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*YOSHITSUNE SENBON ZAKURA:*  
THE VISUAL DIMENSION IN A KABUKI PERFORMANCE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

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By

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**This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of Yamada Chie.**

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation is the first to examine the visual dimension seen in the kabuki performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, one of the "Three Great Masterpieces" of *maruhon* kabuki, and a classic of traditional Japanese theatre.

Everything seen in kabuki performance is the result of a meaningful inner dynamic which expresses itself in a unified stage creation as a result of the interrelationship and coordination of diverse performance elements. The synthesis of these components provides discernable clues to the audience about the characters' identities and relates the message of the play. This creative process is conveyed visually through various *kata*, which are established fixed forms.

Among the key issues analyzed are the historical circumstances which brought about the fixed forms of *kata*, and the process by which *kata* convey meaning through their unique expression and interpretation. Japanese cultural traits reflect various aesthetic preferences seen in conventions adapted to the kabuki stage during the formative Edo period, as well as other conventions created for dramatic expressiveness. A heritage of heterogeneous predilections resulted in a stylization of form seen throughout kabuki performance.

Besides literary research, my methods of inquiry into this topic consisted of direct observational research at kabuki performances,

personal experience as a student of kabuki performance techniques, and my participation as an actor in a kabuki production.

The dissertation is arranged into three major sections which comprise a comprehensive analysis. The first part covers the creation and interpretation of kabuki and includes an introductory chapter which discusses authoritative literature on the visual nature of kabuki as a whole and the *kata* which constitute it. A second chapter discusses the historical and traditional developments which influenced the visual dimension of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

Part Two delineates specific *kata* seen in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance: role type *kata* such as *aragoto*, *wagoto*, *onnagata*, and *kitsunegoto*; appearance *kata* such as makeup, costumes, headwear, props, and performance area; and movement *kata* such as *bukkaeri*, *hikinuki*, *danmari*, *keren*, *mie*, *roppō*, and *tachimawari*.

The final part is a performance-oriented interpretive translation of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, "The Tadanobu Section," from the December 1992 performance at the Kabuki-za Theatre in Tokyo. Each of the five scenes is preceded with a cast listing, a synopsis, and a description of the stage setting. The synthesis of all the various *kata* in the visual presentation described culminates in an organic whole in kabuki performance.

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**PART I: CREATION AND INTERPRETATION OF KABUKI**

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In kabuki performance, everything that is seen is the result of a meaningful inner dynamic which develops as a complete stage art by the coordination of the actors with all the various components of the *mise en scene* such as costumes, makeup, props and stage sets and then by the traditions of all the various elements being assembled into an organic whole (Kawatake 1990, 247).

These diverse elements coalesce into a unity that expresses itself in the kabuki performance. The synthesis of the different aspects of a performance results in a unified creation, as each thing would appear strange if it were by itself. Beauty in kabuki is the coexistence of many arts, and the alliance of many things results in kabuki's unique stage creation (Noguchi 113).

In creating this unity in performance, the total appearance of a character provides the audience with an immediate message about his or her role, status, ideology and personality. When the visual appearance of the actor and the accompanying *mise en scene* are congruent with the action of the play, a "stage reality" exists. The actor's demeanor is expressed through such body movements as posture, gesture, and facial expression, and is combined with wearing apparel consisting of costume, wig, makeup, and props. In creating a role, all aspects of the character's appearance

should be in agreement and harmony with each other, as they provide clues to the audience.

Therefore, each visual communication of the actor, via his coordinated appearance and action, should be with a conscious intention to convey a specific message to the audience about his role identity and also coincide with the message of the play. All aspects of the *mise en scene* must be consistent and in agreement so that the message will be clearly understood.

In kabuki, as was evidenced in Japanese society historically through the Edo period, it was not only the appearance of the clothing, the makeup and hairstyle that provided clues as to a person's identity. In addition, the accompanying bodily mannerisms of that person triggered a collective response from society as to his or her identity.

The first impression must capture the attention and attract the interest of the audience through shared loyalties, beliefs and memories. In the Edo period, the audience was comprised of the general public and the kabuki theatre emerged through its support. Kabuki could only continue by appealing to the people's taste and empathy, and had to be aligned with their thoughts and understanding (Noguchi 29).

Through the *kata*, which may be defined as the conventionalized and refined form of an object or action, the meaning of a kabuki performance is understood as the audience receives messages about the total image of

the performance. As Kanazawa has explained it, the tradition of pattern (*yōshiki*) which is called *kata* is not only the agreement of stage conventions, but a form of communication built on a history and tradition of shared experiences from real life, whereby both viewer and actor mutually share familiar experiences (Kanazawa 55).

Conventions, based on this foundation of tradition, are utilized so that messages can be conveyed to the audience with a minimum of misunderstanding. The conventions derived from these familiarities are transmitted directly from the performance to the audience through the *kata*.

In addition to the costume and props which are employed by the actor to establish his identity, movement is manipulated by him to create a total impression of his role to the audience. The visual impression is structured through a unified whole of both appearance and action.

#### **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

Through an analysis of the visual components seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, I intend to investigate the visual dynamics of a kabuki performance. For purposes of this study, "visual" is defined as "all that is seen." Besides visual content, there is an interrelated aural content which will be discussed only when necessary to understand the visual dimension of the performance.

The kabuki performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* was chosen to be analyzed for this dissertation for three basic reasons. First, it represented a unified and coherent story consisting of five related scenes. Secondly, both puppet (*ningyō*) *kata* from the jōruri theatre as well as *kata* from the noh theatre were adapted into this kabuki performance and it is illuminating to see how these influences are incorporated and synthesized to create a unity of expression.

Finally, besides the presentation of a wide variety of set role types with their accompanying *kata* of appearance and movement, this play is in the unique position to show how the *kata* are changed within one character role as there is a metamorphosis from man to fox. Changes in demeanor are expressed through visual *kata* of appearance and movement, and accompanied by the corresponding changes in the aural *kata*, such as speech and music. The coordination of the total appearance with the other aspects of performance is conveyed through the *kata* and creates a unified presentation.

In addition, *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is a historical piece (*jidaimono*) that represents a rich heritage in history, legend and kabuki performance that is still respected and appreciated by the Japanese people today.

This dissertation presents a three-part analysis. In order to obtain the most complete understanding of the visual dimension in kabuki performance, I have approached the topic from several viewpoints. Part I

covers the creation and interpretation of kabuki and includes its history and tradition. These areas are analyzed inasmuch as they illuminate the visual aspects of kabuki and reflect directly on the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

Within Part I, Chapter One includes a survey of the literature that discusses the various viewpoints of scholars concerning kabuki as visual theatre: the definitions of *kata*, how the performance is conveyed through the *kata*, and the development and transmission of *kata*. Chapter Two discusses Edo period influences via Chinese adaptations and Japanese conventions and relates how the Edo era influenced the visual dimension of kabuki and its adaptations from bunraku.

Part II covers the *kata* that are seen in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* kabuki performance. These *kata* are divided into three categories: role type *kata*, appearance *kata*, and movement *kata*. Chapter One describes the role type *kata* such as *aragoto*, *wagoto*, *onnagata* and *kitsunegoto*. Chapter Two covers the appearance *kata* such as costumes, headwear, makeup, props and the performance area. The third chapter discusses the movement *kata* such as *bukkaeri* and *hikinuki*, *danmari*, *keren*, *mie*, *roppō* and *tachimawari*.

Part III contains an interpretive performance-oriented translation of the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* Performance which I saw in December 1992. An introduction provides an overview of the total performance. Thereafter,



each section relates directly to a specific scene in the performance and is preceded with a synopsis, a listing of the cast of characters, and a description of the stage setting.

Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859-1935) was an eminent theatre scholar who stood at the forefront of Japanese culture in drama and literature. One of his remarks on kabuki, which is often quoted by kabuki scholars, compares kabuki to a chimera. The chimera, a creature from Greek mythology, had a lion's head, a sheep's body and a dragon's tail. "Kabuki is considered to be as complex as a chimera, for by looking at only one part of it, it is difficult trying to understand the essence of its whole" (Morita 1985, 6).

In Part II of this dissertation, I am looking at only one part of kabuki at a time, by examining separately each *kata* of the kabuki performance which is expressed visually. However, in view of various scholars' appraisals, detailed in the survey of the literature section, that the synthesis of all the various *kata* provides an organic whole in kabuki performance, I am also presenting the entire performance in Part III to show the interrelatedness of the different *kata* that comprise it. The final chapter of the dissertation provides a summary and conclusion.

This analysis is written from a theatrical, performance-oriented perspective. The detailed analysis of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* contained within this dissertation is particular to the performance which I saw in December 1992 at the Kabuki-za Theatre in Tokyo, and no attempt is made

to compare this performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* with any other previous performance. Topics such as the historical development of kabuki and the process of actor training are examined only when they contribute meaning to the visual performance.

Japanese terms have been translated into English when they first appear. Thereafter, the Japanese terms are referred to without translation. Japanese names are listed in the Japanese tradition of family name first.

For convenience, throughout this dissertation, whenever I refer to the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, I am referring specifically to the kabuki performance of December 1992, unless otherwise noted. I also refer to the five scenes in that performance as Scene One, Scene Two, Scene Three, Scene Four, and Scene Five, although they are not referred to as such within the performance structure. All stage directions are given from the audience's point of view.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

Western theatre is a primarily a literary or text-centered theatre, while kabuki is an actor-centered theatre where the main actor and ensemble perform together in harmony based on tradition (Kagayama 12). "Whereas in western drama there is a literary tradition, the tradition that exists in the kabuki theatre is primarily a physical tradition" (Kawatake 1990, 247). This physical tradition refers to the fact that a kabuki play is brought to actualization and fruition on the stage during the performance,

and not in a book. The visual aspects of performance illustrate and augment the text and are the most important form of expression in dramatic presentation.

First and foremost, kabuki is a theatre of visual communication *par excellence* (Leiter 1979, x). Most of kabuki performance is centered on styles of acting and spectacle which are primarily based on visual appeal (Toita 1981, 6). The text is used by actors for dialog and serves as a reference point for presenting the performance, but is subordinate to the total theatrical effect which is expressed visually to the audience.

The meaning of a kabuki play is expressed through the *kata* during the performance, and through continual viewing the established *kata* may be noticed (Kanazawa 49). With this understanding, I wish to analyze the production of the kabuki play *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

Written sources may supplement the basic research data and provide insight, but their perspective is directed towards the literary aspects of the play and they usually provide scant details regarding the total mode of expression in the performance. One-third of kabuki's current repertory consists of puppet adaptations. Of approximately three hundred plays in the current repertory of kabuki, there are only about a dozen available in English translation (Brandon 1992, xiii) With the exception of James R. Brandon's books, *Kabuki: Five Classic Plays*, and *Chūshingura: Studies in Kabuki and the Puppet Theatre*, and one book by Samuel L. Leiter, *The Art*

of *Kabuki: Famous Plays in Performance*, the majority of English translations of kabuki plays do not provide many details regarding the total performance. Gunji Masakatsu, one of Japan's leading authorities on kabuki, states that a need exists for detailed descriptions of actual performances that extends beyond the scripts or plot summaries (Leiter 1979, x).

The purpose of this dissertation is to provide such an analysis with detailed descriptions of the actual performance that clarifies both the total appearance of the actor, including his stage movements, with the other visual constituents involved in the performance as they coordinate to express the meaning of the play to the audience.

*Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* (*Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees*) is one of the "Three Great Masterpieces" written for the puppet theatre, the other two being *Kanadehon Chūshingura* (*Chūshingura: The Treasury of Loyal Retainers*) and *Sugawara Denju Tenarai Kagami* (*The House of Sugawara*) (Brandon 1982, 119). All three are history plays (*jidaimono*) and were written by the same team of playwrights, Takeda Izumo II, Shōraku Miyoshi and Namiki Senryū (Sōsuke). *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* was first performed in November 1747 as a puppet play at the Takemotoza in Osaka and adapted to the kabuki theatre within two months (Noguchi 184).

The play weaves together both factual and fictional accounts of the medieval warrior hero Minamoto Yoshitsune, who was instrumental in defeating the enemy Heike clan. After final victory, Yoshitsune was suspected of disloyalty by his brother the Shogun Yoritomo. Yoshitsune was forced to take flight, and the play is centered on various episodes from this period.

The "Tadanobu Section," which is composed of five scenes derived from the entire *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* play, is based on the legend of a magical fox who disguises himself as Yoshitsune's faithful samurai Tadanobu. The December 1992 performance of the "Tadanobu Section," which occupies the late afternoon/evening performance, consists of five cohesive scenes presented in three acts that relate a complete and connected story in a unified coherent performance. This is not the usual case for most kabuki plays, where only one to several scenes of a play are presented together at one time.

Within this particular *jidaimono*, there exists a wide range of character types with their accompanying *kata*; but what is especially unique about this performance is the fact that we can observe the metamorphosis of a man into a fox, progressively with each sequence from the first scene through the third, with all the different *kata* that correspond to those changes.

In addition to the details of the visual aspects of the performance, a comprehensive understanding of the performance is based on a tradition of the agreement of forms (*yakusokugoto*) (Kanazawa 50). These traditions of agreement of forms which are called *kata*, will be explained as to their method of application in the kabuki production of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

There is no English description of the kabuki performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* which provides much more than a synopsis of the plot. The only two available sources written in English are *Yoshitsune Senbonzakura: Keys to the Japanese Mind* by Kijima, which does not include three scenes in the "Tadanobu Section," and *Kabuki* by Gunji, which devotes thirteen pages to illustrations accompanied by a synopsis. In analyzing Japanese play texts used for kabuki performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, such as Atsumi's *Nihon Gikyoku Zenshū* and Toita's *Meikasu Kabuki Zenshū*, one does not find many details concerning the performance such as the appearance and movement *kata*. The scant details which are provided also differ. Moreover, none of these sources include comprehensive performance notes which describe all the various *kata*.

Since there is no English translation of the kabuki play which provides a comprehensive description of the performance, this dissertation is in the unique position of providing the first detailed account in English of the performance of one of the great kabuki classics.

## **METHODS OF INQUIRY**

My methods of inquiry consisted of direct observational research at the kabuki performances, my personal participation in a kabuki production, and literary research.

### **Direct Observation**

Kabuki plays are performed on the basis of centuries of Japanese tradition which serve as the basic foundation in understanding the layers of convention that have been built upon the story. For full comprehension of a performance, an understanding of this foundation is necessary. While information may be gathered on the traditions and conventions of the kabuki theatre from literary sources, the best way to understand how they are implemented in the performance is through viewing a succession of performances of the same play throughout the month. It is fortunate that kabuki performances run for a period of twenty-five days a month, which allows an ample opportunity for continuous observation.

The observational research was made during repeated visits to kabuki theatres in Japan between October 1992 and May 1993, in which I was able to see over one hundred performances. Through the personal auspices of Miyazaki Kyōichi, Executive Director of Shōchiku, Japan's largest theatre syndicate, and Nakano Masao, Theatrical Producer of Shōchiku, I was allowed to be a daily guest for continuous kabuki performances from October 1992 through May 1993. I followed this

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concentrated research period with a return visit during April and May of 1994.

The majority of my research and inquiry was conducted at the Kabuki-za Theatre in Tokyo, where *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* was staged for twenty-five days during December 1992. I also attended and studied the performances at the National Theatre and the Shinbashi Enbuji Theatres in Tokyo, and the Minami-za and the Pontocho Theatres in Kyoto, between October 1992 and May 1994.

For the first twenty-five to twenty-six days of each month, there were usually sections from six different plays presented at the Kabuki-za: three during the matinee performance which started at eleven in the morning and ran until 3:30 p.m., and three other selections during the late afternoon/evening performance which ran from 4:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. However, less frequently, a performance was devoted to a single play such as the December 1992 performance which consisted of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* (the earlier matinee performance featured three different plays).

During this long day of performances, from eleven in the morning until nine at night, there were usually breaks of fifteen minutes to one-half hour between acts or scenes. However, I usually stayed seated taking notes or enjoyed a *bentō* while chatting to those seated around me. By choice, I usually came earlier and stayed later than the performance to talk with people who either worked at the theatre or who were frequent visitors.



Significant and valuable information on the kabuki performance was acquired when I was invited by Ichikawa Ennosuke, the leading actor of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, and Nakamura Ganjirō III (Senjaku) and their respective troupes, into the actors' dressing rooms and backstage and allowed to view the behind-the-scene techniques first hand. Much important data was collected through these research inquiries from inside sources backstage, which included the various kabuki members such as the theatre directors, actors, musicians, and stagehands.

The data collected covered categories such as costumes, makeup, wigs, props, and stagecraft, and explained how their application and relationships coordinated within the performance context. For instance, I was allowed to sit in the actors' dressing room and observed the entire "transformation" process of the actors into their respective characters.

In Part III, the performance discussion of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is a composite of hundreds of pages of detailed notes taken during and after each daily performance of the play. Continuous notes were written throughout sixteen performances, for approximately five straight hours each day. The performance started at four o'clock in the afternoon and lasted until nine o'clock in the evening. I stayed throughout the entire performance. This five hour period each day was in addition to my attendance of the entire early set of different performances which lasted from eleven o'clock in the morning until three-thirty in the afternoon. My

routine was to "digest" the entire performance for the first few days, and thereafter endeavor to concentrate on some particular aspect of the performance each day, such as costumes, make-up or stage effects. All cue notes, which relate a particular line to an action, were rapidly written throughout the performance in *rōmanji* as well as English, sometimes in semi-darkness with the aid of a small flashlight. I could not tape any recordings nor take photos. There was no video of this production available to me. Therefore, the entire performance in Part III of this dissertation is a written account of what I saw first-hand, and a composite of the many repeated performances.

When *The Grand Kabuki* troupe came to Kennedy Theatre in 1988, I was afforded a rare opportunity to meet with them both professionally and informally. The entire troupe was wholeheartedly responsive to discussing all aspects of kabuki performance, and I met with Nakamura Ganjirō III (Senjaku), Nakamura Tomotaro, Kataoka Gatō, all the supporting actors, the *takemoto* musicians, and backstage assistants.

The Grand Kabuki, for their five-day engagement at Kennedy Theater, presented the play "A Messenger of Love in Yamato," which was a kabuki adaptation of a *jōruri* puppet play. At that time, I did not know that my dissertation would focus on a *jōruri* adaptation, and that the knowledge I gained would be invaluable. I was allowed into the actors' dressing rooms and observed the entire transformation process of the actors into their

respective roles. The observations which I made concerning the metamorphosis of a male actor into an *onnagata* provided a rare view of the metamorphosis of an actor into his role. In addition, after the performance, the *takemoto* chanters Takemoto Tanitayu and Takemoto Tasumitayu met with me to discuss the dynamics and interrelationship of the aural and visual aspects of the performance.

### **Performance Experience**

This research is also supplemented by my personal experience as an "actor" in the University of Hawaii Department of Theatre and Dance's kabuki production *Narukami*, under the direction of James R. Brandon, where I portrayed two different characters in opposite role types: a Buddhist priest played in the soft-style (*wagoto*) and a warrior (*yoten*) played in the rough-style (*aragoto*).

Few kabuki scholars have had the personal experience of actually performing as actors in a kabuki production on the stage before a public audience. Therefore, I feel privileged to have had this unique opportunity through the auspices of the University of Hawaii Department of Theatre and Dance, where special student performances of kabuki have been staged in English since 1924. Production rehearsals were held in conjunction with classes and seminars on all aspects of the kabuki performance. As a student performer, I participated in daily workout sessions which included choreography for the fight sequences (*tate practice for the tachimawari*),

classes in choreography for Japanese dances (*Nihon buyō*), and elocution classes for Japanese speech patterns in kabuki.

In addition, I attended lecture classes on kabuki performance, and took individual lessons. Through both university classes and private instruction, I acquired skills in performance techniques of shamisen music and classical Japanese dance (*Nihon buyō*), which are performed on the kabuki stage. Through studying and performing in recitals with my *shamisen* teacher Yamada Chie and my *Nihon buyō* teacher Onoe Kikunobu, I was able to gain a greater perspective into the total performance art of kabuki. Besides years of training in both acting and costume design, an educational background which culminated in a Bachelor's Degree in Art and a Master's Degree in Psychology, provided other venues of insight where I was able to approach the research by examining kabuki's artistic and behavioral modes of expression.

## Survey of The Literature

As previously noted, Japanese language texts of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* provide scant performance information. Therefore, this section will present a broader foundation by discussing the viewpoints of various authors regarding the nature of *kata*, the visual presentation of *kata* in kabuki performance, and the interrelationship of *kata*. Thereafter, my survey will cover the major books which provide further information for my discussion on the visual dimension of the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance.

Kabuki is a theatrical performance whose main purpose is the development of a story that is conveniently constructed and presented so that each scene can be emphasized to show the "vicissitudes in the circumstances, the situations, and the fates of the dramatis personae" (Hamamura 96).

Within that presentation, kabuki becomes a visual spectacle. Everything that is seen in the performance, such as costumes, makeup, props, and stage decoration, is prepared towards a "visual opulence" (Ernst 86).

*Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is an example of spectacular visual effects through color, shapes and forms, and their movement through space in kabuki. Those elements contribute to extrapolating the story in a dynamic way. But beyond this, there is another dimension to the kabuki

performance which is truly unique, and that dimension is found through the *kata*.

### **The Nature of *Kata***

In a careful review of the literature, both in Japanese and in English, it became increasingly apparent that kabuki scholars approached their discussions differently in defining aspects of *kata* in kabuki performance.

Although almost every scholar writing about the kabuki theatre mentions *kata*, such as Brandon, Gunji, Kawatake, Kagayama, Kanazawa, Leiter, Noguchi, Raz, Soma, Toita, and Wazumi, opinion among them is divided as to both the definition of *kata* and the meaning of *kata* within a kabuki performance. This division of opinion is among scholars from Japan as well as the West. The following review of the literature will discuss the viewpoints of the above scholars.

In *Kabuki no Kata (The Kata of Kabuki)*, Kagayama states that all aspects of the performance which have inherited set forms within the total kabuki performance are *kata*. These include *kata* which are factors of appearance such as makeup, wigs, clothing, small props, large stage props, as well as the movement *kata* such as *roppō*, *tachimawari*, *wagoto*, and *aragoto*. Music is also included (Kagayama 11). This book contains the most comprehensive discussion of the different types of *kata* that may be found in a kabuki performance.

Another Japanese scholar, Kawatake Toshio, defines *kata* as the pattern formed. He explains that in kabuki, the forms which have been refined over hundreds of years are known as *kata* fixed forms. However, he then narrows his definition as to what *kata* is by stating that *kata* results when there is a form in spatial terms correlated to a specific amount of time (Kawatake 1971, 250). From Kawatake's complete definition there has to be two elements: first, a specific form that occupies space and secondly, a specific interval in which that form continues and ends. This implies that Kawatake considers only the movements presented by the actor, such as *mie* and *roppō*, as *kata*.

Although Kawatake narrows the definition of *kata* to include only movement, he does not limit his discussion of the beauty of kabuki to movement. Kawatake elaborates with the statement that the pictorial beauty in kabuki performance encompasses the visual aspects of the *mise en scene* such as backdrops, sets, costume and makeup, as well as temporal movement (Kawatake 1971, 71).

Therefore, while Kawatake recognizes only movement as *kata*, he recognizes the visual aspects of the *mise en scene* as contributing to the whole of the performance, since there can not be a beauty of kinetic movement without someone or something there in a visible form causing that movement.

On the other hand, according to Kagayama, to narrow the description of *kata* to just movement style, would limit greatly the understanding of the Japanese traditions that have developed the conventions, cohesiveness and aesthetics of kabuki performance (Kagayama 11).

Leiter, in *Kabuki Encyclopedia*, an English translation of Yamamoto's Japanese language *Kabuki Jiten*, defines *kata* as the "fixed form or patterns of performance" which are found in all production elements of kabuki, although "the term most commonly refers to acting" (Leiter 1979, 178). By acting, Leiter refers to the movement of the actor; that is, what the actor does and not what he wears.

Brandon's definition is closely aligned to Kawatake's as well as Leiter's. He defines *kata* as centering around the performance style which emanates from an actor's movements such as *mie* and *roppō*. However, Brandon further states that the appearance elements, such as costumes and makeup can also be discussed as *kata* since they are an extension of the actors' technique (Brandon 1978, 65). Primarily, Brandon divides *kata* into performance styles, discusses how the *kata* may be employed within these performance styles, and then discusses individual interpretations in the actual performances.

Noguchi, in his book *Kabuki no Bi (The Beauty of Kabuki)*, written in 1969, explains that classical kabuki exists only through the *kata*, and



that there is no existence of the kabuki text if *kata* is ignored. Moreover, kabuki is produced on the "tradition of the agreement of *kata*" termed *yakusokugoto* (Noguchi 107).

Kanazawa provides further insight into *yakusokugoto* in his book *Kabuki no Mikata (Looking At Kabuki)*. In kabuki, a series of regulations and rules exist which are agreements that serve as a pre-knowledge to the understanding of kabuki performance. For instance, there are set stage conventions such as the left side of the house is always the entrance, or that the person of higher class or honor always sits on the right, from the audience point of view (Kanazawa 48).

Kanazawa writes of a "tradition of *kata*" (*kata no dentō*) consisting of a set of established rules derived from the essence of *kata* (Kanazawa 48). Kanazawa says that it is important to understand the agreement of tradition within the kabuki performance, and that the people (Japanese) instinctively understand the *kata* (Kanazawa, 50).

Kanazawa's book *Kabuki no Mikata*, written in 1956, first introduces the term "*yakusokugoto*" to refer to the tradition of agreement of the *kata*. Gunji repeats this term in his book *Kabuki no Bigaku (The Aesthetics of Kabuki)*, written in 1963, closely paralleling Kanazawa's discussion. Gunji makes the forceful statement that if you disregard the *kata* and only understand the text, kabuki will disappear because it is impossible to ignore the *kata*. Gunji states that the *kata* seen in kabuki performance is

the corrected, transferred tradition of the *kata*. This means that kabuki actors have refined the *kata* over the years, and then handed down the refined, corrected form to other actors. Gunji repeats the earlier forceful statement of Kanazawa that kabuki cannot exist without this *yakusokugoto* (Gunji 1963, 107).

Gunji states that these "established agreements" are most important, as each thing seems minor in itself but contributes to the total form of the theatre performance (Gunji 1963, 102). *Kata* is the agreement of things in performance. In how to present the form, it is this *yakusokugoto*, agreement through tradition, which holds promise for the future of kabuki (Gunji 1963, 103).

When Gunji writes in Japanese, in his books *Kabuki no Bigaku* and *Kabuki*, his discussions of *kata* are relatively comprehensive and detailed. However, in *Kabuki*, Gunji's 1969 English language publication, he does not delve into the definition of *kata* deeply. Furthermore, he limits his definition of *kata* only to acting styles. He simply states that kabuki is characterized by certain styles or patterns of acting which are known as *kata* and there is no reference to *yakusokugoto* (Gunji 1969, 17).

In kabuki performance, Leiter states that the traditional methods are transmitted through fixed *kata* or form, which may be used to refer to "all aspects of a production, from the costumes, wigs and makeup to the music, sets, and properties" (Leiter 1979, 178). *Kata* are the cornerstones

of kabuki performance around which every production is constructed (Leiter 1979, xxi).

*Kata* are based on a set rule, a decided fact, that exists as an internal tradition, according to Noguchi in *Kabuki no Bi (The Beauty of Kabuki)*. The meaning of any part of a performance cannot be established without looking at the internal tradition (Noguchi 114). Each great performance in kabuki has established *kata* that are an inherent part of that particular performance (Noguchi 111).

Gunji also explains that in kabuki, there are sets of rules for the *kata*: how to organize it, its structure and style (*yōshiki*), and how to express it for the performance (Gunji 1963, 102).

*Kata* have developed within a tradition based on the agreement of the combinations passed down through the acting families. Older actors taught actors of the next generation directly via the oral tradition in what Kawatake refers to as the "bloodlines of tradition" (Kawatake 1971, 56). Descriptions of *kata* were also passed down by actors in written accounts of *geidan* (artistic words), which describe the process. For example, Danjūrō II wrote down his secrets concerning his *kata* which were never published. He also handed down his ideas by word of mouth to his progeny. Some of Danjūrō's precepts for actors include: "For *aragoto* roles, the best *tasuki* (cloth band used to hold back kimono sleeves) is braided blue and purple, and the *shigoki* (soft sash) should be purple, as the

combination of these colors lends additional feeling of strength to the roles." (This *tasuki* is seen on Tadanobu-*kitsune* in the first scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.) "Before striking a *mie* (stylized pose), it is best to close the eyes, for when they are opened again they will appear larger. The white base of *kumadori* makeup should be applied unevenly in order to make the *kumadori* appear less flat" (Shaver 59).

Hamamura explains that actors utilize the *kata* techniques originated by famous actors, which have been repeatedly refined until today. Over the long history of the performance of any one play, many different actors have performed the same roles, and have instituted refinements in their techniques of presentation. Due to audience acceptance, *kata* were established through this process (Hamamura 105).

Leiter states a similar viewpoint. *Kata* are established as a tradition by an actor who created a special interpretation of a role, which received audience acceptance. That interpretation was then handed down to the next generation (Leiter 1979, 78).

In the book *Kabuki: Ishō to Funsō (Kabuki Costumes and Appearance)*, Soma provides a further explanation. Audiences, who are the actor's critics, help actors establish *kata*; for no matter how much the actors make an effort in their appearance (*funsō*), and no matter how excellent a pattern is presented, without audience support it will not be continued as a *kata* (Soma, 29).

*Kata* are learned by the actor today in the traditional method of observation and imitation (Kawatake 1971, 247). Each family of actors has its own traditions. Toita claims that due to the high demands made on a kabuki actor, it is rare and difficult for anyone except the son or the adopted son of a kabuki actor to become a professional. In addition, there is a tradition of keeping certain aspects of performance a secret, and these secrets are passed down to a succeeding actor only at the appropriate time (Toita 1970, 32).

Unless an actor can be sure that a slight change in *kata* will be noticed and appreciated, there is no temptation to study and vary parts (Toita 1970, 65). When the actor has "scored a triumph" in a part through some small introduction of new *kata* in a performance, a tradition is established for future generations of actors. The sons of kabuki actors observe their family and other actors from childhood and have the opportunity to learn from them first-hand. This is true whether the child is a natural son or an adopted heir like Bandō Tamasaburō, the *onnagata* who plays Shizuka in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. In addition, children have the opportunity to perform onstage from an early age.

For example, in the December 1992 performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* at the Kabuki-za Theatre, Antoku the boy emperor and approximately thirty little foxes were all played by children of the kabuki actors. The children ranged in age from about three years old to about

twelve years old. They seemed to be having a good time performing on the stage, with some of the older ones directing the little ones. Because of the fact that their fathers, grandfathers, or other male relatives were performing along with them from their earliest childhood, the children felt comfortable growing up before the eyes of the audience.

*Kata* are handed down within the families of actors, and their mastery requires years of training (Gunji 1969, 17). The *kata* are transmitted directly from person to person, through teaching and observation. The first rule in learning a *kata* is to observe the *sensei* (teacher) and imitate his movements as precisely as possible. There is a saying "the student must first enter the mold, before he can break it" (Toita 1970, 31). Kagayama also states that actors must first learn and follow the fixed *kata* and may improvise only afterwards (Kagayama 96). The first performances of an actor onstage will be an imitation of his *sensei's* style and form. A student must learn the established patterns of performing *kata* as closely as possible. The child's ability is judged by how closely he imitates the exact movements of his *sensei*. Even as an adult and an American, this was also the method by which I learned *Nihon buyō*, *shamisen*, and Japanese acting techniques.

Kawatake states that many *kata* were first produced when the actors sought to find a method by which their personal appearance could be enhanced. Kawatake seems to imply here that *kata* also extend to non-

movement entities such as costumes and makeup. Later actors often imitated these *kata*, even though they were inappropriate for their own personal physiques, and were criticized for following *kata* which were unsuitable to them (Kawatake 1971, 247).

For example, one actor who has studied *kata* as a method to enhance his appearance is Bandō Tamasaburō, the leading *onnagata* in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. Tamasaburō has studied the *kata* of earlier great actors who possessed similar physical attributes to his, in regard to costumes and mannerisms (Leiter 1979, xviii). Through this process, he has learned to emphasize his unique features to their best advantage, whether it is his tall, slim physique or his strong neck. The type of clothes and colors he wears, the way he holds his arms rounded outward, or turns in an asymmetrical pose leaning with his back towards the audience; all these inherited *kata* which best suit him are meticulously incorporated into his style for presenting the most appropriate image to the audience. He is such a master at the employment of different *kata* that he can portray an old woman or young girl with equal artistry and skill.

For purposes of this dissertation, since I am examining the visual dimension in kabuki performance, I am going to accept the broadest definition of *kata* possible, that is, *kata* are the inherited fixed forms seen in all aspects of kabuki performance. Therefore, by accepting this all-

encompassing definition, I must examine each visual aspect of the performance, and not limit the scope to only the acting *kata*.

### **The Presentation and Interrelationship of *Kata***

Various books in Japanese provide detailed discussions of *kata*. *Kabuki no Kata* by Kagayama presents a comprehensive discussion of the role of *kata* and their interrelationship in kabuki performance. He points out that the audience can see both the role and the psychology of the character's distinctive nature, even before the actor speaks. This is revealed immediately through the established *kata* of total appearance, which include makeup, costumes, headcovers, and small props (Kagayama 95).

In addition to acting *kata*, Kagayama presents a discussion of the *kata* of appearance, such as the makeup, wigs, costumes, scenery and large props, and small props. He explains how certain typical (*tenkei*) *kata* were developed for each period and for each performance, and that while they are fixed, they have also evolved. He further describes how the classics are organized and how they established the criteria which has been set in tradition.

*Kabuki: Ishō to Funsō* concentrates solely on the visual appearance of the kabuki actor. Throughout his book, Soma discusses "*funsō*," which may be considered the total appearance of a character, and states that it is vital in expressing the meaning of the play in performance (Soma 95).



Soma describes the components of the actor's total appearance such as costumes, wigs, makeup and hand props. There is also an extensive description of how roles are differentiated as to sex, age, and various circumstances, and these differentiations are further categorized in a long listing from page ninety-five through page one hundred.

The costumes, wigs, and makeup each have a specific title (*enmoku*) which relates to the role and the specific play, and have appeared as the *kata* of a role over time, so that the type of role can be predicted from the title. For example, the *namajime katsura* is the name of the wig for the *akahime* (red princess) role portrayed by Shizuka in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

Soma provides an analysis of total appearance style in the categories of *jidamono* and *sewamono*, and discusses the appearance of various role types (Soma 28). For example, the *aragoto* total appearance (*funsō*), created and developed by the Ichikawa school, included *kumadori* makeup, hairdos "huge as a small mountain," and exaggerated unrealistic costumes. He contrasts this with *sewamono* appearance which was adapted from the appearance of the general populace and therefore relatively realistic. Soma points out that in addition to these styles, historical costumes were also mixed with costumes from *noh* and *bunraku*, and all these styles were combined together in *kabuki*. Soma notes that the large variety of appearance styles seem to be unorganized,

but in fact everything is organized into patterns for each role to cover types of *kata* in clothes, hairstyles and makeup.

The level of the class of people who produced art and culture clearly expressed an appearance different from the upper class. The actors created many innovations in costumes and the *yōshiki* (style) changed and progressed. Soma describes some of the fashions of the Muromachi and Edo periods which were adapted by kabuki, and fixed by traditional conventions, such as long sleeves for a young woman, and a white face for a handsome young man.

Soma stresses that kabuki appearance style was created by the individual actor and emphasizes that point as most important (Soma 28). Soma further states that each *kata* does not exist independently, but *kata* exist in a state of interdependence (Soma 27).

In direct opposition to these statements by Soma are Raz's viewpoints. Raz, who defines *kata* as a "well established signifier metonymically communicated," remarks that instead of the actors establishing *kata*, it was the playwrights who were "organizers of patterns, *kata*" (Raz 266).

Raz also says that kabuki consists of details in a state of independence and every sense of the audience is given relatively independent information. "Various elements of the performance have become independent; chorus, orchestra, puppets, manipulators, chanters,

actors, dance, makeup and gesture are not employed in tandem but independently" (Raz 267).

Kawatake is eminent among the scholars who present kabuki within an aesthetic framework. Kawatake points out that beauty in kabuki includes everything seen in the pictorial composition (Kawatake 1971, 71). He further states that one of the chief considerations in kabuki performance is the composition as a whole and that the picture formed by the actor should be beautiful at all times (Kawatake 1971, 39). Kawatake discusses the traditions of all the various elements being assembled into an organic whole (Kawatake 1971, 247).

However, Ernst states "the audience does not see the performance as a concentrated whole" (Ernst 77). Ernst further says that there is a "lack of visual totality in the kabuki" and compares this to the spatially dispersed mansions of European medieval drama. He continues that it is impossible to view the kabuki performance as a concentrated visual whole (Ernst 78).

In explaining the aesthetics and significance of *kata*, Gunji outlines his theories on the interrelationship of *kata* as they portray theatre beauty in his book *Kabuki no Bigaku (The Aesthetics of Kabuki)* (Gunji 1963, 102). Gunji also provides an excellent examination of the history of aesthetics which influenced kabuki. Gunji explains that like other forms of Japanese cultural expression, kabuki is also typical of Japanese beauty. Kabuki

resulted from a unique aesthetic lineage which gathered divergent elements that did not complement typical forms of Japanese beauty such as *mono no aware* (a sensitivity to things of beauty and impermanence) or *yūgen* (mystery or profundity). This was because kabuki was not created from the aristocracy, but was produced from the aesthetics of the common people.

Japanese writers discuss varying viewpoints regarding aesthetics. Toita states that Japanese culture is "typified by suggestion rather than straightforward declaration, subdued tones rather than bold colors, and simplicity to richness of effect" (Toita 1970, 3). This idea is discussed in detail in the history section of Chapter Two. We shall see in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance that kabuki does in fact exemplify straightforward declaration, bold colors, and richness of effect. In addition, these aesthetic preferences were seen off-stage, not just among commoners but among the aristocracy as well from the Heian to Edo era. Toita continues that kabuki does not rely on these aspects of Japanese culture which reflect refined aristocratic taste, but instead "remains plebeian to its core, with earthy vigor, crudity, grotesqueness" (Toita 1970, 3).

However, Immoos points out the dichotomy that may be seen in kabuki, and relates it to the chrysanthemum and the sword which are both elements that express the Japanese character: "flowery gentleness

and brutal power seeking, shy reserve and uninhibited outspokenness" (Immoos 193).

In *A History of Japanese Theatre II*, Kawatake discusses the aesthetics of the Edo *chōnin*, since both kabuki and bunraku originated and were nurtured by the general populace (Kawatake 1971, 53). Kawatake points out that kabuki performances surpass individual expressions of styles of beauty (Kawatake 1971, 66). While this stylization is based on the reality of daily life, it is not a naturalistic realism. Kabuki is a "quasi musical dramatic composite art form, which may also be called a kind of expressionism consisting of visual beauty which exhibits sensual color in its pictorial composition" (Kawatake 1971, 67).

Gunji refers to stylization as the action on stage governed by special sets of conventions and special types of formalization (Gunji 1969, 38). These conventions were taken from real life and adapted to the stage. Gunji lists various conventions which can be observed on the kabuki stage such as the superior positions of the stage, and those dealing with protocol and etiquette from Tokugawa times. "These conventions of kabuki acting became an integral part of kabuki and were passed on by generations of actors, and emerged as *kata*, which are distinct styles or patterns of acting" (Gunji 1969, 39).

In his Japanese language *Kabuki*, Gunji explains how kabuki developed primarily as an escapist art by the common people of Edo

whose lives were curtailed by a continuing flood of restrictions. Gunji points out how Okuni Kabuki catered to the desire for striking novel effects in costume, dance and subject matter. The merchants formulated their own preferences in entertainment and arts which constituted a different attitude than that of the samurai, who adhered to more austere taste (Gunji 1968, 208).

Although *kata* are fixed by tradition, Kawatake points out that they are not static but continually undergoing change and development. Kabuki actors today continue to perfect and reinterpret the conventions they have inherited (Kawatake 1971, 67). One example would be the particular voice and hand movements of Tadanobu-*kitsune* in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, which Ichikawa Ennosuke developed as his personal *kata*.

Kanazawa concurs that *yōshiki* (pattern) are the aesthetics which evolved from real life and became an agreement on stage; they were transmitted from actor to actor (Kanazawa 53).

In his book *Kabuki Midokoro (Points of Viewing Kabuki)*, Wazumi describes many important elements of stage interest. He discusses the performances of different plays, such as *Sukeroku* and *Narukami*, and points out the interrelatedness of *kata* in contributing to the meaning of the play. Each *kata* contributes to the expressiveness and characterization of the role. Wazumi discusses the interrelatedness in *Sukeroku*: Sukeroku's purple headband (*hachimaki*), young handsome articulation,

manly but erotic appeal, double red undergarments, colorful *obi*, small sword, flute, tall wooden *geta*, and umbrella, as well as his movements on the *hanamichi*, especially at the 7/3. This interrelationship is important to my study.

In *Kabuki no Bi*, Noguchi explores the beauty of various facets of kabuki, and discusses specific categories of beauty, such as the beauty of color, and provides an excellent discussion on how colors convey emotional qualities, such as red for righteousness, strength and passion, or blue for an evil, cold-blooded character (Noguchi 15). He also discusses how the Edo era audience praised the artistic skill and beauty of the actors. Critiques recorded in books during the Edo period commented on all aspects of the kabuki actor's appearance, such as the color of the costumes. The audience was very concerned about total appearance (*funsō*), which imparted an immediate impression to them (Noguchi 29). Noguchi indicates that kabuki appearance form was established as a direct result of the Edo actors' reaction to their audience and developed as a result of audience response (Noguchi 30).

Toita describes the movement patterns (which he does not refer to as *kata*) in dance that were taken from various actor's styles, as well as habits of dialogue delivery. Each generation of actors used the same movement patterns, which were subsequently passed on to the next generation (Toita 1970, 153).

The present kabuki repertory and most *kata* have not changed significantly since 1840, Toita claims. When a play is revived today after a long absence, old prints are consulted as guides to authentic traditions. The task is easier today than during the Edo period, because there are fixed patterns of movement from play to play, and the audience who is already familiar with the play knows what to expect.

What kabuki aims at presenting is complex and varied and emphasis is laid not on the purport or significance but on form and pictorial beauty produced on the stage, according to Hamamura (Hamamura 97). Hamamura states: "supreme subjugation of these (trivial) matters to the over-all effect prompted the stylization of kabuki, and brought about the present degree of perfection" (Hamamura 93).

Raz's offers a different viewpoint: "this attention to details and nuances, rather than over-all structures and developments may be pointed out as one of the most characteristic features of the kabuki audience" (Raz 250).

Contrary to the Japanese viewpoint that kabuki concentrates on the total beauty of the performance, Raz further states that kabuki concentrates on the "gimmicks" of theatre and "turns them into an audio visual festival" (Raz 268).

Noguchi discusses how *kata* were generally fixed in the late Edo era. After the Meiji era, the kabuki actors followed the precedents already set.



In the Edo period, costumes were not restricted by historical accuracy, and while some costumes developed an artistic and unique beauty similar to *ukiyo-e*, others had the flamboyant excesses of the Momoyama era (Noguchi 29).

Kabuki is a traditional art form where *kata* (set forms) have been transmitted from generation to generation (Kawatake 1971, 72). Traditional elements, such as the actors performances, set designs, shamisen music, and even the beating of the clappers, have all been transmitted directly man to man (Kawatake 1971, 248).

Toita remarks that once the appearance had been determined, the *kata* of the part had to be adjusted; "every gesture mulled over for two hundred years" (Toita 1970, 29). An actor first absorbs all the elements of the tradition, but once he has mastered them, he can renew the role by infusing it with his own personality (Toita 1970, 31). Sometimes a master actor will create a new *kata*, either because he wishes to change the importance of the role, or because he is concerned with achieving visual beauty more than retaining the exact traditional interpretation.

### **Other Literary Sources**

In addition to the books discussed, other books contribute to an understanding of the visual dimension in kabuki performance. Detailed information on kabuki costumes, wigs and props can be found in Shaver's

*Kabuki Costume*. Descriptions of the styles are accompanied by drawings which cover the *kata* of role types, such as the "Red Princess" (*akahime*).

Liddell's book *The Story of Kimono* presents a comprehensive historical background which describes important conventions which influenced people's appearance through the centuries. These conventions are discussed throughout the history section in Chapter Two of this dissertation. "*Kata*" are not mentioned by Liddell.

Morita's two books, *Kumadori: Kabuki no Meikuappu (Kumadori Makeup in Kabuki)* and *Kumadori* provide an exhaustive review of everything related to this makeup *kata* including its history, aesthetics, methods of application, and categories of patterns. His newer book *Kumadori*, written in 1985, is more detailed than the one written in 1969, and has excellent colored photographs which show the various aspects of *kumadori*. It also contains sections written by other authors such as Kawatake.

In understanding the unique historical dimensions which governed appearance in Japanese Heian society, three books by Ivan Morris, *The World of The Shining Prince: Court Life in Ancient Japan* and *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon* (two volumes, one of translation and one of explanation) are indispensable. Also providing valuable insight into the interrelated nature of visual appearance and historical convention are the

two volumes which comprise Murasaki's *Tale of Genji*, translated by Edward Seidensticker.

Books in English which provide a general overview of kabuki performance including a discussion of *kata* are those by: James R. Brandon, with William P. Malm and Donald H. Shively, *Studies in Kabuki: Its Acting, Music, and Historical Context*; Earle Ernst, *The Kabuki Theatre*; Gunji Masakatsu, *Kabuki and Kabuki: Eighteen Traditional Dramas*; and Kawatake Toshio, *A History of Japanese Theatre II: Bunraku and Kabuki*.

Leiter's *Kabuki Encyclopedia*, an English translation of *Kabuki Jiten*, provides extensive coverage of kabuki terminology. Photographs and drawings accompany the text. There is a large appendix which includes actors' genealogies, major plays, and a chronology which provides an overview for each historical period. Some puppet events are included as well.

In addition, both Brandon and Leiter have written books which include English translations of specific kabuki plays, and describe various *kata* in the performance. Brandon's *Chūshingura: Studies in Kabuki and the Puppet Theater*, and *Kabuki: Five Classic Plays* and Leiter's *The Art of Kabuki: Famous Plays in Performance* provide performance-oriented translations of famous kabuki plays. Brandon's books are especially adaptable for staging kabuki productions in English.

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Excellent books on Japanese history and culture include *Japanese Culture* by H. Paul Varley and the trilogy on the *History of Japan* by George Sansom. They cover in detail the traditions and conventions within a chronological framework.

**Literature on The Performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura***

Kabuki texts of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* are available in many Japanese editions, such as Atsumi's *Nihon Gikyoku Zenshū* (1928) and Toita's *Meikasu Kabuki Zenshū* (1961). As noted, they provide few details of the performance such as the appearance and movement *kata*.

In addition, the few details provided differ from the performance I saw on December 1992. For instance, in act four, the *michiyuki*, Atsumi describes briefly the *kitsune roppō*, but on page 24 does not mention any further *roppō*, while Toita devotes three lines to a description of this "missing" *roppō*. In the *michiyuki* in scene six (253-254), Toita refers to the Hatsune drum as "a purple drum" (the one I saw was orange with ornate metallic silver and gold embroidery of birds, and orange cords, and this design and color conveyed special meaning within the context of the play). Toita also mentions "red strings on sandals," while in the *michiyuki* I saw, no one had red-stringed sandals; Shizuka was barefoot, and Tadanobu-*kitsune* was wearing natural colored straw sandals. There are numerous differences throughout each book with regards to any details provided,

such as the number of *yoten* on the *hanamichi* with Hayami no Tota; the numbers differ in each book and also from the number I saw.

The kabuki performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is included in Gunji's English *Kabuki*, published in 1969. Thirteen pages of large photographs show various scenes from the performance and are accompanied by a short synopsis which describes each photograph. There is no discussion of the various *kata* particular to this performance.

Another source, written in Japanese with English translation, is *Yoshitsune Senbonzakura: Keys to the Japanese Mind* by Kijima Takashi. This book is similar to Gunji's presentation in that the majority of the contents are filled with full-page illustrations of the performance, but without the explanatory captions or titles. A brief synopsis is provided to all the scenes that are discussed, but the last three scenes of the Tadanobu section are not included. The first two scenes are included in this book (the Fushimi Inari Shrine scene and part of the *michiyuki* scene), with half a page of synopsis given to each.

Kawatake's book *Kabuki: Eighteen Traditional Dramas*, published in 1985, contains three pages covered with large colored photographs from the kabuki performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, even though this is not one of the "18" masterpieces (*jūhachiban*) compiled by Ichikawa Danjūrō VII in 1832. There is only one line of caption beneath each photo,

and a short synopsis consisting of two paragraphs, which offers no commentary on *kata* involved in the performance.

In addition to this literature on the kabuki play, there is an English translation of the bunraku puppet play by Stanleigh Jones entitled *Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees*.

**CHAPTER TWO: HISTORICAL AND TRADITIONAL  
INFLUENCES ON THE VISUAL DIMENSION OF  
YOSHITSUNE SENBON ZAKURA**

As we have seen in the survey of the literature section, kabuki scholars have pointed out the significance of history and tradition in understanding the *kata* that comprise kabuki performance. Conventions from real life are incorporated into stage life for the most complete message to the audience. Therefore, these adaptations and conventions are examined for a comprehensive understanding of the performance.

**CHINESE INFLUENCES**

Throughout the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, strong Chinese influences can be seen such as the Chinese-style red houses with green tile roofs, military uniforms and regalia, various costumes and hairstyles, screens and other decor, and the ornate Buddhist temple in the last scene. These components of the performance reflect the strong Chinese influence that had penetrated Japan from the seventh century onward, in what Morris describes as a "cultural borrowing" (Morris 1964, 6). Morris states: "It would be hard to exaggerate the extent of Chinese influence in Nara" (Morris 1964, 7). Furthermore, Varley points out that "the court of the early ninth century was outwardly perhaps even more enamored of Chinese civilization than its predecessor at Nara a century earlier" (Varley 39).

Commerce with China accelerated between the end of the Heian period and the beginning of the Kamakura period. Imports from China during the thirteenth century included luxurious fabrics such as silks and brocades, perfumes, incense, sandalwood, porcelain, and copper coins. The military elite began ordering these luxury imports for their own consumption. In reciprocity, Japan exported commodities such as gold, mercury, swords, and timber (Sansom 1961, 171).

The historical Yoshitsune (1159-1188) lived mostly during the Heian era, when Chinese influences were particularly strong (Morris 1975, 69). Morris states: "In understanding the world of Genji it is particularly important to assess the nature and degree of Chinese influence" (Morris 1964, 6). Chinese influences dominated various aspects of Japanese culture from the Nara period (710-784), through the Heian period (794-1185), and continued into the Edo period (1600-1867).

During the Edo period, when the kabuki play *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* was first presented in 1748, there was a nostalgic return to the past of the Heian period, in wearing apparel, architecture, amusements and games. The shell game, inaugurated during Heian times, made a comeback during the Edo period and is mentioned in the *michiyuki* section of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. There was also a revival of the Genji theme from Lady Murasaki's famous book *Genji Monogatari* (*The Tales of Genji*), and the Edo period was inundated with "Genji fever."



In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, these Edo-period features of everyday life were interwoven onstage, both in movement and costume. Many items in the play reflect this period's return to the past: the song in the *michiyuki* about the villagers painting clam shells to sell for the shell game, the *michiyuki* sequence which recalls the battle scene from the *Tales of Genji* done in noh style chant and movement, and the Genji cartwheel crest (*mon*) decorating Tadanobu's kimono (ILLUSTRATION # 9).

### **Color Ranks**

In discussing the important historical developments which influenced Japanese culture, Varley cites Prince Shōtoku (574-622) as "the most important leader of the early years of reform" (Varley 15). Under Shōtoku's mandate, a structured organization of hierarchical court ranks was instituted. Each rank could be distinguished by the designated color of its cap and corresponding robe, based on the five colors of the Chinese spectrum: blue, red, yellow, white, and black (Arnott 18).

The use of color codes continued for over ten centuries, and during this span of approximately one thousand years, there were changes in meanings assigned to context. For example, the significance of the five colors mentioned had originally been explained in the third century by the Chinese philosopher Lui Hsi, who maintained that these five colors "captured the essence of all matter." Blue was the color of creation and symbolized life. Red meant to burn brightly and was the color of the sun.

Yellow was the color of sunshine and symbolized sparkling light. White was the color of cracked ice and signified an opening or clearing. Black stood for darkness and was the color of dawn and evening (Yoshida 12).

The Chinese had five color ranks (they excluded purple, considering it to be more a discoloration than a legitimate color). However, the Japanese incorporated purple and gave it the highest rank, which totaled six colors, and with the two shades of each color, they had a total of twelve ranks. Each of the six ranks had a higher or lower level that was identified by the lighter or darker tone of that color (Yoshida 12).

Each color representing a rank in the Japanese system also signified a corresponding virtue. In order of importance they were: first: purple stood for virtue; second: blue for human excellence; third: red for decorum; fourth: yellow for integrity; fifth: white for righteousness and sixth: black for wisdom (Stinchecum 60). It is interesting to note that red signifies decorum, and that the "Red Princess" (*akahime*) role, such as that of Shizuka in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, is considered to be one of utmost refinement and decorum.

Objects were to be identified and differentiated by their color. This rationale was used to discriminate between the occupations of the disparate classes in Japanese society. The color system exerted such an influence in Japanese life that the ban of particular colors to commoners persisted for a millennium (Yoshida 12).

The different components of a person's life which were determined by his rank included: occupation, all facets of home environment, clothing and hairstyles. Furthermore, each person could use only the colors designated to his rank and not those of a higher rank. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Yoshitsune's leisure attire in Scene Three has a bright orange color; this color was reserved for only the highest rank.

Interesting accounts of the hierarchy of ranks and color codes are provided in *The Tales of Genji (Genji Monogatari)*, a literary masterpiece written by Murasaki Shikibu in the eleventh century. This famous novel was re-popularized during kabuki's formative period in the seventeenth century. Seidensticker's English translation of Murasaki's classic masterpiece is replete with candid glimpses into the highly structured rank system which dictated all aspects of court life.

The Taika reforms, instituted during Prince Shōtoku's reign, continued as an instrument to control power (Varley 17). The government mandated all aspects of life throughout society. For example, the Court Dress and Cap Regulating Office, originally instituted in 701, had over ninety statutes of regulations governing wearing apparel which restricted both the color and type of clothing allotted to commoners. Moreover, slaves were compelled to wear only black, as they were considered classless (Liddell 29). In kabuki, black clothing is worn by *kurogo* in order to be "invisible" to the audience: "a conventional indication that they are

not really there" (Gunji 1969, 200). This exemplifies a paradox which exists in many aspects of kabuki, whereby the meanings differ according to the situation. For instance, black kimono may be worn by the high ranking samurai class, yet black garments are also worn by others which renders them "invisible."

### **Religious Influences**

A significant influence which permeates the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance emanates from religious beliefs. Under the sponsorship of Prince Shōtoku, Buddhism had received official recognition in Japan. Shōtoku had sponsored the building of Chinese-style temples, including Hōryū-ji in Nara, the oldest extant Buddhist temple (Varley 19). The Golden Hall of the Hōryū-ji Temple is similar in style to the temple seen in the last scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* (ILLUSTRATIONS #17, 18). Buddhism plays a central theme in the play. The phrase of Tadanobu in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* "I am a fox because of sins in a past life" reflects Buddhist beliefs.

In the late twelfth century, new sects of Buddhism had emerged such as the significant Zen sect which was introduced to Japan through the immigration of Chinese priests. Zen (literally "meditation") espouses the tenet that individual enlightenment can be achieved through austere self-restraint and by completely eschewing worldliness. Due to this

ideology, Varley points out that it was "an appropriate creed for warriors" (Varley 73).

Buddhist doctrine reflects a concept which recognizes the impermanence of life; since all things decay, life is constantly in a state of flux, shifting and rearranging itself. The awareness of the beauty and fragility of life is referred to as *mono no aware*. The oldest definition of this term may be found in *Kogushi (Collection of Archaic Words and Phrases)* which discusses the word from a composite of five kinds of beauty: emotion, harmony, elegance, sentiment, and pathos (Abe 1970, 7).

