A Beggar's Art

Scripting Modernity in Japanese Drama, 1900–1930

M. Cody Poulton

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Preface

Forget *kabuki.* Ignore tradition. Move, don't dance! Talk, don't sing!

—**OSANAI KAORU,** *admonishing the actors during rehearsals for Tsubouchi Shōyō's* En the Ascetic

For a couple of decades in the early twentieth century, straddling the Taishō era (1912–1926), drama enjoyed something of a heyday in Japanese literature. Almost every writer of the day at least dabbled in this form, and many—including Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, Yamamoto Yūzō, Kikuchi Kan, Kume Masao, Arishima Takeo, Mushanokōji Saneatsu, Nogami Yaeko, and Ueda (Enchi) Fumiko, to name just a few—established themselves as playwrights before or while still settling into fiction as their dominant medium of expression. Some, like Yoshii Isamu and Kinoshita Mokutarō, were poets who caught the drama bug. Many more—men and women like Suzuki Senzaburō, Okada Yachiyo, Hasegawa Shigure, Kubota Mantarō, Kishida Kunio, and Akita Ujaku—devoted themselves almost exclusively to writing for the stage. One of the first scholars to write a major study of modern drama in Japan, Ōyama Isao, lists some eighty professional playwrights active in Japan between about 1900 and 1940; the volume of work that they produced is immense.[1] Some of the earliest modern Japanese literature to be translated into European languages was of drama by Shōyō, Tanizaki, Yamamoto, Mushanokōji, Kikuchi, and Kishida (among others). Kōri Torahiko even wrote drama in English, and at least one of his plays, *The Death of Yoritomo,* was performed on the London stage.

Many of these writers, particularly those who were almost exclusively playwrights, are practically forgotten today, and the ones we remember are often remembered for other things. In fact, drama is a subject that has been given remarkably short shrift in Japanese literary studies over the past century or so.

Tsubouchi Shōyō's *Essence of the Novel* (*Shōsetsu shinzui*, 1887), for example, has amassed a significant body of criticism in English, to say nothing of Japanese, but this work was really a footnote to a life devoted to theatre and drama, and few since Shōyō's death in 1935 have bothered to study the playwright's works in any great detail.[2] The only prewar Japanese playwright whose work is still read, discussed, and performed with any regularity is Kishida Kunio, and his reputation has been tarnished in Japan by his collaboration with the militarists in the early 1940s. By the 1930s, something happened to drama and theatre in Japan, such that the so-called "age of Taishō drama" seemed in retrospect like a flash in the pan. True, many of the plays (especially the translations available from the 1920s and early '30s) are rather dated now. But a major chapter in the study of modern Japanese literature and theatre would be missing if we neglected these works, and, in fact, there are some fascinating gems still to be found there. While the rise of the so-called New Theatre (*shingeki*) movement in Japan in the early twentieth century has been fairly well documented, considerably less attention has been focused on the role that drama played in the modernization of Japanese literature and theatre during this time.[3]

Japan has one of the greatest theatre traditions in the world, and drama has played no small part in this. The country has produced unique forms like *nō*, the puppet theatre, and *kabuki;* the latter two in particular played a crucial role in the rise of early modern Japanese culture. It would be no exaggeration to say that during the Edo era, *kabuki* was the dominant form of cultural expression for the Japanese. The theatre spawned a huge industry of related artistic media, including *ukiyoe* (pictures of the floating world), fan magazines, and illustrated playbooks. Fans vied to imitate their favorite actors in such amateur theatricals as *chaban kyōgen.* References to popular *kabuki* actors and plays were also used as marketing ploys to sell new stories and commercial products. Family feuds; hidden, mistaken, and revealed identities; the quest for a fetish, like a family sword or scroll (a device called a "weenie" by early silent movie actress Pearl White and a "McGuffin" by Alfred Hitchcock); true crimes like extortion, murder, larceny, adultery, double suicides, and vendettas—all were stock plot devices that were first exploited in the puppet and *kabuki* theatres. These "theatrical" devices found their way not only into Edo pulp fiction but also into such storytelling arts as *kōshaku* and *rakugo.*[4] The enormous casts and convoluted plots in, say, Kyokutei Bakin (1767–1848) or *kabuki* history plays (*jidaimono*) demonstrate not only a love of the performative, but also a veritable narratomania prevalent in Edo culture, a tendency that on stage is necessarily translated into spectacular physical action: theatre is plot made flesh.

Playwrights like Chikamatsu Monzaemon and Kawatake Mokuan made a significant contribution to the creation of this popular culture, bı for centuries drama had remained essentially a pretext for performance, an it is not until the introduction of Western dramatic theory in the nineteent century that the Japanese themselves began to pay much attention to dram as a literary genre.

By the first decade of the twentieth century, the staging of Ibsen, Gork Chekhov, and Shakespeare by *shingeki* theatre companies like Osanai Kaoru Free Theatre and Tsubouchi Shōyō's Literary Society ignited an interest i literary circles in the possibilities of drama both as a literary form and as way of disseminating new ideas. But events took place in Japanese literary ar theatre circles earlier in the Meiji era (1868–1912) that paved the way to wh was called the "age of Taishō drama." The first chapter of this study traces tl emerging recognition of drama as a literary genre in the context of attempts reform *kabuki* and make it a performing art that could address the challeng of the modern world. Theatre, however, had to undergo a revolution before could make a place for modern drama in Japan. From the Taishō era onwar efforts to accommodate the new dramaturgy to traditional stagecraft we increasingly abandoned. Osanai's injunctions to his actors on opening nig for *En the Ascetic* at the Tsukiji Little Theatre (Tsukiji Shōgekijō) in 1926 "forget tradition" signaled the rejection of the native and a virtually wholesa acceptance of what was foreign. And so during the Taishō era, we see dram rise but also its demise in Japan, at a point when it had just begun to find its in the works of dramatists like Kishida Kunio and Kubota Mantarō. I use tl word "demise" guardedly because excellent work has continued to be produc well into the present, by writers like Abe Kōbō and Mishima Yukio, not mention others who have been above all playwrights, like Betsuyaku Minor What has fallen, rather, is the estimation of drama as an art form among maı in both the theatre and literary worlds in Japan.

A number of reasons can be offered for this decline. First, as Kishi Kunio himself admitted, drama is "a beggar's art" (*kojiki geijutsu*), somethir that can be artistically complete only if it serves the theatre, where on stage tl lines of a text can be fleshed out by living actors before a live audience.[5] The ri of performance studies since the 1960s has come about in recognition, aft decades of slavish attention to the text, of what is essentially nonliterary abo the performing arts. Osanai himself was well aware that theatre was mo than simply drama. No playwright can enjoy artistic autonomy like novelis or poets; no matter how satisfactory as literature, there is always somethiı

lacking in a play if we only read it. Yet at the same time, it is prey to the whims and vagaries of others who may or may not choose to realize it on stage. As anyone knows, bad direction or acting can destroy the pleasure of a great play. Whether good or bad, productions are in any case an expensive proposition. Indeed, the vicissitudes of funding and fashion often conspire to neglect the work of writers who are not living. With very few exceptions—especially in Japan, where a chasm still yawns between classical and modern performing arts—the theatre world seems to lack a historic consciousness. Many contemporary playwrights, to say nothing of actors and directors, simply do not know the work of their forebears, even if their top award, the Kishida Drama Prize, is named after one of them.

Kishida's own case is emblematic of the dubious role playwrights had in the creation of modern theatre in early-twentieth-century Japan. Political events, particularly the rise of fascism and its stranglehold over all forms of expression in the 1930s and '40s, played an important role in drama's demise as a respected form of literature. *Shingeki* had been politically active from as early as the 1920s, and through the 1930s many playwrights, directors, and actors in Japan would resist authority in a manner far more courageous and concerted than novelists or poets ever did. The collaborative nature of theatrical work quite likely gave *shingeki* artists a solidarity and strength in numbers that isolated poets and novelists did not feel in the face of political oppression. But by the same token, the theatre world was politicized in ways that limited the scope of artistic expression, and those who did not believe that it was their task to promote overtly leftist political ideals found themselves increasingly estranged from the theatre world and thus easily co-opted by the rightists. Well into the 1960s, *shingeki* retained its reputation as a center for increasingly doctrinaire leftist political expression, which alienated many intellectuals who did not share the same views. The critic Kobayashi Hideo was typical of those who came to distain *shingeki* when he wrote in 1960 that "ever since the Tsukiji Little Theatre, the real purpose of what they call *shingeki* hasn't been to put on a play so much as to gather together a group of like-minded comrades [*dōshi*] called '*shingeki* fans.'"[6]

It should be stressed here that modern drama in Japan is *not* synonymous with *shingeki;* rather, the latter played a somewhat adversarial role in the rise of modern drama. A seminal figure in the modernization of Japanese theatre, Osanai Kaoru must take a lot of the blame here, for in two crucial moments in *shingeki*'s development—the founding of Osanai's Free Theatre in 1909 and of the Tsukiji Little Theatre in 1924—he would make a point of privileging

foreign over domestic drama. New Theatre essentially became synonymous with the importation of *Western* drama and theatre to Japan, to a great extent at the expense of the nurturing of a native Japanese dramatic art. In the early years of the last century, most playwrights had to content themselves with productions, if at all, of their plays by artists trained in *kabuki* or its offshoot, the *shinpa* theatre, and not by those schooled in the methods of modern stage art. Certainly drama took longer than fiction to evolve as a modern form of literary expression in Japan, and the challenges of developing a contemporary vernacular dialogue also had something to do with this. Contemporary critics and historians of the genre in Japan tend to use such terms as *kindaigeki* or *kindai gikyoku* (both meaning "modern drama") to describe this form.

I will argue here that there was also an essentially *anti-theatrical* element to the modernization of Japanese culture during this period. Despite *kabuki*'s dominance over popular culture, aesthetic standards began to shift radically during the Meiji era. The rise of the notion that all literary forms should be devoted to the portrayal of a modern, privatized self played a large part in this transition. A time came when a literate, rather than an oral and performative culture invaded all the arts. Rhetorically speaking, modernity found expression in Japanese literature through the devices of confession and dialogue; the former gave rise to personal fiction, the latter to the language of modern drama. The eventual victory of monologic expression over the dialogic imagination is an important reason for the literary precedence of fiction over drama in early-twentieth-century Japan. As a consequence, fiction (*shōsetsu*) began to replace the play (*shibai*) as the paradigm of cultural expression. By the same token, there was a narrowing of subject matter and attenuation of plot, with an often claustrophobic focus on modern subjectivity creating by the 1920s the "plotless fiction" that novelist Akutagawa Ryūnosuke would praise as the sign of "pure literature." Modern Japanese cultural expression thus moved from a polyphonic or dialogic mode of narrative to something closer to internal monologue; at its most extreme, plot is abandoned for a lyrical exploration of consciousness in the "I-novel."

Something of this anti-theatrical quality can even be detected in the contours of modern drama itself. Modern drama had several common features (or at least ideals), including the following: coherent and rationally constructed plots; realistic, psychologically delineated and fully individuated characters struggling for self-determination in a harsh and antagonistic society; colloquial, matter-of-fact dialogue; and a minimum or complete lack of musical, choreographic, or spectacular effects. A remark by Osanai Kaoru

about Gerhart Hauptmann's *Lonely Lives*—a work to which the protagonist of Tayama Katai's *The Quilt* (*Futon,* 1906) turns obsessively for inspiration—pretty much sums up the new anti-theatrical dramaturgy. Osanai said of this signature work of German naturalism that it was "a play that is not a play, in the sense that there are no occasions for acting."[7] At the same time, theatre was pressed into the service of conveying a "message" that was ultimately more intellectual, even ideological, than sensual; indeed, the theatre became, to an extent to which it had never been before in Japan, a forum for the illustration of social problems and the exploration of ideas and possible solutions. Modern dialogue drama, like fiction, became a medium for the personal expression, above all, of its author. Accordingly, the status of the playwright rose over that of the actor, who increasingly was called upon to deliver faithfully the words as they had been written (and frequently printed) down. By the same token, however, much of the fun of theatergoing was lost, and increasingly the experience of seeing a play was like being taught sometimes harsh and frequently boring lessons in modern life. A number of the dramatists themselves were not entirely happy with this turn of events. Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, for one, professed that he preferred an "art rich in sensual pleasures over that with deep intellectual content." Hence, he favored *kabuki* over Ibsen, whose impact on modern Japanese audiences had been profound but was "liable to give them bad dreams." The experience of going to the modern theatre—being forced to sit still quietly and listen without the accompanying pleasures of food, tobacco, or alcohol and no music or dance but just a lot of talking—was too much like school. So Tanizaki claimed, "If I want to see a play these days, I still run to *kabuki,* even though I'm not entirely satisfied with it. In any case, there I can see richer colors, more beautiful physical action than I can on the modern or *shinpa* stages."[8]

The didactic tendency in modern drama became even greater as theatre became politicized in the 1920s and '30s, as if to regain by ideological means the sociality theatre had naturally lost in its march to modernization. During this time, however, the New Theatre movement was never able to achieve either the popularity or the cultural importance hitherto enjoyed by *kabuki.* Its artistic aspirations, conflictingly highbrow and populist, left much of its potential audience bemused; people turned to *kabuki* or *shinpa,* or to more contemporary pleasures like the cinema or the Asakusa opera, for their entertainment.

