

WAKI: What? Why do you say the Eastern Gate? This is the *torii* of the Western Gate.

SHITE: Oh, what a foolish thing to say! Is it wrong to say that by going out from the Western Gate of Tennōji we face the Eastern Gate of Amida's paradise?

WAKI: No, you are absolutely right! By leaving from the Western Gate of Naniwa Temple . . .

SHITE: You enter the most important gate.

WAKI: By leaving from the most important gate of this temple . . .

SHITE: You face the sacred land of Amida . . .

WAKI: The Eastern Gate.

SHITE: Into the western sea of Naniwa facing the Eastern Gate . . .

CHORUS: The sun is setting, while dancing with joy.⁴⁰

THE ANNEXED AREA: SANJO

Confronted by the difficulty of classifying the various categories of outcasts in medieval Japan, Niunoya Tetsuichi has drawn a clear line between the paupers populating slopes (*saka hinin*), shelters (*shuku hinin*), and temple gates (*sanzai hinin*), on the one hand, and those with personal skills that made them useful in acts of purification (*kiyome*)—the inhabitants of tax-free areas managed by major landowners (*sanjo hinin*) on the other.⁴¹ The previous examples of actors coming from the boundary zones of the most deprived among the outcasts show that we cannot exclude the presence of a skilled labor force in the riverbank areas of which the artisans are just one example, nor can we ignore the presence of beggars in the tax-free annexed areas. This does not weaken Niunoya's hypothesis indicating a historical development of the *sanjo* in more and more specialized pools of skilled labor that came to be perceived as less and less defiled.

The *Kennaiki* reports on the fourth day of the Second Month 1435 that the riverbank people (*kawaramono*) in charge of maintaining gardens at the imperial palace were replaced by members of annexed areas (*sanjomono*) "because of the latter's lack of impurities."⁴² Although this is undoubtedly a later development in the history of liminal areas, it supports Niunoya's distinction between different kinds of outcasts. He describes the actors of *sarugaku* as essentially belonging to the less defiled group (*sanjo hinin*), whose members performed at major shrines on the occasion of Shinto festivals. The actor—a typical name would be Sarumaru (Monkey Boy)—was in charge of the lion dances (*shishimai*), as well as juggling, acrobatics, and the like (*dengaku*).⁴³

The confinement of actors to the annexed areas may sound too schematic and restrictive, particularly in light of the evidence to the contrary

provided by the *Shin Sarugaku Ki*. When we consider that three or four centuries separate this Heian document from the records of late Kamakura and early Muromachi times, we may speculate that an increasing specialization and professionalization on the part of *sarugaku* actors led to their escape from the more “defiled,” poverty-stricken areas and to their assimilation in the annexed areas in which they were more easily employable by the officials of shrines and temples. The actor’s migration did not change his status, however. He continued to be perceived as an outcast and to share the same space with other outcasts.

The direct relationship between the actors (*sanjo hinin*) and the outcasts of the first group (*sanzai hinin*)—beggars and lepers—was reinforced at the time of their public appearances. Medieval records tend to group actors together with the most defiled elements of society. The “Illustrated Record of the Suwa Daimyōjin Shrine” (*Suwa Daimyōjin Ekotoba*) lists the animators of the shrine’s festival on the sixth day of the Fifth Month 1356 as follows: “dancers (*shirabyōshi*), *dengaku* performers, magicians, *sarugaku* actors, beggar outcasts (*kojiki hinin*), blind and sick people.”⁴⁴

The *Myōgoki*, a mid-Kamakura dictionary, mentions a group of entertainers known as *Senzu Manzai* (“Wishing a Thousand, Ten Thousand, Years”), which was composed of “begging priests from the annexed areas” (*sanjo no kojiki hōshi*). On New Year’s Day, these beggars put on the garment of hermits (*sennin*) and went with a small pine tree in their hands from house to house to deliver congratulatory poems that wished people a long life, receiving alms in return.⁴⁵ Scholars believe that the so-called *Senzu Manzai*, whose name appears in the *Shin Sarugaku Ki*,⁴⁶ are a filiation of an eighth-century type of beggars who gathered alms in exchange for congratulatory words.⁴⁷