Heian nobility adhered to the Buddhist tenet that everything was destined to perish. Based on Buddhism, the Japanese anticipated the world to come to an end around 1100, which bred a type of fatalism and melancholy attitude called *aware*. Even though the world did not come to an end, this *aware* still permeates many scenes in kabuki, especially those derived from the puppet theatre such as *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. *Aware* is mentioned over one thousand times in the *Tales of Genji*, and Morris defines *aware* as "the pathos inherent in the beauty of the outer world" which reflects the Buddhist doctrine of evanescence in all living things (Morris 1964, 197).

### **Cherry Blossoms and Nature**

The Japanese expressed this Buddhist leitmotif of evanescence through the symbolism of cherry blossoms. Ernst states: "At the base of

Japanese artistic thought lies the Buddhist concept that all things pass, that glory is evanescent, that all bright quick things come to confusion, and this notion constitutes almost the whole intellectual content of Japanese art." He continues to point out that the tree admired most by the Japanese is the cherry tree with "its beauty that lies on the brink of destruction" (Ernst 87). This view of the transient nature of the beauty of life, as symbolized by the cherry blossom, is repeated throughout the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, both visually in the scenery, costumes and props, and aurally in the music and dialog.

Visible in every scene, cherry blossoms appear in the paintings on the flats and drops, in the large free-standing cherry tree stage center, and in the branches of cherry blossoms hanging from the top of the proscenium extending across the stage (ILLUSTRATIONS # 2, 3, 6, 7, 13, 15, 16, and 18). In addition, at key points in the performance, petals flutter gently down (from the top of the stage). The visual forms are reinforced by repeated comments about the cherry blossoms and life being short, sung by the singers or the chanters and spoken by the actors.

The integration of Buddhist doctrine and nature symbolism had developed in Japan during the eighth century. The Japanese court relocated to Nara, which was patterned after the Chinese imperial capital of Chang'an (present day Xian) (Varley 21). Nara was originally surrounded by hills covered with wild cherry trees, and it was during this

time that cherry trees were domesticated and cherry-blossom viewing became a favorite recreation (Liddell 30). This pastime is seen in the *michiyuki* of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

Cherry blossoms are an integral part of the stage scenery, not just because it is spring or because they are pretty to look at. The vivacity and beauty of budding plants emerging in spring and the perfection of their first blossoms are savored and appreciated for a brief time since all things of beauty will die. Their delicate and fleeting beauty is symbolic of the aesthetic of transience expressed theatrically; everybody in the play, and in the audience as well, is here for just a short time.

In the *michiyuki*, the line "their heads fell like cherry blossoms" reflects this state as it compares the fleeting duration of the blossom's beauty with death. Moreover, the second scene juxtaposes the travel journey (*michiyuki*) theme of Tadanobu and Shizuka with the journey of life. In the last scene, the line spoken by Tadanobu "just as numerous as the cherry blossoms are the members of this audience" calls attention to this state of transience again.

The elements of nature play an important part in Buddhist dogma. Kyoto, where *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* takes place, was the imperial capital for over 1000 years, from the ninth century until the Meiji restoration in 1868. Originally called Heian-kyō ("City of Peace and Tranquillity"), Kyoto was selected as a site in adherence to the axioms of

*yin-yang* (Morris 1963, 28). Since the northeast direction was unpropitious, the locale had to be protected from this direction by alpine hills. In addition, the expanse had to be surrounded by water tributaries and verdant expanses of flowering trees, in particular, cherry trees. This panorama of beautiful pastoral scenery can be seen in the stage settings of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, as the story of the "Tadanobu Section" takes place in Kyoto and its surrounding hills.

Buddhist philosophy permeated the use of color with symbolic meaning. Achieving harmony was a major goal, and much attention was devoted to the coordination of an outfit. The Japanese love of nature was suggested by the silken layers of color in kimono worn by court ladies since Heian times. Except for the uppermost two kimono, all other layers of the ensemble were in solid colors which harmonized and reflected the resplendence of nature, such as beautiful flora or a particular season (Morris 1967, 92).

Thereafter, during the Momoyama era, design motifs of nature were incorporated into clothing, and kimono were decorated with botanical forms of flora. This interminable admiration of nature is seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* throughout the performance; both in the verbal passages as well as the visual display of scenery and costumes, described in Part II.



Restrictions on the color of apparel mandated that certain colors could only be worn in their proper season. The aristocracy observed a meticulous correlation between the four seasons and the color of apparel allowed to be worn in them (Morris 1967, 92). Therefore, it is quite spectacular to see a panorama of springtime on stage, with people attired in bright spring colors, when it is really December. I saw this performance in December, but it was also presented for the first time as kabuki in the middle of winter (This may have been a deliberate attempt by the Edo kabuki theatre and their *chōnin* patrons to flaunt these restrictions).

Existing along side with Buddhism, was the indigenous Shinto belief that acknowledges the existence of spirits in non-human things as well as in people (Varley 6). The Fushimi Inari Shrine seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, derived from the actual Shinto shrine in Kyoto, is associated with the fox deity. The inherent Japanese spirit (*yamato-damashi*) emerged in the Heian period as a mark of separateness from the customs and traditions imported from China.

The appearance of Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples in kabuki plays reflects the strong religious temperament of the people during the Edo period (Hamamura 82). In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, prominent displays of both religions can be seen: the Shinto shrine in the first scene, and the Buddhist temple in the last scene, which may also be symbolic of beginning and end, birth and death. In addition, there are overt symbols

such as Yoshitsune's leisure attire (*kariginu*) in the third scene, which is tied in a special symbolic knot seen at Buddhist altars.

### **HEIAN (KYOTO) COURT CUSTOMS**

The aristocratic society which evolved at the Kyoto court was based on privilege through status and enmeshed in the dictates of protocol, fashion, beauty, and refinement. These four pillars of courtly ways are seen throughout the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, especially in the magnificent costumes and gracious mannerisms of Shizuka, Lord Yoshitsune and the "real" Tadanobu.

#### **Protocol**

An important custom of Japanese culture had developed whereby the highest ranking person was accorded the highest position physically. During the Heian period, emperors who were children were placed on a dais in order to be higher than everyone else. The rest of the court was required to sit on the floor. Since antiquity, the Japanese have demonstrated their deference to superiors by lowering their heads. We see this protocol rigidly observed throughout the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, as no head can be higher than Yoshitsune's (ILLUSTRATION # 2). When Yoshitsune is not standing, he is seated on a special campaign-style bench. Throughout the performance, everyone else sits or kneels at a level subordinate to his, except at the finale of Scene Five, when Noritsune mounts a dais holding the child emperor Antoku.

## **Fashion, Beauty and Refinement**

### **Conventions in Attire**

High status was equated with amplitude. One could not easily change the appearance of one's height (except with high hats like eboshi, or platform-type shoes). However, the appearance of girth was easily accomplished by the volume generated from multi-layered clothing. To create an impression of broadness in the shoulders and chest, material was stiffened with starch, shoulder pads were added, and full widths of fabric were employed with the additional material gathered and folded inside the garment. In kabuki, there are enormous padded costumes seen on some of the heroes. The garments of Yoshitsune, the "real" Tadanobu, and especially Benkei, are heavily padded and styled to give this voluptuous effect (ILLUSTRATION # 2).

The appearance of a grander presence was also favored by women. Aristocratic ladies wore multiple kimono called *jūnihitoe*. Although *jūnihitoe* literally means a twelve-layered robe, the number of robes actually worn under this designation varied in number up to forty. The numerous layers of *jūnihitoe* worn by aristocratic ladies during the Heian period gradually diminished and was fixed at five by the Edo period (Shaver 159).

In kabuki performance, five kimono would still be too warm and cumbersome for the actor to perform in, so a imaginative technique has

been developed to suggest multiple robes. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Shizuka's kimono has extra padded hemlines sewn directly to the underside of the outer kimono to give the effect of many robes. This innovation is employed, not only because multiple robes would be too unwieldy to perform in, but also because this padded hem effect was employed in the kimono of aristocratic ladies in Edo society (Shaver 24). While this novel effect is seen on Shizuka's kimono, it is not seen on the kimono of Kawatsura Hogan's wife, since she is of the samurai class and dresses more conservatively.

One undergarment (*kosode*), made of solid white or red silk, became more prominent and was lengthened until it hung to the ankles. Since it extended beyond the kimono, it could be seen edging the outer kimono at the neckline and hemline. This undergarment, worn by both sexes, is seen on everyone wearing kimono in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

Long, flowing sleeves, which were adapted from Chinese court attire, were indicative of wealth and rank. During the Heian era, commoners referred to nobility as *naga-sode*, "long-sleeved people" (Liddell 44). Sleeves also indicated the age and marital status of the wearer. All the noblemen and noblewomen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* wear long sleeves, but Shizuka has longer sleeves than the other women indicating her youth as well as her high status. Full descriptions of these fashions are found in the section on costumes in Chapter Four.

### **Makeup and Hairstyles**

The use of the stark white face in kabuki by both women and men of the upper-class came from actual use in Japanese society. A pale white complexion was prized since the eighth century, when a white makeup was first introduced from China. Even though it contained potentially lethal substances of mercury chloride and white lead, its use as a cosmetic was still prevalent. Aristocrats of both sexes used white makeup, and to further designate a beautiful appearance, they also applied red coloring to their lips and blackened their teeth (Liddell 48).

Blackening of teeth became popular as a sign of beauty among women of nobility during the Heian period. Towards the end of eleventh century, noblemen copied this fashion. This fact is mentioned in the *Heike Monogatari*: "Atsumori was fifteen or sixteen years old, was lightly madeup with elegantly blackened teeth and truly fair of face. Kumagai therefore realized at a glance that Atsumori was a high born noble, and was further struck by his good looks and air of refinement which extended even to a light makeup" (Kawatake 1971, 139).

Fashion also dictated an appearance that required the natural eyebrows to be shaved and false eyebrows to be painted on the forehead. In kabuki, the actor's real eyebrows are whited out, and then artificial eyebrows are painted on (see section on makeup) (ILLUSTRATION # 5).

These conventions are all seen on the kabuki stage today, however, blackened teeth are not evident in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. All high-class women and men have white faces in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, with Shizuka and Yoshitsune having the whitest faces of all. Older noblemen and women have white faces in varying degrees of "slightly darker" than the hero and heroine, depending on their age and status.

During the Heian period, long straight hair was considered an admired feature for women. They styled their hair with a center-part, and ideally their hair cascaded down towards the floor (Morris 1963, 203). However, Shizuka, in the *akahime* role, wears her hair piled up on top of her head in an elaborate style common to the Edo period, and not hanging loosely as was the fashion in the Heian era (ILLUSTRATION # 5).

Women's hairstyles became more decorative as the Edo period progressed. The wives of wealthy *chōnin*, as well as the *onnagata* in kabuki, were influenced by the high-class courtesans of the Yoshiwara licensed quarter, who wore their hair up in elaborate hairdos, fastened with giant decorative hairpins (Liddell 139). Shizuka's hairstyle in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is in this style, complete with a four-tiered silver-ornamented hairpin, decorated with butterflies (ILLUSTRATION #5).

### **Decorum**

Palace interiors were decorated with ornately painted screens and screens with exquisite silk hangings, in the Chinese style (Liddell 33).

High-born women did not show their faces to any man except their master, father, husband or lover, and hid behind fans or a *kichō* "screen of state" (Morris 1963, 211). While I saw this convention employed quite dramatically in another play set in the Heian period (*Shigemoto no Haha* section from *Sugawara Denju Tenarai Kagami*), neither Shizuka nor any other woman in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* employ this convention. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Shizuka does have a fan but she does not hide her face, except for two sections in the *michiyuki*: first, when the chanter refers to her attractive figure, and then again, when she weeps during the reenactment of Tsuginobu's death.

Panels of silk, similar to the *kichō*, were trimmed with long flat streamers and used as room dividers or placed across doorways. This device is similar to the nine long silk streamers hanging across the entryway of Kawatsura Hogan's mansion in Scene Three.

## **KAMAKURA PERIOD**

### **The Historical Yoshitsune (1159-1188)**

The "Tadanobu Section" of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* centers around a legend from the life of Minamoto no Yoshitsune, one of Japan's greatest military heroes. Ivan Morris vividly chronicles Yoshitsune's life in *Nobility of Failure* (67-105). The thirteenth century war chronicle *Heike Monogatari* recapitulates how the Taira (another name for Heike) were defeated by the Minamoto in 1185 under the adroit leadership of

Yoshitsune, younger brother of Minamoto no Yoritomo. The first military ruler of Japan, Yoritomo established his headquarters at Kamakura, which gave its name to this period (1185-1333).

Yoritomo had the mistaken belief that Yoshitsune was involved in a court conspiracy which plotted to usurp him and gave directives for Yoshitsune's arrest. After almost two years of fortuitous escapes, Yoshitsune was finally captured and forced to commit ritual suicide at the age of thirty (Morris 1975, 67).

### **Military Styles**

Although descended from aristocracy, Yoritomo seized power from the emperor and Kyoto aristocracy and gave it to provincial warlords (Morris 1975, 67-105). During the Kamakura period, clothing styles developed to reflect the change in power from aristocrats to military men.

Yoshitsune had led his troops on horseback in the battle against the Taira displaying the Genji cartwheel insignia (*mon*) of the Minamoto clan on his banner. This is the design that can be seen on the kimono of both Tadanobu-*kitsune* and the real Tadanobu in scenes three and five of the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance (ILLUSTRATIONS # 7, 8, 9).

Armor played an important part in military attire. Japanese armor was designed to safeguard the warrior in battle and also identify his rank and clan by its color and ornamentation. The armor was constructed from thin segments of metal, usually iron or bronze, fastened together with



vibrantly colored silk cords in varied colors deepening from top to bottom or with decorative patterns in zigzag designs. Bright colors of red, orange or purple were designated for only the highest ranks.

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Yoshitsune's armor is the brilliant orange color exclusively designated for the highest rank. In the first scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Yoshitsune presents his own suit of armor to Tadanobu as a gift for Tadanobu's loyalty. The magnificent armor, seen in the first and second scenes, is strung with bright orange threads. The gift therefore was a great honor, as Tadanobu, who was below Yoshitsune in rank, could wear this prestigious rank of armor to fight in his Lord's name (ILLUSTRATION # 2).

However, in official meetings with the emperor, court protocol was followed and shōgun and daimyō wore *sokutai*, the official court attire of the previous Heian period. There are no audiences with the emperor or court in the "Tadanobu Section" of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, so this formal wear is not seen in the play, except for the final tableau (ILLUSTRATION #18).

The distinctive samurai hairstyles, which can be seen on Kawatsura Hogan and the "real" Tadanobu in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, date from the Kamakura era when warriors began shaving the tops of their heads to keep cool when they wore heavy battle helmets. Their side hair was oiled and drawn back into a pony-tail. When they were not wearing helmets, the

pony-tail was usually braided or coiled and doubled back over the top of the head. Both *chōnin* and farmers copied this custom of shaving their heads, but were forbidden to wear the same kind of topknot as samurai (Liddell 124).

### **THE INFLUENCE OF DIVERGENT TASTES**

The Edo period was influenced by the Muromachi Period (1336-1573) and the Azuchi-Momoyama Epoch (1568-1600) which preceded it (Varley ix). Various Japanese arts were developed during that time such as: *noh* and *kyōgen*, the tea ceremony, monochrome ink painting (*sumi-e*), and formalized flower arranging (*ikebana*). This was a time of conflict and political upheavals. Perhaps because of an external world of chaos, a quiet inner world of repose was needed to balance the vicissitudes of life, which promoted the development of these arts. However, in direct contrast, existing alongside this introspective docile world, was one of exuberance, colorful spectacle and exhibitionism.

### **Three Flamboyant Rulers**

During the pre-Edo period, three potentate, Yoshimitsu, Nobunaga, and Hideyoshi, influenced the populace who in turn influenced the visual dimension of kabuki. The Muromachi and Azuchi-Momoyama eras were named after the locations of the rulers' castles.

Yoshimitsu, the third shōgun (1358-1408), was enamored by things Chinese and often wore Chinese-styled attire or colorful bizarre fashions

(Sansom 1961, 172). Keene quotes an excerpt from Yoshimitsu's own diary which describes Yoshimitsu "wearing a narrow-sleeved, wide-hemmed costume of pale blue lozenge pattern tied with red sash, green leggings and red knee-length breeches ...This bizarre attire, the current craze among city dandies, excited comment, but was typical of the eccentric taste in dress" (Keene 38). This description of "city dandies" with "eccentric taste" sounds similar to the *kabukimono* who contributed to the formative period of kabuki.

In spite of Yoshimitsu's obvious penchant towards a theatricality accompanied by dazzling color and ostentatiousness, he also advanced the creativeness of the austere noh theatre by his official sponsorship of Zeami, the great noh actor and writer (Varley 80).

After Yoshimitsu's death, the Ōnin civil war (1467-1477) brought devastation throughout the land (Sansom 1961, 217). From these ashes of hardship, an age of opulence emerged that affected the spirit and attitude of the common people, and set the foundation that influenced Okuni Kabuki and the formation of the kabuki theatre.

The reign of Nobunaga and Hideyoshi is characterized by flamboyance. This era is often referred to as "Japan's Golden Age." Nobunaga and Hideyoshi used gold "freely and ostentatiously," both in their castles which exhibited screen paintings executed against backgrounds of gold leaf, and on their apparel which was embellished

with gold embroidery and gold leaf applique (Varley 107). Even the roof tiles of Hideyoshi's palace were capped with pure gold. Sansom describes lavish entertainment and processions characterized by brilliant color. This period is also referred to as the "Age of Opulence" (Sansom 1965, 382).

This love of opulence, highlighted by the lavish use of gold and dazzling color, is vividly displayed in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. Gold decorations and embellishments are seen in the stage sets, particularly in the third scene which takes place at the mansion of Kawatsura Hogan, and most spectacularly, in last scene with the magnificent Buddhist temple. Metallic gold decorates the architecture of the mansion's veranda and the temple which displays vividly colored paintings on gold backgrounds.

In addition to the stage settings, the leading characters have attire accented with gold. Both Tadanobu have large Genji *mon* embroidered in gold on their kimono. Shizuka has exquisite gold embroidery on her kimono and *obi*. Gold decorates the fans of Yoshitsune, Shizuka and Tadanobu. The drum Hatsune is decorated with a design of birds embroidered in gold, and Shizuka's hat has gold ribs. Throughout all the visual aspects, in addition to the gold accents, brilliant colors are displayed such as a bright red kimono, dazzling orange drum, and vibrant pink blossoms.

Succeeding Nobunaga was Toyotomi Hideyoshi, one of the "most colorful" figures in Japanese history (Varley 97). Hideyoshi exhibited a penchant for the noh theatre, not in its austere form, but as a dazzling spectacle with magnificent costumes. For example, Hideyoshi sometimes wore a Genji costume decorated with pure gold leaf when acting in noh performances. One depiction of Hideyoshi sounds like a spectacular kabuki performance: "characteristically clad in scarlet-laced armor with a helmet shaped like a Chinese headdress, with a huge gold quiver on his back, his teeth blackened, and a wig on his head." His horse was also spectacularly attired "in golden tasseled mail with ornaments of green and red" (Sadler 156).

An obvious dichotomy was reflected in the divergent tastes and philosophies of Hideyoshi and his tea master Sen no Rikyū (1521-91), a Zen priest who advanced the concept of *wabi* in the tea ceremony (Varley 112). The Zen aesthetic of *wabi* is the antithesis of ostentatiousness. *Wabi* aesthetics involve: "beauty in simplicity, naturalness, suggestion, asymmetry, and the withered, cold, and lonely" (Varley 143).

Although *wabi* and its related aesthetic *shibui* eventually influenced both the arts and raiment, these aesthetics ran counter to Hideyoshi's style. Contrary to the austere aesthetic principles of *wabi* in the tea ceremony, Hideyoshi amassed a costly agglomeration of Chinese porcelain tea bowls and built a teahouse covered in gold leaf. It is recorded that in

1587, Hideyoshi invited everyone in the capital, including foreigners and peasants, to a lavish tea party which lasted ten days (Varley 111).

There is a dichotomy in Japanese aesthetics whereby a fascination for the munificent and flamboyant coexists with a reverence for moderation and reserve. This dichotomy can be seen in the kabuki theatre; reflecting on one hand the utmost restraint and on the other hand the most flamboyant taste. This dichotomy can be seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Scene Two versus Scene Five, and even within the scenes themselves.

The flamboyant taste which could be seen among the higher classes affected the kabuki stage. According to Hamamura: "What attracts in kabuki is, first of all is beauty of costumes, extravagant material and dazzling effect; but real beauty of kabuki costumes is not found in such gay brilliance but rather in simplicity which is full of nuances" (Hamamura 31). The gay brilliance which also appealed most to the *chōnin* is still displayed on the kabuki stage. The spectacular views of colorful scenery and the sumptuous costumes elicit the greatest applause from the audience today.

Prior to the period of isolationism which Tokugawa Ieyasu inaugurated, Christian missionaries and foreign merchants had arrived with luxurious and unusual commodities and a diversity of weaponry (Sansom 1961, 371). The influence of Christian missionaries and Dutch

and Portuguese traders resulted in a cosmopolitanism which gave the Momoyama period a unique international style. At the time of Okuni, Japanese society had an intense curiosity about Western ways and sought novelty in imported items. Hideyoshi and his retinue wore foreign apparel with Christian rosaries on their chests. Okuni, in her performances, adapted these styles (ILLUSTRATION # 1).

### **Okuni**

Since the late sixteenth century, female performers had danced in *kanjin* performances, in order to raise funds for temples and shrines. They also performed privately in daimyō's mansions. One of these performers was Okuni of Izumo Shrine, the innovative originator of kabuki performance (Raz 139).

Okuni was employed as a shrine maiden (*miko*) throughout her earlier years, and involved in ritualistic dances that were performed at the shrine during festivals (Kokumin 202). In addition, Okuni traveled throughout Japan soliciting donations for shrine restorations and the expenses of clergy (Ortolani 22).

Although there are a few documents which describe the history of Okuni, the most reliable are those written about her during her time. *Izumo-O-Kuni Den (The Biography of Okuni of Izumo)* has been retained by the Senge family who are keepers-in-charge of documents at the Shrine at Izumo (Kincaid 49). According to their records, Okuni was the daughter

of Nakamura Sanyemon. He was employed as an artisan at the Great Izumo Shrine near the Nakamura district where the family lived. The shrine is located just north of Kitsuki in Shimane Prefecture in southwestern Japan near Matsue city (Yoshida 133). The documents at Izumo also relate how Okuni traveled to Kyoto during the beginning of the Keichō period (1596) and performed unusual dances (Nihon 65).

Characterized by both her novel appearance and off-beat behavior, Okuni was typical of the *kabukimono* ("tilted person") who existed before she made her kabuki performances popular (Raz 139). Okuni, the most famous *kabukimono* of her time, is credited with the introduction of kabuki (Ortolani 158). She catered to the *chōnin*'s desire for novel effects in costume, subject matter, and dance (Gunji 1968, 208).

Okuni's dancing employed the leaps, jumps and stamping of *fūryū-odori* (Gunji 1969, 20), erotic versions of religious dances such as the Buddhist *nembutsu odori* (Kenny 151), and Shinto shamanistic rites (Immoos 148). She also introduced unusual and exotic costumes. Okuni cut her long hair, wore it in a man's hairstyle, and dressed entirely in male apparel according to the playlets she was performing (Zusetsu 294). Sometimes, Okuni would dress as a Portuguese merchant or sailor, donning their entire regalia complete with a cross dangling from her neck (Immoos 148).



Paintings done at that time show huge audiences viewing Okuni's performance while she was wearing this outfit, as well as showing her real-life counterparts among the audience. Many foreigners were in the audience at that time as Japan had not been sealed off as yet from the rest of the world. A scroll called the *Kabuki Zōshi* dating from 1596-1615 shows Okuni wearing a black silk priest's robe with a giant gong suspended by a vermillion cord and a straw coolie hat (Gunji 1985, 20). Another popular outfit of hers was that of a samurai (ILLUSTRATION # 1).

The three elements that Okuni introduced into her kabuki performances were: exotic, bizarre and off-beat wearing apparel and props, outrageous mannerisms, and erotic and sensual themes (Shōji 120). (All these elements may be seen in the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.) Shōji states that "Okuni's willingness to incorporate new and unusual things in her act was a distinctive feature of her dancing. It also may have been the reason why her dancing attracted attention and became popular" (Shōji 120).

As early as 1603, it was recorded that Okuni was immensely popular and famous (Gunji 1985, 19). After her initial performances in the dry river bed of the Kamo River with her troupe consisting of a masterless samurai (*rōnin*) and a *kyōgen* performer, she was performing on the stage of Kitano, and took a new name "Kitano Tsushima No-kami" (Bowers 41). Her associate actors added *tayū* after their name, which was borrowed

from the jōruri singers to gain respect. Other troupes tried to imitate her sensational performances, until all women were banned from the kabuki stage in 1629 (Leiter 423).

Raz states that eroticism originated in shamanistic primitive rites, and there was a "subtle distinction between prostitution and religious devotion... When girl performers severed their connection with religious rites, they became plain prostitutes, but their connection with entertainment never ended." Raz goes on to state that *shirabyōshi* dancers (such as Shizuka in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*) and Onna Kabuki belong to this lineage of performers (Raz 141).

The first performances of Okuni were distinctly erotic in subject matter and exotic in attire. Okuni cross-dressed wearing *avant garde* fashions and enacted short dramatic scenes, which centered around themes with courtesans (Zusetsu 294). Perhaps this type of performance appealed to people awakened from the medieval age and "alive with a desire for freedom of passion, which was to be unchecked by feudalistic morals until it was extinguished" (Hamamura 67).

#### **THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDO**

The Edo period introduced a protracted period of peace, previously unknown for several centuries (Raz 136). Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616), powerful military daimyō descended from the aristocratic Minamoto family, ruled the country which had suffered from a long history of civil

wars. Ieyasu instituted a dynasty which ruled Japan for two hundred and fifty years (Varley 97). During this period, kabuki developed into a unique and dynamic theatre.

When foreign traders arrived in Japan, they introduced new ideas and customs. Feudal estates were dissolved, and master craftsmen who were released from their bonds had the autonomy to work independently. Many helped towards the development of the frontier castle town of Edo.

Ieyasu ensconced his military headquarters in Edo, hitherto a small provincial town (Varley 97). Castles were now established on the plateaus, and the heterogeneous populace who settled around these castles contributed to a thriving metropolis. Through the implementation of reforms which benefited them, the merchant class (*chōnin*) and market-oriented commoners were able to merge into the puissant bourgeoisie of the Edo period.

In 1635, the policy of "alternate attendance" (*sankin-kōtai*) was instituted by the shogunate. Daimyō were obliged to establish dual residency by spending every other year in attendance to the shōgun in Edo, and on alternate years, the daimyō were required to return home to their dominions but forced to leave their families in the capital as a warrant of their loyalty (Sansom 1963, 58).

*Sankin-kōtai* stimulated the growth of the economy, which in turn contributed directly to the wealth of the merchant class who were both the

patrons and audience of the kabuki theatre. The construction, furnishing, and maintenance of the daimyō's palatial estates in Edo generated business for the merchants and artisans who rendered the required commodities. Furthermore, daimyō were obligated to bring extravagant gifts for the shōgun upon their return, which fostered the development of local crafts (Sansom 1963, 58).

The yearly processions of daimyō and their retinues to and from Edo were demonstrations of power and status, often numbering in the thousands, and there were almost three hundred processions annually. The daimyō's family crest (*mon*) was heralded by the retainers on their banners and livery, and an official corp was responsible for identifying the *mon* and securing the maintenance of protocol and order (Liddell 113).

The Jidai Matsuri and the Aoi Matsuri, festivals held each year in Kyoto, recreate the grandeur of those magnificent processions. Traditionally, from early Edo times until today, the huge population of ordinary Japanese citizens who witness these processions can identify numerous personages involved in the processions by their total appearance, comprised of costume, hairstyle and headwear, props and *mon*. The people who surrounded me at these festivals could even identify the ownership of horses and carts by the appearance of the livery. This same sense of recognition by appearance carries over to the identification of characters seen on the kabuki stage.

The three urban centers of Edo, Osaka and Kyoto each projected a different character: Edo was a young, quickly-growing military capital, Osaka was the industrious commercial center, and Kyoto was the home of the traditional aristocratic court culture. These three regions each had their own characteristic natures which influenced the development of role types seen in kabuki: the rough and bravado *aragoto* style of Edo, and the soft and refined *wagoto* style of Kyoto and Osaka (Immoos 149). The influence of regional styles on kabuki role types is examined in Chapter Three.

### **Class Structure and Appearance**

In the seventeenth century, the Tokugawa shogunate used Neo-Confucianism, a revival of Confucianism during the Sung dynasty (960-1279), as a doctrinal foundation for governing the populace. Society was divided into four classes, in descending order: warrior, farmer, artisan, and merchant. This division emanated from the Confucian belief in a "natural social order" and was used by the Edo administration to ensure class separation (Sansom 1963, 73).

Ieyasu's regime continued the process that Hideyoshi had solidified, of partitioning society into the four separate classes and adopted the Neo-Confucian philosophy as a state policy, trying to preserve its power. There were continuous attempts by the shogunate to regulate the power of the

people through edicts which tried to reinforce class division through appearance and behavior (Varley 116-117).

Class division continued to be strictly delineated with the emperor and nobility at the top of the hierarchy and the merchants (*chōnin*) at the lowest level (Ortolani 156). However, there were other people who remained outside these four divisions and were considered classless. These pariah included actors, entertainers in the licensed quarters, courtesans, and "untouchables" (a category which included people who handled the dead or taboo substances); collectively, *hinin* were people who engaged in "debased jobs" and were regarded as "non-humans" by the rest of society (Raz 136).

The population of Edo grew commensurate with the wealth and economic power of *chōnin*, which soon rivaled that of the upper classes. As *chōnin* accumulated wealth, they could afford numerous luxuries, and by the 1600's, conspicuous consumption among both court and *chōnin* rivaled the flamboyance seen previously in the Momoyama period. This combination of opulence and flamboyance is particularly observable in kabuki performance, where a sumptuousness of costumes and scenery prevail. Under the sponsorship and financial support of the *chōnin*, the kabuki theatre was able to flourish (Kawatake 1990, 152).

The *chōnin*, who had commenced their power structure during the Momoyama period through the accumulation of wealth, controlled the

importation of profitable goods imported to Japan. Because of their knowledge of the variety of riches from abroad, and their wealth to acquire these commodities, the *chōnin* were in a unique position of fashion consciousness and display. *Chōnin* were both the patrons and the audience of the kabuki theatre.

The Tokugawa shogunate continually issued restrictive edicts which mandated all facets of *chōnin* appearance, including the colors and styles they could wear. The wealthy *chōnin* were thwarted in their attempts to flaunt their *nouveau riche* status and forbidden to wear certain kinds of silk, embroidery, stenciled gold and silver patterns, and tie-dyed patterns (Stinchecum 53).

However, the *chōnin* found ingenious methods to circumvent the government regulations by cleverly substituting things that projected the same appearance, such as appliques and stencils. Finding ways to bypass the continually issued government edicts became one of the games of the *chōnin*. A knack for inventiveness is also apparent throughout all aspects of the kabuki production, such as costumes, makeup, and scenery, and this is further discussed in Part II of the dissertation.

All levels of society had an appropriate appearance, mandated by law, which set them apart. The ceremonial wear of the shogun and high-ranking daimyō, such as Yoshitsune in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, were patterned after clothing worn at the imperial court since the Heian era.

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Two forms of court clothing were the *sokutai*, formal wear of the shōgun and top ranking officials worn only for court appearances, and a hunting garment called the *kariginu*, which is worn by Yoshitsune in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* (Shaver 27). His *kariginu*, a leisure attire outfit seen in Scene Three, has a bright orange stand-up collar which could only be worn by the highest ranking personages. The retainers, as well as Tadanobu in the first scene, also wear Heian style attire, but the *sokutai* is only evident on Yoshitsune in the last scene's final tableau (ILLUSTRATION #18).

The "real" Tadanobu and Kawatsura Hogan wear the uniform of the samurai class of the Edo period which consisted of *kamishimo* (upper and lower garment); a cape-like upper garment with wide extended shoulders stiffened with whalebone, worn over a pair of pleated wide trousers (*hakama*) (Shaver 133). This attire may also be seen on the *kōken*, the *kiyomoto* musicians appearing onstage, the *chobo* musicians in the *yuka*, and Tadanobu-*kitsune* in Scene Three. These performers, as well as Kawatsura Hogan in the first scene, wear *kamishimo* with ankle-length *hakama*.

While *hakama* were usually ankle length, some high ranking samurai wore them much longer, so they not only covered their feet but also trailed out behind them for several feet. The *hakama* seen in



These elegant trailing *hakama* can be seen on both the "real" Tadanobu and Tadanobu the fox (*kitsune*) in all scenes except for the first one, which is played by Tadanobu-*kitsune* in a rough (*aragoto*) style, and the second scene *michiyuki*. Since the first scene involves a fight sequence (*tachimawari*) and the *michiyuki* is a dance sequence, there can be no restrictions upon the legs or feet.

Tadanobu, both "real" and otherwise, wears the trailing *hakama* in the last three scenes. The lengthy pants visually highlight a graceful exit by the "real" Tadanobu as he is led away in the third scene. In that scene, Tadanobu-*kitsune* wears trailing *hakama* for a sense of style and beauty, and also to show the actor's skill since they are extremely unwieldy and great agility is required while engaging in acrobatic maneuvers. Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s movements become a *tour de force* of dexterity as he manipulates fantastic acrobatic movements (*keren*), like hopping up and down the stairs and jumping through traps, wearing this dramatic but cumbersome apparel. In particular, the prawn pose (*ebizori*) in which he bends backwards over the steps with Shizuka brandishing the sword over him, would not create the same poignant visual impression without his long trailing *hakama* cascading down over the steps behind him (ILLUSTRATION # 12).

During the Edo period, the formal attire of the military class, such as Kawatsura Hogan, the "real" Tadanobu, and the retainers in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, was standardized. Only samurai were permitted to wear two swords as an overt symbol of their status, and a rigid code of convention governed their use (Shaver 299). Even when samurai traveled incognito with a big straw hat (*kesa*) covering their face, to attend kabuki performances which were "off-limits" to them, they always carried two swords to signify their station (ILLUSTRATIONS # 3, 4).

In real life, ordinary retainers wore outfits similar to their overlord. Their loose-fitting trousers were bound tightly around the leg at the calf so they could fight without being hindered. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, because both Tota and his retainers (*yoten*) engage in fight sequences (*tachimawari*), they wear their trousers in this fashion. The *yoten* and their master Tota wear completely different outfits for theatrical effect. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, various types of *yoten* are seen, including "flower" (*hana*) *yoten*, so-called because they carry flower-topped poles. In real life, there were no *hana yoten*; these *yoten* are a kabuki convention.

Until the Edo period, commoners were not allowed to use umbrellas (Liddell 139). One of the props used by Shizuka to signify her high status as a "Red Princess" in the *akahime* role, is her umbrella. In real life, a commoner like Shizuka would not have been allowed to carry or use an

umbrella. However, there was never a "Red Princess" category in real life, and even on the stage, Shizuka is not really a princess, nor is she of the highest class: she is a *shirabyōshi* dancer who is the paramour of Yoshitsune.

By the early eighteenth century, although *chōnin* had become powerful elements of society through their wealth, government regulation restricted them to designated areas in the cities. The puppet and kabuki theatres were located in other confined areas, as were courtesans' houses, and these districts were jointly referred to as "the floating world" (*ukityo*) (Varley 122).

Courtesans were ranked into different categories, from highest to lowest class, and licensed accordingly. In kabuki, courtesans usually evoke deference and admiration from the audience. Varley comments: "The spawning grounds of townsman culture were the pleasure and entertainment quarters that formed the Yoshiwara in Edo...abounding in brothels ... teahouses" (Varley 122). Liddell remarks: "Willow trees lined the streets of the licensed quarters which contained the ... restaurants, tea houses, dance halls, and brothels. The willow was an ancient Chinese symbol for prostitution: "the popular sobriquet for this sensuous society was the willow world" (Liddell 129).

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Yoshitsune's famous lover was Shizuka. In real life, she was a *shirabyōshi* dancer, who like other

entertainers of her day, would have been required by law to live in a restricted area, unless a patron purchased a release (Ortolani 79).

Perhaps Shizuka, both the legendary mistress of Yoshitsune, as well as the stage Shizuka, appealed to the hearts of the *chōnin* because either as an *onnagata* or as a *shirabyōshi* dancer, she was one of the common people who was loved by the highest ranking hero of the land.

Restrictions were levied on the common people in all aspects of their lives, including the freedom to trade and communicate with foreign lands. Because of these restrictions, kabuki "provided the people with a dream, as well as knowledge acquired visually" (Hamamura 30). This may be the reason why both the kabuki and jōruri theatres flourished, since the world portrayed on the stage before the common people allowed them a view of the world beyond their own, sparked by their imagination and ignited by the creativity of the theatre.

The Genroku era (1688-1733) is often used generically to describe the *renaissance* that actually started around 1675, and lasted until about 1725 to mid-eighteenth century (Varley 122). Due to the wealth and influence of *chōnin*, their arts achieved a pinnacle of expression during this period, and they defined a beauty and entertainment which reflected their tastes. Sansom points out the "gaiety of color and pattern in clothing and decoration which reflected the mood of the times" (Sansom 1963, 153).

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## Aesthetics

Perhaps because ostentatiousness was typical of *chōnin* and courtesans, understatement became the epitome of the dignified upper-class who reflected "tea taste." Restrained patterns on fine silk in subdued shades of brown, blue, and gray reflected *wabi* (austere beauty) and *shibui* (refined elegance), concepts taken from the tea ceremony.

*Chōnin* found these somber colors unpalatable, since color and gaiety were part of their lifestyle. They tried to circumvent the ban against wearing specific colors by renaming them. For instance, since using the color purple was forbidden to commoners, the suffix "*ai*" (blue) or "*cha*" (tea or brown) was added (Stinchecum 62). The *chōnin*'s colorful exuberance had to be hidden under a sober-colored outer kimono which had a brilliant colored silk lining. Gunji states: "The world of kabuki, in its lavish display, color and excitement, provided like the lining of the kimono, a sense of secret daring and fulfillment difficult to gratify in the strictly regulated world outside the theatre" (Gunji 1969, 207).

The *chōnin* cultivated an aesthetic for austere styles called "*iki*" (*chic*), which was imbued with an undertone of sensuality. "An Edo merchant's wife or high class courtesan was thought to possess *iki* if she conveyed a delicate sexual nuance by an unexpected flash of a forbidden scarlet silk undergarment or by pulling her collar down suggestively at the back" (Liddell 169).

Kyoto's *chōnin* had their own version of *iki* termed *sui* (*savoir faire*), which was even more sensuous and alluring than Edo *iki*, and this particular *sui* can be seen during the *michiyuki* scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. Since the nape of the neck is the "erogenous zone" to the Japanese, by lowering the back collar more than usual (to display the nape of the neck), a tacit erotic statement is made.

In the sensual *michiyuki* scene, Shizuka wears her kimono in this manner, with the neckline pulled back further than usual, which shows a nuance of a seductive red undergarment (*kosode*) when she turns her back suggestively towards the audience, to show off her long neck and upper back (which the audience applauds). Shizuka's style of wearing the kimono, and her languorous movement may be directly contrasted with the austere manner of dress demonstrated by Kawatsura Hogan's wife.

Japanese costume and scenic designers partition sections of concentrated pattern with blank space based on an aesthetic expression known as "*ma*," which may be defined as interval, pause, or space (Leiter 1979, 305). In literature, speech, music, art, and theatre, the Japanese like to imagine what has not been expressed by the artist (Ernst 78). The Japanese poet Bashō said "if nothing is left unsaid, no goodness is left." By leaving something incomplete, *ma* allows the viewer to complete the "picture" with whatever he will (Varley 134). In addition, in kabuki

performance, the space and time when action is stopped serves as a contrast to the action that preceded it and the action that follows it.

This philosophy may be seen applied to the movement *kata* as well as the appearance *kata*. The concept of *ma* is covered in detail in the movement *kata* section in Chapter Five, and also specified throughout the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance in Part III.

Asymmetry reflects the Japanese aesthetic for irregularity (Ernst 73). Liddell cites Okakura Kakuzō in *The Book of Tea*: "Japanese prefer to view a harvest moon at the autumn equinox, not when it is completely full but two or three days before when shape is not yet perfect." Liddell adds: "The love of the imperfect is also reflected in the Buddhist theory of natural fallibility and a deep love of nature which abhors a straight line" (Liddell 109). In the second scene *michiyuki* of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, both Tadanobu and Shizuka walk around in a circular movement when placing their respective armor and drum on the tree stump. They do not walk directly to the stump and place the objects down. This aesthetic convention may also be seen in Chinese Beijing Opera, which was influenced by Buddhist philosophy (Wichmann 4).

### **Adaptions Between Society and Kabuki**

Kabuki found the impetus for creative development through the imaginative talent of great Genroku actors who developed and perfected

numerous *kata*, the stylized forms in kabuki performance which include costumes, makeup, properties, elocution and music (Toita 1961, 199).

A significant influence on *chōnin* fashion came from the stage, as kabuki actors created trends which may still be seen today. Costumes helped to promote an atmosphere of fantasy, and although many styles were too theatrical and extreme for the audience to adopt, some fashions introduced by actors onstage were adopted.

One of these fashions was the *obi*. An exceptionally tall *onnagata*, Ogino Sawanojo I (1656-1704), in order to divert attention from his height, wore a wide sash tied in a decorative bow in back; its ends cascading down to the floor. This innovative fashion was first copied by the courtesans, and thereafter, by ladies of the *chōnin* class (Shaver 50).

*Obi* are worn by all the *onnagata* in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. Although Shizuka and the other female characters wear *obi*, and they are in a late Heian time-frame, *obi* were not worn until the Edo period. This is a contemporary innovation of the Edo era. Previously, ladies of the Kamakura era had tied their kimono around with a simple, narrow sash.

Various styles of wearing the *obi* reflect the wearer's age, status, and occupation. Courtesans tie their *obi* in front in an ornate bow, while unmarried girls tie their *obi* in back with the extended ends cascading down. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, it may be noted that Shizuka ties her *obi* in front, which is the fashion for a courtesan, reflecting a convention



from real life (Edo period). The play's other female characters, the samurai's wife and her ladies-in-waiting, tie their *obi* in back.

A cultural tradition that had been established among the nobility during the Heian period was the use of a family crest (*mon*) (Stinchecum 64). This aristocratic custom was copied by the rest of society during Heian times and retained popularity through the Edo period. The Genji *mon* is composed of a cartwheel design. It can be seen on Tadanobu-*kitsune's* kimono in the *michiyuki* and on the "real" Tadanobu's kimono in Scene Three of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* (ILLUSTRATIONS # 7, 8, 9). In addition, the *mon* of acting families are also seen on the actors' kimono during the play. Besides kimono, *mon* decorate other items such as hand towels and banners, both onstage and off.

Other hairstyles and costumes were created especially for the kabuki stage to accompany kabuki's unique and dramatic styles of acting, such as *aragoto*, and actors delighted in creating fantastic costumes to please their audience (Noguchi 29). The bizarre costume and hairstyle seen on Yoshitsune's retainer Benkei is an example of this artistic license, as well as the costumes of the fox, the "naughty" priests, and the *hana yoten*, none of which were worn in real life (ILLUSTRATIONS # 1, 2, 3).

### **Games and Puzzles**

A pleasure-loving atmosphere prevailed throughout all classes of Edo society. Recovering from the harsh oppression and devastation of

feudal times, both physical and emotional, the people craved novelty and excitement. Many people in Edo society liked to play guessing games. Allusions to both popular and classical literature, riddles, and puns were often woven into kimono designs. A popular amusement consisted of wearing kimono "decorated with some challenging puzzle that would give people enjoyment by trying to decipher its meaning" (Liddell 139).

This love for puzzles and guessing games to discover real meanings is also seen in kabuki. The characters on stage are often not who they appear to be, but "in reality" (*jitsu wa*) someone else (Brandon 1975, 5). For instance, in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, a magical fox is seen masquerading as Yoshitsune's loyal retainer Tadanobu; a basic underlying theme of the play is his metamorphosis from man to fox.

Likewise, a major historical figure may appear "in disguise" (*yatsushi*), and then later reveal his true identity. This provides a dramatic highlight in the play (Brandon 1975, 5). In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the famous Heike general Noritsune is disguised as the priest Kakukan. When his true identity is made known, various *kata* reflect that revelation with a change in costume, wig, lighting, and backdrop.

The other characters on stage, although not in disguise, are not exactly who they appear to be: Shizuka, in the *akahime* role, is not really a high-class princess, but a *shirabyōshi* dancer (entertainers were considered below the lowest class as *ninjin*), the priests are not pious but

really evil and "naughty," and Benkei, who appears to be an over-emotional fool, is really the clever supporter of Yoshitsune.

### **The Genji Revival**

*The Tales of Genji (Genji Monogatari)* was an aristocratic romance novel from the Heian era written between 1001 and 1014, according to Sen-ichi Hisamatsu (Abe 1970, 3). Re-popularized during the Edo period, the aristocratic motif of this novel inspired *chōnin*, who were smitten with "Genji fever" and avidly pursued anything with a Genji theme. Once again, Heian court attire became stylish as it represented aristocratic taste. Chinese-style clouds were considered the most aristocratic design, and *chōnin* called *courtiers* "gentlemen who dwell among the clouds" referring to their elevated rank which was distant from their own earthy lives (Stinchecum 28).

The Genji revival continued from the Momoyama through the Edo period, and was manifest in items such as: kimono decorated with the Genji cartwheel crest (*mon*), seen on costumes throughout *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*; games such as those mentioned in the song in the *michiyuki* about villagers who decorate shells for these games; and stories from famous Genji battles, such as the Battle of Genji sequence in the *michiyuki* recounted by Tadanobu and Shizuka.

The amusements and fashions of the Heian court provided a source of inspiration for kabuki. The Heian game of matching pairs of clamshells

was a favorite with all classes during the Edo period (Liddell 161). These clamshells are referred to in the *michiyuki* of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. The clamshell matching game is still played today in the festival called *Aoi Matsuri*, held each spring in Kyoto, which re-enacts court life from the Heian period.

Kimono with the elongated sleeves of Heian times became stylish. These kimono, called *furisode* (swinging sleeves), were supposedly imbued with special powers which could "capture a man's spirit" (Liddell 163). As a result, *furisode* could only be worn by young unmarried ladies, while married ladies had to wear their sleeves at wrist-length. Shizuka wears the *furisode* in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, while all other female characters wear kimono with shorter sleeves.

### **Interaction Between Society and Kabuki**

As previously described, many conventions and styles were adapted from society to kabuki, and from kabuki to society. This was facilitated due to the mutual interaction that existed between the kabuki actors and the audience, both onstage and off. The kabuki theatres were deliberately located by the government within the areas designated to commoners. There was a close relationship between the kabuki actor and his audience due primarily to the fact that the actors and audience probably communicated with each other outside the theatre on an informal basis.

Officially, the upper classes were restricted from attending kabuki, and *chōnin* were banned from learning noh texts and music. However, due to the expense incurred by the maintenance of luxurious lifestyles, nobility augmented their income by teaching traditional arts such as painting, calligraphy, and music to families of wealthy *chōnin*. In addition, marriages between these two classes ensued in an attempt to mutually improve their circumstances (Liddell 112).

After 1615, many samurai were unemployed and even impoverished. Because of their indebtedness, samurai sold the *chōnin* their allotments of rice, their venerated swords, and even their rank (Raz 136). Due to their insolvent state, masterless samurai (*rōnin*), became actors and introduced martial elements into kabuki performance, which developed into the stylized *kata* of different *tate* seen in the *tachimawari* sequences (Hamamura 68).

During kabuki performances in the Edo period, various spontaneous interaction between actors and audience took place, such as greetings and felicitations, shouts of approval (*kagokae*), and the public presentation of gifts. Actors were presented with various gifts from their patrons and fans, such as rice, lengths of cloth, costumes, horses, rank, and land, which created a personal bond between them (Raz 138).

In the presentation of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, there is more interaction between actors and audience than is usual for most kabuki

performances today, and all the various interaction previously mentioned between actors and audience can be seen, except for the public presentation of gifts.

In 1724, a government edict further limited all aspects of life for each class of society, from the size of official ceremonies and the exchange of presents to the minutest details of clothing and hairstyles. These restrictive orders mandated especially harsh restraints for kabuki actors, not only when they were performing on stage, but also in their private lives (Noguchi 29).

Throughout the Edo period, most actors had to provide their own costumes at their own expense (Wazumi 128). Only low-ranked actors were provided cheap costumes by the theatre. It was financially difficult for actors to purchase expensive material for costumes, and even if they received the material or costumes as a gift from a wealthy patron, they were often reluctant to use them, as luxurious attire both on stage and off was forbidden by law. Actors created costumes that would appear beautiful to the audience out of bits and pieces of silk and other materials which resulted in ingenious styles (Hamamura 32).

Kawatake discusses the oppressive realities that existed for centuries in Japan. The demands of authority and obligations required by society (*giri*) went strongly against the individual's human feelings (*ninjō*) (Kawatake 1990, vi). The *giri-ninjō* theme of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is

seen throughout the play in the physical presence of the drum, which symbolizes duty and obligation versus personal feelings, and the conflict of people struggling to live within the severe restrictions of their world.

Kawatake explains:

The people sought to dispel gloom derived from their impaired personal relationships and gain emotional stability by weeping at the plays about sorrow within their feudal society. People saw reflections of themselves in the make-believe of kabuki and were able to purge themselves of their pent-up emotions by tears of sympathy shed during sad scenes (Kawatake 1990, 155).

However, beside this sad element which provided a catharsis for the people, in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* there was also an interrelated comic element throughout the performance, whereby people could laugh and enjoy themselves. In addition, the vibrant beauty of the scenes such as the *michiyuki*, provided people with a day-long panorama where they could relish the joy of life and beauty of nature.

During the Edo period, the kabuki program consisted of one long play which included historical acts (*jidaimono*) and domestic acts (*sewamono*), lasting approximately ten hours, from early morning until evening. This custom continued at least in part until the end of the Tokugawa era. The complete play of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* would fit into this category.

### **Influences of Puppet Theatre**

Since *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is a kabuki adaption from the puppet theatre, it would be advantageous to briefly review the historical background of the puppet theatre for better understanding.

#### **History of Jōruri**

During the middle of the Muromachi period (1336-1573), blind minstrels (*zato*) recited narrative tales to the accompaniment of a lute (*biwa*) and a fan which they struck rhythmically on a wood block (Leiter 149). These *zato* wandered about from place to place, leading a homeless existence like gypsies. Whether they performed at compounds of shrines and temples, street corners, or inns, they were considered "beggars" and treated accordingly (Kincaid 146).

During this same period, strolling puppet players also wandered around in similar gypsy-like fashion, giving simple performances with boxes suspended by cords around their necks which provided miniature stages for the movements of small dolls (Keene 1961, 4).

In the mid-sixteenth century, the *zato* joined forces with the puppeteers, and replaced the fan with the newly introduced shamisen for musical accompaniment to a popular ballad called "jōruri." This combination developed into a puppet theatre form (*ningyō jōruri*) that competed with and at one time even rivaled kabuki for public favor (Inoura 1981, 175).



The earliest puppet plays, created at the beginning of the sixteenth century, were simple narratives. They described the love affair of Ushiwakamaru, Yoshitsune's name as a youth, and Princess Jōruri, who was not a real princess but a wealthy merchant's daughter from the eastern part of Japan. These ballads grew popular and were called jōruri after her (Leiter 150).

During the late seventeenth century, Takemoto Gidayū (1651-1714) founded *gidayū bushi* in Osaka (Keene 1961, 4). Gidayū, originally a farmer, learned to sing jōruri from the minstrel Aeon Harima in Dōtombori, the theatre street of Osaka (Shaver 48). Thereafter, he took lessons from Kiyomizu Rihei and changed his name to Kiyomizu Ridayu, before changing it again to Takemoto Gidayū (Inoura 1981, 178).

Gidayū created a new school of jōruri by combining the best features from various jōruri schools, and its popularity soon overshadowed these other schools (Hamamura 37). Gidayū enlisted the writing talent of Sugimori Nobumori, a dramatist and poet known thereafter as Chikamatsu Mozaemon, to collaborate with him in creations for the *ningyō jōruri shibai*, known today as the puppet theatre bunraku (Inoura 1981, 179). Tatsumatsu Hachirobei, an accomplished puppeteer (*ningyō tsukai*), joined Chikamatsu and Gidayū. Their combined talents created the total jōruri form (Shaver 48).

Gidayū developed a unique form of narrative chanting (*gidayū bushū*) to describe the setting of a particular scene, or to express a character's emotional feelings, which is mimed by the puppets (Morita 1985, 7).

Gidayū started a theatre in Osaka called the Takemoto-za (Scott 21). Takeda Izumo, one of the co-authors of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, became the director of Gidayū's theatre in 1705 (Keene 1961, 6). Competition between Gidayū's theatre and the nearby Toyotake-za resulted in many improvements in stage management, plays, settings, costumes, stage devices, and methods of handling the puppets (Kincaid 148).

The tradition of Gidayū exists today and is present in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance. The *chobo* singers in the *yuka* are professionally given the name Takemoto to carry the tradition. The plays which were adapted from the *jōruri* repertoire to kabuki are referred to as *gidayū kyōgen*, *denden mono* or *maruhon mono* (Gunji 1969, 25).

#### **Adaptions to Kabuki**

During the late Momoyama and early Edo period, kabuki and the puppet theatre originated as two main amusements of the *chōnin*. Developing along side each other for over a century, these two theatres mutually affected each other's style.

According to Hamamura, "the kabuki actor's manner of speaking, which is closer to singing, and his movements, which are closer to dancing, and all the other exaggerations of presentation came from the influence of the puppet show" (Hamamura 38).

When a puppet play had been a success, its presentation influenced the kabuki performance, which tried to imitate it to please the audience. In order to express its thoughts or feelings, puppets move in a highly exaggerated way; the puppet's over-exaggerated movement is to compensate for its lack of human expression while playing a human. The kabuki actor who portrayed the same role as the puppet tried to imitate the super-human feats as well as the movements of the puppet. This can be seen in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, where Tadanobu does various amazing and dexterous acrobatics and tricks (*keren*) such as hurdling through different parts of the stage scenery and "flying" through the air.

Puppeteers make the puppets move in an exaggerated manner because it creates a beauty of form. In plays adapted for kabuki, the live kabuki actors imitate the puppet's action as closely as possible for this aesthetic effect. This influence can be seen in the kabuki production of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, especially in the exaggerated and difficult movements such as the "shrimp-pose" backbends (*ebizori*) done by Tadanobu-*kitsune*.

In addition, movement is determined by the *jōruri* themes that were appropriated by the kabuki theatre and are evident in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. The first classification of *jōruri* plays revolved around themes of the efficacy of prayer to gods (Inoura 1981, 173). Various stage techniques and machines were invented to assist with the apparition and departure of gods and supernatural beings. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Tadanobu-*kitsune* displays this miraculous power by his sudden and amazing appearance and disappearance "tricks" (*keren*) through all parts of the stage scenery, as well as emerging from the *hanamichi* trap (*suppon*), and "flying" through the air (*chūnori*) above the audience, with the aid of machinery.

The other classification of *jōruri* plays focussed on themes of military power and the amazing adventures of a super-hero called Kimpira, "the incarnation of courage, a slayer of devils and demons" (Shaver 48). This popular hero affected the first Ichikawa Danjūrō's debut which introduced the *aragoto* style.

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, this super-hero who displays beyond-human strength may be seen in the dual roles of Tadanobu, especially in the spectacular fight scenes (*tachimawari*) where the two Tadanobu, both fox and "real," always emerge victorious after arduous battles with scores of opponents.

### **Adaption of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura***

The puppet theatre reached unprecedented heights of success during the Genroku epoch (1675-1725), attracting the best playwrights. Due to its popularity, the "Golden Age of the Puppet Theatre" influenced the development of kabuki, which had hitherto been theatrical performances with simple plots (Morita 1985, 7). Kabuki adapted jōruri's most popular plays, and in addition to the literary content, the form was also adapted as kabuki actors infused their acting style with the movement of puppets.