Such were the challenges facing a Japanese playwright in the first half of the last century. Yet despite all these, some excellent work was achieved, and this book attempts to redress the neglect into which many playwrights have

fallen and demonstrate that, in fact, modern drama flourished in the first d
cades of the twentieth century. Introductory chapters outline the developme
of drama from the 1880s until the 1930s, but the bulk of this book is giv
over to translations, with introductions, of nine one-act plays by nine diffe
ent playwrights. These plays will give the reader a sense of the developme
of modern drama in Japan, often at great odds, from early experiments in t
form to works that, in the opinion of this author, stand head to head with t
best of twentieth-century drama anywhere. While multi-act plays were al
written and produced, the one-act provides an opportunity to present a bro
cross-section of works by many of the best dramatists of their time. There a
also important historical and formal reasons for my having selected only sh
plays from this period. I go into further detail on these in chapter 2, but suffi
it to say here that like the short story was for fiction, the one-act play was t
definitive form for drama during the Taishō and early Shōwa (1926–198
eras; it was the offspring and expression of a quintessentially modern sensib
ity. By the same token, I have selected only plays set in modern times; the
are none here that could be loosely described as *shin-* (new) *kabuki,* though *k
buki* artists staged a number of these works and some playwrights, like Suzu
Senzaburō and Hasegawa Shigure, frequently wrote historical plays.

Space limitations have necessarily made my choice even more selecti
Seminal earlier playwrights like Kinoshita Mokutarō and Yamamoto Yū
have been left out, but their legacy is seen in some of the work of others p
sented here. This book leaves off in the early 1930s, and because of my stud
interest in the development of a colloquial dialogue (a central feature of mo
ern drama), its focus has been on the so-called "literary" school of dram
tists, culminating in the playwrights of the magazine *Playwriting* (*Gekisak*
Kishida Kunio, Kubota Mantarō, and Tanaka Chikao. Another book is need
to do justice to the work of leftist playwrights during the 1920s and '30s, bu
have included Akita Ujaku's *The Skeletons' Dance* (*Gaikotsu no buchō*) as one
the finest examples of politically engaged drama in this period.

The selection here presents a good sampling of what current critici
has identified as the most representative drama of this period. I have be
guided in my selection by the work of many Japanese scholars who, in t
past decades, have been working diligently to reclaim modern drama's sta
as a literary genre; some are members of an earlier generation, like Nagah
Kazuo, Ochi Haruo, and Ōyama Isao; more recent ones include Inoue Yos
Nishimura Hiroko, Hayashi Hirochika, and other contemporary schol
belonging to the Modern Theatre History Study Circle (Kindai Engeki

Kenkyūkai). Four of the plays translated here—Okada Yachiyo's *The Boxwood Comb* (*Tsuge no kushi*), Kikuchi Kan's *Father Returns* (*Chichi kaeru*), Suzuki Senzaburō's *The Valley Deep* (*Tanizoko*), and Akita Ujaku's *The Skeletons' Dance* (*Gaikotsu no bucho*)—I first encountered in an anthology put together by this group.[9] Earlier, I lamented the general ignorance of early-twentieth-century drama among contemporary Japanese theatre practitioners, but there have been some notable exceptions: at Theatre X in Tokyo, Kawawa Takashi, a veteran *shingeki* director, has been active for several years now staging modern "classics," drama from the late Meiji, Taishō, and Shōwa eras. There have also been revivals of several modern classics at the New National Theatre in Tokyo. Another group of contemporary directors and actors associated with Art Space (Geijutsu Sōzōkan) in Osaka has staged a series called Classic Renaissance. Productions I saw there of Izumi Kyōka's *The Ruby* (*Kōgyoku*), Hasegawa Shigure's *Rain of Ice* (*Kōri no ame*), and Kishida Kunio's *Two Men at Play with Life* (*Inochi wo moteasobu otoko futari*) inspired me to translate these plays. Japanese women's literature is still underrepresented in translation, and drama hardly appears at all; with the inclusion of two plays here by women, I hope in part to redress that lack. To this list I have added two prewar classics, Kubota Mantarō's *Brief Night* (*Mijikayo*) and Tanaka Chikao's *Mama* (*Ofukuro*). The introductions provide biographical information on the playwrights and the context of their work, but readers may wish to read the plays first lest what I have to say about them spoil their first impressions.

The subject matter is that of modern drama everywhere: adultery and marital discord, family crack-ups, children pitted against their parents. Both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are represented here, and modern pretensions are lampooned as much as modern predicaments are lamented. Akita Ujaku's play addresses a specific historical moment, presenting a startling indictment of the persecution and massacre of innocent Korean residents in the days following the Great Earthquake of 1923. Each of these plays is written in the modern vernacular and explores and exploits the possibilities of dramatic language in Japanese. In all, I have opted for a variety of styles—realism prevails, as it does in modern drama everywhere, but there are examples of symbolism and expressionism too. Though best known for his distinctively lyrical realism, the play by Kishida that I have translated here is a radical work, a black comedy anticipating the Theatre of the Absurd.

I would like to thank a number of people who have read drafts of this work and offered useful corrections and suggestions: Matsuda Hiroko, Tachibana

PREFACE

Rumiko, Tamagawa Hiroko, Toyoshi Yoshihara, Ueno Sonoe, Mari Boyc Brian Powell, Tom Rimer, and my anonymous readers. My thanks to to Hanako Masutani's excellent indexing. Research funding was pro vided by a generous grant from the Social Sciences and Humanitie Research Council of Canada and assistance from the Dean of Humanities a the University of Victoria. I was also able to use on more than one occasio the fine facilities at the International Research Center for Japanese Studie in Kyoto. My thanks too to the brilliant team of editors at the Universit of Hawai'i Press: Patricia Crosby and Cheri Dunn; and to my copy edito Bojana Ristich. They have turned the sow's ear of my manuscript into a sil purse. As always, any mistakes that remain are my own. Finally, I would like t express my gratitude to my wife, Mitsuko, for her love, support, and patienc This work is for her.

A Note on Names

Japanese names are presented in the customary manner, with surnames firs followed by personal names. Standard practice is to refer to an author by su name, but there are exceptions, such as when an author is best known by a pe name; also, when a surname may confuse a reader with that of another authc the author in question is often referred to by personal name.

CHAPTER

1

Meiji Drama Theory before Ibsen

As with so many other aspects of life in Meiji Japan, theatre also went throug the convulsions of modernization, and theatre "reform" (as it was called) wa part and parcel of a public effort to create a modern, "civilized" nation. Thes were, in the first place, top-down efforts by the government to clean up *kabu ki*'s unsavory reputation as a vulgar entertainment for the masses and make presentable to both foreigners and the gentry, the former samurai class. Fror the very first decade of the Meiji era, the theatre was identified as an impoı tant site for promoting the government's official program of "civilization an enlightenment" (*bunmei kaika*), but *kabuki* was also by its disposition a deepl conservative institution and suspicious of government meddling. This is nc altogether surprising: both as an art and as a business, *kabuki* had evolved i reaction to official restrictions, and by the 1870s it was one of the few vestige of Edo culture that did not seem threatened with extinction.

Kabuki's relationship with authority had always been complex. The Ed shogunate (*bakufu*) considered it a necessary evil to be tolerated but strictl regulated, just like prostitution, and throughout the Edo era the *bakufu* fre quently stepped in to ban plays of a politically sensitive nature, punish actoı for pretensions beyond their station, and (on one occasion) even close down theatre completely (the Yamamura-za in 1714). In turn, the theatre was care ful to pay lip service to government moral and sumptuary edicts, all the whi attempting, within these narrow confines, to provide the public with a worl of thrilling action, glamorous actors, and the larger-than-life characters the

played. Along with the licensed quarters with which the theatre remained associated both geographically and socially, *kabuki*'s reputation as a place of not only sexual fantasy but also sexual practice ensured, on the one hand, its central role in the popular culture of the Edo era and, on the other, its notoriety as a place beyond the pale of polite culture.

Neither *kabuki*'s popularity nor its dubious reputation changed substantially during the first years of the Meiji era. If anything, the new Meiji government viewed it as an even greater embarrassment and impediment to calls for "civilization and enlightenment." Official legations to the West, as well as accounts by those who traveled and studied there in the 1860s and '70s, portrayed the theatre as an entertainment for high society, a place for the cultivation of finer sensibilities and moral principles. The *nō* theatre had served a similar but limited purpose for the ruling class of the Edo era, but it endured great hardship for several years after the dissolution of the old regime before, in the late 1870s, regaining a modicum of official patronage.[1]

At the same time, the new Meiji government began to take a proactive role in *kabuki* reform as well. As early as April 1872, the Tokyo municipal government issued a directive to the three major theatres, the Ichimura-za, Nakamura-za, and Morita-za: "With respect to the fact that in recent times both nobility and foreigners are increasingly going to the theatre, portrayal is hereby forbidden of any lewd acts that adults would be ashamed to see in the company of their children. Furthermore, plots for the edification of audiences should be introduced."[2] This was followed up in June by a similar directive from the newly established Ministry of Instruction (Kyōbushō). As Fujiki Hiroyuki notes, this "top-down reform" focused on four specific areas to do with the dramatic text:

(1) Theatre should be a didactic tool for edifying the masses;
(2) Plays should therefore have a moral message, promoting virtue and castigating vice;
(3) The subject matter should be refined, and vulgar and lewd elements expunged;
(4) Plays should faithfully portray historical facts as they occurred.[3]

Further measures were implemented a decade later, in 1882, with "regulations for playhouses" issued by the Tokyo police department mandating a license system for theatres; limiting their number, seating capacity, and hours of performance; and establishing a reporting and censorship system for the

performance of plays, as well as reserved seating for police watchdogs. Government censorship of the theatre would become in many respects tighter than it had been even under the Tokugawa shogunate.[4]

Artful accommodation to authority had always been *kabuki*'s modus vivendi. When Morita Kan'ya XII (1846–1897) opened his Shintomi-za in 1878, the theatre's lead actor, Ichikawa Danjūrō IX (1838–1903), read a speech decrying the salacious ways of traditional *kabuki* and vowing to "clean away the filth."[5] The speech had been written for him by the journalist and publisher Fukuchi Ōchi (1841–1906), a man closely connected to the government and one of the spearheads of *kabuki* reform. Danjūrō's speech is illustrative of the extent to which the theatre at least paid lip service to government directives.

During the first two decades of the Meiji era, *kabuki*'s response to officia[l] pressure to clean up its act was most evident in its pursuit of greater topicalit[y] and historical verisimilitude, particularly in playwright Kawatake Mokuami'[s] (1816–1893) "crop-haired plays" (*zangirimono*) and "living history" (*katsureki*) plays for the actors Onoe Kikugorō V (1844–1903) and Danjūrō. But th[e] essential features of *kabuki* acting and dramaturgy had not changed, and th[e] introduction of new subject matter or historically accurate details in costum[e] and nomenclature were fairly superficial and ultimately satisfied neither th[e] government nor the public. Calls for more substantial reform came, leadin[g] to the establishment of the Society for Theatre Reform (Engeki Kairyōkai) in 1886. Organized by a number of Japan's leading political figures, includin[g] Prime Minister Itō Hirobumi, Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru, and Minister o[f] Education Mori Arinori, the Society's de facto chairman was Itō's son-in-law Suematsu Kenchō (1855–1920), a man who had spent nine years abroad, tw[o] of them at Cambridge University. Financier Shibusawa Eiichi, politician an[d] educator Toyama Masakazu (1848–1900), scholar Yoda Gakkai (1833–1909) and Fukuchi Ōchi were also prominent members. In its constitution, the Society identified three major goals for reform: do away with *kabuki*'s traditio[n] of vice and produce a theatre that encouraged virtue; promote the importanc[e] of new drama; and construct modern theatre buildings.

