SUKEROKU'S DOUBLE IDENTITY:

A STUDY IN KABUKI DRAMATIC STRUCTURE

by

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Abstract

Using the seemingly illogical, double identity of the townsman, Sukeroku, and the samurai, Soga Gorō, in the play Sukeroku as the focal point, this thesis shows that the dramatic structure of Edo kabuki was based on an annual play cycle. The cycle consisted of several production periods, beginning with the kao-mise, or "face-showing," production in the eleventh month of the lunar year and ending with the o-nagori, or "farewell," production in the ninth month. Each period lasted for a month or more and was repeated annually throughout the Tokugawa period.

To show how the annual cycle functioned as the framework of kabuki dramatic structure and what Sukeroku's double identity signifies, the thesis is divided into two parts. Part One, "The Structure of Edo Kabuki," has two chapters. The first, which is based mainly on writings of the Tokugawa period, outlines the annual play cycle and the dramatic structure it contained. The second then analyzes the concepts of sekai ("tradition") and shuko ("innovation"), which were the underlying principles of that structure. In sum, kabuki was the product of material that had become a familiar part of Japanese culture by repeated use and dramatization over long periods of time (starting even before kabuki began) and material that was relatively new and was used to transform the
older, set material. The double identity in Sukeroku came about as a result of this interplay within the annual cycle of what was received by way of traditional sekai and what was added by way of innovative shuko.

Part Two, "The Significance of Sukeroku's Double Identity," also has two chapters. The first traces the development of the Soga sekai which gave rise to Sukeroku's samurai identity, from its origins in the early dramatic forms of no, kōwaka, and ko-joruri, to the representation of Soga Gorō in kabuki by Ichikawa Danjūrō I. The second then looks at the shuko which transformed Soga Gorō into Sukeroku by discussing the origins of Sukeroku and its introduction to Edo kabuki by Ichikawa Danjūrō II. The conclusion is that within the annual cycle Sukeroku's double identity gave Edo audiences a hero, who was an idealization of the contemporary Tokugawa townsman and at the same time a transformation of a samurai god-hero of the past. In Part Two, the discussions on kabuki are limited to Ichikawa Danjūrō I and his son, Danjūrō II, since their work was the basis of all later developments.
Table of Contents

List of Illustrations ........................................ vi
Prefatory Note .................................................. vii
Acknowledgments ................................................. viii
Introduction ....................................................... 1

PART ONE: THE STRUCTURE OF EDO KABUKI ...................... 7
Chapter I. The Annual Play Cycle ............................... 8
  The Idea of an Annual Cycle in Japanese Culture ........ 8
  The Annual Cycle of Kabuki .................................. 17

Chapter II. Sekai and Shuko: The Principles of Edo Kabuki .... 40
  Origins of the Multi-part Structure of Kabuki ............ 40
  The Jidai and Sewa Link in the Multi-part Structure of Kabuki .... 45
  The Principles of Sekai and Shuko .......................... 49
  The Annual Play Cycle and the Principles of Sekai and Shuko .... 62

PART TWO: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SUKEROKU'S DOUBLE IDENTITY ... 65
Chapter III. Sukeroku as Soga Goro, a God-hero of the Nation: The Development of the Soga Sekai .... 67
  The Soga Brothers' Revenge .................................. 68
  The Origins of the Soga Sekai in Nō, Kōwaka, and Ko-Jōruri .... 72
  Ichikawa Danjūrō I and the Representation of Soga Goro in Kabuki .... 85

Chapter IV. Sukeroku, Flower of Edo: The Transformation of Soga Goro into Sukeroku .................. 102
  A Summary of Sukeroku ...................................... 103
  The Origins of the Sukeroku Innovation ...................... 109
  Ichikawa Danjūrō II and the Introduction of the Sukeroku Innovation to Edo Kabuki .................. 111
  Sukeroku: Flower of Edo .................................... 123
Conclusion.................................................................133
Postscript: Reconstructing Kabuki for Performance........136
Notes.................................................................140
Select Bibliography.....................................................163
Appendix I: Kabuki Source Materials of the Tokugawa Period........173
Appendix II: List of Japanese Terms, Names, and Titles....175
List of Illustrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustration</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shiki Sambasō</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shichi-fukujin</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sekai sadame</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakata no Kintoki</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ichikawa Danjūrō I as Soga Gorō and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ichikawa Euzō as Fudo</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ichikawa Danjūrō I as Soga Gorō</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene from first Sukeroku</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ichikawa Danjūrō II as Sukeroku</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actors (who played Sukeroku and Agemaki)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greeting patrons</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prefatory Note

An assumption I made in writing this thesis is that the study of kabuki in the West has come of age. It is no longer necessary to start out by surveying the history of kabuki, or to define jōruri and aragoto, or to identify Chikamatsu Monzaemon and Ichikawa Danjūrō. For these purposes, works such as the Halfords’ *Kabuki Handbook* and Gunji Masakatsu’s *Kabuki* (in English) serve well. On the other hand, although much progress has been made since Zoe Kincaid wrote *Kabuki: The Popular Stage of Japan* in 1925, which was the first major work on the subject published in English, there is no common vocabulary for discussing many aspects of the art form. This is particularly true in the area of dramatic criticism. In this thesis, therefore, I have introduced several new words and concepts. In doing so I tried to avoid borrowing too many Japanese terms outright, but there were cases where retaining the original was preferable to using a cumbersome or possibly misleading translation. A major purpose of the thesis, in fact, is to elucidate the meaning of certain key words that represent fundamental concepts in kabuki. Because such words often have both a literal and figurative significance, simple translations do not suffice.

Notes follow the body of the text. A list of Japanese terms, names, and titles used in the thesis will be found in Appendix II.
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the Japan Foundation for the dissertation fellowship which enabled me to spend a year of study and research in Japan. My thanks go especially to Professor Gunji Masakatsu of Waseda University and Hattori Yukio of the National Theatre for taking the time to answer my many questions. As will become clear in the pages that follow, their work was indispensable to my own. I am also grateful to Sato Eri of Waseda University for instructing me so thoroughly in the techniques and materials of kabuki studies, and to Sakuma Mayumi of Ochanomizu Women's University, whose linguistic expertise helped greatly in my understanding of the Soga monogatari.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the Canada Council for a fellowship which supported the writing of the thesis and an additional period of study in Japan.

My deepest gratitude goes to Professors Leon Zolbrod, Matsuo Soga, and Andrew Parkin of the University of British Columbia. As always, they have been generous in their advice and encouragement. Professor Zolbrod, especially, as principal adviser, spent many hours reading and criticizing the drafts of the thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank Don Thornbury, Karen Brock, and my other friends at Princeton University for their kindness and help.
Introduction

This thesis is a study in kabuki dramatic structure. Its aim is to show that the seemingly illogical, double identity of the townsman, Sukeroku, and the samurai, Soga Gorō, in the play Sukeroku is actually a surviving element of what was once a complex and coherent structure based on an annual play cycle.

Kabuki was the principal dramatic form and a mainstay of urban popular culture during the Tokugawa period (1603-1868). A large number of the practices which characterized kabuki during that time are still carried on today. Many, however, were abandoned in the last half of the nineteenth century, when Japan was opened to the West and began rejecting the ways of the past in the course of modernization.

Perhaps the most important practice to be left behind was that of the annual play cycle, or shibai nenju-gyōji. The cycle consisted of several production periods, beginning with the kao-mise, or "face-showing," production in the eleventh month of the lunar year and ending with the o-nagori, or "farewell," production in the ninth month. Each production period lasted for a month or more and was repeated annually throughout the Tokugawa period. Although the annual play cycle was basically the same in both Edo (Tokyo) and Kamigata (Kyoto and Osaka) kabuki, there were some important differences in the dramatic conventions of the two regions. The focus of this work will be on
Edo, which came to be the center of culture in the Tokugawa period. It is also the place that is associated with Sukeroku.

The cycle was especially important in that it provided the framework for the dramatic structure of kabuki. Kabuki was composed of a series of relatively short plays which were arranged and even rearranged during each production period according to the dictates of dramatic convention (especially those connected with seasonal change) and audience response. The structure of kabuki during the Tokugawa period was not simply that of any single play as such, but rather, it was the way in which plays were arranged within the framework of the annual cycle as a whole. The cycle was so crucial that unless its role is understood aspects of certain plays that survive in the present-day repertory, such as the double identity in Sukeroku, do not make sense.

Sukeroku is the primary and representative work of kabuki. Other plays can be used to study kabuki dramatic structure, but few are its equal in historical importance. Performed for the first time in 1713 by Ichikawa Danjūrō II, Sukeroku still flourishes today as one of the jūhachi-ban, or "eighteen favorites," the best-known group of kabuki plays. Thus, the history of the play spans more than two hundred and fifty years, beginning when kabuki was just emerging as a major dramatic art form and continuing until now when kabuki is being kept alive by Japanese awareness of and reverence for great art forms of the past. In a play of such scope, a matter such as the double identity of the hero, which has been part of the play since it began, is naturally of great interest.
To show how the annual cycle worked and what Sukeroku's double identity signifies, the thesis is divided into two parts. Part One has two chapters that treat of the structure of Edo kabuki. The first chapter, based mainly on writings of the Tokugawa period, outlines the annual play cycle and the dramatic structure it contained. The second chapter then analyzes the concepts of sekai, "tradition," and shuko, "innovation," which were the underlying principles of that structure. These principles represent an ongoing process that determined the way in which the annual cycle functioned as the framework of kabuki. In sum, kabuki was the product of material that had become a familiar part of Japanese culture by repeated use and dramatization over long periods of time (starting even before kabuki began) and material that was relatively new and was used to transform the older, set material. The double identity in Sukeroku came about as a result of this interplay within the annual cycle of what was received by way of traditional sekai and what was added by way of innovative shuko.

Part Two, which also has two chapters, then considers the significance of the double identity by analyzing it in terms of sekai and shuko. The conclusion is that Sukeroku's double identity gave Edo audiences a hero who was an idealization of the contemporary Tokugawa townsman and at the same time a transformation of a samurai god-hero of the past. To reach this conclusion, the first chapter of Part Two traces the development of the Soga sekai which gave rise to Sukeroku's samurai identity, from its origins in the early dramatic forms of no,
kōwaka, and ko-jōruri, to the representation of Soga Gorō in kabuki by Ichikawa Danjūrō I. The second then looks at the shukō which transformed Soga Gorō into Sukeroku by discussing the origins of Sukeroku and its introduction to Edo kabuki by Ichikawa Danjūrō II. In Part Two, the discussions of kabuki are limited to Ichikawa Danjūrō I and his son, Danjūrō II, since their work was the basis of all later developments.

* * *

My decision to approach Sukeroku's double identity as a surviving element of a dramatic structure that was based on an annual play cycle came about in the following way.

I began studying the double identity with the idea that my research would be based almost solely on early texts of Sukeroku. Knowing that the play has been performed since 1713, by which time Japan had an active publishing industry, I expected to be able to locate a number of them. I was therefore surprised to discover that although much primary source material on kabuki is available in other forms, there is a conspicuous lack of early texts. We have in abundance chronologies, play-bills, critiques of actors and performances, screens, prints, and a variety of essay-type writings. But aside from the illustrated play books (e-iri kyōgen-bon) published during the Genroku era (1688-1703), which are not complete texts and which, nevertheless, pre-date Sukeroku, there are almost no surviving kabuki texts until the end of the eighteenth century. This is almost two hundred years after kabuki began and well after
Sukeroku and many other plays had become established in the dramatic repertory.

In addition to this lack of texts, I found that an investigation into the double identity was also frustrated by the fact that Japanese scholars view it either as an instance of a general lack of logic in kabuki or as nothing more than a device used to delight "commoner" (shomin) audiences by presenting a wide range of kabuki role types. There seems to be agreement with those foreign students of Japanese drama, who, basing their ideas of dramatic form on European and American social-psychological realism, have concluded that by comparison kabuki plays are not well-constructed. Some have gone so far as to say that the Japanese people have succeeded in devising art forms that are relatively short and restricted (such as the thirty-one syllable waka and the seventeen syllable haiku), but when it comes to longer works of art, such as plays, they have not produced anything outstanding. As one American writer on kabuki has said, "The Japanese have never evolved extended, internally coherent forms of artistic expression."

Feeling that such conclusions are the result of not looking at kabuki sufficiently in its own terms, I was determined to carry out a study of Sukeroku's double identity even if it meant doing so without what I thought were important texts and without prior treatments of the topic to be guided by. It was, however, difficult to know where to begin, and my research might have been impossible, had I not come across several newly reprinted works of the Tokugawa period which outline the annual play cycle.
It is well known that such a cycle existed, but the relationship between it and the dramatic structure of kabuki has never been fully explored. With the help of the suggestive, though brief, discussions of the topic in *Kabuki no hassō* by Gunji Masakatsu, *Kabuki no kōzō* by Hattori Yukio, and "Soga kyōgen no hensen to kanshō" by Atsumi Seitarō, I came to see the play cycle as the key to understanding kabuki dramatic structure—and Sukeroku's double identity.

What began as a textual study of a single play evolved into a work which required taking into account a broad range of material. Even had the early texts of *Sukeroku* been available, my experience has shown me that to have studied the play without reference to the annual play cycle would have been another case of the proverbial frog in the well. I would have been seeing only a very small part of the whole picture.
PART ONE: THE STRUCTURE OF EDO KABUKI
Chapter I. The Annual Play Cycle

The Idea of an Annual Cycle in Japanese Culture

In spring it is the dawn that is most beautiful.  
--Sei Shōnagon, The Pillow Book (ca. 1000)

In every culture certain practices define and celebrate the natural cycle of the year. What form these practices take depends on the particular culture. They range from religious rites and seasonal festivals to highly sophisticated poetry and drama. Japan is no exception to this rule; indeed, the way in which Japanese culture, especially the practice of the arts, has been linked to the flow of time is extraordinary.

The purpose of this chapter, and a principal aim of the thesis as a whole, is to show that kabuki dramatic structure was based on a seasonal cycle. Before proceeding, however, a few words about the idea of an annual cycle in Japanese culture and the close connection between season and artistic structure in Japan will help make the concept of the annual cycle of kabuki more meaningful.

The term annual cycle (nenjū-gyōji) was first used in the Heian period to describe the yearly ceremonials carried out by members of the imperial court. Although the imperial nenjū-gyōji was the prototypical cycle, in time the word came to be applied to the annual observances of any group within society as a whole.
Scholars believe that the earliest annual cycles in Japan developed in conjunction with the rice-growing process. Every year there were special times when fields had to be prepared, when young shoots had to be planted, and so on, until the ripe grain was harvested. Because farmers had to rely on natural elements that were beyond their control (sunshine, rainfall, temperature), certain days were set aside to pray that all would go well and that the crop would be bountiful. And, of course, when the crop was in, days would be set aside for prayers of thanksgiving. In Japan prayer often took the form of community festivals which became the focal points of the annual cycle.

The annual cycle originated in the agricultural cycle, but from the Heian period on different kinds of cycles evolved, reflecting activities which had no direct connection with the rice-growing process. Outside of strictly religious cycles (which were distinguishing features of every temple and shrine), some of the best examples of these are found in poetry, prose, music, tea ceremony and its complement, flower arranging, and, of course, drama. In each of these arts, composition and presentation often were, and in many cases still are, seasonally arranged and motivated.

The relationship between season and artistic structure in Japanese poetry has a long history which can be traced back to the Kokinshu (ca. 905), the first of the twenty-one imperial anthologies.² There, as in the later anthologies, poems were divided into various books, among which those devoted to the four seasons occupied a major place. What is of special in-
terest, though, is how poems were arranged within the season books themselves. As Konishi Jin'ichi has shown, poems in the anthologies were integrated through the principles of association and progression. Seasonal poems were "given their place . . . on the basis of the progression of a season from the first faint signs of its arrival to its close." In other words, the structuring of the books was not arbitrary but was clearly made to accord with the flow of time.

Another aspect of poetic arrangement based on seasonal flow was the necessity of taking into account the traditional nenjū-gyōji. Konishi points out that "regardless of the weather, the ceremonial calendar of ancient Japan demanded that certain acts be performed by men and women on certain days of the year" and that these acts be reflected in poetry. The example he uses is that of the annual excursion to pick young shoots which took place on the day of the rat in the first month. Poems written on the subject of this and similar ceremonials "were invariably included in their appropriate place in the progression of seasonal poems in the anthologies."

Season played a major role in the imperial anthologies, but it was not until the renga, or linked poetry, of the Muromachi period that the practice of composing poems with an obligatory reference to season began. The season word (kigo) was an expression of the time of the year that the poem was written. A natural source for such a word was the name of the flower displayed in the room where the poets of the renga sequence met. This practice of including season words in each poetic composi-
tion found its most complete expression in what came to be known as the haiku of the Tokugawa period.

Haiku without a season word is almost unthinkable. I would like to suggest, in fact, that haiku be defined as poetry of season. Although the meaning of a haiku may transcend its natural imagery (the crow on the withered bough expressing more than just a bird in a tree!), such poetry is rooted in a keen awareness of the annual cycle and the passage of time within it. The very existence of volumes of haiku season words, listing literally thousands of those words (many of which had been used in poetry since the Heian period), the season they represent, and their meaning, shows how important season was to poetic structure. From the hana (cherry blossoms) and kasumi (mists) of spring, to the hotaru (fireflies) of summer, tsuki (moon) of autumn, and kare-ashi (dry reeds) of winter, the entire year was defined in poetic terms and the year itself defined the poetry.

In prose as well season was very important. One need only think of the seasonal patterns out of which the structure of the Genji monogatari (The Tale of Genji; ca. 1000) was so intricately woven. Perhaps the best single description of this is the nineteenth passage of the Tsurezuregusa (Essays in Idleness; ca. 1332), where Yoshida Kenkō (1283-1350) enumerates some of the aspects of the seasonal flow that have played a role in the imagery and structure of the great prose works of the Heian period--and in Kenkō's own work as well. This passage is such a perfect expression of the relationship between season and tra-
ditional Japanese artistic sensibility that it deserves to be quoted at length.

The changing of the seasons is deeply moving in its every manifestation. People seem to agree that autumn is the best season to appreciate the beauty of things. That may well be true, but the sights of spring are even more exhilarating. The cries of the birds gradually take on a peculiarly springlike quality, and in the gentle sunlight the bushes begin to sprout along the fences. Then, as spring deepens, mists spread over the landscape and the cherry blossoms seem ready to open, only for steady rains and winds to cause them to scatter precipitously. The heart is subject to incessant pangs of emotion as the young leaves are growing out.

Orange blossoms are famous for evoking memories, but the fragrance of plum blossoms above all makes us return to the past and remember nostalgically long-ago events. Nor can we overlook the clean loveliness of the yamabuki or the uncertain beauty of wisteria, and so many other compelling sights.

Someone once remarked, "In summer, when the Feast of Anointing the Buddha and the Kamo Festival come around, and the young leaves on the treetops grow thick and cool, our sensitivity to the touching beauty of the world and our longing for absent friends grow stronger." Indeed, this is so. When, in the fifth month, the irises bloom and the rice seedlings are transplanted, can anyone remain untroubled by the drumming of the water rails? Then, in the sixth month, you can see the whiteness of moonflowers glowing over wretched hovels, and the smouldering mosquito incense is affecting too. The purification rites of the sixth month are also engrossing.

The celebration of Tanabata is charming. Then, as the nights gradually become cold and the wild geese cry, the under leaves of the hagi turn yellow, and men harvest and dry the first crop of rice. So many moving sights come together, in autumn especially. And how unforgettable is the morning after an equinocial storm!—As I go on I realize that these sights have long since been enumerated in The Tale of Genji and The Pillow Book, but I make no pretense of trying to avoid saying the same things again. . . . Winter decay is hardly less beautiful than autumn. Crimson leaves lie scattered on the grass beside the ponds, and how delightful it is on a morning when the frost is very white to see the vapor rise from a garden stream. At the end of the year it is indescribably moving to see everyone hurrying about on errands. There is something forlorn about the waning winter moon, shining cold and clear in the sky, unwatched because it is said to be depressing. The Invocation
of the Buddha Names and the departure of the messengers with the imperial offerings are moving and inspiring. How impressive it is that so many palace ceremonials are performed besides all the preparations for the New Year! It is striking that the Worship of the Four Directions follows directly on the Expulsion of the Demons.

On the last night of the year, when it is extremely dark, people light pine torches and go rushing about, pounding on the gates of strangers until well after midnight. I wonder what it signifies. After they have done with their exaggerated shouting and running so furiously that their feet hardly touch the ground, the noise at last fades away with the coming of the dawn, leaving a lonely feeling of regret over the departing old year. The custom of paying homage to the dead, in the belief that they return that night, has lately disappeared from the capital, but I was deeply moved to discover that it was still performed in the East. As the day thus breaks on the New Year the sky seems no different from what it was the day before, but one feels somehow changed and renewed. The main thoroughfares, decorated their full length with pine boughs, seem cheerful and festive, and this too is profoundly affecting.

The Tsurezuregusa is important because it sets down many of the elements that are now considered essential to traditional Japanese taste--the preference for the imperfect over the perfect, for the dark and subdued over the bright and dazzling, and, especially, for the impermanent over the permanent. The falling of spring flower petals, the passing of the warm days of summer into the chill days of autumn--these were seen as clear indications of the transience of all things. But it was not just the passing away, the dying, that mattered. It was also crucial to know that spring flowers would bloom again, that the warm days of summer would come once more. Giving expression to this annual cycle was for the Japanese a major point of their art and life.
In the Tokugawa period the relationship between season and prose took on an added dimension in the writing of Ihara Saikaku (1642-93). Almost all of the stories in Seken munezan'yō (Worldly Mental Calculations; 1692), for example, are about the reckoning up of the year's expenses just before beginning the new year. The passage of time is expressed in terms of items once bought and now forgotten.

It may seem insignificant at the time, but when one calculates his expenses for the year he will find that much of his purchases have found their way to the trash pile: the New Year archery set, the mass of raveled thread that was once a ball, the shattered mortar from the Doll's Festival, the sword of tarnished foil from the Boy's Festival, the broken dancing drum, the discarded toy sparrow tied to a spray of Job's tears that was used for the festival on the first day of the Eighth Month. There is also the outlay for the preparation of rice cakes to celebrate Middle Boar Day, the dumpings for the purification rite at the shrine of the Guardian God, the celebration on the first day of the last month, the exorcism coins wrapped in paper on the Eve of Spring, and the charms bought to dispel bad dreams.10

Every person who participated in this cycle could empathize with this view of the passing of the year.

Saikaku's most effective use of season, however, was as a source of humor in characterization. In Kōshoku gonin onna (Five Women Who Loved Love; 1686), for example, when Onatsu is consumed with love for Seijūrō, Saikaku says that she "was unaware of the season, whether it was New Year's or the time for the midsummer festival of O-Bon."11 In another story in the same novel even an almanac maker can be blind "to the flower-fragrant nights of spring and to the rising of the autumn moon"12 because of his overwhelming affection for a woman. Saikaku was
a master of satire, and irregularities in a character's attention to the seasonal cycle were used as a humorous way of depicting the follies of that character.

Even in the modern novel, seasonal rhythm still has a major function. In *Utsukushisa to kanashimi to* (Beauty and Sadness; 1961) by Kawabata Yasunari (1899-1972), the entire work is based on the annual cycle of nature. The first chapter opens with a character's journey to Kyoto to hear the temple bells at New Year's and from there the story follows the progression of the seasons. *Utsukushisa to kanashimi to* is in many ways about the past and present of the characters' lives and there is no better way to present this than in terms of the yearly cycle.

The arts of music, tea ceremony, and flower arranging are also closely related to the seasons. In gagaku, said to be the oldest continuous musical tradition in the world, the tuning of the instruments differs according to the season, and in traditional Japanese music in general, the selection of pieces for a performance is made in keeping with the season. In the tea ceremony the very shape of a tea bowl is a matter of season; wide-mouthed bowls are used in summer, small-mouthed bowls in winter. While this differentiation in shape has a practical application--tea in a wide-mouthed bowl will cool off more quickly (which is desirable in summer) and tea in a small-mouthed bowl will stay warm longer (which is desirable in winter)--the important point is that the shape of the bowl is a visual symbol of the season. The most obvious
indication of the season, however, is the flower arrangement, which is found in the tea room every time the tea ceremony is carried out. As in poetry, the flowers express the structure of the year, while the year itself gives structure to the art of the tea ceremony through the medium of the different flowers that are used.