*Kokusenya Kassen*, a large scale historical piece (*jidaimono*) written by Chikamatsu for the puppet theatre, debuted at the Takemoto-za in Osaka in 1715. *Kokusenya Kassen* was incorporated into kabuki in 1716 and debuted at Kyoto's Miyako Mandayu-za. The following year, it debuted in Edo at the Nakamura-za and the Ichimura-za. After enjoying theatrical prominence for many years, Keene points out that "the puppet theatre lost rapidly in popularity to the kabuki at the end of the eighteenth century" (Keene 1961, 8). The kabuki theatre had distinct advantages over jōruri due to the talent of live actors and a greater performance area. With the adaption of outstanding plays from jōruri, kabuki was able to increase its expressiveness and popularity (Jones 24).

Because of the success of the kabuki production of *Kokusenya Kassen*, numerous kabuki adaptations of other puppet plays followed,

including *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, *Sugawara Denju Tenarai Kagami*, and *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, all written by the same trio of playwrights: Takeda Izumo, Namiki Sōsuke (Senryū) and Miyoshi Shōraku (Inoura 1981, 180).

Sources present various information on the production dates and appearances of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. Gunji states that all three jōruri masterpieces were adapted from their first performances to kabuki "within a month" (Gunji 1969, 25). He goes on to state that *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* was first performed as a puppet play in the eleventh month of 1747, and debuted as a kabuki production at the Nakamura-za in Edo in 1748, where it ran for "more than seventy days" (Gunji 1969, 106). While the exact month the kabuki performance actually debuted at the Nakamura-za in Edo is not specified, Gunji seems to imply that it was first presented there at least two months after its jōruri debut, since 1748 is specified.

Jones states the play was initially performed as kabuki at the Osaka theatre Ise no Shibai in January 1748, which was within two months of its successful debut as a puppet play at the Takemoto-za. Four months later (which would be May 1748), *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* was first presented as a kabuki production at the Nakamura-za in Edo. One month later, it debuted at the Morita-za in Edo with the famous *onnagata* Yoshizawa Ayame performing the dual Tadanobu roles. In August of 1748,

the kabuki production returned to the Naka no Shibai in Osaka (Jones 26).

Brandon, using the *Kabuki Nempyō*, states that *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* debuted at Edo's Nakamura-za in the fifth month of 1748, and played to full houses for seventy days (Brandon 1975, 16). During Scene Two in the December 1992 performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Tota makes a proud and nostalgic reference to that memorable event: "...the Nakamura-za, now called the Kabuki-za, where this play was first presented in Edo!" (Part III of dissertation).

The month that the play *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* was introduced, either in jōruri or kabuki, may have influenced its reception by the audience. The spectacularly beautiful and brilliant spring scenery which accompanies the play in both kabuki and jōruri, would have made a vivid impression on an audience emerging from a drab, gray day in the middle of a barren winter, and provided much more of an impact to accompany the play's theme of the fragility of life, as nature moves swiftly on.

For the kabuki performances of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* in Edo, puppeteers and musicians were hired from Osaka's Takemoto-za puppet theatre, resulting in the incorporation of jōruri performance techniques which affected kabuki production in the areas of acting, stage machinery, and music. Dialogue was restructured for the elocution of live actors, additional roles types were included for greater variety, and transition

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scenes and comical sequences were added, such as the comical sequences in both the first and third scenes, which involve humorous dialogue and choreographed fight scenes (*tachimawari*) between and Tota and his gang of ten men and Tadanobu-*kitsune*.

According to Gunji, of all these elements, the greatest influence on kabuki was the *gidayū bushi* music developed by Takemoto Gidayū, because the motions of the actors were dictated by the music which governed the movements of the puppets (Gunji 1969, 25).

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the *gidayū bushi* (*chobo*) music, which includes singing/chanting and shamisen, has been retained and is part of the performance. The *chobo* musicians can be seen above the stage on the right in an enclosure (*yuka*), with an opening regulated by a straw roll-up curtain. The presence of the *chobo* musicians is especially pronounced in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* during the *michiyuki*, as they provide commentary accompanied by shamisen throughout this section.

Originally, *jōruri* plays were constructed in six acts, but five acts for *jidaimono* became the rule in Chickamatsu's time (Leiter 150). In the English translation of the *jōruri* play by Jones, five acts are mentioned. The December 1992 production of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* presents the "Tadanobu Section" in five parts (each is not a separate act, but a scene). However, these parts are different from the *jōruri* play, and do not represent either the complete *jōruri* play or the complete kabuki play, as



they are sections which revolve around the theme of a magical fox. Derived from the content of the larger play, these related sections are pulled out and assimilated into one unified performance.

In the following discussion, when I indicate "the kabuki performance," I am referring specifically to the December 1992 performance at the Kabuki-za Theatre in Tokyo, which included only the "Tadanobu Section," and not the entire kabuki play which parallels the entire jōruri play. A comparison of the "Tadanobu Section" to the total jōruri play translated by Stanleigh Jones follows.

The "Tadanobu Section" contains three acts and five scenes: Act One has one scene, "Before Torii Gateway To Inari Shrine At Fushimi." Act Two has one scene, "Journey With The Drum (*Michiyuki Hatsune no Tabi*)." Act Three has three scenes, "Kawatsura Mansion At Yoshino," "Inner Garden of Mansion," and "Before Zaōdō Hall." (For clarity in future discussions, I refer to these five scenes as Scene One, Scene Two, Scene Three, Scene Four, and Scene Five.)

Act One of the jōruri play contains four scenes: "The Imperial Palace," "The Hermitage at North Saga Village," "The Horikawa Mansion," and "Kawagoe Tarō Comes As Envoy." None of Act One is included in the kabuki performance.

The kabuki performance starts with Act Two Scene I of the jōruri play: "Before The Fushimi Inari Shrine." In the kabuki performance, this

scene starts Act One and is entitled "Before Torii Gateway To Inari Shrine at Fushimi". Act Two Scene II "The Zaō Hall," and Act Two Scene III "The Conference At Zaō Hall" of the puppet play are omitted in the kabuki performance.

Act Two, Scene IV of the jōruri play: "The Mansion of Kawatsura Hogen" and Scene V: "The Fox," are combined in the kabuki production into Act Three, with three scenes: "The Kawatsura Mansion at Yoshino," "Inner Garden of Mansion," and "Before Zaōdō Hall."

Act Three, Scene I of the jōruri play: "The Pasania Tree," Scene II: "The Death of Kōkingo," and Scene III: "The Sushi Shop," are not included in the kabuki performance.

Act Four, Scene I of the jōruri play: "*Michtyuki*: The Journey With The Drum" corresponds to Act II of the kabuki production. This particular portion of the jōruri play closely parallels the kabuki production, which also has the same title.

Act Five, which is rarely presented, was not included in Jones' translation of the jōruri play, nor was it included in the "Tadanobu Section."

**PART II: KATA SEEN IN YOSHITSUNE SENBON ZAKURA**

### CHAPTER THREE: ROLE TYPE KATA

Characters in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* can be divided into four basic role type *kata*: *aragoto*, *wagoto*, *onnagata* and *kitsunegoto*. Each character has a set role type that remains constant throughout the performance, except that of Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s metamorphosis from "man" to "pure" fox. In the first scene, Tadanobu-*kitsune* is in disguise as Yoshitsune's loyal retainer. The actor plays this part in a strong, bravado *aragoto* style. However, the "real" Tadanobu, seen in subsequent scenes, does not act, dress or look like the imposter Tadanobu in any of the fox's disguises.

In the following *michiyuki* sequence, Tadanobu-*kitsune* is seen in a softer, graceful *wagoto* style. Thereafter, in his metamorphosis from "man" to "pure" fox, Tadanobu-*kitsune* goes through successive stages of transformation, which are each accompanied by a corresponding change in costume, voice and movement into a *kitsunegoto*, or "pure" fox style.

Within the framework of the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance section in Part III, the role types are described in detail with regards to their appearance in unison with their accompanying actions. Appearance *kata*, such as costumes, makeup, and wigs, and movement *kata*, such as *roppō*, *mie*, and *tachimawari*, are examined in Chapters Four and Five which follow. Only the main role types seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* will be discussed in detail.

## HISTORY AND CREATION OF ROLE TYPES

During the Edo period, a person could be identified as to his age, his occupation, and his home origin by both his apparel and his mannerisms. This same process of identification carried over to the characters on the kabuki stage, and by the time of the Genroku era, there was already a systematic division of role types in kabuki. As plays became more intricate, established classifications of role types were insufficient to cover the expanding variety of characters portrayed in the newer plays, so the classification of role types was extended. For example, the early "badman" role (*katakiyaku*) had an ugly face, but later roles for bad men who were also handsome (*iroaku*) were created (Toita 1958, 109).

Kabuki roles are differentiated as to sex, age, character, and circumstances (Soma 93). This division of parts (*yakugara*) is well established and as a rule an actor plays only a certain role, such as *tachiyaku* (leading role), *oyakata* (master), *dōgegata* (fool), *hanagata* (flower), *wakaonnagata* (young woman), *wakashūgata* (young man), and *koyaku* (child). Soma provides an extensive description of over one hundred role types in his book *Kabuki: Ishō to Funsō* (Soma 95-100).

Gunji relates how the division of roles into standard types of *yakugara* developed in a system of "type casting" or "specialization" (Gunji, 1969, 32). After women were banned from the kabuki stage in 1629, the men who took over the female roles were termed *onnagata*, while the men

who portrayed male role types were referred to as *tachiyaku*. Gunji points out that "strictly speaking" *tachiyaku* only refers to the leading male roles. During the Kambun era (1661-1673) in the *keiset-kai no kyōgen*, plays which centered around assignations with courtesans, there were three type of roles: the hero who frequented the courtesan quarters (*tachiyaku*), the courtesan (*wakaoyama*), and the comic role (*dōkeyaku*). These three rudimentary categories formed the foundation for the entire subsequent *yakugara* system (Gunji 1969, 32).

With continuous elaboration, a large number of subdivisions of the main categories developed. *Tachiyaku* role types include: *wakashūgata* (youth role), *aragotoshi* in *jidaimono*, *nimaine* (romantic lead), *wagotoshi* in *wagoto* pieces, *pintokona* (soft, somewhat effeminate lead) and *shimbo-tachiyaku* (silent sufferer lead). *Onnagata* role types include: *musume* (young girl), *tayū* (high-ranking courtesan), *katahazushi* (woman of high ranking samurai household (Gunji 1969, 32). In addition, there are subdivisions under the *katakiyaku* role type.

It may be noted that role types are classified differently by the various authors. Shaver divides role types into eight categories, which are either male (*otokogata*) or female (*onnagata*). They include: "*tachiyaku*; leading male character or man of eminence, *wakashūgata*, young man or boy, *oyajiyaku*; old man, *katakiyaku*; villain; *nyōbogata*; leading female character around thirty years of age; *kashagata*, old woman; *wakaoyama*,

young unmarried girl fourteen to eighteen years old and *koyaku*; child's role" (Shaver 51).

In its formative period, kabuki came to have general broad categories of color that were associated with role types. For instance, the leading young hero always had a pure white face. Moreover, in the makeup called *kumadori*, red lines always symbolized a man who was good and brave, and indigo an utterly evil man (Soma 27).

The stylization that may be seen throughout Japanese artistic expression, is reflected in kabuki role types, where a conventionalized form of expression is employed. Kawatake states:

The beauty of sight and sound is not the beauty of nature and reality as such, but beauty given an extra dimension by selecting its elements from nature and reality according to an individual aesthetic sense and then recreating it by restricting, exceeding or accentuating particular aspects is stylized beauty and the process of recreation stylization (Morita 1985, 87).

This stylization results in defining stereotypical qualities distilled from real life, which are then given creative expression in the total presentation of role type. While the most obvious example of this creative stylization may be seen in the role of *onnagata*, the same aesthetic abstraction is common to all role types and will be explained in detail throughout the appearance and movement *kata* sections which follow.

In addition, there are differences in kabuki between historical plays (*jidaimono*) and domestic dramas (*sewamono*), the rough type of *aragoto* acting, and the soft and graceful style of *wagoto*; each have their own mode. The classics are organized into fixed categories of set styles by tradition, but there are also certain established styles that come and go with the individual actor's uniqueness (Soma 27).

Role types in kabuki were influenced by the native temperaments of the regions from which they emerged. The various characteristics of kabuki can be placed into two general styles of kabuki performance based on geography: the Edo style, which developed in the area of present day Tokyo, and the Kamigata style, which developed around Kyoto and Osaka. These two styles still differ from each other in form and content, and because they have mutually influenced each other, the strong differentiation that once existed has been lessened (Morita 1985, 6). These styles directly influence the coordinated appearance of the role types which includes costumes and makeup, as well as mannerisms.

The *Gezairoku*, a book compiled in 1801, discusses kabuki playwrights' dramatic writing techniques and describes the stylistic differences of drama between the Edo, Kyoto and Osaka regions. It states that, in general, people from Kyoto are soft and gentle-natured and prefer romantic drama. The people of Osaka are contentious and their drama focuses on the conflict between the obligations of society versus their own



personal feelings (*giri ninjō*). Edoites are quick-tempered, and prefer dramas that depict super-heroes battling against the forces of evil. The *Gezairoku* compares the three styles: "If the Kyoto style of drama is like the 'heart of a beautiful woman', then the Osaka style is the 'man', and the Edo style is like the 'spirit of the samurai'" (Morita 1985, 6).

While Edo types were rough and demonstrated bravado, strutting in wide big swaggering steps, arms and hands out in wide gestures, Kamigata types demonstrated a quiet, restrained and genteel personality. On the kabuki stage, for theatrical effectiveness, these attributes were magnified.

Morita points out that in Kamigata kabuki, primary emphasis is on the plot. By contrast, in Edo kabuki, the lead role is paramount and is usually accompanied by spectacular feats of the super-hero (Morita 1985, 7).

With the inauguration of the Tokugawa military regime in Edo in the Keichō era (1596-1614), Kyoto ceased to be Japan's political center, while retaining the Imperial Court with its refined aristocracy. Kyoto's genteel citizenry took mutual pride as the "common townspeople" (*machi-shū*) who had developed a unique cultural tradition for centuries. Within this tradition, a liberal atmosphere prevailed which influenced drama, and plays relating to courtesans became popular (Morita 1985, 6).

With the development of romantic plays which centered around courtesans, Sakata Tōjūrō (1644-1709) created a unique theatrical style

called *wagoto*, a graceful choreographic form which became the dominant style in Kamigata kabuki (Brandon, 1975, 6). This style of acting can be seen in the role of Tadanobu-*kitsune* as he appears in the *michiyuki* scene in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

Osaka developed as a city of merchants (*chōnin*), whose lives were caught up in a struggle for survival which centered on financial problems and commercial interchange. These conditions favored the development of *sewamono* "worldly" or "domestic" plays, created by Takemoto Gidayū and Chikamatsu Monzaemon, who addressed the townspeople's concerns in the development of the puppet theatre which originated in Osaka (Morita 7).

In contrast, Edo developed as a dynamic new frontier town, which projected a rambunctious atmosphere, such as the American "wild west." With the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate, *chōnin* and *daimyō* from throughout Japan flocked to Edo, which quickly mushroomed from a small village into a major city. The exuberance of this spirited new culture favored the appearance of *aragoto* role types (Raz 136).

### ***Aragoto***

*Aragoto* "rough style" is a forceful "bravura" style that "projects power, masculine vigor, and sometimes superhuman strength in male roles" (Brandon 1978, 68). *Aragoto*'s costumes and movements are stylized, bold and exaggerated to produce a spectacular theatrical effect; they coordinate

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with the other *kata* in creating all aspects of the role, such as makeup, headwear, props, and elocution.

The Edo shogunate imposed harsh laws on the common citizens which severely restricted their lives, and their discontentment was expressed in their desire for a super-hero with supernatural power. Morita cites a connection between the *aragoto* style and *goryo shinkō*, a spirit-worshipping folk cult which sprung from the belief that the disasters which plague the world were caused by curses of vengeful spirits. These spirits were worshipped by the people who hoped to appease their anger, and use the spirits' supernatural powers to protect them. According to Morita, the *goryo* cult is considered to be one of the major factors in the emergence of the *aragoto* style (Morita 1985, 8).

The creation of the *aragoto* style is credited to Ichikawa Danjūrō I (1660-1704), leading Edo actor of the Genroku period (Brandon 1978, 68). Danjūrō made his stage debut at the age of fourteen, appearing at Edo's kabuki theatre, the Nakamura-za, in September 1673. He played the role of the boy hero Sakata no Kintoki in the play *Shitennō Osanadachi* (*The Four Faithful Bodyguards*). Kintoki, hero of a famous Japanese folk tale, spent his childhood in the Hakone mountains, perfecting his martial arts among bears, monkeys, and other wild companions. These formative years shaped his character, and as an adult Kintoki becomes a fierce samurai warrior (*bushi*), who wins acclaim by slaying a ferocious demon that

terrorized Kyoto's inhabitants with raids for human victims. *Aragoto* can be described as the super-human actions that a righteous and courageous hero undertakes in standing up to the forces of evil (Morita 1985, 8).

The character Kintoki was modelled after Kinpira, the popular superhero familiar to Edo audiences through the Kinpira puppet performances (*kinpira jōruri*). In his role as Kintoki, Danjūrō infused into his performance elements derived from the jōruri performance, such as the grandiloquent style of movement and elocution, and the spectacular costumes.

In addition to the Kinpira puppet plays, the Buddhist guardian deities seem to have influenced Danjūrō's acting approach. The four guardians of Buddha (*shitennō*) are traditionally portrayed in Japanese sculpture as ferocious-looking deities, with huge bulging muscles, glaring eyes (often crossed), and a countenance of defiance.

For the role of Kintoki, Danjūrō painted his face a deep red color with thick black lines which accentuated his eyebrows, wore a robe with a large checkered pattern (*dojigoshi*), and tied it with a red and white "candy-cane" striped rope (*maruguke*). In this bizarre attire, he wildly wielded an oversized axe in a spectacular fight sequence (*tachimawari*). Danjūrō's performance was so sensational, it became known as the "wild show" (*aragoto*) and set a precedent for the *aragoto* style (Shaver 49).

"Ichikawa Danjūrō is said to have taught that *aragoto* should be performed as if one was a five to six year old child" (Kawatake 1971, 61).

Morita states that the actor of an *aragoto* role was traditionally taught to "act with the heart of a child," since the fundamental "spirit of *aragoto* lies in the kind of anger that could only be generated from innocent righteousness" (Morita 1985, 10). Brandon cites Kagayama who states that in acting *aragoto* style, it is said that the "actor must imagine the virility and self-confidence of a sixteen year old" (Brandon 1975, 71). This comment would seem more appropriate since Danjūrō was a teenager when he made his debut, and furthermore a five or six year old child could hardly have the virility or strength to "slay demons and villains."

Danjūrō's style was so popular that the *aragoto* style became the dominant style in Edo kabuki and was handed down to his son Danjūrō II (1688-1758), and succeeded by later generations in the Ichikawa dynasty who continuously developed and refined the style and made it their family art (*ie no gei*). This style has been perpetuated in tradition by a lineage of actors who have continually been regarded with esteem by the people of Edo (Shaver 341).

### ***Aragoto and Mie***

A significant element in the *aragoto* style of performance is a pose known as the *mie*, which "represents the act of glaring at an evil spirit so as to scare it away." An anecdote has been reiterated for generations: "A person afflicted chronically with intermittent fits of fever was miraculously cured when Danjūrō glared at him. Thus, for the people Danjūrō was more

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than just an actor performing *aragoto* on stage; he was an object of veneration, regarded as an *aragoto* demi-god and thus a being of surreal dimensions" (Morita 1985, 9).

In the dramatic *mie* pose, intense power is seen emanating from the hero as he focuses his energy into the intensified motion, which peaks to a climax, and then freezes motionless for a moment. This standstill, or absence of motion is referred to as *ma*. The spatial dimension created is set apart from the usual, for after the *mie* and *ma*, the play resumes as though nothing had happened. In kabuki performance, the *aragoto* style contains a continuum of successive sequences of *mie* poses and *ma* pauses (Ortolani 179).

Kawatake states a similar viewpoint that the *mie* goes back to the peoples' "diligent worship of wild gods who would otherwise bear a grudge, and the people turned them into protective deities to subdue the evil spirits." Danjūrō worshipped the Buddhist divinity Fudō at the great temple in Narita, which led to "Naritaya" becoming his professional house name. "All the audience hoped for this god in human form to glare at them and drive away evil spirits" (Kawatake 1971, 92).

In the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the *aragoto* style can be seen in Tadanobu-*kitsune* in the first scene, the "real" Tadanobu in the last scene, Benkei, Tota, the *yoten*, and the *shitennō* with the red face.

Each of them portrays the *aragoto* style in a different manner in order to best define his part.

### ***Wagoto***

*Wagoto* may be defined as a "gentle style" or "soft style", and is used by male characters, especially in love scenes. Characterization is expressed through mannerisms conveyed in a soft, refined style which reflects the temperament of Kyoto. According to Leiter, *wagoto*, as compared to *aragoto*, is considered a basically realistic style (Leiter 1979).

The *wagoto* style was created by Sakata Tōjūrō (1647-1709), who portrayed the lead male roles in romantic plays about courtesans (*keisei gai*). An ideal stage lover was elegant and stylish, pale complexioned (enhanced by pure white makeup), and had small feet (Soma 42). Tōjūrō's artistic style set a tradition for *sewamono*, but the artistic style quickly spread to *jidaimono* and influenced *aragoto* roles.

Tōjūrō and Danjūrō I were actors during the same time-span in the Genroku period, and knew of each others style of performance. The two great actors were compared for their contrasting styles which reflected the differences between the Edo and Kamigata temperament: respectively, hard and soft, emotional and pragmatic, romantic and realistic.

When the *wagoto* style was adopted by Edo actors, it became more stylized due to the influence of flamboyant *aragoto*, so by comparison, the overall manner of portraying the *wagoto* hero became more feminine

(Brandon 1978, 72). Brandon considers the *wagoto* hero "delicate to the point of effeminacy." This feminine quality can be seen in the stance of the *wagoto* actor: "feet close together and toes pointing inward like a woman, rather than in broad masculine stance with feet at ninety degree angle" (Brandon 1978, 72). This "feminine quality" can be seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* in the delicate, dance-like movements of Tadanobu as he gestures with his hands, walks, and turns around.

One example seen in real life was the decorum and etiquette for a high-class lady, which required her to walk demurely with little short steps, her knees together and toes pointed inward. In Kamigata style kabuki, this convention became popular for the role of a young lover, who would walk in an effeminate manner similar to the *onnagata* (Brandon 1978, 72). However, even though Tadanobu displays the soft refined role of a lover (substituting for Shizuka's lover Yoshitsune) in the *michiyuki*, he does not walk in this effeminate manner even when he takes the part of Shizuka's lover Yoshitsune.

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, while a few of the characters in *aragoto* roles spread their feet in ninety degree angles, Tadanobu-*kitsune* in the *michiyuki* does not stand with his toes pointing in, but assumes a rather natural stance, with feet almost parallel, toes slightly outward. All the male role types in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* have a stance somewhere in-between ninety degrees and feet parallel.



Elegant and erotic love scenes (*nuregoto*) came to be the forte of *wagoto* acting, such as those seen portrayed by Tadanobu-*kitsune* in Scene Two. *Wagoto* is also considered a comic style, and many *wagoto* characters portray a humorous side to their nature. During Tōjūrō's time there was a saying that "the lover acts with the heart of a comic"; the term *hando* or half-comic was used to describe the *wagoto* style of acting (Brandon 1978, 72). Toita states that roles like Tadanobu in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* must be "sensual and charming, as well as good humored at all times" (Toita 82).

In the "Tadanobu Section" of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, this fusion of the comic and erotic is portrayed *par excellence* by Ennosuke, and can be seen throughout the *michiyuki* where Tadanobu, who is "substituting" for Shizuka's lover Yoshitsune, keeps emerging every so often during a rather erotic and sensual part, with "foxy" motions that are very humorous in their expression and in their context. This interspersion of comic elements during an erotic sequence creates a lively contrast which also serves to show the varied personalities of the fox in his metamorphosis from man to fox, as well as his ill-fated attempts at disguise.

### ***Onnagata***

*Onnagata* means literally "woman style" or in the form (*kata*) of a woman. It refers to the category of male actors who portray female characters. In addition, it refers to the female role types (Leiter 1979).

Women's kabuki (*onna kabuki*), also called courtesan's kabuki, was banned in the sixth year of the Kan-ei era (1629). Then again, in the seventeenth year of the Kan-ei era (1640), women performing together with men was banned and two years later in the nineteenth year of the Kan-ei era, even men dressing as women and appearing on the stage was banned. Since it was impossible to have a play without "women on stage," a petition was submitted to the government which stated that the male role cast and the female role cast would be clearly stated on the billboards so there would be no confusion, and men disguised as women were thereafter permitted to appear on the kabuki stage. Since then, female impersonation has been a distinguishing characteristic of kabuki (Gunji 1968, 208).

Kawatake points to the female eroticism that was prevalent in *onna kabuki*, before women were legally banned from the stage, and refers to *onnagata* as "forbidden fruit" in his discussion. Kawatake goes on to state: "Even after women were banned from the stage, audiences did not forget the fruit they had tasted. In due course, the female impersonator supplied them with this fruit in even more complex and richer form" (Kawatake 1990, 232).

Male actors who portrayed female roles developed the art of representing women on stage in a stylized and idealized manner. The art of the *onnagata* has been developed and refined to extend beyond the mere semblance of a woman, with the goal of creating an "ideal feminine beauty"

(Kawatake 1990, 231). *Onnagata* are entirely "women of the stage" and not the real form of women. Historically, each *onnagata*, in searching for the image of the ideal woman, searched for those unique characteristics of female beauty as seen through the eyes of a male (Gunji 1968, 208).

The famous *onnagata* Yoshizawa Ayame (1673-1719) perfected the art of the *onnagata* and wrote a famous treatise on the art of female impersonation, the *Ayamegusa*. Ayame said that an *onnagata* should live as a woman all the time (even off-stage) in order to absorb the feminine mind and bring these (feminine) feelings to life on the stage. *Onnagata* should continue to have the feelings of a "real" woman, even in the dressing room. Ayame also related that there are numerous aspects about women that go unnoticed even by the women themselves, and these female qualities should be highlighted and stylized to create an "ideal image of femininity" (Dunn 61). (Most of the *onnagata* that I personally witnessed in the actors' dressing room adhere to these admonitions; as they inched closer to the appearance of "real" women, their mannerisms became more feminine, and they even walked around the dressing room with their knees together and toes pointed inward after the completion of their makeup.)

Gunji refers to stylization as the action on stage governed by a special set of conventions (Gunji 1969, 38). These conventions were taken from real life and adapted to the stage, and may be seen in the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. One convention that can be observed is that

*onnagata* must not step out in front of a male actor, but must be seated half a pace behind. In all actions, a woman always moves her right foot first. Therefore, it was interesting to observe Bandō Tamasaburō, the *tate onnagata* in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* in another play *Renjishi*, where he plays the part of a male lion. When he was about to step up on a dias to continue his dance, he stepped with his right foot first; therefore imbuing this male role with his own *onnagata* role type personality.

Other conventions for women, stemming from "real life" during Edo times, are carried to the stage and can be seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. They include acting modestly at all times: covering the hands (with the kimono sleeves) when not utilizing them for some specific act, covering the mouth when laughing (with the hand or a fan), or walking with knees pressed together and toes pointing inward. In addition, the woman always takes the less-honorable position next to a man: being seated to the left of a man and sitting slightly behind him (from audience's viewpoint). All the *onnagata* seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, no matter what their age or status, observe these conventions throughout the performance.

During the early Edo period, *onnagata* were classified into two categories; *wakaonnagata* and *kashagata*. *Wakaonnagata* indicates roles of young (*waka*) women. Shizuka in the role of "Red Princess" (*akahime*) fits into this category, as do the ladies-in-waiting. The second category of *kashagata* represents older women, such as Kawatsura Hogan's wife.

### ***Kitsunegoto***

*Kitsunegoto* means "fox-style" or in the *kata* of a fox. Unlike the *wagoto* and *aragoto* styles which appear in hundreds of plays, fox-style is a *kata* particular only to certain plays where there is a fox character. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the role of the fox, disguised as Yoshitsune's retainer Tadanobu, is a major role. It is usually regarded as the most important fox-role in kabuki.

There are some thirty little fox characters, played by child actors, ages two to thirteen. Their style of acting varies depending on their age and abilities, and naturally the child performers are less polished than the adult actor playing Tadanobu. The little foxes playfully prance around the stage and *hanamichi* with a particular "foxy" gait that is not seen in the character of Tadanobu. Up on their toes, their hands in paw-like gestures, and their backs slightly hunched, the children's demeanor is particularly playful, delightful to watch, and suits their characterization.

According to Soma, the overall portrayal of Tadanobu's *kitsunegoto* includes: fox-like hand movements, attractive and lively presentation in dance and performance, *aragoto* total appearance with big white paper ears, a big sword, and a big bow, *kumadori* style makeup, and movements with an *aragoto* essence (Soma 61). However, this holds true only in the first scene and not in subsequent scenes which are portrayed without

*kumadori*, *aragoto* mannerisms, or their accompanying costumes with swords.

Even though *kata* are fixed by tradition, they are not static but are continually undergoing change and development. Actors today continue to perfect and even reinterpret the conventions they have inherited (Kanazawa 67). One example of this would be the particular voice and hand movements Ennosuke developed for the *kitsunegoto* role in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, which he perfected as his own *kata*.

## CHAPTER FOUR: APPEARANCE KATA

In this chapter, I will describe the visual elements of kabuki performance which I am calling "appearance *kata*." These components include: makeup, costumes, headwear, props, and the performance area. Each of these items is inanimate in itself, but as an adjunct of the actor and his setting is fundamental in expressing the total characterization of the role and the meaning of the play.

### MAKEUP

One of the most striking and important visual elements comprising the total appearance of a character is his makeup (*keshō*). Each role type has a unique style of makeup, which has become traditional and conventionalized in its particular form. In addition, the makeup is seen not only on the face, but may cover all parts of the body not covered by costume. Kabuki makeup may be divided into two broad categories: makeup without lines, and makeup with lines (*kumadori*).

#### Makeup Without Lines

The pure white (*shiro*) face usually designates a gentle good person. Fair skin, as typified by this white makeup, besides being a standard feature of the *onnagata*, is also typical of the *wagoto* hero (Tobe 243). In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Shizuka, Tadanobu-*kitsune* in the *michiyuki* section and Yoshitsune have this white complexion.

Commoners wear darker skin-toned makeup. Darker skin tones are also used to indicate the advanced years of high-class characters, although their darker tone is not as dark as those used by commoners. White is not reserved for just the young high-class heroine or hero, for even thieves can use white makeup in some plays. However, high-class young women in the *onnagata* heroine role and high class young men in the *wagoto* hero role always have bright white complexions.

Ernst states: "The use of white makeup for the well born and wealthy can be explained because they did not expose themselves to sun and therefore a white skin was always prized in Japan as evidence of social superiority" (Ernst 111). A description from the *Heike Monogatari* concurs: "Atsumori was truly fair of face...Kumagai therefore realized at a glance that Atsumori was a high born noble" (Kawatake 1990, 139).

Ernst also states that there was "little light in kabuki theater before modern times and white makeup was a means of minimizing effects of darkness and projecting expression of actors face." However, I do not believe this was the reason for using white makeup, because conventions off the stage, such as the stark white face was prized in Japanese society, and this is a carry-over from real life (see history and tradition chapter).

Secondly, the face makeup compliments the character and role as well as the coordinated costume. The white face, considered elegant by traditional Japanese custom, is appropriate for an elegant type portrayal



of a character. The all white face reflects youth, as well as social standing. In addition, umbrellas to shield the sun could only be used by aristocracy until the Edo era, so most commoners had darker complexions naturally than the aristocracy.

### ***Kumadori***

Kawatake defines *kumadori* as "literally taking up or bringing out shadows" (of the face) (Morita 1985, 125). The word *kumadori* is derived from *kuma*, lines and *dori* from *toru*, to follow, draw or take (Shaver 337). Gunji defines *kumadori* as "literally, making shadows" (Gunji 1969, 41).

*Kumadori* represents the violent rush of blood and tension of the muscles by shadings of red or blue, and expresses symbolically qualities of intense anger (Kawatake 1990, 38). Kawatake states that *kumadori* is a characteristic pattern and an indispensable component of the beauty and unique artistic style seen in kabuki (Morita 1985, 110). *Kumadori* originated in kabuki as a striking innovative aspect of theatrical expression which employed stylized form "in expressing emotional countenances belonging mainly to *aragoto* roles" (Shaver 337).

Because *kumadori* is designed to complement the actor's facial contours, even among patterns of the same design, each actor's *kumadori* is slightly different and unique from that of any other actor (Morita 1985, 119).

Although the Japanese word for makeup is *keshō*, kabuki employs the phrase *kao o koshiraeru*, literally "making a face." Morita believes that this reflects the traditional influences of ancient religious art. "Making a *kumadori* requires the greatest concentration, since through a sober ritual the actor transforms himself into a tempestuous *aragoto* god" (Morita 1985, 115). Tadashi Inumaru also subscribes to the theory that in the act of applying makeup in a *kumadori* pattern, subconsciously the actor is trying to "metamorphose himself into an incarnation of the *aragoto* demigod" (Morita 1985, 10).

Tadashi Inumaru also points out that *kumadori* differs completely from the individualism and realism basic to Western theatre makeup, because *kumadori* "stylistically emphasizes the stereotypical personality of a specific role" (Morita 1985, 5).

### **The Creation of *Kumadori***

The creation of *kumadori* is credited to Ichikawa Danjūrō I (1660-1704), in 1673 in the play *Shitennō Osanadachi* (*The Four Faithful Bodyguards*). For his role as Sakata no Kintoki, a boy who was raised in the wilderness and became a superhero by slaying a ferocious demon, Danjūrō painted his face in deep red with thick black lines for eyebrows to complement a fantastic costume and acting style. His performance became popular as the "wild show" (*aragoto*) and marked the beginning of this forceful and spectacular style of acting (Morita 1985, 8).

During the Tokugawa period, severe restrictions oppressed the common people who longed for a hero figure and yearned for supernatural powers (Morita 1985, 9). "The common people revered the *kumadori* painted superhero who subdued evil entities such as villains, beasts and demons, and saw in him a divine power manifested by his supernatural strength" (Morita 1985, 110).

The red face, such as Danjūrō presented in his debut, denotes a feisty, brave and "wild" character, and this type of character can be seen in one of Yoshitsune's loyal *shitennō*, who also projects a forceful and rough *aragoto* style.

However, the red makeup used by Danjūrō in his 1673 debut performance did not set the precedent for *kumadori*. It was Danjūrō's *sujiguma*, a pattern composed of red lines on a white background, worn by him for the first time in 1702, which became the prototype for most *kumadori*. Danjūrō's *sujiguma* expressed temperament and character by emphasizing the bones, muscles, and veins (Shaver 341).

Twenty years later, Danjūrō's son Danjūrō II, enhanced the *sujiguma* pattern by the *bokashi* technique; shading off the edges of the red lines in a gradation effect, in imitation of attributes he saw in the petals of a peony flower (Kawatake 1990, 38).

The *bokashi* technique was further developed by Danjūrō VII (1791-1859), who created a method of amplifying the gradation to show an

actor's face in all of its perspective. He also introduced methods for making a face appear larger or thinner, and also created *ryakushiguma*, a bold and simplified version of *sujiguma*. In this pattern technique, an actor can quickly change his expression by the addition of one to several lines on the chin, forehead, or between the eyes (Shaver 341).

### **Origins of *Kumadori***

Different theories explain the origins of *kumadori*. According to some scholars, *kumadori* was inspired by the masks used in traditional Japanese performance, such as *bugaku* and *noh*. Others ascribe an influence to classic Chinese stage makeup, such as the patterns used in Beijing opera. Still others theorize that *kumadori* patterns were styled after the expressions seen on Buddhist statues, such as those of Fudō Myō-ō, Shiva, and the Aizen Myō-ō, Naga Raja.

An examination of *kumadori* follows which includes the opinions of: Brandon, Gunji, Ernst, Hamamura, Ichimura, Kawatake, Morita, Numaru, Shaver, Tadashi, and Tobe.

Unlike either *noh* masks or Chinese makeup used in Peking opera, Tadashi Inumaru explains that *kumadori* allows for greater expression because it follows the facial features of the actor (Morita 1985, 5). Gunji notes that today, due to modern electric lighting, *kumadori*'s "effect is mostly flat and lifeless" (Gunji 1969, 41).

Kawatake believes that *kumadori* designs are not *imitations* of Chinese *jian pu* makeup used in traditional Peking Opera, because the Japanese dramatic forms which preceded kabuki, such as noh and bugaku, made use of masks. However, kabuki never adopted masks, but devised *kumadori* as an alternate form of facial expression to take the place of faces found in noh masks, dolls of the puppet theatre, and the angry expressions found in Buddhist sculpture. In addition, Kawatake points out that Japanese makeup uses a shading technique, whereas the makeup used by non-Japanese have distinct lines between one color and another, and also lack differentiation within a single color (Kawatake 1990, 107).

Brandon states that "because the lines of makeup follow the natural musculature of the face, *kumadori* does not mask expression (as do the abstract patterns of *ching* painted-face makeup in Chinese opera), but instead projects it with great clarity and force" (Brandon 1978, 69).

Tobe is not decisive about where Danjūrō derived the idea of *kumadori*: either it was noh, the puppet face, or, most probably, the statue of Fudō (Tobe 241).

Kawatake explains that when the hero vanquishes evil forces, this is expressed symbolically on his face by wide red streaks on a white base which project his righteous anger towards evil and his superhuman powers. The red lines represent arteries and muscles pulsating in anger

which project the appearance of strength (Morita 1985, 110). Moreover, the perimeters of these red lines subtly blend into the white background, "like beautiful peony petals." Kawatake further points out that while similar colored makeup is seen throughout Asia, the color gradation technique is unique to kabuki (Morita 1985, 110).

Shaver states that the basic difference between *kumadori* and Chinese stylized makeup is that the Japanese adhere to the natural facial contours, while the "Chinese merely paint a pattern on the face, disregarding the structure" (Shaver 337).

Morita states the same opinion: "*Kumadori* is different from the Chinese *Ren Bu* makeup which creates a face totally alien from the actors own face by completely covering the surface with patterned designs." He also thinks that whereas masks completely hide the actor's face, *kumadori* serves as an extension of the actors face which expresses the "personality internalized in the role" (Morita 1985, 110).

*Kumadori* is "never said to be drawn or painted"; instead, a *kuma* pattern is "taken, as in taking an impression." Although actors today use both their fingers and the brush in applying their *kumadori*, traditionally, actors used only their fingers to "take" a pattern which followed the facial structure (Morita 1985, 110).

Tobe expresses a similar viewpoint, and states that *kumadori* represents the veins and is a reflection of reality and symbolism: actors

press the veins and try to draw on them; not just an exaggeration of the vessels of the veins alone, but in an extreme state of psychological exaggeration because the veins are expanded, and even a mad expression is exaggerated beyond the natural (Tobe 49). In his book *Kabuki no Mikata*, Tobe states that the lines on the actors' faces stem from ancient days, which were applied in spiritual ceremonies similar to those in Africa (Tobe, 229).

Uzamon Ichimura points out that the makeup used in the Chinese Peking Opera is more mask-like, but *kumadori* accentuates the actor's facial expressions, instead of obliterating them: "Makeup used by Peking Opera completely obliterates actor's natural facial structures in order to replace them with rigid, mask-like cosmetic features. In contrast, the purpose of *kumadori* is to complement the actor's own features, so as to dramatize the intense power attributed to his heroic role" (Morita 1985, 111).

Leiter does not address the question of origin, but in saying that *kumadori* emphasizes the facial expressions growing out of a character's personality, implies it is dissimilar to the Chinese opera makeup (Leiter 1979, 209).

Ernst states a different opinion: "*kumadori* tends toward conventionalization of the face according to the standard types of roles which were created during the Tokugawa period and shows little concern

for realism" (Ernst 195). Furthermore, Ernst states that "the detachment of the actor from the role is further marked in his make up" and "the face of the actor onstage is a compromise between the human face and the mask" (Ernst 195).

While Hamamura explains that *kumadori* is an exaggeration of the muscles of the face (unlike Chinese makeup), he also asserts: "The technique of *kumadori* as a whole was no doubt imported from the Chinese drama." He continues "the *kumadori* of the Chinese drama does not seem to have been so complicated, whereas the *kumadori* in Japan developed into an elaborate thing" (Hamamura 41).

Ernst states that a "likely original influence was that of the faces of polychrome Buddhist statues of Shingon sect whose attitudes bear a close resemblance to the *mie*. Because these figures had their origin in China, indirectly *aragoto* makeup may have had Chinese origins, but there seems to be no verifiable evidence that the makeup was imported directly from Chinese Theatre" (Ernst 111).

### **Categories of *Kumadori***

Kabuki in its formative period developed broad categories of makeup color related to the different role types, such as white for the leading young man who portrayed the hero, and red for the villain who had a violent nature (*akattsura*). In *kumadori*, red lines symbolize a man who is good and brave, and indigo lines indicate an evil man (Soma 27).



Scholars categorize *kumadori* differently: Leiter, based on two colors; Gunji, based on two colors; Morita, based on *yin/yang* color concepts; Shaver, based on three colors; Uzaemon, based on three groups of colors (blue, red and brown); and Ernst, based on lines. Following is a discussion of some of the classifications used to describe *kumadori*.

Leiter classifies *kumadori* styles according to colors which relate to character types: *beniguma* (red lines) for good characters, and *aiguma* (blue lines) for evil characters (Leiter 1979, 276).

Gunji states that red signifies justice and strength, while blue signifies evil or supernatural states (Gunji 1969, 41).

Morita states that *kumadori* may be categorized into two types of patterns; the *beni*, rouge based, and the *ai*, indigo based, patterns. *Kumadori* worn by *aragoto* heroes all belong to the *beni* category, which includes such patterns as the *sujiguma* (sinew pattern), *ipponguma* (single streak), *nihonguma* (double streak), and *mukumi* (skinned flesh). Indigo based *ai* patterns are specified for roles antithetical to humans such as demons and vengeful spirits, as well as evil villains (Morita 1985, 10).

Morita also provides an interesting concept surrounding the aesthetic essence of *kumadori* (Morita 1985, 10):

The essence of *aragoto* is in its expression of anger, of which there are two types: the positive, extroverted *yang* type and the negative, introverted *yin* type. Red symbolizes the *yang* anger and blue

symbolizes the *yin* anger. Aggressiveness and quick tempers are qualities usually assigned to youth, as the term hot-blooded or hot-headed implies. On the other hand, a strong sense of righteousness is also another characteristic of the young. The anger of an *aragoto* hero is represented in red to symbolize the hot-bloodedness and the righteousness associated with youth. The actor in an *aragoto* role has traditionally been taught to act "with the heart of a child," since *aragoto* was originally conceived by the young Danjūrō I as he played the role of the boy hero Sakata no Kintoki; pointing out the fundamental spirit of *aragoto* lies in the kind of anger that could only be generated from innocent righteousness. *Yin* anger is found mostly among mature adults who have experienced the trials and conventions of life, and although vexed by the inconsistencies of real life, they do not let that anger explode straightforwardly, but hold it back inside them where it builds up and casts a dark shadow on their personality. The basic concept underlies the indigo based *ai kumadori*. *Aragoto* drama revolves around a basic theme whereby positive anger vanquishes the power of negative anger.

Within the *beni* category, where *kumadori* expresses righteous anger, slight differences between the *sujiguma* and the *mukimi* patterns can be seen which reflect the personalities of the character. The *sujiguma*, most common pattern among the *beni kumadori*, is used for

"straightforward" hero types, like Benkei in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. The *mukimi* pattern is used for youthful heroes who possess the quality of "sex appeal" (Morita 1985, 11).

*Ai kumadori* can also be classified according to the specific personalities they symbolize, such as the roles of an evil aristocrat (*kugeaku*) or the ghost of a vengeful warrior (*onryōguma*). In addition, non-human beings taking on human form have their own patterns (Morita 1985, 11).

Shaver states that *kumadori* expresses emotion by color: "It is color, rather than lines, that provides an understanding of the close relationship to emotion and temperament implied by *kumadori*." Deep red (on a white base) projects the anger and indignation of forceful personalities who have good qualities. However, Shaver adds that it can also represent characters with bad tempers who are cruel. Indigo appears on the faces of ghosts and villains, and brown is worn by gods (Shaver 342).

Uzaeomon divides *kumadori* into ten basic patterns; each designed to designate the facial characteristics particular to a specific role. He further categorizes them into three large groups according to the basic color used: red, blue or brown. Each color symbolizes a particular personality: red/ righteousness, blue/evil, and brown/ non-humans, such as gods and demons (Morita 1985, 111).

Concluding the discussion of *kumadori* categories, Ernst states a different view from the previous examples and states that "all *aragoto* makeup falls into two classifications: the one line and the two line," and is used in all plays (except *sewamono*) to visually convey "great strength of character" (Ernst 197).

The discussion of *kumadori* representing various authors' viewpoints serves to illustrate its intricate nature and wide variety of interpretation. There are over one hundred different varieties of *kumadori* (Leiter 1979, 209).

The different forms in the art of makeup are inherited traditions of the different actors' families (Hamamura 43). Over the centuries, actors have modified many forms of *kumadori*. About eighty-one forms of *kumadori* remain today, but the number fluctuates slightly with revival of old plays. Twenty-one forms are exclusive to the families of the Ichikawa, the Nakamura, and the Onoe (Shaver 343).

The *sujiguma* pattern, consisting of red lines on a white base, is used by most *aragoto* heroes, such as Benkei and Tadanobu-*kitsune* in the first scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. This pattern is seen on the face, hands, arms and legs (ILLUSTRATIONS #3 and 4).

Either white or red may be used for the base foundation in *kumadori*. Black *kuma* patterns are drawn on the red foundation in the case of one of Yoshitsune's faithful bodyguards (*shitennō*). This provides

a dazzling contrast with the stark white foundation *kumadori* worn by the villain Tota. The red base does not designate a bad character, but rather depicts the temperament of a feisty character. Since *kumadori* is not representative of all kabuki makeup, its restriction to certain roles makes its effectiveness greater.

### ***Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* Characters**

A wide variety of character types are seen in the performance, and each of the characters has a unique appearance which distinguishes him or her. Just as the first aspect in the transformation of an actor into his character is via the application of makeup, this important precedence provides an immediate clue as to the identification of a character.

#### **Yoshitsune**

Minamoto no Yoshitsune, one of Japan's best known historical heroes, has a stark white face and skin, depicting his high status, his goodness, his refinement, and his age (at the time of the events in this play, Yoshitsune is in his late twenties). His makeup is the whitest of any other character's makeup due to the combination of all these attributes (ILLUSTRATION #2).

#### **Benkei**

Benkei, a warrior-priest and faithful retainer of Yoshitsune, wears *kumadori* known as "Benkei's Monkey Pattern" (*Benkei saruguma*). This *kumadori* pattern is an original design of Ichikawa Danjūrō I, one of the

most prominent actors of the Genroku era and the originator of the *aragoto* style of kabuki acting.

Benkei's pattern is also known as the *toriguma* because the design in the center of the forehead resembles the shape of a torii, the entrance arch of a Shinto shrine which is seen prominently in the first scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. Benkei is a warrior-priest, and white is used as the foundation color for this *kumadori* pattern, with the lines in red (ILLUSTRATION #2).

#### **Hayami no Tota**

*Kumadori* for comic roles are called the *zare kuma*, or "comic patterns." Variations of the *beni* pattern, they are used only for minor roles, characters with a comical touch, and constitute an independent category of *kumadori*. They are based on the *namazu kuma* (catfish pattern) worn by the *namazu bozū*, the catfish monster that appears in *Shibaraku*. The *hinode ni tori*, sunrise and bird pattern for Hayami no Tota has been the *kumadori* for that role since the play was first performed in 1747 (Morita 117). The pattern is composed of a half-risen sun painted in the middle of the brow and birds playing on either side. (However, I could not detect this pattern on Hayami no Tota in the "Tadanobu Section.")

### **Shizuka**

Shizuka's makeup is stark white on all visible bodily parts: face, neck and chest, hands and arms, feet and lower legs. A small *beni* (red makeup) mouth is painted on her face, and *beni* is also blended with *oshiroi* (white makeup) and put lightly around the eyes. No rouge is applied to the cheeks (ILLUSTRATION #5).

### **Tadanobu-kitsune in Scene One**

In the opening scene, the fox Tadanobu is in disguise as Yoshitsune's loyal and courageous retainer. Tadanobu is first introduced to the audience, playing a forceful *aragoto* role in a bravado style, complete with exaggerated costumes and *kumadori*. The pattern of flames (*kaen kuma*) is used by the character Tadanobu-kitsune in the *torii mae*, in front of the shrine gate scene as he saves Yoshitsune's lover Shizuka from danger. An original creation of Danjūrō II, the *kaenguma* is a variation of the *sujiguma* design in which the lines have been rearranged in the form of blazing flames, symbolizing flames of righteousness: two lines run from the cheeks, along the nose, and flare up to the forehead (Morita 1985, 28). This *aragoto* hero's makeup has a white base with red lines on it which symbolize super-human strength (ILLUSTRATION #4).

### **Tadanobu-kitsune in Scene Two**

In this *michiyuki* travel scene, done primarily in dance, the fox is in disguise as Tadanobu and substitutes for Shizuka's lover Yoshitsune. This

role by Tadanobu-*kitsune* is played in a soft and refined *wagoto* style. Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s makeup is changed to a stark white face and body, symbolizing the youth, goodness and status of Yoshitsune.

### **Tadanobu-*kitsune* in Scene Three**

In this section, we see the metamorphosis of a "man" into a "pure" fox. During the sequence, Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s appearance changes in everything but his makeup, which stays the same stark white as in Scene Two. (This transformation is described in the costume section and also Part III.)

### **"Real" Tadanobu in Scenes Three, Four and Five**

The human Tadanobu is a stalwart and proud retainer of Yoshitsune's. He has a white face and skin which is not as bright white as Yoshitsune's, indicating his slightly lower status and older age.

### **Kawatsura Hogan**

The aging Kawatsura Hogan has an off-white face and skin which is even darker than the "real" Tadanobu, indicating his advanced years.

### **Kawatsura Hogan's Wife**

Her makeup is an off-white on bodily parts which show; this is darker than Shizuka's bright white makeup, due to the difference in age and status. Also, her mouth is not as small or brightly pronounced and there is little if any red tone around the eyes, due to her older age.

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**Ladies-in-waiting**

The faces and bodies of the ladies-in-waiting are whiter than Hogan's wife, because they are younger, but darker than Shizuka's, due to their lower status. They have small bright *beni* red mouths and some blended red-shade around the eyes.

**Shitennō**

Each of the four *shitennō* have a different "complexion." Most noticeably, one of them has a red face with heavy black eyebrows and red skin, indicative of his feisty, hot-tempered, impetuous and "barbaric" nature. The color does not reflect a "bad" or evil nature; in fact, he is a loyal retainer to Yoshitsune. Another *shitennō* has a pure white face, similar in shade to Yoshitsune's, and is younger than Yoshitsune and a very refined type. The other two *shitennō* have white faces slightly darker than his. None of the *shitennō* wear *kumadori*.

The makeup of each character requires a synthesis in the elements of performance, for it enhances and contributes to the total appearance of the different characters. Makeup serves as a "clue" to the characterization of the role, and allows for greater expressiveness of the meaning of the play. The character's makeup provides an illuminating glimpse into their class in society, station in life, age, sex, and temperament.

## **COSTUMES**

The talented imagination of great kabuki actors brought forth the basic *kata* which covers the total appearance of a character and includes the costumes (*ishō*) that are used in unison with makeup, wigs and props to express the characterization of a role (Ernst 184).

The beauty of the stylized kabuki performance can be seen in the creative ingenuity of the actor's costumes which delineates a role from the moment the actor first appears (Hamamura 39). The costumes have evolved in such a way that the nature of a particular character can be readily identified and understood by examining his costume. Certain costumes use patterns, colors, and distinctive marks which provide clues as to the identification of the character (Toita 1958, 88).

Costumes are designated in accordance with individual roles, and remain identified with those originated by great actors who popularized the roles. These styles have been handed down for generations and have become *kata*. Actors chose costumes fixed in tradition, because they have pertinent meaning to the audience familiar with the play (Shaver 24).

The actors' costumes are significant components of the total pictorial beauty which permeates kabuki performance. Kabuki's prime aesthetic elements, besides the beauty of music, are beauty of form and color, and costumes contribute to those vital elements. A myriad number of colors and designs in kabuki costumes have provided a veritable feast of hues and

shapes, and creative costumes have accumulated over the years. In dance dramas (*shosagoto*) or *michiyuki* like Scene Two of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, over ten distinctly different colors are artistically and dramatically combined for a single costume, such as Shizuka's *akahime* costume (Shaver 113).

Cognizant of the role played by color and variety in the kabuki aesthetic scheme, actors pay careful attention to the relationship between the outermost kimono, *kitsuke*, and the overgarment, *uchikake*, and to the colors of the entire ensemble, including the undergarments. This is particularly evident in those scenes in which kimono are removed one by one, to produce a spectacular array of colors and designs.

Color has an important place in the creation of form. Both the backgrounds and the costumes have bright rich tones in many colors, which are harmonized with skill (Kawatake 1990, 100).

Kabuki costumes are of traditional Japanese colors, which can only be seen in kabuki. Furthermore, all the colors and styles of kabuki are based on those which were worn in the past. Costumes produce a spectacular effect; not only is the visual aspect interesting in itself, but the personalities of the characters are expressed by the colors of their costumes (Toita 98). The following list by Shaver shows emotions or qualities of temperament indicated by color:

*beni* (deep red): anger, indignation, forcefulness, obstinacy

*beni* (red): activeness, eagerness, passion, vigor

*usuaka* (pink or pale red): cheerfulness, youthfulness, gaiety

*asagi* (light blue): calmness, coolness, composure

*ai* (indigo): melancholy, gloominess

*midori* (very light green): tranquillity

*murasaki* (purple): sublimity, nobility, loftiness

*taisha* (brown or burnt sienna): selfishness, egoism, dejection

*usuzumi* (gray, on chin): dreariness, cheerlessness

*sumi* (black): fear, terror, fright, gloom (Shaver 342).

The pictorial scene exhibits an extensive combination of colors, centered on the costumes of the characters. Besides a kaleidoscope of vivid colors, subtle colors such as pale blue or black may be used to emphasize the important character, for visual contrast from other characters or the backdrop. In the *michiyuki*, Tadanobu's black kimono stands out from both Shizuka's ornate and colorful *akahime* costume as well as the bright Yoshino cherry-blossom panorama of red, pinks and greens. When Tadanobu removes the upper part of his kimono, a light aqua-colored kimono is revealed for further contrast. When Shizuka removes her right sleeve, a new bright red sleeve is seen as an additional accent.

Changes of costume are used to focus on a particular character, or show a change in personality, mood, or identity. (The chapter on movement *kata* discusses these *kata* further.) In *bukkaeri*, the character appears to

have changed into an entirely new costume; this accords with general rule in kabuki for expressing a change or revelation of a personality or character (Toita 1970, 98). In addition to removing only the upper part of the kimono (*bukkaeri*), there is also the complete removal of the outer kimono to reveal another kimono beneath it, which shows a change of mood or attitude, rather than a change in character (Toita 1970, 98).

Another quick change technique is called *hayagawari*, which is sometimes referred to as a "trick" (*keren*) because it is done off-stage and therefore does not display the means by which the effect was produced before the eyes of the audience. Ernst states that *hayagawari* is "regarded as a somewhat vulgar trick by kabuki purists" (Ernst 186). However, as Ernst further points out: "in the surprise which it engenders from the audience, and the emphasis thrown on the actor, this form of quick change lies closer to the characteristic forms of kabuki expression" (Ernst 184).

Anything unexpected arouses great interest in the kabuki audience, who especially enjoy "quick changes" (*hayagawari*). This technique of rushing or "disappearing" off-stage to make a complete change of costume, and then immediately returning in an different costume within the same scene, usually creates a sensation.

Such is the case when Tadanobu-*kitsune* repeats a number of *hayagawari* in the third scene, as the magical fox jumps through parts of

the stage scenery, and reappears miraculously in another costume from another location. This spectacular feat occurs three times in one scene.

