RIDIKULUS! A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ROMAN COMEDY AND KYŌGEN THROUGH THEIR TECHNIQUES OF FEAR-ALLEVIATION

A thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities

2013

KIRSTY M JENKINS

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WORD COUNT: 78,868 words.
ABSTRACT

There is a tendency amongst scholars to view comedic elements common to Roman Comedy, such as the tricky subordinate or the nagging wife, as part of a developing Western Comedic Tradition. The appearance of these characters in Medieval Japanese Kyōgen, a comedic art-form unconnected with Western Comedy, challenges this viewpoint and suggests that they are part of a wider comedic identity. This thesis compares and contrasts Roman Comedy and Kyōgen through their techniques of fear-alleviation, exploring the manner in which each culture addresses social anxieties.

The first chapter explores the comedic master-slave/servant relationship through the medium of the tricky slave/servant. It examines how the motif of the tricky subordinate is used to alleviate contemporary fears of authority figures. Chapter 2 considers the other half of this relationship, focusing on authority’s fear of rebellion and how this is addressed through the loyal and/or stupid slave/servant. Chapter 3 explores the depiction of religious and supernatural figures in the two comedic forms and examines the methods by which these awe-inspiring beings are portrayed humorously and rendered harmless. The fourth chapter reflects on the treatment of illness in Roman Comedy and Kyōgen. It discusses how contemporary social anxieties regarding blind men (Medieval Japan) and the stigma of insanity and epilepsy (Rome) are alleviated through the humorous comedic depiction of blind and insane/epileptic characters. Chapter 5 explores the comedic presentation of professional figures. This chapter contrasts the boastful character of the comedic soldier of Roman Comedy with the braggart priest of Kyōgen. In Chapter 6, the focus is on the misogynistic treatment of wives in both comedic art-forms. This chapter explores contemporary fear of wives and how this fear is alleviated through their negative portrayal in comedy.

This thesis finds that there is a strong correlation between Roman Comedy and Kyōgen, both in the types of social anxiety which they seek to alleviate and the methods by which they seek to accomplish this. It also finds that the motif of the tricky subordinate and the nagging wife are not just Western phenomena but that they are also present in the Eastern Comic Tradition. The comparison of Roman Comedy with Kyōgen, an unrelated comedic form, leads to an enhanced understanding of the role which these characters play in alleviating social anxiety. It also enables the consideration of stock characters in Roman comedy from a wider viewpoint, presenting an opportunity for scholars to re-evaluate characters such as the tricky subordinate and the nagging wife as products of a wider, universal comic tradition.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family, my Supervisor and my friend Toshiko Matsumoto for their help and support during the writing of this PhD.
PREFACE

I have a BA English/Classical Literature and Civilisation and an MA Classics from The University of Birmingham. I studied Japanese for two years at The University of Tokyo under a scholarship awarded by the Japanese Ministry of Education.
INTRODUCTION

Tricky servants, deceived masters, nagging wives, boastful professionals – with these epithets I could be referring to characters in any one of a number of Roman Comedies. In actuality, however, I am describing characters commonly found in Kyōgen. This Medieval Japanese form of comedy developed without Western influence but contains some surprising, and unexpected, similarities to Roman Comedy. These similarities present interesting and fruitful opportunities for comparative research, particularly into issues of characterisation, plot, style and language.

Whilst Plautine and Terentian comedy have routinely acted as the basis for comparative studies over the course of the last century; these studies are intrinsically Anglo-American or Euro-centric, adopting a linear approach which focuses on influence and receptionist comparative theories. They can chiefly be divided into two groups: those which address the reception of Greek New Comedy on Roman comic playwrights and on Roman drama as a whole, and studies which examine Roman comedy’s influence on later writers and playwrights. Studies which examine resemblance theories, i.e. those which analyse Roman comedy in the light of disparate cultures are conspicuous

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by their absence. Luk (1982:2) refers to these as “Parallel and Affinity Studies” or a comparison of two texts which have no “rapports de fait whatsoever, except stylistic, structural or ideological resemblances” (Luk 1982:2). This is despite their potential in furthering our understanding of Roman comedy by enabling us to analyse it from a wider perspective.

Recent critics of comic theory and the history of comedy, even whilst applying their theories universally, also tend to draw their evidence and examples from the narrow basis of American and European comedy, rarely venturing further afield.

Overcoming the barriers to cross-cultural comparative studies presents classicists with the opportunity to enhance their understanding of Plautine and Terentian comedy by presenting a further means of analysing its concepts, one which does not only draw attention to elements of interest in Roman comedy but also considers how these elements compare and contrast with disparate cultures. This enables us to identify and analyse cross-cultural patterns and divergences, and to consider how these are manifested in individual societies. Several factors have likely combined to create these barriers. First, until the mid-twentieth century comparisons between West/East texts were ruled out as the East was seen as too dissimilar for any comparative study to be valid. Second, few classical scholars possess the requisite linguistic skills necessary for conducting such a study which naturally requires knowledge of not only Western

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3 (Moore, 2002) marks the exception to the rule. This article briefly addresses the potential benefits to classicists inherent in comparing certain themes/characters in Roman and Japanese comedy.


7 On this point see Yokota-Murakami (1998, 4). See also Pirandello’s (1974:103) comments on the cultural uniqueness of humour.

8 Scheidel (2009a:5) reflects on a similar limitation facing cross-cultural historical studies.
languages, classic and modern, but also of the relevant Eastern languages. A final
factor hampering such cross-cultural studies is lack of knowledge of relevant texts in
the target culture to compare with texts in the source culture.9

In this thesis, I compare the Roman comedy of Plautus and Terence with the Kyōgen
plays of Medieval Japan, examining how each art-form explores and expresses its
respective society’s social anxieties. Although there were many areas of Kyōgen which
I might have compared with Roman Comedy, for example treatment of love, stylistic
convention and language, I have chosen fear because of its commonality in almost all
identified cultures.10 As one of the most primal and easily identifiable human emotions,
fear and, consequently, the treatment of social anxieties, makes an excellent choice for
a cross-cultural comparative study. Although English idiom might prefer an individual
to turn pale with fear whilst the Japanese prefer blue, neither culture would have the
slightest difficulty in recognising and interpreting fear in the opposing environment.11
Similarly, humans are capable of easily identifying fear in many non-human animal
species, and a human society which is free from anxieties has yet to be identified. Freud
(1966:185ff.) has famously expostulated the relationship between laughter and fear12
which remains notoriously difficult to delineate explicitly. Knowledge of how a society
chooses or does not choose to express/address this relationship can provide an

9 On this point see also Aldridge (1986:35) and Dorsey (1989:187).
10 The most recent general study to examine fear and instinct is Winston (2011). Davies (2009) and
Hessel (2009:23-42) provide modern examinations of the relationship between fear and laughter. On this
point see also Rowling (1999:134) on using laughter to defeat a boggart. Davies examines the
relationship between humour and Gelotophobia (fear of being laughed at) whilst Hessel examines the
dividing line between fear and laughter through a study of Don Quixote. The seminal study on this
11 Konstan (2006:129-55) discusses the concept of fear and anxiety as inevitable emotions. He analyses
the concept of fear emotion in the light of ancient Greek literature.
12 On modern interpretations of the relationship between fear and laughter see also Hessel (2009:23-42),
66), Bakhtin (1984:47, 90-91 and 394), Sutton (1980, 164 and 166-67) Yoshinobu (1971:3) and
interesting insight into aspects of their culture and social milieu. Comparisons of one society’s portrayal of this relationship with that of another historically distinct society, which remains culturally isolated from the former, will invariably help to illuminate aspects of both cultures’ comic responses to fear whilst drawing attention to features which are unique in each, thus identifying possible new avenues of research.13

Through an examination of the similarities and differences in theme and characterisation between the two comedic forms I evaluate how each comedic form addresses group anxiety relating to authority, gender and class.14 Through this examination I identify patterns15 and differences in comic portrayals of contemporary social anxieties and anxiety-alleviation across the two comedic forms, expostulating reasons for their existence or absence. In this manner, I hope to provide a fresh perspective on aspects and features of Roman comedy, e.g. treatment of slaves and women, which have tended to be viewed as natural developments by classicists and comic theorists.16 I hope to demonstrate that Roman comedic inversion and subversion

14 Brottman (2004:45) has discussed the use of jokes as a mechanism to "allay or express human fears and anxieties about sex". Although Brottman’s focuses on dirty jokes, the concept of joking as a method of fear-alleviation can be applied to all anxiety-provoking instances. Rozik (2011:217) in his discussion of laughter as cathartic states "[i]t is the intention of comedy to increase anxiety and to release it at its peak".
15 Morris (2010:145) and Lloyd and Sivin (2002:9-10) discuss the importance of pattern-building in comparative research.
16 On the inherent dangers of confining research to one cultural area see Morris (2010:24), Lloyd and Sivin (2002:8). See also Gupt (1994:xii) and Dorsey (1989:184). Moore (1998:160 and 224.n.6) and (2002) is one of the few classicists to reflect on the treatment of comic characters outside of the Greco-Roman tradition. Purdie (1993:93) in her analysis of comedy states that "[t]he ‘exchange of women’, otherwise known as ‘the Romance plot’, has often been identified as ‘the most usual basis of comedy’ (Frye, 1957, p. 163): it appears in all comic traditions, from Greek New Comedy to tomorrow’s television situation comedy” yet this is only accurate from a Western perspective as love plots do not exist in traditional Japanese comedy.
of norms acts as a means of safely expressing and controlling contemporary social anxieties through a process of comic catharsis.\textsuperscript{17}

\textbf{i) Why Compare Kyōgen with Roman Comedy?}

Despite the temporal disparity between Roman comedy (late second century BC to mid-first century BC) and Kyōgen (1333-1800), valid reasons exist for comparing the two. Both art-forms represent the earliest extant comedies in their respective cultures; both cultures were heavily influenced by advanced foreign cultures, in the case of Rome, Greece and in the case of Japan, China; and both cultures were militaristic, patriarchal societies with strong traditions of filial duty. Further, both Roman comedy and Kyōgen exist in conjunction with tragic counterparts which they often parody. Whilst these societal similarities present a solid basis for conducting a comparative study,\textsuperscript{18} perhaps the most compelling reason to choose Kyōgen as a comparative basis for examining Plautus and Terence is its complete independence from Western culture which absolves it from the accusation that any patterns are a result of cross-cultural contamination or influence.

The highly isolationist nature of pre-modern Japan meant that it remained largely free of Western influence until the mid-nineteenth century. This presents a near-unique opportunity to consider key themes and characters of Roman comedy from the standpoint of an entirely separate art-form without the bias of assumptions which a unicultural or interdependent cross-cultural study unavoidably inherits. There is a

\textsuperscript{17} On this point see Watson (2012:179-87) and Janko (1984, particularly 141-44) on Aristotle’s interpretation of comedy and comic catharsis. See also Bakhtin (1984) on the destruction and renewal of social norms in carnival.

\textsuperscript{18} On the importance of identifying comparable areas of comparanda when conducting a comparative study see Morris (2010:133), Lloyd and Sivin (2002:1-2, 3 and 6-9),
temptation amongst scholars in the West to view comic similarities in characterisation, style and theme as part of a continuing, developing Western Comic Tradition which originated in Aristophanic Comedy, whilst accounting for differences as the means by which an individual culture develops or adapts its source material, or by effectively eliding them, as has often happened with medieval farce. This approach invariably gives rise to a feeling of inevitability in the development of Western comedy and the sensation that modern Western humour is a direct consequence of Greek and Roman literary developments and is thus different to the humour of the East or Global South.

Whilst it is undoubtedly true that certain jokes and exchanges in one society would not be considered amusing by another society, such an assumption overlooks the existence of some overlap between cultures which is evinced by the success and multiplicity of translated literature. If no comparable points of reference existed

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19 Recent studies which adopt this approach are Segal (2001, particularly his comments on Terence 226) and Christenson (2000: 9-12). Amongst theorists, Charney (1991) considers the linear development of the comic hero whilst Purdie (1993:93) discusses the role of women jokes in comedy from their historical beginnings through to the present. Goldstone (1991:40-41) discusses the linear approach which scholars have traditionally accepted when considering issues of social change. Torrance (1978) applies this approach to analysing the evolution of the comic hero.


21 An example in point is the Modernist and Populist rejection of medieval farce and their inability to account for comic characters which do not conform to either the comic hero or comic butt mould. On this point see especially Hokenson (2006:143-72, particularly 146-47). See also Frye (1957:163) on the elision of Attic comedy and (1957:162ff.) on archetypes in Western literature.

22 Torrance (1978), for example, considers the linear development of the comic hero from Homer to Joyce but his analysis only considers examples from the Western canon. Similarly, see Shershow (1986). Langer (1953) examines the influence of Aristophanes, Menander and Molière.

23 On this point see Yokota-Murakami (1998:4). This view has been partially challenged by some exponents of fool theory. See Gutwirth (1993:46 who associates the development of the fool with mythological traditions) and Gurewitch (1975) on the fool as clown.

24 Consider the case of the English policeman in the sitcom ‘Allo, ‘Allo whosefunniness results from his broken English which distinguishes him from the other characters heavily-accented, impeccable English but which, since the sitcom is ostensibly set in France, should be interpreted by the viewer as broken French and native French respectively. The complex nature of this metaphorical joke would necessarily be extremely challenging to portray to a French-speaking audience who, whilst they might catch the humour of the policeman who speaks broken French, would inevitably miss the irony of an English speaking cast meant to be viewed as French. Douglas (2003:146-64) contains some interesting and useful material on jokes and their relation to culture. See particularly 147-48.
between source and target cultures then translation of literary texts would be pointless as, despite their linguistic comprehensibility, they would be logically incomprehensible to the target culture which would lack the social understanding necessary to render the sentences meaningfully. For translation to be effective certain emotions or feelings must be recognisable and interpretable across individual cultures and the means and methods by which these emotions are portrayed in their respective literatures can raise interesting points for comparison.

Certain surprising similarities exist between Roman comedy and Kyōgen, for instance their portrayal of the master/slave-servant relationship, misogynistic tendencies, humiliation and eventual reintegration of authority figures, parody of religious and sacred concepts and their emphasis on a world turned-upside-down, which cannot be explained by either historical association or cultural influence. Similarly, there are substantial differences between the two comedic forms in both content and style which are not easily ascribed to societal variation. For example, the issue of love is a particularly fruitful one in Roman literature occurring in genres as diverse as tragedy, elegy, epic and satire. Roman comedy itself typically revolves around a problematic love interest which is usually resolved at the play’s denouement, yet love plots are noticeable only by their absence in Kyōgen. Their common occurrence in other contemporary literary genres such as tragedy, poetry and the novel suggests that this absence cannot be ascribed to any cultural taboo regarding love yet, for some reason, in Medieval Japan the love-plot never made the transition into comedy. Through an examination of similarities and differences such as these, a comparison of Kyōgen with

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Roman comedy is likely to be helpful in reinforcing or re-evaluating theories concerning characterisation and theme, expostulated by classicists, by presenting them from a new perspective and by examining their effectiveness in a wider context.  

**ii) Comparable Criteria**

In his comparison of Eastern and Western historical and social development, Ian Morris identifies six criteria which he determines as vital to a successful comparative study. He lists these as relevance, cultural independence, individual independence, adequate documentation, reliability and convenience. Although a historical comparative study necessarily differs from a literary comparative study, the majority of the criteria which he identifies remain pertinent and can be applied to this thesis. These are relevance – each identified area of comparison should be capable of telling us something about how comic anxiety-alleviation manifests itself in Roman and Medieval Japanese cultures; independence – in order to ensure an overall examination of comic anxiety-alleviation, each area of comparison should exist individually and not be the product of another area of comparison; reliability – each area of comparison should have been identified and examined individually by scholars of Roman comedy and Kyōgen, since this will ensure that only genuine and valid areas of comparison are addressed. Finally, Morris’ criterion of convenience is also applicable since it is necessary to obtain enough material to ensure that any comparative analysis is valid. Using these criteria as a base-point, I have identified six areas for comparison taken from the three fields of

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28 Lloyd and Sivin (2002: 9) apply a similar formula to their comparison of Early Chinese and Ancient Greek scientific development which focuses on identifying groups of comparable material.
29 See Morris (2010:147).
30 Morris’ two remaining criteria, documentation and cultural-independence are less relevant to this thesis. Both Plautine and Terentian comedy and Kyōgen are well-documented, and since I intend to focus on the textual evidence of characterisation and theme, issues of cultural-independence or bias are not applicable.
authority, gender and class. These are masters, slaves/servants, married women, religious/military authority figures, illness/disease, and gods and the supernatural. Although these areas of comparison are not perfect since identical comparable matches do not always exist, they have the advantage of being well-documented and well-researched in their individual disciplines; they comprise a wide variety of character types; they encompass a variety of plot-structures and themes; and they are easily recognisable. Comparing how a group of characters is portrayed across a range of plays is likely to be more helpful than a comparison of individual characters in individual plays, since a broad approach is the approach most likely to highlight patterns (or their lack) of fear-alleviation.

### iii) Core Questions

Timothy Moore suggested several potentially profitable areas for further research in his examination of *Japanese Kyōgen in the Ancient Comedy Classroom* (2002:188-98). His questions concerning masters and servants, wives (2002:193-94) and black humour (2002:195) are particularly relevant to this thesis. Specifically, some of the points Moore raises relate to the presence of tricky servants in non-Western comedy and what impact this has on the Saturnalian theory of comedy (2002:193), how the slave/servant character is “modified in different traditions” and why (2002:193), comic approaches to marriage, particularly those which relate to the wife’s desire to preserve marriage

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31 On this point see Morris’s analysis of human nature (2010:27) “large groups of humans, as opposed to individual humans, are all much the same. If you pluck two random people from a crowd, they may be as different as can be imagined, but if you round up two complete crowds they will tend to mirror each other rather closely.” Smethurst’s study of Aeschylus and Zeami (1989) demonstrates this point. Although she aims at a comparison of the Greek tragedian, Aeschylus and the Japanese Nō writer, Zeami, since her comparisons are confined to an examination of only one Aeschylean play and only a few of Zeami’s Nō all of which she states are atypical examples of their respective art-forms, her study struggles to reach any meaningful conclusion on the comparative nature of Greek tragedy and Japanese Nō. A broader comparison of the two art-forms would likely have avoided this pitfall and would surely have resulted in a more effective, encompassing comparison. Similarly, Ono’s thesis (1975) suffers from the same weakness.
(2002:194) and the “use of black humour” and religious parody (2002:195). Reflecting and expanding on these areas of interest I have identified some key questions for each section, relating to the portrayal of fear in comedy, which I intend to explore in this thesis.

1) and 2) Masters, Slaves and Servants.

Fear of masters with regards to their slaves/servants and the possibility for rebellion and fear of slaves/servants concerning the authority of their masters are two overlapping issues. The master-slave/servant relationship is a symbiotic one, and behaviour which is likely to reduce anxiety amongst slaves and servants is likely to increase anxiety amongst masters and vice versa. In both comedic forms, there exists a comic discrepancy between the powerful threats issued by masters and the actual events of the plays which typically result in a slave/servant victory which humiliates the master. For these reasons, many of the questions which are relevant for my chapter on masters also apply to my chapter on slaves and servants. For this reason, I have placed together, below, key questions surrounding the relationship in both directions.

In both Roman comedy and Kyōgen masters are typically the butts of their slaves/servants’ wiliness, yet their authority is typically reasserted before the end of the play. How exactly are these masters humiliated and reintegrated in their respective traditions? Can we identify any patterns of humiliation and reintegration between Roman comedy and Kyōgen? How far is this humiliation taken? What, if anything, do they tell us about Roman and Japanese society’s attitude towards hierarchical

Parker (1989:236) suggests that “[f]or the Roman, the free slave was the most terrifying of oxymorons”. On this point see also Pliny the Younger’s response to the murder of Larceus Macedo (Ep. 3.14.1 and 3.14.5).
authority? What purpose might stupid and/or loyal slaves/servants serve? What effect might the loyal and/or stupid slave/servant have on authority figures in the audience? How might the portrayal of masters in these traditions reflect methods of fear-inducement and anxiety-alleviation?

A commonly asserted view of Plautine tricky slaves is that they originated in Greek New Comedy and that their role was expanded and substantially developed by Plautus in a manifestation of the Saturnalia tradition. A similar character type, however, routinely occurs in Kyōgen which had no tradition of Saturnalia and, in fact, reflects a society which fears its Japanese equivalent, gekokujiō (the world turned-upside-down). How does the revelation that the tricky slave is not only a “Western phenomenon” (Moore, 2002:193) affect our interpretation of the Saturnalian theory? As Moore has remarked, the Kyōgen servant appears “to get away with less than many of their counterparts in ancient Greece and Rome” (2002:193). Is this actually the case? If so, could this disparity tell us anything about the respective traditions’ comic tolerance of subversive behaviour in lower social classes? If the subversive slave/servant is an example of tension-control in its respective society what can we learn from individual similarities and differences?

In Chapter 1, I focus on the behaviour of the tricky slave/servant and how his actions act to alleviate fears regarding authority figures, not only for slaves and servants but

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34 Fears of authority figures in special areas of authority (i.e. religious and military authority figures) will be discussed in a later chapter.
for all those subject to authority.\textsuperscript{35} In Chapter 2, I concentrate on the opposite side of the master/servant divide and examine how authority figures’ fear of rebellion or \textsl{gekokujuō} can be assuaged through the use of loyal and/or stupid slaves and servants.

3) Gods and the Supernatural

Whilst it may seem unorthodox to consider Gods and ghosts together, I explain the reasons for this choice in Chapter 3. Although Gods and ghosts are more typically associated with tragic genres they also appear in comedy where they are often parodied and ridiculed. Whilst they are not central to either Roman or Japanese comedy they are of extreme cultural importance to both societies and represented a central part of everyday life. This makes them a potentially rewarding source for an examination of social anxiety and anxiety-alleviation methods. How does Roman comedy and Kyōgen address fear of gods and ghosts? Is it possible to identify any patterns between religious and supernatural fear in the two societies, despite their differing religious beliefs and widely divergent mythologies? Does an examination of the two traditions’ techniques support the supposition that religious parody is a cathartic exercise which results in a reaffirmation of traditional beliefs?

4) Disease and Disability

Illness and disability were far more common in the ancient world than they are today and the chances of an individual, no matter what their social class, suffering an incurable disease or of being disabled as a result of disease were far higher than they

\textsuperscript{35} Fitzgerald (2000:11) suggests that this defiance indicates a fantasy atmosphere prevalent in Roman comedy through which not only slaves but “the free” (freeborn citizens who, despite their freedom, are still subject to authority) can act out their own fantasies with comic license. On this point see also McCarthy (2000:19-20).
are in the twenty-first century. This likely created a source of anxiety which would only have been fuelled by the general lack of understanding about causes of disease and disability. The fact that illness and death strike irrespective of social status would likely have increased the anxiety of the general populace. Similar to Gods and the supernatural this is not a central theme of comedy but its commonality in the ancient world makes it a logical choice for inclusion. This is particularly the case since it represents one of the areas in which Roman comedy and Kyōgen manifest the greatest divergence. The blind men plays of Kyōgen are not paralleled in Roman comedy. Likewise, the fear of insanity and epilepsy which can be noted in Roman comedy is not reciprocated in Kyōgen. Since blindness, in particular, is likely to have been equally common in both societies what might account for this divergence? Does the type of fear portrayed in the blind men plays differ from that which is represented by the portrayals of insanity and epilepsy in Roman comedy? Might this discrepancy reflect its society’s collective fears or could it reflect the stigmatization of people with these ailments in their respective societies?

5) Religious and Military Authorities

The master-slave/servant relationship is, perhaps, the most obvious example of comedic tension but it is not the only example. In Roman comedy the boastful soldier is a fruitful source of comic ridicule and his treatment appears to be paralleled in Kyōgen by the braggart priest. Despite, however, the religious tendencies of Roman society and the importance of military valour to Japanese culture, there are no examples of braggart priests in Plautine or Terentian comedy and no examples of boastful soldiers in Kyōgen.

36 Three major causes of blindness in today’s developing world are age-related cataracts, trachoma (caused by poor sanitary conditions) and Xerophthalmia (a result of Vitamin A deficiency) (Sardegna and Otis (ed.) 2002:261). These are likely to have been equally common in antiquity and would have been untreatable with current medicine. On causes of blindness in Roman society see Trentin (2013:95).
Might this be a reflection of cultural taboos, depicting the limits of what each society considers acceptable in comedy? Do the boastful soldier and the bragging priest fulfill the same function in their respective traditions? How might the humiliation of the priest and soldier figures reflect modes of social anxiety and anxiety-alleviation?

6) Wives

Do parallels exist between the treatment of wives in Roman comedy and the treatment of wives in Japanese Kyōgen? Can the misogynistic treatment of wives in their respective traditions provide any clue to contemporary male anxieties regarding women? If so, are there any marked similarities or differences between the two cultures and how might these be explained? Moore (2002:193-94) has remarked on the apparent desire in ancient comedy to preserve marriage. Is this more evident in Roman or Japanese comedy and how does it affect comic fear-inducement or fear-alleviation?

iv) Methodology

Although there have been several comparative studies examining Greek tragedy and Japanese Nō,37 this is the first extensive study (so far as I am aware) which seeks to compare Roman comedy with Japanese comedy. Therefore, this thesis is expository and experimental in nature, seeking to identify and comment upon areas of potential for future studies and drawing attention to and suggesting reasons for singularities and similarities in each comedic form. It has also been necessary to devote a considerable amount of space to a discussion of the historical and social background of the periods, particularly in the case of Kyōgen which remains unfamiliar to a Western readership.

37 Smethurst (1989) compares the work of the Greek tragedian Aeschylus with that of the Nō artist Zeami. Ono (1975) takes a more general approach.
Comparative literary studies often suffer from one of two failings: either they confine their comparative analysis to a list of similarities and differences without considering reasons for, or the importance of, their similarity or diversity, or, in their search for comparable comparanda, they are forced to extremes, considering only the most atypical examples of a genre. By considering a range of characters through a range of plays I hope to avoid these common pitfalls, but such a study necessarily introduces its own potential problems. In this case, the issue is one of depth. The breadth of material available in a study of the master-slave/servant relationship alone would be sufficient to fill several books of comparative literature. Thus in order to portray the wider picture, I have had to choose carefully which areas to consider in-depth and which to examine more generally. Although such an approach might mean a character of potential interest is occasionally excluded, it allows for the identification and analysis of general trends and patterns across the corpus of the comedies, patterns which could easily be missed in a more intensive study of individual characters, plays or themes.

I have adopted an integrated approach to considering the Roman and Japanese material, as opposed to discussing each comedic form in isolation. This has the advantage of allowing more direct comparisons to be made between the two comedic forms. It also enables the reader to focus on identified similarities and differences across a range of plays in conjunction. Although Japanese and Latin are highly divergent languages, there is some role for linguistic analysis within this thesis. This is mainly in the area of literary techniques and devices such as punning and metaphors/similes which are

38 Ono’s (1975) comparison of Greek tragedy with Japanese Nō provides an example of this.
39 Smethurst (1989) only examines two plays, one each by Aeschylus and Zeami, in-depth and states that these are both atypical of the tragic genre.
common to both comedic forms. I consider these literary devices in terms of their appearance and function in Roman Comedy and Kyōgen.

v) Texts Used

All quotations from the plays of Plautus and Terence are from the Oxford Classical Texts. Abbreviations to the works of Classical authors follow Lewis and Short’s A Latin Dictionary and Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon. In the field of Kyōgen there is no one definitive text encompassing all 250 plays. Collections of plays, typically following the traditions of a particular school of performers, have been published, but these rarely encompass the entire oeuvre of a school and many of these collections are extremely rare. The collections to which I refer in my thesis are a combination of those authoritative collections which are most recent and readily available and those which contain the oldest, available, surviving evidence. Tadahiko Kitagawa and Akira Yasuda’s Nihon koten bungaku zenshu 35: Kyougenshuu (1989) and Shinpen nihon koten bungaku zenshuu 60: kyougenshuu (2001) and Hiroshi Koyama’s two volume (1960-61) Kyougenshu are recent collections which combine the original Ōkura school texts with updated orthography, furigana and major textual notes in modern Japanese. The three volumes of the Ookura Toraakibon present a modern publication of the seventeenth century work which preserves the original orthography and woodcuts but adds minor textual notation. Tetsuzō Tsukamoto’s two volume kyougen ki is a republication of a collection of Edo Kyōgen texts which contain plays from both the Izumi and Ōkura schools. It is presented in the original medieval Japanese with the original woodcut illustrations. For Kyōgen not found in the above works I have consulted Hisashi Furukawa and Kaizou Nomura’s 1954 collection of

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40 On problems associated with the term Plautine and Terentian texts see Sharrock (2009:121).
Kyōgen plays, *Nihon koten bungaku zensho: kyougenshuuchuu 2*, and Hisashi Furukawa’s *Kyougen furubon nishu* (1964). The latter combines reproductions of the *Torakyo Kyougen bon*, a sixteenth-seventeenth century Kyōgen text consisting of several Okura School plays, and the *Tensei Kyougen bon*, an early collection of Kyōgen synopses. In the one instance where it has proven impossible to find a full original text of a play, I have consulted Minoru Betsuyaku and Shuntarō Tanigawa’s modernised collection of Kyōgen plays (1993) *Nou:Kyougen* in addition to the partially extant earlier text. This collection preserves the original tone, plot and format of the plays but is written in modern Japanese. Further details are to be found in Chapter 5 of the thesis.

Whilst it has, unfortunately, not proven possible to consult any recent collections of Izumi school texts, I have noted where these differ substantially from the Ōkura school texts. There are very few translations of Kyōgen into English and those collections which do exist tend to reproduce only the most popular or famous plays, perhaps a result of their more ready availability in modern Japanese. This means that less than a sixth of the entire repertoire has actually been translated into English and much of what remains to be translated is only available in the original medieval language. Therefore, all translations from Japanese should be considered my own unless explicitly stated.

vi) What is Kyōgen?

Kyōgen is a dramatic comedic art-form which originated in the fourteenth century in Japan and is still performed.41 It is believed to have developed from Sarugaku and Sangaku, shrine and temple-related dramatic forms which contained music, dancing.


Kyōgen plays were traditionally performed together with and on the same stage as Nō plays, often in the interval between the first and second half of a Nō performance, and provided some much needed comic relief from the tension created by a Nō play. These interludes typically consisted of individual plays (kyōgen), performed by specialist Kyōgen actors, but they could also be part of the Nō play itself in which case they were called aikyōgen (interval Kyōgen). aikyōgen were solo performances, sometimes part of the Nō plot but often a colloquial retelling of the Nō play, performed by a Kyōgen actor who formed part of the Nō troupe.\footnote{On aikyōgen, see Aburatani (2002:17). On the relationship between Kyōgen and Nō (Nōgaku), see Ortolani (1995:150) and Yoshinobu, (1971:12, 84-5). On staging of Kyōgen see Kenny (1989:xviii-xiv). On props and costume see Yamamoto and Kondo (2005:133-68).} A further form of Kyōgen was the maikyōgen (dance Kyōgen) which consisted of mimed Nō plays. Nō and Kyōgen were performed on formal occasions, particularly those involving the Shogunate or other high-ranking officials, with a full performance typically lasting all day. Performances could also occur as part of longer dramatic celebrations such as the eight day Sarugaku performance of 1464\footnote{For an account of this festival see Sakanishi (1967:9-11).} which devoted three days to Nō and Kyōgen. Kyōgen reached its zenith in the sixteenth century when its plays evolved into their present-day form through the process of being committed to writing and by the seventeenth century it had become an official entertainment in its own right.

A typical solo Kyōgen performance of the medieval period consisted of five plays performed over the course of one day in a set order with the first play, performed at dawn, being one concerning gods and the last play, performed at dusk, featuring
demons. In this way, the performance-order represented the life cycle and the day/night continuum.\textsuperscript{45} Plays typically involve no more than three or four characters and a typical play might be expected to last 15-20 minutes, although some such as \textit{Busu} may last up to 40 minutes. There is no one method for classifying Kyōgen plays but plays are often categorised by their main characters. Primary characters in Kyōgen include gods, demons, lords, Tarō Kaja, bridegrooms, women, mountain priests, blind men, priests, farmers and thieves/tricksters, although there is also a large category of miscellaneous plays.\textsuperscript{46} In the majority of cases plays involve some form of deceit or trickery and/or humiliation of a character, particularly where the primary character is Tarō Kaja, a woman, a thief/trickster, a mountain priest, a blind man or a lord. In Kyōgen, the tricky character is usually victorious although his/her trick is often exposed. The majority of plays conclude either with one character (typically the trickster or in the case of women plays, the husband) chased off-stage by another character (usually the deceived character or in the case of women plays, the wife) or with some form of simple reflection on the action of the play as is often the case in the blind men plays.

Although the endings of Kyōgen are often predictable, the plays themselves are far more varied. \textit{maikyōgen}, for example, parodies tragic Nō plays whilst bridegroom plays typically focus on a son-in-law’s first visit to his father-in-law which usually consists of comic mishaps. The plot of \textit{Busu} (Poison) is a typical example of a master-servant Kyōgen. In this play, a master attempts to deceive his two servants, pretending that his vat of sugar is a vat of poison so that they will not eat it in his absence. The servants are so inquisitive that they cannot refrain from first looking at the “poison”, then from tasting it and finally from eating it. In this way, the master’s trickery is uncovered. The

\textsuperscript{45} On this point see Yamamoto and Kondo (2005:12).
\textsuperscript{46} For an example of typical categorisation methods for Kyōgen see Aburatani (2002:20-23).
two servants attempt to cover up their disobedience by breaking two of the master’s treasured items and then pretending that they ate the *busu* in an attempt to commit suicide to atone for breaking the treasures. The play concludes with the servants chased off-stage by their angry master. *Inabadō* (The Shrine at Inabadō) is, likewise, a typical woman Kyōgen. A husband divorces his wife by letter and goes to a shrine to pray to the gods for a new wife. His former wife disguises herself as the god and tells her ex-husband to marry the woman waiting at the crossroads on his route home. The man is delighted, thinking that the gods have granted his prayer and marries the waiting, veiled woman. The new wife, however, is unmasked, after the wedding ceremony, as the former wife and the husband is chased off-stage by his angry spouse. In contrast, plays involving the seven happy gods are usually auspicious plays with the human characters granted gifts in return for their loyal worship. *Kusabira* (Mushrooms) follows the typical plot progression for a mountain priest play. In this play, the priest’s advice is sought by a believer who has a problem with a large mushroom in his garden. The priest boasts of his abilities and promises to solve the problem, accompanying the believer to his home. The priest tries various incantations but is unable to remove the mushroom and the number of the mushrooms in the garden actually increases. This causes the believer to lose faith in the priest at which point the priest tries one final incantation. This incantation also fails to achieve its aim and the priest is revealed as a charlatan and is swallowed-up by the mushrooms.

There were three main schools of Kyōgen, two of which are still in existence. These were the Izumi, Ōkura and Sagi schools. This last disappeared during the nineteenth
century, but the majority of existing plays are from the Izumi and Ōkura traditions. Whilst the great majority of plays are similar in both schools, a few have variant endings or titles whilst a further small minority are unique to a particular school. For the majority of plays it is the performance style which distinguishes the two schools as opposed to drastic variation in content.

Kyōgen is considered to be highly stylised and is of a conservative nature meaning that little has changed in script or performance details since it obtained its final form in the sixteenth century. It is still performed in period costume and language. Its language is that of colloquial medieval Japanese but it is pronounced in a specific manner which cannot be deviated from and which requires many years of vocal training. Whilst Nō used the refined language of the courts, Kyōgen took its vocabulary from the vulgar Japanese of the general classes and presented an immediately recognisable mode of life. Stock routines, phrases and characters are key factors in all the plays, providing recognisable and familiar focal points for the audience. An example of this is the standard greeting of a Kyōgen character to the audience which is always delivered from the same position and which informs the audience of the character’s residential status. Matters of gesture, positioning and speech are explicitly delineated and deviation from or personal interpretation of the conventions is not permitted. Music plays an important part of Kyōgen with a group of musicians playing traditional instruments seated throughout the performance at the back of the stage against the back wall. Although not every play employs dance and some plays rely on it to a far greater extent than others

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47 For possible explanations as to the reason for the Sagi School’s decline see Yamamoto and Kondo (2005:19). For general information about the various schools see Nagai (2002:13-14) and Aburatani (2002: 18).
49 Ueda (1965) examines the stylistic nature of Kyōgen as laid out by Ōkura Toraaki. Berberich (1989) examines the psychological dynamic of Kyōgen.
(for example, the *maikyōgen*), a comic dance scene, accompanied with words is a common occurrence in Kyōgen. Finally, very few properties are used in a typical Kyōgen performance but the fan is an important piece of equipment. This is used to demonstrate a variety of gestures and emotions including fighting, hitting, pointing and crying and to evoke other necessary objects. Use of the fan is highly stylised (as are all the gestures and movements of the characters) with specific gestures and emotions requiring specific use of the fan either in its folded or open form.

**vii) Phonetical Notation**

A note should be made here as to the phonetic notation which I am using to represent Japanese, together with a brief explanation of the Japanese writing system.

The Japanese writing system consists of a combination of two syllabaries (Hiragana and Katakana) and an ideographic system (Kanji) which consists of 1,945 official ideographs. We can see exactly how these three systems combine to produce a Japanese sentence from the following simple example,

Japanese: トムは本屋で面白い本を買いました。

Translation: Tom bought an interesting book at the bookstore.
トム (Tom) being a foreign name is written in Katakana. Grammatical functions such as particles and case/tense markers (for example, は and を) are written in Hiragana and nouns, verbs and adjectives are written in Kanj.

Japanese consonants are always pronounced the same way, while vowels have both long and short forms. Although all forms of transliteration use the same format for depicting the short vowels e.g. a, i, u, e, and o (pronounced respectively like: the a in father, the y in cosy, the oo in book, the e in bet and the o in go), there are several variant methods of depicting the long vowels. I have employed two recognised forms of depicting Japanese vowels in romaji (Roman characters). The first of these is the use of a vowel with a macron above it (ā, ī, ū, ē, and ō) to represent a long vowel, which I have used when citing Japanese titles, names and words as part of my own research or when quoting critics who have employed this method of notation (the format à, î, û, ê and ô is also used by some scholars, and I have kept to this when quoting their work). The second format, the representation of each individual vowel (i.e. a long vowel would be represented by, depending on the syllable, a doubling of the letter: aa, ii, uu, ee, ou/oo), I have used when quoting directly from Japanese. “oo” and “ou”, although pronounced the same, distinguish between the different combinations おお (oo) and おう (ou). The long vowels are sounded for twice as long as their short counterparts.

I have usually phoneticised the Japanese particles (those words denoting case, prepositions or sentence function) as they would be pronounced. I have done this in
order to eliminate confusion as the syllables “he” (へ/へ) and “ha” (は/ハ) are also used, with variant pronunciation, to represent the particles “e” and “wa”. As the Japanese particle “o” is written using the otherwise obsolete syllable “wo” I have transliterated this as “wo” in order to distinguish it from the ordinary vowel “o”. In both formats, I have used “zu” and “dzu” to distinguish between the Japanese modified syllables ず/ズ and づ/ヅ, and “ji” and dji” to distinguish between the Japanese じ/ジ and ぢ/ヂ as, although they sound almost the same, they represent different syllables in the Japanese syllabaries and cannot be used interchangeably.

I have distinguished between these two formats in order to make the Japanese easier for a non-Japanese speaker to understand. The long vowel notation system makes it easier to read the transliterated words as part of an English thesis, whilst the representation of individual vowels makes it easier to follow phonetically and pronounce the medieval Japanese used in the quotations, and to distinguish between Japanese and Western scholars. I have used the second system in citing bibliographical material as this appears to be the most widely accepted system for citing Japanese references. Therefore, the use of this bibliographical system makes it easier for the reader to cross-reference between scholars.

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50 In this phonetical notation, the first of these two symbols always represents the Hiragana character, whilst the second character represents the Katakana character. Although these days Katakana is used solely for foreign words, emphasis or clarification in notation systems, it was once used to write the entire Japanese language (unless you were a woman, in which case you wrote exclusively in Hiragana, also known as “women’s characters”) and is therefore important in any discussion on the Japanese language system.

51 “zu”, “dzu” and “ji” “dji” are examples of modified syllables as they are formed by adding this mark “゛” to the upper right hand corner of the syllables “su”, “tsu”, “ji” and “chi” e.g. す゛ = ず, ち゛ = ぢ. Another form of mark is that added to the syllables “ha”, “hi”, “hu”, “he” and “ho” to make the syllables “pa”, “pi”, “pu”, “pe” and “po”. In this case, the mark looks like this “゜” e.g. ほ゜ = ほ.
Introduction

The societies of Rome and Medieval Japan were both hierarchical in nature and, in both cultures, a clear master-slave/servant hierarchy is evident. Despite this, it is surprising that both societies should also have a tradition of comic tricky slaves/servants who behave in similar ways. This tricky slave/servant has carte-blanche to trick and deceive his master, safe in the knowledge that even when his plots are uncovered he will escape scot-free.¹ This is not true, however, in the reality of contemporary society where slaves/servants could expect to face harsh punishment for their misdeeds.² This reality is, ostensibly, suspended in Roman comedy and Kyōgen, which portray the master as divested of his authority and impotent to apply punishment.³ In spite of this, jokes about prospective punishment, including torture, abound in these comedic forms, particularly in Roman comedy.⁴ William Fitzgerald (2000:25) has suggested that “these images of the master's inflamed eye and the servant's itchy back express the comic symbiosis of master and slave that is central to the economy of Plautine comedy”. In many cases, however, it is the slave himself who indulges in these jokes and appears to relish the threat of punishment.⁵ In Kyōgen, threatened punishment, although often

¹ Segal (2001:189) comments that “in reality, every master had in his everyday power the ability to put a slave to death for this kind of audacity”. Anderson (1993:73) makes a similar point with his note on Cur.214-15. Bradley (1994:5-17) reflects on the legal situation of the Roman slave.
² Bradley (1994:17) demonstrates the different punishment slaves could expect from legal authorities compared to that meted out to freemen or citizens. Leupp (1992:75-6) analyses the terrible punishment that servants faced if convicted of attacking their masters. This was invariably some form of execution no matter what provocation the servant had suffered.
³ As Charney (1991:61) reflects, in Roman comedy “no one seriously believes that the slave will be punished”.
⁴ Beacham (1991:30-1) suggests that Plautus consciously “increased both elements of violent verbal abuse and threats of dire physical punishment” when he adapted his plays from their Greek originals. This suggests that Plautus had a definite comedic reason for inserting and emphasising torture jokes. Beacham asserts that these jokes appealed to the less sophisticated members of the Plautine audience who were less refined than their Greek counterparts.
⁵ On this point see also Parker (1989:246) and Segal (1987:119).
mentioned, is never inflicted. Plays commonly conclude with the errant servant being chased off-stage by his master, the implication being that he will escape scot-free. Given the contradiction between what is threatened and what actually occurs, what significance might the comic depiction of master-slave/servant relations hold? I suggest that it acts, in both comedic forms, as a method of fear-alleviation both for the subjugated and those who subdue.

Although comedic tricky slaves/servants are repeatedly threatened by their masters these threats are almost never executed. As Tranio points out in Plautus’ *Mostellaria*, punishment is deferred to another day, the audiences’ expectations being that that day will never arrive.

*quid grauaris? quasi non cras iam commeream aliam noxiam: ibi utrumque, et hoc et illud, poteris ulcisci probe*

(*Most*.1178-179)

why are you making a fuss? As if I won’t do some other wicked thing tomorrow: then you can take vengeance for both crimes, this and that.

Holt Parker (1989:246) has suggested that this failure to punish is part of a cathartic exercise, designed to defuse rebellious impulses amongst the audience’s slave element whereby the slaves (or merely the powerless) can act out their fantasies through the tricky slave character whilst remaining immune from punishment. Whilst there is some

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6 On the impunity of tricky slaves see Fitzgerald (2000:33), Thalmann (1996:113) and Charney (1991:61). Tyndarus in the *Captivi* appears an exception to this rule (see Thalmann (1996:113) on this point).

7 Stewart (2012:95) examines the relationship between power and torture jokes as well as reflecting on slavery as “enforced subordination”.

8 Parker (1989:246): “Power is mocked, but mollified. Desire is satisfied, but without cost. The wish for rebellion is indulged, but the fear of rebellion is pacified.” Segal (2001:189) expresses similar sentiments in his discussion of Plautine comedy as a form of “Saturnalian” inversion which allows the slave to emerge momentarily triumphant. See also Fitzgerald (2000:33) and Rei (1998:93) on this point.
truth to this, I suggest that the situation is rather more complex, arising, at least in part, from a desire to assuage contemporary fears. As Sigmund Freud’s *galgenhumor* theory suggests, the frequent trickery of master by slave/servant combined with the threat of punishment can be read as a prime example of fear-alleviation. By “play[ing] with terror and laugh[ing] at it, the awesome burden becomes a ‘comic monster’” and the inherent fear is discouraged. Parker (1989:245-46) suggests that the surfeit of torture jokes in Plautine comedy is not, necessarily, related solely to slaves’ fears but can also be viewed as a reflection of the free man’s desire to assert his own power over his superiors. Thus the tricky slave/servant’s outrageous behaviour potentially acts to quell the fears of the subjugated by enabling them to cast off their everyday fears of authority through identification with the subverted world of comedy where authority is eroded. Whilst the audiences’ inherent authority-fears appear to be quelled, to a certain extent, by the actions of the tricky subordinate which result in the humiliation of the master, a degree of fear remains apparent since deception is ultimately exposed and the humiliated master reintegrated into society.

9 See Freud (1966:294-95). Freud’s theory asserts that we laugh at that which we fear as a mechanism for soothing our anxieties and making the real fear bearable. See also Charney (1991:165-66).
10 Bakhtin (1984:47) believes that “[f]ear is the extreme expression of narrow-minded and stupid seriousness, which is defeated by laughter” whilst Charney (1991:167) asserts that it is as if “laughter were an essential defense against a hostile reality” (his italics).
11 Bakhtin (1984:91). See also Stace (1968:74 and 74n.3) commenting on Donatus (*ad Phorm. 138*) who suggested that anything serious voiced by a slave is automatically funny.
12 See also McCarthy (2000:x and 6,) who differs slightly from Parker in that she believes that everyone in the audience has the potential to be subordinated, not just the slaves. She suggests that the audience, far from being divided, is in fact united (see particularly McCarthy, 2000:20).
13 McCarthy (2000:19-20) suggests that “[t]he clever slave in comedy serves as a talisman against anxieties having to do specifically with slavery but also, more broadly, against the anxieties that arose from the constant need to jockey for position in the many minutely gradated hierarchies that ordered Roman society. The clever slave presents a character who is specifically marked with the attributes of slavery and yet stands in for all those who are actually or potentially subordinated to others (in other words, the whole audience”). See also Fitzgerald (2000:11).
14 Stewart (2012:10 and 13) suggests that this tricky behaviour is also a form of self-assertion.
15 As Parker (1989:238) maintains “[f]or all the laughable freedom of a disobedient Tranio or Pseudolus, the vast number of references to punishment constantly remind the audience of the absolute power of life and death it holds over these slaves. Further, it is the clever slaves themselves who say these comfortable words to the audience”. See also Roth (2011) on this point.
Accordingly, I suggest that the slave’s/servant’s fear of his master is somewhat alleviated through joking and trickery which subverts the norms, resulting in the humiliation of the master and the temporary triumph of the slave/servant. This momentary respite surely encourages a relaxation of authority-fears amongst the subjugated in the audience. The opposite side of this is the master’s fear of his slaves/servants which, I suggest, is assuaged by the inclusion of loyal and/or stupid slaves (examined in chapter 2) whose respect for the master is framed in such a way as to encourage relaxation amongst authority figures in the audience.

i) Alleviating Authority-Fears

a) Trickery vs. Gullibility

In Roman comedy and Kyōgen, there exists, in many cases, a juxtaposition of the subordinated character’s trickery with the master’s gullibility and naivety. This juxtaposition acts in such a way as to encourage the suppression of the audience’s authority-fears through a glorification of the repressed subordinate character and through the humiliation of the dominant authority figure. If, like some Kyōgen critics, we consider gullibility as a failing which requires correction (Wells and Davis, 2006:141), its utilisation by Kyōgen to achieve the master’s humiliation is unsurprising, and its application in Roman comedy raises the possibility that Roman society viewed gullibility in a similar manner to Medieval Japanese society. It is certainly interesting

16 Sharrock (1996:154) comments on the importance of deception to the comedy of Plautus, identifying it as the “most powerful signifier of the brand of comedy which Plautus espouses”. Anderson (2002:3) also notes Plautus’ reliance on trickery for the accomplishment of his plots, and emphasises the differences between Plautus and Terence in this regard. See also Amerasinghe (1950:62) “Plautine drama presents you, in general, with a world whose hero is the slave. Free men either make a mess of things and require a slave to extricate them from it, or they fall into a mess because of the villainous machinations of a slave.”
that in both comedic forms even when the master attempts trickery, his tricks, which typically fail, serve to emphasise his own impotence, increasing his humiliation.

An example of this exposure of the master occurs in the Kyōgen Busu (Poison), a play in which two servants thwart their master. In this play, the humiliation of the master achieves greater significance through a comparison of his own ineffectual attempts to thwart his servants. As is typical of master-servant Kyōgen, the main servant is called Tarō Kaja who, depending on the type of master-servant play, can be tricky, loyal or stupid. In Busu, Tarō Kaja is a tricky servant and he is accompanied by a second servant known as Jirō Kaja. Despite the master’s pretence that his sugar is a deadly poison and should not be eaten (Tsukamoto, 1930:373, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:258), the servant, Tarō Kaja, is determined to taste it:

\begin{verbatim}
  nandya wa shiranu ga, kuroi mono ga dotsumiri toshi te aru. umasou na monody hodoni, midomo wa kuute miyou
\end{verbatim}

(Tsukamoto, 1930:375)\textsuperscript{17}

I don’t know what it is, but it’s a black and syrupy looking thing. Since it is such a tasty looking thing I want to eat it to try it.

His determination leads to the discovery that the poison is, in fact, sugar, thus exposing the master’s mendacity. The servants, of course, consume the sugar and then concoct an elaborate trick to explain its disappearance whereby they deliberately destroy their masters’ precious possessions, a \textit{kakemono} (hanging scroll) and \textit{daitenmoku} (ceremonial bowl), but pretend that this destruction was accidental and that the sugar was consumed in a subsequent attempt to commit suicide in order to atone for their mistakes (Tsukamoto, 1930:377, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:271-72).

\textsuperscript{17} See also Kitagawa and Yasuda (2001:264).
Although the servants’ trickery is ultimately exposed, the destruction of the scroll and bowl demonstrate the master’s ineffectiveness against Tarō Kaja’s superior intellect. The master is also revealed as naïve in his belief that he possesses the wit to successfully deceive Tarō Kaja. As a result of his ineffectual trickery, he is punished by the loss of his treasures, and he is revealed as intellectually inferior to his servants. Thus he is physically humiliated by the destruction of possessions which emphasised his social superiority.

Plautus’ *Mostellaria*, which depicts a servant, Tranio, deceiving his master, Theopropides, in order to protect both himself and the young master, Philolaches, contrasts with *Busu*. In *Mostellaria*, the humiliation of the master focuses more on psychological humiliation by exposing Theopropides’ extreme gullibility and naivety. This humiliation is, unlike that of the master in *Busu*, also conducted, partially, in public (*Most.*669-70). This makes it similar to the humiliation suffered by the master, Nicobulus, at *Bacch.*1099-100. Public humiliation is potentially of greater significance for the spectators than the private humiliation which the Kyōgen master suffers, since it exposes the men to the ridicule of their neighbours and the public revelation of their gullibility. This may be particularly true of Theopropides, whose acceptance of

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18 Some versions of the play (e.g. Kenny’s (1989) Izumi School translation) make it expressly clear that this is a recurring problem which the master attempts to address through deception.
19 Another aspect of this is revealed by Sakanishi (1967:17) who cites the origins of *Busu* as a Buddhist example book *Shaseki-Shū* where it acts as a morality tale depicting the dangers of greed. See also McKinnon (1968:51). Conversely, Fujiwara (2003:72) regards Tarō Kaja’s trickery as a just act against a man who has mistrusted him disregarding years of loyal service. Fujiwara’s definition of “loyal service” is somewhat undermined, however, by the master’s explicit statement that this is a recurrent event. Furthermore, Kyōgen servants routinely place themselves in opposition to their masters, making it unlikely that this alone can be regarded as evidence of a long and strong relationship between the two.
20 See Segal (1987:117) “[t]he Roman playwright always emphasises the chagrin of the fallen master, who is distressed not because he has lost money (though he usually has) but because he has lost face.”
21 On the importance of public vs. private space to the plot of the *Mostellaria* see Millnor (2002).
22 Anderson (1993:116) suggests that “Plautus has created this kind of verbal confrontation, to give symbolic victory and ‘mastery’ to the articulate rogue.”
Tranio’s ludicrous ghost story marks him as gullible (*Most.509* and 528). This contrasts with the gentle manipulation of the neighbour, Simo, who is also tricked by Tranio but in a less overt and more credible manner,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{TR.} & \quad \text{sed senex} \\
gynaecaeum aedificare uolt hic in suis \\
et balineas et ambulacrum et porticum. \\
\text{SI.} & \quad \text{quid ergo somniauit? TR. ego dicam tibi.} \\
dare uolt uxorem filio quantum potest, \\
ad eam rem facere uolt nouom gynaecaeum. \\
\end{align*}
\]

(*Most.754-759*)

TRANIO: but the old man wants to build women’s quarters in his house, with a bathing place, a shady walkway and a gallery.
SIMO: So what did he dream?
TRANIO: I shall tell you. He wants to give a wife to his son soon, and for that purpose wants to build new women’s quarters.