Two poems by these entertainers appear in the *Man’yōshū* (Ten Thousand Leaves; 759), both examples of total submission to the ruler. In the first a stag swears obedience to the emperor by offering “my horn for his majesty’s umbrella, my ears for his ink bottle, my eyes for his mirror, my nails for his bowstring, my hair for his brush, my skin for covering his box, my meat for filling his stomach.”⁴⁸ The second follows the same drift: A crab living among the reeds of Naniwa Bay encourages the ruler “to put some salt in my eye, and praise me as a delicious salty pickle.”⁴⁹

The beggars play the role of local deities—deities of a lower order—who swear their submission to the heavenly gods of the Yamato clan and to their human manifestation, the emperor. The symbolic role assigned to the beggars was the same as the one later played by the actors of *sarugaku*. They were the intermediaries between the present ordered reality, represented by the emperor and the Buddhist cosmology, and a threaten-

ing “other”—local deities, Shinto gods—whose submission had to be secured in order to escape disruption of the social/political/religious world.

Several medieval documents mention the activities of *sanjo* outcasts in the precincts of temples and shrines. Two records kept by monks of Daigoji Temple, the *Daigoji Zōjiki* and the *Daigo Nenjū Gyōji*, refer to them with regard to the planning of the temple’s garden, the building of the “sacred road” for transporting the portable shrine, and the presentation of congratulatory greetings on the occasion of festivals for the New Year (*shūshōe*).⁵⁰

Outcasts with a knowledge of the history of the temples to which their annexed area was attached would recite the temple’s legends, making use of picture scrolls that provided listeners with an immediate visualization of the story. When similar groups of reciters (*etoki hōshi*) organized themselves in guilds, clashes erupted between different groups of outcasts who were charged with infringing upon the monopolistic rights of their rivals. In 1330 the lay priest Fujitsugu (Fujitsugu Nyūdō), a liminal “priest” belonging to Tōji Temple, created a controversy with the guild of lute-player/priests for using a lute (*biwa*) to accompany his narration of the temple’s legends.⁵¹ The use of the lute was, in fact, restricted to a group of blind musicians who sang passages from the *Tales of the Heike* (*Heike Monogatari*) and recited tongue twisters (*haya monogatari*).⁵² Although both picture-scroll storytellers (*etoki hōshi*) and lute-player/priests (*biwa hōshi*) were outcasts from a liminal area (*sanjo hōshi*), their professional pride attests to the high degree of specialization achieved.

Other “*sanjo* priests” specialized in the staging of puppet plays. The *Kitanosha Hikitsuke* states that on the tenth day of the Tenth Month 1461, the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa stopped at Ichijō on his way back from Kitano Shrine in order to participate in a puppet show (*ayatsurimono*). The artists were from an area annexed to the Hirata Shrine of Nishinomiya in Settsu province.⁵³

Liminal areas produced the performers of an amateur type of *sarugaku* known as *tesarugaku*, who also practiced divination. Mobilized for fund-raising purposes, these actors/diviners—who were called *shōmonji*—organized themselves in groups as a result of the constant pressure from professional performers attempting to silence competition. The *Inryōken Nichiroku* mentions an actor/diviner of the Kitabatake group who performed a congratulatory dance on the second day of 1488.⁵⁴ In his diary, the *Kanmon Gyōki*, Retired Emperor Go-Sukō praises two famous *shōmonji*: “Young Dog” (Inuwaka) and “Small Dog” (Koinu). Inuwaka performed for the emperor in Fushimi Palace in 1420, while Koinu gave a similar performance in 1431.⁵⁵

