I wasn't called back the next time.

Marginalized for being a Junior from Kansai, and chastened for not appropriately representing the Kansai region though his speech, Maruyama's experience shows
how Kanjani∞ members are dependent upon their branding as Kansai-jin in order to receive work opportunities.

It is important to remember that Kanjani∞ is a group that did not form organically; they are just as manufactured as any other Johnny’s group, or other idols in Japanese show business for that matter. While their definitive characteristic, their birthplace, cannot be altered, the members of Kanjani∞ were chosen to become a group representative of the Kansai region. By auditioning to become an idol, going through Johnny’s Entertainment’s rigorous training program, and finally being picked to become Kanjani∞, their eccentric personalities and good looks are by no means a coincidence. Each member was selected to fit the role of idol with a quirky Osaka twang. Kanjani∞ continues to negotiate the identities that have been prescribed to them, particularly their overlapping and sometimes competing identities as Johnny’s idols and as performers from the Kansai region.

Despite being encouraged to speak Kansai-dialect and act like loud, boisterous Kansai people, Kanjani∞ has also been marginalized within the company by other groups because of their local image. In a 2005 interview, fellow Johnny's group Arashi denied being close with Kanjani∞, telling stories of how Kanjani∞ members had embarrassed them in personal interactions. Arashi member Sakurai Sho stated, “I'm actually a fan of Kanjani. I received a DVD of Kanjani's appearances on this show from our agency. I like them. But, I don't want people to think we're friends.” Stating that they did not want to be thought of as friends with Kanjani∞, Arashi denies what is in actuality a fact; they are good friends with Kanjani∞ members outside of their working relationship. Stories of the
friendships between Arashi and Kanjani∞, such as the friendship between Kanjani∞ member Yokoyama You and Arashi member Aiba Masaki which goes back to their days as Juniors, are often brought up in talk shows and in magazine interviews. In a recent magazine interview in 2011 when Arashi members were asked whom in Johnny's Entertainment they would like to collaborate with on future projects, three out of five of them stated Kanjani∞. However, because of Kanjani∞'s unabashedly comical behaviour and image (which in 2005 was still particularly strong), Arashi members distanced themselves from Kanjani∞, instead choosing to join in teasing them.

Kanjani∞ has even been teased by the group that paved their way into Johnny's Entertainment, Kinki Kids, when they appeared on their weekly television show Shin Domoto Kyōdai. Because of their loud behaviour and antics Domoto Tsuyoshi declared, “Boy you guys are loud! I don't think of you guys as my kohai at all,” showing that even for Kansai-jin, being too close to Kansai stereotypes is viewed negatively.

Since 2007 Kanjani∞ has become more successful nationally, but when their concert DVD was number one for the year of 2008, beating out their fellow Johnny's act and anticipated favourite, Arashi, they joked on another appearance of Hey! Hey! Hey! that, “When our agency told us that we had beaten out Arashi and gotten the top spot, they told us not to tell anyone,” implying that their success was, in a sense, an unexpected embarrassment. The Kansai underdogs had outperformed their Tokyo peers and displaced them from their higher position, disrupting the balance between Kantō and Kansai's relationship.
Through highlighting their roots in the Kansai region, Kanjani∞ has most likely been alienated by their peers because of their atypical behaviour for idols due to pushing their image as Kansai locals. As was explained to me by fans in both the Kansai and Kantō regions, idols are associated more with Tokyo and a *kirakira* (sparkling/shining) image. Kanjani∞ do not conform to this image, and indeed, have been mocked by their *sempai* Kinki Kids for lacking “freshness” associated with idols. Because the comedy world is dominated by comedians from the Kansai region, they are frequently mistaken for comedians on television appearances, as they infuse humour into their performances. However, they have also been specifically instructed by their company president to speak Kansai dialect, and were most likely chosen as members of the group for their ability to perform Kansai stereotypes.

Within national television and within Johnny's Entertainment's Tokyo-centric hierarchy, Kanjani∞ is often marginalized due to their image and heavy emphasis of their Kansai roots. However, to state that their position is only that of marginality would be to ignore the more complex nuances of interpersonal relations in which Kanjani∞’s positioning can be reflective of regional and personal shifts. While they may be teased for their comedian-like behaviour in Tokyo, they are hailed as cool, suave Johnny's idols when they return to Osaka. There, their local roots do not hinder their abilities to become successful idols, but rather they are proudly elevated for their success in joining Johnny's Entertainment and becoming popular idols. On one morning news talk show in Osaka, Kanjani∞ member Yokoyama You stated rather dejectedly in the conversation, “We're not really very idol-like...” to which the newscasters and guests commented, “Nonsense!
You're very cool! You're idols!” showing that perception of the group is relative to geographic location.

An identity shift in relation to one's geographic origin and the locale in which one is appears to be very strong within Japanese media. One of the most powerful examples of this regional relativism I observed in Japan was Kanjani∞ member Nishikido Ryo's appearance on Waratte Litomo, a famous midday television program, to promote his new drama on July 13th 2010. One of Nishikido's sempai, SMAP's Nakai Masahiro, is a weekly-regular on the show, and takes delight on tormenting Nishikido on television appearances by trying to force him to answer which group he prefers to be in, NEWS, or Kanjani∞. As his kohai, Nishikido is obligated to answer him, but clearly does not want to alienate the members of either group and always replies “I am happy to be a part of both groups,” while Nakai takes delight in his uncomfortable squirming under Nakai's insistence that he has a preference. On this particular appearance on Waratte Litomo, Nakai pushed his typical question of “Which are you, NEWS or Kanjani∞?” Nishikido continued to insist he is a member of both, but slipped, “but if I was in Osaka I would probably say I'm Kanjani∞,” to which Nakai gleefully teased, “Eh, If you were in Nagano what would you do!”

The dialogue between the two of them is brief, but shows deep-seated roots of attitudes toward regionalism; by admitting that if he were in Osaka he would be Kanjani∞, Nishikido implies that the locale he is in has a hand in establishing his identity. The divide is not that simple, as Nakai quips with his question of what Nishikido would do if he were in Nagoya (located directly in-between Osaka and Tokyo). Nishikido has
travelled to Tokyo in order to work as a member of Kanjani∞ and to Osaka to work as a member of NEWS, so the divide is not that simple, but it shows that Nishikido associates geographic location with a shift in his identity.

Since debuting in 2004, Kanjani∞'s stage identity has evolved past simply performing regional stereotypes, but the association between their group's image and the Kansai region has been so heavily established that it has been difficult for them to transform themselves. As they have gained experience and popularity, however, they have slowly shifted from performing images controlled by the agency to assuming more control and influence over their own image and projects. Such a shift shows that they have the ability to move past their limitations of being exoticized as regional performers, which will be examined in an analysis of their music in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE. JOHNNY'S KANSAI IMAGERY AND MUSICAL ANALYSIS

5.1 Constructing Performance Identities: the Role of the Agency

Like many other groups from the Kansai region, Johnny's Entertainment group Kanjani∞ has also displayed its Kansai heritage through rap, comedy, and the incorporation of regional symbols. However, as opposed to groups like ET-King or the Ulfuls who decided themselves that they would perform songs about the Kansai region, Kanjani∞ is the result of a company based in Tokyo forming a group to perform regional stereotypes of the Kansai region. This chapter examines the music and musicians from Johnny's Entertainment that are branded with Kansai regional markers or dialect in their music, focusing specifically on Kanjani∞. Before examining the identity and image of Kanjani∞, it is important to first examine how musicians' identities and public personae are constructed by their entertainment company in addition to producers, songwriters, and lyricists. In the popular music industry, this is a complex process involving producers, management companies, marketing departments and, of course, the musicians themselves.

As Steven Epstein astutely points out, “people make their own identities, but they do not make them just as they please. Identities are phenomena that permit people to become acting ‘subjects’ who define who they are in the world, but at the same time identities ‘subject’ those people to the controlling power of external categorization” (Epstein 1987: 30). Generalizations involving either the support or divergence of expectation are particularly critical to the branding of Kanjani∞, as they face a
multiplicity of stereotypes. However, as Epstein alludes, Kanjani∞ is not entirely passive in the construction of its image, particularly since they have gained some creative control as they have become more established artists over time. Their transition into asserting some control over their decisions will be examined at the end of this chapter, although as popular musicians it is difficult to discern the extent of their voice in the decision-making processes of their image and activities.

Keith Negus provides an excellent framework for the relationship between pop musicians, their image, repertoire, and the marketing agents that manipulate the media in order to make the musician relatable to the public. The staff at recording companies play an integral role in determining how a musician or group is marketed. Because they are quite frequently criticized for attempting to make artists into puppets, Negus claims they often defend themselves by arguing that they do not create new images for the musicians, but merely tease out the desirable qualities of the musician's personality (Negus 1992: 65). One partner at a production and management company in England Negus cites in his work eloquently explains the balance between crafting the image of a performer and their own personal expression of self identity.

The closer an image is to what an artist can actually feel comfortable with and genuinely interested in as a projection of themselves and their own ideas the more successful it'll be in our experience. The further away you get from that, that's when it gets really difficult; trying to foster an image on someone. If you go too far you've had it. They can't cope with it, and they'll probably look stupid anyway (ibid: 70).
Artists, and their management agencies, must therefore find a balance between constructing an attractive and unique image to be consumed by the public while reflecting enough of the performer's identity that allows them to remain comfortable with how they are being presented in the media.

In the Japan music industry, there is also the concept of *tsukuttamono* (made thing) applied not only to songs or lyrics, but to the performers themselves and the image they project (Yano 2003: 16). Yano explains that the performer is completely controlled by those around him or her, and the extent to which performers lack control over their own career and image.

A newcomer enters the *enka* world on its own terms, and there is little room for assertions of individual will. Singers have little control over their products, including the songs they sing and the image they project.

According to the same Nippon Columbia director, a singer is a voice, and only sometimes a face; if the singer does not like the way business is conducted in the *enka* world, then he or she should leave (Yano 2003: 54).

Idol companies, such as Johnny's Entertainment, also possess absolute control over their trainees, putting them through a rigorous training process that often continues for years before a performer debuts. The purpose of this training is not only to teach them to sing and dance, but to make them *tōshindai*, or “life-sized,” meaning that they possess “appearance, ability, and charm that are above average, but not so much as to alienate or offend the audience” (Aoyagi 2005: 67). Idols are groomed by their companies to be slightly better-than-average companions for the audience as well as idealized models of
fashion, beauty, and charm to emulate. The control of Johnny’s Entertainment over its idols can be best seen at their debut press conferences; each member of a group is assigned a phrase to say, which they dutifully repeat to the press. In later years, groups such as Arashi and Kanjani∞ have admitted that not only were these phrases given to them to be repeated exactly, but that they sometimes did not even understand their meaning or significance.

There is clearly a distinction between independent groups from Kansai, like the Ulfuls, who freely play with their local identity, and groups that are part of a large organization based in Tokyo, like Kanjani∞, who are simultaneously encouraged and hampered by their Kansai image. Furthermore, Kanjani∞’s image is controlled by its company, which is part of the Tokyo-based media construction of the Kansai region. Johnny's Entertainment has appropriated images and themes about Osaka, such as thriving business, in the past, which were used in SMAP's song released March in 1994 entitled “Hey Hey Ōkini Maida Ari” (Hey Hey Thank You Every Time). The song was SMAP's first number one hit, showing that appropriating Kansai imagery was successful, particularly as this appropriation took place just as Kansai comedians were extremely popular with middle and high school female students. The lyrics feature thick Kansai-iben, in bold below27, despite the fact that none of the members of SMAP are from the Kansai region.

Hey Hey おおきに毎度あり
商売繁盛 なにわの商人 (あきんど)やー
えーもん 安いもののが 名物やー
せったいあんさん そんなはさせへんでー

Hey Hey thank you every time
A rush of business, Naniwa's merchants
Good things, cheap things, famous goods
Definitely won't disadvantage you

27 Please see Appendix A for the full lyrics.
Partial lyrics from SMAP's song, “Hey Hey Ōkini Maido Ari” (Hey Hey Thank You Every Time). Translated by author.

While SMAP's “Hey Hey Ōki ni Maido Ari” is similar to Kanjani∞'s song “Sukiyanen, Osaka” (Love ya, Osaka), as both feature similar thematic content about merchants and economics, in addition to the use of Kansai regional dialect, their function is quite different; SMAP's song was a gimmick appropriation of Kansai imagery during a peak in Kansai presence in popular culture. It is no longer a song they sing, nor is it one of their well known songs, despite being their first single to reach number one on Oricon. Kanjani∞'s songs, although also somewhat clichéd constructions of Kansai identity, relates to their relationship to the Kansai region (for instance, they declare “Love you, Osaka!” over and over and introduce various parts of Osaka city in “Sukiyanen, Osaka”). Marked as the “Johnny's group from Kansai,” Kanjani∞ has also produced numerous songs about Osaka, and continues to sing them in the concerts years after the song is released. These songs, and the development of Kanjani∞'s image in relation to Osaka and the Kansai region, form the core of Kanjani∞'s branding and are explored in depth for the remainder of this chapter.
5.2 Enka and Idols: Kanjani∞'s Early Music and Imagery

Kanjani∞'s musical style is varied and eclectic; debuting as a “modern enka group” in 2004, their style has evolved to include rock, blues, jazz, and pop. In all of the genres they sing, their music shows an interesting connection between localization and pan-Japanese identity construction, particularly in their debut single “Naniwa Iroha Bushi,” and in numerous of their music videos that followed. As a Johnny's idol group, their regional identity appears to lend itself to a more “Japanese” image and sound in their music due to the use of traditional instruments and images. Kanjani∞'s image has also shifted since their debut, especially in their musical style and visual image, distancing them from their localized roots musically, as they have evolved from a localized Kansai group to a pan-Japanese group to a more generic pop group.

Kanjani∞’s first single released, “Naniwa Iroha Bushi,” in particular mixes characteristics of Osaka, Japan and tradition into one pan-Japanese identity under the genre of enka music. Simply deconstructing the title of the song shows the complex layering of images that localize Kanjani∞; the word Naniwa is an old term for the Osaka region, marking the song as not only regional, but old. Iroha is a famous classical poem from Kyoto court of the Heian Period (794-1185) that was used as an old alphabet as it contains each character in the Japanese alphabet once, and is incorporated into the lyrics of “Naniwa Iroha Bushi” as a rap. Bushi is a term meaning song or melody typically applied to folk music, while Naniwa bushi refers to a genre of shamisen music accompanied by speech and song that was popular from the 19th century until as late as the 1950s (Groemer 2008: 348).
As a genre, *enka* commonly references regionalism, and particularly rural locales in its subject matter. During the Taisho Period (1912-1925), *enka* grew in popularity in Japan with the rise of commercialization, but was called *ryūkōku*, or “popular song” (Brasor and Tsubuku 1997: 57). Due to increased urbanization, Japan saw a rise in rural populations migrating to cities, which was reflected in the lyrics of *ryūkōku*, as themes of longing, separation, and *furusato* (hometown) increased in popularity. The Taisho Period forms the basis for constructing a nostalgic past due to this mixture of rural lifestyle and urbanization, in addition to its construction as a period of “prewar innocence.”

Perhaps because Kanjani∞’s image was constructed in connection to Osaka and the Kansai region, the producers in charge of the group thought it was appropriate to make their debut single an *enka* song.²⁸ No other group from Johnny's Entertainment has been entrenched so firmly into a regional image, and so it is possible that *enka* was evoked in order to emphasize Kanjani∞’s connection with its local roots. Furthermore, as they were trained in Osaka and were the first group to debut from the Kansai Johnny's Junior training program, Kanjani∞ may have been marketed as an *enka* group in order to brand them differently from the idols from Tokyo who are revered as the epitome of masculine beauty and female desire. Kanjani∞ are marketed more as “local boys” that contradict the shining image of idols as a means of giving them a unique, marketable image. Two Kanjani∞ fans I interviewed both explained that idols should be “*kira kira,*” brilliant or sparkling, and that because Kanjani∞ lacked the perfect facade constructed by most idols they were attracted to the group and its more down-to-earth image.

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²⁸ Kanjani∞ was not in control of their image or music at all at the beginning; the fact that they even had a CD debut was not made known to them by their agency, as they found out about their debut single release from reading a sports newspaper article or friends who had read the article before them.
During the beginning of their career as a debut group, Kanjani∞ attempted to bridge the gap between young idol fans and older generations by releasing songs they claimed could be enjoyed by young and old alike, such as “Osaka Rainy Blues,” but their fan base is largest in the demographics of teenagers and twenty-somethings, possibly influencing to the slow shedding of their enka image. Perhaps being marketed a Johnny's enka Kansai group was too novel and out of the ordinary. Since Kanjani∞ members are from the Kansai region and not trained enka singers but idols the logical choice was to defer to the local image that was more appropriate for them.

While “Naniwa Iroha Bushi” was marketed as an enka song, their musical style varies from standard practices of enka in many ways. Their first major contrast to typical enka performers is that they are a group, not a single singer. Although certain members have larger solos, such as Shibutani Subaru who is often credited as being the main vocalist, there are a total of seven members in the group who all sing.29 Because they are produced by an idol company and trained to be idols, their singing and performance style do not follow enka's kata (pattern) so much as attempt to imitate it.

In “Naniwa Iroha Bushi,” they do not sing in the yonanuki scale common to enka, but a major pentatonic scale of C, D, E, G, and A that incorporates the occasional F, as can be seen in the first verse (see next page for transcription). By using a pentatonic scale, the song is instantly recognizably different from most songs from Johnny's Entertainment, which are composed in the Western major and minor scales. By incorporating elements from Western music, such as tones outside of the pentatonic scale,

29 There were initially eight members in the group, but one member, Uchi Hiroki, was suspended in 2005 and subsequently removed from the group due to an under-aged drinking scandal.
the music hybridizes a traditional sound with typical practices in Japanese popular music, such as a simple melody in a short range, mirroring Kanjani∞'s regional and idol identities.

Figure 21. The first verse of Kanjani∞'s debut single, “Naniwa Iroha Bushi” (0:54-1:06). Notes of the pentatonic scale are circled. Transcribed by author.

The main vocalist featured throughout the video, Shibutani Subaru, manipulates his voice in order to have a more traditional sound in lieu with enka vocal practices. This process involves exaggerated slides, trills and ornamentation of notes (kobushi), and a wide vibrato (yuri). The large melismatic passages of “ah” that he sings throughout the song highlights these characteristics.