In the above quotation Tranio deceives the next-door neighbour by spinning a plausible lie to account for Theopropides’ desire to visit Simo’s home. This lie manipulates Simo, but does not humiliate him since it is convincing. This contrasts with Tranio’s approach to his own master to whom he tells an incredible, fantastical ghost story. The difference in the humiliation of the slave’s master, but the deceitful manipulation of the neighbour, might have some reflection on the limits of a contemporary audience’s acceptability. It may be that, although a comic slave is permitted to humiliate his own master, audience sensibilities do not allow the humiliation of respectable figures outside the family. It is interesting that in the only other occasion, which I have found, where a tricky slave directly deceives a respectable figure other than his master (*Ep.182ff.*), the tricky slave is instrumental in reuniting a family and, accordingly, is rewarded with manumission. In this way, any audience anxiety which is potentially aroused by Epidicus’ trickery of Apoeides appears negated by the fortunate outcome which Epidicus is instrumental in achieving. If it is the case that audience sensibilities do not permit deceit of other
respectable figures, then this provides a marked difference to Kyōgen, where the humiliation of authority figures is not confined to one’s own master, as is demonstrated by Tarō Kaja’s trickery of the sake shop owner (who is not his master) in Chidori (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:224-25).

A similarly gullible master to Theopropides is the master in the Kyōgen, Kōji (Three Tangerines on one Branch). The master in this play is deceived by his servant, Tarō Kaja, regarding the fate of three tangerines which had been entrusted to the servant. Similar to Theopropides, the Kōji master radiates gullibility through his acceptance of Tarō Kaja’s increasingly elaborate lies, which attempt to account for the loss of his master’s three tangerines. Since Tarō Kaja, having already supposedly lost the first tangerine, allegedly feared losing the remaining two tangerines, he placed them inside his kimono (Koyama, 1960:329). Unfortunately, he discovers that, *rei no nagae no ootsuba ni osare, hitotsu tsuburemashtegozaru* (“one of the tangerines, having been caused to be pushed onto the sword guard of the long-handled long sword which, as you know, I always wear, had been crushed”, Koyama, 1960:329). The master’s incredulous, *namusanbou, shite nan toshita* (“Good Heavens! And then what?”, Koyama, 1960:329) reflects his gullibility, in a manner reminiscent of Theopropides’ uncritical acceptance of Tranio’s fake ghost story. Despite Tarō Kaja’s deplorable puns regarding the fate of the first tangerine (Koyama, 1960:329), the master gullibly and naively accepts the narrated fate of the second tangerine rather than consider the more logical (and accurate) explanation that Tarō Kaja simply ate the fruits.

In a similar manner to Tranio’s layered lies (*Most*.454-528) concerning the ghost that has supposedly led to the household fleeing their home and buying a new property,
which, although creative, prove impossible to maintain, Tarō Kaja’s deception reaches an unsustainable climax. To explain the loss of the final tangerine, he narrates the famous tale of the monk Shunkan and his companions, the priest Yasuyori and General Naritsune who were exiled to the Island of Iō. Of the tangerines, Tarō Kaja says, *hitotsu wa hozonuke hitotsu wa tsubure, hitotsu wa nokoru* (“one separated, one crushed, one remaining”, Koyama, 1960:330), just as with the three men *futari na shamenaru, shunkan nichinin ka no shima e todomekaruru* (“two were pardoned. Shunkan remained alone on the island”, Koyama, 1960:330). With this elaborate tale which culminates in an outrageous pun (discussed in detail below), he accounts for the disappearance of the third tangerine.

Gullibility and naivety thus appear to act as a justification for ignominy, presenting a situation where the master deserves humiliation as a consequence of his weaker sagacity. In this respect, the device of humiliation through gullibility seemingly acts as a safety valve which permits laughter but, simultaneously, protects the authority of real-life authority figures by displaying their comedic counterparts as unrealistically naïve. This approach marks them as separate from any real-life subjugators in the audience, allowing them to be viewed as comic figures of fun.

**b) Boasting**

A common feature of the tricky slave/servant is his boasting which serves to draw attention to his tricky and powerful personality and to the likelihood that he will humiliate and thoroughly bamboozle his master. Boasting also serves to make the character less realistic since his boasts are typically over-exaggerated, bearing little
relation to mundane reality. Thus whilst the tricky slave/servant is likely to encourage laughter amongst the audience, his unrealistic boasting ensures that he retains a fantasy element which marks his actions as Saturnalian licence, limiting any threat which his portrayal might pose for authority.

Tranio, who compares his deceptive abilities with the military skills of the great Greek generals Alexander and Agathocles (Most.775-80), presents a typical example of the tricky slave. The audience are alerted to his belief in his intellectual superiority in his elaborate joke on Theopropides and Simo:

TR. uiden pictum, ubi ludificat una cornix uolturios duos?  
TH. non edepol uideo. TR. at ego uideo. nam inter uolturios duos cornix astat, ea uolturios duo uicissim uellicat.  
quaeo hoc ad me specta, cornicem ut conspicere possis.  
iam uides?  

(Most.832-835)

TRANIO: Can’t you see that picture? Where one crow is making a game of two vultures?  
THEOPROPIDES: By Pollux, I can’t.  
TRANIO: But I see it. For a crow is standing between the two vultures. It is plucking at the two vultures in turn. Please, look here, towards me, so that you can see the crow. Now do you see?

The crow represents Tranio who is alternately mocking the two vultures, Theopropides and Simo. This mockery subverts reality since, through a demonstration of his mental superiority, Tranio disregards his social inferiority. As a metaphor for the concept of comic trickery and the relationship between comedic masters and slaves, his innuendo works extremely well, but it is particularly effective as an illustration of self-belief and

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23 As Segal (2001:188) remarks, the tricky slave is boastful in a way that is the antithesis of Roman social norms.
24 Leigh (2004:26) asks whether “the comic slave decked out in a full array of military metaphors does not have that power to provoke laughter which only truly anxious audiences enjoy”.
25 Sutton (1993:76) suggests that Tranio’s mischief is designed to demonstrate this very fact i.e. that he is “the better man” (Sutton, 1993:76). On the tricky slave as intellectually superior see Jensen (1997:323).
self-glorification. Tranio’s boasts are crafted in such a manner as to suggest his mental superiority over his physically more powerful master. Through exerting control over the situation, but in a farcical manner, Tranio encourages laughter amongst both subjugated and subjugators. His boasting emphasises his superior intellect but also marks this intellect as unreal.

Chrysalus provides a similar example of a tricky slave’s self-glorification (Bacch.640-61 and 925-78), in which his use of Homeric analogy functions similarly to Tranio’s speech at Most.775-80. Pseudolus, who sees (or rather creates) similarities to military sieges in his plans (Ps.573ff.), provides another example of low characters aligning themselves with heroes. The contrast between high and low surely provokes laughter amongst the audience who are aware of the real social position of these characters (both as fictional beings and as actors, as well as being slaves within the fiction). Pseudolus’ boast is thus exposed as “die typisch plautinische Glorifizierung der Sklavenrolle” (“the typical Plautine glorification of the slave-role”), which encourages audience laughter through subverting the norms and by weakening authority’s hold through its portrayal of the subjugated figure as intellectually superior. The fantasticality of the tricky slave’s imagery, however, is likely to limit this fear-alleviation since it removes the tricky slave from reality.

26 Sharrock (2009:104-05) discusses Tranio’s control of vision.
28 See Feeney (2010:287) on Pseudolus’s self-comparison of his trickery with the abilities of poets. Lefèvre (1997:24) reflects on the incongruity of Pseudolus’ boasts given that he has no plan for providing the promised money.
29 On humour derived from the juxtaposition of high and low see Jensen (1997:318) and Stace (1968:74). On the subject of an “aware” audience (i.e. one that can distinguish between role and actor) in Plautine drama see Muecke (1986:224-25).
A similar device is evident in Kyōgen, which depicts its tricky servants as self-assured (Tsukamoto, 1930:377 marks one example), although they lack the heroic identification apparent in Roman comedy. This is particularly evident in the confidence with which the Kōji Tarō Kaja constructs his elaborate deception (Koyama, 1960:329-30). Tarō Kaja, however, fails to capitalise on his fabricated stories as he narrates his tale simply, without boasts or exaggerations and without self-glorification. This lack of boasting results in a distinction between story and storyteller, which is not evident in the boasts of Roman comedic slaves such as Tranio. Tranio apparently revels in and exults over his ability to fabricate, seizing every opportunity to embellish his stories and to emphasise his own intellectual superiority (Most.832-35). This suggests that Roman comedic slaves place a greater emphasis on their own innate abilities than Kyōgen servants who appear more concerned with presenting a story rather than emphasising their superior intellect. Although their lies serve to humiliate their masters, they do not engage in the boasting evident in Roman comedic tricky slaves. This may suggest reluctance on the part of Medieval Japanese society to suggest intellectual superiority in socially inferior persons. Allowing the story to serve as the means of comic humiliation as opposed to drawing attention to the storyteller avoids a depiction of the comic servant as intellectually superior to his master.

c) Saturnalian Licence

Aside from their desire to deceive the master, tricky slaves/servants appear simply to enjoy trickery and deceit. As Dana Sutton (1993:76) suggests, “Tranio’s major motivation is clever deception for the pure joy of it. He seems to act out of the uncomplicated pleasure of demonstrating his intelligence and general superiority and taking advantage of his master's foolish gullibility”. When we consider that Tranio
remains materially unrewarded, the concept of acting for the sheer fun of trickery obtains greater significance. Not only Tranio but also Simia, the sycophant in Pseudolus, Sagaristio (Persa), Busu and Kōji Tarō Kajas and other similar characters gain only minor, if not non-existent, rewards, which are scarcely comparable with the risk to which they have exposed themselves. This suggests that the trick itself is sufficient reward (Ps.939-40) and, perhaps, the insignificance of the rewards is one method by which Saturnalian licence, which encourages the alleviation of authority-fears, is controlled. Although the tricky slave/servant is victorious, their victory is ultimately revealed as meaningless since it presents no noticeable benefit.

The interaction between servant and master in Kōji may reflect this symbiotic relationship. The servant concocts his lie through an apparent fear of his master:

kore wa ikana koto. mitsunari no kouji de gozatta. kudasareta to zonji, mina kuuteshinouta. nani to itasou

(Koyama, 1960:328),

What an awful thing. There were three tangerines on one branch and I thought I was given them, I ate them all. What shall I do?

His trickery, however, has no material benefit and cannot protect him from his master’s wrath since the loss of the fruit is unalterable. As such, the only purpose that the lie seemingly serves is to evoke laughter from a concerned audience, encouraging them to reject their fears of authority. The concept of deception as a duty for slaves/servants, (virtus est, ubi occasio/admonet, dispicere, “it is a virtue when a favourable occasion presents itself to annoy [the master]”, Pers.267-68), through its emphasis on trickery as

31 For a discussion on the role of Simia see Slater (1985:137).
32 Chalinus in the Casina also shares these sentiments (Cas.504-12) as Slater (1985:83) discusses. See also McCarthy (2000:212) on the trick as reward.
a natural characteristic of the low-born, supports such a reading. In the case of master-
slave/servant relations in both Roman Comedy and Kyōgen, successful trickery does
indeed appear the prerogative of the low status slave/servant character and it is
interesting to note that any trickery initiated by the high status master never succeeds
(an example of this is the attempted trickery by the old men in Trinummus (Trin.729ff.)
which is a failure (Trin.843ff.). The ultimate exposure of the slave/servant, however,
appears to act to limit the degree of fear-alleviation, as it reminds the audience of the
master’s authority.

d) Torture Jokes and Punning

The most common method by which slaves/servants seemingly attempt to minimise
anxieties regarding authority figures (hereafter referred to as authority-anxieties) is
through joking about potential punishments, and by trivialising the seriousness of
their situation. This appears more overt in Roman comedy, which contains a high
occurrence of torture jokes (see in particular Bacch.360-63, Most.354-361 and Ps.199-
229), but is also evident in Kyōgen which uses punning to undermine serious threats.

Roberta Stewart argues that, “[v]erbal play, as well as the context of the speech, serves
to challenge authority and to insinuate an independent self” (Stewart, 2012:174). This,
in turn, presents an opportunity for authority-anxieties to recede temporarily through
the injection of humour into a frightening situation.

33 On this point see Parker (1989:235ff.).
34 Marshall (2008:185) suggests that “[a] potentially serious issue like the beating of slaves or jokes
about crucifixion could conceivably be played with equal effectiveness for over-the-top slapstick laughs
or with deadly earnestness”. Lowe (1999:11) comments on the inversion of norms raised by Ps.513
which sees Pseudolus threatened with flogging if he does not succeed in robbing his master.
35 McKinnon (1968:52) comments on the “calculated wailing” of the two Kaja’s designed to “balance”
their outrageous solution.
36 Stewart (2012:82) suggests that the slave actually gains power “from manipulating the master’s control
of the whip”.
In the *Mostellaria* the power of life and death which figures of authority wield\(^{37}\) is diluted, not only by Tranio’s outrageous trickery but also by his exaggerated torture jokes:

\begin{quote}
ecquis homo est qui facere argenti cupiat aliquantum lucri, 
qui hodie sese excruciiari meam uicem possit pati? 
ubi sunt isti plagipatidae, ferritribaces uiri, 
uel isti qui hosticas trium nummm caussa subeunt sub falas, 
ubi †aliqui quique† denis hastis corpus transfigi solet? 
ego dabo ei talentum primus qui in crucem exccurrerit; 
se a lege ut offigantur bis pedes, bis bracchia. 
ubi id erit factum, a me argentum petito praesentarum.
\end{quote}

*(Most.354-61)*

TR: Is there anyone here, who wants to make some money, who could change places with me today and be crucified? Where are the stripe-bearers? Where are the men in fetters? Where are the men who for three nummi will go beneath the besieging towers, where their body may be pierced by two and a half foot spears? I shall give one talent to the man who will hasten out on the cross, but with this provision, that both arms and legs are fastened. When this has been done, then he can come to me for the money.

The sheer impossibility and farcicality of Tranio’s suggestion, with its trick which blatantly allows him to avoid paying his substitute, is likely to alleviate authority-anxieties amongst the audience by provoking laughter in their midst. This is seemingly mirrored in *Busu* with the two servants’ faked suicide attempt:

\begin{quote}
Taroukaja: kayou ni daiji no odoudu wo sokonaimashite, ikete wa okaseraremai to zonjite, busu wo tabete shinou to zonjite, kudasaretaredomo, mada shinimasenu.
Daimyou: onorera, ima no ma ni mekkyakusouzo.
Taroukaja: hitokuchi kuedomo, mada shinazu.
Jiroukaja: futakuchi kuedomo, shinaremosezu.
Taroukaja: mikuchi yokuchi.
Jiroukaja: itsukuchi mukuchi.
Taroukaja: tokuchi amari, mina ni naru made kuutaredomo, shinarenu inochi, medetasa yo. nannbou.
\end{quote}

\(^{37}\) On this power see Bradley (1987:29, 113, 119-23, and 136).
Tarō Kaja: Thus, having broken your precious tool, we felt that we could no longer continue living, so we ate the poison and thought that we would die. But, by some grace, we are not dead.

Master: You! I will kill you!

Tarō Kaja: We took one bite, but still did not die…

Jirō Kaja: we took two bites, and still did not die…

Tarō Kaja: three, four bites…

Jirō Kaja: five, six bites…

Tarō Kaja: we took over ten bites and ate until it had all gone, but our lives did not end. It’s great, isn’t it!

The audience’s superior knowledge (Tsukamoto, 1930: 375-76) together with the narrative’s repetitive formula result, similarly to Tranio’s torture joke, in farce.

Through their calm, but deceitful, assertion that they have already attempted suicide as a means of atonement, they subvert audience expectations concerning master/servant punishment.39

This kind of gallows humour is further evidenced in the dialogue, replete with torture jokes, between the slaves Toxilus and Sagaristio (Pers.22ff.). Abnormally, for Roman comedy, this play features neither a young aristocratic lover nor a generation war, but focuses on a slave’s attempt to purchase a sweetheart.40 A further irregularity is the absence of the master from the stage and the apparent fulfilment of his role by the pimp. Sagaristio, Toxilus’ slave-friend, appears unperturbed either by punishment which he has already endured (plusculum annum/fui praeferratus apud molas tribunus uapularis, “for more than a year I was tipped with iron at the home of the mill, an officer of the lash!”, Pers.23-4) or for punishment which he is likely to endure (tuxtax tergo erit

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38 See also Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:271-72).

39 This is also the case with the onna Kyōgen play Kamabara where the husband, tired of his nagging wife, threatens to commit suicide. Instead of attempting to dissuade him she encourages him. The husband’s own cowardice turns his serious intentions into a farce.

40 Slater (1985:157, 173 and 378) remarks upon this unusual characterisation and discusses its effect on a contemporary audience.
meo/non curo, “it shall be whack, whack on my back. I don’t care”, Pers.264-65). This attitude encourages a holiday atmosphere amongst the audience which presents them with an opportunity to cast aside their own authority-anxieties and to indulge in Saturnalian fantasy.41

Punning, not only by slaves but also by masters, is another means by which anxiety is likely to be diminished.42 Simo, the master of Pseudolus, manipulates the meaning of uerberare (Ps.474-75) to create a pun, which replaces the typical association of corporal punishment with the concept of a mental beating (i.e. through uerba).43 Thus, a distinction is cleverly made between the physical power of the master and the mental superiority of the slave. In a similar manner, Chrysalus’ joke44 juxtaposes “crucifixion” with “Chrysalus” to create a pun which trivialises the serious nature of the slave’s situation whilst emphasising his mental prowess (quid mihi fiet postea?/credo hercle adueniens nomen mutabit mihi/facietque extemplo Crucisalum me ex Chrysalu, “but what will happen to me afterwards? I believe, by Hercules, that he will come up and change my name and straightaway make me—crucified from Chrysalus”, Bacch.360-62). In both instances, punning is employed in such a manner that it encourages the audience to laugh at images of projected punishment, rather than fear them.

A more elaborate torture joke is employed by the pimp, Ballio (Ps.199-229) who creates an extended pun through an identification of his girls’ duties with fitting

41 It may also, as Stewart (2012:109) remarks, act as a reminder to the audience of the control which comedic slaves wield.
42 On torture jokes by masters see Stewart (2012:105).
43 Fontaine (2010), discussing the role of puns in Plautus, identifies several similar examples where one word is used to suggest two meanings, e.g. Sosia’s use of exossat at Amph.320, and the lingulaca pun at Cas.495-98, providing a precedence for this analysis. Stewart (2012:175) views this type of pun as an example of a master acting to undermine his own authority.
44 See also Fontaine (2010:5) who suggests “Crossalus” (his bold type).
punishments should they fail to satisfy him. The first *meretrix*, Aeschrodora is ordered to return with beef or, as Ballio says, *distringam ad carnarium* (“I will string her up on the meat hooks”, *Ps*.200-01). Xytilis is instructed to return with sacks of olives or *te ipsam culleo ego cras faciam ut deportere in pergulam* (“tomorrow, I shall arrange it that you are placed in a sack and deposited in a brothel”, *Ps*.214). Finally, Phoenicium, is informed that failure will “give her a purple hide”, (*Ps*.229) turning *Phoenicium* into *poeniceo*. Through the dual use of *taurum—taurus, culleis—culleo*, and *Phoenicium—poeniceo*, Plautus renders an inherently frightening situation as humorous, manipulating the audience into laughing at what is really a horrendous image.

In Kyōgen, punning by servants, although less overt, appears to occupy the same function as torture puns (and jokes) in Roman comedy. In these plays, the real possibility of severe punishment is trivialised through the application of an extended joke or pun which, through the creation of a farcical atmosphere, encourages the audience to dismiss their authority-anxieties. The Kōji Tarō Kaja creates two elaborate puns which encourage the audience to laugh, not only through its personification of tangerines but also through their utilisation of complex wordplay. First, Tarō Kaja explains that as he carried the rare tangerines home one fell off the branch and rolled outside the gate, upon which he called to it saying, *koujimon wo idezu to iu koto ga aru. yarumaizo yarumaizo* (“it is said that Kōji don’t go beyond the gate. Don’t do it. Don’t do it”, Koyama, 1960:329). An accurate interpretation of this joke relies on the listener hearing 好事門 (*koujimon*) instead of 柑子門 (*koujimon*). The former is a combination of the words “good deeds” and “gate”, whilst the latter is a combination of

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45 Literally “separated at the navel” i.e. the point where the stem of the fruit is attached to the branch.
46 This refers to the 門 (mon) or gate which is the entranceway in the boundary wall surrounding a traditional Japanese dwelling.
“tangerines” and “gate”. Interpreting the word 柑子門 literally, results in “it is said that tangerines don’t go beyond the gate”. If 好事門 is substituted, however, the phrase metamorphoses into “it is said that good deeds don’t go beyond the gate”. To a Japanese listener this evokes the proverb, koujimon wo idezu, akuji senri wo iku (好事門を出でず、悪事千里を行う) which means “good deeds are seldom known in the outside world, bad deeds travel a thousand leagues”. Thus a complex pun, created through the use of a homonym, is employed to encourage humour amongst the audience. His second pun occurs in his personification of the final tangerine. Tarō Kaja declares that the misery the tangerine felt at being the sole survivor is similar to that of Shunkan’s misery at being left alone on the island. Thus, in sympathy, Tarō Kaja ga rokuhara e toudo osanemashita (“Tarō Kaja dedicated it completely to the place Rokuhara”, Koyama, 1960:330). As hara also means “stomach”, Tarō Kaja’s statement can be interpreted as “I, Tarō Kaja, made an offering of the tangerine to my stomach” or, more simply, “I ate it!”

A less complex example, which seemingly shares a similar function, is that of Tarō Kaja and Jirō Kaja (Busu, Tsukamoto, 1930:373) who pretend to mishear the word “poison” (busu) as “taking care of the house in the owner’s absence” (rusu), trivialising the poison image invoked by the word busu. Word puns such as these

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47 senri is a kanji compound consisting of sen (one thousand) plus ri (league) and means one thousand leagues.
48 As it is important to understand the homophonic nature of the Japanese language, and the way in which a substitution of one Kanji compound (two or more Japanese characters joined together) for another can alter the entire meaning of a sentence, I have provided the Kanji for these examples. Tarō Kaja’s utterance reads 柑子門を出すです.
49 One Japanese league = 3.92km or 2.44m (1,000 leagues is about 4,000km or 2,500m). The implication of course is that news of a bad deed spreads far and wide.
50 Rokuhara is reputed to have held the residences of the Heike (Taira) clan, those responsible for exiling Shunkan.
51 For a detailed explanation of this, see Koyama (1960:330 n.12 and 13). See also Kenny (1998:152).
52 rusu can also mean “absent”.
require the audience to penetrate the surface meaning and thus assert their intellectual superiority over those characters unable to perceive the truth. This provides an opportunity for an astute audience to laugh at the superior wits of the socially inferior character.

As Persa demonstrates, however, it would be a mistake to regard all torture references in Roman comedy as laughter-provoking.³³

\[ \text{eru'si minatus est malum seruo suo,} \\
\text{tam etsi id futurum non est, ubi captumst flagrum,} \\
\text{dum tunicas ponit, quanta adficitur miseria!} \]

\[ \text{(Pers.361-63)} \]

If a master threatens his slave with punishment, even if it’s not going to happen, when the whip is taken up, while the tunic is cast-off, how wretched he feels.

Serious considerations of punishment, such as this example, are likely to create an element of uneasiness amongst the audience which may act to limit the Saturnalian atmosphere encouraged by the tricky slaves’ dismissive attitude towards punishment.³⁴

The farcical fake suicide attempt of Busu is similarly disturbing, particularly when considered from a contemporary perspective which perceived suicide as an exemplary method of atonement for mistakes or poor service.³⁵ Richard McKinnon (1968:51) reflects on this more serious element, stating that “[t]his outlandish strategy is to provide solid justification for eating the Busu—to atone with their lives for what they had done to their Master’s treasured possessions”. The fake suicide attempt may serve to remind the audience of the consequences attendant upon failure. Thus, it must be

³³ See Lowe (1989:394) on this point.
³⁴ See also Hardy (2005) and Slater (1985:46n.9) on this point. Guilbert (1962:3-17) believed that this scene is a parody as despite the girl’s moral stance she is only interested in herself.
³⁵ On ritual suicide in Japan see Morillo (2001) and Quigley (1996:167).
regarded as more disturbing than the hypothetical example from *Persa*, because of its closer link to reality.

**ii) Restoration of the Norms**

A further element of disquiet is present at the denouement of these plays where Saturnalian licence is contrasted with potential future punishment. If the conventional Kyōgen endings, which depict servants avoiding retribution, and the comic licence awarded to tricky slaves in Roman comedy, encourage the alleviation of authority-anxieties, the emphasis on possible punishment in the future surely acts to undermine this message. It is also likely that such endings function to reassert the normal power relationship, restoring the master to his rightful position.

In *Busu*, for example, conventional relations between the three characters are re-established, with the master resuming his position of superiority, through the play’s open ending which depicts the master chasing his errant subordinates off-stage (Tsukamoto, 1930:378, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:272). Thus the audience are not only confronted with the possibility of future, off-stage punishment but also witness the fear with which the servants regard their master. Kathleen McCarthy argues that,

> “farce acknowledges that conflict is permanent and unchanging: the master forgives the slave for tricking him, but neither does he change his policies of mastery nor does the slave learn the lesson of obedience. The end leaves them coexisting in their opposition just as they began.”

(McCarthy, 2000:4)

I suggest that, although this can be applied to Kyōgen, such opposition is more overtly evident in Roman comedy, particularly in *Mostellaria* where the errant slave reflects on
the likelihood of future chastisement (*Most*.1178-179), using it as a basis for present
pardon.\(^{56}\) In both Kyōgen and Roman comedy, however, on-stage punishment is
typically avoided although, in Roman comedy, it appears to have been deferred rather
than dismissed. In Kyōgen, although the exit of the servant chased by the master only
implies the possibility of future punishment it marks a return to normality. This
suggests that, despite their apparent subversive nature, master-slave/servant plays
actively promote conventional values as they control and limit subversion, presenting
rebellion as a momentary, farcical occurrence, thus emphasising that the rebellion of
comedic slaves/servants has no real-life counterpart.

These comedic references to punishment and death, although farcical, must remind the
audience of the reality of life in a hierarchical society and it may be that the ludicrous
nature of comedic slaves/servants actually emphasises the fleeting nature of Saturnalian
licence. The “black humour” which presents the condemned man as laughing in the
face of his own death,\(^{57}\) displayed by Kyōgen servants and Roman comedic slaves,
most likely presents a distraction to the audience from their everyday anxieties,
enabling them to participate in a relaxed atmosphere. This is undermined, however, by
the reality which the restoration of the master to his rightful position presents. Even in a
play like *Persa*, which is relatively free from authority figures, reality is reasserted
(*Pers*.361-63), in this instance through the solemnity of the *virgo* who seriously reflects
on the true nature of slavery and subordination.\(^{58}\)

\(^{56}\) As McCarthy, (2000:25-6) expresses with her belief that the lack of punishment is an example of the
master’s exercising restraint in his control of the situation.

\(^{57}\) On this point see Freud (1966:294-95). McCarthy (2000:12-13) also examines the concept of “black
humour”.

\(^{58}\) Hardy (2005:30) suggests that she has a “genuinely tragic” perspective. Lowe (1989) examines the
*virgo* in the guise of “*virgo callida*”. On the *virgo* as property see Stewart (2012:39-42).
The utilisation of a female character to restore male, hierarchical norms may seem strange but *Persa* is not a typical master-slave play; the master does not appear and the slave is both trickster and lover.\(^59\)

“Toxilus is a slave rather than a freeborn lover, he cannot enact the full meaning of filial rebellion: the crisis of maturation by which the son opposes and eventually transcends his father's authority. Making Toxilus' master the blocking character, on the other hand, would violate the principle of comedy that limits the subversive meaning of slave trickery, by ensuring that such slaves never act in their own interest.”

(McCarthy, 2000:123-24)

In such a manner, Toxilus’ subversion is controlled and limited through the non-appearance of his master. Thus a play which, at first, appears extremely subversive avoids this accusation by neatly side-stepping the danger of presenting a slave acting for his own benefit. If Toxilus both tricked his master and gained substantial material benefit whilst remaining free of punishment, this would likely present a step too far for a contemporary audience, potentially destroying the carefully constructed balance between comedic licence and preservation of normality. A slave, however, who benefits from tricking a pimp and is rewarded, is likely an acceptable premise, since a Roman audience’s sense of comic justice is quite satisfied when a pimp loses out.\(^60\)

This, in turn, suggests that a fundamentally reassuring part of Roman comedic tricky slaves, in general, is that they are not acting for themselves. Such a reading marks a direct contrast with Kyōgen tricky servants who are almost always acting for their own gain. It may be that this difference is a result of the discrepancy between slave and servant status. It is, probably, more imperative for sustainment of the norms, in a slave-

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\(^{59}\) Slater (1985:53) suggests that Plautus has combined the characters of the tricky slave and young man into one creating a slave who both labour and reaps the reward.

\(^{60}\) On this point see Sharrock’s (1996:163) discussion of *Pseudolus*. 
owning society, to ensure that a subordinate does not materially benefit from subversive behaviour than it would be in a non-slave-owning culture. In a society such as Medieval Japan, which makes use of servants rather than slaves, it may be that the open-ended nature of Kyōgen, which leaves its audience free to decide whether or not punishment is inflicted, is sufficient to preserve social norms. It may also reflect the Japanese concept of *giri* (social obligation) which seeks to avoid open confrontation.\(^{61}\)

In Köji, for example, the master’s anger when he discovers he has been tricked appears sufficient to restore the balance of the play. An audience which is likely to have been swept-up in the farcicality of the servant’s story, and to have forgotten the reason for its creation, is now treated to a reminder of who is really in charge and of why Tarō Kaja thought it necessary to concoct such a lie.

### iii) Non-Conformist Tricky Slaves/Servants

There are some instances where the master’s relationship with his tricky slave/servant appears to defy expectation. Two instances of this occur in *Bōshibari* (Tied to a Pole) and *Andria*, where the expected pattern, of tricky slave as victorious, master as humiliated and final restoration of the norms, undergoes deviation. The plot of *Bōshibari*, although fundamentally similar to that of *Busu*, since it also features two servants stealing a commodity from their master, fails to reassert social norms. Like *Busu*, *Bōshibari* portrays tricky servants tricked by their master, in a futile attempt to protect his goods (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:239). Unlike masters in the majority of tricky servant Kyōgen, the master in *Bōshibari* is depicted as particularly inflexible (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:239) which, combined with the servants’ apparent ignorance of why they are being tied-up (*nani toshite kayou ni imashimerareta mono*

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\(^{61}\) On the origins and continued importance of *giri* see Morgan (2003:59-60).
dearouzo, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:244), is likely to encourage audience authority-anxieties. Certainly, it suggests an ominous relationship between master and servants, which has more in common with the relationship between master and slave in Roman comedy than that usually depicted in Kyōgen.

Subsequent events depict Tarō Kaja and Jirō Kaja in typical tricky servant mode, marking a return to convention. Jirō Kaja places the blame for their punishment on Tarō Kaja (wagoryo ga sake wo nusumou de nomu ni yotte no kotodja, “because you always steal and drink his sake”, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:245); the two servants obtain victory over their master by discovering a method of drinking the alcohol whilst tied-up (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:245-47); and the two servants engage in jubilant behaviour which emphasises their superiority (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:254). Events take an unexpected turn when Jirō Kaja (typically the less important, more subservient servant) physically attacks the master, causing him to beg for forgiveness (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:255). This provides an ending which subverts that normally found in master-servant Kyōgen whereby the master is the one who causes his servant to seek pardon.62

This ending, only seen in the Ōkura version of Bōshibari, seemingly violates Kyōgen norms through its failure to reassert the master-servant relationship, thus appearing to encourage further the dismissal of authority-anxieties. I suggest, however, that tension amongst the audience actually increases as a result of Jirō Kaja’s actions, since his unwarranted attack on his master potentially places his continued existence in jeopardy.

62 The Izumi School finale uses the conventional ending to tricky servant plays (Kenny (1998:32) and Wells and Davis (2006:138)).
Although the attack (made as it is with Jirō Kaja’s arms still tied to the pole) is undoubtedly farcical and therefore laughter-provoking, the outrageous nature of it surely creates tension. Whereas the Izumi version fulfils audience expectations by following convention and restoring social norms, the Ōkura version is likely to result in uncertainty, and perhaps fear, amongst an audience who are faced with a potentially, disturbing denouement. This fear is a result of the unsettling attack of the master by his subordinate. A further peculiarity of Bōshibari is that it is Jirō Kaja, as opposed to Tarō Kaja, who is the dominant tricky servant. Typically, the tricky servant is characterised by Tarō Kaja with Jirō Kaja acting as sidekick. The anomaly of Jirō Kaja, rather than Tarō Kaja, as dominant servant is difficult to explain: a possibility is that the use of the typically subservient, and rather naïve, Jirō Kaja in the role of attacker, presents less of a threat to authority figures amongst the audience than the use of Tarō Kaja.

Although Davus (Andria) also suffers binding (quadrupedem/constringito, An.866) as a form of punishment, it differs from that portrayed in Bōshibari as he is quickly released from his confinement and his binding appears to act as a reassertion of his role as tricky slave (An.952-55). In this respect, Davus conforms to tricky slave expectations since he escapes lasting punishment. In many respects, however, Davus differs from the typical tricky slave as portrayed by Tranio, Pseudolus and Chrysalus. Although Davus, like the aforementioned tricky slaves, invents numerous plans to thwart his master and

63 An example of this dominance is evident in the fact that the character of Tarō Kaja is often played by the best loved, most respected actor in a Kyōgen company i.e. the role of Tarō Kaja in the role of tricky servant, is the main role of the play (Shite), whilst the master takes the role of Adō or supporting actor. Conversely, the role of Jirō Kaja is that of the Koado or second supporting actor. See Kenny’s (1989) listing of characters and roles in his translations of Kyōgen plays featuring Tarō Kaja, or Kitagawa and Yasuda’s (2001) identification of the Shite character in his tricky servant plays. In Kitagawa and Yasuda’s Shigeyama Ōkura version of Bōshibari, as opposed to Kenny’s translation of the Izumi version of Bōshibari, the Shite role is taken by Jirō Kaja who is the dominant character in this play.

ensure that Pamphilus keeps his girl, it is the arrival of Crito (and his superior knowledge) which provides the solution to the difficulties. Davus, as the audience would expect, is threatened by his master.

In typical tricky slave fashion, Davus jokes about these threats (An.202). Despite his outward bravery, however, his speech suggests an element of fear not usually found in tricky slaves (si illum relinquuo, ei(u)s vitae timeo; sin opitulor, hui(u)s/minas, “if I abandon him, I fear for his life, if I aid him I fear the other man’s threats”, An. 210-11). This is also evident in the following lines, si senserit, perii: aut si lubitum fuerit, causam ceperit/quo iure quaque iniuria praecipitem [me] in pistrinum dabit (“if he senses what I am doing, I’m done for or, if it pleases him, he will come up with a reason, either justly or unjustly, to send me headlong to the mill”, An. 213-14). Davus, although clearly afraid of his master refuses to allow this to prevent his engagement in trickery but he does not display the accomplishment of other tricky slaves, causing his trickery to backfire badly. His assurances, crede inquam hoc mihi,/Pamphile,/numquam hodie tecum commutaturum patrem/unum esse verbum, si te dices ducere (“believe me in this, Pamphilus, I tell you that your father will have not one word to say to you today if you say that you will marry”, An. 409-11), are revealed as misguided since they lead

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65 Amerasinghe (1950:63) suggests that Davos “while making a great business of doing things, actually achieves nothing.”
to the reinstatement of the cancelled wedding plans (*An*.581-599) rather than the abolition of the wedding. This means that Davus appears more stupid than the audience have a right to expect from a tricky slave, thus distinguishing him from the conventional tricky slaves. Unlike tricky slaves such as Tranio, Davus is constantly in difficulty and finds that he is fighting a rear-guard action. Consequently, the atmosphere in the *Andria* may be perceived as tenser than that found in other tricky slave plays where the slave’s hilarious tricks help to provide some alleviation from authority-anxiety.

Conversely, Davus maintains a more authentic, serious outlook on his prospects, grounding his laments within the realm of possibility, thus encouraging the audience to interpret his words in a more fearful manner.

*ego, Pamphile, hoc tibi pro servitio debeo, conari manibu’ pedibu’ noctesque et dies, capitis periclum adire, dum prosim tibi;*  
(*An*. 675-77)

(I, on account of my servitude, owe you, Pamphilus, to try with hands and feet, day and night, to risk my life in order to help you).

There is another, more important, manner in which Davus differs from the typical tricky slave. Although Tranio acted to protect Philolaches, the audience are manipulated into feeling that his actions are designed to satisfy himself as much as to help his young master. Contrastingly, with Davus, the audience are guided into feeling that his actions exist solely to serve his young master. This lends an ironic air to the play, given Davus’ complete and utter failure to accomplish his aims.

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66 On Davus’ stupidity see also Goldberg (1982a:135) who states that “[o]nly an inexperienced spectator could fail to realise that the story of Glycerium’s Attic citizenship dismissed by Davus as fiction (*fabulae!*: *An*.224) is really the truth.”

67 See Goldberg (1982a:138) and Moodie (2009:159) on this point.
In fact, Davus does the very thing that a tricky slave should seek to avoid, he aids the *senex*. His ill-conceived plan contrives that which he was most desperate to avoid, yet Davus is able to manipulate Simo’s natural suspicions and disbelief to prevent his master discovering the deception (*An*.488-532). In this manner, he is able to reassert his role as tricky slave through this manipulation of Simo. It is ironic, however, that he regains the status which he lost, through deception, by being truthful.68 As Davus explains to the audience, Simo is deceiving himself (*certe hercle nunc hic se ipsu' fallit, haud ego, “truly, by Hercules, now it is he who is deceiving himself, not I”, *An*.495).

All Davus is required to do is to maintain Simo’s mistaken beliefs (*teneo quid erret et quid agam habeo, “I know he is mistaken, and I know what I have to do”, *An*.498).69

Thus, unlike the majority of tricky slaves, Davus succeeds through truth rather than trickery.70 By providing Davus with his greatest success by means of veracity, Terence subverts the stock character of the clever slave. Davus, the deceiver, is a failure, but Davus, the misleading, accomplishes the tricky slave’s ambitions giving rise to a maze of confusion.71 This subversive depiction of the tricky slave not only provides an added dimension to a stock character but also encourages an uneasy response from an audience whose expectations are confounded. Thus, whilst both the *Bōshibari* servants and Davus are examples of tricky servants/slaves, they present different perspectives on this character-type. Their actions and speech are probably no less evocative of alleviation of authority-anxieties, than those of conventional tricky slaves/servants, but they employ a different approach to achieve their aims.

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69 On this point see Moodie (2009:153-54).

70 On this point see McCarthy (2004:103).

71 See Moodie (2009:145, 149) on this point.
Conclusion

The relationship between masters and tricky slaves/servants is constructed in such a way that it encourages the audience to have a laugh at authority figures and so to release their anxiety regarding authority. It also acts to preserve social norms through the reassertion of that authority. In cases where the tricky slave/servant does not follow expected convention, subversion is seemingly employed to provide a variation on the typical subjugator-subjugated theme which, whilst upholding the concept of slave/servant as victorious over master, introduces elements which act a) to undermine the role of authority or b) to undermine the role of the tricky slave/servant. Thus, convention is manipulated to create a new approach containing elements which both reinforce and subvert audience expectation.

The presence of the comedic tricky slave/servant in both cultures, Western and Eastern, has enabled us to consider the concept of the tricky subordinate in a wider context. Contrasting the device of the Roman comedic slave with the similarly tricky Kyōgen servant has presented an opportunity to gain a broader understanding of the purpose and function of the tricky subordinate in Roman Comedy, particularly in relation to fear-alleviation. Kyōgen appears to apply a more structured method in depicting the relationship between master and tricky servant than Roman comedy, which employs greater variety in its expression of the tricky slave. As such, the restoration of the norms is more overt in Kyōgen than in Roman comedy and it is, perhaps, more striking when a play deviates from the established pattern. There would seem to be marked similarities, in the use of master-tricky slave/servant relations to explore social anxieties surrounding authority, in both comedic forms. This implies that the need to
alleviate authority-anxieties is a more widespread phenomenon than unicultural studies of Western Comedy have suggested. It has also revealed illuminating differences between tricky subordinates in the two comedic forms. Roman tricky slaves who might be expected to be portrayed more fearfully than Kyōgen servants, given their status as slaves, for example, seemingly evince less fear than their Kyōgen counterparts. On reflection, I suggest that this discrepancy is a direct result of the more exaggerated and farcical, thus less realistic, depiction of master-slave relationships in Roman Comedy. Kyōgen master-servant relationships, on the other hand, are grounded in reality, depicting more realistic scenarios than those of Roman Comedy.
THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

Introduction

In addition to the tricky slave/servant character, Roman Comedy and Kyōgen portray loyal and/or stupid slaves/servants whose often timid behaviour acts in such a manner as to reaffirm the master’s superior status.¹ In Roman Comedy, their loyalty is distinguished from that shown by tricky slaves in that it is directed towards the powerful master figure rather than the young master.² In fact, as with Sceledrus (Miles Gloriosus), loyalty towards this powerful authority figure is often depicted as a type of stupidity. Despite their apparent loyalty, this slave/servant type also poses problems for authority figures and, unlike the tricky slave/servant, is sometimes subject to actual punishment.³ This character-type appears to function as a counterbalance to the tricky slave/servant, presenting authority figures with an opportunity to assuage their fears regarding slave rebellion⁴

¹ These two categories would coincide with the first two of the three types of slave identified by Stace (1968:66) “‘servi callidi’, deceived slaves, and slaves of special interest.” In this third category Stace places: Trachalio (Captivi), Gripus (Rudens) and the eponymous Truculentus (Stace, 1968:67). He appears to focus on a few slaves possessing certain characteristics at the expense of others who also share those characteristics. For example, Stace (1968:67) cites Tyndarus as a “more important” slave due to his loyalty to his master, yet he dismisses Trachalio (Rudens) as merely an “ordinary” slave (Stace, 1968:67), despite Trachalio’s large part and loyalty to his master in the face of difficulty. Likewise, having identified Truculentus as being of “special interest”, Stace proceeds to describe his character in such a manner that this term can be applied equally to Grumio (Mostellaria) whom Stace dismisses as one of the “slaves with very minor parts” (Stace, 1968:68). It thus appears that Stace’s third category is less an actual category and more of a category for slaves with major parts who do not fit into his other two categories.

² An exception to this is Trachalio who is not disloyal to anyone and who is not portrayed as stupid. Exceptions such as this will be discussed in further detail, below.

³ Parker (1989:241) states that “[t]he characters then who actually do get beaten are the good (i.e. cowardly or stupid) slaves” (he is referring to slaves beaten by their masters, as opposed to the slapstick fighting which occurs between slaves such as Olympio/Chalinus (Casina) or Mercury/Sosia (Amphitryo) and this would seem to hold true for both Kyōgen and Roman comedy.

⁴ Stewart (2012:4) remarks on the drastic structural and ideological changes which a slave society would face if slavery was abolished.
Despite Walter Scheidel’s (2005:64) recent assertion that there were never more than one to one-and-a-half million slaves in Roman Italy, a large proportion of whom would have been women and children (2005:72), it is undeniable that slave rebellions were perceived by Romans as a threat to their society. Anne Duncan (2006:162-63) lists no fewer than four slave revolts which occurred during the time of Plautus and Terence and a further two during the subsequent sixty years following Terence’s death. The first of these (217 BC) which occurred in Rome itself resulted in the crucifixion of twenty-five slaves whilst the revolt of 185 BC at Apulia resulted in seven thousand slaves being condemned to death. These figures suggest that the numbers involved in slave revolts increased dramatically during Plautus’ lifetime as the Roman Empire expanded. This, in turn, suggests a likely increase in anxieties relating to slave-rebellion, which can be identified in the Senate’s response to the Catiline conspiracy of 63 BC. This rebellion was tainted by rumours that it had involved slaves, and although Keith Bradley (1978:331ff.), examining the evidence of Sallust (Cat.30.1-5), concludes that the simultaneous announcement of C. Manlius’ rebellion and of slave uprisings at Capua and Apulia were only a coincidence (Bradley, 1978:331-32), it is clear from the Senate’s response that even a rumour of a slave uprising could generate intense fear.

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5 This study and its counterpart contradict earlier studies which placed the slave population as much higher. MacMullen (1974:92) for instance estimated that the Italian slave population in the interval 50 BC–284 AD numbered one quarter of the population. Harris (1980:118) approximates a figure of ten million slaves (or 6.6%-20%) in the period 50 BC – 150 AD. See also Mouritsen (2011:132) although this encompasses the entire Empire and not just Roman Italy.

6 On slave rebellions in the mid-late Republic see also Stewart (2012:159-62), Parker (1989:236-37) and Bradley (1987:31). For historical accounts of the first four of these rebellions see Livy 22.33.2, 32.26.4-18, 33.36.1-3 and 39.29.8-10. On the senate’s action against slaves and slave-rebellion see Stewart (2012:90-5).


8 See Livy: 39.29.8-10 and Parker (1989:238) on the rebellion of 185 BC.


11 On slave uprisings and Senate response see Bradley (1978:331).
The growing threat of gekokujyō in medieval Japan created similar fears for masters from both their servants and local peasants. Thomas Keirstead (1992:80) suggests that peasant uprising “posits a steadily widening orbit of activity by both peasants and local lords that constituted a mounting challenge from below to the dominant structures of authority”. This was an unsettled period in Japanese history, with peasant protests and the beginnings of the warrior farmers. Much of the Muromachi period (the years 1467-1568) was marred by tribal wars where rival daimyō fought for control of the country in what became known as the Sengoku Jidai (Warring States period). In the midst of this chaos masters faced the threat of being themselves “geboku oyobi kai ni narisagaru” (“degraded into servants and subordinates”, Hasegawa, 1967:26).

In Rome, slaves also posed a potential direct threat to their masters’ safety. Seneca’s quotation of the proverb totidem hostes esse quot servos (“as many enemies as you have slaves”, Ep.47.5), and the murder of L. Pedianus Secundus (although after Plautus and Terence, during the reign of Nero), suggest that “[t]he Roman of Plautus’ age had good reason to fear his slaves”. As Christopher Stace says, “[c]ountry slaves worked in chains, some were even branded; they were kept in guarded work-houses” (1968:74), and, although part of the reason for this was no doubt due to a fear that they

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12 Keirstead (1992:80) is also at pains to demonstrate that, although causing great upheaval to the estate, on this occasion the uprising produced no real challenge to the system because it occurred due to disagreements with the overseer rather than the monks or temple owners. The very fact of its occurrence, however, demonstrates a growing awareness of gekokujyō and a gathering militancy amongst the peasant class.

13 See Hane (2000:26-7) on this point. Not only this, but some peasants were also granted their own land. See also Bix (1986:xxx) on the situation in the early Edo period. La Fleur (1983:141) remarks on the importance of gekokujyō. Souyri (2001:161) examines increasing social mobility during the Muromachi period.

14 Bradley (1987:30) states that this proverb “is an important indication of both the antagonism with which slaves were regarded en masse by their masters and of the latters’ fears for their own safety”.

15 Parker (1989:243ff.) discusses both of these events. Tacitus (Ann.14.44) gives a speech to Gaius Cassius regarding this latter example. Pedianus Secundus was apparently murdered by one of his own slaves. On this point see also Saller (1987:82-3).

would abscond, it is probable that anxiety existed concerning the potential threat posed by unsupervised slaves. A further potential anxiety arose from the fluid position of slaves and servants in Rome and Medieval Japan. As McCarthy (2000:19) discusses, slaves could earn their freedom, thus increasing their social position due to the unfixed nature of Roman society.\textsuperscript{17} A similar situation existed in Medieval Japan where, due to the unstable situation, “no rigid caste system existed during this time”\textsuperscript{18} (Hane, 2000:26), leading to upward mobility through military prowess. An example of this is the story of Hideyoshi Toyotomi (1536-98) who, despite his peasant origins, became general in the Azuchi-Momoyama Jidai (1573-98). Given these unsettled situations, comedic attempts to address the anxieties of the subjugators would be unsurprising, and would form a counterbalance to the assuagement of authority-related anxieties discussed in Chapter 1. I suggest that the device of the loyal and/or stupid slave is constructed in such a manner as to encourage the anxiety-alleviation regarding rebellion or potential subjugation.

i) How Tricky Slaves/Servants Increase Anxieties in their Masters

As I discussed in the preceding chapter, tricky slaves/servants are likely to be reassuring to the subordinate portion of an audience. If, however, we consider their effects on the authoritative portion of the audience they surely increase anxieties, the very schemes which act as fear-dissipaters to the subordinates in the audience being likely to invoke fear in authority figures. If we consider the plays discussed in the preceding chapter, it becomes clear that many of the points which related to fear-dissipation in subordinates, (for example, trickery of the master (Mostellaria,

\textsuperscript{17} See also Parker (1989:236) “[f]or the Roman, the free slave was the most terrifying of oxymorons”.

\textsuperscript{18} This caste system was reasserted during the Tokugawa period (see Hendry, 1995:15). See also Mass (1982:132-33).
Bacchides, Pseudolus, Kōji and Busu), complacency in the fear of certain death (evinced by Tranio and the Busu Tarō Kaja in particular) and trickery and defiance of and towards the master (Tranio, Chrysalus and Pseudolus), are likely to increase the anxiety of authority figures in the audience. A character such as Tranio, who surely symbolises, for a subordinated person, freedom from oppression and fear, probably represents, to an authority figure, rebellion and gekokujyō.19

Keith Bradley (1987:29) suggests that “the behaviour of Plautus’ slave characters was based on real historical experience of the sort sketched by Cato”, thus instantly understandable by a contemporary audience who already believed that slaves were guilty of trickery and deception. If, as he suggests, such a belief can only be derived from an observation of tricky, deceitful behaviour by slaves in everyday life, this negative view of slave morality may reflect the “slave-owners’ tensions about the stability of the slavery system” (Bradley, 1987:30). If we consider this assertion through the actions of Chrysalus or the Busu Tarō Kaja, it becomes evident that the concept of a clever, powerful slave such as Chrysalus or a lazy, but smart servant like the Busu Tarō Kaja was likely to cause anxiety for authority figures, suggesting the possibility of a society where the powerless become powerful.20

ii) Potential Means of Reducing Authority’s Anxieties

There are several ways in which these anxieties are addressed. The first two of these were discussed in detail in the preceding chapter, but, for clarification, it will be

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19 McCarthy (2000:6) suggests that the tricky slave is also a reflection of the master’s own desire to rebel.
beneficial to summarise them briefly at this juncture. This chapter, however, will focus on the latter two methods by which authority’s anxiety is potentially reduced.

\[a) \text{Acting for Others}\]

First, tricky slaves in Roman comedy are almost never acting for themselves, as their acts of rebellion aim to ensure the happiness of their young master. (Toxilus (*Persa*) appears to be an exception to this but, as his trickery deceives a pimp, a character of low social standing, it differs from the cases of master-slave deception).\(^{21}\) One suggestion is that by tricking the *senex* on behalf of the *adulescens* the clever slave assumes the alter-ego of the son\(^{22}\) thereby achieving legitimacy for his actions which represent a son’s rebellion against his father. The tricky slave thus acts, not as a vehicle for rebellion, but as a vehicle for wish-fulfilment which leaves the son “untouched by guilt” (Parker, 1989:245). This potentially acts to reduce the level of anxiety which might be anticipated as a result of the tricky slave’s deceptive behaviour.

