

EXPLORING THE LIMITS OF NŌ THEATRE

Adapting the traditional elements of *nō* in *shinsaku* plays

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

The study of *nō* theatre, a 14th century traditional Japanese performing art form, has focused primarily on the classical plays, while no extensive studies of the new *nō* plays or *shinsaku nō* have been made in Western scholarship. Since all *nō* plays, classical and new, are theatrical scripts that adapt their themes and characters from literary or other sources, they are viewed in this study as adaptations. *Nō* plays are a type of adaptations that adapt their sources in a conservative manner, relying on many limits defined by the specific rules of the genre called *nō* theatre. In this study, *nō* plays are divided into two categories: genre adaptations, which adapt literary or other sources and involve the change of genre from literature to theatrical script, and kinetic adaptations, which appropriate material from existing plays. In order to clarify the concept of *nō* plays as adaptations ten adaptation strategies are discussed and examples provided from classical *nō* plays, forming a theoretical framework for the analysis of *shinsaku* plays.

The main focus of this study is on exploring the ways in which source materials have been transformed to create the main characters and intertextuality in *shinsaku* plays. For creating a comprehensive basis for the analysis, the traditional elements of *nō* theatre are divided into four structural and six performance elements. All structural elements and three performance elements (the actors' training, music, costumes and masks) form internal elements of *nō* plays the modification of which to the extremes causes serious deviance from the limits of the genre. On the other hand, remaining three performance elements as external elements of *nō* plays (the stage, properties and lighting) offer more freedom and creativity in adaptation.

Analysis of the practical application of various adaptation strategies in five *shinsaku nō* plays revealed that multiple strategies and techniques similar to those in classical plays have been applied simultaneously in the new plays. Some of the structural elements such as the design of characters, use of language and creation of allusiveness were modified to some extent in the new plays, and the prominence of religion was diminished. The internal performance elements were generally adapted within the limits of the *nō* canon, while the external performance elements were adapted more freely.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- MYSZ = *Mikan yōkyokushū zokuhen* (An Incomplete Collection of Nō Plays, Continued, 22 vols., 1987–1998). Tokyo: Koten Bunko
- NKBK = *Nihon koten bunko* (Japanese Classical Literature). Tokyo: Kawade Shobō
- NKBT = *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (Collection of Japanese Classical Literature, 102 vols., 1957–1968). Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten
- SNKBT = *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (Collection of Japanese Classical Literature, New Edition, 1989–). Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten
- SNKBZ = *Shin Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* (Complete Collection of Japanese Classical Literature, New Edition, 1994–). Tokyo: Shōgakusan

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INTRODUCTION

Nō theatre is a traditional Japanese performing art form that dates back to the 14th century Muromachi period. *Nō* plays are generally based on existing texts, primarily literary works. Borrowings from medieval novels, tales and Heian period poems are used to create intertextuality and allusiveness. These literary borrowings of characters, situations and quotes from famous poems that are woven into the script are special characteristics of the genre. In this study, *nō* plays are viewed as theatrical scripts that are drawn from literary or other sources, and that in the light of contemporary adaptation theories, all *nō* plays, classical and new, can be regarded as adaptations. The methods of adapting the traditional elements of *nō* theatre to new plays are examined. New *nō* plays, called *shinsaku nō*, are generally excluded from the regular repertory, as they are commonly considered to be of low quality and unsuitable for performing on a professional stage, among other reasons due to their usage of contemporary sources.

The special focus of this study is on exploring the ways unconventional source materials are transformed to create the main characters and intertextuality in *shinsaku* plays. The premise is that because of the similarity of *shinsaku* plays to classical plays the adaptation of source materials should in principle occur in the same way as in classical plays. Although the sources of *shinsaku* plays are modern or contemporary literature or other kinds of materials, the adaptation of themes and characters and the creation of allusiveness to other works in the new plays are achieved using adaptation strategies and techniques that are similar to those used in classical plays.

Relevance of current research and the sources

Western scholarship pertaining to traditional Japanese theatre, including *nō*, has been marginal compared with other fields of Japanese studies, such as religion, literature and society. In the past, the study of *nō* theatre has focused primarily on the history of *nō*, and on the analysis of theoretical treatises and the scripts of classical plays; research on *shinsaku* plays seems to have been negligible. Only a few papers on *shinsaku nō* have been presented at academic conferences and seminars, and no extensive studies of *shinsaku* history and plays in Western languages have yet been undertaken. *Shinsaku* has interested very few scholars even in Japan, where Hōsei University has for many years been the main centre of the study of *shinsaku* plays, due primarily to the enthusiasm and contribution to the field on the part of Professor Nishino Haruo, former Director of the Nogami Memorial Noh Theatre Research Institute. Nishino's research papers on *shinsaku* history and plays have been published in the journal of the institute, including his lists of *shinsaku* plays with commentaries and thematic

categorisations. These comprise basically the only sources of research on *shinsaku*, although some studies of other scholars interested in the *shinsaku* movement in *nō* theatre have occasionally been published, such as papers by Professor Yamanaka Reiko and Oda Sachiko.

Just as research on *shinsaku* plays seems to interest only a few Japanese scholars, the new plays are also not easily accessible compared with classical plays. While classical plays that belong to the active repertory of the five *nō* schools are publicly available in many different collections of plays, such as two volumes published in the series of *Collection of Japanese Classical Literature (Nihon koten bungaku taikei)* in 1960 and 1963 (edited by Yokomichi Mario and Omote Akira) and the new edition in one volume (published in 1998, edited by Nishino Haruo), the only extensive source of *shinsaku* plays is the twenty-two-volume edition of *An Incomplete Collection of Nō Plays (Mikan yōkyokushū)*. The collection was edited by Tanaka Makoto from 1987 to 1998 and includes manuscripts and published versions of *shinsaku* plays arranged in Japanese alphabetical order and containing information about the authors, details of premiere performances, and editorial comments.

In addition to the abovementioned collection of *shinsaku* plays as the main source of scripts, and the descriptions and critiques of performances as secondary sources, in this study I also use material from three interviews I conducted in 2004 during my research as a Fellow of the Japan Foundation at the Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum of Waseda University. These interviews include my conversations about the meaning and development of the *shinsaku* movement with some of the connoisseurs of the *nō* world, such as Professor Nishino Haruo from Hōsei University, *shinsaku* playwright and Kita School actor Baba Akiko, and Kanze School actor Uzawa Hisa.¹ In addition, I also refer to a personal letter from acknowledged *nō* scholar Yokomichi Mario, which contains an outline of his thoughts on *shinsaku* and his famous play *Takahime*.

General characteristics of classical *nō* plays

Nō theatre was developed in the 14th century by two creative actors, father and son Kan'ami Kiyotsugu (1333–1384) and Zeami Motokiyo (1363–1443). The plays

¹ I interviewed altogether eight outstanding persons from the contemporary *nō* world who helped me to better understand the “*shinsaku* movement” – the creation of new *nō* plays and the place *shinsaku* plays occupy in the *nō* theatre. Besides the recorded conversations with Nishino, Baba and Uzawa, I conducted interviews also with Professor Takemoto Mikio from Waseda University, *nō* scholar Yamanaka Reiko from Hōsei University, senior Hōshō School actor and instructor Kondō Kennosuke, Komparu School actor Sakurama Kinki, and contemporary theatre director Okamoto Akira. The total length of recordings of the interviews (in the form of mp3) is more than ten hours. However, due to the transformation of research interests during the writing process of this study I decided to use here only three interviews as an empirical material about the nature of *nō* theatre and *shinsaku* plays.

in the nearly 700-year-old traditional Japanese art form generally focus on the story of the protagonist, the *shite* (literally “doer”), who is often cast as a ghost or demon. The supporting role of the *waki* (literally “side”) is usually cast as a travelling Buddhist monk, Shinto priest, or warrior, whose function in the play is to urge the *shite* to tell his story at the beginning of the play, and to offer consolation by saying a prayer for the soul of the protagonist at the end. Both the *shite* and the *waki* may be accompanied by one or more *tsure* (literally “companion” or “follower”), whose character intensifies the image of the *shite* or *waki* in the play. Between the two acts there might be an interlude performed by a *kyōgen* actor who gives additional information about the *shite*’s story in colloquial language. All *nō* plays have a chorus of six to eight *shite* actors and a *nō* ensemble of four instruments – a *taiko* drum, an *ōtsuzumi* hip drum, a *kotsuzumi* shoulder drum, and a *nōkan* flute. There are five schools for *shite* actors, and separate schools for *waki* actors (three schools), *kyōgen* actors (two schools), and musicians (eleven schools for the four instruments in a *nō* ensemble).

Classical *nō* plays can be categorised in several different ways, according to the type of main character, structural matrix, timeline and dramatic elements.² The traditional categorisation is derived from a full-day program seldom performed today, and is based on the principle of *jo-ha-kyū* development and rhythmic progression. The traditional five types of *nō* plays include god plays (*kami nō* or *waki nō*), warrior plays (*shura nō*), woman plays (*kazura-mono* or “wig plays”), plays about madness (*monogurui-mono* or *kyōjo-mono*), and demon plays (*kichiku nō* or *kiri nō*).³ However, in his treatise *Fūshikaden* (Teachings on Style and the Flower) Zeami described nine different types of roles (SNKBZ 88: 219–229),⁴ which implies that the traditional division of plays based on the type of main character does not reflect all the types of roles found in classical *nō* plays.

The modern categories were developed by two *nō* scholars, Sanari Kentarō (1890–1966) and Yokomichi Mario (1916–2012). They categorised the plays according to the nature of the *shite* character, the timeline and structure, and divided them into phantasmal (*mugen nō*) or realistic (*genzai nō*), depending on whether the play has a ghost or living person as the main character, a dream-like or logical timeline. While the traditional five-category classification of *nō* plays is based on the type of *shite* role and the change of mood over the course of the

² Additionally, there is a categorization of *nō* to dramatic *nō* (*geki nō*) and spectacle *nō* (*furyū nō*) that bases on the notion whether the play has more dramatic elements or elegant dance movements in it.

³ Sometimes there are also used the alternative names of the five categories that correspond to the order the plays are performed in a full-day *nō* program, such as *shobanme-mono* (“the first play”), *nibanme-mono* (“the second play”) etc. These alternative names of the categories are quite technical terms, which do not convey fully the meaning of the category they describe, but instead they point to the overall change of mood during the *nō* program.

⁴ The nine role types include women (*onna*), old men (*rōjin*), roles played without mask (*hitamen*), mad persons (*monogurui*), Buddhist priests (*hōshi*), warriors (*shura*), gods (*kami*), demons (*oni*) and Chinese roles (*karagoto*).

one-day program, the modern classification is based on their structure, and is derived from the development of or change in the main character.

In addition to the traditional and modern categorisations of *nō* plays there is another type that is based on the overall structure of the play. According to this categorisation *nō* plays are divided into one-act and two-act plays (the first act being the *maeba* and the second the *nochiba*). In one-act plays the *shite* does not leave the stage during the play and the events take place in one location. Most phantasmal *nō* (or *mugen nō*) plays take place in two acts, the *shite* appearing in disguise in the first act and revealing his true nature in the second after changing his costume offstage.⁵ Thus, the structural composition of a play is based on a functional need that is derived from the type of main character and the plot of the play.

During the long history of *nō* theatre approximately 3000 plays are known to have been created, and there are about 250 plays in the current repertory (*genkō-kyoku*). Some plays are seldom performed (“thrown-away pieces” or *haikyoku*), and they are counted among the nearly 2750 plays that have been excluded from the active repertory (“out-of-repertory” or *bangai-kyoku*). More than 300 *shinsaku* plays from the Meiji and Heisei periods, written in the 20th and 21st centuries, are generally excluded from the repertory with some rare exceptions: the Kanze School has one *shinsaku* play in its current repertory and the Kita School has five new plays on its playlist.

Developing the contemporary meaning of the word ‘*shinsaku*’

The literal meaning of the word “*shinsaku*” is “newly created”, denoting a new *nō* play. In its broader meaning, all *nō* plays were “new” at the time of their creation. Hence, new plays written in the Muromachi and Edo periods were also *shinsaku* plays at the time of their completion and premiere performance. Their elevated artistic quality and popularity, as demonstrated by numerous staging opportunities, eventually earned these plays a special place in the canonised repertory, making them “classical” or “traditional” from the perspective of contemporary *nō* theatre. In the early Edo period, new plays were called *shingi nō* or “*nō* in the new style”, which implies a different attitude toward newly created plays of the modern era as compared with classical plays. By the end of the Edo period the term *shinsakumono* or “new pieces” was adopted to describe modern *nō* dramaturgy (Nishino 2006: 1-2). Hence, the term “new play” was first used to distinguish them from earlier, canonised plays.

⁵ Various *nō* pieces combine these two types of *nō*, and are called semi-two-act plays. In this type of plays *shite* remains on stage as in one-act plays, but changes his costume onstage, not offstage, as it would be conventional for two-act plays. Only few plays in the category of *mugen nō* are in one act, and the number of this kind of plays does not exceed one tenth of all *mugen nō* pieces (Yokomichi 1996: 41).

A specific meaning of the word *shinsaku* as “other” or “out-of-repertory” emerged with the plays commissioned by warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598). Today these plays are referred to as the *hōkō nō* or *taikō nō* plays (“the duke plays”). *Taikō nō* plays, which celebrated the victories of living warriors and involved somewhat politicised performing protocols, led to the connotation of *shinsaku* as plays of lesser value, with the result that they were considered unworthy of inclusion in the regular repertory. Also, the fact that *taikō nō* plays were only performed during the lifetime of Hideyoshi probably helped to establish the image of *shinsaku* as plays that are experimental in nature, performed once or twice for a special occasion and then forgotten.

However, already in the Muromachi period, when Komparu Zempō (1454–1520) and his contemporaries experimented with more expressive forms and used new thematic sources for their “spectacle *nō*” plays, the experimental image of “new” or *shinsaku* works emerged. Later, the shift from medieval to early modern society witnessed the wide popularity of *nō* theatre, including *nō* plays that were performed by Kyoto courtesans and commoners (Groemer 1998). *Nō* plays that were written and performed by amateur actors were not part of the repertory, which was decided by officials of the Tokugawa Shogunate, and probably increased the perception of new plays as works that were outside the tradition.

During the Kyōhō years (1716–1735) of the Edo period, the leaders of the Tokugawa Shogunate initiated the process of canonising the repertory.⁶ As Professor Nishino Haruo observed, the Kyōhō years marked the peak of *shinsaku* writing, and the total number of new plays created during the Edo period has been estimated at one thousand to one thousand five hundred (Nishino 1983: 104–105).⁷ The novelty of these plays lay in their themes and in the diversity of their authors, who belonged to different social strata.⁸ Nishino found that the majority of the plays from the Kyōhō years have little or no literary or artistic value, and only two of them have survived to the present day (*Ibid.*, 134, 136).⁹

Nō scholar Hata Hisashi also confirms that approximately half of the newly created plays from the Edo period were merely adaptations or imitations of earlier plays (Hata 1987a: 308). He found that these plays lacked originality in terms of themes, characters, and sources. The other half was comprised of original *shinsaku* works that drew their plots from well-known classical sources.

⁶ In the Edo period, the repertory of all five schools was canonised, and almost all plays included in the list today were created during the Muromachi period, belonging to the ancient (*kodai*) and medieval (*chūsei*) period of *nō* dramaturgy. The vast majority of the plays out-of-repertory belong to *kinsaku* (early modern period) *nō* from Azuchi-Momoyama period to Edo period.

⁷ The exact number of Edo period *shinsaku* plays is hard to define, because scholars have provided different data. Hata Hisashi, for instance, gives 2000 for the total number of early modern plays (Hata 1987a: 311).

⁸ The five categories of plays written during the Kyōhō years are explained in Nishino’s paper (1983: 131–134).

⁹ The two plays created during the Kyōhō years and still included to the repertory are *Mugen no kagami* (The Mirror of Dreams) and *Chūshingura* (Forty Seven Loyal Samurai).

However, unlike medieval plays, which mostly used materials from Heian and Kamakura periods, the literary material of the Edo period new plays came from medieval Japanese sources. Hence, in the Edo period, the authors of new *nō* plays continued the tradition of Muromachi period playwrights, who also tended to draw the material for their plays from the literary heritage of earlier historical periods.

In addition to the usage of more contemporary sources, two other developments characterise *shinsaku* plays of the Edo period: the comparatively minor impact of Chinese literary sources, and the gradually diminishing influence of Buddhist themes in the plays. Hata Hisashi hypothesised that the reason for the lack of performance history of many Edo period plays might be that they were either not meant to be performed (written merely as literary exercises) or that after their premiere the scripts were not prepared to be performed as *nō* plays, or *yōkyoku* (*Ibid.*, 311). His view is supported by the fact that a large number of Edo period plays were written by amateurs (Nishino 1981: 104), and not by professional *nō* actors, as was common practice until the end of the Muromachi period.¹⁰

However, despite their exclusion from the repertory, some plays from the Edo period seem surprisingly fresh to a contemporary reader, as Nishino Haruo commented in his interview (Nishino 2004b), thus contradicting the general evaluation of *shinsaku* plays as lacking in quality *per se*. His opinion indicates that some of the plays might have been unjustly neglected solely because of the politics that prevailed during the Edo period when the *nō* repertory was canonised.

Importance of *shinsaku* plays

It could be argued that the time in which *shinsaku* plays were created appears to be one of the main reasons why they were not included in the active repertory of the five *nō* schools. The intrinsic contemporaneity of *shinsaku* plays is not a weakness or indication of inferiority, as some orthodox leaders of the *nō* world have frequently insisted. On the contrary, the introduction of innovative themes that are important to contemporary audiences and are capable of moving them is

¹⁰ From there can be made two conclusions, the first of which would be that amateur playwrights had simply much less knowledge about the *nō* as an art form, and therefore they failed to create plays that would have been successfully staged or been interesting enough to attract an attention of professional *nō* troupes. This conclusion is supported by Nishino Haruo, who noticed that due to rather simple structure of *nō* plays, which is similar to the fixed patterns of *haiku* and *tanka* poems, there would have been probably many authors, who wrote *nō* plays just as a part of literary exercise (Nishino 2004b). Another possible conclusion would be that as professional *nō* groupes performed court music at the ceremonies of the Tokugawa Shogunate, the plays by amateur playwrights were not suitable for performing on professional stage. Perhaps, the regulations set by the Shogunate, or the pride of professional actors did not allow performing the new plays at the time.

a quality that would be expected of any *nō* play, whether canonical or *shinsaku*.

The process of adaptation can make important themes more accessible to potential audiences. Julie Sanders has commented, “adaptation can also constitute a simpler attempt to make texts ‘relevant’ or easily comprehensible to new audiences and readerships via the process of proximation and updating,” (Sanders 2006: 19). In *nō* theatre, “updating” texts or making them “relevant” applies adaptation as a technical device to bring canonical source material to a more abstract level. Thus, one benefit of adapting classical literary sources to create new plays would be making temporally distant material available to new generations of audiences. One might think of it as creating new “editions” of classics in theatrical form.

In addition, an important feature of *shinsaku* plays is their ability to address entirely new themes, such as recent events or significant social issues, which could breathe new life into *nō* as an art form. In the terminology of cuisine, staging the traditional repertory as a *menu à la carte* is important to improving mastery of the art.¹¹ It is also essential to offer audiences fresh or unusual “meals” – the new plays – to accustom them to the taste of new ingredients or unusual designs by employing innovative structural and performance elements. Creating new plays helps to hone audiences’ “sense of taste” and prepares them for the quality of “food” they might be served in the future.

Certainly, creating and performing new plays testifies to the vitality of a centuries-old art form. This process is also necessary for attracting new audiences and making the traditional art form palatable to them.¹² New audiences also demand a change of repertory, whether by offering fresh interpretations of traditional plays or by introducing new themes. Thus, the *shinsaku* movement is of vital importance to the survival of *nō* theatre in the contemporary world, because it can prevent it from becoming a mere museum attraction for tourists, as has already happened with many Asian theatre traditions.

¹¹ For example, Kanze Hisao explained in his interview with Albert Harris that *nō* actors “are always repeating the same plays” learned already in their youth „and each time [they] try to improve [their] acting from the previous time” (Harris 1986: 329), thus indicating that when performing plays included to the canonical repertory they only polish their techniques they need for executing the familiar patterns. Kanze Hideo (1971: 11), the brother of Hisao, also criticized this kind of acting practice where “[a]ll that matters is how closely you can approximate the predetermined pattern”. Albert Harris (1986: 101) called this practice a “kind of automatic reproduction”.

¹² This kind of necessity derives from the continuous crisis in the *nō* world that is related to its aging audiences, which constitute of relatively closed community of experts of the genre, professional and amateur actors alike. For its survival the *nō* theatre needs desperately to expand its audiences to include also young generation who would become expert spectators of *nō* in the future, and perhaps also amateur actors.

***Shinsaku* – a threat to classical *nō*?**

Shinsaku nō or new *nō* plays are commonly thought to be inferior to classical *nō* plays in terms of quality. One reason for this judgement might be the notion that *shinsaku* plays often deviate from canonical *nō* texts and performances due to their frequent usage of unconventional topics and contemporary literary materials, which might seem to exclude the possibility of employing the traditional elements of *nō* in the new plays.

Another reason for excluding new plays from the active repertory might have sprung from a deeply felt concern in *nō* circles that the adaptation of traditional elements in the new plays somehow compromises *nō* theatre as a classical form of theatre. Many orthodox *nō* connoisseurs think that *nō* theatre should remain unchanged, as they believe it has for centuries. However, the view that the tradition of *nō* theatre developed in the 14th century has been delivered intact and in its authentic form to contemporary actors and audiences might be somewhat incorrect.

Today there are two competing views of *nō* theatre, the first supported by the authorities of the *nō* world, that over its long history the art of *nō* has remained unchanged, and the second that it has undergone significant changes. *Nō* researcher Amano Fumio explains these opposing views by saying that the former focuses on *nō* theatre as a theatrical genre developed at the end of the Muromachi period (1337–1573), while the latter takes into consideration the history of *nō* theatre until the present (Amano 2000: 29). He points out that the first of these interpretations of the history of *nō* theatre is based on the notion that most of the plays in the active repertory were created during the Muromachi period, while the second describes the history of *nō* performances from the standpoint of *nō* theatre as a living theatrical art form (*Ibid.*).

The first approach to *nō* research concentrates solely on classical *nō* texts and authors, while the second can be divided into sociological research on the study of performers, historical interpretation of the records of actual performances, and written chronicles that describe festivals, dances and other details concerning *nō* theatre (Ortolani 1984: 167). Although these two approaches set different limits for the observed period of time and have dissimilar research objectives, it can be concluded that the essence of *nō* theatre as a performing art form, or the traditional elements of *nō*, has not changed despite its historical development over an extended period of time.

It would appear that the view of *nō* theatre as a static art form originated during the Meiji period, when the opinion prevailed in *nō* circles that the traditional art form should always be performed according to ancient *kata* or patterns (Omote and Amano 1987: 193). Consequently, at some point between the Meiji Restoration in 1868 and the early years of the Shōwa period (1926–1989) the myth of the “unchanging nature of *nō*” was created, implying a certain static stage of *nō* theatre that needed to be protected. The mistaken view of the unbroken continuity of the tradition originated partly from the involvement of

some outstanding actors of the Meiji era (1868–1912), such as Umewaka Minoru (1828–1909), who at first participated actively in the revival and later in the preservation of the *nō* canon, believing it to have been the original tradition of *nō* theatre (Nagao 1997: 117).

This misconception created the impression that the true tradition of *nō* theatre had been transmitted intact for generations. Darko Suvin called the legitimisation of a standardised *nō* tradition in the Tokugawa period the “invented history” of *nō* theatre (Suvin 1994: 525). He borrowed the concept from Eric Hobsbawm, who called it “a set of practices [...] which seek [to] inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past” (Hobsbawm 1983: 1). The repetition of ancient forms in scripts and performances became the most important part of the preservation of the tradition during the Meiji period, and this practice continues in contemporary *nō* theatre.

However, Nagao Kazuo explains that there are some difficulties associated with the “interpretation of the meaning of ‘tradition’ (*dentō*)”, and that it is “the Japanese concept of ‘form’ (*keishiki*)” that has created this mistaken understanding (Nagao 1997: 115). According to Nagao, the Japanese concept of the static nature of form has led to a misconception of the meaning of tradition, which has been transmitted in the *nō* world for decades or even centuries as a distorted conviction in the “unchanging” nature of *nō* (*Ibid.*).

Despite popular belief in the “unchanging” nature of *nō*, some outstanding *nō* actors have expressed rather critical opinions on the issue.¹³ The various developments in *nō* theatre that were described earlier in the introduction demonstrate that from a historical perspective *nō* theatre has undergone significant changes, and therefore the view of *nō* as an “unchanged tradition” is not valid. Nevertheless, traditional elements and ways of adapting source materials in creating scripts form the core of the tradition of *nō* theatre, which defines the nature of the art.

Therefore, all *nō* plays, whether canonical or *shinsaku*, can be analysed according to the mode and degree of adaptation of the source material and traditional elements. The creation of *shinsaku* plays provides an opportunity to expand the limits of *nō* theatre due to the usage of unconventional source materials. It is only natural that orthodox connoisseurs of the *nō* world would fear that employing new source materials and creating innovative performance elements would somehow compromise the art. Eric Hobsbawm has written about the confrontation between “invented tradition” and attempts at change (Hobsbawm 1983: 2), which could instigate protection of the tradition and provoke resistance to any kind of development. The main research interests of this study are, first, how the traditional elements of *nō* are adapted in *shinsaku*

¹³ See for instance the opinion on the issue by Kanze Hideo (Harris 1986: 351; Kanze 1971: 11) and Nomura Mansaku (Nomura 1997: 177–178).

plays, and second, which traditional elements are most likely to be modified in creating new *nō* plays.

Structure of the research

This study is comprised of five chapters: the first three provide the rationale for the in-depth analysis of *shinsaku* plays that follows in the last two chapters. Chapter 1 describes canonical *nō* plays as adaptations according to theories of film adaptation. Because the strategies of film adaptation are not directly applicable to *nō* theatre, *nō* plays are divided into two categories: genre adaptations that adapt literary sources, and kinetic adaptations that appropriate material from existing plays. Ten adaptation strategies inherent in classical *nō* plays will be discussed in this chapter: five strategies for creating genre adaptations, and five for producing kinetic adaptations. The application of these adaptation strategies will be illustrated with examples from classical plays.

As it would be difficult to analyse the new plays without knowledge of the traditional elements of *nō* theatre, Chapter 2 provides an overview of the traditional structural and performance elements. This chapter also introduces some additional factors that are essential to the creation of *shinsaku* plays, such as the playwright's intention to create a *nō* play and his knowledge of the *nō* canon, as well as the actors' entitlement and eligibility to be involved in *shinsaku* projects. In order to illustrate the importance of the playwright's knowledge of *nō* theatre and intention to create a *nō* play, a few plays will be analysed, which, despite the presence of the word "*nō*" in their subtitles, are shown to be mere imitations of *nō* plays. In addition, this chapter also provides an explanation of the meaning of directing in *nō* theatre, and gives some examples from the staging practices of past *shinsaku* projects. Lastly, a theory of the web of structural and performance elements for non-canonical *nō* plays and productions will be presented, which will provide a basis for analysing the adaptation of traditional elements in *shinsaku* plays.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of new *nō* plays that have been written in the last one hundred years. Some of the *shinsaku* plays are adaptations of classical themes in *nō* theatre, but the majority have contemporary themes or adapt unconventional source materials. A common characteristic of new plays is that they have rarely been staged and are often neglected by professional performance troupes. A review of modern and contemporary *shinsaku* plays and authors in this chapter provides background information on various developments that have taken place in the *nō* world during this time. As information about *shinsaku* plays is generally lacking in books about the history of *nō* theatre, this study aims to contribute to filling this gap.

Classical *nō* plays are variously categorised according to the type of main character, structural matrix, timeline and dramatic elements. Professor Nishino Haruo's thematic categorisation of *shinsaku* plays (2005) closely follows the

traditional classification of canonical plays by the type of protagonist or theme. However, the innovative sources and contemporary issues on which *shinsaku* plays are based presuppose the creation of entirely new types of characters, and categorising them thematically would seem to limit the possible types of characters they might potentially feature. Therefore, this chapter offers a system for distinguishing *shinsaku* plays as adaptations, by dividing them into two basic categories: first, as “original” *shinsaku* plays written in Japanese or English, and second, as *shinsaku* adaptations of canonical plays and Western classics, and re-adaptations of western dramas into *nō* form.

Chapters 4 and 5 contain an analysis of the structural and performance elements in five *shinsaku* plays, based on the theory of the *nō* web of elements. Two “original” *shinsaku* plays and three “*shinsaku* adaptations” are analysed as genre and kinetic adaptations respectively, in order to demonstrate the practical application of various adaptation strategies in *shinsaku* plays.

The conclusion summarises the ways in which the traditional elements of *nō* have been adapted in *shinsaku nō* plays. This section identifies the elements of *nō* that are most likely to be adapted in *shinsaku* plays, the ways in which they are adapted to conform to the traditional *nō* canon, and the factors that contribute to the adaptability of some elements.

CHAPTER 1. NŌ PLAYS AS ADAPTATIONS

Nō plays are generally understood to be theatrical scripts that use existing texts, primarily literary works, as their sources. Borrowing from novels, tales and poems in order to create intertextuality and allusions has been discussed in the *nō* academic literature.¹⁴ However, if adaptation theories are applied, the concept of borrowing from literary sources in order to compose a *nō* play could be defined as a process of adapting source materials that results in a script in the form of a classical Japanese drama.

The main object of this study is to explore the ways of adapting source materials and traditional elements of *nō* to *shinsaku* plays based on new literary and other sources that appeal to contemporary audiences, but are not common to the classical plays in the current repertory of the five *nō* schools. Creating *shinsaku* plays provides a good opportunity to expand the limits of *nō* theatre because of their usage of unconventional classical or contemporary source materials. Adapting new sources also requires new patterns of movement, hand props, and costumes that do not exist in the classical plays. This leads one to conclude that the key element in the creation of *nō* plays is the adaptation of source material and the mode of its adaptation; therefore, all *nō* plays, including canonical and *shinsaku* plays, can be analysed according to the mode and degree of adaptation of (literary) source materials.

Research on adaptations of *nō* plays

Nō theatre was developed in the 14th century; it makes extensive use of Japanese and Chinese classical literature, folklore and legends as its source material, as well as quotations from Japanese traditional *waka* poems. Classical *nō* plays are generally not understood to be adaptations, although some studies have analysed *nō* adaptations of dramas or dramatic adaptations of *nō* plays from different viewpoints. The traditional approach to *nō* plays as adaptations is exemplified by the doctoral dissertation of Leo Shing Chi Yip titled *Reinventing China: Cultural Adaptation in Medieval Japanese Nō Theatre* (2004), which analyses the adaptation of Chinese motifs in *karagoto-mono* or “Chinese” *nō* plays. In his

¹⁴ For instance, in his monograph Komparu Kunio writes briefly about *honkadōri* as allusive variations that are a literary device employed to echo earlier works in *nō* plays, and can be understood as one of “many techniques of playing with language” (Komparu 1983: 153). Thomas Hare also speaks about *honkadōri* as rhetorical techniques involving associations, wordplays and allusive variations, and *honzetsu* as the source, situation or famous place on which a *nō* play is based (Hare 1986: 291, 294). Similarly, Karen Brazell does not mention adapting literary sources to another genre or media when she writes about “using an earlier text” (*honzetsu*) or “the art of allusion” (*honkadōri*), although she summarises the theme in the title of the subchapter that describes “intertextuality” (Brazell 1998: 33–34).

study Yip discusses the socio-political relations between Japan and China at the time, the authenticity of the image of China portrayed in the plays, and the strategies of interpreting and adapting Chinese materials (Yip 2004: 2). He argues that the images of China presented in the *nō* plays were not the result of “ambivalent acts” of adaptation, but rather that they reflect Japanese perceptions of themselves in their relations with China during that period (*Ibid.*, 4). In brief, Yip’s research analyses the adaptation of literary sources and cultural images of China in “Chinese” *nō* plays in the context of exploring the “fluid” Japanese self and the “constructed” Chinese other (*Ibid.*, 4–5).

The earliest research on *nō* plays as sources for Western dramas is Belinda Sue Saxon’s Master’s thesis *“Borrowing from the East”: A Study of Types of Western Theater Adaptations of Chinese Opera, Japanese Noh, and Kabuki* (1992). In her thesis she explores the methods in which the theatrical conventions of Chinese opera, Japanese *nō* and *kabuki* can be adapted to Western theatre. Her research is based on an analysis of choices made by theatre directors who adapted East Asian theatrical conventions to their productions. Saxon posits three modes of adapting Asian theatre: direct, effect, and syncretic. Direct adaptation follows the original production as closely as possible through literary and cultural translation; effect adaptation uses only a few unrelated features or “segments of theatrical conventions” from the source theatre; and syncretic adaptation blends some elements of the source theatre with those of conventional Western theatre, which results in the emergence of a new art form (Saxon 1992: 6).

In her research Saxon acknowledges the problems associated with analysing the adaptation techniques used by Western theatre directors, such as the difficulty of differentiating between effect and syncretic adaptations, and the limited number of examples for analysis (*Ibid.*, 6–8). Saxon uses Yukio Mishima’s *Lady Aoi* (a modern adaptation of the classical play *Aoi no ue*) and Benjamin Britten’s *Curlew River* (an adaptation of the play *Sumidagawa* to opera) as examples of direct adaptation, and William Butler Yeats’s *At the Hawk’s Well* (a symbolist dramatic adaptation of the play *Yōrō*) as an example of effect adaptation. In her thesis Saxon concludes that in their direct adaptations both Mishima and Britten “approached the adaptation textually [...] contain[ing] the plot and atmosphere of the original *nō* plays”, although they made some changes to the lines and characters. Yeats’s *At the Hawk’s Well*, which Saxon finds to be “the most typical form of effect adaptation”, did not create a new art form and thus does not fit the category of syncretic adaptations; she commented that Yeats’s use of “Asian theatre as a rebellious tool to break away from the pre-existing conventions” only added an “Asian atmosphere” to the play (*Ibid.*, 70, 81, 86).

In contrast to Saxon’s research, which primarily analysed Western adaptations of *nō* texts, Judith Virginia Halebsky’s doctoral dissertation *Transformation, Transmission, Translation: Japanese Noh in West Coast Arts Practice in San Francisco and Vancouver* (2009) examined the practice of translating and transforming Japanese *nō* theatre in the context of contemporary experimental

theatre in North America. Her case study of three theatre productions focuses not only on the scripts, but also on the philosophical aspects of *nō* theatre and “its formal qualities such as movement, acting, vocal technique, and compositional structure” (Halebsky 2009: ii). In her research she analyses three aspects of *nō* theatre: compositional structure (categories, themes, and structure of the plays), aesthetic structure (concepts of time and space, and acting techniques), and physical structure (stage, costumes, masks, props, staging methods) (*Ibid.*, 3).

Halebsky’s research includes three case studies: June Watanabe’s *Noh Project II ‘Can’t’ is ‘Night’*, Yuriko Doi’s laboratory theatre project at the Theatre of Yūgen, and Pangae Art’s production *The Steveston Noh Project: The Gull*, which are respectively collaboration, fusion and transcultural projects. Halebsky summarises Watanabe’s translation of the special relationship between *nō* theatre performers and spectators into Western theatre as the development of “an attitude of compassion through sharing the moment” between audience and collaborators (*Ibid.*, 81). A thorough analysis of the actors’ training process at the Theatre of Yūgen leads Halebsky to conclude, “Doi departs from the function of *nō* but strives to maintain the substance of *nō* in the training of her students in the United States.” (*Ibid.*, 148) According to Halebsky, the Steveston project translated the language of a *nō* production in such a way that the performance resonated with the history of Japanese Canadians (*Ibid.*, 165). She acknowledges the success of translating all three aspects of *nō* theatre: compositional, physical and aesthetic, commenting, “The themes of *The Gull* as well as many aspects of *nō*’s production language created a stage performance with a high degree of similarity to traditional *nō*.” (*Ibid.*, 167, 212)

The latest research on *nō* adaptations is by Robert Neblett (2011), who in his doctoral dissertation titled *Dramaturgical Crossroads and Aesthetic Transformations: Modern and Contemporary Adaptations of Classical Nō Drama* investigates various dramaturgical strategies applicable to contemporary intercultural adaptations of *nō* plays. Neblett’s approach to his comparative study is quite innovative as he derives its theoretical basis from the classical division between direct and indirect adaptations, and then proposes four new adaptation strategies for the purposes of analysis. These four adaptation strategies are: first, the correlative strategy, which he deems the most “faithful” method, in which the adaptation is similar to a translation and retains all the elements found in the original text; second, the extrapolative method, in which “the distinctive features of the proto-text remain intact and recognizable, though their correlative markers may have altered slightly”; third, the interpolative strategy, in which the original is merely the inspiration for a new play; and fourth, the stylistic method, which draws on the essence of a genre or style in the creation of a new work (Neblett 2011: 12–14). In his analysis Neblett uses Yukio Mishima’s modern *nō* plays as “a comparative lens” through which he “evaluate[s] the quality of other *nō* adaptations” (*Ibid.*, 20). He focuses on contemporary American *nō* plays, such as Kenneth Yasuda’s *Martin Luther King, Jr.: A Nō Play*, and Deborah Brevoort’s

Blue Moon Over Memphis, which Neblett considers to be appropriations of “traditional *nō* structures and conventions [...] convert[ed] [...] into an American theatrical idiom” (*Ibid.*, 178).

Of these approaches, the most relevant to the current study is Robert Neblett’s, which explores contemporary *nō* adaptations from the perspective of various elements and aspects. In the same way that Neblett’s study uses a holistic framework to focus on the intercultural adaptations of *nō*, this research analyses *shinsaku* plays through the lens of the web of traditional elements of *nō* plays, part of which are strategies for adapting source material for *nō* plays. However, the difference between this study and Neblett’s research is that his subjects of analysis are from outside the *nō* world – contemporary dramatic adaptations of *nō* theatre. He acknowledges that his aim “is not to develop the scholarly tradition of classical *nō* studies”, as his research belongs to the field of comparative theatre studies (*Ibid.*, 6). This study, on the contrary, purports to explore the limits of *nō* theatre by analysing new plays that belong to the *nō* world, using tools and strategies that have been developed within the tradition. It aims to discover the methods by which traditional elements of *nō* theatre are adapted in new plays, especially focusing on the way new source materials are adapted to create main characters and intertextuality in *shinsaku* plays.

Adaptation studies and the definition of adaptation

Adaptation theories constitute a relatively new theoretical basis for analysis that is generally used to analyse film adaptations of literature, while translation studies traditionally focus on the adaptation of plays for the stage in order to create a performable translation of a script in another language for a specific target audience. Pascal Nicklas and Oliver Lindner, the editors of a collection of articles on adaptation titled *Adaptation and Cultural Appropriation* (2012), distinguished three main fields of study in adaptation research: intermedial, intercultural and cognitive. Intermedial studies in adaptation research focus on the ways the source content has been adapted to the new form and the ability to recognise the original in the new medium, which gives rise to the question of the fidelity of the adaptation to the original. The intercultural approach explores the process of cultural appropriation, making use of comparative literature and imagology as analytical tools. The cognitive approach concerns the “aesthetic and epistemological implications of adaptation” in researching the historical, systematic and theoretical aspects of adaptations with respect to their recipients and the market; in simple terms this approach seeks to analyse how an adaptation is received by the audience (Nicklas and Lindner 2012: 2-4).

In his book *Contemporary British Drama* (2010) David Lane proposes a general definition of adaptation as “the act of taking an existing book, play text or screenplay and transposing it to another context” (Lane 2010: 157). For film theorist Dudley Andrew the process of adaptation is “the appropriation of a

meaning from a source text”, which in a sense narrows the concept of adaptation to producing a version of the source text (Andrew 1984: 97). Marta Minier acknowledges that the term “adaptation” has been widely used to refer to “filmic reimaginings of literature”; although she admits that it could also be applied to all kinds of texts that in the general sense of the word adapt source texts to various media and genres, from literary texts to operas, cartoons and comic books (Minier 2014: 17–18). Katja Krebs, the editor of the book *Translation and Adaptation in Theatre and Film* (2014), puts forward a different meaning of adaptation as “a creative version of, rewriting of or commentary on a source text, as opposed to translation which, it is assumed, offers sameness and strives for equivalence” (Krebs 2014: 3).

1.1 Canonical *nō* plays as adaptations

Understanding *nō* plays as adaptations is applicable to canonical as well as non-canonical (or new) plays, although the meaning of adaptation is different in each case. Therefore, in order to evaluate how the adaptation of source materials and traditional elements occurs in *shinsaku* plays it is first necessary to define the ways in which source material is adapted in classical plays, because they are the models for creating *shinsaku* plays.

A close analysis of the canonical *nō* plays in the current repertory (or *genkōkyoku*) of the five *nō* schools reveals two facts: first, that most *nō* plays are actually adaptations of various sources, such as literature, poetry and folklore from previous eras, mainly from the Heian (794–1185) and Kamakura periods (1185–1333); and second, that many classical plays are not in the form in which they were originally created, but rather are adapted or revised versions of plays written during the Muromachi period (1336–1573) or later. This study views *nō* plays as scripts that adapt literary (or other) sources, and argues that all *nō* plays – classical and new – could be regarded as adaptations in the light of contemporary adaptation theory.

The context of transposition in *nō* plays

British playwright and dramaturgist David Lane views adaptations as works that re-contextualise the source in three ways: first, transposition of the medium; second, transposition of the original story to a new work; and third, transposition of the story to a new audience (Lane 2010: 157–159). Re-contextualising the source in these three ways means changing the genre of the adaptation as compared with its source; this is a process that often gives rise to the question of fidelity to the original, as well as the recognition and evaluation of the adaptation as a cognitive act on the part of the audience. When these three

contexts of transposing a source are applied to *nō* theatre the characteristics of *nō* plays as adaptations become apparent.

According to the first approach Lane introduced in his book, the process of adaptation is a shift of context from one medium to another, which occurs, for instance, when a literary work is transposed to the screen or stage. This change of medium can be observed in *nō* theatre, because from the traditional Japanese point of view *nō* plays do not belong to the genre of literature, but rather to theatre. *Yōkyoku* or “plays ready for staging” include not only the textual part of the play, but also the libretto and the instrumental score, which convey the mood of the play and are considered as important as the text. Therefore, the use of literature or other sources in creating *nō* plays always involves a shift from one genre to another – from literature to performance. Linda Hutcheon speaks about adaptations as the result of a shift of literary source material from the telling to the performance mode, which is the most common way of transforming material into another work of art (Hutcheon 2006: 23–25, 38).

In light of this knowledge about the nature of adaptation, it can be seen that adapting literary material into the conventional form of *nō* theatre occurs within defined limits, such as special requirements for the characteristics of the protagonist, the use of sources, and the placement of quotations in the script. The rigidity of these formal conventions seems designed to thwart the ease of adapting source materials; for this reason Diego Pellechia refers to moulding sources into the canonical form of *nō* theatre as “conservative adaptation” (Pellechia 2014: 77).

Julie Sanders defines adaptation to another genre as “an act of re-vision” (Sanders 2006: 18). Consequently, an adaptation is often considered to be merely a commentary on the original work, and therefore the value of an adaptation is generally thought to be inferior to the original. In theoretical analyses of film adaptations of literary sources, fidelity to the source has become a standard for evaluating the success of the film. This could lead to the assumption that one of the main requirements of an adaptation is following the original as closely as possible in every respect, without deviating from the nature, interpretation, or substance of the characters and events. This gives rise to the main issue concerning adaptations: to what extent should an adaptation remain faithful to its source material? In partial response to that question Julie Sanders states that “it is usually [at] the very point of infidelity that the most creative acts of adaptation and appropriation take place”, thus presuming that adaptation involves a certain degree of infidelity to the source material (*Ibid.*, 20).

Linda Hutcheon stresses that one of the specific characteristics of adaptations is that they are received as adaptations and are thereafter compared with the originals (Hutcheon 2006: 21). In the case of *nō* plays this characteristic of adaptations proves to be incorrect, because instead of comparing a *nō* play with its source material the *nō* theatre audience draws familiar associations from the intertextual web of the script. The acknowledgement of *nō* plays as adaptations of particular texts is not as important as the existence of allusions in

the play, because allusions allow a spectator or listener to recognise images and reconstruct in his mind the character, story and other relevant information to which the play alludes. In other words, a *nō* play is not a “literal” adaptation, but rather a mosaic or intertextual web of subtexts and images that is constructed in such a way that the play only alludes to the original source.

Due to the shift in genre an interpretation of original material is presumed to have less value on the one hand, but divergence from the original also seems to be an inherent quality of adaptations on the other hand. This dual nature of adaptations does not apply to *nō* plays, because they have fixed rules of form that emanate from the secondary nature of the adaptations. *Nō* adaptations do not copy the story of the source, the linear or chronological course of events, or replicate the dynamics of the interactions between the characters of the original story. This kind of adaptation is only effective when the spectator has a profound knowledge of the source material and recognises it while watching the *nō* play.

Thus, the question of fidelity to the “original” seems to be irrelevant in the case of *nō* plays, because the value of a *nō* play does not depend on accurately following the linear succession of actions of the characters or the course of events as presented in the “original” source. Instead, *nō* plays are known for a rather flexible treatment of time that allows the present, past and future of the source material to be reordered. In addition, the general composition of a *nō* play usually does not employ openly dramatic conflict nor does it offer solutions, features that are further reinforced by a bare stage setting and the limited usage of theatrical props. It enables the creation of a more abstract world that Janet Goff has described as an “open-ended world” (Goff 1991: 58).

The only criteria that requires fidelity to the material in a *nō* play is the preservation of the overall and commonly known image of the character and the essence of the story, both of which are derived from a literary source (Quinn 2005: 127). In the treatise *Fūshikaden* Zeami speaks about “faithfulness to the source” or *honzetsu tadashi*, saying that in writing *nō* plays the playwright should be faithful to the source, meaning that the audience should be able to recognise it from the very first line of the play (SNKBZ 88: 262).

Usage of well-known sources in adaptations

With regard to the fidelity of the adaptation to the source material it could be said that *nō* plays take a liberal approach. Perhaps due to the mutual interaction with widely known literary sources on which *nō* plays are based, and because of the high regard for *nō* theatre as an art form, which was established in the Muromachi period in the society and culture in general, the genre of *nō* plays has been highly valued throughout its history. In other words, the use of classical literature as source material for the plays, and the distinguished and somewhat

elitist reputation of *nō* theatre automatically elevate the status of canonical plays as adaptations.

Therefore, *nō* plays lack the “hostile relationship” between the original and the adaptation to which George Bluestone refers when he describes the mutual relationship between a novel and a film (Bluestone 1968: 2). No hierarchical relationship exists between the original source material and its adaptation in the form of a *nō* play. This is possible because the two genres (literature and *nō* theatre) have historically shared similar artistic techniques (*honzetsu* and *honkadōri*) and conventions (the aesthetics of *yūgen*).¹⁵

It is therefore clear that the discussion about the secondary position of adaptations relative to the original story does not apply to *nō* theatre and *nō* plays, because the use of literary sources does not diminish the value of *nō* plays as might happen with other media such as cinema. On the contrary, no less an authority than Zeami stressed in *Sandō*, his treatise on writing *nō* plays, the importance of using famous historical characters in order to guarantee the success of play (SNKBZ 88: 353). Similarly, Julie Sanders explains the significance of using well-known sources for film adaptations because they alone have the capacity to make the audience aware of the intertextual value of the newly created work (Sanders 2006: 22). Thus, in film adaptations the audience’s awareness of the source text provides access to additional layers of meaning, and at the same time gives rise to the question of the fidelity of the film to the source material, but in the case of *nō* plays a highly valued source guarantees the appropriateness of the main character and consequently the success of the play. Therefore, it is evident that the need for a commonly known source is indispensable for *nō* plays, while in the cinematic genre it is optional and merely an artistic choice for a scriptwriter to either borrow an idea for a film from literature or to create an original story.

Adaptation theorist Linda Hutcheon draws our attention to the fact that behind the intention to adapt well-known material often stands an economic motivation, which relies on the “readiness of [the] audience” (Hutcheon 2006: 87). Similar intentions can also be seen in *nō* theatre; Janet Goff summarises the benefit of adapting literary sources to a *nō* play by saying that, first, “it absolves the playwright of the need to expend valuable time” that he would otherwise spend on creating original characters; and second, the “immediate recognition of essential elements” of the source material by the audience liberates it and allows its members “to turn their attention to other aspects of performance” (Goff 1991: 3). The use of commonly known characters from classical literary works or transmitted by generations of storytellers is the essence of *nō* theatre. Taking all these aspects into account leads one to conclude that the adaptation of well-known literary or oral material is the basis for creating *nō* plays.

¹⁵ *Honzetsu* is intertextual borrowing from literary sources and *honkadōri* is allusive variation on a familiar work or theme. *Yūgen* is one of the most important aesthetic standards in *nō* theatre that is expressed in gentle language usage, in mystic profoundness found in the play text, and in elegant dance and movement of characters.

1.2 Strategies for writing genre adaptations

Applicability of film adaptation strategies to *nō* theatre

For analytical purposes, several categorisations have been created to describe the nature and mode of adapting literary sources to film. In order to examine the applicability of film adaptation strategies to *nō* theatre there are three possible ways of categorising them: two by cinema theorists Geoffrey Wagner and Dudley Andrew for adapting literature to film, and one by Phyllis Zatlin, a specialist in translation studies, for adapting play scripts to film.

Geoffrey Wagner distinguishes three different modes of film adaptation: analogy, transposition, and commentary. According to Wagner, analogy transforms the source material quite liberally and may alter it significantly in order to fit the new medium by shifting the story from the past to the present or in other ways. Contrary to analogy, transposing material for the screen involves minimal changes to the original story, simply translating it into the “language” of film. A cinematic commentary modifies the original story to some extent, such as by restructuring it or giving it a different emphasis (Wagner 1975: 222–227).

Dudley Andrew categorises the modes of adapting sources as borrowing, intersecting and transforming. In his opinion, borrowing is “the most frequent mode of adaptation”, which employs the material, idea or form of an earlier text that is generally recognised as “a continuing form or archetype in [the] culture” in order to create a respectful and aesthetically valued new work. The second mode of adaptation is intersecting, in which “the uniqueness of the original text is preserved to such an extent that it is intentionally left unassimilated in adaptation”. He describes transforming a source, possibly out of “fear or refus[al] to adapt” it, and “instead present[ing] the otherness and distinctiveness of the original text, initiating a dialectical interplay between the aesthetic forms of one period with the cinematic forms of our own period.” The latter mode faithfully translates the text and its spirit into cinema, and transmits its imagery, values and other “intangible aspects” to screen (Andrew 1984: 97–100).

In her book *Theatrical Translation and Film Adaptation* (2005) Phyllis Zatlin introduces three strategies for adapting stage plays to film: first, transposition as a primarily literal translation of the source text; second, transformation as a semantic translation that involves a more aggressive appropriation of the source text into film, although it remains faithful to the source; and third, analogy as a communicative translation that freely adapts the source material to another genre (Zatlin 2005: 197–198).

The principal difference between a film and a *nō* play as adaptations of source material is the way in which the source material is used to create a new work of art. Comparing these two genres, a film with its multiplicity of characters and storylines bears more similarity to a literary work than a *nō* play, which usually has a small cast of characters and focuses on only one scene or situation from the source. In *nō* plays, only the main character, situation, or place

is usually borrowed from a source, but in film the use of a relatively insignificant fraction of the source would result in an extremely liberal adaptation that was only loosely based on its source. According to Zatlin's categorisation this kind of film adaptation would be identified as analogy, which is a completely liberal adaptation to film. However, in *nō* plays the usage of only a fragment of the original story is the basic concept of adaptation, from which many adaptation strategies for *nō* plays have been derived. The best way to explain the fundamental difference between a film and a *nō* play as adaptations that make use of varying amounts of a literary source would be the metaphor of a frame, according to which a *nō* play would be comparable to one scene or frame of a film, which captures the situation and emotional mood of the character at a certain moment, while a film consists of many, sometimes hundreds of scenes or frames. Thus, due to the specific requirements set for *nō* scripts a *nō* play always represents a fragment and substantial transformation of the source, and not a literal translation or transposition, according to Zatlin's categorisation.

From the types of categorisations discussed above it is apparent that film adaptations are generally categorised according to the degree of modification of the literary source to the screen. In other words, the categories of film adaptations seem to be based on the idea of fidelity of the adaptation to its source. From this perspective, Wagner's "analogy", Andrew's "borrowing" and Zatlin's "transformation" are adaptation strategies of a similar type, because they tend to adapt their sources quite liberally, although the characters or situations drawn from them are still recognisable in the new work. *Nō* plays also make use of three adaptation techniques that are similar to those described by film theorists: first, borrowing an archetypal character or famous situation from a well-known literary source resembles Andrew's concept of borrowing and Zatlin's of transformation as semantic translations of the source; second, restructuring the timeline by reordering past and present events could be viewed as a type of analogy according to Wagner's categorisation; and third, changing the emphasis of the source by altering the viewpoint of the new work is one of the characteristics of Wagner's commentary on a source.

Interweaving classical poetry into *nō* plays is a key element, which, among other functions, creates a communal space based on the knowledge shared by the actors and the audience. Including poems or quotes from earlier literary works into a script brings to mind Wagner's transposition of literary material into a new work or Andrew's mode of intersecting "unassimilated" material, because literary quotes in *nō* plays are purposely left unaltered in order that they can be immediately recognised by the audience.

As seen from the foregoing application of categories of film adaptations to *nō* theatre, many characteristics of the *nō* genre fit quite easily into several categories of film adaptations. However, it appears that the special form of *nō* plays requires the simultaneous application of several adaptation strategies, which makes it somewhat difficult to analyse *nō* plays with the tools offered by film adaptation theorists. This highlights a need to create strategies for the

analysis of methods of adapting sources in *nō* plays, which would take into consideration the traditional form of *nō* plays and the different ways the adaptation of sources can be observed in classical *nō* plays.

***Honzetsu* and *honkadōri* as adaptation techniques in *nō* theatre**

The two basic techniques of adapting literary sources to *nō* plays are *honzetsu* (intertextual borrowing from literary sources) and *honkadōri* (poetic allusions). In the study of *nō* theatre, *honzetsu* and *honkadōri* have generally been regarded simply as “intertextuality” and “allusive variation”, but not as the main adaptation methods for creating *nō* plays. Hence, these two techniques of borrowing from literature have not been placed in the broader theoretical framework of adaptation studies as methods of integrating literary works into theatre scripts.

Honzetsu means using existing literary sources for creating the main character of a *nō* play. According to Zeami, the seed (*shu*) or kernel of a play is the character (SNKBZ 88: 353). The choice of a suitable character for a *nō* play is the most important task of a playwright. Therefore, *honzetsu* is not intertextuality that occurs spontaneously, but, in Deborah Stothers’ words, expresses a “very definite presence of authorial intent” (Stothers 2001: 90).

However, the function of *honzetsu* was understood differently in classical poetry and *nō* plays: in classical Japanese poetry *honzetsu* was used as one of many techniques to create associations with other texts, but in *nō* plays it formed the basic source from which the theme and main character of a play were drawn (Goff 1991: 36). Thus, *honzetsu* is of primary importance in *nō* theatre.

While *honzetsu* refers to the borrowing of a main character from an earlier Japanese or Chinese story, the technique of *honkadōri* provides intertextual allusions to older poems that “enlarg[e] the world created by the new work” (*Ibid.*, 16). At the same time, the elegant language achieved by inserting poems into the plays establishes the basis for creating *yūgen* – mystic profoundness and elegance. The purpose of *honkadōri* is similar to *honzetsu*, because effective poetic allusions integrated into a script require recognition of these fragments of verses by the audience (*Ibid.*, 32).

Honkadōri or “allusive variation” is a rhetorical technique by which “[t]he words, or sometimes the more abstract situation or expressive attitudes of a well-known older poem (*honka*), are echoed in a new poem” (Hare 1986: 291), thus giving it depth and presenting the meaning in a new context. Allusions are created by the use of different poetic devices such as *engo* or ‘associative words’, *kakekotoba* or ‘pivot words’ and *makura kotoba* or ‘pillow words’. *Engo*, *kakekotoba* and *makura kotoba* were originally “deployed horizontally along the poetic line” or within the collection of poems, but in medieval literature these poetic devices began to be used vertically in the form of metonyms in order to “generate meaning from below the surface of the poem” (Bialock 1994: 204–205). In other

words, the medieval technique of *honkadōri* tended to concentrate on “thickening” the text vertically by adding allusions and associations with other texts, thus creating intertextual webs. Describing the function of *honkadōri* in *nō* plays, Susan Klein speaks about focusing on a famous poem around which the threads of a *nō* play are woven when a fragmentary poetic image that is introduced in the beginning of a play “takes on new associations as it reappears in later textual contexts, developing a polysemous texture of interrelated imagery” (Klein 1991: 292).

There is a historical difference between the sources of *honka* in poetry and *nō* plays, because *honka* in poetry was not strictly dictated, and could have been drawn from Japanese or foreign (Chinese) sources, while in *nō* plays *honka* comes exclusively from indigenous (Japanese) sources (Stothers 2001: 83).

In *Sandō* Zeami encouraged playwrights to use lines from famous poems, rather than composing poems themselves (SNKBZ 88: 356). Thus, Zeami considered *honkadōri* the main technique for composing *nō* scripts. Incorporating lines from source texts and famous poems from classical anthologies into *nō* plays was a process that cannot be viewed outside its historical context, because borrowed phrases in *nō* plays had clear links to *renga* poetry that could be effortlessly recognised by a literate audience (Goff 1991: 65–66).

Strategies for adaptation of sources into *nō* plays

Five different strategies can be seen for adapting source material into classical *nō* plays: first, combining various images of the character from different sources or parts of a source into one portrait, or reducing the number of characters involved in the adapted scene; second, placing a borrowed character into a fictitious situation that is not found in the source, or broadening the scope by adding characters and creating situations that are absent in the source; third, deconstructing the *honzetsu* source or rearranging the order of events in such a way that events occurring later in the source material would be in the beginning of the *nō* play, and that earlier events involving the same characters would take place in the second half; fourth, employing the technique of *honkadōri*, inserting fragments of famous poems and phrases into the climax of the *nō* play; and fifth, borrowing a *meisho*, or historically or geographically famous place name that is associated with legendary personages or events, and composing the *nō* play from various materials instead of the source alone.

In order to illustrate the use of the five adaptation strategies examples will be provided from plays that drew their sources from two well-known literary works, *Ise monogatari* (The Tales of Ise) and *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji). The play *Izutsu* (The Well Cradle, author Zeami) was written in or around the 14th century and is based on the 23rd episode of the 9th century poetic narrative or *uta monogatari* titled *Ise monogatari* (author unknown). The episode describes the friendship between an anonymous boy and girl, which later evolves into a love

story and marriage. The author of *Ise monogatari* has been believed to be an aristocrat from the Heian era, Ariwara no Narihira (825–880), because his poems were extensively used in the text. It is also supposed that the protagonist of *The Tales of Ise*, who calls himself “a man from the past” (*mukashi otoko*) is Narihira himself.

The second literary source from which themes and characters were adapted for many *nō* plays, and which will be used as an example in this study, is the 11th century novel *Genji monogatari*, the author of which was Murasaki Shikibu, a lady at the court (973–1014). This work is considered the earliest example of a novel, and it provides such extraordinarily good source material for *nō* plays that it could be called “adaptogenic”. The chapters of this novel inspired the creation of many *nō* plays, such as the “Genji-plays” (after the name of the protagonist). Among the most popular plays in the *nō* repertory are two plays that are based on the novel: *Aoi no ue* (Lady Aoi, author unknown, revised by Zeami) which was inspired by Chapter 9 “Aoi” from *The Tale of Genji*, and *Nonomiya* (The Shrine in the Fields, author Zenchiku, 1405–1468) that took its character from Chapter 10 “Sakaki” (The Sakaki Branch).

