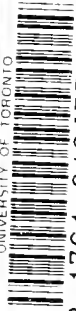


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# A SPECTATOR'S HANDBOOK OF NOH

by

Mr. and Mrs. Murakami Upton



Tokyo

WANYA SHOTEN





*DEDICATED*

*TO*

*Noriyuki Takahashi*

*Our Noh Teacher*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The three volumes of *JAPANESE NOH DRAMA* (The Nippon Gakujutsu Shink'kai, Tokyo, 1955, 1959, and 1960 respectively) were invaluable for the thirty Noh which they include, with the only full translations available in present-day English, detailed stage directions, voluminous notes on the complex background references, and superb introductory material. We recommend their perusal by anyone seeking the fullest appreciation of Noh.

Arthur Waley's *THE NŌ PLAYS OF JAPAN* provided a valuable balance as a somewhat different point of departure and intention.

These are the books on Noh in English which have helped us enrich our knowledge and understanding of Noh.

In Japanese, the definitive masterpiece of Noh research *YŌKYOKU TAIKAN* by Sanari Kentarō has been always at our side. We have mined a wealth of useful information from *NOHIGAKU KANSHŌ JITEN* by Maruoka Akira.

The staff of Wanya Publishing Company have given full measure of their energy, enthusiasm, and inexhaustible knowledge accumulated through generations of Noh practice and scholarship.

All photographs are by Wanya, of *HŌSHŌ* performances.

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## INTRODUCTION

Noh is the oldest living dramatic form in the world. Its true origins are lost in antiquity, among the *sarugaku* and more primitive shrine troupes, imported Chinese Court Dances, and other classical dance forms derived from Central Asia; but it was cast in its present mold in the fourteenth century, during the Muromachi (Ashikaga) Period, by Kanami and his son Zeami, who wrote a large number of the greatest and most popular Noh performed today. The songs and music, dances, and details of staging have been handed down unchanged to the present. In most cases even the standard variations permitted for specific Noh have a history of at least several centuries.

Noh has been favorably compared with classic Greek drama but the remarkable difference is not only that Noh has continued as living theater as well as being preserved as literary masterpieces, but also is thoroughly enjoyed by ordinary people of the present day as an aesthetic pastime. It is impossible to estimate how many thousands of people in Japan are practicing the chanting of the Noh songs (*utai*) and the performing of the short dance sequences (*shimai*) under the tutorage of professional Noh performers. They take up Noh with the same enthusiasm that they play golf, or go to the racetrack or baseball stadium. Unlike Kabuki or any other form of classical theater, anyone who is interested can become an active participant in amateur performances of Noh as well as being a critical spectator of professional performances.

This does not mean that Noh is a simple art to master: quite to the contrary, it requires a lifetime of intensive practice, for Noh is a most exacting art, including elements comparable to opera (chanting), drama (miming), ballet (stylized dance forms), and orchestration (three, or four, instruments), plus the totally different art of impersonation in female, warrior, old-age, spirit, animal, demon, or heavenly-being roles. It is thus not surprising that a professional may be still considered immature at the age of fifty!

The purpose of Noh is neither the portraying of a story nor the teaching of a moral, but simply the expression of beauty.

This basic principle is called YŪGEN, the highest ideal of the aesthetic concept of Noh. From Zeami to the present all interpretive writing about Noh has revolved around YŪGEN which, as a Zen term, has never been—and cannot be—actually defined. Suffice it to say that YŪGEN is conceived of as the most gracefully refined expression of beauty: **beauty which is felt**—as the shadow of a cloud momentarily before the moon, and an echo of a softly flowing brook, are felt.

## NOH AS A STAGE PERFORMANCE

Traditionally participants in a regular performance are male.

### PERFORMERS

Every production of a Noh requires: actors, chorus, and musicians. In addition, stage attendants (KŌKEN) are present.

The actors are divided strictly by groups, independent of each other, each with its own tradition, training, and discipline:

SHITE the main actor; with TSURE ('accompanying') to fill subsidiary roles; and KOKATA, child actors.

WAKI the secondary actor ('beside' to sit aside); with WAKI TSURE, usually just 'walk-on' parts.

KYŌGEN performers of the INTERLUDES (AI KYŌGEN), and KYŌGEN, the farces put on between Noh; also, to fill in as servants to announce an arrival, a Local Person to inform the traveler about the place, etc.

These three types of performers are in turn grouped under traditional family troupes or 'schools' (RYŪ), each headed by an IEMOTO who is responsible for carrying on the traditions of the art, training the members, and maintaining the necessary discipline. (The IEMOTO SYSTEM comes under periodic attack, mainly from outside or young critics, as a feudalistic anachronism but remains an irreplaceable necessity.)

The CHORUS is made up of members of the SHITE group.

### MUSIC

A Noh is performed to the accompaniment of one each of three or four types of instruments (except OKINA which takes several of the same drums):

FUE a transverse bamboo flute

KOTSUZUMI a hand drum held at the shoulder

ŌTSUZUMI a hand drum held at the hip

TAIKO (not used for all Noh) comparable to a snare drum, held horizontally on a low frame before the player.

## STAGE PROPERTIES

The Noh stage is never encumbered with more than the barest suggestion of a set, depending upon the singing and the conventionalized gestures of the actor (a slight movement of the hands, a faraway glance) to stimulate the imaginative sensibility of the spectator to feel the setting, which is after all more a poetic state than a physical place.

### NOTES

*Shimai* (dance sequences) and *utai* (the whole sung part of a Noh) are often performed independently, especially on such occasions as BEKKAI (Special Spring and Autumn Performances) or Memorial Performances, and by amateurs.

The music can also be played as solo performances but such recitals are few and seem to be more for the practice and enjoyment of the musicians than for public entertainment.

KYŌGEN parts are recited in an entirely different manner than *utai*: they wear yellow *tabi* (divided socks); a funny little white cap with a long sash hanging loosely down on either side of the bare face indicates a feminine role.

The stage properties (*tsukurimono*) are carried on and off the stage—often during the performance—by the KŌKEN, members of the SHITE group, who must adjust the SHITE'S costume, hand him the necessary implements (*kodōgu*) or pick up the ones cast away during the performance.

The costumes have in general been standardized for the past several centuries but the infinite variations in color and pattern of the fabrics permits pleasing adjustments to changing popular taste and personal predilections of individual actors. A more limited range of choice is also permitted for the masks to be used for many of the Noh.

## THE STRUCTURE OF A NOH

Actually, no two Noh are of identical construction, but most follow one of several standard patterns.

The most common is a play of two balanced parts, consisting of MAE ('former') and NOCHI ('latter'), separated by the AI ('between'), with a MAE SHITE for the first part and NOCHI SHITE in the last part, usually with one or more TSURE; a WAKI, often with WAKI TSURE—usually remaining on the stage through the AI (INTERLUDE), during which the AI KYÖGEN fills the time while the SHITE changes costume. This type usually employs a stage property.

A shorter type, constructed essentially as of two acts, has only a short introductory prelude followed by the main play; though the long INTERLUDE is not used, a KYÖGEN actor may open the play with an explanatory introduction, or fulfill the same function just before the main part. In this type there are some odd moments of waiting while absolutely nothing is happening on stage.

The true one-act play is as a rule more intense and vigorous, with the main participants (usually two) remaining actively on the stage from their first appearance to the end.

An infinite number of variations of construction are possible.

In addition, many variations are possible in staging: certain dance sequences, or even whole sections of a play, may be dropped; additional roles may be added; the NOCHI of a two-act play is often performed alone, as a HAN('half')-NOH.

In some few Noh the WAKI role is almost as important as the SHITE, but a small number of Noh have no WAKI, many Noh have no TSURE, or WAKI TSURE.

## CLASSIFICATION OF NOH BY THEME

All Noh except OKINA, which stands alone, are classified technically into five groups (though this is variable):

### FIRST GROUP

**WAKI** Noh. Auspicious performances for congratulant occasions, with at least one Divine Being or similar person who performs a *Kami Mai* ('God Dance') or other dance of equivalent dignity.

### SECOND GROUP

**WARRIOR PIECE (SHURAMONO ASURA Noh.)**

The SHITE role is the spirit of a famous warrior of old, in most cases from the Genji-Heike Wars (12th century); including a vigorous dance with a sword or other weapon.

### THIRD GROUP

**KAZURA** ('wig') Noh. Expressing feminine gracefulness; the tempo is exceedingly slow, movements are sublimely restrained, the dances are *yügen* (p. v) personified. These are the core of Noh; and a typical program of three Noh has one of the Third Group as the central piece.

### FOURTH GROUP

A miscellaneous group including all Noh not in the other classifications, the majority being either **MONOGURUI** ('lunatic') or **GENZAI MONO** ('living persons'). In most **MONOGURUI** the lunacy is induced by the loss of a son, husband, or lover, the deranged searching for the lost one, expressed by *Kurui* or an equivalent dance; **GENZAI MONO** have more dramatic conflict and relatively realistic action than other Noh.

### FIFTH GROUP

**KIRI** ('ending') Noh. Generally a demon, ogress, or malicious spirit appears before or attacks a priest or warrior who utterly defeats it; or a diety or imaginary creature performs a vigorously entertaining dance.

## MASKS

The SHITE (particularly in the NOCHI) wears a mask except in a few Noh.

The TSURE in a female role wears the standard TSURE MASK, a simple KO OMOTE lacking individual personality or expression unless the role is important in the Noh.

A KOKATA does not wear a mask.

The WAKI does not wear a mask; nor do WAKI TSURE.

A KYŌGEN in a Noh does not wear a mask, even when portraying a female role; but an AI KYŌGEN (performing for the INTERLUDE) may, especially as a supernatural being.



*Mami*



*Hashihime*



*Jō*



*Chūjō*



*Zō*





*Shinja*



*Hannya*



*Ōbeshimi*



*Ayakashi*



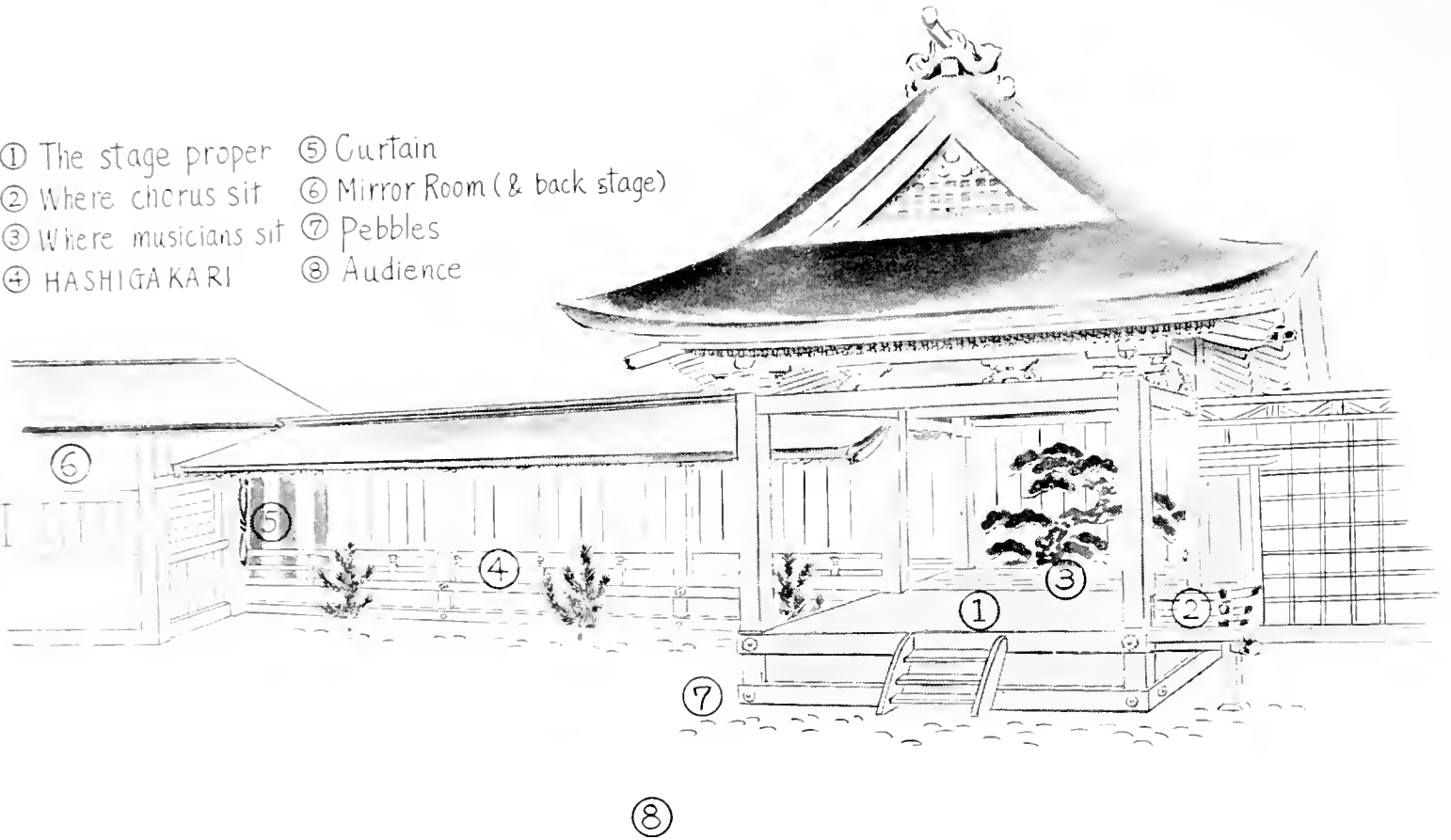
*Komachi*



*Ōakujo*

# THE NOH STAGE

- ① The stage proper
- ② Where chorus sit
- ③ Where musicians sit
- ④ HASHIGAKARI
- ⑤ Curtain
- ⑥ Mirror Room (& back stage)
- ⑦ Pebbles
- ⑧ Audience



OKINA



## OKINA

OKINA is a ceremonial Noh for an auspicious occasion, such as the first performance of the year, or a commemoration performance. It consists of several songs and three dances:

**The Senzai's Dance**

**The Okina's Dance**

**The Sambasō's Dance**



OKINA MASK



*OKINA*



*SAMBASŌ*



TOMOE

*Setting*

Awazu Field, in Ōmi Province (on the shores of Lake Biwa)

*Persons*

Tomoe (SHITE)

A traveling monk (WAKI)

WAKI & CHORUS:

If I try, faraway mountains are not so far;

If I tread on, faraway forests can be traversed.

I journey on the Kiso Highroad.

WAKI: I am a monk from the remote mountain district of Kiso.

As I have never seen the Capital I have decided to go there.

Crossing the pass, journeying on

Farther and farther, unto the end.

Since the day I set out through the provinces

Unscheduled days have passed till now

I look upon a sea—that must be Lake Biwa.

Hastening onward, I have arrived at Awazu Field in Ōmi Province.

I shall rest a while.

SHITE: (*spirit of Tomoe, as a village maid*) How pleasant!  
At the shore of Biwa, calm and peaceful. Under the pines of  
Awazu Field enshrine a diety and be governed well. It is a happy  
reign blessed with grace divine. (*weeping*)

WAKI: It is strange that this woman worships at the shrine,  
shedding tears... 'Tis strange indeed.

SHITE: Is it I of whom you speak?

WAKI: Yes, I wonder that you worship at the shrine and  
weep.

SHITE: Think not it strange! 'Tis said that when the priest  
Gyōkyō worshiped at Usa Hachiman he composed the poem:

Though this god I do not know

Reverence makes the tears to flow.

And the diety was so moved he blessed him by showing the  
images of Buddhas on his kimono sleeves. It was the same diety  
who later appeared at Otokoyama near the Capital, and has since  
been a patron diety of the country. So do not think it strange if  
I weep before the shrine.

WAKI: It is a pleasing answer. Women near the Capital are  
accomplished.

SHITE: Where are you from?

WAKI: I'm from a mountain hamlet of the Kiso district in  
Shinano.

SHITE: If you are from Kiso it is not surprising that you  
do not know who the diety is enshrined here—it is Yoshinaka Kiso,  
who is from your district. Pray do reverence to him, sir.

WAKI: What a marvel for Yoshinaka Kiso to be enshrined here!  
(*they kneel reverently in turn*)

CHORUS: (*for SHITE*) This lord is still renowned and now  
appears as a buddha and local diety guarding our world. Since you  
from some mystical cause stopped here as a traveler, if it please  
you now remain beneath this pine tonight and say prayers for him.

See day is dane  
By the lowering sun ;  
    Hear the evening bell  
    The vespers tell  
On ripples that run  
    'long the water's edge.  
    All things around are under a spell  
As I forth from  
The netherworld come—  
    And if my name  
    Unknown remain  
Enquire of some  
    folk of the village.  
    Then to her place returning again ;  
    In the gloaming shadows  
    Fading from sight  
    Among the grasses  
    In the falling night.

In the INTERLUDE the priest asks a Man of the Place about Yoshinaka Kiso and the woman warrior Tomoe. The man narrates at length Yoshinaka's final battle and death and Tomoe's escape.

WAKI: Darkness has already fallen. I pass the night here on the dewy grass to pray for those who fell in battle on this field.



*(Tomoe reappears, in battle attire)*

SHITE: Falling flowers life's vanity show forth ;  
Flowing waters do purify themselves.  
So now I escape the ever-flowing cycle

CHORUS: Of suffering sin and folly's retribution.  
Insentient plants and land may be saved by the sutra—  
Much more a mortal may attain Nirvano!  
How filled am I with gratitude and joy!  
Filled to blessed overflowing!

WAKI: Staying here the night, I see the woman whom I saw before, but now she is armed as prepared for battle. It is strange.

SHITE: Yes, I am the woman warrior Tomoe. Because I am a woman I was left behind at his death, and my bitter grievance binds me to this world.

WAKI: Your attachment to this world makes you visible.

SHITE: I'm waiting on my lord but the resentment diminishes not.

CHORUS: *(for SHITE)* At that time I wanted to die on that shore and follow him into the after-life. Unwillingly I was left behind at the last moment because I was a woman.

*(weeps)*

Everyone accepts that one's strength should be used for favors received, and life should be cast aside for honor. A warrior's achievement at death is respected by everyone.

*(sits on stool)*

CHORUS: Yoshinaka left Shinano with a host fifty thousand strong to fight against the Heike. In the battles he was distinguished for victories and bravery. Such things are all done for honor after death. But when the fatal time came no more could he retreat and met his end here on the shore at Awazu Field. You are a monk from the same district as Yoshinaka, so please pray for him.

WAKI: Please tell me of the end of Yoshinaka who was killed here.

SHITE & CHORUS It was January. He fled along the snow-patched way to this shore, his life dependent on his horse, which falling into a muddy ice-coated rice paddy, could move neither to right nor left. (*miming his action*) Stirrups sinking into the mud, no way to alight, he grasped the reins and whipped up the horse but it didn't move, and not knowing what to do he stood still. In astonishment I hurried my horse to him (*miming her own action*) and found that he was badly wounded. I put him on the other horse and followed him to this field of pine, urging him to kill himself, vowing to die with him. Then Yoshinaka said: "As you are a woman there must be some way for you to live undiscovered. Here is my guardian tag and my KOSODE (*garment*). Take them to Kiso. If you disobey me the relation of lord and retainer for three lives be severed forever." Knowing not how to answer but in tears, I stood up to leave him (*weeping*), when the enemy attacked, shouting: "It is the woman warrior Tomoe, don't let her get away!" Now there was no escape even if it were sought. Lucky for me that I could fight! Calmly I pulled up my halberd and looked frightened to draw the enemy closer. (*miming the combat*) When they fell upon me I handled the halberd to its best use, like a raging storm; the enemy were pushed back and fled afar. "This is the end," I thought then, and came back to my master, but he had already killed himself under this pine tree, leaving his tag and garment beside him. Weeping, I took them up and bade farewell to my dead lord. Though too stricken with grief to leave the place, I had to go in obedience to his will; so taking off armor and hat at the shore and putting on Yoshinaka's keepsake garment (*changing costume*), armed with a short sword hidden beneath it, fled alone to Kiso. (*weeping*) The regret of being left at that time still clings to me as an attachment to this world.

(*Performs a short dance*)

I beg of you, please pray for me.



#### Other Noh of Yoshinaka:

**KANEHIRA.** A priest enroute to Awazu (see TOMOE above) talks with a boatman, who after he arrives there comes to him in a dream as the warrior Kanehira and describes the battle in which he and Yoshinaka died.

**KISO.** On a military campaign Yoshinaka sends petitions attached to an arrow to the nearby Hachiman Shrine, then takes part in an entertainment arranged for him by the local people, during which white doves fly out from the shrine in an auspicious omen for his future victories.



## AKOGI

When a priest (WAKI) on a pilgrimage to Ise Shrine stops at Akogi Beach, an old fisherman (SHITE) appears, lamenting that his clothes are wet not only from the sea but also by the tears he sheds when he thinks about his sin as a fisherman—the taking of any life transgresses Buddha's commandment.

After they both quote poems about poaching on forbidden fishing grounds, he tells how the beach got the name Akogi. Since the founding of Ise Shrine the fish from this beach have been used for offerings. Perchance by that god's blessing, the fish were plentiful, so fishermen wanted to fish there, but were forbidden. Then a fisherman called Akogi poached there night after night till he was finally caught and punished by being drowned in that very sea. His life was sinful as a fisherman yet more than that he fished illicitly. He left the name Akogi notorious in this world and in the other world he suffers ceaselessly. He is coveting prayers for his soul. The priest pities him, understanding that the ghost of Akogi has appeared to tell his story. The fisherman asks him to wait there. A misty dusk settles down and the fisherman hurries to finish his fishing, but a sudden gust sweeps over the sea, making the waves rise; the fishing lights go out. The old fisherman calls out as he disappears among the waves.

In the INTERLUDE a Man of the Place (KYŌGEN) at the priest's request narrates the story of Akogi.

While the priest recites scriptures Akogi reappears, carrying a fishing net. Though repenting his past he still cannot give up his illicit fishing. Blessed prayers come to his ears but, alas! his heart still attached to fishing, he is in instant torment again. After describing his sufferings in Hell he sinks again into the sea, begging the priest's help.



### NOTES

1. Masks  
SHITE: *Jō*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Kawazu*
2. Stage Property  
Fishing pole and net
3. For a similar theme see  
UKAI, p. 89.



## AMA

### BACKGROUND

Minister of State Tankai Fujiwara's younger sister was married to the Chinese Emperor Kōshō, who presented three treasures to her family temple, the Kōfukuji in Nara. A Sea Dragon, hearing of this and desiring them, succeeded in making off with one, a jewel, enroute (near Fusazaki Beach, at Shido, in Shikoku). Minister Tankai went privately to retrieve the jewel, and while there had a child by an *ama* (girl diver). On condition that this child should succeed to the Minister's position, she recovered the jewel, but at the cost of her life; and in due time the son became the Minister Fusazaki.

### NOH

The Minister Fusazaki (KOKATA) goes with his attendants (WAKI and WAKI TSURE) to the beach at Shido where his mother died, to offer Buddhist services for her soul. When they arrive at Shido they are met by a fisherwoman (SHITE), who relates to them the dramatic recovery of the purloined jewel: (*realistically miming the action*)

The AMA (diver) receives the solemn promise of Minister Tankai to make their child his successor if she recovers the jewel. Declaring: "I would gladly forfeit my life for my child's happiness," she ties a rope about herself, so the people on shore can pull her up when she signals, and jumps into the sea, armed with a sharp dagger. Arriving at the Dragon Palace she sees a towering structure formed of jewels. Eight big dragons guard the jewel in the tower, with other fierce fish and crocodiles about. It seems impossible that she can escape with her life. The thought causes her to yearn for her family

her child and his father the Minister beyond the waves. She is momentarily overcome with grief and stands weeping, but, resolved to carry out her mission, clasps her hands in prayer for help of Kannan of Shido Temple, and leaps upon the stranghold. At her sudden attack the guards draw back and she seizes the jewel and flees with it. Hotly pursued, she cuts her breast, as she had planned to do if necessary, and pushes the jewel into the wound. Casting aside her dagger she collapses. (Now the Undersea Dragons won't come near a dead body, so they don't close n.) When

she tugs of the rope the people on the shore rejoice of the signal and pull her out of the water, her body all gory from her wounds. The Minister laments: "Now both the jewel and the girl are lost," but she bids him with her dying breath to probe beneath her breast, and there he finds the radiantly sparkling jewel.

The fisherwoman turns to the Minister: "So now you are the Minister Fusazaki according to promise named from this beach. I have revealed all: I am your mother, the diver's spirit. Read what is written here (*handing over a scroll—represented by a fan*), never doubting; and pray for my soul. It is now time for me to go back but I will come to you again at night;" and disappears below the waves.

In the INTERLUDE a Man of the Place (KYÖGEN) reviews the background.