Costumes are not necessarily realistic or logical, since these are not aesthetic imperatives in kabuki. While some costumes follow the social trends of the times, most are exaggerated or imaginative for dramatic appeal. Other costumes were adapted from other theatre genre. Costumes worn in jōruri were used in plays adapted to kabuki, such as *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. For instance, the black silk kimono worn by Tadanobu is embroidered in gold with a wheel pattern (*mon*) called "Genji cart wheels" (*genjiguruma*). This same costume is also seen in the jōruri production of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* (Shaver 71).

Certain costumes worn in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, as well as the characters that wear them, like the *akahime* or *hana yoten*, never existed off-stage and were created especially for kabuki. These creative and dramatic *akahime* and *hana yoten* costumes may also be seen in other kabuki plays.

Magnificent costumes fulfilled the townsmen's fondness for beauty, glamour and fantasy. Many of the costumes worn in *jidaimono*, such as *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, were designed for a highly stylized form of acting, not realistic but symbolic and spectacular. Actors made special efforts to delight their audience by creating unique costumes for each role, which evolved into unrealistic styles. Combined within the same scene,

some actors may be conventionally attired, like Kawatsura Hogan and the "real" Tadanobu, while others like Benkei and Tadanobu-*kitsune* in the first scene wear fantastic costumes that are only seen on the kabuki stage. This rich potpourri of costumes seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* provides the audience with stimulating variety and contrast.

The Edo shogunate, fearful that the lower classes might assume prerogatives reserved for their superiors, published numerous edicts and sumptuary laws designed to force the actors to diminish the splendor of their costumes. During the Edo period, each main actor had to supply his own costume. First they were borrowed, later the actors could afford to buy them, or they received them as gifts from rich patrons. It was only after the Meiji period that the theatre paid for the actor's costumes, which led to a stimulating competition among the better paid actors to be the best dressed actor on stage (Wazumi 128).

During the Edo era, imaginative costumes of nobility and samurai were developed because imitation of the authentic attire on the stage (as well as off-stage) was proscribed by law. In addition, display of luxurious and rich materials in kabuki was banned by government edict, so that ingenious methods had to be created through color and design to make the costumes theatrical and representative of important personages.

While some of the costumes created an artistic and unique beauty similar to *ukiyo-e*, there were other costumes created which reflected the

flamboyant excesses of the Momoyama period. By the late Edo period, the *kata* had generally become fixed, and after the Meiji period, actors followed the precedent that already had been set (Noguchi 29).

In *jidaimono* set in the Heian period, like *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, there were no exact recreations of Heian period (794-1185) attire, because most known Heian styles were worn by royalty, and according to law they could not be reproduced on the stage. Shaver states that authentic Heian styles were only introduced into kabuki after 1951 (Shaver 24).

However, a visual perception of the Heian era, when overrefinement in wearing apparel was an indication of nobility, such as the long flowing sleeves and multiple hem effects, was always presented on stage. Today, the costumes for plays set in the Heian era utilize these conventions, but today's costumes are bolder in theatrical design and use brighter colored cloth, since color was also restricted according to rank during the Edo period.

One innovation that can be seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, is the Heian influence of the many-layered kimono (*jūnihitoe*) in the *akahime* role. Since wearing twelve kimono would be too warm under the stage lights, as well as hinder movement, many layers of edges of hemlines are sewn along the underneath border of the top kimono, thereby creating the effect of many robes worn one over another. This effect can be seen on Shizuka's kimono.



Strong contrasts in costumes may be seen, which reflect the various characterizations on stage. An extensive diversity is seen among the patterns, colors and styles worn together in a scene by the various characters. The sizable array of colors, at times almost discordant, produces a vibrant effect. Some costumes are dazzling in their rich hues and patterns, while others are beautiful in their understated simplicity.

Dynamic *aragoto* roles are portrayed in spectacular costumes exaggerated for dramatic effect. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Benkei's fantastic and garish costume provides a counterpoint to the refined and subdued costumes of a samurai like Kawatsura Hogan, the lavish and decorative *akahime* costume of Shizuka, and the understated elegant attire of a dignitary like Yoshitsune. In addition, the comic costume of Hayami no Tota reflects originality and is quite garish and humorous in itself. Many imaginative and bizarre costumes had historical precedent, which were discussed in Chapter Two: History and Tradition.

The Genroku period (1688-1703), considered the "Japanese Renaissance" when plebeian culture reached its zenith of expression, was sparked by the expanding influence of the *chōnin*. Kabuki fulfilled the desires of a non-aristocratic audience, and costumes were created during the Edo period as a result to please their particular taste (Shaver 24).

"Mod" and outlandish fashions were worn by certain townspeople during the Edo period, especially *kabukimono*, and adapted to the stage,

often dramatized for striking effects. *Kabukimono* received their name from the verb *kabuku*, which used to be written with *kanji* meaning inclined away from the norm. Displaying little respect for the restrictive Tokugawa edicts, *kabukimono* lived their lives as freely as possible, and they flaunted off-beat mannerisms as well as fashions which were copied and presented on the kabuki stage (Ortolani 155).

Okuni, the innovative founder of kabuki, exhibited these *kabukimono* fashions in her performances. Old paintings of Okuni show her attired in a priest's black silk robe worn over an ordinary kimono, both ankle length. She wore a painted umbrella-shaped hat (*nurigasa*) on her head, while around her neck hung a scarlet breast-length strap of brocaded silk (*karaori*) on which was fastened a small metal gong (*kane*). Okuni was the only woman of her troupe to cross-dress in male costume (ILLUSTRATION #1).

After Okuni collaborated with Sanza, she changed her costume from the priestly attire to a patterned *kamishimo*, worn without the customary pleated skirt-like trousers (*hakama*) underneath. The kimono was tied with an *obi* in a flat oblong bow (*karuta musubi*). The kimono was unique; fashioned extremely wide, and when closed in front it overlapped in the manner of a noh costume.

Okuni's hair was cut short and styled in a young man's (*wakashu*) fashion; a white headband (*hachimaki*) was tied around her head. Her props

included a folding fan (*ōgi*), a small gourd men carried for holding sake (*hyōtan*) hung from right side of her *obi*, and a Buddhist rosary *juzu* adorned her neck. She also emulated samurai, with a set of swords (*katana*) stuck through the left side of her *obi* (ILLUSTRATION #1).

Kabuki actors also created patterns and colors for theatrical effectiveness, which influenced public fashions such as the wide stiff sash (*obi*) and family crests (*mon*). The use of *mon* on clothing among the populace became widespread during the eighteenth century, after kabuki actors popularized them on stage (Shaver 24).

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, certain types of costumes are based on classical attire of the Heian and Kamakura periods. The category of *hisodemono* or *osodemono*, the extra wide or "big sleeve" apparel include the *kariginu*, a brilliant brocaded outer robe worn as leisure attire by dignitaries, and is seen on the character of Yoshitsune in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. His *kariginu* is bright orange, and this color could only be used by court nobles of the highest rank in real life (Shaver 24).

Some kimono have striking designs embroidered across the shoulder or diagonally down the back. The designs have symbolic significance: for example, a graceful white crane or cranes utilized in all over pattern represents longevity and good luck. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Shizuka's kimono has decorative designs of birds and flowers which symbolize fortuitous aspects.

Actors for both male and female roles are padded at the midriff in order to make the kimono look straight up and down, thereby eliminating bodily curves, since a straight figure and a "square form" are considered desirable (Ernst 184).

### **Costumes for Female Roles**

The beauty of the *onnagata* costumes for *jidaimono* lies in the richness of color combinations and sumptuousness of textile patterns. The "Red Princess" (*akahime*), a word used only in kabuki, denotes both the role and corresponding costume of a high-ranking young woman who is either a princess or the mistress or daughter of a shōgun or daimyō. *Kata* for the *onnagata* playing the role of the *akahime*, who portrays events occurring in medieval Japan, includes a costume typified by a luxurious bright red silk kimono. The long-sleeved red silk kimono and *uchikake* have wadded hems attached underneath to suggest the multiple robes (*jūnihitoe*) of Heian times. The robes are richly embroidered in silver, gold and colored threads in various patterns such as clouds and a curving stream with flowers, cherry blossoms or chrysanthemums (depending on the season), or a long-tailed bird design called *onagadori* (Shaver 166). Traditionally, *onnagata* wore only red in *hime* roles, but occasionally they appear in other colors such as white, lilac or pink. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, this departure can be seen in the *akahime* costume in the last scene when Shizuka returns onstage wearing a bright pink kimono.

A white kimono (*shitagi*) and red undergarments (*juban*) are worn beneath the decorative outer kimono (*kitsuke*). An ornate sash (*obi*), usually in a dazzling gold brocade design, is tied around the waist with extremely long hanging ends in the *furisage* style. Kimono of women denote age, marital status, and occupation. For instance, kimono with long swinging sleeves (*furisode*) are worn by only unmarried girls and young wives, such as Shizuka in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. After marriage and childbirth, the sleeves are shortened, such as the kimono worn by Kawatsura Hogan's wife. Sleeve length, long or short, does not refer to the length of the sleeve as measured against the outstretched arm, but to the length as it falls along the side seam of the kimono from shoulder to hem. Conventional kimono sleeves terminate at the wrist, while other roles call for outsized sleeves, sometimes double the width of material, so hands are "lost" in their volume which trails to the floor (Shaver 166).

Young women such as Shizuka and the ladies-in-waiting wear bright hues, especially red, with the various colors becoming less and less vivid until by middle age a neutral shade is reached, such as the somber black kimono with tan decoration on Hogan's wife (Shaver 114).

The *obi*, a sash about one foot wide, holds the kimono closed. Courtesans tie their *obi* only in front, and other women in back. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Shizuka ties her *obi* in front, courtesan fashion. The ladies-in-waiting tie their *obi* in back in a butterfly style, on the

diagonal, while Hogan's wife's *obi* is tied in back in a simple, square style. These *obi* range from Shizuka's long, colorful and decorative *obi*, to Hogan's wife's short and simple *obi*.

In contrast to the dazzling *akahime* costume, the *onnagata*'s makeup consists of a stark white face with some *beni* red color at the small-drawn mouth and around the eyes. The exposed skin at the neck, arms and hands, legs and feet is also stark white.

Shizuka, in the *akahime* role, wears a distinctive black wig with rounded back hair known as the *habutae maru tabo no fukiwa katsura*. An ornamental hairpin (*hime hana kanzashi*), comprised of four rows of silver plum blossoms and butterflies, is attached to the wig (Shaver 166). This wig and accompanying hair ornament is seen on Shizuka throughout the performance, even when there is a change in her costume.

### **Costumes for Male roles**

The attire of *aragoto* heroes Tadanobu-*kitsune* and Benkei in the first scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* imaginatively expresses the strength of these heroes. Both the kimono and the *obi* are padded with cotton, and the sleeves of the kimono are larger than normal. This creates a "larger than life" presence about the character. According to Wazumi, everything in the *aragoto* costume is beautiful and exaggerated (Wazumi 95).

*Kamishimo* was a standard formal male attire of the Tokugawa period, which emphasized the horizontal line of the shoulders and broad

lower part of the body. Wide kimono sleeves accentuate the movements of the arm, and when the arm is held up, the material of the sleeve increases the size of the figure considerably. The actor holding a fan or a sword further increases the extent of the spatial area he inhabits, as seen in the role of the "real" Tadanobu in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. Either short ankle-length trousers or long trailing trousers (*hakama*) are worn with this outfit (ILLUSTRATIONS #11 and 12).

One of the chief components of a general or high ranking warrior's military costume is armor (*yoroi*), seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* in the first two scenes. This *yoroi* is similar in appearance to its real historical Heian counterpart, but is made of different materials to achieve a lighter weight. From the audience's viewpoint the armor appears as "the real thing" made with metal and leather strips, but when I personally viewed them close up in the costume room, they looked like sturdy plastic. The silk threads which secure the strips of material representing leather or metal are of bright colors which proclaim the rank and status of the owner.

Young generals usually wear armor of red, although a few like Yoshitsune may have purple or orange armor, colors which belong exclusively to the highest rank. Approximately seventy variations of armor have been created for the kabuki stage (Shaver 205).

### Mon

During the seventeenth century, kabuki actors started the custom of displaying their personal *mon* outdoors on the theatre signboards and lanterns, as well as indoors on the theatre programs (*monbanzuke*), in order to familiarize kabuki patrons with their *mon*.

In the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, *mon* were worn only by male characters. The *mon* seen in kabuki are larger in size than those used in daily life, so they can be seen more easily by the audience. In addition, the maximum number for formal wear is not limited to five, as in real life. In *jidaimono*, the highest ranking samurai such as Tadanobu, when dressed in *nagagamishimo*, have six *mon*. The additional *mon* is centered on a stiffened upper piece at the back belt-line of the *hakama*. *Mon* of the actor's family are often applied to their costumes; they are especially noticeable in roles where actors particular interpretations have become accepted *kata* (Shaver 237).

The *genjiguruma* (Genji wheel) is a motif inspired by the wheels of ox carts used by the Minamoto clan nobility during the Fujiwara period. The design consists of two circles crossed by spokes radiating from the center. The *genjiguruma mon* design of the Gidayū singer Toyotake Masatayu III was used for the costume of Tadanobu in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* when this play first appeared at the puppet theatre in Osaka in 1747, and ever since has been a favorite costume design in both the bunraku and kabuki



performances of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. This was in spite of the fact that during the Edo period, the common people of the lowest class (like the actors) could only wear white circles, since by government edict they were not permitted to wear *mon* (Shaver 239).

In kabuki, there is a special attachment to the *mon*, for it represents family honor and continuity handed down from generation to generation. Although Japanese rarely display *mon* today, the practice continues in kabuki, where customs of the Edo period still survive.

One of the most famous actor's *mon* is that of the Ichikawa family. It consists of three square boxes, one inside the next. Branch families of the Ichikawa line personalize it by placing their identifying initial or symbol in the central box. Each *mon*'s design was selected for a special reason. The three boxes of the Ichikawa crest represent three measures (*masu*) of rice given by a devoted fan to Ichikawa Danjūrō I (Leiter 1979, 5).

Actors' crests are depicted on their costumes, on the curtains leading into their dressing rooms, on books dealing with their lives, and on stage properties such as hand towels (*tenugui*).

In kabuki, audiences witness a vast array of costumes which demonstrate the creative possibilities employed to express characterization. Because of this diversity, kabuki costumes have achieved a dramatic quality of theatricality which plays an invaluable role in presenting stylized beauty and spectacle in the visual dimension of performance.

## HEADWEAR

### Wigs (*Katsura*)

The wig is an important aspect of the stylized appearance of a character. Kabuki costumes are coordinated with the corresponding wig for each role, which is necessary for completion of the total appearance of the actor. Kabuki wigs are a necessary component of costuming, as the coordination of wig and costume are indispensable to role identity for transforming the actors into personalities recognizable to the audience.

The kabuki wig is an essential part of an actor's visual characterization. In its uniqueness as an extension and expression of a character's role, the special *kata* of wigs is cited as evidence by Shaver that kabuki is an indigenous art form, for "no other theatrical tradition has anything comparable to it" (Shaver 336).

Most wigs are used only for specific roles, so that in all over five hundred different kinds of wigs exist, if the differences in stylized parts are enumerated. The greater percentage of wigs are made with human hair, but certain special wigs or parts of wigs are made from Tibetan yak tail hair, bear fur, or dyed sheep's wool (Hamamura 42).

During festival days in ancient times, women adorned their hair with flowering vines of the season, and these decorations developed into artistic creations that were elaborated and adapted by the performers of sarugaku, the forerunner of noh (Shaver 301).

Wigs were introduced in stage performances of *noh* in the fourteenth century Ashikaga-Muromachi period. Wigs were simply classified: white hair for elderly men, white or black hair under a hat (*eboshi*) for warriors, and red or black hair for supernatural beings such as divine dragons, mythical lions, and devils (Shaver 301).

Kabuki wigs are first mentioned in 1680, in a book dealing with life in Kyoto entitled *Mirror of Manners and Customs (Miyako fuzoku kagami)*. It states that kabuki actors were using *daigane* (foundation-metal), a copper frame covering the entire head (Shaver 301). Male actors were performing in kabuki as *onnagata* at that time, and creative innovations were being developed to assist with the presentation of female characters.

When an actor puts on the wig, he must first bind his head with a piece of silk cloth (*habutae*), and put the wig on top of it. The head must be bound tightly in order to pull up the corners of the eyes, since slanting eyes are considered a desirable feature (Shaver 334). Facial wrinkles are also minimized by this process. Some wigs cover the whole head, such as those used for *onnagata*, while most of the wigs used for male characters leave a bluish "shaved" portion at the top of the head uncovered. The male wig, placed over the *habutae*, consists of hair at the sides and a top knot. With careful makeup application, the line between face and *habutae* is blended as closely as possible, so from the audience it cannot be discerned (Hamamura 43).

Two groups of men are essential to the creation and completion of *katsura*: the wigmakers (*katsura-ya*), who cut, shape, fit and fashion the copper bases, and the coiffeurs (*tokoyama*), who style and maintain the wigs. Furthermore, the *tokoyama* are divided into two classes: those who specialize in *onnagata* wigs, and those who specialize in men's wigs.

Today, at the Kabuki-za, the *kyōgen kata*, a man in charge of production who assumes various duties, registers in a "wig notebook" (*katsura no tsukechō*) every scene, act, and role and matches the actors chosen for each role with the type of wig to be worn. Copies of this listing are sent to the coiffeurs and the warehouse in Shintomi-chō where available copper wig bases (*daigane*) and *habutae* are stored.

The *tokoyama* visits the individual actors to solicit their opinions or preferences, and then the *daigane*, which are kept for a lifetime (unless the actor's head changes in size), are removed from storage and fitted with the wigs. Every actor must have a separate *daigane* for each role. About three hundred men's wigs are used every month, and there are approximately four hundred male hairstyles remaining in kabuki today.

Illustrations in old paintings and scrolls may provide inspiration for "new" variations of coiffures, or an artist may bring in a detailed drawing of a hairstyle desired by an actor for a particular part. The *tokoyama* endeavors to duplicate the hairstyle using the drawing as a guide (Shaver 303).

### **Types and Categories**

The shapes, names, and general use of the copper wig frames (*daigane*) and hair styles are described by Shaver (303-307).

#### *Daigane*

*Bin no mono daigane*: two side pieces (*bin*) and a suspension bridge which lacks the piece representing the crown of the head (*kora*) forms the base for the *aburatsuki*, which is a class of men's wigs where the back hair is pomaded, polished and flattened to the head. This style is worn by daimyō and samurai in *jidaimono*.

*Kora mono daigane* with *tabo no kane*: this wig base has both the piece representing the crown of the head and the bridge to which the back hair (*tabo*) is attached. The wig has the back hair styled in the *fukurotsuki* style, a class of men's wigs where the back hair is in a bag shape. Many characters in *sewamono* wear this style including persons who mandate final judgments or settle disputes, managers employed in *chōnin* households, certain *wagoto* characters to make them appear more sexually attractive (usually villains), and characters who have some quality of the supernatural.

*Maru tabo mono daigane*: This type is worn mainly by *onnagata* in *jidaimono*. The coiffure has a *tabo* which is stretched into a short roundish puff by the insertion of a stretcher (*tabogane*). This *daigane* is the base for

all female coiffures, with minor changes in the appendages such as eliminating the *tabogane* in the *jtabo* style.

*Bin no mono daigane* with *tabo no kane*: this lacks the *kora* but has a metal bridge at the back for attachment of the *tabo*, which is in *fukurotsuki* style. This wig is used for a few roles in *jidaimono* and practically all *chōnin* and commoner roles in *sewamono*.

The shaping of *bin* and *kurigata* (cutting/scooping shape) or hairline is one of the most significant means of displaying the character of the role. The *kurigata* can emphasize the amorousness of the *nimaine* or the strong forbidding look of the *katakiyaku* or villain. The length of the *bin* and shape of the *kurigata* permit the *tokoyama* to dress the wig to enhance the looks of the wearer. For instance, a long face can be made to look shorter, or a wide face thinner, and an actor can have the *katsuraya* adjust the *bin* and *kurigata* to bring out his best facial traits and conceal his weaker ones (Shaver 307).

#### Hair Styles: Men's Wigs

Men's wigs are styled according to either *aburatsuki* or *fukurotsuki* classification. In *aburatsuki*, the back hair is pomaded and pressed close to the head. *Aburatsuki* type wigs are worn mostly in *jidaimono* by daimyō, noblemen, and samurai. In *fukurotsuki*, the back hair is combed into a bag effect. *Fukurotsuki* type wigs are worn by *chōnin* and other commoners in *sewamono* (Shaver 318).

### Hair Styles: Onnagata Wigs

*Onnagata* wigs may be divided into three classifications: *marutabo*, *jitabo* and *shītaketabo*. *Marutabo* consists of a short rounded puff of back hair which is rolled around a metal stretcher (*tabogane*). This style is used mainly in *jidaimono* roles such as Shizuka's in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. *Jitabo* is dressed without either a stretcher or padding, resulting in a more natural hair style, and is seen mostly in *sewamono* and *kizaewamono*. *Shītaketabo* is highly pomaded and fashioned into a mushroom effect. The style of the three finished coiffures, and not the *daigane*, is the significant difference in these wigs. After the wig is styled by the *tokoyama*, the hair ornaments are added.

### **Wigs Seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura***

Benkei's wig: often referred to as the "100 days wig" (*hyakunichi no tare*) or "*daibyaku*" because of the styling of the *sakayaki*, the unshaven portion of the head. Benkei's head has not been shaven for one hundred days, hence the name *hyakunichi no tare*. According to Shaver, this big bushy wig is worn for special roles "to express moods of weirdness or horror" in *jidaimono* (Shaver 310). However, Benkei's "mood" is not "weird", but rather his wig coordinates with his overall exaggerated appearance, that is fantastic and bizarre and exudes his colorful, forceful and larger than life characterization as Yoshitsune's loyal retainer (ILLUSTRATION #2).

Tadanobu-kitsune's wig in the *michiyuki*: the *aburatsuki-honke-mai-bin-no-mae-chasen-no-bo-jike*. The wig has both *bo-jike*, which are hanging strands of hair at the back of the ear, hardened with a special pomade, and *hachi-mai-bin*, which are sidelocks composed of eight sheets of hair. A thick topknot (which is coiled around eighteen pieces of paper cord to make it stand erect) is brought forward on the crown. This wig is worn by amorous characters, and also used for the roles of *daimyō* (Shaver 315). This is significant, because in the *michiyuki*, Tadanobu "stands in" for Yoshitsune, and portrays an erotic passage with Shizuka. In the previous scene and in subsequent scenes, Tadanobu wears different hairstyles, which each correspond to his metamorphosis from man to fox (ILLUSTRATIONS #3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, and 13).

Red-faced *shitennō*: another interesting wig in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is the *support-no-hishikawa*, worn by the feisty red-faced retainer. After Benkei's wig, this wig stands out as unusual because it is also big and bushy (although less so than Benkei's wig), compared to the neatly styled hairdos worn by the other characters in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. The wig is made from curly hair (*kara-ke*), which gives it a "wilder" look. The word *supporti* denotes that the *daigane* with its attached *kora* completely covers the head, and a reddish brown *habutae* of paper is used to create the look of a red forehead (Shaver 314). This style is used primarily for forceful



*aragoto* roles, and is particularly well-suited to the characterization of the red-faced *shitenno*.

Shizuka's wig: The typical wig (*habutae-maru-tabo-no-fukiwa*) for the *akahime* role is described by Shaver (330):

The *fukiwa mage* is a wide, rather flat *mage* which is looped over a large ornament in hand-drum shape, ornately decorated and predominantly red in color. The ornaments attached to the root of the *mage* are two silver *takenaga* (starched paper strips); four long *takenaga* with a silver zigzag design on a red ground, each end curled under; and a bow of red crepe. Placed in front of the *mage* is a *hanagushi* (flower comb) with four rows of silver plum blossoms and butterflies. Smart-looking *shike* (short strands of hair) hang from each side of the forelock. *Ito-jike* (strands of thick silk yarn twisted together to hang down before each ear) complete the coiffure (ILLUSTRATION #5).

Ladies-in-waiting: the *habutae-katsuyama-no-maru-tabu*. This coiffure, designed by a courtesan in Yoshiwara named Katsuyama, became popular among the general population in the early eighteenth century, and may be worn by young wives in *jidaimono* (Shaver 333). The wig is free of decorations, and its various sections are all smooth and rounded in appearance. The hairline (*kurigata*) is heart shaped, and small strands of hair falling from each side of the forehead are considered chic. A silver

headband (*hirauchi*) is seen slightly at the top right. All the ladies-in-waiting in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* wear this wig, and are also dressed exactly alike in the same kimono and accessories.

Yoshitsune: wig is the *aburatsuki-honke-hachi-mai-komi-no-bin-no-namajime*. Sidelocks are formed of eight strips, four to each side, of *mino-ge* and slightly inflated by the insertion of dried rushes to create a soft elegant style. These sidelocks are without the curved hairline at the temples (*kobitai*). This wig can be worn in both *jidaimono* or *sewamono* for roles characterized by amorousness (*iroke*) (Shaver 314).

#### **Headwear (*kaburimono*)**

Headwear in kabuki does not display the variety of color and pattern seen in kimono and *obi*, and often evades classification by role. Nevertheless, there is a strong affinity between the role, the costume and head covering. *Kaburimono* include hats, scarfs and headbands, but not the hand towels called *tenugui* which are also used as headbands.

In real life, *kaburimono* could not be worn at will by the people, since each class had its own specific types of headwear, and other types were restricted by government edict. There are five general kinds of *kaburimono* seen in kabuki; *kammuri*, *eboshi*, *zucin*, *kasa* and *bōshi*. Only the *kaburimono* seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* will be described.

### **Shizuka's Green Hat**

The *ichimegasa*, "market woman," is so-called because it was originally a hat worn by women who sold items at the market place. However, *ichimegasa* appear only in kabuki dance pieces (*shosagoto*), or in *michiyuki*, such as in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. The *ichimegasa* is a round hat made of a transparent gauzelike material called *sha*, which is stretched across an inside frame. The material is usually kelly green, whereas the edge of the brim and the ribs of the outer frame are metallic gold. The hat is not only elegant, but has the added quality that it may be seen through. Shizuka uses this hat solely as a decorative prop; she never actually wears it. Her *kata* with this hat are discussed in the *michiyuki* section of Part III.

### **Tadanobu's Straw Hat (Kesa)**

Umbrella-shaped reed hats are used in outdoor scenes, such as the travel journey (*michiyuki*) in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, to guard against the elements or conceal the wearer's identity. The particular *kesa* of Tadanobu's is called the *ichimonji-sagegasa*, which is one variation of the hat worn by samurai when traveling (Shaver 255). Tadanobu's hat, which is oversized, round and natural-colored, is used as a prop in the *michiyuki* in two different ways. It hangs down Tadanobu's back by its cord, and it is used in the comical *tachimawari* with the *yoten* as a prop. Tota tries to catch Tadanobu with the hat. After Tadanobu "escapes," one of the *yoten* holds it over Tota as he is comically manipulated like a puppet. Like

Shizuka's hat, this hat is never worn, but is employed as a decorative device.

### **Headbands (*Hachimaki*)**

The *hachimaki* is a folded cloth worn around the head as a band to keep hair out of the eyes and absorb sweat when the wearer is working or engaging in vigorous exertion such as a fight. Because they engage in *tachimawari*, all the *yoten* in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* wear *hachimaki*. However, Tadanobu (real and *kitsune*) and Kawatsura Hogan and his wife, who also engage in *tachimawari*, do not wear *hachimaki*.

In ancient times, there was a superstitious belief that the act of tying was sacred and brought good luck: tying the two ends together produced a whole. Since the head was considered the most vital part of the human body, the *hachimaki* may have been originally tied around the head in the belief that it would keep the head free of evil influences, cure a headache or prevent head ailments (Shaver 241).

*Hachimaki* styles seen in kabuki were drawn from real life, then stylized and made in varied colors. Stage *hachimaki* do not have a standard length or width, although they are usually folded to a width of approximately two inches when wound around the head.

*Muko* (front) *hachimaki* are of two varieties: the *samurai no muko* and *chōnin no muko*. In both styles, the cloth is brought around the head from the rear and tied in a flat bow at the center of the upper forehead. The

difference between the two styles is in the cloth used. For samurai, a *hachimaki* cloth is usually made out of white cotton or silk, although sometimes an orange or red-colored material is used. The *chōnin* forms his *hachimaki* from whatever *tenugui* he has at hand, which is usually of blue cotton (Shaver 246).

The *hachimaki*'s material, color, pattern, manner of tying, and even position of the knot can tell the observant kabuki audience much about the role.

## PROPS

This section examines the function of small props (*kodōgu*). They can be called "hand props" because they are usually carried by the characters in the play as an important adjunct in their total appearance. Large props (*ōdōgu* or *daidōgu*), components of the stage setting, are discussed in the performance area section of this chapter.

Every *kodōgu* in the performance is there for a specific reason: to assist the actor, to enhance the appearance of the actor or stage setting, or to signify. Due to the Shinto belief that inanimate as well as animate objects are endowed with a spirit and imbued with symbolic meaning, special names may be given to these objects, such as the "Hatsune" drum in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, or a suffix "*maru*" added to the name of a sword.

Wazumi, in his book *Kabuki no Kata*, divides *kodōgu* into three major categories: those that are carried by the actor, those that are placed for the actor by the stage assistant, and moving props, which are used to explain a role or to express the atmosphere of a place (Wazumi 128).

Besides having the character appear onstage carrying the *kodōgu* in his hand, such as a fan, or wearing it on his body, such as a sword in a scabbard, the *kodōgu* may be carried onstage by a stage assistant (*kurogo* or *kōken*). The stage assistant hands a character the object precisely when needed for a particular action or emphasis. When the

character has finished using the *kōdogu*, he places it to his side or behind him, and the stage assistant immediately retrieves it and takes it off-stage at the earliest opportune moment.

*Kōdogu* may be imbued with special meaning, so their continued presence on stage has great dramatic impact. An example in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is the continuous presence of the drum Hatsune. Or *kōdogu* may appear only briefly as needed, such as Shizuka's umbrella during the *michiyuki* scene, and removed after its dramatic purpose has been served so as not to detract from the presence of the actor or be an incumbrance.

### **The Drum Hatsune**

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the drum Hatsune is usually stage center during the first three scenes, as the story revolves around it. The drum is positioned in the center of the stage no matter who has it: when received as a gift by Shizuka from Yoshitsune in Scene One, when Shizuka places it on the tree stump in Scene Two, or when Shizuka sets it on the veranda railing in Scene Three. The rare instance that the drum is not stage center is when the action takes place in the air and the fox holds it in his hands while "flying" above the audience in Scene Three.

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the drum Hatsune is presented as a gift and exchanges hands three times: from the retired emperor as a gift to Yoshitsune, then from Yoshitsune as a gift to Shizuka, and finally as

a gift from Yoshitsune and Shizuka to Tadanobu the fox. This *kodōgu* represents more than "just a drum." The symbolism of the drum Hatsune is inherent and reflects the three pillars of Japanese society as expressed in *jidaimono*: loyalty and bravery, duty and obligation, and filial devotion. The emphasis is on the symbolism of the drum and what it stands for: 1. loyalty and bravery, as the drum was bestowed to Yoshitsune as gift for his loyalty and bravery, 2. the obligations of duty over personal feelings of love (*giri ninjō*) when Yoshitsune gives the drum to Shizuka, and 3. filial devotion, when Yoshitsune gives the drum to Tadanobu-*kitsune*, so the fox can be near his parents.

Additional symbolism is bestowed on the drum Hatsune due to its color and design. Besides being placed prominently center stage during the first three scenes, the drum Hatsune is also a visual focal point due to its bright orange color. This color could only be used by dignitaries of the highest order and matches the bright orange stand-up collar of Yoshitsune's *kariginu*. In addition, the drum is decorated with birds; there is continuous narration during the *michiyuki* comparing various birds to the *giri ninjō* situation between Yoshitsune and Shizuka, and in addition the sounds of birds are heard (from off-stage) for reinforcement.

While the drum Hatsune is a *kodōgu* particular to Yoshitsune *Senbon Zakura*, two other *kodōgu* that can be seen in all classical historical pieces (*jidaimono*) are the fan (*ōgi*) and the sword (*katana*). These



stage *kodōgu* were derived from actual life and their use is governed by conventions.

### Fans (*ōgi*)

Following the development of trade relations with China during the Tang dynasty (618-907), Chinese influences predominated over various aspects of Japanese life. One early influence was a small rigid fan called a "hand screen" (*sensu*). During the reign of the Emperor Tenchi (600-671), a Japanese-styled fan (*ōgi*) was created with folding ribs which replaced its Chinese predecessor and became a requisite adjunct of appearance at all levels of society. *Ōgi*, by their distinguishing characteristics of color, design, and size signified sex, age, rank, profession, and class identity. Men, women, and children of all levels of society such as court officials, soldiers, sages, priests, princes, noblemen, and dancing girls had their particular fans (Shaver 275).

*Ōgi* had several functions: first, as a means of identification; second, to agitate the air for coolness; and third, to be at hand when required for other uses. Strict codes of etiquette governed the individual use of *ōgi*.

As early as 957, *ōgi* achieved such popularity that contests (*ōgi awase*) were held before the Emperor to publicly acknowledge the best designed fan. Poems were often inscribed on them to complement picturesque designs.

During the late Heian period (794-1185), folding fans with five ribs were developed. *Hiōgi*, used by nobility wearing formal dress, were fashioned of thin staves of cypress (*hinoki*) held together at the spread end by twisted silk cords and at the bottom by a rivet. Painted designs carried special symbolic significance, such as plum blossoms or bamboo which signified fortitude. For ordinary dress, nobility carried *ōgi* which had folded paper pasted to the ribs (Liddell 53).

During the early part of the Muromachi period (1392-1568), Japan reopened trade with China, which had ceased in 894. One of Japan's first exports was the five-ribbed folding fan. In a reciprocity of trade, China exported fans with fifteen or more ribs, and these more intricate fans were admired by the Japanese who tried to duplicate the craftsmanship. Initially, the Japanese types called *suehiro* were top heavy. However, the technique used by the Japanese artisans improved and the name was changed from *suehiro* to *chūkei* (Shaver 275).

The fan that kabuki adapted from noh is often displayed on the stage in *jidaimono* and has special symbolic meaning. The twelve ribs of the fan symbolize life, and as the rays of the fan expand, so does the road of life expand, indicating a prosperous future (Shaver 275).

The kabuki *ōgi*, besides being a decorative and practical prop, helps to identify a character's social position, class, and profession or

occupation. *Ōgi* belong to all role types, and the protocol and decorum from Heian through Edo times are carried out onstage.

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, many aspects of the performance are adapted from the puppet theatre. One difference between kabuki and puppet performance of the plays lies in the movement *kata* of the *ōgi*. Since a puppet cannot "really" manipulate a fan, its movements are not as finely expressive or illustrative as those of a kabuki actor. In addition, Shaver states: "In *jōruri*, manipulation of the fan is not always the same, since the puppeteer of necessity is somewhat handicapped in movement because his hands have to reach from behind the puppet. Whereas, on the kabuki stage, the action of the fan can be likened to dance steps, always fully the same" (Shaver 279).

Another difference which may be seen in kabuki adaptations such as *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, is when certain characters exhibit dual personalities; *jōruri* states that difference through *monogatari*, the story related by the musical narrative, and not through action. In kabuki, the smallest movement of the fan expresses meaning to the audience of the true nature of the character.

*Onnagata ōgi* are more diminutive and delicate in appearance than those used by actors in masculine roles. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, characters like Shizuka, in the "Red Princess" role (*akahime*), has a fan (*onna ōgi*) without any design, gold on one side and silver on the other,

with black lacquered ribs. It also has two red tassels, which signify her high status. The ladies-in-waiting carry a similar *ōgi*, but without tassels to denote their lower rank.

In *jidaimono*, ladies of the Imperial Court carry the *akome ōgi*, beautifully ornate fans with five corded silk streamers, to "demurely" hide their faces. However, there are no court ladies present in the Tadanobu section. In addition, Shaver states that courtesans do not use fans, since they are entertainers, and to fan themselves before patrons would be rudeness (Shaver 280).

*Ōgi* reach their greatest artistic merit in the dance sequences. The dance fan (*shosagoto ōgi* or *mai ōgi*) can be seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* during the *michiyuki* scene with Tadanobu and Shizuka. They emphasize dramatic and descriptive high points in the narration of the chanters throughout the *michiyuki*. For example, Shizuka uses her *mai ōgi* to express the churning waves and the ship blown off its course at Sumiyoshi Bay. While the beauty of the *mai ōgi* is an attraction, the expressive manner of its employment is what creates an impression. The *mai ōgi* have ten ribs and are larger than those originally created in Japan at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when kabuki debuted.

*Mai ōgi*, usually one foot in length, are larger than the *ōgi* used in other scenes. In addition, the size also varies according to the height and physique of the actor dancing. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the *mai ōgi*

of Tadanobu and Shizuka differ in size. The actor Tamasaburō, who is very tall with broad shoulders, also has a larger *mai ōgi* than other *onnagata*.

During the dance sequence, the dancer employs various techniques in the movement of the *ōgi*. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, two *ōgi* are employed by Shizuka for greater dramatic value, and their manipulation requires great skill. One of the techniques is "flipping over" the *ōgi*. Shaver explains this technique:

A small piece of lead is embedded into the base of each parent rib of the *mai ōgi*. This is done so that the fan can be flipped over and caught easily during the performance- or purposely dropped to the floor. The weighted handle permits its graceful flight, preventing it from landing on end in an unsightly position. The flipping over of a fan is often a tense yet exciting movement for the playgoers, and one that shows the timing and dexterity of the dancer (Shaver 282).

Since the dancers' motions must appear effortless, the dancer is never preoccupied with the progress of the *ōgi*. Sometimes, the *ōgi* is accidentally dropped to the floor, but the dancer continues as though nothing has happened. The dancer may retrieve it, effortlessly with a swift gesture (as I have seen done by Tamasaburō), or the *kōken* may replace it for the dancer. However, the *kōken* does not retrieve it from the floor, but rather waits until an opportune time and then quickly and

dexterously places a new fan in the dancer's hand. The dancer continues without any indication that a substitution has been made.

While the *ōgi* was never dropped during *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, I witnessed this occurrence during another kabuki performance. In *Renjishi*, Tamasaburō dropped his *mai ōgi* during the first dance section, but later, during the lion's dance section, he endured an almost unbelievable number of strenuous head twirls, twice as many as in the previous performance, as if to apologize to the audience and show his great artistic merit.

In the hands of a great performer like Tamasaburō, *ōgi* become "alive" to express a variety of different actions and objects. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, during the *michiyuki* sequence of "Kagekiyo's challenge," the closed *ōgi* emulates the sword, bow and arrow. There are certain rudimentary meanings in the execution of the *ōgi*. Partially opened, it can resemble the *bachi*, a plectrum used with the shamisen and used to play an imaginary instrument. Opened wide, and held over the head, it may represent an umbrella shaped hat (*kesa*), or wavering downward to represent rain or softly falling cherry blossoms. Upside down, fully opened, the *ōgi* represents a mountain, and two fans used together, undulating movements of sea (Shaver 283).

*Ōgi* used by actors in male roles may be classified into three categories: 1. *chūkei*; a fan copied from noh, which are used by the main

characters in roles of *daimyō*, court nobles, and samurai, such as the "real" Tadanobu and Kawatsura Hogan, 2. *tenchikin*; a ten-ribbed white fan with a gold band along the top and bottom edges, used by the same characters as above when they are attired in Edo formal attire (*kamishimo*), and 3. *jin sen*, a battle fan used by warrior heroes like Yoshitsune in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* (Shaver 285).

Yoshitsune's *ōgi* is the battle fan (*jin sen*), and there are two distinctive types. One type is decorated on one side with seven silver discs against a black background, which represent the seven stars of the big dipper and is considered good luck. On the reverse side is a symbol known as *bonji*, derived from Sanskrit, which varies in design. In the "Tadanobu Section" of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Yoshitsune's second *jin sen* is seen which has a large red disc, representing the sun, set against a metallic gold background on one side and a silver metallic background on the reverse side. A bright red tassel is attached to it, signifying that he is of high birth (Shaver 277).

### **Swords (*katana*)**

Stylized form, rather than realistic movement, is an essential feature of kabuki aesthetics. This applies to the use of the sword as well as the fan. Assuming a pose as if to strike an opponent, with just a suggested motion, imparts the full meaning of the action to the audience.

Swords, like fans, are more than "just props," as they become an important reflection of the characters who use them.

Swords, as symbols of life, death and honor, were venerated objects and believed to represent the "soul of the samurai." Because of this attitude, any debasement of their use was detested, and not everyone was considered worthy of being killed with a sword. The samurai would strike unworthy opponents with the back of his sword rather than the tempered edge (Shaver 289). Pictures of *kabukimono*, including one alleged to be Okuni, show the person leaning on a sword, which is the height of irreverence (ILLUSTRATION #1).

Displays of esteem for the sword that are seen on the kabuki stage stem from conventions that were used in real life. A pair of swords is an indispensable component of samurai attire. On stage, in both indoor and outdoor scenes, the samurai's swords remain by his side. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, these conventions may be seen in the role of the "real Tadanobu."

When a samurai pays his respects upon arrival, after seating himself in Japanese style, he removes the longer of his two swords (*daitō*) and places it on the ground on his right side to demonstrate his amity; the action signifies that he has no intention of using his weapon. If he places it down on his left side, hilt to the front, this signifies that there might be an assault, for in this position he can easily grasp the sword.



The placing of the sword is different when the samurai is in the presence of his master, for then he places the sword at his right side but places the sword hilt (*tsuka*) towards the back. If he wants to convey complete obedience to his master, he ties both swords together with the sword cords (*sageo*), as does the "real" Tadanobu when he presents himself before Yoshitsune in the third scene.

Kabuki swords are made in imitation of real blades, the color of the decorations and mountings on the hilt made brighter for dramatic effect. The various periods in Japanese history produced noticeable differences in swords, and the ones employed in kabuki performance are appropriate to the historical period and the role. Kabuki swords are classified under two major headings: *ken*, straight swords with double-edged blades used for stabbing, and *katana*, curved swords with single-edged blades used for cutting. *Katana* is both the generic term for the entire sword category and a specific type of sword (Shaver 289).

Female characters in kabuki may have to defend the honor of their husbands, lords, or themselves, and use a dagger (*kaiken*). Women usually carry them enclosed in a brocade pouch, which they tuck into their *obi*. In kabuki, wives and daughters of samurai or daimyō carry *kaiken* even on ordinary occasions, but in real life they were only utilized for emergencies or dangerous trips. Shizuka dramatically displays such

a dagger in Scene Three, during her interrogation of the alleged imposter Tadanobu (ILLUSTRATION #12).

A special type of weapon is used by Noritsune and the little foxes in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. They carry a type of halberd common to the Heian period (*naginata*). The *naginata* of the little foxes is much smaller than the long over-sized one used by Noritsune. During their *tachimawari*, no weapons actually come in contact with anything; the movements are choreographed with special *kata* to simulate fighting.

## THE PERFORMANCE AREA

All elements of the kabuki visual presentation are directed towards creating and displaying a beautifully composed stage picture. "The scene on stage must always be attractive as an artistic picture" (Kawatake 1990, 93). The aim is perfection throughout the performance. Repeat performances of familiar plays retain their popularity because people want to escape from their problems or daily mundane routines, by immersing themselves in the ambience of the pictorial beauty seen onstage in the "living pictures" created by actors and setting (Hamamura 98).

I refer to the locus of the action as the "performance area," because in kabuki, acting is not limited to the stage proper. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the performance area extends beyond the stage and the *hanamichi* to the entire auditorium area. This concept will be examined within the context of the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance. The components examined in this chapter are also discussed in the section on the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, Part III.

Ernst states that the performance area is the realm of the actor, not the scene designer. Kabuki concentrates upon showing the actor to his best advantage within this stage picture, and every effort is made to appear attractive from the first moment the actor appears onstage until his exit (Ernst 105). In particular, the picture at the end of the scene must be visually pleasing as this image will linger in the minds of the audience

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(Gunji 1969, 39). Wazumi also states that every effort is made at this point to leave a "beautiful stage picture" which will remain with the audience after the final curtain is drawn (Wazumi 96).

This attitude of presentation extends to the space surrounding the actor, and emphasis is focused on the creation of an appropriate setting for the actor (Toita 1970, 81). This reflects the Japanese aesthetic of "empty space," whereby careful attention is given to the relationship of each object with its surrounding space and each component's balance with all other components in the total "picture scene" (Kawatake 1990, 67).

Every aspect of that "picture scene" is carefully planned, to the minutest component. The audience will seek meaning in the slightest detail and therefore nothing is left to chance. The background settings must be appropriate to the place and circumstance of the performance. In the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, even the smallest details are coordinated with the larger reality of the play. For example, the buds of the cherry blossoms have all burst open at the Fushimi Inari Shrine in Kyoto in scene one. However, in Scene Three, at Kawatsura Hogan's mansion further north in the mountains, the buds have only opened at the top of the tree, due to the elevation and latitude.

### **Stage Settings**

The stage setting can modify the performance, by making the actor seem more humble, or by making the actor seem "larger than life." For

example, the large Torii gateway of the Fushimi Inari Shrine is much smaller than its real counterpart in Japan. However, even though the stage setting is modified to accommodate the space available, the shrine looms significantly larger than the characters. Although the stage settings are both large and spectacular, they are created to show the actor to his best advantage, and do not over-power him (Ernst 105).

The geographical location of the stage event affects the stage decor through the physical appearance and layout of the stage. The properties in the overall design may be decorative, symbolic or emotional. An example of a stage unit that convey these three qualities in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* are the drum Hatsune and the cherry blossoms. The cherry blossoms which vividly decorate the stage can be seen from the first scene to the last. Ubiquitous cherry blossoms are seen hanging from the proscenium arch, painted on the flats, bursting forth on a free-standing cherry tree, and falling dramatically from the "sky" at strategic points throughout the play and at the closing of the final curtain. The delicate blossoms visually reinforce the recurring Buddhist theme throughout the play, of the frailty of life as well as its beauty.

The setting affects the reception of the intended message, and can relate to the action in the play by amplifying it, or by providing a contrapuntal accompaniment (opposites *yin* and *yang*) which relates to the stage aesthetically. For example, the stairs are off-center to the right of the

doorway in the third scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. On one hand, they balance the left side of the stage which is "heavy" because of the *hanamichi*. The other reason for the location of the stairs is because Yoshitsune must be stage center at times, and Shizuka and Tadanobu at other times, and the stairs help focus the audience's attention on highlights of the action, such as Tadanobu's dramatic pose (*ebizori*) when he leans backwards over the stairs, with Shizuka hovering over him with the dagger.

Large scenic units such as the stage settings are referred to as *ōdōgu*, to distinguish them from *kodōgu*, small properties which the actors usually carry in their hands (*kodōgu* are discussed in Chapter Four under "props"). During a kabuki performance, "the scenic elements (*jōshikimono*) of kabuki settings that are fixed in style by long tradition" may be seen (Leiter 150). Most of the scenic elements in kabuki are standardized according to length, width, and color. Though standardized, they are also flexible enough to adapt to various sets, either as is, or in combination with one another.

*ōdōgu* are organized and classified under major categories (Wazumi 128). Leiter provides a list of some of the items included under this designation of *ōdōgu*:

levels (*ashi*) placed on the stage floor (*nijū*), pillars, transom works, banisters, railings, stairs, sliding opaque doors, *shōji* screens, latticework, rain doors, fences, entryways (*kido*), stone lanterns,

wells, trees, shrubbery, tree stumps, folding stools, pilings, rain barrels, perspective backdrops, watchtowers, pine-board backdrops..., red-carpeted step units, *torii* gates, washbowls, and shrine fences (Leiter 1979, 150).

Many of these *ōdōgu* may be seen in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, and are described within the performance notes. They include such items as: the *torii* gate and shrine fence specific to the first scene, as well as Yoshitsune's folding campaign-style bench; the banisters, railings, and stairs seen connected to the veranda of Kawatsura Hogan's mansion in Scene Three; the large free-standing cherry tree in the first three scenes; and the red-carpeted steps in the last scene. In addition, common to all the scenes are the perspective backdrops, which are dazzling in their colors and overall patterns.

The *ōdōgu* are scaled to the dimensions of a particular stage so they can be used in any play. In addition, many of the large scenic items, like the Fushimi Inari Shrine entrance, are scaled much smaller than actual size. This is done not only for space limitations on stage, but also to make the actor appear larger by comparison. In the first scene, the stage is set with a beautiful spring panorama which is dominated by the Shinto shrine. The shrine occupies a position of honor on the right side of the stage. Yoshitsune, who occupies the highest position of prestige in the play, is in front of the shrine. By association, this location also signifies that he is

adhering to Shinto doctrine. The shrine, which occupies a predominant place in the setting, serves as a focal point reinforced by the presence of Yoshitsune and a retinue of five retainers; four loyal retainers (*shittenō*) and a page.

Gunji also mentions arrangements of the stage, such as the empty stage (*hira butai*), the double stage with platform on it (*nijū*) or the "doll" stand (*hinadan*) (Gunji 1968, 47). At the end of the final scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, a bright red tiered stand (*hinadan*) about four feet high is quickly placed in the middle of the stage by the *kurogo*. Then, the *kurogo* bring steps which are placed at the rear of the stand. Afterwards, Noritsune, carrying the small child Antoku, mounts the steps and strikes a dramatic pose on the stand and does a *mie*. Meanwhile, the other characters form a grouping around this centerpiece in attitudes appropriate to the characters they are portraying, which forms a dramatic stage picture within the proscenium frame.

Several lifts and trap doors are located in the main stage. Both large and small pieces of scenery or tableau can be brought into view or made to disappear. In the last scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, an enormous Heian temple is brought up by the large lift stage center. In a slow and spectacular fashion, the colorful and ornate temple rises majestically complete with Tadanobu dramatically posing stage center. This major visual setting, by its magnificent grandeur due to color, size, formal



location, and placement in the final scene, leaves an indelible impression on the audience. The Buddhist temple, being a such a magnificent and dominant feature of the setting, reinforces the Buddhist theme throughout the play. Tadanobu, standing on the temple, signifies that he is aligned with Buddhist theology. From the time the temple came into view, the audience became noticeably aroused, clapping and cheering. When they finally stopped their ovation, Tadanobu asked for their support and the audience resumed their enthusiastic applause.

### ***Hanamichi***

The *hanamichi* ("flower-path" or "flower-way") is a raised runway that extends from the stage to the back of the auditorium, through the audience. The main (*hon*) *hanamichi* extends from the rear left side of the auditorium to the stage, and is a unique performance area exclusive to kabuki. The main *hanamichi* at the Kabuki-za Theatre, where the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance took place, is approximately five feet wide. During the performance, it is an integral part of the stage and highlights important entrances and exits of the characters as well as fight sequences (*tachimawari*).

Although *hanamichi* already existed in the seventeenth century at the time when *yarō* (adult male) kabuki began in 1653, they were not used for actors' stage entrances and exits. Instead, they were used as passageways for audience members, allowing spectators access to the stage

to present gifts to the actors. The *hanamichi* came into use as an acting extension of the stage at the beginning of the Kyoho era (1716-35) (Gunji 1968, 45).

As characters enter on the *hanamichi*, their particular dramatic portrayal tone is set by the impression of their first appearance. "Dramatic portrayal tone" refers to the total effect of the characterization by the actor as he portrays his part. This characterization includes his visual appearance including movement in conjunction with his lines (or comments by the chanters or singers). The actor establishes his role for the audience as he moves along the *hanamichi*, so by the time he reaches the stage, the personality and attributes of his characterization have already been presented to the audience through his coordinated total appearance.

Since the *hanamichi* brings actors through the audience, communication between actor and audience is greatly strengthened. The *hanamichi* is used for a variety of dramatic effects. During the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the *hanamichi* is used for spectacular exits such as the leaping, gesticulating *roppō* exit by Tadanobu or for the slow, elegant entrances and exits by Shizuka. Fight scenes also take place on the *hanamichi*, such as those involving Tadanobu and the *yoten*. Actors use the *hanamichi* in the *danmari* passages, in which people fight "in the dark." *Tachimawari* and *danmari* are described in the movement *kata* section in Chapter Five.

Besides being an adjunct or extension of the main stage, the *hanamichi* can be considered a second stage as well. When the leading actor is performing on the *hanamichi*, he makes the main stage a "blank space" because the audience's attention is focused on him. The *hanamichi* provides an opportunity for dramatic effects which are different than those of the main stage. For example, the emotional expectations of the audience are stimulated by the noise of the *agemaku* being drawn, which immediately precedes an actor's entrance on the *hanamichi*.

Since the sound of the iron rings of the *agemaku* curtain scraping against their rod signals the appearance of a character on the *hanamichi*, the audience always turns expectantly towards this location upon hearing the noise. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, this expectation was often used to arouse tension in the audience by leaving the *hanamichi* empty with its footlights on, and then having the actor surprisingly appear from another location. For example, in the third scene, the arrival of another Tadanobu is announced from off-stage behind the *agemaku*. Then, immediately the audience hears the *agemaku* being drawn, and expects someone to appear from that location. Instead, while the audience is looking in this direction, no one appears on the *hanamichi*; instead he appears on stage right, to the audience's surprise (and applause).

The *hanamichi* is divided into ten imaginary parts. The *shichisan* (literally, seven-three) point is three-tenths the distance from the stage, and

seven-tenths the distance from the *agemaku*, and considered the most important location on the *hanamichi*.

Because the seven-three position has the most dramatic impact, important characters who enter on the *hanamichi* almost always stop or pause at this point. They may make a significant remark and poignant gesture, or show their virtuosity in dance reflecting their personality and mood, before continuing on to the stage. The diversity of *hanamichi* entrances detailed within the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* shows the importance of a character's initial presentation to the audience.

The *hanamichi* trap (*suppon*) provides a vehicle for making dramatic entrances and exits, usually of a supernatural nature, and is located at the 7/3. Non-human characters such as ghosts, demons, and animals are brought into sight via this trap. In the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, Tadanobu the fox rises "magically" on the *suppon*, accompanied by special flute music that also signifies the supernatural. The fox Tadanobu is endowed with "magical" powers. In addition, during the *tachimawari* with the little foxes, one fox "disappears" by quickly jumping down into the *suppon* (which has been slightly lowered to allow for this descent; once the fox is on the *suppon*, it is lowered completely).

A second *hanamichi* is added when performances call for action portrayed on two *hanamichi* simultaneously. This temporary (*kari*) *hanamichi*, narrower than the main *hanamichi*, is set up on the audience's

right, opposite the *hon hanamichi*. The *kari hanamichi*, originally called the Eastern walkway (*higashi no ayumi*), came into use in the Anei era (1772-80) (Leiter 107). The designation "east" is derived from the theory that the stage faced south, and therefore audience's right was east, and audience's left side west (Gunji 1985, 45). Twin *hanamichi* have the effect of making acting and production more complex. However, in the "Tadanobu Section" of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the second *hanamichi* is not used.

### **Stage Curtains**

Kabuki curtains are an essential and dramatic component of the kabuki performance. The main stage curtain (*jōshiki maku*) separates the stage from the audience, and contributes a dramatic effect by the formality of its use. It is opened by a stage assistant who draws it aside by hand horizontally, from the left to the right of the stage. Pulled closed in the same manner in reverse, from right to left, it provides a dramatic finale. The *jōshiki maku* is used at the beginning and end of the performance, but not necessarily between scenes, as is the usual case to separate acts (see examples in performance section). The beating of clappers (*ki*) rhythmically marks the progress of its opening and closing, which adds emotional appeal, and the curtain is drawn into the wings accentuated by the final beat.

During the Edo period, only the officially licensed theatres were allowed to use the *jōshiki maku* (Gunji 1968, 46). The main curtain has

narrow vertical stripes in three "established" colors, continuing the precedent set in the Edo period. The *jōshiki maku* at the Kabuki-za Theatre in Tokyo has stripes of black, forest green and a deep rusty-orange (persimmon), continuing the established tradition.

Other kinds of curtains are employed in a kabuki performance to achieve different stage effects and to delineate divisions of time and space. A curtain at the audience end of the *hanamichi* (*agemaku*), opens to allow an actor to enter the *hanamichi* or to exit from the *hanamichi*. It is opened immediately before his entrance and closed immediately after his exit. This provides a dramatic accent during a performance. When pulled, it makes a loud clicking-swishing sound, as the metal curtain rings are scraped on their rod.