1.2.1 Condensation and omission of characters

The first adaptation strategy closely follows Zeami’s instructions in *Sandō*, which stipulated that the main character *shite* be drawn from source material. For Zeami, an important requirement for the main character was elegance, and also that it would not be unnatural for the character to chant and dance in the play (SNKBZ 88: 353).

According to the first adaptation strategy, the *shite* character is based on a literary source. The character in a *nō* play could be drawn from several parts of the source or composed from different source materials that feature the same character. In this way it is possible to create a character that may be portrayed differently in a variety of sources, or to design a character with different identities that are combined in a single fictional portrait.

A good example of condensing several characters into a *shite* is Zeami’s play *Izutsu*, the protagonist of which, the woman at the side of the well, is taken mainly from the 23rd episode of *Ise monogatari*, but also incorporates women from the 17th and 24th episodes of the same source. According to Richard Bowring (1992: 459), the creation of combined characters in *nō* plays originates from the medieval *Reiseike* interpretation of *Ise monogatari*, which condensed the identities of anonymous women in the three chapters into the daughter of Heian *waka* poet Ki no Arisune (815–877). The legend was very popular in medieval times when the character of Arisune’s daughter was created; she was thought to be the wife of Ariwara no Narihira, a Heian poet and the presumed author of *Ise monogatari*. However, Karen Brazell considers this version highly dubious, because the age gap between the two historic personages was sizeable. She

thinks it more likely that Arisune himself rather than his daughter would have been childhood friends with the famous poet (Brazell 1998: 143). Thus, in writing the play *Izutsu*, Zeami was clearly influenced by the popular story and therefore he made the protagonist of his play a composite portrait incorporating three anonymous women from *The Tales of Ise*. An advantage of the technique is that it helps to create a more abstract role symbolising all women who are in a situation similar to the protagonist of *Izutsu*.

The technique of condensation can also be used when the main character is drawn from different sources. A good example of this method of designing the main character is found in the play *Ukifune*, which takes the story of its protagonist from the three Uji chapters of *The Tale of Genji*, combining the material and rearranging it in such a way that the viewpoint of the play shifts from the living Ukifune to her spirit (Yamanaka 2008: 93). In the process of adaptation the protagonist of *Ukifune* becomes a portrait of the original character that condenses her past, present and future into the moment when the action of the play takes place.

Another example of creating a combined image of the protagonist is Zeami's play *Sanemori*, in which several sources can be detected: he took some episodes from *Heike monogatari* (The Tale of Heike, 12th century), and he also made use of local folklore about Sanemori's ghost. Shelley Fenno Quinn observes that "Zeami showed a preference for the popular narrative [*The Tale of Heike*] over the canonical literary work [*The Tale of Genji*]" because of the long oral tradition of the former material during medieval times and the elite status of the latter source (Quinn 2005: 126). Zeami's decision to use popular source material seems to stem from his belief that the ideal source material for a *nō* play should be both familiar and novel. In *Sanemori*, the familiar component of the play is derived from *Heike monogatari*, and the novel aspect, which Zeami also considered important, is provided by the story about the ghost of the great warrior (Quinn 2005: 127). Thus, two different sources were used to create the portrait of the main character in *Sanemori*, one establishing the link to the spectator's previous knowledge about the character, and the other providing new and exciting information that imparts a fresh flavour to a familiar story.

The second type of *honzetsu* with regard to adapting a literary character involves eliminating one character from the scene that was borrowed from the source material. This is typical of adaptations from a literary work featuring a pair of lovers or two parties to a conflict. *Nō* researcher Nogami Toyochirō found that *nō* plays are by their nature "monodramatic", because they focus on the story of one leading character (Nogami 1981: 72). The technique of redacting characters from a scene results in the portrayal in the play of only one half of the couple or one party to the conflict. This technique eliminates the active dynamics between the characters, and presents the scene or situation from the viewpoint of only one of the parties. This ensures that the play will be centred on the *shite*, thus avoiding open conflicts or other dynamics that are undesirable in *nō* plays. This results in the creation of a more tragic mood than if both parties had been

cast as characters. The creation of a *shite* character using this type of adaptation technique produces a totally different situation in a play, and therefore could be called a “full-scale” adaptation of a character.

Examples of this kind of “full-scale” *nō* adaptation are the transformation of literary material into the plays *Izutsu* (*The Tales of Ise*, Episode 23) and *Nonomiya* (*The Tale of Genji*, Chapter 10), the first of which is the story of the ghost of the daughter of Aritsune, who is yearning for her lost husband, and the second portraying a lady of the court (Lady Rokujō) who has been rejected by her lover (Prince Genji) and recollects happier times in the past. In both plays the male characters – the late husband Narihira in *Izutsu* and the former lover Prince Genji in *Nonomiya* – have been eliminated. However, as the women recall their past loves the men still have a presence in the script. Moreover, in the second half of *Izutsu* the ghost of the daughter of Aritsune appears in the court robe of her late husband and sees his reflection in the well, which both textually and visually transports Narihira’s image to the stage (SNKBT 57: 464).

While the characters of the male partners of the protagonists have been omitted from the casts of *Izutsu* and *Nonomiya*, in the play *Aoi no ue* both of the main characters, Lady Aoi and Prince Genji, have been deleted from the scene based on Chapter “Aoi” of *Genji monogatari*. The play focuses on the living ghost (*ikiryō*) of Lady Rokujō, whose role in the source text is ambiguous and unimportant. Changing the viewpoint of the adapted scene diminishes the role of Lady Aoi, who in the play is represented by a red kimono on the floor of the stage. Although the ghost tries to attack the ailing woman during the play, because the characters have been omitted from the cast the possibility of open conflict is eliminated.

1.2.2 Addition of roles and creation of a fictional story

The second strategy for adapting a story into *nō* form is to expand an episode that in the context of the original source did not have major significance. *Aoi no ue* is an example of this kind of adaptation technique that develops a minor episode, which is described in a few lines in the 9th chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, into the main theme of the play (SNKBT 19: 305). While some characters from the original story may be omitted or their role reduced in the “full-scale” adaptation mode described above, the latter technique of expanding on a single event that is unimportant in the source material often involves expanding the cast. For instance, the play *Aoi no ue* casts the characters of the female shaman Teruhi and the Buddhist priest Yokawa, who add dramatic conflict to the play in the opinion of *nō* researcher Yamanaka Reiko, by contending with the spirit of Lady Rokujō (Yamanaka 2008: 84). It is interesting to observe how the introduction of the characters of Teruhi and Yokawa in *Aoi no ue* changes the focus of the original scene into a single act of exorcism. In this play the strategy of omitting characters (Prince Genji and Lady Aoi, who are the central figures in the original scene) has

also been applied. These additions and omissions of characters seem to have made *The Tale of Genji* merely a source of inspiration for the *nō* play (especially when compared with other *Genji nō* plays). Therefore, in the words of Yamanaka Reiko, it can be said that “*Aoi no ue* is only loosely based on *Genji monogatari*” (*Ibid.*, 92).

Another example of creating a fictional story is found in the play *Shikimi tengu* (The Tengu of Shikimi Fields, author unknown) in which a mountain goblin tortures Lady Rokujō (the *tsure* or companion) as punishment for her pride.¹⁶ Although the character of Lady Rokujō is of great importance in the novel *The Tale of Genji*, there is no such scene in the original story. Thus, the entire premise of the play is fictional, and in fact, the character of Lady Rokujō is the only reference to the source in the script. The connection between the play and its source is only visible in a comic interlude in which the identity of the *tsure* is revealed (Goff 1991: 130–131). This type of adaptation could be called “a liberal adaptation”, because a strong link between the *tsure* of the *nō* play and the imagery in the original story is lacking. The play is a liberal interpretation of the character of Lady Rokujō, and perhaps for this reason the play is no longer part of the regular repertory of the five *nō* schools.

1.2.3 Rearrangement of the logic of the narrative

The third technique for adapting a source text to the *nō* form rearranges the timing of the events in such a way that an earlier event involving the protagonist is placed in the second half of the play, and a later event takes place in the first half.¹⁷ Zeami’s second son Kanze Motoyoshi¹⁸ wrote in the treatise *Sarugaku dangi* that “when writing *nō* plays in the order of the events as it was in the source text the play text would be eventually too long and the result would also be not good” (NKBT 65: 517).¹⁹ Thus, it was important to Zeami for practical reasons to change the order of events when source material was adapted to a *nō* play. Another advantage of rearranging the original events is reducing the amount of text, because an overly lengthy script limits the time available for artistic presentation.

This method of rearranging the events of the source is common in the case of *mugen nō* or dream plays such as *Izutsu*. The 23rd episode of the source text of

¹⁶ The play is not included in the active repertory and the script is not publicly available. Therefore, I have relied on the translation and commentaries on the play by Janet Goff in “*Noh Drama and The Tale of Genji*” to describe the method of adaptation used in the play.

¹⁷ The technique of rearranging events and changing the viewpoint is also common in *kabuki* theatre, in which the *shukō* or the setting of the play usually deviates significantly from the *sekai* (source material).

¹⁸ The dates of his birth and death are unknown. It is only known that in 1430 he left his acting career behind and became a Buddhist priest.

¹⁹ Motoyoshi transcribed it from conversations he had with his father Zeami.

the play *Ise monogatari* first describes Arisune's daughter and the poet Narihira in their youth by the side of an old well. A scene follows in which the narrator, who is assumed to be Narihira, recalls their marriage and having left his wife at home worrying about him while he visited another woman (NKBT 9: 126–127). In the *nō* play the timing of these two events has been changed: in the first act the daughter of Arisune recalls waiting for her husband, and in the second act she recollects memories of their childhood (SNKBT 57: 461–465). As a result of this reordering of events a dream-within-a-dream image is created that is typical of *nō* plays. The new situation is further reinforced by another adaptation strategy, because the character of Narihira, who recounts these events in the original story, is omitted from the play. This also reverses the viewpoint of the play, shifting the story of Narihira to the memories of his wife, the daughter of Arisune.

Similarly to *Izutsu*, the events in *Nonomiya* are also presented in reverse order: Lady Rokujō is described in the beginning of the play as already having been abandoned by Prince Genji. She is making an offering of a *sakaki*-tree branch at the shrine, where she recalls happier times with him (SNKBT 57: 625). In the second half of the play the ghost of Lady Rokujō appears in her youthful form and re-enacts the unlucky incident with ox-cart at Kamo Festival (*Ibid.*, 627). In addition to reordering the timing of the events in *Nonomiya*, the strategy of condensing the image of the protagonist into a single portrait has also been used. However, in contrast with the play *Ukifune* in which the *shite* character was drawn from three chapters of *Genji monogatari*, the *shite* of *Nonomiya* is based on two different images of the same character featured in the Chapter 10 titled “Sakaki”.

1.2.4 *Honkadōri* as a technique of adapting poetry

Three techniques introduced earlier in this chapter concern *honzetsu* borrowings – adapting a character or situation from a source text into the form of a *nō* play. The use of poems from Heian period anthologies is called *honkadōri* or literally “taking a poem” and integrating it into a new work. *Honkadōri* in *nō* theatre is bound by certain rules, of which the most important is fragmentation of the source poem into verses and incorporating some of them into the script. These partial quotes from famous poems are used mainly in an exchange of poems between a man and woman who are romantically involved. In a *nō* play a poem or fragment of a poem from only one of the parties would be used. Therefore, this strategy supports the second adaptation method as well, which reduces the number of characters, who are usually closely connected to each other.

The *Honkadōri* technique is related to the rule that the fragment of a poem should be written in the lines of the protagonist, because that helps to focus the play on the *shite*. Zeami advised in his treatise *Sandō* that “famous verses from a poem should be left for the *shite* to chant” (SNKBZ 88: 356). In *Fūshikaden* he

cautioned that important text should not be located in parts of the play in which the *shite* does not chant or perform a significant role (*Ibid.*, 262–263). In *Sandō* he gives more specific instructions when he says that a well-known *waka* poem or famous phrase should be placed at the climax of the play (*Ibid.*, 354). Thus, a *honkadōri* borrowing should be included in the lines of the *shite*, and it should also constitute the highpoint of the play.

Placing famous poems in a new context adds additional layers of meaning and creates intertextuality in *nō* plays. In addition, by omitting one of the parties to the exchange of poems in the original source this *honkadōri* technique presents a one-sided story that enhances the tragic mood of the play. For example, there is a poem in the beginning of the play *Nonomiya* that is drawn from the novel on which the play is based. With eliminating the character Prince Genji in the play creates a newly achieved focus on a single character, Lady Rokujō or Miyasudokoro, which is further reinforced by the technique of inserting partial exchange of poems into the play. Prince Genji's visit to the remote shrine, depicted in the Chapter 10 of the novel, occurs just before Lady's final journey away from the capital, to the Ise Shrine. Although they were once lovers, they have become strangers now, and the Lady refuses to see her former lover. The Prince, on the other hand, regrets his rude behaviour when he without any explanation discontinued his visits to the Lady's residence. The exchange of poems occurs in the situation where the Prince is sitting beside the screen behind which the Lady hides herself. Under the screen separating the former lovers he passes a branch of sacred *sakaki* tree, an offering in Shinto shrines, as a farewell gift. The Lady replies that there stand no cedar trees (that mark the entrance to the holy territory of Shinto shrines) before her house wishing to make the man to leave. The partial quote of the exchange of poems from the novel appears in the play in the lines of *shite* in third-person narration, as if she is speaking about another person (SNKBT 57: 625; translation by Paul Varley, in Keene 1970: 185):

(Girl)

This is the day when Genji the Shining One visited this place, the seventh day of the ninth month. He brought with him a twig of *sakaki* and pushed it through the sacred fence. Miyasudokoro at once composed the poem:

"This sacred enclosure

Has no cypress to mark the spot;

By some error you have picked

A twig of *sakaki* wood."²⁰

It happened on this day!

However, in the play it is not answered by another poem, as happens in the novel. In Chapter 10 of *The Tale of Genji* the exchange of poems reads as follows:

²⁰ The translation of the poem by Edward Seidensticker in "The Tale of Genji" is "You err with your sacred tree and sacred gate. No beckoning cedars stand before my house." (Murasaki 1992: 197).

Not wishing to apologize for all the weeks of neglect, he pushed a branch of the sacred tree under the blinds.

‘With heart unchanging as this evergreen
this sacred tree, I enter the sacred gate.’

She replied:

‘You err with your sacred tree and sacred gate.
No beckoning cedars stand before my house.’

And he:

‘Thinking to find you here with the holy maidens,
I followed the scent of the leaf of the sacred tree.’²¹

In the novel, with her answer to the Prince the Lady rejects him, but in the play *Nonomiya* has been inserted only Lady’s poem without Prince’s poems. This kind of technique immediately leads the spectator to embrace the main theme of the play – the loneliness of the protagonist Lady Rokujō. A different viewpoint is achieved by omitting the character of Genji and focusing on Lady Rokujō, which also turns the image of the burning house into a metaphor of the world of sufferings and changes the significance of the *sakaki* branch (Goff 1991: 128, 130).

In order to establish an allusion to the source text, into the *nō* play could be inserted also an incomplete quote from a single poem, as can be seen in the play *Izutsu*. In the first half of the play that tells about the lonely wife of Narihira who is worried about her husband and waiting for him, who has taken a dangerous road across the Mount Tatsuta to visit his mistress. Only a part of the poem found in the end of the episode described in the source is inserted into the play text:

(The ghost of Arisune’s daughter)
When the wind rises the white waves from the offing
Mount Tatsuta’s Pass
(Yasuda 1980: 447)

In the source text *Ise monogatari* the complete poem is a part of first-person narration by an anonymous man who calls himself “a man of old”:

When the wind rises the white waves from the offing will you wander alone
in the dark hours through the Mount Tatsuta’s Pass?²²

²¹ Translation by Edward Seidensticker (*Ibid.*). In Japanese the three poems are: *Kawaranu iro o shirube nite koso igaki mo koewaberinikere. Samo kokoro uku; Kamigaki wa shirushi no sugi mo nakimono o ikani magaete oreru sakaki zo;* and *Otomeko ga atari to omoeba sakakiba no kaori o natsukashimi tomete koso ore* (SNKBT 19: 345).

²² I use here Kenneth Yasuda’s translation of the poem (Yasuda 1980: 447) in order to make the partial quote of the poem in the play easily comprehensible. In Japanese the poem sounds as *Kaze fukeba okitsu shiranami Tatsuta-yama yowa ni ya kimi ga hitori yukuran* (NKBT 9: 126–127).

However, in the same play an example of an exceptional use of the *honkadori* technique can be seen in which a complete quote from *Ise monogatari* is inserted at the end of the play. The poems that Narihira once exchanged with his future wife, the daughter of Aritsune, recalling the good memories about the time when they were children and playing at the cradle of old well, sound in the 23rd episode of the tale as follows:

The boy sent the girl this poem:

My hight that we measured
At the well curb
Has, it seems,
Passed the old mark
Since last I saw you.

She replied,

The hair parted in the middle
That I measured against yours
Now hangs below my shoulders.
For whom shall it be put up,
If not for you?²³
(McCullough 1968: 88)

The quote from the source is interwoven into the third-person narration of the ghost of Aritsune's daughter in the second half of the play *Izutsu*, where the woman recites the poem wearing the clothes of her late husband, as if he were reading it to her. But the woman is alone, so she also reads her response to the poem, thus playing both parts:

(The ghost of Aritsune's daughter)
"By the round well-curb our heights we used to measure, now that little boy

(Chorus)
has outgrown the marks you made since last he came to meet with you."
Thus he composed these lines
And sent them to her.
Then she in turn
replied in verse:

²³ In Kenneth Yasuda's translation the two poems are "By the round well-curb our heights we used to measure, now that little boy has outgrown the marks you made since last he came to meet with you." and "Since last we measured, long my parted hair, too, grows below my shoulders, for whom else if not for you should I bind and comb it up?" (Yasuda 1980: 449-450). In Japanese the poems sound as *Tsutsu izutsu ni kakeshi maro ga take oinikerashi imo mizaru ma ni* and *Kurabekoshi furiwake-gami mo kata suginu kimi narazushite tare ka agubeki* (NKBT 9: 126).

“Since last we measured, long my parted hair, too, grows below my
shoulders, for whom else if not for you should I bind and comb it up?”
So they sang for one another,
surely this is why
she is known so widely
as the “well-side maid”
in the world of men,
where this dear old name
is given to the daughter
of Aritsune.
(Yasuda 1980: 449-450)

In this rare case the exchange of poems is quoted in full, but this extraordinary *honka* selection is justified by the situation.

1.2.5 Creating a play about a *meisho* or “famous place”

Thomas Hare writes that in *nō* plays *honzetsu* could be a famous place *meisho* as well as a story or character (Hare 1986: 294). As with *honzetsu* and *honkadori*, the use of *meisho* has a somewhat different meaning in poetry and in *nō* theatre: it has “only a limited, local effect in *renga* poetry, whereas in the *nō* the famous places provided the setting for an entire play or scene and [...] suggested theme and mood” (Goff 1991: 37). Furthermore, Zeami associated *meisho* with *honzetsu* (SNKBZ 88: 354),²⁴ which was uncommon for poetry, in which these two devices of creating associations were usually used separately.

Creating a *nō* play that does not take its story and characters from a literary source involves centring the story of the play on a well-known place or *meisho* by using famous poems and characters associated with it. Zeami wrote in *Fūshikaden* that when a famous place or historical site (*kyūseki*) is at the centre of the play a poetic phrase (*shiika*) alluding to it or its reputation should be placed at the end of the play. Furthermore, the quotation should be well known to the audience and easy to comprehend (*Ibid.*, 262–263).

An example of a play that has been composed using the *meisho* adaptation technique is *Matsukaze* (The Wind in the Pines, author Kan’ami, 1333–1384). The events of the play take place on the shores of Suma Bay, which is situated in the former Settsu Province that is now part of Kōbe Prefecture. It is a one-act play that does not take its story from a source. Instead, the play revolves around the historical fact that a famous Heian period aristocrat and poet Ariwara no Yukihiro (818–893) was exiled to Suma. Therefore, the place has been traditionally associated with loneliness and harsh living conditions, and also

²⁴ Writing in *Sandō* about the creation of plays that do not draw their theme or characters from a literary source Zeami suggests substituting a famous place *meisho* for *honzetsu* material, thus equating *meisho* with *honzetsu*.

with natural phenomena like pine trees, waves, wind and rain. The play has been constructed using poems that convey a feeling of loneliness and describe stark images of nature. *Matsukaze* consists of eleven sections, and at the beginning of the play a fragment of a poem by a famous poet establishes Suma Bay as the theme. A poem by Yukihiro is featured in the middle, and in the ending there are two other poems from the same poet that re-enforce the sad and lonely image of the setting (SNKBT 57: 588–595).

Suma Bay as the *meisho* connects *Matsukaze* with several other plays, such as *Suma Genji* (Prince Genji at Suma, author Zeami) that echoes the Suma chapters from *The Tale of Genji*. In her book *Noh Drama and The Tale of Genji* Janet Goff points to another interesting aspect of *meisho* as a type of *honzetsu* borrowing, which could be called “a hidden *meisho*-web”. In this case the plays are connected by allusions to a source that appears to be quite remote from the play, because the characters and situations have not been adapted from it. Janet Goff gives as examples Zeami’s plays *Tadanori* and *Atsumori*, both warrior-plays that are indirectly related to *The Tale of Genji*. Through the lonely image of Suma Bay, where both of the famous warriors Tadanori and Atsumori were killed, these plays are related to *Genji monogatari*, because the main character of the novel Prince Genji was also exiled to Suma. In the play *Tadanori* the poem by the Heian poet Yukihiro – also exiled to Suma – forges an indirect link with *The Tale of Genji* because the same poem is recited in the Suma chapter of the novel (Goff 1991: 8).

Janet Goff points out that these intertextual ties between different plays function “as a form of shared knowledge” connecting works that were created during the same epoch (*Ibid.*). According to Zeami, the need for this kind of intertextual web is based on the notion that using a famous place in a *nō* play (similarly to *honzetsu* borrowing from a source) gives the audience a broader view of the story performed on the stage (NKBT 65: 517).

1.3 Historical changes in canonical plays as kinetic *nō* adaptations

Since the early 20th century, when Zeami’s secret writings were rediscovered, extensive research has been undertaken on his treatises and other theoretical works on *nō*, which eventually revealed a discrepancy between the *nō* plays he described and the plays in the current repertory. In the 1950s, a group of young *nō* actors from the Flower Society (Hana-no-kai) analysed Zeami’s treatises and noticed differences between some *genkōkyoku* (or plays in current repertory) and the plays that Zeami wrote. They discovered significant dissimilarities between scripts with the same title performed by different schools (Harris 1986: 57). These findings from the early 1950s and ‘60s drew attention to a long-unrecognised fact that many plays from the active repertory of the five *nō* schools were actually revised versions of older plays.

It is now common knowledge that *nō* plays have been revised and rewritten since the Muromachi period. The tradition of reworking plays began with the founders of the genre, Kan'ami and Zeami, who rewrote earlier *sarugaku* and *dengaku* plays to satisfy the more sophisticated tastes of their audiences. In *Sandō* Zeami referred to some older plays that he considered good models for creating new ones (SNKBZ 88: 369). In addition, he was convinced that updating older material was an extremely important task for a playwright-actor. He wrote that new versions of existing plays could be created by revising verses and changing the musical scores to make the material fresh and interesting to future audiences (*Ibid.*).²⁵ Thus, according to Zeami, the constant revision and adaptation of existing material was natural creative work for an actor who had to respond to the changing tastes of his audience. However, a growing awareness of this practice, which dates from the early Muromachi period, has over the past decades resulted in reducing the number of plays attributed to Zeami.²⁶

Ancestor plays and their descendants

Plays in the active repertory may have several variants created in different historical periods by the various *nō* schools. These can be adaptations of earlier plays, appropriations of variants, or even adaptations of adaptations, thus departing even further from the classical play they modify or interpret. In order to better understand this chain of appropriation in *nō* theatre it would be useful to turn to research in an entirely different field of study, namely biology. In their article biologist Gary R. Bortolotti and literary scholar Linda Hutcheon describe adaptation as a “process of replication” (Bortolotti and Hutcheon 2007: 444). They explain the relationship between the source and its adaptation by drawing parallels with biology:

²⁵ Zeami used the words *saihen no sakufū*, which J. Thomas Rimer and Yamazaki Masakazu translated as “adaptation” (Rimer and Yamazaki 1984: 161).

²⁶ The number of plays that can definitely be attributed to Zeami has been rapidly decreasing as scholarship on the authorship of the plays has grown. Until the 1940s over half of the Kanze School plays were thought to have been written by Zeami (Rath 2003: 191–192). In the 1950s, Patrick O’Neill wrote in *Early Nō Drama* that only twelve plays are without a doubt Zeami’s rather than about half of the 240 plays that had been attributed to him (O’Neill 1976: 113). Thomas Hare pointed out that numerous plays described in Zeami’s treatise *Sarugaku dangi* contain comments on authorship, revision and adaptation, but only nineteen could be specifically identified as Zeami’s, and another ninety can be linked to him as having revised the scripts or composed the music (Hare 1986: 42). Donald Keene in his list of *genkō*-plays referred to Zeami as the author of thirty-six plays, and less than three decades later Janet Goff suggested that this number is nearer to forty, and added a dozen more that Zeami revised or set to music (Keene 1990: 97–102, Goff 1991: 30). Eric Rath refers to current scholarship when he says that Zeami wrote twenty to thirty plays, adding that he is supposed to have been the editor of another fifty (Rath 2003: 192).

What the recognition of the homology between cultural and biological evolution can provide is an alternative means of deciding what we could consider the success of an adaptation – that is, not as simply faithful or unfaithful (aka good or bad) in relation to a “source”. Instead, the “source” could perhaps be more productively viewed as the “ancestor” from which adaptations derive directly by descent. As in biological evolution, descent with modification is essential. (*Ibid.*, 446)

Applying this idea to *nō* theatre, a source text could be viewed as an “ancestor” and succeeding adaptations as its “descendants” that differ more or less from their source.

In adaptation studies, the attempt to distinguish between appropriations and adaptations is based on the degree to which the original source has been altered: adaptations usually involve modifying the source text, while appropriations may merely re-contextualise it (Minier 2014: 16–17). However, this definition of appropriation as re-contextualised material is not applicable to *nō* theatre, because appropriation generally means revision of the script of an ancestor *nō* play. And on the contrary, adaptation of source material by means of various strategies places stories and characters into a new context – that of *nō* theatre – that results in “originals” that will become ancestor plays.

With regard to film appropriations, Julie Sanders says that while an adaptation has a more direct relationship with the source, appropriation departs significantly from the original, often “[in]forming [the] source into a wholly new cultural product and domain” (Sanders 2006: 26). However, in *nō* theatre, appropriations modify ancestor plays and generally do not draw directly from the sources that have been used to create the ancestor play. As variants of the plays are appropriations of earlier *nō* plays their interaction with the sources of the ancestor plays is limited to interpretation of the original story and characters as they appear in the plays they modify. Thus, the meaning of adaptation and appropriation departs significantly from the concept used in film adaptation studies.

Sanders adds that an appropriation does not always involve a shift in genre, and often the appropriated text is not clearly acknowledged to be an appropriation, because the source of an adaptation is difficult to recognise (*Ibid.*). The transposition of genre from the literary tradition to *nō* theatre appears to be an “extensive” and “particular transcoding” from one sign system to another that results in the first generation of ancestral plays.²⁷ Variants of *nō* plays are later appropriations of ancestral plays that are created as a result of the evolutionary process of a script, which has its own evolutionary history.²⁸ Thus,

²⁷ These are Linda Hutcheon’s words (2006: 16, 22), which I used for describing the adaptation process in *nō* theatre.

²⁸ The words “evolutionary process” signify different stages of the development of a play into variant plays. However, Linda Hutcheon uses the word “process” in a slightly different meaning that denotes the choices for “creative reinterpretation” by which an adapter shortens an extensive work or expands

in *nō* theatre an ancestral (i.e. classical or canonical) play is an adaptation as a product, and later versions of the play can be seen as a process of appropriation, which lengthens the distance from its ancestor play as well as its original source. This process illustrates “the more kinetic account of adaptation and appropriation”, as Julie Sanders calls the potentially endless process of adaptation, saying that “these texts rework texts that [are] often themselves reworked texts” and that “the process of adaptation is constant and ongoing” (*Ibid.*, 24).

Appropriation of ancestor plays and joint authorship

New layers that emerge during the process of adaptation interact with their ancestor, which in *nō* theatre is the same as *honzetsu* borrowings in ancestor plays and their appropriations as descendant plays. However, variant plays that develop through the process of appropriation interact in a wider network than their ancestors. Julie Sanders provides a theoretical perspective on the process when she says, “Adaptation and appropriation also provide their own intertexts, so that adaptations perform in dialogue with other adaptations as well as their informing source.” (*Ibid.*) On the one hand, this interactive web between later modifications of ancestor plays becomes possible because of traditionally accepted adaptation practices in Japanese literature and arts.²⁹ On the other hand, due to the historical and widely practiced system of joint authorship in Japanese culture the adaptation of themes and motifs from earlier works and appropriations of existing works have also been regarded as a part of the tradition and are valued as highly as original works.³⁰

on the source material (*Ibid.*, 19, 22). The words “evolutionary process” have connotations of natural development, and by using them I subscribe to the concept of adaptation that Bortolotti and Hutcheon (2007) introduced in their article, although Hutcheon uses the word “process” in *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006) as a conscious and intentional act of adaptation. Nishino Haruo uses the term “history of adaptation” (*kyakuhon-shi*) to describe the developmental progression of a play into variant plays (Nishino 1983: 125).

²⁹ The *honkadori* technique of borrowing was common in literature, especially in poetry, and in the arts liberal adaptations in the form of copying or imitating sculptures and paintings can also be observed. It was thought to be part of the learning process of an artist or a path to enlightenment for monks who were also artists. John Scott Miller draws our attention to the fact that the Japanese borrowed from mainland Asia the concept of “imitation as [an] honoring act”, which casts in an entirely different light the act of copying an artwork or using fragments of existing work in composing a new one, although this does not coincide with the Western understanding of authorship (Miller 2001: 17). It should also be recalled that adding the artist’s signature to an artwork was only established in the 18th century in Japan, when *ukiyo-e* artists initiated the practice.

³⁰ The concept of joint authorship can be seen in many areas of cultural activities in Japan, for example in the carving of *yosegi-zukuri* sculptures, in which many sculptors collaborated, each of whom had mastered one particular aspect of carving. Another example of cooperation among authors is the medieval practice of composing *renga* poems at specially arranged competitions.

Japanese medieval playwrights and actors liberally reworked older plays by boldly shortening verses, rearranging scenes, cutting roles, and eliminating parts that were of poor quality (Nishino 1983: 127–128). This might seem inconceivable in the light of contemporary concepts of authorship and the laws protecting the rights of authors, but in medieval Japan the meaning of authorship was quite different from the current understanding. John Scott Miller clarifies this situation: “Japan has inherited a traditionally broad definition of what constitutes originality. Rewriting, variation, and adaptation often receive deference over an original work, and so there has been a much greater tolerance for derivative elements in art” (Miller 2001: 17). Miller cites in this regard the borrowing tradition of *honkadōri*, which is “the overt appropriation of earlier poems (*honka*) in creating new ones” (*Ibid.*). In this context such a practice could be considered joint authorship. The *honkadōri* technique as well as the concept of *honzetsu* came from the *waka* tradition, and both poetic techniques were successfully adopted by *nō* playwrights as the basic techniques for adapting thematic issues and characters from literature to *nō* theatre.

Appropriation of ancestor plays as a process of kinetic adaptation

In addition to adaptations created through the techniques discussed earlier in this chapter, a constant renewing and refreshing of older *nō* plays occurred in the repertory, which could be considered kinetic adaptations of ancestral plays. The tradition of reworking earlier texts, and interweaving old poems and famous passages into new works, enabled the emergence of multiple variations of a script until it assumed the form that is familiar today. *Shinsaku nō* scholar Nishino Haruo insists that the very existence of different variants of plays proves that changes to the scripts have been made several times. He gives as examples of variant plays two of the most beloved plays in the *nō* repertory, *Koi no omoni* (The Burden of Love, author Zeami) and *Aya no tsuzumi* (The Damask Drum, author unknown), which are appropriations of older plays (Nishino 1983: 124–125). Sometimes the title of a play signifies that it is an older version, or the contemporary variant may have a title that is entirely different from its original³¹.

³¹ For example, the play *Matsukaze Murasame* is currently known by the shortened title *Matsukaze*. In historical records older versions of the play might contain the word “ancient” (*mukashi no*) in the title and occasionally be performed as variant plays (for instance, the play *Mukashi Unrin'in*, or *Ancient version of the play Unrin'in*). Nishino points out that when a play varies too greatly from its original then the characters “ki no e” (甲 lit. “older brother”) or “ki no to” (乙 lit. “younger brother”), might be added to the title, which denote older and newer variants of the play, respectively (Nishino 1983: 124). A variant play could also have an entirely different title, such as the play *Dōjōji* (The Temple of Dōjōji) in the current repertory, which is an appropriation of the ancestor play *Kanemaki* (Wrapped Around the Bell).

A playwright might have different objectives for reworking an existing play; for instance, Zeami aimed at updating the material for a contemporary audience, but Kanze Motoakira (1722–1774) made some significant changes in the scripts and musical scores of plays centuries later in order to establish his position in the *nō* world (Omote and Amano 1987: 132).³² Thus, revising ancestor plays could involve several purposes and methods of appropriation, such as updating the play for different audiences, improving the text by adding or cutting verses or characters, resolving illogical elements that might have been added to the plays over centuries, restoring scenes that had not been performed for a long time,³³ or writing an entirely new play using older variants of the play as source material.

In his paper about the history of variant plays Nishino Haruo distinguishes four different types of adaptations of older plays: remodelled versions (*kaisaku*), refurbished scripts (*kaishū*), revisions (*kaitei*), and appropriations (*hon'an*).³⁴ He considers the best examples of these categories to be *Unrin'in* (The Temple of Unrin'in, author unknown) as a major remodelling or *kaisaku*; *Yoroboshi* (Stumbling Beggar Boy, author Kanze Motomasa) as *kaishū* or a play with some minor revisions; and *Kumade Hōgan* as a slightly altered variant of an older play or *hon'an* (Nishino 1983: 125–126).

Nishino's categories of variant plays are general guidelines for understanding the different possibilities for revising classical plays. However, rewriting *fukkyoku* plays should also be added to these categories; this is the revival of plays that have been out of the repertory for a long time, but are rediscovered due to their theme or other aspects arousing keen interest in *nō* circles. Thus, at least five different types of appropriation techniques for creating variant plays can be distinguished: first, revising the interpretation of a character or entire play by simply restoring a single performance device; second, revising a script by omitting lines; third, reducing or adding characters to the play; fourth, reviving a play by combining different historical variants into one script; and fifth, extensively rewriting a *haikyoku* or "out-of-repertory" play resulting in the creation of an entirely new play.

While canonical plays that are included in the current repertory of the five *nō* schools are published in collections of *yōkyoku* and are publicly available for

³² See Jacob Raz 1976 and Eric Rath 2003.

³³ This is the process of reviving or restoring plays that now have shorter variants or are performed as one-act (*han-nō*) rather than two-act plays.

³⁴ In his book *Adaptations of Western Literature in Meiji Japan* John Scott Miller explains the transformation of the meaning of the word *hon'an*, which during the Heian and Tokugawa periods was used to denote translated work in general, while the word *hon'yaku* meant the "translation of imported [Western] scientific and medical texts". However, during the Meiji period the meaning of the word *hon'an* changed to "adaptation" or "adaptive translation", which "sought to tame and modify the foreign to fit domestic sensibilities, usually in service of art or entertainment" (Miller 2001: 12–13). Nishino Haruo does not give the exact meaning of the word *hon'an* that he uses in his article, but as it occupies the last position in his list of gradually diminishing types of modifications I chose to translate it in the broadest sense of the word as "appropriation".

analysis, the variants of current canonical plays remain in *nō* school depositories under the control of the *iemoto* or head of the school and have not been published. When variant plays are performed information about the appropriations in the play is usually printed in the program, but the scripts themselves are regarded as the historical legacy of each school and may be taught to the pupils by a master of the school for the purpose of learning the art of *nō*. Therefore, examples that illustrate the five appropriation techniques of canonical plays have been inferred from articles that describe the revised plays. Additionally, in some cases the revisions have been made for an experimental performance occasion and thus are not available in the form of scripts. Sometimes these special additions are recorded by *nō* scholars in their performance reviews, which are also used in this part of the study to provide examples of revised plays.

1.3.1 New interpretation of characters or a play

As the performance history of some medieval plays accumulated and generations of actors made alterations, the original meaning of the play could have been lost. One indicator of such “lost meaning” of a character or even the entire play could be that regardless of flaws in the logic of the play it is traditional to perform it without questioning the message or original idea of the playwright. Continuously performing a misinterpreted play over an extensive period of time could also be a sign of the “suspended thinking” phenomena that Amano Fumio sees as a major factor influencing *nō* actors in their creative work (Amano 2004: 6).³⁵

The need for additional explanations and commentaries generally comes from the realisation that the script is somewhat far removed from current actors and audiences. Janet Goff explains how the gap between scripts and their context increased to the extent that eventually a compilation of commentaries was required for plays, the first of which was written in the late sixteenth century (Goff 1991: 4). Thus, such plays have lost their connection with their historical context, and therefore needed revision in order to restore their meaning.

A good example of a fresh interpretation of a character is the popular play *Aoi no ue*, which was performed for centuries in a traditional setting in which the character of Shinto shaman Teruhi, who is supposed to free Lady Aoi from being tortured by an evil spirit, is temporally manipulated by Lady Rokujō into torturing her. Amano Fumio explains that for four hundred years no one thought this unnatural until it was corrected in an experimental performance of the play at the Nō Theatre Research Institute of Hōsei University, in 1973 (Amano 2004: 8). Nine years later, in 1982, Asami Masakuni attempted to revise the play again and placed a carriage onstage at Hōsei University, inspired by the

³⁵ Amano used the word *shikō-teishi* or literally “stopping thinking”.

famous “carriage incident” in the “Aoi” chapter of *The Tale of Genji* (Nishino 1991: 260). There is no carriage in the traditional setting of the play, although “the image of the carriage lies at the heart of the play” as a powerful symbol of the reason why Lady Rokujō’s spirit tortures the ailing Lady Aoi (Goff 1991: 126). In the revised version of the play the carriage re-establishes the connection with the source and makes the attack of the malevolent spirit plausible.

However, historical records show that at least during the Muromachi period the carriage was used in performing *Aoi no ue*, but was subsequently removed and forgotten (*Ibid.*, 126–127) until Asami Masakuni reintroduced it in the 20th century. Asami’s interpretation has found many supporters as demonstrated by the staging of this version of the play by Umewaka Rokurō, Kanze Motoakira and others. Nishino Haruo ventures that Asami’s version has become a *kogaki* (staging instruction) for the play (Nishino 1991: 260).

As well as revising the interpretation of a single character by means of a performance device it is also possible to modify performance directions to create an alternative interpretation of an entire play. Examples of this kind of new interpretation of a play are *Teika* (Fujiwara no Teika, author Komparu Zenchiku) and *Yūgao* (Lady Yūgao, author unknown). Kanze Hisao revised these plays by considerably reducing the tempo of the performance “in order to emphasise *nō*’s visual beauty” and to bring forth the “great human depth in these works”. According to Nagao Kazuo, Hisao’s changes were based on a “proper investigation of authentic classical play texts and authentic performance notation”. Reportedly, Hisao was also attempting “to purge corrupted traditions caused by unfortunate misconceptions in previous generations and return[ed] these plays to their correct original forms” (Nagao 1997: 120).

1.3.2 Revision of a script

The simplest revision technique for appropriating classical *nō* plays is shortening scenes and changing the ending of a play (Nishino 1981: 133). Although this revision technique would appear to result in minor alterations, some examples indicate the contrary. One such play is the contemporary variant of *Dōjōji* (The Temple of Dōjōji, author unknown), which is the result of a series of selective and intentional cuts to the script that have entirely changed the significance of the older version (or ancestral play) *Kanemaki* (Wrapped Around the Temple Bell, author Kanze Nobumitsu). The textual cuts in *Kanemaki* were probably made for two reasons: first, shortening the text gave more time for an actor to execute performance elements (*kaneiri* or “bell-entering” and the physically demanding *ranbyōshi* dance at the end of the play) that were not part of the ancestral play; and second, eliminating the lines that referred to the enlightenment of women entirely changed the message of the play. Susan Blakeley Klein finds that due to revision of the script “the *nō* loses nearly all of

that ambivalence" that was still present in *Kanemaki*, the ancestor play of *Dōjōji*, and which made it an unusually misogynistic play (Klein 1991: 305-306).

As in the case of *Dōjōji*, cutting and reducing lines in the script could in extreme instances completely change the idea or theme of the ancestral play. This revision technique might be used for emphasising an innovative viewpoint of the playwright-reviser. Julie Sanders explains this type of motivation underlying an adaptation:

Adaptation is frequently involved in offering commentary on a source text. This is achieved most often by offering a revised point of view from the 'original', adding hypothetical motivation, or voicing [the] silenced and marginalized. (Sanders 2006: 18-19)

The cuts that were made to *Dōjōji* resulted in an ending that differed completely from its ancestral play *Kanemaki*, in that the revised version clearly denies women the possibility of enlightenment (Klein 1991: 299). This interpretation might have been an expression of the playwright's religious beliefs or simply an adjustment made to please a particular audience.

1.3.3 Elimination or addition of characters

This revision technique is used to make (sometimes rather deliberate) changes in the script by reducing the number of characters, while preserving their lines and attributing them to another character. Nishino Haruo gives as an example of this type of adaptation the play *Yoroboshi* (Stumbling Beggar Boy, author Kanze Motomasa), which is now known to have at least three different variants (Nishino 1981: 124). In the contemporary version of *Yoroboshi* the *shite* character has no companion (*tsure*), but in Motomasa's original play in addition to the protagonist *Yoroboshi* there is a woman who conducts a ceremony at the temple. *Nō* researcher Yokomichi Mario felt that the original play was more accurate and logical, because in the historical context of the play's events ceremonies at temples were conducted by priests (Yokomichi 1991: 31). It appears that the role of the *tsure* was eliminated in the contemporary version and the lines assigned to other characters, because the text of the contemporary version is unchanged from the original. With eliminating a character some lines in the text of the later version of the play became illogical, and the original logic of the ancestral play could be achieved by restoring the *tsure* character in a new appropriation of the play. Thus, the contemporary version of *Yoroboshi* could be an example of unsuccessful appropriation of the older play.

The talented *nō* actor Kanze Hisao used a similar but reversed revision technique when he restored the chants of the *waki* in the second act of the play *Aoi no ue*, which had been eliminated by revisers over the course of centuries. Hisao also added the *waki* character, changing the logic of the play by

establishing an exchange between the *waki* and *shite* characters (Nagao 1997: 120).

1.3.4 Reviving³⁶ a play by combining different historical variants

Unrin'in (The Temple of Unrin'in, author unknown) is a play in the current repertory of four *nō* schools that is often attributed to Zeami. The original version of the play was dropped from the active repertory in the middle or at the end of the Muromachi period (Nishino 1984: 209). A revival performance of the play took place on the *nō* stage of the Hōshō School on October 2, 1982, under the title “*Unrin'in* of Zeami” (*Zeami-hon ni yoru Unrin'in*).³⁷ The play is about Kinmitsu (the *waki*) who is a great admirer of *Ise monogatari* (Tales of Ise). In the play, Kinmitsu dreams about the stories of *Ise monogatari*, which prompts him to go to the temple of Unrin'in. He wants to take a branch of a blossoming cherry tree as a souvenir of the famous temple, but when he touches it an old man (the *maeshite*) appears and stops him, telling him to wait for the ghosts of the famous lovers from *Ise monogatari*, the poet Narihira and Empress Nijō. The old man advises him to sleep under the tree, and then disappears. In the second part of the play Narihira (the *nochishite*) appears to Kinmitsu in a dream, and while dancing he tells the story from *Ise monogatari*.

The second act of Zeami's original play differs from the current version in that it is Empress Nijō (the *tsure*) and not the famous Heian poet Narihira who appears to Kinmitsu. The *nochishite* in the ancestral play is the older brother of the Empress, Fujiwara Mototsune, who appears as a demon when she recites a poem. In Zeami's play a story unfolds about the secret affair of the Empress and Narihira, who had run away together, and about Mototsune's desperation to be reunited with the sister who was taken from him.

The current play *Unrin'in* is a *furyū nō* (dance play) of the third category, but the original play is a *kiri nō* belonging to the fifth category of demon plays. Thomas Hare finds that the difference between the current version and Zeami's original play is “so great that the two could be considered entirely different plays”. He concludes that the *shite* and *tsure* in the second act of Zeami's play may be regarded as two separate *shite*, while the main character in the second act of the current play is clearly the poet Narihira (Hare 1986: 58, 267). Nishino Haruo, who was involved in reviving the play, says that no other play exhibits such a great difference from its original version (Nishino 1984: 208). Moreover, he finds that the play “offered an excellent opportunity to show the similarities

³⁶ This is my translation of *fukugen*, which means “reconstruction” or “restoration” and applies to the re-discovery of *haikyoku* plays or “plays outside the active repertory”.

³⁷ The performance was given in commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Nogami Memorial Nō Theatre Research Institute of Hōsei University.

and differences between modern *nō* and that of Zeami's time", and was therefore selected for revival (Nishino 1991: 260).

The research group behind the revival of *Unrin'in* decided that the project should include the best of both plays (Nishino 1984: 208). In comparing them Nishino reached the following conclusion:

In Zeami's original play the old man (maeshite) is apparently the ghost (keshin) of Narihira and therefore it is suspicious why he does not appear in the second part. It might be that this part was rewritten by Zeami and originally in the second part of the play Empress Nijō is supposed to make an appearance along with Narihira and then the couple will be torn apart by her brother Mototsune. (*Ibid.*, 209)

The research group initially tried to revise the second act by adding the character of Narihira, but as the act began to lose its focus and some problems with staging the scene arose, they relinquished the idea (*Ibid.*).

A different solution for the second act of the play was not the only change that was made. Zeami's *Unrin'in* lacks the *ai-kyōgen* interlude and the team had to decide whether or not to add it to the play. Eventually the comic character *ai* was included, the members of the team reasoning that an additional explanation before the second act would be useful to the spectators, since *Ise monogatari* is not as familiar to contemporary audiences (*Ibid.*).

Nishino acknowledges that the research group made several changes to the script. Although the text remained basically the same as that of Zeami's original play, some passages of chant were borrowed from the contemporary version of *Unrin'in*, so that the new version became a combination of the scripts of the original and the revised contemporary plays (*Ibid.*).

1.3.5 Adaptation of *haikyoku* plays by extensive rewriting

The last option for adapting existing *nō* plays is simply to borrow an idea or plot and characters from a *haikyoku* play, and rewrite it as a new play for performing in accordance with the contemporary canon. An example of this type of extensive rewriting was the revival play *Tōgan Botō* (Tōgan and Botō), which was performed at the National Nō Theatre in 1991. Nishino Haruo, who was the playwright, found no significant differences between the existing manuscripts, but without additions and revisions to the script it would not have been challenging for the actors and director. Therefore, the team made major changes to the text, intensifying the conflict between the main characters, the brothers Tōgan and Botō. They also rewrote the *ai* part in the interlude and changed the ending of the play by adding a rapid *kiri* section that was not included in the original. As a result of these additions and revisions an entirely new contemporary play was created that was an adaptation of the ancestral play

Tōgan Botō (Nishino 1991: 257).

1.4 Conclusion: ten adaptation techniques for creating *nō* plays

Nō plays are adaptations that draw on literary and other sources in specific ways. Kinetic and genre adaptations of *nō* plays have different objectives: the five techniques of genre adaptation transform literary and other sources into the form of *nō* to create new plays, but the five modes of appropriating an existing play provide opportunities to revive an old play for new generations of actors and audiences.

Genre adaptations use five techniques for adapting source material to create: first, a protagonist; second, a liberal adaptation of a fictional story or characters; third, a timeline of events in the style of *nō*; fourth, a *yūgen* elegance of vocabulary, intertextuality and climaxes; and fifth, a play that has no specific literary or other source.

Five appropriation techniques are used in kinetic adaptations, which are virtually new versions of existing plays: first, re-interpreting the characters or making minor changes that provide a new interpretation of the play; second, revising the structure and language of the play; third, including or excluding characters; fourth, reviving a play by combining different historical variants into one script; and fifth, creating a new version of a *haikyoku* play through extensive rewriting.

Several different adaptation techniques can be applied to a single *nō* play, because these techniques are used to create the main character, intertextuality, and climaxes of the play. In contrast to films, adaptations of which can be categorised as analogy, transformation, transposition, intersecting or commentary, categorising *nō* plays on the basis of the method of adaptation is both impossible and unnecessary, because of the simultaneous usage of multiple adaptation strategies for the same play.

CHAPTER 2. ADAPTATION OF THE *nō* TRADITION IN *SHINSAKU* PLAYS

The most common features of *nō* theatre create the overall image of the art that constitutes “the nature of *nō* theatre”. An image of a performance created in the mind of a theatregoer involves all aspects of the art, such as the aesthetics of the theatrical space, costumes, decoration and stage props, styles of movement, and the sound of the music and chanting. These features create the first impression of a performance, which will then be unconsciously analysed in the mind of the spectator and compared with the image of the genre formed by previous knowledge. A performance will not be recognised as belonging to a certain genre of theatre unless the image transmitted from the stage coincides with the audience’s understanding.

Certainly, the expression “the nature of *nō* theatre” is a relatively vague description of the many elements that are characteristic of *nō* theatre. During his interview when Professor Nishino Haruo tried to come up with a definition for *shinsaku nō* plays he repeatedly used the expression “the essence of *nō*”, which in his opinion should define whether or not a play is a genuine *nō* play. According to Nishino, a *shinsaku* play has to convey the “essence of *nō*” even if the play does not precisely follow the traditional composition and structural canon of *nō* and uses a freer form of linguistic expression (Nishino 2004b).

In this chapter an attempt will be made to define the meaning and characteristics of the traditional elements of canonical *nō* plays that create the complex and somewhat elusive impression of “the essence of *nō*”. In addition, examples will be provided of the adaptation of traditional elements of *nō* in past *shinsaku* projects in order to better understand the limits within which these elements can be modified. Finally, in this chapter a theory of the web of elements of *nō* for non-canonical *nō* plays and productions will be proposed, which will form a basis for the analysis of the adaptation of traditional elements in *shinsaku* plays.

The word “element” is somewhat ambiguous as applied to *nō* theatre because historically it has had several different meanings. Therefore, a brief overview of the past usage of the term will be provided. The classical interpretation of the word “element” in *nō* can be found in Zeami Motokiyo’s treatise *Shikadō* (Path to Achieving the Flower, 1420). In the treatise Zeami used the term *nikyoku* or “two basic arts of *nō*” to refer to the elements of chant and dance that form the basis of *nō* theatre (SNKBZ 88: 339).³⁸ According to Zeami, an actor has to master these two elements or “modes” in order to be able to perform the three basic types of role or *santai* (*Ibid.*). Karen Brazell states that

³⁸ Zeami used the word *buga* or “dance and chant” to denote these two basic elements, which are explained in his treatise, along with the three types of role *santai*, as *shudō no nyūmon* or “introduction to learning the art of *nō*” (SNKBZ 88: 339).

these core elements have been “used to bring the material elements and the text to life, to create the living tapestry that is the performance” (Brazell 1998: 122).

In her book *Traditional Japanese Theatre* Karen Brazell describes the complexity of the elements of *nō* performance that combine all the elements of *nō* theatre into a unified system, starting with the instruments of a *nō* ensemble, costumes and masks, hand and stage props, as well as the stage, voice, patterns of movement, etc. (*Ibid.*, 115–125). In order to develop a theoretical basis for the analysis of plays, the individual elements of *nō* will be described in this study as interrelated modules that are integrated during the performance to create a *nō* play, and, crucially, how these elements are understood.

“Total” *nō* and the concept of internal and external elements

When *nō* actor Kanze Hisao explained in his interview with scholar Albert Harris that *nō* is not the same as dialogue-based drama because of other important elements, Harris drew a parallel between *nō* and “total theatre”, commenting that the concept “includes the idea that limiting theatre to speech alone eliminates many good elements” (Harris 1986: 310). Leonard Pronko also considered that Oriental theatre is a “total theatre in more than one sense”, clarifying the meaning of “total theatre” as “an experience integrating all the resources offered by the theatre” (Pronko 1967: 182, 185).³⁹

As with Asian theatre in general, *nō* has traditionally been understood as a complex form of theatre the scripts and performance elements of which are intrinsically combined to create a holistic production, which accords well with the concept of “total theatre”. This traditional view of *nō* theatre could be defined as “total *nō*”, which includes all the elements that are incorporated into *nō* as a play and performance. Moreover, these elements are interrelated in a complex and unified structure, which in this study would be called “a web of elements”.

“Total *nō*” as the embodiment of a unified system of *nō* elements constitutes the basis of canonical *nō*. The most exhaustive and comprehensive analysis of the literary and performance elements of *nō* theatre is Komparu Kunio’s honeycomb structure.⁴⁰ According to Komparu’s complex structure six basic artistic elements of *nō* (dance, music, literature, folklore and history, architecture, fine arts and crafts) form the core of the structure around which many other structural elements “that actually give shape to the drama” are clustered (Komparu 1983: 263). Komparu describes the relationship between the

³⁹ Pronko even creates a special category of actors for “total theatre” – the total actor – whom he describes as stylised and disciplined (Pronko 1967: 189).

⁴⁰ Komparu Kunio terms his unified structure of *nō* elements a “molecular” structure (Komparu 1983: 263), but I prefer to use the honeycomb metaphor to describe it, because the creation of these elements has been an intentional act, e.g., the incorporation of *kusemai* into the *nō* play by Kan’ami, and Zeami’s subsequent fostering of an elegant mode of acting.

basic artistic and structural elements as an interrelated system, the latter being a product of the former (*Ibid.*). In other words, the structural elements of *nō* emanate from the basic artistic elements.

Richard Emmert's perspective on the elements of *nō* differs significantly from Komparu's concept; he divides the elements of *nō* into two groups: internal and external. Emmert based his theory of external and internal elements on the notion that the physical training of a *nō* actor defines the genre, and that the physical elements are "internal" because they constitute the performance. From that he derives his conclusion that everything that a *nō* actor does using his vocal and physical capacity, achieved by prolonged and rigorous training, can be considered as part of the *nō* tradition. Other elements – language, stage, masks, costumes, and movement patterns – are "external" elements, since these cannot become part of a performance without the existence of a performer (Emmert 1997: 24–25).

Thus, for Emmert, the most important element of *nō* theatre is a performer and his traditional training, which provides the basis on which a *nō* performance can be created. The "physicality of *nō*" is mainly generated by movement and music, which are therefore its internal elements. Emmert concludes that external elements such as stories, masks, costumes, and stage "can be easily adopted or imitated by other forms that can then be called *nō*-inspired" (*Ibid.*, 29).

Internal and external elements of *shinsaku* plays

The concept of "total *nō*" introduced above comprises all the elements of *nō*, from scripts to music, from patterns of movement to masks and costumes. The concept of "total *nō*" is well suited to describing the canonical *nō* plays in the current repertory, but it is not helpful in the case of non-canonical *nō*, because many new plays have never been staged and exist only as literature. Hence, several elements such as movement patterns or music may simply be missing in the case of *shinsaku* plays. Thomas Rimer expressed a similar opinion, saying that "the written *nō*-text represents only one aspect of this remarkable art of total theatre", while the poetics of a *nō* text with its "most beautiful and evocative poetic achievements" have value *per se* (Rimer 1997).

Compared with canonical *nō* plays, in which the closely interrelated traditional elements of *nō* theatre form a complex system, non-canonical *nō* plays and productions might lack some of these elements, or *nō* elements could appear in different combinations and in a slightly modified or altered form. Therefore, in this chapter a theory of the web of traditional elements of non-canonical *nō* theatre is introduced, based on the notion that the majority of *shinsaku* plays exist only as literature (script or *yōkyoku*) and have never been staged, or have had only a premiere performance after which the play was forgotten. This gives rise to the need to divide the web of traditional elements of *nō* theatre into two

separate categories, one designed for the analysis of new scripts prior to staging, and the other for the analysis of *shinsaku nō* performances.

In this study, Komparu's structure of "total *nō*" and its elements is used as a model to create a theoretical basis for the analysis of *shinsaku nō* plays. The elements of Komparu's "total *nō*" are rearranged according to Emmert's concept of "internal" and "external" elements, following the reasoning that the elements needed for composing a *nō* play are internal, and that the performance elements are divided into two groups: the internal and external elements of a *nō* performance.

There cannot be a *nō* play without a script. Therefore, the elements needed to compose a *nō* play are called "structural elements" in this study. There are four structural elements of *nō* plays: source material, characters, structure, and language. However, when a *nō* play is staged, the performance elements guarantee the theatrical appearance of a *nō* play. Thus, the function of the performance elements is to create "the essence of *nō*" in *shinsaku* plays, which allows the spectator to recognise the performance as belonging to the tradition of *nō* theatre. There are six performance elements of *nō*: the actor's training, music, costumes and masks are the internal elements, and the stage, props and lighting are the external. The internal performance elements create the overall image of "the essence of *nō*", whereas the external elements have less impact on the image of the performance.

2.1 Structural elements of *nō* plays

Four basic structural elements – the (literary) material, characters, structure and language – are considered to be essential to creating *nō* plays. These four elements form a system wherein the elements are interrelated in a web-like network. The four structural elements are indispensable to *nō* scripts, and are therefore considered to be internal elements of *nō* plays. Therefore, altering or modifying them beyond the permissible limits of the *nō* canon causes them to deviate from traditional *nō*. In the following subchapters a definition of structural elements is provided, with examples from past *shinsaku* projects that elucidate the possible limits within which these elements can be adapted in new plays.

2.1.1 Source material and characters

Appropriate sources for *nō* plays

A source for a *nō* play could be a literary work, or a story from folklore or oral tradition, which has a theme or characters that could be easily adapted to *nō* theatre. However, a story would not be suitable material (*shu*, lit. "seed") for a *nō*

play unless it has a character to whom singing and dancing would be highly natural. Therefore, Zeami gives as examples of suitable characters for *nō* plays historical personages such as Ariwara no Narihira, Prince Genji, Shizuka Gozen and Ono no Komachi, who were renowned as famous poets or dancers, or simply as elegant individuals (SNKBZ 88: 353).⁴¹ These qualities make the character appropriate for a *nō* play, because it would not be strange for them to dance at the climax of the play.

Two famous literary works from the Heian period, *Ise monogatari* (The Tales from Ise) and *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji) are the sources of many classical plays. There are also many classical plays such as *Kanawa* (The Iron Crown, author unknown) and *Ama* (The Diver Woman, author unknown) that have drawn their stories from folklore or Buddhist *setsuwa* literature. Plays could be created without source material, but in that case a famous place would be the central theme of the play, and *honka* – quotes from poems about the place – would be woven into the script.

A special criterion for appropriate source material for the theme and main character of a *nō* play is that the story and characters are well known and could be recognised immediately by the target audience.⁴² This ensures that a communal space could be created with the audience, who, due to their previous knowledge of the story and through their imagination, would be able to recognise the allusions in the script.

