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**Drama Cross-Cultural Echoes of Silence, Identity and Difference
(The Case of Japanese and American Women Playwrights)**

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Dedications

I dedicate this work to the poet, the dramatist and the novelist of my life: Mum, to my inner voice: Dad, to my confidant, love interest and the deuteragonist of my everlasting love story: Elyas, to the smiling face of my mask: Rouaym, to my Pearl: Rozayna, to the vivid scenes on the stage of my motherhood: Ahmed, to my cute face of *The Moon*: Assim, to the metaphor of the endless beauty: Kawthar, to my wise persona of *raisonneur*: Rayhana, to my secrecy: Israa, to my e-book: Salah Eddine, to the aesthetic multicultural side of my theater in the other land: my in-laws.

ABSTRACT

Abstract

The immense cultural achievements of women writers in Japan facilitate the flowering of Japanese literature and break their silence in a very noisy society. They employ literature as a medium to change their status and realize self-awareness, resistance and esteem at home and abroad. Japanese women writers had to path feminism in order to provide a spectrum of approaches and positions, united by their common focus on writing by and about women, spanning different genres mainly drama which was banned to women as playwrights and performers. Based on the Japanese aesthetic and theatrical conventions, they challenged the traditional by endeavoring the contemporary theater in its feminist insight in Japan and overseas as well, depending on the question raised in each context.

Aesthetic, semiotic and canonical theatrical devices like the mask is highly exploited in the production of such innovative plays. As a dynamic living form, it implies reforms at the level of the representation and the presentation of women on stage. The rhythmic interplay of the lines and planes of the mask and how they animate the negative space around it create a form so that kind of plays may attain their purpose. The mask appears to change expression as it moves and progresses through space and time as the physical body of the performer moves underneath it. The form of the mask dictates the rhythmic movement and energy needed for performance by the actor. This is reflected in the differences of how various styles and cultural practices of masked theater are performed and experienced. Among the most influential and vibrant types of theatrical masks are the Japanese Noh masks.

Noh Theater was not allowed to women traditionally in classical times. Thus, a double challenge is taken today by Japanese women playwrights to write and perform Noh plays in Japan and elsewhere, by writing in English in a more globalized and modern Japan and being acquainted at an international level. Japanese women playwrights do not raise questions concerning their status as being lowered, humiliated and voiceless only, but also in contexts of diaspora, like in United States, facing a rejection founded on ethnicity and femininity.

The present work focuses on the virtues of a classical theater and how modernity challenges tradition to present it in a new form, it entertains its function and conventions in Japan as they are exploited by women playwrights to transmit their voices and presence through external tangible signs such as the mask, supported by signs of a different nature like rhythm and energy of the movement in Noh and as a cultural marker in its referential dimension. Besides, showing the theatrical representation of Japanese culture in America via staging identities of Japanese

women in a hybrid, intercultural and alien context, referring to cultivating the crafts of drama in order to examine self-expression, give voice and break silence. Their echoed yields for presentation and representation unveil the true challenges of adaptation in a society where the concept of genetic plays is a crucial element of considering the self and the other with keeping the traits of the soul of the Japanese culture and mythology even on a diasporic stage.

Key words: Identity, Noh Theater, feminism, tradition, modernity, diaspora.

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List of Abbreviations

ANT: American Negro Theater

BAM: The Black Arts Movement

NOW: National Organization for Women

NEA: National Endowment for the Arts

ERA: Equal Rights Amendment

HUAC: House Un-American Activities Committee

NPO : Non Political Organization

VAWW : Violence against Women in War

MOFA: Ministry Of Foreign Affaires

METI: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

DNA: deoxyribonucleic acid

SCAP: Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers

L1: First language

L2: Second language

V-J: Victory over Japan

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General Introduction

General Introduction

In the theater of life, each self consists of multiple selves: ‘Properly speaking, a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind’ (William James 1902, p. 498). According to psychologists each human being develops three domains of selfhood: the experiential self, this is the “theater of consciousness” and the first person felt experience of being, the private self-consciousness system: the “narrator” (or interpreter) and the public self or persona. It refers to the public image that is attempted to project others. Multiple self-states becomes clear in the sense that people do very different things across time. The multiplicity of self-states¹ also is obvious in the behavior functioning according to different situations (Mark Baldwin 1930, p. 169). Thus, people are just actors, changing their behavior, putting on masks or removing them according to situations on the stage of life, just as said by William Shakespeare¹:

All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players;

They have their exits and their entrances;

William Shakespeare (1623)²

In the life of theater, equally, the role of the actor varies according to the theatrical situation in performance, putting on masks or removing them, sometimes visible and sometimes non-visible:

The actor and character are the two poles of a duality which have been the subject of considerable historical and theoretical investigation. The actor who enters the character; the character which, adapting itself, enters the actor; the actor and the character which meet at a point halfway between them; the actor who fixes and maintains a critical distance from his character...these are only a few of the more familiar formulations regarding this issue. (Barba and Savarese 2005, p. 274)

The relationship between actor and character may be seen as an interaction that is not truly present until the performance where they meet just like the sky and the sea can meet (Ibid, p. 274). During performance the actor and character blend, 'making the spectator see the optical illusion of an identity'. (Ibid, p. 274). This is the case for the spectator; it is not necessarily the case for the actor. The actor does not have the luxury of distance. The actor must create the illusion for the audience. However, for this to be the case, the actor must surely see a distinct separation between the character and his/her personal self. This is not always an easy distinction to make. Donning and doffing masks like hats is not the only way to conceptualize theatre, acting can also be regarded less as representation than as expression. Here the self cannot be the mask alone, as the point of the analogy is to deny that people are merely beings for others; nor can it be the man alone, without destroying the analogy; so it must be some fusion of man and mas, meanwhile plays have scripts, plots, and conventions, which constrain and enable the players in their interpretation of character. There is no one-sided truth about theatre either (Carruthers 1985, p. 222).

There have been many other attempts to define the relationship between the actors and roles they perform. Weissman in *Creativity in the Theater*, describes actors as having 'excessive inner needs for, and urgent insatiable gratifications from, exhibiting themselves.' (1965, p.11). Because actors have failed to develop a normal sense of identity, Weissman asserts that 'the actor's roles give him repeated opportunities to temporarily secure a self-image' (Ibid, p. 12). In fact, from a psychological point of view the actors are in search of an identity that they can become due to an inadequate sense of their own personal identities.

The image of the mask is ubiquitous throughout culture, history, stages of human development, and literature. As an object, the mask takes on human projections in play, ritual, magic and theatre. As a projection of the self, it can assume an infinite variety of forms: human, non-human, animal, inanimate object. The mask continued to be a significant theatrical device throughout history and across many cultures. It appeared steadily in the European Renaissance: La commedia de l'arte, in the Peking opera, the Japanese Noh drama and the Indian Kathakali dance dramas, among many others.

As a theatrical device, mask plays a fundamental role in different parts of the world. In Japan, masks belong to a highly developed theatrical tradition. Its purpose was strictly religious but this has long since changed. Of all the Japanese masks, the Noh mask is said to be the most artistic one. The dramatic arts in Japanese culture have developed through the years into many

different genres. The variations in approaches can be attributed to the unique culture that each style was formed in, and in audiences that viewed and supported them (Linus Hagstrom, 2016, p. 166)³. Modern Japanese theater can be traced back to Noh, but it also has roots in Kabuki and Bunraku in all of them mask and masking occupies a considerable position in performance. Japanese theater has been strongly influenced by movement and dance.

Be it Noh or Kabuki, Bunraku or Sho-Gekijo, everyday Japan gets the first ray of the Sun, equally a long story of one of the world's oldest, most vibrant and influential performance traditions is unveiled in the land of sunrise. Japan, which represents the furthest east for China, was greatly influenced by this country. The latter developed all of the hallmarks of developed civilization, including written language, advanced cities, specialized labor and bronze technology around 2000 years before Japan. As a result, the younger culture was sharing Chinese philosophies, political structures, architecture, Buddhism, clothing styles and even its written languages and cultural dimensions including theater. The term Japanese Drama can be applied to drama written and performed in Japan between 600AD and the present day. Many important elements of the dramatic art in Japan are similar to those developed by the Chinese. In many cases, the story material is the same, and there is great similarity in the methods of producing and acting. There were two periods of brilliance in Japan (the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries), and two distinct types of theatre: the aristocratic and the popular. The former is associated with the famous Noh plays, which reached their period of perfection during the fourteenth century.

Noh performance only allowed male actors, so there emerges a disjunction between female character types, and codified performances that did not involve the actual participation of female actors. Consequently, feminine identity and subjectivity is rendered always performative, an effect of the citation and repetition of formal aesthetic codes. Casting actresses intervenes in the performance history of Noh, particularly because the visual presentation of the actress's distinctly feminine features foregrounds the materiality of the female body on the Noh stage.

For a classical form like Noh, where the concept of character is as conventional archetype, this intercultural production visually foregrounds the corporeality of the female shite, and while she cannot quite be conceived as an individuated character in the style of Western realism, her material presence certainly constitutes an intervention of the feminine into the performance history of Noh theatre. In this way, therefore, the body of the woman can be read as a corporeal,

embodied text that intervenes in and complicates both the history of Shakespearean performance and dramatic criticism, as well as that of Noh theatre. The parts are all acted by men, so the task of performing as a young woman is one of the most challenging for any actor. Femininity and the feminine figure itself in Noh theatre plays an important role, though nowadays the interpreter is fundamentally masculine. The central aim of impersonating feminine roles by masculine performers, and therefore creating the masculine femininity consists of transmitting the spirit and the state of mind in place of ordinary copies of external femininity signs.

Traditional Noh drama is undergoing a great revolution. For centuries, women were not allowed to act on Noh stages, but in the last 50 years, they have begun to train in Noh acting and playwriting. The selected plays in the present research: *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* by Izumi Ashizawa, is a Japanese modern play based on the conventions of Noh Theater, challenging the traditional through the transgression of static Noh values of excluding women from acting, playwriting or contributing. Equally, *Tea* by Velina Hasu Houston as a Japanese American play stands for a collective response of a group of Japanese women in the US to racism, cultural nationalism, and call for heterogeneity in various locations: feminist scholarship as well as organizing and activism. ‘...*Tea* sheds light on intriguing aspects of class, cultural adaptation, racism and friendship...What is achieved...is a choral and impressionistic group portrait: a graceful interweaving of memory in and through the lives...of the four peers who gather to put the dead woman's house in order...*Tea* glides with remarkable smoothness between evocations of past and present.’ (Houston 2004, p. 5). It aims to consider the gender and ethnicity paradigm around nexuses of race, ethnicity, gender and class in Asian America. It emerges to challenge Orientalism inflicted upon Asian women and the stereotypes American mainstreams hold of Asian American women.

Japanese modern drama in the early 20th century consisted of Shingeki (experimental Western-style theatre), which employed naturalistic acting and contemporary themes in contrast to the stylized conventions of Kabuki and Noh. In the postwar period, there was a phenomenal growth in creative new dramatic works, which introduced fresh aesthetic concepts that revolutionized the orthodox modern theatre. Challenging the realistic, psychological drama focused on "tragic historical progress" of the Western-derived shingeki, young playwrights broke with such accepted tenets as conventional stage space, placing their action in tents, streets, and open areas and, at the extreme, in scenes played out all over Tokyo. Plots became increasingly complex, with play-within-a-play sequences, moving rapidly back and forth in time, and intermingling

reality with fantasy. Dramatic structure was fragmented, with the focus on the performer, who often used a variety of masks to reflect different personae.

Playwrights returned to common stage devices perfected in Noh and Kabuki to project their ideas, such as employing a narrator, who could also use English for international audiences. The changes in the sense of vision and visuality in modern Japanese theater is the essence of challenging the traditional, both plays focus on modernizing theater and the environment around it, and ask what gender, ethnicity and performance had to do with vision and visuality, as physical operation and as social fact. Examining the circulating images of women as performers and performers as women. Actually, a significant change occurred in Meiji Japan which aligned in new ways the categories of gender, ethnicity, performance, visuality and the body. That alignment opened up possibilities for new forms of disciplinary control as well as for new forms of resistance and pleasure. These possibilities can be illustrated by the various versions of Oscar Wilde's *Salome* that came into view in Japan at the turn of the century, especially the competing performances of Kawakami Sadayakko and Matsui Sumako in 1914. Matsui Sumako's triumphant performance was paradigmatic of the modern formations of visuality and gender, and *Salome's Dance of the Seven Veils* can be understood as a synecdoche for that formation.

Valuing tradition is a key element in both plays. In Japanese culture, the serving of tea has far more significance than mere quenching of thirst. Many in Japan see tea as an aesthetic pursuit, and the ceremony of preparing and sipping it as a spiritual practice. As for Ashizawa, her play is a physical story-telling based on Japanese Legend of a Jyorogumo (Binding Lady). Fusion of Japanese physical theatre, unconventional puppetry, mask, and chanting, the show, according to critics 'is a triumphant display of some serious artistry' (Ashizawa 2012, p. 98).

Thus, the present thesis *Drama Cross-Cultural Echoes of Silence, Identity and Difference (The Case of American and Japanese Women Playwrights)* is divided into four chapters. The first chapter entitled *Cultural Background* deals with the concepts of identity, heritage relation to aesthetics of Japanese literature and more specifically theater under the universal values of literature and drama to highlight the different theatrical conventions in Japan.

The second chapter *Feminist Shadows of Japanese Drama* sheds light on feminist theories that may facilitate the reading of the selected plays in the present work as well as feminist issues in the Japanese literary scholarship and the struggle to change notions of rooted ideologies in the

social system about women's space, time and body installed by the conventions of Shinto and Buddhism. While it narrows down the scope to drama for the challenge, feminists took in Japan to have access to that literary genre basically forbidden to women.

The third chapter *Noh Theater by Women: Contemporary vs Traditional* entertains a double challenge of exploiting Noh play *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* by a woman Izumi Ashizawa as a playwright and as an actor breaking the conventions of that type of Japanese drama as being forbidden to women besides writing in English in her homeland to gain an international worldwide audience since Japan is getting influenced by globalization. However, she keeps the basic theatrical conventions of Noh drama and mask, the visible and the unseen, the conscious and the unconscious.

The fourth chapter *Cross-Cultural Drama*, which is devoted to the play of *Tea* by Velina Hasu Houston, shows the theatrical Japanese American identity which privileges commonality over differences. Centering a discourse around race, culture or ethnicity through which gender, class, and other differences intersect and complicate various experiences among those Japanese American women who tend to use their own Japanese traits of soul, culture and mythology to be voiceful on a diasporic stage.

The conclusion tends to open new horizons of scientific research concerning the semiotics of drama and theater challenging the traditional vs the contemporary in other parts of Asia like: China, Korea and India in comparison with European theaters like the Roman and Greek drama in terms of signs, codes, systems and the performance of the text, its logic and the dramatic discourse. Furthermore, to exploit the dramatic conventions, mainly mask, in the understanding and the teachability of English language. The thesis tends to answer the following questions:

- 1- To what extent is *Tea* by Velina Hasu Houston a representative work of an Asian American literary challenge?
- 2- How far is transgression determined in *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* by Izumi Ashizawa to overcome femininity and the traditional?

The following hypotheses may be worded as follows:

- 1- *Tea* shows the willingness of Asian American women writers not to be seen as silent and uncomplaining.

2- *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* represents a revolutionary response to the exclusion of women from Noh Theater as a contemporary Japanese play challenging the traditional.

Two questionnaires have been administered to both playwrights about the significance of their plays cross-culturally, employing the cultural heritage influences on the dramatic aspect of expression like mask and tea ceremony to contrast the traditional with the contemporary challenging feminine boundaries and ethnic margins in both cases (see Appendix 3, p 371). The researcher had equally the opportunity to receive some photos taken during the performance of the play *Tea* from the playwright herself (Appendix 6, p. 386) and to study the function of masks on different occasions: The International Conference of Mask held in Marseille (France) on the 25th of October, 2018 and in the Japanese Cultural Center in Paris to obtain valuable data (see appendix:8, p. 394). The researcher uses Harvard University Style in the academic writing of this thesis.

Several obstacles were to hinder the course of research mainly documentation, which was available only abroad especially at the library of IRASIA Institute, specialized in Asian studies and the Japanese Cultural Center in Paris in what concerns Noh Theater. Otherwise, a great amount of data related to drama as a genre and literary studies have been found at the university level of Sidi Bel Abbes, Oran, Tlemcen and Algiers Universities.

Notes:

1: Mark Baldwin has a great quote that “ego and alter are born together,” which means our self-concept is foundationally shaped both by how others see us and how we see ourselves in relation to others.

2: *As You Like It* is a pastoral comedy by William Shakespeare believed to have been written in 1599 and first published in the First Folio in 1623. The play is consistently one of Shakespeare's most frequently performed comedies. The elaborate gender reversals in the story are of particular interest to modern critics interested in gender studies.

3: The concept of Japanese Identity may be examined through two different approaches: The first theory “Norms constructivism” concentrates on how pacifist and unique is the Japanese identity and to what extent it is bound to its cultural heritage and “Relational Approach” which focuses on the fact that Japanese identity is formed differently vis a vis a particular other.

Chapter One

Cultural Background

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Chapter One : Cultural Background

1.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the concepts of identity, heritage relation to aesthetics of Japanese literature and more specifically theater under the universal values of literature and drama to highlight the different theatrical conventions in Japan. In that respect, culture, art and identity tend to be tightly tied. Another pervasive characteristic of Japanese art is an understanding of the natural world as a source of spiritual insight and an instructive mirror of human emotion. An indigenous sensibility perceived that a spiritual realm was manifest in nature with numinous qualities. It nurtured, in turn, a sense of proximity to intimacy with the world of spirit as well as a trust in nature's general benevolence. Everything was understood as subject to a cycle of birth, fruition, death, and decay (Meech-Pekarik 1986, p.92).

1.2 Cultural Identity in Japanese Literature

From the beginning of documented history over centuries, it was noticeable that scholars and priests of : Buddhism, Shinto and Confucianism share the same principles concerning the meaning of being “Japanese” as being different from the outside world, this is because Japanese thinkers developed themselves, as early as Tokugawa times and even previous historical ages, their own kind of national idea. It centers on the concept of Japanese “imagined community” coined by Benedict Anderson: Japanese Kokutai (national polity) under the emperor's rule. It is the construction of common ethnicity that was fundamental in this concept, based on the foundation of the myth of the common origin of Japanese and their land. Such religious thinking had always a political connotation of constant imperial rule (Klaus Antoni 2001, p. 9)

1.2.1 Effect of Cultural Heritage on the Japanese Identity

Scholars have speculated endlessly about Japanese uniqueness and difference. Japanese identity is the anti-image of foreignness and, as such, can only be affirmed by formulating the images of the other, mainly the West (or in previous age China). The Japanese particularistic difference lies on their cultural difference from the universal civilization (Kosaku Yoshino 1992, p. 34). A number of factors affect the construction of cultural identities and the perceptions of these constructs by others. As the first diagram below shows, family values, gender, socioeconomic

status, ethnicity, race, religion, cultural heritage, territory, language, all in one way or another shape individuals' cultural identities and influence the ways in which people understand, experience, and interpret the world.

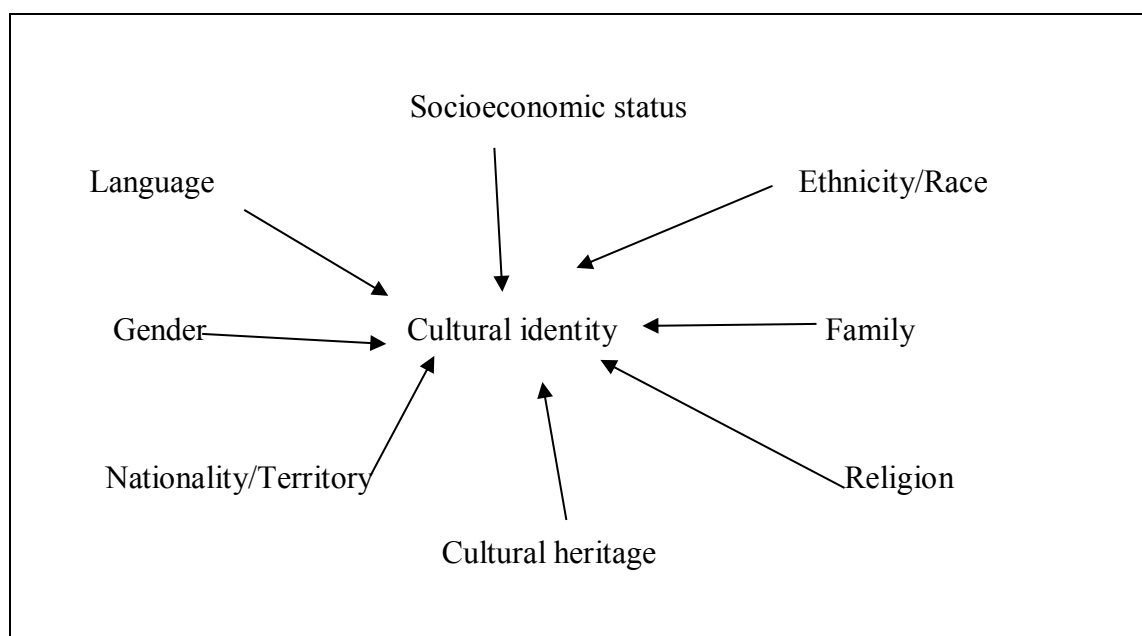


Diagram 1.1: Components of an Individual's Cultural Identity¹

Cultural identities are expressed through cultural heritage

The signification of heritage 'provides meaning to human existence by conveying the ideas of timeless values and unbroken lineages that underpin identity' (Graham et al. 2000, p. 41). Since the security of (cultural) identity is regarded to be a basic human need (Marker 2003), any threat to personal identity, including its physical expressions through material objects or cultural symbols, can be perceived as a threat to one's dignity or survival. Such circumstances tend to cause new, or intensify existing conflicts (Maalouf 2001 and Maiese 2003).

Japanese heritage is the foundation of its identity. The cultural properties determine the symbolic value of Japan as a nation. It is through a shared a unique culture that we define "who we are" in the contemporary world by locating and defining individual selves through the prism of the collective personality and its distinctive culture, and by discovering that culture we rediscover ourselves (Smith 1991). Lowenthal (1998, p. 2) argues that heritage is linked to feeling for the nation and is "the chief focus of patriotism". This psychological approach posits

that cultural heritage contributes to nation-state building on the basis of people's consciousness and sub-consciousness. A related term, "cultural nationalism", used by Yoshino Kosaku (1992, p. 1), exhibits the aim of regenerating the national community by creating, preserving or strengthening a people's identity when it is felt to be lacking, inadequate or threatened. He further explains that the aim of cultural nationalism focuses on the distinctiveness of the cultural community rather than on the representation of the state, which is the aim of political nationalism.

Tom Nairn (1977, p. 348) points out that nationalism, by using the sense of heritage, leads societies to propel themselves forward to a certain sort of goal (industrialization, prosperity, equality with other people...) by a certain sort of regression, drawing more deeply upon their indigenous resources, resurrecting past folk-heroes and myths about themselves. As a result, cultural heritage is frequently used to serve the political and economic strategies of a country or city. The image of a place, therefore, generally considered to be a key resource in arousing the collective memory and nostalgia of its inhabitants. Therefore, the image of cultural heritage, extracted from a certain part in history, often appears in marketing campaigns, interpretation, and even in the recreation of national identity. This reflects nationalism, by showing how cultural production promotes the value of the society, or how the sharing of a common spectacle establishes national difference, since "invented tradition" is viewed as a process that extends the idea of the political use of heritage (Natsuko Akagawa, (2015, p. 20).

Cultural heritage can be used to promote people psychological attachment to their nation. Nicolas Shumway (1991, p. xi) claims that 'the guiding fictions of nations cannot be proven, and indeed are often fabrications as artificial as literary fictions. Yet they are necessary to give individuals a sense of nation, peoplehood, collective identity and national purpose'. However, heritage is never inert, people engage with it, re-work it, appropriate it and contest it. It is part of the way identities are created and disputed, whether as an individual, group or nation state.

The cultural and artistic traditions of Japan, perhaps more than any other element in that society, helped to create a consciousness among Japanese of their history and identity and provided , and still provide, a context for an understanding of the aims and accomplishments of their culture. Art exhibitions, touring theatrical groups, translations of traditional Japanese literature

have made the Japanese art an attractive element for Western enthusiasm and sympathy. Traditional Japanese arts are among the richest in the world. The statement of the 10th century courtier-poet Ki no Tsurayuki conveys a full aesthetic description of Japanese art:

Japanese poetry has the human heart as seed and myriads of words as leaves. It comes into being when men use the seen and the heard to give voice to feelings aroused by the innumerable events in their lives. The song of the warbler among the blossoms, the voice of the frog dwelling in the water – these teach us that every living being sings. It is a song that moves..... without efforts, brings harmony to the relations between men and women, and calms the hearts of fierce warriors. (Ki no Tsurayuki, p. 33)²

The artistic production of Japan as a nation varied from one era to another as the political, social, geographical circumstances varied through time. The following table explains the different changes in the intellectual and artistic endeavor.

Era Name	Important Artistic Productions	Historical Periods
Jomon	Pottery	15000-200 BC
Yayoi	agriculture	200 BC – 250AD
Tumulus	Haniwa and Shinto origins	250 – 550
Asuka	Writing system, government, Confucian, Taoist,...	Late 6 th to first half of 7 th century
Hakuho		Second half of 7 th to early 8 th century
Tenpyo		710 – 794
Nara		710 – 784 (or 794)
Heian		794 – 1185
Kamakura and Muromachi (Ashikaga)	Samurai Japan	1185 – 1568
Momoyama	Merchant Japan	1568 – 1600
Edo (Tokugawa)		1600 – 1868
Meiji	Modernisation, industrialization, Imperial art forms of Waka and Haiku poetry	1868 - 1912

Table 1.1: Historical Periods and Era Names

The different changes in Japan affected its cultural identity and art production at many levels.

Like the United States, the inhabited geography of this chain of islands has changed greatly over the centuries. In the pre-historic Jomon period (15000BC – 200BC) semi-isolated groups of people lived in few areas of moderate climate. They depended primarily upon hunting and gathering, but they also began to live in small permanent settlements. That was the reason behind the production of the world's first pottery, a form of creativity that was of little use to nomadic people.

Japan had transformed around 200BC by hosting people from Korea and also from Pacific islands, who brought much broader-based forms of agriculture creating larger settlements and more centralized government. By 552, Japan became nearly entirely settled under the control of a central government, but the areas of northern Honshu and the northern island of Hokkaido, inhabited primarily by an ethnic minority called: Ainu, descending from the original pre-historic Jomon peoples, remained outside of central Japanese control until recent centuries. Thus, what was considered “Japan” in various periods differed geographically, ranging from south-central Honshu and northern Kyushu in earlier eras to most of what is now considered “Japan”. Any valuable consideration of the arts of Japan today would include an examination of the traditions of the Ainu, as well as those of Okinawa.

Early Japan in the pre-historic era is composed of the Jomon, Yayoi, and Tumulus (Kofun) periods (15000 BC- 522AD). Many non-verbal texts were created of materials like clay because of the absence of the writing system at that time, leaving attractive glimpses into the lives of pre-historic Japanese peoples, like: cooking and storage vessels, semi-abstracted figurines, pottery, *haniwa*, and many other objects between the two worlds of life and death. The roots of the Shinto may be dated back to those eras as a part of the belief system, including the importance of purification as well as respect.

During the Hakuho, Asuka and Nara (Tenpyo) periods (552 – 794) powerful cultural influences from China and Korea were adopted and transformed. These included a writing system, new ideas about government, Confucian and Taoist worldviews and notably Buddhism, which became a vital element in Japanese religious and artistic life. In this period Japan was balancing between native and imported conceptions of artistic expression because of the major transformation of culture due to strong influence brought by continental models, but at the

same time, preserving its indigenous values thank to its geographical structure being a chain of islands protected by huge masses of water.

The Heian period (794 – 1185) was very different from the preceding one because the Japanese arts were dominated by the imperial court in terms of creation and patronage. Selected poetry was written as decorated calligraphy. The world's first novel: *The Tale of Genji* was composed by Murasaki Shikibu (Lady Murasaki); court music borrowed from China was developed to Japanese taste, forms of theater were created and transformed. It was that period of the 10th and 11th centuries which is considered as representing the pinnacle of Japanese culture at the level of refinement and elegance.

The Kamakura and Muromashi (Ashikaga) eras (1185 – 1568) represents Samurai Japan since it witnessed the growth of warriors' power. During this period, courtly arts remained of great importance, but new or hybrid forms, such as Noh drama, linked verse and tea ceremony came to the fore.

The period of Merchant Japan covers the Momoyama and Edo (Tokugawa) eras (1568 – 1868). The Japanese got influenced by the growing power of the merchants, while patronage from courtiers, Samurai-turned-bureaucrats, wealthy farmers, and a new class of Confucian-educated scholars led to a great diversity of art and artistic purpose. In this period an incredible variety of Japanese prose, poetry, art, music, and theater flourished.

Culture in Meiji period (1868-1912) witnessed a high tendency to achieve social literacy, 50% of boys and 15% of girls could read and write, by 1908 primary education was universal and the majority of Japanese children of both sexes could read and write. The Meiji period also resulted in the arrival of traditional Imperial art forms such as: Waka and Haiku poetry and nurtured an interest in Western painting and sculpture. Japanese culture also made its way west. Westerners were excited about buying silks and porcelains in the 1880s. Artists like Van Gogh and Gauguin were inspired by Japanese art (Addiss, Groemer and Rimer 2006, p.4-6).

Japan's aesthetic conceptions, deriving from diverse cultural traditions, have been formative in the production of unique art forms. Over the centuries, a wide range of artistic motifs developed and were refined, becoming imbued with symbolic significance. Like any art, they acquired

many layers of meaning and a high design. Japanese aesthetics provide a key to understanding artistic works perceivably different from those coming from Western traditions.

Within the East Asian artistic tradition, China has been the acknowledged teacher and Japan the devoted student. Nevertheless, several Japanese arts developed their own style, which can be differentiated from various Chinese arts. The monumental, symmetrically balanced, rational approach of Chinese art forms became miniaturized, irregular, and subtly suggestive in Japanese hands. Miniature rock gardens, diminutive plants (bonsai), and ikebana (flower arrangements), in which the selected few represented a garden, were the favorite pursuits of refined aristocrats for a millennium, and they have remained a part of contemporary cultural life (Louis F, et al 2002, p. 120)³. It nurtured, in turn, a sense of proximity to and intimacy with the world of spirit as well as a trust in nature's general benevolence. The cycle of the seasons was deeply instructive and revealed, for example, that immutability and transcendent perfection were not natural norms.

1.2.2 Japanese Literature and Identity

Identity can productively be introduced into artistic practices. As one of the key ideological mechanisms, identity can be taken by artistic practices as an object to be worked upon, and can, as any other ideological material, be elaborated in specifically artistic ways. As ideological mechanism, identity now has its material existence above all in the state regulations concerning culture. Art is an activity considered as a trans historical and organized language whose structure, units and rules should be described in accordance with the structural method. Art is defined as a secondary modeling system (which was built as a language) because it adopts the model based on natural language. In each model, two codes coexist within the artistic text: there is a basic system which is the natural language, but with a simplification of extra-sistémicos referring to those materials that blend language structure and that allow communication which is the significance of the polysemy that characterizes an artistic text (Lotman 1977, p. 7).

To label a whole literary form as the "I" novel can only explain to what extent Japanese literature is focusing on identity or the idea of the "self". According to Kobayashi Hideo (1935), Japan's literature is the only one among all world literatures that considers the "self" without placing it in conflict with others in society. Thus, the Japanese concentration on the purified "I"

is perceived as insular and problematic. Many researches have been undertaken about the Japanese search for self and subjectivity in terms of the “I” novel (Fowler et al 1988) which is a pillar in the foundation of the Japanese identity. In order to realize self-identification, Japanese literature has always sought to understand the self by contrasting it to wide variety of Others inside and outside Japan as well. ‘The geographical definition of Japan changed dramatically over the course of the 20th century, and the changing boundaries had far-reaching effects on the identity of people living within them ‘(John Lie 2001, p.2).

As the empire expanded its borders, Japan saw an increase in the physical mobility due to immigration and war. In fact, Japanese colonizers travelled to meet people different from themselves, while the wars that took place in East and South East Asia and the Pacific introduced the foreigner as an enemy. However, that nurtured the establishment of a new make-up to the citizenship of Japan consisted of a multiple variety of origins in the empire: by 1914 “Japanese” subjects included former nationals of Taiwan and Korea, as well as, the inhabitants of the Micronesian islands, the Southern half of Sakhalin (Karafuti) and parts of Southern Manchuria. Changing borders thus created a tension between the subject of empire and the individual experience of national origin⁵. Similarly, the colonial experience of Japan during the Allied Occupation of (1945-1952) made Japan facing an identity crisis within the shift from a conquering empire into a colonized space. Then the former beliefs in Communism under the Emperor were clearly converted politically in literary writings into Imperialism. Equally, Postwar Japanese literature challenged the questions of responsibility, complicity and the search for a new Self, the fact which shows to what extent the historical circumstances shaped the intellectual endeavor defining Japan. In that respect, Japanese literature problematized the issue of Self in relation to the rapidly changing world (Hutchinson, Williams 2007, p.9)

Kajii Motojiro negotiation of selfhood in the rapidly changing world of Tokyo in the 1920s is a good example about the self in Modern Japanese Literature. As many other modernist works mental anguish is related to physical illness, giving an image about the Japanese self within modernity. Examining the modern self in Japan or Japanizing the Other self, Mainly Asian, stands for the multi-perception of literary works to identity like in the case of the semi-colonized self in Okinawan literature which has experienced a double coloniality of both Japan and the United States. It has been invaded by the Satsuma domain in 1609, the Kingdom of the Ryukyu

Islands was annexed by the Meiji government and made a prefecture in 1879. Established as one of the main centers of the United States Occupation after 1945. The fact that much of Okinawan territory remains under American Occupation today forms the context of Oshiro Tatsushiro fiction of the 1980s and the 1990s, which explores the modern sense of identity (Ibid, p.14)

‘A culture that discovers what is alien to itself simultaneously manifests what is in itself’ (McGrane 1989, p. 1), according to McGrane, the alien or the Other is a relational notion. It assumes a dialectical relationship between the Self and the Other. The Self becomes aware of itself only through perceiving the Other, and recognizance of the Other is possible only to the extent that the Self-consciously objectivizes and relativizes its own system of codes. As for possible definitions of the Other, there is a wide range of different notions: there is the normative versus the cognitive Other, the intra- and the intercultural Other, ethnic Otherness, outsiders and outcasts, the unknown as a source of fear and fascination, the exotic and the intellectually attractive, the foreign and the non-member (non-belonging), the temporally or spatially distant, the repressed, the enigmatic and the uncanny or numinous. All these concepts have been productive in literature in Japan (Hutchinson, Williams 2007, p.27).

The Japanese literature can be defined in different ways. It may refer to the literature written in Japanese language .i.e. in the writing system based on Kana (Hiragana and Katakana), the vernacular syllabary developed in the ancient period of the 9th century. This is also applied for writing by Koreans and Taiwanese during the Japanese occupation in the 20th century or even Japanese immigrants in the United States and Brazil. It can also mean literature written by Japanese people who live on the archipelago now referred to as Japan. This form of Japanese literature covers literary productions written in Chinese since that language constituted the main literary, religious and political writing in Japan in pre-modern and early modern periods. It also refers to writings in Ainu or Ryukyu languages.

Japanese literature as a national literature (Kokubungaku) based on a national language (Kokugo) that precluded the use of languages other than Japanese emerged as a part of modern nation-state building in the Meiji period (1868 -1912), particularly after the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), in which China was defeated by Japan and lost its position of the cultural

authority. The present canon of Japanese literature excludes largely writings in Japanese, i.e. those texts that are recognized by established or powerful institutions. The objective is to historicize a complex sociopolitical process of Japanese canon formation, particularly as it relates it to the emergence of linguistic and cultural nationalism which privileged certain texts as “cultural icons” of Japan’s tradition. Against the traditional “foundational” canon theory which sees a foundation in the text, some universal, unchanging, or absolute value, the new relativistic approach is “anti-foundational” in that it holds that there is no foundation in the text, that works in a canon reflect the interests of a particular group or society at a particular time.

The concept of canon implies conflict and change, unlike the terms classic and tradition, both of which suggest something unchanging or given. “Traditions” and “classics” are now seen as constructed, particularly by dominant communities or institutions, rather than as naturally or spontaneously arising out of a lengthy aesthetics-based literary-historical process of sifting out the great from the merely good or the downright bad. As for the actual processes of canon formation, there are ten different “institutional practices” in the Japanese case, including: the preservation and transmission of texts (especially before printing); commentary and criticism; use in school curricula; use as a model and a source of allusion; use for historical knowledge; use as a religious scripture; inclusion in anthologies; use in genealogies; mention in literary histories; and, finally, use in state ideology. In many of these practices, there is a prominent stress on genealogy and ‘origins,’ which become a frequent source of authority, ranging from the origins of a clan, a family house, a school, to national origin.

1.2.3 Aesthetic Conception of Writing in the Japanese Context

The arts are an important part of human life and culture. They attract a large measure of attention and support from states, commercial companies and the public at large. Considering art is not just a matter of classification, but a matter of cultural esteem. There are, then, two fundamental issues in aesthetics: the essential nature of art, and its social importance. Some philosophers have thought that the value of art is necessarily connected with pleasure or enjoyment because, they argue, to say that a painting, a poem, a play or a piece of music is good is just the same as saying that it realizes pleasure. The best-known philosopher to hold this view was the eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711–76). In a famous essay entitled *Of the Standard of Taste* Hume argues that the important thing about art is its

‘agreeableness’, the pleasure derived from it, and sentiments reflected in it, not its intrinsic nature. ‘Judgments’ about good and bad in art, according to Hume, are not really judgments at all ‘because sentiment has a reference to nothing beyond itself, and is always real, wherever a man is conscious of it’ (Hume 1963, p. 238). In other words, to like a thing is irrespective of any characteristics it possesses. ‘To seek the real beauty, or the real deformity, is as fruitless an enquiry, as to seek the real sweet or real bitter’ (Ibid, p. 239). That is to say, aesthetic preferences are expressions of the taste of the observer, not statements about the object, and Hume thinks the wide diversity of opinions about art is confirmation of this fact.

Unlike Western literature whose compositional and syntactic structure always predominates, in accordance with a tradition that has its roots in ancient rhetoric, Japanese literature, from its origins, is not based on a compositional structure that is primarily logical, formal, and linear. *Shibui*, the one term of Japanese aesthetics that seems to have found its way into the English language, evokes the understatement and refinement typical of much Japanese artistic expression; a performance of Kabuki or with the garish, polychromed temples are considered by the Japanese themselves as a summit of beauty. It goes without saying that Japanese taste did not stay frozen throughout the centuries, nor were aesthetic preferences unaffected by social class and education, and in making general remarks about Japanese aesthetics these cautions must be remembered. Nevertheless, for all the exceptions that might be adduced, it is possible to say of certain aesthetic ideals that they are characteristically and distinctively Japanese. The elevation of aestheticism to something close to a religion was achieved at the Japanese court in the tenth century. Aestheticism spread from the court to the provinces and from the upper classes to the commoners.

Japanese aesthetics can be approached not only through the relatively scant writings of the old literature specifically devoted to the subject, but through the evidence in works of literature or criticism, in objects of art, and even in the manner of life of the Japanese as a whole, so pervasive has aestheticism been. A number of headings under which Japanese aesthetics might be discussed are suggestion, irregularity, simplicity, and perishability. These related concepts point to the most typical forms of Japanese aesthetic expression though exaggeration, uniformity, profusion, and durability are by no means absent. The following table illustrates the characteristics of each element:

Elements of Japanese aesthetics in Literature	Characteristics
Suggestion	Sense of mystery, obscurity and ambiguity
Irregularity	Sense of incompleteness
Simplicity	Sense of naturalness
Perishability	Sense of blessing

1.2 Elements of Aesthetics in Japanese Literature

The meaning of beauty in the Japanese literary context relies on elements very specific and different from the sense of beauty in other contexts.

The way the poet and critic Fujiwara no Kinto (966-1041) described the highest category of poetry which he divided into nine categories: ‘The language is magical and conveys more meanings than the words themselves express’, entails that its beauty lies in the use of language and even the sounds and its power of suggesting unspoken implications. To illustrate this criterion he offered the following poem:

honobono to	Dimly, dimly
Akashi no ura no	The day breaks at Akashi Bay;
asagiri ni	And in the morning mist
shimagakureyuku	My heart follows a vanishing ship
fune wo shi xo omou	As it goes behind an island

A sense of mystery is intensified by the mist obscuring the dawn seascape as the ship disappears and clearly he did not remain impassive as a mere observer. The element of suggestion in the poem is the source of its beauty, yet when compared to later Japanese poetry its level of suggestion may seem shallow. By the end of the 12th century the ideal known as *yugen* (or, mystery and depth) was developed by Fujiwara Shunzei (1114-1204). *Yugen* as an aesthetic principle has been defined by Brower and Miner in *Japanese Court Poetry* as ‘The mid-classical ideal of tonal complexity conveyed by the overtones . . . of poems typically in the mode of descriptive symbolism.’ (Brower and Miner 1988, p.90). This ideal may recall Poe's suggestive indefiniteness of vague and therefore of spiritual effect. The vagueness admired by Poe was easily achieved by Japanese poets, thanks to the Japanese language. The lack of distinctions between singular and plural or between definite and indefinite contributes to the ambiguity, at

least to the Western reader who is accustomed to such distinctions. For a Japanese poet precision in language would limit the range of suggestion.

Suggestion as an artistic technique is given one of its perfect forms of expression in the Noh theater. The undecorated stage, the absence of props other than bare outlines, the disregard for all considerations of time and space in the drama, the use of a language that is usually obscure and of abstract gestures that scarcely relate to the words, all make it evident that this theater, unlike representational examples elsewhere (or Kabuki in Japan) was meant to be the outward, beautiful form suggestive of remoter truths or experiences, the nature of which will differ from person to person.

The emphasis on beginnings and ends implied a rejection of regularity as well as of perfection. It is evident from the earliest literary and artistic remains that the Japanese have generally avoided symmetry and regularity, perhaps finding them constricting and obstructive to the powers of suggestion. Symmetry in Japanese literature and art, whether in the use of parallel prose or architectural constructions arranged along a central axis, almost invariably reflects Chinese or other continental influence. Kenko suggested why the Japanese were so fond of irregularity: 'In everything, no matter what it may be, uniformity is undesirable. Leaving something incomplete makes it interesting, and gives one the feeling that there is room for growth.' (Kenko 2005, p.65)

The insistence on simplicity and naturalness placed a premium on the connoisseur's appreciation of quality. An unpainted wooden column shows the natural quality of the tree from which it was formed. In the Noh theater too the lack of the usual distractions in a performance—sets, lighting, and the rest—focuses all attention on the actor, and demands a connoisseur to appreciate the slight differences in gesture or voice that distinguish a great actor from a merely competent one. Within the limited ranges permitted in their traditional arts the Japanese prized shadings. Seldom did the painter, poet, or Noh actor take the risks involved in bold statement, as opposed to controlled simplicity; for this reason, there is almost nothing of bad taste in traditional Japan.

The Japanese belief that perishability is a necessary element in beauty does not of course mean that they have been insensitive to the poignancy of the passage of time. Whatever the subject matter of the old poems, the underlying meaning was often an expression of grief over the

fragility of beauty and love. Yet the Japanese were keenly aware that without this mortality there could be no beauty. Kenko wrote, ‘If man were never to fade away like the dews of Adashino, never to vanish like the smoke over Toribeyama, but lingered on forever in the world, how things would lose their power to move us! The most precious thing in life is its uncertainty.’ (Keko 2005, p. 22). The frailty of human existence, a common theme in literature throughout the world, has rarely been recognized as the necessary condition of beauty. The Japanese not only knew this, but expressed their preference for varieties of beauty which most conspicuously betrayed their impermanence. Their favorite flower is of course the cherry blossom, precisely because the period of blossoming is so poignantly brief and the danger that the flowers may scatter even before one has properly seen them is so terribly great. The visible presence of perishability in the cracked tea bowl carefully mended in gold has been appreciated not because it makes the object an indisputable antique, but because without the possibility of aging with time and usage there could be no real beauty. This delight in shabbiness may suggest the Arabic conception of *baraka*, the magical quality an object acquires through long use and care (Keene 1969, p. 293-306).

Under the influences of Buddhism and Shinto on the development of the Japanese aesthetic sensibility, three basic concepts trace the Japanese arts and literature: *mono no aware* (物の哀れ), or the “poignant beauty of things,” *wabi-sabi* (詫び), “rustic beauty,” and *sabi* (寂び), “desolate beauty,” and *yūgen*: *yū* (幽) refers to “shadowy-ness” and “dimness,” while the second character *gen* (玄) refers to “darkness” and “blackness.”

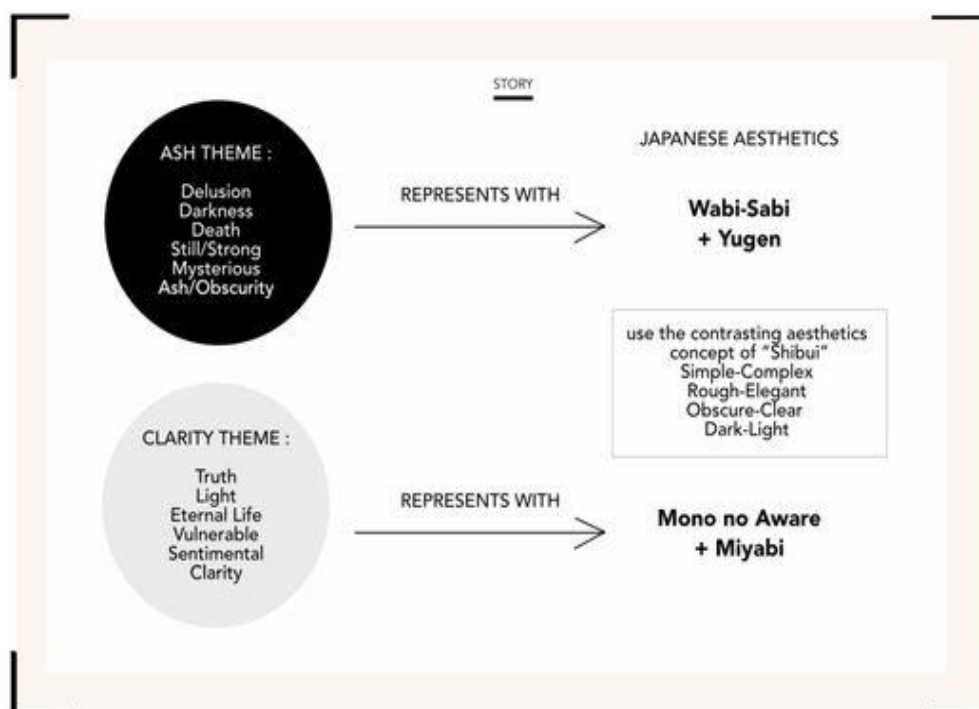


Figure: 1.1 Japanese Aesthetics⁴

The philosophical significance of aesthetic concepts is associated with various artistic disciplines mainly literature.

The aesthetic category of *mono no aware* (物の哀れ), or the “poignant beauty of things,” describes a cultivated sensitivity to the unavoidable transience of the world. Due to their vivid fragility, cherry blossoms, which are easily scattered by the slightest wind or rain, have become the archetypal symbol of the melancholic beauty of impermanence, the transitory presence of the cherry blossom intensifies the experience by underscoring the blossoms’ delicate beauty. *Mono no aware* foregrounds finite existence within the flow of experience and change (Galliano 2002, p. 134). Since *mono no aware* developed as an everyday expression of pathos, it resides at the center of the Japanese pre-modern aesthetic sensibility and thereby has become something of a broad aesthetic category. However, since the interpretation of Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) *mono no aware* has been most notably associated with literary texts like Heian (794-1185) court poetry (*waka* Chinese-style poetry in Japan) and *The Tale of Genji* by Murasaki Shikibu (1010).

While the aesthetic categories of wabi (詫び), “rustic beauty,” and sabi (寂び), “desolate beauty,” can be treated separately, they are ultimately complimentary concepts that support a coherent aesthetic sense. The qualities usually associated with wabi and sabi are: austerity, imperfection, and a palpable sense of the passage of time. The “way of tea” (chadō; also called cha no yu) is closely associated with the wabi-sabi aesthetic. Like *mono no aware*, wabi and sabi are embedded in a deep sense of mortality. Both concepts invoke a contemplative mood of loneliness, a plaintive attentiveness to the passage of time, and sensitivity to the human being’s place within the natural world. To put it somewhat differently, it is against the holistic background of nature, as an endless process of creation and destruction, formation and decay, life and death that the individual human being stands out in her solitariness and uniqueness (Ibid, p. 319). It is in this state of solitariness that one is brought back to one’s authentic self and back to confront the fuller existential and religious dimensions of human experience.

The two characters that comprise the word *yūgen* (幽玄) refer to that which resists being clearly discerned. More specifically, the first character, *yū* (幽) refers to “shadowy-ness” and “dimness,” while the second character *gen* (玄) refers to “darkness” and “blackness.” The concept of *yūgen* appears in four different kinds of literature: Zen and Chinese Daoist writings, Chinese poetry, *Waka* (Chinese-style poetry in Japan), and treatises on poetry and *Noh* plays. In the case of Daoist and Zen literature, the concept takes on a broad “metaphysical” coloring, while the poetic conception of *yūgen* is a more straightforwardly descriptive (Perlich and Whitt 2010, p. 68). Then, in the critical treatises on *Waka* and *Noh*, *yūgen* begins to be used in more “theoretical” manner in order to justify aesthetic judgments and as a normative concept for reflecting upon and evaluating aesthetic works. The visual and literary images typically used to convey the quality of *yūgen* consisted of things like huts being encroached upon by dusk, the enveloping of mountains by mist, the obscuring of the moon by clouds, the fading of people into the shadows, etc. Other perceptible qualities closely associated with these images include colorlessness, vagueness, stark simplicity, silence, and stillness, while the felt qualities include elegance, subtlety, grace, loneliness, tranquility, and a deep sense of pathos.

The idea of *Miyabi* eliminates anything that is absurd or vulgar and the “polishing of manners, diction, and feelings to avoid all roughness and crudity so as to achieve the highest grace. It expresses that sensitivity to beauty which is the hallmark of the Heian era. *Miyabi* is often

closely connected to the notion of *Mono no aware*, a bittersweet awareness of the transience of things, and thus it was thought that things in decline showed a great sense of *miyabi*.

The Japanese, in fact, think in images and give visual form to ideas or things through the *sinograph*; the symbolic and semantic lexicon of ideograms indicates objects and ideas by representing them in images. Logical and syntactic structure is abolished even in the *haiku*, which consists of three unrelated images: optical fragments. There is no relationship among the parts; instead, we have the juxtaposition of three moments in which the description of the countryside predominates. Among the wide range of literature dealing with the subject of Japanese aesthetics, *Essays in Idleness* by Kenko Yoshida, *The Book of Tea* (1906) by Kakuzo Okakura, and *In Praise of Shadows* (1933) by Junichiro Tanizaki, are three of the most well-known and respected books by Japanese writers that explain these principles with great care and detail. They delve into all of the predominant principles of Japanese aesthetics: impermanence, simplicity, naturalness, understatement, the balance of simple and complex, suggestion over explicitness, darkness, mystery, unconventionality, unworldliness, irregularity, asymmetry, and imperfection.

1.2.4 Ethics and Matrix in Japanese Literature

From its beginning in the imperial court, Japanese literature, mainly poetry, which became the central genre, had both a public, political role in the ritual affirmation of power, and a private social role as an intimate form of dialogue and the primary vehicle for courtship. Although most of the poems in the *Kokinshu* were drawn from private exchanges and collections, the anthology was commissioned by the emperor and served as a whole to enhance the cultural authority and aura of the throne (Corneyetz 2006, p. 59). The private, dialogic function of poetry should be distinguished from its ritualistic, public functions in the form of anthologies.

The early chronicles such as: *The Nihon Shoki* and *Kojiki*, which were commissioned by the Yamato court in the early 8th century at a critical period in nation-state building and the first two volumes of the *Man'yōshū* affirmed the power and authority of the head of the Yamato clan, which became the imperial household. By contrast, the vernacular *monogatari* in the 10th and 11th centuries represent alternative voices, of those left out of power. The function of literary culture in Heian period, particularly after the 10th and 11th centuries, is very different from that in ancient periods (Ibid, p. 75). The center of political power has shifted from

sovereigns to regents, from throne to comer clans (primarily the Fujiwara), who controlled the throne through marital politics.

The Heian vernacular monogatari came from the hands of the provincial governor class (who had economic stability but were one step removed from the upper echelons of power) and , as consequence, is a much more private genre than the early chronicles and court poetry (such as: Hitomaro's *Choka*, or long poems) found in the first two volumes of the *Man'yōshū*. The Heian monogatari continued to deal with the nobility and the emperor, and in that sense, they maintained the aristocratic, court culture of the Nara period. In contrast to *Kojiki* and *Nihon* and the early volumes of the *Man'yōshū*, which enforce the authority, power, and divinity of sovereign and his or her surrogates, the protagonists of the monogatari violate the socio-political order and relativize the authority of the throne. The protagonists of *The Tale of Ise* and *The Tale of Genji* belong to clans (the Ariwara and the Genji) that were ousted. Instead of affirming the dominant clan (the mother branch of the Fujiwara). *The Tales of Ise*, for example, reveals deep sympathy for those (such as the clan of Ariwara Narihira, the protagonist) who have been defeated by or fallen into the shadow of the Fujiwara.

One consequence of being at a slight remove from the center of power that the Heian monogatari offer an alternative voice. *The Tale of Genji*, for example, glorifies court culture and the position of the emperor who stood at its center, harking back to a time, a century earlier, when the sovereign had direct power, as opposed to the regency system, in which the emperor was a puppet of his Fujiwara relatives. *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes* (Eiga monogatari) and *The Great Mirror* (Okagami), both written in the Heian period, portray the life and political rise of Fujiwara no Michinaga, the most powerful regent in the Heian period.

Cultural forms and rituals provide a general model for social behavior, one that also takes into account possible threats and dangers. *The Evil Stepmother Tale*, which was the fundamental paradigm of the monogatari in the 10th century, is one such model of loss and reintegration. The oppressive evil stepmother represents a trial that the unprotected stepdaughter must endure and overcome if she is to become an adult member of the community. The heroine overcomes this threat, the evil characters are punished and driven out, and the cultural norms and values are articulated and reinforced (Washburn 2007, p. 31). The exile of the young noble, another familial plot pattern in both early Nara period myths and the Heian monogatari, is the male

version of the evil stepmother tale. A young aristocrat who has committed a transgression or sin undergoes a severe trial in a distant and hostile land. In the process, the young man proves his mettle, meets a woman, and acquires the power necessary to become a leader and hero. A good example is the myth of *The Luck of the Sea* and *The Luck of the Mountain*, one of the key stories in the 8th century Kojiki. In *The Tale of Genji*, the hero likewise commits a sin (having a secret son by Fujitsubo, the consort of his father, the emperor). He is exiled to Suma, where he meets a woman who eventually bears his only daughter, a key to his subsequent political success. The exile thereby functions as a means of atonement and a ritualistic coming of age.

One of the primary functions of culture is the cultivation of “sociality”, the capacity for complex social behavior. Sociality is marked by the ability to be mutually responsive, to read the minds of others, and to be able to understand such notions of politeness and rudeness. Sociality includes knowing how to greet, part, and attend to the face of the other. Sociality of this type assumes that the community finds it valuable to invest time and energy not only in mastering the basic social rules but also in appreciating innovative variations and changes, which require judgment and imagination and distinguish between the novice and the sophisticate. Heian aristocratic vernacular texts frequently had this role of developing, embodying, and transmitting sociality.

At the lower social end, one of the obvious purposes of anecdotal connections such as *The Tales of Times Now Past* (Konjaku monogatari shu) was to teach commoners how to behave, what to do (Act filial, pay respect to priests...), and what not to do (Not steal, lie, murder...) by revealing the consequences of certain actions. More sophisticated examples: *The Pillow Book* (Makura no soshi) and *The Tale of Genji* (Genji monogatari), which are concerned with sociality at the highest levels of aristocratic society. Much of *The Pillow Book* is concerned with aesthetics, not at some objective of beauty, but as part of sociality, as the fine appreciation of the nuances of social response and interaction (Sakaki 2006, p. 49). The same is true in the first part in the first part in *The Tale of Genji*, in which superior social ability becomes an admired quality of the hero and heroine. The humor often derives from those characters (such as Suetsumuhana, the red-nosed lady) who unwittingly fail to understand those complex rules of behavior.

Literary texts explore the complex nature of sociality and offer a wide range of possibilities and perspectives than could normally be experienced firsthand. This particular cultural function can be found in diverse genres, from vernacular literary diaries (such as *Tosa Diary*, *Kagero Diary* and *Sarashina Diary*) to poem tales (such as *The Tales of Ise*), which often focus on the ability to compose waka, one of the key aspects of aristocratic sociality. Some of the women's diaries may, in fact, have been written for the authors' daughters as a way of showing them how to both survive and function properly in society.

In *Essays in Idleness* (*Tsurezuregusa*, 1329-1333), often considered the ultimate compendium of Heian court aesthetics, the aristocrat priest Kenko argues that what is not stated, cannot be seen by the eyes, and is incomplete in expression is more moving, alluring, and memorable than what is directly presented. Since ancient times, the Japanese have prized the social capacity for indirection and suggestion. Poetry was recognized for its overtones, connotations, and subtle allegory and metaphor rather than for what it actually stated (Ibid, p. 65). Generally, this specific literary and social mode depends on a close bond between the composer and reader, with their common body of cultural knowledge, which was absorbed through literary texts.

1.2.5 Canon and Generic Hierarchy

Literature that is criticized and theorized is never the whole, at most, sizable subsets of the writers and works of the past. This limited field is the current literary canon. Some have argued that much the same is true of individual works: that an "elasticity" in the literary artifact permits to attend now to small samples, now to larger traditions and groupings of which the work in its unitary sense forms a mere constituent⁶. The literary canon varies obviously-as well as unobviously-from age to age and reader to reader. The Dame Mutability who produces these marvelous changes has often been identified with fashion. Isaac D'Israeli, an early proponent of this view, argued that 'prose and verse have been regulated by the same caprice that cuts our coats and cocks our hats,' (D'Israeli 1971, p. 28) and concluded his essay on literary fashion with the claim that 'different times, then, are regulated by different tastes. What makes a strong impression on the public at one time, ceases to interest it at another ... and every age of modern literature might, perhaps, admit of a new classification, by dividing it into its periods of fashionable literature' (D'Israeli 1971, p. 179). Now fashion's claim to rule is not easily denied.

The official canon, however, is sometimes spoken of as pretty stable, if not "totally coherent." Besides, the idea of canon certainly implies a collection of works enjoying an exclusive completeness (at least for a time). Yet the biblical canon was arrived at only after many vicissitudes and over a period of many centuries. At each stage it was categorically fixed (although subject to varying emphases, conciliary, denominational, sectarian, individual); but when it enlarged or contracted, the new canon, too, was definitive. Moreover, canonical books of Scripture are not merely authentic but also authoritative. This normative sense has prompted a useful extension of the term to secular literature. Thus 'canon formation in literature that must always proceed to a selection of classics' (Fowler 1979, p. 97-119) and that embodies itself in lists of authors, curricula, histories of literature, and canons of taste.

The notion of literature has changed radically over the fourteen centuries of writing in Japan. Today, a great influence is coming from the West around the 19th century to define literature as being the imaginative writing centering on fiction, poetry and drama as opposed to writing in the form of discursive reasoning. Exactly like the early Western perception to literature as the whole body of valued writing in society including: philosophy, history, essays, and letters as well as poetry, which has changed just recently within the introduction of "les belles lettres" and literary merit theory, similarly the Japanese literature encompassed the whole body of philosophical, religious, historical, political and poetic writings throughout the Nara and the Tokugawa eras. As for fiction and drama, Buddhism and Confucianism influences lowered the position of fictive prose in the textual hierarchy and excluded performative arts like: Noh, Joruri and Kabuki from the literary expression.

Rank	Genre
1	Buddhist scriptures
2	Confucian texts
3	Histories (e.g. Records of the Historian Shi ji)
4	Chinese belles letters (bun) such as: Anthology of Literature (Wen Xuan)
5	Japanese classical poetry
6	Vernacular tales and Sohi, Nikki diaries and related writings in Kana

Table 1.3 Genre Hierarchy in the Heian and Medieval Periods

Genres classified from top to bottom revealed that late Heian period and early medieval period privileged religious writings.

The genre hierarchy follows the Chinese model, with religious/philosophical texts, histories, and poetry held in the highest regard and fiction relegated to the bottom in which the two genres in the Japanese syllabary, Waka and Monogatari with Waka holding a higher status comparing to Kana. In the 18th century, the scholars of Kokugaku (nativist study) led by Kamo no Mabuchi (1697-1769) and Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) replaced all foreign influences by Japanese texts like *The Tale of Genji*. They placed Waka and Monogatari at the top and de-canonize the four first genres mainly Buddhist and Confucian texts as well as Chinese poetry and histories. Within the mid Meiji period and the rise of modern nationalism, the influence of Western phonocentrism, the emphasis on national language (Kokugo) based on Kana, and the defeat of China in the Sino Japanese War, the classification of genres took a new different form. Throughout the pre-modern period Gakumon the Japanese word for “learning” meant Kangaku (Chinese studies) which lasted until the establishment of Koku-bungaku (national literature) in the mid Meiji period when the Japanese literature became Kana-based literature (Ibid, p. 15).

Studies about Japanese literary history elicited nine different cases of canon formation referring to the power politics dimension of canon-making. Power politics had much to do with the creation and canonization of the first two major works of Japanese literature. On the other hand, it seems equally obvious that the *Genji Monogatari* (*Tale of Genji*) was canonized almost in spite of its annoying characteristics. Its canonical status as the “supreme work of Japanese literature” often caused great offense to the political and cultural establishment: because it was written by a woman, because of its alleged “immorality”, because of its “mendacious” fictionality (so offensive to orthodox Confucianism), because of its “insulting” or “degrading” references to the imperial family, etc. Indeed, it is unfortunate and significant at the same time that, although there are many passing references to the *Genji* here, none of the essays focuses on the question of how such an “unorthodox” work could have attained its status as the most canonical work of Japanese literature. What the case of the *Genji* clearly shows is that the approbation of the political/cultural establishment is not the sine qua non of literary canonization, and that the aesthetic appreciation of fellow writers and of readers in general, including, in this case, generations of powerless female readers, can play a decisive role.

In short, the power politics theory of canon formation, while obviously applicable to a limited number of cases, is inaccurate and simplistic when taken as a complete account of what is a

diverse and complex process. There is another alternative that of all those “common readers” who make up their own minds, as Virginia Woolf once urged them to do:

After all, what laws can be laid down about books? The battle of Waterloo was certainly fought on a certain day; but is Hamlet a better play than Lear? Nobody can say. Each must decide that question for himself. To admit authorities, however heavily furred and gowned, into our libraries and let them tell us how to read, what to read, what value to place upon what we read, is to destroy the spirit of freedom which is the breath of those sanctuaries. (Virginia Woolf 1932, p.40)

Japan has recently been caught in an identity crisis as they see themselves as an isolated, nationalistic entity or as players on the world stage, involved in world affairs. There could hardly be a better symbol of this dichotomy (Bowring 1993, p.33). Accepting the Noble prize for literature in 1968, Yasunari Kawabata delivered a stirring speech in Japanese, reading from ancient Zen poetry. More recently, Japan’s second winner of the Nobel Prize, Kenzaburo Oe, struck a very different chord. He spoke in English, while sampling French poetry and paying tribute to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, George Orwell and W.H. Auden. He said he felt intellectually closer to Ireland’s W.B. Yeats than to his countryman, Kawabata.

From such statements, Ralph Cohen has concluded that the hierarchy of the genres ‘can be seen in terms of the inclusion of lower forms into higher-the epigram into satire, georgic, epic; the ode into epic; the sonnet into drama; the proverb into all preceptive forms.’ (Cohen 1994, p.39-40). Certainly, the principle of inclusion was much discussed by Renaissance and Neoclassical critics. Epic, the highest kind, and a norm for the others, was also said to be the most comprehensive. So Scaliger writes:

In every sphere, some one thing is fitting and preeminent, which may serve as a standard for the others; so that all the rest may be referred to it. So in the whole of poetry the epic genre, in which the nature and life and actions of heroes are recounted, seems to be chief. According to its pattern, the remaining parts of poetry are directed. Because these parts exist in variety ... we shall borrow higher universal laws from the majesty of epic, so that their contents may be accommodated, agreeably to the natures of the different forms of each. (Scaliger 1561, p. 404)

In approaching early theories of genre, distinction occurs between full systematic accounts and brief surveys. Scaliger, Minturno, and others describe hundreds of genres and subgenres, some

of them known only to genre theorists. By contrast, they often also list a few main genres. As the genres most often evaluated, they may be rank-ordered, in part, according to value. A typical example, with epic first, is Edward Phillips's list (1675, p. 266) of the categories (or "kinds") under one of which all the whole circuit of poetic design is one way or other included epic, dramatic, lyric, elegiac, epoenetic, bucolic, epigram. The phrase "one way or other" reflects Phillips's sense of the heterogeneity of the traditional paradigm, in which "lyric," "epoenetic" (i.e., epionic), and "elegiac" had no modal force. The paradigm ultimately derived from ancient authorities, particularly Cicero, Horace, Quintilian, and the fourth-century grammarian Diomedes. So far as older literature is concerned too, careful revaluations, even those that seem most inspired by instrumental rather than literary values, may spring from buried generic pressures. Perhaps individual revaluations can only succeed, in fact, when they are in accordance with laws of genre, such as the compensatory alternation of a preference for long and short forms, both between poetry and prose, and within each (Wordsworth 1974, p. 177).

1.2.6 Influence of China on the Furthest East

One of the major characteristics of the Japanese culture is that for most of written history, it has used both languages: Japanese and Chinese, with a great influence of Chinese on the native vernacular (Shirane 2007, P. 11). Divers factors contributed to the development of Japanese art both technologically and aesthetically, it has for many centuries been influenced by Chinese styles and cultural developments, some of which came via Korea. More recently, Western techniques and artistic values have also added their impact (Richey 2015, p. 200). However, what emerged from this history of assimilated ideas and Know-how from other cultures is an indigenous expression of taste that is uniquely Japanese. People living in Japan were the first known people to use pottery. Pottery from Japan dated to 10 000 BC is the oldest known in the world.

While Japan was still in the Stone Age, China was realizing great advances in the arts and sciences. It makes sense then that the Japanese, once exposed to these advances through contacts with China, would try to bring some of them to Japan. Many of the cultural and artistic forms brought from China and Korea were rooted in Bhudism, which in turn was influenced by the cultures of India and Tibet (Heazle and Knight 2007, p. 15). Other forms from Persia and even Europe arrived via China and the Silk Road. Between the fifth and the ninth centuries,

Japan was an active importer of culture, particularly from China and Korea. Among the major imports were written characters, Buddhism, Confucianism, and plans to build cities. Japan, which represents the furthest east for China, was greatly influenced by this country.

Contact between Japan and China goes back to around 200AD, according to the Chinese histories, and the influence of China on Japan is as deep as it is long. Whether language, culture, political institutions, or the Nakasendo itself, Chinese influence is readily apparent in many cultural elements as shown in the following table:

Cultural features	Chinese influence
Language	Adopting the Chinese script
Religion	Appeal for both Buddhism and Confucianism
Writing	Introduction of Chinese writing system (Kanji)
Government	Adopting the Chinese bureaucracy
Architecture	The classic curved roof style definitely came from Chinese influence
City planning	Organizing city roadways in regular rectangle
Arts	Artistic elements like: paintings, sculpture calligraphy and drama
Clothing	Kimono was inspired by Chinese fashions of the Han period
Tea	Popularity of tea led to tea ceremony

Table: 1.4 The Chinese Influence on Several Japanese Cultural Characteristics:

Japan adapted many elements of Chinese culture since the latter stood for a more powerful civilization

When the two civilizations first met, there was no written Japanese language. In fact, the Japanese adopted the Chinese script so that communication between the empires became possible. Over the centuries, the styles of writing in both cultures have changed enough that they are now each unique. Without an organized religion of their own, there was a strong appeal for both Buddhism and Confucianism within the encounter of the two cultures. Though many people in Japan still follow their older Shinto beliefs, there is a large Buddhist following still in Japan today. Even within the native Shinto practice, the art of building permanent shrines and temples came from the Chinese approach to Buddhism (Stunkle 2015, p. 193).

Before the introduction of a Chinese writing system, Japan had no form of written language. The system of writing that Japan adopted from the Chinese was the system of kanji. Kanji is one of three systems that are used in Japan (Duus, Myers and Peattie 2014, p. 166). The other

two forms of writing are hiragana and katakana. Hiragana was a simplified version of kanji that was created for women. Two of the three writing systems in Japan today have come directly from the Chinese. As with Buddhism, kanji was introduced to Japan via Korea. It is generally accepted that the writing system was brought to Japan by Buddhist monks. When the system was introduced, the Japanese maintained the Chinese pronunciation. The Japanese also gave the equivalent Japanese word to the specific Chinese character. This means that today there are two possible pronunciations of kanji. This makes an already complicated language even more complex.

Though both nations had an Imperial Court form of government in the past, the Japanese Emperor adopted many aspects of the Chinese bureaucracy, including their versions of various titles, ranks and official functions. The first form of their constitution was influenced by the Chinese approach to a more centralized and organized government (Suzuki 2009, p. 250). In 607, Prince Shotoku sends his first group of advisors to China during the Tang dynasty to learn about their system of government. One of the take-away from the Chinese system was a grouping of official ranks and duties a bureaucracy. Japanese leaders were also influenced by the famous Chinese thinker Confucius.

As Buddhism came to Japan, so did the practice of building elaborate temples and other buildings began to take on more complex forms with larger rooms and inner courtyards. The classic curved roof style definitely came from Chinese influence, and it is still seen throughout Japan today. China influenced the architecture of Japan. Nobles in both places built homes that were a series of buildings around a central garden. The ancient Chinese approach to city planning involved the use of organizing city roadways in regular rectangles for easier navigation and communication. This strategy is put into use in Japanese cities like Kyoto and Nara. Even fields and irrigation systems started to use this organized and efficient system.

As new artistic styles came with the import of Buddhist monks and temples, the overall art world in Japan took on many Chinese elements over the eras. Painting and sculpture were developed to display Buddhist concepts, and that impacted the overall art scene. Paintings done on fine paper in Chinese ink were very popular during the Nara period, including many forms of decorative scrolls (Jansen 1992, p. 53). The practice of calligraphy as an art medium also

came to Japan. Other forms of art including masked drama known as Gigaku came from China, as did the Gigaku Imperial court dancing.

Though the kimono seems to be the quintessential Japanese icon, it was inspired by Chinese fashions of the Heian period. Ironically, the clothing styles in both nations have been further influenced by the styles of the West so that traditional clothing is becoming less common. The popularity of tea coming from China was so great in Japan, it led to the “Tea Ceremony”, or *chanoyu*, which was a very serious ritual showing hospitality.

Although Chinese culture was deeply embedded as an integral part of Japan's culture, a movement gradually gained strength in the Edo period to isolate the purely Japanese elements of its culture. This included, among other things, the spiritual element of Shinto, the sensibilities of Japanese literature, and the Japanese language. Eventually this thinking became incorporated in various ideologies and policies of the Meiji period (late 19th century), such as the clean split that was forced between Buddhism and Shinto. In the modern era, many aspects of Chinese culture have been discarded or Japanized. For example, the Japanese imperial court used Chinese court ritual for a thousand years; the current more native style is a conscious product of the 19th century (Liao 2006, p. 313)⁷.

In the battle of egos, when Japan was under threat from the Western powers, the view gained ground that Japan's former teacher, China, was now a weak and backward country, and that the key to Japan's survival lay with the culture and technology of Europe, America, and the West. This led to an ideology of abandoning Asia, entering Europe in the late 19th century. As Japan turned its back on China there was a massive adaption of Western models that continues till the present.

1.2.7 Literature in the Land of Sunrise

The unique role of literature is to give the world its human dimensions, to make people conscious of the world and to make man aware of his own personality. By its nature, literature is more capable more than any other discipline of penetrating the meaning of life and of grasping that global sense of reality, which is deep in individual experience. Japan lived long on the edge of Chinese civilization, as it lives today on the edge of Western culture (Napier

2005, p. 223). This gives Japanese culture more fluidity and makes Japan more permeable to external influences. Taking into account that Japan remained during long periods closed to any foreign relationship. That may be the reason behind its permeable characteristic later on.

As early as the human existence in Japan, literary traces were produced equally but only as fragments or orally but very rich and diverse (Origas 2008, p. 338). Possibly the earliest full-length novel, *The Tale of Genji* was written in Japan in the early eleventh century. In addition to novels, poetry, and drama, other genres such as travelogues, personal diaries and collections of random thoughts and impressions like the vengeance of Soga brothers, are prominent in Japanese literature (Mills 2005, p. 8). From the seventh century C.E., when the earliest surviving works were written, until the present day, there has never been a period when literature was not being produced in Japan as shown in the following table:

Period	Dates	Events	Literature
Nara Period	710 - 794	The Kojiki and Nihon shoki were completed	Man'yoshu 759 Kokin wakashu 905
Ancient Literature	Until 894	The creation of the man'yōgana, the earliest form of kana, or syllabic writing.	Kojiki 712 Nihonshoki 720
Heian Period	894 - 1194	Establishment of a Japanese capital in what is now known as Kyoto	novel Genji monogatari (Tale of Genji) [in early 11 century Makura no soshi (The Pillow Book) 996 , waka poetry anthology 905
Kamakura-Muromachi Period	1185 – 1573	Taira clan (Heike) seized political power at the imperial court	Heike mono-gatari (The Tale of the Heike) First half of the 13 th C Hojoki (An Account of My Hut) [1212] Tsurezuregusa (Essays in Idleness) [ca 1330
Medieval Literature	(1195 – 1600)	Japanese civil wars	Emergence of notable genres like

			renga, or linked verse, and Noh theater.
Edo Period	(1600 - 1868)	working and middle classes in the new capital of Edo (modern Tokyo)	The joruri and kabuki became popular Oku no Hosomichi (1702), a travel diary A a collection of gothic stories called Ugetsu monogatari (Tales of Moonlight and Rain) [1776]
Meiji, Taisho, and Early Showa Literature	(1868 – 1945)	European influence and industrialization	(late 1880s - early 1890s) Realism was introduced modern novels including The Dancing Girl (1890), Wild Geese (1911) In 1968 Kawabata Yasunari became the first Japanese to win the Nobel Prize for literature,
Post-War Literature	After WWII	Japan's defeat in World War II	Oe Kenzaburo wrote his best-known work, A Personal Matter in 1964 and became Japan's second winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature fantastic novels such as Woman in the Dunes (1960) The 1988 Naoki Prize went to Todo Shizuko for Ripening Summer

Contemporary Literature	WWII till today	Open doors to westernization	Popular fiction, non-fiction, and children's literature during 1980s At the end of the 1980s, manga represented between twenty and thirty percent of total annual publications in Japan.
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Table 1.5 The Historical Development of Japanese Literature
Political, cultural and historical constraints influenced largely the production of literary works in terms of genres and themes.

Japanese Literature is generally divided into three main periods: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern. Japanese literature spans a period of almost two millennia of writing. Early work was heavily influenced by Chinese literature, but Japan quickly developed a style and quality of its own. When Japan reopened its ports to Western trading and diplomacy in the 19th century, Western Literature had a strong effect on Japanese writers, and this influence is still seen today.

Japanese literature traces its beginnings to oral traditions that were first recorded in written form in the early eighth century after a writing system was introduced from China during the Nara Period 710 -794 The *Kojiki (Record of Ancient Matters)* and *Nihon shoki (Chronicle of Japan)* were completed in 712 and 720, respectively, as government projects. The most brilliant literary product of this period was the *Man'yoshu (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves)*, an anthology of 4,500 poems composed by people ranging from unknown commoners to emperors and compiled around 759. Already emerging was a verse form comprising 31 syllables (5-7-5-7-7) known as *tanka* (Boscaro, Gatti and Raveri 1990, p. 74). In 905 the *Kokin wakashu* or *Kokinshu (Collection of Poems from Ancient and Modern Times)* was published as the first poetry anthology commissioned by an emperor; its preface paid high tribute to the vast possibilities of literature.

Before the introduction of kanji (漢字, lit. "Chinese characters") from China during the period of Ancient Literature and until 894, there was no writing system in Japan. At first, Chinese characters were used in Japanese syntactical formats, and the literary language was classical Chinese; resulting in sentences that looked like Chinese but were phonetically read as Japanese (Ibid, p. 116). Chinese characters were used, not for their meanings, but because they had a phonetic sound which resembled a Japanese word. Modification of the normal usage of Chinese characters to accommodate Japanese names and expressions is already evident in the oldest known inscription, on a sword dating from about 440 C.E. The use of Chinese characters initiated a centuries-long association of literary composition with the art of calligraphy. Chinese characters were later adapted to write Japanese speech, creating what is known as the man'yōgana, the earliest form of kana, or syllabic writing.

The earliest works were created in the Nara Period. These include *Kojiki* (712: a work recording Japanese mythology and legendary history, *Nihonshoki* (720; a chronicle with a slightly more solid foundation in historical records than *Kojiki*, and *Man'yōshū* (*Ten Thousand Leaves*, 759); an anthology of poetry (Hokenson 2004, p. 110). More than 120 songs in the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* were written in phonetic transcription, and parts of the *Kojiki* contain a mixture of Chinese characters used to represent their Chinese meanings, and Chinese characters used to represent a phonetic sound.

Classical Japanese literature generally refers to literature produced during the Heian Period (894 – 1197), considered as the golden era of art and literature. In the resplendent aristocratic culture that thrived early in the eleventh century, a time when the use of the hiragana alphabet derived from Chinese characters had become widespread, court ladies played the central role in developing literature (Ibid, p. 265). One of them, Murasaki Shikibu wrote the 54-chapter novel *Genji monogatari* (*Tale of Genji*) [in early 11 century, ca 1008], while another, Sei Shonagon, wrote *Makura no soshi* (*The Pillow Book*), a diverse collection of jottings and essays [around 996]. *The Tale of Genji* (early eleventh century) by Murasaki Shikibu is considered the preeminent masterpiece of Heian fiction and an early example of a work of fiction in the form of a novel.

Other important works of this period include the *Kokin Wakashū* (905, waka poetry anthology) and *The Pillow Book* (990s), an essay about the life, loves, and pastimes of nobles in the Emperor's court written by Murasaki Shikibu's contemporary and rival, Sei Shonagon. *The Iroha poem*, now one of two standard orderings for the Japanese syllabary, was also written during the early part of this period. During this time, the imperial court patronized poets, many of whom were courtiers or ladies-in-waiting. Editing anthologies of poetry was a national pastime. Reflecting the aristocratic atmosphere, the poetry was elegant and sophisticated and expressed emotions in a rhetorical style. Others also wrote diaries and stories, and their psychological portrayals remain fresh and vivid to present-day readers. The appearance of the *Konjaku monogatari* (*Tales of a Time That Is Now Past*) around 1120 added a new dimension to literature. This collection of more than 1,000 Buddhist and secular tales from India, China, and Japan is particularly notable for its rich descriptions of the lives of the nobility and common people in Japan at that time (Mack 2010, p. 51).

In the latter half of the twelfth century warriors of the Taira clan (Heike) seized political power at the imperial court, virtually forming a new aristocracy. Heike mono-gatari (*The Tale of the Heike*), which depicts the rise and fall of the Taira with the spotlight on their wars with the Minamoto clan (Genji), was completed in the first half of the thirteenth century. It was during the Kamakura-Muromachi Period (1185 – 1573) that literature by recluses also was produced, typified by Kamo no Chomei's *Hojoki* (*An Account of My Hut*) [1212], which reflects on the uncertainty of existence, in addition to Yoshida Kenko's *Tsurezuregusa* (*Essays in Idleness*) [ca 1330], a work marked by penetrating reflections on life. Both works raise the question of spiritual salvation.

Medieval Japanese Literature (1195 – 1600) is marked by the strong influence of Zen Buddhism, and many writers were priests, travelers, or ascetic poets. Also during this period, Japan experienced many civil wars which led to the development of a warrior class, and a widespread interest in war tales, histories, and related stories (Hokenson 2004, p. 276). Work from this period is notable for its insights into life and death, simple lifestyles, and redemption through killing. A representative work is *The Tale of the Heike* (1371), an epic account of the struggle between the Minamoto and Taira clans for control of Japan at the end of the twelfth century. Other important tales of the period include *Kamo no Chōmei's Hōjōki* (1212) and

Yoshida Kenko's Tsurezuregusa (1331). Other notable genres in this period were renga, or linked verse, and Noh theater. Both were rapidly developed in the middle of the fourteenth century, during the early Muromachi period.

Early Modern literature or the Edo Period (1600-1868) was during the generally peaceful Tokugawa Period (commonly referred to as the Edo Period). Due in large part to the rise of the working and middle classes in the new capital of Edo (modern Tokyo), forms of popular drama developed which would later evolve into kabuki. The joruri and kabuki dramatist Chikamatsu Monzaemon became popular at the end of the seventeenth century. Matsuo Bashō wrote *Oku no Hosomichi* (奥の細道, 1702), a travel diary. Hokusai, perhaps Japan's most famous woodblock print artist, also illustrated fiction as well as his famous *36 Views of Mount Fuji*. Two giants emerged in the field of prose: Ihara Saikaku, who realistically portrayed the life of Osaka merchants, and Chikamatsu Monzaemon, who wrote joruri, a form of storytelling involving chanted lines, and kabuki plays. These writers brought about a great flowering of literature (Mack 2010, p. 159). Later Yosa Buson composed superb haiku depicting nature, while fiction writer Ueda Akinari produced a collection of gothic stories called *Ugetsu monogatari (Tales of Moonlight and Rain)* (1776).

Ihara Saikaku might be said to have given birth to the modern consciousness of the novel in Japan, mixing vernacular dialogue into his humorous and cautionary tales of the pleasure quarters. Jippensha Ikku (十返舎一九) wrote *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige* (東海道中膝栗毛), a mix of travelogue and comedy⁸. Many genres of literature made their début during the Edo Period, inspired by a rising literacy rate among the growing population of townspeople, as well as the development of lending libraries. Although there was a minor Western influence trickling into the country from the Dutch settlement at Nagasaki, it was the importation of Chinese vernacular fiction that proved the greatest outside influence on the development of early modern Japanese fiction.

The Meiji period was when Japan, under Western influence, took the first steps toward developing a modern literature. It marked the re-opening of Japan to the West, and a period of rapid industrialization. In the Meiji era unification of the written and spoken language was advocated, and *Futabatei Shimei's Ukigumo (Drifting Clouds)* (1887) won acclaim as a new

form of novel. In poetry circles the influence of translated foreign poems led to a "new style" poetry movement and the scope of literary forms continued to widen. Novelists Mori Ogai and Natsume Soseki studied in Germany and Britain, respectively, and their works reflect the influence of the literature of those countries. The introduction of European literature brought free verse into the poetic repertoire; it became widely used for longer works embodying new intellectual themes. Young Japanese prose writers and dramatists struggled with a whole galaxy of new ideas and artistic schools, but novelists were the first to successfully assimilate some of these concepts (Marra 2010, p. 149).

In the early Meiji era (1868-1880s), Fukuzawa Yukichi and Nakae Chomin authored Enlightenment literature, while pre-modern popular books depicted the quickly changing country. In the mid-Meiji (late 1880s - early 1890s) Realism was introduced by Tsubouchi Shoyo and Futabatei Shimei, while the Classicism of Ozaki Koyo, Yamada Bimyo and Koda Rohan gained popularity. Higuchi Ichiyo, a rare woman writer in this era, wrote short stories on powerless women of this age in a simple style, between literary and colloquial. Izumi Kyoka, a favored disciple of Ozaki, pursued a flowing and elegant style and wrote early novels such as *The Operating Room* (1895) in literary style and later ones including *The Holy Man of Mount Koya* (1900) in colloquial language.

Mori Ogai introduced Romanticism to Japan with his anthology of translated poems (1889), and it was carried to its height by Shimazaki Toson and his contemporaries and by the magazines *Myōjō* and *Bungaku-kai* in the early 1900s. Mori also wrote some modern novels including *The Dancing Girl* (1890), *Wild Geese* (1911), and later wrote historical novels. A new colloquial literature developed centering on the I novel, (*Watakushi-shōsetu*), a form of fiction that describes the world from the author's point of view and depicts his own mental states. This style incorporated some unusual protagonists such as the cat narrator of Natsume Soseki's humorous and satirical *Wagahai wa neko de aru (I Am a Cat)* (1905).

Natsume Soseki, who is often compared with Mori Ogai, also wrote the famous novels *Botchan* (1906) and *Sanshirō* (1908), depicting the freshness and purity of youth. He eventually pursued transcendence of human emotions and egoism in his later works including *Kokoro* (1914), and

his last unfinished novel *Light and Darkness* (1916). Shiga Naoya wrote in an autobiographical style, depicting his states of his mind, that is also classified as I novel.

Shimazaki shifted from Romanticism to Naturalism, which was established with the publication of *The Broken Commandment* (1906) and Katai Tayama's *Futon* (1907). Naturalism led to the I novel. Neo-romanticism came out of anti-naturalism and was led by Nagai Kafu, Junichiro Tanizaki, Kotaro Takamura, Kitahara Hakushu and others during the early 1910s. Mushanokoji Saneatsu, Shiga Naoya and others founded a magazine, *Shirakaba*, in 1910 to promote Humanism (Marra 2010, p. 275). Ryunosuke Akutagawa, who was highly praised by Soseki, represented Neo-realism in the mid-1910s and wrote intellectual, analytical short stories including *Rashômon* (1915).

During the 1920s and early 1930s the proletarian literary movement, comprising such writers as Kobayashi Takiji, Kuroshima Denji, Miyamoto Yuriko, and Sata Ineko, produced a politically radical literature depicting the harsh lives of workers, peasants, women, and other downtrodden members of society, and their struggles for change. War-time Japan saw the début of several authors best known for the beauty of their language and their tales of love and sensuality, notably Tanizaki Junichiro and Japan's first winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Kawabata Yasunari, a master of psychological fiction. Hino Ashihei wrote lyrical bestsellers glorifying the war, while Ishikawa Tatsuzo attempted to publish a disturbingly realistic account of the advance on Nanjing. Writers who opposed the war include Kuroshima Denji, Kaneko Mitsuharu, Oguma Hideo, and Ishikawa Jun.

Soseki nurtured many talented literary figures. One of them, Akutagawa Ryunosuke, wrote many superb novelettes based on his detailed knowledge of the Japanese classics. His suicide in 1927 was seen as a symbol of the agony Japan was experiencing in the process of rapid modernization, a major theme of modern Japanese literature. In 1968 Kawabata Yasunari became the first Japanese to win the Nobel Prize for literature, and Oe Kenzaburo won it in 1994. They and other contemporary writers, such as Tanizaki Jun'ichiro, Mishima Yukio, Abe Kobo, and Inoue Yasushi, have been translated into other languages.

Japan's defeat in World War II influenced Japanese literature during the 1940s and 1950s. Many authors wrote stories about disaffection, loss of purpose, and the coping with defeat.

Dazai Osamu's novel *The Setting Sun* tells of a soldier returning from Manchukuo. Mishima Yukio, well known for both his nihilistic writing and his controversial suicide by seppuku, began writing in the post-war period. Kojima Nobuo's short story, "The American School," portrays a group of Japanese teachers of English who, in the immediate aftermath of the war, deal with the American occupation in varying ways.

Prominent writers of the 1970s and 1980s were identified with intellectual and moral issues in their attempts to raise social and political consciousness. One of them, Oe Kenzaburo wrote his best-known work, *A Personal Matter* in 1964 and became Japan's second winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Inoue Mitsuaki had long been concerned with the atomic bomb and continued during the 1980's to write on problems of the nuclear age, while Endo Shusaku depicted the religious dilemma of the Kakure Kirishitan, Roman Catholics in feudal Japan, as a springboard to address spiritual problems. Inoue Yasushi also turned to the past in masterful historical novels, set in Inner Asia and ancient Japan, in order to comment on present human fate.