The audience's curiosity is aroused by the sound of the curtain opening, as it looks with expectation for each character to appear on the *hanamichi*. In Scene Three of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, this sound is dramatically employed, so when the audience looks at the opened *agemaku* in expectation of the actor to emerge, the character of Tadanobu, a fox with supernatural powers, "magically" appears through a stairway on the stage, instead of on the *hanamichi*. Also in Scene Three, after the *agemaku* opens, instead of on the *hanamichi*, a messenger surprisingly appears elsewhere, providing another instance when the audience's expectations are jarred.

Other curtains provide sudden changes of scene imbued with dramatic elan. A special curtain may be used which suddenly drops to the stage floor, revealing someone previously concealed. The curtain is suspended by rings hooked onto knobs arranged in a row along a long bamboo pole. At a signal from the *tsuke*, this pole is twisted by pulling on a rope, simultaneously disengaging the curtain rings along the length of the pole, whereby the curtain drops to the floor. Thereafter, stage assistants quickly remove the curtain.

The black curtain indicates night, and when this curtain is dropped, it means the sun has risen (Toita 1981, 87). As in Scene Three of the *Yoshitsune Senbon Performance*, this curtain symbolizes "darkness": night indicative of "being in the dark," and light a metaphor for knowledge. In this scene, Noritsune was in disguise as Kakukan. The black curtain dropped simultaneously with his change of costume (*bukkaeri*) revealing his new identity, and the other characters and the audience were no longer "in the dark" about who he really was.

Two other curtains are described in the performance section of Chapter Seven. One is an elegant ivory brocade curtain which is embroidered with birds and stylized branches in quiet, subdued tones. This curtain is the one that greets the audience upon their arrival. It stays in sight until the tri-colored *jōshiki maku* is drawn closed (over it, from right to left). After the *jōshiki maku* is drawn in this manner, the ivory curtain is

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pulled up, unseen to the audience behind the *jōshiki maku*. Then the *jōshiki maku* is dramatically drawn open to the right to reveal a spectacular panorama.

Another curtain, quite different from the rest, separates sequences in the third scene. It is dropped down after the spectacular *chūnori* sequence, and is made of a natural, straw-like material. However, at the beginning of the next sequence, it is drawn to the left (instead of to the right as with the kabuki curtain) to reveal a an outdoor night scene. The curtain is drawn to the accompaniment of an eerie melody being played by the *geza* musicians.

Sometimes an emotional climax to a scene may occur after the *jōshiki maku* is drawn, and a main character is alone on the stage, preparatory to his *roppō* (Ernst 99). This dramatic exit on the *hanamichi* is called an "exit outside the curtain" (*maku soto hikkomī*). The *jōshiki maku* is drawn closed across the stage, and the actor is left alone on the stage or the *hanamichi*. Usually the drawn curtain is then lifted and pulled slightly right to expose either one or several musicians, who stand in the left-hand corner or to the right of the character, and provide musical accompaniment to this sequence. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, this dramatic exit of Tadanobu's is seen twice, accompanied by *geza* musicians who appear on the stage.



Because there is no intent to create an illusion of reality in kabuki, in addition to the actors, other people can be seen onstage during the performance. They include stage assistants (*kōken* and *kyōgen kata*), musicians, and sound effect men (*tsukeguchi*), who all contribute to the expressiveness of the actors and their performance.

### **Stage Assistants and Their Functions**

Two types of stage assistants may be seen in kabuki performance. They are the *kōken* and the *kyōgen kata*, who facilitate the performance by providing acting assistance and stage assistance, respectively. In the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, *kōken* are in attendance to the actors and *kyōgen kata* move furniture and set up scenery.

The *kōken* may be attired in elegant *kamishimo* with *hakama*, the Edo period formal dress and their faces are not covered. Or they may be dressed in black, like the black-robed *kyōgen kata*, in which case both may be called *kurogo* (black clothes) or *kurombo* (black fellows). Outfitted in close-fitting black work clothes, with thin black veils covering their faces, they follow the aesthetic convention symbolizing nonexistence, which deems them "invisible" (Toita 1981, 102).

The number of stage assistants seen at any particular moment varies throughout the performance, depending on the situation. They are only present on stage when needed, either to attend to an actor, or to arrange properties.

While on stage, both *kōken* and *kyōgen kata* work in a stylized manner as quietly, quickly, and self-effacingly as possible. However, I have noticed that once backstage, they quickly work to set up the next scene while one is in progress, and revert to their normal off-stage mannerisms. Even the *kyōgen kata* who do not enter onstage, but work entirely backstage, wear the black work uniform.

The numerous duties of the stage assistant revolve around two primary functions: assist the actor, and assist with stage properties. The stage assistants must be completely familiar with the play and be painstaking in their vigilance to each move of the actor.

#### **Assist Actor with His Appearance**

A kabuki costume may be intricate and require assistance to use it. The stage assistant attends to the actor's costume, helping the actor remove or replace part of it, or arranging its drape or lines. Costume changes may be onstage, seen by the audience. Further discussion of these changes is also included within the movement *kata* chapter, the costume section of Chapter Four, and the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance section in Part III.

During a partial change of costume (*bukkaeri*), the kimono is held securely in place by a waist sash (*obi*), and the upper part of the kimono falls down over the lower half to reveal another kimono of a different pattern and color underneath. The stage assistant helps the actor out of the

upper part of the kimono and arranges it around the actor's waist. This change is effected when a character whom the audience has been led to believe is someone else reveals his true identity, like a well known historical figure who was in disguise to conceal his identity. This situation occurs in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* with regards to the priest Kakukan, who is "in reality" (*jitsu wa*) the famous military general Noritsune. When his true identity is revealed, his costume is suddenly changed and he is transformed into the powerful looking personage of Noritsune. A stage assistant's help is required since this technique cannot be effected by the actor himself.

On other occasions, the outer kimono is completely removed onstage to show a different costume beneath it (*hikinuki*). This costume change, usually done in less than a minute, requires considerable dexterity on the part of the stage assistant, for it is effected with no pause in the actor's movement. At the earliest convenience, the discarded kimono is removed from the stage by the assistants. *Hikinuki* occurs during the metamorphosis of *Tadanobu-kitsune*.

Sometimes the stage assistant may have to help an actor off or on with only a particular part of a costume. For instance, an actor may remove his right kimono sleeve for emphasis of a particular action. After conclusion of this action, the stage assistant helps the actor back on with the sleeve. This particular assistance is given to Shizuka in the *michiyuki* sequence about the battle of Genji.

Sometimes the quick change technique is done off-stage (*hayagawari*). While I was backstage observing, I noticed a ready crew of *kurogo* who stood waiting in the wings. Once the actor appeared, they went to work instantly and in unison. Their actions were skillfully done with split second timing. Or the *kurogo* may be hiding behind a large prop in anticipation of the actor to appear. *Hayagawari* occur several times in the metamorphosis of Tadanobu, as he leaps and tumbles in acrobatic maneuvers through various stage settings (*keren*).

#### **Assist Actor with Hand Props**

Unless the action of the play dictates that the actor enter onstage with a particular property, the stage assistant provides the actor with the prop at the precise moment the prop is required. Immediately after the actor finishes using the prop, he places it beside or behind him and the stage assistant removes it, unless particular dramatic significance exists for leaving it on stage, such as the drum *Hatsune* in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. No property is allowed to remain in sight of the audience after it has served its dramatic purpose, since it may detract from the presence of the actor.

Besides assisting the actor on stage, the stage assistant also helps the actor with props when he is on the *hanamichi*. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the stage attendant does not go on the *hanamichi* himself, but crouches down alongside it until the proper moment to assist the actor.

When the actor needs assistance, precisely at that moment the stage assistant stands up, and when his help is no longer needed, he crouches down again. Under no circumstance does the stage assistant want to detract attention from the actor.

### **Assist Actor by Catering to Personal Needs**

The stage assistant provides continuous attention to the physical well-being of the actor on stage by being his personal valet: providing the actor with a small cloth (such as was seen handed to Tamasaburō between dancing sequences in the *michiyuki*), wiping the perspiration from the actor's face after a strenuous *tachimawari* scene, or serving the actor a drink. These acts are usually performed with the actor facing upstage, turned approximately 2/3 to 3/4 away from the audience.

The stage assistant may place a low wooden stool (*aibiki*) under the actor to make him more comfortable, since an actor may be required to sit for a duration in a kneeling position with his legs under him. Members of the dramatic personae may also assist with minor properties. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the other kinds of "seats" were placed by characters in the play: the Japanese floor cushions (*zabuton*) were placed for Yoshitsune by the ladies-in-waiting at Kawatsura Hogan's mansion, and the folding green campaign-style bench, about two and a half feet high and used exclusively for dignitaries, was placed for Yoshitsune by one of his retainers in the play.

**Assist Actor as Prompter**

Kabuki programs are changed every month, and during the first few days of the performance, some actors, playing a role for the first time, will be prompted by a stage assistant, who assists the actor from an upstage position. From this advantageous position, prompting can be done more easily than from the wings.

**Manipulate Special Properties**

The stage assistant may also manipulate a stage property whose use is coordinated with the movement of the actor. One property that is often used in a performance is a six foot long, black bamboo pole (*sashidashi*) to which theatrical objects are attached. In Scene Two of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, a large decorative butterfly is attached to the pole, and Tadanobu dances in pursuit of it while showing his true nature as a fox.

**Assist with Large Stage Properties**

Stage assistants place various objects onstage and remove them if they impede the actor's movements or are no longer needed. These objects include small hand props (*kodōgu*) as well as large stage scenery (*ōdōgu*). During the course of a scene, large platforms and their accompanying steps may be pushed onstage by stagehands, which the actor or actors mount thereafter. This action is seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Scene Five, in preparation for the final tableau, when the *kurogo* push a large tiered

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platform (*hinadan*) to the center of the stage and then bring out steps which they place upstage behind the platform.

No action is performed by the actor which would hinder his movement, unless particular dramatic significance is attached to the activity. For instance, the actor does not open or close sliding doors (*shōji*) himself but only gestures the movement, while the *shōji* are actually moved by a stage assistant. The "real" Tadanobu in Scene Three does not actually open or close the *shōji* himself.

#### **Assist with Curtains**

A stage assistant is in charge of pulling the main stage curtain (*jōshiki maku*) open and closed. Another stage assistant is in charge of the *hanamichi* curtain (*agemaku*). In addition, there are other curtains which drop to show a change in scene, and these are immediately carried off-stage by the *kurogo*.

Throughout the performance, the stage assistant's every movement is directed towards being as inconspicuous as possible: entering quickly and quietly onstage, assuming a kneeling position in profile or turned approximately two-thirds away from the audience, and hiding behind the actor or a large prop such as a tree. In addition, whenever possible, the stage assistant enters and exits behind the actors, so as not to detract from the total pictorial design or the acting on stage.

Stage assistants serve an essential and necessary role in kabuki performance, for without their help the actors would not be able to change their own costumes nor handle all the properties. By disencumbering the actor from these chores, the stage assistant allows the actor to focus his energies entirely on acting.

### ***Tsukeuchi***

During the performance, a man dressed in black attire without a hood (*kyōgenkata* or *tsukeuchi*) can be seen in the extreme downstage corner, audience right. He appears in this location only when needed, so as not to detract from the actors. His function is to produce sound effects from a percussion instrument consisting of a flat board, about two feet long and eighteen inches wide, and two wood clappers about nine inches long and three inches thick. While kneeling on the stage floor, the *tsukeuchi* beats rhythmical patterns to accentuate certain movements of the actors such as *mie*, *roppō*, and *tachimawari*. This performance of the *kyōgenkata* is known as *tsukeuchi* (beating the *tsuke*) and designated as such in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance (a discussion of the patterns may be found in *Kabuki: Five Classic Plays* by Brandon).

### **Musicians Seen in Performance**

Three types of musicians may be seen on stage during the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*: the *geza* musicians, the *chobo* musicians and the *kiyomoto* musicians.



### ***Misuuchi/Geza***

*Misuuchi*, "within the enclosure," refers to the music played from within the *geza* as opposed to music performed by musicians onstage (Letter 238). The *geza* is a room on the left of the stage, facing the audience on a diagonal, which can be seen by the audience. A large slatted opening cut into the flat is covered by a rattan blind, which allows the musicians inside to see the stage and *hanamichi*. However, the inside of the enclosure is obstructed from the audience's view so it will not distract from the acting. In the *geza* are *naugata* singers and instrumentalists (*hayashigata* or *narimonoshi* meaning "percussion orchestra") who provide music during the performance.

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, at designated times, musicians also appear on stage to perform, such as during Tadanobu's exit outside the curtain. When they appear onstage, they wear colorful kimono, but not the formal *hakama* like the *chobo* musicians.

### ***Chobo***

A narrator/chanter and a shamisen player are seated on a revolving platform, which is in a special alcove (*yuka*) above the stage, audience right. This location has a dramatic vantage point. (In the *michiyuki* of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, an extra chanter and shamisen player are added making a total of four musicians.) As this play progresses, the chanter sings of the setting such as the time of the year or day, the

relationship between the characters in the play, and the individual feelings of the characters. Closely related to the actor's actions, sometimes the narrator speaks lines for the actor while the actor mimes. The character's emotions are rendered fully and freely by the chanter, and this technique is well-suited to the presentation of delicate or intense emotions (Hamamura 92).

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, while the chanter sings and tells of the actor's strong emotions, the actor may remain quite calm, while the chanter displays an expression of agony. The talented chanters that I have seen display emotional sentiments quite dramatically, both physically and aurally. Since the play is an adaptation from the *jōruri*, and puppets are incapable of expressing "feelings," the chanter's spoken narration and singing/chanting are accompanied by facial expressions which are often super-emotional in their expression, as if to compensate for the emotionless puppet. This is especially evident in Scene Two of the *michiyuki* when Tadanobu recalls his brother's valiant death.

### ***Kiyomoto***

The *kiyomoto* musicians are seen on the stage during the *michiyuki*, and their presence is part of the visual stage picture. Both the *kiyomoto* and *chobo* musicians provide descriptive narrative as well as music that accompanies this dance sequence. The *kiyomoto* includes a large number of musicians who sit on a platform onstage right. During the *michiyuki*, all

three types of musicians, *geza*, *kiyomoto*, and *chobo* perform. This mixture of genres on stage is called a *kake ai* performance (Malm 1978, 140).

### **The Auditorium and The Audience**

Traditionally, a close relationship existed between kabuki actors and their audience. Gunji Masakatsu, in *Kabuki Yōshiki to Denshō*, describes the close communication between actor and audience in Edo kabuki and lists the type of interchange between them (Raz 198). Much of this type of communication still exists in kabuki today and can be seen in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance. These special communications between actors and audience, which are interspersed throughout the performance, contribute to making the performance even more exciting and lively. It appears that the kabuki audience appreciates being part of the action, rather than being a group of passive spectators.

The audience response to *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* was more enthusiastic than any other performance I have seen. While there is no longer a ceremony of the mutual exchange of presents and praises between actors and audience held at the beginning of a play, other aspects of actor-audience interaction still exist throughout the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance. For instance, the character Tadanobu turns to the audience and asks for their help and support in fighting his enemy, and the audience wildly cheers and applauds showing their support.

In addition, there were semi-spontaneous kinds of participation such as shouts of approval, or the audience called out the actor's *yago* (acting house) during particularly wonderful moments like Shizuka's first entrance on the *hanamichi* in the *michiyuki* scene or Tadanobu "flying" up and away over the audience in the third scene.

This custom of praising also included the actors onstage praising each other as part of the play itself. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Hayami no Tota remarks that the actors Ennosuke and Tamasaburō, playing the leads, have the greatest popularity at home and abroad.

While the presentation of gifts is not seen on the stage at the beginning of the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, other interaction between those on stage and the audience is still observable. These are commented on in detail in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* Performance section (Part III).

Since the Edo period, the auditorium has greatly increased in size. Due to the distance of the audience from the actor, both physically and emotionally, intimate contact between audience and actor has been greatly reduced. The Kabuki-za stage is 87 feet wide and 67 feet deep, and the auditorium seats 2600 (Leiter 154). Given these dimensions, it remains a challenge to keep the old spirit of intimacy between audience and actors exciting and alive.

In Edo times, sometimes the entire auditorium was turned into the performance area since the actors, the setting and props were not confined to the stage (Raz 198). Today, this practice is revitalized by the exciting performance of the "Tadanobu Section" of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. The auditorium becomes a magnificent performance area where the fox Tadanobu can be seen "flying" through the air (*chūnori*) slowly and spectacularly across the audience, from the front of the auditorium at the *hanamichi* 7/3 to the rear of the auditorium, finally disappearing from sight at the top of the fourth floor balcony (ILLUSTRATION #15).

This action, perhaps more than any other, exemplifies the interrelationship between the actors and the audience, between the pretend and the real that is so intermingled and such a unique feature of kabuki.

## CHAPTER FIVE: MOVEMENT KATA

"The pictorial beauty in kabuki is not confined to visual aspects of the *mise en scene* alone such as backdrops, sets, costumes and makeup, the careful use of color or pictorial composition; but extends to the beauty of temporal movement. It is a beauty of kinetic formation" (Kawatake 1990, 71).

This chapter highlights that "beauty of temporal movement" by describing the various movement *kata* unique to kabuki that can be seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. There are a tremendous variety of movement *kata*, and the best way to understand their unique role is within the performance itself, since each is part of a coordinated set of *kata* used to define both the character and the situation occurring at any particular time. Aspects of basic movement *kata*, such as walking, kneeling, gestures, body positions, and stage blocking are discussed in detail in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance section of Part III, as well as the chapter on role types.

### **BUKKAERI AND HIKINUKI**

Certain techniques are employed by kabuki actors who want to change costumes quickly and dramatically during the action of a play. Two of these techniques, *bukkaeri* and *hikinuki*, are done on stage in full view of the audience. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, these techniques are used when a disguised character's true identity is revealed; his identity

being an integral part of his appearance. Besides providing a dramatic and exciting visual highlight, they may also be employed to reflect a change in the character's personality within the same role, or when a character's true identity is revealed.

*Bukkaeri* ("quick change" or "sudden change") is a theatrical technique employed by a character who has been in disguise, at the moment when his true identity is revealed. Supernatural spirits who have been masquerading as living persons employ this technique when the moment arrives for them to display their true natures, such as the fox who has been impersonating Yoshitsune's loyal retainer Tadanobu. Also, living persons who are in disguise as someone else employ it, such as the warrior general Noritsune who was in disguise as the priest Kakukan. These examples of *bukkaeri* can be seen in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance and are also described within the context of the performance section.

In *bukkaeri*, the outer kimono top is taken off by the actor, assisted by a stage attendant. Secured by a waist sash (*obi*), this top falls down from the actor's waist, and is adjusted to cover the lower half of his kimono. The inner-lining of the kimono which was dropped matches the design of the newly-revealed kimono top, giving the impression that the whole costume has been changed. The change is effected dramatically within about one minute.

Another quick change technique is *hikinuki* ("pulling out"), which refers to the technique by which the basting threads are pulled out of a costume by a stage attendant, whereby the actor's kimono falls completely off, revealing a different kimono, which had been worn underneath the one that was removed. This technique is also completed swiftly, within one minute. Leiter explains: "there are ten rounded buttons strategically placed at the end of each thread pulled out: one button each at the cuffs, rear of the waist, the collar-band, each underarm sleeve opening, and the drape of each sleeve" (Leiter 1979, 117). After the kimono falls down, a stage assistant quickly swoops up the kimono, and carries it off-stage at the earliest convenient moment. Meanwhile, the actor continues his performance in a completely new costume.

Leiter, in *Kabuki Encyclopedia: An English-Language Adaptation of Kabuki Jiten*, defines *hikinuki* as: "an exciting dramatic effect seen mostly in dance plays to reveal a character's true nature, to reflect a change in his personality, or simply to provide a visual delight" (Leiter 1979, 117). However, Gunji states: "*hikinuki* is used solely for the visual appeal of the costume change" (Gunji, 1969, 40). Likewise, Brandon states: "*hikinuki* is purely a theatrical technique designed for visual effect. It does not indicate that the personality of the character has been changed" (Brandon 1978, 110).



Therefore, with these opposing viewpoints, I must formulate a definition of *hikinuki* which results from an examination of the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance. The metamorphosis of Tadanobu-*kitsune* from "man" to "pure" fox is accompanied by various changes in both his costume and demeanor. These changes reflect the change in his identity, from Yoshitsune's retainer Tadanobu to his "true self" as a fox. Naturally, there is also a change in his personality, since the same characteristics do not present themselves in both a man and a fox.

Upon examination of the second scene, a *hikinuki* sequence presents itself at the end of the scene (Part III of the dissertation). This section is described in detail in the performance. It may be noted that the second scene is a *michiyuki*, where Tadanobu-*kitsune*, who is disguised as Yoshitsune's loyal retainer, is escorting Shizuka through the hills of Yoshino. This scene is portrayed by Tadanobu-*kitsune* in a soft, romantic *wagoto* style. As soon as Shizuka exits on the *hanamichi*, Tadanobu is left alone, and his true identity is revealed through *hikinuki*; threads in his black kimono are quickly pulled out by the *kōken*, and the kimono falls to the ground revealing a completely new white kimono with orange medallions in the fox-flame pattern (ILLUSTRATION #10). Afterwards, the *kōken* swiftly gathers up the discarded kimono and takes it off-stage.

At the same time, Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s hair has come down and is hanging loosely about his shoulders. In addition, the stage lights which

were dimmed are turned up exactly at the moment his costume falls down. Frenzied drum beats and shrill flute music from the *geza*, indicating a supernatural occurrence, add dramatic impact to the moment of change. Furthermore, the kabuki curtain which was closed behind Tadanobu-*kitsune* is drawn back to reveal five shamisen players, who provide visual and aural accompaniment to his *maku soto hikkomī*.

His dramatic departure as a fox on the *hanamichi* in a *kitsune roppō* is in strong contrast to his entrance, when he appeared as a romantic *wagoto* hero. This entire sequence is dramatically coordinated to show a spectacular change in Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s total characterization, and introduces the first of a progression of quick costume changes which will highlight his metamorphosis in the next scene.

From the example just described, *hikinuki* was shown to be a technique used to reveal a character's "true" identity and a change in his personality, in addition to providing a spectacular visual effect. However, *hikinuki* does not necessarily indicate that either the identity or personality of the character has been changed, for it may be used only for visual emphasis in the case of dance pieces (*shosogoto*) where the leading *onnagata* creates a variety of beautiful stage pictures through this process.

### **HAYAGAWARI**

In addition to *bukkaeri* and *hikinuki*, *hayagawari* is another quick change of costume technique, although it is sometimes classified under "stage tricks" (*keren*). The reason for this may be that *hayagawari*, unlike the other two quick-change techniques, is done out of the audience's sight.

*Hayagawari* allows an actor to portray several roles in quick succession, or to visually denote a metamorphosis within one role, such as in the role of Tadanobu-*kitsune* in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, in his changes from a "real" man to a fox. *Hayagawari* is so skillfully effected that an actor can rush off the stage and a moment later reappear costumed in completely different attire. In November 1815, Danjūrō VII portrayed ten different roles using this dramatic technique in the "face showing" (*kaomise*) production at Edo's Kawarasaki-za Theatre, a record still unmatched (Brandon 1978, 119).

In the third scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, there are two different *hayagawari*. As Tadanobu-*kitsune* inches closer in his metamorphosis to his "true" fox self, an accompanying quick change is done off-stage. These *hayagawari* are effected through spectacular acrobatics where Tadanobu-*kitsune* leaps, hurdles and somersaults through various stage settings to leave the stage, and then instantly

returns wearing a completely different costume which shows the progression of his metamorphosis.

Sometimes, in the *hayagawari* technique, a stand-in (*fukikae*) is employed to facilitate this effect, appearing in shadow through a *shōji*, or turned with his back to the audience, while the main actor is off-stage changing his costume. This stage effect is seen when Ennosuke, who is playing the dual roles of the "real" Tadanobu and Tadanobu-*kitsune*, seems to be in two places at once. First the "real" Tadanobu is seen at the window opening, then the *shōji* closes and we think we see him in shadow, but it must be a *fukikae* because at the same time we see him in shadow, surprisingly, Tadanobu-*kitsune* springs into sight on the stage.

#### **DANMARI**

*Danmari* ("wordless" or "silent") is a silent, slow-motion pantomime in which a group of characters perform together, as if they were in the dark. The scene always takes place outdoors and at night. *Danmari* is also termed *kurayami* ("darkness") (Brandon 1978, 66). Neither the stage nor the auditorium has to be dark, however. In the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, the stage lights are left on for the *danmari* sequence in Scene Three, but there still exists the "feeling" that it is night due to the skillful miming.

A *danmari* pantomime may be an independent piece, a scene of a play, or a short passage contained within a play. The *danmari* passages

in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, which last about ten to fifteen minutes, are of the latter type. They were accompanied by *geza* music in a haunting, eerie style (*osatuma*).

The *kata* used by the actors are fixed according to the type of role and the actor's rank (Gunji 1969, 39). In certain *danmari* sequences, after the initial entrance, the characters engage in a slow-motion pantomime which culminates in a group tableau. This type of sequence is seen twice in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance, in the third scene. Both *danmari* passages involve the same six ladies-in-waiting.

However, although all the characters are silent during the movement portion, right before the group tableau they stop; each speaks a line individually, and then they speak the last line in unison (*watari zerifu*). This points out an important aesthetic acting convention. As Ernst states: "Kabuki tends to take one thing at a time for the sake of clarity and (also for) freeing the actor from total simultaneous reaction in which his individual expressiveness would be weakened" (Ernst 191). In the case of the *danmari* in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, however, there is no "individual expressiveness," since all the ladies-in-waiting move as a group, dressed in identical costumes and wigs, carrying the same props, and moving about in similar choreography. Even when each character speaks a line, they do not stand out as individuals, but rather present

themselves as an interlocked team of players, punctuated by their last line in unison.

The two main types of *danmari*, historical (*jidai danmari*) and domestic (*sewa danmari*), both may contain various *movement kata*, such as the *hikinuki*, *mie*, and *roppō*. Leiter states that in *sewa danmari*, the *danmari* sequences occur "after a murder, a fight or a mysterious occurrence" (Leiter 1979, 51). In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, which is a *jidaimono*, the *danmari* passages occur both before and after mysterious occurrences. The mood is reinforced by the eerie-sounding music from the *geza*, and the ladies' remark that "strange things happen at night."

Due to its simplistic nature, *danmari* shows kabuki acting in its plainest form and may therefore be the oldest kabuki style of acting (Brandon 1978, 66).

### **KEREN**

*Keren* ("tricks") are performance techniques which employ acrobatics and various stage deceptions or antics. Their primary purpose is to amuse the audience. Kabuki originated and developed as a theatre of the common people, fusing a variety of popular types of entertainment. *Ōkyōgen Gakuya no Honsetsu*, a four-volume book published in 1858 and 1859, primarily for backstage workers, describes 342 *keren* techniques of acting and staging (Brandon 1978, 119).

The "Tadanobu Section" of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* revolves around the supernatural powers of a magical fox, and therefore the audience looks forward to seeing some "magical" tricks as proof of the fox's powers. Incorporated within the scenic and property *keren* of this section are quick-change sequences (*hayagawari*). These continued through the third scene, showing Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s metamorphosis from "man" to "pure" fox. Tadanobu-*kitsune*, a fox disguised in the form of a man, makes a series of rapid acrobatic entrances and exits through various parts of the setting, appearing and disappearing suddenly through sliding panels and sections of the mansion's stairs, ceiling, wall, and through the *geza*. Finally, the fox takes his exit, not on the *hanamichi* as in previous scenes, but by the spectacular feat of "flying" (*chūnori*) over the audience from the front to the rear of the auditorium, disappearing into a little house perched on the fourth floor balcony.

Leiter states that the kabuki actors who depended on *keren* for their popularity were called "masters of trickery (*kerenshi*), a word with pejorative overtones" (Leiter 1979, 190). Also implying a negative connotation, Ernst states that rapid trick appearances and disappearances of the actor are "relatively few and held in low esteem by the Kabuki connoisseur, who refers to *keren* as playing to the gallery" (Ernst 159).

My personal observation is that kabuki is a theatre of the people, not connoisseurs especially, but a variety of people who enjoy a well-rounded and entertaining performance. The *keren* are exciting and lively, and furthermore seem to be greatly appreciated by the audience, as witnessed by their enthusiastic applause. In fact, the *keren* I saw in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* are such an integral part of the total performance, to express the supernatural powers of the fox, that I cannot imagine the performance without them. These *keren* are unique to Ichikawa Ennosuke III, who is a master of *keren* today. Tadanobu-*kitsune* is an extremely difficult part for any actor who does not have Ennosuke's dexterity, energy, strength and talent.

*Chūnori* ("flying") is a performance technique whereby a character portraying a magical creature or ghost "flies" through the air, above the audience in the auditorium. A strong metal fitting is secured to a special harness, concealed within the actor's costume, which is connected to a cable that lifts him off the stage. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, a pursuing chorus of naughty priests gather around Tadanobu-*kitsune*, and just as they swarm around him (as they connect the fitting to the cable), the fox "flies" up out of their reach, over the audience.

Although the role of Tadanobu-*kitsune* in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* provides the best-known example of *chūnori*, this technique can also be seen in the kabuki dance plays *Modori Bashi* and *Hagoromo* (Leiter 1979, 43).



*Keren* are not seen in most kabuki performances. They are integrated into the performance only when they serve to express the supernatural or magical powers of some character or situation. They complement the plot, and provide an exciting extension and contrast to the rest of the performance. I saw *keren* performed in only one other play, also a *jidaimono*, and one of the other "Three Great Masterpieces" appropriated from the puppet theatre, *Sugawara Denju Tengeri Kagami*.

### ***MIE***

*Mie* is a picturesque pose taken by an actor at a climactic moment, and then held for a few seconds. *Mie* are not realistic poses, but picturesque, aggressive and exaggerated poses (Gunji 1969, 39).

Considered by kabuki scholars such as Brandon, Ernst, Gunji, and Leiter to be one of the most important movement *kata*, *mie* are a conventionalized series of movements which usually culminate in a rhythmic whip of the head, accompanied by a glaring expression (Brandon 1978, 84). *Mie* provide a dramatic expression of *kata* that externalize a character's feelings (Leiter 1979, xix). "The *mie*, as the ultimate physical expression toward which all Kabuki movement tends, is a synthesis of the patterns of characteristic Kabuki movement" (Ernst 178).

To perform a *mie*, an actor reaches out with highly stylized movements of his arms and legs in a wide circular motion, and then with a whip of his head, "freezes motionless in a dynamic pose" for several

seconds, like a "visual exclamation point" (Brandon 1978, 84). A *mie* momentarily halts the action of the play and intensifies its emotion. After the *mie*, the play resumes as though nothing had happened (Brandon 1978, 85).

The most dramatic and forceful *mie* are used in *aragoto* roles; accompanied by large arm and leg movements, exaggerated head movement, and sometimes eye-crossing (*nirami*) (Brandon 1978, 86). The actor of a *wagoto* role or an *onnagata* may perform a *mie*, which is softer and more self-contained, in keeping with their respective role types. But fewer *mie* are done by actors in *onnagata* or *wagoto* roles compared to the amount of *mie* performed by actors in *aragoto* roles. "Technically, *onnagata* do not perform *mie*; their poses are called *kimari*," states Ernst (Ernst 180). Although *mie* or *kimari* are not usually executed in women's roles, in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Shizuka performs two *kimari*, which are seen in the first scene and in the *michiyuki* scene (*tsuke* do not accompany the *kimari*). In addition, Kawatsura Hogan's wife performs a *mie* simultaneously with her husband (accompanied by *tsuke*) and the ladies-in-waiting perform *kimari* in the *danmari* sequence; which includes all the women characters in the play.

To strengthen the dramatic effect, sounds of wooden clappers (*tsuke*) always accompany the motions of a *mie*, and are timed to the action of the *mie*, with the final *tsuke* beat accentuating the final

movement of the actor. Contrasting to the "strong" poses called *mie*, there are also "soft" poses, called *kimari*, that are performed in silence. An example of this is the one performed by Shizuka in the first and second scenes of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

Leiter states that the *mie* seen "in the *aragoto* style of play and in the history play are on a grand bravado scale, but *mie* seen in the relatively more realistic domestic plays are fewer and more restrained" (Leiter 1979, 232). However, based on my experience, I would have to say that *mie* style (whether "bravado" or "restrained") is not dependent on the particular type of play, but rather dependent on the type of role.

For instance, in *jidaïmono*, like *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, there are *aragoto* role types who perform *mie* suitable to their strong and forceful *aragoto* role. Also, within the same *jidaïmono*, there are *mie* or *kimari* performed by *onnagata* or *wagoto* role types that are soft and downplayed in character with their role type. However, no matter what style they are performed in, the pose conveys a character's strong emotions, such as anguish or sorrow.

Characteristically, the *mie* pose requires intensely energetic motion which peaks to a climax and is then contrasted by complete stillness (Gunji 1969, 39). This cessation of all movement is termed "*ma*," a pause or interval when all is quiet, both visually and aurally, which exists for a short duration of less than ten seconds. By its contrast to the exaggerated

emotion of the *mie*, the *ma* exerts great impact. *Ma* may be thought of as a lack-of-movement *kata*.

Usually no speech is conducted during a *mie*; neither by the actor doing the *mie*, nor by anyone else on stage. A basic principle prevails in acting *kata*, to either speak or move independently in sequence, and not combine the two actions (Brandon 1979, 85). In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, not only is the character conducting the *mie* silent, but every character on stage is also silent and motionless. The entire cast "freezes" simultaneously, which lends significant impact to the *mie*.

*Mie* in kabuki originated in the *aragoto* acting style of Danjūrō I. "The *mie* posture of arms akimbo, fists clenched, and feet widely planted apart can be seen in prints of kabuki actors as early as 1688-1699" (Brandon 85). However, the opinions of scholars are divided where Danjūrō got the inspiration. Some attribute the source to Buddhist deities. Ernst states: "The *mie* bears a strong resemblance to the features and stance of the sculptured guardian figures Fudō and the Niō, which stand at the entrances of Buddhist temples to ward off evil. The idea of *mie* was probably derived from them, since *mie* share similar characteristics with these foreboding statues: large eyes stare defiantly or are crossed, the corners of the mouth are drawn down in a forbidding expression, all the muscles are tense and they have an intensity of expression and the movement is self-contained so that the attitude is defensive rather than

offensive." Crossing the eyes, one over the other (*nirami*), according to the Japanese, creates a fierce expression which intimidates an aggressor (Ernst 178).

There are a number of *mie* seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. The basic quality in *mie* is one of "balanced tension", and the effect is "sculptural" (Ernst 179). A dozen named *mie* exist. Genroku *mie*, named after the period in which it originated (1688-ca. 1723), is the most common *mie*. "One arm is raised behind the body with the fist clenched, and the opposite leg is thrust forward" in a forceful aggressive stance (Brandon 1978, 85). In *soku* (sheaf) *mie* the actor stands erect, with his chin up and his heels touching, which indicates a self-contained, proud attitude. Both forms of *mie* can be seen in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance. *Mie* may be performed solo by an actor or in combination with two or more actors.

Group *mie* which are seen in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance include those described by Brandon (1978, 86):

*Tenchijin* (heaven-earth-man) *mie*, describes a three-character *mie* and takes its name from the fact that the main character center is visually the highest, and the actors to the right and left of him are progressively lower.

*Tenchi* (heaven-earth) *mie*, describes a two-character *mie*, in which one is high and the other low. The actor in the heaven position mounts a small platform, to increase the grandeur of the pose.

(In the case of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Tadanobu mounts another character's back, to punctuate a particular *tachimawari* sequence.)

*Hippari mie* describes a final tableau of a large group of characters who assemble together at the end of an act or scene and assume the quintessential poses of their character types. As they pose, the *jōshiki maku* is drawn closed (Brandon 1978, 86). This impressive *kata* is seen in the finale of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* (ILLUSTRATION # 18).

#### **ENTRANCE AND EXIT KATA**

The movements of an actor's entrance as well as his exit are classified as *kata*: entrance (*de*) and exit (*hikkomi*) (Brandon, 1978, 93). The actor's primary goal is to make the most vivid impression possible upon the audience for both his initial entrance and his departure. The first appearance of the character conveys his portrayal tone to the audience, and will influence the audience's impression of that character throughout the scene. The last appearance of the character, as he exits, is the second most important appearance, as this impression will linger in the minds of the audience when he is no longer physically present.

The most significant entrances and exits on and off the stage are conducted via the *hanamichi*. Each character has a particular *kata* which defines the manner of his presentation in these entrances and exits. The overt appearance of the character denotes his station and status, and covert expressions of emotionality are also made visible. These *kata* are further described in the *hanamichi* section and in Part III of the performance.

*Hikkomi* includes any special *hanamichi* exit. All exits are not as lively as the *roppō*. Shizuka, in the *michiyuki*, exits slowly, pausing at the 7/3 with a dramatic gesture, and then continues accompanied by lyrical music. No matter what the role types of the main characters, their exit is dramatic and significant.

Sometimes, the actor is left standing alone on the stage or *hanamichi* after the curtain has closed, which provides a dramatic base for his departure. This kind of exit is called an "exit outside the curtain" (*maku soto no hikkomi*). It can be seen twice in the performance of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, when Tadanobu-*kitsune* is left alone on the stage near the *hanamichi* in the first and second scenes. The *jōshiki maku* is closed behind him, and then the corner is lifted, and *geza* musicians appear on stage as a visual accompaniment, as well as aural accompaniment, to his exit down the *hanamichi*.

## ROPPŌ

*Roppō* ("six directions") is a stylized exit performed on the *hanamichi*. As the character struts or bounds off, he makes exaggerated movements with his feet and arms; these stylized movements give the appearance that he is going in "six directions" at the same time (Leiter 1979, 314). Both music and sound effects (*tsuke*) accent the rhythmic movements of the exit.

Brandon relates that in the early Edo period, kabuki actors imitated the "strutting walk (*tanzen roppō*) affected by the brash young men (*otokodate*) who paraded through the licensed quarters" (Brandon 1978, 86). In this pre-Genroku period, a *roppō* was performed when an actor made his initial appearance via the *hanamichi (deha)*, but later it also came to be employed as technique for exiting (Leiter 1979, 314). *Tanzen* is a similar technique to the *roppō*, which is used today for entrances conducted in a gentler, more elegant kind of *roppō* (Gunji 1969, 39).

Numerous *roppō* have been created for *hanamichi* exits, most of them being in the bravura style of *aragoto*. One of the most well known *roppō* is the *tobi roppō* or "flying" *roppō*. The actor forcefully exits the *hanamichi* in "great leaps and bounds," with exaggerated movements of both arms and legs (Brandon 1978, 89).

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the character of Tadanobu-*kitsune* exits employing a *kitsune roppō* ("fox" *roppō*). The combined body



movements of gesturing and posturing are indicative of a fox; the fingers are curled under and the hands curled backward like fox paws. Since this character is a young and magical fox, these movements are quite lively and exaggerated. Moreover, several different *roppō*, including *tobi roppō* and *kitsune roppō*, are seen in the performance, which indicate the progressive stages of metamorphoses in Tadanobu, as he changes from "man" to "pure" fox.

These dramatic and forceful combinations of exaggerated, rhythmical movement provide an exciting climax to a sequence or act, and create a memorable impression which lingers after the actor has exited from sight through the *agemaku* (Gunji 1969, 39).

### **TACHIMAWARI**

*Tachimawari* (literally "standing-and-turning-about") are formalistic, stylized fighting scenes or combat sequences. They emphasize beautiful dance-like form and have many spectacular elements. *Tachimawari* consists of connected sequences of unique choreographed movements particular to this *kata* (Brandon 1978, 91). Movement sections within the *tachimawari* culminate in *mie*. *Geza* music, especially the drums, and rhythmic *tsuke* patterns accentuate the movements. Movement *kata* of *tachimawari* in group battles (*tate*) are taught to the actors by a special choreographer called the *tateshi* (Brandon 1978, 93).

The characters in the *tachimawari* fight either bare-handed or with weapons such as swords, long spears, or daggers (*jitte*). When the hero fights one or two opponents of equal rank, a sword or pole is usually employed.

Two general types of *tachimawari* movements may be seen. The first one consists of slow-motion, extremely stylized movements of a character who is attempting a murder. This type is not seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

The type of *tachimawari* that can be seen in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is where a hero, or two "heroes" as in the case of Kawatsura Hogan and his wife, engage in a fight sequence against a group of villains. The adversaries are groups of evil monks or warriors who are dressed alike and carry identical weapons. They move in unison to attack the heroes and heroines of the play, such as Tadanobu-kitsune, Shizuka, the "real" Tadanobu, and Kawatsura Hogan and his wife.

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, a wide variety of *tachimawari* sequences can be seen throughout the performance which involve both large and small group fights. Whether against a single opponent, or against a group of two to twenty men (always an even number in the groups), the hero always defeats the villains. These *tachimawari* sequences culminate in a stylized victorious pose accompanied by a *mie* from the

hero. These *tachimawari* are described in the performance section of Part III.

Certain aesthetic principles can be identified in *tate* movements. The stylized fighting should look effortless, emotionless and beautiful. In addition, the characters fighting never actually touch each other, but create stylized patterns of movement that simulate combat.

Approximately two hundred different *tate* movement *kata* comprise *tachimawari* (Brandon 1978, 93). Many of these *kata* may be seen in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* and are described within the performance section. Following is a list compiled by Leiter of the major *kata* which I saw performed by Tadanobu and the *yoten* (Leiter 1979, 385-387). I quote:

***chidori***. "Plover," a technique used when a mob attacks the hero; he parries their blows one by one as they pass by him to the left and right.

***ebizori***. "Prawn shape," a pose taken when the hero is attacked by a crowd of opponents. He steps forward exaggeratedly and everyone else falls over backward in a backbend position resembling the shape of a prawn.

***giba***. When performer signifies his being thrashed by jumping as high as he can and landing on his buttocks with legs apart.

***jakago***... a *kata* in which a group of men holds the hero by the waist.

***koshi ni tsuku.*** "Grabbing the waist"; a technique by which each man in the group grabs the waist of person in front of him, forming a chain.

***techi.*** "Heaven and earth," a technique seen during sword or spear fights when the weapons are crossed above and then below.

***tonbo.*** Short for *tonbogaeri*, "somersaults"; also called *tonbo o kiru* ("to cut a somersault") and *kaeru* ("return"). The most important movement in stage fighting, it occurs when the actors perform somersaults at the moment of being struck or slashed at.

***santoku.*** One foot thrust forward onstage after a forward flip while both hands are behind.

***yamagata.*** The crossing of swords. Each of two assailants swings his sword downward from overhead, first to the left of his enemy and then to the right. The term means "mountain shape."

***yanagi.*** The "willow," an oblique parry during a fight with swords or sticks. One fighter parries a blow from behind over one shoulder without turning around.

Over the centuries, the extensive variety of movement *kata*, numbering in the hundreds, which have been created by kabuki actors illustrates the supra-literary visual dimension in kabuki performance.

**PART III: THE YOSHITSUNE SENBON ZAKURA PERFORMANCE**

## CHAPTER SIX: OVERVIEW OF THE PERFORMANCE

This chapter presents a summary of major performance components seen in the five scenes of the "Tadanobu Section" of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* at the Kabuki-za Theatre in December 1992. This overview provides a discussion of the performance from a different perspective than previously examined, and is followed by the detailed description of the performance in Chapter Seven.

### COMPONENTS

#### Comparison Between Kabuki Performance and Jōruri

The first scene of the kabuki performance closely follows the jōruri text translated by Jones. In jōruri, there is no *hanamichi*, so in addition to the jōruri performance, the kabuki performance has added special sequences on the *hanamichi*. These include the comical sequence with Tota and the *yoten* on both the *hanamichi* and the stage, and the final *tachimawari* sequence before Tadanobu's exit in Scene One. There are also more characters in the kabuki performance than in the jōruri performance. Since this play originated in the puppet theatre, one or more chanters takes over the lines of the actors from time to time, whereas in jōruri, since the puppets cannot speak, there is no division of lines between the chanter and the character.

In the second scene, the stage setting and text are almost identical to the jōruri performance, except that there is no *hanamichi* in the jōruri

performance. The kabuki performance adds several additional sequences which utilize the *hanamichi*, such as the fight scenes (*tachimawari*) and the entrances and exits. Further information on differences between the kabuki and jōruri performance are provided at the conclusion of Chapter Two.

### **Appearances of The Cast**

In this first scene, a different cast other than the "stars" portray the lead roles: Yoshitsune is played by Shinjirō, Shizuka is played by Kamejirō, and Tadanobu is played by Ukon. Notwithstanding any referral to the program to confirm this fact, the difference between the actors in the first scene and the second scene is clearly visible to the audience through their physical differences as well as their acting abilities.

The main leading actors, Ennosuke as Tadanobu and Tamasaburō as Shizuka, do not appear until the second scene, and Monnosuke playing Yoshitsune does not appear until the third scene. This allows an auxiliary cast of less experienced actors to gain expertise before an audience, and in addition, allows the main actors to focus their energy and talent on the heart of the play. In most of the kabuki performances I have seen which include at least several consecutive scenes of the same play, an auxiliary cast playing the first scene is common.

The leading actors will portray the main roles starting with the second scene. They will continue their portrayals through the center

sections of the performance, leaving some of the secondary cast to resume portrayal of the main roles in the final scene.

Shizuka's entrance on the *hanamichi* in the first scene is entirely different from her entrance in Scene Two, both in staging, costumes and duration of time spent on the *hanamichi*. Since the actor in the first scene is not the main *onnagata* for the performance, the entrance differs accordingly allowing the main star Tamasaburō a longer, more dramatic and spectacular entrance to display his beauty, virtuosity and talent when he first appears. These entrances are described within the performance section which follows, as well as in Chapter Seven's *hanamichi* section.

#### **Protocol and Etiquette**

Strict conventions of protocol are observed throughout every scene. The person highest in rank is accorded the position of highest honor on the right. The highest ranking person is also in the highest physical position, and no one may be higher than him. When Yoshitsune sits on his green campaign bench, no one may stand or sit above him. When the performance designates that a character is sitting, unless otherwise specified, this refers to sitting on the floor in one of the traditional Japanese fashions.

The conventions of proper etiquette are likewise observed. A lady is to act modestly at all times. When Shizuka covers her hands with her sleeves, it is a reflection of the good manners which indicate her status as



the mistress of Yoshitsune. Shizuka's hands are only allowed to be seen when necessary for functional or expressive use. In addition, a lady is not to expose her open mouth, so when laughing or eating, she politely covers her mouth with one of her hands or her fan.

In history plays (*jidaimono*) such as *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, comic or unrefined characters may express their emotions in an exaggerated manner, but the expression of emotions emulating from refined types are subtle and played down. Especially in the first scene, we can note vast differences in demeanor and range of emotional expression between Yoshitsune and Benkei.

In all five scenes, everyone on the stage remains relatively static during a particular actor's speech or significant movement as in the first scene during Yoshitsune's speech, when Benkei cries, and when Shizuka talks with Benkei. This is done so the audience's attention will be focused on that person or action and not be distracted by any other movement on stage.

### **Moods**

Different moods are created throughout the performance. Following the emotion of pathos concluding the first scene, the second scene displays a completely different mood: light, bright, and basically sensual. The *michiyuki* scene is a dance scene for lovers, and Tadanobu takes the place of Shizuka's lover Yoshitsune. Tadanobu appears now as a young, eloquent

*wagoto* style hero; that is why the following erotic paper-doll sequence works. He will show only a few fox-like lapses in his demeanor.

The mood of this section is basically romantic and sensual, but there is also a passage of sorrow following the sensual sequence, as Tsuginobu's death is recounted. Two *jōruri* chanters take over the narration of most of this section, and perform in a highly emotional manner. They are accompanied by two *shamisen* players. After the sad passage, another mood is created by the presence of comical Tota and his men. With this scene, the leading actors Ennosuke and Tamasaburo take over the leading parts of *Tadanobu-kitsune* and *Shizuka*.

In the fourth scene, a short sequence follows the spectacular flying (*chūnorī*) feat of Scene Three. The dissimilarity between the two scenes provides a change of mood. To heighten that mood, the house lights are dimmed as well as the lights in the red lanterns that hang in front of the Japanese seats and in front of the second and third floor balconies. This scene serves as a "quiet" interlude which provides a contrast between the scenes which precede and follow it, and allows the workers backstage to prepare the set for the grand finale.

The last scene is a brilliant and boisterous extravaganza, comprised mostly of a spectacular fight sequence (*tachimawari*). At the beginning of the scene, a huge Buddhist temple rises majestically with Tadanobu posed in the center of the temple's veranda. He asks the audience for their

support, both as a character about to vanquish his enemies, and as an actor. The audience cheers enthusiastically (and loudly). After the long *tachimawari*, all the characters come onstage and assemble in a tableau. This final portion of the scene, where all the characters assume their most characteristic pose, is done without dialogue, very slowly and formally.

### **Audience Reaction**

Although there are certain key moments in a performance that spark the audiences' admiration and response, and the audience usually reacts similarly in appreciation of these moments, audiences may still display differences in their reactions. A particular audience will generally exhibit similar behavior, such as either applause (or lack of it), tears or laughter, at key moments. Some audiences will applaud enthusiastically at every important point, while other audiences seem to be "dead."

One evening in particular, I noted that the audience was very rough; never clapping at the highlights the audiences usually applaud to, such as the humorous sequence in Scene One when Tota's eyes pop out, or at the beginning of the beautiful *michiyuki* when Tamasaburō enters on the *hanamichi*.

### **The Main Characters in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura***

While each actor's complete costume, makeup and props are described in detail in both the role type chapter and the appearance *kata* chapter, each actor's appearance will again be described briefly when he is

first seen by the audience in the performance description following this chapter. If his appearance changes during the scene, this will be noted within the context of the performance description as it occurs.

In the chapter "Movement *Kata*," I have described the general nature of the movement *kata* seen in the performance. However, since the movement *kata* are such an integral part of the entire performance and constantly changing, they are best described as they occur within the performance in the following chapter.

Throughout this dissertation, an analysis has been presented of the components which comprise the visual dimension of kabuki. This section highlights some of the main characters seen in the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance and describes their coordinated total appearance which consists of makeup, costumes, headwear, props, and particular movements. This section serves to coordinate many of the constituents of characterization seen in the main roles.

### ***Tadanobu-kitsune***

Throughout the first three scenes of the "Tadanobu Section," we see the gradual metamorphosis of a "real" man into a fox. This amazing transformation is witnessed through continual changes in both attire and mannerisms. The dramaturgical challenge is how to accomplish a synthesis of elements that will convey the progression of the metamorphosis.

In the first scene, we see a magical fox masquerading as Yoshitsune's loyal retainer Tadanobu. When Tadanobu-*kitsune* first appears, he presents himself as a forceful, macho retainer, in *aragoto* style, and is dressed in a bright and bizarre outfit. *Aragoto* makeup covers his face, arms, and legs in a pattern of red lines on white which indicate a strong, good person.

Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s movements are exaggerated as he struts or stomps around, feet in a ninety-degree manner, arms and hands widely gesturing. There is no clue in his appearance that he is anything but a "real" man, until a few signals are given out at strategic moments during a *tachimawari*, and then again as he goes to follow Shizuka on the *hanamichi*. His *roppō* on the *hanamichi* provides further clues that he is supernatural, as there are a few "foxy" gestures in the *tobi roppō* exit, which I refer to as a semi-*kitsune roppō* style exit ("foxy" signifies a playful quality).

The second scene continues with Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s masquerade. However, in this scene, Tadanobu assumes a demeanor completely different from the first scene. Since the *michiyuki* is a love scene, Tadanobu-*kitsune* will take the place of Shizuka's lover Yoshitsune during their journey through the Yoshino mountains. However, when Tadanobu-*kitsune* is dancing with Shizuka, he stays to her right (audience left), as is proper for a mere retainer. However, in the doll portion of the dance, when Tadanobu-*kitsune* takes Yoshitsune's place and assumes the pose of marital bliss, he stands above and behind Shizuka (since Ennosuke is shorter than

Tamasaburō, Ennosuke stands on his toes, while Tamasaburō assumes a low s-curve position).

In the *michiyuki*, Tadanobu-*kitsune*, as a *wagoto* "lover," has a stark white face indicative of a young, high-class man. He wears an elegant black kimono which is given a purple cast (*murasaki*) by the lighting, to fit in with the romantic, elegant mood and to indicate his high status.

The movements and mannerisms of Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s are graceful almost to the point of femininity. Although he does not turn his toes inward, his gestures are delicate. In addition, he portrays a very gentle, unassuming character, rather than a fox scheming to get Shizuka's drum. However, the audience is reminded visually that this is really a fox in man's clothing by the noticeable addition of two small white "ears" discreetly protruding from his head. Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s true identity is apt to be forgotten during the erotic dance portion of the *michiyuki*.

During the second scene, after the sensual section just mentioned, there is a complete change of pace when Tadanobu-*kitsune* recalls the valor of his brother (that is, the "real" Tadanobu's brother), who died trying to protect Yoshitsune in battle. During this sequence, the fox becomes more animated in re-creating the story of Tsuginobu's death. During a recitation of the *Tale of Genji*, done in a semi-noh style, Tadanobu-*kitsune* throws his fan on the floor and jumps down forcefully on one foot. This is the only sequence in the performance where there are no "foxy" lapses on the part

of Tadanobu-*kitsune*. All the other portions of this scene, as well as the other two scenes with Tadanobu-*kitsune*, have some intrusion of the fox demeanor.

Still another mood is created in Scene Two due to the humorous arrival of Tota and his men. During this sequence, we are provided a few clues in movement to indicate the supernatural character of Tadanobu-*kitsune* during the *tachimawari* sequence. However, the most revealing set of clues as to the identity of Tadanobu-*kitsune* occurs during the exit outside the main curtain (*maku soto hikkom!*), when there is a quick change (*hikinuki*) sequence.

The masquerading fox, after being teased into a frenzy by a butterfly, sheds his black kimono for a completely new costume: a white kimono with orange medallions in the fox flame pattern, orange being a significant color to indicate his high status, and the fox flame pattern to reinforce his true identity. After this dramatic change, Tadanobu-*kitsune* is more fox than ever, and he exits off the *hanamichi* in a *kitsune-roppō* that, like the change of clothes, symbolizes his real identity.

The third scene is the last time we see Tadanobu-*kitsune*, as he takes his leave during this scene in his true fox form, "flying" through the air. This spectacular feat highlights his complete metamorphosis. Each moment throughout the scene, Tadanobu-*kitsune* inches closer to his true supernatural self, shown in his fox-like mannerisms and amazing feats of

movement. In the last vision we have of the fox, he is seen wearing a white outfit with long silk threads (to indicate white fox fur), and has long black hair hanging loosely around his shoulders.

The only thing that did not change in Tadanobu-*kitsune's* appearance from the second scene to the third scene is his stark white face. This is symbolic of the theme of the play which reinforces the religious tenet that there is a spirit in everything. And in the case of Tadanobu, who sought to dispense his filial piety through obeisance to the drum made of his parent's hide, he is a fox worthy of a pure white face.

### **Shizuka**

Since first impressions are considered the strongest, every effort is made to portray an exceptionally beautiful young woman, worthy of the love and admiration of the exemplary hero Yoshitsune. Therefore, the dramatic portrayal tone of Shizuka must amplify all the qualities that would be appropriate for this type of woman.

The first immediate visual appearance that signifies Shizuka's status is via her entrance on the *hanamichi*. However, it is not the first entrance in Scene One that establishes her role, but the second scene's entrance which is played by the leading *onnagata* Tamasaburō.

Although Shizuka is not a "real" princess, as the heroine, she wears the ensemble of an *akahime*: a brilliant red silk kimono with an ornate *obi* tied in front. This particular way of tying the *obi* signifies Shizuka is of



courtesan status, although she is technically a *shirabyōshi* dancer. Both dancers and courtesans were below the lowest rung of the four classes of society during the Edo period. Nevertheless, high class courtesans were held in awe and respected by the kabuki populace. The bright red color of Shizuka's kimono is a color assigned to young adulthood and also carries a sensual overtone.

Shizuka's long black hair is done up in an ornate hairdo which is similar to the fashion of the courtesans during the Edo period, who wore their hair up in elaborate styles. However, stylish wives of wealthy merchants also copied this hairstyle during that period. In her hair, Shizuka wears an elaborate silver tiara of four tiers decorated with jewels and butterflies. This particular hair decoration is only used in the "Red Princess" role.