Figure 22. A melismatic passage from “Naniwa Iroha Bushi” sung by Shibutani Subaru throughout the piece (first occurrence at 0:21-0:34). Yuri (wide vibrato) is represented with wavy lines while slides before notes are marked with curved lines. Transcribed by author.
Instruments such as *taiko* drums and flutes are played in order to give the song a more traditional Japanese flavour, although the music and their costumes more closely resemble a festival than *enka*. Their chants of “*Sora! Yoitoko sassa no yoi sassa! Haa enya kora se no dokkoise!*” are also directly influenced from the *kakegoe* (shouts) one hears at festivals, mixing festival practices and *enka* styles together for the desired effect of localizing the music as Japanese.

The imagery used in the video is also a complex combination of pan-traditional identity, which is then juxtaposed with modern fashion and Johnny’s Entertainment hallmarks. While festival instruments (*taiko*, gongs, flutes, etc.) are playing, the members of Kanjani∞ walk down a computer emulated street closely resembling the setting of a summer festival. They pass through a *torii* gate, a marker of a traditional Shinto shrine, and approach the moneybox and bell used for prayer. Their attire consists of long *happi* (traditional coats) with traditional prints on the back worn over black tank tops, shiny pants, and fashionable necklaces and accessories. Upon cutting to the next scene, the combination of traditional-style coat over modern clothing continues, this time in white, which is also the costuming on the cover of the single (see next page). One member, Okura Tadayoshi, plays a *taiko* drum while the other members dance around him in a circle reminiscent of *obon* dancing.

The combination of visual references is overwhelming; on the traditional side, summer festivals, *obon* dancing, Shintoism, *happi*, *taiko* and traditional-sounding music. Elements of a modern pop group are also present, such as clothing styles, accessories, hairstyles, and choreographed movements. Close-ups of the members are dispersed.
throughout the video as they sing, reminding the viewer that they are an attractive idol group. Indications that this is a Johnny’s group are also given through the choreographed dances and the acrobatics- including a signature Johnny’s back flip.

![Image of Kanjani Eight band members](image)

Figure 23. The cover of Kanjani’s debut single (2004), “Naniwa Iroha Bushi.”

Surprisingly, they are no references to Osaka or Kansai in this video's imagery. No references are made to famous local Kansai matsuri (festivals), such as Osaka's Tenjin Matsuri, or Kyoto's Gion Matsuri, two of Japan's “big three” festivals. Lyricaly, the only words in Kansai dialect are the expressions gokurosan (good work), arigatosan (thank you), and honma ni sukiyanen (I really love you). Instead of Kansai-ben, classical Japanese is prevalent throughout the lyrics, with the famous Heian Period poem “Iroha”incorporated into the lyrics as a rap.

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30 The cover art was taken from Google's Image Search, and can be found at: [http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_r_9AYoT76mE/TDD3eMHJF8I/AAAAAAAAAFeC/H-Ep-GPi4_k/s1600/Naniwa+Iroha+Bushi.jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_r_9AYoT76mE/TDD3eMHJF8I/AAAAAAAAAFeC/H-Ep-GPi4_k/s1600/Naniwa+Iroha+Bushi.jpg)

31 Tokyo's Kanda Matsuri rounds out Japan's three-big festivals. The cries for this song may be based off of Kawachi Ondo, lively dance songs from the Kawachi area of southeastern Osaka, commonly danced to like obon music, although reliable data or information on this connection is difficult to find.

32 Gokurosan and arigato-san are variations on “gokurōsama” and “arigatō.” One famous characteristic of Kansai-ben is the use of of the suffixes “san” or “chan” on inanimate objects (e.g., ame-chan, or “Mr./Ms. Candy”) and through replacing the more formal “sama” with “san” in expressions. Arigatosan also drops the lengthened vowel on arigatō, another feature of Kansai dialect.
いろはにほへとちりぬるを
わかよたれそつねならむ
ういのおくやまけふここて

あさきゆめみしえひもせすん

ナニワ友あれ輪になって
心うきおき踊りましょう
あの人もこの人も
花の浪花のいろは節!

いうがごときこの世の楽しみも
すぐに散ってしまう
人の世の移り変わりを誰がと
どめられようか

ナニワは何でもめげません
あっち立てばこっち立たず
お勤め每日ご苦労さん
浪花根性ド根性!

Partial lyrics to Kanjani²'s debut song “Naniwa Iroha Bushi.” Translated by author.

While “Naniwa Iroha Bushi” is Kanjani²'s *enka* debut song, the melodic, lyrical, and visual content of the song does not resemble *enka* so much as generic festival music, although *enka* does occasionally borrow from festival music and imagery in order to evoke Japanese identity. One song in their repertoire that was not released as a single, “Futari no Namidaame” (A Couple's Light Rain) features more musical similarities with *enka* than any of their other songs. Musically, the accompaniment of strings and percussion resembles *enka* through the dramatic and sweeping melodic gestures of the strings and the syncopated rhythm of the percussion. The inclusion of the vibraslap, a percussive instrument closely associated with *enka* in Japanese music, prior to each chorus also strengthens the musical similarities to *enka.*
Figure 24. The beginning of the verse of Kanjani∞'s song “Futari no Namida Ame” (A Couple's Light Rain) (0:19-0:48). Transcribed by author. The percussion line consists of maracas on upper and lower pitches. The drum set includes a high pitched drum similar in timbre to a kotsuzumi (Japanese hourglass-shaped drum used in kabuki and Noh) that is represented by a triangular shaped note head, a cymbal notated with an x-shaped note head, and a snare drum depicted with round note heads. Transcription continues on the next page.
In general, Kanjani∞'s lyrics are one of their greater similarities to enka, as they use many terms and themes prevalent in enka, such as tears, heart, and dreams (Yano 2003). There is mixed influence from Japanese popular music as well, as themes of love
(and not necessarily unhappy or unattainable love) are also included, although less frequently than songs about heartbreak and longing. Most importantly, however, they use their lyrics to highlight their Kansai identity by featuring Kansai dialect, *konto* (comedy routines), and by using symbols or locations of Osaka as their thematic material.

In terms of similarities to *enka*, words such as the neutral term for “I” or “me” (*watashi*) are instead replaced with *boku* or *ore*, more masculinized versions of *watashi* used more commonly by younger Japanese. The generic term for “you” (*anata*) is also not generally used, and is instead frequently replaced with *kimi*, which is typically used by men towards women and implies romantic interest. Kanjani∞ has also been influenced by Japanese popular music's inclusion of English lyrics. Some terms commonly used in *enka*, such as I, you, tears, heart, and cry, are occasionally found in English, most likely explaining why some commonly used *enka* words are not as frequent in Kanjani∞'s lexicon.

The words Kanjani∞ shares most in common with *enka* are heart, dream, tears, love, and wind (ibid: 94). While the sad and melancholy themes of *enka* (tears, alone, cry) are quite frequent in Kanjani∞'s lyrics, alcohol does not occur. This is most likely because they are an idol group, and idols typically strive to construct an idealized image (hence Uchi Hiroki's removal for under-aged drinking in 2005). The graph on the next page analyzes the similarities between Kanjani∞'s lyrics and *enka*, using the lyrical analysis of *enka* from Christine Yano's book *Tears of Longing Nostalgia and the Nation in Japanese Popular Song* (2003).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Percentage of occurrences in <em>Enka</em></th>
<th>Occurrences in <em>Enka</em> (out of 115 songs)</th>
<th>Kanjani∞ Percentage</th>
<th>Occurrences in Kanjani∞ (out of 50 songs)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>92</td>
<td>51.20%</td>
<td>54</td>
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<td>29.30%</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>12.20%</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>49</td>
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<td>19.10%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14.60%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>19.10%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4.50%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Word Frequency in *enka* songs and Kanjani∞’s discography\(^3\)

Despite not musically resembling *enka* as they are a group, do not use the scales associated with *enka*, and lack the training to produce the proper vocal timbre, Kanjani∞ is classified as an *enka* group on the Oricon charts. Their debut single was originally only released in the Kansai region on August 25\(^{th}\), 2004, and managed to reach #8 on Oricon before reaching #1 upon nationwide release on September 22\(^{nd}\), 2004. It was the first *enka* song to reach #1 on the Oricon charts since Yujiro Ishirao’s “Kita no Tabibito” in

\(^3\) The left-hand portion of the graph is from Christine Yano's book “Tears of Longing” P. 94, while the right-hand side of the graph is from my analysis of the lyrics from three of Kanjani∞ full CDs, FTO, Zukkoke The Great Escape, and Puzzle.
1987. Kanjani∞ has also performed on enka television shows, and has occasionally performed enka songs, although their performances tend to blur the line between enka and pop music. In 2004 they performed a cover of enka singer Mori Shinichi's song “Fuyu no Rivera,” on television in which Shibutani Subaru sang over top of a recording of Mori Shinichi's voice, with both of their performances being overlapped on the screen, essentially manipulating the performance to appear as a duet. Other Kanjani∞ members joined during the chorus, which was then followed by a rock version of their debut single “Naniwa Iroha Bushi.” In 2006 they were also invited to perform a melody of their songs on “Nippon no Uta,” a television show focusing primarily on enka music. In addition, Shibutani Subaru sang a verse of “Matsuri no Mambo,” a song that many enka singers such as Misora Hibari have previously performed, while the other members danced behind him.

As an idol group, Kanjani∞ also performs music that is not enka-inspired, but is more similar to standard Japanese popular music. Their single “Kyū Jō Show!” is heavily influenced by American rockabilly music in scale, instrumentation, arrangement, and costuming, reached number one on the mainstream Oricon charts. Despite no similarities to enka in the lyrics, music, costuming, or movements, “Kyū Jō Show!” was also number one on the enka charts, showing that even when they evolve into pop music and other genres, they are still tied to their debuted image as Kansai enka idols (Oricon 2009). Not all of their music is categorized under enka on Oricon, as their triple single release, “Gift” with green, red, and white versions on December 24th-26th 2009 was not listed on the enka charts.
My argument is not to state that because Kanjani∞ does not sound or look like the image of Osaka they should not qualify as enka musicians. This would be equivalent to demanding that Kansai musicians match perceived stereotypes of being loud and funny and “sound” like they are from Kansai, which would dismiss a huge number of musicians from the region. Rather, the purpose of my analysis is to point out the influence of enka on Kanjani∞'s musical style and branding, and to display the ambiguous position they hold within their company and the music industry due to the plethora of stereotypes and influences shaping their image.

Furthermore, they are not the only enka artists to defy the preconceived notions of enka as overly sentimental music associated with the past consumed by older rural blue-collar workers. Through mixing genres, performance practices, visuals and singing styles, enka has begun to evolve according to youth influences and musical tastes. Young enka musicians such as Hikawa Kiyoshi, Jero, and Kanjani∞ have all released top ten singles on the mainstream music charts that combine more modern musical forms such as hip hop and idol performance. The success and popularity of these musicians directly challenges enka's image as a genre of the past, as well as problematizes the classification of what “enka” is by post-war standards. The resignification of the genre has widened its audience to include younger generations, making changes to a genre that has always been a hybridization of local Japanese musical styles with Western music. As a genre associated with the “heart of Japan,” enka works well with Kanjani∞'s branding as regional musicians.
5.3 Playing with Stereotypes: Kanjani∞ Performing Kansai Identity

While “Naniwa Iroha Bushi” is Kanjani∞’s most potent music video in terms of imagery, referencing aspects of Japanese identity as local and national, traditional and modern, traditional Japanese or local Kansai characteristics remain constant themes throughout the majority of their videos. They have released several singles dedicated to their hometown: “Osaka Rainy Blues,” “Sukiyanen Osaka,” and “Osaka Oba-chan Rock,” in addition to “Jimoto no Ōsama,” “F· T· O (Funky Town Osaka),” and fan favourite “Osaka Romanesque.” The song “Puzzle” also refers to specific areas around Osaka, which will be examined in further detail later in this chapter, and the song “Horori Melody” features two phrases in Kansai dialect. The majority of their songs about Osaka are from their earlier albums.34

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Kansai-ben in Lyrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naniwa Iroha Bushi</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osaka Rainy Blues</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sukiyanen, Osaka</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh! Enka!</td>
<td>Spoken at beginning, not in lyrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osaka Obachan Rock</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osaka Romanesque</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F·T·O</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimoto no Ōsama</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puzzle</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horori Melody</td>
<td>Two phrases whispered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 25. Use of Kansai dialect in the Kanjani∞’s songs that make reference to Osaka, with the earliest recorded songs at the beginning of the list and more recently released songs at the bottom.

In terms of pitch intonation, Kanjani∞ best highlights Kansai dialect's unique intonation in spoken passages during their songs. “Sukiyanen, Osaka” and “Osaka oba-chan Rock” both feature large spoken sections where the members engage in konto (comic dialogues)

34 For a full list of Kanjani∞’s discography, please see Appendix B.
like the Ulfuls' dialogue in “Osaka Strut.” In Osaka oba-chan Rock,” the members of
Kanjani∞ discuss bargain sales like stereotypical Osaka oba-chan.

| Shibutani: | Look, look At this leopard print sweater. |
| Shibutani: | How do you think it Cost? Try to guess. |
| Shibutani: | How much was it then? |
| Shibutani: | Pin-pon! |
| Shibutani: | Pin-pon pin-pon pin-pon |
| Shibutani: | You don't have to say it So many times, you fool. |

Partially lyrics to the konto (comic dialogue) in Kanjani∞'s song “Osaka oba-chan Rock.” Translated by author.

Kanjani∞ also includes non-comic spoken dialogue that highlights Kansai dialect intonation. In the songs “Oh! Enka” and “Jimoto no Ōsama” (Hometown King) Kanjani∞ member Yokoyama You, who typically speaks in very pronounced Osaka-dialect, speaks phrases during the song. He elevates the upper and lower tones more strongly than how he typically speaks, despite already being one of the Kanjani∞ members whose Osaka accent is quite strong. His narratives in “Jimoto no Ōsama” on their second album, KJ2 Zukkoke Dai Dassō (2007), have not only two, but three pitch levels; the highest pitch is indicated in capital letters and in bold, the middle pitch in capital letters, and the lowest pitch in lower case. The following narrations of his is structured to sound like a section of

35 “Bu bu bu” is an onomatopoeia for a buzzer on a game show indicating an incorrect answer.
36 “Pin-pon” is an onomatopoeia for a bell to indicate a correct answer.
37 Occasionally in some of their live or televised performances another member of the group with a strong Osakan accent, Murakami Shingo, will recite the opening speech.
a letter stating, “How have you been lately? Come back home. We're waiting for you, you local star.”

sai-kin DO-YA-NEN. KAI-TE KOU-ya ki-TAI-SHI-TE-MA-SE ji-MO-TO NO SU-TA

With the additional pitches and heavy exaggeration coupled with Kansai-dialect, his association with the Kansai region, and therefore the entire group's local image is clearly displayed. Spoken phrases such as these are used in many of Kanjani∞'s songs about Osaka.

Musically, their intonation is somewhat inconsistent in terms of mimicking the pitches of spoken Japanese in the melody. “Jimoto no Ōsama” is similar to the Ulfuls' songs such as “Ēnen” that remain on or near a single pitch and fluctuate in order to mimic speech, as displayed in this section of the song found on the next page.

Similarly to the Ulfuls, Kanjani∞ uses pitch to mimic the intonation of speech in the music. Emphasis is shown through the length of notes; for instance, the emphasis in “omoroi” (“interesting” or “funny” in Kansai dialect) is on the “mo,” and so it is longer than other syllables. The last vowel on words, in this case, “i,” is typically lengthened in Kansai dialect, which is also reflected in the music. On some words (in this verse, on “sōnan” (“that's right”) Kanjani∞ member Yokoyama You speaks the lyrics in rhythm with the other members as they sing, further emphasizing the connection of the music's structure to how the words would actually be spoken.

While Kanjani∞'s songs tend to follow the intonation of Kansai dialect relatively well, their construction and performance of Kansai imagery and stereotypes is the most
Figure 26. A portion of the verse of Kanjani∞’s song “Jimoto no Osama” (Hometown King) (0:47-1:03). Kanjani∞ member Yokoyama You speaks in rhythm with the music in measure 14. Transcribed by author.

integral part of their branding. The heart of all of these songs is their lyrics and subject matter; not only do they feature Osaka and Osaka-related themes, but the text also makes extensive use of Kansai-ben. Places names of locations throughout Osaka, and the names Osaka and Naniwa appear the most frequently. Symbols referencing Osaka, such as *oba-chan* (middle-aged women), Billiken, takoyaki (octopus dumplings), leopard print, bargaining, and *ame-chan* (candy, referred to with an honourific title used to reference people) are included in their songs. Specific words associated with Kansai dialect, such as *oton* (father) *okan* (mother) *sukiyanen* (I like/love you), *aho* (idiot), *heppin-san* (beautiful woman), *maido ari* (thank you every time), *ōkini* (thank you) and *nanbo* (how much) also appear throughout their lyrics. The lyrics for “Sukiyanen, Osaka” or “Love ya, Osaka” references Osaka’s thriving commerce, the population’s joy in eating, drinking, sleeping and laughing, and how much they love Osaka. In Japanese, about half of the lyrics use Kansai dialect, which is represented in bold in the following lyrics.\(^{38}\)

\(^{38}\) Full translations of Kanjani∞’s songs examined in this chapter can be found in Appendix A.
“Sukiyanen, Osaka” goes even further in portraying Osaka in the accompanying music video, performing short comedic skits, kanto, in between verses. As they speak in Osaka-ben, they mention famous spots in Osaka for delicious food and act loud and silly. In their live performances, they also comically introduce various areas of Osaka while executing fixed dance motions typical to idol performances. Their routines are extremely similar to Osaka comedians in the mass media, and reinforce the image held by people from Tokyo of Osakans as being humorous and loud. The cover art for the single also reflects the lyrical content of the song by depicting multiple famous spots in Osaka (Osaka castle, Kyocera Dome, Tsūtenkaku Tower, Taiyō no Tō (Tower of the Sun)) and foods associated with Osaka (takoyaki, okonomiyaki) as well as a statue of Billiken (God of good fortune housed at the top of Tsūtenkaku Tower) and a hustling, busy commercial population.

In another single, “Osaka Oba-chan Rock,” Kanjani∞ plays with the imagery associated with the prominent female character associated with Osaka, the oba-chan (middle-aged women). While oba-chan is a generic term for middle-aged woman using a familiar honorific (as opposed to the more formal oba-san), Osaka's oba-chan are associated with additional physical and personality traits, such as frizzy permed hair,
blunt speech, excessive talking, and a love for bargains. The stereotypes of Osaka *oba-chan* are best summarized in the lyrics to “Osaka Oba-chan Rock.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>バーゲンセールは 格闘技</th>
<th>Bargain sales are combat sports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ヒヨウ柄服は 戦闘着</td>
<td>Leopard print clothes are the battle uniform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 買いもの行ったら 絶対値切る | If she goes shopping, she definitely bargains |
| タダのティッシュは 行きと帰りで | She receives two free tissues coming and going |

| しゃべり出したら 止まらへん | If she starts talking, she can't be stopped |
| 2、3 時間は あたり前 | Two, three hours is a given |
| チャリンコ乗ったたら 天下無敵 | On a bike she's invincible |
| ペルのかわりに 自分の口で | Instead of using the bell, she says |
| チリンチンリン   | “Ring ring” herself |

Partial lyrics from Kanjani∞'s song “Osaka, Oba-chan Rock.” Translated by author.