The process of creating a *shinsaku* play starts with the decision to write a play. The practical experience of *shinsaku nō* playwrights indicates that ideas for new plays may come from different sources. The most traditional way of finding an idea for a new *nō* play would be to draw on literary sources – a poem or a novel. For instance, *nō* actor Kita Minoru read the story *Tsuru no hanashi* (A Story About A Crane) and was inspired to create a new style of bird dance that would be similar to the *mai* section of the classical play *Sagi* (The White Heron) (Hata 1987a: 328, MYSZ 9: 56). Minoru asked the *tanka* poet Toki Zenmaro to write the script for the dance performance *Tsuru* (The Crane, 1959), which is still very popular in the Kita School repertory (MYSZ 9: 57). Setouchi Jakuchō, a Buddhist nun and writer, made the character Ukifune the protagonist of her play *Yume no Ukihashi* (The Bridge of Dreams, 2000). She reasoned that as all the famous scenes from *The Tale of Genji* were already adapted to *nō*, the introduction of a new character from the novel into the gallery of *nō* characters would be an interesting challenge for her (Hikawa 2002: 40).⁴³

The theme of a new *nō* play may also be “created from scratch”, as in the case of immunologist Tada Tomio’s play *Isseki sennin* (The Hermit Isseki, 2003),

⁴¹ Zeami used the words *buga-iufū no meibō no hito*, which are translated as “persons of good reputation in dancing and singing” (SNKBZ 88: 354).

⁴² By the term “target audience” I mean a Japanese or foreign audience, because it is best that the theme for a *nō* play be taken from the literary or cultural heritage of the audience for whom the play would be performed.

⁴³ Jakuchō translated *The Tale of Genji* from classical Japanese into contemporary language in 1997.

which features the world-famous physicist Albert Einstein as the *shite*.⁴⁴ Presumably, future *shinsaku* plays will rely increasingly on these kinds of themes, such as global ecology or terrorism, which may be abstract, but are nevertheless important to a contemporary audience. Baba Akiko says that a suitable theme for a *nō* play should have the attribute of permanence, and thus still be interesting to audiences ten or twenty years later (Baba 2004).

The SOURCE of a *shinsaku* play could be derived from a literary work or oral tradition (legend, folklore etc.). The theme of a play should be well known to the target audience, or there should be characters or other elements that can be immediately recognised, in order to create the communal aspect of a *nō* performance. The source material should be adapted according to the techniques of *honzetsu* and *honkadori*, as described in Chapter 1.

Characters of *nō* plays

According to Nogami Toyochirō, *nō* is not drama, because instead of open conflicts or contradictory standpoints between characters it concentrates on the protagonist and is therefore a “monodramatic” art (Nogami 1981: 72). *Nō* plays focus on contradictory feelings or inner conflict in the main character. Terasaki Etsuko says in this regard, “If conflict exists, it is in the hero’s own mind” (Terasaki 1970: 62). Darko Suvin also pointed out that in *nō* the opponent is either unimportant or unpersonified (Suvin 1994: 528).⁴⁵ The typical main character of a *nō* play is a spirit that lingers in an uncertain state between the realms of the living and the dead, and longs for release from its emotional pain. This character type is a reflection of Buddhist ideas that were popular in medieval Japan. In Japanese *nō* plays, the human tragedy that is found in the spiritual struggles of tortured souls is a type of conflict that was uncommon in other forms of theatre at the time. In that sense the inner conflict of a *shite*’s “troubled mind”, which is characteristic of spirit plays from a theatrical tradition that is more than 600 years old, is a thoroughly contemporary theme.⁴⁶

First impressions may lead to the assumption that the *shite* as the main character is overwhelmingly important in *nō* plays. However, the supportive role of the *waki* plays a crucial part in presenting the *shite*’s story. While it is true that the *waki* usually has less text or “action” than the *shite*, and confrontation between these two roles is rare in most of the plays, the *waki* does not simply

⁴⁴ This new *nō* play, subtitled “a modern Noh play”, is about universal peace and tolerance. Tada Tomio, who was Professor Emeritus of Immunology at Tokyo University and a *kotsuzumi* drum player of the Ōkura School, wrote it for the anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic catastrophes.

⁴⁵ Suvin cites the example of *shura* (warrior) *nō* plays wherein the “hidden” opponent of the *shite* may be the cruel destiny of the warrior, rather than another character.

⁴⁶ This is typical of modern psychological drama, although the form is that of *nō* theatre.

occupy a corner of the stage, but in a way typical of *nō* acts without any perceptible action or movement. The character's unawareness of the events told by the *shite* serves as an impulse or quiet intrigue that triggers the "action" of the *shite* and creates the circumstances for the *shite*'s revelation.⁴⁷

Waki characters that are more active than is usual for *nō* have been used in new plays. A good example of this kind of "active" *waki* can be seen in Baba Akiko's *shinsaku* play *Nukata no Ōkimi* (Princess Nukata, 1997), in which an extremely unusual division of one character is created between the *waki* (the princess in her old age) and *shite* roles: the *waki* sees herself as a young woman (the *maeshite*), while the role of the princess as an old woman is performed by the *nochishite* (Hikawa 2002: 69). The author explained that if she had followed the normal pattern, in the first half of the play the ghost of Princess Nukata (the *maeshite*) disguised as a village woman would have appeared to the priest (the *waki*), and in the latter half he would have seen the beautiful princess (the *nochishite*) in her youth (*Ibid.*) To avoid using the typical structure Baba devised a complicated relationship between the *waki* and the two *shite*, with both the *waki* and *nochishite* sharing the figure of the real princess and the *maeshite* being only her illusion.

A similarly unusual division of a character between different roles can be found in the play *Chiekoshō* (All About Chieko, 1957, author Takechi Tetsuji), in which the vision of the ideal Chieko (the first *tsure* or companion of the main character), as it exists in the mind of her husband Kōtarō (the *shite*), as well as the real Chieko (the second *tsure*), who is mad, both appear on the stage (Hata 1987a: 355, MYSZ 20: 11-12). An innovative interpretation of the main character can also be seen in Mizuhara Shion's play *Jizeru* (Giselle, 1999), in which the original character from the ballet Giselle is split into two different persons – the "black Giselle" (Kuro no Jizeru), who is still yearning after Prince Albrecht, who abandoned her, and the "white Giselle" (Shiro no Jizeru), the reincarnation of Giselle after the purification of her soul (Hikawa 2002: 81).

Shinsaku playwrights have also experimented with personification of the chorus. For instance, in Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru's play *Fukkatsu* (The Resurrection, 1963), the members of the *nō* chorus are Romans who question the imprisoned Jesus Christ (MYSZ 12: 239). This interpretation resembles the function of the chorus in Greek tragedies, in which the members were usually citizens who comment on or even intervene in the events of the play. The *nō* chorus, on the contrary, is never personified and has quite a different function in the play, such as chanting the lines for the *shite* or *waki*, or sometimes representing an incorporeal voice. Other examples of casting a *nō* chorus as characters are the rocks in Yokomichi Mario's *Takahime* (The Hawk Princess, 1967), the souls of victims in Udaka Michishige's *Genshigumo* (The Atomic Cloud, 2003), and the spirits of grapes in Yamamoto Tōjirō's *Jizeru* (Giselle, 1999).

⁴⁷ There are also *mugen nō* plays such as *Kanawa* (The Iron Crown), in which the *waki* has an extraordinarily active role in the plot of the play.

In canonical *nō* plays, the *nō* chorus is not a narrator, although adding the role of a narrator seems to be a new trend in *shinsaku nō*. For instance, the narrator as a character was present in film director Yoshida Kijū's play *Abe no Seimei* (2001), which was performed on the vast stage of a concert hall with special effects. In this instance the role of the narrator seemed to balance the play, because it produced a calming effect (Hikawa 2002: 89).

The CHARACTERS in a *shinsaku* play should have a symbolic quality as well as a physical presence. In addition, characters that are naturally related to the arts and music are easier to adapt to the *nō* form, because they are more likely to dance and chant, and would therefore be preferable in *shite* roles. The central role of the main character should be supported by all the basic structural elements of the play. For example, the story should be arranged using the *honzetsu* adaptation technique because it gives a central focus to the protagonist and imparts the "monodramatic" nature of a *shinsaku* play. As a rule, open conflict between characters should be avoided in a *nō* play. The best solution would be for the play to feature only one party to the conflict, which would make the story one-sided and enable it to unfold from the point of view of the main character. Other characters (the *waki*, *tsure*, and *ai*) should support the unfolding of the *shite*'s story. The *waki* role in particular should be designed in such a way that the *waki* does not confront the *shite*, but instead encourages the *shite* to tell his or her story, thus supporting the central role of the *shite* in the play.

2.1.2 Structure of the plays

Dan (divisions) and *jo-ha-kyū* (development) in the plays

Nō scholar Yokomichi Mario conducted intensive research on the structure of *nō* plays and developed the so-called "theory of *shōdan*". According to Yokomichi's theory, *nō* plays have five orders of division that form separate levels of the structure of a *nō* play, with the play as a whole comprising all five levels. A typical *nō* play is divided into two acts (*ba*), the first of which is *maeba* and the second is *nochiba*, and between which a *kyōgen* actor performs an explanatory interlude (*ai-kyōgen*). The division of the acts is based on the identity of the protagonist, and if the identity of the protagonist does not change, the play is written in one act. On the next level the acts are divided into several *dan* or sequences based on the functions of the roles, for example, the entrance of the *waki* or *shite* and conversation between the characters. *Dan* units are divided into smaller units (*shōdan*, literally "little *dan*"), the distinction of which depends on different criteria, such as the rhythm of the music or language. Some *shōdan* can be further divided into *setsu* or sections, which have their own rhythmic or linguistic characteristics that differ in pitch. Lastly, the division of *setsu* into *ku*

can also be based on the musical rhythm, but not all *shōdan* contain *ku* or “isolated units” (Hoff and Flindt 1973: 218–219). This structure of a *nō* play whereby the units are layered in a strict order reminded Yokomichi Mario of parquetry or a mosaic (NKBT 40: 13).

The structural division of a *nō* play is not based on the plot as much as it is derived from the logical unfolding of musical sequences, each of which has its own rhythmic, tonal and melodic elements. The progressive unfolding of the protagonist’s emotional state in a *nō* play occurs according to the logic of the *jo-ha-kyū* rhythm⁴⁸ and is represented on stage by elements of the performance. Thus, as the structure of *nō* is derived from both the music and the text the play must be divided into *dan* and *shōdan* units in order to meet the requirements of a *nō* play.

***Kaimon* and *kaigen*, the two climaxes of *nō* plays**

The placement of *honzetsu* (borrowing from the source material), which is called *honzetsu no zaisho* or the “place of borrowing”, is important to the composition of a *nō* play (SNKBZ 88: 356). Zeami said in *Sandō* that there should be a scene in a *nō* play in which the *honzetsu* is clearly revealed (*Ibid.*) He recommended interweaving the main theme of the story into the *kaimon*, or “ear-opening” part of the play, which is usually in the second half.

The ear-opening moment is followed by the “eye-opening” moment or *kaigen*; together, these serve as the two climactic points in a *nō* play. The *kaimon* moment merges into one impression created by words and music, the former conveying to the listener an important message drawn from the original source material, and the latter supporting the meaning and expressiveness of the text with sound. Zeami recommended placing eloquent expressions and pivot words at the *kaimon* moment, which is the first culmination of the play, in order that the combined effect of the words and music would move the audience (NKBT 65: 519). The “opening of the ears” means that something important about the character and his or her story is revealed to the spectators. Thus, for the creation of an ear-opening moment in a *nō* play the playwright should use both *honzetsu* and *honkadōri* techniques of adaptation of the material and combine them with musical expression in order to achieve the maximum effect of the climax of the play.

In order to create these climaxes it is extremely important to insert the *honka* (quotes) at appropriate places in the play. Zeami found that a quote should be placed near the beginning of the play, which allows the spectators to recognise the source. In addition, the most famous poetic quotation should be

⁴⁸ *Jo-ha-kyū* principle is employed in designing a full-day program of plays, composing *nō* plays, and determining the rhythms of movement in performance. *Jo* means “slow beginning” or “preparation”, *ha* means “breaking” and suggests destruction of an existing mood or state, and *kyū* stands for rapid ending part.

placed in the final part of the play, or in the last third of the *ha* section, just before the *kyū* (the rapid ending of the play) begins (SNKBZ 88: 262). A fast dance sequence follows, which conveys the messages visually to the audience. This is the *kaigen* moment or the “opening of the eyes”. The two climaxes of the *nō* play are closely interrelated, because the “opening of the ears” functions as preparation for the “opening of the eyes”.

In *Sarugaku dangi* Zeami also gave instructions with regard to the use of metaphor or a play on words, saying that it would not be advisable to feature the same metaphoric phrase twice.⁴⁹ He recommended placing it in the *kaimon* or ear-opening moment of the play in order to avoid repetition of “a central metaphor”.⁵⁰ It is also important not to repeat “the crucial phrase”⁵¹ because in that case the audience would not understand the significance of the moment, and as a result the whole effect of the play would be lost (NKBT 65: 519).

These technical devices for creating a successful *nō* play are supported by a conventional agreement between the performer and the audience, which relies on the spectators’ ability to perceive a coded message disguised by layers of intertextuality, and on their possessing a common knowledge of traditional literary sources, and the ability to recognise the implications conveyed through the text and performance. Deborah Lee Stothers (2001: 76) finds that intertextuality in *nō* creates a “sonic exchange between the internal and external imaginaries” whereby the listener’s knowledge of the story (the internal imaginary) is activated by chanted words, music and movements (the external imaginary).⁵² Stothers views the process of an audience’s receiving a *nō* play as communication between internal and external voices:

The main purpose of allusive and intertextual practice in the *nō* is to stimulate in acoustic time and space the inner voice within the imagination of the listener into successive, perceptual acts of remembering. (*Ibid.*, 75)

The remembering process is gradual, proceeding from one textual layer of the script to the next, putting the spectator into a meditative state of mind (*Ibid.*, 71).

The eye-opening or *kaigen* that follows the *kaimon* moment with its visual effects is undoubtedly the most important climax of a play, but without an effective combination of words and sound preceding it, catharsis would be impossible to achieve. Therefore, it could be said that the primary condition for

⁴⁹ In *Sarugaku dangi* Zeami gives several examples of the inadvisable repetition of a play on words, such as in the *nō* plays about the Heian poet Ariwara no Narihira *Izutsu* (The Well Cradle) and *Kakitsubata* (The Iris), in which the central phrases *mukashi ni Narihira no* and *nani ni Narihira no* should not be repeated (NKBT 65: 519).

⁵⁰ Zeami’s phrase “a central metaphor” is in Japanese *sono nō no kibo no kotoba*.

⁵¹ Rimer and Yamazaki translated Zeami’s words *nō no kibo no kotoba* as “the crucial phrase” (Rimer and Yamazaki 1984: 221).

⁵² During the interview Professor Nishino Haruo (2004b) repeatedly used the verb “listen” instead of “watch” when speaking of *nō* plays, indicating that the sonic quality of a *nō* play is of primary importance.

creating a successful play is intertextuality, which is delivered to the audience by sound, or words and music, making *nō* “a sonic art”, in Stothers’ words (2001). Although the sound of a *nō* play provides the basis for understanding and enjoying the visual performance, the textual and visual aspects of a *nō* play, or as Stothers defines them respectively, the “auditory subtext” and “surface text”, are of equal importance to the play as a whole (*Ibid.*, 75).⁵³

The religious element as a structural device

Regardless of the popular belief that *nō* theatre is a Zen Buddhist art, the impact of religion on *nō* theatre is actually rather difficult to define, because religious ideas do not appear explicitly in *nō* plays as would be expected. Many scholars, for instance Albert Harris (1986: 307), Patrick O’Neill (1976: 107), Donald Shively (1957: 159), and Royall Tyler (1987: 25, 39), have pointed out that, first of all, the religious elements in *nō* plays reflect the social and philosophical milieu of the middle ages in Japan, or more precisely, the Muromachi period. It was an age in which belief in the spirits of plants, ghosts and various otherworldly creatures was common. Hence, the appearance of a ghost on a *nō* stage was considered normal, whereas it certainly would not be accepted as such in a contemporary context.

Taking the impact of the historical context into consideration, it could be said that in *nō* plays the religious element, especially Buddhism, is difficult to define because it merely creates a “sense of unreality in plays” and gives them “a solemnity and an otherworldly quality” (Shively 1957: 160–161). Arthur Waley stated that “the religion of the *nō* plays is predominantly Amidist”, which was “the common average Buddhism of medieval Japan” (Waley 1922: 32). Throughout the Muromachi period, the dominant religious ideas that influenced *nō* plays were mostly derived from various Amidist sects, such as the Shingon Sect, which was comprised of mountain ascetics (*yamabushi*) who practiced mysticism and performed exorcist rites, and the Tendai Sect, which combined ideas from Buddhism and Shinto.

The function of religious spirituality in *nō* plays is to establish the general background of the play. Religious personages who appear as characters in the plays, and the prayers that are interwoven into the scripts lack a religious agenda *per se* (Ortolani 1984: 180). The shared religious worldview of the age when *nō* plays were created forms the background canvas of the play that enables different ideas from folklore and religion to be interwoven into it without preaching the tenets of a particular religious sect. It could therefore be

⁵³ If one accepts that the transcription of “kaigen” was a copyist’s error, and that in Zeami’s original text the word was written “mongen” (the characters for “ear” and “eye”), as several prominent sources have suggested (mentioned in Quinn 2005: 400, note 129), then it would imply that “the opening of the ears and eyes” occurred simultaneously and that this one moment marked the climax of a play.

concluded that the religious element is part of a *nō* play simply because it belongs to the historical context of the story.

One characteristic of Buddhism in *nō* plays is that the priests and other religious personages who appear onstage are not affiliated with a particular Buddhist sect. Rather, on their pilgrimage they pray for wandering restless souls (*muenbotoke*), say the name of Amida, or recite the *Lotus Sutra*. The power of invoking the name of Amida Buddha was believed to be capable of working a miracle, such as brightening the sky, or the prayer might be so powerful that it could cause heavy rain and stormy winds with thunder and flashes of lightning, as in the play *Kanawa* (Foard 1980: 444; NKBT 41: 351).

In a typical two-act dream play, such as Zeami's warrior play *Atsumori*, a priest arrives at the site of a famous battle or the grave of a warrior, and after he begins to say a prayer the warrior appears to him, tells his sad story and asks him to pray for his soul trapped in *shura*, the nether world of the wandering souls of dead warriors (NKBT 40: 233–240). It is typical of *nō* plays that saying a prayer, chanting a sutra or reading a famous poem triggers the events of the play by summoning the ghost to the place with which it is closely related. Reading a sutra is a structurally important act of the *waki* that enables the *shite* to make its appearance. In the same way that the prayer in the beginning of a play is part of the structure of the play, a monk or priest's reading an excerpt from a sutra or saying a prayer in the end also functions as a structural unit of the play. However, the affiliation of the *waki* character with a particular Buddhist sect and the content of the prayer are unimportant to the play as a whole. Saying a prayer that summons a ghost to the site at the end of the first part of the play, and reading a sutra (or a simple Buddhist prayer) at the end of the play to enable the ghost to achieve Buddhahood function as the structural framework for two-act dream plays.

In addition to employing Buddhist prayers as structural elements in *nō* plays, terms that originally belonged to different Buddhist philosophies were used without intending to communicate religious ideas or debate different doctrines. Donald Shively explains that during the Muromachi period the Tendai Sect was in a leading position in relation to other Buddhist sects, and that obviated the need for any religious propaganda (Shively 1957: 140, 142). The purpose of inserting excerpts from Buddhist texts and common prayers into *nō* scripts could be viewed as a technical device that playwrights used to add philosophical depth to the plays.

Donald Keene believes that the Buddhist terms used in *nō* plays would have been the most dramatic textual parts of the plays (Keene 1990: 48). In other words, Buddhist prayers helped to create dramatic tension between characters or heightened the climax of the play. A good example of the use of prayers as dramatic tools is the classical play *Dōjōji* (The Temple of Dōjōji, author unknown). In the latter part of the play the prayers of the priests intensify, and due to the power of the prayers the demonic serpent is chased away from the temple, achieving catharsis (SNKBT 57: 56–57). Similarly, in the plays *Chōbuku*

Soga (Exorcizing Malevolent Spirit for Soga, author Miyamasu) and *Aoi no ue* (Lady Aoi, author unknown) the prayers of Buddhist priests function as part of the structural composition of the play, creating dramatic tension (NKBT 41: 96–98; SNKBT 57: 152–154). Certainly, the religious tone of the prayers is important, but it is only used as a tool in the hands of the playwright to create an appropriate atmosphere for the play, and does not serve to preach particular religious principles to the audience.

Zen Buddhist ideals of physical and mental discipline, such as restraint and austerity, attracted the medieval ruling classes, and Zen was thought of as a religion of artists at the time (Pronko 1967: 76; Waley 1922: 32). Therefore, incorporating Buddhist themes into *nō* plays reflects the intention of *nō* actor-playwrights to please their audience. Some plays do teach a Buddhist lesson, but David Shively reasons that “the audience of this time seems to have enjoyed such theological expositions if garbed in elegant form”, adding that a Buddhist theme was to playwrights little more than a framework to justify the play (Shively 1957: 157, 161).

Religion in *nō* plays is indubitably present, although it appears in a disguised form, such as in the identity of a character such as the *waki*, who is usually a monk or priest, in places of worship or pilgrimage, in the usage of prayers and Buddhist vocabulary as structural devices, and in Buddhist symbolism of natural images such as a mountain, a full moon, water, or bamboo (Shively 1957: 140; Pronko 1967: 76; Tyler 1987: 25–28). In very rare cases in classical *nō* plays Buddhism is an expression of a religious agenda; for instance, in the play *Dōjōji*, there is an extremely misogynist statement that women cannot reach Buddhahood (Klein 1991), a religious debate in *Sotoba Komachi* (Komachi at the Grave Marker, author Kan’ami; SNKBT 57: 436–437), an explanation of the ideas of the Jishū Sect of Pure Land Buddhism in the play *Seiganji* (The Temple of Seiganji, author unknown; *Ibid.*, 546–552), and the belief that the spirits of plants can attain Buddhahood in *Hotoke no hara* (Buddha Fields, author unknown; *Ibid.*, 431).

The STRUCTURE of *shinsaku* plays should be arranged in accordance with the structural units of *nō* plays, increasing their potential to be performed. On the other hand, the *dan* units of the play are derived from the “actions” of characters, which in new plays could be modified to some extent, in contrast to canonical plays. The structural units of a *shinsaku* play are like pieces of a mosaic, which can be arranged in multiple ways. Although there are some structural patterns (such as in a typical *mugen nō* play) that have proven to be successful, the exact order of succession of these units in the structure of the play would be left to the author’s imagination. All parts of a *shinsaku* play should follow the *jo-ha-kyū* logic of rhythm and progression. The religious element should be expressed in the structure of the play: in the beginning and at the end there should be prayers or other textual sequences that respectively summon a ghost to the site and offer it redemption. The most important textual part or most impressive poem should

be placed at the end as the *kaimon* (ear-opening) moment, followed by a dance or action on the part of the main character as the *kaigen* (eye-opening) moment, because these moments form the two climaxes of a *nō* play.

2.1.3 Language

The conventional language style of *nō* plays has several components, such as an elegant (*yūgen*) vocabulary specific to classical poetry and novels, a literary *sōrō* style, alternation of poetic sections with prose, and the use of language from an earlier historical period.

Poetic language as the embodiment of *yūgen*

One of the greatest concerns of *nō* theoretician Zeami was the choice of a suitable vocabulary for *nō* plays. For instance, in the sixth chapter of his treatise *Fūshikaden* Zeami spoke about words that create a sense of gracefulness, and others that demand a more forceful acting style (SNKBZ 88: 269-270). In the treatise (*Ibid.*) he gave some examples of “graceful words”, such as *nabiki* (“waving” or “fluttering”), *fusu* (“to lie down”), *kaeru* (“to draw back”), *yoru* (“to come close”), and examples of words with a “strong sound”, such as *otsuru* (“to fall down”), *kuzururu* (“to crumble”), *yabururu* (“to break”), *marobu* (“to knock down”).

An analysis of Zeami’s examples of graceful and strong-sounding words leads one to conclude that his decisions were based on two criteria: graceful words suitable for a *nō* play have a soft sound⁵⁴. The meaning of such words is also soft and delicate, as they tend to be verbs and nouns that are more abstract or archaic. According to these criteria, the special “soft” vocabulary suitable for *nō* includes words such as *imose* (“a married couple”), *samishii* (“lonely”), *shinobu* (“to yearn”), *nagori* (“parting” or “farewell”), *tomurau* (“to mourn” or “to pray for”), *koromo* (“robe”), and *honobono to* (“faintly”) which are among the most common words in *nō* plays.

In the sixth chapter of *Fūshikaden*, Zeami writes that poetic quotations should be used in *nō* plays because “elegant words” enable artistic expression that communicates the concept of *yūgen* (*Ibid.*, 263). Thus, a carefully chosen vocabulary determines whether a *nō* performance is elegant and has the potential to become an expression of *yūgen*. Zeami adds that using vulgar words could poorly impact artistic expression and result in an inferior *nō* play (*Ibid.*).

⁵⁴ An analysis of Zeami’s examples reveals that “soft-sounding” words contain relatively few consonants and many vowels. Thus, words without consonants that create a “strong sound” in the Japanese language, such as ‘z’, ‘ts’, ‘k’, or ‘p’, would be preferable.

Zeami expands on the subject in *Fūshikaden*, and gives examples of vocabulary that should be avoided in *nō* plays: rude words and odd expressions with Sanskrit words or Chinese loanwords (*Ibid.*, 270). Words of the former type are simply unsuitable for *nō* plays because they destroy the mystic and graceful atmosphere that forms the basis of elegant movement. On the other hand, vocabulary of the latter type makes the text too complicated to be easily understood. Sanskrit words in particular would have been incomprehensible to a medieval audience and might have sounded like a mystical spell. Therefore, Zeami's advice concerning the choice of vocabulary for *nō* plays is to use poetic and archaic Japanese words, which have a soft and graceful sound, and are easily understood.

Literary style and the rhythm of the verses

The special form of the language of *nō* plays relies on the structural characteristics of the *shōdan* units and the rhythm of the verses. *Nō* plays consist of *shōdan* units that can be broadly divided into spoken sections called *kotoba* (an introduction *nanori*, a narrative *katari*, and a dialogue *mondō*) and two types of chanted sections: non-congruent song *hyōshi awazu*, and congruent song *hyōshi au* of 7-5 or 12 syllables set to an 8-beat rhythm.⁵⁵ The regular melodic song *tadautai* section is a textual part of *nō* plays in which 7-5-syllable verses alternate (chanted monologues *ageuta* and *sageuta*, and a dialogue *rongi*), while the dance *kusemai uta* section consists of irregular verses (Hare 1986: 3–5, 291–300).⁵⁶

Another characteristic of canonical *nō* plays is the *sōrō-bun*, a classical literary style of the Muromachi period that consists of non-rhythmical prose, non-metered chanted verse, and metered chanted verse. In a play, an actor sings the non-melodic prose parts (*kotoba*), and an actor or the *nō* chorus chants the metered and non-metered verses (Komparu 1983: 169). *Sōrō* textual parts have different functions in the play, such as a formal introduction of the character (*nanori*), a travelling song (*michiyuki*), or dialogues (*rongi* and *mondō*). Other parts of the play are written in a medieval poetic style that is well suited to the quotes from poems and literary works.

⁵⁵ Examples of non-congruent song are a recitative *sashinori* and an entrance song *einori*, which do not have a one-to-one relationship between the syllables of the text and the beats of the music. Congruent song is part of the script, such as *ōnori*, *chūnori*, and *hiranori*, in which the rhythmic patterns of the text and music correspond (Hare 1986: 3–5, 291–300).

⁵⁶ A *kuse* has three sections, is mostly chanted by the *nō* chorus, and is based on strong rhythmic patterns (Brazell 1988: 537).

Language usage in *shinsaku* plays

The issue of language usage in *nō* theatre did not arise before the creation of contemporary *nō* plays, in which a change in both literary style and vocabulary can be observed (Hata 1987a: 330). Contemporary playwrights who create new *nō* plays must decide whether to write the play in classical or contemporary Japanese. Richard Emmert felt that modern poetic language could be used in *shinsaku* plays “because modern Japanese has a natural beauty which might complement the performance techniques of *nō*”. In addition, he is convinced that “modern poetic rhythms might in turn demand changes in musical rhythms” (Emmert 1997: 31).

Nishino Haruo also believes that the choice of the mode of language depends on the music of the *nō* play, but he prefers writing new plays in the language of an earlier historic period. He counsels that just as the *nō* plays from the Muromachi period were written in the language of the Kamakura period, contemporary plays should use Meiji-period Japanese. He goes so far as to say that using contemporary Japanese in new *nō* plays is impossible, because at the end of a phrase or verse it is difficult to sing some words such as the *desu* copula and the *masu* verb endings in the present simple tense. On the other hand, Nishino recommends avoiding the literary *sōrō* style in new plays, and advises using the modern *nari* form instead, or even omitting *nari* if necessary (Nishino 2004b).

Nō actor Kanze Hisao insisted that archaic language is more abstract and thus more suitable for *nō* plays, and that with scripts written in modern Japanese “the reality of the dialogue is lost” (Harris 1986: 341). If archaic words used in *nō* plays are compared with contemporary words with the same meaning, the difference in sound becomes apparent. For instance, the word *inishie* (“long ago” or “in olden times”) that belongs to the *nō* vocabulary sounds softer than its contemporary equivalent *mukashi*. Similarly, in words such as *uruwashii* (“beautiful”) and *utsukushii*, *geni* (“truly”) and *makoto ni*, *omokage* (“appearance”) and *gaiiken*, *kotowari* (“reason”) and *riyū*, *nasake* and *kanji* (“feeling”), the difference between the soft (*nō* vocabulary) and strong (contemporary) sounds is conspicuous and reflects Zeami’s idea of “elegant vocabulary”.

In addition, Kanze Hisao found that if the script contains many “new” and “unusual” words that do not belong to the *nō* vocabulary, an actor might have “a hard time finding a way to speak the words” (*Ibid.*, 342). His opinion is supported by Zeami’s views on the issue; in *Sarugaku dangi* he said that if the text is too complex the audience would not grasp the meaning quickly. The script would be like a book, which can only be appreciated by reading it, and not a play, which should be first and foremost a visual-sonic art (NKBT 65: 519).

However, *shinsaku* playwright Baba Akiko finds that the best solution for new *nō* plays is a combination of classical and modern language. When she writes a new play, she considers the rhythm of the text, and writes the “soft”

parts in modern language and the rhythmical parts in archaic language (Baba 2004).

Some *shinsaku* plays challenge the canon set for language usage in *nō* plays. For instance, Takamura's play *Chiekoshō* (1957) directed by Takechi Tetsuji was written in colloquial language, and contains many poems in contemporary Japanese. Nevertheless, *nō* historian Hata Hisashi found that, surprisingly, it did not feel unnatural when the contemporary language poems were chanted in the *nō* style (Hata 1987a: 357). *Nō* scholars Yokomichi Mario and Masuda Shōzō also reportedly found that this play demonstrated the possibility of creating *nō* plays without writing the text in the typical 7-5-syllable poetic style (*Ibid.*).

A good example of modifying both the vocabulary and grammatical form of the language in contemporary *nō* is Baba Akiko's appropriation of Zeami's classical play *Izutsu* (*The Well Cradle*, 1996). Baba's new version of *Izutsu* is written in colloquial Japanese, not in the classical Japanese that is usual for *nō* plays. The play is written in polite *desu-masu* form, with sentence-final particles such as *nē*⁵⁷ occasionally added to the *shite*'s lines, which make the protagonist of the play, Aritsune's daughter, sound more feminine. In addition to using the contemporary Japanese grammatical mode, Baba often simply translated the vocabulary of the original play into modern Japanese. The effect is twofold: the script is more comprehensible to contemporary audiences (especially readers) but more difficult for the performers to chant. Due to the usage of contemporary Japanese, the amount of text has increased by one fourth compared with the original play (Baba 1996: 11–22). It is logical that because of the use of colloquial and more descriptive language, the original musical accompaniment would no longer be suitable. Moreover, chanting *desu*, *masu* or *deshō* sentence endings in *nō* style or matching them with *nō* music is highly problematic because of the different rhythmic patterns and longer sentences.

Challenges of adapting the English language to *nō* plays

Richard Emmert considers language to be one of the external elements of *nō*; therefore, he is convinced that replacing classical Japanese with contemporary English would not cause a change in the essential structure of a *nō* play (Emmert 1997: 29). David Crandall, a member of Theatre Nohgaku, offers the metaphor of a knot in a rope to illustrate the unchanging nature of *nō* patterns, meaning that writing and performing *nō* in other languages, or using different "material" for the "rope", does not change *nō* into something else, because "the knot remains the same" (Crandall 2004a: 1).

Contrary to Emmert and other members of Theatre Nohgaku, in this study the language of *nō* plays is considered an internal structural element that could

⁵⁷ In contemporary colloquial Japanese the sentence-final particle *nē* is a marker for co-responding attitude, which is often used in women's speech.

be either classical or contemporary Japanese, or English. However, the use of language in *shinsaku* plays, either Japanese or English, has to be in accordance with the traditional canon of *nō*. Thus, the traditional rules of *nō* limit the “freedom” of language usage. However, these rules should not exclude any language on the basis of suitability for *nō*. Of course, should any language other than Japanese be used, knowledge of the *nō* canon would be strongly advised.

Certain problems arise when writing *nō* scripts in English, which arise from differences between the structure of the English and Japanese languages. The biggest difference between English and Japanese texts lies in the phonetic structure of the words: English words often end in consonants while Japanese words usually end in vowels. Zeami has pointed out in his treatise *Sarugaku dangi* the difficulties of chanting Japanese particles according to the melodies and rhythms of *nō*, saying that an actor should always rely on the musical rhythm, because it is the most important element of a *nō* performance (NKBT 65: 506–507). In the same way that Japanese particles can affect a *nō* chant, English words ending in consonants can “shorten” a chant conducted in the *nō* style due to their fragmented effect, and could potentially change the rhythm of the *nō* music. Therefore, when creating *nō* plays in English it is important to find a way to combine the chanting with the rhythms of *nō* music.

Another difficulty associated with writing *nō* plays in English concerns short unstressed words, because the stress on individual syllables in English differs significantly from Japanese, and therefore tends to create “a differing sense of rhythm” (Emmert 1991: 168). A significant challenge for a playwright/composer is also posed by English articles such as “a” or “the” and prepositions such as “at” or “for”, which usually receive less stress than the more important words of the text (*Ibid.*, 169). Therefore, chanting less stressed words according to *nō* rhythms of equal length can decrease the intelligibility of the English script for listeners. However, it is possible to resolve such a “dissonance” between the English text and *nō* rhythms by creating entirely new music for English *nō* plays.

The LANGUAGE of *shinsaku* plays can be classical or modern Japanese, verse or prose, in the formal *sōrō* style, modern *nari* style, *de-arū* style, or even in colloquial language. However, it is highly recommended that the language style of the previous era be chosen for a *nō* play.⁵⁸ The limits of the choice of language are not rigid as long as the language remains within the *nō* canon, and possesses the elaborate vocabulary and elegant passages characteristic of *nō* plays. The script should also be written in such a way that it would be possible to chant in the *nō* style. However, new plays can be written in other languages than Japanese (for example, English).

⁵⁸ It was common practice for plays from the Muromachi period to be written in the language of the Heian or Kamakura periods; therefore, the natural language style of *shinsaku* plays of the Shōwa period would be the language style of the Meiji era, and it would be appropriate for new plays created in the Heisei years to be written in the language of the early Shōwa period.

2.2 Performance elements of *nō* plays

Six performance elements are necessary to non-canonical productions: the actor's training, the music, costumes and masks, stage, hand and stage props, and lighting. The first three elements – the actor's training, music, costumes and masks – are internal performance elements that are indispensable for a performance to be considered a part of the *nō* tradition. The latter three elements – the stage, hand and stage props, and lighting – are external performance elements that could be modified to some degree, and the performance could still be categorised as *nō*.

Plays in the active repertory have a long performance tradition, and they might have several staging interpretations (*kogaki*) by different schools. However, *shinsaku* plays often require new *kata* in order to manipulate extraordinary stage props or to find innovative acting options. Participating in a *shinsaku* production is a rare opportunity for *nō* actors, because it offers them a chance to provide answers to various questions that may arise from a text that has no performance history or stage instructions, and to “give a form to the formless”, in the words of *shite* actor Kongō Hisanori (Hikawa 2002: 36–37).⁵⁹

2.2.1 Internal performance elements

The actor's training as the basis of a *nō* performance

The most important performance element in *nō* theatre is the actor and his traditional training; this provides the basis on which a *nō* performance can come into existence. In *nō* theatre the most important element is music, which defines the rhythms and melodies of the chant. It requires specific vocal training that *nō* performers learn from early childhood. The performer with his physical and vocal training is the very essence of *nō* theatre. For instance, a *nō* script sung as an ordinary song would not create the particular atmosphere that a *nō* performance demands. In this regard, Richard Emmert (1991: 166) says that a “classical *nō* text read simply as naturalistic dialogue does not make a *nō* performance”, because “clearly, only a ‘*nō*’ rendering of a text can create a ‘*nō*’ performance”.⁶⁰ Furthermore, Emmert explains that the meaning of the expression “*nō* rendering” has two aspects: the vocal chanting style, and the combination of chant and drums. He believes that “the strong vocal quality serves as an important energiser” of a *nō* performance that enables the creation of an atmosphere in which the “space comes alive for the actor-dancer”.

⁵⁹ In Japanese, *katachi no nai mono o katachi ni suru*.

⁶⁰ Richard Emmert believes that the actor's traditional training defines *nō*, saying that it is not important what actors chant, but rather, how they chant the lines (Emmert 1991: 172).

According to Emmert, the drum beats and drum calls *kakegoe* create “a constant tension” that is an important ingredient of a *nō* performance (Emmert 1997: 29).

New *kata* for *shinsaku* plays have been created not only for *nō* music, but also for the physical acting, when necessary. A good example of creating new movement patterns for a *shinsaku* play is Setouchi Jakuchō’s *Yume no Ukiohashi* (The Bridge of Dreams, 2000). The first new pattern showed Ukifune “naked” on the *nō* stage after a dance sequence in which her lover Kaoru removes the *itsutsuginu* garment from her shoulders, leaving her symbolically naked, wearing only a white *surihaku* kimono. Hikawa Mariko found that the inclusion of a scene in which the male character undresses the female character was heretofore unprecedented on the *nō* stage (Hikawa 2002: 27). Additionally, an entirely new *kabuki*-style *kata* was created for the same play, in a scene in which the *shite* character Ajari, burning from earthly desires, wraps himself around the *shite* pillar, holding a rosary in his hand (*Ibid.*, 30). This kind of innovative *kata*, which resembles the “*mie* around the pillar” in *kabuki* theatre,⁶¹ was necessary because it expressed a completely new theme in *nō* theatre – eroticism.⁶²

In addition to new thematic issues that require the creation of new *kata*, classical performance elements have also been used in new contexts, such as at the climax of Yoshida Kijū’s *shinsaku* play *Abe no Seimei* (2001) about an imperial astrologer, in which a “spider’s thread” is thrown, an effect that was originally used in the popular classical play *Tsuchigumo* (Earth Spider). In that *shinsaku* production stage director Marikku also created an innovative special effect in a scene in which the reflection of Seimei’s fox-mother Kuzunoha appears in and then vanishes into a mirror (*Ibid.*, 89).

The ACTOR’S TRAINING is the most important performance element, because it defines the *nō* quality of an actor’s movements and chant. If a play fulfilled the *nō* requirements (i.e., if it contained all the necessary structural elements), but was performed by actors trained in some other theatre tradition, the performance would still be considered to be outside the *nō* theatre tradition.

Music as the core element of *nō*

The traditional *nō* ensemble *hayashi* includes four instruments: the bass drum *taiko*, the hip drum *ōtsuzumi*, the shoulder drum *kotsuzumi*, and the flute *nōkan*. The peculiar harmony of these instruments creates the unearthly atmosphere of

⁶¹ “*Mie* around the pillar” is a *kabuki* theatre *kata* known as *hashiramaki* (wrapped-around-a-pillar).

⁶² It would be correct to say that the eroticism in the innovative *kata* in *Yume no Ukiohashi* was of a new type; however, scenes with erotic undertones can also be found in canonical plays. Nagao Kazuo gives some examples of the medieval concept of eroticism, such as in the play *Izutsu* wherein the ghost of Ki no Arisune’s daughter dances in a robe that belonged to her former lover Narihira. A similar motif can be seen in *Matsukaze*, in which Matsukaze dances in Yukihiro’s robe (Nagao 1997: 122).

a *nō* play. Other sound effects are also sometimes used, such as stamping during a dance sequence, shaking small bells, or striking with a mallet (Komparu 1983: 168), but these sound effects are directly derived from the *shite* character of the play and his performance (*hataraki* or “action” and *mai* or “dance”), and are not descriptive in nature.

Various elements have been experimented with in the musical design of new *nō* plays, beginning with the replacement of instruments in the traditional *nō* ensemble *hayashi*. For example, in *shingeki* playwright Kinoshita Junji’s play *Yūzuru* (1954), director Takechi Tetsuji combined the *nō* tradition with some elements of opera and other genres, adding a mouth organ *shō* from *bugaku* to the *nō* ensemble and assembling a choir of opera singers. These changes in the music resulted in a production that deviated substantially from the *nō* canon.

There are other examples of experiments and innovations being made in *shinsaku* plays, such as Dōmoto Masaki’s play *Kūkai* (1998), in which director Umewaka Rokurō used a mouth organ *shō* in the *nō* ensemble, which in his words expressed “the cosmic aspect of Buddhism” (Hikawa 2002: 45). Another example is Yamamoto Tōjirō’s *Garasha* (Garcia, 1997) in which passages of pipe organ were interwoven into the *nō* music, and a special flavour was added to the mix by the choir’s chanting psalms (*Ibid.*, 18, 53). In this production, changes in the *nō* music were required because of the story, which was about a Japanese Christian woman, and the extraordinary performance space, Suntory Concert Hall in Tokyo.

Even more extravagant images have been created in *shinsaku nō* by means of special sound effects. For instance, in Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru’s play *Fukkatsu* (The Resurrection, 1963), in which Saint Peter’s theme music was played on an ordinary flute rather than a *nō* flute, the passage ended with a cock’s crow (MYSZ 12: 242). Similarly, a sound effect rather uncommon to *nō* plays was used in Yoshida Royō’s *Fukkatsu no Kirisuto* (The Resurrection of Christ, 1957), in which the voice of an angel, an incorporeal character, was played from a tape (*Ibid.*, 246). One extreme example is an outdoor performance of the play *Musashino* (1993), in which, among other unconventional elements such as laser lights, synthesiser music was used, leading *shinsaku* researcher Nishino Haruo to label it as an “electronic *nō*” (Nishino 2004: 10).

However, in many *shinsaku* projects there has also been a quest for more creative musical solutions within the *nō* canon. One innovative experiment was a change in the chanting *kata* for the *nō* chorus of Yokomichi Mario’s play *Takahime*, in which the first and second row of the chorus chanted separately in order to create an image of water flowing over rocks at gradually higher speeds and intensity (Nishino 2004b). This example clearly demonstrates the potential to create entirely new sound effects and musical harmonies within the conventional limits of *nō*.

The MUSIC for a *shinsaku* production should be composed according to the traditional *nō* canon, based on the Japanese pentatonic scale. In addition, the

music should be arranged in *dan* and *shōdan* units according to the characteristics and logical unfolding of the story, and other structural elements of the play. Four traditional instruments (*nōkan*, *kotsuzumi*, *ōtsuzumi*, *taiko*) should form the *nō* ensemble, and the *kakegoe* of musicians and *nō* chorus *jiutai* are also natural elements of a *nō* performance.

The use of costumes and masks to define the character

The *nō* mask with its unearthly facial expression symbolises a character. It is small and does not entirely cover the actor's face, as did *bugaku* or Greek masks. Therefore, the actor's face remains visible beneath the mask, which avoids creating the impression that the actor and character are the same. While it is true that an actor can use his face and mask to embody the character, it poses a great challenge, since only a gifted actor is capable of bringing a mask to life through skilful manipulation. Hata Hisashi is correct when he says that a rivalry is created between the mask and the actor, which gives birth to dramatic quality (Hata 1987b: 162). In other words, through an actor's use of the mask the character becomes real, while at the same time, the mask preserves the abstract quality of the character and the sense of unreality.

The new themes of and characters in *shinsaku* plays also require creating new costumes and masks, because in *nō* theatre the mask in particular reflects the individuality and mood of the character. In addition, staging a play in the canonical *nō* tradition usually begins with the selection of a proper mask for the role. However, as Baba Akiko stressed in her interview, the most important issue on the *nō* stage is to accentuate the *tatesen* or upright posture of the character, and for that reason it is always better to have an actor wear a *tatesen* kimono (such as a *karaori*). She says that a shapeless kimono or realistic contemporary costume should be avoided, explaining that the “[*n*]ō stage has upright pillars which gives an important accent to the whole image of the performance” (Baba 2004).

Nevertheless, this unwritten rule of *nō* theatre has sometimes been ignored, as in the play *Chiekoshō* under Takechi Tetsuji's direction, where the actors appeared onstage in costumes that were “particularly unconventional as typical to *shinsaku*”, according to one *nō* reviewer (Hata 1987a: 356).

While unusual hand props can evoke a certain degree of astonishment on the part of the audience, a character's costume seems to be a more important element that creates the first impression of a play as belonging to the traditional *nō* canon. A good example of a special garment made for a *shinsaku* character was Ukifune's costume in Setouchi Jakuchō's play *Yume no ukiohashi* (2000), which, although innovative, perfectly fulfilled the requirements of a *nō* costume. For the first time in the history of *nō* theatre a five-layered *itsutsuginu* was used, designed by costume designer Ueda Itsuko, who wanted to express Ukifune's gentle character and therefore chose a light pink colour for the costume. Ueda

explained that she was able to use this unusual colour for the costume only because of contemporary stage lighting (Hikawa 2002: 33). The costumes historically used in *nō* theatre were of dark intense colours interwoven with golden threads, which looked impressive by candle- and torchlight. Contemporary *nō* theatres generally use electric lighting, which allows nuances of colour that were imperceptible hundreds of years ago to be exploited.

In addition to novel ideas about costume design, new masks that generally follow the established *nō* canon have been carved. Although in some cases minor innovative features have been added, such as the painted hair, vermillion eyes and golden teeth on the mask used in Dōmoto Masaki's *Ōsaka-jō* (Osaka Castle, 2000), these features did not detract from the general impression or aesthetics of *nō* (*Ibid.*, 73).

The COSTUMES AND MASKS should be in keeping with *nō* aesthetics. The most important features of the costume are the use of traditional materials⁶³ and a *tatesen* (upright) posture. The material and subtle facial expression of the mask should be suitable for a *nō* play. The use of contemporary clothing instead of a *nō* costume (or a costume made in accord with the aesthetic standards of *nō*), or a *papier mâché* mask with odd facial features instead of an elegant wooden *nō* mask, should be avoided, because pushing these performance elements to extreme limits would make a play excessively descriptive, and could ultimately destroy the whole image and atmosphere needed for a *nō* performance.

2.2.2 External performance elements

The stage as an unreal performance space

Besides the *nō* masks, which evoke a sense of unreality, the *nō* stage itself provides a feeling of distance as it creates an unreal space for the performance. *Nō* is usually performed on a special stage that features the roof of a sanctuary, recalling the times when *nō* was performed in shrines. Today, roofed *nō* stages are built as separate structures inside the *nō* theatre, which gives the *nō* stage the symbolic status of a remote and sacred zone to which entry is restricted. The relative proximity of the small performance space to the audience creates an intimate environment that enables a spectator to see the features of the mask and to hear the chant of an actor. As Kanze Hideo insisted, "there is a limit to the size

⁶³ Materials used for a *nō* costume should be "made of sophisticated, luxurious fabric", the patterns should be "dignified and extravagant" with "colorful embroidery and gold and silver" (Kirihata 1993: 8, 32, 42). The author of the book *Nō: Design Aesthetics* Nakamori Shōzō adds that contrary to costumes used in the world of performing arts, which have to look beautiful from a distance, the richness of a *nō* costume has to satisfy the sensibilities of the performer when he touches it (Nakamori 2001: 118).

of the stage” that makes proper communication between the actors and their audience possible (Harris 1986: 372).

Alexander Alland, on the contrary, is convinced that the spectator should purposely be kept at a distance from the *nō* stage because it helps to create detachment and solemnity (Alland 1979: 5). Also, the lack of a special set for each play and simple neutral lighting that resembles natural light reinforce the image of an empty space, which is necessary for unreal characters to be able to come to life onstage.⁶⁴ A conventional roofed *nō* stage has little adornment, which is usually limited to a traditional painting of a pine tree as a backdrop. Kanze Hideo feels that it is better to make the stage as simple as possible, and to eliminate all unnecessary distractions (Harris 1986: 372). This allows for the creation of a venue similar to an “empty space”, with maximum scope for imagination.

Creating a sense of unreality in *nō* theatre is achieved without any special decor. It is the narrative monologue, usually in the beginning of the play, that describes the site or scenery where the events of the play take place, thus creating the onstage world. A change of scenery is achieved only by the actor’s monologue, and not with descriptive decor, as is common in Western plays. In his interview Professor Nishino Haruo explained the function of the text in a *nō* performance as follows:

In *nō* plays, the description of a scene is all accomplished by words and then we [spectators] can imagine that “it is snowing” or “this is a snowy landscape” or “cherry blossoms are falling”. You can imagine that “the wind is blowing” but there is no need to let the wind actually sound. *Nō* is not a descriptive explanation. (Nishino 2004b)

Thus, in *nō* theatre a change of scenery is conveyed to the audience in a more sophisticated and abstract way, solely by the spoken text, which triggers the imagination of the audience and through which an imaginary world is created onstage.

Nevertheless, numerous new plays have been staged with “unconventional” stage decoration. For instance, in Yamamoto Tōjirō’s play *Garasha* (Garcia, 1997) a large stylised cross symbolising the Christian theme of the play was placed on the stage. In addition to this kind of specially designed scenery in new plays, an increasing number of outdoor *nō* performances have recently been held in beautiful natural environments with a view of the sea or an old temple. However, this kind of “natural backdrop” has never been considered inappropriate for a *nō* performance, but on the contrary, it adds an element of uniqueness to the performance that is an expression of the director’s vision or interpretation of the play.

⁶⁴ *Nō* plays used to be performed in daylight or by torchlight during the dark hours, and today it is common to use only evenly diffused electric lighting of the stage, and to avoid the use of spotlights or other theatrical lighting.

Today, *nō* is performed in various spaces, such as outside on the grass (*shiba nō*) in daylight or at night by torchlight (*takigi nō*), which seems to mark a return to the roots of *nō* theatre. However, especially in the case of *shinsaku* plays, different types of stages in concert halls (*hōru nō*)⁶⁵ or drama theatres (*sutēji nō*) are also frequently used. This kind of vast performance space creates a different setting for a *nō* play. For instance, the lack of pillars makes the movements of an actor who dons a mask more complicated, and the longer onstage distances could impact the actor's movement (*kata*). For instance, Kanze Hisao recalled a performance at the Osaka Expo (1970) on a round stage and found that "the directions and focus of the dance were changed" causing a change in the actors' *kata* (Harris 1986: 318). A similar effect probably occurred during a joint performance of all five *nō* schools on a round stage at the Aichi Expo in 2005.⁶⁶

The STAGE should provide an intimate space for the *nō* performers, while allowing their voices to be heard by the audience as on a genuine *nō* stage. If the stage is too large, the actors are forced to change their *kata*. The lack of pillars, which generally function as reference points for a masked actor to define his exact position onstage, could also force actors to alter their performance. Therefore, it would be the best for a *shinsaku* performance to be held on a genuine *nō* stage, and not in concert halls or drama theatres.⁶⁷ However, performing outdoors in front of a natural backdrop, such as in *shiba nō* and *takigi nō*, should be considered as occurring in a traditional performance space. As a traditional *nō* stage is undecorated except for a painted image of a pine tree at the back of the stage *kagami-ita*, a simple and bare performance space is preferable for a *nō* play. Excessive use of stage decoration should be avoided, because it lends an unwanted descriptive quality to the stage, and at the same time detracts from the abstract image of the performance space.

⁶⁵ For example, the premiere of Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru's *Shito Pauro* (The Apostle Paul, 1960) took place at Asahi Shimbun Hall on a non-traditional stage.

⁶⁶ See the photos of the experimental stage at <http://www.expo2005.or.jp/en/event/nogaku.html>. Baba Akiko noticed that during tours abroad actors are forced to adapt their performance to the local stage, which usually makes the *kata* larger and showier than it would be in traditional circumstances (Baba 2004).

⁶⁷ Performing a *nō* play abroad always involves adjusting the performance to a different stage, but this does not mean that *nō* performances on tour are not genuine *nō*. Therefore, staging *shinsaku* plays in drama theatres and concert halls, which is common practice for premiere performances, does not automatically diminish their value as *nō* plays. However, an intimate space similar to a *nō* stage would enhance the overall impression and atmosphere of the play, and it would therefore benefit the production if an unconventional theatre space could be created that would provide the optimum conditions for a *nō* performance.

Stage and hand props as semiotic tools

In addition to the imaginative treatment of scenery, which the lack of special decor and realistic stage props makes possible, the stage itself is used as an imaginary space. However, not only can the performance space be altered at the actor's volition, the stage props are abstract entities that can change their purpose during a single play. Karen Brazell describes the use of a stage prop in the classical play *Izutsu* – a simple bamboo-framed structure symbolising a well – that changes its meaning during the play according to the lines chanted by the actors: it is a well from which water is drawn for offerings, the tomb of the protagonist's husband, a childhood playground, and a mirror reflecting the *shite's* memories (Brazell 1998: 144). It could be said that the stage props in *nō* are at the same time abstract and full of potential that can be triggered by the imagination.

Even if the meaning of an object does not change, it can still be used onstage as a mere semiotic symbol of the object. A good example is the use of a boat in the play *Shunkan* where all the characters are "seated" in the boat with the boatman behind it because there is physically no room for him in the simple bamboo structure. Karen Brazell summarises the abstract quality of stage props in *nō* by saying that "the manipulation of the prop emphasizes *nō's* lack of regard for realism" (*Ibid.*, 180).

Relatively few and simple hand props – a fan, fishing net, halberd, lute, to mention some such objects, are used in *nō*. In contrast to stage props, which are temporary structures specially fabricated for each performance, hand props are like "part of the costumes [...] realistic rather than sketchy or suggestive in form" (Komparu 1986: 257). Nevertheless, the use of a hand prop is also often symbolic, such as the gesture of "looking at the moon" with a fan.

Manipulating unusual hand props made especially for a *shinsaku* play can be challenging for actors. For instance, in the *shinsaku* play *Chiekoshō* (All About Chieko, 1957, staged by Takechi Tetsuji) a real lemon was used, and in revivals of the plays *Matsura* (1963, staged by Kanze Sakon) and *Furu* (1984, staged by Yamamoto Nobuyuki) there were some extraordinary hand props, such as a mirror, scarf and sword, which were technically challenging for actors to manipulate because there was no established practice to refer to (Tyler 1998: 167–168). Unusual hand props in *shinsaku* plays compel directors and actors to find solutions to staging problems, and at the same time offer a valuable opportunity to create new interpretations that could shape future staging variations (*kogaki*) of these plays.

HAND AND STAGE PROPS should be created in accordance with the *nō* canon. Stage props should be individually constructed in the traditional abstract manner for each performance, as is customary in *nō* theatre. Hand props should follow *nō* aesthetics, meaning that they should be abstract and capable of being used in multiple ways and with a variety of meanings (such as a fan). The use of

extraordinarily realistic hand and stage props should be avoided, because props that are too descriptive could detract from traditional *nō* aesthetics.

Lighting as a means of creating a special atmosphere

An important visual element of a theatre performance is lighting, which is basically absent from conventional *nō* theatre. Traditionally, *nō* was performed outdoors in daylight or after dark by torchlight, as is characteristic of contemporary *takigi nō* performances. Actor Kanze Hisao was convinced that modern footlights, spotlights or coloured lights are not suitable for *nō* theatre, because the function of this kind of lighting is to create an illusion. He also felt that the use of shadow is not desirable on a *nō* stage, because the change in the impression created by the *nō* mask would then be virtually nullified (Harris 1986: 319).

In recent years, *nō* performances are frequently held by candlelight (*rōsoku nō*), which creates an extremely intimate atmosphere characteristic of *nō*. A good example of the use of candles was a performance of Yamamoto Tōjirō's *shinsaku* play *Garasha* (Garcia, 1997) in a 16th century gothic church in Holland, where the chandeliers were reported to have created a special mood for a play with a Christian theme (Hikawa 2002: 18-19). On the other hand, in some *shinsaku* productions such as Nakamori Akimitsu's *Musashino* (1993) and Tada Tomio's *Isseki sennin* (The Hermit Isseki, 2003), laser lights were used, an innovation with which *nō* scholar Nishino Haruo was not impressed, saying that "lately there ha[d] been done many strange things" in new *nō* plays (Nishino 2004b).

The LIGHTING of a *nō* stage should be as modest and discreet as possible, using only evenly diffused light. The use of spotlights or laser lights should be avoided, as they draw attention away from the actors and players, thus detracting from the general atmosphere of a *nō* play. However, a performance held by torchlight or candlelight should be regarded as a return to the roots of *nō* theatre when *nō* was performed outdoors until dark; therefore, this kind of lighting should be considered suitable for a *nō* performance.

2.3 Additional elements of *shinsaku* plays

In contrast to classical *nō* plays that have been written, staged and performed by professional actor-playwrights, *shinsaku* plays, which are outside the repertory, entail some additional requirements for authors, directors and actors. This subchapter is divided into three parts: the first concerns various issues involved with a playwright's intention to write a *yōkyoku* or "a play ready for the stage" and his knowledge of *nō* theatre as a genre; the second describes the concept of staging in *nō* theatre, the position of the director in canonical *nō*, and its

importance in *shinsaku* productions; and the third discusses the requirements for actors involved in *shinsaku* projects.

2.3.1 Intentions and knowledge of the playwright

Nō plays or *yōkyoku* are a type of Japanese traditional script that has numerous special structural and performance elements. Therefore, an important requirement for a playwright who intends to write a new *nō* play is knowledge of the canon of traditional *nō* theatre, which imposes preliminary conditions on writing a genuine *nō* play. The traditional elements of *nō* introduced above demonstrate that *nō* as a performing art comes into existence only when a number of fairly complex conditions are met, including suitable source material, methods of adapting the characters, structure, etc. Thus, a profound knowledge of these conditions or elements, and of the nature of *nō*, is required for writing new *nō* plays. Apparently for that reason, Takahama Kiyoshi was convinced that the best results would be achieved were a *nō* actor to be both the author of the play and a performer who would stage it according to the tradition, but that equally satisfactory results could be obtained should the author be simply a connoisseur of *nō* theatre, a *nō* scholar, or someone who has a profound knowledge of the genre (Takahama 1980: 205).

The second important requirement for writing a successful *nō* play is the playwright's clear intention to create one, because without such an intention it would be very unlikely that the outcome would be a *nō* play, unless the author is a *nō* actor for whom such an action would be natural. Otherwise, the author has to have a clear objective to create a new *nō* play, which, of course, requires knowledge of *nō* theatre.

However, when a playwright aims to write a *nō* play there is still a risk that he or she might not attain his or her objective, because even if the intent exists, the result might not be a *nō* play. Takahama Kiyoshi explained this seeming ambiguity by saying that the old forms should be destroyed in order that new forms could be created for *shinsaku* plays. However, if the playwright is not careful, instead of creating a new form within the *nō* tradition, the result might fall outside the tradition completely (*Ibid.*, 200).