High status was equated with a stark white face and body. Shizuka exhibits the preferred paleness accentuated by a touch of *beni* red at her small mouth. *Beni* red is also blended with some white to form a lighter hue and delicately shaded around her eyes for emphasis.

In keeping with the impression of high status, Shizuka's movements and mannerisms are subtle and restrained. Her total body movement is governed by the conventions and etiquette considered proper during the Edo era. Shizuka walks with small, graceful steps, knees together, and toes pointed inward. She keeps her hands covered at all times, unless they are

needed for movement which is functional or expressive. Owing respect and allegiance as well as her love for Yoshitsune, Shizuka always maintains a position to the left of him (from the audience's viewpoint), and either sits or stands lower and slightly behind him in all scenes. (However, strong-willed Shizuka is not prone to following Yoshitsune's admonition to return to the capital, and follows him north to Kawatsura Hogan's mansion.)

Shizuka carries certain properties which are imbued with conventional and symbolic meaning: her large gold and silver fan which signifies a dancer and the fan's two red tassels which indicate someone of high status, her umbrella which members of her class were not allowed to carry until the Edo period, and the drum Hatsune which is symbolic of loyalty and devotion.

### **Yoshitsune**

The most valiant exemplar of an ideal Japanese hero, Yoshitsune's attire and mannerisms attest to that fact. Although deeply in love with his mistress Shizuka, he does not allow his feelings for her to stand in the way of his duty. He wears a special outfit which includes an orange stand-up collar which only the highest dignitaries could wear. In addition, his armor is orange-colored. The orange cords of his robe are tied in knots similar to the knots seen at Buddhist altars, to symbolically designate his adherence to Buddhism.

Yoshitsune's face is almost the same bright white color as Shizuka's face, which signifies his high status and age. It is a brighter white than any other male role.

In keeping with the conventions of the Edo period, certain protocol govern Yoshitsune's movements and mannerisms. He never hands anything to anyone directly, even his mistress. Objects are conveyed through a third party, via one of his retainers. Yoshitsune's demeanor is graceful and eloquent. He walks with his head high, shoulders back. When speaking, he is not visibly animated, even during a situation of stress.

Throughout all the scenes where Yoshitsune appears, he is always accorded the highest level in physical placement. No head is higher than his, whether he is standing or sitting. His retainers are grouped around him to the rear, and all other characters are to his right (audience left). When Yoshitsune sits, they all take positions lower than his.

Yoshitsune maintains his dignified bearing at all times. His placement directly in front of the Shinto shrine in Scene One, and predominately in the center of the mansion in Scene Three, attest to his lofty position as well as his alignment to a religious ideology.

### **"Real" and Dramatic Interrelationships**

Many different elements coalesce into a unity in kabuki performance and result in a unique stage creation. The synthesis of diverse elements is seen in the dramatic interrelationship between the "real" and the "unreal"

throughout the *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* performance. This relationship exists not only in the play itself, which relates the story of a magical fox who is in disguise as a "real" person, but also in the presentation seen on stage.

At the beginning of Scene Two, we see the appearance of a supernatural being, in the form of a magical fox. This appearance is first effected via the *suppon* on the *hanamichi*, which is relegated to appearances of supernatural beings who are often in the form of animals. The *suppon* is located at the dynamic position at the 7/3 of the *hanamichi*. This location also provides an interesting visual perspective, since the character emerging from the netherworld below is actually appearing between the rows of people in the audience. When the audience looks at this mystical being, they can also see the "real" people in the audience within their visual scope. Therefore, the unreal and the real are all seen within the same visual dimension. "Real" people (in the play) do not make an entrance or exit from this location.

When Tadanobu-*kitsune* appears rising slowly on the *suppon* of the *hanamichi*, at the beginning of the second scene, all eyes are focussed on him. His entrance is accented by additional lighting from the *hanamichi* lights as well as overhead spotlights that highlight his appearance. (In addition, there is no vocal commentary done during this appearance. A

musical tune which indicates the supernatural serves to reinforce the mood of the visual action.)

The undivided attention of the audience is also maintained by dramatically having any other character on the stage "freeze," while the action continues on the *hanamichi*. This cessation of motion is similar to the *ma* pause which follows the *mie*, except that it is held longer which provides an even greater dramatic impact. The *hanamichi* becomes a separate stage, and Shizuka, who is on the main stage, although exuding a magnificent appearance, loses "presence." All attention is focussed on the appearance of Tadanobu-*kitsune* at this point.

Another interesting example of how the "real" and "unreal" are combined in interrelationships is seen during the end of the second scene. Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s true nature is revealed in a spectacular sequence which contains a costume change (*hikinuki*), effected onstage, while he is isolated in front of the main curtain after it is drawn closed. This transformation is executed entirely through a visual process, as there is no commentary during this entire process to tell us what is happening. The audience is a witness to the transformation through their sight.

First of all, the spotlights and houselights change to indicate a change of mood. Then a *kurogo* appears with a long pole, at the end of which a large butterfly is attached. The audience is not supposed to see this stage assistant who is dressed in black, nor the long black pole (black

symbolizing non-existence). Only what is "really," or "in reality," important is to be witnessed visually by the audience, namely the butterfly and Tadanobu-*kitsune* who is to be teased by this butterfly to a point of extreme agitation.

When the heightened moment of frenzy is reached, Tadanobu-*kitsune* sheds the kimono of a "real" person, and is seen in a kimono signifying a fox. Meanwhile, other *kurogo* who are supposed to be invisible carry away Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s vestige of reality off-stage. (No words are spoken, and the only sound we hear is that of the flute and shamisen music playing an eerie tune which signifies the supernatural.) In this way, the stage picture illustrates the functions of the diverse relationships between the real and the unreal.

Another visual dimension of the interrelationship of this dramatic phenomenon can be seen in the third scene. Suspecting that Tadanobu-*kitsune* is not the "real" Tadanobu, Shizuka finally accuses him of being an imposter. Shizuka, a real male actor/female character, realistically/stylistically wields a dagger over Tadanobu-*kitsune* as he does a *ebizori* (backbend pose) leaning backwards over the stairs stage center. The pose tries to imitate a puppet's movement from the *jōruri* puppet theatre where the "real" puppet tries to imitate a "real" person.

Meanwhile, Tadanobu-*kitsune*'s long trailing *hakama*, which imitate the Heian period attire which was copied during the Edo period, cascade

down the stairs behind him. Helping to adjust the long pant legs is a stage assistant (*kurogo*) who is supposed to be invisible.

After this spectacular visual picture, the pretend Tadanobu disappears through the stage scenery, and after several real/unreal disappearing acts, he reappears in a completely different costume and demeanor as his "true self."

While a dichotomy may seem to exist throughout kabuki performance between reality and non-reality, actually there is no division since the real and the unreal are commingled in each actor/character and each action so that they become one dramatic corporeality.

**CHAPTER SEVEN: THE TADANOBU SECTION****SCENE I: BEFORE TORII GATEWAY TO INARI SHRINE AT FUSHIMI****Synopsis**

Prior to the commencement of this scene, as a way of appeasing Yoritomo's distrust of him, Yoshitsune had immolated the life of his innocent wife Kyōnokimi because she was the adopted daughter of an enemy sympathizer. However, Yoshitsune's faithful retainer Benkei had compounded the unfortunate situation by slaughtering a group of Yoritomo's henchmen, so that any reconciliation between Yoshitsune and Yoritomo is now hopeless, and Yoshitsune must go into hiding accompanied by his "four loyal companions" (*shitennō*).

As the first scene begins, Yoshitsune and his *shitennō* are at the Inari Shrine at Fushimi, preparing for their departure. They are soon joined by the impetuous Benkei. His imprudent act against the enemy posse is forgiven and he is allowed to join them.

Moments later, Yoshitsune's mistress Shizuka, a beautiful *shirabyōshi* dancer, arrives. Averse to being abandoned by Yoshitsune, she has come to plead permission to go with him, but her petition is denied on the basis that her presence will be a hindrance in their flight.

To mollify Shizuka's anguish at their separation, Yoshitsune gives her a precious gift; "Hatsune," the double-faced *tsuzumi* drum which was bestowed upon him for his bravery and loyalty by the retired emperor.



Yoshitsune tells Shizuka to revere it as his own presence after he has departed. In order to thwart her plan to follow Yoshitsune, Shizuka is tethered to the fence with the cords from the drum. Yoshitsune and his retainers then proceed to worship at the shrine preparatory to their exodus.

As soon as they leave, the adversary vassal Hayami no Tota appears on the scene accompanied by his cronies. He is delighted to find Shizuka tied up and all alone, with the famous drum in her possession. As Tota is about to seize Shizuka and the drum, he is assailed by Tandanobu, one of Yoshitsune's faithful samurai who has returned from a leave of absence to care for his sick mother and recover from a wound. Tandanobu engages Tota and his men in a skirmish and recoups the prized drum and Shizuka.

When Yoshitsune and the *shitennō* return from their worship, they are astonished to discover Tandanobu, as he was supposed to be away on sick leave. Tadanobu says he rushed back on learning of the quarrel that had developed between Yoshitsune and his brother, anticipating that his assistance might be needed. Yoshitsune commends Tadanobu's fealty and entrusts Shizuka to his guardianship, and requests that he escort her safety back to the capitol (Kyoto). Yoshitsune bestows upon Tadanobu the name of Genkurō Yoshitsune, derived from his own name, and furthermore honors Tadanobu with a suit of his own prized armor. Yoshitsune relates that he and his retainers are planning to seek refuge at Kawatsura Hogan's mansion in the Yoshino Mountains in their flight west.

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No one is cognizant of the fact that this Tadanobu is not the actual Tadanobu but is in reality a magical fox masquerading as Yoshitsune's retainer, as a way of being close to the drum made from his parents' hide.

### Cast

<i>Yoshitsune</i>	Shinjirō
<i>Shizuka</i>	Kamejirō
<i>Safō Tadanobu</i>	Ukon

(Note: Only the cast listed is specified for the performance.)

### Stage Setting

As the audience sits in expectation of the performance to begin, the tri-colored kabuki curtain, of black, dark green and persimmon, is drawn closed over an elegant ivory brocade curtain which is embroidered with birds and stylized branches in quiet, subdued tones. Once the kabuki curtain is drawn over it, the bird curtain is pulled up, unseen to the audience. Then, the kabuki curtain is dramatically drawn open to reveal a spectacular and dazzling spring panorama with bright colors of pink, red, green and yellow predominating. This delights the audience which has just entered the theatre from a dark gray winter's day, and they applaud appreciatively.

A large red Shinto shrine with a bright red Torii gateway is on the right. This stage version of the shrine is on a much smaller scale than the actual Inari Shrine, so the actors will appear larger. The shrine is

associated with the fox deity and an appropriate signifier of the "Tadanobu Section" of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* which centers around the legend of a supernatural fox.

Long strands of red and white flowers hang on branches from the top of the proscenium, and the same type of flowers can also be seen protruding from behind an area enclosed with a red-fence. Additional brightly-hued flowers dot the kelly and emerald green hills which are covered with pink-flowering cherry trees and pine trees. Decorations of flowers are painted on flats and drops. One large pink-flowering cherry tree is freestanding, stage center, and serves as a guideline and focal point.

A *takemoto* chanter and shamisen player can be seen in the box above the stage on the far right referred to as the *yuka*. The duo consisting of chanter and shamisen player is referred to as *chobo*. They describe the characters' feelings and provide commentary on the characters and events throughout the performance.

### **As The Curtain Opens**

Yoshitsune is sitting prominently on a high green campaign-style bench to the right of stage center. Five retainers surround him.

**Yoshitsune's Appearance:** Yoshitsune has a pure white face and is wearing a Heian-styled attire consisting of an orange striped top with trousers, gray sleeves puffed at elbows and large "kitchen- mitt" type gloves

in orange and gold. A narrow band of cloth is tied around his head. He carries a *jin sen* battle fan with an orange tassel and wears two swords.

**Retainers' Appearance:** Among Yoshitsune's entourage of five retainers, there are four loyal retainers (*shitenno*) and one page. All the retainers give the appearance of being both younger and smaller than Yoshitsune.

Yoshitsune's *shitenno* stand in attendance, two on each side of Yoshitsune, and slightly behind him. The two retainers to the left of Yoshitsune include one with a red face, the other has a face slightly whiter than natural. They are wearing ornate Heian-style outfits with white pantaloons and bright orange tops. The retainers to the right of Yoshitsune have headbands tied in back which hang down about two inches.

The fifth retainer, who is not one of the *shitenno*, stands at the right rear of Yoshitsune (audience left). He is a page and has the whitest skin of all the retainers, reflecting his youth as well as his high class. He is wearing a different styled outfit consisting of a bright yellow top with red cuffs and red and white striped pants. The page is in charge of the placement of Yoshitsune's green campaign-style bench.

Yoshitsune sits at a higher level than those who will kneel or sit on the floor. Everyone is positioned diagonally to the proscenium arch, their bodies turned 2/3 to 3/4 center towards the audience.

Shizuka enters on the *hanamichi*.

**Shizuka's Appearance:** Shizuka has a pure white face, special black wig (*fukiwa*), and a "Red-Princess" (*akahime*) ensemble consisting of: a glittering silver tiara, a magnificent crimson kimono embroidered with gold and silver threads, a bright yellow sash which is tied in front over the kimono, white socks (*tabi*), and red sandals (*zōri*). She is not carrying any props and keeps her hands continually inside her sleeves as a sign of proper decorum.

At the 7/3 (*shichisan*) on the *hanamichi*, Shizuka stops, poses and says, "Ah, my Lord, you are too cruel!"

Chanters: "How could Yoshitsune be so cruel as to leave her behind."

Yoshitsune turns his head slightly towards Shizuka. Otherwise, he sits almost motionless.

Chanters continue: "The road is full of enemies and no place for a woman."

Shizuka enters onto the main stage from the *hanamichi* and sits stage center, which is to the left and slightly upstage of Yoshitsune. Throughout the performance, Shizuka will always be to the left of Yoshitsune and either lower than him or slightly behind him, observing a convention of protocol.

Benkei enters on the *hanamichi*. He hurries down the *hanamichi*; the beats of clappers (*tsuke*) accompany his heavy footsteps.

**Benkei's Appearance:** His makeup and costume are highly exaggerated. His costume is heavily padded to give him a roly-poly

appearance. He has a big, bushy black "100 day wig," to show he is not now a monk, but a warrior-priest. On top of this wig is a large red and white diagonally striped candy cane bow.

Benkei is in such a hurry that he runs to the stage without stopping at the 7/3. This action is indicative of Benkei's impulsiveness.

"His rash actions spoiled a delicate truce," chanters remark.

Kneeling, Benkei extends his arms outward while talking to give a larger presence. Benkei apologizes for being late and kneels low, far left next to Shizuka. Benkei speaks looking directly at the audience. Then he glances over at Yoshitsune, and then back at the audience.

While Benkei is speaking, the retainer in the yellow top and one of the *Shitennō* to the left of Yoshitsune have their hands on their sword handles, ready to strike Benkei upon Yoshitsune's order.

Shizuka still has her hands hidden inside her sleeves and continues sitting on the floor to the left of Yoshitsune while he and Benkei speak.

Yoshitsune demands an excuse of Benkei. Yoshitsune speaks facing the audience, and then turns to Benkei. After delivering his lines, Yoshitsune looks around with a slow head gesture towards Benkei, but his body is motionless.

Benkei changes his position, crossing to the right of Shizuka, and next to Yoshitsune.

Benkei explains why he is late: "...woe be the day when a retainer stands by when his Lord is attacked."

Yoshitsune expresses his anger by hitting Benkei with his battle fan. (Yoshitsune shows no visible signs of anger otherwise, nor does he actually make direct contact with Benkei's body. Yoshitsune hits Benkei in a stylized gesture.)

Benkei is struck speechless for a long moment; then Benkei becomes very emotional.

Chanters say: "Benkei has never cried in his life, but now he lets out a lifetime of tears."

Benkei wails loudly putting his rounded roly-poly arms up to his head: "wa wa wa!" Then he kneels towards the left as he cries out again with his hands still up to his head, shaking his head back and forth. The audience laughs at Benkei's funny over-emotional gestures. This reaction is intentional, as both his appearance and gestures are quite exaggerated and comical.

Shizuka is moved by Benkei's tears and she mediates for him. She rises and goes to sit down on the ground between Yoshitsune and Benkei.

Shizuka is now left of stage center and Yoshitsune is stage center, standing to the right of her.

Yoshitsune, facing front, nods twice, and walks to the left of stage center and sits down on the green bench placed there by the retainer in the yellow top.

After Shizuka pleads in Benkei's behalf, Benkei just wails away on his knees and then sits down.

Now the *shittenō* all speak a line in Benkei's behalf.

Yoshitsune says that they have a dangerous journey ahead. If Tadanobu were at his side he would not forgive Benkei, but since he needs all the men he can get, he will forgive Benkei.

Benkei gratefully bows.

Three retainers are to the left of Yoshitsune and two more are at the right. Everyone is kneeling or sitting at a lower level than Yoshitsune. (This is protocol to show respect since no head can be higher than Yoshitsune's. Therefore, if Shizuka stands to speak, Yoshitsune must be standing also. Otherwise, if he is seated, she may not stand above him.)

Shizuka is relieved that Benkei has been forgiven.

Shizuka now relates that she was "...miserable if separated only one minute from Yoshitsune."

Since Shizuka pleaded to Yoshitsune on Benkei's behalf, she feels she can ask for the favor returned and wants Benkei to plead to Yoshitsune on her behalf.



Shizuka asks Benkei to persuade Yoshitsune that Benkei might accompany her along on the trip.

Benkei refuses this request and asks Shizuka to be patient..."the journey is difficult, please wait in the capitol." He holds a traveling hood out towards her, but she turns away slightly right and begs to be taken along.

Yoshitsune, looking directly at the audience and without showing any emotion, replies in a matter-of-fact manner: "It will be impossible." His body is now parallel with the stage. He turns his head slightly and remarks that he will leave Shizuka with the famous Hatsune drum, which was given to him by the retired Emperor.

As Yoshitsune remains seated, one of the retainers on Yoshitsune's right rear (his "right-hand" man) brings him the drum which is wrapped in a purple cloth. He is the *shitennō* with the whitest face, the other one with the red face is now at the farthest right.

Yoshitsune takes the drum from the retainer, removes the purple cloth wrapped around it, and holds it out with his right hand for Shizuka to come and fetch. Yoshitsune looks directly at the audience or straight ahead, his body still diagonal to the proscenium arch.

Shizuka rises and comes over to get the gift from Yoshitsune. As she rises, so does Benkei.

Shizuka kneels, takes the drum stage center from the retainer who places it from Yoshitsune's hands into hers. (It is a convention of protocol that Yoshitsune never hands anything directly to anyone, even his mistress Shizuka.)

Shizuka thanks Yoshitsune for the gift (ILLUSTRATION # 2).

*Shitennō* say that the enemy forces may be advancing: "...let's go!"

Shizuka gets up to follow Yoshitsune, but she is restrained by the two *shitennō* at the farthest left of Yoshitsune, who stretch out their arms in a blocking motion.

The two retainers will not let Shizuka follow and tie her up with the cords from the drum to the gate post next to the free-standing cherry tree stage center.

The drum is placed on the gate adjacent to the cherry tree by the retainer closest to Shizuka.

Sound effects of tin clanging and drums pounding are heard off-stage.

Benkei quickly stands up, alert at the sounds from the battlefield. Benkei is standing upstage left and he speaks as soon as *shitennō* finish tying up Shizuka.

Yoshitsune stands slowly and begins his exit in a slow dignified strut. He starts to walk, then there is a long pause, as everything stops for a

moment (*ma*), followed by renewed action as Yoshitsune walks at an ever-increasingly faster pace through the Torii gate.

The five retainers bow as Yoshitsune goes off. Then, they exit behind him in the following order: *shittenō*, the retainer in the yellow top, and Benkei.

After their exit, the bamboo curtain of the *yuka* is drawn to reveal two chanters and a shamisen player. The chanters, accompanied by the shamisen, are singing a song of lament which continues throughout this portion as Shizuka does a dance of lament with her hands tied behind her back. The music softens and stops when she speaks and then continues again until she exits.

Shizuka, left all alone, is tied to the fence stage center. She wails and falls down in a choreographic mime to show her state of misery.

Shizuka begs to die. Her body is facing slightly left. She looks directly at the audience when she speaks. Another wail is heard from her as she droops down again.

Shizuka stands, wails again while going down, her body directly frontal to the audience. She leans slightly backward and sways back and forth with her head and body.

Finally, Shizuka turns and with her back to the audience, although restricted as to the distance because she is tied up, she moves around going back and forth with some head and body movement. She goes to one

side and then to the other, shakes her head back and forth, cries, gets up again, and wails as she goes down again.

Drum beats off-stage indicate the sounds of battle.

As the drum beats, a loud shout is heard from the direction of the *hanamichi* curtain (*agemaku*).

Tota, a comical figure, enters onto the *hanamichi* followed by a chorus of ten men (*yoten*), and leads them in a line up the *hanamichi*. The *yoten* are seen in colorful costumes and are known as *hana-yoten*, mainly seen in fight scenes (*tachimawari*) for a spectacle effect.

**Tota's Appearance:** Face makeup is in a special *kumadori* pattern. Garish costume has red and white stripes on sleeves, pants, socks, and one red stripe at the top of his kimono. He wears sandals with rope thongs.

**Yoten's Appearance:** *Kumadori* makeup consisting of red lines on white face, hands, arms, feet and legs. The costumes have a white scroll pattern on dark green with red hems, red cuffs and red leggings. Black sashes are tied around their lower midriffs, and white cloths are tied around their heads as headbands. Their wigs all have a pony tail hanging down in back. They are barefoot. The red and white diagonally striped poles have sprigs of flowers on top. The *yoten* do not have the poles while on the *hanamichi*, only long sprigs of flowering cherry trees stick up out of their sashes, which are exchanged for the striped poles after they go on stage.

Tota stands on the *hanamichi* near the *agemaku* and fans his eyes to see. He spies Shizuka who is stage center.

Tota hurries up the *hanamichi*, stops at the 7/3 and remarks: "If Shizuka and the drum are here, Yoshitsune cannot be far."

Tota stomps onto the stage with the *yoten*. As they enter onto the stage, the *yoten* exchange their flower sprigs for real poles with flower tops, assisted by stage-assistants in black attire (*kurogo*).

Tota snatches the drum with his right hand and delivers a speech facing the audience. He is slightly to the left of Shizuka.

The ten *yoten* are lined up side by side, stretching from the far left of the stage to almost stage center, next to Shizuka.

The first *yoten* on the right, who is next to Shizuka, unties her.

Tota wraps the drums's orange cords around the drum as he boasts about taking both Shizuka and the prized drum.

Shizuka shakes her head sideways (no) and looks around (for help).

"Wait, wait (*matte, matte*)!" The booming voice of Tadanobu is heard from behind the *agemaku*.

Drum beats.

*Tsuke*, on the right of the stage, accompany the movements of Tadanobu as he enters on the *hanamichi* in a bravado *aragoto* manner.

**Tadanobu's Appearance:** In this scene, Tadanobu is played in a bravado *aragoto* style. His *kumadori* makeup consists of bright red lines on

a stark white background on his face, chest, arms, legs, hands and feet. His wig has no "foxy" ears, or any clue to his identity as a fox. His bright red and white tunic has white fringe at the bottom of it, and there is a big blue and purple striped bow tied in back. He wears two swords, one long and one short. Kelly green tassels hang down at the front of the sword hilts.

"What's all this?" retorts Tota defiantly in confrontation.

Tadanobu and Tota each do various *aragoto* poses with their legs spread apart and their arms extended out from their sides in very wide movements.

Tadanobu and Tota pose in *mie* at the same time.

*Tsuke*, drumbeats and flute are heard from the *geza*. During this sequence, the special music and strange fox-like hand gestures indicate the supernatural.

Tadanobu does a *mie* at the 7/3.

### ***Tachimawari Sequence***

Tadanobu engages Tota in a *tachimawari* sequence on the *hanamichi*. First Tota is on top of Tadanobu, then Tadanobu is on top of Tota. Tota tries to escape to the stage, but Tadanobu pulls Tota from the stage back onto the *hanamichi*, and they meet at the 7/3. Tadanobu does a *mie* at the 7/3. Tadanobu forcefully strides back and forth with Tota who has the

drum in his hand. Then, Tadanobu pulls Tota onto the stage by his collar and retrieves the drum.

Once on stage, Tota brags that his men will take care of Tadanobu.

Tadanobu, undaunted, dares them to try.

With "mysterious" hand gestures, Tadanobu casually flips the soldier holding Shizuka. Victoriously, Tadanobu stands stage center with the drum in his hand.

Tadanobu gives Shizuka the drum and she goes off through the gate with Tota following behind her. They remain off-stage during the *tachimawari* between Tadanobu and the *yoten* which follows.

### ***Tachimawari* Sequence**

Fast pounding on drum heralds a *tachimawari* with Tadanobu and the *yoten*.

The following *tachimawari* sequence is mimed as before, with the movements accented by *tsuke*. In addition, this time the person striking the clappers (*tsukeuchi*) is visible at the far right of the stage during the *tachimawari*. Each series of dramatic poses culminate with a *mie* by Tadanobu in a picturesque pose held motionless for a few moments (*ma*), and then the action continues. Sometimes, Tadanobu is in front of the *yoten*, other times he is in the middle of them or on top of them. The constant rearrangements of color and design patterns are like a kaleidoscope.

After a *mie* by Tadanobu, which is accompanied by *tsuke* and *geza* music (shamisen, flute and drums), Tadanobu and the ten *yoten* are left on the stage.

With a wave of Tadanobu's hand, the *yoten* flip backward and fall down. Tadanobu is usually facing the audience while he gestures and poses with his legs spread apart and his arms out from his sides. Tadanobu goes three steps to the rear, then returns three steps forward, and then three steps to the left. His movements are very forceful and exaggerated.

Tadanobu chases the *yoten* off the *hanamichi*, and at the 7/3 he poses and does a *mie*.

Emerging victoriously after this skirmish, Tadanobu stomps back on the stage from the *hanamichi*.

Tota and Shizuka re-enter. Tota, carrying the drum in one hand, is dragging Shizuka onto the stage with his other hand. Tota goes to left of the stage, Shizuka is stage center and Tadanobu is between her and Tota.

Tadanobu wrests the drum from Tota and gives it back to Shizuka who is still stage center.

Shizuka, carrying the drum, goes upstage to the right of stage center. She turns her back to the audience and does not watch the *tachimawari* because it is distasteful for a lady to do so. Another reason she turns her back away from the audience is to focus the audience's attention on the *tachimawari*.



Tadanobu drops Tota to the ground stage center and bends over Tota with his leg on Tota's back. Tadanobu is to the right of Tota. Tadanobu does a *mie*.

Tadanobu says that he will pound on Tota, just as on a drum. Loud "kakaka" snort by Tadanobu as he crushes Tota.

Tadanobu crushes Tota so hard, Tota's eyes "pop out." Huge eyes on springs pop out of Tota's head to the amusement of the audience.

Tota rolls over three turns to the left and then, moving sideways facing the audience in a comically topsy-turvy manner, goes off-stage to the left. Yoshitsune reappears from upstage left (even though he previously went out through the Torii gateway on the right).

The retainer in the yellow top, standing to the right rear of Yoshitsune, places the bench for Yoshitsune to sit on.

Everyone else is either kneeling or sitting on the ground level at a height lower than Yoshitsune.

Yoshitsune says he has seen what transpired.

The *shitennō* are to the right of Yoshitsune, in front of the Torii gateway. Benkei is to the left of Yoshitsune. Benkei and the *shitennō* are now in brocade-effect armor.

Yoshitsune greets Tadanobu.

Tadanobu bows to the left of Yoshitsune.

Tadanobu says that he had gone to his mother's village to care for his ailing mother as well as recuperate from a battle wound. Fortunately, he recovered quickly from the wound and rushed back to join Yoshitsune as soon as possible. It seems that he returned just in time and is happy to have saved Shizuka. Tadanobu gestures while speaking, his body facing front and his arms away from the sides of his body. His head is turned slightly towards Yoshitsune.

Yoshitsune praises Tadanobu's loyalty and bravery and grants Tadanobu the use of his own name and says Tadanobu may fight in this name to save his Lord. Yoshitsune looks first to the audience and then slightly towards Tadanobu and Shizuka as he speaks.

Yoshitsune presents Tadanobu with his prized suit of armor, which is bright orange colored. The retainer second from the right carries it over and with his back to the audience gives it to Tadanobu. Yoshitsune remains seated.

Tadanobu is "overwhelmed by these honors and humbly," (loudly and emotionally in reality), thanks his Lord and bows.

Yoshitsune remains motionless.

The retainers bow twice in unison. Then, all change places and bow low.

Yoshitsune says he and his retainers will continue on. He looks at the audience and then slightly towards Shizuka and Tadanobu.

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Yoshitsune instructs Tadanobu to accompany Shizuka back to the capitol to ensure her safety.

Yoshitsune rises. The retainer in the yellow top takes Yoshitsune's green bench.

Shizuka also rises and goes in a circle with the drum.

A sad song is performed by the chanter and *shamisen* regarding love and duty.

Yoshitsune realizes that this may be the last time he sees Shizuka and is overcome with emotion. Yoshitsune comes over to Shizuka.

Shizuka goes down on her knees.

Yoshitsune and Shizuka are looking directly at each other, their profiles to the audience.

Yoshitsune puts on his armor (with the help of *kurogo*).

Shizuka rises.

Then Shizuka and Yoshitsune go to each other and embrace (never really touching, as there is always an "invisible screen" of three to six inches between the actors). Yoshitsune and Shizuka sway back and forth overcome by emotion. Slowly, Shizuka glides her hand across Yoshitsune's chest in a caress.

The lovers are separated, Shizuka by Tadanobu and Yoshitsune by Benkei (ILLUSTRATION # 3).

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Another sad song is sung by the chanter accompanied by the shamisen.

Yoshitsune begins his exit.

Shizuka is stage right, on the ground with the drum in front of her, shaking her head back and forth.

As Yoshitsune passes her, she kneels to his side. He touches her with his hand while looking straight ahead.

A pause occurs in the action (*ma*), and then the action resumes as Yoshitsune shrugs and goes off followed by the retainer in the yellow top, Benkei and the *shitennō*. They exit under the window and not through the shrine exit.

Shizuka remains left of stage center with Tadanobu at her side. Shizuka says she will look after the drum as if it was Yoshitsune himself. After her lines "look after the hand drum like Yoshitsune himself," Shizuka goes down on her knees weeping, stage center.

The chanters remark that the drum and armor should help to lift Shizuka and Tadanobu's spirits until they meet their Lord again.

The chanters sing: "Her heart filled with grief, Shizuka prepares for her trip back to the capitol."

The chanters accompanied by the shamisen comment on the action and emotions while Shizuka mimes gestures of looking around, going to the

drum and then going back on her knees while she talks, rises, does forlorn posturing and wails as she goes down.

Tadanobu puts the armor down. The retainer wearing the red top and *aragoto* makeup wraps armor on Tadanobu's back with a yellow sash, and then Tadanobu ties it himself in front. This sash is the same width and color as the one Shizuka is wearing around her, also tied in front.

Tadanobu extends his arm to Shizuka after tying on his armor, not touching her.

Shizuka rises, dances and then does a *mie* holding the hem of her sleeve which is indicative of her strong emotion at the parting.

Shizuka tries to go in the direction of Yoshitsune.

"No, no (*tie, tie*)," is repeated by the chanter in the *yuka* as Tadanobu tries to block Shizuka from following after Yoshitsune. Tadanobu puts his arm out first to the left and then to the right and then motions with his arm pointing towards the *hanamichi*.

As Shizuka starts to leave in the direction of the *hanamichi*, Tadanobu, who is walking slightly behind her, suddenly turns and walks in the opposite direction and then swivels briskly on his heels and goes up on his toes to reveal his true "foxy" nature.

The chanters commence singing again: "Her heart filled with grief, Shizuka prepares for her trip back to the capitol."

Tadanobu does a melancholy dance with Shizuka.

The chanters continue the song: "The hand drum and armor should help to lift their spirits, until they meet their Lord again."

Tadanobu and Shizuka go around in a circle, first she goes right and he left towards the drum, but then Shizuka goes left so she can be near the drum. Both figures are drawn to the drum.

They head slowly towards the *hanamichi*, Tadanobu to the right of Shizuka, following behind her.

Ominous foreboding drum beats are heard.

Suddenly, Tadanobu swivels around as two rogues, entering from stage left, try to attack Shizuka as she prepares to go onto the *hanamichi*.

At the 7/3, Tadanobu fends them off with his supernatural hand gestures while drum sounds emanating from the *geza* pound away.

The attackers run off stage.

Shizuka continues her exit onto the *hanamichi*, pausing at the 7/3, and then slowly glides off.

Tadanobu, left alone on the stage, is kneeling far left, near the *hanamichi*, holding a branch.

#### **Exit Outside The Curtain (*maku soto hikkomî*) Sequence**

The kabuki curtain is drawn closed behind Tadanobu. Two rows of floor lights on the side of the stage behind him are covered by *kurogo*.

A portion of the kabuki curtain is lifted to reveal musicians with flute and drums from the *geza* and singers wearing royal blue and white kimono

trimmed with orange, and orange head bands. They will provide musical accompaniment for this final portion called an "exit outside the curtain (*maku soto hikkomé*)."

The *tsukeuchi* on the far right of the stage, visible to the audience, accompanies *tachimawari* to follow.

### ***Tachimawari* Sequence**

Two attackers, wearing dark blue and silver outfits trimmed with orange, enter on the *hanamichi*.

Tadanobu rises, comes onto the *hanamichi* and near the 7/3, engages the villains in a *tachimawari*. To shrill flute sounds, Tadanobu does a special fox-style *mie* (*kitsune mie*) on the top of their backs and uses "strange" fox-like hand gestures. The villains fall down and run off stage.

Drum beats indicate the supernatural.

Two more villains, wearing different costumes, attack Tadanobu and all three go onto the *hanamichi*, where the performance continues.

*Tachimawari* on the *hanamichi* with Tadanobu and the villains.

*Tsuke* loudly accompany the drum and flute music during this *tachimawari*.

Tadanobu's strange hand gestures indicate that he is really a fox in disguise. Tadanobu does a *kitsune-mie*, his hands turned like a fox, on top of villain. Tadanobu fends them off, and they exit.

### **Roppō Sequence**

Tadanobu's fox-nature surfaces again in a spectacular exit on the *hanamichi* called *tobi roppō* (which is not same as the *kitsune roppō* that ends the next scene).

Tadanobu begins his *tobi roppō* at the top of the *hanamichi* with preparation involving waving arm and leg movements. Huge leaps and hops up and down are accompanied by special hand motions to represent his "true" nature. Then he whirls back onto the stage, giving himself more room for a dramatic start.

Tadanobu continues with this virtuoso acrobatic manipulation of space as he leaps off the *hanamichi* in a spectacular and special *tobi roppō*, which is a combination of the *aragoto* style *tobi roppō* and a semi-*kitsune* style *roppō* (ILLUSTRATION #4).

With wide waving of his arms and high lifting of his legs, sweeping through space back and forth in constant movement, punctuated by pauses: long--- long--- short- short- short-, pause (*ma*), and then just short jumps down the *hanamichi*, Tadanobu would have the audience bear witness that they really must be seeing a supernatural being.

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**SCENE II: JOURNEY WITH THE DRUM (MICHUYUKI HATSUNE NO TABI)****Synopsis**

It is spring, and Shizuka is traveling through Yoshino's flower covered mountains to the mansion of Kawatsura Hogan where Yoshitsune has sought sanctuary, hoping to hide from his brother Yoritomo. Tadanobu is escorting Shizuka there, instead of to the capital as Yoshitsune requested.

Suddenly, Shizuka realizes that Tadanobu has disappeared, and she is alone. Carrying Yoshitsune's precious gift drum, she recalls that Tadanobu always materializes before her instantly upon hearing its sound. She unwraps its purple silk cover and strikes the drum several times. Immediately, to the accompaniment of drumbeats in the background signifying the supernatural, the magical fox disguised as Tadanobu appears as if from thin air and is soon beside Shizuka.

During the journey, Shizuka and Tadanobu amuse themselves with dancing and games. However, longing for Yoshitsune, Shizuka becomes melancholy. In an attempt to cheer her, Tadanobu takes out the armor that Yoshitsune had presented to him and places it up on a tree stump. Shizuka places the drum on top of it, and the duo try to comfort themselves by imagining that the shape formed is that of Yoshitsune. Tadanobu starts to recount heroic battle deeds including how his brother Tsuginobu was willingly slain in combat shielding Yoshitsune. Shizuka joins Tadanobu in this choreography.

Unexpectedly, a band of villain led by Yoritomo's underling Hayami no Tota attacks them. Tota tries to abduct Shizuka, but Tadanobu intercedes and engages Tota and his men in a fight, emerging victorious. Shizuka and Tadanobu then resume their trek through the cherry blossomed panorama of Yoshino's mountains to join Yoshitsune.

#### Cast

<i>Tadanobu the fox</i>	Ennosuke
<i>Tota</i>	Danshirō
<i>Shizuka</i>	Tamasaburō

#### Stage Setting

The kabuki curtain is drawn right to reveal a brilliant panorama of the hills of Yoshino, famous for its beautiful pink cherry blossoms. One big, blossoming cherry tree in full bloom is stage center (it looks like same free-standing tree seen in the last scene). Long strands of pink blossoms hang down from across the top of the proscenium. Bright pink-blossoming cherry trees are in full-bloom on verdant kelly to emerald green hills and cover the *geza* wall at left, except for the slats so the *geza* musicians can see the stage, and the entire right wall except for the *yuka* window for the *jōruri* chanters and shamisen. Two ornate Heian-style houses, red with green tiled rooftops, can be seen upstage right. All scenery, except for the large cherry tree stage center, is painted on various drops, panels and flats positioned throughout the stage area.

Seven musicians of the *kiyomoto* school, four chanters and three shamisen players, are seated on a bright kelly green dias wearing formal attire of green *hakama* over black kimono. This dias is on the right side of the stage. The chanters and shamisen here, as well as the musicians in the *geza* and *yuka*, will provide a continuous musical accompaniment throughout this scene. The kabuki *michiyuki* follows the *jōruri* text almost exactly.

### **As The Curtain Opens**

The musicians start to sing that Shizuka is traveling in secret through the hills of Yoshino, famous for its cherry blossoms even today.

Chanter sings: " Heavy burden of love and duty (loyalty)..."

Shizuka enters on the *hanamichi* to audience shouts of: "Yamatoya!," the acting house of *onnagata* actor Bandō Tamasaburō, who is playing this role.

**Shizuka's Appearance:** Shizuka has a stark white face. A black wig (*fukiwa*) is topped by an ornate, glittering silver crown. She is wearing a "Red Princess" (*akahime*) costume consisting of a brilliant red kimono embroidered with gold and silver threads, with a white under-kimono showing slightly at neckline. Covering the red kimono is a translucent gauze pale gold and cream traveling kimono, which is pulled back to show some red of the other kimono at the collar. A purple sash is draped diagonally over the kimono. There is a yellow cummerbund (*obi*), and a

purple pouch is tucked into the *obi* bustle in front. Shizuka carries in her right hand a small green umbrella and in her left hand a silver walking stick trimmed in purple. She will exchange the green umbrella for a green hat at the 7/3, which she uses during a slow dance there. The green translucent gauze hat has narrow gold metallic webbing. Shizuka never wears the hat, it is only a prop; she is already wearing the silver crown on her head. Red thong sandals (*zōri*) over white socks (*tabi*) complete the ensemble (ILLUSTRATION #5).

Shizuka, breathtaking in the dazzling outfit described above, slowly mimes parting the tall grass before her alternately with right and left arms, holding a prop in each hand.

With her right arm and her left arm, Shizuka parts the tall grass before her through the countryside. She glides along with a synchronized movement of right leg moving with left arm, and left leg with right arm. There is a contrast (counter-point) between the same movements and different movements with each hand; the silver staff in Shizuka's right hand gently touches the ground as an accent; she pauses a moment between sweeps (*ma*).

At the 7/3, a stage assistant dressed in formal attire (*kōken*) takes the walking stick and small green umbrella, unwraps the purple cloth around the drum *Hatsune* and hands Shizuka the drum which is decorated with glittering gold embroidery, bright orange cords and a glittering design

with birds. There will be numerous references to birds in the following lines by the chanter-singers. The *kōken* also hands Shizuka the green hat.

At the 7/3, Shizuka takes both props in her left hand while she mimes rubbing her legs with her right hand. With her face turned upward, she languidly assumes a pose and then takes a prop in each hand again.

Shizuka looks slowly left, right, down, and then slowly up and down again and to the right, turning her body with wide swaying movements. Her hand holding the green hat is raised to shade her eyes. She looks down and then up through the transparent green hat. She does not wear the hat. Rather, it is used as a focal point to draw a center of interest up towards her face. She is wearing the ornate silver crown throughout the scene.

"Wild pheasants foraging for food"; a pheasant's cry is heard. Shizuka turns her back to the audience as she bends her knees and goes down in a slow, graceful circle; turning around while her arms are extended outward, away from her body, holding the props.

"A wild pheasant takes to the air, its cry is heard on the wind." Shizuka looks up. She is reminded of the deep attachment pheasants have for their offspring and that they would even risk death to save them. This is compared to the deep attachment between Shizuka and Yoshitsune.

"She is lost along the paths of love." With her right hand, Shizuka wipes away tears of regret, for unlike the birds, she must travel alone.

"A fresh breeze begins to blow." The breeze is indicated by steady beats of the big drum followed by echoes of the small drum.

"Gentle echoes passing through the hills." Beats of the small drum follow beats of the big drum.

Shizuka is tall and elegant; with graceful, curved sweeps in a slow gliding movement, she moves along the *hanamichi* onto the stage. Her green and gold hat matches the green and gold in the landscape, while the other colors she is wearing of purple, yellow and red add additional visual highlights matching those found in the scenery. Her silver princess crown glitters as it catches the lights whenever her head is turned.

The narration continues the same as the *jōruri* text.

"You birds long for your young." The song of parent bird and chick is compared to the love of Shizuka and Yoshitsune. Her hand delicately wipes away tears. This is only a gesture, as she is not really crying.

Chanters remark that Shizuka must travel alone, not like geese who travel as "a mated pair."

A bush warbler whistle and chirp are heard.

After the dance at the 7/3, Shizuka's props are exchanged again by the *koken*.

A *shirabe* song with a plaintiff melody is being played.

Once on stage, Shizuka pauses and slowly raises the staff up and down, twice touching the floor, and then stops at the big cherry tree stage center.

Shizuka goes to the right of the tree where a *kōken* takes her props. She kneels as the *kōken* unwraps the purple cloth that covers the drum, and assists her in taking the drum that was fastened to her back. (Actually, a second drum with a purple cloth is already on the floor, and he hands it to her.)

Chirps are heard again.

The chirps of the bush warbler attract Shizuka, and she decides to accompany it.

She rises with the drum and dances stage center.

As Shizuka slowly dances, her arms are rounded, never straight out. Shizuka looks up as she bends slightly backward and then goes in a circle. With her back to the audience, she looks up, to the left, and then slowly turns forward towards the audience and kneels stage center.

Shizuka closely examines the cords on each side of the drum, turns the drum three times, and unties the cords wrapped around the drum.

Shizuka covers her right hand with the sleeve until she puts the drum on her right shoulder and taps it. She stands up and keeps hitting the drum in very slow motion, with her profile to the audience, pause (*ma*).

"Tap-tap-tap"; three even taps are accentuated with music. Shizuka

raises her head up and down slowly, bends to the left and to the right and goes into a circle stage center with the drum on her left shoulder. She tapped the drum with her right hand.

Drum beats are heard from the *geza*.

Suddenly, piercing the air, a shrill flute sound is heard indicating the supernatural.

Shizuka bends slightly backward as the flute sounds, and then she hits the drum five even times in rapid succession, and then again and again, tapping faster and faster in an agitated manner.

*Geza* drums beat, and the shrill flute pierces the air again.

Instantaneously, at this sound, Tadanobu rises up through *hanamichi* trap (*suppon*) at the 7/3. "1-2-3, pause, 1-2-3, pause"; strong even beats of the drum, separated by a pause (*ma*), accompany the ascent (ILLUSTRATION #6).

**Tadanobu's Appearance:** Tadanobu has a pure white face with a blue pate (no *kumadori* makeup with lines as in the last scene). A small white bow is perched on the top of a special wig to suggest fox ears. He is wearing a dark navy or deep eggplant purple (depending on how the lights hit it, as the kimono is really black off-stage) traveling kimono with gold Genji cartwheel medallions (*mon*). The kimono is trimmed in powder blue at the neck and lining of the cuffs. Pale blue leggings and a pale blue *obi* complement the trim on the kimono. He carries a straw hat (*kesa*) which



will be used as a prop, and has two swords in a scabbard at his waist. Black *tabi* and *zōri* with rope thongs complete his outfit.

Tadanobu does a dance at the 7/3. He looks left, right, left, right and poses, and does a *mie*. He gestures with his hat (*kesa*) and stamps his feet: one, two and goes around and poses with *kesa* in short quick beats with a pause (*ma*) in between. He takes his left hand out of the sleeve and hits his leg with the *kesa* (as a sign of resolve) and goes onto the stage.

Shizuka has been sitting motionless stage center throughout Tadanobu's entrance.

As Tadanobu comes onto the stage from the *hanamichi*, Shizuka rises and goes in a circle to the right and stops in front of the big cherry tree stage center. Tadanobu is now next to her on the left. (Later, when he "substitutes" for Yoshitsune, he will be on the right.) Tadanobu is much shorter than Shizuka.

As Shizuka stands up, three *kōken* come on stage.

Shizuka tells Tadanobu that she has been waiting for him.

Tadanobu apologizes. He has lingered behind her so as not to be conspicuous; he thought a woman's pace was slower.

Tadanobu goes down on his knees facing the audience.

The three *kōken* on the stage crouch inconspicuously, two to the rear of Tadanobu and one to the rear of Shizuka.

Tadanobu takes off the two swords, his sandals, and then the diagonal sash and hands them to one of the two *kōken* near him (who exits with them). Then Tadanobu takes off the *kesa* (which he placed around his neck by its cord before he removed the other items of apparel), and hands it to the remaining *kōken* near him.

Tadanobu and Shizuka comment on the beauty of the cherry blossoms.

"Every branch is in full bloom." They look up, their backs to the audience and then give the remaining props to the *kōken*. They remove their sandals (*zōri*), as they will be dancing in their socks (*tabi*), without their *zōri* on. Tadanobu is still left of Shizuka who is stage center.

Tadanobu and Shizuka do a slow, graceful dance looking at the cherry blossoms. They go around, remaining in almost in the same place, looking at the landscape.

Shizuka leans slightly backward, with her back to the audience, to show off her long neck and graceful form, and looks up at the flowers. She gestures delicately with her right hand to Tadanobu and then covers her hand with her sleeve after her gesture as a sign of refinement and modesty.

Shizuka goes upstage, where she turns her back to the audience and pats her face with a cloth after she hands the props to a *kōken*, who then gives her the dance fan.

From the valley below left, a lighthearted folk song is heard.

Tadanobu points to the direction of the sound and asks Shizuka to dance to the music that they hear.

Shizuka says she does not know the dance and invites Tadanobu to dance instead.

### **Rustic Dance Sequence**

Tadanobu starts to do a rustic dance to this folk song about the rice harvesters.

Shizuka kneels motionless with the drum stage center while Tadanobu dances, her sleeves covering her hands.

Tadanobu continues with the rice harvest dance of the townspeople. He extends good wishes to them. During the dance, Tadanobu's true nature surfaces in fox-like hand motions as he is drawn to the drum. Conscious of this, he quickly covers them with the sleeves of his kimono.

Tadanobu tries to seize the drum, but Shizuka, who is holding it securely, will not let go (ILLUSTRATION #7).

Tadanobu extends his hands out towards her, inviting her to join him.

Shizuka does a graceful hand gesture as she extends her right hand and nods.

Shizuka sets the drum down in front of her and rises from her kneeling position to join Tadanobu in dance.

Tadanobu teaches Shizuka the steps to the dance. As they dance together, her hands convey expressive feeling as they move in different graceful gestures.

"It is shameful for a man to refuse a meal set before him"; ("meal" refers to "sex," and this line is not in the jōruri text).

She is embarrassed by such crude sentiments in the folk song and begins to laugh (mimes "embarrassed" laughter). When embarrassed, she covers one hand and turns away with the other to hide her face.

Singers refer to this theatre, the Kabuki-za, which used to be called the Nakamura-za, and the year when this play was performed here for the first time. They hope the actors will flourish (not in the jōruri text).

Tadanobu sits upstage left while Shizuka dances with the drum stage center in the following sequence.

#### **Shizuka Dances for Yoshitsune Sequence**

Shizuka is handed the drum from the *kōken*, who exits thereafter.

Shizuka, holding the drum, dances to honor her Lord Yoshitsune. She wishes him everlasting youth and prosperity.

Shizuka nods slightly to the drum, then puts it down on a stump of the cherry tree stage center. She takes out a fan that is metallic gold on one side and silver on the other, with two red tassels hanging from each bottom corner.

"For her Lord a bounteous life"; she dances in celebration of Yoshitsune and points the fan in the direction of the drum stage center and bows respectfully. Shizuka brings her hands together wishing Yoshitsune and the townspeople well.

Shizuka modestly covers her face with the opened fan because the singers are describing her slender appearance: "...what winsome charm she has."

She does a slow, elegant dance and peers over the fan, turning it from the silver to the gold side. Her hands are very expressive and not in the sleeves now. She brings her hands together in prayer as singers speak of Ebisu (God) mentioned by the townspeople.

Tadanobu takes over.

Shizuka is on her knees holding the fan, stage center.

Music changes from a lyrical dance melody to a "foxy" tune when Tadanobu's fox-nature surfaces through fox-like hops and hand gestures. He covers them for a while and then continues with them out.

### **Pillow Dance Sequence**

The pillow sequence is sung by the chanters: "...putting out our pillows"; Shizuka's hand is lifted under her chin to indicate the pillow where man and wife rest their heads. Then, Shizuka rests her head on her hands in mimed reference to sharing a pillow.

Tadanobu dances a pillow mime. They laugh ( in gesture only).

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Shizuka puts her hand to her cheek, then turns, and while dancing, gets the drum.

### **Clam Shell Game Sequence**

The chanters sing about the clam shell game. They refer to the fishmonger who sell clams for the New Year Celebration. The clam shells are painted on New Year's Day and are used as part of a game (This is a Genji game of the Heian period which was re-popularized during the Edo period).

Shizuka and Tadanobu now dance together, each holding the drum with one hand. Tadanobu tries to wrest the drum from her; there is a back and forth motion as each vie for it, but Shizuka gets it and holds it in a climactic pose over her head stage center as Tadanobu kneels.

The mood changes as Shizuka takes the drum stage center. Tadanobu does quick little "foxy" steps as he takes the drum from her and caresses it with special "foxy" hands, fingers bent under resembling the paws of a fox.

Tadanobu plays with the drum.

Joyfully, Tadanobu rolls the drum around and dances with it. (There is no "foxy" tune this time.) Then he jumps up and in a fox-like manner rolls it to Shizuka, who is now right of stage center.

This is danced to the accompaniment of flute and drums, indicating the supernatural.

Shizuka takes the drum, and she and Tadanobu pose with her holding the drum up above her head, her back to the audience. Shizuka and Tadanobu speak a few lines and then a chanter continues.

Shizuka dances and then puts the drum down.

"...and now it is the season of spring," the chanter remarks. Bells tinkle.

### **Doll Dance sequence**

Shizuka dances a famous dance about the Doll Festival which is in the third month (March), in spring. Shizuka and Tadanobu will amuse themselves portraying male and female dolls in this slow, erotic section. Tadanobu, as a mere retainer, hesitates to take the place of Yoshitsune behind Shizuka for this famous celebrated "pose of marital bliss." He shows hesitation and turns away.

However, Tadanobu succumbs to Shizuka's request, and they stand in the "pose of marital bliss," Tadanobu standing behind Shizuka very slightly to the left, his arms outstretched, hers wrapped in front of her. Tadanobu is on his toes, and Shizuka is bending her knees slightly which makes her appear smaller than him (ILLUSTRATION #8).

After this pose, during the following sensual sequence, Shizuka will be dancing on the (audience) left; Tadanobu, who is taking the place of her Lord Yoshitsune, will be on the right. (This is a convention of protocol, as Yoshitsune would assume the more honorable position audience right.)

"Gazing up at the moon"; Shizuka looks up, shading her eyes.

"Gazing down in each other's reflection, the would-be couple would rather spend the night together in each other's company," (than sleep), the chanters sing. Shizuka stands over Tadanobu, who is on his knees.

"They did not wish to sleep until morning, but savor each moment of their night together." Slowly, sensually, Tadanobu stands and Shizuka touches him. They weave back and forth as she goes back in a semi-circle; her hands very expressively conveying emotion.

(Although there is an "invisible screen" of a few inches between them, to the audience it appears that Tadanobu and Shizuka are really touching each other.)

Tadanobu is "tipsy with a little too much wine." Tadanobu appears aroused as Shizuka touches him, and they sway back and forth. Both are in semi-profile to the audience. Shizuka claps her hands, and Tadanobu straightens up.

Then, Shizuka touches Tadanobu's chest, and he turns around with his back to her. His breathing is noticeably heavy (that is, it is observable to the audience).

Shizuka, who is behind Tadanobu, taps him on his back, and he "straightens up."

All this talk of couples has made Shizuka melancholy, but Tadanobu has an idea which may cheer her up.



The erotic mood changes abruptly. The house lights are turned up in the red lanterns decorated with fall branches over the Japanese seats and on the second and third floor balconies. (They were previously dimmed for this section).

Two *kōken* enter, one from the left and one from the right. They are dressed in formal *kamishimo* with *hakama*.

One of the *kōken* is carrying the suit of armor which was given to Tadanobu as a gift from Yoshitsune in the previous scene.

Tadanobu takes the armor from the *kōken*.

Tadanobu goes in a circle, starting left and then moving over to the rear of the big tree stage center, and places the armor on the stump of the cherry tree. Tadanobu does not go directly to it in a straight line; he goes in a rounded circular movement starting from left front to rear to the big cherry tree stage center. He faces the audience, wipes off the tree stump, and then puts the armor on it.

Tadanobu invites Shizuka to place the drum on top of the armor to represent Yoshitsune's presence.

Shizuka rises onto her knees and then gets up with the drum. She is in semi-profile to audience. Like Tadanobu, Shizuka does not walk directly to the stump in a direct straight line and put the armor down. She walks first toward the audience, then goes slightly right of the tree stump, and then to the left of it, and then circles back stage center and places the

drum on top of the armor and bows. She is slightly right of stage center near the front of the tree.

Tadanobu and Shizuka bow in reverence for the memory of their Lord. Tadanobu is on the left and Shizuka on the right, both slightly turned away from audience.

### **Yoshitsune Battle Sequence**

The shade goes up in the *yuka*, exposing the chanter and shamisen player. They are accompanied by drum sounds from the *geza*.

Shizuka and Tadanobu each take turns in mimed dance in this section.

"However, though it (the armor) was given to him, far more deserving was his brother Tsuginobu."

(During another performance, it was the only line Tadanobu spoke: on another night this line came from a chanter, and on still another night, Tadanobu's voice was heard but was not coming from him; it must have been a recording as the chanter was also silent.)

Now Shizuka dances Yoshitsune's story.

Shizuka removes her outer kimono's right sleeve, which comes off with the help of a *kōken*. Another sleeve of bright red is thereby exposed for visual emphasis and greater freedom.

Shizuka describes Yoshitsune's attempt to escape.

While Shizuka is dancing, her kimono is trailing on the ground about eight to twelve inches. Her metallic gold and silver fan with two red tassels catches the light as she dances.

"Churned by wave and wind..." Shizuka mimes the wind and rain with her fan with wide sweeping movements and a fluttering motion, sweeping it up and down as she flutters it. Then, the fan represents a ship at sea blown off course onto the shore at Sumiyoshi Bay.

