VISIONING ETERNITY

Aesthetics, Politics, and History in the Early Modern Noh Theater

THOMAS D. LOOSER

East Asia Program
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York 14853

The Cornell East Asia Series is published by the Cornell University East Asia Program (distinct from Cornell University Press). We publish affordably priced books on a variety of scholarly topics relating to East Asia as a service to the academic community and the general public. Standing orders, which provide for automatic notification and invoicing of each title in the series upon publication, are accepted.

If after review by internal and external readers a manuscript is accepted for publication, it is published on the basis of camera-ready copy provided by the volume author. Each author is thus responsible for any necessary copy-editing and for manuscript formatting. Address submission inquiries to CEAS Editorial Board, East Asia Program, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853-7601.

Number 138 in the Cornell East Asia Series
Copyright © 2008 by Thomas D. Looser. All rights reserved
ISSN 1050-2955
ISBN: 978-1-933947-08-2 hc
ISBN: 978-1-933947-38-9 pb
Library of Congress Control Number: 2008926177
Printed in the United States of America
24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 09 08   9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Map on 255: Permission for use graciously authorized by the artist, Hozumi Kazuo.
Rendered by Ariel Looser.
Cover design by Vivian St. George. Book layout and design by Andrea Rosenberg.

♾ The paper in this book meets the requirements for permanence of ISO 9706:1994.

CAUTION: Except for brief quotations in a review, no part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form without permission in writing from the author. Please address inquiries to Thomas D. Looser in care of the East Asia Program, Cornell University, 140 Uris Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853-7601.

To Andrea and Ariel

Contents

Acknowledgments / ix

Introduction / 1

1. Locating Tokugawa Power / 19
Origins 23
The Space of Tokugawa Noh 29
Placing Edo 30
Locality 37
The Place of Religion 42
Nikkō 43
The Institutional Structure of Tokugawa Noh 48
Noh Time 54
Edo Castle and the Dream of Nikkō 61

2. The Value of the Stage / 75
The Boundaries of the Shogun's Economy 80
The Space of Economy 80
Production: Exchange Without Value 82
Gifts and Governance 88
Rice, Money, and the General Equivalent 96
Noh: *The Reed Cutter* 101
Commerce, Capitalism, and Kabuki 103
Kabuki, and the Prostitute as Ghost 109
The Gift of Edo 113

3. Longing for the Death of Time: The Poetics of Tokugawa Noh / 121
The Noh: Contours of Staging and Narrative Form 127
Aesthetics of Deformation 152

4. Times and Visions of the Instant / 171
(Double) Layers of Time 171
Morphologies of Time: Change and Transformation 182
Speed, or "Making a Clock in Slow Motion" 198
Instants and Intensities 204
Vision: Specularity, Spectacle, and the Eyes of Money 221
Movement, Flows, and Capitals of Value 250

5. In the Event: The Kōka *Kanjin* Noh Performance of 1848 / 265
Context: Changing Economics 266
The Kōka Performance: Event of Repetition? 268
Context: Spaces and States of Enclosure 276
Negotiations 282

References / 297

Index / 307

Acknowledgments

This project has been with me for a very long time, and I have a world of people to thank. I have been uncommonly lucky in having exceptional people to work with throughout, and the names listed here are really indicators of whole communities of people who have been critically influential and supportive.

Nancy Munn helped give form to and lay out some of the most fundamental structuring of this project. Nancy has always had remarkable ability to see and understand the working of things even in areas entirely unfamiliar to her, and her advice was instrumental from the start; my great hope would be that some of her insight has somehow translated into my own scholarship, and into this book. Harry Harootunian's influence was as formative, not simply in connection with the specifics of early modern Japanese history, but more importantly in thinking through the critical questions to ask, in ways that would both open up the material and, ideally, the practice of social theory itself. Whether or not it is successfully reflected in this book, Harry has been a model of real scholarship for me. Norma Field, I think, knew far more about the material than she let on, but she imposed nothing on me; instead, she prodded me to think further about what I was doing, and the implications of what I was saying. She was a more than generous reader and advisor (once returning to me about 300 pages of manuscript, with comments on nearly every other page, just two days after receiving them). Tetsuo Najita gave me as hard a time as anybody, in the most effective and helpful ways. I remain truly grateful not only for his guidance but for his willingness to take me seriously from the start, and I still think about some of his comments—and still wish I had addressed some of them more adequately here. Marilyn Ivy has always seemed to understand what I was trying to say even when I was utterly inarticulate. She continues to be an ideal colleague to talk through ideas with, and she is one of those scholars whom I have in mind when writing, and is someone I would always hope to have read my work.

Susan Klein saw this through from beginning (we both attended some of the first noh plays I ever saw), until the end (providing one of the closest readings I was given of the final manuscript). She has been a most valued friend and colleague through all of it. Stefan Tanaka, too, provided an incisive and generous reading of the final manuscript. Mike Molasky kept me sane, encouraged, and clear-headed about everything, from directly practical concerns (how to write, how many chapters to have, how to look at housing mortgages), to knowing where to find the best sake and the best music. Everyone should have a friend like him. I will always miss the bar and coffee shop visits and periodic reading discussions I had with Bob Adams—along with being a very devoted student, he seemed to be able to create whole networks of friends in local communities wherever he was in Japan, and I was always glad to be included. Mike and Bob were part of a remarkable cohort from Chicago, which proved for me to be wonderfully productive. This included Noriko Aso, Mark Auslander, Alan Christy, Kevin Doak, Gerald Figal, Yoshikuni Igarashi, Tom LaMarre, Ellen Schattschneider, and Kentaro Tomio. It would be hard for me to imagine a better group.

At Waseda University, Professors Gotō Hajime and Torigoe Bunzō were both far more helpful and flexible than they needed to be. They allowed me freedom to work as I wished, while nonetheless offering advice, assistance, and structure. Yamaguchi Masao took me on even without formal affiliation, and provided me with work, travel companionship, and endless discussion about anthropology in Japan and in general.

Ochiai Noriko of the Edo Tokyo Museum in Tokyo, Hannah Seger at the University of Kansas Spencer Museum of Art, and Watanabe Yoriko of Hosei University's Nō Research Institute all were remarkably quick in helping me to secure rights for the use of images, and I am most grateful to these institutions for allowing me use of the images. At Cornell, I would like to thank Karen Brazell and her colleagues in Japanese studies, and Mai Shaikhanuar-Cota and everyone at CEAS for their help and patience, and their willingness to take this on.

Above all, I want to express my deep gratitude to all of my family. Because this is what I have chosen to do, they have helped me whenever I needed it, ignored me when I needed that, and supported and inspired me always. If there can be such a thing, for me, they are a true gift.

Research for this book has at different stages received very generous support from the Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation, Fulbright-Hays, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Introduction

As elsewhere in the world, 1848 was a time of some significance in Japan. The years leading up to 1848 had been chaotic: inflation and contradictions in economic policy coupled with ruinous crop failure caused by bad weather had led to bankruptcies of hereditary officials and widespread famine among the peasantry. Economic breakdown was accompanied by political unrest at almost all levels of Japanese society. The 1830s had already seen the greatest outpouring during the 250 years of Tokugawa rule of *ikki* protests and rebellions, some of which aimed at specific reforms, while others were more abstractly protesting the general order of things. Incidents such as the Shonai affair in 1840, in which the government ultimately had to back down from a leadership appointment for a domain that was hereditarily related to the Tokugawa leaders, made clear that the shogunate was increasingly unable to manipulate and control the larger political geography of the state.

State horizons were challenged from without, as well. By the 1840s, shogunal rulers had heard of the decisive military victory of the British over the Chinese in the opium war, and of the trade treaty imposed on the Chinese. In 1844 the king of the Netherlands wrote a letter to the shogun, warning him that Japan, too, was threatened, and asking to expand trade. In 1846, U.S. Captain James Biddle arrived with a similar request, as a precursor to the infamous black ships of Commodore Perry that would reach Japan in 1853. Historians continue to cite Perry's arrival as the event that "opened" Japan, first of all to increased trade with the West, but also by extension—in an incipient way—to the political, social, and cultural conditions of modernity.

In the midst of the crises in the 1840s, the shogunate took the remarkable step of sponsoring a public noh performance. The noh was the official

4

Times and Visions of the Instant

Performances such as the Kōka *kanjin* noh of 1848 were moments that mediated time, or temporalities. Thus the era name could be changed in the middle of 1848, after the *kanjin* noh performance of that year. As I began to indicate in the previous chapter, the orders of time being mediated were implicated in wide orientations of value, including economic value. Different ways of orienting the values that formed the basis of the state, and state power, were therefore at stake and at play in these noh performances. Time, however, took on a privileged role as an autonomous force and ground of action, just as vision gained new status as an independently dominant sense. Time as a ground of action, and vision as a means of relating to the world, were in fact related.

(Double) Layers of Time

Both the noh and kabuki can be thought of as fragmenting time, each in their own ways. Judging from theater poetics, one can look at Edo as an era composed of many times; this raises the question of how the different times related to each other. As outlined thus far, there were two different trajectories of value and of time, and therefore two different modes of relating to the past and two different modes of memory. One possibility—but by no means the only one—is that this would lead to the kind of "double consciousness" that Michael Rowlands describes, a feeling of the world as divided, with two separate images of the world coexisting, but in contest.[1]

The noh privileges the past. That is where the opening "travel scene" *(michiyuki)* generally points. And more specifically, the appearance of the

1. Rowlands, "Inconsistent Temporalities," in Daniel Miller, *Worlds Apart* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 37. Rowlands in fact makes an interesting claim for the interpenetration of inconsistent temporalities, but says this results simply in constraint.

Speed, or "Making a Clock in Slow Motion"

At the same time that the kabuki theater was preoccupied with change, it was also fascinated with speed. Changes generally had to be fast, or almost immediate. In the noh, from the start of the Edo era the shoguns carefully encouraged a radical slowdown in performance speed. Although no precise figures for performance time are knowable, the average number of plays given in a day's performance prior to the Edo period was seven, and some programs had as many as twenty plays. The shoguns then legislated the number initially at four, and since the overall day's performance time apparently remained the same, one can presume that under the Tokugawa shoguns' patronage, the noh slowed to almost half its previous speed. It continued to slow throughout the era, reaching something close to its present pace by the nineteenth century.[51]

Why? What importance could performance time have? In the quest for value, and for the embodiment of meaningful time, speed was as important an element as change.

When looked at in terms of speed, it would seem that kabuki and the noh are inarguably unlike each other. Kabuki's greatest enchantment with speed came at the same time that noh reached its final, ossified slowness (the early to mid-nineteenth century, the time of the Kōka performance), indicating the possibility of some kind of relation between the two.

In the Edo era, there were institutions of regular, measured and even technological time keeping. Temple bells had long been used as time keepers tolling the hours, and in the Edo period mechanical clocks also came into some popularity. These were not, though, the same as Western clocks. In the Edo period, a day was given twelve hours, with six hours each given to periods of lightness and darkness, regardless of season. This meant that nighttime hours were not precisely equal to daytime hours, and none of these remained consistent over the course of seasonal changes. Clocks were accordingly made that allowed for easy and constant adjustment. Time was hence not entirely defined in terms of technological measure—it was more to the contrary. Western clocks were well known, but considered remarkably complex and cumbersome—their inflexibility did not mesh well with Edo time—and they remained objects of exotica throughout the era.

51. Omote Akira, who has researched these figures as closely as any, states that the average time of a noh play in the Edo period was likely about 77 minutes while in the middle ages it was about 33 minutes (that is, more than twice as fast as in the Edo era). According to Omote, in the early Edo period the noh had reached about 66% of its modern rate of slowness, by the mid-Edo era about 70 to 80%, and by the nineteenth century, it approximated 95% the current rate of slowness. See Omote, *Nō kyōgen* I, 223–236.

In kabuki, nearly all the concepts of change and transformation are also connected to speed. *Hayagawari* ("quick change") was one of the generic terms for change in kabuki. There were numerous other words for change, all roughly similar, and in nearly all of them the point was for the change to be as fast as possible. Even the word *hikinuki*, which means simply to "pull out" the few strategically basted threads holding one costume together, so that another might be revealed underneath, was so closely associated with speed that it became a verb for "sudden change." Intricate sewing and stage technologies were also invented to enhance the appearance of speed. The idea of speed was as important as, and helped to define, the idea of "change."

Like the *hengemono* transformation dance pieces, this aesthetics of speed can be linked to the time of fashion and commodity capitalism. It is not necessarily just that either though, as Saikaku once again shows.

Saikaku's work on mercantile capitalism, *The Eternal Storehouse of Japan*, can also be looked at as a study on speed. The form itself—a series of very short stories within which one story will suddenly become another story, and so on, so that a number of stories may be told within the space of two pages—assumes a mode of reading that required readiness to make rapid connections between very quick shifts of plot and theme.[52] Speed is also part of the theme of the work, as in the story, "Making a Clock in Slow Motion."