Obviously, Takahama was concerned that in the process of creating a *shinsaku* play the limits of *nō* theatre could be transgressed or ignored. Therefore, the process of writing a *shinsaku* play cannot start with the author's intention to create entirely different structural patterns or to apply aesthetic standards different from those for canonical *nō* plays. If the author's intention is to ignore the *nō* theatre tradition, or he or she lacks the necessary knowledge of *nō*, then the result would not be a *shinsaku nō* play. In contrast, creating a new play

according to a famous classical play, which as a model represents a certain vision of the outcome, could improve significantly its quality.⁶⁸

However, a new play would be successful only if a talented playwright and composer were involved in its creation, because composing *nō* plays requires knowledge of and skill in both literature and music. A profound knowledge of the elements of *nō* theatre gives authors the freedom to interpret the canon. It is probably for that reason that Zeami stated in *Fūshikaden* that the task should be easy for an actor who has some talent for writing *waka* poems (SNKBZ 88: 234). For Zeami, a playwright-composer who was also an actor was the ideal that very few in his time could have attained. However, Shelley Fenno Quinn acknowledges that even in Zeami's time collaboration between an actor-composer and a poet was common practice in creating *nō* plays (Quinn 1993: 55). During the medieval period as well professional and amateur actors both created and performed in *nō* plays, as contemporary research has demonstrated, and this trend continued throughout the Edo period.⁶⁹ A similar practice was followed in the 20th century when writers from outside the *nō* world sought assistance from professional *nō* actors in creating plays.

However, if a playwright does not have a profound knowledge of the genre and/or a clear intention to create a *nō* play, the result would likely fall short of the tradition of *nō* theatre. Today, there are increasingly more plays and projects in the intercultural theatre world, including the Japanese stage, that have the word *nō* in their title, such as modern *nō*, contemporary *nō*, neo-*nō*, or in ambiguous combinations such as "a free *nō* play" or *nō* opera. One possible way to evaluate the extent to which this type of plays and projects meets the definition of *nō* is to examine the intention and knowledge of the authors who created them.

Among the many ambiguously titled plays and projects we find two adaptations of classical *nō* plays for western dramas: one of the "Four Plays for Dancers", *The Only Jealousy of Emer* (1917-1919), by Irish poet and playwright William Butler Yeats (1865-1939), and "a modern *nō* play" *Aoi no ue* (The Lady Aoi, 1957) by Japanese writer Yukio Mishima (1925-1970). The source of both Yeats's and Mishima's inspiration was supposedly the classical dream-play *Aoi no ue* (The Lady Aoi, author unknown, revised by Zeami) that is drawn from the 11th century novel *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Prince Genji). All three plays have the same theme - the jealousy of a woman spurned. The main character in Zeami's ancestor play is Lady Rokujō, who, according to the *nō* canon, appears as a revengeful spirit, but in Yeats's and Mishima's versions the character has been cast as an actual woman. However, as neither Yeats nor Mishima intended to create a *nō* play they adapted the themes and characters to the form of drama.

⁶⁸ For example, the authors of a successful *shinsaku* play *Tsuru* (The Crane) took the canonical play *Sagi* (The White Heron) as the model.

⁶⁹ See Gerald Groemer's paper "Nō at the Crossroads: Commoner Performance during the Edo Period" (*Asian Theatre Journal*, 15: 1, 1998).

Yeats had long been searching for a suitable form to express his ideals of drama. Sekine Masaru and Christopher Murray (1990: 7) acknowledge that for Yeats the form of *nō* theatre was well suited to fulfilling the various requirements for the symbolist play he had in mind, because the performance elements of *nō* theatre (masks, costumes, use of a chorus and musicians, stylised action, a bare stage, etc.) “coincided with Yeats’s own ideas on staging”.

Most likely, Yeats took the idea for his adaptation from Ernest Fenollosa’s unpublished manuscript on Japanese *nō* theatre, “*Noh, or, Accomplishment, a Study of the Classical Stage of Japan*” (1916),⁷⁰ which gives an extremely rudimentary overview of the play *Aoi no ue*. The script in Fenollosa’s book is vague and contains many textual mistakes that were clearly caused by flawed translations and inadequate interpretations. For instance, Fenollosa mistakenly interpreted the theme of the *nō* play as the jealousy of Prince Genji’s wife Aoi (Fenollosa 2012: 31–33). That was subsequently reflected in the theme and title of Yeats’s play, *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, Emer being the wife of the Irish legendary hero Cuchulain. The direct source of Yeats’s play was the legend of *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* written by Lady Gregory in 1902 (Sekine and Murray 1990: 11).

Yeats failed to design the roles as they would have functioned in a *nō* play because he was guided only by a sketchy account of the original *nō* play published in Fenollosa’s book. The dynamics of the relationships between the characters in Yeats’s play are quite complicated and significantly different from the original *nō* play: in Yeats’s interpretation there is a man (the Irish hero Cuchulain) and three women: two humans (Cuchulain’s wife Emer and mistress Eithne Inguba) and a fairy, who all want to win over the man. This is a very uncommon theme for a *nō* play. By adding the god of discord Bricriu to the cast Yeats made the relationships between the characters even more complicated and further from the *nō* tradition. Yeats also divided the character of Cuchulain into the Ghost and the Figure of Cuchulain, supposedly inspired by the division of roles in classical *nō* plays between the protagonist of the first act (*maeshite*) and the second (*nochishite*) (Yeats 1921: 25–50). Yeats’s play *The Only Jealousy of Emer* is clearly based on a conflict between three women, and is not a one-sided story about the hatred of a woman driven by jealousy, as the *nō* canon would require. Therefore, it could be said that from the start Yeats designed his play as a symbolist drama, and was inspired by a classical *nō* play to find a fresh form for his ideas about using musicians, masks and dance.

For his version of the famous *nō* play *Aoi no ue* Yukio Mishima obviously used Zeami’s original *nō* play, as he was acquainted with the story derived from the classical novel *Genji monogatari*.⁷¹ Donald Keene writes in his introduction to

⁷⁰ The study was first published in London by the Macmillan Publishing Company in 1916. Fenollosa translated and provided comments on the plays, Pound edited the book, and Yeats wrote the foreword.

⁷¹ Besides the obvious impact of Zeami’s revised version of the *nō* play Mishima was also influenced by Yeats’s adaptation. The impact of Yeats’s play is evident in two symbols that are present in both plays, but are absent from Zeami’s original play: water as the floating world of dreams between the

Mishima's *Five Modern Nō Plays*, "it has been his intent that these plays be wholly intelligible and completely contemporary" (Keene 1991: xii). Mishima himself also admitted that he had no intention of writing a genuine *nō* play, saying that he had used the classical theme of a *nō* play "for merging the contemporary conceptual and poetic drama" (Masuda 1990: 351). This statement of Mishima's suggests that his intention was to create plays for modern theatre, and not new scripts for traditional *nō* theatre.

For his adaptation Mishima cast characters that seem to be similar to the original *nō*, but he placed them in a contemporary context. He did not omit any characters nor did he make significant changes to the storyline of the original *nō* play. He merely added Hikaru Wakabayashi's role and combined the roles of the healers into the character of the Nurse (Mishima 1997: 109–131).⁷² *Aoi no ue* appears to be a modern play for which Mishima intentionally used only the overall plot of the classical play, without following the structure, traditional dynamics between characters, or role design of the original play. The play also lacks *honkadōri* (intertextuality), which is a key component of a *nō* script.

Neither Yeats nor Mishima intended to write a genuine *nō* play. Rather, they were inspired by *nō* theatre in their own artistic pursuits, which resulted in a *nō*-inspired symbolist drama and a modern drama adaptation of the ancestral *nō* play.

While Yeats and Mishima clearly had no intention of writing a *nō* play, David Griffiths, a playwright, teacher, theatre director, and book illustrator, took Zeami's classical play *Kinuta* (The Fulling Block) as a model, and in 1994 wrote a play *The Dove*. In his words the play "would unashamedly acknowledge its origins but would be accessible to western audiences" (Griffiths 1998: 59).⁷³ Griffiths' "Introductory Notes" to the play reveal that he may have intended to write a play in the *nō* style, as he claims to have "used the narrative structure of time and place peculiar to Noh" and to have "created a visual, transportable setting which clearly resembled the Noh stage" (*Ibid.*).

In the beginning of the play the protagonist, a woman called Mary, confesses that she is a ghost (*Ibid.*, 64), which is very unusual for *nō* plays because it is generally the *waki* character who discovers the otherworldly origin of the protagonist. But there is no *waki* character in Griffiths' play, nor do the chorus or other characters have a part in it. Furthermore, the structure, language, and aesthetics (stage, costumes, lighting, props)⁷⁴ of the play are far distant from

real world and the otherworld (or the world of dreams or death), and a kiss as a powerful device that causes the character to go to the otherworld.

⁷² The role of the Nurse in the play replaces the pair of healers, who in the original *nō* play are cast as a Shinto priestess and a *yamabushi* diviner.

⁷³ *The Dove* premiered in August 1994 at the Old Meeting House Arts Centre in Helmsley, North Yorkshire.

⁷⁴ Liz Walters designed the set and costumes. A heavy cotton cloth was stretched over the stage in place of the traditional painting of a pine. The large stage and hand props were also too descriptive for a *nō* play: a table and chair at the centre of the stage, a large luggage rack, a red toy carthorse, small piles of clothes, a portable clothes rack with clothing hanging from it, an unclad tailor's dummy, "and

the standards set for *nō* theatre. The play does not follow the basic structural unfolding and logic of scenes in *nō* plays; it is written in a descriptive storytelling style that lacks both poetic language and *honkadōri* quotes from literary sources. In addition, there are many descriptive actions in the play, such as folding clothes and putting them into a suitcase, picking up buttons from the floor and putting them into a tin, and reading a letter (*Ibid.*, 73–74), the type of actions that are generally avoided in *nō* plays. Direct interaction with the audience also occurs in the play, which is very unusual for *nō* plays.⁷⁵

In contrast to the many descriptive elements in the play, the author seems to have made a special effort to design the stage decoration and lighting to be symbolic and ritualistic. In the stage directions, Griffiths stressed the ritualistic nature of some of the movements or actions,⁷⁶ which he seems to have believed to be the essence of *nō*.

Interestingly, David Griffiths must have had considerable knowledge of the genre, as his book *The Training of Noh Actors and 'The Dove'* contains an overview of the history, theory, aesthetics, repertory and performance elements of *nō*. In addition, he also had first-hand experience of *nō* theatre when he visited Japan as a research scholar at Tokyo University and had the opportunity to attend rehearsals and performances of the Kanze School. The introductory part of the book reveals that he was also acquainted with the relevant research on *nō* theatre (*Ibid.*, 1).

Nevertheless, an analysis of the play clearly demonstrates that regardless of his knowledge of *nō* theatre Griffiths failed to create a *nō*-influenced play, as *The Dove* bears little or no resemblance to *nō* plays, and is simply a contemporary drama written as a monologue for a single actor.

In contemporary intercultural theatre, an increasing number of theatrical productions can be found that make use of some performance elements of *nō* theatre. The directors of these projects, such as Peter Brook, Ninagawa Yukio, Watanabe Jun and Eugenio Barba, look for inspiration and innovative ideas to integrate into their theatrical productions. The *gendai nō* (“contemporary *nō*”) Japanese theatre productions of Okamoto Akira (b. 1949), which make use of the *nō* actor’s traditional training in order to fuse elements of Japanese traditional

other items which indicate that a journey is being prepared for”. There were dimming lights and a “corridor of light following the pathway up stage”. According to the author’s instructions the costume of the protagonist was to be “a less ornate version of the traditional Noh costume”, made out of calico, and she had to wear a *ko-omote* mask and hold in her hand a “blood red” fan (Griffiths 1998: 59, 63–64). The original music for the play was composed by Jack Glover, but no information is available about the nature of the music or instruments.

⁷⁵ Mary, the protagonist of the play, turns to the audience, shows a letter, and says, “Lies. All lies.” (*Ibid.*, 77), as if seeking their compassion and understanding.

⁷⁶ In the beginning of the play a light follows Mary as she moves to the centre of stage, and the author’s remarks explain that “[t]his should have a clear sense of ritual, as though it is repeated in a similar way regularly, like a daily prayer.” There are also other ritualistic actions in the play, such as in the beginning of the play when the protagonist strikes claves, removes her outer garments and arranges them on the dummy (*Ibid.*, 63–64).

theatre with contemporary concepts, are particularly interesting. Okamoto's fusion production *Mizu no koe* (Voices of Water) premiered on Tessenkai's *nō* stage in 1990.⁷⁷ It is based on Yokomichi Mario's *shinsaku* play *Takahime*, which was a *nō* adaptation of W. B. Yeats's modern symbolist play *At the Hawk's Well* (1916). Okamoto explained that Yokomichi's text "was radically deconstructed and fragmented and other verbal materials freely inserted, so that the text became a collage of mainly different materials" (Okamoto 1991: 130).

Artists from various fields took part in the project: actors from the contemporary theatre group Renniku Kōbō, *nō* actors from different schools who belonged to a group called Sankonokai, audible-sculpture artist Mineko Grimmer, and computer-music composer Mamoru Fujieda. Grimmer created an audible sculpture for the performance, and Fujieda's sound system caught the delicate "voices of water" and transformed them by means of a computer so that they could be heard by the audience (*Ibid.*, 130–132). Okamoto, the director of the play, summarised his intentions by saying that it was "an experiment to redefine and re-vitalize" the elements of *nō*. In a quest for spontaneity and creativity the actors "were asked to forget [in] their own learnt acting techniques", the result of which was "a radically improvisational acting style". Okamoto was convinced that "such moments are rare in the regular performances of [a] *nō* play with its *kata* and style" (*Ibid.*, 131–132). Thus, the aim of Okamoto's project was to detach from the traditional style and conventions of *nō*, which merely served as the impetus for his ideas. By fostering collaboration between actors from different backgrounds and contemporary artists he seems to have been seeking the essence of *nō*, which he expressed in this project through aesthetics and techniques that were distinct from *nō* theatre.

Similarly to Okamoto Akira, who invited *nō* actors to participate in his experimental projects, the contemporary Japanese theatre director Kurita Yoshihiro used the small and ritualistic *nō* stage for his *Ryutopia Noh Theater Shakespeare Series*.⁷⁸ It seems that Kurita's interest in using a *nō* stage came from his idea that a limited and intimate performance space would pose an interesting challenge for a director staging Shakespearean drama. He also considered staging other plays, but finally decided upon the works of Shakespeare, because "it is the ambiguity in Shakespeare that makes it suitable for the Noh theater." Kurita was also intrigued by the idea because of the absence of decoration in a *nō* theatre, which he called a "naked theatre" and "a space of image [...] that fits perfectly with Shakespeare". From the outset, Kurita's intention was to create a

⁷⁷ The experimental play *Mizu no koe: nō 'Takahime' ni yoru variante I* directed by Okamoto Akira was performed on March 3, 1990, at the National Nō Theatre, following a workshop that he also organised. The second performance, called "Variant II", took place half a year later in September with a collage of several other works at the Kashiwa Atorie (Kashiwa Studio) of Renniku Kōbō (Hata 1991b: 12–13).

⁷⁸ According to Kurita, the idea of staging Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the first in his Shakespearean series, in the style of a *nō* play came "by accident", as the modern Ryutopia Theater was not available at that moment (Tanaka 2006).

contemporary fusion production that simply used a *nō* stage as an element of the *nō* canon. He did not want to become “obsess[ed] about elements of the *nō* style” because this would have restricted his freedom to express his artistic ideas (Yokouchi 2005).

When the elements of *nō* theatre are employed outside the conventional and systematic structure, and the aim is to create a fusion play, knowledge of *nō* theatre seems to be quite unimportant. In the interview Kurita was even convinced that “there are advantages from not having excessive knowledge about the tradition” in order to facilitate new interpretations. Instead, he said that he “was interested in exploring new possibilities and adaptations that could be possible in the working space of the *nō* theater” (*Ibid.*).

The various challenges Kurita faced when he chose to put Shakespeare on the *nō* stage included the length and structure of the play, and the limitations on performance elements such as lighting, costumes, and even physical movements onstage. Kurita’s special interest in staging Shakespeare’s plays was to adapt the famous Western classics for Japanese audiences. Therefore, he chose to present them within the framework of *nō* theatre, which is a familiar Japanese genre; he believed that because of the difference in their cultural background, it would not feel natural for Japanese actors to perform Shakespearean plays (Tanaka 2006).

Another phenomenon in intercultural theatre is the so-called *nō* opera, which is a collaborative type of performance that seems to be developing into a separate theatre genre. The best representative of this genre is a Kanze School professional *nō* actor, Aoki Ryōko, who graduated from Tokyo National University of Art and Music. She defended her doctoral thesis, which was about women in *nō* theatre, at the University of London, SOAS. While studying in Europe she noticed that there the boundaries between classical and contemporary music are somewhat fluid, whereas in Japan traditional and new music are separate and distinct. She wanted to find a way to create something new in *nō* theatre, and *utai*, a *nō* chant, seemed to her to be the area that held new possibilities for the genre. Aoki asked some contemporary composers of different nationalities to create new music for performing in the *nō utai* style (Aoki 2014a).

In 2010 she organised a “talk and concert” series titled *Noh×Contemporary Music* that resulted in the creation of fifteen new works in the *utai* style within three years (*Ibid.*). In June 2014 a CD was released with the collection of *nō utai* music she created in collaboration with contemporary composers (Aoki 2014b). Her other major collaborative performances include *N-opera Macbeth* at the Britten Theatre of the Royal College of Music in London in 2006,⁷⁹ Wolfgang

⁷⁹ The subtitle of the project was “Project for Contemporary Noh-Performance” (Aoki 2016b). As is typical of *nō* opera collaborative projects, the performance had a cast of male and female *nō* actors, opera singers and musicians (percussion artists and a pianist). Producer Yamaguchi Kako merged the physical techniques of movement and chant of the *nō* actors, the visual effects (stage, costumes, lighting) of modern design (*Ibid.*), and the musical imagination of a contemporary composer Asai Akiko into an intriguing adaptation. The distribution of roles was logical: a *nō* actor and an opera

Rihm's opera *The Conquest of Mexico* at Teatro Real de Madrid in 2013,⁸⁰ and her latest project *Nopera: Aoi, Yesterday's Glory is Today's Dream* at La maison de la culture du Japon à Paris in April 2016.⁸¹

Aoki's collaboration with primarily non-Japanese composers has been receiving critical feedback in *nō* circles, which is questioning her motives and speculating that her works could eventually destroy *nō*. However, she argues that she is "a new-type of interpreter" whose intention is to create an entirely new art form called *nō* opera, and not to renew or destroy the traditional art (*Ibid.*). In other words, as Aoki has clearly expressed, she aims to bring *utai* style chanting techniques into the context of contemporary music, and not to create new *nō* songs or plays. She makes use of *nō* chanting as a single element of *nō* theatre outside its traditional context in order to give birth to a new collaborative art form.

Aoki's creative collaboration with European composers is not the first attempt at the *nō* opera genre. In the 1960s, the American-Armenian composer Alan Hovhaness (1911–2000), who is sometimes called the "American Sibelius", composed a cycle of *Modern Free Noh Plays*, which was comprised of *The Burning House* (1962), *Wind Drum* (1962), *Pilate* (1963), *The Travellers* (1965), *The Leper King* (1965), and *Lady of Light* (1969) and inspired by *nō* music. Hovhaness studied Indian Karnatic music, *a-hak* – ancient Korean court music, and *gagaku* – Japanese ceremonial music, but no record of his having studied *nō* music can be found in his biography. However, he visited Japan twice, in 1960 and 1962, and stayed long enough to have had a chance to acquaint himself with *nō* theatre.⁸²

Hovhaness's "modern free *nō* plays", which are part of his "neo-oriental works",⁸³ could be defined as a translation of *nō* music into the language of opera. Hovhaness's *nō*-inspired works demonstrate that without a profound knowledge of the elements of *nō* theatre the result could be merely imitation *nō*. First, in composing his *nō* opera Hovhaness followed the *jō-ha-kyū* progression and five-*dan* structure of the music to some extent (Tyler 2009: 63), but he failed to match the musical unfolding with the smaller units, the *shōdan*, which are also expected to follow the development of the story. Second, he used Western instruments, such as the flute, bass drum, timpani, harp, and stringed instruments instead of traditional *nō* instruments, and opera singers whose vocal techniques are very different from *nō* actors' chanting techniques (*Ibid.*, 72–74). The result was an imitation of non-Western music that was primarily dedicated

singer depicted the complexity of emotions of a single character, the *nō* actors moving and dancing, and the opera singers singing their parts. A male actor worked in collaboration with a female singer, and vice versa. Kai Keiko, a reviewer from the electronic magazine NY ARTS described her impressions by saying that "this added complexity amazingly effective and appealing, as it gave an idea of a duality of selves wherein both masculinity and femininity reside in one body" (Kai 2006).

⁸⁰ Aoki 2016a.

⁸¹ Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris 2016.

⁸² Hovhaness Biography, see at <http://www.hovhaness.com/Biography.html>.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

to recreating the sounds of the *gagaku shō* (mouth organ) and Indian *raga* music (*Ibid.*, 70, 79). Third, the characters in his operatic imitations of *nō* plays are too abstract to be *nō* characters.⁸⁴ For example, in the play *The Burning House* there are characters called Death and Demon, in *Pilates Sacred Wings*, and in *Leper King Alter Ego*. Fourth, the performance elements and the production style of Hovhaness's plays bear little resemblance to genuine *nō* theatre: the masks, costumes, and props are too descriptive and do not fit with the aesthetics of *nō*.⁸⁵ In the staging directions he advised placing the orchestra and chorus onstage, an idea he might have borrowed from *nō* theatre (*Ibid.*, 84).

In light of the above analysis, one might easily agree with Kinnear Tyler's conclusion that Alan Hovhaness "did not intend[ed] for his audience to see and hear Gagaku and Noh traits, but experience rather a neo-Gagaku and a neo-Noh style" (*Ibid.*, 92–93). Tyler might be right when she assumes that "[...] Hovhaness wanted to stir his audience. By puzzling them Hovhaness may have intended for his audience to be the ones to determine the intent of his stage works" (*Ibid.*, 93). His intention was clearly not to create *nō* plays, but rather to adapt some of the elements of *nō* to opera, resulting in "oriental-flavoured" works.

The discussion in the previous section concerns plays the authors and directors of which did not intend and/or possessed insufficient knowledge to create a *nō* play. Yeats's and Mishima's drama adaptations, and Griffiths' monologue drama in which he experimented with masks exemplify works that could simply be called *nō*-inspired plays. To this category also belong some examples of intercultural theatre that employ some isolated elements of *nō*, such as Okamoto's so-called *gendai nō* or "contemporary *nō*" projects, Kurita's experimental setting of Shakespearean plays on an intimate *nō* stage, and projects combining some elements of *nō* with opera. However, there are also examples of plays and productions the authors or directors of which intended to create a *nō* play, but for different reasons failed in their task. Two such plays will be reviewed in the following section: Ulick O'Connor's Irish *nō* play, and Robert N. Lawson's modern *nō* play.

⁸⁴ In analysing the roles in Hovhaness's plays in her Master's thesis Kinnear Tyler (2009: 60–61) appears to apply *nō* role types to the characters too readily or even at random — whether they could be categorised as *shite* or *waki* roles according to the criteria of *nō* theatre, or whether they would be male or female roles in the *nō* tradition. A similar problem with her analysis can be seen throughout the thesis; for example, she equates the recitative sections of Hovhaness's plays with *nō kotoba*, and opera arias with *nō utai* (*Ibid.*, 86), although the usage and structure of *kotoba* and *utai* in *nō* plays are very different from recitatives and arias in opera. It could therefore be concluded that Tyler's analysis of Hovhaness's "free modern *nō* plays" is based on a superficial knowledge or even an incorrect understanding of *nō* theatre, which resulted in her finding many similarities between the plays and *nō*. However, it was Hovhaness's intention merely to imitate some of the elements used in *nō* plays.

⁸⁵ For example, the character Silent Wings in the *Spirit of the Avalanche* wears a bird mask, beak, and black wings; Death in *The Burning House* wears a Panama hat and a Hawaiian shirt, and carries a gun; the solo dancer in the *Wind Drum* wears an all-white traditional Korean gown; props used in *The Travellers* include a suitcase containing a toy wheel, several dolls, and two wine glasses (Tyler 2009: 90–91).

Ulick O'Connor (b. 1928) is an Irish writer, historian and critic who in 1977 wrote the collection *Three Noh Plays: The Grand Inquisitor, Submarine, and Deirdre*. His plays, especially *Deirdre*, are good examples of modern dramas that deviate greatly from genuine *nō* plays. In the "Introduction" to the plays O'Connor clearly expresses his intention, saying, "In 'Deirdre' I took the Irish Saga and wrote it strictly in the classical Noh form" (O'Connor 1980: 8).

Deirdre premiered in October 1978 at the Edmund Burke Theatre during the Dublin International Theatre Festival. At first glance, O'Connor's play seems to resemble a genuine *nō* play: it relies on the famous story of the Irish *Ulster Cycle*, which features heroic characters and events, a potentially suitable source for a *nō* play, and follows the general structural logic of a *nō* play. The play also concentrates on the story of Deirdre as the *shite*, omitting her husband Naoise from the play, in accord with the *honketsu* character adaptation strategy for *nō* plays. There are also characters that resemble typical *nō* characters, such as the Scholar of the South (*waki*), the Old Woman (*maeshite*), Deirdre (*nochishite*) and the Man of the Place (*ai-kyōgen*).

However, O'Connor's play lacks some important characteristics of *nō* plays, such as the dream-within-a-play structure of two-act *nō* plays and the intertextuality provided by the inclusion of poetry into the script. In this regard, the author could have made use of the text of the *Ulster Cycle*, or even Yeats's poetic play *Deirdre* (1907), which could have added layers of intertextuality and depth to the script. Despite the similarities of the structure and characters to *nō*, the most serious deviation from the *nō* canon can be seen in the performance elements of the play. Instead of *nō hayashi* instruments a traditional Irish drum *bodhran* and a tin whistle were played (*Ibid.*, 28). Other performance elements, such as the costumes, masks and lighting, were significantly different from the traditional *nō* canon.⁸⁶ It could therefore be said that while Ulick O'Connor clearly intended to create a *nō* play, and, albeit with some reservations, the script meets the criteria for a *nō* text, the performance elements, such as the musical instruments, costumes, masks and lighting, conveyed the image of a drama containing some exotic elements borrowed from *nō* theatre.

The second example of a *nō*-inspired play is *Mishima*, "a modern *nō* play" by Robert N. Lawson (1928–2013), an American professor of English specialising in Shakespearean studies and Japanese literature. In his writings Lawson did not mention his acquaintance with *nō* theatre, but he was a prolific translator of Japanese literature and visited Japan for short periods during his MA studies between 1973 and 1982. He might therefore be presumed to have had a reasonably good knowledge of *nō* theatre (Lerma 2004). This impression is supported by his writings on Mishima's modern *nō* plays, which Lawson calls

⁸⁶ The costumes resembled those of a Greek tragedy; the mask worn by the main character, the Old Woman, lacked dignity and an unearthly quality; and in some of O'Connor's plays spotlights and dimming lights were used (O'Connor 1980: 9).

“modernizations of famous medieval Noh plays” that were presented in the conventional form of contemporary French drama (Lawson 2000: 13–14).

Lawson’s play *Mishima* premiered in 1981 at the Hutchinson Repertory Company’s First Festival of New Plays in Dillon Park, Hutchinson, Kansas. Similarly to classical *nō* plays, the time and place of the events of the play are carefully set: the date is November 25th – the day in 1970 when Yukio Mishima committed *seppuku*, and the place is the Kinkakuji Temple, which is suggestive of Mishima’s famous novel about the destruction of the original temple by arson in 1950.⁸⁷

In writing his modern *nō* play Robert Lawson clearly attempted to follow the traditional structure of *nō* plays, beginning with the pilgrimage of the *waki* (the Student) to a famous place (Kinkakuji Temple), casting two priests as characters (the priest as the *maeshite*, and his companion the famous samurai Saigō Takamori as the *shitetsure*), and the ghost of Yukio Mishima as the *nochishite* telling his story. The “kendo-dance” of Mishima and Saigō Takamori in the second part of the play, a peculiar substitution for the *mai* dance section, shows his knowledge of the overall structure of *nō* plays. A rather strange innovation for a *nō* play is the *nochishite* Mishima’s summoning another ghost, the spirit of Saigō Takamori, to the site (Lawson 1983).⁸⁸

As the author created his play without using a literary work, he seems to have constructed it around a famous site, the Temple of the Golden Pavilion, but without using quotes from poems written about it. He appears to have substituted references to historical periods (Kamakura, Genroku, Meiji) and mythical, historical, and fictional personages (the goddess Amaterasu, the mythical emperor Jimmu, the war hero Yoshitsune, Prince Genji) for the *honkadori* quotes. He occasionally inserted odd references to contemporary Japanese society, such as companies like Sony and Toyota, into the text (*Ibid.*).

Although Lawson obviously had some knowledge of the basic dynamics between characters and about the structure of *nō* plays, the analysis demonstrates that his knowledge was not deep enough to create a new *nō* play. Ignorance of the specific nature of the basic structural elements resulted in a modern drama the theme of which is overly philosophical, and which lacks a central storyline drawn from literature or constructed around a place – flaws that could have been avoided by using a suitable adaptation technique. It could

⁸⁷ No specific information about the music and instruments used in the performances is available, nor could any other information about the performance elements, such as the stage decor, lighting and costumes, be found. Barbara Lerma writes only that a “modern setting of the Temple of Golden Pavilion” was used (Lerma 2004), and from the remarks attached to the play we learn that the character of Mishima first appears in military uniform, then in a kendo practice costume, and that Saigō Takamori wears samurai armour (Lawson 1983: 8, 12–13).

⁸⁸ This is a very peculiar solution, since it is the *waki* rather than the *shite* who usually summon a ghost to the site. However, confusion about the function of the *waki* and his relationship with the *shite* can also be seen earlier in the play when it is the priest (the *maeshite*), and not the student (who is the equivalent of the *waki*), who summons the ghost of Mishima to the temple.

be said that Lawson's "modern *nō* play" is an essay in the form of drama, which conveys the author's thoughts and viewpoints on various topics.

2.3.2 The role of the director in *nō* theatre

In the Western theatre tradition the director is almost as important as the performer. Staging a modern drama generally involves no other instructions than the stage directions and other remarks added by the playwright to the script. The hands of a director are not tied by previous interpretations or traditional approaches. On the contrary, a director is expected to provide an original and fresh interpretation of the play instead of following its traditional staging practices. From that perspective, directing *nō* theatre and Western drama theatre seem to be opposed, because the former concentrates on reproducing traditional or historical interpretations, while the latter aims to find new approaches to the material. A director who stages a drama has more freedom to experiment and express his or her vision than the *shite* actor who is usually responsible for the *nō* production.

Compared with Western theatre, the role of the director in Japanese traditional theatrical productions developed in a different way. The Japanese concept of direction began to emerge in the late Meiji period when the first modern dramas were staged (Hata 1991a: 228). Hata Hisashi finds that the words closest to the concept of "direction" in the Meiji period were "the presentation of differences between schools",⁸⁹ which concerned the manner of artistic expression of some lines of the script or an "inclination" to perform the same *kata* differently. In a source from the Taishō period published in 1919, the phrase "the way of staging" occurs, which was probably the earliest reference to the concept of direction in connection with *nō* theatre. Nevertheless, the word *enshutsu* (directing) was not widely used in the *nō* world until the Shōwa period, when the meaning was narrowed down to "the way of acting" of the *shite* actor, which is close to the meaning of the word *kimari* or "customized acting style", and is still used among performers (*Ibid.*, 220–221).⁹⁰

Thus, in Japanese theatre, the meaning of direction was at first influenced by the older concept of *kimari*, and consequently the direction of a play was understood to be a static and fixed performing style that should be followed and preserved. The selected *kimari*, which involves every aspect of a performance, is usually included in the program as the *kogaki* (staging instructions) of the play. *Kogaki* is made up of *kimari* – the conventional performance elements that define

⁸⁹ In Japanese, *ryūgi no shutchō*, literally "emphasising the school".

⁹⁰ The earliest Japanese terms for the concept of "direction" that Hata Hisashi mentions in his paper are "the way of staging" or *enshutsuhō* and "the way of acting" or *enjikata*.

the special characteristics of the play – and forms the basis for directing canonical plays.⁹¹

Historian Hata Hisashi believes that the meaning of direction in *nō* theatre lies in the selection of proper masks and costumes for the characters (*Ibid.*, 218). Komparu Kunio, on the contrary, explains that the production of a play is much more complex than merely assembling the costumes, as it involves all aspects of *nō* theatre. In order to illustrate the difference between staging modern theatrical productions and *nō* plays Komparu offers in his monograph the model of a pyramid for modern drama productions and a sketch of an old-fashioned Japanese fishing net for *nō* productions. These two models illustrate the principal difference between directing a modern play, which is usually done by one individual, and staging a *nō* play, which is a more flexible system that depends on many long-standing traditions, and is an art that people have been perfecting for generations. Komparu's model of a traditional Japanese fishing net is a metaphor that vividly depicts the collective and interrelated nature of a *nō* theatre production. He believed that a single person could not produce a *nō*, because each member of the troupe contributes expertise that is interwoven into a unique performance. He found that *nō* schools and families make important decisions about a production collectively; hence, all the performers share responsibility for the play (Komparu 1983: 267–268).

Although a *shite* actor usually initiates a project, responsibility for the performance is shared by all members of the troupe, who are chosen and hired by the *shite*. Each performer interprets his part independently and takes responsibility for it when the play is staged.⁹² James Brandon is convinced that “the natural interpreter of Asian dramatic text is the performer”, who tries to balance between “the pull of text and the push of performing codes” (Brandon 1989: 43).

A script could potentially be interpreted in various ways, but the performance elements of the genre set some fixed restrictions on artistic expression and thus limit the freedom of direction. Violating specific restrictions of the shared performing codes means stepping outside the boundaries of the

⁹¹ The scripts of the plays usually contain remarks on the *kata* (the form or pattern), stage props, and costumes, which are denoted by the word *tsuke* (literally “attached”) and are part of a certain *kimari* that should be followed when performing the play. The use of a specific *kimari* also depends on the school – different *nō* schools may have their own *kogaki* for selecting the combination of masks and costumes for certain plays. Thus, if comparing a *nō* play to a book, it could be said that the *kogaki* is similar to an edition of a book. Yokomichi Mario said that some authors insist on the use of a particular *kimari*, but when a director is involved in a production the final choice could also be made by a *shite* actor (Yokomichi 1987a: 33).

⁹² Directing *nō* theatre has traditionally been the responsibility of a *shite* actor, who, in addition to choosing a proper mask and costume for his or her own role, assembles all the other participants needed for the performance, such as the musicians, *waki* and *kyōgen* actors, and the members of the chorus. In other words, a *shite* actor not only performs the main role in the play, but also acts as the director and producer, personally bearing the cost of the project by paying all the other participants, renting a stage, and taking responsibility for the production.

genre, and consequently losing the special characteristics of a *nō* performance. Therefore, in directing *nō* plays it is important to maintain the performers' acting technique, which is one of the codes that guarantee the traditional style of expression for the whole production.

Directing *nō* theatre does offer the possibility of finding new interpretations of the plays and characters. *Shinsaku* researcher Nishino Haruo argued that at least in *shinsaku* productions and revival projects it would be better to have a strict director, someone who could view the whole production from an objective standpoint, and who would take responsibility for the project, because no stage directions or *kogaki* exist for new plays (Nishino 2004b). *Nō* researcher Amano Fumio agrees with Nishino that particularly in *shinsaku* and *fukkyoku* (revival) productions, strong leadership is needed (Amano 2004: 111).

Nishino Haruo was concerned about the changing attitudes of contemporary *nō* actors and audiences. He found that in recent years *nō* theatre has become too simplistic, because *nō* performances are presented that only vaguely conform to the ideal standard; he likens *nō* to "an American mass production" that resembles a hamburger – it is simple to make and does not take much time to eat. This change took place partly because of audiences who no longer distinguish between good and bad performances, consequently "eating" everything that is presented to them (Nishino 2004b). On the other hand, because audiences are "hungry" for new approaches, *nō* actors are often involved in too many projects, which leaves them practically no time to concentrate on their basic training, the result of which is that their "technique of *nō* acting will be distorted" (*Ibid.*). Additionally, participating in various "extra activities" and projects outside the canonical repertory offers the freedom to create new *kata* and an opportunity to be involved in the collaborative directing of "new" plays, such as revivals (*fukkyoku*), *shinsaku*, or fusion performances.⁹³ In such circumstances and without the help of a director an actor might easily lose the focus of his creative career.

Directing *shinsaku nō* plays involves original interpretation of the characters, the design and creation of instructions for the use of unique stage props, as well as responsibility for possible cuts and additions to the script. Experience in directing *shinsaku* plays can also lead to new possibilities for staging canonical plays. It seems that at present senior actors such as Umewaka Rukurō, who considers canonical plays too perfected to enable new interpretations, tend to turn to new plays (Hikawa 2002: 43).⁹⁴ In other words, many outstanding actors feel that their hands are tied when they perform canonical plays because of the long tradition of these plays that has crystallised

⁹³ In Professor Nishino's opinion, the optimum balance for the active repertory would be about 20 per cent *shinsaku* and revival *fukkyoku* plays, and 80 per cent classical plays (Nishino 2004b). With such a balance, directing plays would become sufficiently common that directors would not hesitate to stage traditional plays, which have already established their own *kogaki*.

⁹⁴ Umewaka Rukurō said, "today the canonical plays have almost no freedom to change something. It can be said that all plays are already perfect."

into performance directions called *kogaki*. New plays, which can be staged without the burden of perfected tradition and heightened responsibility, seem to be perfect material for the creation of new forms in the traditional style.

Adjusting traditional elements for contemporary audiences can be achieved in two ways, either by destroying the old forms and replacing them with new ones, or by placing contemporary content in the traditional form by making fresh ideas conform to the performance codes of *nō* theatre. The former development could lead to the emergence of a more contemporary genre, poetic drama performed in the style of *nō*, which would be called *shin-nōgaku* or “new *nō*”, and have its roots in traditional or classical *nō* (MYSZ 20: 12–13).

The aim of the latter development is to preserve the traditional codes and to attempt to express contemporary ideas within the old forms; this is the basis of the *shinsaku* movement. Umewaka Rokurō, one of the leading figures of this movement, said that in directing *shinsaku* plays, “he does not destroy the tradition, but makes corrections where needed to fit with the present day” (Hikawa 2002: 32). In contrast to canonical plays, *shinsaku* could be considered a more “flexible” corpus of *nō* plays that allows corrections to be made because of the absence of established staging instructions *kogaki*. For instance, if some elements of the play do not work properly onstage then in *shinsaku* productions these flaws can be corrected rather easily by simply eliminating the unsuitable features. However, in classical plays actors sometimes have to adapt to incongruities in the acting instructions, or they simply have to ignore their discomfiture with an illogical movement pattern and execute it correctly without questioning it.

A good example of making adjustments in the performance was a *shinsaku* play written by Dōmoto Masaki *Kūkai* (1998), which was performed in December 2000 during a 9-day tour of several European cities, including Amsterdam, Lille, Brussels and Paris. On the first day of the performance in Paris Director Umewaka Rokurō decided to make a major change in the play: he wanted to eliminate the scene in which *Kūkai* the priest emerges briefly from his tomb. Up until then the scene had been performed in accordance with the script, and Umewaka Rokurō, who played the role of *Kūkai*, had to conceal himself inside the stage prop (*tsukurimono*) that represented a tomb. In the script, the cloth *tsukurimono* on the framework of the tomb was lowered to the stage at the moment when *Kūkai* appeared after attaining Buddhahood. During several earlier performances *shite* actor Umewaka and his fellow performers had felt that that scene had interrupted the flow of the play. However, Hōshō Kan, who played the *waki* role in the production, thought that the scene was too descriptive, and after thoroughly discussing it with Umewaka the scene was omitted (*Ibid.*, 16–17).

Interestingly, although the director had the authority to make such a decision, it was the *waki* actor who first noticed a certain discord in the play and initiated the changes in the production in close cooperation with the director. The author of the play Dōmoto Masaki felt that actors have the right to make

corrections to the play, because in his opinion the play belongs to the playwright only during the writing process, and as soon as it has been handed over to the director and staged it belongs to the actors (*Ibid.*, 77). In that way, Dōmoto's viewpoint is similar to that of Western playwrights, who after finishing a play leave its interpretation to future directors.

In conclusion, the production of *Kūkai* demonstrates that even when a director is involved in a (*shinsaku*) *nō* theatre production, the most important decisions can still be (and usually are) made collectively, or, more accurately, in accordance with the traditional directing practices of *nō* theatre.

2.3.3 Actors' right and eligibility to be involved in *shinsaku* projects

The circle of performers involved in a *shinsaku* project is usually limited. Yamanaka Reiko has observed that not everyone can participate in these projects (Yamanaka 2001: 176). It is noteworthy that from year to year and project to project the names behind *shinsaku* productions have largely remained the same, as the authors and directors of these productions are acknowledged authorities in the *nō* world, such as senior actors from various *nō* schools Umewaka Rokurō, Nomura Shirō, Kanze Hideo, Asami Masakuni, Yamamoto Tōjirō, and others. One explanation for this phenomenon is that involvement in *shinsaku* projects (i.e. writing and producing *shinsaku* plays) demands a certain status, which guarantees the necessary power and knowledge, and the support of *nō* researchers, institutions or other groups, in staging a new play.⁹⁵ Without a group of powerful supporters from the *nō* world it would be extremely difficult to carry out successful *shinsaku* projects.

However, there are not enough regular performances to keep professional actors occupied. Therefore, many actors are looking for more performance opportunities than the leader of a troupe or *iemoto* (the head) of a school can offer.⁹⁶ Thus, *shinsaku* projects function as a way to provide actors with additional opportunities to be creative and onstage more frequently than would otherwise be possible. For *nō* actors who are involved in *shinsaku* projects, learning and interpreting new lines, creating new *kata*, and rehearsing new plays is an uncommon task; it is work that a dramatic actor does every day, but *nō* actors working on *shinsaku* projects find themselves in an unfamiliar situation. *Nō* actors are usually expected to master the entire traditional repertory, and they spend their life learning and polishing roles they will perform in the future. Therefore, performing *shinsaku* plays occasions considerable stress, but also

⁹⁵ These groups include institutions and organisations such as the National *Nō* Theatre, Umewakakai, Hashinokai, Tessenkai, etc.

⁹⁶ Irmgard Johnson (1985) provides a thorough description of the situation in her article "The Life of the Adult *Nō* Player in Japan Today", in *Comparative Drama*, 18: 4, (Winter 1984–85), 289–310.

allows actors to invent new interpretations and gives them the opportunity to exercise their creativity.

Nevertheless, participating in a *shinsaku* project is not without its disadvantages for young actors. Professional *nō* actor Uzawa Hisa is worried about young actors who, instead of improving their skills in traditional roles, are constantly engaged in learning new plays and consequently do not have enough time to practise the traditional repertory. She believes that for senior actors like Umewaka Rokurō involvement in *shinsaku* productions is a great opportunity to widen their repertory, but that young actors should first perfect their technique learning the classical repertory before they participate in innovative and creative projects. Uzawa is convinced that the practice of engaging young actors in new projects threatens the very existence of *nō* and could eventually destroy it (Uzawa 2004).

One might conclude therefore that while participation in *shinsaku* projects could interfere with the training of young actors and the development of their technique, it is appropriate for senior actors who have honed their skills in canonical plays and who have mastered the traditional styles and technique, as it provides them with the opportunity to transmit the tradition into new plays.

2.4 The web of structural and performance elements

Four structural elements – source material, characters, structure and language – form the basic framework of a *nō* play that qualifies it as a *yōkyoku*, or a *nō* script ready for staging and performing. The six performance elements form a web, at the corners of which are the three internal performance elements: the actor's training, music, and costumes and masks. These are considered to be the basic performance elements, any alteration or change in which causes a *nō* to deviate from the conventional style. The other three elements – the stage, hand and stage props, and lighting – are considered to have a lesser impact, because when all the internal elements of *nō* are present and in accordance with the traditional canon, the three external performance elements should not radically change the overall image of the performance, even if altered to some extent. The internal performance elements are considered indispensable to a genuine *nō* performance: the performers should be professionally trained actors who chant and dance in the traditional style, they should wear costumes and masks designed in accordance with traditional *nō* aesthetics, and their performance should be accompanied by a *nō* ensemble playing traditional instruments in the traditional style. In addition, they should perform a play that fulfils all the requirements of a *nō* play; in other words, the play must comprise all four basic structural elements of the script.⁹⁷ Thus, the structural and performance elements

⁹⁷ *Su-utai* or chanting a *nō* script without any performance elements (costumes, masks, properties, music) is an example of a similar performance occasion that is nevertheless within the tradition.

are interrelated in a web-like structure that creates a *nō* play, both as a script and as a performance.

Classical *nō* plays that belong to the current repertory of *nō* schools represent scripts that have the ideal combination of *nō* structural and performance elements. The approximately 250 plays in the repertory that are called *genkō-kyōku* or “current plays” have been selected from more than 3000 plays. “Current plays” as the best examples of classical *nō* scripts are composed of the four basic structural elements: they have suitable themes and main characters drawn from a classical source or folklore, a *shite*-centred and unit-based structure with two climaxes, and are written in the classical Japanese language. Generally, classical plays are performed by professional *nō* actors on a traditional *nō* stage. Therefore, the performance of a classical play also contains all six performance elements, both internal (actor’s training, music, costumes and masks) and external (stage, hand and stage properties, lighting).

Shinsaku plays, which belong to the corpus of scripts outside the *nō* repertory, have been deemed to be of lesser value than classical plays. Today, most of these plays are *haikyōku* or “plays outside the repertory”, with some rare exceptions that have been included in the repertory of some schools. One reason for excluding modern and contemporary *shinsaku* plays from the current repertory could be the fact that the new plays employ traditional elements in innovative and often experimental ways. The adaptation of *nō* elements in *shinsaku* plays is mainly derived from the use of new source materials that require the creation of new character types, unusual props, and other features. Therefore, in analysing *shinsaku* plays the main focus should be on the methods of adapting the source material and other traditional elements of *nō* theatre.

The most important condition for creating a new *nō* play is the author’s intention to write a *nō* play. Due to the special form of *nō* plays, *yōkyōku*, writing a *nō* play requires employing proper methods of adapting the source material, fabricating the requisite structure and intertextuality, and using the unique *nō* language. In other words, knowledge of the web of traditional elements of *nō* and a clear intention to create a *nō* play ensures that the script would meet the requirements of *yōkyōku*.

If the author of the play does not intend to create a *nō* play, but simply integrates one or more elements of *nō* into his theatrical project, the outcome would not be a *nō* play but a *nō*-inspired work with some *nō*-informed elements. Kurita’s experiment to adapt a Shakespearean play to the intimate performance space of a *nō* stage was such a *nō*-inspired project. Another example of a *nō*-inspired play was Okamoto’s *gendai nō* project *Mizu no koe*, in which the director made use of some general aesthetic principles such as tranquillity, elegance, and a bare stage, without any intention to create a *nō* play. In his project Okamoto also used *nō* actors, but he asked them to depart from their traditional performing style and create new ways of moving. Yeats’s and Mishima’s adaptations are examples of modern interpretations of a theme — a woman’s jealousy — borrowed from classical *nō* plays. Therefore it could be said that *nō*-

inspired works as transcultural theatrical projects employ independent *nō* elements or concepts, but not the web of traditional elements.

Nō actors' traditional training, their movement and chanting technique, is the most important performance element of a *nō* play. However, international projects in which *nō* actors participate, performing roles in dramas or opera, are by their nature fusion projects. These projects often challenge participants from different theatre traditions to step out of their familiar routines in order to collaborate in the creation of something new. All the participants from different genres bring to the resulting collaborative performance their particular art, training and acting style. In this case the play or project could be called a collage performance, because it synthesises different theatre genres into one performance. For instance, Aoki's *nō* opera projects apply the *nō* actor's vocal instrument to musical works that do not belong to the *nō* tradition, resulting in a collaborative effort between a *nō* actor and a composer of opera.

In contrast to *nō*-inspired plays and collaborative fusion projects, a *nō* imitation is a type of theatrical project that may have originated with an author's intention to create a *nō* play, but due to insufficient knowledge of the traditional elements of *nō* does not fulfil the requirements of *nō* plays. For instance, the play may be comprised of sequences that resemble *dan* units of *nō* plays, but lacks the dual climax that should be created first through the text and then expressed in music and dance. Thus, the creation of the climax in a *nō* play is the responsibility of both the playwright and the actor-director, because it concerns the structural and performance elements of *nō*. Examples of *nō* imitations are Lawson's play *Mishima* and O'Connor's play *Deirdre*. These plays may seem to be genuine *nō* plays, but a thorough analysis reveals that the major shortcoming of both plays is the absence of a dual climax and *honkadōri* intertextuality.

Contrary to *nō*-inspired plays, collaborative fusion projects, and *nō* imitations, *shinsaku* plays represent a clear intention to write a *nō* play and their authors possess a profound knowledge of the web of traditional elements and adaptation methods of source material. However, the manner in which the traditional elements are adapted is of crucial importance in *shinsaku* plays, because it defines the quality of the play and consequently its potential to be performed by professional *nō* troupes. In addition, *shinsaku* plays contain three particularly significant features: the characters, a religious theme, and the level of abstraction.

First, more than two or three characters can be cast in *nō* plays because this does not change the nature of *nō*. Although a *nō* play should be focused solely on the protagonist's story, according to the monodramatic principle, a *shinsaku* play might contain many characters.⁹⁸ While a large cast of characters automatically makes the play more showy and spectacular, this has a precedent in the flamboyant medieval *nō* plays. The *waki* character does not necessarily need to

⁹⁸ For example, there are fourteen characters in the *shinsaku* play *Abe no Seimei* (2001, author Yoshida Kijū).

be a monk or priest, but could be any other type of character who urges the main character to tell his or her story. Nevertheless, it would be the best if the character is on a pilgrimage or journey to a famous or spiritually meaningful place, or to a place that is somehow significant to the main character.

Second, a religious sermon or debate is uncommon in *nō* plays, so introducing religious ideas would not be advisable as a theme of a play. On the contrary, because there is no longer one dominant religious sect, and due to the somewhat diminished role of religion in contemporary society as compared with medieval Japan, excessive religious overtones could overshadow the story of the main character, which is meant to be the centre of attention. Therefore, exploiting religious themes in *shinsaku* plays would seem like religious propaganda, and feel somewhat awkward.

Third, excessive descriptiveness should be avoided in *shinsaku* plays, because it would diminish the atmosphere of unreality in *nō* and cause them to seem more like modern dramas. A similarly undesirable effect would be created should the script include long descriptions, monologues, or dialogues resembling casual conversation; *yōkyoku* or crafting a script for a *nō* play requires observing a tradition that dictates both the form (structure, mode of speech, etc.) and the vocabulary.

The analysis of *shinsaku* plays representing genre and kinetic adaptations is based on the web of traditional structural and performance elements of *nō*, and the methods for creating genre and kinetic *shinsaku* adaptations. The analysis focuses on the ways in which traditional elements can be incorporated into *shinsaku* plays, and tries to answer the question of how these elements can be adapted and whether their modification is within the limits of the *nō* theatre canon.

CHAPTER 3. SHINSAKU NŌ: THE PLAYS, AUTHORS, AND CATEGORIES

The literal meaning of the word “*shinsaku*” is “newly created”, which simply denotes new *nō* plays. However, in this study a much more restricted interpretation of the term “*shinsaku*” will be used, which refers to the corpus of plays from the late Meiji period until recent years, covering a little more than a hundred years of *shinsaku* history. *Nō* plays created during this period have certain common characteristics that signalled the beginning of a new epoch in *nō* theatre. The shift from an early modern Westernised society to the contemporary highly developed and globalized society is expressed by new themes, the choice of source materials, and other special characteristics of new *nō* plays that are absent from the canonical plays of the current repertory of *nō* theatre.

In 2005, Nishino Haruo, a renowned researcher of *shinsaku nō* and a professor at Hōsei University at that time, compiled a list of modern and contemporary *shinsaku* plays.⁹⁹ Generally, the plays are listed in the order of the year of their creation, but if that is unknown, the year of the premiere performance of the play is used. Nishino’s list of plays covers one hundred years of *shinsaku* history, from 1904 to 2004, and comprises a total of 316 plays. It is the most systematic overview of new plays of the period, and includes short synopses of the plays in a few phrases or sentences.

3.1 Nishino’s thematic categorisation of *shinsaku* plays

Nishino Haruo based his 2006 analysis of *shinsaku* plays on the themes of the new plays, which mainly derive from the type of protagonist of the play. In his analysis Nishino was guided by Zeami’s treatise on the creation of *nō* plays *Sandō* (The Three Techniques of *Nō* Composition), which introduces three elements of playwriting: *shu* (source), *saku* (composition), and *sho* (writing).¹⁰⁰ Nishino focuses primarily on the *shu*, or source material, which defines the main character and theme of *nō* plays (Nishino 2006: 5).

Nishino’s categorisation of modern and contemporary *shinsaku* plays clearly follows the classical concept of the thematic division of *nō* plays, which was first described in Zeami’s *Fūshikaden* (On the Art of the Flower) as the main types of roles. In Chapter Two of *Monomane jōjō* (Various Items Concerning Role

⁹⁹ The list of *shinsaku* plays was published in the journal *Nōgaku kenkyū* (The Journal of Nōgaku Studies, 2005: 29, 1–31). However, Nishino had introduced the initial results of his *shinsaku* research in July 2004 at the 9th Seminar on *Nō* Theatre at Hōsei University: Considering *Shinsaku Nō*, at which he presented to the participants a printed list of *shinsaku* that included 315 plays.

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Rimer and Yamazaki Masakazu (1984) translated the title of the treatise as *The Three Elements in Composing a Play*, but the translation by Shelley Fenno Quinn (2005) *The Three Techniques of Noh Composition* seems to better describe the content of Zeami’s theory.

Playing), Zeami describes nine types of roles, which include women, old men, those played without a mask, mad people, Buddhist priests, warriors, gods, and demons, as well as Chinese variants (SNKBZ 88: 219–229).¹⁰¹ Nishino Haruo seems to have adapted Zeami's grouping of plays by main character and applied it to his categorisation of *shinsaku* plays. Taking Zeami's types of roles as a model, Nishino divided modern and contemporary *shinsaku* plays into twelve categories according to their themes, which include everyday topics, religious priests, warriors, men of literature, beauties, legends about temples, local stories, famous places, plays with the spirits of animals or birds as protagonists, commercial products, plays based on modern literary sources, and adaptations of modern plays from the Western theatre tradition.

However, it appears that some of these categories could have been grouped more broadly. An analysis of Nishino's categorisation reveals that some categories of *shinsaku* plays feature main characters similar to those in classical plays. For instance, Nishino's categories of *shinsaku* plays pertaining to beauties, religious priests, legends about temples, and non-human creatures echo the themes of classical plays about beauties (*Yōkihi*), Buddhist priests (*Saigyō zakura* or Saigyō's Cherry Tree), well-known temples (*Seiganji* or Seiganji Temple), famous warriors such as Atsumori and Kiyotsune, and the spirits of plants (*Fuji* or Wisteria) and birds (*Sagi* or The White Heron). Therefore, *shinsaku* plays with themes and character types that already exist in earlier plays are reviewed in this study as "new plays with classical themes".

Nishino divides into two categories another group of *shinsaku* that make use of innovative source materials: plays that draw on modern Japanese literary sources, and new plays that represent transcultural genre adaptations of foreign sources. The plays in this group are based on materials that centuries ago would have been considered inappropriate for *nō* plays. Thus, the source materials of this group of *shinsaku* plays appear to violate the criterion set for sources of *nō* plays, in that it was only considered appropriate to use literary sources from previous historical periods.¹⁰² From that perspective, the themes and main characters of *shinsaku* plays represent the contemporary period in which the plays were created. Therefore, *shinsaku* plays that draw on modern and contemporary literary source materials will be reviewed as "plays with innovative sources".

The third group of plays, which Nishino categorises as based on "everyday topics", includes plays on various topics of temporal importance, such as a war,

¹⁰¹ *Fūshikaden* is the first of Zeami's treatises, written between 1400 and 1418, in which he provides an overview of all possible types of roles that were found in the plays of his time. After *Fūshikaden* he wrote the treatise *Shikadō* (The True Path to the Flower, 1420) that describes more general types of roles, reducing their number from nine to three: impersonating an old person, a woman, or a warrior (SNKBZ 88: 340–341).

¹⁰² For example, plays from the Muromachi period often drew their sources from Heian period novels and stories, and from Buddhist *setsuwa* literature of the Kamakura period. Similarly, Edo period plays relied on *gunki* literature about medieval wars and warriors from the Muromachi period.

the commemoration of victims of the atomic catastrophe, as well as themes important to contemporary society, such as environmental pollution, organ transplantation, and other issues. In this review, a few new plays advertising a medicine will be added to Nishino's category of plays about everyday matters, although Nishino created a separate category for such plays called "commercial plays".

In order to provide more information about *shinsaku* plays and authors, sources in addition to Nishino's research will also be used. The best source for the analysis of new plays is undeniably *An Incomplete Collection of Nō Plays, Continued (Mikan yōkyokushū, zoku)*, which was compiled and edited by Tanaka Makoto and includes 22 volumes of *shinsaku* scripts. In addition to these scripts Tanaka Makoto provides valuable background information about the authors and productions of the plays. Another useful source of information about *shinsaku* plays is the chapter titled "The Authors and Plays of Early Modern, Modern and Contemporary Nō Theatre" in Volume 3 of *Iwanami Courses of Nō and Kyōgen*, whose author Hata Hisashi provides informative, albeit somewhat critical commentaries on *shinsaku* plays.

3.1.1 Classical themes in new plays

Plays about famous historical figures and beauties

A comparison of Nishino's categories of plays with Zeami's traditional role types clarifies that plays about religious figures such as Kūkai (*Kūkai*, 1998, author Dōmoto Masaki), are in Zeami's categorisation those about Buddhist priests. Episodes from the life of high-ranking court aristocrats, poets, and warriors are themes that were widely employed in classical *nō* theatre, and in Nishino's analysis are divided into two different thematic categories of plays. For instance, in Nishino's analysis (2006: 6), the category "aristocrats and warriors" includes plays about Prince Shōtoku Taishi (*Yumedono*, 1943, author Toki Zenmaro), the aristocrat Sugawara no Michizane (*Kitano*, 1952, author Takenaka Minoru), and the great warrior of the Heian era, Taira Kiyomori (*Kiyomori*, 1956, author Takenaka Minoru). Plays about poets, tea-masters, actors, and scholars, including those about the famous haiku poet Matsuo Bashō (*Oku no hosomichi*, 1933, author Takahama Kiyoshi) and two plays about the *nō* patriarch Zeami (*Zeami*, 1942, author Takekoshi Kenzō, and *Zeabōoku*, 1962, author Katayama Hiromichi) are placed in a separate category.

Although Nishino Haruo grouped these *shinsaku* plays into three different categories (religious figures, aristocrats and warriors, poets and scholars), the common characteristic of all these plays is that they pertain to episodes (either historical or fictional) from the lives of actual historical persons, regardless of occupation or social position. Another common characteristic of these plays is that many of them were written to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of a

historical figure, such as the play *Zeabōoku* Katayama wrote for the 600th anniversary of Zeami's birth, and *Oku no hosomichi*, which Takahama created to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the death of Matsuo Bashō.

There is a special category of plays about beauties, into which Nishino places several new *nō* plays such as *Kaguyahime* (Princess Kaguya, 1973, author Tsumura Kimiko), *Yume no Ukihashi* (The Floating Bridge of Dreams, 2000, author Setouchi Jakuchō), *Nukata no Ōkimi* (Princess Nukata, 1997, author Baba Akiko), and *Kureopatora* (Kleopatra, 2000, author Tsumura Keijirō).