The song also includes a long dialogue that mimics the conversations that occur between the *oba-chan* of Osaka, similar to the manner in which the Ulfuls express Kansai

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39 The cover art was taken from Google's Image Search, and can be found at: [http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_r_9AYoI76mE/TDD5iwvqJhI/AAAAAAAAE0/UFey_Q034SU/s1600/Sukiyanen+Osaka.jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_r_9AYoI76mE/TDD5iwvqJhI/AAAAAAAAE0/UFey_Q034SU/s1600/Sukiyanen+Osaka.jpg)
identity through dialogue between fictional characters. Unlike the Ulfuls music video, Kanjani∞ members do not become the oba-chan character⁴⁰, but instead sings praises for her quirky characteristics while claiming an inheritance to them.

おかん わかるで ボクだって
あなたの血を 引いてるで
見習うべきは
ずうずうしさと たくましさと
ムラサキメッシュ

Mom, I understand it too
Your blood flows in my veins
I should follow your example of your
shamelessness, sturdiness,
And purple highlights

おかん わかるで ボクだって
その心意気 継いでるで
学ぶべきは 節約術
家族愛と 近所付き合い

Mom, I understand it too
I've inherited your spirit
Things I should learn are your thrifty ways,
Love for family, and relationships with
neighbours

Partial lyrics from Kanjani∞'s song “Osaka, Oba-chan Rock.” Translated by author.

In the music video, the members of Kanjani∞ dress in leopard print costumes with large shoulders inspired by traditional samurai attire, perhaps hinting at the oba-chan “leopard print battle uniform” referenced in the song lyrics. At the same time, a brass band of women dressed as oba-chan in garish clothing and large, multicoloured curly wigs play behind them. While they sing, dance, and laugh, gold glitter falls from the ceiling, making the entire scene ridiculously over the top.

When Kanjani∞ sings about subjects other than Kansai, they still retain their Kansai image by performing enthusiastically and with humour. One song, “Wahaha” is an uplifting, comical song about smiling and cheering up others. Japanese comedy references are made in the video through hitting people on the head with a mallet (tsukkomi) and two men in full body spandex suits while Kanjani∞ sings, “If I laugh, then

⁴⁰ One of their local television programs, Honjani (2003-2007) featured a corner where they dressed up as okan (the Kansai word for “mother”) feature identical stereotypes to the Osaka oba-chan. Maruyama Ryuhei, who is from Kyoto, enacted stereotypes more associated with Kyoto by appearing in a kimono instead of garish fashion choices or leopard print (worn by Shibutani Subaru in the skits) and speaking more gently in the feminine forms of Kyoto dialect.
you'll laugh. If you laugh, then someone else will laugh too,” followed by a chorus of laughter sound effects: “Ketaketa,” “Ahahaha,” and “Wahaha Wahaha.” The lyrics do not mention Osaka or make use of Kansai-ben, but humour is clearly an important theme of the video that connects back to their branding as a Kansai group. While there are no visual references to Osaka or Kansai, Japan is firmly established as the location of the video as a large mural of Mount Fuji dominates the Japanese public bathhouse the members of Kanjani∞ clean in the video.

Besides Kanjani∞, other Johnny’s groups rarely reference regional or Japanese identity. Instead, most other Johnny's Entertainment groups shy away from referencing markers of national identity and present a sterile image that blends into the global pop scene. Because Kanjani∞'s initial image was based upon their performance of Kansai stereotypes, their extra flavour as locals of the Kansai region lends itself into well into representations of Japan as a whole. This can be seen by comparing two music videos, “Musekinin Hero” (Irresponsible Hero) by Kanjani∞ in 2008 and “Nice na Kokoroiki” (Nice Spirit) by Arashi in 2002. Both are set in an office, but the visual imagery used in each video is quite different; while Arashi’s video avoids any visual cues that would indicate Japan, Kanjani∞ integrates and plays up the Japanese objects in their video.

Arashi’s music video Nice na Kokoroiki (Nice Spirit) features its members fooling around in the workplace. Dressed as office workers, they wear glasses, ill-fitting suits, and act awkwardly. However, as soon as the chorus begins they have removed the glasses, unbuttoned their jackets, and taken the desks out from the office so that they can dance a choreographed routine typical of most Johnny’s groups. The chorus and its
accompanying dance routine serve as a reminder to the audience that Arashi is still the cool, attractive idol group they have been groomed to be; the nerdy, unfashionable outfits and personae are merely appropriated for entertainment purposes.

Kanjani∞ does not shed their comic image. Unlike Arashi, they are not just idols parading as office workers for a music video, but they incorporate their own personalities into their characters; Yokoyama You, who typically takes a leadership role with Kanjani∞, acts as the boss of the office; Okura Tadayoshi, an avid eater and food enthusiast, spends the majority of his time eating at his desk, which is covered by a large pile of snack food; while Yasuda Shota's expression swaps between huge grins and confused looks, exuding his personality as the cute but somewhat absentminded member of the group. Throughout the video “Musekinin Hero,” the members of Kanjani∞ goof off around the office and retain their image as the lovable, quirky Osaka group within Johnny’s Entertainment.

Other visual cues throughout “Nice na Kokoroiki” retain the more sterile pop image Arashi and other idol groups put forward. All signs or voice bubbles are written in English or nonsense letters. There are no words written in Japanese or kanji, a stark contradiction to Kanjani∞’s office video where signs were written only in Japanese, and recognizably Japanese items, such as calligraphy scrolls, daruma (red doll)\(^4\), and hanko (stamp used in lieu of signatures) are displayed and used as they conduct their antics around the office.

\(^4\) *Daruma* are small, red dolls with no legs or arms. They have a large white face with no eyes painted in; the owner of the doll will paint in the right eye of the doll and make a wish, and when the wish comes true they will paint in the other eye.
The comic behaviour present in Kanjani∞ is not a new element to their image, as they spend most of their time trying to make their audience laugh instead of acting like typical Johnny’s idols. Most other Johnny’s groups are the reverse; like Arashi in “Nice na Kokoroiki,” they frequently exude a cool, trendy image through their long, serious gazes at the camera and sharply choreographed dance routines, and only occasionally display their more humorous side. When it is present, their humour appears more as an appropriated persona rather than a marker of their identity—they aren’t from Osaka, after all.

5.4 Evolving Past the Stereotypes

The construction of Kanjani∞'s public persona has resulted in the creation of several complex issues that both limit and allow for exploration within their crafted image. By being a group that emphasizes their local roots, they have established their regional character traits in order to stand out amongst the many boy idol groups in Johnny's Entertainment. By being the only group in Johnny's Entertainment formed and trained in the Kansai region, Kanjani∞ holds a unique position within the company. Separated from the groups from Tokyo, Kanjani∞ is in some aspects alienated from the other groups and shunned for its Osaka roots, but at the same time is given a greater range of freedom due to their removal from the main system and its expectations. On one television show, KAT-TUN member Kamenashi Kazuya commented that he was a huge fan of the late-night program “Campus Night.” Because of some of the themes of the show, he assumed that Johnny's Entertainment musicians would not be allowed to appear
on the show until he saw Kanjani∞ promoting their latest album as guests on April 11th, 2009. He then expressed his jealously that Kanjani∞ had been able to appear on a show that he did not believe he would be able to, showing that Kanjani∞ has some freedom in their appearances that other groups do not have. Although Kanjani∞’s image has hampered them in many opportunities for debuting, performing, and working, their down-to-earth Kansai image has also benefited them by allowing them to pursue different avenues than their Johnny's peers.

As a group whose image and branding is heavily based on the Kansai region, the stereotypes associated with people from Osaka play a critical role in how fans and the public perceive Kanjani∞; known for being loud, opinionated, funny, and less reserved members of Japanese society, Kanjani∞ constantly plays up this image. They have frequently emphasized their regional identity through their group’s name and the themes and images of their songs. In the background to some of their songs about Osaka, such as “Osaka Oba-chan Rock” and “Sukiyanen, Osaka,” their boisterous and loud cries and cheers are included in the music.

Despite being marketed as a local Kansai band, Kanjani∞’s Kansai identity is not limited strictly to making a spectacle out of songs dedicated to their beloved hometown. There are only so many songs one group can make about flashy fashion, making money, and outspoken oba-chan. Their most recent work shows a great divergence from their earlier songs about Osaka and use of Kansai dialect. From their earlier singles dedicated to Osaka and its loud, boisterous image, to their most recent album 8uppers (pronounced “patch-uppers”) Kanjani∞'s musical style has shifted from one focused almost
exclusively on the promotion of local images to a more generalized pop sound and lyrical content.

This transition is clearest in their song “Puzzle” from their 2009 album of the same name, which essentially chronicles the group's evolution from their early years until their present position. Rather than simply representing Osaka through symbols and stereotypes, “Puzzle” is in itself an account of how far Kanjani∞ has come from their early days and the changes that have occurred in the group. Kanjani∞ member Nishikido Ryo specifically requested that Saito Kazuyoshi write the song, and all members contributed stories and memories that were included in the lyrics. Instead of their typical energetic and rambunctious antics, the music is melancholy and pensive, reflecting on locations in Osaka with special memories to the group (bolded in the lyrics on the next page) before they go to Tokyo to search for the “missing piece” they have lost from their puzzle, referencing the eighth member of the group, Uchi Hiroki, who was removed from the group in 2005 for under-aged drinking.

眠れない夜はいつも
古いアルバムを開く
無邪気な顔で笑ってるぼくらがいる

On the nights I can't sleep,
I always open my old album
We are there laughing innocently

これは何年前だろう
堀江公園の桜
初めて喧嘩した夜もこの場所だったな

How many years ago was this,
Horie Park's cherry blossoms
The first night we fought was there, too

あの頃抱いていた夢
近づいてるの? 遠ざかってるの?

The dream you held back then,
Are you closer to it? Farther from it?

さよなら迷いなきあの日よ
いつの日かまた会えるよね

Farewell, lost days
Someday, let's meet again.
“東通りで3時頃”
待ち合わせはいつもそこ
電車は街をくぐり抜け
淀川越えて
両手を広げ堂々と
そびえ立つ太陽の塔
記念に買ったあのパズル
昨日のようだね

“Three o'clock at Higashi Dōri”
We always met up there
The train would pass through town
Crossing the Yodo River

With both arms spread open
The Tower of Sun stands towering
The puzzle I bought as a souvenir
It's just like it was yesterday.

One piece was lost
I'm searching for it, lend me your hand

Partial lyrics from the song “Puzzle” by Kanjani∞. Translated by author.

In the music video for “Puzzle,” Kanjani∞ walks through the streets of Osaka, mainly the Namba district and around Tsūtenkaku Tower, reminiscing on their journey from their early years as trainees. It is accompanied by a twenty minute documentary of Kanjani∞ reflecting on their memories of and connections with their hometown. The video demonstrates that Osaka identity is more than static symbols, but an ongoing, intimate relationship between the musicians and region.

Besides the song “Puzzle,” Kanjani∞’s most recent albums, Puzzle and Suppers have moved away from specifically referencing Osaka and Kansai, which may have benefited them as it has coincided with an increase in their popularity. The only Kansai dialect present on the Suppers album is in the song “Horori Melody” where there are two phrases whispered during the song: “Akan. Horetemōta” (It's no use. I've fallen for you) and “Omae shika miehenshi” (I see no one but you). These phrases are not included in the lyrics listed in the album liner notes, and so if the listener is not attentive, these phrases can be missed easily. Some fans do not like the change, and prefer for them to keep their localized image instead of assimilating into the more general pop music scene. One fan I
spoke to was particularly concerned with their shifting image, stating that she was losing interest in the group because their change seemed to compromise their personalities and identity.

If Kanjani∞ gradually ceases to use the language and imagery of Osaka upon which it constructed its image, is the group neglecting its local identity? Why is Kanjani∞'s shift to a more generic pop sound seen as compromising their identity, when many musicians from the Kansai region do not even make attempts to sing in Kansai dialect? Although the fan I cited previously is distraught by Kanjani∞'s shift, I would contend that they are not losing their regional identity, but expressing it in ways that do not rely solely on stereotypes that were most likely pushed upon them by their agency in the first place. Their name is still Kanjani∞, and therefore still (and always will) mark them as being the group of Johnny's idols from Kansai. Additionally, they still speak in Kansai dialect in their television shows and performances, and they still perform the songs they released about Osaka at all of their live performances. While their song "ONE," was written in order to express their feelings and thanks for the support they have received from all their fans, the melody line composed for the audience to sing was recorded during one of their concerts in Kyocera Dome, showing that they give preference to their fans in Osaka.

Perhaps the greatest display of their continued affection for their hometown is in their live countdown concerts for New Year's; while Johnny Entertainment holds a concert in Tokyo every year in which almost all of the active Johnny's groups perform, for New Year's Eve of 2009 and 2010 Kanjani∞ held their own separate concert in
Kyocera Dome in Osaka. By holding their own concert in Osaka, Kanjani∞ is asserting their local identity in perhaps the most important manner: performing for the fans who have supported them from the beginning of their career.

This relationship between Kanjani∞ and their fans is the focus of the next chapter. After an examination of the use of regionalism in creating intimacy between performers and fans at concerts, the next chapter explores the manner in which fans view Kanjani∞, and how the group has shaped their opinions and relationships with people from the Kansai region.
CHAPTER SIX. REGIONALISM AND FAN INTIMACY

6.1 Intimacy and the Construction of Artists' Images

The close relationship between fans and musicians in Japan has been documented in several studies (Yano 1997; Kelly 2004) by the term intimacy which “can be used to describe this decreased emotional distance between viewer and performer” (Stevens and Hosokawa 2001: 224). Japanese media and television mimics this trend, as television shows have begun attempting to “expose” the real performer since the 1990s, in what Carolyn Stevens and Shuhei Hosokawa call “humanizing celebrity.” Through revealing aspects of production, the perceived distance viewers feel between the stars and themselves is shortened, creating a stronger feeling of connection. Stevens and Hosokawa define this phenomenon of “humanizing” as the “process of perception, rather than... the quality of that perception. This describes a process of creating fictive relationships between audience members and stars through an effect of familiarity, closeness and intimacy (ibid: 225).” This chapter examines the results of these processes of intimacy and humanizing through the use of regionalism by examining the official fan club, concerts, and fan interviews.

Marketing agencies in Japan have gone a step further than simply manipulating television and the media in order to construct musical groups that appeal to the public; Johnny's Entertainment collaborated with magazine researchers and discovered that “each girl in a typical friendship group will attach herself to one of the boys in a pop group. Learning also that the typical size of a clique is five to seven girls, promotion agencies
have started to create boys' singing groups of the same size, allowing one boy for each fan in a friendship group (White 1995: 266).” Through researching fans' needs and desires through magazine polls and research, popular musicians from Johnny's Entertainment have adapted to reflect the reality of their consumers.

By joining the official fan club with Johnny's Entertainment, fans are given the opportunity to enter raffles to watch the recordings of television shows live. This special privilege allows fans to directly participate in a shared experience with the group members before they are broadcast nationally, as well as a closeness to the stars that they could not normally achieve at a concert. Occasionally, special events with the groups are held, such as debut events for their new albums. Tickets to these events are not sold publicly, but are only available through a special raffle through the fan club.

As a member of “You&J,” the official Johnny's Entertainment joint fan club for NEWS, Kanjani∞, and KAT-TUN, fans occasionally receive newsletters on the groups and their activities. Fliers for upcoming concerts are cleverly designed to look like personal messages written to the fan from the artist, as they are printed in artists' handwriting. With modern technology, video messages to fans have also become available to fans, with artists directly addressing fans from behind the scenes, allowing the official fan a peek into the artists' lives that most fans are not privy to. Fans who are not willing to pay the annual fan club fee can also sign up for the mobile cellphone websites for a minimal fee each month, which allows the reader to access the journals of any of the artists. Through their prose, the personalities of each individual artist shines, as they
address their fan members, some in more formal forms of speech in order to portray respect, while some use casual speech to heighten feelings of intimacy and closeness.

While none of the journals feature pictures of the artists themselves, they insert pictures of food, scenery, personal items, and anything they decide to include. While they write about a plethora of topics, Kanjani∞ members' entries feature the most references to regionalism; Yokoyama You wrote of the huge fireworks festival in Osaka along the Yodo River, while Maruyama Ryuhei uploaded a picture he took at Gion Matsuri, Kyoto's famous festival, and one of the three most famous festivals in Japan (the other two being Osaka's Tenjin matsuri and Tokyo's Kanda matsuri).

This desire for intimacy and connection to the performers can best be seen through live performances. Official Fans are also given the first chance to purchase tickets to concerts, with specifically designated seating in the area closest to the stage. For some groups, such as Arashi, who are currently enjoying massive popularity, fan club membership is almost necessary in order to purchase tickets. Concerts are particularly important places for fans, as they are places of connection with the artists themselves. While most audience members will say they are going to see or hear a performance (mini iku, or kikini iku respectively) for popular music events, fans of Johnny's Entertainment groups often say they are going to meet the artists (aini iku) (personal communication, Tokyo, July 15th 2010). There is a tendency among fans that once they have gone to see a live concert they will say that they have “met” the performer, showing the heightened

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42 Christine Yano has found that enka fans also use the verb aini iku when attending a concert (Yano 2003: PAGE NUMBER).
level of intimacy fans feel from simply seeing a performer in person, despite the physical distance between them.

6.2 Fan Intimacy Through Regionalism in Concert Settings

6.2.1 KAT-TUN Concert Analysis

In order to experience how fans and musicians interact with one another at concerts, I attended four concerts in July and August, two in Tokyo, and two in Osaka. I attended KAT-TUN's “World Big Tour” in Tokyo on July 16th 2010 and in Osaka on August 21st 2010. I also attended Hey! Say! JUMP and Johnny's Juniors performance “Summary” in Tokyo on August 15th, 2010 and Kansai Johnny's Junior's concert entitled “Kansai Jr. 2010 Summer Concert!!” in Osaka on July 29th, 2010. As Kanjani∞ was not on tour during the time of my fieldwork, I analyzed all of their concert DVDs, from their first concert in Shōchikuza Theatre in Osaka in 2004, to their most recent concert DVD released from their live countdown in Kyocera Dome in Osaka for the 2009-2010 New Year.