This was an era in which reform (*kairyō*) was the buzzword for man[y] enterprises (including language, dress, education, religion, fiction, and prostitution, among others); what lay behind many of these were efforts by th[e] government to persuade the world that Japan had become a modern, civilize[d] nation and was thereby able (it was hoped) to do away with the unequal trad[e] treaties foisted on the country by foreign powers after its "opening" to th[e] West in the 1850s. The overall aim of the Society was to transform *kabu[ki]*

from a popular into a highbrow art form, analogous to the theatre and grand opera Suematsu and many of his colleagues in the Society had seen performed in the West. Opinion on how this was to be accomplished widely varied from member to member, however, from those who advocated the eradication of practically all elements that define *kabuki*—the *hanamichi* runway, the *onnagata* (male actors of female roles), the *geza* incidental music, the *chobo* (narrator and *shamisen* accompaniment, a device inherited from the puppet theatre), *kuroko* stage hands, and so on—to those who believed traditional *kabuki* could be rehabilitated with some scrupulous trimming.[6] Suematsu Kenchō, for one, reflected the latter view. In a speech entitled "Opinions on Theatre Reform," he noted that reform should not entail simply donning Western dress and imitating what was done on the European stage, but rather keeping what worked while changing what was no longer appropriate. Much of his criticism was targeted at the traditional repertory of plays and the role of the playwright. In the past, the playwright had been no more than "a slave to the actors." While acknowledging that the likes of a Shakespeare (to say nothing of a Chikamatsu Monzaemon or Takeda Izumo) did not appear every day, Suematsu stressed that substantial reform to *kabuki* would come only when the theatre attracted first-rate writers, and he proposed a prize for the best plays, which would then be published and produced with government support. The publication of drama and not just its staging, he added, would serve to promote reasoned criticism and raise the literary standards of plays.[7]

Much of the problem with *kabuki* drama, Suematsu asserted, lay in its impurity as a literary genre. The West had comedy and tragedy, with tragedy held up as the nobler form, but these distinctions were blurred in *kabuki,* such that most plays were "neither truly sad nor truly amusing."[8] Moreover, *kabuki* showed no regard for the Three Unities of time, place, and action extolled (but seldom practiced) in classical European theatre. *Kabuki* plays were too long and convoluted, and their casts were too large. With regard to acting, Suematsu insisted that "without female actors real theatre cannot be created," but he expressed doubts as to how female actors could be included under present conditions. He proposed the establishment of a joint-stock company to raise funds for a new theatre and the training of new actors and dramatists.[9]

Suematsu decried the old moralism of promoting virtue and castigating vice (*kanzen chōaku*) that was pushed on *kabuki* during both the Edo era and the early years of Meiji, but he did view the theatre as a place where the sensibilities of all classes (and not just the gentry) could be refined. Theatre was therefore useful inasmuch as it could play a role in nation building. Nonetheless, for many of the Society's critics, this view smacked of more government interference. While in agreement with many of Suematsu's main points, Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935) took issue with his covert didacticism, arguing, as he had done in his 1885 *Essence of the Novel* (*Shōsetsu shinzui*), for the independence of aesthetic criteria over moral principles. "Immoral" characters like Iago and Shylock were frequently subjects for great art, he stressed.[10] Shōyō followed this argument up with a more concerted critique of the Society's proposals in an essay entitled "Expressing my modest opinions upon hearing of the establishment of the Society for Theatre Reform": "The reform of playscripts is the essential basis of any theatre reform, and unless this is carried out, all other reform measures will be of no avail. . . . Since, fundamentally, the main purpose of the theatre, as of the novel, is to portray the truth (the truth of human emotions, the truth of social conditions), to be so concerned with extraneous matters as to kill this truth is a dangerous priority."[11]

Shōyō felt that both the Society for Theatre Reform and Danjūrō's "living history" plays were predicated on a superficial reform of *kabuki,* focusing on matters to do with costume, makeup, scenery, and stage properties. The essence of historical drama, Shōyō asserted, lay not in faithfulness to historical facts, but in the portrayal of truths that only drama could express. *Kabuki* characters were stereotypes, and dramatists were needed who could create flesh and blood human beings. Similar criticism came from Takada Sanae, an educator who, like Shōyō, played a key role in the establishment of Waseda University. Like many others, Takada stressed the importance of cultivating new drama written by playwrights who were independent from the old system of the *zatsuki sakusha,* or stable of writers employed by theatres to write works at the request of actors and managers.

Given that the Society for Theatre Reform represented overwhelmingly government interests and had very little input from either theatre or intellectual circles, it was met with resounding criticism and accordingly had little power to effect any change. Both Morita Kan'ya and Ichikawa Danjūrō rejected its proposals for reform, and the Society came under attack from prominent intellectuals. The reform movement reorganized itself twice, first into the even more conservative Society for the Betterment of Entertainment (Engei Kyōfūkai) in 1888, then the following year into the more inclusive Japan Entertainment Society (Nihon Engei Kyōkai), which enlisted as members a number of intellectuals like Takada Sanae, Shōyō, Mori Ōgai (1862–1922), art historian Okakura Kakuzō, and journalist and translator Morita Shiken, as well as *kabuki* actors like Danjūrō. Hijikata Hisamoto (1833–1918), minister

of the Imperial Household Agency and grandfather of Hijikata Yoshi (1898–1959), one of the founders of the Tsukiji Little Theatre, was its chair. The chief results of these official efforts to reform theatre were, first, a command performance of *kabuki* before Emperor Meiji in 1887 and, second, the opening in Tsukiji of the Kabuki-za, Tokyo's largest theatre for that time, in 1889.

From *Kyakuhon* to *Gikyoku*: The Birth of Drama as a Literary Genre

The Meiji era was an age when the very terminology for theatre and literature was being invented, most often as translations of Western ideas that bore little relationship to the traditional forms that had hitherto been defined by such words as *engeki* (theatre) or *bungaku* (literature), themselves Japanese transliterations of Chinese terms. Indeed, although Japan could boast a plethora of theatrical forms, no umbrella term existed to encompass them all. The lack of agreed basic terms for such concepts as theatre and drama muddled the debate, as did efforts for reform in the Meiji era, Mōri Mitsuya notes. The graphs for *engeki* (演劇), for example, were frequently glossed as *shibai* (play); the term was generally regarded as synonymous with *kabuki*.[12] From 1877 to 1890 "drama" (*gikyoku*) was not even listed as a literary genre in the *Statistical Yearbook of Japan* (*Nihon tōkei nenkan*).[13]

As we have seen, much of the debate surrounding theatre reform in the 1880s revolved around efforts to recognize the artistic value of the dramatic text and to reform *kabuki* playscripts (*kyakuhon*) in accordance with newly imported Western ideals of dramatic form. In addition to the high social status accorded to theatre in nineteenth-century Europe and America, the importance accorded there to drama as a literary genre exercised some of the best minds of the Meiji era. As has been noted, the significance of drama as a literary genre in the West is exceptional and is surely based on the contingent fact of the central role it plays in classical Greek culture and Aristotle's *Poetics*.[14] Nishi Amane (1826–1894), Mori Ōgai's mentor, was instrumental in introducing Aristotle and Western drama theory to the Japanese. His *Hyakugaku renkan* (1870–1872) identified a variety of poetic forms, including epic, lyric, ballad, and drama. Drama was further distinguished into comedic and tragic forms; these forms were more refined than those seen in Japanese theatre, which was "a medium for the lewd and base," Nishi asserted.[15] Numerous other Meiji intellectuals, from liberal politician Nakae Chōmin and critic Ishibashi Ningetsu (1865–1926) to novelist Futabatei Shimei (1864–1909) and

Dostoyevsky translator Uchida Roan (1868–1929), served as conduits of Aristotelian drama theory, via nineteenth-century aestheticians like Hegel, Lessing, and Belinsky. Many recognized that while Japan had a rich and venerable theatrical culture and even a number of illustrious playwrights, nonetheless the dramatic text had counted for little or nothing of literary value.

Meiji was thus a period that saw the emergence of drama as a literary genre in contrast to the *kabuki* playscript, which had served to feature the actors' skills. In *Acting like a Woman in Meiji Japan,* Ayako Kano describes how theatre in Meiji Japan came under the influence of a new, Western-inspired logocentrism that privileged the written—and particularly the printed—text over any other form of artistic expression. Such privileging would have a crucial impact on efforts to "reform" theatre and, in the first instance, reflected in an emerging consensus that the dramatic text would have to play a key role in this reform. Suematsu Kenchō bemoaned the fact that *kabuki* playwrights were slaves to the actors, but the "New Theatre" (*shingeki*)[16] would create a new hierarchy of creativity, transforming actors into "interpretive slaves" of a godlike author, whose written words must be faithfully given voice on stage without change, unlike the typical practice of *kabuki* actors, who would ad lib when they forgot their lines or felt the language simply didn't suit them.[17] In large part, this move reflected a power struggle between the traditional *kabuki*, where actors were king, and the rising Meiji intelligentsia, who felt increasingly that external control of the theatre was needed to elevate it into a more respectable art form. Kawatake Mokuami, *kabuki*'s preeminent playwright of the nineteenth century, would signal a major change when he published a play *Shimoyo no kane jūji no tsujitsura* (Crossroads at ten bells on a frosty night), in the pages of *Kabuki shinpō* (Kabuki news) prior to staging it at the Shintomi-za in 1880. It was thought, however, that professional writers independent of the traditional theatre world were needed to assert drama's new status as a literary genre. Both Yoda Gakkai and Fukuchi Ōchi, fellow members of the Society for Theatre Reform, would be among the first playwrights for *kabuki* who were not "stable" writers. (There were some exceptional cases during the Edo era of independent writers, like Kaibara Ekiken [1630–1714], who wrote *kabuki* plays.)

In theatre particularly, but also in many of the other popular storytelling arts of Edo and Meiji Japan—*kōdan* and *naniwabushi* (military tales) and *rakugo* (comic monologue), to name a few—the distinction between author and performer was often fuzzy. The story was not primarily a text to be read but a script for performance, to be heard with the ear and seen physically acted

out. The Meiji era was a crossroads of experimentation, where the public, theatrical, and performative culture of Edo was eventually exchanged for a literary culture of private reading and appreciation of written texts. In his introduction to a seminal essay by Maeda Ai on the transformation of reading practices in the Meiji era, James Fujii notes that the second decade of Meiji (roughly the 1880s) opened "the nation to modernity as a moment of failed community where solitary reading and privatization echo the silencing of not just reading, but of the sociality that found brief expression in the Freedom and Popular Rights Movement" of Nakae Chōmin.[18] Maeda describes how the spread of publications in movable type and the rise in literacy levels revolutionized the practice of writing and its reception in the Meiji era. "Interest in the literary arts had been nurtured by oral literary traditions," including *kabuki*, he writes, describing how such oral forms of recitation as *rōshō* (sonorous reading) and *sodoku* (reading literary Chinese not so much for the meaning as for the sound) emphasized the performative, rhythmic, and material qualities of language over its semantic or mimetic value.[19] Writing in 1932, the ethnologist Yanagita Kunio could still claim that Japanese literature "has not yet crossed the bridge from an oral to a literary art."[20] Though this process was protracted in Japan as it underwent modernization, evidence of substantial change could already be seen in the 1880s and early '90s. Shōyō remarked in 1891 that "the ancients 'read' the works of others with their ears, while people today enjoy the benefit of reading with their eyes," adding that the new practice of private reading "must follow the principle of excavating the deep significance of the text."[21] Literary and artistic practices increasingly emphasized language's function as a medium for representation, where the aim of artistic expression was not so much to portray appealing patterns or colorful surfaces but rather to lay bare the interiors of the human soul. Accordingly, literary efforts moved away from highly figurative lyric or prose, classical diction, and musical or rhythmic effects toward prosaic locutions and plain speech—in short, toward the creation of a modern vernacular literature: *genbun itchi*, literally the "unification of the vernacular and literary."[22] Thus there was a shift away from the voice of the actor, reciter, or storyteller to the authorial "voice" of the text itself. Increasingly, then, the purpose of a literary work, whether fiction, poetry, or drama, would be to articulate what Shōyō called the author's "true intent" (*hon'i*), or subjectivity.

