

**AESTHETICS AND ETHICS IN THE RECEPTION
OF NOH THEATRE IN THE WEST**

Diego Pellecchia

*Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)*

*Royal Holloway, University of London
Department of Drama & Theatre Studies*

September, 2011

Declaration of Authorship

I Diego Pellecchia hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my gratitude to my supervisors, Prof. David Wiles and Dr. Libby Worth, and to my advisor, Prof. Matthew Cohen, for providing invaluable assistance, guidance and feedback at all stages of my research.

I owe my deepest gratitude to Master-Actor Udaka Michishige, whose efforts in opening the tradition of Noh to foreigners allow me and other students of the International Noh Institute to practice the art and experience the world of Noh. I will be forever indebted to Monique Arnaud, who initiated me to the way of Noh, and encouraged me to embark upon this project, and to Rebecca Ogamo Teele, whose achievements in Noh motivate me to pursue the study of Noh, and greatly inspired this thesis.

A special mention goes to Udaka Tatsushige, Udaka Haruna, John Mac Ateer and Dr. Jonah Salz: numerous discussions on Noh and on its transmission in intercultural contexts greatly contributed to the development of central concepts of this thesis. Special thanks to Elena Cazzaro at Biennale ASAC archive for the technical support, and Hara Maiko at Mie Prefectural Museum for facilitating research on Kitasono Katsue. I would also like to thank Sasakawa Foundation Great Britain for having generously sponsored two fieldtrips in Japan in 2009 and 2011.

Finally, I would like to thank my mother and father, Silvana Ballini and Fernando Pellecchia, whose loving care supported me through the highs and lows of this wonderful journey.

Abstract

Arguing that fundamental aesthetic elements of Noh are deeply imbued with ethical qualities, the thesis describes how, throughout the different socio-economic scenarios that marked the transition of Japan and the West to new phases of modernity, Noh became part of an international debate on theatre and ethics. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, European practitioners such as Yeats, Pound, Copeau and Brecht sought to ‘restore’ theatre by returning to ideals of honesty and spirituality that were thought to be lost as a consequence of the rise of bourgeois materialism. The promotion of Noh in Japan and its reception abroad was appropriated both by right and left wing political discourses that provided contrasting and converging interpretations of its theory and practice. With the advent of ‘interculturalism’ Noh was inscribed in a renewed ethical rubric, and became part of a return to the ‘spiritual’ dimension of Asian theatre by practitioners such as Yoshi Oida and Eugenio Barba. However, today Noh is still enmeshed in misconstructions that limit its understanding: drawing on historical research and ethnographic fieldwork, this thesis uses ethical criticism (Carroll, Cooper, Gaut) and Watsuji Tetsurō’s thought in order to analyse past and present reception of Noh, shedding light on the inextricability of the aesthetics and ethics of Noh and seeking to provide a balanced view of individual/communitarian and spiritual/secular dimensions of its contemporary practice, thus placing Noh within the broader perspective of a global discussion of theatre and ethics.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	4
Introduction	7
Noh theatre in the West	7
Theoretical premises: a meeting of aesthetics and ethics	10
A framework for art reception	15
Aesthetically Relevant Ethical Properties	16
Ethical criticism and Noh theatre	19
The ethics of reception	20
Thesis outline	21
Additional remarks	23
Chapter One – First Encounters	25
Meiji Japan and the encounter of Noh with the West	25
Japonisme and early French scholarship of Noh	28
Diplomats, literates and the British discovery of Noh	31
Lafcadio Hearn and the ethics of Japanese tradition	36
Marie Stopes and the Noh	39
Chapter Two – Aesthetics	43
Japonisme and European theatre at the turn of the century	43
Ernest Fenollosa’s study of Noh	45
Fenollosa’s legacy: Ezra Pound and W.B. Yeats’s <i>Accomplishment</i>	50
W. B. Yeats and <i>Certain Noble Plays of Japan</i>	54
Reception of Yeats’s view of Noh	59
Arthur Waley	61
Paul Claudel – a French poet laureate in Japan	64
Chapter Three – Ethics	69
Noh and the new ethics of European theatre	69
Japanese ethics during the Meiji period	70
Promotion of Japanese ethics overseas	73
E.G. Craig and Asian theatre	76
Japanese ethics and theatre in <i>The Mask</i>	78
The Noh actor and the <i>Übermarionette</i>	80
Other comments on Japanese and European theatre in <i>The Mask</i>	81
Noh Theatre and moral cultivation in the theatre of Jacques Copeau	82
Ethics, acting and imitation	84
Ethics and community	90
Chapter Four – Politics	93
Political responses to the ‘Crisis of Modernity’	93
From Taishō ‘democracy’ to the <i>Kokutai no Hongi</i> – The revision of Japanese tradition	97
Politicisation and promotion of Noh during the rise of Nationalism	101
Political implications of the reception of Noh in the West	107
Ezra Pound and the modernist diplomacy of Noh theatre	108

Bertolt Brecht's political reception of the ethics of Noh.....	116
Tanikō	120
Chapter Five: Noh in Post-War Japan	128
The Socio-political condition of Japan after WWII	128
Ruth Benedict and the popularisation of Japanese ethics	129
Inconceivable contradictions.....	130
The ethics of censorship	133
Censorship and Noh theatre.....	134
An American legacy	135
Post-war Noh policy and new visions of Zeami.....	137
Watsuji Tetsurō and the ethics of Noh	138
The 'Renaissance' of Noh	142
A new vision: Kanze Hisao	145
Chapter Six – Cultural exchanges.....	149
A new era	149
The 1954 Festival Internazionale del Teatro, Venice.....	150
René Sieffert and the diffusion of Zeami in the West.....	157
Kanze Hisao and J. L. Barrault: the <i>missing</i> link	158
The 'age of interculturalism'	165
Yoshi Oida.....	166
Eugenio Barba and the ISTA.....	168
Barba's ethics of theatre.....	173
Chapter Seven – Aesthetics and ethics of Noh practice	176
Foreigners and Noh practice today.....	176
Social structure of the Noh establishment	177
The role of amateurs in Noh today.....	180
The International Noh Institute: a historical premise	182
Training with the INI.....	188
Training 'centre' and 'periphery'.....	191
'Self' and 'selfless', 'individual' and 'community' in Noh training.....	193
Watsuji Tetsuro's ethics of emptiness	195
Aesthetics and ethics of emptiness	197
Conclusion: towards an ethics of Noh aesthetics	202
Bibliography	207

Introduction

Noh theatre in the West

It is the intention of this thesis to explore the interrelationship of aesthetics and ethics in the reception of Noh theatre in the West. From the Meiji restoration, when Japan opened its borders to the rest of the world, until today, notions of Noh have reached the West through reports, translations, academic publications, drawings, photographs, audio-visual recordings and eventually by means of performances of Noh actors who have travelled abroad. In the present research I examine two kinds of responses to this reception: scholarship produced by European and North American observers, aimed at introducing Noh to the West, and the work of prominent theatre practitioners who have staged adaptations of Noh plays or claimed to be influenced by Noh in their own work. My enquiry into the different phases of this process highlights two principal strands of reception: on the one hand, Noh theatre has been understood as aesthetic object, appreciated or loathed by virtue of dramaturgical elements such as verse, stage design, choreography and music; on the other hand, Western audiences have responded to ethical elements expressed in the narratives of Noh plays and contained in notions of actor training and performance. The two instances – aesthetic reception and ethical reception – rarely exist independently from one another: they have been in constant dialogue both within the Japanese environment that generated such notions, and within its Western counterpart, which received them. It is from this conceptual starting point that the research will attempt to answer the following questions: what constitutes the ethics of Noh? Why is the study of the ethics of Noh relevant to its reception as art object? How does the interrelation of aesthetics and ethics of Noh reflect the socio-political context of the historical phases in which this reception is embedded?

A number of scholarly publications have enquired into the influence of Noh in the work of Western practitioners. Leonard Pronko's pioneering *Theatre East and West* (1967) provided a necessary initial overview of the broader topic of Asian theatre in the West, and included a chapter on Noh and its reception by practitioners such as Jean-Louis Barrault and Benjamin Britten. In the two decades that followed, a number of essays searching for the influence of Noh in the works of European and North American

practitioners were issued in the form of articles, yet it is not until the late 1990s that more thorough publications were produced. *Nō and Kyōgen in the Contemporary World* (1997), edited by James Brandon, endeavours to contextualise Japanese classical theatre on the international, contemporary stage, and features a section on Noh and Kyogen in the West. Similarly, a section of Benito Ortolani and Samuel Leiter's *Zeami and the Nō Theatre in the World* (1998), collecting the papers presented at the 1998 meeting of the International Zeami Society (Zeami Gakkai), explores ways in which the theory of Zeami Motokiyo, 'the father of Noh', has appealed to Western practitioners. A broader gaze on the presence and role of Japanese theatre abroad is provided by *Japanese Theatre and the International Stage* (2001), edited by Leiter and Stanca Scholz-Cionca, an anthology of essays containing several insights on Noh theatre in the West. Scholz-Cionca has more recently co-edited *Nō Theatre Transversal* (2008), in which a large section is dedicated to Western 'appropriations' of Noh. As already mentioned, besides these books a large number of articles, and a few other publications have been dedicated to the influence of Noh in the artistic production of specific practitioners such as W.B. Yeats and Bertolt Brecht.¹

The volume of publications seeking to investigate the impact of Noh in Western theatre produced to date testifies to large interest in the topic. However, it should be pointed out that this scholarship generally addresses issues related to the *aesthetics* of the dramaturgy of Noh, and its possible influence on European and North American theatre. In the majority of cases, their analysis of the works of practitioners such as Yeats, Claudel or Brecht, to name a few, aims at discerning similarities with elements of Noh including scriptwriting, stage design and choreography, or to trace the history of their reception and implementation.

However, the influence exerted by the aesthetics of Noh as expressed in its dramaturgy is only one aspect of a more complex phenomenon of reception. In this thesis I wish to demonstrate that Noh as artwork and as artistic practice is deeply imbued with *ethical* significations inextricable from its *aesthetic* manifestations – that is to say, according to this line of thought the reception of the aesthetics of Noh should be intrinsically related with the reception of its ethics. Spiritual aspects of Noh are usually understood in connection with its religious origin, as has been described in the studies of Noh theoreticians Zeami Motokiyo and Komparu Zenchiku by non-Japanese scholars

¹ The following chapters will introduce relevant scholarship for each of the practitioners examined.

such as Mark Nearman², Arthur Thornhill (2001) and Noel Pinnington (2006a). However, religious studies are only one of the lenses through which one can interpret metaphysical aspects of Noh. Asserting that the philosophical core of Noh, as that of other Japanese traditional arts, derives from the Japanese syncretic religious tissue, comprising of Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian and Shinto thought, should not prevent one from appreciating the value of its ethics in a secular context. The risk of producing sweeping generalisations lurks behind every attempt to assume that ethics is essentially something shared across cultures, and the question as to whether it is intrinsically ethical to formulate ‘universal’ ethical propositions is at the centre of the current debate on interculturalism and globalisation.³ In addition, ethical virtues should be discussed both in their ‘ideal’ state, and in conjunction with their practical application, which requires historical localisation.

Though it is not in the intentions of this thesis to formulate universal ethical statements, I would like to point out how certain ethical properties of Noh, often described as religiously connoted, could be also understood by those who profess other religions, or even by those who do not follow any specific belief. For example, one of the main themes of this thesis is the ethical debate around the concept of ‘self’ and ‘community’, and its fundamental role in the reception of Noh in the West. Is ‘subjectivity’ an exclusively religious issue? Can values such as humbleness and respect be discussed in secular terms? Arguably, ethics *qua* systems of values that govern the behaviour of individuals can be comprehended and judged within a non-religious context. By using the term ‘secular’ I do not seek to isolate secular thought from its religious derivation: what I would like to emphasise is how, in order to appreciate Buddhist art, one need not to be a Buddhist, and this is also because certain ethical properties expressed in Buddhist art are not exclusive to Buddhism, and can well be understood by a Christian, a Muslim, or an atheist. I suspect that one of the reasons for a limited treatment of spiritual aspects of Noh within fields other than religious studies is due to its belonging to the rather exclusive domain of Japanese studies, and there might be a risk for this ethics to be seen with suspicion by those who are not interested in approaching art from a religious perspective. This thesis will describe how the ethics of Noh have been promoted and received in religious terms since the beginning of its diffusion in the West until present. However, the last chapter will explain how these ethical properties do not need to be seen as religious precepts, as they can also be

² See the series of articles that appeared on *Monumenta Nipponica* between 1978 and 1984 and between 1995 and 1996.

³ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) is an attempt to formulate universal ethics. For a secular perspective on universality and relativism in ethics see S. Harris’s recent work (2010).

understood from a secular perspective.

This should not be read as an attempt to undermine the importance of researching Noh as a cultural product of Japan – including its religious background – but as an effort to expand the horizons of understanding to those of a contemporary, living practice of international breadth. The fragmentary nature of the scholarship mentioned above, essays often scattered through anthologies in which their role is limited to contributing to transversal themes, has prevented the formulation of a more comprehensive view of the importance of ethics in Noh. In sum, what extant scholarship lacks is a dedicated study of the history of the reception of Noh in the West that can trace the evolution of this phenomenon through its various phases. In this thesis historical research will provide a framework for an investigation of a philosophical nature on the relation between the *aesthetic* and *ethical* dimensions of Noh.

Theoretical premises: a meeting of aesthetics and ethics

As this thesis will argue, the intertwining of the aesthetic and the ethical strands of reception of Noh in the West, and the way Western audiences have perceived and re-elaborated them, has depended on a renewed interest in the overlap of the aesthetic and the ethical that emerged with the advent of Modernism. From Plato to Zeami, from Immanuel Kant to Watsuji Tetsurō, aesthetics and ethics have been in continuous divergence and convergence, opposition and superimposition. Invested with sacred and secular meanings, art has been a vehicle of spiritual elevation and political consciousness. However, Western philosophy has progressively brought these two perspectives to a divorce. In classical Greek thought, the distinction between concepts of beauty and goodness, both encompassed in the term *kalos*, was blurred, yet one of the *loci classici* for a Western discussion of aesthetics and ethics is Plato's critique of imitation (*mimēsis*) in art. In books three and ten of the *Republic* (ca. 380 BCE) Plato claimed that, since artists belong to the material existential plane, they are removed from truth, thus they are 'lying' about what they portray: they pretend to represent what in fact they never truly knew. Especially actors constitute a potential threat to ethics because they specialise in imitation: for Plato mimetic art is unethical because it elicits emotional response in spite of reason, compromising the audience's capability of discerning truth from falsehood. To some extent, such view of art as 'artificial' has lingered in the background of the common understanding of theatre *qua* fiction 're'-

presenting facts. Modern philosophy, and in particular the reception of Immanuel Kant's thought widened the gap between aesthetics and ethics, purifying art from moral entanglements. Kant's idea of art expressing purposiveness without having utilitarian purpose, or beauty as 'an object of delight apart from any interest' (Kant 1911, 50) has been interpreted as an attempt to isolate aesthetics from morality. In section 45 of the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* Kant stresses how 'the finality in the product of fine art, intentional though it be, must not have the appearance of being intentional; i.e., fine art must be clothed with the aspect of nature, although we recognize it to be art' (1911, 167). Kant admits that art is bound up in the intention of the artist, yet technique should be hidden and give the impression of naturalness. These attempts to separate aesthetics from ethics bear witness that, whether seen in a positive or negative light, an indissoluble link connects the two concepts. As will be shown below, recent works within the field of ethical criticism have suggested how a misreading of these classics might have led to limited interpretations of Plato's and Kant's view of art and morality.

Kant's introduction of the notion of 'disinterest' marked an important stage in the constitution of a 'modern' understanding of Western aesthetics. As Andrew Bowie (1990) pointed out, this progressive detachment of aesthetics from ethics is bound up with the progressive expansion of the notion of subjectivity and individual freedom that accompanied the development of modernity. It is my intention to demonstrate how at the core of the reception of the aesthetics and ethics of Noh is a debate on the concept of individuality and community. When notions of Japan reached Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century, the long process of detachment of aesthetics from ethics reached a peak epitomised by the Aesthetic Movement. Oscar Wilde's famous dictum: 'to reveal art and conceal the artist is art's aim' (Wilde 2003, 3) echoes Kant's aforementioned idea of art disconnected from any relation with morality embedded in the human nature of its author. As the artist was liberated from moral responsibility, the locus for the appreciation of aesthetic value shifted from the artist to the observer, following David Hume's concept of 'contemplation' by which beauty is in the eye of the beholder (Hume 1974, vol. 3).

Bowie describes how towards the end of the nineteenth century the expansion of subjectivity reached its maximum extent, and was about to collapse into the new forms of repression of individuality represented by Fascism and Communism. As Bowie puts it: 'modernity both creates space for the proliferation of individual meaning and tends to destroy the sense that such meaning really matters' (Bowie 1990, 12). At the turn of the

century, certain practitioners dissatisfied with what they considered the mediocrity and staleness of bourgeois culture responded by going in the opposite direction to Wilde: instead of advocating freedom and independence of beauty, they re-discovered ‘tradition’ as vehicle for canon and discipline. Theatre was invested with moral values that had to be found in its medium: the actor. Konstantin Stanislavski’s revolutionary method was based on concepts of sincerity and respect, and the artist had to find moral integrity in order to act ‘honestly’ (Stanislavski 1948, 34-47).

Ever since the early phases of Japonisme, the reception of Japan in the West has been characterised by the constant presence of an ‘aesthetics and ethics’ binary. Japan has been encapsulated in the clichés of ‘aesthetic wonderland’ and ‘home of the samurai’, opposing beauty to moral rigour in what Western observers considered a puzzling paradox.⁴ In a number of cases, stereotypical views of Japan formulated in the West were accepted by Japan and utilised by so-called *nihonjinron*⁵ literature: Japan reflected the Western gaze and transformed it in a local theory of national identity. Stereotypes of aesthetics and ethics of Japan belong to the Orientalist discourse described by Edward Said (2003) as a dialectics of subordination in which the ‘West’ saw the ‘East’ as irrational and primitive. The aesthetic implication of such perspectives led to viewing the Orient as preserving a sensibility unharmed by the corrupting agency of modernity, in which beauty is ‘natural’ and not dictated by human artifice. As far as ethics are concerned, Brian Turner has pointed out how the Orientalist discourse subsumed a ‘theory of lack of social change’ especially relevant to East-Asian countries such as Japan, which were thought to be incompatible with Western modern ideals of freedom (Turner 1994, 97). At the same time, in the West authoritarianism and discipline extolled by Japanese warrior code (*bushidō*) were admired by both left and right-wing political thought, and were saluted by theatre practitioners looking for an ethics of training and performance that would privilege unselfish dedication to the art over individualistic achievements.

As Rupert A. Cox has pointed out, Orientalism often understood the ethical component of the ‘aesthetic-ethic’ compound in relation to practices of spiritual elevation and asceticism (Cox 2003, 32). Noh theatre’s plays often feature more or less

⁴ Ian Littlewood provides an analysis of a variety of Western stereotypes of Japan in *The Idea of Japan* (1996).

⁵ The term *Nihonjinron* (lit. ‘discussion of Japaneseness’) refers to the body of theory that has tried to isolate essential traits of Japanese ethnicity and culture, advocating their uniqueness. Contemporary Western and Japanese scholarship commonly understands *nihonjinron* as producing stereotypical images of Japan. For a criticism of *nihonjinron* see, among others, H. Befu (2001) and P. Dale (1990).

explicit moral lessons drawing on Confucian, Buddhist, and Shinto precepts, which were associated with Christian *exempla* in European medieval morality plays. Moreover, the theory of its practice as it has been transmitted through the writings of Zeami Motokiyo calls for a practitioner embracing the ‘way’ of acting as a journey toward spiritual elevation. The opening of the *Fūshikaden* (1400-18), one of Zeami's major treatises, introduces ethical precepts that the actor should follow: being temperate, avoiding drinking, promiscuity and gambling; rejecting vulgarity and pursuing *yūgen*;⁶ being dedicated to Noh only; respecting tradition without being obtuse (Zeami 2008, 26). These precepts might not all apply to contemporary Noh actors in their literal meaning, yet it is possible to argue that, in principle, Noh is still promoted and received by and large as a discipline requiring complete dedication to training understood as a path to spiritual cultivation (*shūgyō*). While in the West the word ‘art’ generally suggests activities related to creativity and aesthetics, Japanese practices such as tea ceremony, flower arrangement, and Noh are considered *geidō* – arts of the ‘way’ (*dō* or *michi*). Ever since it was exported as an essential feature of Japanese culture, the notion of the ‘way’ has been bundled up with Buddhist elements in what Richard Pilgrim (1977) has defined as the ‘religio-aesthetic paradigm’ of *geidō*. In his study of the ‘way’ of Noh in the theory of Zeami and Konparu Zenchiku, Noel Pinnington has observed how the ‘Japanese medieval world understood ability not to be rooted in the individual personality, which was seen as superficial, but rather in the knowledge that derived from erasure or detachment from the self’ (Pinnington 2006b, 29). The notion of *michi* is central to this research as it provides a consistent framework in order to understand notions of ‘individual’ and ‘community’ in Japanese traditional thought. As Pinnington pointed out, in Buddhist conceptions of the ‘way’ ‘personal characteristics of the individual are actually the reflections of loci on the path, and thus not essential’ (2006b, 31). Likewise, according to this principle it would seem as if the individual features of those who tread the path of Noh do not count toward their artistic success. Instead, what is privileged is the student’s capability to imitate the model (*kata*) of the teacher, and to conform to the tradition that has been laid down before them. This attitude requires a disposition to abandon one’s everyday-life self and embrace a new identity that will become incorporated into the ensemble of the individuals who constitute the *ethos* of the *michi*.

⁶ *Yūgen* is commonly translated as ‘profound beauty’. Two ideograms composing the Japanese term: 幽 = ‘secluded’, ‘deep’, ‘dark’, and 玄 = ‘mysterious’, ‘occult’.

Western modern subjectivity offers a view of artistry that stems from the notion of ‘genius’, which Kant defined as ‘the talent (natural endowment) which gives the rule to art. Since talent, as an innate productive faculty of the artist, belongs itself to nature, we may put it this way: Genius is the innate mental aptitude (*ingenium*) through which nature gives the rule to art’ (Kant 1911, 168). Although for Kant one is either born a genius or not, the extent of this ‘quality’ is not wholly individual: the artist is rather a vehicle for nature to appear in art. The features of *michi*, such as the pursuit of spiritual cultivation, rigour of discipline and life-long meditation, strongly impacted upon those Western observers who struggled to re-position the self in relation to tradition. Though the philosophical root of *michi* originated in religious traditions, the thesis will try to demonstrate how the notion of selflessness has been misconstrued by local and foreign scholarship, creating the engrained yet oversimplified dichotomy ‘individualist/selfish/secular West’ vs. ‘communitarian/selfless/sacred East’.

It must be noted how neither the philosophy of *michi*, nor Kant take into consideration physical (‘non-intellectual’) characteristics of inborn talent, such as possessing an extraordinary physical aptitude to dance or being gifted with a particularly sonorous voice. In Noh, bodily qualities have an important role in the artistic development of a theatre performer, and actors are often praised because of their vocal quality as well as for control of movement. In addition, Noh demands physical fitness as actors dance with very heavy costumes, wearing masks and wigs that restrict their breathing, and often perform plays that include acrobatic movements. Despite these requirements physical aptitude is not regarded as primary.

Age and its physiological consequences are often beautified, not only in the narratives of plays, but also in performance. Elderly actors as well as children are considered particularly interesting in virtue of their non-conventional beauty. Though the *Fūshikaden* points out how the actor would reach the peak of his capabilities in his mid-thirties, Zeami shows that each stage of life has its ‘flower’ (*hana*, a metaphor to describe artistic accomplishment): age is accompanied by physical weakness, but also by wisdom and *yūgen*. It follows that the concept of beauty cannot easily fall into a canonical aesthetic category, and it is informed by qualities that extend beyond ‘narrow’ aesthetic qualities. This also urges one to consider artistic accomplishment and its reception not as a singular, absolute entity, and to conceive of a plurality of possible accomplishments, thus expressing the literal meaning of the character for Noh (lit. ‘potential’).

A framework for art reception

Before introducing ethical criticism as a discipline for aesthetic enquiry I will outline my approach to the primary sources analysed in the following chapters. A study of the reception of Noh in the West calls for a methodology that considers the socio-historical contexts in which reception takes place. While reception theory is an established strand within literary theory (Jauss 1982; Iser 1978), theatre studies lacks such dedicated scholarship. One of the reasons for this deficiency could be the difficulty of producing an all-comprising theory of the complex ‘multimediality’ of the theatrical text, in which verse, music, movement, and objects merge into unique live events. Susan Bennett's *Theatre Audiences* (1997) remains one of the few attempts to produce a comprehensive theory of audience reception drawing from examples belonging to the Western tradition, and in its latest edition it has been enriched with a chapter on interculturalism. Jacob Raz's *Audience and Actors: a Study of Their Interaction in the Japanese Traditional Theatre* (1983) deals to a great extent with Noh audiences, tracing the history of the relationship between actors and audiences, mostly focusing on Zeami, and only marginally touching on the reception of foreign audiences. However, this research will cover a broader array of instances related to the reception of Noh in the West, a number of which are not live events, as in the case of the practitioners who never travelled to Japan and discovered Noh through written documents and pictures. Other instances of reception treated here did not take place on the occasion of regular Noh performances, as in the case of training, workshops, demonstrations and the like. Ultimately, as the purpose of this work is studying the reception of Noh in the West, this thesis will require a theory of reception that considers how artworks are transmitted and received across cultures. In order to produce a suitable model for my inquiry it is useful to consider Pierre Bourdieu's ‘Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception’, in which he maintains that art should be contextualised within the cultural ‘field’ in which it is produced and received. For Bourdieu

art perception involves a conscious or unconscious deciphering operation. An act of deciphering *unrecognised as such*, immediate and adequate ‘comprehension’, is possible and effective only in the special case in which the cultural code which makes the act of deciphering possible is immediately and completely mastered by the observer (in the form of cultivated ability or inclination) and merges with the cultural code which has rendered the work perceived possible (Bourdieu 1993a, 215).

This theory of reception is the product of the post-modern refutation of universalism, drawing the attention to cultural diversity in production and reception of art. Bourdieu refutes what he calls the ‘myth of the fresh eye’, or the illusion that audiences lacking ‘artistic competence’ would be able to fully ‘comprehend’ an artwork (1993a, 216-17). Elsewhere, Bourdieu reiterates the necessity to historicise reception, articulating criticism of what he considers the common tendency to attribute to art what he calls a ‘transhistoric or an ahistoric essence’ (1993b, 225). Bourdieu distinguishes between what he calls ‘simple *aisthesis*’, a low-level form of enjoyment based on primary sensorial experience, and ‘delight’, the high-level enjoyment ‘procured by scholarly savouring, presupposing as a necessary but insufficient condition, adequate deciphering’ (1993a, 220). Though Bourdieu would reject Kantian universalism, the form of ‘high’ aesthetic appreciation in which adequate deciphering is necessary but not sufficient seems to be in accord with Kant’s notion of true aesthetic judgment taking place only when the qualities of ‘imagination’ and ‘understanding’ are in free play, that is, when knowledge moderates imagination and vice-versa. For Kant, neither ‘imagination’ nor ‘understanding’ are sufficient conditions for appreciation of beauty, as they only exist in a mutual thrust and limitation (Kant 1911, LIX, LXVI). However, if knowledge of the cultural code is a *conditio sine qua non* of ‘appropriate’ reception, shall the positive reception of Noh by audiences who were and are by and large ignorant of the cultural context of Noh be judged as inappropriate, or as ‘mere *aisthesis*’? Is it possible to conceive of a more or less ‘truthful’ or ‘correct’ appreciation of Noh? To what extent can we advance the hypothesis that certain qualities of Noh can be transmitted and received without the decoding process theorised by Bourdieu, hence expressing a more ‘transversal’ quality that cuts through cultural boundaries? The thesis will try to answer these questions using ethical criticism as a way to explore the moral relevance of aesthetics in art reception.

Aesthetically Relevant Ethical Properties

In *Art, Emotion and Ethics* (2007), Berys Gaut reviews the major positions of the recent debate on ethical criticism. Following Frank Sibley’s analysis of aesthetic judgment (1959; 1965), in which the vocabulary of aesthetic judgment is described as often resorting to non-aesthetic concepts, Gaut observes how objects can be described in

‘narrow’ aesthetic terms – for example using the adjectives ‘beautiful’ or ‘ugly’ – and in ‘wide’ aesthetic terms – with terms such as ‘delicate’, or ‘sober’. Such terms refer to properties of the object that are not intrinsically expressing an aesthetic quality, yet they are essential to explaining why the object is perceived aesthetically (Sibley 1965, 135–36).⁷ Gaut pointed out how, in several cases, the aesthetic quality of ‘broad aesthetic’ properties is closely connected with ethical value, and has defined such entities ‘aesthetically relevant ethical properties’ (Gaut 2007, 83).⁸ According to this theory, beauty and good coalesce in properties that describe an experience that is not narrowly aesthetic or ethical. The following section will detail how Noh can be analysed through the lens of ethical criticism.

Two *caveats* should be put forward before continuing: first, an artwork contains a plurality of qualities among which some can be aesthetically relevant ethical qualities while others are not. For example, as Noel Carroll has suggested, much instrumental music and abstract decoration might be difficult to describe in terms of ethical value (Carroll 2000, 352). In such cases, Gaut’s theory appeals to the *pro-tanto* principle, by which art can be subject to ethical criticism *insofar as* it possesses aesthetically relevant ethical qualities (Gaut 2007, 57-66).⁹ Carroll pointed out how those advocating the autonomy of aesthetics and ethics often appeal to the ‘common-denominator’ principle, presupposing that the appropriate criterion for art evaluation should be applied to all art, thus construing a universal paradigm for art criticism (2000, 357). However, not all aesthetic properties are ethically relevant and the difficulty in discerning the intrinsic ethical quality of a painting by Piet Mondrian does not disprove that, for example, Stanley Kubrick’s *A Clockwork Orange* is prone to ethical criticism. The purpose of this section, then, is to draw the attention to cases where aesthetic qualities are also ethically relevant, and why this relevance should be emphasised.

A second *caveat* should be addressed in reference to the nature of the relationship between aesthetics and ethics. Aesthetically relevant ethical qualities suggest an intrinsic relation between good and beauty emerging in the encounter of the

⁷ Kant already suggested that ‘we frequently apply to beautiful objects of nature or of art names that seem to rely upon the basis of a moral estimate. We call buildings or trees majestic and stately, or plains laughing and gay; even colours are called innocent, modest, soft, because they excite sensations containing something analogous to the consciousness of the state of mind produced by moral judgements’ (Kant 1911, 255).

⁸ Similarly, in *The Structure of Iki* (pub. 1930) Kuki Shūzo analysed the aesthetic and non-aesthetic quality of terms such as *jimi* (plain, modest) or *shibumi* (astringent, austere), which in fact convey both aesthetic and ethical meanings.

⁹ Sibley notes that, although the single features of a painting such as background colours, and hardly noticeable brush strokes might not possess aesthetic value *per se*, they might nonetheless contribute to the aesthetics of the whole (1965, 138).

observer with an object perceived *at once* as good and as beautiful, hence eliciting aesthetic and moral appreciation. Elegance, for example, is a complex property generally understood as containing qualities of composure and appropriateness. An elegant person has ‘good taste’, they know the stylistic canon and yet are able to introduce personal elements that elevate their style from mediocrity and conformity without indulging in grandiosity.¹⁰ Elegance expresses a good balance between conformity and individualism, demonstrating knowledge and respect for the norm, as well as creativity and audacity in expressing personal views. Furthermore, elegance is often thought to be subtle, giving the impression of naturalness, only emerging for those who are able to perceive it.¹¹ In other words, elegance dwells in the middle way between ‘self’ and ‘other’, individual and traditional: it is modest because it does not force attention to itself, but appears to those who are able to perceive it.¹² Even so, one might wonder what is the nature of the sensibility required in order to discern elegance: is it mere scientific, factual knowledge of aesthetic canons or does it entail responsiveness to ethical values such as modesty and respect? This thesis aims at exploring the extent to which these two forms of knowledge are intertwined in the reception of Noh as aesthetic and ethical object.

Aesthetics and ethics could also be related by means of *extrinsic* relations. For example, according to David Cooper’s theory of ‘edificationism’, explained in more detail below, art can be aesthetically meritorious insofar as it teaches moral knowledge, establishing a causal relation between art and ethics. Plato’s critique contains both intrinsic and causal elements as it considers *mimēsis* as false (intrinsic property) and corrupting the mind of the audience (extrinsic property). A play could be condemned because it conveys an immoral message, and yet be aesthetically pleasant because its narrative is tightly knit and its direction consistent. In this case extrinsic and intrinsic qualities can clash, and in order to reject or accept the artwork the ethical critic should consider which aesthetically relevant ethical quality is, all things considered, prevailing over the other.¹³

¹⁰ The same can be applied to an elegant object in which we find analogous merits, perhaps implicitly identifying the effort of the author with the work of art. Gaut discusses the notion of ‘implied author’ in relation to ethical criticism in (2007, 80-82).

¹¹ This quality recalls Kant’s aforementioned ideal of art disguised as ‘unintentional’ (1911, 167).

¹² It is not by chance that Kuki positions *iki* (elegance) at the centre of his enquiry on Japanese aesthetics.

¹³ The typical example to describe this dilemma is Leni Riefenstahl’s *The Triumph of the Will*, documenting the 1934 Nazi congress in Nuremberg. Both Carroll (2000) and Gaut (2005) discuss it in relation to ethical criticism, generally agreeing that the film should be rejected as all things considered its aesthetics are flawed because of an ethically wrong approach to photography and direction.

Ethical criticism and Noh theatre

What are the aesthetically relevant ethical qualities of Noh? As has been pointed out above, Noh training as *michi* can be understood as a path to moral or spiritual cultivation. As will be detailed in the conclusion of this thesis, ethical issues still constitute an important aspect of the social and artistic life of a practitioner today. That the narratives of Noh plays extol virtues associated with Buddhist, Confucian or Shinto morals is a truism: from Hearn to Brecht, the narratives of Japanese traditional theatre have impressed Western observers because of their moral content. However, the object of enquiry of this thesis is not exclusively the moral message contained in the text, but also how its aesthetics encompass ethical qualities relevant to its appreciation.

One of the most important characteristics of Noh is its allusive, non-mimetic style, often described as ‘essentialist’, ‘minimal’, or ‘synthetic’. From verse to music, from stage design and properties to movement, all aesthetics of Noh tend to be allusive rather than descriptively exhaustive. The aim of a Noh play is not so much the minute illustration of an event as it is the suggestion of sounds, colours and words that trigger the audience’s imagination. Generally speaking, much of Noh aesthetics is centred upon the Sino-Japanese notion of ‘empty space’ or ‘gap’ (*ma*), a quality widely present in many other traditional Japanese arts. In Noh, *ma* is realised in moments of non-acting, pauses between drum strokes, gaps in narrative and verses, and by the overall scantiness of the *mise-en-scène*. Noh departs from Western conceptions of realism as imitation of life, and its techniques are mostly based on abstraction and allusion, leaving much room for the audience to fill in.

However, it is necessary to resist the temptation to reduce artworks to absolute, unchanging objects. While ethical criticism principally draws its examples from literature and fine arts, in which the author is usually singular, and generally a distinct entity from the artwork (Gaut 2007, 74-76, 84), the case of theatre is more complex as in most cases it involves a plurality of individuals who, by performing, embody at once artist and artwork. Moreover, as the emphasis of the latter half of this thesis is not on the content of scripts, but on performance, the focus should shift from the author of the play to the actors and to their interpretations of the text, that is, their *style*. If the artist expresses aesthetic choices in performance, ethical criticism would first of all analyse whether such choices could be vehicles of ethical values. Noh theatre’s choreographies are transmitted within families and stylistic schools, and are sometimes understood as not granting the actor any leeway for ‘interpretation’. However, this is a major

misunderstanding: actors are not robots but human beings with physical and psychological peculiarities, and will naturally develop individual preferences and distinct approaches to the same piece of choreography. It is precisely because of the rigidity of the canon that, when an actor introduces a variation or an interpretation of a gesture that deviates from it, the experienced audience will immediately recognise it.

The ethics of reception

So far I have described aesthetics and ethics in the intricate relationship between artist and artwork. However, as this thesis looks at the reception of Noh in the West, a second major strand of ethical criticism, art reception, needs to be considered. Kant's notion of 'disinterest' has been impugned by autonomist thought, which holds that ethics would impinge upon the aesthetic experience by introducing 'interest'. Despite its popularity, this claim seems to ignore Kant's claim that 'ideal beauty' is the 'visible expression of moral ideas', and his view of 'beauty as the symbol of morality', in which beauty is described as having the property to re-evoke moral concepts by means of analogy (1911, 21-25). Regarding these inconsistencies, Cooper holds that Kant's 'aesthetic attitude' has been widely misunderstood, and offers in response an alternative reading, by which 'disinterest' is in fact 'openness, mindfulness and selflessness', necessary 'conditions for the exercise of spontaneity' (Cooper 2010, 76). This reading of Kant helps Cooper formulate what he calls the 'edificationist' argument, by which something is 'beautiful' insofar as it assists the cultivation of the observer.¹⁴ Cooper's account specifically refers to the experience of 'new' or 'alien' beauty, which is particularly relevant to the theme of this research. In implicit agreement with Bourdieu's contextualisation of cultural reception within the 'field', Cooper maintains that 'appreciation of new beauty is educative, for it requires initiation into traditions, practices and cultural contexts that allow for beauty of a certain kind to become visible' (Cooper 2010, 63-64). If cultivation as a way of knowing the unknown is itself a virtue, the effort put into the appreciation of unknown beauty is what provides this form of experience with ethical value. As the final section of this thesis will emphasise, in the case of Noh filling in the blanks of *ma* entails going beyond one's individuality, experiencing the unknown, being open and willing to establish a relationship with a

¹⁴ This position resembles Gaut's 'cognitive argument' by which art is beautiful insofar as it can teach us something (Gaut 2007, 133-202).

potential ‘other’. All these acts of ‘filling in’ require an effort that, as Anne Ubersfeld put it, might be ‘the very source of theatrical pleasure’ (Ubersfeld 1982, 129).

The capacity for filling in the blank is an act that Kant articulated describing the ideal condition for aesthetic judgment: ‘free play’ or ‘harmonious working’ of the qualities of ‘imagination’ and ‘understanding’. For Kant, in order to be able to experience beauty the cognitive capacity of sensing and discerning and the creative action of imagination need to be in ‘free play’ – that is, the two entities mutually trigger and limit each other. Using Buddhist terminology, it might be argued that ‘imagination’ and ‘understanding’ exist in ‘mutual dependence’, a crucial concept in Mahayana Buddhism that Japanese philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō integrated into his own ethical theory. The concluding section of this thesis will demonstrate how the notion of mutual dependence has both ethical and aesthetic relevance. I suggest that an approach to aesthetic experience relying exclusively on the decoding of the cultural text is insufficient: understanding every aspect of a piece of art will not necessarily yield aesthetic pleasure. Conversely, as Bourdieu and Cooper suggest, experiencing beauty requires a certain degree of knowledge of cultural signs in order to elevate reception above ‘mere *aisthesis*’ (Bourdieu 1993a, 220), and cannot be experienced by mere exercise of imagination.

Thesis outline

In order to provide a consistent description of the interrelation of aesthetics and ethics in the reception of Noh in the West, the thesis will proceed to the examination of different historical phases of the phenomenon in chronological order. Chapter One describes how during the late nineteenth century Noh was introduced through accounts and translations that constitute the nucleus of the first reception of Noh in Europe. During this first phase of its reception, Japan considered Noh as the relic of a primitive culture, destined to be erased by Western civilisation. However, after the turmoil that characterised the early phases of Meiji restoration, when Japan abandoned feudalism and unconditionally embraced Western culture, Noh was re-invested with the institutional role of representing Japan on the international stage. As knowledge of Japan became increasingly popular in the West, the aesthetics of Noh that were initially ridiculed began stimulating the interest of theatre practitioners who found in Noh a way to salvage their own drama from the decadence of bourgeois culture: Chapter Two looks at

the reception of practitioners such as W.B. Yeats and Paul Claudel, who were mostly influenced by the aesthetic elements of Noh dramaturgy such as symbolic acting and by its use of classic literature and mythology. This chapter also introduces one of the major themes in the reception of Noh in the West, that is, the question as to whether Noh is an art for a restricted group of connoisseurs, or if it can appeal to larger audiences. Though this topic is initially expressed within the scope of art criticism, its underlying themes also stimulate discussion of social and political issues. In fact, Noh soon became part of a larger debate on theatre and ethics, between elitism and popular theatre, 'individualism' and 'communitarianism': Chapter Three looks at the reception of practitioners who sought to reform theatre by resurrecting a strong ethics of acting, such as Edward Gordon Craig and Jacques Copeau. Ethical themes could not exist in isolation from the political ideologies developed during the early twentieth century: Chapter Four describes how Japanese aesthetic-ethical ideals received in Europe fed into a politicised debate on theatre. With the rise of nationalism that led to the Second World War, ideals of self-sacrifice were adopted by both right and left-wing discourses, as the examples of Ezra Pound and Bertolt Brecht will testify. Chapter Five discusses the post-war aftermath with a focus on Japan, looking at how the country reformed its national ethics as a consequence of the relationship established with the USA. This renegotiation of morality had a strong impact on the Noh establishment, and was endorsed by scholars and practitioners such as Watsuji and Kanze Hisao. This corresponds to the period when Noh actors started to travel abroad to perform and to introduce Noh by means of lectures and demonstrations. Chapter Six opens by looking at the first performance of Noh abroad in Venice (1954), and continues by examining examples of 'intercultural' exchanges between Japanese and Western practitioners, expounding the nature of such exchanges and their relevance in the transmission of Noh. Finally, Chapter Seven draws on my personal training experience in Italy and in Japan in order to describe how ethical instances are still at the centre of the debate on how to introduce Noh in the West, and to sketch a perspective on the relationship between aesthetics and ethics of Noh practice.

Clearly, the number of cases of reception of Noh in the West widely exceeds the size of this work, which is not meant to be an exhaustive investigation, but rather a starting point for further elaborations of the topic. The instances of reception considered in this research are those offering particular input for a discussion of aesthetics and ethics of Noh. This thesis aims at demonstrating that the evaluation of Western

reception of Noh theatre is not complete unless it is considered from the perspective of the inseparability of aesthetics and ethics, seeking to contribute to the scholarship of Noh by shedding light on what has been largely neglected by critical literature: the crucial role of ethics in the reception of Noh theatre, specifically expressed in the study of instances of ‘individual’ and ‘community’, ‘self’ and ‘other’, ‘creativity’ and ‘tradition’.

The ultimate aim of this work is to open a window for a wider and better appreciation of Noh in the West that begins with the acknowledgement of the values on which this art is founded. Though these values take aesthetic form, their nature is essentially ethical. Imitation of aesthetics without understanding of its ethics can only lead to superficial mimicry. However, ethics should not be confused with religious doctrines of selflessness: offering a secular view of Noh is a way to dissipate the exotic ‘mist of mysticism’ that often envelops its practice. This does not mean underestimating the religiosity that expresses its ethics, but emphasising the ethics advocated in religious concepts. Likewise, this thesis wishes to shed light on the often-trivialised notions of ‘individualism’ and ‘selflessness’, arguing for a ‘doctrine of the mean’ that raises awareness of the position of the ‘self’ in relation to ‘community’.

Additional remarks

Though the title of this thesis refers to the reception of Noh in the West, the materials investigated are mostly European. There is a question as to whether it is possible to restrict a research investigating trans-cultural models to national boundaries. Admittedly, if particular attention is paid to avoiding pan-Asian generalisations, the same effort is not made when discussing ‘the West’. While British, French, German, Italian and American Orientalism might have common features, they evidently are the products of different cultures. Some of these differences will be highlighted when discussing specific cases in the following chapters, as they might be relevant to specific historical or political conditions in which reception was taking place. However, the aim of the research is not to draw national comparisons between forms of Western reception but rather to explore how the aesthetics and ethics of Noh were received in Western countries, allegedly sharing a common philosophic background. A number of the authors treated, such as Lafcadio Hearn, Ezra Pound or Yoshi Oida have a particularly ‘international’ curriculum and it would be reductive to limit them within the sphere of

influence of a single country. In this thesis I specifically look at literature in French and English languages, which has arguably increased its international range. This is not to undermine the reception and production of Noh scholarship in ‘minor languages’ (Scholz-Cionca 2007, 153-54), to which academia should certainly dedicate more attention in the future, but to restrict the research framework to the most influential instances of reception. The exception to this criterion is the case of Italy, which I have discussed in Chapter Six, analysing the first performance of Noh in the West, a major event largely neglected by existent literature, and in Chapter Seven, where I have deliberately decided to include discussion of the activities of the International Noh Institute in Italy and Japan, and not to treat American companies such as Theatre of Yūgen and Theatre Nohgaku, which have other places for acknowledgement and discussion of their work.¹⁵

¹⁵ For Theatre of Yūgen see Y. Doi (2007) and E. Ehn (2004). For Theatre Nohgaku see Gendrich and Hood (2008) and R. Emmert (2008). Both companies have much explanatory material on their respective websites: <http://www.theatreofyugen.org/> and <http://www.theatrenohgaku.org/>

Chapter One – First Encounters

Meiji Japan and the encounter of Noh with the West

When on March 31st 1854 Commodore Matthew Perry of the U.S. army and the Tokugawa shogunate ratified the Kanagawa Treaty¹, Japan was giving in to the pressure of Western powers demanding an opening of the country to international commerce, and was putting an end to a period of almost complete closure to the outside world that lasted for more than two centuries. Within less than fifteen years from this date the feudal system embodied by the Tokugawa *bakufu* collapsed and the power was assigned to the Emperor: Japan entered a fast process of mass-importation of Western culture, from politics to technology, from economics to arts. At the same time, representatives of Western countries who could visit Japan for the first time started to report back on the conditions of a territory until then unmapped. The encounter with this ‘alien’ culture elicited a range of reactions in Western observers and it is the aim of this first chapter to explore how Noh theatre was transmitted and received during this early phase of its reception, focusing on the work of scholars who produced essays and translations of Noh plays.

The first elements of Japanese art to reach Western shores were objects such as prints and artefacts that quickly became popular in the European trend known as Japonisme. This phenomenon encompassed both a taste for Japanese aesthetics that developed in specific ways in France and Great Britain, and its manifold applications in the art production of Western artists influenced by Japan. Chiba Yōko sketches three key concepts of Japonisme: the outward thrust of the colonial powers, with the subsequent importation of foreign representations of culture, the dissatisfaction with classical art principles that led European art to naturalist aesthetics during the first half of the 19th century, and the discussion of the primacy of the verbal medium (Chiba 1998). While the latter two points are constant elements in the discussion of Japanese art in relation to the West there is a question as to whether it is possible to position Japan within the colonial discourse characterising Said’s theory of Orientalism. As Jan Hokenson points out, theories of hegemony do not apply to Japonisme, as Japan never

¹ The Kanagawa Treaty granted the Americans access the Japanese ports of Shimoda and Hakodate, along with other privileges for U.S. sailors (Beasley 1989, 280).

was part of a foreign colonial empire (Hokenson 2004, 25). Still, even though Japan never suffered from military occupation, the influence of Western powers reached the country in the shape of a massive exportation of all aspects of European culture. Thus, Japonisme can be seen as a by-product of the European imperialist approach, and the frequent International Exhibitions taking place in Europe were occasions upon which representations of Japanese arts and tradition were put on display as samples of ancient civilisation surviving the tidal wave of modernity.

The first meeting of Noh with foreign audiences took place at a particularly critical moment in Japanese history: with the overthrow of the Tokugawa shogunate in 1868 Noh suddenly lost the patronage that had been granted for centuries by aristocratic families. Furukawa Hisashi (1956) distinguished three phases of the history of Noh during the Meiji era: a period of decline covering the years leading to, and immediately after the restoration; a period of renaissance between 1877 and the outbreak of the first Sino-Japanese war in 1894; a period of great development between 1896 and 1917. With the abolishment of the shogunate, Noh seemed destined to be erased with all the signs of the old feudal regime. During the early Meiji period, families of actors were disbanded and many of them were forced to live by their wits in order to survive. Masks and costumes, the most precious patrimony of Noh households, went wholesale, and the end of Noh was prefigured. It was during this difficult period that a few actors, such as Hōshō Kurō, Kongō Tadaichi and Umewaka Minoru, though forced to seek for alternative employments never gave up practising and performing, and endeavoured to protect masks and costumes belonging to their families (Kagaya 2001, 164-65; Furukawa 1956, 85-86).

Fortunately this dark period did not last long. In 1871 Iwakura Tomomi, Minister of the Right and plenipotentiary ambassador, together with other diplomats embarked on an 18-month trip across the world on behalf of the Japanese government, with the mission to report on the state of technology, politics, economics, and all relevant fields of Western countries. For the first time after centuries of seclusion Japan confronted the rest of the world. The West was seen as culturally and technologically superior, and Japan needed to find remedies for its deficiencies from other countries in order to survive a power confrontation within the new international panorama. During its stay in Paris, the Iwakura mission was taken to see the opera, the official entertainment offered to foreign guests in Europe. This event left a great impression on Iwakura, who, once back from the mission, suggested that Japan also chose an equally

stately art form that could represent the country on the international stage. Iwakura's secretary Kume Kunio thus commented upon watching opera:

I acutely felt the need for a national entertainment. However, for the entertainment to be spiritually rewarding, it could be not something momentarily popular, nor a fickle import, but it had to be something firmly rooted in the heart of the nation, this is to say, it had to include original Japanese music and dance. If we were to make a wrong decision, from the perspective of national entertainment, Japan would suffer an extreme calamity. This was how we came to realize the artistic value of *nō* theatre (Kume quoted in Kagaya 2001, 165).

Following Iwakura's report, the Imperial Household Ministry (the organisation that managed the state ceremonies) established that Noh theatre would be elevated to the rank of official entertainment (*shikigaku*).² From 1880 actors started to receive funding from the Ministry, stages opened in Tokyo (most significantly at Aoyama Palace, residence of Empress Dowager Eishō, and in Shiba Park), performances resumed, and the Noh Society (Nōgakusha) was founded (Rath 2004, 220-21; Furukawa 1956, 95-99). Iwakura and the Household Ministry realised the importance that Noh theatre would play as diplomatic tool on the new international stage: instead of being erased Noh was re-appropriated as symbol of the imperial power. During the first thirty years of the Meiji restoration, the struggle to modernise Japan required on the one hand removing the traces of backward feudalism, dismantling shogunal institutions and restoring Shinto as state religion (*kokka shintō*); on the other hand, modernising the country meant adopting Western standards. One of the principal aims of this restoration of Noh was to identify Noh 'as one epitome of traditional culture [that could] stave off the malicious and disruptive effects of Western culture' (Rath 2004, 233). Though the first decades of the Meiji government witnessed alternate movements of disavowal and restoration of traditional culture, the following chapters will describe how the new political role of Noh as *shikigaku* would become increasingly important in internal and foreign affairs, as the country drifted toward the ultra-nationalism of the latter phases of the 'Greater Japan' era (Rath 2004, 222-25).

² Kagaya reports how Iwakura began organising Noh performances at his private residence, to which he would invite members of the imperial court and foreign legates (Kagaya 2005, 228-30).

Japonisme and early French scholarship of Noh

The Japonisme phenomenon initially originated in France, where important dealers and collectors such as Samuel Bing (1838-1905) and Luis Gonse (1846-1921) spread their knowledge of Japanese art and contributed to creating a real craze for ‘all things Japanese’. The discovery of Japanese arts influenced avant-garde painters such as Edouard Manet and Edgar Degas, who in turn contributed to the propagation of the trend in other fields such as theatre. Between 1888 and 1891 Samuel Bing published the seminal monthly magazine dedicated to Japanese arts and crafts *Le Japon artistique*. Bing also owned two shops which specialised in Japanese art and sold items to museums such as the Victoria & Albert in London and the Metropolitan in New York (Hokenson 2004, 186-87).

Luis Gonse, art historian and critic, published *L’art japonais* (1883) a survey of Japanese art covering various fields of craftsmanship. Among the various subjects considered, Gonse included a short chapter on Japanese masks, detailing their manufacture and conservation as well as describing the use of masks in religious rites and theatre performance.³ Gonse associated the custom of using masks in theatre with Greek tragedy (Gonse 1883, 171) but erroneously believed that in Japan they fell into disuse after the seventeenth century, perhaps thinking that the more popular, unmasked Kabuki took over from the old masked tradition (1883, 172).⁴ With the collapse of feudalism, artefacts belonging to samurai families, among them Noh and Kyogen masks, were purchased by Western collectors for little money. Knowledge of Noh masks was also developed through the importation of other small decorative objects such as *tsuba* and *netsuke*⁵ inspired by Noh mask design, easily transportable because of their minute size. Gonse himself possessed a number of masks, as photographs of him posing *à la Japonaise* testify.⁶ The book contains drawings of Japanese masks by his collaborator Henri-Charles Guérard, items that would soon become particularly influential in the work of a number of painters and sculptors.⁷ Despite historical

³ Other early treatments of Japanese masks include M. Huish (1889) and E. Dillon (1909).

⁴ This misunderstanding was rapidly transmitted to other literature, as in J.F. Blacker’s best-selling *The ABC of Japanese Art* (1911, 100-123).

⁵ *Tsuba* are hilts of Japanese swords. *Netsuke* are small buttons used to attach pouches to kimonos, which do not have pockets.

⁶ Photographs portraying Gonse posing with a Kyogen *usobuki* mask and what could be a kind of Noh *warai-jō* (smiling old man mask) were displayed at the exhibition *Masques, de Carpeau à Picasso*, Musée d’Orsay, Paris, 21 October 2008 – 1 February 2009 (Shimizu and Papet 2008). The *warai-jō* mask was drawn by Guérard and reproduced in Gonse’s *L’art japonais* (1883, 173).

⁷ See Shimizu and Papet (2008). As C. Shimizu reports, French sculptor Charles Gillot (1853-1903)

inaccuracies and the lack of distinction between Noh, Kyogen, and ritual masks, Gonse's appreciation of Japanese masks is remarkable. What appears to have impressed him the most is the degree of intensity of feeling that masks transmitted, and their capability once donned of providing realistic depictions of humanity.

The first major French publication on Japanese theatre, *Le Théâtre Japonais* (1889), written by French consul in Yokohama André Lequeux (1852-1902), was entirely dedicated to Kabuki.⁸ Though Lequeux was a diplomat and not a theatre expert, the book expresses with extraordinary clarity themes that would prove influential to the reception of Japanese theatre by the European avant-garde. As early as in 1889, Lequeux praised the way Kabuki privileges action over words, providing a more realistic and true-to-life effect than European theatre, where actors talk more than they act. In addition, Lequeux realised how the attention of Japanese actors and audience is on performance, and how text is of secondary importance (Lequeux 1889, 7,12-13,27).⁹ Reports such as Lequeux's, and the impressions of traditional Japanese dance brought by the travelling troupe of Sada Yacco and Kawakami Otojirō contributed to a Western idea of Kabuki as a hyper-realistic, almost expressionist theatre form, opposed to Noh as symbolic, hieratic performance.¹⁰ Most importantly, Lequeux noticed how in Japan theatre was not, as in France, 'un délassement du soir mérité par le labeur du jour' (1889, 29) but a passion that would completely absorb a person's life.

Following these interesting yet partial reports on Japanese theatre, more academically rigorous publications in French began to appear. *Le théâtre au Japon* (1901), by Alexandre Bénazet is a survey of Japanese theatre from its mythical origins until the present times. The book features two separate sections dedicated to Japanese theatre 'as literature' and 'as practice', often not distinguishing between genres such as Kabuki and Noh to the extent that it is often unclear whether the author had an understanding of the separation of genres in Japanese performance. Writing before Zeami's treatises were re-discovered in 1908, Bénazet believed that no Japanese dramaturge ever wrote a theory of Japanese theatre (Bénazet 1901, 193). In the last section of the book, supposedly dedicated to 'theatre practice', Bénazet only describes aspects of Kabuki, including music and stage, and does not explore Noh practice.

owned more than 60 between Gigaku and Noh masks (2008, 77).

⁸ The only reference to Noh in the book is where Lequeux conflates it with female dancers in a footnote (1889, 17).

⁹ Lequeux's position is revolutionary in his context, as it opposes the idea, shared among the others by Edwards and founder of *Japan Times* Edward House, of Kabuki as a ridiculously unrealistic theatre.

¹⁰ Jean-Jacques Tschudin (2001) has reviewed early French impressions of Kabuki.

Whereas Kabuki's vivacious *mise-en-scène*, featuring a large orchestra and stage machines was studied in detail, the sobriety of Noh was probably seen as a lack of technical means. All things considered, *Le théâtre au Japon* is an important publication insofar it analyses Japanese theatre traditions within a historical context and by connecting contemporary performance with its religious origin: what French scholarship was still missing was an established corpus of Noh translations.

The first, consistent French study of Noh theatre came with the work of Noël Péri (1865-1922), who between 1887 and 1921 published translations that would become standard reading for a French audience interested in Noh. After moving to Japan in 1888 as a Catholic priest, Péri's translations started to appear on the pages of the *Revue française du Japon* and of the *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient*. Péri was not only an active intellectual – he translated the four Gospels in Japanese and started his own literary review in Japanese, *Tenchijin* – but also a free thinker who grew intolerant to the requirements of the Catholic church: in 1902 he quit his place at the mission to become an independent priest and continue his research. This did not diminish his interest in religion: Péri dedicated a consistent part of his research to the study of Buddhism and to the translation of sacred texts. What impresses in Péri's work is the minuteness of analysis and the richness of the materials used: the lengthy introductions, enriched by insights into Japanese philology and the structural analysis of Noh performances are meticulously structured. For the first time Péri introduced an extensive bibliography of Japanese publications on Noh, deliberately excluding the comparatively few books in other languages. Among the texts cited in his latter works are Zeami's newfound treatises and a number of manuals and notebooks belonging to different stylistic schools. A list of all canonical, rare and lost plays of the five stylistic schools was also included.

Péri's translations featured *romaji* transliterations of Japanese sounds, so that even those not proficient in Japanese could have a sense of how Noh verses would sound: Péri was particularly interested in the poetic and musical aspects of Noh as 'drame lyrique', distinguished from Greek tragedy, more focused on plot and action (Péri 2004, 17). What emerges from his explanation is a close bond between the poetic and spiritual elements of Noh: Péri's open spirituality, expressed in his interest in other religious traditions deeply influenced his treatment of Noh theatre. As François Lachaud has pointed out in the preface of a recent collection of Péri's works, *Le Théâtre Nō*: 'Péri sent intimement que le nō est avant tout un art de conjuration des morts, une

conversation sacrée entre ceux-ci et les vivants’ (2004, 9). In Noh, as in a Christian Mass, the recitation of prayers in the form of poetry is one of the primary means of establishing a connection between the secular and the supernatural world. Péri provided his reader with a comprehensive analysis of different core elements of Noh, including stage, dramatic structure, verse, chants and dances, aspects of performance that he could experience in their actuality in Japan. However, despite its solidity and detail of inquiry, Péri’s work, as Bénazet’s, was addressing an audience of academics rather than practitioners. Despite the degree of accuracy of the translation and their transposition into French, Péri’s studies of Noh remained text-based, focusing on the Noh verse (*yōkyoku*) rather than on describing aspects of training or performance.

Diplomats, literates and the British discovery of Noh

Among the earliest British encounters with Noh was recorded by Ernest Satow (1843-1929), secretary of the British Legation in Tokyo across the late Tokugawa and the early Meiji period (1862-1869), one of the founders of the Asiatic Society of Japan. In the diary of his stay in Japan, later published in the volume *A Diplomat in Japan* (1921) Satow included a description of a day spent at the Kongō theatre in Tokyo in December 1868.

Another day was spent with the mayor of Kanasugi and three or four retainers at the classical theatre Kongō-daiyu in Iigura-chō, to see Nō and Kiōgen. [...] It was the first time a foreigner had been present at this kind of theatrical performance. [...] The Noh I could not understand until I borrowed the book from a Japanese lady in the next box, and was enabled to follow the text. This was *Hachi no ki*. [...] The audience consisted entirely of the *samurai* class (Satow 1921, 396-97).

Two elements emerge from this description: first, Satow was not able to ‘understand’ the performance until he could read the libretto, which suggests a difficulty in accepting Noh as performance without the filter of the written text. Despite his interest in Japanese rituals, Satow represents a type of early foreign audience proficient in Japanese but used to understand theatre as dramatisation of a written text, a concept that would be subverted by the modernist avant-garde within a few decades.¹¹ Second, the audience of the event he attended was composed of aristocrats and diplomats. When Satow saw this performance Meiji restoration had reached its most intense phase: what

¹¹ Satow published essays on Japanese rituals on the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society* (1879; 1881).

he attended was probably one of the last performances of Noh under aristocratic patronage. Though the audience of Noh would start changing to include members of other social strata within a few years, Satow's impression concurred with the developing image of Noh as a cryptic and aristocratic art. Satow's short description is rather moderate and does not indulge in excessive criticism of something the author could not fully understand.

In 1869, one year after Satow's experience, Algernon Bertram Mitford (1837-1916), was one of the diplomats resident in Japan accompanying the visit of the Duke of Edinburgh. Noh was scheduled among the events organized for the noble guests, demonstrating how Noh continued to be used as official entertainment even before the Iwakura mission dispatched in 1871. Mitford attended the performance and later described his experience in *Tales of the Old Japan* (1871).¹² Introducing Noh, Mitford distinguished: 'drama is exclusively the amusement of the middle and lower classes. [...] There is a kind of classical opera, called Nō, which is performed on stages specially built for the purpose in the palaces of the principal nobles' (Mitford 1871, 84). Like Satow, Mitford emphasised the aristocratic character of Noh and of its audiences, as opposed to vulgar drama – presumably Kabuki. Mitford did not like what he saw: commenting on *Hagoromo*, one of the most famous plays in the repertoire, Mitford reported:

The beauty of the poetry – and it is very beautiful – is marred by the want of scenery and by the grotesque dresses and make-up. [...] The intoning of the recitative is unnatural and unintelligible, so much so that not even highly educated Japanese could understand what is going on unless he were previously acquainted with the piece. This, however, is supposing that which is not, for the Nō are as familiarly known as the masterpieces of our own dramatists (1871, 84).

The combination of masks portraying a beauty unconventional even for Japanese contemporaries, non-mimetic action and music so distant from Western standards was probably an excess of novelties for him to absorb. Like Satow, Mitford could not understand, and thus appreciate the performance without knowledge of the script. A lack of references forced Mitford to describe Noh in opposition to European theatre, comparing Noh with Greek masks, or farcical Kyogen with pantomime (Mitford 1871, 84,90).

¹² The plays scheduled were: *Yumi Yawata*, *Tsunemasa*, *Hagoromo*, *Kokaji* and the Kyogen *Suminuri Onna* and *Tachibai*.

A major advancement in Western scholarship of Noh was Basil Hall Chamberlain's translations of Noh plays in his *The Classical Poetry of the Japanese* (1880). Chamberlain (1850-1935), one of the most prominent late-Victorian Japanese studies scholars, lived in Japan between 1873 and 1911, and taught at Tokyo Imperial College between 1874 and 1882: his publications greatly contributed to the development of the study of Japanese literature in the UK, and he is still considered one of the most important foreign figures of the Meiji period restoration of Noh.¹³ Observing Meiji Japan, a period torn between tendencies of conservatism and modernisation, Chamberlain commented: 'the current impression that the Japanese are a nation of imitators is in the main correct. As they copy us to-day, so did they copy the Chinese and Coreans a millennium and a half ago. [...] so much so, that of all that we are accustomed to term 'Old Japan' scarce one trait in a hundred is really and properly Japanese' (Chamberlain 1880, 1). Chamberlain was referring the superficial image of quaint Japan that dominated Western imagery as a people who, according to Chamberlain 'want[ed] to be somebody else and something else than what they have been and still partly are' (1902, 3). 'Old Japan', Chamberlain maintained, 'is dead, and the only decent thing to do with the corpse is to bury it. Then you can set up a monument over it, and, if you like, come and worship from time to time at the grave; for that would be quite 'Japanesey' (1902, 6).