Avant-garde writers, such as Abe Kobo, who wrote fantastic novels such as *Woman in the Dunes* (1960), and wanted to express the Japanese experience in modern terms without using either international styles or traditional conventions, developed new inner visions. Furui Yoshikichi tellingly related the lives of alienated urban dwellers coping with the minutiae of daily life, while the psychodramas within such daily life crises have been explored by a rising number of important women novelists. The 1988 Naoki Prize went to Todo Shizuko for *Ripening Summer*, a story capturing the complex psychology of modern women.

In international literature, Kazuo Ishiguro, a native of Japan, who had taken up residence in Britain, won Britain's prestigious Booker Prize. Murakami Haruki is one of the most popular and controversial of today's Japanese authors. His genre-defying, humorous and surreal works have sparked fierce debates in Japan over whether they are true "literature" or simple pop-fiction: *Oe Kenzaburo* has been one of his harshest critics (Mack 2010, p. 181). Some of his best-known works include *Norwegian Wood* (1987) and *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1994-1995). Another best-selling contemporary author is Banana Yoshimoto.

Popular fiction, non-fiction, and children's literature all flourished in urban Japan during the 1980s. Many popular works fell between "pure literature" and pulp novels, including all sorts of historical serials, information-packed docudramas, science fiction, mysteries, detective fiction, business stories, war journals, and animal stories. Non-fiction covered everything from crime to politics. Although factual journalism predominated, many of these works were interpretive, reflecting a high degree of individualism. Children's works re-emerged in the 1950s, and the newer entrants into this field, many of them younger women, brought new vitality to it in the 1980s.

Manga (comic books) have penetrated almost every sector of the popular market. They include virtually every field of human interest, such as a multi volume high-school history of Japan and, for the adult market, a manga introduction to economics. At the end of the 1980s, manga represented between twenty and thirty percent of total annual publications in Japan, representing sales of some four hundred billion yen annually (Marra 2010, p. 417). In contemporary Japan, there is a debate over whether the rise in popular forms of entertainment such as manga and anime has caused a decline in the quality of literature in Japan.

1.3 On the Universal Nature of Literature

As early as the days of Aristotle, critics and scholars have thought and edited about the nature and analysis of literature for any generalization of the term must include statements about the writer use of words in a certain way to achieve a certain effect. Thus, definitions vary from the descriptive to the honorific scale (Robson 1982, p. 17), trying to take into consideration the high view which sees literature as the pre eminent means for giving form and outline for the identity of man as dented by Sartre the middling view, which sees literature as an open forum for the free exchange of thoughts and the low view which finds the value of literature in its contribution to happiness.

1.3.1 Beyond the Boundaries of Describing Literature

Nobody denies that literature is a source of enjoyment for most of the people. However, literature still stands a vague term to be identified. It is tightly associated with qualitative connotations and superior qualities above ordinary written works (Cuddon, 1976, p. 505-506). A more general definition from Oxford dictionary describes literature as an acquaintance with

letters. As a cultural practice, literature cannot be valuable in itself unless if it is put in a cultural frame referring to its people in specific situations according to particular criteria and in the light of given purposes. 'Literature must indeed be re-situated within the field of general cultural production, but each mode of such production demands a semiology of its own, which is not conflatable with some universal.' (Eagleton 2006, p. 166).

Literature is meant to be a problematic term as being an ideological symbol of the high culture "canon" or demystification by radical and critical theory. As a word employed in a neutral discursive capacity it identifies itself quite self-consciously as belonging to the artificial discursive realm of "creative" or "imaginative" writing as opposed to other more quotidian forms of written communication. Literary value is used to identify those discriminative judgments of evaluation mode about literary works within conventional critical discourse in order to define artistic merit of a work. 'Evaluation itself is threatened: how can you operate the techniques for telling who a major writer is, if you do not know what a minor looks like' (Butler 1990, p. 15)

However, value is dynamic, transactional, contingent that allows to reassert expert knowledge as the basis of true judgment . Sartre defines literature by opposing prose to fiction, focusing on the materiality of language. The dangerous rejection of Sartre to poetry that was embodied by the surrealists and political revolution pretension has changed after 1947 into a displacement for poetry, still, does not transmit a clear meaning when neglecting the reader and the world (Sartre 1948, p. 29)

What literature tends to realize and tends to stem from is not the Sartrean violent revolution in the streets, rather it is a revolution in minds concerning identity and creativity. Counter-intuitive that gives birth to literary singularity and that chance is behind the formation of creativity. If literature is creative and imaginative writing, this does not mean that history, philosophy and natural sciences are not. The seventeenth century English literature includes not only Shakespeare, Webster and Marvell but it also stretches to the essays of Francis Bacon, the sermons of John Donne and Bunyan's spiritual autobiography.

In fact, literature may be definable not according to whether it is fictional or imaginative, but because it uses language in peculiar ways that transforms and identifies ordinary language as stated by the Formalist Russian critic Roman Jakobson (1978): ‘Literature represents an organized violence committed on ordinary speech’⁹. It is nevertheless prominent to stress on determinacy and randomness in characterizing literature, taking into account that a random walk entails use of infinity. Sublime and deep qualitative ideas emerges in such states of affairs, in fact, literature satisfies random greedy creative requirements, from which it follows, counter-intuitively, that the use of chance in great literary creativity is coincident with largely excluding it from effects composed in this way. In the counter-intuitive throw of the writer’s dice, the deployment of chance is transcended in its composition. Art is more than the sum of its parts. Chance is transformed into creativity. Counter-intuitive life gives birth to literary singularity (Gibson 2007, p. 480).

Literature constantly extends beyond the limits of its environments and the previous boundaries of literature to demonstrate that there are no new or infinite features in fresh literature. This may include recognizing that much of the most beautiful and what is taken to be most significant creative literature, constantly violates expectations and yet strangely satisfies previously recognizable tastes. There are infinite possibilities for new developments in the actual world; many of these are counter-intuitive identities. A facet of the identity of great literature is its capacity to expose some of the possibilities of infinity. Some readers may wish to restrict or remove the use of infinity (Ibid, p. 482). They may like to replace this term with an analogy using counter-intuitive transcendental number. That is to say, creativity is counter-intuitively relevant to readers, and it can function as an aid to explain the world. A reason for this is that great literature creates new recognition and fresh identities.

Typically, the strong sense of irrelevance that some great creative literature displays in its demeanor to the narrowness of all to local nationalist, or to large scale multinational disputes, is far more likely to probe self-interested causes, and craft answers to practical questions for those in need. Individualism in authorship is often the anti-thesis of the self-centered specific expedience of a council, committee, or politico-corporate grouping whose administrative energy bounds in ensuring that each of its members defends his own self-interest, which inclines to prevent the emergence of substantive solutions for victims.

In fact, the descriptive kind of definitions to literature are not useful for critical purposes as opposed to honorific kind, which commits its user to decisions about value and quality, and within that kind, for the type of definition which picks out transcendence of originating contexts as a central characteristic of literature, and within that type, for definitions which turn on ideas of textuality, linguistic adequacy, propriety and excellence. This recommendation may be criticized on the ground that it is too formalistic, too neglectful to subject-matter. But it does have the advantage that it is equally compatible with a high view concerning the nature and expectations of Man, a middling view based on exchanging ideas and thoughts and a low view of the subject –matter of literature aiming at entertainment for examples (Robson 1982, p. 18).

Art can go no further and has to yield to another discourse, to a philosophy that itself cannot merely show the process of self-conscious thinking, but has somehow to make use of it in the recreation of community. Literary art can be seen as marking a particular phase in history, one in which it serves as a particular set of purposes (Reiss 1992, p. 342). The modern history of literary theory started with a thinking about the identity of mind and nature, before it proceeded to debates dependent on theories based on their radical separation: so that it became the aim of art at once to reveal, to work on and to overcome that separation. This latter emphasizes the nomothetic, lawful value of the literary text, or the moral didactic, or conceptual significance of the literary artifact. Therefore, the ‘literary’ has much in common with the literary language in terms of its linguistic and rhetorical properties as well as with its historical, cultural and social locations, functions and effects, rather than in of its aesthetic essence (Widdowson 2013, p. 93).

1.3.2 Genre Theory

Literary criticism, like biology, resorts to the concept of evolution or development and to criteria of classification to distinguish various genres. The former area is referred to as literary history, whereas the latter is termed poetics (Garzone and Ilie 2014, p. 213). Both fields are closely related to the issue at hand, as every attempt to define text or literature touches not only upon differences between genres but also upon the historical dimensions of these literary forms of expression.

The word genre comes from the French (and originally Latin) word for kind or class. The term is widely used in rhetoric, literary theory, media theory, and more recently linguistics, to refer to a distinctive type of text. Robert Allen notes that 'for most of its 2,000 years, genre study has been primarily nominological and typological in function. That is to say, it has taken as its principal task the division of the world of literature into types and the naming of those types - much as the botanist divides the realm of flora into varieties of plants' (Allen 1989, p. 44). As will be seen, however, the analogy with biological classification into genus and species misleadingly suggests a scientific process.

The term genre usually refers to one of the three classical literary forms of epic, drama, or poetry. This categorization is slightly confusing as the epic occurs in verse, too, but is not classified as poetry. It is, in fact, a precursor of the modern novel (i.e., prose fiction) because of its structural features such as plot, character presentation, and narrative perspective. Although this old classification is still in use, the tendency today is to abandon the term epic and introduce prose, fiction, or prose fiction for the relatively young literary forms of the novel and the short story.

Since classical times literary works have been classified as belonging to general types which were variously defined. In literature the broadest division is between poetry, prose and drama, within which there are further divisions, such as tragedy and comedy within the category of drama. Shakespeare referred satirically to classifications such as 'tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical, historical-pastoral...' . In *The Anatomy of Criticism* the formalist literary theorist Northrop Frye (1957) presented certain universal genres and modes as the key to organizing the entire literary corpus. Contemporary media genres tend to relate more to specific forms than to the universals of tragedy and comedy. Carolyn Miller suggests that 'the number of genres in any society... depends on the complexity and diversity of society' (Miller 1984, in Freedman & Medway 1994a, p. 36). Conventional definitions of genres tend to be based on the notion that they constitute particular conventions of content (such as themes or settings) and/or form (including structure and style) which are shared by the texts which are regarded as belonging to them (Duff 2014, p. 25). The attempt to define particular genres in terms of necessary and sufficient textual properties is sometimes seen as theoretically attractive but it poses many difficulties.

Contemporary theorists describe genres in terms of family resemblances among texts (a notion derived from the philosopher Wittgenstein) rather than definitionally (Swales 1990, 49). An individual text within a genre rarely if ever has all of the characteristic features of the genre (Fowler 1989, p. 215). The family resemblance approach involves the theorist illustrating similarities between some of the texts within a genre. However, the family resemblance approach has been criticized on the basis that 'no choice of a text for illustrative purposes is innocent' (David Lodge, cited in Swales 1990, p. 50), and that such theories can make any text seem to resemble any other one (Ibid, p.51). In addition to the definitional and family resemblance approach, there is another approach to describing genres which is based on the psycholinguistic concept of prototypicality. According to this approach, some texts would be widely regarded as being more typical members of a genre than others. According to this approach certain features would 'identify the extent to which an exemplar is prototypical of a particular genre' (Ibid, p. 52). Genres can therefore be seen as 'fuzzy' categories which cannot be defined by necessary and sufficient conditions.

The classification and hierarchical taxonomy of genres is not a neutral and 'objective' procedure. There are no undisputed 'maps' of the system of genres within any medium (though literature may perhaps lay some claim to a loose consensus). Furthermore, there is often considerable theoretical disagreement about the definition of specific genres. 'A genre is ultimately an abstract conception rather than something that exists empirically in the world,' notes Jane Feuer (1992, p. 144). One theorist's genre may be another's sub-genre or even super-genre (and indeed what is technique, style, mode, formula or thematic grouping to one may be treated as a genre by another). Themes, at least, seem inadequate as a basis for defining genres since, as David Bordwell notes, 'any theme may appear in any genre' (Bordwell 1989, P. 147). The genre divisions and genre concepts used in the Western context do not necessarily match other cultures. For that reason, reflections on the genre systems of different literary cultures form an indispensable part of the intellectual preparation of more globally oriented perspectives on literary history.

A genre is 'a category of artistic, musical, or literary composition characterized by a particular style, form, or content'. All art forms have genres. These groupings can be based on format, structure, medium, mood, style-or any combination of these. Literary genres are categories into

which similar literary works may be grouped, e.g. poetry, prose, hymns, etc. A genre is a vague term with no fixed boundaries in that while literary works within genres hold characteristics in common such as style, structure and use of literary devices, they may also differ considerably or even cross over into multiple genres (Frow 2014, p. 55). These categories can be further subdivided into “sub-genres,” e.g. poetry may be subdivided into epic, lyric, and dramatic, and then dramatic could be further subdivided into comedy, tragedy, and melodrama. Grouping texts provides an orderly way to talk about an otherwise bewildering number of literary texts. Calling a text a poem would clarify the nature of that text: it is a literary form used for its aesthetic value in addition to, or instead of, its ideological or semantic content.

Thus, as early as Greco-Roman antiquity, the classification of literary works into different genres has been a major concern of literary theory, which has since then produced a number of divergent and contradictory categories. Among the various attempts to classify literature into genres, the triad epic, drama and poetry, has proved to be the most common in modern literary criticism. Because the epic was widely replaced by the new prose form of the novel in the 18th century, recent classifications prefer the terms fiction, drama and poetry.

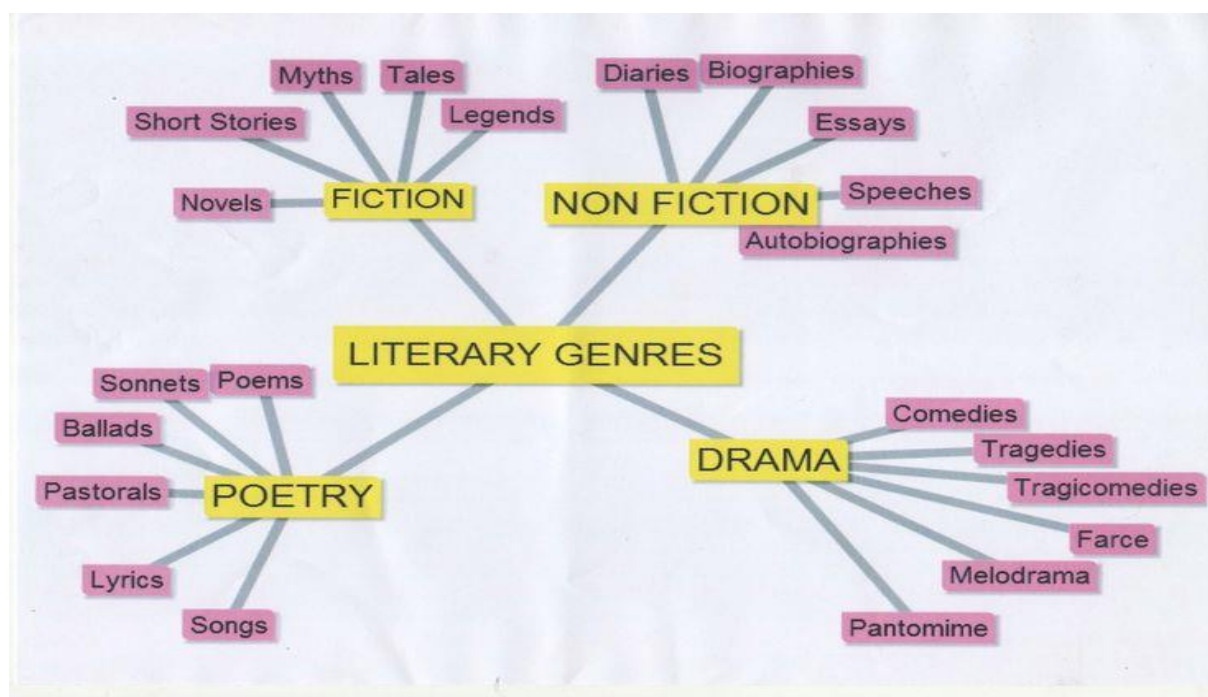


Figure 1.3 Classification of Literary Genres¹⁰

Fiction, poetry and drama stand for the designations of the three major literary genres.

Although the novel emerged as the most important form of prose fiction in the 18th century, its precursors go back to the oldest texts of literary history. Homer's epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odessey* (7th century BC) and Virgil's *Aeneid* (31-19 BC) influenced the major medieval epics such as Dante Aligheiri's Italian *Divina Commedia* (1307-1321) and the early modern English epics such as Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (1590-1596). Although traditional epics are written in verse, they clearly distinguish themselves from other forms of poetry by length, narrative structure, depiction of characters, and plot patterns. The novel, which emerged in Spain in the 17th century and in England during the 18th century, employs these elements in a very deliberate manner. The newly established novel is often characterized by the terms realism and individualism, thereby summarizing some of the basic innovations of this new medium (Todorov 1990, p. 13). These features of the novel which reflect basic socio-historical tendencies of the 18th century, soon made the novel a dominant literary genre.

The term novel, however, subsumes a number of sub-genres such as the picaresque novel, which relates the experiences of a vagrant rogue in his conflict with the norms of society, e.g. Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749). The Bildungsroman (novel of education), describes the development of a protagonist from childhood to maturity, such as George Eliot's *Mill on the Floss* (1860). Another important form is the epistolary novel, which uses letters as a means of first person narration, as for example Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740-1741). A further form is the historical novel, such as Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814), whose actions take place within a realistic historical context. The satirical novel, such as Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), highlights weaknesses in society through the exaggeration of social conventions, whereas utopian novels or science fiction novels create alternative worlds as a means of criticizing real sociopolitical conditions, as in the classic *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1949) by George Orwell. Very popular forms are the gothic novel, which includes such works as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), and the detective novel, one of the best known of which is Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934).

The short story, a concise form of prose fiction, has received less attention from literary scholars than the novel. As with the novel, the roots of the short story lie in antiquity and the middle ages. Story, myth and fairy tale relate to the oldest types of textual manifestations, "texts" which were primarily orally transmitted. While the novel experiments with various narrative

perspectives, the short story usually chooses one particular point of view, relating the action through the eyes of one particular figure or narrator. The novella or novelette, such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902), holds an intermediary position between novel and short story, since its length and narratological elements cannot be strictly identified with either of the two genres.

Poetry is one of the oldest genres in literary history; its earliest examples go back to ancient Greek literature. In spite of this long tradition, it is harder to define than any other genre. Poetry is closely related to the term lyric, which derives etymologically from the Greek musical instrument lyra and points to an origin in the sphere of music (Klarer 2004, p. 26). If fiction is the art of written narrative, and drama is the art of theatrical narrative, both of these using language as a vehicle to tell a story, and the various non-fiction genres are the art of rhetorical exposition, using language as a vehicle to make didactic or argumentative points, then poetry is the product of the poet who is interested in the vehicle itself, in language, as the medium for expression, so poetry is the art of language (Turco 2000, p. 7). Poetry has four elements which are the levels of language usage, those of typography, sound, tropes (figures of speech), and theme.

Some of the subgenres within the genre of poetry include the epic, which is a narrative poem of great length like Giles Fletcher's *Christ's Victory*, heroic, mock-heroic such as Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* which treats of un-heroic matter, in comic imitation of some of the practices of serious epic, lyrics: originally poems to be sung, ballads: simple, fairly short, narrative poem; its style is not necessarily naïve out figures of speech characteristic of epic e.g, Oscar Wilde's *Ballad of Reading Gaol* (Boulton 1982, p.100), sonnets, dirges, threnodies, monodies, epigrams; very short, crisp poems, witty and often satirical, usually with a stinging climax, verse epistles, which are letters in verse to some friend or famous person like Shelley's *Letter To Maria Gisborne*, pastorals which present a setting of idealized and leisurely country life like: Virgil's *The Idylls...* (Feintuch 2003, p. 99)

If novelists write for the page, playwrights, then, write for the stage. Writing for the stage demands an understanding of two fundamentals: the essence of drama and the nature of theater. Drama consists of characters in conflict and in action. Theater is both the arena for the action

and the sensory experience of that action (Hatcher 1996, p. 19). In drama the actions of the play must cling together to form a story, one action causing the other, adding up to some meaningful point that touches the thoughts and emotions of the audience. The fiction writer and the playwright have much in common. Both are concerned with narrative, and both use exactly the same elements of narrative: character, plot, atmosphere, and theme (Lewalski 1986, p. 15) However, unlike fiction, drama is a composite genre, consisting of both written material and visual effects. The strengths of drama enable it to be more immediately apprehensible to the senses than are words in a book. The fiction writer is not limited in terms of writing techniques he may use description, narration.... However, the dramatist is limited to spoken language only, as he may replace narration by stage action and description by acts, scenes, and sets so that the audience can see and hear the development of plot and character.

1.3.3 Drama

Drama as a literary genre is realized in performance described as staged art. It is designed for the theater because characters are assigned roles and they act out their roles as the action is enacted on stage. These characters can be human beings, dead or spiritual beings, animals, or abstract qualities. In its traditional definition, the term drama seems unambiguous: 'The form of composition designed for performance in the theater, in which actors take the roles of characters, perform the indicated actions, and utter the written dialogue' (Abrams and Harpham 2014, p. 69).

However, a written text that is dialogical in nature and has indicated actions, as well as characters that are to be played by actors in a theater is a limited definition since many written texts do not confirm to these demands nevertheless can be said to be theatrical. For example: a soliloquy which has only one character and no dialogue, a play can consist only of conversation without indicated actions, a text can be theatrical but intended for reading instead of performing...Moreover, drama does not have to be performed in a theater but can take place in other spaces as well (streets, private dwellings, churches, factories, classrooms...). The following diagram illustrates the features of written texts intended to be drama

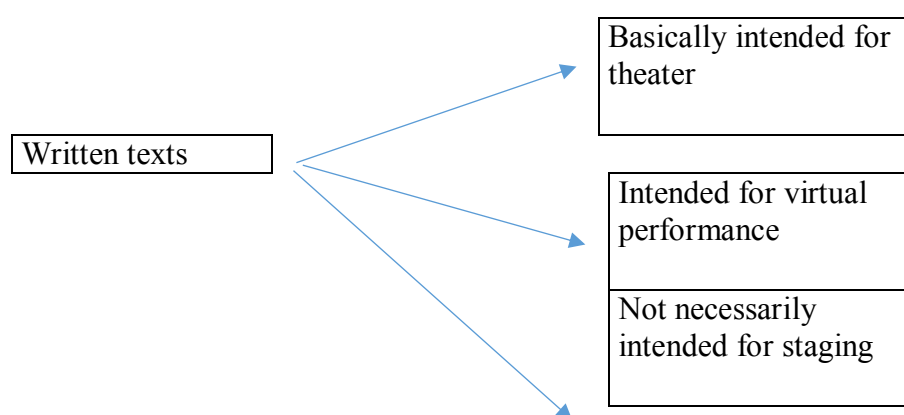


Diagram 1.1: Characteristics of Theatrical Written Texts

Drama consists of written texts that are intended for both actual and virtual performances, including conventions of theater

Although plays exist which were mainly written for a reading audience, dramatic texts are generally meant to be transformed into another mode of presentation or medium: the theatre. Dramatic texts even look different compared to poetic or narrative texts. One distinguishes between the primary text, i.e., the main body of the play spoken by the characters, and secondary texts, i.e., all the texts ‘surrounding’ or accompanying the main text: title, dramatis personae, scene descriptions, stage directions for acting and speaking, etc. (Moorman 2013, p. 10). Depending on whether one reads a play or watches it on stage, one has different kinds of access to dramatic texts.

The written texts or the scripts that are meant for drama are those texts which are basically intended for or derived from actual theatrical performance, or intended for virtual performance. In the imagination of the readers ,i.e.: what is called reading drama and these drama are characterized by extensive commentaries, descriptions and narrative passages in the secondary text (Roubine 2004, p. 183). As a prime example, Pfister points to the reading dramas of George Bernard Shaw. In addition to those texts not specifically intended for staging but including theatrical conventions.

The main feature of drama as a literary language is that their messages are transmitted throughout the artistic structure, is more talkative than normatrical written texts because all its elements have meaning. States that the artistic structure, which defines in terms of language, is

not enough to produce artistic communication but in the cultural context must be planned and defined the existence of literature (Larthomas 2001, p. 9).

Drama is different from other forms of literature because of its unique characteristics. It is read, but basically, it is composed to be performed, so the ultimate aim of dramatic composition is for it to be presented on stage before an audience. This implies that it a medium of communication. It has a message to communicate to the audience. It uses actors to convey this message. This brings to the issue of mimesis or imitation as indicated by Aristotle (Pfister 1991, p. 14-15). Thus, drama is mimetic which means that it imitates life. As far as the communication model for literary texts is concerned, it can be adapted for communication in drama as follows:

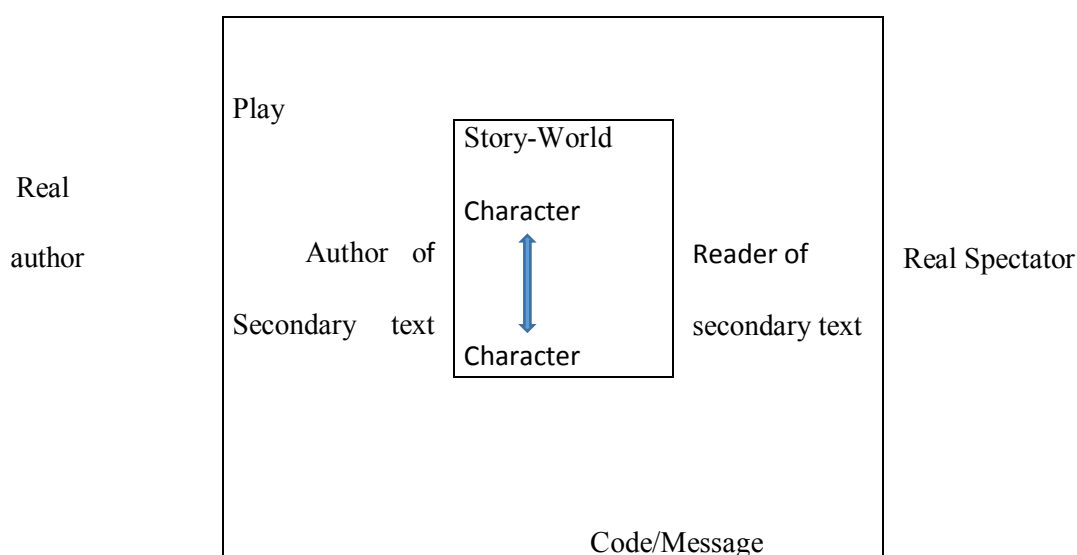


Diagram 1.2 Communication Model Drama¹¹

Since in drama there is usually no narrator who tells us what is going on in the story-world, the audience has to gain information directly from what can be seen and heard on stage.

In comparison with narrative texts, the plane of narrator/narratee is left out, except for plays which deliberately employ narrative elements. Information can be conveyed both linguistically in the characters' speech, for example, or non-linguistically as in stage props, costumes, the stage set, etc. At the beginning of plays where the audience expects to learn something about the problem or conflict of the story, the main characters and also the time and place of the scene,

this is called the exposition. Although in drama information is usually conveyed directly to the audience, there are instances where a mediator comparable to the narrator of a narrative text appears on stage. A theatrical movement where this technique was newly adopted and widely used was the so-called epic theater, which goes back to the German playwright Bertolt Brecht and developed as a reaction against the realistic theatrical tradition (Malkin 1999, p. 37).

At the center of Brecht's poetics is the idea of alienating the audience from the action presented on stage in order to impede people's emotional involvement in and identification with the characters and conflicts of the story (alienation effect or estrangement effect). Instead, spectators are expected to gain a critical distance and thus to be able to judge rationally what is presented to them. Some of the 'narrative' elements in this type of theatre are songs, banners and, most importantly, a narrator who comments on the action. One must not forget that some of these elements existed before (Bloemendol, Eversman and Strietman 2012, p. 57). Thus, ancient Greek drama traditionally made use of a chorus, i.e., a group of people situated on stage who throughout the play commented on events and the characters' actions. The chorus was also used in later periods, notably the Renaissance period. A famous example is the beginning of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, where the chorus bids the spectators to use their imagination to help create the play. Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* also starts with a prologue spoken by a chorus.

Drama is an enacted fiction an art form based on mimetic action. In arts, drama is the most elegant expression of thought nearest to the truth (reality). It is the most concrete form in which art can recreate human situation, human relationship (Esslin 1977, p. 57). However, Bertolt Brecht insists that drama is not just an imitation of action, but a tool for the demonstration of social conditions. It is not just an entertainment but an instrument of political and social change. From these definitions, we can conclude that drama is a way of creating or recreating a situation, an articulation of reality through impersonation or re-enactment. An action becomes drama if it is an imitation of an earlier action real or imagined.

When drama refers to different forms of text the term theater also tends to be ambiguous. Christopher Balme points out the terminological complexity of the term as he writes: 'The term theater has its origins in the Greek word theatron meaning a place for looking' (Balme 2008, p. 16). Thus, originally, theater referred to both a place as well as to a particular form of sense

perception. Today, The concept of “theater” can refer to: a building, an activity (going to or doing theater), an institution, and more narrowly; an art form

This definition highlights the performative intent of a dramatic text when textuality is transformed into multimediality since a drama text is performed either in reality or in the readers ‘minds. A performance generally comprises an event in which one or more performances behave in a particular way before an audience (Baldwin 2012, p. 101). A theater is actually the place for performance, in which writing is meant for a dramatic presentation, as a smaller context of the human presence in the world. In drama, language and movement are considered together, along with the paralinguistic components of the gesture and the action.

The word drama comes from the Greek verb “dran” which means ‘to act’ or to perform. Many scholars trace the origin of drama to wordless actions like ritual dances and mimes performed by dancers, masked players or priests during traditional festivals or ceremonies. Unlike the prose and poetry which depend on narration, drama is presented only through dialogue. The novel is divided in chapters and the poem is written mostly in stanzas, drama is presented in acts and scenes, movements or parts (Lotman 1977, p. 35). William Shakespeare made the five-act structure the standard for his plays. Each dramatist is free to adopt his/her own style. Language and action, which the participants generate within the fictional context, may have functions within that context and within the context of the medium, operating either as primary text or sub-text or as parallel texts (Ory 2015, p. 120).

Drama can belong to both categories literature and performing arts. Even a novel and a poem can be performable like a reading of a novel on the radio or a public recital of poetry. Yet, mime plays cannot be considered as literature because literature is necessarily linguistic (New 1999, p 5). The poet and the novelist have nothing but language with which to depict character, action, feeling, thought location..., whereas the dramatist can rely also on gesture, movement and visual or sound effects ‘. . . drama is not made of words alone, but of sights and sounds, stillness and motion, noise and silence, relationships and responses’. (J. L. Styan, 1975,p 23)

Language (i.e.: utterance in words) is a very important kind of action, and movement is another aspect of that same action. Any dramatic action has at least three functions: the purposive action: relates to the tasks that form the basis of the action, the communicative function: relates

to the constructions to be put upon the action by others, and expressive function: when the action reveals aspects of the characters' nature that modify or throw light on the purposes and may permit negotiation of details of characters and relationship within the drama: 'However familiar or unfamiliar the world of a tragedy, comedy, farce or melodrama may be, everything that we experience has its source, in the long run, in words.' (Gareth Lloyd Evans 1977, p.112)

Drama is often combined with music and dance: the drama in opera is generally sung throughout; musicals generally include both spoken dialogue and songs; and some forms of drama have incidental music or musical accompaniment underscoring the dialogue like in melodrama and Japanese Noh for example (Holmwood 2014, p. 29). In certain periods of history (the ancient Roman and modern Romantic) some dramas have been written to be read rather than performed. In improvisation, the drama does not pre-exist the moment of performance; performers devise a dramatic script spontaneously before an audience.

Though definitions given to drama could not remain incomplete or sometimes misleading, a general Oxford definition of the term denotes that drama is a composition in prose or verse adapted to be acted on the stage, in which a story is related by means of dialogue and action and is represented, with accompanying gestures, costume and scenery as in real life. It is a theatrical form and a literary genre. The Greek philosopher Aristotle, in writing a treatise based on the plays of his time (50 BC), defined drama as 'an imitation of an action, a basis for almost all subsequent dramatic criticism' (Cuddon 1976, p. 103)

It is an important branch of literature and the most concrete of all art forms. It is devoid of the distant intimacy of the novel, the abstract message of fine arts, the incomplete message of music or the cryptic and esoteric language of poetry. It presents a story realistically through the actors to the audience. Drama is therefore used to entertain, inform and educate people. Of all the creative artists, the dramatist is in the best position to mirror his society and to effect social reforms. This is because his work has a unique characteristic of presenting events in a vivid, picturesque and realistic manner (Pfister 1991, p. 339). This helps to imprint social conditions realistically in the minds of the audience. Its message is therefore immediately transmitted and which is adequate to all the socio-demographic features of the receiver: (age, education, social

status, gender...). Contemporary scholars admit that the notion of the dramatic goes far beyond theatrical performances and is an integral part of any literary work

1.3.4 Types of Drama

It is important to point out that Form and Genre are hard to define. They can be interchangeable and often some of the terms can fit into both categories. As far as drama is concerned, form is considered as the basis, it is how the drama is constructed, scripted and improvised, examples are as follows:

Type	Definition
Physical theater	Any mode of performance that pursues storytelling through primarily physical means.
Mime	The art or technique of portraying a character, mood, idea, or narration by gestures and bodily movements; pantomime.
Monologue	A form of dramatic entertainment, comedic solo, or the like by a single speaker
Dance drama	A drama conveyed by dance movements sometimes accompanied by dialogue
Docu-drama	A genre of radio and television programming, feature film, and staged theatre, which features dramatized re-enactments of actual events. On stage, it is sometimes known as documentary theater.
Forum theater	An interactive form of theater that presents a theatrical debate to create a group ethos that encourages audience interaction and is a powerful tool for exploring solutions to difficult problems.

Table 1.6 Types of Drama

Types of drama vary according to their construction, script and improvisation.

Just like the other genres, has undergone significant changes in its historical development. This is partly attributable to the fact that stage types have also changed and have thus required different forms of acting. Here are the various stage forms throughout history (based on Pfister 1991: 41-45):

Greek Classicism	The Middle Ages	Renaissance England	Restoration Period	Modern Times
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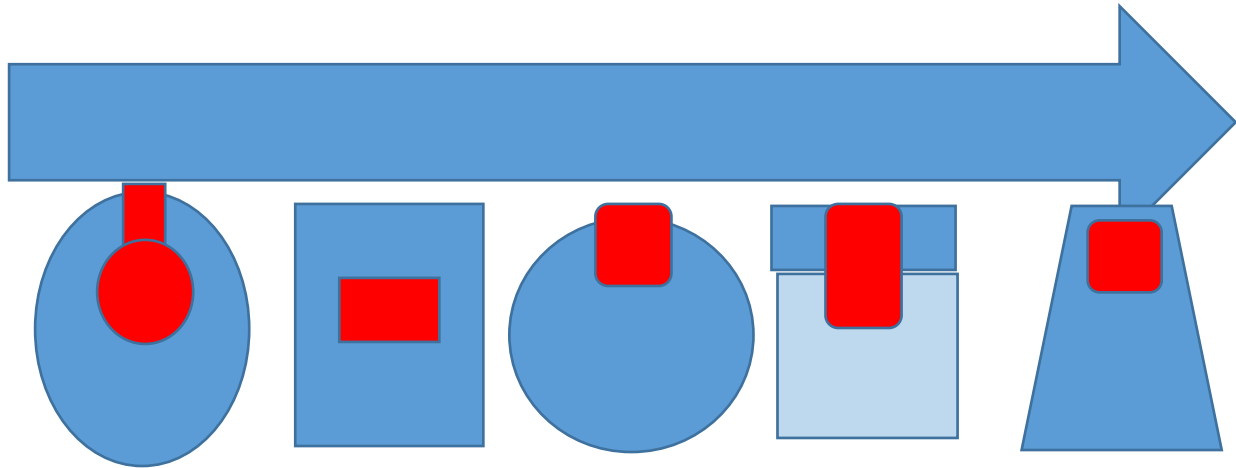


Figure 1.4 Stage Forms throughout History¹²

Stage forms changed according to the need of the audience and the intentions of the dramas.

Plays in ancient Greece were staged in amphitheaters, which were marked by a round stage about three quarters surrounded by the audience. Since amphitheaters were very large and could hold great masses of people (up to 25,000), the actors could hardly be seen from far back, and for this reason, acting included speaking in a loud, declamatory voice, wearing masks and symbolical costumes and acting with large (Pfister 1991, p. 242)gestures. The chorus was a vital part of ancient drama. It had the function of commenting on the play as well as giving warning and advice to characters. The stage scenery was neutral and was accompanied by the real landscape surrounding the amphitheater. Plays were performed in broad daylight, which also made it impossible to create an illusion of ‘real life’ on stage, at least for night scenes. That was not intended anyway. Ancient Greek drama was originally performed on special occasions like religious ceremonies, and it thus had a more ritual, symbolic and also didactic purpose. Another interesting fact to know is that the audience in ancient Greece consisted only of free men, i.e., slaves and women were excluded.

Medieval plays were primarily performed during religious festivities (mystery plays, morality plays). They were staged on wagons, which stopped somewhere in the market place and were entirely surrounded by the audience. The close vicinity between actors and audience has to

account for a way of acting which combined serious renditions of the topic in question with stand-up comedy and funny or bawdy scenes, depending on the taste of the audience (Thacker 2007, p. 141). Actors took into account the everyday experiences of their viewers and there was much more interaction between audience and actors than nowadays. The lack of clear boundaries between stage and audience again impeded the creation of a realistic illusion, which was also not intended.

The Elizabethan stage was typically found in public theatres, i.e., plays were no longer performed outside. However, the Elizabethan theatre was still an open-air theatre as the lack of artificial lighting made daylight necessary for performances. An exception was the Black friars theatre, which was indoors and lit by candlelight. Theater groups were now professional and sponsored by wealthy aristocrats (Ibid p, 173). Groups which were not under anybody's patronage were considered disreputable vagabonds.

The stage was surrounded by the audience on three sides and there was still a close vicinity between audience and actors. The most common stage form in Renaissance England was the apron stage which was surrounded by the audience on three sides. This meant that actors could not possibly ignore their viewers, and theatrical devices such as asides and monologues addressed spectators were an integral part of the communication system. (Ibid, p. 186) The stage set was reasonably barren while costumes could be very elaborate. Since performances took place in broad daylight, the audience had to imagine scenes set at night, for example, and respective information had to be conveyed rhetorically in the characters' speeches (word scenery). As there was barely any scenery, scenes could change very quickly with people entering and exiting. The three unities were thus frequently not strictly adhered to in Elizabethan drama. The Elizabethan theatre could hold up to 2,000 people, and the audience was rather heterogeneous, consisting of people from different social backgrounds. Plays of that period thus typically combine various subject matters and modes (e.g., tragic and comical) because they attempted to appeal to as wide an audience as possible.

Theatres of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were considerably smaller than the Elizabethan theater (they held around 500 people), and performances took place in closed rooms with artificial lighting. In contrast to modern theaters where the audience sits in the dark, the audience in the Restoration period was seated in a fully illuminated room. One must bear in

mind that people of the higher social class were also interested in presenting themselves in public, and attending a play offered just such an opportunity (Nicoll 2007, p. 71). Because of the lighting arrangement, the division between audience and actors was thus not as clear-cut as today. Plays had the status of a cultural event, and the audience was more homogeneous than in earlier periods, belonging primarily to higher social classes. While the stage was closed in by a decorative frame and the distance between audience and actors was thus enlarged, there was still room for interaction by means of a minor stage jutting out into the auditorium. Furthermore, there was no curtain so that changes of scene had to take place on stage in front of the audience. Restoration plays thus still did not aim at creating a sense of realism but they presented an idealized, highly stylized image of scenery, characters, language and subject matter.

The stage of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is called proscenium stage or picture frame stage because it is shaped in such a way that the audience watches the play as it would regard a picture: The ramp clearly separates actors and audience, and the curtain underlines this division. Furthermore, while the stage is illuminated during the performance, the auditorium remains dark, which also turns the audience into an anonymous mass. Since the audience is thus not disturbed from watching the play and can fully concentrate on the action on stage, it becomes easier to create an illusion of real life in plays (Bradby, James and Sharratt 1981, p. 65). Furthermore, the scenery is now often elaborate and as true-to-life as possible thanks to new technologies and more detailed stage props.

While many modern plays aim at creating the illusion of a story world ‘as it could be in real life’ and acting conventions follow this dictum accordingly, there have also been a great number of theatrical movements which counter exactly this realism (Ibid p. 109). However, the modern stage form has not been able to fully accommodate to the needs of more experimental plays (e.g., the epic theatre), nor to older plays such as those of ancient Greece or the Elizabethan Age simply because the overall stage conventions diverge too much. For this reason, we find nowadays a wide range of different types of stage alongside the proscenium stage of conventional theatres.

1.3.5 Elements of Drama

Drama does consist of different elements which dominate the current of events; most important ones are presented in the following table:

Element	Description
Characters	Can be true to life or types or caricatures, the play reveals them through the driving force of each one and their change must be under convincing causes.
Dialogue	The verbal exchanges between characters. Dialogue makes the characters seem real to the reader or audience by revealing firsthand their thoughts, responses and emotional states.
The conflict / rising action	It is what stands in the way of the leading character to reach what he wants; so that it develops the high points of tension or the crisis in which the leading character must make a crucial decision that will affect the outcome of the play.
Climax	Occurs when the forces of the protagonist meet head on. In some plays, it occurs simultaneously with the crisis, the movement in which the rising action changes into the falling action.
Falling action	Introduces the conflict when facing the hero. It is the period in which the protagonist is in ascendancy.
Conclusion	Includes the remaining falling action. This section of the play is also called the denouement, which means an untying or unraveling. The denouement unties the knot or unravels the plot.
Stage directions	They are not provided by every playwright. Some of them provide only scant suggestions for actions. Some directions suggest emotions. Yet others are more complex.

Table 1.7 Elements of Drama

Drama includes both performance and narration.

The elements of drama are to be observed in action together, which makes the experience in total rich, complex and subtle. It is rare to respond to one individual element (theme/characterization). The term Plot is used for the action of drama, i.e., the sequence of events or incidents of which the story/narrative is composed. It implies that the action has a shape and a form. A carefully plotted play begins with exposition, and explanation of what happened before the play began and of how the characters arrived at their present situation. Using suspense is also part of the plot to build tension in the audience and in the characters in developing further the pattern of rising action (Styan 1963, p. 205). Conflict is a clash of actions, ideas, desires or wills: person against person, person against environment, external force, physical nature, society, or "fate.", person against herself/himself, conflict with some element in her/his own nature; maybe physical, mental, emotional, or moral. Artistic Unity is essential to a good plot; nothing irrelevant; good arrangement.

In any study of drama, the plot is to be distinguished from the story. Story addresses an assumed chronological sequence of events, while plot refers to the way events are causally and logically connected. Furthermore, plots can have various plot lines, i.e., different elaborations of parts of the story which are combined to form the entire plots (Styan 2000, p. 65). Chronology would thus coincide with (logical) linearity. Whichever way one wants to look at it, plots can always be either linear or non-linear. Non-linear plots are more likely to confuse the audience and they appear more frequently in modern and contemporary drama, which often question ideas of logic and causality. Peter Shaffer's play *Equus*, for example, the story of Alan's psychiatric therapy. It starts at the end of the story and then presents events in reverse order.

Another model frequently used to describe the overall structure of plays is the so-called Freytag's Pyramid:

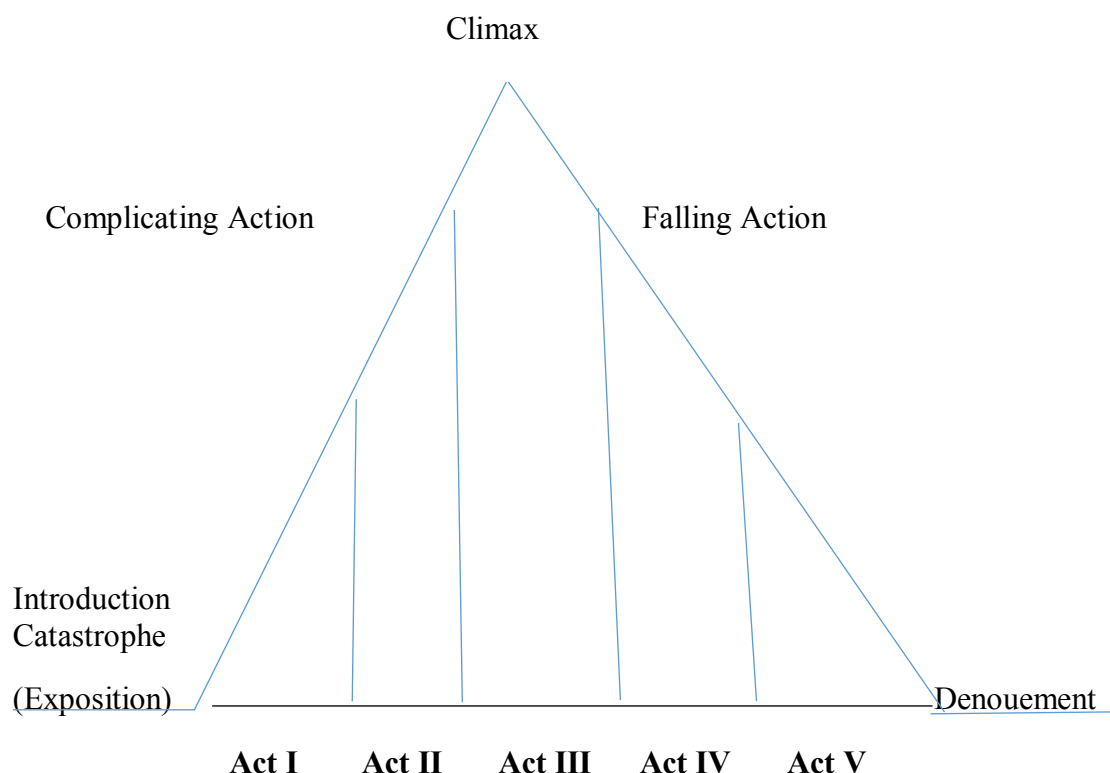


Diagram 1.3 Freytag's Pyramid¹³:

In his book *Die Technik des Dramas* (Technique of the Drama 1863), the German journalist and writer, Gustav Freytag, described the classical five-act structure of plays in the shape of a pyramid, and he attributed a particular function to each of the five acts

Act I contains all introductory information and thus serves as exposition: The main characters are introduced and, by presenting a conflict, the play prepares the audience for the action in subsequent acts. The second act usually propels the plot by introducing further circumstances or problems related to the main issue. The main conflict starts to develop and characters are presented in greater detail. In act III, the plot reaches its climax. A crisis occurs where the deed is committed that will lead to the catastrophe, and this brings about a turn (periphery) in the plot. The fourth act creates new tension in that it delays the final catastrophe by further events. The fifth act finally offers a solution to the conflict presented in the play (O'Toole 2003, p. 48). While tragedies end in a catastrophe, usually the death of the protagonist, comedies are simply 'resolved' (traditionally in a wedding or another type of festivity). A term that is applicable to both types of ending is the French *dénouement*, which literally means the 'unknotting' of the plot.

Characters vary according to their power of making a change on the course of events like the protagonist who is the central character, sympathetic or unsympathetic and the antagonist who represents the ensemble of the forces working against her/him, whether persons, things, conventions of society, or traits of their own character. By contrast, flat characters are those who do not really develop remarkable change in the plot. Direct Presentation is when the author tells the audience straight out, by exposition or analysis, or through another character (Altenbernd and Lewis 1989, p. 15). Indirect Presentation is when the author shows the audience the character in action; the reader infers what a character is like from what she/he thinks, or says, or does. These are also called dramatized characters and they are generally consistent (in behavior), motivated(convincing), and plausible (life-like)

The setting of a play refers mainly to the time and place in which the action occurs. It also refers to the scenery, the physical elements that appear on stage. The setting influences the action and the emotional reaction of the audience. Plays depend for their unfolding on dialogue. It is the speeches that the characters use to advance the action. The dialogue must tell the whole story since there is no description or commentary on the action. Fine playwrights have developed ways of revealing characters, advancing action and introducing themes by a highly efficient use of dialogue. The play's theme is its message, its central concerns, the controlling idea or central insight. It is not a simple thing to decide what the play's theme is (Many plays contain several rather than one single theme). A theme can be: a revelation of human character or may be stated briefly or at great length (Ibid, p. 30). A theme must be expressible in the form of a statement as a generalization about life; names of characters or specific situations in the plot are not to be used when stating a theme. A theme is the central and unifying concept of the story.

As opposed to an image which has one meaning, a literary symbol has many: names, objects, actions... . The ability to recognize and interpret symbols requires experience in literary readings, perception, and tact. The story itself must furnish a clue that a detail is to be taken symbolically, symbols nearly always signal their existence by emphasis, repetition, or position. The meaning of a literary symbol must be established and supported by the entire context of the story. A symbol has its meaning inside not outside a story (Laurel 2013, p. 177). Ordinarily, character, theme, and plot are considered the most important elements of drama by critics,

while, setting, music and movement come next, but each has its importance and each balances the others.

1.3.6 The Mise-en-scene

The performance is all that is made visible or audible on stage but is not perceived as a system of meaning or a system of signifying stage systems. It is the concrete object. The mise en scène is an abstract theoretical concept of the performance, a totality, (an undifferentiated whole) perceived as a system or ensemble of signs working together to produce meaning; an organized ensemble of signs. The metatext : or performance text : is an unwritten text comprising the various choices of a mise en scène that the director has consciously or unconsciously made during the rehearsal process, choices that are apparent in the final product (Pavis 2003,p. 8). If performance is the whole material thing that is taken in visually and audibly; the mise en scène is its abstract substance, the organizing principles and system of options.

The mise-en-scene is an expression used to describe the design aspect of a theatre or film production, which essentially means "visual theme" or "telling a story", both in visually artful ways through storyboarding, cinematography and stage design, and in poetically artful ways through direction. It is also commonly used to refer to multiple single scenes within the film to represent the film. It refers to everything appearing before the audience and its arrangement: composition, sets, props, actors, costumes, and lighting (Gibbs 2012, p. 30). The "mise-en-scène", along with the cinematography and editing of a film in addition to theater, influence the verisimilitude or believability of a film in the eyes of its viewers. The various elements of design help express a play's vision by generating a sense of time and space, as well as setting a mood, and sometimes suggesting a character's state of mind

Elements of the mise-en-scene	Definition
Set design	The setting of a scene and the objects (props) visible in a scene.
Lighting	The intensity, direction, and quality of lighting can influence an audience's understanding of characters, actions, themes and mood.
Space	The representation of space affects the reading of a play.
Composition	The organization of objects, actors and space within the frame.
Costume	It refers to the clothes that characters wear.
Make up and hair styles	Express the nature of characters.

Table 1.8 Elements of the Mise-en-scene¹⁴

The mise-en-scene refers to everything appearing before the audience and its arrangement.

An important element of "putting in the scene" is set design. The setting of a scene and the objects (props) visible in a scene. Set design can be used to amplify character emotion or the dominant mood, which has physical, social, psychological, emotional, economic and cultural significance in the play (Pavis 2003, p. 201). One of the most important decisions made by the production designer and director is deciding whether to shoot on location or on set. The main distinction between the two is that décor and props must be taken into consideration when shooting on set. However, shooting on set is more commonly done than shooting on location as a result of it proving to be more cost effective.

The intensity, direction, and quality of lighting can influence an audience's understanding of characters, actions, themes and mood. Light (and shade) can emphasize texture, shape, distance, mood, time of day or night, season, glamour; it affects the way colors are rendered, both in terms of hue and depth, and can focus attention on particular elements of the composition (Ibid 2013, p. 148). Highlights, for example, call attention to shapes and textures, while shadows often conceal things, creating a sense of mystery or fear. For this reason, lighting must be thoroughly planned in advance to ensure its desired effect on an audience. The representation of space affects the reading of a play. Depth, proximity, size and proportions of the places and

objects in a play can be manipulated through stage directions: lighting, set design, effectively determining mood or relationships between elements in the story world.

The organization of objects, actors and space within the frame is one of the most important concepts with the regard to the composition of a play is maintaining a balance of symmetry. This refers to having an equal distribution of light, color, and objects and/or figures in a shot. Unbalanced composition can be used to emphasize certain elements of a play that the director wishes to be given particular attention to (Raw 2012, p. 3). This tool works because audiences are more inclined to pay attention to something off balance, as it may seem abnormal. Where the director places a character can also vary depending on the importance of the role. Costume simply refers to the clothes that characters wear. Using certain colors or designs, costumes in drama are used to signify characters or to make clear distinctions between characters. As for make up and hair styles, they Establish time period, reveal character traits and signal changes in character.

1.3.7 Space and Time

Space is an important element in drama since the stage itself also represents a space where action is presented. One must of course not forget that types of stage have changed in the history of the theater and that this has also influenced the way plays were performed). The analysis of places and settings in plays can help one get a better feel for characters and their behavior but also for the overall atmosphere. Plays can differ significantly with regard to how space is presented and how much information about space is offered. While in George Bernard Shaw's plays the secondary text provides detailed spatio-temporal descriptions, one finds hardly anything in the way of secondary text in Shakespeare (Gurr and Ichikawa 2000, p. 33).

The stage set quite literally 'sets the scene' for a play in that it already conveys a certain tone, e.g., one of desolation and poverty or mystery and secrecy (Pfister 1991, p. 163). The fact that the description of the stage sets in the secondary text is sometimes very detailed and sometimes hardly worth mentioning is another crucial starting point for further analysis since that can tell us something about more general functions of settings.

Actual productions frequently invent their own set, independent of the information provided in a text. Thus, a very detailed set with lots of stage props may simply be used to show off theatrical equipment. In Victorian melodrama for example, even horses were brought on stage in order to make the ‘show’ more appealing but also to demonstrate a theater’s wealth and ability to provide expensive costumes, background paintings, etc. A more detailed stage set also aims at creating an illusion of realism, i.e., the scene presented on stage is meant to be as true-to-life as possible and the audience is expected to succumb to that illusion. At the same time, a detailed set draws attention to problems of an individual’s milieu, for example, or background in general (Ibid, p. 188). This was particularly important in naturalist writing, which was premised on the idea that a person’s character and behavior are largely determined by his or her social context.

By contrast, if detail is missing in the presentation of the setting, whether in the text or in production, that obviously also has a reason. Sometimes, plays do not employ detailed settings because they do not aim at presenting an individualized, personal background but a general scenario that could be placed anywhere and affect anyone. The stage set in Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot*, for example, is really bare: “A country road. A tree”. One can argue that this minimal set highlights the characters’ uprootedness and underlines the play’s focus on human existence in general. Since drama is multimedial, the visual aspect inevitably plays an important role. The layout/overall appearance of the set is usually described in stage directions or descriptions at the beginning of acts or scenes (Middelton and Woods 2000, p. 20). Thus, all the necessary stage props (i.e., properties used on stage such as furniture, accessories, etc.) and possibly stage painting can be presented verbally in secondary texts, which is then translated into an actual visualization on stage. One must not forget that directors are of course free to interpret secondary texts in different ways and thus to create innovative renditions of plays.

Another important factor to consider in this context is the interrelatedness of setting and plot. Obviously, the plot of a play is never presented in a vacuum but always against the background of a specific scenery and often the setting corresponds with what is going on in the story world. Thus, the storm at the beginning of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* not only starts off the play and functions as an effective background to the action but it also reflects the ‘disorder’ in which the characters find themselves at the beginning: Antonio unlawfully holds the position of his

brother, Prospero; Sebastian is willing to get rid of his brother, King Alonso, in order to take his place; and the savage and deformed slave Caliban broods on revenge against his self-appointed master, Prospero (Dente and Soncini 2008, p. 119). This is functioning as a background or creating a certain atmosphere, these spaces become symbolic spaces as they point towards other levels of meaning in the text. The setting can thus support the expression of the world view current at a certain time or general philosophical, ethical or moral questions.

Nowadays, theaters are equipped with all sorts of sets, props and technical machinery which allow for a wide range of audiovisual effects. When analyzing plays, it is therefore worthwhile asking to what extent the plays actually make use of these devices and for what purpose. Sometimes a bare stage indicates the play's focus on the characters' inner lives and consciousness, and technical devices and stage props are mainly used to emphasize or underline them. Time in drama can be considered from a variety of angles, for example, as part of the play as references to time are made in the characters' speech, the setting, stage directions, etc., the overall time span of the story. On the other hand, time is also a crucial factor in the performance of a play in what concerns the duration of the performance. Within the general concepts of time are expressed in and by a play. One of the first distinctions one can make is the one between succession and simultaneity. Events and actions can take place in one of two ways: either one after another (successively), giving a sense of simultaneity is created here exactly because different plot-lines alternate in strings of immediately successive scenes, or all at the same time (simultaneously). When these events are performed on stage, their presentation in scenes will inevitably be successive while they may well be simultaneous according to the internal time frame of the play (Bryant-Bertail 2000, p. 15). In fact, if no other indication of divergent time frames is given in the text, viewers normally automatically assume that the events and actions presented in subsequent scenes are also successive in their temporal order.

There are a number of possibilities to create a temporal frame in drama. Allusions to time can be made in the characters' conversations; the exact time of a scene can be provided in the stage directions; or certain stage props like clocks and calendars or auditory devices in the background can give the audience a clue about what time it is (Mitry 1993, p. 276). In addition to word painting which means that actors describe the scenery vividly and thus create or 'paint' a picture in the viewers' minds, for example, to describe the weather conditions and the overall

atmosphere. The third possibility of presenting time in the stage directions is the use of the introductory author commentary to each of the acts in the secondary text which gives very short instructions concerning the time of the subsequent scenes. While a reading audience is thus fully informed about the timing of the scenes, theatregoers have to infer it from the context created through the characters' interactions.

Another important distinction is to be made between fictive story time or played time (which is the time of the story) and real playing time (time it takes to stage the play). The playing time of a piece of drama of course always depends on the speed at which actors perform individual scenes and can thus vary significantly from one performance to another. The fact that story time elapses from one scene to the next and from act to act is indicated by the fall of the curtain (Dimitrova 2004, p. 89). Thus, quick curtains are used between scenes, while longer curtain pauses occur between acts. Significantly, the length of curtain time is correlated with the length of time that has been left out in the story: A quick curtain suggests a short time span while normal breaks cover longer time spans of the played time.

A gap in the played time of a piece of drama is called ellipsis, i.e., one leaves out bits of the story and thus speeds up the plot. Considering that scenes usually present actions directly, one can assume that played time and playing time usually coincide in drama. Discrepancies between the duration of played time and playing time mostly concur with scenic breaks because it is difficult to present them convincingly in the middle of an interaction. Since drama employs other media than narrative texts and is performed in real time, not all usages of time in narrative are possible in plays. Nevertheless, postmodernist plays in particular sometimes experiment with different presentations of time. Techniques which can only be adopted in modified form in drama are slow-down or stretch, where the playing time is longer than the played time, and pause, where the play continues while the story stops (Ibid, p. 91). One might argue that soliloquies where characters discuss and reveal their inner psychological state or emotions are similar to pauses since no real 'action' is observable and the development of the story is put on hold, so to speak. However, if one considers that the character's talking to the audience or perhaps to himself is in a way also a form of action that can be relevant for further actions, this argument does not really hold.

A stretch or slow-down could be realized if characters were to act in slow-motion. This slow-down is of course only recognizable through overt hints in the surrounding plot, whereas the time of the actions presented within the daydream perfectly corresponds with the time it takes to perform them on stage (Rennert 2004, p. 53). So, again, a real slow-down cannot actually be achieved through the way the performance is acted out since actors cannot really ‘slow down’ their acting (unless they play in slow motion) but it can be suggested by means of linguistic cues or stage props indicating time (clocks, etc.).

Another aspect to look at when analyzing time in drama (as well as narrative) is the concept of order. How are events ordered temporally? Does the temporal sequence of scenes correspond with the temporal order of events and actions in the presented story? Like narrative, drama can make use of flashback (analepsis) and flashforward (prolepsis). In flashbacks, events from the past are mingled with the presentation of current events, while in flashforwards, future events are anticipated. While flashforwards are not as common since they potentially threaten the build-up of the audience’s suspense (if we already know what is going to happen, we can at best wonder how this ending is brought about), flashbacks are frequently used in order to illustrate a character’s memories or to explain the outcome of certain actions (Ibid, p. 59). Three terms which are often used in the context of discussions of chronology and order are the three basic types of beginnings: *ab ovo*, *in medias res* and *in ultimas res*. These terms refer to the point of time of a story at which a play sets in and they are thus closely related to the amount of information viewers are offered at the beginning of a play:

Temporal Terms	Definitions
<i>ab ovo</i>	the play starts at the beginning of the story and provides all the necessary background information concerning the characters, their circumstances, conflicts, etc. (exposition)
<i>in medias res</i>	the story starts somewhere in the middle and leaves the viewer puzzled at first
<i>in ultimas res</i>	the story begins with its actual outcome or ending and then relates events in reverse order, thus drawing the audience’s attention on the ‘how’ rather than the ‘what’ of the story. Plays which use this method are called analytic plays.

Table 1.9 Basic Temporal Terms in Drama¹⁵

These terms refer to the point of time of a story at which a play sets in.

While in narrative analysis, the terms *ab ovo* and *in medias res* are also used to distinguish between beginnings where the reader is introduced to the plot by means of preliminary information mostly conveyed by the narrator (*ab ovo*) and beginnings where the reader is simply thrust into the action of the narrative, plays by definition always already present the viewer with some action unless there is a narrative-like mediator (chorus, commentator, etc.). Since in that sense plays are usually always *in medias res* because they present viewers directly with an interaction among characters, it might be more appropriate to use the more narrow definition given above for drama, which is limited to the timing of beginnings and does not focus so much on the mode of presentation. Another facet of time worth analyzing is the concept of frequency, i.e., how often an event is presented. According to Genette, there are three possible types of reference to an event :

Concepts of Frequency	Definition
Singulative	an event takes place once and is referred to once
Repetitive	an event takes place once but is referred to or presented repeatedly
Iterative	an event takes place several times but is referred to in the text only once

Table 1.10 Concepts of Frequency

The concept of frequency refers to three types of events.

The singulative representation of events can be found whenever scenes in a play contain single actions and these actions are represented once (Genette 1983, p. 113). This mode is mostly found in linear plots where the main aim is to delineate the development of a conflict. Traditional plays usually adopt this mode. Thus, Cyril Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy*, for example, presents its plot in fast moving actions where no scene replicates previous scenes. Iterative telling occurs when characters refer to the same or similar events that have already happened. The guards in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, for example, discuss during their night shift what had happened during the previous night and thus the apparition of the ghost is presented as repetitive action. A repetitive representation of events is more difficult to imagine in drama since, strictly speaking, it would involve the same scene to be played several times in exactly the same way. While a complete overlap of scenes is not feasible as it would probably cause

boredom, especially modern plays frequently make use of the repetition of similar events/interactions or parts of dialogues (Ibid, p. 151). A good example is Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* where Vladimir and Estragon repeat actions and verbal exchanges throughout the play and where, most significantly, the two acts are structured in parallel, culminating in the announcement of the imminent appearance of Godot (who never shows up) and Vladimir's and Estragon's inaction

1.4 Japanese Drama

Be it Noh or Kabuki, Bunraku or Sho-Gekijo, everyday Japan gets the first ray of the Sun, equally a long story of one of the world's oldest, most vibrant and influential performance traditions is unveiled in the land of sunrise. Japan, which represents the furthest east for China, was greatly influenced by this country (Rimer, Mori and Poulton 2014, p. 2). This latter developed all of the hallmarks of developed civilization, including written language, advanced cities, specialized labor and bronze technology around 2000 years before Japan. As a result, the younger culture was sharing Chinese philosophies, political structures, architecture, Buddhism, clothing styles and even its written languages and cultural dimensions including theater. The term Japanese Drama can be applied to drama written and performed in Japan between 600AD and the present day. Many important elements of the dramatic art in Japan are similar to those developed by the Chinese. In many cases, the story material is the same, and there is great similarity in the methods of producing and acting (Brazell and Araki 1998, p. 33). There were two periods of brilliance in Japan (the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries), and two distinct types of theater: the aristocratic and the popular. The former is associated with the famous Noh plays, which reached their period of perfection during the fourteenth century.

1.4.1 Origins and Conventions

The origins of speech are probably to be found in emotional exclamations and the imitative sounds which accompany imitative action. The inner urge to self-expression, joined with the capacity of mimicry, not only led to language but made a natural union of song and dance in which the primal elements of drama appear. The expressive moments of primitive life were essentially dramatic, and the primal elements of drama may be found wherever ethnic societies have had their beginnings, for each primitive society held within itself the germ of dramatic culture (Rimer, Mori and Poulton 2014, p.10). Thus, not one but many distinct origins of the

drama, may be recognized, as a form of the human expression and marked similarities in the development of the drama among widely scattered peoples. Such similarities are but evidence of the essential oneness.

Traditionally throughout this period between 600 AD and today, Japanese Drama has taken many forms, being characterized by a blending of dramatic context, music, and perhaps most importantly, a strong emphasis on various dance forms. Japanese Drama throughout its history has remained heavily stylized, relying on symbolism in both story, setting and costuming which was often highly elaborate in its design and usage (Osinski Zbigniew 1991, p. 95-112)). Some more modern dramatic pieces do reflect some naturalistic and realistic approaches, however many remain rigidly entrenched in tradition and often reflect a centuries old repertoire of plays or scenes:

Prehistoric times	7 th to 16 th centuries	Azuchi momoyama period (1574-1600)	Takugawa period (1603-1867)	Meiji period (1868-1912)	Since WWII (Since 1945)
Kagura dances	Gigaku Sarugaku	Noh Kyogen	Samurai Kabuki Wagoto Aragoto Puppet plays	Banraku Shimpa	Modern Noh, Kabuki and Banraku




Figure 1.5 Evolution of Japanese Drama over History¹⁶

Political and cultural events influenced the development as well as the generic formation of drama in Japan.

From the days portrayed in earliest mythology, the Japanese have been an agricultural people, making rice their staple production. Extant songs of the rice planting point to primitive origin. In the process all members of the community, women as well as men, work from dawn to dark. The exact origin of such songs, likely long to have been transmitted in oral tradition, cannot be

determined. Such dances and songs are intimately associated with occasions of Buddhist or Shinto ceremonial. The study of their development recognizes the role religion plays as a patron of art in early Japan (Stein B. S 1986, p. 107-125). The Japanese culture could not reach such a high level without the quickening influence of China. The written characters of the Japanese language are a product of contact with Chinese culture. This influence reaches Japan as early as 248 AD. The most vital element in all this influence was Buddhism and as early as the regency of Shotoku Taishi (593 – 621) that religion had gained a position of Imperial sanction and favor.

The earliest form of known Japanese drama is Gigaku. Popular between the 6th and 8th centuries AD, this comic form of theatre was predominantly dance centred and was introduced from China, although it is believed that it may have had links extending back to the original Greek drama forms (Donald Pollock 1995, p. 581-597). The superficial nature of these dances were rejected by Japanese rulers and by the end of the 8th century it had largely been supplanted by Bugaku¹, a form of dance also introduced from China. Bugaku and Sarugaku² were gradually combined with the former dance styles as well as the sacred ceremonies and processions of the Shinto religion to form a more highly developed and original form of Japanese Drama.

Noh and Kogen were dance and theater forms that had come to express the gravity and decorum of a rigidly formal samurai ruling class by the end of the Azuchi-Momoyama period (1574–1600). Artistically severe and highly disciplined, Noh was imbued with the sternly pessimistic philosophy of Buddhism. In content, Noh plays taught the folly of worldly power and position, that time destroys all living things (Lombard 2015, p. 17). The heroes of play after play pray for the divine intercession of Amida (Amitābha) in order that they, tormented ghosts of dead warriors and court ladies, may break free of earthly attachments and achieve Buddhist salvation.

During the Tokugawa period (1603–1867) Noh was assiduously cultivated by samurai as a refined accomplishment. Commoners were forbidden by law to study Noh and were excluded from performances except on special “subscription” occasions, when any person, high or low in rank, could see Noh performed outdoors in a large enclosure. Noh became the exclusive theater art of the warrior class, while bugaku continued as the chief performing art of the imperial court. In 1603 several kinds of urban dances were arranged by a young woman named Okuni into a new dance, called Kabuki (Ibid, p. 39). Other troupes

of femaleprostitute-performers adopted the sensuous and popular style of Okuni's Kabuki dance.

In 1653, when the authorities required Kabuki to be performed by adult males, Kabuki began to develop as a serious art. During the Genroku era (1688–1703) most of Kabuki's essential characteristics were established. Large commercial theater buildings holding several thousand spectators were constructed in the three major cities—Edo (Tokyo), Kyōto, and Ōsaka. The stage, which previously had been simply a copy of the Noh stage, became wider and deeper and was equipped with a draw curtain to separate acts; and in the early 1700s a ramp (*hanamichi*) was constructed from the rear of the auditorium to the stage for actors' entrances and exits. A new style of puppet play was created in 1686 by the writer Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725) and the chanter Takemoto Gidayū at the Takemoto Puppet Theater in Ōsaka, the city which became the home of puppet theatre in Japan. The chanter is responsible not only for narrating the play but for providing the voices of all the puppet characters as well; Gidayū's expressive delivery style remains influential to this day. In the 1720s and '30s puppet plays gradually became more dramatic and less narrative under the influence of Kabuki (Ibid, p.63). A revolutionary three-man puppet was created in which mouth, eyes, eyebrows, and fingers could move, encouraging writers to compose dramatic plays calling for complex emotional expression.

During the 19th century the most important Kabuki dramas were written in Edo, by Tsuruya Namboku IV and Kawatake Mokuami. They wrote all the standard types of Kabuki play—*sewamono* (domestic), *jidaimono* (history), and *shosagoto* (dance plays)—in large numbers; each wrote between 150 and 200 plays in his professional career (Rimer, Mori and Poulton 2014, p. 10). They spent their lives in the Kabuki theater as writers. Although neither was formally educated, their plays reflect with great discernment the desperate social conditions that prevailed as the feudal system in Japan neared its collapse.

Noh, puppet theater, and Kabuki were affected in differing degrees by the abolition of feudalism in 1867. At a stroke, the samurai class was eliminated and Noh lost its base of economic support. Important actors retired to the country to eke out a living as menial workers. For several years Noh was not performed at all, except that Umewaka Minoru, a minor actor, gave public performances in his home and elsewhere between 1868 and 1876. In 1881 a public stage was

built in Shiba Park, Tokyo, for performances sponsored by the newly formed Noh Society and by its successor, the Noh Association. The most influential supporter of Noh during the Meiji period (1868–1912) was the aristocrat Iwakura Tomomi (Ibid, p. 71). The study of Noh came to be a highly regarded activity among the middle classes, and in time each of the five Noh schools (Kanze, Hōshō, Komparu, Kongō, and Kita) became financially stable, sponsoring its own performances and building its own theaters in the major cities

There was a brief revival of interest in Ōsaka puppet drama in the 1870s under the impetus of the theater manager Daizō, the fourth Bunrakuken, who called his theater Bunraku-za (from the name of a troupe organized by Uemura Bunrakuken early in the century). The popular term for puppet drama, Bunraku, dates from this time. Learning to chant puppet texts became a vogue during the late Meiji period (Ibid, p. 175). In 1909 the Shōchiku theatrical combine supported performances at the Bunraku Puppet Theater in Ōsaka, and by 1914 this was the only commercial puppet house remaining.

But, in spite of prosperity and seeming adaptation to new conditions, by the early decades of the 20th century, new artistic creation in Kabuki reached an impasse, and thereafter Kabuki became restricted almost as much as Bunraku and Noh to a classic repertoire of plays. Scholars and artists, learning of Western drama, organized successive groups designed to reform Kabuki—that is, to eliminate excessive stylization and to press for a more realistic manner of performance (Kernodle 1989, p. 575). The actor Ichikawa Danjūrō acted in historically accurate (and reportedly dull) *katsureki geki* (“living history” plays) written by the journalist Fukuchi Ōchi. Three *shin* Kabuki (“new Kabuki” plays) written by the scholar Tsubouchi Shōyō were influenced by Shakespeare, whose plays *Tsubouchi* was then translating.

In 1906 the Literary Society was established by Tsubouchi Shōyō to train young actors in Western realistic acting, thus beginning the serious study of Western drama. The first modern play (*shingeki*) to be staged in Japan in the Western realistic manner was Ibsen’s *John Gabriel Borkman*, directed by Osanai Kaoru in 1909 at his Free Theater, which was modeled on the “free theaters” of Europe. Much to the detriment of *shingeki*’s development, major European playwrights—George Bernard Shaw, Anton Chekhov, Leo Tolstoy, Gerhart Hauptmann, Maeterlinck—were chosen for production over aspiring Japanese authors by all the important

early troupes: the Art Theater (1913–19) founded by a Tsubouchi disciple, Shimamura Hōgetsu; the Stage Association; and the Tsukiji Little Theater (1924–28) (Ibid, p. 563)

Following Japan's surrender in 1945, Kabuki and Bunraku plays that the American occupation forces considered feudal, such as *Kanjinchō* (*The Subscription List*) and *Chūshingura: The Treasury of Loyal Retainers*, were banned briefly. Since then, Noh and Kabuki have greatly prospered, while Bunraku has become increasingly subsidized (Ortolani 1995, p. 292). Modern playwrights and performers, many of whom had been jailed or persecuted by Japanese authorities during World War II for liberal and leftist beliefs, were encouraged by the occupation forces. Important *shingeki* troupes founded in the immediate postwar years include the Actors' Theater (1944), directed by Senda Koreya, an expert on the works of Bertolt Brecht; The People's Theater, devoted to progressive social and political issues; and Theater Four Seasons (1953), which specialized first in French drama and later in American musicals.

The most extreme rejection of both Western mimesis and traditional Japanese aesthetics is seen in *butō* (or *ankoku butō*, "dance of darkness"; usually Anglicized as Butoh), a postmodern movement begun by Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo in the 1950s in which formal dance technique is eschewed and primal sexuality and the grotesque are explored. The Butoh troupes Sankaijuku, Dairakudakan, and Byakko-sha, as well as individual dancers such as Tanaka Min, often toured Europe and the United States (Ibid, p. 300).

The 1960s was a memorable period in modern Japanese history. In the performing arts, the decade will be remembered particularly as a privileged one that saw an upheaval of turbulent theatrical energy and eventually the birth of a new theater. It is easy to see now, from the vintage point of time that signs of a profound change were already evident in the early 1960s, although few critics could have prophesied a flowering of movements that, continuing into the early 1970s, were to change the face of the theater almost beyond recognition (Rolf and Gillespie 1992, p. 1). Insofar as this theatrical renaissance developed concomitantly, there is a sense now that it has outlived that culture. It remains true, however, that the new theater, precisely by being perhaps the most significant cultural achievement to come out of the period, has an enduring value that demands re-appreciation and a power that still disturbs and charms.

Noh and Kabuki dance continued to be avidly studied by thousands of amateurs into the 21st century; three national theatres (built 1966–85) housed subsidized productions of Noh, Kabuki,

and Bunraku; lavish theater and dance festivals annually hosted local and foreign troupes; and international tours regularly introduced Japanese plays and dances to foreign audiences. Live theater of all types flourished in Japan, each form appealing to its own sector of the overall audience.

1.4.2 Genres of Japanese Drama

The Japanese theater is a living theater. Although its roots go back a millennium and its forms have changed considerably over time, the major genres: Noh, Kyugen, Kabuki and the puppet theater can claim continuous performance traditions. The theatrical arts were, and continue to be, passed down from parent to child, from master to disciple, with each new generation learning by imitation the skills of the previous one and each preserving both performance practices and theater artifacts from earlier periods (Brazell 1998;, p. 23). Only after they have totally mastered traditional performance practices do players experiment with innovations, the most successful of which may then become part of the continuing tradition.

Theater as a distinct performance genre with well-developed texts appeared in Japan only after poetry, narrative literature, and a sophisticated poetics have flourished for more than 600 years. During the early, pre-theater period (ca. 700-1350), both religious and secular performing arts prospered. In addition, many of the early literary arts had performance aspects: stories, for example, were often read aloud with conjunction with displays of illustrations. Court poetry was frequently cited aloud and sometimes composed in the voices of figures in screen paintings. Music and dance were important parts of both sacred and secular culture, and troupes of entertainers: acrobats, monkey trainers, puppeteers and comic mimes, traversed the countryside amusing people of all classes (Salz 2016, p. 21). When a full fledged theater did develop in the 14th century, it was, as one might expect, quite unlike its counterparts elsewhere in the world.

The drama is a favorite form of amusement for Japanese people. The popular plays are generally about history and tradition, or they deal with the lives and adventures of supernatural beings and heroes. The scene is always laid in Japan, a country in which religion and mythology meet to form its culture. The plays are very long. The performances begin in the morning and can last all day (Miner and Konishi 2014, p.187).

Three types of drama have been developed in Japan: the Noh play, the Joruri or puppet play, and the Kabuki play. The Noh play is the national theater of Japan. In the past it was a play reserved for the nobility, and the audience dresses themselves in ceremonial robes. Legend says that the Noh has its origin in the dance and that this dance was invented by the supernatural legendary heroes. The puppet play (or doll theater) is very popular in Japan. The puppets are beautifully made and lifelike in size. The strings are expertly manipulated and the dialogue realistically interpreted¹⁷. Three kinds of performers take part in a bunraku performance: the *Ningyōtsukai* or *Ningyōzukai* (puppeteers), the *Tayū* (chanters) and *shamisen* musicians. Occasionally other instruments such as taiko drums will be used. The most accurate term for the traditional puppet theater in Japan is *ningyō jōruri* (人形浄瑠璃). The combination of chanting and shamisen playing is called *jōruri* and the Japanese word for puppet (or dolls, generally) is *ningyō*. It is used in many plays. Bunraku puppetry has been a documented traditional activity for Japanese people for hundreds of years.

The third type of play is the Kabuki, the play for the masses. It is less intellectual, more realistic, and even sensational. This art form was created by Okuni, a female shrine attendant, in the 17th century. Kabuki plays are performed in large theaters, with a *hanamichi*, or raised platform, extending from the back of the theater to the stage. Kabuki theater is an art form that has gone full circle, Kabuki started out all female and, 400 years later is only played by men. The word 'kabuki' is made of three characters in Japanese: 'ka' meaning 'songs', 'bu' meaning 'dance' and 'ki' meaning 'skill'. Kabuki is performed at a special theater and the displays are usually overwhelming in their use of color, makeup and stylized movements. The revolving stage and trapdoors mean that impressive entrances and exits occur throughout the performance.

Kabuki performers are extremely famous in Japan and the skill is usually kept within families; son following father into the business. Some players concentrate on female roles while others usually play male roles, although there is some interchanging. The female specialists are called 'onnagata' and spend an incredible amount of time learning how to move, eat, talk, dress, etc., like a woman. When a scene reaches its climax, the actor strikes flamboyant poses, over emphasizing the emotion and drama of the moment and certain performers have become famous

for their portrayal of a particular kabuki scene. Others strive to equal or surpass these exalted performances

Aragoto characters are the superhero types seen in jidaimono, and are recognized by their distinctive kumadori make-up, painted in stripes of red, black and blue on the face, arms and legs. Wagoto characters are quite the reverse, often being played by onnagata, and are much more sensitive, restrained and romantic in feel. Japanese Kabuki plays can be divided into three main categories: shosagoto, or dance pieces; jidaimono, or history plays; and sewamono, or plays of the common people. Shosagoto are generally made up of a combination of mai, a circling movement with the heels kept close to the floor, odori, folk-influenced gestures and turns, and furi, use of mime often involving props such as fans. Characters in jidaimono may be aristocrats, lords, princesses and empresses, or their retainers and vassals, and often a kind of superhero will dominate the drama. In sewamono, the characters are the lowest level of pre-modern Japanese society, and the plays often revolve around a conflict between giri, and ninjo, human emotions, which may be a forbidden love which causes a dramatic climax.

Under the patronage of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, whose favor Zeami² enjoyed after performing before him in 1374, the Noh was able to shake off the crudities of its past and to develop as a complex and aristocratic theater. After his father's death, Zeami became the chief figure in the Noh. He directed the Kanze school of Noh that his father had established and that had profound and lasting influence (Thomas Blenman Hare, 1995). Zeami not only continued to perform brilliantly but also wrote and revised plays prolifically.

Although Zeami is credited with having perfected Noh as it exists today, his book "Juroku-bu-shu" was not discovered until 1883 (Meiji era). Until that time, this historical genius of Japanese culture, whose talent was equivalent to that of Sen no Rikyu, the founder of the tea ceremony, and Basho Matsuo, a haiku poet, had been forgotten not only among the public but also even among Noh performers. The gem-like words Zeami left for posterity show us his sharp insight into the art of performance as well as into society. Beyond the bounds of the centuries, his words impress us, living in the twenty-first century, and provide wisdom on how to live in modern life.

Noh play derived from the Japanese word for “skill” or “talent”. It is a major form of classical Japanese musical drama that has been performed since the 14th century. Many characters are masked, with men playing male and female roles. Traditionally, a Noh “performance day” lasts all day and consists of five Noh plays interspersed with shorter, humorous kyōgen pieces. However, present-day Noh performances consist of two Noh plays with one Kyōgen play in between.

While the field of Noh performance is extremely codified, and regulated by the iemoto¹ system, with an emphasis on tradition rather than innovation, some performers do compose new plays or revive historical ones that are not a part of the standard repertoire. Works blending Noh with other theatrical traditions have also been produced, developed and designed in a modern way today, keeping the same values of Noh, challenging the traditional with the contemporary Japanese theater.

1.4.3 Myth between Temple and Theatre

Myth and not religion, explains well the relationship between the Japanese people and their homeland through the so called story of the creation of Japan. The legend, which is no more than a myth, shows the relationship between the Japanese people and their country and represents the standards of the Shinto in Japan. According to this legend, both the emperor and the country he reigns over are descended from the same line. The first emperor, Jimmu, was particularly the first cousin to the land he ruled. A Japanese cannot imagine himself to be Japanese unless he is part of his homeland (Jonathan 2004, p. 56). It is that union between human and land that formulates the Japanese identity. The Japanese are not a religious race, their moral codes are based on mythological and philosophical ideas. Nevertheless, religion plays a role in the Japanese society.

At the 3rd Century A.D., shamanism and religious rituals evolved in Japan as a reaction of settled groups of peoples to powers of nature and death. Evidence of this coupling are writings in the Kojiki (A.D. 712), Fudoki (A.D. 713), Wei Zhi (3rd Century) as well as the existence of Haniwa (clay figures). The earliest forms of drama can be seen in such rituals, which were comprised of simple songs, dances and imitative acts (Asai 1999, p. 12). Many elements of Shamanism found in many varieties of folk Kagura (Shinto music and dance) in addition to the

existence of old shamanic practices in early kagura and some elements of Noh originated in shamanic rituals.

The dramatic and religious worship are tightly tied. Religion itself is an expression of the social mind, and the social mind in its self-expression provides the material, which under a religious umbrella, represents art (Matsumura 2014, p. 144). The dramatic expression of life, under the inspiration of high social contacts in exercising religion shapes forms of beauty which constitutes art. The origin of Japanese drama was socially religious. Religious and social customs are so united in the culture of the Japanese race, each one influencing the other. The social life of a simple agricultural people provided the material which religious ceremonies of worship wrought into the forms of art still preserved in Kagura and Noh.

Religion founded many genres of Japanese drama like Noh and others. In addition, in some instances composed anew by wandering bands of performers, who themselves were Yamabushi, followers of ascetic mountain cults, mainly Buddhist in affiliation, but with elements which probably go back to ancient times. Kagura can reasonably be categorized as drama, and also as a sort of religious drama, its main object being to spread knowledge of Shinto myth among people. Resemblance to other Japanese drama lies in the use of musical accompaniment, and the incorporation of comic interludes into the program; the use of masks, too, is characteristic of certain dramatic forms (Redmond 2008, p. 229). Certainly, for many dwellers in rural areas, Kagura was once the only sort of staged drama that they were likely to see. It is still to be found, but more frequently nowadays at folk entertainment festivals.

The religious content of Kagura has entirely to do with non-Buddhist beliefs, but one survival form possibly as early as the 14th century, but certainly from the 16th Century, is the performance which is given annually in a Kyoto Temple Mibu-dera from which the name Mibu play derives. Noh plays also provided material for Kagura and Mibu plays, with the implication that pieces from Noh were brought into their repertoires as a means of adding to the range of plots available in addition to the fundamental religious pieces. In the period from the mid 14th Century to the end of the 16th Century the Noh plays were the dominant drama in Japan. One central line of development, which accounts for the fact that Noh plays were traditionally given in Buddhist temples (and sometimes in Shinto shrines) was that of an annual ritual (Ibid, p. 237).

Buddhist and Shinto influences are generally of higher level of wealth brought about the popularization of drama during Japan's middle ages (1300-1700). Like all drama, the first music and acting were ceremonies celebrating the supernatural beings, performed in the natural environment. As time passed, these dramas developed into sophisticated traditions and told stories ranging from the tragic to the comic, in tones ranging from religious to ribald (Standish 2013, p. 145). They are still widely performed today in Japan like: Yukio Mishima's *Confessions of a Mask*.

Spirits, ghosts and supernatural beings shape the flow of dramatic scenes originated from characters of various Japanese legends, although many are also original. One of the most mysterious such characters is Noh Face, who is perhaps slightly antagonistic, and comes off as a spirit of greed (Ibid, p. 149)¹⁸. The history of wearing masks in Japan for religious rituals is estimated to date back to the country's Jomon period, an era spanning 10,000 BC to 300 BC. Crude masks made from shells and simple pottery evolved into masks with more elaborate faces during the Kofun period, from the 4th through 6th centuries. Following the introduction of Buddhism and Korean influences in the 6th century, masks were also used for secular purposes. Gigaku masks, which covered the entire head, were used in dance performances, but their popularity died out by the end of the Edo period in 1868. Kagura dance performances, on the other hand, in which masks cover only the face, have survived and are still being carried on today (Suzuki 2017, p. 132).

1.4.4 Mask as a Theatrical Device

Be it the ancient Greek theater based on mask intended for ceremonial rites that flourished in the city-state of Athens around 700 BC, or later outcome in Rome prior to 50 BC prevailing masks for acoustic and visual functions in addition to the introduction of the most predominant drama typology. Be it the Black African mask rooted in the pre-historical magic and presence of the unseen based on mythological conventions and symbolizing the body and the soul, or the Inca, Aztec and Maya Latin America where masks are a commonplace technology and a form of art mainly iconizing the concepts of death and life. typically used as ornaments for rituals and as means of entertainment. Be it Siva, Shakti and Ramayana: types of Indian masks implying link between nature power and ritualistic connotations, or Tiaioshen and Dyjia Duangong Chinese theatrical masks with their festive and ceremonial functions. In the west,

the east, the north or the south, in ancient or modern times theater mask possesses the same supreme theatrical expression in its semiotic, energetic, analytical, iconic and hypocrite functions that all meet in the Japanese Noh Mask.

The mask has long been a symbol of the theater; its iconic function can be traced to its traditional development as a variety of conventions for the projection of action. The tradition of mask as a theatrical or physical convention is long and varied; it spans the entire history of the Classical theater. As a theatrical convention, the mask has developed differently in each of the major Classical periods, although in all periods, its primary function has been to convey an objective image of character action to both the actor and the audience, a good example is the mask of Samurai which cannot be disassociated from the Japanese traditional image (Fieschi 2006, p. 9)..

While there is no necessarily a problem with the unmasked characters, those that are masked are much more prevalent. The utility of the mask can even be described in purely technical terms: the mask is a useful project. The use of a mask is often necessary for practical reasons. It is called for to characterize, to create a character who is obviously and unequivocally that certain person or issue. The facial mobility and mimicry of the actor even when excellent are subject to inconsistency and confusion. From a distance, all facial expression is attenuated and becomes vague and therefore ineffective on an expressive level. The mask presents a consistent visual form which the character emanate. Thus, the possibility for confusion is mitigated as much as possible. Further, the mask is a means of transmitting the information of the character to the performer who acquires the face molded by the mask itself, along with the characteristics that the mask is intended to express. The actor takes on all the expressive consequences imposed by the mask, including both physical behavior and qualities of the character.

A theater mask for performance is a dynamic living form. The rhythmic interplay of the lines and planes of the mask and how they animate the negative space around it create a form that “plays.” The mask appears to change expression as it moves through space or as the physical body of the performer moves underneath it. The form of the mask dictates the rhythmic movement and energy needed for performance by the actor. This is reflected in the differences of how various styles and cultural practices of masked theater are performed and experienced.