Professional storytellers like San'yūtei Enchō (1839–1900) nonetheless played a significant role in the construction of a modern literary idiom. Many critics have noted that his performances (and the dictated texts that were

popular spinoffs of Enchō's work) impressed writers like Futabatei Shime who, with his *A Drifting Cloud* (*Ukigumo*, 1887), would forge a new vernacul idiom for fiction in Japan. Shimei's translations of Turgenev also provided stylebook for modern fiction, but (Maeda tellingly notes) he was equally in pressed by dramatic recitations of Russian literature given by Nicholas Gra his teacher at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. (This was an age whe Charles Dickens's highly theatrical recitations of his own novels were powe ful generators of book sales.)[23] If it seems paradoxical that the old oral ar (*wagei*) pointed to a modern idiom of expression, it must be remembered th *kabuki* and storytelling provided the first inkling of modern vernacular expre sion in Japanese culture. Even Edo pulp fiction was heavily dialogue-driven.

One other feature of Meiji culture was its quest for artistic and gener purity, and many critics would take traditional Japanese plays to task for the "impure," hybrid form. As noted, drawing on Aristotle and other Weste theorists, Nishi Amane and other critics in his wake divided literature in three major genres: epic or narrative, lyric, and drama. Discussing the cha acteristics of these genres, Hisamatsu Sadahiro, in his *Doitsu gikyoku tai'i* (A outline of German drama, 1887), wrote that "drama harmoniously combin the two forms of epos and lyric into one genre," and "it would not be wror to say that it is the most refined and elegant of all the arts," encompassir the purest elements of such various forms as choral and instrumental musi architecture, painting, dance, and so on—essentially a reiteration of Richa Wagner's idea of a "total art." Indeed, Hisamatsu concludes, "Drama is tl most artistic of all the arts."[24]

Like Hisamatsu, Mori Ōgai too asserted that the dramatic text was tl most important element in a theatrical work. Decrying "our long establish habit of disregarding the element of poetry in a play," he argued for "first tl drama, then the performance. The drama is primary, the performance se ondary."[25] In Japan, however, Ōgai continued, "the ideal of performance h degenerated into a set of rules for promoting familiar ways of thinking ar doing—rules that do not clarify the Society's ultimate goals."[26] In his criticis of the Society for Theatre Reform's program, Ōgai would argue for a narrow definition of drama than Hisamatsu's notion of a total art, however, making clear distinction between what he called "straight drama" (*seigeki*) and "ope (*gakugeki*), with the latter "falling somewhere between a *jidaimono* in *kabu* and a *jōruri* puppet play." He complained of "distracting 'operatic elements' our national practice." In opera, the stage business (*Händlung*) is slower ar more elaborate, but "a play should be given life through its text: it shou

present poetic nuances in dialogue form, with the actor bringing the script to life. . . . If the audience needs a good deal of stage business to hold its attention, this can only mean that the play is not a good one or it is not being well performed."[27] He argued for a "simpler and more truly artistic theatre" that did not try to "distract the audience with specious shows of 'real' stage effects."[28] In other essays, he called for "backstage poets" and "a theatre that makes dialogue the master."[29]

Ishibashi Ningetsu's *Gikyokuron* (Drama theory, 1893) would echo and expand upon many of Ōgai's opinions. Opening his essay with the statement that "I hold that drama is the most important genre in poetics," Ningetsu calls for Meiji "to become an age in which drama flourishes."[30] He laments that the Edo era slighted drama and that contemporary criticism has privileged fiction. Outlining the characteristics of epic, lyric, and dramatic literature, Ningetsu stresses that drama "must not be confused with epic."[31] He defines drama as "something that manifests the actions (including suffering) of men from the past and renders them artistically, relying on the language of the dramatis personae."[32] He approvingly cites Chikamatsu's definition of language in *jōruri* [puppet theatre] as "a living thing essential to the action . . . portraying reality as it is, while also showing by means of art what is not real."[33]

Ningetsu would not be the first or the last critic to hold up Chikamatsu as a standard-bearer for dramatic literature. Noted as being the first dramatist credited as "author" (*sakusha*) of his own plays, it is said that Chikamatsu switched from writing *kabuki* to *jōruri* because the puppets couldn't change his lines the way *kabuki* actors did.[34] William Lee has pointed out that the rise of Chikamatsu scholarship in the 1880s was linked to the "discovery" of drama as a literary genre.[35]

The most important critic to write on Chikamatsu was Tsubouchi Shōyō, whose formidable energies turned away from fiction to drama after the mid-1880s. The comparison between the two great dramatists of Japan and England, Chikamatsu and Shakespeare, nonetheless highlighted for Shōyō what the new drama in his country desperately required. In what is a seminal text of Meiji drama criticism, "Our Nation's Historical Drama" (Wagakuni no shigeki, 1893–1894), Shōyō would write that traditional Japanese drama (particularly Chikamatsu's and Mokuami's history plays) could be characterized as "dream-fantasy plays" (*mugen-geki*):

> In what respect do they resemble dreams and fantasies? It is in their ridiculous scripts, the farfetched events they portray, their unnatural characters,

> their desultory relationships, their absurd plots, their plethora of *metamorphoses* and *inconsistencies*, their lack of *unity of interest*, their shocking incidents, their exaggerated acts—in all these respects they are fantasies that exist only in dreams. [Italicized words here and below are given in Chinese characters but provided with English glosses.][36]

Japanese drama, in short, exhibits a dreamlike view of life, where fantasy is no distinguished from reality and it is impossible to reason why events happen o characters act the way they do. Life may seem like a dream, Shōyō continued but we need to make sense of it, and so too with drama. Only fools and madmen would take pleasure in the purely irrational. Shakespeare's plays, he goe on, are "tragedies of *character*," whereas Japanese history plays are typicall "dramas of *intrigue*" or of *fate*. In such plays, "Events have no causal relationship and characters have no *individuality*. In Shakespeare's masterpieces, a the same time that there is interest (*umami*) in each and every act, there i an overlying idea (*honshi*) running through the entire work which gives ris to a kind of microcosm, but the ingenuity of our drama, while rich in interest particular to each act, completely lacks any overlying idea."[37] The beaut of such dramaturgy is manifest in the part but not the whole. Shōyō stresse what had been noted earlier by Suematsu, that puppet plays and *kabuki* made travesty of the Three Unities of time, place, and action. The pleasure afforde by traditional Japanese theatre, Shōyō acknowledged, lay in its "remarkabl variety, not only of *appearance*, but also of *tone*," its ability within the course o an entire play or program to run the gamut of human emotions, with "sudde swings from the severe to the salacious, from the refined and elegant to th ludicrous, now virtuous, now violent, now awesome, now weird, never just on thing or another."[38]

This paratactic instinct, a taste for variety over cohesion, was underscore in late Edo culture by two dramaturgical trends in *kabuki*. One was *naimaze* the technique of "twisting together" separate narrative strands, often discret plot lines with quite independent casts of characters that would be familia to audiences from other plays.[39] The other trend militating against structura stylistic, or thematic unity was called *midori:* breaking up multi-act histor plays, dramas that we have seen were already loosely structured, then shuffling them together in a kind of "best of" program with isolated acts fron *sewamono* (domestic plays) and dance plays. For Edo more than for Kamigata (Osaka and Kyoto) audiences, performance of favorite actors trumpe plot. The *midori* program is still typically the way a *kabuki* production is pu

together. Presenting multi-act dramas in their entirety (*tōshi-kyōgen*) is still rather exceptional, often reserved for such plays as *Chūshingura,* and it is a relatively recent phenomenon of somewhat antiquarian instincts.[40]

Earlier efforts to reform drama, such as those of the Society for Theatre Reform, were inconsistent and contradictory, Shōyō asserted. He proposed three major items for a more substantial reform of Japanese drama:

(1) A clear distinction between dramatic and narrative modes. (This is essentially the same advice that other critics like Hisamatsu, Ōgai, and Ningetsu had given, as well as Shōyō in his own "Bijiron-kō" [Essays in rhetoric, 1892].)
(2) Greater structural consistency: a "unity of *interest*" that is equivalent to the theme or action of the drama;
(3) Character as the mainspring and rationale for all actions and events of the drama.[41]

Danjūrō's "living history" plays or the roughhouse political *sōshi* (hooligan) and *shosei* (student) plays of people like Sudo Sadanori (1867–1907) and Kawakami Otojirō (1864–1911), Shōyō claimed, managed to be innovative in only superficial effects, such as costuming and makeup, setting, subject matter, or declamation, but the dramaturgy had not substantially changed, and that was precisely where reform was required.

What we see, in short, in Shōyō's critique is an attempt to create a discrete literary genre for drama predicated on a more individuated portrayal of human character, where the self is constructed out of conflict with other emerging selves.[42] Moreover, he advocates a strong, cohesive, and rational structure in which a logical cause-and-effect sequence of events is constructed out of the actions of individual characters. Such a structure creates an aesthetic of unity and purity, in contrast to the hybrid, episodic, and discursive beauty of *kabuki* and puppet plays. At the same time, in contrast to *kabuki*'s aesthetics of surfaces, Shōyō points toward a dramaturgy of interiors that attempts to anatomize the human soul.

In contrast to Shōyō, who believed that a modern theatre could be created by reforming *kabuki,* the romantic poet and critic Kitamura Tōkoku (1868–1894) doubted whether *kabuki* could ever incorporate the new dramaturgy of Western theatre. Inspired by Shōyō's essay on historical drama, which was then still being serialized in the pages of *Waseda Literature* (*Waseda bungaku*), Tōkoku published an essay entitled "What Lies Ahead for Drama?"

(Gekishi no zento ikaga) in the December 1893 issue of his journal *Bungakukai* (Literary world). Asserting that "a revolution in the theatre must come through a revolution in the drama," Tōkoku believed *kabuki*'s conventions were a great stumbling block to reform. Where Shōyō saw a lack of overall coherence to the structure of a *kabuki* play, however, Tōkoku praised what he called its "*symmetrical harmony*" (*seigōteki chōwa;* here too English glosses are given for the Chinese characters), a harmony achieved by a highly refined synthesis of movement (dance), music (*narimono*), gesture, dialogue, narrative accompaniment, and so on.[43] Japanese dramaturgy was, nonetheless, a slave to such harmony of rhythmic and choreographic form. Tōkoku praised *kabuki* dance but noted that it was designed to highlight the art of the actor, and in performance one forgot all about the character the actor was playing and even the plot, becoming enthralled in, as it were, a "moving painting." Subordinating the actions of the dramatis personae to choreographed movement and instrumental accompaniment destroyed any attempt at realistic identification of the actor in the role; hence action was predicated on aesthetic principles quite alien to how drama was understood in the West. (*Drama,* after all, means "action" in Greek, but in Aristotle the term refers chiefly to the plot). *Kabuki* dance, which exemplified the aesthetic of this theatre, in short, was scenic, but it was not dramatic.[44] The spirit of Japanese theatre, Tōkoku stressed, was to highlight theatrical events, not the actions of the stage characters. The knot tying movement to music must be disentangled before real reform could be seen. If the new drama was to become a "mimetic art" (*mokeiteki bijutsu*), then it would require the concerted work of two kinds of playwrights: those independent of *kabuki* and its conventions and those who could interpret the new aesthetic to dramaturges skilled in the old forms.[45]

Tōkoku put his finger on the problem of how, in practical terms, *kabuki* could ever be transformed into a modern dramatic art, but his proposed solution was weak and undeveloped. Matsumoto Shinko notes that Tōkoku's theatre criticism reflects his keenly felt sense of the disjunction between tradition and modernity, the nigh impossibility of marrying the new to the old.[46]

Putting Theory into Practice: *Genbun Itchi* and the Problem of Dramatic Dialogue

Tōkoku's interest in dramatic form dates back to some of his earliest writings. After Tōkoku's death (by his own hand, at the age of twenty-seven in 1894), the poet and later novelist Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943) would write volubly

of his friend's love of drama.[47] Like many of his generation, the theatre reform movement of the 1880s had awakened Tōkoku to drama's importance as a literary genre. His most important play, *Hōraikyoku* (Song of Penglai, 1891)—clearly written under the influence of Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* Goethe's *Faust,* and above all Byron's *Manfred*—portrays a poet grown sick of the world who climbs Penglai, the mountain of Daoist legend, to commune with the immortal spirits there. Lured by a mountain nymph who resembles his dead wife, he disappears into a cave, never to return to the world below.[48] Written in classical Japanese in the five-seven syllable prosody of traditional verse, *Hōraikyoku* baffled Tōkoku's contemporaries, who could not decide what sort of creature it was: poetry or play? Tōkoku himself expressed in the preface to the play his doubts as to whether the contemporary theatre could stage it. Akiba Tarō writes the following:

> Though structurally it is a drama, [Tōkoku's play] is too poetic and too subjective, such that his wild, vehement, complex, and delicate ideas and sensibilities could not find adequate expression in our theatre as it was, so he had to resort to borrowing from the models he had of Western dramatic verse. Skepticism, suffering, pessimism, idealism, romanticism, rebellion, destruction: there was simply no way all these sentiments, which Tōkoku attempted to portray in his dramatic world, could be given expression within the conventions of traditional Japanese drama.[49]

Hōraikyoku nonetheless paved the way for drama as a literary form to express the thoughts and emotions of its author, and though no theatre yet existed that could stage such work, it inspired similar attempts by other writers associated with the literary world (*bundan*) and not theatre circles. The 1890s marked the emergence of drama as a literary genre, with works published in the burgeoning literary magazines of the day, journals like *Literary World* (*Bungakukai), Waseda Literature,* and *The Weir* (*Shigarami zōshi*). (One of the first drama collections for reading, however, was of *kabuki* plays, mostly by Mokuami: *Kyōgen hyakushu* [A hundred plays], published by Shun'yōdō in eight volumes in 1892–1893.) Tōkoku's friend Tōson wrote a play called *Hikyoku biwa hōshi* (The biwa priest: A tragic lyric, 1893), and Kōda Rohan (1867–1947) penned *Yūfuku shijin* (The happy poet, 1894), but both works were clearly exercises in literary form and neither writer had much interest or hope in seeing them staged.