The Minister reads his mother's letter (Note 1, a) aloud (*holding the fan as a representation of the scroll*), then recites prayers for her soul during which she comes as a Dragon Woman, carrying a scroll (Note 1, b) from which she reads.

She dances in the happiness of salvation obtained through his prayers.

Since then this temple at Shido has prospered.

#### NOTES

1. a. Mother's Letter: She begs him for prayers for her soul: having lain these thirteen years in desolate loneliness.
- b. HOKEKYŌ: Book of Parables of the Lotus Sutra.
2. **Masks and Headgear**  
SHITE: *Fukai*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Hashihime* with dragon headgear
3. **Dances**  
*Tama no Dan* (miming the narrative)  
*Hayamai* (expressing joy)
4. For use of KOKATA, see ATAKA, NOTE 5. p. 13.
5. AMA is unique among Noh in the realistic actions and gestures executed in the miming of the story, in contrast to the conventional reliance upon abstract, symbolic movements.



## AOI NO UE

### BACKGROUND

Aoi no Ue, the wife of Prince Genji (in *GENJI MONOGATARI*), has been stricken with a strange illness, due to the jealousy and hatred of Lady Rokujō, a neglected lover of Prince Genji. As the play opens, a high Court official, an attendant of the retired Emperor, announces that a sorceress renowned for her powers of exorcism has been called to the bedside of Aoi no Ue—who is represented by a folded robe lying at the front of the stage.

### NOH

A Court official (*WAKI TSURE*) enters, introduces himself and explains that, all other cures having failed, he has been sent to bring a sorceress renowned for birch-bow divination, to identify the pernicious spirit causing Lady Aoi's deathly malady.

The sorceress (*TSURE*) chants an incantation, plucking the bow.

Rokujō (*SHITE*) appears as an apparition, invisible to the Court official, riding in a dilapidated carriage, singing of the frailty of life, and her own disconsolate state.

The sorceress describes the pitiful sight: a lady of the nobility in a broken-down coach, weeping copiously.

*(Rokujō making the conventional Noh gesture of weeping)*

The Court official asks her name.

Rokujō sings:

But don't you yet know?

I am Rokujō

Who loved this world long years ago.

With many another Imperial guest

Viewing each season at its best.

—The cherry trees in springtime bloom,

Among the maple the autumn moon—

Luxuriously those days I spent,

In bright apparel, and pleasant scent.

How different now I have become!

A morning-glory withered by the rising sun. (NOTE 1, a)



Rokujō, overcome with intense jealousy, attacks Aoi (*striking her fan at the folded robe*), undaunted by the sorceress' stern reproof. (Note 1, b) (*stepping back, gazing at Aoi*)

Rokujō expresses her hatred, ending:

I will put Aoi in my tattered coach  
And secretly carry her off  
And quietly bear her away.

As Aoi's condition is growing grievously worse, a messenger (KYŌGEN) is sent for the holy man of Yokawa (WAKI), who performs effective exorcism in the mode of En no Gyōja, originator of *yamabushi* mountain asceticism. (Note 2)

Rokujō's jealousy now takes the form of a demon.  
(*taking a defiant stance, then sitting in an arrogant pose*)

The holy man continues his incantation (Note 3), finally subduing the demon, who then dances:

With heart grown gentle,  
Entering Nirvana  
Out of life and death –  
All praise be to Buddha.

## NOTES

- Literary and classical references
  - Quoted from a *waka* in HORIKAWA HYAKUSHU:  
I see the morning-glory in bloom  
When I get up at dawn  
When the sun has begun to shine  
Its beauty all is gone.
  - Uwanari Uchi*  
In her rebuke the sorceress refers to *uwanari uchi*, a custom among the lower classes in the Muromachi Period: when a wife was cast out for another, she and her female relatives or friends would force themselves into the husband's house and beat her supplantor.
- See ATAKA, NOTE 4, p. 13.
- Calling on the five most powerful incarnations of Buddha. See Benkei's prayer against the phantom in FUNA BENKEI, p. 24.
- Masks  
SHITE: *Deigan*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Hannya*  
TSURE: *tsure mask*



### Another Noh of Rokujō:

NONOMIYA. A priest viewing the ruins of Nonomiya Palace is told by a woman that Prince Genji, on this same day many long years ago, came here to visit Lady Rokujō, who then appears and tells the story of the carriage fight: When Aoi no Ue arrives at the Kamo Festival to watch the parade, in which Genji is taking part, her footmen scuffle with those of another carriage (which turns out to be, unknown to Aoi no Ue, that of Rokujō) which is blocking their way, and jostle it aside so Aoi no Ue is moved up ahead into a fine position; such an incident naturally rankles Rokujō deeply and is presumably the immediate cause of the episode in AOI NO UE.

## ARASHIYAMA

### BACKGROUND

ARASHIYAMA is one of those Noh (Cf. EGUCHI, p. 20) which was worked up from several irrelevant legendary or fictional sources, related by cognate names to a famous scenic or historical place.

### NOH

An Imperial Envoy (WAKI) goes with his attendants (WAKI TSURE) to view the famous cherry blossoms at Arashiyama, as proxy of the Emperor.

Two old people meet them there; the woman (TSURE) representing the goddess Katsute, the man (SHITE) the god Komori, each carrying a besom for sweeping under the cherry trees; explaining that, being guardian dieties of the Yoshino cherry trees, they have come to Arashiyama as these trees were transplanted from the famous Yoshino district. After some song and dance they retire, telling them to wait there.

In the INTERLUDE a minor diety of Yoshino (KYŌGEN *wearing mask*), sent by the two dieties to thank and entertain them, sings and dances.

The two dieties (NOCHI TSURE) reappear in their true form, carrying sprays of cherry blossoms; they perform a dance together, then are joined by the Yoshino diety Zaō Gongen (NOCHI SHITE), who inspired En no Gyōja, the founder of mountain asceticism in Yoshino.

### NOTES

1. The NOCHI TSURE play relatively important roles, for they perform a *Mai* (dance) while the SHITE does not.
2. *Masks*  
SHITE: *Jō*  
TSURE: *Uba*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Ōtobide*  
NOCHI TSURE: *Kantan Otoko* and *tsure mask*
3. *Dance* *Chū no Mai* (by NOCHI TSURE together)
4. TSUKURIMONO Cherry trees



## ATAKA

### BACKGROUND

Yoshitsune, under proscription by his elder brother Yoritomo, the Shōgun at Kamakura (NOTE 1), flees northward with his band under Benkei in the guise of *yamabushi* priests (NOTE 4). They know that check-points along the way have been alerted.

The Kabuki version of this Noh is called KANJINCHŌ.

### NOH

Togashi (WAKI), the Keeper of the Ataka Barrier, cautions his men to be on guard for the fugitives.

Yoshitsune (KOKATA) enters with Benkei (SHITE) and the others (TSURE). They confer on how best to get past, and Benkei puts Yoshitsune in their rear, as their porter. (*wearing a large hat hiding his features*)

Stopped under grievous threat, Benkei first breathes dire imprecations against whoever dare harm a *yamabushi*, then, to prove they are bona fide *yamabushi* on a legitimate mission of collecting funds, purports to read from a scroll the Subscription Roll, making it up as he goes along, at the same time skillfully preventing Togashi from checking it.

But as they pass, Yoshitsune is recognized. In an attempt to allay their suspicions, Benkei strikes the "porter," heaping abuse upon him for getting them into trouble. Then in awesome mien they pass the trembling guards.

Safely through the barrier, Benkei expresses his shame for having been forced to such an outrageous act but Yoshitsune praises the gods for supplying Benkei with such wit as the occasion demanded for their escape. A servant (KYÖGEN) then announces that Togashi wishes to offer a present of *sake* by way of apology; and Benkei entertains them with a dance.

## NOTES

1. See FUNA BENKEI, BACKGROUND, p. 24.
2. **Dance**  
*Otoko Mai* Benkei's congratulatory dance at the end.
3. **Costumes**  
All the band (except the porter, who is a KYÖGEN) wear the conventional costume of YAMABUSHI priests.
4. **YAMABUSHI**  
The YAMABUSHI priests were loosely affiliated itinerant mountain ascetics, followers of En no Gyōja, an ascetic hermit in Yamato in the seventh century. (See KAZURAKI, p. 40)
5. **KOKATA**  
Child actors (KOKATA) serve several functions in Noh; i. e.:
  - a. A child's part  
The ghost of the lost child in SUMIDAGAWA; the child in MIIDERA, KURAMA TENGU, etc.
  - b. Portrayal of persons of nobility or imperial rank when such roles are incidental to the Noh; e. g., Yoshitsune in this Noh and in FUNA BENKEI; the Emperor in SŌSHI ARAI, KUZU, etc.



## ATSUMORI

### BACKGROUND

At the decisive Battle of Ichinotani on Suma Bay, during the Genji-Heike Wars, Atsumori, scion of the Heike Clan, fell by the hand of the Genji warrior Kumagai. Beside the dead body lay a bamboo flute, which Kumagai later returned to Atsumori's son.

### NOH

Kumagai (WAKI), having renounced this world, in remorse for the death of the youthful Atsumori, to become a priest under the name Renshō, journeys from Kyoto to the scene of the Battle of Ichinotani on Suma Bay, there to offer prayers for the repose of Atsumori's soul.

He hears the sound of a flute, and four reapers (SHITE and TSURE) appear, singing a mournful song (Note 1). As he engages one of them in conversation, the others leave. When he remarks on this, the young man makes a request for prayer "as one of the family of Atsumori." He joyfully complies, (*kneeling in prayer*) and the youth vanishes.

In the INTERLUDE, a Man of the Place (KYÖGEN) recapitulates Atsumori's death.

In a dream as it were Atsumori reappears in his true form as a young Heike warrior. Then follows an interminable singing of pious expressions of the vanity of life, (*as he dances*) interwoven with the story of the fate of the Heike Clan:

Like leafy green branches of a spreading tree  
Stretching over the earth for all to see;  
    But fortune that lasted for only a day—  
    Like flowers of the field soon fading away.  
They knew not that darkness that was soon to be!





As flashes of flint-sparks are but briefly seen  
Surely, the life of man is wretched and mean!  
In their arrogant pride they appressed the poor  
Thus haughtily ruling twenty years and more.  
A life-time is passed in the space of a dream.

Their scattered ships floated on the Suma sea—  
Wild geese in broken ranks on doubtful journey.  
Like autumn leaves driven before the wind  
Not even in dreams to return again;  
In sorrow they lay at Ichinotani.

Atsumori recalls the party the night before their last desperate battle, (*performing a dance*) mentioning the flute he carried when he died; then recounts being left behind and his fatal encounter (*miming the combat*) with Kumagai. (Note 5)

"My enemy!" he cries, and would strike.  
(*raising his sword against the priest*)

But in the end he is reconciled through salvation attained by Kumagai's fervent prayers.

#### NOTES

1. Literary Reference  
The reapers sing:  
On the shores of Suma  
I too live in sadness.  
(like Yukihiro: See NOTE 2, b)
2. Suma Bay is associated, in various Noh, with:
  - a. The Battle of Ichinotani—The Heike's defeat by the Genji Clan.
  - b. The exile of the poet Yukihiro (See MATSUKAZE, p. 50).
  - c. The exile of Prince Genji, in GENJI MONOGATARI.
3. Mask NOCHI SHITE: *Jūroku*
4. Dance *Chū no Mai*
5. The popular Kabuki of KUMAGAI tells this part of the story.

#### Another Noh of Atsumori:

IKUTA ATSUMORI. The orphaned child of Atsumori meets his father's ghost at Ikuta Forest.



## AYA NO TSUZUMI

### BACKGROUND

An old gardener at an Imperial palace chanced to see one of the Emperor's Ladies walking in the grounds, and fell disconsolately in love with her. Hearing of it, she set him the impossible task of making sound from a drum of damask. When he failed, he drowned himself.

### NOH

A Court official (WAKI) enters with his servant (KYÖGEN) and explains the old gardener's love for the Lady, who responded, "Ah, love knows no caste of high or low..." then ordered:

"Have him beat the drum that hangs in the branches of the laurel tree by the pool. If it makes a sound that can be heard at the Palace, he will see me once more."

He has the servant call the gardener (SHITE) to whom he conveys the instructions and retires.

The old gardener gazes long at the drum in an ecstasy of hope: "I will strike this drum again and again, harder and harder, that I may see her." He strikes the drum with all his energy, unaware that it is covered with damask. There is not a sound from the drum. Is it because of his aged ears?... He vainly beats it -listening, listening... He sings and dances in bitter disappointment, and, overwhelmed by self-pity at his unparalleled misery, casts himself into the pool and drowns.

In the INTERLUDE the servant sympathizes with the old gardener, whose death he at once reports to the official, who in turn tells the Lady.

The Lady (TSURE) stands transfixed before the tree, possessed by his angry spirit as he comes forth as an embittered demon. In a frenzy, he commands her to strike the damask drum and when no sound comes out rails upon her till she utters an agonized cry for mercy, but he turns into an evil snake and sinks back into the pool with unabated malice.



### NOTES

#### 1. Masks

SHITE: *Jō*

NOCHI SHITE: *Ōakujō*

TSURE: *Ko Omote*

2. The TSURE, though actually on the stage from the first, is not "present" until spoken to at the beginning of the second part.
3. This ending is unique in Noh, for the bound or angry spirit which appears is ordinarily released or appeased at the end.

#### A similar Noh:

KOI NO OMONI is an almost identical Noh, varying in but two points: 1) the task set is to carry an immovably heavy stone "a hundred or a thousand times around the garden."

2) the anger of the gardener's spirit is appeased in the end.

## CHIKUBUSHIMA

### BACKGROUND

Chikubushima (*chiku* 'bamboo'; *shima* 'island') is an island shrine in Lake Biwa dedicated to Benzaiten, popularly known as Benten Sama, originally a Japanese (Shinto) goddess, syncretized into Buddhism as an incarnation of Amida Buddha (NOTE 1).

### NOH

An Imperial Court official (WAKI) and his attendants (WAKI TSURE) on their way to Chikubushima arrive on the shore of Lake Biwa. They sit down to wait for an approaching boat carrying an old man (SHITE) and a woman (TSURE).

The Court official asks to be taken to Chikubushima. The old man objects that his boat is not a ferry, but agrees to take them as an act of religious service since they are going to the shrine. They go aboard and he rows, describing the scenery. Arriving at Chikubushima, they disembark and the old man takes them to the Benten Shrine. The Court official asks about the woman, as he has heard that the island is forbidden to women. He is told that since this shrine is dedicated to the worship of Benzaiten, a feminine incarnation of Amida Buddha, of course women should worship here.

The woman then disappears into the shrine.

In the INTERLUDE a shrine priest (KYÖGEN) shows their treasures: a key to the storehouse, a rosary, a forked branch of bamboo and a ball by which fire and water can be controlled.

As the shrine quakes, the woman reappears as a goddess (NOCHI TSURE). Then a Dragon God (NOCHI SHITE) appears as another manifestation of Buddha. He carries a 'fire globe', which he gives to the Court official, along with silver, gold, and other treasures.



He performs a dance before the shrine.  
(concluding with a vigorous movement before the curtain)

### NOTES

1. Classical reference  
As the SHITE (the old man with the boat) explains on their arrival at the shrine, this goddess, Benzaiten, is the reincarnation of gracious Kujō Nyorai, for it was one of Amida's 18 prayers that women might attain salvation.
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Jō*  
TSURE: *tsure mask*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Kurohige*
3. Dances  
*Tenryo no Mai*  
*Maibataraki*  
*KIRI*
4. TSUKURIMONO  
A representation of a boat. (See FUNA BENKEI, NOTE 3, p. 25)  
A covered framework representing the shrine.

### Other Noh of Benten:

UROKO GATA. Benten on Enoshima gives a warrior his battle banner.

In ENOSHIMA the origin of the island is told, with its patron diety Benten and a dragon-god.

## DŌJŌJI

### BACKGROUND

A beautiful girl was in love with a young priest, who fled from her to a temple. The spurned woman, furious at being unable to follow him over a swollen river, changed herself into a huge snake and swam across. Her terrified quarry had hidden himself under the temple's bell so she coiled herself around the bell and in a burning passion melted it into a molten mass. In due time, a new bell is cast to replace the one thus destroyed and is now about to be installed.

### NOH

The head of the temple (WAKI) gives directions that special care be taken that no female be allowed in the temple compound, as he fears the same woman may attempt to destroy this new bell about to be hung.

But in spite of his warning, when a beautiful dancer (SHITE) appears at the gate and begs permission to perform in commemoration of the new bell, the temple servants (KYŌGEN) have not the will to refuse, and allow her to enter. In the ensuing dance, one of the most engrossing in Noh, the dancer's true nature is gradually revealed: till in a frenzy, she leaps directly into the bell, as it crashes to the ground, the terrified young men tumbling about acrobatically.

In the INTERLUDE the priests confer and decide it is the same woman who destroyed the original bell, who came in the form of a snake.

The bell quakes and she emerges as a snake!

Then follows a dramatic conflict between the priests and the demonic passion, with the power of their prayers prevailing in the end.

### NOTES

1. Mosks  
SHITE: *Shiro Shakuni*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Shinja* or *Hannya*
2. Donces  
*Ranbyōshi* an exceedingly exacting dance of slow turnings and foot movements.  
*Kyū no Mai*
3. UNIQUE TSUKURIMONO  
The bell is unlike any other stage property in Noh, and is used only for this Noh. The large ring hanging above the center of the stage and a similar one on the pillar at the rear are installed on every Noh stage, solely for the purpose of manipulating the bell for *Dōjōji*.
4. The HIGH POINT of the Noh is reached as the dancer's true nature is revealed, just before leaping into the bell.



## EBIRA

### BACKGROUND

In the great battle between the Heike and Genji clans, at Ikuta, the Genji warrior Kagesue Kajiwara broke off a bough of a plum tree in bloom to carry in his quiver (*ebira*) as his emblem.

### NOH

A traveling priest (WAKI) and attendants (WAKI TSURE) arrive at Ikuta. A villager (SHITE) appears, singing:

Time passes swiftly as  
An arrow shot from a bow  
Swift as the waters of  
This River Ikuta flow.

When the priest asks about a plum tree there, he tells the story of the spray of blossoms from this tree carried in the warrior's quiver.

The battle is then described in song.

When he has revealed that he is the ghost of that warrior he disappears.

In the INTERLUDE a Man of the Place (KYÖGEN) recites the story of the plum tree and the battle.

The warrior reappears as when he carried the spray of plum blossoms in his quiver. He describes by song and dance first the torments of the perpetual sword play in the Asura Hell (*miming combat*), then the battle at Ikuta.

The priest awakes: it is dawn. Begging for prayers, the spirit returns to torment.

### NOTES

1. Mask  
NOCHI SHITE: *Heida*
2. Dance  
*Kakeri* (expressing torment of the Asura Hell)
3. For other Noh eulogizing the aesthetic sensibility of a warrior, see TADANORI, p. 66; and TSUNEMASA, p. 75.





## EGUCHI

### BACKGROUND

The story in **EGUCHI** is from an ambiguous synthesis of several obscure literary traditions; but it is a Noh with the exquisite unity of a thing of beauty. The references are to:

A famed courtesan of Eguchi in Settsu. (NOTE 1, a.)

The Fugen *Bosatsu*. (NOTE 1, b)

(Bashō's later **HAIKU** on Eguchi the courtesan in Niigata is another facet of this legend with grosser implications.)

### NOH

A traveling monk (**WAKI**), arriving at Eguchi with his attendants (**WAKI TSURE**), seeks the place where the Lady of Eguchi lived in bygone days, and is directed there by a Man of the Place (**KYÖGEN**).

Standing where she once lived he recalls the old tale, and quotes Saigyō's poem (Note 1, c), when a woman (**SHITE**) comes presenting an apologia for the action of the Lady of Eguchi. Quoting her answer (Note 1, d), she points out that she had good reason to refuse a man of the cloth lodging in "such a house... a notorious place of pleasure," and begs the monk not to credit "that idle tale" that she begrudged a traveler shelter.

Calling herself the Lady of Eguchi, she fades from sight.

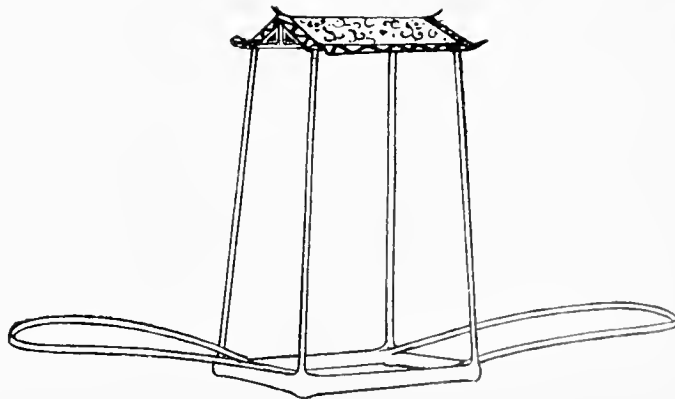
In the **INTERLUDE** the Man of the Place returns and tells another legend of the Lady of Eguchi as an incarnation of Fugen *Bosatsu* who appeared as a courtesan making merry on a pleasure boat on the river.

Deeply impressed, the monk recites sutras for her spirit; and, lo! he too sees a captivating 'lady of pleasure' (**NOCHI SHITE**) in a barge with her attendants. They sing of the sad state of a harlot's way of life, as she dances.

She performs another dance, then sings of “man’s vain attachment to his temporary lodging” as she continues dancing; at last revealing herself as Fugen, (*stamping repeatedly*) ascending on “a milk-white elephant borne on fleecy clouds.”

#### NOTES

1. Literary and classical references
  - a. The courtesan of Eguchi is mentioned in connection with the hermit-poet Saigyō (in Saigyō’s SENJŪSHŌ).
  - b. The reference to a courtesan of Kanzaki as Fugen (a female BOSATSU pictorially represented as riding on a celestial white elephant) is in the JIKKINSHŌ.
  - c. The poet complained: Even for one night, you begrude me your temporary lodging.
  - d. The courtesan answered: As a monk, you ought to take no thought for a temporary lodging.
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Zō*  
NOCHI TSURE: *tsure mask*
3. Dances  
*KUSE*  
*Jo no Mai*  
*KIRI*
4. TSUKURIMONO  
A framework representing the roofed boat. (See FUNA BENKEI, NOTE 3, p. 25)
5. For other Noh built around a single literary allusion, see TADANORI, p. 66 ; and TŌBOKU, p. 71.



#### A similar Noh:

MUROGIMI. Courtesans sing and dance in boats for a shrine festival at Muro, joined by the reincarnated Indian goddess Idaike.

## FUJITO

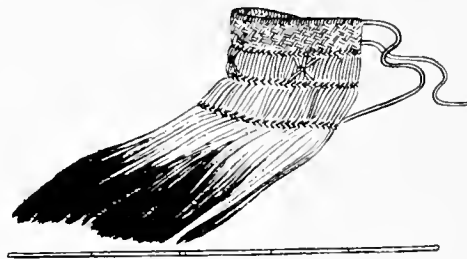
### BACKGROUND

FUJITO is one of many Noh based on the Genji-Heike Wars. When Heike ships arrived at Kojima Island, the Genji in turn moved their army to Fujito on the other side of the strait. But lacking ships, the Genji could not cross the strait to attack. At last Moritsuna Sasaki, a Genji warrior, induced a fisherman to show him a way through the channel on foot which only a few of the fishermen there knew, because it was so changeable according to the tide. When Moritsuna learned it, he killed the fisherman to keep the information to himself, and sank his body in the sea. Moritsuna led his army by that ford to the island, for a Geaji victory. He was therefore awarded the island of Kojima and has now come to take possession of it.

### NOH

When Moritsuna Sasaki (WAKI) arrives at Fujito with his attendants (WAKI TSURE) he issues a proclamation that anybody who has any complaint may present it to the lord. When an old woman (SHITE) comes weeping, Moritsuna asks her the cause. She accuses him of having killed her son for no reason. At first he pretends bewilderment but, moved by her sorrow, he admits all, even telling where he sank her son's body. Despairing over the hopeless prospect of life without her son, she demands that Moritsuna give her the same fate as her son. But instead he tells one of his attendants to take her home; and announces that he is going to hold a religious service for the repose of the fisherman's soul, and give assistance to the bereaved family.

In the INTERLUDE the attendant (KYÖGEN) reports that he saw her to her home; and Moritsuna tells him to arrange for the religious service with music, and also to announce there should be no fishing for seven days, as an expression of his intention.





While Moritsuna offers prayers the slain fisherman (NOCHI SHITE) appears, and they sing alternately:

Alas, it is more painful to try to forget than to try to hold in memory. Of course human life is uncertain. Punishment for a crime cannot be helped, but I was killed in innocence. Considering it now, 'I put my own head in the noose' when I showed him the shallow place in the sea.