Interestingly, we see a reversal of this in Kyōgen, where tricky servants are almost always acting for their own benefit. This suggests a fundamental difference between the two comedic forms which, as I suggested, is perhaps a result of the gap in social status between slaves and servants. Behaviour which may be acceptable in a comedic servant who is ultimately free, both physically and mentally, could conceivably be unthinkable in a comedic slave who is regarded as a possession and thus not in control of his own actions. Yet, it is also the case that the tricky servant’s rebellion is almost always confined to acts of minor significance e.g. unauthorised drinking, laziness and

\(^{21}\) See Duckworth (1994:164-65). This will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter.

\(^{22}\) On the tricky slave as the alter-ego of the son see, in particular, McCarthy (2000:19-21), Duckworth (1994:160, 249 and 251) and Parker (1989:244-45 and 246).
insolence and their trickery is almost always exposed. Thus, even in Kyōgen, which seemingly depicts a looser master-vassal relationship, portrayals of rebellion appear to be strictly controlled and would seem to present a limited picture of gekokujiyō.

b) Reassertion of Authority

Order and normality is routinely restored in the finale of both Roman comedy and Kyōgen. The master reasserts his rightful role, and although the tricky slave/servant is not usually punished this is not as a result of the slave’s pleadings (in fact, Epidicus (683ff.) seemingly desires punishment) but, in the case of Roman comedy, usually as a direct result of the intervention of a third party who is a freeborn character, and in the case of Kyōgen, by the movement off-stage of the principal characters. Thus the master is able to regain a certain amount of dignity, particularly in Kyōgen, where the often ambiguous ending maintains the hierarchy, whilst preserving the joyous nature of comedy. As the final action occurs off-stage, each member of the audience is free to envisage their own ending to the play. In this respect, the hierarchy of the master-slave/servant is more rigorously asserted in Roman comedy where normality is restored on-stage and the temporality of Saturnalian freedoms is made manifest. This distinction is an anticipated one, given the social discrepancy between slaves and servants.

Maintaining and controlling the status quo in a slave-owning society, where the cultural identity of masters and slaves and their respective norms are likely to differ, must present different and, perhaps, greater challenges to the ruling classes than maintaining the status quo in a nominally free society whose citizens share the same cultural heritage and identity. What is surprising is the presence of a comedic tricky servant,

23 Pseudolus is an exception to this as he is pardoned as a direct result of his bargaining ability whereby he earlier made a deal with his master.
24 For example, in the Mostellaria Tranio is pardoned as a result of the intervention of Philolaches’ friend.
similar to the Roman comedic tricky slave, in a culture without a tradition of large-
scale slavery.

c) The Device of the Loyal and/or Stupid Slave

As I identified in the preceding chapter, the tricky slave/servant appears to be
counterbalanced by the character of the loyal and/or stupid slave. The stupidity of
Gripus (*Rudens*), Sceledrus (*Miles Gloriosus*), the *Suehirohari* and *Awataguchi* Tarō
Kajas combined with the loyalty of Trachalio (*Rudens*), Tyndarus (*Captivi*)25 and the
*Chidori* Tarō Kaja (the loyalty of these last two is somewhat problematic as I shall
demonstrate) appear to function to assuage fears of rebellion. Interestingly, the device
of the stupid and/or loyal slave is largely absent from Terence, where only Geta
(*Adelphoe*) can be regarded in this light and hardly conforms to the Plautine norm. This,
perhaps, results from Terence’s apparent desire to subvert the accepted conventions of
comedic slaves, which creates a different kind of tricky slave whose tricky intentions
often result in failure. These result in an outcome which is seemingly more attuned to
Kyōgen than to Plautine comedy, as they present examples of rebellion which are less
overt.

d) Punishment

The threatened or actual use of punishment to control slaves/servants can be seen in
plays such as Plautus’ *Captivi* and *Truculentus* and in a range of Kyōgen plays
including *Akagari*, *Buaku*, *Bōshibari* and *Nukegara*. Examples and types of punishment,
however, are more pronounced and explicit in Roman comedy than Kyōgen. Through

the use of torture and (projected) punishment the audience are likely encouraged to
reflect upon their own social status and the effects of authorial power on their own
persons. In the case of contemporary authority figures, torture references likely remind
them of the ultimate power which they retain over their slaves/servants, whilst the
subordinates in the audience may be manipulated into remembering their own lack of
rights and consequently their inferior social standing.

In this respect, the anxiety of the loyal and/or stupid slave in Roman comedy regarding
the threat of punishment (for example, Messenio (Men.966ff), Phaniscus (Most.872ff.)
and Sceledrus (Mil.278 and 306-11)\(^{26}\) may hold special significance.\(^ {27}\) Whilst threats
of punishment and instances of punishment are present in Kyōgen, both loyal and
stupid servants appear far less concerned about this threat than about maintaining
appearances and reputation, perhaps because they have a greater sense of independent
identity. Despite their lack of concern and their loyalty and/or stupidity, however, they
are scolded and chastised to a far greater extent than their Roman counterparts and this
typically occurs on-stage. This might suggest a lower tolerance for subversive
behaviour amongst the Japanese hierarchy than that of Roman authority figures, despite
the higher status of the Japanese servant by comparison with the Roman slave.

Certainly, it seems to support Timothy Moore’s assertion (2002:193) that Kyōgen
servants are more accountable than those in Plautus and Terence. There is, however,
less of a discrepancy between the frequency of scolding and threatened chastisement
meted out to tricky slaves and tricky servants, than that evident between loyal and/or

\(^{26}\) See also Duckworth (1994:290).

\(^{27}\) McCarthy (2000:72) suggests that difference between torture-references made by tricky slaves and
torture-references made by good (i.e. loyal/obedient) slaves is that “the good slave keeps punishment in
the forefront … not in the exuberantly fatalistic manner of the clever slave (who takes delight in
reciting knows the ghastly punishments in store for him and misbehaves anyway) but with genuine fear
and humility”.

stupid slaves and servants. This might reflect a difference in purpose of the tricky slave/servant and the loyal slave/servant, with the latter fundamentally acting to reassure authority figures whilst the former presents a reassuring side for subordinated figures.

It is likely that the loyal and/or stupid slave’s anxieties regarding punishment correspond to their desire for manumission and reflect authority’s desire to emphasise the link between good behaviour and freedom. As Kyōgen servants are already free such a link does not exist instead, but plays appear to appeal to the servant’s sense of family and social inclusion, emphasising loyalty as a means of protecting the household. The greater correlation between tricky slaves and servants than between their loyal and/or stupid counterparts in this matter reflects, perhaps, their incorrigibility and may act to separate them from those slaves/servants who can be influenced and manipulated. It is a matter of personal power.

iii) Degrees and Categories of Loyalty and Stupidity

The consideration of the portrayal of loyalty and stupidity in Roman and Japanese comedy is a complex issue. Whilst it may be possible to state that, in Roman comedy in particular, stupid slaves and servants are generally portrayed as loyal, loyal slaves are not necessarily stupid. Trachalio, Tyndarus and the Chidori Tarō Kaja in particular are remarkably astute. It is also possible to state that even tricky slaves/servants such as Pseudolus and Tranio and the Buaku Tarō Kaja display signs of loyalty although this

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loyalty is typically directed at the master’s son or a fellow servant rather than their master.\(^{29}\)

The loyal slave/servant attributes his loyalty to a variety of reasons: a desire to achieve manumission (Trachalio \((\text{Rud}.1218)\) and Messenio \((\text{Men}.1023-049\) and 1145ff.)), to avoid punishment\(^{30}\) (Phaniscus \((\text{Most}.862-84)\) and Sceledrus \((\text{Mil}.540ff.)\)), faithfulness (Tyndarus \((\text{Capt}.229-30)\) and the \(\text{Nawanai}\) Tarō Kaja (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:206-07 and 213)), to protect the household’s reputation (Geta \((\text{Ad}.455)\) and the \(\text{Chidori}\) Tarō Kaja, (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:214 and 216)) or to maintain face (the \(\text{Suehirogari}\) (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:69) and \(\text{Awataguchi}\) Tarō Kajas (Sasano, 1942:213-14, Tsukamoto, 1929:152-53)). There is a further category of loyalty-stupidity consisting of slaves/servants whose loyalty seemingly results from their stupidity which renders them incapable of rebellious conduct.\(^{31}\) Thus there appears a wider variation of motive for the loyal and/or stupid slave’s/servant’s behaviour than that demonstrated by the tricky slave/servant. This also allows for greater variation in the portrayal of loyal and/or stupid slaves/servants than that of tricky slaves/servants, presenting a more diverse range of slave/servant characters. There is, however, a clear distinction between loyal and/or stupid slaves/servants in Roman comedy and those in \(\text{Kyōgen}\). The majority of loyal and stupid slaves in Roman comedy fit most closely in the first two examples, typically acting out of fear or a desire to gain their freedom, whilst the majority of loyal and stupid Japanese servants fit the latter two categories, appearing to be more concerned with protecting reputation than personal gain. Thus,  

\(^{29}\) On this point see Duckworth (1994:249 and 251).

\(^{30}\) Stewart (2012:101-03) presents a detailed examination of the \(\text{puer}\) \((\text{Ps.767-87})\) and how he aims to avoid punishment.

\(^{31}\) Examples which depict this type of servant are \(\text{Kyōgen}\) plays: \(\text{Kagyū}, \text{Kane no Ne}, \text{Mejika}\) and \(\text{Namagusamono}\) in particular. See also Sceledrus \((\text{Miles Gloriosus})\) and Gripus \((\text{Rudens})\) for Roman comedic slave examples.
the loyal/stupid Tarō Kaja’s motivation seems to stem from an extrinsic desire to protect household reputation, whereas the loyal/stupid Roman comedic slave is more intrinsically motivated by self-preservation and self-gain.

iv) Depictions of Loyalty

Although several examples exist of slaves/servants in Roman comedy and Kyōgen who display complete loyalty to the highest authority i.e. their master, this loyalty is generally related to an underlying motivation. In Roman comedy, motivation is often linked with a desire for manumission. There are, however, other motivations for loyalty, which are typically self-centred although sometimes appear altruistic.

a) Complete Loyalty to the Highest Authority

Trachalio is, perhaps, the most obvious example of a slave whose loyalty seemingly stems from a desire to gain manumission. Trachalio behaves respectfully not only towards his own master, but also towards Daemones (Rud.627ff. and 1054ff.) whom he addresses respectfully with terms such as oro and opsecre. He clearly differs from the serui callidi in his refraining from rebellion or trickery and, unlike the tricky slave, he reserves his insults for low characters such as Labrax (a pimp) and Gripus (a slave).32 Yet the references to manumission (Rud.1216ff. and 1265) and his reference to marrying his girlfriend, Ampelisca (Rud.1220), suggest that these are motivating factors. His anticipation of substantial reward may be interpreted as a representation of

32 Stace (1968:71) reinforces this with his comment that whilst slaves like Trachalio are “largely unimportant to the plot” they are “generally helpful and decent, patient and obedient”. Sharrock (1996:163) reflects on the treatment of pimps in Roman comedy. Leigh (2010:111) reflects on the pimp’s position as outsider in Roman comedy.
the reality of slave loyalty which seeks to avoid punishment or obtain reward\textsuperscript{33} as opposed to the ideal image conjured up by selfless acts of sacrifice.\textsuperscript{34} Thus, although he is an unusual character, Trachalieo’s respectful behaviour is likely to be reassuring to authority figures since it seemingly validates the system of manumission through good behaviour.

A further motive for loyalty in Roman comedy is manifest in the desire for self-preservation as explored by Phaniscus (\textit{Most.} 859-84) and Messenio (\textit{Men.} 966ff. and 983-85), who soliloquise on the relationship between loyalty and self-preservation. McCarthy (2000:72) remarks: “good slaves fear their masters even when they have not done anything wrong, that is, good slaves have internalized the master's ethos and carry it with them wherever they go”. Loyal slaves, who fear punishment, typically expound on the torments which disobedient slaves might expect. Their comments are ironic, however, as, in the reality of Roman comedy, it is only the “good (i.e. cowardly or stupid) slaves”\textsuperscript{35} who are actually punished, whilst the tricky, rebellious ones get off scot-free. Thus, to a certain extent, loyal characters like Phaniscus must also act as reminders “of the absolute and everyday nature of the power that the audience wields over them [slaves]” (Parker, 1989:240), even as they emphasise the benefits of obedience and faithfulness. This creates ambivalence in the formation and retention of anxieties. In one respect, obedience and faithfulness are promoted as methods of obtaining manumission and avoiding punishment, yet this view is refuted by the


\textsuperscript{34} Bradley (1987:38) discusses this gap between ideal and reality. See also McCarthy (2000:13-4) on moral/ideological notions of rebellion.

reminder that no slave, no matter how loyal, is immune from punishment. These references to loyalty must surely act as a reassurance to masters because they demonstrate the slave as sharing his master’s world-view, yet they are likely to be fear-inducing to subordinates in the audience since they act as reminders of the reality of subordination.

This ambiguity is reflected in the treatment of the maids in Truculentus, particularly if their treatment is compared with that of the tricky Tranio (Most.1115ff.). Despite the threat of punishment, Tranio continues to joke and mock his master (Most.1116, 1118, 1131 and 1167) increasing his wrath and, even when forgiven, displays no remorse or gratitude (Most.1178-80). The atmosphere in Truculentus between Callicles and the two maids reverses this: rogitaui ego uos uerberatas ambas pendentis simul (“I kept on asking you when you were both strung up and being flogged together”, Truc.777), quamquam uos colubrino ingenio ambae estis, edico prius/ne duplicis habeatis linguas, ne ego bilinguis uos necem,/nisi si ad tintinnaculos uoltis uos educi uiros (“although you both have snake-like ingenuity, I’m warning you first, don’t have double tongues lest I cut the doubleness out, unless you want to be led off by the jingling men”, Truc.780-2) and ita lora laedunt bracchia (“the thongs cut my arms so”, Truc.783).

Unlike Tranio who, as a comedic tricky slave, is immune from punishment, the maids have already been tortured and, as such, the atmosphere in some part of the audience is likely manipulated into a higher state of tension than in the Mostellaria, where the audience can remain confident of Tranio’s invulnerability. There is also likely to be an element of scapegoating, with the audience despising and distancing themselves from the tortured maids. Of greater significance is the fact that the maids’ torture is not a

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36 As Duckworth (1994:288) remarks, tricky slaves do not undergo punishment but noble slaves like Tyndarus can suffer. See also McCarthy’s (2000:13) analysis of the “moral perspective” which appears to place Tyndarus in the category of slaves/servants who demonstrate “an inborn nobility”.
result of their own conduct but is a result of what they have witnessed. An important point of Roman law was that the evidence of slaves was only permissible if obtained under torture.\(^{37}\) thus, in the *Truculentus*, reality encroaches upon comic fantasy resulting in the momentary overthrow of Saturnalian subversion. As a reminder to the audience of the power held by authority it is likely to be extremely effective, yet it also raises the disturbing spectre that good personal conduct is not enough to protect one from punishment. Perhaps the greatest difference between the maids and Tranio is the absence of jest.\(^{38}\) This implies that torture exchanges in Roman comedy are funny either when the anticipated torture *will never occur* or when torture is used as a scapegoating device. In either case, if the main effect of torture banter is to reassure subordinates, actual torture seemingly acts to reassure subjugators.

Conversely, the degree of loyalty displayed by a Kyōgen servant appears to bear little relation to the likelihood of punishment. Masters are typically presented with a low tolerance threshold, their anger easily aroused by even the most well-meaning servant. Consequently, the link between punishment and loyalty in Kyōgen appears weaker than that demonstrated in Roman comedy and this seems manifest in the motivation of loyal servants. There can, of course, be no comparative counterpart to Trachalio in Kyōgen, where a servant’s faithfulness has no bearing on social standing. In fact, it might be possible to state that there is a greater social advantage to Tarō Kaja in being disloyal, since disloyalty would likely increase *gekokujyō* (fears of the world turned upside down) thus helping to overthrow the hierarchical social order which kept him restrained.

If we accept that a desire for manumission is created by the fear of slavery and slave-

\(^{37}\) On this point see Watson (1987:84-89).

\(^{38}\) Although Fraenkel (2007:28) suggests that Callicles’ assertion that he will act as a wall between the two maids increases the comic process of this scene, I would assert that on the whole the tone of this scene is not comic even though it may contain some comic utterances.
anxiety then, logically, a society which does not practise slavery would not be influenced by this concern. This suggests that loyalty in Kyōgen must originate from a different source, and this motivation appears to be fear of loss of reputation. In Suehirogari (The Fan)\(^{39}\) and Awataguchi (The Sword), Tarō Kaja is tricked through his unwillingness to admit his ignorance. In both plays, Tarō Kaja is sent to obtain an item but, through ignorance, buys the wrong item, thus angering his master.\(^{40}\) In Suehirogari the master is aware of his servant’s mistake, scolding him for his gullibility, but in Awataguchi the master manifests the same naivety and is also deceived.

In Suehirogari a suehirogari (fan) is needed (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:67-8). The master describes the type which he wants his servant to buy (*madzu datiichi djigami you, hone ni migaki wo ate, kaname moto shitto toshite, zaree zattoshita wo motometekoi*, “Firstly, I require good paper, also polished bones, a strong, precise pin to fasten the bones and pictures”, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:68-9). Tarō Kaja, who does not understand the term suehirogari, allows himself to be swindled into purchasing a cheap used umbrella (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:70-1). Tarō Kaja’s attempts to employ his master’s description are manipulated by the conman and he is deceived at every step (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:73). Since the fundamental materials of the two are identical, the conman is able to use the ambiguously general description provided by the master to manipulate Tarō Kaja into purchasing a useless umbrella.

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\(^{39}\) This play is called Suehiro in the Izumi School (see Kenny, 1998:251-52).

\(^{40}\) There are many variations on this theme, but they all follow the same basic plot, that of a servant (and sometimes his master also) being deceived through their simplicity by a corrupt individual.
The necessity of good paper is easily dealt with since, as the conman states, the umbrella paper was made on a fine day. Second, the bones of the umbrella are well-polished since they have been polished for seven days and nights using two different types of polishing brushes. The potential problem, the kamane (pin) is resolved through a demonstration of the opening and closing of the umbrella. This only leaves zaree to be explained. The conman suggests that his “suehiro-gari” is different because in this instance zaree (戯れ絵) does not refer, as is common, to pictures but to the umbrella stick e (柄) so it is a 戯れ柄. Don Kenny (1989:252) suggests that “zare-e” also means “a handle to strike with” implying that the umbrella’s handle can also be used as a weapon. Another meaning of zareru, however, is a joke/jest perhaps suggesting a double pun as it is the swindler who is playing the “joke” on Tarō Kaja. The conman’s motive in deceiving the servant is obvious from the extortionate price which he now proceeds to charge (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:74 and 74n.2).

Awataguchi presents a similar scenario with a subtle difference. An awataguchi is a well-known type of sword but Tarō Kaja returns with a conman who claims to be Awataguchi and who steals the master’s sword. The difference from Suehiro-gari is that both master and servant are deceived by the false description. Perusing a book describing an awataguchi (Tsukamoto, 1929:154, Sasano, 1942:218), they test the conman (Tsukamoto, 1929:155-56, Sasano, 1942:218ff.). First, the master reads that a good awataguchi has a black habaki (Tsukamoto, 1929:155). The trickster replies that he fulfils this criterion because he is wearing satin leggings. The next test is whether

41 See also Tsubaki (2007:3) on this point.
42 Other similar plays include Meijikadaimyō, Haridako and Yoroi/Yoroi Haramaki.
43 This play can also be found in Sasano (1942: 213-21) which is a Ōkura School version. An English summary is provided by Kenny (1989:25-6) following the Izumi school.
44 In this case, a habaki is the clasp which holds the handle and the sword together, but another meaning of habaki is “leggings”.

the trickster is old or not, as the body (mi) of an awataguchi should be old.\textsuperscript{45} The trickster’s response: umaremashite kono kata, yufuro wo itasanu yotte. zuibun furui to oosharemasei (“since I have never bathed since I was born, tell him that I am very dirty”, Tsukamoto, 1929:155) plays with the double meaning of furui.\textsuperscript{46} The next test (Tsukamoto, 1929:156) is whether or not he has a strong ha (blade). The trickster replies that he can grind and break rocks with his ha (teeth). Finally, the master reads that a good awataguchi has a well-known craftsman’s mark (mei). The trickster turns out to have not one, but two mei (nieces) as both his sisters have girls. To ensure that he has a true awataguchi the master asks the conman to tell them his name (Tsukamoto, 1929:157). If it corresponds with that in the book then he must be a true awataguchi.\textsuperscript{47} The trickster’s announcement that he is called Tōma Nojō acts as the final proof. The conman is entrusted with the master’s sword and short sword which he promptly absconds with (Tsukamoto, 1929:158) leaving the master lamenting over the deception (miyako no damashi ni damasareta).\textsuperscript{48} In Awataguchi, the servant, like the servant in Suehirogari, is depicted as ignorant, but loyal. His master, however, is also ignorant and consequently, since it is Tarō Kaja’s responsibility to protect his master, Tarō Kaja’s failure may be regarded as a more problematic example of servant-stupidity than that depicted in Suehirogari.

In this manner, despite unquestionable loyalty, the two servants cause embarrassment for their masters. In one respect, their actions are likely to appear reassuring and fear-

\textsuperscript{45} mi (身) usually means body [of a person], however, here it refers to the blade (see Kenny, 1989:26).
\textsuperscript{46} Kenny (1989:26) explains that during this period, furui could also mean dirty as well as old. In Sasano’s version (1942:218) the daimyō remarks that he wants to keep away from him because, as he hasn’t bathed since birth, he must smell.
\textsuperscript{47} This last test is first in both Kenny and Sasano (although the other tests follow the same order as Tsukamoto) and is slightly different. In these versions, the daimyō reads that there are two types of awataguchi, touma and tourin and he asks (via Tarō Kaja) the trickster which one of these he is.
\textsuperscript{48} Sasano (1942:221) ends with the more conventional Kyōgen ending toraitekurei, yarumaizo yarumaizo (“Catch him! Don’t let him go! Don’t let him go!”).
diffusing to authority figures in the audience since they focus on helping their masters. Their over-enthusiastic behaviour combined with their ignorance, however, results in the humiliation of their masters, surely increasing audience tensions. In both plays Tarō Kaja’s pretence of knowledge appears to result from a fear of inadequacy. This is manifest in *Suehirogari* where Tarō Kaja assures his master of his competence (*odougu kotogotoku zonjite wa orimasuredo, sono suehirogari to yara wa, tsui ni mita koto mo gozaranu*, “without exception, I am aware of your belongings” and I have never ever seen that which they call a *Suehirogari*”, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:68). If Tarō Kaja, however, is unaware of what a *suehirogari* is how can he so confidently assert that they do not possess one? The audience are made aware of his ignorance (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:69) and, although Tarō Kaja claims he has forgotten to ask what it is, there is intimation that the omission was deliberate. Rather than return for explanations, Tarō Kaja resorts to subverting the usual market practise whereby the seller announces his wares by, conversely, declaring his intention to buy. It is this subversion which allows him to be trapped by the conman. In *Awataguchi*, Tarō Kaja makes a similar assertion: (*tonosama no shichimanbou no takara no uchini, awataguchi wa gozarimasenu*, “amongst Sir’s wealth of many treasures, there is no *Awataguchi*”, Tsukamoto, 1929:152), but his ignorance is also plainly discernible.

The reason for the servants’ pretence must surely be a fear of admitting to ignorance through fear of appearing incompetent. The Japanese master depended on his servants (Kitagawa, 1989:69, Tsukamoto, 1929:152) and an admission of ignorance on their part would be an acknowledgement of failure. Tojirō Yamamoto (Yamamoto and Kondo, 49 The meaning of *odougu* (お道具) is actually closer to “tools” or “utensils” but in this case it represents the daimyō’s expensive, personal treasures so I have used “belongings”. 50 Shibano (1980:79) suggests that part of the humour of this play stems from “the contrast between the sly swindler and the simple rustic” and in this respect, the interactions between the two are similar to those between Gripus and Trachalio in *Rud*.938-1044.
2005:75), discussing Suehiro,\textsuperscript{51} suggests that the master’s complete confidence in his servant means that Tarō Kaja is unable to ask for the definition of a suehiro[gari]\textsuperscript{52} since an admission of ignorance would destroy this confidence. In some respects their unwillingness to admit ignorance is reassuring since it demonstrates an overwhelming desire to please, a concept fundamental to master-servant harmony.\textsuperscript{53} This is reflected by the ending of Suehirogari where Tarō Kaja is forgiven when the master recognises his servant’s good qualities (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:79). Likewise, in Awataguchi, the master’s recriminations fall, not on the servant, but on the trickster. It is also problematic though, since it results in the humiliation of the masters and in the revelation of the servants’ ignorance. Although they have acted to maintain their reputations as highly competent servants, their actions have resulted in the opposite outcome.\textsuperscript{54}

The fear of losing one’s reputation is taken a step further in Chidori (The Seagulls) where the servant’s desire to uphold his master’s reputation leads him into criminality.\textsuperscript{55} Tarō Kaja is ordered to obtain a new barrel of sake from a local shop although his master cannot afford to pay for it (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:213). In order to obtain the sake and maintain the household’s reputation in front of the anticipated guest, Tarō Kaja steals the sake by telling stories which involve “capturing”

\textsuperscript{51} The Izumi school version of Suehirogari is called Suehiro.

\textsuperscript{52} “tarou kaja ni zenpuku no shinrai wo yoseteirundesune. ippou, tarou kaja no hou wa [suehiro ga aruka] to kikareta tokini, jitsu wa suehiro wo shiranakatta wakedasu. kokode [goshujinsama, suehiro gari] to hitokoto kikeba yoseteirundesune. tokoroga, tarou kaja wa shinrai wo yosereateiru koto wo hitteiru monndesu, [shiranai] to ienai. sorede [mita koto ga nai] to gomakashitandesune.” (“[The master has] complete confidence in Tarō Kaja, doesn’t he. But, Tarō Kaja, when he was asked ‘Do I have a suehiro?’ really doesn’t know [what it is]. Here, a better response from Tarō Kaja would have been if he had said these few words, ‘Master, what is a suehiro?’ But, because Tarō Kaja knows that [the master] has confidence in him, he can’t say ‘I don’t know [what it is].’ That being the case that’s why he pretends ‘I have never seen it [amongst your things]’ isn’t it”).

\textsuperscript{53} On this point see Fujiwara (2003:46) who discusses loyalty in relation to Awataguchi.

\textsuperscript{54} As with Roman comedy, Kyōgen is able to and does play with conventions, sometimes subverting them. The play Hagi Daimyō where it is the daimyō’s actions which cause Tarō Kaja to lose face rather than his own behaviour is an example of this.

\textsuperscript{55} The Izumi School Gantōdaimyō follows a similar pattern.
the sake barrel (Kitagawa, 1989:218-24). The servant’s desire to protect his master from ridicule leads to the abandonment of his own moral code and, although his actions are socially immoral, they gain legitimacy through their emphasis on revering the master. In this way the stealing of the sake may be interpreted as a reassuring, fear-diffusing device.56

As Shigekazu Fujiwara (2003:38) states, “‘karidaimyō’ ya ‘chidori’ ni miru you na kurushii chyusei mo genintaru mono wa shinakerebanarimasen ga, shujin ni chyusei wo tsukusu amari tamono kara nikumareru koto mo arimasita” (Servants must be devoted [to their masters], even to the extent that it is distressing/painful devotion such as that shown in Karidaimyō and Chidori, but as a result of showing devotion to the master they were times where they were hated by others). Tarō Kaja is certainly hated by the shopkeeper because he steals the sake, yet this act demonstrates his overwhelming desire to maintain the household’s reputation, thus presenting him as a loyal servant. In this guise, Tarō Kaja must preserve his master’s reputation, even if it means that others hate him for it, because preserving his superior’s reputation maintains his own. Fujiwara (2003:37) suggests that Chidori reflects the harmonious relationship between master and servant in times of economic difficulty. Thus the play surely appeared reassuring to authority figures since it depicted the depths to which a subordinate might sink in order to protect the household’s reputation. Such a depiction suggests identification on the part of the servant with his master’s family, combined with a sense of social inclusion and belonging, important aspects of Japanese culture. By identifying himself as part of the household, Tarō Kaja not only emphasises the close bond which

56 Fujiwara (2003:37) believes that “warudakumi wo shinagara atoaji ga warunai no wa, yoriau shuiyu no kokoro no sei deshou” (“while it is a wicked trick, there is no nasty aftertaste due to the feelings of master and servant which come together”).
is ideal between master and servant but also the fear of stigma and contamination that might taint a servant should his master lose face.

This is less apparent in Roman comedy where, despite the ideal of close master-slave identification, master-slave relations were unlikely to reach this level in reality. There is, however, is some evidence for it, particularly in Terence. Geta (Adelphoe) is completely devoted to his mistress and her daughter to the extent that he identifies with them (Ad.299-354). At Ad.310-19, Geta appears to consider himself as protector and defender of the household rather than as a slave, although this is no doubt in part for comic effect. His own fears, (alienus est ab nostra familia, “he has estranged himself from our household”, Ad.327), (tua fama et gnatae vita in dubium veniet, “your reputation and the life of your daughter shall come into doubt”, Ad.340), are expressed through the potential harm that faces his mistress, suggesting that he considers himself an integral part of the household.

Unlike the serui callidi, Geta’s anxiety is extrinsic yet an intrinsic element may be discernible. His identification of himself with his mistress’s family, as part of a unified household, suggests that, like the Chidori Tarō Kaja, he considers his reputation as bound to the reputation of the household. Geta, however, unlike the Chidori Tarō Kaja, is a slave and thus has no reputation to protect, making his loyalty puzzling. Why should Geta, a slave, be so concerned with the reputation of his mistress and her family? His anxiety suggests a devotion which could only appear reassuring to slave-owners, since it evinces a degree of concern above that typically associated with slaves, but for which a master might, in an ideal world, hope. In this respect, Geta may hold a

unique position in extant Roman comedy since his loyalty apparently stems from devotion alone. Although other slaves in Roman comedy exist who evince an ostensibly similar selfless form of loyalty they are typically employed as devices of contrast, rather than being sustained examples of devoted loyalty.

Grumio appears selflessly loyal, but his value arises from his delineation of Tranio’s character.58 His distress at Philolaches’ lifestyle (Most.78ff.) sharply contrasts with Tranio’s extravagant nature, thus emphasising Tranio’s role as seruus callidus.59 Although Grumio is a well-drawn character,60 his only appearance occurs early in the play where, through banter, he apprises the audience of Tranio’s tricky nature. Thus his loyalty serves a particular comic purpose. The eponymous slave of the Truculentus appears loyally selfless at first sight but this loyalty only serves to make his eventual corruption a more comic experience. At Truc.297-98 he complains, erilis noster filius apud uos Strabax/ut pereat, ut eum inliciatis in malam fraudem et probrum, (“how our Strabax, the son of the master, is being ruined at your house, how you are enticing him into a wicked and infamous crime”) and announces that, hercle ibo ad forum atque haec facta narrabo/seni (“by Hercules, I shall go to the forum and tell the master what has been done”, Truc.313). He appears a loyal slave yet by his next appearance his character has undergone a complete reversal (nimio minu’ saeuos iam sum, Astaphium, quam fui/†iam non sum truculentus†, noli metuere, “I am much less severe than I was, Astaphium. I am not “truculentus” anymore, don’t be afraid”, Truc.674). It is intimated that his corruption has occurred as a result of his exposure to urban life (Truc.682)61 and his value almost certainly lies in his comic potential for subverting the motif of

60 See Duckworth (1994:252 and 252.n.34).
61 On this point see Bradley (1987:26) who cites Columella’s (Res Rusticae) beliefs about urban slaves and corruption.
country innocence.\(^{62}\) Like Grumio, when confined to the country Truculentus is loyal and selfless but once exposed to the machinations of town life, his personality undergoes a dramatic reversal. The contrast between his first and second appearances is undoubtedly comical and the subversion of his selfless loyalty emphasises this change in character. Thus, although both these characters can be regarded as examples of loyal slaves, their loyalty differs from that of Geta. It may be that Geta represents the ultimate ideal slave, marking the ultimate reassurance to authority figures in the audience. In contrast, Grumio and Truculentus may reflect subjugators’ fears of the potential for slavery to harden a slave, potentially increasing the likelihood of rebellion. Thus the transition from countryside to town may symbolise the transition from inexperience to experience.

\(b\) Loyalty as a result of Stupidity

Certain slaves/servants appear to be loyal simply because they are too stupid to be anything else, although this stupidity is often enhanced by fear and anxiety. Problems arise when their idiocy prevents them from distinguishing correctly how best they might serve their master. Sceledrus (\textit{Mil.}\textsc{278-311}) is stupid but fears punishment to such an extent that Palaestrio is able to trick him into allowing Philocomasium’s escape.\(^{63}\) It is his timidity which proves his undoing (\textit{Mil.}\textsc{409} and 540ff.). His fear suggests that the use of violence as a form of control can be an effective tool for masters,\(^{64}\) encouraging obedience, yet this same fear exposes him to Palaestrio’s machinations. Palaestrio manipulates Sceledrus’ fear, exposing the conundrum facing

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\(^{62}\) Groves (2003:57) reflects on the contrast between urban and rural food in Plautine comedy and how they suggest a cultural anxiety between Romans and provincials.

\(^{63}\) Stewart (2012:99) suggests that Sceledrus is staged as “a fearful slave living in a context of of continuously threatening violence within the household”.

the loyal slave, (primumdum, si falso insimulas Philocomasium, hoc perieris; iterum, si id uerumst, tu ei custos additus perieris, “firstly, if you accuse Philocomasium falsely, you will perish for this, then again, if it is true, you, having been brought as guard to her, would perish”, Mil.297-98). For the stupid Sceledrus, this problem is insurmountable. He is disloyal if he ignores the situation and will be punished yet if he does report his suspicions, and they are correct, he will also be punished as a consequence of his failure. This conundrum is also of extreme concern to Japanese servants, although more typically a tragic device as is demonstrated in the Nō, Ataka, where the servant is placed in a similarly impossible position. In order to protect his master, Yoshitsune, he must beat him, yet to do so is, as Zuika Serper (2005:333) remarks, “an unthinkable act for a retainer…which creates a conflict between these two contrasting giri”.

Palaestrio exploits this ambiguity yet he appears unable fully to convince Sceledrus (Mil.297ff.). This, perhaps, depicts a type of loyalty that arises from a stupidity which is so absolute that it cannot recognise what is in one’s own best interests. Palaestrio attempts to convince Sceledrus that it is in his own interests to forget what he thinks he has seen but it is only the fabrication of the twin sister (Mil.382ff.) which secures his silence. This silence is not a result of a change in loyalty but a result of Sceledrus’ stupidity which makes him susceptible to suggestion.

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65 On this conundrum see Stewart (2012:98).
66 Bradley (1987:136) suggests that it “seems inconceivable that they [the beating language and fear in Plautus] are not grounded on true servile fears of slave-owners”. Thus the fear of punishment acts as the real means of ensuring the loyalty which masters hoped for as an ideal.
A more explicit example of loyal stupidity is the servant in *Namagusamono* (Raw Fish) who is given the task of returning a gold ceremonial sword to his master’s uncle, and whose literal obedience results in the very outcome which he was instructed to avoid. Since the road to the uncle’s house is notoriously unsafe, Tarō Kaja’s master has disguised the sword by wrapping it in paper so that it resembles a raw fish. The problem arises from Tarō Kaja’s literal interpretation of his master’s instruction: if accosted, he is not to say that he is carrying a gold sword but a raw fish (Tsukamoto, 1930:347). Thus Tarō Kaja, when accosted, states, *kore wa koganedzukuri no tachi de wa gozaranu. Namagusamono de gozarimasuru* (“This is not a gold sword. It is a raw fish”, Tsukamoto, 1930:349), effectively revealing the planned deception to the thief. Consequentially, the sword is taken, although Tarō Kaja cannot comprehend the thief’s seemingly unexplainable knowledge (Tsukamoto, 1930:350). Similar to Sceledrus, Tarō Kaja’s stupidity renders him susceptible. In both cases, their loyalty is ineffective and potentially dangerous for their masters, but simultaneously reassuring since it marks them as unlikely to rebel. Danger arises from their stupidity which renders them incapable of effective service and, actually, thwarts their masters.

Gripus presents a slightly different slant on stupidly loyal slaves/servants. Despite his evident stupidity, he is instrumental in restoring Palaestra to her family, thus ensuring a harmonious ending. Whilst a tricky slave would have been able to turn the catching of the trunk into an advantage, Gripus’ stupidity costs him his dreams of an eponymous town (*Rud*.934). Although Gripus manifests signs of rebellion (*Rud*.1369ff.), it is ineffectual: he is confined to grumbling (*Rud*.1398, 1399 and 1401) and suicidal threats (*Rud*.1415-16). His stupidity is such that he is unable to understand that his master is trying to help him, a fact which even the pimp recognises, (*tibi operam hicquidem dat.*

69 It is ironic that it is “sheer luck” (Segal, 1987:165) which enables him to earn his freedom.
tace, “he’s acting for you, shut up!”, *Rud.*1403). Gripus appears to have missed his own manumission, (*pro illo dimidio ego Gripum emittam manu,/quem propter tu uidulum et ego gnatam inueni,* “I shall set Gripus free for that half, on account of whom I found my daughter and you found your trunk”, *Rud.*1410), threatening to hang himself (*Rud.*1415). Despite his complaints, at no point does he consider defying his master and seizing the trunk for himself. His behaviour, although unorthodox, is likely to be reassuring to authority figures in the audience given that it depicts a slave who is too stupid to notice a) that he has been manumitted and b) that he has been instrumental in providing the *anagorisis*.70

c) Loyalty to a Subordinate Authority

Notwithstanding the reassurance that the portrayal of loyal slaves/servants might bring to a contemporary audience, the issue of loyalty can also be problematic in another way. Difficulties arise when the slave/servant in question appears to owe allegiance to more than one master, one of whom must necessarily be subordinate to the other. Typically this conflict results from the physical transference of the slave or servant to a new master whilst emotionally they remain bound to their former master as in *Captivi* and *Miles Gloriosus*. This quandary forms the focal motif of the Kyōgen, *Nawanai* (Rope Twisting) which transfers Tarō Kaja to a new master (Mr Tarō) as payment for his former master’s gambling debts. His allegiances, however, remain with his former master. His attempts to prove incompetent in order to precipitate his return home provide considerable comic amusement (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:210). Ironically, Tarō Kaja’s deception is unravelled by his former master’s knowledge of his abilities (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:210-11) and his own loyalty. Desperate to please his

70 Stewart (2012:139) sees Gripus as a challenge to the principle of manumission as a reward for loyalty.
former master he is easily tricked into making rope (his speciality) ostensibly for his former master but, in actuality, Mr Tarō is secretly watching. Whilst twisting the rope Tarō Kaja grumbles about Mr Tarō, his wife – ugly as a dragon, and their disgusting baby (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:218-20), and relates the various examples of bad service which he performed (such as incompetence and slapping and pinching the baby) in an effort to be returned home.

Tarō Kaja’s feelings are evident from his anger at being tricked and given away (Kitagawa, 2001:206-07) and “makkoshita wakedjya ni yotte itekurei” tosa e ooseraretanaraba, sore wo ina to wa mousu maimono wo, taraite yatta bun wa hara ga tatsu (“if he had said, “please go because of this real reason” then I would not have said no, but I am angry because he deceived me”, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:213). Confusingly, however, Tarō Kaja is simultaneously happy (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:212) since he is being returned to his master and consequently dismisses his master’s apologies for the poor treatment which was meted out to him (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:213). In the face of his master’s betrayal and deception such loyalty is surprising, yet must also be reassuring since it emphasises the strong bond which can arise over time between master and servant.  

This bond results in the transference of blame from the former master (with whom it undoubtedly rests) to the new master and his household who bear no responsibility. The reason for this may lie in the long service which it is likely that Tarō Kaja has provided for his former master, most likely a service begun in childhood, perhaps marking a parallel with the faithfulness of Tyndarus (Captivi) who has also been with the same family since childhood (Capt.990ff.). This suggests “genin to wa ijimashii hodo chyuujitsu ni shu ni tsutaeru mono deshita” (“servants who served their master with devotion to the extent that it

Fujiwara (2003:40) comments on the strength of the bond between master and servant.
was pitiful/heart-rending”, Fujiwara, 2003:40); such portrayals are likely to be reassuring to authority figures, in their emphasis on a developing, unbreakable bond between master and slave/servant.

The question of to whom Tarō Kaja should owe allegiance is never fully resolved. For a loyal servant like Tarō Kaja to transfer immediately his loyalty, however, would surely be implausible, and his continued defiance and refusal to accept a new master must surely be comforting to contemporary authority figures in the audience who would be reassured of their servants’ wholehearted loyalty through the pronounced emphasis on the closeness of the master/servant relationship. To a certain extent, however, the audience are manipulated into considering the question of allegiance and the possibility of bad service resulting from disloyalty. The Nawanai Tarō Kaja’s behaviour implies that loyalty is owed to the master with whom one has the strongest bond. To Mr Tarō, however, loyalty appears the prerogative of the current master.

Unlike the Nawanai Tarō Kaja, Palaestrio (Miles Gloriosus) subverts the concept of loyalty, ultimately providing the soldier with a lasting reminder of just how disloyal his apparently loyal slave was:

PA. cogitato identidem tibi quam fidelis fuerim.
si id facies, tum demum scibis tibi qui bonu’ sit, qui malus.
PY. scio et perspexi saepe. PA. uerum quom antehac, hodie maxume scies : immo hodie †meorum† factum faxo post dices magis.

(Mil.1364-367)

Palaestrio: Consider again and again how loyal I was to you. If you do that, you will finally know who was good towards you and who was bad.

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72 On the relationship between master and servant see Fujiwara (2003:38-40).
Pyrgopolynices: I know and I have often perceived it.
Palaestrio: Truly, as previously, today you will know it especially: indeed today I shall make sure that afterwards you will speak of my deeds all the more.

Although he manifests apparently loyal tendencies, these are in fact directed towards his former master not his present master. The legitimacy of this is seemingly reinforced by the unsympathetic portrayal of braggart soldiers in general in Plautine comedy, and contrasts with the ambiguity surrounding the issue of loyalty in Captivi where both masters are from “high” backgrounds. Palaestrio’s subverted loyalty is, interestingly, depicted as a means of punishing the soldier, as well as helping the young master, rather than as a desire for rebellion. Thus he is supported and acknowledged by the other characters including the next-door neighbour Periplectomenus, who is the archetypal senex lepidus, helping the comic heroes against the blocking characters. Palaestrio’s final speech, although subversive towards his current master, reflects the loyalty which he owes Pleusicles. Thus, every act against the soldier is a blow struck for his old master, the love-struck hero of the play. It is, perhaps, ironic that the real “loyal” slave to Pyrgopolynices is the incompetent and stupid Sceledrus, whose loyalty remains unacknowledged.

v) Tyndarus – Faithful Betrayer

The most unusual example of loyalty to a subordinate authority occurs in the Captivi where the master/slave roles are switched.\textsuperscript{73} This reversal of roles enables Philocrates (master), in the guise of Tyndarus (slave), to escape captivity and return home but places Tyndarus in great danger should their deception be uncovered. An added

\textsuperscript{73} On this point see Thalmann (1996:129).
complication is that Tyndarus will be revealed as in fact his new master’s freeborn
son.\textsuperscript{74}

Tyndarus, although in some ways a tricky slave,\textsuperscript{75} demonstrates unquestionable loyalty
which, although manifesting some self-centredness — namely his hope for
manumission, appears remarkably selfless since it exposes him to grave danger with no
certainty of reward.\textsuperscript{76} This is demonstrated at Capt.229-30, (\textit{nam tu nunc uides pro tuo
caro capite} / \textit{carum offerre me meum caput uilitati}, “for you now see me offering my
dear head for your dear head”), and by his refusal to repent, once his trickery is
uncovered (Capt.685-88). Tyndarus’ nervousness is evident (Capt.231-32, 434-37,
443-44)\textsuperscript{77} yet this fear does not influence his actions. His speech is not only
characteristic of a loyal slave, (Capt.690, 707) but goes beyond that demonstrated by
other loyal slaves/servants in either Roman comedy or Kyōgen.\textsuperscript{78} Thus, his loyalty is
likely to appear reassuring to authority figures since it portrays a slave prepared
(potentially) to die for his master, despite the potential anxiety arising from Tyndarus
portraying a free man.\textsuperscript{79} Duncan (2006:168) suggests that any Philocrates’ adop-
tion of the role of tricky slave may be interpreted as “one way the play defuses anxieties about
Tyndarus getting the upper hand through his successful impersonation of a free man”.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{74} On the staging of the \textit{Captivi} see Lowe (1991).
Stewart (2012:71) explores Tyndarus’ actions as both ideal and tricky slave.
\textsuperscript{76} Thalmann (1996:113-17) explores the notion of Tyndarus’ “noble” behaviour, examining two models
of slavery, the one demonstrated by trickery i.e. the fact that slaves are deceitful, the other by Tyndarus’
Konstan (1976:76-91) and Leach (1969:269-71).
\textsuperscript{77} See also Burton (2004:221-22) on this point.
\textsuperscript{78} On Tyndarus’ dignity see Leach (1969:286). See also Segal (1987:154, 155 and 206).
\textsuperscript{79} On one of the potential implications of this see Duncan (2006:172-73), “Tyndarus’ ability to pass as a
free man threatens the foundation of Roman society, because it means that any reasonably skilled actor
could do the same” (See also Duncan 2006:173n.46). On role-reversal, particularly in the \textit{Captivi}, see
\textsuperscript{80} On the inversion of roles in this play and the blurring of boundaries between free and slave, see
In effect, if Tyndarus has transferred the mantle of the tricky slave onto Philocrates he has distanced himself from it. This is reinforced by the treatment of Stalagmus whose dishonourable slave behaviour contrasts with the honourable free-born nature of Tyndarus’ loyalty.

In many respects Tyndarus occupies the role of loyal slave manifesting hope for manumission, suffering and demonstrating devotion towards his master. His trickery, however, reveals an unsettling element to his character. Unlike Palaestrio his conduct cannot be justified by its routing of the agelast since Hegio is not a blocking character. Moreover, Hegio’s social position places him in the position of higher authority, suggesting that Tyndarus’ loyalty is his prerogative. Tyndarus succinctly summarises the dilemma he faces,

\[
\text{quid ? tu una nocte postulauisti et die recens captum hominem, nuperum, nouicium, te perdocere ut melius consulerem tibi quam illi quicum una }\langle a \rangle \text{ puero aetatem exegeram?}
\]

\text{(Capt.717-20) \footnote{82}}

What? Did you think in a day and a night to teach me, a recently captured man, recent slave, novice, to consider you more than him with whom I grew up from childhood?

Hegio’s viewpoint, however, is precisely that advocated under both Roman and hierarchical Japanese society. In this respect, Tyndarus has more in common with the Nawanai Tarō Kaja, who also rebuffed conventions of loyalty by refusing to transfer his allegiance, than he does with Palaestrio whose deceptive loyalty results in the routing of the soldier. Unlike Tarō Kaja, however, Tyndarus’ dilemma is neatly

\footnote{81 Although, as Franko (1995:159) discusses, the two characters “exploit the ambiguity of their status” as neither free man nor slave in order to act out their plan.}

\footnote{82 On Tyndarus’ dilemma see Duncan (2006:170), Benz (1998:119) and Konstan (1976:77).}

\footnote{83 On Hegio and his relation to Roman ideals of slave-obedience see Thalmann (1996:127). On the relationship between Hegio’s opinions and moral slavery see Stewart (2012:65-6).}
dismissed by the play’s denouement which reveals him to be freeborn and thus not a slave at all.\footnote{See Thalmann (1996:130) who believes that it is the audience’s superior knowledge that Tyndarus is free born which prevents “the entire play provoking real questions about the natural validity of the social order”. Duncan (2006:171) asks “if a slave is loyal to his/her first owner, how can anyone ever buy ‘used’ slaves and expect loyalty from them?” Burton (2004:222) and Franko (1995:165, and 174), however, suggest that the fact that Tyndarus and Philocrates remain true to each other reflects the high importance placed on \textit{fides} by Roman society. Franko (1995:174) states that their behaviour, although unfaithful to Hegio, is commendable because “they adopt and uphold specifically Roman codes of behavior”. This emphasis on \textit{fides} removes the problematic nature of Tyndarus’ betrayal of Hegio by replacing it with a greater concern, that of \textit{fidelitas}.}

Tyndarus, unlike the majority of loyal slaves, evinces no overwhelming evidence of self-preservation. In fact, his actions, undertaken knowingly, result in the exact opposite as he is tortured by Hegio (\textit{Capt.}721ff., 993-96 and 998-1007), a seemingly life-changing experience, and an almost unique example of on-stage punishment in Roman Comedy.\footnote{Gosling (1983:56) asserts that the punishment of Tyndarus is the only torture of slaves carried out on-stage. I suggest that there is one other instance of slave torture in Roman comedy, the torture of the two maids in \textit{Trinummus}. These characters differ from Tyndarus, however, in that they are only minor figures. Segal (1987:120-1 and 209) seems to suggest that Hegio’s objection might be to the damage afforded to his reputation by Tyndarus’ actions yet this would not account for the punishment meted out to Tyndarus, nor does it explain the distinction between him and other tricky slaves. On the difficulties surrounding Tyndarus’ punishment at the hands of his father see Leach (1969:286).} His reflections on his treatment bear little relation to the gallows-humour typically indulged in by tricky slaves and it is likely that this difference arises largely if not entirely from Tyndarus’ unique social position. At once a free man and a slave he is uniquely poised to convey both sides of the city-state ideology. Through his deception of Hegio, Tyndarus violates the traditional bond between master and slave.\footnote{On the violation of these bonds see Konstan (1976:80).}

Since “[b]y the logic of captivity and slavery, the slave of an imprisoned free man owes obedience to his new master, and none at all to his former one” (Thalmann, 1996:127) Tyndarus might be said to deserve punishment. By sacrificing himself to protect Philolaches, however, he displays a loyalty which is atypical of even loyal comedic slaves/servants. That such a situation was credibly real can be seen in Tacitus’ interpretation of L. Piso’s slave’s action (\textit{Hist.}4.50) where the slave’s impersonation of
his master saved the man’s life at the expense of his own. The slave’s deception is approved because as Bradley (1987:35) states, “loyalty has been maintained” at the expense of personal sacrifice. In this case, “[w]hat would be lauded in a free man – the rescue of a compatriot – cannot be held blameworthy in a slave” (Konstan, 1976:81). If, as I have demonstrated, loyalty typically arises from self-centred motives often related to anxiety, then how can we reconcile Tyndarus’ actions which place his life in danger?

Tyndarus blurs the boundary between slaves and free, introducing an unsettling factor into the equation by a depiction of a virtuous free man who has had the misfortune to be enslaved. In this respect, he apparently represents the ambivalent boundary between free and slave and master and servant. Resolution only occurs through the revelation that Tyndarus is Hegio’s son. In effect, “the good man proves to be a member of the community, thereby abolishing or at least masking the tension in the concept of good faith or loyalty”. This suggests that Tyndarus’ loyalty has at least two possible interpretations. First, it may mark the only possible safe form of slave deception (i.e., "safe" from the point of view of the free audience) since the deceiver is really a free man; or it may represent “a reflection of what free society hoped for in reality and sometimes achieved” (Bradley, 1987:38). In either instance, Tyndarus’ devotion appears to function as a mode of anxiety-reduction for authority figures in its depiction of a slave prepared to sacrifice his life to defend his master. This presents an example of the “benevolent” model of slavery, whereby slaves are encouraged to accept slavery through the images of loyalty and obedience. Duncan (2006:167) suggests that “[w]e

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89 On the importance of fides and friendship to the plot of the Captivi, see Franko (1995:159ff.) and Burton (2004:220-22).
90 Thalmann (1996:117) presents a comprehensive examination of the benevolent model of slavery.
could say that the benevolent model of slavery is motivated by a fear of upward social mobility”. Through depictions of inherent loyalty, masters are encouraged to discard fears of rebellion and uprising.\textsuperscript{91} Tyndarus’ respectful treatment of Hegio, even when condemned to torture in the quarries (Capt.744), may reinforce this view, although it would certainly be possible for the words to be played as ironic and cutting.