While fighting against one commonplace, Chamberlain contributed to the production of another: the image of Japan as country of imitators. This notion had a considerable influence on the reception of Noh in the West, as in the case of linguist and historian George William Aston (1841-1911), who claimed that Noh was literarily inconsistent because based on systematic plagiarism. The sophisticated intertextual references to Japanese and Chinese poetry that constitute the Noh verse were reduced to a rudimentary attempt to copy from other sources (Aston 1899, 202-204). As Ury Eppstein put it, these claims are 'those of a self-assured nineteenth-century British professor who passes judgement from his vantage point of the aloof European observer' (Eppstein 1993, 158). However Aston's claim that the pivot word device¹⁴ is 'a mistake in serious composition' and a 'frivolous ornament' (Aston 1899, 202) leads one to

¹³ Chamberlain is introduced as a key-figure in the Meiji renaissance of Noh on the-noh.com website, one of the most popular online resources for Noh theatre in Japanese and English languages. See 'Chamberlain, a Pioneer in the English Translation and Introduction of Meiji-Era Noh' http://the-noh.com/en/oversea/05_chamberlain.html.

¹⁴ Pivot word (*kakekotoba*) is a rhetorical device by which a word connects two verses. As many Japanese words are homophonous but are written with different characters, it is possible to create verses that can be read differently according to the way the reader interprets the pivot word.

question to what extent Aston, considered one of the most advanced scholars of Japanese literature, understood the Noh verse.¹⁵

Despite Chamberlain's recognition that Noh was 'not dead' (1902, 475), what characterised his understanding of Japanese tradition at large is an 'antiquarian' attitude, considering Noh as the relic of an ancient civilisation, melancholically gazing at the 'tide of progress' wiping tradition off the map of modern Japan. This approach, between exotic fascination and unsympathetic condescension, is clearly expressed in a passage on traditional music, where he hopes Japan will 'keep it just as it is, so curious to the archaeologist, so beautiful, for all that the jeerers may say. There is only one small thing which I would advise you to do, and that is to harmonise it. Of course that would change its character a little. But no one would notice it, and the general effect would be improved (1902, 5-6).¹⁶ His idea of Noh as a folkloric representation of a literarily dignified form of cultural production is supported by the fact that many among the aristocrats attending Noh performances 'come, not merely to be amused, but to learn, and they follow the play, book in hand (Chamberlain 1902, 457). In his *Things Japanese*, Chamberlain dedicated the entry on 'Theatre' mostly to Noh, the art of the noble class (1902, 25), well distinguished from other forms of 'Entertainments'.¹⁷ Despite his first-hand experience, Chamberlain does not seem to have been able to depart from a merely literary appreciation of Noh: it appears that linguistic and literary knowledge, instead of being an advantage, constituted a hindrance to his appreciation of performance. Focusing almost exclusively on the written text, comforted by the fact that the aristocratic audience of specialists did the same (1880, 25; 1902, 457), Chamberlain was rather dismissive of dance, which he considered 'tedious and meaningless to the European spectator' (1880, 25).

While the translations by Chamberlain and other contemporaries introduced Noh within a literary context, mostly dealing with translations, the first major publication exclusively dedicated to Japanese theatre was Osman Edwards's *Japanese Plays and Playfellows* (1901).¹⁸ Edwards (1864-1936), theatre critic and teacher, visited Japan as

¹⁵ Aston's was not an isolated case: another contemporary, George Sansom, similarly claimed that Noh theatre's intertextuality possessed the 'charm of the curio shop' (Sansom 1911, 128).

¹⁶ Chamberlain does not seem to be always of the same mind when he hoped that 'all the samisen, kotos, and other native instruments of music be turned into firewood to warm the poor, when – if at no previous period of their existence – they will subserve a purpose indisputably useful!' (1902, 341).

¹⁷ The entry for 'Theatre' contains the translation of *Hagoromo*. In the later *Japanese Poetry* (1910), Chamberlain translated *Sesshōseki*, *Kantan* and *Nakamitsu* (*Manjū*).

¹⁸ For a survey of Noh translations in European languages see T. Hoshino (2007). For an updated list of Noh translations see Michael Watson's webpage at: <http://www.meijigakuin.ac.jp/~pmjs/biblio/noh-trans.html>

delegate of Japan Society London in 1898, and is perhaps one of the first drama specialists to visit Japan and report back on traditional theatre. In line with his contemporaries, the book describes Japanese theatre, in particular Noh, as the product of a retrograde culture, doomed to disappear with the advent of Western modernity. On 30th October 1898 he was invited to attend a Noh programme organised by Umewaka Minoru, who at the time of the publication of Edwards's book was yet to achieve popularity as the 'saviour of Noh' through Ernest Fenollosa's notes, posthumously edited and published by Ezra Pound (1901, 44).¹⁹ Edwards's reaction to watching the Noh *Shunkan* is characterised by a combination of sympathy and aversion, condescension and fascination:

A simple, poignant story! So touchingly interpreted, that the primitive and even ludicrous makeshifts of the mounting seemed hardly incongruous! The mooring and unmooring of the boat, for which the crudest parody in outline of rope and wood did duty, and the final embarkation as represented in the picture were gravely accomplished in complete immunity from ill-timed laughter; the messenger's grotesque hakama, elongated trousers trailing a good yard behind the feet, that the wearer might seem to walk on his knees while about his master's business, provoked no smile; in fact, any trivial details and defects were swallowed up in the prodigious earnestness of the actors (Edwards 1901, 47).

While Edwards is – unsurprisingly – unable to depart from a Euro-centric perspective dismissing Noh stage conventions as primitive, it is important to point out that what captured his attention was the dignity of the actors, and perhaps the composure of the audience. However, despite this opening towards an appreciation of Noh, Edwards's bottom line is that Noh plays are 'the fruit of a religious revival on the part of archaeologists and patriots. They are a curious instance of wisely arrested growth' (1901, 56). Interestingly, it is precisely because of their moral content that Edwards considered Noh 'naïf and puerile', as 'piety, reverence, martial virtues are openly inculcated, though never in such a way as to shock artistic sensibilities. Beauty and taste go far to disguise all structural deficiencies' (1901, 57-58). Edwards's reception of the ethical qualities of Noh is incongruous, yet it is important to distinguish the two positions: the latter comment refers to texts, which he perceived to be as didactic as British morality plays (1901, 57-58), and which aesthetic elements had to make up for.

¹⁹ Edwards was in the company of Ernest and Mary Fenollosa (Murakata 1986, 10). The programme included Noh plays *Makiginu*, *Shunkan*, *Koi no Omoni*, *Aoinoue*, *Funa Benkei* and *Tsuchigumo*, as well as the Kyogen *Kitsune-zuka*, *Kaichu Mukō*, *Roku Jizō* and *Fukurō Yamabushi*. Note how the programme did not seem to follow the usual category order, but featured rather energetic plays of the fourth and fifth group, based on mimetic action and acrobatics. It is evident that the programme was conceived especially to entertain foreign guests not educated in the appreciation of *yūgen* plays such as *Kakitsubata* or *Matsukaze*.

Where does Edward see beauty? Certainly not in stage components such the Noh mask, which he considered ‘of singular ugliness’, similar to ‘the fantastic headpiece of a crude idol very foolishly idealised’ (1901, 51). What captured Edwards was, instead, what he expressed in the former comment, that is, the technique of actors ‘curiously elaborate in spite of seeming simplicity’ (1901, 45), and the bodily attitude of performers and audiences, eliciting a sense of reverence for performance. For Edwards, ethical value elicited by the respectful attitude of the audience, and the ‘prodigious earnestness’ of the actors moderated what he perceived as aesthetic flaws. Looking at the above comment through Bourdieu’s lens, it appears that Edwards’s reception was flawed insofar as it was devoid of appropriate decoding of culturally specific signs. However, non-aesthetic elements seem to have gone beyond his cultural barrier, and have positively influenced the overall reception.

Lafcadio Hearn and the ethics of Japanese tradition

Lafcadio Hearn’s essays on Japan had an enormous impact on Western audiences: although he did not explicitly treat Noh plays or performance *per se*, it can be argued that the popularity of his work influenced the reception of most of the Western audiences interested in Japanese arts. Hearn (1850-1904) moved to Japan in 1890 and unlike his contemporaries he was no expert in Japanese history and language: his knowledge depended almost entirely upon his life in Japan, and his literary knowledge was mediated by his wife’s translations. While scholars of Japan focused on the translations of literary classics, Hearn maintained a chronicler’s approach, often reporting ‘real life’ anecdotes as well as popular stories. In Hirakawa Sukehiro’s terms, Hearn was a ‘*rara avis*, a Western observer of Japan who [...] did not take as an act of faith the superiority of Western Christian civilization’ (Hirakawa 1997, 25). Hearn was less interested in academic accuracy than he was with the transmission of what he believed to be the ‘soul of Japan’ (*Yamato damashii*), a concept that would become the core of nihonjinronist literature, and he believed that it was the West that needed to copy from Japan, and not the opposite (Hearn 1896, 8-39). Hirakawa details the turbulent relationship between Hearn and Chamberlain: though initially praising Hearn’s work, in the 1939 edition of *Things Japanese*, published posthumously, Chamberlain criticised Hearn for living in a dream of traditional Japan that would not correspond to reality. As Hirakawa points out, the pre-war re-issuing of Chamberlain’s

later edition of the book was part of an attempt at character assassination: since Hearn projected positive images of Japan in the West, anti-Japanese wartime propaganda was needed to discredit his idyllic views as ‘filled with the bitterness of disillusionment’ (Hirakawa 1997, 4-7).

Hearn’s books played a crucial role in the reception of Japan in the West by popularising the stereotype of Japan as a country beautiful yet austere, with a people gentle yet inflexible, later epitomised by Ruth Benedict in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. He claimed that the root of the incommunicability between Japan and the West lay in a profound difference in the understanding of human existence. While the West privileged individualism, ‘the enemy of social order’ (1896, 39), seen as stemming from the Christian notion of the soul as ‘one’, Japan had a ‘pluralist’ view of the self, enrooted in the Buddhist concepts of *karma* and rebirth. For Hearn ‘the more complex feelings of the Oriental have been composed by combinations of experiences, ancestral and individual, which have had no really precise correspondence in Western life, and which we can therefore not fully know’ (Hearn 1896, 12). Hearn defended the superiority of ‘pre-existence’ referring to contemporary evolutionism and psychology, advocating the existence of ‘inherited memory’ (1896, 222-256) as transmitted with the genetic patrimony of a people. He noticed how modern science and psychology were changing the Western notion of ‘individual’, until then defined by religious dogma, and foresaw that in the future Western thought will reject the notions of personality and individuality *per se*, and will instead embrace the Oriental conception of plurality (1896, 244). Hearn’s position was evidently flawed, because it implied that the Japanese traditional culture always fostered concepts of plurality that the West had only recently discovered, and was therefore morally superior because of past experiences inherited with rebirth, as if rebirth were only confined within the national boundaries of Japan. While his argument is driven by enthusiasm and love for Japan, it is possible to see how this attitude, largely derived from Spencer’s social Darwinism, could go hand in hand with racial theory and eugenics. In the appendix of *Japan, An Attempt at Interpretation* (1904), Hearn included the full text of Spencer’s ‘Advice to Japan’²⁰, in which Japan was depicted according to the Orientalist stereotype of a country beautiful but weak, at risk of being wiped out by Western modernity. In order to avoid this danger, Spencer implored Baron Katō Hiroyuki, one of the architects of the Meiji Enlightenment, to maintain a radically conservative policy and even to forbid foreigners to marry Japanese

²⁰ Originally published in the *London Times* 18 January 1904.

women, as ‘there is abundant proof, alike furnished by the intermarriages of human races and by the interbreeding of animals, that when the varieties mingled diverge beyond a certain slight degree the result is inevitably a bad one in the long run’ (Spencer in Hearn 1904, 531).²¹

Hearn was concerned with the fate of Japan but, unlike Chamberlain, he did not think that Japan would eventually do away with its past. He instead believed that the Japanese possessed an unchangeable spirit that could not be modified by simply imitating the West. Hearn maintained that ‘emotional life, which is older than intellectual life, and deeper, can no more be altered suddenly by a change of *milieu* than the surface of a mirror can be changed by passing reflections (1896, 11). The distinction between ‘intellectual’ and ‘emotional’ seems to be at the core of what Hearn thought to be the misunderstanding between Japan and the West. Hearn described himself as ‘one of those who believe that the human heart, even in the history of a race, may be worth infinitely more than the human intellect, and that it will sooner or later prove itself infinitely better able to answer all the cruel enigmas of the Sphinx of Life’. Hearn thought that ‘the old Japanese were nearer to the solution of those enigmas than are we, just because they recognized moral beauty as greater than intellectual beauty’ (1896, 38). In this passage Hearn spells out one of the major underlying themes of this type of reception of Japan, locating in the primacy of the ‘intellect’ the source of individualism, the scourge of modernity (1896, 38). To this individualism Hearn opposed Japanese traditional society as ‘based upon mutual giving’ (1896, 38), a virtue expressed through beauty. Hearn seems to be implicitly criticising contemporary aestheticism, exemplified by the ‘art for art’s sake’ movement that stripped the concept of beauty from all relations with morality. If aestheticism ‘intellectualised’ art by restricting its access to an elite of connoisseurs, Hearn explained how the concept of Japanese beauty that the West so much admired and attempted to imitate was in fact possible because its morality and beauty were not distinct concepts, and ‘moral beauty’ permeated every aspect of Japanese life. Hearn represents a kind of Orientalist opposite to Chamberlain’s model of the aloof scholar: the enthusiastic participant who ‘went native’, and thought of himself as having eventually ‘become Japanese’ (Hearn in Murray 1997, 251). Though perhaps biased and *naïf*, Hearn’s openness and enthusiasm facilitated an appreciation of Japanese culture on the aesthetic and ethical levels. The last section of

²¹ Though Hearn defended Spencer’s positions, it is difficult to gauge the extent to which he was convinced of the radicalism of such positions: an American national of Irish-Greek heritage, Hearn married a Japanese woman, from whom he had children.

this first chapter will show how the kind of emotional, or less intellectualised approach that characterised Hearn's work was not an isolated case, and was reflected in important scholarship dedicated to Noh theatre.

Marie Stopes and the Noh

The first Western publication exclusively dedicated to Noh was Marie Carmichael Stopes and Sakurai Jōji's *Plays of Old Japan: the Nō* (1913). Written by a British paleobotanist and a Japanese chemist, this rather underrated yet groundbreaking work substantially differed from the existent scholarship both in content and in approach. Marie Stopes (1880-1958) visited Japan in 1907, when she was conducting fieldwork for her PhD on a Royal Society grant working in remote areas, where she observed the humble life of countryside workers, and in cities like Tokyo, where she could attend sophisticated receptions with important foreign and Japanese authorities (Stopes 1910). On 3 November 1907 (Meiji Emperor's birthday), Stopes was invited to attend her first Noh performance. The diary entry relative to this event is rather short – Stopes probably jotted down her notes once back in her room – yet it can be inferred that she attended a full day programme without having a clear understanding of what was happening on stage, as her interpreter slept soundly throughout the day (1910, 65). Stopes's initiation to Noh did not take place either through the filter of an interpreter, as perhaps did legates on diplomatic missions, or through knowledge of literary texts. Stopes never studied Japanese, and would not have travelled to Japan if not to conduct her research or, as biographers point out, to pursue a love affair with a Japanese scientist she met while doing her PhD in Munich.²²

Though later obscured by other publications and now little known outside the specialist field, *Plays of Old Japan: the Nō* was an outstanding publication, and has the merit of introducing innovative elements in the growing scholarship on Noh. There are three main reasons for this: first, it was explicitly addressed to the non-specialist, therefore reducing the amount of historical detail and giving room to Stopes's narration; second, it was the first book ever written in a European language to be uniquely dedicated to Noh, and structured in chapters covering all its aspects, from stage design to costumes, from masks to plays; a third, important novelty was Stopes's enthusiastic appreciation and humble tone, shortening the distance between the reader and what was

²² See K. R. Briant (1962) and C. Blacker (1992).

before seen as an archaic, thus undecipherable art.²³ In the introduction, Stopes expresses the desire to share the beauty of the Noh plays, ‘unique, exquisite, individual, and so full of charm that it is a great loss to the Western world that they should be entirely removed from our ken by being hedged in and shut away from us by the difficulties of language’ (1913, 2). She maintained that existent translations did not do justice to Noh because too much concerned with philological unravelling rather than with trying to convey its beauty. ‘The Noh’, claimed Stopes, ‘must not be too much analyzed and inquired into. Their language is simple, almost to baldness in places, it is true, but their simple elements create a wonderland of illusion’ (1913, 3).²⁴

In the chapter ‘Concerning the Place that Nō takes in Japan to-day’, Stopes tried to debunk the image of Noh as elite art, which other scholars had helped to create. In response to Aston’s description of Noh as aristocratic art only appreciated by the ex-samurai and daimyo (Aston 1899, 200), but unintelligible to the ‘common people’, Stopes offered a radically different *tranche-de-vie* of her Japanese experience.

Among policemen, rickshaw-men and gardeners one may come across men of deep classical interests and knowledge, and a poor student living on a few shillings a week may spend his evenings chanting the Nō songs to the moon. Indeed, while I was in Tokio such a one lived near the house in which I dwelt for a few months. I never met him personally, because I did not wish to destroy the wonderful impression of melancholy romance and weird beauty which his chanting gave me. The many evenings that I sat alone on my balcony, looking toward Fuji mountain, behind which the sun had set, and heard in the swiftly passing twilight and under the glittering oriental stars the mournful, tragic chants of the Nō which this young man was practising, have left their life-long impression on me, and perhaps account for the deeper love and understanding of the Nō which have come to me than to the foreigners who hear only a few performances in a theatre. Yet this young man lived in what could scarcely be called more than a hovel, and he is representative of thousands now so living in Japan. Consequently one must remember that though the audience of a Nō theatre is ‘select’ in the real sense, it is not by any means entirely composed of wealthy folk. (18-19).

At first sight this passage contains all the ingredients of an Orientalist approach of the lowest kind, where the Western observer lets herself go to ‘weird beauty’ under the Eastern sky, the Mt. Fuji as backdrop. Is it possible to criticise Stopes for what appears

²³ The book includes the translations of *Motomezuka*, *Kagekiyo*, *Tamura* and *Sumidagawa*. In addition, the book also features a detailed, free-hand drawing of a Noh stage map, the first of its genre, and is enriched by a set of illustrations by Tsukioka Kōgyō. Pictures from the same set are also in Edward’s *Japanese Plays and Playfellows*. A collection of his prints (*Nōgaku-zue*) is currently kept at the British Museum.

²⁴ Stopes was well aware of the importance of experiencing Noh as a live event: ‘who’, she exclaims, ‘would think of judging Wagner from the texts of his librettos alone and of ignoring his power as a scene creator and musician?’ (1913, 3).

to be a rather stereotypical depiction of Japan? Her emotional abandon to Orientalist fantasies recall Hearn's enthusiasm which, albeit biased, opened the way for positive appreciation, and stimulated the desire to transmit this love through scholarship. In fact, Stopes was a supporter of Hearn at a time when he was criticised for idealising Japan and dismissing his own cultural roots: in late May 1908, Stopes organised a roundtable for discussing Hearn's vision of Japan in which she expressed her appreciation for his ideas, (1910, 159).²⁵ Stopes's bold attempt to question the opinions of eminent scholars such as Chamberlain and Aston was driven by sincere and disinterested passion for Noh. Her argument against depictions of Noh as aristocratic art was largely based on her first-hand experience, and the example of the young amateur is a remarkable one: dedication and respect (1913, 20) are what struck her the most. Stopes travelled to Japan in 1907: by this time Noh has ceased to be the exclusive entertainment of aristocratic families that Satow, Mitford, and Chamberlain described some thirty years before. It should not surprise one to notice that Stopes's book was written under the auspices of the Japanese ambassador in London Katō Takaaki, who in the preface pointed out how,

with the consolidation of the new regime many old things took a new lease of life, the *utai* being one of them. Not only has the *utai* revived, but those who ought to know say that never in the long history of its existence has it been so extensively patronised as it is to-day. Patrons of the art are by no means confined to the aristocratic classes, albeit it is not so popular as the ordinary theatrical play (Katō in Stopes 1910, v).

The Katō's and Stopes's descriptions correspond to the third period of the Meiji history of Noh traced by Furukawa, in which the Noh Association was re-organised in 1899 as *Nōgakkai* and the number of amateur practitioners, especially those learning *utai* chant, increased dramatically, before reaching a boom during the Taishō era (Hoff 1998, 80). Chamberlain's and Aston's books, standards within the field of Japanese studies provided a picture of Noh now obsolete and counter-productive for the image that the Noh establishment itself wanted to project abroad.

If, as Cooper (2010) suggests, edification as moral or intellectual development can be an important component of the aesthetic appreciation of unknown or 'alien' art, it is possible to see that Stopes's neighbour singing *utai* in his hovel informed Marie Stopes's appreciation of Noh in virtue of the ethical value it conveyed: passionate dedication despite material indigence. Regardless of her ignorance of Japanese culture

²⁵ In December 1908 Stopes visited Hearn's wife and children (1910, 147-50), and met Otani Masanobu, Hearn's first student, protagonist of E. G. Craig's story 'A Japanese Pupil' (1929, 109), which will be discussed later in Chapter Three.

and language, Stopes emphasised how the man's daily practice accounted for a 'deeper love and understanding' than mere theatre-going (Stopes and Sakurai 1913, 18-19). Such dedication was manifested in ethical terms and perceived by Stopes as an aesthetic experience also because it contributed to her own understanding of Noh. Unlike those who had academic or artistic 'interest' in Noh, Stopes, a paleobotanist, was less burdened with prejudice, and perhaps more open to absorbing the beauty of the unknown. Stopes wrote in her diary: 'in Japan I had to unlearn what I thought I knew before, as well as to try to unlearn the truth' (Stopes 1910, xiii). Criticism advocating Bourdieu's rejection of the 'myth of the fresh eye' (1993, 216-17) might accept that Stopes, though deprived of the tools for cultural decoding, could nonetheless be sensitive to forms of ethical virtue such as dedication and commitment.²⁶

²⁶ While her book on Noh is mostly unknown to the non-specialists, Stopes became famous for her scientific activity and championing of female rights. Daughter of a suffragette, upon receiving her PhD in London in 1904 Stopes became the youngest Doctor of Science in England and the first woman lecturer at University of Manchester (KR Briant 1962, 46, 50). In 1918 she published *Married Love*, in which she advocated equality of man and woman within the couple, provoking protest among the conservatives and the church. Stopes pioneered research in birth control, building the network of abortion clinics that has now become the Marie Stopes International. If lacking knowledge of Japanese language and culture, Stopes certainly was more instructed in, and sensitive about ethical matters. This does not want to be an ethical assessment of Marie Stopes but an attempt to suggest a reason why a scientist completely ignorant of Japan would, upon her return from her fieldwork in Japan, dedicate part of her rather busy life to writing an entire book on Noh. Her book on birth control *Radiant Motherhood* (1920) advocated eugenics as a way to avoid racial degeneration, themes close to those expressed by Spencer and endorsed by Hearn.

Chapter Two – Aesthetics

Japonisme and European theatre at the turn of the century

The first phase of the reception of Noh in Europe was characterised by two main fluxes. Since the earliest phases of the Meiji restoration British scholars visiting Japan, such as Mitford, Chamberlain and Aston, came into contact with Noh and generally dismissed performance while being appreciative of certain aspects of poetry, which would have at least historical significance. At the same time the Meiji government began a process of re-appropriating Noh from symbol of the Tokugawa shogunate to emblem of national identity under the aegis of the Imperial family. As has been pointed out, this process largely depended on a view of Japan filtered by the Western lens: first taking a distance from what was now considered its feudal past, and later assigning Noh the role of dignified entertainment that could compare to Western opera. While the world of fine arts and crafts quickly assimilated and implemented Japanese aesthetics, during this first phase of its reception knowledge of Noh was still relegated to the domain of literature, and did not find a practical implementation by Western theatre practitioners.

Though notions of Japanese theatre reached the West only as literature, European audiences had been experiencing ‘visions’ of Japan on stage since the 1860s. Chiba Yōko describes how late-nineteenth century French plays of Japanese inspiration emphasised exotic and romantic elements, while British theatre exploited the theme of ‘Happy Japan’ in a number of comic operettas, such as Gilbert & Sullivan’s *The Mikado* (1885) (Chiba 1998b). Most notably, in 1905 Puccini established a standard in Orientalist stereotyping of Japan with the Opera *Madama Butterfly*, inspired by Pierre Loti’s novel *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887). Fantasies of Japan finally met their corresponding ‘original’ when Japanese companies such as that of Sada Yacco and Hanako offered Europe a first taste of Japanese acting (Brandon 1988; Chiba 1992). Their performance was largely based on *shimpa*, a Westernised version of Kabuki that Sada Yacco adapted to the Western stage by adding naturalist movement and a particularly expressive use of the face (Berg 1995, 344-45). These troupes quickly became a sensation among audiences and critics, who heralded them as a new model for those practitioners who were striving to reform bourgeois theatre, though their success

would not have been so huge if it were not for their Western sponsors, who facilitated their reception on the Western stage.¹

As Erika Fischer-Lichte (2001) pointed out, at the turn of the century European culture was predominantly a ‘textual’ culture. The vehicles of transmission of ‘high’ culture were texts or artefacts, objects conserved in libraries and museums as products of sophisticated modes of production. It was against this understanding of culture as text that theoreticians and practitioners belonging to the Modernist avant-garde fought their battle to give back to theatre its ‘performative’ dimension. Though it is difficult to provide a comprehensive definition of the Modernist phenomenon, it might be said that, in the case of the authors treated in this research, Modernist art was characterised by the rejection of the rules and values of nineteenth-century bourgeois culture. This attitude was articulated in a number of different, often contradictory ways, yet it can be argued that Modernism generally comprised the dismissal of realism and the re-evaluation of the body as a way to contend the primacy of the text in the positivist-rational culture developed by the Enlightenment. Raymond Williams defines naturalist drama as contemporary, indigenous (congruent in terms of time and place), realist in its expressive modes, inclusive of social rank and secular (Williams 1981, 66-68). In their revolt against commercial theatre, realistic and psychological, practitioners rediscovered traditional and popular drama, symbolic and empathic. The avant-garde found Japanese theatre appealing for three main reasons: it was a unique blend of dance, music and poetry, it was regarded as a model of ‘total theatre’, in opposition to the text-based tradition of nineteenth century theatre; it offered an alternative to nineteenth century realism through symbolic acting; thirdly, stage design and performance style were a way to establish a new relationship between actors and spectators in a new form of interaction and exchange. It is within this context that notions of Noh theatre reached theatre practitioners belonging to the artistic avant-garde. Though publications on Noh had so far emphasised literary aspects of Noh, new scholarship produced in the early decades of the twentieth century, describing other aspects such as training and performance would start appealing to a public of practitioners. For the first time practitioners such as Ezra Pound, W.B. Yeats, and later Paul Claudel would receive and transmit Noh as living theatre rather than mere study material.

¹ Sada Yacco’s European performances in 1900 were sponsored by British star Henry Irving (Berg 1995, 347), while Hanako’s manager for the 1908-13 tour was American dancer Loie Fuller (Keene 1981, 254; Garelick 2009, 106).

During this second phase of its reception in Europe, Noh was no longer described as primitive or, rather, the ritual quality expressed by masks and symbolic movement was praised as preserving the ‘essential’ qualities of performance that European theatre had lost. Practitioners such as Yeats and Claudel were particularly inspired by the symbolic nature of Noh, which could be used in contrast with nineteenth century realism and revive ancient forms of performance drawing from Irish myth and folk-lore, and from European miracle plays: As Raymond Williams pointed out, while other forms of anti-naturalism were to break through naturalism, symbolism was an attempt to ‘break back’ (Williams 1981, 172). Much of this inspiration came from a typical Orientalist understanding of Japan as a country untouched by industrialisation and capitalism, where life was still regulated by the law of nature and, most importantly, whose inhabitants were endowed with a simpler, yet higher spiritual nature. Modernism contested religious institutions as part of the old aristocratic regime, and called for a return to more private forms of spirituality that could offer a contrast to materialism. As this chapter will show, Noh theatre represented an ideal example of ‘spiritually high’ art expressed in highly refined aesthetic terms which a number of Modernist practitioners sought to adopt in the production of their own reformed theatre.

Ernest Fenollosa’s study of Noh

The initiator of this new phase of Western scholarship was Ernest Francisco Fenollosa (1853-1908), an American scholar specialising in art philosophy who moved to Japan in 1872 at the invitation of American zoologist Edward Morse in order to teach philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University. Fenollosa played an essential role in the diffusion of Western aesthetics and his lectures mostly drew from Hegelian idealism, advocating the distinction between ‘essence’ (*geist*) and tangible materiality of aesthetic objects. In his 1882 *Lecture on The Truth of Art*, Fenollosa stressed the importance of going beyond the surface of the appearance, looking for the essential (or ‘ideal’) elements of beauty in an intangible inner dimension. Fenollosa was particularly appreciative of Japanese fine arts, which he considered ‘non-imitative’, and thus more apt to express ‘ideal’ beauty than Western arts, an idea shared by those European practitioners who disavowed naturalist conventions, yet it should be noted that a clear cut distinction between ‘realist’ and ‘abstract’ art did not originally belong to Japanese art: rather, naturalistic and stylised elements co-existed within the same aesthetic dimension (Keene 1981,

55).²

In 1882 Fenollosa left his university position to become Imperial Commissioner of Arts. With the assistance of historian Okakura Kakuzō (Tenshin) (Brooks 1962b, 108) he endeavoured to classify national treasures and commence the first Japanese art restoration projects.³ Michele Marra has dubbed Okakura, a central figure in the dissemination of Japanese aesthetics overseas, ‘the founding father of the “myth of Asian spiritualism”’ (Marra 2001, 8). In his book *Ideals of the East: The Spirit of Japanese Art* (1903), published during Japan’s first wave of imperialist expansion, Okakura advocated a reunion of Asian countries under the spiritual dominance of Japan and rejecting cold western scientific thought. Fenollosa’s work in Japan on the side of Okakura helped Meiji Japan to institutionalise aesthetics as an academic subject that spoke the language of the Western intelligentsia without losing its local specificity. Japanese art could now compete with Western art because it was acknowledged and praised by Western scholarship.

During his stay in Japan, Fenollosa embraced Buddhist faith and dedicated himself to the practice of several traditional arts.⁴ In 1883 Edward Morse introduced him to Umewaka Minoru, with whom he began to practise *utai* (Noh chant), which many amateurs took up as stand-alone practice (Brooks 1962a, 14-34). Now considered one of the ‘saviours’ of Noh during the difficult years of the Meiji restoration, Umewaka Minoru (1828-1909) was born in a family of the Kanze School who specialised in auxiliary roles (*shite-tsure*), and, living across the late Edo and the Meiji periods, he bore ‘memories of the customs of the stage in old court days’ (Fenollosa 1901, 129). Minoru was among the actors who regularly performed in front of foreign diplomats who visited the country during the Meiji period and was open enough to receive foreigners as students (Kagaya 2005, 231). The publication of Minoru’s diaries between 2000 and 2003 revealed the extent of his involvement in internal and foreign politics, and his acquaintance with high officials of the Meiji government, some of whom were his pupils. As an important exponent of the Noh establishment his artistic

² Philosophers such as Nishi Amane, educated both in Western and Japanese philosophy, attempted to create Japanese modern aesthetics by merging the local and the imported. Michele Marra points out how Amane tried to conciliate Confucian aesthetics, in which arts such as music were considered essential for the good reign, with Kant’s notion of purposiveness without a purpose (2001, 18). Amane translated ‘aesthetics’ as ‘the science of good and beauty’ (*zenbigaku*), and thought that ‘art fosters the flourishing of civilization; it elevates the human world into a lofty realm. [...] The true purpose of aesthetics does not conflict with the comparable purposes of morality, law, and economics’ (Nishi 2001, 37).

³ Pictures of Fenollosa and Okakura’s early restoration work in the Kansai area have been recently exposed at the exhibition *Preserving Buddhist Sculpture, a Century of Conservation* at Nara National Museum, 27 July – 26 September 2010.

⁴ Most importantly Fenollosa learnt Japanese painting under the guidance of Kanō Hōgai.

career was performed influenced by politics. During the First Sino-Japanese war (1894-95) and Russo-Japanese war (1904-05), Minoru performed in a number of *kenkin-noh*, or fund-raising performances for the war effort. In addition, he wrote new Noh plays (*shinsaku-noh*) aimed at celebrating Japanese military victories and praising the magnificence of the country. Minoru wrote the Noh *Mikuni no Hikari* (The Blazing Light of Our Nation) in 1894, and composed *utai* verse for the poems *Seikan no Eki* and *Heijō*, respectively written by the Emperor Meiji and the Empress for the celebration of two victorious battles in the Sino-Japanese war in 1895 (Kagaya 2008, 24,27). Chapter Four will tackle the political employment of Noh in more detail.

In his journal Morse recorded how Minoru ‘was very hospitable and seemed pleased that a foreigner should wish to take his lessons in singing’ (Morse 1917, 2:401). Morse described the *utai* lesson in detail and specified that it was by practice that he could really understand Japan (Morse 1917, 2:403-04).⁵ Fenollosa started to study *utai* in 1883, and in this year he received some ten lessons from Umewaka Minoru and his sons Rokurō and Takeyō (Murakata 1986, 4-5). In 1890 he returned to the U.S. to take on the position of curator of the Oriental section at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. He would return to Tokyo with his second wife Mary in 1897 and resume his practice with Minoru and his sons in 1899 (1986, 14). Though Minoru is generally referred to as Fenollosa’s master, Roy Teele noted how his main teacher was in fact Takeyō, whom Teele personally met and interviewed, and his chant lessons consisted of short excerpts and not whole plays, as would be the case in normal *utai* training. Takeyō also recalled how Fenollosa would transcribe melodies in Western staves (R Teele 1957, 348), which would be later published in the posthumous edition of the notes.

In November 1889 Fenollosa started working on the translations of a number of Noh plays with the assistance of Hirata Kiichi (Tokuboku) (Murakata 1986), whose role appears to have been much greater than Fenollosa acknowledged.⁶ The extent to which Fenollosa knew Japanese is unclear. The manuscripts of his notes, partially re-printed in Murakata (1997), were written in English or romanised Japanese, with no attempt at *kana* or *kanji* (Japanese phonetic and ideographic writings), and present a number of inaccuracies in transcription. At the time of his appointment as Professor of Philosophy

⁵ Morse includes details on how he received his lessons: ‘He placed in front of me a little music-stand and gave me a fan which I held resting on my leg. He sang a line and I sang it after him; then he sang another; and so on through the eleven lines of the piece. After trying it twice in that way we sang together’ (1917, 2:401).

⁶ In a letter to Ezra Pound, Mary Fenollosa refers to Hirata as to a pupil of her husband, who accompanied them to see Noh and who ‘did the translations’ (M. Fenollosa in Kodama 1987, 7).

in Tokyo, Fenollosa had not been educated in the Japanese language. He certainly had some proficiency in everyday Japanese, necessary for communication with Minoru and sons, who most probably would not have known English, yet his scholarly work had been achieved with the support of collaborators such as Okakura and Hirata, fully proficient in English. In fact, Mary Fenollosa's diary testifies to how her husband would not work on the translations without Hirata's presence, which is reasonable: Noh libretti, written in Muromachi period Japanese and printed in cursive style are difficult to understand even for the expert eye (Murakata 1986).⁷

Mary's diary is particularly useful as it shows how Hirata and the Fenollosas had a rather engrained pattern by which on the occasion of the Umewakas' monthly performances (*teiki nō*) Hirata would visit the Fenollosas, prepare a translation of the programme inclusive of names and roles, and a summary of the plays and the full translation of one play, sometimes with romanised transliteration (1986, 14).⁸ In addition, Mary Fenollosa would take additional notes at the theatre concerning masks, costumes and choreography.⁹ Fenollosa's letters to Hirata testify to his helplessness without the interpreting of his Japanese friend (1986, 18-20): when Fenollosa interviewed Minoru after his return to Japan, he did so with the assistance of Hirata (1986, 18-24). It seems that much of what Fenollosa knew of Noh was through Hirata's filter, a pattern that recalls Lafcadio Hearn's version of Japanese folk plays that he learnt from his wife who translated them for him, an approach much dissimilar to that of scholars such as Chamberlain and Aston. Perhaps Fenollosa's interest in visual and material interaction with art, or perhaps his relative ignorance of language and literature, kept him from adopting the same text-based approach that characterised the work of other contemporaries. Fenollosa's hands-on experience with Okakura Tenshin accustomed him to learning by experiencing, and shortened the distance between criticism and the art object. Likewise, in his practice of *utai* with Umewaka Minoru he could experience traditional training, based on a strong spiritual approach to practice.

This section is concerned with clarifying Fenollosa's actual involvement with Noh in Japan, not to discredit his authority, but to uncover how his notes on the Noh,

⁷ The manuscript of the diary is owned by Mrs. Elizabeth Winslow, Montrose, Alabama, and is not published (Murakata 1986, 27).

⁸ Hirata, who was an English literature scholar, not an expert in Japanese classics, based much of his knowledge on Tateki Ōwada annotated collection of Noh plays *Zōho Yōkyoku Tsūkai* (1897) (Murakata 1986, 14).

⁹ Mary's Fenollosa's glosses in Fenollosa's notes are detailed in A. Murakata (1997). A diagram showing stage movements of the play *Yuya*, wrongly translated as 'Bear Field', is reprinted in Murakata (1997, 37).

which would later be consecrated by Ezra Pound, were the fruit of a collective effort involving his collaborators, as well as his wife. Despite the question of ownership of the translations, which seems to have been heavily indebted to Hirata, Fenollosa's method, combining translation with theatre going and practice allowed him to produce the first solid, albeit raw, bulk of knowledge of Noh in the English language. Upon his return to the U.S. Fenollosa published his 'Notes on the Japanese Lyric Drama' (1901) in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, possibly the first publication in a European language reporting notions of Noh training. Fenollosa opened his article lamenting the deficiency of Noh studies in the West: for him Noh had not yet been studied 'as a whole, even as literature, and never in its wealth of aesthetic features, music, costume, *spiritual meaning*, action, nor in its origin, history and its *present condition*' (my emphasis, Fenollosa 1901, 129). Fenollosa assessed his own work on a radically different basis from those of other nineteenth century Orientalists – that is, by claiming to have received his knowledge from the very mouth of Umewaka Minoru, 'second soloist under the Shogun' for Noh is an art that 'can be learned only from the tradition of the actors' (1901, 129,133). To the *ex-cathedra* teaching of British Orientalists armed with pen and dictionary, Fenollosa opposed the most traditional instrument of authority: oral tradition.

It is thanks to his practice with Minoru and sons that Fenollosa could appreciate aspects of training which would form an important link between the aesthetics and ethics of Noh. In his 1901 paper Fenollosa pointed out how

The Nō actor conceives of his work in the loftiest spirit. Strictest morality, and pure, high thinking are enforced upon the young aspirant, as the most important part of his discipline. [...] He becomes absorbed in his part as a kind of spiritual act; for how can he express adequately the mentality of gods, if his soul is not already as pure as a god's?' (Fenollosa 1901, 134).

Fenollosa emphasised the connection between beauty of performance and the ascetic training of the actor and went on saying that 'this high earnestness goes far to explain the intense impression of those plays. The audience is swayed to tears, carried to the crest of noblest emotion: a better example of the Aristotelian *katharsis* could hardly be discovered' (1901, 134). For Fenollosa Noh theatre was an art imbued with morality conveyed not only in the texts, but also in the way actors expressed them through performance. This notion of moral rigour as a necessary condition for good performance would soon become the foundation of the training method of practitioners such as Jacques Copeau and Konstantin Stanislavski. In fact, as early as in 1903 Fenollosa

understood how Noh would soon have a strong impact on Western arts: in ‘Lecture V on the Nō’ (1903), later reprinted in the Pound edition of the notes, Fenollosa identified the influence of the ‘oriental’ art on the West as a way to get away ‘from the deadening boundaries of our own conventions’ (Fenollosa in Murakata 1985, 50). While positing the oriental influence on Western art in a continuum that had achieved its most recent expressive peak in Romanticism, Fenollosa thought that East and West would inevitably start influencing each other. For him, the appeal of Japanese theatre – which had already inspired London and Broadway producers – opened ‘a new era in the possibilities of elevating our Western theatre through a vital incorporation of the best elements in oriental Drama’ (1985, 52). Like Stopes, who challenged the Orientalist picture of Noh as relic of an ancient past, and enthusiastically described amateur practice as the essence of all Noh (Stopes and Sakurai 1913, 16-18), Fenollosa described Noh as ‘alive tradition’, and wished to contribute to its dissemination in the West ‘to embody no mere vague antiquarian research, but to familiarize [ourselves] with a *living* power which is at the very point of practically inspiring and uplifting us’ (Fenollosa’s emphasis, Murakata 1985, 52). This statement alone epitomises the elements that characterised this new phase of the introduction of Noh in the West when scholars and practitioners put the Noh text aside and started to engage in a dialogue with Noh as performance.

Fenollosa’s legacy: Ezra Pound and W.B. Yeats’s *Accomplishment*

Fenollosa died in 1908, before he could complete the plan of publishing the notes on Noh.¹⁰ In 1912, his widow Mary, who closely followed her husband’s work in Japan, put together a first draft of the notes, added corrections and explanations where Fenollosa’s handwriting was unclear, and along with other material on Japanese and Chinese art and culture, she entrusted them to American poet Ezra Pound (1885–1972) with the responsibility of being her husband’s literary executor for the notes on the Noh and other writings (Rosenow 2006, 371).¹¹ During the following four years Fenollosa’s notes underwent a number of modifications and were published in different formats.¹² Miyake, Kodama and Teele (1994) have proven the large extent of Pound’s intervention

¹⁰ Fenollosa expresses this intention in *Notes on the Japanese Lyric Drama* (1901, 129).

¹¹ Achilles Fang treated in detail Pound’s edition of other Fenollosa writings, *Cathay* and *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry* in A. Fang (1957). Yoko Chiba (1986) describes Mary’s encounter with Pound.

¹² For a complete bibliography of the editions of the notes see (Miyake, Kodama, and N Teele 1994, 443-4). Murakata Akiko has transcribed much of the original manuscripts in (Murakata 1997).

in Fenollosa's manuscripts, to the point that it would perhaps be more appropriate to consider Pound a co-author, rather than just an editor. Pound manipulated Fenollosa's manuscripts freely, adding sections and notes, and it is at times difficult to discern Fenollosa's voice from his without comparing the edited text with the original manuscripts. Nevertheless, in the introductory note of *'Noh', or, Accomplishment* (1916), whose original heading included the subtitle *A Study of the Classical Stage of Japan by Ernest Fenollosa and Ezra Pound*, he clarified his role as editor. Having little authority in the field of Japanese studies, this was a way for Pound to avoid criticism from specialists.

Pound edited the notes between 1913 and 1916, including the winters he spent serving as W.B. Yeats's secretary at Stone Cottage in Sussex. The result of these three years of work was the publication of five journal articles and two book editions of the collected notes and translations, the first being *'Noh' or Accomplishment*, authored by Fenollosa and Pound; the second being *Certain Noble Plays of Japan*, authored by Fenollosa, Pound and Yeats. Though the two editions are substantially different, they share one important characteristic: their editors, Yeats and Pound, were the first Western practitioners to take a practical interest in Noh, publish papers on it, and eventually employ it in their artistic production. When Pound started to work on the notebooks his knowledge of Noh was extremely limited. Having never been to Japan, he soon felt the need to seek assistance from someone who had experienced Noh in performance in order to make sense of the otherwise cryptic notes left by Fenollosa. Pound contacted Marie Stopes, whose book on Noh was published in 1913, hoping to involve her in the editing process.¹³ However, as Stopes wrote in a 14 March 1956 letter to C. P. Blacker, Pound did not leave a good impression on her:

I talked with him and found he knew nothing whatever about the subject or the language, or the really fundamental ideas in the plays, and I refused as he was merely trying to sponge on me in my opinion. Yeats, of course, was quite a different matter. He was a real poet, but I feel that his attempts at English Nô Plays are very artificial' (Stopes in Ishibashi 1978, 180).¹⁴

On the other hand, it must be noted that Pound had not been particularly appreciative of any previous translation of Noh – which includes Stopes's book – as in this 31 January 1914 letter to Harriet Monroe he wrote: 'The Earlier attempts to do Japanese in English are dull and ludicrous. That you needn't mention... as the poor scholars have done their

¹³ Arthur Waley proofread the Japanese transliterations.

¹⁴ One might wonder if this depended even partially on Stopes's proto-feminist personality not clashing with Pound's vague misogyny.

bungling best. One can not commend the results' (Pound 1971, 31).¹⁵ Without Stopes's support, Pound was forced to seek assistance elsewhere. One of the advantages of working with Yeats was the possibility of being introduced to his circle of literary acquaintances, to which many young Japanese artists belonged. During his stay in London, Pound befriended painter Tamijūrō (Tami) Kume, dramaturge Takahama Kōri¹⁶, dancer Michio Ito, and most importantly poet Katsue Kitasono, with whom he would continue to correspond until the Second World War.¹⁷ All these Japanese friends might have contributed in different way to the interpretation of Fenollosa's notes, yet only one of them, Tami Kume (1893-1923), received proper Noh training with Fenollosa's teacher, Umewaka Minoru.¹⁸ As Pound reported in his correspondence with Kitasono, Kume demonstrated chant and dance in London and Paris (Kodama 1987, 2,27-28,72).¹⁹

Ezra Pound's treatment of Fenollosa is not an academic endeavour but the free interpretation of a creative mind that was at once elaborating knowledge of Noh drawn from a multitude of second and third hand sources, and at the same time producing a personal vision of Japanese Noh that would deeply influence Modernist theatre practitioners. If the aim of Fenollosa – the scholar – was producing a study of Noh that would eventually influence European arts, then the aim of Pound – the artist – was creating a tool for art renovation. It should be noted that the years Pound spent in London were particularly formative for the development of his concept of 'imagist poetry', which largely drew on Japanese verse: the *Cantos*, which Pound started conceptualising as early as 1915, included elements borrowed from Noh and from Chinese poetry.²⁰ For Pound, Noh was first of all 'a theatre of which both Mr. Yeats and Mr. [Edward Gordon] Craig may approve' (Fenollosa and Pound 1916a, 6). In order to substantiate the argument that Japan could well have contributed to the reform of European theatre, he created a link between the 'recondite' (1916a, 4) Noh and Greek

¹⁵ For further details on Stopes and Pound see M. Kobayashi (1977).

¹⁶ Also known as Kayano Nijūichi, Kayano Jisōichi and Kōri Torahiko.

¹⁷ The names of Tami Kume, Yone Noguchi and Michio Ito are reversed throughout the thesis according to English usage. Michio Ito has been preferred over Itō Michiyo following common spelling in Western scholarship.

¹⁸ In a recent presentation at the XXIV Ezra Pound International Conference in Senate House, London 7-19 July 2011, David Ewick pointed out that Kōri too received Noh training and suggested that his responsibility in Pound's and Yeats's reception of Noh was greater.

¹⁹ Pound stayed in Paris between 1921 and 1924. Kume would help Edmund Dulac in designing masks and costumes for the first production of Yeats's *At the Hawk's Well*. See S. Kodama (1987, 2, 9).

²⁰ Besides the notes on the Noh, Pound re-worked and published a number of other works by Fenollosa, most notably *Cathay* (1915), a collection of Pound's poems based on Chinese verses translated by Fenollosa, and *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry* (1919), in which the 'ideogramic method' is introduced as perfect synthesis of image and signification.

theatre and with medieval drama, demonstrating how, beyond its ‘exotic’ appearance, the dramaturgy of Noh was the living evidence that the ritual dimension of theatre Europe had forgotten still existed in the living tradition of Noh. *‘Noh’ or Accomplishment* was not yet another essay on Japanese theatre, but a message sent from an artist to all artists.

The book’s strong point was Fenollosa's direct account of his training with Umewaka Minoru, transmitting notions of the pedagogy of Noh, a possible solution of ‘practical educational problems’ in Western art (1916a, 99). Fenollosa described the strict training of actors as a combination of artistry and asceticism.

The pure spirit was what [Noh] worked in, so it was higher than other arts. If a Noh actor acted at his best, Umewaka could read his character. The actor could not conceal it. Therefore he always instructed his sons to be moral, pure and true in all their daily lives, otherwise they could not become the greatest actors. (1916a, 47).

By developing a ‘pure spirit’, Noh actors could connect with the ‘essence’ of a character, rather than with its mere representation, thus becoming a transparent vehicle, uncontaminated by everyday-life presence. In other words, the moral stance of an interpreter was directly connected with the aesthetic result he would achieve on stage. Fenollosa maintained that ‘the discipline of the actor is a moral one. He is trained to revere his profession, to make it a sacred act thus to impersonate a hero. He yields himself up to possession by the character. He acts as if he knew himself to be a god.’ (1916a, 122). This description of Noh actors is ambiguous. On the one hand it clearly affirms the extent to which Noh actors dedicated their lives to their profession and that for them Noh was not simple stage trickery but a ritual close to a religious ceremony: what Noh tradition teaches is that Noh actors must humble themselves in front of the character, whose ‘essence’ should be poured into their bodies via the mask as if they were not ‘playing’ a character, but as if the character were using their body in order to appear on stage. On the other hand, this description could be interpreted as a statement of superiority from an elite of actors who elevate themselves at the rank of priests in communication with the divine. It is perhaps in this ambiguity that Yeats found a particular interest, and drew inspiration for his Noh-inspired drama.

In ‘Notes on the Japanese Lyric Drama’ Fenollosa had already emphasised how Noh performers ‘were and are social favourites [...] unlike the plebeians of the vulgar stage’ (Fenollosa 1901, 134), probably referring to the more popular Kabuki or Shimpa stages. Likewise, in the introduction to his edition, Pound emphasised how in Japan

there always was ‘a clear distinction between serious and popular drama’ and that ‘the merely mimetic stage has been despised’ (Fenollosa and Pound 1916a, 17). The deprecation of mundane life was part of the modernist revolt against bourgeois society in general, accused of materialism and individualism. This section has briefly described Pound’s approach to the Fenollosa manuscripts, with particular reference to the spiritual quality of Noh performance – his interest in the ethics of Noh will be further explored in Chapter Four. The following section will tackle W. B. Yeats’s involvement in the edition of the notes on the Noh.

W. B. Yeats and *Certain Noble Plays of Japan*

The influence of Noh on W. B. Yeats's *oeuvre* has been extensively studied in Western and Japanese scholarship, especially in relation to his four Noh-inspired ‘plays for dancers’, published between 1917 and 1921.²¹ This section will not be yet another comparative analysis of Yeats's dance-dramas with Noh: rather, it will try to explore his relationship with Noh, with specific reference to the ethics of his approach expressed in the introduction to *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* (1916).²² Yeats’s involvement in the edition of the Fenollosa papers was radically different from Pound’s: though deeply fascinated by Noh, his interest remained instrumental to his own artistic production. Noh seemed to fit into Yeats’s poetics on many levels: the intertextual quality of the Noh narratives, interweaving classic poetry with local folk-lore; the aesthetics of performance as ‘total theatre’, combining declamation, dance and music; the symbolic use of words, movement, masks and stage design; the spiritual element, which he could relate to his own interest in occultism; finally, the private, anti-commercial dimension of Noh, allowing emotive exchange between actors and a selected audience.

From 1904 Yeats wrote and produced plays for the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, where he wished to legitimate Irish tradition through the arts. As Richard Allen Cave observed, since the Act of Union of 1800 drama in Ireland reflected the English taste, and was used as ‘vehicle for colonial domination [...] There was no such thing as an

²¹ The plays are *At the Hawk's Well*, *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, *Dreaming of the Bones*, *Calvary*, with the addition of the Kyogen-inspired comic piece *The Cat and the Moon*. See, among many others, Stucki (1966), Ishibashi (1966), Qamber (1974), and Sekine & Murray (1990).

²² In 1916 Ezra Pound composed four Noh-inspired pieces *The Protagonist*, *A Supper at the House of Mademoiselle Rachel* (a reconstruction of Alfred De Musset’s play), *Tristan*, and the comic play *The Consolation of Matrimony*, later published as ‘Plays Modelled on the Noh’ by Donald Gallup (1987). These plays were probably meant to be performed as interludes between Yeats’s dance-dramas at Lady Cunard’s, though they remained unperformed (1987, i).

Irish theatre' (Cave in Yeats 1997, xiii).²³ Yeats's engagement in the renaissance of the Irish tradition pervaded his work with Noh: the introduction to *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* opened with a declaration of intent: 'In the series of books I edit for my sister', wrote Yeats, 'I confine myself to those that have I believe some special value to Ireland, now or in the future. I have asked Mr. Pound for these beautiful plays because I think they will help me to explain a certain possibility of the Irish dramatic movement' (Fenollosa, Pound, and Yeats 1916, i).²⁴ Similarly to the connection that Pound drew between Noh, the classical Greek theatre and medieval drama, Yeats wanted to revive and legitimise Ireland's own local tradition by establishing an association with the continuing tradition of Japan.

Certain Noble Plays of Japan greatly differed from Pound's *'Noh' or Accomplishment*: it included only four plays selected by Pound (*Nishikigi*, *Hagoromo*, *Kumasaka* and *Kagekiyo*) and featured a new introduction by Yeats. The titles of Pound's and Yeats's editions are sufficiently explicit in reflecting not only different receptions of Noh, but also different agendas. Pound's choice – *'Noh' or Accomplishment* – was rather unconventional: instead of using words such as 'drama', 'play' or 'theatre', he focused on explaining the meaning (or at least one of the meanings) of the word 'Noh', translated as 'accomplishment'. This editorial decision is not of little importance: for the first time Pound broadened the spotlight on Noh, until then only fixed on texts, to include performance, and, most importantly, to transmit the notion of Noh training as form of spiritual cultivation. Yeats's choice, *Certain Noble Plays of Japan*, cannot but reflect his interest in creating a form of aristocratic theatre, here vaguely reminiscent of Orientalism. It is important to note that Yeats did not intend to create a double of Pound's book (unlike Pound he had not been entrusted to transmit Fenollosa's notes), hence his decision to cut the introductory notes and replace them with his own impressions. Yeats looked for the accomplishment 'of a few cultured people who understand the literary and mythological allusions and the ancient lyrics quoted in speech or chorus, their discipline, a part of their breeding' (1916, xi): it is this kind of audience that he welcomed in the intimacy of Lady Cunard's drawing-room, where in the Spring of 1916 his *At the Hawk's Well* premiered in front of a select audience.

The encounter with Japanese modern dancer Michio Ito (1892-1961) was decisive in motivating Yeats toward the possibility of realising his dream of intimate

²³ Also see F. Sakauchi (2006) *W. B. Yeats's At the Hawk's Well and the Easter Rising*.

²⁴ *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* was published by Yeats's sister Elizabeth for Cuala Press in 1916.

drama. Ito, who studied Dalcroze eurhythmics in Germany, only saw Noh in his childhood, and was surprised to find out about Pound's and Yeats's interest in what he thought to be most boring (Ito 1976, 39).²⁵ Yeats and Ito had two important characteristics in common: they did not know Noh theatre, and they were little interested in knowing it beyond the extent to which it would be useful to pursue their own artistic agenda. Yeats planned to experiment with his Noh-inspired plays only to 'turn to something else' once he had 'given enough performances' (1916, ii). Ito, whose finances had become a matter of worry at the time of their collaboration, may have been less concerned with authenticity than with promoting his professional success in the Western world by selling his 'Japaneseness'. After moving to the U.S. Ito founded his dance school where he taught Dalcroze eurhythmics as well as Japanese theatre, using *'Noh', or, Accomplishment* as his main reference.²⁶

Although the association of Noh with spiritual elevation can be attributed to Fenollosa's description of the Noh actor, the emphasis that Yeats put on intimacy and nobility does not seem to belong to Pound's edition. Was Yeats possibly influenced by sources different from Pound's? Edward Marx (2007) has recently unearthed important material shedding light on other Japanese sources that influenced Yeats's reception of Noh. As early as 1907, well before Pound became interested in Noh, Japanese modernist writer Noguchi Yonejirō (Yone) (1875-1947) published articles in the *Japan Times* suggesting that Yeats take on the study of Noh, in which he would find many points in common with the Irish folk-lore he wished to revive.²⁷ Noguchi introduced Noh as an anti-realist art, in which it is possible to encounter the 'character of a lady whose appearance and voice are not different at all from a man's; but you have no right to quarrel about it, you have only to believe that it is a lady. And if you cannot you are utterly outside the No realm. Spirit is the main thing' (1907b). Naturally this form of theatre could not be appreciated by the mass that would rather enjoy more popular entertainment such as Kabuki, and it follows that what Noguchi called the 'dignity' of Noh was only shared among a restricted audience of connoisseurs who would be able to appreciate it.

²⁵ Caldwell, who is not a Japanese theatre specialist, undermines the aesthetic and philosophical gap that separates Noh from Kabuki when she argues that Ito was not completely unfamiliar with the former, as he had been studying the latter. While sharing a number of common features, as any other traditional Japanese art, Noh and Kabuki were and still are the products of completely distinct cultural environments.

²⁶ At the end of January 1921 his American group was planning to perform a programme comprising the Noh *Shōjō*, *Kagekiyo*, *Hagoromo* as well as the Kyogen *Busu* (Caldwell 1977, 39-41; Kodama 1987, 17-19).

²⁷ Edward Marx has collected relevant material on Noguchi, theatre and modernism in his web project: <http://www.h.ehime-u.ac.jp/~marx/YN/index.htm>

Noguchi's book *The Spirit of Japanese Poetry*, published in London in 1914 includes a chapter on Noh, 'The Japanese Play of Silence', clearly written with the Western reader in mind. The section opens with the description of the spectators of Noh, 'all of them No actors themselves' (1914, 54), as 'appreciative audience', following the performance in composed silence. Describing a day at the Hōshō theatre, Noguchi recalled how the sight of so many 'honourable names' written on the theatre chairs impressed him, and how his 'plebeian mind' was particularly struck by the 'general quietude that overflowed from the hearts of artistic sensibility' (1914, 56-57). Noh was described as an esoteric rite in which actors are 'silent worshippers of the Imperfect [...] congregate[d] for the holy exercise of ritual of their imagination' (1914, 60). Noguchi spelled out his fascination with the sacred dimension of Noh, and insisted on how this atmosphere was created by the collaboration of actors and educated audiences who possessed a form of nobility of spirit. It is not difficult to discern in Noguchi's text a rather elitist tone. In his article addressing Yeats, Noguchi agreed with him that 'a drama has not to wait on its audience and it would be a poor thing which has not the dignity of independence' (1907b). Marx pointed out how Noguchi misread the preface of his *Dramatical Poems* (1907) in which Yeats wrote that 'a writer of drama [...] must always deny that [...] a play has no need to await its audience' (Yeats 1907, 2:v), probably confused by the double negation. In 1906, when Yeats wrote the preface, his adventure at the Abbey Theatre had only started and he was probably full of enthusiasm for the possibility of helping Irish drama and engaging the audience in narratives that would belong to their tradition. It appears that Noguchi, who experienced Western playhouses in New York and London, wanted to throw fuel on the fire of dissatisfaction that Yeats and other modernist playwrights were nurturing with the commercial stage. 'We are tired' Noguchi wrote in another article, 'disgusted in the popular theatrical house where you have to sit with uncongenial people quite often with undesirable people of doubtful character, but here the age and audience are perfectly in unison the audience itself are the actors without action or voice. I thought how Yeats would be delighted here (1907a).²⁸ Noguchi hoped to educate the Western audience to a new, spiritual dimension of theatre going, one which would imply active participation in the creation of performance itself: an ideal that would certainly have interested Yeats and other modernist practitioners. However, the kind of participation he had in mind was not the roughness of the Kabuki stage, where audiences would cheer actors by

²⁸ This and the other articles by Noguchi were reprinted as a longer essay, 'The Japanese Mask Play' (1910). For editorial details see Marx (2007).

shouting or throwing gifts on the *hanamichi* bridgeway, but the decent composure of Noh theatre, where spectators behave with the same degree of solemnity of the actors. Noguchi offered a parallel for the aesthetic experience of watching theatre in an off-stage ethical attitude that reflects, and is in turn inspired by the art observed on-stage: ‘when the performance was finished, we left the house as quietly as we had entered; here we are too the No actors. Pray, think what you do at your common theatrical house when you enter and leave it. To see the No is an art as much as to act as a No actor. It is poetry and ethics; it is philosophy, above all, the highest form of art in its own way’ (1910c).²⁹ If Yeats understood Noh as aristocratic art it was because this was by and large the image of Noh that Western Orientalists, with the exception of Marie Stopes, had created so far: Chamberlain, Edwards and Fenollosa attended events organised for aristocrats and dignitaries, and ignored the existence of different kinds of spectatorships, while Noguchi, in turn influenced by Western modernism, seduced Yeats with a vision of Noh he knew would impact upon his sensibility.³⁰ However, it should be clarified that Yeats’s ‘aristocracy’ was purely intellectual and followed the shared view of Noh actors and audiences as endowed with what Noguchi called ‘nobility of spirit’.

The notion of aristocratic, yet spiritually simple and pure drama reflected a crucial as much as problematic feature of Modernism: on one hand, the desire to return to popular, folk arts, far from the decadence brought by industrialism and urbanisation; on the other hand, the elitist distaste for the flattened taste of the mass. The paradox is well exemplified in Yeats’s essay ‘A people’s theatre’ (1919) in which he stated: ‘I want to create for myself an unpopular theatre and an audience like a secret society whose admission is by favour and never to many. [...] I desire a mysterious art, always reminding and half reminding those who understand it of dearly loved things, doing its work by suggestion, not by direct statement (Yeats in Bradbrook 1983, 160). Similarly, in the introduction to the Noh plays, Yeats claimed to have ‘invented a form of drama, distinguished, indirect and symbolic, and having no need of mob or press to pay its way – an aristocratic form’ (Fenollosa, Pound, and Yeats 1916, ii). However, elsewhere in the same text he claimed to ‘love all the arts that still can remind [him] of their origin among the common people’ (1916, iii). The ‘people’ Yeats had in mind were not the mainstream bourgeois theatregoers, but a restricted circle of connoisseurs, refined

²⁹ Noguchi visited Stone Cottage in 1914 (Ellis 1995, 108), on which occasion he might have given direct advice on Noh to Pound and Yeats.

³⁰ Chapter Five will show how, with the exception of Stopes, the tendency to view Noh as an aristocratic art will be argued against by scholars only after Second World War.

enough to appreciate mysterious and symbolic performance.

Reception of Yeats's view of Noh

A number of Japanese critics, among them Yasuo Stucki, Ishibashi Hiro, and Sekine Masaru have criticised Yeats for having misunderstood Noh and having exploited its aesthetics in a superficial way. Stucki pointed out that Yeats's sense of secrecy 'is clearly foreign to the significance of secret tradition in the Nō' (1966, 108), alluding to an effete use of cryptic symbolism. In fact, the poetics of Noh is largely based on ambiguity and not on fixed correspondences: both the gestural and the literary systems possess a gap (*ma*), or a degree of vagueness that leaves the interpretation open to the audience. In reception theory, this is what Wolfgang Iser called 'structures of indeterminacy', or the negative instances 'which relate less to the text itself than to the conditions established between text and reader during the reading process. This kind of indeterminacy functions as propellant – it conditions the reader's 'formulation' of the text' (1978, 183). In a way, a certain degree of esotericism is an essential part of Noh training performance, yet Noh symbolism is not simply a code to be deciphered. Stucki maintained that Yeats's plays 'stand on two levels of presentation, one sensual and the other intellectual. However, a Nō play has only one level of presentation in which our passions and material world are presented in unity' (1966, 106-7).³¹

Ishibashi observed how Yeats's 'discovery of a new form was the starting point of all his later plays. A creation, we thus see, can be born of a misunderstanding. And a creative worker is free to turn misunderstanding into creation, if only his works have in themselves the power to exist as high art' (1966, 151). More recently, Sekine Masaru has maintained that 'though Yeats imitated the Noh form with a great degree of sincerity, finding in its form, themes and conventions, correspondences with his own notions of dramatic art, he necessarily failed to make authentic Noh plays' (1990, 1). Especially Ishibashi and Sekine have compared and contrasted Yeats's plays for dancers with Noh, yet this approach runs the risk of remaining confined within formal analysis. What is interesting within the framework of the history of reception is Yeats's own

³¹ Pound realised how his vision of poetry and Yeats's were growing apart and expressed his dissatisfaction with Yeats's symbolism, to which he preferred imagism. He argued that 'symbolists dealt in "association", that is, in a sort of allusion, almost of allegory [...] The symbolist's *symbols* have a fixed value, like numbers in arithmetic, like 1, 2 and 7. The imagist's images have a variable significance, like the signs *a*, *b*, and *x* in algebra' (Pound 1914, 463).

appreciation of Noh and how his work contributed to further disseminate notions of Noh in the West.