Following "Our Nation's Historical Drama," Shōyō also wrote several

history plays, the first of which was *Kiri hitoha* (A paulownia leaf, 1894–1895), about the fall of the Toyotomi family in the late sixteenth century, as well as a sequel to this play, *Hototogisu kojō rakugetsu* (A sinking moon over the lonely castle where the cuckoo cries, 1897). Clearly his model was Shakespeare, whose history plays and tragedies presented a dramaturgy and language that could, he felt, make *kabuki* drama a literature and not simply a pretext for stage art.[50]

In the introduction to his translation of *A Sinking Moon,* J. Thomas Rimer notes that "writing after his enthusiastic immersion in Shakespeare's historical dramas, Shōyō created a spoken language for the play that is elevated, resonant and complex. It closely resembles neither traditional *kabuki* dialogue nor modern speech but represents, rather, an experiment at creating a kind of 'Shakespearean' analogue in the Japanese language."[51] Though not immediately staged (*A Paulownia Leaf* was first produced in 1904 and *A Sinking Moon* in 1905), both works achieved some theatrical success and are still occasionally performed.

Both Tōkoku and Shōyō would make considerable advances in dramatic structure and characterization, as well as in the introduction of themes that were alien to the traditional theatre, but dramatic language remained resistant to change. The language of drama is by nature that of dialogue, but as we have seen, traditional Japanese drama contained within it considerable elements of both the epic and the lyric. Over the course of centuries, Japan's traditional performing arts had developed rhetorical styles that were radically different from the dialogue of modern Western drama. In the first place, classical Japanese diction does not make a clear distinction between indirect and direct speech. Ayako Kano notes that in traditional Japanese theatre—*nō* and puppet theatre and to some extent *kabuki* as well—"there is no clear distinction between dialogue and narration," between direct, first-person speech and indirect, third-person narration. This is most obvious in the *nō,* where the chorus may speak on behalf of the *shite* (protagonist), or alternatively the protagonist may refer to the character he or she plays in the third person. Though jarring in English, this shift of grammatical person, between direct and indirect speech, is seamless in Japanese. Indirect rather than direct speech governs all the traditional performing arts. Kano adds that in the puppet theatre all speech, whether construed as "dialogue" or "narration," issues from the mouth of the chanter. Even *kabuki* dialogue—or, for that matter, any speech in the theatre—is indirect and mediated simply by virtue of the fact that theatrical language is not spontaneous: the actor is a mouthpiece reiterating words provided by someone else.[52]

Kabuki sutezerifu (ad libbed dialogue), if anything, only highlights the artificiality of stage speech by calling attention to the actor's versatility, his ability as an actor rather than a character in a play, to intensify the pleasure of performance. Kano goes on to characterize *kabuki*'s nonverbal elements, notably song and dance, as forms of "indirect speech."[53]

Thus, neither *kabuki* nor puppet theatre was, strictly speaking, dialogue drama. Traditional drama, including *kyōgen,* is predominantly in verse or patterned dialogue (versified or rhythmically delivered), often combined with long passages of monologue and narrative. The language of the Japanese theatre until quite recent times was typically regarded as something larger than life, to be delivered in a higher register than ordinary spoken language. Stage dialogue and social discourse—conversation—were fundamentally different creatures. Certain practical considerations, such as the need for an actor to project his voice so as to be heard by all members of the audience in a theatre, helped create a uniquely theatrical style of declamation. In time, this style acquired its own aesthetic in *kabuki,* giving rise to patterned speech such as *watarizerifu,* a rhythmic device whereby dialogue is shared among stage characters. Rhetorical patterns in *kabuki* reached their apogee with Mokuami's distinctive seven-five prosodic speeches and dialogue or his bravura *yakuharai* monologues, in which a hero harangues his adversaries.

The closest thing to "dialogue" in traditional Japanese drama is *mondō,* literally "question and answer," a word employed in *nō* to describe what is ultimately a rather minor function of this genre—that is, a verbal exchange between stage characters. This term originally referred to philosophical debates as practiced by Confucianists and Zen Buddhists. Something of this didactical function can still be detected in *nō,* but *mondō* never quite had the connotation of communication or debate that "dialogue" has had in the Western tradition. Instead, the form typically conveyed the imparting of knowledge from master to disciple, rather than shared discovery of the truth through dialectical reasoning. In short, the Western notion of dialogue was predicated on a more horizontal, egalitarian set of social relations than that which existed in traditional Japanese society. The language of modern drama, which posits highly individuated characters struggling for self-realization in conflict with their peers, was alien to the Japanese social sphere. Traditional Japanese drama would typically resolve any potential conflict in a transcending of the self through identification with nature or higher spiritual and social ideals such as nirvana or fealty.[54] The standard term used today for stage dialogue is *serifu;* in other contexts, the word *taiwa* is also used for dialogue. Dialogue essentially

involves an exchange between individuals where the unspoken subject, the point of talking, is to explore and establish the terms of the relationship between the speakers. Contemporary playwright Hirata Oriza contrasts *taiwa* with *kaiwa* (conversation) as follows: *taiwa* is "the exchange of new information between strangers," whereas *kaiwa* is "pleasant speech between people who already know each other." Japanese, he claims, are notoriously poor at dialogue.[55] In a world in which relationships are not problematized, conversation can reign freely, but dialogue is difficult.

One of the cardinal aspects of modernity in any art is its attempt to conceal the devices of its mediation, to present directly an illusion of reality "as it is." In linguistic terms, for the theatre this involved a transformation of stage art from indirect to direct speech. This project of making language more immediate and transparent worked at cross-purposes to the rhetorical function of speech in, for example, *kabuki.* There was a populist, if not democratic, reason behind this effort. The shift from a classical to a "colloquial" language in written documents and spoken utterances was indicative of the project of modernization in virtually all elements of Japanese culture. As Karatani Kōjin has pointed out, the vernacularization of modern literature was in fact an artificial and literary creation; at the same time, Meiji nation-building efforts to forge a standardized spoken Japanese created a language that was equally synthetic. Moreover, class lines divided the language of the theatre from that of polite society, and language reform reflected the implementation of new schema of social stratification. "Standard Japanese" (*hyōjungo*) was closer to the dialect spoken by Tokyo's ruling *shizoku* class, men and women who were typically the offspring of samurai, whereas *kabuki* dialogue was typically the language spoken by the working-class Edo townsperson.

In fiction, critics identify the beginning of vernacularization in Futabatei Shimei and Oguri Fūyō's literary experiments in the 1880s, a task that did not achieve fruition perhaps until the 1920s, with the first installments of Shiga Naoya's *A Dark Night's Passing* (*An'ya kōrō*). In the realm of public documents, it can be argued that a truly vernacular language was not in place until after 1945. Vernacularization in Japanese drama lagged behind that of fiction by more than a decade and some, like Hirata Oriza, claim it is still an unfinished project.[56]

Playwright Kinoshita Junji (1914–2006), one of the few others who has written on vernacularization in the theatre, has argued that the irrational elements of traditional Japanese drama are intrinsic to the classical language. Unlike modern adaptations of classical Western drama, traditional Japanese

drama is resistant to translation into a modern vernacular. Kinoshita points out that, unlike the West, Japan had to grapple with the creation of modern dramatic dialogue in modernizing its theatre.[57] It is not really until the Taishō era that dramatists came close to writing dialogue in a modern vernacular. Those who wished to write drama had to struggle not only with *kabuki* conventions, but also a choice of what register of language to exploit. In the absence of a common spoken language, "reformist" *kabuki* playwrights like Fukuchi Ōchi and Yoda Gakkai resorted to classical Chinese and Japanese locutions, as if in an attempt to shake off the yoke of *kabuki* diction. Vernacular speech eluded the Meiji playwrights, especially those with literary pretensions, and the drama written in the 1890s by people like Tōkoku, Tōson, and Rohan was predominantly in the seven-five prosody of classical Japanese poetry. Ironically, as drama evolved as a literary form, it initially estranged itself even further from colloquial expression, the lifeblood of modern stage dialogue.

Kinoshita has noted how the drama and translations of Shōyō and Ōgai, Meiji Japan's most indefatigable exponents for the modernization of theatre, reprised the history of the Japanese language. I will have cause to examine Ōgai's plays in further detail in chapter 2 and so will restrict my discussion here to Shōyō's work. Plays like *A Paulownia Leaf* or *Urashima Tarō: A New Lyric* (*Shinkyoku Urashima Tarō,* 1904)—a work in which Shōyō would try to put into practice his theories of lyric drama—never broke new ground stylistically, however.[58] As noted above, Rimer calls Shōyō's style "elevated, resonant and complex," but these attributes did not necessarily make it an easy language for stage delivery. Hirata Oriza counters that "were one to read it in print, one could make out what he means, but there are many passages that, were one to hear them only, one really would have no idea what was being said."[59] Hirata deems that it was impossible for actors untrained in this strange amalgam of "translatese" (*hon'yakuchō*) and pseudo-classical diction to make such dialogue intelligible. Nor did the diction of Shōyō's *En the Ascetic* (*En no gyōja,* 1917), the first Japanese play to be performed at the Tsukiji Little Theatre, in 1926, mark a radical departure from that employed in *A Paulownia Leaf* or *A Sinking Moon.* Shōyō's lifelong quest to create a modern theatre out of the flesh and bones of *kabuki* would remain quixotic; it would seem its theatrical conventions stymied his creativity as a dramatist. On the other hand, his greatest experiments in the modernization of dramatic language would take place in his translations of Shakespeare. Over the course of fifty years, from 1884 to 1934 (just one year before his death), he translated Shakespeare's entire oeuvre, not only some thirty-seven plays but also his narrative verse and sonnets.

Though he is not consistent or thorough in his analysis, Kinoshita identifies five stages in the development of Shōyō's Japanese translations over this time: from versified puppet theatre or *kabuki* diction, through experiments with *nō* and *kyōgen* and the classical, literary idiom of the Heian romance (*monogatari*), to a mixture of the literary and colloquial, finally, quite late in his career, to a more or less modern colloquial language.[60]

In his own drama, Shōyō managed to achieve a greater synthesis of modern and traditional forms, yet he did so not by tackling modern subject matter but by re-envisioning how the past was to be portrayed. Neither he nor Tōkoku crafted dramatic dialogue in a vernacular tongue about matters close to the daily lives of their contemporaries, however. The language of Japanese drama until the twentieth century essentially remained in a classical, literary idiom, increasingly divorced from the language spoken on the streets, one that itself was undergoing a revolution.

Shinpa Adaptations and the Melodramatic Imagination

Shōyō's history plays marked the beginning of the new genre called *shin-* (new) *kabuki,* and in the ensuing years, many playwrights such as Okamoto Kidō (1872–1939), Matsui Shōyō (1870–1933), Mayama Seika (1878–1948), and Hasegawa Shin (1884–1963) would ensure that the repertoire of *kabuki* drama was being refreshed by excellent new work.[61] With Mokuami's death in 1893, the position of the traditional house dramaturge was in peril, but even so, many of the independent and more educated playwrights still found that writing for the stage was sometimes a thankless task. Little honor or remuneration came from it; actors and managers changed what had been written at will, and the "stable" playwrights, already insecure, especially gave these new dramatists a hard time. Okamoto Kidō recalled how he and another *shin-kabuki* playwright, Oka Onitarō (1872–1943), were constantly bullied by jealous and insecure dramaturges requesting constant rewrites and even complaining in one case that an actor could not dance to the trash they had written.[62] An attitude prevailed that theatrically satisfying drama could not be written by "amateurs."