It is important to note that, whilst Tyndarus’s loyalty demonstrates his selflessness and devotion to his master,\textsuperscript{92} potential problems arise from the fact that this master is not his current master. In this respect, his actions risk escalating rebellion-anxieties as they are also manifestly disloyal, like those of Palaestrio and the Nawanai Tarō Kaja. This is, perhaps, mitigated, at least to a certain extent, by his punishment which enables the restoration of normality, albeit a potentially subverted normality since Tyndarus is revealed as Hegio’s son. It is only the complete reunification of Hegio’s family which prevents this being a tragicomedy. As it is, Hegio’s treatment of Stalagmus, the man who stole the child Tyndarus, leaves the play with a somewhat acrid aftertaste.\textsuperscript{93} The removal of the chains from Tyndarus and their placement on Stalagmus (Capt.1025) emphasises the power of the master above all, likely encouraging the authoritarian portion of the audience to release any anxiety which may have arisen from the ambiguity surrounding Tyndarus’ actions.

Conclusion

\textsuperscript{91} McCarthy (2000:60 and 68-9) remarks upon this fact in her examination of Messenio the loyal slave in Plautus’ Menæchmi who saves the day.
\textsuperscript{92} As Parker (1989:246) remarks, and as we have noted above, “[t]he slave’s rebellion is never on his own behalf”.
\textsuperscript{93} On Stalagmus as revalidating slavery see Leigh (2004:90). On Stalagmus as the foil to Tyndarus see Konstan (1976:86).
Loyalty and devotion, when exhibited by comedic slaves/servants seemingly encourages authority figures, in the audience, to forget their anxieties regarding rebellion. This appears to be accomplished, generally, through a representation of loyalty as motivated by personal desires and self-preservation which ensures continued obedience. This is potentially of greater effectiveness when the slave/servant is also stupid since such a slave/servant lacks the intellect for rebellion and, as such, is unthreatening. It is an interesting feature of Roman Comedy and Kyōgen that stupid slaves/servants are typically rustic. Although the idea of the countryside as lacking sophistication is widespread, this construction of the stupid rustic slave may also be a reflection of contemporary fears of rebellion which may have weighted rural slaves as potentially more dangerous than urban slaves, due to the greater numbers of slaves required for country estates. Presenting country slaves/servants as stupid and unthreatening likely worked to alleviate tensions surrounding rebellion as it acted to reassure authority figures of the naivety of rural vassals.

More importantly, even in cases of comic rebellion, the master’s authority is always re-established. Thus, although we may perceive “an awareness of the necessity and value of class struggle” (La Fleur, 1983:135) and a brief success of gekokujiō, ultimately rebellion fails. This is similar to Roman Comedy where “the social order is not disturbed, or rather, it is disturbed only momentarily” and normality is reasserted by the end of the play. As a result, the relaxation afforded to subjugated members of the audience can only be temporary. Likewise, the loyalty and/or stupidity manifested

94 On the increase of slave-run country estates in the second century BC see De Ligt (2007:5).
95 On this point see Fujiwara’s (2003:94-5) account of the master’s actions in the Kyōgen Akagari.
96 On the brief success of gekokujiō in Kyōgen see Fujiwara (2003:95).
97 “shu wo nametekakatta genin no omowanu shippaidesita” (“the servant who held his master in contempt, unexpectedly failed”, Fujiwara, 2003:95).
99 On restoration of normality in Roman comedy, see Segal (2001:189).
by slaves/servants are also problematic, often resulting in the unintentional humiliation of their masters.

Unlike loyal and/or stupid slaves, disloyal, rebellious slaves who joke about torture, such as Tranio and Chrysalus, never even seek freedom.\textsuperscript{100} This marks a distinction between tricky and loyal (and/or stupid) slaves. Tyndarus and Palaestrio might indulge in trickery but their behaviour is designed to demonstrate devotion towards their masters. Thus they are rewarded by being manumitted.\textsuperscript{101} Loyal slaves (and stupid ones) dream of freedom and sometimes obtain it (e.g. Gripus and Tyndarus), yet tricky slaves usually evince no aspirations towards this goal and, apart from the unusual case of Epidicus, do not obtain manumission. It is interesting that Epidicus (\textit{Epidicus}) as a tricky slave has to be persuaded to accept manumission whereas loyal/stupid slaves readily accept freedom. Perhaps this suggests an attempt to placate any audience tensions which might arise from the potentially problematic manumitting of a tricky slave.\textsuperscript{102} In the majority of cases, it appears that manumission is confined to slaves who do not present a threat to authority. Surprisingly often there is reward for good behaviour towards the highest authority, which is generally unexpected in comedy. For example, although both Gripus and Messenio (\textit{Menaechmi}) obtain their freedom, neither accomplishes this through trickery.\textsuperscript{103} This differs from Kyōgen, whose loyal servants appear to gain no material reward for their loyalty, although they may experience some intangible honour or increase in reputational value from their loyalty.

\textsuperscript{100} See McCarthy, 2000:160 and 212) and Segal (1987:164).
\textsuperscript{101} On the difference in desires between tricky slaves and loyal slaves see Segal (1987:164-65).
\textsuperscript{102} Gellar-Goad (2011:149-50) examines the unusual nature of Epidicus’ manumission.
\textsuperscript{103} See Segal (1987:165).
Tyndarus remains a problematic character whose ambiguous status is never fully resolved. The suggestion, through Plautus’ focus on *fides* and *amiticia* and through Palaestrio’s successful deception of Pyrgopolynices in *Miles Gloriosus*, is that loyalty is the prerogative of the old master, not the new. This, however, is an inversion of “the logic of captivity and slavery, [which asserts that] the slave of an imprisoned free man owes obedience to his new master, and none at all to his former one” (Thalmann, 1996:127). It appears a similarly ambiguous issue for Kyōgen servants, where Tarō Kaja’s loyalty towards his former master is difficult to condemn since it reflects the ideal of a close master-servant bond.

When a slave or servant is concerned with protecting his own or the household’s reputation his loyalty is typically more pronounced, but less effective, like that of Geta and the *Suehirogari* and *Awataguchi* Tarō Kajas. Yet their loyalty may manipulate the audience into believing that a slave/servant’s loyalty is paramount to the harmony of the household. This is particularly evident in plays of the *Chidori* variety, although it is also evident in the treatment of Sceledrus, Gripus and Geta. In both comedic forms, the most effectively reassuring slaves are those whose loyalty stems from identification with the family and a desire to protect its reputation. Overall, Roman comedy appears to present a more reassuring outlook for authority than Kyōgen which generally concludes in a more ambiguous manner. It is possible that this is a reflection of the conflicted state of affairs in contemporary Japanese society where social status appears to have been increasingly fluid and uncertain, and the distance between master and servant less conspicuous than that between master and slave.

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104 A similar situation is evident in Palaestrio’s behaviour (*Miles Gloriosus*). Although he is slave to the soldier, Pyrgopolynices, he retains his loyalty towards his former master, aiding him at the expense of the soldier. Marshall (2008:88) examines the various hierarchies which result from Plautine role-inversion, particularly in the *Captivi*. 
OF GODS AND DEMONS

Introduction

Although gods and the supernatural are common features in tragedy, where they rather more obviously encourage fear, they are not typical comedic material perhaps due to their intrusion on realism, which removes them from the everyday, unheroic world of comedy. They feature, however, in a variety of Kyōgen plays and, to a lesser extent, are also found in Roman comedy. Through an examination of five Kyōgen plays, *Buaku*, *Esashi Jūō*, *Kaminari*, *Semi*, and *Setsubun*, together with Plautus’ *Amphitryon* and *Mostellaria*, I examine the portrayal of gods and the supernatural in Kyōgen and Roman comedy, demonstrating the manner in which their treatment acts as a cathartic measure, reaffirming traditional belief-systems, while also offering a thrill of comfortable fear. I examine them together because, unlike the other characters explored in this thesis, they intrude on realism. I suggest that the comedic portrayal of these, typically, fearful beings presents an example of *galgenhumor* whereby that which is fearful is derided, in an attempt to lessen its seriousness. As such, the humorous portrayal of gods and the supernatural would partially act to relieve tensions created by the attribution of disaster to the gods and the supernatural. Ultimately, however, this may well serve to reaffirm traditional belief-systems, since laughter is limited to the confines of the theatre, and even whilst the audience are encouraged to laugh at gods and the supernatural, they are simultaneously reminded of their potential power and of the threat which they potentially pose.

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1 Hills (2005, particularly 33-45) presents an interesting analysis of the horror genre and the peculiar mix of pleasure and fear which it induces. Plato (*Rep. 2.381e*) discusses the use of ghost stories as a method of frightening children. There appears to be little Japanese research into ghosts and folklore but one early, but influential, Japanese study which examines the origins of ghost and monster tales in various cultures is Itō (1928).

2 On this point see footnotes 12 and 58.
During the twelfth century A.D. the native Japanese religion, Shintoism, fused with Buddhism creating a new form of Shintoism.\(^3\) The Medieval Japanese paid reverence to panoply of deities - termed *kami* (gods) both good and bad, responsible for every facet of human life, an example being *Yabu-no-Tenno-San* (God of colds and chills).\(^4\)

Together with animist spiritual beliefs, an important tenet of Shinto ideology was ancestor worship including the daily veneration of household gods or *hotoke* (deceased souls).\(^5\) With the introduction of Buddhism, Buddhist temples were established alongside Shintoist shrines and it became unexceptional for people to worship at both. Belief in the Buddhist hells and reincarnation became prevalent as did the portrayal of Emma (or *Yama*\(^6\)), King of the Underworld, as the “most fearsome of the fiends in hell” (Haynes, 1988:30). Emma’s domains appear to have been regarded as merciless places. Terrifying medieval hanging scrolls containing scenes portraying a liar having his tongue torn out by demons with pincers, souls dragged away in fiery carts, a furnace which used the souls of the dead as fuel, weeping women with plucked out fingernails doomed to centuries of picking sharp bamboo all exist.\(^7\) Above all looms the petrifying figure of Emma judging the newly-arrived souls, demon assistants by his side. The

\(^3\) This fusion is extremely hard to dissect due to the lack of religious documentation prior to this period detailing precise Shinto beliefs and the fact that Shinto deities and doctrines were commonly transferred to Buddhism and vice versa.

\(^4\) Hearn (1927b:285-86) provides examples of traditional Shinto gods. Stone (1999:41) provides examples of good and bad *kami* in her discussion on the establishment of “original enlightenment” beliefs in Medieval Japan.


\(^6\) *Yama* is the Sanskrit name for Emma.

\(^7\) See Hearn (1927a:64-5). See also Kimbrough (2006a:182-86 and 187-88) on hanging scrolls depicting the torments of the animal realms and for the concept of the “hell-tour” manuscripts of the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Kimbrough (2006b:269-96) compares the frequent occurrence of hell-tour manuscripts with the relative scarcity of those dealing with Pure Land tours.
tragedic Nō is particularly concerned with Hell-scenes, especially those featuring tragic warrior deaths such as Ikeniye⁸ and Ikuta⁹.

It is not just thanatophobia, however, which tormented the minds of the Medieval Japanese, but also fear of supernatural creatures that frequented dark, lonely, dangerous places.¹⁰ Spirits such as the Yuki-Onna (snow woman), the Tanuki-Bōzu (badger-priest), the terrible Kappa (water sprite) and the Three-Eyed Priest are particularly well-known,¹¹ although many others exist. Typically the purview of folk-tales and kaidan (ghost-stories), these monsters/spirits appear frequently in medieval literature, forming an important part of the Japanese psyche.¹² They were held accountable for that which was dangerous but could not be explained; vengeful spirits, in particular, were feared as disease-bringers in early Japan.¹³ Spirits were also feared as the causers of natural disasters,¹⁴ which thus posed a grave threat both to society and individuals alike.

In Rome, where religion¹⁵ and politics were closely intertwined,¹⁶ the elite families monopolising both political and religious offices, religious ritual was important for

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⁸ See Waley (1965:240) for an English translation of Hell torments in the Nō Ikeniye. Smith (1974:56-7) suggests that the ghosts of warriors are "ideal cases for the status of vengeful gods" due to their violent deaths.
¹¹ The most comprehensive and detailed collection of Japanese folkloric beliefs taken from first-hand accounts and available in English occurs in the work of Lafcadio Hearn. See Hearn (1927a and 1927b).
¹³ McMullin (1988:285-86) discusses the fear induced by vengeful spirits in Ancient Japan, particularly during the Nara and Heian periods (710AD-1185AD).
¹⁴ On this point see Plutschow (1990:205).
ensuring the health of the State through appeasement of the gods. The Roman religion of the Middle Republic was pantheistic and, despite the suggestion of some scholars of a period of religious decline, worship of the gods and veneration towards ancestors remained an important part of social life. It was important to keep the gods favourable towards Rome to ensure the continued stability and prosperity of the State. Perhaps not surprisingly given this situation, gods frequently appear in tragedy where they are typically depicted as vessels of destruction. Roman comedy, unlike tragedy, tends to shy away from this and it is interesting to note that the only extant comedy featuring major deities, describes itself, albeit jokingly, as a tragicomedy (Amph. 62-3), suggesting that a play involving “high characters” cannot entirely be a comedy, and yet, as Moore (1995) says, “there is a continual fascination with the fact that the gods who belong in tragedy, are the play’s most comic figures”.

As with Medieval Japanese society, ghosts and the supernatural appear to have been common sources of fear in Rome. Although Roman ghost-stories are less well-documented than their Japanese counterparts, particularly during the Middle

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20 Tatje and Hsu (1969:163 and 168) state that cultures which exhibit “a kinship system dominated by the father-son dyad” can be expected to manifest “a strong and positive ancestral cult”.
21 Rüpke (2007:6-7 and 31-3) examines the link between religion and State in Rome. See also Bailey (2007:19) on the State response to foreign cults such as the Bacchanalia. On the adaptation of myth for political reasons see Ruebel (1991:16-21).
22 Padel (1995) is a good source on gods in tragedy, particularly on gods and causes of madness in Greek tragedy.
23 On the unique nature of this play in the Roman corpus see Bertini (1983:313).
24 Hokenson (2006:33), Gupt (1994:217) and Charney (1991:50) discuss the concept of high and low characters. Gupt asserts that low characters are non-courtly characters, in other words, commoners, a definition with which Charney is in agreement.
Republican period, Plautus’ fake ghost (Most. 427ff.) suggests that the haunted house tale, at least, was sufficiently well-known that it could be easily interpreted by a contemporary audience. There are also examples of ghost-stories in earlier, surviving, Greek literature (for example, Homer Ill. 23.62-76). The Roman festival of the Lemuria (Ovid, Fast. 5.431 and 445-84) appears to have focused on the appeasement of spirits and, to a certain extent, these spirits appear to have been identified with gods. Together with the later ghost-stories of Pliny (Ep. 7.27.5-11), Apuleius (Met. 9.29-31), Pausanias (1.32.4-5) and Lucian’s (Philopseudes 30-1), these ghost-tales suggest that the supernatural were viewed as objects of entertaining but nonetheless real fear. The Lemuria, in particular, appears to have focused on exorcising potentially malevolent spirits from the home through the performance of rites conducted by the paterfamilias. The introduction of a festival particularly associated with the pacification of possibly malevolent spirits suggests that, as in Japan, the supernatural posed a significant anxiety for the average Roman.

We often “mock what we fear” (Parker, 1989:235) as Sigmund Freud demonstrated in his illustration of galgenhumor, mocking acting as a means of conquering fear. If we laugh at that which frightens us it becomes funny rather than frightening as it brings our secret fear out into the open where it can be examined and laughed at by all, thereby

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26 Mariconda (2007:269) examines this point. Ogden (2002:156-58) discusses how Plautus’ tale was most likely adapted from an earlier Greek play (Phasma). Guthrie (1968:274-76) discusses the ghost-tale in Greek literature.
27 Barchiesi (1997:122) examines the Lemuria and its meaning in greater depth. See also Forsythe (2012:46) on this point.
28 On this point see Forsythe (2012:46) who discusses the connection between the Lemuria and violent death and Turcan (2000:31-2).
29 King (2009:102) examines this point.
30 Hersch (2010:46) discusses these rituals and states that the Lemuria was a particularly bad time for weddings. Robinson (2013:67) and Barchiesi (1997:122) examine the dangers of offending the dead and the importance of ritual in the Lemuria. On the festival as a means of purification see Forsythe (2012:48).
31 On this point see references to Parker (1989), Chapters 1 and 2.
losing its terror because, as Parker says, “it can be surrounded by, and associated with, ludicrous objects or situations” (1989:235). This renders it ridiculous rather than intimidating. According to Freud, our emotions rise in terror at the circumstances which are unfolding, and then, just before our terror climaxes, something occurs which “deprecates and mocks the terrifying situation”. The parodying of the gods in these two forms of comedy suggests a degree of theophobia. If, however, “comedy more often underpins the people’s unofficial truth by ‘daring’ to challenge the same” then the parodic elements of the Amphitryo may be interpreted as a reaffirmation of the supremacy of the gods. This suggests that there is a double-edged element to the plays with the presence of the gods being both evocative of the audience’s theophobia and a dilution of these theophobic tendencies.

i) Treatment of Gods and Ghosts in Roman Comedy and Kyōgen

a) Comic Inversion of the Gods

In Nō, Emma, Lord of the Underworld, is a menacing figure. This is evident in Ukai (Waley, 1965:167-69), in the treatment meted out to the cormorant fisher and in Ikuta where the ghost of Atsumori is terrified when he believes that Emma has sent for him (Waley, 1965:79). Conversely, in Kyōgen, Emma is revealed as a comic figure who condones sin, as is evident in Esashi Jūō (The Bird-Catcher in the Underworld). At first, Emma appears to fulfil conventional expectations surrounding the Lord of the

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32 Parker (1989:236), See also Freud (1966) and Grotjahn (1957:18).
34 See also Styan (1962:12) “an unfettered audience [appear] to be willing to undergo surprising contrasts of feeling and to joke about what is deeply revered”.
35 Sutton (1979:56-8) has theorised that this play is a parody of Ukai.
Underworld, threatening sinners (Tsukamoto, 1930:215) and driving them to hell (Tsukamoto, 1930:216) but expectations are quickly turned upside-down as the clever bird-catcher manipulates Emma (Tsukamoto, 1930:217) into approving of his immoral actions (Tsukamoto, 1930:218). In the Kyōgen, *Asahina* (Asahina), Emma also suffers degradation at the hands of the warrior Asahina:

ara itawashii no tei ya na. shaba de kiitearishi wa, jigoku no aruji, emma ousama koso, tama no kannmuri wo ki, ishi no obi wo shi, kingin wo chiribame, atarimo kagayaku tei to kiitearishi ga, ikksou mo orinai yo.36

(Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:373-74)

Eh! That pathetic appearance! On Earth I heard tell that the King of Hell, Lord Emma, wears a beautiful crown and a court-style sash inlaid with gold and silver. I also heard that a shimmering aura surrounds him; but looking at you I guess it’s not true.

Asahina and the bird-catcher thus deny Emma “his role as judge of the dead and supervisor of hell” (Haynes, 1988:30), exposing his foibles and portraying him as risible rather than fearful. In a similar manner, Jupiter’s amorous pursuit of Alcumena depicts him as “ridiculously human in his voracious sexual appetite”37.

By representing a major deity condoning and indulging in immoral antics and unable to perform his responsibilities, *Esashi Jūō* and *Asahina* appear extremely subversive plays,38 yet the Buddhist beliefs of their contemporary audience, particularly the ruling samurai classes,39 suggest a different interpretation. I suggest that a comic portrayal of Emma provides an opportunity for a cathartic experience, providing a respite from theophobic fears. Sutton (1979:62) suggests that Emma and his minions are

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“retrospectively deprived of their power to disturb. Yama [Emma] is a frighteningly
demonic and awesome figure in Ukai, but appears as comically fallible and ultimately
benign in Esashi Jûô”. Thus Emma appears a being with mortal fallibilities which
detract from his awe-inducing reality.

I suggest that Plautus employs a similar device in Amphitryo with Mercury’s speech to
the audience (Am.1-15), whose serious message is underscored by the intervention of
reality which reminds the audience that this god is, in fact, a slave, affecting the guise
of a god, who wields less power over the audience than they over him.\footnote{Sharrock (2009:134ff.) comments on the way we see the actor peeping through the mask in Mercury’s speech. She closely identifies the role of Mercury and the actor playing Mercury with Plautus the playwright and Plautus the actor. As both playwright and actor Plautus occupies something of the same role as Mercury who as god and actor is both all-knowing like the playwright, and bound by the play like the slave actor. This is quite right and can also be seen as an example of the duality inherent in the play, which I discussed above, whereby one character assumes two natures: the one high, the other low; the one tragic, the other comic, thereby producing a tragicomedy where all the elements along with the characters are mixed-up.}

The infamis\footnote{See Duncan (2006:162-73) on the social position of slave actors. Any actor was automatically considered infamis at least up until the last two centuries of the Roman Republic.} nature of the gods in this play is emphasised at Am.27-8 where “Jupiter’s” patrimony is
revealed (non minu’ quam uostrum quiuis formidat malum:/humana matre natus,
humano patre, “[Jupiter] no less than any of you fears punishment, being born of a
mortal mother and father”), drawing audience attention to the mortality of the slave-
actor playing the role.\footnote{Bond (1999:212) also remarks upon this ambiguity in the status of Jupiter and Mercury, but he views it as an example of how, despite being gods, they can never be truly tragic in the same way as Alcumena and Amphitryo could. Lefèvre (1999:17) reflects on the actor status of Jupiter and Mercury.} Thus, simultaneously, as Mercury announces Jupiter’s rightful
position as an object of awe (uereri uos se et metuere, ita ut aequom est Iouem, Am.23),
he denounces it by reminding the audience that this particular Jupiter is nothing but a slave.
In the comic triangle of slave as god as slave, Mercury’s veiled threats (Am.1-15) are exposed for what they really are, a sham.\textsuperscript{43} This is underscored by the triviality of his final proclamation which, with the exhortation to behave in the theatre or else (Am.14-15), is anti-climactic given the high-blown language\textsuperscript{44} of his preceding threats causing a comic incongruity\textsuperscript{45} which acts to cheat the audience’s expectations.\textsuperscript{46} Although, in Plautus, a “prayer for divine blessing” is particularly common “in cases where the prologue is spoken by a divine character” (Sharrock, 2009:58) and, despite Howard Scullard’s interpretation (1981:24) of the Roman relationship with their gods as one of bargaining,\textsuperscript{47} Mercury’s materialistic address suggests a form of comic inversion as it offers monetary wealth (Am.1-5) rather than a divine blessing.\textsuperscript{48} Laughter thus arises from “a clash of unexpected worlds or ideas” (Gray, 1994:32), where the projected outcome and the actual outcome differ wildly in content and, as such, any tension which the speech may have provoked amongst the audience is likely to be diffused.

\textit{b) Playing with Fear: Manipulating Superstition}

Although real ghosts do not occur in Roman Comedy or Kyōgen, the device of the fake ghost is sometimes employed by one character to manipulate another character. The haunted house tale in \textit{Mostellaria} and the fake ghost in \textit{Buaku} are examples of these. In both cases, the slave/servant character feigns a supernatural occurrence in order to manipulate his master, and, in both cases, the audience are party to the deception.

\textsuperscript{43} See Bond (1999:212). Segal (1987:101) remarks on the gods as “mere actors”.
\textsuperscript{44} Christenson (2000:134) discusses the function of the legalistic, prayerful language in this speech. Sharrock (2009:56-63) presents the formulaic, ritualistic components of Mercury’s speech, particularly the heavy use of alliteration and \textit{ut} clauses.
\textsuperscript{45} Hokenson (2006:29) discusses Cicero’s assertion in his \textit{De Or.} 2:375 that comedy consists of a cheating of expectations.
\textsuperscript{46} See Purdie (1993:17-35) and Levi-Strauss (1963) on the importance of signifiers and signifieds in our understanding of ideas and concepts.
\textsuperscript{47} See also Sharrock (2009:56) and Beard, North and Price (1998:34).
\textsuperscript{48} See Sharrock (2009:58). Sharrock identifies five Plautine plays where this “prayer” for blessing takes place and four Menandrian comedies where a “prayer” for victory in the comic competition is performed at the end of the play.
Most.424 and, *ludos ego hodie uiuo praesenti hic senifaciam, quod credo mortuo numquam fore*, (“I today shall make games in the old man’s presence whilst he is living, which I believe he shall never encounter when dead”, *Most.427-28*). In *Buaku* (Buaku), the servant is forced to pretend to be a ghost (*soregashi mo ima made iroiro no mono noni nattaredomo, tsuini yuurei ni natta kotogaorinai*, “I have been various things in my life, but I have never been a ghost”, Koyama, 1960:237). Ghosts and ghost stories are typically tension-inducing but Plautus’ ghost and the *Buaku* ghost are comic creations, although references to these ghost-story scenarios are likely to create a pleasantly scary atmosphere, which I discuss below in greater depth. Part of the comedy, aroused by Plautus’ ghost and the ghost Buaku, naturally arises from the fact that the audience are aware that these are fake ghosts, so they are free to relax and enjoy the spectacle knowing that no real threat is posed, but tension is also addressed through other means.

Like the slave Tranio, the servants, Buaku and Tarō Kaja, are forced into creating a fake ghost in order to protect themselves. Since Buaku has supposedly been executed by Tarō Kaja at the orders of their master, when master and servant accidentally meet, Buaku must pretend to be a ghost to maintain Tarō Kaja’s deception. Both Tranio and the “ghost” Buaku overact their roles, encouraging audience hilarity.

TR. eho an tu **tetigisti** has aedis? TH. qur non **tangerem**?
quin pultando, inquam, paene confregi fores.
TR. **tetigistin**? TH. **tetigi**, inquam, et pultau

(Most.454-56)


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49 In his examination of *Mark* 6:49-50, Combs (2008:356) discusses the audience’s participation in Tranio’s fake ghost-tale.
TR. fuge, opsecro, atque apscede ab aedibus.
   fuge huc, fuge ad me propius, tetigistin fores?
   TH. quo modo pultare potui, si non tangerem?
   (Most.460-62)

TR. Flee, I beg you, and go away from the house. Flee this way, flee nearer to me, you touched the doors? TH: How could I knock on them if I didn’t touch them?

At these places and at Most.468-69 and 472-74, Tranio’s use of repetition, warnings and secrecy are over-exaggerated to the point that they increase his master’s scepticism,\(^{50}\) thus encouraging humour amongst the audience.

Tarō Kaja similarly engages in repetitive warnings and secrecy (soba e yoraseraremasuruna, “Don’t come any closer over to that side”, Koyama, 1960:239) whenever the master shows signs of advancing towards Buaku. The master’s formulaic reply, yorukotodewanai (“I won’t”, Koyama 1960:239), encourages a comedic response. Further comedy is encouraged by the dual purpose of these warnings. Whilst ostensibly the exhortations serve as warnings to Theopropides and the Buaku master their true purpose is to prevent the deception from being uncovered. Through repeated warnings, Tranio and Tarō Kaja are aiming to prevent their masters from getting close enough to spot their fraudulence. In this way, the audience are presented with two tension-alleviating devices, a) over-exaggeration and b) superior knowledge which encourage them to release their phasmophobic tendencies.

The complexity and cleverness of the tricks, which manipulate contemporary superstitions to achieve fantastic results, also encourage a cathartic response from the

\(^{50}\) For an analysis of Theopropides’ scepticism see Felton (1999a:133ff.).
audience. Buaku goes beyond the bare necessity of maintaining the ghost deception in order to obtain his master’s expensive possessions. A comedic occurrence in itself, this episode can lead to further comedy as, depending on how far the performing school take the scene, it could result in the master finishing the play half-dressed.\(^{51}\) Tranio also pushes the parameters of his ghost story, although he is driven by necessity rather than greed, to ridiculous lengths. In doing so, the complexity of his trick escalates until it becomes verifiable (\textit{Most.494-95}) and the truth begins to reveal itself (\textit{Most.546-55}). Tranio’s inconsistent ghost-story, containing substantial loopholes which directly contribute to the trick’s failure, encourages a cathartic response from the audience, particularly given that they increase the likelihood of his plan falling apart.\(^{52}\) These loopholes include conflicting evidence about the manner of the ghost’s manifestation. Did it appear in a dream or by candlelight (\textit{Most.485-90})? Does it want burial or revenge (\textit{Most.501-04})? Any audience alert enough to spot these inconsistencies would gain two advantages over a less discerning spectator. They would be alerted at a theatrical level that this is just an episode in a play\(^{54}\) viewing the episode from multiple levels of consciousness\(^{55}\) but also acting as a means of reassuring the viewer that this is just a trick.

\(^{51}\) Sakanishi (1967:39-40) examines this point in detail.

\(^{52}\) The thwarting of Chrysalus’ plans by Mnesilochus (\textit{Bach.500-25} and 530-73), and the unlooked for appearance of Charmides (\textit{Tri.843-1007}) provide prime examples of this. For general discussion on the unpredictability of comedy see Charney (1991:97-9), Hokenson (2006:123-24) and McCollan (1971:7).


\(^{54}\) On this point see Sharrock (1996:156).

\(^{55}\) One example of the way in which this multiple levels of consciousness and discernment work is in the difference between adult and young child viewers/readers. Young children often believe that what they have seen or read is real despite its fantasticality yet adult spectators although permitting themselves to be “fooled” for the duration of a play/film etc. maintain awareness at some level that it is all fiction.
This view is encouraged through Tranio’s repetitive and ritualistic expression (Most.513, 523, 526 and 527-28)\(^56\) and the unexpected scepticism of Theopropides (Most.513, 518, 524 and 525) which is in direct contrast to the gullibility of the Buaku master, whose faith in Tarō Kaja leads him to assume automatically that Buaku must be a ghost (Koyama, 1960:238-39). This banter is phrased in such a way that it acts to further the comedy which is inherent throughout the scene. Theopropides’ unexpected return (Most.365-67) has cornered Tranio similarly to the manner in which Buaku is cornered by his former master (Koyama, 1960:236). Much of the resulting comedy surrounding the fake ghosts thus arises from the necessity for the slave/servant to think fast.

Catharsis is also encouraged through the comic presentation of the two masters whose natural fear is portrayed as cowardly and superstitious. Buaku’s insistent zeiti tomo osonaeshite koito, oosetsukeraretegozaru. moushi, tanouda hito (“I am charged with bringing and offering at all costs the person whom your grandfather requested”, Koyama, 1960:241-42) manipulates contemporary belief, that ghosts possess the ability to affect living beings\(^57\), in order to create a comic scene. Although the idea of a ghost abducting a living person would ordinarily be terrifying, the audience’s superior knowledge encourages a comedic response to the master’s fear. In a similar manner, Theopropides’ gutiam haud habeo sanguinis,/uiuom me accersunt Accheruntem mortui (“I have not a drop of blood, the dead are calling me living to Acheron”, Most.508-09)

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\(^{56}\) On the importance of “magic” rituals see McCartney (1925) and Riess (1941:154). Bailey (2007:29) discusses the use of charms and spells by common people and the difficulties for modern scholars in discovering these rituals. Kaster (2012:33) and Attridge (2004:76) discuss the link between ghosts and pollution rituals in the Roman world. Oliphant (1912:166-67) examines Plautus’ use of omen in Mostellaria.

\(^{57}\) An example of this can be found in the Nō, Aya no Tsuzumi where the Gardener’s ghost returns to punish the Princess who tormented him in life, possessing her body and inflicting torments upon her using the same instrument (a drum) which she used to torment him in life.
is likely to induce an amused response in the audience since the fake nature of the ghost renders his fears groundless.

c) Religious Parody

*Semi* (The Locust/Cicada\(^{58}\)) is a *Nōgakari*, a play constructed in the style of *Nō*, but enacting light-hearted events. When the priest prays for the cicada’s soul, its ghost appears and narrates the story of its purgatory in a similar manner to that found in many *Nō* plays.\(^{59}\) Whilst the *Nō* ghosts are pathetic and human, the tale of the unknown cicada elicits laughter amongst the audience, not tears. The cicada describes the hellish torments he has undergone:

“I light upon treetops, but now  
Their branches turn to swords  
And tear through my body.  
I fly into the air, but fierce black  
Mountain spiders have spread their webs  
Wide across the entire expanse,  
And I’m caught in a net of a thousand ropes—  
Wrapped ‘round and ‘round,  
‘Round and ‘round and ‘round.  
And, when the sun goes down,  
I’m dinner for a horned owl—oh, the misery!  

(Haynes, 1988:36)

These directly parody similar descriptions found not only in *Nō* but also depicted in Medieval hanging scrolls such as those found at Kuboyama (Hearn, 1927a:64-5).\(^{60}\)

Other *Nōgakari*, such as *Tokoro* (The Mountain Potato) and *Tako* (The Octopus)

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\(^{60}\) They also bear more than a passing resemblance to the *touyourin jigoku* (sword-leaf hell) described by Kimbrough (2006a:181).
chronicle similar tales. Tako goes so far as to parody the Buddhist sutras themselves by substituting the word octopus (tako) for Namu Amida Butsu at certain strategic intervals. Namu Amida Butsu is a sacred Buddhist funeral chant meaning roughly “complete reliance on Amida’s compassion”, by substituting Namadako (raw octopus) the Kyōgen priest parodies Nō solemnity as demonstrated in the Ōkura Toraaki Bon version of the Kyōgen (anokudako sanbyakusanzen nite koute, hotoke ni koso wa tamukere. hotoke ni koso wa tamukere. namadako namadako namadako, “softened octopus, highly valued at three-hundred and three Sen, I make offerings to Buddha. I make offerings to Buddha. Raw octopus, raw octopus, raw octopus”, Sasano, 1943:538).

Although the priest asserts that he will nengoro ni go wo shi (“recite the Nengoro”, Sasano, 1943:538) what follows is a clear parody of this solemn chant. Phonetically-similar, but divergent in meaning, phrases are employed as comic devices to elicit laughter from the audience. anokudako sanbyakusanzen parodies anokutara sanmyakusanbodai (epitome of spiritual enlightenment) as a close look at the relevant kanji demonstrates. Anokudako, a compound of anoku (阿耨) and tako (たこ, octopus) and sanbyakusanzen (三百三錢) employ the same or phonetically-similar kanji to anokutara sanmyakusanbodai (阿耨多羅三藐三菩提). The switching of both the kanji and the wording means that the listener, instead of hearing a solemn Buddhist

62 On this point see Haynes (1984:268).
63 Haynes (1984:278) provides an extended translation:
“I will recite the Heart Sutra:
In the name of the Great Budhapus
I present an octet of prayers,
I present an octet of prayers.
Praised be the Exalted,
Praised be the Salted Octopus!”
64 The meaning of anoku in this prayer is difficult to ascertain. 阿 itself appears to mean little, whilst 耕 refers to the soil of rice and vegetable fields which has become soft through ploughing and hoeing.
funerary rite aimed at releasing the dead from their sufferings in hell, is treated to a comic joke regarding the preparation, buying (and, by insinuation, eating) of octopus sushi, in a comic performance which parodies religious conventions.

The Amphitryo can also be read as an example of religious parody, presenting an inverted example of a Roman triumph with Amphitryo in the role of triumphator, or the person “playing” god. Typically, a victorious general awarded a triumph would enter the city dressed in ornatus Iovis and advance towards the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus where he would present laurel wreaths to Jupiter. The identification of the triumphator as wearing ornatus Iovis, amongst other aspects of the Triumph, has led many scholars to suggest that “[i]n some sense, the triumphing general had been deified for the day” (Beard, North and Price, 1998:44). If the triumphing general did assume the “role” of Jupiter for the duration of the Triumph, then in Amphitryo we are faced with the curious case of a triumphing general, Amphitryo, who is ousted from that role by Jupiter. That this Jupiter is, in reality, a slave-actor further complicates proceedings. The audience are treated to a reversal of the norms with Jupiter, “a look-alike general, acting human for the day” (Beard, 2007:254), paying homage to himself (Am.946-48 and 966). Such a reversal is likely to encourage a humorous response from the audience who see an awe-inspiring god comically paroding himself, and is

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65 The sushi joke is extended in a parody of a Nō recitation of hell-torments, by the octopus ghost’s graphic narration of being tied to a sushi board and cut up for sushi.
66 This is similar to the little bottle of oil pun found in Aristophanes’ Frogs 1200ff.
67 Beard (2003:41-3) reads the play in the light of a triumph and suggests that it may have been first performed at the ludi Romani as in that case the magistrate officiating at the ceremonies would have been dressed in the triumphal costume, and may even have been dressed as Jupiter.
70 On this point see Halkin (1948:303).
71 Beard (2007:253) questions whether what we are witnessing in a triumph is the general as “divine double and ludicrous actor”. If this is indeed the case, then in Amphitryo Jupiter’s disguise marks him in both categories.
likely to diffuse any emotional qualms which the audience might have regarding Jupiter’s appearance in a comedy.\(^{72}\)

Karl Galinsky (1966:203-35) suggested that Mercury’s portrayal of Jupiter contains Scipionic elements and, if this is the case, the identification of Jupiter with Scipio whose family “promoted their ancestors to offices they had never actually held” (Galinsky, 1966:209). This suggests an element of *ambitus* which Mercury specifically warns the audience against (*Am*.73-5).\(^{73}\) Identification with a real-life general such as Scipio might evoke fear amongst the audience. His controversial nature, however, suggests a parodic element to Jupiter’s characterisation. This might serve to further remove Jupiter from fearful associations in the minds of the audience.

d) Cowardly Gods

One method in which theophobic catharsis is encouraged in Kyōgen, which does not appear to have a counterpart in Roman comedy, although it is present in Greek Old Comedy,\(^{74}\) is the portrayal of frightening deities as cowardly, even harmless.\(^{75}\) The demon in *Setsubun* (*Setsubun*) does not realise that humans regard him as frightening:

\[
sorede ochitsuita. midomo wa mata hoka ni, nanizo orososhimono de mo aru ka to omoute, yoi kimo wo tsubuita. kore wa hourai no shima no oni toiute, sanomi kowai mono de mo orosohii mono de mo nai wa, sate. \\
(Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:392)
\]

\(^{72}\) On this point see Sharrock (2009:110-115). Sosia (*Amphi!ryo*), Lysidamus and Olympus (*Casina*), Menaechmus I (*Menaechmi*) and Sceledrus (*Miles Gloriosus*) also provide examples of humorous identity-confusion.

\(^{73}\) On this point see Galinsky (1966:209).

\(^{74}\) See the portrayal of Dionysus as cowardly in Aristophanes’ *Frogs* 460ff.

\(^{75}\) Serper (2005:344) examines how the demon reflects characteristics of human weakness. Ueda (1965:21) examines the cowardly behaviour of the Thunder God in terms of human enlightenment to the condition of suffering.
If that’s all it is, I can calm down. I was scared stiff\textsuperscript{76} thinking that there was a frightening thing outside. I am a demon from the Isle of Eternal Youth, so I am neither a scary nor a frightening thing.

Likewise, the Thunder God in \textit{Kaminari} (Thunder and Lightning) is a coward, screaming \textit{a ita, a ita, a ita. hayou tore, hayou tore} (“A! It hurts, A! it hurts, A! it hurts. Take it out quick, take it out quick!”), Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:385) when treated. The doctor’s proclamation, (\textit{chito gohikyou degozarou}, “you must be a bit of a coward”, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:384), acknowledges the comedic role-reversal which depicts the god as powerless rather than fearful and places the human in a position of power. Similarly, the incongruity\textsuperscript{77} of the good \textit{Setsubun} demon contrasted with the traditional image of the wicked demon encourages fear-deflation amongst the audience as it reverses expectations.

\textbf{ii) Reaffirmation of Traditional Values}

It is surely no coincidence that almost a third of Kyōgen plays mock the Buddhist faith in some form, a faith that was all but universal amongst the samurai classes,\textsuperscript{78} or that Kyōgen routinely “makes fun of serious and frightening figures” (Reider, 2003:143). Nor can it be coincidental that in Plautine comedy “persons of all classes often belittle the gods” (Schulten, 2011:67). It would seem that, reflected in these plays is Freud’s belief in “galgenhumor” (that we take the greatest pleasure in deflating that which we hold in the utmost reverence).\textsuperscript{79} These humorous depictions, however, occur in societies which are both highly religious and superstitious. As such, it is unlikely that this humour is subversive, particularly since it is apparently limited to the confines of

\textsuperscript{76} The Japanese reads \textit{yoi kimo wo tsubuita} literally “my liver was well crushed”.

\textsuperscript{77} Toida (1973:105-06) remarks on this incongruity and the humour it provokes.

\textsuperscript{78} On Buddhism amongst the samurai class see Sutton (1979:55).

\textsuperscript{79} On this point see Freud (1966:103ff. and 284-86)
the theatre and the comic theatre in particular. Thus, despite their apparent subversive nature, I suggest that both Roman comedy and Kyōgen act to reaffirm traditional beliefs in gods and the supernatural, reinforcing contemporary fears even whilst seemingly deflating them. What remains clear in both dramatic forms is that the power of gods and demons is something to be feared and respected.

a) Tragicomedy and Comic Rebirth

One method by which a fearful atmosphere is encouraged amongst the audience in *Amphitryo* and *Buaku* is in the plays’ tragicomic nature, although *Buaku* focuses on the social reality of death whilst the tragicomic focus of *Amphitryo* is on the gods and myth. Mercury declares that *Amphitryo* is a *tragoedia* (*Am*. 51) reinforcing his own importance by his reassurance *deu’ sum, commutauero* (*Am*. 53). He can change the play to a tragicomedy, *but only because he is a god*. Thus, Mercury presents an incongruous dual nature from the play’s opening lines. The audience might respond to Mercury’s words with laughter arising “out of a clash of unexpected worlds or ideas” (Gray, 1994:32) as feelings of suspense are dissipated but fear surely lurks behind their laughter. In a similar manner, although the fake ghost episode in *Buaku* is comic, the play’s overall plot is a tragic one more reminiscent of Nō than Kyōgen as it concerns execution.

In Kyōgen stock characters are never named: instead they are referred to by a general appellation which immediately identifies their role. *Buaku* appears to be the only stock

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80 Slater (1990:101-03) and Faller (1999:145) examine the unsettling nature of Mercury’s comments.
81 Storey (1996:221) also reflects upon this. On the play as comedy or tragicomedy see Feeney (1998:28).
82 Even the names of Emma and the various deities can be seen as reflective of their roles as opposed to an individual name.
character in the entire Kyōgen corpus to be named, a fact which Akihiro Satake discourses on at length in his *Gekokujyou no bungaku*, although he confines his observations to social significance.\(^{83}\) In naming Buaku the Kyōgen author adopts a Nō convention in which the tragic hero or main character is often eponymous.\(^{84}\) To a Japanese audience, the very title of the play would appear to signify a variation from the norm more suggestive of tragedy than comedy. Similarly, a Roman audience would likely be alerted to the comic uniqueness of *Amphitryon* by the eponymous title of the play which alerts the audience to the appearance of the gods.

Whilst it has been suggested that the parodying of the gods in the *Amphitryon* suggest “decreased regard for Jupiter and Mercury” (Tolliver, 1952:54)\(^{85}\) the repeated reaffirmation of Jupiter’s might and the final metamorphosis of Amphitryon do not corroborate this and, in fact, reaffirm the serious nature of the play. *Am.1072ff.* inform the audience that Jupiter has transformed Amphitryon into an old man (*quis hic est senex qui ante aedis nostras/sic iacet/?numnam hunc percussit Iuppiter?*) apparently as a direct result of his impious behaviour (*Am.1048-50*) and blasphemy towards the gods (*neque me Iuppiter neque omnes id prohibebunt, si uolent,/quin sic faciam uti constitu*), “neither Jupiter nor all the gods if they want, shall be able to stop me from doing what I have decided to do”, *Am.1051* and it is clear that, despite his reconciliation with Alcumena, Amphitryon remains a *senex* at the climax of the play.

\(^{83}\) Satake (1967:114-36) believes the signification of Buaku’s name to rest with the overthrowing of the old regime which tied peasants to their lords and the establishment of the new regime which allowed peasants more freedom because it enabled them to cultivate unclaimed, traditionally useless land for themselves, enabling them to accumulate income independently of their lords and causing a great deal of resentment on the part of the landowning classes. He sees Buaku’s impending execution as a sign that Buaku has neglected his lord in order to profit himself. I will consider this in more detail in my section on servants and slaves.

\(^{84}\) For example, see *Atsumori, Tsunemasa, Kumasaka*. This also explains the naming of Asahina and Seirei whose characters parody those of Nō.

\(^{85}\) See also Swoboda (1972). Conversely, O’Neill (2003:7) suggests that *Amphitryon* reflects the “widespread anxieties” that the Roman public held regarding triumphing generals during this period.
Amphitryo, as Erich Segal suggests, thus appears to undergo a form of “perverse comic rebirth” (2001:215), being reborn into the same world as opposed to the new world favoured by the ritualists.

Although Amphitryo is “reborn” courtesy of Jupiter’s thunderbolt (Am.1073), his basic condition remains unchanged as he is still the victim of adultery. The emphasis on the transformation being the direct result of a lightning strike would have an added significance for a Roman audience as “a place struck by lightning” (Scheid, 2003:24) immediately became religiosus. It can be argued that Buaku also undergoes a form of rebirth as a result of his supposed execution. Since he is “dead” he can no longer return to his former life but must create a new existence. That this will by no means be an easy transition is demonstrated by the fake ghost episode which brings him face-to-face with the one person that he must avoid. This encounter is likely to raise the question of whether Buaku will successfully be able to keep his continued existence secret. Buaku’s “rebirth” is framed in such a way as to increase audience tension through its suggestion that Buaku will spend the rest of his life looking over his shoulder.

Another Kyōgen which might be said to demonstrate comic rebirth is Esashi Jūō which concludes with its hero’s limited return to the surface world. As has been demonstrated, this play subverts the Buddhist belief in Emma by portraying him with mortal foibles and representing him as capable of being outwitted by mortals. I would argue, however, that the play also acts to reaffirm contemporary belief-systems as the reprieve granted

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86 See also Christenson (2001:257) and Forehand (1971:647).
87 Bakhtin (1984) and Cornford (1934) are proponents of the ritualist theory which sees comedy as paving the way for rebirth into a new, expiated world. Amphitryo of course is not reborn into a new existence but rather into a continuation of his old existence but with a new realisation.
88 Scheid (2003:25) states that “this term designated objects or places marked by death: places struck by lightning or tombs.”
to the hero is only temporary and of fixed duration (Tsukamoto, 1930:218). The bird-catcher is thus unable to bypass death entirely. Even in the plays Asahina and Tako where the eponymous heroes are granted salvation, they are still dead. Asahina may be granted passage to Heaven as opposed to Hell (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:378-79) but he is still dead. Likewise, the octopus who finds salvation at the hands of the priest cannot return to the world of the living as, in life, he was chopped into little pieces (Sasano, 1943:538-39). Thus, despite their apparent subversion, these plays actually act to reaffirm contemporary beliefs in death and the Afterlife.

b) Embroidering the Ghost-Tale

Although the ghosts in Mostellaria and Buaku are both fake, the ghost-stories told by the slave and servant have their roots in contemporary superstition and, as such, are likely to maintain a level of audience anxiety despite their comic nature. By asserting that the mountain area which they are visiting is similar in appearance to Toribeno (a place renowned for its multiplicity of ghosts), Tarō Kaja not only manipulates his master’s fear but also that of the audience through his reminder of reality. Tranio, too, grounds his tale in reality, drawing the audience’s attention to the dangers of ghostly contact.89

In the ghost stories themselves, Tranio and Tarō Kaja stimulate phasmophobia by drawing out and elaborating their stories. Tranio begins rather ambiguously capitale scelus factumst (“a deadly crime has been committed”, Most.475), then elaborates by

89 Ogden (2002:151-53) provides an example of the dangers of contact with ghosts in his discussion of Apuleius Met.9.29-31 where the wife of a miller summons the ghost of a dead woman to kill her husband. The woman (to all appearances alive) visits the husband at the mill, they go into a separate room with no other entrance/exit, much later on the room is entered by one of the mill-workers, the woman is gone and the miller is found to have been hanged. On this point see also Felton (1999b:6).
stating that the crime is (*Most*476) old and long-standing before finally telling his story, thus delaying the creation of a scary atmosphere. Tranio emphasises the words *tangere* and *fugere* which occur seven times within fourteen lines and three times within two lines respectively. This repetition and alliteration concentrating, as it does, for the main part on touching\(^{90}\) and fleeing would act as a reminder to the audience and Theopropides of the common superstition that death is often a result of contact or association with a ghost.\(^{91}\) This combined with Tranio’s exclamation of “uah!” (when he discovers that Theopropides touched the door) and his series of half-warnings (*non potest/dici quam indignum facinus fecisti et malum*, “it is not possible to say what a terrible and outrageous deed you have done”, *Most*.459), (*TR*: *occidisti hercle* — *TH*: *quem mortalem? TR*: *omnis tuos*, “TR: by Hercules! you have destroyed — TH: Who? TR: All your family”, *Most*.463), functions to escalate the ghostly terror which Tranio is attempting to create.

Although Tranio’s ghost story contains substantial inconsistencies, his presentation of a ghostly manifestation conforms to standard contemporary ghost-tales which are likely to have been familiar to the majority of the audience. By evoking contemporary superstition, Plautus is likely to have heightened tension amongst his audience and to have reminded them of their inherent fear of ghostly phenomena. The concept of vengeful ghosts is not limited to Roman culture but formed an important part of

\(^{90}\) Riess (1941:154) in his discussion on the correct reading of *Pseudolus* 351 suggests that in the fake ghost scene in *Mostellaria* “the touching of earth averts the pollution incurred by touching, or merely looking at, the haunted house”. He suggests that this fits in with the general idea that earth has the power to break magic and witchcraft, and (1941:153) he compares the Northern European belief that “putting earth in the shoes averts the fatal consequences of perjury” with the Locrian oath described by Polybius (xii d,3) whereby the oath-swearers, who had sworn their oath with soil in their shoes, no longer considered themselves bound once the soil was removed. McCartney (1925) collects together a range of touching rituals. Like Riess he also makes reference to the act of touching the ground when invoking an oath to Tellus (1925:120) citing Macrobius *Sat*. 3. 9. 12.

\(^{91}\) See Kaster (2012:33) and Ogden (2002:161) on ghosts and mortality. See also Johnston (1999:10, 27, 30, 155-56, and 159).
Medieval Japanese folklore. Anybody who died an unnatural death had the potential to reappear as a vengeful ghost and Buaku’s supposed execution amply fulfils the requirements. Whilst the master’s unquestioning acceptance that the real Buaku is a ghost marks him as gullible, Buaku’s actions are typical of those expected of a vengeful ghost. Particularly terrifying to an audience accustomed to tales of supernatural possession would be Buaku’s threat to take the master back to the underworld (Koyama, 1960:241). Thus, both Buaku and Tranio create and maintain the illusion of a real ghostly manifestation despite the obvious limitations in their stories.

Daniel Ogden (2002:146) discusses the four categories of ghosts: *Ataphoi, Aôroi, Bi(ai)othatoi* and *Agamoi* which were already established by the time of Homer.

Tranio’s ghost is quite clearly an example of *Ataphoi* (ghosts deprived of due funeral rites) although it also possesses characteristics found in some of the other types of ghost since it manifests malicious tendencies (*Most*.461-64, 503-04), suggesting that it is a *Bi(ai)othanatos* (spirit of someone killed by violence). These were thought to be “the typical instruments of malign magic” and are attested to elsewhere in Roman literature (*Apuleius, Met*.9.29-31). The haunted house tale was also well-established in Ancient Rome as demonstrated by Pliny (*Ep*.7.27.5-11). Although the audience know that Tranio’s ghost is a fake, by endowing it with recognisable characteristics, the

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93 On this point see Brown (2001:39).

94 On the subject of Roman ghost stories see also Collison-Morley (1912).


96 The other two categories described by Ogden (2002:146); *Aôroi* (those who die before their time, usually considered to be children or babies but theoretically anyone who did not die from old age) and *Agamoi* (those who died unmarried, usually women) are unlikely candidates for Tranio’s ghost – although a case might be made for the former on the grounds that Diapontius’ lifespan was cut short.


98 Ogden (2002:153) reflects on how the ghost is substantial enough to harm the miller yet is seemingly able to pass through a door.

audience are encouraged to consider actual ghost-tales which they have heard and to reflect on the sinister nature of ghosts.

c) Reminders of Power

Although the gods in Roman comedy and Kyōgen are portrayed facetiously there is an undercurrent which emphasises their power through the repetition of power mantras, protective charms and prayerful language. These reminders of power are framed in such a manner that they act as reminders of specifically godly power and thus are likely to increase audience tension despite the comic portrayal of deity figures.

