

Chikamatsu and the State in the Kyōhō Era: The Journey to *Kanhasshū Tsunagiūma*

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Explanatory Note

A conflation of puppeteering and chanted narrative (*jōruri*), the puppet theatre (*ningyō jōruri*) became established in the early 17th century and enjoyed a steady output of performances during Chikamatsu's time in Japan's three great centers of Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo. Playwright of the Edo period (1603-1867), Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724) initiated his training as a writer under Uji Kaganojō, the eminent *jōruri* chanter of Kyoto, and came to work, in addition, as a kabuki dramatist. In the second year of Hōei (1705), however, he became the exclusive playwright of the Takemoto-za theatre (the *ningyō jōruri* theatre founded by Takemoto Gidayū) in Dōtonbori, Osaka, and, by the time of his death in the ninth year of Kyōhō (1724), amassed an impressive corpus of works as a writer of solely *jōruri* plays. We will be taking his later works into consideration, particularly those historical pieces performed at the Takemoto-za during the Kyōhō era (1716-1736).

Today, *jōruri* plays are generally divided into two genres: Historical plays and domestic plays. Chikamatsu is known particularly for his pieces belonging to the later categorization, including his well-known *Sonezaki Shinjū* (*The Love Suicides at Sonezaki*). Interestingly, however, it is the historical plays that would comprise the majority of a day's program of performances. While domestic plays employed daily happenings of Edo-period city life in their plots, historical plays relied on pre-Edo history and traditions. This lends to the common belief that domestic plays are "modern" while historical pieces are "antiquated"; such a simple compartmentalization, however, is unsatisfactory. As contemporary content was grafted to a great extent into historical plays, Chikamatsu's contemporaries viewed the dramatic landscape unfolding therein as one overlapping with their own. In that regard, historical plays also entered the domain of modern pieces.

Even traditional Chikamatsu research has pointed out embellishments within his historical plays that are satirical of the contemporary political climate, a representative example being *Sagami Nyūdō Senbiki no Inu*, which is implicitly critical of the *Shōrui Awaremi no Rei* – Shōgun Tsunayoshi's infamous Laws of Compassion. Taking clues from Confucian scholar and politician Arai Hakuseki's *Shōtoku no Chi* political reforms, Chikamatsu introduces an evil-vanquishing dog named "Shiroishi," which, to a Japanese audience, would register as a clever alternative reading of the Chinese characters of Hakuseki's name.

Content critical of the contemporary administration in Chikamatsu's works begins to appear generally from the Shōtoku era (1711-1716). For the most part, however, research heretofore presented has considered this criticism only within the confines of a particular play. While taking our lead from past research, panning away from Chikamatsu's critiques of individual policies in order to adopt a more comprehensive vantage point of his Kyōhō era work will put into focus Chikamatsu's concern with State-level politics and the role of the administrator. We will then touch upon *Kanhasshū Tsunagiūma*, Chikamatsu's final work, which tells the story of Minamoto no Yorihiro, the youngest brother of Shōgun Minamoto no Raikō (Minamoto no Yorimitsu). Siding with an enemy of the Court, Yorihiro finds himself at odds with his elder brother. This unorthodox content has engendered manifold interpretations regarding the drama surrounding Yorihiro and has been discussed and treated from various perspectives in *Kabuki: Kenkyū to Hihyō* by Uchiyama Mikiko (Volume 8), Matsuzaki Hitoshi (Volume 19), and Hara Michio (Volume 23). Through an analysis of Chikamatsu's *jōruri* plays of the Kyōhō era, we will consider this final oeuvre within a new context in order to arrive at a revealing conclusion.

In this paper, I stress the importance of considering both the nature of the contemporary State and the corresponding public sentiment when discussing the period *jōruri* plays of Chikamatsu's later years and offer a new light in which to cast Chikamatsu research.

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Introduction¹

Examinations of the final work of Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724), *Kanhashshū Tsunagi-uma* (*Tethered Steed and the Eight Provinces of Kantō*; hereafter, *Tethered Steed*), performed New Years of Kyōhō 9 (1724), reveal more than just criticism of individual policies enacted by the contemporary political administration; rather, what we find is a grand indictment of the Kyōhō era (1716-1736) political system, itself. With the contradictions endemic to the more-than-one-hundred-year-old shogunate system having grown increasingly apparent, Chikamatsu tread beyond simply satirizing the Kyōhō Reforms of Shōgun Tokugawa Yoshimune and created a comprehensive polemic of the entire political system. In this paper I will uncover the journey of how Chikamatsu came to assume this type of political consciousness through an analysis of his later historical works.

Chapter 1

Chikamatsu employed an indirect method of critique by peppering his plays with aphorisms and anecdotes drawn from political thought circulating at the time. For example, in *Tethered Steed*, supporting character Watanabe no Tsuna, one of the four great generals under Minamoto no Yoritomo (the 10th century military leader, also frequently referred to as Minamoto no Raikō, whose exploits had since become legendary) provides an exposition on governance (i.e. political philosophy) that develops in the form of a rebuke given his peer Sakata no Kintoki:²

A smattering of knowledge impedes the true path. Governing a large country is as cooking a small fish. When cooking a small fish or carp, fiddling too much with it will cause its scales to slough off and its fins to crumble, and the fish will lose its shape. So is it with public government. The nature of an important government official's heart, if we may compare it to something closer to home, is as cleaning a tiered food box with a wooden pestle: If you clean in broad strokes, without reaching back into every nook and cranny, it will not break and the country will be at peace. This is the administration of a wise ruler. On the other hand, a foolish ruler tries to clean ever corner, down to the very last one. The box will break and the country will be in danger. As with mice in the house and robbers in the land, even if you cut down one or two hundred, it will lead to naught: More will sprout up. If you are benevolent within the country and on vigilant guard without, the country will naturally find itself at peace, without the need to resort to arms.

Shirakata Masaru has discussed this passage in relation to the Kyōhō Reforms and indicated that its content is critical of Shōgun Tokugawa Yoshimune's administration (1716-1745).³ *Tsuwamono Manzai* (*New Years' Entertainment on Warriors*), the first act of *Ōtō no Miya Asahi no Yoroi* (*The Prince of the Great Pagoda*; edited by Chikamatsu), which opened the year before *Tethered Steed*, likewise contains shrouded political criticism: "Kyoto is under the rule of the wanton Taira [family of nobles]. The rule of Kyoto is entrusted to the [warrior government of the] East. The imperial family is subjected to criticism, the nobles are persecuted, and the people live a life of difficulty. It is truly a sad state." This circulated throughout Kyoto in a pamphlet entitled *Chiryaku no Manzai* (*New Years' Entertainment of Brilliance*), but was met with an official order to cease printing.⁴ Taking these factors into consideration, we can appreciate that the inclusion of such sarcasm as found in Tsuna's exposition was predicated

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1. The present article was first published in *Edo Bungaku* (*Edo Literature*), No.30, Perikansha Publishing, June 20, 2004. The original title is 'Kyōhōki no Chikamatsu to Kokka.' For the convenience of English readers, the translated article was fully reviewed and necessary information about proper names, historical events, and Japanese titles was added.
 2. Quotations from Chikamatsu's jōruri are taken from *Chikamatsu Zenshū* (Iwanami Shoten). Cadence notations, however, have been omitted, *kana* amended to *kanji*, and *dakuten* diacritical marks affixed as appropriate. For ease of reading, this applies to excerpts from other works as well.
 3. Shirakata Masaru, '5: Kyōhō no Kaikaku to Chikamatsu,' Book 2 of *Chikamatsu Jōruri no Kenkyū* (Kazama shobō, 1993).
 4. Refer to Hino Tatsuo, 'Kinsei Bungaku ni Arawareta Ikkokuzō' in Volume 1 of *Nihon no Kinsei* (Chūō Kōronsha, 1991); and Uchiyama Mikiko, 'Kanhashshū Tsunagi-uma to Sono Shūhen,' *Kabuki: Kenkyū to Hihyō* 8, 1992.

on the political discontent of the people of the Kamigata, or Kyoto-Osaka, region, and achieved at the expense of the contemporary administration.

The above dialogue draws upon two metaphors. The first – “Governing a large country is as cooking a small fish” – comes from Chapter 60 of the ancient Chinese Taoist classic Lao Tzu’s *Tao Te Ching*, and likens a large country’s political administration to cooking a small fish, advising against fiddling too much with either. It is doubtful that Chikamatsu directly consulted the *Tao Te Ching* for this quote, however, rather relying on the more contemporary *Kunmō Kōji Yōgen* (printed in Genroku 7 [1694]), a collection of Chinese traditions, or some similar work. *Jinkunmon*, Book 2 of the *Kunmō Kōji Yōgen*, contains numerous aphorisms of instruction for rulers of men, including this saying by Lao Tzu, with accompanying commentary that reads quite similar to Chikamatsu’s passage: “Let it be likened to cooking a small fish. If you move it around excessively, it will fall apart and end up looking like rice porridge.”⁵

The second metaphor of the tiered box and pestle is based on the following anecdote concerning Doi Toshikatsu, a renowned *bakufu* (shogunate) official of the early 17th century:

A person newly appointed to an important position went to seek [Doi Toshikatsu’s] advice. “I have unexpectedly been placed in a position of great responsibility, yet I lack knowledge. In principal, with what mindset should I approach my duties?” To this inquiry, he responded, “Well, it really is nothing of significance. Think that you are rummaging a round wooden stick throughout a square box. If you get into every single corner, as with a round container, it will cause damage.”