However, the list fails to include the play by Dōmoto Masaki *Ōsakajō* (Osaka Castle, 2000), which should have been included in the category of plays about beauties. The play tells the story of Senhime, Tokugawa Ieyasu's granddaughter, who was promised to Hideyori, the son of Ieyasu's ally Toyotomi Hideyoshi. During the summer siege of Osaka Castle she was the only person to escape from the burning castle where Hideyori and his mother Yodogimi committed ritual suicide before their troops surrendered. The play is set on the day of her escape; in the play Senhime sails along the Yodogawa River to Himeji Castle and dreams about past events (Hikawa 2002: 73–75).

Plays about non-human creatures

Plays that feature animal, plant, bird or other non-human characters belong to a separate category that includes themes and characters from Japanese folklore.¹⁰³ In this category is a play by Takenaka Minoru, *Ningyo* (The Mermaid, 1959), in which a village woman (the *maeshite*) tells a monk (the *waki*) about a mermaid who lives in Waka-no-ura Bay near the town of Wakayama. The mermaid sings songs that were more beautiful than had ever before been heard, and thereby lures fishermen to their death. The *katari* – the narrative part of the play – tells the story of a boatman whose boat ran aground near Futagojima Island while he was listening to the song of the mermaid, and who was consequently killed (MYSZ 10: 440–448). The play belongs to a third group of plays – “wig-plays” – in which the protagonist of the first half (the *maeshite*) is a local woman and in the latter half appears as a mermaid (the *nochishite*). Tanaka Makoto (*Ibid.*, 99) is critical of the play, commenting that despite the fact that the first half of the play is quite interesting, both the text and music of the second half lose power, simply consisting of an epic description of the mermaid. Therefore, Tanaka assumes that the play would be impossible to perform as a *nō* play.¹⁰⁴

In contrast to *Ningyo*, the play *Yukionna* (The Snow Fairy, 1971) by Muroyama Gensaburō was performed several times on different *nō* stages. The

¹⁰³ Some of the most frequently performed plays in the active repertory, such as *Matsukaze*, *Hagoromo* and *Kurama tengu*, have characters of a similar type, which indicates the great potential of this category of new plays.

¹⁰⁴ The play was reportedly performed at Fushimi Yūgakukai as a *su-utai* (simply chanted without the roles being performed) (MYSZ 10: 99).

play is about the famous Japanese story of a snow fairy. In the opening scene a townsman (the *waki*) is on a journey to visit his friend. There is a snowstorm, and he meets a woman (the *maeshite*) who invites him into her house. She tells him a story about a woman who froze to death leaving a child behind. In the latter half of the play Yukionna (the *nochishite*) appears, and she dances while the chorus chants a song that describes hills and villages being buried under thick snow (MYSZ 16: 151–165).

While the first of these two plays, *Ningyo*, is an example of a failure and the second, *Yukionna*, represents a successful new play, both were plays about women. The most popular play in this category is probably *Tsuru* (The Crane),¹⁰⁵ which is a *maimono* (or dance piece) belonging to the active repertory of the Kita School. The play, which was created by Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru in 1959, was a great success and has been continually performed even after the death of its authors, which is unusual for *shinsaku* plays. Tanaka Makoto is convinced that the play *Tsuru*, which was modelled on the classical play *Sagi* (The White Heron), is one of the masterpieces of Shōwa era new plays that will be passed on to future generations (MYSZ 9: 56). The main focus of this elegant play is on the ending, in which the *shite* performs *tsuru no mai* (the Dance of Crane). The enormous success of this play in *nō* circles became evident when it gained popularity among amateur actors, and eventually the *tsuru no mai* was shortened to accommodate students of *nō* dance (*Ibid.*).

Plays about legendary places

Nishino created three other categories of plays: those about the legends of famous temples and shrines, local legendary places, and famous sites. However, these categories could conceivably have been combined under a single title such as “stories and legends about famous places”. A good example of this category is the play *Ikaribiki* (The Anchor, 1903, author Ōwada Takeki), which tells the story and explains the importance of the Shinshōji Temple. The temple is located on Mt. Naritayama where a legendary anchor that was drawn from the sea is enshrined. Tanaka Makoto (MYSZ 1: 42) considers the structure of the play to be typical of a *waki nō*: in the first part of the play the *waki* asks the village people (the *maetsure*) the way to the temple, and hears a legend about a miraculous anchor that had for years damaged the fishing nets of local fishermen in Odare Bay. On an August day in 1889 when a fisherman’s boat is caught in something in the sea he turns in prayer to Fudō Myōō (“the Immovable One”, one of the Buddhist Kings of Wisdom). The deity appears before the fisherman and with the power of Buddha the anchor is pulled out of the sea. In the second part of the

¹⁰⁵ In fact, one of the first professional female actors of the Kanze School, Tsumura Kimiko, created a *shinsaku* play in 1951 similarly titled *Tsuru*, which was a congratulatory piece celebrating the birth of the prince and honouring the emperor’s reign, although the play was never performed on stage (MYSZ 9: 55).

play the legend is re-enacted and the play ends with celebratory singing and dancing (*Ibid.*, 237–243).

Religious *nō* plays

Religious themes, especially those pertaining to Zen Buddhism, have been thought to be characteristic of *nō* plays. Nevertheless, most canonical plays have some elements related to Amidism or Pure Land Buddhism, which was one of the prominent religious sects during the Muromachi period in Japan. Typically, in the final part of *mugen nō* plays, the *waki*, cast as a priest on pilgrimage, chants an excerpt from the *Lotus Sutra* or says a *nembutsu* prayer for a departed spirit. However, new *nō* plays employ religious themes in a significantly different way. Religious elements, such as a prayer or quote from a sutra, are no longer structural elements of *shinsaku* plays, as they were in classical plays, but rather occupy a prominent or even central place in the play, similar to European medieval liturgical dramas or mystery plays.

Good examples of this new incorporation of religious elements into *shinsaku* plays are the Tenri trilogy and modern Christian *nō* plays. In 1912 Imanori Hideashi wrote three plays about the Tenri religious sect: *Tenri kyōso* (The Founder of Tenri Sect), *Mikage no inochi* (The Holy Spirit), and *Mikage no ame* (The Holy Rain). The second play in the cycle, *Mikage no inochi*, is about a child who is seriously ill, and is miraculously cured by the leader of the Tenri Sect Nakayama Mikiko. The subject of the third play is a great drought that caused all the wells to dry up, but at the end of the play, following prayers to the Tenri goddess, clouds and flashes of lightning appear and it starts to rain, which restores life to all the plants on earth (MYSZ 14: 166–179). This play uses natural phenomena and symbolism to describe the overwhelming power of the religion that the playwright Imanori Hideashi preached throughout the cycle of plays.

The propagandistic purpose of the Tenri cycle is obvious, but the artistic quality of the plays is questionable. Tanaka Makoto, who compiled *An Incomplete Collection of Nō Plays (Mikan yōkyokushū)*, says in his commentaries on the plays that there are many mistakes in matching the number of syllables to the rhythm, which causes difficulties even in reading the text of *Mikage no ame*. Tanaka also criticises the play *Mikage no inochi*, which in his opinion also has a poor literary foundation, as well as similar problems with the rhythm of the verses. He says that the play “would be impossible to perform on stage” and “is virtually not a *nō* play at all” (*Ibid.*, 19–20).

Of special interest are the plays on biblical themes, such as the first modern Christian *nō* play *Fukkatsu no Kirisuto* (The Resurrection of Christ, 1957) by Yoshida Royō, two plays by the artistic duo Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru *Shito Pauro* (Apostle Paul, 1960) and *Fukkatsu* (The Resurrection, 1963), and a play by Kadowaki Kakichi *Iesusu no senrei* (The Baptism of Jesus, 1987).

Yoshida's play *Fukkatsu no Kirisuto* was commissioned to be performed at Easter.¹⁰⁶ For the creation of the script a team of writers of Christian *shinsaku nō* plays (Kirisuto Nō Shinsaku Iinkai) was assembled, the leader of which was Yoshida himself, who was working for the publishing company Wanya Shoten at the time (MYSZ 12: 51). The play begins with a scene set on the grave of Jesus, in which two *tsure*, one of which is Mary Magdalene (Magudara), enter in haste. The heavenly voice of an angel reveals that because Jesus helped the poor and redeemed the sins of men He will be victorious over death and will be resurrected. There is a celebratory dance at the end of the play that expresses the gratitude of all Christians (*Ibid.*, 245–250).¹⁰⁷ Tanaka Makoto says that Yoshida's play is a remarkable achievement as the first modern Christian *nō*, but he is nevertheless sceptical of whether or not the theme is suitable for *nō* (*Ibid.*, 52).

Shortly after the first Christian play of the Hōshō School was broadcast over NHK radio in 1957, two plays on biblical themes followed, which were created by the Kita School. The first of these plays was *Shito Pauro* (1960), which was written to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the successful collaboration of Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru.¹⁰⁸ The play, which tells the biblical story of how Saul became Paul, is ultimately a celebration of the spirit, which continues its existence after the mortal body dies. The play was also significant among *shinsaku* pieces because the five *nō* schools had no Christian or religious plays in their repertory in the 1960s, but after its premier, *Shito Pauro* continued to be performed and established its place in the repertory of the Kita School, which, according to Tanaka Makoto, was unprecedented (MYSZ 6: 15).¹⁰⁹

The next Christian *nō* play created by Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru was *Fukkatsu*. It premiered in 1963 at the Asahi Shimbun Hall, was later performed numerous times on several *nō* stages, and was published in 1979 as a play belonging to the active repertory of the Kita School. *Fukkatsu* is based on the Gospel of Mark, but the scene of Peter fishing in the sea is taken from the Gospel of John. The famous scene in which John denies Jesus three times is in the first part of the play, as is the episode from the Bible in which Jesus is brought before and questioned by Pilate. The play concentrates on Peter, who witnesses the suffering of Christ on the cross and promises to tell Mary Magdalene. It ends with the glorification of the resurrection of Christ, which conveys "hope for all mankind and solves the differences between East and West" (MYSZ 12: 238–45).

¹⁰⁶ The play was performed for Easter at the Kita Nō Theater in Tokyo on March 30, 1975 (MYSZ 12: 45).

¹⁰⁷ Copies of the *nō* mask that was used for the character of Jesus Christ were sent to the Pope, the President of the United States, and the Queen of England (Masuda 1990: 207).

¹⁰⁸ Reportedly, Toki himself called their splendid creative collaboration a *futari sankyaku*, or "two men, three legs" (Masuda 1990: 201), signifying that they jointly executed the roles of poet-writer, composer, and director, which would usually be undertaken by a single *nō* actor-playwright.

¹⁰⁹ Following the example of the Kita School, which added their next play *Fukkatsu* to its repertory, the Hōshō School also adopted the play *Fukkatsu no Kirisuto*, and the Kanze School incorporated *Iezusu no senrei* into its playlist.

The play *Iezusu no senrei* was created in 1987 by Kadowaki Kakichi and performed for the first time under the title “Mass and *nō*” as part of a Catholic Mass.¹¹⁰ The theme of the play was taken from the Gospel of Mark, as was that of *Fukkatsu*, and is based on the scene in which John the Baptist baptizes Jesus in the River Jordan. There are many symbols in the play such as a cloud symbolising the Holy Spirit and water as its embodiment, both of which are unified in the character of Shadow (MYSZ 1: 84).

As discussed above, the Christian *nō* plays had some common features, such as themes that were unfamiliar to typical *nō* play audiences, and almost all of them were designed for Christian spectators, as they were specially commissioned or performed on specific Christian occasions (at Easter or before the Pope). Therefore, it can be concluded that these new plays based on religious themes were propagandist in nature, with their purpose being to explain the dogmas of a particular religion (the Tenri trilogy), or their inclusion of scenes from the Bible (the Christian *nō* plays). Thus, the new religious plays have a purpose (explaining biblical stories or preaching Christian teachings) similar to the miracle plays of medieval Europe.

3.1.2 Innovative sources of new *nō* plays

Themes such as historical persons, legendary places, and mythical or non-human creatures are common in classical *nō* plays. Nishino Haruo acknowledges in his analysis of the categories of *shinsaku* plays that those based on legends about the foundation of Buddhist temples or Shinto shrines (or *tokoroutai* “Song of a Place”) have become quite unpopular in modern times (Nishino 2006: 10). However, there are two additional categories of *shinsaku* plays that are entirely new in the context of *nō* theatre: those that draw their inspiration from modern or contemporary Japanese literature (novels, poems or plays), and those that adapt themes from Western dramaturgy or poetry to the form of *nō* (*Ibid.*).

Adaptations of modern and contemporary Japanese literature

Adaptation of themes from literature into the form of *nō* has been a common practice since the beginning of *nō* theatre. However, during the Muromachi period the literary sources for *nō* plays were drawn from the classical works of previous historical periods, but modern *shinsaku* plays often draw their inspiration from contemporary literature.

A good example of using contemporary source material is Takechi Tetsuji’s *shinsaku* play *Chiekoshō* (All About Chieko, 1957). The poems of Takamura Kōtarō

¹¹⁰ This Kanze School play was also performed at the Vatican before a Catholic audience in 1989 (MYSZ 1: 83).

(1883–1956) about his beloved wife Chieko, gathered into a collection (1941) after her death (MYSZ 20: 11),¹¹¹ inspired the scandalous theatre and film director Takechi Tetsuji¹¹² to adapt the poems to the *nō* stage as a *shinsaku* play. In the play the poems were arranged in almost the same order as they appeared in Takamura's collection (*Ibid.*). They sounded natural when chanted, despite the fact that the words of the poems were left unchanged (Hata 1987a: 355); according to the usual method, the verses would have been adjusted to conform to the *nō* vocabulary.

The production of *Chiekoshō* included some unconventional elements, such as the use of a doppelganger for Chieko in addition to her character, unusual costumes and hand properties. Therefore, *nō* researcher Hata Hisashi concludes that Takechi's production is a *gendai nō*, or a contemporary *nō* play with some non-traditional elements. Hence, while he deems the play unorthodox, he still considers that it belongs to the *nō* tradition (*Ibid.*, 356).

Another example of using modern literary sources for composing a *shinsaku* play is Nishino Haruo's new *nō* play *Kusamakura* (The Grass Pillow, 2002). The play was inspired by Natsume Sōseki's (1867–1916) haiku novel (1906), which is a story about a young artist who during a walk in mountains meets a beautiful young girl who becomes his inspiration. The play refers extensively to Sōseki's novel and poems, which results in a mosaic-like *shinsaku* play that has a complex character design, as well as a web of allusions and multi-layered images.

Adaptations of Western literature and drama

Subsequent to contact with Western countries being re-established in the 20th century Western drama and literature became an additional source of inspiration for the creation of new *nō* plays. The adaptation of Western literary and dramatic sources into the form of *nō* has been regarded as a new trend in the contemporary *nō* world. However, Nishino Haruo reminds us that a similar

¹¹¹ Paul Archer translated the title of the collection *Chiekoshō* into English as *The Chieko Poems* (http://www.paularcher.net/translations/info/essay_takamura_chieko_poems.html), but Stephen Kohl translated it as *Chieko's Sky* (Literature – Japan; *Encyclopedia of Modern Asia*, 2002, Karen Christensen and Daniel Levinson, eds., 493–497, <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/sites/default/files/10223/Literature--Japan.htm>).

¹¹² Takechi Tetsuji (1912–1988) was known as the Father of Pinku for his erotic “pink” movies that shocked Japanese audiences in the 1960s. He was also involved in *kabuki*, *nō* and *kyōgen* productions that often violated the traditional canon of these art forms. In the 1950s he even introduced some elements of striptease into his *nō* productions, called “burlesque *nō*”, irritating the orthodox leaders of the *nō* world, who threatened to excommunicate from *Nō* society those actors who dared to participate in Takechi's performances. Because Kanze Hisao and Kanze Shizuo (later known by the name Tetsunojō) performed in Takechi's *Chiekoshō*, their stigmatisation became quite obvious. Later, in his first movie *Nihon no yoru: onna onna onna monogatari* (A Night in Japan: A Woman, Woman, Woman Story, 1963) Takechi Tetsuji included scenes of a nude *nō* performance, which with its eroticised interpretation of the traditional art form further incensed the leaders of the *nō* world.

phenomenon of adapting stories from another tradition, namely Chinese literature and folklore, was already common practice during the Muromachi era, which gave rise to a special category of plays with Chinese sources, the *karagotomono* or 'Chinese plays' (Nishino 2006: 11).

The first adaptation of a Western play into the form of *nō* was Takahama Kiyoshi's *Tetsumon* (The Iron Gate, 1916), which was inspired by Maurice Maeterlinck's play *The Death of Tintagiles*, a performance of which Takahama happened to witness in Tokyo. Takahama's play is an abstract drama in four acts that Hata Hisashi includes in his list of most successful modern *shinsaku* plays (Hata 1987a: 338–339).

Another play, Yokomichi Mario's *Takahime* (The Hawk Princess, 1967), is an adaptation of William Butler Yeats's *nō*-inspired "play for dancers" *At the Hawk's Well* (1916). Yokomichi's *shinsaku*, which is a rewritten version of his earlier adaptation of Yeats's play *Taka no izumi* (Hawk's Spring, 1949), has had numerous productions and is one of the most successful new *nō* plays of the 20th century.

Along with *Tetsumon* and *Takahime* Hata Hisashi includes in his list of best *shinsaku* plays of the last century Kinoshita Junji's play *Onna to kage* (The Woman and Her Shadow, 1968), which is a *nō* adaptation of Paul Claudel's libretto for the ballet *La femme et son ombre* (The Woman and Her Shadow, 1922), premiered at the Tokyo Imperial Theatre in 1923 (*Ibid.*).

Among the more recent examples of *shinsaku* adaptations of Western theatre texts is Mizuhara Shion's play *Jizeru* (Giselle, 1999), which is based on the romantic ballet *Giselle* (1841, libretto by Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges and Theophile Gautier, music by Adolphe Adam) inspired by Heinrich Heine's poem. Another Mizuhara Shion *shinsaku* play *Berunaruda Aruba no ie* (Bernarda Alba's House, 2002, directed by Okamoto Akira) is a *nō* adaptation of Federico García Lorca's (1898–1936) play *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936). *Nō Hamuretto* (Noh Hamlet, 2004) by Ueda Kuniyoshi Munakata is an adaptation of Shakespeare's famous play, which along with Ueda's other works forms a group of productions called "Shakespearean *nō*".

3.1.3 Plays about "everyday topics"

In addition to the *nō* adaptations of modern and contemporary Japanese literature, and Western literature and drama, in the 20th and 21st centuries numerous plays were created, which Nishino Haruo categorises as *jikyokumono* ("everyday topics" or "current affairs"). He reasoned that plays about a war, environmental pollution, and other societal issues could not have been written in another era (Nishino 2006: 9). It is true that *nō* plays have traditionally drawn their sources from earlier historical periods, and featured figures that were famous in the past. This type of limitation on the choice of source material allowed the characters in the plays to be detached from the contemporary world.

However, making use of contemporary themes and characters in *shinsaku* plays gives rise to a discussion of issues that are currently important to the society, and hence helps to attract the attention of audiences who are less familiar with the traditional themes and form of *nō* theatre. Thus, the usage of innovative topics in *shinsaku* plays provides an opportunity to attract new audiences, which is vital to the survival of classical *nō* theatre as a living art form.

In addition to plays about contemporary social issues, there are also three plays that advertise products, but in spite of their extremely modern topic these plays were not included in the category of "everyday topics". Instead, Nishino Haruo placed these plays in a separate category titled "advertisements of products" (*jibutsu no senden*). They represent a commercial potential of new *nō* plays that was unthinkable for classical plays. In the review of *shinsaku* plays in this study these plays are included in the group of plays on "everyday topics".

Nationalistic war-plays

The *shinsaku* category *jikyokumono* includes plays about a war, such as two plays about the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), *Washi* (The Eagle, 1904, author Ōwada Takeki) and *Ikusagami* (The God of War, 1904, author Hirota Kagetsu), which were created during wartime and probably intended to bolster the fighting spirit of the soldiers. The event on which the play *Ikusagami* is based took place only eight months before it was made into a *nō* play (MYSZ 1: 43). This is an extremely unusual practice for *nō* theatre, and was more characteristic of *bunraku* or *kabuki* theatre, in which current events were adapted for the stage shortly after they happened.

This novel approach to writing *nō* plays about current events continued during the Second World War when two plays, *Chūrei* (The Loyal Souls, 1941, Kanzekai) and *Miikusabune* (The Battle Ship, 1943, author Sako Shōi), were commissioned by wartime Japanese authorities for political propaganda purposes. Both plays were recorded and broadcast several times via mass media (MYSZ 9: 32–34, MYSZ 14: 12), which confirms their propagandistic agenda.

The first of the "world-war plays", *Chūrei*, which is structurally a typical *waki nō* play with a fast *kamimai* dance at the end, was created to express gratitude to the soldiers for their loyalty to their country. The play premiered in 1941 on the *nō* stage of the Yasukuni Shrine,¹¹³ but following Japan's defeat the play fell out of favour, and is only interesting today from a historical point of view as a play that conveys information about wartime Japan (MYSZ 9: 34).

The second play, *Miikusabune*, drew its theme from an original work written by the admiral of the Japanese Imperial Navy Sako Shōi. The play was

¹¹³ Yasukuni Shrine was founded in 1869 and all the victims of war since the Boshin war, including a few war criminals from the Second World War, are buried there. The latter fact has helped to create a scandalous image of the shrine, which was reinforced by annual visits of Japanese Prime Ministers.

published in the journal for submariners under the title *Sekidōgami* (Poseidon) (MYSZ 14: 12). *Miikusabune* describes the heroism of the crew of a Japanese submarine that encounters a severe storm when crossing the equator. Because the storm has purportedly been caused by the Dragon God, the captain of the ship urges his soldiers to pray for the appeasement of the god's fury, and orders the soldiers not to fire the cannons as they had intended (*Ibid.*, 93–98).

While the overall mood of *Chūrei* concerns solace for the souls of dead soldiers, the rhetoric of *Miikusabune* is openly ultra-nationalistic: it declares that as Japan is the land of the gods the warship is going south to save hundreds of millions of people from the destructive power of the United States and England that is threatening East Asia (*Ibid.*, 95). The play was forgotten soon after the end of the Second World War and, like the play *Chūrei*, was removed from the repertory and became a *haikyoku* piece.

The so-called “war-plays” that describe the heroism of Japanese soldiers during the Russo-Japanese and Second World Wars are nationalistic plays celebrating the loyalty of Japanese soldiers to the Emperor and to the State. By setting the events in the recent past, or in some cases even in the present, these plays violate the traditional canon of *nō* plays that requires that the sources for the plays be taken from past eras, preferably from the previous historical period. From that perspective the “war-plays” resemble the “duke plays” of the 16th century that glorified the victories of the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi and were sometimes written only a few months after the actual battles took place.

Plays commemorating the atomic catastrophe

The group of plays about the atomic catastrophe differs from the nationalist war-plays in many respects. The “atomic bomb plays” are more *nō*-like in nature because they were produced at a certain distance from the actual events, and are retrospective in their tragic mood, rather than celebratory like the “war-plays”. The first play of this group was *Gembaku* (The Atomic Bomb), which was written by Takenaka Minoru in 1955 for the 10th commemoration of the atomic catastrophe. In the play the ghosts of victims of the atomic blast appear to a travelling monk at Hiroshima and tell him their sad story (MYSZ 3: 396–403).

Some decades later, in 2001, Dōmoto Masaki wrote the play *Sadako – Gembaku no ko* (Sadako, the Child of the Atomic Bomb), which is based on the famous story of a twelve-year-old girl who died from leukaemia after surviving the atomic blast. In the play a tourist visiting Hiroshima hears the story of Sadako and the thousand paper cranes the dying girl made. After hearing the story he also starts to make cranes and floats paper prayer lanterns on the Ōta River, while Sadako's ghost appears to him and performs a dance (Nishino 2005: 25).

In another play, Udaka Michishige's *Genshigumo* (The Atomic Cloud, 2003), the stage is transformed into Yomi-no-kuni (Land of the Dead), where all the

souls of the women and children who died from acts of terrorism or war are gathered. In the play a mother who is looking for her daughter, a victim of the atomic bomb, is finally led to a willow tree, which is her reborn child (Genshigumo 2004).

Two plays by the immunologist Tada Tomio (1934–2010), *Gembakuki* (Anniversary of the Bomb, 2004) and *Nagasaki no seibo* (The Virgin Mary of Nagasaki, 2004), were created for the 60th commemoration of the atomic catastrophe. The first play *Gembakuki* describes the suffering of the victims of radiation poisoning from the Hiroshima bombing. The play begins with a Buddhist monk's pilgrimage to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, where he meets an old woman and some homeless men who survived the bombing. In the second half of the play the spirit of a victim tells about his suffering and death. The play ends with the monk and his attendant's offering prayers for the souls of the victims and for world peace (Tada 2012: 123–152).

Tada's second "atomic catastrophe" play *Nagasaki no seibo* takes place at the Urakami Cathedral in Nagasaki, Kyūshū, where a travelling Buddhist monk meets an old woman with two girls, Anastasia and Lucia. They recall the day that Nagasaki was bombed as if it were yesterday. They tell the monk that the morning after the blast there was a young woman helping the wounded, and they presume that it was the Virgin Mary of Nagasaki, who saved the souls of the victims of the atomic bomb. At the end of the play the Virgin Mary performs a Dance of Resurrection (*fukkatsu no mai*) for all the victims of the Nagasaki atomic catastrophe in order that their souls might attain peace in heaven (*Ibid.*, 158–180).

A common characteristic of these five "atomic catastrophe" plays is prayer for the souls of the victims, which echoes the sentiments of the Japanese people and the importance of the theme in Japanese society. The overall structure and mood of the plays in this group resemble the second group of classical plays about medieval warriors in which the travelling monk says a prayer at the end of the play to bring peace to the soul of a warrior who was killed in battle.

Plays about contemporary social issues

Of similar importance to contemporary industrialized Japanese society as the plays commemorating the atomic catastrophes are those about the environmental diseases that emerged in the 1950s and are still claiming victims, who seek the solution to their problems in continuous lawsuits. One of the most severe cases of pollution occurred in a town in Kyūshū, Minamata, where over a period of thirty years the Chisso chemical factory released mercury into the factory wastewater, which eventually ended up in the waters of Minamata Bay and the Shiranui Sea. The writer and poetess Ishimure Michiko wrote the

shinsaku play *Shiranui* (2002),¹¹⁴ on the theme of Minamata disease. The characters in the play are the mythological Princess Shiranui and her little brother Tokowaka, the children of the Dragon God, who purify the polluted sea at the end of the play (Shiranui 2004).

Two plays by Tada Tomio, *Isseki sennin* (The Hermit Isseki, 2003) and *Mumyō no i* (Well of Ignorance, 1991), are also symbolic or even philosophical in nature. The play *Isseki sennin* begins with a scene in which a noted Japanese female scholar travels with her companions to Europe seeking a wise man called Hermit Isseki. During a solar eclipse they meet a shepherd who speaks about the principles of the universe. In the second part of the play the famous physicist Albert Einstein appears as a hermit who tells the Japanese travellers about the dangers related to nuclear energy, while two children perform a dance of nucleons. The hermit then disappears into the black hole of the cosmos (Tada 2012: 94–116).

A new *nō* play *Mumyō no i* discusses problems connected with brain death and organ transplants, which have become ethical issues in Japan and elsewhere over the past few decades. The theme of the play is contemporary, but in order to adapt it to the *nō* form the author Tada Tomio used a story from a Chinese legend introduced in the 8th century collection of poems *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves). The ancient Chinese story is set in the contemporary world, where a young girl receives the heart of a brain-dead fisherman, but cannot cope with the guilt resulting from taking the life of another person in order to survive. In the first half of the play a young Buddhist priest spends a night by an old well while travelling. There he meets a young woman who wishes to draw water from the “well of life”, but a fisherman appears and stops her. After a struggle both disappear into the well. The priest then learns the sad story from a local man, after which the two ghosts, a fisherman’s and a woman’s, describe their horrible experiences (*Ibid.*, 36–60). The play is extremely tragic in mood, as if the character of the fisherman has spoken for those who could never express their feelings otherwise.

Plays for advertising goods

The plays in this group are somewhat similar to commercials, because their main purpose seems to be advertising a medicine, namely the anti-beriberi drug. The plays *Musashino*, *Tamakagami* and *Miho*, written in 1919 by Tsuzuki Jinnosuke, celebrate the invention of a medicine that cures Vitamin B1 deficiency, which causes a disease known as beriberi. In the play *Musashino* a demon lurking in white rice is defeated by a local deity Takachiho, who then performs a dance and

¹¹⁴ Shiranui is the name of the sea where the polluted water from the Chisso factory was released. However, the word “*shiranui*” means “will-o’-the-wisp”, which obviously inspired the author of the play to have the figures of the gods enter the stage guided by the light of fireflies.

informs the people of Musashino that there is a cure for beriberi. In the second play of the so-called “commercial *nō*” cycle, *Tamakagami*, a Japanese disciple visits the German town of Heidelberg, and after finding out that an anti-beriberi drug has been invented he dances for the advancement of science. The third play in the cycle, *Miho*, is about a celestial being who visits the town Miho, where she falls ill with beriberi. She cannot return to heaven until she is cured by the anti-beriberi drug (Nishino 2005: 7–8).

As the themes of the plays suggest, all three “commercial *nō*” plays are somewhat peculiar interpretations of the *nō* canon: in the play *Musashino* the disease takes the form of a demon who is defeated by a *shintō* deity; the play *Tamakagami* celebrates scientific research leading to the invention of a drug and not the reign of an emperor, which would be more natural in *nō* plays; in *Miho* a heavenly spirit is cured by an innovative drug, which is also an extremely awkward theme for a *nō* play, because in such plays Buddhist prayers usually have miraculous powers.

3.1.4 Characteristics of the thematic categorisation of *shinsaku* plays

A review of 20th and 21st century *shinsaku* plays shows that many of the new plays are written according to traditional standards, taking as their themes famous poets, religious figures, beauties, legendary places, and mythical creatures. Nevertheless, and as one might expect, modern and contemporary *nō* plays have four distinctive characteristics: first, they have new themes and sources that are important to contemporary authors and audiences; second, they are written in response to a request by a particular interest group; third, they feature a relatively diminished role for religion; and fourth, most of them have an insufficient performance history.

The first characteristic of *shinsaku* plays of modern and contemporary periods is the frequent usage of thematic issues that are new to *nō* theatre. These innovative themes can be divided into three groups: themes that are of current importance to new audiences; advertisements of goods or ideas that resemble commercials; and themes from contemporary or historically recent literary sources. First, there are new *nō* plays that deal with an increasing number of issues that are important to contemporary audiences. Tada Tomio’s plays are good examples of this trend, as are plays like *Shiranui* about environmental pollution, and the “atomic catastrophe” plays, which raise questions of ethics and morality pertinent to contemporary society, and appeal to contemporary spectators who are accustomed to seeking answers from modern theatre productions. Second, *nō* plays that resemble commercials and introduce new products to audiences (Tsuzuki’s trilogy about the anti-beriberi drug), and religious plays (the Tenri trilogy and the Christian plays) change the traditional relationship between *nō* actors and their audience, because the aim of the performance is to introduce a product to the customer/spectator, whether it be

information about new drugs or propaganda from a religious group. And third, the writers of new plays tend to use poems and novels by more recent, even modern or contemporary, authors (as in the case of *Chiekoshō* and *Kusamakura*), although the literary sources of *nō* plays were traditionally centuries old. Using Western literature and plays as models or sources of inspiration for *shinsaku* plays is also a trend that emerged at the beginning of the 20th century and has resulted in many new *nō* plays that are considered to be among the most successful *shinsaku* works (such as *Tetsumon*, *Takahime* and *Onna to kage*) in modern and contemporary *nō* theatre.

In addition to the innovative themes or literary sources of *shinsaku* plays, the second characteristic common to many new *nō* plays is the fact that these plays, often celebratory in nature, were commissioned by particular interest groups. For example, there are plays that were commissioned by the Japanese government to celebrate certain political events, such as a play written by Fujishiro Teisuke for the coronation of the Taishō Emperor *Taiten* (The Ceremony, 1915), or for disseminating a political ideology, such as the war-plays written during the Second World War. Among the many celebratory plays there are also some *nō* pieces that were written for an anniversary of a historically and culturally important figure, such as the plays *Zeami-bōoku* and *Oku no hosomichi*.¹¹⁵ There is also a play that was created for the 80th anniversary of the foundation of the editorial office of the newspaper *Asahi shimbun* (1959, author Okano Yoshinosuke). In addition, all the new plays with religious themes were created in close collaboration with the target audience and often for performing on a special occasion, such as a Catholic Mass.

The contemporary nature of the new *nō* plays is also evident in the diminished impact of religion, which is the third characteristic of *shinsaku* plays. The religious element in medieval *nō* plays appears mainly in two ways: first, as a shamanist or Buddhist “other world” featuring spirits of plants, ghosts or various otherworldly creatures as the main characters of the plays, or second, as religious spirituality that provides the background for classical *nō* plays. Generally, religious figures are cast as characters in the plays; prayers interwoven into the scripts do not represent a religious agenda *per se*. Throughout the Muromachi period, the dominant religious ideas that influenced *nō* plays were mostly derived from various Amidist sects, such as the Shingon Sect, whose members were mountain-dwelling ascetic hermits who practiced mysticism and performed exorcisms, and the Tendai Sect, which combined teachings from Buddhism and Shinto.

In the corpus of over 300 *shinsaku* plays, there are only seven plays with religious themes, the Tenri trilogy and four biblical plays, which could be

¹¹⁵ For instance, Takahama, the author of the play *Oku no hosomichi*, received simultaneous proposals to write a play about Bashō from the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation (Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai or NHK) and from the Japanese Literature Patriotic Association (Nippon Bungaku Hōkokukai), which commissioned the play for the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the death of the famous 17th century haiku poet (MYSZ 2: 26).

considered exceptional due to their propagandist approach. However, in contemporary *shinsaku* plays religion is expressed primarily as a structural element of the plays. The most common supporting character in two-act plays is a Buddhist monk who is on pilgrimage to a temple or famous site. On arrival the monk says a prayer that summons a ghost to the site, and at the end of the play the monk prays for the soul of the ghost, which enables it to become a Buddha. In the new plays a traveller might replace the character of the monk. Prayers or sutra can function as structural elements in the play, but their purpose is not to press a religious agenda upon the audience. Therefore, it could be argued that the role of religion in *shinsaku* plays has diminished in importance relative to its role in medieval *nō* plays, perhaps due in part to changes in the contemporary attitude toward religion and the absence of one dominant religion.

The fourth characteristic common to almost all *shinsaku* plays is that they have been staged only once or never. The lack of performance history has been taken as an indication of the inferior quality of the new plays. Some researchers, like Hata Hisashi (1987a: 313) and Nishino Haruo (2006: 11, 13), have pointed out that the reason underlying the seemingly unfair neglect shown toward *shinsaku* plays by *nō* schools is the poor quality of most of the plays.¹¹⁶

Thus, as the editor of the *Nōgaku Handbook* Kobayashi Yasuharu admits, the majority of new *nō* plays exist only as *yōkyoku* (literally “a *nō* song”) or a script (Kobayashi 1993: 184). In other words, the new plays are often literature that has the potential to become a theatre piece when staged. From this perspective, many *shinsaku* plays are similar to Western armchair dramas, which often do not have specific performance directions provided by the playwright because the staging of such a play is left to the director. In contrast to Western drama practices, in *nō* theatre the premiere performance often sets the canon for the play, which completes the process of creating a new *nō* piece. It is also possible that the vocal and movement patterns of the play would be improved and refined during future performances, through which the material would be gradually refined. Nevertheless, without the components of musical and physical expression it is rather difficult to decide whether the play is potentially a good *nō* play or even a *nō* play at all.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Hata comments that the Meiji period plays were not “artistically fruitful”. Nishino uses similar wording when he says that “almost all the plays were un-artistic in nature, even including some plays that should not be called *nō* at all” and “almost all the plays were of temporary importance”. Nishino says that among *shinsaku* there are many plays that are simply uninteresting.

¹¹⁷ Perhaps because the quality of a *shinsaku* play is unknown before it is staged the first performances of *shinsaku* often take place in drama theatres and concert halls, and after a successful premiere the second and third performances might be arranged on a *nō* stage.

3.2 *Eigo nō* or “*nō* plays in English” as possible *shinsaku*

Including new English language *nō* plays in the corpus of *shinsaku* plays could be problematic; however, a careful analysis of publicly available English *nō* plays has convinced the author of this study that some of the plays could be considered to be of similar value to the most successful new plays in the Japanese language.

Nishino Haruo seems to have had some hesitation about including English *nō* plays in his list of *shinsaku* plays, as shown by the fact that his list of *shinsaku* plays compiled in 2004 and presented at a seminar held at Hōsei University, includes only three English *nō* plays and five adaptations of Western classics (Nishino 2004a).¹¹⁸ Nishino made no distinction between the original plays and adaptations, categorising them all as “English *nō* plays”. He apparently based his decision solely on the language of the plays. Nevertheless, for some reason he excluded English language *nō* plays from the updated list of *shinsaku* plays that he compiled in 2005 and published in the Journal of the Institute of Nōgaku Studies (Nishino 2005).¹¹⁹

To avoid further confusion, the twofold meaning of “English *nō*” or *eigo nō* needs to be clarified. There are two possible interpretations of the word “English *nō*”, either as a *nō* play translated into the English language, or a *nō* play written and composed in English for performing before an English-speaking audience.

When the first *nō* plays were translated into English they were treated as literature, but theatre scripts were not considered literature in pre-modern Japan.¹²⁰ At first, translators of *nō* plays concentrated on accurately conveying the plot or creating aesthetically satisfactory translations of the plays. In other words, they focused on the “what” and the “how”, but in the process of translation they seem to have forgotten to take into consideration the elements that constitute the essence of a *nō* play, the rhythms and melodic moods of the music, which define the mode of language used in them (Teele 1957). Therefore, it seems that the translators’ intention was to recreate the pace of *nō* plays through the text, and not to achieve a performable result in English.

¹¹⁸ The three English *nō* plays were Arthur Little’s *St. Francis: A Noh Play* (1970), Janine Beichman’s *Drifting Fires* (1985), and Allan Marrett’s *Eliza* (1989). The other plays included in the list of modern and contemporary *shinsaku* plays were four English-language *nō* adaptations of Shakespeare’s classics by Ueda Kuniyoshi, and a *nō* version of Garcia Lorca’s play *The House of Bernarda Alba* (2002).

¹¹⁹ In an August 2004 interview Professor Nishino told me that he was initially uncertain whether *nō* plays could be created or performed in English. But during the course of our conversation he seemed to agree that this would at least not be impossible, finally acknowledging that an English *nō* is just a “*shinsaku nō* written in English” (Nishino 2004b).

¹²⁰ The plays were primarily written for performing on stage, rather than for reading. Deborah Lee Stothers clarifies the issue by saying that *nō* texts “were not read as literature, rather being recorded for the purpose of preserving the *nō* for future generations”. She adds that “even now *nō* texts are rarely read as literature by the Japanese” (Stothers 2001: 85).

Performable English translations of *nō* plays have been created and performed experimentally since the early 1980s. The initiator of this movement was a professor of Asian performing arts at Musashino University, Richard Emmert, who is a Kita School actor, *nō* instructor, and leader of the Tokyo-based Theatre Nohgaku, which is dedicated to creating *nō* plays in English. Emmert was reportedly intrigued when he was told that it was impossible to produce *nō* plays in English (Jeeves 2001). One of the first attempts to combine *nō* music with an English translation in a production of a play was made in 1989, when the classical play *Matsukaze* (The Wind in the Pines) was performed in English under the title *Pining Wind* at the Kennedy Theatre of the University of Hawaii. An English *nō* version of William Butler Yeats's play *At the Hawk's Well* was staged in Bloomsburg in 2001 after which the Theatre Nohgaku troupe performed the play in many cities around the United States. In 2009, twenty years after the experimental English production of *Matsukaze* at the University of Hawaii, a performable English translation of the classical play *Sumidagawa* (Sumida River) was staged in the same space.¹²¹

In addition to producing performable translations of classical scripts Theatre Nohgaku began another new development in *nō* theatre – writing original plays in English. On the official Theatre Nohgaku website the collaborators in that creative activity expressed their mission statement: “to share *nō*'s beauty and power with English speaking audiences and performers”.¹²² They took the leading role in developing English *nō* worldwide, organising writers' workshops for playwrights and *nō* training programmes and performances that enabled new *nō* plays to be created in English, simultaneously educating performers and audiences in the genre called “English language *nō*” or *eigo nō*.

The members of Theatre Nohgaku organised the first writers' workshop in March 2003. The participants were not practicing *nō* actors as the authors of *nō* plays had usually been in the past. For that reason they may have accepted the challenge of creating new *nō* plays in an extremely open-minded way, as is shown in the kaleidoscope of main characters they proposed: Elvis Presley, Yoko Ono, Winnie the Pooh, Antigone, lost children, etc. Compared with classical *nō* plays these themes for new *nō* plays were extremely unusual, as well as “political, fantastic, elegiac, graceful” (Ehn 2004: 10). The first workshop was followed by a series of others in North America and Japan, with the latest one taking place in Raleigh, North Carolina, in April 2015.

Several English *nō* plays have been written in the past forty-five years, which were staged by theatre troupes other than Theatre Nohgaku. The first English language *nō* play appears to be Arthur Little's *St. Francis: A Noh Play* (1970) featuring the spirit of Francis of Assisi. The play was performed by drama

¹²¹ In the programme, Richard Emmert called his English version of *Sumidagawa* a “performance translation”, perhaps intending to underline the fact that the play had been translated not for reading, but for performing on stage, accompanied by *nō* music (Sumidagawa 2009).

¹²² See Theatre Nohgaku's homepage at http://www.theatrenohgaku.org/abouttn/mission_e.php.

students at Earlham College in Indiana where the author of the play was a drama professor at the time.¹²³ Eleven years later, “a modern *nō* play” *Mishima* (1981) premiered during the Hutchinson Repertory Company’s First Festival of New Plays in Topeka, Kansas. The author of the play is Robert N. Lawson, who was a professor of English at Washburn University in Topeka, specialising in Shakespearean studies and Japanese literature. The play is about a student visiting Kinkakuji Temple in Kyoto where a ghost appears who turns out to be the famous writer Mishima Yukio.

The next attempt to create an English *nō* play was made in 1983, when David Crandall, a member of Theatre Nohgaku, wrote the text and music for the play *Crazy Jane*, which tells the story of a woman searching for her lost love Tom.¹²⁴ In 1985, Janine Beichman, a professor of Japanese literature, wrote the play *Drifting Fires*, which has quite an abstract theme, and features as the main character the ghost of the Last Human Being. The play takes place on “the remains of the planet Earth” “sometime after the end of the world”, a place and time that are too obscure for a genuine *nō* play (Beichman 1986). The first performance of *Drifting Fires* was held at the International Exposition in Tsukuba, Japan, in August 1985. A year later the play was performed at Sōjōji Temple, Tokyo, and a Japanese translation was provided for the audience.

In 1989, Allan Marrett wrote the first Australian *nō* play *Eliza*, which tells the story of a white English woman Eliza Frazer who after being shipwrecked was cast ashore on a remote island off the northeast coast of Australia (later named Frazer Island in her honour), and lived with native islanders until she escaped and returned to “civilisation” (Schaefer 1991: 92). A *nō* play called *The Dazzling Night* was written by New Zealander Rachel McAlpine and produced by the New Zealand Noh Theatre Company, premiering in 1999 at Le Mata Theatre, Auckland. *The Dazzling Night* begins with a scene in which Sir Harold Beauchamp (the *waki*), the father of writer Katherine Mansfield (the *shite*), arrives at the Gurdjieff Institute in France where his daughter died. The play is about a heart-breaking meeting of a father with his daughter’s ghost, who tells him about the last agonising years of her life (McAlpine 2001).

In 2003 Deborah Brevoort, an American playwright and librettist, created a new *nō* play called *Blue Moon Over Memphis*. The theme of the play is quite unusual: it features the ghost of Elvis Presley who appears to a devoted fan at his gravesite. There are also some peculiar elements in the play, such as the characters of Memphis mafia, Presley’s songs interwoven into the script in various places, and dances (such as the Dance of Many Elvises) “using abstracted Elvis poses and gestures” (Brevoort 2003). *Pine Barrens* (2005), a play by the American playwright Greg Giovanni, is “a Noh treatment [...] of a New Jersey folktale” about the legend of the Jersey Devil (Gendrich and Hood 2008:

¹²³ See Theatre Nohgaku’s homepage for the history of English *nō* at <http://www.theatrenohgaku.org/englishnoh>.

¹²⁴ See at <http://www.theatrenohgaku.org/englishnoh>. Crandall is also the author of a new play in English *The Linden Tree* (1986).

27). The play features two witches who travel to the pine barrens of New Jersey, where according to legend a demon monster lurks. In the second act of the play the monster appears to the witches, who battle him with witchcraft.¹²⁵

Daphne Marlatt, a Canadian poetess, wrote the first Canadian *nō* play *The Gull*, which was produced by Heidi Specht in 2006. The play is about Japanese-Canadian fishermen who were interned in relocation camps in central Canada during World War II and allowed to return to their home village near Steveston after the war. The play features Japanese-Canadian brothers who encounter a mysterious Gull-Woman while sailing on a stormy sea. The Gull is actually the ghost of their dead mother who tells the boys to return to Japan, their ancestral home (Marlatt 2009).

In 2009, Janette Cheong wrote *Pagoda*, “a contemporary noh play” that tells the story of a young woman who in searching for her roots travels to China, the land of her father’s birth, which he left as a child. Next to a pagoda she meets a woman Meilin and her daughter, who are actually ghosts. The traveller presents them with a keepsake from her father, the lost son of Meilin, after which the spirits of the mother and long-lost son are reunited in the other world (Cheong 2011: 3).

The above overview of English *nō* plays, their themes and characters, is not exhaustive, as new plays for English-speaking audiences continue to be created. There are several other *nō* plays in English, such as James Ferner’s *Desert Light* (2005) about a man who goes to the desert to get away from the city and seek enlightenment (Emmert 2005: 6). The play *Sop Doll! A Jack Tale Noh* (2009) by Lee Ann Brown and Tony Torn seems to be far removed from a genuine *nō* play; the introduction of the play at the Howl Festival in September 2009 promises that it is “an Appalachian Nō Play” based on “a spooky Appalachian tale of witches, ghosts, and shape-shifting wildcats, told in the style of Japanese ritualistic Noh drama” (heyevent.com 2009, The Howl Festival 2009).

A shortcoming of most English *nō* plays is their failure to cast a main character that meets the basic requirements of a *shite* character in *nō* plays. The shortage of *eigo nō* plays stems from two main reasons: first, the source material is not well known by the target audience or the story is invented by the playwright, which in either case fails to provide a main character that can create a communal space during the performance; and second, the main character is too weak to be a genuine protagonist of a *nō* play, is too abstract (for example, the character of the Last Human Being in *Drifting Fires*), or fails to symbolise a particular type of person (such as Jane in *Crazy Jane* and Eliza in the Australian *nō* play). It seems that English *nō* playwrights tend to base their main characters on a generalized image of the *shite* as a ghost. At the same time, they seem to neglect the structural function of the character in *nō* plays and the mutual dynamics of the *shite* with the supporting characters.

¹²⁵ See Theatre Nohgaku’s homepage at <http://www.theatrenohgaku.org/pinebarrens>.

American scholar Samuel L. Leiter (2006: 80) in his *Historical Dictionary of Japanese Traditional Theatre* refers to English-language versions of traditional Japanese theatre pieces as “attempts to clone as closely as possible the translation of an authentic play in all its particulars except language”, noting in a rather pessimistic tone that “adapting the rhythms of chanting, dialogue, and music to a foreign language creates obvious problems that some believe insurmountable.”

Fortunately, many playwrights and musicians around the world who are working on the creation of English *nō* plays are much more optimistic. Writing and performing *nō* plays in English is only the start of the process, the goal of which could be the creation of an entirely new category of *nō* theatre that perhaps in the future would be called “foreign language *nō*”. A step in this direction was taken three decades ago in the 1980s when Professor Richard Emmert attempted to translate two classical *nō* pieces, *Hagoromo* and *Funabenkei*, into the Hindi language, after which the two plays were performed at the National School of Drama in New Delhi (Emmert 1991: 165). Emmert suggested that these *nō* performances in Hindi should be called “Hindi *nō*”, thus raising the possibility of a new role for foreign language plays as performance translations (*Ibid.*).

3.3 The categorisation of *shinsaku* plays as adaptations

Classical *nō* plays can be categorised in several different ways based on the type of main character, structural matrix, timeline, and dramatic elements. The classification of *shinsaku* plays that was introduced earlier in this chapter focuses primarily on the themes of the plays. Nishino’s thematic categorisation closely follows the traditional classification of canonical plays by the type of protagonist or theme of the plays. However, the innovative sources and contemporary issues that are used in *shinsaku* plays and constitute their main characteristic presuppose the creation of entirely new types of characters. Therefore, thematic categorisation of *shinsaku* plays seems to set some limits for possible character types that could be used in new plays in the future. Hence, thematic categorisation would not be the soundest basis for studying the adaptation of characters in *shinsaku* plays. Furthermore, because the aim of this research is to study the ways in which both the structural and performance elements of *nō* have been adapted in *shinsaku* plays, and to evaluate the quality of new plays according to the traditional standards set by classical plays, thematic categorisation of *shinsaku* would be inappropriate.

As opposed to thematic categorisation, a better standard for analysing the methods of adaptation in *shinsaku* plays would be the type of sources on which *shinsaku* plays draw. On this basis *shinsaku* plays can be divided into new “original” plays and adaptations of earlier plays. *Shinsaku* plays that are derived from original source materials are written in the form of canonical *nō* plays, but often have contemporary themes, unlike classical plays with traditional sources and themes. However, the category of *shinsaku* adaptations is by nature

extremely eclectic, because it contains adaptations of various themes from classical *nō* plays and Western drama pieces, and appropriations from earlier *nō* plays, classical and new alike.

***Shinsaku* plays as adaptations**

The general term for new *nō* plays is *shinsaku nō*, which is used for all newly written *nō* plays. However, a closer analysis of the corpus of new plays indicates that the definition of “*shinsaku*” embraces not only *nō* plays written on contemporary themes, but also a large variety of adaptations and *nō*-influenced plays. It seems that Nishino Haruo was rather expansive in including in his list of *shinsaku* plays (2005) adaptations of classical *nō* plays (such as the two *Aya no tsuzumi* plays by Toki Zenmaro and Dōmoto Masaki) and plays with themes adapted from Western history (such as Kadowaki Yoshikichi’s *Iezusu no senrei*, 1987, and Tsumura Toyojirō’s *Kureopatora*, 2000).

Canonical *nō* plays as models for creating *shinsaku* plays are themselves adaptations, genre and kinetic, as is shown in Chapter 1 of this study. Therefore, the “quality of originality” of the source materials for *nō* plays represents a highly problematic issue. Naturally, new *nō* plays are also adaptations, assuming that similar adaptation techniques have been used for composing *shinsaku* plays and canonical *nō*. Of course, if entirely different techniques have been used for the adaptation of source materials for *shinsaku* plays, as compared with the adaptation methods discussed earlier in this study, it would also be possible to assume that *shinsaku* plays are not *nō* plays at all.

However, in this part of the study a theoretical analysis for creating a categorisation of *shinsaku* plays is based on the assumption that *shinsaku* belongs to the tradition of *nō* theatre, and that *shinsaku* plays are virtually adaptations, genre and kinetic, similar to canonical *nō* plays. If canonical *nō* plays can be divided into genre and kinetic adaptations, as “ancestral” plays (or first-generation adaptations of literature to a *nō* play), and as later appropriations of already existent scripts, respectively, then *shinsaku* plays can be also divided into the two categories, as *shinsaku* “ancestral” plays and *shinsaku* adaptations.

Based on the analysis of canonical *nō* plays as adaptations, it can be concluded that *shinsaku* “ancestral” plays are genre adaptations, and *shinsaku* adaptations of existent canonical plays are kinetic adaptations. A categorisation of *shinsaku* plays could be similarly derived, the first category of which comprises *shinsaku* plays that draw their original theme directly from (literary) source material, and the second, new plays that rework extant plays. Both categories of plays presumably use the ten adaptation techniques – five for creating genre adaptations and five for kinetic adaptations – that are applied in canonical *nō* plays and are described in Chapter 1 of this study.

3.3.1 “Original” *shinsaku* plays as genre adaptations

Professor Nishino Haruo mentioned the term “*sōsaku nō*” in our interview when I asked him to explain some contemporary terms in *nō* theatre. The literal meaning of the word “*sōsaku*” is “creation”, “composition of music”, or simply “production”. Nishino’s interpretation of the meaning of the term “*sōsaku nō*” in the context of *shinsaku* is based on the following reasons:

I use the word *shinsaku nō*, but Okamoto Akira speaks instead of *gendai nō*. I think that all these words [*kindai nō*, *gendai nō* and *sōsaku nō*] can be generalised as *shinsaku nō*. However, those who use the word *sōsaku nō* probably intend to say that, compared with the so-called “normal” *nō*, to *sōsaku nō* have been added some new elements, such as a drum-beat of Chinese drum, which revitalises the production. If it is a regular *nō* performance with traditional *nō* instruments (as for instance *taiko* drum) and *nō* chorus (*jiutai*) then it should be called “*shinsaku nō*”. On the other hand, when the production is called “*sōsaku nō*” then the general appearance of the performance could be similar to regular *nō*, but to the production might be added some other elements that with their special characteristics do not belong to the *nō* theatre. Therefore, they [directors] call this kind of plays “*sōsaku nō*”. (Nishino 2004b)

Nishino also suggested that “those who call their production intentionally *sōsaku nō* want perhaps to stress their inner consideration that it is something that is going beyond the form of *nō*” (*Ibid.*). Thus, according to Nishino’s definition, the term “*sōsaku nō*” mainly denotes a production of a new play that interweaves into the performance some elements that are not found in the traditional staging of *nō* plays. These elements could be, for instance, non-traditional musical instruments, innovative usage of stage lighting, or unconventional costumes and masks that are derived from or inspired by classical ones. This interpretation of the term “*sōsaku nō*” could be translated as “creative *nō*”.

“Original elements” are part of innovative staging practices, but in order to guarantee “the general appearance” of familiar *nō* only a few elements of this type can be employed in a production. Otherwise the performance could lose its *nō* character completely. It is also important to note that the line separating *sōsaku* productions from transcultural fusion performances can be rather fine and subtle, and hence difficult to define. Therefore, a director who wants to stage a *shinsaku* play should have a profound knowledge of the aesthetics and performance elements of *nō* theatre.

There is also another possible interpretation of the term “*sōsaku nō*” that reflects the original quality of the source materials from which the main character of the play is drawn. After briefly hesitating and questioning the very existence of the term “*sōsaku nō*”, *nō* playwright and female actor of the Kita School Baba Akiko said in her 2004 interview that a *sōsaku nō* is a play that “is created from scratch” (Baba 2004). She explained that *sōsaku* plays do not use

well-known literary sources as canonical *nō* plays do, but rather are based on stories created by the author, who writes them in the form of a *nō* play (*Ibid.*). During the interview, Baba frequently emphasised that in the case of *sōsaku nō* the story should be original and “created from the author’s original ideas or conception [having no] influences from other works” (*Ibid.*). *Sōsaku* or “original” plays may be based on a well-known historical event or an episode from the life of a famous person. She said that the plays by Tada Tomio and Janine Beichman could definitely be called *sōsaku nō* plays (*Ibid.*).

In his treatise *Sandō* (The Three Techniques of Noh Composition, 1423) *nō* patriarch Zeami also speaks about *tsukuri nō* or “made-up *nō*” plays (SNKBZ 88: 345).¹²⁶ Zeami insists that these “made-up” plays should be “formed in connection with a noted place or historical site” that guarantees the audience the opportunity to draw on a familiar source that would trigger its imagination, which is essential to achieving the type of experience provided by a *nō* performance. The playwright who has no well-known literary source to draw on must be extremely skilful in order to compensate for this lack and still find poems suitable for the play (*Ibid.*).

Thus, for Zeami, a *tsukuri nō* play sets some limits on the choice of material. At the same time, he presumes that a playwright should be extremely literate, possessing an extensive knowledge of classical poetry. Without the opportunity to rely on a classical story or work, knowledge of the classics allows the playwright to insert allusions into the script and to create the atmosphere of *yūgen* necessary for *nō* plays.¹²⁷

The category of “original” *shinsaku* plays is divided into two types of new plays, written in either Japanese or English. At present the category only applies to plays in Japanese and English, but it is possible that new *shinsaku* plays would be created in other languages.¹²⁸

Shinsaku plays in English have contemporary themes, which is a special characteristic of *shinsaku*, although the themes of the plays are familiar and significant only to the English-speaking world, or, more specifically, to a

¹²⁶ Shelley Fenno Quinn translates Zeami’s term for a *nō* play with an original source as a “made-up *nō*”, explaining that it is “a play that is not based on a preexisting source or story material” and “is newly conceived” by the playwright (Quinn 2005: 293). Karen Brazell uses the words “made-up play” when translating Zeami’s term (Brazell 1988: 33), while Thomas Rimer and Masakazu Yamazaki translate the words *tsukuri nō* as “created *nō*” (Rimer and Yamazaki 1984: 149).

¹²⁷ However, Zeami’s instructions for composing a play would not be applicable to all categories of *nō* plays but only to *mugen nō* or dream-plays. This is clearly evident from Zeami’s treatise *Sandō* in which he designates *mugen nō* as the exemplary models for playwriting.

¹²⁸ The possibility of writing *shinsaku* plays in other languages than English is not a hypothetical question anymore, as for instance a Polish language new *nō* play *The Piano Tuner* (in Polish *Stroiciel fortepianu*) was performed by Tessenkai *nō* group in Tokyo, in 2011. The author of the play is Jadwiga Maria Rodowics, a reknown Japanese studies scholar and Polish ambassador to Japan. The play features a meeting of famous Polish pianist Fryderyck Chopin and French artist Eugène Delacroix in the garden at Nohant (Pellechia 2011).

particular English community, be it American, Canadian, Australian or New Zealand.

This highlights another special characteristic of *nō* theatre, which would remain unnoticed without the opportunity to compare classical *nō* plays with English language *shinsaku*: *nō* theatre is a thoroughly communal performing art form that draws its themes from sources that are part of the cultural heritage of the target audience. In other words, *honzetsu* – borrowing a character or theme as a technique of genre adaptation in *nō* theatre – is applicable only if the source material (written or oral, drawn from history, literature or folklore) is part of the common knowledge of its potential audience.

“Original” *shinsaku* plays are those written in the form of canonical *nō* plays, but which have contemporary themes, as opposed to classical plays, which rely solely on traditional sources, preferably from an earlier historical period. “Original” *shinsaku* plays have original contemporary (or classical) sources, and are not based on adapted themes from earlier classical *nō* plays. Therefore, in this research *shinsaku* plays based on innovative and original source materials will be referred to as “original” *shinsaku* plays, in order to distinguish them from plays with themes adapted from earlier works.

“Original” *shinsaku* plays are virtually *sōsaku nō* plays according to both meanings of the term: as “original” plays that use source materials that have never before been used for *nō* plays, and as “creative” plays, which give the playwright and actors new artistic opportunities to invent innovative character types and metaphors, patterns of movement, etc. The only limitation on the “originality” of the themes of *shinsaku* plays is that they not be adapted from earlier *nō* plays, which makes “original” *shinsaku* plays the “new ancestral” plays. The “creativity” of *shinsaku* is limited by the canon of traditional elements and aesthetics of *nō* theatre. The requirements of the genre set some limits on the creation of new characters, costumes, stage design, aesthetics, and the function of stage and hand props, etc., thus making the creation of new plays a complicated task indeed.