The examples given above are by no means exhaustive and are only meant to suggest the pervasiveness of season in Japanese art. I must emphasize that the seasonal or, rather, cyclical element went beyond the occasional use of nature imagery: it determined the very structure of the art form in which it was used. In what follows, I have tried to clarify the role of season in Edo kabuki.
The Annual Cycle of Kabuki

The annual cycle of kabuki comprised altogether about two hundred days of performance time.\(^{14}\) It was divided into six production periods, the traditional names and starting dates of which are shown below.\(^{15}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>production</th>
<th>starting date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kao-mise (&quot;face-showing&quot;)</td>
<td>11th month, 1st day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spring (haru or hatsu-haru)</td>
<td>1st month, 15th day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third-month (yayoi)</td>
<td>3rd month, 3rd day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fifth-month (satsuki)</td>
<td>5th month, 5th day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bon (refers to bon festival)</td>
<td>7th month, 15th day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farewell (o-nagori)</td>
<td>9th month, 9th day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third- and fifth-month productions may be treated separately, but in the Tokugawa period they were often part of the spring production and will be regarded as such here. Also, starting dates are given according to the lunar calendar, which was used in Japan until January 1, 1873, when the Western calendar that is in use today was adopted. Dates given according to the lunar calendar would fall up to a month or more later on the present calendar.\(^{16}\)

The production periods started at approximately two-month intervals. Among them, the kao-mise and spring productions constituted the main portion of the annual cycle and their structures were most fully defined. They will therefore be outlined in greatest detail.
The Beginning of the Cycle: The Kao-mise Production

The cycle began with the kao-mise production, which started on the first day of the eleventh month.\textsuperscript{17} Actors of the Tokugawa period held one-year contracts with licensed theatres, and the kao-mise was the first production after the settling of new contracts.\textsuperscript{18} As the word implies, this was the time for members of a newly organized company to "show their faces" so that audiences could assess their potential for the coming year. Accordingly, the production was designed to display the company to its best advantage, and to ensure that this was done the fullest possible dramatic program was planned, making the kao-mise production "the soul of kabuki."\textsuperscript{19}

Before presenting the play that was to be featured during the period of kao-mise, it was customary in each of the theatres to perform traditional congratulatory and ceremonial dance-dramas during the first three days of the new theatre year. One such piece was Shiki Sambaso (also called Okina watashi).\textsuperscript{20} Customarily, the head of a theatre took the role of Okina, accompanied by his heir presumptive as Senzai, and a relative or one of his apprentices as Sambaso.\textsuperscript{21} Taking these roles was the theatre management's way of demonstrating its active support of a new company.

Shiki Sambaso is a variation of Okina, an ancient drama that predates no.\textsuperscript{22} The central character, Okina, is represented as a very old man, who is thought to be a god in human form.\textsuperscript{23} He is a symbol of longevity, and his importance is such that he was invoked at the accession of a new emperor.
This was to ensure successful rice-growing cycles during the coming reign. In the Tokugawa period, when no was made the official ceremonial entertainment of the samurai class, a day's performance was arranged according to a pattern of "five steps plus Okina" (Okina-tsuki go-ban-date), meaning that one play from each of the five dramatic categories of no was performed, preceded by Okina. In principle, this arrangement was not unlike that of kabuki.

Shiki Sambaso was followed on the program by a waki-kyōgen, an auspicious "god" play. Because each theatre had its own special waki-kyōgen, producing them was an expression of the pride of a particular theatre. Both Shiki Sambaso and waki-kyōgen were reserved for only the most special occasions, such as kao-mise, New Year's, and the opening or reopening of a theatre building.

Since no had a considerable influence on the early development of kabuki, it is natural to find features of resemblance in the two arts. Moreover, by preserving Okina (in the form of Shiki Sambaso), for example, kabuki, which was viewed by the samurai (especially those who considered themselves proper Confucian scholars) as a rather undesirable activity of the commoners, could create a symbolic association with recognized and accepted conventions.

After starting the new theatre year with Shiki Sambaso and waki-kyōgen, the main portion of kao-mise was presented. It was composed of two major sections, generally known as the first play (ichi-bamme kyōgen) and the second play (ni-
Sambasō, Okina, and Senzai in Shiki Sambasō. Costumes and setting are richly decorated with pine, bamboo, tortoise, and crane, symbolic of good fortune and longevity. Illustration from E-hon shibai nenjū-kagami.
Shichi-fukujin, a waki-kyōgen of the Ichimura-za. The shichi-fukujin are the seven gods of good fortune. Illustration from E-hon shibai nenjū-kagami.
bamme kyōgen), both of which in turn could be sub-divided into the following parts: 28

Shiki Sambasō

waki-kyōgen

I. first play (ichi-bamme kyōgen)
   a. opening (jo-biraki)
   b. second step (futa-tateme)
   c. third step (mi-tateme)
   d. fourth step (yo-tateme)
   e. fifth step (itsu-tateme)
   f. sixth step (mu-tateme) — end (ō-zume) 29

II. second play (ni-bamme kyōgen) 30
   g. sewa scene (sewa-ba)
   h. grand finale (ō-giri)

In b. . . . f. the word "step" (tate) is the same as that used to describe the arrangement of no. (In Okina-tsuki go-ban-date, -date is a phonetic variation of tate.) In fact, with the exception of g., the structure is described simply in terms of consecutive steps. In Japanese "to compose a play" is kyōgen o tateru (tate being the nominative form of the verb tateru), in the sense of building something step by step.

The opening and second step sections of the first play were staged early in the morning as warm-up exercises, and therefore they commanded the least share of the audience's attention. They were composed by low-ranking playwrights and, likewise, were performed by low-ranking actors. 31 The opening
was often comic, featuring unusual characters, such as animals and other-worldly beings. The second step would often be a dance piece (shosagoto) and the plot might concern the unmasking of conspirators or rebels.

Following the opening and the second step, the featured portion of the program began with the third step, which, during kao-mise, traditionally entailed a performance of the play Shibaraku. This play, like Sukeroku, is one of the juhachiban, "the eighteen favorites" of kabuki. Its presentation during kao-mise was started by Ichikawa Danjūrō II in 1714. What is now considered the established text of the play, however, dates only from 1895. Prior to that, Shibaraku was newly written every year, a fact which illustrates an important feature of kabuki dramatic practice: the exact same play was not performed twice. The basic situation remained fixed, but the identities of the characters and certain elements of plot were changed.

As the day progressed and the size of the audience increased, in general the work of higher-ranking playwrights and actors was performed. For both the leading playwright and actors, and the audience as well, the focus of the kao-mise was the second play, usually a work on a topical theme. This was in contrast to the first play, which was generally about a long-established theme. The plays of kabuki, as well as those of the puppet theatre, are typically classified as either jidai-mono (works on long-established themes) or sewa-mono (works on topical themes) and it is significant
that the first production of the annual play cycle embodied both categories.

A structural requirement of Edo kabuki was that the first play and second play be linked together, even though in style and substance they were very different from each other. To achieve this link an important convention of the dramatic structure was that in the course of the second play one or more characters revealed that they were really characters from the first play who had undergone a transformation of identity. Moreover, the requirement of linking was also observed among the sections within the first and second plays themselves. Thus, despite stylistic differences between dance-dramas and "straight" dramas, every section had somehow to be integrally joined to the work as a whole.

The day's production ended with the grand finale, which brought the performance to a splendid conclusion. Dance-dramas were often staged. The curtain was finally drawn at dusk (the performance having started at sunrise), with the announcement "That's all for today" (Mazu konnichi wa kore-giri). This sentence seems to imply that if there were more hours in a day the work would have gone on longer. A work, in fact, did not end so much as it was cut off (kore-giri, which I have translated as grand finale, literally means "great cutting-off"). This is quite different from the "logical" conclusion we have come to expect in Western drama.

The kao-mise production continued until the tenth day of the twelfth month, about a month and a half after it started.
Just as the play began in a congratulatory and ceremonial way, so too did it end that way with mai-osame (the "final dance"). Mai-osame entailed the presentation of Senshūraku, a dance with a chanted accompaniment, which was originally derived from the ancient art of gagaku. Most often used in the form it is given at the end of the no play Takasago, Senshūraku is still used on various felicitous occasions, and in the case of kabuki it was like a service of thanksgiving for a successful beginning to the theatre year. The rest of the twelfth month was occupied with preparations for New Year's and the start of the spring production.

**Kao-mise**: the representative structure of kabuki

The kao-mise production outlined above represents kabuki structure in general. The spring (including the third- and fifth-month productions), bon, and farewell productions differed from that of kao-mise only in the degree to which they were patterned after it.

Kao-mise structure reveals two outstanding features of Edo kabuki. These are 1) a multi-part, step-by-step arrangement, and 2) the linking of the parts, which were classified as either jidai- or sewa-mono. A discussion of these features will constitute part of the next chapter. Meanwhile, it is necessary to keep them in mind as we continue this consideration of kabuki within the framework of the annual play cycle.
The Long-run Spring Production

Just as kao-mise was important because it began a new play cycle, the spring production served as the theatres' greeting for a new calendar year. According to the lunar calendar, the first month of the year was also the first month of spring. Thus it follows that the production which began in the first month was called the spring production. Presumably the companies had found their audience during the previous two months and now their energies could be devoted mostly to artistic considerations.

The spring production began with a two-part introductory ceremony that consisted of Shiki Sambaso and maki-bure, a formal announcement which entailed the reading of a scroll by the head actor of a company. The scroll gave the main title (o-nadai) and subtitles (ko-nadai) of the upcoming work, as well as the names of those who would be taking the various roles. Following the ceremony, younger members of the company performed colorful dances.

The spring production and the Soga sekai

In 1709 a play connected with the famous story of the Soga brothers' revenge was performed as the spring production in each of the principal theatres of Edo. These productions were so successful that from then until the end of the Tokugawa period, Soga plays dominated the spring productions there. The concept of sekai, which is this repeated use of certain stories and thematic material in the composition of plays for
kabuki, will be discussed in the next chapter and the Soga sekai in particular will be dealt with in Chapter III. The structure of the spring production, however, cannot be understood without some reference to the role of Soga plays, and, moreover, without first discussing the implications of the terms "main title" and "subtitles" mentioned above.

Unlike other periods in the annual play cycle, the spring production was designed to have a long run, lasting up to half a year, through the time of the third- and fifth-month productions, and until the start of the bon production period.\(^5\) This did not mean, however, that the dramatic content of the spring production remained exactly the same throughout this period. In fact, kabuki structure was such that as time went on certain parts of the production could be modified or taken out altogether and new parts could be added. The production was given a single overall title, which was the main title (\(\text{o-nadai}\) literally means "great title"). Because the spring production was invariably a Soga play, the main title could be expected to include the word "Soga" in it: for example, *Shiki-rei yawaragi Soga* (Nakamura-za, 1716), *Otoko-moji Soga monogatari* (Nakamura-za, 1749), and *Edo murasaki kongen Soga* (Ichimura-za, 1761).

Subtitles (\(\text{ko-nadai}\) literally means "small titles") designated various changes made in the spring production. They were neither substitutions for the main title nor true play titles in themselves, even though what they stood for may have been fully wrought dramas. *Suikeroku yukari no Edo-zakura*, for
example, was simply the name of the third-month portion of *Edo murasaki kongen Soga*. Many difficulties arise in trying to identify the plays of kabuki because of the shifting relationship between main title, subtitles, and what they represent. As a result, one play is often referred to in several ways.\(^{53}\)

The question then is, what determined the manner and extent to which changes were made in the spring production? The answer involves two sets of related factors, one seasonal and traditional, the other financial.

Among the seasonal factors was the approach of the summer solstice, which meant that as the hours of daylight increased more material could be presented and the production was accordingly lengthened.\(^{54}\) Also, tradition dictated that plays somehow reflect the changing seasons. As New Year's gave way to the season of cherry blossoms and as that gave way to the heat of summer, modifications were made in both dramatic content and theatrical presentation.

Financial factors were also of great concern to the theatre management. Theatres had to obtain a certain amount of backing in order to begin a production. The success of a production was then measured in terms of box office receipts. No matter how much it cost to open a production, it might close shortly after it began if audience response was insufficient. But unlike the practice in most commercial theatres today, if a kabuki play was not doing well and change was necessary, the actor was secure in his position because
he had a year-long contract. It was the play itself that somehow had to be changed.

In sum, a structure was required that could accommodate 1) expansions in performance time, 2) dramatic traditions associated with seasonal change, and 3) the vagaries of box office success. Each of these requirements could be met because the unique characteristic of kabuki was that it had what may be called a multi-part structure. This structure was a model of flexibility. When performance time became longer, more parts could be added. When a new season or lack of success required change, this could be done as well. Because many variables were involved, it is difficult to generalize about the structure, particularly from the time of the spring production until the end of the entire cycle. In my opinion, it is precisely this difficulty in generalization, arising from its characteristic flexibility, that has caused some people to conclude that kabuki structure is illogical and incoherent.

The following description of the spring production will assume optimum audience response and financial conditions. It must be noted, however, that factors--such as the death of an actor, a fire, governmental repression--could prevent a production from continuing or even opening "on time," in the sense of beginning on the traditional starting date. In such cases, the order of the annual play cycle was still adhered to as closely as possible, even if it meant some rearrangement of the schedule. For example, in the year 1713
both the Yamamura-za and the Morita-za began kao-mise productions during the first month as well as during the eleventh month. The Kabuki nempyo, the standard chronology of productions, reveals that in 1712 neither theatre had a kao-mise production (the Nakamura-za's began on the fifteenth day of the twelfth month). The reason for the delay is not clear, but it is evidence of how things might be rearranged. Although it appears that the Morita-za continued with its belated kao-mise production through the spring, the Yamamura-za went into a spring/third-month production in the third or fourth month (it is not certain which) with the play Hana-yakata Aigo-zakura, which contained the first Sukeroku.

The first and second months of the spring production

During the time allotted for the spring production in the first month of the year (a period of about two weeks, because the production began on the fifteenth day of the month, the "little New Year" (ko-shōgatsu)), only the first play was produced. After introductory presentations, the main portion of the first play began with the third step, as in the case of the kao-mise production, and continued through the fourth step, the fifth step, and an end step. The precise content of the third, fourth, and fifth steps differed depending on the play, but the story generally concerned the loyalty of Onio Shinzaemon, his brother Dōzaburō, and Onio's wife toward the Soga brothers, and their efforts to help the brothers carry out their revenge on Kudō Suketsune.
This was followed by **Taimen** (literally, "coming face to face"), which brought the first month of the spring production to a climactic conclusion. **Taimen** is the dramatization of the Soga brothers' first meeting with Suketsune. In fact, a probable reason why the spring production began on the fifteenth day of the first month is that it is the anniversary of the actual **taimen**. The **Taimen** was generally done as a dance piece, featuring fantastic aragoto poses (**mie**), which wordlessly express the clash of the foes. An example of a surviving first play which contains all these parts is **Nenriki yatate no sugi**, performed for the first time in the first month of 1806 at the Nakamura-za.

At the end of **Taimen** in the text of **Nenriki yatate no sugi**, Sukenari (Soga Juro) says: "Now the second play begins" (**Kore yori ni-bamme hajimari**), indicating that it was time to proceed to the next section of the spring production. This line was inserted on the first day of the horse (**hatsu-uma**) in the second month, which also corresponded to the beginning of the Inari shrine festival on the civil calendar. It was appropriate that theatres specially mark this day since the Inari shrine was, and still is, where business people, among others, go to pray for prosperity. If things went well at the box office, the spring production could be extended considerably beyond the second month. Consequently, a change in program would have been part of a theatre's celebration of the festival.

Whereas the first play of the spring production had been presented in the first month, the second month was the time
to add the second play through the practice of "inserting what follows" (ato o dasu).\textsuperscript{62} The second play was added to a modified first play--something on the order of one "old" part being exchanged for two "new" ones. Which "old" one, however, was unspecified; it depended on the relative success of each individual section. Once the second play had been added, then the basic first (jidai) and second (sewa) play structure was revealed, so that the structure was very similar to that of the kao-mise production.

As in the case of kao-mise, the second play of the spring production had to be linked to the first play. Characters of the second play disclosed who they had been in the first play. Thus, in the Soga sekai, Ume no Yoshibei (a second play character) is revealed to be Oniō Shinzaemon (a first play character), Yaoya Oshichi (a second play character) is revealed to be Miura no Katakai (a first play character), and, of course, Sukeroku (a second play character) is revealed to be Soga Gorō (a first play character).

The third-month production: the third and fourth months of the spring production

The third and fourth months of the spring production corresponded to what may be called the "third-month" production. (Yayoi is the word for third month in the lunar calendar.) Just as the first and second months of the spring production began on a special day, the third-month production started on the sekku (a special festival day), which, in the third month, fell on the third day.
There were five major sekku in a year: the seventh day of the first month, the third day of the third month, the fifth day of the fifth month, the seventh day of the seventh month, and the ninth day of the ninth month. Each sekku had special celebrations and festivities associated with it. Because each marked an important event on the civil calendar, theatres did well to take special notice of such holidays, and larger audiences than usual could be expected to attend plays at such times.

Assuming that the spring production was successful enough to be continued, the third-month production would encompass the third and (assuming it went into the fourth month) fourth transition points—that is, the third and fourth times for adjusting the contents of the play. In the third month the production was adjusted by dropping all that remained of the first play, leaving only the Taimen section. This was first on the program, followed by the second play (which had been added in the second month) and which at this time was embellished or had parts replaced. Because the third month was the season of cherry blossoms, at this time the production was likely to have some connection with these flowers in contents and designation of subtitle. The theatre, moreover, was decorated appropriately in scenery and costumes. The play still being within the Soga sekai, the Soga connection had to be maintained: Soga Gorō as Sukeroku was often done at this time, if it had not already been played in the second month.

The third month was also when servants in the residences of the daimyō in Edo had a three to ten-day holiday (yado-
sagari), and the theatres could count on their attendance. To appeal to their interests, plays on the theme of feudal family rivalry, such as Kagami-yama and Sendai-hagi, were worked into the Soga play.

From the fourth to the sixth months the structure of the spring production became less definite, reflecting the fact that, as summer approached and temperatures rose, audiences dwindled. One expedient for drawing a crowd was to produce "one-night pickles" (ichiya-zuke), which were instant dramatizations of current events, particularly love-suicides. Because these "one-night pickles" were hastily composed, most were not of high quality and their popularity was short-lived.

"One-night pickles" or works that were already popular, such as Kagekiyo, constituted the fourth adjustment of the spring production. What remained of the first play (i.e. Taimen) was eliminated entirely, and the production began with the second play. Thus, by the fourth month, the production was, for the most part, a sewa-mono, though still within the framework of a Soga play. If box office receipts were sufficient to carry the spring production through the fourth month, it could be extended into the fifth and sixth months with appropriate changes.

The fifth-month production: the fifth and sixth months of the spring production

The fifth-month production (satsuki is the word for fifth month in the lunar calendar) was generally the time to
conclude the spring production. There was a symbolic reason for bringing a Soga play to a close at this time: the anniversary of the Soga brothers' revenge was the twenty-eighth day of the fifth month. By then the formal structure had been abandoned altogether, and starting on the sekku, the fifth day of the fifth month, the fifth-month production was carried out in the form of a Soga festival (Soga matsuri). Dances and comic routines were featured. Day after day the program would change, always keeping a comic and informal atmosphere.  

The spring production was formally brought to an end on the seventh day of the sixth month. Theatres then recessed for summer, until the start of the bon production. During this recess period top-ranking actors went to summer resorts to escape the heat of the city, which was worst at this time. Second-rank actors toured the provinces as players in road shows, both in order to be out of the city and to supplement their incomes.  

During this period, too, necessary repairs were carried out on theatre buildings. Theatres were also used by younger or lower-ranking actors who remained behind in Edo. They performed "summer plays," mainly practice performances. Large audiences were not expected to come, and ticket prices were cheaper than usual. Younger actors thus got an opportunity to take leading roles, which they would not normally have. It also gave observers a chance to assess the ability of up-coming stars.
Summary of Spring Production
(Including Third- and Fifth-month Productions)

first month
first play, ending with Taimen

second month
modified first play (including Taimen) + second play

third month
Taimen + modified second play

fourth month
second play

fifth month
Soga festival

sixth month
end of spring production

summer recess
Winding Down the Cycle: The *Bon* and Farewell Productions

After the *kao-mise* and spring productions, the major portion of the annual cycle was over. The *bon* production, which began the winding down of the cycle, was important more because it coincided with a major celebration on the civil calendar than because of the dramas presented at that time. The season of *bon* is when spirits of the dead are said to visit the world of the living and when prayers and ceremonies are carried out in their honor. Unlike the spring production, which had a fixed starting point (the fifteenth day of the first month), the scheduling of the *bon* production was not so precise. Ideally, it began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. Lingering summer heat, however, often discouraged top-ranking actors and audience members from returning to theatres at that time—a condition which would have obviated the necessity for making any elaborate plans for the production. Summer plays were frequently continued well into the eighth month. If new material were needed, plays adapted from the puppet theatre were often used. After the end of the eighteenth century, the practice of staging newly written pieces began.

In the eighth month decisions were made on changes in the company for the following season. This was done so that departing actors could plan their farewells for the following month's production, and also so that preparations for the dramas for the following theatre year could begin. In order to compose plays, dramatists had to know which actors would be playing the parts.
Farewell production

Finally, the farewell production, which began on the ninth day of the ninth month, brought the annual cycle to a close and gave the company one last chance to perform together before changes in personnel were made. Plays given at this time featured departing actors, especially those returning to troupes in the Kamigata area, and what was presented differed depending on the year and the theatre. The farewell production continued until the fifteenth day of the tenth month.

* * *

By outlining kabuki in terms of the annual play cycle, we can see that the cycle gave the dramatic structure a ready-made framework and rhythm. The framework was the calendar year, and the rhythm was the regular passage of the seasons, months, and days within the year.

As the seasons passed, plays were made to suit the conventions of each time of the year. Similarly, within the seasons the succession of months—especially during the long period of the spring production—provided logical points for adjusting the contents of plays. Moreover, the days defined each single production. Plays were made to fit the length of the day, and the play changed as the length of the day changed. This was appropriate, since a day at the theatre was meant to be a day wholly given over to relaxation and enjoyment. Ordinary time was replaced by dramatic time, and
the entire day, or whatever portion of it a person spent at
at the theatre, doubtlessly passed very quickly indeed.
Chapter II. Sekai and Shuko: The Principles of Edo Kabuki

The annual play cycle, as outlined in the preceding chapter, defined ordinary calendar time in special dramatic terms. By so doing, it provided the basis for an artistic structure that could preserve long-standing cultural traditions; while also renewing and updating them by means of innovation. In this chapter I will consider the principles—sekai and shuko—which represent the characteristic interweaving of traditional and innovative material in Edo kabuki. I will proceed by looking first at the origins of kabuki's multi-part structure and at the jidai and sewa link, which are essential to the functioning of sekai and shuko, and then by looking at the two principles themselves.

Origins of the Multi-part Structure of Kabuki

The multi-part structure, which gave kabuki the great flexibility that was noted in the preceding chapter, had its beginnings in the dances and comic sketches of early kabuki.¹ These dances and comic sketches are usually categorized as hanare-kyōgen, or "separate plays." This distinguishes them from the later tsuzuki-kyōgen, or "continued plays." Tsuzuki-kyōgen appeared after the authorities suppressed kabuki and closed all theatres in 1652 for violations of laws prohibiting homosexual prostitution. (Up to that time kabuki
had been largely a prostitutes' art.) Theatres were allowed to reopen only on the condition that various changes in staging and in dramatic form and content be made. One of the results of this ruling was that it stimulated the development of kabuki dramatic structure, leading eventually to the appearance of the sophisticated, multi-part tsuzuki-kyōgen form.

The first plays with a multi-part structure of which we have any record were performed in 1664. One is Hinin no kataki-uchi, attributed to the actor-playwright Fukui Yagozaemon (fl. 1660-90), and performed in Osaka at the Araki Yojibeiza. The other is Imagawa shinobi-guruma, attributed to the actor-playwright Miyako Dennai (dates unknown), and performed in Edo at the Ichimura-za. It is noteworthy that the form appeared in the same year in both major centers of kabuki.

Without extant texts it is difficult to know what these plays were like. What interests us here, though, is that they were both labeled as either two or three-part plays (ni- or san-ban tsuzuki-kyōgen), depending on the source of information. It is tempting to use the terminology of Western drama and simply define a two-part play, for example, as a work in two "acts" or two "scenes," but this can be misleading. A part of a kabuki play was neither an act nor a scene in the sense that acts and scenes are divisions of a play that usually cannot stand independently apart from the play as a whole. The parts of a kabuki play might in themselves be complete and potentially independent dramas.
By the Genroku era the three-part play structure had become standard in the Kamigata area, and the four- or five-part structure standard in Edo. This does not mean, however, that there could not be more, or even fewer, than three, four, or five parts in a play. Much variation was possible. In fact, as the potential of this multi-part structure was developed, the labels "three-part play," "four-part play," and "five-part play" were kept only to retain a sense of tradition, particularly in the advertisement of productions. They were not literal representations of the actual number of parts in a work and, as we saw in the last chapter, the word "step" (tate) eventually became the way generally to describe these parts.

The development of the multi-part structure depended on the fact that the basic hanare-kyōgen type of structure was retained; the difference was that this structure was multiplied, or, as we have defined the term, "continued." A hanare-kyōgen was a one-part play, and a tsuzuki-kyōgen was a play of two or more parts. This is the same as saying that a tsuzuki-kyōgen was two or more hanare-kyōgen joined together. Viewed in this way, the structure of kabuki was similar to that of renga or haikai—extended verse forms made up of relatively short and self-contained units that were linked together.