(*Mado no Susami* [Window-Side Pastimes] by Matsuzaki Kanran)⁶

While Chikamatsu would not have relied directly on this essay for inspiration, as it was written at the beginning of the ninth month of Kyōhō 9 (1724), we can say with relative certainty that he came to know of the anecdote through some other source(s) and based Tsuna’s exposition upon it. In later years, Yosa Buson, the 18th century poet, would equip his literary arsenal with this metaphor, as well:

The parable of cleaning a tiered food box with a wooden pestle is an admonition against overly strict government. In anticipation of the springtime of the magnificent imperial reign:

Plum blossoms
Yet the cold remains
In the nooks and crannies⁷

It can thus be inferred that the anecdote had gained a fair level of currency.

At any rate, Chikamatsu has borrowed two metaphors similar in content to form the passage in question. We can intuit from his borrowing of sources extolling pertinent matters of governance in order to provide administrative guidance his concern with the very nature of the political administration as a whole, surpassing direct invectives against any particular, single policies. There are many passages in Chikamatsu’s Kyōhō-era works (between 1716 and his death in 1725), in addition to *Tethered Steed*, that rise above individual criticisms of specific administrative ills and allow us a glimpse of his concern with State-level politics and the role of the administrator. In this paper, I would like to consider anew Chikamatsu’s last work, *Tethered Steed*, after examining the characteristics of his Kyōhō-era *jōruri*.

5. Quotation from *Wasei Ruishoshū* in the *Edo Kaii Kisō Bungei Taikai* series (Kokusho Kankōkai).

6. Quotation from Volume 7 of *Onchi Sōsho* (Hakubunkan).

7. Quotation from Volume 1 of *Buson Zenshū* (Kōdansha).

Chapter 2

First, this section will delve into the pertinent thematic elements of Chikamatsu's Kyōhō-era *jōruri*. His Kyōhō-era historical works are noted for featuring what historians have dubbed a Japan-centered *ka-i* (lit., a “homeland-barbarian” dichotomy) consciousness.⁸ This refers to a Japanese center-periphery ideology, something of a co-opted Chinese ethnocentrism (in which China, the “Middle Kingdom,” resides in the center and all other lands are relegated to barbarian status on the peripheries) but with Japan, instead, positioned as the locus of civilization and history.

This *ka-i* consciousness is formed through a representation of the superiority of Japanese ethnicity and culture when compared to the values/morals of another country, although such comparisons relied exclusively on the author's imagination since the shogunate had proscribed almost all interaction between Japan and the outside world for the past century. Chikamatsu's *Kokusen'ya Kassen* (*The Battles of Coxinga*; Shōtoku 5 [1715]), exemplifies such historical plays involving (perceptions of) foreign cultures, as does *Honchō Sangokushi* (*Japan's History of the Three Kingdoms*; Kyōhō 4 [1719]), which deals with the timely subject of the upcoming (Korean) Joseon Dynasty mission to Japan.

Yet this is not to say that it was exclusively these works that formulated the Japan-centered *ka-i* consciousness; it is also evidenced in Chikamatsu's plays inspired by ancient Japanese lore, such as *Nippon Furisode no Hajimari* (*The Beginning of Long Sleeves in Japan*; Kyōhō 3 [1718]) and *Yamato Take no Mikoto Azuma Kagami* (*Yamato Takeru Mirror of the East*; Kyōhō 5 [1720]). In these plays, Chikamatsu updates a typical *ko-jōruri* (old- or proto-*jōruri*) literary device, the *yurai-bun* (passages in the narration that explain origins and history). The style employed in these works is to trace the origins (*yurai*) of the military government back to the mythological age of the gods (*kami*), and thereby extol the martial prestige (or “warrior spirit”) of the current regime.

For Chikamatsu, *Kokusen'ya Kassen* started the Kyōhō era with a bang, securing three years of acclaim, from the end of the Shōtoku era (1711-1716) to the beginning of Kyōhō 2 (1717). This work tells the story of Coxinga (Watōnai), a biracial with a Japanese mother and a disenfranchised vassal of the former Ming dynasty for a father, who strives to restore the fallen Ming dynasty in China. As the first work to ensconce its setting in a foreign country, particularly of interest is the depiction of “Japanese” characteristics and culture, brought about by the very nature of the story, in which Japan is placed in juxtaposition with a foreign land. To Chikamatsu's contemporaries, identifying “Japan” within the context of interaction with the foreign world must have felt novel. Represented here, however, is a China conceived from ignorance of things foreign, leaving nothing more than a reflection of contemporary Japan. This foreign element fails to cast “Japan” in any form of comparative relief, leaving readers with nothing but an indication of “Japan's” simple superiority over a foreign land.

For example, there is a scene in the third act where Coxinga's mother arrives at the Castle of Lions, and a group of ladies-in-waiting gather together and comment from afar on her unique Japanese hairstyle and clothing. Finally, one of them sighs, “If I had to be born a woman, I'd like to be born a Japanese one. And if you want to know why, it's because they say that Japan is the Land of Great Tranquility [the Chinese characters for “Yamato,” an alternate name for “Japan,” literally mean “Great Peace”]. How does that sound? Doesn't a gentle country sound like a lovely place for a woman?” This evokes agreement from the other ladies. Further along, the ladies-in-waiting and Kinshōjo (Coxinga's half-sister) are discussing the banquet to be thrown for Coxinga's mother and remark that she seems to want to eat rice balls rather than a luxurious feast of Chinese cuisine. This scene is predicated on the audience's absolute belief in Japan's inherent worth in order to tickle viewers through a display of Chinese peculiarity, including the humor of the Chinese ladies-in-waiting misunderstanding the word for a “rice ball” to mean a “sumo wrestler.” While the author and audience are afforded a chance through such scenes to recognize that every country boasts unique hairstyles, clothing, and food, it is evident that the work fails as a chance for them to objectively analyze their own country.

These absolute patriotic sentiments apply to the depiction of Coxinga, the Japan-born main character, as well. For example, in the “Tiger Hunt” scene at Senrigatake, his mother hands him a protective talisman and tells him, “You were born in the land of the gods and you are the recipient of your body from above. Do not put yourself up against

8. Refer to Asao Naohiro, ‘Sakokusei no Seiritsu’ in Volume 4 of *Kōza Nihonshi* (Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1970); and Arano Yasunori, *Kinsei Nihon to Higashi Ajia* (Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1988).

a beast in a battle of strength only to get hurt. Although Japan is far away, the gods dwell within you. This talisman from the shrine of the sun goddess, Amaterasu Ōmikami, by the Isuzu River is surely not without efficacy.” Face-to-face with a tiger, he holds out the charm and the tiger submits with its tail between its legs, no match against “the mysterious, supernatural power of the land of the gods.” Here, the superiority of the Japanese people is made manifest atop this recognition of Japan as a divine country. Further along, the scene in which a group of conquered Chinese soldiers’ hairstyles and names are changed to the Japanese style can be interpreted as an extension of this theme. This sense of superiority over foreign countries is by no means simply a reflection of Chikamatsu’s personal worldview, but rather a consciousness held across the Japanese social spectrum, from the ruling class down to the commoners. This is, in other words, none other than the aforementioned Japan-centered *ka-i* consciousness predicated on military might and a conception of national divinity (*shinkoku*).

The Edo period (1603-1867) witnessed an eclipsing of the trilateral Buddhist worldview dominant until the medieval period, which centered on India and perceived Japan as a distant, far-removed region, in favor of a worldview that held the respective cultural spheres of each of the three countries based on Shintō, Confucianism, and Buddhism as equal. Passages in Chikamatsu’s *Urashima Nendaiki* (*The Chronicle of Urashima*, Kyōhō 7 [1722]) such as “it will annihilate the people of Japan, dry up the well of Shintō, destroy the foreign religions of Confucianism and Buddhism, and each of the three countries will be plunged down into perdition” illuminate the reality that this train of thought had percolated down to the level of the common man by the time the playwright took up his pen. In addition to this ideological transformation, mid-17th century China witnessed a dynastic change from the Ming to the Qing (*ka-i hentai*), the very source of Chikamatsu’s *Kokusen’ya Kassen*, and an instance of outside rule (*i*) of the Chinese homeland (*ka*). Impacted by this neighborhood climate, Shintoists and military scholars began vigorously espousing the supremacy of Japan – the land of the gods – which had been brought under widespread peace through military force.⁹

The logic here, in other words, is that Japan, which was under the rule of warriors invoking an unbroken line of emperors for legitimation, is superior to China, which, being anemic literati, had been subjected to foreign rule. This consciousness is demonstrable in *Kokusen’ya Kassen* in such passages as “Kinshōjo’s eyes became darkly clouded. Weakness is the way of Chinese women. Neither Coxinga nor Ikkan shed a tear, as true Japanese warriors.” It was according to this worldview that Chikamatsu penned his works.