How would ethical criticism consider Yeats's 'appropriation' of Noh? If unconditioned and selfless attitudes are accepted as necessary propositions for the aesthetic experience, it is possible to argue that, to a certain extent, Yeats's declared plan of utilising Noh theatre for his individual interest flawed his aesthetic experience. It might be argued that Yeats's intention, expressed in the introduction to *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* to 'record all discoveries of method and turn to something else' because 'it is an advantage of this noble form that it need absorb no one's life, that its few properties can be packed up in a box, or hung upon the walls where they will be fine ornaments' (1916, ii) does not really correspond to the ethical ideal of dedication to the art of Noh that Fenollosa described in his notes. However, it should be considered that, unlike Japan, modern European theatre did not conceive of genres, and its practitioners would not demonstrate dedication by sticking to one company or director. In his study of Yeats's collaboration with Ninette de Valois in the production of the Noh-inspired *Dreaming of the Bones* and *At the Hawk's Well* at Abbey theatre in the early 1930s, Richard Allen Cave has pointed out how Yeats, though not involved in the study of Noh as Orientalist scholars were, was particularly fascinated by the discipline of Noh actors, and in his collaboration with de Valois he constantly demonstrated humility and selfless dedication to the discipline of the art (Cave 2011, xv-xvii). Yeats obviously never wanted to become a Noh practitioner, and yet his approach to his art was equally dedicated and ethically laudable.

Moreover, in his discussion of ethical criticism David Cooper claims that 'someone who exercises virtues – selflessness, respect for the integrity of things, and so on – in appreciating the beauty of things will presumably manifest this in various ways: through demeanour, comportment, style of speech and the like' (2010, 78). Cooper's argument aims at showing how human attitudes, not only art, express ethical virtues and are, in Berys Gaut's terms, aesthetically relevant ethical properties. It appears that Yeats's ideal of intimate drama, possibly inspired by Noguchi's account of the Noh audience as endowed with 'nobility of spirit' describes an audience that is at once aesthetically and ethically sensitive. Participating in the play in an emotive exchange with the actors, the small audience Yeats envisaged would have added aesthetic value to the performance itself, and it would do so through decorum and composure.

Yeats's reform of theatre originated in a revolt against the vulgarity of

commercialism and bourgeois populism, to which he responded with ethical ideals of spiritual nobility, and retreat to ‘drawing-room’ drama. His attitude is apparently contradictory insofar as he planned to create a new form of popular theatre with ‘an audience like a secret society’ (Yeats 1962, 254): the intention to cultivate the audience and heal them from the vulgarity of the commercial stage is laudable, yet it seems to be flawed by the will to restrict cultivation to an elite. Criticism has tended to see Yeats’s work as an attempt at replicating Noh plays in a European fashion, conceiving of reception as a binary system in which an objectified original is opposed to an inauthentic replica. Though it is possible to consider Yeats’s work as Orientalist, this view would fail to frame his use of Noh in the more ethical attempt at promoting Irish culture as authentic and independent. Moreover, Yeats’s notoriety granted Noh greater exposure than it could have achieved if it remained confined within the realm of academic scholarship by attracting the attention of a multitude of intellectuals and practitioners, an achievement welcomed by a Japanese government that was developing strategies for the promotion of Noh overseas.

Arthur Waley

Soon after Pound’s and Yeats’s books were published, a collection of translations which would become a milestone in the Western scholarship of Noh appeared. Arthur Waley’s (1889-1966) *The Nō Plays of Japan* (1921) set a standard for the outstanding accuracy and quality of its translations, and for introducing Zeami’s treatises on Noh dramaturgy in the English language: Waley included a consistent section of Zeami’s *Fushikaden* in the first section of the book.³² Waley’s systematic analysis and quality of translation soon reached practitioners such as Bertolt Brecht, who, as will be shown in Chapter Four, used his translation in order to produce the adaptation of the Noh *Taniko*.

At the time of the publication of the book Waley worked at the Sub-Department of Oriental Prints and Drawings at the British Museum where he remained between 1913 and 1929. A classicist by training, Waley taught himself Chinese and Japanese, which he could pick up quickly thanks to his outstanding linguistic skills. As early as in 1918 Waley started publishing translations of the Chinese and Japanese classics: by the

³² Waley refers to *Fushikaden* as *Kwadensho*. In the second edition of the book (1922), reprinted by Dover (1998), the introductory section on *Fushikaden* has been cut. The first edition has been reprinted by Unwin Hyman (1988).

end of his career he would have translated many of the masterpieces of Asian literature, including *The Tale of Genji* and *Monkey*. His approach to such work was not that of the detached historian: Waley closely followed the development of Modernism in Europe, and was affiliated with the Bloomsbury group. Therefore, his engagement with the Noh plays came from a background informed by contemporary Western literature, as well as rooted in a profound knowledge of Japanese history and literature, framed in the strong philological competences of a classicist. It is not by chance that Waley included in his introduction the Noh plays an adaptation of John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* in Noh style. Like Pound and Yeats a few years before him, Waley grasped the potential of Noh as an alternative to decadent bourgeois drama, in his words, 'the last stronghold of realism' (Waley 1998, 17).

However, Waley's approach differed from that of his distinguished predecessors, Yeats and Pound, as he strongly disagreed with the image of Noh as a mysterious, esoteric art that Yeats conveyed, and was concerned with this message being propagated through their popularity. Waley wanted to treat Noh 'as literature, and not as some kind of Delphic mystery' (1998, 17). This emphasis should be read as 'literature and not mystery', and not 'literature and not performance': it is important to note that, since Waley never travelled to Japan and never saw Noh on stage, his knowledge of Noh could not be but literary. This is a form of ignorance he shared with Yeats and Pound, whose work he implicitly criticised for being in a field out of their experience, as he firmly believed that 'it is only through the accurate scholarship that the "soul of Nō" can be known to the West' (1998, 17). Waley was most of all arguing against the image of Noh as aristocratic art that first Mitford and Chamberlain, and later Yeats contributed to creating. 'I must explain', Waley wrote, 'how it was that in the early days the Nō, contrary to the opinion usually accepted in Europe, was not solely the entertainment of the upper classes' (Waley 1921, 39). Walter De Gruchy sees Waley in opposition to Fenollosa-Pound (2003, 87). However, Yeats seems to be more responsible for the association of Noh with 'nobility' than Fenollosa or Pound, who insisted more on spiritual aspects of Noh than on the creation of elite art. In the short bibliography provided in the book, Waley noted how Fenollosa's translations were inaccurate, but praised Pound's work as editor (Waley 1998, 260). Moreover, De Gruchy's claim that Pound's interest in Noh 'quickly waned' (2003, 96) is not exact: Chapter Four will demonstrate how Pound continued to discuss Noh theatre until the Second World War.

Waley intended to dispel the aura of elitism as well as that of mystery through historical accuracy, yet his project reflected a spirit that goes beyond that of mere philology: as De Gruchy has argued, Waley's reaction to Yeats's endorsement of Noh 'was in line with the modernist reaction against realism, but to his strong socialist or populist sympathies, such blatant elitism was anathema' (De Gruchy 2003, 102). De Gruchy reported how Waley was born and grew up in a Jewish family of socialist convictions, and later became affiliated with different left-wing activist groups (2003, 35-42). Waley wanted to provide a strong response to the image of Noh as elitist entertainment reserved to an aristocratic class which a number of British Orientalists – with the exception of Stopes – had established, and he probably was the first important author to appreciate Stopes's *Plays of Old Japan: the 'No'*, and the lecture Waley gave at the Royal Society in 1919, later included in his book, was chaired by none other but Stopes herself.³³ Upon being asked about the relationship of Yeats with Noh, Waley replied that Yeats's interest was mere 'folklore', while Marie Stopes understood how Noh was the product of the spiritual nobility of the Japanese people (Ishibashi 1978, 37). Waley dismissed Yeats not merely because he dared to interfere with something outside his speciality – Stopes was no expert on Japan either – but because of the alleged superficiality of his treatment of Noh which, in his opinion projected a misleading image of Noh as aristocratic. This might have well been a misunderstanding of what Yeats meant by 'noble', yet it is difficult to deny that Stopes offered a much more 'inclusive' description of Noh, less wrapped with an aura which could be easily understood as elitist snobbery.

In order to justify his argument for a more inclusive understanding of Noh, Waley needed to resort to the highest authoritative source: Zeami Motokiyo. He stressed how Zeami knew 'unfailingly how to gain the reader's attention and how by skilful balancing of quite simple elements quickly to enlist his sympathy and steer his emotions' (Waley 1921, 55) and dedicated a large part of the introduction of the first edition of the book to introducing concepts extrapolated from the *Fūshikaden*, a measure that reveals the extent to which he considered Zeami as crucial in the understanding of Noh. Interpolating lines by Zeami with his own conjectures, Waley provided the reader with detailed descriptions of the various aspects of Nō from the point of view of the practitioner. He restated this position in the 'Appendix II' of *The Nō Plays of Japan*, in which he reiterated that 'numerous passages prove that Nō at its

³³ As De Gruchy reports, this was the first time a woman had presided over a meeting of the Japan Society (2003, 98).

zenith was not an exclusively aristocratic art. The audiences were very varied' (1998, 270). With a possible political slant in his interpretation of Zeami, Waley preferred to emphasise how originally even 'commoners' could enjoy Noh. This position is now known to be historically accurate: after Zeami's times, Noh underwent a process of transformation that led to the establishment of a canon and to the exclusive patronage of the noble class, while its initial audiences were mixed.³⁴ Waley's commitment in joining the modernist battle against realism, while fighting against the incorrect ideas some practitioners were perpetuating shows his intention to disseminate Noh while respecting the 'original source' in a way that reflects his ambiguous nature, between artistic involvement and academic commitment. Despite his exceptional knowledge of the topic and his familiarity with the language, Waley never visited Japan: his understanding of Noh was mostly based on the writings of Zeami, and on his own intuitions.³⁵ However, is the experience of Japan necessary for a deep understanding of Noh? The next section will introduce another important figure of the promulgation of Noh outside Japan who had the chance to learn about Noh in its original environment: Paul Claudel.

Paul Claudel – a French poet laureate in Japan.

The influence of Noh in Claudel's vast theatrical output has been thoroughly researched by scholars such as Watanabe Moriaki (1965), John Gillespie (1983), and more recently Nishino Ayako.³⁶ Instead of looking for the influence of Noh in Claudel's plays, this section will analyse the nature of the French poet's reception of Noh, and its collocation within the history of this reception in Europe. Unlike the practitioners who preceded him, Claudel spent a long time (between 1921 and 1927) in Japan as French ambassador, a period during which he attended several Noh performances.³⁷ Claudel left comments on his experiences in various notes and essays, though the text in which the presence of this subject is strongest is the collection of articles *L'Oiseau noir dans le soleil levant* (1929). What differentiates Claudel's essays on Noh from previous

³⁴ Even during the Edo period, countryside Noh continued to be performed in parallel with the official court tradition. See G. Groemer (1998a; 1998b).

³⁵ Donald Keene has praised Waley's translations because they represent an outstanding achievement for a translator devoid of annotated editions of the plays (Keene 1981, 335).

³⁶ A. Nishino's work has been published in a series of articles on the *Cahiers d'études françaises* by Keio University.

³⁷ For a list of the Noh performances Claudel attended see M. Watanabe (1965).

literature is the typical poetic prose: to a certain extent, his critical oeuvre was still tinged with the overtones typical of the *fin-de-siècle* Orientalist rhetoric and his written thoughts come from vantage point of the distinguished observer. Claudel's descriptions often border on the quaint and the picturesque as in the case of the lecture he delivered in 1923 to Japanese students in Nikko, in which Claudel, a Frenchman, was lecturing on Japan to the Japanese: 'Pour trouver la tradition japonaise il n'est pas nécessaire, comme pour les gens de France, de pénétrer jusq'à ce for intime où se forment les idées et s'essayent les attitudes. Il n'y a qu'à ouvrir les oreilles et les yeux à ce concert autour de nous' (Claudel 1929, 19). Echoing Hearn, Claudel described Japan as a land blessed with 'supernatural beauty'. His fervent Catholicism surfaced his view of Japan as the sacred land inhabited by a naturally 'spiritual' people, from whom Europeans had much to learn in order to fill their inner void: 'l'Européen d'aujourd'hui ne voit dans les choses qui l'entourent qu'un domaine destiné à son agrément ou à son profit, il est certain que pour le Japonais traditionnel la Création est avant tout l'oeuvre de Dieu' (1929, 25). In his criticism of the secularisation of the West, where centripetal forces restricted human existence to the individual self, he used Christian terminology, mirroring Japanese spirituality into a Christian absolutist worldview. Hoping that progress would spare this corner of the earth still uncontaminated from the *malaise* of modernity, Claudel painted Japan with an aura of ineffability.

The prose of *L'Oiseau noir dans le soleil levant* might annoy the reader with an excessively ornate tone, yet its narrative offers rather original insights: Claudel did not write essays, but literature that contributed to spread the knowledge of Japan by means of emphasising its aesthetic qualities. 'Le drame, c'est quelque chose qui arrive, le Nô, c'est quelqu'un qui arrive' is the famous catchphrase that opens his essay 'Nô', immediately offering the reader a thoughtful, metaphysical reflection (1929, 89). It is possible to read this witty formulation according to different interpretations, for instance it might be seen as a way to describe the emphasis Noh places on the *shite*, the main character around which all the narrative of the performance is often built. Yet it seems natural to consider how Claudel might have wanted to stress the idea that European drama is confined to the materiality of the literal *mise-en-scène* – that is, the dramatisation of an actual event – while Noh theatre preserves the ritual quality of performance (Claudel, like Pound, identifies it in comparison with classic Greek theatre) in which a dramatic gesture can be seen as having both a fictional and an actual meaning.

Certainly the journey, as in the ‘coming and going’ of spirits summoned on the stage, is an essential aspect of the Noh dramaturgy, and Claudel acknowledges its topography through the use of a peculiar set of highly poetic, newly-coined expressions: ‘le Chemin ou Pont de l’Estrade’, ‘le Pavillon du Rêve’, ‘Lac des Songes’ (1929, 89, 91, 95). Though fanciful, certain passages of ‘Nô’ are powerfully evocative: while discussing the actor’s dance as a sort of shamanic trance, Claudel points out that ‘ce n’est plus le sentiment qui est à l’intérieur de l’acteur, c’est l’acteur qui se met à l’intérieur du sentiment’ (1929, 96). This might be the first time that Noh theatre is described with such an expressive drive and in such creative form: before Claudel had come the efforts of scholars (such as Fenollosa, Waley and Stopes), while the poets (Yeats, Pound) had no direct experience of Noh and could not indulge in reports of such felt experiences. However ignorant of the Noh texts – unlike many of his precursors, he did not attempt at translating any of the plays – Claudel was strongly impressed by the choreographic aspects of Noh, and through poetic prose he described how Noh, a paradigm of theatre, synthesised the whole metaphysics of existence through the essentialised gestures of the ‘magistrat du rêve’, the *shite*:

C’est la vie telle que, ramenée du pays des ombres, elle se peint à nous dans le regard de la méditation: nous nous dressons devant nous-mêmes, dans l’amer mouvement de notre désir, de notre douleur et de notre folie. Nous voyons chacun de nos actes à l’état d’immobilité, et du mouvement il ne reste plus que la signification. A la manière d’un maître qui reprend et qui explique, quelqu’un lentement devant nous reproduit ce que nous avons fait afin que nous comprenions de quelle attitude éternelle chacun des nos pauvres gestes au hasard était l’imitation inconsciente et improvisée (1929, 97-98).

Through this rather elaborate illustration, perhaps unsuitable to describe the rather modest and austere world of Noh, Claudel delivers one of the richest descriptions of Noh to date. Although deprived of the linguistic tools, his non-verbal reception has been deeply incorporated and reproduced in a new poetic texture.

This intense aesthetic appreciation does not seem to be the only element of the world of Noh that impressed Claudel: thanks to his upper-class circle, he discovered that many of his acquaintances were engaged in the Noh practice as amateurs. Realising that Noh was not practised as a mere pastime, but as a regular activity, in a way similar to martial arts, Claudel acknowledged the importance of practice: ‘le Nô n’a pas seulement une valeur artistique et une valeur religieuse, il a une valeur éducative. Il apprend à l’artiste et au spectateur l’importance du geste, l’art de contrôler ses pensées, ses paroles et ses mouvements, la patience, l’attention, le décorum’ (1929, 99).

Although Claudel did not elaborate further on the educational or ethical capabilities of Noh, he insisted on the beauty of Japan as a world in which all gestures are measured and composed, and deliver a degree of dignity he thought the West lacked. Japan is described – in a way that Roland Barthes will adopt later in his *Empire des signes* (1970) – as a world where all gestures possess a dramatic quality, and ‘everything is sign’ (1962, 4:194). Possibly, it was this symbolic system that led Claudel to incorporate elements of the Noh into his own theatrical work. Watanabe (1965) and Nishino (2008) document how the influence of Noh is manifested in several of his plays, especially after 1927 – *Le Livre de Christophe Colomb* (1927), *Jeanne d’Arc au bûcher* (1934), and *Le festin de la sagesse* (1934). Traces of Noh are visible, though to a lesser degree, also in works he produced during his stay in Japan – *La Femme et son Ombre* (1922) and *Le Soulier de satin* (1924). While *La Femme et son ombre*, commissioned by the Japanese as a ‘japanised’ version of his ballet piece *L’Homme et son désir* seems to have more in common with Kabuki, other plays manifest a more defined presence of Noh elements (Nishino 2007, 74). While Nishino (2007) has analysed the possible influence of the Noh *Kantan* on the ‘dream scene’ in the third act of the lengthy *Soulier de satin*, commenced in 1919 and completed during his residence in Japan in 1924, John Gillespie (1983) singled out three recurring elements in Claudel’s style of playwriting that would justify the claim of the influence of Noh and locates their presence in different plays: the use of the ‘dream’ element, the emphasis on the *shite* character and the retrospective dimension of memory (Gillespie 1983, 58). It is however necessary to acknowledge that most of what has been discussed is playwriting, that is, the way his plays were composed, not put on stage. Unlike practitioners such as Stanislavski, Craig or Copeau, Claudel was not a ‘man of theatre’ in the strictest sense but, rather, a ‘man of letters’.

Claudel’s intention to borrow elements from the Noh is explicated in *Un Essai d’adaptation du No japonais: Le Festin de la sagesse* published in 1938 but possibly drafted during the production of the ‘mimodrame’ in 1934 (Claudel 1993, 143). Here the author synthesises his view of Noh in a way that could be compared to what Yeats previously wrote with reference to the new theatre he intended to develop:

C’est un art essentiellement aristocratique, destiné à la délectation d’un petit groupe d’amateurs cultivés. [...] Les spectateurs de leur côté s’y préparent par cette attention disciplinée, cet esprit aguisé, purifié, clarifié par le jeûne de toute distraction extérieure, qui est la condition difficile et rare, mais nécessaire pour l’appréciation d’une grande oeuvre d’art comme du plus haut enseignement spirituel (1993, 144).

Claudiel, diplomat in Japan, incorporated the already well-established paradigm of Noh as aristocratic entertainment and added his own Catholic dimension. The result is an idealised, poeticised view of Noh as spiritual doctrine in stark contrast with Waley's attempt to give back to Noh its original, popular component. Once more, the 'nobilitisation' of Noh elevated training even higher than its actual condition in Japan, where its practice was opening to larger audiences.

Chapter Three – Ethics

Noh and the new ethics of European theatre

The aesthetics of Modernism were by and large a reaction to the nineteenth-century naturalism, associated with the rise of the bourgeois class. Thanks to new accounts of Noh performance and practice, enriched by excerpts from training notes and by partial translations of Zeami's treatises, Noh broke through the boundaries of academia and appealed to theatre practitioners. This new audience understood the potential of this tradition as a stimulus for the Modernist reform of theatre. Noh was understood as a spiritually uplifting art, whose actors and audience would practice as a religious act. Symbolism and spirituality elevated Noh over debased bourgeois taste, though when read through the filter of European practitioners, they were soon tinged with elitist overtones. Arthur Waley seems to be the only authoritative voice trying to oppose this drift of Noh toward the *haut monde* of European literati. However, the responsibility for the aestheticisation of Noh theatre's spirituality and elevation in the ranks of aristocratic art did not solely depend on the Western gaze, but also on the promotion of Noh by Japanese intellectuals, such as Yone Noguchi, who addressed European practitioners using their own language.

The spiritual element of Noh was not only of interest for its aesthetics, which appealed to writers like Yeats and Claudel. As this chapter will try to demonstrate, theatre practitioners particularly involved with actor training received Noh and its practice as an example of exactitude on which to build their own ideal of the performer. Underlying this process of constitution, or, rather, restoration of the actor as professional true to his or her art was the discussion of the role of the individual in relation to tradition. One of the constant elements of Modernism was a friction between the old and the new in which practitioners broke through the canon of realism by creating brand new forms that incorporated elements of pre-modern traditions, either from classic antiquity, the Middle Ages, or, as in the case of Japanese theatre, faraway territories that still preserved continuing traditions that Europe had lost. The question of tradition is ethical in its nature insofar as it considers the value of the individual against the canon *qua* collectivity of past individuals. While the philosophy of the

Enlightenment invested the self with absolute ontological value, Modernism condemned utilitarianism and bourgeois capitalism as the decadent expression of positivist individualism, and proposed a re-evaluation of individual ‘genius’ within an ethics of discipline, respect for the tradition and of the community. According to Edward Shils, ‘true originality is a deflection of the line of traditional transmission. True originality transfers the centre of creativity into the individual and withdraws the determination of conduct from the external inheritance. Thus there is at the very root a war between originality and tradition’ (Shils 1971, 143). Similarly, in *Tradition and the Individual Talent* (1919), T.S. Eliot addressed this issue by attacking the romantic conception of the artist as self-sufficient and self-centred entity, claiming that ‘poetry is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality’ (Eliot 1919, 21), thus challenging the Western tendency to seek value in originality. Eliot was in favour of the re-establishment of a relationship between the artist and the literary canon, in which the canon provides the original impetus needed to undergo an intense artistic process of sublimation of the artist into tradition. As the chapter will show, European theatre practitioners followed the same principle by adopting teachings imported from Noh.

Japanese ethics during the Meiji period

What emerged from the accounts of Fenollosa and Stopes was an image of Japan as a country not simply aesthetically appealing, but also morally admirable. The philosophy of *bushidō*, the ‘way of the warrior’, which reached its formal configuration during the Tokugawa period (1573-1867), was introduced in the West through Japanese books that presented it as the foundation of Japanese ethics. However, Japan did not promote traditional philosophy until after the long and complex process of revision of National thought that began with the early stages of the Meiji restoration, when Japan, faced with what was perceived as a cultural, economical and technological inferiority by comparison with the Western countries, entered the *bunmei kaika* period, characterised by an unconditional adoption of Western culture and the dismissal of all Japanese tradition.

As Hirakawa Sukehiro reports, during the *bunmei kaika* period utilitarianism and liberalism were introduced through the writings of John Stuart Mill and Benjamin Franklin, while Samuel Smiles’s *Self-Help*, promoting a Western-based idea of ‘personal cultivation’ became a best-seller of over one million copies, and Benjamin

Franklin's virtue of Industry – 'lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions' – was particularly well received in Japan thanks to its resonance with Zen practicality (Hirakawa 1989, 482). The document epitomising this mass-adoption of Western thought is the 1868 Charter Oath, whose points 4 and 5 read:

4. All absurd usages of the old regime shall be abolished and all measures conducted in conformity with the righteous way of heaven and earth.
5. Knowledge shall be sought from all over the world, and thus shall be promoted in the imperial polity (Quoted in Victoria 2006, 5).

With the Charter Oath the Meiji government established Shinto ('the way of heaven and earth') as the state religion, dismissed Buddhism ('all absurd usages of the old regime') and embraced culture as a whole. A few days later, the Office of Rites promulgated the *Shinbutsu Hanzen Rei* (Separation Edicts), establishing the division of Shinto and Buddhism, until then syncretic practices. It is necessary to point out that, before the Meiji restoration, Shinto did not exist as a self-contained religion, but consisted of a number of diverse, local animist cults with one principal nation-wide recognised deity: the Sun-Goddess *Amaterasu-no-omikami*. Since the mythical time of Emperor Jimmu, founder of the Yamato Empire, the Imperial family, in supposedly unbroken line of succession, was thought to have descended from *Amaterasu* herself: a bond between gods and men that the Meiji architects sought to restore by installing Shinto as state religion (*kokka shinto*). Japan was a land blessed by the gods, governed by a descendant of the gods, and populated by sons and daughters of the Emperor. Unlike Buddhism, a religion that originated outside Japan, Shinto had the mytho-historical, autochthonous potential to become the spiritual motor of the nationalist renaissance of Japan.

However, the reactions to this attack from the Buddhist side were equally well planned and effective. As Brian Victoria documents, soon after the promulgation of the Charter Oath influential Buddhist groups devised ways to counter events, which appeared to present characteristics of a religious persecution by aligning their views to the Imperial current, and donating conspicuous sums to the government. New organisations, such as the 'United Movement for Revering the Emperor and Worshipping the Buddha' sought to conciliate the nationalist spirit and state Shinto worship with Buddhism, while launching a fierce anti-Christian campaign (Victoria 2006, 6-7, 18). Buddhism officially re-emerged and became the symbol of Japanese spirituality, elected as representative of all Asian religions on the international stage. At the 1883 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, Mahayana Buddhism was promoted by the Japanese delegates as what the West needed in order to remedy its lack

of spirituality and belief. However, Judith Snodgrass (2003) has stressed that at the conference ‘Buddhism was discussed, and thereby defined, in terms of absence of soul, absence of a creator God, absence of divine wrath, absence of a Saviour. Buddhism as the “other” of Christianity reflected the “diseased”, discarded, disowned, or disputed parts of the nineteenth-century Christian self’ (Snodgrass 2003, 114). Despite the generally tolerant tone of the Parliament, it appears that the dominant voice of the inter-religious dialogue remained that of the organisers, who understood Buddhism as a negative ‘other’ of Christianity (2003, 59-64). In 1883, the American organisers could not yet realise that it was exactly this ‘diseased’ part of the nineteenth-century Christian self that, within a few years, would find its cure in the East Asian spiritual ‘other’.

Japanese Buddhism, which would become progressively synthesised into ‘Zen’ by its foreign observers, continued its plan to project a ‘modern’ image of Japan, well represented by the work of Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki. A Buddhist scholar of international reputation, Suzuki’s publications in the English language were crucial in the dissemination of Buddhism to the West before and after Second World War. His explanations of Zen included insights into Western philosophy and arts. In *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis* (1960), Suzuki described the different phenomenological approaches of East and West by comparing two compositions, by Basho Matsuo and by Alfred Lord Tennyson (Suzuki, Fromm, and Martino 1970, 1–12).¹ While discussing religion through poetry, Suzuki contributed to conveying an image of Japan in which ethics and aesthetics are one and the same. Japan’s rather complex syncretic cults needed to be synthesised in order to be presented to the West, largely unaware of this overlapping. Devoid of the complex system of deities and religious practices of other Buddhist sects, and focusing on meditation and introspection, Zen could be better understood by Western audiences that were coincidentally discovering psychoanalysis. However, besides the peaceful effort to spread the light of Zen abroad, Suzuki was also one of the Buddhist personalities to be promoting war as a religiously righteous deed (Victoria 2006, 22-26).

As Japan moved toward the end of the century, the all-accepting spirit of Japanese enlightenment gradually muffled its enthusiastic tone and gave way to a

¹ Basho’s famous *haiku* read: ‘When I look carefully / I see the *nazuna* blooming by the hedge!’ While Tennyson’s poem read: Flower in the crannied wall / I pluck you out of the crannies; – / Hold you here, root and all, in my hand, / Little flower – but if I could understand / What you are, root and all, and all in all, / I should know what God and man is.’ Suzuki criticised Tennyson for his scientific, dissecting and possessive attitude in the appreciation of the flower and in its connection with the transcendental. Suzuki praised instead Basho’s Zen attitude, epitomised in the simple act of acknowledging of the existence of the flower, an aesthetic appreciation that does not need the intervention of the human hand.

growing need to retrieve what the early Meiji government had swiftly done away with. This new wave of conservatism was first manifested in the promulgation of the Imperial Rescript on Education (1890), which re-introduced into the schooling curricula the teachings of Confucius (Hall 1949, 193). Although a Neo-Confucian mentality was at the core of the *bushidō* ethics that characterised the suppressed Tokugawa regime, Confucian ideals of unselfishness and loyalty toward the sovereign were re-utilised with the purpose of strengthening the connection between the Emperor and his subjects. This process became apparent in the drafting of the first constitution of Japan, enacted in 1890. Robert Bellah notes how, while attempting to emulate a Western constitution, based on natural laws of theistic origin, the Japanese were lacking a source of absolute value, hence the transferral of this power to the Emperor as direct descendant of the Gods (Bellah 1965, 575). Throughout the Meiji period political and religious establishments undertook great endeavours to make the three principal philosophies of Japan – namely Shintoism, Buddhism and Confucianism – converge upon the figure of the Emperor. The adjustments of legislation and religious canon were the formal expressions of the concept of *Yamato Damashii* ('spirit of Japan'), the 'unique essence' of the Japanese Nation. Galvanised by the consecutive military victories of the first Sino-Japanese war and of the Russo-Japanese war (1894-95 and 1904-5), Japan was all the more convinced of being the country designated by the gods to lead the whole continent toward a pan-Asian resurrection, as prefigured in the writings of Okakura Tenshin.

Promotion of Japanese ethics overseas

At the turn of the century, Japan's new aggressive foreign policy required an image of national power that would bear comparison with the modern Western countries. Throughout this period of radical transformation, Japan attempted to consolidate its national spirit into a format that could be 'merchandised' among foreigners. Okakura Tenshin, assistant of Fenollosa, promoted the notion of 'pan-Asianism' in which Japan was first among equals, purest representative of the 'Asian spirit' with the responsibility to lead Asia towards a new dawn, under the leadership of Japan. In *Ideals of the East* (1901) Okakura postulated that 'Asia is one', and identified its sources in two main civilisations: 'the Chinese with its communism of Confucius, and the Indian with its individualism of the Vedas' (2007, 1). Conceived and written in English, the book rose

to quick success also thanks to its clarity in presenting Japanese aesthetics. However, Okakura's agenda was not limited to widening knowledge of Japanese art history: the book's subtext explains the cultural and political role of Japan within the global context. In the last chapter of the book, dedicated to the Meiji period, Okakura discussed the meeting and contrast of 'Asian' and 'European' cultures as a way to awaken Japan from its 'torpor' (2007, 91). Specifically, Okakura recognised the merits of Confucianism and the reactions to the Western military threat to Japan which triggered the opening of the country to the outer world. In his terms, the tenacity, cohesion and righteousness of Japanese culture were founded on the 'Code of Morality, the keystone of Japanese ethics' (2007, 94), which is what allowed Japan to survive 'the wild whirlpool of individualism' (2007, 96) brought by the slavish reproduction of foreign culture. The West had by then been absorbed and translated in Japanese terms: now the country had to move towards a new phase of cultural renaissance, but needed to seek vital energy from its new national identity.

Okakura's book was not the only English-language publication to export notions of Japanese ethics to the West. In 1900 Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933), a Japanese agronomist and educator who studied in the USA and in Germany, published *Bushidō, the Soul of Japan*, an introduction to Japanese ethics specifically addressed to foreign readers. His book focused on the traditional moral code of the *samurai* (*bushidō*, lit. 'the way of the warrior', here translated as 'chivalry'), with the intention to clarify the otherwise undecipherable Japanese society to the Western reader. Underlying Nitobe's discussion was the belief that, despite the abolition of feudalism, the *ethos* of 'ancient Japan' was in fact part of its *ethnos*, that is, dependent on a racial fact, and therefore would eventually not be corrupted by the newly imported Western thought. This concept bears some resemblance to what Lafcadio Hearn, whom Nitobe considered as 'the most eloquent and truthful interpreter of the Japanese mind' (Nitobe 1904, 161), described as the Japanese 'emotional life', an inner quality resistant to the changes imposed by Western modernity (Hearn 1896, 11). The common source both Hearn and Nitobe were referring to was Herbert Spencer's popular theory of social Darwinism, which laid the foundation for racial doctrines.² Nitobe's language is loaded with concepts and terminology borrowed from Western scholarship and it is evident how in order to explain the source of Japanese ethics he adopted a language that his readers

² However, Shmuel Eisenstadt has pointed out how the theme of ethnic superiority developed by Fascist doctrine was not particularly successful in Japan, where National cohesion did not depend on racial factors (Eisenstadt 1998, 94).

would find familiar and sufficiently authoritative.³ Inoue Kyōko explains how through the discussion of *shūyō* (lit. ‘cultivation’) Nitobe developed the pre-existent concept of *jinkaku*, a word that has been translated as ‘personality’, or ‘self-dignity’. Literally, *jinkaku* is composed of the words *jin* (person), and *kaku* (rank), from which it is possible to deduce its specific connotation within a hierarchical society. Nitobe’s endeavour as a scholar and as an educator was the improvement of *jinkaku* through correct moral behaviour, involving notions of modesty and respect. Although focusing on the development of one’s personality, Nitobe describes human beings as social entities who need to accept their specific collocation within the community. Inoue points out that Nitobe believed in a hierarchical society to which equality and democracy would constitute dangers, yet he insisted on the fact that an educated person would show equal courtesy and respect to both those who stand above and below his or her social grade. Nitobe’s teaching of *jinkaku* mixes egalitarian and hierarchical values, thus contributing to the constitution of a syncretic and at times contradictory ethics embodied by the concept of *jinkaku* that will reach its peak in the post-war revision of moral education. ‘We are told every day how Europe has influenced Japan’, wrote Nitobe, ‘and forget that the change in those islands was entirely self-generated, that Europeans did not teach Japan, but that Japan of herself chose to learn from Europe methods of organization, civil and military, which have so far proved successful’ (Nitobe 1904, 159-60). Not unlike Okakura, Nitobe expressed the moderate tone of the post-*bunmei kaika* period, merging the best of Western and Eastern thought into a unique Japanese blend, a concept later developed in the nationalist manifesto *Kokutai no Hongi*, and explaining how the Japanese had a natural talent for responding to differences, discerning the good coming from the ‘outside’, and appropriating it by transforming it into something peculiarly Japanese.

Even before the examples of Okakura and Nitobe, essays on the ‘nature’ of the Japanese were not new to the West: in the previous chapter it was pointed out how Lafcadio Hearn contributed largely to the promotion of a generally positive vision of Japanese ethics in the West. In his books, the Japanese were depicted as noble and fierce people, animated by a solid ethics, yet gifted with a ‘sensible heart’. Artists engaged in the criticism of post-industrial society were attracted by the myth of the

³ At the time when Nitobe wrote, the West was not ready to accept an Eastern theory on its own terms. In the 1910s, Nitobe was among the leaders of the *Shūyō Undō* or ‘self-discipline movement’, a theme which he explored in three books published in Japan: *Shūyō* (1911), *Yo-Watari* (1912) and *Jikei* (1916). None of these books has yet been translated. For a treatment of Nitobe and Japanese moral education see K. Inoue (2001, 52-56).

Japanese as a people of samurai, whose behaviour was unified under the moral code of *bushidō*, the ‘way of the warrior’, a consistent feature which could be easily transmitted to the West. Instead of describing the complexity of its multi-faceted social and philosophical systems, the myth of the ‘loyal samurai’, as well as that of the ‘faithful wife’ was a stereotype useful for the Japanese to export their cultural products, and for the West to receive and utilise them. Both clichés generated Japan-inspired Western performances and populated the repertoire of the Japanese performers visiting Europe and the United States – as in the case, for example, of Sada Yakko's *Kesa, the Faithful Wife* or Michio Ito's *Bushidō*. Hearn himself associated theatre with Confucianism, which he dubbed the ‘religion of loyalty’, whose moral fervour is represented in plays showing ‘the martyrdoms of feudal society for its noblest ideals’ (Hearn 1904, 291). These concepts had a great impact on theatre practitioners who sought a way to renovate European theatre starting from the ethics of training and performance: though the majority of the Western observers understood Japanese theatre mostly in terms of the aesthetics of its dramaturgy, this new phase in the evolution of Modernist thought brought practitioners to consider their art in relation to the ethics underlying its practice. This section will explore how Noh theatre fitted within a reception of the ethics of Japanese theatre.

E.G. Craig and Asian theatre

Edward Gordon Craig (1872-1966) was one of the central figures of European Modernism, having introduced revolutionary concepts in theatre production and stage design. His theoretical work focusing on aspects of the education of young actors represented the drive towards a legitimisation of theatre professionals and the constitution of a theatre work ethics. Craig dedicated several articles to Japanese arts in his seminal magazine *The Mask* between 1908 and 1929.⁴ Craig was particularly interested in Noh, which he considered ‘the soul of Japan’ (Craig 1913, 6:91) because of the intensity of its symbolic expressive means. The eclectic style of the journal, often including comments on aspects of Japanese arts rarely treated in subject-specific publications, offers an array of subjects that help to explain Craig’s reception of Japan, and the importance of his contribution for the later reception of Noh in Europe.

⁴ For an overview of Japanese theatre in *The Mask* see S-K. Lee (2000) and the entry on E. G. Craig in D. Ewick’s website *The Margins*, <http://themargins.net/bib/D/d17.html>

Olga Taxidou has defined Craig as a 'romantic idealist', claiming that 'all his knowledge and admiration of the East [...] never quite plays the determining role it could. Covered by a cloud of awe and fascination, the Holy East is somewhat fetishised and never quite appropriated' (Taxidou 1998, 81). This view of Craig would associate him with Yeats, of whom he was close collaborator, and other contemporaries who lived on the myth of Japan, rather than showing a deeper interest in the subject by which they declared themselves inspired. However, Craig's attitude cannot be easily bundled up with the facile attraction for an idealised 'otherness' that his contemporary Orientalists manifested. His general attitude towards the East appears instead rather controversial: on the one hand he praised 'Asian tradition', in which he sought freedom from canons that Modernism was trying to abandon; the power of symbolic acting, the precision of its techniques and the nobility of its spirit. This attitude would lead one to classify Craig as Orientalist insofar as it reveals the ethnocentric bias of the practitioner who understands 'Asia' only as in opposition to the West. However, from the pages of *The Mask* Craig warned Western practitioners of the 'dangers of the East': 'The dangers of knowing are ever increasing. The danger of knowing all about the East... what a danger! The more we know the more we lose' (Craig 1913, 6:81). Elsewhere, in a letter to friend and correspondent of *The Mask*, the philosopher Ananda Coomaraswamy, he confessed the fear that European practitioners would be easily carried away by the facile sensation of the Oriental strangeness (Craig in Savarese 1980, 10). While attracted by certain elements of the Asian arts that he considered superior to their European counterparts, Craig kept the East at a distance. In his article 'A New World', James Brandon has criticised Craig for this split attitude that he considers to be an anachronistic and conservative opposition to the inevitable meeting of East and West (Brandon 1989, 44). However, if at first Craig's view might seem retrograde, a more open reading of his words in the context of his editing of *The Mask* brings to the surface a rather early awareness of the idiosyncrasies the intercultural experience would bring about. Besides the Orientalist vocabulary, it is possible to acknowledge how Craig was at least aware of the superficiality of the current Japonisme fashion, and of the necessity of adopting a critical eye in the reception of a culture so distant, which could be praised, but not superficially adopted as new aesthetic model. Although Craig can be criticised for nurturing a simplistic idea of the East, his interpretative reading of the exportation of Japan in Europe – and Europe in Japan – offers a unique point of view of the outset of this early phase of 'intercultural theatre'.

In Britain, Japonisme produced effects that Craig considered catastrophic. Shallow aestheticisation viewed Japan as a country where life is choreographed as in a dance piece. Craig wanted to reverse this misconstruction by showing how ethics generate art, and not vice-versa. In his review of *Plays of Old Japan: the Noh* (1913, 6:263-69), Craig praised Stopes's work, appreciating the attention she put into describing the moral stance of both actors and audience. In addition to his review Craig offers a striking comment that synthesises his thought Noh and on Japanese theatre at large:

We have nothing to gain, as some would claim, by a mere imitation of this or any other ancient form of drama, of its masks, its symbolisms, its conventions, its costumes: it is rather in tracing the spirit of which these outward forms and accessories were the expression that we may find something of value, either as warning or encouragement, to aid us in shaping the masks, the symbols, and the laws of our theatre which is to be (Craig 1929, 268).

What Craig called the 'spirit' of Japan is an ensemble of cultural instances of which ethics is only one component. It appears that Craig was not fascinated by the aesthetics of Japan as much as he was by its ethics, which he perhaps considered less culturally loaded, thus more universal. Following Hearn and Spencer, Craig believed the exchange between East and West could only jeopardise the integrity of centuries-old civilizations, which could not be revolutionised in a few years just because of a trend like Japonisme. By copying the West, Japan was condemned to decay: the Japanese troupe of Kawakami and Sada Yacco, usually welcomed in general appraisal, impressed Craig negatively as a mix of Japanese stereotypes with the 'regrettable' Western habit of using actresses (Craig 1910, 3:96).⁵

Japanese ethics and theatre in *The Mask*

Craig's attention to aspects of Japanese culture that might have seemed marginal to those who were solely interested in its aesthetics reflects his concerns with the ethics of performance and audience reception. Like Yone Noguchi, he complained about the vulgarity of the boisterous London playhouses and of melodramatic acting, and was convinced that theatre must be healed from both the actor's and the audience's sides. In

⁵ Recent studies have proven that women's presence in Japanese theatre traditions was consistent although often excluded from the official canon. See, among others, R. Teele (2003a; 2003b) and B. Geilhorn (2008).

‘Does the Real Englishman go the Theatre? Does He Act in It?’ an excerpt from Lafcadio Hearn offered the stimulus for Craig to demonstrate how in Japan ‘it may be stated as a general truth that the deeper the emotion [...] the more naturally silent those who feel or act’ (Craig 1911, 4:38). It is highly probable that Craig formulated this idea under the influence of Noguchi, who corresponded with him and whose book *Lafcadio Hearn in Japan* (1910) was reviewed in the same issue of the magazine. One is not surprised to find Hearn in the pages of *The Mask*, as his portrayals of Japanese society often praised the ethical rectitude of the Japanese, driven by high virtues such as selflessness and communality: according to Hearn and Craig, one of the major dangers of the rising bourgeois civilization was the pervasive individualism that corrupted the West.

This concept surfaces again in an article by Craig himself (under the pseudonym of John Semar) inspired by another piece by Hearn, ‘Apprenticeship in Japan’. In his paper, Hearn described the visit to a Japanese silk-house, where he observed that the individuality of the workers was subordinated to the single, authoritative voice of the lord. In Craig’s view, the origin of Japan’s cultural and economic success in obtaining the maximum result with the minimum cost was to be found in the social value of discipline (1911, 4:108). For Craig, there was ‘an absolute necessity of thorough training for all the workers in theatre and when some such conditions as the above are imposed upon, and willingly submitted to by, those workers, then, and not before, we may hope for a renaissance of the theatre’ (1911, 4:109). The *topoi* of humbleness, obedience and respect for a code of practice resurface later in the same volume in ‘A Japanese Pupil’ written by Hearn’s devout assistant Otani Masanobu. The article is a touching account of their relationship that highlights how Otani held his master in highest esteem and treated him with profound respect even after his death. It is worth underlining that there is no trace of theatre in all these articles. Similarly to Hearn’s description of the silk factory, it is evident how Craig believed the Japanese ethical attitude to be the secret of Japan’s success not only in politics and economics but also in the arts, as he dedicated ten pages of his magazine to Otani’s article. Ethical training was associated with hierarchy, commitment, dedication and self-sacrifice: these were values the West should have imported without fear as they were not the product of superficial exoticism but of a moral integrity which Craig felt to be lacking in Europe. In ‘The Artists of the Theatre of the Future’, Craig admonishes young actors living on the dream of artistic accomplishment: in order to fight the decadence that surrounds

them they must dedicate mind and body to training in their art (1911, 1-2). Moreover, they should submit their will to that of the manager in a way that recalls Japanese submission to the *sensei*: ‘You must serve him faithfully, not because he is paying you a salary, but because you are working under him’ (1911, 4).

The Noh actor and the *Übermarionette*

The ultimate materialisation of such an ethical ideal was Craig’s theory of the *übermarionette*, as purified humanity: not a reduction of a human being, but an essentialisation of its character. In his criticism of naturalism, Craig was mostly concerned with actors and acting technique. In ‘The Actor and the Uber-marionette’, Craig lamented the ugliness of photographic realism:

Do away with the real tree, do away with the reality of delivery, do away with the reality of action, and you tend towards the doing away with the actor. [...] The actor must go, and in his place comes the inanimate figure – the Uber-marionette we may call him, until he has won for himself a better name (Craig 1911, 81).

For Craig, the physical presence of the actor brings on stage the banality of every-day life that ruins the enchantment of performance, which should instead be able to cast the audience into another world of aesthetics. This concept was part of the Modernist need to de-construct naturalism and restore theatre’s symbolic and imaginative power. In order to support his anti-naturalist argument, Craig maintained that ‘even the unintelligent in Asia fail to comprehend photography while understanding it as a simple and clear manifestation’ (1911, 81). Clearly Noh theatre, where performers wear masks and dance according to pre-established choreographies composed of abstract movements, is one of the Asian traditions which most seems to reflect Craig’s association of actors with puppets.⁶

Craig’s and Yeats’s association of Noh with puppetry is reasonable insofar as the two never saw it performed: Noh theatre has elaborated a more sophisticated, and less extreme, relationship between everyday-life and art, human and super-human, actor and character. Wrapped in thick layers of silk costumes, his face covered by a mask that conceals his expression, the *shite*, or main actor of Noh, appears to be a perfect model

⁶ In the introduction to *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* Yeats claimed that Noh actors ‘wear masks and found their movements upon those of puppets’ (Fenollosa, Pound, and Yeats 1916, xii). This is not true: Noh theatre movement does not draw inspiration from puppet play but from earlier performance forms such as Kagura, Bugaku or Kusemai. Ningyō Jōruri, the classical puppet theatre Yeats might be referring to, was developed during the seventeenth century.

of the otherworldly impersonality Craig was seeking, yet this description would be incomplete if less apparent details of its figure, initially uninteresting for the external observer, were forgone. Noh rests on a delicate balance of showing and concealing, of naturalness and rigour, of quotidian and supernatural. Contrasting elements, such as the presence of stage assistants in plain clothes who interact with the actors, the existence of roles without mask, requiring an inexpressive face, the temple-like stage, separated by a strip of white pebble but connected with steps which are never used in modern times are just some examples of the variety of ways through which in Noh, the human and the everyday life intertwine with the otherworldly as in a religious ritual. Bare hands and neck, involuntary trembling of the fan, or sweat dripping from the chin are elements of 'reality', that constantly remind the audience of the humanity of the actor. The beauty of Noh lies in its ambiguity and not the extreme of the *Übermarionette* because Craig's need to oppose abstraction to realism was an issue that simply did not exist in the pre-modern environment of which Noh was a cultural product.

Other comments on Japanese and European theatre in *The Mask*

A final note on Craig and Japanese theatre refers to the article 'The Drama in Japan' (1911, 4:309-20) signed by Tsubouchi Sheko, probably a misspelling of Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859-1935) one of the advocates of the modernisation of Japanese theatre, author of the first translations of Shakespeare's plays. Tsubouchi lamented the fact that Orientalist perspectives of Japan encouraged the country to preserve its tradition, while Europe was free to advance. 'To be sure', he noted, 'we do not mean to abandon our past arts. We are striving to assimilate them to the new spirit' (Tsubouchi in Craig 1911, 4:309). As Craig did for its European counterpart, Tsubouchi criticised the Japanese who slavishly imitated Western dramatic standards not considering the reception of an audience completely alien to the Western sensitivity. At the time when he wrote this article Tsubouchi came to think that plays like *Othello*, *Hamlet* or *A Doll's House* would be impossible to understand for a Japanese audience, and the only things Japan could learn from Western drama were 'its technique and principle' (1911, 4:310), and not its narratives. The claim is a reversed version of what Craig later wrote about Stopes's book: for Tsubouchi, the obstacle to cultural exchange between Japan and the West did not lie in the aesthetics of the performance, in the technique, in the costumes, or in the acting style, but in the content of the plays, which reflected a different view of

the world.

However, Tsubouchi equally believed that values represented by Japanese traditional theatre were outdated. In a passage concerning Noh he wrote: ‘As Buddhism no longer appeals to our spiritual life, so “No” drama no longer satisfies our emotional demand. You see that we cannot revive this drama [...] this pessimistic drama is so monotonous’ (1911, 4:313). Tsubouchi located the main reason why Noh could not be interesting to a contemporary audience in the discrepancy between the values conveyed in the narratives of the play, which he deems to be mostly ‘Buddhist’, and the Western-looking Meiji Japan. That the majority of Noh plays are pessimistic is inaccurate, as most of the plays in the repertoire have ‘happy endings’, in which families reunite and evil spirits are chastised. In addition, Tsubouchi did not consider the good number of plays which have a solid Shinto influence in their plots, such as *Takasago*, *Chikubushima*, or *Kamo*, whose tone is augural and not at all austere. Tsubouchi was trying to build an argument against Noh. As Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Oshikiri Hōko have pointed out, Tsubouchi’s *Shingakugekiron* (1904) (‘Treatise on the New Lyrical Drama’) opposed Noh theatre as a patrimony of the ruling elite, a relic of the feudal era not apt to represent contemporary Japan (Scholz-Cionca and Oshikiri 2004, 24-25). Presenting articles on various subjects and from a wide array of high-profile international contributors, *The Mask* represented an early ground for intercultural discussion on theatre, art and beyond. The articles mentioned above testify to how the discussion of ethics and performance was central to Craig’s conception of theatre, and how, as in the case of Tsubouchi’s article, Japan started to critically respond to the rising interest in its performance traditions.

Noh Theatre and moral cultivation in the theatre of Jacques Copeau

The name of Jacques Copeau (1879-1949) is usually associated with the production of the Noh play *Kantan*, scheduled to be staged at the Vieux-Colombier theatre during the 1923-1924 season. Unfortunately Aman Maistre, the actor taking the main role, sprained his ankle during the dress rehearsal, and the show was cancelled (Copeau 1993, 5:392). Little is known about this production, and the sparse notes of Suzanne Bing and Copeau, together with a few later interviews with the director, are the only documents containing explicit references to Noh. In fact, the *Journal de Bord* of the Copiaus company was not kept after October 1923: the existent information about the

following period of the life of the company is only recorded in notes by Bing and other students (2000, 6:384).⁷ In an entry of his *Journal* dated 27 September 1923, Copeau noted that ‘Suzanne [Bing] was studying hard the Japanese Noh’, preparing for the production of *Kantan* (1999, 211). It is important to observe that, although the name of Copeau’s is associated with Noh, *Kantan* was essentially Bing’s work: Copeau only supervised the dress rehearsal of *Kantan*, but never actually worked on it. In the *Souvenirs of the Vieux-Colombier*, Copeau admitted that

ce nô, tel qu’il m’apparut à la répétition finale, par la profondeur de l’entente scénique, la mesure, le style, la qualité de l’émotion, reste pour moi l’un des joyaux, l’une des richesses secrètes de la production du Vieux-Colombier. Que la louange en revienne à qui elle est due: Suzanne Bing d’abord, qui avait tout mis en oeuvre, et aux élèves dont la coeur docile l’avait suivie (Copeau 1999, 211).

According to Nishino Ayako, Copeau was at least familiar with the work of Waley and Peri (Nishino 2006, 19), while John Rudlin and Norman H. Paul document how the *Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society, London 1912-13* and “*Noh*”, or, *Accomplishment* were found in Copeau’s house, both heavily marked by Bing (Copeau 1990, 23). However, since *Kantan*’s translation is only contained in *The Nô Plays of Japan*, it can be inferred that at least Waley’s book was well known to both Copeau and Bing. It should be added that Copeau and Bing used a French translation, probably from Waley’s English version, by Dorothy Bussy, a friend of André Gide, in turn a friend of Copeau, and acquainted with the Bloomsbury group of which Waley was member (2000, 6:386, 392-93).

Not much besides these conjectures can be formulated on the Copiaus’s production of *Kantan*. The only reference of the performance is the following note left by Bing:

Kantan: Notre travail. Frappés par les lois dramatiques auxquelles s’assujettit le Nô japonais, et par leur parenté avec les lois fondamentales que le Patron avait commencé d’ériger pour l’École en une théorie du théâtre. Le Nô se présentait comme l’application des études musicales, dramatique, et plastiques dont, depuis trois ans, nous nourrissons nos élèves, à tel point que les diverses improvisations, aboutissement de ces études, s’apparentaient comme style à ce Nô, beaucoup plus qu’à n’importe quelle oeuvre contemporaine. Écartée toute documentation en vue d’une reconstitution, condamnée à demeurer artificielle, il s’agissait d’accepter franchement la transposition. Et le même problème était de procurer au public français un plaisir de même qualité que celui que le Nô offre aux japonais, avec les moyens dont nous disposions: travail pour y parvenir

⁷ ‘Les Copiaus’ was the new name of the company of the Vieux-Colombier, probably deriving from the mispronunciation of Copeau’s name in Burgundy dialect.

(Bing in Copeau 2000, 6:392).

It is clear how Bing and Copeau connected Noh theatre with their own aesthetics, but also with the ethics that regulated their company-commune. Bing might implicitly refer to the Orientalist Japan-inspired plays of the earlier Japonisme period, to which they responded by frankly admitting the impossibility of reproducing something they never even saw on stage. What they attempted was an adaptation performed through the performance form developed with the *Vieux-Colombier*.

Copeau was a very unusual presence in the group of the ‘noh-influenced Modernists’ insofar as he was not an Orientalist. Unlike Yeats’s Noh, experienced through the filter of Michio Ito, Bing and Copeau’s Noh was not an exotic *reverie*, but a philosophical encounter which may have been more influential on a theoretical plane rather than on a practical one. Besides Noh, Copeau was not particularly interested in other aspects of Japanese or Asian culture at large. The reason why he took an interest in it was because it matched his ideal of exacting technique that inspired moral rectitude both on stage and off-stage. Upon being asked why he had chosen Noh as an inspiration for his theatre, he simply replied: ‘parce que cette forme est la plus stricte que nous connaissons et demande de l’interprète une formation technique exceptionnelle’ (1999, 211).

Ethics, acting and imitation

What moved Copeau and Bing to study Noh was the will to break with the conventions of the naturalist theatre. Most of the work of the *Vieux-Colombier*, the school founded by Copeau and named after the theatre it was based in, was aimed at restoring the ‘original’ spirit of theatre and of the profession of the actor. Copeau opposed commercialism in the poster-manifesto for the opening of the *Vieux-Colombier* on 15 October 1913, in which he explicitly addressed ‘la jeunesse, pour reagir contre toutes les lâchetés du théâtre mercantile [...] au public lettré, pour entretenir le culte des chefs-d’oeuvre classiques, français et étrangers, qui formeront la base de son répertoire’ (1913). Copeau focused on the education of the actor: for him acting was a profession that demanded a life-long commitment to the art and to the company. This ideological base was a fertile ground on which an interest for the principles of Noh theatre could easily have grown. For Copeau, Noh theatre represented more a theoretical model, rather than an exotic and visually appealing model to imitate. He believed in a

correspondence between the decadence of theatre and the secularisation of the cultural environment by which theatre and its practitioners were imbued, negatively influenced by the rise of capitalism and corrupted by commercialism and bourgeoisie. In the manifesto *Un essai de renovation dramatique: Le théâtre du Vieux-Colombier*, Copeau described the actor as the central figure of theatre, and the training method he developed aimed at preventing his actors from sliding into facile imitation. The rupture with what he called *cabotinage* (charlatan acting, quackery) had to be realised by restoring the integrity of original traditions of European theatre such as Greek tragedy, medieval mystery plays and *commedia dell'arte*. In the following passage his tone is strong, and the language close to that of a political manifesto:

We must identify more specifically the feeling which animates us, the passion which pushes us, forces us, compels us, to which we must finally concede: it is *indignation*. An unbridled industrialisation which, from day to day more cynically degrades our French stage and turns away the cultivated public; the monopolizing of most of the theatres by a handful of entertainers in the pay of shameless merchants; everywhere, even where the great traditions should prevent such shame, the spirit of quackery and speculation, the same baseness; everywhere bluffing, buying and selling of all sorts and exhibitionism of every nature attaching itself like a parasite to an art which is unquestionably destroying itself; everywhere weakness, disorder, lack of discipline, ignorance and foolishness, disdain for the creator, abhorrence of beauty; productions more and more foolish and vain; critics more and more acquiescent; a public taste more and more misguided: these are conditions that make us indignant and rouse us to revolt (Copeau 1967, 447-8).

Copeau conceived of the actor, his technique, and his life in terms of ‘sincerity’ and ‘honesty’, values that needed to be valued above, or rather, before aesthetic accomplishment. In his theory, a clear line between the artistic and everyday life of the company members could not be drawn: actors must be wholly dedicated to their art. Discussing the plan for the Vieux-Colombier school, Copeau wished

[to gather] under the authority of one man a troupe of young actors, unselfish enthusiasts, whose ambition is to serve the art to which they dedicate themselves. To free the actor from quackery [...] to cultivate him, to inspire conscience in him and to initiate him into the morality of his art. We shall always have in view the development of individual talents and the subordination to the ensemble (Copeau 1967, 452).

This holistic vision of theatre was in line with the training of Noh actors partially described by Fenollosa via Pound, and with discussions of Japanese ethics that appeared in *The Mask*. Copeau was convinced that the actor should be ‘unselfish’ and disposed to be ‘initiat[ed] into the morality of his art’ (Copeau 1967, 452). He therefore harshly

criticised actors who exploited individual artistry for what he considered to be effete, artificial acting: what the ‘real’ actor needed was ‘above all *honesty*’ (1967, 448). This moral necessity is paralleled in Noh as the art of the ‘way’ for artistic and spiritual achievement which, as Noel Pinnington observed, did not acknowledge ability as dwelling within the individual, but pertaining to the correct following of the ‘way’ (Pinnington 2006a, 48). Among the pre-requisites of any Noh actor are submissiveness to one’s master, and the capacity to imitate without yielding to the affectation of self-awareness. Pure, excellent technique is often described with adjectives such as ‘honest’ (*shōjiki*), ‘genuine’ (*junsui*) or ‘transparent’ (*tōmei*), associating artistic with moral righteousness. Aesthetics and ethics overlap in Noh as they do in Copeau’s criticism of *cabotinage* and in his attempt at devising a new form of training with the purpose of purifying not only the techniques but also the ‘souls’ of his actors. This operation can only succeed when the actor has discarded his own presence, in order to make room for the character.

Copeau’s ideal of dedication of the actor to his art resembles Craig’s wish for an actor-marionette, submissive to the wish of the director. However, Copeau considered Craig’s ideas as radically different. After their meeting Copeau noted: ‘Theoretically, the actor does not interest him. [...] It is his theory of the “Uber-Marionette”. He has often said to me: “You believe in the actor. *I do not*”’ (Copeau 1990, 21). However, Craig explained, the *Übermarionette* was not meant to destroy the actor: ‘[it] will not compete with life - rather it will go beyond it. Its ideal will not be the flesh and blood but rather the body in trance’ (Craig 1911, 84). As Thomas Leabhart (a descendant of Copeau’s school, through his teacher Etienne Decroux) has observed, the ‘body in trance’ mentioned by Craig was not unfamiliar to Copeau, who would acknowledge such a holistic mind-body approach. Copeau’s pupils such as Jean Dasté and Charles Dullin have described his acting as being carried out in states of ‘possession’ or ‘frenzy’ (Leabhart 2004, 317). Copeau considered the issue of acting a role, and the relationship between the actor and the character: ‘you say that an actor enters into a role, that he puts himself into the skin of the character. That is not exact, as it is the character who approaches the actor, who demands of him everything he needs to exist at his expense, and who bit by bit replaces him inside his skin’ (quoted in Leabhart 2004, 324).

This concept resembles the metaphor of the ‘vessel’, borrowed from Confucius’s *Analects*, which Zeami employs to explain the way in which the actor deals

with embodied technique in the treatise *Yūgaku shūdō fūken*.⁸ Zeami noted how

The visual and aural attractions of the Two Arts and the Three Modes are pervasive in their creation of excitement and carry undiminished and yet unfilled potential; as such, they are a vessel. If you understand this in terms of being and nothingness, being is the visible phenomenon, and nothingness is the vessel. What manifests being is nothingness (Zeami 2008, 186).⁹

The actor's body, representing individuality, is like an empty container, carrier of a higher being – that is, the spirit or essence of the character portrayed. Zeami, then, distinguishes between two entities: the tangible humanity of the actor as vessel, opaque but perfectible through a training that should polish it until it becomes transparent, fading into nothingness, and the intangible essence of the character, which is the actual being, coming to existence in the vessel transformed into nothingness.

In *Shikadō*, Zeami further elaborated the concept of imitation and gave detailed advice on how to approach it. He principally distinguished performance into two ideas: 'instance' and 'substance'.¹⁰

What you see with the mind is Substance. What you see with the eyes is Instance. As a consequence, beginners see Instance and imitate it. In effect, this amounts to imitating without knowing the principle of Instance. There is good reason not to imitate the Instance. Those who know performance because they see with the mind imitate the Substance (Zeami 2008, 136).

This passage seems to unequivocally point toward a form of acting that avoids superficial mimicry only to point at the inner 'core' of the character. To this extent, Zeami's teaching is in line with the Modernist's ideal of non-imitative style. In fact, in the note 'First Become the Thing, then Imitate the Way it Acts' of *Kakyō*, Zeami instructed the aspirant actor that 'the first thing to learn is how to become the character in question. After that, do what the character does' (Zeami 2008, 100). Given this approach to acting, it may come as a surprise to realise how Zeami's instructions could rely on bodily imitation: 'If you are to become an old man [...] you should bend at the waist, be unsteady in gait, and reach out and draw back your arms only a short distance. [...] For a woman, you should hold your waist fairly straight, reach out and draw back your arms rather high, be mindful of not using force [...] and employ the body

⁸ In Hare's translation (2008): 'An Effective Vision of Learning the Vocation of Fine Play in Performance'.

⁹ In Zeami's terminology, The Two Arts (*nikyoku*) are chant and dance, whereas the Three Modes (*santai*) are Warrior, Woman and Old Person.

¹⁰ Substance (*tai*) and Instance (*yū*) are a recurrent dyad in classic Chinese philosophy. See E. Rath (2004, 491).

gracefully' (2008, 100). This apparent inconsistency reveals what might be a misunderstanding of Zeami's concept of imitation. As Yamazaki and Matisoff have articulated: 'when Zeami uses the term *monomane* (imitation), he does not mean realistic imitation in performance of some particular individual. [...] Through a particular posture and mental attitude, the actor depicts, as in a one-line stretch, the entire image of an individual who has endured a complex life' (2008, 243). Thus, imitation has to be sought in both a mental and a physical attitude.