-How peculiar! At almost dawn there is a strange figure walking on the water. Might it be his ghost?

I am grateful for the prayers, but I have come to talk away my resentment which fetters my soul in everlasting attachment to this world.

-Come you over the night sea to this shore with an unforgetting grudge to reproach me?

You told me to show you my crossing place; and I showed you the ford.

-I crossed as you showed me

You received fame and also—

-For from ancient times till now, to cross the sea on horse is

An unheard of feat

-So I have been awarded this island

The fortune came because of me

-How very grateful!

You should be!

Chorus (for fisherman): Beyond reason, you took my life; that is more unusual than riding a horse through the sea. I cannot forget. You took me to the rock over there; stabbed me in the chest with an icy sword. Being stabbed my life was ebbing away, then I was pushed down in the sea, sinking into the fathomless dark.

Fisherman: The tide was at ebb-flaw.

Chorus: In the undertow of the ebbing tide the waves rising and receding washed round the body caught in a rift between the rocks. He determined in his terror to turn into a monstrous underwater demon of Fujito to wreak vengeance. But now by your unexpected prayers, led by Buddha's hand, he comes easily to Nirvana as he wished.

#### NOTES

1. Masks

SHITE: *Kanawa Onna* or *Shakumi*

NOCHI SHITE: *Hatachiamari* or *Yase Otoko*

2. Costume

NOCHI SHITE: Conventional fisherman's garb



## FUNA BENKEI

### BACKGROUND

Yoritomo, who established the Bakufu Shogunate at Kamakura, became suspicious and jealous of his younger half-brother Yoshitsune whose military exploits against the Heike had won him an honored place at the Imperial Court. After several unsuccessful attempts on his life (see SHŌZON p.88), Yoshitsune decided it would be prudent to leave Kyoto for Kyushu where he could await events in safety.

As the Noh opens he is going to embark at Daimotsu Bay (Osaka), accompanied by his personal retainers and his faithful mistress Shizuka, a dancer noted for her beauty and art, whose vigilance and courage had saved him from one of the attacks upon his life.

### NOH

Yoshitsune (KOKATA) and his retainers (WAKI TSURE), led by Benkei (WAKI), enter. Benkei identifies himself and explains the reason for their hasty departure. They sing, and arrive at Daimotsu Bay.

Benkei secures lodging of a boatman (KYŌGEN); then urges Yoshitsune to send Shizuka (SHITE) back. He agrees, and Benkei goes to tell her. (*Shizuka appears, going to Yoshitsune.*)

Benkei announces her, and Yoshitsune tells her to return to the Capital. She reluctantly agrees (*weping*) reciting a poem:

More than this sorrow at parting—  
For the hope of meeting again  
I shall live, to see my lord's return.

At Yoshitsune's command Benkei serves *sake* to Shizuka.

Benkei bids Shizuka sing a farewell song, and dance. After Shizuka sings, Benkei hands her a ceremonial hat (*eboshi*), and she dances a few steps, singing:

Though I have no heart for dancing...

She performs several dances, singing of an incident in ancient Chinese history, quoting Lao-tse: "When one has reached fame and attained success one should retire," as a hope that

his brother's heart will soon be inclined toward him again.

She sings a sorrowful song of parting.

Yoshitsune and Shizuka bid sad farewell.

Benkei and the boatman prepare to depart, despite Yoshitsune's misgivings. They all board and are rowed out to sea.

There is a humorous touch as the boatman asks a boon: "When your master returns in power to the Capital, might I hope to be appointed director of shipping for the western seas?" Benkei promises it shall be so, but the boatman odds: "When one's lord is in danger, it's easy to promise anything, then afterwards forget—I hope you won't."

The sea grows tempestuous, and towering waves lash the boat; the boatman shouts and beats with his oar, explaining:

You may think me noisy, but waves are obedient—if we scold them they calm down.

Suddenly Benkei sees the hosts of the defeated Heike chiefs rising on the horizon; then one of them, Tomomori (NOCHI SHITE), draws near and, after several feints, attacks. Yoshitsune draws his sword "challenging him—as if he were human." Benkei prevents this futility, and instead rubs the beads of his rosary, invoking the five incarnations of Buddha.

From the east... the south... the west...

From the north... and in the center, calling on the Great King

The avenging phantom is put to flight by Benkei's prayers.

Carried away  
on the receding tide—  
Nothing left  
but the white-capped waves.

### NOTES

1. Mosks and Headdress

SHITE: *Magojirō*

NOCHI SHITE: *Ayakashi*, with flowing black wig and golden horns

2. Dances

*Iroe*

*KUSE*

*Chū no Mai*

*Maibataraki* (the vigorous dance of the NOCHI SHITE)



### 3. TSUKURIMONO

The use of a mere framework to represent a boat, not large enough to hold even the accompanying retainers (not to mention the 8 or 10 more who are supposedly present but not represented on the stage) is a typical example of the abstract representations used as stage properties for Noh.

### 4. For use of KOKATA, see ATAKA, NOTE 5, p. 13.



### Other Noh on Yoshitsune in flight:

**SETTAI.** Yoshitsune and his party fleeing in disguise are given hospitality (*settai*) by the widowed mother and the son of the loyal warrior Tsuginobu who sacrificed himself to save Yoshitsune at the battle of YASHIMA (p. 76).

**TADANOBU.** Tadanobu, brave warrior, brother of Tsuginobu (see **SETTAI** above) fights a daring one man rearguard action as Yoshitsune and the others escape from a tight spot at Mt. Yoshino.

In **YOSHINO SHIZUKA**, Shizuka helps Tadanobu delay the pursuers.

**FUTARI SHIZUKA.** Shizuka's spirit takes possession of a woman gathering herbs for a priest, then appears herself and they perform a dance.

## HACHI NO KI

### BACKGROUND

Tokiyori, retired regent in the Kamakura Bakufu, traveled about incognito as a priest to see the real state of the country. In this Noh, he is shown hospitality by Tsuneyo, a former lord unjustly dispossessed and reduced to abject poverty, but still possessed of the fiercest feudal loyalty.

### NOH

Tokiyori (WAKI), in the guise of a priest, arrives at Sano during a severe snowstorm and asks a night's lodging of Tsuneyo's wife (TSURE). She cannot take him in as her husband is away, so he stands outside to await his return.

Tsuneyo (SHITE) returns, singing of the snow:

Like scattered goose feathers  
Falling to the ground  
The snow blows round;  
People about are clothed  
With a snowy gown  
As of a white crane's down. (NOTE 1, a)

The priest is refused lodging, on the plea that they have scarce room for the two of them; so he plods on. But then the old couple decide they must somehow give him shelter from the storm, so he is called back.

As they have nothing else to set before him, they serve coarse peasants' millet, with poetic reference to Rosei's millet at Kantan. (NOTE 1, b) To build a fire to warm the guest, Tsuneyo must needs chop up his three treasured potted trees (*hachi no ki*)—a cherry, a plum, and a pine; singing:

Brushing off the snow the tree's beauty  
Shows forth, How can I do this thing? Shall I  
Now first cut down this plum? that's the first one  
To bloom among the deadened gloom of winter,  
Although the plum tree at the north window  
Blooms late by reason of the snow.

I pitied the man who couldn't see  
Beauty in a flowering plum tree (NOTE 1, c)  
Must it be made into firewood by me?

I've been concerned about this cherry tree  
When its spring blossoms seemed to be delayed;  
Carefully have I cored for it. But now  
To such depths of poverty have I sunk  
I chop this nurtured cherry tree in grief  
To make it blossom red in flame.

And now the pine!  
Banding and clipping its branches  
I made a graceful form;  
Yet all the care I exercised  
Is blown away in a storm.

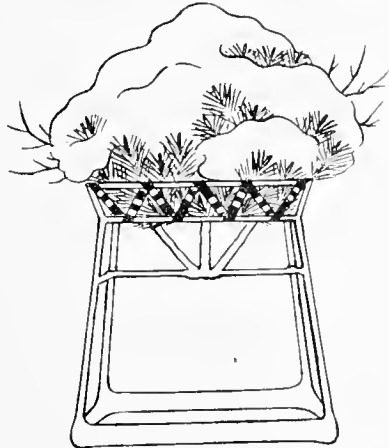
Now here's a fire I've made;  
Come closer and be warm.

At the priest's insistence, he then identifies himself as the dispossessed Lord of Sano and tells the story of the usurping of his possessions by a relative. But he still has his halberd and armor, and an old horse, that if at any time Kamakura be in peril:

I'd gird on my armor  
Tho' it be tattered,  
Take up my halberd  
Now rusty and battered,  
True, my steed is so lank  
Yet I'd ride with the first rank  
To write my name at the top of the roll.

When the fighting began,  
Though many the foes,  
I'd cleave their massed ranks  
Exchanging blows  
With an adversary  
Who would not be wary  
Of dying in battle! my own life-gool.

But alas my fate!  
It can never be done;  
Worn out with hunger  
I'll die unsung.



The priest then suddenly takes leave of them, going on his way.

In the INTERLUDE, some months later a herald (KYŌGEN) announces the order for a general alarm which Tokiyori issued upon his return to Kamakura a few days previously, calling on all the feudal nobility to report there at once under arms.

Tsuneyo rushes off to Kamakura with the others, but his old horse falls behind "like a coach on wobbly wheels."

Tokiyori, sitting again in the Seat of Authority, orders an attendant to bring the most unsightly soldier among the assembled warriors, and he quickly picks out Tsuneyo.

Tokiyori gives Tsuneyo formal commendation for proving his words that he would answer a call to arms, even in his poor condition; and restores him to his rightful estate. He grants him, in addition, three fiefs as memorials for the three trees, his treasure, which he cut down for firewood in the great snowstorm. (Note 2)

Holding aloft the deeds to his lands, Tsuneyo rides back joyfully to Sano.

#### NOTES

##### 1. Literary references

- a. A poem by the Chinese poet Po Chu-i
- b. See KANTAN, p. 36.
- c. From a poem by Michizane. (Cf. RAIDEN, p. 86)
2. The three fiefs given for his three trees—plum, cherry, and pine: Umeda—Plumfield (in Kaga); Sakurai Cherrywell (in Etsū); and Matsueda—Pinebranch, or Matsuida—Pinewell Field. (in Kōzuke).
3. HIGH POINT of the Noh: as he prepares to cut the trees.
4. Special features of this Noh:
  - No mask for SHITE
  - No apparition, or strange creature
  - No dream, or dream-like qualities—all earthy and natural.

#### Another Noh about Tokiyori:

In TŌEI Tokiyori, traveling incognito through Ashiya in western Japan, restores lands usurped by Toei from his nephew, and reconciles them.

## HAGOROMO

### BACKGROUND

The story of a celestial creature who lost her robe (*hagoromo*) and was therefore unable to return has many variations in the folklore of many countries. In one version in Japanese folklore, for example, the heavenly being is obliged to become the wife of the mortal who stole her cloak, and it is not until many years later that she is able to regain possession of it by persuading their child to tell where the father has hidden it; whereupon she ascends by it immediately into the heavens.

In the Noh the story is but a vehicle by which to introduce many classical literary allusions and traditional dance forms.

### NOH

A fisherman and his fellows (WAKI and WAKI TSURE) arrive at Matsubara on Mio Beach, singing of the scenery, when suddenly:

There is music in the sky,  
A shower of flower petals  
A divine fragrance waft all round.

The fisherman finds a beautiful cloak hanging upon a pine tree. As he is about to take it home for a family treasure, a heavenly maiden (SHITE) calls to him, claiming the cloak. Learning that it is the robe of a heavenly being the fisherman stoutly refuses to return it, saying it shall be a national treasure.

The heavenly maiden piteously bemoans in song the loss of her only means of returning: (*gazing upward*)

I look as it were on the fields of Heaven!  
But the misty sky-way is hidden;  
Alas, the path is lost.

As she and the chorus alternately express her deep despair (*making the conventional Noh gesture of weeping*), she dances.

The fisherman is so moved by her plight that he agrees to return her robe if she performs the dances of heaven. She

agrees but insists he must first return her robe in order for her to dance. He demures, lest she fly away without dancing, but she chides:

To doubt is human;  
Heaven has no deceit.

This so shames him that he hands over the robe and she performs several dances, finally ascending:

Over Mt. Ashitaka, and lofty Fuji,  
Faintly visible among the clouds,  
Then lost to human sight.

### NOTES

1. Dances  
KUSE  
*Jo no Mai*  
*Ha no Mai* (often omitted)  
KIRI
2. Mask  
SHITE: *Nakizō*
3. There are innumerable variations in the dance sequences.



## HANAGATAMI

### BACKGROUND

This Noh is based on the popular theme of a distraught woman searching aimlessly for her lover in a crazed frenzy. (Cf. HANJO, p. 80)

### NOH

When an Imperial prince who has been living in the provinces is suddenly called to the throne, he sends to the lady who has been his lover a flower basket (*hanagatami*) and a letter of farewell. The messenger (WAKI TSURE) delivers them to the lady (SHITE) as he meets her on the road to her home. Reading the letter, she sings her grief (*wecping*) and returns home disconsolately.

Later, crazed by her grief, she makes her way with her maid (TSURE) to the Capital, (*carrying the basket*) arriving as the Emperor is going out to view the autumn maple.

A courtier (WAKI), clearing the way for the Imperial party, jostles them roughly out of the way, knocking the basket to the ground. She remonstrates vehemently, singing and doing a frenzied dance. The courtier orders her to come forward and perform her mad dance for the Emperor's diversion. She does so, dancing a story from ancient China about heartbroken grief.

The Emperor (KOKATA) recognizes the basket. Telling her to forget the horrid letter that was with it and return to sanity, he takes her back with him to the Palace.

### NOTES

1. Masks  
SHITE: *Zō*  
TSURE: *tsure mask*
2. Dances  
*KURUI*  
*Iroe*  
*KUSE*





## HASHITOMI

### BACKGROUND

This Noh is one of many based on an incident in the classic GENJI MONOGATARI.

One night Prince Genji took a girl named Yūgao to a deserted house with amorous intentions but she was attacked there by the spirit of his jealous mistress Rokujō (NOTE 2) and died that night.

### NOH

A priest (WAKI) of the temple of Unrin In is performing a Buddhist service for flowers, when a maiden (SHITE) comes to offer a *yūgao* blossom.

Priest: What kind of flower have you offered? It is so unusually white and beautiful!

Maiden: A needless question! This flower blooms in the evening so you should be able to tell its name. But it grows along the fence-rows of common people's houses so it is natural you do not know. It is YŪGAO (Evening Glory).

Priest: Ah, yes and who then might you be?

Maiden: That should obviously be clear - coming from this flower.

Priest: Then you must be coming forth from the other world to this flower service. But pray tell me clearly who you are.

Maiden: I had a name though it is old and dead...

Priest: There is a story like that at a certain temple...

Maiden: My usual abode is there...

Chorus: In truth, it is YŪGAO.

And saying that she disappears behind the flowers to which he is performing the religious service.

In the INTERLUDE, a stranger (KYŪGEN) coming to see the flowers' service relates the story of Prince Genji and Lady Yūgao, concluding that the girl who appeared may be the spirit of the *yūgao* flower or the ghost of Lady Yūgao. He suggests the priest go to the temple in Gojō, where she lived.

At Gojō the priest finds the old mansion as dilapidated as that night Prince Genji made love to Yūgao there.



The maiden (NOCHI SHITE), present in her true form as Yūgao, (*siting in the bamboo framework hung with yūgao blossoms and gourds*) sings a description of the old tumbled-down house, and quotes a short, sad poem of heartbreak:

The moon, drown willy-nilly to the mountain,  
Not fully comprehending his true intent:

To be cast aside and fade away in the sky. (NOTE 1)

She asks for prayers, which the priest readily promises.

Then lifting the door she comes slowly forth, looking so pitiable the priest can not but weep.

As she dances, Prince Genji's liaison with Yūgao is retold:

One evening Genji found this house and ordered Koremitsu, his servant, to get a YŪGAO blossom and I sent the flower on a pure white fan, deeply perfumed. ... At that time, when he asked about the flower, if I had not answered we might have passed on without ever knowing each other.

She then performs a dance followed by more song, ending:

I have revealed my identity. Please pray... pray for me. It's almost dawn. I must go before the sun comes up.

So saying she returns again into the house; and it has all been but his dream.

#### NOTES

1. Literary reference  
Yūgao's poem in GENJI MONOGATARI
2. See AOI NO UE, p. 10.
3. *Mosk*  
SHITE: Zō
4. *Dances*  
KUSE  
*Jo no Mai*  
KIRI
5. TSUKURIMONO  
Bamboo framework hung with gourds. (See FUNA BENKEI, NOTE 3, p. 25)



#### Other Noh about Genji:

YŪGAO. The same story (see HASHITOMI above) but follows more closely the original narrative in GENJI MONOGATARI.

SUMA GENJI. The spirit of Prince Genji appears to a priest on a pilgrimage to Ise Shrine, first as an old man, and recounts his days in exile at Suma Beach.

SUMIYOSHI MŌDE. At the Sumiyoshi Shrine Prince Genji by chance meets Lady Akashi, who was his solace during his exile at Suma.

OCHIBA. A woman tells a priest the story of Princess Ochiba's love for Prince Genji's son Yūgiri, afterwards appearing as the princess.

## IZUTSU

### BACKGROUND

Narihira, known no less for his gallantry than for his poetry, is a legendary figure, but in this Noh the legend is modified: As children, he and a little neighbor girl used to lean over the wooden curb of a well (*Izutsu* means 'well-curb') and peer down at their own faces. When they grew up they married but were not happy for long; the sophisticated, fickle Narihira began to pay nightly visits to another woman. But his wife's unselfish devotion drew him back to her, and they lived happily thereafter.

### NOH

A traveling priest (WAKI) visits the temple built on the site of their house. An old wooden well-curb amongst *susuki* grass recalls their famous love story. A maiden (SHITE) comes to draw water, pouring it into a small wooden bucket containing flowers, and offering it reverently before a nearby mound, which she informs the priest is Narihira's grave.

She then obliges the priest by telling the love story of Narihira and Ki no Arisune's daughter—of the two children in innocence at the well-curb, quoting the poems (Note 1) which later trothed their love. From this exchange of poems she was called the Lady of Izutsu.

So filled with wonder is he at her charm in the telling of this tale that he begs to know her name; she softly confesses to be the 'Daughter of Ki no Arisune' and 'Lady of Izutsu,' scarcely after fading away behind the well-curb there.

In the INTERLUDE, a Man of the Place (KYÖGEN) repeats the story to the priest.

The spirit (NOCHI SHITE) returns and performs a dance expressing the sharp melancholy of her longing, dressed in the princely robe and headgear of her beloved, so that when she looks into the well in her intense yearning she sees Narihira's





image in place of her own, reflected in its still water. But dawn breaks—and nothing remains with the priest but the reality of day.

#### NOTES

1. THEIR POEMS (In the ISE MONOGATARI)

He wrote:

Beside the well-curb we compared our height;  
I've grown up much in the interval.

She answered:

The hair I parted when we stood  
Comparing our height beside the well-curb  
Hangs loosely down; by whom should  
It be tied up but you?

(It was the husband's place to tie up his bride's hair.)

2. Mask

SHITE: *Zō*

3. Costume

NOCHI SHITE: Ceremonial hat (*KAMURI*), and dancing robe (*CHŌKEN*)

4. Dance

*Jo no Mai*

5. TSUKURIMONO

Wooden well-curb, with a tuft of *susuki* grass.

#### Other Noh of Narihira:

**KAKITSUBATA.** A traveling priest stopping to view the blooming *KAKITSUBATA* (iris) at Yatsushashi meets a young woman, who explains that these flowers are specially famous from Narihira's ISE MONOGATARI in which he made an acrostic poem from the word *KAKITSUBATA*, then invites him to lodge that night at her house, where she dresses in a stunning robe and headpiece, both of which are remembrances, the robe being mentioned in the poem and the headpiece being Narihira's; finally revealing in song and dance that she is the spirit of the *KAKITSUBATA*, saved by Narihira's poem for he was a *BOSATSU* incarnation.

**UNRIN IN.** In obedience to a dream, a man who has always loved the ISE MONOGATARI visits the Unrin In in Kyoto and meets a woman with whom he talks about the blooming cherry there; Narihira himself later appears and dances.

**OSHIO.** A party viewing cherry blossoms at Ohara meet an old man who recites poetry Narihira wrote about Ohara and Oshio; then Narihira's spirit appears and dances.

## KAGEKIYO

### BACKGROUND

KAGEKIYO is one of the numerous Noh about a warrior of the defeated Heike Clan. Though he was a real person, this episode has no known historical basis. Nor can the daughter here portrayed be identified with certainty.

### NOH

Kagekiyo's daughter (TSURE) journeys with an attendant to the province of Hyūga where he is in exile, to meet the father she has never known, singing:

The gentle breeze whispered that he lives still—  
The whispering breezes said he is still alive  
But, oh, life is so like dew could he be ?

Kagekiyo (SHITE)—old, blind and destitute—unwilling for her to see his wretchedness, sends her away from his hut without revealing himself. But when a villager (WAKI) brings the daughter back he admits his identity, and agrees to tell his exploits at the Battle of Yashima (Note 1), on condition that she go as soon as it is finished:



We of the Heike were in our ships,  
The Genji armies spread 'long the shore;  
Each eager to bid for mastery  
Through force of arms in battle sore.

Then thought Kagekiyo in his heart,  
"Yoshitsune is after all  
No god or demon—an easy mark  
For one who loves not his own life dearly!"  
"It is I, Kagekiyo," he cried  
"The Quick-Tempered, o Captain of Heike men!"  
Swiftly pursuing, with bare hand grasping  
The helmet which his enemy wore.  
He clutched at the neck-piece, then clutched again;  
But it slid from him—slipped through his fingers.  
Till the neck-piece crocked and tore off in his hand,  
While the other, breaking free, ran a good way off,  
Then turning, he shouted, "O mighty Kagekiyo,  
How terrible is the strength of your grip!"  
Kagekiyo called back to him,  
"Noy, rother, how strong your neck is!"



When the story concludes she leaves.

"I stay," he said; and she answered, "I go."  
This word was all he kept of hers,  
Nor exchanged they more remembrances.

#### NOTES

1. See YASHIMA, p. 76.
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Kagekiyo*  
TSURE: *tsure mask*
3. TSUKURIMONO  
A bamboo framework representing Kagekiyo's hut.
4. A high point in this Noh is the portrayal, by the SHITE—immediately after he comes out of the hut—of various and conflicting emotions; i. e., anger, shame, hopelessness, etc. Another is the sad scene of the daughter's departure, at the end.

#### Another Noh about Kagekiyo:

DAIBUTSU KUYŌ. Kagekiyo, disguised as a temple sweeper, attempts to attack his enemy Yoritomo during the re-dedication ceremony of the great Buddha (DAIBUTSU) at Nara but is discovered and flees.



## KANTAN

### BACKGROUND

Rosei, a pious youth seeking "enlightenment" but loath to break "attachments to this life," comes to the village of Kantan (in ancient China), journeying to consult a great sage. At Kantan he finds what he sought and returns home satisfied.

## NOH

An innkeeper (KYÖGEN) explains that her "Pillow of Kantan," which was given to her by a holy man who passed there on a journey, has the power to enlighten one who sleeps on it by revealing past and future in a dream.

Rosei (SHITE) arrives at the inn.

Learning the purpose of his journey, she suggests he sleep upon the headrest, and orders a meal of millet for him.

### ROSEI'S DREAM:

An envoy (WAKI) tells Rosei he has been chosen emperor, and takes him to the Palace (NOTE 1, a) in a jewelled palanquin.

A flowery description of its magnificent splendor is then sung.

A Court Minister announces a party celebrating the fiftieth year of his reign. They drink "the wine of chrysanthemum dew." (NOTE 1, b)

Then the Court Dancer (KOKATA) performs, as they sing.

Rosei does a classical Court Dance, followed by more song and dance.

The innkeeper calls him; his millet meal is cooked.

Rosei awakes, bewildered; bereft of fifty years' glory:

'Twas but the sighing pines that made the voice  
Of multitudes of queens and waiting-ladies;  
The palaces of splendor nought but this inn.  
His glory was for fifty years—his dream  
But time to cook the millet. O mystery!  
Even a hundred years with pleasure filled  
Are but a dream

At Death.

Gratefully enlightened by the Pillow of Kantan he turns homeward.