The *shōmonji* were eventually crushed by the professional troupes who lobbied with the shogun to deny them access to the shogunal palace. The shogun's guards restrained Koinu from giving his congratulatory performance on New Year's Day of 1337. This took place at the time when the Yamato troupe of Kan'ami (1333–1384) and Zeami was enjoying the patronage of shogun Yoshimitsu. In 1450, seven years after Zeami's death, the police, answering a request from the Kanze and Konparu troupes, stopped Koinu in the middle of his act while he was holding a fund-raising performance at Rokudō Chinkōji Temple in the capital. He was eventually arrested in 1466 for appearing on stage with a mask—apparently a prop reserved for the guilds of professional actors.⁵⁶

The Marketing of Defilement

The ritual domestication of the defiling forces of the unknown translated into solid cash in the middle of the Kamakura period when, due to the thirteenth-century development of a monetary economy as well as the erosion of their proprietary rights on lands (*shōen*), temples became increasingly dependent on the ability to gather money from external sources. Religious institutions launched fund-raising campaigns employing an array of “fund-raising saints” (*kanjin hijiri*), an anonymous crowd of fund-raisers endowed with the most diverse expertise: monks preaching the Buddhist teachings in exchange for alms; storytellers and actors who were sent by temples to instruct villagers in the history of their institutions while informing their audiences of the temple's need of a new bell or some repair work on a leaking roof; and construction workers who could easily market their sought-after skills in designing and building roads and bridges.⁵⁷

From around the middle of the thirteenth century, temples looked for new avenues of income by charging their customers to listen to a Buddhist sermon or to pray in front of a statue that was credited with healing power. Sacred representations on the topic of the sermon followed the monk's oratorical performance with the aim of instructing and entertaining a paying audience. “The Record of the Kagen Era” (*Kagenki*) states that “Eight Lectures on the *Lotus Sutra*” (*Hokke Hakkō*), delivered at the Kokawadera in 1339, ended with a performance of *sarugaku* by the actor Kesadayū.⁵⁸ The same name appears in conjunction with a fund-raising campaign at the Hōryūji on the sixth day of the Eleventh Month 1317 and in 1320, the year in which, according to the *Ōdai Nenjū Gyōji* (1511), an actor named “Kesadayū from Sakato was asked by [Hōryūji] Temple to head the performances of *dengaku* because of his fame.”⁵⁹

The increasing involvement of temples in the arena of play followed

their successful monopolization of rights over the performance of rituals dealing with death and defilement. A study of the mechanism of memorial services indicates a direct relationship between religious ritual and theatrical performance, as well as informing us on the dynamics of the economic gains made by temples in domesticating and silencing the threatening power of an impure “other.” We know from texts such as the *Kanmon Gyoki* (9/23/1421) and the *Dajōin Jisha Zōjiki* (2/26/1497) that one of the main reasons why commoners and aristocrats provided temples with offerings was the sponsorship of memorial services. People needed to have rituals performed that would extinguish evil karma and guarantee rebirth in Amida’s paradise.⁶⁰

The medieval monk was not the first to master the art of convincing people that services held in memory of the dead were highly beneficial both to the destiny of the departed and to the karma of his generous relatives. The ninth-century *Nihon Ryōiki* by monk Kyōkai mentions the story of monk Jakurin who freed a dead woman from the sin of abandoning her babies without food by persuading those babies—now responsible adults—to sponsor a memorial service on the woman’s behalf. The narrator argues that only the generosity of her filial children can spare the woman from the pains of hell:

Thereupon, all the children grieved and said, “We don’t bear her a grudge. Why does our loving mother suffer for this sin?” They made Buddhist images and copied scriptures in order to atone for her sin. After the ceremony was over, she appeared to Jakurin once more in a dream, saying, “I am now released from my sin.”⁶¹