As was previously mentioned, Johnny's fans go to concerts not just to hear the musicians, they go to “meet” them. One way in which this attitude is physically manifest is through the creation of uchiwa (large fans) with personal messages written to the musicians on them. Messages may include simply their favourite performers name, or instructions directed towards the performer, such as “wink at me,” “wave at me,” or “throw a kiss!” Fans make these requests in order to determine whether the idol has seen them or not, and the uchiwa are created exclusively by fans of Johnny's groups. Fans who
do not create their own *uchiwa* often purchase fans with the face and name of their favourite member, separating themselves into identifiable groups based on their favourite group member.

KAT-TUN's members all hail from the Kantō region, and have established their image as the “cool” Johnny's, with a varied repertoire of rock songs to soft ballads. In their first concert in Tokyo, the stage was designed for maximum effect in reaching their audience, with a walkway that went around the entirety of Tokyo Dome. The concert stage layout for Kyocera Dome in Osaka also featured a large walkway, but it went halfway around the stadium. Large cranes and moving stage platforms were used in order to allow the members to move physically closer to the audience, much to the delight of the fans.

KAT-TUN's concert (as do all Johnny's groups) featured a large emcee section in the middle of the concert in order to communicate with the fans. However, while they did little to reference regionalism in their concert in Tokyo, they relied on it heavily in order to create a connection with their Kansai audience. Perhaps because it was the first night of their tour, their Tokyo performance felt stiffer, and there was little direct communication with the audience. Instead of asking questions, or directing their talk towards the audience, KAT-TUN members simply talked amongst themselves on the stage and then heavily promoted their upcoming activities.

In Osaka, however, their emcee section was much longer and more involved, with KAT-TUN directing comments towards the audience and working much more to establish a connection to the audience, despite the fact that Kyocera Dome is a much smaller venue.
than Tokyo Dome. A large portion of their talk was dedicated towards Osaka and how it differed from other areas they had toured. KAT-TUN member Kamenashi Kazuya commented on the *uchiwa* that fans had constructed, in addition to their attire, stating that they were “flashy... but in a good way!” *(hade... ii ini de)*. Indeed, the appearance of fans in Osaka was much more flashy than fans in Tokyo. While fan-made items were limited to *uchiwa* in Tokyo, fans in Osaka had constructed not only *uchiwa*, but t-shirts, hats, and even full jumpsuits.

![Fans outside of KAT-TUN's concert in Osaka, with a group of girls in matching homemade jumpsuits in the foreground.](image)

Besides commenting on (and complimenting) Osakan fans on their more showy concert attire, KAT-TUN members spent the bulk of their emcee time attempting to use means familiar to them in order to relate to the audience about their localized identity. While KAT-TUN discussed how many people from the Kansai region do not appreciate it when non-Kansai attempt to appropriate Kansai-dialect, KAT-TUN member Tanaka Koki, who is from Chiba, commented on how he disliked the fact that Tokyo Disneyland
is named as such, saying, “It's in Chiba, isn't it?” Although the two instances are not quite the same, Tanaka attempted to bond with the audience over their dislike for outsiders usurping parts of their region's identity that should belong to them.

Of all the members, Kamenashi Kazuya made the most attempts to connect with the audience through regional identity construction processes. As he is a sportscaster for Going! Sports and News and an avid baseball fan, he brought up the Hanshin Tigers and how intense (atsui) their fans are. He said, “When most baseball teams travel around they don't have many fans follow, but the Tigers always have a large fan following,” again trying to use mutual points of interest to create intimacy.

His most poignant attempt at bonding through the emcee section was through his attempt to use Kansai-ben (despite the earlier discussion that people from Kansai do not necessarily regard such attempts positively). In the safety of a concert with his fans, many of the audience members supported him and laughed, although one girl behind me yelled “Chau ya!” (That's not right!) in very thick Kansai-ben. Fellow band member Nakamaru Yuichi also chastised Kamenashi's attempt, asking him, “Where are you from?” to which Kamenashi replied, “Tokyo,” which garnered many laughs from the audience. While not necessarily successful in imitating Kansai-ben, KAT-TUN made numerous efforts to bond with the Kansai audience through the use of regional identity markers, which they did not attempt in Tokyo.
6.2.3 Johnny's Juniors and Kansai Johnny's Juniors Concert Analysis

Both Johnny's Juniors and Kansai Johnny's Juniors are trainees within Johnny's Entertainment, and through observing the concerts of both groups, it became very apparent that while they share great similarities in their singing and dancing training they varied greatly in their image and speaking abilities. Similar to KAT-TUN's concerts, the performance in Tokyo featured little reference to regionalism, but the Osaka concert highlighted it in an attempted to foster a connection with the audience.

Johnny's Juniors were part of a concert entitled, “Summary” that began in 2004. In its incarnation in 2010, Hey! Say! JUMP also performed, taking a central part in the performance despite the fact that they debuted in 2007. They continued with a global theme of previous Summary concerts, with each member of Hey! Say! JUMP representing a country, although this was only on a superficial level, as it simply involved costumes and symbols of various locals and no information, language, or music of those areas.

“Summary” was a hodgepodge of entertainment to the point where it lost cohesion. At the very beginning, there was a small clip with all of the performers that was in 3D and required the audience to wear special glasses. In addition to the country theme, Summary also incorporated a “circus” theme, which manifested itself mainly into the final half of the concert where one of the members of Hey! Say! JUMP performed trapeze stunts with two professional trapeze artists.

Almost all of the fans for this concert had made uchiwa, and because the concert venue was so small, it was quite easy to see the musicians. Perhaps because of the
intimacy inherent in such as small space, however, Hey! Say! JUMP and Johnny's Juniors did not make as many attempts to talk to the audience, although when they did they felt very stiff. At one point in the concert, members of Hey! Say! JUMP stood in different balconies, and asked three questions directed specifically towards a member of the audience. When one performer asked a female audience member, “What is your favourite food to eat in New York's Chinatown?” following along with the “trip” to America, the fan could only manage an extremely high, completely incomprehensible squeak. Attempting to laugh off the unanticipated response, the Hey! Say! JUMP member repeated his question, only able to move on to the next member after he had received an acceptable answer to his question, showing how fixed their interactions with the audience were.

Between the circus act, an extended “fight” scene between Hey! Say! JUMP performers and a large dragon robot that circled the audience, and tricks with very obedient pet dogs, there was little time left for singing. When they did sing, there were a few songs that were released by debuted *sempai*, such as Arashi's “Lucky Man” and V6's “*Wa ni natte odorō*” (Form a circle and dance). Hey! Say! JUMP only performed a medley of their released singles at the very end of the concert.

In contrast, the “Kansai Jr. 2010 Summer Concert!!” held in Osaka Jō Hall loosely followed the them of a festival and featured many more references to locale. One of their early sets in their concert was a “festival set,” that featured Kanjani∞'s debut single, “Naniwa Iroha Bushi” and was followed directly by the same *enka* song that Kanjani∞ sang on television programs, “Matsuri Mambo.”43 Kansai Juniors placed small *mikoshi* "

43 When Kanjani∞'s televised performance of the song on Nippon no Uta the song was listed as “Matsuri
(portable shrines) on their shoulders while they danced around in *happi*-coat-like costumes that resembles Kanjani∞'s debut attire. They yelled out “Matsuri ya de!” (It's a festival!) in thick Osaka dialect, and took ownership for the town, the venue, and the audience by also declaring, “Orera no machi ya de!” (This is our town!) in Kansai-dialect.

In terms of performance style, Kansai Johnny's Juniors have clearly received the same style of training in singing and dancing, and are equal to their Tokyo peers in that respect (or perhaps even better, as they appeared more polished and confident). The difference in their constructed image and their manner of speaking is what localized them, unlike their Tokyo equivalents. As mentioned above, Kansai Juniors used Kansai dialect throughout their concert, and particularly in their emcees. They asked numerous unscripted questions to the audience, such as “Have any of you watched us on *Ahoyanen!* *Sukiyanen!* on Friday?” or “Have any of you been to the restaurants we visited on the corner of Kanjani∞'s local show 'Janiben?’” When the audience reacted overwhelmingly positively to these questions, the Kansai Juniors were visible very happy that the fans were adamantly following their activities. Humour was also another defining aspect of their personality, as they were very comfortable at deviating from their set emcee topics, cracking jokes with the audience and engaging in *manzai*-like behaviour. At one point, the track to KAT-TUN's song “Bokura no machi” (Our town) began to play, to which they yelled “Orera no machi ya de!” (This is our town!) in Kansai-dialect, and subsequently ceased the song.

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*Mambo,* but a set list of the Kansai Junior concert published in Potato magazine in October 2010 lists the song is “O matsuri Ninja,” a song by Johnny's Entertainment group “Ninja” in 1990. “O matsuri Ninja” essentially only differs from “Matsuri Mambo” in title, as the lyrics, melody, and rhythm are the exact same.
As part of Johnny's Junior training consists of back-up dancing for debuted sempai, imitation of debuted groups through the performance of their songs is common. Since the Junior concert in Tokyo featured a debuted group, and non of the Juniors groups in Kansai have debuted yet, perhaps this accounts for why the Kansai Juniors concert more prevalently featured songs by sempai. As Tackey from the group Tackey and Tsubasa was holding a concert approximately a week after the Kansai Junior's concert, he appeared in a video message to the audience (and the Kansai Juniors) to promote his concert tour. This video led directly into a medley of sempai songs, starting with Tackey and Tsubasa's song “Venus,” followed by KAT-TUN's “Real Face,” V6's “Honey Beat,” Hey! Say! JUMP's “Hitomi no Screen,” and two songs by Kanjani∞: “Kyū Jō Show” and “Zukkoke Otoko Michi.” Kanjani∞'s presence was (not surprisingly) the strongest, as Kansai Juniors sang four of their songs, the most out of any of their sempai.

6.2.3 Tokyo and Kansai Fan Behaviour

Performance styles and the construction of intimacy between Tokyo and Osaka were not the only aspects of concerts that changed; the audience themselves, and the atmosphere of the venues themselves varied dramatically. In terms of the venues, Osaka's merchant spirit was visible outside of the concert halls, with scalpers unabashedly attempting to sell tickets to fans who arrived in the hope of purchasing tickets at the last minute as opposed to Tokyo, where scalpers were not visible at either event I attended. Furthermore, small booths were set up outside of the concert hall, particularly at the
Kansai Junior's concert. Food stands identical to those at festivals were selling fans food and beverages prior to the concert, while other booths sold (unofficial) photographs of the performers. Fans themselves even laid down tarps where they attempted to sell goods from previous concerts, or their own handiwork, to other fans.

In terms of the fans themselves, Tokyo fans were much more subdued in their appearances, although in all concerts there were groups of girls (typically two or four) who dressed wearing the exact same outfits. As observed by KAT-TUN, the fans in Kansai were decidedly more showy in their apparel choices, and in their homemade uchiwa. I noticed numerous pairs of girls sporting identical clothing in Osaka, and when I asked a few girls outside of the Kansai Johnny's Junior concert why they were wearing matching outfits, their responses were simply, “medatsu” (to stand out). Dressing specifically to draw attention to themselves shows the fans' desire for connection with the musicians through eye contact, interaction of smiles, handshakes and waves, or uchiwa
messages. These “pair looks” were more prevalent in Osaka than in Tokyo, although fans wearing them were present in both.

![Image](image.jpg)

**Figure 30.** Two girls sporting a more subdued “pair look” outside of the Kansai Johnny's Junior concert.

Audience members in Osaka appeared to be more engaged in connecting with the artists emotionally than the Tokyo fans. Fans purchase pen lights that glow during a performance, and they typically move them along with the motions of the performers. These motions are typically demonstrated in the music video or when the artists perform on music television shows such as *Hey! Hey! Hey! Music Champs* or *Music Station*, so the fans have already dedicated time and effort into memorizing the motions before they attend a concert. In certain songs, the movements are simple enough that the performers and audience are performing the same hand motions together, where as other instances fans simply wave them along to the beat of the music. Although I witnessed some of this behaviour in Tokyo, the vast majority of the audience, if not the entire auditorium of fans
were moving their pen lights in the set motions with the performers in Osaka, even during the medley section of *sempai* songs, a rather stunning sight to behold.

Many fans I contacted stated that Kanjani∞'s dances were generally very simple for the purpose of performing together with the fans, as opposed to other Johnny's groups who perform more complex choreography in order to look cool. Kanjani∞'s desire to perform as one with the fans mirrors Kansai fans' enthusiasm in connecting with the performer.

**6.2.4 Kanjani∞ Concert Analysis**

Kanjani∞'s performances very clearly show their connection to their hometown, and their desire to connect with their audience. Humour is woven throughout their performances, both in their emcee sections and in their songs. In *Spirits*, the concert DVD from their 2005 summer concert in Osaka Jō Hall, Kanjani∞ makes fun of the singing abilities of some of the members, particularly Yokoyama You, who has voiced his lack of confidence in singing on numerous occasions. In a pre-taped comedy skit played in between sets, member Maruyama Ryuhei cross-dresses as an *oba-chan* with a large frizzy perm, while member Shibutani Subaru personifies a balding old man, speaking rapidly in almost unintelligibly thick Kansai-ben. Halfway though the skit, the camera pans out to reveal that Shibutani is wearing only his boxers on the lower half of his body. Beginning in their 2006 concert, they have also included a recurring comedy skit “Eight Rangers,” where they dress up in colour-coded uniforms similar to the Power Rangers, but with the infinity symbol decorating the costume. Eight Ranger skits feature the members falling
out with one another over silly fights, only to reconcile with one another after realizing the power of their friendship. Eight Rangers is an extremely popular segment in their concerts. One fan informed me that the segment is so popular that the audience fusses when they finish the skit, and that Kanjani∞ then pleads with the audience to let them return to the music performance of the show.

Kanjani∞'s concert DVDs are not just videos of them performing, but include the fans as integral parts of the concert. Kanjani∞ works hard to foster a connection with their fans, and the editing in their concert DVDs show this very clearly, particularly from their 2006 concert DVD *Heat Up!* and in subsequent DVDs. Cut scenes frequently zoom out to show the whole audience moving their pen lights while Kanjani∞ performs. Close-up shots of the audience are also interspersed within the DVDs, as fans sing along, dance together, and cry when moved by Kanjani∞. Kanjani∞ also encourages participation from the audience, incorporating parts for the audience to call out into their songs. In their song *ONE*, written by the members of Kanjani∞, they even created a melodic line specifically for the audience to sing. The recording of the song took place at one of their concerts in Osaka, showing the connection between Kanjani∞, their fans, and their locale.

6.3 Fan Opinion on Kanjani∞ and Regional Intimacy

In order to understand how fans view Kanjani∞, I sent out approximately four hundred surveys to members of the Kanjani∞ fan club on Mixi, the Japanese equivalent of Facebook, and I received a total of forty-one replies. Although I attempted to find male fans to contact, all of the community members I contacted were female. Those who
responded were between the ages of seventeen and thirty-nine, with the majority of fans falling between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one. They hail from all areas of Japan, from Hokkaido to Kyushu, with the majority of them being from the Kantō or Kansai regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Location</th>
<th>Number of Fan Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hokkaido</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tōhoku</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kantō</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chūbu</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansai</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chūgoku</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shikoku</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyūshū</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Distribution of survey respondents' regional affiliations.

Mixi has proven to be a site for expressing personal identification as fans of Kanjani∞ through the use of the infinity sign at the end of Kanjani∞'s name. Many fans simply list in their profile, “I am ∞” or “I am ∞er,” recontextualizing the meaning of the infinity sign. Additionally, while many individuals on mixi refuse to friend individuals they do not know (and state so in their mini biography), some fans state that they want to meet other Kanjani∞ fans, and visibly express that they are willing to have other fans contact them. Judging by the responses from individuals I attempted to talk to at concerts in Japan (although not Kanjani∞ concerts), it appears that fans are more willing to communicate over the internet with other fans than in person.

It should be pointed out here that despite the fact that Kanjani∞ is pronounced “Kanjani Eight” their name always uses an infinity sign and never an actual 8. When mailing out surveys, I referred to the group as Kanjani8 in all of my questions. This was
due partly to the fact that I do not know how to create the ∞ without copying and pasting, and it seemed like unnecessary trouble. However, I was reprimanded by one fan who stated, “it's not 8, it's ∞笑 [the symbol for laughter, used like “lol” or “haha” by English internet users].” After receiving this comment I became more conscientious of the use of the infinity mark, and I noticed that every single response I received referred to Kanjani∞ using the infinity symbol. Occasionally fans would edit my questions in their responses to use the correct symbol.

The infinity mark is also often present in self introductions, and also in nicknames; unlike Facebook, Mixi has each person provide a nickname. While many people use abbreviations of their name, several Kanjani∞ fans use the ∞ mark in their nickname. Surrounding their nickname with the mark (such as “∞mana∞”) was especially common. By including the ∞ mark in their nickname, individuals identify themselves as fans without requiring Mixi users to view their profile. Rather than using their own picture, a practice very few people on Mixi do due to safety concerns, many Kanjani∞ fans used images of individual members or group pictures, further marking themselves as fans in a very visual manner.

Resoundingly all the respondents believed that Kanjani∞'s image matched their view of the Kansai region. There were no respondents who felt that Kanjani∞ was presented without reference to Kansai and its stereotypes. Fans from the Kansai region and fans from outside of the Kansai region tended to share similar opinions on how Kanjani∞ represents their perception of the Kansai region, but their answers varied in
terms of how they perceived regionalism as affecting their feelings of intimacy for Kanjani∞.

When asked about their opinions on the images and stereotypes surrounding people from Kansai, the responses were varied from positive to negative, although several recurring descriptions were given. The majority of the images of the Kansai region that these fans listed were congruent with the responses that the students of Ritsumeikan University gave in the survey examined in chapter two. Many of the impressions were positive (which is not surprising as they are fans of Kanjani∞), and adjectives that appeared frequently include energetic (genki), interesting/funny (omoshiroi), fun (tanoshii), cheerful (akarui), kind (yasashii), warm (atatakai), having good personalities (hirogara ga ii) and good at talking (oshaberi ga jouzu). Negative stereotypes that appeared frequently cited people from Kansai as being loud (urusai), noisy (sawagashii), petty/stingy (sekiō) and as talking a lot (yoku shaberu).

In terms of opinions on Kanjani∞'s image and its similarities to images of Kansai, all of the respondents agreed that Kanjani∞ closely matched their perceptions of Kansai, although there were some discrepancies on how closely fans perceived these two images to be intertwined to one another. The majority of fans felt that Kanjani∞ and Kansai were closely related; “they speak in Kansai-ben and, after all, the 'Kan' of 'Kanjani' is from Kansai,” one fan pointed out. One fan from outside of the Kansai region found the two to be synonymous, stating, “In my opinion, Kanjani∞ and the Kansai region are not different things, but are equally connected. I feel like saying 'Kanjani∞' is like speaking of Kansai, and saying 'Kansai' is like speaking of Kanjani∞.”44 Another fan from outside

44 私からしたら関ジャニ∞と関西地域は別物ではなく、イコールでつながるもの。関ジャ

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of the Kansai region had not contemplated Kanjani∞'s relationship with their hometown, but could still find a connection between the two:

I haven't thought deeply about Kanjani∞ and the Kansai region's images, but if I go to Osaka I feel it is the town Kanjani∞ was raised in. The only image of Kanjani∞ and people from Kansai I have is that of Kansai dialect, but when I first went to Osaka as soon as I set foot there I felt the same warmth that I feel from Kanjani∞, so I love Osaka.”