## NOTES

1. Classical references
  - a. Palace on the River Wei, of the First Emperor of Ch'in, builder of the Great Wall of China.
  - b. "Wine of chrysanthemum dew" a legendary elixir of longevity. (See MAKURA JIDŌ, p. 83)
2. Mask  
SHITE: *Kantan Otoko*
3. Dances  
*Chū no Mai* (by KOKATA)  
*Gaku* (Court Dance)
4. TSUKURIMONO  
Dias with bamboo frame and roof, used to represent:
  - 1) A bed chamber of the inn at Kantan
  - 2) The Throne Room of the Palace, in his dream
  - 3) Again, his bed at the inn





## KAYOI KOMACHI

### BACKGROUND

Ono no Komachi, famous beauty of the Heian Period (see *SŌSHI ARAI*, p. 63) had a most persistent suitor, Fukakusa no Shōshō, to whom she made a coquettish promise - if he would come to her house for one hundred nights. He fulfilled the task by all but one - on which night, alas, he died!

### NOH

A priest (WAKI) in religious training at Yase wonders about a woman coming daily with offerings of fruit and firewood.

The woman (TSURE) comes, commiserating on her poor appearance, and when she arrives tells what she has brought.

The priest asks about her.

My name is Ono no... No, I can't say it - an old woman at Ichiharano,  
where SUSUKI grass grows...

Begging for prayers, she disappears.

The priest muses: "It's very strange - when I asked her name she disappeared, quoting:

The autumn wind blows unmercifully  
Where SUSUKI grass grows;  
Nothing remains of Komochi's beauty.

"It is Ono no Komachi's poem. Then it must have been her. I will go to Ichiharano to offer prayers for her soul."

The priest comes to the place and prays.

Komachi reappears and thanks him for the prayers, begging for release.

A man (SHITE) rushes in threatening the priest not to do so. She complains that he wants her to suffer. The man retorts: "I was in grief even with the two of us together; now if she leaves me alone it will be intolerable, and I must end up in

hell, so then she must too. There's no need to be religious. You priest go away."

The priest pleads with him to receive Buddha's mercy, which he refuses. Komachi insists on being freed from Shōshō, but he swears that he will never let her go, and both weep. The priest, realizing that the man is Fukakusa no Shōshō, asks him to describe the one hundred nights.

As Komachi told him that she would meet him on the one hundredth night, he came night after night. She told him to be inconspicuous, so he went on foot, while she expected him to give up some day.

Disguised as a commoner  
In the moonlight  
it wasn't dark  
In the snow  
shaking snow off his sleeves  
On the rainy night  
in fear of a demon's attack  
Unclouded night  
I was always in tears - never had a clear day

*(Performs a dance)*

Truly the evenings make one's heart wander.  
In the evenings you must have waited for  
the moon in the sky, but not for me.  
At dawn things creep into one's mind.  
It isn't for me but for herself, birds should sing,  
bells ring, morning light should come, because  
it is better to be alone.

Thus wearing himself out he counted the ninety-ninth night. Then in happiness he arrayed himself in his best apparel and started on his way, thinking Komachi would be waiting for him.

If it is the command not to drink I would not, even if it be served  
in the most exquisite cup.

Thus his steadfast will led him to Nirvana.

Forgiven their many sins, Ono no Komachi and Shōshō both attain release.





## NOTES

1. Dances  
Iroe  
KIRI
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Yase Otoko*  
TSURE: *tsure mask*

### Other Noh of Komachi's old age:

**SOTOBA KOMACHI.** Komachi as a hundred-year-old beggar sits down to rest upon a stupa marker and is reprimanded by priests from Mt. Kōya (seat of the strict mystic Shingon Sect) for sacrilege but in disputation she proves more than a match for them with her Zen sophism, composing a WAKA (31 syllable poem) justifying her sitting on the stupa (*sotoba*), since what is forbidden in heaven may be all right outside (*soto wa*), making a neat play on words; then she reveals her identity, soon thereafter becoming possessed of the distraught spirit of her persistent suitor Shōshō, portraying the same story as in the Noh above.

**ŌMU KOMACHI.** A Noh about a letter Komachi received from the Emperor, in the form of a WAKA which she answered by returning the same poem (*ōmu* means 'parrot') with just one syllable changed.

**SEKIDERA KOMACHI.** Some priests and a child sit at the feet of an old woman, Ono no Komachi, who teaches them of poetry, quoting her own poems and reminiscing on her former splendor; then accompanies them to their temple, Seki Dera, where she and the child perform dances.

### Other old-woman Noh:

**HIGAKI.** A priest meets a very aged woman daily bringing water who turns out to be the great dancer of long ago who composed a famous poem for Fujiwara no Okinori when she gave him a drink of water.

**OBASUTE.** An exceedingly beautiful presentation of the legend about an old woman left to die on the mountain.

(*The subject is treated extensively by modern story-writers and movies, as well as by HAikai and other forms of literature.*)



## KAZURAKI

Three *yamabushi* (Note 1) priests (WAKI and WAKI TSURE) come to Mt. Kazuraki and are given shelter from the snow by a woman (SHITE) who, after building a fire for them, asks for prayers. When the priest asks why, she reveals that she is the mountain's diety, and is suffering punishment for having failed to carry out an order to construct a stone bridge for Gyōja, a famous traveling priest.

In the INTERLUDE a Man of the Place (KYŌGEN) meets the priests, who ask him about the stone bridge on Mt. Kazuraki. He relates the story: This mountain is so rugged that it is almost impossible to climb. But since En no Gyōja climbed it priests have been going there. This Gyōja, from Yamato, lived here for thirty years during Emperor Mombu's reign and had complete mastery over the gods. Then he thought it was so far from Kazuraki to Ōmine going around mountains and through valleys that there should be a stone bridge, which he ordered the goddess of Kazuraki to make. The goddess worked only at night because she was so ashamed of her ugliness, so she couldn't complete it to his satisfaction. In anger he bound her with a vine. The goddess retaliated by denouncing him to an Imperial Court official who tried to catch him but, unable to do so as Gyōja could traverse heaven and the earth freely, caught Gyōja's mother instead. Then Gyōja came to take his mother's place and was exiled to an island. After that Gyōja transported his mother out of the country in a pot. But he still came to the mountains Kazuraki, Ōmine and Fuji, and the goddess suffers.

The goddess (NOCHI SHITE) reappears in her true form and performs a dance in gratitude for being saved by their prayers from further punishment.

### NOTES

1. See ATAKA, NOTE 4, p. 13.
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Shakumi*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Nakizō*
3. Dances  
*KUSE*  
*Jo no Mai*  
*KIRI*



## KINUTA

### BACKGROUND

KINUTA is centered poetically upon the common household chore of women in olden days of beating cloth with a mallet on a wooden block (*kinuta*) to soften it. The sensibility of the sound of the beating is interwoven with the nuance of the poetry to express the wistful waiting of a wife for her husband long in coming home.

### NOH

The Lord of Ashiya (WAKI), away at the Capital for three years while his wife waits yearningly at home (in Kyushu), sends their maid (TSURE) to say that he will be back at the end of the year.

The wife (SHITE) complains bitterly to the maid of the husband's extended absence; then in the autumn evening air they hear the sound of beating cloth and get out the wooden block to beat cloth together. This recalls to the wife a Chinese story (Note 1) and she dares hope the sound of their beating may reach her husband and bring him back quickly.

But alas! it is not to be so: a messenger arrives with the news that her husband can not after all come back at the year's end as he had promised.

The poor wife, losing all faith in her husband, feels deceived and so utterly neglected that she sinks into a melancholy illness and passes away.

The shock of this brings the husband home at once, to hold religious rites for the repose of her soul. He offers up the wooden beating block and employs a medium for a birch-bow seance (Cf. AOI NO UE, p. 10).

Her embittered spirit comes forth to rail upon him, giving vent to her long-accumulated resentment and disillusionment:

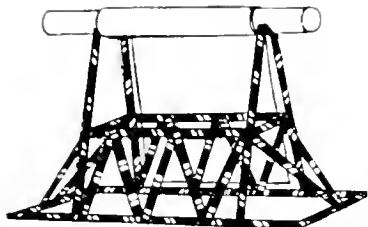
Even in your dreams why did you not hear the sound of my mallet beating on the cloth those lonely chilly nights? O, heartless man!



But the chanting of the Lotus Sutra so like to her the sound of beating cloth—leads the way to her soul's eternal bliss.

## NOTES

1. Literary reference  
While a Chinese envoy to the barbarians was being held by them for many years, he one autumn evening miraculously heard the sound of his yearning wife thousands of miles away beating cloth on the wooden block, and soon after was released and returned home.
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Fukan*  
TSURE: *tsure mask*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Deigan*
3. Stage Property  
Wooden block on which cloth is beaten, and small mallet.



### Other Noh on a similar theme:

**AISOMEGAWA.** A woman comes with her child to her former husband but by the jealousy of the present wife is led to drown herself, the child being prevented from following her, and she herself being brought back to life through the husband's prayers.

**TORI OI.** A landowner returning to his home in Kyushu after ten years in the Capital on a lawsuit finds his wife and son being made to work scaring away (*oi*) birds (*tori*) and flies into a murderous rage but his wife forgivingly intercedes for pardon for the evil steward who thus grossly mistreated them.

**KAMO MONOGURUI.** A man who has been away for three years returns to the Capital on the day of the festival of the Kamo Shrine and there finds his wife who became deranged from loneliness; although they finally recognize one another they go home separately to avoid curious onlookers.

## KIYOTSUNE

### BACKGROUND

This Noh is built around an incident recorded in the HEIKE MONOGATARI. When the Heike army, in disastrous flight from the Genji, received an oracle from the local Hachiman Shrine that there was no further hope for their cause, one General Kiyotsune eager to enter Nirvana, deciding to throw himself immediately upon the mercy of Amida Buddha and thus insure his future bliss, one night leaped from his boat into the sea and drowned. A lock of his hair was found in the boat, for a keepsake to his wife at the Capital.

### NOH

Kiyotsune's faithful retainer (WAKI) announces that he has taken upon himself the task of bearing the tragic news, and the keepsake, to Kiyotsune's wife (TSURE).

When he has delivered both he retires.

The wife is shocked and embittered at the news and casts the keepsake aside, going weeping to her lonely bed:

*Languishing, praying that even in a dream he might come to her.*

When Kiyotsune (SHITE) appears beside her pillow she knows she must be dreaming but is thankful all the same for the sight of him.

They quarrel, tauntingly reproaching each other in mutual rancor, he for her spurning of the keepsake he had taken so much care to leave for her, she for his casting away of his own life.

Kiyotsune relates the events leading up to his death:  
(*sitting on stool*)

*The Heike, in flight with the Imperial Court (NOTE 1), inquire at the Usa Shrine of Hachiman and are granted an oracle from the god which tells them to give up all hope. Immediately they are forced to embark again in flight before their advancing foes.*

Kiyotsune (*dancing*) describes his death in a beautiful lyrical passage of blended poetic sensibility and religious piety.



The wife responds:

I am dazed ; shaken by sabbing. Oh, tragic end to our wedded life !

Kiyotsune then describes his suffering in the Asura Hell (*drawing his sword and dancing with it*), a torment of continuous combat :

The trees are enemies, raindrops as arrows,  
Sharp swords strewn over the ground. The hills castles  
Of iran, clouds of battle-banners, surrounded by  
Enemies blades and flashing eyes of hate.

All is strife.

The foe advance like waves,  
Then like the tide retreat ;  
All battles of the land  
Are fought again without end.

'Til now at last, these torments cease.

Buddha's name the dying Kiyotsune invokes ;

Kiyotsune, the Purified, enters Nirvana.

All praise be to Amida !

#### NOTES

1. See OHARA GOKŌ, p. 55
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Chūjō*  
TSURE: *tsure mask*
3. Dances  
*KUSE* (describing his death)  
*KIRI* (with sword, expressing suffering of Hell)
4. This is a one-act Noh of unique structure, using almost no stage properties, and the WAKI being on stage only briefly. The effect is a high emotional tension throughout the play.

#### Similar Noh:

**TOMOAKIRA.** The defeated Heike (Taira) warrior Tomoakira appears to a priest praying at a stone inscribed to him at Suma Beach, first in the form of a man to extol his father's military exploits, then as himself to describe his own death in battle at Ichinotani.

**MICHIMORI.** A priest praying at Naruto for the souls of Heike (Taira) warriors who died there meets the spirit of one of them, Michimori, and his wife, who drowned herself upon news of his death.

## KOKAJI

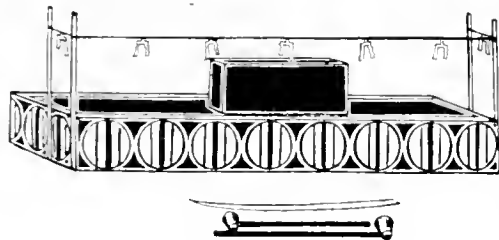
Kokaji (WAKI), a swordsmith in Kyoto during the Heian Period, receives an order to make a sword for the Emperor, but as he does not have a good assistant, he demurs. But when the envoy (WAKI TSURE) from the Imperial Court explains that the order is being given in compliance with instructions received in a dream, Kokaji goes to the Fox Shrine to seek divine aid. The diety appears in the form of a lad (SHITE), who reassures him with a promise of assistance.

Following the INTERLUDE, the god (NOCHI SHITE) comes and dances, then together they make a marvelous sword.

There follows a dance of praise.

### NOTES

1. TSUKURIMONO  
Dias representing the swordsmith foundry.
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Jidō*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Kotobide*
3. Dances  
*Maubataraki* (showing his divinity)  
*KIRI* (the concluding dance)
4. HIGH POINT: pounding out the sword



## KOSODE SOGA

### BACKGROUND

The story of the Soga Brothers' Revenge is a classic vendetta in Japanese literature. Thousands of stories, plays, etc. have been written on the theme--especially for Kabuki. Their father was killed on a hunting party over a quarrel about land. (The traditional spot in Izu—a small, deep hollow visible from the highway between Itō and Shimoda—is faithfully pointed out to tourists.) The mother put the younger son in a temple, where he did not stay long.

### NOH

The Soga brothers, Jūrō (SHITE) and Gorō (TSURE), go under arms to their mother's house with their servants.

Jūrō announces that Yoritomo is taking out a hunting party, including their enemy, and he will join them with Gorō; so he hopes their mother will be reconciled with Gorō before they go.

Jūrō is welcomed by their mother (TSURE) while Gorō waits outside commiserating himself. (*weeping*)

Jūrō returns to tell Gorō that, as their mother is in a good mood, he should go in; but when he calls, his mother answers that she has disowned him because he didn't become a priest as she had willed, and closes the door against him. Jūrō is told that if he even mentions Gorō he will also be disowned; (*returns weeping*) so he takes Gorō in with him, complaining:

Everyone knows about their enemy, and as he doesn't feel able to carry out their revenge against him alone she ought to scold Gorō if he wants to become a priest, leaving his older brother alone. Even if he stayed in the temple to please her, people would say that it was to hide from their enemy - not for religious motives - and his fellow priests would despise him. To live unwillingly in shame would be worse than being in secular life. He learned the Hokekyō at the temple in Hokone and prayed for his parents every day. Such a filial son has been disowned for three years! Unable to meet his mother, his longing has grown ever stronger. She should surely realize their danger, even in these peaceful times, on such a hunting or fishing expedition, remembering how their father was killed.

Then they leave weeping; but she calls them back, forgiving and giving them her blessing. The two brothers prostrate



themselves, weeping for joy; then celebrate by drinking a ceremonial cup of *sake*, (*making the conventional Noh gesture of pouring*) and performing a joyful dance together.

#### NOTES

1. **Mask**  
TSURE (Mother): *Fukai*
2. **Dances**  
*Otoko Mai* (by two together, expressing their joy)  
*KIRI*
3. This is a one-act Noh, and is unusual in having no WAKI.

#### Other Noh of the Soga brothers' revenge:

**CHÖBUKU SOGA.** The younger of the two Soga brothers, seeing their enemy at a shrine at Hakone and burning with revenge is restrained from such rashness by his guardian, the governor of Hakone, who instead gathers priests and places a figure of the enemy on the altar to put curses upon him, whereupon the god Fudō Myō-ō materializes and attests that the revenge will be achieved.

**GEMBUKU SOGA** (an episode preceding their return home in **KOSODE SOGA**). The older Soga brother Jūrō performs the coming-of-age ceremony on the younger brother Hako-ō (Gorō), in preparation for their setting out on their vendetta; after which the governor of Hakone presents him with an heirloom sword.

**YOUCHI SOGA.** The Soga brothers attack their enemy at night, on the Shōgun's hunting expedition (see **KOSODE SOGA** above), but the younger Gorō, searching about in the dark for his brother whom he fears has been killed, is attacked by a large number of the Shōgun's men and tricked by one of them masquerading as a woman and led away bound.

**ZENJI SOGA** follows the **YOUCHI SOGA** episode, their younger brother Zenji being taken captive before he can kill himself.

#### Other Noh of revenge:

**DANPŪ.** Another story of revenge, set on Sado Island during the Kamakura Period.

**MOCHIZUKI.** Another story of revenge, by the victim's wife and son with the assistance of his loyal retainer.

**HŌKA ZŌ.** Two brothers, to avenge their father's death, disguise themselves as Hōka priest entertainers to come into the presence of their enemy and slay him.



## KURAMA TENGU

### BACKGROUND

Ushiwaka, who grew up to become the famous warrior Yoshitsune, was the ninth son of Yoshitomo, head of the Genji (Minamoto) family. He was spared, along with his older half-brother Yoritomo, when his father was killed, and his family all but annihilated by the Heike (Taira) victors. At the time of this Noh, Ushiwaka is at Mt. Kurama with children of the Heike Clan.

### NOH

A *tengu* (Note 1) disguised as a *yamabushi* priest (SHITE) enters, announces that he is going to West Valley at Mt. Kurama to view the cherry blossoms, and retires.

At East Valley a priest (WAKI) and his attendants (WAKI TSURE) going blossom viewing with Ushiwaka and other children (KOKATA) appear.

A servant (KYÖGĒN) from a temple of West Valley brings a letter inviting them there, where the cherry blossoms are now at their best: so they go with him.

The priest calls the servant to entertain the children; he does so with song and dance. The *yamabushi* comes uninvited. The servant would make him leave, but the priest decides they will have their party tomorrow instead, and all except Ushiwaka leave, the angry servant shaking his fist at the intruder.

The *yamabushi* grumbles:

I've heard that there is no discrimination in loving flowers but these people of Kurama Temple, though they have renounced worldliness and keep the image of the merciful Buddha, know not such mercy.

Ushiwaka, sympathizing, kindly suggests they view the cherry blossoms together. Asked why he remained behind, Ushiwaka complains (*weeping*) that the others, sons of Kiyomori Taira, the Heike ruler then in power, are always well treated but he is an outcast even for enjoying the moon or the flowers.





The *yamabushi* laments that a Genji lives thus :

You are like cherry blossoms far from a town—nobody  
paying any attention to you—but after all other  
blossoms are gone, there will be your time...

On the quiet mountain the *yamabushi* leads Ushiwaka through all the noted flower-viewing places amid the gathering dusk. When Ushiwaka asks the name of him who is so kind, the *tengu* reveals his identity, suggesting they return on the morrow, when he will reveal the secrets of military arts by which to defeat the Heike, then flies away up the valley among the clouds.

In the INTERLUDE little *tengu* (KYŌGEN) come to test Ushiwaka; but prove to be no match for him.

Little Ushiwaka boldly awaits the big *tengu*.

The *tengu* (NOCHI SHITE) reappears, boasting his prowess; then asks Ushiwaka, what he did to the little *tengu* he sent. Ushiwaka wanted to show off by inflicting a few slight wounds, but was afraid the teacher might scold him for that. The *tengu* thanks him, then relates (*miming the action*) an old Chinese story about a famous military strategist. (Note 1)

He assures Ushiwaka: "You will surely overcome the Heike;" then promising to act as his constant guardian and protector, he bids farewell—though Ushiwaka (*holding him by the sleeve*) tries to hold him longer—and flies off.

#### NOTES

1. Classical literary reference  
The story is portrayed in CHŌ RYŌ (below).
2. **Mask**  
NOCHI SHITE: *Obeshimi* (TENGU mask)
3. **Costumes**  
SHITE: Conventional costume of YAMABUSHI  
NOCHI SHITE: Carrying the "Tengu fan" of feathers.  
NOCHI KOKATA: White headband, carrying NAGINATA
4. TENGU: A fabulous flying creature of the mountains.  
YAMABUSHI: See ATAKA, NOTE 4, p. 13.
5. For use of KOKATA (child actor) see ATAKA, NOTE 5, p. 13.



The Noh CHŌ RYŌ portrays this story: The general Chō Ryō, in obedience to a dream, goes to learn the secrets of military arts from a great master, who, in the guise of an old man, first tests his patience by delays and affronts—Chō Ryō repeatedly picks up the boot which he kicks off, finally being obliged to leap into a swift-flowing stream and fearlessly attack a dragon-god to retrieve it.

SEKIHARA YOICHI. Leaving Mt. Kurama (see KURAMA TENGU above) Ushiwaka gets into a fight with a party on the highway and rides away on their horse.

#### Other Noh of TENGU:

MATSUYAMA TENGU. The poet Saigyō offers up a poem at the tomb of a former Emperor, who appears, and also many TENGU.

KURUMA ZŌ and ZEGAI are Noh of malicious TENGU in the guise of YAMABUSHI who contend with a priest and are overcome.

DAIE. In repayment of a past kindness by a priest a TENGU magically brings up an image of Buddha preaching on Mt. Ryōjusen for him, but is punished by a divine being for doing so.

## KUROZUKA

### BACKGROUND

Stories of a man-eating ogress are common in most folklore. This Noh is from an old tale of a Kurozuka in Adachigahara.

### NOH

A priest (WAKI) and his attendants (WAKI TSURE) set out. Arriving at Adachigahara, they are given shelter for the night in the house of a poor woman (SHITE). She works at a spinning wheel, complaining that she is so poor that she has to work even in her old age. The priest exhorts that however busy her daily life, she can attain salvation if she believes in righteousness: she replies that she knows life is only a moment's dream but is unable to cut off her attachment to this world. (*spinning as she sings*)

Then she goes to collect wood in the forest to make a fire, charging them not to look into her room. They promise and thank her for her kindness.

In the INTERLUDE, while the others are sleeping, the servant (KYÖGEN), unable to restrain his curiosity, looks into her room. Horrified, he tells what he saw, and flees. Finding many skeletons there, they are convinced it is the notorious demon of Kurozuka and rush from the house.

The woman reappears as a ferocious demon (NOCHI SHITE), but is defeated by their prayers.

### NOTES

1. Masks

SHITE: *Kanawa Onna* or *Shakumi*

NOCHI SHITE: *Hannya*

2. Stage Properties

Spinning wheel and spindle.

3. For a similar theme treated in a simpler manner but more striking setting, see *MOMIJI GARI*, p. 54.





## KUZU

### BACKGROUND

KUZU is a Noh of auspicious felicitation. Though action is simple, and dramatic at only one point, it includes an important dance.

### NOH

The Emperor Temmu (KOKATA), fleeing to Yoshino with his followers (WAKI and WAKI TSURE) because of a revolt, meets an old couple (SHITE and TSURE) who are fishing. Asked for food, they offer fish and vegetables. After eating, the Emperor returns a fish left over, which the old man frees in the river (*miming the action with fan*); it returns to life—as an omen of the Emperor's restoration. When soldiers (KYÖGEN) come pursuing the Emperor, the old man hides him in his boat and by cunning and courage deflects them from their purpose. Promising some entertainment for the Emperor, the couple leave, to return as a god (NOCHI SHITE) and goddess (NOCHI TSURE), who performs a dance for an auspicious reign by the Emperor.

### NOTES

1. Dance  
*Gaku* (by NOCHI TSURE)
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Jō*  
TSURE: *Uba*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Ōtobide*  
NOCHI TSURE: *tsure mask*
3. TSUKURIMONO  
Boat
4. The dramatic point occurs as the old man interposes himself between the pursuing soldiers and the refugee Emperor.
5. For use of KOKATA (child actor) see ATAKA, NOTE 5, p. 13.

HŌJŌGAWA. When a priest asks two men carrying fish in a pail of water why they take life one of them replies that these are live fish they are taking to release in the Hōjō River, later reappearing as a god to dance and quote seasonal poetry.



## MATSUKAZE

### BACKGROUND

Yukihira, an Imperial Prince in the early Heian Period, is famous as one of the great poets of that time. He was banished to Suma Beach but after three years returned to the Capital, where he later died. While at Suma he loved the two sisters Matsukaze and Murasame, who pined passionately for him the rest of their lives.

### NOH

A priest (WAKI) on a pilgrimage to the western provinces comes to Suma Beach, where he sees a beautiful pine tree. He asks a Man of the Place (KYŪGEN) about it and is told that it is in memory of Matsukaze and Murasame of old. As he is offering prayers there evening comes on, and, being far from the village, he decides to stay the night in a nearby hut.

Two girls (SHITE and TSURE) appear, bemoaning their hardships and the hard work of drawing salt water.