Frightening sermons on hell and karmic retribution were an eloquent exhortation to generosity. Fund-raisers of the Daianji—a temple in Yamato province—who solicited funds by performing memorial services for the dead used a popular legend for this purpose. In 1199, one of their monks, Keikō, wrote a document with the intention of raising money for the casting of a new bell. He justified the temple’s fund-raising technique by mentioning a famous precedent dating back to the Heian period, when Emperor Uda (r. 887–897) entrusted seven temples with the recitation of sutras in order to save the spirit of Tōru from hell. Keikō was referring to a popular legend involving the figure of the minister Minamoto no Tōru (822–895), a patron of the arts, whose gorgeous villa—the Kawara no In—was in early Heian times the spatial symbol of courtliness (*miyabi*).⁶² According to the *Konjaku Monogatari*, after Tōru’s death the villa went from his son Noboru to Retired Emperor Uda, who in turn left it to his own son, Emperor Daigo (r. 897–930). The spirit of Tōru used to appear to Uda complaining that the emperor was illegally occupying

his dwelling. Eventually the evil spirit disappears—the legend continues—persuaded to do so by Uda's rhetorical skills.⁶³

In another version that appeared in an eleventh-century anthology in Chinese, the *Honchō Monzui* (Choice Literature of This Realm; ca. 1040),⁶⁴ the spirit of Tōru confesses to the emperor that his fall into hell was due to his sinful habit of killing living beings. Since he had no descendants—Tōru argues—he cannot hope to have a memorial service performed that would release him from his sins. Therefore, on the fourth day of the Seventh Month 926, Emperor Uda—who was then living at the Kawara no In together with his consort Kyōgoku no Miya—sponsored sutra recitations in seven temples as a requiem for the repose of Tōru's soul. Ki no Arimasa wrote an oath (*fujumon*) soliciting the recitation of Buddhist scriptures.⁶⁵

Other medieval collections, such as the *Jikkishō* and the *Zoku Kojidan*, describe the emperor's pacification of Tōru's spirit. According to the latter document, in addition to the recitation of holy scriptures, Uda, following the advice of monk Hitoyasu, gave the order to build a statue of the Buddha to be worshiped at Daianji Temple.⁶⁶

Keikō exhorts his parishioners to follow the example of Emperor Uda by providing themselves and their dead relatives with proper afterlife insurance. He argues that by remembering the meaning of the famous words, "the bell of the Gion temple tolls into every man's heart to warn him that all is vanity and evanescence,"⁶⁷ and by giving generous alms for the casting of the temple's bell, the ordinary man can escape "the kettles of hell" and be reborn in Amida's paradise. Monk Keikō put the textual bells of the *Tale of the Heike* (*Heike Monogatari*) to a practical end, a practice that became quite common during the Muromachi period. According to the *Moromori Ki*, the recitation of episodes from the *Tale of the Heike* often followed the delivery of sermons.⁶⁸ Moreover, the view of traveling holy men carrying signs with the image of a bell was widespread among donors who grew increasingly accustomed to the fund-raising tactics of temples.

The activity of fund-raisers intensified with the approach of the Seventh Month and the Urabon Festival commemorating the spirits of the dead. The *Rakuchū Rakugaizu* (Scenes from Inside and Outside the Capital) portrays a group of monks, carrying a board with a bell on it, in the act of collecting money while narrating legends of their temple.⁶⁹ An offering for the casting of the temple's bell was publicized as the price of guaranteeing spiritual relief both to the donor and to his dead relatives suffering from the pains of the lower circles of the Six Realms (*rokudō*).