3.3.2 “Adapted” *shinsaku* as kinetic adaptations

The category of *shinsaku* adaptations is somewhat eclectic as it contains various adaptations of classical *nō* plays and Western dramas. The question of quality, which is measured in terms of fidelity to the source, always arises with regard to adaptations. However, while “original” (or new ancestral) *shinsaku* plays are usually not considered to be adaptations, later versions of classical plays often give rise to questions of quality, which seems to be a similar problem for film adaptations.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ See Hutcheon 2006.

In Nishino's lists (both 2004 and 2005) of more than 300 *shinsaku* works the majority of the plays are "original" *shinsaku nō* plays, and the number of adaptations is quite insignificant: only thirty-two of them are adaptations, and thirteen of these plays are appropriations or variants of older plays.¹³⁰ There are three sub-categories of *shinsaku* adaptations: adaptations of classical *nō* plays, transcultural *shinsaku* adaptations or adaptations of Western dramas (or sources), and "double adaptations" or re-adaptations of Western adaptations of classical *nō* plays into the form of *nō*.

***Shinsaku* adaptations of canonical plays**

The first subcategory of *shinsaku* adaptations comprises kinetic adaptations of canonical plays, which presumably employ adaptation techniques that are similar to the canonical variants: re-interpreting the characters or direction instructions, cutting or adding characters or revising the script, or creating an entirely new script using an older play as a source of inspiration.

Refreshing classical plays that had been forgotten for centuries started as far back as the Tokugawa period and has resulted in the revival of old plays since the 17th century. At the same time, the popularity of plays in the active repertory created an unwritten taboo against reworking them. This trend in the history of *nō* explains the relatively scant corpus of *shinsaku* adaptations of classical plays created by contemporary authors. Therefore, the subcategory of new *nō* adaptations does not provide many examples for analysis, perhaps because only a few authors have dared to write their own versions of famous classical plays.

Other types of appropriations can be found on Nishino's list, for example, a revised version of the *shinsaku* play *Taiten* (1915) under the new title *Heian* (1961, Katayama Hiromichi), and two shortened variants of the 1919 play *Nochi no Hagoromo* (an adaptation of the famous classical play *Hagoromo* or *The Feather Suit*), created by Tanaka Chigaku in 1932 and 1953. The latter examples of *shinsaku* adaptations reveal a special characteristic of *nō* plays: newly created works communicate with older versions, constructing intra-textual webs between otherwise independent plays.

Another example of a *shinsaku* adaptation is Yamashina Osamu's new version of Zeami's *Semimaru*, which closely resembles the 15th century canonical play. The adaptation was created in 1935, and it differs from the canonical play in its interpretation of the main character Semimaru; in the new version he is a blind *biwa-hōshi* storyteller famous in the capital for his skill. Another difference is that Princess Sakagami, who in the original play is Semimaru's sister wandering in the countryside, is in Yamashita's revised version the daughter of

¹³⁰ Eight plays of the thirty-two cannot be categorised as *nō* plays, because these plays are dramas with some elements from *nō* theatre.

a king from the land of Chūgoku (MYSZ 7: 41). Although the plot of the new version is the same as that of the older play, the changes in the characters have made the sad story of a royal brother and sister more appealing to a wider audience.

Two revised versions of *Aya no tsuzumi* (The Damask Drum), one written in 1952 by the creative duo Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru, and the other created in 1954 by Dōmoto Masaki, are also included in the list of Nishino's modern *shinsaku* plays. Toki Zenmaro and Kita Minoru's revised version of the classical play now belongs to the active repertory of the Kita School, and is therefore included in the analysis in Chapter 5 as an example of *shinsaku* adaptations of classical *nō* plays.

Although the majority of adaptations of canonical plays have been included in Nishino's lists of *shinsaku* some collections have been omitted from his reviews. For instance, *tanka* poetess and playwright Baba Akiko is a contemporary author who has created more than twenty appropriations of famous classical *nō* plays, including *Sumidagawa*, *Momijigari*, *Adachigahara*, *Takasago* and *Izutsu*, of which ten were published in the book *Baba Akiko no yōkyōkushū* (Baba Akiko's Collection of *Nō* Plays, 1996). Baba's adaptations of classical plays are good examples of revisions of classical works for contemporary readers.

Transcultural *shinsaku* adaptations

The second subcategory of *shinsaku* adaptations comprises *nō* versions of Western dramas. Borrowing themes from Western dramas started in the early 20th century with the creation of a new *nō* play by Takahama Kiyoshi *Tetsumon* (An Iron Gate, later known as *Zenkōji mōde* or The Pilgrimage to Zenkōji).

Adapting Western classics into the form of *nō* requires the utmost knowledge and creativity, especially when the adaptation deals with iconic playwrights and their works. The leading figure in the "translation" of Shakespearean and other plays into the language of *nō* is Ueda Munakata Kuniyoshi, a two-time Fulbright scholar and Professor Emeritus of English literature at Shizuoka National University. In 1982 he established the Noh Shakespeare Group and started reworking Shakespearean plays in order to make it possible to chant an English text in the style of *nō*. Some years later he wrote *nō* adaptations of *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear* and *Cleopatra* in Japanese. His latest works include the *nō* version of Garcia Lorca's *Bernarda Alba's House* (in cooperation with playwright Mizuhara Shion and director Okamoto Akira, 2002) and the *nō* adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, titled *Nō Nōra, mata wa futari no Nōra* (*Noh: Nora, or Double Nora*, 2005). Ueda's adaptations of Shakespeare's plays are undoubtedly the best examples of *shinsaku* adaptations of Western dramas. *Nō Hamuretto* (*Noh Hamlet*), his *nō* version of Shakespeare's

iconic play, represents the category of transcultural *shinsaku* adaptations analysed in Chapter 5 of this study.

Re-adaptations into the form of *nō*

The third subcategory of *shinsaku* adaptations is of special interest, as the plays belonging to this category were first adapted into the form of Western dramas, and then re-adapted back into the form of *nō* as new *nō* plays. These plays are similar to those in the second subcategory of transcultural adaptations, the newest iterations of which may be quite distant from their “ancestral” *nō* plays. Julie Sanders explains the reason:

An adaptation signals a relationship with an informing sourcetext or original; [...] On the other hand, appropriation frequently affects a more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain. This may or may not involve a generic shift, and it may still require the intellectual juxtaposition of (at least) one text against another that we have suggested is central to the reading and spectating experience of adaptation. But the appropriated text or texts are not always as clearly signalled or acknowledged as in the adaptive process. They may occur in a far less straightforward context than is evident in making a film version of a canonical play. (Sanders 2006: 26)

In re-adapting Western dramas into the form of *nō* the “journey away from the informing source” occurs in two stages: first, a shift from the Japanese cultural context to the Western style of drama, and second, from that form back to the canonical form of *nō* theatre. The double shift of cultural context and genre makes these adaptations complicated and interesting, and also makes them challenging to analyse.

The most famous example of this “double-adaptation” technique is Yokomichi Mario’s *shinsaku* play *Takahime* (The Hawk Princess, 1967), which is closely analysed in Chapter 5 of this study. The ancestor of this *shinsaku* piece is William Butler Yeats’s play *At the Hawk’s Well* (1916). The famous Irish poet and symbolist writer was keenly interested in the form of *nō* theatre and based *At the Hawk’s Well*, one of his his *Four Plays for Dancers*, on Zeami’s classical play *Yōrō* (Nourishing the Old). Yeats’s play in turn inspired *nō* scholar Yokomichi Mario to write his first version or appropriation (*hon’an*) of *Taka no Izumi* (The Hawk’s Spring) in 1949. However, his second variant of the play *Takahime* is indubitably the most successful *shinsaku* play created in the 20th century. Taking into account two later versions of Yeats’s play by different authors, *Taka no ido* (The Hawk’s Well) by Umewaka Naohiko and *Taka no i* (The Hawk’s Well) by Takahashi Mutsuo, both written in 1990, could reveal the interactive web of the plays with their mutual and multiple borrowings and revisions.

Principles for selecting the plays for analysis

The plays were selected for analysis according to the following criteria: first, the play represents the best example of the category; second, it has a recorded performance history and secondary sources for analysis; third, it has attracted the attention of the *nō* world; and fourth, the author of the play had sufficient knowledge of *nō* theatre and actually intended to create a *nō* play.

The plays – two genre adaptations and three kinetic adaptations – analysed in Chapters 4 and 5 of this study represent the best examples of the five categories of *shinsaku*. Nishino Haruo's play *Kusamakura* (The Grass Pillow) is an example of adapting modern literary source material, while Daphne Marlatt's new English play *The Gull* represents *shinsaku* plays that are composed without a literary source and centred around a particular place. Toki Zenmaro's *Aya no tsuzumi* (The Damask Drum) is an example of the appropriation of a classical *nō* play, a category that is sparsely populated. Ueda Kuniyoshi's *nō* adaptation of Shakespeare's iconic play *Nō Hamuretto* (*Nō* Hamlet) exemplifies transcultural adaptation. Yokomichi Mario's famous play *Takahime* (The Hawk Princess) is a rare example of re-adapting a drama into the *nō* form.

The authors of the plays selected for analysis were active *nō* actors, *nō* researchers, or others guided by experts of the *nō* world, which means that their intentions and knowledge are beyond question. Some of the plays were mentioned by experts of *nō* theatre in their interviews as the best examples of *shinsaku*, which led the author of this thesis to include them in the analysis. An additional criterion was the existence of a performance history and the involvement of professional *nō* actors in the performance, because many *shinsaku* plays exist only as scripts that have not been staged, as was mentioned earlier in this study. Thus, as the authors and performers of the plays were part of the *nō* world, the intentions and knowledge of the playwrights and the qualifications of the performers involved in these projects guarantees the quality of the plays to a large extent.

Not all *shinsaku* plays have attracted interest in *nō* circles; therefore, another principle for selecting the plays for analysis was the availability of secondary sources about the plays and performances. Commentaries on and critiques of the plays and performances are valuable sources for evaluating many aspects of *shinsaku* plays, such as the intention of the authors, the choice of source material, and the creation of performance elements. Secondary sources providing information about the plays and authors were available for all the plays selected for analysis.

CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS OF *SHINSAKU* GENRE ADAPTATIONS

Creating a new *nō* play is an extremely challenging task for a playwright, because the long tradition of the canonised performing art sets strict rules for writing them. *Shinsaku* playwrights attempt to meet these requirements while trying to create something different. Haiku poet and *shinsaku* playwright Takahama Kiyoshi recommended that new plays be based on an idea that “is born as a flash of inspiration in the head of an author” (Takahama 1980: 200, 205). He was convinced that “there is no need to create imitations or copies of old plays”, taking ideas from classical plays and composing a new one as a patchwork of old motifs. According to Takahama, creating new plays according to the requirements set for *nō* theatre would not destroy the genre (*Ibid.*). Therefore, the plays representing *shinsaku* genre adaptations will be analysed on the basis of the web of traditional elements and applied adaptation strategies introduced in Chapters 1 and 2 of this study. The analysis is especially focused on the methods of adapting sources and creating intertextuality in *shinsaku* plays. Particular attention will be paid to the adaptation of language for new *nō* plays.

In this chapter two *shinsaku* plays will be analysed: *Kusamakura* (Sleeping Away From Home) as an “original” *nō* play that adapts modern literary sources to the form of *nō*, and a new bilingual play, *The Gull*, which is a *tsukuri nō* or a “*nō* play without a definite literary source” that is created about a place. Both plays can be categorised as *sōsaku nō* plays because they are based on original material not previously used in *nō* plays, and they include some innovative elements.

The authors of the plays were familiar with *nō* theatre: Professor Nishino Haruo (b. 1943), who wrote the play *Kusamakura*, is an acknowledged *shinsaku* researcher and the former head of the Institute of Nōgaku Studies at Hōsei University, and Daphne Marlatt (b. 1942), the author of *The Gull* and a renowned Canadian poet, had been interested in *nō* theatre for decades before she participated in the workshop organised by Theatre Nohgaku for the creation of *nō* plays in English.

4.1 “Original” *shinsaku* plays: Nishino’s *Kusamakura*

Nishino Haruo’s *Kusamakura* (Sleeping Away from Home, 2002) was selected to represent the category of “original” *shinsaku nō* plays. It premiered on the 15th of November 2002 at Hōsei University, and was staged in 2005 at the National Nō Theatre in Tokyo and performed by a troupe of professional actors from the Hōshō School.

4.1.1 Adapting modern literature to *nō* plays

The idea and motivation for writing the play

Nishino Haruo, author of the *shinsaku* play *Kusamakura*, recalls that Kasai Ken'ichi, general manager of the *nō* performance group Tessenkai, sent him two of Natsume Sōseki's poems and asked him to consider creating a *nō* play based on these verses. When Nishino read the poems he immediately felt that the material was suitable for adapting to the form of *nō* (Nishino 2003b). Interestingly, before Kasai made his suggestion Nishino had already thought about the possibility of writing a *shinsaku* play in the form of free verse (Nishino 2003a: 97). Hence, Kasai's request gave Nishino an opportunity to realise his idea, and he was eager to write the play. He also thought that an original *nō* play could be performed as part of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Institute of Nōgaku Studies at Hōsei University. Soon after, a group of actors from the Hōshō School, led by Asami Masakuni, showed interest in the project, so Nishino asked Asami to compose the music and stage the play (Nishino 2003b). Therefore, more than one interested party was involved in the project, and all the participants, from the originator of the idea Kasai, the playwright Nishino, and the actors from the Hōshō School, belonged to the *nō* world.

Nishino found that one of the poems Kasai had sent him, *Oninakidera no ichiya* (One Night at the Temple of Oninakidera), resembled the second act of a *nō* dream-play (*Ibid.*) He knew that Natsume Sōseki was fond of *nō* theatre and had learned *nō utai* (*nō* chanting). Nishino felt that Sōseki's poems, especially *Oninakidera no ichiya*, had been written with *nō* theatre in mind (Nishino 2003a: 94). However, he felt that one poem would be an insufficient basis for a full-length *nō* play. He looked for other material to complement the poem, and found a novel, Sōseki's *Kusamakura* (The Grass Pillow), that had an atmosphere and storyline similar to *nō*. Nishino decided to use the novel as the background story for his new *nō* play and as the inspiration for creating the characters (Nishino 2003b).

The main sources of *honzetsu* borrowings in *Kusamakura* fulfilled the general requirements for sources of *nō* plays because Sōseki's works are well known, but they are also novel in the *nō* world, because *Kusamakura* represents the first time that Natsume Sōseki's writings were used in a *nō* play. *Nō* scholar Yokomichi Mario commented that it was unusual for a *nō* play to draw its material from modern literature. However, he admitted that some successful *shinsaku nō* plays that used new literary material had been created, such as the play *Chiekoshō*,¹³¹ which were based on contemporary poems written in modern

¹³¹ It is also fascinating that the models for Nishino's *shinsaku* play were Takechi Tetsuji's play, *Chiekoshō* (All about Chieko), and Yokomichi Mario's play *Takahime* (The Hawk Princess) (Nishino 2003a: 97).

language (Nishino 2003a: 98). According to Nishino, his intention was to fuse music, poetry and drama into one play, thereby transforming Sōseki's works into the form of *nō* (*Ibid.*, Nishino 2003b).

Creating the plot by combining *honzetsu* borrowings

The theme of the *shinsaku* play *Kusamakura* is drawn from two main sources, the poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* and the novel *Kusamakura*, and combines the worlds and characters of both of Sōseki's works. Nishino took a scene from *Kusamakura* and set it in the Temple of Oninakidera, where a traveller stays overnight (Baba, Hioki and Nishino 2006: 111). The adapted scene is found in Chapter Two of Sōseki's haiku novel, in which the protagonist, an artist on a journey deep into the mountains, enters a teahouse on a rainy day and hears the sad story of the Nagara maiden. According to the story, the maiden fell in love with two men at the same time, and because of the unbearable situation threw herself into a river and drowned (Sōseki 2008a: 28).¹³² Nishino used as a *honzetsu* borrowing the idea of a wandering artist and the old story of the Nagara maiden.

Sōseki's free-verse poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* tells the story of a man who spends a night in an old temple. There he meets a female ghost, has a brief conversation with her, and when she disappears, he thinks that it was only a dream (Nishino 2003b). Nishino adapted from the poem the situation of meeting a ghost in an old temple, as well as the setting, the Temple of Oninakidera. He combined Sōseki's two works by taking the ghost of the Nagara maiden from the novel and having her appear at the temple described in Sōseki's poem. Nishino said that he did not use the female character Nami from the novel, because he felt that the sad story of the Nagara maiden fit better with the world of *nō* (Baba, Hioki and Nishino 2006: 111).

Therefore, the main plot of the play was taken from the poem, and a story was added from the novel, smoothly combining the two sources. The renowned poet Baba Akiko considered the themes of Sōseki's works eternal and suitable for *nō*, and felt that the poem added depth to the young man's struggles with his thoughts about life and death (*Ibid.*, 113). The fact that the author of both source materials was known to have been influenced by *nō* theatre made the sources compatible with and adaptable to that form.

One reviewer of the premier performance of *Kusamakura* criticised the play for infidelity to Sōseki's novel (Nishino 2003a: 99). However, Nishino explained

¹³² The story is originally taken from the anthology of poems *Man'yōshū*, Books 9 and 19, as *honzetsu* for classical play *Motomezuka*. In Poem No. 1801, Book 9, a poet goes to the grave of the Unai maiden in the village of Ashiya and composes a poem about her sad story (NKBK 2: 322). This episode from *Man'yōshū* is reminiscent of Nishino's new *nō* play, in which a poet spends a night at a remote temple that is haunted by the ghost of a maiden who drowned herself over two lovers. By integrating some verses from the classical play *Motomezuka* into his new play Nishino establishes the connection of both the *shite* and *waki* of the *shinsaku* play with the ancient story from *Man'yōshū*.

that it was never his intention to dramatise the novel, but rather to use it as the background story for the main plot derived from the poem *Oninakidera no ichiya*. He added that his true intention was to dramatise the verses of the poem in *nō* form, rather than to adapt the novel (*Ibid.*, 100).

4.1.2 Creating the *shite* and *waki* characters

In creating the characters for his play, Nishino used the poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* as the main source and combined it with direct and indirect quotes from the haiku novel *Kusamakura*. Within the framework created by combining the two sources Nishino cast two characters, the poet as the Man and the Nagara maiden as the Woman, which also alluded to characters in many other literary works and *nō* plays.

Creating the *waki* character by combining two sources

The *waki* in the play is a combination of the characters of a young vagabond painter from the novel and an anonymous man from the poem. Nishino wrote that in the process of writing the play the painter from the novel transformed quite unintentionally into a poet on a journey, because it felt more natural within the setting of the play (Nishino 2003b). In addition, the protagonist who tells his story in Sōseki's novel also writes poems, which enabled the painter and poet to be melded smoothly into one character. Nishino said that the poet fitted better with his idea of the *waki* role, because understanding and loving beauty above all else is a characteristic of poets (Nishino 2003a: 95). Furthermore, Nishino said that his ultimate aim was to make his play an expression of poetry, which made the character of a poet more appropriate for conveying the idea to the audience (*Ibid.*, 98).

Kusamakura exemplifies the non-traditional interpretation of a *waki* character as a man on a journey, rather than a monk or priest, which was usual in classical dream-*nō*. This makes the character more modern, while maintaining the traditional function of the *waki* to encourage the *shite* to tell her story.

In the *nanori* or "name-saying" at the beginning of the play, the *waki* introduces himself as "a man composing poems and chanting songs" (Nishino 2003a: 101). He explains that he draws inspiration for his work from nature, between the realms of heaven and earth, which transcends human existence. In describing the natural world as the source of his inspiration the Man uses the word *hininjō*, the literal meaning of which is "suprahuman" (*Ibid.*, 101-102),¹³³

¹³³ In Chapter Nine of the novel the artist has a conversation with the female character Nami, to whom he explains the meaning of the words "unhuman feelings" (*hininjō*) and their difference from the words "inhuman feelings" (*funinjō*), saying that he does not lack human feelings but simply suppresses them and tries to clear them from his heart in order to attain the state of detachment he

and refers directly to Natsume Sōseki's novel *Kusamakura*: in Chapter One, the protagonist ponders the difficulties of living in the human world, as opposed to the nonhuman realm. The protagonist concludes that the nonhuman realm would be a more difficult place for a human being to inhabit than the human world (Sōseki 2008a: 5), but later in the same chapter he finds that he would like to stay in the nonhuman realm long enough to enjoy the poetic scenery, which might inspire him as it did the famous Chinese poets of ancient times (*Ibid.*, 13). By using the word *hininjō* in the beginning of the play Nishino provides an allusion to the character in the novel, the goal of whose journey to a remote part of the country is detachment from the human world, but who is still unable to dissociate himself completely from his human feelings.

The direct reference to the protagonist of Sōseki's novel, whose quest is to find a nonhuman realm where he can dedicate himself to his art, creates a connection with the poet of the *nō* play, who has set out on a similar journey. The difference between the two characters lies in the outcome of their quest: in the book the artist discovers an irritating attraction to the human world, the embodiment of which is Nami,¹³⁴ and thus fails to achieve unhuman detachment, whereas in the play the poet experiences the sorrows of wandering in the nonhuman realm when he encounters the ghost of the Nagara maiden at a remote temple.

The character of the *waki* also alludes indirectly to an old story told in the *waka* anthology *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, 8th century), in Poem No. 1801, which is a *honzetsu* source for the classical play *Motomezuka* (The Grave Sought, supposed author Kan'ami). In the poem a poet goes to the grave of the Unai maiden in the village of Ashiya and composes a poem about her sad story, which is identical to that of the Nagara maiden (NKBK 2: 322). This episode is very similar to the setting of Nishino's new *nō* play, in which a poet also spends a night at a remote temple that is haunted by the ghost of a maiden who drowned herself because of her inability to choose between two lovers. Indirect reference to the story from the classical poem is made by integrating verses from *Motomezuka* into several parts of the *shinsaku* play.

Creating a *shite* character with multiple identities

The main character of the play is the Woman, whose identity was borrowed from the story about the Nagara maiden in Natsume Sōseki's haiku novel. Nishino recalled discussing the characteristics of the *shite* with *nō* actor Asami Masakuni, who, after choosing a suitable mask for the character, suggested making her an anxious and worried woman (Baba, Hioki and Nishino 2006: 118).

needs for his work as an artist (Sōseki 2008a: 114–115). In this chapter Meredith McKinney translates the words *hininjō* as “non-emotional” and *funinjō* as “un-emotional” (Sōseki 2008b: 97).

¹³⁴ The name is written with the Chinese characters 那美, which mean “beauty”.

Thus, Nishino collaborated with Asami in designing the main character, and her characteristics were decided after a mask had been selected for her, which “gave the soul” to the character. Visualising a character by means of a mask was in accordance with the traditional way of staging a *nō* play, but what was extraordinary in the case of *Kusamakura* was the use of the classical method to create an entirely new character, and not to interpret one that already existed.

Although Nishino asserted that the creation of the protagonist of *Kusamakura* was inspired by the story of the Nagara maiden, analysis of the script reveals that the *shite* character is actually a combined portrait of three different women: the Nagara maiden and Nami from Sōseki’s novel *Kusamakura*, and the Unai maiden from the *nō* play *Motomezuka*.

The section in which the stories of the three women are interwoven is found in the 18th *shōdan* of the *shinsaku* play. It tells about two young men, Sasada and Sasabe, who fell in love with the Nagara maiden (Nishino 2003a: 105). In creating the text of this passage Nishino relied to a great extent on Sōseki’s novel, in which an old woman the artist meets in a teahouse tells him the story of the Nagara maiden, who drowned herself in a pond (Sōseki 2008a: 28).

A similar passage can be found in the classical play *Motomezuka*, which tells the story of another young woman, the Unai maiden. In *Motomezuka* two men named Chinu and Masurao loved a maiden who, unwilling to hurt their feelings, killed herself by drowning in a river (NKBT 40: 70–71).¹³⁵ Nishino took direct quotes from *Motomezuka*, using the lines *onaji hi no onaji toki* (“on the same day and at the same time”) and *warinaki omoi no tamazusa o kayowasu* (“they sent their heartrending letters to her”) as Verses 6 and 7 of the 18th *shōdan* of his play. A comparison of the texts of *Motomezuka* and the *shinsaku* play reveals that the phrase “if I chose one the other would become jealous” (Verses 8 and 9) of the new play is also a paraphrase of the text of the classical play.¹³⁶ In addition, the story in *Motomezuka* is told in the first person by the ghost of the Unai maiden (the *shite*), while the same passage in both Sōseki’s novel and Nishino’s play is delivered in third person narration by an old woman and the chorus, respectively. This suggests that Nishino relied on the novel in presenting the story, although he used some parts of the classical play.

Interestingly, Nami, a maiden from the village of Nakoi who is the female character from Sōseki’s novel, was also loved by two men, but her parents made her marry a local rich man against her will, rather than the one she truly loved (Sōseki 2008a: 28–29). Thus, due to *honzetsu* borrowings of characters and

¹³⁵ The classical play *Motomezuka* draws from several poems in the *Man’yōshū* collection. Two men, Chinu and Masurao, who are in love with a young maiden, are characters in three poems: Nos. 1801, 1809 and 1811 in Book 9 of *Man’yōshū*, Vol. 1 (NKBK 2: 322, 324, 325). However, another poem, No. 4211 in Book 19 of *Man’yōshū*, Vol. 2, also mentions a man called Unai-otoko (NKBK 3: 300).

¹³⁶ In *Motomezuka* the verses are *anata e nabikaba konata no urami to naru bekereba* (NKBT 40: 71), which Nishino modified in his play as *anata e nabikaba konata no urami konata e nabikaba anata no urami naru beshi* (Nishino 2003a: 105).

honkadori textual loans from different sources, the character of the Woman in the new *nō* play combines three stories into one: that of the Unai maiden, the Nagara maiden and Nami from Nakoi.

The protagonist of the *shinsaku* play *Kusamakura*, in which the identities of three women are combined, was mainly designed by *honzetsu* borrowings from two different sources. However, the portrayal of the protagonist as “a worried woman” whose beauty lies in her fragile attachment to the world was created by interweaving quotes from other literary sources.

For instance, the *kuse* section (the 19th *shōdan* in the 8th *dan*) of the play conveys the feelings of the ghost of the Woman. This *shōdan* directly quotes Verses 1 and 2 of Sōseki’s free-verse poem *Minasoko no kan* (The Feeling in the Depths of Water) about lovers who pledged to die together in a quest for final peace in the depths of a waterfall (Sōseki 2003: 108). Nishino added to the quote the adverb *kiyoki* (“clear” or “pure”) that modifies the noun *mizu* (“water”), but otherwise the verses are used in the play without other alteration (Nishino 2003a: 105). The modified verse *sumaba kiyoki mizu no soko* (“we will find an abode in the depths of pure waters”) functions as a prelude to Verses 2 and 3 in the subsequent *waka* section (the 20th *shōdan*), which describe the *shite*’s happiness at being released from the sorrows of this world (*Ibid.*, 106).

These verses in the *kuse* section also allude to Chapter Seven of Sōseki’s novel, in which the artist recalls a poem by the English poet Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837–1909), and John Everett Millais’s painting of Ophelia inspired by Shakespeare’s famous play, and concludes that death in the depths of pure water is aesthetically beautiful (Sōseki 2008a: 90–91). The phrase *onna ga mizu no soko de ōjō shite ureshigatte iru kanji* (“the feeling of happiness of a drowned woman”) accords well with the image of the Nagara maiden, who found a peaceful final abode in the water. This feeling is further enforced by the expression *ku nashi ni nagareru arisama* (“floating she seems untroubled”), which in the novel echoes a poem the artist composes while floating in a hot spring (*Ibid.*, 91). Interestingly, another verse from the artist’s poem *shizumaba nami no soko* (“sinking beneath the waves”) paraphrases the verse *sumaba mizu no soko* (“we will find an abode in the depths of waters”) from the poem *Minasoko no kan* (Sōseki 2003: 108). Another phrase from the artist’s poem *tsuchi no shita de wa kurakarō* (“it would be dark within the earth”) implies that dying in water is somehow preferable to being buried (Sōseki 2008a: 91). Thus, Nishino’s play echoes the feelings of many characters – Nami and the Nagara maiden in the novel, and an anonymous woman in Sōseki’s poem *Minasoko no kan* – in describing the peacefulness of death in water and the eternal unification of the maiden with her lover. Furthermore, the reference to Pre-Raphaelite painter John Everett Millais’s famous painting of a drowned maiden floating in the water (1894) also alludes to Ophelia in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*.

By placing the modified quote *sumaba kiyoki mizu no soko* from the poem *Minasoko no kan* immediately after the verses that the Nagara maiden recites before throwing herself into the river, Nishino creates an image of a woman who

has no regrets, and thus does not need to be rescued from hell as did the Unai maiden in *Motomezuka*. On the contrary, he aimed to portray the character of the Woman (or the Nagara maiden) as an attractive figure, and used the character Nami from the novel *Kusamakura* as a model for creating the *shite* role, based on the poem that the painter, the protagonist of the novel, wrote about her (Nishino 2003a: 98).

In order to create the image of a beautiful woman Nishino inserted a reference to Sōseki's novel, in which the word *kaidō* ("crab apple" or "aronia") in the *haiku* poem *Kaidō no tsuyu o furū ya monogurui* (Sōseki 2008a: 39)¹³⁷ alludes to Princess Yang Guifei (719–756), or Yōkihi as she is known in Japan, who was traditionally compared with *nemureru hana* or "the sleeping flower", and was the beautiful concubine of the last Tang emperor. Nishino used this allusion to the famous beauty in the 17th *shōdan* of his *shinsaku* play (Nishino 2003a: 105), in which the word *senkentari* (a conjugation of the verbal adjective *senkentarū*, meaning "graceful" or "beautiful") in the last verse alludes to a poem by the famous Chinese poet Bai Juyi (772–846), whose works had a great impact on Heian period Japanese poetry.¹³⁸ The poem could be loosely translated as "the locks of a beautiful woman's hair are as the spent wings of an autumn cicada". This allusion to the poem about the Chinese princess describes the beauty of Nami/the Nagara maiden as fragile and ephemeral, which seems to prefigure her imminent death.

In conclusion it can be said that in creating the *shite* character Nishino Haruo relied mainly on two sources, the novel *Kusamakura* and the classical play *Motomezuka*, but several references to other works, such as Sōseki's poem *Minasoko no kan*, an old Chinese poem, and Millais's painting of Shakespeare's Ophelia, can also be found in the play.

4.1.3 Structure of the play

Jo-ha-kyū development and *shōdan* structure

The play *Kusamakura* is divided into eleven *dan* (units) that comprise twenty-three *shōdan* sub-sequences, which are chanted or spoken as a monologue or

¹³⁷ "The maddened woman setting the dewdrops trembling on the aronia." (Sōseki 2008b: 33).

¹³⁸ Bai Juyi was known in Japan by the name Haku Kyoī. The poem is included in the anthology *Wakan rōeishū* (Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Singing, 1013, compiled by Fujiwara no Kintō), Book 2 (Miscellanea), Poem No. 708. The original poem in Chinese is written with the characters 嬋娟兩鬢秋蟬翼, which in the Japanese reading of Chinese characters is *senken ryōbin shūsen yoku*, and in the Japanese language 嬋娟たる兩鬢は秋蟬の翼 *senkentarū ryōbin wa shūsen no yoku*. The poem is quoted as a *honkadōri* borrowing in many classical *nō* plays, including *Sotoba Komachi* (Komachi at the Grave Marker, author Zeami), to describe the beauty of a woman. (For reference see the electronic source *Yōkyoku no tōkeigaku* at <http://jixia.web.fc2.com/Nohpage/NohWakan/Wakan13.html>)

dialogue. The play also includes some passages of instrumental music; for example, in the 3rd *dan*, in which the Man seeks shelter from the rain in an old temple (Nishino 2003a: 103), Nishino felt that the melancholy mood could be better expressed without text (Baba, Hioki and Nishino 2006: 114).¹³⁹ *Nō* scholar Furukawa analysed the structure of the play and reportedly found sections that followed *jo-ha-kyū* development, although Nishino himself was not convinced that this was true, saying that it had not been his intention and he had not been thinking about it when he wrote the play (*Ibid.*, 115).

The events of the play take place near a mountain village in Higo Prefecture in late spring, 1908 (Nishino 2003a: 95). The structure closely follows the *nō* theatre canon, beginning with an opening song (*shidai*), and proceeding to the *nanori* (lit. “name-saying”). The first two lines of verse in the *shidai* are taken from the opening passage of Natsume Sōseki’s free-verse poem *Oninakidera no ichiya*. Nishino combined these verses with a quote from the beginning of the classical play *Kantan* (Life and Dream, author unknown) and inserted them into the last verse of this section:

Hyakuri ni mayou tabigokoro
hyakuri ni mayou tabigokoro
*yumeji o itsu to sadamen.*¹⁴⁰
 (*Ibid.*, 101)

The word *yumeji* (“the path of dreams”) in the quote from *Kantan* (SNKBT 57: 34) echoes the sound of the word *yamaji* (“mountain path”), the Chinese characters for which are pronounced in the novel “yamamichi”, and is found in the opening sentence of Sōseki’s novel *Kusamakura* (Sōseki 2008a: 5).¹⁴¹ Together with the dream-like image of a mountain path at the beginning of the play, an allusive connection is made between the *waki* and three different characters and sources: the traveller from the poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* seeking shelter at a remote temple, the young artist from the novel *Kusamakura* trying to detach himself from human feelings by journeying to the nonhuman realm, and the young man from the classical *nō* play *Kantan*, who is on a quest to find a miraculous pillow.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Umehara Takeyuki composed the musical interlude, titled *Niwakaame* (the Shower), for the third *dan*. He drew inspiration from Komparu Sōuemon’s instrumental music *Taen no niwakaame* (Shower at Taen) and modelled the gentle rhythm of the *Sambasō* part on the classical play *Okina*. Nishino found that the music perfectly expressed the scene in which a sudden shower interrupts the *waki*’s journey, and causes him to struggle (Nishino 2003a: 96).

¹⁴⁰ Izumiya Osamu’s translation of the opening passage is “My soul wanders on a one-hundred-mile journey, my soul wanders on a one-hundred-mile journey. When will it come out of its wandering dreams?” (*Ibid.*, 167).

¹⁴¹ However, in Chapter Two of the novel, the same characters start to run at the alternative reading of the word “*yamaji*” (Sōseki 2008a: 22).

¹⁴² The quote from *Kantan* also establishes a strong relationship between the magic pillow (*yumemakura*) and the grass pillow (*kusamakura*), the former promising wealth to its owner and the latter offering fulfilment of a dream in a remote natural environment.

The reference at the beginning of the play to one of the main sources, the novel *Kusamakura*, has a twofold function: first, it indirectly introduces the theme and title of the play (*kusamakura* as “sleeping away from home”, lit. “grass pillow”, a direct reference to which is found in the first verse of the 10th *shōdan*); and second, it points more directly to the connection between the characters of the *waki* of the *nō* play and the protagonist of the novel *Kusamakura*, although one is a poet and the other is a painter.

After introducing himself the Man sings *michiyuki* or a travel song (the 3rd *shōdan*) describing the season of “tranquil spring” (*nodokana haru*): plants growing and flowering (*sai no hana* “the mustard blossoms”; *yamazakura* “mountain cherries”), beautiful scenery (*aoku sobieru takamine* “bluish mountain peak rising high”; *harukana tani* “far-away valley”) and the sounds of nature (*hibari no koe* “the sound of the skylark”) that endlessly (*ma naku toki naku* “without pause”) fill the air, creating a seemingly timeless space apart from the human world (Nishino 2003a: 102).

In the second *dan* the Man explains the reason the human realm is difficult to inhabit (*hito no yo wa suminikui*): if you let your intellect guide you in life you will become offensive (*chi ni hatarakeba kado ga tatsu*), but if you let compassion guide your way you will be carried away by your feelings (*nasake ni saosaseba nagasareru*). The Man, who views the arts as his only escape from this human dilemma, is thereby expressing his artistic credo, which is to observe his surroundings, from which will be born a work of art, a poem, or a song (*Ibid.*). This type of detachment from the human world, or the sentience of *hininjō* (“nonhuman feelings”), is identical to that which guides the travelling painter in Sōseki’s novel.

The third *dan* describes the change of weather during the journey of the poet as it begins to rain when the Man arrives at a temple. In the fourth *dan* he realises that it is the temple that is connected with the story of the Nagara maiden, of whom he had heard from the old woman at the teahouse. The young poet decides to spend the night in the temple. In the fifth *dan* a mysterious ghost of a woman appears at the temple, and in the sixth *dan* she expresses her feelings about the world she has left. Nishino explains the importance of this part of the play as it is at this juncture that the heart of the poet starts to tremble, and after which he gradually enters the dream world (*Ibid.*, 97). The seventh *dan* is an exchange between the Man and the Woman, in which the *waki* asks the *shite* to identify herself and tell her story.¹⁴³ In the eighth *dan* the ghost of the Woman tells the Man about the two men who simultaneously fell in love with her, and because she was unable to choose between them she eventually drowned herself, after which the two men followed her to their death. The ninth *dan* is a lyric poem quoted from Natsume Sōseki’s *Minasoko no kan* (The Feeling in the Depths of Water, 1904), which is chanted by the chorus while the Woman performs “a

¹⁴³ According to Nishino, he designed this *dan* as a bridge between the first and second halves of the play, after which the poet fades into the world of dreams (Nishino 2003a: 97).

dance of the water's depths" *minasoko no mai* (*Ibid.*, 106).¹⁴⁴ The tenth *dan* is the Woman's lament (*kudoki*) at being "entangled in an unattainable relation", which is followed by the eleventh *dan*, in which the poet's dream of the ghost at the temple vanishes at the break of dawn.

Dual climax of the play

In addition to making extensive use of different sources to create characters with multiple identities, Nishino also applies a specific technique of intensifying images through the repetition of verses, which is characteristic of *nō* plays. There are in total twelve repeated verses found in eight *shōdan* throughout the play. For instance, the *kiri* section in the last *dan* is composed of nine verses from the poem *Oninakidera on ichiya*, three verses of which are repeated at the culmination of the play.

At least one *honkadori* verse that is repeated throughout the play, sometimes in modified or paraphrased form, is usually found in *nō* plays. In the *shinsaku* play *Kusamakura*, a repeated quote from Sōseki's novel (2008a: 28), which is comprised of the verses the Nagara maiden chants before she throws herself into the river, takes the place of a principal *honkadori* borrowing.¹⁴⁵ In the play, these verses are first delivered by the Woman/Nagara maiden in the 13th *shōdan* after the chorus has chanted the verses for the *waki*, who sees a mysterious figure appearing before him. The repetition of the same verses, chanted by the chorus for the Woman, occurs at the beginning of the 19th *shōdan*, which tells the story of the Nagara maiden. These repetitions create a powerful image of a young woman who chose death over life because she refused to favour one admirer over the other.

While the excerpt from Sōseki's novel sets the overall tone of the play by intensifying the Woman's sadness and acceptance of her coming death, the climax of the play is based on the poem *Minasoko no kan*. In the *kuse* section (19th *shōdan*) that tells the story of a woman who drowned herself in a pond is inserted a quote of three verses from the poem that depict her black hair floating among the weeds in the water. The end of the same section describes the two men ending their lives in grief over the woman. A song follows that tells of the fragile bond between lovers. The *kuse* section prepares the audience for the following *waka*, which quotes three verses from the poem *Minasoko no kan* and conveys the drowned women's freedom from sorrow. The poem, which is

¹⁴⁴ The poem was reportedly based on a true story that happened in Sōseki's time. It moved him so profoundly that he decided to compose a poem about lovers who after ending their lives find each other in the depths of water (*Ibid.*, 95). The story tells of a man who drowned himself in a waterfall at Nikkō, and the woman who loved him following him to her death at the same place.

¹⁴⁵ McKinney translated the passage from the novel *aki zukeba obana ga ue ni oku tsuyu no kenubeku mowa wa omohoyuru ka mo* "As the autumn's dew that lies a moment on the tips of the seeding grass, so do I know that I too must fade and be gone from this brief world" (Sōseki 2008b: 23).

chanted by the chorus and the Woman, is accompanied by “a dance of the water’s depths”. Ending the *kuse* section with the quote from *Minasoko no kan* constitutes the “ear-opening” moment, and the following *waka* poem and dance is the eye-opening climax of the play. Nevertheless, the author of the play Nishino considered the fast *kiri* section with its repetition of verses from *Oninakidera no ichiya* to be the climax of the play (Nishino 2003a: 97).

Absence of a religious element in the play

The religious element in classical plays is generally expressed by casting the *waki* as a travelling monk or priest and using Buddhist prayers as a structural element at the end of the play. However, in *Kusamakura* the place of a travelling monk is taken by a poet on a journey, to whom the ghost of a dead woman appears in a remote old temple. The poet does not say a prayer to summon the ghost, as a monk usually would. On the contrary, the ghost in *Kusamakura* seems to make her appearance independently of the will of the poet. However, this passive role of the *waki* is well suited to Nishino’s concept of a poet, who fades into a dreamworld at the old temple. Thus, the ghost appears in the poet’s dream and disappears when he awakes. The only overtly religious element in the play is the site of the events, the Buddhist Temple of Oninakidera.

Just as the *waki* does not say a prayer to summon the ghost in the first half of the play, there is also no prayer or sutra chanted at the end. The absence of a prayer for the soul of the ghost is derived from the character of the *shite*, who is portrayed as a woman freed from suffering and in no need of being rescued from Buddhist hell. Thus, the author’s original concept of creating unusual and updated *waki* and *shite* characters required the play to focus on conveying the sentiments of the *shite* rather than on offering her release from suffering. Moreover, it seems that the author intended to eliminate words and phrases with religious connotations. For instance, in adapting the text of Sōseki’s novel in the *kuse* section of the play Nishino replaced the Buddhist concept of *inga* (“cause and effect”) with the words *hakanaki en* (“a fragile tie”) (Sōseki 2008a: 53, Nishino 2003a: 105), which appears to indicate a decision on the part of the author to reduce the Buddhist content in the play.

4.1.4 Creating intertextuality with a *honkadori* collage technique

Nishino Haruo’s basic concept in creating the play was to draw extensively from the literary works of Natsume Sōseki and to integrate Sōseki’s poems as *honkadori* borrowings into the script. He explained that after designing the framework of the play he divided the poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* into sequences and interwove these into the script at key points in the play (Nishino 2003a: 94). Consequently, all 51 verses of Sōseki’s poem are inserted as direct quotes into

nine of the twenty-three *shōdan* (1, 9, 11, 12, 14, 19, 21, 22, 23). Most of the quotes are in the second half of the play, which intensifies the mood of the story toward the end.

Employing different literary sources for creating characters with complex identities exemplifies Nishino's collage technique in writing his *shinsaku* play. However, some sub-sections of the play are composed according to an even more sophisticated matrix of drawing from multiple sources, in which the author modified borrowed quotes and paraphrased verses. An example of this collage technique is the 19th *shōdan* (*kuse* section) in the eighth *dan* of the play,¹⁴⁶ in which four different sources are elaborately interwoven into the play. In order to give a better overview of Nishino's collage technique, I have divided the *kuse* section into eight parts according to different source materials that have been quoted, referred to, or modified in composing the section.

The first part of the *kuse* section is a nearly verbatim quote¹⁴⁷ of a poem from the novel *Kusamakura* that recounts the last words of the Nagara maiden before she drowns herself in the Fuchi River. The mood of the scene is mournful, and the woman feels autumn approaching, which is a metaphor for her life coming to an end (Sōseki 2008a: 28). She compares herself to *eulalia* grass, a beautiful Chinese plant with an elegant shape, which withers in autumn.

In the novel, the Nagara maiden throws herself into the river after reciting the poem, but Nishino inserted Sōseki's free-verse poem *Minasoko no kan* (Sōseki 2003: 108) into the second part of the *kuse* section of the play, which further elaborates on the woman's emotions. The poem, a *honkadori* borrowing, conveys the feelings of an anonymous woman expressing her hope of finding a final resting place with her lover in the depths of pure clear water. This is a direct quote from Verses 1 and 2 of Sōseki's poem, to which Nishino simply added the word *kiyoki* ("clear" or "pure") as a modifier of the noun *mizu* ("water"). The first verse of the poem *sumaba kiyoki mizu no soko* ("we will find an abode in the depths of pure waters") alludes to Sōseki's novel *Kusamakura*, in which a parallel has been drawn between the image of an aesthetically beautiful death in water and Millais's painting of Ophelia (Sōseki 2008a: 90–91). This verse also establishes an indirect connection with the Chinese beauty Yōkihi, to whom an allusion is found earlier in the same *dan* (Nishino 2003a: 105).

The third part of the *kuse* section is composed of three verses: Verse 1 is a direct quote from the classical play *Motomezuka*, which tells the story of the Unai maiden, who drowned herself in the Ikuta River to avoid having to choose between her two admirers (NKBT 40: 71). Verses 2 and 3 are paraphrases of verses from *Motomezuka*, but Nishino replaces the Ikuta River with Kagami Pond

¹⁴⁶ *Kuse* is a *shōdan* in *nō* plays that contains the main story about the *shite*; it is often also the poetic highlight of the play.

¹⁴⁷ In the last verse of the quote Nishino uses the verb *ejiru* ("to chant a poem") instead of Sōseki's phrase *uta o yomu* ("to recite a poem, text or sutra").

from Chapter Ten of the novel *Kusamakura* (Sōseki 2008a: 131–132).¹⁴⁸ In addition, he creates an interesting change in the meaning of the words *munashiku narinikeri* (“and she died”) from the classical play: in *Motomezuka* they apply to the lovers of the Unai maiden, who died after stabbing each other, but in the new play they refer to the death of the Woman (the Nagara maiden).

The fourth part of the *kuse* section follows with a direct quote from the poem *Minasoko no kan* (Sōseki 2003: 108). With its almost romantic description of a woman floating in the water it depicts the image of a peaceful and strangely beautiful death scene. Izumiya Osamu translated the quoted verses *Mizu no soko kurokami no nagaki midare mosetsu mo tsurete yorubenaku* as “In the depths of the waters her long black hair dishevelled got entangled in the weeds adrift.” (Nishino 2003a: 160), which strongly alludes to Millais’s painting of Ophelia. In the last verse Nishino replaced the original phrase from the poem *yuruku tadayou* (“gently floating”) with the word *yorubenai* (“have no people to depend on”), which gives an additional meaning to the verses that the drowned maiden had no one to depend upon, and therefore decided to commit suicide.

The fifth part of the *kuse* section is a poetic paraphrase of the scene from *Motomezuka* in which the two grieving admirers keep visiting the burial mound of the Unai maiden and eventually kill each other to follow their beloved (NKBT 40: 71). In his novel Sōseki did not mention what happened to these two men, but by using the word *tsuka* (“burial mound”), a reference to *Motomezuka*, Nishino alludes to Sōseki’s novel (Sōseki 2008a: 28, 30), establishing the connection between the image of the Unai maiden’s burial mound and the Nagara maiden’s gravestone (*gorintō*).

However, there are some differences in the interpretation of the burial mound as compared with the original text: in the new *nō* play it is the mound where the bodies of the two men are buried, but in *Motomezuka* it is the burial mound of the Unai maiden, who returns to it as a ghost to tell her sad story. In addition, Nishino replaces the reference to the Ikuta River with the word *ikemizu* (“the bottom of pond”), referring to Kagami Pond, which is mentioned in the third part of the *kuse* section. Apparently, Nishino intentionally omitted mention of the feeling of guilt that the ghost of the Unai maiden expressed in the words *sore sae waga toga ni* (“for this also the guilt is mine”, NKBT 40: 71). Nishino explained his decision by saying that in his play he intended to depict the ghost of the Nagara maiden as free from suffering, unlike the ghost of the Unai maiden in *Motomezuka* who is atoning for her deeds in hell (Nishino 2003a: 98).

¹⁴⁸ In Chapter Ten of *Kusamakura*, the artist visits Kagami (Mirror) Pond and finds out that long ago a young girl from the Shioda family who fell hopelessly in love with a monk drowned herself in the pond (Sōseki 2008a: 131–132). At the end of Chapter Nine, Nami, the female protagonist of the novel and a member of the Shioda family, asks the artist to paint a picture of herself floating peacefully in the pond (*Ibid.*, 123). This image corresponds with that of the Nagara maiden in the new *nō* play, who also does not suffer in hell as did the Unai maiden in *Motomezuka*. On the contrary, it seems that Nishino has taken the concept of his Nagara maiden from this chapter of the novel, embellishing it with the image of Millais’s painting of Ophelia, who is also mentioned several times in Sōseki’s novel.

The sixth part of the *kuse*, which tells about the profound relationship between the Woman and her admirers, is composed of six verses. The first three are an abbreviated paraphrase and the last three a direct quote of a passage from Sōseki's novel (Sōseki 2008a: 53). The central metaphor of the last verses is *ito* or "thread", which, in contrast to the Buddhist image of a karmic cord in Sōseki's novel, has been transformed to express the fragility of the bond between lovers, conveyed by phrases such as *niji no ito* ("thread of the rainbow"), *kasumi no ito* ("thread of the haze") and *kumo no ito* ("thread of the spider") in the play (Nishino 2003a: 105). The thread metaphor was introduced earlier in the play in the phrase *ame no ito* ("threads of rain") in Verse 2 of the 8th *shōdan* (*Ibid.*, 103), where it refers directly to the end of Chapter One of the novel *Kusamakura* (Sōseki 2008a: 16). In addition, the phrase *ame no ito* also refers to the last sentence of Chapter Six of Sōseki's novel, which describes a gentle rain that spills from the clouds in visible threads (*Ibid.*, 88). The phrase *kumo no ito* ("spider's web") in the last verse of the sixth section of the *kuse* alludes to Verses 8 and 10 of the poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* (Sōseki 2003: 107), which are inserted as direct quotes into the *ageuta* section (the 11th *shōdan*) of the fifth *dan* of the play: *kogane to hikaru kumo no me [...] shirogane ito ni hiku* (Nishino 2003a: 103).¹⁴⁹

The verses of the next (seventh) part of the *kuse* section are original text composed by the author of the play to connect the quote from the novel *Kusamakura* in the sixth part of the section with that from the poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* in the eighth.

The last (eighth) part of the *kuse* section is a direct quote from Sōseki's poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* (Verses 33–36), which describes a woman at an old well who sees a falling star and hears a sound in the depths of the well, which she thinks are answers to her prayers (Sōseki 2003: 107). In the last verse of this part the word "an old well" (*koi*) binds together the image of water, alluding to all five stories told in the sources that are used to compose the *kuse* section of the play.

In summarising the many allusions to the different sources it could be said that the *kuse* section creates a multi-layered image of water in which the protagonist of the play drowned herself: the Ikuta River (Ikutagawa; the Unai maiden in *Motomezuka* and in the poem from *Man'yōshū*, the source of the *honka* loans in *Motomezuka*), the Fuchi River (Fuchikawa; the Nagara maiden in Sōseki's novel *Kusamakura*), Kagami Pond (Kagamigaike; the girl from the Shioda family in the novel *Kusamakura*), the waterfall (an anonymous woman in the poem *Minasoko no kan*), an old well (the ghost of the maiden in Sōseki's poem *Oninakidera no ichiya*), and the stream in which Shakespeare's Ophelia drowned herself, the image of which is repeatedly evoked in Sōseki's novel.¹⁵⁰ In addition, in Chapter Nine of Sōseki's *Kusamakura* the young woman Nami tells the

¹⁴⁹ Izumiya Osamu translated the verses as "a spider's eyes gleaming like gold [...] the silver hue of the web it is spinning" (Nishino 2003a: 163–164).

¹⁵⁰ References to Millais' painting are found in Sōseki's novel (2008a: 26, 33, 91).

protagonist about her fantasy of an artist painting a picture of her dead body floating in Kagami Pond (*Ibid.*, 123). In this way the *shite*, the Woman in Nishino's new *nō* play, alludes to the five people who share a similar fate. The collage technique of interwoven borrowings broadens the image of the protagonist by adding layers from other stories and creating a thick web of allusions essential to the main character of *nō* plays.

Table 1. Summary of intertextuality in the *kuse* section of *Kusamakura*

No.	Source of quote or reference	Body of water in the source text	Character in the source text	Allusion
1	Kusamakura	Fuchi River	Nagara maiden	-
2	Minasoko no kan	Waterfall	Anonymous woman	Millais's "Ophelia" Nami Nagara maiden
3	Motomezuka	Ikuta River	Unai maiden	Kagami Pond Nagara Maiden
4	Minasoko no kan	Waterfall	Anonymous woman	Millais's "Ophelia"
5	Motomezuka	Ikuta River	Unai maiden	Old well Kagami Pond Ghost of Woman Nagara maiden
6	Kusamakura	-	Nami	-
7	-	-	Ghost of Woman	-
8	Oninakidera	Old well	Ghost of Woman	-

As the analysis of the *kuse* section demonstrates, Nishino Haruo interwove multiple sources into this part of the text, creating complex characters by drawing *honkadōri* allusions from four main literary works (the novel *Kusamakura*, the poems *Oninakidera no ichiya* and *Minasoko no kan*, and the classical *nō* play *Motomezuka*). Additionally, references to legendary figures (the Unai maiden, Princess Yōkihi, Ophelia) and a modern work of art (Millais's "Ophelia") can be found in this section.

However, close examination of the script reveals that several other sources, such as the classical play *Kantan* (Life and Dream, author unknown), Sōseki's earlier work *Kairo-kō* (The Way Through Vanishing Dew on Chives), and poems from the anthology *Man'yōshū*¹⁵¹, were also used in different parts of the play. On the one hand, it is unusual for a *nō* play to draw from so many sources, but on the other hand, writing a *shinsaku* play offers a rare opportunity to experiment and create new forms. It seems that the author of *Kusamakura* seized the opportunity to dramatise Sōseki's texts, in the process of which he raised the adaptation of source texts to a new level, inserting sizeable components of

¹⁵¹ According to Nishino, he also used in the play some expressions from Sōseki's novel *Maboroshi no tate* (The Shield of Illusion), which was written during same period as *Kusamakura* (Nishino 2003a: 95).

several literary works into his play. In so doing Nishino also broadened the meaning of *honkadōri*, a term that is traditionally used only for poetic loans. However, as direct quotes and paraphrases of prose texts are also interwoven into the script, the technique Nishino used for his play could be called “*honkadōri* loans” in the case of poetic borrowings and “*honkadōri* references” in the case of paraphrased sections of prose texts. The following table gives an overview of *honkadōri* quotes and paraphrased sections, which form a sophisticated structural collage in *Kusamakura*.

Table 2. Structural analysis of *honkadōri* loans and other references in *Kusamakura*
 The play is divided into eleven *dan* structural units and 23 sub-sequences or *shōdan*, which are numbered accordingly in the table. Sub-sequences marked with □ are *shōdan*, which were not specified by the author at the time the play was published (Nishino 2003a: 101). A “*honkadōri* quote” denotes a direct quote from the source material. A “*honkadōri* reference” denotes a part of the source that was slightly altered or modified (poetic language, extracted image, literary style, etc.) to fit the form of a *nō* play. “Original text” denotes a part of the play that was written by the author. A part of the play that was written by the author without any extensive quotes is marked in the table as ⊙; and if author combined his text with some other sources, it is marked in the table as ●. If a *honkadōri* quote, *honkadōri* reference or original text is not present in the sub-sequence it is marked as × in the table.

Dan	No	Sub-sequence	Honkadōri quote	Honkadōri reference	Original text
1	1	<i>shidai</i>	<i>Oninakidera</i> ¹⁵² (Verse 1) <i>Kantan</i> ¹⁵³	×	×
	2	<i>nanori</i>	×	<i>Kusamakura</i> ¹⁵⁴ (p. 13)	●
	3	<i>ageuta</i> (<i>michiyuki</i>)	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p. 8)	<i>Kusamakura</i> (pp. 5, 7-8)	●
2	4	□	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p. 5)	×	×
	5	□	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p. 6)	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p. 6)	●
	6	<i>uta</i>	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p. 6)	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p. 6)	●
3	7	□	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p. 16)	<i>Kusamakura</i> (pp. 14, 16)	●

¹⁵² Natsume Sōseki (1904). *Oninakidera no ichiya* (One Night at the Temple of Weeping Demon), Sōseki 2003: 106–107; is referred to as *Oninakidera* with the verse number(s).

¹⁵³ *Kantan* (Life and Dream, author unknown), SNKBT 57: 34; mentioned as a source of the play by Nishino (2003a: 96); is referred to as *Kantan*.

¹⁵⁴ Natsume Sōseki (1906). *Kusamakura* (The Grass Pillow), Tokyo: Shinchōbunko, 2008; is referred to as *Kusamakura* with the page number(s).

	8	□	×	<i>Kusamakura</i> (pp. 16, 17)	○
4	9	□ (<i>machiutai</i>)	<i>Oninakidera</i> (Verse 2)	<i>Kusamakura</i> (pp. 19-21, 27-28)	○
	10	<i>ageuta</i>	×	<i>Oninakidera</i> (Verse 4) <i>Kusamakura</i> (p. 23)	◎
5	11	<i>ageuta</i>	<i>Oninakidera</i> (Verses 3-18)	×	×
	12	□	<i>Oninakidera</i> (Verses 19-26)	×	×
6	13	<i>ge no ei</i>	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p.28)	×	×
	14	<i>sashi</i>	<i>Oninakidera</i> (Verses 27-32)	<i>Kairo-kō</i>	×
	15	<i>jō no ei</i>	<i>Kairo-kō</i> ¹⁵⁵	×	×
7	16	<i>kakeai</i>	×	<i>Oninakidera</i> (Verse 3)	◎
8	17	<i>kuri</i>	×	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p. 39)	◎
	18	<i>sashi</i>	×	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p.28) <i>Motomezuka</i> ¹⁵⁶ (p. 70)	○
	19	<i>kuse</i>	<i>Kusamakura</i> (pp. 28, 53) <i>Minasoko</i> ¹⁵⁷ (Verses 1-3) <i>Oninakidera</i> (Verses 33-36)	<i>Kusamakura</i> (p. 16) <i>Motomezuka</i> (p. 71)	○
9	20	<i>waka</i>	<i>Minasoko</i> (Verses 1, 5-6)	×	×
10	21	<i>noriji</i>	<i>Oninakidera</i> (Verses 37-42)	×	×
	22	<i>kudoki</i>	<i>Minasoko</i> (Verse 4) <i>Oninakidera</i> (Verses 43-45)	×	×
11	23	<i>kiri</i>	<i>Oninakidera</i> (Verses 46-51)	<i>Sumidagawa</i> <i>Bashō</i> ¹⁵⁸	×

¹⁵⁵ Natsume Sōseki (1905). *Kairo-kō* (The Way through Vanishing Dew on Chives); mentioned as a source of the play by Nishino (2003a: 95); is referred to as *Kairo-kō*.

¹⁵⁶ *Motomezuka* (The Grave Sought, supposed author Kan'ami), NKBT 40: 70-71; mentioned as a source of the play by Nishino (2003a: 95); is referred to as *Motomezuka* with the page number(s).

¹⁵⁷ Natsume Sōseki (1904). *Minasoko no kan* (The Feeling in the Depths of Waters), Sōseki 2003: 108; is referred to as *Minasoko* with the verse number(s).

As seen in the table, eleven of the twenty-three *shōdan* are direct quotes from various sources, and nine *shōdan* were created by using quotes, references and various techniques of adapting the language to the form of *nō*. Only three of the twenty-three *shōdan* (Numbers 10, 16, 17) were written almost entirely by the author of the play, although he also used some words or phrases from different sources in these verses. In conclusion, it can be said that the basic idea and main technique for writing the *shinsaku nō* play *Kusamakura* was a collage, which allowed Nishino to infuse new meaning into well-known source materials and give them a new context.