An overwhelming amount of Kansai fans felt an immediate connection with Kanjani∞ because of their shared local identity. Some fans found the connection to be immediate and obvious, and when asked if they felt closer to Kanjani∞ because they were from the same region stated, “That's a given,” and, “After all, we're from the same place so of course I feel attachment.” This feeling of attachment can be on an even deeper level for fans who are from the same city or district as members of the group. One fan from Osaka wrote, “I particularly feel affinity because I'm from the same area as Shibutani-kun.” Another fan from Kyoto wrote, “Naturally as one of the members is from the same hometown of Kyoto he speaks in Kansai dialect, and when he talks about stores I know of in his blog, among other places, then I really feel close.”

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45 二∞と言えば関西、関西と言えば関ジャニ∞という感じですね。
関ジャニ∞と関西地域のイメージを深く考えたことはありませんが大阪に行くと「関ジャニ∞が育った街」って感じます。関ジャニ∞と関西人のイメージを関西弁でしかわかりませんが大阪に初めて行ったとき大阪に足を踏み入れ感じたことは温かさだったのであたしが関ジャニ∞に感じることと一緒だと思う、大阪大好きです。

46 やっぱり同じ関西出身なので親近感はありませんね。

47 それは勿論あります。

48 関西弁はもちろんです同じ京都出身のメンバーもいますが blog 等で知っている店のことを話してたりすることすごく身近に感じます。
One fan from outside of the Kansai region also acknowledged the special
relationship between Kansai fans and Kanjani∞. She provided the following explanation
on the positive and negative aspects of Kansai fans:

There are still people in the Kantō region who don't know Kanjani∞, and
they have a minor image, but I think they're a big name in the Kansai
region! I think there are also more fans from the Kansai region and they're
passionate! However, I think that there are many fans [from Kansai] who
also strongly want to monopolize them, which is quite scary.49

While this particular fan felt alienated by Kansai fans, one fan commented that Kanjani∞
improved her opinion towards people from Kansai. “I love Kanjani∞ and I love people
from the Kansai region. When I began liking Kanjani∞, I began to like people from
Kansai even more.”50 Fan comments such as these, whether positive or negative, show
how personal relationships and perceptions on the Kansai region had been directly shaped
by Kanjani∞ and its fans.

Language appeared to be a critical element in Kanjani∞’s image, and played an
integral part in perceived levels of closeness for people from Kansai and other regions.
Several respondents from Kansai cited dialect as a point of affinity with Kanjani∞. One
respondent stated, “I’m from Mie Prefecture, which I think just barely makes me a

49 関東では関ジャニ∞の事知らない人がまだまだいるし、マイナーなイメージだけど、関
西では有名だと思います！ファンも関西の方の多いと思うし熱い！ただ独占欲強い
方も多い気がしてちょっと怖い
50 関ジャニ∞も関西の方もとてもだいすきです。関ジャニ∞をすきになって更に関西人がだ
いすきになりました。
Kansai-jin, but I hear Osaka dialect more than standard Japanese, so it makes me feel at ease.\textsuperscript{51}

Kanjani∞'s regionalism is an integral marker of their identity to non-Kansai people as well, and their use of Osaka dialect acts as a form of self-exoticization within Japan's nation consciousness. Aside from standard Japanese, Kansai dialect is the most widely recognized regional speech in Japan, with over twenty million people speaking the dialect (Shingu and Hatanaka 2010). Despite the large number of Kansai-ben speakers, and the prevalent use of Kansai dialect on television by comedians, Kansai dialect is still seen as exotic from the perspective of Tokyo's media and people. One fan from Saitama (in the Kantō region) stated, “I think that for standard Japanese speakers, dialects are attractive,”\textsuperscript{52} showing how residents of the Kantō region exoticize and romanticize Japanese from other areas of the country.

Not all fans view this regionalism in a positive manner, however, as it limits their access to certain television shows and their ability to participate in concerts. “There are television shows and events only in Kansai so I’m envious.”\textsuperscript{53} One fan was particularly unhappy that she was unable to participate in activities, stating, “In the past, there were activities taking place in Kansai, but because I live in Kantō there were television shows and concerts that I could not attend, which made me very frustrated.”\textsuperscript{54}

While Kanjani∞'s image as Osaka-jin is one major point of appeal for many fans, other fans feel a gap with Kanjani∞ because of this regional difference. The same fan

\textsuperscript{51} 三重県民なので関西人なのか微妙ですが…大阪弁は標準語より聞いて安心しますね。
\textsuperscript{52} 標準語圏のひとにとって方言は魅力的だとも思う。
\textsuperscript{53} 関西だけの関ジャニ∞のテレビ番組やイベントもあるのでうらやましいとは思います。
\textsuperscript{54} 昔は関西を中心に活動していたため、関東に住んでいた私は見られないテレビや、行くことのできないコンサートが多く、悔しい思いをたくさんしました。
who found dialects appealing also wrote, “With lyrics using Osaka as the scene or through their talks on television and radio, I feel there are times when I cannot relate, so I feel a gap in culture and environment. But that is also captivating. It made me want to go to Osaka, so I went,” displaying how Kanjani∞ has become an ambassador in promoting the unique culture of the Kansai region.

As a follow-up question I decided to ask those living outside of the Kansai region if they believed they would feel closer to Kanjani∞ if they were from Kansai. An overwhelming number of the people who responded to this second question answered that they believed they would feel greater affinity if they were from Kansai. One person added that they wanted to be from Kansai (naritai desu). Another fan commented, “Kanjani∞’s love for their hometown is incredible. It makes me jealous and wish that I was from the Kansai region.”

Despite the heavy influence of regionalism on fans' perceptions and perceived proximity to Kanjani∞, there were several fans who felt that regionalism did not have any affect. One fan from outside of the Kansai region stated, “Before I used to think if I was from Kansai I would feel closer to them, but by exchanging information with other 'eighter' [Kanjani∞ fans] I no longer feel that.” Indeed, fans from all over Japan appear to feel affinity for Kanjani∞, and many listed this feeling of closeness to be the reason why they liked them. The single “ONE,” for instance, was the song that appeared the

---

55 大阪を舞台とした歌詞や、テレビやラジオでのしゃべりの中で、共感できない節があるので文化や育った環境に隔たりを感じる。でもそこも惹かれるとこ大阪行きたいなっておもうし、行きました。
56 あと関ジャニ∞の地元愛はなんじゃない。羨ましくて関西出身が良かったって思う。
57 前は関西人だったらもっと近づけたのではないかと感じたことはありましたが地方のエイターと情報を交換することによりそのようなことは感じなくなってしまいました。
most frequently as being a fan favourite. The lyrics were written by Kanjani∞ in order to
convey their feelings towards their fans, and part of the recording includes fans singing at
one of their live concerts at Kyocera Dome in Osaka. Respondents who did not find any
affiliation between region and feelings of proximity with Kanjani∞, in addition to fans
who did feel regional affiliation was important, commented that the connection Kanjani∞
shares with its fans is the reason they like the group, noting that this close relationship
was unique to Kanjani∞ within Johnny's Entertainment's groups.

One way fans feel proximity with Kanjani∞ is through the name given to fans of
the group: eighter. This name is not to be confused with the official Johnny's fanclub, as it
is a nickname was created by one of the members of Kanjani∞, Shibutani Subaru. Fans
describe themselves as having “received” the name from him, using the verb kureru (to
give), or the honorific form, kudasaru. No other Johnny's Entertainment groups have
come up with a special name for their fans.

Aside from receiving the name from a group member, fans have developed their
own sense of the word, and based on the survey replies there appear to be a fascinating
array of understandings of what being an “eighter” entails. The simplest explanation that
a fan of Kanjani∞ is an eighter was the most common answer to appear. One fan wrote,
“Eighter are all the fans who support Kanjani∞,”58 while another wrote, “I believe that
any fan who likes Kanjani∞ and supports them from the bottom of their heart is an
eighter.”59 These definitions are inclusive of anyone who views himself or herself as an
eighter, and have no prescribed requirements beyond liking Kanjani∞.

58 エイターとは関ジャニ∞を応援しているすべてのファンのことです。
59 関ジャニ∞が好きで、彼らを心から応援してあげられるファンなら誰でもエイターだと思
じています。
Several fans spoke of the positionality of eighth to Kanjani∞ (also referred to as “eight,” or “eighto”) where being a fan and being an eighth are two separate forms of fandom. One self proclaimed eighth also compares fans of another Johnny's Entertainment group, Arashi, to eighth:

I believe eighth like all of the eight. For example, there are some Arashi fans who say 'Matsu Jun [member of Arashi] is a little...,' but even if they like a specific person, I've never heard of an eighth who said 'I don't like so-and-so.' People who say that are fans of eight. Asides from that... anyway, it's special. It's not something I can express in words. It's a special relationship that's not family or lovers or friends or fans.\(^6\)

Another fan echoed the sentiment that being an eighth is a special position in relation to Kanjani∞, stating, “it's the closest existence; they are the people who are loved by Kanjani∞, receive happiness and cheerfulness from Kanjani∞, and accept their smiles and tears. Eighth love Kanjani∞, and eighth love each other.”\(^6\)

Kanjani∞ fans do not appear to distinguish between fans and eighth based on knowledge of Kanjani∞, or the length of time they have been fans. Instead, surprisingly issues of proper etiquette and manners was quite frequently cited as a point of distinguishing eighth from fans. After one fan explained to me that she did not think of

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\(^6\) Eighthはエイトみんなのことを好きだと思います。たとえ嵐のファンの人も「松潤はちょっと...」と言われるけど、Eighthは担当はいても「○○は嫌」とか言う人は聞いたことないです。それを言う人はエイトファン。あとは...。とにかく特別なんですね。言葉では表現されないす。家族でも恋人でも友達でもファンでもない特別な関係です。

\(^6\) 一番近い存在であって、関ジャニ∞に愛されて、関ジャニ∞から幸せや明るさ、笑顔に涙をもらえる幸せな人たちのことだと思います。エイターは関ジャニ∞を愛していますし、エイターもエイターが大好きです。
fans who cause trouble to eighter as eighter, she replied to my request for more details on proper eighter etiquette with the following explanation.

First, don't do anything that will cause trouble for eighter!! Screaming while they're in the middle of talking, grabbing their clothes when they appear in front of you... In one of my experiences, Tacchon [nickname for Kanjani∞ member Okura Tadayoshi] was exiting a cart and heading towards the stage when a fan forcibly took an autographed ball from him [they often throw signed goods out into the audience during concerts]. Not even as a fan, as a human being it was low.62

Several other fans of Kanjani∞ stated that they do not view fans who cannot show respect towards Kanjani∞ and other fans to not be eighter. One fan stated, “I think it goes without saying, but have manners, support the members without causing them grief, and become one with eight during concerts.”63 Judging by the number of comments relating to proper etiquette in order to be an eighter, it would appear that there are many fans who do not show Kanjani∞ the proper respect viewed as necessary by eighter.

Fans of Kanjani∞ identify themselves in a variety of ways, from proper etiquette to the use of the infinity mark, to how they perceive themselves to be in relation to the members during a concert, but judging by the responses I received from fans I would still contend that regional identity plays a critical role in negotiating feelings of closeness. The

62 エイトに迷惑を掛けたりマナーを守らなかったりするファンは eighter と考えたくないです。....まず、エイトが困るようなことをしない!!MC中に叫んだり、目の前に来た時服を掴んだり...あたしの経験ですがたっちゃんがトロッコから降りてステージに向かおうとした時サインボールを無理矢理奪ったファンがいました。ファンどうこうではなく、人として最低だと思います。

63 当たり前だけどマナーを守りメンバーを悲しませず応援してあげることコンサートでは Eight とひとつになること
majority of Kansai fans felt affinity towards Kanjani∞ due to their use of Kansai dialect, while fans from areas outside of Kansai felt that Kanjani∞'s image closely resembled their image of Osaka-jin and that their use of Osaka-ben exoticized them. Fans that did not feel that regionalism played a role in their affinity towards Kanjani∞ often listed characteristics they admired in the group such as humour, the group's desire to establish a close connection with fans, and their un-idol-like behaviour. However, I would contend that it is exactly the fact that they are from Osaka that allows them to break the mould of the typical idol pattern followed by their Tokyo peers. If they were not from Kansai, they most likely would have developed the implicit, unmarked Tokyo idol image similar to the other groups in Johnny' s Entertainment.

While Kanjani∞ debuted at a local level and struggled to be successful nationally for many years, they have begun to gain national attention. As one fan pointed out, “with their television show 'Bouken Japan' being broadcast nationwide, I think they will become an even bigger group.” Indeed, it will be interesting to see how Kanjani∞ negotiates national success with their localized roots in the future.

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64 冒険JAPANが全国ネットで放送開始したのでこれをきっかけにこれからもっと大きなグループになるといいなと思います
CONCLUSION

7.1 Conclusion and Future Research

In this thesis I have examined representations of the Osaka/Kansai region in the media and music industry in order to better understand how regionalism affects perception and construction of identity on an individual, regional, and national level. I contend that regionalism is an integral marker of identity within a nation that views itself as a homogenous body, and that Japan's system of regional hierarchy between individuals is not only applicable to people but also to geographic regions from which they hail. The relationship between regional hierarchy and individuals is most clearly seen through the media, which manipulates and intensifies the images and perceptions of specific regions and their place in the hierarchy. This geographic hierarchy consists of Tokyo in the Kantō region at the top tier with Osaka and the Kansai region second, which has created a rivalry between the two regions, although the Kansai region still exerts great influence on western, southern, and central Japan, as well as contributes to Japan's national narrative through its important traditional culture and history. I have examined the shift in identity and interactions between individuals based on the individual's geographic origin, the locale in which he/she is, focusing on musicians from the Kansai region and the manner in which they assert their Kansai identity through the branding of their image and the melodic construction of their music.

As the Kansai region has historically been an important region in the history of Japan, culture, politics, and economics, it commands a greater level of familiarity within
Japan than more remote regions, such as the Tōhoku Region of northern Japan, which has rallied around a specific symbol of historical figure in an attempt to boost its cultural capital. However, because the Kansai region is host to a proliferation of stereotypes and images associated with its culture, people, and location, it is difficult for people from Kansai to escape the influence of outside (specifically Tokyo's) perception of what the Kansai region is, or should be. By examining musicians from the Kansai region who assert their local identities through branding and musicianship, I argue that because the stereotypes and imagery of the Kansai region is so familiar to the Japanese public, musicians from the Kansai region cannot fulfill all of stereotypes and thus their identities are constantly contested from the external, Tokyo gaze. This is not to deny the Kansai region of its own creativity or ownership in redefining itself, as can be seen through Kanjani∞, who began as a group based upon stereotypical images of Osaka and evolved to express their love for their hometown by serving the fans of its region with more “neutral” music.

Regionalism and identity construction in Japan is a complex, multi-layered process, as played out in the Japanese media, but the presence of groups such as the indie group Ulfuls and idol group Kanjani∞ who stress their local identity, and fan reactions to these groups shows that local roots are an important part of Japanese identity construction. However, there is clearly a distinction between independent groups from Kansai, like the Ulfuls, who freely play with their local identity, and groups that are part of a large organization based in Tokyo, like Kanjani∞, who are simultaneously encouraged and hampered by their Kansai image. Through examining concerts and
interviewing fans, it is clear that regionalism is an important tool for negotiating connections between individuals and creating intimacy, even when regional markers are appropriations for the purpose of establishing connections, such as KAT-TUN's attempts to bond with their Kansai audience, although these processes are sometimes so internalized that they are unconsciously carried out. Geographic affiliations, therefore, are powerful forces in negotiating the differences between us, them, and the relationship between the two on individual, regional, and national levels in Japanese society.

Regional identity construction within the music industry supports and perpetuates the stereotypes and images associated with a specific area, but it also shows that there are discrepancies and limitations for localized individuals due to the rivalries between certain regions, specifically the Kansai and Kantō regions. Highlighting regional affiliation can be used to draw attention to a group or band within the competitive industry of popular music, whether the results are viewed positively or negatively. Regionalism is used to emphasize sameness and assert closeness for people from the same region just as it is used to emphasize difference in order to encourage consumption and attract visitors, viewers, or fans, making the manipulation of regional identities an inconsistent, subjective, and fascinating process.

While symbols of Osaka such as Osaka castle, takoyaki, loud oba-chan and down-to-earth merchants remain unchanging markers of Osakan identity, musicians from the Kansai region continue to evolve and shape their own image as regional performers. In order to continue the focus of this thesis, examining the fledgling Osaka female idol group NMB48 as they establish their regional identity under the umbrella of Akimoto's
agency would provide a useful perspective of how female idols' regional identities are
constructed, in addition to continuing the examination of the development of Kanjani∞'s
image. It would also be interesting to see if NMB48 receives the same treatment within
the media and music industry that Kanjani∞ received upon their debut, or if Osaka idols
have become an accepted alternative to Tokyo idols.

Examining popular musicians from other areas of Japan and how (or if) they
assert their local identities would strengthen the examination of regional and national
identity construction within popular music. The Kansai region is not the only region in
Japan to struggle to assert its regional identity. While the music of Okinawa has been
widely studied (Ito 1988; Masuda 1996; Potter 2002), an examination of the regional
identities of all the geographic areas in Japan and the hierarchies among these regional
areas would be beneficial in obtaining a more clear understanding of regionalism in
Japan. It will be interesting to see how groups from Kansai, and particularly idol groups
or other musicians from genres not typically associated with Kansai, will continue to
reinvent the image of the Kansai region.
GLOSSARY

aonori
Green seaweed in a fine powder form.

aho
“Fool” or “idiot.” Used mainly in the Kansai region in lieu of the synonymous term “baka” more commonly used in the Kantō region. In the Kansai region “aho” can include feelings of endearment based on the intonation and “baka” is viewed as an insult, while the opposite holds true for the Kantō region.

ama
Female divers, famous symbols of Toba in Mie Prefecture.

bakufu
The shogunate government of the Tokugawa Period (1600-1868) that was established in Edo (present-day Tokyo).

boke
The “fool” character in a manzai duo.

bunraku
Traditional Japanese puppet theatre strongly associated with Osaka.

bushi
Folk songs.

daimyō
Feudal warlord of the Tokugawa Period.

dame tora
“No good tigers.” Used by non-Kansai residents when the Hanshin Tigers are playing poorly.

daruma
Red dolls with no arms or legs. One eye is painted in when the owner makes a wish, and the other eye is painted in when the wish comes true.

dentō no issen
“The traditional match.” The baseball game between the Hanshin Tigers and Tokyo Giants.
Edo
The old name used for “Tokyo” until the Meiji Restoration of 1868.

enka
A form of popular music known as the “heart of Japan” that reached the height of its popularity following World War II.

furusato
Literally “old town.” Refers to one's hometown, typically in the countryside.

geinin
A performer, usually refers to comedians.

goinjin
An performer, usually refers to an entertainer, actor, or musician.

hankō
A stamp or seal used in lieu of signatures for official documents.