Accounts of the sinners' pains in hell such as the one about Minamoto no Tōru were eloquent devices in fund-raising campaigns. Actors pro-

vided the monks with even more graphic portrayals of “reality” in the afterworld, eventually developing a repertoire of *nō* that staged the victimization of the dead at the hands of angry demons—a form known as “demon-*nō*” (*oni-nō*).⁷⁰ The playwright Kan’ami (1333–1384) transformed the legend of Tōru in a demon-*nō* entitled “Minister Tōru” (*Tōru no Otodo*). The play was probably commissioned by a preacher who wanted his sermon on the minister followed by a staged account of the events. Kan’ami’s play introduces the theme of a demon torturing Tōru in hell.⁷¹

The fourteenth century witnessed a substantial increase in the number of temples sponsoring *sarugaku* performances for fund-raising purposes. Before Zeami’s accomplishments of the 1400s, we have records indicating eight major examples of *sarugaku*. They were staged in “defiled” zones whose association with the impurity of death made the geography of ludization a central element in the religious politics of domestication against the threat of the unknown and the “other.” The following list records the sites where these performances took place, as well as the performers and the sponsoring temples:⁷²

<i>Date</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Actor</i>	<i>Source</i>
1317	Hōryūji	Kesadayū	<i>Kagenki</i>
1339	Kokawadera (Kii)	Unknown	Temple records
1364	Yakuōji (Kyoto)	Yamato troupe	<i>Moromori Ki</i>
1371	Fukujōji (Settsu)	Kan’ami	Temple records
1372	Daigoji	Kan’ami	<i>Ryūgen Sōjō Nikki</i>
1380	Aya no Kōji Kawara	Inuō	<i>Gōyōki</i>
1383	Takakura Jizō-dō	Unknown	<i>Yoshidake Hinamiki</i>
1399	Ichijō Takenohana	Zeami	<i>Gōyōki</i>

Representations of Defilement

The reconstruction of the contextual elements in which a performance of *sarugaku* originally took place helps to clarify the role played by actors within a larger ritualistic performance. The presentation to the public of a religious drama was a small portion of a much larger play in which the professionals of the holy channeled defiling non-Buddhist components of the *mysterium tremendum* on a stage—the smaller text—on which impurities were transferred to a representative of the most “defiled” elements of society: the outcast actor. The performer of *sarugaku* exorcised on stage the elements that demanded expulsion from the frame of the social order—a threatening presence exemplified by the beggars and lepers auditing the play. By taking upon themselves the negative ingredients

of defilement, actors played the role of scapegoats, which the medieval Japanese called the "dolls of pollution," that shrines' officials consigned to the river after transferring to them the impurities of the community.

The performance of the minor drama (*sarugaku*) was the temple's prerequisite for the success of the major drama, a ritual whose actors—the paupers of riverbanks—were paraded to remind commoners and aristocrats, the members of the ordered society, of the risks of an unsuccessful ritualistic performance. Outcasts were the protagonists of both the textual play and the play of reality. While providing audiences with concrete examples of defilement, they also owned the key to escape from their own personal defilement. Audiences were reminded that, because of the continuous threat posed by the nonresident groups, they could not shelter themselves from the attacks of the "other" unless they mobilized the forces of defilement to their advantage. Actors who played the role of scapegoats mitigated the harshness of the commoners' reaction to the presence of outcasts, who as "professional scapegoats" and restorers of order were sometimes given a chance to climb from the very bottom of a long and complex social ladder. This was made possible mainly by the actor's identification on stage with a deity (*kami*) in its peaceful and benign nature (*nigitama*) that recovered cosmic order after the same deity's violent aspect (*aratama*) had threatened to destroy it. The final restoration of order won the audience's respect for the actor—a pattern recurring in the staging of *nō* regardless of the community to which the play was addressed.

The Japanese anthropologist Yamaguchi Masao has devised a scheme for the interpretation of *nō* that—although originally applied to *Semimaru*, the story of Emperor Daigo's blind son—provides a thorough explanation of the plays that are most closely related to the problem of outcasts' defilement. The actor/character shelters the positive elements of society—such as centers of power, normality, organized settlements, the law, and the capital—from the negative factors—margins of power, abnormality, vagrancy, liminality, and the countryside—that challenge social stability. The process aims at either the avoidance of disorder or the restoration of order to any community that patronizes this theatrical ritual, be it a temple, a village, the court, or the shogun's palace. Because of the alleged ability of actors to free the community from "evil," troupes of outcasts were invited, put on stage, and then discarded after the "other" had been completely absorbed by the performers who, like "dolls of pollution" were then floated down the river to their new location, a temple or a neighboring village.⁷³

The exorcising nature of the ritual was further strengthened by the actor's unveiling of his social status onstage in an act of self-representa-

tion showing the presence of outcasts among the characters of the play. Here I will mention a few examples whose topic was thought by temples to be congenial to the role played by *nō* within a Buddhist ritual of purification and pacification.