In that story, time and qualities of time are clearly connected to methods of production, as the title itself announces. It begins with a description of the Chinese, a "self-composed" people, and the way they make clocks. Chinese people "spend their time strumming the *koto*, playing chess, making verses, and drinking wine. In autumn they stand by the sea admiring the moon, and in spring . . . they make trips to the mountains to view the wild apple in bloom." In this context, the story relates, the clock was invented. "Year after year a man thought about it, with mechanisms ticking by his side day and night, and when he left the task unfinished, his son took over. . . . At long last,

52. As one of Saikaku's translators puts it, Saikaku "does not labour his points . . . He proceeds rapidly from topic to topic, expecting his readers to follow as best they can—and if his readers were already schooled in the twists and turns of rapid *haikai* verse, they probably experienced little difficulty." Sargent, *The Japanese Family Storehouse*, 210. Most of the arts of the pleasure quarters incorporated some notion of speed. "Woe to the slow gesture," says Focillon in describing the painting style of the famous printmaker Hokusai (*Life of Forms*, 176). But Focillon attributes to this style the intrusion of accident—i.e., the appearance of true difference, and that is not the argument I am making here.

after three lifetimes, the invention was completed."[53] Thus, the time of clocks is here represented as following the slow cycles of nature. It follows the flow of the seasons, and is completed in three generations—three generations being considered a completed natural cycle. Hence the cycles of this time form a completed whole. It is also slow. The Japanese title uses the term *mawaridōki*, or "slow-turning," and this refers both to the speed of the clock and to the speed of its production. So, this clock time is a natural, cyclical, and slow time of closed reproduction.[54]

"But this," says Saikaku, "is hardly the way to make a successful living." He then goes on to describe an episode that focuses on finding a new mode of production in order to make a better living. A poor townsman of Nagasaki wishes to produce a Chinese confection, currently being imported at very high prices, but he cannot figure out how to make it, nor will the Chinese tell him their secret. At last, after much experimentation, he finds that the trick lies in how the sesame seeds are prepared. The process turns out to be simple and cheap, and because he can still sell at high prices, he quickly profits.

Others, however, quickly learn the process, so he does not sit still. He abandons the confectionery business, and opens a fancy goods store. Continuing thus to "exercise his gifts to good purpose," he makes a fortune, "all made within his own lifetime."

Saikaku thus shows the basic capitalist impetus toward ever-speedier change. Whoever comes up with a newer and cheaper production process will inevitably stay ahead, but he/she must then continue with these innovations, presumably at an ever-quicker pace. "Good opportunities seldom wait."[55] Further, time is now structured by ever-changing processes of production, rather than the cyclically closed time of an unchanging reproduction seen in the Chinese clock.

This new temporality of speed is therefore definitive of a new kind of "clock." Unlike the natural clock invented in China, this is a clock, and a time, that wants more ("only a fool would try to imitate the lackadaisical Chinese approach"—natural time is here almost parodied). In a way, speed seems to be part of an attempt to overcome natural time, and the almost endless waiting that that kind of time implies. In the time of speed, rather than wait the full duration of three generations, one can have one's own fortune

53. Sargent, ibid., 105.
54. *Mawaridōki* also was described by Saikaku as "not useful." See *Nippon Eitaigura*, 127, in *Teihon Saikaku Zenshu* vol. 7 (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1951).
55. Ibid., 105.

"within [one's] own lifetime." Speed, accordingly, is a means to timeliness—to living *in* a meaningful, and valuable, time.[56]

It is also evident that there are overtones of nationalism implied in the different qualities of time. Speed is a more productive kind of time, and the basis for the new, Japanese way of making a living and a clock. The closed cycles of nature are "slow," and Chinese (*Morokoshibito*, 唐土人), or at least foreign since "Chinese" in the Edo period could still be a generic designation for foreignness. The distinction between speed as Japanese versus slow cycles as an increasingly foreign time adds another layer to the contrast between kabuki and noh. The noh's temporality would presumably be increasingly alien.

Speed, too, then becomes an issue in the question of controlled circulation; shogunal control of circulation was not just a matter of maintaining spatial boundaries. For example, the shogun Tokugawa Tsunayoshi, himself given to great flaunting of luxury and a proponent of large public displays, especially of the noh, admonished against the "swift flow of seductive luxury."[57] The government advisor Ogyū Sorai saw this as part of the new conditions of "urgency,"[58] in which even the samurai class was increasingly caught up with the necessity to buy more, and buy more frequently. Sorai's critique of Edo life as being like "living in an inn" referred not only to the qualities of instability and transiency, but also of speed. Edo houses, he said, "true to the bustling fashion of the city," "are erected in great haste." This is in *Seidan*, a treatise on government; apparently for Sorai, good governmental form was defined in part in terms of the flows of time—a sort of economy of time. Sorai also criticized the ukiyo-e woodblock prints that were one of the better examples of the frenzied flows of fashion. Ukiyo-e, he said, which could be rapidly produced and distributed (more rapidly then even than moveable type), were not a proper method of printing, and to this he opposed as better the process of making rubbings from stone, which was a slow and painstaking process of taking rubbings from ancient stone markers.[59] Speed was thus a question of production and reproduction for Sorai, too, and he envisioned a method which appears to have come as close as pos-

56. Also, this is not just a spatialization of time, or the imposition of regularized technological measure, as is commonly described of the nineteenth-century time.
57. In Ikeuchi, NS I, pp. 27, 29.
58. In *Seidan*. See J.R. McEwan, transl., *The Political Writings of Ogyū Sorai* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 37–8.
59. Ibid., 47, 49.

sible to closed reproductions—prints based on unchanging originals, and made through material contact with the lettering or iconography of those originals.

That is one way of looking at where the noh fit in. The ritual cycles, the *jo-ha-kyū* principle that returns from speed to nontime, the ritual aim of completing an ancient material body—all were structures of unchanging natural flows of time and value. In these, as noted in Chapter 1, were said to be found "the sounds of Japanese nature," and "the sound of harmony in Japan." This "Japanese" order of time is clearly opposed to the time of Saikaku's "Japanese" clock.

Speed, for Saikaku and kabuki, was a means of not only approaching full value, but also of overcoming the slow and "useless" time of generational cycles. The noh's slowness was in these respects similar.[60] The painfully slow movement on stage in the noh, for instance, can be compared to the gestures and movements of the noh performances on the national level, in which the noh was used to create a mastery over time. Even *Sekidera*, which narrates the terrible loss of stable time, is comprised of the *shite* sitting motionless on stage almost until the end of the two-hour long play. There is thus no movement to temporalize time at all. Nor is there movement to create difference within space (spatial alteration), movement that might create some possibility of time, or of change, even within the realm of space. In this way the noh's motionless bodies create something like a mastery over time through the institution of a motionless space. This becomes the preferred aim, and the slow movements that do arise are in a sense only longings for, and reinforcements of, the value of that timeless space.[61]

Hence, as opposed to kabuki's speed as mastery and means to value, the noh controls time and approaches value through slowness and space. The result is that kabuki ends in a time without place—that is, without a single

60. There is no large vocabulary of "slowness" in the noh the way there is for speed in kabuki. In Zeami's treatises of the middle ages, the distinction is more a matter of the nontemporal "preface" of the *jo* level versus the "fast" tempo of the *kyū*. The focus on slowness is more a Tokugawa construct.

61. To say that the noh could thus control time through a kind of spatialization, or (lack of) movement, also assumes that space was already connected to time. One might read the noh as making this connection of space and time, only then to use space to control time. This same relation might of course also then invite movement and conquest *by* speed—as seems to be the case with kabuki's trajectory. On the baroque as an era which newly associates space with motion and time, see Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1961), 364.

place of stable value—and noh ends in a place without time. We are back to the simple opposition of fast change versus closed cycles.

However, the noh was not always only about slowness, or final fulfillment. Zeami privileged the final, "fast" (*kyū*) level over the return to the timeless *jo*. In terms of narrative progression, the most important moment was the almost instantaneous *ha*, or break, and it was the "woman" plays of interminable longing that were most important to nearly all audiences.

In kabuki, on the other hand, the critical scene in many plays was the *tachimawari* (立回り, fight) scene, which was staged as a dance in "slow motion." Although a form of slow-motion,[62] the *tachimawari* sequences were also dependent on a feeling of remarkable speed. The idea was to show the fast parries of a hero against attacks from one or more opponents. When there are a group of attackers, in the staging they approach the hero one by one not because they are stupid, but as a matter of motion. Breaking the fight sequence into a series of fights allows the audience to see the various moves against the various attackers that the hero would in real time be making all at once. It is in other words a very cinematic approach to motion and speed, both assuming a temporality of speed and assuming that time might be broken up into images, the better to understand and depict it.[63]

However, while the need to thus break up speed in order to really see it, taking the fastest moment and breaking it into a series of sequential movements, can be thought of as simply the slowing down and fragmenting of what is in reality an intensely fast and complete moment, nearly all other scenes of quick change lead to an openness and a lack of completion. Neither kabuki's urge for speed, nor the noh's drive for slow immobility generally had a complete endpoint, even though both seem to have desired a complete ending and resolution. Saikaku's story of the clock is unusual insofar as, in all three episodes that make up the story, people not only devise new methods that bring them riches and find these riches "within their lifetimes," but they also retire so that they *can* partake of these riches. This is Saikaku's one statement of the dream of speed—that there would be an endpoint that one could reach, within the span of one's own lifetime. Otherwise, the exhilaration

62. All *tachimawari* consisted of tightly choreographed movements, but not all were really played in slow motion.

63. See, for example, Stephen Kern's discussion of 1870s film pioneers and the cinematic attempts to capture speed and motion—in particular, E.J. Marey's "photography of time." In this case, it seems that it was the speedy temporalities of capitalism that set the conditions for cinema, rather than the technology of cinema creating a new vision of time.

from speed and change in kabuki, and the enchantment with slow immobility in the noh, both lead only to an endless seriality.

This confluence of the two problems of seriality explains the structure of another pleasure quarters work, by Ikku Jippensha. In *Shingaku tokei-sō* (心学時計草, *Thoughts on the Time/Clock of Shingaku),* Ikku tells a series of typical tales of a popular courtesan. But she is unusual in two ways: first, she brings in a clock (albeit the Japanese, adjustable kind) and allots all clients an identical amount of time, despite protestations from her employers that special patrons should continue to receive priority; and second, along with her pleasure quarters profession, she is also a leader of what was then something like a new religion—the religious-ethical system of *shingaku.* There is thus an overlap of the pleasure quarters and theology. Both the pleasure quarters and the divine, though, were beholden to the newly defined time of perpetual seriality (*mannen,* 万年 —perpetuity, which is the label then used for the time of Western clocks). This is also visible in the narrative form of the work. Although it is a typical series of fast-moving tales of the pleasure quarters, the work is at the same time framed in the preface as being of the "pillow-time of *Kantan.*" *Kantan* is one of the more messianic noh plays, and the tales hence include expressions of both pleasure quarters time and the godly time of the noh. These are all ordered by perpetual clock time, insofar as each section (there is one section per page) is, on the corner of each page, allotted an hour—Ikku drew a picture of the traditional sign of the hour on the corners of each page. Thus, in this work too there is a layering of different temporalities expressed as the time of Edo, and in this case, the overlap of noh time with pleasure quarters/kabuki speed meets under the sign of the serial clock.

It is the ghostliness of this seriality—the disembodied, devalued aspect of time, from the perspective of both times—that leads also to the appearance of death. Even the *tachimawari* was, as Brandon puts it, a "grotesquely beautiful dance of death."[64]

Instants and Intensities

One of the paradoxes of time in the Edo era is that from the perspective of both the noh and kabuki, the time of one's own activity, and one's own desire, tended to lead to the disembodiment of time—a time apart from one's own material being. This is not to say that people were no longer "in"

64. Brandon, Malm, and Shively, *Studies in Kabuki* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1978), 93.

time at all; just that time had a ghostliness to it. This led to a sort of crisis of the present, especially as a crisis of the time of "now," and to a desire for some other quality of time. Both the noh and kabuki privileged a moment of the instant—a point neither just spatial nor just temporal[65]—as an expression of this crisis and as a point of redemption, or a way out. Very much akin to discussions of postmodern time, these instants were described as times of intensity, moments of strong and even rapturous affect, but also in some cases as moments of death. These moments represent the possibility of fulfillment, of truly achieving a moment of value and of meaningful time, and so a fulfillment of the temporality that the initial desires and actions instituted. At the same time, however, these instants are moments that not only punctuate time, they also present the possibility of puncturing, or "tearing" (the noh's *ha*) the very structure of time and value of which they are a part. They therefore are tied to the problem of difference, to the appearance and experience of a truly constitutive present, and to the emergence of change (that is, change of a system, from within that system).

On the one hand, in the Edo period this was a theological problem. This can be seen in the example of *Kantan* used by Ikku as a reference to messianic time. In *Kantan,* this messianic time is beyond the epic longing for reunion with the past. Briefly, *Kantan* tells the story of a man in search of a "master," a person and place of true and eternal fulfillment, and initially he finds this fulfillment in all the epic ways we might expect. The man ("Rosei") at first finds himself in the wasting time of everyday life, not even seeking enlightenment: "I do not aspire to follow the Buddha, but instead only fritter my life away." Traveling, however, on his way to finally find a sage of truth, he stops at an inn where he is given the "Pillow of Kantan." This is a pillow from an immortal of long ago, upon which anyone who dozes will be awakened to "the truth of past and future."[66] In other words, this pillow is the object or souvenir that all noh plays seem to focus on, and in this case the pillow-object offers the possibility of uniting with the most eternal time of all—a time incorporating *all* time, past and future included.