By the 1890s, however, *kabuki* had become almost by definition a thing of the past. Shōyō's *kabuki* plays were a considerable advance over "living history" plays, but it was increasingly apparent that for the portrayal of modern life, *kabuki* was limited as a theatrical form. Nor were the "crop-haired" plays much more successful at this task. "Can traditional acting techniques

properly express modern Japanese lifestyles?" ask Brandon and Leiter in the introduction to their volume of translations of *kabuki* plays from the mid-to-late nineteenth century. "One unintended consequence . . . is that *kabuki* increasingly became identified with its pre-Meiji, traditional—that is feudal—repertory."[63] In contrast, by the 1880s, "Change had become the norm. . . . Surface reality could not mask the lack of connection between the daily lives of the audience and the inner life of the dramatic action, even if that action was set in the present day. One could easily accept stylized acting in plays set in pre-modern times. Such acting and dramaturgy that supported it, however, may have seemed alien to dramatic characters dressed in raincoats and bowler hats."[64] In the meantime, another type of theatre was emerging that seemed to catch the tenor of the times better than *kabuki:* the politically engaged but amateurish productions being staged by Sudō Sadanori and Kawakami Otojirō that would later become known as *shinpa,* or "new school."[65]

As it wrestled with a new way of portraying the modern age theatrically, *shinpa* reflected the kind of debate that was going on in Meiji criticism on the proper function of drama and fiction in contemporary society, a debate that essentially revolved around what kind of theatrical realism would prevail. Traces of a nascent realism can be seen in Japanese literature and drama as far back as *The Tale of Genji* and Zeami's theories of imitation (*monomane*) in the *nō.* To be sure, however, it is not until the Edo period that we see the establishment of certain social conditions—the rise of the middle classes and a consumerist popular culture that catered to their tastes—essential to the creation of a home-grown version of realism. The term *sewamono,* literally "gossip plays," suggests a more colloquial, dialogic style, as well as the topicality of the subject matter of domestic drama. Actor Sakata Tōjūrō (1647–1709) predicated his art on realistic acting, but he noted that because *kabuki* was a popular entertainment, it was necessary to make life look more beautiful than it really was.[66] Though *kabuki* acting could be at times startlingly realistic, its dramaturgy was not, and verisimilitude alone was never the ideal.[67]

In many respects, *kabuki* could be more accurately characterized as a melodramatic theatre. It shared all or some of the following elements common to melodrama: a stress on musical accompaniment for emotional effect, sensationalism and extreme emotional displays, stereotyped characters presenting moral polarities, a narrative structure that featured outrageous coincidence and convoluted plotting, and *deus ex machina* resolutions (among others).[68] Its heroes, heroines, and villains were presented scenically, as surfaces in a pictorial composition, as if painted in primary colors emphasizing their function as

types. There is thus a focus on simplicity rather than complexity in characterization, a metaphysical or semiotic, not psychological or humanistic, portrayal of people. In this respect, melodrama has been described as "monopathic," as opposed to the "polypathic" nature of tragedy.[69]

As an expressive mode in both literature and theatre, melodrama both reflected and made intelligible (which is also to say inoculated people from) the shock of modernity. In his book *Melodrama and Modernity,* Ben Singer identifies two kinds of realism that were operative in the arts of the nineteenth century: "absorptive realism" and "apperceptive realism." The former is a naturalist version of realism, an attempt to create a transparent and quasi-documentary mode of verisimilitude. The latter is a kind of verisimilitude that "does not create a strong feeling of diegetic immersion in the represented space."[70] Displaying a kind of apperceptive realism, melodrama thus occupied a middle ground between the romantic and the realistic modes—in Nicholas Vardac's turn of phrase, a "romantic realism."[71] Its romantic element—a predilection for spectacle and strong emotional effects, its larger-than-life characters and its coincidences, its dreamlike plots of virtue vindicated after extreme suffering—was treated with all the realism modern stagecraft could muster. In both the West and Japan during the nineteenth century, the greatest efforts at producing realism were expended not on dialogue, dramaturgy, or acting but on the spectacle: staging, lighting, and sound effects. Whereas in Shakespeare and other playwrights of the past, highly figurative language was employed to conjure images in the mind's eye, nineteenth-century melodrama employed technology to achieve the same visual effects. As Singer puts it, "Incredible sights were presented with credible diegetic realism."[72] Cinema, Vardac pointed out, grew out of a demand for such a "romantic realism." In both the West and Japan, theatrical melodrama gave birth to, and was eventually upstaged by, early cinema.

In much the same way, *shinpa* melodrama provided the theatrical bridge between tradition and modernity in Meiji theatre. The instinct toward a more realistic art was reflected in both the topicality of the new plays and their focus on action and dialogue over dance and music. Borrowing the term from Ōgai, Kawakami Otojirō characterized his style of theatre after his company's tours of Europe in 1900–1901 as *seigeki,* "straight drama," focusing on dialogue, a less episodic dramaturgy, and actresses to play women's roles.[73] A more traditionalist camp would succeed, however, in defining the *shinpa* style as a kind of musical or lyric theatre (*gakugeki* or *shigeki*) that employed *kabuki* presentational techniques such as *geza* incidental music, the *hanamichi,* and, most important, the *onnagata.*

The transitional, hybrid nature of *shinpa* was literally embodied in the *onnagata,* who represented *shinpa*'s ambivalent stance between the stylization of traditional theatre and the "absorptive" mimetic mode of modernity. The *shinpa onnagata* Hanayagi Shōtarō commented that "80 percent of *kabuki*'s essence lies in the *onnagata*'s art," which was devoted to the creation of a "weird beauty," a consciously artificial image of femininity that had a homoerotic charge. In *shinpa,* the *onnagata*'s eroticism was downplayed, and its portrayal of women tended to be more naturalistic than *kabuki*'s. But realism was not the ultimate goal of *onnagata* acting for *shinpa* any more than it was for *kabuki.* Hanayagi used the metaphor of painting versus photography to compare the way an *onnagata* (as opposed to an actress) would play Otsuta in the "Yushima no keidai" scene in Izumi Kyōka's *Onna keizu.* Hanayagi wrote that actresses were simply too realistic for the *shinpa* stage, "lacking the chiaroscuro of the *onnagata* portrayal. There is something unsettlingly carnal about an actress's performance—one can practically smell her—as she exposes only what is real: her body." Women are equated with realism; then both are rejected here. Ultimately what is most important is not the performer's sex, Hanayagi claims, but the performance of femininity. Strict training (likened to that of the *ningyōzukai,* or puppeteers, in puppet theatre) is necessary to capture the "weird beauty" of *kabuki* heroines like Agemaki, Yatsuhashi, or Princess Taema. The art of the *shinpa onnagata,* Hanayagi stressed, was essential in the classical portrayals of prewar women, who were almost necessarily associated with the kimono. By the same token, actresses could not play geisha until they learned how to "play *onnagata.*" In this respect, *shinpa* would remain the "moving painting" of *kabuki,* rejecting both the heightened realism of *shingeki* and the "moving photographs" (*katsudō shashin*) of cinema.[74]

Initially, *shinpa* plays were composed by the actors themselves, in much the same manner as in early *kabuki,* hastily improvised (*kuchidate*) out of rough plans sketched together before a production began but subject to constant change depending on expedience and audience approval. In its development out of a form of agitprop in the 1880s into a full-fledged art form, this theatre drew heavily for its material on contemporary news items and, later, novels, moving from the sensationalism of Kawakami's earlier productions—titles like *Shock!* (*Igai*) and *Shock Again!* (*Mata igai*) speak volumes—to the sentimentalism of mature *shinpa* drama, much of it adapted from the popular fiction of the day. Hanabusa Ryūgai (1872–1906), who scripted many of the early *shinpa* adaptations, came from the traditional circles of *kabuki* stable writers, having apprenticed under the playwright Kawatake Shinshichi III (1842–1901).

Those who were most active writing plays or adaptations (*hon'an*) of other works directly for the *shinpa* stage came from a school of writers, the Friends of the Ink Stone (Ken'yūsha), associated with Ozaki Kōyō (1867–1903). The Ink Stone writers had a special knack for writing vivid dialogue. During the 1890s and the early 1900s, fiction by Kōyō, his associates, and his students—men like Yamada Bimyō (1868–1910) and Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939)—was readily dramatized, often by other Ink Stone members, like Oguri Fūyō (1875–1926), Satō Kōroku (1874–1949), Hirotsu Ryūrō (1861–1928), and Yanagawa Shun'yō (1877–1918). The popularity of such fiction, which typically was serialized in the newspapers and magazines of the day, inspired stage versions, which in turn generated more sales of the novels in book form. Such a system pleased audiences and readers and to some extent provided royalties for the novelists, but—as was the case with the *shin-kabuki* playwrights—adapting the work of others only to see one's script further adulterated by the actors was scarcely satisfactory from an artistic standpoint.

The *shinpa* adaptations of Izumi Kyōka's fiction were brilliant examples of this stage art; many are still performed today.[75] Kyōka's fiction was exemplary of a style of literature popular before the rise of naturalism in the first decade of the twentieth century, with thrilling, highly melodramatic plots and language richly figurative and pleasing to the ears. Thus, in both narrative and stylistic terms, such literature harked back to an earlier time, one already on the way out by the 1900s, where the consumption of literature was still to some extent a public or communal event, where the pleasure of reading could best be captured by oral recitation and not by silent reading alone. In an essay entitled "The Rhythm of Sentences," for example, Kyōka wrote the following: "I believe that literature should appeal not to the eye but to the ear, which is to say that I write prose that even an illiterate person could understand were it read out to him."[76] Kyōka continued, well into the Taishō era, to write works that in a sense memorialized this earlier stage of Meiji popular culture. The *shinpa* adaptation of his 1914 novel *Nihonbashi* is a case in point. Writing of the relationship between this novel and its adaptation for the stage (Kyōka later published his own dramatization in 1917), Saeki Junko has rightly pointed out that "dialogue from the novel has been transposed verbatim to his dramatic text, and narrative parts are lifted whole from the novel for the stage notes."[77] Passages of the novel were written to order for the *shinpa onnagata* Kitamura Rokurō, who would play Okō for the first stage production in 1914. (Kitamura also had a hand in adapting the novel for that production.) Kyōka, and *shinpa,* excelled in speeches like Okō's address to Katsuragi on Ichikoku

Bridge: "It was the night after the Doll Festival, it was spring, and the moon was shrouded in clouds; there on the bridge we both set free our whelks and clams; and the policeman recorded our names, side by side, in his little notebook. He called me your 'wife.' We were both on our way to pay our respects to Jizō, who ties two lovers together, there on the West Bank; and if he can't do that, the world's a dark, dark place!"[78]

Such bravura performances, akin to a *kabuki tsurane* (tirade), became *meizerifu* (literally "famous speeches"), showstoppers that simultaneously summed up the character, the play, and the whole genre of theatre in a few emotionally charged lines. The rhetoric of *shinpa* dialogue—highly rhythmic, sonorous, and figurative—remained close to the aesthetic of *kabuki*. Dramatists, actors, and audiences took pleasure in language for its theatrical effects as much as for its ability to delineate a character or advance the plot. Theatre scholar Dōmoto Masaki has remarked that the essence of theatre resides in moments when a character says or does something that defies our expectation and, hence, interpretation; the tirades and *coups de théâtre* of *kabuki* or *shinpa* epitomize this feature, but they are notably lacking in the modern theatre. The realistic, rational, and prosaic language of modern drama, which had fallen under the "sin of interpretability," spelled the death of the *meizerifu*, he notes.[79]

By the first decade of the twentieth century, *shinpa* was staging adaptations of Western drama too. After their American and European tours at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Kawakami Otojirō and his wife Sadayakko would produce some of the first Japanese versions of Shakespeare, Victorien Sardou, Alexandre Dumas *fils*, Maurice Maeterlinck, and many other European playwrights.[80] Many of these adaptations would play fast and loose with the originals, often changing the setting of the dramas and names of the characters to make them more "Japanese." Kōyō himself had adapted Molière's *L'avare* and *Le médecin malgré lui* (*Natsu kosode* and *Koi no yamai*); the latter, Kinoshita argues, is one of the few plays prior to 1900 that was written in anything close to the vernacular. "Had he lived any longer," Uchida Roan commented, Kōyō "would no doubt have distinguished himself more as a playwright than a novelist."[81] These experiments to naturalize European theatre by accommodating it to existing Japanese forms and conventions were the theatrical version of *wakon yōsai* (Japanese spirit, Western means). *Shinpa* therefore did not predicate its identity on a clean break with tradition but attempted to assimilate Western cultural products within the context of existent Japanese expressive forms. The cultural paradigms for Western influence, at least in the theatre, remained those of the *hon'an* and *kyakushoku:* dramatic

adaptations. In the first decade of the twentieth century, however, *hon'yaku* (translation) would become the greater force for change.