Analysis of the structure of *honkadori* borrowings in the play reveals an intentional structural pattern according to which the 2nd to 8th *shōdan* are based on the novel *Kusamakura*, explaining the inner world of the *waki* character and describing the scenery around him on his journey. However, from the introduction of the story of the Nagara maiden in the 9th *shōdan* to the end of the play (comprising nearly two thirds of it) the *honkadori* sources are the poems *Oninakidera no ichiya* and *Minasoko no kan*, and the classical play *Motomezuka*. In the second half of the play only the 13th (the last words of the Nagara maiden) and 17th *shōdan* (a description of her beauty) are drawn from the novel *Kusamakura*.

Kusamakura as a collage play written within the strict canon of *nō* theatre has been extremely successful, because the various source materials and rich web of allusions create a multi-layered story with complex characters that largely meets the requirements set for *nō* plays.

4.1.5 Language of the play

Adapting the style of speech

Nishino Haruo intentionally chose not to write his play in the *sōrō* style common to *nō* plays. However, he admitted that it was extremely difficult to write a *nō* play in modern language. He even considered creating a *kyōgen* interlude for the play, in which background information about the story conveyed in colloquial language would have been an even more natural choice.¹⁵⁹ He eventually

¹⁵⁸ Nishino Haruo wrote that in the last (eleventh) *dan* of his play the lines *tsuka mo ugoke to naku koe ni* and *tsuka mo ugokite haru no kaze* allude to the verse *tsuka mo ugoke waga naku koe wa aki no kaze* from Matsuo Bashō's poem, and the last verse of the same *dan kusa bōbō to akenikeri* alludes to the classical play *Sumidagawa* (Nishino 2003a: 94).

¹⁵⁹ After watching the performance, *nō* scholar Yokomichi Mario agreed, saying that the *waki* in the play was the kind of role he would like to see played by a *kyōgen* actor (Nishino 2003a: 99).

decided to rely on the professional skills of the actor Kanze Tetsunojō, who used an elaborate technique in chanting the *waki*'s lines (Nishino 2003a: 96).¹⁶⁰

Nishino designed the style of speech in *Kusamakura* according to the nature of the *waki* and *shite* characters, so that the *waki* speaks in colloquial language when he is by himself and the Woman uses the literary style of the Meiji period (Baba, Hioki and Nishino 2006: 116). It seems that this use of language is also derived from a need to separate the worlds of the young Man (*waki*) and the ghost of the maiden (*shite*). This difference is most explicit in the *kakeai* section (the 7th *dan*), in which the two characters maintain their own style during their conversation: the Man uses a polite *masu* style when directly addressing the Woman, while she speaks in the literary style of the Meiji period (Nishino 2003a: 104).

The new *nō* play draws extensively from both of Sōseki's texts — the novel *Kusamakura* and the poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* — the first of which is written in poetic language mostly in the first person and in an informal *ru-da* style, and the second in free verse using a mixed style, and also occasionally in *ru-da*. In adapting Sōseki's texts for his play Nishino Haruo wrote some phrases in the *de-arū* contemporary literary style. For instance, the word *omoigakenai* ("unexpected") at the end of the phrase from the novel *konna kogana hanashi o kikō to wa omoigakenakatta* ("I did not expect to hear such an elegant old tale", Sōseki 2008a: 28) becomes *omoi mo kakenu koto de atta* in *de-arū* style (Nishino 2003a: 103).

A similar shift in style can also be observed elsewhere, for example, in the 5th *shōdan*, in which Nishino renders the passage from the novel *suminikuki wazurai o hikinuite* ("draw the sting of troubles") as *suminikuki wazurai o hikinuki*, and Sōseki's *utsusanaide mo yoi* ("there is no need to present this world in art") as *utsusazu to mo yoi* (Sōseki 2008a: 6, Nishino 2003a: 102).¹⁶¹ In the first example the verb *hikinuku* is in attributive form (*rentaikei*) instead of *te* form, and in the second example the *naide* form negation is changed to the more archaic *zu* form, and the *te mo* form is replaced by the more literary *to mo* style.

Making a kiki-nō: replacement of Chinese words with Japanese vocabulary

Not only is the choice of language style important in *shinsaku nō* plays, but also the vocabulary that gives a play its archaic image. In addition, an archaic Japanese vocabulary is usually easier to understand without having to read the text in Chinese characters. Nishino explained that his aim was to create a play that would be easy to understand, even labelling his *shinsaku nō* "a *nō* play for

¹⁶⁰ In his review of the performance, Yokomichi praised Kanze Tetsunojō for his ingenious acting style, which relied mainly on traditional intonation, but also used somewhat different tones and stresses (*Ibid.*).

¹⁶¹ The English translation of the phrases from the novel is by Meredith McKinney (Sōseki 2008b: 3–4).

listening” or *kiki no nō* (Nishino 2003a: 96, 98). Another reason for modifying the language of the source texts was to prevent the script from becoming lengthy and tedious (*Ibid.*, 95).

Natsume Sōseki’s *Kusamakura* is a haiku novel, the protagonist of which is a painter who also composes poems, which are integrated into the text. Throughout his work Sōseki uses very poetic language that is extremely adaptable to a *nō* play. The language of both the novel *Kusamakura* and the poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* seems to have impressed the author of the play to the extent that he wanted to use Sōseki’s vocabulary as much as possible, and he made very few changes.

However, some changes to the vocabulary and other adaptations of Sōseki’s text were necessary in order to make the script easily understood when listening to it. Therefore, Nishino paraphrased some passages of Sōseki’s novel instead of using rather lengthy direct quotes from the source. An example of modifying Sōseki’s language can be found in the *utai* (song) section in the second *dan* of the 6th *shōdan*, which explains the poet’s understanding of the world (Sōseki 2008a: 6, Nishino 2003a: 102). Nishino replaced the phrase *reidaihōsun no kamera* (“the camera of the sentient heart” in McKinney’s translation, Sōseki 2008b: 4) with *kokoro no manako* (“our mind’s eye” in Izumiya’s translation, Nishino 2003a: 165), words more suitable for the archaic image of the *nō* world. Nishino probably modified the vocabulary for two reasons: first, because Sōseki’s original wording *reidaihōsun* is a Chinese word and thus difficult to understand without seeing the characters (i.e. reading the text); and second, because the word *kamera* is a loan word that is not suitable for use in a *nō* text. Likewise, instead of the phrase *gyōkikondaku no zokkai* (“sullied world” in McKinney’s translation, Sōseki 2008b: 4, meaning the impure world of ordinary people who are not interested in scholarship or the arts) Nishino used the Japanese vocabulary, changing the phrase to *nigoritaru zokkai* (“muddied, unclean human realm”), which has a much softer sound than the Chinese word in Sōseki’s novel.

Similar examples of replacing Chinese words with Japanese vocabulary can be seen throughout the script. For instance, in the *sashi* section (the 18th *shōdan*) instead of the Chinese word *kesō suru* (“yearn”, Sōseki 2008a: 28) Nishino used a Japanese word *nabiku* (“yield”, Nishino 2003a: 105); in the 5th *shōdan* the word *chōkoku* (“sculpture”, Sōseki 2008a: 6) is changed to *takumi no waza* (“craft”, Nishino 2003a: 102); and in the 7th *shōdan* of Nishino’s play the word *onsenba* (“spa”, “hot spring”, Sōseki 2008a: 14) from Sōseki’s text is replaced with *ideyu* (Nishino 2003a: 102), using the same characters as an *ateji* or substitute.¹⁶² Similarly, in the *ageuta* section (the 3rd *shōdan*) Nishino paraphrased Sōseki’s text *shunji no yoyū mo nai* (“without pause”, Sōseki 2008a: 8) as *ma naku toki naku*

¹⁶² In Sōseki’s text the reading “yuba” is added to the characters 温泉場 (Sōseki 2008a: 132). The characters for *ideyu* are 出湯.

("endlessly", Nishino 2003a: 102), systematically avoiding the use of Chinese words to make the text easy to understand.

Achieving a balance between colloquial and archaic language

Nishino used colloquial language in his play whenever possible. For example, in the 7th *shōdan* (Nishino 2003a: 102) he exchanged the word *ayashimareru* ("look like") in the phrase from Sōseki's novel *shihō wa tada kumo no umi ka to ayashimareru* (Sōseki 2008a: 16, "all around me seems nothing but a sea of cloud" in McKinney's translation, Sōseki 2008b: 12) for the word *maru de* ("seem as"), changing the excerpt from the novel to *maru de kumo no umi da* ("as if I was facing an ocean of clouds" in Izumiya's translation, Nishino 2003a: 165).

Another technique that Nishino used in adapting Sōseki's language for the *shinsaku* play was to make colloquial language more archaic or literary in style. An example of the technique is the replacement of the word *konna* in Sōseki's phrase *Yo wa konna yamazato e kite* ("I came to this kind of mountain village", Sōseki 2008a: 28) with *kono yō na* in Nishino's play (Nishino 2003a: 103). Similarly, the phrase *futari no aida ni* ("between them") from Sōseki's novel (Sōseki 2008a: 53) is expressed with *kimi to ware* ("you and me"), vocabulary more suitable to *nō* (Nishino 2003a: 105).

Nishino used two different techniques for adapting phrases from the source text: he put the words into a more poetic form and replaced some words with those that were more comprehensible, while still conforming to the language code of *nō* plays.

Omission of onomatopoeic and mimetic words

Nishino also used the technique of omitting onomatopoeic and mimetic words found in Sōseki's original text. The first example of this method of adapting Sōseki's language is found in the 7th *shōdan* of the play (Nishino 2003a: 102), in which Nishino omits the mimetic word *burabura to* ("wander around") from the phrase *burabura to Nanamagari e kakaru* (Sōseki 2008a: 8) ("I set off up the winding track, taking my time" in McKinney's translation, Sōseki 2008b: 6). The second example is in the last verse of the same *shōdan*, from which the word *shitoshito to* ("drizzle") in the quote from Sōseki's novel (Sōseki 2008a: 16) has been omitted, and in the play is written simply as *ame mo furidashite kita* ("it has begun to rain" in Izumiya's translation, Nishino 2003a: 165).

Extracting images from the source text

In addition to adapting the style and vocabulary of the source text to his *nō* play Nishino Haruo used a special technique of extracting images and inserting only shortened and “compressed” phrases full of allusive power into the script.

A good example of applying different strategies to writing the script is the 3rd *shōdan* (Nishino 2003a: 102), the verses of which have been drawn from different parts of Natsume Sōseki’s novel (Sōseki 2008a: 7–8, 22). This sub-sequence of the play begins with the verse *nodokana haru no yamaji* (“mountain path on a soft spring day”), which combines vocabulary from Chapters One and Two of Sōseki’s novel, *nodokana haru no hi* (“a calm spring day”) and *haru no yamaji* (“a mountain path in springtime”).

A similar technique of combining quotes from different parts of the source text and producing a new image from them is also found in the 9th *shōdan* (Nishino 2003a: 103): in the last verse the phrase *ichiya o akasu* (“spending one night”) was created by combining the word *ichiya* (“one night”) from the title of the poem *Oninakidera no ichiya* and a phrase from the second verse of the poem *yoru o akasu* (“spending a night”).

Nominalisation of phrases

In addition to the technique of combining two phrases into one verse that he used in writing the first two lines of the 3rd *shōdan*, Nishino also nominalised phrases, rearranging the order of the words to modify a noun (*meishi shūshoku* or noun modification). He used this technique to compose Verse 4 of the 3rd *shōdan*, shortening an adjective from the source text *aoguroi* (“blueblack”) to *aoi* (“blue”), and changing the phrase from Sōseki’s novel *baketsu o fuseta yōna mine ga sobiete iru* (“a mountain peak resembling a bucket”) to a noun modifier in order to create the image of a lofty peak *takamine* (Sōseki 2008a: 7, Nishino 2003a: 102).

In conclusion, it can be seen that in composing the verses of the 3rd *shōdan* of *Kusamakura* Nishino used three methods of adapting Sōseki’s text: extracting an image from long sentences, unifying the images by combining two phrases, and compressing phrases in order to either create a noun modifier or nominalise phrases.

Changing the meaning of adapted phrases

The techniques Nishino used in adapting Sōseki’s language can be seen as technical devices for creating the text of a *shinsaku* play, because the images and phrases are generally used in a context similar to that of the source material without any major changes in the meaning. Nevertheless, at least one example can be found in the script – in the 7th *shōdan* of the play – in which the original

meaning of a phrase has been altered in such a way that it communicates a meaning contrary to that in Sōseki's novel. This kind of shift can be seen in Nishino's play, in which the main character, a poet, has passed the teahouse (*tōge no chaya mo koe*) and left the Nanamagari Path (*Nanamagari mo sugi*) when a sudden rain interrupts his journey and causes him to seek shelter in a remote temple (Nishino 2003a: 102). In Chapter One of the novel the artist takes the path in order to find shelter in a mountain inn, where he arrives in Chapter Three after visiting the teahouse in Chapter Two (Sōseki 2008a: 8, 14).

Another minor conflict between the play and the novel can also be found in the same *shōdan*, in which the poet says that he must hasten (*iza michi o isogō*) to find a shelter (Nishino 2003a: 102), while in the novel the artist is in no hurry (*moto yori isogu tabi de nai kara*) and wanders in the mountains (Sōseki 2008a: 8).

4.1.6 Innovative performance elements

The premiere of *Kusamakura* was held on the *nō* stage of the Sky Hall of Hōsei University, November 15, 2002.¹⁶³ Professor Nishino described his first *nō* play as a “commemorial *nō*” (*kinen nō*) and a “*nō* for ears” (*kiki no nō*), suggesting that because of the elaborate poetry and the emphasis on the verses and music the play was designed for listening rather than watching (Nishino 2003a: 93, 98, Nishino 2003b).

The costumes and masks were designed according to the canon of *nō*: the character of the Woman appeared first with a green *mizugoromo* over her shoulders (the same as the *shite* wears in the classical play *Takasago*), her hair falling on both sides of her head, and wearing a type of mask called *Takarazō*; later in the play she wore a red *koshimaki* over which was drawn a heart-shaped white *nuihaku* in the *tsuboori* style (Nishino 2003a: 99). According to *nō* scholar Yokomichi Mario the costume “suited the character well”, although it did seem to be “rather realistic” (*Ibid.*). Renowned poet Baba Akiko found the character of the maiden so beautiful that she forgot everything else about her (Baba, Hioki and Nishino 2006: 115), which indicates that the onstage presentation of the character of the Woman was a great success. The costume of the *waki* was a *jūtoku haori* with a plain-coloured *kirihakama*, which is often used by *kyōgen* actors from the Izumi School, but is not traditionally worn by *waki* in *nō* plays. Yokomichi Mario is said to have commented that the unconventional costume of the *waki* character was also well suited to this *shinsaku* play (Nishino 2003a: 99).

In addition to the unusual costume of the *waki* in the *shinsaku* production, some innovations were introduced into the *shite* actor's dance. In the ninth *dan* of the play the *shite* performed “a dance in the depths of waters” or *minasoko no mai*, which was performed at a walking pace, in contrast to the upbeat rhythm of the music (*nori*), creating a feeling that the dance was being performed underwater.

¹⁶³ Subsequent performances were held at the National Nō Theatre on a traditional *nō* stage.

The dance and the actor's movements were impressive enough to prompt a *nō* reviewer to suggest calling *Kusamakura* "a dance piece" (*Ibid.*).

Another innovative experiment was made in the performance of the *nō* chorus in the eleventh *dan*. Nishino had the front row of the chorus chant verses that were repeated by the back row in the form of a canon (*Ibid.*, 97).

The audience warmly welcomed the new play and a *nō* reviewer wrote that the play was unmistakably a *mugen nō* (*Ibid.*, 99), thus confirming that it belongs to the tradition of *nō* theatre. Some *nō* critics did say that *Kusamakura* differed from a conventional *nō* play because it lacked the theme of religious salvation and was composed in an overly rational manner, resulting in a piece that made no distinction between the world of *nō* and the real world (*Ibid.*). However, despite this criticism the opinion was expressed that *Kusamakura* is leading *nō* in new directions and inspires a search for new possibilities within the *nō* canon (*Ibid.*, 100).

4.1.7 Conclusion

Analysis of the play confirmed that Nishino strongly intended to create a new form of *nō* play. He drew mainly on two works of modern literature, a novel and a poem by Natsume Sōseki, which are extensively quoted and paraphrased in the play. Additionally, the author used quotes from and references to two classical plays and three poems in writing the play. Such extensive use of source materials is an extraordinary accomplishment for *nō* plays, but the collage technique employed for merging multiple sources compensates for the lack of traditional use of *honkadori* and *honzetsu* in writing the script. Because of the traditional structure of the play the innovative use of source materials also seems natural.

In addition to a unique interpretation of *honzetsu* borrowings and *honkadori* quotes in the play, the use of language also differs from classical plays in the unusual way in which the source texts are modified. However, alteration of the source texts was probably intended to make the language of the play conform more closely to the *nō* canon, even though modern language is used, rather than the archaic Japanese common to classical plays.

The design of the *waki* and *shite* characters is also exceptional compared with classical plays because the *waki* is mainly based on two sources and the *shite* character is a combined portrait of five women. The costumes of the characters were designed differently from those in classical plays; the *shite* performed in a conventional *nō* costume, but the *waki* wore the costume of *kyōgen* actors, which is unusual in *nō* plays.

The play was performed by a professional *nō* troupe on a *nō* stage, without any particularly innovative elements added to the performance. There is no information available about the use of unusual stage or hand props or lighting; therefore, it could be assumed that these elements also followed *nō* conventions.

The *minasoko no mai* dance at the end of the play was performed in a unique walking style. Innovative use of the chorus and music did not change the overall impression of the new *nō* play, which was welcomed by critics as well as audiences.

The analysis of the structural and performance elements of the play is summarised in the following table.

Table 3. Web of *nō* elements in the *shinsaku* play *Kusamakura*

The elements that fully meet the conventional requirements for *nō* plays are marked in the table as ⊙, and those that appear in a slightly modified form are marked as ●. A question mark is used for performance elements about which information could not be found in any source available to the author of the thesis.

Structural elements		Source	●
		Characters	⊙
		Structure	⊙
		Language	●
Performance elements	Internal elements	Actors' training	⊙
		Music	⊙
		Costume and mask	●
	External elements	Stage	⊙
		Hand and stage props	?
		Lighting	?

4.2 *Shinsaku* plays in English: Marlatt's *The Gull* – *nō* for a foreign audience

4.2.1 Extracting a story from the aural tradition

The Gull is a two-act *shinsaku* play written in English by Daphne Marlatt in 2006. The play tells the story of Japanese fishermen living in the coastal village of Steveston, British Columbia, Canada before the Second World War. The play was written as part of the Sister Cities Program to which Richmond, B.C. (formerly Steveston) in Canada and Wakayama in Japan belonged. Heidi Specht, the artistic director of Pangaea Arts, a Vancouver-based intercultural and interdisciplinary world arts organisation, wanted “to promote cultural interaction and the exchange of ideas between diverse communities and to introduce Canadian audiences to performance traditions around the world”.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ For further information see the Pangaea Arts homepage at <http://www.pangaea-arts.com/about/>. The organisation explores storytelling practices around the world (e.g. *Fabulous Fables and Masked Mayhem* in 2004; and *Stories on Wheels*, which is written in the Japanese *kamishibai* style, and is currently on the playlist), the fusion of different theatre traditions (*Cultural Metaphors* 1997,

Specht had been interested in *nō* since she participated in Richard Emmert's Noh Training Project in Bloomsburg, so in 2001 she told Emmert about her intention to create a *nō* play for Pangaea Arts about Japanese fishermen in Steveston. Shortly before the decision was made an exhibition took place about Japanese fishermen living in a small historical settlement near the mouth of the Fraser River that further increased her interest in creating a *nō* play on that theme (Knutson 2008: 9).

Heidi Specht engaged Daphne Marlatt, a poet, novelist and editor who had also been connected with the theme for decades.¹⁶⁵ Marlatt recalls her eye-opening experience during the interviews she conducted for an oral history project in the 1970s with the members of the Steveston fishing community, who had received permission from the Canadian government to return to the village after 1949.¹⁶⁶ Marlatt recalls her first impressions walking through Star Camp in the 1970s: she sensed the "impermanence [...] and the fragility of human life", an idea that forms the core of most *nō* plays. She said that the story of the Japanese-Canadian fishermen "was 'shouting' at [them] to be voiced and heard". She also felt that as her poetry and *nō* drama "share both lyricism and psychological depth", the themes expressed in her earlier poems fit quite naturally and translated easily into *nō* form (Downey 2006).

Marlatt had been interested in *nō* drama since the 1960s when she took a course in Japanese literature while studying at the University of British Columbia (Curran 2004). After participating in the *nō* workshop held in Vancouver in 2003, Marlatt travelled to Mio in Wakayama Prefecture, Japan, in 2004. In her play Marlatt wanted to establish a strong connection between the sister-cities Steveston and Mio, and therefore needed to visualise the site of the Japanese fishing village located in Wakayama Prefecture (Stanga 2005). In Mio she met the actor Akira Matsui, who would play the main role in her future play, and who was also responsible for staging *The Gull* and performing the *shite* role (Marlatt 2009: 16-17).

In 2005 she again went to Japan to work in close collaboration with Richard Emmert, who wrote the music for the play. Emmert had worked with several other playwrights in creating English *nō* plays, and was very impressed by the structure of Marlatt's play (Curran 2004). It was further developed during two readings in 2005, which provided feedback from an audience and were crucial to

Einstein's Dreams 2002, *Jade in the Coal* 2010), and bilingual theatre projects (*Into the Heart of Beijing Opera* 2000, *Butterfly Dream* 2004, *The Gull – The Steveston Noh Project* 2006).

¹⁶⁵ Marlatt wrote a cycle of poems titled *Steveston* (1974), edited the anthology of oral histories *Steveston Recollected: a Japanese-Canadian History* (1975), and created a radio play *Steveston* (1976).

¹⁶⁶ For additional information about the project see Chapter 5 of Beverly Curran's book "Theatre Translation Theory and Performance in Contemporary Japan – Native Voices, Foreign Bodies" (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).

the process of writing the play.¹⁶⁷ *Nō* workshops for Canadian actors in 2005 and lectures/demonstrations in 2006 also contributed substantially to the project.

The playwright spoke with local people and heard many interesting stories about the connections between the two communities. From one such conversation Marlatt conceived the idea of writing a play about a mother who was the daughter of a temple priest, and who had left her home in Wakayama to marry a Japanese man living in Canada. During her research in Japan she was also told about a superstition among Japanese fishermen that seeing a seagull flying just above the waves portends a storm. Additionally, the fieldwork she had done decades ago in Steveston reminded her of a story about fishermen who had reportedly seen ghosts wandering the coastline (Marlatt 2009: 17–19). From these fragments of stories Marlatt composed a play with a storyline featuring two second-generation (*nisei*) Japanese brothers who return to their fishing village after the end of the war. During a storm a ghostly figure appears to them in the form of a seagull, which is actually the ghost of their dead mother.

4.2.2 Creating symbolic characters

The characters in the play represent two generations of Japanese-Canadians from fishing villages.¹⁶⁸ The *waki* and *wakitsure* are cast as second-generation Japanese, whose characters, in playwright Daphne Marlatt's words, "are more elaborated, the dynamic between the older and younger brother more insistent than in traditional *nō*" (*Ibid.*, 27). The brothers in *The Gull* are on a journey to find their roots when they meet a Gull-Woman who appears to be the ghost of their dead mother. The character of the Gull is in a sense typical of *nō*, embodying a mixture of sadness and fury. Jean Miyake Downey found that all the characters in *The Gull* "express the collective memories of loss experienced by interned Japanese Canadians and lingering memories of concern felt by Japanese people who worried about their loved ones across the ocean during those years" (Downey 2006).

It is unusual in a *nō* play for the characters to be closely connected with each other, because the *waki* generally visits a location that is coincidentally related to the *shite*. The role of the *waki* in *nō* plays is to question the *shite* and provoke him or her into revealing his or her identity, but in this *shinsaku* play the *waki* does not take an active role in finding out the true identity of the *shite*. In the *mondō* (prose dialogue) the brothers – the *waki* and *wakitsure* – sense something familiar about the Gull-Woman, but it is an old fisherman – the *ai* – who suggests that the Gull is the troubled spirit of their mother (Marlatt 2009: 64).

¹⁶⁷ See the Pangaea Arts homepage at <http://www.pangaea-arts.com/history/>.

¹⁶⁸ During the comic interlude the *ai* character, a local fisherman named Harry Takahashi, who appears to know the parents of the two brothers, reveals that the surname of the brothers is Arakawa (Marlatt 2009: 56), but the first names of the brothers, their father and mother are not mentioned in the play.

Feelings of frustration and anger cause her spirit to appear to her sons as a gull, giving them a message to return to Japan (*Ibid.*, 54).

The *waki* and *wakitsure* are symbols of troubled second-generation Japanese searching for their roots. They are also eager to understand what happened to their parents, who, along with other fishermen's families, were forced to relocate to internment camps in the mountains, to abandon all their possessions, and to eventually pass away without returning home.¹⁶⁹ Jean Miyake Downey found that Daphne Marlatt "created characters who express the collective memories of loss experienced by interned Japanese Canadians" (Downey 2006). The characters in the play represent more than the sad story of the members of the fictional Arakawa family; they personify the shame and anger of the first-generation Japanese (the Gull-Woman/Mother), and the uneasiness of young second-generation Japanese (the *waki* and *wakitsure*) who exist between the Japanese and Canadian cultures. A local fisherman, Harry Takahashi (the *ai*), who knew the family, functions as a middleman between the two generations: he helps the Arakawa brothers to understand what had happened to their parents, and gives them a clue that the Gull-Woman might be the spirit of their mother, who is trying to contact them.

4.2.3 Structural elements

Structure and dual climax of the play

The structure of the play follows the general pattern of two-act dream plays, in which the *shite* appears in the first act in the disguise of the Gull-Woman, and in the second act as the mother of the brothers, the *waki* and *wakitsure*. The play is composed of structural units, beginning as is typical of canonical plays with the verses of the *waki* in the *shidai* (entrance song) (Marlatt 2009: 41). The opening verses describe the general circumstances of the play, such as the season (late spring), the location (the sea), and the special circumstances of the characters (*nisei* brothers who return to fish in a place full of nostalgic memories).

The introduction is followed by the "name-saying" (*nanori*), in which the *waki* expresses his sorrowful feelings about his parents' having been forced to leave the coast of British Columbia, and all their possessions confiscated, including their fishing boat. After this section comes the travel song (*michiyuki*), which describes the beautiful coastal scenery of Canada and the coming storm.

In the next part of the play the *shite* appears to the fishermen (the *waki* and *wakitsure*) in the form of a bird-woman, and through her songs gives them a hint about the cause of her anguish: she has been taken far from her homeland against her will. A dialogue (*mondō*) between the fishermen and the Gull follows,

¹⁶⁹ In the play the reader is informed that the brothers' father died in a road camp and their mother in hospital (Marlatt 2009: 57).

during the course of which the brothers begin to suspect that the bird-woman might be the spirit of their mother. However, unlike in classical *nō* plays, at the end of this section the *waki* does not ask the *shite* directly to reveal her true self, but rather is still unsure of her real identity. This is a nuance that differs from the traditional pattern of the *mondō* section, but as the playwright has explained, she took “some liberties with the conventions” in order to modify and adjust the *nō* form for Western audiences (Knutson 2008: 10).

The conversation in prose is followed by the part of the play in which the *shite*, while dancing and chanting, tells about her youth and arrival in Canada. At the end of the *kuse* section, which includes a long narrative about the story of the Gull/Mother chanted by the chorus, the brothers realise that the bird is their mother. Then the chorus, chanting for the *waki*, asks the Gull-Woman to reveal her identity. In most *nō* plays this kind of inquiry about the identity of the *shite* is made directly by the *waki*, but Marlatt’s play provides a slightly different solution to the situation.

The following *ai-kyōgen* interlude is longer than usual for *nō* plays, and includes an explanation of the *shite*’s story in a more conversational mode than is typical of *ai-kyōgen* in *nō* plays (*Ibid.*, 10). The playwright explains that the interlude had to be extended in order to provide enough time for the *shite* to change costume before the second act (Marlatt 2009: 28). The interlude is apparently modelled after *kyōgen* plays, which are full of situational comedy and wordplay, because the function of an interlude in a *nō* play is usually to deliver background information for the story. The comic interpretation of the role of the *ai* in *The Gull* and the heightened realism add vitality to the play, but the interlude does not destroy the *nō* atmosphere. Drinking sake during a dialogue is commonly seen in *kyōgen* plays; therefore, it would not be unimaginable that a Japanese fisherman living in Canada would drink whiskey instead of sake, as occurs in this play. It also seems natural that an elderly Japanese Canadian fisherman would come on board the brothers’ boat, offer them a drink, and start talking about bygone days in the village.

In addition to conveying information about the fate of the brothers’ parents, the comic interlude in this play explains the political circumstances that gave rise to such painful memories not only for the Arakawa family, but also for many other Japanese-Canadians (Knutson 2008: 15). It helps to provide a framework for the story and to establish an emotional bond between the audience and the theme of the play. Interestingly, the interlude begins and ends with the lines of a folk song sung by the *ai*, an old Japanese fisherman, which is exceptional for *nō* plays. This song and other original *kata* in the *ai-kyōgen* create an informal atmosphere, which in addition to the conversational style of speech helps to establish a context for the play to which an audience can easily relate.

The second act starts with the *machiutai* (“waiting song”), in which the *waki* and *wakitsure* wait for the spirit of their mother to reappear. In classical plays the ghost appears to the *waki* in a dream, but in *The Gull*, the *waki* does not fall asleep in order to visualise the spirit. Instead, the brothers see the Gull-Woman, who is

the ghost of their mother. The ghost tells them to go back to Japan, dances, and vanishes at the sound of a bell buoy.

The dual climax of *The Gull* has been constructed according to the traditional form of *nō* plays, with the ear-opening moment at the end of the first act, in which the chorus chants a song for the *shite* describing her confusion and desperate desire to communicate with her sons. The ear-opening section is followed by the eye-opening, at the beginning of which the *shite* dances slowly, but then performs a rapid *hayamai* dance. The climax of *The Gull* conveys the inner struggle and powerful emotions of the *shite* that are resolved in the following *kiri* section, in which the power of a *nembutsu* prayer brings her soul final peace.

Buddhist elements in the play

At the beginning of the play the cause of the Gull-Woman's anguish is unclear, and the second act begins with a scene in which the brothers are waiting to see their mother's ghost, which is "caught between both worlds" of life and death (Marlatt 2009: 65–66). This Buddhist image of the uncertain state of a *shite* poised between the two realms is developed in *The Gull* as a symbol of the woman's confusion, whose soul is torn between Canada and Japan, and who yearns for her lost home in Mio "on the dark side of the sea" (*Ibid.*, 67–68, 73).

The Mother suddenly remembers pulling the bell rope in her father's temple. In the play, the bell rope has a dual image: it reminds her of Amida Buddha's cord with which He "guides the lost through stormy waves to his Western Paradise" (*Ibid.*, 68). When the Mother realises that her sons have no intention of returning to Japan, the cord changes into a rope entangling her feet and causing her pain (*Ibid.*, 70), which is a reminder of the plastic waste floating in the oceans that endangers sea creatures (Knutson 2008: 14).

Verses describing the ocean in the *kiri* or ending section of the play create a poetic image of one indivisible world (Marlatt 2009: 73). This is the state of mind that prepares the *shite* to escape her seemingly endless suffering. The end of the play in which the Mother's soul is pacified by the Buddhist prayer "Namu Amida Butsu" (*Ibid.*, 74) resembles many classical *nō* plays, especially Kanze Motomasa's *Sumidagawa*, in which the mother and child are reunited for a moment, just as the Mother in *The Gull* reaches an understanding with her sons, only to be separated again.¹⁷⁰

At the end of the play the *shite* says a *nembutsu* prayer, which, according to Pure Land Buddhism, offers salvation not only to practitioners, but everyone. The prayer chanted for the *shite* by the chorus symbolises the reconciliation of the

¹⁷⁰ A similar scene is found in the classical play *Sumidagawa* (SNKBT 57: 344), in which the verses *tagai ni — te ni te o torikawaseba, mata — kie kie to nari yukeba* ("they take one another's hand, and again — he is fading away") are strongly reminiscent of the situation in *The Gull*.

Mother with her sons' choice. However, it is extraordinary that unlike in classical plays in which the *waki* cast as a priest reads the prayer for the salvation of the *shite*, in *The Gull* the *shite* herself chants the *nembutsu* prayer.

The use of Buddhist images, such as a spirit living between two realms, a Buddhist temple bell and a prayer, gives the play a more Japanese flavour. At the same time, the Buddhist elements in the play seem to be entirely natural, since all the characters in this English *nō* play are Japanese, and the playwright had personal reasons for interweaving Buddhism into her play.¹⁷¹

4.2.4 Creating intertextuality in the play

The *shinsaku* play *The Gull* is a good example of the original creation of a successful new play. Writing a *shinsaku* play without a solid literary source still requires the use of well-known literary materials that can be interwoven into the script. However, finding and selecting suitable materials for *honkadori* borrowings was a difficult task, because in Daphne Marlatt's opinion there were no materials of *honzetsu* quality in Canadian literature that were equivalent to Japanese classics (*Ibid.*, 24). Another reason for the lack of material about the Japanese-Canadian community is that its history became known to many Canadians only recently.

In addition, it was difficult to find an equivalent to a *meisho* or famous site, because the local history was not well known to Canadians. The problem lies in the historical "de-culturation of indigenous people" by the Canadian government, as a consequence of which the village of Steveston was not even on the map (*Ibid.*, 24–25). Daphne Marlatt explained that the indigenous place names of the coastal area of British Columbia, such as Klemtu or China Hat, were only known to the local fishermen, and she intentionally included these place names in her play as "a small bow towards that long oral tradition" (*Ibid.*, 25). As evidenced by the feedback after performances the audience did recognise these details in the play and appreciated this gesture made by the playwright (Downey 2006).

Using contemporary Canadian poetry for *honkadori* borrowings

Despite the shortage of material caused by the lack of commonly known classics in Canadian literature that would be analogous to the long Japanese literary tradition, Daphne Marlatt decided to use contemporary Canadian poetry. She knew that a Canadian audience would not recognise quotes from Japanese poetry, and therefore she used verses from Canadian poems "with very strong

¹⁷¹ Marlatt was exposed to Buddhism at an early age when she lived in Malaysia and was cared for by a Buddhist nanny, who had a strong influence on her (Downey 2006).

images" that would "carry certain thematic motifs of the play" (*Ibid.*). Thus, in order to create literary allusions in the play Marlatt used works by Canadian poets of Japanese descent: Roy Miki, Joy Kogawa, and Roy Kiyooka, award-winning authors known to a wide circle of readers. It can therefore be concluded that the choice of *honkadori* sources meets the requirements set by the *nō* canon, as they are connected with and familiar to local audiences.

Verses from poems by the three well-known authors are interwoven into the script and create a structure "like a fisherman's net" (*Ibid.*). The quotes are inserted into the first act after the *shite's* recitation (*sashi*) and after the prose dialogue (*mondō*) between the *waki* and the *shite*, and into the second act when the *shite* performs circular dance movements. All three excerpts from the poems are chanted by the *nō* chorus, which delivers the songs for the *shite* in the first act and describe her inner feelings in the second act.

The first quote from a poem paints an idyllic scene of the life the fishermen and their families once led on the Canadian coast (Marlatt 2009: 45). Verses from the second poem convey the anguish felt by the *shite*, who does not see a future for the Japanese in Canada, expressed by the phrases "shadows fade and grow" and "these freedom-heavy days" (*Ibid.*, 49). The third quote follows the tragic scene at the end of the play in which the ghost of the Mother accuses her sons of having left her to die in a hostile land. She is distressed because her sons are unwilling to leave Canada. The chorus then chants a song for the *shite* that is taken from a poem, describing her anger and confusion (*Ibid.*, 71-72). By placing two poems that express the inner feelings of the main character at the beginning of the play and another quote in the emotional climax of the play just before the *kiri*, or rapid ending, that gives the *shite* a conclusive "release from anguish" (*Ibid.*, 74), the playwright has managed to follow the basic pattern of *honkadori* used in *nō* plays.

Creating a web of metaphors

Because of the lack of well-known Canadian classics from which allusive references could be drawn Marlatt created a web of symbols to provide intertextuality in her play. She used images that are immediately recognisable in the Western literary and oral traditions. The first symbol is that of a seagull, whose cries resemble the agonised lament of a tortured soul, but at the same evokes the free spirit of birds of passage. The seagull is also a bird common to the coastal areas of Japan and British Columbia, making it a symbol that unifies both nations. In the play the gull is described as a "lost" or "wretched" bird who is "lulled by the promise of a good life" far from her native home (*Ibid.*, 44-45).

In her interview Daphne Marlatt pointed to a pun that is hidden in the word "gull", which also means "to deceive or fool somebody" if used as a verb (Stanga 2005). In the first act of the play the *shite* uses this verb in the phrases "gulled I was, far from home" and "how gulled we were" (Marlatt 2009: 44, 53),

which imply that she was twice deceived: first by her husband, who sent her a much younger photo of himself to ensure that she would marry him, and then by Canada, which did not provide the good life that she felt she deserved. This double meaning of the word “gull” becomes clear later in the play from the *shite*’s lines and the story that the *ai* tells to her sons (*Ibid.*, 52–53, 60).

Throughout the play there is a veiled confrontation between two separate worlds, the symbols of which are fishermen and seabirds. The world of the Arakawa brothers (the *waki* and *wakitsure*) is full of good childhood memories connected with nostalgic landmarks; therefore, they describe their home as the “salmon coast”, and feel like salmon who have returned to the place where they were born (*Ibid.*, 48, 43). In contrast, the world of the Gull-spirit is full of unresolved rage; as a consequence, she does not understand that her sons’ true home is Canada, not Japan. Her stormy world is depicted by images of rain, “rising wind”, “rough sea”, “battering waves that come and come”, and the darkness of the night (*Ibid.*, 71). She is “caught in the storm” of her longing for the lost past, caused by a changing world that is symbolised in the play by the image of wind, as in the phrases “destiny’s rough wind has stranded me”, “gale-force winds of war” and “shifty winds of time” (*Ibid.*, 45, 69). As a result, she is lonely and angry, and feels trapped, although her “spirit flies like a gull” (*Ibid.*, 45, 53, 47).

Allusive parallels with the classical play *Sumidagawa*

Daphne Marlatt (*Ibid.*, 26) also used verses from the classical *nō* play *Sumidagawa*, reasoning that Canadians are familiar with this work from the adaptation of the theme by Benjamin Britten for a chamber opera *Curlew River* (1964). She thought that inserting lines from the classical play would help to create intertextuality in the *shinsaku* play. The quote from *Sumidagawa* is in the first act of *The Gull*, in which the *maeshite*, who appears in the form of a gull-woman, turns to the young fishermen and communicates with them in symbolic language. She speaks about the “poor Mio birds” who are “blown far off-course” (*Ibid.*, 48) and sings two lines from the classical play *ware mo mata iza koto towan miyako-dori* (“I in turn ask you the questions, birds from the capital”, SNKBT 57: 341), which alludes to seagulls as *miyakodori* or “birds from the capital”, who are messengers bringing news from loved ones.

In *Sumidagawa* a madwoman (the *shite*) is looking for her young son Umewakamaru (acted by a *kokata* or child actor), who was kidnapped by a slaver and taken far from his home to the land of Azuma in the eastern provinces of Japan. The woman from the capital asks the *miyakodori* whether her son is alive. After asking the question she sees people gathering at a mound on the opposite coast of the Sumida River and learns that this is the grave of her son, thus receiving an answer from the birds (*Ibid.*, 338–345).

Both motifs — the boatman from the Sumida river and the *miyakodori* — are borrowed from the 9th episode of *Ise monogatari* (The Tale of Ise), in which the poet Ariwara no Narihira (referred to in the text as “the man of old” or *mukashi otoko*) leaves Kyoto. The poet is longing for his wife, whom he left behind in the capital, and hears from a boatman about birds that can tell whether the person one loves is alive and well (NKBT 9: 116-117). On the one hand, in the Canadian play, asking gulls to bring news from home means that the ghost of the Mother expects to hear news of her family in Japan, comparing her sons to gulls that fly over the ocean. On the other hand, combining the image of *miyakodori* with the phrase “Mio birds”, which the Mother repeatedly uses when she appears as the Gull-Woman in the first act, refers both to her sons and herself, who have lost contact with their home on the other side of the ocean — the boys with Japan and the mother with Canada.

The impact of *Sumidagawa* on Marlatt’s play is more profound than a few verses interwoven into the script. For instance, the *waki* character in both plays is a boatman — a *watashimori* of the *hayabune* ferry operating on the Sumida River in the classical play, and a fisherman sailing his boat on the sea in the new play. The motive of the main character in both plays also seems to be the same: in *Sumidagawa* a madwoman is searching for her lost child to bring him back home, and in *The Gull* a bird-woman visits her sons’ boat to call them back to Japan.

Associations with the classical play can also be found in the way the *waki* and *shite* interact in both plays; in *Sumidagawa* the boatman does not initially want to let the woman on his boat. A similar situation exists in Marlatt’s play, in which the brothers are unable to communicate with the Gull-Woman in the first act, until she appears in her true form as their mother in the second act. The similarity between the two plays lies in the reluctant attitude of both *Sumidagawa*’s boatman and *The Gull*’s brothers toward the *shite* at the beginning of the play, although they change their mind after some explanation. In *Sumidagawa* the change occurs after the conversation between the madwoman and the boatman that draws on the resemblance between her situation and Narihira’s story from *Ise monogatari*. In *The Gull* the brothers begin to regard the mysterious figure of the seagull differently after the conversation with the old fisherman in the *ai-kyōgen* interlude, during which the boys find out about their family’s past.

There are some other slight parallels in the endings of both plays. In *The Gull* the Mother hears the sound of a temple bell (which in reality is a bell buoy) after which the *nembutsu* prayer is chanted (Marlatt 2009: 73), and in *Sumidagawa* the mother beats a *shōko* gong while reciting the prayer (SNKBT 57: 344). In both plays after hearing temple bells or the sound of a gong a Buddhist prayer is chanted, which gives relief to the soul of the ghost — to the Mother in Marlatt’s play and to the child in Motomasa’s. The ending of each of the two plays is similarly set in a moonlit scene: in *Sumidagawa* the phantom of the lost child and his mother are briefly reunited after a Buddhist prayer is recited, and in *The Gull*

the Mother finds emotional relief when a *nembutsu* is chanted.¹⁷² The Mother in Marlatt's play lived as a lost child in a foreign land, but as a mother she has come to look for her children. Therefore, in the end both sides of the Mother's character meet and find peace, as her spirit experiences a world unified by the ocean, which "joining here and there [along] one current [that] circles through torrents of disparate naming wave on wave" and she finally understands that her sons' homeland is Canada (Marlatt 2009: 73).

4.2.5 Language of the play

The analysis of language in the play is divided into two parts: first, an analysis of the adaptation of the poetic form of *nō* plays to the English language, and second, an analysis of the bilingual vocabulary.

Adapting the poetic form of *nō* to the English language

Nō plays are generally written in poetic language. This can be seen in the archaic Japanese vocabulary and some *shōdan* sections, which are composed of alternating 7 and 5 syllables, or are quotes from *waka* poetry. The author of *The Gull* could not use quotes from Japanese literature in the play because she knew that the audience would not recognise them. Although she added quotes from Canadian poetry to create intertextuality, those poems were written in free verse and could not impart a *nō* quality to the play. Therefore, Marlatt composed some parts of the text in a form that resembles *waka* poetry. For instance, the verses in the *shidai* section (the entrance song) imitate the Japanese *waka* tradition, which alternates phrases composed of 5 or 7 syllables in a 5-7-5-syllable pattern:

in late spring's drenching sea-mist we return at last
in late springs' drenching sea-mist we return at last
to fish the grounds our father knew, this wild spray
(Marlatt 2009: 41)

However, Marlatt did not follow the traditional matrix for Japanese poetry in writing these verses, but rather composed the lines according to a 7-5/7-5/7-3-syllable pattern, with 10 to 12 syllables in each line. As a result of this adaptation of the tradition to the English language, a rather free rhythmic pattern was created, which is common to many classical *nō* plays.

It would appear that Marlatt tried to create a similar effect in other parts of the play, writing lines of verse for the *shite* (or chorus chanting for the *shite*) in

¹⁷² The reference to the classical play is made in the phrase "moon's light barred by clouds" (Marlatt 2009: 67), which echoes the words *tsuki no yo nembutsu moro tomo ni* ("nembutsu in moonlight night") in *Sumidagawa* (SNKBT 57: 344).

the *jo-no-ei* (high-pitched poem) section of the first act that are composed by alternating 5 and 7 syllables, in the *kake-ai* sung exchange between the *waki* and the *shite* in the second act, and in the *kiri* or closing section of the play (*Ibid.*, 45, 69, 73). Elsewhere Marlatt allowed herself more freedom in composing verses of 3 to 7 syllables chanted by the *shite* or *nō* chorus, such as in the *kuse* section of the first act and in the *ei* section of the second act (*Ibid.*, 53, 71). These examples show how carefully the text of *The Gull* is composed, with the playwright making use of the traditional poetic form and attempting to meet the rhythmic requirements of *nō* texts. In order to create a script that could be chanted in the style of *nō* Marlatt wrote the play in close collaboration with Richard Emmert, who guided her in modifying the fixed poetic patterns according to English pronunciation, which has stressed and unstressed syllables that are difficult to render in the *nō* style of chanting (Knutson 2008: 10).

Creating the identity of the characters with a bilingual text

The solution to the use of language in *The Gull* is intriguing, as it is written in both Japanese and English. Marlatt's decision to write a bilingual play expresses the core of a Japanese-Canadian story about loneliness and yearning for peace of mind. The lines delivered by the character of the Gull are mostly in Japanese because of her Japanese origin, and because she is an old woman who lived most of her life in a Japanese community. However, some words in her lines are in English and contain important messages for her sons. For instance, in the first act the Gull-Woman tries to give her sons a message that is woven into an otherwise Japanese text.¹⁷³ A sentence in the *shite*'s lines composed of the English words *home--child--husband--father--mother--home--Mio "bahdo"*¹⁷⁴ attempts to convey a meaningful message to her sons (Marlatt 2009: 47-48). The Mother's tragedy is that her sons do not recognise her disguised figure and cannot understand her message of English words woven into a Japanese text.

In the second act of the play the ghost of the Mother appears to her sons in the human form they remembered from when she was in her old age and struggling with a deadly disease. She addresses her message in a more direct way, saying in English the words "my sons" and "home" (*Ibid.*, 67-68). By the word "home" she means "nesting ground", the birthplace that draws back all birds of passage (*Ibid.*, 69). When the *shite* complains that her sons left her to die in a hospital, the brothers apologise to her for disregarding her wish to return to her homeland. When their mother hears these words she tells them to go home, realising bitterly afterwards that the only home her sons know is in Canada (*Ibid.*, 71).

¹⁷³ In the script English words in the *shite*'s lines are underlined, while in the Japanese translation these words are written in *katakana* as loanwords.

¹⁷⁴ "Bahdo" is the Japanese pronunciation for the English word "birds".

An analysis of the script shows that Marlatt composed the bilingual text extremely carefully, without deliberately inserting English words into the *shite's* lines. It could be argued that the character of the *shite* in *The Gull* is partly designed from the inclusion of English words in different parts of the play because the *shite's* bilingual text reflects the appearance of the Mother in the form of the Gull-Woman (*maeshite*) and as the ghost of an aged woman (*nochishite*). In addition, the few English words in an otherwise Japanese text enable a foreign audience to understand her message without translation.

Just as the *shite* speaks in Japanese with the occasional use of English words, the design of the characters of the brothers (the *waki* and *wakitsure*) is also based on a rational argument that they are second-generation (*nisei*) Japanese who no longer know their mother tongue. Therefore, they deliver their lines in English, which further stresses the gap between *issei* (first-generation) and *nisei* (second-generation) Japanese-Canadians. The author confirmed that writing the *shite's* lines in Japanese “helps to illustrate the generational conflict between the *issei* mother and her *nisei* sons in the play” (Downey 2006). The older brother (the *waki*), who knows some Japanese, is able to see the Gull as a young woman who is trying to communicate her message in Japanese.¹⁷⁵ Conversely, to the younger brother (the *wakitsure*), whose knowledge of Japanese is rather poor, she is only a “strange bird [...] tucking its head under a wing” (Marlatt 2009: 46), and because of this inability he cannot recognise the spirit of his mother in the bird as his older brother does.

In conclusion, it can be said that the Japanese language in this English *nō* play has been employed as a dramatic tool that explains the motives and feelings behind the characters' words and actions. Moreover, the deliberate language usage in the script of this bilingual *nō* play communicates the tragedy of *nisei* brothers who are severed from their Japanese roots.

4.2.6 Adapting the performance elements

The Gull premiered in May 2006 and played for four days on a *nō* stage constructed under a tent pitched on the grounds of Richmond City Hall in Steveston. In addition to being the first Canadian *nō* play, the project aimed to provide an opportunity for healing to the Japanese-Canadian community that had suffered during wartime (Downey 2006). The play was warmly welcomed by the audience, many of whom were Japanese-Canadian fishermen, who were deeply moved by the story and felt a strong connection with it (Fisher 2006). The author Daphne Marlatt said that the feedback from spectators was encouraging as “there was a feeling that this was their story, very familiar, and they loved the unfamiliarity of *nō* that carried it” (Downey 2006).

¹⁷⁵ He apologises to the Gull-Woman for his “broken Nihongo”, which is the result of the brothers' schooling in English (Marlatt 2009: 48).

Despite the enthusiastic response from the audience *The Gull* was neglected by the media, with the exception of one radio station that broadcast interviews with the project staff (Knutson 2008: 16). Regardless of the insufficient media coverage, the play won the prestigious Uchimura Prize in 2008 for its collaborative contribution to introducing Japanese traditional theatre outside of Japan (*Ibid.*, 9).¹⁷⁶

The play was performed by Japanese and American professional actors, as well as Canadian amateurs of Japanese origin, who participated in a lengthy training period from August 2004 to the premier in May 2006 in order to learn the basics of *nō*. A member of Theater Nohgaku, Akira Matsui, played the role of the Gull, and the musicians of the *nō* ensemble were also Japanese professionals. The chorus was comprised of Canadians, who were led by Richard Emmert, the artistic director of Theater Nohgaku (Marlatt 2009: 27–29). Assigning the roles of the *waki*, *wakitsure* and *ai* to amateur Japanese-Canadian actors and giving the *shite* role to a professional *nō* actor was a wise decision that guaranteed the success of the production, as the *shite*'s lines in Japanese were left to the Japanese actor.

In order to adapt the story, which was set in Canada in the early 1950s, into canonical *nō* form the traditional performance elements were altered to some degree, although the overall image of *nō* was maintained. For example, the costumes for the *waki*, *wakitsure* and *ai* were created by the Canadian designer Margaret McKea, who took fishermen's clothes from the 1950s as a model and created stylised costumes for the roles.¹⁷⁷ Altering the costumes was justified, because it would have been extremely awkward for the *waki* and *wakitsure* to wear the clothes of 14th-century Japanese fishermen or other common people. McKea also designed the costume for the *shite*, which was made in traditional Japanese style, closely following the upright posture and elegant look of *nō* costumes. The *maeshite*'s outer robe had a long train and was made of transparent material, which evoked the image of a bird. This was complemented in the performance by a special pattern of movement that involved raising the hands, and created the impression of a bird's wings. The professional Japanese mask-carver Hakuzan Kubo created original masks for the characters of the Gull-Woman and the Mother (*Ibid.*, 25).

Some hand props were used in the production that would not be used in canonical *nō*, in which all the objects manipulated by the actors are highly stylised. The unusual hand props in *The Gull* were a fisherman's lantern used by the *waki*, and a cup and bottle in the *ai-kyōgen* interlude, which were more realistic than the aesthetics of traditional *nō* theatre permit.

The play was performed on a rectangular stage built under a large tent on the seacoast. The stage had a backdrop featuring beautiful local scenery of an

¹⁷⁶ See the Uchimura Award for Pangea Arts at http://www.pangaea-arts.com/news/2008_Pangaea_Arts_UCHIMURA_AWARD_Press_Release.pdf.

¹⁷⁷ See the design of the stage, costumes, masks and hand props at <http://www.pangaea-arts.com/gullstills/>.

island in the evening. In addition, fishing nets were draped on a *hashigakari* bridgeway. Marlatt explained that her decision to combine the features of a traditional *nō* stage with elements derived from the plot was made in order to integrate “West Coast realism with the classic minimalism of *nō*” (*Ibid.*, 26). Instead of pillars at the four corners of the stage stood wooden piles used for mooring boats. The piles served as visual landmarks for the masked *shite*, thus fulfilling the same function as pillars on a traditional *nō* stage. Although the stage was slightly altered compared with a genuine *nō* stage, this was done taking into account both the story of the play and the sensibilities of a Canadian audience, which is not accustomed to seeing a bare stage that lacks decoration or familiar objects.¹⁷⁸

Richard Emmert wrote the music for *The Gull* and also led the chorus, the members of which were amateurs trained in Emmert’s workshops. Professional *nō* musicians played traditional instruments: the *ōtsuzumi* (hip drum), *kotsuzumi* (shoulder drum), *taiko* (stick drum) and *nōkan* (*nō* flute), producing a sound that would have been similar to canonical *nō* music.

However, during the *kyōgen* interlude, which traditionally has no musical accompaniment, some innovations were introduced, including a folk song sung by the *ai* at the beginning and end of the interlude. The conversation between the *ai*, *waki* and *wakitsure* in the *ai-kyōgen* takes place in the brothers’ boat, which from time to time is rocked by waves.¹⁷⁹ The rolling waves are musically expressed by sharp *ōtsuzumi* drum rolls and physically acted, as if the performers are being rocked by them. This descriptive use of music is uncommon in *nō* plays and more closely resembles the onomatopoeic expressions in *kyōgen* plays that describe the physical actions of the characters, such as opening a door or pouring *sake*. This use of descriptive instrumental music is also similar to *kabuki geza*, in which various musical instruments give the illusion of natural phenomena, such as the sound of wind or thunder.

Nevertheless, these musically evocative moments in the *ai-kyōgen* did not dominate the play, but simply emphasised the naturalism and comic element in the interlude. A similarly descriptive use of *nōkan* occurs at the end of the first act, in which the *nō* chorus sings: “Only a gull’s shriek beats the air—fool Mio-birds, go home! Go home!” and the *shite* rushes away from the bridgeway with outstretched “wings” (*Ibid.*, 53–54). A flute solo at that juncture imitates the shriek of a gull.

There are only a few stage directions with regard to the *kata* movements in the play, one of which concerns the entrance of the Gull-Woman. At the beginning of the second act, after the *waki* and *wakitsure* have sung their waiting

¹⁷⁸ When giving guest performances abroad on a drama theatre stage shorter pillars are often used to mark the rectangular area to aid the masked *nō* actors to execute their movements and prevent disorientation. See examples of half-pillars of an indoor stage at <http://blog.livedoor.jp/kgaroku/archives/2010-09-06.html> and of an outdoor stage at http://www.karatsu-kankou.jp/english_event1009.html.

¹⁷⁹ This happens four times during their dialogue (Marlatt 2009: 57–59, 63).

song (*machiutai*), the *nochishite* appears, partially hidden by the curtained entrance to the bridgeway, sings her song, and then comes into full view (*Ibid.*, 66). This original entrance of the *shite* is derived from the character of the Gull, which hesitates to reveal herself to her sons.

4.2.7 Conclusion

The play was created without a literary source, but the author found a story related to a place that was important to the local people. She took advantage of a unique opportunity to interview them and gather other elements that were used in the play. In principle, the play was composed according to the *meisho* adaptation technique, as the author used contemporary poetry that is associated with the place and supports the atmosphere of the play. There are allusions to and quotes from the classical play *Sumidagawa*, which is also the source of the symbol of *miyakodori* (birds of passage).

Stories about local fishermen in both Canada and Japan, poems by contemporary Canadian poets alluding to loneliness, and a quote along with oblique influences from the classical play *Sumidagawa* are all building blocks of this new *nō* play. The relatively contemporary theme of the play created certain obstacles to using allusions from the classics. Nevertheless, the playwright managed to devise her own type of allusions, including the symbols of the gull, storm, waves and sea, which were effectively integrated with Buddhist images of the bell-rope and Amida's cord. The metaphor of the "Mio birds" is especially powerful with reference to Japanese emigrants from Wakayama, and is a most effective allusion to *miyakodori* in the Japanese classics.

The structure of the play follows the requirements for *nō* plays as it is composed of *shōdan*, and the roles of the *waki* and *shite* characters are similar to those in the classical plays.

One of the major challenges in writing the play was language. The playwright designed the characters based on the language gap between the generations. She composed a bilingual script in which the *shite's* lines are delivered in Japanese with some key words in English. A special effort was made to adapt English poetry to the traditional form of Japanese *waka*.

In addition to the innovative use of language in the play, the performance elements were also extraordinary. The troupe was comprised of professional performers (in the role of the *shite* and as musicians), while local amateurs played the other roles. As the *shite* has the most active role in a *nō* play, the lack of experience on the part of the amateur actors who played the roles of the *waki* and *tsure* had a relatively insignificant impact on the play. An unconventional stage with shorter pillars and no roof was used, the backdrop was modified according to the story, and an innovative pattern of drumming was introduced. The hand props (a fisherman's lamp and a bottle of whiskey) and the costumes of the *waki*, *tsure* and *ai*, were not typical of a *nō* play, but were well suited to the

characters. Moreover, due to elements that were familiar to the local English-speaking audience, the play was more comprehensible than if canonical costumes and acting patterns had been used. Although the costumes and the mask of the *shite* were newly designed, they were fashioned according to the aesthetics of *nō* theatre.

The analysis of the structural and performance elements in the play is summarised in the following table.

Table 4. Web of *nō* elements in the *shinsaku* play *The Gull*

The elements that fully meet the conventional requirements for *nō* plays are marked in the table as ⊙, and those that appear in a slightly modified form are marked as ○. The elements that deviate from the canon to the extent that they cannot be considered part of the *nō* tradition are marked as ×.

Structural elements		Source	⊙
		Characters	⊙
		Structure	⊙
		Language	○
Performance elements	Internal elements	Actors' training	○
		Music	○
		Costumes and masks	○
	External elements	Stage	○
		Hand and stage props	×
		Lighting	⊙

CHAPTER 5. ANALYSIS OF KINETIC *SHINSAKU* ADAPTATIONS

The majority of *shinsaku* plays are genre adaptations, which use literary and other source materials to create *nō* plays with original themes. Surprisingly, about one tenth of the 316 modern *shinsaku* plays on the lists Nishino compiled in 2004 and 2005 are adaptations of earlier plays, or, in the terminology used in the current study, kinetic adaptations. Of the thirty-two kinetic adaptations, thirteen are adaptations of classical *nō* plays, six are transcultural adaptations of Western dramas, and five are re-adaptations into the form of *nō*.¹⁸⁰

Kinetic *shinsaku* adaptations provide valuable information about the adaptation process that occurs in adjusting the theme, imagery, characters, structure and language to a new context, which involves different expectations on the part of the audience and calls on the creative abilities of the performers. Therefore, the main focus of the analysis of *shinsaku* adaptations is, first, on the study of the changes – marginal or fundamental – that the authors of the new plays decided to make, and second, on the adaptation techniques they used for reinterpreting the plays. The analysis might involve several generations of plays – ancestor plays and their descendants as variants of original works. Therefore, *shinsaku* adaptations will be compared with different variant plays and classical plays in order to identify possible borrowings, paraphrases and metaphors that have been brought into the new play.