This is brought into focus all the more clearly when thought of in light of two plays staged in expectation of the Joseon Dynasty mission sent to Japan in Kyōhō 4 [1719] from Korea to congratulate Tokugawa Yoshimune on his accession to the position of shōgun: Chikamatsu’s *Honchō Sangokushi* and Ki no Kaion’s *Jingū Kōgō Sankan Zeme* (*Empress Jingu’s Expedition against the Three Kingdoms of Korea*). In the fifth act of *Honchō Sangokushi*, Mashi-ba Hisayoshi (a fictionalized name identified with the historical Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the military ruler of Japan preceding the Tokugawa shogunate), who had obtained a map of the Korean kingdom of Kōrai, “is victorious in battle upon foreign soil, and having received a promise sealed in blood from the king of Korea to follow Japan’s orders, returns to the capital, making the vassals carry the ears cut from enemy soldiers.” Once back in Japan, he constructs a Buddhist image of Vairocana for the repose of the deceased Harunaga (a fictionalized name identified with Hideyoshi’s predecessor, the historical Oda Nobunaga) and his son. For entertainment at the memorial service, he arranges to have a puppet play lauding his wartime victory (as a male version of Empress Jingū) performed in front of their resting place, which begins a play-within-a-play narrative device. Here we see the conflation of Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s late 16th century invasion of Korea and Empress Jingū’s legendary ancient conquest of the three Korean kingdoms of Shiragi, Kōkuri, and Kudara – a laudatory recount of Japan’s military prowess subjugating foreign powers.

It is clear that Kaion’s *Jingū Kōgō Sankan Zeme* was performed with the same aim as Chikamatsu’s *Honchō Sangokushi*, its content based upon a popular legend circulating from medieval times in which the victorious empress, upon returning to Japan after conquering Shiragi, carves a message into a rock with the nock of her bow: “The

9. Concerning divine-country ideology (*shinkoku*), see Tajiri Yūichirō, ‘Kinsei Nihon no Shinkoku-ron’ in *Seitō to Itan: Tennō, Ten, Kami* (Kadokawa Shoten, 1991); concerning the military-country ideology of military scholars, see Maeda Tsutomu, ‘Kinsei Nihon no Bukoku Kannen’ in *Nihon Shisōshi: Sono Fuhē to Tokushū* (Perikansha, 1997).

Shiragi king is our dog.”¹⁰ While the Joseon envoys were actually friendship ambassadors communing with a country on equal footing, the average Japanese and a majority of the literati viewed them as a mission bearing tribute. For a more recent example, *Chōsenjin Daigyōretsuki* (printed Enkyō 5 [1748]) begins with the following passage in its recount of the history of the Joseon envoys: “Joseon, having submitted to our court...” The orientation of the Japanese people is evident in this and subsequent passages harkening back to the Empress Jingū narrative and Hideoyshi’s invasion of Korea.¹¹ Alongside feelings of contempt or disdain for Korea, which was not counted amongst the main three countries considered as comprising the established world, contemporaries recalled a history that spoke of military subjugation and embraced a simple nationalism.

If viewed in light of these circumstances, *Nippon Furisode no Hajimari* and *Yamato Take no Mikoto Azuma Kagami*, Chikamatsu’s mythological plays performed around the same time, while not directly involving foreign countries, can be situated as belonging to the same development. Above, I mentioned that the Japan-centered *ka-i* ideology was predicated on military prowess and notions of national divinity. Maeda Tsutomu argues that it is the mythology of Japan’s ancient texts – the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* – which conflates these two elements, and introduces various post-Yoshikawa Shintō military-state theories that hold as their military symbol the Heavenly Jeweled Spear given the creator deities Izanagi and Izanami by the heavenly gods.¹² For example, Izawa Banryō’s *Shintō Amenonuhoko no Ki* (*Record of the Heavenly Jeweled Spear of Shintō*; printed in the third month of Kyōhō 5 [1720]) begins with, “For this country was founded on military might and the power of the Heavenly Jeweled Spear,” and explains that “the spear is, in other words, a sword,” which is a “manifestation of man’s tenacious will and fortitudinous courage.” He expounds on a State theory that holds the spear as its symbol of military prowess: “Out of all the various implements, they took a spear to raise the country and build their house. Therefore, for you born in this country, you must be aware of your need to especially emphasize the military arts.”¹³ Inevitable due to the nature of its content, it also contains the stories of Susanoo defeating Yamata no Orochi, the eight-headed and eight-tailed serpent of lore, with his Ten-Fists Sword, and the eastern conquest of Yamato Takeru with his Sword of the Gathering Clouds of Heaven (Grass-Cutting Sword). We cannot, therefore, consider Chikamatsu’s depictions during this period of the valor of Susanoo and Yamato Takeru, in his *Nippon Furisode no Hajimari* and *Yamato Take no Mikoto Azuma Kagami*, divorced from such ideology.

Of special interest here is the use of *yurai-bun* in both works. I have previously traced the development of the *yurai-bun* from *ko-jōruri* (old- or proto-*jōruri*) to Chikamatsu’s *jōruri* and discussed the way in which its characteristics evolved.¹⁴ I will recap my conclusions drawn elsewhere in brief below. In short, these *yurai-bun* were quite common in *ko-jōruri*, which treated such themes as *engi* (shrine and temple origins), *honji* (original Buddhist identities of Shintō deities), and *reigen* (miracles), but began to appear less and less frequently as *jōruri* earned a reputation as a theatrical art for the stage, until it became relegated to a position located at the close of an act in the *jōruri* of Chikamatsu and Kaganojō. This type of act’s-end *yurai-bun* served to guarantee the veracity of the ever-winding skein of fictitious elements within the play, similar in function to the last verse of a poem (*kekku*), which serves to bequeath information to the reader.

While I do not intend to amend this conclusion concerning the general evolution of the *yurai-bun*, there are certain examples that seem to contradict it, the most striking being *Nippon Furisode no Hajimari*. Throughout the text,

10. This phrasing is from *Kōeki Zokusetsuben* (printed in Shōtoku 5[1715]). This folktale is covered in some detail in Tsukamoto Akira’s ‘Jingū Kōgō Densetsu to Kindai Nihon no Chōsenkan,’ *Shirin*, 79-6, 1996.

11. See Ueda Masaaki, ‘Chōsen Tsūshinshi to Amenomori Hōshū,’ *Edo Jidai no Chōsen Tsūshinshi* (Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1979). The subtitle to the *Chōsenjin Daigyōretsuki* is Chōsenjin Raichō Monogatari. It was printed in Enkyō 5 (1748) and Hōreki 13 (1755) by Kyōto Kikuya Shichirōbei on the occasions of the Korean envoys’ visits to Japan. According to the *Kokusho Sōmokuoku* catalog, there is a Shōtoku 1 (1711) printing of *Chōsenjin Raichō Monogatari* in the Naikaku Bunko collection, but it remains unanalyzed. The Chōsenjin Daigyōretsuki copy from the Naikaku Bunko collection maintained at the National Institute of Japanese Literature in microfilm form is a manuscript copy of the Enkyō printed edition mentioned above. Quotation from the Enkyō 5 printed edition in the Kyoto University Library Collection.

12. See the work by Maeda mentioned in Note 9.

13. Quotation from Volume 3 of *Nihon Dōtoku Sōsho* (Kaihatsusha).

14. Kubori Hiroaki, ‘*Katari* no Henshitsu: Chikamatsu no Jōruri’ in *Kokugo Kokubun* 66-12, 1997.

and not limited to act's-end locations, are found numerous passages of origin and pedigree related to the Gion cult (the worship of Gozu Tennō and Susanoo) and Japanese customs, such as the origins of Gozu Tennō/Susanoo, Kasuga Daimyōjin, *shimenawa* (rope used to delineate sacred space in Shintō), Somin Shōrai amulets, *kettekiki* (a court robe with open sides), *waka* poetry, and *furisode* (long-sleeved kimono). What we find here, in other words, is a *yurai-bun* that is fundamentally identical in use to that of *ko-jōruri*; its appearance here is certainly not unrelated to the military-state ideology discussed above.