The concept of bringing together semi-independent units of composition and making them into a single artistic structure is a central one in Japanese aesthetics, and one that
must be recognized in order to appreciate forms such as kabuki. The case has already been made for a linked verse type of structure in Saikaku’s novels. I think an even stronger case can be made for kabuki. Although this is a topic deserving of much fuller treatment, I have isolated below some of the striking elements common to the multi-part structures of both linked verse (particularly haikai) and kabuki.

1. Composition by more than one artist.

Both linked verse and kabuki were characterized by the fact that more than one artist contributed to the composition of a single work. In linked verse, commonly two, three, or more poets gathered and took turns making links in a poetic sequence. In kabuki a team of playwrights was usually responsible for the making of a play.

2. Composition controlled by rules of structure.

Having several people work on one composition might have resulted in chaos were it not for the fact that the structures of both linked verse and kabuki were controlled by certain rules. This is especially apparent in linked verse, for which a number of rule books survive. The rules of kabuki were not as obviously stringent nor as apparent to outsiders, but they existed nevertheless. The most important one was the matter of linking the parts of a play, which will be looked at more closely in the next section of this chapter.

3. Seasonal structure.

As has already been pointed out, both linked verse and kabuki were defined by seasonal structures.
4. Lack of logical conclusion.

In kabuki, what most bothers those who expect plays to be based on principles of logical causality is the lack of logical conclusions. This is true as well in linked verse, which Earl Miner calls "plotless narrative."\(^{12}\) It is a fact, of course, that artistic structures may be based on principles other than logical causality. As linked verse and kabuki show well, they may be based instead on seasonal principles and on principles of sekai and shuko.\(^{13}\)

5. Strong element of wit.

A distinguishing feature of the haikai form of linked verse, as opposed to renga, was a strong element of wit. Wit included parodies of well-known works, riddles, puns, and "unexpected associative leaps."\(^{14}\) Similarly, wit was an important feature of kabuki. Kabuki relied heavily on clever references to contemporary society and on the innovative use of works that had been produced in the past.


In connection with the use of wit—but going beyond it, too—was the fact that both linked verse and kabuki depended on audience familiarity with the rules and conventions of their art forms. An audience's appreciation of a poetic sequence or a play depended greatly on its perception of how the composition was made to accord with established principles of structure. In the nineteenth century, when the world in which haikai and kabuki had developed and flourished changed
so drastically (with the opening of Japan to the West and the end of Tokugawa rule), audiences were no longer such active participants in these art forms. The continued practice of haikai and kabuki was more a matter of preservation than one of healthy survival.

The list could be continued, but I think that what is given above clearly shows that many features of kabuki were not isolated phenomena, but were part of a broader trend carried on especially in poetry. To make successful multi-part structures, it was necessary to have a group of artists working together, to have certain rules and conventions to determine the type of composition, and to have an audience that was knowledgeable about the practices. Not surprisingly, many, if not most, kabuki playwrights and actors were also practicing haikai poets.\textsuperscript{15} Poetry was an integral part of the cultural life of the Tokugawa period and also part of the overall training an artist in the theatre received.\textsuperscript{16} Although most of their poetry was not memorable enough to preserve, it is significant that the practitioners of kabuki composed it and that they knew its rules and conventions.

The \textit{Jidai} and \textit{Sewa} Link in the Multi-part Structure of Kabuki

The multi-part structure was characteristic of both Kamigata and Edo kabuki, but it was the link between the \textit{jidai} and \textit{sewa} parts of a play which distinguished Edo kabuki. Up until now, works classified as \textit{jidai-mono} have usually been defined as follows:\textsuperscript{17}
1. **Jidai-mono** concern characters and events of past ages and not of the present age.

2. Not just any characters and events of the past will do; they must be drawn mainly from history or legend. (Examples of such characters are Yoshitsune, Sakata no Kintoki, and the Soga brothers; examples of such events are the Gempei wars and the Soga brothers' revenge.)

3. However, characters and events do not necessarily have to be taken from history and legend if they concern the upper strata of society, such as the houses of the shōgun, daimyō, and other high-ranking samurai. Kabuki audiences were predominantly commoners and when they saw plays concerning a different class of society the effect was thought to be the same as that of a play with a historical setting.

Works classified as **sewa-mono** are then defined, predictably, in the following way:

1. **Sewa-mono** concern characters and events of the present age, not of the past.

2. However, the characters and events do not have to be of the present age if they are "unknown," that is, not taken from history or legend.

3. Again, it does not matter whether the setting is present or past as long as the characters and events do not concern the upper strata of society, but rather commoners and their affairs.

In sum, **jidai-mono** are said to be "historical" because they concern characters and events that are "known," and
sewa-mono are "contemporary" because they concern characters and events that are as yet "unknown." Moreover, jidai-mono treat of "upper-class" (that is, samurai) society, and sewa-mono treat of "lower-class" (that is, commoner) society.  

Such definitions, however, break down for two reasons. First, they try to distinguish the concepts both in terms of time categories ("past, historical" and "present, contemporary") and in terms of social class categories ("upper, samurai" and "lower, commoner"), as if, in kabuki, these categories were mutually exclusive (which they are not). Second, they try to isolate the concepts from the dramatic structure instead of viewing them as the artistic categories that they are.

To avoid this breakdown, I propose instead that the terms be looked at as relative to each other and that jidai-mono be defined as "plays of the old order" and sewa-mono as "plays of the new order." This seems to match most closely the actual dramatic structure of kabuki, which was intimately bound up with the social structure of Japan during the Tokugawa period. For the commoners, at whom kabuki was aimed, the old order was that which was established prior to their own emergence as the new order. Since the idea of old order includes social, historical, and artistic elements, the samurai class may be thought of as the old order in relation to the new order of the commoner (in particular, the townsman), and the literature prior to the Tokugawa period as the old order in relation to works composed during that period.

This also takes into account changes that occurred during the Tokugawa period. As kabuki developed and as the commoner
rose in the cultural and economic hierarchy, the new order itself became old. The ultimate expression of this is seen in the principles of sekai and shukō.

Support for this relative view of jidai and sewa comes from Gunji Masakatsu's approach to these concepts. Following suggestions first made by Origuchi Shinobu, Gunji brought the whole of the Japanese performing arts tradition to bear on the question, not just categorizing it as a phenomenon of the Tokugawa period. By doing so he has been able to shed light not only on kabuki, but on pre-Tokugawa period dramatic structures as well.

Gunji found the antecedents of jidai-mono and sewa-mono in the contrast between the ritualized, archetypal forms of ancient Japanese festivals and performing arts (as old as kagura) and "modernized" variations of them. He sees this contrast as one which is found throughout Japanese culture.

To Gunji, ritualized, archetypal forms—he uses the made-up term omo-tadashii-mono—are found in drama, poetry, and religious ceremony. Over a period of time they have crystallized and been made to represent the ideal practice. In time, they are given new interpretations, called modoki—a term which commonly means "modification," "imitation," even "parody." The rivalry of Sukeroku and Ikyū for the attention of Agemaki, for example, may be seen as a modoki of their enmity in the context of the Soga sekai, which is the ritualized form. A feature of kabuki structure was that it contained both fixed and variable elements.
The link between *jidai-mono* and *sewa-mono* was the logical final step in the development of the multi-part structure of kabuki. It was in the nature of a transformation: the old order--that which was fixed and idealized--was renewed and regenerated through the new order--that which was newly developed and not yet perfected. As in the case of *Sukeroku*, the transformation was best accomplished by means of the technique of double identity. Part Two of this thesis will show the significance of bringing together Soga Gorō and Sukeroku and of thus achieving a link between a *jidai-mono* and a *sewa-mono*.

**The Principles of Sekai and Shuko**

Shortly after the start of the last production of the annual play cycle, attention was directed to the next theatre year. Work on the program for the coming year officially began on the evening of the twelfth day of the ninth month at a meeting called the *kao-mise sekai sadame*, "deciding the sekai of the kao-mise production." This meeting was the most important point in the play cycle. It was, in short, where the cycle ended and where it began again. The heads of the theatre, the head actors, and the head playwright gathered to decide the sekai that determined the dramas for the coming year. It was then up to the playwrights, in conjunction with the actors, to work out the *shuko* for those sekai.

The crux of kabuki dramatic structure in the context of the annual play cycle lay in the process represented by the
principles of sekai and shukō. The importance of these principles was first made clear in a brief passage called "Matters concerning vertical and horizontal plots" (Tate-suji yoko-suji no koto) found in the Kezairokū (1801), a manual for writers of plays and novels. In effect the earliest attempt to define kabuki dramatic structure, it says that the plot of a kabuki play is a product of the interaction of two kinds of plots, the "vertical" and the "horizontal." These represent, respectively, sekai and shukō.

The purpose of sekai, as represented by the vertical plot, was to provide the general outline of a play by using characters and events of familiar works of drama and other forms of fiction. A sekai, which literally means "world," was a kind of tradition or traditional framework within the drama. The role of shukō, as represented by the horizontal plot, was to transform this traditional material into something new. A shukō was an innovation. While the quality of newness is essential to the effectiveness of any kind of drama, the newness of a kabuki play was not so much a departure from past practice as it was a reworking of already established practice. The perfect expression of this is, of course, in the annual play cycle where every year new plays were performed but in subject matter and structure they were a continuation of the plays of the past.

But why call sekai the vertical plot and shukō the horizontal plot? It appears that the words vertical and horizontal were used as graphic expressions of dimensions in time,
Thus making it clear that kabuki had a dual temporal structure. The vertical represented the past in its complete and unchanging form and the horizontal represented the present in its unfolding and ever-changing form. Although the so-called vertical plot gave primary definition to a play, the horizontal plot was needed to bring a work out of the past and into the present.

Sekai and shuko represented the dynamics of kabuki dramatic structure. In defining jidai and sewa, which underlie sekai and shuko, as the old order and the new order, the process that took place was referred to as one of transformation. The old was transformed into the new and the new in turn became old. It was a cycle that might have continued forever.

Sekai: The use of traditional frameworks

The passage from the Kezairoku showed that the concept of sekai was central to kabuki. Its origin as a device in drama, however, was in jōruri. Some have suggested that late in the seventeenth century kabuki playwrights turned to jōruri as a source of material. It was then that works that had been dramatized for jōruri were made into new works for kabuki. In terms of sekai, kabuki took over those traditional frameworks that had originally been "made for" jōruri.

It is further suggested that kabuki became derivative of jōruri. Rather than invent completely new characters and situations, after all, kabuki relied instead on those which
had already been tried and proven in joruri. Such a view, however, does not take into account a fundamental feature of the arts in Japan. Japanese dramatic arts, from no and kowaka to kabuki and joruri, are not mutually exclusive, but all have borrowed or have been borrowed from at one time or another. Joruri playwrights themselves from the beginning used much material that had been developed and dramatized long before the Tokugawa period. Tradition and continuity are essential elements in Japanese aesthetics, and for one art form to use the materials of an older, established one is not only good but is desirable. By so doing, new forms and approaches can be developed, and at the same time a certain cultural cohesiveness is maintained. This is precisely the thought pattern underlying sekai and shuko in kabuki.

As mentioned above, on the twelfth day of the ninth month of the year, the managers, head-actors, and head-playwright of the theatres gathered for the event known as the kao-mise sekai sadame. Depending on which actors had been contracted for a company, plays with a certain distribution of roles were needed. The function of a sekai was to supply these role requirements by providing the basic plot and character constellation of a play.

In choosing a sekai, the heads of the theatres were aided by works such as the Sekai komoku, which was probably compiled in the late eighteenth century. It lists one hundred and fifty sekai, giving the names of the characters in them, as well as the joruri and literary or historical
Sekai sadame. The leading actors of male and female roles (the two figures on the right), the heads of the theatre, and the head playwright (with brush and paper) are gathered to decide the types of plays that will be performed in the coming year. Illustration from E-hon shibai nenjū-kagami.
works which were their sources and to which playwrights could refer for more information.

The most striking feature of the Sekai kōmoku is that it is a rough outline of the history of Japanese literature. The titles of the sekai are works of fiction or the names of characters and events which represent such works. The works of fiction cover a wide spectrum beginning with the earliest myths and legends, such as those found in the Kojiki (712) and Nihon shoki (720), and extending to works of jōruri and kabuki in the Tokugawa period. While it is true that the Sekai kōmoku drew on many of the most famous works in the history of Japanese literature, it was not comprehensive. Only materials which had already been dramatized, mainly in the form of no, kōwaka, jōruri, and kabuki were included.

Iizuka Tomoichirō has pointed out that by the last decades of the Tokugawa period choosing the sekai for the kao-mise production had changed from what was probably a true discussion meeting to a merely perfunctory and ceremonial affair. The reason was that in time kabuki became classicized, as is shown by the contents of the Sekai kōmoku itself. The Sekai kōmoku analyzed the entire contemporary repertory of kabuki according to traditional frameworks, and is a predecessor of Iizuka's own Kabuki saiken (1926).

The Kabuki saiken is essentially an updated version of the Sekai kōmoku. By simply comparing the number of entries in each work it is easy to see that sekai and shuko did indeed represent a process in which new material was constantly
added to the kabuki repertory. Whereas the Sekai kōmoku lists one hundred and fifty sekai, the Kabuki saiken, published over a century later, contains two hundred and seventy-five.

How are the entries in the Sekai kōmoku classified? Not surprisingly, they are mainly divided into jidai and sewa. There was some ambiguity about how to categorize plays based on struggles for power within the houses of feudal lords (ō-ie kyōgen). Although these plays concerned the samurai class, the stories of rivalries were timely subjects in the Tokugawa period and therefore fall between jidai and sewa. Another problematic category was religious plays, whose timelessness made it difficult to classify as either jidai or sewa.

In the entry for each sekai were names of its characters and titles of related works. The Gikeiki sekai is typical. It contains the names of forty-six characters, including Yoshitsune, Benkei, and Tadanobu, with the note that there are many more and that the reader should consult listings under the Heike monogatari and Izu nikki, among others, for more of them. The entry also contains the names of characters from that part of the Gikeiki that concerns Jōruri Gozen (Princess Jōruri), which by itself forms a small sub-sekai. Following the characters there is a list of sources for the Gikeiki sekai. The Azuma kagami (ca. 1270), which is the historical chronicle of the Kamakura bakufu, is an example. This in turn is followed by a list of approximately thirty jōruri titles in that sekai, ranging from the very familiar
Yoshitsune sembon-zakura to the less familiar Tadanobu migawari monogatari and Kumasaka monogatari. This pattern of giving the names of characters, literary or historical sources or both, and joruri works is followed to a greater or lesser degree in each entry.

Each traditional framework of course was not equal in importance to every other--importance being determined by how frequently a framework was used in the construction of kabuki plays. Among all the sekai that are listed three stand out as being used far more than any of the others. These are the Gikeiki, Soga, and, to a slightly lesser degree, the Heike sekai.

Speculation as to why these three were so important raises some interesting issues about Japanese literature in general. One of the most stimulating of the works along these lines is Barbara Ruch's article, "Medieval Jongleurs and the Making of a National Literature"--in particular the section entitled "A National Literature." Ruch argues that the Muromachi period saw the development of a national literature, which she defines as:

a certain core of literary works the content of which is well known and held dear by the majority of people across all class and professional lines, a literature that is a reflection of a national outlook. Such literature never shocks or revolutionizes; it is constituted of favorite themes that recur again and again of which people never tire. . . . This national literature may, indeed must, cross genre lines.

She further points out that as a result of the development of this national literature "for the first time Japan . . . came to share one body of heroes and heroines." And the three
"works" she cites as examples of such a literature are, not unexpectedly, the Gikeiki, Soga monogatari, and Heike monogatari. 38

The sekai of kabuki are, to me, part of this national literature. Moreover, I think the fact that Ruch has identified such a phenomenon from a perspective different from that of kabuki underscores its importance in Japanese literature as a whole.

As I have tried to emphasize, the relationship between sekai and shuko was by no means static; in fact, it worked because it was not. Time was the crucial element. Shuzui Kenji has shown that what are considered traditional frameworks differ depending on the historical period under consideration. 39 For a work of fiction to be a sekai, it had to be sanctioned by repeated dramatization over time. It was then familiar to audiences and became, essentially, a frame of reference that the playwright could presume the audience possessed. By the time the Sekai komoku was compiled a considerable number of such frames were already available. Of course, this does not mean that all of the items listed in the Sekai komoku were always sekai. Sekai of sewa plays in particular needed time to develop and to gain a permanent place in the repertory. To give an example of the importance of time in the making of sekai, in the third month of 1708 the story of Yaoya Oshichi (the lady who burned down Edo so she could be near her lover) was used as a shuko in a play based on the sekai of Chūjō Hime (a very devout Buddhist
princess of ancient times who represented the archetypal step-daughter). The play was Chūjō Hime Kyō-hina, performed at the Nakamura-za. In time the story of Yaoya Oshichi gained the status of a sekai and came to be found in the Sekai Kō-moku.40

Taking Gunji's analogy one step further, we may say that traditional frameworks are idealizations (ōmo-tadashii-mono), in contrast to which shuko work as counterpoints (modoki). This means, of course, that by the end of the eighteenth century, when the Sekai komoku was compiled, plays classified as jidai and those classified as sewa were both idealizations. And this is exactly the case. Around that time the kabuki repertory ceased to grow, in effect becoming entirely traditional. One way to renew the traditional material was to combine two or more sekai in a single work.

Traditional frameworks and the law

One of the most interesting features of the use of traditional frameworks in kabuki was the way playwrights employed them to circumvent certain restrictions imposed by government regulations. The government had stipulated "that matters concerning [it] must not be published, that the names of contemporary members of the samurai class and above must not be mentioned, nor any incidents involving samurai occurring after 1600."41 These orders were issued before 1700, but in 1703 when the incident of the forty-seven masterless samurai was first dramatized, it was further decreed that "unusual
events of the times or action resembling them must not be acted out.⁴² These laws were actually bans on direct representation, rather than on representation itself, which could be accomplished in other ways. Taking the case of the forty-seven samurai as an example, even though direct representation of the character Asano of Akō was not permitted, it was acceptable to have En'ya Hangan from the Taiheiki sekai substituted for him.⁴³ Putting what was to become popularly known as Chushingura into the framework of the Taiheiki was quite different from giving all the characters fictitious names, a transparent device that would probably have been banned immediately. By using the Taiheiki, if the authorities asked they could just be told that the theatre was putting on another Taiheiki play which, of course, had the sanction of long use and, at any rate, concerned events before 1600.

Using the framework of the Taiheiki in this way was in itself dramatically effective. Audiences were familiar with the work and could easily make the mental leap from Taiheiki to Chushingura. The play as we know it today contains anachronisms, such as references to samisens and gay quarters, which did not exist at the time of the Taiheiki. These directly underscore the fact that the play was not just about those characters and events of the Taiheiki. Even in the West some playwrights have found this type of indirect representation more desirable than direct representation, especially when speaking of current events that are particularly shocking
to the community. One is especially reminded of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, where Miller used the framework of the Salem witch trials to write about McCarthyism in the 1950's, and similarly Jean Anouilh's *Antigone*, where he used a framework from ancient Greek drama to write about Nazism. In Western drama such examples are relatively isolated ones in comparison with kabuki, which was a dramatic form whose foundation lay in the use of traditional frameworks.

**Shuko**: Three types of innovation

Compared with sekai, shuko was, of course, far less fixed. While traditional frameworks may be labeled and compiled in a work like the *Sekai komoku*, it is difficult to do the same in the case of innovations. This is because the principle of innovation necessarily implies a state of constant change. Though innovations could in time become traditional frameworks, they started out as counterpoints to existing ones.

**Shuko** is an important principle in Japanese aesthetics in general but it acquired particular importance in the Tokugawa period, especially in the new arts of haikai, ukiyo-e (woodblock prints), and kabuki, each of which was an art of innovation.\(^4^4\) It may even be said that innovation is the defining element of Tokugawa literature.\(^4^5\)

Innovation makes something new out of something old. As the *Kezairoku* suggests, in kabuki sekai are old. It then follows that to understand shuko, it is necessary to analyze the ways in which they made sekai new. There appear to have been three ways in which this could be done.
The first encompasses those changes that were made within a traditional framework and involves the technique of *kakikae*, or the rewriting of plays. *Shibaraku* and *Taimen* are two excellent representatives of this type. Although both works may be regarded as part of larger frameworks, each possessed its own character constellation and plot outline. The practice was to perform *Shibaraku* in the eleventh month of every year and *Taimen* in the first month. But every year these plays were rewritten. While keeping the same basic framework certain changes in character and situation were made. The most characteristic feature of this type of innovation was the lack of fixed texts, even though a play might have been produced many times. Only since the Meiji era have such plays as *Shibaraku* and *Taimen* acquired set texts.

The second type of innovation takes place when a play that was previously unknown or unused in kabuki was added to a *sekai*, as *Sukeroku* was to a Soga play. It was usual in this case for the new work to be a *sewa-mono* and for it to be joined to a *jidai-mono*. The joining was done by means of a transformation of character, accomplished by the technique of double identity.46 Besides *Sukeroku*, other innovations that were added to the Soga *sekai* in the same way were the stories of Ume no Yoshibeib, Osome and Hisamatsu, and Sankatsu and Hanshichi.47

The third type of innovation occurs when two or more *sekai* were joined. This is commonly called *naimaze* (which literally means to twist—as in making a rope—and to mix).
Naimaze is a very misunderstood technique, often confused with the second type of innovation. Although naimaze simply means putting two or more sekai together, the confusion results from its often being thought of as equal to the joining of a jidai- and sewa-mono. Though this certainly underlies the principles of sekai and shuko in general, it is not naimaze. As Urayama Masao has shown, the different sekai do not retain their separate natures as such but are brought together to form an entirely new work.48

Naimaze was the last type of innovation to develop, and it marked the end of kabuki's growth as a dramatic art form. The technique began to be employed near the end of the eighteenth century, when kabuki was already starting to look upon itself as a classic form. This is reflected in the formulation of the jūhachi-ban, the writing of the Kezairoku, the compilation of the Sekai kōmoku, and in the publication of kabuki texts. Naimaze was a popular technique for several decades, especially as used by the playwrights Tsuruya Namboku IV (1755-1829) and Kawatake Mokuami (1816-93)--who is considered to be the last major playwright of kabuki.

To close this chapter, I return to the annual play cycle and the concepts of jidai- and sewa-mono to consider how kabuki dramatic structure as a whole may be looked at in terms of sekai and shuko.
The spring production (including, if conditions were favorable, the third- and fifth-month productions) was dominated by the Soga sekai. In the first month the spring production was a jidai-mono. As the months went by, however, and the play was altered, it became more of a sewa-mono, though always within the framework of a jidai-mono. Let us now look at the rest of the year in terms of sekai and jidai- and sewa-mono.

The kao-mise production was not dominated by any single sekai, although certain ones were more popular than others for use at that time. This is seen in the work of Sakurada Jisuke (1734-1806), the foremost playwright of Edo kabuki during the latter part of the eighteenth century. The sekai that Jisuke used can be divided into three categories: sekai of kao-mise productions, sekai of Soga (i.e. spring) productions, and sekai of "miscellaneous" productions. The naming of these categories derives from the fact that the kao-mise and spring productions were most structured, while the other productions of the annual play cycle were less certain both in starting dates and structure.

As shown by Jisuke's use of sekai, the kao-mise production was, on the whole, a jidai-mono. It was complemented by a sewa-mono which, however, was not as independent as in the spring production. The preferred type of innovation for kao-mise was that where changes were made within the sekai. Jisuke also wrote plays for Soga productions. In these jidai-mono were predominant. Sewa-mono, however, evolved as more
independent pieces in contrast to their less independent status during kao-mise. Within the group of miscellaneous plays, the largest single group of sekai was those of the revenge-play type (a sub-category of plays dealing with struggles for power within samurai households). This is particularly noteworthy since they are thought of as falling somewhere between jidai- and sewa-mono, with the emphasis on the latter.

In sum, from the kao-mise production to the end of the annual play cycle there was a gradual shift from jidai-mono to sewa-mono and indeed the year itself may be divided into jidai and sewa. Each individual production was jidai or sewa to a greater or lesser degree, and the way in which the production manifested these elements was a function of the position and role of a production within the annual cycle as a whole.

Kabuki dramatic structure, therefore, must be considered first in terms of an annual cycle and then in terms of the individual parts or productions which made up that cycle and whose component parts changed during the course of it. Moreover, the cycle and its individual parts, like any one of the productions and its own component parts, were held together—some might say unified—by the jidai and sewa link and were ruled overall by sekai and shuko. These principles, while enabling artistic traditions to be maintained, at the same time brought about a renewal of the drama every time the cycle was repeated.
PART TWO: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SUKEROKE'S DOUBLE IDENTITY
In Part Two that follows, I challenge the notion that Sukeroku's double identity was illogical and without meaning. I propose, instead, that it signified an important and, indeed, logical transformation of a hero of the past into a hero of the present through the workings of the principles of sekai and shuko. In the first chapter I trace the development of the Soga sekai and show the significance of Soga Gorō as a god-hero of the nation. Then, in the second, I look at the shuko that transformed Soga Gorō into Sukeroku, and show the significance of Sukeroku as the "flower of Edo"—that is, as an idealization of the Edo townsman. Although Sukeroku is no longer performed as part of the Soga sekai because of the demise of the annual cycle and traditional kabuki structure, it was the Gorō identity which helped make Sukeroku into a central figure of kabuki.
Chapter III. Sukeroku as Soga Gorō, a God-hero of the Nation:  
The Development of the Soga Sekai

To analyze the significance of Sukeroku's double identity, the first step is to elucidate the symbolism of the character Soga Gorō as portrayed by Ichikawa Danjūrō I (1660-1704), the great actor and playwright who determined many of the lasting features of Edo kabuki. This will be done by tracing the evolution of the Soga sekai from its origins in nō, kōwaka, and ko-joruri to its appearance in Edo kabuki. Nō and kōwaka are dramatic forms that began before the Tokugawa period. Ko-joruri, or "old" joruri, flourished during the early Tokugawa period.