Through different degrees of mastery of the art of Noh, the actor explores different approaches to imitation: while beginners will necessarily try to copy the instance, the substance only will be visible, therefore imitable, at a certain degree of development of the *michi*, the path through life that apprentices would follow. In fact, in *Shikadō* Zeami specified: 'in imitating the Substance well, the Instance is present. [...] When we talk about Substance and Instance, we have a pair. When there is no Substance, there also can be no Instance. [...] Since there is no principle by which you can imitate Instance, you should not imitate it. You must understand that imitating Substance is not separate from imitating Instance (Zeami 2008, 136). Instance and Substance, then, cannot be separated, and the ultimate achievement of the actor is breaking through duality to embrace the co-presence of both entities.

In Noh, as in other medieval Japanese practices influenced by Zen philosophy, the exploration of the 'spirit' starts with bodily training. As Nagatomo Shigenori puts it, 'one learns to *correct* one's mode of consciousness first by assuming a certain bodily form' (Nagatomo 1981, 407). What was understood by the Western observer as symbolic and abstract is therefore a much more complex combination of concrete imitation and transcendence. In fact, in Noh the concept of *monomane* is not opposed to symbolism or to anti-realism, but paired with *yūgen*. Bodily imitation is a necessary stage in the path to the attainment of the ultimate 'flower', in which perfect imitation becomes non-imitation, representing the oneness of Substance and Instance, of Mind and Body.

The same type of tension between internal and external entities in imitation was central to one of the greatest Modernist reformers of acting technique. In *An Actor Prepares* (1936) Constantin Stanislavski instructs young actors to look for spiritual elements with advices that much resemble Zeami's teachings, for example when he suggests that 'physical immobility is the direct result of inner intensity, and it is these inner activities that are far more important in theatre' (1948, 34). Stanislavski is often

seen in opposition to Noh because of his association with psychological drama, epitomised by his distinction between conscious and subconscious elements of acting. However it has been shown how dualism of internal and external, self and other, is present in Stanislavski as much as it is in Zeami. Both reach the inner through the external, yet what distinguishes the two approaches is that Stanislavski's actor starts from (conscious) self to reach the (subconscious) character. In Noh tradition, instead, the self is abandoned to adopt a form copied from a teacher, without any kind of psychological search. However, Zeami the pedagogue explicitly points out how beginners (especially children) should be left free to express their own inclination and not be forced into a mould, as this would run the risk of making them lose enthusiasm (Zeami 2008, 26-27). In addition, while beginners might be focusing on formal technique, mature Noh actors do engage in a deeper dialogue with the character, trying to understand its personality by reading literature, researching its history, or trying to establish a 'spiritual' contact by visiting places connected to its history, or places where the character is buried or enshrined.¹¹

Noh actors have different approaches to their acting and it would be unfair to reduce them to a single, romanticised view of their attitude as following a spiritual communion with the mask and becoming possessed once they step onto the scene. The young Kongō School actor Udaka Tatsushige (born 1981) admits that his focus on stage remains on technique. However, his all-encompassing knowledge of all elements of the play would provide enough confidence for him to express his artistry at best (T Udaka 2010). Because of his relatively young age, Tatsushige is still concentrating on improving formal technique, rather than looking for personal interpretation. This attitude greatly differs from that of his father's, Udaka Michishige (born 1947), engaged in intimate and esoteric forms of interaction with the character he would interpret on stage.¹² All in all, Stanislavski's motto 'unconscious creativeness through conscious technique' (1948, 47) seems to apply to Noh acting, too. Certainly Stanislavski believed in the 'dependence of the body on the soul' (Stanislavski 1948, 15), thus expressing the relationship between spirit and form in Western terms, different from Zeami's attention to the co-existence of Substance and Instance.

The idea of Noh as requiring complete depersonalisation of the interpreter seems

¹¹ These attempts to connect with the character do not seem to depart from Stanislavski's method, in which an actor should start researching on a character from 'given circumstances', historical elements that help to build a character (1948, 47-48).

¹² Udaka Michishige recounts his spiritual experiences in connection to Noh in M. Udaka (2007).

to ignore the amount of personal commitment of the actor as human being struggling with his art. What differs is the place where the emphasis is laid: in Stanislavski, the very essence of training is a search for complete identification with the character that begins with a psychological work involving the conscious self and achieved through processes that can only be conceived in psychological drama that elicits a ‘sense of truth’ by realistic acting; in Noh, the conscious self is not privileged because the actor’s identification with the character relies less on mimetic means than it does on interpretation of chant and dance. Though creativity is an important aspect of Noh, individual genius is not an essential part of the training process as it could be for Stanislavski.

Ethics and community

Craig, Copeau and Stanislavski shared a concern for the actor’s training particularly for the communitarian aspect of working within a theatre company. In the chapter ‘Toward an Ethics for the Theatre’ of *Building a Character* (1949), Stanislavski advocated the ethics, discipline and ‘sense of joint enterprise’ (Stanislavski 1968, 249), building a quality of readiness for the intrinsic communitarian quality of theatre. His dictum ‘love art in yourself and not yourself in art’ (1968, 250), is in line with Zeami’s advice to the actor, who should never think of himself as being a fully accomplished actor, as it will give free rein to ‘personal eccentricities on stage to make a virtuoso display’ (Zeami 2008, 29). Zeami’s moral teaching in the *Fushikaden*, instructing the actor to follow a virtuous off-stage life in order to succeed in the art of Noh reflect Pinnington’s claim that, at least in Medieval Japan, Noh ‘was a religion and actors needed to be good men’ (Pinnington 2006b, 256). Similarly, Stanislavski urged actors to develop ‘the ethics and discipline of a public servant destined to carry out into the world a message that is fine, elevating and noble’ (Stanislavski 1968, 254). What united both the attitude of practitioners such as Stanislavski, Copeau, Craig, and Zeami’s theory, is the attention to an ethical quality of respect and dedication to art that is not merely instrumental to creating a good social environment among the production members, but has a direct relevance on stage. If seen within the framework of ethical criticism, if an actor does not indulge in self-centred diva-like behaviour – what Stanislavski dubbed the ‘sense of craving for constant, uninterrupted titillation of personal vanity’ (1968, 251) – but lets himself be guided by the director, or led by the character, either in a psychological or

‘spiritual’ mode, his performance will positively reflect the ethical attitude. Humbleness or sobriety, then, can be understood as what Gaut (2007) defined as ‘aesthetically relevant ethical quality’, or an aesthetic feature that expresses beauty or ugliness according to its ethical purport.

Dignity and respect for the profession of the actor and awareness of the collective dimension of theatre were ethical premises that constituted the foundation of Stanislavski’s and Copeau’s endeavours. The *Journal de Bord*, a logbook of the activities of the school compiled by Copeau’s daughter Marie-Hélène, well documents the communal dimension of the *Vieux-Colombier*, in which integral parts of the life of the actors within the school consisted of maintenance works, sharing food, cleaning the spaces, arranging properties and other manual and administrative tasks. The *Journal de Bord* shows how all these duties were equally shared among teachers and students. This communal dimension reached its ideal configuration between 1924 and 1929, when the company, having taken the name of ‘Les Copiaus’, moved to the so-called Château de Morteuil, a farmhouse in Burgundy, in order to undertake an intensive training period in isolation. As Evans put it, ‘a desire for communion and spiritual redemption may have been something which drew Copeau towards what he saw as a purer, less morally degenerate form of theatre’ (Evans 2006, 82). The *Copiaus* period was characterised by a spirit that Copeau dubbed ‘*choeur*’ (lit. ‘chorus’, homophone of *coeur*, ‘heart’), emphasizing the importance of the community in theatre production. The chorus element not only referred to a dramatic instance, as in ancient Greek theatre and in Noh: the community on stage had to be a community off-stage. Reporting on a speech that Copeau gave at Morteuil on 4 November 1924, one of his students noted:

He laid great emphasis on the morality of the artist and the discipline needed to aspire to it. There would be no question of erasing our personalities, rather than disciplining, managing and conserving our individuality. We would need respect for others, discretion and deference; above all, sincerity, charity, intelligence and good humour (quoted in Gontard 1974, 45-46).

Community was compared to a brotherhood in which it was possible to share both training and everyday life. Once again, the discussion involving Craig and Copeau on the individual personality of the actor emerges. As in Noh theatre, the issue of preserving one’s individual talent as opposed to erasing oneself for the higher purpose of maintaining the purity of technique is a paradox difficult to resolve in a definite way. Both instances alternate and overlap during the life of an actor and it is probably the friction generated in their forced co-existence that generates a creative impulse

conscious of the limit of the tradition.

Chapter Four – Politics

Political responses to the ‘Crisis of Modernity’

This chapter will look into the political resonances of the reception of Noh theatre in Europe during the Modernist period. Chapter Three pointed out how, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the reception of Noh in Europe was thickly interwoven with the criticism of bourgeois ethics. For a number of European practitioners, Noh theatre represented a positive model to copy in order to save Western theatre from the decadence into which it had fallen. Ethics were the necessary premise for the production of good art, and Japan shifted from being mainly an aestheticising practice to being the cure for the social and artistic disease embodied by the ‘crisis of modernity’. Instead of merely imitating the East, this new generation of artists used the inspiration they drew from Japan in order to resurrect their own traditions, as in the case of Yeats’s Irish theatre or Copeau and Claudel’s medieval theatre.

The first decades of the twentieth century in Europe were characterised by a profound crisis that marked the terminal phase of the political, social, and economical changes brought by the ‘age of modernity’. For historian Roger Griffin, ‘Western modernity can be identified [...] with the breakdown of community, with the erosion of a “healthy” mental, physical, social, or spiritual dimension that endows its inhabitants with a higher, suprapersonal, but not necessarily *suprahistorical*, significance’ (Griffin 2008, 11). This was a process that led to the erosion of the social order in the form of its religious and secular institutions of church and nobility, which eventually collapsed under the weight of the ever-imposing, capitalist-driven bourgeois class. This progressive decay of the established order was propelled by the rationalist thought that, from Decartes through to the age of Enlightenment, shifted the medieval-based transcendental vision of the universe into individual-located particularism, and reached its political climax with the egalitarian spirit that led to the upheavals of the eighteenth and nineteenth century revolutions. The outcome, Griffin argues, was ‘a process of disaggregation, fragmentation, and loss of transcendence with respect to premodern societies’ (2008, 10) that resulted in the dissolution of the social and familial bonds between community and the individual, now transformed into a self-sufficient entity. As the Enlightenment emphasised rationality and relativism, bourgeois capitalism grew

along with the cult of self-help. The industrial revolution drove masses of men and women to migrate from the countryside to the urban centres, dissolving the existent familial bonds, and contributing to the worsening of a social disease that had its major symptoms in social alienation and in a general, yet acute sense of loss.

A response to this critical condition came from political movements that aimed at healing the 'evils' of modernity by opposing different forms of what Shmuel Eisenstadt called 'alternative modernities': Fascism and Communism. Eisenstadt emphasises the complexity of the political responses to modernity: while Communism fitted within the framework of modernity brought by Enlightenment, albeit contesting its incompleteness, Fascism sought for the constitution of a new form of collectivity that would blend the universalistic and the particularistic, creating a 'semi-universalistic' ideology founded on race (Eisenstadt 2000, 11). Though their demagogy might suggest otherwise, the ideological matrix of Socialism, from which Fascism and Communism stemmed, did not reject modernity, but re-moulded it into new, though idiosyncratic shapes.

The political movements that took the form of European Fascism were propelled by populist concepts that sought for the creation of a classless society. However, unlike Marxist socialism that utterly rejected institutions of self-development and private property, developed during the Enlightenment, but encouraged self-reflection and cultural tolerance, Fascism operated 'as an *identificatory* ideology, encouraging total symbiosis with the ideological community' (Griffin 1996, 15). Instead of a radically egalitarian community, Fascism proposed the myth of an ethnically uniform people-grounded racial ideology. In order to achieve the aim of healing society from its decadence, and resurrecting the national spirit, Fascism offered a 'third way' between Capitalism and Communism, mixing tradition and modernity, old and new myths, populist elements, such as the participation of the working class, with the elitist attitude that had as extreme expression the cult of the Fascist leaders.

The contradictory nature of European National-Socialism was reflected in the artistic phenomenon of Modernism. As Griffin put it, Modernism aimed at reinstating 'a sense of transcendent value, meaning, or purpose in order to reverse Western culture's progressive loss of a homogeneous value system and overarching cosmology (*nomos*) caused by the secularizing and disembedding forces of modernization (2008, 15). Modernism mirrored the forms of political response to the 'crisis of modernity' that National Socialism had provided. At the base of the complex interweaving of ethical

and aesthetic concepts underlying Modernism was the elaboration of the community-individual dyad upon which both left and right-oriented forms of socialism were centred. Modernist art generally condemned individualism, to which it preferred forms of secular or spiritual communitarianism. However, Fascism utterly rejected egalitarianism and democracy, against which it opposed a form of elitist populism that, unlike Capitalist plutocracy, was based on ethical meritocracy exalting the virtues of courage and selflessness. Although with hindsight it is possible to understand Modernism as an evolution of the ‘crisis of modernity’, rather than its nemesis, most of the Modernists conceived of their work as a revolutionary endeavour that radically rejected all that constituted the canon imposed by the previous regimes.¹

Modernism was generally characterised by a political ambiguity: the rejection of the capitalist mode of production was the basis of socialist doctrine from which both right and left-wing ideologies stemmed. Fascism and Communism preached the abhorrence of individualism, to which they opposed a communitarian conception of society, and shared a common enemy: the bourgeois.² As Raymond Williams points out, the movement that adopted the form of symbolic abstraction, despite being anti-bourgeois, was also ‘the culmination of the weakest tendency of the bourgeois epoch: the attempted stabilisation, at a new level of abstraction from society and from history, of the mystery of general human processes: a mystery now finally located [...] within the individual (Williams 1981, 174). A retreat into folklore and tradition countered the materialism and commercialism of the naturalist scene, and yet this refutation of the bourgeois world tended towards the construction of new forms of elitism and psychoanalytical subjectivity. The seemingly contradictory presence of populist and elitist elements is what characterised Fascist ideology. As the political life of several Modernist artists testifies, the line dividing the ethics of Left and Right Socialism was often blurred.

¹ Discussing the intersection of Fascism and Modernism in Italy, Emilio Gentile notes how Italian ‘artists and intellectuals were to abandon the privileged isles of aristocratic individualism and immerse themselves in the impetuous flux of modern life in order to become the artificers, the spiritual guides of the New Italy’ (Gentile 1994, 58). Originality and genius were identified with the voice of dissent, and only accepted when fitting within the larger plan of the artistic manifestos, that is, in the track of a newly founded tradition. Nevertheless, Gentile points out how Futurism, the most prominent form of Italian Modernism, emphasised the abandon of the old for the new, with a particular insistence on the disdain for tradition (1994, 56). The co-presence of these apparently antonymic forces within the same artistic movement reveals a clash that went beyond the debate on the aesthetic canon: while tradition meant the re-establishment of the relationship with the ethos of a nation, artistic advancement presupposed the originality of the individual genius.

² A Fascist saying goes: ‘The belief of the bourgeois is egoism. The belief of the Fascist is heroism’ (in Segàla 2000, 23 my translation).

The case of Ezra Pound probably constitutes one of the most complex forms of ethical and political thought of the Modernist period. Advocate of the inalienability of individual freedom and property, and opposer of finance capitalism and usury, Pound admired figures such as Thomas Jefferson and Mussolini, both critics of the banking institutions and reformers of agrarian politics. Feng Lan's study of Pound and Confucianism proves how Pound's adoption of Confucian doctrine contained the paradoxes of Fascist ideology, at once advocating individual freedom and submission of the self to the greater authority (Lan 2005, 84-135). On the one hand, Pound's shift to Fascism paralleled the growth of his interest in Confucianism, reflecting the authoritarianism contained in the teaching of Confucius, on the other hand it reflected an ideal of power and independence embodied by the figure of Mussolini. If Pound discussed tradition as the richness of distant cultural areas, he certainly did not do so out of sheer fascination or reverence for an imposed canon, but in sympathy with approaches to politics and art that he would assimilate and convert into his own syncretic philosophy.

In France, Jacques Copeau held an equally ambiguous profile: the socialist ideals of unselfish, communal spirit and erasure of the individuality for the sake of 'honesty' in performance, proposed in the 1916 Vieux-Colombier manifesto could be read both from Fascist or Communist perspectives. Serge Added describes how Copeau was forced into assuming a clearer political stance when, in 1940, the year in which France started to suffer the German offensive, he was appointed to the direction of the *Comédie Française*. Added documents how Copeau's policy appears to be in accord with the official Vichy government line: '[t]he opening night on 7 September 1940 betrayed a worrying politicisation on stage. It was a poetic patchwork interlaced with the watchwords of the collaborationist regime: the return to life on the land, traditional crafts, the family, the fields, in clear allusion to Pétain's *Travail, Famille, Patrie*' (Added 1996, 284). The echoes of the nationalist policy of Vichy France resonated in Copeau's *Le Théâtre Populaire*, published in 1941, in which he stated that the 'unique duty of all Frenchmen' was 'the remaking of France', envisaging the creation of a 'Theatre of the Nation' through the creation of a government-funded state school (Copeau 1963, 184-5).

Clearly, theatre arts could not but reflect the governmental policies, especially when its interpreters filled institutional roles. As has been described in chapters Two and Three, the ethics of Nationalistic ideology pervaded Noh after it was restored as the

official performing art, establishing a connection with the Imperial family. The following section will explore in greater detail how, as the second global conflict approached, Japan developed a Nationalist theory in opposition to the promotion of Western culture that characterised the first phases of the ‘modernisation’ of Japan, in which Noh theatre, as well as other traditional arts, was considered the highest expression of Japanese ethics.

From Taishō ‘democracy’ to the *Kokutai no Hongi* – The revision of Japanese tradition

Though it is uncertain whether dubbing Japanese Nationalism as ‘Fascism’ is appropriate, it is anyway possible to notice how the escalation of nationalist feelings in Japan from the early Meiji period until Second World War shared common points with European Fascism. Nationalist spirit was initially born within the old samurai families that lost their position with the restoration of imperial centrality. Unlike Germany, in which nationalistic ideology grew on the ruins of World War I, Japan approached the 1930s with important military victories against Russia and China at its back.

The Taishō era (1912-1926) is often depicted as a relatively liberal period, though it in fact was the furnace where late Meiji conservatism moulded into the shape of Showa militarism (Eisenstadt 1998, 86-95). This was a period pervaded by nostalgia and a sense of loss of traditional values, which became one of the principal topics of intellectuals such as Natsume Sōseki, Tanizaki Junichirō, Watsuji Tetsurō, and for those who adhered to the so-called ‘culturalist’ movement. Najita and Harootunian pointed out how, for the Taishō conservatives, the Western conceptions adopted by the *bunmei kaika* polity were seen as ‘manipulating the indigenous cultural values in ways that were inimical to the legacies of a distinct history, particularly the aesthetic impulse of an elegant inheritance, and contrary to the communitarian experience vivified by the collective memory of the folk’ (Najita and Harootunian 2008, 714). These ‘indigenous values’ were subsumed under the concept of *kokutai* (lit. ‘body of the country’, the expression now refers to national polity in general), a synthesis of national traits that lies at the foundation of the *nihonjinron* discourse.

The re-appropriation of ‘indigenous’ culture described by Najita and Harootunian quickly escalated into nationalism and militarisation that led to the second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and eventually to the global conflict. In 1937, at the apex of

Showa nationalism, Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro, who would later become the leader of the para-fascist organisation *Taisei Yokusankai*, ordered the publication of the *Kokutai no hongei* (lit. 'True Meaning of the Nation'), a pamphlet containing the governmental line on themes of internal and foreign affairs, economy, culture and education.³ This document testifies to the official Japanese response to the Western 'crisis of modernity' that led to a revision of the concepts of self and community. The premise of the book was that Japan had forgotten the original way of its ancestors 'due to the fact that since the days of Meiji so many aspects of European and American culture, systems, and learning, have been imported, and that, too rapidly' (Hall 1949, 52). The responsibility for weakening the spirit and dividing the thoughts of a people until then united could not but originate in an alien form of social illness, which the authors of the *Kokutai no hongei* attributed to what they considered an all-Western phenomenon: individualism. In fact, the whole document can be read as an articulated criticism of individualism, described as the Western plague that contaminated Japanese society. However, in line with the post-*bunmei kaika* attitude of Okakura and Nitobe, combining Eastern and Western thought, the *Kokutai no hongei* described how Japan did not foolishly refuse anything that might come from the West. Rather, Japan skimmed and absorbed Occidental thought and technique, purifying and rendering Japanese whatever would be profitable for the sake of the nation's wealth. The authors clearly stated: 'Our first duty is the task of creating a new Japanese culture by *sublimating and assimilating* foreign cultures which are the source of the various problems in keeping with the fundamental principles of our national entity' (emphasis added, Hall 1949, 175). They later elaborated on this concept by asserting that:

Western cultures are the spectacular developments of the natural sciences which are based on positivism and of the material civilisation which is their fruit. [...] Our nation must increasingly adopt these various sciences [...] However, these scholastic systems, methods, and techniques are substantiated by views of life and of the world peculiar to the West, which views are due to the racial historical, and topographical characteristics of the Occident. Hence, in introducing these things in our country, we must [...] scrutinise their essential qualities, and with the clearest insight adapt their merits and cast aside their demerits (1949, 179).

The *Kokutai no hongei* is often redundant in its treatment of the issues of individualism and absorption of Western culture, yet frequent repetitions give the idea of how this very point was considered essential in this phase of the construction of the Japanese

³ Sections from the *Kokutai no hongei* quoted hereafter are from J. Owen Gauntlett's translation, edited by R. Hall (1949).

national identity.⁴

Written in a poetic language, rich in hyper-textual references recalling mytho-historical chronicles such as the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*, the *Kokutai no hongii* describes the origins of Japanese civilisation and opposes them to the history of Western thought. Occidental civilisations are seen as rooted in the individualism, liberalism and rationalism that stemmed from classic Greek philosophy, through Christianity and the Enlightenment: the Western mistake was ‘[having lost] sight of the totality and concreteness of human beings and [having deviated] from the reality of human existence’ (1949, 176). To this ethical mistake the book opposed the virtues of loyalty and filial piety of Confucian origin. However, the authors thought that Chinese Confucianism contained the germ of individualism, and became pure only once ‘sublimated and assimilated’ into the Japanese ‘national entity’ (1949, 177). It would have been impossible for the nationalist hierarchs to admit that the philosophical foundation of their country, including Buddhism, was simply imported. Moreover, by claiming the perfection of Japanese Confucianism, they automatically hinted at the dangers of deviant forms, which might have led China to embrace Communism.⁵ The core of this discussion was ethical in nature, and hence of political application: at the roots of all Western ‘ill’ ideologies, both in extreme versions (communism and anarchism) and moderate versions (liberalism and democracy), is a view of the world in which the individual is seen as completely independent, and his or her freedom strictly related to this autonomous condition. According to this line of thought, what the West seemed to have forgotten is that true moral freedom (*dōtoku no jiyu*) is not to be found in the self (*kojin*), but in ‘serving’ (*hōshi*) the community (1949, 180).

Chapter IV of the book, entitled ‘Ceremonial Rites and Morality’ explained how Japanese ethics are based on Confucianism. The authors showed how in Japan the virtue of *loyalty* is strictly related to that of *filial piety*: because the Japanese people was believed to be ethnically homogeneous, descending from the Emperor Jimmu, serving the Emperor meant serving the father of a big family – Japan. Here the nationalist ideologues found the perfect intersection of Confucianism and state Shinto. Besides, the

⁴ The expression ‘individualism’ (*kojinshugi*) occurs 140 times, while ‘sublimate and assimilate’ (*junka suru*) 34 times.

⁵ Criticism of individualism was not only directed toward utilitarianism and liberalism, but also socialism, identified with the revolutionary events taking place in Russia. Following the attempted assassination of the Emperor Meiji by leftist revolutionaries, a strong anti-communist campaign was brought forward and the socialist heretics who believed in a class-less society were fiercely prosecuted. B. Victoria documents how anti-socialist anathema came especially from high members of the Buddhist sects (Victoria 2006: 50).

Kokutai no hongī pointed out the important role that Bushido played in transcending the teaching of Confucianism into an all-Japanese ethics of self-effacement and defiance of death. As is typical in all regime literature, the *Kokutai no hongī* delivered its content with a strong, assertive tone. The concept underlying the whole narrative of the book is the uniqueness and superiority of Japan, especially in the ability to absorb the best of what was offered by foreign civilizations, developed since the dawn of its civilisation. The ethical principle that governed all importation and ‘purification’ of foreign culture was the principle of effacement of the self in order to serve the higher ‘good’.

This elemental concept had its application in the field of artistic production, too. The *Kokutai no hongī* described the ‘truly Japanese’ approach to the arts by stating at the outset that

Our national Way stands out markedly in the arts that have come down to us from the old. [All Japanese traditional arts] culminate in the Way, and find their source therein. The Way manifests itself on the one hand as a spirit of esteem for tradition and on the other as creative of progressive activities. Thus, our artistic pursuits, ever since the Middle Ages, have been practiced [sic] by first keeping to the norms [...] This means that they taught that artistic pursuits should be materialised along one’s personality only after one has personally found the Way by casting aside one’s untoward desires and by first following the norms in keeping with the tradition. (1949, 157).

The primacy of the *michi* within the Shōwa ideology bears the evidence that this conception has been nurtured within the various fields of cultural production until it found its canonical, modern collocation within the *Kokutai no hongī*. Pinnington shows how the notion of *michi* would consider the ‘path through life’ not as an achievement of the individual but as a gathering of ‘reflections of the loci of the path’ (Pinnington 2006, 31). Following the *way* does not imply a solitary condition, but emphasises the need to melt into the *way*, as opposed to a vision of man as architect of one’s way. Yet it is necessary to stress how in Japan this concept is not just left as metaphysics but intrinsically requires practical (physical) activities in order to be investigated and expressed: Japanese practices such as flower arrangement (*kadō*), tea ceremony (*chadō*), calligraphy (*shodō*), frequently labelled as ‘traditional arts’ in English are in fact considered ‘ways’ (*geidō*) (Pinnington 2006, 32-34). This difference in language contributes to showing how Japan traditionally understands means of artistic production not merely as aesthetic practices, but as paths for spiritual elevation. Therefore, Japanese ‘traditional arts’ could be more appropriately called ‘traditional practices’.

The interrelation of aesthetics and ethics was formally codified as a fundamental

principle of the Japanese artistic method in the *Kokutai no hongī*. The importance of traditional practices as locus of the tangible manifestation of the self-other dialectic of the *michi* is exemplified in the passage describing the practice of tea ceremony, in which '[t]he object is to enjoy squatting face to face in a narrow tearoom as if to meet for once in one's lifetime, and to enter into the flavour of a merging of personalities among master and guests, and so to arrive at a state of concord in a gathering of all classes of people with self set aside and with no idea of discrimination' (1949, 158). Taking a further, politically meaningful significance, the effacement of the self of the individual is not performed for the sake of the individual, but for the sake of *all* individuals. Social differences and individual personalities are levelled by the act of self-removal: this approach determines the contextualisation of Japanese traditional arts in communities of practitioners, by which aesthetic production is subordinated to the ethical attitude. To this extent, the ideology of the *Kokutai no hongī* can be compared to the ideal of a classless nation that European Fascism was promoting.

It is important to note that among the authors of the *Kokutai no hongī* was Watsuji Tetsurō, who in 1944 published the nationalist essays *The Way of the Subject in Japan and America's National Character* as part of a pamphlet distributed by the Ministry of Education (Dilworth 1974, 7). Watsuji's ethics, grounded in the principle of reverence to the Emperor of both Shinto and Confucian origin, was evidently instrumental to the wartime nationalist ideology that in 1944 was reaching its peak before collapsing. As will be shown in Chapter Six, Watsuji had an equally important role in the transformation of ethical principles and in the association of Noh with a new national morality during the post-war period, when the country entered a new process of renegotiation of its cultural identity.

Politicisation and promotion of Noh during the rise of Nationalism

Given this historical background, it is possible to draw a parallel between the rise of nationalist ideology in Japan and Noh theatre from the Meiji period until the outbreak of the Second World War. In the thirty years following the Meiji restoration Noh went from risking disappearing to becoming the official ceremonial entertainment (*shikigaku*) under the patronage of the Imperial Household Ministry. Eric Rath points out how, as Japanese politics moved toward stronger nationalist positions, Noh theatre's role became more and more important as a vehicle of transmission of the governmental line

during a time of growing conservatism: intellectuals believed the Noh could help Japan to take a stance against Western cultural imperialism while becoming an important link between the state and the masses (Rath 2004, 224). During the Taishō era the popularity of Noh extended to lower social strata, with a consistent growth of amateur practitioners (Hoff 1998, 80); at the same time, Noh associations needed to take measures appropriate to a dignified, stately ceremony, and this included the creation of an audience etiquette that prohibited drinking, eating and chatting during performances, and any behaviour that recalled the traditional way of attending performances in temples and shrines. Noh theatre found itself between popular and elite entertainment. As European Fascism comprised populist and elitist elements, Shōwa right-wing nationalism was based on a combination of Shinto and Buddhist principles, governed by Confucian ethics of cooperation and harmony of the subjects and loyalty toward the Emperor. Japan's drift towards ultra-nationalism began at the turn of the century, with the first military victories against China and Russia, and, as has been discussed in Chapter Two, Noh theatre reflected this tendency.

One of the events that epitomise the association of Noh with nationalist polity was the relocation, in 1902, of the Shiba Park Noh stage to the Yasukuni shrine, the war memorial where the victims of those who fought for the Emperor had been enshrined since the Meiji restoration (Rath 2004, 224). As Scholz-Cionca and Oshikiri note in their study of Noh and the rise of militarism during the Russo-Japanese war (2004), the creation of *shinsaku nō* ('newly created Noh plays') was considered a way to maintain a living Noh tradition and not let it become a mere museum piece. The two *shinsaku nō* *Washi* ('The Eagle') and *Ikusagami* ('The War God') were met with an enthusiasm that characterised the first phases of Japanese militarisation and thrust into imperialism. The journal *Nōgaku*, issued by the newly founded Noh Association, published a number of articles in favour of war and asserting how Noh should reflect this 'glorious' phase of Japanese history (Scholz-Cionca and Oshikiri 2004, 29-30). In the years that preceded the Second World War, Noh families were asked to revise certain plays of the repertoire, most notably *Semimaru*, which tells the story of a disabled member of the Imperial family, and to write new works to sustain the War.⁶ Richard and Mae Smethurst documented how, in addition to *shinsaku nō* ('newly created Noh plays') written to celebrate the victories of the Russo-Japanese and Sino-Japanese wars, some Noh schools wrote plays with military themes such as *Chūrei* ('The Loyal Spirits') or

⁶ Other censored plays were *Ohara gokō*, *Futari Shizuka* and *Ataka*. See (Brandon 2009, 146-7).

Miikusabune ('The Emperor's Warship'), celebrating the efforts of soldiers and commanders, and the grandiosity of Japan's army (M Smethurst and R Smethurst 2008, 31-37; Brandon 2009, 210-11). Although not part of the classic repertoire, *Chūrei* was translated into Italian as *Le anime fedeli* by Salvatore Mergé for the Italian Embassy in Tokyo in 1942, further evidence of the extent to which Noh was used to circulate nationalistic ideology among countries of the Axis.

Noh theatre soon became an integral part of the Nationalist policy. In 1934 Prince Konoe Fumimarō, at the time already president of the House of Peers, founded the *Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai* (KBS – 'Society for the International Cultural Relations').⁷ The prospectus of the society, drafted in Japanese and English on the occasion of its foundation, is deeply tinged with Konoe's ultra-nationalist policy and contains reflections on the role of international cultural promotion during this period of rising national consciousness. The prospectus reads: 'the diffusion of knowledge regarding a nation's culture is not only necessary for the purpose of enhancing its prestige, but will also serve to make its people alive to their position in the world and to strengthen their sense of self-respect' (KBS 1934, 2). The KBS was aware that the nostalgic, conservative attitude to Japanese tradition of the past Taishō era, although necessary in order to recover from the excessive Occidentalisation of the early Meiji period, had become sterile and the methods of promotion of national culture on the international stage needed to be reconsidered: 'in recent years there have been discernible signs of awakening to the value of their own culture, but self-confidence is likely to be tinged with self-sufficiency. We appear to lack a sufficiently liberal intention to make known to the world the full extent of our culture' (1934, 2).

Among the activities of the KBS was the promotion of Noh theatre. In 1936, a few months before Konoe became prime minister and the *Kokutai no hongī* was published, Noh performances were held in Kyoto (at the Kongō Noh Theatre) and in Tokyo (at the Peers' Club) for the delegates of the Seventh World Conference of the World Federation of Education Associations. The KBS sponsored the programme and a record of the performances in English was printed on the occasion. The English pamphlet was meant to be an introduction to different aspects of Noh theatre, and starts off with some general remarks on the role of Noh in the contemporary context: '[Noh] probably [is] Japan's most vivid mirror reflecting, in this modern and progressive age,

⁷ A more accurate translation of the name of the group would read 'Society for the International Promotion of Culture'. Although not explicit in the heading, it was Japanese culture and not 'culture' in general to be promoted internationally.

the Japan of bygone years; and not as one of those static objects such as are relegated to the museum, but as a dynamic, living art' (KBS 1937, 5). There was a clear intention to free Noh from the label of ancient relic that early Meiji approaches to traditional culture, and its European witnesses (as was the case of Chamberlain, Satow and Mitford) helped to generate, as Japan's glorious past formed the spine of its bright present. One section of the pamphlet is dedicated to explaining the reasons that led Noh theatre to become such an important, state institution. Interestingly, the authors restate the role played by the strict moral code followed by its practitioners, for which 'the *utai*, or Noh recital, became as much a part of his accomplishments as Confucian ethics or swordsmanship' (1937, 17). It is in fact thanks to the 'sense of loyalty to their ancestors and devotion to their art' that Noh survived the tumultuous years of the Meiji restoration, 'accentuated by the wholesale importation of Western civilisation' (1937, 18). A well-balanced introduction to Noh, including the various aspects of Noh play (history, technique, music and texts), this pamphlet seems to synthesise in less than twenty pages all the previous literature on Noh in English and can be considered as the first official endeavour of the Japanese government to present Noh theatre to the outside world.

As the role of Noh as *shikigaku* became increasingly important as artistic interface of Japan on the international stage, translations and explanatory material in English started to be produced directly by the Japanese institutions. In 1934 the Board of Tourist Industry, sponsored by the Japanese Government Railways, published *Japanese Noh Plays, How to See Them*, by Nogami Toyochirō, one of the most prominent Noh scholars of the period. The booklet was conceived with the aim of promoting cultural tourism in Japan, and provides insights into the ways Noh was presented to the foreigners by the Japanese. As other previous publications in English, the book consists of different sections treating various aspects of Noh, including a list of plays sub-divided by category, a short bibliography in European languages and a calendar (possibly the first of its kind) of the regular performances held in the Tokyo Noh theatres.

According to Nogami, foreigners understood Noh better than the majority of the Japanese. Having had the chance to accompany several honourable visitors such as Paul Claudel and G.B. Shaw to Noh performances, Nogami noticed how the foreigner's naïf approach was particularly inclined to grasp the beauty of Noh without suffering the frustration of not understanding the lyrics (or their meaning) word by word. 'If you go

to a Noh theatre', Nogami noted, 'you will be surprised to find some of the audience gazing at the libretto open on their knees, and rarely looking at the stage, but following the actor's recitation so that it may improve their own. In olden times hardly any of the audience went to the theatre with a libretto. In these circumstances I wonder if the Noh is really popular' (Nogami 1934, 8). Nogami reflected on whether Noh could even be considered popular if its appreciation really depended on deciphering the obscure lines of the scripts. Chamberlain's comments on the same topic, written before 1890, are remarkably close to Nogami, when he noted how the audience went to the theatre 'not merely to be amused, but to learn, and they follow the play, book in hand; for the language used, though beautiful, is ancient and hard of comprehension, especially when chanted' (Chamberlain 1902: 457). It is evident that Nogami struggles to open Noh to a less esoteric approach, which could potentially be embraced by Western audiences. In fact, Nogami goes on to say that foreigners,

as they are unable to follow the libretto, never attempt to follow uselessly the meaning of every word and phrase in the *utai*, but merely watch the movements of the actors and listen with a very incomplete understanding to the chorus and musicians. Though this is their only method of appreciation, it appears to be a wise one. This is why the Noh appeals to intelligent foreigners (Nogami 1934, 9).

This might have been the approach of foreigners such as Marie Stopes and Paul Claudel who, even without language proficiency, were attracted by the Noh more than by other Japanese traditional performing arts that require a complete understanding of the lyrics in order to be appreciated. It must be noted how Nogami's comments also reflect the shift of Western audiences from a mainly text-oriented conception to a more holistic approach to performance as comprising music, stage action and text.

A unique approach to Noh was that of Beatrice Lane, who in 1932 published *Nōgaku: Japanese Nō Plays*, a book following the usual 'explanation and translation' format. Although this is the work of a Westerner, printed by a Western publisher, it seems to fit best among the Japanese promotional works on Noh. What impresses of this work is the frame in which it has been developed: Lane was a British scholar of Japanese Buddhism, a member of the Theosophical society, and the wife of Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki, a personality internationally recognised as being a bridge between Japanese and Western culture. *Nōgaku* opens with a foreword of Kongō Iwao, headmaster of the Kongō School, which is worth quoting in its entirety:

The fundamental principle of the Nō play is what is technically known as Yūgen. This is a vocal movement in quietude and quietude in movement, or the

realisation of a state of identity in which the art and Zen are perfectly harmonised. Unless this is fully mastered by the players, Nō cannot claim to be a living art; that is to say the knowledge of Nō must be based on that of the spirit of Oriental culture.

Mrs. Suzuki is known as an earnest student of Buddhism and her long residence in the East, added to her untiring efforts to get into the soul of the east, has enabled her to awaken in herself deep love for and a well-balanced understanding of the Nō. Her study of Nō, one of the oldest and greatest arts created by Japanese genius, must be said to have solid foundation. There is no doubt that this present work of hers properly describes the spirit of Nō. This will surely give Western visitors to our shore an opportunity to realise that there is something deeply artistic in Japanese life besides geisha dances and cherry blossoms (Lane Suzuki 1932, 9-10).

This is possibly the first time that a Noh actor addresses the Western reader through the pages of a book written by a foreigner. Iwao's words should not be taken simply as a way to praise and recommend Lane's work: the value of this statement can be synthesised in two main points. Firstly, the union of art and that religion which had been promoted internationally as being the essence of Japanese spirituality, Zen; secondly, the necessity for the Western onlooker to go beyond quaint Orientalist stereotypes and reach out for the 'heart of Japan'. As a matter of fact, Lane was one of the first authors who wrote about Noh with the expertise deriving from direct experience of performance, linguistic proficiency, extensive stay in the country, and vast knowledge of Japanese culture. With the exception of B.H. Chamberlain, all previous translators lacked one of the listed elements. It is however interesting to note that in the preface of the book Lane only credits Waley's *The Nō Plays of Japan* and Stopes's *Plays of Old Japan* among the foreign sources of inspiration for her work (1932, 11). The work of Chamberlain and other old-school Japanese specialists might not have been as interesting for her because they lacked the direct experience of Stopes and the proficiency of Waley. It is also striking that the Kongō *iemoto* puts emphasis on the importance of maintaining the tradition 'alive': similarly to the KBS pamphlet, this comment reveals that the Noh community already felt the pressure to present its art not just as a 'museum piece', but as a continuing tradition with the capability to ensure the transmission of the mythical ethos of Japan into the future.

The state of identity mentioned by the *iemoto* in the foreword is a concept Lane insists on, explaining how Noh theatre is the synthesis not just of the arts, but of all Japanese culture. Lane draws parallels between Noh and tea ceremony by explaining how this sort of performance does not only satisfy a superficial need for the aesthetically pleasant, but also a deeper, spiritual call for a higher state of mind. In fact,

for Lane, Noh and Buddhist doctrine share the same aim of unifying action and mind. This conception is explained as originating from the time of Zeami, when Noh was under the aegis of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, facilitating the coalescence of art with Zen Buddhism. Lane explains the importance of the nexus between Noh and Zen, from which came the inspiration for several of its sophisticated philosophical concepts, such as *yūgen* and *sabi*.⁸ The way the link between Noh and Zen is explained in the KBS pamphlet (1937, 8) seems to reflect Lane's work and might lead one to think that Lane had already left a trace in the methods used to present Noh theatre to Western audiences.

Political implications of the reception of Noh in the West

During the period between the two World Wars, responses of European practitioners to Noh were not exempt from political interest. It has been shown how in Japan Noh theatre was used as an instrument of political propaganda in the ever-increasing militarisation of the country. In the West, since the work of Pound, Noh theatre seemed to be particularly appealing to those intellectuals who followed 'right-oriented' political lines. However, the writings of Stopes and Waley show that 'socialist' readings of the Noh were also a possibility. It is apparent how theatre in the age of Fascism, characterised by archetypal plots infused with ritual elements and symbolic stage acting, was sharing elements with Asian traditional theatre. In particular Noh, the age-old, unbroken tradition chosen by the restorers of the Imperial government to be representative of Japan, soon to become allied to the Fascist governments, extolled virtues of heroism and loyalty by means of recounting the victories and defeats of the mythical warring clans of ancient Japan. Since the beginning of its European reception, Noh had been described as being practised by devoted followers who had given up worldly life to training. In particular, the unconditional submission of practitioners to the Noh tradition embodied by the figure of the *iemoto* might have been associated with the idea of selfless dedication to the art of theatre that several European practitioners were praising. The syncretism, of populism and elitism, was represented in Europe in

⁸ The two terms defy explanations and do not respond to canonical translations. *Yūgen* has been rendered as 'profound elegance', while *sabi* conveys the idea of modesty and imperfection. Inaga Shigemi notices how, while *yūgen* first appeared in an English version in Waley's *Plays of Old Japan*, *sabi* appeared in Lane's *Nōgaku*, while it found a lengthier explanation in D. T. Suzuki's *Essays in Zen* (1934) as 'rustic unpretentiousness' and 'apparent simplicity or effortlessness' (Inaga 2005, 4-5).

the work of W.B. Yeats, who created a theatre drawing from popular sources but only accessible to a select few, and by Ezra Pound, whose controversial and idiosyncratic political views will be explored in relation to his reception of Noh theatre in the following section.

Ezra Pound and the modernist diplomacy of Noh theatre

Studies of the relationship between Noh and Ezra Pound has generally tended to consider aesthetic aspects of reception. However, unlike Yeats, Pound's interest and commitment to Noh did not end with the publication of the Fenollosa notes, and with his Noh-inspired plays. This section will show how Pound continued to hold Noh in high esteem and considered its role as a tool for international diplomacy and peace politics. Pound's involvement in politics is well known. After moving to Rapallo in Italy in 1925, he took an active part promoting Mussolini, most importantly by broadcasting anti-American messages to Britain and America from 1935 until his arrest for treason in 1945 and his subsequent internment at the St. Elizabeth hospital. Among his activities while in Italy, Pound was the correspondent from Italy for the *Japan Times and Mail* in 1940. During the Italian period Pound enlarged his network of international relations with artists and politicians, intertwining discussions on art with those on politics. In his correspondence with the modernist poet Kitasono Katsue (1902-1978) Pound expressed his concern with a possible new world conflict, and one of the recurrent themes in Pound's letters was the urgent need to find a possible way of fostering understanding between cultures, mostly focused on preventing the USA from entering the war against Japan.⁹ His attempts at communicating with different institutions often involved the arts as means of cultural exchange. On 13 August 1936 Pound wrote to Kitasono:

You will not think me unappreciative of Zen if you see my edition of Noh plays & Tami Koumé in 1922 was already dreaming of the incidence of Zen in abstract art. But neither Zen nor Christianity can serve toward international understanding in practical action in the way the *Ta Hio* of Kung fu Tseu can. I mean that gives us a basis of ethics & of national action (patriotic) which does not produce international discord [...] The reasons for Italo-Japanese understanding lie deep [...] the span to America may be longer. But Italy can serve as middle. (Kodama 1987, 31).¹⁰

⁹ The letters cited from here onwards have been collated and edited by S. Kodama (1987).

¹⁰ Pound refers to his edition of *Da Xue*, one of the main four books of Confucianism, which he published in 1928 under the title *Ta Hio*.

Zhu Chungeng claims that Pound, unsatisfied with Greek philosophy and Christianity, which he considered individualistic philosophies, embraced Confucianism as true doctrine of social harmony and *humanitas* (Zhu 2005, 58). However, as Feng Lan's study reveals, Pound converted Confucian notions of cultivation and self-development into even stronger forms of individualism, generally undermining the social value of *rén* ('benevolence, humanity')¹¹ while privileging *ji* ('self'), and interpreting the notion of 'subduing the self' as 'supporting the self' (Lan 2005, 85-86). While Pound's freedom of self-development as foundation of humanity is centripetal, Confucian self-development aims at finding, establishing and strengthening the relationship of the individual within society, as it is this very social condition that makes the individual a human being (Lan 2005, 94, 100). In this phase of his life, Pound's Confucianism was instrumental to the ideal of individual inalienable freedom that Pound believed Mussolini embodied. However, it is specifically upon Noh theatre that Pound centred his intercultural negotiations, as in the following message, addressed to the Japanese Ambassador in Rome, on 26 December 1936:

I should [...] be very glad to meet any member of the Embassy who recollects Umewaka Minoru or Ernest Fenollosa (whose papers and studies of the Noh, I have done my best to edit) or anyone who is interested in improving the understanding of Japanese culture in Europe and America and arranging better methods for cultural comprehension (1987, 35).

After 1936 Pound repeatedly attempted to approach American, Italian and Japanese governments in order to establish peace treaties based on a very pragmatic plan of cultural exchange. In 1939 he travelled to America with the intention of convincing president Roosevelt not to enter war with Japan for economic reasons. Pound's bargaining chip for approaching these 'peace negotiations' was Noh theatre, for which he proposed up-to-date recording methods. In a letter to Kitasono dated 10 March 1939, Pound wrote:

Do YOU, Ito, Mushakoji and Kita agree on ANYTHING? And if so what? Or do you set round and NEVER meet (as in England different sects). Sometimes damn foreigner can introduce proper people across clique frontiers. As activist, shd/ like to know if useful collaboration possible between me and any of 'em/ either to get FULL sound film of Noh/ or more lively Confucian comprehension (1987, 107).

¹¹ *Rén* is then a form of graded altruism, which contains its simplest explanation in the construction of the Chinese character expressing it (仁) composed by the radical for 'person' on the left and 'two' on the right.

Now involved in a sort of Noh theatre activism, Pound urged his Japanese friends (Kitasono, Michio Ito and painter Mushanokoji Saneatsu) and the famous Noh actor Kita Roppeita, whom he never met but of whom he knew the importance, to follow his suggestions, insisting on the necessity of making films of Noh performances. During his 1939 visit to the Museum of Modern Art in Washington D.C. Pound had the chance to see a film recording of *Aoinoue* (1934) with Kita Roppeita as *shite*, and perhaps pictures that Fenollosa took during his practice with Umewaka Minoru.¹² In a letter dated 31 October 1939, addressed to the curator of the film archive of the New York City Museum of Modern Arts, Iris Barry, Pound wrote:

I forget whether the film of Noh Play, 'AWOI NA UYE', that Shio Sakanishi had shown me in Washington is from your collection. In any case I am starting rumpus to get ALL the NOH filmed. Ought to be done SOON, otherwise the IN and YO will get messed and some god damned Jap Wagner smeared over the whole business. I wonder if you cd/ get the Museum to colly/bo/rate by putting in an order, either via Dr. Sakanishi (Congress Libr/) or direct to the KOKUSAI BUNKA SHINKOKAI Meiji Seimei kan, Marunouchi, Tokyo. If you could write to them, merely say that Museum is interested in my proposal and that you wd. of course be ready to take copies of all films made with properly qualified Noh actors. I hear that Shigefusa Hosho is good. Forget who did the Awoi, but it was a good show. (1987, 225).

On 31 December 1940, upon his return to Italy, Pound wrote to Kitasono:

When did Bernie Pshaw ever see a Noh play and why did he think he knew what it was driving at? Wonder if Kita/ no he cant have/ if that was first photo/ anyhow, wonder who did the damn good performance that I saw from film in Washington? Kita OUGHT to be smoked up to get ALL his performances onto a permanent record of that sort. BOTH the movements and the sound (1987, 109).¹³

Pound's fervour reached its peak when the cultural and political exchange was discussed in explicit terms, as in this letter dated 25 March 1941:

Note for you and VOU club/ that I sent yesterday to United Press a statement of plan for Pacific Peace// We shd/ give you Guam but INSIST on getting *Kumasaka* and *Kagekiyo* in return. i.e. INSIST on having 300 Noh plays done

¹² The film was one of the earliest audiovisual recordings of Noh, realised in 1934. Fenollosa brought back to the U.S. visual material including pictures after he left Japan (Murakata 1986, 26). In the 16 May 1883 diary entry, Umewaka Minoru mentions the fact that Fenollosa came to take pictures of him in full attire before leaving for the U.S. (Umewaka 2003, 4:18). Silent films containing images of Noh had circulated since the early nineteenth century. Some of them were taken by Western film-makers, as in the case of Albert Khan and Stephan Passet's early colour films, others were Japanese productions, as the series *Meikan no Omokage* (1932) restored by Hōsei University Noh Research Centre.

¹³ Pound refers to G.B. Shaw's trip to Japan, during which he was able to attend a Noh performance accompanied by Noh critic Nogami Toyochiro. A picture in Nogami's *Japanese Noh plays: How to See them* shows Shaw jokingly donning the *Okina* mask (Nogami 1934, 11). However, for Earle Ernst Shaw 'slept soundly throughout' the performance (Ernst 1969, 137).

properly AND recorded on sound film so as to be available to EDUCATE such amerikn stewdents as are capable of being cultur'd (1987, 112).

Pound suggested that the U.S. let go of Guam, which the Japanese army would occupy a few days after the attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941, in exchange for records of Noh performances, which would be part of the 'world classics' he was compiling.¹⁴ Though rather violent in his attacks against social credit, for whose institution he blamed the Jews, Pound was horrified by the enormous bloodshed of the First World War, and did not express himself as in favour of intervention. On the contrary, these letters prove that Pound made vigorous attempts, albeit in a rather harebrained fashion, to convince both sides not to enter war. It might also be argued that Pound feared an American attack on Japan, which would have endangered its precious cultural patrimony. Generally, Pound's attempt to negotiate peace through Noh was characterised by an equation of aesthetics and ethics, using the beauty of Noh as a way to urge the USA to consider Japan under a better light. On 29 March 1941 Pound wrote to Japanese foreign minister Matsuoka Yōsuke:

Ernest Fenollosa's literary executor begs leave to present his respects and to hope that after the present tension has passed Fenollosa's work may better be continued. It has been my experience that no occidental decently aware of the qualities of your Noh drama can be infected with anti-Japanese propaganda, especially for the beastly sort I found two years ago in the U.S., the theme being 'yah / we can starve you out', and this meanly expressed cinematographilcly. Men like myself would cheerfully give you Guam for a few sound films such as that of Awoi no Uye, which was shown for me in Washington. I regret deeply that there are not more of us. But in any case the least, and alas probably the most that I can do is to assure you that the seeds of respect and affection sown by Fenollosa have not been wholly unfruitful. I mean in a few American minds for the qualities of Japanese spirit. (1987, 249).¹⁵

Pound publicly expressed such intentions in the articles he wrote between 1939 and 1940 as correspondent for the *Japan Times and Mail*. In 'Tri-lingual System Proposed for World Communications' (15 May 1939), Pound made three requests to the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai: to collect one hundred classics of Japanese literature to be put on microfilm, to produce a tri-lingual communication system based on Japanese ideograms, Italian and English, and to film all Noh plays.

The whole of the Noh could be filmed, or at any rate the best Noh music could

¹⁴ Pound already compiled his *ABC of Reading* (1934), a list of all major literary works in the Western world.

¹⁵ The same slogan was used later in the 1945 American anti-Japanese propaganda film *My Japan*, in which stereotypical images of Japanese beauty were matched to scenes of ruthless killings.

be registered on sound-track. Your film *Mitsuko* filled me with nostalgia. It is 15 years since Tami Koumé's friends sang me fragments of Noh in Paris but the instant I heard that all-too-brief reproduction here in Rapallo (in a simple village cinema) I knew whence it came (1987, 150).

A reference to the film *Mitsuko* had already appeared earlier in a 3 March 1939 letter to Kitasono:

I have (had strong) nostalgia for Japan, induced by the fragment of Noh in *Mitsuko*. If you can continue such films nothing in the West can resist. We shall expect you AT LAST to deliver us from Hollywood and unbounded cheapness. ALL the Noh plays ought to be filmed/ or at any rate ALL the music shd/ be recorded on the *sound track*. It must be 16 years since I heard a note of Noh (Kumé [Tami] and his friends [Kayano Jisoichi and Michio Ito?] sang to me in Paris) but the instant the Noh (all too little of it in that film) sounded I knew it (1987, 72).

Pound was referring to *Atarashiki tsuchi* (a.k.a. 'Die Tochter des Samurai' or 'Mitsuko la figlia del samurai'), a German-Japanese production by Arnold Fanck and Itami Mansaku. The film was released in Japan in February 1937 and shortly after reached Germany, Italy, and other countries of the Axis. *Atarashiki Tsuchi* is a quasi-documentary propaganda film, introducing ancient and modern aspects of Japan to the allied countries in Europe.¹⁶ The film displays a number of Japanese traditional arts, such as tea ceremony, flower arrangement, and Noh theatre. The scene 45:03-45:48 shows the protagonist and his sister attending a Noh performance, and includes *Aoinoue* fragments of the final scene.¹⁷ As is mentioned in the 15 May 1939 article in the *Japan Times and Mail*, Pound watched the film in a small cinema hall in Rapallo, and it would be natural to suppose that the sequence in *Atarashiki Tsuchi* was Pound's first experience of Noh 'in action'. Although this should have constituted a great event in the life of someone who put so much effort into the edition of a milestone in the history of Noh in the West, Pound's note is rather scanty, mostly remembering the London years. After decades of pure 'imagination', more detail or excitement would be expected, yet Pound appears more interested in the potential of the film as a means of propaganda, rather than in the sight of Noh. It would appear as if in this second phase of his reception of Noh, Pound seems to be concerned with the aesthetics of Noh only insofar

¹⁶ For detailed criticism on the film see Janine Hansen (1997).

¹⁷ The protagonist, a man who has spent his formative years in Germany and is now back in Japan, struggling between the love for a German woman, and the promise of marriage to his former fiancée, is asked by the sister (Hara Setsuko, who would become the heroine of Ozu Yasujirō's films) whether he understands the lyrics of Noh. 'Not very well', he replies 'But within me, the blood of my ancestors seems to. Hearing them, I feel like I remember the past' (Fanck and Itami 1937).

as they have a practical application in international politics.

However, besides this more political approach to Noh, Pound did not abandon his appreciation of Noh as an excellent art form. In ‘Study of Noh Continues in West’ (*Japan Times and Mail* 10 December 1938), Pound insisted on the lack of appropriate translations (ignoring the work of Waley, Lane-Suzuki, and KBS), and stressed the importance of having the plays translated in ‘two or more languages’.¹⁸ Though Pound was naturally attracted by Noh as literature, he never underestimated the importance of its visual and auditory aspects: microphotography and sound film were the new media Pound was urging his contacts to adopt in order to record Noh movement and music and quickly transmit it to the West.

Every Western university should have the COMPLETE SET of Noh plays on sound-film for study in its dramatic and literary courses. That will come and will have to come for a dozen reasons as the old half-witted system of Western teaching wakes up (30 or 40 years after modern science has made photographic conveniences a daily accessory to our industries and to our commercial filing systems) (1987, 155).

Pound complained about the inadequacy of the Western educational system, which did not seem to keep pace with technological modernisation. In the article he wondered about the possibility of exchanging a large number of Noh texts with Western classics, and he might have considered the use of microfilm because of lower costs and better transportability. However, while discussing the terms of this exchange, Pound ventured into a particularly interesting speculation, which is worth reporting in its entirety:

Dr. Sakanishi caused me a good deal of anguish by insisting that something I had found in Fenollosa did not exist in the original. I am puzzled as to how it got into my text. Did it spring from Umewaka Minoru, or from Professors Mori and Ariga or did Fenollosa or I catch it out of thin air?

Fenollosa wrote that the Noh was in secret language; it was, for centuries, reserved for the Samurai and Nobles. You can not translate poetry merely by translating words. Some freedom (but not too much) must be left [to] the poet who finds a new verbal manifestation for the original thought. He or she must in some way convey the feel and the aroma of the original play and the inter-relation of characters.

Tami Koumé had danced the *Hagoromo* before the Emperor, taking the tennin part when he was, as I remember, six years old. At twenty he still remembered the part and the movements of the tennin’s wings, which as she returns to the upper heaven, are the most beautiful movements I have seen on or off stage. Tami knew something of Noh that no mere philologist can find out

¹⁸ The evocative power of the Ideogram, a suitable symbol for the concept of Vorticist poetry, fascinated Pound since he edited Fenollosa’s essay *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry*, published in 1918, two years after *Noh, or, Accomplishment*.

from a text book (1987, 156).¹⁹

Pound reflected on the patterns of reception of Noh, and on the nature of translations with unprecedented profundity of thought. In his view, philological accuracy was of little importance, as the poet must be free to elaborate what he or she receives into a new shape. By stressing the need to unleash the imagination of the reader from the bounds of canonical readings of the artwork, Pound agreed with Nogami's claim that foreigners understood Noh better than the Japanese because not limited by knowledge and habit, an effect similar to what Georges Banu has defined as 'ignorance bénéfique' (Banu 1993, 109).²⁰ The knowledge of Pound's friend Koume, that is, bodily knowledge and training following the traditional way, was praised in its uniqueness, as something that no book could capture. Pound praised Koume's performance as opposed to Michio Ito's in his 30 December 1940 letter to Kitasono, in which he wrote that 'Miscio's strong point was never moral fervour, and he may have a desire to popularise. <or not?> HOWEVER, Tami Kume who HAD studied Noh, though he hadn't in 1915 Ito's inventiveness etc/ had by training something that Miscio hadn't (quite naturally had NOT at the age of 23) got by improvisation' (Kodama 1987, 106). Pound was clear on the fact that Michio Ito had no interest in Noh, and that he was using his being Japanese to pursue his own artistic interest via his collaboration with W.B. Yeats, who sought in him qualities that certainly did not belong to the Noh tradition, but to contemporary European dance. The beauty of Kume's dance did not lie in his physical presence (Kume was an amateur practitioner) but in his 'moral fervour', which, in the case of Pound's reception might well be understood as an aesthetically relevant ethical quality.

Pound's interest in the potential of Noh was kept alive by British dancer Margaret Gerstley Leona, who in 1936 and 1937 choreographed Pound's versions of the Noh plays *Nishikigi* (from which Yeats had drawn inspiration for his *Dreaming of the Bones*), *Kinuta* and *Suma Genji*. Leona performed *Suma Genji* at the Players' Theatre in Covent Garden in December 1936. Pound and Leona maintained an interesting, yet still

¹⁹ Tami Koume was a Noh amateur, and he apparently studied under Umewaka Minoru when in primary school. His father Taminosuke was a successful businessman and he had a stage at his house in Yoyogi. If the position of the father made possible lessons from such a famous actor as Umewaka Minoru, it is quite unlikely that he could have performed in front of the Emperor.

²⁰ 'Lorsque l'Orient le spectateur occidental preserve une bénéfique dose d'ignorance et le comédien un juste pourcentage de désinvolture, il y a chance que cet Orient aide à féconder et non pas seulement à informer' (Banu 1993: 111).

unpublished correspondence.²¹ The remarkable feature of her production of Pound's versions of the Noh plays is that shortly after being staged at the Players' Theatre *Suma Genji* was performed for broadcasting at London Television studios at Alexandra Palace.²² In an undated letter to Leona, Pound affirmed that television was 'THE medium for Noh' and that he was 'trying to get proper collaboration to carry on with the Fenollosa papers', though he was struggling with finding a Japanese who would be able to take the place of Kume, who died in the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake. The performance was aired on 7 January 1937 and Leona provided Pound with a detailed description, and the hope of being able to produce more of his Noh plays.²³

Pound was attracted to all forms of technology that would allow Noh to reach the largest audience. This insistence in requesting Noh films could be read in different ways. It is first of all important to clarify how, thanks to his exposure to Japanese amateurs in London and Paris, and to the excerpts he could see in the film *Atarashiki Tsuchi* and in the film screened at the Museum of Modern Arts in Washington D.C., Pound believed in the necessity of pairing bookish knowledge with the experience of watching and listening to Noh. In a way, Pound was convinced that the beauty of Japan, concentrated in the film *Atarashiki Tsuchi*, could be one of the few chances to make the Allies, especially the Americans, reconsider Japan's morality. Acknowledging the capabilities of cinema as a means of propaganda, Pound was hoping Japan could counter-attack with the same weapons, wishing that aesthetic beauty could moderate racism fuelled by governmental anti-Japanese campaigns. In the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the war, Pound felt the danger that the incoming world conflict represented and wanted to secure this patrimony from any possible material catastrophe or from the possibility of diplomatic relations between Japan and the West being irrevocably compromised. In 'Study of Noh Continues in West', subtitled 'Pound Outlines New Approach to Drama Using New Media', Pound wrote that 'the work initiated by Ernest Fenollosa for better comprehension of East and West is by no means ended. Whatever Fenollosa may have done in the way of awakening his Japanese friends to the need of more active preservation of Japanese values must be set against

²¹ The unpublished correspondence quoted here is preserved at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, Ezra Pound papers YCAL MSS 43 box 18 f. 817.

²² London Television was the world's first regular television service, which would later take the name of the BBC. London Television started its broadcasts in 1936, and *Suma Genji* was one of its first transmissions.

²³ Pound sent Leona's description to Kitasono, along with an article from the *Morning Post* commenting on the performance at the Players' Theatre. This was translated in Japanese and published on 1 March 1937 on Kitasono's magazine VOU n.17.

the spark lit here by his unedited manuscripts' (1987, 154).

Unlike other authors and colleagues, who had brief, albeit intense, encounters with Noh, Pound's literary connection with Fenollosa continued until the War. His treatment of Noh during this period is an excellent example of how the relationship between Noh and the West had changed since it had been first exported to Europe. If Orientalist scholars such as Chamberlain and Hearn were worried about Japan's Westernisation and urged the Japanese government to shut the country again, in order to preserve its tradition from external sources of corruption, Pound's reaction was strikingly modernist as he underlined the need for tradition to move forward and embrace technological progress such as film, which would become an important tool in the dissemination of Japanese culture at large. Pound, already used to means of mass-communication such as the radio, went beyond the fetishised vision of Noh as a museum relic, and focused on the importance of transmitting, rather than holding back, prefiguring the era of cultural exchange that would come after Japan recovered from the catastrophic conclusion of the Second World War.

Bertolt Brecht's political reception of the ethics of Noh

The political value of Noh was not understood and exploited only in Japan but also in Europe, and Pound provides a good example of how Western practitioners sensitive both to Noh as a form of art and to the ethics it elicited could use it to promote their personal political message. However, Noh theatre did not only appeal to artists associated with right-wing ideology, such as Pound or Yeats. As has been pointed out in the analysis of Waley's *The Nō Plays of Japan*, left-wing Socialist thought also had points of contact with the ethics extolled by Noh narratives and performance practice. The next section will explore how Western practitioners received and re-elaborated Confucian morality within a Western Socialist paradigm.

In the 1927 essay 'Shouldn't we Abolish Aesthetics', Brecht addressed the issue of the bourgeois decadence of theatre adopting a radical perspective, and wishing for a reform accomplished by subverting a view of art as aestheticised object: 'I was hoping that sociology would be the death of our existing drama [...] [The sociologist's] scale of judgment runs not from 'good' to 'bad' but from 'correct' to 'false'. If a play is 'false' then he won't praise it on the grounds that it is 'good' (or beautiful); and he alone will remain deaf to the aesthetic appeal of a 'false' production' (Brecht 2001, 20-21). Not

unlike Plato's criticism of *mimesis*, Brecht saw nineteenth century naturalism as deceiving the audience, anaesthetising the critical sense of the spectator and only representing the ruling class. Brecht described bourgeois theatre with the derogatory expression 'culinary' art – that is, commodified art, produced with the sole intent of satisfying the observer who would passively consume it, a decadent situation he wished to heal by recovering the educative role of the arts, and destroying the idea of theatre as mere leisure. 'The ruling strata are using lies more openly than before and the lies are bigger. Telling the truth seems increasingly urgent': thus Brecht alerted his readers from the pages of *Das Wort* (2001, 107).