Rosei then crosses the mountains, and finds Kantan (a village in China), "once simply a name," lying there before him. Here, the name, or sign, is materially fulfilled. Heaven has "vouchsafed" the "sacred dream"—the trans-

65. The instant need not be thought of as instantaneous time literally—it is the experience of an instant, an effect of time but a point outside of time, so that the effect of seeing a whole noh play (all two hours or so) might still be considered as the experience of an instant (as it often was).
66. Tyler, *Japanese Noh Dramas,* 135.

action is heavenly—and he has arrived. Once arrived, Rosei truly seems to be united with the place of truth and value and rule. He is astonished by a royal envoy who comes to tell him that for unknown reasons the king has decided to cede his throne to Rosei. Rosei will therefore himself sit on the seat of value, and he becomes King. He is brought to the Palace (the vocabulary here indicates an idealized seat of rule, at once as the Chinese emperor's throne, the Buddha Amida's Western Paradise, and the Tōri Heaven at the summit of Mt. Sumeru), which is a place of value in several ways: lords "pour in, bearing a thousand or a myriad of gems, treasures innumerable, as offerings." The mountains are of the purest silver and gold, surmounted by a sun of gold. It is also a place of eternal time and changelessness, a place where one finds the "Hall of Eternal Life," "before the Gate of Everlasting Youth, sun and moon barely move." To maintain this state, all Rosei needs to do is drink an elixir. This will keep the pure flows and clear circulations of eternity streaming along in their proper courses: "O pass the cup, I say, that clear, chrysanthemum waters speed on down the stream, till eager hands dart from sleeves gay with chrysanthemums to pick it up again . . . Never shall these blessed waters fail, flowing as the do from healing springs that yield all their bounty, without end. O how they gush forth, with might renewed! . . . as pleasure merges night into day. Happiness, delight, brilliant success: all these here attain their pinnacle."[67]

Rosei has reached that final point of eternal value, goodness, and truth for which most noh plays dream. The pillow really has embodied that wonderful past. This is good, but the play does not end there. The beauty of what Rosei sees is then expressed as the beauty of the changing seasons—cyclical, but in fact indicating the passing of time: "time passes and the years slip by . . . till fifty years of glory reach an end." Thus, time has passed, and even ended, but the ending is one of decay rather than fulfillment. The years "melt away to nothing." With this realization, Rosei does a curious thing for a noh play: he rushes with great speed to lie back down and place his head on the pillow of Kantan again. He then awakens to the realization that the entire fifty years of glory was nothing but a dream—an instant of sorts, "a dream that lasted the short while millet takes to cook upon a stove." At this point, the dream of epic value is a vain and fleeting one, and no great moment of meaningful enlightenment and eternity would seem possible. The pillow is little more than an everyday item.

67. Ibid., 137–139.

Yet at that same moment, Rosei comes to realize the whole point is that "all things are a dream while millet cooks"—that one should give up on all desires for "glory or great age." This itself *is* enlightenment, and so the pillow has been an effective embodiment of truth after all: "Now he understands: the sage he sought, bent on liberation, was this pillow . . . How great the gift it gave him at Kantan, where he has seen the world to be a dream, and finding his hopes met, now journeys home."[68] Rosei's journey for the point of truth has been completed, all in the instant of connecting his head with the pillow. But the truth is not in the epic value of eternal time, with its glorious wealth and immortal circulations. It is a second definition, both of the truth embodied in the pillow, and of the dream instant his connection with the pillow entailed, in this case phrased in roughly Buddhist terms, of a messianic moment of liberation and truth beyond all circulations of past and present, and beyond all desire entirely.

This is a generally religious solution to a theologically phrased problem of finding enlightenment. Nonetheless, although it leads to transcendence, it is in a sense a transcendence of life itself, and of time—a moment that gives up on and so is beyond even the theological image of the eternal heavenly castle. Accordingly, this kind of play privileges something like a form of death (as in the idea of death as beyond all circulation and exchange) as the real guarantee of truth. Here, we are at a moment after theology, in which death becomes the guarantee in place of a failed image of eternity. More simply, the problem of the instant in noh was connected to a crisis of time, value, and meaning after theology—in between a theological and a nontheological frame. This may be an overly general example, and the decrepitude of the aging woman in *Sekidera* is probably a more common expression of the noh's endings than the clear moment of revelation and resolution seen in *Kantan*. The point is that the noh had two different notions of the instant, and of the kind of interruption the instant constituted, just as it had two differing notions of the souvenir.

It is clear that kabuki's "capitalist" time emphasizes fast and even instantaneous change. But the noh, too, privileges the time of the instant. Both the effect of a full play and critical moments within a play—the *ha* of the *jo-ha-kyū*, and the *kusemai* dance in particular—were often described as instants. At a general level, privileging the time of the instant in itself has the potential of breaking up the continuous homogeneity and harmonious

68. Ibid., 141.

flows of an epic time, even allowing for multiple instants with no connection between them—a plurality of times, and possibly even different worlds. To the extent that this is so, there is a contradiction of qualities of time in the noh, being a more flowing, continuous, and unified type that is homogenous and all-embracing, and the other a time of singular and independent instants.

While this singular instant time is independent of a homogenous time of duration, it should be kept in mind that it might also be independent of the repetitive time of seriality. Though continuous, seriality may be a time of decay, as in *Sekidera* where history itself, as serial, is a time of disintegration.[69]

There are several terms for the "instant," and the effect of the instant, in the noh. First, one of the more obvious and critical points of the instant is the *ha*, the moment in a play which "breaks" or institutes time in the overall *jo-ha-kyū* sequence. At least at the ritual level, as for example in *Takasago*, the *ha* only opens the instant out into an eternal time and space. In *Takasago* at the *ha* (generally the point at which the *shite* makes his first appearance, opening the play into its possible relation with the past), the *shite* sings of the "stretching/spreading out of our thoughts/mind" (*Omoi o noburu*, 思を述ぶる). Just before that, the traveling priest has described the road of "the capital as it stretches far to its end," (*sue harubaru no miyakoji*, 末遙ばるの都路), and the many days they have traveled, and the many days until they reach the end (*ikuka kinuran atosue mo*, 幾日来ぬらん跡末も).[70] Thus this "instant" brings the play into an eternally "stretching out" space and time. Although the *ha* "tears" open time, it is an instant-time that in fact is eternal and all-encompassing, and identical in form to the ritual time of the narrative.

---

69. There is therefore a parallel of these conditions with the typical claims regarding what have been called postmodern times. In the latter, too, of course, the emphasis on the instant is connected with a weakening of historicity (part of which involves the emergence of the image itself apart from any referent, as the site of the real); and an empty repetitiveness of time, with no clear point of value to ground a more meaningful narrative of time, or to act as the ground from which to point to something different and better. In this context, the instant becomes a unique moment of feeling and emotion—intense but also strangely euphoric (it is not, in other words, necessarily the climactic moment of a narrative that has led to this point, or that will lead somewhere else from it). They are, then, moments that are often thought of in terms of the sublime—moments emerging out of a temporal shapelessness, and only possibly indicating a point of transcendence of that shapelessness, and so a point of difference, and a way out. Accordingly there is a theological element (or rather, the quandary of a world in between the theological and something else) in the postmodern instant.

70. *Yōkyokushū*, 220.

In the treatises of Zeami, the instant is also tied to the moment of coming-into-consciousness of the "highest level of the art" (this comes "instantly"—*oboezu ni*—"without [time for] knowing," or "instinctively"), and this highest level is therefore called an instant of sorts—*itten tsukitaru* (一点付きたる, a term difficult to translate; literally, something like, "the addition of a single point," or "marking" or "achieving a point").[71] In this case, the instant is described as a coming-into-consciousness in a theological sense: "It resembles the instant when a vague smile without self-awareness [appeared on the face of the Buddhist disciple Kasyapa]," [72] says Zeami, then also comparing it to the critical moment of the founding myth in which the sun goddess, Amaterasu, comes out of a cave in order to see her own face. This coming-into-consciousness is hence a fully transcendent moment: a "Feeling that Transcends Cognition." [73] As the highest level of the noh, it is also the true point of value: "Thus it is that the very highest of the nine levels of excellence . . . is assigned the characteristics/qualities of gold [*kinjō*, 金状]." Thus far, the instant primarily has to do with an eternity, in the sense of an expanded space, time, and consciousness, or an arrival at the time of true value, and although a "point," it is not a point of difference.

There are two additional things worth noting here about the instant from this eternal perspective. First, it is also an "interval," "when nothing happens." In this case Zeami uses *hima* (暇, now meaning "free time," in the sense of a time or moment in between required activities).[74] It is a time of "doing nothing," that "signifies that interval which exists between two physical actions." Here, too, we are confronted with a spatialized view of time, and one in which there is no motion which could temporalize things even in that realm of space. It is nonetheless not an empty time: for Zeami, it is a time of "concentration," in which an actor "binds together the moments before and after that instant when 'nothing happens.'"[75] This too thus points to an absolute concentration of all time and history into one eternity. All movements as well: "Such a process constitutes that inner force that can be termed 'connecting all the [physical] arts through one intensity of mind."[76] Second, the noh's ultimate eternal instant is the moment of real fulfillment that comes at the

---

71. "Shūgyoku tokka," in *Zeami Zenchiku*, 188.

72. *On the Art of the Noh*, 133 (Rimer and Yamazaki's translation of this passage is loose, at best, and I use it here selectively).

73. Ibid., 134.

74. "Kakyō," in *Zeami Zenchiku*, 100.

75. *On the Art of the Noh*, 97–97.

76. Ibid., 97.

end of the *jo-ha-kyū* sequence—the moment (*shunkan*, 瞬間 —an instant, or "blink") in which one "becomes" (*naru*)—as opposed to imitates (*monomane*, 物真似).[77]

All of this points to an emphasis on the instant, but only as an epiphanic point that condenses all of time and space into a single point, and so stretches into an eternity (thus, the noh was described as a "stage art of no blinking";[78] see the section on visuality, below). It is neither a point that breaks time into a repetitive series, nor a point of difference that might alter the smooth unity of a more homogenous eternity. It creates a "now" time of fulfillment and value, but only in an eternal and unchanging form.

That is not all there is to it with the noh's instant either, though. First, Zeami attaches at least some notion of difference to the final instant of fulfillment: "It is that instant of Fulfillment in an artistic work that gives the audience a sensation of novelty;" "The fulfillment of *jo*, *ha*, and *kyū* provides the spectators with the sense of novelty." However I think it would be misleading to carry this notion of newness and difference very far.[79]

Part of the problem with the eternal space-time presented by the noh's more ritual order is that precisely because it is all-encompassing (there is no outside, no beyond the borders), perspectival difference and "newness" is really impossible. Value here is pure and absolutist. Difference, in other words, cannot arise in a contestatory or oppositional form.[80] The same, however, might be said of the noh's time of ghostly and repetitive absence: in the separation from or absence of an absolute value, there is nothing to anchor an oppositional view for or against things, in time and space.[81] This is where

77. "Shūgyoku tokka," ibid., 190–191.

78. Certain actors in particular from the Hōshō school were renowned for appearing never to blink, even in roles that required them to sit on stage for hours. When asked how this was possible, one replied that they don't particularly think of not blinking, but that they had made this a practice of everyday life. See Ikeuchi, NS I, 170.

79. Furthermore, Rimer and Yamazaki's use of "novelty" is itself suspect. Generally they use novelty as a translation of *mezurashiki* (unique, rare), which fits, but in this case it is a translation of *omoshiroki*—more commonly translated as "fascination," and a term that by no means necessarily implies either newness or difference.

80. That seems to be part of the ideological effect of the two preferred concepts used to describe the aesthetic of the noh (*yūgen*, often simply glossed as "mystery," and *aware*—"sadness," "pathos," "beauty," "interest"). Both terms already had long histories as the expression of typically noble/imperial aesthetics. Both are so generic, and almost always described as transcendent and therefore not definable by any single idea or feeling, in such a way that they encompass nearly all aesthetic form. There is no clear boundary that says what they are not.

81. Again there is some parallel with so-called postmodern conditions (really an element of modernity), and the trap of being in between absolutism and the pure absence of fixed values.

the sublime enters, as a kind of intensity that emerges out of a perspectivalless world.

Zeami writes about the moments or instants of eternity in ways that lead to transcendence, but this is not always a transcendence of pure resolution and unity—these are moments that do not, in other words, always accord with a totally bounded space, time, and "mind" (*omou*) of eternity. Some of Zeami's writings resemble attempts in our own time to conceive of moments of desires and intensities which are bodily, and somehow pre-representational—"primordial," in Deleuze's words—and which therefore are potentially outside of any totalizing representational order (including of time or space). Certainly for Zeami, the experience of the instant was at very least pre-conscious.[82] In discussing that point in which the audience feels the highest level of "Peerless Charm," Zeami states, "it can be said that this moment of Fascination represents an instant sensation that occurs before the rise of any consciousness regarding that sensation, a Feeling that Transcends Cognition." He then goes on to give a further etymology of this "feeling," describing how the written character (*kan*, 感—"feeling," or "sensation") was written by excising the bottom section of the character (*kokoro*, which can mean heart, but in this case something more like mind or consciousness). This, he says, describes "an intensity of pure feeling that goes beyond the workings of the mind"; the response to a performance embodying this feeling "is such that there is no occasion for reflection," and "Such a state might be referred to as 'purity unmixed.'" It is therefore a preconscious, and pre-representational, point of intense feeling or sensation;[83] it also describes a temporal economics of purity, in which there is no gap between body and value.

These instants were described by Zeami as times of intensity, but if anything this quality of intensity becomes far more pronounced in the Edo era. The shortening of the texts, the elimination of "side" roles in favor of the focus on the *shite* alone, and the reduction of speed were all part of this increase in concentration and intensity.[84]

This intensity was associated in many ways with a general lack of respect for borders and frames—as much or more so than it was with a condensed but bordered moment of eternity. The end result of a play was supposed to

82. Though as Norma Field reminded me, it should be kept in mind that for Zeami, one could only reach this point through a tremendous emphasis on practice and craft.