Whilst Mercury’s prologic soliloquy is in many respects a comic speech the audience is never allowed to forget that he is a god (albeit an actor playing a god). His address is replete with references to his and Jupiter’s superior position relating to their capacity to shape mortal endeavours and, notwithstanding the fact that these reminders are mitigated by instances of comic joking, they are never entirely obviated. In Mercury’s opening speech (Am.1-15) the audience are repeatedly reminded of his power:

“Ut uos in uostris uoltis mercimonii,
emundis uendundisque me laetum lucris
adficere atque adiuuare in rebus omnibus,
et ut res rationesque uostrorum omnium
bene expedire uoltis peregrique et domi,
bonoque atque ampo auctare perpetuo lucro
quasque incepistis res quasque inceptabitis,
et uti bonis uos uostrosque omnis nuntiis
me adficere uoltis, ea adferam, ea ut nuntiem
quae maxume in rem uostram communem sient
(nam uos quidem id iam scitis concessum et datum
mi esse ab dis aliis, nuntiis praesim et lucro):
haec ut me uoltis adprobare, adnitier
lucrum ut perenne uobis semper suppetat,
ita huic facietis fabulae silentium
itaque aequi et iusti hic eritis omnes arbitri.”

(Am.1-15)

As you want me to make me favourable to your business in the buying and selling of your merchandise, as you want me to aid you in all your business dealings, as you want me to expedite your business and accounts (both those which you have begun and those which you will begin) at home and abroad, and to increase them with good and ample money *in perpetuum* and since you want me to grace you and all yours with good news, so that I bring and announce to you the things which most of all are for your common benefit (for you already know that it has been ordained and given to me, by the other gods, to rule over announcements and profit); as you wish me to commend these things and to strive that perpetual profit should always be available to you, you must be silent for this play and be fair and just spectators.

Through the use of conditional clauses the longest sentence in Plautine comedy (Christenson, 2000:134 and Slater, 1985:104) is created and a feeling of half-fearful suspense is gradually promoted amongst the audience. The accumulation of *ut* clauses must surely heighten the audience’s anticipation as it draws attention to the power which Mercury wields. Plautus’ repeated use of *ut* is another factor in the escalation of anticipation. Instead of using *si* rendering the phrase as *si ... uoltis* or “if you want”, he uses *ut* furnishing the phrase with the meaning “as you want”. *Ut* indicates one half of the bargain. You want these things — so what do you have to do to get them? The answer, when it comes, deflates the tension which has been evoked, through the reminders of the immense power of the gods.

The use of *iubeo* with its meaning of “to order” or “to command” is instrumental in keeping this fear at the forefront of the prologue. *Iubeo* appears no less than six times

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100 Sharrock (2009:59) sees the *ut* clauses as an expression of legalistic language opening the way “for Mercury to lay down the law to the audience about how to behave and to introduce a whole series of edicts about how the entire performance is to be run, by all those involved in the experience”. She believes that the language is also similar to that used in prayers. Feeney (1998:27), O’Neill (2003:25) and Dumézil (1970:492) examine Mercury’s emphasis on business and profit. Feeney makes particular reference to the emphasis of Mercury’s Roman nature.
during Mercury’s monologue and four of these usages occur within ten lines of each other,

“Nunc quoiius iussu uenio et quam ob rem uenerim
dicam simulque ipse eloquar nomen meum.
Ioui’ iussu uenio: nomen Mercuriost mihi:
pater huc me misit ad uos oratum meus;
tam etsi pro imperio uobis quod dictum foret
scibat facturos, quippe qui intelleixerat
uereri uos se et metuere, ita ut aequom est Iouem;
vorum profecto hoc petere me precario
a uobis iussit leniter dictis bonis.
etenim ille quoius hic iussu uenio, Iuppiter
non minu’ quam uostrum quiuis formidat malum:”

(Am.16-27)

Now, I’ll tell you who sent me and why I’ve come and, at the same time, I’ll tell you my name. I come on the orders of Jupiter. My name is Mercury. My father sent me here to request you (even though he knew that you would do what he asks on account of his power, as he knew that you revere and fear him, as befits Jupiter); he ordered me to seek this from you by entreating you with gentle words. That, Jupiter, on whose orders I have come, here fears punishment no less than any of you.

The leniter dictis bonis is in direct contrast to the use of iubeo. Although Mercury informs the audience that is a request rather than an order\(^\text{101}\) his continual repetition of iussu(it) would seem to belie this and acts as a reminder to the audience of godly power. Since iubeo is commonly the property of the comedic master I would expostulate that it is also an indication of the subversion of roles which will follow. The usual role of master has been usurped by Jupiter who by assuming all of the power of that personage will destroy the true master only to revive him, a changed man, at the finale. As with his opening speech, the character of Mercury appears to seek to intimidate the audience through his choice of language. These continual reminders to the audience that they are

\(^{101}\) Forehand (1971:637) comments on the over-abundance of references to Jupiter in Amphitryo, particularly references to his name reading them as an example of irony since the characters, in their cries of “Jupiter damn me/you” (Am.1077 especially), are cursing more accurately than they realise. He also cites the example of Alcumena who in asserting that no “mortal” man has touched her save Amphitryo is speaking truthfully. Her words are also ironic, however, as we know that an “immortal” man has done so (Am.831-34).
in the presence of the gods suggest a continuance of fear and anxiety, which must be present in order to allow the comic elements of the play to act as anxiety-alleviators.

Similarly, in *Setsubun*, it is only through the power of words and ritual that the woman is able to overcome the demon: *mohaya yoi setsubun de gozaru. mame wo hayasou to omoimasuru. fuku wa uchi e, fuku wa uchi e. fuku wa uchi e. fuku wa uchi e. oni wa soto e* (“It’s time for the Setsubun ritual. I think I should chant whilst I throw the beans. In with luck! In with luck! In with luck! in with luck! Out with devils”, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:397). The existence of such a ritual reflects the powerful superstition surrounding demons in Medieval Japanese thought and demonstrates the immense fear which they aroused in the ordinary population despite this demon’s comic portrayal.

The quack doctor in *Kaminari*, although ready to call the Thunder God a coward (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:384), is also reliant on ritualistic words to protect himself from the god’s wrath (*aa, kuwabara, kuwabara, kuwabara, “aah! Heaven forbid, Heaven forbid!”, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:389) as *kubawara* is a mantra believed to ward off thunderbolts. By performing this spell as the Thunder God leaves Earth amidst copious thunder and lightning, the doctor demonstrates his fear (and, perhaps, reflects that of the audience) of the god and his powers.

This fear reoccurs throughout the play, most noticeably in the doctor’s requests to the Thunder God to refrain from zapping him whilst undergoing treatment:

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102 *Kuwabara* (桑原) actually means “silkworm fields”. As it was believed that the lightning god was afraid of silkworms, chanting this mantra provided immunity from lightning strikes.

ISHA: kashikomatte gozaru, kanarazu naraserarunai.
KAMINARI: oo, naru kotodewanai.
ISHA: kanarazu hikaraserarunai.
KAMINARI: oo, hikaru kotodewanai.

(Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:393)

Doctor: Understood. Now, by no means are you to lighten at me, please.
Thunder God: Oh, I won’t do any lightening. Doctor: Now, by no means are you to thunder at me, please. Thunder God: Oh, I won’t do any thundering.

As with Jupiter, Mercury and the Setsubun demons, the Thunder God, for all his cowardice, is still a force to be reckoned with, and to be feared.

Conclusion

In these plays traditional interpretations of gods and the supernatural are subverted resulting in a comic portrayal which encourages a cathartic response amongst the audiences but simultaneously traditional power-roles are reinforced through character-response and speech. Contemporary thought and belief are faithfully replicated by the comic characters despite their apparent irreverence, so that awe of the gods and supernatural is encouraged, albeit unconsciously.

Although the audience are encouraged to laugh at the comic incongruity of demons being frightened of osoroshii mono, gods appearing as slaves and lovers, gods unable to bear a pinprick and masters behaving like frightened children, they are never allowed to forget entirely the real power associated with these phenomena nor the respect which is accorded to them. The solemnity of Buddhist law is also mocked and deflated with the Buddhist tenet that all beings possess souls being taken to the utmost absurdity in plays
such as *Esashi Jūō* and *Semi*,\(^{104}\) but their descriptions of real hell-torments are crafted in such a way as to remind audiences of the reality of Buddhist hell.

\(^{104}\) On this point see Haynes (1988:36-7).
**Introduction**

Roman comedy’s treatment of illness and disability ostensibly diverges considerably from that of Kyōgen; the former depicts, relatively rarely, insanity and epilepsy whilst the latter, fairly frequently, performs blind man plays.¹ I argue that this difference is a superficial one and that both comedic forms make use of illness and disability as a fear-controlling mechanism. I argue that portrayals of insanity, epilepsy and blindness in these comedic forms reflect contemporary social tensions which relate to a fear of powerlessness. The portrayal of blind men in Kyōgen suggests contemporary fear of the power held by the blind guilds which rendered a typically powerless group, powerful. In contrast, the portrayal of insanity and epilepsy in Roman comedy appears to focus on fear of being rendered powerless through illness and its associated stigma.²

I suggest that these comic episodes are structured in such a way as to manipulate audience tensions surrounding these issues, acting to deflate potential tension whilst simultaneously reminding the audience of the serious nature of their concerns.

Scholars have commonly attributed the humour of zatō (blind men) plays to their satirization of blindness or the blindness in each of us, the mocking of humanity’s failings including, as La Fleur (1983:141) suggests, “credulity, gullibility, pious naiveté, and impotent submission to fate.”³ If physical blindness in Kyōgen represents a form of

¹ These plays are no longer performed due to their pejorative nature which makes uncomfortable viewing for a modern audience. Wells and Davis (2006:140) explores this issue in greater detail.
² Hessel (2009:30) reflecting on fear of madness suggests “[t]he inability for one to apply reason to the world and therefore make sense of the surrounding environment is a terrifying notion”.
³ On this point see also Wells and Davis (2006:140) and Morley (1993:80).
metaphorical blindness similar to the portrayal of blind-insanity in Greek tragedy, this might provide some explanation for the prevalence of zatō plays in Kyōgen. Such a reading, however, does not account for the frequency of zatō plays compared to those satirizing other forms of disability, nor does it provide any insight on the lack of blind characters in Roman comedy, which also delights in social parody and is likely to have experienced similar levels of blindness as those of Medieval Japan. It, likewise, fails to account for plays in which the blind man character exists as both persecutor and persecuted i.e. Tsunbozatō/Kikazuzatō (The Blind Man and the Deaf Man) where a blind man and a deaf man mock each other. Conversely, a reading which considers the addressing of audience anxieties as a key factor in the portrayal of blindness in Kyōgen and which also examines its sometimes tragic representation as depicted in Kawakamizatō (The Jizō of Kawakami and the Blind Man), might also be applied to the representations of insanity and epilepsy found in Roman comedy.

Although it is likely that a fear of becoming blind was a significant anxiety for a contemporary audience, I suggest that the social tensions expressed by zatō Kyōgen are able to be understood only through an examination of the social status of zatō within both the tōdō-za (Guild of Blind Men) and wider society. Membership of the tōdō-za required a subscription; the greater the subscription the higher the rank which a member could attain; the redistribution of this money to the upper guild-ranks endowed the highest ranking guild members with immense financial means which they

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4 Buxton (1980:22-37) is particularly useful on the portrayal of blindness as metaphorical in the work of Sophocles.
3 Golay (1973:142) supports this view with her assertion that Kyōgen parodies everyone.
5 G. on common causes of blindness in developing countries see Sardegna and Otis (2002:261).
7 Groemer (2001:355 and 356) provides an explanation of the various levels of tōdō-za and the monetary subscriptions necessary to attain each rank. Morley (2007:51), Sorgenfrei (1993:86-7) and Golay (1973:141) also examine this issue.
8 In order of lowest to highest the ranks are zatō, kōtō, bettō, and kengyō. Groemer (2001:356) provides a detailed examination of the ranking system of the tōdō-za.
invested in money lending. The Guild’s growing financial power led them to be feared and suspected by a government which, although originally appreciative of their activities, now moved to regulate and denigrate them. This change in attitude is reflected in the shifting interpretation given to the causes of blindness and found in contemporary writing. From being viewed as a result of fate or karma blindlessness came to be seen as the result of immoral behaviour, an interpretation which became more widespread as the Guild’s power increased. This suggests gradually increasing tensions between high-ranking sighted and wealthy sightless members of society which had its origins in monetary concerns.

Whilst the daimyō wielded a physical authority over a subordinate population, the zatō, despite their physical inferiority, maintained a financial superiority over those who would typically be considered their superiors. This suggests that the humiliation suffered by blind characters in Kyōgen, where sighted characters triumph over their sightless compatriots, marks an attempt to displace these financial anxieties. The assertion that blind men in zatō plays are identical to the lords in daimyō plays whose pomposity and arrogance results in their humiliation (Morley, 2007:51-2) supports this analysis. Just as the comedic daimyō is, in reality, an example of the lowest ranking land-owning authority figure, so the comedic zatō can be identified with the lowest level of the tōdō-za upper echelons. Thus the displacement of audience tensions is confined safely through its humiliation of the least important of these classes. This is likely to invoke a sense of the art of safe criticism and suggests a strong link between daimyō and zatō plays in terms of comedic purpose. Certainly, the treatment of zatō in

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9 On this point see Groemer (2001:357-58).
10 Groemer (2001:358) discusses the concept of blindness as resulting from karma.
11 Groemer (2001:358) examines the shift in viewpoint which occurred during the medieval period.
Kyōgen differs radically from reality where blind men were afforded a courtesy and formality typically extended only to the most respected members of society.\textsuperscript{13}

Unlike the blind men of Medieval Japan, the real-life counterparts of victims of illness in Roman comedy do not appear to have been held in particular regard i.e. those displaying symptoms of epilepsy or insanity. In fact, from contemporary writings it appears that they were spat at and shunned, partially due to fear of contagion and methods of disease prevention.\textsuperscript{14} Epilepsy, in particular, appears to have been feared in the Graeco-Roman world, being commonly referred to as the “sacred disease”\textsuperscript{15} due to the belief that it heralded divine possession of the sufferer. It is possible, and likely probable, that some of the fear invoked by epilepsy lay in the similarity of certain of its symptoms with those demarcating insanity\textsuperscript{16} which include largely unpredictable fits sometimes resulting in abnormal behaviour. In Temporal Lobe Epilepsy the patient may become violent, run, speak or have a sense of unreality whilst Grand Mal Epilepsy causes loss of consciousness and convulsions.\textsuperscript{17} Frothing at the mouth, lengthy unconsciousness\textsuperscript{18} and prior awareness of an imminent attack (an ‘aura’)\textsuperscript{19} are also

\textsuperscript{13} For a list of the privileges granted to kengyō see Groemer (2001:357).
\textsuperscript{14} See Pliny (\textit{H.N.},xxviii.35), Hope (2000:120) and Chowdhary-Best (1975:198) on contagion, prevention and cure. In addition, Pliny lists several plant and animal remedies which he believes will cure epilepsy: \textit{H.N.}xxvi.70, xxviii.7, xxviii.63 and xxx.27. See also Kotansky (1991:112-13, 117-19 and 120) on the subject of Roman first century BC inscribed amulets believed to ward off diseases including epilepsy.\textsuperscript{15} See Magiorkinis et al. (2010), Garland (2010:126-27), Todman (2008:435-441), Hughes (2004), Temkin (1994:7-8 and 10), Blaiklock (1945:51) and Nicolson (1897:31) on epilepsy as the “sacred disease” and for possible reasons for this association. On the history of epilepsy in general, Temkin (1994) provides the most comprehensive account.
\textsuperscript{16} See Padel (1995:154-56) on the association of shame with both epilepsy and madness. Padel (1995:158) demonstrates that the Greek \textit{nosos} not only meant plague and disease but could also be used for madness. See Temkin (1994:40-2) on symptoms associated with epilepsy in the ancient world. Toner (2009:84) reflects that “[i]deas about insanity were also shaped by the high value placed on traditional religious beliefs” with madness being “linked to the rejection of the proper social order”.
\textsuperscript{17} See Baumbach (1983:101) who remarks on Menaechmus’ simulated coma-like state as the climax of his insanity episode. See also Baumbach (1983:100) on other symptoms manifest in Menaechmus’ actions.
\textsuperscript{18} On this point see also Hippocrates (\textit{de Morbo Sacro} 5-11).
\textsuperscript{19} On this point see also Hippocrates (\textit{de Morbo Sacro} 5-11). Goldhill (1986:185n.34) draws attention to the point that in the ancient world “visual disorder seems most often the sign of mental aberration”.

common symptoms. In the absence of any medical understanding of epilepsy, it is perhaps easy to see how it came to be considered by many as a sign of possession and how it came to be linked with insanity.

Insanity which includes loss of mind, a common component of Greek tragedy e.g. *Hecuba* and *The Madness of Hercules*, was, like epilepsy, thought to be associated with demonical possession. Curiously, the two ailments appear to have been closely linked in Greek and Roman thought as is most clearly demonstrated in Plautus’ *Captivi* with the accusations against Aristophontes (*Capt.547ff.*). Not only was spitting recommended as a remedy for both but also the violence which sometimes accompanies a Temporal Lobe epileptic seizure may easily have been confused with the violence which accompanies some forms of mental illness. The common belief that epilepsy was a “divine disease” seems to have persisted despite the efforts of Hippocrates’ treatise *de Morbo Sacro* to convince the public of the contrary. Its origins may arise from the Babylonian custom of ascribing all illnesses as attacks by gods or demons. It is interesting to note that suspicions of epilepsy were not limited to the ancient world but persisted well into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in both

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Hughes (2004) and Benediktson (1989) discuss the common symptoms of epilepsy with regards to their application to the Roman Emperors’ Julius Caesar and Gaius Caligula.

20 See Stol (1993:133) and Nicolson (1897:31) on the supposed link between epilepsy and demonical possession in Ancient Rome. See also Scarborough (1991:154) and Temkin (1994:4-28) on the association of divine causes to madness and Goldhill (1986:185) on madness in Greek tragedy. Gardner (2002:169-171) provides examples on the types of behaviour which might result in accusations of insanity, particularly with relation to abnormal behaviour towards family members.


22 Blaklock (1945) discusses whether the symptoms displayed by Hercules in Euripides’ *Heraklion* and commonly portrayed as madness could suggest epilepsy. On this point see also Temkin (1994:20). Padel (1995:159) remarks that both “madness and epilepsy were purified by ritual” in Greek medicine.


Europe and America\textsuperscript{25} until the advancement of medical knowledge resulted in an understanding of its causes. It is also worth noting that, despite the fear in which it was regarded and despite its attached stigma, epilepsy itself does not necessarily appear to have been a barrier to social or political advancement in Rome.\textsuperscript{26}

The commonality that links insanity-related episodes in extant Roman comedy suggests a similar controlling device as that used in \textit{zatō} plays. Like the \textit{zatō}, who represent relatively low-level blind men, characters engaging in insane-like behaviour in Roman comedy are also of low status. This suggests a safety-device mechanism which allows audience fears regarding disease to be deflated through disassociation with reality. Supporting this view is the fact that all the incidences of insanity occurring in Roman comedy are faked. As Elaine Fantham (2011:16) remarks “[r]eal madness has no place on the comic stage, and accusations of madness have only a limited potential for humour”. Thus there appears to be a double denial of reality in these episodes which deflates the fear of being rendered powerless by disease, particularly mental illness, through the portrayal of fake illness and through the use of low-status characters.

I suggest that there are three ways in which contemporary anxiety towards the issues of blindness and insanity/epilepsy are addressed in Roman comedy and Kyōgen; stigmatization, risibility and the afflicted as impotent. Although these are visible in both Kyōgen and Roman comedy they seem to reflect different aspects of the power struggle. \textit{Zatō} plays appear to focus on the fear surrounding the transfer of power from


\textsuperscript{26} For example, Julius Caesar is thought to have suffered from epilepsy. On this subject see Magiorkinis et al. (2010), Hughes (2004) and Jones (2000:169-70). Benediktson (1989) suggests that Gaius Caligula may also have suffered from epilepsy.
the traditionally powerful to the traditionally powerless whilst portrayals of mental illness in Roman Comedy seem more concerned with a fear that one may lose one’s power and influence through becoming afflicted.

i) Stigmatization – Marking the Afflicted

Blindness and mental illness are stigmatized both in Roman comedy and Kyōgen. Sufferers (including suspected sufferers) are treated as separate from the majority of society and appear to be viewed suspiciously and/or with disdain by their peers. In Kyōgen, this is accomplished through the frequent references to the afflicted character as a blind man and by repeated emphasis on his sightlessness. Roman comedy prefers to focus on the physical symptoms of illness and the apparent confusion the “afflicted” character manifests. Through a demarcation of the afflicted as different and apart, both comedic forms are able to encourage a sense of superiority amongst the audience, whilst maintaining a sense of fear regarding affliction. This appears to be increased through the depiction of the afflicted characters as incapable of correctly interpreting or influencing surrounding events.

In Plautus’ Menaechmi, an identical twin, identically named, causes havoc for his brother. The visiting Menaechmus’ (Menaechmus II) similarity to his twin enables him to spend a carefree day enjoying his brother’s mistress. His natural inability to recognise his supposed wife and father-in-law results in an accusation of insanity being levelled at him which the true Menaechmus (Menaechmus I) finds difficult to refute. As part of his fantasy, halcyon day, Menaechmus II plays with this accusation, deciding that ego med adsimulem insanire (“I must pretend that I am mad”, Men.832), in the
hope that this will frighten away his accusers. His success causes immense problems for his twin (Men.996ff.)  who is only rescued from the ignominy of enforced incarceration by his quick-witted slave, Messenio. The madness scenes, despite their hilarity, suggest a fear of stigmatization in their depiction of the insane as confused, unpredictable and prone to violence.

Menaechmus I, unaware of his twin’s presence, is unable to comprehend his father-in-law’s seemingly absurd questions. His irritated responses, given at cross-purposes, fuel the suspicions of his father-in-law and the doctor who view them as the ramblings of a madman (Men.934 and 936). Menaechmus’ behaviour plays with common stereotypical depictions of madness, by making him appear increasingly threatening the more irritated he becomes. Despite its superficial humour, this scene can be viewed as disturbing since Menaechmus I is ultimately unable to absolve himself from the accusations of madness. Thus he is left susceptible to the stigma associated with insanity and, as a result, is almost subjected to compulsory confinement and treatment (Men.889-97, 950 and 954-55). At first Menaechmus I is more annoyed than concerned about the accusations levelled against him but, as events progress, he becomes increasingly fearful as he appears increasingly marked as isolated (Men.956ff. and1006ff.). Thus Menaechmus II has created a perilous situation for his brother from which he can withdraw.  

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27 Duckworth (1994:231) examines Menaechmus II’s success in establishing his insanity.
28 See Temkin (1994:8-9) on the stigma associated with epilepsy, not just in Rome but throughout history.
29 Fantham (2011:30) reflects on the link between rising anger and madness.
30 Baumbach (1982:100-01) compares the insanity scene in Menaechmus with contemporary beliefs regarding insanity.
31 Segal (2001:196) reflects on the carefree nature of Menaechmus II and the difficult situation he creates for his brother.
The fear of Menaechmus I’s wife and father-in-law, first towards Menaechmus II and later towards Menaechmus I, appear to focus more on the perceived symptoms of insanity and what they portend for themselves than on any concern for Menaechmus’ well-being (uiden tu’ illic oculos uirere? ut uiridis exoritur colos/ex temporibus atque fronte, ut oculi scintillant, uide!, “Do you see how his eyes are green? See how the green colour rises up from his temples and forehead; look at how his eyes spark!”32 Men.829-30) and:

MA: perii! mi pater, minatur mihi oculos exurere.
MEN: ei mihi! insanire me aiunt, ulro quom ipsi insaniunt.
SE: filia, heus! MA: quid est? SE: quid agimus?

(Men.840-44)

Father: Alas for your mind!
Menaechmus II: Look, Apollo commands me through an oracle to burn out her eyes with blazing brands.
Wife: I’m lost! My father, he threatens to burn out my eyes.
Menaechmus II: O me! They say that I am mad when they themselves are both mad.
Father: Daughter, alas!
Wife: What is it?
Father: What shall we do?

The father’s belief that Menaechmus II is turning a green colour is, of course, entirely imagined and it is these imaginary fears which encourage him to feign insanity (Men.832) as a means of manipulating their response. The audience are repeatedly

32 Distortion of the eyes and a change in facial colour are commonly cited as symptoms of epilepsy by the Ancient Greeks. See Temkin (1994:42 and 44-5). See also McDonald (2009:116). Hellebore which the doctor in Menaechmi recommends as a treatment for Menaechmus’ insanity was also a favoured treatment for epilepsy (see Temkin (1994:68).
33 On the relationship between the colour green and insanity see Baumbach (1983:100) “As Thoresby-Jones points out in his edition of the Menaechmi, a greenish hue would indicate excess of bile, which the ancients regarded as a cause or concomitant of madness (Thoresby-Jones, 1918:179).” and Thoresby-Jones (1918:179). On madness in Roman comedy see Duckworth (1994:325-36).
34 Padel (1995:74) comments that physical symptoms were believed to portray madness “[t]he mad do not look normal to other people” and “[m]ad eyes roll, twist…..”, “[m]ad eyes are also bloodshot”. See also Goldhill (1986:185n.34). Baumbach (1983:100) suggests that Menaechmus’ symptoms appear to conform to accepted notions of madness. On mental illness and its divine associations see Garland (2012:138).
made aware of the dangers associated with approaching a madman (concede huc, mea nata, ab istoc quam potest longissume, “come here, my daughter, the furthest away from there as is possible”, Men.834), (fuge domum quantum potest,/ne hic te optundat, “flee home as soon as possible, in case he beats you up”, Men.850), (sane ego illum metuo, ut minatur, ne quid male faxit mihi, “really I’m scared, as he threatens, that he might do some harm”, Men.861). These dangers appear to relate not only to the prospect of physical violence which Menaechmus’ threats raise but also to a fear of contamination,\(^{35}\) which derives support from the doctor’s instruction to the senex to beware of Menaechmus I’s words (de illis uerbis caue/tibi, Men.934)) since he is beginning to rave. Raving poses no material threat so why is it necessary to exhort the old man to beware? It is possible that the perceived threat is a threat of contamination through association\(^{36}\) rather than a fear of physical attack.

The ease with which Menaechmus II is depicted as able to manipulate surrounding characters’ reactions suggests that fear of insanity and the stigmatization of the insane was a common, contemporary occurrence.\(^{37}\) Certainly, the symptoms which he manifests appear to conform to contemporary views of insane behaviour and to tragic conventions of madness\(^{38}\). This includes an association of madness with visitation and instructions by the gods, since Menaechmus II claims to be in contact with Apollo\(^{39}\) whose instructions he is performing. Both the matrona and her father-in-law assume that this is a sign of madness rather than true prophecy. Several of Menaechmus II’s

\(^{35}\) See Nicolson (1897:26). Temkin (1994:115-16 reflects on the medieval perceived belief of epilepsy and possession as contagious diseases contracted through contact.

\(^{36}\) Padel (1995:67-8) remarks on fear associated with contact with the mad in Greek tragedy. Berthold-Bond (1994:73) suggests that madness and tragedy could potentially afflict anyone as “we are all inwardly divided and doubled selves”. On the association of madness, insanity and tragedy see Temkin (1994:20).

\(^{37}\) Fantham (2011:22) reflects on this when she suggests that in order to enjoy the madness scene, Plautus’ audience must have been familiar with similar madness scenes in tragedy.

\(^{38}\) On Menaechmus II’s manipulation of tragic convention see Fantham (2011:19-21).

\(^{39}\) See Baumbach (1983:101) on the association of madness with visitation by the gods.
symptoms, particularly those involving violence, appear to have been lifted from tragedies such as Euripides’ *Madness of Hercules.* By threatening to remove his “wife’s” eyes Menaechmus conforms to tragic convention seemingly confirming their suspicions.

Those on the receiving end of Menaechmus II’s “madness” are faced with sudden inexplicable behavioural changes in a familiar figure suddenly unable to recognise his family. The frightening suddenness with which madness can apparently occur is expressed in the lamentation of the *senex,*

\begin{quote}
uel hic qui insanit quam ualuit paullo prius!
ei derepente tantus morbus incidit.
eibo atque accersam medicum iam quantum potest
\end{quote}

\textit{(Men.873a-75)}

Truly, this man, who is insane, was well just a moment ago! So suddenly, such a disease struck him. I shall go and fetch the doctor as quickly as possible.

The terrifying intimation is that madness can strike down anyone, anywhere and that there exists a certain unpredictability and inevitability about the disease. The fear with which the wife, her father and the doctor treat Menaechmus II (and I), particularly in terms of maintaining a distance from the patient, may indicate a contemporary fear of contracting insanity from contact with the afflicted. Certainly there is a strong suggestion of fearfulness in the portrayal of the madness scenes which is likely controlled through the audience’s knowledge that the incident is faked.

\textsuperscript{40} See also Padel (1995:70) on this point.

\textsuperscript{41} See Goldberg (1982b:314) on Plautus’ parodying of tragedy in Menaechmus’ episode.
The concept of the afflicted as stigmatized and isolated, is most obvious in *Kawakamizatō*, which has been described as “perhaps the cruelest of all kyōgen plays” (Golay, 1973:147). This play features a blind man regaining his sight only to have it taken away again. The contrast between the man’s happiness when he regains his sight and the couple’s misery when it is taken away, emphasise the tragedy of the occurrence, but it is the reason for this loss of sight which is most unsettling and frightening, since it apparently results from the man’s decision not to divorce his wife.

I can see. Truly, this is a difficult thing to explain. *Namu Emmyō Jizō Bosatsu, Namu Emmyō Jizō Bosatsu*. Indeed, indeed, this is a difficult thing to explain. First I must hurry home, when I tell this experience to my wife I know she will rejoice.

Husband: When I made my decision the Jizō’s manifestation was swift. His punishment has come. Once again my eyes have darkened.
Wife: Are you speaking the truth.
Husband: Yes, yes.
Wife: Oh, Oh, it’s a pitiful thing, it’s a pitiful thing. “Until just a moment ago your pupils were black, your eyes black but now once again, your pupils have turned white.

At the moment when he declares his intention to stay married (*naka naka makoto de oriyaru*, “yes, yes truly that is it”, Furukawa and Kaizou, 1954:103) he is struck down by the god, as the restoration of his sight was seemingly conditional upon his initiating a divorce,
ojizou no goshigen ni wa, wagoryo to ima made no gotoku soueteitarabara, mata
gen ga tsubururu de arou to ooserareta hodo ni, kore kara wa fuufu de wa nai
hodo ni, sou kokoroesashimase.

(Furukawa and Kaizou, 1954:101)

Since when the Jizō revealed himself to me he said that if we continue as we
have been – being married – I will become blind again, I think that we should
no longer be husband and wife. You should understand this.

This condition appears arbitrary and pointless.42 Why should the answer to the man’s
prayer be conditional upon the separation of a happily married couple? As Jacqueline
Golay remarks, “this sort of sadistic punishment is usually the result of some specific
breach of the ethical code, not of an unreasonable bargain” (1973:148). This
unreasonableness is, in part, responsible for the disquieting nature of the play. Michizo
Toida (1973:70) states that the Jizō has declared their marriage to be one of bad karma
yet there is no evidence of this in Furukawa and Kaizou’s edition of the play where
events are contrived so as to maximise the shock to the audience. There was no
mention of this condition in the scenes at the temple,43 causing its revelation to be an
unexpected one. The punishment’s infliction, occurring as it does just at the moment of
reconciliation between husband and wife, leaves the play with a particularly bitter
ending. As Toida (1973:72) has remarked,

“zatou mono ga, mekura wo ijimeru kugaishateki tachiba ni tatte warau mono to
sureba, 「kawakami」 no warai ha sukoshi kore to chigatteitru. tachiba ga
moumoku no otto ni kanari chikadzuiteori, shinpasetiku de aru. dakara, warau
to ittemo, nigawarai de atte, mushiro kanashigeki ni chikai.”

Amongst zatō plays, if the laughter is a result of the audience identifying
themselves with the persecutor who is tormenting the blind man, then the
laughter in Kawakami is a little different. The audience’s identification in
Kawakami is closer to that of the blind husband, it is sympathetic. Thus,
although the audience laugh their laughter is a bitter laughter, rather the play is
closer to tragedy.

42 See also Toida (1973:70) on the difficulty of interpreting and accepting the god’s commandment.
43 See also Golay (1973:147) who suggests that this omission is a deliberate one conceived in order to
maximise the audience’s surprise when the Jizō proceeds to carry out his threat.
The audience’s reactions are shaped in such a way that their natural fear at the thought of losing their sight is encouraged, and the portrayal of the blind man as ultimately impotent to alter fate appears to reinforce this fear. The audience are presented with a joyous situation in which a sightless man miraculously regains his sight through prayer to the gods, but their expectations of a joyous reunion with the man’s wife are dashed, subsequently, by the Jizō’s inexplicable command. The man appears to have two choices, both unpalatable; he loses either his wife or his sight. Finally, the man, upon choosing to keep his wife, loses his sight in the same manner in which it was regained. This is such an unexpected conclusion to a Kyōgen play that the audience cannot be anything but disquieted by events. The zatō’s exhortation that the sequence of events should be regarded as the result of his sins in a past life (Furukawa and Kaizou, 1954:103), suggesting that prior immorality is the cause of present unhappiness, stigmatizes blindness by depicting it as the result of immoral behaviour. Thus, as with the Menaechmi, the afflicted character is presented as separate and removed from the audience. In both instances, this separation appears to reflect the powerlessness of the afflicted character in comparison to the power wielded by those surrounding him. It is especially interesting to note that in Kawakamizatō, the powerful character, arguably the reason that the blind man loses his sight for a second time, is his wife. The power displayed by this female, traditionally powerless, might be said to emphasise the powerlessness of the blind man, thus acting to deflate any audience tensions which might have arisen as a result of contemporary economic policy.

A similar portrayal of affliction as stigmatizing occurs in the Captivi during a scene between Hegio, Tyndarus and Aristophontes (Capt.532-658). Through an accusation

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44 On this point see also Kitagawa (1967:394).
45 On the blind man’s resignation over fate in Kawakamizatō see Sorgenfrei (1993:95 and 98).
and refutation of charges of insanity and epilepsy this scene hints at contemporary fear and stigma surrounding these afflictions. The captured slave Tyndarus accuses the captured citizen *cum* slave, Aristophontes, of being both insane (*hic homo rabiosus habitus est in Alide*), “this man was known as a madman in Elis”, Capt.547) and epileptic (*et illic isti qui sputatur morbus interdum uenit*, “that disease, which is cured by spitting sometimes comes upon him”, Capt.550). Aristophontes’ frantic attempts to refute these accusations imply a fear of stigmatization (Capt.557, 564, 584-86, 600-01 and 607-08). Aristophontes also seemingly reveals contemporary attitudes towards these illnesses:

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me rabiosum atque insectatum esse hastis meum memoras patrem,
et eum morbum mihi esse, ut qui me opus sit insputarier?
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(Capt.552-53)

Do you say I am insane and have threatened my father with spears, and do you say that I have that disease which it should be necessary to spit on?

Tyndarus manipulates this stigma, turning Aristophontes’ words against himself. As with the Menaechmi brothers, the angrier that Aristophontes becomes, the easier it is for Tyndarus to prove his accusations of insanity and the more powerless Aristophontes becomes to refute them. As was evident in *Menaechmi*, the accusations follow and conform to a seemingly set pattern of symptoms which include a propensity for violence; Aristophontes is apparently well-known as the man who threatened his parents with a spear (Capt.549) and *gliscit rabies, caue tibi* (“his fury grows, take care”, Capt.558). He is unable to recognise acquaintances (*credidi esse insanum extemplo, ubi te appellauit/Tyndarum*, (“I believed him to be insane from the moment when he addressed you as Tyndarus”, Capt.559). In a similar manner to Menaechmus I,

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46 See Gosling’s (1983:56) remarks concerning Hegio’s gullibility. Fantham (2011:21) comments on Tyndarus’ manipulation of Aristophontes’ natural indignation to consolidate his case for madness.
Aristophontes’s denials only serve to increase Hegio’s conviction and to cement the accusation of insanity (*iam deliramenta loquitur,* “now he speaks nonsense”, Capt.597) and:

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TY: heus, audin quid ait ? quin fugis ?
iam illic hic nos insectabit lapidibus, nisi illunc iubes comprehendi. AR: crucior. TY: ardent oculi : fit opus, Hegio ;
uiden tu illi maculari corpus totum maculis luridis ?
atra bilis agitat hominem.
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(Capt.592-96)

Tyndarus: Alas, did you hear what he said? Why don’t you flee?
Soon he will be pursuing us with stones, unless you order him to be restrained.
Aristophontes: I’m in agony.
Tyndarus: His eyes burn: there is need, Hegio, do you see how his whole body is spotted with livid spots? Black bile urges the man.

The more Aristophontes threatens Tyndarus, the more insane he appears. This causes great difficulty for him in attempting to prove his sanity at Capt.607-08 (*uerum si quid metuis a me, iube me uinciri: uolo,/dum istic itidem uinciatur,* “truly, if you fear anything from me, order me bound. I wish it as long as he is bound likewise”) and Capt.619-20.47

Although both Roman comedy and Kyōgen appear concerned with portraying afflicted characters as powerless, they seemingly achieve this through different methods.
Kyōgen emphasises moral/immoral beliefs concerning sight and sightlessness to mark the blind man as separate from normal society. In such a way, the blind man is revealed as powerless and not to be feared in an apparent reversal of reality, which seemingly acts to deflate contemporary tensions regarding blind men guilds and their financial

47 See also Frangoulidis (1996:153) on Aristophontes’ desire to purge himself from the allegations of madness and his use of the ritual verb *expurigare.*
might. Roman comedy, on the other hand, engages in a lengthy portrayal of the physical symptoms which are evident in sufferers of insanity and/or epilepsy in order to mark the afflicted as different. It is likely that the depiction of these physical symptoms act to stigmatise the afflicted. The apparent inability of the afflicted characters to affect or influence others’ interpretation of their behaviour suggests a fear of powerlessness occurring as a result of disease.

ii) Risibility

In Kyōgen and Roman comedy sufferers of blindness and mental illness are typically depicted as risible and suffer humiliation as a direct result of their affliction (even where this affliction is only an assumed illness). In both comedic forms this humiliation has potentially serious consequences for the afflicted character, but the consequences of Kyōgen humiliation are markedly graver than those of Plautine and Terentian comedy.

a) The Blind Man as Cuckold

In Saruzatō a blind man who takes his wife flower-viewing (Furukawa, 1964:32: lower:13-14), becomes a cuckold as his wife is seduced by a monkey-trainer. His humiliation is compounded by the replacement of his wife with a monkey which, in his sightless state, he mistakes for his wife, transformed (Furukawa, 1964:34:lower:16). One method of interpreting this play is to view it as a mockery of blind men. Several factors contribute to a reading of this nature; the seducer as sighted (Furukawa, 1964:33: upper:21-22), the seducer as socially inferior to the husband (he is a monkey-trainer), the demarcation of the blind man as naïve in his belief that a) he can control his wife by tying her to him and b) that she has turned into a monkey (Sasano,
1945:158, 159 and Furukawa, 1964:34:lower:16), a blind man as the victim of adultery (Furukawa, 1964:33:lower:15) and the blind man’s impotent attempts to control his sighted wife through tying her to his side (Sasano, 1945:159). These points appear to manipulate a genuine social anxiety, adultery, in such a way that it becomes associated with blindness. Not only does this serve to make the blind man a risible character (and to negate potential tensions between powerful blind men and their indebted sighted compatriots) but also it acts to deflate the fear of infidelity by depicting it as a result of sightlessness; thus not of consequence to the majority of the audience. In this manner the blind man experiences double humiliation.

The husband’s suspicious nature which appears to be a direct consequence of his inability to see seems to be a motivating factor in his wife’s decision to leave (Furukawa, 1964:33: lower:23). Yamamoto (1993:110) has suggested that the husband’s condition is irrelevant and that it is the wife’s disloyalty which is the focus of the play. The fact that the wife leaves a socially superior, but sightless man for a socially inferior, but sighted man, however, must surely be significant. I would suggest that in this instance the husband’s sightlessness acts not only as an opportunity to ridicule the potentially threatening 道者 but also as a safety mechanism for exploring the issue of infidelity, since the man is separated from the majority of the audience by his blindness.

There is certainly a marked contrast between the Saruzatō wife and the wives portrayed in onna (women) Kyōgen where the emphasis, as I shall demonstrate, is on preserving

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48 See Yamamoto (1993:111) on the difference between the physical controls exhibited by the blind man as opposed to the mental control over her which he cannot hope to gain. Yamamoto suggests that the man can tie her physical body but not her mind.

49 See also Sasano (1945:157) who also provides a version of this play.
marriage against the husband’s attempts to (unsuccessfully) terminate it. This play reverses that emphasis, making the husband the unsuccessful marriage-preserver and the wife the successful marriage-terminator. This contrast may serve to emphasise the humiliation of the blind man by depicting him as less influential than a woman, particularly since his naïve mistake is a direct result of his inability to perceive the truth, relying on touch to determine what his wife has become (Furukawa, 1964:34:lower:17-8). Whereas the Kyōgen onna metaphorically succeeds in tying her husband to her side, the Kyōgen blind man is incapable of binding his wife to him even when he uses physical means. Such an interpretation reduces the potentially threatening blind man to farcicality, encouraging the view of him as object of humour rather than fear.

b) Reduction to Non-Existence

In the Amphitryo, Mercury is able to manipulate Sosia’s timorous nature (Am.295ff.) causing him to doubt his own identity (timet homo: deludam ego illum, “the man is afraid: I'll trick him”, Am.295). By dint of superior reasoning and by the threat of violence Mercury is able to reduce Sosia to a non-person:

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ME: quid igitur ? qui nunc uocare? SO: nemo nisi quem iusseris
(Am.381-382)

(ME: Who is your master? SO: Whomever you want him to be. ME: What then? Now who are you? SO: I am no-one except he whom you shall order me to be).

The result is that Sosia cannot accept the truth as the truth (egomet mihi non credo, quom illaec autumare illum audio, “I don't even believe in myself, when I hear that

50 Sosia’s “chief function in the plot is as an instrument of mystification”, (Costa, 1965:95).
man spouting”, *Am.416-17*), despite his own knowledge that he remains fundamentally unchanged. Mercury further manipulates Sosia’s confusion (*ubi ego Sosia nolim esse, tu esto sane Sosia*, “when I do not want to be Sosia, you can be Sosia”, *Am.439*), resulting in the slave’s inability to distinguish fact from fiction.

Alison Sharrock reflects, “[w]hat is ridiculous (literally, funny, as well as stupid) about the situation is the very idea that someone could be tricked into doubting himself. And yet… It is hard for Sosia not to accept the evidence of his eyes. There is something scary as well as funny about this loss of self” (2009:113-14). This scariness is evident in Sosia’s plaintive (and somewhat ironic) appeal to the gods:

\[
\text{di inmortales, opsecro uostram fidem,}
\text{ubi ego perii? ubi immutatus sum? ubi ego formam perdidi?}
\text{an egomet me illic reliqui, si forte oblitus fui?}
\]

*(Am.455-57)*

Immortal Gods, I beseech your good faith. Where was I lost? Where was I transformed? Where did I lose my form? I think I left it there, if I have forgotten it.

This concept of loss of identity is, in reality, very frightening yet Sosia’s low status and his innate ability to turn the situation to his own advantage (*Am.462*), by reflecting that if he is not Sosia, the slave, he must be a free man, encourage the deflation of this natural fear. Sosia, himself, is portrayed as cowardly and farcical which encourages the audience to interpret his loss of identity as a joke. This must help to alleviate some of the anxiety which Sosia’s loss of self might be expected to arouse amongst the audience.
The depiction of Sosia’s loss of identity is constructed in an entirely different manner to the Saruzato husband’s loss of his wife. In both cases, however, the characters are depicted as risible, particularly in regards to their gullibility. Both characters are deceived as they are able to perceive only what their tormentor desires. In Sosia’s case, although he has the use of sight he is no more able to discern the truth of the situation than the blind man who believes that his wife has become a monkey (*onnadomo ni ke ga haete saru ni natta. dare mo gozaranu ka*, “hair has grown on my wife. She has become a monkey. Is there anyone there?”, Sasano, 1945:159). Conversely, the audience, who are aware of the truth, are able to laugh and treat the situations as farcical, safe in their own superior knowledge. In such a manner, the audience are encouraged to view potentially threatening events; such as unfaithfulness and loss of identity, as occasions for laughter. This surely helps to deflate audience tensions surrounding these issues. This may be reinforced by the supposedly low status of the affected characters i.e. a blind man and a slave which may act to further remove them from large parts of the audience.

c) The Insane Female

A different portrayal of insanity as risible can be discerned in Plautus’ *Casina* where it is not the supposedly insane character who is humiliated but her victim. As with other Roman comedic insanity scenes this is a fake portrayal of madness since the “insane” Casina is, in reality, the disguised slave, Chalinus. Her fake insanity appears to play with Greek tragic conventions in order to humiliate Lysidamus (*Cas*.621-719). Pardalisca’s portrayal of Casina is semi-tragic, drawing on the symptoms of insanity depicted in tragedy to portray a violent maid. Casina has a sword (*Cas*.660) which she

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will use to kill anyone who attempts to lie with her (Cas.670-71), she is insane (Cas.667) and she has two swords (Cas.692). As Pardalisca enhances her outline of Casina’s madness, Lysidamus becomes more and more fearful giving rise to cries of lamentation (Cas.661, 665, 672, 683, 694 and 704). This lends the scene a farcical air which removes the scene from its tragic roots. The audience are likely to find the interaction between Pardalisca and Lysidamus amusing since it is not only fake, but results in the humiliation of the senex character. In a similar manner to that seen in Sosia’s encounter with Mercury in Amphitryo, Lysidamus is portrayed as timorous and the scene, although ostensibly holding potentially fearful connotations, descends into farcicality. This farcicality encourages the audience to laugh at the potentially fearful spectre of an insane female because it depicts the victim of the attack as risible, thus marking him as separate from the audience.

Thus, in these three plays, affliction is connected with humiliation and audience laughter. By depicting affliction, and those affected by it, as risible, it is likely that audience tensions surrounding disease and its social consequences undergo a certain degree of deflation. The humiliation of the blind man in Saruzatō appears to serve a double purpose. First, it deflates any fears which the audience might have regarding the power of the tōdō-za in its depiction of its members as lacking the sense necessary to correctly interpret the world surrounding them, and as being incapable of controlling events even within their own families. Second, it acts to control fears surrounding sightlessness by depicting the blind man as laughable rather than pitiful. In contrast to this, Roman comedic depictions of insanity and epilepsy appear to concern themselves with a reflection of affliction as confusion-inducing. Through an emphasis on the farcical, Roman comedy is able to manipulate the audience into treating, as humorous,
a typically frightening affliction. The extreme confusion exhibited by all characters (not just the afflicted ones) involved in these episodes suggests an attempt to deflate audience tension, regarding the contraction of disease, through laughter.

iii) Impotence – Rendering the Powerful, Powerless

Zatō plays typically begin with the blind character portrayed as happy and content with his situation. They emphasise the superiority of the other senses whilst minimising the importance of sight as a sense. In Tsukimizatō, for example, the Japanese tradition of moon-viewing is given a different perspective by the blind man’s view of the event as an opportunity to listen to insects:

iya makoto ni, minahito no, haru wa hana, aki wa tsuki to ooseraruru ga, me no mienu mono nitotte wa monono neiro hodo omoshiroi mono wa gozaranu.

(Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:440)

In truth, in Spring everyone goes flower-viewing, in Autumn, moon-viewing; but for a man who cannot see there is nothing more enjoyable than tones.

The blind man’s “whole monologue is a tribute to the delicate sense of hearing of the zatō, and to the fact that, in his predicament, he is still able to make a choice dictated by an intense love of life”. Golay (1973:142). Golay also remarks upon the portrayal of the zatō which focuses on his enjoyment of what he can do rather than what he cannot do.
Similarly, in Roman comedy, those who appear confident and certain of their own identity such as Sosia, Aristophontes and Menaechmus I are made the victims of identity-loss and subjected to powerlessness. Whilst each of these characters begins the play secure in their own identity, uncontrollable events reduce them to powerless pawns in the games of others. Sosia is made a game of by Mercury (Am.185ff.), Aristophontes is confused by Tyndarus’ lies (Capt.547ff.) whilst Menaechmus I is placed at risk through his brother’s actions (Men.832-888 and Men.909ff.). The reduction of these characters to a powerless state suggests a manipulation of contemporary fears surrounding the social consequences of mental illness.

Tsukimizatō reveals superior hearing to be an imperfect replacement for basic sight since the blind man is tricked by over-reliance on that one sense. A sighted man, for no apparent purpose, decides to trick the blind man (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:446) with whom he has been sharing the moon-viewing experience. Disguising his voice he bumps into the man, throws away the man’s stick and runs away crying, yoinarino, yoinarino. midomo wa shiranuzo. shiranuzo shiranuzo, shiranuzo shiranuzo (“serves him right, serves him right. He didn’t recognise me. He didn’t know, he didn’t know. He didn’t know, he didn’t know”, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:447). The play’s “comedy” apparently arises from the blind man’s incapability of recognising that the man from before and this man are, in fact, the same person (aa, omoeba omoeba ima no yatsu wa, saizen no hito to wa hicchigae, nasakemonai yatsu de gozaru, “aa, come to think of it, come to think of it, that man just now is completely different to the other man – he has no sympathy”, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:447-48).
Interpreting the abrupt change in character depicted in this play has caused significant challenges for critics. Golay (1973:143) suggested that humour derives from the “play’s perfect exploitation of what Henri Bergson has called ‘a mechanization of life’, in the shock caused by the sudden reversal of mood”. Although it is possible to interpret the play in this manner, such a theory fails to account for two important features of the play; the remarked social disparity between the two men and the sneeze (kussame) which, marking the conclusion of the play, breaks the spell of the drama and transports the audience back to reality. The inclusion of these two features suggests a more sinister interpretation of the play as an example of fear-negation which reveals the potentially threatening member of the tödō-za as impotent and incapable of correctly interpreting a situation.

The social standing of the two characters is likely to support such a reading. The sighted man is clearly of a higher social standing than the blind man who is from the downtown (poorer) area of the capital (contrast Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:440 with Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:441), a social disparity which may act as a reflection of contemporary fear of gekokujyō. Although the blind man’s social standing is lower than that of the sighted man, his zatō status marks him as a member of the tödō-za which raises his authority. The activities of the tödō-za made it possible for a social superior to become financially indebted to a social inferior thus threatening social stability.

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53 Interestingly, Golay (1973:144n.17) cites an alternative version of the play where the blind man is set upon by dogs and nobody appears to rescue him.
55 On this point see also Golay (1973:143).
Examined in this manner, it is possible that the humiliation of the *zatō* acts as a restoration of normality with the superior man asserting his superiority over his inferior; thus suggesting fear of *gekokujyō* which may have undergone some alleviation through the blind man’s humiliation. Read like this the play can be viewed not as a mockery of blindness but as a means of asserting a check over a group of people whose influence and power had spun out of control.\(^{56}\) This is perhaps reflected in the measure of reality reasserted through the *kussame* of the *zatō* which may assist in deflating tension and act as a light-hearted distraction.

In contrast to this, the identity-crisis typically surrounding episodes of mental affliction in Roman comedy appear concerned with exploring fears surrounding potential loss of influence. In the majority of cases, as demonstrated above, the supposedly afflicted character becomes a victim of others’ suggestion. Through the behaviour and attitude of the other, non-afflicted characters, they are forced to question their own selves and forced to defend their sanity (*Am.*416-17, 612-15, *Capt.*552, 567-68, 577, 579-80 and 592ff. in particular). Sosia and Aristophontes, in particular, are subjugated to victim status and, although they are marked as particularly stupid (in the case of Sosia through his servile status and cowardly actions when compared with Mercury who controls events (*Am.*305-462) and in Aristophontes’ case by his inability to grasp the truth of the situation until it is too late (*Capt.*697-99)), the loss of power which they undergo through the denial of their identity hints at a particularly frightening result of affliction.

\(^{56}\) Sorgenfrei (1993:88) discussing *Tsukimizatō* suggests that “[t]his kind of cruel farce seems to represent a world-view typical of societies undergoing radical change.”
These are characters that, through the fear surrounding mental illness, risk losing what little power their low social status might be expected to afford them. In the case of Menaechmus this is more evident since he occupies a higher social position than either Sosia or Aristophontes, being both free and apparently wealthy since he is able to support a mistress. Whilst the slave status of Sosia and Aristophontes may act to reduce audience tension regarding the depicted link between mental illness and loss of power, the free, wealthy existence that Menaechmus I enjoys and almost loses, surely acts to increase audience tension.