Hanshin
Multiple definitions: the Hanshin department store; the Hanshin Tigers baseball team; the Osaka-Köbe region; a railway line that connects Osaka and Köbe.

Hanshin-hakkaten
Hanshin Department stores.

happi
A type of coat worn over traditional clothing.

iroma
A famous poem from the Heian Period(794-1185) that makes use of every syllable in the Japanese alphabet.

izakaya
Japanese-style bar.

jimushō
A management agency for performers.

jōkyō
“To proceed to the capital,” or Tokyo.

kabuki
A traditional form of theatre, popular with the lower classes in the Tokugawa Period.
**kamigata**
An archaic term for Kyoto and the surrounding area.

**kanji**
Chinese characters used in written Japanese.

Kansai
Literally “Western Gate.” The cultural sphere of western Japan that centres on the Osaka/Kōbe/Kyoto area.

**Kansai-ben**
Kansai dialect.

**Kansai-jin**
Person or people from the Kansai region.

Kantō
Literally “Eastern Gate.” The eastern part of Japan that consists of Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba, Saitama, Ibaraki, Tochigi, and Gunma prefectures.

**kata**
Patterned learning, or methods of transmission used in traditional art forms. Can also refer to patterned learning for rearing and grooming musicians.

**katakana**
One of three writing systems in Japanese. Typically used for writing foreign words or sound effects.

**keigo**
A polite form of Japanese speech used to indicate respect.

Kei-han-shin
The Kyoto-Osaka-Kōbe area.

**Kinai**
“Close to the Emperor.” An old term for the area surrounding Kyoto.

Kinki
The western part of Japan that consists of Kyoto, Osaka, Hyōgo, Wakayama, Shiga, Nara, and Mie Prefectures. Is sometimes used interchangeably with Kansai, despite the nuanced differences of kinki referring to a geographic area while Kansai refers to a cultural sphere.
kohai
A junior or underclassman in an organization, such as school, work, or management agency.

kokuhō
National treasures designated by the government that can be tangible (temples, palaces, etc.), intangible (kabuki, Noh, etc.), or people.

konto
A short comedy skit or performance.

kuidaore
“Eat until you drop,” a popular phrase used to describe Osaka's culinary offerings.

manzai
A popular form of comedy originated in the Kansai region consisting of two people, one person a boke or “fool” character, and one a tsukkomi “straight” character, who reprimands the boke.

matsuri
Local Japanese festivals, most commonly held in the summer.

mikoshi
A small, portable shrine carried during festivals (matsuri).

mōko
“Fierce Tigers.” Phase used when the Hanshin Tigers are playing well.

mōmarimakka
An Osaka greeting meaning, “Are you making any money?” Because it references Osaka's commercial history it is a common example of Osaka dialect, although it is no longer used as frequently.

monzen machi
Literally “town before the gate.” Temple towns that emerged in the 16th century.

Naniwa
The ancient name for Osaka.

nihonjinron
“Theories of Japaneseness,” which attempts to define a singular Japanese identity.

Noh
Traditional Japanese theatre of the upper classes.
**oba-chan**
“Aunt” or “lady,” typically middle-aged. Osaka is famous for its loud, outspoken *oba-chan*. Other honorific titles used may be *oba-san* (more polite) or *oba-han* (variation used in the Kansai region).

**obon**
A summer festival honouring family ancestors that includes *obon* dance, which is done in a large circle.

**omiyage**
Local souvenirs, generally food.

**Osaka-jin**
Person or people from Osaka.

**rakugo**
A traditional form of comic storytelling.

**ryūkōko**
Popular songs from the early 20th century.

**sempai**
A senior or upperclassman in an organization, such as school, work, or management agency.

**shamisen**
A traditional three-stringed instrument played with a large plectrum and typically accompanied by singing.

**Shitamachi**
Downtown. The area of town where merchants historically lived.

**taiko**
Traditional Japanese drums.

**torii**
A large gate marking a sacred Shintō shrine or spot.

**takoyaki**
Octopus dumplings, an iconic food of Osaka.

**tsukkomi**
The “straight” character in a *manzai* duo, who reprimands the *boke*.
uchiwa
A broad, flat-surfaced fan that does not fold up. Johnny's Entertainment fans construct uchiwa fans with messages in order to communicate with the musicians during concerts.

udon
A thick noodle dish, and one of Osaka's famous foods.

yakuza
Gang members of an organized crime syndicate.

yonanuki
A scale commonly used in enka.
APPENDIX A. SONG LYRICS AND TRANSLATIONS

All translations done by the author.

**HEY HEY おおきに毎度在り (SMAP)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ケチなおやじがむかし</td>
<td>A long time ago a stingy old man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ほろりとこぼしよわた</td>
<td>was moved to tears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>感謝を忘れんことか</td>
<td>Not forgetting gratitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>セニを生むんや</td>
<td>produces money</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>兄ちゃん姉ちゃん</td>
<td>Old brother, older sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>おばちゃんおっちゃん</td>
<td>Auntie, uncle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>らっしゃいらっしゃい</td>
<td>Welcome, welcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>よっていーてーかー</td>
<td>Will you drop in?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>わたれは商売人のポンポンや</td>
<td>We're fierce merchants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>しんきくさい顏せんと</td>
<td>If we aren't provoking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>買(こう)ていってかー</td>
<td>Will you buy from us?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>今日はめちゃくちゃ</td>
<td>Today I'll really really</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>べんきょうするで</td>
<td>give you a discount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>わたが言うからまちがいない</td>
<td>I said it so there's no doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>もってけー! いっとこー!</td>
<td>Take it! Go!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>こうてまえ! サンキュー</td>
<td>Buy it! Thank you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>今日の目玉やそろそろ行こかー</td>
<td>Today's showpiece, shall we go then</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hey Hey おおきに毎度あり

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>商売繁盛 なにわの商人(あきんど)やー</td>
<td>A rush of business, Naniwa's merchants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>えーもん 安いものなどが名物やー</td>
<td>Good things, cheap things, famous goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ぜったいあんさん そんはさせへんでー</td>
<td>Definitely won't disadvantage you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>なにわの どでかい土俵で</td>
<td>Naniwa's huge arena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>咲かすで 人情勝負</td>
<td>I'll make it bloom, the match with humanity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>足元 見てたらあがん</td>
<td>If you look at your feet it's hopeless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>セニが逃げよるで</td>
<td>Then money won't come</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>あっちも こっちも 大変やー</td>
<td>Here and there it's terrible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>不景気言うても はじまれへん</td>
<td>Even if you call it a recession, it won't improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>わたの 信念まげれんなあー</td>
<td>But my conviction won't change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>しんきくさい顏せんと がんばるでえー</td>
<td>If we aren't provoking I'll do my best</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>いまだ バブリーな やつはなあー</td>
<td>It's now, the bubbly guys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>借金しても かっこつけるよる!</td>
<td>With debt, trying to show off!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ほんまにかいこい お客さんに</td>
<td>To really clever customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>薄利多売や ハート 熱いでぇー!</td>
<td>Small profits and quick returns, my heart's on fire!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hey Hey おおきに毎度あり 商売繁盛 なにわの商人(あきんど)や一 えもん 安いものやてんこ盛り</td>
<td>Hey Hey thank you every time A rush of business, Naniwa's merchants mustering up good things, cheap things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>いっさいがっさり めんどうみるやんけ一</td>
<td>Any and everything I'll look after you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hey Hey おおきに毎度あり 商売繁盛 なにわの商人(あきんど)や一 えもん 安いものや名物や一 ぜったいあんさん そんなはさせへんで一</td>
<td>Hey Hey thank you every time A rush of business, Naniwa's merchants Good things, cheap things, famous items Definitely won't disadvantage you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Osaka Strut Part 2 (ウルフルズ) Osaka Strut Part 2 (The Ulfuls)

梅田行きのキップ買って 纪ノ国屋で待ち切って 梅田行きのキップ買って 三番外から茶屋町 梅田行きのキップ買って (アベックだらけ) カンテ Gでやっぱチャイとケーキ (アベックだらけ) 梅田行きのキップ買って (アベックだらけ) やっぱキタは そんなこんなでええなぁー | Buy a ticket for Umeda Wait impatiently in Kinokuniya Buy a ticket for Umeda From Sanbangai to Chayamachi Buy a ticket for Umeda (Packed with couples) Cante G, definitely chai and cake (Packed with couples) Buy a ticket for Umeda (Packed with couples) Northern Osaka is what to say... great! |

OSAKA STRUT Just keep on OSAKA STRUT

(セリフ) (Dialogue)
'さぁー、どっか行こうか どこ行こうか ヘーこいて帰ろか クソして寝よか' 'So, where should we go, where should we go? Pass gas and go home, or take a dump and sleep?'
'おまえ暇やろ、 茶ーでも飲みに行けヘんか カヨちゃんバイトしてる店、 あれ、どこやったっけ この辺やろう?' 'You're free aren't you? What about going to drink tea? That store Kayo-chan is working at, it's- where was it? Wasn't it around here?'
'あーああー、この道ブーツと行って グワっと曲がって、でっかいビル、 ポワーン立ってるから その角シュットと曲がんねん' 'Ah, that. If you go 'bwaa' up this street Turn like 'gwaa' there's a big building Standing like 'bwaa' so then, then you go 'shu' around the corner.'
'あー、なるほどおい、おまえ、あれ、おまえのおとんちゃうんか?'
'おー宮内くん、元気でやってるか'
'あっ、はいあーびっくりしたー'
'めっちゃ腹へったな、なんか食うかうどんは?
'いろんなーマクドええ味出しとんで 마련、うどんでえか'
'はい、お兄ちゃん、ネギおまけー'
'うわっ'
'おぱちゃん、ごちそうさま'
'いつもありがとう'
'おぱちゃんんでこれ?'
'はい、おおきに、三百マンエーン'

ナニはなくともナニワはサイコー
他に比べリャ外国同然

Whatever it is, Naniwa is the best
Compared to other places, it's like a foreign country

OSAKA STRUT Just keep on
OSAKA STRUT
ナニワンギター 何?

Ah Yeah
OSAKA STRUT
Keep on strut
OSAKA STRUT

(Dialogue)
'んー今度どこ行こうかなーおまえもーどこ行こかー、
あっ、でも阪神タイガース
やっぱ今年は、がんばって欲しいよな'
'うわーハデな奴、
あの服なんぶくらいうすんのかな'
'あっ、ちょっと待って、
タバコ買って来るからタバコ
わっ、ちょーおババハン、
割り込むなよ おまえ
足踏んでも、痛い痛い痛い、
痛いて、おまえ'
'兄ちゃん、毛ー長いから
女の子と思たんか
もーよー言いわんわー'

'Ah, I see. Hey, you, Isn't that your dad?'
'Oh, Miyachi-kun, are you doing fine?'
'Ah, yes. Whoa, that surprised me.'
'I'm really hungry. How about eating Something. How's udon?'
'Nah, McDonald's tastes good. Well, but udon's fine then.'
'Ok, mister, extra onions for you.'
'Whoa!'
'Ma'am, thanks for the food'
'Thanks every time'
'Ma'am, how much is this?'
'Yes, thank you, it's three million yen!'

'(Dialogue)
'Hmm, now where should we go
Hmm, where should we go;
Ah, but this year I definitely want the tigers to do well'
'Whoa, what a flashy guy
I wonder how much those clothes cost'
'Ah, hold on a moment
I'm going to buy cigarettes
Ow, wait, lady
Don't cut in line
You're stepping on my foot ow ow ow
I said it hurt, why you-
'Mister, your hair's long
so I thought you were a girl
I'm at a loss for words.'
'何言うとんねん、このオバハンは'
'おい、ちょっと見てん、あの女、
ええケツしてると思わへん?'
'あっ、ほんまや'
'ちょっとおまえ前まで行って
顔見て来いや、宮内どうかった?'
'んーちょっとなー'
'えっ、ちょっとてなんやねん'
'あんまり、かわいない、
いやかわいーかなー'
'どっちか言うたらかわいーかな'
'どっちやねんな、おまえは!!'

'What's this old lady saying'
'Hey, look, that girl
Don't you think she has a nice butt?'
'Ah, you're right'
'You, go up a bit
and look at her face, Miyauchi. Well?'
'Mmm... she was...'
'What do you mean?'
'She wasn't very cute
no, she was cute...
if you had to say which I guess cute...'
'Which is it!!'

ナニはなくともナニワはサイコー
他に比べりゃ外国同然

Whatever it is, Naniwa is the best
Compared to other places, it's like a foreign
country

OSAKA STRUT Keep on
OSAKA Ah… Yeah
(OSAKA OSAKA)
あれもこれもあんでー
(OSAKA OSAKA)
えーとこやでおいで
(OSAKA OSAKA)
あれもこれもあんでー
(OSAKA OSAKA)
えーとこ知ってる
(OSAKA OSAKA)
あれもこれもあんでー
(OSAKA OSAKA)
えーとこやでおいで
(OSAKA OSAKA)
あれもこれもあんでー
(OSAKA OSAKA)
えーとこ知ってる
(OSAKA OSAKA)
Just keep on strut
(OSAKA OSAKA)
One more strut
(OSAKA OSAKA)
Everybody
(OSAKA OSAKA)
あみんなみんなみんなみんなみんな
(OSAKA OSAKA)
Hey
(OSAKA)
Hey Yeah Yeah Yeah
(OSAKA OSAKA)
Keep on strut
(OSAKA OSAKA)
えーとこやでおいで
(OSAKA OSAKA)
ジスイズ OSAKA STRUT

ええねん (ウルフルズ)  It's All Right  (The Ulfuls)
何も言わんでも ええねん  It's all right if you don't say anything
何もせんでも ええねん  It's all right if you don't do anything
笑い飛ばせば ええねん  It's all right if you laugh out
好きにするのが ええねん  It's all right if you do as you please
感じるだけで ええねん  It's all right if you just feel it
気持ちよければ ええねん  It's all right if you feel good
それでええねん それでええねん  That's all right, that's all right

後悔しても ええねん  It's all right if you regret it
また始めたら ええねん  It's all right if you start over
失敗しても ええねん  It's all right if you fail
もう一回やったら ええねん  It's all right if you do it one more time
前を向いたら ええねん  It's all right if you look forward
胸をはったら ええねん  It's all right if you puff up your chest
それでええねん それでええねん  That's all right, that's all right

僕はお前が ええねん  I'm all right with you
好きでいわれたら ええねん  I'm all right if I can like you
同じ夢を見られたら ええねん  It's all right if we can see the same dream
そんなステキなふたりが ええねん  It's all right, this wonderful couple
心配せんで ええねん  It's all right if you don't worry
僕を見てれば ええねん  It's all right if I'm watching
それでええねん それでええねん  That's all right, just that

アイディアなんか ええねん  It's all right if you have an idea
別になくてても ええねん  It's all right if you don't
ハッタリだけで ええねん  It's all right if it's just a bluff
背伸びしたって ええねん  It's all right if you push your limits
カッときたって ええねん  It's all right if you fly into a rage
終わりよければ ええねん  It's all right if it ends
それでええねん それでええねん  That's all right, that's all right
つっぱって突っぱる
転んで転げまわる
時々ドキドキする
そんな自分が好きなら ええねん
そんな日々が好きなら ええねん

情けなくなても ええねん
叫んでみれば ええねん
にがい涙も ええねん
ポロリこぼれて ええねん
ちょっと休めば ええねん
フツと笑えば ええねん
それでええねん それでええねん

何もなくても ええねん
信じていれば ええねん
意味がなくても ええねん
何かを感じていれば ええねん
他に何もいらねん
他に何もいらねん
それでええねん それでええねん

Samurai Soul (ウルフルズ)
見たまんまの いかにもテキトーな
フツけた男と思ってたしゃろ
熱しやすく 落ち込みやすい
おれを見つめておまえは笑う
心配すんな
ロマンチックな男だからね
後ろにひきずるもののはあれど
想いは常に前にあるぜ

Samurai Soul (The Ulfuls)
Just as you see, a really unserious guy who
Messes around is what you thought wasn't it.
Falling asleep, easily depressed
Gazing at me, you laugh
Don't worry
Because I'm a romantic guy
I sometime drag behind but
My thoughts are constantly forward

サムライソウル
まちがいそうでも
サムライソウル
エイエイオー

ひとりのひとを愛するっていうのは
いったい何を求めてことなんやろ
かわいさか やさしさか
それとも振る回されたいか
カッコつけんな
欲しがる前に己がちゃんとせな

To love just one person is
To search for what exactly?
Cuteness? Gentleness?
Or the desire to show off?
Don't assume airs
Before wanting, I have to straighten up

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おそれはアホにもほどがある
だからおまえといっしょにいたいんだ
Samurai soul
泣きたい夜も
Samurai Soul
エイエイオー

あなたの男というのはな
Samurai isn't he
戦ったりスゴそうな事企んだりして
He lives fighting, planning
それでおまえを幸せに
To make you happy
したるっちゅうくらいの
What he will do.
気合いを
Fighting spirit
集中するっつちゅうの
Integrating it,
注入するっつちゅうの
Injecting it,
おれはサムライなんちゃうのん
That's a samurai isn't it

ふたりで歩く橋の上
The couple walking above a bridge
駅の前のネオンサイン
The neon signs of the station name
へなちょこでも気分はサムライや
Even though novice, my feelings are samurai
そういうおれがおれは好きや
I love that me
そしておまえが好き
And I love you
めちゃめちゃおまえが好き
I really, really love you
そうやって笑って見てってくれたら
Like that, if you look, laughing for me
おれは誰にも負ける気がせえへんわ
I don't feel I'll lose to anyone.