83. See "Shūgyoku tokka," ibid., 188, and *The Art of the Noh*, 133; as well as "Kakyō," 95–96, and *The Art of the Noh*, 91.

84. See Yokota-Murakami, ibid., 261, 269, 271 passim.

leave one in a sort of intoxication. The final, *kyū* level, too, it should be remembered was the stage of "madness." Another term used to describe the final point at which one was left was *yūkyō* (幽境)—generally meaning solitude, but more literally, "on the border line of indistinctness/vagueness;" yū is also the character used for *yūrei*, or ghosts. As B. L. Suzuki says, the aim was "to play as far as madness, an ecstasy in which the self is forgotten."[85] In these cases, the instant entails far more of the attributes of deformation than of eternal stability.

The same might be said of the *kusemai*, the critical dance scene at the end of the central *ha* level, in which a character's "true" identity is finally revealed. The *kusemai* was a popular dance mode brought in from outside the noh and, as its name indicates, it was thought of as an "unconventional" set of dance types. Furthermore, when performed, Zeami and others of his time stress that both melody and words should be "slurred and altered."[86] Thus at the critical moment of revelation, both temporal structure and meaning *do* have some form of difference interjected, or at very least their frames of continuity are "twisted" (*kuse*, 曲). The sharp but meaningless cries the chorus utters periodically, too, are often described as emotive interruptions in the otherwise smooth flow of meaningful time. They were part of a "crisis of feeling;" they were "disconcerting," and involved a "quickening of emotion."[87]

There are many such examples. The most important point is that the last and preeminent instant of "fulfillment" in the noh, for actor and audience, was described as the "borderline of astonishment" (*odorokikasu sakai*, 驚きかす境).[88] This moment of astonishment is, as described above, tied *not* to the "straightforward" style of the *shūgen* god-play style, but instead to the chaotic form of *ran-i* or *rangyoku*; this point of chaotic astonishment is the moment of transcendence, not the ritual-style return to the godly state of unity. It may also be relevant to remember that although the more epic ritual play *Takasago* was of course given eminence in specifically ritual situations, *Sekidera*, with all of its terrible bodily withering, and its longing for death,

85. B. L. Suzuki, *Nohgaku* (London: John Murray, 1932), 34.
86. *On the Art of the Noh*, 196–197.
87. B. L. Suzuki, ibid., 26. As Benjamin put it, in such moments "the contrast between sound and signification remains something ghostly and terrible." In Tiedemann and Schweppenhauser, eds., *Gesammelte Schriften* II, 1 (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1972), 139. Translation from *Baroque Reason*, 71.
88. "Shūgyoku Tokka," 188.

was considered the hardest to do and accorded the highest rank. Furthermore although *Takasago*, as a god play, might be expected to be slow, in its Edo-era form *Sekidera* was far more extreme insofar as the *shite* remains entirely motionless until nearly the end—it was also therefore considered more "intense."

There is accordingly this other side to the instant, just as there are two sides to the noh's emblem-souvenir. In a way, at least in terms of time, the instant is all that a noh play is. It is a dream-instant that one then wakes from, and the question (as posed in *Kantan*) is simply, what are the effects of that instant? What kind of time did it institute, and what kind of time does one therefore wake into? The noh, furthermore, poses two possibilities with regard to the form of its time. First, it represents a time-space of infinitude—bordered, but the borders are forever stretching out, so that one is totally caught within this eternity. It is a state at once of pure immanence and pure transcendence, so there is no possibility of any position of difference. Yet secondly, this eternity is revealed as impossible, and the time of experience is consequently an endlessness of a different sort—an empty seriality that can only view the time of value from a distanced spectatorial position. Again, difference, or involvement in a truly constitutive, participatory time, is impossible. From either side there is no real way of redirecting the flow of time. The intense instant is the alternative to these times, offering the chance of entering active and embodied time.

Difference, in this context, cannot be a function of direct, contestatory opposition. It is more a matter of radical, chaotic deformation, or at most, of opposition in the sense of using the instant to interrupt the supposedly boundless flow of epic time. This opposes the time of the independent unit to the time of homogenous continuity, thereby creating a different form of time. Also, the instant—even when described as a time of immediacy and direct emotion—is not necessarily a point in which all the "true" contingencies of the present intrude; difference, that is to say, is not necessarily a question of the enlightenment of the present. From this perspective, eschatological times that focus on death (as in Sekidera's desperation for a final death), even when messianic, can be as disruptive of claims for eternity as might a more secular form of serial time.[89] In any event, the fascination with the instant in Edo-era noh, along with the increasing focus on intensity

89. Another way of looking at this would be to say that the immediacy an instant of "death" brings is also an eruption of "nowness"—a meaningful interruption—and so the problem of now-time is not necessarily precisely the same thing as the insertion of present-time.

and immobility, was both a symptom of the period's eternal times, and one of the only possible alternatives.

The flows and conditions of time in capitalism and kabuki were different from the noh. One might assume for example that where kabuki did give precedence to instants, this might indicate the presence of mercantile temporalities—the need to break down homogenous flows of time into independent units, for example, so that they could be brought into a rational system of measure. One might also look at the brief popularity of kabuki actors acting in a mechanical style, like puppets, as expressive of the increasing technologizing of and mechanization of the body and of time (as well as being a method of trying to regain popularity from the puppet theater, as it more immediately was). Even if kabuki's temporality was defined more by the conditions of capitalism, I have argued that between the forms of noh and kabuki—in their effects—there are meeting points. This commonality is evident in kabuki's temporality, too. The concern with the instant, the increasing limitation of experience to elements split off from the whole, and a turn to the intensity of the body, was still more evident in Edo kabuki than in the noh. I summarize only a few salient points here.

As mentioned above, the quick changes of "transformation" plays were considered to be instantaneous. These, though, while at first sight appearing to truly emphasize a time only of the instant, end up as a repetitive series, a kind of seriality which itself seems to beg for a moment of more meaningful time—a way out of the repetition that would more truly change the continuity of this repetitive time. Within the structure of kabuki's narratives, the most obvious example of this second kind of instant is probably the *mie* (見得, 見栄, or 見え)— a frozen pose of fierce, concentrated, but silent expression that periodically halts a play's progression for several seconds.

One of the more important moments of a *mie* was as the culmination of the *tachimawari* fight scenes described above (scenes of great speed, but which entailed sequential, slow, and even flowing dance-like movements). There were eventually a great variety of types of *mie* developed, but in general, they were used to "capture the moment;" "like a visual exclamation point [the] *mie* momentarily halts the action of the play and intensifies its emotion."[90] The *mie* accordingly is both a climactic moment within the narrative, and a point of intensity independent of narrative time.

90. James Brandon et al., *Studies in Kabuki* (Hawaii; University of Hawaii Press, 1978), 86, 84.

Depending on how it is written, *mie* would literally mean "seeing profit/advantage" (the second written character of the compound, *e* or *toku*, generally refers to capitalistic profit). One could infer from this unlikely choice of characters—though this etymology has to be taken as more playful than certain—that the moment of the *mie* is somehow like the capitalist seeing, or realization, of profit—a single point of stasis and enjoyment in an otherwise continuing movement of capital's time. This would imply that the *mie* is no more than a fleeting interruption, and part of ongoing time—much the same way that capitalist profits are no more than brief, at times intense moments that give rhythm to the otherwise ongoing flows of capital reinvestment. In this case the instant always contains within it a view toward the ongoing future.

Also, the *mie* could come at any time in a play; it did not act as a final point of conclusion, or resolution. In contrast to the importance of a *mie*, the play's conclusion was almost insignificant. Consequently the overall temporal form of a play depended less on a clear final endpoint, and it consisted more of a series of relatively random but intense moments.

This kind of time is atomistic more than flowing. As Brandon says of the dance form, "while the word 'dance' suggests in the West a fluid, continuous movement, Japanese kabuki dance leads from one dramatic posture to another"; "the kabuki play is more a series of striking climactic images [*mie*] as the actor holds a pose to show an intense emotion, rolling his head . . . grimacing, flinging out his arms and legs"; "All sense of motion is eroded as the static figure is caught . . ."[91] On the one hand, these are almost like the eternal instants of the noh: complete unto themselves, they capture the full meaning of the characters and the plays within themselves. Yet they are viewed as part of a series, and so form a serial temporality. As long as it forms a repetitive series, atomistic time in this way is just as homogenizing as the continuous flow of a unified narrative.

At the same time, though, as the most important moment of a play, the *mie* privileges a time outside of ongoing temporalities. These are the moments of greatest affect and greatest intensity (and the better the actor, it was said, the longer he could hold these poses of pure intensity in absolute stillness). They are like the "punctum," or puncturing of time, to use the analogy that Martin Jay describes (in his case, though, for haiku—Jay is also referring to Barthes' notion of the photograph): "Like a Japanese haiku, the

91. *Studies in Kabuki*, 45–46.

'punctum' could produce a higher order of emotional intensity. . . . [It has] the ability to take the viewer out of the frame into a 'blind field' charged with the desire of the unseen . . ."[92]

Especially later in the Edo era the *mie* was also associated with death, and in this association the *mie* instant becomes increasingly independent of any kind of continuity, seriality included. It punctuates the *tachimawari* fight dances mentioned earlier. These dances, consummate moments of death, were of an intensity and a speed that itself seemed to "capture" motion and thereby in a way end ongoing time.[93] The dances were also known as *tate*, and the character compound for this means "battle array of murder/butchery." This referred to the content, of course, since the dances were scenes of numerous killings, but the thematization of speed and death also appears to indicate the wish for a more final moment of complete ending.[94]

More telling is the way that these *mie*, as moments of frozen motion, were then circulated beyond the pleasure quarters in the form of ukiyo-e prints. The *mie* which arrested the action on stage were themselves captured as images on prints; these *mie*-prints of famous actors were then widely circulated as mementos of those supreme moments of onstage intensity. The print in this case, even while focusing on a unique and discrete time of stasis, becomes part of an ongoing (and consumer capitalist) flow of exchange time. Thus while the images of these moments of singular intensity increasingly gain wider penetration of everyday time, they are nonetheless integrated into a capitalist order of repetition.

However, at the same time that kabuki's absorption in speed, torture, and death grew, a new kind of actor print became even more popular. These

92. Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 453.
(In psychoanalytic terms, the punctum is like Lacan's *tuché*—the return of a traumatic encounter with the real, that has the power to pierce a symbolic structure of repetition; if one were going to pursue this line of thought, it might be more appropriate to look not only at kabuki's emphasis on immediate events (scandalous, but repetitive nonetheless), but also on murder and torture.)

93. One could also read these as, ultimately, instants of eternal expanse, insofar as the slow motion is meant to capture a moment of pure speed—speed becomes the temporal expanse almost like the spatially "stretched" eternal instants of the noh. I have seen nothing to verify this reading, however.

94. There is also a pulling apart of sense associated with these times, somewhat like the "slurring" of language in the noh's *kusemai*. At emotional high points in kabuki, the hero would make exclamations of nonsense—as, "*yattoko tottcha, untoku na!*" (quoted in Brandon, *Studies in Kabuki*, 71). While tied to the *mie*, these verbal exclamations were kept separate from the images, generally either just preceding or just following the *mie* pose.

were the "death pictures" (*shini-e*) of actors. When a well-known actor died, a print would be produced of him that marked the date of his death, his age at death, and listing his Buddhist name—his death name, that is to say. These prints were hence themselves images of fame, but also souvenirs of grief,[95] and of moments of a final point of real death. As if to emphasize this, there are some in which the actor is portrayed in one of his roles as a ghost. All of these elements are brought together in Figure 1. This is a *shini-e* print marking the death of actor Nakamura Utaemon IV, portraying him in a ghost role, holding the instantaneous frozen pose of a *mie*.[96]

The ukiyo-e prints of these death instants are particularly telling as to the content and role of that moment. The frozen instant act of the *mie* they show is the most difficult kind, known as *nirami* (睨み). In this type of *mie* (performed only by male characters), the actor would not just cross his eyes, but rather leave one eye forward-focused and cross only the other eye. This was thus a doubled look, both cross-eyed and not. The point, in other words, is that this instant moment is a privileged point of negotiation, a time outside of specific temporalities, when everything, including different looks, could come together. This was the look of Sukeroku, who as we have already seen was a character of overlapping world orders. To some extent this same negotiation can be seen in the prints reproduced here. In Figure 1, the *nirami* moment brings together a character apparently split into states of life and death, or ghostliness and full bodiliness; it mediates past and present, as well as the identities of the actor Nakamura Utaemon with the ghostly role of Iga Shikibunojō, and it hints at uniting a Buddhist concept of transcendence (the ghost is forming a *mudra* with his hands) with a more popular and even spectacular idea of death. All this comes together in the instant look of the *nirami*. In Figure 2, the printmaker Kunisada overlays a whole set of worlds, in complex ways. Here, the legendary lover and poet of the ninth century, Ariwara Narihira, is shown in the guise of the contemporary actor Danjūrō VII (not the other way around), who is also playing the role of the famous

95. When Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII killed himself in 1854, large numbers of death prints were produced, apparently a testament both to his popularity and to the grief over his death. Especially for the more famous actors, great varieties of death prints were produced. On Danjūrō, see *Kabuki Encyclopedia*, 129.

96. The print is from 1852, by Utagawa Kunisada. It is reproduced in Stephen Addiss, ed., *Japanese Ghosts and Demons* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1985). Unfortunately the ghostly blues and silvers are not evident here.