Despite his intention to reconsider aesthetics in ethical terms, Brecht maintained a view detached from lofty metaphysics: the famous line of the *Dreigroschenoper* 'Erst kommt das Fressen, dann kommt die Moral' ('Grub first, then ethics') demonstrates how Brecht's attitude was grounded in practical effectiveness. 'Political, moral and aesthetic influences' Brecht maintained, 'all radiate from the theatre: good when it's good and bad when it's bad' (2001, 152). Because aesthetic and ethical instances co-exist in theatre, Brecht was particularly concerned with the ethical stance of actors. In his discussion of professional and amateur theatre, Brecht criticised the vulgar display of emotions on the naturalist stage, where performers would exhibit 'great individual emotions. [...] Rich inner life for many intellectuals is a merely poor substitute for a rich outer life [...] so long as individuality remains the privilege of a minority which owns not only "personality" but other, more material things' (Brecht 2001, 149). 'Psychological make-up' characterised certain professionals, but not amateurs, which he took as an example of aesthetically poor but ethically truthful acting, and it was while working with amateurs that Brecht would develop the idea of his Noh-influenced plays.

Brecht's artistic endeavour was grounded in political concern and high awareness of the ethical value of performance. Unlike other modernist practitioners, his work did not attempt to resurrect traditions: what Brecht aimed at was the creation of a new canon. One of the turning points of this trajectory of the transformation of theatre into a stage for political discussion was the creation of the *Lehrstücke*, ('didactic', or 'learning' plays). Brecht himself provided a description of this new dramatic format:

Briefly the Aristotelian play is essentially static; its task is to show the world as it is. The learning-play is essentially dynamic; its task is to show the world as it changes. [...] The latter theatre holds that the audience is a collection of individuals, capable of thinking and reasoning, of making judgments even in the theatre [...] With the learning play, then, the stage begins to be didactic. The theatre becomes a place for philosophers (1990, 6).

To the flattening of personality that the ‘crisis of modernity’ produced Brecht opposed a forum, where performance was not just description, but action and creation, in which the audience would not merely observe but also participate. Brecht’s concept of ‘alienation’ (*Verfremdung*) was a tool that performers and spectators could adopt in order to escape from the hypnosis of ‘fiction’ and to recover the capacity for enquiry and dissent, and the *Lehrstücke* expressed its extreme degree. The ‘Learning plays’ were not considered as part of his stage repertory, and were meant to be performed by community groups, without the presence of a conventional audience.²⁴ Anthony Tatlow points out that ‘the primary purpose of the didactic plays was to encourage a certain method of thinking: their function was not exhortation but self-education. They do not offer instruction, neither do they provide entertainment, such as might expect from a theatrical event. This is because they are not theatrical events’ (Tatlow 1977, 191). As Tatlow reports, Reiner Steinweg singles out two characteristics of the *Lehrstücke*: the fact that they were conceived to be only for the participants, and the fact that they do not reproduce realistic situations but *exempla*, performed through abstract attitudes and speech (Steinweg in Tatlow 1977, 192).²⁵ Although Tatlow’s view of didactic plays as events deprived of all ‘entertainment’ would need further discussion of the meaning of the terms ‘entertainment’ and ‘theatrical event’, and the extent to which the social forum created within the staging of one of these plays could be entertaining or not, it is possible to agree on a view of the *Lehrstücke* as specifically written in order to reduce the ornament of *mimesis* and to enhance the moral conveyed. Such logic suggests parallels between the *Lehrstücke* as dramatic genre and Noh theatre, as they share common elements such as chorus and orchestra, stylised acting style, and most of all the centrality of the moral message. The following section will elaborate on the connection between *Lehrstücke* and Noh by looking at Brecht’s *Der Jasager*, an adaptation of the Noh play *Tanikō*.

The circumstances under which Brecht came into contact with Japanese culture are still unclear. Bridgwater claims that Brecht possessed a number of Waley’s publications yet this does not prove he could not have been influenced by other sources. Bridgwater also mentions the influence of Pound’s ‘Chinese’ poetry, though a

²⁴ Among the *Lehrstücke* are the cluster of plays written and produced around the years 1929-30: *Die Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis*, *Der Flug der Lindberghs*, *Die Ausnahme und die Regel*, *Die Massnahme* and *Der Jasager/Der Neinsager*.

²⁵ Steinweg’s *Das Lehrstück. Brechts Theorie einer politisch-ästhetischen Erziehung* (1972) is quoted via Tatlow’s translation (1977).

chronology of the relationship between Pound, Waley and Brecht is yet to be established (Bridgwater 1964, 216-18).²⁶ It is presumable that among Brecht's first contacts with Asian literature were Waley's renditions of the Noh plays, introduced to him by collaborator Elizabeth Hauptmann, who in turn translated some of them into German.²⁷ Tatlow reports a private conversation in which Hauptmann affirmed that Brecht did not take an interest in reading Zeami after she introduced to him Waley's translations, but that he only 'heard about him' later (1977, 227). However, it has been argued that Brecht might have been exposed to other Japanese theatre sources prior to 1929, the year in which he started working on his own adaptation of the Noh *Tanikō* (Alter 1968, 123; Tatlow 1977, 178). Other conjectures include the possibility that Brecht had seen a Kabuki troupe that visited Berlin in October 1930 and January 1931, an experience through which he might have evinced dramatic features common to Noh, yet too late for being influential in the *Lehrstücke*. According to John Willett, Brecht might have known the Noh through Claudel's *Livre de Christoph Colomb*, which may have contained elements borrowed from it, yet this argument is not completely convincing, not simply because too tortuous, but also because even if fascinated by the innovations of *Christoph Colomb*, it is arguable that his ignorance of Noh would have prevented him from recognising the elements allegedly borrowed from Noh as such (Nishino 2008, 72-77; Willett 1977, 116-7; Alter 1968, 122-3; Tatlow 1977, 209-10).

Brecht probably had a greater knowledge of Chinese opera, which he saw in Moscow in 1935. It is after this experience that Brecht started to develop his theory of alienation, or, at least, started to describe it this way: in 1936 he published the essay 'Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting', in which he explored the stage techniques of Chinese opera especially in relation to the Western acting style based in psychology and introspection. If Hauptmann were right in affirming that Brecht never read Zeami, but only 'heard of him', any connection between theories of detachment of the actor from the character, which would be later developed in the theory of *Verfremdung*, and Zeami's thoughts on *monomane* (imitation), introduced by Waley in the introduction of the first edition of *The Noh Plays of Japan* (Waley 1921, 25), would be a conjecture not grounded in facts. It must be added that the first translations of Zeami's treatises were, in fact, German, but would not have been available to the European public before

²⁶ The reference is to the edition of the Chinese poems translated by Fenollosa and published by Pound as *Cathay* (1915).

²⁷ Oba Masaharu (1984, 18-20) has documented in detail the phases of the translation process.

1934.²⁸

Tanikō

It is within the context of a combination of limited knowledge of Noh but great motivation drawn from its similitude with the concept of *Lehrstück* that Brecht produced his adaptation of the Noh *Tanikō* ('The Valley Rite', attributed to Konparu Zenchiku), composed in the form of the 'school operas' *Der Jasager* and *Der Neinsager* (1929-30), and based on Elizabeth Hauptmann's translation of Arthur Waley's translation of the Japanese text. Unlike his predecessors, Brecht did not write essays on Noh, and because deprived of the experience of watching Noh on stage, its performance aesthetics did not seem to attract him as much as the moral message of its texts did. According to Tatlow's reconstruction, it was Kurt Weill, author of the music for a number of Brecht's plays, who first discovered Hauptmann's translation in the magazine *Der Scheinwerfer*, and suggested Brecht adapt it for one of his *Lehrstücke*.²⁹

The tortuous journey of the original script to Brecht, through Waley and Hauptmann, yielded significant modifications of the text. Exploring the transition from the Japanese text to Brecht through Waley, it will be possible to shed light on a new, politicised form of the reception of Noh in Europe. The background of *Tanikō* is the world of the *yamabushi*, mountain hermits affiliated with sects of esoteric Buddhism (*mikkyō*), whose activities comprise the practice of austerities also known as *shugendō*. In the Noh play, a *yamabushi* visits the house of Matsuwaka, one of his young disciples, announcing that his group is about to depart for a journey to the mountains where they will undertake ascetic practices. Despite his young age and the peril of the journey, Matsuwaka decides to leave his sick mother at home with the hope that his prayers will help her recover. However, during the trip the pupil falls ill, jeopardising the integrity of the pilgrimage. The rule (*daihō*) of the *yamabushi* community decrees that whoever should fall ill during such sacred pilgrimage shall be executed by being hurled into the valley and stoned to death. Despite initial reluctance, the master has to give in and explain this rule to Matsuwaka, who welcomes his death with the sole regret of leaving

²⁸ Hermann Böhner's translation of the *Kyū-I* ('Nine Ranks'), published in 1933, was only available in Japan. The same treatise was translated and published the following year, this time in Europe, by Oscar Benl. See Ortolani (2001).

²⁹ Tatlow includes an excerpt of a statement by Weill (in German), quoted in (Steinweg 1972, 29) originally printed in *Die Szene*, XX, 1930 p.23, in which the musician explains how the pedagogical content of *Tanikō* suggested Brecht and him to produce an adaptation of the Noh in the form of 'school opera'. See (Tatlow 1977, 181).

his sick mother alone. After having executed the child, the master feels so depressed that he would also like to join Matsuwaka in death, and he receives the sympathy of his companions, who decide to bring the boy back to life by summoning En no Gyōja, the legendary founder of the *yamabushi* sect, and Fudō Myō-ō, a central deity of esoteric Buddhism helping humanity to reach salvation. At this point, the spirit of En no Gyōja appears and declares himself willing to grant their wish: he in turn summons Gigaku no Kijin, the fierce god of Gigaku, who flies down the valley, removes the rocks that bury the child and returns him to his master.³⁰

Arthur Waley's translation presents one main discrepancy from the original text: his version ends with the execution of the child, while a footnote summarises in a few lines the entire second half of the play, where the Gigaku no Kijin enters and rescues the child.³¹ The first half has also been severely cut: all references to Buddhist practices that are not only the background of the narration but also the foundation of the underlying moral of the play have been deleted. In the original play, the prayers of the monks summon divine powers that bring the sick, yet courageous child back to life, while in Waley's version the boy is coldly killed. Waley went as far as censoring certain lines, such as those where Matsuwaka accepts his death with resignation and his companions reluctantly accompany him to death. The result of these cuts is a 'secularised' version of the play, purged from all religious references to the concepts of the impermanence of life and the cycle of reincarnation, particularly strong in the original text; Waley also deprived the other monks, who in fact do not appear as monks but as unspecified 'pilgrims', from all compassion for the loss of their young and courageous fellow.³² Moreover, the choice to hurl the pupil down the valley appears to be gratuitously cruel, whereas it must be pointed out that esoteric Buddhism conceived of ritual killing, and was perhaps also influenced by Shinto concepts of purity, by which during a period of austerities sickness could not be tolerated. It is not difficult to realise how for a small community living in isolation the spreading of a disease would endanger the whole group, hence the decision to execute the sick boy is not completely unreasonable.³³

The original story is an excellent example of the complexity of the religious

³⁰ This synopsis is based on Royall Tyler's translation in Keene (1970).

³¹ Although literarily less interesting than the first, the second half of the performance actually includes the most interesting action, with both En no Gyōja and the god entering the stage in rather eye-catching attire, wearing respectively a mask for fierce, elderly supernatural beings such as *hanakobu-akujō* or *washibana-akujō* and a demon mask such as *shikami*. This was unknown to Waley.

³² Waley does include some information on Japanese Buddhism and on its role in the Noh plays in the appendix 'Note on Buddhism' of *The Noh Plays of Japan*, yet this does not seem to have a specific impact on his version of *Tanikō*.

³³ On the origin of ritual violence in Buddhism, see Faure (2008, 36-39).

world of Medieval Japan, subsuming elements of Shinto, Buddhism and Confucianism. Although the frame of the story and its main characters fit within the sphere of *mikkyō*, the moral virtues extolled principally belong to the Confucian system. What seems to have attracted the attention of Waley is a double theme of Confucian nature: on the one hand, filial piety moving the son to give up his own life to cure the sick mother; on the other hand, acceptance of the authority of the rule and selfless acquiescence to the death sentence. Once the Shinto god Gigaku no Kijin, summoned by the spirit of the Buddhist hermit En no Gyōja, recovers the little Matsuwaka, he compliments his virtue in Confucian terms: ‘I am moved at the sight of such ardent filial piety’.³⁴

Waley’s translations are usually rich in poetic passages, and his stark rendition of *Tanikō* is a sign of his intention to deliver the moral of the play in a *political*, rather than in a *poetic* way. Inspired by the theme of the sacrifice of the individual for the greater good of the community, Waley seems to have found a way to deliver socialist ideals through the translation of this Noh play. The unadorned style and the brisk exchanges of Waley’s *Tanikō* seem to anticipate the style of Brecht’s adaptation: Waley got rid of the passages where the *yamabushi* priest reflects on the nature of the world in Buddhist terms, referring to the flash-like brevity of existence, and the desires and attachments that bind humans to this existential plane as obstacles to enlightenment (Keene 1970, 325). If approached from a Buddhist perspective, the death or loss of Matsuwaka is accepted by the mother, the teacher, and the child himself as part of the chain of existence that extends beyond the incumbent facts (Tatlow 1977, 183).³⁵ Eliminating the positive conclusion of the original script, a feature of the large majority of Noh plays that leaves a sense of fulfilment and reconciliation in the audience, Waley transformed *Tanikō* in something akin to a Greek tragedy, where the protagonist is forced to accept his own impending doom. In the original text, the execution of the child is certainly considered a horrible fact by the monks, yet there is no discussion of its righteousness: it is simply accepted as organic part of existence. However, Waley’s extensive knowledge of Japanese religion would lead one to think that the elimination

³⁴ ‘*Zenzai zenzai, kōkō setsunaru. Kokoro wo kanzuru zo tote*’. The identity of Gigaku no Kijin is still unclear. Sanari Kentarō’s entry in *Yōkyoku taikan* does not specify the nature this character (Sanari 1930, 3:1937f). I personally contacted translator Royall Tyler who could not provide additional information. *Tanikō* is rarely performed, hence has not been studied with the same thoroughness as other major plays. Gigaku is a form of masked dance-drama imported from India through China and Korea since the seventh century and does not seem to have any relation to the plot. There might be a possibility that the character in the Noh play was inspired by the attire of a demon in the Gigaku tradition, from which Noh also derives.

³⁵ The theme of acceptance and resignation to various kinds of sacrifice for the higher good and for the larger plan is not exclusive to *Tanikō*: other Noh plays that deal with a similar topic are *Atsumori*, *Fujito*, *Funa-Benkei* and *Yuya*.

of the conclusion was intentional and not the result of a misunderstanding. Without a more faithful treatment of the first half, the syncretism of the second part would not have made much sense, therefore Waley decided to remove it entirely. One other reason for the ‘cut’ which should not be overlooked, is the content of the (shorter) second ‘act’ of the play, less interesting on the literary plane but much more rich on the performative plane, featuring the entrance of En no Gyōja and the lively dance (*maibataraki*) of the Gigaku no Kijin. Especially in plays of the fifth category like *Tanikō*, the second half is usually occupied by dance rather than by declamation or dialogue, but these are facts that Waley could hardly know simply because he never attended a Noh performance.

It now appears clearer how Brecht could have sympathised with a play that seemed to offer an ethics very close to his own belief. However, as Tatlow documents, Brecht’s relation with the sacrifice of the child was not without trouble: between 1929 and 1930 he wrote three versions of *Tanikō* (*Der Jasager*, a second version of *Der Jasager*, *Der Neinsager*) and a fourth play heavily influenced by *Tanikō*, *Die Massnahme* (Tatlow 1977, 182).³⁶ All four plays are centred upon the idea of consent and require the participants’ response in the form of assent or dissent in order to be concluded. In fact, Brecht re-wrote *Der Jasager* after the group of school children that took part in the performance showed their dissatisfaction with the conclusion. As a response to this negative feedback, Brecht wrote *Der Neinsager*, in which the pupil refuses to accept the ‘Great Custom’ and returns home covered with shame, and the second version of the *Jasager*, which incorporated elements from the first version and from the *Neinsager*.³⁷ The two plays became a set, (*Der Jasager/Der Neinsager*) with the possibility to choose between the two conclusions according to the will of the participants. However, according to John Willett’s report, it is unclear whether the two pieces were actually ever performed together (Willett 1977, 38).

If compared with Waley’s translation, the *Jasager* appears to be even less

³⁶ Although not an elaboration of a Noh play *per se*, in *Die Massnahme* the theme of self-effacement for the sake of the communal good is expressed in even stronger terms. As *Der Jasager*, the play deals with the theme of self-sacrifice, committed in order to recover from a situation that will jeopardise the good of the greater ideal, in this case the teaching of Communism in China. However, the guilt of the Young Comrade, victim of the *Massnahme*, does not come from an external source, such as the illness of the Boy in *Der Jasager*, but from his own insistence in wanting to solve the contingent problems of the poor coolies instead of keeping the promises he made to his comrades. His major guilt is giving in to pity and compassion, acting out of individual instinct, and not being able to see the larger picture of the Communist revolutionary plan. The Control Chorus speaks: ‘The individual has only two eyes / The Party has a thousand eyes’, as the Three Agitators remind the Young Comrade: ‘Your revolution will end when you end. / But when you have come to your end / Our revolution will continue (Brecht 1990: 29, 28).

³⁷ For more details on the chronology of the writing see Tatlow (1977:182).

ornate, almost reduced to the formal rigour of military language. Several novelties are introduced, mostly aimed at justifying its conclusion: the child's mother is not simply sick, but a disease that has broken out in the village where they live; hence, the group of monks here becomes a group of students on an expedition to reach beyond the mountains where great doctors live. Besides these modifications, which have the sole purpose of making the story consistent, Brecht introduces one simple, yet powerful element: before the child is put to death, he is asked to consent to the execution as a part of the ritual. It is customary to ask, as it is to give one's assent, and so the child does. In *Der Jasager* the child would simply be 'left behind', but since he is afraid to die alone he demands his companions kill him by hurling him into the valley instead (Brecht 1990, 68). What is particularly strong in this new element is the introduction of freedom to decide one's destiny. In Brecht's narrative, the child's virtue is even stronger as he has the choice to refuse to give his life for the sake of the great custom, yet he decides to die. This infamous destiny is not unavoidable as fate in Greek tragedy could be: the child willingly decides to comply with the established practice, as he understands that this sacrifice will be for both the health of his companions, and for the good of his mother. The self is immolated partially to the greater good of the community and partially for a more personal reason. Brecht's version does not seem to reach the extreme degree of selflessness suggested in the original play, where the boy accepts the life-sentence even knowing that he will not be able to pray for the health of his mother, and no one else would be able to do it on his behalf.³⁸ In the Japanese version there is no question about this matter as it is understood within the frame of the Buddhist law (*buppō*) which could be seen as the real *daihō*, the 'great law' or 'great custom' of the play, as the Master cries: 'All things shift with the changing world / Like dreams and wraiths, foam, light and shade, / Like dew or the lightning flash. / Every man must know this truth' (Tyler in Keene 1970, 325).³⁹ The plays depend upon a very different ethical basis: while Brecht wanted to extol the virtue of self-sacrifice for the greater good, and the compliance to the rule of the of the community, *Tanikō* teaches that there is no escape from the way of this fleeting world, but also that being virtuous and trusting the law of Buddha will eventually lead to salvation, as happens through the prayers of the monks and the intervention of En no Gyōja.

Brecht expands the new element of 'freedom of choice' in the *Neinsager*, where

³⁸ In the Japanese version the group is not seeking medicine, they are instead undertaking a shamanic pilgrimage.

³⁹ From the Hōshō school text.

he portrays the scenario in which the child refuses to be killed, providing rather practical reasons for this: ‘I wanted to get medicine for my mother, but now I myself have fallen ill, so it is no longer possible. And because of the altered situation I want to turn back at once’ (1990, 78). The companions seem to be convinced of this argument and accept his decision (‘What the boy says is reasonable, though it is not heroic [...] We will turn back and neither shame nor disgrace shall deter us from doing the reasonable thing, nor shall any old Custom prevent us from accepting an idea that is right’), although the chorus does not seem to be of the same mind (‘Side by side they walked together / Towards calumny / Towards ridicule, with their eyes open / None more cowardly than his neighbour) (1990, 79). The point of this negative re-working of the *Jasager* is in fact that going against prescribed rules is a revolutionary act of heroism: ‘What I need is a new Great Custom to be introduced at once, to wit, the Custom of rethinking every new situation’ (1990, 79), and the moral of the play could be seen as an exhortation to dissent against what has been taken for granted, and react against what the ruling class has established as universal and incontrovertible norm. This reading of the play would reflect a different aspect of Brecht’s revolutionary thought, by which not only selflessness, but also the capability to overthrow unjust canons imposed by the ruling class is considered as crucial.

It must be noted that other Noh plays may lay stronger emphasis on choice and on internal struggle, as in the case of Sasaki Moritsuna deciding to kill the fisherman in *Fujito*: in which, as Andrew Gerstle put it, ‘although the context is Buddhistic, the ultimate choice is humanistic’ (Gerstle 1994, 220). Western commentators who dismiss Noh plays as being ‘plot-less’ (Aston 1899, 203) because devoid of Aristotelian tragedy simply do not conceive of a psychological struggle that does not take place *in* but *between* the verses. It comes as no surprise that Waley himself held classical Greek dramaturgy in higher regard than Noh (Waley 1921, 55): being ignorant of Noh as performance he could not but fail to realise the immense importance of dance in the staging of Noh, in which at the moment of highest dramatic tension narration ceases, giving room to dance. What Waley, among others, ignored was the fact that Noh dance is not simply an ornament, but the dramatic core of Noh plays.⁴⁰

Brecht constitutes a particular case in the reception of Noh in the West as his experience differed greatly from that of his contemporaries. This is because of his very limited exposure to Noh. Unlike Pound or Yeats, who were part of literary circles

⁴⁰ While this might be true for Noh such as *Fujito*, the more ‘primitive’ dramaturgy of *Taniko*, actually closer to that of a moral parable, does not leave much room for such dramatic psychological insight.

attended by Japanese, Brecht had no direct contact with anyone who could share the experience of Noh; his knowledge was literary but far from being specialist. His attempt at using techniques, such as ‘alienation’ effects, that could have been common to Noh – but also to other forms of Asian theatre in general – probably did not derive from direct exposure to these forms of theatre (with the exception of Chinese opera), but from intermediate sources such as, in the case of *Tanikō*, Hauptmann’s translations. Besides certain aesthetic aspects of dramaturgy that might have been borrowed from Noh, Brecht focused on the moral message that he could evince from the reading of the translation of *Tanikō*.⁴¹

However, in the comparison of *Der Jasager* and *Der Neinsager* diametrically opposite positions emerge: while *Der Jasager* extols the virtue of discipline and self-sacrifice for the greater good, *Der Neinsager* urges us to reconsider tradition and not to indulge in passive acceptance, but instead to question all assumptions. Brecht revolutionised *Tanikō* by introducing the ‘freedom’ element in the story, and he probably did so with the hope of provoking discussion upon the most basic ethical question – ‘What am I to do?’ In the original Japanese text, freedom is not expressed in the straight-forward way Brecht puts it, yet this does not mean it is not contemplated: the leader first attempts to hide Matsuwaka’s illness, then the pilgrims discuss the necessity to follow the ‘great rule’. The difference lies in the fact that no option is given to the child, yet it appears natural that in fourteenth century Japan a group of well-motivated monks would not rely on the opinion of a child when facing such a crucial question. Moreover, if freedom is a necessary condition of ethical responsibility, the child of *Tanikō* expresses it by accepting his death without complaint, thus demonstrating his virtue. The filial piety that moved him to venture on a dangerous journey, and the responsibility that made him accept his death are not simply acts of passive submission, but choices to follow the tradition. In Matsuwaka’s case, freedom is not a condition that liberates the individual from the constraints of society, but a chance to reinforce one’s position within society by acting according to the good nature of filial piety, therefore *Tanikō* would appear, to put it in Brecht’s terms, ‘an aid to discipline, which is the basis of freedom’ (Brecht 2001, 32), but an idea very close to the one

⁴¹ A synthesis of these dramatic elements is arranged by Andrzej Wirth (1971). However, it must be specified that one of the recurrent elements in the comparison of Noh with Brecht’s alienation techniques is the claim that in Noh plays the lines freely switch from first to third person singular. Japanese grammar does not have declinations or any form or particle or ending of verb indicating the person speaking, nor does it always include the subject of a sentence. The result is a grammatical structure less rigid than most European languages, allowing a sentence to shift freely from one character to the other without inconsistencies in form or content.

expressed in the *Kokutai no hongi* that seeks moral freedom in service of the community.⁴²

After *Der Neinsager*, Brecht returned to the first version of *Der Jasager* and revised it, which might indicate dissatisfaction with the reaction of the school children, as Tatlow reports (1977, 183-4). *Der Neinsager* ends in shame, and there is no positive outcome to the decision of the boy to deny consent. Brecht might have written out of the democratic spirit that he professed in the plays, yet he might not have believed in the ending of *Der Neinsager*. As Roswitha Mueller points out

Brecht [...] was unwilling to scrap the attitude of self-sacrifice in its original context; instead, he shifted the emphasis in the whole play just enough to prepare for the notion that individual sacrifice can also be meaningless, that unreflected acquiescence is the opposite of the desired dialectical attitude (Mueller 2007, 113).

This leads one to think that the moral message of *Der Jasager* failed to elicit a unanimous, positive response in the context in which it was introduced: Andrzej Wirth notes how the imposition of the rule and the spirit of self-sacrifice paradoxically ended up being adopted by Fascists, and criticized by the Left (Wirth 1971, 613). The problem of coherence or truthfulness to the original text did not interest Brecht, as his work on *Tanikō* was far from being an exoticised practice. There is no mention of Noh in Brecht's later works and one is left to wonder whether he might have re-encountered the Noh at a later stage of his career. Brecht passed away in 1957, the year in which Jean-Louis Barrault and others had the privilege to attend one of the first performances of Noh in the West in history, the dawn of a new era of intercultural exchange between Europe and Japan.

⁴² It would be worth expanding this topic by contrasting the nature of 'freedom' and 'responsibility' in Confucianism and Buddhism on one hand, and in Marxism and Fascism on the other. A debate of Brecht's interpretation of the Japanese ethics has been introduced by Oba Masaharu (1984 – only in German).

Chapter Five: Noh in Post-War Japan

The Socio-political condition of Japan after WWII

With its defeat in the Second World War on 15 August 1945 Japan underwent a second period of radical change after the Meiji restoration. During the American occupation (1945-52) led by General Douglas MacArthur, Japan was transformed from a country perceiving the threat of Western imperialism to a country under the fatherly patronage of its sworn enemy: the USA. The special relationship between the once antagonist countries helped the exceptionally rapid economic development of Japan until the 1970s, when the country acquired political independence and the American influence began to loosen up.

The dramatic changes that Japan underwent after the issue of the Imperial Rescript accepting the Potsdam declaration can be generally described as the attempt to transform its political system into that of a ‘modern Western country’. The USA sought to eradicate any possible breeding ground for revolt, transforming Japan into a faithful ally that could play a strategic role in the upcoming Cold War. With the 3 May 1947 constitution, inspired by the American model (Duus 2008, 6:8), came a reform of education that emphasised democratic values and human rights (Khan 1998, 96-101; Inoue 2001, 81-109). As the Emperor gave up any claim to divine descent, a democratic regime was established and political parties acquired more importance. Within a few years, the values on which the nationalist government had insisted in the pre-war period were overthrown: traditional hierarchy was replaced by democracy (Befu 2001, 136).¹ Inoue has described how the reform of education played a crucial role in the dissemination of the new morality of individual right imposed by the Americans. However, as has been pointed out in Chapter Three, traditional ethics had started to coalesce with imported philosophy since the *bunmei kaika* period, later through Nitobe’s teaching of *jinkaku* (‘individuality’) and finally with the development of the so-called ‘Taishō democracy’. In this post-war phase of the development of a new national ethics, the concept of *jinkaku* as described by Nitobe, in which society at once

¹ The concept of the East as governed by despotic authoritarianism, where church and state are not separated, is an important component of the Orientalist discourse, substantiated in the West by the concept of social mobility of liberalism and utilitarianism (Turner 1994, 96-98).

appears to be meritocratic yet elitist, took the more democratic connotation of *ningensei* ('humanity'). Though pre-war literature described assimilation and 'japanisation' of foreign thought as a feature of national character, this process of coalescence of the 'local' with the 'imported' did not prove to be fully effective. Shmuel Eisenstadt has pointed out that, despite the introduction of democracy, Japan maintained the leadership of the elitist central bureaucracy that manipulated the masses creating consensus (Eisenstadt 1998, 84): the newly-acquired 'modern' way of liberalism and capitalism met the traditional social substratum based on strong hierarchy resulting in phenomena such as the blurring of social classes, and weak class consciousness (1998, 73-4).² In Khan's opinion, the incongruence of democratic and Confucian values generated a condition of ethical confusion that cannot be resolved so long as Japan continues to endorse individualism in its educational programmes (Khan 1998, 210).

Ruth Benedict and the popularisation of Japanese ethics

The US government that imposed major social and political changes based much of its knowledge of the country on information gathered and elaborated by the anthropologist Ruth Benedict, who, in June 1944, was asked to produce a social profile of Japan in order to predict their reaction to what appeared to be inevitable defeat and subsequent occupation. Benedict's study, published under the title *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946) was a scientific attempt to decipher the 'mysterious Japanese mind' through ethnographic research. However, Benedict performed her research without even visiting the country, drawing her primary information from interviews with Japanese expatriates living in America. The book quickly rose to popularity among scholars and general readers alike both in Japan and abroad, its 'winning' characteristic being the consolidation of 'social stereotypes' into scientific literature. Benedict has been criticised by scholars such as Befu Harumi (1992; 2001), who explains how her book has contributed to the creation of 'isomorphic' views of Japan (2001), in which Japanese cultural diversity is ignored in favour of monolithic essentialisation. Similarly, Douglas Lummis points out how, by describing Japanese patterns of behaviour as out of time and space, Benedict associates war not with the perverted ideology of fascism and

² Japan developed an eclectic combination of capitalist economics and Confucian-influenced work ethics. Duus indicates how paternalistic principles of factory management that remained unchanged since the Meiji industrial revolution grew even stronger during the economic development phase of the 1950s and 1960s (2008, 6:24-5).

imperialism, but with the very nature of the Japanese character, of which war appears to be a natural consequence (Lummi 2007). However, the point should be made that, if Benedict based much of her knowledge on her Japanese informants, they might be bearing half of the merit or demerit for the outcome of the book.³

Inconceivable contradictions

Benedict introduces the Japanese as a people of many contradictions: unmovable yet sensitive, moral yet hedonist, loyal yet treacherous, and grounds much of her research on the comparison between the Japanese and the Americans. A consistent feature of the book is its description of how, despite the Confucian-based ethics of moral indebtedness and absolute loyalty to one's superior, the Japanese also possess the ability to change and adapt to new conditions in a surprisingly quick way. This peculiar aptitude for pliability could have been easily misunderstood as a feature of the treacherous character with which they had been often depicted by anti-Japanese war propaganda. How was it possible that a people untamed for centuries, who would fulfil revenge even at the cost of life would now accept submission to the foreign occupant? Benedict explains this saying that 'socially effective' means of Western education for dealing with sin were punishment and humiliation, while the Japanese acknowledged their faults observing the results of their misdeeds: in their ethics, humiliation gives good right to revenge (Benedict 2005, 306-7). Hence, the USA should not fear retaliation: as long as they are treated with respect the Japanese will be faithful allies. Benedict faced the problem of explaining to the American government the unexpected reaction of the Japanese to their military defeat, when they had apparently transformed themselves from kamikaze to friendly allies overnight. 'Japan's real strength', wrote Benedict, '[...] lies in her ability to say of a course of action, "That failed", and then to throw her energies into other channels. The Japanese have an ethic of alternatives' (Benedict 2005, 304).

The Chrysanthemum and the Sword lacks the informed gaze of the area specialist: instead of delving into the religious aspects of Japanese ethics, Benedict essentialises the subject matter by setting Japanese morals against Western Christian

³ One could argue that the underlying racism of Benedict's book suffers from the influence exerted of the autochthonous *nihonjinron* discourse that developed with the rise of nationalism, epitomised by Nitobe Inazo – in Benedict's words 'one of the most benevolent men in Japan' – who in *Bushido* stated that 'in revenge there is something that satisfies one's sense of Justice. Our sense of revenge is as exact as our mathematical faculty and until both terms of the equation are satisfied we cannot get over the sense of something left undone' (2005, 161).

values.⁴ Frequently referring to historian George Sansom, Benedict asserts that the ineffable essence of the Japanese mind, in which contrasting principles appear to coexist as a fact of nature, was due to their alleged ‘incapacity to discern’ between good and evil (2005, 190, 197-8). Their understanding of correct and incorrect behaviour did not depend on the law of god, but on the law of what Benedict calls the ‘circle of human feelings’.⁵ In order to explain this unfamiliar ethical system, Benedict takes as example folk tales featuring ethical dilemmas for their protagonists, stuck between individual feelings and social commitments (*ninjō/giri*), usually ending in tragedy. In Chapter 11, ‘The Dilemma of Virtue’, Benedict refers to ‘folk novels and plays’, such as *Tale of the Forty-Seven Ronin*, portrayed in the famous Kabuki play *Chūshingura*, in which a group of loyal retainers carry out revenge upon the lord who insulted their master, only to eventually submit to the law and commit ritual suicide (2005, 198-205). This was Benedict’s only substantial reference to Japanese theatre, and it should be observed that the association of Japanese ethics, in terms of the circle of retribution and vendetta, with Kabuki would have major consequences for cultural policy during the years of the occupation. The alleged ‘ignorance of good and evil’ of the Japanese is still at the heart of ethical dilemmas, as Benedict articulates in her signature distinction between ‘shame’ and ‘guilt’ cultures, in which she argues that Western countries understood the lack of virtue as guilt, or as a consequence of a misdeed against the law of God. Knowing no real distinction between good and evil, the Japanese know no guilt, yet they feel shame, as their self-respect depends not on the judgment of a god, but on the ‘gaze the other’ (2005, 222-7).⁶

The only possible way to understand Japanese moral rigour was to enquire into their methods of self-discipline, which Benedict affirms at the outset as being underdeveloped in the USA (2005, 229). Here the merit of the book is that of being able to formalise what others had only hinted at: a clear, albeit oversimplified, East-West comparison of the notion of individualism versus selflessness. This underlying concept would see Western cultures as acting out of interest, by which things done at sacrifice are treated as investments that one would expect to have paid back at some point. The

⁴ Because Confucian values provided a more favourable ground for the discussion of ethics, Benedict did not venture in the analysis of how Buddhism might provide a distinction of ‘good’ and ‘evil’, for example in the form of ‘knowledge’ and ‘ignorance’.

⁵ This concept had also been introduced by Waley, who claimed that ‘Zen denied the existence of Good and Evil’ (Waley 1998, 32).

⁶ Certainly the concept of a cycle of retribution discussed in the ‘Dilemma of Virtue’ chapter belongs more to Buddhism than Confucianism, but one should justify Benedict in her attempt to resolve the intricate Japanese religious syncretism for the sake of the readability of her essay.

Japanese also act in accordance to a reciprocity that has been already described in the cycle of obligations, yet their selfless services are not seen as ‘sacrifices’. As one of Benedict’s interviewees affirms: ‘No matter how many things we actually give up for others, we do not think that this giving elevates us spiritually or that we should be ‘rewarded’ for it’ (2005, 232-3). Once again, the distinction between Japanese and American ethics appears to be of religious nature, although Benedict’s treatment here is rather simplistic: it is difficult to deny that, for example, the good Christian would act not out of self-interest but out of love for the neighbour.⁷

From this common level of self-discipline, Benedict moves to describe the degree of ‘expertness’, embodied by religious devotees as well as artists such as painters, masters of tea ceremony and actors. Associating Zen with the arts that flourished under its influence, such as Noh and tea ceremony (2005, 242,8), Benedict centres the discussion of the ‘self’ on concepts different from those used in the description of Confucian virtue, exemplified by the ‘forty-seven ronin’ legend. Besides re-stating the importance of reciprocity, Benedict specifically focuses on the concept of *muga* (lit. ‘no-self’),

the word used in the flourishing upper-class cult of Zen Buddhism. The description of this state of expertness is that it denotes those experiences, whether secular or religious, when ‘there is no break, not even the thickness of a hair’ between a man’s will and his act’. [...] The act is effortless. It is ‘one-pointed’. The deed completely reproduces the picture the actor had drawn of it in his mind (2005, 235-6).

Benedict discusses Zen in rather positive terms, pointing out how the self-discipline it teaches is substantially lacking in the West. Besides, the experience of *muga* as a holistic condition of overcoming the self and, with it, the boundary between self and other, belongs both to religious mysticism and to artistic experience, as in the case of the theatregoer who completely loses himself in the performance (2005, 248). Art is certainly not predominant in Benedict’s research, yet some tangential references to theatre in relation to ethics might have supported the association of Kabuki with loyalty, murder and suicide, and Noh with spirituality and self-effacement.

⁷ Since Benedict often refers specifically to the USA, and not to the West in general, it might be argued that this description of interest vs. disinterest in self-sacrifice is particularly relevant not to Franciscan ideals, but to puritan work ethics, in which economic success is a sign of Grace.

The ethics of censorship

Benedict's association of Kabuki with moral themes was not her invention, but part of a lasting narrative epitomised by Hearn's writings. Supported by such authoritative sources, the central role of theatre as a form of popular moral education did not go unnoticed by the occupying US government: as the American post-surrender policy started to affect aspects of public life, all arts that could have been associated with the previous government underwent strict censorship. In his dedicated study, Okamoto Shirō has reported how the occupying forces' offices issued specific rules against Kabuki. The 22 September 1945 document of this series reads:

Kabuki drama, with its feudalistic codes of loyalty and its treatment of revenge, is not suitable for the modern world. As long as treason, murder, fraud, etc., are publicly justified, and individuals seeking revenge take the law into their own hands are permitted to be shown, [sic] the Japanese people will be unable to understand the fundamental behaviour governing international relations in the modern world. Western logic is predicated upon the distinction between good and evil, and is not dependent on a people's or race's sense of feudal loyalty. In order to assume their place among the nations of the world, the Japanese people must acquire – through the entertainment and news media – the fundamental ideals of a nation based on universal suffrage, respect for individuals, and mutual respect among nations (in Okamoto 2001, 48-49).

The General Headquarters document appears to be the practical execution of Benedict's argument on Japanese morality and its manifestation in folk arts, with a specific emphasis on how the values depicted in Kabuki belong not just to a local, but to a universal past: if Benedict's research maintained a certain ambiguity, the legal text is clearly stating that Japan needs to do away with an underdeveloped tradition in order to be accepted by the (Western) 'modern' world. Ancient Japan was wrong, and its representation must be abolished.⁸

However, according to other accounts, what Okamoto records is a mere declaration of intent. In a recent study, James Brandon attempts to clarify the roles of Shōchiku, Kabuki's major producer, and that of the American censors. As Brandon highlights, it was Shōchiku who retained the initiative, proposing programmes of which only a small percentage was rejected, and resisting any attempted 'democratisation' of the repertoire, an American plan that failed completely (Brandon 2006, 3). Within two

⁸ Okamoto contextually reports how censors later circulated a list of specific themes to be banned from productions, such as vendetta, nationalism, warlike behaviour, feudal loyalty, praise of militarism, approval of suicide, death, cruelty or the triumph of evil, anti-democracy, praising personal devotion to a state, national, race, the Emperor or the Imperial Household.

years of the end of the war the major ban on Kabuki was lifted and Shōchiku, whose primary interest was the conservation of tradition, despite the turn away from wartime morals, could resume its productions (2006, 79). Eventually, resistance from post-war modernisation led to the opposite consequence of fossilising the Kabuki genre, which became ‘a crucial counterweight to an objective reading of history that spoke of national failure’ (2006, 80). Instead of projecting into a new age of renovation, Kabuki asserted its identity by retreating to its most traditional roots, an attitude which was partially followed by scholars who after the war looked back at Zeami as the authentic origin of Noh.

Censorship and Noh theatre

The censorship that struck Kabuki also touched other genres such as Kabuki-derived *shimpa* and, unsurprisingly, *shingeki*, inspired by Russian authors and socialist realism. However, the American censors did not seem to be equally stringent with Noh theatre, which was not discussed in the documents analysed by Okamoto. The obvious reason for attacking Kabuki was its overt endorsement of the imperialist regime and military expansionism, which was unequivocally extolled and beautified in performance throughout the decades of the rise of nationalism, until the surrender.⁹ However, there might be additional reasons for the censors to have avoided targeting Noh: firstly, it does not beautify vendetta the way Kabuki does. With the exception of the ‘Soga brothers’ plays, Noh focuses on the dissipation of anger and resentment through the reconciliation of contrasting characters.¹⁰ This is the case with plays where angry ghosts torment living beings, such as *Aoi no Ue*, where thanks to the prayer of a *yamabushi*¹¹ the vengeful spirit of Lady Rokujo no Miyasudokoro reaches enlightenment in life (*sokushin jōbutsu*). It is also the case in warrior plays such as *Atsumori*, where the young warrior finds peace in the reconciliation with his own murderer, Kumagae Jirō Naozane, or *Funa Benkei*, where the horde of vengeful ghosts led by Taira no Tomomori who were killed in a naval battle by the Genji army is defeated by the

⁹ Especially see Brandon (2009). Kabuki actors travelled to Italy and met Mussolini, with whom they discussed cultural exchange through the medium of theatre (Thornbury 2001, 216-17).

¹⁰ The *Soga Monogatari* epic has inspired the authors of many famous Noh, Kabuki and Bunraku plays, and recounts how two brothers, Soga Jūrō and Soga Gorō vindicated the assassination of their father by killing one of the Shogun Minamoto no Yoritomo during a mountain hunt. The representation of the Soga tale in traditional theatre has been explored by L. Komintz (1995).

¹¹ Priest-warrior belonging to esoteric Buddhism sects.

mystical powers of Minamoto no Yoshitsune's bodyguard, the *yamabushi* Benkei. Although Buddhism endorsed military initiatives in the pre-war period, its role in Noh plays is unequivocally that of bringing peace and reconciliation by elevating the individual above feelings of hatred and revenge.¹² Another reason why Noh avoided censorship could have been its alleged non-realism. The American censors were certainly not Kabuki experts – Okamoto (2001, 52) explains how they were provided with synopses of the plays by the Shōchiku production company – yet they could sense how the 'hyper-realism' of Kabuki, that during the war treated contemporary subjects, was a much stronger means of diffusion of what they considered immoral messages. Lastly, the fact is that the US was not interested in uprooting institutional cultural representations as much as they were in eradicating anti-democratic notions at the level of mass entertainment, that is, Kabuki and cinema. Moreover, while Kabuki was a popular art with a controversial past, suppressing a symbol of national identity such as Noh would have represented the kind of blow to the dignity of Japanese tradition that Benedict cautiously suggested avoiding.

An American legacy

The Chrysanthemum and the Sword described the paradoxical condition of post-war occupation with foresight. As the USA took control of the country, establishing new morals and imposing restrictive measures on traditional arts, some of the members of its intelligence service operating in the 'enemy field' discovered the beauty of Japanese arts and became its greatest scholars and interpreters. As Brandon pointed out, Faubion Bowers, 'the man who saved Kabuki' (Okamoto 2001), was only one among the censors who fell in love with Japan (Brandon 2006, 17), and indeed many of the most prominent Western scholars of Japanese theatre who worked and published after the war, among them Donald Keene, Earle Ernst and later James Brandon encountered Japan while serving in the army. With this new generation of scholars came a shift of interest in Western scholarship on Japanese theatre from Noh to Kabuki, which became a centre of attention during the years of the occupation. In his *Japanese Theatre* (1952), Faubion Bowers argued that Noh plays 'have perhaps been unduly emphasized by

¹² An exception is *Tamura*, in which the intervention of the bodhisattva *Kannon* (Sanskrit: Avalokitesvara) significantly contributes to the defeat of the demon-like invaders, that is, the *Ainu* population from the North part of Japan.

Western scholars, to the extent that Noh, to most Westerners, means either all or the best of Japan's theatre. Neither is true' (Bowers 1952, 14-15). It is clear that Bowers was a Kabuki lover and not a Noh expert.¹³ He considered Noh a highly emotional art form (1952, 22), but his intention remained that of changing the perspective from which Western scholarship understood Japanese theatre. It was not difficult for Bowers to build his argument in favour of Kabuki on the already established commonplace that regarded Noh as elitist art when he asserted that the patronage of aristocrats resulted in Noh theatre's concentration 'on refinement, rather than on growth or development along broader lines' (1952, 23). According to him, 'the years have widened the gulf between [Noh] and its origin, and have intensified its artificiality and museum-like mustiness' (1952, 23). Noh and Kyogen occupy only fourteen out of two hundred and ninety-two pages of *Japanese Theatre*, and Bowers makes clear from the very first lines of the preface that 'Kabuki is the dominant type of drama in Japan today, and has been for some three centuries' (Bowers 1952, ix).

While articles and translations continued to be published throughout the 1950s and 1960s, it is not until the 1970s that Western scholarship started to help Noh out of the niche in which it had been confined. In particular Jacob Raz has tried to debunk the myth of aristocratic Noh by providing an analysis of Zeami's treatises that would consider the role of Zeami's father Kan'ami in providing a popular counterbalance to Zeami's new aristocratic patrons (Raz 1976; 1983). As will be shown later, the renewed association of Zeami with the popular origin of Noh had been the objective of Japanese Noh scholars and practitioners from the early 1950s. It is the case of Frank Hoff and Willi Flindt's English translation of Yokomichi Mario's study of the Noh lyric and musical metre (1973), initially published in *Concerned Theatre Japan* (CTJ), the first English-language journal devoted to theatre, whose wide spectrum of topics ranged from contemporary, 'off' performance to classic drama. Later, the work of Monica Bethe, Karen Brazell, Richard Emmert, played a crucial role in the dissemination of Noh to larger audiences, not only producing translations, but specifically looking at ways to document and transmit elements of Noh chant and chorography to non-Japanese audiences (Bethe and Brazell 1986, vol. 1, 2 and 3; Emmert and Bethe 1992).

¹³ On page 15 he wrongly included *Tamura* in the God plays category (instead of Warrior group) *Utō* in the Warrior plays category (instead of 4th group); on page 19 he claimed that during the Meiji period the five traditional schools of Noh disappeared while a sixth school, Umewaka, was created (a branch of the Umewaka family did emerge as prominent and even tried to achieve independence, but it never became a sixth school of its own); on page 21 he mistakes the *kokata* who perform *tsure* roles like Minamoto no Yoshitsune in *Funa Benkei* for *waki* actors.

Until the Second World War Japanese theatre had been by and large the domain of European scholars such as Chamberlain, Waley or Peri. However, after the war Japanese theatre studies flourished in the USA, and a number of American scholars have established new levels of excellence, such as Thomas Hare, Royal Tyler, Thomas Rimer, Samuel Leiter and Mark Nearman, only to name a few. While Great Britain has continued to excel in fine arts, history and literature, the USA developed a specific interest in performance theory that would also influence the field of Japanese theatre. Research centres such as Pomona College, University of Hawai'i, Brooklyn College and the International Theatre Studies Centre (IASTA) at University of Kansas, where the two, usually separate fields of 'Japanese studies' and 'Theatre studies' could coalesce in curricula that gave equal importance to Zeami and Shakespeare, Chikamatsu and Chekov. In the Noh study field, scholars Rebecca Ogamo Teele, Monica Bethe and Richard Emmert went as far as permanently moving to Japan, where they received traditional training and attained various levels of proficiency. These foreigners who began their training in the last decades of the twentieth century constitute the first generation of Noh specialists trained for an extensive period of time according to the traditional methods.

Post-war Noh policy and new visions of Zeami

With the end of the war, Japan entered a new historical phase in which not only national identity would have to be radically reconsidered, but also the image projected in international diplomacy became an absolute priority. If during the Meiji and Taishō periods Noh served the double purpose of representing national identity inside and outside the national boundaries, during the post-war period it underwent a revision in which both scholars and practitioners actively participated. Japan needed a new international identity, and Noh conformed to this transformation.

The Noh establishment did not underestimate the possible impact of the anti-feudal sentiments that accompanied the de-militarisation of the country, and quickly responded with a revision of the institutional role of the art. It became necessary to take a distance from the military spirit with which Noh had been associated throughout the Meiji, Taishō and Showa periods until surrender was proclaimed. Moreover, the extremely poor conditions of the Noh actors, many of whom were left without a stage after the severe bombings of Tokyo, were in need of an institutional policy that could salvage the tangible and intangible patrimony of the families. Eric Rath has described

how immediately after the surrender Noh scholars such as Yokomichi Mario blamed the Tokugawa feudal lords for transforming Noh into an aristocratic and ritualised drama (Rath 2004, 226-27). This attitude is particularly evident in the way Zeami, whose name acquired growing popularity only after his treatises were published in 1909, was reevaluated as ‘father of Noh’, bearer of the ‘original spirit’ which was corrupted with the seizure of power by the samurai class and the institution of the Tokugawa shogunate. The principal aim of this group of scholars was to dissociate Noh from the culture of the military elite that patronised it during the pre-war period.

Watsuji Tetsurō and the ethics of Noh

It is during this period that Watsuji Tetsurō, one of the authors of ultra-nationalist *Kokutai no Hongi*, completed the edition of *Rinrigaku* (‘Ethics’, published in successive volumes in 1937, 1942, 1949), and published a revised version of *Nihon Rinri Shisōshi* (‘History of Japanese Ethical Thought’, 1952). In a section of this latter publication, entitled *Japanese Ethical Thought in the Noh Plays of the Muromachi Period*, Watsuji focused on Zeami’s establishment of the Noh canon, drawing attention to the role of Noh as an effective means of education of the masses throughout the ages.¹⁴ Watsuji was conscious of being part of a current of historical reassessment of Noh, and openly affirmed that:

There may be considerable opposition to the perspective of treating the noh as an expression of the consciousness of the common people of this age. The noh is apt to be regarded as the manifestation of the consciousness of the samurai class. This refers not only to the fact that throughout the Edo period the noh texts and music were in the main preserved under the patronage of the samurai class. Kan’ami (1333-84) and Zeami (1363-1443), the founders of the *sarugaku* noh as literary art, were both patronized by the Ashikaga shogun, Yoshimitsu. If we consider that the patronage of the shogun was a powerful force in the completion of this art, it would seem necessary to regard it as a product of the samurai class, which was represented by the shogun himself. This seems to be the usual way of thinking about the matter. However, this was in actual fact a creation of this art, and not the force which created it. The development of the *sarugaku* noh had already conspicuously advanced before the shogun first saw it. The foundations of its development were the Shinto shrines, Buddhist temples, and the common populace, not the samurai class (Watsuji 1969, 468).

Watsuji seems to reply to views exemplified by Bowers’s claim of the deadliness of the

¹⁴ The material here utilised is from David Dilworth’s translation of Chapter 4, Part IV, Vol. II, p.128-64, published in Watsuji (1969).

aristocratic patronage of Noh, which interrupted the development of an theatre form with popular roots, (Bowers 1952, 23). Here Watsuji reaffirmed Zeami as the origin of Noh, and emphasised the role of Noh in the dissemination of moral examples to the masses: he did not deny that the aristocracy which adopted Noh as court entertainment bore the responsibility for a literary development of the art and its subsequent crystallisation, yet the construction of its ethical core still expressed the consciousness of the common people (1969, 469).

In order to illustrate the ethics of Noh in this new light, Watsuji chose examples from the repertoire that well represented the association of Noh with national cohesion and the Imperial house, while demoting militarism and the anti-democratic hierarchy represented by the samurai class of the Tokugawa period. Watsuji argued that during the Muromachi period ‘Noh, which expresses the consciousness of the common people, gave life to the tradition of veneration of the emperor and the ideal of an ethical nation far more abundantly than did the upper intellectual class represented by Kanera’ (1969, 470).¹⁵

The essay begins with an analysis of the first group plays, also called ‘god-Noh’, in which the Shinto influence is particularly strong. Many of these plays can be seen as eulogies to the Emperor, and in the pre-war period their themes coalesced with nationalist policy. It must be noted that the new constitution decreed the separation of religion and state, and that the Emperor had renounced his direct descent from the sun deity, Amaterasu-no-omikami. Watsuji’s intent here is to explain how praising the Emperor was principally an expression of peace that ‘has no connection with the government of the shogun’ (1969, 471). Plays from this group, such as *Takasago*, *Tsurukame* or *Oimatsu* are replete with passages describing the prosperity of the land and the happiness of the people, an idyllic scenery that contrasts with the closeness of the country and the strictness of rule, consequences of the institution of the feudal regime.

Watsuji proceeds to review Zeami’s warrior plays, largely drawing from the most famous military chronicle of the Heian-Kamakura period, the *Heike Monogatari*, plays in which Zeami celebrated the salvation of restless souls of the fallen instead of celebrating the victory of their opponents: ‘the culture of the time of the imperial court which was expressed in music and in Buddhist incantations seems to have been

¹⁵ Ichijō Kanera (or Kaneyoshi, 1402-1481) was a statesmen and a literate who greatly contributed to the revival of Heian literature in the Muromachi period. Watsuji discusses his life and work in the previous chapter of *History of Japanese Ethical Thought*.

esteemed far more highly than the way of the warriors' (1969, 491). Furthermore, Watsuji insists on the distinction between the samurai ethics of loyalty and the Buddhist ethics of selflessness underlying Zeami's distancing from the original *Heike Monogatari*: 'the fact that the morality of dedication was the core of the way of the warrior, and that it possessed something in common with the reality of selflessness, are points that Zeami does not admit' (1969, 492).¹⁶

A similar treatment is reserved for the fourth group Noh *Fujito*, also taken from an episode of the *Heike Monogatari*, in which a fisherman is killed by the samurai Sasaki Moritsuna after having revealed the location of a ford which will allow the vanguard he leads to reach the opposite shore where the enemy army is camping. In the second half of the play, Moritsuna confesses his guilt and prays for the soul of the fisherman, who in fact attains Buddhahood. Here Watsuji insists on how, while the *Heike Monogatari* exalts Moritsuna's repentance as an act of heroism, Zeami's version of the tale focuses on the character of the fisherman, thus implying that repentance does not really suffice for the samurai to be praised as a hero.

Lastly, Watsuji examines the Noh *Hachinoki*, in which a monk finds refuge from a snowstorm at the hut of Genzaemon no Jō no Tsuneyo, a samurai who fell into disgrace after his land was usurped by his own clansmen. In order to warm up his guest on such a cold night, Tsuneyo burns a miniature tree that he has treasured despite his dilapidation. The Buddhist moral underlying this episode is the unselfish heart of the samurai who burns his only precious possession as the 'firewood of Dharma' (*nori no takigi*), and Watsuji remarks how Zeami's depiction of the virtuous samurai does not involve elements of *bushidō*, but of Buddhist compassion.

Watsuji's essay is a remarkable attempt to justify the presence in Noh of critical themes such as loyalty to the Emperor and war. In his final analysis, Watsuji responds to eventual objections that might arise to his thesis, and his analysis of the 'Soga brothers' plays, specifically centred on revenge and murder.

The tradition of the way of the warrior definitely lived on even within the Noh. However, it is not the most significant feature of the noh. Moreover, the noh only adopted characters which had already been created in the *Gikeiki* and *Soga monogatari*; the noh did not itself directly create these characters out of the *gunkimono* ('war narratives') category. Therefore, I think we should turn our attention to the various *monogatari* of the Muromachi period as the representative stream which continued to give life to this tradition (1969, 498).¹⁷

¹⁶ This Buddhist origin of Watsuji's ethics in contraposition with Confucianism has been analysed by W. LaFleur (1978).

¹⁷ The unorthodox structure and performance elements of the Soga Noh plays might lead one to think that

What can be inferred from this analysis of *Japanese Ethical Thought in the Noh Plays of the Muromachi Period* is an interpretation of Noh ethics that shifts away from the values of loyalty and hierarchy emphasised in the Meiji Imperial Rescript on Education (1890), aligning instead with the current trend towards re-evaluation of Zeami's role as originator of Noh. Commenting on Watsuji's ethical thought across the chronology of his work, Furukawa Tetsushi points out how, despite the events of the Pacific War, Watsuji did not modify his philosophical system, which remained rooted in Emperor worship and Confucian family ethics, tinged with Buddhist metaphysics (Furukawa 1961, 230-32). Robert Bellah completes this argument, noting how in his post-war writings Watsuji dismissed the concept of *kokutai* that was so central to nationalist ideology inscribed in the *Kokutai no hongii* as belonging to extreme neo-Confucianism characteristic of the Tokugawa feudal regime. It is now clear how, both in his political and literary writings, Watsuji attempted to reinstate the figure of the Emperor through Shinto narrative while at the same time emphasising the relevance of Buddhist philosophy in the moral narratives of Noh plays, trying to clean up national symbols that had been marred first by the Tokugawa patrons, and later by the militarist elites of wartime Japan. Watsuji's post-war discussion of the ethics of Noh remains grounded in ideals that belong to an idealised pre-*bakufu* antiquity, tinged with elements of nostalgia that were distinctive traits of his distinguished friends, among them Natsume Sōseki and Tanizaki Junichirō. In Watsuji's understanding, the atomic hecatomb that brought war to a close represented the apex of a fatal obsession with scientific and technological advancement. In Japan this condition was aggravated by the hasty importation of scientific thought from the West, which was forced upon a classic Confucian and Buddhist substratum that had been consolidated in more than two centuries during which the country had been closed to the outside world (Furukawa 1961, 232). However, while the appropriation of the figure of Zeami was a necessary step in the constitution of a new identity of Noh, introvert academic speculation looking backwards to the primeval origin of the art was in need of invigoration from a fresh force that could launch Noh into an era in which cultures could meet, discuss and exchange.

their production occurred after Zeami. The six plays written during the Edo period are not performed anymore; likewise, the sole two (dubiously) attributed to Zeami are currently *bangai* (off-list) (Komintz 1995, 52, 250-51).

The ‘Renaissance’ of Noh

As actor families started to recover from the grave economic conditions war left behind, Noh found new vigour for ‘renaissance’ in a movement that involved scholars and practitioners alike. Most notably, Kanze Hisao (1925-1978) took an interest in Zeami’s treatises while he was attending Noh scholar Nose Asaji’s university course. In 1950 Hisao and other Noh scholars, critics and practitioners who did not only belong to the Noh world, such as Mishima Yukio and Kinoshita Junji, formed the Noh Renaissance Group, an ensemble that sought to provide a new reading of the theories of Zeami, and apply them in modern practice (Hoff 1998, 79). The construction of a new identity of the art was centred on a new reading of Zeami’s treatises that would emphasise the relationship with the audience (as in the *Fushikaden* and the *Kakyō*) in which Zeami insists on the responsibility of the actor to understand the needs of the audience and mould his acting accordingly (Rath 2003, 203).¹⁸ Hisao strongly criticised the isolationism of the *iemoto* system, whose rigidity and disinterest in external criticism prevented a productive dialectics between audience and actors, a fundamental aspect of the dramaturgy of Zeami (Hoff 1998, 79, 96; Kanze 1981a; Kanze 1981b).¹⁹

The need to re-establish a relationship with the general public was determined, at least in its initial phase, by economic need: a first wave of popularisation had already taken place during the Taishō ‘democracy’ (1912-1926), when, under the influence of a more liberal government, amateurs significantly increased, replacing the old aristocratic patrons of the pre-Meiji period with the private sponsorship of loyal fan-students (Hoff 1998, 80). However, after the tragic ending of the Second World War, the effort of government and private was dedicated to reconstruction and reinvestment, and little money was left for philanthropy and art-related activities (Havens 1982, 31). In fact, it is not until 1968 that the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs was established and an official policy for the preservation and innovation of the arts that involved governmental endorsement and financial support was issued (1982, 57–58). The 1970s saw the peak of the ‘democratisation’ of traditional arts, and the decade was

¹⁸ This reconsideration of Zeami’s work and its application by the Renaissance Group generated a certain political reaction, as anti-communists soiled the walls of the Suidōbashi theatre, which hosted the ensemble with graffiti (Paul Harris 1973, 23). The *iemoto* is the leader of a traditional practice stylistic school. He or she holds absolute power on all matters of artistic, political and economic nature within the school. The *iemoto* system has been studied, among others, by F. Hsu (1975). Its specific relevance to Noh has been analysed in E. Rath (1998; 2004).

¹⁹ Hisao’s criticism was part of a larger movement criticising the power of the *iemoto* as antithetical to ‘modern’ Japan. See Ortolani (1969, 297-98).

significantly inaugurated with the establishment, in 1972, of the Japan Foundation, in charge of promoting Japanese culture within the country and abroad. However, this ‘democratisation’ was not of a populist nature: similarly to what had happened at the beginning of the twentieth century, arts that belonged to the aristocratic sphere opened to a white-collar bourgeoisie (Cox 2003, 161-62). As the country began its economic ascent, the culture of ‘leisure’ started to spread within the middle-class population, which undertook training and obtained grades and licenses in traditional arts such as Noh or tea ceremony as status symbols, rather than as artistic accomplishment (2003, 161–65). While Kabuki could count on private fan clubs and Noh on teaching to amateurs, the part of Japanese theatre that really found itself in trouble was modern theatre, which resorted to left-wing labour groups in order to survive (Havens 1982, 52). This is not to undermine Noh theatre’s need for financial support – the maintenance of stages and mask and costume collections is in itself a huge economic expense – but to draw attention to the fact that the so-called 1970s ‘democratisation’ of the traditional arts might in fact have been a ‘bourgeoisification’.

‘An aspect of this [democratisation]’ Noh historian Omote Akira writes, ‘was to find a way to appeal to students and a general audience [...] a different kind of person from the regulars that before had always come to see Noh [...] [hence] the number of spectators at Noh performances suddenly jumped’ (Omote in Hoff 1998, 80). Amateurs contributed to inflating the lower ranks of the professional hierarchy and performances that had venerable traditions such as *Takigi* (firelight) Noh became particularly popular (1998, 80). All in all, Omote’s view of Noh theatre’s ‘popularisation’ in 1977 is bitter: ‘the quality of performance has declined; there are too few *waki* and too few musicians [...] There has been strong criticism of the perilous state of Noh as it hides behind a false prosperity’ (1998, 80). Omote’s prophetic view of Noh theatre’s alleged wealth would take concrete form in the late 1980s, when the bursting of the economic bubble, and a generational turnover significantly changed the economic and social condition of the Noh establishment and the status of its student-practitioners. While it could not be said that Noh is in danger of disappearing because of lack of economic resources, another health indicator, the increasing age of its performers and spectators, points to a condition of danger.

The process of detaching Noh from the political group that had appropriated it during the pre-war period, and the opening to a new, popular audience was not as straightforward as it might appear from Hisao’s revaluation of Zeami’s relation with the

audience. As will be suggested later in this chapter, Hisao was certainly far from conceiving of a ‘touristic’ version of Noh that could easily appeal to the large masses. Nonetheless, he insisted on the importance of holding the audience in high regard, and he was clearly against what he considered to be the obtuse *iemoto* system as a hindrance to a much-needed renovation of Noh. Hisao attempted to find a third way between the extremes of elitism and populism, which he pursued first of all by studying Noh with a scholarly approach, but without losing a grip on practice. Hisao’s search for new inputs brought him to meet Western actors and audiences who possessed a ‘detached’ gaze that could offer more than the simple eye of the popular audience: his work on Noh theatre on both the Japanese and international stages has been seminal for the development of new approaches to Noh scholarship and practice.