In *ko-jōruri*, for example, the chanter (*tayū*)'s account of the origins of those deities worshipped by the audience must have resonated palpably with them as a connection between the gods (the past) and themselves (the present), and identifying this connection must have been pleasing to the audience. This was indeed its original intent as a literary device. If we consider the *ko-jōruri*-style *yurai-bun* of *Nippon Furisode no Hajimari* in this light, we can infer that they were sprinkled throughout the text for the same intended effect. In other words, the audience descries in the bravery of Susanoo's subjugation of the "other" by dint of the majesty and virtue of the sword the origins of an Early Modern (17th century) military government capable of subjugating a foreign country by dint of military might. Surely the audience found a form of enjoyment in their identification of this connection between past and present, as supplied by the *yurai-bun*. And concerning the origins of those cultural elements discussed in connection with Susanoo, the identification of the origins of the mores and customs of a Japan superior to the outside world inside the landscape of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* mythologies would not have been unsatisfying to the audience. This is demonstrable in the following passage found in Book 3 of Shintoist Masuho Zankō's *Shintō Tebikigusa* (*A Shintō Primer*, printed in Kyōhō 4 [1719]):

Japan is a country that highly esteems pedigree and lineage. In such places as India and China, men of uncertain provenance are chosen as emperor. To prize the teachings of such a country is to return evil for good or pollute the source by tampering with the end; and that is, itself, ingratitude. The people of Japan revere the emperor as Amaterasu Ōmikami, the houses of the regents and advisers as the Kasuga deity, and the line of shōgun as the deity Hachiman The sight of hanging *shimenawa* for the purification of a house is not to be found in either China or India.¹⁵

While this Shintoist's ideology was not necessarily the contemporary norm, there were others who shared similar notions, which served to produce *yurai-bun* such as the following:

Indeed, it is quite the natural thing. For this Koyane no Shin to manifest himself as Kasuga Daimyōjin in the latter days, progenitor of the regents and advisers, the rulers of Japan's military and literary government (origin of Kasuga Daimyōjin).

The *shimenawa*, which imparts straightway the true path in perpetuity, has been mankind's law for many generations (origin of the *shimenawa*).

Broadly speaking, the evolution of the *yurai-bun* witnesses, as previously stated, an increase in the number of act's-end passages that serve as veracity guarantees. We sometimes find, however, as in the case of *Nippon Furisode no Hajimari*, the breed of *yurai-bun* similar to those found in *ko-jōruri* that are substantiated by beliefs, ideologies, or sympathies. For example, let us look at a *yurai-bun* from *Honchō Sangokushi*:

"This Hisayoshi [Hideyoshi] departs for the front. Victory in battle is without doubt, judging from the way I have taken up this Kōrai [Korean-style] tea cup and gulped it down in one swig. According to hearsay, Soshisen named his house after the rain, calling it 'The House that Delights in Rain.' Build a tea house here and name it 'His Lordship's Tea House.' Give tea to passing travelers, sharing the day's celebration with them for generations to come," he ordered. And to this day, this place is known as "His Lordship's Tea House," owing its name, it is said, to the festivities.

15. Quotation from *Kinsei Shintō-ron: Zenki Kokugaku* in the *Nihon Shisō Taikēi* series (Iwanami Shoten).

The cult of Hideyoshi and related partisan beliefs held by the common people materialize here as a correlate to Korean contempt.

Nippon Furisode no Hajimari, oriented towards passages of explanatory history and pedigree from the very nature of its title, was a *jōruri* play for “the people of Japan, to whom the old customs of the age of the gods have imparted blessings” (located in the first act’s prologue), to identify the origins of ancient traditions. Furthermore, the mythological age of the gods, in which Susanoo receives his famed sword and embarks to subjugate the barbarians, is, in other words, the source that legitimizes the Early Modern military government’s military power. Therefore, while it does not directly involve a foreign country, the work ends with a patriotic lauding of Japan’s influence, which extends even over foreign lands: “Our lord’s rule extends even over countries beyond the seas and the people are blessed with health and long life, and their tables are full with the five grains.”

The repeated sword motif in *Yamato Take no Mikoto Azuma Kagami*, which can be thought of as a continuance of *Nippon Furisode no Hajimari*, suggests that it was conceived within the same ideological context. At the end of the second act, the warrior Yaso Takeru, having been struck down by the prince’s Sword of Gathering Clouds, turns toward the prince and speaks his last words: “Praise be to the chief of Japan’s warriors, the guardian deity of brave warriors for generations to come. I, Takeru, before I pass, declare that you shall henceforth be known as Yamato Take.” The prince declines at first, but decides to take the name upon seeing Yaso Takeru’s valorous death as a “righteous warrior.” The second act closes with the following *yurai-bun*: “A paragon deity for virtuous warriors for generations to come. He thus took the name ‘Yamato Take’ from this time forth.” While this follows the *Kojiki-Nihon Shoki* mythologies, such phrases as “chief of Japan’s warriors” and “a paragon deity for virtuous warriors for generations to come” reveal an attempt to forge a link between the personage of Yamato Takeru (Yamato Take) and contemporary military affairs. Furthermore, the origin of the Grass Cutting Sword is revealed in the fifth act, which covers the Oshikuma punitive expedition. Following are the closing lines:

There are none that do not bend against its power – the Grass Cutting Sword that has been passed down. The people shall be blessed forever and ever with the five grains, not a wisp of cloud shall trail over the country, and the cloudless sword’s virtue and majesty shall be manifest.

Implied here is that the majesty of the sword, the military’s symbol, has maintained peace in the world of the contemporary spectators.

We can understand from the content of Hayashi Gahō’s *Nihon Hyakushō Denshō* (*Biographies of Japanese Generals*; postscript written in Meireki 1 [1655]), a collection of biographical traditions of Japanese military commanders, that contemporaries viewed Yamato Takeru as both a deity and a warrior leader. Buttressing *Yamato Take no Mikoto Azuma Kagami* was a belief system centered on Yamato Takeru’s military aspect.

We have identified within *Kokusen’ya Kassen*, *Honchō Sangokushi*, *Nippon Furisode no Hajimari*, and *Yamato Take no Mikoto Azuma Kagami* traces of the Japan-centered *ka-i* consciousness. However, this consciousness is not necessarily particular to Chikamatsu, but rather a reflection of the proto-nationalism that was emerging within the Japan of that time. In addition, we can infer that he fundamentally affirmed contemporary, samurai-ruled society.

Chapter 3

Kyōhō-era Chikamatsu was not, however, simply an apologist for Japanese nationalism. His historical plays of this period show an awareness of the contradictions of such an outlook. As indicated by past research,¹⁶ *Kokusen’ya Gonichi Kassen*, or *The Latter Days of Coxinga* (Kyōhō 2 [1717]; abbreviated below as “*Gonichi Kassen*”), performed as the sequel to *Kokusen’ya Kassen*, exhibits a relativistic value system critical of the Japan-centered pro-

16. Representative works include Matsumoto Shinpachirō, ‘Kokusen’ya Kassen: Sono Minzokukan ni tsuite’ in *Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei Geppō* 28 (August 1959); and Hara Michio, ‘Chikamatsu no Tai-Ikoku-Ishiki’ in *Kokubungaku: Kaishaku to Kyōzai no Kenkyū* 45-2, 2000.

tagonist Coxinga (Watōnai) and his brandishing of the Japanese Spirit.

As explained above, the epic drama *Kokusen'ya Kassen* recounts the biracial (Japanese and Chinese) Coxinga coming to the rescue of the Ming Dynasty, which was faced with the mortal peril of the Qin people from Manchuria. In this play, Coxinga's departure from Hirado beach (on Japan's southwest island of Kyushu) to China, is imbued with heroic stature akin to the legendary Empress Jingū who is said to have subdued the Korean peninsula: "it was as seeing the terrible spirit of Empress Jingū standing aboard her ship as she set off to conquer the three kingdoms of Korea." This image of the hero, however, is completely recast in *Gonichi Kassen*.

In the first act of *Gonichi Kassen*, Sekimonryū, a crafty retainer secretly in communion with the Tartars (from Manchuria), criticizes Coxinga for imposing Japanese elements upon the Ming court he has worked to restore:

If Coxinga was truly a loyal retainer, then he would conform the ancestral shrine rights, national government, and the ceremonies of the people to the ways of the Ming after subjugating the Tartars. Only then can he call this a restoration of imperial rule. He boasts of his strategies, proclaiming a victory for Japan, and has modeled his father Ikkan's mansion in their territory of Tōnei [Taiwan] on the style of a Japanese castle. He calls his China-born daughter, Kinsha, the descendant of a Japanese deity, and has transferred foreign and unknown deities, such as Amaterasu Ōmikami, Sumiyoshi, and Hachiman, to this land. He frivolously touts Japan's authority as the "country of the gods" and the "country of peace," whittles away the power of the Ming, and has broken the ancient understanding that China is China, Japan is Japan. Building the imperial palace in the Japanese style, like that picture yonder, forcing all those under heaven to worship Japan and making light of our emperor, scheming to place all the world under Japan's control – is this not the very definition of a disloyal traitor?