At Sumo Beach here  
Where waves come near  
Not only the sea's  
Wetting our sleeves  
The moon engenders such sadness that tear  
After tear adds dampness to our sleeves.

The autumn wind "that makes the heart grow sad" recalls Yukihira's poem about the wind of Suma Beach (Note 1, a).

In a hut like this so far from the village no one  
But the moon ever comes to keep you company.

There may be no easy way of earning  
A living; but ours is especially lowly.

It sounds easy to draw water, but for  
Weak girls even pulling the cart is difficult.

The waves roll in and out upon the sands  
And up the ready shore, disturbing cranes  
That rise with noisy flutterings and cries (NOTE 1, b)  
Mingled with the strongly-blowing gale;  
How then to pass this chilly autumn night?

In the nocturnal sky the moon grows more  
Serene; and is also in the brine I draw.

Take care the salt-kiln smoke becloud not the moon!

To dip up the reflected moon—how poetic!

On many a famous shore...

Salt-makers boil brine to make a living.

There is a moon in this pail! Marvel!

Oh, joy! In this one too there is a moon!

There's only one moon in the sky but two  
Reflections on the cart.

Carrying moonlight does not seem like hard work.

After getting the sea water they go home, and the priest asks for a night's lodging. Matsukaze first demurs that their home is too mean a hovel, but she invites him in when she learns he is a priest. He recalls Yukihira's poem:

If there be someone who asks of me, tell him  
I'm living in lowly sorrow at Sumo Beach. (NOTE 1, c)

When he mentions that he prayed for the girls of the pine they weep, finally revealing that they are the spirits of those two girls, reminiscing:

Yukihira was here at Sumo for three years. Boating or consoling himself viewing the moon, he chose us two sisters, naming us Matsukaze and Murasame (NOTE 2). We served for his solace, and grew attached to him. Our clothes were changed from salt-soaked garb to flowing gowns of perfumed silk. After those three years he returned to the Capital. Soon after that we heard he passed away. O Beloved!

Since he died, there was no way we could hear from him, and we lived a life of tears. But weeping helps not a whit!  
O dear old days! Lord Yukihira was here for three years and when he went back to the Capital he left his headdress and robe as our keepsake. (*holding up the garments*) But whenever we see these the longing for him but grows stronger and we are unable to forget him for even a moment.

Putting on the robe and hat Matsukaze weeps:

The pain of love torments even after death.

O joy! Yukihira calls to me! I must go quickly!

She rushes to the pine but Murasame holds her back:

What folly! That is why you are in torment! Can you never sever such binding attachment to this world? That is the pine—Yukihira is not here!

Matsukaze responds:

How cruel! That pine is Yukihira—his very self! He said that if he only hears the pine for him he will return.

This is the pine where my beloved lord lived. If he really comes back according to his ward, I will stand by this tree and talk with him...

O My Beloved!

She expresses her passionate longing in a carousing dance about the pine.



The wind in the pine tree is strang;  
The waves at Suma Beach are high at night.  
We've come to you in a dream  
Because of our attachment to this world.  
Please pray for us.  
We bid you farewell.

As they leave,

Across the beach comes the clear sound  
Of the surf; the morning breeze sweeps down  
From the hills behind; from yonder town  
A medley of crawling.

The priest wakes, reality regains;  
He wonders: Was it a dream—Passing-Rain's  
Voice, and Wind-in-the-Pine? There remains  
Nothing at all showing

In morning's light; for he only sees  
The tree hears just the saughing breeze  
Passing, the wind through the pine tree's  
Branches softly blowing.

#### NOTES

- Literary references
  - Yukihira's poem on the wind at Suma:  
The coastal wind from Suma  
Blowing through the pass  
Cools the travelers' sleeves.  
(Referred to in GENJI MONOGATARI)
  - Allusion to a poem by Yamabe no Akahito in MANYŌSHŪ
  - Another poem by Yukihira (See ATSUMORI, NOTE 1, p. 15)
- NAMES:  
*Matsukaze*—'wind in the pine'  
*Murasame*—'passing shower'
- HIGH POINTS  
Two scenes are famous for the beauty of their expression of poetic sensibility and emotion:  
Pulling the cart "carrying the moonlight"  
The passionate yearning in the dance around the pine
- Dances  
*KUSE*  
*Chū no Mai*  
*Ha no Mai*
- Masks  
SHITE: *Zō*  
TSURE: *tsure mask*

## MIIDERA

### BACKGROUND

This is one of the many Noh on the theme of a grief-crazed mother seeking her lost child. (Others are SUMIDAGAWA, p. 64, HYAKUMAN, p. 80 and SAKURAGAWA, p. 56. They generally end in a happy reunion, except SUMIDAGAWA, in which the mother finds the child's grave on the bank of the Sumida River.)

### NOH

While the mother (SHITE) is praying at Kiyomizu Temple she dreams that she finds her lost child Senmitsu; an interpreter of dreams (KYÖGEN) comes out and offers to tell her its meaning. She tells the dream: that she should go to Miidera, a temple in Ōmi, if she wants to see her child; as he urges her to go, she starts off happily.

Meanwhile, the people of Miidera gather in the temple grounds awaiting sunset to view the Harvest Moon, with the boy Senmitsu (KOKATA) whom they have found and taken in. As they discuss how glorious is the beauty of the moon on this one night of the year if it be not clouded over – the priest (WAKI) has the servant (KYÖGEN) entertain the child with a dance.

Hearing that a crazed woman is now wandering their way, the servant wishes to bring her in, hoping to see her dance; when the priest flatly refuses, he opens the gates anyway, in hopes she may wander in, and she does.

The mother comes, singing:  
(*holding a twig of bamboo*)

Over the mountainous way I've come  
To Shiga, where I see  
Lake Biwa and the holy  
Mountain Hiei-zan beyond.

(*worshipping*)

Though I may appear to be quite sane  
To worship the holy mount religiously  
It is not strange that I have lost my mind  
Since my dear child was lost; for even birds  
And animals know affection between parent and child.

(*Performs a dance*)

As I hurry through the country, how I wish  
I could ask the trees along the way about my child.

And so she arrives at Miidera.

Both the priest and the mother quote poems on the beauty of the moon; and she sings of the scenery.

The servant (*miming the action vigorously*) rings the bell, one of the three most famous in Japan.

Impressed by the sound she determines to ring it herself, but the priest would prevent her. She disputes with him, alluding to a poetic incident in ancient China. (Note 1, a) and approaching the bell, begs:

Let me hear the bell and be freed from the cares  
Of the world and calmly hear the preaching of Buddha.

She sings of various bells, with allusions to many classical poems (*pulling the bellrope*) illustrating various feelings of bell sounds (Note 1, b).

(*Performs a dance*)

Watching her, Senmitsu wonders where she is from, so the priest inquires. She answers that she is from Kiyomigaseki in Suruga. Senmitsu repeats the name, and she realizes that the child is her own lost son. The priest rebukes her as insane for uttering such an idea but she retorts that having become insane by separation from her child, why should she therefore be insane when she again meets the child, who is indeed her real son? The attendant is about to strike her, but Senmitsu prevents him. The priest in surprise asks the boy who he is, and Senmitsu answers that he is from Kiyomigaseki and came to this place through a dealer in children, but had no idea that his mother was wandering about the country looking for him.

The mother apologizes for breaking out so rudely, then:  
(as the priest places the boy before her)

I rang the bell and was reprov'd by the priest  
And then I found my son. Ordinarily  
For a man and woman the ringing of a bell  
Is not pleasant for it tells of time to leave,  
But we have found each other because of the bell.  
What gratitude I feel for the bell!

(looking up at the bell)

She embraces her child, with tears of joy.  
(making the conventional Noh gesture of weeping)

They go home happily to become a prosperous family.

#### NOTES

##### 1. Literary references

###### a. The mother's defense:

There was a poet (Chia Tao of China) who composed:

The round full moon leaving  
The mountain near the sea,  
Rising in the sky.

But it wasn't complete so the poet concentrated on rounding it out, gazing at the moon, and in inspiration added:

The moon tonight is very full.  
There must not be any place unreach'd  
By this serene light.

Beside himself with joy at this composition he climbed a high tower and rang the bell. When he was reprov'd, he answered: "I am crazed by poetry." If even such a great man was so excited by the moon, is it not much more so for a poor common woman like me?

###### b. One of the poems:

The moon sets, birds cry out,  
Frost pierces the night air;  
Fishermen's fires burn out,  
While on the anchored boat  
The midnight bell is heard.

##### 2. Mask

SHITE: *Shakumi*

##### 3. Dances

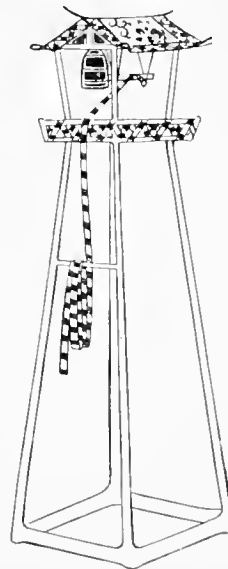
*Iroe*

*KIRI*

##### 4. TSUKURIMONO

Bell tower, with bell and lengthy bellrope.

##### 5. For use of KOKATA see ATAKA, NOTE 5, p. 13.



## MOMIJI GARI

### BACKGROUND

This plot of a man-eating ogress of the forest appearing in the form of a beautiful lady to entice a young warrior is a story as old as literature. The beauty of the Noh is enhanced by placing it in a setting of autumn maple. (*Momiji Gari* means 'Maple Viewing')

### NOH

A beautiful lady (SHITE) is having a maple-viewing party with her ladies-in-waiting (TSURE) deep in the Togakushi Mountains among the brilliant autumn leaves. When the renowned warrior Koremochi (WAKI) and his hunting party (WAKI TSURE) come upon them he courteously dismounts (*indicated by handing his bow and arrow to attendant*) and, to avoid intruding, takes another path around, but is accosted and enticed to drink (*with the conventional Noh gesture of pouring SAKE*). By wine (Note 1) and her erotic dancing, he is captivated and seduced:

Commit the sin of drinking and the sin  
Of lewdness and of falsehood then begin.

As the woman performs a dance, she makes certain he is asleep: then concludes the dance at a quickened tempo, and disappears into a nearby mound (*represented by a covered bamboo frame*).

In the INTERLUDE, a god (KYÖGEN) sent by the chief deity of the Otokoyama Hachiman Shrine of which Koremochi is a devout worshiper, warns him in a dream and gives him a sword with which to kill the demon.

As Koremochi awakes in shame from his drunken stupor, he is confronted by a fearful monster—ten feet high, with great horns and blazing eyes.

Parrying her attack, he calmly runs her through. Slashing as she jumps upon a rock, he pulls her down and valiantly stabs her to death.

### NOTES

1. Classical reference  
The drink with which he is tempted is called the "wine of chrysanthemum dew" (See KANTAN, NOTE 1, b. p. 36.)
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Mambi*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Shikami*
3. Donces  
*KUSE*  
*Chū no Mai*  
*Maibataraki*
4. For a similar theme see KUROZUKA, p. 48.





## OHARA GOKŌ

### BACKGROUND

After the Heike Clan were destroyed at Dannoura, the former empress Kenrei retired to a little hut in the mountains with two of her former ladies-in-waiting, Lady Dainagon and Lady Awa, spending her days in prayers for the souls of her son the infant Emperor Antoku and her mother, drowned at Dannoura.

### NOH

A Court official (WAKI TSURE) announces that Goshirakawa, a retired emperor, is to visit Kenrei (SHITE).

(*Ohara Gokō* means 'Visit to O-Hara')

Kenrei's hut (Note 2) is revealed (*by uncovering the thatched framework*) and her way of life here is described in song. She leaves with Lady Dainagon (TSURE) to collect herbs of the mountain to use for offerings.

Goshirakawa (TSURE) and his attendants (WAKI and WAKI TSURE) arrive by carriage, one of the attendants describing the quiet serenity and Goshirakawa reciting a poem.

Informed as to where Kenrei has gone, they wait.

Returning, the women pray for the Emperor Antoku and the Heike people who were killed. Goshirakawa's visit recalls her life at Court in contrast to the present, filling her with nostalgia.

Again in her hut, she reminisces on the days when she lived a colorful and sophisticated life as Empress. She relates her flight with her mother and her infant son, the Emperor, in company with the Heike army, until they were driven into the sea at Dannoura. Her mother leaped from a boat with the infant Emperor in her arms and both were drowned.

Kenrei also tried to drown herself but was rescued, so lives now like this in devotions and somber sadness.



### NOTES

1. Masks  
SHITE: *Zō*  
TSURE: *tsure mask*
2. TSUKURIMONO  
The hut, represented by a bamboo framework.
3. This is a relatively rare type of Noh which creates an atmosphere of poetic sadness (MONO NO AWARE) and elegant gracefulness (YŪGEN)—by appeal to the sensibilities of sight and sound only—through music, costumes, and solemnity of slow movement and restrained gestures.

In IKARI KAZUKI the tragic death of the infant Emperor is related to a traveling priest, first by an old boatman, then by the spirit of the warrior Tomomori who died at that time by casting himself into the sea holding an anchor.



## SAKURAGAWA

### BACKGROUND

SAKURAGAWA is second only to SUMIDAGAWA (p. 64) in popularity among Noh with the theme of a distraught mother searching for her lost child. Others include: MIIDERA (p. 52), and HYAKUMAN (p. 80).

### NOH

A child dealer (WAKI TSURE) from the East has been in Kyushu where he bought a boy called Sakurago, at whose request he delivers a letter and the money he paid for the boy to his mother (SHITE).

She reads Sakurago's letter: His mother's life has long been so miserable that he has sold himself to the man-dealer and is going to the East with him, suggesting it would be best for her to become a nun; she would call the man back but he was already gone.

Praying the mercy of the local guardian goddess (*see below*) on Sakurago she leaves her home, which has become unbearable without her son, and goes looking for him.

Three years pass.

The head priest (WAKI) of Isobe Temple in Hitachi (Ibaragi Prefecture) takes Sakurago (KOKATA) and attendants (WAKI TSURE) to the Sakuragawa for cherry blossom viewing, where the group are met by a villager (WAKI TSURE) who tells of a deranged woman gathering the fallen blossoms.

At the villager's suggestion the woman (NOCHI SHITE) is called in. She expresses in dance her love for the cherry blossoms which is mingled with her affection for her son Sakurago. When the priest asks her why she has become thus she explains:

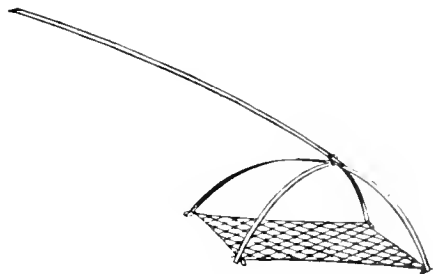
Separated from her son Sakurago in Kyushu, traveling after him by ship and overland, she has now come to this famous Sakuragawa. The name Sakuragawa meaning so much to her (NOTE 1), especially as it is now spring, she just wanders along the river, scooping up the floating petals, for—as the guardian goddess of her native place represents SAKURA her son was named Sakurago, and this is Sakuragawa—even fallen flowers are too valuable to be wasted.

Realizing her deep sorrow the priest, after confirming her identity, informs her that Sakurago is with him.

After their happy reunion she takes him home and becomes a nun—that in this world and for the life hereafter they shall not want.

#### NOTES

1. Names  
*Sakuragawa*—'cherry blossom river'  
*Sakurago*—'cherry blossom child'
2. Mask  
 SHITE: *Shakumi*
3. Dances  
*Kakeri* (showing her madness engendered by the falling blossoms)  
*Iroe* (her mingled love for the *sakura* and her son)  
*KUSE* (to accompaniment of lyrics on the falling flowers)  
*Ami no Dan* (her longing for her son)
4. Stage Property  
 SUKUI AMI (fisherman's net), with which she scoops up the floating petals.





## SHAKKYŌ

### BACKGROUND

The Lion Dance exists in various forms, from India and Central Asia to China and Japan. Noh (like the Kabuki copied from it) simply expresses the spirit of playful lions gamboling about in a mountain wilderness.

### NOH

A priest (WAKI) on a pilgrimage through India and China comes to the Stone Bridge (*Shakkyō*) and hesitates to cross it. A boy (SHITE) comes, singing of the scenery. The priest asks him if this is *Shakkyō* and the boy answers that it is and beyond the bridge is Mt. Seiryō, the Paradise of the Monju Buddha (Note 1, a).

The priest is about to cross the bridge, trusting his life to the mercy of Buddha. The boy stops him, for from olden times even well-known priests crossed this bridge only after long and rigorous ascetic self discipline. He warns the priest it is a perilous act, referring to an old saying about the lion (Note 1, b), then describes the awesome bridge:

This is not a man-made structure: it came out by itself—connecting from rock to rock, so is called 'Stone Bridge'. Less than a foot wide, slippery, covered with moss, more than thirty feet long; the valley more than a thousand feet below; waterfalls hanging down through the clouds—below that may be Hell. The sound of water and wind resounding together would move rivers and mountains. Looking deep down into the valley below—feet trembling, heart fainting—who would dare to cross? Truly none but those who have the miraculous power of Buddha shall go! But beyond it is the sacred land of Monju with everlasting music and flowers. Wait here for an Appearance.

In the INTERLUDE demi-gods (KYŌGEN, *wearing masks*) explain that it was Monju who appeared in the form of a boy. Feeling sorry for the priest whom he has prevented from crossing the bridge, he will let him see a marvelous sight. They have

come to watch too, drinking while they wait. But they become tipsy and afraid to watch the *shishi* ('lions') about to come, so they run off.

The 'lion' (NOCHI SHITE) comes and performs a unique dance, remarkably vigorous and active; then a short closing number.

#### NOTES

##### 1. Literary and classical references

a. Monju is one of the two great BOSATSU of the Buddhist triad (the other being Fugen. See EGUCHI, NOTE 1, b, p. 21)

b. The saying:

A lion about to eat a flea  
First gets ready carefully.

##### 2. Dances

*Shishi Mai*

*KIRI* (to accompaniment of song referring to peony flowers)

##### 3. Masks

SHITE: *Jidō*

NOCHI SHITE: *Shishiguchi*

##### 4. TSUKURIMONO

Dias representing the Stone Bridge

Peonies

##### 5. Variations

1) Han Noh: Performances are quite often given of only the NOCHI (latter part).

2) The number of 'lions' for the *Shishi Mai* varies.

3) Performed without the INTERLUDE the SHITE role is played by a TSURE.

4) Under some circumstances of programing, the SHITE role is portrayed as an old man instead of a boy.



*Kojishi MASK*



*Shishiguchi MASK*

## SHŌJŌ

Kōfū (WAKI) comes on stage and tells his story:  
(*an old Chinese legend*)

Being told in a dream that as a reward for his filial piety, if he would go to the town when there was a fair and sell SAKE he would become rich, he has been doing so and getting richer and richer. There is a man who comes to drink lots of SAKE at every fair. Curious as to the man's identity, because he never seemed to be affected by any amount he drank, he asked who he was. The man answered he was a Shōjō.

(*an imaginary red-faced animal resembling the orangutan*)

Anxious to see him again, to find out more about him, Kōfū is waiting at his regular place with *sake* for him.

The Shōjō (SHITE) appears and is happy to see him. After drinking convivially he dances on the waves under the clear moon and stars. After the dance he tells Kōfū that his filial piety will be rewarded: the *sake* which he has given him will never run out. Then he drops off to sleep—*Kōfū thought in his dream.*

Kōfū awoke from his dream; but the source of his *sake* truly never failed and his house prospered enormously.

### NOTES

1. Mask  
SHITE: *Shōjō*
2. Dances  
*Chū no Mai*  
*KIRI*
3. Variations  
The Shōjō may be increased to two, or seven.

MIDARE is a standard variation in which the *Midare* Dance is performed instead of *Chū no Mai*.

TAIHEI SHŌJŌ is a variant of SHŌJŌ.



## SHUNKAN

### BACKGROUND

This is one of the most emotional, and tragic, of all Noh.

The priest Shunkan conspired with Fujiwara no Naritsune and Taira no Yasuyori—high officials, and others, against Kiyomori, dictatorial head of the ruling Heike (Taira) Clan. When the plot was discovered the three were banished to Kikaigashima ('Devils' Island'), a barren dot of land far off Kyushu—also called Iwōgashima ('Sulphur Island').

### NOH

A Government Messenger (WAKI) announces that he has been appointed as the bearer of a pardon for Naritsune and Yasuyori granted under the amnesty proclaimed in connection with the prayers offered on behalf of the approaching childbirth of Her Majesty the Empress (Kiyomori's daughter); and orders a Sailor (KYŌGEN) to make ready a ship for his immediate departure to their place of exile.

Meanwhile, the two exiles (TSURE) are carrying on Shinto rites to the gods of Kumano, singing medleys of religious piety and gloomy despair over their forlorn state in banishment:

Our tottered hemper garments must be made  
To serve as holy vestments; and white sand  
We throw instead of rice to cast out evil.

Shunkan (SHITE), a former priest in Zen Buddhism, has remained aloof but now comes to meet them with a bucket of water, saying he has brought wine to entertain them on their way home. They are incredulous that he could find wine on that desolate island and looking into the bucket, exclaim:

Why, this is nothing but water.

Shunkan then justifies, by lyrical exposition of well-known classical allusions, the identification of water with wine. (Note 1)

They sit down to a mock banquet; Shunkan serves "wine" (*using his fan, in the conventional Noh gesture of pouring*), invoking memories that but intensify their despondency.

Suddenly the Messenger arrives (*standing in the 'bout'*), to deliver the pardon, and the three are transported with joy.

But when the document is read aloud Shunkan's name is not heard. As he grasps the scroll and scrutinizes it, incapable of believing his name is not mentioned, the Messenger confirms that the omission of his name was intentional. Shunkan shouts:

Why? Was not our crime identical? and our place of  
banishment the same? The amnesty should be likewise!

The horror of his despair is expressed in an exquisite lyric of classical quotations of poignant grief, ending:

Hark! Birds and beasts are crying out  
My anguish with me.

Again he searches for his name, hoping against hope, taking even the paper wrapping of the scroll, turning it over and over, but there is nothing, not a word like his name, nor even resembling his title—nothing at all.

The Messenger coldly orders the others to stop wasting time and go aboard at once. Shunkan, in a frenzy, grasps his departing friend by the sleeve, pleading for pity of the Messenger, quoting:

Even official duty allows for individual kindness.

But the Messenger, hardened to all sense of mercy, beats him off with the oar. When he seizes the mooring rope to hold back the departing ship he cuts the rope free and casts off, leaving him crying hoarsely midst the foaming surf. Hopelessly he throws himself upon the sand, sobbing out the heartache of his fathomless despair.



The companions of his exile aboard the ship, in heartfelt sympathy, shout encouragement to him again and again across the waves, promising that when they reach the Capital they will intercede on his behalf, till voices and figures grow faint, and then are hid behind the waves on the far-off horizon.

#### NOTES

1. Classical reference  
Chrysanthemum wine (See KANTAN, NOTE 1, b, p. 36.)
2. Mask  
SHITE: *Shunkan* (used only for this Noh)
3. TSUKURIMONO .  
A bamboo framework representing a boat.  
(See FUNA BENKEI, NOTE 3, p. 25.)





## SŌSHI ARAI

### BACKGROUND

Komachi (Ono no Komachi) was the famous Heian beauty known for her poetry as well as her amours. (See *KAYOI KOMACHI*, p. 38)

### NOH

The poet Kūronushi (WAKI) announces that the Emperor is holding a Poetry Contest on the following day, at which he will be pitted against Komachi. Lacking confidence in bettering her by fair means, he plans to do so by foul.

At home, Komachi (SHITE) orally composes her poem, as Kūronushi and his servant (KYŌGEN) eavesdrop.

In the INTERLUDE the servant ruminates on his master's obsession to win in the poetry contest.

The Emperor (KOKATA) presides at the poetry contest. When Komachi's poem (Note 1), is read Kūronushi accuses her of having plagiarized it, showing as proof a sheet of the MANYŌSHŪ on which Komachi's poem is written; but Komachi knows that he has written the poem into the old collection. Receiving the Emperor's permission to test it, she washes the poem from the page, (*miming the action*) proving that the ink was hardly dry. Kūronushi starts to leave in shame, intending to die, but is forgiven. Komachi then performs dances glorifying the love of poetry.

### NOTES

1. Komachi's poem (*waka*):

(Appointed subject for the Poetry Contest: "Water Plants")

Unplanted, floating grosses grow  
From what seed I do not know,  
In furrowed waves, row on row.



2. *Mask and Costumes*

SHITE: *Zō*

All wear conventional costumes of the Imperial Court.

3. *Dances*

*Chū no Mai*

*KIRI* (glorifying poetry)

4. THE HIGH POINT of this Noh is the action of the SHITE in miming the washing of the poem from the purported page of the MANYŌSHŪ.