Not unlike the Modernist movements of the early twentieth century, the post-war renaissance of Noh was characterised by the coexistence of traditional and modern elements exemplarily contained in the play chosen for the inaugural event for the foundation of the group: *Takahime*, or Yokomichi Mario’s adaptation of W.B. Yeats’s *At the Hawk’s Well* (Plowright 1975, 120), danced by the Noh Renaissance group star, Kanze Hisao. *Takahime* (originally entitled *Taka no Izumi*) was an attempt to prove Noh theatre’s relevance in the modern world first by highlighting the importance it had had in the modernisation of Western theatre, and secondly by re-appropriating what had been borrowed through a Noh re-adaptation of Yeats’s play.²⁰ Poh-Sim Plowright has not only objected to scholars proposing a direct influence of the play *Yōrō* on Yeats’s *At the Hawk’s Well* (1975, 124-25), but also criticised *Takahime* as being a poor imitation of the rules of classic Noh writing (1975, 116). Although Plowright acknowledges Yokomichi as being among the most important Noh scholars of the century, it appears that one of the reasons for such a strong criticism was the attempt to create a new Noh using traditional writing rules that would clash with an anachronistic cultural environment. Plowright’s negative judgment of *Takahime* is principally political: as Yeats was adulated in Japanese literati circles, producing a version of the play was a way to ‘pay back’ by following the same process of imitation and at the same time to re-appropriate the part of Noh that Yeats took by investing it with ‘original’ Noh dignity. *Takahime* constitutes an interesting case for discussion for the historian, however its

²⁰ The performance has been performed on different occasion since 1949 and the play is occasionally referred to as being now part of the Kanze school repertoire. For a chronology of the performance until 1972 see P. S. Plowright (1975, 120-21). For a comparison of *Takahime* and *At the Hawk’s Well* see R. Tsukimura (1967) and O. Komesu (1987).

relevance in contemporary performance is less evident than Plowright feared in the early 1970s. Although still performed by important actors, and often referred to as being part of the Kanze School repertoire, *Takahime* is not part of regularly performed programmes (*teiki nō*), and probably is widely unknown to the general Noh public, and to most Noh practitioners belonging to other schools, too. It is nonetheless important to underline how the first contact between Noh and Western theatre was recognised and incorporated in a programme that sought to make Noh contemporary, and for Kanze Hisao it represented one of several important artistic endeavours he undertook in order to bridge the gap between Noh and contemporary theatre.

A new vision: Kanze Hisao

The economic revival of the 1950s and 1960s allowed a considerable increase of travel and cultural exchange between Europe and Japan. Among the Noh practitioners who first explored this new era of ‘intercultural’ theatre exchanges was Kanze Hisao, who has been described as playing a crucial role in the ‘renaissance’ of Noh. It should be underlined that this renewal was not an introvert reconstruction, confined within the boundaries of tradition: in order to elaborate his original views of theatre, Hisao drew from sources that came from his experiences outside Noh. Conversely, the capacity of his artistic and philosophic endeavour extended beyond national borders and influenced practitioners overseas. Thanks to his collaboration with theatre makers of international rank, among them Suzuki Tadashi (Carruthers and Takahashi 2004, 26-33), Hisao could contextualise Noh as part of a global theatre spectrum.

His first contact with a foreign audience took place as early as in 1954, when Hisao joined the group who performed at the Venice Biennale, an epochal event that will be described in detail in the following chapter.²¹ In September 1957 Hisao published the article *Nō ni okeru dentō no mondai – engisha to shite* (‘The problem of tradition in Noh – an actor’s perspective’) in the prestigious journal *Bungaku*, in which he initiated the discussion on the ‘essence’ of Noh theatre that he would later develop in further publications.²² Hisao expressed the need for a study of Noh that could treat the issue of transmission in contemporary practice (Kanze 1981c, 20). In order to give Noh

²¹ On that occasion Hisao was *shite* for the Noh *Shōjō* (Nishi and Matsuda 1988, 4).

²² F. Hoff (1998) has collected and translated part of this material in ‘Kanze Hisao (1925-1978): Making *Nō* into Contemporary Theatre’. The majority of Hisao’s writings are yet to be translated.

a strong identity that could be meaningful on the international stage, Hisao opposed Noh to Western naturalism, questioning whether it would actually be possible for Noh audiences to be moved by the non-realistic dramaturgy of plays such as *Sumidagawa* or *Nonomiya* (1981c, 21). In his view the ‘organic’ nature of Western theatre is opposed to Noh, which ‘is structured by dismembering (as it were) the performer’s voice and his body and reassembling the pieces in a most *inorganic* (*mukiteki*) way – pure sounds and pure movement (Hoff 1998, 81; Kanze 1981c, 22). Hisao claims that elements of Noh performance exist independently, orbiting around a core that is empty: they exist within this sphere, yet their relation is not determined to a predefined scheme but by the *shite*, whose movement and voice create ever new connections on stage, and by the creative agency of the audience, which creates by receiving.

As will be discussed in Chapter Seven, the notion of emptiness (*mu*) is crucial to the aesthetics and ethics of Noh. What Hisao does by pointing out the inorganic nature of Noh is to reveal how performers need to erase the self in order to create their own expression. Hisao particularly stresses the independence of this condition from representation and imitation: describing the *shimai* of the Noh *Bashō* (‘The Plantain Tree’) performed by Noguchi Kanesuke, Hisao observes how he was not struck by the fact that the actor managed to suggest the ‘spirit of the plantain’ with his dance. What fascinated Hisao was the extraordinary physical presence of the actor on stage, and the feelings that this presence conveyed to the audience: for him there was nothing symbolic or allegoric in that beauty (Kanze 1981c, 21-22). This corresponds to a view of Noh that transcends the dualism of aesthetic elements as mere *representations* of abstract concepts such as ‘regret’, ‘resignation’ or ‘longing’, arguing for an intrinsic relation between the expression and the expressed. Evidently, the performance described is not praised either for its mimetic efficacy or spiritual content: rather than something removed or imagined, Hisao draws the attention to a quality that is immanent in the physical presence of the actor on stage. Not unlike his overseas contemporaries, Hisao is more interested in the body than in the texts of Noh, which he considers of secondary importance. He explores the thin line that distinguishes actor and character, essence and substance, presence and absence, art and life, aesthetics and ethics. In 1964, he thus described the performance of *Obasute* by Hashioka Kyōtarō:

What I saw was not the old woman of the legend of *Obasute*, or the apparition in the moonlight described by its words. A master of some seventy years or so was simply standing on stage. I saw his strong and beautiful presence. Would the experience go on forever? Would it abruptly end? Was the performance – spectators as well strangely included – really a performance? Was he just

standing there? It was unclear. In the silence the Master created an instant replete with the fullest measure of self. He did so during the time of the endless flow of his presence. That was the meaning of this moment. Only in moments such as this do I feel Noh to be alive as a contemporary art (1998, 85).²³

Hisao's trenchant reflection sheds light on an essential aspect of Noh which observers before him could not articulate in such a sensitive description. While performing, actors deny their everyday-life presence by covering the body with a costume, by using the body and the voice in an extra-ordinary way, and eventually by donning the mask, the extreme act of self-erasure. However, these acts do not disguise the actor as something else. It is just because humanity is negated that humanity comes forward, and the boundary between the actor and the character blurs.

What Hoff does not specify in his translation is that the case Hisao is discussing is not a full performance, but a *maibayashi*, an unmasked excerpt in plain clothes. In this type of performance the audience has all the more the chance to explore the physicality of the actor, whose face is on full display and whose body is stripped of the thick layers of costumes, who has given up of all means of sophistication and presents his bare humanity in an act that takes performance to the bare minimum of non-performance. On this account, the good actor looks for a stage of perennial non-accomplishment. The hardly describable experience transcends the realm of mere aesthetics: what unfolds before the eyes of the spectators is not just beauty, but the abyss of existence as highest culmination of aesthetics and ethics, where 'beauty comes with the feeling an audience takes from the human reality of a man's life [*seimeikan*] present on the stage before them' (1998, 95).²⁴ 'Was the performance really a performance? Was he just standing there?', Hisao asks himself reflecting on Hashioka's *Obasute*. The question arises from a deep reflection upon the nature of performance itself, and relates to Brecht's notion of *Verfremdung*. However, Noh 'alienation' is not an abrupt intervention of reality, breaching the illusory realm of fiction with the aim of shaking the consciences of the audience. Here the subtle line between 'doing' and 'being', 'acting' and 'living' is carefully considered and never completely trespassed. For Hisao this verge, consciously or unconsciously created by actors and audiences alike, is not at all based on the knowledge of Japanese literature, or even of Japanese language.

The experience of observing Hashioka appears to have gone beyond the

²³ Originally published in H. Kanze (1981d).

²⁴ Originally published in H. Kanze (1981e).

boundary of mere aesthetic appreciation: what Hisao describes as an ‘instant replete with the fullest measure of self’, created by Hashioka’s immobility and silence, transcends the contingent to open a fissure on the infinite, and is comparable to an epiphany in which human existence comes to being in an instant of nothingness. Though Hisao emphasises the importance of the bare materiality of performance, he refers to a transcendental quality of the same. How can this extraordinary experience take place in immobility is what would interest ethical criticism the most. In this case *ma*, the absence of movement and sound, is one of what Gaut described as ‘aesthetically relevant ethical qualities’ appearing through the bodily vehicle of the actor. Hashioka’s silence and immobility gives tangible meaning to the Sino-Japanese ideogram for *ma* (間): the sun (日) within a door (門). *Ma*, then, is a portal that allows the observer to reach beyond the here-and-now and glimpse the infinite, the transcendental. The quality of the actor who creates *ma* is ethical insofar as it denies the self and invites the observer to see through his body. In such case, *ma* is unselfish, and generous.

Hisao’s fresh and disenchanting view of Noh is not only insightful but also remarkably anti-Orientalist, as it deprives performance of all the ornamental elements of trite Japanese aesthetics. Dismissing lyrics and plot, focusing on movement, and most of all on the physicality of performance offers a way to get away from an exclusivist reception of Noh, in which appreciation is subordinated to the understanding of the text and of its cultural symbols: Hisao opened Noh to the fullest appreciation of foreigners and responded not merely to the elitist and intellectualised view of the Noh literati.

Chapter Six – Cultural exchanges

A new era

This chapter examines the post-war reception of Noh theatre in Europe, with a focus on how the intersection of ethical and aesthetic concepts in Noh developed in this new political, social and artistic frame. Before its first performers reached Europe in 1954, the only sources of knowledge of Noh available to European observers were pictures, essays, translations, and the few ‘Noh-inspired’ plays by practitioners such as Yeats, Claudel and Brecht.¹ With the end of the war, the economic boom, and the development of transportation technology, exchanges between Japan and the West became ever more frequent. Practitioners from distant continents could finally meet face to face and compare their work both on practical and theoretical stages. However, while the classical European traditions of ballet and opera were successfully exported to Japan, where Japanese interpreters reached high levels of artistic and professional achievement, Japanese classical arts have remained by and large confined to its national borders, inaccessible to the outsiders. As Japan opened to the West, and imported notions of pluralism and individual freedom, the rigidity of the traditional arts system, and its consequent isolation started to be criticised by a scholars and practitioners who perceived this condition as life-threatening for their art. Unlike European theatre and classical music, Noh schools did not open branches outside Japan, and the only option left to Western practitioners willing to explore Noh was either to take advantage of the sporadic visits of Noh groups to the West, or to travel to Japan for equally occasional training.² However, as will be shown in the last chapter, throughout the decades that followed the end of the war this condition evolved and the rigidity of the traditional Noh system slowly began to partially loosen its grip.

Besides the fascination for specific traditions, what characterised this post-war stage of East-West encounters is the particular attention of Western practitioners to the

¹ Other Noh-inspired performances include the 1924 production of *Tsunemasa*, staged by Hallie Flanagan at Vassar College, New York; 1937 *Suma Genji*, danced by Margaret Gerstley Leona at Covent Garden’s Player’s Theatre, London; 1939 staging of *Aya no Tsuzumi*, directed by Corrado Pavolini, at the Teatro delle Arti, Roma.

² Fujiwara Opera, founded in 1934, is the first Japanese troupe specialising in Western opera. Since 1981 the Japan Opera Foundation administers the two major Japanese opera companies: Fujiwara Opera and Nihon Opera Kyōkai.

body of the actor as the primeval origin of performance. Practitioners and scholars took the ‘body’, already at the centre of Modernist avant-garde research, to a further level of investigation, comparing and contrasting physical techniques of performers from different parts of the world. Experimental theatre that has been defined as ‘intercultural’, or ‘fusion’, aimed at demonstrating the universality of theatre arts, and at experiencing a transcultural sense of ‘communality’ by exchanging texts and performance techniques. At the same time, the emergence of cultural studies and post-colonial research soon drew attention to the risks of sweeping generalisations regarding the alleged ‘essence’ of theatre that would de-contextualise art from its cultural milieu. The historical framework of this chapter, spanning the period between Japan’s surrender and the present, demands a strict selection of the material treated: the chapter will not pretend to cover the innumerable contacts of European theatre and Noh, but will specifically focus on cases that provide substantial material for the discussion of Noh in terms of the interaction of aesthetics and ethics. After a detailed description of the first Noh tour in the West, the ethics of intercultural theatre will be analysed by looking at one early example, the encounter between Kanze Hisao and Jean Louis Barrault, and at the later experiences of Yoshi Oida and Eugenio Barba.

The 1954 Festival Internazionale del Teatro, Venice

Though spared the censorship inflicted on Kabuki, in the aftermath of the Second World War Noh families were suffering from economic distress following military defeat, when several theatres were destroyed during the bombings, and actors were scattered across the country. Thanks to the endeavours of scholars and practitioners, Noh began its recovery process while seeking institutional support: in 1957 Noh became the first Japanese traditional performing art to be designated ‘Essential Intangible Cultural property’ by the Japanese government. Noh theatre’s thrust into a new, international dimension reached its first apex when, in the summer of 1954, a group of actors from the Kanze and the Kita Schools marked the history of Noh theatre performing for the first time in the West at the 13th Festival Internazionale del Teatro di Venezia, the so-called ‘Biennale’.³ Venice had already bestowed official recognition upon Japanese culture in 1951, when Kurosawa Akira’s *Rashōmon* was awarded the first prize at the

³ This was the first Noh performance in the Western world, but not the first outside Japan. Noh had already been performed in China and Korea during the Japanese Empire era. See Kagaya (2001).

Festival Internazionale del Cinema. At the same time, Italian theatre critic Silvio d'Amico had tried to bring Noh actors to the Biennale theatre festival through Giuliana Stramigioli, a celebrated Italian Japanologist who was working at the Tokyo branch of the Italiafilm company: the attempt fell through due to the lack of funds on both sides.⁴ The 1954 festival coincided with the 700th anniversary of the birth of Marco Polo, epitome of the connection between Venice and the East. That Marco Polo never visited and probably had very few, if any, contacts with the Japanese people should have been a known fact in 1954, yet his description of Chipango (Japan) contained in the *Travels* seems to have left an impression on Venetian readers so as to justify such an otherwise inappropriate association (Herriott 1945). The Festival opened amid a mood of vague Orientalism: in a letter dated 11 December 1954, Rodolfo Pallucchini, General Secretary of the Festival, wrote to Angelo Spanio, Mayor of Venice, explaining that the first intention of the organisers was in fact to invite a Chinese troupe based in New York, which they eventually discarded as not sufficiently representative of their country. Consequently, the Japanese troupe that had failed to come the previous year was re-invited with a new budget of 8,000,000 lire, of which 5,000,000 came from public funds. Thanks to the efforts of the organisers Venice, the old continent's 'door to the East', was about to host the first performance in the Western world in the six-century-old Noh tradition.

The Noh performances took place on August 6th and 7th (Friday and Saturday) between 21:15 and 22:45⁵ and the programme was thus arranged: Friday: *Sagi*, *Aoinoue*, *Shakkyō* (*hitori* variation); Saturday: *Shōjō* (*midare* variation), *Hagoromo*, *Shakkyō*.⁶ An abbreviated programme for authorities and press was organised on August

⁴ The budget for the 1953 tour was 10,000,000¥. Information on the 1954 Biennale Noh performance provided hereafter is unpublished except where specified. Letters, receipts, manuscripts and all other documents that have been consulted are stored at the Festival archive in Marghera, Italy, as La Biennale di Venezia, ASAC, Fondo Storico, Serie Teatro, Busta 2, Busta 7 and Busta 10. Newspaper clippings belong to La Biennale di Venezia, ASAC, Raccolta documentaria, Serie Teatro, 1954.

⁵ I deduced the timetable from the live television broadcast of the performance, published in (n.a. 1954b, 44). The opening time is also clearly visible on the poster (reprinted in Hideo Kanze 2005: 143).

⁶ The programme has been the cause of much confusion. The Japanese initially planned a three-day performance (the first day only for authorities and press) featuring the following plays: 1st day *Sagi*, *Hagoromo*, *Shakkyō*; 2nd day *Tōru*, *Aoinoue*, *Shōjō*; 3rd day *Kagekiyō*, *Hagoromo*, *Shakkyō*. As the Japanese organisation was particularly zealous in the production of informative material, they printed a luxurious trilingual pamphlet in English, French and Italian, with pictures and synopses of the plays long before the arrangements were completed: the programme underwent changes and new materials were produced. See (n.a. 1954a; Hideo Kanze 2005, 143). The pamphlet later prepared by the Italian organisation includes a number of pieces that were probably performed as *shimai* dance excerpts: *Shōjō*, *Shakkyō*, *Yōrō*, *Sagi*, *Aoinoue*, *Tsuchigumo*, *Kokaji*, *Funa-Benkei*, *Kagekiyō*, *Hagoromo* and *Utō*. Also see (Nishi and Matsuda 1988, 3). The official programme of the six Noh plays that actually went on stage is confirmed in (Hideo Kanze 2005, 141; Nishi and Matsuda 1988, 1).

5th, featuring *Aoinoue* and *Shakkyō* (Hideo Kanze 2005, 141).⁷ The cast, especially put together for the international tour, featured some of the most prominent Noh practitioners, including Kita Minoru, Kanze Yoshiyuki, Kanze Hisao and Kanze Hideo (who was at that time adopted by the Kita school, and went under the name of Gotō Hideo).⁸ The performances took place at the ‘Teatro Verde’, located on the San Giorgio Island: a massive open air Greco-Roman amphitheatre featuring a 1200m² stage and a luxuriant tall cypress background, with a total of 1168 seats for the audience. A wooden Noh stage was built in Japan especially for the occasion by a Kabuki carpenter and sent by boat via New Dehli and Cairo, then eventually mounted on top of the amphitheatre orchestra (2005, 142-44). Tickets were sold at 2.500 lire for the *caveas* and 1.500 lire for the *contro-caveas*. This is not marginal data if one considers the remarkable success of the performances within the frame of the Festival’s programme: Noh was the most profitable event in terms of income, with an overall return of 1,200,000 lire from subscription fees for each night.⁹ An exhibition of costumes and masks was also arranged, and the courier inventory shows that on June 8th fifteen masks and thirteen costumes were sent from Tokyo for this purpose.¹⁰ In order to help the understanding of the audience, translations in English and Italian were projected onto the side of the stage during the performances.

The 1954 Biennale well represents the new era theatre had entered: an Asian group could now be invited to perform at one of the world’s most important theatre festivals, along with other prestigious European companies, occupying two important evening slots. Furthermore, the Friday night performances of *Sagi* and *Aoinoue* were broadcast live by the newly founded RAI national television (Nishi and Matsuda 1988, 4). Unfortunately, technology did not yet allow simultaneous broadcasting and recording: there is no documentation left of this broadcast except for references in the newspapers.¹¹ In the collected reports Director Adolfo Zajotti thus summarised the outcome of the Noh performances:

⁷ Nishi and Matsuda report otherwise: the on August 5th the stage was completed and the troupe performed *Sagi* and the second half of *Aoinoue* as rehearsal. There is no mention of an extra performance (1988, 144).

⁸ In a 2005 interview, Hideo reports how after the war Noh families were left with serious financial problems, H. Kanze (2005, 141) which might be one of the reasons why *shite* actors from different schools, who usually do not perform in mixed casts, went on stage together.

⁹ The Japanese troupe contributed to keeping their budget below the expected by choosing to fly in economy class instead of first class, and returned 500,000 lire.

¹⁰ Kanze Hideo also mentions the exhibition in H. Kanze (2005, 144).

¹¹ In the 15th August issue of *Avvenire*, Giorgio Candini mentions that the transmission was directed by Sergio Spina, who managed to transmit the feeling of the performance with delicacy through details and close captions (Candini 1954).

Presenting Japanese theatre we were aware of undertaking an extraordinary cultural endeavour that was at once important and dangerous. Its expressive means, symbolic movements, and frequent allegories that intertwine in a complex ritual are undecipherable to us ignorant of the idiom. The Biennale could do nothing but relying on the audience's sensibility, hoping that it could let itself be absorbed in the hallucinating atmosphere summoned by actors who treat theatre as religion. The result was above all expectations. The audience was at first puzzled, but then became progressively absorbed in a religious respect, transported by the vibration coming from the stage, as if in a dream. The theatre was crowded and the spectators expressed their admiration for the Japanese artists with much applause.¹²

This official commentary still resonated with the poetic Orientalism of Yeats or Claudel, describing Noh as a cult for the initiated. Quite obviously, one could not expect a critical response from Zajotti, who was bound to his role of Director and had to consider both Italian and Japanese diplomatic sensitivities. It must also be remembered that the Italian theatre scene, although particularly rich in the pre-war period, was less exposed to the international experiences of other European colonial countries. Besides *Madame Butterfly* and Orientalist adaptations by Corrado Pavolini Italy did not know Japanese theatre, and was no better prepared on the academic front.¹³

The 1954 performances in Venice were highlighted by the exceptional amount of newspapers covering the performances before and after the event: this research has considered more than seventy articles from newspapers from all over the country. Responses varied but were generally positive. It must be taken into account that in most cases the authors of these articles were not theatre specialists, let alone experts on Japan. Reports of the performances were rich in curious anecdotes, but replete with mistakes and misunderstandings of performance elements.¹⁴ However, a transversal reading of the articles reveals an important datum: positive responses to the performances mostly belonged to right or centre-right wing newspapers, mostly

¹² The text is kept at (La Biennale di Venezia, Asac, Fondo Storico, Serie Teatro, Busta 2, Relazioni, 9).

¹³ The endeavours of Arcangeli, Fulchignoni and Marega are relatively important if compared to the extensive works of Waley or Peri.

¹⁴ Some examples of the urban legends created by the journalists: the stage was washed every night with milk (*Il Tempo*, 7 August 1954); an obscure ritual specific to the Kita school obliges the actors to take off their shoes as they enter the greenroom (*La Notte*, 7 August 1954); the chorus performs special evolutions before sitting (*Il Messaggero*, 7 August 1954); an actor lost his concentration because he saw a tiny piece of paper on stage (*Il Giornale d'Italia*, 8 August 1954); hitting the knee with one hand signifies excitement (*L'Unita* 8 August 1954). The most amusing of these stories is the rather famous legend of the Noh actor who, upon making a mistake in a scene, would have been ready to commit suicide in order to show repentance. This tale (still well known today among Noh actors in Japan) was told by Kita Minoru at the gala reception that took place in Rome before the Venice performances, and was incorrectly reported in the *Corriere Lombardo* and on the *Il Resto del Carlino* 7 August 1957. In the distorted version of the story, the actors are told to be ready to commit suicide 'if the role requires it'.

affiliated with the governing Christian-democratic party.¹⁵ These reviews, pompous and didactic, insisted on the importance of the event in terms of authenticity: for these critics it was finally possible to see the ‘real’ Noh and not its poor imitations (Calendoli 1954). Italy had experienced Japanese theatre through a few adaptations such as Brecht’s *Jasager*, which had just been performed at the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza in 1953 (Nogara 1954). It is not surprising to discover that socialist Brecht was seen as a travesty when compared to the dignified ‘Tokyo Imperial Theatre’ company.¹⁶ There never was such a company in Japan, there is no trace of this name in the Japanese sources that have been consulted, and it is plausible that the Italian organisers felt the need to attribute such an appellation to an otherwise indefinable group in order to provide the authoritativeness of the ‘original’, dignified Noh, the Japanese counterpart to Western opera or ballet. These articles generally reiterate the beauty of the refined and elitist entertainment of the Japanese ruling class, permeated by a sense of religious ceremony and spirituality.¹⁷ Christian-democratic journalists saw Noh as a vehicle of spirituality at a time of excessive materialism that accompanied the economic boom, others as an authoritarian response to petty realism (Crimi Fabbri 1954).¹⁸

Stark criticism generally came from the left-wing newspapers such as *L’Unità* and *Avanti!*, affiliated with communist and socialist parties. For these writers, Noh was the artistic product of an isolated, backward and spiritually poor country, whose only positive qualities were copied from China (Perego 1954). The plays presented in Venice could not but confirm this prejudice: the Noh *Sagi* tells the story of a heron flying in the garden of the Emperor which, after fleeing the Emperor’s retainers’ attempts to catch it, lets itself be subdued by the sovereign, who then appoints it his vassal.¹⁹ The moral of *Sagi* was condemned as instilling blind obedience to a god-like monarch reminiscent of the fascist regimes (Trevisani 1954). Certainly, the fact that Noh theatre had been appreciated by artists such as Yeats and Pound who in the period following the end of

¹⁵ Democrazia Cristiana was the Catholic-inspired, anti-communist political party that led all Italian governments from 1945 to 1981, gathering popular consensus also thanks to the Vatican’s endorsement. Throughout the 1950s, Democrazia Cristiana teamed up with secular institutions and penetrated all fields of economic and cultural activity.

¹⁶ The actual origin of the ‘Teatro Imperiale di Tokyo’ appellation, used by organisers and journalists alike, is unknown, yet it recalls Sada Yacco & Kawakami’s company being billed as The Japanese Court Company of Tokyo during their London performances (Berg 1995, 347).

¹⁷ Such were the reviews of, among others, *Il Giornale* 7 August 1954, *L’Avvenire* 7 August 1954, *Corriere d’Informazione*, 7 Ago 1954.

¹⁸ In cinema, the new-realism of De Sica, Visconti and Rossellini was at the time strongly criticised by the Christian-democratic government.

¹⁹ The Italian journalists could not know that the *age-ha* (central line of the *kuse* dance) of *Hagoromo* reads ‘*kimi ga yo*’, (‘long reign the emperor’), opening line of the Japanese national anthem and epitome of the relationship between Emperor and subjects.

the war could be perceived as representatives of the right-wing cultural sphere did not help Noh to avoid of accusations of being a relic of the Japanese feudal past. In fact, it must be noted that the Japanese group carefully avoided plays from the warrior category, which might have been associated with Japan and Italy's past military alliance. Popular warrior tales such as *Kiyotsune* or *Tsunemasa* were first seen abroad only in ten years after the Venice event.²⁰ Not only the reaction of the unprepared audience, but also the political ambivalence of Noh theatre – in content and performance style – was a matter of concern for the Japanese and the Italian organisers alike. Furthermore, the political relevance of the Festival is evident in the way left-wing journalists accused the organisers of spending public money on productions that only satisfied the intellectual elite, while ignoring other important traditions such as those from China and East-Europe. Critics suspected that Noh had been chosen with the covert purpose of pleasing the USA, with which Japan, quickly shifting from feudalism to capitalism, entertained a strong relationship (Ripamonti 1954b).

The Italian leftist factions were also fighting a battle against the political influence of the church upon state legislative matters and it is understandable that, in the eyes of the anti-clerical newspapers, Noh theatre's mythical and ritual background were adding fuel to the religio-political debate. Journalists insisting that Shinto was the creed that united Japanese state and church were unaware that the background of the plays *Shakkyō* and *Aoinoue* is predominantly Buddhist, and *Shōjō* (set in China) extols the Confucian virtues of filial piety and friendship.²¹ Those who agreed with the favourable right-wing commentators in underlining the importance of the meeting between 'authentic' Japan and Europe pointed out how disappointing this encounter was. Noh put on display the emotional poverty and sterile symbolism of a ritual that is deficient on the artistic plane as well as on the technical plane, as its choreography was nothing but the monotonous repetition of mechanically memorised steps (Ripamonti 1954a). For the leftist critics this form of performance could appeal only to the snobbish pseudo-intellectuals who populated the avant-garde art galleries, who pretended to enjoy Noh only because they would have been too ashamed of saying they did not understand a

²⁰ The first warrior play performed overseas was *Kiyotsune*, during the America-Mexico 1966 tour of the Hōshō school. See Nishi and Matsuda (1988, 33).

²¹ The Rome, Turin and Genoa editions of the 7 August issue of *L'Unità* read: 'Japanese folklore – charming representation of an intellectualised revival'; 'Spectacular expression of the feudal and shinto folklore that flourished between 1300 and 1500. Miracles and sorceries in honour of the emperor. Modern theatre enchained by censorship'; 'The [theatre] organisation exalted the value of this mystical and feudal literary product just as the Fascist critics did'. This last quote might refer to both Baron Di Giura, president of the organisation for theatre exchanges, who was fascist ambassador in Tokyo and to scholars like Fulchignoni, Marega or Mergé, who translated Noh plays during the war period.

thing about it (Ripamonti 1954b).

The first staging of Noh in the Western world was a remarkable event not only because it inaugurated the new age of East-West artistic exchanges, but also because it encapsulated the politicisation of the aesthetic-ethical debate in the international context. Right-wing journalists welcomed Noh as spiritually enlightening and emotionally charming despite the difficulty of bridging such a vast cultural distance. However, this praise was accompanied by the misunderstandings that characterised the Orientalist literature of the previous age. On the other side of the political barricade, left-wing newspapers accused the pro-government organisers of having resurrected the Rome-Tokyo axis, strongly criticised tedious and inescapably incomprehensible aesthetics, and railed against the ethics of the Noh actors, whose respect and dedication were ridiculed and dismissed as the residue of a decadent era (Terron 1954).²² Nevertheless, signs of change in the understanding of Noh started to creep into the words of theatre historian Giovanni Calendoli, who wrote from the pages of *Fiera Letteraria*, a specialist journal directed by Enrico Fulchignoni, who in 1942 edited one of the first Italian collections of Noh translations. Calendoli argued that

today the culture of our old world needs more than ever to go back to truth and sincerity, and to respect all civilisations. We must escape the generic encyclopaedism enrooted in the philosophy of reason that, in order to comprehend everything under a single, overarching scheme, uniforms everything, destroying the originality of the most noble cultural manifestations of humanity (Calendoli 1954).

Gastone Ventura, Venetian journalist and freemason, was part of the Fascist mission that attended the 21 March 1938 performance of *Aoinoue* in Tokyo (KBS 1938). Ventura attacked those who criticised Noh for being coldly mathematical, only accessible to those who know its symbolic grammar, maintaining instead that Noh can provide a spiritual – albeit painful – bliss to the open-minded who can set their imagination to work (Ventura 1954). Both authors belonged to the ‘pro-government front’ and certainly cannot be said to be impartial, yet their words represent a step

²² Noh had been performed for the Italian Fascist mission in Japan, as it was customary on the occasion of formal visits of diplomats and army officials. However, some of the individuals involved in the organisation of the events had a politically relevant background: Baron Giovanni di Giura (1893-1989), plenipotentiary minister and president of the Ente Italiano per gli Scambi Teatrali had been counsellor at the Italian Embassy in Tokyo in the Fascist ‘trentennio’. He was a good friend of Adolfo Zajotti, the Festival organiser, with whom he fought during World War I. Angelo Spanio, mayor of Venice (representing the Christian-Democratic party) was president of the Biennale and of the Cini Foundation sponsoring the Festival. The national television showed interest in broadcasting the performance through its regional director Lando Ambrosini, who had a long-lasting career as director of the Radio Rurale Fascista.

forward in the understanding of Noh in the West, and a sign of its transmissibility to non-Japanese audiences. Although belonging to upper-class lineages, Calendoli and Ventura criticise the cold, intellectualised reception of Western ethnocentric scholarship and the superficiality of viewing Noh as a symbolic and elitist theatre, perspectives that mark an important advancement from the previous stage of the reception of Noh.

René Sieffert and the diffusion of Zeami in the West

As the 1954 Festival introduced Noh performance to Western audiences, Noh scholarship continued to grow: and thanks to the post-war reevaluation of Noh tradition, Zeami's 'treatises' achieved greater popularity both in Japan and abroad. In 1960 French scholar René Sieffert published *La tradition secrète du Nô*, which can be considered the first stand-alone translation of the major treatises (including *Fūshikaden*, *Kakyō*, *Shikadō* and *Kyū-i*) under the 'UNESCO Knowledge of the East' series. In his bibliography, Sieffert acknowledged a number of sources for his work, most importantly the Japanese critical editions of the treatises by Kawase Kazuma (1945) and by Nose Asaji (1949) as well as the work of Noel Peri, Gaston Renondeau, and the Germans Hermann Bohner and Oscar Benl, who had previously translated sections of Zeami. However, Sieffert failed to acknowledge Arthur Waley's first edition of *The Noh Plays of Japan*, where many of the fundamental aspects of Zeami's dramaturgy had been already introduced in 1921.²³

Sieffert was a Japanese classical literature specialist and not a theatre scholar *per se*, an aspect of his background that might have influenced his position with regards to Noh. In the introduction to the book, Sieffert pointed out how, although knowledge of *shimai* and *utai* might be the prerequisites for a true understanding of Noh, the practice of the art itself could compromise the necessary distance the critic should assume when enquiring into a foreign form of cultural expression (Sieffert 1960, 7). He was dissatisfied with the way Noh was generally treated in France: commenting on how the 1957 performance of the Kanze/Kita group at the Théâtre des Nations was received by the Parisian audience and critics, he points out how the experience generally remained on the plain of exoticism, with a tendency to present Noh as an esoteric art (1960, 8).

²³ In the early 1950s Richard McKinnon published two essays on the religio-aesthetic concept in Zeami's treatises, including numerous translated and paraphrased passages from Zeami's treatises (McKinnon 1952; 1953). Although McKinnon's essays anticipated Sieffert's translation by seven years, they did not seem to earn the same popularity among scholars and practitioners.

About fifty years before, Waley had similarly criticised Yeats's and Pound's understanding of Noh as art for the elite, claiming instead that the genius of Zeami lay in the balance between high and low culture, a point that would be addressed by later scholars (Waley 1921, 55). However, Sieffert's position seems to have been even more conservative than Waley's, who had gone as far as suggesting the possibility of interaction between Noh and European theatre with the example of Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*. For Sieffert, creating European Noh plays, or adapting plays in translation is simply out of the question: attempts at such a production have been either fanciful or ridiculous (1960, 10). Sieffert indirectly refers to Claudel's *Le Soulier de Satin*, which Jean Louis Barrault staged in 1943 in Paris, presenting it as a Noh-influenced work, an affirmation that the critic considers 'preuve [...] des insuffisances de l'information et de la faillite complète de l'entreprise' (1960, 8).²⁴

Sieffert's alternative to these 'imitations' was Zeami, whose knowledge would clarify the 'real' nature of Noh. If in Japan the treatises were an important tool for the interpretation of Noh among both actors and audience, Europe should instead do the inverse: Japanese art should be considered as an illustration of Zeami's works, from which one should attempt to deduce its universal invariants. For Sieffert, Zeami the theoretician was even greater than Zeami the playwright (1960, 10).

Kanze Hisao and J. L. Barrault: the *missing link*

The previous chapter attempted to demonstrate that Kanze Hisao could articulate sophisticated insights into Noh both because of his profound knowledge of Noh and because of his international experience. After performing at the Venice Biennale in 1954, he joined the Paris and Dijon tour in 1957, and Hisao had the chance to meet Jean-Louis Barrault in 1960, when the French director was touring Japan with the Théâtre de France. Subsequently, Hisao visited Barrault in Paris during a study period aimed at fostering exchange across cultures. However, the content of this experience has not yet been analysed in detail and it is the aim of the following section to shed light on the actual significance of what has been considered the intercultural encounter of two theatre geniuses.

Barrault had his first, indirect encounter with Noh when he was studying with

²⁴ *Le Soulier de Satin* is the 'evidence of the lack of information [on Noh] and of the complete failure of the experiment'.

Charles Dullin in 1931, at the time when Etienne Decroux was teaching mime at his Atelier. Decroux had in turn participated in Copeau's rehearsals of *Kantan* (Gillespie 1982, 25-26). This does not seem to be sufficient grounds to claim that Barrault was initiated into Noh this early in his career, and it has been already discussed how Copeau's *Kantan* probably was not essential in the formation his dramaturgy. Besides in the chapters explicitly dedicated to his stay in Japan, there is little mention of Noh in Barrault's writings: what was handed down to him at the Atelier was probably a much-diluted knowledge of Noh.²⁵ While Noh dramaturgy might not have been crucial to Copeau, Dullin and Decroux, what appeared to be particularly relevant to their general approach to theatre was an aversion for Western stages, dirty and fictive, exemplifying little respect for the *profession* of the actor, and their working place (1961, 70).

Barrault was familiar with Claudel's writings on Japan when he staged *Le Soulier de Satin* (1943) and *Le Livre de Christophe Colomb* (1953, and 1960 in Japan), both among Claudel's plays inspired by Noh (Nishino 2008; 2007). Claudel's influence in Barrault's reception of Noh is evident: his *Journal de Bord* (1961), in which he collated memories of his travel to Japan, where he toured in the summer of 1960, bears a striking resemblance with *L'Oiseau noir dans le soleil levant*.²⁶ Like Claudel, Barrault dedicated a chapter to Japanese theatre, with distinct sub-sections on Noh, Bunraku, Kabuki, Gagaku and Sumo. His observations, rendered in a less sumptuous style than Claudel's, often refer to aspects of performance, such as the Noh fan (1961, 82-83) that recall similar passages of *L'Oiseau noir dans le soleil levant* (1929, 95-105). As Gillespie points out, Barrault shared Claudel's interest in the elements of dream and silence, both of which are essential aspects of Noh dramaturgy (Gillespie 1982, 329-31). Certain passages of the *Journal*, such as the discovery of the 'Japanese soul', which Barrault deems to be 'feminine, hence endowed with the ability to receive and reproduce', his impressions of Japanese houses 'as doll houses, but populated with *live* puppets' (1961, 34), or of Japanese people as 'made of living porcelain' (1961, 35), betray Barrault's Orientalist attitude (1961, 24). However, it would be unfair to judge his travel log by the same criteria used to analyse the work of Claudel, who bore diplomatic and academic responsibility: the *Journal* is naively Orientalist but also genuinely enthusiastic about the discovery of a new, fantastic country, and the reader can easily sympathise with the warmth he put into the description of his meeting with

²⁵ For more on Dullin, Decroux and Noh see K. Wylie-Marques (1998) and T. Leabhart (2004).

²⁶ Barrault described his experience in Japan and impressions of Noh in *Journal de Bord* (1960) and *Souvenirs pour Demain* (1972).

Kyogen actors as a reunion of the ‘grande famille internationale des comédiens (1961, 59).²⁷

One might in fact wonder whether a direct experience of Japan, or perhaps reading Sieffert’s translation of Zeami, which Barrault lists in the *Journal* among his sources of knowledge of Noh (1961, 71), would have helped him to appreciate the 1957 performance of *Aoinoue* and *Shakkyō* in Dijon, staged by part of the group that performed at the Théâtre des Nations in Paris on the occasion of the second Kanze-Kita tour in the West (Nishi and Matsuda 1988, 9; Gillespie 1982, 333). Barrault thus described the experience:

To my great amazement, I was not moved. The miming actions of the actors produced in me less effect than did those of the actors in the Chinese opera. I even ended up laughing nervously, so much did my sensibility refuse to absorb those guttural cries which were like someone who would try to force himself to vomit (Barrault in Gillespie 1982, 333).²⁸

Despite his reading of Claudel, Barrault’s reaction did not differ from that of the first commentators discussed in Chapter 1, or from those of Italian journalists in Venice. Apparently, none of the influence that Noh might have had on Modernist practitioners could prepare him to the spectacle of Noh in its ‘real’ form. This first impression changed when in 1960 Barrault attended Kanze Hisao’s performance of *Hashitomi* (Hoff 1998, 93; Carruthers and Takahashi 2004, 26), on which occasion he could invite him to visit Paris. Besides silence and intensity of gestures, described in a fashion very close to Claudel’s, Barrault was struck by the discipline of Noh actors, which he compared with ‘the dust of our old theatre, the random accumulation of our furniture and of our objects, the negligence of our theatrical activity – to say it all, the lack of true respect that one had in Europe for the theatre’ (Barrault 1961, 70). Gillespie associates this comment with Claudel, though it appears to be closer to the ideals of respect for the stage that characterised practitioners with a larger on-stage experience such as Copeau, Craig or Stanislavski, whom Barrault considered ‘prophets of theatre’ (1972, 64). According to Gillespie, Barrault’s production of *Le Livre de Christophe Colomb* in Tokyo (1960) represented the evidence of his reception of Noh, as it combined pantomime, song, and dance, emphasising a kind of ‘interior’ acting, as opposed to expressionist style of mime. However, Barrault visited Japan for the first time only in

²⁷ Barrault was not new to this kind of infatuation for exotic practices. David Wiles documented how in 1950 Barrault found the inspiration for his 1955 *Oresteia* during a trip to Brazil from which he borrowed *candomblé* and *macumba*, later criticised by Roland Barthes as aestheticised exoticism (Wiles 2007, 110-17).

²⁸ Originally in Barrault (1961, 71).

1960, and given that his 1957 experience in Dijon did not prove to be particularly positive, one might wonder whether this influence did not come more from Claudel's writings or, as Gillespie suggests, from Sieffert's translations of Zeami, rather than from 'authentic' Noh. Belonging to the corporeal mime tradition, the element that interested Barrault the most was the use of the body as principal expressive medium of the *shite*. It is important to note that, although Barrault had developed a particular interest in masks, which he employed in his productions of ancient Greek plays (Wiles 2007, 110-27) there is no consistent mention of Noh masks in his writings, apart from the mask displayed, with other Japanese souvenirs, from the wall of his studio (Isker 1966). This is rather surprising given the depth of his thought on masks and their physical and physiologic impact on the body of the actor: David Wiles documents how in his unpublished notebooks Barrault produced an anatomy of the face of the mask in chakric terms that could be associated with the esoteric theory of Konparu Zenchiku (Nearman 1995, 243), but were instead borrowed from Polynesian and African tradition (Wiles 2007, 115-16). For Barrault, donning the mask meant shifting the locus of the senses from the head as site of the brain to the body, where the actor can breathe with the vertebrae, see with the chest, smell with the diaphragm, use their body to establish a direct contact with the 'the great body of the universe' (Barrault in Wiles 2007, 115), suggesting a non-dualistic phenomenological approach to performance close to Tantric Buddhism and to the philosophy of Noh practitioners such as Udaka Michishige. This brief excursus through Barrault's notes on Noh reveals that he was much predisposed towards a fruitful meeting with Noh, yet commitment to his own profession possibly did not leave him enough time for deepening his interest beyond this rather superficial level. The following section will demonstrate how this impression was confirmed on the event of the French visit of his fellow theatre superstar, Kanze Hisao.

Two years later, Barrault had another rare chance to explore the world of Noh further. In 1962, Kanze Hisao was chosen to represent Noh in a national theatre commission that organised the first overseas exchange study scheme for practitioners, on which occasion he could accept Barrault's previous invitation and be in Paris for six months (Hisao Kanze 1981a, 228; 1981b, 239).²⁹ Hisao left various articles, journal entries and interviews documenting his trip to Europe, precious data that can substantiate a comparison between his experience and Barrault's, and to investigate

²⁹ Hisao received a monthly stipend of 75,000¥, although he reckoned at least 100,000¥ would be necessary, and it is possible to argue that he ended up paying part of the expenses out of his own pocket (1981c, 224-25).

further the nature of this exchange. In the early sixties Hisao was at the same time one of the top-ranking *shite* actors and one of the few Noh actors performing outside the traditional boundaries.³⁰ Going abroad for around seven months (from May to December 1962) was a privilege probably none of his colleagues could have: the performance and teaching calendar of Noh physically binds actors to the stage or training space, and prevents them from dedicating long periods to individual activities.³¹ In order to take full advantage of this precious time, Hisao planned ahead the activities he would have liked to undertake: studying French classical theatre, such as Racine and Molière, but also contemporary ‘anti-theatre’ (1981a, 229, 232).

What, then, was the role of Barrault during Hisao’s ‘study abroad’ period? From the interviews and notes he left, it is clear that Hisao felt for Barrault the deference one owes to a *sensei*: as it was his first independent experience in the West, Hisao put himself in the hands of Barrault, of whom he only knew his protagonist role in the film *Les Enfants du Paradis* (1945) (1981c, 224).³² Barrault was key insofar as he was the ‘big name’ inviting the Japanese practitioner to Europe, introducing him to the theatre scene and arranging some of his performances/demonstrations. He set up a practice room for him at the Théâtre de l’Odéon, which he ended up not using much because of his many other commitments: in seven months, Hisao attended over sixty plays and concerts, and was able to meet and discuss with theatre practitioners, musicians and scholars – but how exactly did he do so? He often lamented his ignorance of French, which he started studying during the mornings at Alliance Française, and he always needed an interpreter, especially when giving his presentations. Besides the many plays he could attend as spectator, it is unclear whether Hisao undertook any form of training in Paris, of which there is no mention in his writings. Nevertheless, he had many occasions to introduce his own art to the French public: Hisao was able to perform at all major Paris venues with full house attendance (1981b, 239). These were not complete performances, impossible to stage alone, but 45-50 minutes sessions during which he

³⁰ Hisao choreographed Igor Stravinsky’s *Histoire du Soldat* and Takemitsu Tōru’s *Water Music* (Hoff 1998, 93). In 1970, Hisao joined the experimental group *Mei no Kai*, with whom he staged plays from the Greek classic repertoire, to Beckett, to contemporary Japanese playwrights. See K. Kasai (2008).

³¹ Hisao considered this pattern to be a minus for Noh actors, who ‘only do Noh all their lives and they have no time not even to think about what they are doing. It feels as if their creative impulse were paralysed. It’s not that in creative performing arts this inspiration does not exist, but in Noh the actor has first of all achieve a beautiful ‘shape’: if you can have this shape, even without being creative, you can succeed in Noh. However, even performing the classical repertoire requires the same degree of energy in order to create anew. Without this energy, there is no way something good comes out of an actor’ (1981a, 237).

³² It is not clear what occasions Hisao had to see Barrault perform on stage. There is no precise mention of this in his writings.

would demonstrate movements and dance *shimai* or *maibayashi*. He decided to present excerpts from the Noh *Eguchi* and *Utō* because they would provide examples of non-mimetic dance (*Eguchi*), which he believed would be the most difficult to transmit to the audience, and of more dynamic, self-explanatory dance (*Utō*). Hisao brought a costume, tapes with *hayashi* music, and 16mm films – among which was probably a colour version of *Shōjō* – in order to support his demonstrations (1981d, 244-45; 1981a, 235). Barrault and Sieffert helped in introducing the demonstrations, until the director had to leave for a tour of the Soviet Union.³³ Unable to continue his activities alone, he then teamed up with René Sieffert, with whom he appears to have had the best demonstrations, probably because of the linguistic and scholarly support of the famous Japanologist (1981b, 239; 1981d, 246).³⁴

From the facts sketched above it is possible to argue that Hisao's experience in Paris was important in two principal ways: firstly, it allowed him to explore French theatre traditions by attending performances and conversing with practitioners, albeit with the limitations already pointed out. Secondly, Paris helped Hisao to observe his own art from an objective point of view: in 'Dentō no tadashii keishō' ('The correct legacy of tradition'), an interview published in the April 1963 issue of the *Nōgaku Times*, Hisao points out how the first element of interest in his overseas experience was 'disagreement'. Unlike in Noh, where traditional arts follow a canon upon which both actors and audience agree, in the West the result of a performance is determined by the free interaction of the two sides (1981e, 254). This element of 'independence' must have been something Hisao felt very strongly, as it fed directly into his criticism of the *iemoto* system.

Noh has become part of the world cultural heritage and it is very important that we find a good way to pass this heritage on correctly. [...] I think the times are

³³ After the harsh comments on Barrault and Noh that Sieffert wrote in the introduction to his translation of Zeami (Sieffert 1960, 8), it is evident that this team was put together out of linguistic and scholarly necessity.

³⁴ Hisao reflected on his presentation at the Musée Guimet, and on how *ukyo-e* prints have been overvalued in the West. In his opinion, they have little role in the actual world of Japanese performing arts (1981a, 233). Elsewhere, he takes on this argument while commenting on how in his view the French audience would appreciate Noh more than Kabuki, possibly because of Kabuki's specific adherence to the time-space dimension of Tokyo during the Edo period. This opinion does not seem to be supported by the positive response that Kabuki had since its introduction and even after the war, when many important translations and essays were published. He also noticed how Western audiences have become more and more interested in arts such as ink painting and stone gardens, which are typical forms of medieval, Zen-influenced culture, akin to Noh in the period of its institutionalisation (1981d, 250). While during the Japonisme period *ukyo-e* and other forms of Japanese artefact were responding to the taste of European ornamental aestheticism, the post-war period saw the popularisation of Zen and its artistic representations, epitomised by Eugene Herrigel's book *Zen in the Art of Archery*, which was Barrault's *livre de chevet* (Pronko 1967, 95).

ripe for us to introduce the concept of ‘theatre group’ in Noh too, as Barrault suggested. The current *iemoto* system is just not right [...] However, if I propose these ideas is not because I want to change the form of Noh, or to introduce new performing methods, but rather to make the original spirit of Noh live again. [...] The *iemoto* system was the only artistic system of the feudal era: while society around it changed, it remained as it was centuries ago (1981b, 261–62 my translation).

The importance of this international experience is evident from his numerous comments that prove the extent to which being confronted not only with a different artistic practice, but with the ethos in which this practice was inscribed, was determinant for his understanding of Noh in Japan. There is however one important absence in Hisao’s memories of Paris: that of Jean-Louis Barrault. Hisao often referred to the ‘diplomatic’ role of his French ‘*sensei*’ but what he does not say is what kind of work they did together, what opportunities they had to confront their art, how and whether Barrault was eager to take advantage of this historical exchange. What emerges from Hisao’s memories is that he spent less time with Barrault than he did with others, demonstrating in schools, attending performances and travelling to other European countries (Germany, Switzerland, Spain, England, Sweden, Denmark) – a rather busy schedule for only a six-month stay (1981b, 241). Finally, the cultural exchange Hisao appears to have appreciated the most was one in Bourges (Région Centre), where he spoke to the musicians and stage technicians, because the actors were busy elsewhere (1981d, 247).

If the experience was so fruitful for Hisao, what was this celebrated encounter worth for Barrault? When such exchange takes place under the aegis of diplomatic institutions, the meeting of two cultural representatives does not seem to belong to history, but to hagiography. However, what this encounter records is Hisao’s outstanding endeavour both in Noh and in ‘Western’ theatre as a tangible fact. As for Barrault, his relation to Noh did not go beyond the genuine interest and fascination that an artist of his stature could nurture for a high expression of culture like Noh. As he admits in *Souvenirs pour demain*, Barrault attended Noh performances and could meet Noh actors, yet his involvement in *doing* Noh remained in the realm of hypothesis (Barrault 1972, 294).³⁵

³⁵ Barrault and Hisao had the chance to briefly meet on other occasions: in 1972, at the Théâtre des Nations festival in Paris, and in 1977, when Barrault and Hisao confronted their practice during a cross-cultural workshop on the Tessen-kai stage, Tokyo. A documentary showing part of the workshop has been recently shown at the Toshiba International Foundation Symposium (Pittsburgh, October 2009) and at the ‘Scènes françaises et japonaises de 1900 à nos jours’ symposium (Paris, November 2009).

The ‘age of interculturalism’

The Kanze-Barrault experience inaugurated a new era of international encounters that produced a vast number of explorations and exchanges between Noh and Europe, including adaptations of translations and use of Noh techniques in new forms of intercultural performance. During the 1960s and 1970s, the wave of contestation against middle-class bourgeoisie and capitalism that swept the West also hit Japan, where post-modern experimentations with intercultural theatre characterised the work of important directors such as Suzuki Tadashi and Ninagawa Yukio. Especially Suzuki elaborated a specific training method that would incorporate elements of Noh theatre and undertook a number of important collaborations both with Kanze Hisao (among them *The Trojan Women*, 1974, and *The Bacchae*, 1978) and with Kanze Hideo (1927-2007), Hisao’s younger brother, whose work in cinema and alternative theatre created scandal in the Noh establishment.³⁶

Since the end of the 1960s, the growth of cultural studies, and the philosophical debate on universalism and particularism elicited the formulation of umbrella terms such as globalisation and multiculturalism, expressing a new awareness of the cultural, political and economic implications of a global society in which individual and communitarian identities are no longer definable in terms of nationality. These concepts quickly spread in all fields including that of theatre and performance, where the concept of ‘intercultural theatre’ is still in the process of finding a definition. Scholars have provided different models for understanding of the phenomenon (Schechner and Appel 1990; Pavis 1996; Lo and Gilbert 2002), indicating various forms of ‘intra’, ‘multi’, and ‘trans’ culturalism that would suit specific cases of the more generally defined ‘intercultural’ experience. More recently, Erika-Fischer Lichte has elaborated the concept of ‘cultural interweaving’, emphasising how processes of interculturalism do

³⁶ Hideo explained how in his youth he escaped from home, asked to be adopted by the Gotō family of the Kita school, and took the name of Gotō Hideo. In 1958 Hideo was forced to quit Noh for reasons that remain unclear, but which might be related to his involvement in activities outside Noh. He was reintegrated in the Kanze School only in 1979, thanks to the intercession of his elder brother. (Hideo Kanze 1971, 186,190). Hideo was actively involved with the radical movements that shook the theatre scene in the 1960s and the work with leftist director Koreya Senda and other anti-conservative theatre groups such as Fukuda Yoshiyuki’s Youth Art Theatre (Powell 2002, 172-73). As Gerstle put it, ‘modern Japan, like the modern West, finds traditional conventional formality, with its submission of the individual to the will of the group, stifling. Ideas, social criticism, and individual expression are the modern sacred pillars’ (Gerstle 1994, 214). It has been already pointed out how during the post-war period Japan was undergoing a revision of the concept of ‘self’, providing a social background for the artistic shift to independent careers such as that of Kanze Hideo (Miyoshi 1994; Inoue 2001; Khan 1998).

not lead by amalgamation but by a state of in-betweenness of the ‘diverse’ elements, continuously producing new forms of diversity (Fischer-Lichte 2009). Since it is not the aim of this research to provide a model for interculturalism, the term ‘intercultural’ will be used here simply to define art works characterised by the generally identifiable presence of more than one culturally distinct element, as in the case of Noh theatre versions of Shakespeare, or opera versions of Noh plays.

Yoshi Oida

The case of Katsuhiko ‘Yoshi’ Oida’s long-lasting collaboration with Peter Brook, which began in 1968, when the director was invited to stage *The Tempest* by Barrault at the Théâtre des Nations (Kustow 2005, 183), well exemplifies the European intercultural theatre milieu that was in the process of being created in the 1970s. Although scarcely recognised as such, Oida’s notoriety in Western theatre world and the editorial success of his books have been a way for the diffusion of Noh to a non-specialist audience. In *An Actor Adrift* (1992), Oida recounts how Kanze Hisao and Nomura Mansaku had been invited by Barrault to join the Théâtre des Nations in 1968 but could not make it because of previous commitments (Oida 1992, 3). Oida was proposed as their replacement, and was introduced by Barrault to Brook as ‘an actor of the Noh theatre’ (Brook in Oida 1992: ix). The nature of this replacement casts doubts on the rigour of this theatre exchange: when Oida left Japan in 1968, he had been training in Kyogen with Okura Yatarō for twenty years, and had also received notions of Noh and Gidayū recitation (used in Bunraku) (1992, 5), but he never really was a traditional theatre professional, and these were corollary activities that accompanied his training in stage and cinema acting – that is, his actual profession. It follows that comparing the skills of a semi-amateur to that of traditional masters of the calibre of Kanze Hisao or Nomura Mansaku is preposterous.

The question, then, is: were Barrault or Brook able to realise this immeasurable distance? This situation does not seem to differ from that of Yeats’s ‘traditional’ dancer, Michio Ito. As will be argued later in this chapter, the inability to gauge the quality of foreign actors invited by Western practitioners is one of the flaws of the intercultural theatre experience. Following the recommendation of a friend, the director and playwright Iizawa Tadashi, Oida went to the first rehearsal wearing *yukata* (summer robe), that is, dressed ‘as the Japanese actor’ (1992, 8). Iizawa advised Oida: ‘you have

trained in Kyogen and Gidayu, which are unknown to foreign actors. Wear traditional costume and go as a Japanese actor. Never, never, under any circumstances, mention that you have played Hamlet. They will laugh at you' (Iizawa in Oida 1992: 5). Armed with what Erving Goffman (1959) described as 'expressive equipment', or the items that support the dramatisation of one's 'personal front', Oida was 'performing Japaneseness' to an audience hungry for exotic Japan even before he could set foot on a Western stage. Overwhelmed not only by the alien physicality, but also by the cultural distance expressed in the ease with which his colleagues undertook warm-up exercises, Oida took refuge in tradition, and resorted to his knowledge of Noh. While around him foreign bodies were contorting and voices were screaming, 'the Japanese actor' sat on the floor as in a Zen meditation session.

Oida started to realise the danger of self-exoticisation lurking behind the label of 'the Japanese actor' after he took on the role of Ariel in Brook's *The Tempest* (London 1968), which he acted using Noh techniques. Despite the positive response from audience and critics, Oida realised that his foreignness was 'a sort of exotic souvenir' (1992, 25), and soon gave up imitating Noh moves merely superimposed upon non-traditional contexts (1992, 26). Brook agreed, and suggested that Oida try to get away from an ethnic category he fell into: tradition and technique are reassuring, but would become a prison if the actor relied on them exclusively (1992, 43, 59). In a way, the process of working with international performers under Brook's direction was a process of liberation from the 'japaneseness' created by his retreat into tradition and by the exoticising attitude of his observers. This process was not straight-forward: the ambiguously entitled piece *Japanese Liturgical Games*, which Oida wrote and directed in Japan and overseas in 1975 with the title *Beyond Wisdom* featured a Shinto priest, a Buddhist monk, a Noh actor, two martial artists and a musicians involved various religious rituals before putting on their distinctive uniforms and interacting according to their specific techniques, in what appears to be a melange of Japanese asceticism and aestheticism (Oida 1992, 141-154; Flakes 1975). Oida later admitted he would not repeat an experience that he might have recognised as being self-Orientalising (1992, 154).

Oida's other major publication, *The Invisible Actor* (1997), is a guide for performers, in which Oida attempts to incorporate traditional expertise with contemporary performance. In order to convey his advice to the large public, Oida writes in a simple, straight-forward style, heavily borrowing from the concepts

elaborated by Zeami, mentioned everywhere in the book. Zeami is the perfect vessel for conveying philosophical ideas and practical teachings, expressing what appears to be Oida's synthesis of Japanese aesthetics and ethics, touching on signature concepts of *jo/ha/kyū*, heart-mind, emptiness, and substance-essence. While the style of his prose is often poetic rather than scientific, replete with anecdotes involving Noh actors, Chinese masters and Zen monks, his explanations of Zeami are convincing and engage in reflections that could potentially be undertaken even by those unfamiliar with Noh theatre. Oida spends a number of pages of the book discussing ethical aspects of practice and performance, which also derive from his experience as a Shingon Buddhism acolyte, as described in *An Actor Adrift* (1992, 115-132). He reflects on the concept of 'mutuality' as the core relationship established between performers, pointing out that what prevents actors from developing natural talents is the failure to recognise their egotistical attitude toward performance (1997, 74, 81). All in all, Oida's books express the split personality of an actor who dedicated his whole professional career to travelling across cultures. Despite the declared intention of getting rid of his own traditional background, thus embracing a freer and 'more authentic' self, the points of departure and points of arrival of his pilgrimages remain the theatrical and religious culture of Japan. Asceticism and aestheticism, the two components that identify Japanese culture singled out by Pilgrim (1977) and Turner (1994), are reinstated and vitalised in Oida's presentation of Japanese culture to an international audience.

Eugenio Barba and the ISTA

The fact that Oida's staging of rituals belonging to his country of birth in *Beyond Wisdom* was not met with particular criticism was probably due to the indulgence given to those practitioners who, rightly or wrongly, are granted the right to represent what is considered their 'own' tradition. Especially since the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978, Western endeavours in intercultural theatre encountered severe criticism, and were often accused of Eurocentric attitudes and covert racism. Most notably, Oida's mentor Peter Brook and his production of the Indian epic *Mahabharata* (1985) were criticised by Indian scholar Rustom Bharucha (1988) as a form of imperialist cultural appropriation.

Among the practitioners who most researched the modes of interaction of cultures via the performance medium is Eugenio Barba. The socio-historical framework

of Barba's formative years is that of the social revolution of the 'cultural decade': from 1961 to 1964 Barba was an apprentice of Jerzy Grotowski, who, besides nurturing a strong interest in Asian traditional theatre, wished for a retreat of theatre from commercialism to a 'poor' yet honest theatre (Grotowski 1973, 116). It is perhaps meaningful to note how the premises of Grotowski's and Barba's theatre are not distant from the early twentieth-century practitioners whose work was inspired both by Asian traditions and by anti-bourgeois feeling. In fact, among those who Barba acknowledges as his influences are Copeau, Decroux and Stanislavski as well as Asian traditions such as Noh, Kathakali and Topeng, which had in common the quest for the 'actor in life', or the synthesis of artistic behaviour and ethical attitude (Barba and Fowler 1988, 126) that he identified as belonging to a trans-national, 'Eurasian' cultural area (Barba 1995, 40).

Much of Barba's work has been dedicated to the comparative analysis of theatre forms belonging to different cultural regions, which led him to the formulation of the key-concept of 'pre-expressivity' (Barba and Fowler 1982; 1988), or 'the use of the body-mind according to extra-daily techniques based on transcultural, recurring principles' (1995, 10). According to this concept, all performance traditions possess methods for the development of the performer's 'extra-daily' 'presence', as opposed to the 'daily', ordinary, non-performative use of the body, and it has been the aim of the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA), founded in the 1970s, to search for the origin of such methods. (Watson 1993, 149-73). During the ISTA symposia performers from all regions of the world confront their artistry under the guidance of its director, who pauses, rewinds, plays back and meticulously analyses the different performance methods (2002, 2-17).

The multitude of Asian influences in Barba's work with Odin Teatret, ISTA and Teatrum Mundi makes it difficult to discern any specific influence of Noh theatre. Probably the contribution of Noh actors Kanze Hisao, Kanze Hideo (Barba and Fowler 1982, 31) and later Matsui Akira (in 2006, with Teatrum Mundi's production of *Ur-Hamlet*) to the ISTA has not been more influential than that of, for instance, Nihon Buyō practitioner Kazuko Azuma, or Odissi dancer Sanjukta Panigrahi, both long-term contributors to Barba's standing symposium. Since the early phases of the development of his dramaturgy, Barba has made clear that it was not his intention to ask his actors to incorporate elements of Asian theatre, or to 'imitate them', but to use them as 'stimulus' or 'points of departure' for a creative process (1972, 48-49). Even in the case of his multicultural group Teatrum Mundi, practitioners belonging to different traditions

contribute to the performance while maintaining their form with almost no alteration, unlike the intercultural productions of Peter Brook and Ariane Mnouchkine (Watson 2002, 6-17). Barba's quest for the 'essence of theatre' (Barba 2002a) has led observers to criticise the mode of his intercultural research (Watson 2002, 20-35). In the controversy with Philip Zarrilli, Barba was accused of not delving into the historical specificities of the cultural traditions considered, idealising Asian theatre by means of sweeping generalisations instrumental to his own formulation of *presence*, and leaving his own directorial voice isolated and authoritative (Zarrilli and Barba 1988, 101,106).