This can be seen in the differences between the Noh, Kyogen, Topeng, Greek Masked Theater, Kabuki, The Commedi dell'Arte as well as various forms of contemporary masked theater. A theater mask for performance sees the world from a singular perspective. Its opinions, its emotional life and its reactions to events experienced are all based on the perspective held within the mask. The mask maker creates the perspective through a rhythmic understanding of human emotion and how those manifest in the movement of the human body as it moves through space.

Masks are among the most exotic and spectacular of the plastic arts, yet their widespread use through history and in a wide variety of geographical settings has lent the concept of the mask a level of familiarity which is shared by few other body techniques with the human long history of masks. In terms of form and function, masks have an inscription of social status on the body through various forms of mutilation, decoration or somatisation (Perzynski 2012, p. 15). Despite their familiarity, masks remain enigmatic. Masks are one of the variety of semiotic systems that are related through their conventional use in disguising, transforming, or displaying identity, therefore they work by coordinating the iconicity.

The use of masks in Japan goes back to at least the early part of the 7th Century when, in imitation of the Chinese model, an imperial Department of Music was set up to organize and regulate the various kinds of musical entertainment imported from the Asian mainland, as well as those developed in Japan itself. In 612 some of the forms deriving from the continent had been known in Japan, but the most important of the early entertainments was one known as Gigaku which is said to have been brought over by a Korean called Mimashi¹⁹. Although the entertainment itself has long since disappeared, leaving little trace beyond the Lion Dance (*Shishi Mai*) in its many and varied forms, nearly 250 Gigaku masks have survived (Ibid, p. 100). These are characterized by their large size: they were complete headpieces with ears, designed to be worn over the head itself, and the face part alone was generally between 24 and 33 cms.

An even larger number of masks survive from Bugaku, the next important entertainment to flourish in Japan. The term is now used to cover the whole range of ancient Court dances, which comprise two broad types, one the various kinds of early Japanese dance, and the other a variety of dance pieces originating overseas. The latter are again divided into two types, the Dances of

the Left, deriving from India, South-East Asia and China, and the Dances of the Right, originating in Korea and neighboring parts of the mainland of north Asia; and in most of these, masks were worn by the dancers (O'Neil 2014, p. 126) .

Considering the historical circumstances surrounding the creation of masks, it is astonishing to realize to what extent their design was perfectly achieved. Notably the idea of the pointed nose which was almost a superstition as it was believed to be an imitation of the device which was used to hold vinegar in the time of the bubonic plague to remove the disease, or at least the bad smelling of the sick or the dead (Granat 2002, p. 36). Although masks originated in different circumstances, the reasons for their creation are not so different. Whether the reason is to allow the person to transform into an animal form or to get in touch with spiritual or ancestral roots or just to shadow a personality, they have been put in a theatrical context, with a space and time on a scene to change a usual form, almost a form of escapism.

Although Noh masks cover a wide variety of types, in general they show a continuation of the process of reduction in size, some of the most characteristic of them being smaller than the human face. The different types of Noh mask are divided into three main categories. Historically, it seems that masks of supernatural beings were the earliest, since they were used from an early stage in the religious rites and dramatic presentations of the shrines and temples; and that, as Noh arose and enlarged its range of performance, it had to meet the need for other masks depicting ordinary men and women; the first group in fact consists of masks such as called Beshimi, Tobide, Tenjine and Shikami which represent supernatural beings. Typically, these are rather big, with large ears, and the carving of the eyes, nose and mouth produces an exaggerated form of the usually fearsome expression appropriate to the particular role (Sheppard 2001, p. 96). The second groups consist of masks representing old men (Jo masks). These have a separate hairpiece attached and arranged across the top, a long thin beard implanted into the chin, and ears of normal size. The third group comprises masks representing women and younger men who are ordinary human beings, or the ghost or spirits of such people. They do not have a definite expression, like the masks in the first group in particular, but are so subtly made that they have a neutral or intermediate expression which, with the help of the other elements in the performance and skillful use by the actors, can portray a variety of emotions. Masks of this kind are too shallow to have ears and they cover only the front part of the face. Thus, some Noh masks were clearly derived from those used in older entertainment forms (Ibid, 91

p.100). Basically, they were required to serve different purposes in a more complex entertainment, and as a result, they may be said to represent the peak of the art of mask carving in Japan.

1.4.5 Performance and Narration

The three primary ideological centers in Japan were Buddhism, Confucianism, and native beliefs that were later called Shinto. Buddhism and Confucianism were imported from the continent in the ancient period. Buddhism stressed issues of individual salvation, suffering, and protection from various dangers. Confucianism became the guide for ethical behavior, and social and political relations, based largely on the model of the family and filial piety. Finally, the local folk beliefs focused on fertility, nature, purification and pollution. Dramatic conflict in Japanese literary texts often derives from the interaction among these different ideologies (Araki 1964, p. 10). Much of the Japanese literature from the Nara through the medieval era stands in a larger Buddhist context that regards excessive attachments, notably family ties and the deep emotions of love, as a serious deterrent to individual salvation, especially in a world where everything is not everlasting and must have an end, the fact which is to be narrated by stage..

The Japanese believe that strong attachment, particularly at the point of death, would impede the soul's progress to the next world, which would be the Pure Land. In a typical Noh play by Zeami the protagonist is caught in one of the lower realms. For the warrior the attachment is often the bitterness of defeat; for women, jealousy or the failure of love, and for old men, the importance of age. In Zeami's "dream plays", such as the warrior play *Atsumori*, in which the protagonist appears in the dream of the travelling monk (the waki), the protagonist cathartically reenacts or recounts the source of his attachment to the dreaming priest (Tokita 2015, p. 134).

Many Japanese literary and aesthetic forms, particularly those that stress brevity, condensation, and overtones, assume an intimate audience. The paring down of form and expression occurs in a wide variety of forms: poetry, Noh drama, landscape gathering, bonsai, tea ceremony, and ink painting (Ibid, p. 91). Historically, Japanese poetry evolved from the *choka* (literally, "long poem"), which is found in the early *Man'yōshū*, to the 31 syllable *waka*, the central form of the *Kokinshū* and the Heian period to linked verse in medieval period, finally, in the Tokugawa

(or Edo) period, to the 17 syllable hokku, later called haiku, probably the shortest poetic form in world literature.

A similar condensation of form can be found in Noh drama. As it evolved under Zeami (1363-1443), the greatest Noh playwright, Noh was a drama of elegance, restraint, and suggestion (Richie 2005, p20). Human actions were reduced to the bare essentials, to highly symbolic movements such as tilting the mask to express joy or sweeping the hand to represent weeping. In *A Mirror Held to the Flower* (Kakyo), Zeami writes that ‘if what the actor feels in the heart is ten, what appears in movement should be seven’. He stresses that the point at which physical movement becomes minute and then finally stops is the point of greatest intensity. The physical and visual restrictions: the fixed mask, the slow body movement, the almost complete absence of props or scenery...create a drama that must occur as much in the mind of the audience as on the stage.

Conflict tends to be internalized in Japanese vernacular literature, often creating a highly psychological or lyrical work. In Zeami’s Noh dramas, for example, the characters have no substantial internal conflict. Instead, the climax occurs when the protagonist is freed of his or her internal attachment or is reconciled to him or to herself, not when the opposition, if there is any, is vanquished (Jortner, McDonald and Wetmore JR 2007, p. 25). When the influence of Buddhism abated in the Tokugawa period (a secular age of urban growth, capitalism and commerce, dominated by urban commoners), more secular plot paradigms became prominent, such as the conflict between human desire or love (ninjo) and social duty or obligation (giri), which lies at the heart of Chikamatsu Mon’zaemon’s puppet plays (jouri). Even so, the ultimate focus of the literature and drama tends to be on the intense emotions, generated by or in conflict with the irreconcilable pressures of society and social responsibility (supported by Confucian ethics)²⁰. Although dramatic conflict exists, the primary objective of drama is not always the pursuit and development of dramatic conflict to its logical consequences.

Although sometimes possessing elaborate and complex plot structures, vernacular prose fiction often is concerned with the elaboration of a particular mood or emotion and tends to be fragmentary and episodic. For example, in vernacular fiction, the poetic diary, and drama (Noh, Jouri), it is no accident that one of the most popular scenes is the parting: a poetic tops that can be traced back to the poetry of the Man’yosha. *The Tale of Genji* is highlighted by a series of

partings, which culminate in the climactic parting: the death of the heroine. The same can be said of *The Tale of Heike*, a complex and detailed military epic that repeatedly focuses on the terrible partings that war forces on human beings (Ibid, p. 123). The closeness of traditional social ties (between parent and child, lord and retainer, husband and wife, individual and group) make the parting an emotionally explosive situation, which is often presented in highly poetic language.

The primary vernacular genres in the Heian period were the 31 syllable poem (waka) and related forms, particularly poetic diaries (nikki) and vernacular tales (monogatari). The poetic orientation of Heian vernacular literature, however, should not obscure the fact that Japanese vernacular literature also was rooted in a narrative tradition that often imported texts from the continent and was presented orally to the audience. This narrative, storytelling literature which came to fore in the late Heian and medieval periods when commoner culture began to surface, included a wide assortment of myths, legends, anecdotes (setsuwa), and folktales, often about strange, supernatural beings and events belonging to the unseen world. This narrative tradition, which drew on anecdotes from China and India, became particularly prominent in the late Heian period, when Buddhist priests used for didactic purposes popular stories that they recorded and rewrote to preach to a largely illiterate audience: *The Konjaku monogatari shu*, which was compiled in the late Heian period, is the most famous example of a collection of such anecdotes. This storytelling tradition also appears in the form of extended epic-like narratives like *The Tales of the Heike*, Noh drama, Sekkyobushi (sermon ballads), this type of narrational voice flows over the action, dialogue and scenery. First and third person narrations overlap. In Noh for example, the dialogue alternates with descriptive passages narrated by both the chorus and the protagonist (Leiter 2015, p. 3). The position of the narrator is most prominent in Jouri, in which the chanter (gidayu), on a dais separate from the puppet stage, performs both the puppet dialogue and the narration.

This double structure (action enveloped in descriptive narration) lends itself to extremely powerful lyric tragedy, in which the tone is elegant, poetic, and uplifting even when the subject matter or situation is unpleasant and sorrowful. The love suicide plays by Chikamatsu, the greatest Jouri playwright, are one example. The climatic travel scene (michiyuki), a sub-category of the parting topos, is one of tragedy and pathos: the lovers who are traveling to the place of their death rather than the live under their present circumstances (Ogata and Asakawa 94

2018, p. 58). The overriding narration is chanted to music and interwoven with allusions to poetic places and classical poetry. The narration consequently elevates the character even as he or she dies. The same can be said of the climatic scenes in *The Tale of Genji* or in the final chapter of *The Tales of the Heike*, when Kenreimon' in reflects on the destruction of her clan. In most of these scenes, the poetic descriptions of nature and seasons, so central to Japanese poetry, suggest that death is not an end but a return to nature.

The lyrical character of Japanese vernacular literature also derives from a fusion of genres and media that in European literature are generally thought of being as intrinsically separate. Except for some folk literature (setsua), it is hard to find a work of premodern Japanese prose literature that does not include poetry. Since the Renaissance, European theater has generally been split into three basic forms: drama, opera and ballet, whereas Japanese traditional theater has combined these elements (acting, music and dance) in each of the major dramatic forms: Noh drama, kyogen (comic drama), Jouri (puppet theater), and Kabuki. Of these only Kyogen does not depend on music. One of the central principles of Noh and Jouri is the jo/ha/kyu (introduction, development and finale), which regulates the tempo of the play, particularly in relationship to dance and song (Ibid, p. 60). This multimedia quality often makes the drama more performative than mimetic, instead of emphasizing the represented world, the work calls attention to itself as a performative medium.

1.5 Conclusion:

This chapter tends to show the position of “identity” in the Japanese cultural production including literature and drama as a genre more specifically. To what extent Japanese aesthetics can be approached not only through the relatively scant writings of the old literature specifically devoted to the subject, but through the evidence in works of dramatic literature or criticism, in objects of art, and even in the manner of life of the Japanese as a whole, so pervasive has aestheticism been. A number of headings under which Japanese aesthetics belongs to, have been discussed including: suggestion, irregularity, simplicity, and perishability. Furthermore, Japanese drama has been approached in terms of its conventions and how it did originate; submitting divisions exploiting the concept of mask and the masking ritual within the influence of mythology and religion in addition to highlighting the narrative discourse as well as performativity at the whole of its endeavor to create a Japanese drama.

Notes to Chapter One:

- 1: Adapted from Sysoyev Pavel. V. (2001). *Individual's Cultural Identity in the Context of Dialogue of Cultures*. The Tambov State University Press: Tambov.
- 2: Cited in Donald Keen (2007, p. 135) *Anthology of Japanese Literature: From the Earliest Era to the Mid-Nineteenth Century*
- 3: Another pervasive characteristic of Japanese art is an understanding of the natural world as a source of spiritual insight and an instructive mirror of human emotion. An indigenous sensibility perceived that a spiritual realm was manifest in nature with numinous qualities.
- 4: Adapted from Tokyo National Museum 東京国立美術館, ed. Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan zuhan mokuroku: Kosode fukushoku hen 東京国立博物館図版目録: 小袖服飾篇. Benridō, 1983.
- 5: This tension between different versions of the self has been heavily present in the literature written by people subsumed into the empire as it grew, as well as that written by various members by the multi-ethnic society formed within the new borders of Japan.
- 6: This may be true in part, although much has still to be said on the side of the artifact's integrity. However that may be, few will dispute the elasticity of literature.
- 7: Bushido is presented as uniquely Japanese but was actually heavily influenced by Confucian thought. There are many ways in which Japan subtly or not so subtly sought to differentiate itself from Chinese culture.
- 8: Tsuga Teisho, Takebe Ayatari, and Okajima Kanzan were instrumental in developing the yomihon, which were historical romances almost entirely in prose, influenced by Chinese vernacular novels such as *Three Kingdoms* and *Shui hu zhuan*. Kyokutei Bakin wrote the extremely popular fantasy and historical romance, *Nansō Satomi Hakkenden* (南総里見八犬伝), in addition to other yomihon. New genres included horror, crime stories, morality stories, and comedy, often accompanied by colorful woodcut prints.
- 9: The Formalists emerged in Russia in the years before 1917 Bolshevic revolution, and flourished throughout the 1920s, until they were effectively silenced by Stalinism. Formalism was essentially the application of linguistics to the study of literature. Literature can be seen as descriptive or objective category but the value judgment to put a writing under the heading of literature has a close relation to social ideologies
- 10: Retrieved from: <https://www.tes.com/lessons/Kj7-55u9zVe7cg/genres-of-literature-on-26/08/2015>
- 11: Adapted from Pfister Manfred (1991,) *The Theory and Analysis of Drama* (p. 14-15)

12: Adapted from Pfister Manfred (1991,) *The Theory and Analysis of Drama* (p. 41-45)

13: Retrieved from: <https://www.storyboardthat.com/articles/e/five-act-structure-on-31/12/2016>

14: Adapted from: Gibbs John. (2012,) *Mise-en-Scene: Film, Style and Interpretation* (p. 23)

15: Rennert Hellmut, H. 2004, *Essays on Twentieth-century German Drama and Theater: An American Reception, 1977-1999* (p105)

16: Adapted from: Osinski, Zbig,iew. (1991). *Grotowski Blazes the Trails: From Objective Drama to Ritual Arts* (p. 95-112).

17: It is also known as *Bunraku* (文楽), also known as *Ningyō jōruri* (人形浄瑠璃), is a form of traditional Japanese puppet theatre, founded in Osaka in the beginning of 17th century.

18: The concept for Noh Face is very unique with a collection of strange powers that are made of mythological spirit.

19: Gigaku is sometimes said to have derived originally from Central Asian, Tibetan and Indian dances, but with the general enthusiasm for things Chinese prevailing in Japan at the time, it quickly found favor at the Imperial court and in Bhudist temples.

20: Although dramatic conflict exists, the primary objective of drama is not always the pursuit and development of dramatic conflict to its logical consequences.

Chapter Two

Feminist Shadows of Japanese
Drama

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Chapter Two: Feminist Shadows of Japanese Drama

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sheds light on feminist theories of pertinent utility in the reading of the selected plays in the present work as well as feminist issues in the Japanese literary scholarship and the struggle to change notions of rooted ideologies in the social system about women's space, time and body installed by the conventions of Shinto and Buddhism. While it narrows down the scope to drama for the challenge feminists take in Japan to have access to that literary genre basically forbidden to women as playwrights and actors.

2.2 Feminist Literary Values

When a school of literary criticism is still evolving, trying to make a definitive explanation of literature, it can be a perilous undertaking. Feminist criticism for example is difficult to define because it has not yet been codified into a single central perspective. Instead, its several shapes and directions vary from one country to another. The premise that unites those who call themselves feminists critics is the assumption that Western culture is fundamentally patriarchal, creating an imbalance of power that marginalizes women and the work. That social structure, they agree, is reflected in religion, philosophy, economics, education and all aspects of the culture, including literature (Benstock 1987, p. 110). The feminist critic works to expose such Ideology and, in the end, to change it so that the creativity of women can be fully realized and appreciated.

2.2.1 Feminist Literary Theory

Although the feminist movement stretches back into the nineteenth century, the modern attempt to look at literature through a feminist lens began to develop in the early 1960s. It was a long time coming. For centuries, Western culture had operated on the assumption that women were inferior creatures. Leading thinkers from Aristotle to Darwin reiterated that women were lesser beings, and one does not have to look hard to find comments from writers, theologians, and other public figures that disparage and degrade women. The Greek ecclesiast John Chrysostom (345-407 AD.) called women 'a foe to friendship, an inescapable punishment, a necessary evil,' and Ecclesiastics states, 'All wickedness is but little to the wickedness of a woman.' Alexander Pope (1688-1744) asserted, 'Most women have no character at all,' and John Keats (1795-1821) explained, 'The opinion I have of the generality of women who appear to me as children to

Whom I would rather give a sugar plum than my time, forms a barrier against matrimony which I rejoice in.'

In 1929 another eloquent analysis of the position of women was pushed by Virginia Woolf, best known as a writer of lyrical and somewhat experimental novels. *A Room of One's Own*, it questioned why women appear so seldom in history. Woolf pointed out that poems and stories are full of their depictions, but in real life, they hardly seem to have existed. They are absent. She pondered what would have happened to a gifted female writer in the Renaissance. Without an adequate education or a room of her own, whatever she had written, Woolf concluded, 'would have been twisted and deformed, issuing from a strained and morbid imagination. Woolf went on to argue that 'if we (women) have the habit of freedom and the courage to write exactly what we think; if we escape a little from the common sitting room and see human beings not always in their relation to each other but in relation to reality. When she (Shakespeare's sister) is born again she shall find it possible to live and write her poetry.' (Woolf 1929)

Individuals like Wollstonecraft and Woolf stand out as eloquent spokespersons for women. Along with them are many others whose names are less well known but whose efforts have been important to the development of women's history, both social and literary. Some of that history has been traced by Elaine Showalter, who divided it into three phases, which she called the feminine phase (1840-1880), the feminist phase (1880-1920), and the female phase (1920-present). In the first, female writers imitated the literary tradition established by men, taking additional care to avoid offensive language or subject matter. Novelists such as Charlotte Bronte and Mary Ann Evans wrote in the forms and styles of recognized writers, all of whom were male. Sometimes female writers even used men's names (Currer Bell and George Eliot, for example) to hide their female authorship. In the second phase, according to Showalter, women protested their lack of rights and worked to secure them. In the political realm, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and others pushed to secure equality under the law, and some of the more radical feminists envisioned separate female utopias. In the literary world, they decried the unjust depictions of women by male writers (Plain and Sellers 2007, p. 197). The third phase, at its beginnings, concentrated on exploring the female experience in art and literature¹. For feminist critics it meant looking at the depiction of women in male texts an effort to reveal the misogyny lurking there. More recently, they have turned their attention to an examination of works by female writers. These latest efforts Showalter refers to as

gynocriticism, a movement that examines the distinctive characteristics of the female experience, in contrast to earlier methods that explained the female by using male models.

The political edge found among minority feminist critics, the Marxist feminists, and others has not been welcomed by everyone. Some complain that radical positions regarding social policy ultimately cause a reader to ignore the literary text (Humm 2015, p. 139). They object that a radical position diverts the critic from the main task at hand-to pay attention to the aesthetics of literature, not to impose a political stance on it. Such comments are formalist in nature, for they urge the reader to see the work as an autonomous entity with its own rules of being. It is an approach that lies at a great distance from the methods of those who would use literature as a tool of social protest and reform.

The definition of feminist criticism was also destabilized by the introduction of deconstruction, which since the middle 1970s has been a disruptive and transformative way of thinking about what it means to be male or female. When the definition plays with the reversal of those categories, it also overturns all the other binary oppositions that are related to them: rational/emotional, active/ passive, objective/subjective.

The sociological aspects of feminism broached so delicately by Virginia Woolf become overt and explicit with today's outspoken feminists who complain of the imbalance of power between the sexes. Assuming that the economic system is at the root of the inequitable relationship, they attack both the economic and the social exploitation of women (Ibid, p. 141). They charge that women are oppressed by a group that consciously works to hold them down through its ideology. Michele Barrett, who writes from a Marxist point of view, argues that the way households and families are organized is related to the division of labor in a society, the systems of education, and the roles men and women play in the culture. Building on Virginia Woolf's belief that the conditions under which men and women produce literature affect how they write and what they write about, she argues that gender stereotyping is tied to material conditions.

The interest of some feminists in probing the unique nature of the female personality and experience has led the critics and writers among them to try to identify a specifically female tradition of literature. Such explorations have been particularly interesting to French feminists, who have found in Jacques Lacan's extensions of Freudian theory a basis for resisting the idea of a stable "masculine" authority or truth. Rejecting the idea of a male norm, against which women are seen as secondary and derivative, they call for a recognition of women's abilities

that goes beyond the traditional binary oppositions such as male/female, and the parallel oppositions of active/passive, intellectual/emotional. Searching for the essence of feminine style in literature, they examine female images in the works of female writers and the elements thought to be typical of l'écriture féminine—such as blanks, unfinished sentences, silences, and exclamations. Early female images become important as symbols of the Power of women to resist and overcome male oppression (Felski 2003, p. 135). Images of motherhood are significant too, for childbearing and rearing involve power and creation. Of course, this approach runs the risk of creating female chauvinists who argue for a special, superior gender. It also risks creating a ghetto in which women's writing stands separate from the male tradition and is thereby weakened.

Feminist opposition to male-centered theories of labor has influenced feminist literary theories concerning the canon, literary value, and cultural production. Indeed, feminist literary critics have documented through literature that women did participate in the work force as wage laborers and as producers of culturally valuable work. Challenging the male-defined notions of work, feminist literary critics show how labor within the family and among the community is work, although women's labor and voices both outside the home and within it often have been muted, erased, or forgotten (Wallace 2009, p. 400).

Given the historical absences of women within existing studies, feminist literary critics looked to novelists and writers as evidence of women's participation in literary productions. Mary Kelly's *Private Woman, Public Stage* studies 19th Century woman writers in the United States and the domestic roles that shaped their professional identities. Literary critics such as Nina Baym, Elaine Showalter, and Jane Tompkins have recovered the neglected texts of women writers, reconstructing what Tompkins calls in *Sensational Designs* the "Cultural Work" their literary productions performed in their time (Donovan 2015, p. 29). Tompkins study opens the literary canon and questions the aesthetic values that previously have encouraged the erasure or the ridicule of women's texts. Feminist literary scholars continue to recover cultural productions by women, challenging the devaluating of women's work that has pervaded the political, economic and academic system.

2.2.2 Gender and Rhetoric

'Current Western thinking sees women and men as so different physically as to sometimes seem two species. The bodies, which have been mapped inside and out for hundreds of years, have

not changed. What has changed are the justifications for gender inequality' (Lorber 1994, p. 727). As most of us are personally familiar with, men and woman are constantly compared in sports, workplaces, and personal situations, merely based on biological/physiological aspects. These "differences" cause society to separate genders into "social bodies" that would not exist without a culture that is seemingly hung up on categories, groupings and causing division. Judith Lorber's passionate look into gender inequality begins with basic physiological differences and how society has transformed those dissimilarities from biological to sociopolitical.

Gender inequality is not, and has not been for a long time, just a female issue². Men, although expected to "bring home the bacon" and be masculine, have most of the power that allows them to continue to harm not only women, but themselves in the process. It is important that these men, among all others, take the time to step in and be a part of positive changes for both genders. As this issue will continue to be a discussion, it is also important that the literary community is also brought up. Although Lorber does not go in to much detail about these things, it is obvious that with cultural needs to "divide and conquer" it is high time to accept people who do not follow social norms (Kochin 2002, p. 8).

Breines and Gordon, a sociologist and a historian, are keenly aware of the semiotic, discursive dimension of the social. Thus, they go on to argue, if the great majority of scholarly studies still come short of a coherent understanding of family violence as a social problem, the reason is that, with the exception of feminist writers, clinicians, and a few male empirical researchers, the work in this area fails to analyze the terms of its own inquiry, especially terms such as family, power, and gender. For, Breines and Gordon maintain, violence between intimates must be seen in the wider context of social power) central, it is as necessary to the constitution of the family as it is itself, in turn, forcefully constructed and inevitably reproduced by the family. Moreover, they continue, institutions such as the medical and other "helping professions" (e.g., the police and the judiciary) are complicit, or at least congruent, with "the social construction of battering (Breines and Gordon 1983, p. 519).

'The discourse of man', writes Gayatri Spivak, 'is in the metaphor of woman' (1983, p. 169). The problem with phallogentrism 'is not merely one of psycho-socio-sexual behavior but of the production and consolidation of reference and meaning' (1983, p. 169). Derrida's critique of phallogentrism-deconstruction-takes the woman as "model" for the deconstructive discourse

(Spivak 1983, p. 170). Thus, in what appears as a case of inscribing gender with a vengeance, Derrida searches for the name of the mother to question the "men" of the philosophers (1983, p. 173) and Dissemination takes the hymen as figure for the text, the undecidability of meaning, the 'law of the textual operation-of-reading, writing, philosophizing' (1983, p. 175). Speculating on the particular rhetoric of violence that permeates the discourse in which scientists describe their encounter with the unknown, Hirsch and Keller find a recurrent thematics of conquest, domination, and aggression reflecting a 'basic adversarial relation to the object of study.' (Hirsch and Keller 2015, p. 105).

Problems, for many scientists, are things to be attacked, licked or conquered. If more subtle means fail, then one resorts to brute force, to the hammer and tongs approach. In the effort to master nature, to 'storm her strongholds and castles,' science can come to sound like a battlefield. Sometimes, such imagery becomes quite extreme, exceeding even the conventional imagery of war (Keller 1983, p. 20).

The "genderization of science," as Keller calls the association of scientific thought with masculinity and of the scientific domain with femininity, is a pervasive metaphor in the discourse of science, from Bacon's prescription of 'a chaste and lawful marriage between Mind and Nature' to Bohr's chosen emblem, the yin-yang symbol, for his coat of arms (Keller 1978 p. 413- 432). It is a compelling representation, whose effects for the ideology and the practice of science, as well as for the subjectivity of individual scientists, are all the more forceful since the representation is treated as a myth; that is to say, while the genderization of science is admitted and encouraged in the realm of common knowledge, it is simultaneously denied entry or currency in the realm of formal knowledge (Keller 1978, p. 410). Such is the case not only in the "hard" sciences, so called, but also more often than not in the "softer" disciplines and even, ironically enough, in the study of myth.

Deconstruction thus effects a feminization of the practice of philosophy, Spivak observes (with a phrase that reminds me immediately of Keller's "genderization of science"), adding that she does not regard it as 'Just another example of the masculine use of woman as instrument of self assertion' (1983, p. 173). For if man can never fully disown his status as subject, and if desire must still be expressed as man's desire, yet the deconstructor's enterprise-seeking his own displacement by taking the woman as object or figure is an unusual and courageous one. Regretfully, one must infer, Spivak is led to admit that the question of woman, asked in the way

Nietzsche and Derrida ask it, is their question, not ours (1983, p. 184). Then she suggests, with respect, that such a feminization of philosophy as serves the male deconstructor (1983, p. 177). One can only conclude that, insofar as the deconstructor is a woman, the value of that critical practice (the patriarchy's own self-critique) is at best ambiguous.

For the female subject, finally, gender marks the limit of deconstruction, the rocky bed (so to speak) of the abyss of meaning. Which is not to say that woman, femininity, or femaleness is any more or any less outside discourse than anything else is. This is precisely the insistent emphasis of feminist criticism: gender must be accounted for. The biological difference that lies before or beyond signification, or the culturally constructed object of masculine desire, as well as the semiotic difference of a different production of reference and meaning may be understood in the vision of Derrida and Foucault and possibly Peirce's notion of semiosis may allow beginning to chart. Clearly, the time of replacing feminist criticism (Elam 2013, p. 47). 1982) has not come.

2.2.3 Marxist Feminism

There is a very strong tradition of Marxist/socialist scholarship within feminism. A reading of Marxism and feminism suggests that they share some common ground. They both follow a model of society where conflict and tension between two classes is their prime focus. In feminism men and women are those two broad classes and in Marxism the haves and the have nots, or bourgeoisie and the proletariat, to use the Marxist terminology. Both concern themselves with the issue of power and the subordination of some classes in society. Men have traditionally enjoyed power over women in all known societies resulting in women's subordination and inferior status³. Marxism visualizes a classless society where all dependent classes have been liberated. It strives for the stage of communism and socialism is just a mid point in this ideal. Feminism is probably even more interested in the concept of change. It visualizes a stage where all discrimination on the basis of gender has disappeared and there are not only equal opportunities for women but a complete equality of sexes. Both Marxism and feminism activists focus more on making people aware of their rights, bringing more and more people in their fold, organizing protests and demonstrations and seeking legal and political safeguards. The question relating to women was discussed by Friedrich Engels in his book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (1884)*. In fact, Marxism does not make a separate case for the exploitation of women. Women are part of the depressed classes who will be liberated once the capitalist system, Marx's prime target, is overthrown.

Some feminist thinkers have sought a marriage of Marxism and feminism. Marxist and Socialist feminists, as they are called, try to fill up the empty spaces in Marxism by supplying ideas from feminism. In their view classical Marxism is 'sex blind'. The proponents of the Dual Systems Theory, as this theory is called, believe that patriarchy should be given as much importance in any analysis of women's issues as capitalism. They are of the firm opinion that patriarchal relations form a system of their own which has a separate and distinct from. It stands independently of economic relations discussed in traditional Marxism. Patriarchy has existed prior to capitalism and the two systems interpenetrate each other. Juliet Mitchell and Nancy Hartman are the main proponents of the Dual Systems Theory but they differ in their account of patriarchy. Iris Young is of the view that Juliet Mitchell's account of patriarchy is expressed in universal and non-historical terms and it dehistoricizes women's oppression. Hartman, on the contrary, Young emphasizes that patriarchy has a material base in the structure of concrete relations and maintains that the system of patriarchy itself undergoes historical transformation (Young 2012, p. 47). It is clear here that unlike many schools of criticism which consider patriarchy as a psychological and cultural phenomenon, Hartman emphasizes the material base of patriarchy.

Economic determinism is a very important concept in Marxism. Literally this means, that economy determines the nature of most things in society. The concept rests on the belief that society has an economic base and a superstructure. Superstructure consists of world of ideas which may include religion, art and literature. In other words in classical Marxist theory, economy, rather than patriarchy, is the key factor. As patriarchy is the prime target of attack in the work of most feminist theorists they are not comfortable with so much emphasis given to economy in Marxist theory (Mojab 2015, p.12). Obviously many feminists find the exclusion of women in this scheme problematic. Whereas traditional Marxist scholars believe that with the overthrow of capitalism women would be liberated, those who consider patriarchy as the main culprit in the exploitation of women do not appear too hopeful. In traditional Marxist account capitalism, and in the traditional feminist account, patriarchy is the target.

Patriarchy operates very much like ideology. The operation of patriarchy can be seen in different walks of life. It is not difficult to detect the role of patriarchal ideology in all those images, stories, jokes and styles of dressing that we in our daily life. The clear division of roles for men and women in society also reflect the role of ideology (Lemer 1986, p. 33). Patriarchal ideology tries put women in a subordinate position. It also tries to convince them that their

subordination is natural. Patriarchal ideology comes through different mediums and so one cannot escape it.

Marxist criticism has also put focus on the ideological nature of some literary forms. In fact Macherey's emphasis on literary form does not sit comfortably with Terry Eagleton. In *A Theory of Literary Production*, it demands an enormous amount of literary form, as though this in itself were enough to break the power of ideology over men and women; and it overlooks the fact that form itself is ideological that there is no literary convention or procedure which is not itself shot through with historical significance. (Eagleton, 2006, p. xi). To put it differently form cannot be neatly separated from ideology. Thus the relationship between the rise of novel as a genre and the development of middle classes has been discussed by Marxist critics. They are of the view that the genre of novel has often presented a bourgeoisie point of view in literature.

The study of genre and its relationship to ideology holds a lot of interest for Marxist- feminist critics. Many established genres in literature have been exposed for their bias towards male sex. Thus epic glorifies war and warriors and does not go down well with many women readers. In the same way tragedy also glorifies the deeds of strong male characters. A novel of development considers the development of a male character much more important. Feminist intervention in gender generics has resulted in the transformation of some genres and in a new importance acquired by some genres. Thus a novel of development which takes up a woman character or a female gothic like that of Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) has been recognized following feminist intervention. Raman Selden makes an apt observation when he says that "Marxist and feminist theories often work at a more general level, affecting the reader's overall strategies of reading. Central ideas such as 'mode of production', ideology' and 'patriarchy' shape the reader's framework of interpretation in fundamental ways by directing attention to the inequality with which both economic and sexual power have been shared in the past and in the present (Selden, 1989, p. 140).

Marx's methodology is indispensable for identifying the capitalist structural conditions and macro-level processes that are the foundations of the inequality between men and women in capitalist societies; and the limits of political and legal changes to end gender inequality. The oppression of women is the visible, observable effect (e.g., in the labor market, in socioeconomic stratification, the domestic division of labor, bureaucratic authority structures, etc.) of underlying relations between men and women determined by the articulation between

the capitalist mode of production, and the organization of physical and social reproduction among those who must sell their labor power to survive (Sargent 1981, p. 314). Feminism, to remain relevant to the majority of women, must, therefore, acknowledge that most women are working women whose fate, and that of their families, are shaped both by gender oppression and class exploitation.

2.2.4 Liberal Feminism

Theoretically, liberal feminism claims that gender differences are not based in biology, and therefore that women and men are not all that different, their common humanity supersedes their procreative differentiation. If women and men are not different, then they should not be treated differently under the law. Women should have the same rights as men and the same educational and work opportunities. The goal of liberal feminism in the United States for example, was embodied in the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which was never ratified. (It said, Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex.). Politically, liberal feminists formed somewhat bureaucratic organizations, which invited men members. Their activist focus has been concerned with visible sources of gender discrimination, such as gendered job markets and inequitable wage scales, and with getting women into positions of authority in the professions, government, and cultural institutions (Schwartzman 2010, p. 26). Liberal feminist politics took important weapons of the civil rights movement; antidiscrimination legislation and affirmative action, and used them to fight gender inequality, especially in the job market.

Nussbaum's "capabilities approach" may be compared with procedural accounts of autonomy. Procedural accounts suggest that the women's movement should work to protect and promote women's ability to live lives of their own choosing by identifying particular autonomy deficits in women's lives and promoting the conditions that enable autonomy. These approaches avoid directly judging the substance of the choices women make or the arrangements that result. They leave it to individuals and groups to fashion new, diverse, non-oppressive ways of life. The list of enabling conditions for personal autonomy is not unlike Nussbaum's list of human functionings. But advocates of procedural approaches may worry that the goal of the women's movement, according to the capabilities approach, is to bring to women a particular way of life, namely one in which women can function in these ways, instead of freeing women up to find their own way (Cudd 2002, p. 50). As Drucilla Cornell, an advocate of a procedural approach explains, "social equality should be redefined so as to serve freedom" (Cornell 1998, p. xii)

because ‘there is nothing more fundamental for a human being’ (Ibid, p. 17). Procedural accounts of autonomy can include Nussbaum's approach, not as definitive of the kinds of lives women should live, but as an important contribution to the kind of reflection on the good life on which personal autonomy depends.

Affirmative action calls for aggressively seeking out qualified people to redress the gender and ethnic imbalance in work places. That means encouraging men to train for such jobs as nursing, teaching, and secretary, and women for fields like engineering, construction, and police work. With a diverse pool of qualified applicants, employers can be legally mandated to hire enough different workers to achieve a reasonable balance in their workforce, and to pay them the same and also give an equal chance to advance in their careers (Jaggar 1988, p. 15). The main contribution of liberal feminism is showing how much modern society discriminates against women. In the United States, it was successful in breaking down many barriers to women's entry into formerly male-dominated jobs and professions, helped to equalize wage scales, and got abortion and other reproductive rights legalized. However, liberal feminism could not overcome the prevailing belief that women and men are intrinsically different. It was somewhat more successful in proving that even if women are different from men, they are not inferior.

Some liberal feminists emphasize the importance of political autonomy, that is, being co-author of the conditions under which one lives. Some use contractualist political theory to argue that the state should ensure that the basic structure of society satisfies principles of justice that women, as well as men, could endorse⁴. The gender system leads to women's being underrepresented in influential forums of public deliberation, including in elected law-making bodies (Brown 2003, p.101). For example women have less free time to engage in public deliberation because of the double-burden they carry of paid and unpaid labor; sex stereotyping leads many to think that women (especially women from particular ethnic and cultural groups) are less capable of leadership than men; the behavior called for in agonistic public deliberation and electoral politics is understood to be masculine; issues of particular interest to women are seen as personal and not political issues; women lack power in the many institutions (like churches, universities, and think tanks) that influence political debate, etc. But when women are underrepresented in these forums and law-making bodies, it is unlikely that the justice of the gender system will become the subject of public conversation or its dismantling a target of legislative action.

Critics have also taken aim at the treatment of oppression in classical-liberal or libertarian feminism. Recall that equity feminism holds that women are oppressed when the state fails to protect them, as a group, from sustained and systematic rights violations. Recall also that for equity feminists the only rights that create coercible duties are the rights to justly acquired property and freedom from coercive interference. Equity feminists argue that, in western countries like the United States, women are not oppressed because the state protects these rights of women. It should be conceded that much violence against women which was, in the past, tolerated or condoned is now unambiguously prohibited. But, critics contend, violence against women remains all too common in western countries, and thus it is premature to suggest that women are not oppressed, that is, are not effectively protected against sustained and systematic rights violations (Cudd 2002, p. 52).

Critics suggest that classical-liberal or libertarian feminism is not adequately supported by a consequentialist case; fails to recognize our obligations to those who cannot care for themselves; hides from view the way in which the work of care is distributed in society; denies that state power should be used to ensure equality of opportunity for women and women's equal standing in society; and (cultural libertarianism excepted) is uncritical of traditional social arrangements that limit and disadvantage women. For reasons such as these, some have argued that classical-liberal or libertarian feminism counts as neither feminist nor liberal (Brown 2003, p. 45)

2.2.5 Gender and Consciousness

Gender consciousness is the recognition that one's physical sex shapes one's relationship to the political world. Similar to other forms of group consciousness, it entails identification with others like oneself, a positive affect toward them, and a sense of connectedness with the group and its well-being (Tolleson Rinehart 2013, p.5). Gender consciousness is a necessary precondition for feminism (Hogeland, 1994, p. 19), but individuals can reject the label of feminist while still being quite gender conscious. In previous studies women have been found to exhibit low levels of gender awareness when reflecting on their career experiences. These studies conclude that greater gender awareness can help promote women's careers. At the same time, Hogeland (1994) speculates that awareness of vulnerability and difference may hinder women's self-determination and freedom. This could cause women to choose less ambitious career paths and avoid professions traditionally dominated by men.

Feminism posits that gender shapes our experiences; it cannot be teased apart from other aspects of our identities or from the contexts of life experiences. Through a contextual analysis of power structures, the experiences of the oppressed can ‘challenge the way assumptions of dominant groups have been uncritically ingrained in our language, our structures, our visions’ (Mulvey & Bond 1993, p. 38). Presidential Address called for research that focuses on variables linking structural and individual levels of analysis rather than focusing on victims. Swift et al. reviewed women’s inclusion in the first 25 years of community psychology. They reported that very few articles have analyzed women’s issues. In addition, they found that gender consciousness was underdeveloped in the literature. Within the research on women’s issues, they discovered that most analyses focused on the individual level. In particular, they found that ‘recognition of the power imbalance based on gender that pervade women’s lives’ and ‘multilevel analyses of the structural variables that systematically disempower women’ were missing.

As Swift et al. pointed out that, ‘it is unlikely . . . that studying characteristics of raped and battered women will tell us as much about the causes and correlates of rape and battering as will studying the characteristics of cultures that tolerate these crimes . . .’ They recommended that community psychologists consider gender, power dynamics, and a contextual understanding of problems in their work. In particular, they suggested that scholars ‘acknowledge gender as an important factor with important consequences for definition, measurement and intervention’ (Swift et al 2000, p. 884-885)

Hamby articulated some of the ways that experience is shaped by gender and incorporated an analysis of power imbalances in her discussion of domestic violence among American Indians. Specifically, she described three ways that gender dominance is expressed. Through authority, gender is associated with different levels of decision-making power when traditional social roles are accepted. Through disparagement, one gender is valued above the other⁵. Through restrictiveness, one gender has control over the other’s behavior (Hamby 2014, p. 123). As such, gender and power asymmetry shape the way the world is experienced.

Campbell (1998) provided an example of linking individual behaviors to the environment. From a feminist-ecologic framework, she examined rape victims’ experiences with legal, medical, and mental health systems. She examined individual-level variables, such as victim’s demeanor as well as community-level variables such as interorganizational coordination. Through cluster

analyses, she was able to identify three profiles of experiences, labeled “exercises in futility,” “one saving grace,” and “approaching justice.” Through her research, researchers and service providers have been able to come to a comprehensive understanding of victim’s experiences as well as a more complete understanding of community responses to rape (Campbell 1998, p. 537– 572).

In the literature prior to the late 1970s, there was little differentiation between the concepts of group identity and group consciousness. The idea of group consciousness in this early literature was associated mainly with identification with a political group, which scholars now understand as the definition of group identity (Verba and Nie 1972; Miller et al 1981, p. 494). Our understanding of group consciousness has evolved to include much more than simple self-identification. In one of the primary defining articles on the subject, in 1981, Miller, Gurin and Malanchuk identified four components of group consciousness: group self-identification, which is subjective rather than objective, and carries with it a sense of group loyalty; polar affect, defined as ‘a preference for the members of one’s own group (in group) and a dislike for those outside the group (out group)’ (Miller et al 1981, 496), which can develop even in the absence of conflicts of interest, so long as the ingroup and outgroup are clearly defined; polar power, or the politicizing of the ingroup’s relative power, influence, or resources as compared to the outgroup, leading to group-wide satisfaction or dissatisfaction; and system-blame, the belief that a larger system is responsible for group members’ relatively lower (or higher) position of power or influence, rather than placing the blame on individual members of the ingroup.

Together, these four psychological components form an ideology that has important political implications for members of both dominant and subordinate groups. For subordinate group members, Miller et al explain (1981), group consciousness shifts their ideology away from a situation in which they accept their relative deprivation and toward one where they collectively express a sense of grievance and injustice, and challenge the system that they perceive as illegitimately benefiting the outgroup. For dominant group members, group consciousness leads to a diametrically opposed political ideology, one that ‘justified advantage, gives legitimacy to their social status, and provokes action aimed at securing permanence for their position’ (Miller et al 1981, p. 494- 511).

Examining gender has been one of the primary applications of group consciousness theory. The generally accepted account of gender consciousness includes several components. First, an

individual woman must identify herself as a member of a disadvantaged group (women). As Bruce and Wilcox put it in (2000), 'Social movement organizations begin by trying to convince potential members that they share a common identity, and that identity has political implications... Once a group identity is in place, social movement organizations attempt to turn that into group consciousness' (Bruce and Wilcox 2000, p.18). To have gender consciousness, then, the woman must view her gender identity as an important part of her overall identity. In addition, she must acknowledge the structural disadvantages for women within the overall gender system; that is, she is system-blaming rather than individual-blaming. 'Most theorists argue that group consciousness requires that an individual believe that members of the group are disadvantaged by social, political, or economic structures, and that this disadvantage comes from systematic discrimination, not from individual failures' (Bruce and Wilcox 2000, p. 19). Once the individual is focused on systemic problems, most scholars of group consciousness stress the individual's belief that collective action among group members is necessary to address common grievances (Klein 1984; Miller, Gurin, Gurin, and Malanchuk 1981; Gurin, Miller, and Gurin 1980; Miller).

Gender consciousness, like other types of group consciousness, is thus not a given for members of a group; neither women nor blacks have gender or black consciousness simply because of their gender or race. Neither, as Patricia Gurin has pointed out, is it static. Rather, Gurin found that gender consciousness among women increased significantly during the period 1972 and 1983, which she attributes to feminist movement organizing (Gurin 1985, p. 143). Indeed, consciousness raising was such an important goal of the feminist movement that the National Organization for Women (NOW) published several editions of a "CR" guide between 1972 and 1983. Gurin further writes that women's gender consciousness increase was 'particularly pronounced with regard to women's discontent about the relative political power of women and men and their views about the legitimacy of gender disparities' (Ibid, p. 144). That is, the increase in women's gender consciousness was explicitly political and indeed, the discontent she describes was manifested in the decade long collective mobilization for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S. Constitution.

2.2.6 Gender and Class

Stratification theory has traditionally focused exclusively on the position of men in the occupational system, either ignoring women completely, or locating them through male heads of families. Recent feminist research has criticized the assumptions underlying this approach,

arguing that sex-based inequalities are an inherent feature of the class system, and must therefore be incorporated into class analysis. At a theoretical level feminists have argued that to treat the family as a single unit in which all members belong to the same class position, ignores the existence of sexual inequalities within the family. At an empirical level the increasing numbers of married women entering the workforce undermines the notion of the male head of household (Ingham 1996, p. 20). People in low-power positions, whether due to gender or class, tend to exhibit other-oriented rather than self-oriented behavior. Women's experiences at work and at home are shaped by social class, heightening identification with gender for relatively upper class women and identification with class for relatively lower class women, potentially mitigating, or even reversing, class-based differences documented in past research. Gender–class differences are reflected in women's employment beliefs and behaviors. Research integrating social class with gendered experiences in homes and workplaces deepens our understanding of the complex interplay between sources of power and status in society.

Class position is not the only determinant of people's life opportunities, however. There are other dimensions in today's societies that also influence these outcomes. Sex, or gender, is one example (Crompton, 1989, p. 17). The available empirical evidence shows that gender is a core determinant of the opportunities that are open to people in the labor market (Browne and Misra, 2005; Stier and Yaish, 2014)⁶. This has led researchers to look more closely into the relationships between class and gender. In the 1960s, the feminist movement engaged in a debate concerning the theoretical and methodological implications of the analysis of women's positions in the social structure (Pollert, 1996; Ferree and Hall, 1996; Yuval-Davis, 2006; Davis, 2008). As more and more women entered the labor market, they began to question the characterization of women as a peripheral component of the class system, which was, according to this point of view, reflected in the fact that class position was analyzed on the basis of the occupational status of the head of household and chief breadwinner, who was generally a man.

The large-scale entry of women into forms of gainful employment in advanced capitalist societies prompted researchers to ask themselves to what extent sex was independent of class. They discussed, for example, how to go about analyzing situations in which there were two heads of household who occupied different class positions. In the realm of empirical research, this debate raised questions as to which unit of analysis was appropriate, i.e. whether it was better to gather data at the individual or household level (Baxter, 1992, p. 23). The most well-known stance regarding the central importance of the household in studies of social class is that

of John Goldthorpe (1983, p. 99)). In his view, all members of the household occupied the same class position. He argued that class position should be measured on the basis of the economic activity conducted by the man of the house because men were the main providers and breadwinners.

In contrast, feminists maintained that, given the fact that there were some households that were economically dependent on a woman and there were some in which both the man and the woman were breadwinners, it was necessary to have a joint classification model, i.e. a model that was capable of combining the attributes of both spouses in determining their class or status (Baxter, 1992). These discussions led to the development of an approach based on the concept of intersectionality, which focuses on the ways in which the interactions of various dimensions of inequality influence life opportunities. Not all schools of thought have embraced the concept of intersectionality, however, with one of the main reasons for this being that it entails a complete overhaul of the theoretical assumptions underlying the way in which empirical data are interpreted. Be that as it may, Wright has conducted empirical research on class and gender in which he demonstrates that gender is an extremely important determinant of access to positions of authority in countries such as Australia, Japan, Sweden and the United States (Wright 1997, p 156).

However, in an effort to vindicate the Marxist theory of social class, Wright (1992) states that social class is a “gender-neutral” abstract concept in much the same way as patriarchy is, in the abstract, a “class-neutral” concept. In other words, in the abstract, class and gender can be understood as two very distinct concepts. Accordingly, Wright contends that the complex relationship between class and sex can only be understood, in the abstract, if they are thought of as independent phenomena. Based on this line of reasoning, Wright contends that the interaction between class and gender exists, but only at a concrete level. In other words, class structures are shaped by gender relations solely in a circumstantial, material sense. By the same token, it is only at that concrete, circumstantial level that gender shapes other class-related phenomena, such as class consciousness and collective action (Wright, 1992, p. 47).

Absent consideration of class differences, studies show that women, like members of other low-power groups, are less likely than men to put self before others and more likely to endorse interdependent or communal goals. Women’s greater tendency to seek and mobilize social support, especially during times of stress, is ‘one of the most robust gender differences in adult

human behavior. Preferences for affiliation over power, characteristics argued to vary by both gender and class, may underlie gender-based and class-based differences in employment choices. Seeking explanations for the persistent gender gap in high status leadership jobs, Gino et al. find that women, compared to men, place less importance on self-interested power-related goals (Gino et al 2015, p, 112). In a parallel exploration of social class and employment preferences, Belmi and Laurin find that relatively lower class individuals, controlling for gender, are more reluctant than higher class individuals to engage in political behavior to acquire positions of power (Belmi and Laurin 2016, p. 111). Whether gender, class, or some interaction between the two dominates in women's approach to employment remains an open question.

Gender scholars and class scholars often consider additional identity dimensions such as race, ethnicity, and religion. Gupta finds that the difference in total time spent on housework per week between the highest-earning and lowest-earning women is as large as the male-female difference (Gupta 2006, p. 35)⁷. Reductions in the total number of housework hours for middle and upper class women reflect a shift to paid domestic labor, as women with more resources transfer housework chores to low wage women, reducing the need for intra-household bargaining between more privileged women and their domestic partners. Overall, rising incomes have made it easier for higher earning women to remain employed and nominally responsible for housekeeping while minimizing their own hours of unpaid labor; in contrast, low earning women have fewer options for reducing the time they dedicate to housework.

Women, unsurprisingly, enjoy childcare activities more than housework and women across class and racial backgrounds account for their employment choices as routes taken for the family. Describing career choices in the language of family is consistent with the stereotype of women as selfless and other-oriented, regardless of social class (Davidoff 1995, p. 16). Yet higher earning women are more likely to report that their family and work identities conflict, while family and work identities are more consistent for lower class women. Middle and upper class cultural schema endorse highly involved parenting, motivating more privileged women to adjust their careers to uphold expectations of intensive mothering. In contrast, women earning lower wages are more likely to face social sanctions when they do not maintain their employment as they raise their children. Reflecting these social sanctions, restricted household resources, and their lack of power in the workplace, lower class women are more likely to forego highly gendered mothering roles and engage in 'tag team' parenting, with both parents

(or other family members) alternating daily between low-paying employment and unpaid care work at home. In sum, economic resources and social mores make it possible and socially desirable for middle and upper class women to live up to the expectations of intensive mothering without substantially sacrificing their family's financial stability, whereas lower class women with less lucrative and less stable job prospects face social pressure to remain in the workforce while patching together low-cost options for caregiving.

Within the workplace, occupational and cultural conditions for women also vary by social class. Gender plays a magnified role in women's employment when women are in the minority within an occupation or work environment. Women working in professions where men are the majority face exaggerated gender-based bias, and recent evidence suggests this bias may be greater for upper class, relative to middle class, women. The amplification of gender bias may increase upper class women's identification as female while potentially interfering with class-based identification. Female managers and professionals reap career benefits from increases in the presence of women in leadership positions, but reliance on the minority of leaders who are female may also heighten identification with gender and decrease identification with class (George 2005, p. 39).

Low wage-earning women tend to work in occupations with high female representation, but they do not reap career-enhancing benefits from the presence of same-sex peers. Mandatory, non-standard work schedules are disproportionately concentrated in low wage service jobs, imposing family, social, and health related penalties on lower class women. Lower class jobs push both women and men away from prescribed gender roles as they conform to the restricted options that result from low incomes and low schedule control in their jobs. Working in low-wage, female-dominated occupations, with the associated economic and work-family struggles, may decrease women's gender-based identification and increase class-based identification (Baxter and Western 2001, p. 23). Scholars have begun to consider the role of gender in class-based orientations, but the conclusions vary substantially across studies. Psychology studies using laboratory or online experiments conclude, controlling for gender, that upper class individuals prioritize their own self-interest and self-reliance whereas lower class individuals prioritize social relationships. The setting and outcome variables in many of these studies are far removed from the gendered environments women face at work and at home. Studies that do consider employment choices report non-significant effects for gender (Batsleer 2003, p. 41). The inconsistency between these results and a wealth of empirical evidence that

women and men make markedly different employment choices in practice cries out for further investigation into possible interactions between gender and class.

Investigations show that middle class women report strong connections to and trust in family and friends, while the social and economic isolation accompanying poverty reduces lower class women's access to supportive social ties and heightens necessary reliance on the self and that professional women who grew up in middle and upper class households tend to assign credit for their career success to their relationships with others, while their peers raised in lower class households are more likely to attribute their success to self-reliance (Realey 2011, p. 223). Reflecting realities of their respective employment and domestic realms, middle and upper class women may endorse feminine ideals by focusing on their connections with others, while lower class women may be more likely to step outside the traditionally feminine other-orientation as they maneuver among constraints at work and at home.

Both class and gender play a central role in the perpetuation of inequalities in societies. They also indicate that gender is a fundamental consideration in understanding how class-based inequalities operate or how social class influences subjective aspects of job quality, such as the perception of control over work processes. In other words, in line with various gender studies dealing with different nations suggest that, at a concrete level of analysis, studies on class-based inequalities should include gender as a variable because it is a major determinant of the way in which social class operates in societies (Wright 1997, p. 867).

2.2.7 Feminism of Color

For many decades women of color first turned feminism upside down, exposing the feminist movement as exclusive, white, and unaware of the concerns and issues of women of color from around the globe. Since then, key social movements have risen, including Black Lives Matter, the transgender movement, and the activism of young undocumented students. Social media has also changed how feminism looks for young women of color, generating connections and access to audiences in all corners of the country. Nevertheless, the world remains divided by race and gender. Now, a new generation of outspoken women of color offer a much-needed fresh dimension to the shape of feminism of the future (Hernandez and Rahmen 2010, p. 101).

The Post Colonial literature had clearly two schools of thoughts or two distinct theories regarding most studied topics, since history seems to have drawn differences in the Black and

White communities, and time has not necessarily been the best factor to narrow this gap. Arun Mukherjee reckons that groups of women who identify themselves as women of Color, Native women, Third World women, African American women and Black women attacked theoretical constructions of the White Anglo-American and White French feminist theory as being imperialist, racist, Eurocentric and exclusionary (Mukherjee 1992, p. 13). However not all White feminists seem to be aware of this crisis of legitimization, neither all Western feminists are white or middle class nor forgot the oppression caused by class or racism (Rojas 2010, p. 110). Terms like women's oppression, representation of women, sexual differences or gender subjectivity raised the objections by women of color as an exclusionary attention to middle-class White women.

White feminism means mainly Western feminists, although not all of them are white, who have ignored or undermined race and ethnicity in the social divisions and identities of the definition of Woman. By contrast Black feminism means a growing literature, everywhere, that conveys and conceptualizes the historical circumstances of Black women and other women of color (Stasiulis 1991, p. 282). The omission of women of color from White feminist analysis has in itself been regarded as reflective of tire racism and ethnic exclusivity of the White women's movement. For Minh-Ha, the labels of racial differences among women such as Western, non-Western or Third World takes the dominant group as reference, and they reflect strongly the ideology of dominance. So feminists may have to come to terms with the complexities and contradictions of power relations involving tire intersection of gender, class, and race, while they might be at tire same time privileged and oppressed (Stasiulis 1991, p. 283). It seems to be contradictory, but it has been possible to belong to a privileged class and to still be oppressed in another category. Several White middle class women, well educated, can relate to experiences of oppression while they accept living in privileged conditions.

Black feminists have criticized the White feminists coming to generalize all women from their experiences. They reject the claims to universality of the central categories and assumptions of White feminist analyses. In addition, Black feminists criticize the treatment of the family by White feminists. The family and women's roles as wives and mothers within it are central to feminist theory. The role of women as performing domestic labor, especially tire bearing and raising of children is more problematic for Black feminists and definitely culturally bound. The idea of family, and specially family at large, which could almost be extended to a complete village like it is often the case in Africa, is mostly unknown from White feminists, or at the

most not completely understood. '...Black women as the least oppressive institution commonly experience the family; rather, it functions as a site for shelter and resistance' (Stasiulis 1991, p. 284).

Another criticism from the Black feminists is the concept of female financial dependence on male wage earners, which they regard as racially and culturally bound. More often than white women, they have had the sole responsibility for earning income and supporting dependents. In the West, women seem to be either working outside their home, or to be so called mothers at home which is a temporary unpaid position (Hurtado 1996, p, 91). In many of the Third World countries, women go outside to work whether or not they are mothers and regardless of the number or age of the children, in that sense the term mothers at home does not apply in the context nor their culture.

It may be considered a failure from the White feminists to define immigration and citizenship as Women's issues. The immigration policies have had a destructive influence in disallowing the preservation of family forms other than the nuclear families⁸. Debates among Marxists and Marxists focus on the relationship between racism and the development of capitalism. The relationship between race and class, and between racism and capitalism has received in the past many divergent answers. The new era of new social developments provided finally the political context for the development of Black feminism and feminism of women of Color. Since Development followed Colonization, and now Partnership is replacing Development, the door is open for a North and South dialogue and therefore for a new definition of global feminism (Roth 2004, p. 17).

The experience and struggles of feminist women of Color has been an appropriation by hegemonic White women's movements. It was in slave society that the concept of white privilege gave white women a degree of power over both Black men and Black women. The institution of slavery reveals the privileges gained by the white women within a patriarchal and capitalistic society and the powerlessness of Black women in the same society. The fact that Western feminists write of women in the Third World is a political and discursive practice. It can be seen as a mode of intervention into hegemonic discourses (Eisenstein 1994, p. 183). That is to say that those practices are inscribed in relations of power, and therefore are arbitrary. Since Development replaced chronologically the period of Colonization, it is not so surprising to see its hegemonic position today in so many ways. The Western feminists cannot ignore the

complex interconnections between First and Third world economies and the profound effect of this on the lives of women in all countries.

In much research, the image of the Western women has been depicted as educated, modern, having control over their own body and sexuality and having the freedom to make their own decisions: It seems to appear in the global media as the model that should be exported (McCluskey 1985, p. 89). In contrast, the Third World women are sexually constrained, ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family oriented and victimized. Such a person has been seen as needing help and therefore wanting to be developed by adopting the other model.

It is widely accepted that women in the Third World have been victims of the colonial process and of the development process. Among the many forms of socioeconomic deprivation, African slavery on both sides of the Atlantic has probably provoked the most historical! debate (Barry 1996, p. 4). The women of color are charging into middle-class White women with having played an exclusionary politics in the structures of the women's movement. They have suggested that many White feminists have appropriated the category women to speak only about middle-class white women's experience (Muklierjee 1992, p. 166). When some feminists theorists defended their exclusionary works on the basis that they could not include areas with which they had no experience with, they came out looking only more racist (Muklierjee 1992, p. 168). The hierarchal pattern of race and sex relationship in American society merely took a different form under feminism, which has to be considered in the dismantling process.

The hierarchal pattern of race and sex relationship already established in many societies merely took a different form under feminism: the form of White women writing books that purport to be about the experience of American women when, in fact ,they concentrate solely on the experience of White women; and finally die form of endless argument and debate as to whether or not racism was a feminist issue (Muklierjee 1992, p. 168). Cox thinks that all racist phenomena have their roots in the colonial phase of capitalism. The expansion of capitalism via the amassing of vast profits from the enslavement and proletarianization of colored people necessitated the construction of a philosophy of justification. The major function of racism is to divide the working class so that the capitalists can exploit the proletariat more effectively.'... Traditionally the labor of females, domestic work, is supposed to complement and confirm their inferiority' (Barry 1996, p. 21). Some analysts insist that the imposition of class, as well as

racist and sexist divisions, occurred with the incorporation of Native people into colonial relations under mercantile capitalism in the days of the fur trade. Slaves were without rights, could not vote, could not associate with white people as equals, could not think of interracial marriage, were not welcome in White churches, and were segregated in Black schools (Mandell 1995, p. 40). Many historians failed to describe the brutalities endured by slaves.

In most countries women live in the common context of political struggle against class, race and gender, to name only the most important, but there are obviously many more. For those who suffer these multiple oppressions any kind of analysis which creates oppositions as women and Black, women and minorities, women and the colonized people is of course a bitter mockery (Mukherjee 1992, p. 170). The terms of doubly oppressed, or triply oppressed, and double or triple minority that we so often encounter in feminist literature, does accentuate the differences and the exclusion rather than serve positively the analyses.

However, 'one hopes that this time around, instead of playing the separate but equal game, we can take stock of the past, calmly assess its mistakes and begin to build for a more promising future' (Mukherjee 1992, p. 166). In this reconstructing process, many women are actively working for anti-racist hiring practices and anti-racist curriculum. There has been an obvious hierarchy of the oppressed, and until women understand this hierarchy. 'Black women must fight the world because they struggle daily against the racist, sexist, classist power of white men, and against the sexist power of powerless Black men' (Simms 1992, p. 177). Understanding the history; and why there have been these two schools of thoughts or two theories in the Post Colonial Studies, rather repeating it or reliving it, will propel women to plan the future in ways that do not replicate the negative outcomes of the past.

Not all women, whether or not it is because they are black or white, have similar concerns and needs and therefore cannot have similar interests and goals. What becomes clearer is that women have several similar basic sociological concerns, which could be studied, at a global level and solutions could be applied locally according to the degree of the problem and adapted to the culture. Women around the world have a coherent group identity within the different cultures -and prior to their entry into social relations. 'It is our hope that the house divided will not survive but will someday be the house united, a house united against racial, sexual, and class injustices' (Mukherjee 1992, p. 174).

2.3 Feminist Issues in Japanese Literary Scholarship

Feminism in Japan began in the late 19th century near the end of the Edo period. There have been traces of concepts in regards to women's rights that date back to antiquity. The movement started to gain momentum after Western thinking was brought into Japan during the Meiji Restoration in 1868. Japanese feminism differs from Western feminism in the sense that less emphasis is put on individual autonomy. Prior to the late 19th century, Japanese women were bound by the traditional patriarchal system where senior male members of the family maintains their authority in the household. After the reforms brought by Meiji Restoration, the status of women in Japanese society also went through series of changes. Trafficking in women was restricted, women were allowed to request divorces, and both boys and girls were required to receive elementary education. Further changes to the status of women came about in the aftermath of World War II. Women received the right to vote, and a section of the new constitution drafted in 1946 was dedicated to guarantee gender equality.

2.3.1 Women in Japan and the Discovery of the Self

Japan is a model nation that is making dynamic evolutionary progress and development. Both individual and nation tend to attain maturation, moving toward a better future and a higher state of existence. New Japan is in a state of rapid growth and it is in a critical period, resembling a youth, just coming to manhood, when all the powers of growth are most vigorous. Intellect is awaking, ambition is equaled by self-reliance... the growth of the past half-century is the beginning of what we may expect to see. (Gulick 1988,p. 33)

The rapid development of Japan emphasized the advancement of Japanese women as they were not given such liberty in Old Japan. The improvement of Japanese women position and condition is considered as a feature of the progress of New Japan. This close association of woman and nation is typical civilization discourse; the woman's status reflects the level of the nation's enlightenment and becomes a gauge for assessing its process of growth. In both the West and Japan, the woman is a flexible symbol, malleable within the context of her representation. She is often depicted as the embodiment of modernity, but she is also used to signify its "Other". She is a "modern" figure that mirrors seismic shifts in values and technologies, at the same time she is a pre-modern figure of innocence and nostalgia providing stability in an unpredictable world (Kishimi and Koga 2018, p. 125). Often she is a representation of gendered sites that produce or interrogate the meaning of modernity, such as

the non West, popular culture, the everyday, the spectacle, language, city, country, and consumption.

In Japan, the woman became important as a sign of such ambivalent simultaneity during the Meiji Period (1868-1912). It was during the pre-war decades of the 1910s, through 1930s, the Taisho (1912-1926) and early Showa(1926- 1989) periods, that the most dramatic changes occurred and the relationship between modernity and gender became increasingly complex especially in labor, in which gender differences played a vital element of discrimination:

Factors	Meaning	Examples
Economic	Economic conditions	Bubble burst, recession, industrialization
Organizational	Company practices	Human resources management, job promotion system, job allocation, career track system
Structural	Systems and policies	Tax policies, legal policies, household registration system
Cultural	Traditional values, mainstream gender role, stereotype, image	“Women as the reproducers and men as the producers”, “good wife, wise mother”

Table 2.1: The Four Factors Contributing to the Gender Inequality Problem in the Workplace

Factors hindering women career advancement can be divided into four categories: economic, structural, organizational and cultural.

Economic factors refer to the economic conditions that may bring about changes in employment situations and economic opportunities for female labor. To illustrate, the restructuring of the economy from a manufacturing-based economy to a service centered economy and the economic bubble burst and expansion are examples of economic changes that can affect opportunities for advancement of women. Organizational factors refer to employment and management practices that limit career advancement. For example, the career track system, a human resources strategy, encourages female workers to stay in the public sphere by suggesting occupational segregation between career and non-career jobs (Murata 2018, p. 33).

Structural factors refer to deeply embedded social structures and systems. The household registration system acts as a structural hurdle that disadvantages women in numerous ways. For

example, it preserves the male advantages and the centrality of the patriarchal order. The institutional restraints, constrain the choices available to women. Lastly, cultural constraints refer to both traditional and mainstream gender role expectations of women being mothers and reproducers, with men being breadwinners and producers. The culture of a society shapes gender roles and affects the expected duties of two sexes (Nagi Stephen Robert 2015, p. 255). The indeed the eclipse of Meiji civilization by Taisho culture has been discussed as the emergence of a feminized culture; the idea of modernism or the modern has also been gendered female, evoking the ephemerality of modernity, the fragmentary aspects of modernist art, the spread of mass culture, the disruptions of individualism and the fantasy of consumerism.

Such emphasis on the relationship between woman and pre-war periods has been productive for feminist inquiry; scholars have illuminated the significant presence of female images and voices and the dramatic transformations of women in Japanese society and culture. These studies have often evoked modern female identity as representing change, a radical shift or decentering that challenges the social landscape. The modern Japanese woman, in fact, describes herself as an intrinsic part of modernity, becoming a Japanese modern woman through progress and growth (Kishimi and Koga 2018, p. 149).

This relation can be explained by the concept of Miriam Silverberg's concept of "constructionist" for the Japanese modernity. The awareness of modernity as a dynamic process of being in construction was an important part of female identity; prewar women fashioned themselves as active participants in modernity by taking part in the process of continual progress and change. This self-Image is articulated by Hiratsuka Raicho (1886-1971), one of the most influential feminists in Japan. In 1911, she wrote in *Seito* (Bluestocking 1911- 1916) the first Japanese feminist journal:

The flow of life progresses moment by moment. Now the people of the world have finally burst forth beyond known human boundaries and are making an intense effort day and night... to evolve the humanity of today. We are no longer the set of, unchanging beings conceived of by people of past ages. We are rich in changes, full of promise with the ability to evolve endlessly into the future, to become more beautiful, stronger, larger and superior day by day. Women can't be an exception to the rule of evolution or unable to become part of humanity. It is clear that we must use our will to accelerate and strengthen the power of our progress (Hiratsuka 1911, p. 128)

The women of today are described as sentient beings just newly awakened from a state of infancy, who need to 'move forward with an attitude that focuses on the self'. The insistence

on the self is not supposed to be the core objective in a woman's journey forward, but it is a crucial stage in human life for becoming a true person. Women are still considered inferior to men who are human beings, so the importance of their journey lies on the achievement of "personhood"⁹. This identity is also shaped by time and space of nationhood.

Within the rejection of the idea that women are inferior and unchanging, there is equally a demand to both external social progress (women's rights) and internal (realization of selfhood). Their inability to participate in the political process as being without full legal rights, women under the 1898 Civil Code were subject to the authority of their fathers, husbands and sons. Though this lower status, women succeeded to change themselves in the public sphere as early as the 1910s, the 1920s and the 1930s through writing, labor, in popular and consumer cultures, and in feminist and proletarian movements. Thus, female identities, such as: New Woman, Modern Girl, working woman, housewife, factory worker, café waitress rose to cultural prominence, highlighting changes in the Japanese society (Michiko Suzuki 2010, p.115).

2.3.2 Struggle of Japanese Feminism

Women have long been active in many social movements in Japan. They have participated in major social movements including, but not limited to, the labor movement, student activism, the peace movement, and the environmental movement. Women have also organized as women since the nineteenth century, as have their sisters in other parts of the world. However, women's activism in Japan has garnered little attention until recently. One of the reasons seems to be the long-lasting Orientalist perspective on the submissiveness of Japanese women and the strong patriarchal traditions in Japanese society. Charlotte Bunch, for example, mentions the lack of knowledge of the feminist movement in Japan in the rest of the world stating 'even today, in a country so commonly identified with strong patriarchal traditions'(Bunch and Myron 1974, p. 69). No less important a reason for the lack of knowledge of women's activism in Japan is the very nature of Japanese women's mobilization, notably the strong tendency towards small scale, grassroots forms of activism and decentralized organizational structures. These characteristics have contributed to the invisibility of the women's movement in the minds of those who are outside of the activist circle.

In spite of this invisibility, various kinds of women's groups and feminist activism have been present within Japan. During the post-war years, the Japanese women's movement has come to boast a great diversity in terms of both its areas of focus and membership. Moreover, it has

rapidly developed transnational orientations since the 1970s, taking an active part in contributing to global feminist networks. One of the questions frequently asked about women's mobilization is the scope and range of the women's movement. In Japanese society, *josei undo* (women's movement) sounds rather outdated, reminiscent of the first wave of women's mobilizations for equal rights in the early period of modern Japan. For its part, the term *feminizumu* (feminism) tends to indicate women's activism since the second wave of the women's liberation movement in the late 1960s. Distinct from those two forms of activism, women's mobilizations based on women's culturally ascribed gender roles as housewives and mothers has been very active in Japan. Whereas they have not been identified with the women's movement generally, they have in fact contributed to the large-scale mobilization of ordinary women in practice. Feminists have been rather critical of mobilizations grounded in the role of mother and housewife given that they have further reinforced, rather than challenged, the inequalities underpinning gender relations in Japanese society (Kanai 2011, p. 13).

There have also been many discussions over the definition of "the women's movement" within global feminist scholarship. Two of the widely used concepts that define women's movement activism are women's "practical interests" and "strategic gender interests" (Molyneux 1985). Women's "practical" interests seek satisfaction of those needs arising from their specific location and responsibilities within the sexual division of labor. Women's immediate needs as care-taker of the family, such as for safe food or clean water, belong in this category. On the other hand, "strategic" interests claim to transform social relations in order to overcome women's subordination, such as in efforts to abolish the sexual division of labor, remove institutionalized forms of discrimination, establish freedom of choice over childbearing, and ensure the adoption of adequate measures that prevent male violence and control over women. Strategic interests have been valorized as having the potential to transform gender relations and the structures of women's subordination (Molyneux 1988, p. 228)

Drawing on the concepts of women's interests and strategic gender interests, Alvarez divides women's mobilizations into two categories: "feminine" organizations and "feminist" organizations. Feminine organizations mobilize to defend women's rights as they are assured by the dominant culture in principle, whereas feminist organizations challenge socially ascribed sex roles on the basis of strategic gender interests (Alvarez 1990, p. 25). She argues that feminist organizations focus primarily on challenging the conventional gender hierarchy, a goal that often puts them in opposition to feminine organizations¹⁰. These distinctions cannot always be

neatly drawn when they are applied to actual women's movements. Women's groups of diverse ideological orientations and understandings of womanhood often find themselves working in pursuit of the same goal (Shin 2011, p. 199). Furthermore, women's groups that were once viewed as radical and feminist at a given moment in history can later be identified among the more conservative women's groups by future generations of activists. That is to say, women's groups that focus their activism within the traditional "women's spheres" are not necessarily always placed in opposition to more obviously feminist groups.

Ferree and Mueller point to such dynamics within women's movements in their overview of feminist literature on women's movements. They distinguish women's movements and/or the actual mobilization of women as separate from feminism, which is rather a particular goal or idea (Ferree and Mueller 2004, p. 578). They define "women's movements" as all organizing of women explicitly as women towards social change, regardless of the specific ends sought by that change at any particular time (Ferree and Mueller 2004, p. 579). This broad definition 'takes into account the dynamic nature of the women's movement, in that many women's mobilizations start out with a non-gender directed goal, such as peace, anti-racism, or social justice and gradually acquire explicitly feminist components, and vice versa' (Ferree and Mueller 2004, p. 579). This inclusive definition of women's movements can also reflect the movement's fluid organizational strategy. Women's movements often address their constituents not only as women, but also in relation to their gender roles as mothers, sisters or wives. In short, regardless of the particular goals, women's mobilizations 'bring women into political activities, empower women to challenge limitations on their roles and lives, and create networks among women that enhance women's ability to recognize existing gender relations as oppressive and in need of change' (Ferree and Mueller 2004, p. 579).

Women's rights discourses and activism did not die with the Taisho era but rather expanded and grew in diverse directions. Suffragism continued to be a central feature, fueling the rhetoric and actions of groups dedicated to suffrage as a *sine qua non* of rights as well as being supported by groups with other primary agendas. These latter groups took for granted the desirability of rights, despite their differences concerning the meanings of rights other than the vote, which virtually all supported to some degree. Rights within the existing state system might be just a stopgap till a revolutionary state could be created as socialist women advocated in their feminist demands in the leftist labor movement in the late Taisho era, or they might be framed in terms of inclusion in the existing civil society. In both cases, they were articulated within existing

regimes of power. Feminists increasingly expressed rights as protections in the 1930s, when concepts of rights based on the 'individual' were potentially subversive. Inclusion in the state and/or civil society, many feminists believed, could be achieved in multiple ways, including consumer movements, 'election purification' movements, protection of laborers, welfare assistance to single mothers and their children, and other public sphere activities producing gendered social welfare reforms. Rights remained a central feature of these various activities (Machie 2003, p. 201). The permutations of rights discourses against shifting social and political backgrounds, especially as the state became increasingly reified in the early twentieth century, both accompanied and drove changes in the relationship of women to the state.

Women's movements in Japan function as political agents that change the political status quo. Japanese women's movements can be seen to comprise three groups: elite-initiated, feminist and non-feminist participatory. Despite differences in their outlook and attitudes, they share two common characteristics. First, their identities tend to be centered on motherhood. The language of motherhood has been a key idea behind Japanese women's mobilization. Second, their campaigns link women's demands with politics. Women's movements provide Japanese women, who are largely excluded from formal political processes, with an alternative channel for political participation. When they exercise practical influence on politics, they make effective use of channels both outside and inside formal political institutions, i.e. non-institutional and institutional channels. In the former case, the traditional style of Japan's policy making makes political influence possible for the women (Sakamoto 1987, p. 400)¹¹. In this view, the relationship between women's mobilization and feminism as a goal is not static or oppositional. Indeed, a great attention is given to the fact that 'at any given historical moment in a particular country their organizations might appear feminist or not, as the immediate focus of their efforts shift' (Ferree and Mueller 2004, p. 580).

2.3.3 New Challenges and Achievements since the 1990s

Although two main streams of women's mobilizations have continued beyond the 1980s, notably, housewife activism and single-issue activism protesting the housewifization of women, the 1990s witnessed important new developments in women's movement activism in Japan. First, new themes of women's activism, particularly violence against women, began to prevail (Fujimura-Fanselow 2011, p 234). The global human rights norm that "women's rights are human rights," and international feminist mobilization around the issue of violence against women stimulated the women's movement in Japan to explore new challenges. Women's

mobilizations against domestic violence and in protest of Japan's war-time military sexual slavery are important examples. Besides the fact that these movements successfully mobilized "new" norms, such as violence against women, they have also illustrated the possibilities of alternative means for women's movement influence; women's groups working on domestic violence articulated a new model of women's activism through their political participation in policymaking processes (Mackie 2003, p. 168). For their part, women's groups working to denounce Japan's war time military sexual slavery took up a pivotal role within transnational feminist activism and coalition building with other feminists from the Asian region.

These forms of mobilization were empowered by the vibrancy of global feminist activism and the increased legitimacy of global human rights norms (Chan-Tiberghien 2004, p. 159). Global human rights norms, particularly the notion that "women's rights are human rights," gained salience following the 1993 Vienna Human Rights Conference, thus spurring feminist movements to fight violence against women worldwide. The subsequent Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, included violence against women as one of the five core issues included in the proposed Platform for Action. Many activists who had participated in these international conferences brought back global human rights norms to challenge the cultural and national discourses on gender that dominated in their own countries.

These international developments sensitized Japanese women activists to the importance of gender equality policies and to governmental responsibility for the practical realization of gender equality. Japanese participants in the Beijing Conference formed a broad-based network, including feminist scholars and women legislators, in order to pressure and monitor the Japanese government's compliance with the Beijing Platform for Action. Under pressure to adopt new gender equality policies, in 1996, a year after the Beijing Conference, the Japanese government formulated the Vision for a Gender Equal Society and the Plan for a Gender Equal Society 2000. Thereafter, the comprehensive Basic Law on a Gender Equal Society, adopted in 1999, can be understood as the fruit of the previous decade of women's movement activism (Murakami 2006, p. 136).

Activists who had worked on behalf of victims of domestic violence also began to shift their attention to the need of a new law specifically dealing with violence against women. Women's groups were encouraged when violence against women was included in the Vision for a Gender Equal Society in 1996, as it was the first time that this issue had been formally recognized in an

official Japanese government document (Porter and Judd 1999, p. 42). At last, women in the shelter movement who had helped battered women survive their experiences of domestic violence, could formally name and receive recognition for the forms of violence they were combating in their daily work. Women's independent research, undertaken in 1992 by the "Research Team on Husbands (Lovers)'s Violence against Women," helped the problem of violence against women gain public recognition and attention. Through their field experiences, women's groups were convinced of the urgent need of a new law on violence against women in order to deal with these problems more effectively.

In 1998, women's groups held the first National Symposium on Domestic Violence in Sapporo, the largest city in the northern island of Hokkaido. A key outcome of the Symposium was that participants formed a national network that would enable information sharing and enhanced coordination of their voices and interventions on the government's policy responses in this area. A loose national network soon developed into the National Women's Shelter Network, obtaining the legal status of a Non Political Organization (NPO) in 2003. The Network worked in earnest towards the adoption of a new law and intensified its lobbying activities by distributing information to policy makers, preparing an alternative draft bill, conducting their own research, and by coordinating collaborative actions with other women's groups. However insufficient in meeting the expectations of women's groups, the first law came into effect in 2001, due in large part to these groups advocacy and political mobilization (Lunsing 2015, p. 163).

The Network, supported by the solidarity of other women's groups, has played an even greater role in the process of ensuring revisions to the law. Women's groups have continued to persuade law-makers and bureaucrats throughout the tedious review processes, each of which has often lasted several months. From the outset of the review committee, the women's groups requested that the government hold "Ikken Kokankai" (literally, opinion exchange meetings). More than a hundred women from all over Japan voluntarily came to participate in each opinion exchange meeting, held in the building of the Upper House in Tokyo (Sievers 1983, p. 36). Activists expert knowledge of violence against women, obtained through their longstanding experiences working with actual victims, enabled them to propose effective policy improvements throughout the law reform processes. Many survivors of domestic violence volunteered to share their experiences of abuse, and their testimony brought to light many of the problems that the initial law had failed to address. Faced with the vivid testimonies of these survivors, many of

the women legislators who had participated in the opinion exchange meetings confessed their ignorance of violence against women (National Network for the Revision of the DV Law 2006)¹².

Women's mobilization around domestic violence deserves our attention for several reasons. The Women's Shelter Movement has forged a cooperative relationship with state actors. Women's groups have long been aware of the state's attempts to coopt women's mobilization, and as such, they often preferred to keep the state at a distance. Governments have rarely been viewed as a genuine partner, by women's groups. In most cases, women's interventions have been invested in either protesting against the state's attempts to implement reactionary reforms or demanding the adoption of new laws, without gaining any meaningful access to the law-making process that ensues (Elliott, Katagiri and Sawai 2014, p. 133). Viewed from this perspective, women's groups in the shelter movement can be said to have carved out a new model of women's activism, one that includes formal political participation in the relevant policymaking processes.

Furthermore, this new model was made possible while they retained a preference for decentralized organizational structures that date back to the activism of the 1970s. The key activists working towards the adoption and revision of the Domestic Violence Law attribute the movement's success to the organizational openness. Each opinion exchange meeting witnessed widespread mobilization of women throughout Japan, a feat that was accomplished without requiring formal membership in any particular organization. Participants could voluntarily choose to participate in the Network's activities without being mobilized by organizational authorities (Endo 2006, p. 34). The opportunity for individual autonomy akin to this kind of women's activism might indeed be one of the main reasons motivating women's participation in social movements in Japan. Women's movement strategies, such as consciousness-raising, decentralized networks, conferences and teach-ins, which emerged as a form of resistance to conventional authorities still remain the preferred strategies of the contemporary women's movement. Nonetheless, this strategy of loose networks and women's voluntary participation still enabled the shelter movement to successfully mobilize for policy change. At the same time, the success of the shelter movement is among the few examples of "bottom up movements" in Japan that have brought about actual policy changes for women.

Regarding the efforts of Japanese women's movement activism at the global level, this issue

of violence against women opened up a new phase of transnational activism in the 1990s. Women's mobilization around the "Comfort Women" issue is a salient example. Before the rise of the Comfort Women issue, since the 1970s a few Japanese women activists had been prominent in commenting on the unequal relationships between Japan and other Asian countries. Matsui Yayoi and Iijima Ayako were the leading figures for such critiques (Mitsui 1976, p. 86). A journalist, Matsui was earnestly devoted to building international solidarity with Asian women; she set up the Asian Women's Association in 1977 and revitalized the organization into the Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center in 1995. Pursuing advocacy on issues of prostitution, peace, poverty and the environment, her organization played a central role in organizing the historical 'Women's International Tribunal on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery' in Tokyo in 2000. This important moment in history was achieved through broad-based mobilization and collaboration with Asian women's groups, feminist lawyers, and legal authorities working both inside and outside of Japan.

The Comfort Women issue achieved wide international attention in the late 1980s when Korean women's groups called for the investigation of war crimes committed by the Japanese government; the first lawsuit seeking formal damages and compensation was filed in Japan in 1991. The issue was first brought before the International Commission on Human Rights in 1992 and subsequently before other U.N. organizations. Public hearings were held in Tokyo and again at the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 (Chinkin 2001, p. 340). Japanese women's groups cooperated closely with the Korean women's movement, demanding an official apology and that compensation be provided to the victimized women by the Japanese State.

The global feminist campaigns against state sponsored violence against women during wartime and the historical documents attesting to the Japanese government's conscious efforts to build military stations enforcing sexual slavery pressured Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama to apologize to all victims in Asian countries for the atrocities of Japan's military invasions in 1995. Nonetheless, the government evaded formal responsibility towards the women victims and delegated authority for compensation and welfare assistance to a private, non-governmental organization. The injustice of these governmental actions was an outrage to those survivors who had courageously come forward to speak out and publicly relay their stories on the international scene (De Beauvoir 2000, p. 269).

To break through the impasse, in 1997 Matsui and women's networks working on the Comfort Women issue held an International Conference on Violence Against Women in War and Conflict in Japan, inviting forty overseas participants from twenty countries. The outcome was the formation of the International Network for Violence against Women in War (VAWW-NET). In the following year, VAWW-Net Japan was formed. An international alliance on sexual violence and the Comfort Women issue aimed at achieving a regional reconciliation between Japan and other nations, and amongst women's movements in East Asia, by raising the issue of Japan's governmental responsibility for sexual war crimes. At the Asian Women's Solidarity Conference held in Seoul in 1998 VAWW-NET Japan proposed the organization of a Women's International War Crime Tribunal; the proposal was adopted and the International Organizing Committee was formed to prepare for the tribunal. The Committee was composed of women from Japan, six of the victimized countries, and activists specializing in armed conflict throughout the world who joined the International Advisory Committee. Organizers identified judges with international prestige to oversee the tribunal. During the four-days of hearings, 50 prosecutors from 12 countries presented cases to indict Japan and approximately 4,800 people sat in the court (Eto-2008, p. 129)

In the fall of 2009, the longstanding Opposition Party, the Democratic Party of Japan, gained power, constituting the first change of government and electoral upset suffered by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party since the Second World War. In the coming months in 2010, the third Action Plan for Gender Equal Society will be drafted. This dramatic change in politics may serve to silence the conservative backlash against gender equality and thus reactivate women's groups. Although it is unclear whether the new models of post 1990s women's activism will result in a new historical phase for the women's movement in Japan, women's movement activism is surely ushering in a new era for the refreshment of their activism.

2.3.4 Women and Art in Japan

Existing social structure, that made formal training, rigorous practice and exhibitions of artistic exploits difficult for women, can largely be blamed for the scant presence of talented women artists in the world of art till the 19th century. They were, however, allowed to work at home between performing their domestic duties and, occasionally, assist their male family members in the studios. Japanese poets of 10th century Heian era like Murasaki Shikibu, Sei Shonagon, Akazome Emon and Izumi Shikibu habitually embellished their journals with simple motifs and calligraphy (Fister, Fumiko and Yamamoto 2007, p. 25). Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of*

Genji inspired many later day artists to create immortal works of art. Famous painters of Tosa School, particularly Mitsuoki, created several impressions influenced by Murasaki's poems. Ironically, the poet herself was forced to remain hidden behind her pen name and the artists of the day anonymous. It was not a custom to let women painters sign their own creations.

Women have been central to the Japanese ceramics tradition over its long history, the longest known among human civilizations. Jomon or "cord-marked" pots were being made in Japan by women in 14,000 BC, some four thousand years before pottery traditions began in Mesopotamia and China. In the 6th century, when the potter's wheel came to Japan from Korea, along with other technologies for producing thinner, more durable, less water-permeable ceramics, men assumed the lead role in producing these wheel-thrown wares fired at high temperatures in specially designed kilns (Mostow, Bryson and Graybill 2003, p 135). Women and their hand-worked, unfired, earthenware ceramics were relegated to the background, but by no means to extinction.

With expanded industrialization of the ceramics in the Meiji period, (1868-1911), and an increase in foreign demand, many Japanese feared loss of basic qualities of Japanese ceramics. A movement at the turn of the 20th century refocused aesthetic interest in traditional craft and reaffirmed the value of the ceramicist's hand. This reinvigoration of craft combined with international emergence of "the individual" as the source of artistic creativity has created a place that individual women artists occupy alongside men (Vartanian 2006, p. 34).

The works in the exhibition span categories such as "traditional," "sculptural," "craft design," and "installation;" and like much contemporary art, they often float above such boundaries. Inspiration for shapes, colors, and motifs is acknowledged by these artists to come from plants, shells, mountains, rivers, rubbish, industrial design, light and shadow, absence and presence. Despite the communality of being women and born into Japanese culture, these artists emerge in their work as creators and innovators with individual sensibilities, wit, and unique responses to a wide range of artistic traditions (Weinder 1990, p. 159). This exhibition comes together as a stimulating encounter with twenty-five distinctive and highly creative artistic personalities.