5. For use of KOKATA see *ATAKA*, NOTE 5, p. 13.

**Another Noh of Kūronushi:**

**SHIGA.** A courtier is met by the deified spirit of Kūronushi.

## SUMIDAGAWA

### BACKGROUND

SUMIDAGAWA is the most tragic among Noh on the theme of a grief-crazed mother seeking her lost child.

### NOH

The boatman (WAKI) who operates the ferry across the Sumidagawa (Note 1) announces that a crowd is gathering for a solemn memorial service on the opposite bank of the river.

A traveler (WAKI TSURE) from the Capital tells of a mad woman approaching who dances most amusingly, so the boatman waits to see her.

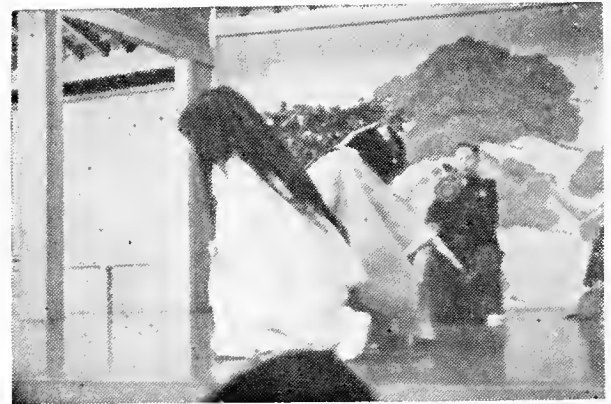
The mother (SHITE) sings her grief, and performs a dance. (*carrying a spray of bamboo*)

The boatman speaks roughly to her but she rebukes him with poetic reproofs, telling of her fruitless search for her child, and demands to be ferried across. The boatman declares her "the most sensible mad woman I've ever seen;" and they all board the ferry.

The boatman, as he ferries them across (*plying his pole*), tells the sad tale of what happened just a year ago this day:

A dealer in children passing there with a tender lad of twelve deserted the boy when he fell mortally ill from the unaccustomed rigor of the forced travel, leaving him to die on the bank by the roadside. The good country people, judging by his appearance that he was of noble birth, tried to nurse him back to health, but in vain. Just before he met his fate the boy identified himself clearly, naming his home and parentage, explaining that he had been kidnapped at the Capital. Then, like a man, he asked that he be buried there on the bank "that at least the shadows of the travelers from the Capital may be cast upon my grave," and that they plant a willow tree in memory of him; invoking Amida Buddha, he died.

The mother ascertains by careful questioning that the stolen child was her own lost son.



The boatman, in heartfelt sympathy, leads her to the child's grave beneath the willow tree.

She cries out in anguish:

(*kneeling in front of the mound*)

I had hoped oagainst hope to find my child, ond now  
He is no more upon the earth; only  
This mound remains. O, cruel! Was it that he  
Was born to be torn from his home and thus become dust  
Beside the road?  
Con my deor child be truly lying here  
Beneoth this sad?

She would dig out the mound, "to gaze once more upon his mortal form;" and though the boatman urges her to join in prayers (*striking a prayer gong in his hands*) for the repose of his soul, she is at first too overcome with grief to pray, but finally takes the prayer gong and joins them as they call upon Amida Buddha:

Nomu Amida! Namu Amido!

The voice of the child comes faintly from within the mound, then an apparition of the child glides forth as a floating wraith, retreating, coming forth again, eluding her when she tries to embrace it, returning finally into the mound as she weeps inconsolably.

#### NOTES

1. The action supposedly takes place on both the banks of the Sumida River and the ferry boat, at a point near the present Asakusa in Tokyo.
2. **Dance**  
*Kakeri* (expressing the mother's crazed frenzy of grief)
3. **Mask**  
SHITE: *Shakumi*
4. **TSUKURIMONO**  
A framework representing a boat.  
(See FUNA BENKEI, NOTE 3, p. 25.)  
A covered framework representing the burial mound.
5. Though apparitions are common in Noh, the child ghost is unique; however, in a variation of this Noh the child does not appear—only a voice comes from within the mound.





## TADANORI

### BACKGROUND

This Noh is founded upon a touching incident in romantic history and built around a single literary allusion.

The incident is the death of the young court noble Tadanori at the Battle of Ichinotani. The poem is a *waka* by Tadanori which was included in an Imperial collection (NOTE 1, a) unsigned (as his family was involved in a revolt).

The theme is that his spirit cannot rest – is still attached to this world by life's desires, for fear his poem may remain anonymous.

There are recurring references to the poem, and it is quoted in full three times: by SHITE, WAKI and Chorus and finally skillfully paraphrased for the closing lines.

### NOH

A traveling monk (WAKI) and his attendants (WAKI TSURE) arrive at Ichinotani on Suma Bay where they meet an old man (SHITE) making an offering of flowers before a cherry tree that was planted there in memory of Tadanori. As they talk the sun sets and the man asks for a night's lodging. The old man retorts, "Is there better lodging than beneath these cherry blossoms?" and quotes Tadanori's poem:

Wandering into late twilight  
I lodge beneath a cherry tree  
Its blossoms are mine hast this night.

The monk in turn repeats the poem, identifying the poet. The old man explains that this cherry tree was planted where Tadanori fell in battle, so the monk offers prayers for his soul. Rejoicing for the prayers and promising to return in a dream, he vanishes from sight. (*as the monk prays*)

In the INTERLUDE a Man of the Place (KYŌGEN) recites the story of the tree and of Tadanori's death.

As the monks sleep beneath the cherry tree, Tadanori (NOCHI SHITE) reappears in a dream as the Heike warrior he was, lamenting his attachment to this world because his poem does not bear his name, and seeking official recognition.

The priest muses:

The fairest fortune befalling one  
Must be to be born a poet's son — (NOTE 1, b)  
And live in the love of poetry.  
For Tadanori how much more  
Highly skilled in arts of war  
And honored by all for his poetry.

Tadanori relates his fatal combat (*miming the action of both warriors*) and the victorious enemy's subsequent discovery and reading of the poem attached to an arrow in his quiver. (*Performs a dance*)

The closing song and dance ends with the paraphrase:

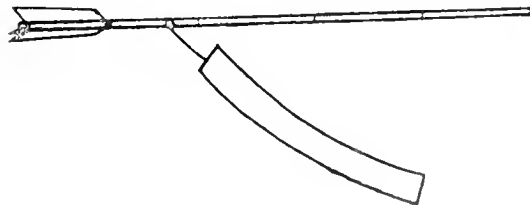
When you lodge below  
The flowering bough  
The blossoms are your host.

#### NOTES

- Literary references
  - The poem appears anonymously in SENZAISHŪ.
  - Poems by Tadamori, Tadanori's father, are included in anthologies collected under Imperial auspices.
- Mosks  
SHITE: *Jō*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Chājō*
- Donces  
*Kakeri*  
*KIRI*
- THE HIGH POINT of the Noh comes as Tadanori's phantom, immediately following the miming of his own death, portrays the victorious enemy's discovery and reading of the poem, then reverts to the role of Tadanori as a disquieted spirit of the other world.
- For other warriors eulogized for aesthetic sensibility, see EBIRA, p. 19; and TSUNEMASA, p. 75.

#### Another Noh:

SHUNZEI TADANORI. The same story: discovery of Tadanori's poem, and his ghostly complaint.



## TAKASAGO

### BACKGROUND

In classical references the Twin Pines of Takasago and Sumiyoshi symbolize longevity and conjugal fidelity; in this Noh they also stand for the MANYŌSHŪ and the KOKINSHŪ anthologies, respectively, since the traditional role of poetry was to insure the peace and prosperity of the realm.

### NOH

A priest (WAKI) of a shrine in Kyushu, on a tour with his attendants (WAKI TSURE), lands at Takasago Bay to see its famous pine tree. Beneath the spring breezes sighing in the Takasago Pine an old couple (SHITE and TSURE) are sweeping away the fallen pine needles (*carrying a besom and a rake*). He asks them how it is that the Takasago and the Sumiyoshi Pines are called 'Twin Pines' though they are in different places.

They sing:

Though mountains and rivers and thousands of miles  
Between them lie a man and wife in love  
Are ever together in heart.

Eventually they reveal they represent the Pines, appearing in human form as man and wife.

The old man then takes a boat (*miming the action of boarding a boat*), saying he will await him at Sumiyoshi.

In the INTERLUDE a Man of the Place (KYŌGEN) tells the priest the legend of the Pines, and offers to transport him to Sumiyoshi.

When the priest arrives at Sumiyoshi he is met by the diety (NOCHI SHITE) in his true form, who does a dance, singing:

Thousand-year evergreen filling my hand  
Plucking plum blossoms to deck my hair  
Petals like spring snow fall o'er my robe.

He then performs a 'god-dance'; and closes with a song and dance of felicitation.

### NOTES

1. The general popularity of TAKASAGO is attested by the fact that it is customary for several lines from this UTAI to be sung at a wedding party, ordinarily by the man who acts as 'go-between.' Also, representations of the aged couple, on scrolls, as figurines or dolls, etc. are very common.
2. **Dance**  
*Kami Mai*
3. **Masks**  
SHITE: *Jō*  
TSURE: *Uba*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Kantan Otoko*



## TAMURA

### BACKGROUND

Tamura was a victorious general who, in devotion to Kannon, built Kiyomizu Temple, which has been for centuries one of the most popular temples in Kyoto. There is a shrine dedicated to Tamura within the grounds. A shrine of Jishu Gongen, a local diety, on the slope behind is referred to in the poetry below.

### NOH

A traveling monk (WAKI) and his attendants (WAKI TSURE) arrive at Kiyomizu Temple on an evening when the cherry blossoms are in full bloom.

A lad (SHITE) carrying a besom for sweeping under the cherry trees comes, singing of the beautiful blossoms:

Behold the snowy garden of the shrine  
In dazzling white, eclipsing clouds and mist;  
The boughs blurred with the varied-petaled flowers.  
The Capitol and the mountain ranges round  
Beneath Spring's sky show forth their radiant beauty.

At the monk's request, he relates the history of the temple, pointing out nearby scenic spots and extolling its patron diety. When the monk asks his identity, he answers, "Watch where I go," and enters the Tamura Shrine.

In the INTERLUDE a Man of the Place (KYÖGEN) relates the history of the temple and the exploits of Tamura.

As the monk intones the Lotus Sutra, Tamura's spirit (NOCHI SHITE) reappears as a noble general of long ago, and tells by song and dance how he vanquished the 'demons' (barbarians) in the Suzuka Mountains through devotion to Kannon.



### NOTES

1. Dances  
*KUSE* (Expressing the beauty of the spring evening in cherry-blossom time.)  
*Kakeri* (Suggesting his victorious encounter with the demons.)  
*KIRI* (Dramatic gestures and movements accompanying the song of his victory.)
2. Masks  
SHITE: *Dōji*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Heida*
3. This Noh is unusual in that Tamura is a victorious general, of an age before the Heike-Genji Period, whereas the hero of this type of Noh (Second Group) is usually a Heike warrior killed in battle. (See YASHIWA, NOTE 1, p. 76)

## TENKO

An Imperial envoy (WAKI) tells:  
(an old Chinese story)

A couple called Ōhoku and Ōbo had a son they named Tenko because just before the child was born his mother dreamed that a drum from heaven fall into her womb. Then the boy got a real drum from heaven and it made such a marvelous sound the news of it reached the emperor, who wanted the drum. But Tenko hid himself in the mountains with the drum, only to be found and drowned. The drum is kept in the palace but has never made a sound. The emperor, realizing why the drum is silent, has sent for Tenko's father.

Tenko's father (SHITE), living in grief and tears, follows unwillingly to Court, expecting he also is to be killed. He laments that, although a man should try to overcome his grief, looking for Nirvana, he cannot forget the loss of his son, whom he cannot make himself believe is no longer in this world.

At the courtier's insistence he helplessly strikes the drum, and strangely it gives out a heavenly sound of lovely sentiment, moving the emperor to tears.

The courtier tells the father that the emperor was so moved he shall be given treasures, and musical services are to be offered for Tenko. He orders a servant (KYŌGEN) to see him home; then has musicians summoned for the services.

When the ceremony is held in the presence of the emperor at the place where Tenko was drowned the boy's spirit (NOCHI SHITE) comes out of the river and expresses his gratitude, for he has now been saved from the torments of hell, and praises the Imperial reign. Then he plays his drum and dances in an ecstasy through the night till the rustle of people and the morning light fade his phantom away.



### NOTES

1. TSUKURIMONO  
Drum set on a bamboo framework
2. Dances  
*Gaku* (a solemn dance expressing his pious ecstasy)  
*KIRI* (a dance of joy, and farewell to the drum)
3. Masks  
SHITE: *Jō*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Dōji*



## TŌBOKU

### BACKGROUND

TŌBOKU is designed to illustrate the romantic temperament of Lady Izumi, a poetess endowed with rare poetic sensibility, notorious for her love affairs with various princes, but remembered most for a plum tree she had planted at the Tōboku In, under the eaves of her west window. Attaining enlightenment through her poetry, she became a *Bosatsu* of Song and Dance in the 'Western Paradise' upon her death.

### NOH

Many years after the death of Lady Izumi, when the former palace has become a temple, with her plum tree still putting forth its exquisite blossoms as in days of old, a traveling monk (WAKI), guided to the place by a Man of the Place (KYŌGEN), sits admiring the plum blossoms. Lady Izumi's spirit (SHITE) appears as a maiden, finally identifying herself as the mistress of the plum tree, then vanishing into the shadow of the tree.

In the INTERLUDE, the Man of the Place tells the story of Tōboku In and Lady Izumi's 'Plum Tree by the Eaves.'

She reappears in her true form, performing dances and singing in praise of poetry:

Poetry is indeed a sermon...  
The memory of only poets lives on forever...  
Poetry moves Heaven and Earth  
And melts the Demon's heart.

The Chorus alludes to an ancient poem:

The flower returns from whence it comes  
The bird returns to its old nest.

And as she glides back into the temple hall the monk awakens from his dream.



### NOTES

1. Lady Izumi's tree is poetically associated with the beautiful plum tree of which it is said that a poetess, when it was requisitioned as a replacement for an Imperial tree that had died, attached the following poem to its branches:  
Honored by the Imperial command—  
Yet what shall I tell the nightingale  
When it returns.
2. Mask  
SHITE: Zō
3. Dances  
KUSE  
*Jo no Mai*  
KIRI

### Another Noh about Lady Izumi:

SEIGANJI. Izumi appears to a man at her grave at Seigan Temple, in Kyoto, first as a woman, then as a diety of poetry and dance.

## TÔRU

### BACKGROUND

To writers of later times the Heian Period was the Golden Age. Such extravagant exaggerations of luxurious living as the story of Tōru's seawater pool are not uncommon.

### NOH

A traveling priest (WAKI) arrives at the Capital and comes to the ruins of Kawara no In on the night of the Harvest Moon.

An old man (SHITE) carrying salt buckets slung over his shoulders comes and, viewing the ruins of the famous mansion, laments:

When the moon is in the sky, the tide is high, it's lonesome at  
Shiogama Beach. This is a place of rare beauty, and enjoying the  
scenery, a lonesome old man like me feels the sensibility of the poem:

As I count the days of the moon  
This evening is just mid-autumn.

The priest asks him if he lives nearby, also wondering about the salt buckets. Then the old man answers that this place, Kawara no In, is properly called Shiogama Beach because many centuries ago Tōru built his garden as a copy of Shiogama Beach on the northern coast (Matsushima, Miyagi Prefecture).

Meanwhile the moon has risen, moving them to recite poetry and ponder upon people of the past.

At the priest's request he tells the history of Kawara no In in the early Heian Period.

Minister Minamoto no Tōru, son of Emperor Soga, built a mansion here and had his garden patterned after the famous Shiogama Beach. He had the pool filled daily in imitation of the tide, with sea water carried up every day from Naniwa (Osaka), and indulged in the pastime of watching salt-burning (NOTE 1). After Tōru's death nobody kept up the place so the pool dried up and dead leaves floated on the stagnant rain water. The poet Tsuroyuki (NOTE 2) saw it and made a poem on the pathetic sight of the once elegant splendor.



When the old man finishes his story he is overcome by throbbing sorrow of yearning for the past. The priest consoles him by diverting his attention to the surrounding mountains in rich autumn hues. Then he remembers that he was going to draw salt water and approaches the shore of the pool where he disappears in the spray of the surf, as it were.

In the INTERLUDE a Man of the Place (KYÖGEN) tells the priest the history of Tōru and his marvelous salt-water pools.

The priest decides :

On this beach, on a rock bed with moss sheet I'll lie down expecting more wonders as if waiting for a dream.

The spirit of Tōru (NOCHI SHITE) returns, reminiscing :

Though I have forgotten this world for a long time, I have now come back to see the moon. I'm the one known as Tōru who loved the Beach of Shiogoma many years ago. The beach so fascinated me that I used to spend the bright moonlight nights in a boat among the islands dancing and dancing.....

A dancing figure is as beautiful as the falling petals of the laurel flower in the moon.

He dances and sings exotic praises of the moon.

In the early spring, why isn't the moon clear ?

Because of the mist along the mountains far away.

An eyebrow like faraway mountains is also like the new moon.

The new moon may be likened to a sailing vessel.

Fish in the water may wonder if it be a hook.

Flying birds are frightened by it as of an arrow.

The moon never falls from heaven

Though water may evaporate it will return as rain.

As birds start singing and bells ringing announcing the dawn he goes with the fading moonlight.

#### NOTES

1. See MATSUKAZE, p. 50, for references to salt making.
2. Tsurayuki: poet of the early Heian Period.

3. Masks

SHITE: *Jō*

NOCHI SHITE: *Chūjō*

4. Dance

*Hayamai*



## TSUCHIGUMO

### BACKGROUND

TSUCHIGUMO is the most popular Noh of a fearful monster. It is based on a primitive story from NIHONSHOKI retold in HEIKE MONOGATARI.

### NOH

A maid (TSURE) bringing medicine to the mansion of Raikō, who is confined to his bed by a mysterious malady, is announced by a servant (TSURE). After she leaves, a priest (SHITE) comes and talks with Raikō (TSURE), telling him that his illness has been caused by a spider (*tsuchigumo*.) When Raikō sees that the priest himself is the spider, it tries to emmesh him in a web, but Raikō attacks it with a sword he has by his pillow. Wounded, it flees.

Raikō's warrior Hitorimusha (WAKI) rushes in and is told what has happened. Finding a trail of blood, he announces that he will follow the monster to its lair and slay it.

In the INTERLUDE his servant (KYŌGEN) recapitulates.

Hitorimusha and his warriors arrive at the mound where the spider (NOCHI SHITE) is hiding. Hitorimusha finally kills the monster in a fierce battle and returns in triumph to the Capital.

### NOTES

1. TSUKURIMONO

The monster's lair, represented by a bamboo framework covered with spider's web.

2. Mask

NOCHI SHITE: *Shikami*

3. Dance

*Maibataraki*

4. The highly dramatic and comparatively realistic throwing out of paper streamers as the spider's entangling web is a type of action unique to this Noh.



### Other Noh about Raikō (Yorimitsu)

ŌEYAMA. Yorimitsu (Raikō), under an Imperial Order to annihilate the demon Shutendōji, with his retainers disguised as YAMABUSHI (see ATAKA, NOTE 4, p. 13) locate the demon on Ōe Yama through a woman made captive by him; and after taking advantage of his unwilling hospitality attack him as he sleeps and kill him.

RASHŌMON. After returning from Ōe Yama (see above) Yorimitsu and his retainers are drinking and discussing the rumor that Rashōmon, one of the gates of the Capital, is haunted by a demon; one of the men, Tsuna, on a dare goes to the place, where he is attacked by the demon whom he defeats by slicing off one of its arms, and returns proudly to his comrades. (The Kabuki IBARAGI follows this episode.)

## TSUNEMASA

### BACKGROUND

Tsunemasa, scion of the Heike (Taira) Clan, was granted high Imperial favor for his skill with the lute. After his death in battle his lord arranged to have the lute dedicated at his temple.

### NOH

A priest (WAKI) has gathered musicians to dedicate the great lute, when unexpectedly the voice of Tsunemasa (SHITE) comes:

Wind in the trees—rain sounds under clear skies;  
Moonlight on sand, like frost—on a summer night. (NOTE 1)

His shadow falls dimly within the pale of their flickering candle light, then disappears; but his voice lingers, identifying himself as Tsunemasa, even through the wall of death his undying devotion to his lord thus declaring:

Though the water in the garden's courses alter—  
Still I shall not weary of my lord's house.

The priest expresses gratitude for the marvel of being able to converse with the dead, and Tsunemasa tells the story of this lute SEIZAN now being dedicated, which was given him by his lord. As the service proceeds with a concord of many instruments, Tsunemasa steals up, unseen, and plucks the strings of his beloved lute.

Then he dances as the chorus sings of the sound of lute music.

He performs another dance, still his shadow only visible.

But the anguish of the Asura Hell begins to return upon him here where he has momentarily returned to this world:

Though his heart is set on music, he cannot stay  
Wind snuffs the candle out and wafis his phantom away,  
In the darkness nat e'en  
His shadow can be seen.

### NOTES

1. Literary reference  
From a poem by the Chinese poet Po Chu-i, comparing the sound of the wind in the trees to that of rain, and sands bathed in moonlight to frost.
2. Mask  
SHITE: *Jūroku*
3. Dances  
*KUSE*  
*Kakeri*  
*KIRI*
4. For other Noh on a manly, courageous warrior imbued with aesthetic sensibility, see EBIRA, p. 19; and TADANORI, p. 66.



## YASHIMA

### BACKGROUND

The bay of Yashima was the scene of a great battle in the struggle between the Minamoto and Taira clans (the Genji-Heike Wars).

### NOH

A priest (WAKI) and his attendants (WAKI TSURE) arrive at Yashima and are given lodging at the house of two fishermen (SHITE and TSURE), one of whom describes the scene of the battle in such vivid detail that the priest asks his name. He is made to understand that it is the ghost of the famous military hero Yoshitsune, the Genji commander in that battle, who then disappears.

In the INTERLUDE a Man of the Place (KYŪGEN) relates background information.

As the priest dreams, Yoshitsune (NOCHI SHITE) appears in his true form, singing:

A fallen flower blooms not again  
A broken mirror reflects no more.  
The dead cannot return.  
But anger, an attachment to this world,  
Binds him in agony in the nether world.  
And pulls him back to the battlefield.

Then he does a song and dance, and tells (*sitting on stool*) how he rode his horse into the sea amongst the hostile craft to retrieve his bow which was being carried away by the tide, in danger of falling into the hands of the enemy.

He dances again, describing poetically the glistening of arms on the field of battle.

### NOTES

1. YASHIMA is one of the three Noh (with EBIRA, p. 19; and TAMURA p. 69) of this type (Second Group) based on a victorious warrior rather than a defeated Heike.



2. Masks  
SHITE: *Jō*  
NOCHI SHITE: *Heida*
3. Dances  
*Kakeri*  
*KIRI* (describing Yoshitsune's battle with the Heike)
4. Variations of the INTERLUDE:
  - 1) The usual form—Kagekiyo's combat with Mionoya (the story Kagekiyo relates for his daughter, in KAGEKIYO, p. 35).
  - 2) The story of Yoshitsune retrieving his bow.
  - 3) The story of the marvelous archery feat of Nasu no Yoichi (with the KYŪGEN performing a fascinating miming of the roles of Yoshitsune and Nasu no Yoichi alternately): Commissioned to do so by Yoshitsune, he shot down the fan carried as an emblem atop the mast of the enemy's ship, which was bobbing on the waves a great distance offshore.

## YOROBOSHI

### BACKGROUND

A father had cast out his son Shuntoku Maru because of a slander instigated by the boy's step-mother. The father, when he realizes the boy's innocence, does penance by giving alms for one week at the temple called Tennōji, in Osaka. In the meantime the boy has become blind and wanders about as a begger.

### NOH

On the last day of the almsgiving, Shuntoku Maru (SHITE) is among the throng of the poor, singing his loneliness as he comes.

Well may all call me Yaroboshi, far being blind I weave about like a cart with one wheel off. (NOTE 1)

As he receives the alms he becomes aware of the scent of plum blossoms in full bloom, and quotes exquisite poetry of their fragrance, as

The petals fall upon his sleeves  
—Like spring snowflakes floating down  
—In semblance of the alms being given.

After receiving alms he tells the history of the temple, and describes the famous places of the vicinity.

Then everyone goes to watch the sunset, as it is the day of the Vernal Equinox. The blind boy performs a dance, telling the story of his own life and suffering.  
(*miming his blind running and stumbling*)

The father (WAKI), realizing it is his own son, embraces him (though the boy in shame tries to hide himself), and joyfully takes him home.