The presence of Noh is probably more discernible in Barba's theory than in his practice. For Barba, Zeami is a constant reference and source of inspiration, and provides confirmation of his vision of training and performance (1995, 64-69). Zeami authenticates practice with the authority of inscribed tradition: his poetic images of acting – among which *hana*, *kokoro*, *jo/ha/kyū* – form an easily identifiable lexicon which Barba, not unlike Brook or Oida, appropriates in order to express his own vision of theatre. Zeami has become canonized not only in Japanese, but also in Western theatre literature, and it appears that theoreticians like Barba, who are removed from practice, with the exception of the occasional events with guest practitioners of the ISTA, whose degree of representativeness of the Noh establishment is yet to be assessed, take for granted that the theories of Zeami are embodied by any Noh practitioner. Barba tends to idealise Zeami when, as Zarrilli has suggested, he does not acknowledge that even in Asian traditions there are a large number of practitioners who certainly do not reach the high peaks of achievement in the 'presence' with which Barba is fascinated (Zarrilli and Barba 1988, 102). In addition, there is a question as to whether Barba even possesses the instruments to judge if, for example, the practitioner invited for the ISTA symposium is actually a 'good' practitioner in his or her own field. This reminds one of Mnouchkine, who during her trip to Japan understood the universality of theatre because the Kabuki actors she saw 'were wonderful' (Mnouchkine 1996, 96). Following Bourdieu (1993), who formulated a theory of art reception as a process taking place within a socio-historical field, and thus not conceivable in absolute terms, both Mnouchkine and Barba would be outside their jurisdiction when expressing judgments on the quality of an art form whose technique and cultural milieu are mostly unknown to them. While it is plausible that even without knowledge of a particular technique they be able to tell a 'good' actor from a 'bad' actor of the same tradition if they were standing one next to the other, it would be less likely

for them to produce such judgment if the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ actors were taken singularly, or within a group of artists belonging to other styles. This is because *some* of the abilities that generally characterise ‘good acting’, such as the ability to perform acrobatics, or execute complex dance routines, or any of the extra-daily actions that Barba has collected in his *Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* (1991) are shared across cultures.

Nevertheless, what such an audience could not grasp are the degrees of subtlety that make art interesting for those who are able to understand it. An audience familiar with Western naturalist theatre would be able to recognise a bad actor who ‘overdoes it’, thus producing a grotesque effect, or a comedian with terrible comic timing, yet they might not be able to recognise whether a Noh actor is performing in a sensitive, moderate way, or in an showy and superficial fashion, or whether a Kyogen actor’s timing is funny or not. Yet a great part of this audience would be satisfied with the spectacle they are observing, because they are attracted by other components rather than by the subtle qualities evident to the connoisseur. It appears that, for Barba, it is not the intrinsic quality of the actor that counts, but the fact that the actor is there. And yet one is left to question the artistic relevance of creating performances with practitioners whose quality cannot be understood by the other participants. Barba assumes that ‘presence’ is a quality that is globally and transversally evident, that does not require specialised expertise in order to be recognised and it is this tendency to universalism that undermines an otherwise meritorious endeavour. Not unlike Oida, the direction Barba takes supports the diffusion of Noh to a large audience of spectators and readers of his publications, partially removing its exotic aura of aristocratic entertainment, describing it in concrete, anthropological terms accessible to non-specialists, and forcing Noh to leave the comfort zone of tradition and to take part in an international theatre forum.

Asian theatre has been the means for Western practitioners to discover their own tradition, yet, Barba warns, ‘this fascination with the surface, which today because of the intensity of contacts risks subjecting the evolution of traditions to rapid accelerations, can lead to homogenizing promiscuity’ (1995, 14). In *The Paper Canoe* (1995) Barba creates a new space for discussion of intercultural theatre by getting away from the trite East-West dichotomy. Having explored the roots of trans-cultural ‘pre-expressive’ features of performance for decades, Barba establishes a latitudinal distinction between what he calls ‘North’ and ‘South’ poles of performance. These are

not geographic areas but fictional units in which the ‘North pole’ represents the exacting tradition of Asian (for example Kathakali, Kabuki and Barong) and Europe (as in the case of corporeal mime, ballet, Sicilian marionettes), relying on canon and prescribed training; the ‘South pole’, instead, represents a form of performance that does not belong to a specific style, in which ‘the performer must construct the rules of support by her/himself’, and their apprenticeship ‘begins with the inherent gifts of her/his personality’ (1995, 13). Barba’s argument is powerful as it resists the geographical and historical categorisation that is at the centre of the debate around inter-cultural theatre, and is at the same time post-modern in the way it avoids the East-West dichotomy rooted in the idea of national boundaries and he envisages a paradigm of the artist positioned between past and future, own and other, tradition and innovation. The core distinction lies in the different quality of *freedom* (an ethical property) of performers: while the ‘North pole’ practitioner is bound to a canon, ‘South pole’ practitioners are free to express their personality. However ‘the South Pole performer easily becomes the prisoner of arbitrariness and of a lack of support. But the freedom of the North Pole performer remains completely within the genre’ (1995, 13).

This theory could be argued against by looking at practitioners such as Yoshi Oida, whose eclectic career has been summarised above, proving that South and North poles are ideals rather than actual categories of contemporary theatre, and a possible way to interpret what Barba is trying to express in such topology is that poles should not be understood as absolutes but as ideal *termini* of a continuum. Though Barba’s theory focuses on the formal constitution of technique, his poles implicitly convey an ethical distinction: while the South Pole is the realm of individuality and apparent ‘freedom’, where a performer is at the centre of their own art, the North Pole corresponds to the bounds and boundaries of tradition, within which the performer ‘depersonaliz[es] him/herself’ (1995, 13). The flaw of the North/South pole theory is simply formal, as Barba admits that the ‘personalization’ of the model learnt from tradition is a sign of artistic maturity (1995, 13). Likewise, looking at the metaphor of the poles from an ethical perspective, the North Pole actor necessarily faces a critical phase when their individuality begins to creep into the rigour of the mould of tradition. Evidently, traditional performers who attempt to innovate the tradition of Noh, such as Umewaka Genshō (formerly Rokurō) could innovate only because they were in the artistic, social and political condition of proposing such novelties from within his individual

understanding of Noh.³⁷ At first, this does not seem to be what Barba is looking for: he analyses the form an actor inhabits in the moment of his artistic expression, not in the psychological, spiritual or ethical process that brought him or her to that stage. What is Barba's perspective on the ethics of training, so important to his 'masters'?

Barba's ethics of theatre

The concept of *ethos*, which Barba describes as 'scenic behaviour' and 'work ethics' (1995, 62), is foundational in his training method.

It is impossible to define the border beyond which scenic *ethos* becomes ethics. [...] In the classical traditions of Asian theatres, the contiguity between the theatrical profession and ceremonial or meditative practices is so normal that their respective languages often intermix. Sometimes one wonders: is Zeami using theatre to talk about Zen or Zen to talk about theatre? (1995, 107).

Barba considers the ethics of performance as a liminal space between every-day life and scenic life that is materialised in discipline. Referring to Copeau's school, but also to Brecht, Barba points out how the actor's training is the locus for the development of a social condition of the individual – hence of the group – that directly feeds into the aesthetics of performance, as 'training teaches one *to take positions*, both as extra-daily behaviour on the stage, and with respect to one's profession, the group in which one works, the social context in which one is immersed: with respect to what one accepts and what one refuses' (1995, 109). Barba is, then, interested in the social relevance of performance, as from the earliest stages of his career he understood training as an act of self-definition (1972, 47), by which the actor does not give up his or her own 'self' in the act of transformation, but maintains a certain degree of 'sincerity': what the performer belonging to the 'North' pole seeks is not a 'fictive person' but a 'fictive body' (1995, 34). Again, the morality entailed in the North-South Poles metaphor refers back to the quest for sincerity in theatre initiated by the Modernists and epitomized by Copeau in his 1913 *Essay of Dramatic Renovation*. For the Modernists, as well as for Barba, moral ideals of theatre training have their positive paradigm in the Asian tradition seen in opposition to the Stanislavskian realism, in which 'the performer's work has been orientated towards a network of fictions, of 'magic ifs' (1995, 34). Barba's North Pole practitioners do not compromise their moral integrity: they do not

³⁷ For the *shinsaku nō* by Umewaka Genshō, see R. Umewaka and M. Hikawa (1998) and R. Umewaka et al. (2008).

lie while performing because they perform ‘through their bodies’ and not ‘through their minds’. This is where Barba’s alleged holism falls back upon the most typical form of dualism conceiving of a ‘mental’³⁸ component and a physical component of acting.

What is the point of convergence of the multicultural condition in which Barba’s work is articulated, and the ethics of training? For Barba the ‘hidden’ yet ‘beautified’ (2002b, 239) pre-expressive means that constitute the form of Asian performance are still a mystery to the external observer.

Today, the theatrical environment is restricted but has no frontiers. Performers often travel outside their own cultures or host foreigners, theorize and diffuse the specificity of their art in foreign contexts, see other theatres, remain fascinated by and therefore tempted to incorporate into their own work some of the results which have interested or moved them. These misunderstandings can be fertile [...](Barba 1995, 14).

As has been pointed out in the introduction, Barba elaborates this concept in *The Ripe Action* (2002) where he laments the lack of interest of Western practitioners in the ‘real’ knowledge of Asian performance traditions. Though Barba appears to be mostly interested in technical elements of a given performance style, which he considers scientific and not ‘aesthetic’ (Barba 2002b, 240), it is arguable that the superficiality of the approach criticised derives from a lack of interest in the ethics of training. For Barba, the essence of theatre resides in the ‘performer’s *bios*’ (2002b, 240), whose ‘knowledge which lies behind those results, the hidden technique and the vision of the craft which bring them alive, continue to be ignored’ (1995, 14). However, as Bharucha put it, ‘we need to ask ourselves whether the *bios* of being an actor from a particular culture can be separated from his or her *ethos*’ (Bharucha 1996, 207). It is important to compare these two claims to notice how the vocabulary used could be misleading. If the object of the conversation is the *ethos* of a specific tradition, then emphasis is laid on the cultural-historical, identitarian characteristics of such tradition, which is Bharucha’s principal interest.

Yet, as mentioned above, Barba’s target beyond *bios* is not *ethos* – the characteristic features of a given culture – but *ethics*, that is to say, his practice does not consider specifically the context of the tradition he borrows from, but the ethical (secular or religious) drive of the performer’s training, regardless of his cultural specificities. For Bharucha, this approach would be comparable to Richard Schechner’s ‘performance of cultures’, accused of not acknowledging the difference between faith

³⁸ Barba’s expression in Barba and Zarrilli (1988, 12).

and spectacle, resulting in an unethical adaptation of religious rituals in 'secular' performance (Bharucha 1996, 256-257). While discussing Indian religious performance, and its 'restoration' in New York, Bharucha claims that:

It is precisely this demystification of faith that needs to be questioned when examining religious festivals like the ramlila. The boy-actor who plays Rama is Rama, not because of any particular technical ability on his part but because he believes with his entire being in the divinity of Rama. This is faith, not a performance virtue, and the two should not be blurred. If this same boy had to 'perform' at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, he would not be 'Rama'. He would be an alien exhibit (1996, 257).

Once more, criticism of interculturalism entails the fundamental discussion about the truth of art dating back to Plato's *Republic*. The fulcrum of Bharucha's criticism is faith as an inextricable religious component of a certain performance tradition, whose imitation would be morally wrong. Bharucha's radical perspective, which would annihilate Oida's 'liturgical games', restricts the practice of such traditional art to believers, raising the question to how it is possible to gauge the faith of its practitioners and audiences. Would not Noh theatre run this risk, too? Since the time of Zeami Noh theatre has been composed of secular and religious elements, whose balance is continuously renegotiated in every aspect of both performers and performance. At the dawn of the international encounters of Noh with the West, Fenollosa affirmed that Noh actors have 'souls pure as a god's' (1901, 134). Is this position still tenable? The following, conclusive chapter will attempt to disentangle issues related to religious spirituality in Noh, eventually proposing a 'secular' approach to ethical criticism of intercultural theatre.

Chapter Seven – Aesthetics and ethics of Noh practice

Foreigners and Noh practice today

The previous chapters have described how, from the late nineteenth century until recent intercultural experiments, the reception of Noh theatre in the West has been characterised by a constant intertwining of aesthetic and ethical discussions. In this last chapter I shall switch to the first person singular and examine my own experience as a Noh practitioner in Europe and in Japan, with the aim of building a theory of the inextricability of aesthetics and ethics in Noh. The hybrid condition of scholar/practitioner has deeply influenced my approach, and therefore my findings, and it is necessary to describe at the outset the methodology I have adopted.

My knowledge of Noh is not the result of the comparative study of different styles or teachers. Much contemporary scholarship seeks to take a less subjective perspective by adopting the ‘compare and contrast’ method. I considered this approach unsuitable for my own research not only because it is incompatible with the possibilities offered by my ethnographic case study, but also because it appeared to collide with ethical ideals pursued in the thesis. In other words, by studying Noh I was not simply acquiring knowledge for the sake of my own, individual research: I was most of all establishing social bonds whose good condition would influence my path through the world of Noh (*nō no sekai*).¹ As will be explained below, these relationships could then be made to serve the purposes of my individual work, as the interest of the research is exploring the validity of ethical virtues in Noh. As will be explained further, it is precisely because I decided to abide by the rules of traditional training that I was able to gain access to Noh. In order to come to grips in more detail with the reasons that brought me to this decision, the following section will summarise the basic aspects of the Noh training environment.

¹ This common expression simply translates the English ‘the world of Noh’ but it is important to point out how by referring to *nō no sekai* (lit. ‘world of Noh’) one suggests a comprehensive understanding of Noh not only as technical or academic knowledge but as living, complex system characterised by a high level of social participation in the activities of the practice groups.

Social structure of the Noh establishment

P.G. O'Neill (1984) categorises typical features of Japanese traditional arts under the following headings: *iemoto* leadership, hierarchy, secrecy, and obligation. With the administrative systematisation that came with the Tokugawa regime (Harootunian 2008, 182-95), Japanese traditional arts were subdivided into stylistic schools (*ryū*), whose hierarchy was regimented into a system better known as *iemoto seido*. In Noh, four *ryū* of *shite* actors were initially created: Kanze, Hōshō, Konparu and Kongō, to which a fifth, Kita, was added later (O'Neill 1984). At the heart of the *iemoto seido* is the concept of *ie* (household) or 'corporate unit' (Smith 1998, 24), where roles and power positions are acquired by means of succession, and whose absolute leader is the *iemoto* (lit. 'origin of the family').² As Eric Rath explains, it is thanks to the *iemoto* institution and its authority over the transmission of texts and technique that Noh has managed to be handed down more or less unaltered for six centuries (Rath 2004, 190-214). After the Meiji period, the *iemoto* has become the only individual with the right to award licenses, authorise performances and publish texts (O'Neill 1984, 640). His role is not limited to the administration of the activities of a school: he is what Shils defined as a 'custodian of tradition' (Shils 1971, 13), the most important actor in the school, the embodiment of the ethos of the *ryū*, and the lighthouse showing the direction to future generations.

The social model of the *ryū* as extended household can be understood in macro and micro sub-systems. For example, the historical nucleus of the Kongō School is composed of the Kongō family, led by the current *iemoto*, Kongō Hisanori, and by four other main families (Imai, Matsuno, Taneda and Teshima). In addition to these are a number of other professional practitioners who do not belong to families with Noh descent, but who nonetheless received professional training: in total 85 individuals (Nōgaku Kyōkai 2011). A Noh school is structured according to the typical 'extended family' system (Smith 1998, 25), where members are not necessarily related by consanguineal descent but are nonetheless united by strongly felt feelings of gratitude and obligation (*giri*) towards the teacher, and by extension towards the *iemoto*.

Because the *iemoto seido* is a pyramid-shaped structure, actors below the *iemoto*

² With the Meiji restoration, increasing nationalistic policy advocated cultural but also racial unity of the Japanese as people of Yamato, and the concept of *ie* was used to foster the bond between the Emperor, seen as the originator of the 'big family of Japan', and his subjects (Hendry 2003, 25-30; Wilkinson 1962).²

have in turn their own family tradition, and form groups (*kai*) constituted of professionals, semi-amateur and amateur practitioners. As Noh lost its aristocratic patronage with the Meiji restoration, teaching to amateurs has become the principal source of income for most Noh actors.

Although old-timer/new-comer (*senpai/kōhai*) seniority relations (Nakane 1973, 42-47) govern the social dimension of amateurs orbiting around a professional actor-teacher, they are likely to have no direct contact with the *iemoto*: they all share the same kind of relation to the teacher, who is the student's only point of reference. Unlike other Asian performing arts, Noh teachers establish exclusive relationships with their students, and changing one's master is considered an exceptional event.³ A Noh student is not free to join other stylistic schools, or even other groups within the same school: in most cases the bond to the master, and to the *kai*, is forever. It is not by chance that actors such as Rebecca Ogamo Teele and Richard Emmert describe their life within the Noh as a form of 'marriage' (Teele and Kitakura 2011; Emmert).

This type of exclusivity of Noh training explains why, as Noh trainee, I had no choice but to abide by this rule. If I wanted to train with teachers belonging to different groups, I would have needed to do this covertly, as no teacher would have accepted a student already training with someone else. It might have been possible that a foreign researcher doing extemporaneous practitioner observation on a sample of training groups could have been accepted 'as observer'. However, the type of training I am following is not the one-off, workshop-like type, but a continuous, progressive path leading to semi-professionalism, and an ethical stance based on respect for the authority of the teacher – hence for the *iemoto* – is the premise on which my journey began. It is important to specify that the decision to accept the teacher's authority is not unconditional and it by no means implies the need to erase the self, as a superficial understanding of Japanese traditional training would claim. This chapter will argue that partial understandings of the notion of selflessness (*muga*) are at the basis of a misconstruction of the ethical condition of the individual in Noh training.

The familial structure of the Noh *kai*, and the feeling of indebtedness to the teacher are so strong that breaking of the bond could be associated with feelings of 'disrespect' and 'betrayal'. Likewise, knowledge circulating within the group, whose

³ This might happen in case of the death of the teacher, in which case he or she would probably be replaced by a son/daughter or other family member. It is also possible that students or teachers judge their personalities or methods incompatible and decide to interrupt the training course. In this case a student would normally respect a 'mourning' period (up to one or two years) before asking another master to take him or her on.

teaching is what makes the student in debt to the master, belongs to that very group, and is not supposed to be shared with outsiders. Zeami stressed the importance of secrecy (*hiden*) as one of the fundamental characteristics of Noh.⁴ Zeami associated secret transmission with the concept of the ‘flower’⁵: one of the reasons for secrecy was the effort to create an effect of freshness for the audience, as well as an aura of mystery around objects that, Zeami admits, once revealed ‘are not things of particularly great consequence’ (Zeami 2008, 70). Eric Rath (2004) shows how secrecy was, and still is, a means for legitimisation and monopolisation of knowledge: the Noh establishment responded to the popularisation of Noh knowledge through various stages of technological advancement by enhancing the value of secret transmission so that the a certain degree of authority over transmission remained in the hands of a restricted number of ‘custodians of tradition’. Even today, materials such as diagrams, notes or recordings taken during lessons are not shared with outsiders: the in-between status of the amateur as ‘undesigned bearer of knowledge’ (Morinaga 2005, 112) could be felt as possible threat to secrecy.

Seen from an anthropological perspective, the origin of secrecy in arts would seem to lie in the exclusivist quality of Japanese sociality.⁶ However, other views would claim that limitation of the circulation of materials such as audiovisuals has a very practical reason: as Noh scores are much less precise than Western staves, and their interpretation mostly relies on the interpretation of the reader, audiovisuals as learning tools are usually considered dangerous if not interpreted by an experienced practitioner – that is, a member of the *kai* who ‘was there’ when the film was taken, who would be able to contextualise the video in the history of the teaching style of the teacher. In addition to this practical argument is a question as to whether anything reproducible (audio or video recording) would not be in sheer contrast to the many features of Noh that make it an irreproducible art. In order to maintain the freshness encapsulated in the expression *ichi-go ichi-e* (lit. ‘one occasion, one encounter’), Noh performances are rarely repeated more than once in the life of a practitioner, which means that months of preparation lead to a single event, usually shared with the restricted audience that fits

⁴ See Zeami (2008, 70-73) and M. Morinaga’s detailed study of *hiden* in Noh (2005).

⁵ In medieval Japan, the term *kadensho* (‘flower-transmission’) was a common way to denominate secret treatises in the world of arts and crafts.

⁶ Japanese social science has described the distinction between *uchi* (inside) and *soto* (outside) as crucial to the understanding of the sense of belonging and distinction between the ‘domestic’ or ‘own’ and the ‘foreign’ or ‘other’ See, among others, J. Hendry (2003, 46-61) and J. Bachnik (1998).

into a Noh playhouse.⁷ Reproducibility is associated with staleness, and it could be argued that much of the beauty of Noh is in the tension created by practitioners who do not rehearse together, and by an audience conscious of the uniqueness of the event taking place on stage.

The role of amateurs in Noh today

The above description presents Noh as orally transmitted art (*kuden*), where students learn by observation and imitation: texts and audiovisual recordings are complements of the learning process. As Noh is organised in households where art is orally transmitted from father to son (or in some cases to daughter), those who do not belong to a family of Noh lineage can either be ‘adopted’ by the house of a master at an early age (becoming *uchi-deshi*, ‘live-in-apprentice’) and be brought up as the son of a professional would be, or train as amateurs and be ‘upgraded’ to this status at a mature age, thus becoming a so-called *shirōto-agari* (professional who reached their status starting from an amateur condition). A large number of amateurs start their training when joining a university club or even later, thus the possibility of them becoming *uchi-deshi* is precluded. Though the amateur is not expected to fulfil the duties of a professional, values of respect and submission to the master are held in high esteem.

It is common practice to consider full members of the Nōgaku Kyōkai as professionals (*nōgaku-shi*), while all the others would be amateurs (*shirōto*).⁸ The Nōgaku Kyōkai’s mission is to preserve and promote the tradition of Noh, to monitor the work of its practitioners, and to sustain their work (Nōgaku Kyōkai website).⁹ It is a rather closed institution: in order to become a member an individual is required to be introduced by his or her teacher, and subsequently be approved by all members of the section of the association to which they wish to be subscribed. Rebecca Ogamo Teele, Noh scholar and student of Udaka Michishige, was the first foreigner in the history of

⁷ Each school has ‘standard’ and ‘special’ variations (*kogaki*) for each play of the classical repertoire. An actor might then perform the same play more than once in his life, yet choosing a variation, usually of higher rank (*kurai*) and difficulty. The cast is likely to be composed of different performers.

⁸ Nōgaku Kyōkai (Nohgaku Performers’ Association) is the corporation representing all professional Noh, Kyogen actors, as well as instrumentalists. *Nōgaku-shi* specifically indicates a ‘Noh specialist’. *Shirōto* is composed by the characters 素, ‘elementary’, ‘naked’ and 人, for ‘man’. The more general antonym for *shirōto* would be *kurōto*, composed by 玄, ‘mysterious’, ‘occult’, and ‘man’. Notice how, semantically, *kurōto* implies the concept of esoteric knowledge.

⁹ The Noh association was founded in 1880 as Nōgakusha, reformed in 1896 as Nōgakkai and again in 1945 as Nōgaku kyōkai. The association’s board is composed of elders representing the various schools of *shite*, *waki*, *hayashi* and *Kyogen*, and is divided into eight regional sub-directories.

Noh theatre to be accepted in the Kyōkai in 1996.¹⁰ While other foreigners obtained licenses to teach (bestowed by the *iemoto* of one's school upon presentation by the teacher), Teele still remains the only foreigner in the Association.

While it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between Noh professionals and amateurs, it is possible to consider some of the practical privileges and duties of both categories. Professionals are granted a large number of benefits, among which are free training, the right to sell tickets for their own performances, the right to earn money from their teaching, and the possibility of performing in regular events programmed by the school (*teiki nō*). On such occasions, the professional actor does not pay for the production of the play in which he or she is involved. Amateurs, on the other hand, do not have such privileges: they must pay for their lessons and, most importantly for their participation in performance events. When the teacher proposes the student to perform a full production as *shite*, the amateur must financially provide for all elements of the staging: musicians, *waki* actors, Kyogen actors, eight chorus members, stage assistants, rental of costumes, masks and stage. The enormous cost of a Noh production means that amateurs rarely stage complete plays, and more often perform in smaller-scale, plain-clothes recitals. Amateurs have no 'right' to perform except in recitals organised by the teacher, and they have the duty to support the activities of their leader by purchasing tickets to his or her performances, and to contribute with gifts and donations on other occasions. For an amateur, Noh can be a rather expensive activity, and participation in its world requires strong motivation and readiness to sacrifice time and money. Noh actors dedicate their lives to Noh and would not be able to support themselves without the support of students: in a way, gifts to the teacher (*orei*) are ways to express gratitude for the sacrifice the actor is making by renouncing an 'ordinary life', and sharing their knowledge with others who do not belong to the professional world.¹¹

¹⁰ Teele recounts the difficulty of obtaining the membership in R. Teele (2003a).

¹¹ Full membership of the Kyōkai does not seem to be a sufficient instrument to map the great variety of Noh practitioners. While all full members of the Nōgaku Kyōkai are formally considered professionals, not all of them perform with the same frequency, and possibly not with the same artistic results. Certain professionals with low artistic achievement might be asked to perform only corollary activities, such as singing in the *ji-utai*, working in the *gakuya* greenroom, or serving as secondary *kōken* stage assistants, without performing full Noh as *shite* for long periods. Other reasons for this limited appearance on stage can be related to power positions within the school, or within the Nōgaku Kyōkai itself. However, it is the policy of the Nōgaku Kyōkai to ensure each school, as well as *waki hayashi* and Kyogen schools, is proportionally represented in the regularly scheduled performances. Each school has regular (*teiki*) Noh performances scheduled monthly. In addition, families or *kai* can have regular annual performances, produced by the actors themselves. It is the case of the Udaka Sanrinshojo and Seigan performances. To these are added other regular performances in shrines and temples, and *takigi* torchlight summer events. I experienced working as 'tourist guide' at the Kyoto Takigi-Noh in the summer of 2010. The 2-day event takes place every June within the premises of the Heian-jingu shrine, and the plays performed are equally

The International Noh Institute: a historical premise

My teacher, Udaka Michishige, was not born in a family of Noh professionals: he began his Noh practice at the age of 13 when, after graduating from elementary school, he became live-in-apprentice of the *iemoto* Kongō Iwao II. The condition of *uchi-deshi* required that he carried out menial tasks such as cleaning the house and running various errands in exchange for the privilege of receiving training directly from the *iemoto*. Living with the Kongō family without the rights of kinship granted to a blood relative might have heightened a certain sense of responsibility for his own future career. Besides chant and dance, Udaka developed an interest in Noh masks and taught himself how to carve. This is a rather unusual feature of his career: while mask-carvers are artisans not involved with professional acting, Udaka would make mask-carving a signature feature of his acting technique, as it allows him to understand the universe of masks from the unique perspective of the creator (Udaka and Teele 1984e). In 1970 Udaka graduated from the *iemoto*, left the house and founded his own teaching group, the Kei'un-kai, which now has branches in five other cities in Japan, as well as in Milan, where I began my training. With his two sons Tatsushige and Norishige, both professional actors, and his daughter Keiko, a Noh mask carver, Udaka has now created a solid group within the Kongō School.¹²

At the time of Udaka's initiation, his father's surname had no relevance within the world of Noh. However, recent research has revealed that the Udaka clan, originally from Matsuyama, had been serving the local Matsudaira lords as Noh performers from 1712 until the start of the Meiji period, when the family disbanded and members of the family moved to Kyoto.¹³ Throughout adulthood, Udaka put enormous efforts in the reconstruction of the history of his family and in re-establishing a connection with his past heritage in Matsuyama, where he has one of his training groups. In fact, Udaka established a particularly strong relationship with the Shinonome-jinja, a Shinto shrine

distributed between the two schools active in Kyoto, Kanze and Kongō.

¹² Udaka's individual achievement should be judged on his position within the organism of the Kongō School: Udaka is either chorus leader or principal stage assistant (*hon-kōken*) for the *iemoto*'s performances, the two highest positions a *shite* actor can take on stage if not acting as *shite* or *shite-tsure*.

¹³ The history of the Udaka family and their relation to the Matsuyama nobility has been recently researched and published by one of Udaka's most advanced students, Ono Yoshirō (2010).

adjacent to Matsuyama Castle where masks and costumes used by the actors serving the Matsudaira lords during the Edo period are preserved. In 2010 the *gūji* (chief priest) of Shinonome-jinja granted Udaka access to the collection, based on the mutual interest of the two: Udaka would be in charge of cataloguing, restoring and periodically cleaning masks and costumes, but would also have the privilege of using them in his performances.

It seems clear that Udaka's attempt to re-create his 'lost' connection with Noh ancestry is part of a process of empowerment and legitimisation of his family name. Rath (2004) has described how, before secret manuscripts became the most powerful mean of transmission of the *ethos* of a Noh family, Noh masks represented 'objective standards' (2004, 33), providing legitimacy to those who were able to interpret their 'lore' (2004, 24). While other Kongō families transmit choreographies through *katazuke*, Udaka did not receive manuscripts from his father, who was an amateur, and found himself needing to build his own library by copying from the *iemoto*'s texts on the occasion of his own performances. Until he could start rebuilding his family history, Udaka had no means to legitimise his position and to claim the consideration that his artistic achievements deserved. Therefore, access to the Shinonome-jinja collection means reconnecting with the broken line of his ancestry by the material mean of the mask. Likewise, for Udaka carving his own masks is not only an artistic practice, but a way to achieve independence: as Noh actors usually need to rent masks, costumes and props from the *iemoto*, at considerable financial outlay, possessing masks that can be handed down to his heirs is a clear attempt to assert Udaka's self-determination.

The struggle to achieve recognition in a world dominated by kinship-based hierarchy, where privileges acquired at birth can be valued in spite of artistic merit requires a remarkable effort in claiming a certain degree of autonomy for the performer. Since the beginning of his career, Udaka has pursued an artistic path in which acquirement of technique was accompanied by the desire to develop tradition further. Unlike others, he built his own road to emancipation from 'inside' – that is, while sticking to the track of tradition, and not venturing into other artistic fields – as his first need was to establish a reputation as traditional artist. Udaka has written three *shinsakunō* (new Noh plays)¹⁴, whose structure and *mise-en-scène* falls well within the boundaries of the Noh canon.

One of the major characteristics of Udaka's approach to Noh is spirituality and

¹⁴ *Shiki* (2001), *Ryōma* (2003), and *Genshigumo* (2003).

understanding of Noh as a path of self-cultivation. Between 1978 and 1980 Udaka studied the esoteric rituals of Tendai Buddhism (one of the main sects of Japanese tantric Buddhism) with Ajari Utsumi at Sekizanden-in in Kyoto, with the intention of employing such knowledge both in his everyday life and in his Noh training. Udaka does not consider Noh as mere aesthetic accomplishment, but as a practice leading to Buddhist enlightenment. Not only are his descriptions of his own artistic life deeply tinged with mysticism, but included meditation as part of his mask carving and dance/chant lessons, a practice that has generated interest as well as scepticism in the students who joined his group.¹⁵ Though direct implementation of religious practice in Noh training has considerably diminished today, among the most controversial aspects of Udaka's spirituality has been his approach to teaching non-Japanese students in the intensive summer training programme Traditional Theatre Training (TTT).

At the time of the foundation of the Kei'un-kai, Udaka was studying English, and was particularly interested in opening knowledge of Noh to foreigners. Among the first non-Japanese who joined the group was Rebecca Teele, who would later become the associate director of the International Noh Institute, and the person through which a number of foreign practitioners were able to access Noh. In 1984, Udaka and Teele teamed up with Jonah Salz, theatre director and Kyogen scholar who at that time was the director of NOHO, an experimental theatre group producing repertoire from Beckett and Yeats using elements of Noh and Kyogen, with the collaboration of members of the Shigeyama family of Kyogen actors, and with Noh actor Matsui Akira. Traditional Theatre Training (TTT) was the name of the intensive summer programme comprising Noh (taught by Udaka and Teele) and Kyogen (with actors from the Shigeyama family).¹⁶ For three years Udaka and Teele's group would collaborate with Salz and the group led by the late Shigeyama Sennojō II (1923-2010) in what could be considered the first programme offering traditional theatre training to foreigners.¹⁷

Despite TTT's success, in 1986 the two groups decided to split. Udaka and Teele formed the International Noh Foundation, quickly renamed International Noh Institute (INI), while Salz continued TTT with actors of the Kanze School. Discussing the subject with Udaka, Teele and Salz, and examining documents related to the 1984-86 editions of TTT I could evince how at the origin of the divorce was the radically

¹⁵ See, for example, his books on Noh masks (Udaka 2007; Udaka and Yamagata 2010).

¹⁶ From 1985 students could also train in Nihon Buyō (classical dance) with masters of the Fujima School.

¹⁷ See '25 Foreigners Studying Traditional Theatre' (1985) and 'Foreign Students Learn "No", "Kyogen" on Vacation' (1984).

different views of the two leaders Udaka Michishige and Shigeyama Sennojō.¹⁸ While Udaka insisted on ‘spiritual’ aspects of Noh, including the meditative dimension by which training in Noh corresponds to treading a path to enlightenment, Sennojō offered a much more ‘down-to-earth’, pragmatic view of Kyogen, pointing out that Japanese culture is not all about lofty religio-aesthetic ideals.

While Udaka emphasised the need for an inner, ‘spiritual’ approach to art, pursuing a sort of religio-aesthetic path, Sennojō pointed at the pragmatism of Kyogen in on-stage application, particularly understandable by Westerners, allegedly less formal and more ‘frank’ than the Japanese (Udaka and Shigeyama 1985c). Sennojō seemed happy with foreigners acquiring some technique and taking it back to their countries (Salz 2010), while Udaka insisted in the importance of the path of self-cultivation through accumulative training. This already substantial divergence grew even larger with the following year’s edition of TTT. This is Udaka’s message for the 1986 recital:

At present, Noh is unfortunately being left neglected like something in a corner of a museum. Our culture is becoming increasingly *materialistic*. The brilliant technology born of our modern age has suffocated art, at the same time putting humanity itself in terrible peril. Noh, along with other aspects of Japanese culture of which the world can be proud, is gradually being eroded. [...]

Until now, the emphasis in theatre arts has been on “*theatricality*”, while recently it seems that the “*spiritual*” or even “*religious*” aspects of theatre are being given greater consideration. Taking this deeper approach to theatre, the students involved in Noh and other theatre arts are looking in the direction of, or even taking the actual first step towards, a new theatre (emphasis added, Udaka in Udaka and Shigeyama 1986d).

Sennojō’s message read:

In *recent years* there has been an increasing interest in Japanese culture on the part of Westerners, which I came to experience for myself during my recent trip to America. However, since before my trip, and even more strongly since my return, I have had *misgivings* about this interest and have wondered if it isn’t biased, with a little too much emphasis on the psychological.

Zen, or *yugen*, or *wabi* or *sabi* definitely do not represent the whole of Japanese culture. [...] We might even say that dry, earthy, *hardboiled* sensibility itself is the true culture of the Japanese common man, who walks with his feet firmly on the ground and lives sincerely. The dramatic expression of this sensibility, Kyogen, is what I want the T.T.T. students to experience: this is my wish (emphasis added, Shigeyama in Udaka and Shigeyama 1986d).

The 1986 edition of TTT seems to have widened the gap between Udaka’s and Sennojō’s views, which now seem to be involved in a head-to-head confrontation on the

¹⁸ Shigeyama Sennojō passed away on 4 December 2010, before I had the chance to interview him.

programme page. Both have in common an emphasis on the present time: on one side, Udaka complained about the growing materialism (in 1986 Japan was entering its ‘bubble economy’ period) in which commodities of modernity jeopardise Japanese tradition. On the other side, Sennojō lamented the fact that foreigners came to Japan in search of an exotic ideal of tradition, epitomised by *Zen* and *yūgen*. Sennojō protested against the Orientalist reduction of Japan to trite stereotypes, claiming that less spiritual and at the same more ‘sincere’ features were also important parts of its tradition. In addition to this general disagreement, these comments bear a more specific message regarding the nature of acting: while Udaka describes a shift from ‘theatricality’ to ‘spirituality’, implying the need to inform theatre aesthetics with spiritual training, Sennojō advocates a secular and pragmatic take on Japanese traditional theatre, stripped of its esoteric aura.

At the third edition of TTT, Udaka’s and Sennojō’s opinions reached the apex of their divergence. Sennojō’s realism was grounded in radical left-wing thought, and expressed a marked intolerance for the stiff conservatism afflicting the world of Noh and Kyogen (Kobayashi and Kagaya 2007, 172-72; Shigeyama 2009, 9). Sennojō was a modern man, looking at the future of the arts, experimenting with performers from other nationalities and legitimising Kyogen, advocating its dignity and independence from Noh (Shigeyama 2009, 9). Before the beginning of the 1986 recital at Yasaka-jinja, the Shinto shrine where TTT recitals customarily took place, Udaka arranged for the participants to receive a purification ritual (*oharai*) from the priests. As much training and the final performance were taking place within the shrine premises, Udaka felt that TTT as a group should have shown respect to the priests who provided the space, and to the space itself, where the performance was taking place – indeed not simple performance space, but sacred ground (Teele 2011). Sennojō did not approve, as he believed that religion and performance should be kept separated, especially when it comes to foreign practitioners (Salz 2010). At this stage, the group of students training in Noh was the most numerous and while Sennojō and Salz were evidently unhappy with the association of Noh with religion and mystique, Udaka and Teele felt confident enough to leave TTT to form their own international group, the INI. The two groups were in evident opposition and the split unavoidable: Sennojō and Salz were advocating a pragmatic view of Noh, devoid of any transcendental dimension (Salz 2010), whereas Udaka and Teele offered an approach to art training as inextricably related to a spiritual dimension.

The 3rd INI recital (1988) summed up Udaka's approach, who asserted that: 'when the artistic level of training in Noh, and the discipline of mind of the common man become one, then *yūgen* is born, and a limitless wisdom is born' (Udaka 1988a). Here Udaka explicitly described his view of Noh training as a path that unites both artistic cultivation and moral cultivation. However, with time his approach to Noh and spirituality has changed. Udaka has maintained a strong connection between Noh and meditation, but he has also developed a module called 'Noh dance and meditation seminar', which is offered independently from his regular classes. I attended this seminar in 2009 and 2010 and noticed how religiously connoted terminology is substituted with more generic talks on 'spirituality' and on the positive effects of Noh training on health, with the purpose of opening understanding of the underlying ethical concepts of self-cultivation to those not familiar with or not interested in more specific religious doctrine.¹⁹

Labelling Sennojō's attitude as 'progressive' and Udaka's as 'traditionalist' would be rather superficial: it has already been pointed out how, though grounded in tradition, much of Udaka's work takes place at the borders of orthodoxy. The TTT messages reflect Udaka's perception of contemporary art, which he felt was being divorced from spiritual life. In an interview for the Japanese magazine *Kansai Time Out*, Udaka observed how in his view foreigners are interested in the 'true essence' of Noh, unlike the Japanese, who 'often study merely for the sake of form itself, and the custom of venerating a culture that is honourably traditional, even if questionably alive' (Udaka and Furst 1987b). For Udaka, the way to 're-infuse the art with an appreciation of its original purpose' would be emphasising not a slavish reproduction of the model copied from the teacher, but the 'individual spiritual effort behind the cultural tradition' (1987b). Once more, the fulcrum of the debate lies in the friction between individuality and tradition, which Udaka attempts to solve by creating a training model based on traditional methods, within which the individual is required to express a high level of commitment in 'spiritual' terms. The following section will describe my personal training experience, aiming at disentangling some of the issues related to the individual/tradition conundrum.

¹⁹ It is not by chance that information on the Noh dance meditation seminars is only available on the Japanese version of the Udaka-kai website <http://www.noh-udaka.com/jp/about-seminar.html>

Training with the INI

My journey into Noh began in May 2006, when I started training with Monique Arnaud, one of the three foreign *shihan* (licensed instructors) who studied under Udaka. Arnaud was – and still is – the only European-based *shihan*, and after moving to Milan from Japan she opened the Italian branch of the INI, with a small group of students. Though Arnaud and her students took part in demonstrations and organised small workshops, the INI Italy remained a rather small group, rarely advertising its activities, and operating on a rather restricted, national scale. This anti-entrepreneurial attitude reflects a specific approach to the transmission of Noh: Arnaud decided not to capitalise on her license by ‘professionalising’ her activity, and did not ask for an economic compensation for her teaching.²⁰ Establishing a Noh ‘school’ in Italy would have meant compliance with the requests of sponsors and patrons, and manipulating the teaching curriculum to meet the needs of institutions such as universities or acting schools. In order to maintain the integrity of traditional training, Arnaud decided not to reach compromises with other institutions, and to keep her teaching private, free of charge, and open to any of those who would be interested in studying Noh in earnest.

When I began my training of *utai* and *shimai* Arnaud only had one other student, Cristina Picelli, who had been training with her since 1998. As I realised later, lessons in Milan were taking place in exactly the same way as they did in Japan: after reaching Arnaud’s apartment in Milan, we would have some tea together, talk about various subjects, not necessarily related to Noh, then move to a double bedroom which Arnaud converted to a practice room. There we would start our practice without theoretical introductions or explanations. As in the Noh tradition, learning is by imitation, so that in substance a class consists of the teacher demonstrating, and the student trying to reproduce the model as closely as possible. In our case, after having exchanged a formal greeting I would sit in a corner and watch Cristina having her lesson, and vice-versa. In some cases, we would sing for each other’s *shimai*. Practice was dedicated to observation and practice, with little time for note taking, which was usually performed only once the lesson was over. While training with Udaka in Kyoto I would make audio recordings and sometimes videos of my classes, no such supports were adopted in our weekly practice in Italy. In addition, prior to 2007 neither Cristina nor I had gone to Japan, and all we knew of Noh was Monique’s dance and chant: transmission took place

²⁰ In Japan as well as elsewhere, professionals advertise their classes with leaflets that can be found in the theatre’s lobby, or distributed with programmes, and a fee to take classes is required.

by word of mouth and by imitation of the teacher, as in the classic Japanese convention. On some occasions, it was possible for us to perform *shimai* or *utai* we learnt in demonstrations or ‘open lessons’ at events to which we were invited – mostly schools, museums or culture centres.

An important characteristic of my training in Milan that I came to appreciate in time, after I visited Japan, was that ‘exotic’ elements were minimised, as Arnaud’s training space resembled much more an average Italian flat than a Japanese *okeikoba*: the sole elements that represented Noh were the sounds of our *utai* and the shapes that our bodies would take. Dressed in plain tracksuits, our only non-Western properties were white *tabi* and the fan. Before our classes, we would bow to each other in a traditional salutation, which is usually accompanied by the words ‘*yoroshiku onegaishimasu*’ (lit. ‘please, be kind’, a common expression used by persons establishing a relationship, or about to perform work together), to which an analogous salute, ‘*arigatō gozaimashita*’ (lit. ‘thank you’) is uttered with the conclusive bow. However, during our lessons in Milan we often used Italian equivalents, such as a plain, but very meaningful, ‘*grazie*’ – that is to say that the content was prioritised over the form, and that expressions conveying ethical meaning were stripped of their exotic allure and re-contextualised in the specificity of our cultural location. What is most important in an expression of gratitude is that the message is transmitted fully, rather than becoming a formula expressed in a foreign language. Likewise, in training or in demonstrations students never used properties such as masks, costumes, wigs and the like, not only because transporting them to Italy from Japan would be problematic, but also because amateur students would not normally wear them if not under the supervision of an experienced professional. In sum, Arnaud’s teaching aimed at conveying the core ethics of Noh that actors can express when dancing simple *shimai*, without necessarily resorting to other aesthetic elements of Noh.

It should be added that neither Cristina nor I belonged to theatre companies, or were learning Noh as part of a school curriculum. This allowed us to fully appreciate the slow progression of this form of ‘way’, where training is not considered as a preparation for a performance, but as part of a life-long path of self-cultivation. The basics of Noh dance – standing (*kamae*) and walking (*suriashi*) – are continuously corrected and perfected throughout the life of an actor, and it is necessary to reach a certain degree of confidence in them in order to perform more complex pieces. For this reason, a student learns increasingly complex *shimai* excerpts generally according to the

order indicated in the *shimai no katazuke*, a manual edited by the *iemoto* that contains lyrics and choreographic indications of the *shimai* excerpts. These books, along with *utaibon* chant books, are available for anyone to purchase in shops or on the Internet.²¹ Such indications help the trainee to memorise the movements in individual, solitary practice, yet a teacher, who has the right to express a personal interpretation of the dance, can modify them.²² Basic *shimai* dances initially appear simple, yet what surprises the newcomer is the degree of exactitude required in dance, where feet, arms, neck and other body parts are corrected if only by a few centimetres. Because of this exactitude, and because actors belonging to a group only practice among themselves, the trained eye will be able to recognise even the smallest difference in posture and gesture. At the same time, it is necessary to memorise the *utai* of each *shimai* one learns: this way the trainee builds his or her own ‘mental library’ which can be employed when others dance and *ji-utai* singing is called for. Accumulative training has a very practical meaning of expansion of the repertoire by step-by-step acquisition of the different forms of knowledge that constitute the all-round curriculum of a Noh actor, including musical instruments and costume dressing (Teele 2003b, 36).

The teacher will show an example once or twice, and ask the students to reproduce this form at their best. More time is spent in ‘learning by doing’ than it is in listening to verbalised explanations, and the student is not encouraged to ask questions.²³ As Arnaud herself has pointed out, ‘Zeami’s dictum ‘the flower is in the secret’ implies that if there are questions to which you could answer by yourself, then it is better not to ask them at all’ (Arnaud and Casari 2008, 151 my translation). Therefore, a lesson requires a remarkable effort from the student, who needs to fill in the blanks left by the teacher. In several cases, misunderstandings generated by my ‘filling in the blanks’ during individual training clashed with the opinion of the teacher, who would claim to have taught otherwise. This happens because *kata* are not absolute but contingent objects: they evolve as the teacher’s style evolves, which means that the student has to adapt to these changes, discarding the old and adopting the new. While this fact was initially frustrating – it was not easy to accept learning something only to

²¹ It must be specified that Kongō School *utaibon*, unlike those of other schools, are completely devoid of other explanations or drawings.

²² In our school most students begin their training with *shimai* such as *Oimatsu*, *Tsurukame*, or *Yuya* – simple pieces that introduce basic *kata* movements and allow the beginner to experiment *kamae* and *hakobi*.

²³ In the *Shikadō* Zeami actually said that students should ‘raise questions’ and ‘dutifully ask for clarification’ of one’s progress through the ranks of attainment (Zeami 2008, 134). The reader should be able to contextualise this advice within a generally non-verbalised training environment, where learning is through the body (*karada de oboeru*) and not through intellectual speculations.

discard it later— its purpose became clearer when I realised the extent to which it elicited active physical and intellectual participation from my side. I had to go through my scanty notes in order to reconstruct my own understanding of the dance, and be ready to change it as soon as I was confronted with the interpretation of the teacher. At a deeper level, this form of training depends on a person's capability to accept the unexpected and establish a productive relation with it.

Training 'centre' and 'periphery'

My observations of Arnaud's learning environment in Milan, where I trained between May 2006 and September 2007, occasionally returning after this date, will acquire depth if compared with Udaka's learning environment in Kyoto, where I have trained for periods of three and six months every year since April 2007. From the time I joined Udaka's classes I had the chance to meet a number of other students of the INI. Some of them started their training before me but interrupted; others still continue their practice though not on a regular basis; still others were just at the very beginning of their training when I met them. Their background is most diverse: among them are theatre practitioners, scholars, and students from different parts of the world. I have had the chance to practice with a number of these students and to discuss and compare our opinions on training with the INI.

One of the issues raised by a number of students has to do with the intensity and pace of training, and with the way activities are distributed within sessions. In the average INI *okeiko* with Udaka, the student is involved in actual practice for a limited time: most of the time spent at the *okeikoba* is dedicated to collateral activities that might appear to have little to do with training, such as having tea, informally chatting with the teacher, running errands, and so forth. However, beyond their menial appearance, these tasks play an important role in the sociality of the *kai*. Firstly, accepting to carry out tasks is a way to show deference to the teacher who requests them, and a possible means of establishing mutual trust. By helping the teacher with 'favours' students manifest gratitude in a more physically expressive way than only paying their tuition fees. In addition, tasks are often carried out together with other members of the group enhancing the spirit of communion between newcomers and old-timers, who, despite different ranks are united in serving the teacher. Among the things a teacher can request is that experienced students assist beginners when the teacher is

busy elsewhere: again, such activity is crucial in the solidification of a circle of obligations that gives meaning to the *senpai/kōhai* relationship. Members of the Udakakai spend a considerable amount of time together, and the boundary between their private lives, and that of the teacher is not always as clear as it might be in other learning environments: this kind of social activity is an essential part of the process of acquiring an identity within the cohort. As Zeami said: ‘a house is not, in itself, a house. It is made a house through its transmission from generation to generation. A person is not, in himself, a person, but he becomes a person through knowing’ (Zeami 1986, 73). It follows that the capability of the individual to be able to ‘fit in’ the group acquires very high relevance within the range of skills necessary to pursue Noh training. In this case, artistic achievement is subordinated to an other-regarding principle expressed in ethics such as generosity, modesty, and respect.

Students used to individual training or specific timetables of schooling institutions face their first obstacle in the slow pace of traditional training and in the familial organisation of the group. The combination of looseness and strictness of this environment was the first obstacle I personally faced when I started my training: if in my previous learning experiences in Europe I used to capitalise time for the sake of my own, individual targets, and would expect a similar attitude from my teachers, when I entered Noh I was implicitly requested to give up not just any commitment for the evening, but also the tendency to focus exclusively on what I thought the primary function of a training session would be. It is precisely in the misconception that learning processes can be divided into ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ instances that the difficulty of accepting traditional Noh training originates. In my experience in Kyoto, I noticed how activities I considered as ‘secondary’ were in fact given great relevance, which drove me to re-examine my conception of training as acquisition of skills or, rather, to find a new position for this acquisition process within the larger dialectic of ‘central’ and ‘peripheral’ learning instances.

Anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) defined the collateral activities mentioned above, and their relevance in apprenticeship as ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ (LPP). For Lave and Wenger, apprenticeship through LPP involves ‘participation as a way of learning - of both absorbing and being absorbed in – the “culture of practice”’ (Lave and Wenger 1991, 95). A learning condition is ‘peripheral’ insofar as it does not directly address the final outcome of the learning process, but rather emphasises peripheral activities inherent in the social condition of

the learning environment. Lave and Wenger hold that ‘the initial “circumferential” perspective absorbed in partial, peripheral, apparently trivial activities – running errands, delivering messages, or accompanying others – takes on a new significance: it provides a first approximation to an armature of the structure of community of practice’ (1991, 96).

One of the primary functions of what Lave and Wenger have defined as LPP is the social relevance of apprenticeship that must be sought for in circumferential activities indirectly feeding into the principal subject of the teaching/learning process: activities that despite their apparent marginality are nonetheless essential to the definition of the community of practice, that is, to the maintenance of its heritage. The factors contributing to the transmission of a given ethos are not located in the doctrine itself, but in the ways knowledge is circulated among its participants. Therefore, the ethics of learning are not exclusively aimed at the artistic advancement of the trainees, but include socially relevant activities that contribute to the constitution of identity of its practitioners.

‘Self’ and ‘selfless’, ‘individual’ and ‘community’ in Noh training

Udaka often refers to Nan-in’s famous Zen metaphor of the ‘empty cup’, by which a student should be in a state of readiness and openness devoid of preconceptions, waiting to be ‘filled’ by the knowledge provided by training.²⁴ In traditional training, the beginner is encouraged to imitate the teacher, and not to develop a personal style. That is to say, teaching is not necessarily tailored to the needs, desires or expectations of the pupil, but follows a methodology prescribed by tradition, interpreted by the teacher, and generally applied to all students. Naturally, any student will possess individual features and inclinations that a good teacher will not ignore, yet it is not the duty of the student to put them forward. Unlike Western theatre, where facial and other physical attributes of actors can be influential in the development of a performer, in Noh all actors follow a similar training path, and are considered complete only if they are able to perform all roles despite age, size, gender or physical features. In addition, the student is not expected to participate in decision-making, but to entrust the teacher with any relevant

²⁴ This notion applies to Noh training of adults and does not aspire to be a precept universally applicable to education in general. In fact, Zeami states that training to children should not be strict and that they should be able to develop their own innate inclinations (Zeami 2008, 26-27). Contemporary Japanese elementary school education also privileges a pupil-centred format. See, among others, Khan (1998).

decision and to put efforts into the promotion of the teacher or of the group, instead of caring about individual progress.

This aspect of Japanese society is commonly associated with conformism and self-denial: Befu Harumi has shown how much Eastern and Western scholarship has described Japanese society as tending to communitarianism, or ‘groupism’, and Western society to ‘individualism’ (Befu 2001, 60; 2009, 25), and this thesis wished to demonstrate that the same understanding has characterised the reception of Noh abroad. Although this subdivision certainly has grounding, especially to the extent that Japanese institutions have formulated social structures to promote it, it has suffered oversimplification: Rupert Cox has pointed out how a theory of self-denial ‘tends to obscure the self-consciousness of participants as distinctive individuals’ (Cox 2003, 192), while Joy Hendry has proposed a differentiation between ‘individualism’, connotated by self-assertion and individual rights, and ‘individuality’, as ‘the opportunity to develop his or her own particular talent or character’ (Hendry 1992, 56). While the former might have had a stronger development in the Western modern world, the latter is a characteristic of any society acknowledging differences between individuals (1992, 56).

In Zeami’s ‘bones/meat/skin’ theory, the ‘bones’ of the actor are the ‘visible display of innate talent’, or the basic indispensable material for the construction of outer layers of artistry (Zeami 2008, 135). Zeami makes a point of talent as necessary for an actor who inherits oral tradition and becomes responsible for its transmission (2008, 73), and Morinaga has argued that Zeami’s conception of talent contained both artistic (aesthetic) capabilities and other qualities such as charisma and managerial (social) skills (Morinaga 2005, 67-70).²⁵ Noh does require physical capabilities such as an athletic physique, a sound voice and the stamina required to dance and sing under extremely heavy costumes and wearing a wooden mask and weighty headpiece. While stamina and athletic physique can be nurtured with training, a well-proportioned body and a beautiful voice are gifts of nature.

However, Noh is not merely based on physical skills: what is first of all required from an actor is the capacity to follow the ethical path of cultivation encapsulated in the concept of *michi*. What emerges from Pinnington’s study is that the Japanese ‘medieval world understood ability not to be rooted in the individual personality, which was seen as superficial, but rather in the knowledge that derived from erasure or detachment from

²⁵ ‘Talent’ is one of the possible translations of the ideogram for Noh (能).

the self' (2006, 48). It is important to note how Pinnington's study is devoted to the analysis of medieval treatises, not to understanding the sociology of selflessness in the contemporary world. Is this theory applicable to modern Noh performance? A preliminary observation of Pinnington's description of the *michi* as *locus* for the coming into being of potential personalities sheds light on the two meanings of the character for 'Noh' – that is, 'possibility' and 'skill'. 'Noh' is plurality, potential, 'yet-to-come': a condition that puts the self in relation with the potential 'Other' that is 'not I'. At the same time Noh is the particular self, the innate talent or skill: all that distinguishes myself from the other, thereby defining otherness. These two aspects of Noh are linked by reciprocal definition and an understanding of its practice that ignores either part cannot but be insufficient. As has been mentioned above, a teacher is a 'plural individual' embodying tradition: in my case by following Arnaud I was also following Udaka, the former *iemoto* Kongo Iwao II, and his predecessors. If what is at stake in Noh training is the position of the self with regards to tradition seen as ideal community of the predecessors, the highest value should be somewhere on a continuum between these two instances: rather than indulging in either extreme – selfishness and impersonality – a productive approach to *michi* would consider awareness of the self and of the other as mutually dependent entities.

Watsuji Tetsuro's ethics of emptiness

In *The Body: Toward an Eastern Mind-Body* (1987) Yuasa Yasuo described traditional art training (*shugyō*) as a process of self-cultivation profoundly connected with the Buddhist idea of non-ego (*muga*). Yuasa pointed out how, according to the Buddhist doctrine, cognition is attained through a practical process of detachment from egoism (Yuasa 1987, 86). Elsewhere, Richard Pilgrim asserted that Noh training is a

gradual shift in focus and locus of power from the intending discriminating mind which is attached to its artistic object and technique to the detached, free, mirror mind of *mu*, for it is the attainment or realisation of the *mu*-mind, or (negatively) the no-mind (*mushin*), which signals the breakthrough and transformation (Pilgrim 1972, 138).

Reflecting on my training experience, can I say in earnest that this ideal of self-removal has been pursued, or even encouraged by my teachers? Furthermore, is self-effacement an ethical act at all? A possible answer to this question can be found in Watsuji Tetsurō's ethical philosophy.

In *Rinrigaku* (lit. ‘ethical studies’), Watsuji articulated a theory of ‘socio-ethics’ in which a rather sophisticated relation between ego and non-ego emerges. Basing his thought on Confucian and Buddhist elements, Watsuji developed his ontological enquiry from the analysis of the Japanese word *ningen* (‘human being’, or ‘mankind’), composed by the characters 人 (*hito*, or *nin*, lit. ‘person’) and 間 (*ken*, or *gen*, alternative reading of *ma*, lit. ‘empty space’), holding that the object of discussion in ethics should not be centred upon the rights and duties of the individual, and should instead look into the ‘space between them’ (*hito to hito no aidagara*).²⁶ Watsuji shifted the focus of ethics from individual conscience to the law of social existence: for him independence and self-sufficiency were imaginative abstractions, because the only truth of human existence (*ningen sonzai*) is the opposition of person and community, where the individual negates the totality, and totality negates the individual. Watsuji thus explained ‘double negation’:

The true reality of an individual, as well as of totality, is ‘emptiness’, and this emptiness is the absolute totality. Out of this ground, from the fact that this emptiness is emptied, emerges *ningen’s sonzai* as a movement of negation. The negation of negation is the self-returning and self-realising movement of the absolute totality that is precisely social ethics (i.e., *Sittlichkeit* in German). Therefore, the basic principle of social ethics is the realisation of totality (as the negation of negation) through the individual (that is, the negation of totality) (1996, 23).

Adhering to a general Buddhist process of cultivation by which one needs to realise the dual nature of the world before accepting the truth of non-duality (emptiness), Watsuji created a dual system in which the two co-existing demonstrate their empty nature through ‘co-dependent origination’.²⁷ Whether the non-dual stage is attainable or not is a question that exceeds Watsuji’s argument. He is aware of the idealistic nature of his philosophy, yet in his words there is a clear understanding that the ideal is what fixes an objective to which individuals will tend in their path toward wisdom (1996, 122).

The next passage will clarify why Watsuji’s ethics are so relevant to a more ‘aware’ approach to Noh practice as *geidō*. Watsuji articulates his thought in two distinct phases of the process of realisation of the nature of the world:

²⁶ The influence of Confucianism and Buddhism in Watsuji’s thought has been debated in D. Dilworth (1974) and W. LaFleur (1978).

²⁷ William LaFleur has demonstrated how this aspect of Watsuji’s philosophy reflects instead the influence of Indian philosopher Nāgārjuna, who rejected the idea of *svabāva* (self-existence) in favour of the ‘co-dependent origination’ of beings (LaFleur 1978, 244). Following Nāgārjuna’s thought, individual and community exist only in view of their mutual negation, revealing absolute emptiness as the principle to which all existence returns (Watsuji 1996, 107).

One of these is the establishment of the individual as the other, over against totality. What is at stake here is the taking of a first step toward self-awareness. Apart from the self-awareness of an individual, there is no social ethics. The other moment is the individual's surrender to the totality. This is what has been called the *demand of the superindividual will*, or of total will. Without this surrender, there is also no social ethics (1996, 23).

Watsuji expressed the paradox of 'coexistent non-dual duality': if in the passage above the emphasis is on surrender, a concept close to the Buddhist acceptance of the truth of the *dharma*, in 'The Negative Structure of a Human Being' he affirmed the importance of rebellion as expression of individuality. This is not a paradox: 'the essential feature characteristic of the independence of an individual lies in its rebelling against the whole, and the essential feature characteristic of the wholeness of the whole lies in its negating the independence of an individual' (1996, 101). However, Watsuji warns,

If an individual, as the negation of emptiness, sticks to this negation in such a way as to refuse to allow the negation of negation to occur as well, then that association disintegrates on the spot. Likewise, if an individual submerges herself in the whole and refuses to become an individual again, then the whole perishes at the same time (Watsuji 1996, 117-18).

Instead of a self-centred ethics of self-erasure, Watsuji emphasised the need for both individuality and totality to exist in mutual awareness, and mutual negation. If the self disappears, the other will also disappear. While the concept of double negation is common in Buddhist thought – in the *Kyū-i Zeami* indicates that the highest flower is attained through erasure of the self, recuperation of the self and fusion of self-and non-self (Pilgrim 1972; Nagatomo 1981) – Watsuji's innovation lies in a modern, secularised formulation of the notion of co-dependent origination and in focusing ethical enquiries in the spaces between persons (*ma*).

Aesthetics and ethics of emptiness

So far this chapter has enquired into Watsuji's notion of *ma* in his ethical thought. However, Watsuji discussed the concept of empty space in relation to aesthetics, and his treatment of this subject may be particularly relevant to the identity of aesthetics and ethics in Noh.²⁸ In *Climate and Culture*, Watsuji observed how one of the most characteristic features distinguishing European art from East-Asian art is the emphasis of the latter on blank spaces (Watsuji 1961, 193-94): for him, at the core of Japanese

²⁸ The convergence of aesthetics and ethics of *ma* in Watsuji's thought has been discussed, among others, by LaFleur (1978) and J. Shields (2010)

traditional arts such as gardening, tea ceremony, ink painting and Noh theatre lies a ‘moment of negation’ (1971, 111). In fact, Noh theatre employs *ma* in visuals, music and dramaturgy: the Noh stage is an empty platform with few scenographic elements, Noh music involves long pauses, punctuated by sparse drum strokes and harsh vocal utterances of the drummers (*kakegoe*). In *Kakyō* Zeami asserts that moments of ‘non-action’ (*senu hima*), or inactivity between actions are most interesting for the audience (Nearman 1982, 488). As Komparu Kunio has pointed out, by creating emptiness around a subject, the subject itself gains importance and is therefore defined by emptiness, as ‘the blank part created by the symbolic expressive part is the core of the composition, *ma*, an entity that really exists’ (Komparu 1983, 72). Likewise, the Noh mask negates the actor’s facial expression, offering a blank slate whose expression changes according to the position of both actor and audience, and stage properties have the power to trigger the audience’s imagination because of their lack of connotation.²⁹

Nonetheless, LaFleur has pointed out how Watsuji’s ‘moments of negation’ are not simply artistic devices, but they are intimately linked to the notion of emptiness as co-dependent origination (LaFleur 1978, 246). Watsuji explains the connection between ethical stance and artistic, thus aesthetic, production in the description of *renga*, a traditional form of poetry where different poets write collective compositions by linking verses in alternate order.

If there are self-centred persons in the company, a certain ‘distortion’ will be felt and group spirit itself will not be produced. When there are people who, lacking individuality, are influenced only by others’ suggestions, a certain ‘lack of power’ will be felt, and a creative enthusiasm will not appear. *It is only by means of attaining to Nothingness while each one remains individual to the last [...] that the company will be complete and interest for creativity will be roused* (Emphasis added. Watsuji 1971, 113).

For Watsuji, negation is not obliteration or depersonalisation of the individual, but an aesthetic-ethical empty space where relations can be established, as ‘the communion between man and man does not mean their becoming merely one. *It is only through the fact that men are unique individuals that a cooperation between ‘man and man’ is possible*’ (emphasis added, 1971, 112-13). This implies that art cannot but be produced by cultivated individuals, aware of the topography of the social space in which they live, who are conscious of their individuality and at the same time able to leave enough room for the other, and it is within this space that aesthetic creation is possible. In

²⁹ I expanded this concept in *The Fan of Noh Theatre* (Pellecchia 2008).

Watsuji's ideal, 'while preserving their individuality, the poets combine their feelings and reveal their individual experience in a symphonic concord of each other's hearts' (1961, 196). *Renga* is a particularly fitting example for Watsuji's ethics of *ma*, yet it is not the only art based on a collective endeavour: it is possible to apply the same concept to Noh, and to theatre at large.