The role of women in ancient Japan elicits inconsistencies due to different influences that were integrated at various time periods. The primary influence that contributed to these inconsistencies was religion. Integration of the two major religions of Japan, Shintoism and

Buddhism, created a paradox for the female identity; altering women's place in Japan's matriarchal antiquity to a state of acquiescent confinement by the dawn of the Meiji Restoration. Different conjectures of ancient Japanese women were formed in direct correlation to the spiritual beliefs of the time. Evaluating the feminine identities educed by these beliefs illustrates the drastic changes that occurred for women. Through literature and written records a window to the past is created, allowing modern day analysis on the status of women in antiquated Japan.

Historian

The Kojiki and Nihongi are the two original Japanese written records that illuminate the first documented Japanese attitude towards women. These documents facilitated the discovery of a feminine presence that is renowned and worshipped. The *Nihongi* holds insight into the birth of Shinto though the story of *Amaterasu*, which was previously preserved by oral tradition. *Amaterasu* is portrayed as the epitome of perfection in the Shinto religion exemplifying intelligence, beauty, fertility, and purity (Yoshimoto 2005, p. 33). *Amaterasu* is the primary kami of religion and her feminine qualities are embraced and admired. This mythology based on femininity, created a "matriarchal antiquity" in Japan. The mythology surrounding *Amaterasu* was not only the birth of the Yamato line, but of a feminine allure that would dictate a reputable attitude towards women until the sixth century.

Chinese records dating back to the first century reveal that women were not only allowed to rule, but also encouraged to rule due to a confidence in women to bring peace and regulation to the country. In these documents it is determined that a female ruler Pimiko ruled Japan in the third century. She was described as having "mature eyes." In the same document the opinion of women is established, "Women are chaste and not given to jealousy." When Pimiko's female descendant, Iyo, became queen she was greeted with much support from the people. This instance of historical record illustrates themes that parallel in the Shinto mythology during a time when Shinto was the primary religion. A women's sense of order and perfection is reflected in both documents. What *Amaterasu* represents is personified in Pimiko 'From the depictions of female governors in the myths and the numerous women rulers...it can be assumed that the status of women was similar to that of men.' (Reeve 2005, p. 23).

In 552 A.D the introduction of Buddhism from China would interfere with the Shinto dominated perception of women. According to Campbell, Dalby and Oshima, 'The aspects of Buddhism which define its character had begun to make inroads on society's attitude towards

women.’ (Campbell, Dalby and Oshima 1995, p. 13). This particular form of Buddhism that assimilated in Japan was immensely anti-feminine. Japan’s newfound Buddhism had fundamental convictions that women were of evil nature, which eventually led women into a submissive role of in Japanese society¹³. These spiritually based judgments produced a chauvinistic society.

These spiritual attitudes can be found in the literary works of the time. The thirteenth century Buddhist morality tale *The Captain of Naruto* emphasizes the concept of female submission and male dominance. In the tale a wife of a captain is the object of the emperor’s desire. The captain orders his wife to go to the emperor and she agrees, illustrating an act of submission. *The Tale of Genji* also provides examples of Buddhist values. Genji imitates the Buddhist credence of the time, Heian Japan, by stating, ‘If they were not fundamentally evil they would not be born a woman at all.’ Lady Murasaki, the author, illustrates the use of women for political advancement through marriage throughout the plot line. This mirrors the common use of woman during the Fujiwara dominance; to form political alliances obtained through arranged marriages made by fathers. Once again the Buddhist perception of women was fueling the deterioration of their status in society (Brown 2011, p. 11). The negative Buddhist depiction of women infiltrates the story of Genji as well as reflects the common marriage practices of the time. Again, historical record and literature are sharing common themes.

The situation remained the same for ensuing seven hundred years. Then started the Edo period with its policy of Sakoku and Japan became completely isolated from the outside world. No foreigner could enter or exit the country without facing a death penalty. For everything, including creative inspirations, Japan was forced to look within. Consequently, art and literature were injected with new life even in this apparently counterproductive time. Practitioners of *bunjinga* or literati painting started challenging the existing social norms. Matsuo Basho accepted women as trainees in his school. Despite considerable oppositions, female painters could now practice openly and were no longer forced to remain obscure. Kiyohara Yukinobu (1643 – 1682) created very detailed yet delicate landscapes on folding screens and hanging scrolls. 18th century poets and artists Chiyo-ni and Tagami Kikusha started combining ink illustrations and calligraphy with their haiku poetry (Grosenick and Becker 2001, p. 65).

Otagaki Rengetsu (1791 – 1875) was one of the most renowned artists of the time. She combined her love of poetry, calligraphy, painting and ceramic to create vivid depictions of her

surroundings. Being a Buddhist missionary, her world was not confined to the limits of the four walls of the home. Instead, she traveled widely and met a great many people while performing her religious duties. This helped her to have a wider outlook and perfect her natural skills as an artist. Uemura Shoen's (1875 – 1949) work helped women become more engaged with the world of art. She was not only a gifted artist but also a single mother by choice. The latter decision caused considerable furor in a still conservative society. However, her accomplishments as an artist were too great to be ignored for long. In 1948, she became the first woman to be honored with the *Order of Culture* in Japan (Fister, Fumiko and Yamamoto 2007, p. 31). These instances were certainly helpful in promoting the cause of women artists in Japan and beyond. Unlike the West, Japanese artists reveled in similar styles and subject matters irrespective of their genders. If any difference existed, it was in the delicacy of the presentation and softness of lines. Artists often searched for and found solace in nature. Even the women artists were not shy of confronting their inner demons on canvas.

The Heian period is known for its developments in literature, attributed to the woman authors such as Murasaki. During this time women faced severe isolation with limited education. Women in the Heian period were defined by restrictions of what was not permitted. Custom influenced by Buddhism, enforced strict physical limitations on women, not to be seen by men and sometimes even other women. In a diary entry of an aristocratic woman, Izumi Shikibu, a poem is entered:

*Thinking of the world
Sleeves wet with tears are my bed-fellows.
Calmly to dream sweet dreams—
here is no night for that.*

This entry illustrates the frustrations of her confinement. These women were locked away from the world, with nothing else to do but think and imagine a world outside the walls of their detainment. Nevertheless, in their time of internment these aristocratic women had a literary revolution brewing (Grosenick and Becker 2001, p.28). Although they did not openly acknowledge their education, many aristocratic Heian women learned to write eloquently. Lady Muraskai is a prime example of women writers whom were self taught, and she composed the first novel in Japan, *The Tale of Genji*. In a dairy entry Lady Muraskai acknowledges learning the Chinese classics from listening to her brother's lessons. She cautiously expresses the

necessity for discretion in regards to her knowledge, since this education was restricted for women, again a product of preconceived prejudices against women due to the Buddhist convictions.

The development of feudal Japan during the Kamakura period distinctly outlined the expectations of women, 'In this less structured society the freedom and strength of women grew, and the Kamakura period became a high point in the status of Japanese women' (Mostow, Bryson and Graybill 2003, p 159). Women were playing a more active role in society, reconnecting from behind the Heian barriers. Women even trained in the ways of the samurai, although there were still property and financial restrictions to their status Buddhism was flourishing due to the introduction of new sects of Buddhism, like Amidism, which were far more harmonious and less restrictive to women. In this case Buddhism is contradicting itself, creating inconsistencies in the expectations of women.

As the feudal era progressed, and relations became more hostile, women's rights began to revert again. The husband and wife relationship began to reflect that of the lord and subject feudal ideal. During the Tokugawa era the definition of women was clear, 'marriage was the only acceptable condition for women. Thus the sole purpose should be learning to please her future husband...' Households were again based on patriarchy, and women once again detained from other women and considered "shallow" in intelligenc. Ieyasu Tokugawa wished to freeze social classes and human relations for control and unity purposes, thus resorted to old restrictive customs of women, originally instated due to the Buddhist chauvinism. This restrictive lifestyle defined the status of women leading up to modern day Japan (Reeve 2005, p25).

Counterarguments claim it is difficult to define ancient Japanese women's status due to the lack of resources regarding the lower class. Unfortunately, a disadvantage when exploring this topic is the limited resources from men and women of the lower class. Most diary entries and literary works, especially during the Heian period, were the products of Aristocratic women. However, these two central religions in Japan bridge the gap between classes sharing common beliefs and ritual, which are the focal influences under examination. Another criticism is that Shinto is hard to define due to its hybrid tendencies. The vindication, *Amaterasu's* role in Shintoism as the premier deity is indisputable, and is supported by Chinese historical record as well as Japanese mythology. The anti-feminine tendencies of Buddhism redefined the role of women and continually progressed and regressed over a period of thirteen hundred years. There is an

evident change of femininity and matriarchy at the dawn of Japanese civilization to the restricted and submissive women of the Tokugawa era that was “devoid of legal rights,” by the birth of modern Japan. This change can be attributed to the arrival of Buddhism in 552, creating a paradox with the native Shintoism. The two religions were harmonious in practice yet created a contradictory and confusing role for the women of ancient Japan. The Heian women themselves were a contradiction; in their confinement, they found liberation in writing which would be a dynamic contribution to Japanese culture, and their legacy. The status of women in ancient Japan was interrupted, due to the chauvinistic foundation that Buddhism conveyed. Joy Paulson confirms, “...their status was defined by custom.” (Grosenick and Becker 2001, p.29).

2.3.5 From *The Tale of Genji* to *The Nakano Thrift Shop*: Women Literary Icons

Proceeding to the most complex period in the history of Japanese literature, namely, the end of the nineteenth and the twentieth century, there were several innovations in the layout of material and placement of accents. First of all, in the previous compendiums of Japanese literature men were given the dominant place. In the twentieth century, men were considered as representatives of naturalists: Tayama Katai, Shimazaki Tōson, Masamune Hakuchō etc., idealists :Arishma Takeo, Shiga Naoya, Mushanokōji Saneatsu, aesthetes :Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, Nagai Kafū, Satō Haruo. At the end of the nineteenth century there is one female writer mentioned Higuchi Ichiyō among pseudo-classics (Hutchinson and Morton 2016, p. 42). This is proof of the theory of “masculinity” of the most outstanding works of literature almost until the end of the twentieth century.

There would be no Japanese literature without women's voices. In the Heian period (8-12th century), which serves as one of the two loci of this class, women developed both an orthographic system and a literature that ranks as that culture's crowning achievement and our best window into it. *The Genji monogatari*, hailed as the world's first novel, and then consider a Heian woman's diary, the *Sarashina nikki* (or *As I Crossed Dreams*). Women's identity has been rewritten in the turbulent one hundred years from roughly 1900 to 2000. Modern Japanese identity has been in a constant state of flux and nowhere in the case of female identity. The constant rewriting of gender by women authors and artists has served as a critique of society, a search for new self-definitions and as compelling art (Gayle 2013, p. 55).

The immense cultural achievements of women writers in ancient Japan — Murasaki Shikibu (c. 973 or 978-c. 1014 or 1031 CE), Sei Shonagon (c. 966-c. 1017 or 1025 CE), and Izumi

Shikibu (c. 976-c. 1040 CE) — facilitated the first flowering of classical Japanese literature. Women wrote Japan's and perhaps Asia's first autobiographical narratives in diaries and memoirs, as well as miscellaneous writings composed of poems, lists, observations, and personal essays during the Heian era (794-1185 CE). For this reason, the Japanese can uniquely claim to have a literary golden age dominated by women. The forces that enabled women writers to flourish during the Heian era are three fold: the adoption of the scholar-bureaucrat tradition from Tang China (618-907 CE), the utilization of the dual writing systems of classical Chinese and vernacular Japanese (Hutchinson and Morton 2016, p. 51) and the establishment of a regent government where male relatives married their female relatives into the imperial family to gain access to the throne.

In accordance with Chinese practice, those in power were required to be scholar-bureaucrats with training in the official historical and philosophical texts in classical Chinese, and also in the arts of calligraphy, poetry, music, and painting, thus giving the arts great prominence in governance. But much of the language of governance: imperial edicts, documents, and the like was written in classical Chinese and deemed off-limits to women. With classical Chinese as the language of privileged discourse, things might have been exceedingly difficult for women writers had it not been for the marriage politics in play (Szostak 2013, p. 82). One family, the Fujiwara clan, gained ascendancy at court by marrying their sisters and daughters into the imperial family and ruling as regents in place of their young charges, who were placed on the throne as children. The only way men outside of this coveted family could access power was by marrying their own female relatives into the Fujiwara family. This union of women to men of power; for political reasons ; is not a rarity in the history of the world, but what made it unusual was the practice of educating women in letters and the arts to make them attractive mates, marriage pawns if you will, which ironically enabled women to create what later came to be considered the *belle lettres* of the period.

This, of course, did not preclude men's literary production, which included composition of poetry in both Japanese and classical Chinese, diaries in classical Chinese, and even prose tales, which were predecessors to great works like *The Tale of Genji*. However, while the men were occupied writing in both Japanese and classical Chinese, the women came to write largely in Japanese, creating what the literary economies of the twentieth and twentieth centuries have come to celebrate as the major literary pieces of the Heian period. Women writers in ancient Japan achieved success through lineage; having the right pedigree to acquire training in the

literary arts; language, being able to compose in vernacular Japanese with the freedom to engage and explore genres, which were shunned by men; and leisure, possessing the time and space to write because they were confined to their homes, and not saddled with the social and official responsibilities associated with male courtier service¹⁴. Additionally, women like Murasaki Shikibu and Shonagon learned classical Chinese; however, they incorporated it into vernacular Japanese and created what can be termed a “hybrid style.”(Curran, Sato-Rossberg and Tanabe 2015, p. 69).

In actuality, *The tale of Genji* operates more like a written version of a “spoken word” text; that is, the tale loses its sense of an orally-delivered narration directed to an intimate few, perhaps sitting in a darkened room, transfixed as the tale unfolds before them in medias res. Much is in code as cultural and social information is required of the listener-reader for the tale is constructed for in-group, collaborative readers, who are “in-the-know.” Ironically this actually works to draw in present-day readers, as they are made to feel welcome in a very special world, which looks exceedingly different but which has much that readers throughout the centuries have been able to understand, recognize, and engage (Gayle 2013, p. 59). The tale speaks to the trials and tribulations of both men and women living in a court society over a millennium ago, to their desires for love and acceptance and power in terms that we all understand; however, at the same time, these serve as foils that mask the power struggles at an ancient court where love relationships are not just for love, but also as a means to create alliances to solidify positions at court.

Philosophical, religious, aesthetic themes and concerns abound; the more one knows and brings to the text, the richer and fuller the experience and appreciation. Complex relationships, psychological depth, bringing to life a bygone world, and more, are what make it a masterpiece (Hutchinson and Morton 2016, p. 43). The greatest variable to be found in the writings of Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shonagon come from the differing political realities in force during the times the two women served in court. She argues these realities greatly affected the relationship between empress and lady-in-waiting, and most prominently fashioned *The Pillow Book*, Murasaki Shikibu’s diary (*The Diary of Murasaki Shikibu*), and even *The Tale of Genji*. Although the two women are often thought of as “contemporaries,” Iwasa notes that the heydays of the two courts were separated by a critical period of ten years.

Between the years of c. 993-1000 CE, Teishi (977-1001 CE), the empress whom Shonagon served, was the sole recipient of the emperor's favor, so she could maintain a showy, attractive salon, establish a supportive, stimulating relationships with her ladies, and even bestow overt favor on Shonagon without repercussions for this favoritism. By the time that Empress Shoshi (988-1074 CE) arrived on the scene in 1008 CE, the political climate was so finely calibrated that the fortunes of the family could not be left in her hands alone. Shoshi's father, the powerful and cunning Fujiwara no Michinaga (966-1028 CE), could not afford to bank solely on Shoshi's charms to draw the attention of the emperor, for Teishi was the older, more experienced, and the emperor's favorite. As a result, Michinaga maintained stringent control, causing the much gentler Shoshi to take the safer, less conspicuous route in terms of both her salon and her relationships with her ladies (Copeland 2006, p. 33).

All of this is reflected in the writings of the two women: Shonagon's style is daring, flashy, and witty, while Shikibu's, especially in her diary, appears more guarded, circumscribed, and even psychological (Szostak 2013, p. 22). One of the brilliant minds of the period, Izumi Shikibu, who served in the same salon as Murasaki Shikibu, is well known for her poetry and her *Izumi Shikibu Diary*, which is suitably filled with her poetry. This work also relates her love affair first with Prince Tametaka, a close relative of the imperial family, and then later with his half-brother Atsumichi. So extensive was her reputation as a great lover; this gleaned as much from her poetry and her diary as from her life; that she is often stylized as the female counterpart to the talented poet Ariwara no Narihira (c. 825?-c. 880? CE) and as following in the steps of Ono no Komachi (c. 825-c. 900 CE), who is also known for her intensively passionate poetry.

Another prominent writer of the age: Michitsuna no haha (c. 935-995 CE), author of the *Kagero Diary*, who recorded her rather tortured relationship with Michinaga's father, Fujiwara no Kaneie (929-990 CE). Hers is the first in a long series of *nikki bungaku* (diary literature) written by women. For this reason and for the presence of Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shonagon, it might be best to say that the *zeitgeist* of the period is a composite if not amalgamation of all these women's writings and, of course, those of the male courtiers too. *The Tale of Genji* and the other women's writings of the Heian period have been read as "history" most likely soon after their inception. And, if we take Leo Tolstoy's comments in regards to the significance of his *War and Peace*, it is precisely the history of the "little people," the people living their everyday lives rather than just the great historical figures, which constitutes history, then the fictional or semi-fictional writing of the Heian women writers should indeed be considered

history (Coy, Woehrle and Dyton 2000, p. 21). Courtly lady-in-waiting Sei Shonagon's witty journal is a portal to Japan's classical era. Her masterpiece *The Pillow Book* (1002) is considered as one of the most remarkable literary products in Japan.

Sakae Tsuboi managed to write an anti-war novel without ever describing a battlefield, but *Twenty-Four Eyes*' pacifist message is all the more moving for its subtlety. The novel follows a provincial schoolteacher and her classroom of 12 children from 1928-1946, through the rise of Japanese nationalism and the war's devastating effects at home. Rural Shodoshima Island provides a charming setting in a side of Japan that is often out of sight to Tokyo-centric foreign audiences. Though Higuchi Ichiyo was arguably the most prominent Japanese female writer of the 19th century, her work is unfortunately relatively unknown outside of Japan. This biography paints a portrait of Higuchi's brief life of financial struggle and unrequited love, providing a background for the theme of feminine suffering that runs throughout the poems and stories included in the collection; all produced prodigiously before her tragic death from tuberculosis at the age of twenty four. Banana Yoshimoto set off "Bananamania" when she published her first novel, *Kitchen*, at the age of twenty four. Indeed, Nüffer credits Yoshimoto's best-sellers for increasingly eroding 'the distinction between pure and popular literature often used to marginalize female authors. Her production contains two atmospheric novellas about loss, expressing the underlying melancholy of Japan's bubble economy. The second story, "Moonlight Shadow," is a gateway to Yoshimoto's later, more surreal works like *N.P.* and *Amrita*, where she begins to hone the quirkiness and magical realism that we often think of as hallmarks of modern Japanese literature (Schallow and Walker 1996, P. 225).

Crime novelist Natsuo Kirino's most thrilling page-turner is about four suburban women working the graveyard shift at a bento factory who get tangled up with murder, blackmail and the yakuza. A feminist exposé of single motherhood and domestic violence, topics that are often swept under the rug in Japan, *Out* champions female empowerment in a still-patriarchal society, right up to its pulse-pounding climax. Hiromi Kawakami's character study of a Tokyo thrift shop is populated as much by the ashtrays and lamps for sale as it is by the store's eccentric workers, stand-ins for the tug-of-war between a quiet nostalgia and modern Japanese culture. 'Decades of economic stagnation and broad cultural shifts have left many Japanese people of both sexes feeling adrift and uncertain of the future,' says Nüffer. And if *The Tale of Genji* is an ideal of classical Japanese romance, the tortured relationship at the center of *The Nakano Thrift Shop* is a love story for contemporary Japan (Ibid, p. 226). Living a life that spanned the

twentieth century in Japan as Koda Aya (1904-1990) did, meant being exposed to a whirlwind of economic and social change. As a woman, Aya must have experienced shifts in social life that rocked her understanding of personal and social identity (Tansman 1993, p. 3). Her first works, written when she was 43, were memoirs of life with her father; they include *Chichi* (父, *My Father*) and *Konna koto* (こんなこと, *Such an Affair*). Seen as the writings of a dutiful daughter, they achieved critical success. Her subsequent short stories, novels, and essays explored women's lives, family, and traditional culture. They include the 1955 novel *Nagareru* (*Flowing*), which was made into a popular movie, as well as essays such as *Kakera* (*Fragments*) and *Mono Iwanu Issho no Tomo* (*A Friend for Life*), and short stories including *Hina* (*Dolls for a Special Day*) and *Kunsho* (*The Medal*). She received the Yomiuri Prize for *Kuroi suso*.

2.3.6 Body, Time and Space: Geisha as a literary Device

Although having an honorable position at court, the services the ladies of court performed for the Emperor or noble men were not unlike the services of the “yujo” (or courtesan / prostitute during Edo period (1600-1868) and “geisha” (women entertainers and sex partners, first seen in the late eighteenth century), who appeared later onto the scene (Malelland and Dasgupta 2015, p. 34). The possibility that these women were in any way alike was perhaps unthinkable then, but in today's modern societies, the question may be valid, considering all the sexual innuendoes in advertisements and music videos. This question as well as other topics, such as the women's regard for the profession, how society viewed them and their feelings about their status in life, regarding all three professions, the court lady, the yujo and the geisha were the theme of many literary productions through the Japanese history.

Geisha as a literary device is present in many literary productions like: “Genji Monogatari” *The Tale of Genji* and Masuda Sayo's *Autobiography of a Geisha*. Among other texts used, were an extract from Sei Shonagon's (清少納言) “Makura no Soshi” (*The Pillow Book*), Michitsuna no haha's (道綱の母) “Kagero Nikki” (*The Gossamer Years*), military stories by a samurai's daughter named O'An, Nun Abutsu's “Izayoi Nikki” (*The Diary of the Sixteenth Night Moon*), Izumi Shikibu's (和泉式部) *Diary*, Higuchi Ichiyo's (樋口一葉) “Takekurabe” (*Child's Play*), along with various other stories about pleasure women. An extract from Liza Dalby's book “*Geisha*”, Liza Dalby's article “*Courtesan and Geisha: The Real Women of the Pleasure*

Quarter”, as well as Rowley’s “*Prostitutes Against the Prostitution Prevention Act of 1956*”, also provided necessary background information.

Heian period produced several women authors of subsequence, although none as influential as Murasaki Shikibu (973-1014?) who wrote “*Genji monogatari*” (*The Tale of Genji*, 1007-8?), which became a cannon of Japanese literature. Her peers of Heian and Kamakura (1185-1333) periods include Sei Shonagon (966-1017?), who wrote *The Pillow Book* (Makura no soshi, 993-1001), which is not unlike a behavior manual for women of aristocratic descent. Also of note is Michitsuna no Haha (936- 995?), an extremely apt poet from the 11th century who was commissioned by her husband Fujiwara no Kaneie (929-990), a very noble man, to write a diary “*Kagero nikki*” (*The Gossamer Years*, 974), in which she was to portray his sensitive character. In her prologue, she hints at after having read the old tales, she found them mere fabrications and wanted to do better ‘Yet, as the days went by in monotonous succession, she had occasion to look at the old romances [monogatari], and found them masses of the rankest fabrication sorogoto. Perhaps, she said to herself, even the story of her own dreary life, set down in a journal nikki, might be of interest;’ (Hutchinson and Morton 2016, p. 33)

The Gossamer Years, 974, is certainly very interesting, although not a literary feat like “*Genji monogatari*” (*The Tale of Genji*, 1006?), it conveys the loneliness that women experienced, while waiting for their loved ones, and having to share them with other women (Malelland and Dasgupta 2015, p. 68). A few of those women, as all three stories allude, had the opportunity to become acquainted with each other and even start a friendship, but more often, the women, especially those not living in the Palace or at court, spent their lives waiting.

While the diaries are a compilation of exceptional poetry from those days (Suzuki and Shirane 2000, p. 73), women also wrote different kinds of stories, such as nun Abutsu’s (1222-1283) “*Izayoi Nikki*” (*Diary of the Waning moon/ The Diary of the Sixteenth Night Moon*, 1283). Nun Abutsu was adopted as a child by her mother’s husband, who was a provincial governor named Taira Norishige¹⁵. She may be most famous for her relationship with the poet Fujiwara Tameie (1198-1275). Although he was married at the time, they lived together for twelve years and had three sons. After the death of Tameie, she fought with his son of former marriage about the Hosokawa Estate, which she said belonged to one of her sons. The diary is a travel journal and one of the earliest examples of such, according to Professor Christina Laffin, in her translation of the diary (Laffin 2010, p. 112-121).

At the beginning of Edo period (1600-1868) stories of men who had battled for unification were extremely popular. “Oan Monogatari” (*O-An’s Stories after 1600*) was of this caliber, about a teenage girl and her participation in the battle of Sekigahara (Leyasu 2002, p. 39-41); When O-An (before 1600-Kanbun era 1661-1673) wrote the story she was already an old woman, but she seems to have had a vivid memory of the incident, as well as surviving it when the Ogaki Castle fell with Ishida inside. Her story is that, the women had specific jobs, like making bullets and sorting through the heads of men who had fallen during the battle. The sorting was to decide whether the man was of high rank or not, which then was made even clearer by blackening his teeth, a sure sign of high rank in those days.

One of the most influential women writers of Meiji period (1868-1912) was Higuchi Ichiyo (1872-1896), with her awareness raising political. The story is extremely intriguing and not only because it attacks the ideas of the Meiji government, but also because it depicts the life of yujo during a time when they were becoming less high class and more like low prostitutes. The diaries and stories grasp the society of each period, and depict the culture fairly accurately, but to further investigate their feelings and portrayal of the societies, it is necessary to look more closely at two very important female authors of different genre. A high standing gentlewoman of the Heian (794-1185) court, and a 1950’s low class geisha at a hot springs resort in Suwa Japan short story “Takekurabe” (*Child’s Play*, 1895-96). The story is set on the outskirts of Yoshiwara, and the children depicted in the story, clearly reflect the grown-up world. The main characters are, the priest’s son Nobuyuki and the outside girl Midori, whose parents help out at a brothel the Daikokuya, where the older daughter has become a popular “oiran” (the highest rank a courtesan at a brothel can achieve, before that they are “yujo”, meaning women who play). They have a sort of relationship, where Nobu clearly likes Midori but in keeping with his social status, ignores her because he is extremely shy. She likes him, whether it is because of his quiet demeanour or the fact that his status in life is likely to become better than hers. The other characters are children who play with them and who go to the same private school as they do. There is Chokichi, not a bad kid, but tends to bully his friends. Then there is the gang from the public school, which in those days was considered better. The leader of the gang is a kid named Shota, who is always extremely well dressed and his parents are pawnbrokers, so they have money. Despite living in the same neighborhood, Shota feels that the others are beneath him in dignity. He is very taken with Midori and has high hopes about their future, which come crumbling down when he finds out about her already-decided future. When the gangs go to war, Chokichi gets help from Nobu against Shota and his friends. Of course near the end, each knows

exactly what they will be doing in the future, whether it is taking care of the pawnshop, becoming a yujo or a priest (Hutchinson and Morton 2016, p. 89).

Nevertheless, a Ko-Uta is translated as "little song" in Japanese. Unfamiliar to most Westerners, *ko-uta* are particularly in tune with the tradition of Japan's Edo-era merchants. Some *ko-uta* are aesthetic, many are earthy. *Ko-uta* are sung to the accompaniment of the *shamisen*—a traditional, three-stringed Japanese lute. *Ko-uta* come to life when they are sung, and the best example of where they live is in the geisha world. Some experience with *haiku* and other forms of Japanese poetry shows that *ko-uta* share many things with those forms. Yet, *ko-uta* retain their own unique interest, making Geisha songs a fascinating addition to any collection of Japanese literature or art (Crihfield 2016, p. 3).

At the age of nine, in Japan and before the WWII, Sayuri was sold by her father, a humble fisherman, to a whorehouse in Kyoto. With her blue eyes, the little girl understands quickly that she has to make a profit from this chance that she possessed alone. She submits with docility to the initiative difficulty that would make of her a true geisha. Art of toilet and hairdressing, tea ritual, the science of chanting, dance and love: Sayuri will, step by step, be one of the most coveted geishas in her town. The richest men, and the most powerful will dispute to gain her, as she will be the target of rival hatred of adversaries. She wrote in the form of memoirs and then a novel *Geisha* that puts the reader in an exotic universe, a melting of perversity and erotism, cruelty and refinement, seduction and mystery (Golden 2006, p. 4).

The courtesans of Edo period (1600-1868), were also captured as sex slaves. Sold to dubious establishments by their parents, and whored out to anyone with the finance to pay for a night here, or even a month there (Dalby 2000, p. 4). Although less refined than the aristocratic ladies, they were considered on top of their game, in their heyday. As the court ladies, they were not free to make their own decisions, but were left to the mercy of the owners of the brothels, who also owned them, at least for as long as their contract stipulated. Their daily lives consisted of equal jealousy and waiting, while they hardly needed to wait too long for their lover each time, some were waiting for a better life, and freedom.

Almost the exact same thing can be said about the lives of geisha stretching from Edo period (1600-1868) up until mid-twentieth century, or at the time when Masuda was writing her autobiography. Violence seems to have followed the girls every step when, living at the okiya, from the okasan and elder sisters of the houses, as well as aggressive customers. Surely pleasure

women of all societies and status, must know some clever tricks to keep a man at a distance, and if not the women probably lay still and waited for things to be over, as Masuda experienced with one of her clients (Mostow 2003, p. 48). Therefore, the similarities are that all women were sold for money and increased status in community, which in most cases was expressly for the men's benefit. Heian (794-1185) court ladies traded for money and social standings, courtesans and geisha, sold to the highest bidding patron, to become his mistress, which was most likely also for his benefit, as well as affecting his social standing for the better. Despite pleasure women having patrons who paid for them and secured lodgings for them, they were perhaps even more like prisoners or sex slaves. It was one thing for a geisha or a courtesan to have multiple partners, but the idea of having one, whom they might not like, was no different from being indentured at the okiya/brothel.

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In "The Prostitution Prevention Act" which was passed in May of 1956 and went into effect in April of 1957, Article 3 states "Nanbito mo, baishun o shi mata wa sono aitekata to natte wa naranai" (No person shall commit prostitution or become the client of a prostitute). The laws were made to target the licensed prostitution business, which the government sanctioned, but even though they made laws, prostitution was still in bloom, just not the licensed one. The abolitionists were mostly thinking about the social ideals, and started reformatory institutions for the rehabilitation of prostitutes. As one Socialist Diet representative Kamichika Ichiko (1888-1981) said: 'We have no choice but to punish the 500,000 some prostitutes in order to protect the way of life of 40 million respectable married women.' They naively thought that this could eradicate all prostitution in Japan, and refused to associate the words "poverty" and "prostitution" together. The abolitionists were under the illusion that the women working as prostitutes did this only because their families had indentured them to brothels as children or that they were curious about the profession. They were trying their best to save the women, and as a part of the Act there was a clause that explicitly prohibited taking advantage of a kinship relationship to encourage, cause, or profit from prostitution. Kamichika named her campaign for abolishing prostitution, "Sayonara ningen baibai" (Farewell to trafficking in human beings),

but she strongly believed they had abolished this demon from society. After this campaign, the prostitutes, if caught, were moved to a rehabilitation center, where they felt that their honor might not be restored, since they would always be considered has been prostitutes. The women wanted compensation from the brothels. This is why Masuda and others in her situation were angry, because, while the government controlled the businesses, the prostitutes at least had medical check-ups once a week and had contracts with the brothels, and were able to practice “safe sex” (Ibid, p. 51).

2.3.7 The Literary Functioning of Gaze: Male vs. Female

The female gaze can be used by writers and readers to look at narratives from a perspective that sees women as subjects instead of objects. Applying a female gaze to discourses that have traditionally been male-dominated opens new avenues of interpretation that are empowering from a feminist perspective. Kirino Natsuo presents a female perspective on such issues as prostitution, marriage, and equal employment laws in her novels, which are often based on sensationalist news stories¹⁶. Likewise, the female consumers of popular media are able to view and interpret popular texts in such a way as to subjectively female characters and emphasize feminist themes (Cornyetz 2006, p. 72). In addition, the erotic elements of a female gaze may be used to apply a subversive interpretation of the overt or implicit phallogentrism of mainstream media. The male gaze should not be taken for granted in the study of literary texts and novels, and an awareness of an active female gaze can change the ways in which we understand contemporary Japanese literature and popular culture. Female readers and writers can find enjoyment and create messages of feminist empowerment even in works with flawed and problematic representations of femininity. The female gaze thus acts as a mode of resistant reading that allows alternate methods of reading, viewing, and interpreting the female characters and the gendered themes and issues of a text, regardless of the gender of the creators or the gender of the reader.

One of its primary tasks of feminist literary criticism, headed by studies such as Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (2016), was to uncover the sexism and sexist representations of women inherent in texts written by men. Another of its goals, undertaken by works like Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own* (1999), was to discover and validate texts that had been written by women and marginalized by a patriarchal system of evaluation, criticism, and canonization. Other studies, such as Joanna Russ's *How to Suppress Women's Writing* (1983), demonstrated exactly how male dominated literary establishments have repressed the writing of female

authors. The feminist critical movement quickly acquired self-reflexivity, analyzing how both phallogocentric modes of thought, as well as resistance to them, surface in the works of female authors. For example, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (2000) demonstrates that the insanity and violence of female characters that do not conform to bourgeois notions of femininity are not only a way of punishing and othering these characters but also, in the novels of Victorian writers such as Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë, a cry of protest against a society that confines powerful and creative women to its margins. In France, a trend in feminist thought crystallized in Hélène Cixous's *Le Rire de La Meduse* (2010) demanded an *écriture féminine*, a style of writing that would spring forth from the very bodies of women and provide an alternative to the previously unrivaled male mode of expression that had dominated the world of letters before the first wave of feminist literary criticism in the 1970s.

Western scholarship on Japanese female writers has followed the same patterns of inquiry. Noting the failure of the first generation of American scholars to mention almost any female authors, poets, or diarists after the close of the Heian period in literary overviews like Donald Keene's *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era* (1987), feminist scholars of Japanese literature have attempted to establish female writers as equally deserving of translation and scholarly attention while criticizing the sexist representations of women and femininity in the works of canonized writers such as Kawabata Yasunari and Tanizaki Junichirō. Victoria Vernon's monograph *Daughters of the Moon: Wish, Will, and Social Constraint in Fiction by Modern Japanese Women* (1988) is an example of this type of re-appropriation that has inspired many academic essayists while also partially carving out a new canon of post-war Japanese writers. Nina Cornyetz's *Study Dangerous Women: Deadly Words: Phallic Fantasy and Modernity in Three Japanese Writers* (1999) expands on the project of examining sexist literary representations of women, turning an equally critical eye on the fictions of both male and female authors. Finally, scholars such as Sharalyn Orbaugh and Atsuko Sakaki have delved into the "female language" of contemporary writers like Kanai Mieko and Kurahashi Yumiko, tracing themes of subversion and empowerment through depictions of the body and antirealist writing styles. The positions of Vernon, Cornyetz, Orbaugh, and Sakaki on female writers and female writing are an important and useful foundation for any discussion of gender in Japanese women's literature.

Early feminist scholarship on Japanese women's writing sought to demonstrate how feminist concerns are handled by female authors of literary fiction. For this purpose, Victoria Vernon's *Daughters of the Moon* focuses on three female writers: Higuchi Ichiyō, Sata Ineko, and Kurahashi Yumiko. These three writers are fairly disparate in terms of historical background, with Ichiyō active in the closing years of the nineteenth century, Sata writing proletarian literature before the Pacific War and more personal short stories through the rest of the twentieth century, and Kurahashi publishing experimental novels and short fiction during the post-war decades. Vernon justifies her choice of authors by asserting that, although there is little stylistic common ground between the works of these three women, each has experienced various social constraints that have accompanied changing gender roles in Japan over the past hundred years. Vernon posits that the limitations imposed on these women in the real world have motivated them to write in a way that portrays their social and historical milieux through their fiction (Ibid 2006, p. 101).

In the case of Higuchi Ichiyō, Vernon provides a brief explanation not only of the political modernization Meiji period but also of the drive to modernize literature, as well as the repercussions that these modernizations had on the lives and writing of women. Vernon is especially interested in the idea that Ichiyō's stories are successful because they fit into comfortable notions of literature as defined by men. She quotes Hiratsuka Raichō's derision of Ichiyō's work as being attractive to men because of its beautiful yet pitiful female characters, who are hardly a model for the independent modern woman. While Vernon agrees that Ichiyō's stories do not challenge accepted female roles, she argues that works like "*Takakurabe*" (1896) clearly demonstrate an attitude that questions these roles by showing the social and economic constraints they place on their female characters. According to Vernon, it is Ichiyō's sensitive depiction of these female characters, equally tinged with romanticism and desperation, that give her writing a uniquely feminine sensibility. Sata Ineko also demonstrates the experience of her constraints as a woman with her proletarian stories, which suggest that the oppression of the working class, especially its female contingent, is imposed both by the government and by the power structures implicit in family relations. Vernon argues that, even in her later fiction, such as the sedately bourgeois short story "*Yuki no mau yado*" (1972), Sata subtly exposes how women suffer from their economic dependence on men, thus criticizing the modern institution of the family.

Despite the claims of many feminists that women's writing should find its place in negativity and resistance, Rita Felski argues that the pseudo-biographical confession and the realist novel of self-discovery have been crucial in the formation of female subjectivity, as they explore questions of personal and gender identity while engaging with a political movement and voicing a plurality of femininities. Felski references Toril Moi's conclusion from *Sexual/Textual Politics* (1985) that writing by women should be judged neither by its fidelity to a political stance nor by its commitment to a revolutionary or deconstructive style of writing, but she concedes that an awareness of women's interests in social and historical context is one of the defining characteristics of what might be considered feminist writing. Women's writing by concentrating on how meta-textual context shapes textual reality for women writers and their female characters. Although Kirino does not openly resist societal misogyny, the anger and frustration with which she handles the topic through her descriptions of the lives of her female characters is a feminist reaction analogous to those of earlier female writers who did not expressly identify themselves as feminist.

Another method by which feminism finds expression in literature is through the critique of the portrayal of female characters authored by male writers. Nina Cornyetz furthers the interrogation of female characters in the works of male authors with her analysis of Izumi Kyōka in *Dangerous Women, Deadly Words*. Using what she terms as a "psychoanalytic-based materialist-feminist" style of analysis, Cornyetz argues that the modern male subject in literature was created through the abjection and othering of the feminine and maternal, a process that can be traced through the trope of the "dangerous woman." By her own admission, Cornyetz is reacting in part to the body of Japanese scholarship on Kyōka that does not question the embodiment of the dangerous woman as the essence of femininity, which thus perpetuates the stereotype without acknowledging its constructedness. Through her readings of Kyōka texts such as *Kōya hijiri* (1900) and "Kechō" (1897), Cornyetz demonstrates that the author's female characters are directly linked to a fantastical, erotic realm of imagined pre-modernity, which throws the shadow that proves the existence of a rational and male modernity. This masculine modernity is just as imaginary as the magically dangerous woman; but, as Kyōka's readers distance themselves from the blatantly otherworldly feminine, they come to identify with the conquering masculine, which seems infinitely more solid and plausible. Specific ways in which Kyōka renders his dangerous women abject are through their close associations with their bodies, which are never clean and whole but rather bestial and watery, and through their association with a pre-modernity replete with sexual shamanesses and the various monsters

Kyōka culled from Japanese folklore. Although it would seem that the outwardly nurturing and alluring nature of these women privileges pre-modernity, Cornyetz argues that they signify loss of self-control, a state of mind from which Kyōka's male characters must free themselves at all costs. The "nostalgic uncanny" embodied by these female characters is an object of desire even as it is a site of the abject, another that must be perpetuated yet distanced in order for the modern, rational, masculine subject to come into its own.

Likewise, Michael Bourdaghs's study of *Shimazaki Tōson* suggests that the use of female characters by male authors often carries ideological connotations. Bourdaghs demonstrates that Tōson in particular had a clear agenda in his role as an author of semiautobiographical novels and as the editor of a journal for women's literature. In *The Dawn That Never Comes* (2003), Bourdaghs argues that, in his semi-autobiographical novels *Haru* (1908) and *Shinsei* (1918), Tōson used the feminine as a symbol of what an emerging Japanese national literature had to cast aside as other in order to more clearly define and legitimate itself. Bourdaghs holds that 'masculine literature, both as gender and genre, could only aim at identity by distinguishing itself from its various others, so that the ground of its identity lay outside itself.' Not only was literature written by women (joryū bungaku) marginalized in order to serve the center, which consisted of national, masculine, pure literature (junbungaku), but female characters and the themes associated with them were downplayed at the expense of male characters and themes (Bourdaghs 2003, p. 114).

2.4 Women and the Japanese Theater

The history of women in Japanese theater is the history of the social changes that swept the country in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Actresses at this time progressed from a point where they were not allowed to perform at all to the point where they were celebrated artists.

2.4.1 Women between Presence and Representation

The idea that actresses are little better than common prostitutes is common in all cultures that have a theatrical tradition, and in Japan at least, it has some basis in fact. Some prostitutes used their stage appearances to advertise themselves in sensational dances that resulted in riots and disorder. Because of this, women were completely banned from appearing on the stage in Japan 'from 1629 to 1891, initially they were replaced by the *wakashu*, akin to the boy-actors in English theater of the Elizabethan period' (Kano 2001, p. 5). Unfortunately, it soon became evident that the *wakashu* incited as man riots as the women did, and they were banned as well.

That left only adult males available to act, so they took on all roles, including female roles as well.

Applying thick white powder and rouge to their faces, donning elaborate costumes and heavy wigs, forcing their shoulders back and walking with bent knees, these actors, called *onnagata*, or *oyama*, cultivated a style of acting that represented idealized femininity by concealing one set of somatic [bodily] signs and inscribing another. So highly valued was their portrayal of femininity that women from the pleasure quarters began to imitate them. (Kano 2001, p. 5).

This is a strange and rather disturbing idea: that men should be thought to embody the height of femininity when in fact they were a grotesque parody of it. Femininity thus became a sort of “code” that circulated from the theater to the prostitutes and back again; the *onnagata* were available as sexual partners for the male patrons in much the same way the women had been before they were banned from the stage. However, ‘the practice of *onnagata* eventually led to the development of a stylized art and made idealized femininity something that was represented by men.’ (Ibid, p. 5).

By the late 1800’s, when Western influence was spreading through the country, attitudes began to change towards the *onnagata* and towards the idea of having women in the theater. Much of Kano’s book is devoted to delineating the careers of two of the most influential actresses in Japanese theater, Kawakami Sadayakko and Matsui Sumako (Hutchinson and Morton 2016, p. 99). Women who are important for what they represent: actresses trained purely in the art of acting. ‘During a time when the public regarded women’s performance as synonymous with sexual entertainment, these women trained their bodies and minds in order to enter a profession that consisted of nonsexual performance.’ (Kano 2001, p. 7). Actresses occupied a place in society that was ambiguous, and they faced a difficult “balancing act,” because of the way in which Japanese society was structured:

A geisha is considered better than a prostitute (*shōfu*) because she presumably sells her performance rather than her body, but she is not considered a full fledged artist (*geijutsuka*) because presumably her body is on sale to select customers. Thus a geisha needs to constantly distinguish herself from a prostitute while at the same time maintaining a pose of sexual availability not ostensibly required of an artist. An actress (*joyū*) is often seen as not much different from a geisha and is in direct competition with actors who impersonate female roles (*onnagata*). Thus an actress needs to distinguish herself from a geisha by emphasizing her art over their sexual appeal while

at the same time proving herself superior to the onnagata by emphasizing her natural sex over his artifice. (Kano 2001, p. 42-43).

In other words, the actress must be sexual and asexual at the same time. That is, she must distinguish herself from geisha and prostitutes by exhibiting her skill at acting; and yet while she acts, she must also be seen to be more feminine than the onnagata. The rise of the female actress in Japan resulted in the marginalization of the onnagata, and it was both ‘a liberating and repressive phenomenon.’ (Ibid, p. 8). Even today feminists complain that society has clearly defined roles that it feels women should play. First and foremost is the role of “wife and mother.” Despite the fact that economic conditions make it necessary for most women to work, there is still something of a backlash against it; a lingering idea that a woman who works is somehow betraying her deeper purpose, which is to create and nurture life. This mythology hangs on, despite the fact that many women have no maternal instinct, don’t want children, and may choose not to marry (Sakaki 2006, p. 92).

In the theater, the stereotypes of women, as Good Wife, Wise Mother, New Woman and Femme Fatale reinforce the same sort of “pigeonholing” in real life. That is, people often expect that women will fit into one of the types they see in the theater, and they expect her to do so. This of course robs the woman of individuality and choice and remains a problem for most women who wish to enter nontraditional careers, or indeed violate any social “norms.” Within Japanese theater, the female stereotypes are what you would expect from the names. The Good Wife and Wise Mother are usually considered together, because their function is the same: to be part of a family unit. In both cases, whether as wife or mother, the woman is an adjunct to a man: her husband; or an example for her children. She is never seen as an individual, but is defined only in her relationship to her family. This is a ‘position ... that regards women as complementary to men and ultimately incomplete without men.’ (Kano 2001, p. 41).

The “New Woman” appeared in the 1890’s, but truly came of age in Europe at the end of the First World War. She is ‘young, middle class, single, well-educated and financially independent, working outside the home to earn her living.’ (Ibid, p. 124-125). The New Woman smokes and drinks, and demands equality with men. Women who identified with the New Woman, and who also were interested in the theater, faced a dilemma, because success in the theater for women was ‘predicated on their sexual attractiveness.’ (Ibid, p. 125). Thus, they were forced to use their sensuality in order to succeed in their chosen career, which immediately

placed them back in a subservient role, dependent not upon intelligence and talent, but upon looks, for success ((Hutchinson and Morton 2016, p. 102).

New Women are considered to have challenged the conventional definition of womanhood, that of the good wife, wise mother. New Women were critical of marriage as an institution and abhorred the idea that they should sacrifice themselves for husband, children and the husband's parents. The paradox, however, is that the New Woman also reinforced the prevailing definition of womanhood as biological essence, rooted in the woman's body." (Kano 2001, p. 128). The *Femme Fatale* is a type that is familiar to us from countless film noir thrillers: she is the irresistible temptress who lures men (often innocent men) to their doom.

As the male's body is alienated by and submitted to industrialization and urbanization, the woman comes to inhere even more closely to the body in a compensatory gesture. The *femme fatale* is a figure embodying the fears and anxieties prompted by this shift in the understanding of sexual difference, in which the woman is made to stand for the body in opposition on the man, who is standing for the mind. (Kano2001, p. 183).

The *femme fatale* can be seen as an object of pity, because her power is not based on conscious will... she is the carrier of power. (Sakaki 2015, p. 35). It is as if she has no control over her sensuality or the way in which her sensuality impacts others, and thus she is often caught up in the whirlwind she creates, and destroyed along with everyone else. The debate over revealing the body of the actress on stage centered on the production of Oscar Wilde's *Salomé*, which appeared in Japan in 1914. There were two versions of the play in performance at the same time, one starring Kawakami Sadayakko, the other with Matsui Sumako, the two ladies who embody the transition in Japanese theater¹⁷. In order to wheedle Herod into giving her what she wants, she performs the seductive *Dance of the Seven Veils* before the King. Besotted, he agrees to her bizarre request and the Baptist is killed, and his head is brought to the girl. She kisses and caresses the severed head, actions that fill Herod with such horror that he orders her executed as well.

This retelling will point up some of the problems with staging the production with *onnagata*, for instance, though such a thing was not seriously contemplated. '... in Japan ... there is no question that *Salomé* was a role whose performance was inconceivable for a male performer of female roles.' (Kano 2001, p. 220). What is needed to make the play work is a young and sensual woman who is believable as a seductress, one who seeks the love of one man and, when

that fails, is able to tease a second into committing an act of murder. In addition, the dance requires that the actress appear in very skimpy clothing. It is in fact the *Dance of the Seven Veils* that is the most important scene in the play. The whole point of the scene, and hence of the play, is to strip down the woman to her bare body, or as close to it as the censors allow. (Ibid, p. 221).

The two major productions of *Salomé* were wildly popular, as were several other versions of the show, including a spoof. It soon became a benchmark for actresses who, by showing off their bodies, proved that they were better than onnagata at playing women. But the victory, and the recognition that women had a place in the theater, was a two-edged sword, for what these actresses had done was to use their bodies and sexuality to win their place on the stage. Although they were undoubtedly talented, in an era when female nudity was prohibited, people went to the theater to gawk, and such performances as the *Dance of the Seven Veils* ‘... confirmed the definition of womanhood as an essence naturally grounded in a woman’s body, a definition that would also justify the reduction of woman to nothing but her body.’ (Ibid, p. 219). So, in spite of having won the right to appear on stage, the Japanese actresses also found themselves in the same dilemma as women around the world: they were now defined by their attractiveness, not necessarily their talent.

Women who appeared on the stage were, in a profound sense, free. They moved differently when they were not hampered by wearing a confining kimono, and in so doing, found a greater range of movement, more mobility, and increased power. These actresses insisted on their natural femininity and in doing so differentiated themselves from the geisha and onnagata. They freed themselves from the stereotypical roles of good wife and wise mother, and wore the “New Woman” label with pride. ‘And most paradoxically, they embodied the essentialist and expressive definition of gender and, by doing so, performed a new understanding of what it means to act like a woman in modern Japan.’ (Coaldrake 1997, p. 55).

2.4.2 The Demonic Female as a Theatrical Tradition

The representation of women in Japanese theater has been shaped by the perpetuation of artistic tradition as much as it has by the creativity and innovation that distinguished actors have brought to their roles. “Artistic tradition” goes back perhaps thousands of years, a number of plays in the pre-modern theatre of Japan derive their inspirations from older myths, legends, and folktales, and can be traced throughout history, throughout these separate but complementary theatrical institutions (Brazell 1998, p. 10). This propagation of antiquity so

fundamental to the arts of Japan serve as a testament to the symbolic power of famous characters that have appeared throughout the ages; in the face of political subjugation and the evolution of religion within Japan, major character archetypes in the theatre have continued to thrive, but do so while also incorporating change.

Said to have been developed by a female dancer named Okuni in 1603, kabuki was closely linked to prostitution and sexual promiscuity between military men and young actors (male and female) until women were banned from the stage in 1629 (Shively 1995, p. 751). Strict government reforms enacted by the Tokugawa shogunate onto the kabuki theatre were, Shively argues, “beneficial” to the art because it was forced to formalize (Ibid, s p. 752). Since its “legitimization,” kabuki has incorporated the themes and plotlines of popular Noh plays and developed several celebrated methods of acting, all while continuing to maintain popularity among Edo and Meiji audiences.

One such vestige carried throughout the two theatrical traditions; i.e. Kabuki and Noh is the demonic female character. This woman, who is revealed within the play to be a demon disguised in human form, is an archetype that serves as a cautionary tale against succumbing to the dark side of femininity. She is superficially defined by her tendency to act based on emotional impulsiveness and fits of jealous rage, but more profoundly she contributes to larger narratives demonstrating the necessity of religious and familial devotion, the strength of karmic retribution, and the ways in which both men and women must rely on institutional discipline to prevent these tragedies caused by her irrationality¹⁸. Examining the major theatre traditions of Japan (whose actors and creators comprise of only men) begs an analysis of the place of women in this sphere of one-sided representation, and scholarly works up until this point have offered no shortage of dialogue concerning the implications of her emotional, fiery, and often destructive representation in the performing arts (Coaldarke 1997, p. 69).

The play “*Aoi no Ue*” as textual evidence, women in the play reflect larger political and religious struggles, and the ways in which they often fall victim to the severity of their social subjugation. In the play, *Genji Monogatari* characters Aoi and Rokujō battle over their claim to Genji as a lover; after finding out about Aoi’s pregnancy, Rokujō possesses her in a fit of jealousy, and must be extracted by a shamaness. The fact that Aoi’s pregnancy exists (and therefore her status as female) predisposes her to spiritual possession; the origin of this idea comes from the Heian belief that pregnancy made one susceptible to spiritual attack (Brown

2001, p. 38). The interest, however, lies in the actions of the Rokujō Lady; spirits were thought to possess others because of some dispossession they underwent, and the case of Rokujō is no exception. The implications of her actions are both political and religious. Rokujō must overcome the karmic cycle of rebirth in order to reach enlightenment by breaking her attachments to her mortal jealousy. But Rokujō was also the woman whose first marriage was supposed to make her empress; because she was further shamed and humiliated by Genji's public acknowledgement of his marital union with Aoi, her jealousy culminates in her spiritual invasion of the evidence that she is not favored in the court (Ibid, p. 40).

The use of women on stage as tropes representative of undesirable traits; such as jealousy and resentment, as well as their exclusion from the creation of theatrical works ensured that, on the pre-modern stage, their representation was limited to characterizations that would be most convenient for their male authorities to exploit, and replicated so that the structures of power between the genders would remain so. Though this scholarship sufficiently outlines the political and religious implications placed on the representation of demonic women in literature and drama, there is no scholarly approach that traces plays which feature this character over time, through historical eras, and through theatrical traditions (Samuel 1997, p. 48). From the focus on Buddhist ideology in the medieval period, to the resurgence of Confucian ideals into Japanese social politics during the early modern period, it is inconceivable that works within the theater would continue without absorbing any of the changes that come with evolving social contexts.

The demon woman archetype found in Noh and kabuki shows the extent to which institutional control was alive and well in pre-modern Japan. Between the Noh and kabuki versions of the plays "*Momijigari*" and "*Dōjōji*," there is considerable evidence of the shifts in social thinking that occurred with the advent of Confucian social politics in the Edo period (Kano 2001, p. 104). Despite these shifts in institutional ideology, however, one thing remained constant: these women were always portrayed negatively, and were robbed of any personal agency to escape their destitute situations.

From Foucault's assertion that the human body is subject to the influence of institutional power by the way that body is allocated in time, space, and action, to Butler's theory that gender is based on a regulated and naturalized series of associative behaviors that mark certain people as belonging to certain constructed "genders," theory serves to visualize the nature of power with

regard to female subjugation. Jill Dolan's work then put this framework within the sphere of performing arts, establishing the stage as a space that simultaneously affirmed and perpetuated a particular female identity (Dolan 1985, p. 5-11). Judith Butler, in the spirit of Foucault, argues that the construction of gender is imposed onto individuals by ascribing set of "associations" to the inherent nature of one gender (in this case, women), and that women as a group are subject to social control when the repetition of associations is naturalized within a society and seen as objective truth (Butler 1993, p. 55)¹⁹.

These ideologies presented themselves in many plays in Japanese drama. The Noh version of the play "*Momijigari*" features an especially strong Buddhist undercurrent, with blame and karmic retribution constituting the central themes of the work. The juxtaposition between the righteous warrior Koremochi, and the Gentlewoman who exploits religious text to deceive him, reinforces the fact that Koremochi alone is steadfast in his morality, while the possibility of salvation for the female demon is not even entertained. The kabuki version of this play, meanwhile, incorporates bushido ideology and takes Koremochi's superiority as a warrior as justification for the divine intervention he receives. In both plays, the women (and their femininity) are posed as threats to the inherent righteousness of the warrior Koremochi –the resolution of the play, in which Hachiman is summoned by Koremochi's good karma, offers a convenient re-balancing of karmic fate that ensures Koremochi's victory against the demons.

"Dōjōji" provides a similar case. In the Noh version, the priests were shown the consequences of allowing a woman into a sacred space, but they were not punished – instead, the priests were called upon to aid in the salvation of the Dōjōji maiden, because she as a demon could not achieve that feat alone. The play as a cautionary tale effectively reinforces Buddhist law, while also highlighting the lack of control the Dōjōji maiden had over her own fate. The kabuki version, meanwhile, stripped the plot of its Buddhist undertones, and instead made the production more entertaining to Edo-period audiences. In the end, however, the plight of the main character Hanako was arguably self-imposed; her status as a courtesan – which was at odds with the expected female role according to Confucian ideology – could be the source of her unhappiness, which would imply that the play serves to warn audiences against the hardships Hanako's emotionally indulgent lifestyle may bring.

In any case, the demon woman archetype raises many vitally important questions with regard to the aims of social control in medieval and early modern Japan. This fundamental in theater

shows that institutional control over women was informed by a fear of the unknown. Such drama introduces elements of the unfamiliar: “Momijigari” is set the mountains, while “Dōjōji” takes place at a faraway temple; the social ranks and identities of the women are largely unknown; and the emotional (and therefore uncontrollable) appeals these women make to the male characters hide ulterior motives. Furthermore, audiences walk away with the message that these supernatural events occur because of some lapse in judgment – Koremochi drinks the wine, while the “Dōjōji” priests are sympathetic to the maiden’s requests. Such events serve to further reinforce the necessity of institutional ideology.

These dramatic works also call into question what sort of implications a demonic characterization has with regards to women, and how this characterization allows male characters to take more violent action against these women in their demon form. When a woman transforms into a demon, the male character is suddenly given an immediate physical justification for acting violently towards them; the act of violence against a woman becomes righteous when her appearance is changed, despite the fact that the demon characterization is fundamentally female. With these women reduced to a non-human form, any violent action against them is justified. Further, the mistakes of Koremochi and the “Dōjōji” priests are forgotten once the women reveal their demon form, and they emerge out of the events of the play blameless. It instead becomes their duty to right the moral wrongs that these women represent, which reaffirms their righteousness and moral superiority. These men are absolved of any obligation to treat the demonic woman with dignity, because she has become an enemy in need of extermination. Koremochi’s “courageous” defeat of the demon in “Momijigari” instead becomes an act of righteousness, while the priests’ salvation of the Dōjōji maiden becomes an act of sympathy.

The demon woman perfectly epitomizes lack of self-control, and it is interesting to think that these characters are unabashedly blamed and ridiculed for a transformation they had no control over, while the men who either save or vanquish them are lauded with praise for their valiant efforts. The rigidity of this archetype proves the enormous capability of institutional ideology for social control, and the ability of male authority to justify male superiority. While women may not have been equated to demons in real life, their theatrical representation is not at all coincidental. Even if they are exaggerated for the sake of entertainment or moral teaching, these associations manifest themselves in this way because of a deliberate distribution of power whose reigning groups aimed to preserve their own authority.

2.4.3 Takarazuka Theater

As a reaction to the interdiction of theater to women in ancient times, a theater made by only women in Japan is installed under the bases of excluding men. Scores of dancers in colorful kimonos weave patterns on a huge stage, recalling the lavish spectacle of Busby Berkeley musicals. But when they glide off, the lights dim to reveal another mood, another century. A Heian period courtier in gorgeous robes postures to the strains of lush orchestral music that alternates with Noh chant. Several set changes later, the tempo picks up as an ensemble of shamisen, three-stringed Japanese lutes, twangs a lively accompaniment for an Edo period festival scene done in kabuki style. The hero of the scene, a stylish man-about-town who flirts with two courtesans at once, is played by a woman. In fact, all the roles in Takarazuka Odorisanka are played only by women (Atkin 2008, p. 21).

Part of the novelty of Takarazuka is that all the parts are played by women, based on the original model of Noh and Kabuki before 1629 when women were banned from the theater in Japan. The women who play male parts are referred to as *otokoyaku* (男役, literally "male role") and those who play female parts are called *musumeyaku* (娘役, literally "daughter's role"). The costumes, set designs and lighting are lavish, the performances melodramatic (Ibid, p. 24). Side pathways extend the already wide proscenium, accommodating elaborate processions and choreography.

Before becoming a member of the troupe, a young woman must train for two years in the Takarazuka Music School, one of the most competitive of its kind in the world²⁰. The first year, all women train together before being divided by the faculty and the current troupe members into *otokoyaku* and *musumeyaku* at the end of the year. Those playing *otokoyaku* cut their hair short, take on a more masculine role in the classroom, and speak in the masculine form. The company has five main troupes: Flower (花 *hana*), Moon (月 *tsuki*), Snow (雪 *yuki*), Star (星 *hoshi*), and Cosmos (宙 *sora*); as well as superior members, a collection for senior actresses no longer part of a regular troupe who still wish to maintain their association with the revue and perform from time to time. Flower and Moon are the original troupes, founded in 1921. Snow Troupe began in 1924. Star Troupe was founded in 1931, disbanded in 1939, and reestablished in 1948. Cosmos, founded in 1998, is the newest troupe (Ibid, p. 29).

While on the surface it would appear that the Takarazuka was intended to grant Japanese women freedom from social oppression, ironically, it began as quite the opposite. According to Takarazuka scholars, the production office and corporate structure that control Takarazuka are overwhelmingly patriarchal. Although Takarazuka embodies Shiraishi's idea that the actresses become "good wives and wise mothers" upon leaving the company, it also simultaneously represents progressive feminist points of view. Some believe that its appeal to the female audience is on account of the perceived link to freedom from traditional Japanese society's imposed ideas of gender and sexuality. So while Takarazuka reinforces the status quo and sublimates women's desires through its dreamy narratives, there remains some possibility that certain spectators find it empowering simply to watch women play men (Ibid, p. 30).

Some Takarasienne shows, such as *The Rose of Versailles* and *Elisabeth*, feature androgynous characters. The *otokoyaku* represents the woman's idealized man without the roughness or need to dominate, the "perfect" man who can not be found in the real world. It is these male roles that offer an escape from the strict, gender-bound real roles lauded in Japanese society. In a sense, the *otokoyaku* provides the female audience with a "dream" of what they desire in reality.

In addition to their claim to "sell dreams", the actresses of the Takarazuka take on another role, empowering themselves as women in a male-dominated culture. It is the desire to make actresses into good wives and mothers has often been hindered by their own will to pursue careers in the entertainment business. It is becoming increasingly more common for women to stay in the company well into their thirties, beyond the conventional limits of marriageable age. The actresses' role within the Takarazuka thus overlaps into the culture surrounding it, adding to their appeal to the female-dominant audience. In fact, it is the carrying over of this 'boyishness' into everyday life and the freedom that this implies that captures the attention of some fans (Caddeau 2012, p. 9). The *otokoyaku*, however, is not bound to her assigned male role in the theater. Stars of the Moon Troupe, said that they conceived male impersonation as just a "role" that they wore like the makeup and costume that helped create their *otokoyaku* image. They reverts to their nonperforming "feminine" self after performance. Other *otokoyaku* feel uncomfortable switching to female roles.

Although traditionally an all-female troupe, in 1946 the Takarazuka employed male performers who were trained separately from the female members of the troupes. Ultimately, however, the female members opposed these new male counterparts, and the department was dissolved, the

last male department terminating in 1954. A recent Japanese musical, *Takarazuka Boys*, was based on the company's history. While the casts are all-female, the staff (writers, directors, choreographers, designers, etc.) and orchestra musicians may be male or female. It is not uncommon in Takarazuka for a predominantly male orchestra to be led by a female conductor. The five troupes of the Takarazuka have certain differences of style and material which make each unique:

Troupe	Description
Flower Troupe (Hana)	The Flower Troupe is considered the "treasure chest" of <i>otokoyaku</i> . Many of the most popular former and current top stars of the company originated in Flower Troupe; these include Miki Maya (who held the first Budokan solo concert in Takarazuka's history), Sumire Haruno and Tomu Ranju of Flower, Jun Shibuki, Jun Sena and Kiriya Hiromu of Moon, and Hikaru Asami of Snow. Their performances tend to have larger budgets, with lavish stage and costume designs, and are often derived from operatic material.
Moon Troupe(Tsuki)	While tending to be a home for young performers (with Yūki Amami in her sixth year reaching the status of top star in the 1990s), the members of Moon Troupe are also strong singers. The term "Musical Research Department" is occasionally used in articles about the troupe, underscoring the troupe's focus on music. Their material tends toward drama, Western musicals, and modern settings, such as <i>Guys and Dolls</i> and <i>Me and My Girl</i> . During the era of Makoto Tsubasa as top star, they had at least two musicals adopted from classic western novels.
Snow Troupe (Yuki)	Snow Troupe is considered the upholder of traditional dance and opera for the whole company, being the vanguard of traditional Japanese drama in a company that tends towards Western material. They were the first troupe to perform <i>Elisabeth</i> in Japan. The troupe has been moving towards the opera and drama style of Moon and Flower.
Star Troupe (Hoshi)	Star Troupe tends to be the home of Takarazuka's stars. They, along with Flower Troupe, have very strong <i>otokoyaku</i> players. In recent years, many of the company's prominent <i>musumeyaku</i> have also originated from Star Troupe, such as Hana Hizuki, Shizuku Hazakura, and Yuki Aono.
Cosmos Troupe (Sora)	Cosmos, the newest troupe, is less traditional and more experimental. When it was first formed, it culled talent from the

	other troupes.. While it had a troupe-born actress become <i>musumeyaku</i> top back in 2006 with Asuka Toono, it wasn't until 2014 that an actress originating from this troupe became an <i>otokoyaku</i> top star: Seina Sagiri, the former top star of Yukigumi(2014-2017).
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Table 2.2: The Five Troupes of the Takarazuka Revue

Differences among the Takarazuka theater are mainly in terms of style and material.

Takarazuka has had a profound influence on the history of anime and manga, especially shōjo manga. Osamu Tezuka, a highly influential manga creator, grew up in the town of Takarazuka. His mother knew many of the Takarazuka actresses, and as a child he knew them and watched many of their performances. Based on their stories of noble princes played by female actresses, Tezuka created *Princess Knight*, the first manga aimed at a female audience, which tells the story of *Princess Sapphire*, a girl born with both a male and female heart who struggles between the desire to fight as a noble prince and to be a tender, gentle princess²¹. Women in masculine roles continue to be a central theme in shōjo manga and anime as well as some shōnen, and Tezuka himself explored the theme in many of his later works, including *Dororo*, *Phoenix* and *Black Jack* (Lebra 1992, p. 165).

While the influence of Osamu Tezuka and Takarazuka on anime and manga is general, there are still many series which show more specific influences. The Takarazuka Revue inspired the plot of the original *Sakura Wars* video game, along with additional inspiration from Takarazuka's one-time competitor the Shochiku Kagekidan (Shochiku Revue). The Zuka Club in *Ouran High School Host Club* is based on the Takarazuka Revue. The characters Haruka Tenoh and Michiru Kaioh of *Sailor Moon* were loosely based on the actors of the Takarazuka Revue. *The Virgin's Mask* by Jūrō Kara, a significant work of post-war theater, features an aging "Zuka-girl" attempting to reclaim her youth through ritualistic bathing in a tub of virgins' tear (Leiter 2009, p. 387).

2.4.4 Onnagata: A Female Voice in Male Bodies

According to the World Health Organization, "sex" refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women," while "gender" refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women." This is the definition that matches conventionalized distinction between sex as biology and gender as culture. Human voice can be considered one of the main means of

distinguishing adult men from adult women and the most reliable one in the absence of physical or visual contact between two or more people. In early childhood, growth of the human vocal folds is independent of sex which explains why it is almost impossible to distinguish between a voice of a boy and that of a girl. During puberty, however, boys' vocal folds generally grow considerably longer than girls' which results in their lower speaking voice (Steven and Gangestad 2008, p. 375).

Discrepancy between the performer's sex and his/her voice can strongly affect the audience's perception of the performer's gender and his/her ambiguous body can only further perplex it. Such crossing of gender boundaries becomes most intriguing when continued after the performance into the real world where, unlike in the theatre, gender codes must be obeyed. While individuals pose little threat to an established gender order, larger groups of performers are far more likely to seriously shake its foundations. Amongst historically most notable performers blurring the gender boundaries both on and offstage are operatic castrati and onnagata: male actors specializing in female roles in Japanese kabuki theatre (Kuritz 1988, p. 112). As paradigmatic examples of gender ambiguity, they provide two ideal contexts for my investigation of the interconnection between voice and gender.

Castrati and onnagata are two fascinating phenomena of early modern Europe and Japan not only as performers of protagonist roles in Italian baroque opera and kabuki drama respectively, but also as distinct members of their societies. Even though the church castrati antedated, outlived and far outnumbered those who sang in opera, castrati were primarily an operatic phenomenon. Opera was the form of art that most fully exploited their extraordinary vocal skills and brought them to prominent international recognition²². Castration performed before the onset of puberty caused a castrato's body to develop differently from that of a non-castrated grown-up man. This resulted in his particular bodily appearance and, most importantly, in shorter vocal folds which were the source of his high-pitched voice and the primary motive for the operation. Both the castrato's body and his voice looked and sounded neither wholly male nor female and were therefore the basic constituents of his gender ambiguity (Lawson 2017, p. 21). The onnagata's otherness was similarly unmistakable, though it emanated from an intact, normally developed male body.

The onnagata emerged in 1652 when kabuki became an all- male theatre. As female role specialists, onnagata did not imitate women but invented their own fiction of female-likeness

which they achieved through a highly stylized bodily and vocal transformation. Most intriguingly, many Edo-period onnagata extended this fiction into their daily lives. As Samuel L. Leiter succinctly put it, ‘the practice of living as a woman, even if married and even if a father [...], became de rigeur for all important onnagata until modern times and the influence of Westernization.’ (Leiter 2015, p. 24). An onnagata’s overall appearance (attire, manners, and behavior patterns) as well as his high(er)-pitched voice (a mixture of sounds produced in both falsetto and chest registers) perceptibly differed from those of ordinary people, male and female alike. Owing to their role as third-person narrators, the women of quyi bridged the gender gap, creating an androgynous persona that de-emphasized their feminine appearance and, at the same time, allowed them to show case their female voices on public stages: places that had been previously unwelcoming to female artists. In fact, female storytellers sang their way to respectability and social change in the early decades of the twentieth century by minimizing their bodies in order to allow their voices to be heard (Lawson 2017, p. 4).

Onnagata or *oyama* (Japanese: 女形・女方, "woman-role"), are male actors who played women's roles in Japanese Kabuki theater. The modern all-male kabuki was originally known as *yarō kabuki* ("man kabuki") to distinguish it from earlier forms. In the early 17th century, shortly after the emergence of the genre, many kabuki theaters had an all-female cast (*onna kabuki*), with women playing men's roles as necessary. *Wakashū kabuki* ("adolescent-boy kabuki"), with a cast composed entirely of attractive young men playing both male and female roles, and frequently dealing in erotic themes, originated circa 1612. Both *onnagata* and *wakashū* (or *wakashū-gata*), actors specializing in adolescent male roles (and usually adolescents themselves), were the subject of much appreciation by both male and female patrons, and were often prostitutes. All-male casts became the norm after 1629, when women were banned from appearing in kabuki due to the prevalent prostitution of actresses and violent quarrels among patrons for the actresses' favors (Ibid, p. 19). This ban failed to stop the problems, however, since the young male (*wakashū*) actors were also fervently pursued by patrons.

In 1642, *onnagata* roles were forbidden, resulting in plays that featured only male characters. These plays continued to have erotic content and generally featured many *wakashū* roles, often dealing in themes of *nanshoku*; officials responded by banning *wakashū* roles as well. The ban on *onnagata* was lifted in 1644, and on *wakashū* in 1652, on the condition that all actors, regardless of role, adopted the adult male hairstyle with shaved

pate. *Onnagata* and *wakashū* actors soon began wearing a small purple headscarf (*murasaki bōshi* or *katsura*) to cover the shaved portion, which became iconic signifiers of their roles and eventually became invested with erotic significance as a result. After authorities rescinded a ban on wig-wearing by *onnagata* and *wakashū* actors, the *murasaki bōshi* was replaced by a wig and now survives in a few older plays and as a ceremonial accessory (Tan 2012, p. 223).

The castrato and Edo-period *onnagata* were specific to two pre-modern patriarchal societies whose conceptions of sex, gender, sexuality, and the human body strikingly differed from our modern ones. In early modern Europe and Japan, it was believed that men were physically superior to women and this sexual hierarchy was to an important degree the foundation of the social hierarchy. Indeed, there is an important difference between the *onnagata* and castrato: the former was a complete man whereas the latter was not, primarily because he could not procreate. However, this very fact also had an important advantage: absence of the danger of conceiving unwanted offspring would have removed the one and only break on unfettered sexuality, hence the view of the castrato as a sexual machine where the female partner would not have to worry about the consequences—a privilege otherwise inconceivable in a world without contraception (Ibid, p. 29).

Members of early modern Europe and Edo period Japan, male and female alike, were erotically or aesthetically fascinated by the bodies of adolescent boys and the castrato and *onnagata* came very close to this ideal. The castrato's particular bodily condition was determined by the operation performed on his testicles before the onset of puberty, while the *onnagata* achieved an androgynous appearance through manipulation of his intact male body. Castrati's and *onnagata*'s otherness was unmistakable, both in terms of overall appearance as well as their social status. The means of attaining their otherness was indeed very different, but the end result was practically the same. Their extraordinary artistic skills obtained through an early-started, intensive and longlasting training were highly admired and made them (inter)national stars but the status which they enjoyed in the public eye was in great dissonance with their official social position. In this respect, operatic castrati and Edo-period *onnagata* were highly controversial figures.

On the one hand they were seen as a supernatural embodiment of a widely-held ideal of eroticism and beauty and were praised for their unsurpassable artistic skills. On the other hand, they were second-class citizens prohibited to marry (castrati) or considered outcasts

(onnagata)²³. Such biologically deterministic reasoning may be in contradiction with postmodern feminist thought, but clearly castrati and onnagata had to be male due to the fact that women were politically forced away from performing arts. Had women been allowed to continue in the world of theatre, it is highly plausible that traditions of operatic castrati and onnagata would have been greatly reduced or even non-existent (Ibid, p. 197).

If the high pitch and unusual timbre of the castrato voice were intrinsic in his body, his seemingly unlimited vocal range, unsurpassable skills in ornamentation, and extraordinary breath capacity were all results of a long and intensive training. Despite the fact that kabuki drama is spoken rather than sung, the Edo-period onnagata exploited his voice to nearly the highest possible degree in all its features: pitch, range, intonation, pronunciation, registers, loudness, and timbre. In this respect, both castrati and onnagata were virtuosi, although it is useful to remember that the castrato's voice was the primary means of expression in performance, whereas in kabuki, acting, dance and voice play equal roles (Mezur 2005, p. 34). Beyond the theater, their voices still differed from those of ordinary people; the castrato's voice remaining in its "otherness" in terms of pitch and timbre, the onnagata's voice retaining elements of theater in his everyday speech, through the use of a highly stylized falsetto sound.

After film was introduced in Japan at the end of the 19th century, the *oyama* continued to portray females in movies until the early 1920s. At that time, however, using real female actresses was coming into fashion with the introduction of realist *shingeki* films. The *oyama* staged a protest at Nikkatsu in 1922 in backlash against the lack of work because of this. Kabuki, however, remains all-male even today. *Oyama* continue to appear in Kabuki today, though the term *onnagata* has come to be used much more commonly. Every Kabuki actor is expected to have facility with *onnagata* techniques; and while it is tempting for Western opinion to equate *onnagata* with mere cross-dressing, or female impersonation, no kabuki actor's training is complete without mastery of what constitutes the techniques the Kabuki *onnagata*. The phenomenon is best identified with the kanji, 女形, for there is no English equivalent (Ibid, p. 239).

2.4.5 A Female Mask

Masks have been used almost universally to represent characters in theatrical performances. Theatrical performances are a visual literature of a transient, momentary kind. It is most

impressive because it can be seen as a reality; it expends itself by its very revelation. The mask participates as a more enduring element, since its form is physical (Sheppard 2001, p. 23).

The mask functions as a critical tool for an examination of character and performer action in all periods of theater, including the most recent. The mask has developed as a convention for the projection of action in two basic ways: as a theatrical convention, which is principally concerned with the projection of character action, though in its latter stages of development, it also accounts for the action of the performer. As a theatrical convention, the mask functions symbolically as a direct objectification of character action. The human dialectic symbolized by the mask exists as a tension between the individual, as represented by the dramatic character, and the cosmic order, as represented by the action as a whole. Second, the mask functions as a dramatic convention is concerned with a balanced projection of character and performer action (Hall 2012, p.4). As a dramatic convention, the mask projects action representationally; the mask functions as a representative embodiment of two fundamental visions of human potential. These two visions are exemplified by character's action and the performer's action

The feminine figure holds a significant place in the Noh theater, being one of the five Noh play categories dedicated entirely to women. In a great number of plays the main character is the feminine one, with a wide spectrum of ages, emotions, social statuses and principal purposes of the roles for the protagonist. Unlike Kabuki, where the male interpreter tries to imitate women, Noh offers a radically different approach, using the same interpretative technique for both masculine and feminine roles. Actually, not to imitate, but to transmit the spirit, and not to copy, but to capture the state of mind is the basis of the interpretation by the actor in the Noh theater. In Noh theater, it is more of an aesthetic than psychological procedure (Stein 2010, p. 247).

According to the Noh system, the primary objective of performance consists of transmitting the feminine spirit, through the tight control of energy that the actor uses according to each role, and with the total avoidance of the naturalist procedure. The femininity in Noh is transmitted through external tangible signs such as the mask, wig, and costume, and supported by the signs of a different nature as the rhythm and the energy of the movement. Although contemporary theory has already made a great incursion in the Noh dramatic literature, the internal process of the interpreter, the reasons, and the results of the masculine attempt to temporarily become a woman on the Noh stage remain insufficiently studied (Brown 2001, p. 78). Furthermore, the

actor adopts the feminine spirit without losing his masculine essence, and will highlight the procedures of this unique method based on the intellectual agreement with the public.

In Japan, femininity components, seen through the eyes of man, are successfully distributed in the total Noh *mise-en-scène*. Dance, mask, wig, and costume that are in use during the performance, the instrumental music produced by *hayashi*, the vocal music produced by *jiutai* and the interpreter, and the acting technique of the performer are responsible for the correct expression of the feminine character on the stage. All the above-enumerated constituents of the Noh performance draw attention to the simplicity as one of the main features of the Noh theater. Simple props, masks, and *tsukurimono* (set pieces) emphasize the complexity of the costumes. The only constituent that stands out for its voluptuousness and majesty among other tangible items. Furthermore, these elements underline the message of the play. The mask, on the other hand, has a colossal supremacy in the whole *mise-en-scène*. Even the finishing of both the reverse and the front of the mask is significant. The back can smooth or obstruct the use of the mask, and therefore, can restrict the performance quality. Additionally, an inadequate resonance of the mask can collapse the interpretation, and hinder the advent of *hana*. Thereby, the mask can be considered one of the musical instruments in Noh, (Udaka Michishige (2010, 104).

With regard to the choice of the facial expression of the mask, it can add a completely new tone to the interpretation of the character. Beyond the costume, the wig, and the movements, the female mask with its delicate lines and round eyeholes intensifies the symbolic image of the character. Thus, the mask is not just a prop, but also a defining integrant of the performance with its great stage presence. The *shite* role performer chooses the mask in advance, months before the performance, according to his individual interpretation of the character (Udaka 2010, 34). The mask itself, a priori, has a neutral appearance as a heritage of the first Noh masks made originally by copying the faces of the dead²⁴. The elusiveness of the usually vaguely asymmetrical mask that is smaller than the interpreter's face itself, especially in case of the female mask, does not create any feature of the character, but evokes *yūgen* 幽玄 (“mysterious beauty”). The subtle and precise *kata*, the appropriately chosen fan, and the stage costume and wig must complete the emotional picture of the main character. There is something else to consider when evaluating the mask.

In terms of style, Noh drama is the quintessence of simplicity. Performed by a handful of players, mostly masked and using minimal props and exceedingly understated movements, this

is theater pared down to its essentials. Yet, as an art form, Noh drama is highly complex and richly symbolic, nuanced and exquisite in its austerity. Since the emergence of Noh drama over six centuries ago, the masks worn by the actors have been integral to the work. A Noh mask, with its subtle fusion of the real and the imaginary, is a beautiful object; but it only comes fully to life when a talented actor is able to transcend the mask's unchanging expression and convey a wide range of emotions. In recent years, Noh drama has seen a resurgence in prestige and popularity, both in Japan and abroad. Today, the masks worn by most Noh thespians are either old, passed down from generation to generation within a particular school of acting, or the work of an artist who specializes in this craft. Only one Noh master-actor continues to make masks in addition to teaching, writing and performing. (Ibid, p. 3)

Noh's true uniqueness lies in the way it eschews any portrayal or visible reality, instead expressing the inner workings of the protagonist's heart and mind through a bare minimum of movements and chanting to aid the narrative progression, with musical accompaniment adding further dramatic color (Ibid, p. 146). Although there is a reference to the interpretative technique, it can be used when analyzing the mask in Noh. The "visible reality" of the Japanese, both nowadays and in the époque when the Noh theatre was established, has nothing in common with the mask's expression. The mask is just an idea that the actor should fill with emotions.

The appearance of the main character is completely transformed at the *kagami-no-ma*, while *ai-kyōgen* ("folk character") relates the story of the first half of the performance in a simple and accessible language. In addition to the traditional ways of the mask change, there are those that endanger the health of the performer. Of course, in respect to the vision, regardless of the gender of the character, there is a longstanding technique in Noh to orient oneself using the pillars, but in the case of *Dōjōji*, the technique goes even further because of the actor's work with a very reduced vision that the *mae-shite* mask offers to him during the first half of the play, and the quick and dangerous change that follows. The timing of getting under the bell, which falls from the ceiling at the end of the first part of the performance, requires accurate calculation of the space and excellent physical condition of the performer (Eldredge 1996, p. 85). As the actor enters under the bell, a change of mask from one of the *onna-men* 女面 ("female masks used in Noh performance") to *shinja*, costume, and wig, all of a female character, starts on the stage, unlike a usual *mise-en-scène* (Brown 2001, p. 13).

Thus, as noted in the above examples, the mask is one of the stage components that emphasize the femininity of the character and communicates a wide range of emotions with the support of other stage elements. Nonetheless, it is not enough to only put on a mask in kagami-no-ma before arriving to the stage. Yet another factor confirms that the mask is not just part of the props. Unless the costume and wig are put on in the dressing room, the merging of the actor and character through the mask occurs in kagami-no-ma. Situated between the dressing room and the stage, the “mirror room”, or sometimes called maku-no-ma 襦袢場 (the “curtain room”), is a sacred space where shite sits down in front of the mirror, concentrates mentally and physically on the role, and finishes the creating of the character by putting on the mask and transforming into the protagonist. Udaka Michishige points out that ‘this is the moment when he pours all his emotions into the mask, and simultaneously, a sacred interlude in which the role he is about to play fills him’ (Udaka 2010,p. 127).

The mask of the female character Zo-Onna was used in Noh, the classical Japanese theater that frequently uses masks and elaborate costumes. Noh is the classical theater of Japan which was codified in the 14th century under the father and son actors Kan'ami and Zeami under the patronage of the Shogun (supreme military leader) Ashikaga Yoshimitsu. The mask's fine features indicate nobility and are emphasised by the eyebrows painted high on the forehead and the restrained carving of the eyes, which lack any pronounced details of the natural eyebrows. The mask is less broad across the forehead and the lips and mouth are less full than is usual for the character of Zo-Onna (Coldiron 2004, p. 101). This mask represents a woman slightly younger than convention calls for. It is possible that this mask is a variant on that of the character of Waka-Onna, a younger woman. The cord holes are worn, especially on the outer painted surface where the black ink has been rubbed away indicating use in a performance.

The mask is used for female roles in many Noh plays, notably from the Third and Fourth Groups and depicts a slightly older woman as indicated by the thinner face. This mask is considered suitable for female roles which call for elegant refinement. Rokujo in Nonomiya or the Heavenly Maiden in Hagoromo (The Feather Mantle) might wear this mask. In this play the Heavenly Maiden, having retrieved her feather robe back from the fisherman who took it, wears it as she dances in gratitude. Her heavenly nature is indicated by the elaborate phoenix headdress she wears (Ibid, p. 115).

When most people think of Noh these are the masks that come to mind. That being the case, these tend to be the most varied and popular masks. These masks are categorized by age and character. Examples of beautiful young women masks are the: *ko-omote*, *wakaonna*, *zō* and *magojirō*. The *ōmiona* mask also portrays a young woman, but with more of a working class background. *Fukai* and *shakumi* masks are both used to play mature, middle-aged woman of elegance and grace however the latter displays a stronger character. The *deigan* mask has gold rimmed eyes which implies that the character is otherworldly. Examples of masks for playing old women are *rōjo* and *uba* (Ibid, p. 116).

2.5 Conclusion

When a school of literary criticism is still evolving, trying to make a definitive explanation of its ideals, it can be a perilous undertaking. Feminist criticism for example is difficult to define because it has not yet been codified into a single central perspective. Instead, its several shapes and directions vary from one country to another. The premise that unites those who call themselves feminists .Critics is the assumption that Western culture is fundamentally patriarchal, creating an imbalance of power that marginalizes women and the work. That social structure, they agree, is reflected in religion, philosophy, economics, education and all aspects of the culture, including literature. The feminist critic works to expose such Ideology and, in the end, to change it so that the creativity of women can be fully realized and appreciated. Modern Japan has been characterized by social injustice for women. Paradoxically, it was these women and their labor that generated much of the capital of both the Japanese empire and the post-war Japan. These women were represented by women writers in literary productions, which is the key concern of a feminist, approach in Japanese literature and drama in particular since the literary genre excluded in ancient times the presence of women on stage.

Notes To Chapter Two:

1: For female writers this meant, turning to their own lives for subjects. It also meant that the delicacy of expression that had typified women's writing began to crumble as a new frankness regarding sexuality emerged.

2: Males are impacted by the social stigmas just as much as women; however, these specific categorizations come without the financial divide currently existing in the workplace between genders.

3: In the case of Marxism, those classes which control the forces of production have enjoyed power over those who have no control over the forces of production, distribution and exchange. Both Marxism and feminism are not satisfied with the existing state of affairs and change is their most important concern.

4: Others argue that the democratic legitimacy of the basic conditions under which citizens live depends on the inclusion of women in the processes of public deliberation and electoral politics. Attempts to increase women's participation in public deliberation and electoral politics confront a vicious circle of women's exclusion

5: While feminist analyses typically identify women as the devalued gender, cultural factors make the analyses more complex. In American Indian cultures, for example, men's traditional roles have worn away more than women's traditional roles.

6: In the English-language literature, the term "gender", rather than "sex," is generally used to refer to the natural status of a person, as distinct from the social construct that may be associated with it. In this study, the term "gender" will, in most cases, be used to refer to a person's sex as viewed from the standpoint of the relationship it bears to the availability of resources and opportunities

7: The division of unpaid labor within households and across societies is a gendered struggle as well as a class-based struggle. Research on the allocation of unpaid work within households finds that women's bargaining power rises with earnings. As a result, women with higher earnings spend significantly less time on 'second-shift' housework than women with lower earnings .

8: Although it is difficult to draw the line between serious problems due to heavy an inhuman bureaucracy and pure sexism. These debates about race and class reflect one aspect of the crisis in Marxism, as it has focused on production and class relation.

9: According to Hiratsuka, Japanese women have awakened and are involved extremely in the future, introducing new frames for female identity to realize the state of normative "male's personhood" a desire of progress articulated through the notion of equality and later refined by the idea of difference.

10: These concepts provide a good start for an analysis of the women's movement. But in reality, what constitutes feminism is not self-definitive. It is also highly contingent on the cultural meaning of particular forms of activism within a given society.

11: The use of institutional channels means electing female candidates to political office. Women's movement organizations provide those candidates with support for their election campaigns. It is clear that women's political involvement at the grassroots level has contributed not only to improving women's social conditions but also to developing a more democratic political system in Japan.

12: The progressive outcomes of each of the law reforms undertaken between 2001 and 2010 can be attributed, in large part, to the courage of the survivors who bore public witness before legislators, and also to the relentless participation of women activists throughout the entire law reform process.

13: The concept of obtaining enlightenment was limited to men, "...man is the personification of the Buddha." In certain sects of Buddhism it is diplomatically implied that the only way for a woman to reach salvation is if she were reincarnated as a man. Teachings even went as far as to associate woman as "agents of the devil" to seduce men away from obtaining Buddhahood.

14: Of course, the ladies-in-waiting like Murasaki Shikibu and her contemporary Sei Shonagon did serve at court, as did other women writers of the period, but their duties were largely limited to serving their master or mistress. They did exercise their own agency in creative and personal matters.

15: Through his connections she was able to serve at court and learned the prose of "waka" (tanka), a verse poem made out of 31 sound units, which are divided into 5/7/5/7/7 units, and other scholarly attributes, which helped Abutsu to become a major court poet later in life.

16: Meanwhile, CLAMP (A collective of four women artists) challenges the discourses surrounding the production and consumption of fictional women, especially the young female characters, or shojo, that have become iconic in Japanese popular culture.