Figure 1. The Ghost of Iga Shikibunojō Mitsumune (Death Print of Nakamura Utaemon IV)

Courtesy of the University of Kansas Spencer Museum of Art.

Figure 2. Ariwara no Narihira as Seigen

Courtesy of the University of Kansas Spencer Museum of Art.

monk Seigen.[97] Here, too, the various worlds and times are brought together in the flash of the *nirami*, and in this case the one body of all of those times and worlds.

These death pictures are no longer just images of great emotion, or speed. Nor are they attempts to hold onto a living image of that which has passed. They are more accurately attempts to capture death, not the ongoing time of life, and to give image to that moment of a final end. The pictures do go out into circulation like the earlier actor prints did,[98] but at the very least they introduce a *memento mori*—a souvenir, and an image, of that desire for an instant beyond the ongoing circulations of time.[99]

Kabuki, too, thus has its elements that nearly approximate the eschatological aspects of the noh. In the aesthetics of both noh and kabuki, ongoing, continuous, durational time had become problematic. Both theaters increasingly hinged on the autonomous instant moment. In both theaters, the instant offers the only possibility for attainment of true value. In face of the failures of transcendent fulfillment, the instant appears also as the only point on the temporal horizon wherein a true, more meaningful difference might appear—a transcendence of the whole structure of temporality, phrased as the "death" of time. As indicated by Edo-period theater, the instant is thus a critical form of time in Japan's early modernity, and a point of negotiation of different times.[100]

97. See Stephen Addiss, ed., *Japanese Ghosts and Demons* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1985), 54.

98. It is not clear whether these prints, once purchased, were treated similarly to other forms of ukiyo-e or not. Most such prints were considered of little lasting worth and discarded often, so that there was a relatively fast and ongoing circulation of new prints. It would not be surprising if these death prints were held onto, and kept outside of any ongoing circulations.

99. One might return to the popular image of the Edokko townsman, going off and in a single euphoric night spending every last *sen* he owned, as a parallel example of the inherent desire for "death" in capitalist culture at that time.

100. It is important to keep in mind that this does not preclude the importance of the time of homogenous flows and universal sameness. The question was, which kind of time the instant would guarantee. This also shows that—in some ways parallel to the West—the early modern ambiguity of time as universal and whole, or as punctual and potentially diversified, was a political-economic problem of value in the widest possible sense. On Western polemics of time as consisting of homogenous flows versus time as atomistic and diversified, see Nancy Munn, "The Cultural Anthropology of Time: A Critical Essay," in *Annual Review of Anthropology* 1992, 21: 93–123, and Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1983).

Vision: Specularity, Spectacle, and the Eyes of Money

In the official performances of noh (and technically, in the Edo era all performances were official since anything done outside the purview of the shogun was considered illegal) lines of vision were fairly carefully controlled. Principally by regulating who sat where, a set of views were produced that created an assemblage of perspectives—an arrangement of controlled lines of vision, that focused on and thereby created a centered site, or originary point of reference, for everything. This point was located on the place of the shogun. Yet these lines of vision were not necessarily all of the same order. They involved different kinds of vision, including in general terms both "gazes" and "glances," as well as different "eyes"—different looks, which see different kinds of values, entail different kinds of desires, and are comprised of different kinds of temporalities. This heterogeneity of views nonetheless did not necessarily imply the breakup of an empowered structure of vision, or scopic regime, although it certainly raises that possibility.

This section looks at the set of relations of vision within which the audience—both ruler and ruled—found and saw themselves as such. I focus on the great public "town-entering" machi-iri noh performances in the shogun's castle as a central model of vision and of seeing and producing rule and order in Tokugawa Japan. As will be seen, structures of vision were not distinct from the problems of time.

Looking across the Edo period, one could in fact find a remarkable array of kinds of vision, none of which were confined by any simple or stable tie to either class or economics. The subject positions implied by these orders of vision, and the social space they helped produce, were at least as complicated in early modern Japan as in the West. Traits of all three categories of vision described by Martin Jay as characteristic of Western early modernity[101] are easy to locate in Edo-era Japan. This includes not only the rational, mathematically understood space of Descartes, with its intellectualized observational looks separating subject from object, but also the "northern," descriptivist view,[102] as well as the "madness" of baroque vision. These characteristics are all evident in Tokugawa times, and others are as well. Although

101. Outlined in Hal Foster, ed., *Vision and Visuality* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1988), 2–23.

102. As in Jay's formulation, the "descriptivist" view referred to here emphasizes surfaces and immediate but fragmentary description. It is therefore in a sense photographic. It is also objectively empirical, but without the Cartesian hierarchy of a privileged monocular viewing subject; it assumes a prior existence of a world of objects, indifferent to the beholder's position; and it is more interested in surface mapping than in allegorical meaning.

perspectival space was known in Edo Japan, the perspectival ordering of a unified and mathematically homogenous space cannot be used to describe Edo-era subjectivity as a whole. Perhaps even less so than in the West, there was no single unifying order of visual space in early modern Japan. At least not until very late in the era, around the time of the Kōka *kanjin* noh.

The history of Tokugawa vision involves a genealogy, including the Zen reorientation of medieval apocalyptic visions toward a new focus on knowing the world through immediate bodily truths. Thus in the early Edo period one finds poems like Onitsura's, "In the front of the garden It has whitely blossomed—The camellia." In response to a Zen priest's request, "truth" is defined in this poem as a surface reality that lies before one's eyes: a camellia in the sun is seen to be white, and that is what should be said about it. Part Zen koan, in the Edo era this becomes the basis for an increasing empirical, descriptivist attitude toward the world.

This new idea of "truth" (*makoto*, 真) was yet also tied to the supposedly more plebian comic forms of poetry, especially *haikai* (俳 徊). *Haikai* poetry typically opened with a traditional statement, but then, as in the linked poetry of renga, twisted that opening by finishing with a parodic refocusing. Thus for example a poem playing with the more traditional statement of the medieval court poet Saigyō ("I gazed so long at the blossoms they became dear to me, and when they fell, leaving me, I was sad"), becomes "From my gazing I got a pain from the blossoms In the bone of my neck"; the truth of the gaze in this case, too, comes from the material experience of the body. Vision in these cases is descriptivist, and tending toward quick, immediate observations of what lies before one rather than a more intellectualist and distanced view of space as some kind of larger whole. Although empiricist, it is therefore not perspectival in the sense that it does not claim to yield a more unified, integrated view of everything. And because of the often comic emphasis on re-viewing and re-thinking everything that one sees in front of oneself, while there is a new emphasis on the immediate world of the present, continuity of perspective is fragmented in time, too.

On the one hand, this mode of seeing develops into Basho's descriptive haiku. In *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (*Oku no hosomichi*), these supposedly brief glimpses increasingly come to imply a more unified way of seeing the whole country. In Basho's case, this descriptivism is still very much a product of the subjective, even bodily authority of each viewer. These are his views of the country. The bodily sensorial aspect is emphasized in Basho's

borrowing of the classic aesthetic of *nioi*, or "smell"—the various sites, and the poems Basho uses to describe these sites, are united by a common sense of "smell."

Yet this stance of descriptive-vision-as-truth is also tied to madness. As the poet Soin put it, "The art of *haikai* places madness (*kyō*, 狂) ahead of reality (*jitsu*, 実) . . . it is a joke within a fantasy." This same madness, nonetheless, is "a means of expressing truth" (*makoto*). *Kyōka*, or "mad poetry," attained remarkable extension throughout Edo society, from kabuki actors to samurai, who in some cases were joining groups to compose these poems together.

A similar descriptivism characterizes the mid-eighteenth century, with the idea of *shasei* (写生)—a simple "reflection" of nature (*shasei* means sketch, but literally in the sense of "a reflection of life"). As in the poetry of Buson, it is increasingly empiricist (in Buson's case, his poetry implies a distance of observer from object to the extent that, when writing even of his own children's death, the poetry consists of little more than impassive observation). *Shasei* is also tied to comic perspectives, and to the "low art" of *gesaku* literature. By the nineteenth century a more Cartesian perspective also emerges out of this, Shiba Kōkan being an obvious example. Shiba's discussion on Western painting and print forms argues for a method of "reflecting true form" that is in part descriptivist: "in reproducing a flower . . . unless the picture resembles that flower, it cannot be said to be a picture of the flower." Shiba here uses the new term *shashin* (写真, which later comes to mean a photograph, to talk about this kind of image).

But while Shiba's essay starts from this empirically descriptivist position, it develops into an argument for something more like perspectival space, with an active, a priori viewing subject who looks out on, and therefore truly knows and has command over, a perspectivally homogenous space. Using Dutch perspectival painting for comparison, Shiba complains that Chinese and Japanese methods depict a sphere as only a flat circle. Western methods, he says, use a "three facet" system,[103] including the use of shading, to portray what is in fact a globe—in other words, he is arguing for an understanding of space as three-dimensional. This understanding of space, he continues, should be founded on scientific foundations (although in a very specific sense; Shiba uses an interesting metaphor likening painting to the mental

103. Shiba felt that these modes of vision were different enough from local forms that, even after having seen a Japanese "perspective print" (*uki-e*), Japanese people are disoriented if suddenly shown "the vividly exquisite works of Western painting."

attitude of a medical doctor). As in Cartesian views, space in Shiba's formulation becomes homogenous and empty of qualitative difference. This is in opposition not only to nonperspectival understandings of vision and space, but even to some three-dimensional modes of perspectival space that continued to be practiced in Shiba's time. Maruyama Ōkyo's print work, for example, borrowed from Chinese styles that appeared to be perspectival, but in fact implied qualitative differences (not just the neutral difference of distance) between the spaces that were near, midway, and distant to the observer. In earlier, more spiritualist understandings of space and spatial expanse, space itself was a matter of essential qualitative differences and gradations of value; in Shiba's newly perspectival space, all space was of the same qualitative order of value.

As in Western perspectivalism, Shiba's space is mathematical, and it includes a mathematical relation between observer and observed objects. He provides a fairly detailed statement of the correct way to view a picture, including the lines within a picture that must be assumed, and the distance and height at which a picture should be placed. Also, as in the classic Western perspectival observer's relation to the world, the observer here is both distanced from the world, and yet very much of it (that is, the observer is alienated from but not in any way transcendent to the world that she/he sees). Thus, Shiba says that there should be a direct correspondence between the picture and the observer's viewing position, such that the viewing subject sees the painting/object "as if one were looking at a reflection in a mirror." The viewing subject here finds him/herself as subject in direct relation to the inert and distanced object.[104] Nor is this just a subjective view that might differ from one person's position to the next. There is only one correct way to view things in this kind of world, for Shiba, and so "it definitely would not do to look at [these perspectival paintings] just as one pleases." Not only is the correct viewing position therefore objectively accurate (one just needs to find the right position to view things from), but the accurately depicted image therefore takes on a greater truth value than either the subjective idea of the object held by the observer (including as memory) or the organic characteristics of the object itself. Accordingly, in writing about what he took to be the preserved specimen of a mermaid, he noted that because the stored specimen

104. Shiba also emphasizes that these are framed—and therefore presumably unified.

would inevitably change over the months and years, "ultimately, if it were not pictured, one could not know the true reality of the thing."[105]

The world that Shiba is describing is thus the most stable sort of perspectivalist order. It is a space defined by just one homogenous order of value (everyone should see things the same way, in a world without essential qualitative differentiation), just one kind of knowing subject, and just one true way of seeing the world. Furthermore, Shiba makes it clear that this is not just a discussion on good methods of painting and seeing. Western painting, he says, "is truly a technique of real utility, and a tool for governance and education as well."[106] Shiba is laying out the grounds for a social and political order based on a newly homogenous landscape.

Still, even in the early nineteenth century, along with these varied beliefs in the legibility and stability of material surfaces, the more "baroque" concerns with inconstant bodies and uncertain frames of vision were omnipresent. Often the same people were interested in both general forms of vision. Hiraga Gennai would be one example among many, but so would Shiba Kōkan. Although Shiba used a camera obscura to create perspectival drawings, he also worked in classical Chinese as well as Japanese woodblock print styles. This confluence of visions will be returned to below.

What I have described only hints at the remarkable variety of forms of vision present in the Edo era, as well as their interconnectedness.[107] At that time, empiricist descriptivism and even Cartesian-type perspectivalism had a genealogy leading back to Zen Buddhism, but were also closely tied with a "madness" of vision, and even with the kind of baroque reemphasis on an uncontrolled bodiliness that so often is considered in diametric opposition to Cartesian forms of space and sight. Science in this case therefore has a genealogy that includes Zen, as well as comic perspectives and especially madness; and none of these should in any easy way be thought of as emancipatory ways of seeing, or even necessarily counter-hegemonic.

105. Quotations from Shiba Kōkan, *Seiyōga dan*, Looser, trans., in *Readings in Tokugawa Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Center for East Asian Studies, Select Papers vol. 9, 1993), 159. There is clearly a temporal disjuncture here as well: the time of the accurately observed image becomes eternal, while the time of the corporeal and subjective is fleeting and therefore untrue. This work was written in 1799.

106. Ibid., 160.

107. Martin Jay's broad claim with regard to the "absence of such scopic regimes in Eastern cultures" strikes one as somewhat hasty, to say the least. See *Vision and Visuality*, 19–20.

In order to be more specific about how some of these forms of vision might, or might not, have been part of the same space, and might or might not have contributed to the same order of power in early modern Japan, I want to consider a few terms and conditions more closely.