At this point, two more musicians from the Gidayū school are added above to the *yuka*. One chanter and one shamisen from bunraku recall the battle between Genji and Yoshitsune. There are now a total of four musicians in the *yuka*; two singers and two shamisen players all wearing pink *hakama*. The other seven musicians in green *hakama* are still seated on the stage at the right.

Shizuka sits right of stage center on a folding chair (placed by the *kōken*), while Tadanobu does his section.

Tadanobu commences with a portion from "The Tale of Genji" (*Genji Monogatari*), where the events leading to his brother's death are told, while Tadanobu mimes the action to the accompaniment of a very emotional chanter.

Emotional noh-style chant about the Battle of Genji continues. This sequence culminates in the "first celebrated pose" of this scene (the second

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one is the "pose of marital bliss"; they are not graded numerically because of sequence, but because of importance).

Tadanobu dances with a large noh fan, which he also holds in his mouth for a special effect. He takes off his kimono top to expose an aqua wave-patterned kimono, assisted by *kōken*, and a *kōken* holds the kimono top up behind him while Tadanobu does *mie* holding the large noh fan in his mouth, his arms folded.

"Now they rode into battle..."; very dramatic, forceful music and movement.

"Even though wounded..."; Tadanobu is dancing with dramatic movements (not noh style).

"At last the challenge was taken!"

"Like cherry blossom petals in a storm, heads fell off of homeless samurai"; fan used to represent sword with wide outward sweeping motions (ILLUSTRATION #9).

"The sound of fighting drowned off the sound of the waves"; drum patterns of crashing waves compared to sounds of battle.

"Retreating and charging..."; wide sweeping movements to narrative.

Tadanobu glances up at the sky as we hear of returning geese signaling the late hour.

Now all seven musicians seated on stage are singing and playing forcefully.

"Ah, shouts Kagekiyo"; crushing wave pattern on drum.

Shizuka and Tadanobu take turns enacting portions of the battle with two chanters alternating lines.

"Seizes tight the neck strap.."; Kagekiyo grabbed the strap around Yoshitsune's neck and pulled backward. Tadanobu mimes this action stage center.

Now the other chanter takes over: "Finally the neck strap broke, and both men fell to the ground," Tadanobu throws his fan on the floor and jumps forcefully down on one knee and one foot.

"Into the fray came Tadanobu's brother."

"My brother Tsuginobu stood"; Tandanobu's brother rode to block the arrow meant for Yoshitsune (meanwhile the armor and drum have been taken off-stage by the *kōken*).

Tadanobu mimes his brother riding his horse as he saw the arrow coming: "Then Tsuginobu rode in front of his Lord Yoshitsune to block his arrow."

Tadanobu hits his knees, legs out.

Shizuka rises (her bench is taken away by *kōken*).

Shizuka says that the enemy Noritsune was well-known for his horsemanship. She dances in a semi-noh style, played down with quiet movements and sliding her feet in a special noh type step.

Shizuka joins Tadanobu in the storytelling and she mimes shooting the fatal arrow which wounded Tsuginobu.

"Noristune, Lord of Noto"; she mimes shooting the arrow. She pulls her right hand back as she mimes the arrow being pulled. Shizuka is at stage center.

"It reached its target in Tsuginobu's chest."

Shizuka turns her back and kneels down while Tadanobu mimes Tsuginobu, who was shot, falling to the ground. Tadanobu is very emotional. He throws his fan on the ground, jumps up and then goes down on his knees dramatically.

"After the battle, all will be remembered."

"My sleeve is never dry of tears"; Tadanobu weeps in anguish at the memory of his brother's death.

"The sleeves of Tadanobu and Shizuka will not dry from the tears that they have shed at his death," chanter remarks.

Tadanobu puts his two hands, then just left hand, over his eyes. Shizuka, also weeping, turns her back to the audience, leans slightly backward and nods her head, puts her fan in front of her face and flutters it (indicating weeping).

Then, Shizuka does a *mie* standing stage center.

Musicians remark sadly on the "empty reputation of a warrior who leaves behind a name."

Thus reminded of her Lord, Shizuka asks Tadanobu for the drum so they can continue on their journey to join Yoshitsune.

(Shizuka turns her back to the audience and delicately wipes her face with a cloth.)

A *kōken* hands the drum to Shizuka and then gets the armor and hands it to Tadanobu.

Tadanobu motions, with one arm outstretched, for Shizuka to leave as a suspicious noise is heard.

Tadanobu and Shizuka exit right off stage; first Shizuka and then Tadanobu behind her with his arm still outstretched.

This is the end of the dance section (*michiyuki*). The following section is added as a comic relief in the kabuki performance to add contrast to the previous heavy emotional section and to lighten the hearts of the audience.

At the same time as Shizuka and Tadanobu are exiting, the comical Tota enters on the *hanamichi*.

A light shamisen melody is being played by a musician on the right side of the stage and the *chobo* singer in the *yuka*, (not the emotional one who did Tsuginobu's death scene), who takes over with a light-hearted song.

"Wait wait, wait wait wait! (*matte matte, matte matte matte!*)"; long--- long---, fast-fast-fast beats are shouted out in a loud voice. It is humorously

called out by the chanter in the *yuka*, and although Tota's sentiments, it is not Tota's voice.

Tota enters with a chorus of ten *yoten* on the *hanamichi*.

Since the *hanamichi* is only five feet wide, this sequence presents a difficult path to maneuver for rotund Tota and his men.

**Tota's Appearance:** He has a grayish-white face with no *kumadori* lines, and a red band is tied around his head. He wears the typical costume of a fool: flame pattern pantaloons in turquoise, gold and black, a green kimono trimmed with red cuffs, and a red vest. (In real life, this actor is the brother of Ennosuke.)

**Yoten's Appearance:** Garish costumes with red wave design pantaloons and classic kimono in navy, red and blue, and a red vest. Only sprigs of flowers are sticking up in back of them, simulating flower-topped poles. On the *hanamichi*, these sprigs are exchanged for real poles topped with red and white blossoms by the *kurogo* who emerge from behind the flats when the *yoten* go onto the stage.

Tota tells his men that they should stop and eat. They agree and start to march off.

"Wait wait wait! (*matte matte mattel*)"; Tota calls out three even times. Tota tells the men to run away if they see anyone in a priest's garb.

The men agree.



Now, cowardly Tota invents an excuse to march at the rear of his men. They reply that they cannot make progress led from the back so they will become the leaders. Tota agrees unthinkingly, but realizes his mistake and goes before them. However, Tota does not feel like leading and sends some men ahead as scouts to report.

One *yoten* lookout comes back to report seeing a woman warrior spirit. (No one is presently seen on stage.)

At the mention of a woman, Tota's lust is pleasantly aroused.

"But what kind of a woman warrior spirit can it be?," Tota asks as he peers towards the stage.

Then, Tota realizes that the woman must be the beautiful Shizuka, but she will be accompanied by Tadanobu.

Undaunted, Tota hurries onto the stage in a funny *roppō*, rushing towards Shizuka with grasping arm movements, starting at the 7/3.

Tota enters on the stage from the *hanamichi* at the same time as Tadanobu and Shizuka enter from stage right. Tota is left of stage center, Tadanobu is stage center, and Shizuka is to his right with her back turned to the audience.

Tota, talking to the audience, refers to this month's long awaited program with Ennosuke and Tamasaburō appearing on the stage together. "It has been fifteen years since their last performance together." He continues to remark that even though older actors have the greatest

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respect, these two young stars have achieved the greatest popularity at home and abroad. (Ennosuke and Tamasaburō are considered young by kabuki standards, as they are in the mid-fifties and mid-forties, respectively).

Shizuka goes slowly downstage.

There is a long series of puns now as Tota taunts Tadanobu and compares his name with the sound "tandapopo." Tota's long, funny speech is punctuated by the shamisen.

Tadanobu finds Tota's ridiculous words amusing and decides to put his words to the test and challenges him. Tadanobu does a *mie*.

*Yoten* rush in from the area of the Torii gateway holding their poles.

Shizuka and Tota retreat with their backs to the audience. Tota goes to the left side of the large cherry tree stage center and Shizuka to the right of it. Shizuka kneels. A *kōken* takes Tota's top down and his two swords away while Tadanobu is fighting with the *yoten*. Then, Tota kneels with his arms out at the elbow in right angles to his body, his hands palms down.

### ***Tachimawari* Sequence**

Ten *yoten* come out and engage Tadanobu in a *tachimawari*.

Tadanobu chases the *yoten* off the *hanamichi*, but two of them return and go behind the pink flowered panel far right.

Tota claps his hands and orders the remaining two *yoten* to help him, but all are powerless against Tadanobu.

Tadanobu fells Tota to the ground and does a *mie* stage center.

After the *tachimawari*, Tadanobu is assisted by these remaining two *yoten* with his swords, sandals and sash.

Chanter's lyrics tell of a man who was smitten by the beauty of Tota.

Tota, smoking a long pipe, is a bride-to-be riding haughtily in an ornate palanquin. The palanquin is carried by four *yoten*.

Working under the spell of the fox magic, Tota fights with his own men, who then go off-stage.

A *kōken* comes on stage with a large straw hat (*kesa*).

At stage center, Tota tries to catch Tadanobu twice with the *kesa* but Tadanobu "disappears." Tota looks around for Tadanobu but does not see him. (Tadanobu is actually still there; he just walked away to stand by the big cherry tree stage center).

One *yoten* comes out, and Tota becomes a string puppet controlled by this *yoten* who manipulates Tota's *kesa* over him and does a *mie*.

Tota takes his *kesa* from the *kōken* and goes to the left flat. He kneels with his back to the audience and puts on his straw sandals.

The *yoten* are propelled off-stage through Tadanobu's magical powers.

Tota, also under Tadanobu's spell, returns and bows to Tadanobu.

Tota claps his hands and commands his men to get Shizuka's traveling gear.

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Two *yoten* bring out Shizuka's purple sash and *zōri*, which she took off at the beginning of the dance sequence. Another two *yoten* come out with her green hat and silver staff and hand it to Tota.

The *yoten* assist Shizuka as she puts on the sash and *zōri*. She is then handed the silver staff and hat by Tota, sliding foolishly sideways to her.

After Shizuka is dressed, Tota pulls her by the bottom of her sleeve to the ground. Tota's lust is aroused again, but Tadanobu casts a spell on him. Tota, who is once again controlled by Tadanobu's magical power, goes sideways in a silly topsy-turvy scurry off-stage left.

The two *yoten* will help Tadanobu and Shizuka continue their journey. The *yoten* put their sleeves back on (they were off for *tachimawari*).

Shizuka and Tadanobu pose stage center, with Shizuka standing to the left of stage center and Tadanobu kneeling stage center.

The chanters sing that Shizuka and Tadanobu will continue their journey to the village to join Yoshitsune.

Shizuka slowly goes left towards the *hanamichi*.

Tadanobu, following behind her, turns and reveals his "foxy" nature through special hand movements and a hopping step. He stops and bows by the *geza*.

Drum beats are heard.

Shizuka begins her exit on the *hanamichi*. She stops at the 7/3, and dances slowly. She turns, raises her green gauze hat to shade her face, leans backward and poses gazing up, and then raises it again and peers under it.

While audience attention is diverted by Shizuka at the 7/3, Tadanobu goes back to stage center and kneels, and a cherry blossom scenery flat is put in front of the seven musicians seated on stage right.

At dramatic drum beats, followed by flute music and singers from the *geza*, Shizuka gazes up. She puts her staff down, holds the hat in one hand and poses toward the stage, and then goes in a full circle with her arms rounded away from her side.

Shizuka exits down the *hanamichi* in the same slow, synchronized movement as marked her entrance at the beginning of this scene; one arm, in rounded circular movement, synchronized with opposite foot. Feet and opposite arms move up and down simultaneously. In this manner, Shizuka goes slowly off the stage in gliding steps, moving the silver staff rhythmically up and down.

After Shizuka has exited, simultaneously the *yuka* curtain is closed, flower petals fall, and the stage is dimmed.

Tadanobu is alone stage center.

**"Exit Outside The Curtain" (*maku soto hikkom*)**

The kabuki curtain is drawn back to reveal five shamisen players wearing pink kimono on the right of the stage. The panels/flats have been removed.

The atmosphere is heightened as additional petals fall softly from the sky (actually from the top of the proscenium arch).

***Hikinuki* Sequence**

Tadanobu is teased by one butterfly at the end of a long pole which is manipulated by a *kōken*. It flutters around him, and he dances chasing it. The mood changes to one of agitation.

Accompanied by the beating of a drum at the end of the *hanamichi* by the *agemaku*, Tadanobu dances in frenzied motion after the butterfly.

Tadanobu's true identity is revealed through a quick change technique (*hikinuki*) as lights go up. This dramatic technique, revealing a whole new costume, is used to reveal a character's true identity.

Threads in Tadanobu's costume are quickly pulled by the *kōken* and the costume falls down and is carried away by the *kōken*. Tadanobu is now wearing a completely new costume; an all white kimono with orange medallions in the fox flame pattern. In addition, his hair has come down and is hanging loosely about his shoulders.

A heavy shower of flower petals descends onto the stage simultaneously as the new appearance is revealed.

Music in a happy "foxy" tune emanates from the five shamisen on stage right, accompanied by the flute and drums in the *geza*, and a drum at the *agemaku* exit (three different sources of music).

Tadanobu dances at the top of the *hanamichi*, accompanied by the music.

Tadanobu stops at the 7/3 and then does a *mie*. Then Tadanobu jumps three times, leaps up and comes down in the famous prawn backbend pose (*ebizori*).

Tadanobu goes in a circle and then whirls around, going faster and faster, accompanied by the flute and shamisen music. Then, he leaps up and from the 7/3 goes back to the stage near the *hanamichi* for greater dramatic effect (ILLUSTRATION #10).

The music emanating from the three different sources crescendos.

Tadanobu goes back onto the *hanamichi*, and hops down the *hanamichi* in an exciting *kitsune roppō*, with special fox-like hand and arm movements. (This *roppō* is different from the *tobi roppō* seen ending the first scene).

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**SCENE III: KAWATSURA MANSION AT YOSHINO****Synopsis**

Yoshitsune has been compelled to seek refuge as a fugitive because of the enmity fostered by his brother, the shōgun Yoritomo. Yoshitsune is temporarily safe, having been granted refuge at the Yoshino mountain estate of his benefactor Kawatsura Hogen. Due to the perilous situation, Yoshitsune is elated when Satō Tadanobu, one of his loyal retainers, arrives in Yoshino to offer his support. However, Yoshitsune becomes suspicious and upset when Tadanobu states that he is ignorant of the whereabouts of Yoshitsune's beloved Shizuka, whom Yoshitsune contends he had entrusted to Tadanobu at Fushimi prior to his departure.

Tadanobu, speaking the truth, has neither been to Fushimi recently, nor been entrusted with Shizuka. The fact is that Yoshitsune placed Shizuka under the protection of an imposter, who is in reality a magical fox masquerading as Yoshitsune's retainer Tadanobu. Ignorant of this verity, Yoshitsune persists that he had not only entrusted Shizuka to Tadanobu, but had also given him a prized suit of his own armor, and in addition, had given Shizuka the valuable Hatsune drum as well.

At that point, Shizuka arrives, excited to be reunited with Yoshitsune. She relates how she had been securely escorted throughout the long and arduous mountain journey by Tadanobu. However, she is astonished to discover that Tadanobu has already arrived at the mansion before her. Her



statement baffles Tadanobu who has not seen Shizuka for almost a year. Initially, Shizuka believes that Tadanobu is mocking her, but then she begins to remember specific peculiar occurrences during the trip pertaining to the Tadanobu who had escorted her. For example, there was his mysterious practice of vanishing at times, only to materialize as if from nowhere whenever she hit the drum Hatsune.

Yoshitsune, leery of the mysterious circumstances, commands Tadanobu held incarcerated in an adjacent chamber while Shizuka interrogates the other Tadanobu who escorted her to Yoshino and whose arrival has just been announced. When the second Tadanobu fails to appear, Yoshitsune tells Shizuka to beat the drum. He supplies her with a dagger and assures her that he will be close-by in the adjoining room. Shizuka takes out the drum and hits it, whereupon the other Tadanobu instantly materializes beside her. Shizuka, although surprised at this instant manifestation, fearlessly denounces him as an imposter.

Tadanobu-*kitsune* then remorsefully reveals his true story. He admits that he is in reality a fox and that the drum Hatsune is made from the hide of his parents. He relates that when his parents were seized and slaughtered, he was still too young to have fulfilled his filial duties, and he therefore regards his protection of the drum as a means of rendering his filial duty. Accordingly, when the drum is beat, he hears his parents' voices in the sound of the drum and is incapable of abandoning it.

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Shizuka is filled with sympathy upon hearing the fox's story. Yoshitsune, who has been listening in the adjacent chamber, is also filled with compassion and returns to express words of solace to the grieving fox. Yoshitsune bestows upon him the gift of the cherished drum, whereupon Tadanobu-*kitsune*, filled with happiness, dances blissfully holding it.

Unexpectedly, the drum commences to sound all by itself. Tadanobu-*kitsune* listens to its urgent message and reveals that his parents are warning them that a throng of evil priests are advancing up the mountains, in search of Yoshitsune. After using his supernatural power to vanquish the priests, the fox flies up into the sky, after pledging that in the future he will always be faithfully ready to protect them whenever necessary.

#### Cast

<i>Satō Tadanobu</i>	Ennosuke
<i>Tadanobu the fox</i>	Ennosuke
<i>Yoshitsune</i>	Monnosuke
<i>Kamei Rokurō</i>	Shinjiō
<i>Saruga Jirō</i>	Ukon
<i>Kawatsura Hogen</i>	Roen
<i>Asuka</i>	Takesaburō
<i>Shizuka</i>	Tamasaburō

**Stage Setting**

Red lantern lights are now on over the Japanese seats and at the second and third floor balconies. Over these lanterns hang branches of red leaves. The house is now dim, darker than the stage.

The kabuki curtain, which was closed, is now pulled open. A beautiful and spectacular stage setting shows an exterior view of Kawatsura Hogan's home. An elegant mansion with a large, ebony veranda trimmed with gold faces the audience. Nine long silk cloths in different colors hang from the top of an entryway stage center. Slightly to the right of this entryway is a flight of stairs. The large free-standing cherry tree that was stage center in the previous scene has been moved to the right of the window of the mansion at the end of the veranda. There are pink blossoms only on the top of the tree. (In the previous scene, the cherry tree was in full bloom, but in the mountains the trees bloom a little later and all the buds have not opened yet). There is a bamboo wall at the far right. A brilliant panorama of green hills are dotted with pink-blossoming cherry trees and pine trees, and a mountain stream meanders to the left of the mansion. Free-standing wood lattice slats cover the water. There are four flats painted with colorful flowers and shrubs on each side of the steps.

**As The Curtain Opens**

On the veranda of his mansion, Kawatsura Hogan and his wife, an older couple of high rank, are engaged in conversation. Hogan is seated

stage center and his wife is to the left, leaning towards him. (The woman sits to the left of her husband in any formal scene.)

**Hogan's Appearance:** His white face is comparatively darker than Yoshitsune's stark white face. Hogan has gray hair which indicates his advancing years. He is wearing an austere black kimono with a decorative gold design.

**Wife's Appearance:** Her face color is similar in shade to her husband's face, and she also has gray hair, which is pulled up in a simple neat style. She is wearing a very conservative black kimono with a gold pattern which is less decorative than her husband's.

Hogan and his wife discuss how the local priests are angry and hostile to Yoshitsune and his cause. They are concerned how they may best protect their Lord. Hogan is both visibly and aurally more animated than his wife during the discussion.

Hogan turns his body as two ladies-in-waiting in colorful pink kimono with red *obi* bring out floor cushions, which they place down on the veranda floor. Thereafter, they exit and then immediately return accompanied by Yoshitsune.

Hogan and his wife move over to the left to make way for Yoshitsune (who will sit in the more honored position on the right).

Yoshitsune enters and stands stage center. The ladies-in-waiting who entered with him leave. (This actor appears older and larger than Yoshitsune in the first scene.)

Hogan and his wife rise and exit to the left.

Yoshitsune is standing alone on the stage slightly right of stage center.

**Yoshitsune's Appearance:** Yoshitsune has a white face, which is whiter than Kawatsura Hogan's face. Yoshitsune is wearing a nobleman's leisure attire (*kariginu*) which has a brilliant orange stand-up collar, with cords knotted to suggest the stylized flowers on Buddhist altars. The stand-up collar and bright orange color can only be used for leisure outfits of the highest ranking personages. Graceful, trailing trousers are part of this outfit.

Yoshitsune sits down on a floor cushion, slightly right of stage center, which is in the center of the passageway to the left of the stairs. The stairs are placed right of the passageway to allow Shizuka to be stage center when she is at the center of stairs (as she sits to the left of Yoshitsune, she will be stage center).

The "real" Tadanobu enters on the *hanamichi* and bows.

**"Real" Tadanobu's Appearance:** He has a white face and is dressed in formal attire of black *hakama* decorated with the gold Genji cartwheel crest (*mon*), a white kimono under the *hakama*, a gold apron over the

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*hakama*, and long trailing trousers. Two swords are at his left side. This outfit is typical of the formal attire worn by the highest ranking lords.

At the 7/3, Tadanobu delivers a line and then comes on stage. He holds a fan with his right hand as he walks, his left hand holding the sword scabbard.

Yoshitsune sits on the veranda stage center, in front of the curtained entryway. Tadanobu sits on the ground level below, to the left of stage center. Both Yoshitsune and Tadanobu face the audience, although talking to each other (ILLUSTRATION #11).

Tadanobu kneels to the right of the steps, and sits down on the ground. He then takes his two swords out of the scabbard, puts them down on the ground and ties them with white cords to show his reverence and loyalty to his Lord. Immediately thereafter, he rises to his knees and does a *mie* facing the audience.

The chanters remark that everything about Tadanobu suggests dignity and service toward his Lord.

Eerie flute music accompanied by soft drum beats symbolize the supernatural and continues during Tadanobu's speech.

Yoshitsune, although visibly animated (more than the Yoshitsune in the first scene), especially with noticeable head movement, still maintains a dignified and formal manner. (Aside from the particular situation, the

difference in demeanor from the first scene is also due to the fact that this is a different cast, with the "stars" now playing the leading parts.)

Yoshitsune inquires about the welfare of Shizuka. Although facing front, Yoshitsune turns his head only slightly and then leans forward towards Tadanobu.

Tadanobu replies that he has no knowledge concerning Shizuka. He is returning just now from the village of his mother, where he was recovering from a wound. Like Yoshitsune, he speaks in a very formal manner facing the audience.

Yoshitsune is staggered by Tadanobu's story and flies into a rage (not visibly; his voice is not louder than usual). He accuses Tadanobu of selling Shizuka into enemy hands and of being a traitor.

Yoshitsune calls his retainers to take Tadanobu and lock him up.

Two retainers run in to the left of Tadanobu.

**Retainers' Appearance:** One has a red face with no pate, just bushy "wild" barbarian style black hair, and is wearing a kelly green and gold tunic trimmed with orange trim, a red under-kimono which looks "puffed up", and yellow *tabi*. This costume is indicative of a feisty, hot-tempered type. (This retainer will be on the left of Yoshitsune.) In contrast, the other retainer with a reserved demeanor has a white face, samurai hairdo, and is elegantly attired in a black and gold outfit. (He will serve on the right of Yoshitsune.)

Tadanobu sits formally, with his hands outstretched upwards. He has no time to reply to the charges when the click of the *hanamichi* curtain (*agemaku*) is heard.

Shizuka appears on the *hanamichi*, hurrying with fast little steps to the 7/3; she is overjoyed to see Yoshitsune.

**Shizuka's Appearance:** She has a pure white face, black wig (*fukiwa*) and "Red Princess" (*akahime*) attire. She is not wearing any sandals or thongs (*zōri*), only white socks (*tabi*). A yellow scarf is tied around her kimono.

Shizuka, stopping at the 7/3, says she is delighted to see her lover. She carries with her the treasured drum given to her by Yoshitsune.

Shizuka quickly hurries to the stage and up the steps, placing the drum, which is wrapped in purple silk, down stage center next to Yoshitsune. Shizuka sits down to the left of Yoshitsune, with the drum between them. (The drum is usually stage center throughout the scene.)

"Tadanobu just left me to come on ahead"; Shizuka explains.

Shizuka now notices Tadanobu's presence. "Ah Tadanobu, there you are, you made good time!"; Shizuka says that she is surprised to see that Tadanobu arrived before her.

Tadanobu, bewildered, repeats to Yoshitsune that he has not seen Shizuka before this moment.



"You must be joking, we have been together for months," Shizuka holds out the fan, pointing it towards him.

Shizuka puts her head down, holds the fan with her right hand and confides to Yoshitsune; "He just left me."

Yoshitsune explains the situation to Shizuka and asks her to take a good, long look at Tadanobu.

Shizuka rises and goes over to the railing to look at Tadanobu.

Yoshitsune orders Tadanobu to submit to her scrutiny.

Tadanobu agrees to submit to this scrutiny. He rises and poses with his arms out, hands inside sleeves, still facing the audience.

Shizuka is above Tadanobu on the veranda, to his right. She is on her knees (she seems very tall). She rises, taps twice with her red tasseled fan on the railing of the veranda, and looks at him.

Shizuka now kneels to the left of Yoshitsune.

Speaking to Yoshitsune, Shizuka says: "This is not the man who accompanied me. Although he resembles him, his dress and demeanor are entirely different."

Shizuka continues that throughout their long journey, it was Tadanobu who protected her. She had only to beat on the drum Hatsune and Tadanobu would materialize and be at her side.

Shizuka goes up on her knees: "Indeed, he seemed to be enchanted by the sound of the drum."

Shizuka suggests to Yoshitsune that she tap the drum now to solve the mystery.

Yoshitsune thinks this is a clever idea.

Yoshitsune orders Tadanobu removed and taken within, but as the retainers are about to take Tadanobu, a click is heard from the *hanamichi* curtain (*agemaku*).

However, no one enters on the *hanamichi*. Instead, two retainers run in from the right of the stage (to the surprise of the audience). Clappers (*tsuke*) accompany the movements of the retainers.

Another click is heard from the *agemaku*. This time there is someone there. A messenger on the *hanamichi* announces that a second Tadanobu has just arrived.

Alarmed at this news, Tadanobu unties the sword cord from around his swords to meet with his own life for whatever danger awaits his Lord Yoshitsune.

"His loyalty is apparent by this gesture"; remark the chanters.

"But where is this second Tadanobu and who saw him since Shizuka came in?" Yoshitsune inquires. He dispatches his retainers to intercept this new arrival.

The formal retainer to the right of Yoshitsune remains almost static, while the other red-faced retainer is visibly agitated and stomps off the

*hanamichi*, pauses at 7/3, and then continues marching off the *hanamichi* with *aragoto*-style high, vigorous steps.

The red-face retainer comes running back with high fast steps onto the stage from the *hanamichi* and says he cannot find another Tadanobu. Flute and drums accompany his footsteps from the *hanamichi* to the stage. He bows, goes to stage left, turns his back to the audience, kneels while he adjusts his robe, and then turns around facing the audience.

Tadanobu rises, turns his back to the audience and bows to his Lord. This noble and faithful subject will not be "taken" by the retainers, but goes freely of his own accord. With graceful dance movements, his long pants trailing behind him, Tadanobu is escorted by two retainers. At stage center, the three pose, Tadanobu turns proudly and does a *mie* with his sword in both hands in front of him.

After the *mie*, the three pose in unison, then simultaneously all lift their feet and turn with their backs to the audience. They turn around again to face the audience and take two more steps towards the audience. Tadanobu turns right to go off-stage, he pauses a few moments (*ma*) facing the audience, and then slowly goes off with the others through a draw-curtain exit in the bamboo wall under the *yuka*.

Music is heard from both the flute and the drums in the *geza* and the chanters in the *yuka* as they exit.

Yoshitsune and Shizuka are left alone on the veranda.

The *yuka* shade goes down and a chanter sings behind the shade.

Yoshitsune instructs Shizuka to beat the drum. He will be listening nearby if needed, within the mansion. He hands her a small sword-dagger.

"Lord, I understand and will obey," says Shizuka, bowing humbly after being handed the sword.

Yoshitsune rises and exits through the curtained entryway to the mansion.

Shizuka, who was kneeling, now stands. The drop curtain blind goes down on the veranda to cover her (it is similar to a bamboo roll-up blind).

### ***Danmari* Sequence**

Six ladies-in-waiting holding lanterns enter on stage.

**Ladies-in-waiting's Appearance:** They have white faces and are wearing purple kimono with red trim at the sleeves and white trim at the hems. Black *obi* have black bows tied on the diagonal in back. White *tabi* and white wood clogs with a high platform (*geta*) complete the outfit. Each lady is holding a glowing lantern in her right hand and lifting her kimono up with her left hand. (The lanterns are lit by batteries.)

In accompaniment to an eerie melody, the ladies-in-waiting weave in and out on a diagonal between each other, after kneeling in a group stage center for a discussion about the dangers of night (even though it is night, the stage lights are not dimmed, only the house lights, and the same daytime landscape backdrops are retained).

Three ladies in front inspect upstage, then turn and go opposite as they cross over diagonally and inspect downstage, and then vice versa.

Then all six ladies meet in a line straight across the stage facing the audience. Each lady speaks a line individually, in turn, and then they all speak the last word in unison (this type of speech pattern is known as *watari zerifu*).

The lighting of lamps is emphasized, as "strange things happen during the night," and the ladies "promise to be vigilant at their post."

After they say the last word together, the choreography resumes as they weave slowly back and forth and spread their lanterns to illuminate the darkness. The ladies-in-waiting weave in and out, three in front and three in back, across the stage as they exit.

This *danmari* passage, with its accompanying theme of "darkness," sets the mood for the audience, and acts as a transition from one part to the next. It also gives the main actors a "breathing space."

The *yuka* straw blind, which was down, goes up. The main chanter, Tadeyu Takemoto Otakedae, accompanied by one shamisen player, sings an emotional song about love and duty. They will continue throughout the next portion of the scene (there are no musicians downstairs on this set as yet).

The lights are turned up again in the red lanterns over the Japanese seats and second and third balconies, illuminating the red branches above them. However, the other house lights remain dimmed.

The mansion's large shade goes up and Shizuka is on the stage alone stage center holding the drum. Yoshitsune's shadow in profile can be noticed on the center curtain panel behind the entryway.

Shizuka unwraps the purple cloth from around the drum, and does an intricate twist with its cords after it is unwrapped. Shizuka breathes on the drum to soften the skins before playing, to put it into tune.

The beautiful drum is embroidered with a metallic silver and gold design and has bright orange cords. It serves as a focal point.

Shizuka looks around and rises to her knees stage center and taps the drum, which is echoed by a drum off-stage (off-stage drum rolls prepare the audience for a supernatural occurrence).

Shizuka hits the drum again three times, turns it and hits it again.

Shizuka stands up, goes to the left and back to stage center where she turns her back to the audience and looks around.

Then Shizuka goes around in a circle, hits the drum six or seven times progressively faster, looks around, and goes across the veranda back and forth.

Off-stage drum beats are followed by the sound of the *agemaku* being opened for an entrance.

Expectantly, Shizuka, as well as the audience, turns to look towards the *hanamichi*.

Surprisingly, instead of via the *hanamichi*, Tadanobu Kitsune appears to have ascended through the stairs on the veranda (trap in stairs).

Tadanobu is now more of a fox in man's clothing, with a totally different demeanor in costume and voice from his last appearance. (Ennosuke developed this special "foxy" voice as his *kata*. It is extremely difficult to do it while also expending physical energy, such as the acrobatic maneuvers which will accompany the next part of the scene.)

**Tadanobu's Appearance:** He has the same white face, but now he has long black hair hanging down neatly, with little white ears sticking up through it. He is wearing a light lilac top trimmed in dark purple extending to his knees with a purple apron over it, a light blue under-kimono, and long trailing white pants trimmed in purple at the top (trailing pants are very difficult to hop around in).

*Chobo* musicians are singing and playing throughout this entire sequence.

Shizuka says that Yoshitsune is waiting and invites Tadanobu to come up.

Tadanobu, his hands covered, bows.

Shizuka, standing, continues to tap the drum. This is accompanied by drumbeats from the *geza*.

Tadanobu gestures towards the sound and hops to the left of the stairs. He then hops over to the center of the stairs, and onto the veranda to the left of Shizuka with three equal hops, his long pant legs cascading behind him.

As Shizuka stands forebodingly, Tadanobu hesitates. Shizuka, stage center, puts the drum down, takes out the dagger and slashes at Tadanobu. Shizuka attempts to laugh the matter off, as she points the dagger towards him. She laughs affectedly seven even times: "ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!"

Shizuka accuses Tadanobu of being an imposter, and slashes at him. Then, she puts down the dagger, picks up the drum and swings at him with it.

Tadanobu grabs her hand and takes the drum away from her.

Shizuka gets the dagger and there is a scuffle with it. Tadanobu catches her hand and snatches it from her. He goes left and bows low on his hands, profile to audience, with his back to Shizuka. Then, he turns and does a *mie* towards the audience following a drum roll.

Shizuka takes the dagger and as she is about to strike again, Tadanobu leans backwards over the steps, his long pants trailing down the steps. Shizuka is standing over him holding the dagger. Tadanobu is in the famous prawn pose (*ebi-zori*) of bunraku (ILLUSTRATION #12).



Tadanobu goes back upon the veranda and gets the drum. Shizuka's back is to the audience as she stands with the dagger in her right hand.

As Shizuka rises with the dagger, Tadanobu goes through the veranda trap, hops up to the narrow railing and walks on the railing back to the left of the stairs.

Tadanobu rises, holds out his left hand, hops down the steps, and goes left on the ground. Then, he hops back over the railing onto the left side of the veranda. A shrill flute accompanies this amazing maneuver.

Tadanobu rolls the drum with his hands, holds it up, and while kneeling pays obeisance to the drum which is stage center.

Tadanobu, facing the audience, puts the drum down stage center, bows and sadly says that he will tell his story. He relates his tale in a special "foxy" voice and also through the chanter's. (Shizuka has her back turned 3/4 to the audience during his delivery, and is to the right of the stairs.)

Tadanobu dances to the chanter's emotional rendering of this section.

Shizuka reaches out and rolls the drum to Tadanobu who picks it up and puts it to his cheek. Tadanobu raises it and comes stage center but he does not want to let go of it.

Tadanobu finally puts the drum down stage center near Shizuka, and as he is about to go down the steps, on the left side, he pauses, and leans

backward and flips over the railing, while the flute and drums play. Then, the music stops.

Shizuka sits with her back to audience, almost 3/4 turned from audience, on veranda to the right of the stairs.

Tadanobu is facing the audience. He sadly and emotionally tells his tale in his special "foxy" voice.

"Many years ago, there was a drought, and the farmers wanted to propitiate the rain god. Two foxes, male and female, had one thousand years of karma accumulated. The farmers trapped the foxes and made a drum out of their skins and magically the rains came."

Drums produce the sound of rain.

"It is this drum, now in your possession, that are my parents, and I am their child." Tadanobu bows; his manner is pitiful and adorable at the same time.

Shizuka is amazed. On her knees, she turns to face the audience.

Pointing the knife towards the left, Shizuka gasps: "You are a fox?"

High shrill flute music pierces the air with accompaniment by the drums at this revelation.

Tadanobu slides down through the left side of the veranda and out (through the trap in the veranda) and returns almost instantly under it in an entirely different costume which represents his "true" fox form (ILLUSTRATION #13).

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**Tadanobu's Appearance:** He has the same white face, but his hair is hanging down differently, and he is in an all white "shaggy" outfit with long silk threads (ILLUSTRATION #13).

Tadanobu is to the left of the stairs.

"I am called a beast for sins in a past life, but why can't I know filial devotion?"

Tadanobu's story is first told by him in words and then sung by the chanters while he mimes it. This long passage is executed in a very emotional manner. (From the audience's continuous reaction of alternately crying and clapping, this seems to be their favorite passage.)

Shizuka is now turned 3/4 away from the audience, in profile.

"I grew up alone in the forest. Birds pushed out from their nest must learn to fly." Tadanobu makes a motion like a bird flying and then goes down towards the audience.

Tadanobu speaks and cries slowly in a special "foxy" voice, miming the narration.

Tadanobu relates his childhood; growing up an orphan (holds his arms to rock a baby) without knowledge and guidance from his family.

He went searching (he scampers around fox-like) for the drum, seeking to protect it (he twirls back and cries with his hand to his eyes).

Through the drum, he can listen to his parents speaking to him (he waves his little paws at the drum, as he says "mama...daddy"). Only in this

way could he show his filial piety (he puts his paws to the floor bowing). He laments his fate at being a fox.

He goes behind the railing and stands shaking, hits his paws together and motions to the drum with wavering paws, and goes back and poses in prayer.

Intermittently while relating his story, the little fox sobs, then while crying, he resumes the same position towards the audience, stage center with his paws down.

Tadanobu hops onto the railing and walks on it with little fox-like steps. He jumps back down, puts his paws to the ground and cries facing the audience in an extremely emotional manner, and bows.

Calling out for his mama: "Haha," crying more and more.

"Called a fox for sins in a past life"; he weeps, back and forth on his "haunches" with his "paws" up.

Tadanobu takes his leave full of sorrow because he cannot bear to leave his parents (the drum) behind and does an *ebizori* pose in front of Shizuka and Yoshitsune, waving his little paws in a circular motion above him (ILLUSTRATION #14).

Tadanobu gets on his knees in a prayer position and weeps, holding his little paws before his face.

But now his parents' voices tell him to go home, for his actions have brought shame and suspicion to the real Tadanobu.

Tadanobu apologizes for having brought trouble to the real Tadanobu. He hopes that he will be forgiven.

Tadanobu waves "byby" to the drum with his little paw hands, and starts to leave.

But the little fox cannot bear to be separated from his parents and he turns and jumps onto the veranda railing and walks on his little paw feet to the end of the banister and jumps down: "We have been together for four seasons," he explains.

"Shizuka-sama, please hear my heart and forgive me," Tadanobu pleads. To the left of the bottom stair, he cries his heart out, covering his face with his paw hands.

Then, to a shrill flute sound, he whirls quickly around and around on one knee and falls down on the ground with the side of his body, back to the audience and wails in anguished sobs, his whole body racking back and forth in a wrenching motion. (The audience loudly applauds this fabulous sequence.)

Tadanobu still cannot bear to leave the drum behind.

Tadanobu does a "foxy" walk on the veranda railing: left, right, and then back to the left, where he wails near the *geza*. Then, with his back to the audience, he looks back at the drum stage center, and goes down weeping. This action is repeated three times.

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Tadanobu hits his knee with both paws, one after another (a moment of resolve). He hops back to the stairs, then hops down them while weeping, and hurries off to the left, next to the *geza*.

Slowly, he turns around with his back to the audience, longingly looks at the drum one last time, and cries.

Suddenly, a shrill flute pierces the air, and Tadanobu leaps through the *geza* to the simultaneous accompaniment of drums and flute (there is a trap below the *geza* window).

Shizuka, who has been sitting quietly the whole time, is moved by the little fox's story. She rises and puts the dagger in the scabbard and goes left of the drum and at stage center calls to Yoshitsune: "Lord, did you hear?"

Yoshitsune comes out from behind the entryway curtain, where he had been listening to the entire story. He looks at Shizuka, who is sitting above the flight of steps. Yoshitsune is standing.

Sympathetically, Yoshitsune says that the fox's feeling is the same as any human's.

Yoshitsune sits on a tall bench, which a *kōken* places behind him. Yoshitsune asks Shizuka to strike the drum. She goes to the left of the stairs and taps it, but no sound emerges. The drum is silent as the parents weep for the loss of their child.

The "real" Tadanobu, who has been listening at the window of the mansion, just to the left of the cherry tree, is also touched by the fox's story. He can be seen in shadow, behind the *shōji* in the mansion.

Shizuka puts the drum down, at the top of the center of the stairs.

Yoshitsune is at the center of the entryway. He compares his own fate to that of the fox; both have been orphaned. Yoshitsune relates how his older brother, who was like a parent and raised him, now pursues him. Yoshitsune is speaking emotionally, but his formal posture is static, and he only raises the fan with his hand at the end of the speech (as a gesture of weeping).

Yoshitsune, Shizuka and the "real" Tadanobu (who is seen at the window) all weep with subdued gestures.

Yoshitsune announces that he will give the drum to the fox.

The audience is happy and applauds his generosity.

The "real" Tadanobu, who is seen at the window, slowly closes the *shōji*, and within seconds Tadanobu the fox tumbles down through the roof (through a trap) above the veranda (Ennosuke is playing both Tadanobu characters).

With this happy news, the fox comes falling through the opening in the ceiling portico, flips backward onto the stage, and slides exuberantly on his knees facing the audience. Tadanobu raises his hands, goes on his

knees, faces the audience, and bows low with his hands touching the floor. He rises to a happy "foxy" tune on the shamisen.

Yoshitsune bestows upon him the name of Genkurō and presents him with the drum. The fox faces the audience with the drum, overcome with joy and smiling. He bows toward the audience with his hands touching the ground. Still on his knees, he gets the drum (handed from Yoshitsune to the retainer to him) and hugs it.

A happy "foxy" tune is played by two shamisen in the *yuka* and drums at the *geza*.

The fox does a happy dance with the drum, rolling it back and forth on the floor.

The fox then hangs it on the railing post, at the bottom of the stairs.

The drum begins to sound by itself, as a warning, because wicked priests from a nearby village are planning to attack this very night.

But they are not to worry; Genkurō the fox will be there to help them.

During the following *tachimawari*, Shizuka and Yoshitsune stand almost motionless, but Shizuka does turn her head slightly a few times. Then, at one point during the beginning of the *tachimawari*, they exit off-stage.

Six "naughty" warrior-priests, in mousey gray outfits with flouncing caps, prance along the *hanamichi* with spears in their hands as they dance



in time to "pied-piper" flutes. They dance from the *hanamichi* onto the stage.

"Don't worry," says Genkurō and puts down the top of his shaggy fox costume (with help from *kurogo*) to expose an elegant white kimono with gold and orange fox-flame medallions. He waves his right hand.

### ***Tachimawari* Sequence**

The humorous *tachimawari* which follows is punctuated by poses and *mie*, in rhythm to a special "naughty priest tune" on the flute and drum from the *geza* and two shamisen in the *yuka*, but mostly the "pied piper" sounding flutes. *Tsuke* are added for punctuation towards the end.

During this sequence, the priests are manipulated like puppets by the fox's magical power.

Genkurō first waves his left paw and then his right paw and then his left (each hand snaps back towards the arm and then down).

Genkurō and the priests "fight" each other in a lively and humorous *tachimawari*.

Genkurō waves at the priests from a panel under the cherry tree.

Then Genkurō goes behind a bush near the window stage right, and hops on top of the bush and waves. First, he waves his right paw twice at them, then he waves the left one once. Tadanobu manipulates the priests with these special hand motions set to the rhythm of lively music. There are

coordinated beats and motions of long-long-short, pause (*ma*), long-long-short. These movements are repeated throughout this sequence.

Genkurō climbs on the shoulders of three priests, two on the left and one on the right (asymmetrical balance). Then, he gets on the shoulders of two priests, moves right and does "foxy" hand motions to the beat of the tune. He waves his arms, two waves with each paw faster and faster, and then he jumps through the right veranda (trap).

Immediately thereafter, he comes up through the *suppon* (*hanamichi* trap) onto the stage and does a *mie* between the six priests stage center. Three priests are on each side of him (symmetrical balance).

Genkurō takes the drum in his hands stage center and bids his friends farewell, going off to the left just as the naughty priests rush to capture him.

(While the priests huddle around Genkurō on the *hanamichi* at the 7/3, wires are attached to Genkurō's special harness which is hooked to a cable connected to the auditorium ceiling).

Just in the nick of time, Genkurō zooms up from the *hanamichi* and flies through the air (*chūnorī*) holding the drum. He flies up and down and then up again through the sky, dancing joyously while kicking his feet in the air to the accompaniment of happy bells, flute and clappers (ILLUSTRATION #15).

The fox "flies" over the audience to the top fourth-floor balcony (into a small house-type structure that was built there specifically for this performance).

The audience is thrilled by this feat and applauds loudly throughout the entire *chūnori*.

A stage curtain (not the tri-color kabuki curtain) comes down.

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#### **SCENE IV: INNER GARDEN OF MANSION**

##### **Synopsis**

The Heike leader Noritsune, disguised as the priest Kakukan in a black hooded robe, is seen approaching Kawatsura Hogan's mansion with plans to attack it, having discovered that Hogan is allegedly hiding Yoshitsune there. However, Noritsune is hindered in his advancement by an assembly of foxes that keep pestering him in spite of his attempts to purge them. After he ousts them, Noritsune is encircled by Yoshitsune's faithful supporters including Benkei who confronts him and exposes him as the enemy Noritsune.

Noritsune continues in his attempt to disguise himself as the priest Kakukan, but he ultimately comes to the conclusion that it is impossible to continue the charade and acknowledges his true identity, explaining that he survived the decisive sea battle of Dannoura because he was an excellent swimmer. Profiting from the fact that both allies and enemies

acknowledged his demise in the conflict, he has been waiting for the chance to apprehend Yoshitsune who had been in charge of vanquishing the Heike.

Whereas Yoshitsune's retainers outnumber Noritsune and could obviously slay him, they advise Noritsune that under Yoshitsune's directive he will be permitted to retreat unharmed at this time. In the near future, they are to convene again in a formal duel at a specified location amid the cherry blossoms of Yoshino. This will allow Tadanobu a chance to strike at Noritsune under honorable conditions, in retaliation for the murder of Tadanobu's brother Tsuginobu, who had saved Yoshitsune's life by hurling himself in the path of an arrow shot by Noritsune, meant for Yoshitsune.

#### Cast

<i>Satō Tadanobu</i>	Ennosuke
<i>Yoshitsune</i>	Monnosuke
<i>Benkei</i>	Yajurō
<i>Kamei Rokurō</i>	Shinjirō
<i>Kataoka Hachirō</i>	Kikaku
<i>Ise Saburō</i>	Enya
<i>Suruga Jirō</i>	Ukon
<i>Noritsune</i>	Danshirō
<i>Shizuka</i>	Tamasaburō

**Stage Setting**

The kabuki curtain is not evident; in its place is a straw curtain.

From the *geza*, an eerie melody is being played on the shamisen.

As the house lights are dimmed, the straw curtain is drawn to the left (instead of to the right as with the kabuki curtain) revealing an outdoor night scene. Even though it is somewhat dark, flowering cherry trees can be dimly seen in the landscape.

**As The Curtain Opens**

Four ladies-in-waiting with glowing lanterns enter on the *hanamichi*.

Kawatsura Hogan and his wife also enter on the *hanamichi* and stop at the 7/3.

**Kawatsura Hogan's Appearance:** He has the same dark white face and gray hair. This time, he is wearing a kimono that has a brownish-gold top and a beige bottom, a white under-kimono that shows above the other kimono at the collar line, and long trailing pants.

**Wife's Appearance:** She has the same dark white face and gray hair and is wearing a conservative dark purple kimono with a white under-kimono.

**Tachimawari Sequence**

Four villains approach from the stage towards Hogan and his wife, who are on the *hanamichi*.

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Kawatsura Hogan and his wife *mie* stage center with two villains on each side of them, and promise "to defend Lord Yoshitsune to the end." Hogan is standing at the left and his wife is kneeling beside him; they all pose, husband and wife *mie*, and the ladies-in-waiting hurry off-stage right.

A short *tachimawari* sequence follows with Kawatsura Hogan and his wife and two of the villains.

Thereafter, two little foxes come onto the *hanamichi*, stop at the 7/3 and motion towards the stage to Hogan and his wife. Following the foxes' suggestion, Hogan and his wife run onto the stage and exit right. The two foxes remain to fight the two villain who are wearing green and wine-brown with white hoods. Two additional villains are seen from each side.

Lights dim again, revealing a divided curtain which is drawn forward, dropped and then carried off left by *kurogo*, to expose a black curtain (indicating the darkness of night and deception). A single pink flowering cherry tree is stage center, and there is a brown fence below the black curtain.

Noritsune, disguised as Kakukan the priest in a hooded outfit, fights with the foxes.

**Noritsune's Appearance:** He is wearing a gold hooded cape with a black robe.

All of the foxes, as well as Noritsune, have halberd poles with blades. One white fox hovers over him; drum beats. Noritsune is left of the tree

stage center. The foxes go off the *hanamichi*, except for one fox who goes down through the *suppon* (*hanamichi* trap).

The children of the kabuki actors are playing the characters of the little foxes.

Noritsune, standing at the 7/3, demands Yoshitsune's head and then fights with two little foxes on the *hanamichi*. These foxes are offered assistance by a group of white foxes, and they hurry off-stage.

Noritsune, still in disguise as the priest, wonders where all the foxes came from, and why they are hindering his attack.

Noritsune goes back on stage to the left of the tree, and tries to finish a blow on a fat little fox, but just as he is about to reach for him, the fox disappears through the *suppon*.

The bamboo screen comes down over the *yuka* window.

Loud clappers.

A loud voice is heard from the *agemaku*, joined by additional voices backstage, which stops Noritsune, who is now on stage in front of the cherry tree.

Benkei enters on the *hanamichi*, stops at the 7/3, and does a *mie*.

**Benkei's Appearance:** He has the usual black bushy wig and is wearing a red undergarment with a gold metallic outer top, a red ascot, and long trailing black pants.

Noritsune's four barbarian-looking retainers enter from stage right, go to the left of the stage and *mie*.

**Barbarian-looking Retainers' Appearance:** They are wearing Chinese barbarian style outfits; one retainer with a red face has long feathers tucked into his headgear and is wearing a red trimmed top and pants. He has two strange long white ears (like a rabbit) sticking out in back of him. Another is in a purple, burgundy and dark blue-violet outfit, and another is wearing an outfit in brown with red trim.

Noritsune confronts Benkei, and they do a short *tachimawari* on the *hanamichi*. Noritsune maintains his disguise.

Then Noritsune and Benkei go onto the stage, joining the four barbarian-looking retainers.

After the *tachimawari*, Noritsune's true identity is revealed by a type of quick costume change (*bukkaeri*).

### ***Bukkaeri* Sequence**

*Kurogo*, who is behind Noritsune with back to audience, now turns around and takes the halberd, unties the threads to pull the garment off to the waist, simultaneously with the hood. The top of the kimono, which just came down, is then held up in back of Noritsune by the *kurogo* behind him, and Noritsune appearance is completely changed with a different kimono and a new wig.



Simultaneously, with this *bukkaeri*, the black curtain (signifying night) is dropped, and the lights go up both on stage and in the auditorium, revealing on stage bright pink-blossoming cherry trees amidst a rolling green hillside with pine trees. Long strands of pink cherry blossoms hang from the top of the proscenium. There is a symbolic correlation between light and truth, as opposed to "being in the dark" and being deceived. A person's true identity "comes to light" through this coordinated change of costume, scenery and lighting.

Noritsune relates how he only pretended to drown himself so he could avenge himself latter.

Benkei and Noritsune agree to settle peaceably and head for Zaōdō Temple. Noritsune strides off the *hanamichi* in big, forceful *aragoto* steps. Benkei goes off to the right of the stage behind the four retainers; Stomp stomp stomp to clappers and then faster and faster.

Chanters: "Ah ah ah ah...."; as they stomp off.

### ***Danmari* Sequence**

Flutes in the *geza* play an eerie melody.

The following *danmari* is similar to the one in the previous scene but shorter.

Six ladies-in-waiting appear on stage with glowing lanterns.

**Ladies' Appearance:** They are wearing purple kimono trimmed with red bands at the hemline. Their faces are white with small red mouths.

White *tabi* and black *geta* complete the outfit. Each carries a lantern with a red light.

The ladies spread their glowing lanterns about as they do a slow *danmari*, weaving in and out.

They stop, with three women on each side of the stairs.

*Watari zerifu*; each lady speaks a line separately, then they all say the last word in unison.

The ladies-in-waiting exit off the stage.

A straw-patterned curtain comes down.

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## **SCENE V: BEFORE ZAŌDŌ HALL**

### **Synopsis**

At beautiful Zaōdō temple hall, Tadanobu is surveying Mt. Yoshino's renown flowering cherry trees while he waits for Noritsune to arrive for their duel. Some of Noritsune's allies, who are priests, advance to dishonorably strike at Tadanobu before the duel can take place, but they are defeated.

Thereafter, Tadanobu challenges Noritsune before Zaōdō Hall, asking for Noritsune's life in retaliation for his brother Tsuginobu's death. However, Noritsune asserts that before he can die, he must first search out the boy-emperor Antoku and under his banner regain control of the nation for the Heike. They commence a duel, but Noritsune is no equal for Tadanobu, who is assisted by the magical force of the fox Genkurō.

Just as Tadanobu is about to dispense the final blow to the fallen Noritsune, he is halted by Yoshitsune who arrives at the locale with his retainers, along with Antoku and Shizuka. Yoshitsune expresses that it is his wish for Antoku to be taken to Ohara to join his mother. She became a nun after the Heike defeat, since she is Noritsune's sister and of Heike blood. Antoku is to accept the vows for priesthood under his mother, as the surplice will protect him from any future danger.

Noritsune concedes to the proposed amnesty and agrees to escort the boy safely to Ohara. Yoshitsune and his retainers must leave quickly, as their appearance at the Kawatsura Mansion has become known to Yoritomo, and they are no longer secure there. Sadly, Shizuka must bid farewell to her lover Yoshitsune and return to the capital, chaperoned by the faithful Tadanobu. Valiantly, they embark on their different paths not knowing what the future will bring.

**Cast (no cast specified in program)**

**Stage Setting As The Straw-patterned Curtain Goes Up**

Simultaneously, to shrill flute and drum music which signifies the supernatural, the entire backstage lifts spectacularly revealing a brilliant new stage setting. This setting is dominated by an enormous Heian-style temple that is bright orange with a green tile roof, red and metallic gold decorations, and Chinese style paintings on red panels. The temple is surrounded by pink flowering cherry trees. Flats with "1000" pink

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flowering cherry trees are brought in by *kurogo* to cover the chanters on the right, and the *geza* on the left; four of these flats have slats for them to hear and see through. Two more flats of scenery are lowered from the ceiling. In addition, two additional tiers of extra long strands of cherry blossoms descend from the sky (that is, the top of the proscenium) to join the one tier already there.

Pink cherry blossoms delicately drift down from the sky (the top of the proscenium) as Tadanobu rises from the center of the temple floor stage center, through the trap in the floor of the stage. The audience applauds this spectacularly beautiful and dramatic entrance of the hero.

**Tadanobu's Appearance:** He has a bright white face; a blue cloth covers his pate. His kimono is purple and gold, and he has a tunic with yellow-gold fringe at the hemline. A big purple and white striped bow is tied in back, and a light aqua blue apron with tassels in front is tied around his hips. A light purple tassel hangs from the holder on the left handle of his sword. He is barefoot.

Tadanobu speaks directly to the audience: "Just as numerous as the cherry blossoms are the members of this audience," and he asks for their support in avenging the death of his brother Tsuginobu.

The audience applauds loudly showing their support.

Noritsune enters on the *hanamichi* and stops at the 7/3.

**Noritsune's Appearance:** He is in a Genghis Khan-style outfit (Mongolian conqueror, northern "barbarian" style), in various shades of red, green and orange, with long green mitt-styled gloves.

Shamisen music is heard coming from the *yuka*, which is closed.

Two villain wearing hoods come on stage to attack Tadanobu, but they are quelled by a magic power. Tadanobu does *mie* as the two go off right.

Tadanobu spies Noritsune on the *hanamichi* and calls out his revenge.

Noritsune, from the 7/3, throws one of his two swords off the stage right. The remaining one, which he will fight with, has no tassel.

Noritsune replies that he has his own ambitions. Antoku, the child Emperor is still alive and Noritsune will fight in his name.

Noritsune comes onto the stage and joins Tadanobu who is still stage center. They both *mie* and do a short *tachimawari*.

Noritsune goes off-stage right.

A spectacular *tachimawari* between Tadanobu and the *yoten* follows.

### ***Tachimawari* Sequence**

Noritsune's men enter on the *hanamichi* (twenty *yoten*, except for one performance when there were only eighteen *yoten*).

This long, super-acrobatic *tachimawari* is loudly accompanied by *tsuke*, drums and flute (to perk up a tired audience).

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The eighteen or twenty *yoten* stomp onto the stage to fight Tadanobu.

Loud sounds of clappers and drum pounding accompany the *tachimawari*.