While Kanki, Coxinga's brother-in-law, is initially opposed to this Sekimonryū, who is in rivalry with Coxinga, he is silenced by this "argument of reason," finding it of "the utmost reason, unobjectionable." Overhearing their exchange, the emperor orders Kanki to approach Coxinga; in the subsequent scene at Coxinga's mansion, Kanki presses him to rectify his wholesale adoption of Japanese ways:

When conquering your enemies and ruling a country, the nature of peaceful governance is to revive that country's old customs and to culture the people in peace. You have reformed Ming customs, copied the Japanese imperial palace, and try to change the etiquette and manners of the people into the Japanese style – the people, therefore, tremble at Japan's military prowess and their hearts are never at rest. It is no wonder that they fear. Let us consider the familiar example of Korea: There was formerly in the land of Japan a man, similar to you, whose name was something like Hyōkichi. He worked his way up from a lowly grass cutter. He was gifted with both intelligence and bravery and won many battles for himself. Finding no equal then or in times past, he controlled all the provinces of Japan and rose to the rank of *Kanpaku*. At the peak of his great military exploits, he set his mind on conquering Korea and dispatched a host of several million men and an armada of several tens of thousands of warships. Crashing through the gales and rolling waves, they attacked the harbor at the bay of Busan. Fierce generals, such as Konishi something or another and the Demon of Katō, brought the Kōrai capital to its knees. They captured the Ryōtō prince, shaved off the ears of the heads they took, loaded them onto a large ship, and returned home triumphantly. They then built up a mound with the severed ears they had brought back – that today such a mound of ears still stands in the land of Japan is known even as far as China.

Unheeding of Kanki's plea, which draws heavily from a history of Korean invasion, Coxinga makes no attempt to listen to reason and withdraws to his territory of Tōnei, leaving the Ming capital of Nanjing behind. In the end, it comes to light that Sekimonryū's counsel was nothing more than calumny intended to remove Coxinga to allow him and the Tartars to bring about the fall of the Ming court. Coxinga is thus able to retain his honor. The fact that Kanki is swayed by Sekimonryū's criticism of Coxinga, however, leads us to interpret this criticism (spoken from the Ming perspective) and Kanki's subsequent opinion as not beyond the bounds of reason. As noted earlier, however, Chikamatsu continued

to produce works tethered to patriotic public opinion that affirmed the absolute value of “Japan” even after *Gonichi Kassen*. How are we, then, to reconcile this glimmer of relativism in this criticism of Coxinga?

Perhaps one answer can be found in the *Minshin Tōki* (*A Record of the Battles between the Ming and Qin*, published in the first year of Kanbun [1661]), a text Chikamatsu referred to when penning his work. The narrative device Chikamatsu employs in *Kokusen'ya Kassen* in which Coxinga changes the hairstyles and names of the captured Chinese soldiers to the Japanese style is believed to have been based upon scenes found in the *Minshin Tōki*: In 2:10-3:1, we read of Rōikkan readying some 1,000 “Japanese-style warriors” and having them fight with rifles in the Japanese manner;¹⁷ and in 3:5, we read of the Tartar assimilation policy of forced adherence to the queue, or ponytail, hairstyle. Chikamatsu thus certainly conceived of segments of his plot after reading such material. Concerning the latter of the two scenes, that the actions taken by Tartary were extremely burdensome to the Ming people is demonstrable in passages such as the following: “Moreover, making no distinction between warrior and commoner, they imposed their northern barbarian customs upon them, and shaved altogether the sides of their heads and their beards....”¹⁸ We can be most sure that Chikamatsu read the *Minshin Tōki* and was able to infer from such passages the sentiments of a people plied with foreign customs; Ming sentiments expressed in *Gonichi Kassen*, therefore, were greatly informed by this earlier work.

While Chikamatsu sympathizes with the struggles of a people unwillingly acculturized, it must be emphasized, however, that this does not elevate to the level of genuine cultural relativism. During the middle Edo period, a cultural relativism appreciative of the unique culture appropriate to each respective country sprouted in the minds of individuals in contact with consummately disparate elements from foreign lands – men such as Sugita Genpaku and Hiraga Gennai.¹⁹ In contraposition to this, Chikamatsu’s perspective is something else entirely: On the one hand, Kanki’s plea in *Gonichi Kassen* exemplifies sympathy felt for Korea, while, on the other, Hideyoshi’s military prowess during his invasion of Korea, as found in *Honchō Sangokushi* (printed two years later), is lauded in earnest. Certainly, objections are raised against the imposition of Japanese values in the speeches given by Sekimonryū and Kanki in *Gonichi Kassen*, and the logic espoused therein (i.e., “China is China; Japan is Japan.”) can be viewed as exemplifying a relativistic view of culture. However, Kanki’s admonition (“When conquering your enemies and ruling a country, the nature of peaceful governance is to revive that country’s old customs and to culture the people in peace.”) can actually be read as criticism of the nature of the political administration. The locus of Kanki’s criticism is therefore not so much in Coxinga’s “reforming [of] Ming customs,” but rather in allowing the people, whose “hearts are never at rest,” to “tremble at Japan’s military prowess”; in other words, the focus of the criticism is in Coxinga’s lack of consideration for the people.

Cultural relativity is therefore pursued to no great depth, the Japanese *ka-i* consciousness remaining at the forefront of Chikamatsu’s works. Meanwhile, Chikamatsu becomes increasingly aware of the deepening conflict formed by the interaction between the public-sphere *giri* (duty or obligation) of an actively coercive state on the one hand, and the private-sphere *giri* and *jō* (emotions or passions) of an individual’s value set on the other. Whereas before the Kyōhō era, Chikamatsu’s works contained criticisms of individual perceived social and political aberrations, in his final years, Chikamatsu cast doubt on the fundamental nature of the contemporary political system as a whole.”

The cultural relativism discernable in *Gonichi Kassen* is thus secondary: We can interpret this as embedded criticism against the uncompassionate nature of the State administration. These traces of criticism against Japanese coercion all but disappear after the second act, and to take their place in the central third act is the drama unfolding around Coxinga in Tōnei, where he finds himself, as a political administrator, placed in a dilemma over the treatment of his father, who has been charged as a criminal. The inhuman nature of the State is once again depicted, this time

17. The forced acculturation and inclusion into one’s own army of enemy soldiers can be found in, for example, the *Chōsen Seibatsuki* (printed in Manji 2 [1659]), which depicts Hideyoshi’s invasion of Korea: “Approximately half of the Japanese force is currently made up of people from Korea. The Japanese have made the laws much stricter so they cannot run away. In addition, the Japanese have shaved their hair so that they cannot return to their own camp.”

18. Quotation from the copy located in the Kyoto University Library Muroga Collection.

19. Refer to Hino Tatsuo, ‘Kinsei Bungakushi-ron’ in Volume 8 of *Iwanami Kōza: Nihon Bungakushi* (Iwanami Shoten, 1996); and Hino Tatsuo’s work mentioned in Note 4.

by pitting national law against filial piety.

In the third act of *Gonichi Kassen*, it becomes known that Rōikkan, Coxinga's father who has supposedly been procuring war funds from overseas Japan, has actually been stealing money that had been used by the Tartars to deceive and win over the people of Tōnei. This act's dramatic conflict is found in Coxinga's dilemma over how to handle his father, who has broken the law. The element of procuring money was based upon the very topical issue of Japanese money flooding outside its borders due to illegal trade and excessive imports (the *bakufu* enacted the *Kaihaku Goshi Shinrei*, regulations on Nagasaki's maritime trade, also known as the Shōtoku Shinrei, or New Shōtoku Act, in Shōtoku 5 [1715] in response to a report made by Arai Hakuseki,²⁰ a key player in the government who had been given his position based on intellectual and administrative talents). That Chikamatsu tailored the following line of dialogue into an admonition against taking Japanese money over to foreign soil suggests, at first glance, that he was in support of the *bakufu*'s policy:

“It wants for money, this island country. Although you cross over to Japan in order to raise campaign funds, how frightening the rebuke of heaven and the displeasure of the gods towards such an act as transferring even one ounce of this country's riches to a foreign land.”

Of note, however, is the mention, “how frightening . . . the displeasure of the gods . . .” Additionally, let us look at the following quote from *Shintō Tebikigusa*:

Nowadays, even when admiring old lacquerware pieces, it seems they do it according to the Chinese fashion. . . Rather, they hate the essential Japanese nature and esteem items brought over from China. Before long, they are making light of the gods of this country and have utterly forgotten to pursue our country's own unique culture. Owing to this, Japan's expenditures thus increase and illegal trade occurs.

Rather than support for the *bakufu*'s trade policy, what seems to be reflected here is a national-divinity discourse that extols absolute reverence for precious, domestic goods on the one hand, and the Japan-centered *ka-i* consciousness discussed in the previous section on the other; Chikamatsu does not seem to be taking particular issue with the trade policies. Rather, we can interpret Chikamatsu's focus as residing in his depiction of what sort of situation would arise in a confrontation between private-sphere *giri/jō* and filial piety and public-sphere *giri*, the latter exemplified by the State and national law.