An historical approach was chosen because the principle of sekai in kabuki is based on the existence of characters and themes accumulated over a period of time, many of which antedated the birth of kabuki. Danjūrō's portrayal of Soga Gorō in Edo kabuki depended on Gorō's having been established as a central figure among the dramatis personae of earlier dramatic forms. Representations of Soga Gorō before Danjūrō I established the character in the minds of the Japanese people as a strong and awesome being. Danjūrō's great achievement was to use the traditional framework that had built up around Gorō, in combination with acting techniques inspired by Kimpira joruri (a short-lived and very violent form of seven-
teenth-century Edo puppet and recitative theatre). In so
doing he created the aragoto style of Edo kabuki and brought
Gorō to the highest possible level in the hierarchy of dra­
matic characterization: as a living god-hero for the people of
Edo.

The Soga Brothers' Revenge

The story of the Soga brothers' revenge is one of the
most popular and enduring stories in Japan. Supposedly
based on an actual event which occurred during the Kamakura
period, it is a heroic tale of how two brothers, Soga no Jūro
Sukenari and Soga no Gorō Tokimune, devoted their young lives
to avenging the murder of their father. The devotion that
enabled them to endure eighteen difficult years of waiting
before they were finally able to carry out the revenge, and
the fact that the revenge cost them their own lives, have
combined to make the brothers ideal examples of filial piety
and samurai honor.

The enemy of the brothers was Kudō Suketsune. Angered
at the father of Kawazu no Saburō Sukeshige over a matter
involving what he believed to be his rightful inheritance,
he had Sukeshige killed. Sukeshige was his own cousin and the
father of the Soga brothers, who were small children at the
time. Even though Suketsune's dispute with Sukeshige's father
was not unjust, his resolution of the problem was. And the
only thing the brothers could think of as they were growing
up was revenge—to console their mother and to restore family
honor.
The revenge was finally carried out on the twenty-eighth day of the fifth month of 1193, eighteen years after Sukeshige was killed. After several unsuccessful attempts, Jūrō and Gorō trapped Suketsune at a hunt arranged by Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147-99), the de facto ruler of Japan at that time, at the foot of Mt. Fuji. Jūrō was killed in the ensuing fight that broke out with Suketsune's retainers. Gorō escaped, but was eventually captured. He was forced to die even though Yoritomo admired his bravery. In conformity with traditional practice in cases of outstanding acts of heroism and sacrifice, Yoritomo ordered temples erected and prayers said for the Soga brothers.

The story of the Soga brothers' revenge had a number of features which contributed to its popularity, with character, theme, and geographical appeal predominating. The leading characters were, of course, the brothers themselves. With their contrasting natures--Jūrō tended to be cool and calm while Gorō was hot-blooded and quick to act--which became more pronounced the more the story was told and dramatized, the brothers stood for a kind of heroic Japanese Everyman. In Japan the traditional view of human nature is that it is made up of two sides, one calm and one violent, which balance each other. The two brothers perfectly represented these two sides.

The story's theme of vendetta was an important one in Japanese thought and literature. Japanese society placed high value on "face" and honor, and revenge was seen as a
necessary course of action when the scales of honor were somehow unbalanced. In contrast to the vendetta in *Chūshingura*, which was carried out by almost fifty samurai, the Soga brothers' revenge was accomplished with very little help. This of course put even more emphasis on the phenomenal and heroic determination of Jūrō and Gorō.

The character of the brothers and their vendetta had universal interest, but the story's setting in the eastern part of Japan gave it special geographical appeal—particularly in the Tokugawa period when Edo was the capital of the shōgun and a city of the samurai. Soga plays were performed in Kamigata kabuki, but they never occupied the position of importance they did in Edo.

The *Soga monogatari*, literally "Soga Tale," is the representative written work of the Soga brothers' revenge. It began as a work recited by storytellers. Some of them were *goze* (blind women) who told—possibly chanted or sang—the tale, accompanying themselves by beating on a drum. In time the story developed a well-established character constellation and general plot outline—in short, a *sekai*—that could be used over and over again as suited the art and purposes of different storytellers.

Once the *sekai* had been created, the storyteller, in order to satisfy the audience's desire for something new and different, found it necessary to invent incidents, episodes—what we have called *shuko*—and fit them into the familiar framework. In turn, these *shuko*, if they could survive the
test of time, crystallized and became part of the sekai; more shuko could be made in counterpoint to them. In the case of the Soga sekai, the storyteller was just one of the "performers" of the story, as in a more literal sense were the players of no and kōwaka, and later those of ko-jōruri, jōruri, and kabuki.

The question of how the written text fits into this performance process is an interesting one, although beyond the scope of this thesis. Suffice it to say, however, that after the story had been developed to a degree as an oral tale, it was written down, probably by a monk, using a kind of modified Chinese (hentai kambun) writing system. This first Soga monogatari, the so-called shinji-bon, dates from the Muromachi period and is in ten volumes. Later written versions differed more in writing system than in actual contents—until the twelve volume rufu-bon (popular edition) was published in the Tokugawa period. The rufu-bon has two more volumes than previous texts because it contains a number of incidents not found in the earlier editions. These incidents are by and large the innovations that had become part of the Soga traditional framework through their dramatization in no and particularly in kōwaka. The Soga sekai was developed in the course of dramatic performance, and this is reflected in the textual development of the Soga monogatari. Moreover, Yanagita Kunio hypothesized that the characters Tora Gozen and Tora no Shōshō, the lovers of, respectively, Jūrō and Gorō, were actually introduced
by the goze who first told the Soga story. Whether this is true or not is difficult to prove, but it does at least suggest one possible kind of connection between performances of the story and its textual development.\textsuperscript{10}

The Origins of the Soga Sekai in No, Kōwaka, and Ko-jōruri

The first entry in the Kabuki nempō suggests that Soga plays, along with those based on the Gikeiki (the story of the hero Yoshitsune), were already popular and being performed early in the history of kabuki. The entry is for the year 1559 and says that "Okuni and others performed [plays based on] the Gikeiki and the Soga Revenge in front of the Shōgun [Ashikaga] Yoshiteru."\textsuperscript{11} Although the information is clearly anachronistic (Okuni is usually thought to have first performed kabuki some forty years later), it does point out that kabuki made use of established traditional frameworks right from the beginning and among the first chosen were those of the Soga monogatari and Gikeiki.

How were Soga and other sekai that became popular in kabuki established even before Okuni did her first play? They were formulated in the repertories of other dramatic forms. Before discussing the Soga sekai in relation to Danjūrō I, it is necessary first to look at it as it had developed up to his time, in no, kōwaka, and ko-jōruri.\textsuperscript{12} Brief summaries of plays and repertories, such as those given below, cannot do justice to the evolution of a major dramatic tradition, but they will at least give some idea of the
nature of the material on which Danjūrō built his Soga dramatizations.

The Soga Sekai of No and Kowaka

Among the approximately two hundred and forty works in the current No repertory, there are five Soga plays: Chōbuku Soga, Gembuku Soga, Ko-sode Soga, Yo-uchi Soga, and Zenji Soga. In the total known repertory of more than two thousand titles, there are perhaps ten additional Soga works that are no longer performed—or perhaps never were performed. Among the fifty surviving texts of kowaka (the mai no hon), seven are Soga plays. These are Ichiman Hakoō, Gempuku Soga (note: in no the title is Gembuku, in kowaka it is Gempuku), Wada sakamori, Ko-sode Soga, Tsurugi sandan, Yo-uchi Soga, and Jūban-giri.

The Soga plays of No

The authorship and dates of composition of the Soga plays of both No and kowaka are not known with certainty. In the case of No, however, it is thought that Miyamasu may have composed the five works that are extant. Very little is known about Miyamasu. He is thought to have lived slightly later than the playwrights Motomasa (ca. 1394-1432) and Zenchiku (1405-ca. 1470) and to have toured the eastern provinces of Japan as a member of a sarugaku troupe. In the eastern provinces, where the Soga story was set, Miyamasu may have transformed the already popular tale into the No form.
Among the five works, Chōbuku Soga is not only the most distinctive, but it is also related in the most interesting way to Danjūrō I's kabuki Soga plays. It is the earliest Taimen play, that is, a work treating of the first confrontation between the Soga brothers and their enemy Kudō Suketsune. In this case, however, the encounter does not involve Jūrō; it is only between Goro and Suketsune. In fact, in Chōbuku Soga, Goro is not yet Goro; he is still a child named Hakoo living in the Hakone temple where his mother left him to train for the priesthood so that he could devote his life to praying for the repose of his father's soul. As everyone knows, however, Hakoo is not destined to become a priest. He will leave the temple in order to carry out the revenge.

The crux of the play lies in the contrast between a terribly strong-willed, but as yet powerless boy and his seemingly unassailable enemy, who arrives at the Hakone temple one day as a samurai retainer in the entourage of no less a figure of power and authority than Yoritomo. Because of the tremendous frustration that Hakoo experiences in this momentous meeting, the priest of the temple performs a chōbuku (curse) for him, the outcome of which is the highly symbolic appearance of the guardian deity Fudo Myoo who assures all watching that one day the revenge will indeed be done.

Chōbuku Soga is in two parts. It opens with the arrival of Kudō Suketsune and Minamoto no Yoritomo at the temple
in the Hakone mountains. They meet the chief priest of the temple and Hakoo. The latter questions the priest about the identity of the visitors, only to learn that Kudō Suketsune (whom Hakoo had never seen before) is among those accompanying Yoritomo. Suketsune audaciously addresses Hakoo on the subject of his father Sukeshige's death, though he has no idea of the powerful emotions that he is stirring up in the boy. Hakoo is ready to carry out the revenge on the spot, but the priest holds him back.

In the second part of the play Fudo appears. According to popular belief, Fudo Myōo is a Buddha who has been changed into a being of terrible and frightening appearance in order to act as a guardian of men in a world filled with evil spirits.

Though never so horrendous in appearance as the Tibetan angry deities, the face of Fudo is nevertheless startling. . . . One eye glares downwards, the other squints divergently upwards. With one upper tooth grasping his upper lip, his mouth is twisted into a peculiar snarl. His long hair hangs in a coil over his left shoulder. His right hand grasps a sword and his left a rope, and he stands not on a lotus or an animal mount as do many Buddhist divinities, but on an immovable rock, which rises sometimes from curling waves. Always he is ringed round with fire.18

The climax of Chōboku Soga comes when Fudo destroys an effigy (katashiro) of Suketsune and brings the play to a close with the words: "In the end, [by the power of this curse] Hakoo will succeed [in avenging his father's murder]."

The play is a masterpiece of irony and contrast. Great forces gather amidst the serenity of a mountain temple. Suketsune believes that the boy Hakoo cannot do him any harm,
but in the end he will be proved wrong. The point is brilliantly underscored when Suketsune is "transformed" (theatrically, by using the same actor--the shite) into Fudō, who, as we have seen, makes certain of Suketsune's ultimate destruction.

At the same time, it can be said that Hakōō is also transformed into Fudō. After all, neither Suketsune nor Hakōō appear as such in the second part of the play. As the audience knew, Hakōō must wait for a long time to carry out his revenge, and it is his spirit of resolve through those long years that makes him such a tremendous and even superhuman figure in the Soga sekai. In a broad sense, Hakōō as Fudō represents a determination to rid the world of the all too powerful and therefore evil forces (represented by Suketsune) that would overwhelm the less powerful forces (represented by Hakōō), and to restore the world to its proper balance. Danjūrō I's use of the Soga sekai, and his interpretation of Soga Gorō in particular, came close to a Gorō manifested as Fudō. In fact, Danjūrō consciously adopted Fudō as the symbolic model of his aragoto art.¹⁹

The other four no plays in the Soga sekai, while important, do not have quite the same power as Chōbuku Soga. Gembuku Soga concerns Hakōō's leaving the Hakone temple and undergoing the coming-of-age rites (gembuku) so that he may finally carry out his revenge as a man. In the play Jūrō goes to Hakone to take Hakōō from the temple, but before Hakōō can be released, Jūrō must get permission from the
head priest. Although it means going against their mother's wishes—eventually leading her to disown Hakoo—the priest, who is sympathetic to the brothers' cause, allows Hakoo to go. When the brothers set out, he comes after them with a long sword to present to Hakoo in honor of his coming of age, the ceremony of which has been performed by Jūrō on the road. It is this sword, which is said to be a gift from Yoshitsune, that figures so centrally in Sukeroku.

Ko-sode Soga contains the reconciliation of Gorō and his mother, which is also the farewell meeting of mother and sons before the revenge is carried out. As a result of the action depicted in Gembuku Soga (namely, leaving the temple where the mother had intended her younger son remain), Hakoo (now Gorō) had been disowned. A reconciliation takes place, and although Jūrō and Gorō rejoice, expressing their happiness in music and dance (which are the focus of the play), this is soon supplanted by lamentation at the thought of imminent separation from their mother.

Yo-uchi Soga is concerned with the revenge itself. The strength of the play lies in the emotional contrast between the necessity of carrying out the revenge in order to restore family honor and the strong attachment Gorō and Jūrō have toward their mother and toward their two retainers, Oniō and Dōzaburō, who are prepared to (but do not) join their masters in death.

The story of Zenji Soga, the last play of the five, opens with Oniō and Dōzaburō's visit to the Soga mother to
bring her some of her sons' personal effects to keep as mementos. While lamenting the deaths of Gorō and Jūrō, she is at the same time concerned about the safety of her surviving son, Kugami no Zenji. He is at Kugami Temple, where she sends Onio and Dozaburo to look after him, but before they can get there he has been captured and sent off to Kamakura on the orders of Yoritomo. This can only upset the balance that had been restored when Gorō and Jūrō carried out their revenge on Suketsune, and contributes to the belief that the Soga brothers' struggle continued even after they were dead.

The Soga plays of kōwaka

Unlike no, which is well known and performed by amateurs and professionals alike in many areas of Japan, kōwaka is not well known and survives today only in the Village of Ōe in Fukuoka Prefecture (Kyūshū). It has been performed there for the past four centuries, since late in the sixteenth century, when a kōwaka master came to teach the art to the samurai retainers of Kamachi Hyōgo-no-kami Akimune, lord of a castle town near present-day Ōe. 21

While the traditions of kōwaka continued to be transmitted faithfully from generation to generation in the outlying district of Ōe, kōwaka was dying in Edo. There, kōwaka masters enjoyed the prestige of samurai status and seemed to have spent much energy trying to dissociate themselves from the class of entertainers by ridding their performance of its dance elements, and reducing it finally to "simply
singing to a beat produced by the slapping of a fan." These are the words of Takizawa Bakin, a noted writer of the nineteenth century, who also observed in the same entry of *Nimaze no ki* (1811) that kowaka—with the dance intact—still survived in Ōe village, "although most people of Edo do not know it." 22

The survival of kowaka remained practically a secret until almost a century after *Nimaze no ki* was written, when Takano Tatsuyuki, a scholar who died in 1948, read the entry and went to Ōe (in 1907) to see if the art of kowaka had indeed survived there. What he saw in the performances, as well as in the historical and genealogical records of the performers, was the subject of many of his pioneering studies. 23

Takano's research must have been stimulated also by the reprinting in 1900 of *Mai no hon*, which James Araki in *The Ballad Drama of Medieval Japan* translates as "Texts for Kowaka Dances," and describes as "an anthology of thirty-six standard kowaka compiled in the early seventeenth century and published as prose tales to be enjoyed in reading." 24

Ueda Kazutoshi, editor of this work, said in the preface that kowaka, which had long since become a virtually forgotten dramatic art form, was "the equal of the no drama in its importance to the culture of medieval Japan." 25

An indication of the importance of kowaka is that its material was based on two major works of pre-Tokugawa Japan, the *Heike monogatari* and the *Soga monogatari*. Kowaka helped popularize and establish the traditions of these works.
Kōwaka are "lively tales which extol the virtuous warrior, exalt valorous and honorable death, and find pleasurable charm in the pathos of tragedy. Loyalty, filial piety, faithfulness, courage, and chivalry are glorified." They are significant precursors of kabuki.

Summaries of the seven Soga works of kōwaka are included in Araki's book. In the matter of story line, the similarities between nō and kōwaka Soga plays can be readily seen. Differences are found mainly in what I call the "distribution" of the story. The kōwaka Gempuku Soga, for example, contains Hakō's meeting with Kudo Suketsune at the Hakone temple. This, as we have seen, was treated in the nō Chōbuku Soga, which, in my view, makes more effective use of the meeting between Hakō and Suketsune, and Hakō's subsequent frustration. Another example of a difference in "distribution" is found in Tsurugi sandan. In kōwaka this contains the episode where the priest gave Gorō and Jūro a sword which has special value. In nō this episode is found in Gembuku Soga.

Yet another example of such a difference is found in the nō and kōwaka Yo-uchi Soga. Whereas the nō version contains the scene of the revenge on Suketsune and ends with Jūro's death and Gorō's capture, the kōwaka version stops just before the revenge is carried out, the point being that finally the revenge can be carried out. The revenge itself, the ensuing fight between the brothers and Suketsune's retainers, Jūro's death and Gorō's capture are then all covered
in the kōwaka Juban-giri. Soga plays of kabuki generally stop before the actual carrying out of the revenge.

Before summarizing the Soga sekai as seen in the works of nō and kōwaka, I would like to discuss one kōwaka piece in some detail. Just as Chōbuku Soga is of special interest among the Soga plays of nō, so too is Wada sakamori outstanding among those of kōwaka. And like Chōbuku Soga, Wada sakamori displays an interesting relationship with Danjūrō's Soga works.

The story of Wada sakamori is about Jūrō's farewell to his lady-love, the courtesan Oiso no Tora (elsewhere referred to as Tora Gozen). Arriving at her house, he encounters Wada Yoshimori, who had previously helped the brothers in an unsuccessful attempt to carry out the revenge. Friendship notwithstanding, Yoshimori and Jūrō are ready to quarrel over the lady. Goro, whose brotherly instincts tell him that Jūrō is about to need his help, arrives on the scene. (He had been at home sharpening arrowheads in preparation for the revenge.) Goro is poised outside the sliding paper door of the room his brother is in, and just as he is about to attack, Yoshimori's son, the strongman Yoshihide (who, as Asahina, comes to play a major role in the kabuki Soga sekai) sees Goro's image through the door. Yoshihide lunges at Goro and tries to drag him by his armor into the room. But Yoshihide, for all his strength, cannot budge Goro. The part of the armor that he was pulling at finally gives way and he tumbles backward into the room. The episode ends with Goro having the situation well in hand.
The importance of *Wada sakamori* is that it is the first play in which Gorō is clearly established as a being of great, even superhuman, strength. This scene of his encounter with Yoshihide is reminiscent of Yoshitsune's famous encounter with Benkei on the bridge. Although Yoshitsune and Gorō are in other respects quite different, in both cases a youth encounters someone whose strength is legendary and who should in ordinary circumstances be the victor. In this Gorō-Yoshihide encounter, we see the beginnings of the style that gave rise to Danjūrō's aragoto art.29

In summarizing the *Soga sekai* as it is found in works of *nō* and *kōwaka*, it can be said first of all that the basic character constellation and plot outlines that were used in later *Soga* dramatizations have been established. The main characters are Soga Gorō and his brother Jūrō, their mother, their two loyal retainers Oniō and Dōzaburō, the courtesan Oiso no Tora, and finally, Kudō Suketsune.30 The plot revolves around preparations for the revenge, carrying it out, and to a degree, what happens after the deed was done. The focus of the story is the conflict between the larger forces of the state, as represented somewhat abstractly and distantly by Yoritomo, and personally and closely by Suketsune, and the two brothers who struggle to assert their rights against these forces. It is not simply a struggle between evil and good, but between the more powerful and the less powerful. It is a conflict between the forces of society—the kind of theme that was so important in classical Japanese drama in general.
What made the Soga sekai of nō and kōwaka special, however, was the way in which the character of Gorō was treated. In plays like Chōbuku Soga and Wada sakamori, we see the first steps toward the representation of Gorō as a superman, a god-hero, symbolically connected with Fudo. As Gorō increased in stature and strength through repeated dramatizations, the contrast between him and Jūro was firmly established. Unlike the aragoto Gorō, Jūro came to be depicted as a rather feminine type, a character especially suited to a softer, wagoto style of kabuki.

The Soga Sekai of Ko-jōruri

Ko-jōruri, or old jōruri, is the term that is applied to jōruri prior to the partnership of Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724) and Takemoto Gidayū (1651-1714), and particularly their joint work on the play Shusse kagekiyo, performed in 1685. Just as the term hanare-kyōgen was no doubt conceived after the idea of tsuzuki-kyōgen was developed, the term ko-jōruri was used once the "new" jōruri of Chikamatsu and Takemoto Gidayū was developed. In cases of this kind, of course, the various terms describe trends and tendencies rather than clear-cut divisions that irrevocably divide one group from another.

In historical terms, a consideration of the Soga plays of ko-jōruri follows that of nō and kōwaka. In artistic terms, however, the Soga sekai was not actually developed any further in ko-jōruri. The contribution of ko-jōruri to the Soga sekai was to bring it, in many cases using kōwaka
texts, into the Tokugawa period. Although kōwaka for the most part declined artistically soon after the beginning of the Tokugawa period, at the same time it was "reborn" by being metamorphosed into the jōruri of that period.

At the same time as the popular edition (rufu-bon) of the Soga monogatari was being published in the early seventeenth century, ko-jōruri Soga playbooks (shōhon) were also being printed. The earliest known examples of these are Ko-sode Soga, used by Satsuma Dayū (or Joun) (1595-1672), and thought to have been printed some time before 1650, and Wada sakamori, also used by Satsuma Dayū, and dated the first month of 1664. According to Takano Masami, these texts are almost exactly the same as the kōwaka texts of the same names.

Another ko-jōruri Soga play is Ō-Soga Fuji kari, performed by Inoue Harima-nō-Jō (1632-85), and which is a composite of the kōwaka Yo-uchi Soga and Jūban-giri. The jōruri reciter Uji Kaga-no-Jō (1635-1711) also performed Soga works, but until Chikamatsu began writing for him, his Soga works are said to be almost duplicates of those of Harima-no-Jō, although Uji Kaga-no-Jō did change the titles of the works he adopted as his own. Takano concludes that neither Harima-no-Jō nor Kaga-no-Jō progressed beyond the Soga works of kōwaka. They simply lifted sections from the popular edition of the Soga monogatari, which, in any case, was probably closely related to the Soga plays of kōwaka.

A final noteworthy feature of the Soga sekai of ko-jōruri is the existence of a cycle of seven Soga works which are said
Ichikawa Danjūrō I and the Representation of Soga Gorō in Kabuki

Ichikawa Danjūrō I made Soga Gorō into a god-hero for the people of Edo. To do this he used the tradition that had built up behind Gorō in other dramatic forms and combined it with acting techniques inspired by Kimpira jōruri, a form of ko-jōruri which flourished in Edo in the mid-seventeenth century. Danjūrō's achievement may be summarized in the word aragoto—for he was the founder of that "rough" style of kabuki, which not only made Edo kabuki distinctive from the wagoto, or "gentle" style, of Kamigata kabuki, but also helped make kabuki as a whole a distinctive form of world drama.

Aragoto, which was in large part based on and represented by the Soga sekai, particularly the character Soga Gorō, was characterized by "the exaggerated movement and bombastic language appropriate to the superhuman prowess of warrior heroes" such as Gorō. In kabuki today the exaggerated movement and bombastic language still survive, but audiences no longer really believe in the superhuman prowess of warrior heroes, which once made fantastic action and style of speech necessary and appropriate. My purpose in the re-
remainder of this chapter is to complete the picture of Soga Gorō as god-hero of the nation by interpreting the Soga sekai in terms of Japanese popular belief which, during the Tokugawa period, gave credence to aragoto god-heroes. I will begin by looking at what Danjūrō gained from Kimpira jōruri.