The discussion sketched above leads to the question: 'how do the ethics of the artist contribute to the aesthetic value of the artist'? A way to answer this question would be to take as an example an aesthetically relevant ethical quality such as 'sobriety': a sober attitude is generally described as moderate, appropriate, expressing humbleness and modesty. From the perspective of aesthetics, a sober work of art would be plain, unadorned, endowed with a more 'hidden' kind of beauty. In Japanese, the word for such quality would be *jimi* (lit. 'soil-flavoured'), an adjective often used appreciatively in order to describe both ethical attitudes (*jimina seikatsu*, 'plain living') or aesthetic properties, such as colours (*jimina iro*). An actor performing in a particularly sober (*jimi*) way would first of all avoid throwing all his technique at the audience and would instead suggest that 'he could do more than what he is doing'. In this case retained power is left for the audience to elaborate. The modest actor avoids characterisation through mimetic or realistic acting, because imposing one's interpretation signifies subtracting *ma*. Humbleness is in essence an other-regarding virtue: the humble performer will be ready to acknowledge the presence of other members of the cast as well as of the audience, and act accordingly. Contrarily, the showy actor performing in an emphatic style would not only be unpleasant because of effete acting, but also because his stylistic choice reflects vanity, and individualist property. His acting might also overshadow the rest of the cast, throwing off balance the aesthetics of performance, but also demonstrating a lack of respect for the other interpreters and for the audience.

Saito Yuriko, who has studied Japanese aesthetics in relation to local and Western perspectives, has pointed out how Japanese aesthetics contain an important, inextricable moral dimension, mostly based on 'promoting respect, care, and consideration for others' (Saito 2007a, 85).³⁰ She demonstrates how a number of these aesthetic-ethical qualities are expressed in the relationship between objects (both art works and everyday life objects) and the human agencies that produce and receive them. For example, Saito points out how from a Japanese point of view, a person gobbling up

³⁰ For recent scholarship on aesthetic-ethical concepts in Japan also see H. Fujita (2003) and T. Otabe (1998).

food without savouring each ingredient is not only aesthetically but also ethically deficient (2007a, 93). As a matter of fact, the extent to which bodily attitudes reflect moral stance in a rather explicit way is something that can be appreciated in everyday life experience. How would ethical criticism consider the identity of artwork and artist in the bodily expression of the Noh performer? Yuasa's argument for ethical cultivation through bodily cultivation represents a widespread East-Asian coincidence of body-mind. However, Western philosophy is not barren of similar accounts. As David Cooper has recently pointed out, in section 17 of the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* Kant described 'ideal beauty' as 'only to be sought in the human figure', where 'the ideal consists in the expression of the moral' (Kant 1911, 80). Kant states that the combination of the

visible expression of moral ideas that govern men inwardly' with 'all that our reason connects with the morally good in the idea of the highest finality-benevolence, purity, strength, or equanimity, etc. – may be made, as it were, visible in bodily manifestation [...] and this embodiment involves a union of pure ideas of reason and great imaginative power' (1911, 80).

These bodily manifestations are not innate physiological conditions but attitudes – in other words, style.³¹ Expressions of modesty and humbleness in physical attitudes are what render the appearance of characters whose beauty does not rely on canonical aesthetic features, such as the elderly and the deformed, beautiful. In Noh, ethically beautiful characters such as the poetess Ono no Komachi or the blind warrior Kagekiyō are aristocrats who fell into disgrace and live in wretchedness, yet maintain their dignity despite misery and/or physical handicap. Zeami dedicates passages of the *Fūshikaden* and of the *Nikyoku-santai ningyōzu* to how the actor should portray aged characters (*rojō*) without emphasising realistic imitation, but focusing on their inner beauty, 'as if blossoms were to come into bloom on an ancient tree' (Zeami 2008, 33). Ethical qualities compensate for the imperfect acting of elderly performers, children or amateurs, while the humble style of a professional will curtail vulgarity. Contrarily, it has been already described how for the ethical critic vanity or narcissism as manifested in the bodily attitude of the showy actor and the self-complacent chorus member are ethically wrong, as well as aesthetically unpleasant.³²

³¹ Cooper (2008) articulates the argument for a virtue-centric view of the body.

³² Style appears to be the way an actor reveals his moral perspective: it has however been pointed out (by Tate 1928 and 1932) that in Book Ten of the Republic Plato admitted different kinds of 'styles' (*lexis*) of acting, some of which would be more ethically correct than others. In particular, the acceptable kind of actor would be he who does not slavishly or realistically imitate an object, but who would be able to detach himself from his acting and be able to honestly present acting as such, without pretence of truth.

However, these are rules of Noh dramaturgy and outline how actors would *ideally* apply them. The reality of human existence is far more complex than the mere moral ideal. In a Noh performance of professionals I attended in Kyoto, in August 2010, I noticed that one of the chorus members was sitting in a rather casual way on stage, constantly fidgeting and with a self-satisfied smirk that I interpreted as a brash attitude. My reception of the performance was aesthetically flawed by this person's attitude, the only performer on stage to show what I considered to be a remarkable lack of consideration. Part of the beauty of watching Noh is the atmosphere of concentration, the general mood of solemnity and decorum that all performers contribute to creating by their composure and dignity. Not only actors, but also musicians, chorus members and stage assistants move and manipulate objects with extreme care and respect, an attitude that is particularly meaningful because it results in the minimisation of their presence, hence the enlargement of a space (*ma*) for the *shite*, who is the real core of the play. Udaka Tatsushige, my teacher's first son, has mentioned that 'once on stage, the *shite* is like a god, regardless of whom the person behind the mask is', and is treated with extreme deference and respect (Udaka 2010). Disrupting this atmosphere, drawing attention to the self was ethically wrong because it did not respect the *shite* as well as the rest of the cast, and aesthetically wrong because it spoiled the rare atmosphere of concentration.

What is the ethical value of *ma* created between performers and spectators? Saito (1997) has described the Japanese sense of beauty as 'aesthetics of imperfection and insufficiency', and this definition clearly applies to the beauty of age described above, but also, in general terms, to the concept of *ma* as incompleteness. As Saito argues, imperfection is what triggers the imagination of the observer, stimulating anticipation, reminiscence, and generally eliciting reflection that leads the observer to take the material contingency of *aisthesis* to a higher level of appreciation (Saito 1997, 379). Clearly imagination as the foundational element of aesthetic appreciation is not exclusive to Japanese thought, as it plays a crucial role in Kant's aesthetics. However, what is the ethical value of *ma* as gap eliciting imagination? In *Art Emotion and Ethics*, Berys Gaut considers Johannes Vermeer's *Girl Reading a Letter at an Open Window*, a painting that originally featured the picture of a Cupid hanging on the wall behind the woman, which Vermeer deleted in due course. According to Gaut, the Cupid would have represented the artist reminding the woman that loyalty to her husband is a virtue and that she should watch her conduct. In this case, 'over-painting' would have

represented a didactic or moralistic attitude that for the ethical critic represents an aesthetically relevant ethical flaw (Gaut 2007, 104-105). After all, the beauty of much great art, regardless of its expressive means, lies in its ambiguity and in the property of letting its audience formulate their own opinions on what the work portrays, while it is common to consider over-explanatory works ungainly. Gaut's example eloquently demonstrates how the concept of *ma* as creative absence is not exclusive to Japanese aesthetics, but also applies to Western art.

Drawing a parallel with Gaut's example, a Noh actor performing an old woman, gently bringing the hand close to her eyes while slightly tilting the mask downwards in what is called *shiori* (crying gesture) is more interesting than having over-titles explaining to the audience that the character is now looking back at the time when she was young and beautiful while she is now old and wretched, spending her time in solitude, and that they should try put themselves in her position, and sympathise with her pain because that is what morally sensitive people ought to do. In Noh, allusive gestures only point the spectator toward a direction, without providing an exhaustive representation of desolation or regret. In this case, the *shiori* gesture is not teaching the audience a moral lesson, as there is no explicit content in it: its ethics lie in the quality of the gesture itself. Avoiding didacticism and moralistic attitudes is a form of respect for the intellect of the audience: here the artwork does not pretend to be exhaustive, and it leaves an opening for the audience to participate in active reception. Leaving an empty space is a way to hold the spectators responsible for their own interpretation, reminding them of the importance of their role in the constitution of their own existence, and of the Other's existence.

Conclusion: towards an ethics of Noh aesthetics

David Cooper pointed out how an individual approaching a work of art belonging to an 'other' or 'alien' culture might draw aesthetic pleasure from the act of discovering and learning from the exposure to 'new' art. His 'edificationist' theory of ethical criticism estimates the educational value of experiencing 'other' art, in which the epiphany of beauty takes place through increasing mastery of a certain cultural area. This theory is not in contrast with Bourdieu's grading of art reception according to knowledge of the

cultural code to which the work of art belongs. In my experience I have noticed how training according to the traditional method of the INI demands remarkable efforts: Noh tradition is based on secrecy, and the INI greatly limits the access to materials such as videos, scores, and the like, and generally encourages students to follow their own path of discovery, collection of bits of data, records, notes, and most importantly by dedicating much effort in reflection on what is received during a lesson. Treading this path sometimes means fighting to acquire knowledge. Thus, the kind of path through Noh promoted by the INI urges the practitioner to reconsider their own approach to otherness and learning, to be ready to accept the unknown and mould themselves in order to make room for the other to take part 'in them'. This tradition encourages waiting, as being able to wait means accepting incompleteness and being aware that something else is yet to come into existence – an 'other' as well as another 'self'. As Emmanuel Levinas put it, Western concepts of knowledge comprehend

the notion of intellectual activity of a reasoning will – a way of doing something which consists precisely of thinking through knowing, of seizing something and making it one's own, of reducing presence and representing the difference of being, an activity which appropriates and grasps the otherness of the known' (Levinas 2007, 76).

To the longing for possession feared by Levinas, the tradition followed by the INI responds with the creation of a learning environment fostering group spirit and a sense of accomplishment that reaches beyond the mere individual acquisition of technique. The INI website reads: 'lessons emphasize traditional values, including the language and manners that express the relationships between master and student and between fellow students, values that constitute the discipline of Noh' (Udakakai 2011). This statement condenses ethical values such as respect for the group and the awareness of its responsibility as vehicle of transmission of the ethos of Noh. As William Hanks has pointed out, 'even in cases where a fixed doctrine is transmitted, the ability of a community to reproduce itself through the training process derives not from the doctrine, but from the maintenance of certain modes of coparticipation in which it is embedded' (Hanks in Lave and Wenger 1991, 16). Survival of the ethos of Noh depends on forms of transmission that would resist the atomisation resulting from the pursuit of individualistic tendencies, and has its political expression in the *iemoto* system. However, as Watsuji has eloquently expressed, contrasting forces are a necessary condition of existence (Watsuji 1996, 101), and so it is within the world of Noh, where the authority of the *iemoto* is challenged by revolutionary forces, such as

Udaka's efforts to achieve independence and recognition.

What Arnaud is trying to achieve in Italy is a form of transmission in which the ethics of Noh are maintained as necessary conditions for the flourishing of its aesthetics. In fact, it is the ethics of practice that give meaning to practice itself. As the focus is on the *michi*, work towards artistic achievement is never done at the expense of the slow progression on the path of self-cultivation. First comes a correct ethical attitude, then comes artistic accomplishment. Arnaud's approach has less to do with aesthetic paraphernalia than it has with the possibility of cultivation of the individual within the social environment of *okeiko*. Rather than replicating the often-exoticised aesthetic elements of Noh with costumes, masks and other elements that cannot be skilfully used by beginners, the INI perseveres in disseminating the core principles of sobriety and dignity of Noh, essential properties that give profound meaning to the most basic dance and chant. These values and their social implications are located in the community of practice, yet they are not geographically bound to their native site, and their portability depends on the capacity for maintaining the ethical kernel on which they are founded. Inverting the centre/periphery axis of Noh knowledge, what appeared to be 'secondary' is in fact the base without which the 'primary' aesthetics would only be loose and shallow. As the fundamental ethics of humbleness, temperance and patience fostered by the INI are not exclusively pertinent to the Buddhist cultural sphere, Arnaud delivers her teachings without necessarily colouring them with religious terminology, yet she maintains the ethical core that constitutes the foundation of Noh practice in Japan. In other words, Arnaud's method is a positive response to Udaka's admonition against fetishised reproduction of an allegedly honourable foreign tradition (Michishige Udaka and Furst 1987), and fosters practice that prioritises what Noh can teach us about our own lives over mere acquisition of technique. Though it would be impossible to consider one's understanding of Noh complete without having a firm grasp of its religious, literary and linguistic background, practice requires an effort beyond mere scholarly knowledge: I believe that at the origin of Arnaud's non-religiously connotated teaching is the profound awareness that ethics is something that has to be 'felt', hence transmitted in a shared language, rather than only 'understood' through cultural decoding.

In conclusion, by looking at different examples in the reception of Noh theatre in the West, in this thesis I have proposed that an ethical approach to Noh could depart from both formal aestheticisation and moral radicalism, as both attitudes are comprised

within the spectrum of Orientalism. Udaka's efforts to convert Buddhist spiritualism into less religiously connotated practice represents a possible way for the ethics of Noh to transcend Pilgrim's religio-aesthetic paradigm, because moderate selflessness, respect and modesty – qualities of the *michi* – do not necessarily depend on religious belief, and can be shared across cultures. I believe 'moderate selflessness' is a better, or more realistic way to define a positive ethical attitude toward Noh. It is crucial to emphasise that the ethics of self-erasure cannot do away with the individual, whose presence and recognition is the first, indispensable step in Watsuji's ethics of co-dependent origination. Being modest does not mean erasing the self. Since Aristotle's 'doctrine of the mean', moral philosophy has acknowledged the danger of extremes, by which, for example, between 'boastfulness' and 'mock modesty' stands the ideal of 'truthfulness' (Urmson 1988, 28-35). Moreover, one should be careful not to misunderstand the emphasis on the moral virtue of the actor as a claim for saint-like absolute righteousness. In order to act ethically one need not be morally immaculate. Such extreme attitudes can be avoided by considering that an individual can contain ethical and unethical traits at the same time.³³ Perhaps human beings could be understood in the complexity of their temporal dimension and not on an 'absolutely bad' versus 'absolutely good' scale.

The aim of this aesthetic-ethical experience is not enslavement to tradition, as the space, or *ma* between self and other, individual and community should not be bridged, but nurtured. For Watsuji the nature of *ma* is a form of co-participation of artist and audience, and expresses the awareness that the experience of art itself cannot be limited to the affirmation of the artist, but takes place in a shared area that the blank left by the artist and a certain predisposition from the side of the audience contribute to creating. This ethical collaboration of performers and audience is realised in what Watsuji has called 'meeting of spirit', or 'meeting of feeling' (*kiai*) (Watsuji 1961, 192-97). In the case of the many international students of the INI, different attitudes to Noh represent a rich source of inspiration and understanding of the trans-cultural potential of training, and the confirmation that Noh is not simply a part of Japanese heritage, but a live tradition that is slowly entering a new phase of its history in which foreigners are struggling to find a position. The emphasis on tradition, then, is not the badge of stiff conservatism, but the awareness of the ethical values that underlie the aesthetics of Noh, and the determination to pierce the surface of exoticism, and to offer a richer view of its

³³ For example, one might be feeding the homeless while also being a liar and a cheater: such contrasts seem to be part of human nature.

beauty, that is, of its goodness.

Bibliography

- ‘25 Foreigners Studying Traditional Theatre’. *Mainichi Daily News* (July 15 1985).
- Alter, Maria. 1968. ‘Bertolt Brecht and the Noh Drama’. *Modern Drama* 11: 122-131.
- Arnaud, Monique, and Matteo Casari. 2008. ‘Conversazione con Monique Arnaud, shihan della scuola Kongō’. In *Teatro nō : la via dei maestri e la trasmissione dei saperi*, 149-160. Bologna: CLUEB.
- Aston, William. 1899. *A History of Japanese Literature*. London: Heinemann.
- Bachnik, Jane. 1998. ‘Time, Space and Person in Japanese Relationships’. In *Interpreting Japanese Society: Anthropological Approaches*, 91-116. London: Routledge.
- Banu, Georges. 1993. *L’acteur qui ne revient pas: journées de théâtre au Japon*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Barba, Eugenio. 1972. ‘Words or Presence’. *TDR* 16, no. 1: 47-54.
- . 1995. *The Paper Canoe: a guide to theatre anthropology*. London; New York: Routledge.
- . 2002a. ‘The Essence of Theatre’. *TDR* 46, no. 3: 12-30.
- . 2002b. ‘The Ripe Action’. *Mime Journal* 17: 237-251.
- Barba, Eugenio, and Richard Fowler. 1982. ‘Theatre Anthropology’. *The Drama Review: TDR* 26, no. 2: 5-32.
- . 1988. ‘Eurasian Theatre’. *TDR* 32, no. 3: 126-130.
- Barba, Eugenio, and Phillip Zarrilli. 1988. ‘Eugenio Barba to Phillip Zarrilli: About the Visible and the Invisible in the Theatre and about ISTA in Particular’. *TDR* 32, no. 3: 7-16.
- Barba, Eugenio., and Nicola Savarese. 1991. *The Secret Art of the Performer: a Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Barrault, Jean-Louis. 1961. *Journal de bord*. Paris: Julliard.
- . 1972. *Souvenirs pour demain*. Paris: Seuil.
- Barthes, Roland. 1993. *L’Empire des signes*. Paris: Skira.
- Beasley, W.G. 1989. ‘The Foreign Threat and the Opening of the Ports’. In *The Cambridge History of Japan: the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Marius Jansen, 5:259-307. The Cambridge History of Japan. Cambridge University Press.
- Befu, Harumi. 1992. ‘Symbols of Nationalism and Nihonjinron’. In *Ideology and*

- Practice in Modern Japan*, ed. Roger Goodman and Kirsten Refsing, 27-46. London: Routledge.
- . 2001. *Hegemony of Homogeneity: an Anthropological Analysis of "Nihonjinron"*. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press.
- . 2009. 'Concepts of Japan, Japanese Culture and the Japanese'. In *Cambridge Companion to Modern Japanese Culture*, ed. Yoshio Sugimoto. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bellah, Robert. 1965. 'Japan's Cultural Identity: Some Reflections on the Work of Watsuji Tetsurō'. *The Journal of Asian Studies* 24, no. 4: 573-594.
- Bénazet, Alexandre. 1901. *Le théâtre au Japon: ses rapports avec les cultes locaux*. Paris: Leroux.
- Benedict, Ruth. 2005. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*. Boston: Mariner Books.
- Bennett, Susan. 1997. *Theatre Audiences: a Theory of Production and Reception*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Berg, Shelley. 1995. 'Sada Yacco in London and Paris, 1900: le rêve réalisé'. *Dance Chronicle* 18, no. 3: 343-404.
- Bethe, Monica, and Karen Brazell. 1986. *Dance in the Nō Theater*. Vol. 1. 3 vols. East Asian Papers. Ithaca: Cornell University.
- . 1986. *Dance in the Nō Theater*. Vol. 2. 3 vols. East Asian Papers. Ithaca: Cornell University.
- . 1986. *Dance in the Nō Theater*. Vol. 3. 3 vols. East Asian Papers. Ithaca: Cornell University.
- Bharucha, Rustom. 1988. 'Peter Brook's Mahabharata: a view from India'. *Theater* 19, no. 2: 5-20.
- . 1996. Somebody's Other. In *The Intercultural Theatre Reader*, 196-212. New York: Routledge.
- Blacker, Carmen. 1992. 'Marie Stopes and Japan'. In *Britain and Japan, 1859-1991: themes and personalities*, ed. Hugh Cortazzi, 157-165. London: Routledge.
- Blacker, J. F. 1911. *The ABC of Japanese Art*. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Co.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1993a. 'Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception'. In *The Field of Cultural Production*, 215-237. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- . 1993b. 'The Historical Genesis of a Pure Aesthetics'. In *The Field of Cultural Production*, 254-266. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Bowers, Faubion. 1952. *Japanese Theatre*. New York: Hermitage House.
- Bowie, Andrew. 1990. *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche*.
Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Bradbrook, Muriel. 1983. 'Yeats and the Noh Drama of Japan'. In *Aspects of Dramatic Form in the English and the Irish Renaissance*. Vol. 3. Brighton: Harvester.
- Brandon, James. 1988. 'On Little Hanako'. *Asian Theatre Journal* 5, no. 1: 92-100.
- . 1989. 'A New World: Asian Theatre in the West Today'. *TDR (1988-)* 33, no. 2: 25-50.
- . 1997. *Nō and Kyōgen in the Contemporary World*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- . 2006. 'Myth and Reality: A Story of Kabuki during American Censorship, 1945-1949'. *Asian Theatre Journal* 23, no. 1: 1-110.
- . 2009. *Kabuki's Forgotten War 1931-1945*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Brecht, Bertolt. 1990. *The Measures Taken and other Lehrstücke*. London: Methuen Drama.
- . 2001. *Brecht on Theatre: the Development of an Aesthetic*. Trans. John Willett. London: Methuen Drama.
- Briant, Keith Rutherford. 1962. *Passionate Paradox: the Life of Marie Stopes*. New York: Norton.
- Bridgwater, Patrick. 1964. 'Arthur Waley and Brecht'. *German Life and Letters* 17, no. 3: 216-232.
- Brooks, Van Wyck. 1962a. 'Ernest Fenollosa and Japan'. *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 106, no. 2: 106-110.
- . 1962b. *Fenollosa and his Circle: With Other Essays in Biography*. 1st ed. New York: E.P. Dutton.
- Caldwell, Helen. 1977. *Michio Ito: the dancer and his dances*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Calendoli, Giovanni. 1954. 'I "Nō" giapponesi'. *Fiera Letteraria*, August 15.
- Candini, Giorgio. 1954. 'La Frontiera'. *L'Avvenire d'Italia*, August 15.
- Carroll, Noel. 2000. 'Art and Ethical Criticism: An Overview of Recent Directions of Research'. *Ethics* 110, no. 2: 350-387.
- Carruthers, Ian, and Yasunari Takahashi. 2004. *The Theatre of Suzuki Tadashi*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Cave, Richard Allen. 2011. *Collaborations: Ninette de Valois and William Butler Yeats*. Alton: Dance Books.
- Chamberlain, Basil Hall. 1880. *The Classical Poetry of the Japanese*. Trübner's oriental series. London: Trübner.
- . 1902. *Things Japanese*. London: John Murray.
- . 1910. *Japanese Poetry*. London: John Murray.
- Chiba, Yōko. 1986. 'Ezra Pound's Versions of Fenollosa's Noh Manuscripts and Yeats's Unpublished "Suggestion & Corrections"'. *Yeats Annual*, no. 4: 121-144.
- . 1992. 'Sada Yacco and Kawakami: Performers of Japonisme'. *Modern Drama* 35, no. 1: 35-53.
- . 1998. 'Japonisme: East-West Renaissance in the Late 19th Century'. *Mosaic* 31, no. 2: 1-20.
- Claudé, Paul. 1929. *L'Oiseau noir dans le soleil levant*. Paris: Gallimard.
- . 1962. *Claudé diplomate*. Vol. 4. Cahiers Paul Claudé. Paris: Gallimard.
- . 1993. 'Un essai d'adaptation du Nô japonais'. In *Mes idées sur le théâtre*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Cooper, David. 2008. 'Beautiful People, Beautiful Things'. *British Journal of Aesthetics* 48, no. 3: 247-260.
- . 2010. 'Edification and the Experience of Beauty'. *International Yearbook of Aesthetics: Diversity and Universality in Aesthetics* 14: 62-81.
- Copeau, Jacques. 1967. 'An Essay of Dramatic Renovation: The Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier'. Trans. Richard Hiatt. *Educational Theatre Journal* 19, no. 4: 447-454.
- . 1990. *Texts on Theatre*. Ed. John Rudlin and Norman Paul. London; New York: Routledge.
- . 1993. *Registres V: les registres du Vieux Colombier troisième Partie 1919 à 1924*. Ed. Norman Paul. Vol. 5. Paris: Gallimard.
- . 1999. *Journal: 1901-1948*. Ed. Claude Sicard. Paris: Paulhan.
- . 2000. *Registres VI: l'École du Vieux-Colombier*. Ed. Claude Sicard. Vol. 6. Paris: Gallimard.
- Cox, Rupert. 2003. *The Zen Arts*. London: Routledge.
- Craig, Edward Gordon. 1911. *On the Art of the Theatre*. Ed. Franc Chamberlain. London; Melbourne; Toronto: Heinemann.
- Craig, Edward Gordon, ed. 1909. *The Mask: A Journal of the Art of the Theatre*.

- Florence: Arena Goldoni.
- . 1910. *The Mask: A Journal of the Art of the Theatre*. Vol. 3. 12 vols. Florence: Arena Goldoni, November.
- . 1911. *The Mask: A Journal of the Art of the Theatre*. Vol. 4. 12 vols. Florence: Arena Goldoni, December.
- . 1913. *The Mask: A Journal of the Art of the Theatre*. Vol. 6. 12 vols. Florence: Arena Goldoni.
- Crimi Fabbri, Vito. 1954. 'Si ai Nô: una grande interpretazione del teatro imperiale giapponese'. *Gente Nostra*, August 21.
- Dale, Peter N. 1990. *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness*. Nissan Institute/Routledge Japanese studies series. London; New York: Routledge.
- Dillon, Edward. 1909. *The Arts of Japan*. London: Methuen.
- Dilworth, David. 1974. 'Watsuji Tetsurô (1889-1960): Cultural Phenomenologist and Ethician'. *Philosophy East and West* 24, no. 1: 3-22.
- Doi, Y. 2007. 'Theatre of Yugen's Direction of Kyogen in English and Kyogen Fusion Plays'. *Asian Theatre Journal* 24, no. 1: 247-261.
- Direction du théâtre du Vieux-Colombier. 1913. Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier: Appel. October 15.
- Duus, Peter, ed. 2008. *The Cambridge History of Japan*. Vol. 6. 6 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Edwards, Osman. 1901. *Japanese Plays and Playfellows*. London: W. Heinemann.
- Ehn, Erik, ed. 2004. *Theatre of Yugen, 25 Years: A Retrospective*. San Francisco: Theatre of Yugen.
- Eisenstadt, Shmuel Noah. 1998. *Japanese Civilization: A Comparative View*. Chicago; London: University Of Chicago Press.
- . 2000. 'Multiple Modernities'. *Daedalus* 129, no. 1: 1-29.
- Eliot, Thomas Stern. 1919. 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'. In *The Egoist* 6, no. 4, 5: 54-55, 72-73.
- Ellis, Sylvia. 1995. *The Plays of W.B. Yeats: Yeats and the Dancer*. New York: Macmillan.
- Emmert, Richard. 2008. English Nô and Theatre Nohgaku - the How and the Why. In *Nô Theatre Transversal*, ed. Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Christopher Balme, 141-153. Munich: Iudicium.
- . Richard Emmert: Making a Foreign Art His Own. <http://www.the->

- noh.com/en/people/sasaeru/011_emmert.html
- Emmert, Richard, and Monica Bethe. 1992. *National Noh Theatre performance guide series: Fujito; Matsukaze; Miidera; Tenko; Atsumori; Ema; Aoinoue*. 7 vols. National Noh Theatre.
- Eppstein, Ury. 1993. 'The Stage Observed: Western Attitudes Toward Japanese Theatre'. *Monumenta Nipponica* 48, no. 2: 147-166.
- Ernst, Earle. 1969. 'The Influence of Japanese Theatrical Style on Western Theatre'. *Educational Theatre Journal* 21, no. 2 (May): 127-138.
- Evans, Mark. 2006. *Jacques Copeau*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Ewick, David. '17. Craig, Edward Gordon and The Mask 1905-29'.
<http://themargins.net/bib/D/d17.html>
- Fanck, Arnold, and Mansaku Itami, dir. 1937. *Atarashiki tsuchi*. With Hara Setsuko and Ruth Eweler.
- Fang, Achilles. 1957. 'Fenollosa and Pound'. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 20, no. 1-2: 213-38.
- Faure, Bernard. 2008. *Bouddhisme et violence*. Paris: Le Cavalier Bleu.
- Fenollosa, Ernest. 1901. 'Notes on the Japanese Lyric Drama'. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 22: 129-137.
- Fenollosa, Ernest, and Ezra Pound. 1916. "*Noh*", or, *Accomplishment: a study of the classical stage of Japan*. London: Macmillan.
- Fenollosa, Ernest, Ezra Pound, and William Butler Yeats. 1916. *Certain Noble Plays of Japan: from the Manuscripts of Ernest Fenollosa, Chosen and Finished by Ezra Pound, With and Introduction by William Butler Yeats*. Churchtown: Cuala Press, April.
- Fischer-Lichte, Erika. 2001. 'The Reception of Japanese Theatre by the European Avant-Garde (1900-1930)'. In *Japanese theatre and the international stage*, ed. Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Samuel Leiter, 27-42. Leiden; Boston; Koln: Brill.
- . 2009. 'Interweaving Cultures in Performance: Different States of Being In-Between'. *New Theatre Quarterly* 25, no. 4: 391.
- Flakes, Susan. 1975. 'Yoshi and Company'. *TDR* 19, no. 4: 36-40.
- 'Foreign Students Learn "No", "Kyogen" on Vacation'. *Japan Times* (March 8 1984).
- Fujita, Haruhiko. 2003. 'The Ways of Arts or Ethics in Aesthetics'. *International Yearbook of Aesthetics: Diversity and Universality in Aesthetics* 7: 39-49.
- Furukawa, Hisashi. 1956. 'The Nō'. In *Japanese Music and Drama in the Meiji Era*, ed.

- Toyotaka Komiya, 75-117. Tokyo: Obunsha.
- Furukawa, Tetsushi. 1961. 'Watsuji Tetsuro, the Man and his Work'. In *A Climate*, 209-235. Tokyo: Ministry of Education.
- Garelick, Rhonda. 2009. *Electric Salome: Loie Fuller's Performance of Modernism*. Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Gaut, Berys. 2005. 'Art and Ethics'. In *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 431-443. London: Routledge.
- . 2007. *Art, Emotion and Ethics*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Geilhorn, Barbara. 2008. 'Between Self-Empowerment and discrimination: Women in Nō Today'. In *Nō Theatre Transversal*, ed. Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Christopher Balme, 106-122. Munich: Iudicium.
- Gendrich, Cynthia, and Woodrow Hood. 2008. 'Another Terrain: Theatre Nohgaku's Pine Barrens'. *Theatre Topics* 18, no. 1: 27-40.
- Gentile, Emilio. 1994. 'The Conquest of Modernity: From Modernist Nationalism to Fascism'. Trans. Lawrence Rainey. *Modernism/modernity* 1, no. 3: 55-87.
- Gerstle, Andrew. 1994. 'Tragedy in Japanese Drama'. In *Recovering the Orient*, ed. Anthony Milner and Andrew Gerstle, 205-227. Chur: Harwood.
- Gillespie, John. 1982. 'Interior Action: The Impact of Noh on Jean-Louis Barrault'. *Comparative Drama* 16, no. 4: 325-44.
- Gillespie, John K. 1983. 'The Impact of Noh on Paul Claudel's Style of Playwriting'. *Theatre Journal* 35, no. 1: 58-73.
- Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City: Doubleday.
- Gonse, Louis. 1883. *L'Art japonais*. Paris: A. Quantin.
- Gontard, Denis, ed. 1974. *Le Journal de bord des Copiaus, 1924-1929*. Éd. commentée par Denis Gontard. Paris: Seghers.
- Griffin, Roger. 1996. 'Staging the Nation's Rebirth'. In *Fascism and Theatre*. Providence; Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- . 2008. 'Modernity, Modernism, and Fascism'. *Modernism/modernity* 15, no. 1: 9-24.
- Grotowski, Jerzy. 1973. 'Holiday'. Ed. Boleslaw Taborski. *The Drama Review: TDR* 17, no. 2: 113-135.
- De Gruchy, John. 2003. *Orienting Arthur Waley*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

- Groemer, Gerald. 1998. 'Nō at the Crossroads: Commoner Performance during the Edo Period'. *Asian Theatre Journal* 15, no. 1: 117-141.
- . 1998. 'Elite Culture for Common Audiences: Machiiri Nō and Kanjin Nō in the City of Edo'. *Asian Theatre Journal* 15, no. 2: 230-252.
- Hall, Robert, ed. 1949. *Kokutai no hongei: Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan*. Trans. John Owen Gauntlett. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Hansen, Janine. 1997. *Arnold Fancks Die Tochter des Samurai nationalsozialistische Propaganda und japanische Filmpolitik*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Harootunian, H.D. 2008. 'Late Tokugawa Culture and Thought'. In *The Cambridge history of Japan*, ed. Marius Jansen, 5:168-252. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harris, Paul. 1973. "This Radical Noh": A Study of Two Productions by Kanze Hisao and Kanze Hideo. PhD dissertation, Ohio State University.
- Harris, Sam. 2010. *The Moral Landscape*. New York; London; Toronto; Sydney. Free Press.
- Havens, Thomas. 1982. *Artist and Patron in Postwar Japan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hearn, Lafcadio. 1896. *Kokoro*. Boston: Tuttle.
- . 1904. *Japan, an attempt at interpretation*. New York; London: Macmillan.
- Hendry, Joy. 1992. 'Individualism and Individuality: Entry into a Social World'. In *Ideology and Practice in Modern Japan*, 55-71. London; New York: Routledge.
- . 2003. *Understanding Japanese society*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Herriott, J. Homer. 1945. 'Folklore from Marco Polo: Japan'. *California Folklore Quarterly* 4, no. 4: 398-403.
- Hirakawa, Sukehiro. 1989. 'Japan's Turn to the West'. In *The Cambridge History of Japan: the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Marius Jansen, 5:432-498. The Cambridge History of Japan. Cambridge University Press.
- . 1997. 'Rediscovering Lafcadio Hearn'. In *Rediscovering Lafcadio Hearn: Japanese Legends Life & Culture*, 1-57. Folkestone, Kent, UK: Global Oriental.
- Hoff, Frank. 1998. 'Kanze Hisao (1925-1978): Making Nō into Contemporary Theatre'. In *Zeami and the Nō Theatre in the World*, ed. Benito Ortolani and Samuel Leiter, 77-99. New York: Center for Advanced Studies in Theatre Arts.
- Hokenson, Jan. 2004. *Japan, France, and East-West aesthetics : French literature, 1867-2000*. Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

- Hoshino, Tsutomu, ed. 2007. *Nō no honryaku*. Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Kokusai Nihongaku Kenkyū Sentā.
- Hsu, Francis. 1975. *Iemoto: The Heart of Japan*. Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman.
- Huish, Marcus. 1889. *Japan and its Arts*. London: Batsford.
- Hume, David. 1974. *Of the Standard of Taste*. Ed. T. H. Green and T. H. Grose. Vol. 3. 4 vols. *The Philosophical Works of David Hume*. London: Longman.
- Inaga, Shigemi. 2005. 'Philosophia, Ethica and Aesthetica in the Far East Cultural Sphere: Reception of the Western Ideas and Reactions to the Western Cultural Hegemony'. Presented at the 'Cultures of Knowledge', October 20, Pondicherry.
- Inoue, Kyoko. 2001. *Individual Dignity in Modern Japanese Thought*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.
- Iser, Wolfgang. 1978. *The Act of Reading*. London: Routledge.
- Ishibashi, Hiro. 1966. *Yeats and the Noh: types of Japanese beauty and their reflection in Yeats's plays*. Dublin: Dolmen.
- . 1978. 'Marie C. Stopes to nō (1)'. *Eigo seinen* 124: 180-81.
- Isker, Abder. 1966. *Jean-Louis Barrault sur "Les Paravents" de Jean Genet*. A propos. May 3. <http://www.ina.fr/art-et-culture/arts-du-spectacle/video/CPF86601582/jean-louis-barrault.fr.html>. .
- Ito, Michio. 1976. 'A Translation of Fifteen Pages of Ito Michio's Autobiography "Utsukushi naru kyoshitsu"'. Trans. Ian Carruthers. *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 2, no. 1: 32-43.
- Jauss, Hans Robert. 1982. *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- Kagaya, Shinko. 2001a. 'Western Audiences and Meiji Nō'. In *Japanese Theatre and the International Stage*, ed. Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Samuel Leiter, 161-175. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- . 2001b. 'Nō Performances in Gaichi'. *Asian Theatre Journal* 18, no. 2 (October 1): 257-269.
- . 2005. 'The First Umewaka Minoru and Performances for Guests from Overseas'. *Nachrichten der Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens* 177-178: 225–236.
- . 2008. 'Dancing on a Moving Train: Nō Between Two Wars'. In *Nō Theatre Transversal*, ed. Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Christopher Balme, 19-30. Munich: Iudicium.

- Kant, Immanuel. 1911. *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement*. Ed. Nicholas Walker. Trans. James Creed Meredith. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Kanze, Hideo. 1971. 'Noh: Business and Art. An interview with Kanze Hideo'. *TDR* 15, no. 2: 185-92.
- . 2005. 'Kaigai kōen de kanjita koto: 1954 nen no benechia engeki matsuri hoka'. In *Gaikokujin no nōgaku kenkyū*, ed. Haruo Nishino, 141-153. Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Kokusai Nihongaku Kenkyū Sentā.
- Kanze, Hisao. 1981a. 'Iemoto seido no hihon'. In *Kanze Hisao Choshakushū*, 3:121-133. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- . 1981b. 'Dentō no tadashii keishō'. In *Kanze Hisao Choshakushū*, 4:252-263. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- . 1981c. 'Nō ni okeru dentō no mondai - engisha toshite'. In *Kanze Hisao Choshakushū*, 3:20-30. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- . 1981d. 'Jujitsu shita chinmoku'. In *Kanze Hisao Choshakushū*, 1:58-16. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- . 1981e. 'Musō shinnyō'. In *Kanze Hisao Choshakushū*, 1:53-57. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- . 1981f. 'Pari ryūgaku'. In *Kanze Hisao Choshakushū*, 4:228-241. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- . 1981g. 'Pari ryūgaku wo oete'. In *Kanze Hisao Choshakushū*, 4:239-241. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- . 1981h. 'Furansu ryūgaku hitotsuki mae' - daiichi ikkai nichifutsu engeki kōkan ryūgakusei ni erabarete. In *Kanze Hisao Choshakushū*, 4:222-27. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- . 1981i. 'Nō no shōkai'. In *Kanze Hisao Choshakushū*, 4:244-251. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- Kasai, Ken'ichi. 2008. 'New Plays (shinsaku nō) as an Engine of Renewal'. In *Nō Theatre Transversal*, ed. Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Christopher Balme, 86-98. Munich: Iudicium.
- KBS. 1934. Prospectus. Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai.
- . 1937. *Noh programme: specially arranged for the delegates to the Seventh World Conference of the World Federation of Education Associations*. Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai.
- . 1938. 'Rappresentazione del dramma del noh Aoi-no-uye (La principessa

- malvarosa) in onore della Missione Italiana Fascista. Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai', March 21. KD451-B25.
- Keene, Donald. 1970. *Twenty plays of the Nō theatre*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- . 1981. *Appreciations of Japanese Culture*. Tokyo; New York: Kodansha International.
- Khan, Yoshimitsu. 1998. *Japanese Moral Education Past and Present*. Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.
- Kobayashi, Manji. 1977. 'Mari stōpusu to ezura paundo'. *Eigo seinen* 123: 397-399.
- Kobayashi, Seki, and Shinko Kagaya. 2007. 'Kyōgen in the Postwar Era'. *Asian Theatre Journal* 24, no. 1: 144-177.
- Kodama, Sanehide, ed. 1987. *Ezra Pound & Japan: Letters & Essays*. Redding Ridge: Black Swan Books.
- Komesu, Okifumi. 1987. 'At the Hawk's Well and Taka No Izumi in a "Creative Circle"'. *Yeats Annual* 5: 103-113.
- Komintz, Lawrence. 1995. *Avatars of Vengeance*. Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies 13. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.
- Komparu, Kunio. 1983. *The Noh Theater: Principles and Perspectives*. 1st ed. New York: Weatherhill/Tankosha.
- Kustow, Michael. 2005. *Peter Brook: a biography*. London: Bloomsbury.
- LaFleur, William. 1978. 'Buddhist Emptiness in the Ethics and Aesthetics of Watsuji Tetsurō'. *Religious Studies* 14, no. 2: 237-250.
- Lan, Feng. 2005. *Ezra Pound and Confucianism: Remaking Humanism in the Face of Modernity*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Lane Suzuki, Beatrice. 1932. *Nōgaku: Japanese Nō Plays*. London: John Murray.
- Lave, Jean, and Etienne Wenger. 1991. *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Learning in Doing: Social, Cognitive, and Computational Perspectives. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Leabhart, Thomas. 2004. 'Jacques Copeau, Etienne Decroux, and the "Flower of Noh"'. *New Theatre Quarterly* 20, no. 80: 315-330.
- Lee, Sang-Kyong. 2000. 'Edward Gordon Craig and Japanese Theatre'. *Asian Theatre Journal* 17, no. 2: 215-235.
- Lequeux, André. 1889. *Le théâtre japonais*. Paris: E. Leroux.
- Le sette tv di New York. *Il Tempo*. (12 August 1954).

- Levinas, Emmanuel. 2007. 'Ethics as First Philosophy'. In *The Levinas Reader*, ed. Sean Hand. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Littlewood, Ian. 1996. *The Idea of Japan*. London: Secker & Warburg.
- Lo, Jacqueline, and Helen Gilbert. 2002. 'Toward a Topography of Cross-Cultural Theatre Praxis'. *TDR* 46, no. 3: 31-53.
- Lummis, Douglas. 2007. 'Ruth Benedict's Obituary for Japanese Culture'. *Japan Focus*. July 19. http://www.japanfocus.org/articles/print_article/2474. .
- Marra, Michele. 2001. *Modern Japanese Aesthetics*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Marx, Edward. 2007. 'No Dancing: Yone Noguchi in Yeats's Japan'. *Yeats Annual*, no. 17: 51-93.
- McKinnon, Richard. 1952. 'The No and Zeami'. *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 11, no. 3: 355-361.
- . 1953. 'Zeami on the Art of Training'. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 16, no. 1/2: 200-255.
- Mitford, Algernon. 1871. *Tales of old Japan*. London: Macmillan.
- Miyake, Akiko, Sanehide Kodama, and Nicholas Teele. 1994. *A Guide to Ezra Pound and Ernest Fenollosa's Classic Noh Theatre of Japan*. Orono; Otsu: National Poetry Foundation, University of Maine; Ezra Pound Society of Japan, Shiga University.
- Miyoshi, Masao. 1994. 'Shutaisei and the West in Postwar Japan'. In *Recovering the Orient*. Chur: Harwood.
- Mnouchkine, Ariane. 1996. 'The Theatre is Oriental'. In *The Intercultural Theatre Reader*, 93-99. New York: Routledge.
- Morinaga, Maki Isaka. 2005. *Secrecy in Japanese Arts*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Morse, Edward. 1917. *Japan Day by Day*. Vol. 2. 2 vols. Boston; New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Mueller, Roswitha. 2007. 'Learning for a New Society: the *Lehrstück*'. In *Cambridge Companion to Bertolt Brecht*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Murakata, Akiko. 1985. 'Ezra Pound ed. "Fenollosa on the Noh" as it was: Lecture V. No. Washington, 12 March, 1903 (50th Special Edition)'. *Eibungaku Hiyouron* 50, no. 3: 45-78.
- . 1986. 'Ernest F. Fenollosa's Studies of No: with Reference to his and Other Unpublished Manuscripts and Ezra Pound's Edition'. *Eibungaku Hiyouron* 51, no.

- 2: 1-55.
- . 1997. ‘The Ernest F. Fenollosa Manuscripts on No at Princeton University Library’. *Eibungaku Hiyouron* 69, no. 3: 38-96.
- Murray, Paul. 1997. ‘Lafcadio Hearn’s Interpretation of Japan’. In *Rediscovering Lafcadio Hearn: Japanese Legends Life & Culture*, 242-258. Folkestone, Kent, UK: Global Oriental.
- Nagatomo, Shigenori. 1981. ‘Zeami’s Conception of Freedom’. *Philosophy East and West* 31, no. 4: 401-416.
- Najita, Tetsuo, and H.D. Harootunian. 2008. ‘Japanese revolt against the West: political and cultural criticism in the twentieth century’. In *Cambridge History of Japan*, ed. Peter Duus. Vol. 6. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nakane, Chie. 1973. *Japanese society*. London: Penguin.
- Nearman, Mark J. 1982. ‘Kakyo: Zeami’s Fundamental Principles of Acting (Part Two)’. *Monumenta Nipponica* 37, no. 4: 459-496.
- . 1995. ‘The Visions of a Creative Artist. Zenchiku’s Rokurin Ichiro Treatises (Part One)’. *Monumenta Nipponica* 50, no. 2: 235-261.
- Nishi, Amane. 2001. ‘Theory of Aesthetics’. In *Modern Japanese Aesthetics*, 17-37. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press.
- Nishi, Kazuyoshi, and Tamotsu Matsuda. 1988. *Nōgaku kaigai kōen shiyō*. Tokyo: Kinseisha.
- Nishino, Ayako. 2006. ‘Claudel et Copeau, leurs regards sur le Nō’. *Cahiers d’études françaises Université Keio* 11: 16-31.
- . 2007. ‘Elements japonais dans la Troisième Journée du Soulier de satin: l’influence probable de Kantan, une pièce du no sur la scène du rêve’. *Cahiers d’études françaises Université Keio* 12: 79-94.
- . 2008. ‘L’Adaptation claudelienne du no: dans l’histoire de la réception occidentale du no’. *Cahiers d’études françaises Université Keio* 13: 48-63.
- Nitobe, Inazo. 1904. *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*. Tokyo: Teibi.
- Nōgaku Kyōkai. 2011. ‘Seikaiin meibo’.
<http://www.nohgaku.or.jp/about/members.html>
- . ‘Nōgaku kyōkai ni tsuite’. <http://www.nohgaku.or.jp/about/index.html>
- Nogami, Toyochiro. 1934. *Japanese Noh plays: How to See them*. Tokyo: Board of Tourist Industry.
- Nogara, Gino. 1954. ‘Sei “nō” giapponesi al festival della prosa’. *Giornale di Brescia*,

August 7.

- Noguchi, Yone. 1907a. 'With a Foreign Critic at a No Performance'. *Japan Times*, October 27.
- . 1907b. 'Mr. Yeats and the No'. *Japan Times*, November 3.
- . 1910a. 'The Japanese Mask Play'. *Taiyō* 16, no. 10: 5.
- . 1910b. *Lafcadio Hearn in Japan*. London: Mathews.
- . 1914. *The Spirit of Japanese Poetry*. London: John Murray.
- 'Nō: il teatro classico giapponese: Biennale di Venezia 7-8 Agosto 1954'. *Asahi Shinbun*. 46975 Carton E-7. Bibliothèque du Musée Guimet.
- O'Neill, P. G. 1984. 'Organisation and Authority in the Traditional Arts'. *Modern Asian Studies* 18, no. 4: 631-645.
- Oba, Masaharu. 1984. *Bertolt Brecht und das No-Theater: Das No-Theater im Kontext der Lehrstücke Brechts*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Oida, Yoshi. 1992. *An Actor Adrift*. London: Methuen.
- . 1997. *The Invisible Actor*. London: Methuen.
- Okakura, Kakuzo. 2007. *Ideals of the East : the spirit of Japanese art*. New York: Cosimo Classics.
- Okamoto, Shiro. 2001. *The Man Who Saved Kabuki: Faubion Bowers and Theatre Censorship in Occupied Japan*. Trans. Samuel Leiter. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Ono, Yoshirō. 2010. *Shirabe to tōshi: nō no monogatari to kindaika*. Kyoto: Rinsen.
- Ortolani, Benito. 1969. 'Iemoto'. *Japan Quarterly* 16, no. 3: 297-306.
- . 2001. 'Zeami's Mysterious Flower: The Challenge of Interpreting it in Western Terms'. In *Japanese Theatre and the International Stage*, 113-132. Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill.
- Ortolani, Benito, and Samuel Leiter, eds. 1998. *Zeami and the Nō Theatre in the World*. New York: Center for Advanced Studies in Theatre Arts.
- Otabe, Tanehisa. 1998. 'Some Aspects of Japanese Aesthetics'. *International Yearbook of Aesthetics: Diversity and Universality in Aesthetics 2*: 59-73.
- Ōwada, Tateki. 1897. *Zōho yōkyoku tsūkai*. 9 vols. Tōkyō: Hakubunkan.
- Pavis, Patrice. 1996. *The Intercultural Theatre Reader*. New York: Routledge.
- Pellecchia, Diego. 2008. 'The Fan of Noh Theatre: Object of Encounter'. *Platform* 3, no. 2: 33-46.
- Perego, Giovanni. 1954. 'No del pubblico ai nō giapponesi'. *Milano Sera*, August 7.

- Péri, Noël. 2004. *Le theatre nō: études sur le drame lyrique japonais*. Paris: École Française d'Extrême Orient.
- Pilgrim, Richard. 1972. 'Zeami and the Way of Nō'. *History of Religions* 12, no. 2: 136-148.
- . 1977. 'The Artistic Way and the Religio-Aesthetic Tradition in Japan'. *Philosophy East and West* 27, no. 3: 285-305.
- Pinnington, Noel. 2006a. *Traces in the Way: Michi and the Writings of Komparu Zenchiku*. Ithaca: Cornell University.
- . 2006b. 'Models of the Way in the Theory of Noh'. *Japan Review* 18: 29-55.
- Plato. 2000. *The Republic*. Trans. Benjamin Jowett. New York: Dover.
- Plowright, Poh-Sim. 1975. *The Influence of Oriental Theatrical Techniques on the Theory and Practice of Western Drama*. Egham: Royal Holloway, University of London.
- Pound, Ezra. 1914. 'Vorticism'. *Fortnightly Review* XCVI: 461-471.
- . 1971. *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound, 1907-1941*. Ed. D.D. Paige. New York: New Directions.
- . 1987. *Plays Modelled on the Noh*. Ed. Donald Gallup. Toledo: The Friends of the University of Toledo Libraries.
- Powell, Brian. 2002. *Japan's Modern Theatre*. Oxford: Japan Library.
- Pronko, Leonard. 1967. *Theater East and West*. University of California Press: Berkeley.
- Qamber, Akhtar. 1974. *Yeats and the Noh, with two plays for dancers by Yeats and two Noh plays*. 1st ed. New York: Weatherhill.
- Rath, Eric. 1998. *Actors of Influence: discourse and institutional growth in the history of Noh theater*. PhD dissertation, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.
- . 2003. 'Remembering Zeami: The Kanze School and Its Patriarch'. *Asian Theatre Journal* 20, no. 2 (October 1): 191-208.
- . 2004. *The Ethos of Noh: Actors and Their Art*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Raz, Jacob. 1976. 'The Actor and His Audience. Zeami's Views on the Audience of the Noh'. *Monumenta Nipponica* 31, no. 3: 251-274.
- . 1983. *Audience and Actors: a Study of Their Interaction in the Japanese Traditional Theatre*. Leiden: Brill.
- Ripamonti, Icilio. 1954a. 'Leoni che folleggiano fra le peonie in fiore'. *Avanti*, August

- 7.
- . 1954b. ‘Il problema della cultura affrontato con assurdi criteri’. *Avanti*, August 22.
- Rosenow, Ce. 2006. ‘Fenollosa’s legacy: the Japanese Network of Ezra Pound’. *Philological Quarterly* 85, no. 3-4: 371-389.
- Rudlin, John. 2000. Jacques Copeau. In *Twentieth Century Actor Training*, ed. Alison Hodge. London; New York: Routledge.
- Said, Edward. 2003. *Orientalism*. Penguin classics. London: Penguin.
- Saito, Yuriko. 1997. ‘The Japanese Aesthetics of Imperfection and Insufficiency’. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 55, no. 4: 377-385.
- . 2007. ‘The Moral Dimension of Japanese Aesthetics’. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 65, no. 1: 85-97.
- Sakauchi, Futoshi. 2006. ‘W. B. Yeats’s At the Hawk’s Well and the Easter Rising’. *Waseda University Theatre Research Centre Bulletin*, no. 6: 43-49.
- Salz, Jonah. 2010. ‘Interview’ by Diego Pellecchia. August 13.
- Sanari, Kentarō. 1930. *Yōkyoku Taikan*. Vol. 3. 7 vols. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin.
- Sansom, George. 1911. ‘Translations from the Lyrical Drama: Nō’. *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* 38, no. 3: 126-176.
- Satow, Ernest. 1879. ‘Ancient Japanese Ritual’. *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* VII: 97-132.
- . 1881. ‘Ancient Japanese Ritual’. *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* IX: 182-211.
- . 1921. *A Diplomat in Japan*. London: Seeley.
- Savarese, Nicola. 1980. *Il teatro al di là del mare*. Torino: Studio Forma.
- Schechner, Richard, and Willa Appel, eds. 1990. *By Means of Performance: intercultural studies of theatre and ritual*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Scholz-Cionca, Stanca. 2007. ‘Yoroppa ni okeru nō honkyaku: eikō no kako - fuanna mirai’. In *Nō no honyaku*, ed. Tsutomu Hoshino, 153-169. Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Kokusai Nihongaku Kenkyū Sentā.
- Scholz-Cionca, Stanca, and Christopher Balme, eds. 2008. *Nō Theatre Transversal*. Munich: Iudicium.
- Scholz-Cionca, Stanca, and Samuel Leiter, eds. 2001. *Japanese Theatre and the International Stage*. Leiden; Boston; Koln: Brill.

- Scholz-Cionca, Stanca, and Hōko Oshikiri. 2004. 'Der Adler und die Chrysantheme: Nō-Spiele zum Russisch-Japanischen Krieg'. *Nachrichten der Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens* 175-176: 23-59.
- Segàla, Ariberto. 2000. *I muri del duce*. Gardolo (Trento): Arca.
- Sekine, Masaru, and Christopher Murray. 1990. *Yeats and the Noh: a comparative study*. Savage: Barnes & Noble.
- Shields, James. 2010. 'The Art of Aidagara: Ethics, Aesthetics, and the Quest for an Ontology of Social Existence in Watsuji Tetsurō's Rinrigaku'. *Asian Philosophy* 19, no. 3: 265-283.
- Shigeyama, Sennojō. 2009. 'Artist Interview: Sennojo Shigeyama'. *Japan Foundation: Performing Arts Japan*. http://performingarts.jp/E/art_interview/0906/1.html. .
- Shils, Edward. 1971. 'Tradition'. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 13, no. 2: 122-159.
- Shimizu, Christine, and Edouard Papet. 2008. 'Les masques japonais en France au XIXe siècle'. In *Masques, de Carpeaux à Picasso*. Paris: Musée d'Orsay / Hazan.
- Sibley, Frank. 1959. 'Aesthetic Concepts'. *The Philosophical Review* 68, no. 4: 421-450.
- . 1965. 'Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic'. *The Philosophical Review* 74, no. 2: 135-159.
- Sieffert, René. 1960. *La tradition secrète du Nō*. Connaissance de l'orient. Paris: Gallimard.
- Smethurst, Mae, and Richard Smethurst. 2008. 'Two New Nō Plays Written During World War II'. In *Nō Theatre Transversal*, ed. Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Christopher Balme, 31-37. Munich: Iudicium.
- Smith, Robert. 1998. 'The Iemoto System'. In *Learning in Likely Places: Varieties of Apprenticeship in Japan*, ed. John Singleton, 23-34. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Snodgrass, Judith. 2003. *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West*. Chapel Hill; London: University of North Carolina Press.
- Stanislavski, Constantin. 1948. *An Actor Prepares*. Anniversary Edition. New York: Theatre Arts Books.
- . 1968. *Building a Character*. London: Methuen.
- Steinweg, Reiner. 1972. *Das Lehrstück: Brechts Theorie einer politischästhetischen Erziehung*. Stuttgart: Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

- Stopes, Marie. 1910. *A Journal from Japan*. London: Blackie.
- . 1920. *Radiant Motherhood: a Book for those who are Creating the Future*. London: Putnam.
- Stopes, Marie, and Jōji Sakurai. 1913. *Plays of Old Japan: the “No”*. London: Heinemann.
- Stucki, Yasuo. 1966. ‘Yeats’s Drama and the Nō: A Comparative Study in Dramatic Theories’. *Modern Drama* 9: 101-22.
- Suzuki, Daisetz Teitarō, Erich Fromm, and Riccardo De Martino. 1970. *Zen Buddhism & psychoanalysis*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Tate, J. 1928. “‘Imitation’ in Plato’s Republic”. *The Classical Quarterly* 22, no. 1: 16-23.
- . 1932. ‘Plato and “Imitation”’. *The Classical Quarterly* 26, no. 3/4: 161-169.
- Tatlow, Antony. 1977. *The Mask of Evil: Brecht’s Response to the Poetry, Theatre and Thought of China and Japan*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Taxidou, Olga. 1998. *The Mask: a periodical performance by Edward Gordon Craig*. Amsterdam: Harwood.
- Teele, Rebecca. 2002. ‘Women in Nō Today’. *Mime Journal* 17: 67-79.
- . 2003. ‘Tomoe’. *The Open Page* 8: 34-40.
- . 2011. ‘Interview’ by Diego Pellecchia. April 9.
- Teele, Rebecca, and Yoshihiro Kitakura. 2011. ‘Wedded to her Art, Noh Two Ways About It’. *Daily Yomiuri Online*, June 2.
<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T110205002516.htm> .
- Teele, Roy. 1957. ‘Translations of Noh Plays’. *Comparative Literature* 9, no. 4: 345-368.
- Terron, Carlo. 1954. ‘Dramma, rito, danza, pantomima tutti insieme nei “Nô” giapponesi’. *Corriere Lombardo*, August 7.
- Thornbury, Barbara. 2001. ‘Performing Arts as Cultural Ambassadors’. In *Japanese Theatre and the International stage*, ed. Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Samuel Leiter, 213-27. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Trevisani, Giulio. 1954. ‘Nei “Nô” giapponesi recita anche il ventaglio’. *L’Unità*, August 7.
- Tschudin, Jean-Jacques. 2001. ‘French Discovery of the Japanese Theatre’. In *Japanese Theatre and the International stage*, ed. Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Samuel Leiter, 41-58. Leiden; Boston: Brill.

- Tsukimura, Reiko. 1967. 'A Comparison of Yeats's At the Hawk's Well and Its Noh Version Taka no izumi'. *Literature East and West* 11: 385-97.
- Turner, Bryan. 1994. *Orientalism, PostModernism and Globalism*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Ubersfeld, Anne. 1982. 'The Pleasure of the Spectator'. *Modern Drama* 25: 127-139.
- Udaka, Michishige. 1988. 'On the 3rd Annual INI Recital'. Trans. Rebecca Teele. May 14.
- . 2007. *Noh Masks*. Udaka-kai.
- Udaka, Michishige, and Dan Furst. 1987. 'Resonance and Renaissance: The International Noh Foundation'. *Kansai Time Out*, March.
- Udaka, Michishige, and Sennojō Shigeyama. 1985. '2nd TTT Recital: Messages'. Trans. Rebecca Teele.
- . 1986. '3rd TTT Recital: Messages'. Trans. Rebecca Teele.
- Udaka, Michishige, and Rebecca Teele. 1984. 'Interview with Udaka Michishige, Actor of the Kongō School'. *Mime Journal* 5: 130-139.
- Udaka, Michishige, and Shuichi Yamagata. 2010. *The Secrets of Noh Masks*. Tokyo; London: Kodansha International.
- Udaka, Tatsushige. 2010. 'Interview' by Diego Pellecchia. February 2.
- Udakakai. 2011. 'About the International Noh Institute'. Trans. Rebecca Teele. <http://www.noh-udaka.com/en/about-ini.html>.
- Umewaka, Minoru. 2002. *Umewaka Minoru Nikki (1883)*. Ed. Rokurō Umewaka and Bunzō Torigoe. Shohan. Vol. 4. 7 vols. Tokyo: Yagi Shoten.
- Umewaka, Rokurō, and Mariko Hikawa. 1998. *Umewaka Rokurō: nō no shinseiki*. Nōgaku Nyūmon. Tokyo: Shogakukan.
- Umewaka, Rokurō, Sachiko Oda, Ken'ichi Kasai, and Stanca Scholz-Cionca. 2008. 'Talking with Umewaka Rokurō about his Involvement with Shinsaku Nō'. In *Nō Theatre Transversal*, ed. Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Christopher Balme, 92-98. Munich: Iudicium.
- Urmson, J.O. 1988. *Aristotle's Ethics*. Oxford; New York: Blackwell.
- Ventura, Gastone. 1954. 'La pantomima dei "Nō" poetica ma impenetrabile'. *Messaggero Veneto*, August 10.
- Victoria, Brian. 2006. *Zen at war*. 2nd ed. London: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Waley, Arthur. 1921. *The Nō Plays of Japan*. 1st ed. London: Allen and Unwin.
- . 1998. *The Nō Plays of Japan*. 2nd ed. New York: Dover Publications.

- Watanabe, Moriaki. 1965. 'Claudel et le Nô'. *Société Japonaise de Langue et Littérature Françaises* 6: 61-77.
- Watson, Ian. 1993. *Towards a Third Theatre: Eugenio Barba and the Odin Teatret*. London; New York: Routledge.
- . 2002. *Negotiating Cultures: Eugenio Barba and the intercultural debate*. Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press.
- Watsuji, Tetsurō. 1961. *A Climate*. Trans. Geoffrey Bownas. Tokyo: Printing Bureau, Japanese Government.
- . 1969. 'Yōkyoku ni arawareta rinri shiso: Japanese Ethical Thought in the Noh Plays of the Muromachi Period'. Trans. David Dilworth. *Monumenta Nipponica* 24, no. 4: 467-498.
- . 1971. 'Japanese Literary Arts and Buddhist Philosophy'. Trans. Umeyo Hirano. *Eastern Buddhist* 4: 88-115.
- . 1996. *Watsuji Tetsurō's Rinrigaku: Ethics in Japan*. Trans. Robert Carter and Seisaku Yamamoto. New York: SUNY Press.
- Wilde, Oscar. 2003. *The Picture of Dorian Grey*. London: Penguin.
- Wiles, David. 2007. *Mask and Performance in Greek Tragedy: From Ancient Festival to Modern Experimentation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilkinson, Thomas. 1962. 'Family Structure and Industrialization in Japan'. *American Sociological Review* 27, no. 5: 678-682.
- Willett, John. 1977. *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht: a Study from Eight Aspects*. London: Methuen.
- Williams, Raymond. 1981. *Culture*. London: Fontana.
- Wirth, Andrzej. 1971. 'Brecht and the Asiatic Model: Secularisation of Magical Rites'. *Literature East and West* 14, no. 4: 601-615.
- Wylie-Marques, Kathryn. 1998. 'Zeami Motokiyo and Etienne Decroux: twin reformers of the art of mime'. In *Zeami and the Nô Theatre in the World*, ed. Benito Ortolani and Samuel Leiter, 109-26. New York: Center for Advanced Studies in Theatre Arts.
- Yeats, William Butler. 1907. *Dramatical Poems*. Vol. 2. The Poetical Works of William Butler Yeats. New York: Macmillan.
- . 1962. 'A People's Theatre: A Letter to Lady Gregory'. In *Experiments*, 254 -. London: Macmillan.
- . 1997. *Selected Plays*. Ed. Richard Allen Cave. London: Penguin.

- Yokomichi, Mario. 1973. *The Life Structure of Noh*. Trans. Frank Hoff and Willi Flindt. Tokyo: Nōgaku Shorin.
- Yuasa, Yasuo. 1987. *The Body: Toward an Eastern Mind-Body Theory*. Ed. Thomas Kasulis. Trans. Thomas Kasulis and Shigenori Nagatomo. New York: SUNY Press.
- Zarrilli, Phillip, and Eugenio Barba. 1988. 'For Whom is the "Invisible" Not Visible? Reflections on Representation in the Work of Eugenio Barba'. *TDR* 32, no. 1: 95-106.
- Zeami, Motokiyo. 1986. *Zeami's Style: The Noh Plays of Zeami Motokiyo*. Trans. Thomas Blenman Hare. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press.
- . 2008. *Performance Notes*. Trans. Tom Hare. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Zhu, Chungeng. 2005. 'Ezra Pound's Confucianism'. *Philosophy and Literature* 29, no. 1: 57-72.