SLAVES

Three outcasts appear in the *nō* drama *Jinen Koji*: a fund-raiser, a slave trader, and a girl who sells herself in order to pay for a memorial service for her dead parents. The title of the play derives from the name of the main character (*shite*)—a man “naturally endowed (*jinen*) with the virtues of a lay priest (*koji*).” A translation of the Sanskrit word *grhapati*, “*koji*” indicates a paterfamilias who embraces the Buddhist faith and acts like a monk, although officially he does not take the tonsure.⁷⁴ An employee of Ungoji Temple in the Higashiyama area of the capital, Jinen Koji is likely to be the portrait of an articulate outcast from an annexed area (*sanjo*) whose rhetorical skills guaranteed his employability as preacher and fund-raiser. The fact that in medieval Japan “natural lay priests” (*jinen koji*) were often laughed at as “natural beggars” (*jinen kojiki*) unmasks a reality that is much closer to the historical circumstances of the social status of lay priests than to a simple play on words.⁷⁵

The *Mii Zokutōki* mentions that a representation of a play with the same title took place on the fifteenth day of the Eighth Month 1313 at the Jōgyōdō of Miidera Temple.⁷⁶ The detail of the Jōgyōdō hall where the play was allegedly performed links *Jinen Koji* to the repertoire of “backstage *sarugaku*” of which we know so little. The records of the Miidera state that *Jinen Koji* was the fifth piece in a series of performances sponsored by the temple on the occasion of a “longevity display” (*ennen furyū*), a ritual aimed at the extension of the believers’ life by dispelling evil spirits and summoning benign deities on stage. This performance occurred sixteen years before the birth of Kan’ami, who is credited with the authorship of the present play, but not without the revising hand of his son Zeami.⁷⁷

Jinen Koji is in charge of the performance of a double ritual: The textual and fictional performance—the delivery of a series of sermons lasting seventeen days in order to raise funds for reconstruction of the temple—becomes the basic framework sustaining the larger and to the temple more central rite—the sheltering of the community from the danger of defilement that may occur if the larger ritual suffers any kind of disruption. The fund-raiser battles against the intrusion of disturbing elements that may jeopardize the results expected to benefit the two communities meeting in the temple: the fictional group of worshipers that has gathered

in order to listen to the preacher's sermons, and the historical community that is witnessing the performance of the play.

The preacher's first concern is the proper execution of the ritual, a respect for the binding rules of the profession that, if improperly followed, may lead to a result opposite from the one desired—a summoning of evil spirits bringing misfortune to the community. The expertise of Jinen Koji in the basic matter of rules is emphasized by the fact that he faithfully reproduces on stage the norms collected in a medieval manual for preachers, "Essays on the Clear Vision of Sermons" (*Seppō Myōgen Ron*). Jinen begins with preliminary arrangements such as putting on the proper garments, entering the sacred area, worshiping the Three Treasures, burning incense, and mounting the platform. Then he proceeds to the ritual—recitation of hymns, offering of flowers to the Buddha, striking the bell, reading of the supplication. These actions customarily preceded the delivery of the sermon.⁷⁸

SHITE: Seeking solace while awaiting the moon at the temple surrounded by clouds—Ungoji—in the evening sky, I said that I would give a sermon. Therefore, the preacher got on the platform and, before starting to read the written supplication, he struck the bell and said: "I respectfully address Śākyamuni, for whose teachings I shall be grateful all my life, and all the buddhas of the Three Worlds, together with all the bodhisattvas. I will recite the *Hannyakyō* in order to ask for the coming of all deities to protect the Buddhist Law."⁷⁹