**Conclusion**

It is likely that the comic depiction of blind men in Kyōgen and of insanity and epilepsy in Roman comedy relates, at least in part, to contemporary fears regarding the acquisition and loss of power. In this respect, Roman comedy appears to reflect the issue with more subtlety than Kyōgen which is more overt in its portrayal of the afflicted as humiliated. This encourages a reading of these plays as both a reaction to fears surrounding the social power of the *zatō* and those surrounding the social effects of blindness itself. It suggests that the humiliation of the *zatō* occurs because he is, in reality, a powerful, influential figure who has the potential to cause anxiety to others. Thus, his treatment is no different to that of the other authority figures discussed e.g. *daimyō*, *oni* and *Emma*. His humiliation presents the audience with an opportunity to forget any financial or political anxieties which the power of the *tōdō-za* may have incited and to assert their own superiority.
As a comparison with insanity episodes in Roman comedy demonstrates, however, there is another element to the humiliation of those suffering affliction. It is surely not coincidental that the ailments most commonly subjected to comic humiliation in Kyōgen and Roman comedy appear to be those which were least understood and those which excited the greatest controversy. The reduction of these sufferers to a farcical level must act to mitigate the anxiety which they might be expected to produce amongst a contemporary audience. In this respect, in Roman comedy, the typical confinement of affliction to those of slave status (with the exception of Menaechmus I) is likely to encourage further the mitigation of audience anxiety as it separates the sufferers from the majority of the audience. Roman comedy seemingly concerns itself with the danger that affliction poses to an ordinary person’s social influence whilst Kyōgen is more concerned with refuting the social influence that the blind held in reality. This difference likely reflects the social discrepancy between Medieval Japanese society, which was financially obligated to blind men, and Roman society which was under no such obligation and where illness and affliction was likely to result simply in loss of power and influence for the afflicted citizen. Thus, it appears that although both comedic forms are concerned with the issue of fear of powerlessness in conjunction with illness, there is a distinct difference in the manner in which the type of fear depicted. Roman comedy appears to depict the concerns of a healthy majority who feared reduction in their influence and status due to personal affliction, whilst Kyōgen seemingly reflects the general fears of a sighted majority at risk of eclipse by a sightless, but influential minority.
Braggart Soldiers and Boastful Priests

Introduction

The braggart soldier in Plautine and Terentian comedy and the boastful priest in Kyōgen provide fruitful sources of comic relief. In the comedies of Plautus and Terence, the braggart soldier predominantly features as an ineffectual love rival who is typically deceived and manipulated by the other characters, particularly the tricky slave. The soldier’s role forms part of a sub-plot which tends to highlight the difficulties facing the adulescens and the tricky slave. In contrast, boastful priests occupy the central role in plays which feature them (yamabushi Kyōgen). Their treatment at the hands of other characters is, however, markedly similar to that meted out to the braggart soldier. Both comic depictions directly contrast with the real status of soldiers and priests in both societies. In reality, in both Roman and Japanese society, soldiers and priests were respected and venerated. Roman and Japanese society were both highly militaristic and religious, leading to a cultural milieu which placed extreme importance on military prowess and religious piety.¹

During the Middle Republic, not only was it the duty of every Roman male citizen to serve in the army if required,² but also a period of service in the military acted as a prerequisite for advancement to certain public offices.³ Although theoretically “[i]n

² On the duty placed on serving one’s country in Republican Rome see Keppie (1998:17). See also Nicolet (1980:91-2).
³ Nicolet (1980:92). On this point see also comments regarding legates and senatorial service in Keppie (1998:40). For the importance of military achievement to a political career see McDonnell (2006:249)
Roman eyes a soldier and a citizen were the same thing” (Nicolet, 1980:93), which is to say that a Roman “is first and foremost a warrior, or rather a soldier” (Nicolet, 1980:90), in practice the necessary property qualifications for call-up ensured that it was chiefly the affluent whose services were called upon. Whilst the rich were undoubtedly burdened by the responsibilities of military service they also received substantial rewards, both politically and monetarily.

These rewards enabled a wealthy Roman familia to increase their substance and prestige through a demonstration of their military might. Successful generals were granted lavish triumphs which commended and recognised their martial prowess, whilst substantial wealth could be attained through successful plundering. The impressive military might of the Roman army resulted in the creation of a great Empire which brought wealth and prosperity to many sections of Roman society. Alongside the benefits that a powerful military brought to Rome, however, there were also substantial potential drawbacks which are evident from the range of prohibitions designed to limit the power of individual generals and commanders. These restrictions suggest an element of anxiety associated with military success and a need to control and limit military power at home. One example of this is that armies were prohibited from

4 A Roman was enrolled as a juvenis at the age of seventeen and could be called to active service at any time up until he reached the age of sixty (Nicolet, 1980:93 and 97). On this point see also Keppie (1998:33-4).
5 De Ligt (2007:3) comments on the statement of Tiberius Gracchus as to “whether a citizen was not always a better man than a slave, and a soldier more useful than a non-soldier”.
6 On the property qualifications necessary for army service see De Ligt (2007:8) and Nicolet (1980:92ff.). On relaxation of “minimum census requirements” in the early second century BC see Keppie (1998:33). On changes in the first century BC to the rules governing property qualification which resulted from Marius’ recruitment of volunteers see Nicolet (1980:92). Hoyos’ (2011:66) suggestion that most Romans either would have experienced or had family who had experienced military service seem to suggest that military call-up was not always dependent on meeting property requirements.
7 On the heavy burden imposed on Roman society by military service see Hoyos (2011:65-6) and McDonnell (2006:242).
8 See Nicolet (1980:92, 117ff. and 122).
9 On the subject of Roman triumphs see Beard (2007:233-38).
entering Rome and forced to disband before they crossed the Rubicon\textsuperscript{10} in order to protect the Senate’s authority.\textsuperscript{11} The very success of the Roman army was also likely to cause anxiety amongst the populace at home, not least because many Roman slaves would have owed their servile status to the army’s might, particularly during Plautus’ period.\textsuperscript{12}

\emph{Yamabushi} (a combination of 山 (yama) “mountain” and 伏 (bushi) from 伏せ(ろ) (fuse(ru)) “to lay down” meaning literally “one who lays down in the mountains”\textsuperscript{13}) were warrior priests who, through severe mountain training, had acquired special, mystical powers of a supernatural appearance.\textsuperscript{14} They practiced \textit{shugendō}; a combination of Buddhist and Shintoist beliefs.\textsuperscript{15} For example, it was commonly believed that a powerful mountain priest could halt a flying bird.\textsuperscript{16} The significance of mountain training revolved around the belief that mountains were sacred places where spirits and the gateway to the Other World were to be found.\textsuperscript{17} Their reputed

\textsuperscript{10} Julius Caesar’s decision to cross the Rubicon with his army ultimately led to the breakdown of the Republic and the establishment of the Imperial system. For recent discussion concerning the illegality of crossing the Rubicon see Fields (2010:26), Cawthorne (2005:51) and Goldsworthy (2002:29).

\textsuperscript{11} Keppie (1998:102ff.) explores the repercussions of violating this law. See also Goldsworthy’s account of the build-up to civil war (Goldsworthy, 2002:26-9).

\textsuperscript{12} On the staging of Plautus’ plays at “a time of intense Roman military activity” see McDonnell (2006:20).

\textsuperscript{13} Hori (1975:267) suggests that the word \emph{yamabushi} “originally referred, in my opinion, to one who made his bed on a spirit-mountain, a mountain that was at once a cosmic mountain and a mother-goddess of death and rebirth. It designated one who dies to his life as a member of this mundane world, enters into the womb-store world or womb of mother earth, undergoes many tests, and is finally reborn as a member of the sacred world”.

\textsuperscript{14} Blacker (1984:596) asserts that \emph{yamabushi} had powers of healing and prophesy as well as being able to atone for the sins of others through their own suffering. See also Urubshurow (2008:513), Ashkenazl (2003:271) and Blacker (2000:186). The other-worldliness of the \emph{yamabushi} is reflected in the interpretation placed upon them by the early Jesuit missionaries to Japan (see Lach and Van Kley, 1993:1832), who believed that the \emph{yamabushi} were in service to the Devil.


\textsuperscript{16} Toida (1973:118). On \emph{yamabushi} as magic users see Wakamori (1964:71). See also Blacker (2000:186).

extraordinary powers, particularly their healing and exorcism abilities, made the
*yamabushi* indispensable to the general population but also caused them to be feared. Teigo Yoshida (2007:52) suggests that the *yamabushi* were regarded ambivalently by the general population partly due to their itinerant nature and partly as a result of circulating stories of bad *yamabushi*, “[w]hile pilgrims and other strangers were said to have the magical power to bring good luck to village inhabitants, at the same time they were also held to be dangerous”.

A particularly frightening aspect of the mountain priest was the ability of spirits/ghosts to appear in his guise. Goblins, like the *tengu* (long-nosed goblin), often materialised in human form as *yamabushi,* and *bakegitsune* (goblin foxes) were credited with the ability to “approach a lonely house as an old man who has lost his way, as a pilgrim-monk or Buddhist priest, or as a damsel in distress—rarely in any other human form” (Casal, 1959:9) for the purpose of causing mischief. In the form of a Buddhist priest (*bōzu*), goblin foxes were thought to be especially menacing. Additionally, it was believed that mountain priests could summon goblin foxes as familiars. The itinerancy of the majority of *yamabushi*, coupled with their religious rites — chanted in, what Laurence Kominz (2007:240) describes as, “Japanized Sanskrit” — which were

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19 Casal (1959:24) states that the seventh century founder of the *yamabushi* (En-no Shōkaku) was himself accused of sorcery and that “[h]is monkish followers were a most superstitious crowd, and because of their own weird rites and performances were feared by the people”. On the ambivalence accorded to mountain priests see Jeremiah (2010:139).

20 See Blacker (1967:116). Casal (1959:44) tells a story of someone who saw beings which looked like *yamabushi* but which disappeared when they tried to look closely at them. This notion of an insubstantial being appearing in the guise of a human and then mysteriously vanishing when approached is a common theme in Japanese folklore. Toida (1973:119) discusses a Nō play in which a *tengu* appears in the guise of a *yamabushi*. There also appears to have been some confusion over the difference between a mountain priest and a *tengu*, with *yamabushi* sometimes being identified as the *tengu* in human form (see Jeremiah, 2010:140 and 142 and Mol, 2003:197). This may be a result of the supposed similarity in clothing between the two (see Ashkenazi, 2003:271).

21 See Casal (1959:10).

22 Casal (1959:24). The reputation of mountain priests as “fierce fighters” (Mol, 1993:197) might be an additional factor in the fear associated with the *yamabushi*.
unintelligible to the commoner most likely contributed to this fear. No doubt the secluded life of the mountain priest also fuelled the fear of goblin/demon transformations. The *yamabushi*’s other-worldliness is reflected in the contemporary drama of Kyōgen and Nō where their movement across the stage is closer to the movement of an *oni* character rather than a human.\(^{23}\)

The respect which former soldiers could expect to receive in Rome\(^ {24}\) and the fear and awe that the *yamabushi* inspired\(^ {25}\) makes it, perhaps, surprising that in comedy both the soldier and the priest are typically portrayed as boastful bombasters who cringe and cower when confronted by danger.\(^ {26}\) The *miles gloriosus* blusters and threatens, yet recoils from action. His military feats are embellished to the point of absurdity, provoking ridicule from his fellow characters. He is often depicted as alien to the accepted military ideal, a figure of scorn rather than the genuinely, highly esteemed and awe-inspiring soldier of reality.\(^ {27}\) A similar situation can be identified in Kyōgen where a relatively large collection of *yamabushi* (mountain priest) plays exists. Although the *yamabushi* is occasionally portrayed as the victor and trickster, as in *Kagyū* (*The Snail*) where the Mountain Priest tricks Tarō Kaja into believing that he is a snail, the majority of *yamabushi* plays depict the priest as a figure of fun who routinely fails to achieve his

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\(^{23}\) See Toida (1973:120-21).

\(^{24}\) On the importance of military victories at the time of Plautus and their depiction in Plautus’ comedy see McDonnell (2006:20).

\(^{25}\) It is interesting to note that the portrayal of the mountain priest in Nō is the exact opposite of his portrayal in Kyōgen. On this point see in particular Serper (2005:343).

\(^{26}\) Duckworth (1994:264) states that “his predominant trait is boastfulness, usually of his military exploits but sometimes of his ability to charm the opposite sex”. Duncan (2006:101) claims that the braggart soldier is “someone so predictable and so hollow that he is an easy mark for his fellow characters”. Damon (1997:40-3 and 81-7) also reflects upon this point examining the portrayal of the parasites Artotrogus and Gnatho and their ability to flatter the braggart soldier.

\(^{27}\) *Amphitryo* in Plautus' *Amphitryon* is portrayed more like the traditional Roman *imperator* (see Forehand, 1971:647-48 and 650) but even his power and prowess is mocked, as he is revealed to be powerless against Jupiter.
aims. The yamabushi’s depiction in comedy, like that of the boastful soldier, marks a complete contrast to his real position and status in society.

In Kyōgen the yamabushi is portrayed as an ineffectual priest whose spells inevitably backfire. Although the play begins by depicting the mountain priest in an exalted position (Kani Yamabushi, Kusabira and Fukuro Yamabushi in particular) this opinion is quickly eroded and the priest becomes a figure of fun. Everything which he does is ineffective and often succeeds simply in worsening the situation. For example, in Fukuro Yamabushi (The Owl and the Mountain Priest) the chants which the priest intones only serve to anger the owl spirit and cause him to turn his vengeance onto the priest and the afflicted man’s brother, in Kusabira (Mushrooms) the spells to destroy the mushroom result in the creation of ever-increasing mushrooms.

i) Portrayal of the Braggart Priest and the Boastful Soldier

Both the boastful soldier and the braggart priest are typically accompanied by an attendant/follower who publicly encourages and indulges their boasting. In Roman comedy this role is sometimes taken by a parasite (Artotrogus (Miles Gloriosus) and Gnatho (Eunuchus)) or by a slave (Palaestrio (Miles Gloriosus)) whilst, in Kyōgen, the follower tends to be either an acolyte (Kani Yamabushi (The Crab and the Mountain Priest)) or the person requesting assistance (Fukuro Yamabushi and Kusabira).28 Although, in essence, these followers occupy the same function (to draw attention to the boasts of the soldier or priest) a slight difference can be discerned between them. The Kyōgen follower tends to begin the play impressed and awed by the yamabushi

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28 Serper (2005:345) provides a short synopsis of Kusabira and comments on the cowardliness of the priest at the end of the play.
(Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:374) but gradually loses this respect as things begin to unravel, finally denouncing the priest as a fraud (Betsuyaku and Tanigawa, 2006:268. See also McKinnon, 1968:49). Alternatively, the priest is revealed as a coward compared to the bravery (or recklessness) of his attendant (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:377). In contrast, the soldiers’ attendants play a double role, supporting the soldier to his face but denouncing him behind his back; compare, for example, the comments of Palaestrio regarding Pyrgopolynices at Mil.89-90 with those at Mil.1077-78.29 It is likely that this difference arises as a result of the difference in motivation between the two sets of followers which indirectly reflect their disparate social status. As an acolyte or person in need of help, the follower of the priest has a vested interest in believing in the priest’s abilities but, in Roman comedy, the follower is usually motivated by his personal relationship with the soldier. For parasites such as Artotrogus and Gnatho this is a relationship which revolves around food,30 whilst the slave follower, such as Palaestrio, customarily has his own manipulative motives for supporting the soldier.

The comedic soldier and priest typically engage in boasting which reveals their true characters.31 In the case of Roman comedy the other characters are typically already aware of the soldier’s true nature. For example, Artotrogus’ comments about Pyrgopolynices present a typical opinion of the braggart soldier, *(peiuriorem hoc hominem si quis uiderit/aut gloriarum pleniorem quam illic est./me sibi habeto, ego me mancupio dabo, “if anyone has seen a more perjured man than this or a more vain man than was there, let him have me, I shall give myself to him as slave”, Mil.20-23). This

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29Duncan (2006:102) discusses a similar point when she reflects on the double role of Gnatho in Terence’s *Eunuchus*.
30See Damon (1997:40-43 and 81-87) on the motivation of the parasite in flattering the braggart soldier.
31On typical language of braggart soldiers see Filoche (2007:46-7).
opinion is quickly affirmed by the character himself. In Kyōgen, however, the revelation that the priest is a fraud is more gradual. The other characters believe inherently in the priest’s abilities until his incompetence is revealed, at which juncture they lose all confidence in him, Shintarō Tanigawa’s *Kusabira* (Betsuyaku and Tanigawa 1993:268) provides a good example of this.

ii) Types of Boasts

There is also a correlation between the types of boasting which the soldier and the priest engage in. Boasts appear to focus on three main areas, relationship to the gods, the ability to perform impossible feats and exceptional qualities such as physical and mental appeal. Whilst the soldiers and priests wholeheartedly embrace the fiction as fact, these exaggerated claims are revealed to the other characters and to the audience to be nothing but empty words. Thus both character types are exposed ultimately as ineffectual braggarts and suffer humiliation.

a) Relationship to the Gods

A common boast of the Plautine boastful soldier and his lackeys is one depicting him as possessing god-like qualities. Sometimes, as evidenced by Pyrgopolynices (*Miles

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32 See also Filoche (2007:47).
33 This collection of Kyōgen plays is aimed at encouraging high-school students to read and enjoy Kyōgen. Consequently, it explains complex passages and terms in a more overt manner than traditional collections of Kyōgen, which present the material in its original format. Although Tsukamoto (1930:290-92) contains notations of an original version of *Kusabira*, this is only a partial rendition which ends after the yamabushi’s departure from home. It concludes with a brief note regarding the climax of the play and the similarities between this and *Fukuro Yamabushi*. McKinnon’s English translation of *Kusabira* (1968:43-50) is based on the original Izumi school version found in Mansai Nomura’s *Shinsen Kyōgen-shū* (“Newly Compiled Collection of Kyōgen”) (1930, 2 volumes) published in Japan.
34 On this point see Keene (1995:133) “kyougen de wa, ooborafuki ya sagishi to douretsu ni atsukaware, bakenokawa wo hagasaretu to iu shukou ga ooii”, (“in Kyōgen [the mountain priest] is treated the same as a big braggart and a swindler, there are many devices whereby they show their true colours”).
Gloriosus), fantastical abilities are also attributed to his progeny. Palaestrio facetiously asserts that Pyrgopolynices’ *pueri annos octingentos uiuont* (“children live for eight hundred years”, *Mil*.1078), a ludicrous assertion which the soldier willingly accepts. A similar situation occurs in *Truculentus* when Stratophanes learns of the birth of his “son” and nonsensically questions whether the child, only a few days old, has brought home any spoils yet (*iamne iit ad legionem? ecquae spolia rettulit?*, *Truc*.508). When the baby’s extreme youth is pointed out to him he unreasonably asks what the child has been doing (*Truc*.510-11) to be born before he is able to fight.35 By endowing the child with heroic abilities, Stratophanes may be alluding to the divine abilities which he believes himself to possess and is, perhaps, suggesting that his “son” should have inherited. It is also possible that Stratophanes’s queries attempt to make a comparison between his own child and the infant Hercules whose exploits were legendary. Any humour in this scene appears to arise out of Stratophanes’ stupidity in thinking that a baby is capable of fighting in the army. If, however, Stratophanes is comparing his child to Hercules, and thus endowing him with semi-divine abilities, an added source of amusement may be found in Stratophanes’ apparent likening himself to Jupiter. Such a reference would no doubt mark a comic moment in the play and would provide further evidence of Stratophanes’ stupidity and idle boasting.

More direct boasts linking the soldiers to divinity occur when the soldiers openly compare themselves with the gods. Pyrgopolynices couples his own name with that of Jupiter, claiming that he was born only one day after Jupiter (*Mil*.1082) and, as a result, just missed becoming king of the gods.36 In comparison, Stratophanes focuses on

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35 On this point see Duckworth (1994:264).
36 Filoche (2007:59) and Tolliver (1952:51) also comment on this. Moore (2004:59) briefly comments on Pyrgopolynices’ “pretension” as part of his discussion into Alcesimarchus and parody of prayer-like formulas.
emphasising his god-like strength by referring to himself as Mars and to his girlfriend as Neriene (Mars peregre adueniens salutat Nerienem uxorem/suam, “Mars, returning from abroad, salutes his wife, Neriene”, Truc.515). By emphasising their omnipotence and by directly comparing themselves to gods, the soldiers’ humiliation is made even greater and their fall is more pronounced. As Neriene is believed to have been a Sabine goddess it is possible that Plautus uses her to emphasise, perhaps tongue-in-cheek, the Roman tendencies of his (supposedly foreign) miles gloriosus.

This form of boasting can also be discerned in the Kyōgen yamabushi plays. In Kani Yamabushi the yamabushi is delighted to learn that he is regarded by others as the “living” Fudō. Revelling in this ridiculous notion he declares his acolyte Kongara-Seitaka, the attendant of Fudō (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:374). This claim is proven a sham, however, by the priest’s inability to quell a lowly crab spirit.

Comparisons with the god Fudō Myōō are also found in Kusabira where, after the ineffectiveness of the yamabushi’s incantations – which have increased, not decreased, the quantity of mushrooms in the garden – the garden’s owner rebukingly remarks: tatta ima made omaesama wo ikifudou no you ni omotteita noni, kore wa nantomo mikomichigaida (“up until this moment I’d thought you were like the living Fudō, but now I see that I was quite mistaken”, Betsuyaku and Tanigawa, 1993:268).

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37 Neriene as the wife of Mars is attested by Aulus Gellius (Noctes Atticae 13.23(22)). Very little is known of this reportedly Sabine goddess who is also mentioned by Ennius (Ann. 1) and Varro (Saturae Menippeae 83). For a summary of the biographical details of Neriene see Daly (2009:100), Shanzer (1986:61) and Smith (ed.) (1846). Conway’s (1967:498) discussion of Italic dialects also refers to Neriene as the wife of Mars in his discussion on inscriptions and Iguvine liturgy. Whilst the majority of scholars are in agreement that Neriene was, at some point, believed to be the wife of Mars, Fowler (1908:60-1) refutes this suggesting that the term Neriene originally depicted a particular aspect of Mars’ character.

38 Kitagawa and Yasuda (2001:374) and McKinnon (1968:100).

39 Kitagawa and Yasuda (2001:374) has ikifudou (生不動) which he explains (2001:374n.9) means ikiteiru fudou myouou (生きている不動明王), or the “living Fudō Myōō” (the God of Fire).

40 See also McKinnon (1968:100).

41 See also McKinnon (1968:49).
commoner sagely reflects, *omaesama ni tanondarishinakattara, konna koto ni wa naranakatta noni* (“if I’d never asked you for help this would never have happened”, (Betsuyaku and Tanigawa, 1993:268)). This serves to negate the earlier claims to greatness which the *yamabushi* had engaged in, and reveals him to be ineffectual.

In the above-cited cases the claims of the *yamabushi* are unmasked as fraudulent in a similar manner to the boasts of the braggart soldiers. As Carolyn Morley (1993:48) remarks,

“[t]he bragging and subsequent demise of the mountain priest is all the more humorous in that he has so clearly exaggerated his connections. The underlying reality which breaks through is that this supposed grand mountain priest is no different from one of us.”

The arrogant assertions that these men are like gods are punctured by their inability to meet expectations, and this is true not only of the *yamabushi* but also of the soldier who has also exaggerated his origins and divine qualities.

*b) Impossible Physical or Mental Feats*

The second type of boasting engaged in by comic soldiers and priests is one which exaggerates their physical and mental abilities, often to the point of nonsensicality. In the case of the comedic soldier, this is typically an exaggeration of their fighting prowess, whilst the *yamabushi* tend to focus on portraying their powers of exorcism. In both cases, this exaggeration of power serves to create an even greater height for the characters to fall when their ineffectiveness is exposed.

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42 See also McKinnon (1968:49).
When the audience is first introduced to Pyrgopolynices, he is boasting of his military exploits. At this juncture, rather than reciting his feats himself, he allows the parasite, Artotrogus, to recount them to him. Pyrgopolynices readily accepts whatever the parasite recites. Thus the audience hear that he crushed an elephant with his fist (*Mil.*25ff.). They are informed that Artotrogus, whom the soldier then asks to “re-cap”, is recording Pyrgopolynices’ “kills” for him. Apparently, in one day Pyrgopolynices killed: one hundred Cilicians, plus another fifty, one hundred Sythobrigandians, thirty Sardians and sixty Macedonians (*Mil.*42-5); an unlikely figure which the parasite then rounds up to the ludicrous *septem milia* or “seven thousand”. He even agrees with the claim that he has gold piled as high as Mount Etna (*Mil.*1065). Thus, Pyrgopolynices is depicted as incapable of discerning truth from fiction or of perceiving that he is being ridiculed. In *Poenulus*, the soldier Antamoenides is portrayed similarly, asserting that he killed sixty thousand flying men in one day with his bare hands (*pugna Pentetronica,/quom sexaginta milia hominum uno die/ uolaticorum manibus occidi meis*, *Po.*472-73). Stratophanes’s claims are just as boastful. When he presents his beloved with new maids he claims that he obtained them when he destroyed their homeland (*patriam ego excidi manu*, *Truc.*530). Whilst this is perfectly possible, the intimation is that he single-handedly accomplished this feat, destroying an entire nation.

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43 Cleary (1972:302) suggests that this incident provides more evidence that the soldier’s exploits “are more imaginary than real”.
44 Even assuming that Pyrgopolynices did single-handedly kill all the men that Artotrogus has just listed, the combined total is no more than 340 men, a figure almost twenty times less than that cited by Artotrogus. See also Duckworth (1994:264-65) on this matter.
45 See also Filoche (2007:55) and Duckworth (1994:264) on these boasts.
The difference between comedic *miles gloriösus*, such as Stratophanes, and the genuine war-hero is clear from the portrayal of the serious general Amphitryo, who marks the antithesis of the braggart soldier. It is interesting to note how Plautus depicts him in contrast to the braggart soldier. Amphitryo is accompanied by his slave Sosia, who prepares to relate his master’s exploits to Amphitryo’s wife (*Am*.203-62). Unlike the accompaniers of the braggart soldiers, Sosia prepares to narrate a (plausibly) true and formal account of the battle (203ff.) in which he states Amphitryo’s possible actions and accomplishments. In Sosia’s description there are none of the exaggerated accomplishments attributed to the braggart soldiers but a fair account of how Amphitryo may have conducted himself in battle. Since Sosia was hiding during the battle (*nam quom pugnabant maxume, ego tum fugiebam maxume, Am*.199) he is unable to give an accurate account of the battle movements, thus his restraint in narrating events is even more pronounced when contrasted with the blatant exaggerations of the parasites who relate the braggart soldiers’ feats. The greatest claim that Sosia makes for Amphitryo is that he singlehandedly killed King Pterelas (*Am*.251), and this is not only a perfectly plausible scenario but one which is attested in Roman historical accounts. Thus, it marks a direct contrast with the feats supposedly conducted by Pyrgopolynices and Antamoenides whose kill counts, as we have seen, are impossibly exaggerated.

When Amphitryo greets his wife he does so with restraint (*Am*.676-79). Unlike the braggart soldier Stratophanes, he does not compare either himself or his wife with divinities, nor does he make exaggerated comparisons between himself and Jupiter in

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46 Harris (1985:43) suggests that Sosia’s account of the battle appeals directly to the Roman audience.  
47 For an account of single combat by Romans until the Late Republican period see Oakley (1985:393-97). On the honours awarded to those who had killed in single combat see McDonnell (2006:251) who discusses instances of single combat victors appearing on coinage.
the manner of Pyrgopolynices. Conversely, Amphitryo’s greeting is exactly that which might be expected of a victorious general returning home and offering formal salutations to his wife. Instead of comparing his wife to a goddess (as Stratophanes likened his courtesan) Amphitryo ranks her as first amongst the citizens of Thebes (Am.677-78). This is a far more believable comparison than those of the braggart soldiers and demonstrates how Plautus’ portrayal of a true general differs from his portrayal of the braggart soldier. It appears that the portrayal of the braggart soldier parodies both the formality of the customary battle report and the traditional greetings of a returning general. A Roman citizen familiar with the formal language of the battle reports might be expected to laugh at the braggart soldier’s impossible feats and to mock the outlandish greetings which soldiers such as Stratophanes lavish on their courtesans.

A further example of the “real” soldier can be seen in Plautus’ Epidicus where the would-be miles gloriosus is denied the role due to the appearance of the “real” military legend Periphanes (a soldier in his youth), who, William MacCary (1972:296) states, “threatens to overwhelm the soldier in a contest of braggadocio (Ep.442-52)”. In this play any gloriosi pretensions are checked by the introduction of a supposedly real hero who is not only portrayed as having attained the feats which he relates but also is genuinely respected by the other characters. Periphanes marks a direct contrast with the typical cowardly miles that is the object of others’ scorn and ridicule, perhaps projecting an element of reality onto the stage.

In a similar manner, the Kyōgen yamabushi exaggerate their abilities seemingly in a deliberate attempt to increase their mystique. One manner in which they do this is in
their nonsensical chants which they claim are potent exorcism or mystical spells. Although in reality the yamabushi’s ability to intone spells would have marked him as revered, in Kyōgen, his chants are ultimately the greatest indication that he is a charlatan. In **Fukuro Yamabushi** and **Kusabira** when the young men arrive at the home of the yamabushi they are greeted by similar recitations. In **Fukuro Yamabushi**:

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fushigi no mado no mae, jyuujyou no yuka no hotorini, yuga no hossui wo tata e, sanichii no tsuki wo sumasu tokoro ni, annai mousan to iu wa taso.  
(Tsukamoto, 1930:24)
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in front of my mysterious window, in the vicinity of my room of Ten Concentrations, filled with the water of Yoga, in the place where the moon of the Three Secrets becomes clear, who’s there? 

Similarly, in **Kusabira**:

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kushiki no mado no mae, jyuujyou no yuka no hotori ni yuga no hossoi wo tata e, sanmitsu no tsuki wo sumasu tokoro ni, annai mou san to wa tare djya  
(Tsukamoto, 1930:290)
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in front of the window of Nine Signs, in the vicinity of my room of Ten Concentrations, filled with the water of Yoga, in the place where the moon of the Three Secrets becomes clear, who’s there?

These chants are directly imported from the Nō play **Aoi no Ue** (Lady Aoi), a serious retelling of an episode from the classic **Genji Monogatari** where the spirit of the Lady

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38 Kenny’s (1989:194) translation of this episode from the Izumi school repertoire is: “[b]efore the windows of the nine senses, close to the foundations of the ten vehicles, praising the purifying flow of Yoga, in the midst of the three secrets, calling to me so loudly at my door, who are you?”

39 McKinnon (1968:45) in his translated version of the Izumi school **Kusabira** has this:

“Before the window of Nine Perceptions,  
In my chamber of Ten Vehicles,  
The holy water of Yoga, brimming full,  
Reflects the clear moon of the Three Mysteries.  
Who is it that seeks admission?”

He refers the reader to the translation of the Nō play **Aoi no Ue** (found in **Japanese Noh Drama: Ten Plays Selected and Translated from the Japanese**, Volume 2; 1959; The Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkokai; pp.89-102) where the same lines are to be found (McKinnon, 1968:44).
Rokujō attempts to destroy Lady Aoi. Although it is not necessary for the audience to understand the intricate details of the phraseology, which itself relies heavily on an understanding of Medieval Buddhist terminology, much of its humour relies on the audience knowing that this is an almost direct quotation from the Nō. The parodying is evident not only by its inclusion in the vulgar Kyōgen but also by replacing the portentous *ikanaru mono zo* with the colloquial *to iu wo taso or to wa tare diya*. The priest in the Nō play successfully conquers the vengeful spirit unlike his Kyōgen counterpart further marking this as a parody, which functions similarly to *Semi* and *Tako*.

Jay Rubin (1993:514-55) asserts that the chant itself is not amusing and that the humour relies on the audience’s realisation that this is a parody but, I suggest, a hidden level of humour exists in these lines. Part of the humour undoubtedly arises from the incongruity of the *yamabushi* reality compared to his self-interpretation coupled with the parodic intonation of phrases like *fushigi/kushiki no mado e* (“in front of my mysterious/Nine Signs window”) which hint at a solemnity seldom found in Kyōgen. Humour, however, can also be derived from an alternative interpretation of the homophonous spoken words. The word *jyou* in *jyuujyou* (十帖・十乗) acquires varying interpretations depending on the Kanji used to write it; whereas *帖* is the

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50 The text of the Nō play reads: 「九識の窓の前。十乗の床のほとりに。瑜伽の法水をたたへ。三密の月を澄ます所に。案内申さんとは如何なる者ぞ」 (“kushiki no mado no mae. jyuujyou no yuka no hotori ni. yuga no hossui wo tata e. sammitsu no tsuki wo sumasu tokoro ni. annai mousan to wa ikanaru mono zo”, Owada, 1907).
51 On this point see Rubin (1993:514-55) who suggests that the audience would recognise this as a Nō piece realising that it is a parody. He believes that the colloquial language reinforces to the audience that this is a parody.
53 Although the audience are unaware of what will happen at this point, an unfavourable ending can be inferred and even encouraged due to the repetitive and stereotypical formula of Kyōgen. The passages in *Fukuro Yamabushi* and *Kusabira* are highly similar, thus knowledge of the one play would undoubtedly enhance and encourage expectations when viewing the other.
counter for a quire of paper, 乗 can also mean “raised to the power of n” as in *kyuu no nijyou*  (九の二乗) or “nine raised to the power of two” or “nine squared”. A traditional Japanese home is also measured in *jyou*  (畳) with a 十畳 room being a “room measuring ten tatami mats”. When spoken, these very different words all sound exactly the same. Occurring with *yuka* which means “floor” would, I suggest, encourage, amongst the audience, the image of a tatami-floored home. In actual fact, the spoken *jyuujyou no yuka no hotori ni* (“in the vicinity of my room of Ten Concentrations/Vehicles”) has a very similar meaning to “close to my room measuring ten tatami mats”. As a ten tatami mat room is not a particularly large one this can perhaps be regarded as a further hint at the inconsequentiality of the *yamabushi*.

Punning in this manner is fairly common in Kyōgen as has already been noted and there seems no reason to dismiss such a pun here simply because the phrase is also a direct parody. In *Tako*, whilst the play was a clear parody of Nō, much of the humour revolved around the reinterpretation of the priest’s prayer which replaced *namu* with *nama* to create the image of a raw octopus. In this manner, the audience are encouraged to laugh at what would ordinarily be regarded as awe-inspiring *yamabushi* incantations.

Tanikawa’s modernized Japanese version of *Kusabira* (Betsuyaku and Tanikawa, 1993:260-69) supports this interpretation of the chant and demonstrates, more overtly, a means by which a serious priest like the *yamabushi* can be reduced to a figure of fun.

Tanikawa’s interpretation of the same passage reads:

♪mimi ni wa nagareru mizu no oto, hana ni wa shoppai mizuppana, me ni wa toutoi hotokesama, karada to kuchi to kokoro wo shizume, ware wo wasurete majinai tonae…..♪teiru tokoro e, yattekita no wa ittai doko no doitsuda?
(Betsuyaku and Tanigawa, 1993:261)
the sound of water flowing in my ears, from my nose a salty dribble, in front of
my eyes – the Buddha, calming both mouth and heart, forgetting oneself and
chanting the spell, while I am in the middle of this, who is it who came here?

In his accompanying notes Tanikawa explains that although the prayer itself is serious
it is simple to transform this into humorous sentences. One example of how he
demonstrates this is by his use of *mizuppana* (水っ洟) which means literally “a running
nose” instead of *hossui* a word which emphasised the purity of the water used by the
*yamabushi*. Clearly Tanikawa’s interpretation is an amusing one yet it still remains true
to the original chant, which, in a more subtle manner, also reflected the disturbance of
the meditations of the *yamabushi*. Tanikawa’s *doitsuda* is perhaps even more informal
than *tare diya* or *taso* and is certainly more modern. His updated interpretation has the
added advantage of dispensing with the complex terminology of the original, allowing
the modern reader to understand instantly both the function and meaning of the passage.
It turns the awe-inspiring *yamabushi* of reality into a comedic figure of fun.

The incantations which the *yamabushi* chant to exorcise the crab, owl and mushroom
(and, in the case of *Inu Yamabushi* (The Dog and the Mountain Priest) to quiet the dog)
are also ineffective nonsense:

sore yamabushi to ippa, yama ni okifusu niyotte no yamabushi nari

(Kaki Yamabushi, Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:377)

yamabushi to mousu wa, yama ni neoki wo suru hodoni yamabushi to naduku

(Fukuro Yamabushi, Tsukamoto, 1930:25)

sore yamabushi to ippa, wa yama ni okifusu ni yotte yamabushi nari

(Inu Yamabushi, Tsukamoto, 1930:181).
These three sentences can be almost identically translated “as for a man called a yamabushi, he’s a man who sleeps and wakes in the mountains, that’s why he’s called a yamabushi”. Far from being powerful spells, they are mere definitions of the term yamabushi. Similarly formulated explanations of the headdress worn by and the prayer beads used by yamabushi follow. Although the priests boast that their spells will exorcise the spirits due to their potency, these “spells” are clearly not mysterious or other-worldly, being in fact, no more than dictionary definitions.

Once these first “spells” fail, the yamabushi resort to more powerful incantations chanting, boron, boron, boron and i ro ha ni ho he to.\textsuperscript{54} As has been noted by several commentators on Kyōgen\textsuperscript{55} this is sheer nonsense. Kominz (2007:240) points out that the word boron actually means “absurd, irresponsible utterances” while Rubin (1993:514) calls it “a meaningless bunch of resonant syllables”. In addition, the phrase i ro ha ni ho he to is a traditional means of teaching Japanese children to read the syllabary. The flavour of this chant is perfectly captured in this translation,

“[n]o matter how deeply laced with evil, if I apply this magic formula and offer the A, B, C, of prayers, surely the mushrooms would not D-E-F-Y me”.  
(McKinnon, 1968:49)\textsuperscript{56}

When viewed like this, it is little wonder that the “spells” fail, as the yamabushi are simply chanting the Japanese syllabary at the spirits. Tanikawa (Betsuyaku and Tanikawa, 1993:265) updates this for the modern reader by making the Kusabira yamabushi chant the names of different types of mushrooms: matsutake, shiitake,
himetake, ikuchi and shimeji, a device which works equally as well at portraying the charlatan nature of the yamabushi.

In this way, the two art-forms show a similarity in the manner in which boasts concerning physical and mental abilities are expressed. In both cases the boasting can be discerned as parodying the reality of the soldier and priest in their respective societies, often through an apparently deliberate nonsensicalisation of real exorcism chants and military accomplishments. The soldier’s exaggeration of his military feats coupled with the absurd chants of the mountain priest appear to accomplish the same aim – that of parodying their real-life counterparts. In doing so, the comic soldiers and priests collude in their own humiliation since they provide the audience and the other characters with a means to ridicule and laugh at them.

c) Exceptional Qualities

A third area in which the soldier and priest engage in boasting is that which emphasises qualities which mark them as distinct from ordinary men. In Roman comedy this ranges from boasts regarding sexual prowess to boasts about exceptional wit, whilst, in Kyōgen, it revolves around emphasising the priest’s outstanding medical and priestly abilities. Pyrgopolynices is one such soldier. He readily boasts about his sexual desirability, but his own lust is quickly exposed in his readiness to be tricked, by Palaestrio, into believing that both the fake wife of his next-door neighbour and her maid are burning with desire for him (Mil.959-990, 991ff. and 1216ff.). Pyrgopolynices is so convinced of his own irresistibility that when Milphidippa (the maid) addresses

57 Traill (2005) argues that Pyrgopolynices is meant to be seen as Phaon, and that the whole infatuation scene is a Sapphic parody. On this point see also Sharrock (2009:227).
him with *pulcher, salue* (“hello, Handsome!” *Mil*.1037) he remarks, *meum cognomentum commemorauit* (“she remembered my name” *Mil*.1038). More important is the fact that the soldier appears to truly believe these exaggerations, readily accepting Acroteleutium’s claim that she is a “lucky woman” (*Mil*.1223) because he will meet with her. Consequently, he marks himself as not only a braggart, but a gullible braggart; one unable to distinguish between fact and fantasy. As MacCary remarks, “[h]is self-deception is so complete and so overwhelming that one could pity him if he were only believable” (1972:296). This overwhelmingly confident self-belief serves to depict the soldier as a figure of fun since the audience is aware of the reality of the situation and know that the other characters do not consider the soldier at all irresistible.

Ultimately it is Pyrgopolynices’s unbridled lust which precipitates his humiliation and almost results in his castration. His vainglorious self-belief renders him helpless under the machinations of Palaestrio. As the unnamed *puer* declares,

> in statu stat senex,  
> ut adoriatur moechum, qui formast ferox,  
> qui omnis se amare credit, quaeque aspexerit  
> mulier: eum oderunt qua uiri qua mulieres.  
> (*Mil*.1389-1392)

> the old man waits in position that he might assail the adulterer who is arrogant about his beauty; who believes that every woman who looks upon him loves him: they hate him both men and women.

Pyrgopolynices is so convinced of his own irresistibility that he is unable to discern that the convenient discovery of the neighbour’s wife is only a ploy designed to free

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58 Traill (2005:528) suggests that the soldier’s desire for all women marks him as a figure of ridicule. See also MacCary (1972:296).

59 On Pyrgopolynices’ lust see also Filoche (2007:59-60).
Philocomasium and Palaestrio. Not only is the soldier exposed as deluded but also he is revealed to be a coward. When captured by Periplectomenus (the gentleman whose “wife” he has made advances to), like a coward he begs for not only his life but his manhood. Whilst he ultimately retains both of these, he is forced to leave behind his tunic, military cloak and sword (Mil.1423). In surrendering these he yields the very elements which comprise his identity, relinquishing that which defines him as a soldier. In addition he is forced to recognise the justness of his punishment and to interpret events philosophically (Mil.1436-437).

Similar to Pyrgopolynices’ misguided belief in his sexual desirability is Thraso’s (Eunuchus) belief in his exceptional wit. Unusually for a Roman comedic soldier he prefers to exhibit his wit rather than his military exploits, but the function and end result of this boasting is similar to that of Pyrgopolynices. Thraso boasts that he asked a man whether he was “fierce” because he “is in charge of beasts” (eon es ferox quia habes imperium in beluas?, Eu.415). He is encouraged in his boasts by the parasite Gnatho who claims that Thraso “slaughtered the man” (Eu.417), although this is clearly a different kind of slaughtering to that typically associated with soldiers. Thraso also claims that when a Rhodian youth began to mock him and latch onto his girl he rebuked him with “quid ais” inquam homini “inpudens ?/lepu’ tute’s, pulpamentum quaeris?” (“‘what are you doing, impudent one?’ I said to the man, ‘do you a hare seek meat?’”, Eu.425-26). John Barsby (1999a:163-64) elaborates that this phrase was a negative one which suggested searching for something in someone else which is to be found in yourself. He suggests that Thraso is intimating that the youth is desirable and

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60 On this point see Brothers (2000:34-5). See also Barsby (1999a:157) and Duckworth (1994:265).
61 See Barsby (1999a:162) on the meaning of iugularas hominem.
62 pulpamentum are delicacies in the form of meat, served as hors-d’oeuvres (see also Barsby, 1999a:163).
therefore should not be seeking a girl of his own. Thraso states that everyone who heard him “died laughing” and all feared him and his wit (Eu.432-33). This is clearly a different kind of fear than that usually evoked by images of a soldier as it is one of the tongue rather than the sword. Although these boasts are potentially more believable than those of the other braggart soldiers they are clearly not great examples of a brilliant wit. In fact, the reverse is true. Thraso is recycling old jokes and ancient witticisms like a poor comedian (which can itself be a kind of comedy), and this is likely to have been well-known by a contemporary audience. Similar to other braggart soldiers, however, he appears incapable of distinguishing when he is being ridiculed and seems to believe that he really does possess a supreme wit.

The mountain priests of Kyōgen also engage in boasting about their exceptional abilities but these are often more job-related than those of the braggart soldier, referring to the priests’ healing abilities. For example, in Kusabira, the yamabushi asserts that he was capable of completely curing a sick man but, because he judged that it was better for him to recover gradually, he refrained (Betsuyaku and Tanigawa, 1993:262 and McKinnon, 1968:46-7). If this fallacy is designed to increase his prestige it apparently works as the audience learn that the “patient”, due to his partial recovery, is now an even firmer believer in the yamabushi (Betsuyaku and Tanigawa, 1993:262-3 and McKinnon, 1968:47).

Barsby’s (1999a:164) commentary indicates that despite Thraso’s apparent belief that this is a new joke, it is in fact an old one and one with which the audience would most likely be well-acquainted. Wright (1974:24-6) compares Plautus’ phrase with a near identical comic fragment of Andronias. He states (1974:25) that it is “clearly a Greek proverb quoted and explained by Diogenianus”. Sharrock (2009:164) comments on the extra humour derived from the applicability of this joke to Thraso, himself. On the subject of jokes of repetition see Sharrock (2009:164-65).
There is also an emphasis on the individual priest’s renown and on his social importance. In *Kaki Yamabushi* (The Mountain Priest and the Persimmon) the yamabushi describes himself as a tattool yamabushi (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:372) or a “highly respected/highly valued yamabushi” notwithstanding the fact that he has just been caught, *in flagrante delicto*, stealing persimmons. A similar situation can be discerned in *Fukuro Yamabushi* where the yamabushi boasts of his abilities (*kahodo tattoki yamabushi ga, hitoinori inoru mono naraba nado ka kitoku no nakaran*,”a highly prized yamabushi such as I am, if I perform one prayer, the result must be commendable”, Tsukamoto, 1930:26). In both cases, however, the priests’ incantations are revealed as futile, and, in the case of *Fukuro Yamabushi*, result in the spread of the curse to the afflicted man’s brother and the yamabushi himself. Like the braggart soldiers however, these priests appear to truly believe their own claims. The priest in *Kaki Yamabushi* is convinced that his incantations have worked and that the farmer has been paralysed. His confidence appears to be a direct result of his belief in his own renowned reputation (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 2001:372). Thus, when the truth is revealed, the humiliation of the yamabushi is more complete because even his self-belief is punctured. In this manner, the similarity in types of boasts and forms of boasting favoured by and engaged in by braggart soldiers and boastful priests in both comedic forms, together with the similarity in exposure techniques, which typically result in the character’s humiliation, suggest a similarity of purpose and function in the two character roles. I suggest that this motivation relates to anxiety-alleviation and role of humiliation within this.

### iii) Humiliation as Anxiety-Alleviation
As has been demonstrated, the boasting of the yamabushi and braggart soldier only serve to accentuate their eventual disgrace and humiliation. Their over-exaggerated claims and ridiculous self-belief generate a farcical tone which encourages the extinguishing of apprehension in the ranks of the audience. It might also be said that the elaborated and embroidered claims of the two character types, being so completely removed from reality, provide a hint as to the eventual humiliation of the respective characters. At the beginning of these plays, however, these characters also reflect an element of awe and fear. For instance, Thraso’s wealth “makes him a dangerous rival for the young Athenian Phaedria” (Brown, 2004:2). Pyrgopolynices too starts the play in a strong position, possessing both wealth and the girl, whilst the very fact of consulting a yamabushi (Kusabira and Fukuro Yamabushi) demonstrates the deference according to this rank in real society. Any awe surrounding the characters is, however, quickly dissipated by the way in which they are depicted on-stage.

The sheer risibility of the yamabushi chanting and the unbelievable nature of the soldiers’ boasting coupled with their cowardly humiliation frames the audience’s reactions in such a way that it encourages the negation of any fears which they might hold pertaining to soldiers or yamabushi. Thus, “exalted” characters such as Thraso and Therapontigonus find themselves fooled and ridiculed by tricky slaves. Even in Negi Yamabushi (The Senior Priest and the Mountain Priest) the supposedly unbeatable yamabushi is defeated by a lowly negi no doubt causing great hilarity amongst the audience. In reality, however, the overlapping of the yamabushi and tengu and the

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65 Sutton (1980:164-65) comments on the desire to see arrogant authority figures deflated.
66 Brown also asserts that his wealth gives the soldier an advantage over the adulescens who is usually dependant for money on his father, and is usually portrayed as penniless.
67 The most common meaning of negi is “leek”. In this case, however, a negi is a senior Shinto priest.
68 On this point seeToida (1973:122). Inu Yamabushi (The Dog and the Mountain Priest) is a very similar play.
yamabushi ability to exorcise spirits meant that the yamabushi was a feared and respected person, whilst the wealth and military prowess of the mercenary soldier meant that he was also accorded a certain amount of respect.

The reality of the feelings evoked by those hearing yamabushi chants would most likely have been the exact opposite to that suggested by the buffoonery of the Kyōgen yamabushi. The form of Sanskrit which the yamabushi employed would have been unintelligible to the majority of the population meaning, in essence, that the chants could signify anything. They could be spells to exorcise spirits but they could just as equally have been curses against the onlookers. In this respect, the yamabushi was a being to be feared and revered. Similarly, the military prowess of the professional soldier and the importance accorded to military service in Rome would likely have ensured his respect in real life. In Roman comedy and Kyōgen, however, soldiers and priests are typically exposed to ridicule and humiliation in a manner which helps to negate any anxiety surrounding them. The ridiculing and parodying of the soldier and the yamabushi by their own followers encourages the audience to forget their fears. This may be particularly true of Roman comedy if the braggart soldier represents a parody of a real-life soldier as has been suggested by some critics.69

In the Miles Gloriosus the audience are encouraged to laugh at Pyrgopolynices’ discomfort and to interpret it as a fitting judgment on his lustful, arrogant behaviour. The soldier is exposed as a laughable, gullible, self-deluded nonentity who loses not only his girl(s) but also his identity. Pyrgopolynices, however, is not noticeably

69 Grimal (1968:129-44) suggests that Pyrgopolynices may reflect the soldier, Demetrius Poliorketes as Poliorketes was renowned for his desire for women. On this point see also Ehrman (1993:274) and Traill (2005:521n18).
distressed by events, as his final philosophical comments depict, and his final remarks beg the question of what exactly it is that he has learnt from his experience. Is it to trust his slaves less? Is it that he is not as irresistible as he thought? Is it that he should avoid “married” women? Although he has discovered Palaestrio’s deception, the full enormity of the plan has eluded him as he remains ignorant regarding Periplectomenus’ role in events. Thus he ends the play still partly deluded suggesting that any lesson which he might believe that he has learnt has only been partially assimilated. The audience have a greater awareness of the facts and are able to distinguish that in retaining his belief that the woman is married, Pyrgopolynices has misinterpreted events. This exposure of the soldier and his gullibility and self-delusions encourage the audience to forget their anxieties and incite laughter rather than fear. As Vincent Cleary (1972:305) acknowledges, “[t]here are many monkeys in the play, but the soldier is the biggest monkey of them all.”