### NOTES

1. YORO means 'stumbling' (or 'weaving') and BOSHI can mean 'boy' (or 'beggar').
2. Mask  
SHITE: *Yoroboshi*

### 3. Dance

*Iroe*

### 4. HIGH POINTS:

- 1) The expression of his sensibility in smelling the plum blossoms falling on his sleeves.
- 2) The sensitivity portrayed in his running hither and thither, ashamed before his father.



### Other Noh of a similar theme:

**KŌYA MONOGURUI.** A son grieving for his dead father runs away to become a priest, leaving a letter for the servant in whose charge he has been left, who becomes mentally unbalanced in searching for him, until he finds him with some priests at Mt. Kōya.

**TSUCHIGURUMA.** When a father, unbalanced by grief at his wife's death, abandons his son to become a priest, the overwhelming responsibilities that fall upon the boy's tutor so unbalance him he draws the boy about in a lowly vehicle (TSUCHIGURUMA 'earth barrow') from place to place until they are by happy chance reunited with the father at Zenkō Temple.

**UTAURA.** A boy whose father is missing is taken to a fortune-teller who turns out to be his father.

## YUYA

### BACKGROUND

Yuya is the concubine of Munemori, a scion of the governing Heike Clan (NOTE 1, a) at the Imperial Court in Kyoto, the Capital. She longs to go to her mother who lies seriously ill at their home in the eastern part of Japan.

## NOH

First Munemori (WAKI) comes on stage to explain that Yuya has asked permission to return home but he has refused because he is pleased to have her company during this cherry blossom time.

Then a maid (TSURE) from Yuya's home appears, bringing a letter from Yuya's mother, which she delivers when Yuya (SHITE) appears. Yuya again begs leave of Munemori to return home, and reads him the letter, in which her mother says she wishes to see her face once more before dying. But Munemori still insists that she remain with him. A carriage is then brought and Yuya is taken to Kiyomizu Temple (Note 1, b) for the cherry-viewing party. There Yuya prays to Kannon to save her mother, but is called from her prayers to join Munemori and the others. She dutifully tries to appear gay, dancing as ordered; but when a sudden shower causes many of the blossoms to fall, Yuya writes a poem and passes it to Munemori, who reads:

I know not what to do! 'Twould sodden me  
To quit the Capital in all its vernal glory;  
Yet if the flower that I hold dear there in  
The East should fall...?

This so touches Munemori that he immediately gives her permission to go to her mother. Yuya sets off on her journey at once before he can change his mind.

## NOTES

- References:
  - For a description of the Heike in power, see the song in ATSUMORI, p. 14.
  - See TAMURA, BACKGROUND, p. 69.
- Masks  
SHITE: *Zō*  
TSURE: *tsure mask*
- TSUKURIMONO  
*Hanamiguruma*: a framework poetically representing the carriage which carries Yuya to the cherry-viewing party.





## ASHI KARI

A man who left his wife because of poverty is now eking out a subsistence as a rushcutter. The wife meanwhile has been well employed at the Capital and comes for him but he is at first too wretched to show himself. However, when he has put on the new garments she has brought for him, he dances, and they then return happily together.

## FUJI DAIKO

A musician named Fuji came up to the Capital when he heard that Asama, another drummer, had been called to play at an Imperial Court concert. Asama so resented this that he killed Fuji, whose wife arrives with their daughter shortly after, because of an upsetting dream she had. Grief-stricken, she puts on her husband's robe and beats the drum which is to her the cause of his death.

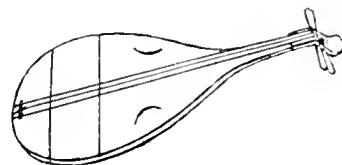
In *UMEGAE*, priests see the drum and robe (see above) in the house at Sumiyoshi where they are given shelter by a woman who afterwards comes as Fuji's wife and dances, wearing the robe.

## GENJI KUYŌ

A priest is asked by a woman to perform a service for the soul of Prince Genji of *GENJI MONOGATARI* because she is unable to obtain bliss, for breaking the Buddhist commandment against untruth by writing the romance. Though doubting her, he complies; whereupon Lady Murasaki, the writer of the book, appears again with a petition which he reads, at last understanding that Murasaki was manifestly an incarnation of the Kannon Buddha who wished to show through the *Tales of Genji* that human life is in reality as empty a dream as is fiction.

## GENJŌ

A renowned lute player about to embark for China for further training plays his instrument for the old couple in whose house he is staying at Suma Beach, who so appreciate his music that when rain patters on the roof they quickly spread grass mats to deaden the sound. In turn, they play a lute named Genjō and a harp for him, so impressing him that he gives up going to China, learning then that they are the spirits of Emperor Murakami and his consort Lady Nashitsubo, who played for him for that very purpose. The Emperor later reappears, to call a dragon god up from the sea and retrieve another famous lute snatched away while enroute to Japan. (Cf. *AMA*, p. 8)



### Other Noh on the same theme:

In *KASUGA RYŪJIN* a man taking his leave at the Kasuga Shrine (in Nara) for a trip to China is informed by a messenger of the god there in the guise of an old man that all necessary Buddhism can now be found in Japan; following which a dragon god descends to make him forswear the trip.

*HAKU RAKUTEN* contains the most chauvinistic insularism in this pregnant myth: The Chinese poet Po Chu-i (*HAKU RAKUTEN*) enroute to Japan meets two Japanese fishermen offshore who amaze him by not only calling him by name but immediately capping a Chinese poem the poet composes extemporaneously; after which a Japanese god, Sumiyoshi Myōjin, materializes from the waves and dances, then orders him to go back home at once, calling up a big wind with the help of other gods which blows his ship all the way back to China.

## HANJO

This is the outstanding love story among all Noh.

The "madame" of a road-side house discharges one of her girls, Hanago, who refuses to serve other men since she fell in love with one Yoshida from the Capital when he passed through. The unfortunate girl, distraught with love and loneliness, wanders aimlessly from place to place. Yoshida comes back on his return trip in the autumn, intending to make Hanago his wife, but finds her gone. So upon his arrival at the Capital he goes at once to worship at the Shimokamo Shrine. They are romantically reunited there through the two fans which they had exchanged in troth of their love.

### A Noh on a similar theme:

MINAZUKI BARAE. Two lovers are reunited at the Kamo Shrine.

## HIBARIYAMA

Minister Toyonari, believing the stepmother's slander, orders his men to take his daughter Chūjō Hime to Mt. Hibari and kill her. Instead of killing her they hide her there and her nurse supports them both by selling flowers. One day Toyonari comes to Mt. Hibari where he meets the nurse, who has become crazed from worrying over Chūjō, and asks her to take him to his daughter, for he has come to repent of what he did. After their reunion they happily return home.

### Another Noh:

TAEMA. In a dream a priest meets manifestations of Amida and Kannon, who wove a marvelous tapestry of Buddha images for Chūjō Hime (see above), who also appears and dances.

## HYAKUMAN

A man and a lost boy attend a religious service of chants and dances. The boy's mother, Hyakuman, crazed with grief, also comes, leading in the worship, and dancing, then praying fervently that she may find her child. The boy tells the man that she is his mother, so the man inquires where she is from and the cause of her present condition. She replies that she is from Nara where, after her husband's death, she became separated from her only child, and now in her fruitless search for him her wanderings have brought her here, and expresses her grief in dance. She also dances the story of the founding of the temple, praying that she may find her son.

The man is deeply moved and brings the boy to her. The mother praises Buddha and they return home in great joy.

### Similar Noh:

ASUKAGAWA. A child meets his lost mother planting rice.

KASHIWAZAKI. The servant of a man from Kashiwazaki who died while on a trip to Kamakura with his son brings the dead man's belongings and a letter from the boy saying he will become a priest, both together so overwhelming the mother that she becomes deranged; but later she is reunited with her son at Zenkō Temple.

## KANAWA

A wife who has been cast aside by her husband for another woman, determined that they should suffer in this world for what he has done to her, goes to the Kifune Shrine for seven days seeking divine aid against them. On the last day she receives an oracle: go forth to her purpose wearing on her head an iron crown (*kanawa*) surmounted by three burning tapers, her face painted red, dressed in red and holding to a consuming wrath

in her heart. She is very much surprised at this but while she is considering going home to follow the instructions her features take on a demonic visage and she rushes forth to take revenge.

The husband meanwhile consults the wizard Seimei about his nightmares. Seimei quickly warns him that his life is in danger on this very night because of a woman's hatred but Seimei promises that he will try his best to save his life by deflecting the imprecation.

While Seimei prays with all his might to protect the cursed couple the 'living spirit' of the former wife's jealousy appears and approaches the altar where dolls of the couple are lying. She strikes them, expressing the agony and fury of a cast-off woman, but when she tries to carry off the man she sees thirty gods (protectors of the sutra) reprimanding her to desist. Her supernatural power deserts her and she evaporates into thin air, only her voice coming clearly declaring that she will wait for another chance.

## KOGŌ

An Imperial Court official sends a man to find Lady Kogō, the Emperor's favorite among the ladies-in-waiting, who has left the Capital for fear of incurring the displeasure of the Heike (Taira) overlord Kiyomori whose daughter has become Empress. He finds her by hearing the sound of her *koto* (harp). And, after concluding his errand by delivering a letter from the Emperor and receiving her reply, shows his sympathy by drinking with her and dancing before he returns.

In **GIŌ**, the dancers Giō Gozen, long a favorite of Kiyomori, and her protegee Hotoke dance before him, but though he becomes enamored of Hotoke she promises Giō she will not accept his attentions.

In **HOTOKE NO HARA** the spirit of Hotoke appears in a dream to a priest at Hotoke no Hara and tells how she, like Giō, became a nun and returned to her native village to die.

## KŌTEI

The emperor (KŌTEI), in great anxiety over the illness of his favorite concubine Princess Yang (see **YŌKIHI** below), is visited by the spirit of Shōki (see below), who committed suicide when he failed the government examination, but was posthumously appointed to court rank by the emperor's grace and given a grand funeral. So in gratitude he has now come to exorcise the peniculous demon causing the affliction, for which he orders a mirror to be set up at the sickbed. When he has left, the demon appears in the mirror but simply vanishes when it is attacked. Shōki returns and vanquishes it in an amazing shadow-duel with its reflection.

In **SHŌKI** the ghost of Shōki appears to a traveler.

**YŌKIHI**. A medium who has been commissioned by the bereaved emperor to locate his beloved Princess Yang (Yōkihi) in the other world locates her in the mythical Chinese Paradise Hōrai Zan and visits her there, receiving from her a memento and a poetic pass-word for proof to the emperor that he met her.

### Other similar Noh:

**SHŌKUN**. An old couple, greatly agitated over the welfare of their beautiful daughter Shōkun who has been sent from among the Chinese emperor's concubines as a peace offering to a barbarian king, set up a magical mirror in which her image appears and that also of the hairy barbarian, who is so hideous beside her fair beauty that he draws back in shame.

**KANYŌ KYŪ**. A Chinese emperor deceived and captured by two men of an enemy state tricks them by his concubine's music and kills them.

**KŌU**. A ferryman reveals he is the spirit of the famous General Kōu, then appears in his true form with his wife.

## KUMASAKA

In the evening a priest from the Capital on a pilgrimage to the East arrives at the village of Akasaka, where he is stopped by a local priest requesting prayers for a certain person whose tomb he points out but whose name he will not divulge. Then he invites the traveler to lodge the night at his house, which he does. And a startling place it is for a priest's house, with all kinds of weapons hung about—a veritable armory—but not a single religious implement. The host attempts by tricky logic of twisted religious reasoning to justify a priest's possession of such weapons. Then seeming to go to his bedroom to retire he disappears and the whole house vanishes, leaving the traveler to find himself spending the night under a pine tree.

In the INTERLUDE the priest asks a Man of the Place about a bandit who once lived there, and is told the exploits of Kumasaka and his defeat by Ushiwaka (the boy Yoshitsune), concluding that Kumasaka must have appeared in longing for prayer.

In the priest's dream Kumasaka reappears in his true form and relates his band's night attack on a merchant caravan staying at an inn, which ended in their being utterly routed by Ushiwaka, who happened to be accompanying the merchants, and in Kumasaka's death.

### Other Noh on Yoshitsune as the boy Ushiwaka:

**EBOSHI ORI** is another Noh of the defeat of Kumasaka by Ushiwaka, presented as a direct narrative instead of the dream-form.

**HASHI BENKEI.** The well-known defeat of Benkei at the bridge (*hashi*) by the boy Ushiwaka in the guise of a girl, whereupon Benkei became his most loyal and proficient retainer.

**FUE NO MAKI** is a variant of **HASHI BENKEI** differing in the first part.

## MAKIGINU

An Imperial envoy, on orders the Emperor gave in compliance with a dream to present a thousand rolls of silk to the Kumano Shrines, is sent to Kumano to gather the silk coming from the provinces. But the man bringing the silk from the Capital stops at the Otonashi Shrine to worship, and offers up a poem.

When he arrives he is tied up and about to be punished for being late. But the spirit of Otonashi no Tenjin, taking possession of a medium, tells the envoy to release him because the poem he offered pleased the god. The possessed medium praises poetry and explains the religious significance of the Kumano Shrines, during which she dances more and more ecstatically till the moment the divine possession leaves her.

### Another Noh on the same theme:

**ARIDŌSHI.** The poet Tsurayuki (*see TŌRU*, Note 2, p. 73) angers the god by riding his horse into the shrine compound but appeases him by composing a fitting poem on the spot.



## MAKURA JIDŌ

In ancient China, an envoy is sent by the emperor to Mt. Rekken to find the source of miraculous water flowing forth from there. Deep in the mountains he finds Jidō in a hut, singing: "With the pillow of Kantan (see **KANTAN**, p. 36) you dream of a hundred years of luxurious life, but every time I look at my pillow I am reminded of my misconduct which caused me to be here." (He had inadvertently stepped over the pillow of the emperor, who was therefore obliged to exile him to this remote mountain fastness.) Jidō discovers that it has been centuries since he was exiled, and understands then that the emperor from his sympathy wrote on the pillow two verses of Buddhist scriptures, which he faithfully copied onto chrysanthemum leaves round about, and the dew from those leaves became an elixir of life protecting him from wild beasts, disease and death. Jidō dances and serves the elixir to the envoy, blessing the emperor and presenting him with his seven hundred years longevity.

### Other Noh of an elixir of life:

**FUJI SAN.** Another story about an elixir of life, sought on Mt. Fuji.  
**KAPPO.** A man pays a fisherman to release a strange fish he has caught, then its spirit comes as a child and gives him a jewel that is formed by its tears and will insure his longevity and health.

**NEZAME.** An elixir of life is received from dragon gods.

**SEIŌBO.** A peach from heaven is given the emperor for longevity.

**TŌBŌSAKU.** Another Noh relating the same story of the peach.

**YŌRŌ.** A perpetual renewal in reward for filial piety: A young woodcutter who works hard and faithfully to support his old parents shows an Imperial envoy the waterfall from which he has taken water that renewed his strength and benefited his parents, and some is taken for the emperor; whereupon a mountain god appears and dances.

### A similar theme:

**HIMURO.** A courtier is shown the 'ice cave' by the local god and given a piece of ice to take to the Emperor.

## MANJŪ

When a man named Manjū recalls his son from the temple where he has been sent to study, to check on his progress, he flies into such a rage upon discovering the boy's utter ignorance that he is only restrained from striking him dead on the spot by the intervention of his servant Nakamitsu, whom he then orders to kill the boy. Unable either to ignore the order or to carry it out, Nakamitsu instead kills his own son who willingly offers himself as a sacrificial substitute. When the father repents his rashness his son is brought back from the temple where he has been hidden. While Nakamitsu takes part in the ensuing celebration his heart is with his dead son.

### NOTE:

Only this Noh has this feudal concept of extreme self-sacrificing loyalty so common in Kabuki; but in others a child suffers a similarly hard fate:

**TAKE NO YUKI.** A boy mistreated by his stepmother, being sent out ill-clad into the wintery cold to clear out the snow (*YUKI*) from a bamboo (*TAKE*) grove, dies; but the gods, moved by the pathetic grief of his father, sister, and real mother, bring him back to life.

**TANIKŌ.** An acolyte of a *YAMABUSHI* priest secures the permission of his ill mother to accompany his master and others on a hazardous ascetic exercise of mountaineering but on the journey becomes ill and, in accordance with their immutable custom, must be thrown into the valley far below; but En no Gyōja (see **ATAKA**, Note 4, p. 13) so sympathizes with the priest in this unbearable disaster that he summons a diety to restore the boy to life.



## MATSUYAMA KAGAMI

A young girl sits alone in her room. It is the anniversary of her mother's death.

When her father approaches she slyly slips a small object out of his sight. He becomes greatly upset at this, jumping to the conclusion that the daughter has made a wooden figure of her stepmother, to put a curse upon her. But how grossly he misjudges her! To allay his fears she is obliged to show it; a small hand mirror that had been her mother's, which she passionately insists still shows her mother's image.

In actual fact it is the daughter's own reflection, for by her devotion to her dead mother she has become her living image.

The mother's spirit then comes to console her, but is soon sent for to return to Hades. Before being led away she is told to look into the mirror to see her sins reflected there, but lo! there in the mirror her saintly image is beheld sanctified by the daughter's pure heart of devotion. So she goes not back to purgatorial torment but passes on to paradise anon.

**NOTE:** This lovely story has been sweetly retold in English by Lafcadio Hearn, among others.

## MITSUYAMA

A priest arriving at Yamato with attendants has the famous "Three Mountains" (*Mitsu Yama*) pointed out to him by a Man of the Place, then meets a woman who tells their story:

A man living on Koku Yomo, one of the three mountains, conducted a liaison with Katsurogo and Sakurago, women who lived one on each of the other two mountains. But he began to neglect Katsurogo, who drowned herself in a pool.

The woman, the spirit of Katsurago, then sinks into that pool. The priest prays for her, but the spirit of Sakurago comes to beg his help against her former rival's hatred, whereupon Katsurago returns and they quarrel, but their ill-feeling is at last assuaged.

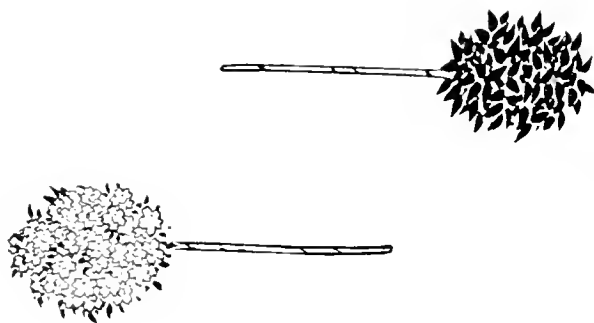
## MIWA

A woman who brings a daily offering of purification water and a sprig of anise to a priest at Miwa asks him for a cloak to protect her from the bitter autumn cold. He gives it to her, and is told that her home is at the two cryptomeria trees not far away, where the cloak is soon afterwards found hanging among the branches. When the priest goes there, the god of Miwa comes out as a woman and tells him an ancient legend:

A woman whose husband visited her only at night, wishing to find out where he came from, tied a thread to the hem of his garment and followed it, only to find that it ended at the foot of this tree.

The diety then performs the dance that was used to entice the goddess Amaterasu from the cave where she had hidden herself and relates that story too.

As dawn breaks the priest awakes with pleasant thoughts.



## MORIHISA

The Heike (Taira) warrior Morihisa is being taken captive to Kamakura, but is granted permission to worship at Kiyomizu Temple. With the day of execution drawing near he reads the sutra continuously. Immediately after he has had a miraculous vision of reassurance he is taken out to be executed. But the executioner is so blinded by a dazzling light that shines suddenly from the sutra scroll which Morihisa holds in his hand that his sword falls to the ground and is shattered. Yoritomo, learning what has happened, summons Morihisa and when he tells his dream Yoritomo admits he also had the same dream, which so impresses him that he decides to spare Morihisa's life. He serves him *sake*, and Morihisa performs a dance in gratitude.

### A Noh on a similar theme:

**SHUNEI.** Among the prisoners taken in a recent battle is the lad Shunei, whose brother Tamenao then gives himself up to die with him whereupon Shunei tries to save him by denying their relationship until he threatens to kill himself; but all is happily resolved as a pardon for Shunei arrives just as he is about to be executed, and everyone celebrates.

## MOTOMEZUKA

A priest is shown the burial mound he is seeking and told its story:

A girl named Unai Otome, unable to choose between two ardent suitors, gave them trials of skill, but both their arrows struck the same mandarin duck on the Ikuta River; so seeing no way out she drowned herself there and was buried in this mound. To the two young men life then was vain so they stabbed each other to follow her in death. So now their deaths, with that of the bird, she counts among her many sins. Oh, miserable soul!

And lo! the girl telling it vanishes into the mound.

As the priest reads the sutra for her soul and prays, she appears and thanks him, then describes (*and mimes*) in vivid horror her exquisite torments in hell, which ceasing she returns in groping darkness to her tomb.

### Other Noh on the same theme:

**FUNABASHI.** Some priests meet a man and woman collecting donations for rebuilding a bridge—on which hangs the following tale: Two lovers living on either side of a river met nightly on the bridge until their parents, disapproving, took some planks out of the bridge to prevent their meeting, and both, unknowing, fell into the river and were drowned; these two being of course the spirits of the lovers, who later reappear and attain salvation through the prayers of the priests.

**NISHIKIGI.** A priest is shown a mound by a man and woman, later revealed as spirits of a broken-hearted suitor buried there, and the object of his affection.

**UKIFUNE.** A woman tells a traveling priest the story of Ukifune, who drowned herself because she could not choose between two suitors; when he goes on to another village she comes to him as Ukifune, with an arresting story of how she was saved from the river and spent the rest of her days here.

## NOMORI

A traveling priest finds a pond in Kasuga Field and asks an old man there about it. He informs him that it is called the Mirror of the Keeper of the Moors, but this is also the name of a mirror carried by a demon who guards the moors by day in the form of a man. Saying he has the mirror carried by the demon, he disappears into a mound. The priest prays there and the demon appears with the mirror. He shines it in all directions and stamps about vigorously, finally disappearing again into Hades.

## OMINAMESHI

A traveling priest sees some yellow flowers (*ominameshi*) blooming and would pick some but an old man stops him. He talks about the flowers and takes the priest to the burial mounds of a man and his wife, whom he explains have some connection with that flower; then disappears. The spirits of the husband and wife then appear and relate their story:

Unable to bear her husband's lack of consideration, the wife threw herself into the river. Her husband buried her in a mound and from it grew this kind of flower. He then drowned himself and was buried in a mound beside his wife's.

He then performs a vigorous dance expressing the continuous pain of torment in Hell; and they disappear.

### A Noh on a similar theme:

**UNEME.** A lady-in-waiting at the Imperial Court appears to a priest who prays beside the pond in Nara where she drowned herself after she lost the Emperor's affection.

## RAIDEN

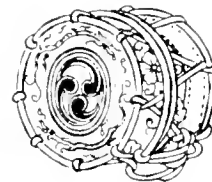
The avenging spirit of the Heian Court Minister and poet Michizane who died with malice in his heart against his enemies appears to a holy priest to whom he is indebted to warn him that he plans to take revenge by becoming a thunderbolt and striking the Imperial Palace, so not to go there even if summoned. The priest however will not heed the warning but goes when called, and succeeds in subduing the angry spirit.

### NOTE:

In a variant NOCHI (Second Part) of this Noh, Michizane comes to the Imperial Palace only to express his gratitude for the honors posthumously bestowed upon him, and to bless the Imperial reign.

## RŌDAIKO

A man in detention for killing another man in an argument escapes, so his wife is confined in his stead. But she becomes seemingly crazed, with loneliness and yearning for her husband, and strikes the drum hanging on the wall, dancing madly. This so arouses the sympathy of her captor that he releases her, with a pardon for her husband. She then tells where he is hiding, and sets off at once to join him.





## SAIGYŌ SAKURA

When an old cherry tree beside the retreat of Saigyō, a famous hermit-poet, comes into full bloom he would enjoy the beauty undisturbed but a noisy group of people come on a flower-viewing party. Saigyō composes a poem in which he blames the cherry tree for the intrusion; but while he is napping there, the spirit of the old tree comes forth to remonstrate that it is not to be blamed; then dances, expressing the joy of spring blossoms. As the dream fades Saigyō awakes.

### Another Noh about Saigyō:

**UGETSU.** At Sumiyoshi, Saigyō lodges with an old couple whom he helps compose a poem about a disagreement arising from their acute poetic sensibility; then the god of the Sumiyoshi Shrine, patron of poetry, takes possession of an old man to sing of poetry, and dance.