I am in this section concentrating on the noh, but there are elements of kabuki that are important as background to understanding vision in the noh. Within the pleasure quarters/kabuki theater/merchant world, one of the principal forms of vision was defined by *ugachi* (穿ち). Literally a "penetrating" look, *ugachi* was a skilled mode of seeing, associated with Edokko knowledge, that claimed for a kind of empiricism—it was a learned mode of observation. Theoretically anyone, the shogun and otherwise, could learn it, but it focused on the world as a place of material surfaces which nonetheless held a truth that could be penetrated, or uncovered. It also implied an angle of observation: *ugachi* was said to always be a posture of looking awry, focusing only on the side (*soba*) or sometimes on the back *(ura)* of things. It was thus never a mirroring gaze, in which subject and object are directly reflected, and reflexively constituted. This is not, then, a Cartesian mode of vision, or of subject constitution. It is furthermore a look of or in time, at least insofar as, like the parodic *haikai* poetry with which it was associated, it was ostensibly based on very brief, speedy glances. Finally, it also became associated with a mode of power. The best example of an *ugachi* look in this sense is the famous poem describing the Edokko as a man who gives "a sideways glance" at the golden dolphins atop the shogun's castle towers, and in doing so pierces the power of the shogun.

In the kabuki theater, this look from awry was undoubtedly associated with the critical frozen instant of the *mie*. Even the simple crossing of eyes left no possibility for a transcendent mirroring gaze.

The possibility has already been raised that this look is also associated with money (the *mie*, for example, as a moment of "seeing profit"). The *ugachi* look from awry was in very practical terms associated with money in general, and with the relations of spectacle that capitalism is so typically connected with. This association is most clear in the massive, bustling *misemono* (見世物 , "showing things") fairs set up as a new kind of spectacle specifically to make money. In these fairs the idea of *ugachi* becomes not so much a specific angle of observation as it is more generally a need for constantly new and different perspectives on things, and new forms of seeing. Sights—both things to look at and new modes of looking at them—are what sell, and in order to keep selling, these sights must keep changing (Saikaku

describes this too). Objects and bodies of vision themselves take on the capitalist qualities of mutation already discussed (examples include displays of the woman whose neck seems to stretch endlessly; the armless "bottle-boy"; the giantess; the "feejee mermaid"; hairy "demon girl"; and so on),[108] and new technologies of seeing arrive here first (the telescope, the magnifying glass).

It has been claimed that in the West, Cartesian perspectivalism (especially the divide between subject/viewer from object of vision) emerged with the buying and selling of oil painting. As the visual field of the canvas entered the circulations of capitalism, the argument goes, it became detached from its context and separated from both buyer and seller, thereby creating the Cartesian separation between viewer and visual field as object. Although this line of argument is somewhat simplistic, it is relevant that the first Western-style perspectivalist prints in Japan (the *uki-e*, 浮絵) did appear in the misemono fairs. Also extremely popular were the *nozoki* "peep" shows (the *uki-e* perspective prints were generally viewed through the peep show lenses). And more generally, and importantly, all these forms of vision were spectacular—meaning that they entailed a disconnection of viewer from viewed. Consequently, despite the claim for temporal immediacy of *ugachi*-style perspective, in its association with the capitalist misemono fairs (and despite all the glaring bodiliness of the misemono images) this perspective also involves a gap separating the subject off from the object of vision.

As in other forms of spectacle, this look is also defined by a mode of desire, which involves an alienation (an obvious example may be the misemono booth in which men were allowed to come and view, as well as blow air through a bamboo tube toward, a woman's genitalia—but they could never go beyond a restraining wall). It is as well a form of history, or really an alienation from history, such that one cannot be part of the temporality of the thing that one observes. This is no different from the separation from the time of the commodity that Saikaku described. Here too the immediacy or temporality of the *ugachi* glance, with its focus on the present "truth" of things, turns out to also entail a mediation. Much of this is summed up in yet another misemono exhibit, from 1840. There was at that time a man who was supposedly able to extract and reinsert his eyeballs, at will. Not only did he do so, however, but to make it interesting, he attached large strings of

108. Most of these are described in Andrew L. Markus, "The Carnival of Edo," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* vol. 45, no. 2, 499–541.

coins to the filaments of his optic nerves—as if he was seeing through the strands of money.

Vision in this case is mediated by, and assumes the value of, money (and all that this implies).[109]

This "eye," seeing the present world through the perspective and values of money, describes one aspect of the pleasure quarters views.[110] The noh was in some ways quite different.

One of the most important locations for the formation and manipulation of visuality in the noh was the public machi-iri performances. This was entirely a Tokugawa creation. Even the noh stages we see today were not really concretized until around 1700, and these were patterned after the stage form created by the shoguns within Edo castle, and used on occasions such as the machi-iri. The noh stage commonly portrayed today as an apolitical site of traditional Japan is also a historical model of vision and power.[111]

The noh stage was set up directly opposite a veranda-like room for the shogun. Both the stage and the shogun's room were raised, and a divider of gravel-covered ground separated the two. Connected to the shogun's room (to his left) was a series of additional rooms, separated by sliding doors mostly left closed, in which the principal daimyo lords sat. The higher the rank, the closer the room to the shogun—the room next to the shogun's was reserved for the *fudai* daimyo (lords considered to be genealogically related to the Tokugawas).[112] This hierarchy was also constituted as an organization of angles of observation: because the shogun's room was opposite the stage, and about the same height and size, he had the only direct view of the stage; then, the farther one sat from the shogun, the sharper the angle from which one could see the stage. These lines of vision were also reinforced by paths of gift giving (see Figure 3). The lower ranking lords would bring robes up to the actors on stage from a more obliquely placed stairway and path, and there was a separate set of stairs for the shogun, again immediately opposite the stage, by which actors and shoguns could make gift exchanges with one another in a single direct path. All of these officials would typically watch the

109. Saitō Gesshin et al., *Bukō nenpyō* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1968), 2:217, and Markus, ibid., 530. Markus reports this example as fact, though it is difficult to believe there was not some ruse involved. I am not concerned with whether it was factual or not, so much as I am interested in the concept of eyeballs connected through nerves of money.

110. In kabuki, the mediating role of money in a spectatorial relation between audience and stage is evident in the practice of expressing one's appreciation for specific moments, or actors, in a play by throwing coins wrapped in paper on stage.

111. Although stages were modeled after the shogun's, the structure used by the shogun was already present by the mid- to late-sixteenth century. A wide variety of stages were used prior to that time, but even the large public performances were typically held on stages with the audience circled around, so that everyone had a roughly similar perspective. See Figure 5.

112. In the case of machi-iri held for shogunal investiture, the *fudai* daimyo attended only the first day. The second day was then reserved for the nonrelated *tozama* ("outer") lords, the third and fourth days for various shogunal officials, and on the fifth day the "priest-prince" of the shrines at Nikkō came.

Figure 3. Paths of Gift Giving

From the *Yanagiei gyōji*, reprinted in part in Ono Kiyoshi, ed., *Tokugawa seido shiryō* (Tokyo: Rokugodan, 1926).

full day's performance, which lasted from around or before sunrise until sunset, so only they had a full view in both a spatial and a temporal sense.

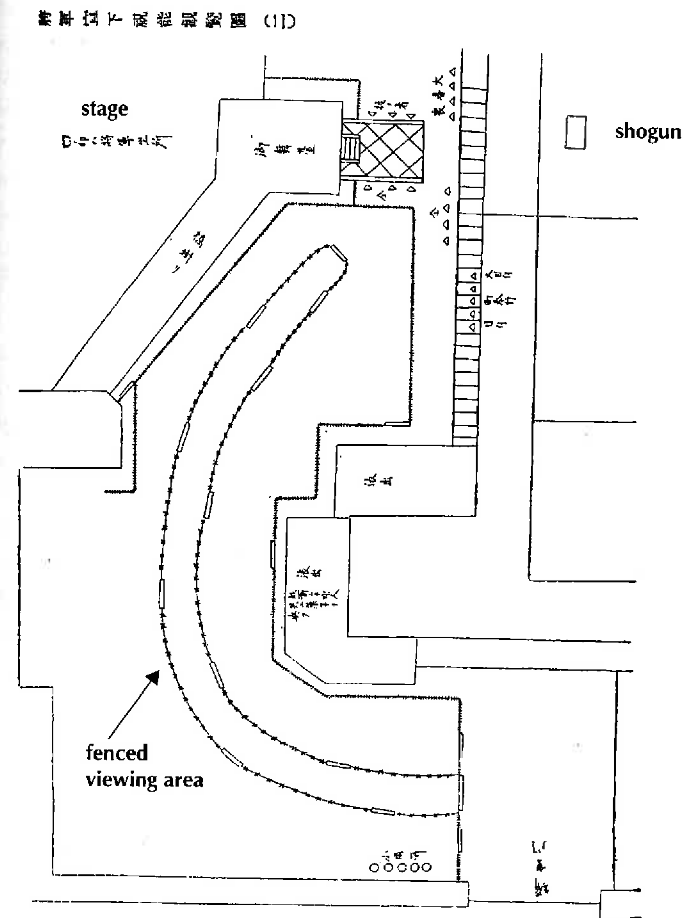
Along with the shogunal and court officials, commoners were allowed into the castle grounds to see the performance. Members of the imperial court as well as commoners were specifically invited to attend only the first day's performance, but this was considered the most important, or "weighty." Unlike any of the officials, however, the commoners were placed in the lower ground-level area that formed the gap between the stage and the rulers' rooms. This was considered a temporary space: they were tightly packed within a temporary bamboo fence (see Figure 4), and forced to sit or stand on the gravel-strewn ground. Even the best view of the stage they could have was set off to the side, and much of this section would have had only an extremely oblique view, or none at all. At the same time, placed in between the stage and the lords' rooms, the commoners watched the goings-on in both spaces (this seems to have been intended), and documents indicate that they enjoyed the spectacle of both actor and shogun equally. Although commoners lined up for performances long before sunrise (generally at about 4 a.m.), they were allowed to watch only half of the day's performance, with a second group coming in for the second half. Hence they were allowed neither a full view of the space of the stage, nor of the completed time of the performance.

Those are the principal positions of observation for a machi-iri noh, but there is still another, third audience. The closest lords of all to the shogun, the three Tokugawa families (*Gosanke*), did not sit next to him, but instead sat *"behind"* the stage. They therefore could see neither the stage nor the actors at all. Rather, from behind the stage they were expected to directly face the shogun, in a position of obeisance that was supposed to be maintained until the very last performance of the very last day. Different members, though, were allowed to replace one another over the course of a day.[113]

This overall stage structure, with its varied audience positions and lines of sight, is an Edo-era construct. Prior to the Edo era there was no uniform structure for a noh stage, but larger performances generally were set up with

113. This is described in documents of the Matsudaira family (one of the genealogical branch families of the Tokugawas), compiled as part of the *Yanagiei gyōji*—reprinted in Ono Kiyoshi, ed., *Tokugawa seido shiryō* (Tokyo: Rokugokan, 1928). See p. 515. It is possible that at least in some cases, sitting "behind" the stage may have meant sitting at the back of it, or parallel to the back of it, but the general structure of viewing positions remains the same.

Figure 4. Commoners' Fenced Viewing Area (Machi-iri Noh)

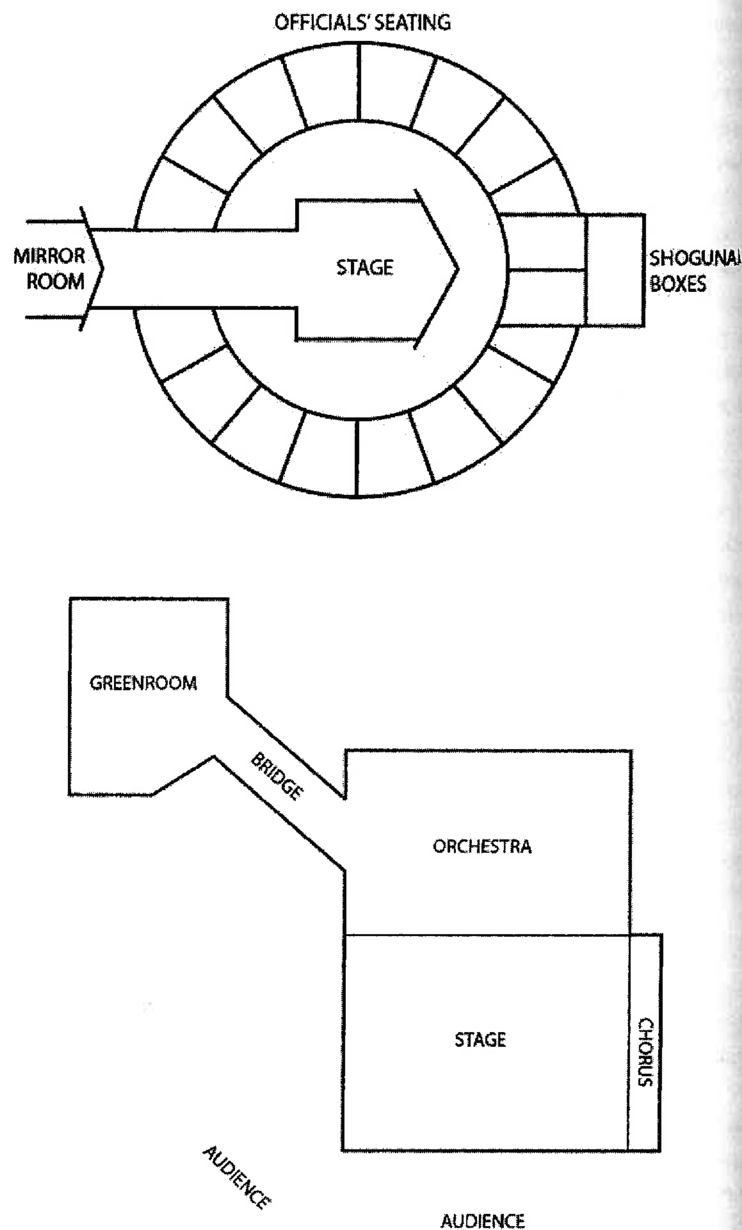


Map of shogunal proclamation noh as reprinted in Ikeuchi, NS I, 185.

viewing stands almost entirely circling the stage, so that most members of the audience had roughly similar positions of perspective (see Figure 5).