The endings of Kaki and Kani Yamabushi are similar in as much as they depict the humiliation of the yamabushi character and the removal of all fear surrounding him. In Kani Yamabushi, the yamabushi has his ear pinched by the crab in the same way as his assistant whom he has been attempting to free. Thus he is revealed as powerless and undeserving of his acolyte’s earlier praise. Clearly this is no Fudō Myōō. In Kaki Yamabushi the yamabushi believes that he is controlling the farmer whose persimmons he has been stealing. In reality, the farmer is laughing at his stupidity and only pretending to acquiesce to the priest’s demands. In both these Kyōgen the audience are encouraged to forget their fears of the yamabushi and to relax in their impotence in

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70 See also Moore’s (1998:77) points regarding Pyrgopolynices’ flawed understanding of events.
71 On this point see Morley (1993:9).
much the same manner as the Roman audience appear to have been encouraged to forget their fears of soldiers through the humiliation of the braggart soldier.\textsuperscript{72}

The conclusion to Terence’s \textit{Eunuchus} follows a slightly different format and Thraso can be seen as somewhat pitiful in the way in which his naivety is exploited at the end of the play (\textit{Eu}.1075-080). Although Thraso’s siege against Thais reveals him to be a coward who would rather flee than engage, he does not lose in the same manner as Pyrgopolynices. Thraso retains a share in Thais at the play’s conclusion (\textit{Eu}.1088-092)\textsuperscript{73} and, since he remains convinced of his desirability (\textit{Eu}.1091-092), appears to have learnt nothing from events. Thraso begins his siege of Thais’ house with a declaration that he would rather die than accept the indignity which she has thrust upon him (\textit{Eu}.771-72). However, after an extremely tame siege,\textsuperscript{74} he dismisses his army and later declares his intention to unconditionally surrender to the courtesan (\textit{ut Thaidi me dedam et faciam quod iubeat}, \textit{Eu}.1025) in order to retain her affections. Thus his earlier threats are exposed as worthless bluster. The audience have already witnessed his cowardly nature in the description of the battle-lines where Thraso keeps himself at the rear, protected by his troops (\textit{Eu}.782).\textsuperscript{75} Despite advancing brave threats as to what he will do if Thais refuses to submit to him (\textit{Eu}.772ff.) Thraso leaves the courtesan’s house untouched. Confronted by Thais’ scorn and refusal to submit he seems unsure of what to do next. He readily agrees with Gnatho’s plan that he return home and wait for Thais to come to him. This exposes his earlier boasts of attacking the house and seizing the courtesan as empty threats, an opinion which is further reinforced by his subsequent

\textsuperscript{72} See also Morley (1993:48).
\textsuperscript{73} James (1998:46) suggests that the retention of a share in Thais is deliberate on the part of Terence, encouraging the audience to “think more carefully about what they have seen” particularly in the area of rape and “masculine sexuality”. Sharrock (2009:232) in her discussion of “Sapphic motifs” in the \textit{Eunuchus} reflects on this uncomfortable ending.
\textsuperscript{74} See Frangouli\c{d}is (1994:587).
\textsuperscript{75} See also Frangouli\c{d}is (1994:590-91).
surrender to her wishes. Indeed, in the end, Thraso is reduced to accepting only a partial share in a woman whom he initially declared belonged entirely to him.\textsuperscript{76} He fails to recognise that he is being used by all and sundry and that he is considered an object of scorn and contempt, preferring to dwell in the illusion that he is loved by all (\textit{Eu.}1092). Despite his inability to acknowledge the truth, however, he is treated less harshly than Pyrgopolynices. It is true that Thraso will pay a heavy price\textsuperscript{77} for his continued dalliance with the courtesan, but ultimately he does obtain his objective which was access to Thais.\textsuperscript{78} In this respect he scores better than Pyrgopolynices who is left with nothing.

The siege of Thais’ house is conducted in such a way as to frame the audience’s response to encourage them to forget their fears of soldiers. Thraso is exposed as a propounder of empty threats and the object of everybody’s scorn. Consequently, it is difficult for the audience to retain any fear of him. His final humiliation epitomises this. He is only allowed a part in the final proceedings because of his wealth, which will be useful to Chaerea and Parmeno, and his ability to provide a good meal for Gnatho. Thraso misunderstands Gnatho’s assurance that he had only to inform the other characters of Thraso’s true qualities (\textit{Eu.}1089-090) as an assurance that he is well-loved.\textsuperscript{79} The audience, however, know better as they have been privy to Gnatho’s conversation with Chaerea and Parmeno. Consequently, they know that the “true qualities” which Gnatho refers to are Thraso’s wealth and gullibility. He is only

\textsuperscript{76} Frangoulidis (1994:593) reflects that “the boastful commander and the arrogant lover of the tales is at the end of the play reduced to a powerless suppliant”.

\textsuperscript{77} See Brothers (2000:35).

\textsuperscript{78} Wright (1974:136-38) also comments on the atypical nature of this play; atypical since it includes the soldier in the “general reconciliation”. He suggests that it reflects Terence’s deliberate rejection of “the traditions and conventions of Roman comedy”. See also Barsby (1999b:22) on the belief that Terence inverts the stock character type in his portrayal of Thraso. Smith (1994:29) suggests that by including Thraso in the finale, Terence “underlines the selfishness of Chaerea” and “focuses the attention of the audience upon a theme that unifies the play” (i.e. self-interest).

\textsuperscript{79} See also Gilmartin (1975:266) on this point.
accepted into the circle for two reasons. First, he is so wealthy that he can assume the financial burden of Thais’ desires and second, he is so stupid that he will not be a threat:

principio et habet quod det et dat nemo largius.  
fatuos est, insulsu’ tardu’, stertit noctes et dies:  
neque istum metuas ne amet mulier: facile pellas ubi velis  
(Eu.1078-080)

firstly, he has money to give and no-one gives more lavishly. He is stupid, boring, slow, he snores both day and night. You need not fear that the woman will love him: You can easily drive him out whenever you wish.

Thus whilst Thraso suffers from the delusion that he is accepted because he is loved, the audience know that he is only to be retained for as long as he remains useful. As Barsby (199a:281) acknowledges, “[t]he final solution is not presented as an act of generosity to him, even though he may think that he has gained by it; it is a just reward for his stupidity, in that he is simply going to be used as a source of finance and amusement (1087).” The treatment of the yamabushi in Kaki Yamabushi shares a similarity with this as, although the priest believes that his chants are working and that the farmer is afraid of him, the reality is that the farmer is only pretending to be afraid in order to mock the priest.

The endings of two of the mountain priest plays, Fukurō Yamabushi and Kusabira, however, are particularly sinister. In Fukurō Yamabushi the yamabushi becomes possessed by the vengeful owl spirit in the same way as the two brothers. In the Ōkura School version edited by Ken Sasano (1943:486) the stage direction states that the two possessed brothers breathe on the yamabushi causing him to also become possessed. The play concludes with the yamabushi crying hohon. hohon and flapping across the
stage. In *Kusabira* the *yamabushi* is surrounded by mushrooms which appear to overpower and destroy him removing him from the stage entirely. In both of these plays the power of the *yamabushi* is revealed as a sham. They are beaten by the very beings which they vowed to exorcise. In one respect, the vanquishment of the *yamabushi* is highly amusing as it emphasises their boasting and bragging, puncturing their pomposity. There is also a frightening aspect to this, however, as the *yamabushi* are not only humiliated but are also destroyed. The *Fukurō yamabushi* does not only fail to exorcise the owl spirit he succumbs to it and thus loses his identity. Once possessed by the spirit he is doomed to wander around believing that he is an owl, in the same manner as the man he came to save, and the frightening question is: who will help him? Similarly, in *Kusabira*, the destruction of the *yamabushi* is assured by the mushrooms that alone remain on the stage having overpowered the foolish priest. These two priests have lost everything as a result of their arrogance and pomposity, even their own identities.

Rubin (1993:513) conjectures that the role of *yamabushi* Kyōgen is “to puncture the arrogance of the overbearing mountain priest, whose greatest pleasure is showing off the magic powers that place him far above the heads of ordinary mortals.” The consequence of this is that the plays encourage the audience to forget the tensions and anxieties which ordinarily surround their interrelations with this group. Correspondingly, the humiliation of the braggart soldier encourages the negation of fear aroused through military might.

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80 Morley (1993:80) suggests that the audience are encouraged to laugh at the *yamabushi* not only because of his failure but also because of his “timidity and cowardice” which “strikes a chord in the audience”.

81 Morley (1993:9) points out that the mountain priest’s powers “do not necessarily fail” but the plays in which the *yamabushi* is victorious, such as *Kagyū*, are the exception. They commonly expose the naivety of Tarō Kaja or another equally naive character. In *Tsuto Yamabushi* (The Mountain Priest and the Straw Bundle) the comedic “victim” is a lunch thief who steals someone’s lunch and attempts to frame the mountain priest.
A further means by which the braggart soldier (but not the Kyōgen priest) may be seen as an anxiety-alleviation device may be evident in his portrayal as a mercenary, and therefore foreign, soldier. It has been advanced that the braggart soldier was regarded by the audience as “another absurd foreign type” (Barsby, 1999a:157). William Anderson (1993:145) concludes that, in comedy, “[t]he principal function of the soldier is to represent a ridiculous and non-Roman kind of soldier and soldiering, at which the entire audience, as Romans, can join in laughing.” The ostensibly Greek setting of Roman comedy tends to support this fictitious portrayal as the Greek army was formed differently to that of the Romans, relying on mercenaries rather than a home-trained native army. The Roman audience were free to laugh at the ridiculing of potentially threatening Roman soldiers because, for the purposes of the play, they are not Roman but Greek (or Carthaginian). For instance, if we consider Terence’s *Eunuchus* (*Eun.* 19-32), Terence makes it clear that his character of the braggart soldier originated from Greek comedy rather than the Roman comedies of Plautus or Naevius. Thraso is not meant to be a Roman soldier but a Greek one.

Consequently, this suggests that laughing at his foibles is unlikely to be interpreted as an affront to any real Roman soldier in the audience because Thraso has already been identified as doubly foreign. Not only is he un-Roman in as much as the plays are set

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82 Barsby considers this an alternative view to that suggested by other critics who claim that the *miles gloriosus* is a “satirical portrait of their own commanders”.

83 The Greek army (and the Carthaginian army) mainly consisted of mercenaries who were well-recompensed for their services. As an example, Hannibal’s forces, although nominally Carthaginian contained a large number of Greek, Numidian, Gaulish and Italian mercenaries (see Nicolet, 1980:93).

84 See the character of Hanno in Plautus’ *Poenulus*.


86 Anderson (1993:145) expostulates the braggart soldier’s main role as “Plautus appeals to Roman solidarity” by deliberately portraying the *miles gloriosus* as un-Roman. Although, as McKechnie (1994:299) acknowledges, “no one gets misled by it into thinking that all the thousands of fourth-century
in Greece but he is also distinguished as un-Greek, being a foreign mercenary. Having said this, the Plautine additions to this role surely suggest that the character holds a distinct and separate relevance to the Roman audience which cannot merely be explained by the knowledge that the character is foreign. This is especially significant if we consider that, since the plays are set in Greece, essentially all the characters are foreign. It seems more plausible to suggest that the character of the braggart soldier directly appealed to the Roman imagination by presenting them with an opportunity to ridicule a figure typically evocative of fear. This is accomplished by portraying the miles gloriosus in a manner which marks him as an outsider and not a member of the community. Thus, the character of the braggart soldier is surely, to a certain extent, a reflection of Roman society itself and of the average Roman’s fears of the might of its military. If we accept this, then a parallel can be drawn with the treatment of the mountain priest in Kyōgen. Whilst the yamabushi is clearly a feature of Japanese society and thus cannot be seen as a foreign character to be ridiculed in the manner that the braggart soldier might be, the character is portrayed as outside of the rest of the community. Such an interpretation is encouraged by the yamabushi’s otherness and itinerant nature which mark him as both outside the community and as different to the ordinary population. This provides not only a means of ridiculing him (outsider vs. community member) but also a potential reason for his humiliation (the negation of the fear of otherness).

mercenaries were like the soldiers in New and Roman comedy” the façade that these are Greek, not Roman soldiers encourages the audience to laugh in safety. 87 This distinction between those within a particular group as opposed to those outside the group is particularly relevant in Japanese society as it encompasses the basic tenets of uchi (inside) and soto (outside). If a person is uchi then they are a member of your circle and the recipients of your loyalty. If a person is soto, however, this obligation no longer exists.
In the manner outlined above, the audience are prompted to laugh at the character of the *miles gloriosus* and, through his very antithesis to the real Roman military commander; they are encouraged to forget their fears and anxieties. Thraso and Pyrgopolynices are revealed as blocking characters that stand in the way of the *adulescentis* and his girl and, as blocking characters, they get their just reward. It would be difficult to fear a character as cowardly as Thraso or as self-deluded as Pyrgopolynices and thus the audience is prompted to laugh at their foibles and to bask in their own superiority and knowledge. Whilst on the surface it appears that Thraso is treated more favourably than Pyrgopolynices this is debateable as, unlike Pyrgopolynices, Thraso remains deluded and is condemned to lose his entire fortune subsidising Thais and, to a certain extent, Phaedria. At least Pyrgopolynices is given the satisfaction of knowing that he has been cheated and tricked, even if he does draw a false moral from it. This is a satisfaction denied his counterpart.

**iv) The Yamabushi and the Reflection of Fear**

It has been suggested that *Fukurō Yamabushi* possesses an even deeper meaning. Yamamoto (1993:60ff.) believes that the play holds a deeper, more fearful meaning than its farcical elements suggest. He asserts that the play reflects the helplessness of the common person in the face of plagues and incurable diseases. Yamamoto points out that deaths from disease were everyday occurrences during the Muromachi period and that the plague in particular was a hopeless disease which caused even the doctors to

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88 Goldberg (1986:16) believes that in Terence’s *Eunuchus* the audience are treated to a “boastful soldier rewarded for his foolishness”.


90 “kono ‘fukuro’ ni wa, motto fukaku osoroshii mono ga aru you ni miete kita no desu”, Yamamoto, 1993:60.
Following this line of reasoning, the *yamabushi* can be regarded as the doctor who is impotent in the face of disease and eventually succumbs to the illness he is trying to treat. In this reading the owl cry assumes a more sinister countenance representing the cry of death\(^{92}\) while the owl spirit itself symbolises disease. If we accept this, the failure of the *yamabushi* acquires another dimension. His failure represents not only his own inadequacies but also the powerlessness of all human beings in the face of nature. Thus the diminished fear relating to *yamabushi* and caused by their impotence may be replaced by an even greater fear relating to powerlessness as a whole. If this is true, it suggests that ultimately there is no release from fear, even in comedy. Fear of the *yamabushi* has been extinguished but this fear has been transposed into an even greater threat. The failure of the *yamabushi* becomes the failure of everybody in the audience to fight against nature.

Whilst this reading may seem rather far-fetched, it is worth noticing a parallel with a modern performance of *Kusabira* shown in the US to an American audience. As the mushrooms are costumed in wide-brimmed, pointed straw hats like those traditionally worn by peasant farmers in the Far East, the audience, when asked for their reactions, reported that the destruction of the *yamabushi* reminded them of the US position in Vietnam.\(^{93}\) This violent reaction on the part of the audience suggests a transposition of the original fear which has been destroyed through farcicality into a greater, deeper fear which is incapable of destruction. Whilst the audience undoubtedly laughed at the antics of the *yamabushi* and his inability to vanquish a simple mushroom, when confronted by the climax of the play another reaction set in, and what was a simple mushroom assumed an entirely different persona. In other words, the fears surrounding

\(^{91}\) On this point see Yamamoto (1993:61).
\(^{92}\) See Yamamoto (1993:61).
\(^{93}\) See Toida (1973:125).
authority figures and their power over their subordinates become transposed into a fear of one’s own powerlessness. In the eyes of the American audience the arrogant yamabushi reflected the powerful USA and their inability to conquer the supposedly less powerful Vietnam (represented in their eyes by the mushroom). Certainly, the audience’s reactions could not have been predicted by the original writer of Kusabira, as the script existed several hundred years before the Vietnam War, viewed, however, by an already frightened population it evoked this current fear. This, perhaps more than any other Kyōgen, suggests that comedy as a reflection of society’s fears is a medium which can assume new forms depending on the time and context. This new form, however, appears only a modern reflection of its original message where the supposedly all-powerful yamabushi was vanquished by the paltry mushroom and depicts the fear of a society turned upside-down.\footnote{Morley (1993:15) states “there is a disturbing lack of distinction made in this period [medieval Japan] between miraculous physical changes and those changes in status brought about by upheavals in society. For the commoner, sudden movement up or down the social scale was as incomprehensible as the depictions in picture scrolls of the period showing people in various stages of transformation: priests turned into snakes, for example, or jealous women into serpents.” Viewed in this light, the absurdity and nonsensicality of the yamabushi Kyōgen can be seen as a simple reflection of the confusion felt by the ordinary man faced with a world that had suddenly gone mad. Morley (1993:80) also suggests that the yamabushi represent the audience’s own failings and that by laughing at them they are laughing at themselves. Whilst there may be some truth to this, it is difficult to see how this can be applied in the cases of Fukurō Yamabushi and Kusabira which, I would suggest, have chilling undertones.}

The deeper meanings sometimes ascribed to the failures of the Kyōgen yamabushi are more difficult to ascribe to the Roman comic portrayal of the boastful soldier, perhaps due to the inclusive nature of Roman comedy which seeks to rehabilitate the comedic scapegoat in an apparent attempt to restore society’s balance. This rehabilitative feature appears to be lacking in the Kyōgen portrayal of comedic yamabushi who seem to act as the receptacle of the audience’s fear, suffering a harsher fate than other Kyōgen comedic butts. The yamabushi seem to undergo a more comprehensive comedic annihilation, reflecting audience fear which is transferable through the ages, in a way
which the *miles gloriosus* cannot compete with. Thus, although both characters can be said to reflect society’s fear, there is a clear distinction between the lengths to which their humiliation is taken.

v) The Importance of Absence

An interesting point worth noting here is that although religious ritual was very important to the Romans,\(^95\) and despite the fact that warriors played a major role in shaping medieval Japan, there are no correlatory examples in either of the two genres. That is to state, that whilst a considerable number of braggart soldiers exist in Roman comedy, there are none in Kyōgen; and whilst there is a substantial repertoire of priest plays in Kyōgen, religious figures play only a minor role in Roman comedy. The only instance of a religious figure in Plautine and Terentian drama which I am aware of is the Priestess in the *Rudens* who is treated with respect by everyone despite her use of archaic language (*Rud*.259-88).\(^96\) Warriors do occasionally appear in Kyōgen, as with the play *Asahina*, but their role is to ridicule and deflate Emma, Lord of the Underworld and they are inevitably victorious.

One suggestion worth entertaining is that the lack of warriors in Kyōgen and the lack of priests in Roman comedy reflect the limits of acceptable comedy in their respective societies. Perhaps they were viewed as *too* revered or sacred to be parodied or ridiculed in comedy? Perhaps the absence of comic priests in Roman comedy reflects the lack of professional priests in Roman society, although this does not explain the lack of comic soldiers in Kyōgen. It is possible that the absence of these characters in these particular

\(^{95}\) On this point see Fraenkel (2007:76-7).

\(^{96}\) On the archaic language of the priestess see Sharrock (2009:213-14)
societies mark a comic taboo. The common presence of warriors in the tragic counterpart to Kyōgen, the Nō, whose plays “were often based on tragic military encounters and often had a theme of retribution in afterlife” (Henshall, 2012:44) might support this theory. In Nō the warrior is typically a serious character who returns, as a ghost, to relate and lament on his earthly existence, marking a complete contrast with Kyōgen characters. Priests, priestesses and prophets are also to be found in Roman tragedy such as Cassandra in Seneca’s *Agamemnon* and the characters of Calchas (*Troades*) and Tiresias (*Oedipus*). This suggests that in both societies there was no anathema to depicting these characters in drama *per se* and perhaps suggests that it is their portrayal in comedy, where they might be expected to be subject to ridicule and humiliation, which presents the problem. A detailed examination of these two character types as they are portrayed in both tragedy and comedy together with a comparison of their treatment in their respective societies would, no doubt, be beneficial in addressing this question but, such an examination, is beyond the scope of this thesis.

**Conclusion**

As we have seen, the fear that soldiers and priests undoubtedly inspired in reality is negated in Roman comedy and Kyōgen in two main ways. First, through the bragging/boasting of the soldier/mountain priest which is embellished and exaggerated to the point of fantasy; second, through the complete failure of these characters to deliver on their promises/threats. Thus the braggart soldier proves to be a coward, ineffectual in battle: the *yamabushi’s* magic rites are ineffective often inadvertently exacerbating the situation. In both instances the characters’ suffering occurs as a direct result of their own inadequacies.
The endings to *Fukuro Yamabushi* and *Kusabira* suggest that the yamabushi are punished far more severely than the braggart soldiers of Roman comedy who still retain the majority of their wealth and their identity even after they have been humiliated and ridiculed. Whilst they may be objects of scorn, their identities remain intact and they are free to continue with their lives. Although Pyrgopolynices is threatened with castration, this act is never carried out and he ends the play physically intact. The same cannot be said of the *Kusabira yamabushi* who is physically destroyed, or the *Fukuro yamabushi* whose mental capacity is severely diminished. The downfall of the yamabushi is complete and absolute. As such, they are unable to learn any lessons from their failure because they no longer even exist. Thus, although the audience are encouraged to laugh at the failure of the priests, an element of fear must still remain. Whilst the audience may be persuaded to relinquish their fears regarding the powers of yamabushi, the total destruction of these priests must surely leave a chilling afterimage. Is their total annihilation a fair and just price to pay for their arrogance and weakness?

Considering these two types of character enables us to gain a clearer understanding of what is happening with the character of the braggart soldier in Plautine and Terentian drama. In the *Miles Gloriosus* and the *Eunuchus* we have the same basic premise, the defeat and humiliation of a supposedly all-powerful and superior character by a physically weaker and inferior character. In Roman comedy, however, the defeated character is more easily forgiven and re-integrated into society than in Japanese comedy. The soldier in Roman comedy, once his defeat has been assured and the audience have laughed at his failure, is allowed some form of re-integration into society. Pyrgopolynices, although claiming to have learnt a lesson, is free to continue in much the same way as before, whilst Thraso is seemingly rewarded for his cowardice. His
Japanese counterpart is given no such quarter and a climax which is, on the surface, fear-vanquishing, assumes a more powerful, sinister meaning.
Introduction

Traditionally women have often been portrayed as comic butts – the object of male misogyny – in Western comic literature.\(^1\) Examples range from the excessively bibulous and adulterous women depicted in Old Comedy,\(^2\) the shrewish women of Medieval and Renaissance Europe,\(^3\) to the comedies of Molière.\(^4\) A similar misogynistic bent is evident in Kyōgen. All but two extant Roman comedies of Plautus and Terence feature women (93%) which provides a solid foundation for examining Roman comic misogyny, from which only the *virgo* appears immune. Slave-women and prostitutes\(^5\) are typical recipients of male hatred, particularly when they act contrary to the interests of the male characters. Scapha (Most.157-307), who is made the subject of comic invective by Philolaches when she upbraids Philocomasium for her faithfulness towards him, marks one example; the vilified prostitutes of *Truculentus*, Phronesium and Astaphium, provide another. Perhaps the most interesting recipient of Roman, comic, male misogyny, however, is the established, married woman who is, typically, verbally abused by her husband.\(^6\) A significant proportion of Plautine and Terentian comedy (8 out of 27 plays) features *matrona* characters (44%) all of whom suffer some abuse from male characters, often their husbands.

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2. See Bobrick (1997:194 fn.15) on the women’s admissions at the Assembly in Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazusae* (331-51) which include adultery and excessive drinking.
4. Johnson (1987:79) provides an insightful refutation of feminism in Molière’s *L’Ecole des Femmes*. She suggests that, despite an ostensibly feminist approach, “Molière’s feminism is actually a form of benevolent paternalism”.
5. Duncan (2006:124-59) discusses the role of prostitutes in Roman comedy with especial reference to the distinction between “good” and “bad” prostitutes.
6. Braund (2005:46-7) remarks that abuse of the wife is typically conducted in her absence or perceived absence, except for the case of *Menacehmi* where the abuse is directed to the wife.
Although women are less prominent overall in Kyōgen, a substantial proportion of the corpus is specifically classed as *onna* (women) plays (11%, 28 out of 257 plays), whilst the plots of other plays including *Saruzatō* (The Blind man and the Monkey), a *Zatō* play and *Oba ga Sake* (The Aunt and the Sake) also revolve around women. In the majority of cases, misogynistic behaviour targets more mature, married women and, as with Roman comedy, is typically indulged in by the husband (although he is sometimes replaced by another male relative e.g. the nephew in *Oba ga Sake*). This contrasts with plays featuring recently-married (and, by implication, much younger) women where the comic butt is typically the bridegroom.

This prolific invective against married women found both in Roman comedy and Kyōgen is interesting since it appears ostensibly to undermine the institution of marriage. This is particularly the case in Roman comedy where young love acts as the driving force for the majority of plays and contrasts sharply with the relations between already married couples. It is less overt in Kyōgen where young love, despite its importance in the Classical Court Literature of the Heian period, is notable only by its absence. As I demonstrate, Kyōgen does, however, emphasise the desirability of continued marital relations. In both comedic forms a curious juxtaposition exists

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7 These figures relate to the categorization of Kyōgen plays in Kobayashi et al. (2002:99-240). It does not include the designation of “new plays” i.e. those written during the twentieth century. Morley (1988:45) identifies a slightly higher percentage of women plays (39 “woman” plays of which she identifies 23 as being “couple plays” in the Izumi school, and 17 “couple plays” out of a total of 39 “woman” plays in the Ōkura school but she does not identify her source.

8 See *Saruzatō* and *Mizukumimukō* in particular.

9 See *Genji Monogatari* (The Tale of Genji) and the Nō genre. Walker (1979:31-65) compares the stylised love poetry of the Heian Age, such as the *Kokinshū* (a collection of love poetry) and *Izumi Shikibu Nikki* (The Diary of Izumi Shikibu) with the love poetry of Catullus and Ovid.
between the necessity for marriage and the undesirability of a wife\textsuperscript{10} where “men find it difficult to live with wives but impossible to live without them” (Braund (2005:43)).

This opinion is succinctly summarised by Ágnes Heller’s statement (2005:60), “[m]arriage is desirable as long as it has not yet happened; it becomes a burden only after it is actualized.” The concept that it is the act of marriage itself which is responsible for furnishing social tension between man and woman suggests a link between comic, misogynist invective and the psychoanalytical theory relating to fear of the female and castration-anxiety. This theory links male misogyny with a fear of female dominance leading to male emasculation (whether real or symbolic).\textsuperscript{11} Thus, comic misogyny might be said to reflect contemporary male anxieties regarding dominant women and the threat which they were believed to pose to male authority. As Peter Green remarks, “if the dominant woman was not a problem, why does she so constantly reappear, in tragedy and comedy alike” (1998:144). Such a reading would also help to answer Parker’s question of why Roman male anxiety appears particularly directed towards matrons rather than older, widowed or more vulnerable females (Parker, 2007:84), whom we might reasonably expect to have been easy targets for misogyny and false accusations. This can be explained if the matron is psychologically perceived as presenting a threat to male power, a threat which cannot be posed by vulnerable and socially insignificant females.

\textsuperscript{10} Braund (2005:42-3), in her analysis of Q. Caecilius Metellus Macedonius’ speech of 131 B.C., implies that in Roman Comedy, at least, this forms part of a wider social problem affecting Roman Republican society which appears to reflect a fear of marriage.

\textsuperscript{11} Oliensis (2009) employs Freudian psychoanalysis to analyse Latin poetry, particularly that of Ovid and Virgil. Rogers (1966) presents a psychoanalytic history of misogyny in Western literature. Gilmore (2001) adopts a more inclusive approach in his examination of misogyny as a world-wide phenomenon which is not only a product of castration-anxiety but is part of a near-universal psychological male mindset which stems from “unresolved inner conflicts” (Gilmore, 2001:14) which are not limited to an Oedipal complex but are also rooted in regressive conflicts.
Equally important is the question of whether such comic misogyny is a destructive or reinforcing influence on society. David Christenson (2000:35-6) states

“[a]propos of *Am.*, the fundamental institution of marriage has been a seemingly universal target of humour throughout the world. As noted above, theorists debate whether this type of laughter is socially destructive or simply reinforces the existing social order. Both are possible in given situations and societies, but the latter seems to apply more accurately to Plautine comedy”.

As I demonstrate, Roman comedy often concludes with the reintegration of the husband into the household (as with the endings to *Asinaria*, *Casina* and *Mercator*) whilst the endings of Kyōgen women plays typically reinforce the married relationship.¹² This suggests, as Christenson implies, a reinforcement of established social order. It is not clear, however, to what extent this reintegration relieves the tension caused by, as Susanna Braund discusses, “the spectre of divorce, which in effect shifts the goal from achieving marriage to retrieving it” (2005:39). There does, however, appear to be a suggestion that comic misogyny functions to reinforce masculine authority and to reassure the male psyche in its emphasis and reinforcement of the *status quo*. It also raises the question of whether women (particularly married women) in Plautine society and Medieval Japanese society were perceived, by males, to possess a greater degree of emancipation than historical evidence might suggest was the reality. Howard Bloch (1989:21n.14) in his discussion of medieval misogynistic attitudes has suggested that,

“if misogyny is the symptom of men’s fear of the real power of women, then the more misogynistic a culture is, the stronger females can be assumed to be; in this way antifeminism represents not the derogation of women but an expression of their material enfranchisement”.

I wonder, however, if this is less a reality and more a psychological assumption, where a stronger fear of (and thus belief in) women’s power translates into more overt

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¹² Konstan (1983:31) and Slater (1985:68n.8) both reflect on this viewpoint.
misogyny. Wives might reasonably be perceived as more influential and as possessing more scope for domination and usurpation of male authority (than the unmarried or widowed women) by reason of their more secure position in society (particularly in the case of the *uxor dotata* whose dowry appears to have been resented because it was perceived to provide the woman with greater freedom and independence). Thus married women may be particularly susceptible to comic invective. In consequence, this chapter will focus on misogynistic behaviour towards wives and its implications as a fear-controlling mechanism. I suggest that in the case of Roman comedy misogynistic incidences, although not necessarily reliant on a particular political situation, can be related to the perceived growing enfranchisement of wives whilst, in the case of Kyōgen, they can be considered in terms of the ambiguous economic and social role of Japanese wives during this period.

i) The Historical Situation of Roman and Japanese Wives

Fear in Roman society over the empowerment of wives was a growing concern at the time of Plautus. As Annalisa Rei (1998:92-108) demonstrates, the new form of marriage — marriage *sine manu* — where the woman (in theory) retained her dowry in whole, and where she or her father could demand it back in the case of divorce, potentially provided wealthy women with an unprecedented position in Roman society. As Braund (2005:48 and 49), see also Boëls-Janssen (2002:129), Dixon (2001:33-4 and 39). On Greco-Roman negative attitudes to marriage in educational texts see Hawley (2005:26-38). Related to this point are Halliday’s reflections on the history of male sexuality anxieties in general, “[h]owever, whenever there has been any sort of movement for female emancipation we have tended to find group male sexual disorientation. The plethora of cuckold jokes in comedy may well manifest a fear of female emancipation.” (Halliday, 2001:105).
Whereas marriage *cum manu* had placed women under the *potestas* of their husbands, marriage *sine manu* left them under the protection of their fathers or, if their fathers were deceased, theoretically enabled their independence. The concept of marriage, itself, provides a motif for male anxiety as a woman was “still a stranger in her marriage family” (Parker, 2007:85) and a threat to her new family. Moreover, for the first time a Roman woman could initiate divorce proceedings. The tension caused by these laws is apparent in the attempts to pass legislation to control these new rights. One example is the Vaconian Law (169 B.C.) which limited the amount of property that could be inherited by women from the first census class. Another concerns the successful attempt to repeal the *Lex Oppia*. Moore (1998:160) suggests that not only were Roman men anxious about their wives’ social positions, but also about marriage itself, with anxiety apparently centring around the fear that a man with a dowered wife is at risk of becoming her slave. This is in direct contrast to the situation in Early Rome where a husband held complete power over his wife who, without property or money, was entirely dependent on her husband for her survival and well-being.

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16 See Rei (1998:94-9), Treggiari (1991:324-26 and 441-45), Konstan (1977:317) and Schuhmann (1977:47-9) on this point. See also Fredershausen’s (1912:236) discussion of *Stich*.204, where he explores the similarities between Roman and Greek divorce customs as evidenced in Plautus.


18 Rei (1998:98). Fredershausen (1912:236) citing Gellius IV.3 and XVII.21,44 states that the first divorce in Rome had occurred only shortly before the time of Plautus (“Lesen wir doch bei Gellius (IV 3, XVII 21, 44), daß erst kurz vor Plautus’ Zeit in Rom die erste Ehescheidung vorgekommen sei”).


21 Hunter (1985:98). Segal (2001:190) suggests that the worst type of wife is a dowered one whilst Sharrock (2009:44) comments on the fact that the *uxor dotata* always means trouble in Roman comedy. Culham (1982:793) suggests that the resentment over dowered women reached a peak during the Hannibalic War when women assumed more visible positions in society. On resentment towards women amongst Roman middle-class males see Bloch (1991:76).

22 Beacham (1991:13). Segal (2001:203), however, states that a man still had the right to have his wife put to death for adultery. A similar situation existed in Japanese society as Hane (2000:43-4) demonstrates in his discussion of sources from the early Tokugawa period (1600 onwards).

23 Konstan (1978:221) suggests that the problems in Plautus’ *Asinaria* have at their heart “the moral disorder introduced into the household by the abuses of the dowry system, about which Plautus expressed his concerns also in the *Aulularia.*”
In feudal Japan directional development was the opposite to that of Rome. Women, who had been relatively independent in antiquity, having held inherited property independently from their husbands,24 gradually lost their independence through legal changes which saw property passed directly to the eldest son. Thus by the Kamakura period (1185-1333) the majority of land was held by men.25 That is not to say, however, that Japanese women were powerless pawns in a male-dominated society as this new system of land division, although the norm in wealthier families, was never rigorously applied amongst the peasantry.26 Also, despite the Confucian ideal of a woman as completely submissive to her husband, a wife, in reality “held undisputed authority over the conduct of the family’s affairs” (Beillevaire, 1996:544).27 Frequent skirmishes between warring tribal groups meant that the majority of able-bodied men were away from home leaving traditionally men’s work to the female population.28 Furthermore, until the end of the sixteenth century, craftswomen were able to control trade monopolies.29 Although women from the warrior class may have spent the majority of their lives indoors, their role as mother was held in high esteem “since motherhood meant bearing the child to carry on the family line with its attendant property and authority” (Wakita, 1984:92) although, it is not clear to what extent childbirth itself acted as a controlling mechanism for men, suppressing women’s freedom. The social


27 See also Hane (2000:27) on the martial arts training given to the daughters of samurai and on Masako, widow of the famous warlord Yoritomo, who led the Minamoto army against the Imperial forces.

28 See Toida (1973:77-8). Toida compares the situation of women at this time to that of the Second World War. See also Storm (1992:170) and Morley (1988). Hane (2000:27) sees the ascendancy of the samurai as a contributing factor in the increasingly inferior position ascribed to women as the samurai prized “military valor and physical strength” above all.

position of warrior class women who were childless or unable to bear children is also unclear. This changing legislation, regarding property ownership, reveals an ambivalent, ambiguous picture of a woman’s role in early medieval Japanese society. Thus onna Kyōgen are likely to reflect the uncertainty which surrounded women’s social status in medieval Japanese society.

ii) Roman Matronae and Kyōgen wives

Roman comic matronae are typically recipients of male negative humour but this is often expressed in vague terminology, for example, (As.62) inportunam and incommodam and (Cas.388) noli uxorí credere, which leave the audience uncertain as to what crimes have been committed. Through male accusations such as As.891-900, Cas.226-28, Cas.249-50, Hec.199-204 and Men.117 both viewer and critic are manipulated into accepting that all wives are deceitful and wicked, constantly henpecking their husbands. This misogynistic portrayal, however, is often unwarranted and unsupported (Au.162-69 and Ad.30-5), and is sometimes revealed as altogether false as demonstrated by the mistaken views which Amphitryo and Laches hold regarding their wives. Even in cases where male characters appear to have a legitimate basis for their misogyny, they are typically revealed as deserving of their wife’s anger (both Demaenetus and Lysidamus are planning affairs, whilst

30 Wakita and Gay (1984:98) summarises the conflicting views of recent critics regarding Medieval Japanese women’s rights with “[s]ome scholars maintain that the position of women has steadily improved through various social developments. Others, after studying the lot of women from earliest times, have concluded that their activities have been steadily restricted with the rise of the state and other institutions.”

31 This can be demonstrated by the Kyōgen play Oba ga Sake in which the female character, the Aunt, owns her own sake shop; impossible from the latter part of the sixteenth century onwards when the za (commercial organizations which protected women’s monopoly privileges) passed out of women’s control (see Wakita and Gay 1984:94-7). The Kyōgen play clearly reflects earlier custom.

32 Gericke (1996:105-06), for example, suggests that whilst married women in Menander and in the Nea were not negatively portrayed, the wife in Plautus is a “bitchy wife”. For the treatment of women in New Comedy see also Fantham (1975).
Menaechmus is having an affair). Thus Roman comic misogyny is depicted in such a manner as to appear a product of male paranoia, allowing for the expression of male anxieties about the dominant female.

The *uxor dotata* (wife with a dowry) is a common joke in Plautine and Terentian comedy, where the foolishness of marrying a woman with money is frequently professed (Megadorus (*Aul.*162-70) and Demaenetus (*As.*86) are prime examples of this). Male characters make jokes at their wives’ expense, insulting their looks and attributes; yet, divorce is not generally an issue. *Matronae*, themselves, even where contemplating a divorce (*Am.*928), never follow through with their threats. The exception to this is *Menaechmi* where there is a suggestion of divorce (*Men.*1160) but, given its farcical setting as part of an auction, this is unlikely to have been viewed seriously. This threat of removal of the female figure combined with the knowledge that such removal is socially impossible may present an example of subconscious castration-anxiety, which seeks to remove the female threat whilst acknowledging the impossibility of existence without her. The relatively young age of this *matrona*, compared to other *matronae*, may support such a reading as it emphasises her fertility which may itself be regarded as a threat to male authority.

The Kyōgen wife, like the Roman *matrona*, is also the victim of repeated, yet vague, insults from her husband, she also retaliates through deception. There is, however, a

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33 Culham (1982:791) examines the issue of dowries and the *Lex Oppia* in relation to Plautine misogynistic comments regarding dowered wives.

34 Konstan (1994:146) comments on the “relative indifference” attached to bonds of marriage in the *Menaechmi*.

35 Gilmore (2001, Chapters 1-2) presents an enlightening examination of male menstruation and childbirth anxieties, in particular focusing on the concept of the vagina and vaginal excretions as polluting and debilitating to the male.
clear distinction between the two. In Kyōgen, the wife’s deception (in onna Kyōgen) is typically performed with the sole and direct aim of ensuring the continuation of her marriage\textsuperscript{36} (for example, Hikkukuri and Inabadō), whereas in Roman comedy marital reaffirmation seems to occur as an incidental result of the wife’s deception (i.e. Casina and Asinaria). Jokes about Japanese wives, whilst referring to their stupidity, anti-social behaviour and ugliness, do not reflect the disadvantages of marrying into money which are evident in Roman comedy. This may, of course, be because the issue of a dowered wife did not exist in Medieval Japan, or because male anxieties surrounding female empowerment were centred on different issues. Despite these differences, two fundamental similarities exist in the treatment of married women between the two comedic forms. First, the husband’s foibles are always exposed resulting in his humiliation and embarrassment, second restoration and reaffirmation of marriage typically occurs. It also appears that in both Roman comedy and Kyōgen, invective against the wife, which seeks to denigrate her, is generally accompanied by the actual ridicule and humiliation of the husband in a parody of social expectations of husband-wife relationships.

iii) The Marriage Paradox

Although much of Roman comedy revolves around young love, marriage itself is typically portrayed negatively, particularly from the more mature man’s viewpoint. A similar ambiguity is evident in Kyōgen where the ideal of marriage contrasts with the reality. I suggest that the comic discrepancy between ideal and reality reflects male misogynistic fears regarding a wife’s potential power which can be identified in the concept of the controlling male whose “castration anxiety is kept at bay so long as the

\textsuperscript{36} See Serper (2005:331) on this point.
perception of otherness, and specifically feminine otherness, is kept under control” (Madsen, 2000:106). This arises from an overwhelming desire for the female which itself is feared by the male because it is overwhelming. Thus the male engages in denigration of the female in order to reduce their own sense of powerlessness. Such a fear can be seen in Roman State responses to women in times of crisis where, as Parker (2007:83) states,

“[t]o control women and their sexuality was to control the state. As the state escaped control, among the omens was the escape of women from proper male control. The danger to the Urbs could only be warded off by the punishment of women and the subsequent foundation of public cults of chastity with admonitory and apotropaic functions.”

In comedy, however, “[a] distrusted and controlled woman will lie and will always outsmart a suspicious male” (Heller, 2005:62). Such behaviour might be expected to compile subconsciously male castration-anxieties which, in turn, can be alleviated by the restoration of marital harmony and the reassertion of male authority at the denouement.

a) The Undesirability of a Wife

For the comedic senex the only really “good” wife is, seemingly, a non-existent one (quod fortunatum isti putant, uxorem, numquam habui, “I never had a wife, which men reckon fortunate”, Ad.43-4). This viewpoint, however, contrasts with the emphasis placed on love in general in Roman comedy. This suggests that the problem is the wife herself rather than the marriage act. It is easy to blame the woman rather than the structure, however, and to lay the blame for marital tension solely at the woman’s feet. This desire to absolve oneself of blame presents a further evidence of subconscious

37 On this point see Braund (1992:72-5). Watson (1995:92-134) examines the particular distrust accorded to wives who are also stepmothers in Roman literature.
castration-anxiety which holds the woman as responsible for male desire.\textsuperscript{38} We see this reflected more clearly in Kyōgen where, despite the failure of his marriage, the husband is interested in remarriage (\textit{Inabadō}, Koyama, 1961:80). Thus the ideal of love appears to suffer displacement in the transition from unwed to wed.\textsuperscript{39} Since the respective partners are physically the same, I would argue that the change in attitude is a reflection of the male psyche, which fears the potential power a wife, as opposed to a desired girl, may wield.

Megadorus,\textsuperscript{40} the bachelor in Aulularia, seemingly understands this when he reflects upon the foolishness of marrying into money,

\begin{quote}
\begin{scriptsize}
istas magnas factiones, animos, dotes dapsilis, 
clamores, imperia, eburata uvehcla, pallas, purpuram 
nil moror, quae in seruitutem sumptibus redigunt uiros
\end{scriptsize}
\end{quote}

\textit{(Au.167-70)}

I can’t stand these great families with their doings, pride and bountiful dowries, with their shouts and orders, with their carriages inlaid with ivory, their expensive garments and wearing of purple; things which draw men into slavery through their expense.

His decision to marry a poor girl (\textit{Au.171}), with presumably low expectations, whilst potentially reflecting his desire to maintain his independence, suggests also that the potential power a dowered wife might wield is even more fearful, to a bachelor, than the act of marriage itself. This is reflected in \textit{Inabadō} and Hikkukuri where it is less the ideal of marriage which is brought into question, but the undesirable characteristics of the women the men have married (\textit{Inabadō}, Koyama, 1961:80; Hikkukuri, Sasano,

\textsuperscript{38} On this point see Halliday (2001:98-9) “The rules that were framed to control the behaviour of women served of course to control the behaviour of men. If a man ‘fell’ for a woman, it was easy to blame the cause of that fall, which was, paradoxically, the idealized object of his desire”.\textsuperscript{39}\textsuperscript{39} Ormand (2009:153) discusses the notion of marriage as a “battlefield” between husband and wife.\textsuperscript{40} Konstan (1977:314) describes Megadorus as “the inveterate bachelor, rich and contented with his lot, and loath to undertake either the responsibilities or the expense of a wife and family”. See also Konstan (1983:33-46).
1943:355-59). Terence’s Micio (Ad.728 and 938) is cognizant of a fact which both Megadorus and the Kyōgen husbands apparently miss; namely that all women potentially pose a similar threat. Even a poor girl has the potential to become a domineering wife and, as such, marriage itself should be avoided (Ad.30-34 and 930ff.), as any man engaging in a marriage contract faces a potential loss of authority if he proves incapable of ruling his wife.

b) Comic Insults

There is a difference between the type of insult hurled at a Kyōgen wife and a Roman comic matrona. Kyōgen insults typically focus first on complaints about excessive drinking (Inabadō: Koyama, 1961:80 and 84). For example, in Inabadō the husband is gradually made aware of the true identity of his “new” wife (in reality the disguised former wife) through her bibulous behaviour during the wedding ceremony which arouses his suspicions:

kore wa ikana koto. tadaima made no onnadomo ga taishu wo konou de gozaru niyotte, itoma wo tsukawashite gozaru ga, mata musou no otsuma mo sake wo suku to mieta. tokaku soretashi niwa sake wo nomu onna ga sou to mieta. zehi ni oyobanu, kuwaete mairazuwanarumai.

(Koyama, 1961:84)

What is this? Because my wife until today was a heavy drinker, I sent her packing, but it seems that the wife from the vision also likes to drink sake. It seems I am apt to marry women who like to drink. It can’t be helped, I must deal with it.

Second, insults focus on a woman’s physical unattractiveness (Onigawara, Koyama, 1960:184). On the other hand, Roman comedic insults focus on women’s excessive spending (Au.167-70 and Hec.224-25), occasionally venturing into the physical with
insults about smell (As.893-95 and Men.167-68) or unflattering comparisons with non-human life or inanimate objects (Cas.557, Hec.239, Men.714-18 and Merc.760-61).

This discrepancy between Roman comedy and Kyōgen is an interesting one as it does not seem possible to explain it through cultural variations. Even if we could explain the lack of insults about expenditure in Kyōgen through differing inheritance and dowry laws, this does not account for the relative lack of insults involving drink and ugliness towards wives in Roman comedy. This is especially relevant given that excessive drinking by all classes of women is a feature of Classical Greek Comedy,\textsuperscript{41} and given that wine seems to have been restricted for women in Roman society.\textsuperscript{42} It is also interesting to note that where excessive drinking insults do feature in Roman comedy they are directed, not at wives, but at low-class women as at Cu.96ff. Likewise, the lack of insults relating to physical appearance is puzzling when we consider that often in literature,

\begin{quote}
“[t]he ugly woman seems to be the female figure that best embodies all masculine fears and anxieties about women in positions of authority or women acting beyond the boundaries of the conventional space assigned to them”.
\end{quote}

(Betella, 2005:66)\textsuperscript{43}

Unlike Roman Comedy, this is exactly what we see in Kyōgen. Thus, in Roman comedy, the monetary excesses of dowered wives form the most common area of complaint for the comedic senex. Erich Gruen (1990:144) attempted to explain this

\textsuperscript{41} In particular, O’Higgins’s discussion of women and humour in Classical Greece provides several examples of bibulous wives in comedy (2003:128 and 214n.133).

\textsuperscript{42} Purcell (1994:194-201) provides a detailed examination of literary evidence surrounding wine-drinking women and the law from Cato onwards.

\textsuperscript{43} Although she is talking, specifically, about the motif of the ugly woman in Italian comic poetry, Betella examines the Classical origins of the Ugly woman, considering the witch motif against the rise of medieval witch-hunting.
preference for *uxor dotata* insults by suggesting that such insults parody the ineffectual sumptuary laws which aimed to control monetary amounts spent on luxury items.\(^{44}\)

I suggest that there is, however, another means of accounting for the frequency of excess insults in Roman comedy which also considers the role which insults of wifely excessiveness play in *Kyōgen*. I suggest that it is likely that these insults reflect male subconscious castration-anxieties and fear of emasculation through wifely dominance. The presence of insults concerning lavish expenditure at the expense of more typical insults associated with male-anxiety may suggest that in the Roman male psyche the *uxor dotata* usurped the ugly woman as the greatest threat to male authority.

The relationship between power and excess is evident in the closely related complaints about dowered wives and male loss of control. Demaenetus (*argentum accepi, dote imperium uendidi*, “I took the money: I sold my power for a dowry”, As.87)\(^{45}\) and Artemona (*faxo ut scias/quid pericli sit dotatae uxori uitium dicere*, “I shall see that you know what peril there is in discussing the faults of a dowered wife”, As.897-98) both comment on the potential threat which a dowered wife poses to male *imperium*. This comic terror centres on “verbal aggression”\(^{46}\) as opposed to the physical threat which is evident in slave torture jokes. In this respect, *Casina* diverges from the norm as Lysidamus farcically contemplates physical abuse from his wife (*Cas*.955-56), in the manner of a slave. This presents a similar situation to the farcical endings of *onna* Kyōgen, which depict the husband chased off-stage by his angry wife, parallelling the

\(^{44}\) Connors (1997:305) suggests that Lysidamus’ use of perfume might also suggest a reference to these sumptuary laws.


\(^{46}\) Dutsch (2008:82). On this point see also Konstan (1978:217).
endings of master-servant plays. The main threat to male power in women Kyōgen, however, appears to arise from the subversion of marriage roles, as in Inabadō where the wife’s control of the marriage cup denies her husband his expected societal role and detracts from his authority. Similarly, the refusal to accept divorce, which is typical of Kyōgen women, also appears to subvert social values.

It is probable that these insults reflect, to some extent, a fear of powerful women who might cause male emasculation. As Konstan (1978:217) asserts, “Artemona, by virtue of the large dowry she controls, has actually been playing the role of the paterfamilias, while Demaenetus has been reduced to a state of dependency”. This is also evident in much later Roman literature, particularly Juvenal’s Satire VI where some critics have related complaints about dowered wives to the ease with which money allows women to be unfaithful to their husbands (Braund, 1992:76-7). The control which the Inabadō and Hikkukuri wives demonstrate over their marriages, where their refusal to accept their husbands’ divorces makes them active participants rather than the passive females of ideals, may translate to a similar fear of emasculation. As Diana Swancutt (2007:36) explores, the fear that “a matron’s activity not only masculinized them, it effeminated their male relations, making them wives to their wives” is also evident in Martial 8.12, which she suggests (2007:36) points to an ideological link between women’s increased autonomy and male fear of emasculation.

The fearful implications surrounding the “possible economic empowerment of women” (Rei, 1995:94) are most explicitly apparent in Syra’s soliloquy (Merc.817-29); she humorously questions the bias against women in existing social convention and reflects

47 See Braund (1992:81-2).
on the possible implications of laws which sanction men and women equally. Syra’s championing of women’s rights is somewhat incongruous given her low social status and given that her challenge argues for equal rights in immorality. Nevertheless, she questions a fundamental tenet of Roman society: the absolute authority accorded the *paterfamilias*. The challenging of the *mikudarihan* (divorce letter) by the wives in *Hikkukuri* (Sasano, 1943:357-58) and *Inabadō* (Koyama, 1961:81 and 84-5) can also be read as a challenge to male authority. The refusal of the wives to accept male-initiated divorce, however, ostensibly poses a greater threat to male society than the ramblings of a female slave. This may explain why “this elderly female slave, loyal to her mistress, voices sentiments not recorded elsewhere in antiquity, in words no citizen woman would be permitted to say” (James, 2012:236).

In both dramatic forms, however, despite the apparent fantastical nature of the female challenges, the stability of male-oriented society is placed under potential threat. The introduction of *sine manu* marriage had already provided women with potentially greater rights, Syra’s suggestion that men be made as accountable for their faults as women (*Merc.* 821) is likely to have unsettled at least a proportion of the Plautine audience, as a result of the fearful possibilities it raises. In Kyōgen, the very act of a woman refusing to accept the legal *mikudarihan*, presents a potentially serious threat to male authority since it challenges the notion of women as items of male property, and accords them a degree of independence.

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48 See Duckworth (1994:256ff.) on the subject of comedic Roman women and the subject of adultery/infidelity. See also Forehand (1973:254) “[i]n societies where women’s rights are subservient to the husband’s wishes the wife’s accepting infidelity may be a matter of custom and practicality, but it depends on the wife...”

49 Braund (2005:67n.20) wonders whether Syra’s servile status means that her words may be easily dismissed by a male audience. It is possible that it is precisely for this reason that the words are spoken by a slave and not a freeborn woman. Perhaps allowing a freeborn woman to speak in this manner would be too anxiety-provoking.

50 Dutsch (2008:85) suggests that women are manifested in part “as a threat to the integrity of the man’s bodily boundaries” whilst Wheat (2000:289) reflects on women’s criticism “arresting [male] pleasure”.

c) Trickery as Symbolic Emasculation

The threat to male power is surely heightened by the apparent success of the Kyōgen wives’ trickery which not only refutes divorce but also reaffirms their social position. In many respects, the trick in Inabado appears similar to that in Casina where Cleustrata constructs an elaborate fake marriage in order to deny her husband the sexual use of his own slave. In both instances the female initiates a fake wedding which results in the humiliation of the husband and, it might be said, in his worst nightmare. In Inabado, the husband remarries the discarded wife, thus resuming his former life but in a worse position as his wife’s anger has been fuelled by his recent actions. In contrast, the humiliation which Lysidamus experiences, represents the pinnacle of castration-anxiety, symbolic emasculation by a woman. Although Casina is, in actuality, a male slave “[w]omen are behind the transvestite wedding and thus women enable the emasculation of Lysidamus” (Pierce, 1998:143). The subversion of gender roles is evident both in the active roles played by the women plotters and in their actions. The Inabado wife plays a more active role than Cleustrata as she not only disguises herself as the new bride but also disguises herself as a male god (Koyama, 1961:81) in order to deceive her husband. In contrast, Cleustrata leaves the actual physical aspects of the plan to her slave, thus making him the instrument of justice.