This friction between public-sphere *giri* and private-sphere *giri/jō* is not an exaggerated discord or dilemma painted within the fictional landscape of *jōruri*, but rather the palpable dramatic expression of the fundamental contradiction inherent in the Early Modern *bakuhau* (the administrative system composed of the *bakufu* on top and the numerous *han* domains below) State. In actual society, while loyalty and filial piety were encouraged as a link in the samurai's education – exemplified by Article One of the *Buke Shohatto*, the fundamental legal codes governing the samurai aristocracy in the Edo period (quoted from its Tenna 3 [1683] proclamation, which is the basis for Kyōhō and subsequent iterations): “Encourage martial and literary pursuits, loyalty, and filial piety, and make straight all manners of etiquette” – the Bakufu was known to mete out punishment upon “loyal” men whose convictions ran counter to the interests of the State, as seen in the punishment of the Forty-Seven *Rōnin*, a famous band of samurai retainers who placed vengeance above obedience to the State in their 18th century vendetta. This contradiction was inherent in Early Modern samurai society and in the tenets of *bushidō*, commonly known as the “way of the warrior,” which prescribed samurai etiquette. Renowned contemporary political thinker Muro Kyūsō's *Meikun Kakun* (*House Precepts of a Wise Ruler*, printed in Shōtoku 5 [1715]), a favorite of Shōgun Tokugawa Yoshimune, we find advice on how to handle a situation in which the rebel acting contrary to national law belongs to one's own family. Excluding conditions of “treachery” or “national disturbances,” this is what he has to say about whether a child

20. Uchiyama Mikiko, ‘Kokusen’ya Kassen to Soga Kaikeizan’ in *Jōrurishi no Jūhasseiki* (Bensei Shuppan, 1989).

should reveal the crime of his father:

One must equally value one's duty to both master and father, and neither loyalty nor filial piety may be lacking. It is, depending on the time and circumstances, an issue a child must carefully consider. Nothing can be said unconditionally.²¹

He essentially suggests esteeming the decision made by the child when the time comes, and continues by addressing "samurai manners": He states the undesirability even to one's lord of the imposition of public-sphere *giri* at the expense of private-sphere *giri*, thus appearing to give precedence to the private sphere. On a similar note, Ogyū Sorai, a political thinker contemporaneous to Muro Kyūsō, in Book 4 of his *Seidan* (*Discourse on Government*) takes the opposite position by stressing the importance of the public sphere: "Generally speaking, private *giri* and public loyalty are disparate things. When ruling a country, there may be times where it stands to reason to dispatch private *giri*. In the event that it thoroughly contradicts public rule and will cause unwanted harm, however, private *giri* must be made to submit."²² Whichever the case, this contradictory discord between public and private was a very real issue facing contemporary warrior society – and one that Chikamatsu adopted as the main thrust of act three in his *Gonichi Kassen*.

Regarding the resolution of the public-private discord within this work, Coxinga finds himself in the unexpected position of being a political ruler, yet having to choose between adherence to national law (public-sphere *giri*) on the hand and remaining filial to his father (private-sphere *giri/jō*) on the other. He anguishes over whether to "turn his back on national law or turn his back on the path of a filial son"; yet, in the end, he dismisses the private sphere and decides that his only recourse is to condemn his father to death. When it comes down to the appointed hour, however, he crumbles into tears, unable to find a single solution to this dilemma. This inexorable situation is resolved not by dint of Coxinga's own strength, but by the suicide of his father, Rōikkan, who departs with these final words: "Raised in Japan, Coxinga is a general without room for personal matters or falsehoods in his administration. Let it be told." In the end, Coxinga's personal confliction never reaches a decisive conclusion, and the matter of how this public-private rivalry should be resolved by a ruler is reserved without open treatment. However, Chikamatsu has painted an image of weak humanity apprehended by *jō* through Coxinga's ordeal. This image of Coxinga differs greatly from the brave hero of the previous *Kokusen'ya Kassen*, which is perhaps one of the greatest contributing factors to the sequel's unpopularity. Chikamatsu must have felt a certain affinity with such a character teeming with humanity, unable to divorce himself from the element of *jō*.

While Coxinga overflows with emotion for his own flesh and blood, he displays mercilessness atop the stage of national administration: The forced acculturation of the Ming people. Surpassing individual "right and wrong," this is a symbolic expression of the inhuman nature inherent in a State or institution. This cold-heartedness serves to torture even the administrator, himself, in the third act through the sclerotic system of national law.

As discussed in the previous section, Chikamatsu was fundamentally supportive of the warrior administration. While he felt discontent with certain policies, we can understand from his various other works that this discontent did not equal a complete disavowal of samurai reign. Of course, this only applies in cases where the ruler esteems the will of the people; a ruler lacking this quality, even a hero symbolizing "Japanese" military prowess such as Coxinga, would be culpable of censor. Surely it was because the discord between public and private spheres and the relationship between the State and the people portrayed within the foreign landscape of *Gonichi Kassen* did not overlap flush with contemporary Japan that Chikamatsu was able to freely portray the nature of the State and the manner of a ruler.

Previous scholarship has discussed in detail criticisms of the contemporary administration present in many of his pre-Shōtoku-era (pre-1715) works.²³ However, what is depicted in these works is criticism against specific policy and social ills. In contraposition to this, *Gonichi Kassen*, Chikamatsu's first piece of the Kyōhō era, presents a somewhat different picture: In the first act, he depicts forced acculturation by an inhuman administration; in the third act, he reveals the

21. Quotation from *Kinsei Buke Shisō* (Iwanami Shoten) in the *Nihon Shisō Taikei* series.

22. Quotation from the Iwanami Bunko version of *Seidan* (Iwanami Shoten).

23. Uchiyama Mikiko, 'Kōkiden U no Ha no Ubuya no Haikei: Iwayuru Shōtoku no Chi' in *Jōrurishi no Jūhasseiki*.

manacles placed upon the statesman's execution of his own private-sphere *giri/jō* by a sclerotic State and legal system. It is in this point that we discover the work's landmark significance. Furthermore, we must not consider the context of the appearance of such a State or legal system within *jōruri* divorced from its temporal backdrop – a time in which the people had gained a recognition of the “Japanese” nation through contrast with the outside and this recognition had then been reflected in *jōruri*. It is certainly no chance coincidence that such a State or system of national law (public-sphere *giri*) that alienates or estranges its people makes its first appearance in the foreign-set *Gonichi Kassen*.

Interestingly, this theme of public-sphere *giri* appears once again in *Soga Kaikeizan* (*The Soga Vendetta*; Kyōhō 3 [1718]): Soga Gorō defies the “constitution of the land” (public-sphere *giri*) by undertaking a vendetta (private-sphere *giri*), and finds himself under the gavel of the ruler Minamoto no Yoritomo. Expanding on Hirata Sumiko's elucidation of Chikamatsu's Soga series' indebtedness to the Forty-Seven *Rōnin* incident,²⁴ we can view his *Soga Kaikeizan* – particularly the scene of judgment for Soga Gorō – as borrowing from this historical incident as well. Deviating from the actual punishment meted out by the *bakufu* upon the *rōnin*, however, Yoritomo, painted as the ideal and benevolent ruler, sympathizes with the Soga Brothers. While he still must sentence Gorō to death, Yoritomo, himself, ties the ropes as a symbol of his benevolence. This may very well be satire of the *bakufu*'s cold-hearted treatment of the apprehended *rōnin*. However, when approached in this manner, the inhumanity of public-sphere *giri* no longer becomes the central issue.

To begin with, in Chikamatsu's time, *jōruri* was a structurally secure dramatic art that required each play to conclude with a correlation of the public sphere with absolute good. For its stories, which develop and progress along pre-established and well-known rails, to home in on the inhumanity of the public sphere (i.e., the State and national law) was no simple task. As long as the public sphere found form in the State, as characterized by absolute “rightness,” any appeals of private-sphere *giri* or *jō* would be rejected forthwith. Hence, narratives in which the private realm is trampled underfoot or violated by the public sphere were not vigorously employed in Kyōhō-era works; rather, this dissatisfaction found indirect expression through multiplex of dramaturgy.

Chapter 4

While Chikamatsu's earlier works express public/private conflict indirectly, only his final work, *Tethered Steed*, contains an unequivocal representation of blatant confrontation between public and private spheres.²⁵ The plot unfolds against the backdrop of Japan's first warrior (*bushi*) rebellion against the ruling Kyoto aristocracy in the 10th century. After warrior leader Taira no Masakado is slain, the play follows his male heir, Taira no Yoshikado, and daughter, Kochō, as they attempt to dispatch their private sphere *giri* of avenging their father against the Minamoto no Yorimitsu-led public sphere. While their vendetta is branded as treason and Yoshikado faces annihilation as an enemy of the court, the actions taken by Yoshikado and Kochō are repeatedly depicted as predicated on their *giri* of vengeance. As this confrontation plays out, Minamoto no Yorimitsu's younger brother, Yorihiro, grows to sympathize with the sentiment behind the warrior's vengeance sought by Masakado's heirs and comes to turn his back on his brother's public regime, which refuses to acknowledge them as anything other than mere traitors. After siding with the rebellion, Yorihiro is ultimately rescued through the *giri*-inspired remonstrative suicide of his foster brother, Mita no Jirō Tomozuna. In this light, there is no doubt that Yorihiro's struggle to reconcile public logic with private values lies at the crux of Chikamatsu's drama.