The choreography is usually formal (symmetrical balance) with Tadanobu stage center and an even number of *yoten* on each side, but occasionally changes to asymmetrical formations at intervals for the sake of variety of design.

The *yoten* rush through the large entryway of the temple stage center and engage Tadanobu in a *tachimawari*.

Action is rapidly taking place.

Four *yoten* each catch baskets, then four more fall from the temple roof; one right after the other, not in unison.

Simultaneously, two other *yoten* do board flips on bright red benches.

Tadanobu climbs a tall ladder that is higher than the first balcony (over 20 feet) to the roof of the temple.

Four *yoten* with another ladder climb up and then fall backwards from the roof. Another comes down from the roof in a back flip and lands on his back (he has something on his back to protect him). This maneuver is accompanied by a loud sound effect "smack!" precisely at that instant when he hits the ground.

Tadanobu leaps down from the roof and somersaults, first over one *yoten*, then over two, then over three, and then over six *yoten*. All the while Tadanobu is wielding his sword about.

Then, Tadanobu runs to the 7/3, and raises a tall ladder reaching between the second and third balconies on the left side of the stage, with the help of the *yoten* (ILLUSTRATION #16).

One of the *yoten* quickly climbs up and then falls backward as Tadanobu, who has followed him up the ladder, wields a sword beneath him.

Tadanobu stays on the ladder, which the *yoten* then pick up and carry onto the stage. Tadanobu, clinging to the ladder, slips upside down and then up again as *yoten* flip it upside down and up again. (He seems glued to the ladder) (ILLUSTRATION #17).

A *yoten* then rushes onto the *hanamichi* and at the 7/3 hurls his sword high into the air towards another *yoten* on stage at stage center, who dexterously catches it by the handle.

Then, all of the *yoten* assembled leap, one at a time, over Tadanobu's sword while he is trying to strike at them. They run off the *hanamichi* followed by Tadanobu chasing them as he does a *roppō* with his sword raised.

Tadanobu chases all the *yoten* off-stage, and then goes off himself.

Almost immediately, Tadanobu returns dressed in a completely new outfit; a formal samurai attire with a white top and long black trailing pants, all of which are decorated with metallic gold Genji cartwheel *mon*.

Noritsune returns to the stage with all the little foxes chasing after him. The foxes fight off Noritsune. Noritsune waves a long pole with a mounted spear point (a halberd) at the foxes.

Cherry blossoms fall as Tadanobu who is stage center with his sword raised is about to finish off Noritsune.

"Wait (*matte!*)!": a shout is heard from off-stage right.

Yoshitsune, his retainers, and Shizuka come onto the stage. The red-faced retainer is carrying the child emperor Antoku, who is wearing a long feather in his hair. Shizuka has changed into a pink kimono with a yellow *obi*, with a big bow in front (even though she is still a "Red Princess"; also note that this is not the leading actor Tamasaburō).

Antoku is to take priestly orders and join his mother.

Tadanobu decides to spare Noritsune who will also take priestly orders and go with Antoku.

Shizuka and Tadanobu will seek shelter.

All the characters are facing the audience across the stage.

The red-faced retainer gives the child emperor to Noritsune.



While chanters say that Tandanobu stands for loyalty and trust, all move about, and a red dias is brought in by two *kurogo*, who then crouch behind it.

Noritsune, carrying the Emperor Antoku, goes up three steps onto the dias and assumes a pose at the top.

Chanters in the *geza* sing that each goes their own way, not knowing what the future will bring them.

All bid farewell. Everyone turns around in a circle and then, facing the audience, the characters assume their most characteristic pose in a panoramic tableau across the stage, and *mie* (ILLUSTRATION #18).

As everyone stands motionless, the lights in the red lanterns in the audience are turned on, cherry-blossom petals fall from the sky (the top of the proscenium), and the kabuki curtain is drawn closed.

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## CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

In the introduction, a basic hypothesis was introduced which provided a premise for further investigation: everything seen in kabuki performance is the result of a meaningful inner dynamic which expresses itself in a unified stage creation as a result of the coordination of its diverse components. The synthesis of these elements provides clues to the audience about the characters' identities and relates the message of the play. This process is conveyed visually through the various *kata*.

Furthermore, in the survey of the literature, persuasive justification was presented to support the basic hypothesis, although alternate arguments were also reviewed. I chose one play, *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, as an example to show how the performance elements coordinate to express the meaning of the play to the audience.

This chapter brings together the results of the investigations that have been detailed in the preceding chapters. Among the key issues examined were the historical circumstances which brought about the fixed forms of *kata* and reflected on their interpretation and expression, including: the tradition of conventions from real life which were adapted to the stage, conventions which originated on the kabuki stage, and cultural traits which reflected aesthetic preferences. All these issues directly affect *kata* which convey the meaning of the play.

The conventions of the kabuki theatre are largely governed by those that evolved from actual social discourse in Japanese society. Historically, certain relatively uniform aspects of appearance and decorum signified each social class, their position and privileges.

The Tokugawa government had decreed sumptuary laws which dictated every aspect of a person's appearance, as well as his lifestyle. Clothing apparel, makeup, and hair style indicated a social hierarchy, and strict codes of class conformity were reinforced through government edict. As a social instrument, appearance delineated role and reflected rank through mutually recognized conventions in the society.

While some conventions were invented specially for the kabuki stage, the majority of stage conventions are based on actual historical precedent. The character's total appearance defines his role within the performance, indicates his status, reflects his personality, and provides an identification with an ideology.

For example, Yoshitsune's total appearance identifies him as a dignitary of the highest rank. The orange cords on his *kariginu* are tied to resemble the knotted cords seen at Buddhist altars. From only this item, it can be determined that he identifies with Buddhist doctrine and holds the highest rank, since only dignitaries could wear this color. The personality of a character can usually be identified immediately upon sight. One of Yoshitsune's retainers has a total appearance consisting of

a red face, a bright red and green outfit, and rough bravado mannerisms, which indicates a hot-headed, feisty type of individual to the audience.

A character can be identified, as to his age, his class, his occupation, or his home origin by his total appearance which include his mannerisms. For instance, typically, Edo types demonstrate a rough bravado, while Kamigata types demonstrate a softer, more refined personality. On the stage, for theatrical effectiveness, these attributes are magnified.

Even before the character speaks, one can immediately decipher both the role and the psychology of the character's distinctive nature: this has already been defined and designed in the *kata*, and is part of kabuki's unique theatrical expression. Yoshitsune's page can be readily identified as young, due to his stark white face and his forelock which has not been shaved off yet. He also appears to be from an aristocratic Kyoto background as evidenced by his delicate, fine-tuned mannerisms.

A character's body language, consisting of his total movements and mannerisms, permits him to enact abstractions inadequately communicated by words alone, and also provides clues to both his personality and the plot of the story. This is especially well-evidenced in the portrayal of Tadanobu-*kitsune* throughout his metamorphosis from "real" man to "pure" fox.

An agreement on manners accompanied the ideology of each social class. Aristocrats, *daimyō*, or *chōnin* each had their particular code of

deportment which was recognized by the other levels of society. Proper decorum continued onto the kabuki stage, where accepted norms conveyed the expressions of various classes of society. The theatre mirrored society, albeit in a theatrical manner, and furthermore, provided a venue where the *chōnin* could learn about the upper classes of society.

Conventions adapted from real life emerged into distinctive styles of *kata*. Movements are governed by established *kata*, and mannerisms and gestures are rooted in basic cultural attitudes concerning status and sexuality. For instance, emotional expressions such as surprise, happiness, sadness, disgust, fear and anger are governed by the rules which dominated Edo society. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, when Shizuka laughs, she covers her mouth. When she cries, she covers her face with her hand or her fan. Proper decorum also required a high-class lady to walk discreetly with her knees together, and toes pointed inward, and this convention is also seen in Shizuka's characterization.

*Kata* help express the externalization of an emotion which words are incapable of expressing adequately. These emotions are conveyed through *kata* which present essential elements of reality. *Kata* are rendered stylistically, and although they have the power of immediate communication of the emotion to the audience, they do not reproduce the natural movement. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, all the main characters weep: Shizuka, Yoshitsune, Benkei, and Tadanobu-*kitsune*. Weeping is

designated by a rhythmical movement of the head and precise gestures of the hand, even though each character portrays the emotion differently. From Shizuka's delicate gestures to the excessive out-pouring cries of Benkei replete with wide arm movements, each person portrays a stylized pattern of head and hand motions in keeping with their characterization.

Messages may be conveyed visually which would be undesirable or distasteful to convey linguistically. One example of this would be the eroticism that is expressed through mime in the *michiyuki* scene where Tadanobu takes the place of Shizuka's lover. Watching the emotion expressed through body language can be more compelling and have more impact than words.

Action often provides more credibility than words can convey. When the "real" Tadanobu lays down his swords in a particular manner, it signifies that he is paying homage and showing loyalty to his lord. When Tadanobu goes to pick the swords up, at the news of the imposter, he is worried for his lord, and ready to meet with his own life if need be. He does not have to say a single word; his sentiments of duty and loyalty are clear by his actions. Any comment from him, such as "I am here to help," would be superfluous.

Mutually recognizable conventions of symbols, signs and rituals maintain social cohesiveness. There is a unification of the audience which mutually identifies aspects of Japanese culture. For instance, the Fushimi

Inari Shrine seen by the audience in the first scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* signifies common shared ritual patterns, both by overt message, when Yoshitsune and his *shitenrō* go there to pray before leaving, thereby showing their piety, and also by covert message, since this particular shrine is associated with the fox deity, and there is the Shinto recognition of a living spirit in all things. This symbolism is manifest in the meaning of the play which centers around a magical fox.

Another convention is *kamite* and *shimote*, signifying right and left facing the stage. *Kamite* is considered the superior position and main entrances and exits are always made from the left, usually via the *hanamichi*. The character who is seated on the right side of the stage is either someone of high rank, or a guest or representative of someone of high rank. Yoshitsune is always to the right of Shizuka and the other characters in the play. If someone changes positions during the course of a scene, then the other characters also have to change positions to accommodate the highest ranking personage.

Differentiation according to social status is also shown by the different levels created by a raised platform on stage, or by levels created from other devices. The difference of levels between the two figures literally symbolizes the higher position of the person who assumes it. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, each scene shows this protocol, as Yoshitsune is always seated higher than anyone else. A special tall bench, which only the

highest dignitaries may use, is provided whenever he wants to be seated.

Another convention is that an *onnagata* should not step out in front of an actor in a male role, but remain a pace behind. Other distinctions between right and left exist besides the *kamite* and *shimote* of the stage. Because the left is considered more honorable than right, from the actor's point of view, in all actions, a man always moves his left foot first, whereas a woman moves her right foot first. These transferred conventions from everyday life contributed to the stylized quality of kabuki.

Aesthetics evolved from real life, and became part of the various *kata* seen in kabuki performance. Pictorial beauty in kabuki includes all the visual *kata* comprising the *mise en scene* such as backdrops and stage sets, and the costumes, makeup, and wigs of the characters as well as their movement. Appearance *kata* which distinguish the character combine with scenery and large props, which complement the expressiveness of the performance. One of the primary considerations is the composition as a whole, and that the picture formed by the actor should be beautiful at all times. As a result, much attention is devoted to the total appearance of the actor and his background.

The beauty seen in kabuki was created by a unique aesthetic lineage gathered together from divergent elements, since kabuki was created from the aesthetics of the common people. The original meaning of kabuki pointed to an emotional state which exceeded the normal condition, and



pointed out appearance and behavior which were out of the ordinary. However, the common people, who suffered from government oppression and endured great difficulties, yearned for a world of freedom and admiration. Between the Momoyama and Azuchi era and the Edo period when Japan was unified, *kabukimono* appeared as admired personages.

Wearing the designated and approved apparel signified compliance with the norms of society mandated by the Tokugawa shogunate; to flaunt convention would signify symbolic rejection of society itself, which is exactly what the *kabukimono*, some *chōnin*, and kabuki actors tried to do. *Kabukimono* were "free agents" who did as they wanted, flaunting the restrictions of society. *Kabuki odori* expressed this feeling through the medium of theatre.

Eventually within the rules of Edo's feudalistic society, the people's dissatisfaction was permitted in only two places, namely the prostitutes' quarters and the world of *shibai*, and although they took forms separated from society, the aesthetics created in this world of outcasts reflected the beauty of kabuki.

Okuni catered to the desire for striking novel effects in costume, dance and subject matter. Her plays dealt with sensuous pleasures and the realm of the upper classes, as *chōnin* tried to penetrate the world of nobility from within their own restricted confines. *Chōnin* devised their own pleasures and tastes, and Edo actors created many innovations in

costumes and styles of various *kata*, which changed and progressed to accommodate the tastes of that audience.

The visual beauty created through this process produced a synthesis of diverse elements and exhibited "a strangely beautiful world both rough and fragrant." Kabuki in its escapist function, displayed lavishness, color and excitement combined with a sense of secret daring, like the forbidden scarlet silk lining a *chōnin*'s drab kimono.

Like the *chōnin*'s kimono, a dichotomy can be seen in kabuki: on one side, there is restraint, austerity, and simplicity, while on the other side, there is sumptuousness, dazzling colors, and multiplicity. Both extremes are presented and complement each other by their contrast. This idea can be seen not only in the total appearance of the different characters, but also in their mannerisms, stage decoration, music and sound effects; each *kata* is employed as part of an interrelated counterpoint which expresses the meaning of play.

Kabuki is a theatre of multi-faceted dimensions that has fixed *kata* covering all aspects of performance. While kabuki may appear disorganized with such a preponderance of different and seemingly discordant elements, in fact, it is extremely organized.

There is also a mixture of various aesthetic expressions and conventions: exaggerated and non-realistic *aragoto* styles, relatively realistic adaptations of styles worn by Edo society off-stage, various

costumes from noh and jōruri, and creations in costumes and scenery from other cultures, which combine together to create a sphere of visual beauty not found in other genre.

Kabuki performance displays a kaleidoscope of vividly changing patterns and colors that are strongly contrasted. Yet they all coordinate and harmonize with each other and provide great dramatic impact. The variety seen within *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* was created to satisfy a demand for diversity by *chōnin* over three hundred years ago.

The beauty and impermanence of an ever-changing nature is reflected throughout the performance and these aspects of nature are expressed visually, such as the ubiquitous cherry blossoms seen throughout the "Tadanobu Section" of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*. Although the cherry blossoms provide a dazzling beauty which serves as a backdrop for the characters, they also symbolize the Buddhist philosophy of the impermanence of life. The play centers around this theme, and the constant interplay of cherry blossoms in the various scenic backdrops reinforces the idea presented in the play that everyone, including actors and audience, is here for only a short duration.

The pursuit of perfection is an aesthetic aim in production. No detail is too trivial, as each thing contributes to the overall effect of the presentation. Each item has an inherent significance in the structure of the overall design and meaning of the performance. For example, in the

first scene which takes place in Kyoto, the cherry blossoms are in full bloom, but in the third scene, which takes place farther north, the cherry blossoms have not burst open yet, and only the buds are seen on the trees. This attention to detail permeates every aspect of production and every *kata* presented throughout the performance.

Some conventions seen in performance were created in kabuki, and do not exist outside the theatre. In *kata* such as *bukkaeri*, *hikinuki*, *hayagawari*, *danmari*, *keren*, *mie*, *roppō* and *tachimawari*, the movement and aural *kata* are not performed simultaneously in any characterization. Instead, there is silence on the part of the character during the actual movement sequence, and any vocalization is done either before or after the sequence, but not during it. The third scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* contains a *danmari* sequence which is comprised of a series of interrelated movement *kata* done in silent pantomime. When the ladies-in-waiting are involved in movement, in a choreography of asymmetrical weaving patterns, they do not talk. They engage in conversation only when they stop moving and are completely static.

A non-structural, non-realistic dimension of time and space exists in kabuki performance. Both are treated with free reign, to express the story or feelings of a character; time can even stand still, as in the *ma* pause. This duration of "empty" time or space allows an abstraction to be formulated by the audience. By suspending motion and sound, the viewer

or listener must complete the idea himself, and becomes part of the creative process. Furthermore, the complete stillness of motion and sound serves to accentuate the visual and aural dimension which surrounds it.

The visual beauty seen throughout the kabuki performance is not the beauty of reality duplicated, but beauty given an added dimension by extracting elements from nature according to aesthetic sensitivity. Recreating these elements through restricting and accentuating particular aspects results in stylization. While stylization is based on the reality of daily life, only the essence of naturalistic realism is conveyed.

What may appear at first glance as restraint and simplicity in composition and content is really bold directness, freedom from irrelevant details. The Japanese expression is not simplification for its own sake, but an effort to go beyond realism to interpret a deeper understanding than mere outward form can convey. This is due to two factors: first, there is no attempt to duplicate reality, and secondly, aesthetic expression appeals to the emotions rather than the intellect.

In kabuki performance, all the visual elements of the performance, such as the makeup, costumes and patterns of movement reinforce a deliberate perception by the audience that it is witnessing a "theatre reality" derived from the aesthetic distillation of actuality.

While effective communication in kabuki performance entails that of achieving credibility, a deliberate attempt is built into the performance

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structure for the audience to regard the actor as an actor and not the real character: the actor portraying Benkei is not really Benkei, nor is the actor portraying Tadanobu-*kitsune* really a fox. The actor's characterization on stage exudes an appearance and set of mannerisms completely different from the audience's perception of a "real" person or a "real" fox.

Besides the actor's makeup and costumes, other "non-real" factors exist throughout the performance, such as the *mie* which externalizes a character's feelings and the *ma*, when all movement ceases for an interval.

In addition, this disparity between actor and character is effected by comments on the actor's real identity, either by the actor himself, another actor, the chanters, or the audience. Key moments in the action of an actor reinforce that distinction, such as when the actor's kabuki house or other words based on actuality are exclaimed. For instance, when Tamasaburō first enters on the *hanamichi* in the *michiyuki*, cries of "Yamatoya!" (his acting house) are shouted by members of the audience.

Kabuki plays serve as a showcase for the actor as an actor, as well as a character. The actor can step out of character by engaging in conversation with the audience. In the final scene of *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Tadanobu asks the audience for their support and they enthusiastically respond. Passages of dialogue exist in which actors proclaim their own professional acting names. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, Tota remarks to Tadanobu (being acted by Ennosuke) that it has

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been fifteen years since Ennosuke performed with Tamasaburō together on the same stage. Humorous passages such as these indicate a distinctive outlook of the audience towards the performance.

In kabuki, a suspension of disbelief is required for the audience to "believe" that the man portraying the woman is really a woman. In actuality, the audience knows by prior factual knowledge that a female character is really a man (*onnagata*). The audience accepts this convention in order for the structure of the play to be actualized. This convention is effected because an *onnagata* is entirely "a woman of the stage" rather than an actual replica of a "real" woman. The essence of a woman is simplified and stylized into an ideal type. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the chanters comment on Shizuka's "winsome figure." There is no intention to deceive the audience that Tamasaburō is anyone but a man who is acting the part of a woman called Shizuka. That is the reason why older men can portray beautiful young women and find acceptance among the audience.

Kabuki appeals to the emotions more than to the intellect. The aim of kabuki's expression is to create a feeling or mood which evokes an emotion and leaves an impression on the audience. A priority is assigned to eliciting the emotions of the audience through the sights and sounds which result from the process of dramatic development through a world of formal beauty conveyed visually. Each section of the performance has its own particular mood, and a variety of moods is presented.

*Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* presents a plethora of emotions such as fear, anger, sorrow, love, humor, lust and greed. Each section of the play contains a variety of emotions yet centers on a dominant emotional theme, such as the pathos in Scene One, the erotic sections in the *michiyuki* in Scene Two, and the anguish in Scene Three. Yet humor is also interspersed in each scene, and integrated for maximum emotional effect. For instance, in a sequence of sadness, such as the one observed in the first scene where Shizuka laments her fate because she cannot follow her lover Yoshitsune, another sequence follows that is humorous. In this case, silly Tota spies Shizuka tied up, and a comical portion ensues with Tota and his gang of men.

In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, the laughter of the audience is more prevalent throughout the entire play than tears. Even when a sad, pathetic situation is presented, it is touched by humor. For example, the *michiyuki* scene, where Shizuka is pining away for Yoshitsune, is accented by the humor of the fox. In addition, the pathos emanating from the passage about Tsuginobu's death is attenuated by the presence of the comic Tota and his men. In *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, as in other kabuki adaptations from joruri, intense or discreet emotions are rendered fully and freely through the chanters, particularly in the *michiyuki* sequence.

An agreement of understanding (through *yakusokugoto*) is needed to move an audience in kabuki which requires an appeal to their collective



symbols and ideology that reaches beyond the private experience of individuals to the traditions of the group. It appears that the human touch, via direct visual message, appeals to the emotions of the audience: the little fox in anguish at the thought of leaving his parents, the drum; the misery of Shizuka at the thought of leaving Yoshitsune; and the despair of the real Tadanobu having his loyalty questioned. These moments of anguish, misery and despair serve to balance the moments of happiness: Tadanobu joyously receives the drum and flies through the air with it; Shizuka elatedly is reunited with her lover; and the real Tadanobu is proudly reinstated as a loyal retainer. These poignant memories are part and parcel of the human condition shared collectively and most remembered by the audience even though that audience is not comprised of red princesses (*akahime*), foxes and samurai.

*Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* is an example of a well-rounded performance, as it represents something for most everyone to enjoy. Other kabuki performances may only show one act or one scene from a play and that particular part may only focus on a specific emotion or a much narrower range of emotion. As a general statement, it would appear that people do not go to the kabuki performance either to weep or to laugh, but most importantly, to enjoy themselves and to be entertained. This entertainment is not limited to any one set of things, but rather to the

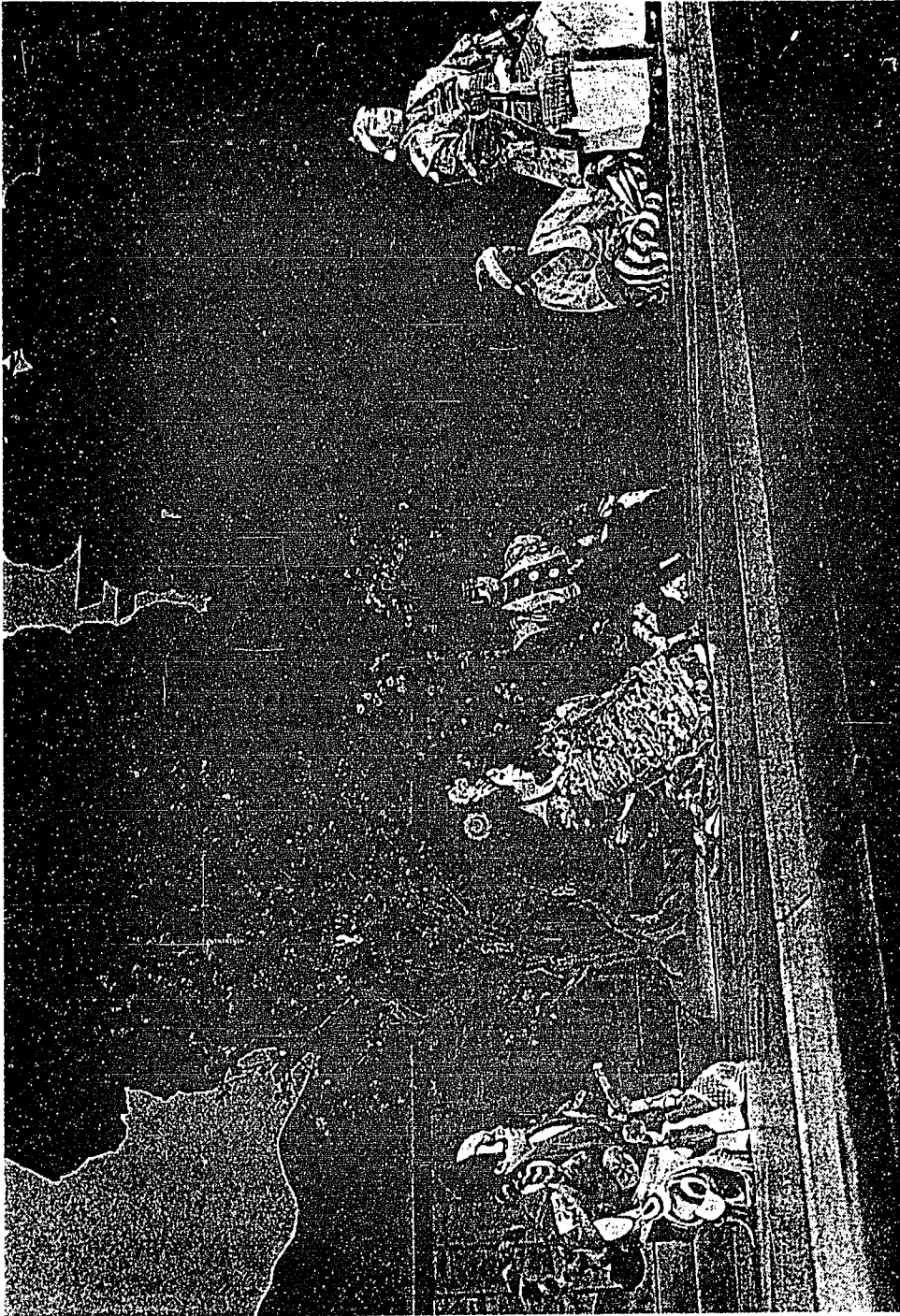
overall *jote de vivre* that emanates from a kabuki performance like *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*.

This dissertation is the first to examine *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, one of the great classics of kabuki performance. This is also the first study on the visual dimension of kabuki which examines all the visual *kata* seen in this performance. As a result, it paves the way for future research whereby the interrelationships of *kata* may be further examined through the inclusion of aural *kata*.

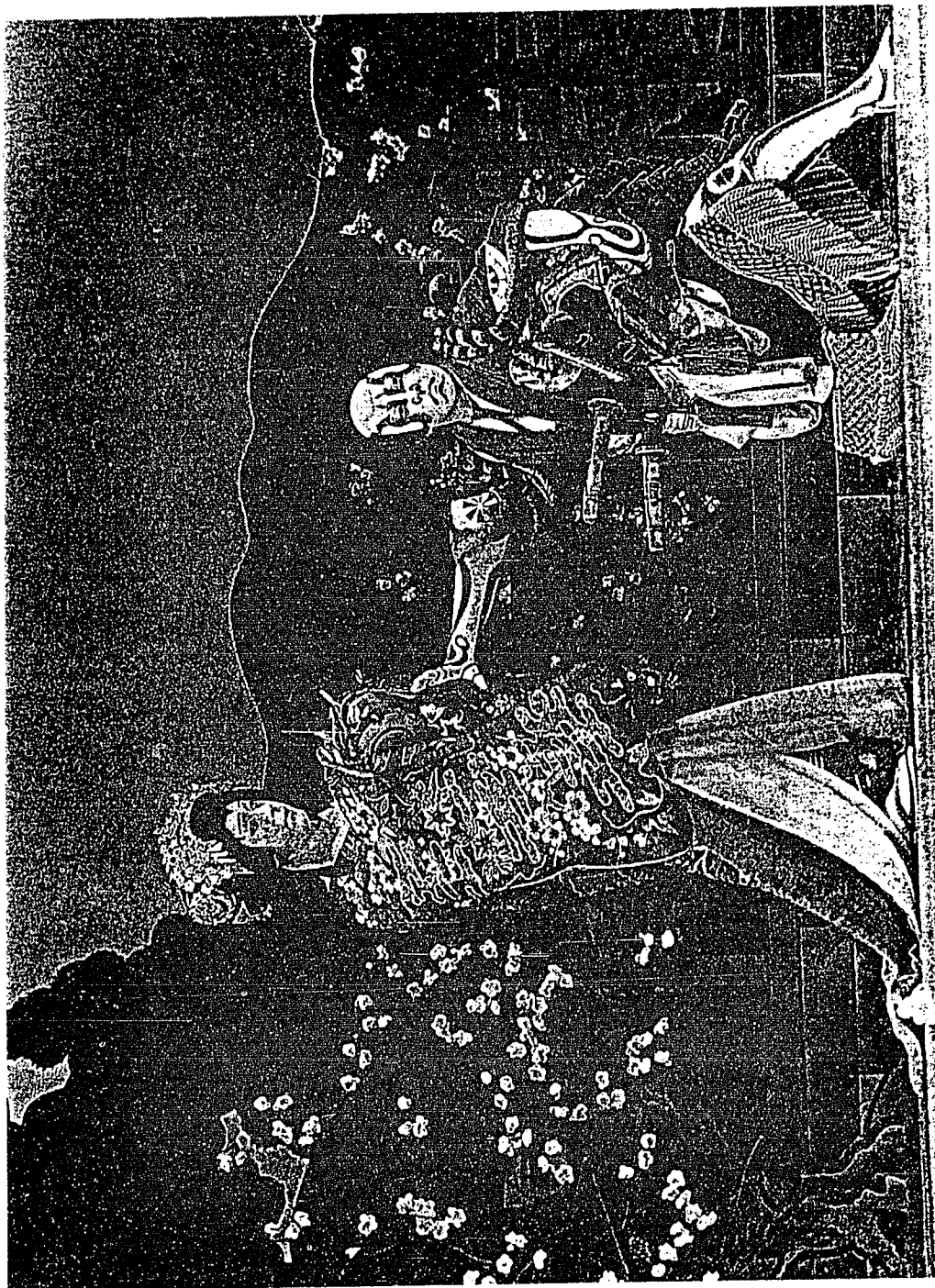
The foregoing study has demonstrated something of the magnitude and complexity of the visual dimension in kabuki performance. Through an examination and understanding of the interrelationships of *kata*, we are better able to appreciate the dramatic expressive nature seen throughout kabuki performance.



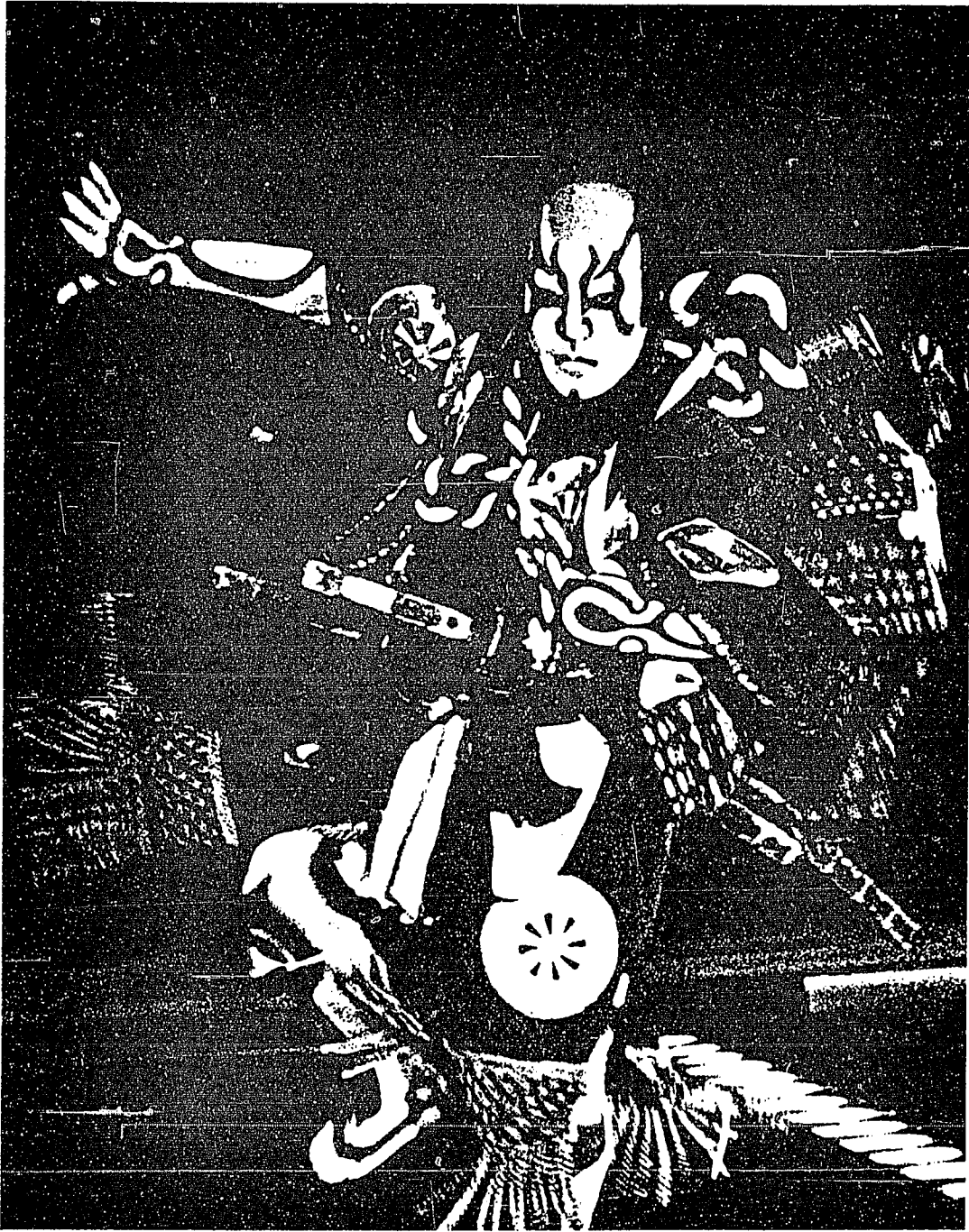
1. **Painting of Performer Alleged to be Okuni**  
Actress, dressed in male costume, leaning on sword in kabuki performance.



**2. Before Gate of Fushimi Inari Shrine**  
Yoshitsune bids farewell to Shizuka and gives her the drum Hatsune.



**3. The Parting of Yoshitsune and Shizuka**  
Tadanobu-*kitsune* stops Shizuka from following Yoshitsune.

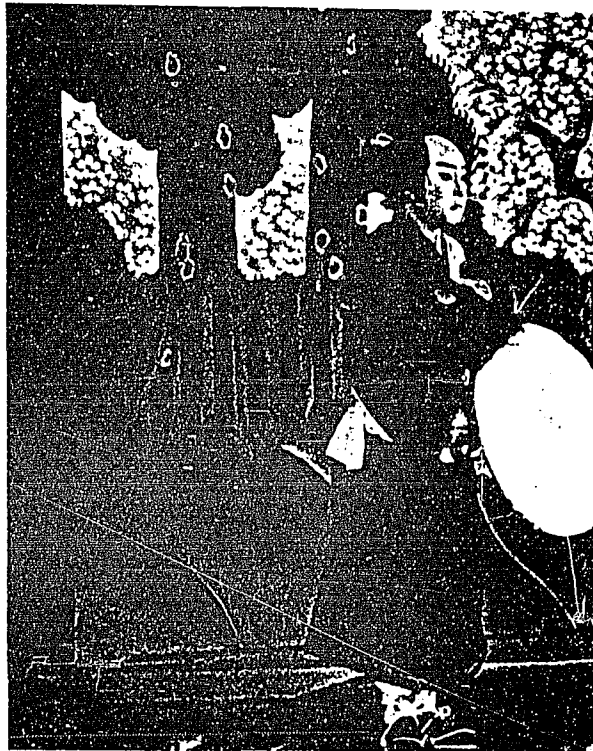
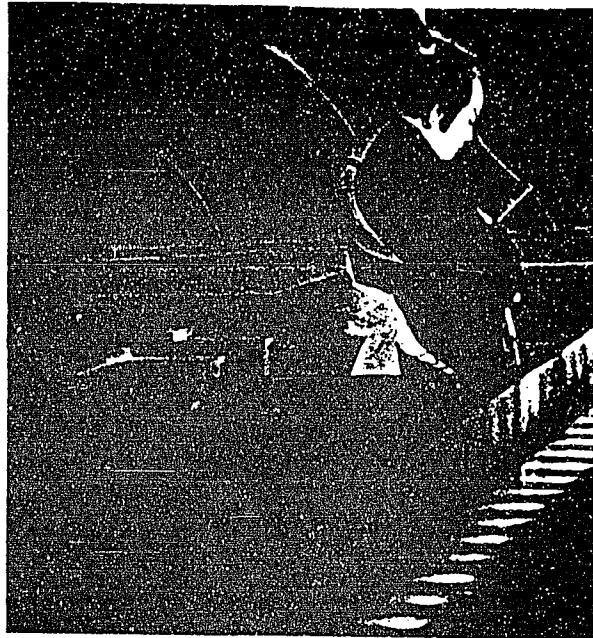


**4. Tadanobu's Exit (first scene)**

*Tadanobu-kitsune executes semi-kitsune roppō along hanamichi.*



5. **Shizuka Enters on Hanamichi (second scene)**  
Shizuka, a beautiful *shirabyōshi* dancer, follows her lover Yoshitsune.



**6. Tadanobu Appears After Shizuka Strikes Drum**  
*Tadanobu-kitsune rises mysteriously on suppon of hanamichi.*





**7. Struggle for The Drum (second scene)**  
Tadanobu-kitsune and Shizuka vie for the drum during the journey.



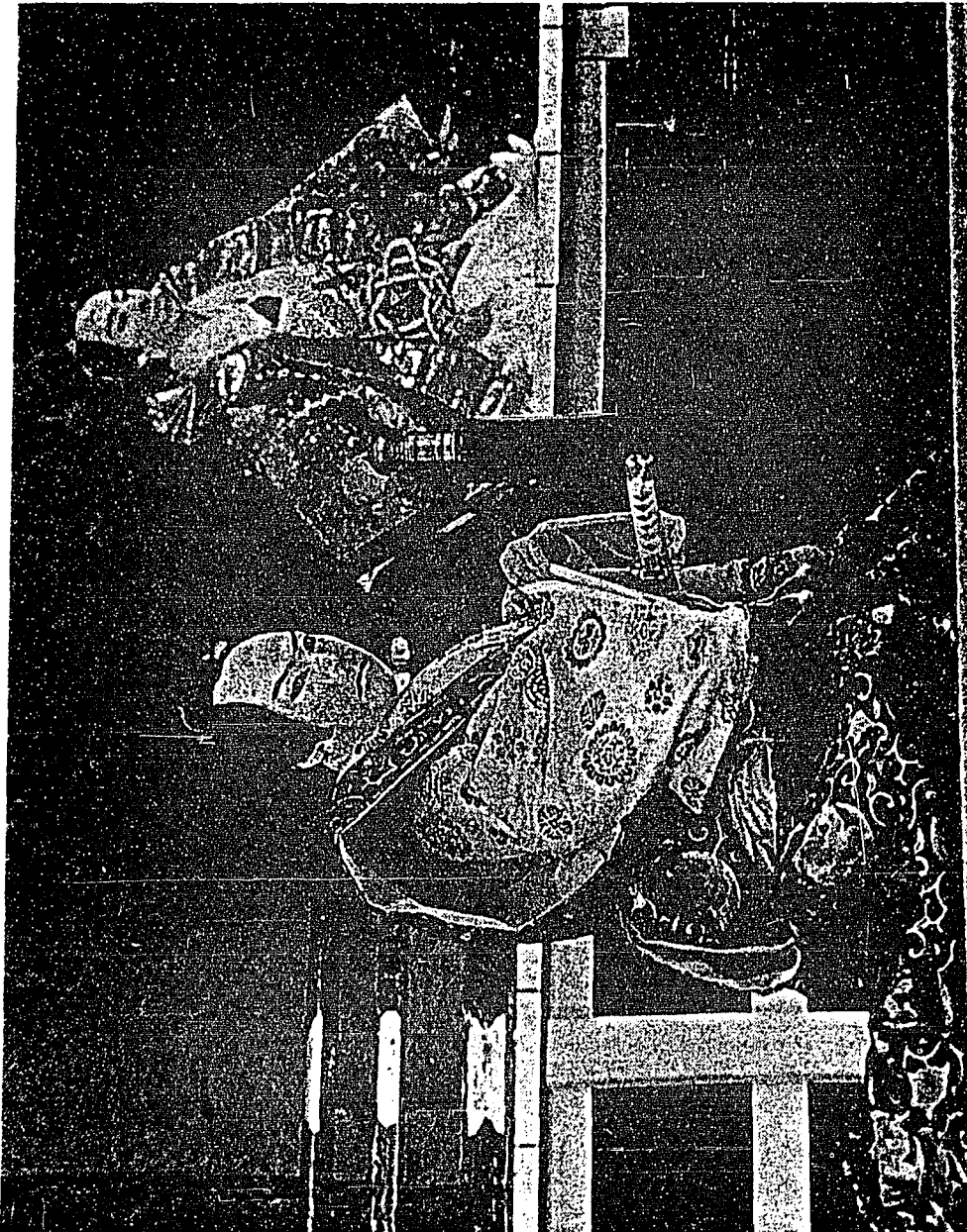
8. Amusements During The Journey (*michiyuki*)  
Tadanobu-kitsune and Shizuka strike pose reminiscent of Doll Festival.



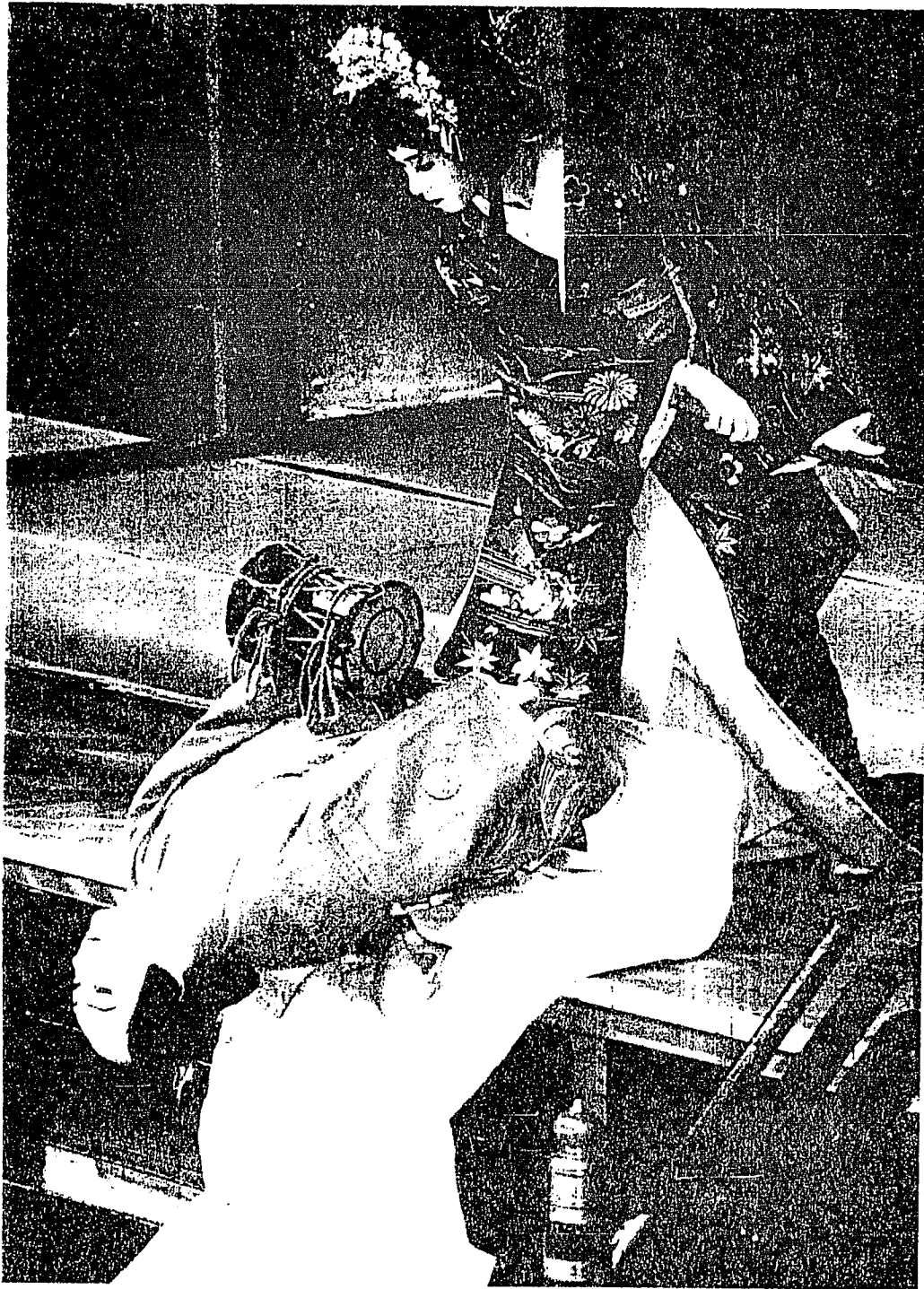
9. Battle of Genji Sequence (*michiyuki*)  
Tadanobu-*kitsune* recalls his brother's bravery in battle.



10. Tadanobu's Exit (second scene)  
*Tadanobu-kitsune* executes *kitsune-roppō* along the *hanamichi*.



**11. The Mansion of Kawatsura Hogan**  
The "real" Tadanobu is accused of being a traitor.

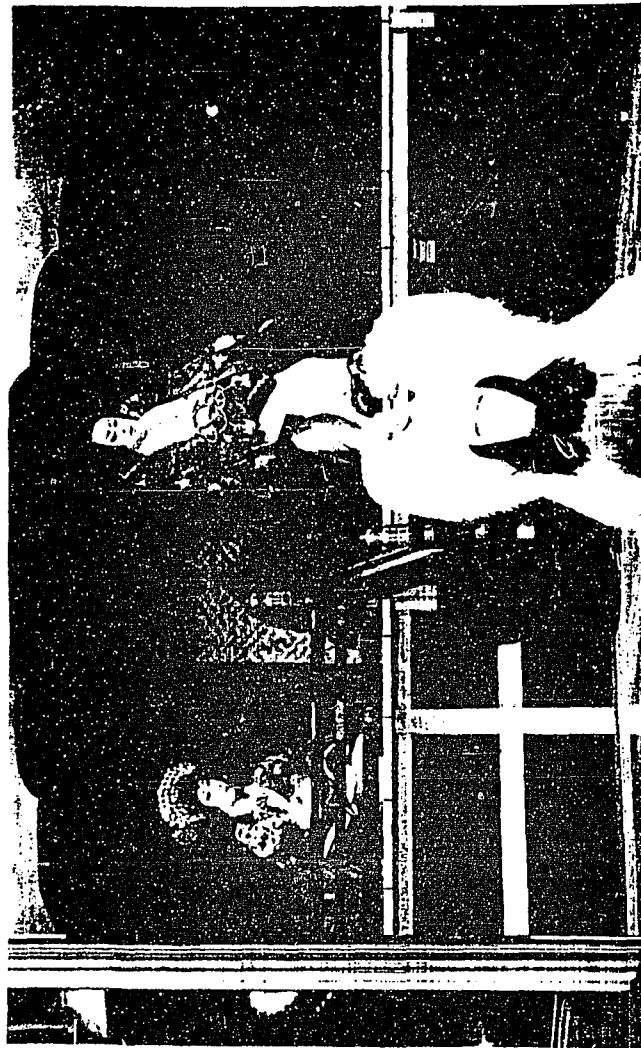


12. Shizuka Weilds Dagger over Tadanobu  
Tadanobu-kitsune does the famous prawn pose (*ebizori*) holding the drum.





**13. The Fox Reveals His True Identity**  
*Tadanobu-kitsune* contritely tells his tale.

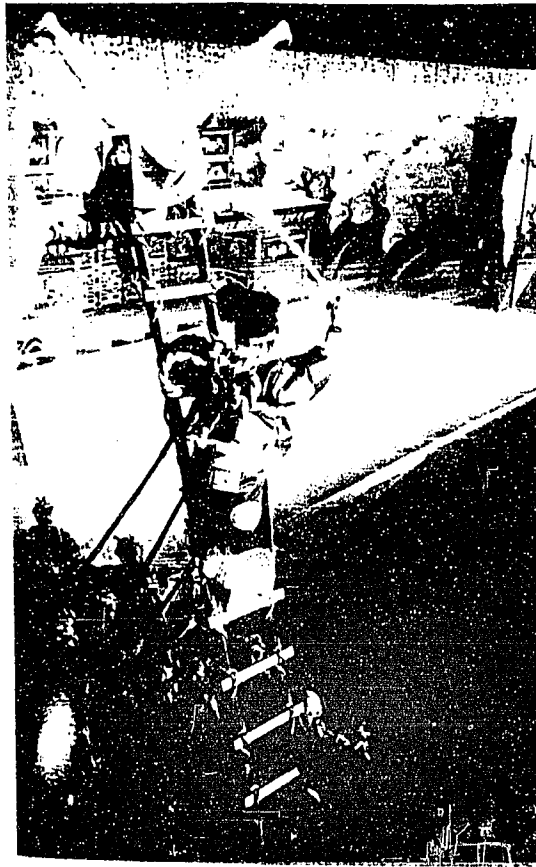


**14. The Fox Pleads His Case**  
Yoshitsune and Shizuka feel compassion for Tadanobu-*kitsune*.

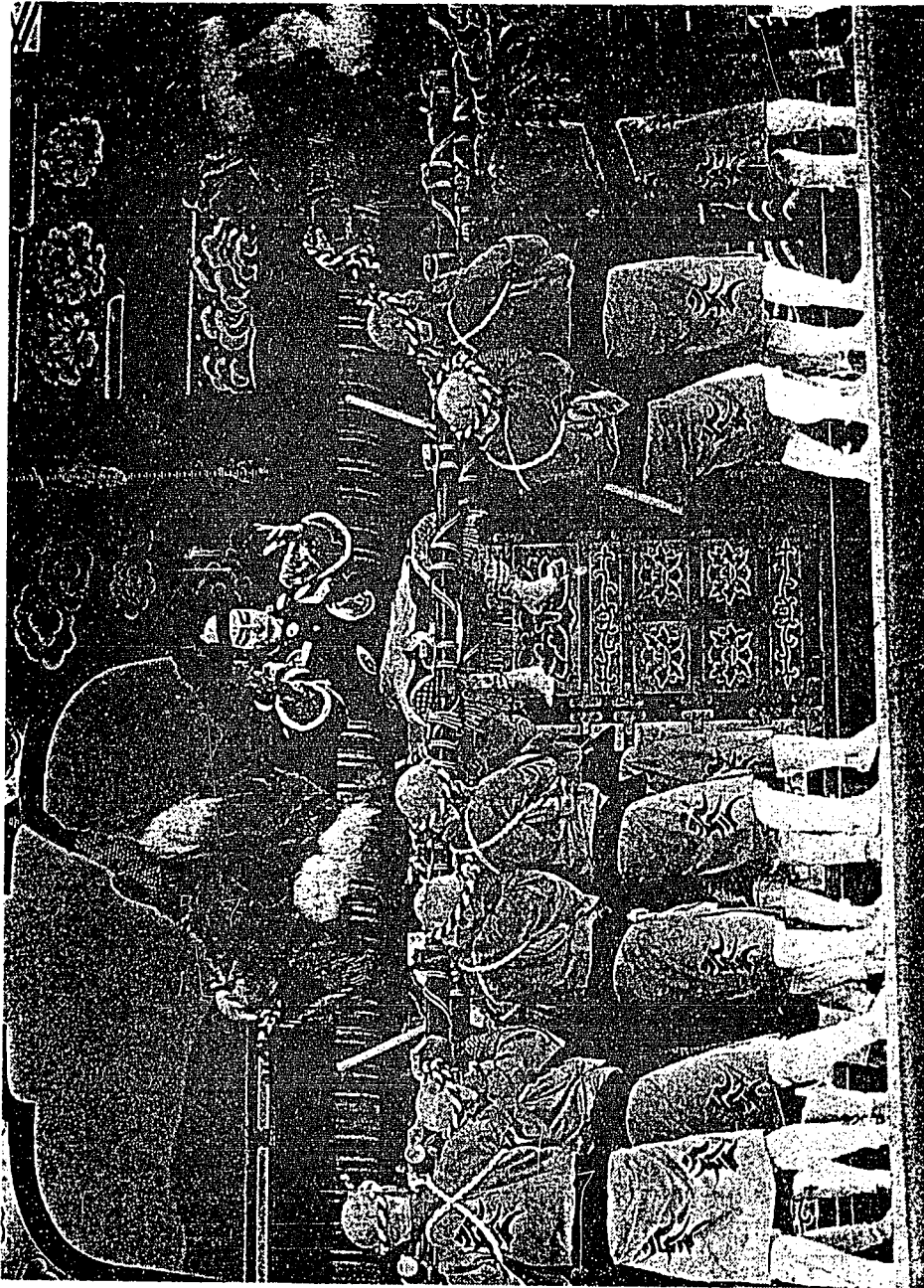




**15. The Happy Fox Flies off With Drum**  
After defeating the naughty monks, the fox flies away (*chūnori*).

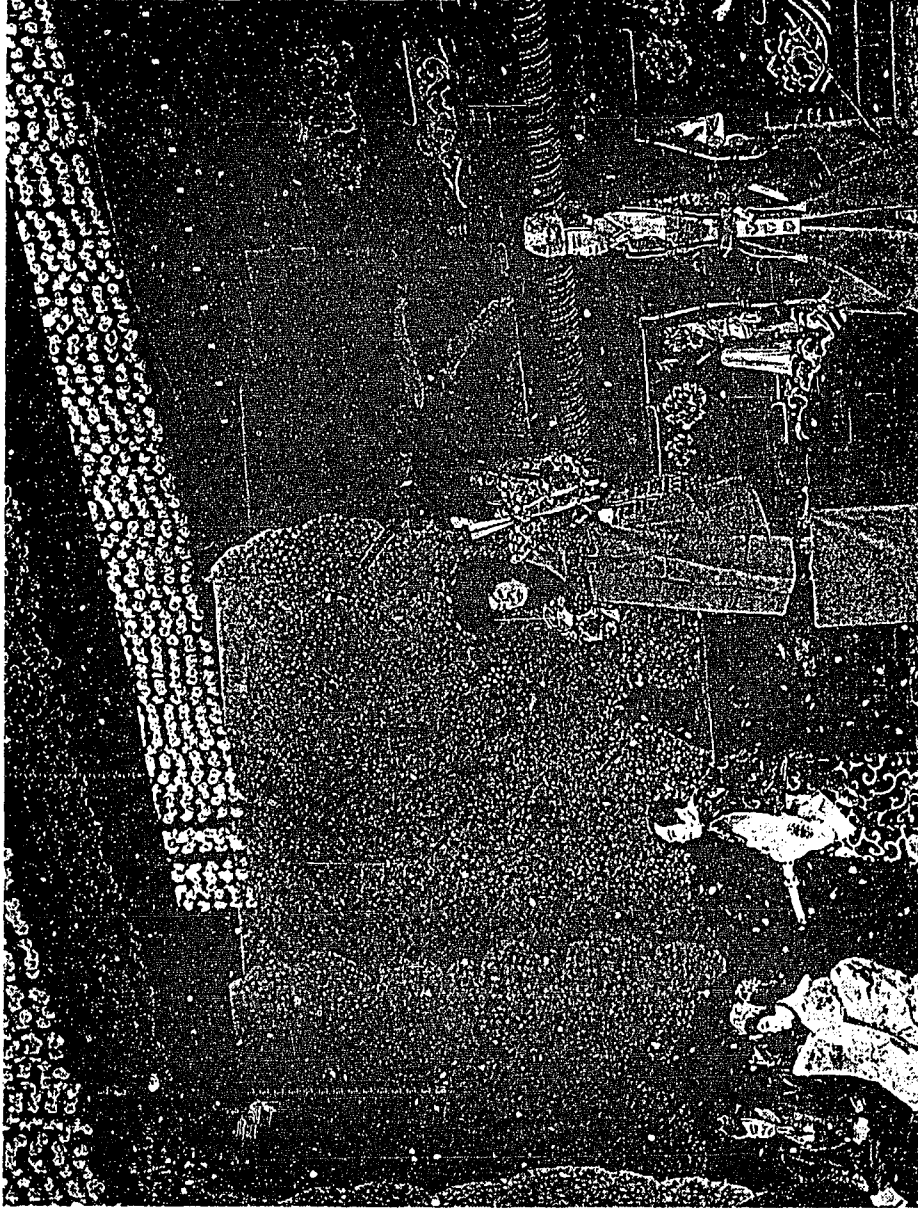


16. *Tachimawari* (last scene)  
"Real" Tadanobu uses ladder for an acrobatic fight on *hanamichi*.



**17. Tadanobu Vanquishes Enemy**

Tadanobu emerges victorious in *tachimawari* sequence (last scene).



**18. Tableau Before Final Curtain**  
Characters assume their most quintessential poses.

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