By then, a new drama instigated by playwrights like Henrik Ibsen was making its presence felt in Japan. Its radically modern and foreign dramaturgy could not be accommodated so easily into the traditional forms of *kabuki* or even *shinpa*. New ideas required a new language, new actors, and a new theatre. The status of drama in Japan by the first decade of the twentieth century thus represented something of an impasse. Producing new drama was not so straightforward as creating new fiction because its life was not meant to end on the page. To realize it on stage required an expensive outlay of financial and artistic resources not yet available in Japan: new playhouses and modern techniques of direction, acting, lighting, and stagecraft. Even more important, it needed a public who understood and appreciated it. New work was being written, often directly or indirectly under the influence of Western models of dramatic literature, but a theatre had not yet been created to produce much of it without resorting to various unsatisfactory expedients and compromises.

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Notes

Preface

Epigraph. Osanai Kaoru, "Enshutsu nōto: *En no gyōja* no daiichiya wo oete" (A director's notes: Completing the first night of *En no gyōja*), in Osanai, *Osanai Kaoru zenshū* 6 (Kyoto: Rinsen shobō, 1975), 460.

1. See Ōyama Isao, *Kindai Nihon gikyokushi,* 4 vols. (Yamagata: Kindai Nihon gikyokushi kankōkai, 1968).

2. A recent exception is Tsuno Kaitarō's biography, *Kokkei na kyojin: Tsubouchi Shōyō no yume* (Heibonsha, 2002).

3. Two recent books—Ayano Kano's *Acting like a Woman in Modern Japan: Theater, Gender, and Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave, 2001) and Brian Powell's *Japan's Modern Theatre: A Century of Continuity and Change* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002)—have focused on acting and the establishment of theatre companies. J. Thomas Rimer's *Toward a Modern Japanese Theatre: Kishida Kunio* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974); Brian Powell's *Kabuki in Modern Japan: Mayama Seika and His Plays* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan in association with St. Antony's College, Oxford, 1990); and my own *Spirits of Another Sort: The Plays of Izumi Kyōka* (Ann Arbor: Center of Japanese Studies, University of Michigan Press, 2001) are devoted to individual playwrights.

4. Suwa Haruo dates the influence of *kabuki* dramaturgy on fiction to the Hōei and Kyōhō periods (ca. 1703–1736). Ejima Kiseki (1666–1735) was one of the first authors to adopt *kabuki* techniques of plotting and scenic structure. See Suwa

Haruo, *Edo: Sono geinō to bungaku* (Mainichi shinbunsha, 1976), 187–192. *Kōdan* was the term used in the Meiji era for *kōshaku,* a popular genre of storytelling that specialized in military narratives like the *Taiheiki,* vendettas and tales of knights-errant. *Rakugo* (comic monologue) had its start in the Edo era (1600–1868) and remains a most popular art.

5. Kishida Kunio, "Engeki yori bungaku wo haijo subeki ka" (Should theatre be rid of literature?), in Kishida, *Kishida Kunio zenshū* 21 (Iwanami shoten, 1989), 210. Kishida borrows the phrase "beggar's art" from the French dramatist Jules Amedée Barbey d'Aurevilly.

6. Kobayashi Hideo, "Yakusha," in *Kangaeru hinto;* cited in Miyashita Nobuo, "Gikyoku," in Suwa Haruo and Sugai Yukio, eds., *Kōza Nihon no engeki* 1: *Nihon engekishi no shiten* (Benseisha, 1992), 109.

7. Cited in Gioia Ottaviani, "'Difference' and 'Reflexivity': Osanai Kaoru and the *Shingeki* Movement." *Asian Theatre Journal* 11, no. 2 (Fall 1994): 220.

8. "Gekijō no setsubi ni taisuru kibō" (My hopes in regard to the theatre, 1913), in Tanizaki, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū* (Chūō kōronsha, 1982), 22:10, 11.

9. Nihon kindai engekishi kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon no kindai gikyoku* (Kanrin shobō, 1997).

Chapter 1: Meiji Drama Theory before Ibsen

1. The first so-called command performance, or *tenrangeki,* before Emperor Meiji of *nō* was in 1878. Iwakura Tomomi, who had led the 1871–1873 mission to Europe and the United States, was instrumental in establishing a public *nō* theatre where Hōshō Kurō (1837–1913), Umewaka Minoru (1828–1909), and other lead actors were able to ensure *nō*'s revival.

2. Cited in Fujiki Hiroyuki, "Gikyokushi 3," in *Gikyokuron* (*Engekiron kōza* 5), edited by Tsugami Tadashi, Sugai Yukio, and Kagawa Yoshinari (Shōbunsha, 1977), 127.

3. Ibid.

4. For a discussion of the effect of censorship on the development of *shingeki* in the late Meiji era, see Ayako Kano, *Acting like a Woman in Modern Japan: Theater, Gender, and Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 154–156ff.

5. See the account in Komiya Toyotaka, *Japanese Music and Drama in the Meiji Era,* translated and adapted by Donald Keene (Tōyō bunko, 1969), 191. Kan'ya's Morita-za was the first theatre to move from its original location in Saruwaka-chō, next to the Yoshiwara licensed quarters, to the more central Shintomi-chō. It burned down in 1876, and the Shintomi-za that replaced it was

touted as Japan's first "modern" theatre. See Yuichirō Takahashi, "*Kabuki* Goes Official: The 1878 Opening of the Shintomi-za," in *A Kabuki Reader,* edited by Samuel L. Leiter (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2002), 123–151.

6. Toyama Masakazu, for one, pushed for the eradication of *kabuki*'s traditional stage conventions. See "Engeki kairyōron shikō" (Personal thoughts on theatre reform), in *Meiji bungaku zenshū* 79: *Meiji geijutsu, bungaku ronshū,* edited by Hijikata Teiichi (Chikuma shobō, 1975), 139–148.

7. Suematsu Kenchō, "Engeki kairyō iken," in *Kindai bungaku hyōron taikei* 9: *Engekiron,* edited by Nomura Takashi and Fujiki Hiroyuki (Kadokawa shoten, 1985), 18–19.

8. Ibid., 20.

9. Ibid., 22.

10. Tsubouchi Shōyō, "Suematsu-kun no engeki kairyōron o yomu" (Reading Suematsu's theory on theatre reform), in Nomura and Fujiki, *Kindai bungaku hyōron taikei,* 26. Shōyō's rebuttal was first published in the *Yomiuri shinbun,* October 20–21, 1886.

11. Cited in William Lee, "Chikamatsu and Dramatic Literature in the Meiji Period," in *Inventing the Classics,* edited by Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 187.

12. See the discussion by Mōri Mitsuya in "Ipusen izen: Meijiki no engeki kindaika o meguru mondai (1)," *Bigaku/bijutsushi ronshū* (July 1987), 6:3–10. *Engeki*'s first entry in the Japanese lexicon was in *Saikoku risshi hen,* the 1870 translation of Samuel Smile's *Self Help,* where it served as a rendition of "opera."

13. See Wolfgang Schamoni, "The Rise of 'Literature' in Early Meiji," in *Canon and Identity: Japanese Modernization Reconsidered: Trans-cultural Perspectives,* edited by Irmela Hijiya-Kirschnereit (Munich: Iudicium, 2000), 55.

14. See Earl Miner, *Comparative Poetics: An Intercultural Essay on Theories of Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 22–23, and Lee, "Chikamatsu," 192.

15. Cited in Tsugami, Sugai, and Kagawa, *Gikyokuron,* 138.

16. Shōyō used the term *shingeki* in Tsubouchi, "Suematsu-kun no engeki kairyōron o yomu." Other related terms at this time include *shin-engeki* or *shin-engei.*

17. See Kano, *Acting like a Woman,* 151–153ff. The expression "interpretive slaves" is taken from Jacques Derrida's discussion of Antonin Artaud's critique of Western drama theory in "The Theatre of Cruelty and the Closure of Representation," in *Writing and Difference,* translated by Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1978), 232–250.

18. Maeda Ai, "From Communal Performance to Solitary Reading: The Rise

of the Modern Japanese Reader," translated by James Fujii, in Maeda Ai, *Text and the City: Essays on Japanese Modernity,* edited with an introduction by James Fujii (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 223.

19. Ibid., 227, 228.

20. "Kōshō bungei to wa nani ka," in Yanagita Kunio, *Yanagita Kunio zenshū* (Chikuma bunko, 1990), 8:14–82.

21. Tsubouchi Shōyō, "Dokusho o okosan to suru shui" (A prospectus for the encouragement of reading); cited in Maeda, *Text and the City,* 234.

22. For a detailed discussion of *genbun itchi,* see Karatani Kōjin, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 39–40, 45–75.

23. Maeda, *Text and the City,* 245. See also Malcolm Andrews, *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves: Dickens and the Public Readings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

24. Cited in Tsugami, Sugai, and Kagawa, *Gikyokuron,* 141. For further discussion of the introduction of European drama theory to Japan, see ibid., 137–142.

25. Mori Ōgai, "Surprised by the Prejudice of Theatre Reformers" (Engeki kairyō ronja no henken ni odoroku), translated by Keiko McDonald, in Mori Ōgai, *Not a Song Like Any Other: An Anthology of Writings by Mori Ōgai,* edited by J. Thomas Rimer (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 145. The Japanese text can be found in Nomura and Fujiki, *Kindai bungaku hyōron taikei,* 46–49. Ōgai's essay originally appeared in *Shigarami zōshi,* October 1889.

26. Mori Ōgai, "Surprised," 147.

27. Ibid., 148.

28. Ibid., 149; Nomura and Fujiki, *Kindai bungaku hyōron taikei,* 48.

29. See Mori Ōgai, "Gekijō-ura no shijin," in Nomura and Fujiki, *Kindai bungaku hyōron taikei,* 302–312 (the essay first appeared in *Shigarami zōshi,* February 1889), and "*Tamakushige futari Urashima* no kōgyō ni tsuite" (On the production of *The Jeweled Comb Box and the Two Urashimas,* 1902); cited in Ochi Haruo, *Meiji Taishō no gekibungaku* (Hanawa shobō, 1971), 12.

30. Ishibashi Ningetsu, *Gikyokuron,* in Nomura and Fujiki, *Kindai bungaku hyōron taikei,* 312–316. Ningetsu's essay first appeared in *Kokkai,* December 12, 1893.

31. Ibid., 315.

32. Ibid., 316.

33. Ibid., 315.

34. See Donald Keene, *Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 5.

35. See Lee, "Chikamatsu," 182ff.

36. Tsubouchi Shōyō, "Wagakuni no shigeki," in Nomura and Fujiki,

Kindai bungaku hyōron, 49. Shōyō's essay was serialized in *Waseda bungaku,* October 1893–March 1894, with related criticism subsequently published in *Waseda bungaku, Taiyō,* and other journals. Donald Keene discusses Shōyō's essay in *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984), 2:410–411.

37. Tsubouchi, "Wagakuni no shigeki," 51.

38. Ibid.

39. This is a device not strange to Hollywood. It is lampooned in "Luxury Lounge," episode 72, season 6, of *The Sopranos,* in which the character Christopher Moltisanti attempts to pedal an idea for a screenplay on Ben Kingsley, describing it as "*The Ring* meets *Texas Chainsaw Massacre.*"

40. See Megumi Inoue, "Why Did *Sewamono* Not Grow into Modern Realist Theatre?" in *Modern Japanese Theatre and Performance,* edited by David Jortner, Keiko McDonald, and Kevin J. Wetmore Jr. (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006), 3–15, which discusses how *naimaze* and the tastes of Edo audiences resisted the development of realism. James Brandon and Samuel L. Leiter discuss the impact of *midori* programming on *kabuki* dramaturgy in their introduction to *Kabuki Plays on Stage,* vol. 4: *Restoration and Reform, 1872–1905* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 32–36.