Interpreting the Soga Sekai: The Aragoto Hero as God-hero

Kimpira jōruri and aragoto

Danjūrō I performed the role of Soga Gorō in the play Kachidoki homare Soga (1675) when he was only sixteen years old. His stage career, however, had actually begun two years earlier, when, according to the Kabuki nendaiki, he performed the role of the legendary strongman and monster-slayer, Sakata no Kintoki, in the play Shitenno osanadachi.39 Although the text of the work does not survive, this performance is commonly viewed as the beginning of the aragoto style of kabuki.40

As the title indicates, Shitenno osanadachi was part of the Shitenno sekai. This sekai provided the basis and a good deal of the material for Kimpira jōruri, which was brought to Edo from Kyoto by Sugiyama Shichirōzaemon (dates unknown); Satsuma Dayū, and other jōruri reciters. Kimpira jōruri was given its distinctive features by Satsuma Dayū’s pupil Izumi Tayū (dates unknown), who in 1662 took the rather imposing name Sakurai Tamba no Shōjō Taira no Masanobu, and his son, Izumi Tayū II.
In drama the Shitenno sekai can be traced to such no plays as Shuten Dōji and Ōeyama, which dramatize how Minamoto no Raikō, together with the shitenno, Watanabe no Tsuna, Sakata no Kintoki, Usui no Sadamitsu, and Urabe no Suetake, along with the warrior Hirai Yasumasa, went to Mount Ōe where they subdued the monster Shuten Dōji. Until the Tokugawa period the popularity of the Shitenno sekai came close to that of the Soga and Gikeiki sekai.

Kimpira joruri, using this traditional framework, made the exploits of Sakata no Kintoki's son, Kimpira, one of its featured innovations, which in time assumed the proportions of a sekai in its own right. Like Kintoki, Kimpira was brave and strong, but it was to the point of being reckless. He was portrayed as being short-tempered and inclined to plunge into situations with his eyes closed. Kimpira jōruri was a violent type of dramatic presentation, both in the rough style of jōruri delivery and in the way puppets were made to enact great battle scenes culminating in houses being tossed up in the air, trees being torn out by the roots, and enemies having their heads and various limbs ripped from their bodies. Danjūrō, who was a youth when Kimpira jōruri was at the height of its popularity, was reportedly influenced by what he saw and later adapted some of its techniques to kabuki.

When Danjūrō appeared on stage for the first time as Kintoki, it is said that his style of acting and make-up were at least in part derived from Kimpira jōruri. He did a
Sakata no Kintoki subduing a tengu. Illustration by Torii Kiyo-nobu from Masters of the Japanese Print: Moronobu to Utamaro.
fight scene (tachi-mawari) wielding an ax in one hand, and painted his whole body red with crimson and black lines decorating his face —thereby beginning the style of make-up that came to be known as kumadori and which is now one of the distinguishing features of aragoto.

From the outset these techniques (and others that were to follow) appealed greatly to Edo audiences. Their effect was powerful and shocking—and just what the residents of the samurai city wanted to see. Danjūrō, however, needed something more than what Kimpira jōruri provided in order to establish the style that would determine the course of kabuki. What he needed was found in the Soga sekai, which, as we have already seen, had by the early Tokugawa period given much material to other dramatic forms.

Soga Gorō as god-hero

Soga Gorō was the aragoto hero par excellence. But the display of physical strength and the bold presentation coming from Kimpira jōruri were not the most important elements in the power he had when represented on stage by Danjūrō. His power came from the belief audiences had that he was a god-hero. To understand this, we must look at the role of the hito-gami, "man god," in kabuki.

Yanagita Kunio first suggested the importance of a connection between hito-gami and kabuki when he said that the name Gorō, which is used for several aragoto kabuki heroes (such as Soga Gorō and Kamakura Gongorō), actually stands for
As defined by Hori Ichiro, the goryo were the malevolent spirits of noble persons who died in political intrigues. They were associated with disasters, epidemics, and wars. Originally, the belief in goryo was also influenced by the Chinese idea that if the spirits of the dead did not have memorial services performed by their descendants, they would become evil spirits or demons. The belief in goryo was also influenced by the Buddhist idea that every human being has Buddha nature within him and thus has the possibility of becoming a Buddha. Later, the idea of goryo was gradually expanded through the reinterpretation that even an ordinary person could become a goryo or goryo-shin (goryo deity) by his own will power, ardent wish on the verge of death, or accidental death under unusual circumstances.

Belief in goryo has survived in folk beliefs, rituals, and customs as well as in folk arts, dancing, and music. Even the most refined classical dramas or plays are thought to have originated from the belief in goryo or the hito-gami complex.

The belief that a person has the potential to become a god or acquire god-like power is what underlies the concepts of goryo and hito-gami. Knowledge of these beliefs, which were still important and influential during the Tokugawa period, has helped scholars take a new look at aragoto and its heroes.

The most famous hito-gami or goryo in history was Sugawara no Michizane (845-903), a nobleman who died in exile after being accused of plotting against the emperor. Some twenty years after he died—a period in which many disasters struck Kyoto that were said to be due to Sugawara's vengeful spirit—Sugawara was enshrined at Kitano Shrine in Kyoto and worshipped as a god throughout the country. It was presumed that such worship would appease the angry spirit.
Sugawara was a nobleman, but samurai and commoners could also become superhuman beings. Soga Gorō is perhaps the most famous example of such a being without noble lineage. He and his brother spent eighteen years plotting and finally carrying out their revenge, only to die themselves. In Japanese belief, the great spirit they showed during their lifetimes and their untimely deaths combined to make god-heroes of them. Like Sugawara, the Soga brothers are worshipped at certain shrines, particularly at Hakone.

The belief in goryō required that the spirit be appeased through worship. It is very interesting, however, that worship of the spirits of the departed did not just take the form of enshrinement, but could also take the form of dramatic performances based on the lives of the god-heroes. Dramatic performances include the telling of oral tales in the Muromachi period, which, as we have seen, were largely concerned with the story of the Soga brothers. Ruch has said that "Muromachi vocal literature was more than entertainment or diversion; it was a magico-religious and psychotherapeutic ceremony for artist and audience."

Something similar may be said of kabuki in the Tokugawa period. In the world of pre-modern Japan telling stories and performing dramas about heroes were viewed both as ways to entertain audiences and at the same time as ways to worship those heroes and acknowledge their powers. Danjūrō I brought together both of these aspects on the kabuki stage.
This special way of viewing dramatic character also helps in understanding the nature of the principle of sekai and the continuity in Japanese culture that underlies it. In short, Soga Gorō's story had to be told and at the same time because it was told it began to acquire a kind of momentum that would carry it through various transformations—from oral narrative, to no and kōwaka, and on to ko-jōruri (and jōruri), and kabuki forms. It might even be said that Soga Gorō acquired importance and, by extension, god-likeness simply because his story was repeatedly told. It thus became so central to the culture that it formed part of what Ruch has called the national literature.

It was mentioned earlier that the first entry in the Kabuki nempyo refers to Okuni performing Soga plays. It is thought that Okuni began kabuki by doing nembutsu (a prayer to Amida Buddha) songs and dances. Hori has pointed out that:

> the practice of Nenbutsu ... and the belief in Amida-butsu to whom Nenbutsu was offered as a prayer appeared in about the ninth century and flourished in the tenth and eleventh centuries; they were connected with the rising belief in goryo. Many magical Nenbutsu dances and dramas still exist in rural villages. They have the function of driving off evil spirits of the dead ... [in time] popular Nenbutsu beliefs and practices degenerated into magico-artistic entertainments and lost their religious character.51

Even though the religious character may have been lost—just as the agricultural connection was lost in the case of the annual play cycle—some entertainments did start as
"magic against the goryō."\textsuperscript{52} It can be supposed that kabuki at least in part had this magical function when Okuni performed.

This being the case, we can then understand why Okuni may have performed Soga plays, even if the fact cannot actually be proven. She would have done them as part of a nembutsu ritual, albeit secularized and carried out mainly for entertainment purposes. But is that not how drama has generally started—with the carrying out of some religious ritual which in time moved out of the realm of religion and into the realm of "pure" drama?

Just as goryō is linked with Gorō (according to Yanagita), the word ara-hito-gami may be linked with aragoto. Although the ara in both words is usually interpreted as "violent," "angry," or simply "rough," there is another way to read its meaning and that is in the sense of "existence" or "appearance."\textsuperscript{53} Despite the seeming disparity of these interpretations, I think it is very important that both be considered together. The latter tells us that a being, namely the god-hero, exists and that he can appear before us in human form. The implication of this for the drama is that this being may be represented by a human actor on a stage. The former then gives us an idea of the being's nature, which is that he is strong and prone to violent displays of strength. Of course, a great source of that strength is anger. To appreciate how this works, it must be remembered that special anger-producing circum-
stances were required for figures such as Sugawara no Michizane and Soga Gorō to gain the supernatural powers that were believed to be the source of calamity in the world of men.

Thus, we have in the aragoto hero a representation of a superhuman being--or god-hero--in human form. In his portrayals of Soga Gorō, Kimpira, Kintoki, Kamakura Gongorō, and others, Danjūrō I brought this kind of being to the kabuki stage. The kumadori make-up and the mie poses were not accidental developments. They were Danjūrō's way of giving himself a fierce and awe-inspiring presence like that of Fudo or like the statues that guard Buddhist temples, whose aggressive stance and violent expressions are often compared to those of the aragoto hero.

Danjūrō's characters may have been fictional, but his portrayals of them were real and from the beginning audiences responded enthusiastically to them. Having first seen the technical possibility of bringing "ara" characters to the stage in Kimpira joruri, Danjūrō then brought them to the kabuki stage. He did this by means of the Soga sekai and the popular beliefs that lay behind it, thus creating the god-hero Gorō who could be continually transformed and renewed by later generations of Danjūrō's.
The Soga Sekai and the Annual Play Cycle

Our discussion of Danjūrō's use of the Soga sekai must take into account the place of that sekai in the annual play cycle.

Records show that Danjūrō's first Soga play, Kachi-doki homare Soga, was produced beginning in the fifth month of 1675. In fact, with one exception, plays which featured Danjūrō as Soga Gorō began in the fifth month of the year. Although the traditional starting date for the bon production period came to be in the middle of the seventh month, in the Genroku era—when Danjūrō I was active—productions beginning in the fifth month were thought of as bon productions. This is shown by an entry in the Yakusha mannenreki, a critique published in 1700, which says that every year Soga plays were performed during the bon (i.e. beginning in the fifth month) production period. From about 1703 (a year before Danjūrō I was killed on stage by a fellow actor), Soga plays began to be used for spring productions, and in 1709 all theatres in Edo featured Soga plays as spring productions. From that time on spring productions in Edo were based on the Soga sekai.

Why Soga plays were first used for bon productions and then used for spring productions is not entirely clear. There is no doubt, however, that either season was appropriate. As the entry in the Yakusha mannenreki
also said, the purpose of Soga plays was to worship (matsu-ru) the souls of the dead brothers. In Japan the two special seasons of the year for honoring departed spirits are New Year's (i.e. spring) and bon. Portraying the Soga brothers in drama was one way of honoring them. Moreover, since the brothers carried out their revenge between the seasons of spring and bon, it was logical to have plays which concerned the revenge either begin or end at those times. Whether produced at the time of bon, as they were at first, or whether produced during the spring, as they came to be, Soga plays were a fixed part of the yearly cycle.

An Example of Danjūrō I's Representation of Soga Gorō:

Tsuwamono kongen Soga

For several reasons, Tsuwamono kongen Soga provides a good example of Danjūrō I's representation of Soga Gorō. First, it is one of the major plays in which Danjūrō I portrayed Soga Gorō. Second, it survives as an e-iri kyōgen-bon, an illustrated playbook of the Genroku era, and among the illustrations are several excellent ones which show Danjūrō as the archetypal aragoto Soga Gorō. Third, an incident associated with it reveals the god-hero nature of Danjūrō's Soga Gorō. And fourth, it is the play in which Danjūrō II, who will be discussed in the next chapter, made his stage debut.
Danjūrō as Gorō was truly an aragoto figure, as the illustration on the following page shows. He has the upper part of his kimono pulled down and the lower part tucked up. In terms of the action that was taking place, this allowed him freedom of movement. More important, however, it conveyed the sense of Gorō's physical strength by letting the audience get a good view of the actor's body. He is also shown with protruding eyes, a turned-down, tooth-baring mouth, and a stance with one leg aggressively thrust forward. All of these are unmistakable features of the aragoto hero.

The kind of transformation that Danjūrō carried out in the Soga sekai is best seen in that part of Tsuwamono kongen Soga which tells the same story as in the nō Chōbuku Soga. After Gorō has met his enemy Kudō Suketsune for the first time, his only thought is to carry out the revenge as soon as possible. But the time is not right and he must wait. In the nō the priest takes over at this point and prays to Fudō on behalf of Gorō. This results in the appearance of Fudō who assures everyone that in time Gorō will be granted the strength to carry out the deed. In Tsuwamono kongen Soga, however, Fudō's intentions are more graphically shown. Gorō undergoes thirty-seven days of religious austerities (aragyo, literally "rough action;" notice the ara which is the same as that in aragoto and ara-hito-gami). He acquires fantastic strength and, as the next figure il-
Ichikawa Danjuro I as Soga Gorō and Ichikawa Kuzo (Danjuro II) as Fudo in Tsuwamono kongen Soga.
lustrates, as proof of this he pulls out a large bamboo by its roots. (This famous scene is called **Takenuki Soga**, the bamboo-pulling Soga.) As in the case of **Chōbuku Soga**, Fudō also makes his appearance here (as shown in the figure above). What is particularly interesting is that Danjūrō's son, Kuzō, who later became Danjūrō II, played the role of Fudō. The close tie between Gorō and Fudō was thus heightened by the underlying family relationship of Danjūrō and his son. Undoubtedly, this intensified the effect of the play. In fact, when **Tsuwamono kongen Soga** was being performed people flocked to the theatre from Narita (in present-day Chiba Prefecture) with money they had collected to present to Danjūrō. It was as if they viewed Danjūrō and his son themselves as god-heroes—as actual manifestations of Gorō and Fudō. Following this zealous display, the actors led a procession out to Shinshōji temple in Narita (where Fudō is worshipped) and in turn contributed money there. It is said that from that time the Danjūrō line of actors began to be referred to as "Narita-ya" (House of Narita). Later on Fudō lost his immediate association with Gorō, but in the beginning at least, that association helped build up the power of Gorō as a god-hero of the nation.

* * *

In the world of modern-day Japan it is perhaps hard to conceive that people once believed in god-heroes. It is
Ichikawa Danjūrō I as Soga Gorō in famous takenuki (bamboo-pulling) scene from Tsuwamono Kongen Soga.
even more difficult to go back into history and discover what a god-hero such as Soga Gorō once symbolized. As a society changes its heroes change, and what I have tried to suggest in this chapter is that the significance of Soga Gorō as portrayed by Ichikawa Danjūrō I must be understood both in terms of accumulated dramatic tradition and contemporary popular belief—inssofar as it sheds light on the meaning of that tradition. It remains now to show how Soga Gorō underwent further change, by becoming Sukeroku.
Chapter IV. Sukeroku, Flower of Edo: The Transformation of Soga Gorō into Sukeroku

Among the plays that survive in the present-day repertoire, Sukeroku offers one of the best examples of kabuki dramatic structure at the peak of its development. This state was reached in the early eighteenth century when Ichikawa Danjūrō II (1688-1758) combined a jidai-mono and a sewa-mono into a single work within the framework of the annual play cycle, thereby giving Edo kabuki a unified structure. In the case of Sukeroku (a sewa-mono) this meant making it part of a spring production Soga play (a jidai-mono) through the technique of double identity.

Chapter III began the discussion of the significance of Sukeroku's double identity by showing that Soga Gorō as portrayed by Ichikawa Danjūrō I symbolized a god-hero to the people of Edo. The present chapter will examine the symbolism of the character Sukeroku. With the image of Gorō behind him, Sukeroku as portrayed by Ichikawa Danjūrō II was perceived by Edo audiences as idealizing two of the most colorful townsman types of his day: the otokodate, or chivalrous commoner, and the fudasashi, or wealthy rice-broker. As such, Sukeroku was the quintessential figure of Edo kabuki--the flower of Edo.
A Summary of Sukeroku

Sukeroku is set in front of the Miura-ya, in the Yoshiwara gay quarters of Edo. There Sukeroku confronts Ikyū when both arrive expecting to meet Agemaki, a grand courtesan of the quarters. Although Ikyū is a powerful, albeit blustery, samurai with a retinue of underlings to do his bidding, Agemaki is enamoured of the townsman, Sukeroku. In one of the most famous speeches of the play, she says of the two men: "Compare Sukeroku and Ikyū, side by side. Here is the one, a young stag, here is the other, an old crab. White and black, like snow and ink. One the broad ocean, one a mire of mud; one deep, one shallow, as the courtesan's beloved and the prostitute's customer." 

The confrontation between Sukeroku and Ikyū could be seen simply as the rivalry of two men from different classes of society over the affections of the same woman, were it not for the revelation that Sukeroku is really the samurai Soga Gorō. The play, in fact, is not about class rivalry as much as it is about matters of identity and revenge. Gorō has come into the gay quarters in the identity of Sukeroku to search for the stolen sword that he must have to carry out the revenge. The sword he is looking for is Tomokirimaru, which was a gift from Yoshi-tsune. Gorō's aim is to provoke samurai passing through
the quarters to draw their weapons so that he can check
to see whether they have the one he is looking for. As
Sukeroku he can do this without raising suspicion about
the revenge. His confrontation with Ikyū, who is actually
the Heike general Iga Heinai Zaemon and who in the end
proves to have the sword, may start out looking as though
it is about matters of love but it is really about matters
of revenge.

Once Agemaki, her friend Shiratama, and the other
courtesans of the Miura-ya, and Ikyū and his men have been
introduced, Sukeroku enters by performing his famous
dance on the hanamichi. The chorus sings in accompaniment:

Hear the shamisen sounding bright Sugagaki;
Arousing our memories in the gay quarter . . .
Impregnated kimono crest of Five Seasons;
Symbol of year's waiting, steeped deeply in love . . .
Do not hurry, do not rush;
The world is transient, a wheel that turns;
Time passes by day by day as expected . . .
You are charming! You are marvelous!3

Sukeroku's coming had been eagerly awaited by all the cour­
tesans. Each welcomes him by offering him a pipe to smoke.
In contrast, Ikyū, who is sitting nearby, receives nothing.
And when he protests, Sukeroku insults him by "handing"
him a pipe stuck between the toes of his foot.

The pipe scene is followed by an amusing scene in­
volving a noodle vendor, Sukeroku, Kampera Mombei (a samurai
retainer of Ikyū), and Mombei's servant, Asagao Sembei.
When Mombei comes out of the Miura-ya drunk and out of sorts
because no courtesan came to serve him in the bath, a
noodle vendor accidentally bumps into him. Mombei re­
acts by preparing to strike him. It is a classic case of samurai versus commoner. Sukeroku, however, steps in on behalf of the vendor and tells Mombei to forgive him. Since Sukeroku to all appearances is not a samurai, he has no right to tell Mombei what to do. An argument then breaks out between them and ends when Sukeroku dumps a bowl of noodles on Mombei's head. Mombei is shown for a fool when, thinking that the noodles are actually his brains, cries out that he has been mortally wounded. Once the situation is made clear he orders his gang to attack Sukeroku. Sukeroku, however, turns out to be so imposing that they slink away without touching him. Even when Sembei tries to attack Sukeroku, he is easily driven back.

Neither Sembei nor Mombei can understand who Sukeroku is. In contrast to the samurai style Mombei uses to identify himself in the heat of his confrontation with Sukeroku ("Taking the Kan of my name from Kan'u, the Chinese general of the Three Kingdoms whose flowing Cloud Beard reminds us of Lord Ikyu, and the Mon of my name signifying a treasured temple gate, I am the sam­murai Kampera Mombei, wealthy powerful Kampera Mombei!"), Sukeroku takes his time before he finally tells everyone in his characteristic akutai ("insult") style:
No one but an ass sets foot in Yoshiwara not knowing my name. So hear it well. A headband of purple, the pride of Edo, dyed in Edo, binds my hair, the strands of which as you look through them frame a face which, if it graced an ukiyo-e print, would make that picture famous in Japan! Who does not know this dragon in the water, growing stronger as his enemies increase? From the carousers at the pleasure houses of the Golden Dragon Mountain to the grim image of the ferocious god Fudo in Meguro, all Edo's eight-hundred-and-eight districts do not hide the man who does not know this wearer of the crest of peonies, this dweller among the cherry blossoms of Yoshiwara, this youthful Sukeroku, Agemaki's Sukeroku! Scum! Bow before this face! Worship it!

Sukeroku is the man of Edo par excellence. Words are his best weapon. He has manipulated Sembei and Mombei by his actions and extravagant introduction of himself. Frightened, they do exactly as Sukeroku wanted them to do. They draw their swords, which he has a chance to inspect before chasing them away.

Sukeroku's identity as Soga Goro is clearly revealed to the audience in a scene with his brother, Juro, who also has another identity--that of the sake peddler, Shimbei. In the effeminate and un-samurai-like Shimbei, we see a parody of the wagoto Juro. Shimbei upbraids Sukeroku:

Every day mother and I heard stories of your fighting in Yoshiwara.... The day the crows don't caw is the day Sukeroku doesn't fight in Yoshiwara, they say. She could not believe this wastrel called Sukeroku was her son, Goro. So she sent me to the quarter to see.... For eighteen years we have waited to avenge father's murder at Hakone Mountain, but now that the time has
come, you disgrace yourself with quarreling and debauchery. Honor your parents is the first precept of morality, honor your elder brother is the second. You esteem neither. The bond between us is broken. You are no longer my brother Goro.

But Sukeroku replies that he only fights out of his filial duty, for the purpose of finding the stolen sword. Shimbei (Juro) is convinced and decides to join his brother in his search.

The play continues with two comic scenes in which the brothers encounter first two country samurai and then a gay quarters dandy. Both the samurai bumpkins and the dandy let Sukeroku and Shimbei get the best of them—-the former because they are ignorant in the ways of the city and the latter because he is overly clever and effete.

A more serious chord is then struck when the brothers are discovered by their mother, who has come into the Yoshiwara disguised as a samurai. Thinking that both of her sons are now engaged in questionable behavior in the gay quarters, she admonishes them: "Virtuous sons would be taking vengeance on their father's slayer. My sons take aliases and brawl in public places." The mother is finally appeased when she hears their explanation.

The play ends with a last encounter between Sukeroku and Ikyu. Ikyu, who has somehow discovered that Sukeroku is Soga Gorō, draws his sword in a moment of emotion, and Sukeroku sees that he has Tomokirimaru. Ikyu swears that
he will never part with the sword. (As a Heike general he plans to use the sword that once belonged to Minamoto no Yoshitsune to destroy the Minamoto clan.) He attacks Sukeroku, who kills him and takes possession of the sword. The play closes with Sukeroku and Agemaki waiting for nightfall in order to escape from the Yoshiwara and to go on to find the brother's enemy, Suketsune.

In terms of plot very little happens in Sukeroku. But the point of the play is not in action. It is in the revelation of character identity. Only when the play is considered in its proper context—that is, within the Soga sekai—is the full meaning of the various identities made clear.
The Origins of the Sukeroku Innovation

When Sukeroku was performed for the first time by Ichikawa Danjūrō II in 1713, the play was new to the Edo kabuki stage, thus fulfilling a primary requirement of an innovation. However, the play was not completely new. Previously, the story of Sukeroku and Agemaki had been an established theme of Kamigata kabuki and, especially, jōruri. In creating his own Sukeroku, Danjūrō removed the love suicide element, and put the focus instead on Sukeroku as a pure Edo character.

The importance of the Kamigata origins of Sukeroku is threefold. First, they reaffirm a point about the creative processes of Japanese dramatic arts that was made earlier in this thesis: that what is "new" in one art form may be based on themes and characters that are already known in another art form. Second, they are reminders that in the early eighteenth century the Kamigata area was still the center of Japanese culture, but just as Sukeroku shifted to Edo, so was the center of culture moving there as well. And third, they show the divergent interest of Kamigata and Edo audiences: whereas the former wanted their Sukeroku to be a tragic lover, the latter wanted theirs to be a triumphant hero.

The story of Sukeroku and Agemaki began to be dramatized in the Kamigata area as early as 1678 in the play
Yorozuya Sukeroku shinjū, thirty-five years before the first production of Sukeroku in Edo by Danjūrō II. Yorozuya Sukeroku shinjū was followed by a number of other works, including Kyō Sukeroku shinjū (1707), Semi no nukegara (1707), and Sennichi-dera shinjū (1709).

How Danjūrō II became acquainted with the Kamigata Sukeroku is a question that is still being debated. Most scholars believe, however, that the jōruri reciter Miyako Itchū journeyed from the Kamigata area to Edo in 1712 and performed one or more of the works mentioned above, which Danjūrō II heard and then had made into a work for himself.

Mention should also be made of a theory that there was actually someone named Sukeroku living in Edo, who was the model for Danjūrō. Stories about a real Sukeroku, however, sound more like versions of later kabuki plays than actual historical accounts.
Ichikawa Danjūrō II and the Introduction of the Sukeroku Innovation to Edo Kabuki

In his lifetime Danjūrō II performed the role of Sukeroku three times. The first was in 1713, as part of the play Hana-yakata Aigo-zakura. The second was in 1716 in Shikirei yawaragi Soga. And the third was in 1749, as part of Otoko-moji Soga monogatari. For his first Sukeroku Danjūrō was twenty-five; for his last—his so-called ichidai issei performance—he was sixty-one.