To varying degrees, all of the views in the machi-iri noh fix themselves on the shogun at one point or another. This is true even of the actors onstage: Zeami wrote that actors should always play to and focus on the most noble members of the audience, and in the Edo era the one form of improvised look allowed the actors was a sort of unobtrusive glance toward the shogun

Figure 5. Noh Stages: Middle Ages (top) and Edo Era/Modern (bottom)



(or other high officials) as a means of flattery.[114] There were also times when the sliding doors were opened so that the shogun was visible to all, including shogunal officials. On one level, then, the machi-iri as a whole was a monocular model. All the various views came together on the place of the shogun, thereby constituting him as the point of reference for, and in a sense the origin of, the whole. At this level, all views are part of a single homogenous space—a space of authority—not all that unlike the Western Renaissance order of perspectival space.[115] Space at this level accordingly might be thought of as relatively abstract or homogenous, insofar as it was all organized by the monocular view of the shogun as focal point.

The shogun himself was part of this, and in a sense what he saw was himself. His was a "gaze" as opposed to a "glance," as in the terminology of Jay, Crary, and others, but it also involved a kind of mirroring. As a gaze, the shogun's were the only eyes that had a direct view of the stage as well as a panoptic view of the entire structure of theater and audience. This was thus the only transcendent form of vision. The shogun's eyes also were the only ones able to connect directly with the actors', thereby connecting fully and directly with the absolute epic past embodied therein (much in the same way that within the plays, moments of divine, transcendent unity are expressed by the image of a purely reflected full moon). Therefore when thinking of Zeami's ideal instant in which the audience realizes the "pure feeling" of Peerless Charm, an instantaneous view of pure experience in which one has no time for reflection, it is really the shogun in particular who realizes this. In this sense, the space of these various lines of sight was already not abstractly homogeneous. The closer the space to the shogun, the more direct the observer's gaze toward the stage would be, and the more transcendent that space would be. The quality of each view, and the position of each view, would differ from the next.

---

114. See Oda Sachiko's discussion of Edo noh actor's stage manuals: "Nō no engi to enshutsu: shōzokuzuke, katazuke o meguru shomondai" in *Nōgaku kenkyū* 10 (1984), 63–108.

115. "Monocularity, like perspective and geometrical optics, was one of the Renaissance codes through which a visual world is constructed according to systematized constants, and from which any inconsistencies and irregularities are banished to insure the formation of a homogeneous, unified, and fully legible space." Jonathan Crary, "Modernizing Vision," in *Vision and Visuality*, 33. These lines of sight can also be thought of in the context of the increasingly secularized notion of rays of light that were related to the formation of renaissance structures of visual power. Descriptions of the machi-iri by Matsudaira Nobuyoshi tell of how the commoners and others, upon seeing the shogun, felt a deepened sense of his "authority." The term here used was a new one, *ikō*, literally meaning the "power of light." In *Tokugawa seido shiryō*, 514–515.

The shogun's gaze thus is without mediation—as Zeami put it of this instant, it is "purity unmixed."[116] Recall also that the moment of Peerless Charm had "the quality of gold"—here, the pure, immediate gaze of the shogun can be contrasted to the mediated "eye of money" described just above. The gaze therefore also entails a temporality, which in this case may be an instant, but is nonetheless that nondiachronic instant which is really the compressed space and time of a forever-stretching-out eternity. In the noh's staging, the eternal gaze may be reduced to a single point (the shogun), but it sees into and opens up the distant landscape of the eternal past. And as Jay says, "the pull of the eye into the distant landscape seemed to grant the view the all-important 'prospective' capacity for foreknowledge."[117] This explains why the shoguns repeatedly commented that by gazing out over the townspeople during these machi-iri performances, they were able to "judge the condition" of the people, including both present and future.

The image of this gaze into distant space and time can be found in Zeami's own drawings. In his treatises, Zeami sketched three ideal role types (old man/god; woman; and warrior; see Figures 6–8), as well as six others.[118] Of these, only one is portrayed with uplifted eyes. This is Okina, the old man/god figure after which the ritual play *Okina* was named, and the role which Zeami said "represents the pinnacle of our art."[119] The principal characteristic of this image seems to be this fact that he is looking up, off into the infinite distance. The actor playing the role accordingly was to "keep his soul at ease and look off into the distance," continually "looking afar."[120] As if to emphasize this eternal gaze and the importance of vision itself in constructing this eternity, Zeami drew a dotted line from the figure's eyes off into space, with the written character for vision (*miru*, 見る) at the end of it. This also expresses the eye of the shogun. And this eye, which sees without mediation straight into the eternal past and reflects the full plenitude of the "Peerless" quality of gold, might again be opposed both to the mediations of the man with an eye connected by nerve strands of coins, and to the crossed gaze of the *mie* moment in kabuki.

116. Rimer and Yamazaki, *On the Art of the Noh*, 91.
117. Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 25.
118. See "Nikyoku santai ningyōzu," reprinted in *Zeami Zenchiku*, 121–132.
119. Rimer and Yamazaki, ibid., 11.
120. *On the Art of the Noh*, 11, 141.

Figure 6. Okina (Old Man) with "Eyes Looking Afar"

Courtesy of Hosei University Nō Research Institute.

As a look of pure unblinking reciprocity,[121] however, the machi-iri is also a case of the shogun in a sense looking at himself. The shogun's gaze was specular, in that it not only looked clearly off into the distance, but that it involved a direct mirroring relationship between viewer and viewed, or subject and object. This relationship was built into the stage itself: the wall at the rear of the stage, painted with the divine pine tree, was known as the "mirror board" (*kagami ita*, 鏡板). It should be emphasized that this backboard is an Edo-era creation—though almost never recognized as such—so it does express a specifically Edo-era structure of visuality. In fact, according to a lecture given in the early 1930s by the noh actors Kongō Iwao and Umewaka Rokuro, Edo-era shoguns also always had a folding screen painted with the

121. Great actors were said to be able to practice "the art of not blinking," hence returning the shogun's regard with a look of their own, uninterrupted by even the blink of an eye. See Ikeuchi, NS I, 170.

Figure 7. Woman Role

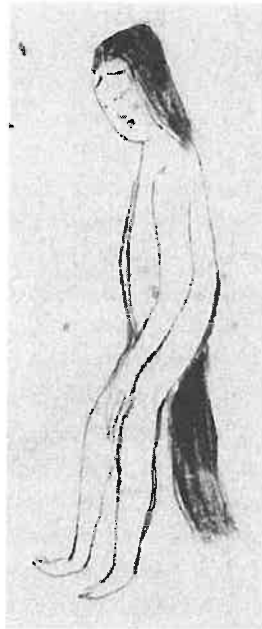


Figure 8. Warrior/Man Role

Images courtesy of Hosei University Nō Research Institute.

same pine put up in their viewing room, and the stage backboard pine was a reflection of this; there thus may have been a double process of mirroring going on.[122] Additionally, the room just offstage, behind the entry curtain, was called the "mirror space" (*kagami no ma*, 鏡の間), and contained a mirror set up next to the curtain.

In part this may simply express the absolute reciprocal reflection of the shogun and the values of the noh's epic past. The shogun himself, gazing directly across from the mirror board and directly at the actors who are acting out that divine past, wholly and absolutely reflects those values, without material remainder outside of himself. It is an act of self-contemplation, in which the shogun's being is reflected as a whole, and that being, or body, itself reflects the whole, complete value of the past. Further, it is an act of knowledge. In this gaze, the shogun sees and therefore knows the epic truth of the divine past, and this knowledge, too, as we have seen in other contexts, is therefore embodied in the shogun himself. As an act of pure knowledge, the shogun's viewing of the noh is thus also a form of self-knowledge, and the shogun knows himself fully, as a complete reembodiment of the values and knowledge of the past.

Thus the shogun might be said to be looking at himself in watching the noh. But it is more than just that. By watching the play, he finds himself as transcendent, as the very image of those divine values. That is to say, it is almost like the Lacanian notion of a child who, while still lacking an understanding of his various body parts as being all connected in one organic being, then gains an image of himself as whole by seeing this image in a mirror. Similarly, the shogun as a mortal (and in the investiture, as not yet a "great barbarian-quelling shogun") looks at the noh and thereby has an image returned to him of himself as a greater whole—the body of the divine/epic past, stretching from here to eternity. This process is also evident in the way that the "mirror room" was utilized by the actors themselves. Particularly for the more important "god" roles, an actor would take up the mask from its special box (for plays like *Okina*, this should be preceded by several days of ritual abstinence, and a ritual fire in the mirror room), and once having put the mask on, he would look in the mirror. In so doing and seeing his masked

122. See their compiled lectures in *The Noh Drama* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, 1937), 9. There are stages older than the Edo era, still in existence, which do have the "aged pine" painted on the back board; the stage at the Nishi Honganji is one example. But these apparently had the pines, and most likely the back board itself, added after the Edo era began (this is what Amano Fumio speculates; personal communication).

image in the mirror, he was said to literally *become* that god (more than just an actor with a mask on). The mirror thus returned an image to him of himself as a new, more divine being.[123]

But what of the three Tokugawa families? What are they doing sitting "behind" the stage?[124] As documents from Matsudaira Nobuyoshi indicated, this was an act of obeisance, but still, why not allow them a room next to the shogun's, where they could bow in his direction? If it was a matter only of not allowing them a view of the stage, the curtains for their room could easily have been drawn, with the sliding doors facing the shogun instead left open. One likely element of this may have been that, as Tokugawas, they too should partake of the plenitudinous reflection of value that the shogun's gaze did. The only position from which they might do this, however, without actually then becoming equal to the shogun himself, would be on the opposite side from the shogun. They were thus the reflection of the shogun's reflection (in this context, one might think of the pine-painted screen set up in the shogun's room, the equivalent of the "mirror board" the shogun faced on stage—here the *sanke* may have been a mirroring of the shogun's mirroring), and their gaze would thus constitute them in the same image of eternal value, even while it also paid allegiance to the shogun.

But this structure of vision is also reminiscent of another example from Renaissance Europe, the *tavoletta* experiments of Brunelleschi. Brunelleschi had taken a small perspectivalist painting and placed a small hole in the canvas. One was to look through the hole from behind the canvas, to a mirror on the other side which reflected the painting's surface therein. Thus viewing the picture through the mirror, one's gaze met directly with the point of view that formed the basis of the painting's perspective. By at least one reading,[125] this has two effects: it reveals and verifies the "truth" of the gaze (that is, in a self-referential way, it shows that the painting is constructed through lines of perspective, and so must be viewed from the proper perspective—and the single "point of view" is then indeed "true"). Perhaps more importantly here,

123. Perhaps a moment roughly equivalent to this within the narrative structure of noh plays was the time when the god first appears, often called (the term is borrowed from Buddhism) *kaigen* (開眼), or the moment of "eye opening."

124. While I think the question to be critically important in understanding the structures of vision, I have only found the barest of mention of this practice and so can only speculate on its implications.

125. There are quite a variety of readings of Brunelleschi. The ideas here are from Hubert Damisch's extensive account. See John Goodman, trans., *The Origin of Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994).

Brunelleschi's *tavoletta* setup also implies a symmetrical structure of perspective which may locate a second point of view, and a second vanishing point, somewhere far behind the viewer's head. Even without this assumption, it is clear that for Brunelleschi, the only way the subject could verify the painting's plane of visuality, and therefore his/her own gaze, was by placing himself behind that plane of vision—again, in a sense, the viewer looks behind his/her head.[126] The most important point here is that this takes the apparently finite structure and gaze of a single point of perspective and brings it into a connection with infinity and ubiquity.

That, then, parallels the shogun's secondary gaze—a gaze coming from his own closest representatives (the *sanke* families), from behind the mirror within which the shogun sees himself. The *sanke* thus express and verify the shogun's gaze as the look of truth. It is an outside position which acknowledges the shogun's gaze as the originary point of reference, but it acknowledges it from within the same logic of the gaze (this is sort of like trying to find a way to verify one's own view of oneself in a mirror—the only way to see oneself gazing into the mirror would be to stand behind that mirror, and thus the shogun has his own representatives in that position). Second, and more importantly, the *sanke's* position connects the shogun's view with an all-seeing eternity as described above, or in the idea of infinity as "an idea of what's behind one's head."[127] Zeami expresses a quite similar idea in his outline of the ideal form of sight an actor should aspire toward (for Zeami this is a self-image): "For an actor to grasp his true appearance implies that he has under his control the space to the left and to the right of him, and to the front and to the rear of him. In many cases, however, an average actor looks only to the front and to the side and so never sees what he actually looks like from behind. . . . Therefore, an actor must . . . examine his appearance with his spiritual eyes. . . . Such an action truly represents 'the eyes of the spirit looking behind.'"[128]

All of this, including the *sanke's* view from behind the stage, thus still involves a reflectionist model of vision and of the constitution of power. It also involved an organization of points of view which ultimately are constrained to just one point of true sight, and this point of sight was also a reduction of the perceiving subject (the shogun) really to just his eye.