The *giri* of vengeance is most evident in the scene during the second act where Kochō teeters between life and death: “To be branded a thief would be to disgrace my ancestors and defile my family's name . . .” This legitimization of her own actions is an attempt to expunge shame. Additional dramatizations can be interpreted along the same lines: (1) In the second act, Yorihiro, the youngest brother of Yorimitsu, declares he will join with the rebel Yoshikado and his “just cause”; and (2) in the fourth act, Yorimitsu praises Yoshikado, saying, “Your rebellion was for

24. Hirata Sumiko, ‘Chikamatsu Sogamono-kō: Futatsu no Katakiuchi,’ *Kabuki: Kenkyū to Hihyō* 19, 1997.

25. Regarding the following analysis of Kanhasshū Tsunagiama, I am greatly indebted to the following works: The Uchiyama work mentioned in Note 4; Matsuzaki Hitoshi, ‘Kanhasshū Tsunagiama-ron: Uchiyama Ronbun wo Megutte,’ *Kabuki: Kenkyū to Hihyō* 19, 1997; and Hara Michio, ‘Jō wo Meguru Dorama: Kanhasshū Tsunagiama no Baai,’ *Kabuki: Kenkyū to Hihyō* 23, 1999. As space prevents me from treating each work individually, however, I will provide a general overview.

the sake of cleansing your father's shame; how gentle and kind you are," and returns his father Masakado's tethered-steel banner.

Acts of vengeance had been institutionalized and vested with a form of legitimacy during the Edo period by the *bakufu*. This served to maintain the societal order built atop the feudal master-servant relationship, and even though the *bakufu* was the agent that institutionalized acts of vengeance, a vendetta could quite naturally stand at odds with the law of the State. The contradiction arising between both positions of public and private, discussed in the previous section, develops in full force within *Tethered Steed*.

This contradiction births an even graver situation in the drama surrounding Yorihiro, the work's central character. In the second act, Yorihiro joins sides with Yoshikado, who has taken his lover, Eika, hostage:

Ah, what choice do I have? Even if this Minamoto no Yorihiro becomes an enemy of the court and throws his life away, to let a woman I have taken along with me die would not be my shame alone, but would be a stain upon the name of my whole family, up to the line's progenitor, Rokusonnō.

Yorihiro thus forsakes his loyalty to the court (his public-sphere *giri*) and allies with court-enemy Yoshikado, valuing his pride as a shame-averse warrior²⁶ (his private *giri*). He subsequently engages Yorinobu's party in battle, as a member of Yoshikado's troupe, but is captured by his former vassal, Watanabe no Tsuna. Refusing to renege, he proclaims his adherence to his personal *giri*:

The Chinese character for "snow" can either be read "to cleanse" or "to purify." I may have had my swords ripped from my side and be an unarmed prisoner, abased beneath this snow of shame, but take heed! In the end, I shall "cleanse" my shame by accepting shame; I shall "purify" my infamous name by donning infamy!

Atop phrasing reminiscent of the of a classical Chinese idiom such as *kaikai no haji wo susugu* (*susugu* being written with the Chinese character for "snow"), a phrase that recalls ancient Chinese history and literally translates as "expunging the shame of Mt. Kaikei," Yorihiro thus pledges to dispatch his warrior duty and expunge his crime, even if he must become a prisoner for a time. At the close of the act, his behavior is praised: "Now, to draw the bowstring tight, and, now, to loosen it again – to be judicious is the essence of valor. How elegant the teachings of the bow and arrow, as passed down from old." We can infer that the author and his audience nodded their agreement with Yorihiro's attitude and sympathized with his sentiments, and it is here that we ascertain the predominance of the private sphere over the public.

Additional affirmation of such private-sphere *giri* can be found in the succeeding third act as well. Yorihiro has been placed in the custody of Mita no Jirō Tomozuna and awaits execution, as ordered by Yorimitsu. Having nursed Yorihiro alongside her own son, however, Tomozuna's mother disguises herself as an old man named Sasame no Shōni in order to gain access to Yorimitsu and entreat him personally. She criticizes Yorimitsu's public-sphere position that has no consideration for private-sphere concerns and asks him, "Can someone who hates his brother be called the mirror of the land? . . . If you cast off your blood ties, the natural order and way of things will crumble." Seeing that Yorimitsu remains unaffected, she makes one last effort by chiding his inhuman administration: "Hoist the gallows five, seven *shaku* high in the sky! Let all under heaven see the heart of a warrior with no room for personal concerns in his administration!"

In response to this petition, Yorimitsu grants his brother a seven-day period of grace until his execution, but Yorihiro remains unwilling to recant his allegiance to the enemies of the court, turning a deaf ear to the pleas of those around him, including his former wet nurse, Tomozuna's mother. She has interpreted his stubbornness as simply an aspect of his "obstinate" character, saying, "You never take back your words after you have spoken them, whether right or wrong." Yorihiro responds, however, with a series of metaphors expounding on the nature of a warrior's *giri*:

26. *Giri* is depicted in this fashion in Saikaku's *Buke Giri Monogatari*. See Hino Tatsuo, 'Saikaku no Giri,' *Ei Ningen Sanka* 4, 1974.

Sometimes a samurai must go against the Way in order to abide by it. For example, gold is the most precious of all treasures, but after climbing a tall mountain, throat parched and energy drained, not one thousand nor even ten thousand gold pieces can compare to a single cup of water. Furthermore, a brocade robe is a piece of clothing of utmost beauty. But under the scorching summer sun, a first-rate brocade robe cannot compare to the rough fabric of an unlined hemp robe. That is why the old poem, “There is a season for everything. In summer, a rough hemp garment is better than brocade,” is so pertinent to the life of a samurai. Instructed by the meaning of snow, I threw snow at my brother Yorinobu at the Battle of Ichiharano and pledged to “cleanse” my shame by accepting shame, to “purify” my infamous name by donning infamy. I cannot forget my pledge and relent quietly, for the pride of a warrior is that much stronger between brothers. Please understand my circumstances and do not consider my actions as simply stubborn.

Through a string of related metaphors, including a *waka* verse culled from poet Matsunaga Teitoku’s *Shōyūshū* (*Collected Ramblings*; printed in Enpō 5 [1677]), Yorihiro explicates the essence of a warrior: A warrior is not to be held captive to absolute criteria, but rather possess the capacity to make relative judgments based on his respective circumstances. By extension, this comes to mean that what is important is not selfless sacrifice to absolute public-sphere values, but rather conduct informed by one’s own devotion to private *giri*. The decisive change that occurs in Tomozuna’s mother in response to Yorihiro’s words should not be overlooked: She now praises Yorihiro as a “magnificent general.” Just as with the close of the second act, the audience acknowledges anew the legitimacy of Yorihiro’s position and his contention based on personal *giri*.

Alongside this acknowledgement of the private sphere’s predominance over the public, the conflict surrounding Yorihiro enters its denouement. His only recourse to escape capital punishment being to cut ties with the enemies of the court, he eventually decides to abandon his affiliation with Yoshikado. Yorihiro is dissuaded by the remonstrative suicide of his foster brother, Mita no Jirō Tomozuna, who repays, through death, a prior debt of kindness owed to his lord.

This debt of kindness brings readers back to an earlier scene. On the day of the ceremony to elect the new head of the Minamoto family, the lights are turned out so those present can vote with anonymity. Under the cover of darkness, Tomozuna attempts to accost Kochō, a lady-in-waiting, but she cuts the chin strap of his ceremonial cap in defense. If the lights were to be turned on and his misconduct discovered, he would lose face as a warrior. His lord, Yorihiro, however, is moved with pity and orders all warriors in attendance to cut the chin straps of their caps while the room remains dark, thus saving Tomozuna from embarrassment and disgrace.²⁷ Ever since, Tomozuna has been secretly biding his time until he can repay Yorihiro’s “august benevolence and kindness.” Before he can repay this debt, however, Yorihiro is charged an enemy of the court and sentenced to death. Hearing this, Tomozuna decides, as a final recourse, to remonstrate with his lord to cut ties with the court enemies by taking his own life.

Tomozuna’s remonstrative suicide is born of his gratitude for kindness received, and the sentiment serves to turn Yorihiro’s resolve from his adherence to private-sphere *giri*. Yorihiro, himself, admits, “Just now, Tomozuna’s compassionate remonstrations has changed this Yorihiro’s heart!” Yorihiro, who had hitherto esteemed private-sphere *giri* over public *giri* to the point of becoming an enemy of the court, is moved by Tomozuna’s *jō* and turns his allegiance from private-sphere *giri* to *jō*. Such an interpretation reveals that the salient theme of Yorihiro’s dramatic conflict within *Tethered Steed* is the predominance of *jō* over public-sphere *giri* through the agency of private-sphere *giri*.