In studying the three productions which constitute Danjūrō II's introduction of the Sukeroku innovation to Edo kabuki, one is also following the development of Danjūrō II's career, as he grew from a young man who had just begun to show his potential to a fully mature man at the top of his profession. What makes these three productions even more significant is that they also parallel the development of what came to be thought of as the characteristic culture of Edo—that is, the culture of the so-called Edokko, or "child of Edo."

The word Edokko was an expression of pride. It was not only pride in growing up and living in the city of Edo (for regardless of place of birth only the townsman-commoner, the chōnin, could be an Edokko), but also pride in a certain manner and style of living. Such pride was represented by Danjūrō II in his portrayals of Sukeroku.
Records show that Danjūrō II first performed Sukeroku in the third month of 1713 at the Yamamura-za. At that time he wore a kimono of black pongee and a headband of reddish-yellow cotton. He also carried a long sword, which showed his samurai nature since samurai were permitted to carry two swords, a long and a short one, while townsmen could only carry a short one. The setting was in the Yoshiwara gay quarters and the action focussed on a great roof-top fight scene between Sukeroku and Ikyū and his men, with Ikyū getting killed in the end.¹⁵

The clearest image of this first Sukeroku comes from an excellent illustration that is found in Sukeroku kyōgen-kō by Santō Kyōden (1761-1816).¹⁶ Kyōden attributes the picture to the artist Kondō Sukegorō Kiyoharu (fl. early eighteenth century), and the only reason it survives is because Kyōden included it in his own work. Sukeroku has his kimono top pulled down, leaving the upper part of his body bare. His muscles are bulging and his legs are thrust out. The pose is unmistakably one of the aragoto hero. This Sukeroku seems somewhat out of place in the gay quarters; we can see the striking similarity between him and Soga Gorō in Tsuwamono kongen Soga.

Sukeroku, however, was not a 'totally aragoto figure. An entry in the Yakusha irokeizu, a critique published in
L. to r., Hige no Ikyū, Kantera Mombei, Keisei Kisegawa, Agemaki, Sake-uri Shimbei, Otokodate Sukeroku, two onlookers, and a gay quarters' visitor who is fighting with Sukeroku. Illustration from *Sukeroku kyogen-ko*. 
the second month of 1714, says that he was an aragoto satte nuregoto gakari otokodate. This means that the aragoto style, which normally characterized representations of otokodate, was dispensed with and Sukeroku was instead an otokodate in the nuregoto style. Nuregoto, which is related to, but not the same as, the wagoto, or "gentle" style, of kabuki, is an erotic type of presentation—associated with lovers, not heroes. In time Sukeroku came to be represented as a physically attractive character as well as an awe-inspiring one. This was the result of refinements made by Danjūrō II in his father's aragoto art. It is important to realize, however, that from the beginning the style of production (if we use the illustration as evidence) was very much in the heroic tradition and despite outward changes that style always remained a significant part of the play. Surely it is not a coincidence that Soga Gorō, the first Sukeroku, and Danjūrō's later Sukeroku's are all shown in exactly the same way—with one leg thrust forward, attacking the enemy or appearing ready to attack, and with a determined expression on the face. The god-hero nature is consistently present in all of these depictions.

The similarity between Soga Gorō and the first Sukeroku has been suggested, but Sukeroku was not yet part of the Soga sekai. As the title Hana-yakata Aigo-zakura indicates, the play was based on the Aigo sekai. Although
we know the Aigo sekai treated of themes of feudal family rivalry, there is no extant play which uses this sekai and therefore it is very difficult to know anything about either the play or how the sekai was used.

Despite this difficulty, we can ask why Sukeroku was first made part of a play not in the Soga sekai—especially since records show that the play was performed in the third month of the year and should therefore be expected to be part of the theatre's spring production, which was usually in the Soga sekai.

There are two ways to answer this. First, as was pointed out above, the Yamamura-za did not have a proper spring production in 1713. Its kao-mise production had started in the first month of the new year—two months late—and it was not until the third month (or possibly later, according to some accounts) that the spring production actually began. Second, kabuki structure at that time was just emerging from its formative period and although theatre managers were generally inclined to produce Soga plays in the spring, exceptions could be made. Also, plays based on the Aigo sekai seem to have been popular just at that time; in the following year, 1714, Danjūrō again did an Aigo play at the Morita-za.¹⁸

Despite the lack of a Soga connection in 1713, the structure of the play was such that Sukeroku had a double identity. Sukeroku's other identity was that of the samurai
Daidōji Tahatanosuke, and Shirazake-uri Shimbei (who was later Jūrō) was a samurai named Araki Saemon.

Aside from Sukeroku and Shimbei, who were to continue as major characters in later Sukeroku plays, the other characters who also appeared in this first Sukeroku were: Agemaki, Ikyū, Sukeroku's mother (sometimes known as Mankō), Sembei, Keisei Kisegawa (the courtesan Kisegawa, who later became Shiratama), and Kantera Mombei (later, Kampera Mombei).

The importance of this first Sukeroku is that it brought the Sukeroku innovation to the Edo kabuki stage and established the setting and general character constellation for all later Sukeroku plays. Moreover, in terms of dramatic structure, it was one of the pioneering plays in which the jidai and sewa sections of a long play were linked together, as is evidenced by Sukeroku's double identity as otokodate and samurai.

In costume, acting style, and, no doubt, contents, the first Sukeroku was very different from the way it is now. What is important about it, however, is that it passed the crucial test of its first production. If it did not have potential as a good play, it would never have been heard of again. Instead, it was taken out of the Aigo sekai and made part of a Soga play.
Danjūrō II's Second Sukeroku: The Soga Connection

Danjuro II performed Sukeroku for the second time in the second month of 1716 at the Nakamura-za. Scholars agree that this was the turning point in the production of the play and that many elements of the staging and costumes that are still associated with Sukeroku, including the connection with the Soga sekai, were formulated at this time.19 This second Sukeroku also helped preserve an event which happened in Edo: cherry trees were planted in the Yoshiwara gay quarters. They were immediately made part of the setting of the play, and not only irrevocably fixed the seasonal association of Sukeroku but they also underscored the intimate connection between kabuki in general and the gay quarters.20

In this second Sukeroku Danjūrō used the snake's eye umbrella that is now one of Sukeroku's trademarks.21 He also had a shakuhachi (bamboo flute) tucked into the back of his obi, which is still used. Other changes that became standard for Sukeroku are the purple headband, which replaced the reddish-yellow one of the first production, and the black, short-sleeved kimono, which replaced the one made of black pongee.22 Attired in a more lavish costume, Sukeroku was becoming elegant.

The most symbolic change in costume for the second production was the reported replacement of the long samurai sword with a short one, the only sword a commoner could
There is a logical explanation for this change. When Sukeroku became Soga Gorō, as he did in this production, his reason for coming into the gay quarters and fighting with others there was that he was searching for the sword that he needed to carry out the revenge. The sword he was looking for was, of course, a long samurai sword, and it was natural then that he be carrying only a short one.

There is, however, another possible reason for his having only a short sword—that it was part of the process of softening Sukeroku, of making him less like the warrior he appeared to be in the first production. Such an observation requires some mention of the difference in the aragoto art (particularly with respect to the representation of Soga Gorō) of Danjūrō I and Danjūrō II.

Danjūrō II had made his stage debut in the play Tsuwamono kongen Soga. In that work, as we have seen, Danjūrō I played a strongly aragoto Soga Gorō. Gorō was also a role that Danjūrō II made famous; in fact, it was the principal role of his acting career. Danjūrō II did almost forty Soga plays in his lifetime and many had extraordinarily long performance runs.

The Gorō that Danjūrō II made famous was not, however, the same Gorō that his father had done. Danjūrō II began with his father's aragoto style and reworked it with elements of the wagoto style that Sakata Tōjūrō had developed.
so successfully in the Kamigata area. Beginning in 1711 (two years before the first Sukeroku), in the play Yunzei yome-iri Soga, instead of the red-faced Gorō of Danjūrō I, he used white make-up with red lines around the eyes.\(^{25}\) This signified a new approach to the role. Whereas Soga Gorō had been totally fierce and awe-inspiring, with Danjūrō II he began to acquire a softer, more sensuous nature. From this beginning, Danjūrō II took the idea to its fullest extent five years later in the yawaragi Soga, or "gentle" Soga, of the play Shikirei yawaragi Soga (1716), which contained the second Sukeroku. Although we are again frustrated in our attempt to know the full details of the play because of the lack of a text, contemporary observers indicate that this play was a complete departure from Danjūrō I's Soga plays (even the title, with the use of the word "gentle," indicates as much).\(^{26}\) A great deal of the importance of this play, of course, can be accounted for by the fact that it was the first time that the Sukeroku innovation was joined to a Soga play.

In 1716 the main portion of Sukeroku opened, as it does now, with Sukeroku's dance-entrance on the hanamichi. In that year, it was done to the accompaniment of Edo Han-dayū Bushi, although other forms of jōruri, especially Kato Bushi, were later used. The characters that were introduced in the 1713 production are also in the 1716 production, though instead of being identified as a sake seller, Shimbei
became an oil seller (Abura-uri Shimbei). More important, though, is that Shimbei became identified as Soga Jūrō, brother of Sukeroku/Gorō. Moreover, Agemaki here was said to be Tora no Shōshō (Gorō's lover in the Soga sekai). Agemaki's double identity did not last, however.

The significance of Danjūrō II's second Sukeroku is the use of the Sukeroku innovation in a Soga play and the softer approach to both Sukeroku and the Soga sekai in general. Both of these aspects were continued in Danjūrō II's third and last Sukeroku.

Danjūrō II's Third Sukeroku

Whereas the first and second times that Danjūrō II did Sukeroku were the first and second times it had ever been done, by the third time, three other actors had taken the leading role. All of the actors performed at the Ichimura-za, where Danjūrō had not done Sukeroku. The first was Ichimura Takenojo (dates unclear), who appeared as Sukeroku in the third month of 1733 in the play Hanafusa bunshin Soga, the second was Ichikawa Danjūrō III who performed Sukeroku in the third month of 1739 in the play Hatsumotoyui kayoi Soga, and the third was Onoe Kikugorō I (1717-83), who portrayed Sukeroku in the third month of 1746 in the play Kikeba mukashi Soga monogatari. With each production, the play became more developed and established, paving the way for the Sukeroku shukō to become the Sukeroku sekai.
The title of the play in which Danjūrō II performed his third and final Sukeroku was Otoko-moji Soga monogatari, performed in the third month of 1749 at the Nakamura-za. It seems fairly certain that the playwright in this case was Fujimoto Tobun, and indeed, Kawatake Shigetoshi calls the play one of Tobun's representative works.  

Judging by the illustration of Sukeroku that survives from this production, and by what has been written about it, Danjūrō II's third Sukeroku was ima no Sukeroku—an "up-to-date" Sukeroku, one who had changed with the times. One major source of change was the close association in the mid-eighteenth century between Danjūrō II (who was at the height of his career) and the wealthy Edo rice brokers (who were flourishing at that time). Not only is Sukeroku said to be modeled on Ōguchiya Gyou, a rice broker, but a change in the third production was the use of Katō Bushi to provide the jōruri accompaniment for Sukeroku's entrance. Katō Bushi were drawn from the ranks of the wealthy merchants who were the main patrons of kabuki. When Danjūrō performs Sukeroku today, descendants of these Katō Bushi musicians provide the accompaniment.
Ichikawa Danjūrō II as Sukeroku, third month 1749. Illustration by Okumura Masanobu.
Sukeroku: Flower of Edo

As the "flower of Edo," Sukeroku was an Edo townsman in his most idealized form. In the context of traditional Japanese culture, flower is a very evocative image. While it certainly denotes natural beauty—as expressed in the youth and physical attractiveness of Sukeroku—it means much more. Most obvious is the image of the cherry blossom, the Japanese flower of flowers, which not only represented the season of spring when Sukeroku was performed, but in the Tokugawa period was also the single, general symbol for the world of the theatres and gay quarters. These comprised the so-called ukiyo, or floating world, and were perfectly brought together in Sukeroku. Not quite so obvious, however, are the flowers, which, manifested in Sukeroku, represented (1) the spirit of resistance of the Edo townsman—what I call Sukeroku as otokodate, and (2) the Edo townsman's attainment by virtue of wealth of the most influential position in the cultural order of Tokugawa Japan—what I call Sukeroku as fudasashi.

Sukeroku as Otokodate: The Spirit of Resistance

In Edo art and literature the otokodate was a champion of the people, a hero, one who, as the characters for otoko and date signify, evoked the model image of a man.
He was a Robinhood figure who helped defend the weak against the strong. He was a man of honor, chivalrous, dedicated—and he had style. He was Sukeroku.37

The real-life counterpart of the otokodate was the machi-yakko. Machi-yakko were groups of commoners who banded together in opposition to the samurai hatamoto-yakko (bannerman "fellows") in the city of Edo. While clashes between machi-yakko and hatamoto-yakko may at times have had overtones of class conflict, many of the machi-yakko were originally low-ranking samurai.38 Unlike those hatamoto in the service of the shōgun, however, these samurai found jobs as shopkeepers, artisans, and other types of businessmen in the rapidly developing commercial sector of the city. The hatamoto, who survived on handouts in the form of rice stipends from the shōgun, were underpaid, underworked (there were no wars in which they could exercise their samurai skills) and, as a result, they formed their yakko groups which went looking for trouble in the busy streets of the city.

We must be very careful, of course, about trying to infer the significance of the fictional otokodate from the historical evidence concerning the machi-yakko. Such an attempt may lead to the following type of conclusion:

For what reason it is not quite clear, the [machi-]yakko are credited in romantic literature with remarkable virtues. They are depicted as patterns of chivalry, and styled Otokodate. . . . It is true that some of the bands of [machi-]yakko were governed by severe codes of loyalty among them-
selves, and no doubt from time to time they performed quixotic acts; but . . . they seem to have been disorderly rogues and to owe their reputation chiefly to the eighteenth-century stage plays in which they figure as heroes. It is indeed a curious fact that the theatre in Japan owed its development to its portrayal of [these people] and their exploits.\footnote{39}

The problem here is that the writer tried to make artistic works fit a limited set of historical facts, a not entirely satisfactory method of literary criticism. Moreover, the writer seems to have tried to understand Japanese culture from the point of view of his own culture and naturally, therefore, what he saw was quite "curious." If, however, we take Japan's culture as the given--and we must do this--and study the artistic works in their proper context, we find that there were good reasons why, for example, Sukeroku as *otokodate* became a major hero in the drama.

The proper context for understanding the significance of Sukeroku as *otokodate* is the *Soga sekai*. Unless we keep in mind the fact that Sukeroku is Soga Gorō, Sukeroku's actions have no meaning. Sukeroku is an *otokodate* precisely because he is Soga Gorō. To make this clearer, let us look at the first encounter between Sukeroku and Ikyū.

As we have seen, when Sukeroku enters the stage the courtesans all offer him a pipe. Ikyū, who is sitting nearby, does not receive a single one. When he protests, Sukeroku boldly offers him one with his foot. Ikyū is incensed
and proceeds to lecture Sukeroku on what it means to be an otokodate. According to Ikyū there are five qualities that distinguish a true otokodate: righteousness, morality, courtesy, reasonableness, and a spirit of honor and pride. His implication is that Sukeroku, who has achieved notoriety by fighting with all and sundry in the gay quarters and behaves in such an insulting way toward him, is not an otokodate.

Sukeroku's reply is in character with the role he has assumed. He says that for him the pride of an otokodate is simply in drawing his sword on any man bold enough to resist him. And he ends by saying, "Who do you think I am? Fool!" At this point Ikyū does not know who Sukeroku is and that he is actually talking to Soga Gorō. What Soga Gorō as Sukeroku is doing is all carefully planned and with purpose. The fighting and the insults are truly manifestations of righteousness and other otokodate qualities, for he is using them as ways to find the sword that will enable him to carry out the revenge. In sum, Sukeroku is an otokodate if one understands the motivation of his actions in terms of his identity as Soga Gorō.

This aspect of Sukeroku recalls the Ichiriki teahouse scene in Chūshingura, where Yuranosuke is spending his time in apparent dissipation in the gay quarters instead of working toward carrying out the revenge on Moronao. Like Soga Gorō, who as Sukeroku seems to be wasting his time in
the gay quarters, Yuranosuke only wants to put his enemies off their guard. The key question in both Sukeroku and Chūshingura is, as Sukeroku asks Ikyū, Dare da to omou? "Who do you think I am?" Ikyū does not know, and even Sukeroku's own mother and brother are fooled.

Given Sukeroku's identity as Soga Gorō, then, the spirit of resistance that Sukeroku as otkokodate symbolized can be understood. In terms of the Soga sekai, it was resistance first of all against Kudō Suketsune and the powerful forces (represented by Yoritomo) that made it difficult for Gorō and Jūrō to carry out their just revenge. Going further, it was generalized resistance against all destructive and overwhelming forces. Soga Gorō was associated with the guardian deity Fudō, and was himself a god-hero—becoming so by means of the aragoto art of Danjūrō I.

Sukeroku was a hero in the same tradition as Soga Gorō. Sukeroku, however, was of the new order (sewa) while Soga Gorō was of the old order (jidai). Sukeroku was a pure Edo figure—in essence, a contemporary manifestation of Soga Gorō. The forces he represented resistance against included not only the political forces of the Tokugawa period, but also evil "forces" such as fire, earthquake, business uncertainty—all of them contemporary problems. Life in the Tokugawa period was uncertain. Earthquake and fire were constantly threatening and frequent-
ly destructive, and business, which was just developing on a full scale in Edo was often risky. Just as their forefathers did, the people of the Tokugawa period turned to their heroes, their gods, to protect them against the uncertainties and to give them the power and strength that they themselves did not otherwise have.  

What are the elements that are evidence of the spirit of resistance of Sukeroku as otokodate? They may be divided into three categories: (1) action, (2) costume and make-up, and (3) speech. Sukeroku's actions are those of the aragoto hero, but they are actions appropriate to a hero of the modern city of Edo—not to a warrior from a previous age like Soga Gorō. Sukeroku's posture is always assertive, yet elegant. His dance entrance on the hanamichi, which is a series of assertive poses done with the assistance of his snake's eye umbrella, is a good example of this. In the course of the play, Sukeroku engages in a number of fight scenes with Ikyū and his men, and always emerges calmly as the winner.

Sukeroku's costume and make-up are also those of an aggressive hero. Most outstanding are the kenka no hachimaki ("fight headband") and the kumadori make-up. Not only does the headband identify its wearer as an aragoto hero, but its purple color also signifies "abiding ties"—the ties of love (toward Agemaki) and the ties
of duty to his family and to the revenge. Sukeroku's mu-
kimi style of kumadori, which is the principal visual feature of the aragoto hero, is especially noteworthy since it is the same as that of Soga Gorō. Thus, the make-up makes clear the association between the two characters.

Finally, Sukeroku's speech provides the finest examples of his spirit of resistance. The style of speech is called akutai, and is characterized by barrages of insults delivered in a rapid-fire manner. The best instance is Sukeroku's introduction of himself, quoted earlier in the summary of the play. Other instances are when Sukeroku says:

> reason with a wise man, but kick a mule in the ass. I deflate the pompous braggard with a touch of my clog.

> Blockhead! Beanpaste brain! Outhouse ass!

There are even times when Sukeroku will use meaningless syllables just because they sound menacing. "Yattoko, totcha" is a good example.

In all, Sukeroku's actions, costume, make-up, and speech established him as the ultimate Edokko—that special class of Edo townsman, born and bred in Edo, and, most important of all, characterized by iki and hari—the spirit of resistance. Scholars do not seem to be able to say enough about Sukeroku and the idea of resistance. Toita Yasuji sums it up by simply labeling Sukeroku "the champion of the Edokko."
Sukeroku as Fudasashi: A Change in the View of Sukeroku as Otokodate

As the career of Danjūrō II matured and as the position of the townsman in Edo became more stable and secure, the image of Sukeroku as otokodate was modified to one of Sukeroku as fudasashi. This was not so much a break with past practice as it was a refinement of it. Sukeroku as otokodate had been a hero of resistance; Sukeroku as fudasashi was still a hero of resistance, but one who had reached the pinnacle of success. By the mid-eighteenth century, the economic success of the townsmen of Edo had enabled them to establish themselves as the cultural leaders of their age. The samurai may have occupied first place in the official hierarchy, but the wealthy merchants, and especially the fudasashi, had the real power and influence in "popular" society.

Proof of this modified view of Sukeroku is that at the time of Danjūrō II's third Sukeroku, Sukeroku was modeled on Ōguchiya Gyou, a leading Edo fudasashi, one of the so-called daihachi daitsu—the eight great townsman-merchant Edokko. Moreover, by this time Katō Bushi musicians, who were fudasashi by occupation, were providing the accompaniment for Sukeroku's important dance entrance. In kabuki, where there is usually no place for non-professional performers, the presence of the amateur Katō Bushi was evidence of the close association between Sukeroku and the fudasashi.
Since the *fudasashi* were major patrons of kabuki, Sukeroku as *fudasashi* may be viewed not only as a statement of townsman success, but also as the theatre's way of thanking these townsmen for their patronage and support. This can be seen in the selection of Ōguchiya Gyō as the model for Danjūrō II's third Sukeroku. Other evidence is a drawing by Utagawa Toyokuni in *E-hon shibai nenjū-kagami* showing the actors who played the roles of Sukeroku and Agemaki, accompanied by the teahouse managers whose business depended on the theatres, making formal rounds of greetings to their patrons.

In sum, Sukeroku as *fudasashi* was an exaltation of the townsmen of the kabuki audience. Edo kabuki was a mirror of the success that the Edo townsmen had achieved and Danjūrō's portrayal of Sukeroku was the image they saw in that mirror. In works such as *Edo murasaki hiiki no hachimaki* (1810), *[Hana no Edo] Kabuki nendaiki* (the titles of which are explicit references to Danjūrō and Sukeroku), and in assorted prints, we see testimonies to Edo itself. The kabuki theatre, after all, was where so many of the energies of Edo converged.

Sukeroku as *fudasashi* was the final step in the evolution of the Sukeroku innovation within the Soga traditional framework. Except for parodies in the nineteenth century, this view of Sukeroku has remained the same.
Actors who played the roles of Sukeroku and Agemaki making formal rounds of greetings to their patrons. Illustration from E-hon shibai nenju-kagami.
Conclusion

By studying kabuki dramatic structure within the framework of the annual play cycle and in terms of the principles of sekai and shuko, we have been able to ascertain the significance of Sukeroku's double identity. As we have seen, Soga Gorō, the samurai god-hero who was presented in the first months of the spring production, was transformed into Sukeroku, the townsman who appeared in the latter months of the production. This change within the cycle was a movement from the realm of the jidai-mono (works of the "old order") to the realm of the sewa-mono (works of the "new order"). The double identity served as a structural link between the two realms.

Even to appreciate what remains of kabuki today, we must understand the structure of kabuki during the Tokugawa period. It was a complex structure, based primarily on a cyclical pattern. As I have shown, this pattern was an outgrowth of the singularly intimate relationship in Japanese culture between artistic structure generally and the perception of seasonal rhythms. Even long after major urban centers had been established and people were generations removed from the actual experience of growing rice (which had given rise to the
prototypical cycle), novels, poems, and plays were still being made according to a pattern of seasonal movement. At the same time, the structure accommodated a non-cyclical or linear time. This represented the accumulation of tradition—which plays an important role not only in kabuki, but in all Japanese classical art forms. We have seen that the tradition of Soga plays was established in the early dramatic forms of no, kōwaka, and ko-jōruri and that it came to occupy a major place in kabuki. To keep traditions alive, playwrights used various types of innovations, an example of which is the joining of Sukeroku to the Soga framework.

Once kabuki is understood in terms of the annual cycle and the principles of sekai and shuko, the meaning of "a play" in kabuki becomes clear. "A play" such as Sukeroku was not a single work, complete unto itself, but one section of the cycle as a whole. Moreover, "a play" in kabuki was not a finished product but part of a continuing process wherein every production differed from, but recalled, earlier productions. Thus, it was not until late in the history of kabuki (starting around the end of the eighteenth century) that "definitive" texts were preserved, which thereby removed a work from the process of change. It is at that point that we begin to refer to kabuki as a classic.

By looking at kabuki structure from the perspective of the annual play cycle, we can see that it was neither
illogical nor incoherent, as some have suggested. Rather, it was an extended, intricately bound structure built on the rhythms of the changing year. Take away that idea of cycle and the structure becomes fragmented, unintelligible.

The very logic of kabuki is perfectly revealed in the double identity of Soga Gorō and Sukeroku. It was the nature of kabuki to strike a harmonious balance between time present and time past. When audiences saw Danjūrō as Sukeroku, they saw the present in its most vital form, as the spring-time, as the flower of Edo. At the same time they saw Danjuro as Soga Gorō, who represented the power and weight of the past. In Japanese culture, the past lives on in the present; Soga Gorō was a god-hero and the logic of kabuki enabled Sukeroku, the courtesan's idol, to appear as his contemporary manifestation.
Postscript
Reconstructing Kabuki For Performance

To understand the significance of the Sukeroku and Soga Goro double identity, it was necessary to reconstruct the annual play cycle of the Tokugawa period and the dramatic structure it contained. As a postscript to this thesis, I would like to say a few words about the attempt by Japan's National Theatre, the Kokuritsu Gekijō, to reconstruct kabuki for actual presentation on stage.