The ritual is disrupted when a girl appears on stage, offering a garment to the preacher in exchange for a memorial service for her dead parents. The girl's offering to the temple is, in fact, the result of a defiling action: She had to sell herself (*minoshiro*) to a slave trader in order to purchase a straw-coat-like cloth (*minoshiro goromo*) that might pay for the requiem. As the two Japanese words—*minoshiro*—indicate, the girl was making a human sacrifice to the Buddha by providing the temple with a symbolic item displaying the real nature of the sacrifice—the life of a human being forced to become an outcast in order to fulfill the duty of filial piety and assure her parents of a safe life in the afterworld.

Jinen Koji is faced with the hard choice of whether to address the problem of the girl—and, thereby, disrupt the order of his ritual—or to continue the rites undisturbed while exposing them to the potential defilement coming from the offering. He is so upset by the sight of the girl's proprietor, who has come to the temple to claim her, that he ignores a believer's complaint that, by interrupting his sermons on the last of the

seventeen days, the preacher is preventing his audience from forming a tie with the Buddha. Arguing that rules must be broken and the sacrifice must be exposed to danger in order to escape a deeper defilement that would inevitably unleash its ruinous power against the sacred area, Jinen Koji decides to stop the rites. There is no point—Jinen says—in struggling to keep intact an order that has already fallen into disorder. Looking for a justification in the same manual which codified the rules he was breaking, Jinen Koji applies to himself a well-known argument from the *Seppō Myōgen Ron* according to which “a preacher must make his listeners achieve the principle (*dōri*) of understanding white and black, forcing them to distinguish good from evil.”⁸⁰

AI: If you do so, all the sermons that you have delivered so far will be of no avail to me.

SHITE: No, that’s not the case. Although you may be listening to sermons one hundred or a thousand days, those words won’t be of any help to you unless you learn how to distinguish good from evil. Now, the girl happens to be a good person, while the slave trader is clearly bad. Aren’t these two paths straightforwardly laid in front of you?⁸¹

Defilement is removed and the restoration of order achieved through an act of ludization. The preacher shows his ability to exorcise the defiling presence of the “other” by staging a play within the play—three times removed from the temple’s original ritual—in which he appeals to his rhetorical and performing abilities to persuade the slave trader to free the girl.⁸² Jinen Koji puts his philological dexterity to the task of healing the hurt pride of the merchant whose boat the preacher inadvertently calls “a slave boat” (*hitokaibune*). The same expression appears in a popular poem collected in the *Kangin Shū* (A Collection of Private Music) that attests to the practice, quite common in medieval Japan, of buying human beings and reselling them in the eastern or northern provinces. The poem says:

<i>Hitokaibune wa oki</i>	A row of <i>slave galleys</i> goes offshore.
o kogu	
Totemo uraruru mi o,	Captain, at least row quietly the
tada	<i>first boat</i> carrying
Shizuka ni koge yo	This body of mine which is waiting
Sendōdono.	to be sold. ⁸³

Incensed that he has been publicly exposed as a seller of human flesh, the man threatens to increase the temple’s exposure to defilement through his anger. Jinen Koji calms the merchant and avoids the further accumula-

tion of impurities by improvising an ingenious play on words that is based on the two meanings of the expression *hitokaibune* italicized in the poem. His rhetorical skills win the preacher the temporary admiration of the merchant who is almost persuaded to set his captive free:

SHITE: Let me address that man in his boat.

WAKI: Why should you call me, since this is not a boat meant for passengers?

SHITE: As a matter of fact, I am not a passenger, and I am not looking for a boat to cross Lake Biwa. I have something to tell you.

WAKI: What kind of boat do you think this is?

SHITE: Well, this is a slave boat (*hitokaibune*).

WAKI: Not so loud! What are you driving at?