愛しい人へ       (ET-King)
はちきれそうになって
To My Loved One       (ET-King)
覚えたセリフかんで
I feel like I'm about to burst
簡単な言葉さえ
I stumble on the lines I memorized
うまく声にならなくて
Only simple words
ありきたりじゃ足りなくて
are the things I can say well
だけど抑えきれなくて
The conventional just won't do
あふれ出した想い
But I can't control it anymore
何も言わず聞いてくれ
The overflowing memories

おおきに!この出会いに感謝
Just listen without saying anything
本気ほれた相手なんだ
Thank you! Gratitude for meeting
まだ見ぬ未来共に歩こうや
a person I really fell in love with
たまにケンカしたりもあるもんや
Let's walk our unseen future together
電話で泣いてグチ吐いとって
Sometimes we'll fight
だけど嫌とは言わず 側にいてくれて
Cry on the phone, tell lies
But without complaining you stayed with me
夢は２人分になった
だから明日へと進む力増した

待っていた 互い近づく距離
昨日より進んでいった道のり
日々ともに過ごすことに
何度も繰り返していた思い
曲げられない 素直に言いたい
どうしようもないけど愛情は大
変わらず心にグッと
飾らず これからずっと

おまえとおったらおもろいわ
どこのどいつもかなわんわ
百年でも二百年でも
いく年が過ぎても
おまえとおったらおもろいわ
どこのどいつもかなわんわ
いつまでもいつまでも
はなさないこの手だけは

いつもおまえ一人にしてたっけ
飯も食わないで待ってたっけ
まだガキな俺 金なくて
そろいの指輪もあげれんかって
でも変わらず好きでいてくれて
くだらないこと笑い飛ばした
重なるたびに愛はぐんぐん
一緒におれたら最高やんけ

明日は二人でどこまでも行こうか
陽射しをあびて 風に向かって
平舗道バイクで
畳った気持ち全部吹き飛んで
降りだす雨もやけに楽しくて
これから先出会う景色を
並んで見よう どんな時だって

If you're here, it's interesting
Who else on earth could match?
For a hundred years, two hundred years
However much time passes
Without changing, firmly in my heart
Without decorating it, from here on always

My dream became one for two people
So my will to move towards tomorrow increased

We waited, each closing the distance
The journey we've come since yesterday
Day by day spending it together
The memories I repeat time after time
Won't bend, I want to say honestly
It can't be helped but, love is the greatest
Without changing, firmly in my heart
Without decorating it, from here on always

If you're here, it's interesting
Who else on earth could match?
For a hundred years, two hundred years
However much time passes
Forever and ever
I won't let this hand go.

Didn't I always leave you by yourself
Didn't you wait for me and not eat
Still childish, without any money
I couldn't give you matching rings
But as always you still loved me
You laughed at trivial things
Each time love grew more
If we're together, it's the best

Tomorrow how far can we go together?
Bathing in the sun, facing the wind
On a bike on a country road
cloudy feelings all vanish
The rain that starts to fall becomes fun

All of the scenery we will see from here on
let's see together anytime

If you're here, it's interesting
Who else on earth could match?
For a hundred years, two hundred years
However much time passes
おまえとおったらおもろいわ
どこのどいつもかなわんわ
いつまでもいつまでも
はなさないこの手だけは
はちきれそうになって
覚えたセリフがんで
簡単な言葉さえ
うまく声にならなくて
ありきたりじゃないくて
だけど抑えきれなくて
あふれ出した想い
何も言わず聞いてくれ

YO おまえが笑ってくれるなら
でかい声で歌ってやる
百年でも二百年でも
いく年が過ぎても
辛い時には側にいる
俺がぶっ飛ばしてやるよ
いつまでもいつまでも
いく年が過ぎても

おまえとおったらおもろいわ
どこのどいつもかなわんわ
百年でも二百年でも
いく年が過ぎても
おまえとおったらおもろいわ
どこのどいつもかなわんわ
いつまでもいつまでも
いく年が過ぎても

何度も言うよ
どんな時でもおまえ以外は
何もいらないから
約束しよう
ずっとずっと
はなさないおまえだけ

恋のつぼみ (倖田来未)
めちゃくちゃ好きな気持ち
抑えきれないから

If you're here, it's interesting
Who else on earth could match?
Forever and ever
I won't let this hand go.

I feel like I'm about to burst
I stumble on the lines I memorized
Only simple words
are the things I can say well
The conventional just won't do
But I can't control it anymore
The overflowing memories
Just listen without saying anything

YO If you laugh for me
I'll sing in a huge voice
For a hundred years, for two hundred years
However much time passes
During the hard times I'll be at your side
I'll knock them away
Forever and ever
However much time passes

I'll say it any number of times
Whatever time, asides from you
I don't need anything
I promise
Always, always
I'll never let you go

Love's Bud (Koda Kumi)
Feelings that I really, really like you
I can't contain them
大好きな君にでくわす
大事なときには
いつも最悪。
格好も 髪型も なんで

「恋愛に生きる!!」って
決めたはずなのに
空振りのみ
うまくいかない
それが人生なんかなぁ

だけど どうにもならないって
思いたくない
「いつかは私をみてくれる」と
信じてるから

めちゃくちゃ 好きっちゃゅーねん
月曜日も 火曜日も
誰にも負けへんのに
心の叫びいつ伝えればいいの？
目が合うだけで
ドキドキに勝てない

気付いたら 恋の始まり
相変わらずびだまりに
私の心 やられています

ほんのちょっとだけの優しさが
嬉しすぎて 何も手につかなかったり
恋って恐ろしすぎる

目で追い始めると きりがないと
わかっているのに
あなたにはまってしまう

めちゃくちゃ 好きっちゃゅーねん
誰にも渡したくない
恋の矢あなたに今
解き放つ準備は できている

だけど ドキドキがまた
邪魔してしまう

When I come across you, whom I love
In those important times
I'm always at my worst
My appearance and my hairstyle

“Live for love!!”
I should have decided but,
It's only in vain
It doesn't go well
I guess that's life

But it being futile
Is something I don't want to think
“Someday, he'll look at me”
Is what I want to believe

I really, really like you
Monday and Tuesday too
I won't lose to anyone
Does my heart's cry reach to you?
Just having our eyes meet
I can't win against this throbbing heart

As I realized it, it was the beginning of love
As always, a sunny spot
My heart was done in

Just a little bit of kindness
I'm too happy I can't concentrate on anything
Love is too tremendous a thing

If I start to follow, it won't end
Even though I know this,
I'm crazy about you

I really, really like you
I don't want to give you up to anyone else
Sending love's arrow to you now
I'm prepared to release it

But my throbbing heart again
Gets in the way
めちゃくちゃ好きっちゃゅーねん
月曜日も 火曜日も
誰にも負けへんのに
心の叫びつつ伝えればいいの?
目が合うだけで
ドキドキに勝てない

浪花いろは節 (関ジャニ∞)
ソラ! ヨイトコサッサノ ヨイサッサ!
ハア エンヤコレセノ ドッコイセ!
ハア エンヤコレセノ ドッコイセ!
ハア エンヤコレセノ ドッコイセ!
ハア エンヤコレセノ ドッコイセ!
ソラ! ヨイトコサッサノ ヨイサッサ!
ハア エンヤコレセノ ドッコイセ!
ハア エンヤコレセノ ドッコイセ!
ハア エンヤコレセノ ドッコイセ!
ハア エンヤコレセノ ドッコイセ!

いのはにほへと ちりぬるを
わかよたれそ つねならむ
ういのおくやま けふこえて
あさきゆめみし えひもせす

ナニわ無くとも空見上げ
笑い飛ばして生きましょう
幸せさん飛んでくる
笑う角には福が来る!

迷いと苦しみの山々を
今越え果てて
すでに浅はかな夢見ず
快楽に溺れもせず

ナニワ友あれ生きてます
皆さんの愛にいかされて

ありがとう御感謝して
浪花ホンマに好きやねん!

I really, really like you
Monday and Tuesday too
I won't lose to anyone
Does my heart's cry reach to you?
Just having our eyes meet
I can't win against this throbbing heart

Sora! Yoitoko sassa no yoi sassa!
Haa enya kora se no dokkoise!
Haa enya kora se no dokkoise!
Haa enya kora se no dokkoise!
Haa enya kora se no dokkoise!
Sora! Yoitoko sassa no yoi sassa!
Haa enya kora se no dokkoise!
Haa enya kora se no dokkoise!
Haa enya kora se no dokkoise!
Haa enya kora se no dokkoise!

As flowers are brilliant but scatter
What can remain constant in our world?
Today let us ascend the high mountain of transience
Where there will be no more shallow dreams, no more drunkenness

Even if you have nothing, look up at the sky
Laugh it off and live on
Happiness will find a way
Fortune comes to those who laugh

Now that we have over come the mountain
Of hesitation and suffering
We will see no more superficial dreams,
Nor drown in pleasure

Even without friends we are alive
Kept alive by everyone's love

Thank you, we are grateful
Naniwa, we really love ya!
ソラ! ヨイトコサッサノ ヨイサッサ！
Haa enya kora se no dokkoi!  
Haa enya kora se no dokkoi! 
Haa enya kora se no dokkoi! 
Haa enya kora se no dokkoi!

好きよね、大阪（関ジャニ∞）
ぼんでもってそんでまいどあり
俺ら商売繁盛ええ環境大繁盛

今日も明日も明後日も

今でもってそんでまいどあり
俺ら商売繁盛ええ環境大繁盛

今でもってそんでまいどあり
ぼんなら呑んで眠ってよお寝て大爆笑
この街大阪やっぱ好きよね

コン（Comic Interlude）

空に浮かぶ太陽が
街を人を心を照らし続けるから

コン（Comic Interlude）

今でもってそんでまいどあり
俺ら商売繁盛ええ環境大繁盛

今でもってそんでまいどあり
ぼんなら呑んで眠ってよお寝て大爆笑
この街大阪やっぱ好きよね

コン（Comic Interlude）

今にもってそんでまいどあり
俺ら商売繁盛ええ環境大繁盛

今にもってそんでまいどあり
ぼんなら呑んで眠ってよお寝て大爆笑
この街大阪やっぱ好きよね

コン（Comic Interlude）

The sun floating in the sky continues to shine
Down on this town, its people and our hearts

Thank you, come again
Our business is booming, circumstances are great and flourishing
Then let’s drink, eat, sleep well and laugh
This town, Osaka, I love ya!

Love ya, Osaka! (Kanjani∞)
Thank you, come again
Our business is booming, circumstances are great and flourishing
Thank you, come again
Then let’s drink, eat, sleep well and laugh
This town, Osaka, I love ya!
ほんでもってそれでまいどあり
ほんなら呑んで喰ってよお寝て大爆笑

Thank you, come again
Then let’s drink, eat, sleep well and laugh

ほんでもってそれでまいどあり
俺ら商売繁盛ええ環境大繁盛

Thank you, come again
Our business is booming, circumstances are
great and flourishing

ほんでもってそれでまいどあり
ほんなら呑んで喰ってよお寝て大爆笑
この街大阪やっぱ好きやねん
やっぱ好きやねん　やっぱ好きやねん

This town, Osaka, I love ya!
I love ya, I really love ya.

好きね～ん

I love ya～!

∞SAKA おばちゃん ROCK (関ジャニ∞)
コンニチ ワン ツー どこ行くん？
今日も陽気に お金買い物

Konnichi one two where are you going?
Today, cheerfully shopping as well

バーゲンセールは 格闘技
ヒョウ柄服は 戦闘着

Bargain sales are combat sports
Leopard print clothes are the battle uniform

買い物行ったら 絶対値切る
タダのティッシュは 行きと帰りで
2個もらう

If she goes shopping, she definitely bargains
She receives two free tissues
coming and going

おかん わかるで ポクだって
あなたの血を 引いてるで
見習うべきは
うすうすささと たくましさと
ムラサキメッシュ

Mom, I understand it too
Your blood flows in my veins
I should follow your example of your
shamelessness, sturdiness,
And purple highlights

派手にき めて おばちゃん Rock
今日も Rock Rock Rock
おばちゃん Rock
めっちゃやさしごばちゃん Rock
みんな Shake Shake Shake
おばちゃん Rock
ビリケンさんも 笑ろうてる
ポケてつっこんで
おばちゃん Rock
今日も Rock Rock Rock
おばちゃん Rock
めっちゃべっぴんさん
おばちゃん Rock

Decidedly flashy, oba-chan Rock
Today as well Rock Rock Rock
oba-chan Rock
Really gentle oba-chan Rock
Everyone Shake Shake Shake
oba-chan Rock
Billiken-san is laughing too.
If you space out she reprimands you
oba-chan Rock
Today as well Rock Rock Rock
oba-chan Rock
A really beautiful woman
oba-chan Rock

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みんな Shake Shake Shake
おばちゃん Rock
コンニチ ワン ツー ありがとさん

しゃべり出したら 止まらへん
2、3 時間は あたり前

チャリンコ乗ったら 天下無敵
ベルのかわりに 自分の口で
チリンチリン

おかげ わかるで ボクだって
その心意気 継いでるで
学ぶべきは 節約術
家族愛と 近所付き合い

派手にき め て おばちゃん Rock
今日も Rock Rock Rock
おばちゃん Rock
めっちゃ やさし おばちゃん Rock
みんな Shake Shake Shake
おばちゃん Rock
ビリケンさんも 笑ろうてる

ポケット つっこんで
おばちゃん Rock
今日も Rock Rock Rock
おばちゃん Rock
めっちゃ べっぴんさん
おばちゃん Rock
みんな Shake Shake Shake
おばちゃん Rock
コンニチ ワン ツー ごきげんさん

派手に き め て おばちゃん Rock
今日も Rock Rock Rock
おばちゃん Rock
めっちゃ やさし おばちゃん Rock
みんな Shake Shake Shake

おばちゃん Rock
ビリケンさんも 笑ろうてる

Everyone Shake Shake Shake
oba-chan Rock
Konnichi one two thank you

If she starts talking, she can't be stopped
Two, three hours is a given

On a bike she's invincible
Instead of using the bell, she says
“Ring ring” herself

Mom, I understand it too
I've inherited your spirit
Things I should learn are your thrifty ways,
Love for family, and relationships with neighbours

Decidedly flashy, oba-chan Rock
Today as well Rock Rock Rock
oba-chan Rock
Really gentle oba-chan Rock
Everyone Shake Shake Shake
oba-chan Rock
Billiken-san is laughing too.

If you space out she reprimands you
oba-chan Rock
Today as well Rock Rock Rock
oba-chan Rock
A really beautiful woman
oba-chan Rock
Everyone Shake Shake Shake
oba-chan Rock
Konnichi one two in high spirits

Decidedly flashy, oba-chan Rock
Today as well Rock Rock Rock
oba-chan Rock
Really gentle oba-chan Rock
Everyone Shake Shake Shake
oba-chan Rock
Billiken-san is laughing too.
ボケてつっここんで おばちゃん Rock 今日も Rock Rock Rock おばちゃん Rock めっちゃべっぴんさん おばちゃん Rock みんな Shake Shake Shake おばちゃん Rock コンニチワンツーありがとちゃん

二人の涙雨 (関ジャニ∞)

明かりさざめく街で 歩幅を合わせる様に 肩を寄せる恋人達を眺めながら 知らず知らずのうちに 一人で先を急いだ 僕を一言も責めずに 目を伏せたキミ

重ねた温もりに 少し甘えすぎて キミの孤独気付きもしないで

空からは涙雨悲しみが連なって もうこれ以上歩けないと キミが心を濡らす様に...

雨をはらうプリして 横目でキミを見ていた 不意に背中を向けられる そんな気がして どんな時でも傍で 笑っていたけなげさに いつも背を向けていたのは 僕だったのに

キミの手をつかんで 強く抱き寄せても きっと心には触れられない

空からは涙雨後悔が連なって 抑えきれず溢れ出した 僕の弱さを隠す様に...

If you space out she reprimands you oba-chan Rock Today as well Rock Rock Rock oba-chan Rock A really beautiful woman oba-chan Rock Everyone Shake Shake Shake oba-chan Rock Konnichi one two thank you

A Couple's Light Rain (Kanjani∞)

In a bright, boisterous town I gaze at lovers walking in step together With their shoulders coming close Not knowing, not knowing at all One person hurries ahead Without blaming me with any words You cast your eyes to the ground

I was naïve towards the heaped up warmth I also didn't notice your loneliness

From the sky, a light rain, grief extends I can walk no further Your heart appears drenched

I pretend to brush off the rain And look at you with a sideways glance And suddenly am facing your back It feels that way Anytime you were beside me I could laugh courageously The one to turn his back was Always me

Even if I grab your hand Or embrace you tightly It surely won't touch your heart

From the sky, a light rain, regret extends I can't restrain from overflowing I try to hide my weakness
空からは涙 悲しみが連なって
もうこれ以上歩けないと
キミが嘘く
空からは涙
二人の心模様
もう過去には戻れないと
そっとさよなら告げる様に

大阪ロマネスク (関ジャニ∞)
今日も誰かがめぐり逢う
遥か 遥か 西の街
恋をするなら 御堂筋から始まるのさ
雅(みやび)なる物語(ストーリー)

あの日の僕らは迷っていた
意地がはまって 傷つけあって
かけだし君の背中が消えた梅田駅

この街の言葉 乱暴と言ったね
でも僕は変えないよ
「好きや」と言うから

君を探して 抱きしめよう
早く 早く 追いかけて
恋をするため 心斎橋には人が来る
雅なる物語

難波の庭園 好きだったね
二人ではしゃいだ 観覧車から
神戸まで見えた
あの日が続くと信じた

僕のこの胸は 面影を求めて
ダメなのか 思うけど
「やっぱり好きやねん」
君を追いかけ どこへ行こう
キタヘミナミ 戦(えびす)橋
恋をもう一度 御堂筋から始みたいよ
雅なる物語

From the sky, a light rain, grief extends
I can walk no further
You murmur
From the sky, a light rain,
It seems likely our hearts
Can no longer return to the past
Softly appearing to express goodbye

Osaka Romanesque (Kanjani∞)
Today people will meet by chance
In the far, far away western city
If you're going to fall in love, start at
Midōsuji
An elegant story

That day we were wandering
Filled with obstinacy we hurt each other
You ran off and disappeared into Umeda Station

You said this town's words are crude
But I won't change
I'll say “I love ya” [in Osaka-dialect]

I will find you and hold you
Quickly, quickly I chase after you
People come to Shinsaibashi to love
An elegant story

You liked the park at Namba
From the Ferris-wheel we rode
We could see to Kōbe
I believed those days would continue

My heart longs for your trace
Although it may be hopeless
“Just as I thought, I love you”
I will chase after you, wherever you go
To the north, south, Ebisu Bridge
I want to start our love over at Midōsuji
An elegant story
振り向いた 交差点
僕を見つめている
忘れられない 君の優しい声
時間が止まっていく

今日も誰かが めぐり逢う
遙か 遥か 西の街
恋をするなら 御堂筋から始まるのさ

雅(みやび)なる物語(ストーリー)
君を探して 抱きしめよう
すぐに すぐに 追いかけて
恋をするため 心斎橋には人が来る
雅なる物語

ワッハッハー (関ジャニ∞)
悲しみや悩み事は少なくない
誰にでもあるみたい
浮かない顔 また溜め息 寂しさと孤独
抱えては生きてる
自分だけじゃないさと割り切れば
それまでだけど
頑張れのその一言が また君に
無理をさせてはいないかい

僕が笑えば 君が笑うから
君が笑えば また誰かが笑うさ
ケタケタケタケタ
アッハッハー アッハッハー
ワッハッハー ワッハッハー
ウワッハッハー ワッハッハー

君のあくびが僕にうつるように
この笑顔もつながると思うんだ
出来る気がするんだ
出来る気がするんだ
大した事ではないけれど
僕が笑えば 君が笑うから
君が笑えば また誰かが笑うさ
この空の 雨雲のような
悲しみが全部消えて
なくればいいのに いいのに

At the crosswalk you looked back
You stared at me
I can't forget your gentle voice
Time stood still

Today people will meet by chance
In the far, far away western city
If you're going to fall in love, start at Midōsuji
An elegant story
I will find you and hold you
Right away, right away I will chase after you
People come to Shinsaibashi to love
An elegant story

Wahaha (Kanji∞)
Having a lot of sadness or worries
Is something it seems like everyone has
An cheerless face, a sigh again
You bear it and live
You're not alone you tell yourself
And that's the end of the matter but
The single phrase “Hang in there” is
Forcing you to overdo it, isn't it?