The National Theatre opened in November 1966 with the aim of providing a center for the study and performance of traditional arts, especially kabuki and the puppet theatre of bunraku, or ningyō-joruri. As supporters of the project saw it, the most exciting undertaking of the new theatre, and the feature that promised to make it unique among existing theatres, was the production of kabuki in its "original classical form," as reconstructed toshi-kyōgen.¹

The first undertaking of the new theatre was the toshi-kyōgen version of Sugawara denju tenarai kagami, which is regarded as one of the three most popular plays in the kabuki repertory (along with Yoshitsune sembon-zakura and Chu-shingura). Because the length of time required to do the whole work was around twelve hours, and because modern audiences do not have the time nor the desire to spend an entire
day at the theatre, it was decided to produce only the first half one month and to do the rest the following month. After that the practice of dividing extremely long works into two parts and presenting them in consecutive months became usual in National Theatre productions.

When *Sugawara* was produced in November and December 1966, audiences were able to see sections of the play that had not been performed in decades—such as the *daijo*, or prologue—along with sections that are done quite often, such as *Kuruma-biki* and *Terakoya*. In January 1967, when *Narukami Fudo Kitayama-zakura* was produced as the second work of the new theatre, the *Kenuki*, *Narukami*, and *Fudo* sections were given in the same production as they had two hundred and twenty-five years before. Although the practice of reconstructing plays became well established at the National Theatre, it has not been accepted without criticism by theatregoers and actors alike.

A review of the opening of the very first production is representative. The critic found that although the production was "faithful to the original" (*koten ni chūjitsu*), the "kabuki feeling" was somehow lacking. The tremendous amount of research that went into the reconstruction of plays made the production of kabuki at the National Theatre seem pedantic. Later, some commentators suggested that a solution lay in investing more time, money and talent into each production. This had the result of making kabuki at
the National Theatre extraordinarily lavish, both scenically and in amount of historical detail, but it still left many dissatisfied. As Onoe Baiko, a top actor who has frequently played leading roles in National Theatre productions, said about the reconstruction of kabuki: "If, over a long period of time, our predecessors dropped certain plays and sections of plays from the repertory, they had their reasons."5

Their reasons, of course, derived from the way kabuki was structured during the Tokugawa period, which was not sufficiently taken into account in the new productions. On the one hand, the National Theatre had assumed that the parts of plays which had been produced independently for decades, even centuries, could and, moreover, should be returned to some sort of original context. And, on the other hand, it had been thought that plays from which parts had been taken could be easily reconstructed; it was only a matter of research and reworking to put things back together. But, as we have seen, kabuki structure was based on relatively short, potentially independent dramatic units that could be moved from context to context or taken out of the repertory altogether. Because of this the problem of balance in the plays was naturally the most difficult obstacle to overcome. Some sections had become so self-sufficient from performance "out of context" that they resisted being put back in with other sections that had been long neglected. This could have an adverse effect
on both actors and audience when it was felt that parts of
a play had to be gotten through just for the sake of the
idea that everything should be done.

Another assumption that was made was that the concept
of reconstructing a play could be applied to all works in
the repertory. In practice, however, as Gunji has pointed
out, this concept applies for the most part to jōruri-derived
kabuki and kabuki in a similar structural tradition (mainly
Kamigata kabuki), and not to Edo kabuki—that is, kabuki
in the tradition of Danjūrō, which includes Sukeroku.6

Gunji observes that, looking back over the years that
the National Theatre has been in operation, the emphasis
has been on plays such as Sugawara denju tenarai kagami,
Yoshitsune sembon-zakura, and Chushingura—all derived from
the jōruri theatre. He argues that the structure of these
plays appears "modern" and "logical," while the structure of
Edo kabuki embodies features—such as double identities—
that today's society will only find illogical. Of course,
Edo kabuki was not illogical but was based on an annual
play cycle which provided the controlling context for each
play that was produced in the course of it. And this leaves
us right at the point where the thesis began.
Notes

Introduction

1 See Appendix I for a summary of kabuki source materials of the Tokugawa period.

2 Twenty-four examples of Edo e-iri kyōgen-bon are published in Genroku kabuki kessaku shū, ed. Takano Tatsuyuki and Kuroki Kanzō (Tokyo: Waseda Daigaku Shuppan-bu), I. The lack of surviving kabuki texts is related to the practices of the annual play cycle.

3 In Kawatake Shigetoshi, Nihon engeki zenshi (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1959), p. 394, the double identity phenomenon is referred to as absurd (koto-mukei) and incoherent (shiri-metsuretsu).


5 For an interesting discussion of how the tradition of social-psychological realism has affected our view of dramatic form in general, see the essay by Robert Brustein, "Drama in the Age of Einstein," New York Times, 7 Aug. 1977, Sec. 2, pp. 1, 22.


7 Gunji, Kabuki no hassō; Hattori Yukio, Kabuki no kōzō (Tokyo: Chuo Kōron Sha, 1970); and Atsumi Seitarō, "Soga kyōgen no hensen to kanshō," Engeki-kai, 8, No. 2 (1950), 11-19. For specific references, see Part One.

Chapter I


2 There were references to season in the poems of the Man'yōshū (compiled ca. 760), the earliest anthology of Japanese poetry, but the poems were not arranged on a seasonal basis. See Konishi Jin'ichi, "Association and Progression: Principles of Integration in Anthologies and Sequences of Japanese Court Poetry, A.D. 900-1350," trans. and

3 Ibid., 74.
4 Ibid., 77.
5 Ibid.
6 In Azuma mondo (1467), the poet Sogi (1421-1502) says that the nun Abutsu (? - 1283), also a poet, emphasized the necessity of making poems correspond to the actual season of composition. Howard S. Hibbett, "The Japanese Comic Linked-Verse Tradition," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 23 (1960-61), 83, note 10.

8 An example of such a book is Daigo Yoshiyasu, Kigo jiten (Tokyo: Tokyodo, 1968).
12 Ibid., p. 128.
16 Because translations seem inappropriate, the kao-mise and bon productions will be referred to by their Japanese names. In the Kamigata area the spring production was called the "second production change" (ni no kawari kyogen) and the third-month production was called the "third production change" (san no kawari kyogen). Such designations stress the annual cycle nature of kabuki structure.
The question of why the annual cycle of kabuki began in the eleventh month is an open one. Although we will probably never have a definite answer, my guess is that it goes back to ancient practices in drama which were related to the rice-harvest cycle. According to the Heian period *Engi shiki*, for example, the eleventh month was the time to offer new rice to Amaterasu-o-mikami and other heavenly deities. See *Engi-Shiki: Procedures of the Engi Era*, trans. Felicia Gressitt Bock (Tokyo: Sophia Univ., 1970), I, p. 97. In Japan, as elsewhere, the mythological beginnings of drama are in offerings to the gods.

In Edo, from 1714 until the end of the Tokugawa period, the licensed theatres which were empowered to make one-year contracts with actors were the Nakamura-za, Ichimura-za, and Morita-za. Together they comprised *Edo no sanza*, "the three theatres of Edo."


The importance of this production in the annual play cycle is indicated by the fact that it was on a *kao-mise* playbill in 1680 that Tominaga Heibei had his name inscribed as "playwright" (*kyogen-tsukuri*), thus becoming the first person to be so recognized. Prior to that there had been no special recognition of those who had contributed to the composition of kabuki plays. In Tominaga Heibei's time it was usual for kabuki actors (such as Heibei himself) to compose their own plays. As time went on, playwrighting became a full-time occupation for professionals. See Ted Takaya, "An Inquiry into the Role of the Traditional Kabuki Playwright," Diss. Columbia 1969.


Shokado Hajo, *Shibai nenjū-gyōji* (1777; rpt. in *Kyōgen sakusha shiryō-shu* (1): Sekai kōmoku, *Shibai nenjū-gyōji*, Tokyo: Kokuritsu Gekijō, 1974), p. 94. In Edo, the head of a theatre was also the hereditary holder of the theatre license. Their names were Nakamura Kanzaburo (Nakamura-za), Ichimura Hanzemon (Ichimura-za), and Morita Kan'ya (Morita-za). See Hattori, *Kabuki no genzō*, p. 152.

It appears that at times other than *kao-mise* and New Year's *Shiki Sambaso* was performed by low-ranks actors (*bandachi*). See Gunji, *Kabuki*, trans. John Bester (Palo Alto: Kodansha, 1969), p. 52.
22 An entry in the Kadensho (ca. 1400) by Zeami (1364-1443) says that the predecessor of Okina (or Shiki Samba) goes back to the tenth century. Waseda Daigaku Engeki Hakubutsukan, Engeki hyakka daijiten, I, p. 421.


24 See Ibid., p. 50.

25 Gondo Yoshikazu, No no mikata (Kyoto: Toyo Bunka Sha, 1975), pp. 53-54. The five categories of no plays are generally given as works concerning gods, warriors, women, mad persons, and concluding works.

26 A waki play is the first of the five "steps" of no. Though kabuki waki-kyogen were different, it is probable that the concept and terminology were borrowed from no. Waseda Daigaku Engeki Hakubutsukan, Engeki hyakka daijiten, VI, p. 63.


According to Shokado, Shibai nenju-gyoji, p. 94, examples of waki-kyogen of the principal Edo theatres are:

Nakamura-za Shuten Dōji
Ichimura-za Shichi-fukujin
Morita-za Fukujin-asobi


29 Depending on the work, the end of the first play (the 0-zume) might come after the fourth step (and thus be equivalent to a fifth step) or after the fifth step (and thus be equivalent to a sixth step).

30 In the Kamigata area the first play was called the "beginning" play (mae-kyogen) and the second play was called the "end" play (kiri-kyogen). Unlike Edo kabuki structure, however, the Kamigata "beginning" and "end" plays were unrelated to each other. Gunji, Kabuki nyumon, new ed. (Tokyo: Shakai Shisō Kenkyūkai Shuppan-bu, 1962), p. 139.
There was a strict hierarchy among actors and playwrights. In the case of the latter, for example, each theatre had a playwrighting "team" presided over by the head playwright (tate-sakusha). Each play was a collaborative effort between the head playwright and lower-ranking members of the team.


See Atsumi, Kabuki nyūmon, p. 147. Consult Chapter II for a fuller treatment of this subject.

Kore-giri (not kiri) is the proper reading. See Kabuki jūhachiban shū, ed. Gunji, p. 133.

Plays continued for about thirteen hours each day. For information on time restrictions, see Hattori, Kabuki no genzo, p. 6. It was not until the Meiji period (at the end of the nineteenth century) that performances of kabuki were permitted at night. See Gunji, Kabuki to Yoshiwara (Tokyo: Awaji Shobo, 1956), p. 49.
This ceremony was called shizome, which literally means "opening."

Performed for three days, from the first to the third day of the first month. Shōkado, Shibai nenjū-gyōji, p. 87.


Takamura, E-hon shibai nenjū-kagami, p. 189.

The three theatres and the Soga plays performed in 1709 were: Morita-za, Fukubiki Soga; Ichimura-za, Meiseki Soga; Yamamura-za, Aizen Soga. Ihara Toshiro, Kabuki nempyo (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1956), I, p. 379.


Atsumi, "Soga kyōgen no hensen to kanshō," 17.

This multiplicity of titles is also related to the fact that when plays were re-written they were given new titles.

Atsumi, "Soga kyōgen no hensen to kanshō," 16. Also, see note 42 above.

Ihara, Kabuki nempyo, I, pp. 408-10.

Matsuzaki Hitoshi, "Kabuki kyōgen no kōzō," Kokubungaku kaishaku to kyozai no kenkyū, 20, No. 8 (June 1975), p. 52.

The following material is based largely on the work of Atsumi in "Soga kyōgen no hensen to kanshō," 16-19. It is also based on the same author's explanatory notes to the plays in Soga kyōgen gappei-shū, Vol. XIV of Nihon gikyoku zenshu (Tokyo: Shun'yōdō, 1929), pp. 805-11.

Atsumi, Kabuki nyūmon, p. 123.


Text of play in Soga kyōgen gappei-shū, pp. 1-140.

Shōkado, Shibai nenjū-gyōji, p. 88.


The names of the five major sekku are jinjitsu, jōshi, tango, tanabata, and choyo.
As the practice of long-run spring productions was abandoned toward the end of the Tokugawa period, the idea of separate and independent third- and fifth-month productions developed. Atsumi, "Soga kyogen no hensen to kanshō," 17.

Ibid. See also Mimasuya, Sakusha nenjū-gyōji, p. 678.

See Mimasuya, Sakusha nenjū-gyōji, p. 678.


See Atsumi, "Soga kyōgen no hensen to kanshō," 16-17.

Mimasuya, Sakusha nenjū-gyōji, p. 679.

Takamura, E-hon shibai nenjū-kagami, p. 209.


The word for summer recess in Japanese is doyō-yasumi doyō referring to the hottest period of the summer (and yasumi meaning recess). A popular place for actors to go was the baths (toji) in Hakone. Hattori, Kabuki no genzo, p. 18.

Takamura, E-hon shibai nenjū-kagami, p. 212.

Thanks to these road shows, people living in the country had the opportunity to see professional kabuki actors perform. There is a passage in Fukuzawa Yukichi's Autobiography where he describes the welcome that samurai gave to traveling players:

In the summer time . . . there would sometimes be a series of plays lasting seven days together when the traveling actors set up their temporary stage in the Sumiyoshi temple-yard. Then there would always be a proclamation that the samurai of our clan should not attend the plays or even go beyond the stone wall of the temple. Though the proclamation sounded very strict, it amounted to a mere formality. Many of the less scrupulous samurai would go to the plays with their faces wrapped in towels, wearing only the shorter of the two swords which all samurai wore—thus making themselves appear like common people. These disguised samurai broke over the bamboo fence of the theater, whereas the real common people paid their fees. When the management tried to stop the intruders, they would utter a menacing roar and go striding on to take the best seats.

Although Fukuzawa said that he did not join the "less scrupulous samurai" at those times, he later became a regular patron of kabuki.

74 During the summer about half of the members of a company stayed behind in the city. Atsumi, Kabuki nyumon, p. 138.

75 Miyamasu, Sakusha nenjū-gyōji, p. 680. Summer plays were variously known as doyō-shibai, natsu-shibai, and natsu-kyogen.

76 Ibid.

77 Takamura, E-hon shibai nenjū-kagami, p. 214.

78 Special summer plays were not written until Tsuruya Namboku IV (1755-1829) composed his ghost plays (kaidan-mono). See Atsumi, Kabuki nyumon, p. 138.

In general, it was considered undesirable for kabuki playwrights to adapt plays from the puppet theatre, but in times of poor attendance at the theatre (such as in the late summer and early autumn months), this type of adaptation was done. See Atsumi, Kabuki nyumon, p. 138. After the Meiji restoration, this type of play became an important part of the repertory.

79 Takamura, E-hon shibai nenjū-kagami, p. 215, lists several plays that were performed at this time. These include Shichi-henge, a spectacular dance-drama, which, as the title suggests, requires the performer to make seven changes of costume—and character. This would have provided an excellent opportunity for an actor to display his talents. Variations of the work have been performed often throughout the history of kabuki.


Chapter II

1 Early kabuki includes the periods of women's (onna), young men's (wakashu), and the first decade of mature men's (yaro) kabuki.

Women's kabuki flourished during the first quarter of the seventeenth century, until women were banned from the stage in 1629. Young men's kabuki started during the time of women's kabuki. It especially flourished during the administration of the third shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu in the mid-seventeenth century. This period of kabuki ended when young men were banned from the stage. Mature men's kabuki followed and continues to the present day.
It was ruled that kabuki had to become monomane kyōgen zukushi, which means something like "a more fully developed representational dramatic art form." See Kawatake, Nihon engeki zenshi, p. 290. In his Kabuki-shi no kenkyū, Kawatake calls the development of kabuki rebyū-shiki no buyō kara sha-jitsu-teki na serifu-geki e ([a movement] from revue-type dance-drama to realistic drama), p. 383.

After 1652 (when young men were banned from the stage) kabuki became known as kyōgen. Kyōgen, of course, originally referred to the contemporary-set, often comic plays that were part of the traditional no program. Calling kabuki kyōgen was symbolic of the fact that kabuki was being forced to become more acceptable in the eyes of the authorities—and society at large. Today the word kyōgen generally refers to any type of play.


All evidence, unfortunately, dates from after the Genroku era. Ibid., p. 47.

Watsuji Tetsuro has tried to reconstruct these works by basing his efforts on later adaptations. Watsuji, Nihon geijutsu-shi kenkyū: kabuki to ayatsuri-joruri (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1971), p. 469.


This can be seen even today on the traditional-style kabuki billboards (kamban) displayed in front of theatres.

Hattori, Kabuki no kōzō, p. 177.


For example, Gosan (1651) of Matsunaga Teitoku (1571-1653). Hibbett, "The Japanese Comic Linked-Verse Tradition," 86.

13 In "The Japanese Comic Linked-Verse Tradition," 81, Hibbett echoes sekai and shuko when he speaks of the principles of "change and continuity" in linked verse.

14 Ibid., 78, 83.

15 Ichikawa Danjūrō I, for example, on a trip to Kyoto in 1694, joined the haikai group of Shiinomoto no Saimaro, and took the name Saigyū. Nishiyama, Ichikawa Danjūrō, pp. 36-37.

16 Ibid., p. 37.


18 Of course, there were laws against the representation of certain contemporary people and events. (See below)


20 As in the case of jidai-mono, there were restrictions on the presentation of some types of material (particularly love suicides), although violations of these restrictions were common.

21 Sometimes it is also said that jidai-mono are "non-realistic/romantic" and sewa-mono are "realistic." Strictly speaking, however, the terms "romantic" and "realistic" do not have much relevance to kabuki.

22 The social structure of Japan during the Tokugawa period was represented by a four-tier class hierarchy. Samurai were at the top, followed by the commoners: farmers, artisans, and merchants. Jidai-mono, which came first on a kabuki program, were samurai-related, and sewa-mono, which came second, were commoner-related.

23 The term "commoner" in relation to kabuki mainly refers to the artisans and merchants who lived in the cities where kabuki was performed. Farmers, because they did not live in the cities, did not actively participate in kabuki (either as audience members--except in the summer--or as characters represented in the dramas). Artisans and merchants made up the newly-emergent townsman (chōnin) class of the Tokugawa period.
Gunji, like others before him, sees Japanese cultural history as a process whereby past practice becomes idealized and current practice in contrast is regarded as imperfect and corrupt. An excellent, older expression of such an attitude is Yoshida Kenkō's *Tsurezuregusa* (*Essays in Idleness*) (see Chapter I). For Kenkō, the ideal was the age of the Heian court.

Another example is *Sambasō*, which is a *modoki* of Okina. Inoura, *A History of Japanese Theater I: Up to Noh and Kyogen*, p. 27.

Completed in 1801, the *Kezairoku* was transmitted in manuscript form until 1908, when it was published for the first time. There is some uncertainty about who wrote the *Kezairoku*; the only clue to the author's identity is the pen name-palindrome, Nyugatei Ganyu. While it is generally accepted that this is the signature of the minor playwright Namiki Shōzō II (？-1807) and that it was he who is responsible for the work in its present form, it is likely that the contents reflect the teachings of Namiki Shōzō I (1730-73), Nagawa Kamesuke (fl. ca. 1765-90), Namiki Gohei I (1747-1808), and other major playwrights of Shōzō II's day. The *Kezairoku* is reprinted in *Kinsei geido-ron*, ed. Nishiyama Matsunosuke, et. al., *Nihon shisō taikei*, 61 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1972), pp. 493-532. The passage referred to is on pp. 511-12.


The authorship of the *Sekai komoku* is uncertain, but like the *Kezairoku* several playwrights probably contributed to it. It was most recently reprinted in *Kyogen sakusha shiryō-shū* (1): *Sekai komoku, Shibai nenju-gyōji*, pp. 7-84. See also section entitled "Sekai kōmoku no seiritsu ndai" in the article "Naimaze to sekai" by Urayama Masao in *Geinō no kagaku*, Vol. V of *Geinō ronkō II*, ed. Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo Geinōbu (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1974), pp. 103-20.

33 Iizuka, Kabuki saiken (Tokyo: Daiichi Shobo, 1927).


35 According to Atsumi, "Seikai to tōjō-jimbutsu," in Kabuki zensho, ed. Toita Yasuji (Tokyo: Sogensha, 1956), II, 78, the Soga sekai has the greatest number of plays associated with it.


37 Ibid., p. 293.

38 Ibid., p. 292.

39 Shuzui, Kabuki-geki gikyoku kōzō no kenkyū, pp. 36-37.

40 Okazaki Yoshie refers to innovations as being "fragmentary" (dampen-teki) at first and gives the Yaoya Oshichi shuko in the Chūjō Hime sekai as a particular example. Okazaki Yoshie, "Genroku kabuki no sekai kōzo," in his Nihon bungeigaku (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1935), p. 336.


42 Ibid., 352.

43 On the same page cited in note 42 above, Shively mentions some of the conventions associated with name substitution.

The incident of the forty-seven masterless samurai was first dramatized as part of the Soga sekai, but it was banned immediately. See Chushingura (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers), trans. Donald Keene (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1971), pp. 3-4.


46 This second type of innovation is sometimes referred to in Japanese as yatsushi, "disguising."

Chapter III

1 As Anesaki Masaharu put it, "The soul was believed to be composed of two parts, one mild, refined, and happy, the other rough, brutal, and raging (the mild, nigi-mitama, and the rough, ara-mitama). The former cares for its possessor's health and prosperity, while the latter performs adventurous tasks or even malicious deeds." Anesaki, History of Japanese Religion (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1930), p. 40.

2 Okakura Yoshisaburō found a connection between revenge and Japanese love of purity:

   Many of the so-called mental peculiarities of the Japanese owe their origin to the love of purity and its complementary hatred of defilement. But, pray, how could it be otherwise, being trained, as we actually are, to look upon slights inflicted, either on our family honour or on the national pride, as so many defilements and wounds that would not be clean and heal up again, unless by a thorough washing through vindication? You may consider the cases of vendetta so often met with in the public and private life of Japan, merely as a kind of morning tub which a people take with whom love of cleanliness has grown into a passion. Quoted by Ruth Benedict in The Chrysanthemum and the Sword, Patterns of Japanese Culture (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946), pp. 161-62.

3 Soga plays were performed in Kamigata kabuki by the great actor Sakata Tojuro (1647-1709). See Gunji, Namari to suigin, p. 16. Unlike Ichikawa Danjuro I, Tojuro did not have a male heir or capable pupil to continue his work, which may be one reason why Soga plays lost popularity in the Kamigata area after Tojuro died.


5 Soga monogatari, ed. Ichiko Teiji and Ōshima Tatehiko Nihon koten bungaku taikei, 88 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966),
Among the original sources of the information are Shichi-ju-ichi-ban uta-awase (dating from the early 1500's) and the no play Mochizuki, in which a woman becomes a blind storyteller and tells how Ichiman Hakoo (Soga Goro) avenged his father's murder.

6 Soga monogatari, p. 7.

Among the various editions, the rufu-bon is of most interest both to students of drama and to readers in general. See Gunji, "Soga monogatari to Soga kyogen," Engeki-kai, 8, No. 2 (1950), 5.

With the birth of the publishing trade and the development of a widespread reading public in the early seventeenth century, the Soga monogatari became a best-seller in its rufu-bon edition. By the Genroku period, it had gone through at least six printings. The earliest known one was in the Kan'ei era (1624-41). Its popularity is testified to in an anecdote which relates that even courtesans kept copies of it in the toko-no-ma of their rooms. Ibid.

8 The relationship between kowaka—as preserved in mai no hon texts—and the texts of the Soga monogatari has been of interest to scholars. It has been said that kowaka are the link between the shinji-bon and rufu-bon versions and are perhaps, in fact, the direct source of the rufu-bon. Nuroki Yataro, Katarimono (mai, sekkyo, ko-joruri) no kenkyu (Tokyo: Kazama Shobö, 1970), p. 163.


10 Soga monogatari, p. 10. For more information on Shohō and Tora Gozen as storytellers, see Gunji, "Soga monogatari to Soga kyogen," 5. This also suggests a possible source of the erotic, "womanly" innovations in the Soga sekai. See Ruch, "Medieval Jongleurs and the Making of a National Literature," p. 301.

11 Ihara, Kabuki nempyo, I, p. 3. Yoshiteru (1536-65) was the thirteenth Ashikaga shōgun.

The original source of the information is the Kabuki jishi, reprinted in Kabuki, Vol. VI of Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shusei, 87-133, relevant passage on pp. 93-94. The Kabuki jishi is an interesting though, unfortunately, not wholly reliable work on various aspects of kabuki history and performance. It was written by Tamenaga Itchō and published in 1762.
Before the time of Danjūrō I, the only dramatic art forms to treat the Soga sekai in an important way were no, kowaka, and ko-joruri.