SHITE: I am not surprised you are so upset; after all, people may be listening! I was referring to the oar of the boat.

WAKIZURE (a dealer's colleague): You don't refer to an oar that way. If you had meant what you say, you would have used the word "sculling oar" (*kararo*). There is no oar called *hitokai*.

SHITE: Well, you say first layer of mist (*hitokasumi*) and second layer of mist (*futakasumi*) when you talk about mist on the water's surface. By the same token, you say first dyeing (*hitoshio*) and second dyeing (*futashio*) when you dye cloth. Why should it be wrong to say that your boat is the first oar (*hitokai*) or the first boat in a series of galleys?

WAKI: Your reasoning is quite interesting, preacher!⁸⁴

Appealing to the written code of his guild that forbids the restitution of purchased slaves, the trader refuses to free the girl, transforming the object of the priest's philological performance—the oar—into a weapon of physical torture. With the oar he repeatedly hits the girl, filling her mouth with cotton in order to silence her cries.

The monk challenges the professional code of the merchant with the Buddhist rule of bodhisattvic action, according to which no person of the Law can neglect human suffering without being exposed to shame and disgrace. Looking for a psychological reversal that may transfer his own embarrassment to the trader, Jinen Koji offers to change places with the girl and be sold as a slave in the northern provinces. He knows that, should the trader arrive home with a priest on the boat, people would think that, unable to find any slave, the merchant had finally settled on a preacher, thus becoming the laughingstock of his town.⁸⁵ The preacher is successful, but on one condition: that a ritual be performed by Jinen Koji on behalf of the defiled slave trader.

The merchant's request gives Jinen Koji an opportunity to exorcise the

serious defilement with an act of ludization. The fame of the preacher as a performer was well known to the people of the northern provinces who had once seen him dancing, after a sermon, "in order to get the attention of a sleepy audience."⁸⁶ The ingenuity of Jinen Koji's act—a mixture of narration,⁸⁷ music, and mimicry—battles against the threatening elements of the "other," leading to the staging of a civil war in which an outcast is asked to fight against his peers in order to legitimize his "acceptable" social function. The preacher summons the forces of nature to help him perform his professional act of purification. While rubbing his rosary on the frame of his fan in order to reproduce the sound of the instrument known as *sasara*, he uses as musical background the waves hitting the shore and the roar of the thunderstorm. After freeing the girl and exposing the merchant to the sinfulness of his trade, Jinen Koji finally leads the metaphorical boat of defilement "through Lake Biwa into the land of enlightenment."⁸⁸

The symbolic mechanism that allows the preacher to restore order to the Buddhist community, shielding the temple from further disruption, is put in motion by the skills of a *sarugaku/nō* actor. His mastery of verbal as well as nonverbal languages—dance, music, and mime—is a central ingredient in the successful performance of a ritual that actualizes the ideal, "so that what ought to have been prevails over what was, permanent good intention prevails over temporary aberration."⁸⁹

The outcast's mastery of the means of production—rhetoric, music, and dance—provided by the orderly hierarchical center brings about an act of pacification. The investment of temples and commoners in the skills of an outcast helps them to shelter their ordered world from the defiling forces of the disordered "other" that the outcast/actor channels to himself. The act of miming is central to the actor's achievement of control over the forces of defilement. Clarifying the meaning of the symbolism of confrontations, the anthropologist R. G. Lienhardt has eloquently explained the role played by nonverbal action in the context of peacemaking ceremonies among members of the African Dinka tribe:

It seems that gesture without speech was enough to confirm, in the external physical universe, an intention conceived interiorly in the moral. . . . The symbolic action, in fact, mimes the total situation in which the parties in the feud know themselves to be including both their hostility and their disposition towards peace without which the ceremony could not be held. In this symbolic representation of their situation they control it, according to their will to peace, by transcending in symbolic action the only type of practical action (that is, continued hostilities) which for the Dinka follows from the situation of homicide.⁹⁰