## SANEMORI

A Man of the Place explains that a certain priest preaches at that spot every day apparently to himself but an old man, visible only to the priest, comes daily to listen. The old man now comes as usual, and, after revealing he is the spirit of the old warrior Sanemori, vanishes at the nearby pond. The priest prays for him there all night and the old warrior comes back in his true form to describe his fatal battle with Yoshinaka (see **TOMOE**, p. 4), miming the episode of the washing of his severed head in that pond, by which his true identity was then discovered, for he had dyed his old gray hair lest he be put to shame for his hoary age.

## SEMIMARU

Semimaru, fourth son of the Emperor, blind from birth, is taken at his father's order to Mt. Ōsaka. There his head is shaved and his clothes are changed to those of a priest; he is supplied with a straw coat, a hat, a stick to walk with, and a lute. Though he accepts that it is his father the Emperor's wisdom to make him suffer thus now so he may be happier in the next life, he weeps when he is left alone and realizes what a great change has come upon him.

A Man of the Place sympathizes with him, making a hut for him to stay in and also offering to wait on him.

In the Capital his insane older sister Sakagami wanders away from the Palace and comes to Mt. Ōsaka.

In his hut Semimaru plays the lute and recites a poem showing his resignation. The unusually noble tone of the lute draws Sakagami to the hut, and she finds her younger brother.

After the affectionate and sorrowful encounter she leaves, Semimaru begging her to visit often, wandering heavily onward.

## SENJU

Shigehira, son of Kiyomori, was captured at the battle of Ichinotani and has been sent to Kamakura, seat of Yoritomo's government, and is being held at Munemochi's house.

Senju is sent by Yoritomo to keep him company with musical instruments. Shigehira asks her about his request to be allowed to become a priest but is told that Yoritomo has refused.

Munemochi brings *sake* to cheer him up, as it is a dank, dreary evening. Then Senju sings and dances to entertain him and Shigehira joins in, playing on a lute till late; then together they sleep.

When morning comes Shigehira is sent back to Kyoto by an Imperial Order, and they say a last sad farewell.

## SHICHIKIOCHI

After suffering a crushing defeat by the Taira (Heike) clan, Yoritomo is about to escape by boat when he finds that he and his companions number eight. This number having proved very unlucky for both his father and his grandfather in similar circumstances, he orders that one of the men be put ashore. The chief officer leaves his own son behind to face certain death; but he is 'captured' by a Taira commander secretly in league with Yoritomo, and returned safely. They all rejoice, drinking ceremonially, and celebrating with happy dances.

## SHŌZON

Yoritomo, head of the Bakufu at Kamakura, has become so suspicious of his younger brother Yoshitsune, that he sends his retainer Shōzon to Kyoto to kill him. Benkei, hearing of this, goes to the inn where Shōzon is staying and insists on taking him immediately before Yoshitsune. There he is closely questioned about his intentions and to escape from the difficulty, gives his written bond of loyalty to Yoshitsune. At this they feast together and Shizuka Gozen entertains them with a dance before Shōzon returns to his inn. Benkei, however, is far from satisfied and sends a serving-woman to see what Shōzon and his men are doing. When she reports that they are making preparations for an attack, Yoshitsune and his men themselves make ready. In the fight Shōzon and his men are defeated and Shōzon himself captured and bound.

### **A Noh on the same theme:**

NISHIKIDO. Bloody complications of suicides, attempted fratricide; and conflicts of feudal loyalties in treachery against Yoshitsune instigated by Yoritomo.

## TAMAKAZURA

A traveling priest arrives at Hatsuse to worship the Kannon of Hase. A woman comes up the river, singing of her loneliness and distressed condition. The priest, wondering at a woman all alone in a little boat rowing against the mountain current, opens a conversation with her. Enjoying the autumn scenery they go to worship at the Kannon Temple. Then she shows him two cryptomeria trees. Reciting an old poem about those evergreen the priest asks her about the circumstances of the poem. She tells the story of Tamakazura:

*Her mother Yūgoo (p. 31) died when she was a child, so she lived in Tsukushi, in Kyushu, where she spent unhappy days till she finally returned to the Capitol. But still she was so miserable that she went to pray at the famous Hase Kannon, and there she met her mother's former maid, Ukon.*

Buddha's mercy again led her today to see the priest. Begging, "Please help me attain spiritual peace," she reveals her name and disappears.

As the priest prays, Tamakazura reappears, dancing as an expression of her yearning for prayer.

She confesses that her attachment to this mortal life is clouding her soul from entering peaceful rest:

*I should not be ongrly at others, if I consider all my troubles, painful though they were, to be the natural recompence for my sinful nature. I am so oshomed that I was disturbed and much overwrought about trivial things.*

Freed from worldly attachment she attains Nirvana.

## TEIKA

A priest and attendants visiting the Capital are enjoying the autumn scenery. When they take shelter from a sudden shower in a nearby cottage, a beautiful woman appears and asks them if they realize this is the cottage built by the Heian poet Teika who loved this scenery, especially in autumn, and used to write poems here. At her invitation, they go to visit a tomb which is covered by a tightly clinging vine. She explains it is the tomb of Princess Shokushi and the vine around it is called the Teika Vine. Finally she tells of Teika's secret liaison with Princess Shokushi; and how after her death Teika's spirit turned into the vine which has confined her in constant suffering. Revealing that she is the spirit of the Princess, she requests prayers, then disappears into the tomb.

As the priest recites the Lotus Sutra, the spirit of the Princess reappears out of her tomb to perform a joyful dance in gratitude for having obtained release through his prayers.

## TŌGAN KOJI

A lay priest named Tōgan entertains a traveler with preaching and song and dance, at Kiyomizu Temple in Kyoto.

### **Other Noh including an entertainment:**

**JINEN KOJI.** The lay priest Jinen receives a robe as a gift from a girl, but in an accompanying letter she explains she has sold herself to buy it for him to hold services for her deceased parents, so he rushes after the men who have bought her and secures her release by entertaining them with song and dance.

**KAGETSU.** A man who became a priest after his son disappeared meets a boy entertainer near Kiyomizu Temple in Kyoto and recognizes him as his son, learning then that he had been led away by a TENGU.

**TOKUSA** is a reverse story: A boy who had been enticed from his home recognizes his father when he puts on the son's garments and sings songs as the boy used to, and dances.

**SANSHŌ.** Three old sages drink and laugh together.

## TŌSEN

Two Chinese children arrive on a ship from China to ransom their father who has been held in forced labor by a Japanese landowner who captured his ship thirteen years before, but the father is forbidden to take with him the two children born to him in Japan; so he is torn between the two pulling him to leave and the two holding him to stay, till the landowner is so moved by his plight that he allows him to take them with him, and all five happily set sail.

**MINASE.** A man who left his family to become a priest is reproached by the spirit of his wife, who has subsequently died, for hesitating to reveal himself to his children, and at last reunited with them.

## TSURUKAME

An Imperial Chinese Court official announces that a New Year celebration is to be held. The celebration proceeds with song and dance, the principal characters representing the crane and the tortoise, auspicious symbols of longevity. And the emperor himself then dances.

## UKAI

The priest Nichiren determines to pass the night in a haunted temple. The ghost of an old cormorant fisherman who once sheltered him appears, explaining that for violating the strict prohibition against taking life in the nearby river by fishing there nightly with his cormorants he was punished by being drowned in the river. When the priest promises prayers for his soul he demonstrates how the fishing is done; then disappears. When Nichiren writes words from the Lotus Sutra on some stones and throws them into the river, Emma, the King of Hell, announces the fisherman's suffering is remitted and he will be sent to Paradise because of his kindness to the priest.

### Other Noh of the priest Nichiren

**GENZAI SHICH MEN.** Nichiren, by the power of the Lotus Sutra, transforms a dragoness, who comes first as a worshiper then as a serpent, into a goddess protector of the mountain.

**MINOBU.** A woman's spirit attains salvation through Nichiren's reading of the Lotus Sutra.

## UKON

Some priests of Kashima Shrine (in the present-day Kanto district) have come to the Capital to see the cherry blossoms (at a place in Kyoto named Ukon no Baba). When a lady comes there in a carriage, accompanied by her maid, one of the priests recites a poem by Narihira, the famous classical poet, which says that, though it is not a person whom he really knows, yet it is not someone he has never seen before why should he be so captivated by her? He will spend the day dreamily contemplating her! She, in turn, answers by reciting a poem which had been written in answer to Narihira's poem: Whether we know each other or not is beside the point; the all-important question is the depth of your feeling.

They continue thus, reciting poems and discussing the scenery. Finally she reveals that she is the goddess of cherry blossoms, who is enshrined as a minor diety at that shrine, and promises to return and dance that night, which she does.

### A similar Noh:

**YOSHINO TENNIN.** A goddess of Yoshino comes to a cherry-viewing party, first as beautiful woman, then in her true form as a diety to dance in praise of the cherry blossoms.

## YAMAMBA

According to ancient folklore, a weird old mountain hag called Yamamba, who is the embodiment of the mountain spirit, goes her eternal rounds of all the mountains.

Hyakuma Yamamba, a dancer who has won fame as the composer of a dance on the mountain hag's wanderings, is on her way from the Capital to the Zenkō Temple, when she is halted in a mountain pass by a sudden darkness, caused by the Yamamba, who comes as a village maid and intreats her to do the Yamamba Dance, then disappears.

When Hyakuma performs the Yamamba Dance in the nocturnal solitude of the mountain depths the Yamamba comes forth and performs dances symbolizing her wanderings about the mountains in all seasons—flower bedecked, moon lighted, and silvered with snow.

## YORIMASA

A priest who is sight-seeing at Uji has the places of interest round about pointed out to him by an old man, who then takes him to Byōdō In to show him the patch of turf kept cut in the shape of a fan, on the spot where the old Genji (Minamoto) warrior Yorimasa chivalrously spread out his fan to sit upon when he killed himself there after suffering a crushing military defeat. As he disappears he reveals he is the spirit of the warrior, who then comes back to relate his fateful battle and final act.

**TOMONAGA.** Tomonaga, also a defeated Genji (Minamoto) warrior, appears to his former tutor who is lodging the night at the house of a woman of the place where he killed himself.

## SHRINE NOH

**Noh beginning as shrine troupes it is not surprising that there are a great many Shrine Noh:**

**KAMO.** A pilgrim priest sees the three dieties of Kamo Shrine: the god Wakeikazuchi, his mother, and the arrow which she found floating in the river just before she miraculously conceived him.

**KINSATSU.** An Imperial envoy receives a golden tablet from heaven promising protection to the land, then the god brings a bow and arrow for subduing demons and keeping the peace.

**KUSENOTO.** A pilgrim courtier taking part in a religious ceremony at Kusenoto meets a BOSATSU and a dragon god.

**MATSUNO-O.** A courtier at Matsuno-o Shrine meets the god, first in the guise of an old man.

**MEKARI.** The priest of Hayatomo Shrine performs an annual ceremony of gathering seaweed, with dragon gods.

**ÖYASHIRO.** A courtier hears the story of Izumo Shrine from two of its priests, then two gods dance.

In SHIRAHIGE and SHIRONUSHI the Diety of the Place performs dances.

**TAIZANBUKUN.** Dieties extol the beauty of cherry blossoms.

**TATSUTA.** A priest going to Tatsuta Shrine is stopped by a woman as he is about to cross the river and taken there by another way, to worship at a sacred maple; the woman, reappearing as the goddess Tatsuta, discourses poetically on the beauty of the maple leaves.

**UCHITO MÔDE.** An Imperial envoy to Ise Shrine is entertained with prayers and preaching, then by various types of dances.

**U NO MATSURI.** An Imperial envoy attending the cormorant festival at Keta Shrine meets the goddess, with a child representing a sacrificed cormorant returned to life, and a god.

**YUMI YAWATA.** The god of the Otokoyama Hachiman Shrine appears carrying a bow and arrow, reappearing to dance for a blessed reign.

**NOTE:** These shrines are so-called Shinto, but by the time of Noh the syncretism of native gods (MYÔJIN, KAMI, etc.) with Buddhist incarnations (BOSATSU) makes clear distinction impossible.

**DÔMYÔJI** expresses this synthesis most clearly: an old man in a Buddhist temple explains Buddha and the gods (Shinto) as manifestations of the same things, then reappears as Shiratayû, messenger of the gods.

**RINZÔ** has a Buddhist theme, with a remarkable sutra stand (RINZÔ), a Buddhist divinity, and a great teacher (Fu Daishi) with his two children.

## There are many Noh of mythology and legends:

**AWAJI.** Japan made by the drops of water from the spear that had been plunged into the sea by the god Izanagi.

In SAKA HOKO a courtier meets an old man going to Tatsuta Shrine who informs him the spear (*hoko*) the god used (see AWAJI above) is enshrined there, then appears carrying it after a goddess has danced.

**EMA.** An Imperial envoy enroute to the Ise Shrine stops to watch a local shrine's festival in which votive plaques of white or black horses are hung to foretell the fortune of the coming year; the sun goddess Amaterasu and other dieties later depicting her withdrawal into a cave.

**MIMOSUSO.** A delightful myth about the origin of the name of the River Mimosuso, from the washing of the soiled train of the goddess Yamato Hime—told by an old man who reappears as the god Okidama.

**OROCHI.** The Noh version of the folklore about the god Susano-o who saved the Princess Kushiinada from an eight-headed dragon (*orochi*—'great serpent') by first getting it drunk on *sake* and then killing it, afterwards taking a sacred sword out of its tail.

In KUSANAGI two gods appear, first as flower peddlers, to a pilgrim to Atsuta Shrine and tell how the sword taken from the tail of the dragon (*orochi*—see above) was used to subdue the barbarians.

**GENDAYÛ.** At Atsuta Shrine two dieties in the guise of an old couple tell of the sword, other dieties afterward dancing.

**KUREHA.** The spirits of Kurehatori and Ayahatori, the girls who introduced weaving to Japan from Korea, appear to a courtier.

**SAOYAMA.** A nobleman at Kasuga Shrine finds a white cloud covering Sao Yama, it being the wonderful gown of mist, neither cut nor sewn, of Sao Yama Hime, goddess of spring.

## DEMONS, DEVILS AND EVIL SPIRITS IN NOH

There are demons of various types in the NOCHI (latter part) of a large number of Noh. In the cases representing a true demonic creature, the *HANNYA* mask is used; in other cases similar masks are used. Among other things, these demons represent:

In AOI NO UE—a 'living phantom' jealousy (p. 10) Also YÛGAO, p. 31

In AYA NO TSUZUMI—the malice of a dead man (p. 16)

In DÔJÔJI—a spurned woman's fury in snake form (p. 18)

In FUNA BENKEI—an apparition of a defeated warrior (p. 24)

In KUROZUKA and MOMIJI GARI—a man-eating ogress (p. 48 and p. 54)

SESSHÔSEKI is a 'death rock' killing any living thing that comes near, but the evil spirit within it is subdued by a priest's prayers.

## Other Demon Noh:

**DAIROKUTEN.** Devil king Dairokuten is subdued by god Susano-o (see **OROCHI**, p. 91).

**HIUN.** A devil, appearing first as an old woodcutter, is subdued by priests warned by the local god.

**NOMORI.** A benign Demon of the Place performs a vigorous dance with a mirror (p. 86).

**SHARI.** A demon disguised as a villager makes off with a temple's *shari* (ashes of Buddha) but the holy relic is recovered by a divine being.

## DRAGONS

The Noh dragons, or dragon gods (**RYŪJIN**) and goddesses bear no resemblance to the antagonist of St. George, coming rather from old Chinese Rain Gods, or the magical Kingdom Under the Sea (**RYUGŪ**) of myths like Urashima Tarō (see **TAMANOI** below); but the eight-headed *orochi* ('big serpent') of the Izumo legend does (see p. 91).

**TAMANOI.** The god Hodemi, in search of his older brother's fish-hook which he lost while fishing, spends three years with two gorgeous princesses in the Dragon King's Palace, receiving the fish-hook when he returns, as well as a magnificent jewel, etc., from each princess.

**IKKAKU SENNIN.** A horned (*ikkaku*) hermit (*sennin*) has imprisoned the rain dragons but is beguiled by a beautiful lady to drink, which is taboo, thus losing his magical power that the dragons escape to bring rain on the parched land.

**IWAFUNE.** A benign dragon god brings in safely a treasure-laden ship. **RYŌKO** is a strange story of priests from Japan in China witnessing a fight between a heavenly dragon (*ryō*) and a tiger (*ko*).



## ANIMALS, BIRDS, AND POETIC SPIRITS

The fabled beasts and birds portrayed in Noh are mostly reminiscent of such creatures as the unicorn and phoenix bird of Western myths. **NUE**—fearful bird with head of monkey, body of a badger, legs of a tiger, tail of a snake. In the Noh, killed by Yorimasa (p. 90) for threatening the life of the Emperor.

**SHISHI**—mythical lion **SHAKKYŌ** (p. 58)

**SHŪJŌ**—mythical orangutan (p. 60)

**TENGU**—a flying goblin (p. 47)

**TSUCHIGUMO**—'earth-spider' (p. 74)

**Real animals are also the subject of Noh.**

**HATSUYUKI.** The spirit of a dead pet chicken appears as a woman and dances.

**SAGI**—'heron'

In the Noh, the bird is caught and performs dances for the Emperor.

**TSURUKAME**—crane and tortoise, symbol of longevity (p. 89).

**U**—'cormorant' **UKAI** (p. 89) and **U NO MATSURI** (p. 91)

**UTŌ**—an indeterminate bird immortalized for its devotion to its young. In the Noh the damned spirit of a hunter who had killed *utō* and other birds returns from Hell to send a memento to his wife and child. In **MATSUMUSHI** a regular customer of a wine dealer in the marketplace turns out to be the spirit of a man who, long ago, wandered off after the chirping of crickets (*matsumushi*) and was finally found dead by his bosom friend who came in search of him.

**Embodied spirits play an important role in Noh.**

**KOCHŌ** is the portrayal of the spirit of the butterfly.

**YUKI**—spirit of snow, as a young woman

**Poetic spirits of insentient flowers and trees.**

**BASHŌ**—'the plantain tree'

The spirit of the tree, as a woman, rejoices that even plants and trees may attain salvation (Cf. **KAKITSUBATA**, p. 33).

**FUJI**—'wisteria'

The spirit of the flowers appears as a woman and dances.

**MUTSURA**—spirit of a maple

**NANIWA**—praise of the plum blossom

**O/MATSU**—divine spirit of an ancient pine

**SAIGYŌ SAKURA**—spirit of a cherry tree, as an old man (p. 87)

**UME**—spirit of plum blossoms

**YUGYŌ YANAGI**—spirit of willow tree, as an old man

**UKON**—goddess of cherry trees (p. 90)

## SOURCES

The KOJIKI and the NIHON SHOKI (*Chronicles of Japan*) supplied many myths and legends for Kami Noh (of Shinto gods).

The HEIKE MONOGATARI (*Tales of the Heike*) not only gave the plots for many Warrior Noh, but also served as the model for the literary style and language of this type of Noh. Other sources of stories of warriors include: GEMPEI SEISUIKI (The Genji and Heike Clans); GIKEIKI (Yoshitsune); and SOGA MONOGATARI (Soga Brothers).

The MANYŌSHŪ and the KOKINSHŪ, the great repositories of classical Japanese poetry, have greatly influenced the theme and content of Noh.

GENJI MONOGATARI (*Tale of Genji*), the classic novel of Japanese literature, gave Noh not only many characters, but also plots, descriptive passages, and an inexhaustible supply of quotations.

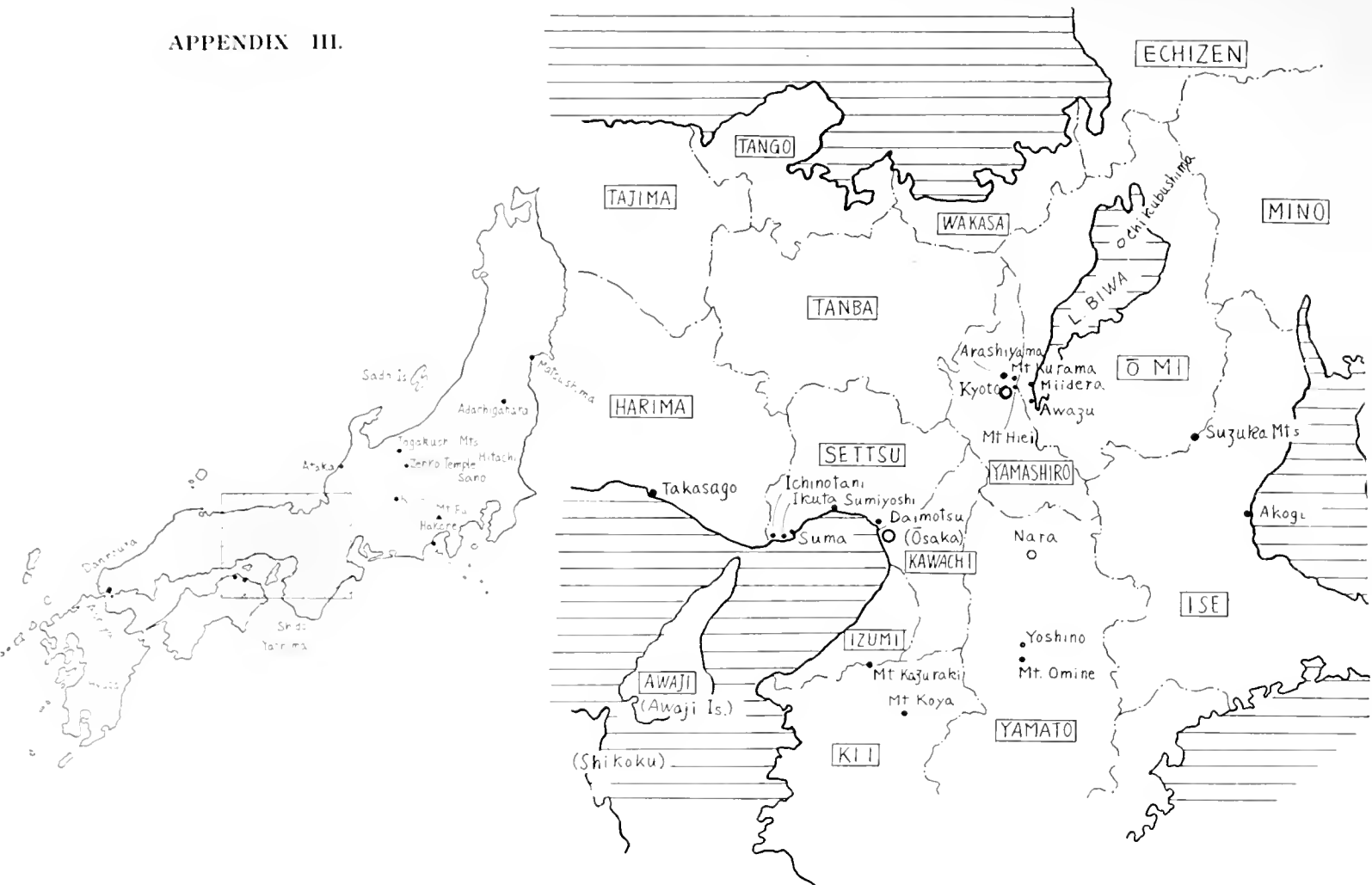
The ISE MONOGATARI (by Narihira) and the YAMATO MONOGATARI supply plots and poems for many Noh.

Legends from India, incidents and poetry from Chinese lore, as well as Japanese, are derived from a great many sources. Such references and allusions in Noh are legion.

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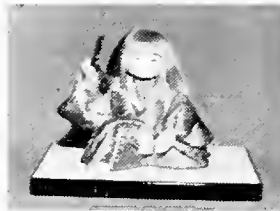
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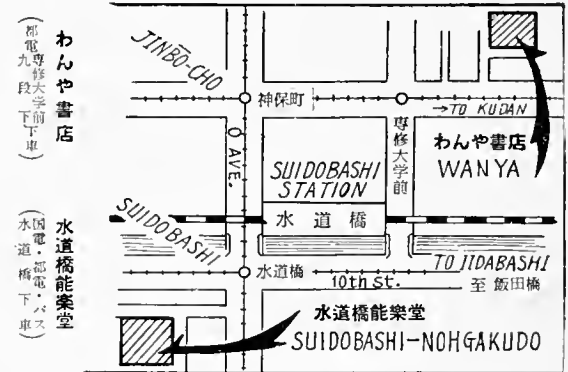
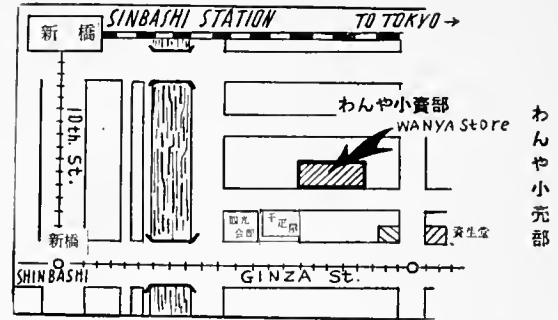
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