Of course, no matter how much Yorihiro were to assert his private *giri* or how much Tomozuna’s mother were to appeal for compassionate treatment, the resolve of the public sphere, as headed by Yorimitsu, would remain unshaken, and a victory for the private sphere over the public would be unheard of. However, the lot of Yorimitsu, Yorinobu, and the four fierce generals (the *Shitennō*) who comprise the public sphere are thoroughly powerless to handle Yorihiro’s situation. Even in the face of Tomozuna’s mother’s sarcastic command to “let all under heaven see the heart of a warrior with no room for private concerns in his administration,” they are powerless to effect a solution. On the other hand, Tomozuna’s

27. Chikamatsu based this scene on the *Zetsuei no Kai* (“Cord-Cutting Gathering”) anecdote found in *Zeien* (*Shuo Yuan*). It is highly likely that he became familiar with this incident through *Hōgitei ni Ryōfu Chōzen ni Tawaburu* (*The Clandestine Meeting of Ryōfu and Chōzen at the Hōgitei*), Book 3 of *Tsūzoku Sangokushi*.

“compassionate remonstrance,” which, as Tomozuna himself admits, is for his country’s sake, proves effective in resolving the problem. Therefore, a phenomenon in which public-sphere *giri* is deconstructed by *jō* becomes manifest through the revelation that public-sphere *giri* is powerless in the face of *jō*’s consummate power.

Concerning Chikamatsu’s elucidation in this work of the superiority of private over public, it rewards notice that Itō Jinsai, a contemporary Confucian philosopher, was also developing his rhetoric of compassion, of “having sympathy for others,” as preeminent over public logic. There is clearly an overlap between Chikamatsu’s ideology and that of Jinsai, who directly challenged Neo-Confucianism (a prominent school of thought stemming from the 12th-century movement associated with Chinese philosopher Zhu Xi), a school of Confucianism, which was the official philosophy endorsed by the *Bakufu*. While it is unlikely that Chikamatsu read a work by Jinsai and was thereby affected directly, surely there is no doubt that, as a contemporary, Chikamatsu became indirectly indebted to Jinsai through one form or another. Chikamatsu’s value set clearly placed a premium on the consideration of others: He made a deliberate effort to place in the mouths of his characters expositions on the importance of showing compassion for their fellow man; and the recurrent use of the verb *omoiyaru* (to show compassion, to sympathize) in both its active and passive forms, both in lines of narrative and snippets of dialogue, suggest reciprocal acts of sympathy or compassion amongst characters. We can discern in the writings of Itō Jinsai traces of an ideology in accord with Chikamatsu’s thinking. In other words, while Neo-Confucian discourse espouses extending compassion to others with one’s own heart as a guide, Jinsai perceives this sentiment as intuitively based on calculating the heart of one’s fellow man.²⁸ Regarding this weight accorded sympathy extended to one’s fellow man, we can find here a harmony with Chikamatsu’s own position.

The following passage exemplifies Jinsai’s thoughts on the public sphere:

The public sphere calls what is proper “proper” and what is wrong “wrong,” without the faintest partiality. However, there is invariably harm when fulfilling one’s duty under a wholesale application of this sort, regardless of intimacy or distance. For a father will cover up for his son and a son for his father . . . But this cannot be called the “public sphere.” The Way, however, is found in the ultimate expression of humanity.

The Sayings of Sovereign Yao Number 20, *Rongo Kogi* (Old Interpretations of the Analects)²⁹

On this passage Miyake Masahiko has commented that Jinsai “claims that the Way is found in *ninjō* [human sentiments] predicated on private-sphere degrees of intimacy; in contrast to the principles for leading the *bakuhatsu* State, he has attempted to maintain normative rules for communal behavior characteristic of the commoner class.”³⁰ For Jinsai, who highly regards sympathy extended towards others, a public sphere that is applied without making allowance for exceptions and does not take private-sphere *ninjō* into consideration should be negated in this way. Surely this ideology accords with Chikamatsu’s.

Kyōhō-era Chikamatsu was aware by the time he penned *Gonichi Kassen* that the public-sphere State system marginalized the people. This awareness was surely birthed by the coercive pressure of Japan’s Early Modern *bakuhatsu* State and experienced a gradual process of deepening within Chikamatsu. Therefore, while, as mentioned earlier, outright treatment of the State’s mercilessness in his *jōruri* was difficult, his rebellion against the absolute public sphere took various indirect forms in his Kyōhō-era works. For example, we can understand his deconstruction of the fundamental period-piece *jōruri* framework of good-versus-evil as one such manifestation. As long as the Establishment was rendered as “absolute good,” its “good” or “evil” was not open to questioning, meaning that the only recourse was to relativize. The aggrandizement of the “rebel character” threatening the establishment may be said to belong to this same idea.³¹

28. This is indicated in Ōtani Masao, ‘Jo to Omoiyari to no Aida: Itō Jinsai no Gakumon, Sono Ittan’ in *Kokugo Kokubun* 48-3, 1979. Tanaka Michio responds to Ōtani’s work in Chapter 7 of *Shōfū Fukkō Undō to Buson* (Iwanami Shoten, 2000), indicating that this train of thought is developed even clearer in Hozumi Ikan’s *Keigaku Yōjisen*.

29. Quotation from a Shōtoku 2 printed edition in the Kyoto University Library Tanimura Collection.

30. Miyake Masahiko, ‘Kinsei Buke Dōtoku ni okeru Kōshi no Mondai,’ *Nihon Shisō Taikō Geppō* 44 (November), 1974.

31. Futagawa Kiyoshi, ‘Chikamatsu no Muhongeki ni okeru Muhonin no Henbō,’ *Kabuki: Kenkyū to Hiyō* 13, 1994.

Especially in his later years, we can perceive in the plots and expressions of his writings that he strongly felt such private-sphere circumscription from the public sphere. For example, there is a scene in the third act of *Urashima Nendaiki* (Kyōhō 7 [1722]) where Emperor Yūryaku has “a prison with walls 7-*shaku* [2-meter] across, pillars of oak, and crossbeams of iron” built in the palace for his own imprisonment as he takes upon himself the guilt of his mother-in-law; the jail, here, symbolizes the public sphere circumscribing man. At act’s end, a character betrays his *jō* and ties a just individual up with rope. The following scene is depicted with “rope” as a binding keyword:

He takes out the rope he had readied from his robe and begins to wind it. A rope for a husband and wife to bind themselves, the one tying the rope and the one being tied, both are tethered by a warrior’s *giri*. Without words, they dissolve into tears.

This expression is not an outright display of rebellion against the State system, but can rather be interpreted as having arisen from the stifling atmosphere of the time, which was produced by ever-tightening regulations that hindered the people’s free activity. Likewise, *Tethered Steed* is also clearly a product of the latter stages of these developments.

There are, of course, examples in Chikamatsu’s previous *jōruri* period plays of characters changing their circumstances for the better through compassionate acts, and there are examples of characters, similar to Yorihiro, whose actions are based upon an adherence to personal *giri*. There are no prior examples, however, of (1) private-sphere *giri/jō* being depicted as a force to stand up against the public sphere, or (2) the public sphere being overpowered by the private. In this regard, *Tethered Steed* is indeed a unique work.

We can spy in Chikamatsu an affinity to Jinsai’s perception that “the Way is found in the ultimate expression of humanity.” Furthermore, we can observe his agreement with Jinsai that within a State system without concern for *jō* (that which is to be most highly regarded) there is “harm in *giri*.” *Tethered Steed* is demonstrably Chikamatsu’s antithesis to such a State system (public-sphere *giri*). This is evident in the fact that Chikamatsu has positioned the *jō* element, that which eventually overpowers the public sphere, as originating in Yorihiro’s own compassion. Chikamatsu, in other words, is disavowing the inhuman administration of the public sphere, which has no regard for private concerns, and is affirming the affectionate administration of a ruler with a heart of compassion.

By extension, we can interpret the political exposition extolling benevolent rule delivered by Watanabe no Tsuna, introduced at the beginning of this paper, as predicated on this same ideology. The administration spoken of by Tsuna – that which is “benevolent within the country, and on vigilant guard without,” thus ensuring that “the country will naturally be at peace, without the need to resort to arms” – was perhaps the ideal Early Modern *bakuhon* State that Chikamatsu longed for.

Conclusion

After *Kokusen’ya Kassen*, there can be no doubt that Chikamatsu began to weave the State into his Kyōhō-era *jōruri*. Additionally, he gradually came to realize its coldhearted nature illuminated against the realities of Kyōhō-era Japan. Predicated upon the confrontation between public-sphere *giri* on the one hand and private-sphere *giri/jō* on the other, *Tethered Steed* is Chikamatsu’s antithetical exposition of a State willing to marginalize its people. Nestled inside dramatic conflict crafted with virtuoso skill is the expression of personal triumph over the public sphere. It is this unique quality that makes *Tethered Steed* deserving of recognition.

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