17: The play, as everyone probably knows, retells the Biblical tale of *Salomé*, King Herod's stepdaughter. She falls in love with John the Baptist, who spurns her affections. She seeks revenge, and goads King Herod into granting her wish: that she is given the Baptist's head on a platter.

18: Her representation, therefore, reflects the interplay and tension between certain systems of power; those of gendered customs, religion, the arts, and the feudalistic society encapsulating these institutions, which should be understood as the parts that make up the whole of her character.

19: Buddhism and NeoConfucianism did exactly this with their doctrines. Women were regarded as inferior to men in every aspect of life (and death,, in the case of Buddhism) in the official knowledge of both institutions, and power was maintained with the rationalization that men had earned their place above women through merit.

20: The 40 to 50 who are accepted are trained in music, dance, and acting, and are given seven-year contracts (Mitsui 2014, p20). The school is famous for its strict discipline and its custom of having first-year students clean the premises each morning.

21: The great success of *Princess Knight* and other Tezuka stories began the tradition of manga written for a female audience, especially the very influential *Rose of Versailles* and *Revolutionary Girl Utena* series, both of which borrow directly from *Princess Knight* by including specific Tezuka images, character designs and names. *Rose of Versailles* is one of Takarazuka's best-known musicals

22: The beginning of their era roughly coincided with the birth of opera at the turn of the seventeenth century and came to an end in 1830 when the last operatic castrato, Giovanni Battista Velluti, retired from the stage. Throughout much of this period they dominated opera whose great popularity both in and outside Italy created public figures of them, drawing far more attention than their church counterparts.

23: They were products of two specific social environments, created to fill the vacuum left by the sudden absence of women from the public stage. These environments concurrently fully embraced them and shunned them if tastes dictated. Ultimately however, they were happily tolerated despite official objections. They met all the gender requirements as defined earlier, with one exception: the castrato and onnagata genders were restricted to the male body.

24: This notion is known as *chūkan hyōjō*. It is considered as an essential component of the Noh performance, being one of the main characteristics of the Noh technique used by actors and all the Noh staff without mask, like musicians, chorus, and even *kōken* / 権. The so-called “neutral beauty” of the mask allows the actor to deliberately fill the stage with the sorrow or the joy that is dominating the character by using a different angle of the inclination of the mask.

Chapter Three

Noh Theater by Women: Contemporary vs. Traditional

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Chapter Three: Noh Theater by Women: Contemporary Vs Traditional

3.1 Introduction

This chapter entertains a double challenge of exploiting Noh play *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* (2012) by a woman Izumi Ashizawa as a playwright and an actor and breaking the conventions of that type of Japanese drama as being forbidden to women besides writing in English in her homeland to gain an international worldwide audience as Japan is getting influenced by globalization. However, she keeps the basic theatrical conventions of Noh drama of mask, the visible and the unseen, the conscious and the unconscious.

3.2 Noh Theater

Noh (能 *Nō*), derived from the Sino-Japanese word for "skill" or "talent", is a major form of classical Japanese musical drama that has been performed since the 14th century. Developed by Kan'ami (1333-1384) and his son Zeami Motokiyo (1363-1443), it is the oldest major theater art and the only one keeping to present the same repertoire of about two hundred plays since 600 years ago. Traditionally, a Noh program includes five Noh plays with comedic *kyōgen* plays in between; an abbreviated program of two Noh plays and one *kyōgen* piece has become common in Noh presentations today. An *okina* (翁) play may be presented in the very beginning especially during New Years, holidays, and other special occasions (Sky 2014, p. 18).

Noh is often based on tales from traditional literature with a supernatural being transformed into human form as a hero narrating a story. Noh integrates masks, costumes and various props in a dance-based performance, requiring highly trained actors and musicians. Emotions are primarily conveyed by stylized conventional gestures while the iconic masks represent the roles such as ghosts, women, children, and the elderly (Tyte 2003, p. 9). Written in ancient Japanese language, the text vividly describes the ordinary people of the twelfth to sixteenth centuries. Having a strong emphasis on tradition rather than innovation, Noh is extremely codified and regulated by the "iemoto" system.

3.2.1 Shinto, Buddhism and Zen in Noh

The forms of Noh Theater, which is considered as one of Japan's greatest classical dramatic theaters, derived from early court entertainments and religious rituals. In A.D. 782 the Imperial

court disbanded its palace entertainers. Many incorporated dramatic elements into the religious rites to teach congregants as they found employment in temples of Buddhism and Shinto. Noh dramas emerged from these religious activities (Kurtiz 1988, p. 78). Certain genres of Japanese ritual literature can be traced to a particular ritual, the Shinto festival, and especially the performing arts that had a ritual function within it (Plutschow 1990, p. 33).

First, some festivals include artistic performances that have been performed more or less regularly since ancient times, may be even prehistoric times. However, the festivals may have changed over time, they preserve an ancient structure and the art used in them conforms to that structure. Second, certain historical documents, although written in the eighth century, describe ritual and artistic behavior that reveals facts about much earlier practices. Shinto festivals may differ according to location and season, yet they all share similar traits referring to ancient Japanese ritual practices. One such similarity that would define most, if not all, Shinto festivals is their periodicity. Though the periodicity may change from one festival to another, they have in common the regular periodicity. Most festivals are held yearly, indicating their basis upon the agricultural year. Yet, some are held every three years (Ondamatsuri, Muroto-shi, Kochi prefecture May 3), or every twelve years (Izaiho festival and Jinko-sai, Kasima-shi, Ibaragi prefecture), twenty years (Ise, Kamo, Sumiyoshi), twenty one years (Mitsuyama festival, Himeji, Hyogo prefecture) or fifty years for example (Andreason 2014, p. 82). According to experts, the origin of these cycles may have a cosmic significance though no relation between the observation of planetary movements and the timing of local festivals has been reliably documented.

In the past the Buddhism of Noh has been defined in two ways: as Amidism and as Zen. Arthur Waley distinguished the Buddhism of educated people and artists from that of the common people when he wrote: 'It was in a style tinged with Zen that Seami wrote of his own art. But the religion of the Noh plays is predominantly Amidist; it is the common, average Buddhism of medieval Japan' (1957, p. 59). There is no trace whatever of direct Zen influence upon the language or the sentiment of the Noh texts, whereas they abound in the ideas and terminology of the popular Amidism of the day. The indirect influence of Zen, however, cannot be exaggerated. The producers and the actors worked primarily for an audience whose aesthetic standards were those of Zen, and whatever may be said of the literary content of the plays, their structure, the method and the atmosphere of their presentation were in full accordance with the canons of Zen taste (De Gruchy 2003, p. 113).

Both definitions of the Buddhism of Noh, as Amidism and as Zen, refer to schools of Buddhism which are prominently active in modern times. The essential teachings of Zen and of the popular Amidist sects founded by Honen (1133-1212) and Shinran (1173-1262) are current, easily available, quite easily learned, and undeniably important. It is no wonder that they should have been invoked to explain aspects of Japanese culture. But while devotion to Amida does appear in Noh, Amidism as a concerted faith has not struck the imagination of the West, and the statements about Amidism by Waley seem largely to have been forgotten. Zen, on the other hand, has been wonderfully publicized by Suzuki and many others, and has drawn fascinated attention. Consequently most people who know about Noh do not distinguish between doctrine and taste as Sansom did, but take it for granted that the Buddhism of Noh is simply Zen (Carruthers and Yasunari 2004, p. 27).

All Noh plays are precisely situated. Classical verse is full of the poetry of places and of place names, and strong interest in place may be found in much other writing of the centuries which precede the time of Noh; but it is remarkable that practically every Noh play contains a journey to a specific, named spot. Most of the principal figures in Noh can be met only where they reside. The glad vision of the supposed supernatural powers of Sumiyoshi in Takasago, the melancholy dream of the girls of Suma in Matsukaze (*"The Wind in the Pine"*) and the horrifying recital by the lovers of Sano in Funabashi (*"The Boat Bridge"*) are all elaborate evocations of places known in poetry. Other places are distinguished by their association with the death of a warrior. Still others, popular pilgrimage centers whose legends were famous, customarily advertised themselves with these legends. Thus Chikubushima celebrates the pilgrimage center of that name, a sacred islet in Lake Biwa; and Ama (*"The Diver"*) promotes a temple named Shidoji on Shikoku. The monks in Noh do not on the whole make an issue of sect, nor do any of the other figures in the plays (Nogami 2013, p. 18). A few travelers specify that they belong to the Jishu, for example, a popular Amidist sect which began in the Kamakura period; but their sect affiliation, and their sharp consciousness of it, are atypical.

Japan is a mountainous country, and the typical sacred place in the Japanese middle ages was a temple or shrine associated with a mountain. Therefore a mountain is the central element in the landscape of Noh. The other elements are the full moon, water, the water's edge, and a pine tree. These appear in a great many plays. The mountain need not be heroic or distinctive. It may be only a hill or a hillock, or a range of hills. Yama (*"mountain"*) in Japanese refers more to shape than to size, and it does not distinguish between singular and plural. The hills behind

the beach at Suma serve in several plays just as well as Mt. Fuji in Fujisan; and so does the modest altitude of the island in Chikubushima (Ibid, p. 53).

In time, the concern with the afterlife characteristic of Buddhism led to the recognition of these mountains as a symbol of the far unseen afterlife. The most popular general model of a magic mountain was neither Shinto nor Buddhist, however, but an item of Chinese myth. Japanese literature and culture have very significant aspects in a ritual context. Religion provides the background of literary works as well as the intention, the concept and the subject matter for all genres: prose, poetry and drama, e.g., *The Manyoshu* (a collection of poetry compiled in the middle of the eighth century, *Monogatari* or recitative tales, theatrical arts and their criticism, painting, flower arranging, gardening and the tea ceremony, (Fenollosa and Pound 1959, p. 7). Ritual which stands for an activity with a religious purpose, pervades the Japanese life –all segments of society- both ancient and modern. Scholars of varied disciplines ranging from social and cultural anthropologists to religious historians, from psychologists to philosophers demonstrate ritual's universality and centrality to human culture, providing soul care and healthy life.

The ritual context by which the Japanese literature is concerned include regular ceremonies about the changing of the seasons or irregular ones like marriages as well as ones subjected to a protocol. The Shinto ritual is present in literary productions lasting until the Heian period (794 – 1185). As for the medieval literature Shinto-Buddhist synthesis dominated the productions during that period when the warriors called Samurai controlled Japan's politics (Kitagawa 1987, p. 83). Various aspects introducing the interrelation between art and ritual through elements of symbolism and order, in the sense that ritual often involves formalistic, ceremonious and therefore aesthetic behavior besides healthy nurture and psychological appreciation via a highly ordered and structured expression which is the aim of ritual literature covering both written texts and performing arts¹. Many rituals, in fact, explain numerous literary phenomena and their relation to drama, the ritual significance of names and the ritual value of space. Both art and ritual change ordinary activities into extraordinary experiences, symbolic artistic behavior is related to symbolic ritual performances within time and space, art calls forth both the mind and the feelings. Ancient Japanese literature is a public art, it is not personal as in nowadays, that is why most of the artistic works are anonymous.

Many cultural practices related to ancient Japanese art originated not with the individual, creative artists, but with a group in a ritual context. Evidence of such origins may be found in *The Tales of Heike* and *Monogarari*. Yet ritual literature depends upon the forces of group, time and place and those of a common tradition. It often comes out of a group and functions for the group's benefits. Ritual songs are believed to be communications using artistic language rather than everyday human speech, in which vocabulary and forms of expressions are limited to create poetic rhythms and to express a snobbish language. In different arts, meaningful forms relate to symbolic content; visual arts for example, often reveals a geometrical understructure of planes that imply symbolic relationships between parts of the image (Ortolani 1995, p. 137). The art of song might use certain sounds to symbolize certain moods, correlate objects and emotions.

Ritual art must be able to communicate and to be understood by all. Lacking this ability, it cannot induce universal participation. Its power comes from a system of symbols agreed upon by the culture, symbols whose fixed or potential meaning are held in common. Through these symbols, the culture relates to a common history and experience, and shares the same judgment and response to it (Baird 2001, p. 316). These shared values, communicated through art, sustain culture. Yet if art is to be the repository of these values, it must remain relatively stable, retaining its symbolic associations so that it can communicate them to the culture. Art can do this only within the framework of its proper cultural functions, a framework that precludes its rapid change.

Classical Japanese poetry may typify an art that aims primarily to communicate cultural values. By repeating time-honored images and allusions, this poetry allows everyone to understand it and ensures its transmission. In periods of innovation and radical breaks with tradition, change was at first condemned, but the innovators eventually formed schools that institutionalized the changes and made them a tradition in their own right. Various schools disputed theories of poetry based on the real concern for maintaining poetry's cultural meaning despite these radical changes. Other arts also consolidated into schools, artistic monopolies over drama, dance, flower arranging and the tea ceremony (Burckhardt 2009, p. 77)².

The ancient Japanese valued tradition more than innovation in art forms. Tradition legitimated a work of art, while innovative art not sanctioned by tradition was considered illegitimate, had trouble finding patrons, or was simply not accepted as art, for art had to communicate shared

values. Given this emphasis on tradition and legitimacy, art was put to political uses, association with a traditional, legitimized art allowed a political group to increase its power. Conversely, art came to convey subtle political overtones. Artistic traditions were often tied to political in and out groups, and adherence to one or another artistic tradition could be seen as political allegiance or rivalry. This, participation in artistic activity such as poetry and tea could have important political overtones (Liliehoj 2011, p. 87).

In fact, it was during the fourteenth century that a temple dance known *ennen-no* found its way into the *dengaku* and *sarugaku* (Shinto dance, acrobatics and juggling / a form of entertainment imported from China). As a result, new forms of dance dramas, called *degaku-no* and *sarugaku-no*, were the ancestor of the Noh theater. Noh, therefore, referred to *dengak-no* and *ennen-no* stripped of their crudity and humor. However, *sarugaku-no* eclipsed the others and became known as Noh drama. Unlike the other two forms, the Noh of *sarugaku* lineage left a large body of literature, including the plays of Zeami. But not until 1374, when a noble ruler, Yoshimitsu, recognize the value of the dramatic theater, did the Noh become the first classical theater in Japan (Kuritz 1988, p. 99).

3.2.2 Zeami and the Emperor: A Noble Stage

Zeami was born in 1363, during the Namboku-cho era, as the oldest son of Kannami, who was the favored star in the Yamato-yoza (four *sarugaku* performance groups in the Yamato region). His childhood name was Oniyasha, and his true name was Motokiyo. When he was eleven years old, he performed the role of *shishi* (a lion) with his father in a Noh performance competition in Imakumano. Beginning with this performance, Zeami was recognized for his talents and became a star actor (Hare 1996, p. 12). Also, at this performance, he met the young shogun of the Muromachi Shogunate, Yoshimitsu Ashikaga, and was invited to serve Yoshimitsu intimately thereafter. Yoshimoto Nijo, who was the most sophisticated members of the *culturati* of that time, also favored Zeami and provided him with the knowledge of Japanese classics, such as the *Kokinshū* and *renga* poem (linked verse) which is still present in the Japanese collective imagination (Scholz-Cionca 2011, p.129).

Shortly after Zeami turned twenty, his father, Kannami, passed away while he was traveling for a performance in Suruga (in present-day Shizuoka Prefecture)³. He arranged and improved his father's repertory dramas as well as created many new Noh dramas. Although enjoyed favor in his own life, he suffered over the matter of choosing a successor (Ibid, p. 17). Since

he was not blessed with a child, he adopted a child, so-called Onnami, who was a son of Zeami's younger brother, Kanze Shiro, Zeami started to think of carrying on the tradition of his performance art and to write "*Fūshi kaden*." This was a sort of guide written for his successors to sustain the highest status in the world of Noh, while it is recognized as a book of quintessential art theory today (Quinn 2005, p. 20).

Zeami and his wife were finally blessed with three children, the oldest son, Juro Motomasa, the second son, Shichiro Motoyoshi, and a daughter, who later became the wife of Komparu Zenchiku. Zeami suffered between favoring his blood-related son, Motomasa, and favoring the Shiro/Onnami family since Onnami, Zeami's nephew and adopted son, was once determined as his successor. Ultimately, Zeami handed down the "*Fūshi kaden*" to Motomasa, when it was completed in 1418. Although Zeami was once favored by the shogun Yoshimitsu, their relationship changed over the years. Yoshimitsu came to favor Zeami's rival Noh actor, Inuoh, in his last years and ranked "Dohami (Inuoh) as the best *sarugaku* actor." However, after Yoshimitsu's sudden death from illness, Yoshimochi, who was a member of the *culturati* and familiar with Zen Buddhism, became the next shogun. The new shogun favored Zohami, a *dengaku* actor, instead of Dohami (Hare 1996, p. 33).

In 1428, Yoshimochi died and Yoshinori became the sixth shogun. Zeami's adopted son, Onnami, performed the grand Noh performance for Yoshinori's accession to shogun, instead of Zeami. From there on, Onnami became the leader of the Noh world, and the Kanze group split into the mainstream of the Onnami group and the anti-mainstream of the Zeami and Motomasa group. Around this period, Zeami's second son, Motoyoshi, entered the priesthood probably out of despair regarding his future. Two years later, the first son, Motomasa, passed away in his early thirties while performing in Ise (in current Mie Prefecture). After losing his successor Motomasa, Zeami mentally relied on Komparu Zenchiku, his son-in-law. In his very last years, Zeami passed down "Noh as a philosophy," including the theory of Noh performance, to Zenchiku (Pronko 1967, p. 78).

During such a period, another ordeal came to Zeami. In 1434, seventy-two-year-old Zeami was suddenly expelled from the capital city of Kyoto and was banished to Sado Island (in present-day Niigata Prefecture). It is unknown why the government expelled him because no official record was left about his exile. The fact is barely known through the existence of his letters to Zenchiku and "*Kintosho*," his travel notes from Sado. In 1441, the sixth shogun,

Yoshinori, was murdered, and Yoshimasa Ashikaga assumed the position of the eighth shogun. Onnami however maintained his privileged star position. The current Kanze School is the lineage of Onnami (Ibid, p. 80).

Under the patronage of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, whose favour Zeami enjoyed after performing before him in 1374, the Noh was able to shake off the crudities of its past and to develop as a complex and aristocratic theater. After his father's death, Zeami became the chief figure in the Noh. He directed the Kanze school of Noh that his father had established and that had profound and lasting influence. Zeami not only continued to perform brilliantly but also wrote and revised plays prolifically. He is credited with about 90 (and most of the greatest) of the approximately 230 plays in the present repertoire. In 1422 he became a Zen monk, and his son Motomasa succeeded him. But Ashikaga Yoshinori, who became shogun in 1429, favoured On'ami (Zeami's nephew) and refused to allow the son to perform before him. Motomasa died in 1432, and Yoshinori exiled Zeami to the island of Sado in 1434. After the shogun died in 1441, Zeami returned to Kyōto (Nipponica 2005, p. 538).

The two main elements in Noh acting were *monomane*, "an imitation of things," or the representational aspect, and *yūgen*, the symbolic aspect and spiritual core of the Noh, which took precedence and which became the touchstone of excellence in the Noh⁴. Zeami wrote, 'The essence of *yūgen* is true beauty and gentleness,' but not mere outward beauty: it had to suggest behind the text of the plays and the noble gestures of the actors a world impossible to define yet ultimately real. Such plays as *Matsukaze*, written by Kan'ami and adapted by Zeami, have a mysterious stillness that seems to envelop the visible or audible parts of the work. In other of Zeami's dramas there is less *yūgen* and more action and, occasionally, even realism. No one knows when and where Zeami passed away. According to the tradition of the Kanze family the date was 1443 (Rudd 2006, p, 708). If this is true, he was eighty-one years old at his death. It is said that he probably died in Sado Island.

3.2.3 Elements of Noh Theater

Noh performance combines a variety of elements into a stylistic whole, with each particular element the product of generations of refinement according to the central Buddhist, Shinto, and minimalist aspects of Noh's aesthetic principles. *Noh* masks (能面 *nō-men* or 面 *omote*) are carved from blocks of Japanese cypress (檜 "*hinoki*"), and painted with natural pigments on a neutral base of glue and crunched seashell (Sieffert 1983, p. 51). There are approximately

450 different masks mostly based on sixty types, all of which have distinctive names. Some masks are representative and frequently used in many different plays, while some are very specific and may only be used in one or two plays. Noh masks signify the characters' gender, age, and social ranking, and by wearing masks the actors may portray youngsters, old men, female, or nonhuman (non-visible, demonic, or animal) characters. Only the *shite*, the main actor, wears a mask in most plays, even though the *tsure* may also wear a mask in some plays to represent female characters (Kurtiz 1988, p. 105).

Even though the mask covers an actor's facial expressions, the use of the mask in Noh is not an abandonment of facial expressions altogether. Rather, its intent is to stylize and codify the facial expressions through the use of the mask and to stimulate the imagination of the audience (Tschudin 2011, p. 19). By using masks, actors are able to convey emotions in a more controlled manner through movements and body language. Some masks utilize lighting effect to convey different emotions through slight tilting of the head. Facing slightly upward, or "brightening" the mask, will let the mask to capture more light, revealing more features that appear laughing or smiling. Facing downward, or "clouding" it, will cause the mask to appear sad or mad (Ibid).

Noh masks are treasured by Noh families and institution, and the powerful Noh schools hold the oldest and most valuable Noh masks in their private collections, rarely seen by the public. The most ancient mask is supposedly kept as a hidden treasure by the oldest school, the Konparu⁵. While the historical accuracy of the legend of Prince Shōtoku's mask may be contested, the legend itself is ancient as it is first recorded in Zeami's *Style and the Flower* written in the 14th century. Some of the masks of the Konparu school belong to the Tokyo National Museum, and are exhibited there frequently (2014, p. 38). The representation can be analyzed as a textual unity as well as an articulation of micro-texts. It is in fact necessary to indicate levels of analysis as illustrated in the following table:

Levels of analysis	Identification
Discourse level	Representation is considered as a text or series of discourse that can be analyzed as a configuration of signs at a synchronic scale, when text is considered as a complex unity on which vertical cuts are executed.
Narrative level	At a diachronic scale, it is necessary to isolate unities, i.e.: to cut down the text into modes of articulations: acts, scenes, middle sequences. Signs have a diachronic determination of considerable procedures. Signs organized as narrative have a story on the scene, i.e: presence of myths.
Semic level	Each sign corresponds to an organization of meaning elements (signified) that can be called (semes): minimal unities of signification, e.g.: crown of paper implies the seme royalty in addition to the seme (derision): carnival royalty. All theatrical audience elements function in relation to one another as well as with the characters and objects.

Table 3. 1: Levels of analysis

As far as the analysis of Noh texts is concerned, a mask may be identified at the level of discourse, Scene sequences and as a sign.

The traditional Noh stage has complete openness that provides a shared experience between the performers and the audience throughout the performance. Without any proscenium or curtains to obstruct the view, the audience sees each actor even during the moments before they enter (and after they exit) the central "stage". The theatre itself is considered symbolic and treated with reverence both by the performers and the audience. One of the most recognizable characteristic of Noh stage is its independent roof that hangs over the stage even in indoor theaters. Supported by four columns, the roof symbolizes the sanctity of the stage, with its architectural design derived from the worship pavilion (*haiden*) or sacred dance pavilion (*kagura-den*) of Shinto shrines. The roof also unifies the theater space and defines the stage as an architectural entity (Ibid, p. 41).

The pillars supporting the roof are named *shitebashira* (principal character's pillar), *metsukebashira* (gazing pillar), *wakibashira* (secondary character's pillar), and *fuebashira* (flute pillar), clockwise from upstage right respectively. Each pillar is associated with the performers and their actions. The stage is made entirely of unfinished *hinoki*, Japanese cypress, with almost no decorative elements. The poet and novelist Tōson Shimazaki writes that 'on the stage of the Noh theater there are no sets that change with each piece. Neither is there a curtain. There is only a simple panel (*kagami-ita*) with a painting of a green pine tree. This creates the impression that anything that could provide any shading has been banished. To break such monotony and make something happen is no easy thing.' (Shimazaki 1987, p. 453)

Another unique feature of the stage is the *hashigakari*, a narrow bridge at upstage right used by actors to enter the stage. *Hashigakari* means "suspension bridge", signifying something aerial that connects two separate worlds on a same level. The bridge symbolizes the mythic nature of Noh plays in which otherworldly ghosts and spirits frequently appear. In contrast, *hanamichi* in Kabuki theaters is literally a path (*michi*) that connects two spaces in a single world, thus has a completely different significance. Noh actors wear silk costumes called *shozoku* (robes) along with wigs, hats, and props such as the fan. With striking colors, elaborate texture, and intricate weave and embroidery, Noh robes are truly works of art in their own right (Kuritz 1988, p. 107). Costumes for the *shite* in particular are extravagant, shimmering silk brocades, but are progressively less sumptuous for the *tsure*, the *wakizure*, and the *aikyōgen*.

For centuries, in accordance with the vision of Zeami, Noh costumes emulated the clothing that the characters would genuinely wear, such as the formal robes for a courtier and the street clothing for a peasant or commoner. But in the late sixteenth century, the costumes became stylized with certain symbolic and stylistic conventions. During the Edo (Tokugawa) period, the elaborate robes given to actors by noblemen and *samurai* in the Muromachi period were developed as costumes (Sieffert 1960, p. 7). The musicians and chorus typically wear formal *montsuki kimono* (black and adorned with five family crests) accompanied by either *hakama* (a skirt-like garment) or *kami-shimo*, a combination of *hakama* and a waist-coat with exaggerated shoulders (Ibid, p. 105). Finally, the stage attendants are garbed in virtually unadorned black garments, much in the same way as stagehands in contemporary Western theater.

The use of props in Noh is minimalistic and stylized. The most commonly used prop in Noh is the fan, as it is carried by all performers regardless of role. Chorus singers and musicians may carry their fan in hand when entering the stage, or carry it tucked into the *obi* (the sash). The fan is usually placed at the performer's side when he or she takes position, and is often not taken up again until leaving the stage. During dance sequences, the fan is typically used to represent any and all hand-held props, such as a sword, wine jug, flute, or writing brush. The fan may represent various objects over the course of a single play (Cavaye 2012, p. 108).

When hand props other than fans are used, they are usually introduced or retrieved by *kuroko* who fulfill a similar role to stage crew in contemporary theatre. Like their Western counterparts, stage attendants for Noh traditionally dress in black, but unlike in Western theater they may appear on stage during a scene, or may remain on stage during an entire performance, in both cases in plain view of the audience. The all-black costume of *kuroko* implies they are not part of the action on stage and are effectively invisible (Kuritz 1987, p. 106).

Set pieces in Noh such as the boats, wells, altars, and bells, are typically carried onto the stage before the beginning of the act in which they are needed (Ibid). These props normally are only outlines to suggest actual objects, although the great bell, a perennial exception to most Noh rules for props, is designed to conceal the actor and to allow a costume change during the *kyōgen* interlude.

Noh theater is accompanied by a chorus and a *hayashi* ensemble (*Noh-bayashi* 能囃子). Noh is a chanted drama, and a few commentators have dubbed it "Japanese opera". However, the singing in Noh involves a limited tonal range, with lengthy, repetitive passages in a narrow dynamic range. Texts are poetic, relying heavily on the Japanese seven-five rhythm common to nearly all forms of Japanese poetry, with an economy of expression, and an abundance of allusion. The singing parts of Noh are called "*Utai*" and the speaking parts "*Kataru*". The music has many blank spaces (*ma*) in between the actual sounds, and these negative blank spaces are in fact considered the heart of the music (Nunez 2005, p. 38)⁶. The chant is not always performed "in character"; that is, sometimes the actor will speak lines or describe events from the perspective of another character or even a disinterested narrator. Far from breaking the rhythm of the performance, this is actually in keeping with the other-worldly feel of many Noh plays, especially in those characterized as *mugen*

3.2.4 Dramatic Functions of Noh Theater

The dramatic function of a play is how the story is to move on, how it helps the drama to progress, what it does for the story structurally. i.e., a character's dramatic function describes the structural reason your character in a story.

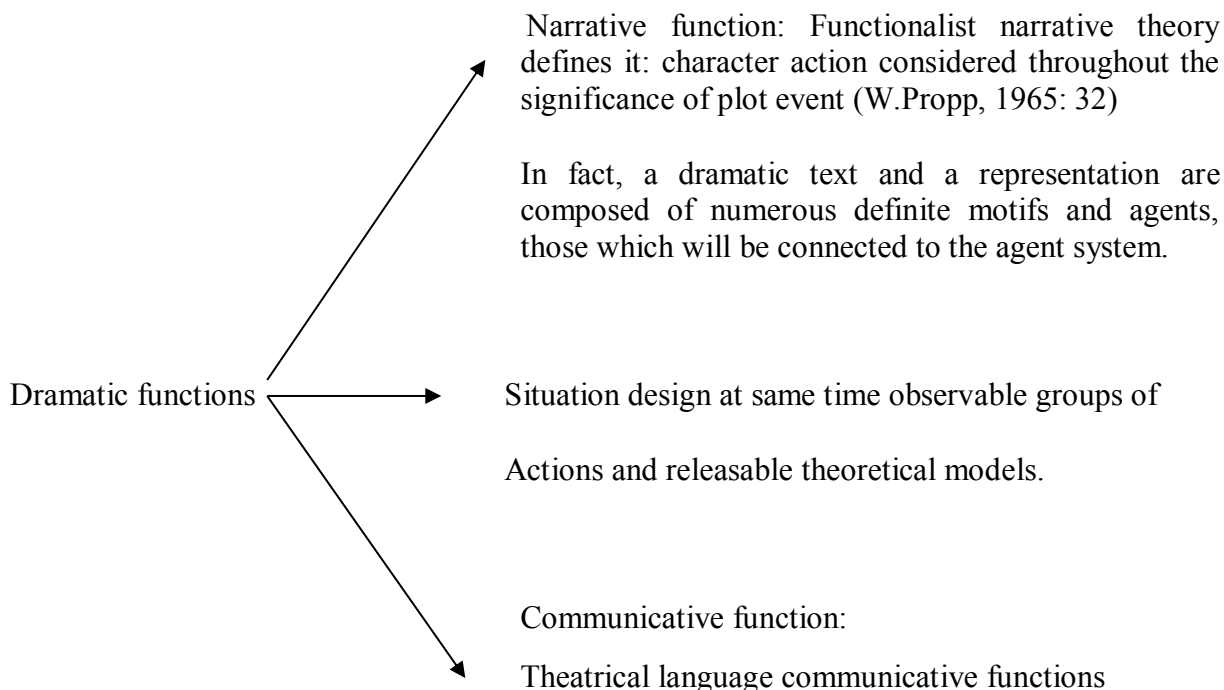


Diagram 3.1: Dramatic Functions

A dramatic text is narrative, situational and communicative

On its turn, the theatrical text presents other three functions:

The function	Details
Dramatic function	When the text holds the action and even comments the action. The dialogue gives explicit and implicit information concerning the running of the action. It expresses the characters' subjectivity, the situation, time and space, in addition, it precises their harmonious and conflictual relations.
Poetic function	Styles and written in verse using all the literary devices: metaphors, metonymy, symbolism...It responds to an aesthetic aim.
Communicative function	Assures the function of communication between the characters as well as between the playwright and the audience.

Table 3.2: The Functions of a Dramatic Text

The script in drama is to be performed with poetic qualities and communicative skills

In rhetoric theory, moral authority is indispensable to winning the assent of audiences. Aristotle gives ethos priority, there is persuasion through character whenever the speech is spoken in such a way as to make the speaker worthy credence; for we believe fair-minded people to a greater extent and more quickly than do others' as stated by Aristotle's *A Theory of Civil Discourse* (Kennedy 2007, p. 324). Because rhetoric studies context or the circumstances, in which speech is delivered and because it assumes the presence of an audience, its procedures are particularly well suited to the study of political and social drama.

A Noh performance placed great demands on the spectators. Zeami wrote that: 'the purpose of this art is to pacify and to give pleasure to the minds of the audience and to move them..' (Kuritz 1988, p. 108). The audience had to prepare itself so that actions could seem profound and conductive because the classical theater did not end with what was visible to the audience, it rather drew the audiences imagination to the action so that meaning could arise through joint effort (Goff 2014, p. 125)⁷. Zeami advised his audience to forget the theater and to look at Noh, to forget Noh and to look at the actors, and finally, to forget the actors and to look at the ideas so that Noh Theater could be understood.

Noh plays illustrated Zen doctrines: Zen taught that the phenomenal world was meaningless because it masked the inner truth. Noh action created a conflict between appearance and reality. What an audience saw was not what it seemed to be appearance deceived. Noh dramas were interwoven with imagery of nature (Smethurst 2013, p. 64). Each play had an appropriate season for performance and captured the essence of either a season or a time of a day. The characters were memories, what remain when life has ended.

Noh language alternated between verse and prose, singing and chanting. Filled with archaisms, obscure Buddhist references, Chinese derivations, and allusions to lost poems and songs, Noh texts seemed almost incomprehensible. The poetry was written in alternating lines of seven and five syllables. Each episode of a scene consisted of passages with their own rhythm and linguistic characteristics. Some passages were divided into sections characterized by changes in pitch of recitation or rhythmical drum patterns. Noh diction followed Zen suspicion of language. Language does not represent rational ideas because words always refer to something other than themselves. Consequently, words were used in the Noh as echoes of things that once were. Noh employed words to magnify the faint echo, to bring an image back from memory, into physical incarnation upon the stage. Then texts of the Japanese classical theater reveal the cultural contexts that shaped the composition of the audiences and performances (Ismail 2013,

p. 65). Noh texts structuring the actions of a Zen Buddhist theater, emphasized allusion and an overriding desire to escape time and place. A Noh play sought to prolong the essence of a fleeting moment's mood.

Noh began as popular entertainment but became a possession of an elite audience. The Noh audience was wealthy and educated samurai. Noh actors disappeared in their costumes and masks, they were given samurai status by their audience and the government. Noh, like all classical theater, evolved from dance. Every rhythm of each production highlighted and commented on the dancers, the center of the performance (McGrath 2012, p. 201)⁸. Drums and flutes and shamanistic instruments dominated Noh Music. The flute and the three drums were played by four musicians, who sometimes cried out during a performance. The Ji (chorus of six to eight singers) recited parts not assigned to others and spoke the voice of the shite. The Ji narrated the opening scene and commented, in a question and answer format, on the action. The Ji took no part in the action other than to chant an accompaniment to the dominant dance (Kuritz 1988, p. 105).

Noh dance, not miming action but evoking an action's ultimate meaning, followed familiar movement patterns. Each gesture held several symbolic Kata (forms), of which Noh 300 for dance, However, movement never illustrated the words. Thus, Noh drama can be done only within the critical parameters of its culture. The relationship between art and ideology is so crucial and the relationship between the reader's understanding and the world is so complex. Such complexity can be softened only if the relationship between art and ideology is dialectical.

3.2.4 The True Face of Noh Masks

In Japan masks belong to a highly developed theatrical tradition. Its purpose used to be strictly religious but this has long since changed. Of all the Japanese masks the Noh mask is said to be the most artistic one. The origins of Noh theater go back to the thirteenth century. At that time a very popular performance was 'Dengaku no Noh' which translates as 'Field-music Performance' and it had its root in rustic acrobatic and juggling exhibitions (Irvine 2003, p. 131). By the fourteenth century, however, Noh had become a kind of opera in which the performers recited while sitting next to each other and then danced. As the fourteenth century went on, another type of Noh, Sarugaku⁹, which used a lot of buffoonery, developed into a serious dramatic performance.

The Japanese theatrical masks are used particularly to represent demons (it can be taken literally or metaphorically, depending on the storyline of the play), for example: if the play is centered on the afterlife or elements of a more dark or gothic nature, the Shikami mask would function in a literal way (Corneille 2018, p. 43). However, if the play is focusing on more modern themes like betrayal or murder, the Shikami mask would probably be metaphorical for a person of a more evil or bad nature (Mack 1999, p. 95). The Shikami mask is presented in a very clever way, it looks like dark and demonic characters from a stereotypical point of view, in order to make the audience reacting by being scared.

Masks are only worn by the main character, his mask would stylize the person it represents and show them in a truer light than reality could do by depicting only the absolutely essential traits of character. In order to evade a physical reality, the bearer of masks covers his face to terribly himself or others, but also to taste some happiness sealed by disillusionment during these furtive moments stolen from adversity. Unique and real instants of apparent convenience (Bedjaoui 2014). There are five categories of Noh masks: supernatural beings, demons, men, women and the elderly (Pollock 1995, p. 591). Noh theater is a good example of a theatrical form in which masks are used, they generally show a neutral expression so it is up to the skill of the actor to bring the mask to life through his acting. The parts are all acted by men, so the task of performing as a young woman is one of the most challenging for any actor because women were not allowed to perform Noh plays. The masks are comparatively small and they only cover the front of the face having only small holes for eyes, nostrils and mouth.

Although Zeami is credited with having perfected Noh as it exists today, his book “*Juroku-bu-shu*” was not discovered until 1883 (Meiji era). Until that time, this historical genius of Japanese culture, whose talent was equivalent to that of Sen no Rikyu, the founder of the tea ceremony, and Basho Matsuo, a haiku poet, had been forgotten not only among the public but also even among Noh performers. The gem-like words Zeami left for posterity show us his sharp insight into the art of performance as well as into society. Beyond the bounds of the centuries, his words impress us, living in the twenty-first century, and provide wisdom on how to live in modern life (Marvin 2010, p. 24).

Noh play derived from the Japanese word for “skill” or “talent”. It is a major form of classical Japanese musical drama that has been performed since the 14th century. Many characters are masked, with men playing male and female roles. Traditionally, a Noh ‘performance day’ lasts all day and consists of five Noh plays interspersed with shorter, humorous kyōgen pieces.

However, present-day Noh performances consist of two Noh plays with one Kyōgen play in between. While the field of Noh performance is extremely codified, and regulated by the iemoto system, with an emphasis on tradition rather than innovation, some performers do compose new plays or revive historical ones that are not a part of the standard repertoire (Griffiths 2014, p. 49). Works blending Noh with other theatrical traditions have also been produced, developed and designed in a modern way today, keeping the same values of Noh, challenging the traditional with the contemporary Japanese theater.

A square platform supported on pillars, open to the audience on three sides, and covered with a temple-like roof, forms the stage for a Noh play. It is connected with a green room by a corridor, or gallery, which leads back from the stage at the left, as the audience sees it. Upon the back scene is painted a pine tree, and three small pines are placed along the corridor. The orchestra, consisting of a flute, drum, and two instruments resembling the tambourine, is seated in a narrow space back of the stage; while the chorus, whose number is not fixed, is seated on the floor at the right. The actors are highly trained, and their speech is accompanied by soft music. There are rigid rules for acting, each accent and gesture being governed by an unchanging tradition. The actors are always men, wearing masks when impersonating females or supernatural beings (Kuritz 1988, p. 107). The costumes are exquisite and of medieval fashion.

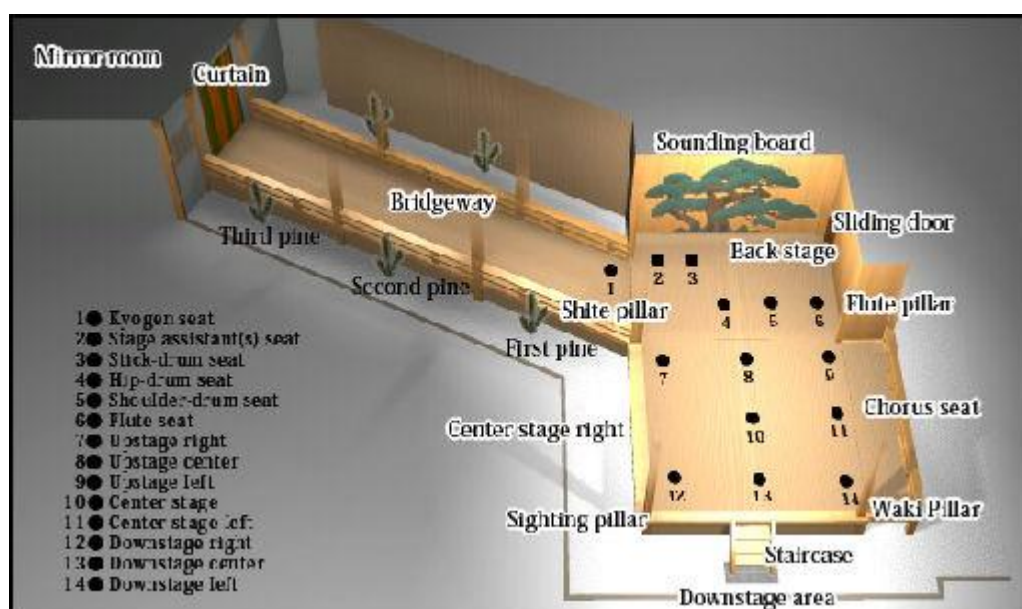


Figure 3.1: The Staging of a Noh Play¹⁰

The traditional Noh stage has complete openness that provides a shared experience between the performers and the audience throughout the performance

The construction of the Noh play is always the same. It begins with the appearance of a traveler, perhaps a priest, who announces his name and purpose of journeying to such-and-such a battleground, temple, or other time-honored place. While he is crossing the stage, the chorus recites the beauties of the scenery or describes the emotions of the traveler. At the appointed spot a ghost appears, eagerly seeking an opportunity to tell of the sufferings to which it is condemned. This ghost is the spirit of the place as the Japanese presentation of the unseen which is present in all religions since none can deny the tight tie between many conventions of the religions in the world (Cotterell and Storm 2012, p. 420). The second part consists of the unfolding of the ancient legend which has sanctified the ground. The story is revealed partly by dialogue, partly by the chorus. At its close the priest prays and the play ends with a song in praise of the ruling sovereign (Ibid).

As it is often difficult to tell the actual feelings expressed in a Noh mask, it is said to be made with a neutral expression. The mask carver tries to instill a variety of emotions in the mask 'Noh is an image in the mirror which life approximates' (Keene 1966, P. 111). It is up to the performer to imbue the mask with emotion. One of the techniques used in this task is to slightly tilt the mask up or down (Rath 2006, p. 159). With Terasu (tilting upwards) the mask appears to be slightly smiling or laughing and the expression lightens somewhat. While Kumorasu (tilting downwards), produces a slight frown and can express sadness or crying.

<p>翁面 okina Old Man</p> 	<p>This type is only used for the piece called "Okina", performed in the New Year or for special occasions. It is a kind of ritual items derived from <i>sarugaku</i>, the classic form of the Noh, and it is said that this type was already used in the late Heian era (12th Century). It predates any other types of the Noh masks.</p>
<p>尉面 jō Elders</p> 	<p>Masks portraying elder people are called <i>jō-men</i> (<i>jō</i> masks). They vary in the types including <i>Ko-jō</i>, <i>Asakura-jō</i>, <i>Sanko-jō</i>, and <i>Warai-jō</i>. They are distinguishable by their hair, and generally worn by the leading actors in Part One in <i>waki-nō</i> (god plays) or <i>shura-nō</i> (warrior plays), in which they play incarnate spirits.</p>
<p>男面 otoko Man</p> 	<p>Depending on roles' social positions or situations in plays, performers choose masks from various types of <i>Otoko-men</i> (<i>Otoko</i> masks), including <i>Heida</i> portraying soldiers, <i>Chūjō</i>, <i>Jūroku</i>, <i>Hatachi-amarī</i>, <i>Dōji</i>, and <i>Kasshiki</i>.</p>
<p>女面 onna Woman</p> 	<p><i>Onna-men</i> (<i>Onna</i> masks) is the most popular type of the Noh masks that first comes into people's minds. There are a number of variations including <i>Ko-omote</i> that portrays a young woman. Depending on ages or characters of roles, the type is broken into parts, such as <i>Waka-onna</i>, <i>Shakumi</i>, <i>Uba</i>, and <i>Rōjo</i>.</p>
<p>鬼神 kishin Demons</p> 	<p>This is assumed to have appeared in the early stage of the history, describing supernatural substances such as demons or <i>Tengu</i> (long-nosed goblins). It is distinguishable by its forceful and wild appearance, and roughly classified into two types: <i>Tabide</i> portraying demons or savages, and <i>Beshimi</i> portraying goblins such as <i>Tengu</i>.</p>
<p>怨霊 onryo Ghost and Spirit</p> 	<p>This is the type that portrays incarnate spirits of dead persons. They include male ghosts such as <i>Ayakashi</i>, <i>Yase-otoko</i> and <i>Kawazu</i>, and female ones such as <i>Yamanba</i> and <i>Deigan</i>. They are all regretful and revengeful of this world. <i>Hannya</i>, one of the well-known type of the masks, is also classified into this group.</p>

Figure 3.2: Noh Masks¹¹

Noh masks represent age, gender and social ranking of human or nonhuman beings like animal, demon or spirits.

Noh costumes which added stature and grandeur to the players, preserved centuries-old official dress. Some Noh masks were even considered national treasures. Costumes were brilliantly variegated in color and featured luxurious embroidery and silver and gold brocade. Actors chose their masks and costumes to interpret their roles. They chose costumes, for example, for their silhouettes, and they chose colors and masks for their abilities to lead the audience into another realm. The shite wore the brightest colors and most impressive mask, the maskless waki wore less vivid colors. The waki, if a member of the clergy, often wore black priestly robes. Even more subdued costumes bedecked the musicians and kyojen characters. Simple uniforms covered the chorus and stage assistants. The players also wore *tabi* (bifurcated or two sectioned socks) that were white if formal (Kuritz 1988, p. 106).

As for Greek, Indian and Chinese actors, for the Japanese, the Noh mask was an object for mediation prior to performance because it was not a mirror of the human face; it was a mirror of reality. Thus, before actors entered the stage they gazed at their masked faces in a mirror

until they became reflections of the masks. Young actors were admonished for simply putting their masks on their faces be pulled into and cling to the masks. But the masks did not conceal, they rather reconciled all human contradictions: male with female, old with young, human with non-human, living with dead, past with present,. They brought the oneness of the universe to the here and now (Ibid, p107).

All of the masks have a distinctive name. There are 60 types and over 400 different masks. Noh mask is used to emphasize and stylize the facial expressions which is accompanied with adequate body language and movement in order to stimulate the imagination of the audience of Noh play. The content of the Noh play, which is nearly always tragic, is treated with simple dignity. There is frequent reference to learned matters, and to the teachings of Buddha. The text is partly archaic prose and partly verse. Within this slight conventional form are themes relating to filial duty, endurance under trial, uncomplaining loyalty in the face of hardship and neglect, and tender sacrifice (Udaka 2018, p. 133). The plays are uniformly austere and poetic, remote from the everyday scene, and full of imagination and beauty. This type of play may well be considered unique in the history of the stage, and an important link between the classic plays of Greece and the poetic drama of modern Europe.

In the 20th century some experimentation took place. Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru produced Noh plays that had new content but adhered to traditional conventions in production, e.g. *Sanetomo* (1950), the first postwar Noh play. Mishima Yukio, on the other hand, took old plays and added new twists while retaining the old themes like *Thirst for Love* (1950) and *Kyoko's House* (1959). Many other Japanese playwrights are pioneers for treating national and international issues like feminism, racism, immigration, diaspora...through new forms of Noh drama, e.g. *Tea* (1988) by Velina Hasu Houston and *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* (2012) by Izumi Ashizawa.

3.2.5 The Character in Noh Theater

He is the essence of human behavior, representative or quintessential characters, embodiment of the characteristics of an entire group. Only human as much as the playwright and production have made them distinguishable from other characters, physically, socially, psychologically, morally. The concept of "decorum" was important in the Neoclassical period: characters should behave according to their class /circumstances e.g: *The Cid* .Revealed only by what the character says, does, what others say about him, react to him (stage directions, etc.). They can

also be revealed through how the character functions in the play. “person” and “character” have the etymology meaning “persona” i.e: tragic mask in Latin. The sole difference between them is that “person” belongs to reality and “character” to fiction. A character refers to the social status of a person. (Fuchs 1996, p. 4). The following terms help describe characters according to their function in the play:

The term	The function
<i>Protagonist</i>	often used to refer to the lead character in a tragedy.
<i>Antagonist</i>	often the bad guy, but could be anyone / thing that struggles against the protagonist.
<i>Foil / Counterpart</i>	reveals some aspects of the main characters by having similar or different circumstances or by behaving similarly or differently
<i>Stock characters</i>	a character who is larger than life who has a dominant trait as opposed to a "real" or life-like individual
	<i>Chorus and Non-Human characters</i>
<i>Narrators</i>	a character whom the protagonist or other important character confides in
<i>Confidante</i>	
<i>Raisonneur / author's character</i>	speaks for the author, giving the author's morals or philosophy, usually not the protagonist

Table 3.3: Characters in Drama and their Functions

Each type of character has its own function on the stage in relation to the scene, the theme, the other characters, space and time, audience and language.

Characterization analysis investigates the ways and means of creating the personality traits of fictional characters. The basic analytical question is, Who (subject) characterizes whom (object) as being what (as having which traits or properties). Characterization analysis focuses on three

basic oppositional features: narratorial vs figural (identity of characterizing subject: narrator or character); explicit vs. implicit (are the personality traits expressed in words, or do they have to be inferred from somebody's behavior); self-characterization (auto-characterization) vs altero-characterization (does the characterizing subject characterize himself/herself or somebody else). Pfister's famous diagram (1991, p.184) is generally used for a reasonably complete survey of dramatic characterization techniques:

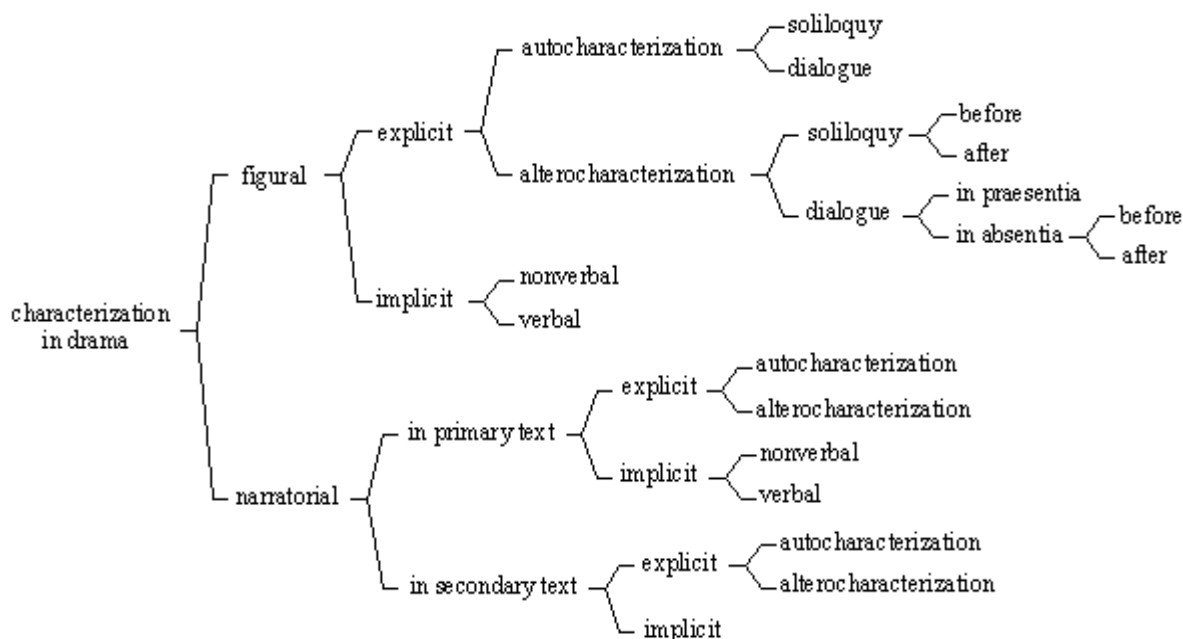


Diagram 3.2: Pfister Famous Diagram¹²

Levels of analyzing Characters depend on actors and audience

In figural characterization, the characterizing subject is a character. On the level of explicit characterization, a character either characterizes him- or herself, or some other character. The reliability or credibility of a character's judgment largely depends on pragmatic circumstances: auto characterization is often marked by face- or image-saving strategies, wishful thinking, and other "subjective distortions" , e.g., the reliability of marriage ads, letters of applications etc., situations in which one wants to look one's best and to gloss over one's faults); alter characterization is often strongly influenced by social pressures and "strategic aims and tactical considerations", especially when the judgment in question is a public statement made in a dialogue (as opposed to when it is made in a soliloquy), and even more so when the person characterized is present , it can clearly be dangerous to criticize a tyrant; for the audience, it

makes a difference whether the figure characterized has already been on stage or not (characterization before/after the character's first appearance).

In a narratorial characterization the characterizing subject is a narrator. A narrator can be a figure in the primary text (as in epic drama) in which case s/he can act as a homodiegetic narrator (first-person) or a heterodiegetic narrator; and/or s/he can be the (usually, heterodiegetic) narrative agency of the stage directions (i.e., within the secondary text). (However, recall that all stage directions, including their narratorial voice, are lost when the text metamorphoses into a performance. Although most of the pragmatic features associated with figural characterization are irrelevant for narratorial characterization, a dramatic narrator need not necessarily be reliable.

An explicit characterization is a verbal statement that ostensibly attributes (i.e., is both meant to and understood to attribute) a trait or property to a character who may be either the speaker him- or herself (autocharacterization), or some other character (alterocharacterization). An explicit characterization is usually based on a descriptive statement (particularly, a sentence using *be* or *have* as its main verb) that identifies, categorizes, individualizes, and evaluates a person. Characterizing judgments can refer to external, internal, or habitual (Pruner 2010, p. 71). An explicit characterization is mainly defined as being one that is meant and understood to be a verbal characterization, however, the characterizing statement itself can clearly be quite vague, allusive, or elliptical.

An implicit characterization is a (usually unintentional) autocharacterization in which somebody's physical appearance or behavior is indicative of a characteristic trait. X characterizes him- or herself by behaving or speaking in a certain manner. Nonverbal behavior (what a character does) may characterize a person as, for instance, a fine football player, or a coward. Characters are also implicitly characterized by their dress, their physical appearance and their chosen environment (e.g., their rooms, their pet dogs, their cars). Verbal behavior (the way a character speaks, or what a character says in a certain situation) may characterize a person as, for instance, having a certain educational background (jargon, slang, dialect), as belonging to a certain class or set of people (sociolect), or as being truthful, evasive, ill-mannered, etc.

Even though, normally, the audience starts out on a state of inferior knowledge, it usually does not take long for them to learn the characters' goals and secret plans. The title and the genre of a play may also contribute essential information. Frequently, the resulting superior audience

awareness is the basis for creating comic effect. For instance, the audience may know that the person whom somebody addresses disrespectfully is actually the King in disguise. Analytical drama, on the other hand, relies on the fact that the viewers, just like the characters, are left either uncertain or ignorant about essential parts of the plot.

Characters in Noh are men and boys who start training at the age of seven. At the age of twelve student actors dance and recite without criticism or praise. At twelve instruction began in various roles. Although the greatness of Noh actors is not seen until they are Thirty five, at the age of forty five they play less assertive roles. Since Zeami, Noh actors enjoyed high status:

... If the players are too engrossed in practical matters, and think only of money, that will become the ruin of Noh. Actually, a shite can get much more income by honesty and thinking only of his art, and the result of aiming at nothing but wealth will be the corruption of Noh. (Kuritz 1988, p. 103)

The twenty-one authentic Noh works still exist. Kadensho by Zeami, explained the artist's role:

The seed of a flower that blossoms out in all works of art lies in the artist's soul. Just as the transparent crystal produces fire and water, or a colorless cherry tree bears blossoms and fruit, a superb artist creates a moving work of art out of a landscape within his soul. It is such a person that can be called a vessel. Works of art are many and various, some singing of the moon and the breeze on the occasion of a festival, others admiring the blossoms and the birds at an outdoor excursion. The universe is a vessel containing all things: the flowers and leaves, the snow and the moon, mountains and seas, trees and grass, the animate and the inanimate,; according to the season of the year. Make numerous things the material of your art, let your soul be the vessel of the universe, and set it in the spacious tranquil way of the void. You will then be able to attain the ultimate of art, the mysterious flower (Ibid).

To "flower" or present the mysteries of the cosmos, Noh actors indicated various visual and auditory symbols with their bodies and voices. Zeami passed along the secret means of accomplishing the feat. Two arts were involved: music and dance, and three forms: monomane, yugen, and hana. Zeami defined monomane as:

A thorough personification of a being that one is endeavoring to portray... In actual practice, however, it is essential to draw a line between an object which should be copied as minutely as possible and one the imitation of which should be confined to its general aspects.... Here it is the spirit that counts. A mere external imitation of an object would make the result "masterless" while by "feeling it with heart and soul to make it one's own, we would have the outcome mastered (Ibid, p. 104)

Monomane, thus, suggested imitation of the essence of an individual. The actors so identified with their roles that they no longer felt they were merely imitating an old man, warrior, or a woman, for example. They sought, rather, a balance between portraying a particular individual and communicating the universal essence of that person.

Monomane, then, the mastery of the symbolic essence of a role. Yugen symbolized by a white bird with a flower in his beak, was what lay beneath the surface symbol. Originally, a poetic term used first by the poet Shunzei (1114-1204), yugen became synonymous with elegance and gracefulness rather than with its original meaning of lonesomeness. It captured quietude, elegance and restrained beauty. Monomane is an attitude in representation, which provides the basis for movements, while yugen is an adorning technique to bring them to perfection. Toyochiro Nogami compares monomane to the composition of a painting and yugen to its coloring. No painting is worth our note, if it is not solid in composition, no matter how rich it is in color, or it fails to command the full attention of the people, if it is poor in color effect, however clever it might be in design'

Hana, symbolized by flowers, is the spontaneous adaptation of a particular performance for each particular audience. Han, like "flowering", aroused the interest of an audience. Whereas, monomane and yugen were regular and consistent, hana changed. The flower as Zeami writes, was the perfect symbol for this phenomenon:

...You must understand that the reason why they have used the symbol of flowers for hana. As every kind of plant and flower blooms at its proper time in the four seasons, people think it is beautiful because they think that it is blooming as something fresh and rare. In the art of Noh, the point at which the audience feels this freshness and rarity will be the interesting part to them. So the hana the interesting part and the rarity are one and the same thing. No flower can remain in bloom forever. It gives pleasure to the eye because its bloom has been so long awaited. In the art of Noh it is the same, and a shite must know first of all that hana is a thing which is constantly changing. To change its style, not always keeping to the same one, will make the audience more interested (Ibid, p. 104)

An actor bewitched the audience by giving it "the feeling of strangeness":

By strangeness, therefore is meant merely the change of the occasion to apply a set technique, or the adjustment of emphasis according to the conditions of the audience. An actor should be ever attentive to the state of audience. If they are strained and eagerly anticipating, they should be lightly entertained; if their attention is wandering,

they should be taken by surprise, baffled of their expectations, and kept in constant suspense, so that they would be never bored, nay, even be excited. They would be, then, overwhelmed (Ibid, p140).

Monomane, yugen and hana did not tell a story but evoked emotions and moods. Every movement and intonation followed a specific rule. Each episode lingered and sustained a feeling. Symbolic, quintessential actions worked by implication: A simple step became a journey, a lying kimono presented an ill person, a stab at a hat completed a revenge, a downward glance presented tears, a lifted hand produced weeping. Action was slow and deliberate. Each step and gesture, carefully measured, sought economy of movement and complete restraint. Noh actors understand the symbolism of their actions.

A great Noh actor did not depend upon innate talent, study or success, a great actor 'knows the nature of things, has broad learning and the qualities of a master, looks after his sons and grandsons, and trains his pupils well' Great actors work not only on their art, but also on themselves:

To lead a virtuous
Life, To keep the self upright
To dissolve the soul
And to pursue the nature of things_
These make up the basis of our art

Off-stage behavior, following rigid guidelines, regulated eating, drinking, quarrelling, talking and laughing. When in the theater humor was out of place. Following Zeami's injection: 'Let your soul be a mirror which reflects all the laws of the universe', Noh actors play two main roles: the shite (doer) and the waki (assistant). Each role has its own techniques. The shite always appears masked; the waki bare or painted faced. The waki asked the shite to provoke the main action. Young boys played the waki so as not to overpower the adult shite.

3.2.6 Theatrical Communication in Noh Drama

Drama is a fact of communication when it conveys not only a message but an artistic message, presenting signs that stimulate intellectual effects as well as affective and physical reactions. Drama indeed, is a socio-cultural event determined by signs constructions and audience significance. As Pfister (1988) and Chatman (1990) point out, drama is a narrative form that represents or 'tells' a story, sometimes literally so. The following graphic shows that narrative communication in general involves several levels. Each level of communication comes with its

own set of addressers and addressees (i.e., senders and receivers, story-tellers (narrators) and audiences).

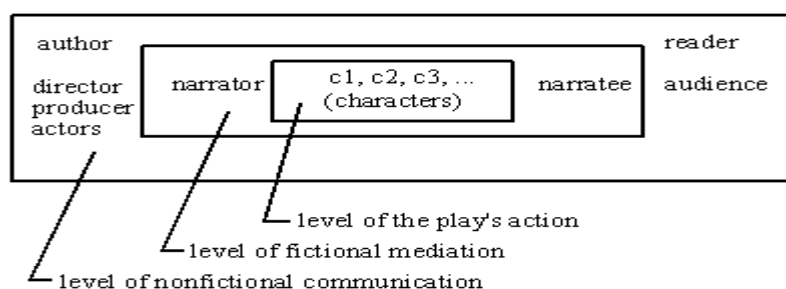


Diagram 3.3: Levels of Theatrical Communication¹³

Theatrical communication involves all of the author, narrator, audience and the production crew as well.

The level of nonfictional communication is the outermost level designating the pragmatic (communicational) space in which an author (dramatist, playwright) writes the text of a play. This text is used by a director, in collaboration with a producer, actors, composers, etc., to stage a performance. In a sense, the playwright is the 'primary' author, while the director and his/her collaborators as 'secondary authors'. Addressees on this level are either the readers of the play's text or the members of the audience in an actual performance. The level is 'nonfictional' because all agents involved are real persons.

The level of fictional mediation is an intermediate level which is activated in 'epic drama' only, i.e., mainly in plays that use a narrator figure who acts as the teller, historian or commentator (e.g., Shakespeare's *Pericles*, Shaffer's *Amadeus*). Since narrators are fictional addressers, their counterparts are fictional addressees or -- narratologically speaking -- narratee. The level of fictional action is the level on which the characters communicate with each other. As has been recognized in speech-act theory, as recognized by Searle (1974). The level of fictional action is the level on which the characters communicate with each other. As has been recognized in speech-act theory, talking constitutes a special kind of act, a speech act. Hence a distinction can be made between 'verbal action' (speeches, dialogues, etc.) and 'nonverbal action' (mime, gesture, movement, etc.) (Walkott 2007, p. 38).

Real-life persons can occupy more than one of the agent positions in this model. Many playwrights (Albee, Ayckbourn, Pinter) double as directors. Perhaps the most famous contemporary writer-director-designer-choreographer-performer in the British theater scene is

Steven Berkoff. As in the narratological model and its treatment of embedded narratives, additional levels have to be used to capture the structure of a 'play-within-the-play' (as occurs in, e.g., Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*). The distinction between plays that do or do not use the level of narrative mediation leads to the distinction between epic and absolute drama as described by Pfister (1988)

An absolute drama is a type of drama that does *not* employ a level of fictional mediation; a play that makes no use of narrator figures, chorus characters, story-internal stage managers, or any other 'epic' elements. The audience witnesses the action of the play as if it happened 'absolutely', i.e., as if it existed independently of either author, or narrator, or, in fact, the spectators themselves. Example: *Hamlet*, and many others.

An epic drama, in contrast, is one that makes use of 'epic devices' such as those listed above, mainly a narrator or teller figure. It is 'epic' in the sense that, just like in prose fiction, there is a visible and/or audible narrator figure whose presence creates a distinct level of communication complete with addressee, setting, and time line. Example: Shakespeare, *Pericles* (Gower is a heterodiegetic narrator). Even though, in ordinary circumstances, the terms person, character and figure are often used indiscriminately, modern theoretical discourse makes an effort to be more distinct and accurate. A person is a real-life person; anyone occupying a place on the level of nonfictional communication. Authors, directors, actors, and spectators are persons. A character is *not* a real-life person but only a "paper being" (Barthes 1975 [1966]), a being created by an author and existing only within a fictional text, usually on the level of action¹⁴. An actor is the person who, in a performance, impersonates a character. Also a type of being created by a fictional text. Often the term is used just as a variation of 'character'; however, some theorists use it with specific reference to the narrator (on the level of fictional mediation). For instance, Gower is a 'narrator figure' in Shakespeare's *Pericles*.

The strangeness of Japanese Noh scenery with a rigorous traditional art that has very specific means of presenting plays, resembles to a long extent the scenic techniques of the Irish mystical traditions. In Noh theater, the reality of images are derived from this stage power of communication, since Noh drama is based on dance and song like: sarugaku, which originated in pantomimic dances at ancient festivals. The writing of Zeami, commenting on the concept of shiore as (the withering of a flower) considered to be the highest attainment of Noh actors while the term refers to an internal, almost subliminal communication between performer and

audience. Furthermore, *yugen* is described as the ultimate state of attainment in all arts consisting of elements of dance, music, imitation and the state of the mind of the performer (Armstrong 1990, p. 112).

The symbolic representations on the stage of Noh are neither imitation nor realism, but a totally stylized, symbolic representation of the essence and substance of the human experience, realized through the use of dance, music and extremely simplified, abstract movement. The importance of the relationship between audience and performers is described in *shiore* and *yugen*. Zeami was more specific in his concept "riken no ken" (the sight of remote sight) which is the essence of the performer adopting the same perspective of the performance as the audience. In addition, there is the concept of "gaken no ken" (the sight of self sight), or the sense by which the performer sees himself from his own viewpoint. In other words the performer must see himself from both objective and subjective viewpoints of the performer's self.

When a performer is able to see himself with the audience's eyes, so to speak, he has not only the same visual image as they do, but also the audience's mind and awareness. If a performer is able to see all aspects of his body from every perspective – as the audience sees it- by means of *riken no ken*, he will realize an aesthetic ideal on stage which in its balance and harmony approaches perfection (Ibid, p. 113). The symbolic nature of Noh presents a kind of ritualistic space and time for the audience where and when communication becomes a theatrical event shared by both audience and performers.

3.2.7 Nature as a Theatrical Device in Noh

Refuting the belief that tradition reflects Japan's agrarian origins and supposedly, mild climate, a clear establishment of seasonal topics to the poetry composed by the urban nobility took place in the eighth century¹⁵. Contrasted with the elegant images of nature derived from court poetry was the agrarian view of nature based on rural life. The two landscapes began to intersect in the medieval period, creating a complex, layered web of competing associations. Representations of nature and the four seasons in many genres, originated in both the urban and rural perspective: textual (poetry, chronicles, tales), cultivated (gardens, flower arrangement), material (kimonos, screens), performative (Noh, festivals), and gastronomic (tea ceremony, food rituals). This kind of "secondary nature," flourished in Japan's urban architecture and gardens, fostered and idealized a sense of harmony with the natural world just at the moment it

was disappearing (Shirane 2013, p. 5). Illuminating the deeper meaning behind Japanese aesthetics and artifacts, Shirane clarifies the use of natural images and seasonal topics and the changes in their cultural associations and function across history, genre, and community over more than a millennium. The four seasons are revealed to be as much a cultural construction as a reflection of the physical world.

Nature in the Japanese culture and literature as well is highly present even in today's technological and urbanized age. Nature is not only present in literature, painting, and traditional arts such as: *Ikibana* (flower arrangement) and tea ceremony, but in many aspects of daily life: the decoration of kimono as well as the names of colors, such as: peach color, yellow kerria.... Almost every letter in Japan begins with reference to the current season: whether it is the approaching winter's cold or the first signs of spring. The custom of seasonal greeting can be traced back to the early 8th century and the seasonal poems in the *Man yoshu* (*Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves*), many of which are elegant greetings to guests and hosts in banquets and other social occasions, the fact which reflect a shared, comprehensive, and highly encoded representation of nature in the Japanese everyday life, providing the foundation of much of Japanese literary and visual culture (Shimazaki 1987, p. 46).

The Japanese people have a long-standing and close affinity with nature, rooted in a deep and influential agricultural heritage centered on wet-field rice farming, as the climate and geography of Japan brought about a profound sensitivity to natural references. This explanation draws heavily on modern notions of national identity and hide the more complex historical differences among artistic genres, social communities, and cultural environments. Within the emergence of Ecocriticism, concepts of images of nature are constructed in different sub-cultures and institutions and are expressed through a variety of literary, cultural and social practices.

'Ecocriticism analyzes the ways in which literature represents the human relation to nature at particular points in history, what values are assigned to nature and why, and how perceptions of the natural shape literary tropes and genres. In turn, it examines how such literary figures contribute to shaping social and cultural attitudes toward the environment' (Heise 2016, p. 19)

For example: the Thirty one Syllable *Waka* stood in a dominant position from at least the 10th century and had such a far-reaching influence that by the Muromachi and Edo periods, its representations of nature had come to be identified with those of Japan as a whole. Kate Soper defines three notions of nature as they appear in Western philosophy: metaphysical, which is non-human as opposed to the human or cultural, realist, which underlies the structure, processes

and casual powers that are constantly operative within the physical world that provide the objects of study of the natural sciences, and lay in which the concept of nature is used in reference to ordinarily observable features of the world: the natural as opposed to the artificial. This latter denotes nature as it has been exploited in Japanese traditional arts regarded as the extension of the human (Soper 1986), p. 23).

The ubiquity of nature in Japanese literature is apparent in many ways. One perfect example is *The Tale of Genji* early 11th century to discover that most of the female characters, such as: Kiritsubo (Polawnia Court), Fujitsubo (Wisteria Court), Lady Aoi (Heartvine), Lady Murasaki (Lavender), Suetsumuhana (Saf-flower), Oborozukio (Misty Moonlit Evening), and Hanachirusato (Village of Scattered Flowers) are named after natural objects and phenomena, usually flowers and plants. Indeed, a fundamental scrutinization of *The Tale of Genji* requires an understanding of the literary implications and inferences of a wide variety of plants, flowers, atmospheric conditions, landscapes, animals, insects, celestial bodies that provide not only names of characters, but also characters themselves, settings, themes as well as a sophisticated literary discourse.

The Japanese nation has an inherent affinity with nature, which is one of the characteristics of the Japanese culture; Japan is an agricultural country; the Japanese are an agricultural people.... In contrast to the Westerners who fight with and conquer nature, the Japanese live in harmony with nature and desire to become one with it.

The literature that is born from such conditions naturally emphasizes unity with nature. First of all, in the ancient period Japanese poetry (Waka) emerged from a careful observation of nature, which was used to express emotions. In the Heian period, this tendency extended to prose writing. The miscellany *The Pillow Book* is an excellent example. In *The Tale of Genji*, too, nature has an important symbolic function. The medieval period produced such poets as Saigyō, who questioned the meaning of nature. The idea that nature was the source of various human endeavors resulted in recluse literature in which the writer retreated to nature. Edo period Haikai is a literary form that cannot be conceived without nature, and its strong emphasis on seasonal topics continues into modern Haiku (Abe Hajime 2000, p.26)

Perspectives of insects and fish were very emblematic in literature, especially insects known for their song in the *Haikai* poetry in the *Waka* tradition became a metaphor of everyday, gritty commoner existence in farms and cities (Shirane 2011, p.195)

Japan as a people and a nation gives natural aspects of life a sacred and honorable position. A people that lives on natural resources and under natural pressures that may cause fear like earthquakes. Japanese people considered nature very sacred like trees and mountains.... In Noh drama groves symbolize sacred places because nature can not be evil, rather it is pure and pure hearts followed nature. Thus, the creative power of life is revealed through a love for the pure, the simple and the natural (Kuritz 1988, p. 97). In Noh, nature is described in metaphors and similes rather than as actual sceneries, Noh texts are woven with lines describing, contemplating and enjoying nature. To know the meaning of hana is the most important element in understanding Noh, and it's greatest secret the presence of natural elements on Noh stage remains a mystic experience of an honorable presence, a state of transcended awareness in the actor and audience, brought about by the performance of the actor. A flower¹⁶ is used to symbolize this state.

But in chaste hearts, uninfluenced by the power
Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower
That breaths on earth, the air of paradise. (Michelangelo Buonarroti)

Understand the Flower starts by observing a flower blooming in nature, and then understanding this as a metaphor for the principle of the Flower in all things. (*Zeami 15th Century*. The growth of a flower begins with a seed, which symbolizes the desire to be present. From the seeds, roots grow into the ground, symbolizing this desire penetrating one's whole being. The stem of the flower supports the flower itself and represents tools and techniques by which the flower sacred position is established. Just as the pure and fragrant lotus flower grows out of the mud of a swamp rather than out of the clean loam of an upland field, so from the muck of worldly passions springs the pure Enlightenment of Buddhahood. Pine trees are a fixture of Noh theater, as their coniferous nature means that the same set can be used for all seasons. There's also a fake roof, in homage to the original design of Noh theater, in which plays were performed outdoors and the stage required a roof to keep the actors dry (Fenolloza and Pound 1959, p 63).

3.2.8 Aesthetics in Noh Plays

Japanese theatrical art and literature were not very sophisticated before they were influenced by the Chinese. Gradually, Japan molded Chinese culture to its own state. The Japanese impulse of Japanese art, a love of nature, produced gardens, flower arrangements and dwarf trees. The Japanese who admiring converting life into beauty, perfecting paper folding, calligraphy, tea

service, combat, and theater. To make nature into a dramatic art, the Japanese rearranged and controlled it. As the playwright Chikamatsu wrote:

When all parts of the art are controlled by restraint, the effect is moving, and thus the stronger and firmer the melody and words are, the sadder will be the impression created

Like Zen teachings, Japanese dramatic art sought to represent entities through small details. The theater artist suggested the whole world with one sharp image. The dramatic poem has to be completed by the reader. The stage settings few strokes by the viewer, the theater's sharp lines and bold colors by the audience. The structure and order that encompassed Japanese art derived from Chinese philosophy. Through careful control and Judgment Japanese theater artists set the stage for fortuitous and unexpected marvels. Only within a disciplined technique could accident have beauty; chance could not be taught. *Li* (organic pattern) is a multidimensional, subtle relationship among work's parts. Zen art, the Noh theater framed the universe in microcosm: the relationship among the items in the universe. To the Japanese artist then process of creating theatrical art was the goal. The point in music and dance was each moment rather than the end of the performance. Meaning exists not after the theatrical event, but within each small moment of the performance (Kuritz 1988, p. 103).

Noh is an organic, living system, and when a performance comes to life, the aesthetic experience can be profoundly moving. The totality of this experience is indescribable, but some of the effects of Noh can be explained by examining its aesthetics. Because of the high degree of stylization, performing Noh is not like acting in realistic Western theater. Yet both forms of theater share the ideal of the actor totally identifying with the role. The Samurai always possessed two entirely different implements of destruction. The visible and concealed weapon; these were the sword and breathing rhythm. Breathing rhythm as the implement of expression in Noh (Ortolani 1976, p. 26).

This focus on breathing rhythm is not limited to Bushido, but holds true also for many of Japanese traditional performing arts. Experts and the greatest thespians of Noh, one of Japanese most acclaimed performing arts, in particular had focused on breathing rhythm as an implement of expression for the past several hundred years. They discovered that the body expression could be altered by breathing method and succeeded in incorporating breathing rhythm as an artistic element of their aesthetic craft. Noh actors believe that in order to alter the outward expression of the body, 'we ourselves must consciously stir change in composure

of the body internal, feel the sensation of transformation while at the same time let the body itself speak as a means of expression' (Pellecchia 2011, p 32). Though this internal change may be miniscule, it can nevertheless be a powerful transformation that an audience often senses. In an instant, what seemed to be an insignificant internal change can astonishingly captivate an audience. It is at this instant that the expressive power of internal change to communicate outwardly is perfected. This discipline evolved to be of utmost importance for a Noh actor. Noh Theater, an ancient and medieval mix of dance, drama, and music. Known for its austere beauty, is both a fascinating subject of study and an extremely difficult art form (Ibid, p. 66).

One commonly repeated aphorism by Noh Theater creator Zeami is “what the actor (or musician) *does not do* is of great interest” – *senu tokoro ga omoshioki*. This idea is directly related to the use of what is known as *ma* in Japanese fine arts – a profound usage of space or silence; a moment ‘pregnant’ with possibilities. In the case of Noh Theater, this is an emotional state where nothing is being done, but the “immense presence” of emotion is felt. The inner tension of the actor in his prescribed emotional state is the thing that audiences sense in the silence of the actor. Various terms can be used to distinguish this state from other Zen arts or Zen Buddhism itself. *An-i*, the state of perfect versatility and ease, is neither inner state nor outer action exclusively (Looser 2008, p. 75). One can grasp the actor’s genuine understanding of the role and the art of Noh (*fūga-no-makoto*), which may resemble the original purity of (Zen) enlightenment (*hongaku*), or the essential nature of phenomena (*hon’i*). An actor, through mastering or creating *hana* can create in the audience an awareness of the beauty and sacredness inherent in everything (*hosomi*, *kanjaku*, and/or *ka*) most commonly created in haiku, the ‘spirit resonance’ of an artwork; how alive with *chi* (*ki*) it is (not to be confused with the Western notion of *chi* as a catch-all term referring to ‘energy’). This beauty usually has a relationship with impermanence or aging (*kokō*), while the profound activity itself is *mui-no-i*, something being done by nothing being done, containing no trace of deliberation, the sense of ‘no-sense’ (Japan: *mukan-no-kan*, in Chinese painting *hsi-pi*: “playing with the brush”; spontaneous painting after mastery of technique). Best of all is the term *mushotoku*, “without a fixed salary,” meaning doing without thought of action or end, result, or reward leading to *myōfu* – mystical experience that which is beyond all understanding and enunciation, usually created by the mature actor with *ran-i*, the fully matured state of artistic sense that comes from an intense cultivation of skill. This is what is considered the profound, “unfathomable” Japanese beauty (*yuugen*), achieved at the “sou” level of performance expressed in the term *shin-gyou-sou*.

The *shin-gyou-sou* system of describing levels of visual and musical composition in Noh is similar to the idea of gestalt in visual/aural perception. This is the *shin* level of Noh. The next level, *gyou*, makes the general organization of the work less clear (in an artistic manner) through the use of narrative, chronological reversal, and sparse instrumentation. The *sou* level of composition consists of the expressive part serving to support the ‘blank’ part, only existing to give ‘shape’ to this void. This blankness is the core of a *sou* composition, and the highest attainable level of acting, narrating, or musical performance in Noh. How one deals with the nature of a *sou* level performance involves a high degree of training, to the point where training is forgotten and the actor or flautist ‘instinctively’ uses the practiced elements to frame the *ma*. Unlike a boundary, *ma* can be created with a single note or gesture – like the single post sticking out of a shrine foundation at the Isse Grand Shrine, which is considered to symbolize an area of reverence and quiescence¹⁷. For the individual musician is not displaying his own unique style like one would in a more solo-oriented form like jazz improvisation. *Ma* becomes one’s own feeling: feeling, appropriately expressed in light of the mood of that particular performance, is the thus ground of this *ma*. Zeami discusses this in his aesthetic theories of *hana* (Ibid, p. 92).

The plays of Noh are concerned with the impermanence of life and how various beings, both natural and supernatural, deal with reality and fate. The deep emotional nuances of Noh come from the explanation and personification of various truths and their consequences in a person’s existence. Thus, the art of Noh is an art of expression through aesthetic principles of the mysteries and profundities of life. The expression of the *quality* of being sad, the inner *qualities* of sorrow, is sought in the acting and musical art of the Noh theater as the ground for all gesture and sound. And the concept of *hana* as a flowering of these qualities at the appropriate time in a play is paramount (Hume 1995, p. 106)¹⁸. In the void of *ma*, this emotional awareness is grasped internally by the audience member as the actor and the *nohkan* player create what they feel is the proper space for this realization. This spontaneous shifting of pitch, tempo, and rhythm within the cells of music is for an emotion, psychological effect and is improvised in the process of finding the suitable gesture for the specific audience, time and location of the piece. This, as a spontaneous shifting of elements, is an improvisation within traditional boundaries, but more specifically, could be considered an emotional improvisation

of notes, timing, flute or vocal pitch and shape, and pacing (though my own teacher himself did not have a singular opinion on this matter).

The aesthetic experience is so specific when dealing with the metaphor of the mask. Sakabe argues that a mimetic view of reality provides a definition of “mask” (Kamen) literally means a temporary facade that emphasizes the characteristics of the object customarily taken to be different from “the true self” (makoto no omote) (the unpainted, unfeigned face) “sugao” of the person wearing the mask (Sakabe 1976: p. 231). He challenges the conceptual poverty of this definition of “reality” as the representation of an allegedly primordial appearance. In fact, the visual aspect of the self is stressed as the self is seen in the projection of a mirror. The “frontside” is simply a sign (shirushi) of refraction that can only be perceived in its moment of “representation” (saigenzenka). The mirroring process questions the validity of the distinction between mask and face and challenges the possibility of positing a “true self” (Sakabe 1989: p. 42). The presence of a “self” as “surface” (omote, meaning both “mask” and “face”) implies the existence of a structure of “reciprocity” (sogosei) and “reversibility” (kagyakusei) that emblemizes the visual self as “something that is seen by others, that sees itself, and that sees itself as other”. This is applied to both the mask and the face, depriving them of the justificatory ground for positing any kind of differentiation.

An escape from the alienation following the realization of the absence of truth or meaning might rest with the identification of truth as a predicate (jutsugo) rather than as a subject (shugo): a dissemination of meaning that is placed from the mask of a disposal subject to the underside of its being. Zeami’s concept of “flower” (hana) : which is the prerogative of the skillful actor whose credibility comes from the “depth and mystery” (yugen) of symbolic and poetic forms rather than from his brilliant mimetic power (monomane). While losing his meaning as a subject, the persona retains it as a form upon which truth is predicated. Truth is production of meaning that cannot be meant. Rather than in a sign, truth can be recovered in the anxiety caused by the demise of meaning (Hui 2017, p. 34).

The voice plays a major role in the Greek word for “mask” (baskiano) which means “to lay a curse on somebody” or “to shield oneself from someone else’s curse”. In Japan, as well, the voice is an essential part of the mask as the Japanese verb “to curse” (norou) is related to an act of proclamation (noru), the announcement of the law (nori) in the primeval fight against chaos. The etymological roots of the Latin expression “persona” meaning to proclaim in a louder

manner, is behind the question who is in charge of this proclamation. The mask is then in charge of the announcement of the voice (Wisniewski 2016, p. 178). Reflection captures the meaning of “thinking” as “the concentration of the human mind of different surfaces (omote) and different beams of light and shade (kage). The object of reflection is identified in the indirectness of metaphorical expression that Buddhist and Taoist philosophers call “void” (ku) and “nothingness” (mu) or what is experienced within silence.

The typical manifestation of the structure of “omote” is evidently the structure of the mask and at the same time the structure of the face. The reason is that the face is also what is seen by the other, what sees itself, and what sees itself as another. That is why in Japanese the same word that is used to indicate the mask is used to indicate the face too, just like the Latin word “persona” means the person as well as originally indicates the mask (Mara 1999: p. 242)

3.3 Women and Noh in Japan

The feminine figure holds a significant place in the Noh theater, being one of the Noh plays categories dedicated entirely to women. In a great number of plays the main character is the feminine one, with a wide spectrum of ages, emotions, social statuses and principal purposes of the roles for the protagonist. Unlike Kabuki, where the male interpreter tries to imitate women, Noh offers a radically different approach, using the same interpretative technique for both masculine and feminine roles. Actually, not to imitate, but to transmit the spirit, and not to copy, but to capture the state of mind is the basis of the interpretation by the actor in the Noh theater. In Noh theater, it is more of an aesthetic than psychological procedure. (Aoki 2014, p. 4). Though Noh was strictly prohibited to women, recent tentative transgressions by women occurred widely in Japan to write and perform Noh drama.

3.3.1 When Western Literary Winds Reach the Furthest East

The confrontation of the last two polarities is still a pending subject even in the Western world, which fails to overcome a significant amount of prejudice that emphasizes male superiority in society, and has become increasingly alarming in the world inevitably referred to as “Oriental”. This fact cannot be omitted entirely as a decisive impact on the development of the so-called traditional Japanese theater where the main performer even nowadays is still the male one. Though currently Noh theater admits the creation of the feminine troupes, it should not be forgotten that the value of such performances is considered quite low among the Japanese Noh

researchers. On the other hand, Kabuki theater suffers from the official government ban on female presence from 1629, and still no actress is on the Kabuki professional stage, though the Meiji government (1868–1912) had removed the ban two hundred and fifty years later (Mackie 2002, p. 136). Traditionally, the Japanese woman lived behind closed doors during the eight centuries of military rule, and is seen as the negative, the passive, the weak, and the submissive member of the society, corresponding to her role of yin in the Chinese duality system of the world¹⁹. Abandoning her ego by the act of the wedding, the woman agrees to be an obedient wife.

Thus, obedience, passiveness, and jealousy are the main signs of traditional Japanese femininity, widely represented on the Noh stage, though this image largely differs from the image of the modern Japanese woman. Therefore, while Edo period shows some important changes in the image of women, at least on Kabuki stage and on the social stage of Japanese society, even more can be expected from the contemporary times. Usually, in the old days a woman dedicated her entire life to i.e. 家 (“the family/home”), meanwhile the man, whose role is strong, active and bright in accordance with yang, lived for the state. The male function within the family is similar to the one that shōgun holds towards the state. In other words, shōgun/man is the head of the state/family according to neo-Confucian doctrine, being this peculiar relationship between state/family practically unchanged until the end of World War II (Ward 2018, p. 121).

The military and commercial successes of Japan have been attributed by Western critics to the Japanese genius for imitation, and this very skill has been considered a discredit, as if it were somehow more admirable to imitate badly (Karatani 1993, p. 45). The literature and art of modern Japan have been open to similar attack by those who deplore any deviations from what they consider to be “the pure Japanese”. Japan was to welcome Western machinery and other material benefits while retaining unaltered the customs and philosophy of the East.

During the twenty years following the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the Japanese were occupied in learning about imitation. They built for themselves railway and telegraph systems, printed newspapers and photographs. Ordinary citizens became interested in political problems for the first time. A modern political and industrial state was taking shape, characteristically Japanese in many features of its composition, but modeled on similar institutions in the West. In literature, the changes came more slowly (Ibid, p. 133). The celebrated dramatist Kawatake Mokuami wrote a play about an English balloonist who dazzled the Japanese by descending

from the sky over Tokyo, and a leading Kabuki actor was required to pronounce a speech written in English for the play.

When the poets of the 1880s felt a need to express their emotions in terms more suitable to their age than the traditional forms permitted, they had access to a new idiom (Murakami 2006, p. 20). The first collection of English and American poems in translation was published in 1882. The choice of poems was based on the Japanese expression about reactions to life in the brave new world of the Meiji era, like: Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade*, Gray's *Elegy* and few morsels of Shakespeare.

The appearance of Natsume on the scene would in itself have represented a major event in Japanese literature, but by an unusual set of circumstances the whole of the literary world burst into an almost unprecedented period of creativity during the years 1905-1915 (Ibid, p. 130). This was the decade when some writers, like: Mori Ogai and Shimatazaki toson, who had previously enjoyed a measure of fame, produced their best works; when others like Natsume Soseki and the poet Ishikawa Takuboku, wrote all of their literary production; and when still others, like Nagai Kafu and Tanizaki Junichiro began their long, distinguished careers.

Japanese chroniclers of the literary history of the modern period divide the various authors into a large number of schools: neo-realist, Naturalist, Sensualist..., and these schools in turn are splintered into sub-sections, denoting influences and associations. Such categories are of little concern to Western readers (Ibid, p. 140). However, the passion for European literature continued, but added a greater interest in the old Japan. The conflict between the claims of East and West is particularly apparent in the works of Tanizaki Junichiro. His early productions dealt mainly with themes, which might have been suggested by the writings of Edgar Allan Poe and are characterized by a heavy tone of sadism and masochism like in his work: *A Fool's Love* (1924).

The military disasters of the thirties and forties into which the Japanese people were plunged by the ruling cliques produced almost no literature of consequence. It has only been in the end of the war in 1945 that important new writers have begun to appear in numbers. One of the writings the perfectly captured the post-war scene are the works of Dazai Osamu as well as the novels of Mishima Yukio. As European traditions are finally absorbed, not only by the novels but by the drama and poetry too, amazing renaissance of literature in Japan is to be expected, the fact, which will be one of the wonders of the modern literary world (Keene 1956, p. 28).