If I laugh, then you'll laugh
If you laugh, then someone else will laugh
Keta keta keta keta
Ahaaha ahaaha
Wahaha wahaha
Uwahaha Wahaha

Your yawn transfers to me
I think this smile is connected too
It feels like you can do it
It feels like you can do it
It's a trivial thing but
If I laugh, then you'll laugh
If you laugh, then someone else will laugh
Like the sky's rainclouds
Your sadness will all disappear
It's good if it disappears
無理して笑っても
無意味と笑われても
それすらも笑ってりゃ
逃げ出して居なくなるさ
この胸生きてゆこうと今、
音をたてるのは
悲しみ懐しみじゃなくて
楽しい高鳴りであって欲しい

僕が笑えば 君が笑うから
君が笑えば また誰かが笑うさ
この空の澄み渡る青のよう
悲しみが全部消えて
なくなればいいのに いいのに

ケタケタケタケタ
アッハッハー アッハッハー
ワッハッハー ワッハッハー
ウワッハッハー ワッハッハー

Puzzle　(関ジャニ∞)
眠れない夜はいつも
古いアルバムを開く
無邪気な顔で笑ってる ぼくらがいる

これが何年前だろう
堀江公園のサクラ
初めて喧嘩した夜も この場所だったな

あの頃抱いていた夢
近づいてるの? 遠ざかってるの?

さよなら 迷いなきあの日よ
いつの日かまた会えるよね

「東通りで3時頃」
待ち合わせはいつもそこ
電車は街をぐるり抜け
淀川越えて

両手を広げ堂々と
そびえ立つ太陽の塔

If you force yourself to laugh
Even if it's meaningless
Even that is laughter
It will run away and disappear
Now, from now on living in this heart
Not sadness and hatred
Making a sound
I want it to beat happily

If I laugh, then you'll laugh
If you laugh, then someone else will laugh
Like the sky becomes perfectly clear
Your sadness will all disappear
It's good if it disappears

Keta keta keta keta
Ahaha ahaha
Wahaha wahaha
Uwahaha wahaha

Puzzle　(Kanjani∞)
On the nights I can't sleep,
I always open my old album
We are there laughing innocently

How many years ago was this,
Horie Park's cherry blossoms
The first night we fought was there, too

The dream you held back then,
Are you closer to it? Farther from it?

Farewell, lost days
Someday, let's meet again.

“Three o'clock at Higashi Dōri”
We always met up there
The train would pass through town
Crossing the Yodo River

With both arms spread open
The Tower of Sun stands towering
記念に買ったあのパズル
昨日のようだね
The puzzle I bought as a souvenir
It's just like it was yesterday.

なくしてしまったひとつのピース
探しているよ 手を借してくれ
One piece was lost
I'm searching for it, lend me your hand

さよなら 迷いなきあの日よ
いつの日かまた会いたいな
Farewell, lost days
Someday, let's meet again.

探してる 足りないピースを
ひとりじゃ とても無理だよ
I'm looking for the missing piece
I'm totally lost on my own.

さよなら 迷いなきあの日よ
いつの日かまた会いに行く
Farewell, lost days
Someday, let's meet again.

探してる 足りないピースを
探してる この東京で
I'm looking for the missing piece
I'm looking, here in Tokyo

眠れない夜はいつも
古いアルバムを聞く
無邪気な顔で笑ってる みんながいる
On the nights I can't sleep
I always open my old album
Everyone is there laughing innocently
APPENDIX B. KANSAI SONG LIST

This is a partial list, as it would be difficult, if not impossible to find every single song written about the Kansai region or in Kansai-ben. In alphabetical order from the performing artists' name. Not all performers are from Kansai. This list has been expanded from MIT’s website “Kansai dialect self-study site for Japanese Language Learners” at http://web.mit.edu/kansai/7.OtherResources/3jpop.html.

- B’z
  - “Mōmarimakka”
- Boogieman
  - “I don't wanna be your friend”
- THE BOOM
  - “Osaka de umareta Otoko”
- Dreams Come True
  - “Osaka Lover”
- ET-King
  - “Itoshii hito e”
- Gospellers
  - “Shin-Osaka”
- Hagiwara Kenichi/BORO
  - “Osaka de umareta Onna”
- Hamada Masayori
  - “Eh! Sayonara”
- Hanawa
  - “Osaka-fu”
- The Hanshin Tigers’ Song
  - “Rokko Oroshi”
- Ikechan
  - “Saika”
- Kamon Tatsuo
  - “Shin Kono Naka ni Hitori”
  - “Mr. Sekkyō MAN yachūtennen!”
  - “Hamburger Shop”
- Kanjanii∞
  - “∞SAKA Oba-chan ROCK”
  - “F·T·O”
  - “Jimoto no Ōsama”
  - “Naniwa Iroha Bushi”
  - “Oh! Enka!”
  - “Osaka Rainy Blues”
  - “Osaka Romanesque”
- “Puzzle”
- “Sukiyanen, Osaka”
- Kinki Kids
  - “Tayorinishitemasse”
  - “Maketara akan”
- Koda Kumi
  - “Koi no Tsubomi”
- Kuinsuke
  - “Osaka Boshoku”
- Kuonama Sahiro & Funny Company
  - “Sweet Home Osaka”
- Kururi
  - “Kyoto no Daigakusei”
  - “Yado Hanashi”
- Laugh and Peace
  - “Chotto kiiten”
- Makihara Noriyuki
  - “Te wo tsunaide kaero”
- Miki Dōzan
  - “LifeTime Respect”
- Midori
  - “Aitte Kanashii ne”
- Miss Hanako
  - “Kawachi no Ossan no Uta”
- Modan Choki Chokizu
  - “Ra Ika Inoshishi”
- Morning Musume
  - “Osaka Koi no Uta”
- Oka Chiaki
  - “Osaka Koi Shigure”
- Puffy
  - “Nannari to naru deshō”
- SAKURA
  - “Love 4 Real”
- Sakuraba Yūichirō/ Nagase Tomoya
  - “Omae yanai to Okan nen”
- Seven HOUSE
  - “Shinpai sendemo ee”
  - “Nande yanen”
- SharanQ
  - “Osaka Elegy”

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• Shônen Knife
  ○ “My Favorite Town”
• SMAP
  ○ “Hey Hey Ōkini Maido Ari”
• Soul Powers
  ○ “Ōkonomiyaki Funky Soul”
• Tomizu Masa
  ○ “Ijimentoiteya”
• Ueda Masaki
  ○ “Kanashii Iro ya ne”
• Uemura Kana
  ○ Toire no Kamisama
• Ulfuls
  ○ “Aho de Kekkô”
  ○ “Ènen”
  ○ “Osaka Strut Part 2”
  ○ “Samurai Soul”
• VOICE
  ○ “Sukiyanen”
• West End x Yuki (from O.P. D.)
  ○ “So. ya. na”
• Yashikitakajin
  ○ “Yappa sukiyanen”
  ○ “Nametonka”
  ○ “Osaka Koi Monogatari”
  ○ “Tokyo”
• Yûkadan
  ○ “Osaka Big River Blues”
APPENDIX C. KANJAN∞ DISCOGRAPHY

Songs that include references to Osaka or are in Kansai-ben are in bold. Solo and sub-unit songs are not included.

List of Singles:
- “Naniwa Iroha Bushi” 2004
- “Osaka Rainy Blues” 2005 (on KJ1 F.T.O)
- “Sukiyanen, Osaka/Oh! Enka/Mugendai” 2005 (on KJ1 F.T.O)
- “∞SAKA Oba-chan ROCK/ Osaka Romanesque” 2006 (∞SAKA Oba-chan ROCK is on KJ2 Zukkoke Dai Dassō, Osaka Romanesque is on KJ1 F.T.O)
- “Kan Fu Fighting” 2006 (on KJ2 Zukkoke Dai Dassō)
- “Zukkoke Otoko Michi” 2007 (on KJ2 Zukkoke Dai Dassō)
- “It's My Soul” 2007 (on Puzzle)
- “Wahaha” 2008 (on Puzzle)
- “Musekinin Hero” 2008 (on Puzzle)
- “Kyū Jō Show” 2009 (on 8uppers)
- “Gift” 2009 Three versions:
  ○ White
  ○ Red
  ○ Green
- “Wonderful World!!” 2010 (on 8uppers)
- “Life (Menomae no Mukō e)” 2010 (on 8uppers)
- “TWL/Yellow Pansy Street” to be released April 20th, 2011
- “My Home” to be released May 11th, 2011
- “365 Day Family” to be released June 6th, 2011

Full Studio Albums:
KJ1 F.T.O (2006)
- “F·T·O”
- “Kanashii Koi”
- “Osaka Romanesque”
- “Taiyō no Kodomo”
- “Carnival”
- “Mugendai”
- “Hatenaki Sora”
- “Heat is On”
- “Misetekure”
- “Oh! Enka”
- “Sore de ii janai”
- “ONE”
• “Osaka Rainy Blues”
• “Sukiyanen, Osaka”

KJ2 Zukkoke Dai Dassō (2007)
• “Big Sky Blues”
• “Speedy Wonder”
• “x-SAKA Oba-chan ROCK”
• “Futari no Namida Ame”
• “Gōjō ni Go!”
• “Great Escape Dai Dassō”
• “Sayonara wa itsumo”
• “Jimoto no Ōsama”
• “Zukkoke Otoko Michi”
• “Energy”
• “Tabi no Hate ni wa”
• “Arigatō”
• “Kan Fu Fighting”

Puzzle (2009)
• “Ichibyō Kiss”
• “Akai Shinkirō”
• “Puzzle”
• “Kawaita Hana”
• “Gori Gori”
• “It's My Soul”
• “Rolling Coaster”
• “My Last Train”
• “Musekinin Hero”
• “Brule”
• “Saite Ikiyo”
• “Giga Maji Mega Fight”
• “Jōnetsu Party”
• “Wahaha”
• “Donna ni hanaretetate soba ni iru kara?”

Suppers (2010)
• “Oriental Surfer”
• “Monogram”
• “Nakanai de, Boku no Music”
• “Baby Baby”
• “Life (Menomae no Mukō e)”
• “Back Off”
• “Negai”
• “Horori Melody”
• “Wonderful World!!!”
• “Realize”
• “Boy”
• “Animal Magic”
• “Kyū Jō Show”

Concert DVDs:
• Live DVD: Excite!! (2005)
• Spirits!! (2005)
• Heat Up! (2006)
• 47 (2007)
• Puzzle Tour 2009 (2009)
• Countdown Live 2009-2010 in Kyōsera Dome Osaka (2010)
APPENDIX D. SURVEYS

D.1 Survey for Ritsumeikan University Light Music Club (English version follows)

関西のアイデンティティとポップス音楽研究

この研究は関西地方のポップス音楽について、大学院の理論のために行われます。
受け答えは研究のためのみに使われます。音楽の好み・関西のイメージなどの意見に尋ねます。
ご協力頂ければ、以下の質問を答え、サインして下さい。

理論で名前を使っても宜しいですか： はい  匿名で

名前： ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿   サイン： ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

年月日： ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

出身：
性別：
年齢：

出来れば詳しく答えて下さい。
軽音楽部でどんな音楽を演奏しますか。（例：ロック・ポップスなど）

カバーかオリジナルの曲をしますか。カバーなら曲名・アーティストの例を下さい：

カバーなら曲の選び方を教えて下さい。
演奏はどこで行いますか。都道府県を述べて下さい。

オリジナルならどうやってメロディー・歌詞を作りますか。

関西が出身なら歌詞を関西弁で書いたことありますか。理由も書いて下さい。

好きな関西のバンド・歌手・アーティストを述べて下さい。

関西弁か関西のイメージをテーマにする曲を教えてください：（例：ウルフルズの大阪ストラット）

関西についての曲、または関西出身のアーティストと親近感がありますか。述べて下さい。

自分によって関西に対してどんなイメージを持ちますか。

関東のイメージは何ですか。
ご協力ありがとうございます。追加の質問があったら連絡してもよろしかったら連絡先を教えて下さい。

メールアドレス：_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ 

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
この調査や研究について疑問があったらぜひ連絡して下さい:

研究生：Nancy Marsden
住所：XXXXXXXXXXXX

ハワイ大学：Committee on Human Studies
住所：XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

海外電話: XXX-XXX-XXXX
メール：XXXXXXXXXX

国内電話: XXX-XXXX-XXXX

Contact information has been removed

Research on Kansai Identity and Pop Music

This research is on the Kansai region's popular music, and will be used for the purposes of my master's thesis. Responses will be used only for the purposes of research. This survey inquires about your opinion on musical preferences and the Kansai region's image.

If you are willing to participate, this answer the following questions and sign.

Would it be acceptable to use your name in the thesis:    Yes         Anonymous Please

Name: ___________________       Signature: ___________________

Date: ___________________

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Hometown:
Gender:
Age:

Please answer in detail.
What kinds of music do you perform in Keionbu? (e.g. rock, pop, etc.)
Do you cover songs or write your own? If you do covers, please provide some examples of artists or songs.

If you perform covers, what is your selection process?

Where do you perform? Please state which prefectures.

If you create your own songs, what is your process for creating melodies and lyrics?

If you are from Kansai, have you ever written lyrics in Kansai-ben? Please explain.

Please list your favourite bands, singers, or artists from the Kansai region.

Please provide the name of songs that make use of Kansai-ben or Kansai's image (e.g., The Ulfuls' “Osaka Strut”)

Do you feel affinity for songs or artists from the Kansai region? Please explain.
What is your image of the Kansai region?

What is your image of the Kantō region?

Thank you for your cooperation. If it would be acceptable for me to contact you with further questions, please provide your email address.

Email Address: ______________________

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
If you have any questions about this survey or research, please feel free to contact:

Researcher: Nancy Marsden University of Hawai'i: Committee on Human Studies
Address: XXXXXXXXXXXXX Address: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
         XXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXX
Foreign number: XXX-XXX-XXXX Email: XXXXXXXXXXX
Japanese number: XXX-XXXX-XXXX
Email: XXXXXXXXXXX

Contact information has been removed
D.2 Survey for Kanjani∞ Fans on Mixi (English version follows)

どうも。
ハワイ大学の大学院生のナンシーと申します。関ジャニ∞のファンの方について研究をしています。もしけいたら、以下のアンケートのお答えを五月二日まで送って頂いたら大変有難いのです。出来れば詳しく答えて下さい。宜しくお願い致します。

出身:
性別:
年齢:
関ジャニ∞はいつから聞き始めましたか。どんな出会いでしたか。
関ジャニ∞の好きなところは何ですか。（例：しゃべり、歌、など）
好きな曲の名前は何か、またはなぜ好きですか。（例：メロディー、歌詞、など）
他のジャニーズを聞きますか。グループの名前を教えて下さい。
関西人なら関西人として関ジャニ∞と親近感がありますか。述べて下さい。
関西人ではない場合には、関ジャニ∞と関西地域のイメージは何ですか。関ジャニ∞は関西人とのイメージ合っているか。
関ジャニ∞の情報はどうやって手に入れますか。少し詳しく述べて下さい。
他のファンと活動をしますか。述べて下さい。
エイターですか。エイターとはどんなファンを詳しく説明して下さい。
関ジャニ∞について他の感想：

ありがとうございました！
ご協力ありがとうございました！助かります。
もう少し質問してもよろしいでしょうか。

関西人だったらもっと関ジャニ８と親近感を感じられると思いますか。

関ジャニ８のグッズを買いましたか。どんな物ですか。

「最高で最強な 」フレーズがよく返事に出て来ます。これはどこからのフレーズを知っていますか。

ありがとうございました！

エイターはエイトに迷惑を掛けないようにどんなマナーが基本ですか。

錦戸/担当は何ですか。説明もらえませんか。
Hello,
My name is Nancy and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai‘i. I am conducting research on fans of Kanjani8. If you could fill out the following form and return it to me before May 2nd I would be very grateful. If you can, please answer in detail. Thank you for your cooperation.

Hometown:
Gender:
Age:

When did you start listening to Kanjani8? How did you hear about them?

What do you like about Kanjani8? (e.g., their talking, songs, etc.)

What are the names of songs you like, and why do you like them? (e.g., melody, lyrics, etc.)

Do you like other groups in Johnny's Entertainment? Please list the group names.

If you are from Kansai, do you feel affinity for Kanjani8? Please explain.

If you are not from Kansai, what is your image of Kanjani8 and the Kansai region? Does Kanjani8 match your perception of people from Kansai?

How do you obtain information about Kanjani8? Please explain a bit in detail.

Do you conduct any activities with other fans? Elaborate please.

Are you an “eighter?” Please explain in detail what kind of fans you think eighter are.

Any other thoughts you have on Kanjani8:

Follow-up questions sent to participants, depending on their answers:

Thank you!

Thank you for participating. Your answers are very helpful.
Would it be all right to ask you a few more questions?

Do you think that if you were from Kansai, you would feel more affinity for Kanjani8?

Does Kanjani8 match your views of people from Kansai? As a person from Kansai, what are your thoughts?
Do you purchase Kanjani8 goods? What kinds of things?

“The best and the strongest” is a phrase that has appeared a lot in surveys. Can you tell me where this phrase comes from?

What are the basic kinds of manners eighter should have in order not to create a nuisance for eighto?

What is the “in charge of” in “in-charge of Nishikido?” Please explain this to me.

Thank you very much!
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