41. Tsubouchi, "Wagakuni no shigeki," 57.

42. This idea is developed further in his "Bijiron-kō" (*Waseda bungaku,* May–June 1892). See Ochi, *Meiji Taishō no gekibungaku,* 23, 28, passim.

43. Kitamura Tōkoku, "Gekishi no zento ikaga," in Kitamura, *Tōkoku zenshū,* edited by Katsumoto Sei'ichirō (Iwanami shoten, 1964), 2:335, 336. Note that the term Tōkoku uses for "drama" is not *gikyoku* but *gekishi,* which means something like "dramatic poetry."

44. Ibid., 337.

45. Ibid., 338–339, 340–341.

46. Matsumoto Shinko, *Meiji engekiron shi* (Engeki shuppan-sha, 1980), 236.

47. In Tōson's autobiographical novel *Haru* (Spring), Tōkoku—who is given the name Aoki—is described as devoting his energies to work he hopes may one day be staged. See Akiba Tarō, *Nihon shingekishi* (Risō-sha, 1971 [1956]), 1:233.

48. For further discussion of this play, see Poulton, *Spirits of Another Sort,* 89–90.

49. Akiba, *Nihon shingekishi,* 1:236.

50. "I came to feel that research into Shakespeare might be the most useful means of improving the Japanese drama," wrote Shōyō. Cited in Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West,* 2:413. Keene discusses Shōyō's plays on pages 2:410–417.

51. Tsubouchi, "*A Sinking Moon over the Lonely Castle Where the Cuckoo Cries*," in Brandon and Leiter, *Kabuki Plays on Stage,* 4:368.

52. Kano, *Acting like a Woman*, 70. Kano stresses that, in any case, "direct speech, in the strictest sense does not exist, since pure direct speech would deny the materiality of the body that must produce the speech." Her analysis continues to page 73.

53. Ibid., 170.

54. See Sakai Shinnosuke, "Kindai gikyoku no tenkai—sono kokoromi: Ōgai made," *Nihon kindai bungaku* 6 (May 1967): 17.

55. Hirata Oriza, *Engeki nyūmon* (Kōdansha gendai shinsho, 1998), 121.

56. Chief exponent of the so-called "quiet theatre" (*shizuka na geki*) of the 1990s, Hirata calls his own style "contemporary colloquial theatre"(*gendai kōgo engeki*). He has advanced his ideas on the development of modern colloquial stage dialogue in a number of books, including *Gendai kōgo engeki no tame ni* (Benseisha, 1995) and *Engeki no kotoba* (Iwanami shoten, 2004).

57. Kinoshita Junji, *Nihongo no sekai* 12: *Gikyoku no Nihongo* (Chūō kōronsha, 1982), 39–42, 146.

58. See my discussion of this play in Poulton, *Spirits of Another Sort,* 91–100.

59. Hirata, *Engeki no kotoba,* 51–52.

60. See Kinoshita's analysis in *Nihongo no sekai*, 143–157.

61. For a detailed study of new *kabuki,* see Nakamura Tetsurō, *Kabuki no kindaika: Sakka to sakuhin* (Kabuki's modernization: Writers and their work) (Iwanami shoten, 2006). Modern playwrights continue to write *kabuki* drama. Mishima Yukio (1925–1970) wrote several successful *kabuki* plays, and actor Nakamura Kanzaburō XVIII (b. 1955) has commissioned works by Noda Hideki (b. 1955) and Watanabe Eriko (b. 1955). Despite their popularity, however, the settings of these plays are typically pre-Meiji.

62. Okamoto Kidō, "Shirōto no kyakuhon," in *Shin-engei* (January 1918); cited in Akiba, *Nihon shingekishi,* 1:224. In Mishima's time, apparently, this situation had not changed substantially. See "Onnagata" (1957), translated in Mishima, *Death in Midsummer and Other Stories* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), which describes how the traditional *kabuki* world intimidates a modern *shingeki* playwright.

63. Brandon and Leiter, *Kabuki Plays on Stage,* 4:30–31.

64. Ibid., 31.

65. More complete accounts of *shinpa* are given in Kano, *Acting like a Woman,* 57–119, and Poulton, *Spirits of Another Sort,* 17–51.

66. Sakata Tōjūrō, "Dust in the Ears," in Hachimonjiya Jishō, *The Actors' Analects,* edited and translated by Charles Dunn and Bunzō Torigoe (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969). On Edo constructs of realism, see Kamiyama Akira, "'Shizenshugi' no naka no 'Edo': Hōgetsu, Ryūgai shinpa no hitobito," *Engekigaku ronshū* 37 (1999): *Tokushū: Nihon no kindai engeki,* 281–307, and Kamiyama Akira, Saitō Tomoko, Seto Hiroshi, Nagata Yasushi, and Mori Mitsuya, "Hyōgenshi ni okeru riarizumu" (panel discussion), *Engekigaku ronshū* 38 (October 2002): 45–78.

67. Mōri Mitsuya, in "Thinking and Feeling: Characteristics of Intercultural Theatre," in *Japanese Theatre and the International Stage,* edited by Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Samuel L. Leiter (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 357–365, describes how shocked many nineteenth-century Europeans were by the almost carnal realism of *kabuki* acting. I deal in greater detail with the issue of realism in Japanese theatre, past and present, in "The Rhetoric of the Real," in Jortner, McDonald, and Wetmore, *Modern Japanese Theatre and Performance,* 17–32.

68. See the "cluster definition" of melodrama provided by Ben Singer, *Melodrama and Modernity: Early Sensational Cinema and Its Contexts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 50. The classic guide on melodrama is Peter Brooks's *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, and the Mode of Excess* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976). See also my discussion of melodrama and *kabuki* in Poulton, *Spirits of Another Sort,* 17–51 passim.

69. See Singer, *Melodrama and Modernity,* 57.

70. Ibid., 176.

71. Nicholas Vardac, *Stage to Screen: Theatrical Method from Garrick to Griffith* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949).

72. Singer, *Melodrama and Modernity,* 168.

73. For Ayako Kano, "straight" drama especially marks the emergence of a heterosexual theatre, in contrast to the "queer" theatre of *kabuki* (a term that originally meant something like "bent," "kinky" or "twisted"). See Kano, *Acting like a Woman,* 57–84.

74. Hanayagi Shōtarō, *Yakusha baka;* cited in Hagii Kōzō, *Shinpa no gei* (Tōkyō shoseki, 1984), 211, 213. Kano, *Acting like a Woman,* is the definitive analysis of performing femininity in modern Japanese theatre.

75. See Poulton, *Spirits of Another Sort,* 17–54, for further discussion of *shinpa* adaptations of Kyōka's fiction; the appendix, 320–323, lists stage performances since 1986.

76. "Bunshō no onritsu," in Izumi Kyōka, *Kyōka zenshū* (Iwanami shoten, 1988), 28:718. Many writers have remarked on how inherently "theatrical" Kyōka's prose is. A dramatic reading of his novel *Nihonbashi,* directed by the *nō* actor Kanze Hideo at Theatre X in Tokyo, March 2003, underscored the performative qualities

of this writer's work. Much of the story is told through dialogue, and though the characters are not individualistic in the modern sense, their language is vividly distinguished along class, gender, and personality lines.

77. Saeki Junko, *Izumi Kyōka* (Chikuma shobō, 2000), 76.

78. *Nihonbashi,* act 1. In Izumi, *Kyōka zenshū,* 26:279.

79. Cited in Imamura Tadazumi, "Serifu kara mita kindaigeki," *Higeki kigeki* 43, no. 8 (August 1990): 13.

80. See Kano's account of the Kawakamis' adaptation of Shakespeare's *Othello* in *Acting like a Woman,* 105–109. Ink Stone writer Emi Suiin (1869–1934), who was commissioned by Kawakami to write the adaptation, was offered at the time the unprecedented sum of ¥1,000 but was never paid more than half what had been promised. See Poulton, *Spirits of Another Sort,* 32. On the adaptations phenomenon, see also J. Scott Miller, *Adaptations of Western Literature in Meiji Japan* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001).

81. Cited in Kinoshita, *Nihongo no sekai,* 129–130; see also Kinoshita's appraisal of Kōyō's drama on p. 125.

Chapter 2: The Rise of Modern Drama, 1909–1924

1. Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Seishun monogatari* (1932); in Tanizaki, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū,* 13:386. At the time, Osanai was only twenty-eight years old and Tanizaki twenty-three.

2. Kikuchi Kan, "Osanai-san to bokura"; Kume Masao, "Haiku kara geki, shōsetsu"; both cited in Endō Tasuke, "Kindai ni okeru gikyoku jidai: Sono seiritsu no ichimen," *Nihon kindai bungaku* 6 (May 1967): 28.

3. Mori Ōgai, *Youth,* translated by Shōichi Ono and Sanford Goldstein, in *Youth and Other Stories,* edited by J. Thomas Rimer (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), 412.

4. Tsubouchi Shōyō, "Shaōgeki wo okosan to suru riyū" (1910); cited in Mōri Mitsuya, "Ipusen shoen zengo (2): Meijiki no engeki kindaika wo meguru mondai (4)," *Bigaku/bijutsushi ronshū* 12 (March 1999): 138.

5. See Kano (*Acting like a Woman,* 184–199) for an account of the Literary Society's production of *A Doll House* and the debate on the "new woman" that it inspired. I follow Ayako Kano in using *A Doll House* as the English title for Ibsen's play.

6. A friend of Tanizaki's, actor and director Kamiyama Sōjin (1884–1954) was a fascinating individual who deserves more study. Instrumental in the early Taishō years in the introduction of Western drama to Japan, he later went to Hollywood, where, like Hayakawa Sessue, he played exotic heroes and villains in a slew of silent films, including the Mongol prince in Douglas Fairbanks's *Thief of Baghdad* (1924) and Charlie Chan in *The Bombay Parrot* (1927). Talkies, which revealed a foreign accent not appreciated by American audiences, led to his demise as a Hollywood star, and he returned to theatre and cinema in Japan. One of his last roles was as the blind minstrel in Kurosawa's *The Seven Samurai* (1954).

7. Endō Tasuke, "Kindai ni okeru gikyoku jidai," 30.

8. See, for example, Kaneko Sachiyo, "Nora no yukue: Mori Ōgai to Ipusen no gikyoku," in *Mori Ōgai kenkyū* (Izumi shoin, 1989), 3:117. Novelist and playwright Masamune Hakuchō (1879–1962) was one of the first to take issue with a play about old age being the catalyst for the New Theatre movement.

9. Kano (*Acting like a Woman,* 186–187) notes that the first German production of *A Doll House* in 1880 changed the ending of the play so that Nora does not leave her husband and children. This "happy" ending, enforcing conventional notions of a woman's marital and maternal duties, remained the dominant one for German productions throughout the 1880s, and Shimamura Hōgetsu's first translation of this play in 1906 reflected this bowdlerized version.

10. Mori Ōgai, "Gendai shoka no shōsetsuron wo yomu," *Shigarami zōshi* 2 (November 1889); Tsubouchi Shōyō, "Kaigai bungaku ni tsuite," *Waseda bungaku* (October 15, 1892); both cited in Mōri Mitsuya, "Ipusen shoen zengo (1): Meijiki no engeki kindaika wo meguru mondai (3)," *Bigaku/bijutsushi ronshū* 10 (September 1995): 181.

11. Partial translations of *An Enemy of the People, The Master Builder,* and *A Doll House* appeared in 1892; complete translations of *The Master Builder* and *John Gabriel Borkman* were published in 1897.

12. Nakamura Kichizō, "Ōshū bungaku no torai no eikyō," *Waseda bungaku* (April 1926); cited in Kaneko, "Nora no yukue," 114.

13. Mōri Mitsuya, "Ipusen shoen zengo (1)," 189.

14. Yanagita Kunio, "Ipusen zakkan," *Waseda bungaku* (July 1906): 99; cited in Mōri Mitsuya, "Ipusen shoen zengo (2)," 133.

15. Mōri Mitsuya suggests that Hōgetsu's notable absence from this roster is due to the fact that he and Osanai never got along; Mōri Mitsuya, "Ipusen shoen zengo (2)," 134.

16. Ibid., 132.

17. Györgi Lukacs, "The Sociology of Modern Drama" (1914), translated by Lee Baxandall, in *The Theory of the Modern Stage,* edited by Eric Bentley (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968), 429.

18. Ibid., 445.

19. Ibid., 426.