In modern times, social changes are also due to changes in the political landscape. The current family law was approved in 1948 after Japan's defeat in World War II. The law is based on basic human rights, human dignity, equality of sexes, and followed the footsteps of the Japanese Constitution promulgated in 1947. The main objective of this law was to reform the law of the Meiji Era family. Liberals demanded the abolition of i.e., because they believed it was violating both human dignity and equality of the sexes, while conservatives were in favor of continuing. Finally, a law that insisted that the family should be a core consisting of parents and minor children was approved. Furthermore, it stated that family members could take any of two surnames, either the husband's or the wife's surname. Practically, however, the surname of the husband is generally the one that continues to be the name of a new family. (1948 Family Register Law 2015)

After the war, Japan quickly recovered its economic capacity, and thus household consumption increased significantly. Traditional shopping rushes of appliances occur. Husbands "get married" with the company and work day and night, and meanwhile, the wives are behind doors again dedicating their time to raising children and being engaged in housework. Thus, with economic success, the division of labor is accentuated once again. Companies have replaced the ancient clans, employees thereof have replaced bushi, and Western suits have replaced traditional Japanese clothes. Fidelity to the clan has disappeared, and become the *giri* 義理 ("debt") to the company. Labor reputation of the individual, important since the days of yore, has not lost its relevance today, and with it comes the concept of social death, which is a personal disgrace and therefore the entire company's problem, so it is avoided at all costs. (Bowen 2003, p. 8).

In Japan today, there are still areas where the law does not apply, for example, in the area of traditional arts. Nonetheless, perhaps the reason is that the ancient arts, once their form was stabilized in an almost perfect condition, do not need the female presence at all, having survived without it during the passage of time. In recent times, there have been other legal improvements such as the right to use the maiden name at work after marriage, the use of different surnames between the couple and the heritage that favors the wife. Because of the declining birth rate, in 1991 the Child-Care Leave Law to support working mothers was approved. (Introduction to the Revised Child Care 2015)²⁰.

Regarding the traditional theater, however, the woman's place is still the same as in the past, being the labor reforms completely ignored. Meanwhile in Kabuki the onnagata was obliged to follow the rules established for the female members of Japanese society during the Edo period, while the woman in Noh theater was simply completely absent. The idea of the female interpreter on the Noh stage is so outstanding even nowadays, that important magazines or newspapers will discuss it. The circumstance that the female interpreters are still not allowed on the Noh professional stage on a regular basis is due to the above-mentioned relationship between the tolerance and intolerance to a certain extent, though it can be also debated that the aesthetic significance of the transformation of masculine in feminine also plays an important role in preserving the conception of the traditional Noh production.

Definitely, the main artistic and technique pattern, created by Zeami in his dissertations, is written by the male performer for the male interpreter's body and spirit. Even so, many of the Japanese traditional arts like tea ceremony or ikebana, initially introduced by the male master, with time have developed into arts shared by both men and women. In some cases, some of these arts have almost entirely become the female prerogative. Noh theater has its own path, as Kyōgen, Bunraku and Kabuki do, with the gender-related licenses and prohibitions, and in the same manner these three kinds of dramatic art leave aside the female presence on the stage (Griffiths 2014, p. 8). Once the technique of female-character impersonation by the male interpreter was established, both actors and the conservative public have rejected the innovation/reintroduction of the female performer that could destroy—in their opinion—the ideal composition originated hundreds of years ago. In no case does it mean that female interpreters have never accessed the Noh stage.

On the contrary, the feminine presence was quite important during the early days of Noh history. After the Noh world was established, with an absolutely masculine production environment, the woman took her position on the stage as a character only, once again manifesting the signs of classical Japanese femininity: passiveness, delicacy, submission, weakness, jealousy, ego, and sometimes obedience. Of course, it could be argued that the same characteristics can also appear in the masculine character in Noh, or even on the European stage, as universal human features. Nevertheless, those are always special features of an isolated character under certain conditions, and in no case can serve as gender characteristics regardless of socio-economic, educational, or religious conditions of its members, as it happened in

traditional Japan to the feminine figure, conditioned by her image built and impersonated by man on the Noh stage during the last 600 years (Madhaven 2017, p. 137).

3.3.2 ‘Cool Japan’ and Modernization: towards Writing and Performing in English

It was the private sector that took the initiative of Japanese popular culture, “until quite recently, the state was far more comfortable supporting elite cultural forms (such as Noh Theater and Tea Ceremony) than mass entertainment. In fact, despite the success of Cool Korea and the UK’s Cool Britannia in the 1990s, the Japanese government was rather slow to realize the opportunities offered by the Japanese popular culture. Recognizing the need for a national branding strategy, the government did introduce a new national policy, and established a strategic council, on intellectual property early in 2002. The Prime Minister Koizumi was one of the first to articulate the government newfound intention to capitalize on the popularity of Japanese popular culture overseas, announcing Japan’s new vision as an “Intellectual Property Nation” in February 2002 (Choo, 2012: 89) followed by an address to the diet in 2003, Thereafter, the government’s efforts were split between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) which was interested in improving Japan’s image abroad through public diplomacy, and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), which maximize the economic benefits of Japanese culture’s popularity overseas. The development of these two elements: the economic and the political can be seen in the following table:

Dates	Events
2002 March	Strategic Council on Intellectual Property established within Prime Minister ’ s Office
2003 March	Intellectual Property strategy set up under Intellectual Property Basic Law
2003 September	Prime Minister Koizumi mentions potential of Japanese popular culture in general policy speech
2004	*MOFA establishes Public Diplomacy Department representing first use of English term.
2005	First use of Cool Japan slogan for promoting industrial content
2006 April	Cool Japan starts broadcasting
2006 April	Foreign Minister makes speech on cultural diplomacy at Digital Hollywood University
2007 July	First International Manga Award presented
2008 March	Doraemon appointed first “anime ambassador”

2009	MOFA appoints three female “Kawaii” ambassadors to promote Japanese pop culture
2009	Japan Branding Strategy published
2010 June	“Creative Industries Promotion Office” set up under METI. New national growth strategy to promote a “culture-oriented industry” announced
2010 October	Liasion Council for Cool Japan Promotion set up
2011 March	“Action Plan with regard to Promoting Cool Japan” published
2011 September	New Cool Japan Logo introduced
2012 February	METI rolls out Cool Japan spring events to promote food, art and fashion.
2012 May	MOFA announces establishment of a new “command post” to unify and reinforce the promotion of the Japan brand
2012 December	Tomomi Inada chosen as first Cool Japan strategy Minister
2013 February	“Cool Japan Promotion Council” established an expert panel under the Cabinet Office
2013 March	First meeting of “Cool Japan Promotion Council” opened by Prime Minister Abe
2013 May	Second batch of economic growth strategy measures include Cool Japan program to promote Japanese pop culture abroad
2013 May	“Cool Japan Promotion Council” presents 19-point action plan with focus on food
2013 November	\$ 1billion « Cool Japan Fund » launched

Table 3.4: Development of Japanese Culture’s Popularity²¹

The popularity of the Japanese cultural elements enhanced the installation of “Cool Japan”.

The term “Cool Japan” is a generic term for the promotion of Japanese pop culture in general, the slogan itself is recent. Japanese pop culture and state policy/ideology become increasingly and explicitly linked. Japan’s image associated with enterprise society has gradually been replaced with that of “Cool Japan”. These recent discourses explain: Whether and how the consumption of Japanese media culture enhances a deeper understanding of the complexity of Japanese society and culture; whether and how it reproduces one dimensional and stereotypical views of Japan as an organic national cultural entity, and whether and how power relations operate to divide some groups and keep others intact (Kajiyama 2013, p. 123). For instance, Tokyo has been selected as the host city of the 2020 Olympic Games, which gives Japan,

through its capital city Tokyo, an opportunity to promote its positive image to the rest of the world via “Brand Nationalism”. On the other hand, a number of language learners institutions overseas has grown, Japanese food has become part of the cosmopolitan lifestyle in many parts of the world, and Japanese popular culture resources such as: anime, manga and fashion have been embraced by millions of consumers around the world.

As such, in the contemporary period of globalization, Japan has witnessed many social changes, which include issues of language and identity. With increasing mobility of people and transcultural flows in the globalized world, the idea of Japan as a monolingual, monocultural and mono-ethnic nation is becoming demythologized. Consequently, Japan is facing new challenges, not only within its geopolitical boundaries but also elsewhere beyond the borders, the fact which has been resulting in the refashioning of languages and identities (McLelland 2016, p.30).

Streger defines Globalization as ‘a set of social processes that appear to transform our present social condition of weakening nationality into one of globality’ (2009, p.10) and ‘the expansion and intensification of social relations and consciousness across world time and world space’ (Ibid, p. 9-10), but he also refers to the cultural dimension, in particular, globalization languages (Ibid, p. 100-103). His work, therefore, elucidates important relations between language, identity and globalization. Therefore English language gained a special place in Japan as well as for Japanese abroad. The new Japan’s identity is imposed on Japanese since the Meiji Era, first the economic strength of the latter half of the 20th century, and then the economic hardships of the late 1980s and 1990s as Tsurumi Kazuko writes:

In many societies the basic value orientation of the society as a whole does not change, or changes only slightly, within the lifespan of an individual. There are some societies, however, in which this fundamental value orientation of the overall group undergo a drastic change within an individual lifetime... In the latter type of society... the individual is obliged to abandon his basic set of values after childhood in favor of a new value orientation... Japan after the Meiji Restoration and after World War II happens to fall into this second category (Tsurumi 2015, p. 4)

In this drastic readjustment of values that brings to Japan the crisis in identity which operates on the social, macro level, but more importantly, on the individual micro level (Timothy Iles 2008, p. 30). Modern Japanese drama, though, has been improving since new novelists are giving their attention to the theater. A recent movement of avant-garde drama in a number of

underground theaters in Tokyo is starting a revolution, it has created nothing remarkable yet, but it is lively enough to justify hopes for the future of Japanese drama open to the worldwide audience and understandable, written in English. In a question asked by the researcher to Izumi Ashizawa, a Japanese playwright who writes in English: Is the use of English language in your play considered as a result of Japanese openness to the world especially within the introduction of 'Cool Japan' and the spread of anime industry? She said:

It is not related to "Cool Japan" concept. It is related more to the "Soft Diplomacy"--- to reach various audiences in multiple cultural backgrounds. I consider my works are consistently the act of cultural diplomacy through arts. (see appendix 4, page: 373)

In the light comic mood Teramaya's *The Seven Deadly Sins of the Countess Kikuko Odagiri* is a rather purposeless piece. It is lost in a too obvious modern Westernism and in an empty agitation of a group of women, which cannot entirely hide its lack of substance. Teramaya was more successful in the use of a Western idea in the more interesting and dramatic *La Marie Vision*, suggested by the American play *Oh Dad, Poor Dad*, and in his *Shinjuku-Arabian Nights*, then from a small scene of Brecht's *Threepenny Opera*. With the work of Shuji Terayama, who produces a couple of plays every year, the Japanese theater is beginning to find a way to express modern life through a skillful fusion of ancient and modern elements within the national field and within a combination of these with Western motives and sources (Salz 2018, p. 34). Here is the beginning of the Japanese theater of the future in English.

The tension in the tragic and the epic exaltation in which man overcomes tragedy itself is unknown in Japanese literature, and alien to Eastern thought. In the East tolerance and abstention from action are the dominant tones, the path leading to enlightenment, is in neither dominating reality nor splitting it. This originating from the passive teachings of Buddhism about existence as being without substance, without essence and without core (Janeira 2016, p. 35). During the twenty years following the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the Japanese were occupied in learning about imitation. They built for themselves railway and telegraph systems, printed newspapers and photographs. Ordinary citizens became interested in political problems for the first time. A modern political and industrial state was taking shape, characteristically Japanese in many features of its composition, but modeled on similar institutions in the West. In literature the changes came more slowly. The celebrated dramatist Kawatake Mokuami wrote a play about an English balloonist who dazzled the Japanese by descending from the sky over Tokyo, and a leading Kabuki actor was required to pronounce a speech written in English for

the play²². The first collection of English and American poems in translation was published in 1882. The choice of poems was based on the Japanese expression about reactions to life in the brave new world of the Meiji era, like: Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade*, Gray's *Elegy and few morsels of Shaespeare*.

The *Essence of the Novel* (1885) by Tsubouchi Shoyo is one of the first important critical works of the time. Tsubouchi was a student of English literature, and what he read of the aesthetic principles convinced him that great changes must take place in the writing of Japanese fiction. The first important novel of the new Japanese literature was *The Drifting Cloud* (1887-1889) by Futabatei Shimei. It is written almost entirely in colloquial. It is astonishing that within twenty years after the Meiji Restoration the imprint of the West had become so strong on Japanese society, and that any novelist caught up in the frantically rapid evolution of that society could have observed it with such detachment and humor. One work in a more traditional vein which retains its vitality is *Growing up* (1895) by the woman novelist Higuchi Ichiyo. This tale of children in the Yoshiwara, the licensed quarter of Tokyo, is closer in style to the seventeenth century novel than to works of its own day, but the sharpness of its details and its descriptions still excites the admiration of today's readers (Ibid, p. 36).

While the novel and the short story were making striking advances, the Japanese drama and poetry continued in much the same vein as before. In the case of the drama, the exigencies of theater were such no great changes were immediately possible, except occasional Western touches, whether the striking of a clock or the appearance of a character in Western dress. Within the framework of the existing dramatic arts certain steps were taken to achieve greater historical accuracy in the presentations, sometimes with ludicrous results. In the 1890s the Shimpa (or the new school) drama gained public favor with plays based on such contemporary events as the Sino-Japanese War of 1894. Shimpa, however, relied more on dramatizations of novels than on original plays, and its greatest successes were with melodramatic works. Some Western plays (including Shakespeare) were performed by Shimpa, but it was not until the foundation of new theater movements after the Russo-Japanese War that Western dramas received serious productions (Ibid, p. 37).

The poetry of the 1880s and 1890s witnessed numerous translations of European works, and in their wake Japanese poems on similar themes. The most successful of these poems, one step removed from the originals, was undoubtedly *The Song of the Autumn Wind* (1896) by Shimazaki Toson. Although clearly derived from Shelley's *ode*, it was graceful enough to

survive in its own right as a Japanese poem, and indeed marked the beginning of modern poetry in the country. It begins:

Softly the Autumn wind has come,
Rising from the western sea...

On the whole, modern Japanese drama and poetry have not been the equal of the novels, short stories and other works of prose. There are some remarkable exceptions, but one cannot escape the feeling that the drama and poetry have yet to reach their full maturity. In drama, there were many survivals of old-fashioned plots beloved of the Kabuki audiences, and the modern theater has been slow to catch on. Among the few modern plays which have won lasting popularity have been those by Kikuchi Kan, including *The Mad Man on the Roof* (1916), more recently, the play *Twilight Crane* (1949) by Kinoshita Junji won acclaim for its skillful use of Japanese folklore. However, the number of playwrights is small and most audiences seem to prefer period pieces to works on contemporary subjects (Iwabuchi 2002, p. 121).

3.3.3 Contemporary Vs. Traditional Noh Theater

The history of Japan in the 20th century tells the story of a great human experience: the rise and fall of empire, the tumult of the 15 year war waged across China, the Pacific and South East Asia, the atomic bomb and its after-math, rebuilding and repatriation, economic boom and collapse. The intellectual endeavor focalizes on the question of Japaneseness as early as the Meiji period, because of the change that occurred in Japan and rose more quickly than ever before, by defining the “self” at the individual as well as the national levels. The task was to determining the way that Japan can modernize yet with preserving its heritage (Hutchinson and Williams 2007, p.2)

The military disasters of the thirties and forties into which the Japanese people were plunged by the ruling cliques produced almost no literature of consequence. It has only been in the end of the war in 1945 that important new writers have begun to appear in numbers. One of the writings the perfectly captured the post-war scene are the works of Dazai Osamu as well as the novels of Mishima Yukio (Freeland 2007, p. 11). As European traditions are finally absorbed, not only by the novels but by the drama and poetry too, amazing renaissance of literature in Japan is to be expected, the fact which will be one of the wonders of the modern literary world.

The historical choices Japan made distinguished two different époques: the pre- and the post-war eras, a divide that demonized the past when the country was misled by a group of elites. As

a value in itself, the emperor, for them, was defined as the cultural center and the symbolic authority of the Japanese nation; Later, this cultural space was considered by Japanese as being incompatible with the modern political system of governance by a rational and codified set of laws. In fact, post-modern Japan discovered a different way of formulating its national identity²³. This link between Japan and Postmodernism arose from the intersection of a Western fascination with an imagined exteriority fused with its own fears of the unknown; and the link was forged in such a way as to exaggerate the difference between the Western self and the Japanese other and to thrust aside the material aspects of the cultural moment, interpreting them instead in terms of Japanese cultural traits (Ibid, p. 12).

The identity of Japan submitted a great influence of its inclusion into the Eurocentric modern world, the dialectic of modernity and the penetration of modern forces. Some intellectual and artistic fields, such as Chinese medicine and Buddhism were either abolished or replaced by their Western counterparts, except the field of visual arts because it has been recognized by the West as something valuable in itself. In the mid to late nineteenth century, Japanese traditional arts were discovered by Westerners searching for new aesthetic possibilities and sources of inspiration as well as a potential way out of the discomfort of rationalism of art and philosophy developed since Renaissance. Asian arts were regarded as a help to rejuvenate Western culture with new aesthetic forms and alternative intellectual and moral principles (Ernst 1974, p. 68). This Western recognition of the beauty of Japanese art had a deep and important impact on the formation of Japanese national identity in aesthetic terms, and particularly its development as an advocate of counter hegemonic revolt against what perceived as the tyrannical imposition of Western reason.

The Japanese identity is only articulable in universal terms, as a sameness in difference, as a difference and a distinction vis a vis the assumed universality of the West as Sakai Naoki argues:

Japan is defined as a specific and unitary particularity in universal terms: Japan uniqueness and identity are provided insofar as Japan stands out as a particular object in the universal field of the West. Only when it is integrated into Western universalism does it gain its own identity as a particularity. In other words, Japan becomes endowed with and aware of its “self” only when it is recognized by the West. The Japanese cultural particularists’ insistence on Japan’s peculiarity and difference from the West embodies a nagging urge to see the self from the viewpoint of the other. But this is nothing but the posing of Japan’s identity in Western terms which in turn establishes the centrality of the West as the universal point of reference. (Sakai Naoki 1997, p. 200)

This attempt to define Japan as culturally particular space was approved in advance by the West's appreciation of Japanese aesthetics as a valuable exterior commodity.

The historical significance of Japanese literature was to be found in its articulation of a critical response to modernity (Doak 1994, p. 131). Japanese chroniclers of the literary history of the modern period divide the various authors into a large number of schools: neo-realist, Naturalist, Sensualist..., and these schools in turn are splintered into sub-sections, denoting influences and associations. Such categories are of little concern to Western readers. However, the passion for European literature continued, but added a greater interest in the old Japan. The conflict between the claims of East and West is particularly apparent in the works of Tanizaki Junichiro. His early productions dealt mainly with themes which might have been suggested by the writings of Edgar Allan Poe and are characterized by a heavy tone of sadism and masochism like in his work: *A Fool's Love* (1924).

In the 20th century some experimentation took place. The Japanese theater suddenly was confronted with a society that is characterized by great changes and mad accelerations that no one has previously prepared (Tschudin 1995, p. 27). Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru produced Noh plays that had new content but adhered to traditional conventions in production, e.g. *Sanetomo* (1950), the first postwar Noh play. Mishima Yukio, on the other hand, took old plays and added new twists while retaining the old themes like *Thirst for Love* (1950) and *Kyoko's House* (1959). Many other Japanese playwrights are pioneers for treating national and international issues like feminism, racism, immigration, diaspora...through new forms of Noh drama, e.g. *Tea* (1988) by Velina Hasu Houston and *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* (2012) by Izumi Ashizawa. This latter was one of the most important female dramatic voices in Japan, manipulating the genre of Noh within modern theatrical values notably in her play *Dreams in the arms of the binding lady* (2012) which is a mixture of Japanese physical acting, unconventional puppetry and masks. The each episodes in the performance is based on Japanese spider legends. It attests that noble spirits and profound emotions are the reason behind the simplicity of Noh plays. Simplicity and naturalness in Japanese arts came from the cultural backgrounds of the arts rather the individual emotions of artists, as opposed to contemporary arts in the West, arts are infected by egotism while classical arts in Japan were created as if anonymously.

Therefore, the names of the authors are forgotten, or they did their own names by choice. Even when some names are mentioned, like: Zeami or Otoami, it is in the context of music, dance

and stage arrangements. The classic arts in Japan, Noh drama has the strongest appeal because of its spiritual and philosophical foundation. It has been developed from religious rituals practiced in the festivals of Shintoism. Prayer to attain Nirvana (spiritual peace) is, in fact, an essential element in any Noh play in which characters vary from ghosts to warriors, lady, flower, tree... That spiritual background of Noh drama made it lasting for centuries. In *Dreams in the Binding Lady* the spiritual foundation of Noh drama is the paradox of Realistic sensationalism in contemporary arts. Instead of surface, rituals and masks are greatly employed. Those devices are used to present intensified, time-honored expressions which the Roman theater tended to use too by replacing “make-up” with masks. Make up as well as masking strategies were used in the performance of the play (see appendix 6, page 389).

In her answers to a questions asked by the researcher: Natural elements, myths and legends are the essence of your play *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady*, how were you able to exploit those Japanese cultural dimensions to create a modernized Noh play?

Izumi Ashizawa claims that : Tradition Noh theater pieces consist of the theme of natural elements and legend as well. And it is our tradition to depict the aspects of nature (both symbolically and philosophically) in literature due to our animistic belief. So, it is quite natural approach for me to incorporate the elements of nature in my pieces. (see appendix 4, page: 373)

In fact, she tended to create once more heroic or grotesque types that, keeping always an appropriate distance from real life and ancient fixed notions of Noh. As for the mask, which is a fundamental device, the images created by the mask can convey those profound emotions that exist only in solitude and silence rather than in actual scenes and personages: The mask is made to reserve its feeling, and the actors wonderfully well protect themselves from falling into the bathos of the so-called realism through the virtue of poetry and prayer.

A mask never seems but a dirty face, and no matter how close you go is still a work of art; nor shall we lose by staying the movements of the features, for deep feeling is expressed by a movement of the whole body. In poetical painting and in sculpture the face seems the nobler for lacking curiosity, alert attention, all that we sum up under the famous word of the realists “vitality”. It is even possible that being is only possessed completely by the dead, and that it is some knowledge of this that makes us gaze with so much emotion upon the face of the mask. The popular arts stresses on a more complete realism, for that would be their honesty; and the

commercial arts demoralize by their compromise, their presence that ignorance can found a true theater of beauty (Pound 2009, p. 155-156)

In another question the researcher asks: To what extent you exploit the communicative functions of masks being the Japanese most powerful theatrical element in your play? The researcher answers:

All the actors were in the painted mask make-up during “*Binding Lady*”. The declamatory facial expressions also signified as another form of mask. A huge man’s mask head rolls into the space, then in the next second a floor set piece makes the shape of body, merging with the head mask and body together to establish a huge puppet in one second. Since the show consists of episodes of dreams that represent subliminal, non-linear, and illogical world, the style and approach to the mask is also unconventional in “*Biding Lady*” (see appendix 4, page: 373)

That was further illustrated by Fenollosa and Pound:

The beauty and power of Noh lie in the concentration. All elements: costume, motion, verse and music, unite to produce a single clarified impression. Each drama embodies some primary human relation or emotion; and the poetic sweetness or poignancy of this is carried to its highest degree by carefully excluding all such obtrusive elements as a mimetic realism or vulgar sensation might demand. The emotion is always fixed upon idea, not upon personality. (Fenollosa and Pound 1959, p. 69)

As for Noguchi, the eastern soul resides in the artistic production, including theater:

When the Japanese poetry joined its hand with the stage, we have the Noh drama, in which the characters sway in music, soft but vivid, as if a web in the air of perfume; we Japanese find our joy and sorrow in it. Oh what a tragedy and beauty in the Noh stage! I always think it would be certainly a great thing if the Noh drama could be properly introduced into the West; the result would be so small protest against the Western stage, it would mean a real revelation for those people who are well tired of their own plays with a certain pantomimic spirit underneath (Noguchi 2006, p. 11)

The salient feature of Noh plays that is much more appealing is its structure. Unlike a realistic mimetic play in the West, the Noh play thrives on its unity and concentration. In Vorticim an essay on imagism, published in *Fortnightly Review* in 1914 Pound said: ‘I am often asked whether there can be a long imagist or vorticist poem. The Japanese, who evolved the hokku, evolved also the Noh plays. In the best “Noh” the whole play may consist of one image. I mean it is gathered about one image. Its unity consists in one image, enforced by movement and music’ (Pound 1914, p. 371)²⁴. A complete service of life is the core aim of a Noh presentation, i.e. words and visions of life that are portrayed on the Noh stage are not segmented; they are

continuous and unified. While in Hamlet for example, a certain situation or a problem is set out and analyzed, the Noh service presents or symbolizes a complete diagram of life and recurrence. Noh plays resemble more the Greek plays as they deal with well-known legends and myths, e.g. Oedipus in Greek drama and Suma Genji in Japanese drama.

The appearance of Natsume on the scene would in itself have represented a major event in Japanese literature, but by an unusual set of circumstances the whole of the literary world burst into an almost unprecedented period of creativity during the years 1905-1915. This was the decade when some writers, like: Mori Ogai and Shimatazaki toson, who had previously enjoyed a measure of fame, produced their best works; when others like Natsume Soseki and the poet Ishikawa Takuboku, wrote all of their literary production; and when still others, like Nagai Kafu and Tanizaki Junichiro began their long, distinguished careers.

3.3.4 Japanese Women as Actors and Playwrights in the Noh Theater

According to the Noh system, the primary objective of performance consists of transmitting the feminine spirit, through the tight control of energy that the actor uses according to each role, and with the total avoidance of the naturalist procedure. The femininity in Noh is transmitted through external tangible signs such as the mask, wig, and costume, and supported by the signs of a different nature as the rhythm and the energy of the movement. Although contemporary theory has already made a great incursion in the Noh dramatic literature, the internal process of the interpreter, the reasons, and the results of the masculine attempt to temporarily become a woman on the Noh stage remain insufficiently studied. The actor adopts the feminine spirit without losing his masculine essence, and will highlight the procedures of this unique method based on the intellectual agreement with the public (Aoki 2014, p. 33).

Obviously, the concept of femininity was altering over time according to social reforms and changes. The ideal submissive woman of the Edo period (1603–1868) differs in a great manner from the Noh characters mainly composed following the aesthetic standards of femininity in the Heian (794–1159) or Muromachi (1337– 1573) period. The capricious Ono-no Komachi from *Kayoi Komachi*, the jealous Rokujō-no Miyasudokoro from *Aoi no Ue*, and the dancer girl from *Dōjōji*, terrible in her passion, do not show any sign of submission to the terrestrial man. Only praying and the fear of the spiritual and physical punishment in hell can reduce them. On the other hand, submission is also present through the characters' behavior, as one of the signs of the ultimate femininity even in these ancient times. For instance, Yuya, from the play of the

same title, is a supreme example of the obedient and delicate woman. Whereupon, even changing the femininity signs over time, the main one is the obedience and submission to the male predominating force to some extent to the present day. According to Hofstede's research (1980,p. 288), modern Japanese society is still associated with the dominant masculine factor and the massive feminine submission as main aspects of traditional gender role ideology. However, the 20th century had introduced in the masculine/feminine relationship such innovations as laws that should regulate their correlation in both the domestic and professional sphere, though the following study will highlight to what extent these laws are used in practice.

Izumi Ashizawa, an Assistant Professor of Directing and Devising at Stony Brook University, has a Master degree in English Literature from the University of the Sacred Heart of Japan and an MFA in Dramaturgy from the prestigious Yale School of Drama. She is also the Artistic Director of her own theater company, Izumi Ashizawa Performance, which explores physical storytelling with unconventional puppetry and object animation. The company values the interdisciplinary collaborative process with dancers, actors, composers, musicians, and sculptors. Based on Japanese physical performance techniques, Ashizawa's movement techniques are taught around the world, including the U.S.A., the U.K., Japan, Norway, Austria, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Romania, Poland, Turkey, Iran, Australia, the Cayman Islands, and Peru. Ashizawa directed and devised many great performances (*Mysterious Lake, The Kojiki, Minotaur, etc.*) (2007). *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* (2012) won the Medal of Honor for Cultural Excellence, given by the city of Piura, Peru (Haridy 2013, p. 115). She also received the 2010 Kennedy Center's American College Theater Festival Faculty Achievement Award for her play *Gilgamesh* (2007).

Other works include: *The Blue Rocks*, Le Morte de La Fontaine (Woodford Folk Festival, Australia), *Haoma and the Warrior* (Iran), *Zahak* (International Women Theater Festival, Iran), *iKill* (Capital Fringe Festival, U.S.A.), *Minotaur* (Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, U.S.A., and IIFUT Festival, Iran), *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* (Danza Nueva, Peru, Municipal Theatre in Piura, Peru, Municipal Theater in Trujillo, Peru, J.F.Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington DC, Capital Fringe Festival, Washington DC). Izumi Ashizawa won numerous awards including Medal of Honor for Cultural Excellence from the City of Piura in Peru, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Faculty Achievement Award Excellence in Directing and Technology, Capital Fringe Director's Award, UNESCO-Aschberg Award, IIFUT Best Performance Award,

Tehran Municipality Culture and Arts Organization Award, Australian Government Fund for the Arts, and Norwegian Cultural Fund. She is not only an amazing director but also an amazing professor, admired by students and faculty alike.

The researcher asks Izumi Ashizawa about the feminine perspective in her play *The Binding Lady* (2012), (see appendix 4, page: 374): Taking into account that women were not allowed in Japan to perform in the Noh theater, how would you consider the way you transgress this cultural dimension in your play *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* which is basically a modernized Noh play?

The playwright replied

Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady is an amalgam of Noh, Butoh, and avant-garde puppetry. It is considered a new genre of style that was inspired by Noh and other Japanese aesthetics. Thus, it is not necessarily considered to be a transgressive Noh, rather a new genre. Thus, it allows me as a woman to be a creator and performer. (see appendix 4, page: 373).

The concept of “masculinity and femininity” means mainly the handling of tolerance/intolerance. Throughout the history of world culture it can refer to religious and/or territorial causes, causes of sex (opposition woman/man), etc. However, it almost always insinuates to be inside or to be outside some established system, in other words to be able to represent the other, or of being represented by the other. Also, the one that is outside the system is the “other”, or the weak one. Hierarchies arise as a result of the recognition of differences, creating the exclusion of the “other” and nostalgia of the one where this one is free to decide the fate of others. The artistic stylings, reputation, and international acclaim of Izumi Ashizawa is that of a woman of many talents and of one who wears many hats. Izumi is a director, a performance artist, a costume designer, a puppeteer, a dramaturge, a choreographer, and she is a playwright. She employs her inspirations and passions of a Japanese Interdisciplinary artist in her works. The instinctive insights of Ashizawa can be explored in her playwriting and the origins of her visual style, the motivations of her work ethic and the personal impact of a life dedicated to art (Ibid, p. 116).

Ashizawa, one of the more significant artists in World Theater today and look closely at her 2012 work, *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady*. Ashizawa's artistic endeavors began as an eight-year-old in Tokyo where she studied calligraphy. Eventually, she came to study Noh with

the master, Kanji Shimizu of the Kanze-Ryu Noh School. Noh theater traditionally bans women from its regimen, but also teaches the importance of disseminating the form. Since moving to the US was a part of Ashizawa's plan, Shimizu accepted her as a pupil. The physical rigor and discipline she learned there are major components to her teaching and at the root of her performance philosophy. In 2002, Ashizawa devised an amalgam piece of theatre, *Medusa*, a retelling of the Greek myth through traditional Japanese performance techniques. She followed that with a second work based on Greek themes, *The Blue Rocks*, which would lay the groundwork for her internationally, as her company would eventually perform it in Romania, Iran, and Japan (Ibid, p. 117). These two works began a remarkable decade of performances, through which she has established herself as a master teacher and practitioner of what has been dubbed the "Neo-Noh Theater."

While at Yale, Ashizawa made a connection that would catapult her work to where it is today. When Tadashi Suzuki visited the school, Ashizawa was engaged as his translator. Having made an impression on the great teacher, Suzuki invited her to join him, first as his student and eventually, as his assistant. In combination with her Yale training, her knowledge of the forms of Noh, Kabuki, and Bunraku, and her work with Suzuki, she brings to any rehearsal room a cultural *mélange* that defies all intercultural performance models. Though significantly different, these models all share one commonality. They depend on making a distinction between what Patrice Pavis calls the "source" and "target" culture (Pavis 2012, p. 5). Today, various performance artists and their companies seem to signal an inevitable transcendence of these models. As the convolution of cultural signs within a work increases, the lines of demarcation, the semiotic borders between cultures that may have once brought clarity are beginning to disappear. This erasure of cultural boundaries seems to be a logical extension of the postmodern, but the cultural, formal, and political tensions we use to define the postmodern have also become harder to see. No performer has demonstrated this new formation as clearly as Izumi Ashizawa.

In 2007, after her work with Suzuki, she won the prestigious UNESCO-Aschberg Award, which took her to France, where she wrote the text for her next creation, *Zahak*, which was based on a Persian folk-tale. Ashizawa would later devise its final form in Iran, with the help of local actors, working, of course, within stringent Iranian restrictions. Eventually, she returned to Iran and devised three separate pieces under these conditions. That same year, Ashizawa entered

academia with a visiting position at the University of South Florida. There, she and her students devised what is arguably her best-known work, *Gilgamesh*. It was also the birth of her performance company. Her play *Mysterious Lake* (2015) addresses for children with lots of puppets and movement. It was inspired by *Kwaidan*. She worked also with The Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London (Haridy 2013, p. 118).

3.3.5 Dream Vs. Reality

Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady is a physical theatrical presentation based on the Japanese legend of Jyorogumo (Binding lady). Fusion of Japanese physical theater, unconventional puppetry/mask, and chanting, the show, according to critics is a triumph display of some serious artistry. The play is a nightmare in all the right ways. In turns seductive and ghastly, this dream sequence drawn from Japanese myth is an entrancing addition to the plays performance. The play is based on the legend of a spider who entices victims (she prefers human males) by turning into a beautiful lady who lures men into a quiet shack and wraps them up in a silk web. Ashizawa's ensemble of five portrays the dreams of one such web-bound victim with spellbinding grace and ingenuity. Utilizing mind-bending costumes and movement pieces, the group turns the space in theater into a surreal dream space where nothing is immutable. Like the best dreams, the play seems in its retelling too strange to be feasible. For example, at one point the ensemble merges to become a giant babbling grandmother, her robes made of woven spider's silk. In another, a man slowly unwinds the *obi* belt of a beautiful lady's *kimono*, only to find terror underneath. Without spoiling the rest of Ashizawa's dream-dances, they are impossible to believe or predict, but they are magical (Tamagawa 1980, p. 144).

The play sounds and looks just like a dream. Low blue lights hide the seams of Ashizawa's creations, cloaking her faceless ghosts and spider seductresses in the blurriness of fear and imagination. Meanwhile, the performers create a constant soundscape of creepy noises, mutters just too low to be heard clearly, and the occasional far-off scream. In keeping with its origin myth, *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* shows off a distinctly Japanese influence (Ibid, p. 145). Actors enter with the slow deliberation of *Noh* performers, heightening the suspenseful onset of new dreams. Meanwhile, *Butoh* provides a meaningful base for Horan's clawing attempts to wake up from his nightmares. At one point, there's even a *Bunraku*-style puppet show.

The play is actually a mixture of several theatrical traditions: highly trained in an amalgam of Noh, Kabuki, Suzuki and martial arts in both philosophy and practice, transmitted her technique by rehearsing with her actors in intensive workshops and also performed in the production. The actors brought intrinsic bodily techniques and ideologies to rehearsals that were antithetical to Ashizawa's approach. This collision between established cultural and performative traditions created a dialectical tension that became an animating current for a performance more powerful than anything the actors had previously experienced (Haridy 2013, p. 118).

A man character is enchanted by a beautiful string of spider web. He reaches out to touch it, but ended up being trapped in a spider web. The following scenes 1-4 are the dream of this man.

A woman character first is controlling a small spider in her hand, but later completely being taken over by the spider---and eventually transforms into spider herself, and later gives birth to a spider baby. The mode of the presentation would be Japanese ghost story.

A male traveler lost in the forest in the dark at night, and found a light afar. He approaches to the source of the light and discovers a small hut. He enters. An old woman spinning the thread. She promises him to offer a peaceful one-night sleep, but never to open the door. The man wakes up in the middle of the night. Curious about the forbidden door, he slowly slides the door just a few inches. He startles, and runs off crazily in the dark forest. What he sees was a magnificent spider and human skulls tangled with spider web. The spider turns to the open door and screams.

Then a man Far down in the water, he sees the residents of the hell, repeatedly tortured. Some in the blood pool drowning, some on the mount of needles, etc. Shaka remembers one man, Kandata, in the hell did one good things when he is alive. He saved a small spider. Thus Shaka put that same spider who was saved by Kandata at the edge of the pond. The spider releases her one thin long string. Kandata realizes it, and starts to climb up. But half way through, he realizes hundreds of other residents of the hell start to follow him, climbing through up through the spider string. Outraged, he kicks off these people below him and screams, "This is mine". Before his line finishes, the spider string breaks and Kandata, too, falls down back to the hell.

Girl A puppeteer manipulate Girl B puppet. Girl B's legs are artificial legs. No strings attached to Girl B, but act as if she is manipulated by strings. Suddenly after a while, a leg of Girl B starts to come off. Another leg of Girl B comes off. Instead, manipulation Girl A's legs become

Girl B's legs. The reversal of manipulating and manipulated with the illusion of costume and movements. Here is an approximate presentation to the plot using Pfister's diagram:

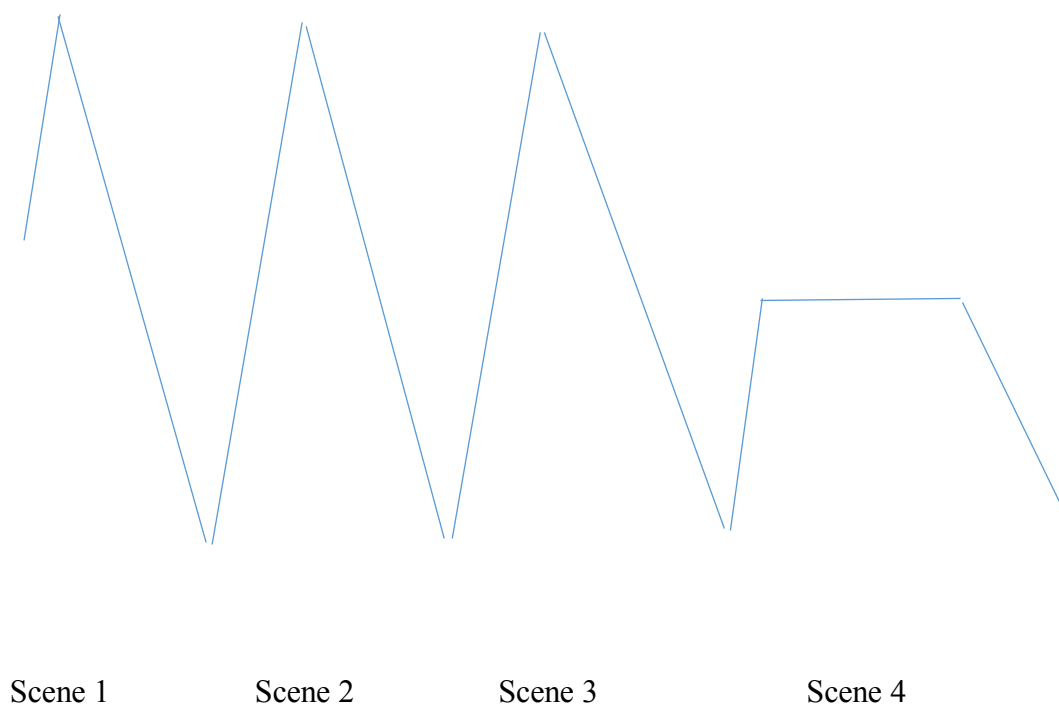


Diagram 3.4: Freytag's Diagram for *The Binding Lady*

Each scene represents a dream with different plot, climax and resolution.

The playwright was asked about the message she tended to transmit to the audience through her play *The binding Lady*:

What is the message you tend to transmit through Dreams in the Arms of the *Binding Lady* to the worldwide audience, since the play is gaining an international position being performed in many countries all over the world? She answered:

The message itself is up to the audience how to receive. Depending on each audience's cultural background, they would perceive the performance differently. I consider that my performances trigger the audience's imagination that can be applicable to any country and culture. Thus the format is open-ended and symbolic, sometimes metaphorical. I rather not to give specific answers to the audience. I would like them to think about them. They may have one answer now, but may have completely different answers and perspectives after 5 years or 10years. When we performed in "Binding Lady" in Piura, Peru, a family of audience approached us after the performance and told me that the performance triggered their memory of political oppression, and functioned as mental cleansing prices. Thus, for them, my performance functioned as Aristotlean "catharsis". (see appendix 4, page: 373).

The answer may refer to the Reader/viewer oriented approach, in which the analysis of the play relies on the differences of age, gender, social status, education, cultural background.... The use of English is a good reason to gain a wide world audience's interest in a globalized Japan. For the sake of introducing Japanese culture at the international scale. As well as going further within analysis to a new approach which is the reader's culture based approach that considers the reader's own culture to read the writer's cultural features, perspectives, and perceptions.

Between the conscious and the unconscious, The most famous and most widely discussed philosophical problem raised by dreaming is whether dreams pose a threat towards our knowledge of the external world (Whitman 1996, p. 95). The most important rival to the hallucination view of dreaming in the contemporary philosophical literature is the claim that dreams are imaginative experiences (Windt 2015, p. 287). An important reason for thinking that dreaming is relevant for theories of consciousness is that dreaming involves a profound alteration in the conditions under which conscious (in the sense of phenomenal) experience arises. Moreover, as compared to other altered states of consciousness (such as waking hallucinations or illusions) and pathological wake states (such as psychosis or neurological syndromes), dreams occur spontaneously and regularly in healthy subjects. For this reason, many regard dreams as a test case for general theories of consciousness, arguing that any theoretical account of consciousness that strives towards empirical plausibility should be able to accommodate dreaming as well.

In the last question, the playwright was asked the following question:

How did you employ the constraints of time and space on stage when you dealt with notions like: Conscious vs. Unconscious, and Reality vs. dream? So she replied:

Space and time are treated both poetically and metaphorically in "Binding Lady", so I didn't consider these elements to be constraints. Rather, they opened up different layers of poetic languages. For instance, the protagonist, a male dreamer, appears as a marionette first, then in the next second, with a help of lighting and fog, it transforms into a human version of a dreamer—signifying the shift of conscious/unconscious and realistic/ imaginary space and time. (see appendix 4, page: 373).

Since antiquity, different ways of interpreting dreams have been the main source of interest for laypeople and psychologists discussing dreaming (Artemidorus' *Interpretation of Dreams* and Freudian dream theory are two particularly prominent examples). Historically, the epistemic status of dreams and the use of prophetic and diagnostic dreams was not just a theoretical, but a practical problem (Ibid, p. 204). Different types of dreams were distinguished by their putative

epistemic value. Artemidorus, for instance, used the term *enhyption* to refer to dreams that merely reflect the sleeper's current bodily or psychological state and hence do not merit further interpretation, whereas he reserved the term *oneiron* for meaningful and symbolic dreams of divine origin. An important perspective for the future is that aside from being empirically informed, philosophical theories of dreaming should also strive to be *empirically informative*—for instance by clarifying the precise role that dreaming can play in the context of general theories of consciousness and subjectivity and by suggesting specific contrast conditions, such as the contrast between dreams and waking mind wandering, delusions, and hallucinations.

Further integrating the fields of philosophy of mind and philosophy of cognitive science with scientific sleep and dream research consequently is an important goal for the future. Many features of the dream in the play are shared with the Arab and Islamic, Jewish and christian, in which there exists three types Dreams with bodily origin, for example some dreams seen after eating heavy meals, or some dreams while the person is ill and in fever, or some dreams when the body is not in a comfortable state; although not all dreams in these cases are necessarily fake. Dreams rooted in the happenings experienced by the guy before falling asleep, say during the day or the past couples of days; or thoughts that have affected the person much so that intensely engaging his mind such that he cannot stop thinking about them (including demands and wishes or scary things or similar things) even the person may be not thinking about the subject but if the subject has affected his soul much he would recall the issue while asleep in the form of a dream. Dreams that are honest, captured by the soul during its travel in the other world. Such dreams occur mainly in some specific hours of the night. Everyone may experience such dreams. However such dreams can either be symbolic or realistic. There are some issues about why the dreams are usually symbolic (Tull 2000, p41).

During the honest dreams, people may be shown some facts about past, present or future, a context in non-definable frames of space and time, regarding themselves or others; they may be let experience some situations, and even they may encounter some examinations, while being in such dreams. mainly the honest dreams that are of "news" type, about some facts, may be symbolic or realistic, the other kind of honest dreams are almost always realistic or almost realistic. Those the story centers around based on the symbols observed is itself a science, though not an ordinary science, but anyway teachable and learn-able (Ibid, p. 42).

As for the second scene, the notion of darkness of the night, fear, forest, a traveler... all do exist in Noh drama in which traditionally the story centers around a traveler priest who encounters a

ghost in the forest.... Thus, the theme that may be developed can be associated with the spread of ghosts within the fall of the night. Light and darkness shape our perception of the world (Bach and Degenring 2015, p. 62). This is true in a literal sense, but also metaphorically: in theology, philosophy, literature and arts, the light of day signifies life, safety, knowledge and all that is good, while the darkness of the night suggests death, danger, ignorance and evil.

A closer inspection, however, reveals that things are not quite so clear cut and that light and darkness cannot be understood as simple binary opposites. On a biological level, for example, daylight and darkness are inseparable factors in the calibration of our circadian rhythms, and a lack of periodical darkness appears to be as contrary to health as a lack of exposure to sunlight. On a cultural level, too, night and darkness are far from being universally condemnable: in fiction, drama and poetry the darkness of the night allows not only nightmares but also dreams, it allows criminals to ply their trade and allows lovers to meet, it allows the pursuit of pleasure as well as deep thought, it allows metamorphoses, transformations and transgressions unthinkable in the light of day. But night is not merely darkness. The night gains significance as an alternative space, as an 'other of the day', only when it is at least partially illuminated. Safety is a central facet of nighttime lighting and an important value intertwined with urban nightscapes. While the correlation between increased lighting and increased safety is contentious, research suggests that lighting influences feelings and perceptions of safety (Kemmerer 2014,p. 353), and that feelings of fear increase at night.

The idea of hell for bad doers is present in many other cultures mainly those related with sacred books, referring to a historical rooted resemblance with Japanese cultural foundations. It stands for a fundamental principle that justifies the reason behind existence in the playwright's culture and many cultures around the world. In which hell stands as a punishment for evil deeds and install justice.

In scene four, the puppets with their string may reflect characteristics of the unconscious. Theories about the unconscious vary widely within psychological circles, from the Freudian view that it's a storehouse of socially unacceptable desires, traumatic memories, and painful emotions to cognitive psychology's perspective that the unconscious mind is simply a bundle of cognitive processes. Just as the universe is vast, the unconscious mind is powerful. To laypeople in Western cultures, the unconscious mind has been viewed as an enemy, a murky power that swooped in to sabotage our conscious desires. It became the scapegoat for every failure, mistake or unwanted reaction. More recently, people have come to

think of the unconscious mind as a tool they can consciously use to get where they want to go. They bludgeon the mind with affirmations then wonder why they are not working. Others treat the unconscious mind with a lot more respect. They believe that the unconscious has specific, important roles to play and duties to perform. They see the unconscious mind as having a wisdom of its own that should be honored. And they emphasize working *with* the unconscious rather than trying to browbeat it into submission or ignoring it (Astin 2007, p. 30).

3.3.6 Japanese Mythology and *The Binding Lady*

Throughout history, spiders have been depicted in popular culture, mythology and in symbolism. From Greek mythology to African folklore, the spider has been used to represent a variety of things, and endures into the present day with characters such Spider-Man from the eponymous comic series. It is also a symbol of mischief and malice for its toxic venom and the slow death it causes, which is often seen as a curse. In addition, the spider has inspired creations from an ancient geoglyph to a modern steam-punk spectacle. Spiders have been the focus of fears, stories and mythologies of various cultures for centuries (Doniger 2011, p. 63). In Edo period writings such as the *Taihei-Hyakumonogatari* (太平百物語) and the *Tonoigusa* (宿直草), there are "jorogumo" that shape shifts into women *Tonoigusa*. It relates the story of a young woman appearing to be about 19-20 years old who appears to a youthful warrior (bushi). She tells the child she carries "Him there surely is your father. Go forth, and be embraced" ("arenaru ha tete ni temashimasu zo. Yukite idakare yo", あれなるは父にてましますぞ。行きて抱かれよ). The warrior sees through her ploy and, realizing she is a yōkai, he strikes her with his sword, making her flee to the attic. The next day, they find a dead jorōgumo, along with numerous bodies of people that the jorōgumo had devoured.

In literature, The epic poem *Metamorphoses*, written by Ovid two millennia ago, includes the metamorphosis of Arachne. This was retold in Dante Alighieri's depiction as the half-spider Arachne in the second book of his *Divine Comedy, Purgatorio*. Considered as the earliest known work of science fiction in Western literature, the second century satirical novel, *A True Story* by Lucian of Samosata includes a battle between the People of the Moon and the People of the Earth featuring giant spiders. Spiders recur in themes for works by J. R. R. Tolkien. He included giant spiders in his 1937 book *The Hobbit* where they roamed Mirkwood attacking and sometimes capturing the main characters. The character of Ungoliant is featured as a spider-like entity, and as a personification of Night from his earliest writings. Although

described as giant spiders, Tolkien gave them fictional attributes such as compound eyes, beaks and the spinning of black webs. He also resurrected the Old English words *cob* and *lob* for "spider". More recently, giant spiders have featured in books such as the 1998 fantasy novel *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* by J. K. Rowling. This book was later followed by a motion picture of the same name, using the giant spider Aragog from the novel as a supporting character and pet of grounds keeper, Hagrid. In *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, a book about many of the creatures within the Harry Potter universe, these giant spiders are also known as Acromantulas (Warburton 2012, p. 133).

In *The Binding Lady*, the main character, which is a spider woman, is derived from the Japanese legend of "jorogumo" that shape shifts into women, the characters of the play take different characteristics: male, female, human, non-human... as in the table:

	Male	Female	Human	Non-human	Old	Young
Spider woman		×		×		×
Man 1	×		×			
Old woman		×	×	×	×	
Man 2	×		×			×
Man 3 bad doer	×		×			
A friend to man 3	×		×			
Bad doers			×			
Spider				×		
Girl 1		×		×		
Girl 2		×		×		

Table 3.5: Characterization of *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady*

Characters differ in terms of their humanity, gender and youth.

The characters in *The Binding Lady* differ from one scene to another, except for the young man who is dreaming. A man character is enchanted by a beautiful string of spider web. He reaches out to touch it, but ended up being trapped in a spider web. This is the beginning of his dream.

The best-known things about spiders are their webs. However, there are miraculous details hidden both in the web and in the silk they use to build it. The spider web is made up of load-bearing scaffolding threads and spiral capture threads laid over these and coated with a sticky substance, as well as threads binding all the threads together. The capture threads are not completely tied to the scaffolding threads. In this way the more an insect caught in the web

struggles, the more it gets stuck to the web. As the capture threads stick all over the insect, they gradually lose their elasticity, both growing stronger and stiffening. In this way the insect is trapped and immobilized. After this the prey, held by the unyielding scaffolding threads, like a wrapped-up, living food parcel, has no alternative but to wait for the spider to come and deal the final blow. In the play, the web is to trap men (Kompelien 2010, p. 24).

The beauty of the spider woman is to be visualized, as the way it is going to trap the man. Scientifically, female spider kills and eats a male one before, during, or after copulation, this is a part of the aesthetics of the visual characteristics in Noh theater as Ashizawa compares beauty taste to visualization like in the flower blossoming:

I think that is related to the concept of Japanese beauty – just like Cherry Blossoms. One of the reasons we like them is because they last such a short period of time. Cherry Blossoms bloom extremely beautifully, but it only lasts three to five days. But, because of that, they look more beautiful. When the Cherry Blossoms fall, that's also beautiful. When they do, I cry too. (see appendix 4, page: 373).

In scene 2: A male traveler lost in the forest in the dark at night, and found a light afar. He approaches to the source of the light and discovers a small hut. He enters. An old woman spinning the thread. She promises him to offer a peaceful one-night sleep, but never to open the door. The man wakes up in the middle of the night. Curious about the forbidden door, he slowly slides the door just a few inches. He startles, and runs off crazily in the dark forest. What he sees was a magnificent spider and human skulls tangled with spider web. The spider turns to the open door and screams. The traveler may refer to the priest traveler in Noh theater, who would face a ghost and later prays to be saved.

Scene 3 the dreamer is looking down the punishment of bad people, the only one good deed he did is to save a spider. Then in scene 4, the characters are merely two girls in the form of spiders presenting different movements and sounds. The tension between nature and civilization as secular culture usurps the power of religion is at the core of Ashizawa's dramatic interpretation of the story.

Different forms of characters depend on the nature of inner side of each one; spiders forms are generally female except for the last scene. The youth is an essential characteristic for the young dreamer; this may entail the reason of seduction. The old woman turns into a spider, her paroles entail wisdom too, and this is to be reflected in the light of many other cultural understandings to the spider itself in Japan. Each scene presents a specific dream in which the spider takes a

different form²⁵. In Toriyama Sekien's *Gazu Hyakki Yagyō*, it is depicted as a spiderwoman manipulating small fire-breathing spiders (Correia and Bingo 2016, p.111) .

Jorōgumo can also refer to some species of spiders, such as the *Nephila* and *Argiope* spiders. Japanese-speaking entomologists use the katakana form of *Jorōgumo* (ジョウグモ) to refer exclusively to the spider species *Nephila clavata*. The spider has symbolized patience and persistence due to its hunting technique of setting webs and waiting for its prey to become ensnared. Numerous cultures attribute the spider's ability to spin webs with the origin of spinning, textile weaving, basketry, knot work and net making. Spiders are associated with creation myths because they seem to weave their own artistic worlds. Philosophers often use the spider's web as a metaphor or analogy; and today, terms such as the *Internet* or *World Wide Web* evoke the inter-connectivity of a spider web. The spider, along with its web, is featured in mythological fables, cosmology, artistic spiritual depictions, and in oral traditions throughout the world since ancient times. Japanese mythological spider figure is the *Jorōgumo* ("prostitute spider") which is portrayed as being able to transform into a seductive woman. In some instances, the *Jorōgumo* attempts to seduce and perhaps marry passing samurai (Bornoff 1991, p. 336).

Performances with multiple channels of cultural interactions require the development of an alternate model that accounts for non-linear exchanges. Pavis located the potential for agency at the microscopic level of actor training, revealing the limitations of the hourglass model (Thomaidis and Macpherson 2015, p. 43). Fischer-Lichte rejects all theorizing which suggests a communication or translation model, cuts herself off from any productive model for exchange and renounces a semiotic (even a simply theoretical) explanation, reducing everything to the target culture' (Pavis 2012, p. 11).

Conceptualizing a theoretical framework for intercultural performance must also consider the catalytic effect of inculcating actors with new ("foreign" or "alien") techniques. This may cause the actors to question their own traditions and practices. Eugenio Barba explained this condition according to cultural anthropology: This implies a displacement, a journey, a detour strategy which makes it possible for one to understand one's own culture in a more precise way. By means of a confrontation with what appears to be foreign, one educates one's way of seeing and renders it both participatory and detached. Theater Anthropology is the study of the behavior of the human being when it uses its physical and mental presence in an organized

performance situation and according to principles which are different from those used in daily life. This extra-daily use of the body is what is called technique. (Barba et al 1982, p. 7).

These paralinguistic codes became expressive morphemes that evoked a sense of primal ritual. This is how Ashizawa learned Noh theater's Utai (chanting segment). There is no score for Noh theater. The Noh script contains symbols along with poetic text. Her actors learned in a similar way by listening and repeating with slight alterations as they became more familiar with the sounds. At the heart of Ashizawa's mode of performance are the kinesic elements derived from Japanese traditions—the rigorous movements, gestures and expressions that are rich sign-vehicles. Her actors have become fluent in a theatrical language unbounded by verbal and textual limitations. The ensemble is made up of individual artists who work together to convey the action (Elam 2003, p. 24). They speak the text through paralinguistic techniques of vocalization using distinctive non-verbal sounds, shouts and cries with variations in loudness and tempo that create a dialectical tension in conjunction with kinesis action and the proxemics relationships established through the interpersonal dynamics of actor-actor and actor-audience

According to Grotowski (1996), 'The actor who, in this special process of discipline and self-sacrifice, self-penetration and molding, is not afraid to go beyond all normally acceptable limits, attains a kind of inner harmony and peace of mind' (Cited in Wolford 1996, p. 45). These actors have the experience and desire to approach acting in a whole new way. It was not only necessary for the cast to be fully focused to concentrate on mind and body, but also the technical crew. The cast became accustomed to the concentration Ashizawa demands. When the performance was nearly ready for an audience, it was time that the technical crew was also initiated into the experience. Ashizawa initiated the crew through a rite of silence. This task was essential to the performance because of the weighty responsibility the crew had regarding the set.

3.4 Conclusion

Women, just like Izumi Ashizawa, who appeared on the stage were, in a profound sense, free. They moved differently when they were not hampered by wearing a confining kimono, and in so doing, found a greater range of movement, more mobility, and increased power. These actresses insisted on their natural femininity and in doing so differentiated themselves from the geisha and onnagata. They freed themselves from the stereotypical roles of good wife and wise mother, and wore the “New Woman” label with pride. And most paradoxically, they embodied the essentialist and expressive definition of gender and, by doing so, performed a new understanding of what it means to act like a woman in modern Japan. They realized that new challenging position even by entering the theater of Noh as playwrights and performers though Noh was banned to women in ancient times.

Notes to Chapter Three

1: Art expresses order by symbolically relating elements that seem unrelatable superficially like man and its reality. However, it does not express order only through its symbolic associations and images; it does so in its very structure.

2: Once a school established a tradition, it sought to preserve it at all costs, keeping that art within a system of communication.

3: From that time on, Zeami became the leader of the Kanze group in deed and in name and managed the group as the *shite*, who was the stage director and the protagonist.

4: In his treatises, of which the most important is the collection *Fūshi kaden* (1400–18; “The Transmission of the Flower of Acting Style,” also known as the *Kaden sho*), “flower” representing the freshness and appropriateness of fine acting—written as manuals for his pupils, Zeami said the actor must master three basic roles: the warrior, the woman, and the old person, including the singing and dancing appropriate to each.

5: According to the current head of the Konparu school, the mask was carved by the legendary regent Prince Shōtoku (572-622) over a thousand years ago.

6: In addition to *utai*, Noh *hayashi* ensemble consists of four musicians, also known as the “hayashi-kata”, including three drummers, which play the *shime-daiko*, *ōtsuzumi* (hip drum), and *kotsuzumi* (shoulder drum) respectively, and a *nohkan* flutist.

7: The classical theater, seeking to unify actors with characters, sought to unify performance with audience.

8: Noh music achieved form under Zeami’s father, Kannami, who introduced the rhythmical intonation of speech sounds to music. This made Noh movements’ relationship to music more complicated, varied and expressive.

9: Monkey music, was a form of theatre popular in Japan during the 11th to 14th centuries. It originated from “sangaku,” a form of entertainment reminiscent of the modern-day circus, consisting mostly of acrobatics, juggling, and pantomime, sometimes combined with drum dancing. The term sarugaku gave way to the current nomenclature, Noh.

10: Retrieved from: <http://factsanddetails.com/japan/cat20/sub131/item716.html>

11: Retrieved from: <http://www.the-noh.com/en/world/mask.html>

12: Chatman, Seymour, 1978. The Status of the Stage Directions. *Studies in the Literary Imagination* (p. 22)

13: Retrieved from: Chatman, Seymour, 1978. The Status of the Stage Directions. *Studies in the Literary Imagination* and Pfister.M, 1977. *The Poetics of Plot: The Case of English Renaissance Drama.*: Manchester UP. (p. 22)

14: Example: the character Hamlet in the play by Shakespeare.

15: After becoming highly codified and influencing visual arts in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the seasonal topics and their cultural associations evolved and spread to other genres, eventually settling in the popular culture of the early modern period.

16: The Golden Flower is the light. One uses the Golden Flower as a symbol. It is the true energy of the translucent great one, the Elixir of Life. It is a surprising flower, which cannot be seen and yet its fragrance cannot be hidden.

17: This idea from Zeami – *senu tokoro*: the site of undoing, unspeaking – speaks of the ‘silences’ (*ura-byoushi*) in the nohkan music that are all alluded to by *notes*.

18: The ‘flowering’ is the domain of those that create the piece, and successful performance is a personification in the artistic ritual of the quality of existence.

19: Femininity in the Middle Age is associated with the jealousy too, and therefore even nowadays the traditional feminine wedding costume includes *tsunokakushi* 角隠し (“a piece of fabric that hides the horns any woman is supposed to have”).

20: In 1999 the Basic Law on the Cooperative Participation of Men and Women in Society was enacted. Because of this law, equal participation in social activities by both sexes was promoted for the first time, and legal remedies were available to correct inequalities.

21: Kuritz, Themes in the History of Japanese Garden Art, p 209.

22: When the poets of the 1880s felt a need to express their emotions in terms more suitable to their age than the traditional forms permitted, they had access to a new idiom.

23: Emerging in the context of Japan’s nascent high consumer culture, and tending to reflect its international economic successes, this new form of identity was characterized by the so called “post-modern” cultural attributes of lightness, fragmentation and stylistic sophistication, freed from the burden of representing the meaning and content.

24: Emerging in the context of Japan’s nascent high consumer culture, and tending to reflect its international economic successes, this new form of identity was characterized by the so called “post-modern” cultural attributes of lightness, fragmentation and stylistic sophistication, freed from the burden of representing the meaning and content.

25: As for the spider *orōgumo* (Japanese Kanji: 絡新婦, Hiragana: じょろうぐも) is a type of *Yōkai*, a creature, ghost or goblin of Japanese folklore. It can shapeshift into a beautiful woman, so the kanji for its actual meaning is 女郎蜘蛛 or "woman-spider".

Chapter Four

Cross-Cultural Drama

Chapter Four: Cross-Cultural Drama

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Chapter Four: A Cross-Cultural Drama

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the selected play of *Tea* (1987) by Velina Hasu Houston shows the theatrical representation of Japanese culture in America via staging identities of Japanese women in a hybrid, intercultural and alien context. It refers to cultivating the crafts of drama in order to examine self-expression, gives voice and breaks silence. Velina Hasu Houston exploits *Tea* to unveil the true challenges of adaptation in a society where the concept of DNA plays a crucial element of considering the self and the other with keeping the traits of the soul of the Japanese culture and mythology even on a diasporic stage.

4.2 The Journey of Asian American Theater

The focus of Japanese literature outside Japan is to consider the Japanese vision to the Other and what constitutes “non-Japan”. The Japanese writer abroad experienced the Other through physical relocation and the shock of cultural difference. In his *Tales of America* 1908 Nagai Kafu did not present the West as being homogenous and no simple binary construction was given to Japan, but a multiform, many-layered constellation of dichotomies which raise many questions critically (Hutchinson, Williams 2007, p.11). Writers like: Nagai Kafu and Tanizaki Jun'ichiro were influenced by Pierre Loti, Oscar Wilde, Rudyard Kipling and several French and British writers considered by Said as Orientalists. The complicated nature of the relationship between Japan and Orientalism is portrayed in the works of Tanizaki through the Japanese perception to China as an “Orient” , introducing notions of race, gender and nation.

Race, as we all know, is a social construct, a mass fantasy in which we all participate, yet it persists as a constant material force as well as a visceral and lived reality. (Davé, Nishime, and Oren 2016, p. 16),

As Davé, Nishime, and Oren point out that race is a constructed and often very ambiguous method of identification, based on phenotypical characteristics such as skin color, eye shape, and hair color. However, race has continually been used throughout the history of the United States as a way of informing perceptions of identity and “foreignness” and as a method of both including and excluding racialized1 minority groups from full participation in American society. In fact, the first federal laws enacted in the United States in order to exclude a particular group of people were in response to Asian immigration, beginning with the Naturalization Law of 1790, which limited citizenship to “free white persons.” The last discriminatory legislation

was not removed until the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Nguyen 2018, p. 143). South Asian Americans in particular have had a complicated and confusing racial history in the United States.

The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 was the first legal measure to exclude all Asian immigration, and this attempt to bar all Asian immigration to the United States uniformly also served to redefine America's concept of "Asian," as it was expanded to include all of Asia as one undesirable category (Palumbo-Liu 1995, p. 33). In spite of the fact that during World War II the United States fought against the racist ideology of Nazism, it continued to practice racial discrimination within its borders. In fact, the United States refused naturalization rights to South Asians until 1946, due largely to the denunciation of this double standard by South Asians in the United States. In that respect, one remarkable expression said by Doshi describes the situation: 'I am tired of being told what I have to be, and I am tired of defending who I am.' (Doshi 1997, p. 34). The result was the 1965 Immigration Act, which reopened immigration for Asians to the United States, and Asians quickly became the fastest growing minority group in the U.S. This population increase, along with the Asian American political and literary movement in the late 1960s, made Asian Americans more visible to the general American public. In 1968 Asian American intellectuals formed a political movement and public struggle for racial equality that took place largely on West Coast college campuses and spread to the United States as a whole. After the initial formation of the political movement, Asian Americans became more aware of their identity as a racial group as defined both by the government and by themselves.

The term recognizes the existence and importance of Asians who are American, and challenges the pervasive assumption that Asians cannot really be from the United States, 'when the reality is that several generations of Asian people in the United States have been born and raised here or became naturalized decades ago'(Poore 2004, p. 25)¹. Frank Chin and Maxine Hong Kingston, two Chinese American writers, were instrumental in bringing attention to Asian American literature both within and outside the academy in the 1960s and 1970s, but the publication of Amy Tan's *Joy Luck Club* in 1989 brought the subject of Asian America to the attention of the mainstream public. Literary critic David Palumbo-Liu asserts that the most lasting effect of the Asian American movement may be the 'reshaping of American consciousness of ethnicity and race' (Palumbo-liu 1995, p. 307). Although awareness of minorities within Asian America is still emerging, much progress has been made in bringing

attention to the experiences of Asian Americans as a whole, and much of this progress has come through literature.

4.2.1 Dramatic Literature in the Land of Miracles

In the imagined community of America as a space of purity, so called people of color were destined to have only a shadowy existence. Of all non-white people in the U.S., the group that remained among the easiest targets for such exclusion were people of Asian descent, who by common consent are the latest comers to the U.S., the foremost being of Chinese origin, who began to arrive in the mid-19th century, and of Japanese origin, who began to arrive in the late 19th century. This fact is clearly demonstrated in the series of U. S. immigration laws, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Alien Land Law, and the Japanese Exclusion Act, as Lisa Lowe explains meticulously in her path breaking work on Asian American cultural politics titled *Immigrant Acts*. What should be noted is that, whenever we see such blatant moves to exclude people of Asian descent, some critical development is occurring either within or without the U. S. borders (Lee 2003, p. 147). Thus the 1880s, the time of the Chinese Exclusion Act stemming from the “yellow peril” phenomenon, coincides with the disappearance of the frontier and the subsequent large-scale American advancement into Asia, resulting in the first U.S. war in Asia, namely the U.S.-Philippines war in 1898. Granted that the so-called “yellow peril” syndrome, castigating people of Asian origin as invariably alien and barbarian, was due in a large measure to the threat posed by hard-working, low-waged Asian immigrants to white workers, the more significant cause was a compulsion to achieve a sense of unity on the part of mainstream America at its critical moment. Indeed, the construction of Asians as “exotic Others” was crucial in solidifying the national foundation.

With the more egalitarian Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, such blatantly discriminatory practices toward people of Asian descent seem no longer feasible. In fact, there has been a marked tendency among mainstream Americans to celebrate people of Asian origin as an exemplary ethnic group who have successfully promoted themselves to middle-class status thanks to their unusual perseverance and hard work. But this “model minority” discourse, which dumps all people of Asian origin into a readily assimilable ethnic group, can itself be a different version of the Orientalist discourse that has been prevalent throughout the century (Fukuko 2002, p. 31). Although immigrants from Asia and Americans of Asian descent have been writing in the United States since the 19th century, Asian American literature as a category

of writing only came into existence in the early 1970s. Perhaps the earliest references to "Asian American literature" appeared with David Hsin-fu Wand's *Asian American Heritage: An Anthology of Prose and Poetry*, published in 1974, and *Aiiieeee! An Anthology of Asian-American Writers*, edited by Frank Chin, Jeffery Paul Chan, Lawson Fusao Inada, and Shawn Wong, also published in 1974. Elaine Kim's seminal book of criticism, *Asian American Literature: An Introduction to the Writings and Their Social Context*, was published in 1982 and was the first critical book on the topic. Since then, the field of Asian American literature and of Asian American literary criticism has grown remarkably. But defining "Asian American literature" remains a troublesome task. Most critics who have written about Asian American literature implicitly or explicitly define it as being written by Asian Americans, and usually about Asian Americans.

In the past twenty years, the field of American literature has undergone a radical transformation. Just as the mainstream public has begun to understand America as more diverse, so, too, have scholars moved to integrate more texts by women and ethnic minorities into the standard canon of literature taught and studied. These changes can be both exhilarating and disconcerting, as the breadth of American literature appears to be almost limitless.

African	Slavery and Freedom	, Rhythms in Poetry
American →→→→→	Regional Realism	, Southern Renaissance
Literature	Becoming Visible	, Poetry of Liberation
Native American	Native Voices	
literature →→→→→	Masculine Heroes	Exploring Borderlands
	Becoming Visible	
	Exploring Borderlands	
Latino literature →→→→→	Exploring Borderlands	
	Rhythms in Poetry	, Masculine Heroes
	Migrant Struggle	, Rhythms in Poetry
	Search for Identity	
Asian American →→→→→	Migrant Struggle	, Social Realism
literature	Search for Identity	

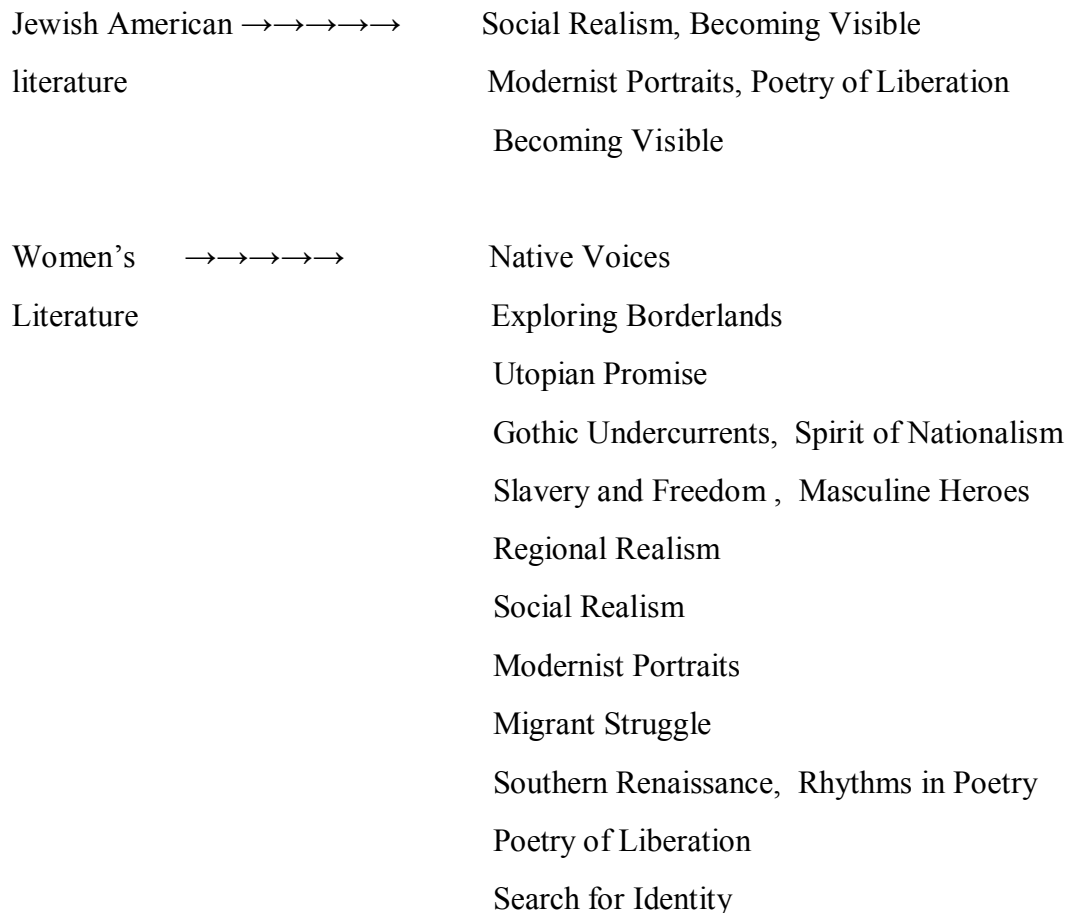


Diagram 4.1: Chronological Development of Themes in American Literature:²

American literary themes entertain racism, nationalism, regionalism, romanticism....

These themes were treated in various literary genres notably drama. As far as drama is concerned, the history of United States has affected deeply its growth and prosperity. Before the first colony was established in 1607, Spanish dramas and Native Americans tribes performed theatrical events. The drama of the pre-war period tended to be a derivative in form, imitating European melodramas and romantic tragedies, but native in content, appealing to popular nationalism by dramatizing current events and portraying American heroism. But playwrights were limited by a set of factors, including the need for plays to be profitable, the middle-brow tastes of American theater-goers, and the lack of copyright protection and compensation for playwrights. During this time, the best strategy for a dramatist was to become an actor and/or a manager, after the model of John Howard Payne, Dion Boucicault and John Brougham. This period saw the popularity of certain native character types, especially the "Yankee", the "Negro" and the "Indian", exemplified by the characters of Jonathan, Sambo and Metamora. Meanwhile, increased immigration brought a number of plays about the Irish and Germans, which often dovetailed with concerns over temperance and Roman Catholic (Beasley

2002, p. 15). This period also saw plays about American expansion to the West (including plays about Mormonism) and about women's rights. Among the best plays of the period are James Nelson Barker's *Superstition; or, the Fanatic Father*, Anna Cora Mowatt's *Fashion; or, Life in New York*, Nathaniel Bannister's *Putnam, the Iron Son of '76*, Dion Boucicault's *The Octoroon; or, Life in Louisiana*, and Cornelius Mathews's *Witchcraft; or, the Martyrs of Salem*. At the same time, America had created new dramatic forms in the Tom Shows, the showboat theater and the minstrel show.

In 1896, Charles Frohman, Al Hayman, Abe Erlanger, Mark Klaw, Samuel F. Nixon, and Fred Zimmerman formed the Theatrical Syndicate, which established systemized booking networks throughout the United States, and created a management monopoly that controlled every aspect of contracts and bookings until the turn of the 20th century, when the Shubert brothers founded rival agency, The Shubert Organization. The years between the World Wars were years of extremes. Eugene O'Neill's plays were the high point for serious dramatic plays leading up to the outbreak of war in Europe. *Beyond the Horizon* (1920), for which he won his first Pulitzer Prize; he later won Pulitzers for *Anna Christie* (1922) and *Strange Interlude* (1928) as well as the Nobel Prize in Literature. 1940 proved to be a pivotal year for African-American theater. Frederick O'Neal and Abram Hill founded ANT, or the American Negro Theater, the most renowned African-American theater group of the 1940s. Their stage was small and located in the basement of a library in Harlem, and most of the shows were attended and written by African-Americans. Some shows include Theodore Browne's *Natural Man* (1941), Abram Hill's *Walk Hard* (1944), and Owen Dodson's *Garden of Time* (1945). At ANT, many famous actors received their training there, including Harry Belafonte, Sidney Poitier, Alice and Alvin Childress, Osceola Archer, Ruby Dee, Earle Hyman, Hilda Simms, among many others (Fisher 2011, p. 19).

Date	Political/cultural events	Theater arts
1945	Second World War	European and British playwrights such as: Jean Genet, Samuel Becket, Eugene Ionesco and Harold Pinter introduce a style of theater that dealt with the anxieties of living in a post war society, which Martin

		Esslin eventually terms: “Theatre of the Absurd” in 1961.
1946	House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), created in 1938, becomes a permanent committee of the House of Representatives to investigate “Un-American” activities.	
1947	Bertolt Brecht is called to testify in front of HUAC to account for his communist allegiances, he testifies, then leaves the US to settle in Europe.	Julian Breck and Judith Malina establish the Living theater.
1950	US senator Joseph Mc Carthy begins his communist “witch-hunts” by investigating US citizens , many in the theatre industry.	Eugene Ionesco’s first play, <i>The Bald Soprano</i> (<i>The Bald Prima Donna</i>) premieres in Paris.
1953		Arthur Miller’s <i>The Crucible</i> and Tennessee William’s <i>Camino Real</i> premiere; both are reactions against Senator Mc Carthy “witch-hunts” and oppressive tactics. Becket’s <i>Waiting for Godot</i> premieres in Paris.
1954	Mc Carthy and HUAC lose credibility after Mc Carthy accuses the the US Army of communist infiltration.	
1956	Arthur Miller called to testify in front of HUAC and refuses to “name names”.	Beckett’s <i>Waiting for Godot</i> produced in the US.

		John Osborne's <i>Look Back in Anger</i> initiates a "stage revolution" in Britain.
1959		Jack Gelber's <i>The Connections</i> is one of the off-broadway plays to achieve mainstream critical attention. Edward Albee's <i>The Zoo Story</i> premieres off-broadway. Lorraine Hansberry's <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> is the first play written by a black woman to be produced on Broadway.
1960s	Political and cultural movements such as: the Women's Movement and The Black Power Movement take shape and flourish.	The Off Broadway flourishes, with theater venues such as, Café Cino and La Ma Ma E.T.C? as well as performance troops, such as: The Living Theater, The Open Theater (1963) and The Performance Group (1967).
1962	The first US combat troupes are sent to South Vietnam	
1964	US involvement in Vietnam escalates	Sam Shepard's first plays, <i>Cowboys</i> and <i>The Rock Garden</i> , produced at Theater Genesis. Le Roi Jones's <i>Dutchman and The Slave</i> premiere. Ardiene Kennedy's <i>Funny House of a Negro</i> premieres.
1965	Malcom X assassinated in New York.	The NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) is established.

		The Black Arts Movement (BAM), led by playwrights such as: Le Roi Jones, Ed Bullins and Ron Milner, begins to take shape.
1966	The National Organization for Women (NOW) is established.	The first plays to deal with the Vietnam War, Megan Terry's <i>Viet Rock</i> and Jean Claude Van Itallie's <i>America Hurra</i> , are produced.
1968	Martin Luther King is assassinated.	The 1927 theatrical censorship laws in the US, which prohibited the depiction of "sex perversion" are repealed. Similar laws (The Licensing Act of 1737) are repealed in Britain. The Performance Group produces <i>Dionysus</i> in 1969 under the direction of Richard Schenker.
1973	US troops are withdrawn from Vietnam.	
1975	Vietnam War ends when Saigon falls to the North Vietnamese. HUAC abolished.	
1976		BAM, as an organised movement, breaks up. David Mamet's <i>American Buffalo</i> premieres.
Late 1970s		The rise of Rap and Hip Hop culture in the South Bronx.
1980s and 1990s		Lisa Kron's <i>Well</i> opens at the Public Theatre, it moves to

		Broadway in 2006, earning two nominations.
2005		Will Eno's <i>Thom Pain</i> is a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. The Virginia Theater on Broadway is renamed The August Wilson Theater to be named after An African American.
2006		Sarah Jones wins a Special Tony Award for <i>Bridge and Tunnel</i> . Will's Power's Hip Hop drama, <i>The Seven against Thebes</i> , premieres at the New York Theater workshops.

Table 4 .1: Contemporary American Drama³

American theater witnessed many changes in relation to cultural and historical events.

In the late 1990s and 2000s, American theater began to borrow from cinematic and operatic roots. For instance, Julie Taymor, director of *The Lion King* directed *Die Zauberflöte* at the Metropolitan Opera. Also, Broadway musicals were developed around Disney's *Mary Poppins*, *Tarzan*, *The Little Mermaid*, and the one that started it all, *Beauty and the Beast*, which may have contributed to Times Square's revitalization in the 1990s. Also, Mel Brooks's *The Producers* and *Young Frankenstein* are based on his hit films. The period beginning in the mid-1960s, with the passing of Civil Rights legislation and its repercussions, came the rise of an "agenda" theater comparable to that of the 1930s. Many of the major playwrights from the mid-century continued to produce new works, but were joined by names like Sam Shepard, Neil Simon, Romulus Linney, David Rabe, Lanford Wilson, David Mamet, and John Guare. Many important dramatists were women, including Beth Henley, Marsha Norman, Wendy Wasserstein, Megan Terry, Paula Vogel and María Irene Fornés (Moore 1968, p. 177). The growth of ethnic pride movements led to more success by dramatists from racial minorities, such as black playwrights Douglas Turner Ward, Adrienne Kennedy, Ed Bullins, Charles

Fuller, Suzan-Lori Parks, Ntozake Shange, George C. Wolfe and August Wilson, who created a dramatic history of United States with his cycle of plays, *The Pittsburgh Cycle*, one for each decade of the 20th century.

Asian American theater is represented in the early 70s by Frank Chin and achieved international success with David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly*. Latino theater grew from the local activist performances of Luis Valdez's Chicano-focused *Teatro Campesino* to his more formal plays, such as *Zoot Suit*, and later to the award winning work of Cuban Americans Fornés (multiple Obies) and her student Nilo Cruz (Pulitzer), to Puerto Rican playwrights José Rivera and Miguel Piñero, and to the Tony Award winning musical about Dominicans in New York City, *In the Heights*. Finally, the rise of other dramatists, including Christopher Durang, Holly Hughes, Karen Malpede, Terrence McNally, Larry Kramer, Tony Kushner, whose *Angels in America* won the Tony Award two years in a row, and composer-playwright Jonathan Larson, whose musical *Rent* ran for over twelve years. Earlier styles of theatre such as minstrel shows and Vaudeville acts have disappeared from the landscape, but theater remains a popular American art form⁴. Smaller urban theaters have stayed a source of innovation, and regional theaters remain an important part of theater life. Drama is also taught in high schools and colleges, which was not done in previous eras, and many become interested in theater through this (Saddik 2007, p. 27).

4.2.2 An American Theater with an Asian Soul

Two centuries ago, many multilingual writers have questioned their credo: “a language, a nation” by their literary practice, claiming the recognition of their specificity: living between two languages means living periphery to their L1 and living marginalized to their L2 (Gasquet and Suarez 2007, p. 30). This may be applied to the Asian American theatrical context ‘...Asian American literature inhabits the highly unstable temporality of the “about-to-be,” its meanings continuously reinvented after the arrival of new groups of immigrants and the enactment of legislative changes.’ (Susan Koshy 1996, p. 315). As literary critic Susan Koshy explains, the genre of Asian American literature is constantly shifting and expanding in order to encompass writing from different Asian American ethnicities. The influx throughout history of immigrants to the United States from various parts of Asia, and the writing that emerges from their experiences, has resulted in a constantly changing Asian America, which expands and is redefined with each new ethnic group and its literature.

According to Koshy, the widening scope of Asian America and its stratified and uneven internal structure have resulted in a community of literature that is ever growing and difficult to contain within the model of a pluralized ethnic identity. In addition, she states that too often critics of Asian American literature simply include “other” Asian American literatures (Vietnamese, South Asian, Korean) according to changing Census classifications or changing numerical ratios, without taking the time to analyze historical commonalities and differences among groups. The majority of theoretical and critical analysis in the field of Asian American literature have focused on Chinese American and Japanese American texts. However, because of the shifting nature of Asian American literature and the constant emergence of new groups of ethnic literatures within the field, the current analysis has proven inadequate. As Koshy points out, this dearth of criticism has resulted in a canon-formation that prioritizes Chinese American and Japanese American texts as the “canonical” Asian American texts, while other Asian American ethnic works are viewed as “marginal” or “emergent”. In order to avoid creating hierarchies within the field by prioritizing older and more familiar forms of Asian American literature (such as Chinese American and Japanese American literature) and to give adequate representation to smaller minority groups within Asian American literature (Ibid, p. 316) Koshy argues that the field must make a concerted effort to investigate the premises and assumptions underlying our constructions of commonality and difference. The term “Asian American,” in addition to offering a group identity, allows for representation and recognition for many ethnic groups within the term. Therefore, although to discard the term “Asian American” in favor of individual ethnic groups in defining literature may not be plausible, both Koshy and Nguyen assert that, rather than perpetuate a “fictional notion of unity” among different Asian American ethnic groups, the unique contributions of each group should be fostered.⁵

Asian American theater is not the same as the immigrant theater of each Asian community, which illustrates aesthetic traditions, and narratives of the homeland. Ethnically based theater was created and in some instances continues in various Asian immigrant communities in the United States. Chinese opera and puppetry came to California and Hawaii with immigrants working in plantation and railroad industries in the mid-1800s. Various regional Chinese opera forms have again received impetus with the influx of Chinese immigrant artists in the post – 1980 liberalization of relations with China.

Asian American theater emerged in the 1960s and the 1970s with the foundation of four theater companies: East West Players in Los Angeles, Asian American Theater Workshop (later

renamed Asian American Theater Company) in San Francisco, Theatrical Ensemble of Asians (later renamed Northwest Asian American Theater) in Seattle, and Pan Asian Repertory Theater in New York City. The four companies have provided the resources and opportunities to actors, writers, directors, designers, and producers to pursue and define Asian American theater for almost four decades. By the end of the 1990s, the number of Asian American theater companies and performance groups grew to about forty. Asian American plays have appeared on Broadway and regional theaters and have received major awards both nationally and internationally. Asian American actors have used Asian American theater companies as their artistic bases while pursuing careers in the mainstream theater, film, and television. Alternative forms of theater and performance such as multimedia performance, solo performance, and spoken word have also shaped Asian American theater (Kubiak 2002, p. 157).

In the beginning, participants of Asian American theater were mostly of East Asian descent, but in the 1990s and the 21st century, more artists of Southeast Asian and South Asian backgrounds have joined the community and have made Asian American theater one of the fastest growing and changing sectors in American theater. Taking into account that Fiction, poetry, drama, essays, and other works written in English by Asian immigrants and Americans of Asian ancestry have portrayed the Asian immigrant experience as seen by themselves rather than through the eyes of American mainstream press and literature. Their early works focused strongly on the Asian American family and communal adaptations to life in America. As the Asian American community matured, its writers moved beyond the immediate immigrant experience, often featuring Asian American characters of many different ethnic backgrounds and often retaining a focus on Asia. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Chinese American immigrants were the first Asian Americans to write about their experience in English. Their primary impulse was to combat negative racist stereotypes held about the Chinese by the popular American press and literature of the day. In his autobiography, *When I Was a Boy in China* (1887), Yan Phou Lee, who converted to Christianity and immigrated to the United States to study from 1872 to 1875, sought to show that education could turn a young Chinese into a person suitable to fully participate in American society (Lee 2006, p. 9). A similar goal inspired Yung Wing's autobiography, *My Life in China and America* (1909)⁶.

As Asian American literature has matured, some authors have strived to move beyond immigrant themes and autobiographical works. In general, however, Asian American writers who have tried to do this have had limited success. For example, Cynthia Kadohata and Chang-

Rae Lee both moved away from celebrated first works that focused on immigrant Asian Americans. Lisa See, who gained literary fame with her family memoir *On Gold Mountain* (1995), triggered by the rare occurrence of her Chinese great-grandfather marrying an European American, gave her subsequent works Asian—but not necessarily Asian American— themes. Her novel *Shanghai Girls* (2009) followed her heroines from China to America during the 1950's. By the early twenty-first century, most Asian American literature still focused strongly on the Asian American immigrant experience and featured many Asian American immigrant characters. Those Asian American authors who sought alternative topics generally retained links to Asia. The crime series of Laura Joh Rowland, whose sleuth Sano Ichiro operates in seventeenth century Japan, was a noticeable example.