What is clear, however, is that both women subvert typical gender roles in order to exercise marital control. The plays reveal these wives to be the dominant marriage partners and their dominance, seemingly, is at the expense of male authority. Thus their actions are likely to increase subconscious, symbolic castration-anxiety amongst the audience although this is likely to be somewhat lessened by the farcicality of the fake
wedding incidents. The fake Casina is portrayed with a “phallic masculinity” (Pierce, 1998:143) which although anxiety-provoking, with its depiction of a sword-wielding maniac, is also extremely hilarious, particularly given the confusion and shame which it causes for Olympio and Lysidamus (Cas. 875ff., 899-909 and 937-48). What is most interesting about these two tricks is that they are constructed with the purpose of preventing male sexual intercourse with a female other than the wife. This is more evident in Inabadō which sees the wife threatened with rejection, than it is in Casina where the rival for the husband’s attentions is a slave-girl and thus not a threat to the wife (although there are indications that Cleustrata regards it as such). This is accentuated by the structure of the plot which places the battle between husband and wife within the context of father-son conflict where, in a similar manner to Asinaria, the father is the barrier to his son’s happiness. The difference between the Kyōgen and the Roman play suggest that Kyōgen takes a more overt approach in its depiction of male symbolic castration-anxiety, and the threat which women pose to male authority, than Roman comedy. Plautus appears to disguise what is truly subversive behaviour by making slave-characters the vehicle for subversive thoughts and actions rather than citizen-women.

d) Wawashii Onna and quarrelsome Matronae

Roman Comedy and Kyōgen typically joke about unpleasant, often quarrelsome wives. The wife in Oko Sako (Oko and Sako) presents such a domineering persona, whilst preparing her husband Oko (in a dispute against his neighbour, Sako, whom Oko’s wife also likes) for his visit to the law courts, that “Oko forgets that he is in a rehearsal and
faints from fear” (Savas, 2007:75).\textsuperscript{51} These jokes, which reflect the unpleasant nature of the wife are, however, often vague. Lysidamus for example states, \textit{sed uxor me excruciat, quia uuit} (“my wife is torturing me – because she lives!”, \textit{Cas.}227), but what exactly does this mean? At \textit{Cas.}249-50 and 497-98,\textsuperscript{52} Cleustrata is depicted with a love of quarrelling but the audience are indirect recipients of this viewpoint since the information originates via Lysidamus rather than through Cleustrata’s actions. In a similar manner, the \textit{Hikkukuri} husband claims his desire for divorce is a result of his wife’s \textit{wawashi} (nagging and troublesome) behaviour (Sasano, 1943:354), but this is an extremely vague term and his viewpoint is unsupported in the later portrayal of the wife. The most overt statement regarding unpleasant and quarrelsome wives occurs in \textit{Inabadō} where the husband states that the wife is verbally abusive, (\textit{yayatomo itaseba watashi wo sebirakitenarasen}, “she’s inclined to bully/tease me”, Koyama, 1961:80), but even this is vague. He appears more distressed by her excessive drinking and laziness around the house (Koyama, 1961:80) than by her behaviour towards himself. The misogynistic attitude of the husbands towards their wives is clearly evident and suggests an inherent fear/distrust of women,\textsuperscript{53} but it is typically expressed in an elliptical manner which insinuates, but does not support, the concept of the domineering wife.

I suggest that these misogynistic complaints against wives’ dominance present an opportunity for male characters to express their anxieties regarding women’s verbal dexterity as opposed to reflecting real examples of domineering behaviour. In this manner, social issues such as dowries and their potential for empowerment may be

\textsuperscript{51} Savas (2007:74-86) presents a detailed examination and translation of this play which pays particular emphasis to the role of the wife. See Kitagawa and Yasuda (1989:355-56) for the Japanese original.

\textsuperscript{52} For the pun on \textit{lingulaca/lingua} in these lines see Fontaine (2010:23) and Wheat (2000:297). On women and noise in general, see Dutsch (2004:627-28).

\textsuperscript{53} On distrust and fear of women in \textit{Casina} see Gold (1998:22).
used as an excuse for Roman men to vent their anxiety at women who hold opinions and therefore represent a potential threat to male authority. This appears evident in Oko Sako where the wife’s verbal prowess is such that she can terrify her husband despite the fact that she is only acting the role of a domineering official. That this is not her real persona is expressed through her devoted concern for her stricken husband (Kitagawa and Yasuda, 1989:356).\(^{54}\) Such a reading would also explain the existence of similar emasculation anxieties in Kyōgen (and in Casina where Cleustrata is likely not an uxor dotata)\(^{55}\) where dowry concerns are not significant yet wives are still portrayed negatively.

Walter Forehand (1973:247) reflects that plotting of Cleustrata’s calibre is typically the preserve of the seruus callidus and suggests that “[f]or the matrona to exhibit them [plotting skills] is truly exceptional and emphasizes strongly the extraordinary nature of this husband-wife conflict.”\(^{56}\) Such verbal trickery, however, is a common feature of Kyōgen husband-wife tension. In both Hikkukuri and Inabadō, the successful reaffirmation of marriage is reliant on the wife verbally tricking her husband (Hikkukuri, Sasano 1943:358-59 and Inabadō, Koyama, 1961:82-4). In the former, this trickery revolves around the wife’s manipulation of her husband’s offer which allows her to take away any possessions which she can fit in her sack (she puts the sack over

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\(^{54}\) On this point see also Savas (2007:75).

\(^{55}\) Cleustrata’s speech (Cas.155-62) suggests that she is a dowered wife but her subsequent conversation with Myrrhina suggests the opposite (Cas.200-13). Rosenmeyer (1995:205ff.) suggests that this ambiguity marks an attempt to confound audience expectations regarding the matrona character. Cleustrata’s position is somewhat ambiguous, as it has been argued that she is in fact married cum manu rather than sine manu (see Rei (1998:101-02). Throughout the play, however, Cleustrata behaves very much like a dowered wife in the manner in which she addresses her husband, if not in the manner in which her trickery is played out. Segal (2001:197) goes so far as to call her “a consummate harpy” determined to wreck her husband’s plans. I consider this too harsh an analysis but Rei (1998:96) seems to support this in her suggestion that women are defeminized as a result of their empowerment. See Andrews (2004:450) on dowerless women’s fear of divorce. See also Wheat (2000:296). On non-dotal property see Grubbs (2002:101-02). See also Braund (2005:45).

\(^{56}\) Rei (1995:101-02) suggests that Cleustrata’s deception is condoned because it takes place through the intervention of her slave, Chalinus, which enables the retention of the necessary hierarchy. See also Schuhmann (1977:50).
her husband’s head); in the latter, the trickery is more complex, involving the wife impersonating a god in order to verbally manipulate her husband into marrying the next woman he meets (herself). In this way, lack of monetary and legal power is compensated by ample wits potentially raising fear of womanly intelligence amongst the audience. This appears to be the case with Cleustrata whose lack of monetary power is compensated by her mental abilities. This appears similar to comedic slaves/servants who also capitalise on their intelligence using wit to compensate for a lack of social power. McCarthy reflects on this point when she asks whether Cleustrata is:

“to be compared to the clever slave plotting the overthrow of the master or to an irate senex swearing his revenge against his deceiver? In no other play does the blocking character realize that he or she is being tricked at the very beginning of the play.”

(2000:89)

It is not surprising that such negativity, in both Roman comedy and Kyōgen, focuses on the older, more mature woman since her experience and maturity is likely to mark her as a greater threat to male authority than that of a young, inexperienced girl, and as age has caused her to relinquish her status as a sexual object. As such, the older wife presents a perfect opportunity for men to vent their ambiguous view of women as both desired and hated object. I suggest that it is this issue of male control (and control-

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37 Purdie’s (1993:133-36) comments regarding misogynist behaviour and women as “inferior thinkers” apply here in the sense that the concept of woman as “inferior thinker” is the issue in question. In Casina, it is clear that Cleustrata is cleverer than her husband. It might even be suggested that she is the most successful plotter in Plautine comedy as she is apparently the only character whose “plan” meets with complete success. See Rosenmeyer (1995:207) on the incongruity of Lysidamus having to plead for forgiveness in a reverse of what Myrrhina leads the audience to expect.

38 Gilmore (2001, particularly chapters 1-2) and Rogers (1966:53-4) are particularly informative on this subject.
anxieties\textsuperscript{59}) which provide a means of understanding comedic misogynistic behaviour in Roman Comedy and Kyōgen.

iv) Subversion as Emasculating

a) Role Subversion

Despite Syra’s lamentations regarding the issues of male infidelity and divorce, Roman and Kyōgen comedic wives are typically portrayed as being able to manipulate and control their husbands\textsuperscript{60} in an apparent subversion of traditional roles. Whilst the husband may insult his wife bombastically, his role is ultimately passive as he is forced to accept his wife’s trickery and his own loss of control. The most obvious example of this occurs in Casina where Lysidamus is not only exposed and humiliated but also publicly symbolically emasculated\textsuperscript{61} by his wife. The play’s conclusion appears to conspire in condoning Cleustrata’s actions through a moralising sermon on the inappropriateness of old men seeking love (Cas.1015-018), but her aggressive action subverts the traditional role of the wife as passive. The abnormality of this may be reflected at Cas.1016-017, which appears to condone (and mark as natural) the actions of men who have secret affairs (cf. As.942-45).\textsuperscript{62} Cleustrata’s open confrontation

\textsuperscript{59} Andrews (2004:450-53) discusses how artistic control moves from the male to the female sphere in Casina. Boëls-Janssen (2002:129-49) examines the representation of marriage and marriage symbols in Casina with particular reference to the realities of “slave marriage”.

\textsuperscript{60} For example, discussing the Casina, Forehand (1973:234) states that the main source of conflict “comes from the wife’s determination to stand in the way of her husband’s infidelity”. Way (2000:187ff.) suggests that Lysidamus and Cleustrata’s conflict concerns who will wield the household power.


\textsuperscript{62} On this point see also Sharrock (2009:264-66).
denial of Lysidamus’ lusts serve to place her in a dominant role which reduces Lysidamus to subserviency. McCarthy reflects of this role-reversal, “[t]he ambiguity of Cleustrata’s position at this point is crucial to how we understand the action of the play as a whole: is it the justifiable rebellion of the downtrodden household members against a tyrannical paterfamilias, or is the ill-natured dowered wife exerting control over her fun-seeking husband?”

(2000:89)

In either case, Lysidamus’ public humiliation is likely to increase tension amongst male audience members as it subverts the norms.

The husbands of the Hikkukuri and Inabadō wives face similar situations. Like Lysidamus, the Hikkukuri husband is subjected to forceful criticism by his spouse (ano youna otoko wa yabu wo kete mo gonin ya nananin wa keidasou, “were I to kick a bush, five or seven men like that one would come crawling out”, Sasano, 1943:357).

Although he attempts to reassert his natural role (otoko ga itoma wo yatta ni kore e kuru monoka, “since a man divorced you, why have you come here?”, Sasano, 1943:358), he is revealed as powerless to finalise the divorce and ultimately remains married. Similarly, in Inabadō, the wife’s active trickery subverts the traditional and ideal imagery of the passive wife and results in an outright denial of the husband’s legitimacy in issuing a divorce. The end result sees the husband renewing his wedding vows, through aggressive trickery, with the very woman that he sought to divorce. In

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63 Anderson (1983:17) reflects that Chalinus who might be expected to take the lead role as the seruus callidus is usurped by Cleustrata. His accomplishments result not from his own plans but from hers.

64 Ormand (2009:152) remarks on the “clear comic inversion of the norm” which results from Cleustrata’s trickery of Lysidamus.

65 Kenny (1989:51) adds “you are as much a man as a chopstick with eyes and a nose stuck on it”.

both instances, the concept of the passive, submissive wife\(^{66}\) is confounded and a dominant, aggressive personality, which overwhelms male authority, is evident.

In a slightly different manner, Demaenetus (As.87) has also relinquished his male authority to his wife,\(^{67}\) although this subservience has been accomplished through monetary power as much as force of personality. Artemona establishes this monetary authority in the minds of the audience:

\[\text{ain tandem? edeol ne tu istuc cum malo magno tuo dixisti in me. sine, uenias modo domum, faxo ut scias quid pericli sit dotatae uxorii uitium dicere} \]
\[\text{(As.896-98)}\]

Do you say so? By Pollux, you have said such things about me to your own great disadvantage. As soon as you get home I shall make sure that you know what danger there is in speaking badly of a wife with a dowry.

She then drags her protesting husband home (As.921ff.), after the unmasking of his indiscretions (880ff.).

Thus the play concludes in a role-reversal which sees the wife asserting authority over her husband. Her emphases on the punishments which will be heaped upon her husband

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\(^{66}\) The importance of the subservient wife to Japanese thought can be demonstrated by Walthall’s (1984:114-20) discussion of peasant women’s protests in medieval Japan. Walthall (1984:120) writes, “[t]hat even women had done wrong can be said to have constituted the most telling evidence of how profoundly the village social order had been disrupted”. That even women, who represent the idealistic image of social submissiveness and stability in Japanese society, could go out and bear arms in protest reflects the turbulence of the time. Walthall (1984:113) also reflects that Japanese peasant women’s public defiance was always on behalf of family honour and reflects their “extraordinary devotion” to their husbands.

\(^{67}\) Konstan (1978:217) suggests that Demaenetus’ assertion that he has sold his power mean that his desire for his son’s “affection in place of respect” is incongruous since by selling his \textit{imperium} he has lost “the title to respect”. Thus, not only has Demaenetus sold his power over his wife, but also his power over all family affairs.
once he returns home relegate Demaenetus in status.\textsuperscript{68} In this way, through role-reversal, it is likely that male tensions are increased and misogynistic fears regarding the possibility of female dominance expounded.\textsuperscript{69}

\textit{b) Humiliation}

In these plays, gynophobic tensions appear to climax in the humiliation of the husband by his wife. In \textit{Casina}, Lysidamus suffers utter disgrace through his wife’s trickery,

\begin{quote}
Maxumo ego ardeo flagitio  
neq quid agam meis rebu’ scio.  
nec meam ut uxor um aspiciam  
contra oculis, ita disperii;  
omnia palam sunt probra,  
onnibus modis occidi miser.  
\textit{(Cas}.937-42)
\end{quote}

I burn with the greatest shame. Nor do I know what I shall do, nor how I will look my wife in her eyes, I am so utterly perished. All my disgraceful conduct is known. O unhappy man! I am, in all respects, slain!

His humiliation, however, is compounded by comparisons of Lysidamus’ situation with that of a slave:

\begin{quote}
intro ad uxorem meam  
sufferamque ei meum tergum ob iniuriam.  
sed ecquis est qui homo munus uelit fungier  
pro me? quid nunc agam nescio, nisi ut  
inprobos famulos imiter ac domo fugiam.  
\textit{nam salus nulla est scapulis, si domum redeo.  
nugas istic dicere licet? uapulo hercile ego initus tamen}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{68} Ryder (1984:182) suggests that Artemona “is something of a dragon” claiming that “it is impossible not to feel a little sorry for [Demaenetus]”, whilst Konstan (1978:217) states that Demaenetus is in a similar position to the young lover bound by the “restrictions of traditional authority”. I believe that Ryder’s view places too much emphasis on Artemona’s vileness. She is, however, more sinned against than sinning. If, however, Konstan’s assertion that by using her dowry to control her husband Artemona has been usurping the role of \textit{paterfamilias} (Konstan, 1978:217) is followed then Demaenetus is transformed into a victim and his rebellion represents a rebellion against an unnatural authority.

\textsuperscript{69} It is worth noting that women in the plays of Aristophanes, such as \textit{Thesmophoriazusae}, present a far more explicit version of this phenomenon.
etsi malum merui.
hac dabo protinam et fugiam.
(Cas.949-60)

I go inside to my wife and I’ll submit my back to her on account of her wrath. Is there any man who wants to take my place? I do not know what I shall do now, except to imitate wicked slaves and flee from home. There is no safety for my shoulder blades should I return home. Is it okay to speak nonsense? By Hercules, I am certainly to be whipped, unwillingly even if I have deserved something bad. I shall go from here straightaway and flee.

Absconding and suffering the whip are slave-associated; a free man could not be subjected to whipping. Lysidamus’ suggestion that he will undergo this demeaning punishment at the hands of a woman surely suggests the ultimate humiliation which a paterfamilias might endure. That it is his wife who will supposedly be performing this punishment demonstrates how completely Lysidamus has lost control of his own household. Despite the absurdity of the threat, it is likely that Lysidamus’ words would cause unease amongst male members of the audience, as they apparently suggest a transfer of power from the male to the female sphere.

Role-inversion and the bride who is, in reality, a man almost suggests a form of symbolic rape of the old man by the slave, Chalinus. Although this is only implied and Lysidamus quickly regains his authority, it must surely represent the ultimate humiliation. The concept of being penetrated rather than the penetrator also suggests a realisation of castration-anxiety with Lysidamus being symbolically reduced to a phallic-less woman. The concept of being penetrated rather than the penetrator also suggests a realisation of castration-anxiety with Lysidamus being symbolically reduced to a phallic-less woman. Cleustrata’s public emasculation of her husband surely symbolises the very thing that Roman misogynists would fear most regarding women’s empowerment, namely the reduction of a man to a woman’s role (or worse, reduction

71 On this point see Franko (1999:1).
to slave status). As Jane Cody (1976:461) suggests, by attempting to have sex with Casina, in reality a male, Lysidamus is subjugated to the role of *seruus*, and not just any *seruus*, but his wife’s *seruus*. In *Casina*, “[w]e see the women rising up against their lord and master to overthrow his social and sexual authority” (MacCary, 1974:887).

Cleistrata’s actions likely represent “a significant challenge to a male-dominated society” (Wheat, 2000:299). This might be expected to encourage tension amongst a proportion of the audience.

The humiliation of the Kyōgen husbands, although less public than that of the Roman comedic *senex*, is, in some respects, more absolute. These husbands are prevented from exercising their right to divorce by the one person who should, in reality, be powerless to stop it. Thus, in both *Inabadō* and *Hikkukuri*, the husband is forced to continue a marriage with an undesirable wife as a direct result of that wife’s trickery. In both plays there is a suggestion that symbolic emasculation occurs as a result of neglect of duty (*ouchaku*, Sasano, 1943:359 and Koyama, 1961:85). This suggests a link between voluntary abandonment of the natural role and the humiliation of symbolic emasculation. This is more manifest in *Inabadō* with the subverted presentation of the wedding scene where the “bride” usurps the groom’s place by controlling the sake cup, thus assuming the dominant role (*Inabadō*: Koyama, 1961:83-4). It is, perhaps, most overt in *Casina* where Lysidamus’ blocking actions suggest an abandonment of parental duty, which is punished by his humiliation and symbolic emasculation during

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73 Lilja (1982:59) discusses allusions to homosexuality in the *Casina*.

74 Gold (1998:26) suggests that this challenge is lessened by the fact that the female characters are played by male actors “[t]he audience would have seen that only the men cross-dressed and played the other. For women to take on male roles would have been too dangerous and unsettling”.

75 Morley’s (1988:41) assertion that compared to the Western comedic wife the Kyōgen “wife’s complaints are essentially practical in nature and her lazy and negligent husband is no cuckold” is in agreement with this.
the fake wedding. The actions of the Inabadō wife expose her husband as naïve and powerless, encouraging an escalation of anxiety amongst the male audience, enhanced by the revelation that the earlier divorce is now null and void. The subsequent enforced apology by her husband in which he denies that the letter was one of divorce (Koyama, 1961:85) also encourages an escalation of tension, as it emphasises the apparent subversion of roles which is cemented by the wife’s dominance at the play’s denouement:

mada sono tsure wo iu ka. onore nani toshite kuryouzo. nikui yatsu no. ano ouchakumono, dore e iku, toraetekurei. yarumaizo yarumaizo, yarumaizo yarumaizo.

(Koyama, 1961:85)

Are you still saying such a thing? What should I do to you? Hateful thing! Hey, neglecter of duty, where are you going? Catch him! You’re not getting away! You’re not getting away! You’re not getting away, you’re not getting away!

This parallels and subverts the ending of master/servant Kyōgen which feature the dominant male chasing his errant subordinates. A similar ending is present in Hikkukuri which also depicts the husband being chased off-stage by his wife (Sasano, 1943:359). Thus, both Inabadō and Hikkukuri conclude with the husband retaining a passive role in what should be a male-dominated relationship.76

Artemona (Asinaria) is another example of a matrona who humiliates her husband. After finding her husband attempting to seduce their son’s girlfriend, she humiliates him in front of the son and girlfriend (As. 921-929). Demaenetus is forced to beg for

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76 Morley (1988:43) suggests that the “humor of the kyogen woman stems in part from an inversion of the socially idealized roles for man and wife in the medieval period; unquestioned authority for the male and obedience for the wife”. She believes that given the economic conditions of the time i.e. the numerous wars, “[t]he expectation that women be docile and submissive would never have been conductive to the demands of daily life”, which required women to take the initiative and work in the fields.
forgiveness (As.926) in an attempt to appease his angry wife who, throughout the exchange, is portrayed as dominant. She very openly confronts her husband over his extra-marital activities, unlike Cleustrata and the Inabadō wife who rely on trickery for success. This might suggest that Artemona represents more of a threat to male authority than Cleustrata, a fact which the ending of the play, which lacks the overt reconciliation evident in Casina, may reflect. The epilogue to Asinaria (As.942-47), however, which appears to condone Demaenetus’ actions, might be regarded as an attempt to reassert male authority and to justify male behaviour. The lack of apparent forgiveness on Artemona’s part (As.936 and 938) perhaps places her in closer identification with the Kyōgen wives, who also refuse to forgive their husbands (Inabadō, Koyama, 1961:85; Hikkukuri, Sasano, 1943:359), than with Cleustrata. Yet monetarily, Cleustrata can be more closely linked to the wives of Kyōgen who also lack independent financial means. Thus, the combination of dominant personality with financial control suggests that the character of Artemona presents the ultimate threat to male power.

v) Reclaiming Authority

There is, however, another side to this gynophobic tension which typically occurs at the denouement of the plays with the restoration of the husband to his rightful place, symbolising the re-establishment of male authority.77 At Cas.1007-008 Cleustrata seemingly forgives Lysidamus and, despite her assertion that this forgiveness occurs in an effort to cut a long play short (Cas.1005-006), an interesting example of metatheatricality,78 this must symbolise, to a certain extent, the reassertion of

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77 Ormand (2009:147) suggests that “the old man’s return to proper and restrained behaviour” represents one way in which Plautine comedy “return[s] to the proper state of things in general”.

78 Dutsch (2008:152) takes Cleustrata’s assertion literally, stating that it “defies the belief that women do not pay attention to time constraints” as professed in Mil.1292 and Stich.129-31. A more likely
normality. Through a reaffirmation of marriage Plautus is able to dissipate any gynophobic tension which Cleustrata’s actions might have created, exerting his own ultimate control over tension within the play. The concept of marriage in Roman comedy as “an ongoing relationship that has no natural time limit and does not change in necessary or essential ways with the passage of time” (McCarthy, 2000:80) supports the need for re-harmonization and is also evident in the endings to Amphitryo, Asinaria and Mercator where the husband re-joins his wife indoors (Am.1145, As.940-42 and Merc.1015). Cleustrata’s metatheatrical mode of forgiveness, which readjusts the comedic balance, provides a comic means for Lysidamus and Cleustrata to reintegrate into their conservative roles. This in itself, however, is atypical of Roman comedy as, like Inabadō and Hikkukuri, it parallels yet subverts the expected comic ending which depicts the senex forgiving his son, slave, or both. By making Cleustrata the vehicle for forgiveness, Plautus not only presents the female as male, but also as senex, thus subverting expectations.

The comic balance also undergoes restoration in Kyōgen through a similar reaffirmation of marriage. This reunification, however, appears to be one-sided with the desire for marriage preservation lying solely with the wife. The Hikkukuri wife’s assertion that the only belonging she wishes to carry from her former husband’s house explanation is that this is a metatheatrical joke which serves to remind the audience that they are in fact watching a play. Slater (1985:90n.36) is of the impression that Lysidamus is not in fact restored to his rightful place as this position has been usurped by his wife. Cleustrata’s capitulation would, however, appear to weaken this argument. On this subject, see Ryder (1984:185), Konstan (1978:215-21) and Forehand (1973:251ff.). She also reflects upon how this timeless aspect of marriage enables the uxor dotata to be portrayed as a “blocking character” because the “farcical plot” which rejects romance within marriage “forces marriage into the farcical mold, which emphasizes its similarity to slavery. This refiguring of marriage has the effect of revealing something that Plauntine comedy more typically conceals: wives, not husbands, are subordinated in marriage and so, according to the logic of farce, should have access to the imaginative liberation of being a rebel in comedy.” Forehand (1973:251 and 253) as already outlined, takes a pessimistic view regarding this reintegration. See also Gold (1998:26) who suggests that “the male prerogative of sexual and social domination seems to be reaffirmed.”
is her husband himself,\(^\text{83}\) (*kore ga hoshu gozaru*, “I want this”, Sasano, 1943:359), clearly demonstrates her desire to preserve their marriage. Her husband’s apparent terrified acceptance of this turn of events (*aa yuritekurei yuritekurei*, “Aaa! Forgive me, forgive me!”, Sasano, 1943:359) perhaps suggests a resignation on his part which is more passive than might be considered desirable from a conservative point of view.

Similarly, in *Inabadō*, although the play concludes with the reaffirmation of marital relations, which remain identical to those at the beginning of the play,\(^\text{84}\) reaffirmation is portrayed as female-instigated. The husband-wife bond has been re-established through the connivance and acceptance of the wife who, despite professions of hatred, (*nikui yatsu no*, Koyama, 1961:85) has acted to save her marriage. Conversely, there is no indication in either instance that the husband shares the wife’s sentiments, seemingly being more concerned about his wife’s temper than the issue of marriage (Koyama, 1961:85 and Sasano, 1943:359). Thus, although the reaffirmation of marriage in *Kyōgen*,\(^\text{85}\) through its demonstration of wifely fidelity and devout loyalty towards marriage vows,\(^\text{86}\) is likely to appease gynophobic anxieties amongst the audience it also presents a cynical viewpoint, which reveals men as ultimately unable to assert their authority. In this way, a more ambiguous presentation of marriage is presented than that

\(^{83}\) Kenny’s (1989:49-52) translation of the Izumi school version reaches the same conclusion but from a far stranger standpoint. In his translation, there is no letter of divorce although the husband is seeking an end to his marriage. Instead, the husband provokes the wife into asking for a divorce, at which point the play reaches a similar conclusion to the Ōkura version (Sasano, 1943:354ff.) with the wife reclaiming her husband by means of a sack. Morley (1988:43 and 51n.6) appears to be using a similar version to Kenny.

\(^{84}\) See Morley (1988:42) who states “the kyogen couple exits as they entered, disgruntled, perhaps, but with the balance of their relationship intact.” See also Moore (2002:194).

\(^{85}\) Morley (1988:43) affirms that “[d]ivorce and even suicide may be threatened [in Kyōgen] but they are never carried out”.

\(^{86}\) This is supported by the Japanese proverb *otto no nana tabisaru made wa ie wo denu mono* — “Even though a husband orders a wife to leave [because he wants to get divorced], she should not leave him until he orders her seven times” (Storm, 1992:170).
generally found in Roman comedy, where the *paterfamilias* undergoes reintegration, reaffirming his rightful role.

A possible exception to this occurs in the treatment of Demaenetus (*Asinaria*) who is not forgiven explicitly at the play’s conclusion. Artemona, however, undoubtedly acts to preserve her marriage, even at the expense of punishing herself through continued intimacy, (*cuculum uxor ex lustris rapit*, “the wife tears the cuckoo from the den”, *As*.934), despite the fact that her husband “is no good prize” (Slater, 1985:66). As with the Kyōgen plays the implicit suggestion that “even a man made out of straw is a man” negates, to a certain degree, any threat of women’s empowerment. Like the Kyōgen husbands, Demaenetus has been neglecting his duties by trying to have sex with his son’s girlfriend (cf. *As*.829-32) and, as David Konstan (1978:218) has suggested, he “must now mend his ways and take up his proper position in his house”. Artemona’s defence of her marriage (*As*.922ff.) may represent the first step in Demaenetus’ rehabilitation, just as the desire to preserve marriage, evident in Kyōgen, appears to reaffirm male status. This view is supported by the fact that, where reconciliation occurs, the desire to reaffirm the marriage bond is instigated by the wife (*As*.934, *Cas*.1004 and 1007, Sasano, 1943:359, Koyama, 1961:81 and 84-5) rather than the husband. It is, however, worth noting that in Roman comedy, at least, women appear to have a more altruistic reason for preserving their marriage. In Artemona’s case this appears to stem from her anger at being substituted for a younger woman whilst Cleustrata is acting for her son. The final implication of marriage

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87 *wara de tabanete mo otoko wa otoko* (“even a man made of straw is a man”). On Japanese Proverbs regarding women see Storm (1992:167-82).
88 Moore (2002:194) also reflects upon the fact that “[t]he wives of Kyōgen, like most wives of ancient comedy, consistently want to preserve their marriages in spite of the faults of their husbands”.
89 On this point see Konstan (1978:221) and Forehand (1973:251 and 253).
reintegration, however, is that men need women but also that women need men. In this manner, castration-anxieties, which regard women as both desired and hated objects, although seemingly reinforced, are diminished by the final affirmation of male authority. This is more evident in Roman comedy, where male, adulterous behaviour is typically excused as a norm (As.942-45, Cas.1015-018, and Men.1160), than in Kyōgen where poor male behaviour is not condoned explicitly.

vi) Atypical Wives

There are wives in both Kyōgen and Roman comedy who subvert audience expectations in a different way and it is interesting to consider what effect they have on the concept of uxoriphobia. Sostrata (Hecyra) and the Onigawara (The Demon Tile) wife suffer male denigration in the same manner as the above-discussed wives yet they are not typical nagging comedic wives although, the audience is encouraged to assume this (Hec.198-204, 207, 239-40 and 250) and (Onigawara, Koyama, 1960:184).

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90 See also Wakita and Gay (1984:97) who believes that the character of the wawashi onna merely serves to reflect the power of men and their supreme position. The humour is, of course, the impossibility of a woman ever really getting the better of her husband. Ormand’s suggestion (2009:147) that women restrain their husbands’ amorous advances in order to preserve their own image is interesting. He raises the possibility that women are motivated to reaffirm their marriages by a desire to protect their own image as viewed by others.
91 On woman as both desired and hated object, particularly in Greek and Roman literature, see Gilmore (2001:204-05).
93 Slater (1988:251) discussing Hecyra asserts that “[i]n no other play are women so noble—nor so readily condemned. Nowhere is the contrast between seeming and reality so sharp as between the perceptions of women held by men in this play and their actual roles”. McGarrity (1980:149-156) reflects on how the reputations of the characters in this play differ markedly from the reality. See also Gilula (2001:228). James (1998:41) briefly discusses the sympathetic portrayal of women in Hecyra.
94 See Anderson (2002:6), Slater (1988:251) and McGarrity (1980:151) on the manner in which Terence misleads his audience in Hecyra.
*Hecyra* encompass several common stereotypical Roman comedic views of women.

These stereotypes are: first, the accusation that women turn against their husbands (*Cas*. 227-78, 275-76, *Men*. 110ff. and *Merc*. 667-69); second, the hint that the only good wife is a non-existent one (*Ad*. 30-4, *As*. 901, *Cas*. 228 and *Trin*. 51-9); third, the charge of excessive expenditure (*Aul*. 165-67); fourth, quarrelling (*Cas*. 249-50 and 497-98); finally, a fear of powerful/dominant women (*As*. 61 and *Aul*. 160ff.). These stereotypes encourage the audience to view Sostrata in a negative light\(^95\) and encourage the mistaken expectation that she will be a typical dowered wife.

In a passionate speech which shares similarities with Alcumena’s defensive soliloquy (*Am*. 835ff. and 883ff.), Sostrata refutes her husband’s accusations:

> Edepol ne nos sumus inique aeque omnes invisae viris **propter paucas**, quae omnes faciunt dignae ut videamur malo. nam ita me di ament, quod me accusat nunc vir, sum extra noxiam. sed non facile est expurgatu: **ita animum induxerunt socius omnis esse iniquas**: haud pol mequidem; nam numquam secus habui illam ac si ex me esset gnata, nec qui hoc mi eveniat scio; (**Hec*. 274-80)\(^96\)

By Pollux, we are all equally unfairly hated by our husbands on account of a few who make us all seem to deserve trouble. For, so may the gods love me, I am without fault of that which my husband accuses me. But it is not easy to clear myself, since people are convinced that mother-in-laws are perverse. Not I, for I have never otherwise behaved towards her than as if she were anything but my daughter, nor do I know how this is happening to me.

Any preconceptions which the audience may have accrued are plunged into disarray by her testimony and conduct,\(^97\) potentially causing uncertainty amongst the audience due

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\(^{95}\) On the comparison of *Hec*. 203 with the theme of *malitia* and women and its unfairness when referring to Sostrata see Fatham (2008:306).

\(^{96}\) McGarrity (1980:149) remarks on the way that tension between husband and wife is carried out at a general, rather than a personal, level in *Hecyra*. See also Braund (2005:59).

\(^{97}\) As McGarrity (1980:151 and 153) remarks, Sostrata repeatedly attempts to preserve her reputation, even to the extent of sacrificing her own pleasures.
to the unusual nature of Sostrata’s character: she is prepared to sacrifice her own desires to assist her son.

The plot of Onigawara revolves around a misogynistic joke which portrays the daimyō wife as an ugly hag. The onigawara (a type of tile with the form of a gargoyle; found in shrines) is quickly dismissed as a ikamena mono (“majestic, terrible and imposing thing”, Koyama, 1960:183) before it is discovered that this particular gargoyle bears a strong resemblance to the absent wife. A highly misogynistic scene ensues where the daimyō compares his wife’s physical appearance with that of the repulsive demon (Koyama, 1960:184). The audience are informed that the demon tile’s me no kurikuri (“big, round eyes”) and hana no ikatta (“square nose”) resemble his wife’s features. In addition, the gargoyle’s great, wide mouth which stretches to the bone behind the ears is just like his wife’s when she begins to scold. As in Hecyra, audience expectations are thwarted as, unexpectedly, the daimyō now professes his sadness at missing his wife. He derives comfort only from the knowledge that they will soon be together again (Koyama, 1960:184).

Although these wives do not fulfil audience expectations there remains an emphasis on the reaffirmation of marriage which focuses on preserving marital harmony. This is more evident in Onigawara, which emphasises the husband’s desire for his wife in spite of her unwelcoming appearance and nature. It also occurs in Hecyra with Sostrata’s assertion that she will go to live in the country with her husband (Hec.586), implying that the relationship between the two is not so dire as Laches’ speech might suggest. Despite her apparent virtue, however, a subversive element might be evident in

98 Sasano (1943:300) moves directly into recognition of the demon-tile as resembling the wife.
Sostrata’s portrayal, as Niall Slater (1988:255n.21 and 261) discusses. If Pamphilus chooses to ignore his father’s wishes and honour his mother there is a suggestion that his father’s *imperium* is devalued (Slater, 1988:255n.21 and 261). Thus, Laches’ acceptance of Sostrata’s suggestion may act not only as a means of reuniting him with his wife but also as a reaffirmation of his power, since “Sostrata, who has been living an independent life in the city, … will, like Mrs. Millamant, once more ‘dwindle into a wife’” (Slater, 1988:259-60).

**Conclusion**

The dominant behaviour of female characters in Kyōgen and Roman comedy encourages the audience to reflect on the potential danger of women’s empowerment. This tension is counteracted by the emphasis on reaffirmation of the husband-wife bond which occurs at the end of the plays. Kyōgen appears to place a greater focus on marriage reaffirmation and, this re-harmonization typically occurs at the wife’s instigation. Roman comedy, however, seems to place less importance on reaffirming the marriage bond, generally focusing on the restoration of male authority. This may be a result of the fact that the marriage bond is never threatened in the same way as it is in Kyōgen. Although the Roman comedic *senex* often seeks affairs, these are typically with slave women as opposed to free women. The Kyōgen husband, however, is likely to seek a new wife, an action which would destroy the marriage bond and re-establish it elsewhere. Thus there may be a greater need for Kyōgen to clearly and unambiguously depict the reaffirmation of marriage than is necessary for Roman Comedy. This is surely reflected in the different portrayal of wives in the two comedic art-forms, although wives in both comedic forms are outspoken in their criticism of their husbands, the actions of the Kyōgen wife are both active and aggressive, whereas the *matrona,*
although equally aggressive, is depicted in a more passive role. Thus Artemona and the *Menaechmi* wife do not need to plot to unmask their husbands’ behaviour as it is gradually revealed to them. In a similar manner, Cleustrata, although aggressive in her plotting, places a slave in the active role in humiliating Lysidamus and assumes the passive role of spectator for herself. In both instances the restoration of the norms appears to be necessary for resolving audience tension regarding dominant women and their effects on male authority.
CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis was to compare apparent instances of fear and fear-alleviation in Roman Comedy and Kyōgen in order to obtain an enhanced understanding of the manner in which Roman Comedy might be said to explore and alleviate contemporary social anxieties. In addition, the lack of direct contact between Kyōgen and Roman Comedy presented a near-unique opportunity for a consideration of the possibility of comic universals. This is because, as Patrick Hogan (2010:42) states, “a property or relation may be considered a universal only if it is found in distinct bodies of literature that do not share a common ancestor having that property or relation”. It has become clear that despite the disparity of time and place and their lack of direct contact, Kyōgen responds to social anxiety generally in a similar manner to Roman Comedy. Cross-cultural patterns have emerged which show an often striking resemblance, both verbal and narrative, between the treatments of contemporary hierarchical, gender and supernatural anxieties in the two comedic forms. These patterns are less immediately discernible in the comedic forms’ treatment of illness and disability and in the treatment of professional characters but, from a detailed examination of the relevant texts, certain similarities became evident. The identification of differences between the two comedic forms has also proven useful, provoking consideration of why certain aspects, such as the actuality of divorce, are absent from Roman comedy.

The high incidence of apparent similarities in fear-alleviation techniques between the two unrelated comedic forms would seem to suggest one of two things: both Roman and Medieval Japanese culture contained fundamental similarities which resulted in a
similar presentation of comedic fear-alleviation humour, or the similarities between Roman Comedy and Kyōgen are suggestive of a universal humour which processes particular emotional stimuli, such as gallows humour, in similar ways. The first explanation is unlikely, given the very evident cultural and historical disparity between Japanese and Roman society. The second explanation presents interesting, and possibly complex, implications for further research into Roman Comedy, particularly research related to exploring and accounting for the presence and meaning of certain comic devices and phenomena found in Plautine and Terentian comedy.

i) Identified Similarities and Differences

Roman Comedy and Kyōgen appear to display a similar tension between masters and subordinates (typically a slave in Roman Comedy and a servant in Kyōgen) which manifests itself in the contrast in behaviour and outlook between tricky subordinate and loyal and/or stupid subordinate. Thus, in both comedic forms, we see the tricky subordinate subvert the norms of master-subordinate relations, whilst the loyal and/or stupid subordinate typically acts to reinforce these norms. In this manner, both comedic forms split the servant/slave role into two halves, one half of which appears subversive, the other half re-affirmative. This appears to be balanced by the humiliation and reintegration of the master figure in both traditions.

In terms of gender relations, wives, in both comedic forms, are the victims of misogyny which is generally vitriolic but vague. Marriage, however, typically undergoes re-affirmation and, despite his humiliation, the husband resumes a position of authority, essentially resulting in an unchanged society. Thus an ambiguous picture of the
husband-wife relationship is discernible in both traditions which seem to depict a wife as hated but necessary, and as both powerful and dominant. She seems to represent a threat to male authority which is never fully realised but is ever-present.

Gods and the supernatural emerge as a genuine anxiety in both Roman comedy and Kyōgen with elements of religious parody and manipulation of superstition undergoing similar treatment. Kyōgen, however, appears more concerned with portraying religious parody than Roman Comedy as there are far more Kyōgen which feature gods with human failings than there are in extant Roman comedy. They show a greater convergence in their treatment of supernatural anxieties. The ghost stories of *Mostellaria* and *Buaku* manipulate, in a remarkably similar manner, the superstitions and conventions of their contemporary audiences in order to create an atmosphere which is at once frightening and humorous. Plautus’ *Mostellaria* appears more realistic in this respect than the ghostly Buaku since Plautus appears to incorporate real-life ritual and to draw on common motifs to depict his ghost. In contrast, *Buaku* seemingly places greater reliance on the credulity and superstitious nature of the master.

The greatest divergence between Roman Comedy and Kyōgen’s treatment of social anxieties appears to be centred on the nuclei of disability and professionals. Although, as I have demonstrated, both comedic forms address these anxieties, they do so through the use of very different subject matter. Whilst Kyōgen explores anxiety relating towards the blind and blindness and towards priests, Roman comedy pokes fun at soldiers and laughs in the face of insanity. This is despite the fact that sight and lack of sight plays an important role in Greek and Roman tragedy. The most interesting aspect relating to treatment of professionals is that both Roman Comedy and Kyōgen use
similar methods to explore differing subject matter. Thus, the braggart soldier of Roman Comedy shares many similarities with, and may even be said to parallel, the boastful priest of Kyōgen. Perhaps of greatest interest is the dissimilarity in the treatment awarded to blind characters in Kyōgen compared with those characters supposedly suffering from insanity or epilepsy in Roman Comedy. The treatment of disability in the two comedic forms seemingly suggests a divergent source of anxiety. In Roman Comedy anxiety towards disability appears to focus on the threat that one’s own disability might pose to one’s own authority, while, conversely, Kyōgen seems concerned over the threat that someone else’s disability (e.g. the blindness of the blind man) poses to the authority of the non-disabled.

ii) Enhanced Understanding

This thesis has demonstrated that aspects of Roman Comedy, which have traditionally been viewed as part of a developing Western comedic tradition, e.g. the tricky slave and the dominant wife, can actually be placed in a broader comic context.¹ This suggests that the study of Roman Comedy may hold wider implications, psychological, social and literary than has previously been recognised. The similarities between Roman comedy and Kyōgen suggest that the Western comedic fear of tricky slaves/servants, braggart professionals and termagant wives etc. form part of a broader, perhaps universal, human psychological subconscious than was highlighted through unicultural studies of Roman Comedy.² Such studies have tended to focus on the place

¹ Torrance (1978) is a particularly effective example of this type of approach. He considers the role of the comic hero from Homer to Joyce but only in relation to Western humour. Purdie (1993:93) does the same for women jokes in comedy.
² Stewart (2012) who examines Plautine depictions of slavery is a recent example of a unicultural study. Although she raises many valid points regarding Plautine comedic slavery she confines her observations to the Graeco-Roman context.
of Roman comedy in the evolution of Western comedy from its Greek origins to its influence on modern comic drama. The similar techniques used to reflect social anxieties in dissimilar societies, which lack direct contact, suggest that tricky servants and nagging wives are not only a Western phenomenon and provide a solid foundation for a consideration of the case for a universal humour.

Thus, comparing and contrasting Roman Comedy with an early comedic form from a non-Western culture has enabled a clearer identification of cross-cultural humour patterns and provided a more solid foundation for exploration of the reasons behind the presence of certain types of humour in Roman Comedy. Such cross-cultural studies are routinely found in anthropological research which seeks to explain the presence of near-universal phenomenon such as misogyny and creation myths yet they have received little attention from literary classicists.

What this thesis has hoped to show is that there is a strong case for considering Roman comedy from a non-Western viewpoint. Not only has this helped to provide and analyse possible explanations for particular forms of humour but it has also helped to identify aspects of Roman comedy which, although prevalent in Western comedy as a whole, might not be as uncomplicated as previously thought. The most obvious example of this is the widespread presence of love plots in the Western Comic

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1 Kirk (2011), Hardin (2007) and Segal (2001) are recent examples of studies which adopt this approach.
3 Garry and El-Shamy (ed.) (2005) provide a good example of cross-cultural folkloric studies. They are particularly concerned with archetypes and motifs in different societies across history.
4 The forthcoming book Classical World Literatures: Sino-Japanese and Greco-Roman Comparisons by Wiebke Denecke (due for publication in late 2013, Oxford) may be an indication of the direction which future classical literary scholarship will take.
Tradition which has been dismissively explained as a universal element of comedy.\textsuperscript{7}

The absence of love-plots from Kyōgen suggests that their inevitability is not a given and that their presence in Greek and Roman comedy may be of greater sociological and psychological import in the development of Western culture than previous scholars have realised. By drawing attention to similarities and differences in the treatment of social anxieties, in particular, this thesis has made us question the reasons for their presence/absence in different forms of comedy. For example, what is it that makes the braggart soldier so important to Roman Comedy and why, in a nation of warriors, is the role of the braggart soldier replaced in Japanese comedy by the boastful priest? Teasing out the answers to such questions will enable us to advance towards a more universally applicable definition of comedy and, as is relevant to this thesis, to a greater understanding of the role which humour plays both in alleviating human anxiety and in re-affirming conservative traditions. Such knowledge can only enhance our understanding of Roman comedy and add to our knowledge of the Roman psyche.

From the point of view of this thesis in particular, there are several areas in which a comparison of Kyōgen with Roman Comedy has been beneficial to the study of Roman comedy. The typically shorter nature of Kyōgen which generally leads to single-plot plays has provided us with a means of more easily identifying certain plot and characterisation elements which lead to fear-alleviation. This enables us to identify more clearly similar elements in Roman Comedy than might be possible in a unicultural study of individual Roman comedies, which are bound by complex plot structures. By examining the highly focused single-plot of Kyōgen we are able to

\textsuperscript{7} Frye (1957:163) suggests that love plots are found in all comic traditions. Purdie (1993:93) states that the romance plot has been identified as the most common source of comedy.
identify elements of fear-alleviation and compare these with parallels or divergences in Roman comedy, thus throwing these into clearer relief.

The similarity between tricky slave and tricky servant has proven particularly interesting, especially given that Medieval Japanese society lacks the Roman tradition of Saturnalia which critics such as Segal (2001:189 in particular) have taken as central to the structure of Roman Comedy. This, in turn, raises questions regarding the widespread existence of the Saturnalia theory to explain subversive behaviour in Roman Comedy. These questions can be explained, to a certain extent, through the concept of the tricky subordinate as cathartic and re-affirmative of traditional values. This, in turn, draws attention to the debate over the extent to which Roman comedy can be regarded as subversive. Certain types of trickery and humiliation and the ways in which they act to alleviate social tensions, in particular, have become clearer through comparing and contrasting them with Kyōgen. It is easier, for example, to draw out the implications of the trick in *Casina* through a comparison with wifely trickery in Kyōgen. Likewise, a comparison of the ghost story in *Buaku* with that in *Mostellaria* helps us understand how superstitious fears can be exploited and made humorous. The more extensive evidence for ghosts and spirits in Medieval Japan than exists for Republican Rome, together with the similarities between the two ghost stories, can help us to understand how ghost stories functioned in Roman society and their effect on contemporary society.

A cross-cultural study such as this also enables easier identification of absent elements in Roman comedy, e.g. the absence of parodic portrayal of priests, and leads to questions as to the reason for their absence. Why is the boastful priest not present in
Roman Comedy which, like Medieval Japan, placed great emphasis on religious rites? Could the absence of what is a common feature of Kyōgen reveal anything about Roman taboos? Could it simply reflect the development of the priesthood as a separate profession in Japan as compared to the closely politically-linked Roman priests? This question of absence is one which can only be identified through a cross-cultural study but which, when highlighted, raises interesting questions with potentially fruitful areas for further research.

iii) Potential Impacts

The benefit of using Kyōgen as a means of investigating aspects of comic fear-alleviation in Roman Comedy has been the advantage which the use of a form of comedy, uncontaminated by Western influences, has brought to pinpointing areas of interest in Roman Comedy’s treatment of social anxiety. The comedic treatment of social anxieties appears largely similar in Roman Comedy and Kyōgen in both the type of social anxiety depicted and the method in which it is expressed. It is also clear that in both comedic forms, gallows-humour ultimately achieves very little of substance. As Paul Lewis (1989:130) has remarked, “[t]he problem with gallows humor is that, since it works by denying or evading reality, it can do nothing to alter the reality it evades”. This results in an end product which is essentially unchanged. The comparison of fear-alleviation techniques in Roman comedy and Kyōgen has demonstrated not only that gallows-humour can have a cathartic aspect which manifests similarly in quite divergent cultures but also that the types of anxieties faced by different societies can actually be fairly analogous. This has raised several points of interest which would benefit from further comparative research.
First, the vagueness of misogynistic behaviour in Roman comedy and Kyōgen warrants further study, particularly comparative studies with other early comedic forms such as Classical Indian Comedy and later comedic forms in both Western and Eastern Comedy, in order to determine not only whether comic misogyny is typically vague but also whether misogyny forms a universal basis for husband/wife comedy. Second, exploration of the ways in which hierarchical conflicts such as the master/servant relationship is expressed, in varying forms of comedy, would be beneficial in enhancing our understanding of the portrayal of Roman hierarchical anxieties. Third, the parodic relationship between comedy and tragedy has implications for studies not only on Roman religious and superstitious beliefs but also for Roman Comedy as a whole. For example, a more specific consideration of the role which parody of superstition and religion plays in Roman comedy and how it subverts tragedy might provide valuable insights into Roman belief-systems. Fourthly, the love plot as a product of Greek and Roman comedy is worthy of a more considered examination which considers how extensive it is elsewhere. A particularly interesting question which has arisen from this thesis is why Kyōgen and Roman Comedy show such a divergence in this area. The treatment of other forms of women, particularly wives, is very similar so why it should be so different in cases of young, unmarried women may be a question of particular import. Could it be that Roman comedy places greater emphasis on the oxymoronic concept of woman as desired and hated object than Kyōgen?

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8 Although they have not featured in this thesis, the treatment of mistresses in Kyōgen such as Suminuri and Kagamiotoko also has parallels with the portrayal of courtesans and prostitutes in Roman Comedy. For example, the mistress in Suminuri is depicted as deceitful and insincere whilst the wife of Kagamiotoko reacts to the belief that her husband has a mistress in a similar manner to the wives of Roman Comedy.
Potentially the most important product of this thesis is, perhaps, its implications for research into comedy and the universal psyche. In demonstrating the similarity of comedic fear-alleviation techniques in Roman Comedy and Kyōgen, this thesis has suggested the possibility of a universal humour and questioned the concept of a developing Western Comedic Tradition which is wholly separate and distinct from other comedic forms. This leads to questions arising as to whether humour is a universal means of alleviating social anxiety and whether forms of social anxiety are universally similar. The concept of a universal humour has serious implications for our understanding of comedy and, more importantly, for our understanding of the place which Roman Comedy holds within the development of world humour.

Morris (2010:27) suggests that although individual people are likely to be very different, if we could gather two crowds of people they would be largely similar. Konstan (2006:129) and Brottmann (2004:45) consider the concept of particular emotions, particularly fear and anger, as being universal across humanity.
Glossary of Japanese Terms Found in this Thesis

aikyōgen [間狂言] kyōgen which is performed during the interval of a nō performance.


bakegitsune [化け狐] A fox spirit which could disguise itself into human form.

chūsei [中世] “Middle ages” or “Medieval Period” of Japanese history (1185-1868).


daitenmoku [大天目] A type of ceremonial bowl.


Emma/Enma/Yama [閻魔] A demon who is the ruler of Hell.

gekokujuō [下剋上] Literally meaning “the world turned upside down” this term refers to the social upheaval caused by the Sengoku Period.


hōtoke [仏] The dead, deceased souls.

Jirōkaja [次郎冠者] A generic name; typically used in kyōgen to designate a second servant.
Kamakura Bakufu [鎌倉幕府] A feudal government of Medieval Japan whose leaders were referred to as Shoguns.

kakemono [掛け物] A hanging scroll decorated with a painting or calligraphy.

Kamakura Jidai [鎌倉時代] The Japanese name for the years 1185-1333 A.D when Japan was ruled by the Kamakura Bakufu.

kyōgen [狂言] A form of comedic drama which developed alongside nō drama.

mikudarihan [三行半・三下半] Letter of divorce.

Muromachi Jidai [室町時代] The period in Japanese history which was governed by the Muromachi Shogunate (1336-1573).

negi [祢宜・祢宜] A senior priest (Shintoism).

nō [能] A form of tragic drama which originated in Medieval Japan.

oni [鬼] Demon/devil.

onna [女] A woman character in kyōgen.

sake [酒] Alcohol made from rice.


shūgendō [修剣道] The religious practices followed by yamabushi.
Tarōkaja [太郎冠者] A generic name; typically used in kyōgen to designate the main servant.

tengu [天狗] A long-nosed goblin spirit.


wawashii [わわしい] Nagging, troublesome.

yamabushi [山伏] A mountain priest character in kyōgen.

yōkai [妖怪] A Supernatural being or spirit.


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