Plays for which there is no record of performance may have been used only for chanting purposes, according to Tanaka Makoto. Moreover, it is difficult to determine the number of Soga plays of no using only the titles of plays because some plays with different titles had the same contents. See Tanaka, " Yökyoku no haikyoku," in Nōgaku zensho, ed. Nogami Toyoichirō (Tokyo: Sogensha, 1942), III, 337-80.


Tanaka, "Soga-mono yökyoku ni tsuite," Hōsei, 19, No. 11 (1943), 73.

Gondo, Nō no mikata, p. 52.

Chōboku Sōga has been translated by Laurence Bresler in Monumenta Nipponica, 29, No. 1 (1974), 69-81.


See Nishiyama, Ichikawa Danjūrō, pp. 17-18.

Yo-uchi Sōga has been translated by Laurence Kominz in Monumenta Nipponica, 33, No. 4 (1978), 441-59.

Araki, The Ballad Drama of Medieval Japan, p. 80.

Nimaze no ki is translated by Araki as "Potpurri of Records." The relevant passage is on Ibid., p. 6.


Araki, The Ballad Drama of Medieval Japan, p. 4.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 13.

Ibid., pp. 136-39.

This scene is the forerunner of the play Ya no ne Gorō.

The Sekai kōmoku lists about seventy characters in the Soga sekai.

Even before Chikamatsu began working with Takemoto Gidayu, he had already influenced the development of joruri by means of a work on the subject of the Soga brothers' revenge. His first known joruri piece is Yotsugi Soga. Because this came after Danjuro I's Soga plays had already reached the kabuki stage, it is not necessary to consider Chikamatsu's Soga plays here. This is not to deny, however, that his treatment of the Soga sekai is an important topic in joruri studies and in drama studies in general. Evidence of its importance is the number of studies devoted to it. See, for example, the extensive treatment of the topic in Takano Masami, Kinsei engeki no kenkyū (Tokyo: Tokyodo, 1941).

Unlike kabuki, the scripts of joruri were published for the use of the general public.

Takano Masami, Kinsei engeki no kenkyū, p. 36.

Ibid., p. 39.


Watsuji, Nihon geijutsu-shi kenkyū: kabuki to ayatsuri-joruri, p. 528. The cycle is reprinted in Ko-joruri shōhon shū and is based mainly on editions from the Meireki era (mid-seventeenth century), although two works are based on reprints from the Genroku era. Watsuji views this cycle as an attempt at setting Soga joruri in the face of the growing popularity of Kimpira joruri in the seventeenth century. The cycle is divided into seven plays so that one play may be performed on each of seven days.


41 The word shitenno (the four tenno) originally referred to the Buddhist deities who guarded each of the four directions. In Japanese culture the word came to be applied generally to any group of four outstanding personages. Minamoto no Raiko's four tenno are perhaps the most famous shitenno.

42 See Kawatake, Nihon engeki zenshi, p. 440.

43 In "Aragoto no seiritsu," p. 15, Gunji says that Danjūrō I got a "hint" for aragoto from Kimpira joruri.

44 Tachikawa, [Hana no Edo] Kabuki nendaiki, p. 15.

45 According to Gunji, "Aragoto no seiritsu," p. 18, this was first suggested by Yanagita in his essay "Imoto no chikara."


47 For our purposes here, goryō and hito-gami stand for essentially the same concept.

48 Particularly Gunji. Mention should also be made here of an article by Umehara Takeshi called "The Genealogy of Avenging Spirits," trans. Susanna Contini, Diogenes, no. 84 (1974), 17-30, the thesis of which is that the concept of avenging spirits forms the basis of Japanese civilization. It is a general summary of the ideas of Origuchi Shinobu and his disciples.

49 The belief that a man could somehow become a god is a universal phenomenon:

Even in the conscious period there was the tradition that gods were men of a previous age who had died. Hesiod speaks of a golden race of men who preceded his own generation and became the "holy demons upon the earth, beneficent, averters of ills, guardians of mortal men." Similar references can be found up to four centuries later, as when Plato refers to heroes who after death become the demons that tell people what to do.


Hori, Folk Religion in Japan: Continuity and Change, p. 73.

Ibid., p. 74.

This alternative reading was suggested to me in a conversation with Gunji. The analysis that follows, however, is mine.

Speaking of renewal, it may also be noted that a third possible interpretation of *ara* is "new."

**56** The exception was *Kokon kyōdai tsuwamono Soga*, which was produced in the third month.

**57** Two examples are *Tsuwamono kongen Soga*, produced in 1697, and *Dainihon tekkai sennin*, produced in 1700.


See Chapter I, note 50.

**61** *Tsuwamono kongen Soga* is included in Genroku kabuki kessaku shū, pp. 55-91.

Playbooks are not complete texts. Instead, they are recapitulations of plays using a narrative format, though containing many lines of what seems to be actual dialogue. Illustrations, of course, are important parts of these works. For twenty pages of text in *Tsuwamono kongen Soga*, there are twelve pages of illustrations showing scenes from the play. More than words, these pictures communicate the spirit of actual performance.

**62** Kuzō first appeared in the play in the role of the mountain priest (*yamabushi*) Tsurikibo, who, at the end of the third part of the play, is transformed into Fudo. Ibid., p. 56.

**63** An interesting aspect of the illustration of Gorō and Fudo is its resemblance to *honji-suijaku*-type Shinto paintings, which depict a Buddhist deity and his Shinto counterpart. If we look at the illustration in this way, Fudo and Gorō can be interpreted as one and the same. This further strengthens the argument that has been put forward thus far. For discussions...

64 Nishiyama, *Ichikawa Danjūrō*, p. 18.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.

Chapter IV

1 The Miura-ya was an ageya (*Kabuki jūhachi-ban shū*, ed. Gunji, p. 78), a place where courtesans entertained their guests. Courtesans did not live in ageya.


3 Ibid., pp. 62-63.

4 Ibid., p. 69.

5 Ibid., pp. 71-72.

6 Ibid., p. 75.

7 Ibid., p. 81.

8 Danjūrō II doubtlessly worked with one or more playwrights, but their identity is the subject of much controversy. Many suggest Tsuuchi Jihei II (1679-1760).


10 Ibid.

11 Ibid., p. 36.

12 See Tachikawa, *Hana no Edo* Kabuki nendaiki, p. 38, which says that there was a grave of someone by the name of Hanakawado no Sukeroku (which is the same as Sukeroku's full name in the play) in the Shintorigoe Igyō-in (temple) in Edo.
The three play titles given here are お-nadai. In 1749 the Sukeroku section was performed under the title Sukeroku kuruwa no ie-zakura, which is actually the title of the jōruri piece used as the accompaniment for Sukeroku's dance entrance.

There is some dispute about the お-nadai title of the play that was produced in 1713. Kawatake, Nihon engeki zenshi, p. 513, calls it Hana-yakata Aigo no waka.

The term Edokko is vague and wide-ranging, and it appears that the best way to appreciate the flavor of it is to study Sukeroku. As the Meiji writer Sasagawa Rimpū said, "Those who do not understand Sukeroku do not understand the spirit of Edo." Quoted in Nishiyama, Edo chonin no kenkyū (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1973), II, 14.


Ihara, Kabuki nempyō, I, p. 435.

Kawatake, Nihon engeki zenshi, p. 514.

For more on the connection between kabuki and the gay quarters, see Gunji, Kabuki to Yoshiwara.

Ihara, Kabuki nempyō, I, p. 463.


Ibid.

In Ichikawa Danjūrō, pp. 54-56, Nishiyama provides a chart of Danjūrō II's Soga plays.


Ihara, Kabuki nempyō, I, pp. 463-64.

Ibid.

Ihara, Kabuki nempyō, II, p. 186. When Takenojo did Sukeroku in 1733, Danjūrō II played Shirazake-uri Shimbei/Soga Jūrō in the same production.
Ihara, Kabuki nempyō, II, p. 304.

Ibid., pp. 511-12.

Kawatake, Nihon engeki zenshi, p. 563.

Nishiyama, Ichikawa Danjūrō, p. 69.

"Flower of Edo" applies to both Sukeroku and Danjūrō. Gunji, Kabuki to Yoshiwara, p. 65.

When the Sukeroku section of a long play was identified by a separate title, it usually contained a word indicating flower. For example, the title of Sukeroku in the Ichikawa family's juhachi-ban is Sukeroku yuki no Edo-zakura. Zakura (or sakura in its unvoiced form) means cherry blossom.

The ukiyo was the world of beauty and impermanence, and the cherry blossom was its symbol. Cherry blossoms come every spring, but almost as soon as the long-awaited flowers begin to bloom the petals drop to the ground.

Flower (hana) in the case of the otokodate was primarily a metaphor for the fights that he engaged in. These fights were, of course, the expression of his resistance.

In the case of the fudasashi, flower does not have so obvious a meaning, but if the fudasashi were the most successful merchant-townsmen, then flower, which is often used to connote completeness, is appropriate here.

Otokodate cannot be explained without reference to Sukeroku. Dictionaries such as Maeda Isamu, Edogo daijiten (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1974), p. 200, refer to Sukeroku in order to define otokodate.


Kabuki jūhachi-ban shū, ed. Gunji, p. 95.

There was a proverb associated with Sukeroku which went: Aite kawaredo, shu kawarazu ("Though the opponent changed, the principal was the same"), meaning that Sukeroku was always fighting, though with different people. Ibid., p. 86.

Ibid., p. 95.

44 Kabuki jūhachi-ban shū, ed. Gunji, p. 95.

45 Aragoto was in itself an expression of resistance. Tomita, "Sukeroku yukari no Edo-zakura: Saiken," 133.

46 There was, for example, the Meireki fire of 1657, in which more than half of Edo was destroyed. See Sansom, A History of Japan, 1615-1867, pp. 61-62.

47 Nishiyama and Takeuchi, Edo, p. 32.

48 "Sukeroku: Flower of Edo," p. 63. The chorus sings: "A headband such as this one in times long ago; Spoke through its purple color of abiding ties."

49 Toita, Kabuki jūhachi-ban, p. 114.

50 Toita emphasizes that since Sukeroku was really Soga Gorō, it was only natural that their style of make-up be the same. Ibid., p. 115.


52 Ibid., p. 72.

53 Ibid.


55 Toita, Kabuki jūhachi-ban, p. 119.

56 Kawatake, Nihon engeki zenshi, p. 515.

57 Toita, Kabuki jūhachi-ban, pp. 104, 118.

58 Tachikawa Emba, Edo murasaki hiiki no hachimaki. Manuscript owned by Waseda University's Engeki Hakubutsukan. Murasaki (purple) and hachimaki (headband) refer, of course, to Sukeroku's purple headband (which Danjūrō wore in the role). Hana no Edo ("Edo the flower") in Tachikawa, [Hana no Edo] Kabuki nendaiki means both Sukeroku and Danjūrō.

59 An example is Kurodegumi kuruwa no tatehiki by Kawatake Mokuami.
Postscript


2 See Kabuki: Five Classic Plays, pp. 95-97.


5 Ibid.

6 Gunji, Namari to suigin, p. 95.
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Appendix I

Kabuki Source Materials of the Tokugawa Period

For the purposes of my study, the most important types of kabuki source materials of the Tokugawa period were critiques of actors and performances (hyōbanki), chronologies (nendaiki and nempyō), playbills (banzuke), and writings on theatrical matters (gekisho).

Critiques of kabuki actors and performances in the cities of Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka were published annually from the middle of the seventeenth century to the end of the Tokugawa period. Although they focus on acting technique rather than on the dramatic content of the plays, they were useful (especially in the case of Danjūrō II's Sukeroku) for finding information on the productions.

Chronologies are invaluable year-by-year listings of what was produced in each major theatre throughout the Tokugawa period. The most useful ones were Tachikawa Emba's [Hana no Edo] Kabuki nendaiki, which, in addition to its annual listings, also contains useful illustrations and occasional comments on plays and players, and Ihara Toshirō's Kabuki nempyō, which was compiled from material contained in works dating from the Tokugawa period.

Playbills either advertised plays in advance of their opening or were handed out at theatres, teahouses, and book-
shops at the time of performance. Their function was the same as that of posters, handbills, and theatre programs today. Because texts are not available for many plays of the Tokugawa period, certain playbills (especially those of the e-hon, or "picture book," variety, which contain summaries of plays) were helpful in assessing the contents and dramatic form of plays. Many playbills have been reproduced by Shuzui Kenji in Kabuki zusetsu.

Writings on theatrical matters cover a variety of topics and range in style from historical to theoretical. The most useful ones for my purposes were the Kezairoku, the Sekai komoku, and the works on the annual play cycle. I also used a number of items included in the sixth volume (Kabuki) of Nihon shomin bunka shiryō shūsei, which is a collection of reprints of writings on theatrical matters.

In listing the kabuki source materials of the Tokugawa period which I employed, I cannot omit to mention prints, several of which are reproduced in the thesis. Some are the work of prominent artists, who made them either to illustrate writings of the sort that are mentioned above, or made them as independent works of art. Kabuki prints, which still remain to be systematically studied, are an important part of the cultural heritage of Tokugawa Japan.
Appendix II

List of Japanese Terms, Names, and Titles

The list excludes authors and titles already in the bibliography.

Abura-uri Shimbei 油壺新兵衛
Agemaki 揚巻
ageya 揚げ屋
Aigo 愛護
Aizen Soga あいぜんとが
akutai 悪態
aragoto 荒事
aragyo 荒行
ara-hito-gami 荒人神
Araki Saemon 荒木左衛門
Araki Yojibei-za 荒木与次兵衛屋
ara-mitama 荒御魂
Asagao Sembei 朝顔仙平
Asahina 朝比奈
Asano 浅野
ato o dasu 後を出す
Azuma kagami 吾妻鏡
bandachi 番立
banzuke 番付け
Benkei 弁慶
bon 盆
Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門
Chōbuku Soga 調伏曾我
chōnin 町人
Chūjō Hime 中将姫
Chūjō Hime kyō-hina 中将姫京雛
Chūshingura 忠臣蔵
Daidōji Tahatanosuke 大道寺田助之助
daihachi daitsu 大八太通
daio 大序
Dainihon tekkai senrin 大日本鉄界仙人
dampen-teki 断片的
doyō 土用
doyō-yasumi 土用休み
Dōzaburō 団三郎
Edo Handayū Bushi 江戸半太夫節
Edo murasaki kongen Soga 江戸紫根元曾我
Edo no sanza 江戸の三座
e-iri kyōgen-bon 絵入り狂言本
En'ya Hangan 監治判官
fudasashi 札差
Fudo Myōō 不動明王
Fujimoto Tobun 藤本斗文
Fukubiki Soga 福引そが
Fukui Yagozaemon 福井弥五左衛門
Fukujin-asobi 福神遊
futa-tateme 二立目
gekisho 剧书
gembuku 元服
Gembuku Soga 元服曾我
Gempeigun 源平军
Gempuku Soga (see Gembuku Soga)
Gikeiki 義經記
goryo 御霊
Gosan 御傘
goze 蓑女
Hanafusa bunshin Soga 英分身曾我
Hanakawado no Sukeroku 花川戸の助六
hanare-kyōgen 放れ狂言
Hana-yakata Aigo no waka 花屋敷愛護若
Hana-yakata Aigo-zakura 花屋敷愛護桜
Hanshichi 半七
hari 張り
haru kyōgen 春狂言
hatamoto-yakko 旗本奴
hatsu-haru kyōgen 初春狂言
Hatsumotosui kayoi Soga 初霧通曾我
hatsu-uma 初午
Heike monogatari 平家物語
hentai kambun 变体漢文
Hinin no kataki-uchi 非人の敵討
Hirai Yasumasa 平井保昌
Hisamatsu 久松
hito-gami 人神
honji-suijaku 本地重迹
hyōbanki 评判記
ichi-bamme kyōgen 一番目狂言
ichidai issei 一代一世
Ichikawa Danjūrō 市川団十郎
Ichikawa Kuzō 市川九蔵
Ichimana Hakō 一滿箱王
Ichimura Hanzaemon 市村羽左衛門
Ichimura Takenojo 市村竹之丞
Ichimura-za 市村座
ichiya-zuke 一夜清け
Iga Heinai Zaemon 伊賀平内左衛門
iki 粋
Ikyū 意久 (Hige no Ikyū髭の意久)
Imagawa shinobi-guruma 今川忍び車
ima no Sukeroku 今之助六
Inoue Harima-no-Jō 井上播磨郷
Itchū Bushi 一中節
itsu-tateme 五立目
Izumi Tayū 和泉大夫
Izu nikki 伊豆日記
jidai 時代
jidai-mono 時代物
jo-biraki 序開き
Jōruri Gozen 洗瑠璃御前
Jōun 浄雲
Jūban-giri 十番斬
jūhachi-ban 十八番
Kabuki jishi 歌舞伎事始
kabuki no seimei 歌舞伎の生命
Kachidoki homare Soga 勝鬨誉誉我
Kagami-yama 加賀見山
Kagekiyo 景清
kaidan-mono 怪談物
kakikae 書替之
Kamachi Hyōgo-no-kami Akimune 蓼地兵庫上鑑連
Kamakura Gongorō 鎌倉権五郎
kamban 看板
Kampera Mombei かんぺら門兵衛
kao-mise 頭見世
kao-mise sekai sadame 頭見世世界定め
katashiro 形代
Katō Bushi 河東節
Kawatake Mokuami 河竹黙阿弥
Kawazu no Saburō Sukeshige 河津三郎祐重
Keisei Kisegawa けいせいきせい
kenka no hachimaki 喧嘩の帯巻
Kenuki 毛抜
kigo 季語
Kikeba mukashi Soga monogatari 間伴昔昔我物語
Kimpira jōruri (釣)公平浄瑠璃
kiri-kyōgen 切狂言
ko-jōruri 古浄瑠璃
Kokon kyōdai tsuwamono Soga 古今兄弟兵我
Kokuritsu Gekijo 国立劇場
ko-nadai 小名題
Kondō Sukegorō Kiyoharu 近藤助五郎清春
ko-shōgatsu 小正月
Ko-sode Soga 小袖曽我
koten ni chūjitsu 古典に忠実
kōtō-mukei 荒唐無稽
kōwaka 幸若
Kudo Suketsune 工藤祐経
Kugami no Zenji 久上禅師
kumadori 隈取り
Kumasaka monogatari 熊坂物語
Kurodegumi kuruwa no tatehiki 黒手組曲輪延ひ
Kuruma-biki 車引
Kusazuri-biki 草摺引
kyōgen 狂言
kyōgen o tateru 狂言を立てる
kyōgen-tsukuri 狂言作り
Kyō Sukeroku shinju 京助六心中
machi-yakko 町奴
mae-kyōgen 前狂言
mai no hon 舞の本
mai-osame 舞納
maki-bure 卷触
Manko 満江
Matsunaga Teitoku 松永貞徳
matsuru 祭る
Meiseki Soga 華石曾我
Mie 見得
Minamoto no Raiko 源頼光
Minamoto no Yoritomo 源頼朝
mi-tateme 三立目
Miura no Katakai 三浦の片貝
Miyako Dennai 都伝内
Miyako Itchu 都一中
Miyamasu 宮増
Mochizuki 望月
modoki もどき
mono-mane kyōgen-zukushi 物真似狂言尽
Morita Kan'ya 森田勘弥
Morita-za 森田座
Morona no 師直
Motomasa 元雅
mukimi むきみ
mu-tateme 六立目
Nagawa Kamesuke 泷河亀輔
naimaze 細い交せ
Nakamura Kanzaburō 中村勘三郎
Nakamura-za 中村座
Namiki Gohei 並木五瓶
Namiki Shōzō 並木正三
Narita-ya 成田屋
Narukami Fudō Kitayama-zakura 喧神不動北山桜
nembutsu 念仏
nempyō 年表
nendaiki 年代記
nenjū-gyōji 年中行事
Nenriki yatate no sugi 念力箭立杉
ni-bamme kyōgen 二番目狂言
ni-ban tsuzuki-kyōgen 二番続狂言
nigi-mitama 和御魂
Nimaze no ki 煮雑の記
ni no kawari kyōgen 二つ替り狂言
nuregoto 濡事
Nyūgatei Ganyū 入我亭我入
Ōe 大江
Ōeyama 大江山
ō-giri 大切
Ōguchiya Gyou 大口屋暁雨
o-ie kyōgen 御家狂言
Ōiso no Tora 大磯の虎
Okina お国
Okina-tsuki go-ban-date お国付五番立
Okina watshi お国渡し
Okumura Masanobu 奥村政信
Okuni お国
omo-tadashii-mono おも正しいもの
ō-nadai 大名題
ō-nagori お名残り
Oniō Shinzaemon 惧王新左衛門
onna kabuki 女かぶき
Onoe Baiko 尾上梅幸
Onoe Kikugorō 尾上菊五郎
O-Soga Fuji kari 大曾我富士狩
Osome お染
otokodate 男達
Otoko-moji Soga monogatari 男子文字曽我物語
ō-zume 大詰
rufu-bon 流布本
Saigyū 未午
Sakata no Kintoki 坂田公(金)時
Sakata Tōjūrō 坂田藤十郎
Sakurada Jisuke 桜田治助
Sakurai Tamba no Shōjō Taira no Masanobu 桜井丹波少掾平正信
samban tsuzuki-kyōgen 三番続狂言
Sambasō 三番叟
Sankatsu 三勝
san no kawari kyōgen 三の替り狂言
Santō Kyōden 山東京伝
Sasagawa Rimpū 笹川臨風
satsuki 五月（午月）
Satsuma Dayū 薩摩大夫
sekai 世界
sekku 節句
jinjitsu 人日
jōshi 上巳
tango 端午
tanabata 七夕
chōyō 重陽
Semi no nukegara
Sendai-hagi
Sennichi-dera shinjū
Senshuraku
Senzai
sewa
sewa-ba
sewa-mono
shibai nenju-gyōji
Shibaraku
Shichi-fukujin
Shichi-henge
Shichi-jū-ichi-ban shokunin uta-awase
Shiinomoto no Saimaro
Shikirei yawaragi Soga
Shiki Sambaso
Shimbei
shinji-bon
Shinshōji
Shintorigoe Igyō-in
Shiratama
Shirazake-uri Shimbei
shiri-metsuretsu
shite
Shitenno
Shitenno osanadachi
shizome
shohon 正本
shomin 庶民
shosagoto 所作事
shukō 題向
Shusse Kagekiyo 出世景清
Shuten Dōji 酒吞童子
Soga matsuri 曽我祭
Soga monogatari 曽我物語
Soga no Gorō Tokimune 曽我五郎時致
Soga no Jūrō Sukenari 曽我十郎祐成
Sugawara denju tenarai kagami 菅原伝授手習鑑
Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真
Sugiyama Shichirōzaemon 杉山七郎左衛門
Sukeroku 助六
Sukeroku kuruwa no ie-zakura 助六廼の家桜
Sukeroku yukari no Edo-zakura 助六所縁江戸桜
tachi-mawari 立廻り
Tadanobu 忠信
Tadanobu mī-gawari monogatari 忠信身體物語
Taimen 対面
Takasago 高砂
Takemoto Gidayū 竹本義大夫
Takenuki Soga 竹抜曾我
Takizawa Bakin 滝沢马琴
tate 立ち
tate-sakusha 立作者
Tate-suji yoku-suji no koto 壹筋横筋之事
Terako-ya 寺子屋
Tōji 湯治
Tokugawa Iemitsu 徳川家光
Tominaga Heibe 富永平兵衛
Tomokirimaru 友切丸
Tora Gozen 虎御前
Tora no Shōshō 虎の小将
Tōshi-kyōgen 通し狂言
Tsūrikibō 通力坊
Tsurugi sandan 剣讃談
Tsuruya Namboku 鶴屋南北
Tsuuichi Jihei 津打治兵衛
Tsuwamono kongen Soga 兵根元曾我
Tsuzuki-kyōgen 続き狂言
Uji Kaga-no-Jō 宇治加賀挾
Ukiyo 浮世
Ume no Yoshibe 梅の由兵衛
Urabe no Suetake 井部季武
Usui no Sadamitsu 環井貞光
Utagawa Toyokuni 歌川豊国
Wada sakamori 和田酒盛
Wada Yoshimori 和田義盛
Wagoto 和事
Wakashu kabuki 若衆かぶき
Waki-kyōgen 延狂言
Watanabe no Tsuna 渡辺綱
Yado-sagari 宿下がり
yamabushi  山伏
Yamamura-za  山村座
Yanagita Kunio  柳田国男
Ya no ne Gorō  矢の根五郎
Yaoya Oshichi  八百屋お七
yaro kabuki  野郎かぶき
yatsushi  やつし
yayoi  弥生
Yorozuya Sukeroku shinju  萬屋助六心中
Yoshihide  義秀
Yoshitsune  義経
Yoshitsune sembon-zakura  義経千本桜
yo-tateme  四立目
Yo-tsugi Soga  世継曾我
Yo-uchi Soga  夜討曾我
Yunzei yome-iri Soga  弓勢嫁曾我
Yuranosuke  由良之助
za-gashira  座頭
zatsu-kyōgen  雑狂言
Zenchiu  善竹
Zenji Soga  禅師曾我