Kabuki dance was widespread in the Japanese communities of Hawaii and the West Coast in the early part of the twentieth century and vestiges remain in dance schools which are often loosely associated with cultural programmers' at Japanese Buddhist temples in the United States. Indian Dance theater, especially Bharata Natyam, has been common in Indian dance performances, from traditional stories like the Ramayana to the more acculturated offerings, like a Bharata Natyam Nutcracker, abound. But rather than focusing on new work for the new life, these theaters are largely attempts to continue Asian sources and introduce the next generation to the ideas of the home country. While this mode of performance generally appeals to the first generation of immigrants and may find support among the second generation, it rarely has appeal to the third generation. On the other hand, Asian American theater is about the experience of living as Americans. While some first generation artists (e.g. Tisa Chang of the Pan Asian Repertory in New York, or Yuriko Doi of Theater of Yugen in San Francisco) have become involved in this movement, it is more routinely the preserve of artistes who have been born and educated in America.

The theatrical genres pertain to American styles, from realism to Guerilla Theater to postmodernism, rather than to Asian artistic genres. The widespread emergence of Asian American voices came only with the socio-political transformations of the later era. African American and Chicano theaters, which developed along with the civil rights movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s, created a model of identity-based theater. Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Cambodian might have little in common in an Asian framework, where religion, history, politics and ethnic difference often put one group in opposition to the next; Americans of these different groups, however, saw their past conflicts as history and felt

that their treatment in America had created common ground among them. Their physical features marked them out from the Caucasian majority and, as affirmative action created an identity from the 1970s on as 'Asian American.' Artists found a common theme, namely, the reality of being a minority member of Asian descent. Companies of Asian American performers were established in major cities between the 1960s and the 1980s. East West Players in Los Angeles was established in 1965. In addition to producing classics of the American canon with all-Asian casts, the company sponsored play competitions that promoted the generation of new scripts. From the late 1960s the group fostered playwrights like Wakako Yamauchi, whose *And the Soul Shall Dance* was widely produced in the mid-1970s. This play portrayed the lonely lives of Japanese American women in the Imperial Valley agricultural community in California in the early part of the century. By the early 1970s more companies had been founded and were consciously seeking scripts that represented the Asian American experience. In New York, China-born Tisa Chang established the Pan Asian Repertory Theater, which has supported the work of many of the East Coast Asian American actors, directors and writers. In Honolulu the Kumu Kahua players at the University of Hawaii nurtured new work by Asian and Pacific islanders. In Seattle the Asian Exclusion Act (now the Northwest Asian American Theater Company) developed with Judy Nihei as founding artistic director. The Asian American Theater Company in San Francisco, with actors like Lane Nishikawa, created spaces for the work of authors such as Genny Lim and Philip Kan Gotanda. Genny Lim's *Paper Angels* (1980) deals with the experience of Chinese immigrants in the Angel Island immigration detention United States. The Angel Island Theater Company and Minna-Sama-No in Chicago are other groups that have promoted Asian American Talent.

David Hwang looks beyond ethnicity to question that the Euro-American norm is indeed the norm. He argues that authors, actors and audiences should not be constrained by ethnic identity and that the work of such artists should not be labeled Asian American theater, but be recognized as American theater. Also of importance in the 1990s is the emergence of Asian-American solo performers, Lane Nishikawa's *I'm on a Mission from Buddha* takes a comic look at growing up Asian American. Brenda Wong Aoki is a storyteller whose *Uncle Gunjaro's Girlfriend* (1998) looks at the story of her great-uncle, the first Japanese to marry a white American in California. Government cutbacks for the arts in the 1990s led some companies, like the Asian American Theater in San Francisco, to collaborative efforts with Japanese companies to fund new work. The large influxes of Asians into the United States in the last

quarter of the twentieth century brought with them some increase in immigrant theater, but for most Asian American artists the quest for representation by, for and about Asian Americans remains the core.

4.2.3 Hybridity in Asian American Literature

In a recent poem Janice Mirikitani, a Japanese American **Nisei** woman describes her sansei's daughter rebellion . The daughter's denial of Japanese American culture and its particular notions of femininity reminds the Nisei speaker that she, too, has denied her antecedents, rebelling against her own more traditional Issei mother:

*I want to break tradition- unlock this room
Where women dress in the dark
Discover the lies my mother told me
The lies that we are small and powerless
That our possibilities must be compressed
To the size of pearls, displayed only as
Passive chokers, charms around our neck*

The heterogeneity of Asian Americans is considered to be a part of a strategy destabilizing the dominant discursive construction and determination of Asian Americans as a homogenous group. Throughout the nineteenth century and early twentieth century Asian immigration to the United States was managed by exclusion acts and quotas that relied upon racialist constructions of Asians and homogenous; the “model minority” myth and the informal quotas discriminating against Asians in university admissions policies are contemporary versions of this homogenization of Asians (Lowe 2000, p. 510). In regard to the practice of “identity politics” within Asian American discourse, the articulation of an “Asian American identity” as an organized tool has provided a concept of political unity that enables diverse Asian groups to understand the unequal circumstances and histories as being related; likewise, the building of Asian American culture is crucial, for it articulates and empowers the multicultural, multilingual Asian-origin community vis-à-vis the institutions and apparatuses that exclude and marginalize Asians.

The term “Asian American” originated from the ethnic movement of the 1960s to create solidarity among the otherwise scattered constituents of the Asian American population, which

then was largely composed of Chinese and Japanese Americans along with a much smaller number of Filipino Americans. In their effort to seek ethnic self-esteem, these early practitioners of the “Asian American movement” began to seek out and express their cultural heritage, including literature, which came to be called “Asian American literature,” still hardly known to mainstream readers. Bruce Iwasaki (1972), one of the early Asian American literary critics, expressed his sigh of regret over the deplorably marginalized state of their literature in the pioneering Asian American Studies textbook titled *Roots*. The experience of Asians in America has been such a neglected area of study, there is no wonder that the literary output of Asian Americans is virtually unknown. True, there have been no Japanese American Saul Bellows; no Chinese-American Ralph Ellisons; no Filipino American Scott Momadays. But there have been, and are, noteworthy authors of Asian descent in the United States (Ibid, p. 511).

It can be difficult to escape the false metonymics in which one's race comes to stand for one's whole person. For Asian American writers, this presents a serious dilemma: can one's work be granted a certain degree of universality (reflexively offered to mainstream white writers). A system of mistaken metonymics seems to have captured the American cultural imagination, and one consequence is that individual members of ethnic or racial minority groups are often made to stand for their entire community. Hanna Fenichel Pitkin (1967, p. 175), in *The Concept of Representation*, writes, ‘Anyone who performs a function for the group may seem to be its representative, for his actions are attributed to it and binding on it. Representatives defined in this manner need not be elected ... The manner of their selection is irrelevant, so long as they become organs of the group.’ She continues, ‘rather than being the agent of an individual, the representative is seen as the organ of a group’.

Strangely, authorization for such representatives often comes from outside the represented group itself; for example, an Asian American writer is often authorized to speak collectively not by other Asian Americans, but by the white majority. Secondly, this false metonymy tends to make a person's race stand for his or her entire person. Thus an Asian American writer's Asian Americanness is the one thing needed to identify or interpret both him and his work. This metonymy is particularly troubling because of the limits it constructs: regardless of what a writer chooses to create, it will always be seen first and foremost as by, for, and about Asian Americans. Many minority writers face a choice between claiming America and maintaining their distinct racial or ethnic identity. Claiming one's status as American, insisting on aesthetic

independence from ethnicity, might affirm white cultural hegemony. On the other hand, insisting on one's ethnic uniqueness could perpetuate a diasporic existence, as one's identity is reduced to ancestral origins and marked as alien. The case of Asian Americans is particularly complicated as they are not always relegated to a marginal position.⁷

Women writers were appropriating their fellow male writers' concept of Cultural Nationalism for their own needs. The result is a sort of a woman-centered ethnic "cultural nation," a space they could claim as their own through their writing. It is, of course, to those women writers' credit that their works came to enjoy unprecedented popularity among mainstream readers. However, it should also be pointed out that they owe their success in no small measure to the particular intellectual climate of the U. S. society at the time when their works were produced. During the 1970s and 80s, there was a marked tendency among U. S. feminists to valorize so-called "history," or woman-centered historical narratives, based on the concept of the mother-daughter bond, in contradistinction to what is termed "history," based on the father-son bond, a phenomenon that helped considerably to generate the critical acclaim with which the works were received. The emphasis on the idea of "multiculturalism" prevalent since the late 1980s is no doubt another factor in accelerating the wide acceptance of these texts, since their clear-cut demonstration of their own traditional cultural legacy was exactly what the general practitioners of multiculturalism valued (Wallinger-Schorn, 2011, p. 29).

More recent Asian immigrants who arrived in the U. S. from such diverse countries as Korea, India, Vietnam, Cambodia and the Philippines during the latter half of the 20th century whose number increased drastically after the enactment of the new Immigration and Naturalization Act in 1970. Unlike the old immigrants from China and Japan during the 19th century, who were more intent on settling down in the U. S., the new immigrants of the late 20th century tend to be far more mobile. The majority are those people whom Edward Said (2001, p 33) has called the "exiles" of "our times", or diasporic subjects who, having undergone forced displacement due to a variety of causes associated with the on-going condition called "post-coloniality", and who continue their migration to whichever part of the globe that allows them to seek a better life or more opportunities (Ibid, p. 30). Hence, it is no surprise that the writers coming from this group of "diasporic writers" show a new kind of subjectivity. Hence, the important question for any writer of Asian descent in the U.S. can be how to create a space that might enable movement beyond the confines of the foregoing binaries and yet maintain some form of cultural specificity—a space that is constantly on guard against any unifying, consolidating

tendency from within, while simultaneously functioning as a cultural front from which to fight back against any exoticizing, essentializing move from without.

Heterogeneity, hybridity and multiplicity characterize the Asian American culture as part of a twofold argument about cultural politics. The ultimate aim of that argument being to disrupt the current hegemonic relationship between dominant and minority positions. Lisa Lowe (2000, p. 509) offers heterogeneity, hybridity, and multiplicity as tools to conceptualize “Asian American Differences” that challenge dominant discussions of authenticity and what it means to “be” an Asian American. She defines heterogeneity as the pluralism within the group of ‘Asian Americans’; hybridity as cultural intermixing due to (often involuntary) histories; and, multiplicity as the positioning of each individual along multiple axes of power. Lowe calls for an understanding of film and literature as agents in *producing* a pluralistic Asian American culture. Furthermore, she appropriates Gramsci’s notion of hegemony in understanding that while this culture includes dominant/racist representations of Asian/Americans, we could actively work to contest such images. Accordingly, Lowe offers examples from several literary works to illustrate the limits of positioning Asian Americans merely in terms of culture, through reinforcing narratives of East versus West in the form of parent-child tensions, as illustrative of this popular and problematic discourse in which critics must use as a point of departure.

In stressing cultural differences, Lisa Lowe intervenes in larger discourses within Asian American Studies that seek to examine an Asian American ‘identity’ which privileges commonality over differences. Centering a discourse around race, culture and/or ethnicity continually marginalizes examination of the means through which gender, class, sexuality and other differences intersect and complicate various experiences among Asian Americans. Thus, there are dangers in framing discussions around binaristic concepts such as ‘Old World,’ ‘New World,’ and other terms that seek to establish notions of concrete, static cultures based upon race. As her use of Angela Davis’s quote suggests, focus should be shifted away from people to the agenda: ‘basing the identity on politics rather than the politics on identity’ (Lowe 1996, p. 63). Lowe’s contribution is significant and transformative for imagining Asian American Studies as a critique that stresses the urgency of understanding past histories and experiences of exclusion while stressing the need to sustain this critique onto the present and into the future. Lisa Lowe’s work is also valuable for sustaining possibilities of coalition building with other scholars/activists while shifting away from identity politics (Ibid).

4.2.4 Feminism in Asian American Drama

Feminism has gradually become more far-ranging and subtle in its attacks on male-dominated society. Many injustices still need to be corrected, but equally necessary is a more down-to-earth, tolerant and compassionate view of fellow human beings. Many feminists dislike theory. Sharp intellectual categories, argumentation, seeming objectivity, and the whole tradition they grow out of are just what feminists are seeking to escape. And if their reasoning seems unsystematic they can draw support from the psychoanalysis of Lacan and Julia Kristeva, from Derrida's deconstruction, and from Rorty's view that philosophy should model itself on an edifying conversation seeking rapprochement rather than no-holds-barred gladiatorial combat.⁸

Feminist literature, as the name suggests, is based on the principles of feminism, and refers to any literary work that centers on the struggle of a woman for equality, and to be accepted as a human being, before being cast into a gender stereotype. Not all these works follow a direct approach towards this goal of equality. It is only through such media that women believed a change was possible in the way they were perceived in society. Not all feminist literature has been written by women, but also by men who understood women beyond the roles they were expected to fit into, and delved into their psyche to understand their needs and desires. Some works may be fictional, while others may be non-fictional. Having a look at the characteristics of feminist literature, would highlight a list of some of the many works of feminist literature, that make for a good read if you truly desire to learn extensively about this form of writing and what it stood for.⁹

Feminism in Asian America is a collective response to racism, sexism, cultural nationalism, and call for heterogeneity in various locations: feminist scholarship as well as organizing and activism. It aims to consider the gender and ethnicity paradigm around nexuses of race, ethnicity, gender and class in Asian America. It emerges to challenge Orientalism inflicted upon Asian women and the stereotypes American mainstreams hold of Asian American women. Contemporary Asian American feminism also attempts to extend its territory to other Asian subjects in a transnational context by including women across boundaries of race, class, and nationalities. Asian American feminism is profoundly attached to the civil rights movement, second wave feminist movement, and Asian American movement in the 1960's and throughout the 1970's when Asian American women found it urgent to interrogate marginalization of women of color in these movements and assert Asian American voices in the feminist and Asian

American studies agendas. Simply put, Asian American feminist movement arises from a conscious and strategic move to resist, interrogate, and critique the ethnocentrism of white feminism and cultural nationalism in the Asian American community (Pelaud 2011, p, 12).

In a question asked to the Playwright of *Tea*: Japanese American drama faced a big challenge to impose itself in the national canon, how can you consider the position of *Tea*? Houston replied:

The “canon,” as it often is thought about in the Western world with regards to dramatic literature, generally means, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/canon>), a “...list of works considered to be permanently established as being of the highest quality.”

There are a few subjective words in that definition. For example, what does “permanently established” mean to various groups of people? Furthermore, what does “highest quality” mean to various groups of people? There is a 17th Century English proverb, ““One man's meat is another man's poison,” popularized in the Western expression, “One man’s trash may be another’s treasure.” These sayings take into account human subjectivity. Thus, the term “canon” is complicated and cannot be exclusive of dramatic literature written by women or by people of color. It remains true, however, that many White European American scholars with regards to dramatic literature define “canon” to mean plays written mostly by White men and before the 1960s. I was presented with such a list at the University of Southern California in fall 2017 and was stunned that so little inclusivity had been embraced in creating a list of 100 plays that contemporary university students ought to read. I amended the list with the names of women playwrights and playwrights of color; they were included, but highlighted in red so that readers would know that they were an afterthought and not a part of the original formulation.

For these reasons, I know that Asian American dramatic literature continues to face challenges in being considered a part of the U.S. canon or Western canon of dramatic literature. I think that it is incorrect to say that Asian American dramatic literature must impose itself upon that canon. It is the creators of the canon itself who must think more broadly, deeply, and inclusively. Plays such as the works of Wakako Yamauchi, which came before my work in drama, deserve to be remembered. For example, her play *And the Soul Shall Dance* should be established permanently as being of the highest quality – and as representing important dimensions of U.S. history and life. While my play *Tea* is one of the most produced works about the Japanese female experience in the U.S., I never have sought to impose it upon the Western canon. As I reflect upon its position, I would surmise that many U.S. citizens, even those who considered themselves well versed in dramatic literature, probably do not know of the play. Those that do most likely relegate it to a marginalized arena – what the U.S.

often dubs as “Asian American drama,” distinguishing it from the mainstream drama that they are taught to believe is the only genuine voice – or at least the only one worthy of permanent establishment and the labeling of “highest quality” – in U.S. drama. I know that a play like *Tea* and the U.S.-Japan history that it reflects, as well as its impact on the Asian Diaspora, African Diaspora, White European Diaspora, Latinx Diaspora, and Native American Indian Diaspora, should be read and/or seen by anybody who is not a multiethnic Asian (particularly one of African descent). Whether or not *Tea* is considered to be in any Western canon – and I think it never could be because its author is both female and a multiethnic, multicultural person of color – it addresses aspects of history and identity to which an inquiring mind would want to be exposed. Moreover, Asian Americans and Asian Canadians continue to grow in number so that the North American continent should be opening itself up to stories in dramatic literature that have something important to say about life beyond the year 2000. Certainly, there are plays that do not have a lot to say, just as there are a lot of books, poetry, blogs, television, and film that do not have a lot to say. However, do not let their sparseness cause you to bypass explorations that may shed light on our shared universes.

One also has to beware the notion of “ethnic” drama versus “White” drama. U.S. society often utilizes terms such as “Black cinema,” “Black theater,” “Latino theater,” “Asian Cinema,” etc., but how often does one hear the term White cinema or White theater? I smell marginalization. I smell exclusion. U.S. society must face the fact that “U.S./American cinema” or “U.S./American theater” is no longer solely White. Any theater or cinema created in the U.S. is “U.S./American.” Ethnic terms as descriptors are fine, I suppose, but often it seems that they are being used as ways of diminishing or separating from the White mainstream. Besides, often the terms are not accurate. For example, often my work is labeled as “Asian American.” Of course, it is Asian American and Asian and Japanese, but it also is a lot of other things – African American, Latin, Native American Indian, White European American, female, and global. To not say all of those things is to reduce reality to a comfortable categorization that allows people to go to sleep at night without a sleep aid.

Tea remains an important play that I wrote when I was young to explore a part of U.S. history that was ignored by the mainstream, including by educators. When I was older, I adapted it into a musical – *Tea, With Music*, motivated by the inspiration of artistic colleague Jon Lawrence Rivera. Then I adapted it into a novel, called *Tea*. After its first workshop in 1984 at the Asian American Theater Company in San Francisco and its professional world premiere at Manhattan Theater Club in 1987, the play continues to be produced around the world. In 2013, the musical version was nominated for best book of a musical by the Los Angeles’ Ovation Awards. I think that is a first-rate journey for any play to be taking. (See Appendix 5, p. 379)

Alternative theater has been central to the development of minority theaters, including feminist theater. For instance, highly personal, theory-sensitive performance art, with its focus on embodiment (the body's social text), promotes a heightened awareness of cultural difference, of historical specificity, of racial and gender boundaries and transgressions. In reacting against patriarchal, hierarchical structures of traditional theater, feminist artists created a more egalitarian form of performance in which an individual artist would not have to depend on an authorial figure (Lee 2006, p. 111).

4.2.5 The War to Free Women

At the end of World War II, Japan was occupied by the Allied Powers, led by the United States with a contribution from the British Commonwealth Occupation Force. This foreign presence marked the first time in its history that the island nation had been occupied by a foreign power. The San Francisco Peace Treaty, signed on September 8, 1951, marked the end of the Allied occupation, and after it came into force on April 28, 1952, Japan was once again an independent country. Japan initially surrendered to the Allies on August 14, 1945, when the Japanese government notified the Allies that it had accepted the Potsdam Declaration. On the following day, Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's unconditional surrender on the radio (the Gyokuon-hōsō). The announcement was the emperor's first ever radio broadcast and the first time most citizens of Japan ever heard their sovereign's voice. This date is known as Victory Over Japan, or V-J Day, and marked the end of World War II and the beginning of a long road to recovery for a shattered Japan (Staff 2013, p. 110).

On V-J Day, United States President Harry Truman appointed General Douglas MacArthur as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP), to supervise the occupation of Japan¹⁰. Under the final plan, however, SCAP was given direct control over the main islands of Japan (Honshū, Hokkaidō, Shikoku and Kyūshū) and the immediately surrounding islands. It is unclear why the occupation plan was changed. Common theories include the increased power of the United States following development of the atomic bomb, Truman's greater distrust of the Soviet Union when compared with Roosevelt, and an increased desire to contain Soviet expansion in the Far East after the Yalta Conference. The Soviet Union had some intentions of occupying Hokkaidō. Had this occurred, there might have been the foundation of a communist "Democratic People's Republic of Japan" in the Soviet zone of occupation. However, unlike the Soviet occupations of East Germany and North Korea, these plans were frustrated by the

opposition of President Truman. The Far Eastern Commission and Allied Council for Japan were also established to supervise the occupation of Japan. Japanese officials left for Manila on August 19 to meet MacArthur and to be briefed on his plans for the occupation. On August 28, 150 U.S. personnel flew to Atsugi, Kanagawa Prefecture. They were followed by USS Missouri, whose accompanying vessels landed the 4th Marine Division on the southern coast of Kanagawa. Other Allied personnel followed (Ibid, p. 111).

On September 2, Japan formally surrendered with the signing of the Japanese Instrument of Surrender. On September 6, US President Harry S. Truman approved a document titled "US Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan". The document set two main objectives for the occupation: eliminating Japan's war potential and turning Japan into a western style nation with pro-American orientation. Allied (primarily American) forces were set up to supervise the country, and for eighty months following its surrender in 1945, Japan was at the mercy of an army of occupation, its people subject to foreign military control. At the head of the Occupation administration was General MacArthur who was technically supposed to defer to an advisory council set up by the Allied powers, but in practice did everything himself. The San Francisco Peace Treaty, signed on September 8, 1951, marked the end of the Allied occupation, and when it went into effect on April 28, 1952, Japan was once again an independent state (with the exceptions of Okinawa, which remained under U.S. control until 1972, and Iwo Jima, which remained under US control until 1968). Even though some 31,000 U.S. military personnel remain in Japan today, they are there at the invitation of the Japanese government under the terms of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan (1960) and not as an occupying force (Beachamp 1998, p. 57).

It has been argued that the granting of rights to women played an important role in the radical shift Japan underwent from a war nation to a democratized and demilitarized country. In the first postwar general elections of 1946, the unexpectedly high female voter turnout led to the election of 39 female candidates, and the increasing presence of women in politics was viewed by Americans as evidence of an improvement of Japanese women's condition. However, many scholars talk of the emphasis put at the time by Americans on Japanese women's enfranchisement as a way to disguise the imperialism endeavors behind the occupation. Some scholars also argue that Japanese feminists already had a history of seeking equal rights and that women would have gained suffrage without the occupation. Since the 1920s, the appearance of the "modern girl" (moga) and "modern boy" (mobo) saw an increase in the

number of women taking on the role of industrial and white-collar workers and consumers (Ibid, p. 111). During the 1930s, women had also started filling in for men away from home for military service, and during the war, women did not hesitate to take up arms when needed.

However, Japanese women were perceived as helpless victims of feudalistic and chauvinistic traditions who needed the guidance of the United States. American women assumed a central role in the reforms that affected the lives of Japanese women: they educated Japanese about Western ideals of democracy, and it was an American woman who wrote the Japanese Equal Rights Amendment for the new constitution. Although their efforts were genuine for the most part and did bring benefits to Japanese women, the attitude of American women took roots into imperialist and orientalist perceptions of Japan. The American women perceived themselves as "feminist agents endowed with progressive and modern ideology and practice" who had been appointed the mission of liberating Japanese women. It is also important to note that General Douglas MacArthur did not mean for Japanese women to give up their central role in the home as wives and mothers, but rather that they could now assume other roles simultaneously, such as that of worker. In 1953, journalist Ichirō Narumigi commented that Japan had received "liberation of sex" along with the "four presents" that it had been granted by the occupation (respect for human rights, gender equality, freedom of speech, and women's enfranchisement). Indeed, the occupation also had a great impact on relationships between man and woman in Japan. The "modern girl" phenomenon of the 1920s and early 1930s had been characterized by greater sexual freedom, but despite this, sex was usually not perceived as a source of pleasure in Japan. Westerners, as a result, were thought to be promiscuous and sexually deviant. The sexual liberation of European and North American women during World War II was unthinkable in Japan, especially during wartime where rejection of Western ways of life was encouraged (Bradsley 2014, p.57).

The Japanese public was thus astounded by the sight of some 45,000 so-called "pan pan girls" (prostitutes) fraternizing with American soldiers during the occupation. In 1946, the 200 wives of U.S. officers landing in Japan to visit their husbands. Both prostitution and marks of affection had been hidden from the public until then, and this "democratization of eroticism" was a source of surprise, curiosity, and even envy. The occupation set new relationships models for Japanese men and women: the practice of modern "dating" spread, and activities such as dancing, movies and coffee were not limited to "pan pan girls" and American troops anymore, and became popular among young Japanese couples. There is a note that in 1946, about 465,000 American

soldiers were stationed in Japan to disarm troops and began the occupation there (Johnson 1991, p. 73). At that time Japan witnessed a lack of men because of the civil war of 1944. Lots of women lost their husbands and all Japanese were desperately poor in the first years of the war (Johnson 1989 p. 73). With the coming of American soldiers which continue to increase until the early 1950s, it was not surprising that during this period, there were a lot of marriages between American grooms and Japanese brides. American men were interested too, to Japanese women since they were known for being good wives, obedient and faithful. They had the moral charm, slight and dainty though their eyes and eye-lids seemed strange at first, just as Johnson said: 'Yet they are often very charming...Even if she cannot be called beautiful, according to Western standards, Japanese women must be confessed pretty, pretty like a comely child, and if she is seldom graceful in the Occidental sense, she is at least in all her ways incomparably graceful: her every motion, gesture or expression, being in her own Oriental manner, a perfect thing.' (Johnson 1991, p. 78).

Compared to American women who are generally self assertive, brash and independent, Japanese women are more compliant, gentle and obedient. When American soldiers reached Japan and they found Japanese women who brought them their slippers, fixed them tea and drew them a hot bath without being asked, they thought they have arrived in a paradise for men (Ibid, p.79). However, American soldiers kept still a bad reputation in the Japanese society who were staying in their homeland, they still remembered the American bombing in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, lots of Japanese families forbid their daughters to have any relationship with Americans. On the contrary, many Japanese girls considered marriage with Americans a very good beginning of a new and better life and a true American dream.

4.3 Examining Self-Expression in *Tea*: Voice vs. Silence

In *Tea*, Velina Hasu Houston tells about the Japanese "war brides" in 1969 in Kansas, America. This is a story of Japanese women community in America, in which the main character, Himiko is one of them and their difficulties in adapting themselves among American society is unbearable.

4.3.1 Staging Identity

The issue of identity is complex, in the contemporary world; many questions are raised about frontiers and identity, migration and margins, imaginaries and exile (Shuang 2012, p. 10). To

analyze this complexity, it is helpful to look at the origins of the concept, at its most basic definitions. Identity is the distinguishing character or personality of an individual and therefore can be related to the concept of individuality. Paradoxically the Latin identities means sameness, a sameness of essential or generic character in different instances. Interpreting the first definition, especially to the words “distinguishing character” as it brings us to some theatrical terminology. In a play, the character, derived from the Greek character is conceived as the defining qualities he or she is given by the playwright. For that reason, all the elements regarding the characters of a play are biased and depend on the amount of information the author is willing to give. Properly speaking, a character is not a person but a set of written elements and cannot have an identity although she/he can present elements of identity. Furthermore the character does not have a body. Technically it is a no-body. However, in drama, contrary to the novel where the character remains a being of paper, this “no-body” will gain substance. It will appear on stage, move and talk, love and die, all in front of an audience. To exist materially, the character has to be embodied by an actor who himself or herself accepts to put his or her own identity aside while on stage. Actors ‘necessarily fill the gaps left by characters’ (Ryngaert and Sermon, 2006, p.20). The stage director will also influence the formation of the character by making cultural and aesthetic choices. But most importantly, it is the audience that will participate in this process by giving a personal and emotional response to the characters, giving consistency to the character’s identity.

A body to progress into a space with specific aesthetic references and a voice to articulate the text. A safe conclusion will be to posit that the character is born out of the representation and the confrontation with an audience: it is no longer a virtual, disjointed being but begins to appear more as a person. Following Artaud’s intuition and Brecht’s prescriptions, many playwrights became suspicious of the traditional character and its closed subjectivity. In post dramatic theater, drama does not stand as a mirror of reality anymore and this directly affects the character. In fact the subject as a character is generally conceived as a virtual individual but is also thought of as based on a real person. This definition is no longer acceptable. On the contemporary stage, neither inter-subjective relationships nor intra-subjective relationships are simple. Not only does the subject have difficulty communicating, he also barely recognizes himself as a self. Authors such as Valère Novarina, Noëlle Renaude or Philippe Minyana, moved away from the concept towards ideas of figure, void or vestige, generating a fragmented subject (Weltman 1991, p. 70).

The word “person” is derived from the Latin *personae* — a character in a drama, a mask — thus restoring the initial conundrum about the possibility of an identity on the theater stage. Theater, perhaps more than any other art form, provides a fascinating field of analysis because it is built upon the constant tension between nothingness and presence. The migrant as a theatrical character is particularly interesting because her/his identity is based on fragments of identity: she/he evolves on the threshold of two societies, the one she/he left and the one she/he is trying to inhabit. This fundamental in-betweenness generates a dynamic process: her/his identity is mobile. As for defining identity as sameness, the theorist Anne Ubersfeld (1996) does not pretend to resolve this ontological issue but proposes to look at it from an alternative angle. From the beginning of her book, *Lire le théâtre III: Le dialogue de théâtre*, she argues that any theatrical statement is produced by two speakers, the author and the character, and is received by two addressees, because although the character of theater addresses another character, it also addresses, and even especially addresses, the spectator. Ubersfeld (1996, p.21) defines this phenomenon as *la double énonciation*, a double statement contained in all plays. In my personal opinion, the double énonciation has two implications. First it instigates a new sense of balance between all the participants, resulting in a sense of sameness, and of oneness that occurs during the time of the performance. Theater is a place in the social world where an emotional community is born (Lavender 2016, p.59).

In a town near a military base in Kansas, four Japanese women, all post-war emigrants with American servicemen husbands, meet at the home of a fifth, Himiko, who has shot herself. The four women have differences of background, temperament, outlook, and status, and two are widows. During the meeting, they clean and tidy the house, drink tea together, and come to a difficult accommodation with each other. Himiko is present as a spirit, gradually reconciling herself to her fate and death. As they undergo their rite of passage, the women "transform" to their past selves in Japan, to their husbands, and to their own children, so that the playwright through these techniques creates a full and complex portraiture of the women coming to terms with their cultural limbo in a largely alien society. At the climax, the tragic circumstances behind Himiko's suicide are fully revealed in a moving epiphany.

Himioko is the protagonist in *Tea* which is the final play of a trilogy based on Houston's family. The first trilogy is: *Morning has Broken, Asa Ga Kimashita*, which tells about her Japanese mother's decision to marry an African American, Native American Indian G.I and leave her ancestral home. The second trilogy is *American Dreams*. *Tea* concludes the series, reaching

beyond immediate autobiography to encompass a community of Japanese women, one of whom is based on Houston's widowed mother (Uno 1993, p. 155). In her playwright's notes for *Tea*, Houston writes:

My passion for these Japanese international brides is both personal and political. An Amerasian born of America's first war with Asia, I am the daughter of one such Japanese woman and an American soldier who was half Native American Indian and half African American. My creative exploration of my family history, though born of artistic and personal passion, are nevertheless historical because they document history- the Japanese war brides and the Japanese American experience- that otherwise must have been lost to the mainstream history that Japan has side-stepped and about which America never knew and never care. (Houston in Uno 1993, p. 155).

In *Tea* Houston focuses on Himiko, a Japanese woman, who cannot adapt to her new life in America, unlike Houston's mother. The women of *Tea* come from different classes and cultural backgrounds within Japan and have married equally diverse American men (Uno, 1993: 157). Houston said that *tea* in the play, was not tea in Japanese ceremonial sense, but the ritual of everyday life. It means that tea here means the relationship with the other people and how close it is- that every single person perhaps has his own taste of tea, e.g: green tea, hot tea, milk tea..., which means they have their own lives. In fact, tea describes which type of relationship each person has with others. Himiko, the main character in *Tea* loses that kind of relation with all persons around her, even with herself. She experiences the bitterness of alienation and felt rejected by her family in her homeland, by her husband and daughter in America where she hoped having a better life, and even rejected by herself. The fact that has led her to murder her husband and commit suicide. In one way or another, women in *Tea* represent the Japanese women in America who 'have endured immigration detention centers, cultivated the earth, married in hopes of a brighter future, toiled at demeaning jobs in order to survive, or simply attempted to live an independent life.' Their actions, confined mostly to personal decision, only cumulatively contribute to a sense of triumph. (Uno 1993, p. 2).

The researcher asked the playwright about the value of the genre of drama in attaining her goal: Would you explain how the genre of drama made you voiceful in a multi racist context: being a woman, Japanese and Black; she answered:

For me, the correct term for an individual who has many ethnicities is "multiethnic." In my case, given the fact that my parents were from different countries, I also am multicultural. Even though I wrote my first play when I was eleven years old, the year that my father died, I do not know why I became interested

in writing plays. There were no writers on my mother's side of the family in Japan, except for a distant uncle who was lethally poisoned at a banquet celebrating his journalistic promotion. On my father's side, there were no writers, but my father told me that there was an Irish relative who was a singer. While my cultural identities foreground my Japanese and Black ancestries, I also am Blackfoot Pikuni Indian, Cuban, and, I have learned, a little bit Irish and Scottish, but I think that may have come from U.S. slavery plantations and the rape of Black slave women. I also am female, which is another identity marker in the U.S. and, I daresay, other nations. So, the desire to write plays is one that that I must consider with regards to my literary voice. The second thing that I have to consider is the unlikelihood of a multiethnic, multicultural, female voice finding ground and making progress in a Western theatre world that is largely patriarchal and White European. That I would have two plays Off-Broadway right out of graduate school (*Tea* at Manhattan Theatre Club and *American Dreams* at the Negro Ensemble Company) rendered me a bit speechless. Having grown up in U.S. schools that marginalized immigrant families, neither did I expect that two Off-Broadway institutions would embrace my work nor that these productions would be the fountainhead for a viable literary career. As I reflect upon my writing, I know that my background – both ethnically and culturally – enriched my outlook with an organic interest in what happens when a new entity enters an established arena. That could be a new person in the neighborhood, a new person in a new family, or a new person in a new country. I innately was interested in the impact of a new environment on an individual who simply wants to survive. That thread is present in almost everything that I write. Perhaps, beyond my multi-ethnicity, multiculturalism, or female-ness, that is something to which many can relate. Perhaps that is why my very different voice sustains in the theatre.

In Japanese culture the serving of tea has far more significance than mere quenching of thirst. Many in Japan see tea as an aesthetic pursuit, and the ceremony of preparing and sipping it as a spiritual practice. In Velina Hasu Houston's widely seen 1987 play *Tea*, the beverage has additional symbolism for a circle of Japanese-born women who came to the U.S. as brides of American servicemen soon after World War II. Long estranged from each other, the women reunite around the teapot to mourn the death of one of their own and rediscover a common, complex bond. Presiding over the tea party is a ghost in a tattered kimono: Himiko Hamilton has not only taken her own life, but also murdered her abusive American husband and lost her cherished adolescent daughter. Chizuye, the widow of a Mexican-American man, has avidly pursued cultural assimilation and independence - to the point of requesting instant coffee over green tea. Setsuko, the widow of a black military man (and based on Houston's own mother), and Atsuko, the wife of an Asian-American, have clung to more of the old Japanese ways. All endured racism and struggled to re-define themselves in a new land. Himiko clearly had it

roughest: a Tokyo cabaret waitress, her immigrant journey resulted in a brutal marriage and eventual madness. The least defined character (and the one with the shakiest accent) is Fujikawa's Teruko. The ensemble is solid enough to make meaningful the compassion and recognition the women finally extend to one another. In the end, there is sympathy to go along with the tea.

4.3.2 The Feminist Shadow

Houston observes that the Asian American woman playwright is compelled "to mime her soul" and express the angst, fear, and rage that oppression has wrought while maintaining her relationship with America as a good citizen. The plays are rich with cultural and political substance and have a feminist concern about women's spirit, intellect, and lives. They portray Asian and Asian American women who challenge the cultural and sexual stereotypes of the Asian female. Yamauchi's two plays deal with how easily a country can dishonor its citizens. *Tea* presents disappointment, a pervading sense of a broken promise and a lost dream as implies the end of scene three, where Himiko tells the audience, contrary to Setsuko's optimistic memory, that they never had "it". *Tea* paints a picture of Japanese victimization and the crushing, unjust force of Western ignorance towards people whose only crime was looking especially different, especially identifiable as a potential enemy. Houston reveals in the play that many young Japanese women wanted to leave their war-torn, broken homeland—the dream was rotting before their youth-bright eyes, and running into the arms of the victors seemed glamorous, savvy, and promising.

But on a personal level, instead of finding prosperity and romance, the "war brides" largely discover a new kind of struggle in marriage due to isolation, prejudice, and abuse, and even the women in supposedly content marriages seem silly at best to their children:

Teruko: My mother doesn't worry about anything except my dad. When she starts licking the bottom of his shoes and gets that look in her eye,

(mimicks her mother doing this) I can say, "Mom, hi, I'm going to join the Marines, become a lesbian, screw the football team." She'd just say,

(imitates mother's accent) "Okay, Linda. That's good. Have to fix dinner for sugar pie now.)

Although Himiko's tragedy "explodes", everyone suffers—some women fester, sensing that they will never be fully accepted by their neighbors, while others carry the heavy load of widowhood, facing a double sense of loneliness on the strange plains of Kansas. The play's five women are all individuals, all facing personal struggles and exhibiting different personalities, but they are also a microcosm of a much larger community of war brides brought back to something much different than what they had imagined: refusal of service on the basis of mixed marriage, being relegated to Kansas for the same reason, the million winks and nods received every day, accompanying any minor errand.

However, although the play's political message is important for its ability to capture, within five women, so many thousands of experiences, the individual voices are themselves equally political in a different way. While Asian men are certainly a minority in American culture, Asian women are a double minority and a double silence if minorities have historically been ignored by the mainstream, women have certainly also been until very recently, and the West often fetishizes the Asian woman as submissive, pliant, delicate, and always quiet. Asian men may be seen as a kind of second-class version of masculinity, but Asian women are a kind of caricature of woman's general submissive stereotype, and for this reason, Houston's decision to give the voice to female, Asian American women is intriguingly subversive (Mason and Gainor 2001, p. 139).

Furthermore, it is important to note Houston's decision not to include separate actors for the roles of the husbands and children, we are given these important perspectives, but they are pronounced *through* the women. This seems especially important in the former case; since the traditional view of women is that of submission to their husbands, and particularly since the West has historically been so fascinated by the idea of the silent geisha serving her man, the idea that the men are only given voice through the bodies, imaginations, and memories of their wives is almost shocking. The theme of disappointment, perhaps achieving its climax in Himiko's affirmation "No, we didn't. We never had it. All we had filtering through our fists was the powder left when a dream explodes in your face", is crucial in eclipsing the possibility of a too-neat, too-resolved ending. Besides, the end of the play, we are left with comfort through community, but it is not a trite, happy ending; there is certainly an important realization of the need to support one another instead of fragmenting for the sake of assimilation, but the fact that the dream is dead forces us not allow a veneer to form over the past. The ending is progress,

certainly—but it is progress with its eyes wide open, looking back towards its crusted-over sore, still feeling it and finally giving a voice to both victim and afflicter.

Japanese women are known by their famous way of wearing a kimono clad and their bowing, which is a form of respect to all the people around them including their husbands. Sumiko Iwao in her book, *The Japanese Women*, said: ‘Americans cannot understand how Japanese women tolerate the blatant sexual discrimination evident in their society’ (Iwao 1993, p. 3). In Japanese society, women’s role is considered to be housewives, managing and arranging their homes to obtain their self-esteem, stability and prosperity teachings of the Japanese society and its government, thus Japanese women tend to go with the flow as said in Japanese: (*agare ni mi o makaseru*) (Ibid, p. 4). Generally saying, the value system that guides Japanese women is reactive (Iwao, 1993: 8) meaning that their behaviors come as a response to others treatment. Japanese women are pragmatic, they don’t care to achieve equality or struggle to have a better status. They fail in their childhood to learn how to think independently (Ibid, p. 9). This portrays the Sumiko added that: ‘Japanese women, however, consider their own happiness is to be closely tied to that of their families, so much that they will restrain their personal feelings to an extent that an American woman might not be able to tolerate’. (Ibid, p. 10) i.e: they are very happy and honored when they succeed to have a good and harmonious family as Sumiko mentioned also, ‘women handle the family relations in the community, affairs related to their children education, and home management, also enriching the family through their cultural pursuits...’ (Ibid, p. 14).

There are three striking differences between the older generation of Japanese women who were born before 1935: the first postwar generation born between 1946 and 1955 and the younger generation born between 1960 and 1969 (Ibid, p. 19). Women of the older generation were brought up by their parents with pre-war values, being taught to maintain the household after getting married and to respect the superior status of men and the inferior status of women. The ideal model for them is to be (good wife and a wise mother). Women in the first post-war generation; however, started to think of sexual equality as an obligation. (Ibid, p. 20). They began to reject the values and lifestyle of the previous generation because they considered such way of life as being outmoded and undesirable. This Japanese stereotype implies no more obeying husbands and no more doing what they like. Comparing to the previous generations, younger generations of Japanese women had different lifestyles, they starts to apply equality

with men, earn some money and live independently. They learned to anticipate the action and not to be always in the position of reaction to others (Ibid, p. 266-267).

Houston explores a Japanese woman's interracial romance in postwar Japan and the influence of traditional patriarchy on the lives of Japanese women. Although the term "feminism" was not invented until the 1880s, reform movements aiming to improve women's lives emerged early in the nation's history. At the end of the Revolutionary War, women lived under far more constraints than men. In slavery, to be sure, neither men nor women had rights. But in the free white population, women, governed by the doctrine of coverture, laws defining the status of women during marriage, were transferred from paternal guardianship to their husbands' rule when they married, with no legal access to property, education, children, occupations. Female education was rudimentary at best. Still, marriage was women's most reasonable choice because (except for widows) if unmarried, women had to live in their parents' homes, work as servants in other people's homes, or go into the sex trade. In fact the play *Tea* centers on the struggle of a woman for equality, and to be accepted as a human being, before being cast into a gender stereotype and follow a direct approach towards this goal of equality so that women believed a change was possible in the way they were perceived in society (Blanchard 2011, p. 30).

4.3.3 Alienation and a Cup of *Tea*

The play shows how alienation is a kind of disease which can be experienced by anyone in the world. Alienation is not an easy problem. Because if someone experiences it, the effects on his or her life can be the worst thing coming up in human's mind. The effects might be dangerous physically and psychologically, because an alienated person has the tendency to hurt him/herself, and psychologically, as a matter of fact, an alienated person generally is a person mastered by his or her behaviours in order to fulfil the social forces surrounding him or her. In *Tea* Houston focuses on Himiko, a Japanese woman, who cannot adapt to her new life in America. She experiences the bitterness to another all her life long. When she was still in Japan, her mother-land, she has felt rejected by her parents and her environment. She goes to America and marries an American hoping to have a better life there, but unfortunately, she is rejected there, even by her husband and daughter, till she decides to murder her husband and commits suicide.

Human is a social being who needs to have communication with other people to survive, help and be helped each other, that is why human cannot live without his or her society or people

around him or her. i.e. without having interact with other people, human is nothing and nearly he cannot survive. (Fromm 1955, p. 35). She experiences both personal alienation as mentioned in Erick Fromm, *The Sane Society*, and social alienation as mentioned in Joseph K. Davis, *Man in Crisis: Perspectives on the Individual and his World*. Alienation is about relationship with people and to oneself. According to Fromm, an alienated person will be slave to one partial striving in him or her, which is projected into external aims, by which he or she is possessed. (Fromm 1955, p. 114). Alienation is the noun of the verb to alienate meaning to lose or destroy the friendship, support, sympathy... (Growther 1995, p. 29). However, according to Fromm, in *The Sane Society*. An alienated person is the one who feels that he is strange and not considered by his society, he is mastered by his acts and consequences, thus he is a half or completely out of touch with himself as with any other person (Fromm 1995, p. 111).

Psychologically, being alienated means feeling depressed, loneliness, frustrated and insignificant. Fromm said that those kinds of feeling can make someone completely isolated and lead to mental disintegration to come to death (Fromm 1955, p. 34). According to Davis, an alienated person who experiences a deeper emotional problem will lose his or her primary feelings extremely and does not know how they feel. In short, what matters to him or her is only whether he or she has the right attitude toward something (Davis 1970, p. 296-297). An alienated person focuses on what he or she should do according to the people around him or her, and when he or she feels free from something which has bounded him or her, he or she will experience, fantastic happiness because he or she is temporarily freed from his or her hated self being another individual (Davis 1970, p. 299). Himiko had such attitude because of her society reactions towards her.

The main character in *Tea* suffered also from what is called self alienation. In : *Man in Crisis*, Horney describes self-alienation as the remoteness of the neutric from an alienated person's own feelings, wishes, beliefs and energies, it is the loss of the feeling of being an active, determining force in his own life, the loss of feeling as an organic whole...an alienation from the real self (Davis 1970, p. 294). This is related with what Weiss said in *Man in Crisis*, that if an alienated has reached in one point, he cannot avoid, he will have no active relation to life (Davis 1970, p. 271), that is why many cases of suicide are committed because of the feeling that life has been a failure (Fromm 1950, p. 137). People who experience alienation indeed are not born alienated nor they choose to be so. They simply lack the genuine acceptance, love and concern for their individuality received from others around, the fact that lead them to have basic

anxiety. In fact, self-alienation is the further result of social alienation. The first of Himiko's alienation causes is her parents' rejection to her besides the bad conditions of life in Tokyo Japan.

Himiko: It's though in Tokyo after the Yankees take our country. I have six sisters. My father screams about all the daughters my mother left with him, "too crowded, no money". If I want a new dress, I have to work for it. (Uno 1993, p. 177).

Himiko's father was proud of having seven daughters, not only because of the shortage of financial revenues but also because they were all daughters and the Japanese society privilege a son than a daughter. When Himiko met her husband William Hamilton in Tokyo and previewed to marry him, her father does not understand that. He refuses to accept an American being a member of his family and to see his daughter again.

Himiko: My father does not want me to show my face at home again.

"Look at your big belly", he shouts, "carrying Yankee-gaijin baby. Shame. Shame..."

The conflict between Himoko and her father shows how really Himiko lacks her father's love and affection and how short is their relation. He rejected her and chased her away the fact that rendered her feeling bitterness, sadness and anger. Himiko's mother rejected her differently, she committed suicide, leaving her responsibility to educate her daughters.

Himiko: ...Last night, coming home from a wedding, I see her mother in her best kimono, walking by the river. She takes off her geta and puts her feet in the water. Her face is peaceful. So lovely, like the moon in the shadows of the clouds. She slips her small hand into the river and picks up a large stone. Looking at it for only a moment, she drops it in her kimono sleeve. Suddenly, she begins filling both sleeves with stones. I try to stop her, but she fights. The same stones I played with as child sagging in her kimono sleeves, she jumps into the current. I watch her sink, her long black hair swirling around her neck like a silk noose. Her white face, a fragile lily; the river a taifun. I wondered what it felt like to be in a storm. (Uno 1993, p. 176).

William Hamilton, Himiko's husband also makes her feeling rejected, unworthy as a human, woman and wife. He does not give her a better life when he took her to America with him.

Terulko: But you know what he was doing to her.

Atsuko : Nobody really knows.

Himiko : Nobody would listen.

Atsuko : Maybe she wasn't a good wife.

Himiko : I was the best wife.

Teruko : He never let her out of the house and hardly let her have guests. Remember during the big snow storm? The phone lines were down and...

Himiko: ...I didn't have any tea or rice left. Billy had gone to Oklahoma to visit his family. He said, "Don't leave the house" and took my daughter, Mieko with him. So there I was, starving to death, standing behind...

Teruko: (overlapping with Himiko's last two words)...standing behind the frosting glass. She looked like she was made of wax.

(Uno 1993, p. 167).

With such treatment coming from Billy, Himiko's life seems unworthy and meaningless. She left her homeland, and lost her family for him, in return, he left her starving, lonely, cold and sad. She lost the love she thought she would have forever when she was still in Tokyo.

Himiko: ...I asked him once. I said, "Why did you marry me?", and he said that he wanted a good maid for free.

Atsuko: Maybe she wanted too much

Himiko: I never asked for anything. Except soy sauce and good rice. And dreams...for Mieko.

(Uno 1993, p.168).

After being convinced that she is not respected by her own beloved husband and that he does not really care about her feelings, Himiko decides to kill him.

Setsuko: Shame on you, Himiko-san! Pouring beer on your husband's grave!

Himiko: I'm celebrating. First Memorial Day since he left me. He liked beer when he was alive. Why shouldn't he like it when he's dead. (Uno 1993, p. 173).

Himiko did not regret killing her husband, it was the sole solution for her to put an end to sadness, emptiness and meaninglessness.

Though Billy was dead, Himiko imagines that he is still alive and can beat or hurt her.

Himiko: Help me, Setchan. He's going to beat me up again.

Setsuko: Come Himi-chan. You must go home and rest.

Himiko: There is only unrest. It is like the war never ended.

Setsuko: (sympathetically) oh Himi-san. (not knowing what else to do, she releases Himiko and bows her head sorrowfully).

Himiko: (enervated to herself) I wish I would have died in world war II. It was an easier war than this one. (Uno 1993, p. 173).

Himiko suffered from her only daughter's rejection and whom she loves a lot, Mieko. Because she was born as an American Japanese girl. She cannot accept the reality of a confused identity. Mieko blames and dislikes her mother. She avoids having a close mother-daughter relationship. In the play Mieko's feeling is spoken by Himiko:

Himiko: ...don't ask me about my mother. Because then you're asking about myself...and I don't know who the hell I am. (Uno 1993, p. 197)

Himiko understands Mieko's confusion and that she is hurt by the reality; however, she expects her to accept the conditions in which she is born.

Himiko: I was born in a storm and it's never stopped raining. My only blessing is Mieko, my half Japanese girl. I love her so much, but she was born in my storm, too. For years, I tried to talk to her but she wasn't ready. (a sad laugh) Mieko is so fast, I only knows what she looks like from behind. (Ibid, p. 197-198).

In Tokyo, Himiko had a sensitive profession, she was a cabaret dancer. Though an irrespectable job, Himiko was forced to do it in order to survive since her father does not care of her. Himiko's society has a negative perception towards her job and her relationship with the Yankees.

Chiz: That Amerikan. That nice-looking Texas man over there? He's very nice. I cut his hair every week.

Teruko: Explain to him.

Chiz: Come on. Teru-chan, give him a chance. One little date, I won't tell anybody.

Teruko: Tell him I can't be seen with a Yankee. (Uno, 1993: 178).

Himiko feels that there will be no hope in Tokyo. People do not respect her anymore and there is no chance for a good life there.

Himiko: Billy, You have to take to Amerika now. There is no life left for me in Japan. People whiper "whore" in the streets and spit at my feet....(Uno, 1993: 180)

Tokyo becomes an uncomfortable place for living and escape is the sole solution as himiko said, "I'm tired of living in the Tokyo the Yankees left us with" (Uno, 1993: 180).

After her society's rejection Himiko decided to leave Japan with Billy, seeking a better life in America. However, in Kansas, himiko failed to construct any relation with the Japanese there. They still consider her past life and do not want to get any friendship from her. So, she started to experience alienation within persons of her own culture like Atsuko, one of the Japanese women who live in Kansas, says about Himiko, "Himiko was so wild after her husband died. Maybe she was like that in Japan too..." (Uno 1993, p. 166). Another reason for the rejection of Himiko by the small Japanese society in Kansas is that they were afraid of her because she seemed crazy and very different from them.

Atsuko: She invited Himiko, too!

Teruko: Yes, even after the incident. Even though everyone was afraid.

(Ibid, p. 168)

Himiko as a social being needs to have relationships with others, needs to drink tea with others and not alone. In fact tea represents the strong social ties that gather the Japanese in a foreign country like America.

Himiko suffered also from alienation in the American society from Americans too. The first American who make her tasting this bitterness is his husband. He forces her to abandon her traditions and customs and replace them with American ones. All Japanese women were ordered to deny their country and declare their faithfulness to be good citizens in America.

Women: (in, unison; with difficulty, stumbling over various words as this is the first time they have seen or read these words; some can say almost none of the words) “I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely renounce all allegiance to any foreign state or sovereignty of which I have therefore be a citizen; that I will defend laws of United States of America against all enemies; that I will bear arms on behalf of United States; and that I take that obligation freely without any mental reservation: so help me God” (Uno 1993, p. 182)

Japanese geishas is very popular, in the sense that society consider them as being prostitutes. Even the American officials who interviewed the Japanese women coming to America were suspicious on them to be geishas.

Himiko:”Are you communist?” Why do you want to marry this man instead of one of your own native Japanese? Do you think that moving to America will afford your personal financial gain? Are you suffering from insanity? Are you an imbecile or idiot? (a beat) Are you now or have ever been a prostitute? (Uno 1993, p. 166)

Americans wanted to know whether these Japanese women plan nothing that endanger America or disturb Americans. In addition, Himiko realizes the racism Americans offer them.

Himiko: It was more than racism. It was the gloating of victor over enemy. It was curiosity about our yellow skin, about why in the hell, their red blooded American boys would want to bring home an “Oriental” (she indicates the other women) Some of them liked us; most of didn’t...

In fact those Japanese women faced difficulties in America because they were not accepted to be part of the American society. Then, Himiko decides to deny her Japanese identity and behave like an American, though she was not comfortable in her new American appearance.

Himiko: ...their Japanese wives dressed up in Amerikan clothes. We were little, breakable dolls to them.” (Uno 1993, p. 188)

Himiko wanted to resemble to An American in order to be well viewed by Americans.

Setsuko: ...I would see her walking in the middle of a humid summer day in a heavy coat and the yellowed hair wig.

Himiko: (reliving that day) “ Hello, I’m Mrs William Hamilton. May I have a glass of water? Oh thank you, thank you, you’re so kind”

Atsuko: (gesticulating that Himiko was crazy) kichigai, ne...(crazy)(Uno 1993, p.72)

In fact, Himiko experiences a real social alienation from the people around her, she had mental disorders, she felt depressed, lonely, frustrated..., she came at a stage to reject herself, to believe that she does not deserve to be loved and accepted, so she decided to commit suicide and put an end to her life, especially after her daughter’s death.

Himiko: Someone made her dirty, stabbed her in the chest many times and then raped her as she died...(Ibid, p. 198) .

After Mieko passed away, Himiko became hopeless, and life for her became meaningless, so suicide for her was the best solution to avoid troubles and escape the feeling that her life was a failure¹¹ .

4.3.4 Honor and Purification

Literature in this context refers to foreign language literature. As a starting point it can be defined as written texts with artistic value, including the traditional literary genres of poems, fiction and drama. Besides the “canon” of culturally and literary accepted texts a broader concept of literature is needed to reflect the wider cultural horizon of text-mediation. Thus non-fiction narratives such as diaries, autobiographies and letters are included as well as children’s

literature and folklore narratives. Literature should also be understood as a social and communicative system. This wide concept allows for a much more empirical description of actions that are being performed in the field of literature, the main four sectors being production, distribution, reception and processing of literary texts and other literary products. It serves as a basis to understand literature as a set of more or less social psychology that mostly can be learned and fostered as literary competences.

The crucial task for both the social psychologist and the literary critic is to describe the shifting currency of acceptable and understandable systems of interpretation which are open to exchange and to analyse the accounting systems which are used to make sense of social life and to convey impressions to others (Potter, Stringer and Wetherell 1984, p. 1-2). Culture is a wider concept than literature, so in this context it will be considered in terms of its relationship with literature, i.e. as a combination of literature and culture. Thus in the teaching of culture literature plays different roles: it serves either as illustration or a starting point for the study and mediation of cultural phenomena. It is understood as part of a specific foreign civilization, thus by learning about the social, historical, linguistic and other cultural implementations in literary texts specifics of the foreign culture are being mediated. It is also important to note that not all culture and literature subjects in foreign language contexts are delivered in the target language.

In *Tea*, the character of Himiko is in a limbo between mortal death and the after-life. As a hovering spirit, she seeks to bring closure to her surrendered natural life—a purification of sorts—so that she can obtain a certain sense of belonging that will allow her passage to the after-life. She urges her Japanese peers to seek a concurrent purification that will help to restore the honor of their immigrant community that has been frayed by the American-made myths about war brides, the challenges of immigrant existence in a Japan-loathing post-war United States, and their own internalized fears. As the spirit confronts her community and demands that they excavate all their fears and the dreams and nightmares out of which they grew, the women come to know themselves and each other better, ultimately uniting in a spiritual rite that symbolizes the cleansing of Himiko and her release from limbo. Knowledge based in fear and the embrace of that knowledge frees not only Himiko, but the other women as well. Each of the women discovers a newfound honor of self and group, and a sense of belonging emerges from the commonalities of identity—being Japanese, being immigrants in America, being interracially married—that instigated the challenges in their lives in the first place. Here is an approximate representation to the flow of events in the play of *Tea*, using Freytag's Pyramid:

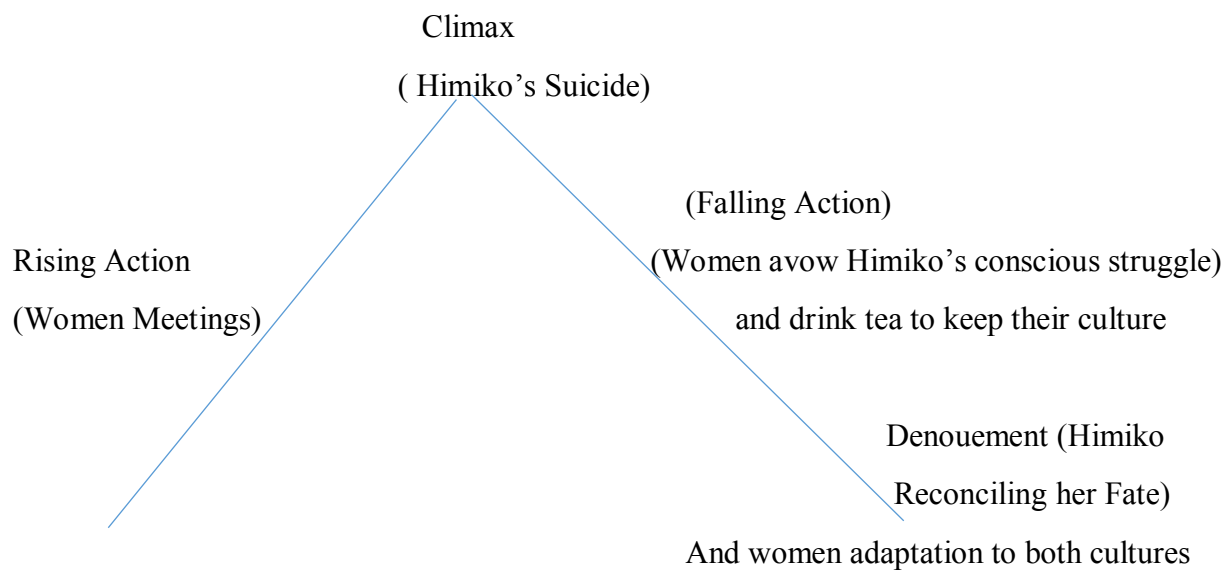


Diagram 4.2: Plot in *Tea*

The whole scenes of *Tea* create the different phases of Freytag's diagram

Himiko is also suffering from another kind of degradation of honor, that of a mother who believes that she has failed her maternal duties. In her weakened state of psychosocial clarity caused by her husband's physical and psychological abuse, Himiko has not been able to be fully present for her daughter, Mieko. This perhaps has degraded in turn Mieko's ability to confront the world, leading to her rebellious engagement with society that eventually instigates her death. Himiko blames herself for this. Moreover, her sense of shame and lost honor are deepened by the fact that she believes her child wanders the after-life without a mother. Even though Mieko is post-pubescent, the fact that Himiko's memory of her is one of Mieko in arrested pre-pubescence and the fact that Mieko engaged with society in what could be said to be a less than mature or sophisticated way leaves Himiko feeling that Mieko is more child than adolescent or young woman. Therefore, Himiko feels a maternal responsibility that she will not forsake in the wake of Mieko's tragic death. Thus, she seeks to cleanse her soul of her lost maternal honor and lost nuptial honor; she seeks purification and passage so that she can enter the after-life, find Mieko, and begin anew in fulfilling her obligations. This need drives Himiko in the play, leading her to what true cleansing mandates: that she face her internal fears no matter how painful they are. Those fears stem from her insistence upon recalling only the clean and pure

child Mieko and being unwilling (and perhaps unable) to confront the reality of the teenaged Mieko’s gruesome, unclean death. Once Himiko takes the journey that she also forces upon her Japanese peers, she comes to understand and know herself better so that she can summon the courage needed to confront the reality of the nature of Mieko’s death. At the climax of the play, she does so and this releases her from her natural life. With the help of the gift of the spiritual rite from her Japanese peers, she crosses over the boundaries of guilt and shame with a sense of inner peace and begins the new journey of reuniting with her child. Characters differ according to their status, here is a tentative characterization:

	Human	Non-Human	Male	Female
Atsuko	✕			✕
Teruko	✕			✕
Setsuko	✕			✕
Chiz	✕			✕
Himiko		✕		✕

Table 4.2: Characterization of *Tea*

All the characters are women except one who is a spirit of a dead woman.

The play begins with Himiko, a middle-aged Japanese widow, committing suicide. After her gun goes off, the remaining characters in the play come forward and invite the audience to tea. Atsuko, Teruko, Setsuko, and Chiz are all middle-aged Japanese women living in Kansas. They all gather for tea and socialization at the house of the now-dead Himiko. Himiko appears onstage as a spirit and comments on the action going on. The four women discuss Himiko’s troubled life... she had a daughter who died before she did and Himiko killed her husband, Billy. Himiko was not jailed for the crime because it was seen as an act of self-defense, but she was ostracized by the community (save for Setsuko) because of this. They also talk about the idea of a “Japanese community” and their obligations to mourn over Himiko/band together as the sole Japanese women in the area.

There is a flashback to the cemetery, where Himiko is seen pouring beer over her husband’s grave after his burial. She is un-remorseful and reveals that Billy beat her frequently. Back in

the present, Atsuko is frustrated that Chiz requests coffee instead of tea, seeing this as disrespect towards their heritage. Himiko states that her mother committed suicide during World War II by placing rocks in her kimono and drowning. This trance and the coffee argument turns into a discussion of where each of the characters are from and how they met their respective husbands. All women were born in Japan, but met American husbands and immigrated with them back to America.

Teruko was courted by a man who invited her to a movie. Fearing being seen with him, she turned him down, but he bought tickets for her entire friend group every week for a year so they could ‘accidentally’ sit next to each other in the movie theatre. Setsuko helped an African American man who dropped his helmet and fell in love with him immediately. She dated ‘Creed’ for five years while he was stationed in Tokyo with the American military. After her mother died, Setsuko felt no strong reason to remain in Japan, so she moved with Creed to America and married him. Atsuko met a man who followed her all the way to the train station. He is Japanese American, which she prefers because she really doesn’t want to marry an American. She justifies dating him because he looks Japanese. Chiz met a man, Gustavo, at her father’s restaurant. She hurries to America with him because she is afraid of breaking her father’s heart. Her father is sad when she leaves for America and even offers to come there himself if she is unhappy.

Himiko, the protagonist, was very poor, so when her friend suggested cabaret dancing as a job, she thought it would be a good way to make money. It turns out, cabaret dancing is dancing with American men for pay. One soldier, Billy, continuously goes only to her. Himiko was set on marrying a Japanese teacher, but she felt ashamed of her profession so she broke up with him and instead spent more time with Billy. When she gets pregnant, she flees to America and tells her family that they will never see her again. The women are asked to swear an oath of allegiance to the United States after arriving to the country. They all do, though they don’t understand the meaning of their oath.

Back in the present, Setsuko mentions that “maybe we did” marry the war because of all of the problems their being Japanese in a white America has caused. They discuss the idiosyncrasies of being immigrants and also small acts of racism they experienced while in America. The women transform and the actresses play the respective husbands of their characters. During this sequence, it is implied that Billy was having an affair and beat Himiko because she didn’t give

him enough space. It is also revealed that Setsuko and Chiz are widows. In the present, the tea is getting cold. The conversation turns to what will happen when the women all die. In this discussion, Chiz and Atsuko get into yet another heated argument, and Atsuko turns to leave. Her right-hand-woman, Teruko, does not follow her out, which leaves Atsuko devastated. The spirit of Himiko tells Atsuko that if she leaves now, she will never have peace as this story would remain untold, so Atsuko returns to continue tea time with the others and apologizes.

The actress then portray the respective daughters of their characters. Atsuko's is heavily restricted... she can't try out for cheerleading or participate in un-Japanese activities. Setsuko's says her mother is fearful of life more than death. Teruko says that her mother is mostly concerned with the wellbeing of her husband. Mieko, Himiko's daughter, proclaims that she "hates the world" and her mother too. This develops into a heartfelt monologue by Himiko, who describes her tortured life to the audience as an explanation for why she killed herself. Mieko went missing while she was hitchhiking, and the police found that she was raped and killed. Himiko's memories turn into visions, as she begins to see visions of her deceased Billy, her mother, and Mieko. At the end of the monologue, the women recognize that Himiko is there at tea in the spirit. They say "In your honorable shadow, please join us for tea." Himiko does. They women finish their tea and leave. Himiko finishes what is left and bows deeply, nourished.

Lastly, Himiko must deal with her honor with regard to her community, a loss that she shares with all the other Japanese women in Junction City. Since arriving in the small Kansas town, the women have become fragmented due to the fact that they are married to men of different races with different cultural values and socioeconomic backgrounds. The racism and classism innate to the Kansas town imprints upon the women, and they begin to act out the same prejudicial structures commonplace in the white community. There is an added tension, however, caused by the fact that they are Japanese and, therefore, suspected and disliked by the majority of local citizens. So, even if a Japanese woman who is married to a white gentile believed herself to be superior from a Japanese woman married to a Jew, Latino, or African American; she also has to confront the fact that white gentile citizens often believe themselves still to be superior to her and do not count her as one of their own.

4.3.5 Multicultural Issues in *Tea*

Ethnic mix contributes to the immense diversity in Unites States, but this does not mean that cultures can co-exist pacifically. *Tea* highlights this issue and studies its reflections.

4.3.5 .a) At the Center of the Margins: Cultural Hybridity vs. Cultural Shock

Culture shock is a condition of disorientation affecting someone who is suddenly exposed to an unfamiliar culture or way of life or set of attitudes; it is a term used to describe the anxiety and feelings (of surprise, disorientation, confusion, etc.) felt when people have to operate within an entirely different cultural or social environment, such as a foreign country. ... In *Tea*, characters are described how they were excited by the new environment and a few frustrations do not spoil their enthusiasm. How experiencing some difficulties with simple things like, for instance, making telephone calls, or using public transport, tends to down-play negative emotions. How they feel isolated and become withdrawn from life around them. They reject what is around them, feel that everyone is against them and that nobody understands them. Some physical symptoms of culture shock: headache, lethargy, sleep problems loss of appetite, digestive irregularities. Some psychological problems: irritability, anger over minor frustrations, confusion about morals and values, feeling moody, isolated and insecure.

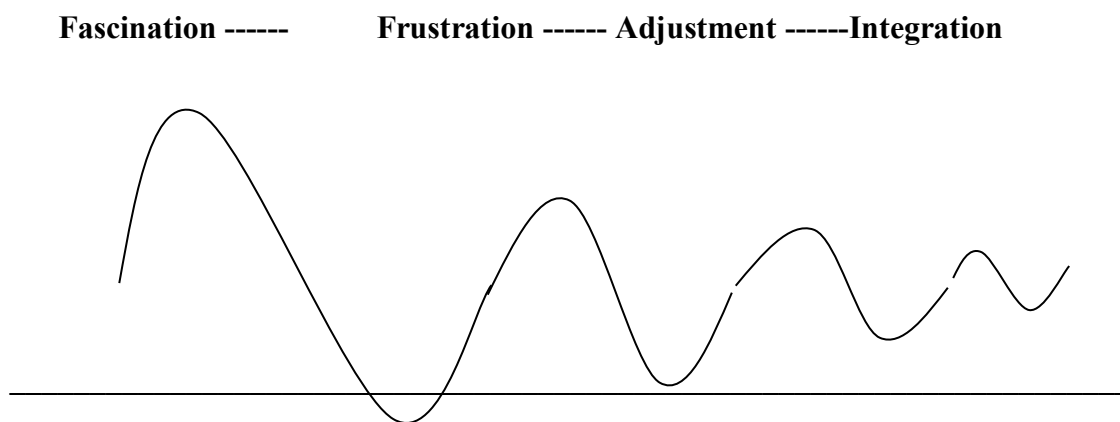


Diagram 4.3 : Successful Adaptation:¹²

Fascination ----- Frustration ----- Depression/ Destructive behavior

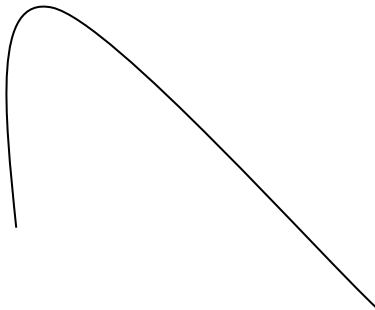


Diagram 4.4: Unsuccessful Adaptation:¹³

The success of adaptation depends on the capability to adjustment to avoid depression.

However, in classical sociology, assimilation is intended to mean a progressive change from a more diverse to a less diverse behavior. A more recent definition (Alba, Nee 2003, p. 30-31) defines assimilation as the “attenuation of distinctions based on ethnic origin”. The socio-political theory of assimilation views assimilation as a progressive and irreversible phenomenon. Warner and Srole (1945) first introduced the concept of a “straight line assimilation”. This has been a seminal concept in the sociological literature, the basic argument being that migrants behavior will become over time increasingly similar to that of natives.

Japanese-American communities exist as a local/global community, whose identities are constantly being negotiated and renegotiated, across generations. The notion of the idea of a

community has always been an ideological construct (DiLeonardo 1984, p.133). Anderson points to the census, map and museum as nexus points for asserting and maintaining community (Anderson 1991), visual and abstracted markers, to maintain tenuous connections between members in a group. The understandings of the 21st century constructions of communities exist in various forms from theories of diaspora, the "imaginary" (Anderson 1991), globalization (Appadruai 1996), transculturality, cultural hybridity (Werbner and Modood 1997) and the multicited (Marcus 1995). Under various guises, these discussions may lead to back to the realization that culture is the result of numerous transitions, difficult, disparate and highly differentiated. But communities are not necessarily shifting and unstable constructs; ideological rather than structural. Communities regard the various influences from the outside, adapting, appropriating, and rejecting, and in the process creating their own culture, demarcating themselves out against others.

Asserting sites of Japanese-American identity, such as the JANM, is an act of resistance against what Japanese-Americans perceive as the pervasive homogenizing of "generic" American culture. This resistance may potentially be the result of the incommensurability between perceived standard "American" culture and Japanese-American culture. This American culture is "imagined" as Caucasian and male (Haley 1976, p. 116). Japanese- American culture becomes marked within mainstream culture in how it varies from the norm. The construction of Japanese-American identity is partially predicated on the outsider or dominant "American" culture's perception of Japanese-Americans. This perception of Japanese-Americans by the outside is tied to the perception of not only Japanese nationals (as evidenced by WWII), but later, other Asian groups. In turn, the Japanese-Americans themselves, may partially internalize this perception of the outsiders that has been grafted onto them.

In that respect the playwright was asked by the researcher: To what extent was the use of some Japanese cultural notions like: tea, kimono... and some Japanese vocabulary significant in an intercultural theater?

Can you explain how you exploited several cultural elements like: spirits, imaginative Vs real and myth which are very crucial in Japanese literature and drama?

Houston answered:

I am not certain what an intercultural theatre is or if we even have any in the U.S. On my literary journey, particularly in my home city of Los Angeles, California, I sought such a theatre and the closest thing that I have found is Playwrights' Arena; hence, that is my artistic home. The use of Japanese cultural notions is embedded in the Japanese cultural dimension of my being. I can no more separate them from my being than I can cease to drink water or eat food. They are just there, carefully planted and seeded by my mother, who was raised by a Meiji Era mother in southern Japan. This is connected to the representation of spirits and magical realism in my stories. All of these elements are not exploitations, but simply interwoven into my multicultural being. As with any other artist, many of the galvanizers of my artistic creation stem from within. Certainly many of these elements may be important in Japanese literature and drama, but they are equally as important in Japanese Diasporic literature and drama, particularly when the artist is of native Japanese descent herself. Upon seeing my play *Calling Aphrodite*, Mr. Kazuo Kodama, the former Honorable Counsel General of Japan of Los Angeles, paralleled my work in drama to the work of Isamu Noguchi in fine art. Of my work, Mr. Kodama remarked that I have a "unique lens... as a Japanese American of mixed parentage" that is "an asset to Japan-U.S. relations at all levels" because "people can come to see a connection between our two nations that not only exists in documents and organizations, but which is a living, organic relationship, exemplified by and embodied in individuals like... [Houston]." (Kodama, Kazuo. Speech delivered at International City Theatre on September 13, 2007, Long Beach, California). (See appendix 5, p. 379)

Thus Japanese-America becomes Asian-American encompassing a large body of disparate cultural types that become homogenized from the outside. Japanese-Americans are struggling against this to define themselves in terms of their own culture and heritage. Japanese-American heritage draws from both those cultural ideals learned from the Japanese-American community life, as well as from Japanese-American perceptions of both a mythic or "imagined" America and Japan itself. Therefore, the construction of Japanese-American identity must also be looked at historically. The Japanese government initially fostered the maintenance of Japanese communities within America during the early phases of emigration to the US (Loue 2007, p. 106). The climate of WWII and the relocation and internment of American ideology of the great melting pot continued to encourage such assimilation as well as demanding the Japanese-American community to renounce their ties to Japan (Okada 1976). During this time, the Japanese-American Citizens League mounted a campaign to unite and assimilate Japanese-Americans throughout the US. At this time Japanese-Americans had to prove their loyalty and honor to the US as evidenced by the "100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team, the most highly decorated unit in the history of the U.S. armed forces" (US

Army News Release 00-034 2000). This assimilation was obviously at the expense of something considered to be "traditional" Japanese or Japanese-American culture, historically seen as a threat to America itself. Post-War generations of Japanese-Americans, feeling the pull between assimilation and the retention of Japanese-American culture have initiated new campaigns, to perhaps reassert the visibility and legitimacy of Japanese-American culture. Current Japanese-American communities are literally disappearing, as only 3 of at least 40 Little Tokyos or Japan Towns once in existence, remain in the US.

Japanese-American culture has been studied across generations to explore the shifting of cultural identity over time. The assumption has been that the later generations (sansei and yonsei) Japanese-Americans, are more Americanized. Issei, Nisei, Sansei and Yonsei were the traditional Japanese terms for Japanese emigrants from the first through fourth generations respectively. Recently, the word Gossei has arrived in the lexicon to account for the fifth generation of Japanese-Americans inhabiting the United States. The fact that this vocabulary continues to persist within American culture, signifies that certain ties to Japan are assumed within Japanese-American cultural identity. No other ethnic group that has the same types of designations. (Hassel 1987, p. 40). Recent academic studies have begun to study the cultural exchange between Japan and the West. This newfound recent Western fascination with Japan (coming close on the heels of Japanese economic domination and downfall in the global market) allows for a reassessment or renegotiation of Japanese identity, within the American mainstream, although reminiscent of "orientalist" fascination (Said 1976). Recent generations of Japanese-Americans find the re-appropriation of Japanese culture and specifically, a high "visual culture" (manga, film, video, art) to be a means of gaining cultural capital but within the political and power confines of the US.

A fairly different view arose in the sixties. A paradigm takes a close look at the process of migrants integration in the case of New York City. The authors argue that migrants tend to assimilate to a common (American) model but at the same time increasingly retain their ethnic origin traditions. A further radical blow to the straight line assimilation paradigm came from the work of Gans (1979, 1996). His "bumpy line theory" questions the very existence of a progressive assimilation process, highlighting that migrants' greater length of stay in the host country was not necessarily associated with a visible improvement in their economic and social conditions. Even second generation migrants were at risk of being marginalized. One key contribution of Gans is to focus the attention of policy makers on those policies that can favor

integration. A most recent development in the analysis is the “segmented assimilation” paradigm developed by Portes and Zou (1993). In this view, migrants assimilate in different strata of the host society. Accordingly, upward mobility can either be the outcome of individual social promotion⁴ or alternatively result from the action of self-supporting communities and networks which boost the influence of the disadvantaged groups (Venturini 2007, p. 90).

4.3.5 .b) Empathy

Public views of other nationalities are often rooted in stereotypes. These perceived characteristics may or may not be fair or accurate. But they capture a public perception that may help explain national attitudes on a range of other topics.

Characteristics	American views of Japanese	Japanese views of Americans
Hardworking	94%	25%
Inventing	75%	67%
Honest	71%	37%
Intolerant	36%	29%
Aggressive	31%	50%
Selfish	19%	47%

Table 4.3: Different Perceptions of the Other between Japanese and Americans¹⁴.

Americans and Japanese see each other through different lenses.

The table shows the results of a recent survey about the relationship between Japanese and Americans, the question was given to the publics in both countries if they associated particular words with people in the other country. To Americans, the Japanese are generally viewed in a positive light: Words like “hardworking,” “inventive” and “honest” are what American use to describe them. In fact, more than nine-in-ten Americans say they associate “hardworking” with the Japanese. Most Americans do not ascribe various negative stereotypes to the Japanese. Only 36% see the Japanese as “intolerant,” 31% see them as “aggressive” and just 19% associate them with the term “selfish.” The Japanese offer a more mixed assessment of Americans, however. They see Americans as “inventive” but also “aggressive.” And relatively few think of Americans as hardworking and honest. Two-thirds of Japanese see Americans as

“inventive,”. But only 37% of Japanese associate honesty with Americans, and only a quarter voice the view that Americans are hardworking.

Japanese Americans” are also called Nikkei, are Americans of Japanese ancestry. This term covers the immigrant Japanese, their children and their grandchildren. The social, political and historical circumstances in the US changed the identity of those immigrants, and thus transformed them into Japanese Americans. Japanese Americans are divided along generational lines, ‘defined in terms of birth order’ (Kanigel 2019, p. 365). The Issei, i.e. the first generation, are the original immigrants from Japan, the Nisei, i.e. the second generation, are their American born offspring, and the Sansei and Yonsei, or third and fourth generation, are their grandchildren and great grandchildren. Nowadays, a fifth generation of so-called Gosei is slowly coming into existence. Moreover, due to interethnic and interracial mixing, the term “hapa” has become an increasingly important term to refer to Americans who are one half of Japanese ancestry and one half other.

According to Renato Rosaldo, there are two possible ways to determine the term culture in an American context. When a certain degree of culture is put under the light so this derives from notions of “high culture” (Rosaldo 2001, p. 197). However the concept of culture in general does not refer to high culture but is linked to the idea of the USA as a “melting pot” implying that, by the process of acculturation, immigrants are stripped of their former cultures, i.e. customs and norms... and thus become American citizens, i.e. people without culture (Rosaldo 1993, p. 209). This leads to the opposition of civilized versus cultural, an opposition which confines people with culture to marginal lands (Rosaldo 1993, p. 199): ‘Curiously enough, upward mobility appears to be at odds with a distinctive cultural identity. One achieves full citizenship in the nation-state by becoming a culturally blank slate’ (Rosaldo 1993: p. 201)

According to George Lipsitz, it is this marginalizing culture that ‘exists as a form of politics, as a means of reshaping individual and collective practices for specified interests, and as long as individuals perceive their interest as unfulfilled, culture retains an oppositional potential’ (Lipsitz 1990, p. 16f.). Those oppressed individuals are excluded from the American dream as they reveal the contradictions of the constitution, shaping their own identity, guaranteeing equality for everyone and reality. The Japanese American community is a very complex phenomenon and Japanese American identity is equally multi-faceted depending on the different waves of immigration, the immigrants’ origins, their religious beliefs... ‘each

diasporic community is shaped by its own specific histories of class, religion, language, race and region... dangers of totalizing tendencies'.

In *Tea* the women who are truly torn. Attracted to America by young love and by the self-confidence of the victorious young nation, they had no idea of how stranded and unhappy they would feel in the Great Plains, where their husbands are assigned at Ft. Riley. That national self-confidence now feels like a choking insularity. Houston's play immediately places us at a flash point of the cross-cultural despair. In the opening scene, one of the women, Himiko Hamilton, commits suicide--and we quickly learn that she has already shot her husband. Himiko's problems were not caused by cultural dislocation. Her family history, even in Japan, is tragic. But her isolation in Kansas left her with few escape routes. The other women gather in Himiko's house for a ceremonial tea--and because they urgently need to talk about their common experiences, in the wake of Himiko's death. The rest of the play is structured around that talk, which is overseen by the spirit of Himiko. But the conversation is broken up by brilliant scenes in which the women play their younger selves in Japan and Kansas, as well as their husbands and their children.

They haven't talked like this before, because at least some of them don't like each other much. Their common bond is threatened by the differences among them. Houston is careful to respect the individuality of each character along with their cultural links. One of the characters, Setsuko, is based on Houston's own mother. Married to an African-American, Setsuko's wrenching departure from Japan was the subject of Houston's *Asa Ga Kimashita*, seen at East West Players in 1984. Another Houston play, *American Dreams*, read at L.A. Theater Works, also touches on Setsuko's experience. But Setsuko is perhaps the least vivid of the characters in *Tea*. Most of the friction is between Atsuko, who married a Japanese-American, and Chizuye, whose Mexican-American husband died shortly after her arrival in the United States. Partly out of necessity, partly out of personality, Chizuye has become more Americanized than the others, and Atsuko (the head of the local Buddhist chapter) resents her for it. There is a strain of bigotry in Atsuko, but there is also a cynicism arising from cultural loss in Chizuye. The nervous intermediary between Atsuko and Chizuye is Teruko. Yet all of the characters do wonders, especially considering they haven't much time to tell their individual stories. Houston compresses a lot into one intermissionless act, evoking with lyric imagery what might take too long to tell in a more naturalistic style. Occasionally, the language may sound rushed or overwrought.

4.3.5. c) Fortitude and Cultural Memory

Japanese women have for hundreds, maybe thousands of years, pursued the delicate, intricate social ritual of sharing tea and talk together. These ladies are four friends plus the one who has (drastically) departed from them, are here in the States by virtue of wedlock. They are what were once called Japanese war brides, fish out of water in the very different cultural environment in and around Fort Riley, Kansas, where the World War II G.I.'s who married them and brought them home to America are now stationed, 'I was born right outside Tokyo, but I grew up in Junction City, Kansas,' says Velina Hasu Houston, the playwright whose 1987 *Tea* has been re-mounted as one of the keystones of in various venues of this city. 'I used to sit around in the background, and listen to my mother and her friends as they were having tea in Kansas,' says Houston — herself of mixed parentage — on the phone from Los Angeles. Her (now 78-year-old) 100-percent Japanese mother — 'from a quite affluent family of merchants' — is the model for the level-headed character named Setsuko in the play. The playwright's father, the late Lemo Houston — "pronounced like that street in New York" — was the offspring of a black American father and native American mother. "My father, who had been an MP on Guam, used to tell me: 'I killed your mother's people. I had to do it.' "

Those meetings are highly related to the cultural memory, Collective memory is also called "cultural memory", it is a social phenomenon, referring to Aristotle's perception to human beings as social animals, in which the sole difference is human's ability to communicate. Furthering his view to consider memory as being created by communication and inter-action in what is called social frames (Wossner 2010, p.45). The concept can be split into two categories: communicative memory and cultural memory. Communicative memory concerns the recent past because it is transmitted by actual witnesses and disappears after three or four generations, while it may be changing through time, and "a floating gap" occurs after a century, followed by the official written history.

Cultural memory, on the other hand, is based on crucial events of the past only. This remembered past is transformed into a formative, absolute, often mythic and elevated into art and literature... This transmission is preserved by using the writing system. Collective memory is functional because it signifies reality, defines identity, and realizes cultural continuity. It is due to collective memory that a constructed image of the past is to maintain a stable identity,

i.e. authenticity is replaced by constructedness via a writing system meaning: language. Since memory is a construct which is different from reality, aiming at preserving identity, remembrance tends to be selective, based on highlighting some facts rather than others. Those facts and details are chosen according to the principle of difference and continuity since they are supposed to establish identity.

Memory makes us aware of the limitations of conventional historiography...
elisions...repressions...silences...silencing also takes place within the oppressed
community...deliberate amnesia (Singh 1996, p. 141)

Memory is not identical with history, when the latter provides a singular coherent history of many facts which may exclude certain events, it may change if contexts change too, because singularity brings with it “destructive binary opposition” which is the core of the historical method. In the context of the US history ‘denying the memory of minorities and neglecting the plurality of personal stories that shaped the American past’ (Lipsitz 1990, p. 32). These destructive binary oppositions stand for bipolar race relations opposing black to white, indicating how history is linked to power and control. Collective memory, on the other hand, is plural, aiming at supporting identity and securing its continuity.

Collective memory tends to segregate canons. Since the concept of “canon” changes its implication to focus not on a certain work of art but rather on a certain topic of art. It is this culture’s “memoire volontaire”, i.e.: what the culture wants to remember, that provides a sense of identity and cultural continuity. Canons change over time, for example, the 20th century witnessed the emergence of many different canons, as a transformation of already existing canons or as a contradiction to them, like: anti-communist, anti-nationalist, religious fundamentalist, as well as, feminist, ethnic or other thoughts... Memory and pain are interrelated. The traumatic experience that is left in the sub consciousness is highly noticeable for memory. Therefore, that collective memory, which is connected to art too in the subconscious, may be expressed in the form of artistic productions like literature. ‘Tragic memory transforms pain and denial into strength and power.’ (Singh 1996, p. 258)

Collective memory is closely tied to time, since the present rules the past and the past rules the present as they both have a great influence on the future. The present circumstances are a consequence of historical events. ‘Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please, they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under

circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. (Rosaldo 1993, p. 105). In that respect, history is made according to circumstances transmitted from the past, equally remembrance of the past is based on present needs, like in the context of ethnic cultures. ‘Ethnic cultures remain tied to their pasts in order to explain and arbitrate the problems of the present’ (Lipsitz 1990, p. 135). Remembrance of the past is based on changing social and political circumstances; this explains why the works of Issei are different from the works of Nissei and Sansei, and how the focus of their works shifts from internal to external, from ethnic to mainstream political.

Collective memory is tied to place, meaning: “places of memory” which refers to identity in order to establish itself as a community. A group of people tends to secure some places, providing a social frame of interaction and functioning as symbols for their identity and clues of remembrance. Places of memory do not have only a physical concrete place, but they function more properly as a mental image which does not disappear or change over time. The shift from a real place to a mental image is the shift from a place of generation to a place of memory due to social and cultural contexts changes as the distance between the past and the present increases with the slow disappearance of actual witnesses (Wossner 2005, p. 13). The following table explains the three types of identity:

Individual Identity	Personal Identity	Collective Identity
The person’s conviction to remain the same, without bearing any external influence by the social circumstances around him or by other individuals.	The person’s role and function in the social structure, depending on his qualities and the know-how.	A person’s awareness of being part of the social structure.

Table 4.4: Types of Identity:

Types of identity differ according to the person or the society.

The three types of identity are embodied in different characters in *Tea*, that was the aim when Houston did her research for *Tea*, and she went back to Kansas and interviewed some 50 of her mother’s old Japanese girlfriends or other women of the ages of those girlfriends. ‘I wanted to represent a unique chapter of Japanese immigration history that we don’t see in history books

— the fortitude of these women in the American Bible Belt. Some had positive stories, some had tragedies. Actually they ran the gamut from upper class to middle-class to lower class. They had been and sometimes still were subject to stereotyping. Audiences would ask, reporters would ask, even scholars would ask me: These girls were all bar girls and prostitutes, weren't they? Part of it was the *Madame Butterfly* myth. They were also looked upon in some quarters as people who had betrayed their own countrymen and country women.' (Houston 1993)

Some had tragedies: Velina Houston, that child on the fringes of her mother's tea sessions, kept her ears open. In the play there is a suicide by drowning (kimono sleeves packed full of stones), a suicide by rifle, and a troubled young woman's gruesome death that locks into those other two deaths. There is also some unexpected black humor (dramatically, not ethnically black): Himiko, the war bride at the center of the play, saying: "I'm about as Japanese as corn flakes ... and I killed my husband because he laughed at my soy sauce just one time too many." Soon after that she pours beer upon his grave — the brew he loved so much when he was alive.