126. For a detailed outline of this possibility, see Damisch, *Origin of Perspective*, 121–122.

127. This idea, mentioned also in Damisch, is Louis Marin's. See *La Critique du discours* (Paris: Minuit,1975), 394–396.

128. *On the Art of the Noh*, 81; "Kakyō," in *Zeami Zenchiku*, 88.

To a degree, the townspeople are part of this order of specularity, even though they were not allowed a total view of anything. Packed into the confines of the bamboo fence, these people could view the stage, and the shogun, at best only from a partial, sideways glance rather than a full gaze; and because they were allowed in for only part of a performance, theirs was a more fleetingly temporal look, caught in the passing moment. Still, in a way it was images of those very structures of incompletion that the noh performance returned to these people. That is, in a way, they too looked and found an image of themselves, and in this limited sense it can be considered a specular relation. As mentioned in Chapter 1, in their appreciation of the performance these townspeople saw and realized their own position as not full members of society, as excluded from full participation in power and in the eternal value of that power. They saw that they could not completely see, that they did not entirely know what was going on, and that they were excluded from the shogun's place as well as from the stage.[129] Furthermore, they enjoyed it, and even, from an exoticist position, found it interesting. As one quote from the time puts it, "For people who know [the noh], it is as interesting as they have knowledge, and for people who don't know it is as interesting as they don't."[130] In their enjoyment at watching this theater which they could not understand and in their pleasure at being given restricted glances at the shogun, the commoners effectively reaffirmed the shogun's eternal, all-knowing and all-seeing position (and the shogun took care to be "magnanimous" in providing occasions when his screen was lifted, so that the townspeople might peek at him and offer rowdy praise).[131] Thus in this sense the

129. There is also a contrast visible in the participation in more official, genealogical time of the shoguns, and the lack of participation in this time on the part of the townspeople. This was also apparently a relation of something like ritual versus theater, as well as "real" versus "artificial." For example, members of the nobility as well as daimyo or shogunal officials would wear formal clothing with their family crests clearly emblazoned thereon. Their viewing rooms were also hung with purple crepe curtains, onto which these crests were dyed. (See Yokoi, *Nōgaku zenshi*, 394.) Reports of the commoners, on the other hand, tell of some who, at least half in fun, attached play family crests made out of paper to their crude outerwear (which would otherwise have no crest), and tied straw ropes around their waists in place of the upper class silken obi belts. (See for example Ikeuchi, NS I, 197–198.) While it might be argued that this played with the idea of the fixity of hereditary social class, however, one could as easily claim that this too ultimately has the effect of emphasizing the commoners' exclusion from permanent or "real" membership in those classes and the official time of genealogy; the commoners' artificial crests are mere theatrical play at legitimate participation in that time.

130. Yanagizawa Kizen, in *Hitorine*, reproduced in Omote, *Nō kyōgen* II, 395.

131. See quotes in Ikeuchi, NS I, 199: first, the town magistrate is ridiculed, and then when the shogun's screen was lifted, "the boss was praised; it was rowdy and outrageous."

reflectionist mirroring model of vision in the machi-iri still holds, even for the glance of the townspeople. They looked at and valued the same reference point (the shogun) as the others, using it as a mirror against which they might see and gauge themselves, even though in this case the image that was reflected—that of the commoners—was an incomplete and devalued one. So the overall space of the machi-iri noh was in this limited sense too comprised of relatively monocular, homogenous lines of sight.

Still, the commoners' sideways glance was in some ways closer to the sideways *ugachi* view described earlier, and this is a look of a different order for several reasons. Above all, it is spectacular rather than specular. Part of the Edo-era spectacular vision involved an eye for money (looking toward speculative capitalist value; looking through the mediation of money, etc.), and this implies a different set of values, and a different order of vision from the shogun's specular modes.

On the one hand, even if this other mode of seeing entailed a different set of values, it was still used by the shogun as part of the overall process of the machi-iri. The spectacular and capitalist eye for something that is objectified (the commodity), and that is part of a system of circulation of value from which one is to an extent excluded, would work well in this context. Shoguns, after all, wanted commoners to acknowledge that as shoguns they were indeed of a fundamentally different and unattainable order of being. Descriptions from the time would seem to indicate that that was the way commoners viewed the proceedings, as in one quote (this one regarding the great Kōka performance), in which the shogun and officials, set up on the raised platform of their own viewing rooms, were said to be "set out on view, like one *mon* dolls."[132] Here the shogunal officials are objectified, clearly separated from the commoner observers, and seen through eyes accustomed to monetary, commodity value (eyes which look admiringly, and appraisingly, at the shogun, on display). In this case, the alienation created by consumerist desire seems to work in favor of the shogun's need for a position of distanced but privileged value.[133] Capitalist spectacle here reinforces the shogun's "ritual" position of difference and power.

Accordingly, the bakufu went to some lengths to encourage the appearance that this very mode of seeing *was* present, rather than discouraging it as

132. Ikeuchi, NS I, 271.

133. This form of spectacular interest is also connected to the idea of "sightseeing" (*kenbutsu*), as in the shogun's wish to have commoners come as sightseers (only) to the shoguns' divine shrines at Nikkō.

an unwanted element of the capitalist values which the shogun ostensibly refused. For example, rather than simply announcing a performance and letting the townspeople in, the shogun went through a process of having them buy tickets. This was a sham of sorts, both because the "requests" that the commoners buy tickets were in truth demands, and because these commoners were nonetheless given quantities of money (apparently worth a good deal more than the minimal price of the tickets) both at the end of the performance and again several days afterward. Money, therefore, was one of the real motivations for going. Descriptions tell of the townspeople shoving and fighting one another and finding ways to take more than their allotted shares of money and minor items of luxury. Money was in some cases even placed out in piles, for people to come and grab.[134] Through these machinations, the shogunate both explicitly exhibited the desire for money, and by having tickets bought, created the appearance that people wished to see the performance enough to pay money for it—that is, that the people gave it the (capitalist/consumerist) value of money.

Hence the commoners' perspective did introduce a different kind or different value of vision into the overall performance space, and so an element of heterogeneity. But just as the shogun's archaic "gift" economy of rice in practical fact needed the flows of capital, here the shogun's pure specular mode of sight and value not only allowed for, but actually needed the outside confirmation of the spectacular spectator. At very least, the shogun's image of transcendence was bolstered by the overlayering of that image with the commodity image, as seen by the townspeople. Or, put in different terms, the shogun's eyes of gold received outside confirmation from the commoners' eyes of money. To the extent that the shogun actually depended on this outside confirmation of his authority, one might then argue that the whole structure depended on alienation: in a world of already theatricalized, reinvented state divinity, even the *sanke's* position of obeisance to the shogun was not enough to validate the shogun's transcendence. This could only come from a position outside that "eternal" view—i.e., the temporal, broken, and alienated glance of the townspeople.

The same matters of time, memory, and embodiment considered earlier in the context of play structures, above, accordingly also reappear here in the more everyday contexts of spectatorship and the circulation of objects at the machi-iri performances. I can cite here only a brief and tentative example. The shoguns, as noted, engaged in a ritual exchange of robes with the actors as part of the more general exchange between shogun and actor as representative of a divine past. The robes therefore serve a role similar to that of the object of memory in a ritual noh play—they are complete materializations of an epically transcendent past. In contrast to this, like the everyday objects in a kabuki play, the commoner spectators of the machi-iri engaged only in the procurement of commodities and souvenirs from the performances—not in ritual embodiments of the past, and not therefore in ritual reconstructions of a divine time. Still, one story indicates the commoners' souvenirs worked in some ways with the shoguns' ritual order of time. In this story, apparently widely known, a servant of a townsman (himself too old to endure the uncomfortable conditions of the commoners' graveled viewing area) came home slightly drunk from the morning half of a performance—the segment he had been allowed to see. Along with the *sake* wine and cakes the servant had managed to grab, he pulled out of his kimono sleeves a large piece of the bamboo fence used to confine the townspeople within the castle grounds. The family valued this piece of bamboo fence enough to hold it as a keepsake (it was made into a brush holder), and the chronicler of this story, years later, said "even now this old man treasures it and boasts of it."[135] What has become a treasured body of memory in this case is a piece of the fence that kept those people partitioned off. It acts as a fetishized object of their own exclusion, a physical memory of their separation from the more eternal time and memory of the shogun. It may be just an everyday object, but it becomes more than just a commodity, and as a fetish fills in for what was in fact a real social alienation; these people remember themselves as being legitimate (but excluded) members of that machi-iri world. Consequently, although this was an object very much unlike the robes ritually exchanged by the top officials, it nonetheless worked just as much as the ritual objects to bolster the unity of the shogun's world.

Is all this therefore a paradigm of visual mastery? Proof not only that the Edo-era concern with controlling time was connected to a very much visually constructed (and theatrical) mode of power and social form, but that this theater of visions was indeed a model of total shogunal control?

The commoner audience of the machi-iri performances, packed there within the tightly uncomfortable confines of the bamboo fence, really does

134. Typically they were given bottles of *sake* rice wine, cakes, and umbrellas as well as the various forms of monetary gifts and remunerations.

135. Ibid., 198.

seem to have constituted a qualitatively different kind of time, and vision. Before concluding, it is worth looking just a bit more at this audience.

The position from which the shogun allowed himself to be seen by these people, and the kind of vision with which they apparently looked at him, was, as noted, the *ugachi* angular view from the side. *Ugachi*, however, referred to more than just a look from awry; it also implied a particular form of knowledge. Literally, *ugachi* means to penetrate, or pierce. As an angle of observation, the *ugachi* view was considered a means of seeing into the *ana*, or "holes" of things, and this in turn meant seeing into the hidden truths or facts of things. This was in clear contrast to the direct, reciprocal gaze of the shogun: here, the *ana* holes could be seen *only* by a sideways glance; otherwise these holes would be invisible and one could not see truth.[136] This knowledge was also typically sought for in the partial, fragmented details of things, so there was little desire for the overarchingly unified perspective of the shogun. Accordingly, this is an angle of vision and a kind of knowledge that the shogun could not have, but the commoners did. The position of spectatorial alienation in this case is not disempowering, and does not at all reflect an image of unknowing disenfranchisement to the commoners. Rather than an incomplete act of knowing, the commoners' glance by this definition was fully perceptive, penetrating the "ritual" truth of the shogun. The image of the free-spending Edokko townsman, peering sidelong at the golden dolphins atop the shogun's castle as an act of defiance and power, is one example of this different kind of knowing subject, and different kind of view. Whether or not it was planned this way, and whether or not the "piercing" of the shogun's ritual world worked for anyone other than the commoners, this was the place the commoners held in the machi-iri.

There is also what might be called an *ugachi* order and quality of time. The shogun's gaze, recall, was eternal. Like the "art of no blinking" that the noh actors themselves practiced, the shogun's tranquil observation of the full noh play saw into the fullness of the eternal past, without the insertion of any break or blink that might divide up this eternal temporality and allow for the emergence of different times. In contrast to this, the *ugachi* view was temporal, fleeting, even saccadic, as if composed of brief, blinking views. *Ugachi* views were premised on the idea of only a quick but nonetheless penetrating glimpse, unlike the studied contemplation of the shogun. This of course was

136. It was explicitly stated that one must look from the side (*soba*), or even from behind (*ura*). See Jo Nobuko Martin, *Santo Kyōden and His Sharebon* (PhD Dissertation: U. of Michigan, 1979), 52.

the way in which the commoners were allowed to watch the machi-iri noh performances. They were effectively placed in a position of visual and temporal interruption. They were allowed only partial views of the stage and of the shogun; they could see only part of a full program of plays, and only occasional glimpses of the shogun (when he chose to have his side screen raised, to allow them brief views of himself); and within these moments their glances are described as flitting back and forth between the stage and the shogun.

Furthermore, the *ugachi* perspective, and the "eyes" that these townspeople brought with them to the machi-iri performances, always were closely allied with the view toward profit. In this case, the townspeople most likely (I do not have clear quotes to confirm this) looked forward not only to the performance and to the gifts that they would receive at the time of the performance, but they also most likely looked forward to the monetary remuneration that they would receive some days after the performance. This desire for and look toward a future repayment ruptures the idea of any fully immediate time of repayment, or full value. One might oppose this interrupted vision and time to the shogun's (and the noh actors') eyes which saw, without a moment's pause for thought, the "qualities of Gold"—eyes which seemed to directly, immediately, and completely see into, and thereby unite with, the eternal time of pure value.

Accordingly, in the *ugachi* view of the commoners, one finds the same emergence of durational and future-oriented time that has been encountered in other contexts. It entailed a different set of values, and not only saw the shogun from a different perspective, but also carried the structure and flow of time (and value) out and away from the confines of the machi-iri grounds toward a future, monetary return. In these ways it was a mode of vision, and of time, that was qualitatively different from the shogun's.

One might even argue that within the machi-iri performance space, the emphasis on bodiliness and on the instability—even decadent instability—of bodies, reappears in this context. The physical conditions of the fenced viewing area themselves seemed to emphasize this: the "seating" area was intentionally covered with rough gravel, and spectators were not allowed to bring in cushions; toilet facilities were inadequate and a constant source of discussion; and the area was crowded enough that the jostling and shoving of bodies was also a problem. None of this would allow for the comfortable, speculative contemplation enjoyed by the shogun and other officials and the transcendent "swooning" appreciation that went with the officials' view, and all of it would in very concrete ways reassert the grounding of the spectators'