4.3.6 Houston: From the Theater of Sunrise to the Theater of Dreams

A great number of Japanese left their homeland during the modernization and industrialization of the Meiji Period (1868-1912) when Japan was affected by serious socioeconomic problems, they sought escape from poverty by migration. Between 1885 and 1923 half a million Japanese left Japan for reasons of high taxes and overpopulation. The Asian destination for those immigrants was mainly Manchuria as well as Korea, others went to Philippines and some Pacific Islands. In 1883, the Japanese started a new wave of immigration to Australia, but a great majority went to Hawaii and by 1898 the Japanese constituted 40% of the total population of Hawaii. By 1910, 72, 157 Japanese had gone to the Western Coast of the United States from Hawaii or directly from Japan. By 1938, 598 490 Japanese were living abroad (De Carvalho, 2003: 29)

After Japan's cultural defeat in WWII, memories of that national trauma remain so relevant to society and art long after the event. It even endured and intensified through people's avoidance to remember dreadful pasts, and became an indelible part of Japan's national collective life known as Japan's History Problem. Japan's war memories are not only deeply encoded in the everyday culture but are much more varied than the single caricatured image of "amnesia" depicted by Western media. There is no collective memory in Japan; rather multiple memories of war and defeat with different moral frames coexist for legitimacy (Akiko Hashimoto 2015,

p. 9). The notion of suicide as an idea of escapism rather than striving through the cultural memory and maintaining hopeful is of great presence, as stated by the playwright in a response to a question by the research: What is the message you tend to transmit to the audience showing diaspora behind suicide?

The playwright said:

Suicide and suicidal ideation are part of every culture. That means that every Diaspora is affected by them. Perhaps in each culture, the motivations for them differ; perhaps not. Events of suicide or attempted suicide that occur in my plays and other writings are not meant to transmit a meaning to any audience or to comment upon any culture. They are ingredients in the characters that I develop. I try to create them with consideration, breadth, and depth, however, I am not perfect and, therefore, my creations cannot be. We strive and hope.

As Japan's religion and drama drank from the same historical spring, Japanese religious theme of peace, emphasizing on individual moral cultivation. One expression "Hakko Ichiu" meaning "The whole world under one roof" conveys the ideal of world unity under Japanese direction, leading to the establishment of peace. In this way, it is a prime example of the prewar idea of establishing peace through the spread of Japanese civilization (Robert Kisala 1999, p. 20). Velina Hasu Houston, born Velina Avisia Hasu Houston, (on May 5, 1957) is an award winning American playwright, essayist, poet, author, editor, and screenwriter. She has had many works produced, presented, and published, with some drawing from her experience of being multiracial, as well as from the immigrant experiences of her family and those she encountered growing up in Junction City, Kansas.

Exploiting the dramatic elements of time and space, the reality of the present and the memories of the past, the playwright replied as the researcher asked her: How do you consider the presence of theatrical elements like: space Vs time and present Vs Past in *Tea*? She replied:

In my stories, time always is fluid. "Whereof what's past is prologue; what to come..." (Shakespeare, William, *The Tempest*, Act II, Scene 1, pp. 245-254). That is part of my thinking, that everything that has happened before our time has some degree of impact on what is happening now. As we often hear, if we forget history, it will come back to haunt us. The other part of my thinking emerges from how I was asked to consider time when I was growing up. In the Japanese literature and legends to which I was exposed and in the stories that my mother shared with me when I told her about the stories in my head, I understood that there was no boundary of any kind between the natural and supernatural worlds. I also understood that the life of the mind

sometimes can be very real. Given those factors, the nature of time in my stories is not conventional or constructed, but organic to the needs of the characters and the world of the stories.

Her work focuses on the shifting boundaries of identity with regard to gender, culture, and ethnicity, often embracing a transnational view of identity based upon her own Japanese and American background. Her works' themes also have extended beyond these issues to explore stories related to women in society. She is best known for her play *Tea* which portrays the lives of Japanese war brides who move to the United States with their American servicemen husbands. Her plays are studied in the US, Asia, and Europe in high schools and in colleges and universities. She is the only American playwright to amass a body of work that explores the transnational US-Japan relationship through stories that include a bilateral, global view of identity and belonging. The former Honorable Consul General of Japan of Los Angeles Kazuo Kodama paralleled Houston's work in drama to the work of Isamu Noguchi in fine art, both being offspring of one Japanese parent and one American parent.

Conclusion

Japanese American Theater has been inspired by the rise in Asian American ethnic identity in the 1960s. The term Asian American did not exist before 1965, and neither did the Asian American theater, but theatrical activities by Asian immigrants and their descendants have been around as long as they have lived in the United States of America. *Tea* by Velina Hasu Houston is a collective response to racism and cultural nationalism, and calls for heterogeneity in various locations. It aims to consider the ethnicity paradigm around nexuses of race, ethnicity, gender and class in Asian America. It emerges to challenge Orientalism inflicted upon Asians and the stereotypes American mainstreams hold of Asian Americans. Velina Hasu Houston exploits the standards and elements of the dramatic art to fulfill her aim of exploring Japanese women status in USA.

Notes to Chapter Four:

1: In the 1990s, a resurgence of interest in Asian American studies and politics took place in the United States, in part due to the emergence of powerful Asian American literature, which helped establish Asian America as a point of reference.

2: Derived from Storey J, 1993. *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*. Athens. University of Georgia Press . P7

3: Derived from Saddik A,J , 2007. *Contemporary American Drama*. Edinburg Critical Guides. Edinburg University Press. P. XVII

4: Broadway productions still entertain millions of theater goers as productions have become more elaborate and expensive. At the same time, theatre has also served as a platform for expression, and a venue for identity exploration for under-represented, minority communities, who have formed their own companies and created their own genres of works, notably East West Players, founded in 1965 as the first Asian American theatre group. Notable contemporary American playwrights include Edward Albee, August Wilson, Tony Kushner, David Henry Hwang, John Guare, and Wendy Wasserstein.

5: While the experiences of Asian ethnic groups in America vary, a commonality exists in that their lives and identities have all been marked by discrimination and alienation based on race. Therefore, Asian American literature, regardless of ethnic associations, is unified in that it brings attention to the impact of racial difference on the Asian American subject. Asian American literature as a whole is intrinsic in conveying the experiences of Asian Americans and defining what constitutes Asian America.

6: Kadohata's *The Floating World* (1989) and Lee's *Native Speaker* (1995) were both successes. In contrast, Kadohata's science-fiction novel *In the Heart of the Valley of Love* (1992) flopped. However, she regained her audience with *Kira-kira* (2004).

7: retrieved from: <http://www.goliath.ecnext.com>

8: Retrieved from: . <http://www.cycad.com/cgi-bin/pinc/apr97/justus.html>

9: Retrieved from: <http://www.buzzle.com>

10: During the war, the Allied Powers had planned to divide Japan amongst themselves for the purposes of occupation, as was done for the occupation of Germany.

11: Retrieved from: <http://www.dewey.petra.ac.id>

12 and 13: Nguyen Kim Phuong, 1993. culture shock, citizenship immigration. LINC Program/ Class III-D4. P4-5

14: Adapted from: 2015 Pew Research Center Survey.Q4-f.

General Conclusion

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When multiple selves meet into one self or another, when multiple literary dimensions like: past and present, ethnicity and culture, space and time, masculinity and femininity, dream and reality, identity and difference... meet in one context or another, theater may offer a voice to silenced identities as well as to the different ones, give re-birth to the classical and the ancient, to live consciously and unconsciously with concrete or abstract notions of life and performance. A theater coming from the furthest east. A theater crossing the oceans from the other side to attain the same dream. A female dream to play on the forbidden stage. A theater in which the furthest east and the furthest west meet in a tea ceremony in which women are mourning the loss of their eastern soul and who are masked behind a western body.

The first chapter entitled *Cultural Background* deals with the concepts of identity and heritage relation to aesthetics of Japanese literature and more specifically theater under the universal values of literature and drama to highlight the different theatrical conventions in Japan. In that respect, culture, art and identity tend to be tightly tied. Another pervasive characteristic of Japanese art is an understanding of the natural world as a source of spiritual insight and an instructive mirror of human emotion which paints the production of art and theater as well. This indigenous sensibility perceived that a spiritual realm was manifest in nature with numinous qualities. It nurtured, in turn, a sense of proximity to an intimacy with the world of spirit as well as a trust in nature's general benevolence. The cycle of the seasons was deeply instructive and revealed, for example, in many artistic productions that immutability and transcendent perfection were of natural norms. Everything was understood as subject to a cycle of birth, fruition, death, and decay (Meech-Pekarik 1986, p.92).

Japanese aesthetics can be approached not only through the relatively scant writings of the old literature specifically devoted to the subject, but through the evidence in works of literature or criticism, in objects of art, and even in the manner of life of the Japanese as a whole, so pervasive has aestheticism been. One of the primary functions of culture is the cultivation of sociality and the capacity for complex social behavior. Identity can productively be introduced into artistic practices. As one of the key ideological mechanisms of time, identity can be taken by artistic practices as an "object" to be worked upon, and can, as any other ideological material, be elaborated in specifically artistic ways. Identity is an ideological mechanism that has become particularly important during the last decades. It has its material existence above all in the state

regulations concerning culture and its aesthetics. Japanese aesthetics in literature includes the artistic elements of expression within the textual work as well as within the dramatic art form through the Japanese standards of beauty.

The second chapter *Feminist Shadows of Japanese Drama* sheds light on feminist theories that facilitate the reading of the selected plays in the present work as well as feminist issues in the Japanese literary scholarship and the struggle to change notions of rooted ideologies in the social system about women's space, time and body installed by the conventions of Shinto and Buddhism. While it narrows down the scope to drama for the challenge, feminists take in Japan to have access to that literary genre basically forbidden to women. When a school of literary criticism is still evolving, trying to make a definitive explanation of such context, it can be a perilous undertaking. Feminist criticism for example is difficult to define because it has not yet been codified into a single central perspective. Instead, its several shapes and directions vary from one country to another. The premise that unites those who call themselves feminist critics. It is the assumption that certain cultures are fundamentally patriarchal, creating an imbalance of power that marginalizes women at work. That social structure, they agree, is reflected in religion, philosophy, economics, education and all aspects of the culture, including literature. The feminist critic works to expose such ideology and, in the end, to change it so that the creativity of women can be fully realized and appreciated.

The interest of some feminists in probing the unique nature of the female personality and experience has led the critics and writers among them to try to identify a specifically female tradition of literature. Such explorations have been particularly interesting to French feminists, who have found in Jacques Lacan's extensions of Freudian theory a basis for resisting the idea of a stable "masculine" authority or truth. Rejecting the idea of a male norm, against which women are seen as secondary and derivative, they call for a recognition of women's abilities that goes beyond the traditional binary oppositions such as male/female, and the parallel oppositions of active/passive, intellectual/emotional. Searching for the essence of feminine style in literature, they examine female images in the works of female writers and the elements thought to be typical of *l'écriture féminine*-such as blanks, unfinished sentences, silences, and exclamations. Early female images become important as symbols of the power of women to resist and overcome male oppression. Images of motherhood are significant too, for childbearing and rearing involve power and creation. Of course, this approach runs the risk of creating female chauvinists who argue for a special, superior gender. It also risks creating a

ghetto in which women's writing stands separate from the male tradition and is thereby weakened.

For the female subject, gender marks the limit of deconstruction, femininity, or femaleness is any more or any less outside discourse than anything else is. This is precisely the insistent emphasis of feminist criticism: gender must be accounted for. It must be understood not as a "biological" difference that lies before or beyond signification, or as a culturally constructed object of masculine desire, but as semiotic difference.

Japanese feminism differs from Western feminism in the sense that less emphasis is on individual autonomy. Prior to the late 19th century, Japanese women were bound by the traditional patriarchal system where senior male members of the family maintains their authority in the household. After the reforms brought by Meiji Restoration, the status of women in Japanese society also went through series of changes. Trafficking in women was restricted, women were allowed to request divorces, and both boys and girls were required to receive elementary education. Further changes to the status of women came about in the aftermath of World War II. Women received the right to vote, and a section of the new constitution drafted in 1946 was dedicated to guarantee gender equality.

Though still the third largest gender gap in the Organization of Economic and Corporation Development, the rapid development of Japan emphasized the advancement of Japanese women as they were not given such liberty in Old Japan. In Japan, the woman became important as a sign of such ambivalent simultaneity during the Meiji Period (1868-1912). It was during the pre-war decades of the 1910s, through 1930s, the Taisho (1912-1926) and early Showa (1926-1989) periods, that the most dramatic changes occurred and the relationship between modernity and gender became increasingly complex especially in labor. After the reforms brought by Meiji Restoration, the status of women in Japanese society also went through series of changes. Today, Japan is a model nation that is making dynamic evolutionary progress and development. Both individual and nation tend to attain maturation, moving toward a better future and a higher state of existence. 'New Japan is in a state of rapid growth. It is in a critical period, resembling a youth, just coming to manhood, when all the powers of growth are most vigorous. Intellect is awaking, ambition is equaled by self-reliance... the growth of the past half-century is the beginning of what we may expect to see.' (Gulick 1988,p. 33)

The relationship between women's mobilization and feminism as a goal is not static or oppositional. Indeed, the fact that 'at any given historical moment in a particular country their organizations might appear feminist or not, as the immediate focus of their efforts shift' (Ferree and Mueller 2004, p. 578). The historical development of the women's movement in postwar Japan led to the dynamic complexities of Japanese women's activism that spans a broader range than the conventional definition of the feminist movement. Women contributions to Japanese literature range from *The Tale of Genji* (源氏物語) *Genji monogatari* written by a lady named Murasaki Shikibu to manga anime, and from Heian women Geisha to Takarazuka of today. *The Tale of Genji* which is a unique depiction of the lifestyles of high courtiers during the Heian period is considered as the world's first novel. One of the most influential women writers of Meiji period was Higuchi Ichiyo (1872-1896), with her awareness raising political issues. Fukuda Chiyo-ni (1775) was a famous Japanese poet of the Edo period, widely regarded as one of the greatest poets of haiku. In addition to the famous novel of *The Nakano Thrift Shop* (2005) written by Hiromi Kawakami in Modern Japan.

The history of women in Japanese theater is the history of the social changes that swept the country in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Actresses at this time progressed from a point where they were not allowed to perform at all to the point where they were celebrated artists. The idea that actresses are little better than common prostitutes is common in all cultures that have a theatrical tradition, and in Japan at least, it has some basis in fact. Some prostitutes used their stage appearances to "advertise" themselves in sensational dances that resulted in riots and disorder. Because of this, women were completely banned from appearing on the stage in Japan 'From 1629 to 1891, initially they were replaced by the *wakashu*, akin to the boy-actors in English theater of the Elizabethan period.' (Kano, p. 5). Unfortunately, it soon became evident that the *wakashu* incited as man riots as the women did, and they were banned as well. That left only adult males available to act, so they took on all roles, including female roles as well.

Applying thick white powder and rouge to their faces, donning elaborate costumes and heavy wigs, forcing their shoulders back and walking with bent knees, these actors, called *onnagata*, or *oyama*, cultivated a style of acting that represented idealized femininity by concealing one set of somatic ... signs and inscribing another. So highly valued was their portrayal of femininity that women from the pleasure quarters began to imitate them. (Kano 2001, p. 5).

Women who appeared on the stage were, in a profound sense, free. They moved differently when they were not hampered by wearing a confining kimono, and in so doing, found a greater

range of movement, more mobility, and increased power. These actresses insisted on their natural femininity and in doing so differentiated themselves from the geisha and onnagata. They freed themselves from the stereotypical roles of good wife and wise mother, and wore the “New Woman” label with pride. In addition, most paradoxically, they embodied the essentialist and expressive definition of gender and, by doing so, performed a new understanding of what it means to act like a woman in modern Japan. Most of all, leaders of that theatrical feminist movement took the immense challenge to react and to rebel against their own traditional conventions and produce such innovative plays (Tschudin 1989, p. 252).

The mask of the female character Zo-Onna was used in Noh, the classical theater of Japan which was codified in the 14th century under the father and son actors Kan'ami and Zeami under the patronage of the Shogun (supreme military leader) Ashikaga Yoshimitsu. The mask's fine features indicate nobility and are emphasized by the eyebrows painted high on the forehead and the restrained carving of the eyes, which lack any pronounced details of the natural eyebrows. The mask is less broad across the forehead and the lips and mouth are less full than is usual for the character of Zo-Onna. This mask represents a woman slightly younger than convention calls for.

The third chapter *Noh Theater by Women: Contemporary vs. Traditional* entertains a double challenge of exploiting Noh play *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* by a woman Izumi Ashizawa to write Noh Plays in English as Japan is welcoming globalization, and to perform on Noh stage though women are not allowed to. However, she keeps the basic theatrical conventions of Noh drama of mask, the visible and the unseen, the conscious and the unconscious.

In terms of form and function, masks have an inscription of social status on the body through various forms of mutilation, decoration or somatization (Irvine Gregory 1994). Despite their familiarity, masks remain enigmatic. Masks are one of the variety of semiotic systems that are related through their conventional use in disguising, transforming, or displaying identity, therefore they work by coordinating the iconicity. Under the reference of Mexican and Pharaonic dead masks, Izumi Ashizawa introduces reality or imagination between true life, magic or dream each within its time dimensions: a time which would have no value just as space and light at the edge of a black hole, as past may be reviewed and future is forecast. Behind the shade of a mask, soul is transported to the other reality of the unconscious, the world of the soul, fascinating, unforgettable voyage through the senses. During these secret moments

of extreme lowliness and intense weakness, fear and darkness, an attempt to timeless freedom for dreaming tries to decipher mysteries of life and its apocalyptic sense. Since the show consists of episodes of dreams that represent subliminal, non-linear, and illogical world, the style and approach to the mask is also unconventional in *Biding Lady*.

In Noh, masks are only worn by the major characters. The mask would stylize the person it represents and show them in a truer light than reality could do by depicting only the essential traits of character. There are five categories of Noh masks: supernatural beings, demons, men, women and the elderly (Donald Pollock 1995). Noh theater is a good example of a theatrical form in which masks are used, they generally show a neutral expression so it is up to the skill of the actor to bring the mask to life through his acting. The parts are all acted by men, so the task of performing as a young woman is one of the most challenging for any actor because of the exclusion of female characters from the stage of Noh.

Izumi Ashizawa is not the only one Japanese playwright who brought dramatic changes like in her play *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* (2012) enabling women to be behind the Noh mask, in the 20th century some experimentation took place in Japan too: Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru produced Noh plays that had new content but adhered to traditional conventions in production, e.g. *Sanetomo* (1950), the first postwar Noh play. Mishima Yukio, on the other hand, took old plays and added new twists while retaining the old themes like *Thirst for Love* (1950) and *Kyoko's House* (1959). Many other Japanese women playwrights are pioneers for treating national and international issues like feminism, ethnicity, immigration, diaspora even outside Japan like Velina Hsu Houston, the playwright of *Tea* in USA.

The fourth chapter *Cross-Cultural Drama* in which the selected play of *Tea* by Velina Hasu Houston shows the theatrical representation of Japanese culture in America via staging identities of Japanese women in a hybrid, intercultural and alien context. It refers to cultivating the crafts of drama in order to examine self-expression, give voice and break silence. Velina Hasu Houston exploits *Tea* to unveil the true challenges of adaptation in a society where the concept of DNA plays a crucial element of considering the self and the other.

Japanese American Theater has been inspired by the rise in Asian American ethnic identity in the 1960s. Theatrical activities by Asian immigrants and their descendants have been around as long as they have lived in the United States of America. Besides, Asians and Asianness have appeared on mainstream American stages at least since the 18th century. The term “Asian

American” has been coined in the second half of the 1960s as the Asian American Movement rejected “Oriental” as racist and Imperialistic. The conflation had been used by the U.S government to justify systematic and consistent denial of Asian's basic rights as immigrants and citizens, considering that Mongolians and Orientals were among other inferior races such as Negroes, Indians and Mexicans that were disenfranchised and excluded from the national imagination of the ideal new country.

Race is a constructed and often very ambiguous method of identification, based on phenotypical characteristics such as skin color, eye shape, and hair color. However, race has continually been used throughout the history of the United States as a way of informing perceptions of identity and “foreignness” and as a method of both including and excluding racialized minority groups from full participation in the American society: ‘Race, . . . , is a social construct, a mass fantasy in which we all participate, yet it persists as a constant material force as well as a visceral and lived reality.’ (Shilpa Davé, LeiLani Nishime, and Tasha G. Oren 2005, p. 243). In stressing cultural differences, Japanese American literature tended to examine a Japanese American “identity” which privileges commonality over differences (Poor Stuart 2004).

Velina Hasu Houston tends to present the concept of cultural identity. Heterogeneity, hybridity and multiplicity characterize the Asian American theater as part of an aim of that argument being to disrupt the current hegemonic relationship between dominant and minority positions twofold argument about cultural politics (Eng Alvin 2000). Ultimate several plays illustrate the limits of positioning Asian Americans merely in terms of culture-through reinforcing narratives of East versus West in the form of parent-child tensions as illustrative of this popular and problematic discourse in which critics must use as a point of departure. *Tea* goes beyond having a ceremony to quench thirst, but quenching thirsty souls at the cross-roads of hostility and empathy, souls of the West and the East, of the relaxed dead and the resisting living, of the past and the present which may meet in memory. A memory which is collective and cultural as Aristotle refers to it being communicative under social frames, communicating silences, and silencing repression or amnesia.

Although the issue of conflicted identities is a common one in ethnic American literature, the field of Asian American literary studies is new and is constantly being expanded and redefined in order to incorporate new ethnic groups, among them Asian Americans. To date relatively

little has been written about Asian American fiction. In looking specifically at how the racial politics of the United States affects the lives of Asian Americans. In order to understand the literary texts fully, however, it is necessary to place them within the context of both the general history of Asian Americans and the history of the development of Asian American literature as a separate subgenre of Asian American literature. In that context, Japanese women writers aim was to be realized even abroad , mainly as immigrants in the US and to deal with the issues of diaspora, hybridity, racism, power, hierarchy, home and displacement, self and other, integration and alienation, gender and stereotypes with different facets of relationship between women and writing, mothers and daughters, the maternal and history. They addressed the questions about language, writing and the relations between women which have preoccupied the three most influential Japanese generations in America: Issei, Nissei and Sansei. Treating both literary production and theory as texts, they traced the connections between female positions at home and abroad as they matched differences and explored insights regarding Japanese women's identity and subjectivity. *Tea* is a collective response to racism and cultural nationalism, and calls for heterogeneity in various locations. It aims to consider the ethnicity paradigm around nexuses of race, ethnicity, gender and class in Asian America. It emerges to challenge Orientalism inflicted upon Asians and the stereotypes American mainstreams hold of Asian Americans (Huping Ling and Allan W. Austin 2015). Velina Hasu Houston exploits the standards and elements of the dramatic art to fulfill her aim of exploring Japanese women status in USA.

One of the most crucial elements of drama is the story or the plot: story in drama addresses an assumed chronological sequence of events, while plot refers to the way events are in a one single setting locale causally and logically connected. Furthermore, plots can have various plot lines, i.e., different elaborations of parts of the story that are combined to form the entire plot. The story is developed in a minutely choreographed plot, where the individual scenes combine and are logically built up towards the crisis. Thus, plot refers to the actual logical arrangement of events and actions used to explain why something happened, while story simply designates the gist of what happened in a chronological order. plots can always be either linear or non-linear. Non-linear plots are more likely to confuse the audience and they appear more frequently in modern and contemporary drama, which often question ideas of logic and causality. Ashizawa's *The Binding Lady* presents events are in a non specific order, each scene is on its own a short play. The whole play is made of four scenes, in each one the flow of events undergoes the stages of Pfister's diagram: exposition, rising action, climax , falling action and

denouement, and the protagonist who is the dreamer is present in all acts as he is the only element that unites the four scenes into one entire play. However, *Tea* is made up of four scenes and the play is based on a one climaxed linear plot in which the events take place in a one single setting locale in order to follow Aristotle's concept of mimesis and make the play appearing more true-to-life with a traditional closed structure leading to a clear resolution, unlike *The Binding Lady* which goes beyond reality to appear like a dream and does not employ that same traditional unity of plot, place and time and events are presented in different settings where scenes only loosely hang together and are even exchangeable at times and where the ending does not really bring about any conclusive solution or result.

Spatio-temporal descriptions are crucial elements in stage presentations; Space in *Tea* seems very realistic since all the scenes take place in the Tatami room of Himiko's house to take tea, however in *The Binding Lady*, space tends to be more symbolic as the visual aspect is indicated by stage directions, while scenes appear in different settings with a specific casting, light, props....indicating that facts and characters belong to the world of dreams. As for time sequencing, *Tea* tends to use succession; when scenes appear one after the other, while *The Binding Lady* seems using simultaneity. However both plays use temporal frame to show the exact time of scenes through conversations of characters as well as word paintings to describe weather and atmosphere. Discourse time varies in both plays, when duration in *Tea* employs an adaptation between the playing time and the played time through order and events sequencing except for scene one which begins with an analepsis, *The Binding Lady* is based on ellipsis, speed up, slow down, pauses, analepsis and prolepsis. The beginning of *Tea* tends to be *Ab ovo*, whereas *The Binding Lady* starts as in *ultimas res*.

Both plays characters vary from major to minor characters according to speech, time and presence on stage. Characters are all women except Himiko, the protagonist, who is the spirit of a dead woman committing suicide after failure to adaptation. Between the illusion of identity and self-awareness, egotism may engender mistakes in understanding the self and the world; ego-loss refers to loss of one's sense of self due to the use of psychedelics. According to Fromm, an alienated person will be slave to one partial striving in him or her, which is projected into external aims, by which he or she is possessed. (Fromm 1955, p. 114). The masks influence the very way in which realities are categorized. In *Tea* Himiko, the protagonist appears as the focal point of the struggle, while *The Binding Lady* employs the major character of the binding lady which is the antagonist as an eponymous hero. The characters in *The Binding Lady* differ from

one scene to another, except for the young man who is dreaming. A man character is enchanted by a beautiful string of spider web. He reaches out to touch it, but ended up being trapped in a spider web. This is the beginning of his dream. The main character, which is a spider woman, is derived from the Japanese legend of "jorogumo" that shape shifts into a woman, the characters of the play take different characteristics: male, female, human, non-human. In *Tea*, characters are all women except Himiko, the protagonist, who is the spirit of a dead woman, and they differ according to their status.

Dramatic language is modelled on real-life conversations among people, and yet, when one watches a play, one also has to consider the differences between real talk and drama talk. Dramatic language is ultimately always constructed or made up and it often serves several purposes. On the level of the story-world of a play, language can of course assume all the pragmatic functions that can be found in real-life conversations, too: e.g., to ensure mutual understanding and to convey information, to persuade or influence someone, to relate one's experiences or signal emotions, etc. However, dramatic language is often rhetorical and poetic, i.e., it uses language in ways which differ from standard usage in order to draw attention to its artistic nature. Both plays use monologues, dialogues, asides, ad spectators, stichomythia repartee, and wit. Thus, the use of Japanese words represent a considerable cultural appurtenance.

The origins of speech are probably to be found in emotional exclamations and the imitative sounds which accompany imitative action. The inner urge to self-expression, joined with the capacity of mimicry, not only led to language but made a natural union of song and dance in which the primal elements of drama appear. The expressive moments of primitive life were essentially dramatic, and the primal elements of drama may be found wherever ethnic societies have had their beginnings, for each primitive society held within itself the germ of dramatic culture. Thus, not one but many distinct origins of the drama, may be recognized, as a form of the human expression and marked similarities in the development of the drama among widely scattered peoples. Such similarities are but evidence of the essential oneness.

Traditionally throughout this period between 600 AD and today, Japanese Drama has taken many forms, being characterized by a blending of dramatic context, music, and perhaps most importantly, a strong emphasis on various dance forms. Japanese Drama throughout its history has remained heavily stylized, relying on symbolism in both story, setting and costuming which was often highly elaborate in its design and usage (Osinski Zbigniew 1991). Some more

modern dramatic pieces do reflect some naturalistic and realistic approaches, however many still remain rigidly entrenched in tradition and often reflect a centuries old repertoire of plays or scenes.

Myth and not religion, explains well the relationship between the Japanese people and their homeland soil. The legend, which is no more than a myth, shows the relationship between the Japanese people and their country and represents the standards of the Shinto in Japan. According to this legend, both the emperor and the country he reigns over are descended from the same line. The first emperor, Jimmu, was particularly the first cousin to the land he ruled. A Japanese cannot imagine himself to be Japanese unless he is part of his homeland (Jonathan Rice 2004). It is that union between human and land that formulates the Japanese identity. The Japanese are not a religious race; their moral codes are based on mythological and philosophical ideas. Nevertheless, religion plays a role in the Japanese society. This appurtenance to the Japanese land is present in both plays. In *The Binding Lady* is based on this philosophy and mythology, as the notion of life after death indicates its apocalyptic sense (Zimbaro 1996, p. 20), while *Tea* indicates how Japanese are made of their land with specific physical appearance, eyes shape, skin color just the same color of Japanese soil, and cultural tradition that is preserved even abroad.

The dramatic and religious worship are tightly tied. Religion itself is an expression of the social mind, and the social mind in its self-expression provides the material, which under a religious umbrella, represents art. The dramatic expression of life, under the inspiration of high social contacts in exercising religion shapes forms of beauty, which constitutes art. The origin of Japanese drama was socially religious. Religious and social customs are so united in the culture of the Japanese race, each one influencing the other. The social life of a simple agricultural people provided the material, which religious ceremonies of worship wrought into the forms of art still preserved in Kagura and Noh.

Buddhist and Shinto influences are generally of higher level of wealth brought about the popularization of drama during Japan's middle ages (1300-1700). Like all drama, the first music and acting were ceremonies celebrating the supernatural beings, performed in the natural environment. As time passed, these dramas developed into sophisticated traditions and told stories ranging from the tragic to the comic, in tones ranging from religious to ribald. They are still widely performed today in Japan like Yukio Mishima's *Confessions of a Mask*. Spirits, ghosts and supernatural beings shape the flow of dramatic scenes originated from characters of

various Japanese legends, although many are also original. One of the most mysterious such characters is Noh Face, who is perhaps slightly antagonistic, and comes off as a spirit of greed. The concept for Noh Face is unique with a collection of strange powers that are made of mythological spirit. Those religious, mythological and cultural traits characterize both plays, for example: the notion of afterlife.

The meaning and symbolism of masks and masking and the cultural function of masking ritual in a dramatic context play a vital role as far as theatrical conventions are concerned. This is to determine how masks are able to perform such work, through a dramatic perspective that treats masks as icons and indexes of identity. Such a framework also broadens the category of mask to include other signaling systems, which may be called upon by the mythology of identity in a particular country like Japan, expanding the traditional and the stereotypical conception of the mask. The relationship between masking and dramaturgy, and variability of forms of masks, are illustrated through examples of Japanese drama, particularly Noh Theatre.

The history of wearing masks in Japan for religious rituals is estimated to date back to the country's Jomon period, an era spanning 10,000 BC to 300 BC. Crude masks made from shells and simple pottery evolved into masks with more elaborate faces during the Kofun period, from the 4th through 6th centuries. Following the introduction of Buddhism and Korean influences in the 6th century, masks were also used for secular purposes. Gigaku masks, which covered the entire head, were used in dance performances, but their popularity died out by the end of the Edo period in 1868. Kagura dance performances, on the other hand, in which masks cover only the face, have survived and are still being carried on today.

The aesthetic and the performative function of the masking ritual separate the body and the visual identifier of the face. They serve to liberate the wearer from the inhibitions, laws and niceties of a seemingly well-ordered everyday life but are also a reminder that chaos, destruction, and mutability are always with us. (Foreman 2000, p. 27–29). As an iconic symbol of theater, its function is to be representational, emotive and indexical and disguise. Anthropologically, the mask works as a metaphor or signifier for the spectator to separate the individual performer, and distance that perception to allow an alienation effect.

Elizabeth Tonkin sees the mask as a means to articulating power, the power of the individual to transform and become “other”, and the power of the spectator to take cognitive control and to accept experiences (Tonkin 1979, p. 237-248). This analysis appeals to the psychological

and cognitive processes but as Pollock suggests, this analysis limits an understanding in that 'one must interpret this as the work masks do rather than how they do it' (Pollock 1995, p. 581-597) Pollock further develops the concept of what a mask does. The mask works by concealing or modifying those signs of identity which conventionally, represent the transformed person or an entirely new identity. Although every culture may recognize numerous media through which identity may be presented, masks achieve their special effect by modifying those limited number of conventionalized signs of identity (Pollock 1995, p. 584). Pollock's concepts, which could be further researched in multiple academies of thought, can be identified as having recognized inadvertently applied twentieth-century theater practice. The use of masks as a rehearsal tool is not a new concept but one that appears to be lacking in reference in twenty-first century theater practice.

The concept of the mask as a modifier of conventional signs of identity can be seen in Bertolt Brecht's use of masks, as a deliberate act of alienation of the spectator. Derived in part from Vsevolod Meyerhold and Edwin Piscator, it was used to allow the audience to be conscious participants within a spectacle. This is different to the effect of the masks upon the spectator as has been theorized in relation to Greek Theatre, which in part is accounted for within the cultural basis for the society and the pragmatic requirements for performance. Importantly, when viewed in an open-air space, the mask was an effective way of instantly establishing a sense of theatricality. The wearer of the mask is immediately separated from the spectators, and as the vase paintings show, just the simple act of donning a mask indicates that a performance is about to take place. Lastly, in an open-air space that allowed the external environment to inform the aesthetic experience of watching drama, the mask provides a visual focus for emotional communication, and is able to stimulate a deeply personal response from the spectators. The mask demands to be watched. (Meineck 2011, p. 113-121).

The aesthetic experience is present in Noh as an organic and living system because of the high stylization of performance which is not realistic like in western theater. The main performer in a Noh play (the *shite*) usually wears a mask. However, in Noh plays about living, youngish or middle-aged men such as the *shite* in the first act of *Atsumori*, the actors do not wear masks but they must keep their faces expressionless just like masks in order to avoid individuality of performers who create art directly instead of creating an illusion, which the audience is asked to accept as real. In realistic drama, each actor portrays one character through words, vocal and facial expressions, and movements. Events are shown (dramatized) rather than told (narrated).

In Noh the entire ensemble unites to create one being, who is most often something more than a normal human. To accomplish this, Noh utilizes the narrative and lyric modes as well as the dramatic. In fact, the dramatic mode is normally used only to present the least dramatic material. The shite's actions, for example, may portray emotion through abstract movement, illustrate metaphors, dramatize narrative, or fill the kinetic forms of the system. The psychological awareness of their unique opportunity and the relative newness of the ensemble to its individual members combined with their familiarity with the material creates a tension, which may burst into powerful creativity. For an hour and a half, the theatre may turn into a living picture of profound beauty. All the actors were in the painted mask make-up during *Binding Lady*. The declamatory facial expressions also signified as another form of mask. A huge man's mask head rolls into the space, then in the next second a floor set piece makes the shape of body, merging with the head mask and body together to establish a huge puppet in one second. Since the show consists of episodes of dreams that represent subliminal, non-linear, and illogical world, the style and approach to the mask is also unconventional in *Binding Lady*. As for *Tea*, the presence of Himiko's spirit on the stage is with a specific physical appearance, white long dress and a bright make up.

The device of mask as a metaphor within the text and as a tool on the stage has important developments in the fields of psychology, sociology, anthropology, religion and philosophy. The usage of masks may fall on the satiric and the grotesque category, the ritual, myth and spectacle or dream, images and psychological projections as well as social roles assumed and imposed. Satiric masking suggest that the masker is less than a human and spiritually incomplete. Tracing its roots to Greek comedy, English folk mummery, Asian and African folk customs and theater, Japanese Gagaku and Kyogen as well as Commediadell'arte satiric masking tend to isolate and then distort the base instincts of man in order to hold them up to ridicule and the spectator's reaction is analytical and rational rather than emotional. In modern theater it begins with Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi* and its portrait of selfishness and hypocrisy lying on individualism and social struggle. Other modern dramatists like Brecht, Cocteau, Arden, Goll and Genet deploy satiric masking to delineate the horrors transmitted by the masker since he is separated from his self. In *The Binding Lady*, equally, the actor is protected by his inhumanity to inflict pain. In addition to her usage of the heroic mask which represents the quest for the nobility of the man and which derives from four primitive traditions: African ritual Christian ceremonies, Japanese Noh theater and Greek theater. They all involve dance, stylized gesture, song and chant. Modern drama tends to be ritualistic in the works of Yeats, Reinhardt,

O'Neill, Claudel, Artaud, Genet and Brooke. In *The Binding Lady*, the main character, which is a spider woman, is derived from the Japanese legend of "jorogumo" and the characters of the play take different characteristics and forms.

Making dream images and mental conflicts visible through masks is based on the personifications of medieval morality plays, which is nurtured by the modern discoveries of Freud about the nature of the unconscious mental processes. At the same level are the explorations of Schlegel, Scaupenhauer, and Nietzsche on the dualistic nature of the personality. Schlegel who considered the function of the mind very dramatic open the doors to new insights for expressing the perpetual dialectic of the inner life of man upon the stage. Such attempt ranged from masked projections of archetypes as in Toller's *Transfiguration or ghosts* in Yeats's *The Dreaming of the Bones* to masked depictions of fragmented single personalities in works like Andreyev's *The Black Masker*. Evreinov's monodrama *The Theater of the Soul*, and Wedekind's *Spring's Awakening* viewed the entire stage as a mirror of the mind with an autonomous reality and significance of its own. Space and time are treated both poetically and metaphorically in *Binding Lady*. Rather, they opened up different layers of poetic languages. For instance, the protagonist, a male dreamer, appears as a marionette first, then in the next second, with a help of lighting and fog, it transforms into a human version of a dreamer, signifying the shift of conscious-unconscious and realistic/ imaginary space and time.

However, social masking tends to be based on the Jungian idea of the frozen persona, the protective and the false social self which implies the wearing of social masks by men. Those who seek masks of control as in Brecht's *The Good Person of Szechwan* lose themselves to the intoxicating freedom the mask temporary affords them. Those who seek escape from the burden of personal identity by donning anonymous group masks; as in *The Measures Taken* by Brecht, *The Blacks* by Genet or *Minetti* by Thomas Bernhard find that group masking offers no real protection or solace. The mask in its fixity suggests permanence, but the face behind it withers anyway. Thus, social masking is a concrete manifestation of the awful paradox of the human condition in which man's desire for transcendence results directly from his perpetual insecurity and cosmic anxiety. In *Tea*, each woman has a specific social mask varying between integration and rejection of the American host society.

The success of companies like Switzerland's Mummenschantz, France's Theatre du Soleil, San Francisco Mime Theater and Snake Theater is proof enough of the continuing viability of masks. Plays like: O'Neil's *The Hairy Ape*, *The Emperor Jones*, *Marco Millions* and *Lazarus*

Laughed all involving bold experiments with masks; were once produced on Broadway. Masks, far from being abstract, dehumanizing or archaic, are of the very essence of imaginative perception in the theater. It offers the dramatist a flexible creative tool to embody ideas analogically. Through the mask, a textual metaphor can be transformed into a concrete and resonant stage image. Another virtue of the mask is its positive effect upon the creative process and effect of acting. The actor in a mask is more, not less, theatrical than an actor without a mask because in the duality of simultaneously being both oneself and someone else lies a consciousness of artifice, of roleplaying and of temporary transformation that celebrate the very power of the histrionic act.

Nature in the Japanese culture and literature as well is highly present even in today's technological and urbanized age. Nature is not only present in literature, painting, and traditional arts such as: *Ikibana* (flower arrangement) and tea ceremony, but in many aspects of daily life. The Japanese people have a long-standing and close affinity with nature, rooted in a deep and influential agricultural heritage centered on wet-field rice farming, as the climate and geography of Japan brought about a profound sensitivity to natural references. Perspectives of insects and fish were very emblematic in literature, especially insects known for their song in the *Haikai* poetry in the *Waka* tradition became a metaphor of everyday, gritty commoner existence in farms and cities (Shirane 2011, p.195). To know the meaning of *hana* is the most important element in understanding Noh, and it's greatest secret the presence of natural elements on Noh stage remains a mystic experience of an honorable presence, a state of transcended awareness in the actor and audience, brought about by the performance of the actor. A flower is used to symbolize this state. For Ashizawa, the incorporation of natural elements (insects like spiders, trees, fire...) in *The Binding Lady* is based on the tradition Noh Theater which depicts the aspects of nature symbolically and philosophically due to the Japanese animistic belief. Equally in *Tea*, tea ceremony as well as tea as a plant is valued as a Japanese cultural hallmark.

Prior to the Meiji Restoration Japanese women wrote to trace the concepts of women's rights that dated back to antiquity. Japanese women were bound by the traditional patriarchal system where senior male members of the family maintains their authority in the household. While the transition from barbarism to social life had its advantages, it also compelled the individual to repress his instinctual behavior and thereby to minimize the chances of his life pleasurable. Such repression is all the more severe in the rigid, tradition-bound society of Japan. The

resultant suffering is also shared more by Japanese women, because the social norms and moral codes of Japan are particularly disadvantageous to women.

Japanese women writers were to campaign for women's rights (such as in contract law, property, and voting) while also promoting bodily integrity, autonomy, and reproductive rights for women. Feminist campaigns have changed societies, particularly in Japan, by achieving women's suffrage, gender neutrality, equal pay for women, reproductive rights for women, and the right to enter into contracts and own property. Feminists have worked to protect women and girls from domestic violence, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. They have also advocated for workplace rights, including maternity leave, and against forms of discrimination against women.

Drawing on disciplines as diverse as structuralism, psychoanalysis, semiotics, socio-linguistics and Marxist analyses of literature, they suggest the variety and vigor of feminist literary criticism, as well as representing some of the debates currently animating it. Topics of common concern range from the nature of a women's tradition in literature to the scope and method of feminist literary criticism itself. Successfully bridging the gap between literary criticism and literary production, the scope of Japanese women writers is to be of considerable interest to the current developments in literary criticism as well as the field of women's studies at the international scale. *The Binding Lady* allowed Ashizawa to be a Japanese woman who is creator and performer of Noh drama. As *Tea*, for Houston, considers the unlikelihood of a multiethnic, multicultural, female voice finding ground and making progress in a Western theatre world that is largely patriarchal and White European.

At the pedagogical level, the difference between the theater and the classroom is that, in theater everything is contrived so that the audience gets the kicks. In the classroom, the participants get the kicks. The effectiveness of drama in teaching EFL may not be doubted, it is natural for someone who has no experience in it to approach it with hesitancy. There are so many things that have to be taken into consideration before one leaps into putting up a play. A teacher may come across several constraints such as an already prescribed text to "cover" in a stipulated time period, lack of space, a paucity of monetary funds or disinterest and worse, skepticism of colleagues. To quote Gavin Bolton (in Dougill J. 1987). 'Drama is a unique tool, vital for language development' as it simulates reality and develops self-expression. In Drama Education, mask work is undertaken and presented as both a methodology and knowledge base. Masking can capture moments of humanity, and is well suited to trained utilization in

education (Roy 2016). The act of masking, and challenges associated with the wearing of our masks. The Arts allow us to communicate ideas and understandings in alternative ways to the limitations of traditional literacy. They allow students with challenges; the ability to make mistakes, develop learning and communicate it open without barriers (Roy 2016).

From traditional foot binding and Geta Japanese shoes to high heels of liberty, justice and individualism, walks the Japanese woman on the red carpet of challenge and resistance, as her leg is chained to the heavy ball of Japanese patriarchal norms and hegemony when femininity may put her back on her heels. She turns to the far ancient spirits that reside behind the mask of her dead ancestors and puts it again to give it rebirth in a new form, so that her voice would resonate louder and breaks silence of her passivity patience, obedience as well as tender weakness, when she gets on stage of a forbidden theater. While theater is the unique space devoted to meditation and contemplation, with its both aesthetic and transgressive edges, perception lies beyond ambiguity and reality to understand *The Binding Lady* that allowed Ashizawa to be a Japanese woman being a creator and performer of Noh drama. As *Tea*, for Houston, considers the unlikelihood of a multiethnic, multicultural, female voice finding ground and making progress in a Western theater world that is largely patriarchal and White European. Velina Hasu Houston's *Tea* uses history and poetic writing to weave a drama about Japanese "war brides" living in Kansas. Both Houston and Ashizawa with their implementation of pure Japanese theatrical conventions based on mythology, they allow students into the world of Japanese culture and cross-cultural relationships. Teaching this drama brings students an appreciation of the challenges facing immigrants and an example of the rich cultural diversity that is part of the American society's landscape, as well as, the cultural traits of a different country like Japan.

Further research may open new horizons of scientific investigation concerning the semiotics of drama and theater challenging the traditional vs the contemporary in other parts of Asia like: China, Korea and India in comparison with European theaters like the Roman and Greek drama in terms of signs, codes, systems and the performance of the text, its logic and the dramatic discourse. The usage of masks as an aesthetic dramatic device and how it may fall within the domain of pedagogical drama.

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Appendix 1: Photos and Biographies of the Japanese women Playwrights

Photos and Biographies

Velina Hasu Houston

Velina Hasu Houston, born Velina Avisia Hasu Houston, (on May 5, 1957) is an award winning American playwright, essayist, poet, author, editor, and screenwriter. She has had many works produced, presented, and published, with some drawing from her experience of being multiracial, as well as from the immigrant experiences of her family and those she encountered growing up in Junction City, Kansas. Her plays are studied in the US, Asia, and Europe in high schools and in colleges and universities. She is the only American playwright to amass a body of work that explores the transnational US-Japan relationship through stories that include a bilateral, global view of identity and belonging. The former Honorable Consul General of Japan of Los Angeles Kazuo Kodama paralleled Houston's work in drama to the work of Isamu Noguchi in fine art, both being offspring of one Japanese parent and one American parent.



Izumi Ashizawa



Born in 1947 Izumi Ashizawa is a playwright, director and puppet designer. She is an assistant professor. She has received Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Faculty Meritorious awards for both Excellence in Directing and Excellence in Scenic Design for her Florida production of Gilgamesh. Ashizawa is a recipient of numerous awards from different countries: Norwegian Cultural Fund, Australian Government Fund for the Artists, UNESCO-Aschberg Award, Tehran Municipality Culture and Arts Organization Award, Best Performance Award — IIFUT Festival, Special Performance Award — Women Theatre Festival, Puffin Foundation Award and Gritchen Johnson Award. She is a graduate of Yale School of Drama.

Appendix 2 Synopses of the Plays Selected for the Research Study

Synopsis 1: Velina Hasu Houston *Tea* (1987)

In a town near a military base in Kansas, four Japanese women, all post-war emigrants with American servicemen husbands, meet at the home of a fifth, Himiko, who has shot herself. The four women have differences of background, temperament, outlook, and status, and two are widows. During the meeting, they clean and tidy the house, drink tea together, and come to a difficult accommodation with each other. Himiko is present as a spirit, gradually reconciling herself to her fate and death. As they undergo their rite of passage, the women "transform" to their past selves in Japan, to their husbands, and to their own children, so that the playwright through these techniques creates a full and complex portraiture of the women coming to terms with their cultural limbo in a largely alien society. At the climax, the tragic circumstances behind Himiko's suicide are fully revealed in a moving epiphany. Himiko, the main character in *Tea* loses that kind of relation with all persons around her, even with herself. She experiences the bitterness of alienation and felt rejected by her family in her home land, by her husband and daughter in America where she hoped having a better life, and even rejected by herself. The fact that has led her to murder her husband and commit suicide. In one way or another, women in *Tea* represent the Japanese women in America who "have endured immigration detention centers, cultivated the earth, married in hopes of a brighter future, toiled at demeaning jobs in order to survive, or simply attempted to live an independent life." Their actions, confined mostly to personal decision, only cumulatively contribute to a sense of triumph.

Synopsis 2: Izumi Ashizawa *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* (2012)

A man character is enchanted by a beautiful string of spider web. He reaches out to touch it, but ended up being trapped in a spider web. The following scenes 1-4 are the dream of this man.

Scene 1:

[Sound of water drip. Lights up dimly. Water chant. A cocoon hanging in the air. A drop of water drips down from the cocoon. Lights on a man (Nick) SL. He is wearing a long black wrap skirt. He sees water dripping on the floor, looks up to see the source of water. He notices the cocoon in the air and approaches. He stops directly below the cocoon and looks up again. The cocoon illuminates mysteriously. The man slowly stretches his one arm, trying to touch it. Water continues to drop. The cocoon slowly descends, When the cocoon reaches to the height that the man can almost touch it, a huge spider web emerges in the air all of a sudden and starts to enwrap the man. The spider web continues to expand in the air and another layer of the web completely covers up the man's body. Music continues along with the sucking sound (Vanessa Nolan water chant). Lights slowly goes down. Lights on a puppet. The same action is repeated by a puppet. Lights slowly fade down, and as the puppet disappears, a web cocoon, which trapped the man inside prior to the puppet scene, opens and flies up. The man is no longer there!]

A woman character first is controlling a small spider in her hand, but later completely being taken over by the spider---and eventually transforms into spider herself, and later gives birth to a spider baby. The mode of the presentation would be Japanese ghost story.

[A woman in white kimono starts to unwrap an obi belt. She slowly turns continuously, revealing the inside pattern of the obi---a white spider web on a black background. A woman undress her kimono, revealing her body completely covered with spider web tattoo. A spider puppet lands on her spider web body. At first, it was a gentle interaction, then the relationship starts to grow violent). The woman is later completely taken over by the spider, and eventually transforms into a spider herself.

[A woman's double appears in a black spider web skirt. She walks forward slowly, then extends her one leg through a front hole on the skirt. A baby mask on her knee. She manipulates the baby knee mask puppet combined with the hand spider puppet. A male traveler lost in the forest in the dark at night, and found a light afar. He approaches to the source of the light and discovers a small hut. He enters. An old woman spinning the thread. She promises him to offer a peaceful one-night sleep, but never to open the door. The man wakes up in the middle of the night. Curious about the forbidden door, he slowly slides the door just a few inches. He startles, and runs off crazily in the dark forest. What he sees was a magnificent spider and human skulls tangled with spider web. The spider turns to the open door and screams.

Scene 2:

Lights up. A man in the attire of a traveler is running in slow motion. He is apparently distressed. He is running frantically, occasionally looks back with fear, then continues running. It is as if he

is running away from something. He trips and falls. Sound of breath and heartbeat continues. A man is positioned to different direction, still running in slow motion, trying to escape from something. Lights abruptly out from him, then comes back in 2 seconds. A man is positioned to different direction, still running in slow motion. Sound of breath and pounding heartbeat continues. As he runs, he starts to see a small light in far distance. He realizes it and approaches--instead of a man approaches, the source of light comes (Cluadia) close to him). A small 2-dimensional house puppet with a lighted window emerges in the darkness upstage. It slowly advances---the house is getting bigger to the man's eyes. (small house-middle house-big house--Claudia) Finally web set raises horizontally and with its center hoisted up---making a shape of a roog. The weavin set piece roles down and represents the door of a house. The man slowly and carefully steps toward the house and knocks at the door 3 times. Chanting---Vanessa N's 'water chant' + Vanessa T's Black paint chant)]

Voice

Who knocks at the door in the middle of night...?

Man

A veil of dark night's mist hinders my way. I am chased, running for a long time.
May I ask for a refuge here, just for one night?

Voice

You sound awfully distressed. Whoever you are, I cannot leave a desperate man out. Come inside. It is a modest little hut of a poor old woman, but at least serves as your shelter.

[The Man enters. The sound of weaving---black paint chant. An old lady (Vanessa T) is sitting in front of the weaving---her back toward the audience so that her face is not visible to the audience.]

Man

How kind of you to...

Old Lady

SILENCE, if you please...while I finish the last line of the string.

[As he chant continue, the red weaving string runs across the weaving machine. The old woman is still in the same position, moving only her arms---simultaneous arm movements of Vanessa T. The horizontal red thread moves across as if the arm movement of the old lady motivates

and controls the string movements. After the several repeated movements of the stings, the old woman stops her arms. The string freezes at the same time.]

Old Lady

Night fell completely. (looks at the Man) You look utterly distressed, young man.

Good night sleep will rejuvenate your exhausted flesh.

[A sucking sound afar]

[The old lady tries to stand up and freezes—her back is still facing to the audience.]

Old Lady

Feel at home and sleep soundly. BUT, promise me one thing.

[The Man nods. As the Old Lady slowly turns her face to the audience for the first time, she smiles enigmatically.]

Old Lady

Promise to never open this door.

Man

By my soul.

Old Lady

(her eyes glare) Enjoy your long and peaceful sleep. (smiles)

Scene 3:

地獄のかんだたと蜘蛛の糸

お釈迦様 (Shaka-Muni) looks in the pond. Far far down in the water, he sees the residents of the hell, repeatedly tortured. Some in the blood pool drowning, some on the mount of needles, etc. Shaka remembers one man, Kandata, in the hell did one good things when he is alive. He saved a small spider. Thus Shaka put that same spider who was saved by Kandata at the edge of the pond. The spider releases her one thin long string. Kandata realizes it, and starts to climb up. But half way through, he realizes hundreds of other residents of the hell start to follow him, climbing through up through the spider string. Outraged, he kicks off these people below him and screams, “This is mine”. Before his line finishes, the spider string breaks and Kandata, too, falls down back to the hell.

Scene 4:

Twin marionette---“No String Attached”

Girl A puppeteer manipulate Girl B puppet. Girl B’s legs are artificial legs. No strings attached to Girl B, but act as if she is manipulated by strings. Suddenly after a while, a leg of Girl B starts to come off. Another leg of Girl B comes off. Instead, manipulation Girl A’s legs become Girl B’s legs. The reversal of manipulating and manipulated with the illusion of costume and movements.

(Epilogue)---approximately 2 minutes

Same image as prologue. A man releases himself from the spider web.

Appendix 3 Questionnaires

Questionnaire N° 1 for Velina Hasu Houston

- 1- Japanese American drama faced a big challenge to impose itself in the national canon, how can you consider the position of Tea?
- 2- Would you explain how the genre of drama made you voiceful in a multi racist context: being a woman, Japanese and Black;
- 3- What is the message you tend to transmit to the audience showing diaspora behind suicide?
- 4- To what extent was the use of some Japanese cultural notions like: tea, kimono... and some Japanese vocabulary significant in an intercultural theater?
- 5- Can you explain how you exploited several cultural elements like: spirits, imaginative Vs real and myth which are very crucial in Japanese literature and drama?
- 6- How do you consider the presence of theatrical elements like: space Vs time and present Vs Past in Tea?

Questionnaire N° 2 for Izumi Ashizawa

- 1- Is the use of English language in your play considered as a result of Japanese openness to the world especially within the introduction of 'Cool Japan' and the spread of anime industry?
- 2- Taking into account that women were not allowed in Japan to perform in the Noh theater, how would you consider the way you transgress this cultural dimension in your play *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* which is basically a modernized Noh play?
- 3- Natural elements, myths and legends are the essence of your play *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady*, how were you able to exploit those Japanese cultural dimensions to create a modernized Noh play?
- 4- What is the message you tend to transmit through *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady* to the world wide audience, since the play is gaining an international position being performed in many countries all over the world?
- 5- How did you employ the constraints of time and space on stage when you dealt with notions like: Conscious Vs Unconscious, and Reality Vs dream?
- 6- To what extent you exploit the communicative functions of masks being the Japanese most powerful theatrical element in your play?

Appendix 4 Emails Exchanged with Izumi Ashizawa

Re: Request

Izumi Ashizawa <izumedusa@gmail.com>

Ven 29/06/2018, 07:22

À : emy zela <imenhenry@hotmail.fr>

Dear Emy,

Thank you for your email. I am glad that your dissertation is going forward successfully.

I just wrote and directed my new show at the Estonian National Drama Theatre a few months ago. It is called "Vaike Jumalana (The Little Goddess)". I am wondering if there is a possibility in your country's theatre to remount this show with local cast? In this case, starting with training, rehearsing, and mounting the show with local actors/ musicians.

If not, is there a possibility to tour the show to your country?---documentary article of the process of this production "The Little Goddess" will be published as a 1 chapter in a book published by Rutledge publication next year.

Or, another suggestion would be creating a new work with local cast in your country. Like I did in Estonia, Bulgaria, and other countries, I offer technical and theoretical workshop/training, then moving onto the actual rehearsal itself, and create a piece with actors when I direct in different country. It will become a package of pedagogical and practical performance making. Do you think of any theatre, institution, or organization that would be interested in producing and hosting this type of collaborative package?

Please let me know.

And, here is the answers to your questions:

1. It is not related to "Cool Japan" concept. It is related more to the "Soft Diplomacy"---to reach various audiences in multiple cultural backgrounds. I consider my works are consistently the act of cultural diplomacy through arts.
2. "Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady" is an amalgam of Noh, Butoh, and avant-garde puppetry. It is considered a new genre of style that was inspired by Noh and other Japanese aesthetics. Thus, it is not necessarily considered to be a transgressive Noh, rather a new genre. Thus, it allows me as a woman to be a creator and performer.
3. Tradition Noh theatre pieces consist of the theme of natural elements and legend as well. And it is our tradition to depict the aspects of nature (both symbolically and philosophically) in

literature due to our animistic belief. So, it is quite natural approach for me to incorporate the elements of nature in my pieces.

4. The message itself is up to the audience how to receive. Depending on each audience's cultural background, they would perceive the performance differently. I consider that my performances trigger the audience's imagination that can be applicable to any country and culture. Thus the format is open-ended and symbolic, sometimes metaphorical. I rather not to give specific answers to the audience. I would like them to think about them. They may have one answer now, but may have completely different answers and perspectives after 5 years or 10years. When we performed i" Binding Lady" in Piura, Peru, a family of audience approached us after the performance and told me that the performance triggered their memory of political oppression, and functioned as mental cleansing prices. Thus, for them, my performance functioned as Aristotlean "catharsis".

5. Space and time are treated both poetically and metaphorically in "Binding Lady", so I didn't consider these elements to be constraints. Rather, they opened up different layers of poetic languages. For instance, the protagonist, a male dreamer, appears as a marionette first, then in the next second, with a help of lighting and fog, it transforms into a human version of a dreamer —signifying the shift of conscious/unconscious and realistic/ imaginary space and time.

6. All the actors were in the painted mask make-up during "Binding Lady". The declamatory facial expressions also signified as another form of mask. A huge man's mask head rolls into the space, then in the next second a floor set piece makes the shape of body, merging with the head mask and body together to establish a huge puppet in one second. Since the show consists of episodes of dreams that represent subliminal, non-linear, and illogical world, the style and approach to the mask is also unconventional in "Biding Lady".

Sincerely,

Izumi Ashizawa

On Thu, Jun 28, 2018 at 2:29 PM, emy zela <imenhenry@hotmail.fr> wrote:

De : emy zela <imenhenry@hotmail.fr>

Envoyé : samedi 27 janvier 2018 09:22:54

À : Izumi Ashizawa

Objet : RE: Request

Hello

It is an honor for me to inform you that I am achieving the final steps of my research

about Dreams in the Arms of a binding Lady

It would be a pleasure if you can come to Algeria to attend my viva

but I still need first to ask you some considerable questions as you are the playwright

it will be very kind of you if you provide me with answers:

1- Is the use of English language in your play considered as a result of Japanese openness to the world especially within the introduction of 'Cool Japan' and the spread of anime industry?

2- Taking into account that women were not allowed in Japan to perform in the Noh theater, how would you consider the way you transgress this cultural dimension in your play Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady which is basically a modernized Noh play?

3- Natural elements, myths and legends are the essence of your play Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady, how were you able to exploit those Japanese cultural dimensions to create a modernized Noh play?

4- What is the message you tend to transmit through Dreams in the Arms of the

Binding Lady to the world wide audience,since the paly is gaining an internaonal
posion being performed in many countries all over the world?

5- How did you employ the constraints of me and space on stage when you dealt
with noons like: Conscious Vs Unconscious, and Reality Vs dream?

6- To what extent you expolit the commnicave funcons of masks being the
Japanese most powerful theatrical element in your play?

Thank you so much in advance

Best regards

De : Izumi Ashizawa <izumi.ashizawa@stonybrook.edu>

Envoyé : mercredi 7 septembre 2016 10:00

À : emy zela

Objet : Re: Request

Dear Emy,

Thank you for your email. What kind of my personal informaon may support your thesis?

Sincerely,

Izumi Ashizawa

On Tuesday, September 6, 2016, emy zela <imenhenry@hotmail.fr> wrote:

Hello

I am a student preparing a thesis on your play Dreams in the Arms of the binding lady, but I need some informaon about you as a playwright including your date of birth and some hints concerning your personal life.

Best regards

Sent from my Wiko BIRDY

--

Izumi Ashizawa

Assistant Professor of Direcng and Devising

Theatre Arts

Stony Brook University

Appendix 5 Emails Exchanged with Velina Hasu Houston

Email 1

One more photo

Velina Hasu Houston <greenteagirlorangepekoecountry@gmail.com>

Lun 25/06/2018, 02:43

À : imenhenry@hotmail.fr <imenhenry@hotmail.fr>

■ 1 pièces jointes (1 Mo)

tea poster pan asian 2018-05-24 at 1.18.18 AM.png;

--

Velina Hasu Houston, M.F.A., Ph.D.

ヒューストン . ベリーナ . ハス

Playwright

<http://www.velinahasuhouston.com>

School of Dramatic Arts University of
Southern California Distinguished Professor
of Dramatic Writing Director of MFA
Dramatic Writing
Head of Undergraduate Playwriting
Resident Playwright
Associate Dean of Faculty

Affiliated Faculty:

East Asian Studies

American Studies and Ethnicity

Co-founder, Asian American Studies, 1992

Associated Faculty Member: USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions & Culture

Founder, USC Graduate Playwriting Studies 1991

Co-founder, Study of Asian American Culture at USC, 1992

Email 2

08/01/2019

Courrier - emy zela - Outlook

Photographs

Velina Hasu Houston <greenteagirlorangepekoecountry@gmail.com>

Lun 25/06/2018, 01:58

À : imenhenry@hotmail.fr <imenhenry@hotmail.fr>

■ 4 pièces jointes (6 Mo)

photo tea with music by michael lamont 2017-02-09 at 11.54.16 AM copy.jpg; image tea with music poster 2012 ewp.png; Screen Shot 2018-06-24 at 6.56.57 PM.png; Screen Shot 2018-06-24 at 6.57.19 PM.png;

Dear Emy:

I give you permission to use these photos in your work.

Best regards,
Velina

Here are some other photos to look at:

<http://www.velinahasuhouston.com/photographs.html>

--

Velina Hasu Houston, M.F.A., Ph.D.

ヒューストン・ペリーナ・ハス

Playwright

<http://www.velinahasuhouston.com>

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of Dramatic Writing Director of MFA
Dramatic Writing
Head of Undergraduate Playwriting
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Affiliated Faculty:

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Co-founder, Asian American Studies, 1992

Associated Faculty Member: USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions & Culture

Founder, USC Graduate Playwriting Studies 1991

Co-founder, Study of Asian American Culture at USC, 1992

Email 3

Greetings

Velina Hasu Houston <greenteagirlorangepekoecountry@gmail.com>

Lun 25/06/2018, 01:48

À : imenhenry@hotmail.fr <imenhenry@hotmail.fr>

Dear Emy, if I may,

I am not sure how to address you: Ms. Imene Henry? Ms. Emy Zela? Mrs. Henry Zellat? Please let me know which you prefer and I will address you properly from now on. I ask that you simply call me Velina.

Yes, I remember you. Because I had not heard from you in some time, I thought something had happened. Please keep in touch and let me know your progress. What is the name of your university and your program? When do you expect to complete your master's thesis? May I please read it? I would very much like to. Also, I am very interested in this Japanese playwright that you mention -- Ms. Izumi Ashizawa. Will you please send me her plays to read?

I am answering your questions below. I may use some of my responses in my blog. I hope that you are doing well in life in general.

Thank you for your interest in my work. I will send you photos from productions of Tea.

Best regards,
Velina

YOUR QUESTIONS & MY RESPONSES:

- 1- Japanese American drama faced a big challenge to impose itself in the naonal canon, how can you consider the posion of Tea?

The "canon," as it oen is thought about in the Western world with regards to dramac literature, generally means, as defined by the Oxford Diconary ([hps://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definion/canon](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definion/canon)), a "...list of works considered to be permanently established as being of the highest quality."

There are a few subjecve words in that definion. For example, what does "permanently established" mean to various groups of people? Furthermore, what does "highest quality" mean to various groups of people? There is a 17th Century English proverb, ""One man's meat is another man's poison," popularized in the Western expression, "One man's trash may be another's treasure." These sayings take into account human subjecvity. Thus, the term "canon" is complicated and cannot be exclusive of dramac literature wrien by women or by people of color. It remains true, however, that many White European American scholars with

regards to dramatic literature define “canon” to mean plays written mostly by White men and before the 1960s. I was presented with such a list at the University of Southern California in fall 2017 and was stunned that so little inclusivity had been embraced in creating a list of 100 plays that contemporary university students ought to read. I amended the list with the names of women playwrights and playwrights of color; they were included, but highlighted in red so that readers would know that they were an afterthought and not a part of the original formula.

For these reasons, I know that Asian American dramatic literature continues to face challenges in being considered a part of the U.S. canon or Western canon of dramatic literature. I think that it is incorrect to say that Asian American dramatic literature must impose itself upon that canon. It is the creators of the canon itself who must think more broadly, deeply, and inclusively. Plays such as the works of Wakako Yamauchi, which came before my work in drama, deserve to be remembered. For example, her play *And the Soul Shall Dance* should be established permanently as being of the highest quality – and as representing important dimensions of U.S. history and life. While my play *Tea* is one of the most produced works about the Japanese female experience in the U.S., I never have sought to impose it upon the Western canon. As I reflect upon its position, I would surmise that many U.S. citizens, even those who considered themselves well versed in dramatic literature, probably do not know of the play. Those that do most likely relegate it to a marginalized arena – what the U.S. often dubs as “Asian American drama,” distinguishing it from the mainstream drama that they are taught to believe is the only genuine voice – or at least the only one worthy of permanent establishment and the labeling of “highest quality” – in U.S. drama. I know that a play like *Tea* and the U.S.-Japan history that it reflects, as well as its impact on the Asian Diaspora, African Diaspora, White European Diaspora, Latin Diaspora, and Native American Indian Diaspora, should be read and/or seen by anybody who is not a multiethnic Asian (particularly one of African descent). Whether or not *Tea* is considered to be in any Western canon – and I think it never could be because its author is both female and a multiethnic, multicultural person of color – it addresses aspects of history and identity to which an inquiring mind would want to be exposed. Moreover, Asian Americans and Asian Canadians continue to grow in number so that the North American continent should be opening itself up to stories in dramatic literature that have something important to say about life beyond the year 2000. Certainly, there are plays that do not have a lot to say, just as there are a lot of books, poetry, blogs, television, and film that do not have a lot to say. However, do not let their sparseness cause you to bypass explorations that may shed light on our shared universes.

One also has to beware the notion of “ethnic” drama versus “White” drama. U.S. society often utilizes terms such as “Black cinema,” “Black theatre,” “Latino theatre,” “Asian Cinema,” etc., but how often does one hear the term White cinema or White theatre? I smell marginalization. I smell exclusion. U.S. society must face the fact that “U.S./American cinema” or “U.S./American theatre” is no

longer solely White. Any theatre or cinema created in the U.S. is “U.S./American.” Ethnic terms as descriptors are fine, I suppose, but often it seems that they are being used as ways of diminishing or separating from the White mainstream. Besides, often the terms are not accurate. For example, often my work is labeled as “Asian American.” Of course, it is Asian American and Asian and Japanese, but it also is a lot of other things – African American, Lan, Nave American Indian, White European American, female, and global. To not say all of those things is to reduce reality to a comfortable categorization that allows people to go to sleep at night without a sleep aid.

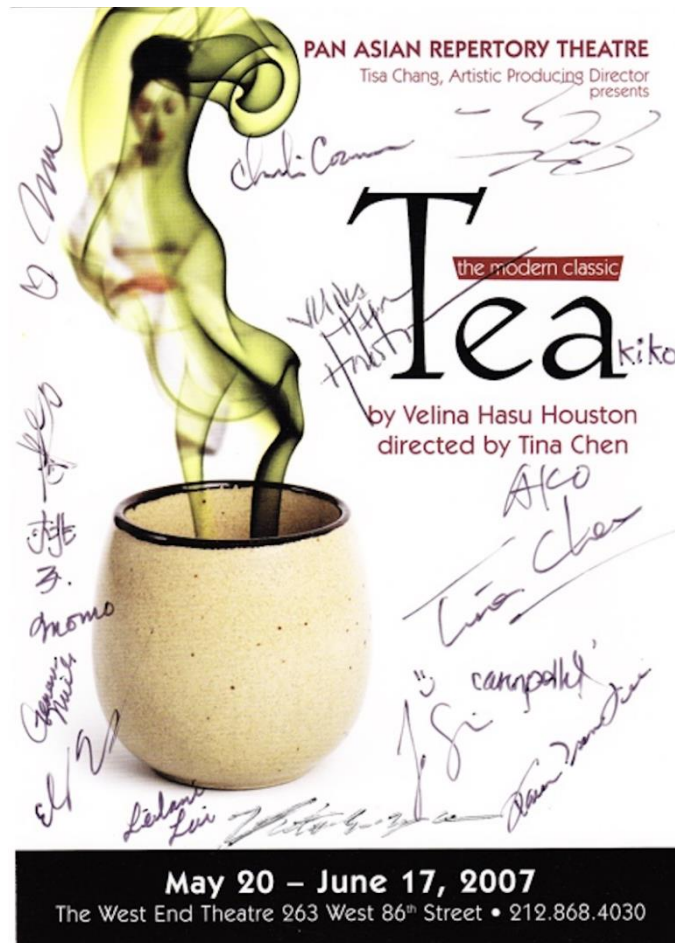
Tea remains an important play that I wrote when I was young to explore a part of U.S. history that was ignored by the mainstream, including by educators. When I was older, I adapted it into a musical – *Tea, With Music*, motivated by the inspiration of my colleague Jon Lawrence Rivera. Then I adapted it into a novel, called *Tea*. After its first workshop in 1984 at the Asian American Theatre Company in San Francisco and its professional world premiere at Manhattan Theatre Club in 1987, the play continues to be produced around the world. In 2013, the musical version was nominated for best book of a musical by the Los Angeles’ Ovation Awards. I think that is a first-rate journey for any play to be taking.

2- Would you explain how the genre of drama made you voiceful in a multicultural context? (*note use of term is incorrect; I think you mean “multiracial.” “Racist” implies hatred of races*) context: being a woman, Japanese and Black;

For me, the correct term for an individual who has many ethnicities is “mulethnic.” In my case, given the fact that my parents were from different countries, I also am multicultural. Even though I wrote my first play when I was eleven years old, the year that my father died, I do not know why I became interested in writing plays. There were no writers on my mother’s side of the family in Japan, except for a distant uncle who was lethally poisoned at a banquet celebrating his journalistic promotion. On my father’s side, there were no writers, but my father told me that there was an Irish relative who was a singer. While my cultural identities foreground my Japanese and Black ancestries, I also am Blackfoot/Pikuni Indian, Cuban, and, I have learned, a little bit Irish and Scottish, but I think that may have come from U.S. slavery plantations and the rape of Black slave women. I also am female, which is another identity marker in the U.S. and, I daresay, other nations. So, the desire to write plays is one that that I must consider with regards to my literary voice. The second thing that I have to consider is the unlikelihood of a mulethnic, multicultural, female voice finding ground and making progress in a Western theatre world that is largely patriarchal and White European. That I would have two plays Off-Broadway right out of graduate school (*Tea* at Manhattan Theatre Club and *American Dreams* at the Negro Ensemble Company) rendered me a bit speechless. Having grown up in U.S. schools that marginalized immigrant families, neither did I expect that two Off-Broadway institutions would embrace my work nor that these productions would

Appendix 6 Photos

Photos of *Tea*



Advertising Photos for *Tea*

This is an advertising chart for *Tea* in 2012



Michael Lamont

L to R: Joan Almedilla, Jennie Kwan, Janet Song, Yumi Iwama and Tiffany-Marie Austin





Photos of the Performance of *Tea*

Those photos were taken during the performance of *Tea* in Pan Asian Repertory Theater in 2007

Photos of *The Binding Lady*



Gigantic Character

This character is made of masks and puppetry



Masks in *The Binding Lady*

***The Binding Lady* is based on masks as a physical theater**



The Binding Lady

The Character of The Binding Lady is derived from the Japanese legend of Jroguma.

Appendix 7: Extracts from Journals and Newspapers About *Tea*

'This is a play too marvelous to grasp in one viewing. A cornucopia of theatrical delights, there is so much to please the eye and the ear. The play is a fascinating mix of insightful exploration and simple poetic imagery.'

Drama-Logue

2: Retrieved from: [www:// www.dramatists.com](http://www.dramatists.com)

"A play written with a very deft poetic touch...[Houston] has taken her consciousness as woman and as Japanese American, filtered them through the lessons of history and the experience of parents and others, and brilliantly illuminated [a] much broader sociopolitical canvas."

LA Times

. "A fresh, imaginative and fascinating play...Houston has, with TEA, cast light on a shadowy chapter of modern U.S. history, and she has done so with anger, affection, honesty, and wisdom. TEA is a wonderful piece of work."

San Diego Union-Tribune

"TEA is more than a play; it is an amazing experience that will leave you changed, wiser, and with a new understanding. It is what great theater is all about."

Trentonian.

"The fates of five...Japanese women transplanted to the U.S. are at the heart of...Houston's deeply moving and insightful play...here is such a sense of lives explored...of personal journeys full of upheaval and adjustment...that you leave the theater shaken and reawakened."

Chicago Sun-Times.

"TEA is a play about coming to terms with the present and, ultimately, with the past and future. It is so excellently crafted that...it's as though the audience is part of the...gathering, coming to terms with our own lives, and also with ourselves."

Davis Enterprise

... "[TEA] sheds light on intriguing aspects of class, cultural adaptation, racism and friendship...What is achieved...is a choral and impressionistic group portrait: a graceful interweaving of memory in and through the lives...of the four peers who gather to put the dead woman's house in order...[TEA] glides with remarkable smoothness between evocations of past and present."

Seattle Times.

Appendix 8: Photos of the International Conference of Mask in Marseille (La Timone)



Advertising Photo for the International Conference of Mask

The conference was held in Marseille (La Timone) to study the different uses of mask: cultural, environmental, meteorological...

Glossary 1: Cultural and Theatrical Terms

Ab ovo: the play starts at the beginning of the story and provides all the necessary background information concerning the characters, their circumstances, conflicts, etc. (exposition).

Analepsis: flashback.

Androcentric: A term used to describe attitudes, practices, or social organizations that are based on the assumption that men are the model of being.

Asides: are spoken away from other characters, and a character either speaks aside to himself, secretly to (an)other character(s) or to the audience (ad spectators),.

Bkufu : Name given to warrior government under the leadership of the shogun. Also sometimes referred to a shogunate.

Bugaku: Ritual court dance introduced from China in the eighth century A.D.

Bunraku: Puppet theater popular in the seventeenth century, usually includes chanters, samisen players, and puppeteers who manipulated nearly life size puppets.

Bushido: A term used during the Edo period to describe the ethical code of the samurai warriors.

Chanoyu: The tea ceremony. An important part of Muromachi period culture. Most of the time associated with the great master Sen no Rikyu (1521-1691), who established many of the guidelines for the use of instruments and the procedures for serving tea in his highly ritualized ceremony.

Choka: A long poem (in contrast to the shorter waka) which uses alternating phrases of five and seven syllables. The subject matter was often about domestic situations; Choka were also often used to praise the emperor or members of the imperial family or to commemorate a trip taken by the emperor. They are often accompanied by short waka as companion pieces called kanka or envoys.

Confucianism: Originating in ancient China, it is a set of moral and religious teachings which emphasized duty to one's family and friends and ancestors. It came to prominence in Japan during the Tokugawa period.

Daimyo: Warrior chieftains next in power to the shogun. They exerted a powerful cultural influence in the medieval period by developing such activities as the tea ceremony (chanoyu), Both theater and calligraphy.

Diaspora: is a scattered population whose origin lies in a separate geographic locale. scholars have distinguished between different kinds of diaspora, based on its causes such as imperialism, trade or labor migrations, or by the kind of social coherence within the diaspora community and its ties to the ancestral lands. Some diaspora communities maintain strong political ties with their homeland. Other qualities that may be typical of many diasporas are thoughts of return, relationships with other communities in the diaspora, and lack of full integration into the host countries. Diasporas often maintain ties to the country of their historical affiliation and influence the policies of the country where they are located.

DNA: deoxyribonucleic acid, a self-replicating material which is present in nearly all living organisms as the main constituent of chromosomes. It is the carrier of genetic information. The fundamental and distinctive characteristics or qualities of someone or a culture, especially when regarded as unchangeable.

Ellipsis: gaps in the plays.

Eponymous hero: when the protagonist appears in the title of the play.

En: “Charming”. Its use as a term of praise indicates that not only the melancholy but also the colorful surface of the Genji was appreciated. En invokes the visual beauty in which much of the literature of the time was clothed.

Gagaku: Music of the imperial court imported from China in the eighth century A.D. Most often comprised of a large number of players of chimes, bells, drums, flutes and many other instruments.

Giri: social obligation or duty. Points out the kind of behavior necessary in relation to those people with whom one has contact, especially those who have done one a favor. This sense of duty was particularly important during the medieval period.

Gynocriticism: A movement that examines the distinctive characteristics of the female experience, in contrast to earlier methods that explained the female by using male models applied to literature, gynocriticism is concerned with developing the study of the writing of

women. Elaine Showalter designates for such perspectives: biological, psychoanalytic, and cultural.

Ha: part of jo, ha and kyu, which is the rhythmical progression of renga poetry as well as the musical structure of Noh. “All things in the universe, good or evil, large or small, animate or inanimate, have each the rhythm of jo, ha and kyu” says Zeami. “It is observed even in such things as a bird’s singing or an insect’s chirping”. “The Noh follows that too”.

Haiku: popular poetic form which uses three lines, 17 syllables arranged in a 5-7-5 pattern. Probably developed by taking the first three lines from renga (linked verse) and making an independent form from it. Matsuo Basho is one of the early and most important proponents of Haiku. It is still a very popular poetic form in Japan and has also had widespread popularity in the West.

Iemoto system: is a Japanese term used to refer to the founder or current Grand Master of a certain school of traditional Japanese art. It is also used to describe a system of familial generations in traditional Japanese arts such as tea ceremony (inc. sencha tea ceremony), ikebana, Noh, calligraphy, traditional Japanese dance, traditional Japanese music, the Japanese art of incense appreciation (kōdō), and Japanese martial arts. Shogi and go once used the *iemoto* system as well. The *iemoto* system is characterized by a hierarchical structure and the supreme authority of the *iemoto*, who has inherited the secret traditions of the school from the previous *iemoto*.

In medias res: the story of the play starts somewhere in the middle and leaves the viewer puzzled at first

In ultimas res: the story begins with its actual outcome or ending and then relates events in reverse order, thus drawing the audience’s attention on the ‘how’ rather than the ‘what’ of the story. Plays which use this method are called analytic plays.

Issei (一世, "first generation") is a Japanese-language term used by ethnic Japanese in countries in North America and South America to specify the Japanese people who were the first generation to immigrate there.

Joruri: Dramatic texts associated with the puppet theater (bunraku).

Kabuki: Theater form which became popular during Tokigawa period. It was largely a theater of the ordinary people (unlike Noh, which became the theater for the samurai and aristocracy). In Kabuki, the emphasis is on the actors, so the scripts do not emphasize the literary aspects.

All parts are played by men and there are beautiful costumes, elaborate make-up, and much music and dance.

Kana: Japanese syllabary (A set of written signs or characters of a language representing syllables). Hiragana and katakana are two kinds of kana.

Kendo: The way of the sword. During the Kamakura period, there was a great flourishing of skills in swordsmanship involving the techniques of the two-handed sword used by the samurai.

Kigo: “Season word”. Kigo or the “season word” is consented with a rule in the orthodox haiku tradition which prescribes that every poem must contain a word suggestive of a season of the year. Each haiku poem, according to Basho, must present an atmosphere of nature; it follows then that each haiku must imply a season, for nature is seasonal.

Misogyny: negative attitudes toward women.

Ninjo: human feelings as distinct from giri. It refers to more universal human feelings, those which one naturally feels as opposed to those feelings tied to social obligation.

Nissei: (二世, "second generation") is a Japanese language term used in countries in North America and South America to specify the ethnically Japanese children born in the new country to Japanese-born immigrants (who are called Issei)

Noh: A form of classical drama which emerged in the Muromachi period. The development of this theater is attributed in large part to Kan'ami and his son Zeami (Seami) who both wrote and acted in Noh plays and were responsible for the aesthetic treatises which defined this form. The themes of Noh often reflect the Bhuddist notion of the sinful attachment to things of the world. The use of masks, highly stylized dance, an almost bar stage with few props are features of this dramatic form and set it apart from the more flamboyant kabuki. Also unlike kabuki, the scripts of Noh plays are more readable as a literary form.

Prolepsis: flashforward in palys.

Polysemy: is the capacity for a sign (such as a word, phrase, or symbol) to have multiple meanings (that is, multiple semes or sememes and thus multiple senses), usually related by contiguity of meaning within a semantic field. Polysemy is thus distinct from homonymy—or homophony—which is an accidental similarity between two words (such as *bear* the animal, and the verb *to bear*); while homonymy is often a mere linguistic coincidence, polysemy is not.

Repartee: quick responses given in order to top remarks of another speaker or to use them to one's own advantage.

Sansei: (三世, "third generation") is a Japanese and North American English term used in parts of the world such as South America and North America to specify the children of children born to ethnic Japanese in a new country of residence. The *nisei* are considered the second generation; grandchildren of the Japanese-born immigrants are called *Sansei*; and the fourth generation *yonsei*. The children of at least one *nisei* parent are called *Sansei*. *Sansei* are usually the first generation of whom a high percentage are mixed race, since their parents were usually born and raised in America themselves.

Shite: principle actor or protagonist in Noh plays.

Shogun: Military rulers who generally controlled Japan between 1129 and 1867. Even though they were appointed by the emperor and were responsible for keeping the peace, they were in virtual control of the country while the emperors were only figure heads.

Speed up: summary of the play.

Social psychology: is the scientific study of how people's thoughts, feelings and behaviors are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others. In this definition, scientific refers to the empirical investigation using the scientific method. The terms thoughts, feelings and behavior refer to psychological variables that can be measured in humans. The statement that others' presence may be imagined or implied suggests that humans are malleable to social influences even when alone, such as when watching television, looking at reality shows, music videos and movies they can be influenced to follow the behavior in the visual setting or following internalized cultural norms. Social psychologists typically explain human behavior as a result of the interaction of mental states and social situations.

Stichomythia: when speaker's alternating turns are of one line each

Tatami room: A tatami room is a fixture in washitsu, or traditional Japanese interior design. Once the mark of nobility, modern tatami rooms serve as study areas in temples and as living or sleeping areas in homes. The tatami room, with its simple furnishings and open atmosphere, can bring the Far East into any Western home.

Tokugawa: also known as the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) and the Edo Bakufu (江戸幕府), was the last feudal Japanese military government, which existed between 1603 and 1867. The head of government was the *shōgun*, and each was a member of the Tokugawa clan. The

Tokugawa shogunate ruled from Edo Castle and the years of the shogunate became known as the Edo period. This time is also called the Tokugawa period or pre-modern (*Kinsei* (近世)).

Wit: combines humor and intellect, thus Japanese words represent a considerable cultural appurtenance.

Glossary 2: Japanese Terms

(物の哀れ): *mono no aware* or the “poignant beauty of things,”

(詫び): *wabi-sabi* wabi, “rustic beauty,”

(寂び): *sabi*, “desolate beauty”.

(幽): *yūgen*: *yū* refers to “shadowy-ness” and “dimness”

(玄): *gen* refers to “darkness” and “blackness.”

(清少納言): “*Makura no Soshi*” (*The Pillow Book*),

(道綱の母): “*Kagero Nikki*” (*The Gossamer Years*)

(和泉式部): *Diary*

(樋口一葉): “*Takekurabe*” (*Child’s Play*)

(男役): *otokoyaku* , literally "male role"

(娘役): *musumeyaku* literally "daughter's role"

(花): Flower *hana*

(月): Moon *tsuki*

(雪): Snow *yuki*

(星): Star *hoshi*

(宙): Cosmos *sora*

(女形・女方): *Onnagata* or *oyama* Japanese "woman-role"

(女形): *kanji*,

(女唄): *onna-men* (“female masks used in Noh performance”)

(襦袢場): *maku-no-ma* (the “curtain room”)

(能): Noh *Nō*

(翁): *okina* play

(能囃子): “the family/home”

(家): a chorus and a *hayashi* ensemble (*Noh-bayashi*)

(ジョロウグモ) : *Jorōgumo*

Abstract

The present work focuses on the virtues of a classical theater, traditionally forbidden to women and how modernity challenges tradition to present it in a new form. It entertains its function and conventions in Japan as they are exploited by women playwrights to transmit their voices and presence through external tangible signs such as the mask, supported by the rhythm and the energy of the movement in Noh Theater as a cultural marker in its referential dimension. Besides, it shows the theatrical representation of Japanese culture in America via staging identities of Japanese women in a hybrid, intercultural and alien context, referring to cultivating the crafts of drama in order to examine self-expression, give voice and break silence. Their echoed yields for presentation and representation unveil the true challenges of adaptation in a society where the concept of genetic plays is a crucial element of considering the self and the other with keeping the traits of the soul of the Japanese culture and mythology even on a diasporic stage.

Key words: Identity, Noh Theater, feminism, tradition, modernity, diaspora.

Résumé

Cette étude se focalise sur les vertus d'un théâtre classique, interdit aux femmes, et sur la manière dont la modernité défie la tradition pour le présenter sous une nouvelle forme. Elle emploie ses conventions qui ont été exploitées par des femmes dramaturges pour transmettre leurs voix et leur présence à travers des signes extérieurs tangibles tels que : le masque, soutenus par le rythme et l'énergie du mouvement dans le théâtre de Noh comme un marqueur culturel dans sa dimension référentielle. De plus, montrer la représentation théâtrale de la culture japonaise en Amérique à travers la mise en scène des identités de femmes japonaises dans un contexte hybride, interculturel et étranger, se référant à une industrie d'un théâtre afin d'examiner l'expression de soi, de donner la parole et de briser le silence. Les échos de leurs cries pour la présentation et la représentation révèlent les véritables défis de l'adaptation dans une société où le concept de la pièce théâtrale génétique est un élément crucial, de considérer le soi et l'autre, tout en préservant les traits de l'âme de la culture et de la mythologie japonaises, même sur une scène diasporique.

Mots Clés : Identité, théâtre de Noh, féminisme, traditionnel vs. Moderne, diaspora.

ملخص

يرتكز هذا البحث على مزايا و مواصفات المسرح الكلاسيكي في اليابان و كيف تعرض لتحدي المعاصرة كي يظهر بشكل جديد. كما أنه يهتم بتوظيف مبادئه و استغلالها من طرف كاتبات مسرحيات من أجل إيصال أصواتهن و تواجدهن من خلال ما يميزه من رموز خارجية حسية كالقناع إلى جانب الإيقاع و طريقة الحركة على خشبة النوه كدلالة ثقافية على اعتبارها المرجعي. هذا إضافة إلى تصوير الثقافة اليابانية في الولايات المتحدة عن طريق الإخراج المسرحي لهويات النساء اليابانيات في وسط متعدد الثقافات، هجين و مغترب، يُستمد من صقل صناعة مسرحية تدرس التعبير الذاتي، و تمنح الصوت، و تكسر الصمت لإسماع صدى صراخهن من أجل تواجدهن و تمثيلهن لكشف النقاب عن حقيقة التحدي الذي يواجهه أملا في التأقلم بمجتمع يؤمن بالعرقية و تصنيف المسرح وراثيا كعامل حاسم في اعتبار الذات و الآخر، و هذا بالحفاظ على سمات روح الثقافة اليابانية و أساطيرها حتى و إن كان ذلك على منصة مسرح الشتات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الهوية، مسرح نوه، تكافؤ الجنسين، التقليد و المعاصرة، الشتات