In the category of adaptations of classical plays only Toki Zenmaro's *shinsaku* adaptation of *Aya no tsuzumi* is included in the current repertory of the Kita School. This provided a strong argument for selecting the play for analysis in this study, because it is indicative of the quality of the adaptation. Ueda Kuniyoshi's *shinsaku* adaptation *Nō Hamuretto* has sparked keen interest in the areas of both Shakespearean studies and transcultural research in Japan and abroad, which provides some secondary sources for analysis that are absent in the case of other new plays in the category. Of the five *shinsaku* re-adaptations, Yokomichi Mario's *Takahime* is the only play that has a lengthy performance history and has gained popularity in the *nō* world. The other three plays in the category (Umewaka's *Taka no ido*, Takahashi's *Taka no i*, and Okamoto's *Mizu no koe*) cannot be considered *nō* plays, and *Takahime* replaced Yokomichi's older variant of the play *Taka no izumi*. In contrast to the *shinsaku* version of *Aya no tsuzumi*, the analysis of *Nō Hamuretto* and *Takahime* also involves the study of the methods of translating the theme and characters from one cultural context to

¹⁸⁰ The remaining eight adaptations on Nishino's 2004 list of *shinsaku* plays are categorised as "English plays" and include Yeats's *At the Hawk's Well* (the Japanese title of which is *Taka no i*), four English-language *nō* adaptations by Ueda Kuniyoshi, and three original *nō* plays in English. However, Nishino excluded from his 2005 list of new plays all "English plays", but added Okamoto's *Mizu no koe*, which is an experimental play with some elements of *nō*, as well as Ueda's *Nō Hamuretto*.

another, and, consequently, an application of adaptation techniques that is similar to genre adaptations.

All the authors of the plays selected for analysis were acknowledged professionals in the field who clearly intended to write a *nō* play. Toki Zenmaro (1885–1980), the author of the *shinsaku* adaptation *Aya no tsuzumi*, was a prolific playwright who for decades was closely affiliated with the troupe of the Kita School and wrote several plays that are now included in the School’s repertory. Ueda Munakata Kuniyoshi (b. 1934), the author of *Nō Hamuretto*, is Professor Emeritus of English literature at Shizuoka University. He studied the works of Shakespeare and is an amateur *nō* actor who has led the Shakespearean Noh Troupe for nearly thirty years. The late *nō* scholar Yokomichi Mario (1916–2012) was the author of numerous studies on *nō* theatre, and wrote the most popular *shinsaku* play of modern times, *Takahime*, which is an example of a *nō* play that was first adapted to the form of Western drama by William Butler Yeats, and decades later re-adapted back into *nō* form as a *shinsaku* play.

5.1 *Shinsaku* adaptations of canonical plays: Toki’s revision of *Aya no tsuzumi*¹⁸¹

The classical play *Aya no tsuzumi* was composed by an unknown author, but it is commonly attributed to Zeami.¹⁸² This ancestral play is included in the current repertory of the Hōshō and Kongō Schools, while the Kanze and Komparu Schools perform Zeami’s variant play *Koi no omoni* (The Deadweight of Love).¹⁸³ The Kita School also used to perform the ancestral play, but since 1952 they have replaced it with playwright Toki Zenmaro’s new version. Nishino Haruo included in his list of modern *shinsaku* plays another adaptation of the play that Dōmoto Masaki, a director and playwright, wrote in 1954. However, an analysis of the script reveals that many traditional elements of *nō* are lacking, which

¹⁸¹ The title of the play has been translated into English as *The Damask Drum*, following the tradition established by Arthur Waley (Waley, Arthur, tr. *The Nō Plays of Japan*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1922, pp. 135–142). The word *aya* translates into English as “twill”, but, as Royall Tyler explains, Japanese twill can be woven into very complicated patterns that resemble brocade (Tyler 2004: 50). This conveys the image of a drum skin that the old gardener in this play fails to notice is different from the usual type. Subsequently, almost all translators have used Waley’s version of the title, with the exception of Chieko Mulhern’s translation of the title as *The Tangled Drum*, according to which the drum is only a facsimile of a musical instrument (Mulhern 1994: 277). In this study I will follow the established tradition of translating *aya* as “damask”.

¹⁸² For instance, the Japanese Text Initiative (1997) cites Zeami as the author of the play, referring to the printed version of the text in *Yōkyoku hyōshaku*, Vol. 7 (ed. Tateki Owada), Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1907–1908 (<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/japanese/noh/ZeaAyan.html>). Arthur Waley and Royall Tyler also consider the play to be Zeami’s work (Waley 1922; Tyler 2004: 49).

¹⁸³ This is the translation of the play found on the homepage of the Noh Plays DataBase the-noh.com http://www.the-noh.com/en/plays/data/program_064.html. However, Royall Tyler translated the title as *Love’s Heavy Burden* (Tyler 2004: 49).

makes it an imitation *nō* play at best. Therefore, Toki's *shinsaku* version is the only adaptation of the ancestral play that will be thoroughly analysed in order to distinguish the kinetic characteristics of *shinsaku* adaptations. In this subchapter a synopsis of the ancestral play will be provided as well as an analysis of the Kanze School's version of the play. The Kita School's new play by Toki Zenmaro will then be compared with both the ancestral play and the Kanze School's version, including an analysis of the language, verses, structure, and interpretation of characters.

Theatrical and literary adaptations of the classical play *Aya no tsuzumi*

The ancestral *nō* play *Aya no tsuzumi* tells the sad story of an old gardener who falls in love with an imperial consort. He desperately tries to beat a damask drum so that the consort could hear it in her palace, but failing in his task he drowns himself in a pond in despair. The play inspired many authors outside the *nō* world to create their own version of the story. The most famous adaptation of the play is arguably Mishima Yukio's modern drama with the same title. Mishima's modern interpretation of the story unfolds in an office in the corner of which stands a potted laurel, the central symbol in the classical play. The play has a large cast of characters – eight people in total – making the stage very crowded as compared with the *nō* cast of three characters plus a comedian. Mishima's play ends with the suicide of an old janitor, who jumps out of the window, after which his ghost meets but is once again parted from his beloved (Mishima 1991: 77).

Mishima set the story in a contemporary context in the 1950s, but in 1922 Nogami Yaeko¹⁸⁴ had also written a modern dramatic adaptation of the classical play. The story takes place in Baghdad at the palace of King Rashid, who is cast as the *waki* in the play, and the princess as the *shite*. The main character of the original story, the gardener, is cast as a young shepherd who does not appear onstage (Masuda 1990: 470). Playwright Ariyoshi Sawako went even further with her innovations, making the main character in her *kabuki* version of the play a young gardener who falls in love with a princess. He starts learning to play the drum with a *shirabyōshi* dancer, and finally chooses the arts over love (*Ibid.*, 468).

While in the story written by Etsuda Kiwao the main character is transformed from a gardener into a farmer (*Ibid.*, 469), novelist Nakanori Chikako used the story as the basis for a novel about a love affair that takes place in Spain. In her novel titled *Aya no tsuzumi. Isupania no tsuchi* (The Damask Drum. The Soil of Spain) the damask drum is a symbol of desperate longing for love, and the beating of the drum is compared to the sound of writing on a

¹⁸⁴ Nogami Yaeko was a student of Natsume Sōseki and the wife of renowned *nō* scholar Nogami Toyochirō. She also studied *nō-utai* and the *tsuzumi* drum (Mulhern 1994: 275, 277).

typewriter (*Ibid.*, 432–433). Playwright Yamazaki Masakazu’s modern drama *Zeami* (1963) deviates even more from the ancestral play *Aya no tsuzumi* by interpreting the love story as the relationship between the famous *nō* playwright Zeami and Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu.¹⁸⁵

In 1954 the playwright and theatre director Dōmoto Masaki wrote his own version of *Aya no tsuzumi*, which at first glance seems to be a *nō* play, but closer analysis reveals several weaknesses that make the play difficult or perhaps even inappropriate to perform as a *nō*. Dōmoto’s adaptation contains many paraphrased verses, direct quotes, and combined phrases from both the classical play and Toki’s *shinsaku* version of the ancestral play. It follows the overall structure of the classical play, but due to some minor changes, such as extensive descriptions of nature and the almost pitiable image of the demon (MYSZ 1: 199, 202–204),¹⁸⁶ the theme of the play seems to be the sadness of solitude, rather than the revenge of a demonic soul. Although Dōmoto succeeded in creating some extremely beautiful poetic metaphors, he occasionally used contemporary vocabulary, and the overall style of the play is inconsistent. It prompts one to agree with Tanaka Makoto, who found Dōmoto’s adaptation similar to Mishima Yukio’s *Modern Nō Plays*, commenting that it could also be performed as a *shingeki* or modern drama (*Ibid.*, 36).¹⁸⁷

These examples of adaptations of a classical *nō* play demonstrate the vast potential of adaptation to modify a theme on the one hand, and on the other hand, the extent to which an adaptation can deviate from the original work when the limits of the genre are exceeded and the cultural context of the story is altered.

5.1.1 The ancestral *nō* play *Aya no tsuzumi*¹⁸⁸

Aya no tsuzumi (The Damask Drum) is a classical play that was written by an unknown author, although some sources attribute it to Zeami. The play is set in

¹⁸⁵ The play was written for the commemoration of the 600th anniversary of Zeami’s birth. It premiered in 1964 under the direction of Senda Koreya and Kanze Hideo, and won the prestigious Kishida Prize for Drama in 1963 (Mayuzumi 1974: 230).

¹⁸⁶ The imagery of a cold winter, frost and ice, and dying plants as symbols of loneliness seems to dominate the play. Instead of the angry demon who is suffering in hell, the ghost of the gardener appears at the end of the play, crying out after desperately beating a drum, “Poor me! I am old and tired!”

¹⁸⁷ It is not surprising that Tanaka draws parallels between the works of Dōmoto and Mishima, since in 1968 they founded together the Roman Theatre Company (Roman Gekijō), where Dōmoto directed Mishima’s plays, including dramas that were incorporated into Mishima’s collection *Modern Nō Plays* (*Kindai nōgakushū*, 1956). The Company was disbanded shortly after Mishima’s suicide in 1970.

¹⁸⁸ As the ancestral play is not included in the collections of *yōkyoku* published by Iwanami Shoten, and there are no other sources available, for the analysis I made use of an e-text provided by the Japanese Text Initiative (1997) at <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/japanese/noh/ZeaAyan.html>.

the remote province of Chikuzen and begins with a passage in which a courtier (the *waki*) explains that a gardener (the *maeshite*, cast as an old man) from the Palace of Kinomaru happened to see an imperial consort (the *tsure*) by Katsura Pond and fell in love with her. The courtier tells the gardener that the lady would let him see her again if he were to beat the *tsuzumi* drum hanging on the Japanese laurel tree *katsura* by the pond. The gardener is deeply moved and believes her, but in reality she is playing a cruel joke on the old man, because the skin of the drum is made of damask and cannot make a sound. The old gardener tries as hard as he can to produce a sound on the simulated drum, but when his efforts are in vain he collapses in despair, and after waiting for the lady for several days and nights, he casts himself into the pond and drowns.

When the courtier hurries to inform the imperial consort of the sad fate of the gardener, the lady seems to be possessed by an evil spirit. At that point the ghost of the gardener (the *nochishite*) rises from the pond as an angry demon. He forces the lady to beat the damask drum without rest or mercy. At last she realises her misdeed and feels deep remorse, but the demonic ghost of the gardener curses her and sinks into the “depths of desperate love” (*koi no fuchi*).

5.1.2 The Kanze School’s *Koi no omoni* as a variant play of *Aya no tsuzumi*

Koi no omoni (The Deadweight of Love) is a version of the ancestral play *Aya no tsuzumi* that belongs to the repertory of the Kanze School.¹⁸⁹ Unlike *Aya no tsuzumi*, in which the role of the *maeshite* is simply described as “an old man” and the *tsure* as “a consort”, in *Koi no omoni* the protagonist of the first act has a name, Yamashina no Shōji, and the *tsure* is introduced as a consort from Shirakawa Palace. Similarly to its ancestral play, *Koi no omoni* begins with a passage in which a courtier (the *waki*) tells of an old gardener (the *maeshite*) who has fallen in love with a lady (the *tsure*). At the beginning of the play the courtier reveals that the lady had been informed of the old gardener’s affection for her. She had wrapped a rock in an elegant cloth and demanded that the gardener carry the “heavy burden of love” (*koi no omoni*) a thousand and one hundred times around the garden to earn the right to see her again (NKBT 40: 325). The main difference from the ancestral play lies in the revelation in the opening lines that the consort has played a trick on the old man, while in the older version the cruel joke is only disclosed in the second half of the play.

After this different beginning, the story unfolds as in its earlier model. At first the old gardener is happy to hear that the lady is willing to meet him after the task is completed, but when he tries to lift the package he finds that it is too heavy. The old man tries his best, but he cannot do it. Then his love turns to hatred, and he curses the lady and takes his own life.

¹⁸⁹ The authorship of both plays is sometimes attributed to Zeami, who was certainly the author of the Kanze School variant play, but the author of the ancestral play has usually been listed as “unknown”.

In the second half of the play the courtier informs the lady of the death of the gardener. Feeling pity for him, she goes to the garden and kneels before the dead body of the gardener, but when she wants to leave, she suddenly finds that she cannot stand up, and feels as if a heavy rock is pulling her down. Then the ghost of the gardener appears and accuses the lady of having given him a cruel task that he could not possibly fulfil. His body burns with the fire of unreciprocated love and smoke rises from his body, because he is suffering in hell. At the end of the play the ghost asks the lady to pray for his soul and promises to protect her eternally as her guardian spirit (*Ibid.*, 330).¹⁹⁰ The resolution of Zeami's play, in which the ghost finds peace and offers his antagonist protection, is significantly different from the ancestral play, which ends with the curse of a furious ghost. Patrick Geoffrey O'Neill suggested that Zeami might have changed the ending because he thought that the cruelty on the part of a lady of high rank towards a poor old man and the anger of the ghost in the ancestral play would make the play unsuitable to perform in front of an aristocratic audience (O'Neill 1954: 204). O'Neill considered that changing the furious demon of the older play into a ghost offering his protection was a weakness of Zeami's revised version, rather than an improvement (*Ibid.*).

A few minor details in Zeami's revised play have been altered in comparison with the older play. For instance, the gardener in *Koi no omoni* tends chrysanthemums, the favourite plants of the consort (NKBT 40: 325), but in *Aya no tsuzumi* an important symbol is the *katsura* or Japanese laurel tree that grows beside Katsura Pond and from the branches of which hangs the damask drum. In addition, in the older version of the play there is a wordplay that makes use of the similar sound of the words *aya* ("twill") in *aya no tsuzumi* or "damask drum" and *ayashi* ("strange" or "suspicious") in the phrase *ayashi no taiko* or "strange drum", which is absent in Zeami's play. The task the consort gives the old man – playing the damask drum or carrying the heavy package – is a central metaphor common to both plays. Although in the older play the gardener's attempts to play the drum convey the somewhat abstract nature of the task, in Zeami's new version the cruel trick of the consort has been made almost visual by the physical effort the old man has to exert in trying to carry his burden of love. It is reasonable to agree with Patrick O'Neill that Zeami's decision to change the task of the gardener "enables his ill-fated love to be symbolised by the burden itself" (O'Neill 1954: 204).

In conclusion, one can see that Zeami changed the central metaphor of unattainable love in his new version of the play by replacing playing a damask drum with carrying a heavy rock. Therefore he had to omit the wordplay present in the ancestral play, because it was based on the word *aya* and its homophones. In addition, in changing the ending of the play, the powerful impression the character of the ghost had made as a furious demon gave way to an image of a

¹⁹⁰ The ghost of the gardener calls the consort *komatsu* or "little pine" and promises to protect her as a gardener watches over the trees in a garden (NKBT 40: 330).

ghost with seemingly human qualities, who has sympathetic feelings for the lady.

5.1.3 Toki Zenmaro's revised play *Aya no tsuzumi*¹⁹¹

This version has replaced the ancestral play in the Kita School repertory. In the beginning of the revised play there are some minor changes that include the omission of some phrases or words, such as the name of the province of Chikuzen in the opening line, and the word *meichi* ("a famous place"), which in the original play conveys the importance of Katsura Pond where the story mainly takes place. The phrase "Love does not recognise any difference of low birth or high birth" (*koi ni wa jōge o wakanu narai*), which was also included in the Kanze School play *Koi no omoni* (NKBT 40: 325), is also missing. The absence of the phrase at the very beginning of the play creates an entirely different mood because it does not emphasise the relationship between the gardener and the consort, which in the original play is clear and somewhat tense. Instead, it focuses on a single character, the *shite*, who is an old gardener suffering from the pain of love.

Paraphrasing verses

Some changes have been made to the wording in the part of the play in which the courtier leaves the gardener by the *katsura* tree at the pond and the protagonist talks about the laurel at the Garden of the Moon. For instance, instead of the original phrase "There really is a moon-laurel in the Garden of the Moon Palace" (*geni ya uketamawari oyobu gekkyū no tsuki no katsura koso*) Toki wrote in more colourful words, "Truly, the perilla leaves have turned red and the fall is deepening. Only a laurel tree stands in the moonlight at the pond" (*Geni yukari mo aki fukaki. Tsuki no katsura nomi ike no hotori*) (MYSZ 1: 193).

Another example of a modified phrase is found in the same section, in which the gardener hears the evening temple bells. The text in the ancestral play is "The sound of the evening bell offers its help, but then again the days pile up and I keep hoping from dusk to dusk" (*Yūbe no kane no koe soete. Mata uchisouru hinami no kazu. Nochi no kure zo to tanome oku*). Toki shortened the passage significantly to "The day sets and the sound of the temple bell offers its help in the world to come" (*Kureruru ni kane mo oto ya soen, nochi no yo no; Ibid.*, 193–194). This rearrangement of words and shortening of verses has resulted in minor changes to the text as compared with the ancestral play. Occasionally, Toki has

¹⁹¹ I use the same source, available at <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/japanese/noh/ZeaAyan.html>, as I did for the analysis of the unattributed ancestral play *Aya no tsuzumi* in order to draw examples from the script. Toki Zenmaro's *shinsaku* play is published in *Mikan yōkyoku-shū zoku*, Volume 1 (MYSZ 1), pp. 192–198.

omitted even longer passages, such as the lines of the chorus after the phrase *nochi no kure zo to tanome oku* (as in the example given above), which included a compelling image of the gardener as an old crane standing in the darkness of the night (*sanakida ni yami no yozuru no oi no mi ni*). Five verses in total have been omitted from the *shinsaku* play (*Ibid.*).

Major changes in the *kuse* section

The script of the *shinsaku* play follows the text of the original play almost word for word until the *kuse* section. From that point on some major appropriations have been made. The *kuse* section of the ancestral play is significantly longer, describing the desperate efforts of the old gardener to play the drum, but he hears nothing but the waves on the pond and the spatter of rain on the window. At the end of the section the old man wonders why the strange drum does not make a sound.

The same section of the *shinsaku* play conveys a very different mood, as there is no rain, and a new moon shines in the sky. Verses have been inserted into the text that describe the man looking at the moon and commenting that it will not wax that night (*yagate michinan mochi no yoru no*), as if he understands that this is yet another night when his wishes will not be fulfilled (*Ibid.*, 194). The next verses “Meaningless wandering in the dark path of love that I cannot see coming” (*ayanaki, yami no koiji tote, mienu iro ni ya mayou ran*) further deepen the mood of despair (*Ibid.*). These verses are not found in the classical play *Aya no tsuzumi*, but paraphrase the verse “wandering in the dark path of love” (*koiji no yami ni mayou*) from the ending of the Kanze School’s play *Koi no omoni* (NKBT 40: 330). Therefore, we can conclude that in composing his *shinsaku* play the author did not rely exclusively on the text of the ancestral play, but also used the Kanze School play as a model.

Extending the script

In contrast to the significantly shortened *kuse* section, the *rongi* section¹⁹² of the new play is extended to almost twice the length of that in the ancestral play. As a result of the insertion of long passages the mood of the section is quite different. The first half of the section portrays the old man, who desperately tries to play the drum and feels miserable because of his unsuccessful efforts. The melancholy description of natural phenomena – rain and the sound of insects – supports the heart-breaking atmosphere of the scene (MYSZ 1: 195). The same scene in the ancestral play is completely different, as the clamour of waves beating on the surface of the pond and the rattle of rain on the windows creates a more violent

¹⁹² The *rongi* is a question-and-answer type of conversation between the actor(s) and the chorus.

mood, which foreshadows the transformation of the gardener into a furious demon. In addition, a passage about the Thunder God has been omitted from the *shinsaku* play, which considerably softens the atmosphere of the scene.

Whereas the first half of the *rongi* produces a relatively mild image, the latter half focuses on the grudge of the old gardener. He realises that the skin of the drum is made of damask only when the courtier tells him the truth and urges him to give up trying to play it (*Ibid.*). His anger gradually increases until at the end of the section he begins to change into a demon and leaps into the white waves of the pond (*Ibid.*, 196). If we compare this scene with the original, we see that the classical play lacks the passage in which the courtier informs the gardener about the trickery of the consort; in the *shinsaku* play this triggers the transformation of the old man into a demon. Consequently, in the older play it is a lonely and betrayed old man who ends his life in the pond, but in the *shinsaku* play he is a partially transformed demon who becomes angry and leaps into the waves. Thus, it could be said that Toki's additions to the text made the development of the play more logical by filling in gaps found in the older play.

Creating a human demon

After the *nakairi* break between the two acts the last section of the play begins, which in the *shinsaku* version is about two-thirds the length of the same part in the original. However, it is not only the omission of a significant portion of the script that results in a different ending, but also the rearrangement of the structure of the section and the changes made in the content. Approximately half of the section is copied directly from the older play, followed by a word-for-word transcription from its model.

In this part of the play the courtier informs the consort of the death of the gardener, after which the lady starts to act strangely, as if possessed by a spirit. They then hear the sound of breaking waves and the spirit of the gardener appears. Interestingly, the following verses lead the two plays in different directions: in the ancestral play the demon violently communicates his anger, but the demon in the *shinsaku* play expresses his abiding deep feelings of love for the consort (*Ibid.*, 197). In the new play the demon uses the phrase *koi no fuchi* – a direct quote from the last verse of the ancestral play – and proceeds to enter “the abyss of love”. Following these words the demon in the *shinsaku* play possesses the consort and forces her to beat the silent damask drum, after which the verses describing this tragic scene are exactly the same in the two plays.

The next part of the play vividly demonstrates the dissimilarity between the classical and *shinsaku* plays. In the classical play Buddhist terms are used nine times in this short sequence, such as “wrath and deception” (*shin'i no jain*), which are sins in the Buddhist context, “the realm of demons” (*makyō*), “underworld” (*meido*), “*rākṣana* demon” (*abō rasetsu*), “torment” (*kashaku*), “the Wheel of Fire” (*higuruma*), “karma” (*inga*), “hell” (*guren*) and “evil serpent-

demon" (*akuja*). By using these words, on the one hand, the demon describes his torments in hell, but on the other hand, also expresses his fierceness and anger towards the consort, who did not respond to his feelings. The image is further reinforced by the word "grudge" (*urami*), which is repeated three times in the section.

Compared with the script of the classical play, we find significantly fewer references to the Buddhist underworld in the *shinsaku* play. For example, words such as "demon" (*akuma*), "torture in *naraka* hell" (*naraku no jain*), "the realm of demons" (*makyō*), "karma" (*inga*) and "*rākṣana*" (*rasetsu*) are used only five times (*Ibid.*, 195–198), and the word "grudge" (*urami*) is used only twice in the entire sequence. Analysis shows that the image of the fierceness of the demon is softened by the use of fewer Buddhist terms in the script. In addition, the section itself has been considerably shortened, minimising the textual content expressing the gardener's grudge against the consort.

Seemingly to compensate for the diminished image of the dreadful demon, the symbol of the damask drum (*aya no tsuzumi*) is reinforced in the *shinsaku* play: it is mentioned six times in the last section of the play, while the word "*aya no tsuzumi*" is found only twice in the same section of the ancestral play. Consequently, the classical play conveys the image of a frightful demon and the tortures in hell that result from someone entering the path of sinfulness. As a true demon-play, the classical play warns the audience with its medieval message. The *shinsaku* play, on the contrary, features a more human demon who vanishes quietly as "an old weary demon" at the end of the play without making any threats (*Ibid.*, 198). Tanaka Makoto (*Ibid.*, 34) found that because of the many revisions Toki Zenmaro made in the classical script by significantly reducing some sections and changing the ending of the play, the adaptation of *Aya no tsuzumi* resulted in an entirely new play for the Kita School, which, due to a new interpretation of the main character, can be performed in a completely different way from the classical play.

5.1.4 Conclusion

Regardless of the many changes made in the script, Toki Zenmaro's adaptation follows in general closely the structure of the ancestral play and copies parts of it word for word. It is a revised appropriation of an older play; therefore, the changes that have been made in the script are relatively insignificant. Although the first act of Toki's *Aya no tsuzumi* is almost the same as that of the classical play, the minor changes made in the second act have an important impact on the image of the main character. Due to the omission of phrases that convey Buddhist images of demons and hell, the portrait of the main character is softened. As a result, the dynamics of the transformation of the *shite* into a demon are also more logical in Toki's *shinsaku* play as compared with the original. In other words, *Aya no tsuzumi* is an adaptation of an ancestral play that

involves the omission and insertion of verses, and the rearrangement of some parts of the original play in order to create a new, somewhat milder image of the demon. Toki's adaptation of the classical play *Aya no tsuzumi* is a good example of a revision of an older play that closely follows its model, preserving the style of language and the overall structure of the play, while creating a new play with a fresh interpretation.

Lastly, as the play is part of the regular repertory of the Kita School, there is no reason to believe that the performance elements have been altered or modified. Therefore, they are assumed to conform to the canon of *nō* theatre, although there are no reference materials available for confirmation.

The analysis of the structural and performance elements of the play is summarised in the following table.

Table 5. Web of *nō* elements in Toki Zenmaro's *Aya no tsuzumi*
The elements that fully meet *nō* requirements are marked as ⊙.

Structural elements		Source	⊙
		Characters	⊙
		Structure	⊙
		Language	⊙
Performance elements	Internal elements	Actors' training	⊙
		Music	⊙
		Costumes and masks	⊙
	External elements	Stage	⊙
		Hand and stage props	⊙
		Lighting	⊙

5.2 Transcultural *nō* adaptations: Ueda's Zen Buddhist *Nō Hamuretto*

5.2.1 The long path to *Nō Hamuretto*

Ueda Kuniyoshi Munakata, a Professor Emeritus at Shizuoka National University, became acquainted with the works of Shakespeare during his studies of English literature at Tokyo University in the 1950s. A group of third-year students organised a circle for reading *Hamlet*, and publicly performed part of the play under the title *Act I of Hamlet in Full* in 1958, with Ueda playing the role of the Danish prince (Okamoto 2004: 93).

The idea of writing a *nō* play based on Shakespeare's *Hamlet* occurred to Ueda Kuniyoshi on a plane coming back from United States, where he had been a Fulbright Fellow at Harvard University from 1973 to 1975 (Kawata 2011: 62). During his studies in America Ueda had performed *A Noh Dance: Hamlet's First Soliloquy* at Harvard University's Emerson Hall in 1974. He also performed the

role of Hamlet as a *nō shimai* dance at Abbey Theatre a year later. He made his first attempt to translate Shakespeare's play into the language of *nō* theatre in 1982, staging an English *nō* version of *Hamlet* titled *Noh Hamlet in Five Acts* at the Anagoya *Nō* Theatre in Shizuoka. Okamoto Yasumasa, who had been Ueda's friend from his student years and a member of the *Hamlet* reading group, found that this five-act adaptation of *Hamlet*, which included almost all the events in the original play, was too long for a *nō* play (Okamoto 2004: 97). However, it was for this English-language *nō* version of *Hamlet* that Ueda created the motif of Hamlet's enlightenment (*satori*) caused by Ophelia's death. In addition, the scene at Ophelia's grave and the use of a *kosode* kimono to symbolise the dead Ophelia were also brought into the Japanese-language *shinsaku* play *Nō Hamuretto* (*Ibid.*).¹⁹³

The two-act version of *Noh Hamlet* in English, in which Hamlet's friend Horatio was cast as a travelling priest (the *waki*) and Hamlet as the protagonist, premiered in 1984. In this play, Ophelia's ghost appears to Hamlet, who is meditating in *zazen* in front of the *kosode*, and performs "a dance of joy" (*yorokobi no mai*) that gives him strength to choose life over death (Ueda 2009: 73–76). The Zen Buddhist overtones of the first act are further reinforced by the music of a shoulder drum *kotsuzumi* and a flute *shakuhachi*, which is usually associated with Buddhist monks (Okamoto 2004: 75). In the second act the fight takes place between Laertes and Hamlet, who both die at the end of the play (Ueda 2009: 73–76). Okamoto Yasumasa felt that the fight scene was redundant and unsuitable for *nō* because of the excessively descriptive and explanatory nature of the action (Okamoto 2004: 97).

The performance history of Ueda Kuniyoshi's *Noh Hamlet* in English is extensive. Different versions of the play were performed nearly sixty times between 1982 and 2004 in Japan (including the first performance at the National *Nō* Theatre in 1991) and abroad (Canada, USA, England, Denmark, Sweden, Australia, Thailand).¹⁹⁴

5.2.2 Adapting *Hamlet's* story and characters for *nō* theatre

According to Okamoto Yasumasa, *nō* begins at the point where European dramas end (*Ibid.*, 96). It is this fundamental difference between *nō* plays and Western dramas that makes the conversion of characters and plot into a culturally dissimilar theatrical language the hardest problem to be solved. Nevertheless, Shakespeare's plays are very well suited for translation into the language of *nō*, because as classics of European drama the characters and stories

¹⁹³ In the play a *kosode* kimono symbolises the dead Ophelia, alluding to the classical play *Aoi no ue*, in which a kimono placed at the front of the stage represents Lady Aoi on her sickbed.

¹⁹⁴ The latest performance of *Noh Hamlet* was in 2013 at the University of Chester, England.

are well known. On the other hand, the special form of *nō* plays makes it difficult to accomplish.

Okamoto Yasumasa recommended to Ueda that in rewriting his English-language two-act version of Shakespeare's iconic play in Japanese he cast a nameless travelling priest as the *waki* and Horatio as the *ai* (*Ibid.*, 100). Taking partially Okamoto's advice, Ueda Kuniyoshi rearranged the story to begin with Horatio's (the *waki*'s) return to his Danish homeland after Hamlet's death. Horatio feels responsible for failing to stop Hamlet from fighting Laertes, and blames himself for inadvertently causing his death. Therefore, he goes to the graveyard and visits both Hamlet's and Ophelia's graves. In the *nanori* or name-saying section of *Nō Hamuretto* Horatio explains that he has travelled to many countries to tell Hamlet's story, as he had promised him on his deathbed (Ueda 2005: 7), referring to Hamlet's last words in Act V, Scene II of the original play (Shakespeare 1993: 414–415). By placing the reference to the final scene of Shakespeare's play at the beginning of his *nō* adaptation Ueda Kuniyoshi obeys the dictum expressed by Okamoto Yasumasa that *nō* begins at the point where Western dramas end.

After the name-saying a short section follows in which Horatio describes his arrival at Ophelia's grave.¹⁹⁵ This part of the play is usually called the *michiyuki* or travel song, which precedes the *tsukizerifu* or announcement of someone's arrival.¹⁹⁶ Horatio is praying at the grave when a stranger appears. Horatio asks him to identify himself, thereby executing his function as the *waki*, who in *nō* plays usually asks a question about the *shite*'s identity.

A conversation between Horatio and a villager (the *maeshite*) follows, in which the man explains that his deep grief over Ophelia's unrequited love often moves him to visit her grave. He reveals that Hamlet told Ophelia to go to nunnery (Act III, Scene I, Shakespeare 1993: 282), because he had already planned to exact vengeance for his father's death and was prepared to die. The chorus then chants verses for the villager/Hamlet that express his regrets for unintentionally causing Ophelia's madness and her eventual death.

The conversation between Horatio and the villager continues, and the motif of violets as symbols of reincarnation and Ophelia's sincerity is further intensified. The villager then explains why Hamlet told Ophelia to go to a nunnery, and expresses Hamlet's true feelings with an incomplete quote from Shakespeare's play: "I lov'd Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers could not with all their quantity of love make up my sum" (Act V, Scene I, *Ibid.*, 391–392). After these verses, which are translated word for word into Japanese, the villager describes the scene in which Ophelia in her madness wanders along the river, humming a song and holding a garland in her hands, then steps into the water

¹⁹⁵ A red kimono lying on the stage represents Ophelia's grave.

¹⁹⁶ In the script of *Nō Hamuretto* the *shōdan* sections are not marked. Only the musical directions for the chanting are given.

and floats like a mermaid before sinking to the bottom of the river (Ueda 2005: 8).¹⁹⁷

Having described the death of Ophelia, the villager/Hamlet sits and begins to meditate. A silent scene follows in which the chorus describes the dead Ophelia floating beautifully in the river. During this scene Ophelia's ghost (the *tsure*) appears behind the villager and makes a gesture of reconciliation; this causes the villager to stand up and turn toward her, but she leaves without speaking. The villager follows her with his eyes and sings slightly modified verses from Hamlet's famous monologue "To be or not to be..." (Act III, Scene I, Shakespeare 1993: 277) that indicate that he has attained enlightenment (Ueda 2005: 9).

In the following comic interlude an old grave guard (the *ai*) describes a scene that resembles the previous silent section of the play: Hamlet visits the grave of Ophelia, prays there and weeps, then the figure of Ophelia appears behind him, extends her hand as if blessing him, and leaves. The grave guard says that it was the day before Hamlet had his deadly fight with Laertes (*Ibid.*, 10).

The second half of the play begins with a passage in which Horatio decides to wait for the return of the villager, whom he assumes to be the ghost of Hamlet. Ophelia's ghost unexpectedly appears and expresses deep regret over her thoughtless act of suicide. She understands that Hamlet's love for her was sincere. Then the ghost of Hamlet arrives, saying that he and Ophelia have gained enlightenment in love, passed the Sea of Life and Death, and attained the Realm of Light (*Ibid.*, 11).

A short *iroe* movement follows in which Hamlet gives Ophelia a jewel symbolising life and peace. Ophelia then passes the jewel to Horatio. After that symbolic act the ghosts of Ophelia and Hamlet execute a quick *hayamai* dance, Ophelia performing the first section and Hamlet the second and the third. Hamlet then chants about happiness and resting in peace (*Ibid.*). This kind of shared *hayamai* dance sequence is unusual in *nō* plays; traditionally, the *shite* and *shitetsure* perform a dance in tandem (such as in *Momijigari* or *Takasago*) rather than in succession. Moreover, the character of the *shitetsure* in classical *nō* plays either has the function of emphasising the image of the *shite* (as do the demons in *Momijigari*) or he/she is an equal partner symbolising a harmonious relationship with the *shite* (as in *Takasago*). Thus, for a *shitetsure* in a *nō* play, Ophelia has an extremely sophisticated and independent character with her own volition (to offer forgiveness to Hamlet) and her own fate (suicide by drowning), rather than sharing a similar fate with the *shite*. Ueda Kuniyoshi interpreted the role of the *shitetsure* in a novel way by giving her the important function of initiating the *shite*'s salvation (*satori*), which in classical plays is usually left to the *waki*.

¹⁹⁷ In creating this vivid description Ueda was clearly inspired by John Everett Millais's famous painting (1894) of the drowned Ophelia.

In adapting the characters and plot of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to *nō* Ueda Kuniyoshi eliminated the vast cast of characters in the original play, preserving only the roles of Horatio (the *waki*), Hamlet (the *shite*), Ophelia (the *shitetsure*) and the old grave guard (the *ai*). It seems that he interpreted the story of political intrigue and the uncertainty of the mad prince of Denmark as the tragic love story of Hamlet and Ophelia, and gave it a happy ending in their reunification in the afterlife.

5.2.3 *Honkadori* borrowings in the structure of the play

In light of the relationship between the *waki* (Horatio), the *shite* (Hamlet) and the *shitetsure* (Ophelia), in Ueda's interpretation *Hamlet* seems to be a tragic but somewhat simplified love story. However, the usage of numerous word-for-word quotes from Shakespeare's original play and the pattern of arrangement of various quotes, paraphrases and references in the script reveal a more complex fusion of the religious and symbolic worlds behind a simple love story.

The first important quote from Shakespeare's tragedy, which sets the mood of the play, is in the first act, when Horatio prays at Ophelia's grave after recalling Hamlet's last words. The scene is set in spring, and violets, primroses and buttercups are blooming around the grave, all beautiful and gentle spring flowers that remind Horatio of the "fair" Ophelia (*Ibid.*, 7). The metaphor of the violet refers to the prophetic wish Ophelia's brother Laertes made at her funeral, "And from her fair and unpolluted flesh may violets spring." (Act V, Scene I, Shakespeare 1993: 389), which is translated into Japanese as *kimi kore yori wa sumire to naru beshi* (Ueda 2005: 8). The image of *sumire* or violets is also echoed in the phrase *hitohagusa futayogusa*¹⁹⁸ that the chorus chants for the villager (*Ibid.*). Both words, *hitohagusa* and *futayogusa*, translate as "violet", but also convey the meaning "hidden", "not seen", or even "non-existent", alluding to the dead Ophelia. Horatio recalls her funeral and the queen's words as she offers her flowers, "Sweets to the sweet. Farewell" (Shakespeare 1993: 390). This is the first direct quote from the original play, which Ueda translated into Japanese as *utsukushiki hito ni utsukushiki hana o koso* ("The fair flowers to the fairest of all"; Ueda 2005: 7).

Horatio's prayer evokes the appearance of Hamlet's ghost in the disguise of a villager (the *maeshite*), who chants the verses "I've been wandering the path between life and death" (*seishi no michi ni mayoi kite*; Ueda 2005: 7), a modified version of Hamlet's famous monologue "To be or not to be..." (Act III, Scene I, Shakespeare 1993: 277). The local man continues with a long passage from the original play starting with the quote "Whether 'tis nobler..." (*Ibid.*, 277-280), which is translated almost word for word into Japanese (Ueda 2005: 7). The

¹⁹⁸ In Chinese characters these two verses are written as 一葉草 二夜草.

author of the play repeated the line *nemuru ga gotoki mono naru ya* (lit. “[to die will be] something like to sleep”), a modification of Shakespeare’s “To die, to sleep...” (Act III, Scene I, Shakespeare 1993: 278). Ueda added two verses to Hamlet’s monologue, *Ikuru koto to wa nani yaran. Shi suru koto to wa nani yaran* (“I wonder what is to be and what is not to be”; Ueda 2006: 92–93), in which the verb “to be” is expressed in Japanese by the contrasting verbs “to live” (*ikuru*) and “to die” (*shisuru*), expressing the nature of the suffering and feeling of uncertainty filling Hamlet’s heart.

At the end of the first act, after the scene in which the villager/Hamlet meditates in *zazen* and Ophelia gives him her blessing, the villager chants verses that are derived from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, but with a significantly different interpretation: “To be or not to be, is *no longer* the question” (Ueda 2006: 94), which translates into Japanese as *Seishi wa mohaya. Tou made mo nashi* (Ueda 2005: 9). This modification of the first line of Hamlet’s famous monologue expresses the spiritual path of the villager/Hamlet in the *nō* play, whose mind is set at rest after seeing Ophelia’s ghost and receiving her blessing, and therefore no longer needs to ask whether to live or die. By paraphrasing the famous verses from Shakespeare’s play, Ueda changed the tone of his adaptation and gave the simple love story a more abstract interpretation.

The final quote from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* contains Hamlet’s last words before he dies “the rest is silence” (Act V, Scene II, Shakespeare 1993: 416). It is placed at the end of the *nō* adaptation, literally translated into Japanese as *ato wa seijaku* (Ueda 2005: 11), and followed by modified verses from Shakespeare’s tragedy: “Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince, and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest” (Act V, Scene II, Shakespeare 1993: 416). These words are originally said by Horatio, but in the *nō* play the chorus chants the verses for the ghost of Hamlet. The verses from the original play “now cracks a noble heart” are paraphrased as “Now. A noble heart cracks” (*Ima. Ki-takaki kokoro ga tobitatareru*); “good night” is paraphrased as “go to rest in the world of the spirit” (*reikon-sekai e o-yasumi nasai*) and “enter the world of rest” (*ansoku-sekai ni hairitamau*), alluding to the realm of the dead; and the phrase “flights of angels sing thee to thy rest” becomes “the flights of angels, their singing voice invites you and guides you” (*Tenshi no hishō to utagoe ni. Izanaware michibikare*). In the Japanese version the phrase “speak no more” (*mō katarenu*) has been added to the original verses.

Direct quotes and paraphrased verses from Shakespeare’s play are arranged in a way that supports Ueda’s interpretation of Hamlet’s story: the *nō* play starts with a reference to Hamlet’s last words and also ends with verses from the same scene, as if completing the cycle. Thus, the structure of the *nō* play conveys the idea that Hamlet’s spirit has finally found relief.

The placement of the references (or modification of the original verses) and direct quotes in the *shinsaku* play is presented below in Table 6.

Table 6. Quotes and references in the structure of *Nō Hamuretto*

The symbol ● signifies a reference to Shakespeare's verses, and the symbol ⊙ denotes a full quote that is translated word for word into Japanese.

Act	Sub-sequence	Shakespeare's <i>Hamlet</i>	Reference or quote
<i>maeba</i>	<i>nanori</i> Horatio recalls Hamlet's last words	"Horatio, I am dead..." "And let me speak..." (Act V Sc. II)	●
	<i>kakaru</i> Horatio recalls the queen's words at Ophelia's funeral	"Sweets to the sweet." (Act V Sc. I)	⊙
	<i>sageuta</i> Horatio recalls Hamlet's last words	"If thou didst..." (Act V Sc. II)	●
	<i>shidai</i> The villager/Hamlet	"To be or not to be..." (Act III Sc. I)	⊙
	<i>sashi, ageuta</i> The villager/Hamlet	"Whether 'tis nobler..." "To die, to sleep..." (Act III Sc. I)	⊙
	The villager/Hamlet cites Laertes's words	"And from her fair and unpolluted flesh may violets spring." (Act V Sc. I)	●
	<i>katari</i> The villager/Hamlet	"Get thee to a nunnery" (Act III Sc. I)	●
	<i>kakaru</i> The villager/Hamlet	"I lov'd Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers ..." (<i>Hamlet</i> , Act V Sc. I)	●
	The villager/Hamlet	"To be or not to be..." (Act III Sc. I)	●
<i>nochiba</i>	<i>kakaru</i> Hamlet	"To be or not to be..." (Act III Sc. I)	●
	Hamlet	"The rest is silence" "Now cracks a noble heart..." (Act V Sc. II)	⊙

As seen from the table above, the quotes and indirect references to the source play have been inserted mainly into the first act – six references and three direct quotes in all. The most famous verse from Hamlet's monologue "to be or not to be..." (*seishi no michi ni mayoi kite*) is placed at the beginning of the *maeba* as a full quote establishing the link with the source text, and again in a modified form "to be or not to be, is no longer the question" (*seishi wa mo haya tou made mo nashi*) at the end of the first act just before the *ai-kyōgen* interlude. The same quote is also

repeated in shortened form *seishi wa tou made mo arazu* ("To be or not to be, is *not* the question") in the second act, just before the *iroe* movement and *hayamai* dance at the end of the *kiri* section. Thus, this key phrase is found in three different sections of Ueda's *nō* adaptation; its presence at the end of the *maeba* as the ear-opening moment before the eye-opening climax corresponds to Zeami's recommendation to insert the most important quote or allusion into the ear-opening and eye-opening sections.

5.2.4 From medieval tragedy to Zen Buddhist *nō*

In contrast to classical *nō* plays in which the protagonist finds salvation through the prayer of a Buddhist monk, in Ueda's *Nō Hamuretto* Hamlet attains enlightenment in *zazen* meditation. Kawata Motoo found that in his *shinsaku* play Ueda reconciles two different concepts of Buddhism. Instead of the Pure Land Buddhism common in most of the classical *nō* plays from the Muromachi period, Ueda unites two opposing branches of Buddhism: *jiriki* ("inner-directed") or enlightenment through meditation, as in Zen Buddhism, and *tarik*i ("other-directed") or rebirth in the Western Paradise due to the power of Amida Buddha, as in Pure Land Buddhism (Kawata 2011: 60). Although Kawata believes that there is no need to seek a religious meaning in Shakespeare's works because religion and literature are opposites (*Ibid.*, 62), Ueda Kuniyoshi's interpretation of *Hamlet* is indubitably religious, and, more specifically, an expression of Reginald Horace Blyth's Zen (Arai 2007: 98).

Blyth's impact on Ueda's religious views

The reflections of Blyth's views on Zen Buddhism in Ueda's *Nō Hamuretto* are not coincidental. Reginald Horace Blyth (1898–1964), an English writer and admirer of Japanese culture, stated in his book *Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics* (1942) that Zen Buddhist thought has some features in common with the works of Shakespeare, and that a similar attitude towards life could also be seen in the works of Wordsworth, Dickens and Stevenson (Blyth 1942: viii). In Chapter II of his book *Religion is Poetry* Blyth argued that "the most profoundly religious passages in the Bible are the most poetical" and formulated his famous phrase "Zen is poetry, and poetry is Zen" (*Ibid.*, 25). According to Arai Yoshio, Blyth's views on the unity of religion and poetry are based on the fundamental idea of Zen Buddhism: "Zen is nothingness, and nothingness is Zen" (Arai 2007: 92). Blyth reasoned that in the same sense that nothingness and Zen are eternal, poetry is also eternal, because poetry is the Zen of art. He concluded that poetry is the English equivalent of Japanese Zen (Blyth 1942: ix).

Arai considers that in addition to Zen Buddhist thought, Zen is also expressed in the contemporary world in various other forms and modes, such as

culture, the arts, literature, and so forth (Arai 2007: 90). In his book Blyth lists some of the cultural phenomena in which Zen is most clearly evident, including the life of Jesus Christ, the music of Bach, and the works of Shakespeare (Blyth 1942: vii). According to Arai Yoshio (2007: 93) the universality of Blyth's views is evident in his interpretation of a Buddhist concept from the *Heart Sutra* "everything returns to nothingness", which is congruent with the well-known sentence from the Bible "from dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3: 19). Arai's statement is supported by the fact that this biblical thought can be found in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in the verses "Alexander returneth to dust, the dust is earth, of earth we make loam" (Act V, Scene I, Shakespeare 1993: 387). He argues that for Blyth these three phenomena – Zen Buddhism, the Bible, and Shakespeare – were unified in his concept of Zen (Arai 2007: 93). Arai reasons that the universality of Blyth's Zen fuses together all earthly things – nations, frontiers, religions and doctrines, and that it is a type of universality also found in Shakespeare's works.¹⁹⁹ Arai is convinced that Ueda's Shakespearean *nō* has a similar cosmic universality because it is based on Blyth's views on Zen (*Ibid.*, 90).

Blyth's views on Zen Buddhism were heavily influenced by the works of Suzuki Daisetsu, who introduced Zen to Western readers as a unified system of religious thought that integrates two different branches of Japanese Buddhism: Pure Land Buddhism and the Zen schools.²⁰⁰ Kawata Motoo is convinced that Reginald Blyth, whose lectures on English poetry Ueda Kuniyoshi attended for nine years at university, imbued him with Suzuki's understanding of Buddhism (Kawata 2011: 60).²⁰¹ Kawata's analysis of the development of Suzuki Daisetsu's interpretation of Zen thought led him to the conclusion that Ueda's Shakespearean *nō* is based on Suzuki's universalistic concept of Zen from his later period, which also includes the Pure Land Buddhist views that are characteristic of *nō* theatre (*Ibid.*, 65).

Zen in *Nō Hamuretto*

In *Nō Hamuretto* Blyth's universalistic concept of Buddhism becomes apparent in the characters of Hamlet (the *shite*) and Ophelia (the *shitetsure*): the former is an embodiment of Zen *jiriki* ("inner-directed") power, and the latter a personification of Great Compassion or *tariki* ("other-directed") power. In the first act of the play, after the villager/Hamlet explains his reason for rejecting Ophelia and expresses his sincere regret over her death, he sits in *zazen* and

¹⁹⁹ Arai goes even further, pointing out similarities between the symbols of Zen Buddhist nothingness — a zero or an empty circle — and Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, which featured a round stage ("this wooden O") (Arai 2007: 94).

²⁰⁰ In the preface to his book Blyth expresses his "indebtedness to Taisetz Suzuki's books on Zen" (Blyth 1942: xi).

²⁰¹ Ueda Kuniyoshi's latest book *Thank you, Professor Blyth (Buraizu-sensei, arigatō)*, published in Tokyo by Sangokan in 2010) is dedicated to his mentor.

begins to meditate (Ueda 2005: 8). At that point Ophelia's ghost appears behind him, looks at him and makes a gesture "as if to pardon and bless him". Due to her forgiveness, Hamlet achieves enlightenment, saying, "To be or not to be, is not the question" (*Ibid.*, 9, 11).

A short passage follows in which the villager voices his newly discovered knowledge that the dream and reality are one. This is expressed in a wordplay written in the homophonous Chinese characters *Yūgen mugen*. *Mugen yūgen* (*Ibid.*, 9)²⁰², which translate into English as "Infinity resides in the finite. Dream and reality" (Ueda 2006: 94). Hamlet no longer has a need to question whether to be or not to be, because the "past and future may be in the present" (*Ibid.*). This silent scene reveals the influence of Blyth's thought on Ueda's religious views, which are woven into the adaptation: Hamlet attains enlightenment through the forgiveness of Ophelia, who appears to him during his meditation in the form of the Goddess of Mercy and transmits to him the grace of the Great Compassion.

After meditating, the villager uses Buddhist vocabulary, such as *kakugo suru* ("make up one's mind" or "be disillusioned"), *satoru* ("awake" or "attain enlightenment"), and *seishin shinka* ("spiritual evolvement"), to describe his changed spiritual state. Due to the influence of Blyth's universalistic Buddhism, the interpretation of Hamlet's character in Ueda's adaptation differs significantly from Shakespeare's: the original Hamlet searches for the truth and justice, while Ueda's seeks personal enlightenment through Zen meditation.

Religion and the *waki*'s salvation in *Nō Hamuretto*

In addition to the enlightenment of Hamlet, the salvation of Horatio is also an important theme in this *nō* adaptation. Compared with the role of the *waki* in classical plays, whose main functions are to urge the *shite* to reveal his identity and to pray for his salvation at the end of the play, the *waki* in *Nō Hamuretto* is cast as a close friend of Hamlet who regrets not having been able to stop the fatal fight between Hamlet and Laertes, the brother of Ophelia. In the second act the ghost of Hamlet expresses his concern for Horatio's salvation and tells him to save himself (Ueda 2005: 11). Thus, contrary to the *shite-waki* relationship in classical plays, in this new *nō* play the *shite* offers salvation to the *waki*, because the *shite* has already attained enlightenment.

This unusual relationship between the *shite* and the *waki* becomes vividly apparent in the *iroe* movement of the second act in which the symbolic act of passing a jewel of life and peace takes place, followed by the *hayamai* dance of Ophelia's and Hamlet's ghosts that signifies their eternal unification in the afterlife (*Ibid.*). In this part of the play the most important message is delivered:

²⁰² The verse is written in Chinese characters as 有限無限。夢幻幽玄。The literal meaning of the words are: "the finite" (*yūgen*), and "the infinity" or "the boundlessness" (*mugen*); "a dream" (*mugen*), and "profound" or "mysterious" (*yūgen*).

the enlightenment of one person initiates the circle of salvation that affects all humanity through the Great Compassion. A similar message of universal happiness is delivered by the grave guard in the interlude, and repeated at the beginning and end of the *ai-kyōgen*, in which the repeated use of the word “Universe” (*uchū*, lit. “space” or “cosmos”) underscores the religious overtones derived from Blyth’s concept of Buddhism (Ueda 2005: 10).

The analysis of *Nō Hamuretto* reveals that various religious elements uncommon to *nō* plays have been woven into the play, such as Hamlet’s attaining enlightenment through *zazen* meditation, Ophelia as the embodiment of forgiveness and compassion, and a novel interpretation of the *shite-waki* relationship through which Horatio’s soul finds peace. However, it could be concluded that regardless of these religious elements this *shinsaku nō* is not a particularly religious play because of the obscurity of the religious ideas. While some Buddhist concepts are employed in the play, they do not clearly belong to a particular religious philosophy or school. Therefore, the play could only have been based on Blyth’s universalistic concept of Zen Buddhism, which apparently had a great influence on the author’s worldview.

5.2.5 Adapting the language of Shakespeare to the form of *nō*

Combining various language styles

The use of language in *Nō Hamuretto* is quite interesting because it combines different modes of speech throughout the play. The play is written almost entirely in the *waka* poetic style in a 5-7-syllable rhythm with minor modifications, but some parts of the play are written in the literary *sōrō* style. For instance, Horatio’s self-introduction, the following *tsukizerifu* (arrival song), and the conversation between Horatio and the villager at the beginning of the play are written in *sōrō* style. However, the next section, in which Horatio describes the flowers on Ophelia’s grave, and recalls the queen’s words at her funeral, and Hamlet’s last words to him, is written in poetic free verse. The villager then chants the famous verses from Shakespeare’s tragedy in poetic language, but following that section, when Horatio asks the villager about his identity, the mode is again shifted to *sōrō* style (Ueda 2005: 7). This exchange of questions and answers between the *waki* (Horatio) and the *shite* (the villager) is a conventional feature of *nō* plays, and the *sōrō* form underlines the traditional nature of such a conversation. Moreover, when adapting material from a foreign theatre tradition to the form of *nō* the choice to write the play in more conservative language supports the creation of a traditional image, which assists the conversion of the Shakespearean tragedy into a *nō* play.

In contrast to other parts of the play, the *ai-kyōgen* interlude is written in a plain style, occasionally featuring the particles *yo* and *sa* at the end of sentences,

that generally do not belong to the language of *nō* (Ueda 2005: 9–10).²⁰³ However, when the grave guard begins to tell the story of Ophelia he uses polite vocabulary (like the verb *mairu*) and a humble *de gozaru* style (*Ibid.*, 10). Plain speech, a humble vocabulary, and the *de gozaru* style all emphasise the low status and simple nature of the grave guard.

Combining blank verse with the poetic *waka* form

The most challenging task for the author of the *shinsaku* play must have been adapting the blank-verse poetic language of Shakespeare's medieval tragedy. Kawata Motoo pointed out difficulties with previous attempts to import the poetic form of Shakespeare's plays into the Japanese tradition (Kawata 2011: 62).²⁰⁴ Renowned writer Natsume Sōseki was not satisfied with the first translations of Shakespeare's tragedy and objected to performing the play in translation, which lacked the rhythm of blank verse (*Ibid.*, 61). Fukuda Tsuneari, who translated *Hamlet* (1967) and other works of Shakespeare, also felt that the first translations into Japanese lacked 90% of the beauty of *Hamlet* (*Ibid.*, 57). However, Kawata Motoo is convinced that in contrast to previous adaptations, the metrical beauty of *utai* was successfully conveyed in the English verses of Ueda's *nō* version of the play (*Ibid.*, 57–58). Thus, Ueda Kuniyoshi succeeded in adapting a Shakespearean play to *nō* form in the manner Sōseki had advocated in 1911, establishing it "as a *nō* play by converting English blank verse into the tune of *nō*" (*Ibid.*, 55).

Ueda used the classical play *Izutsu* as a model for his 1982 English-language *nō* version of *Hamlet*, matching Shakespeare's blank verse with the rhythm of *nō* by arranging the verses in alternating 7 and 5 syllables. Kawata Motoo analysed Ueda's technique of adapting blank verse to *waka*, and demonstrated the correspondence of these two poetic forms in Ueda's first English-language *nō* adaptation (Kawata 2005: 263). In the following analysis of Ueda's technique of matching the rhythm of *waka* to blank verse I used Kawata's analysis as a model and applied his idea to the Japanese-language *shinsaku* script. The first example of Ueda's adaptation of Shakespearean language is in the *shidai* section of *Nō Hamuretto* (Ueda 2005: 7), in which the most famous

²⁰³ Sentence-final particles *yo* and *sa* function as interactional particles and express forcing upon the addressee the speaker's will and judgement. In contemporary Japanese language these sentence-final particles are considered a part of masculine speech.

²⁰⁴ Ueda's *shinsaku* play was not the first attempt to employ poetic *waka* language in adaptations of Shakespeare's plays. The first attempt to transform *Hamlet* into Japanese verse was Toyama Masakazu's adaptation *Seiyō jōruri Hamuretto* (*Hamlet* in Western-style narrative, 1882). Almost thirty years later, in 1911, Tsubouchi Shōzō's translation of *Hamlet* was performed for one week at the Imperial Theatre (Kawata 2011: 56, 61). Ashizu Kaori, a scholar of Shakespearean studies, assumed that by using a 7-5-syllable meter, Tsubouchi intended to adapt his translation of *Hamlet* (1909) to the form of traditional theatre (Ashizu 2008).

passage from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* "To be or not to be..." (Act III, Scene I, Shakespeare 1993: 277) is rendered in traditional 7-5-syllable form as follows:

To be or not to be, that is the question.
 U — U — U — U — U — U

Sei-shi no mi-chi ni ma-yo-i ki-te.
 U — U — U — U U — U — U²⁰⁵

As seen above, in the original play the number of syllables in the verses is equal (6-6), as is common in Western blank verse, but Ueda transferred these verses in his Japanese translation to a 7-5-syllable rhythm, the traditional form of *waka* poems. Nevertheless, the same quote in slightly modified form, "To be or not to be, is no longer the question", repeated at the end of the first act and at the beginning of the second, is in a freer form of alternating 6 and 8 syllables.

The direct quote from Shakespeare's play "To die, to sleep..." (Act III, Scene I, Shakespeare 1993: 278), which in the Japanese version is chanted by the villager/Hamlet in an *ageuta* sequence, is also composed in a strict 7-5-syllable rhythm:

Shi-nu-ru to wa. Ne-mu-ru ga go-to-ki mo-no na-ru ya.
 U — U — U ×²⁰⁶ U — U — U — U U — U — U
Ne-mu-ru ga go-to-ki mo-no na-ru ya.
 U — U — U — U U — U — U
Ne-mu-re-ba yu-me o mi-ru mo-no o.
 U — U — U — U U — U — U
I-ka-na-ru yu-me o mi-ru ya-ra-n.
 U — U — U — U U — U — U
 (Ueda 2005: 7)

Similarly to the example above, some other quotes or references from Shakespeare's play, such as the direct quotes "Whether 'tis nobler..." in the first act of the *shinsaku* play, and "Now cracks a noble heart..." in the second act, as well as the modified verses "If thou didst..." and "Forty thousand brothers..." in the first act, are adjusted to the Japanese 7-5-syllable meter.

²⁰⁵ The markings for weak (U) and strong (–) syllables have been added to the Japanese verses in order to demonstrate their correspondence with the number of syllables, and with the English translation or original verses in English. However, it seems that in the Japanese language the number of syllables and their correspondence with rhythmic configuration is more important than the alternation of weak and strong syllables.

²⁰⁶ Kawata Motoo marks *ma* or theatrical pauses between verses with the symbol × (Kawata 2005: 255). In Japanese music *ma* are often voiced, and do not equate to pauses in Western music. Komparu Kunio explains, "the body of the music exists in the negative, blank spaces generated by the actual sounds"; for example, the calls of drummers (*kakegoe*) establish and support the negative rhythm (Komparu 1983: 168, 189).

However, the script of *Nō Hamuretto* is not entirely written according to this rhythmic pattern, because the use of different rhythmic modes is of vital importance in composing *nō* plays, such as congruent and non-congruent song, and the alternation of *jibyōshi* and *jitsubyōshi* rhythms with different patterns in the instrumental sequences (Kawata 2005: 263).²⁰⁷

Writing *Nō Hamuretto* involved not only choosing an appropriate style of language and adapting free verse to the form of Japanese *waka* poetry, but also creating the impression of a *nō* play by using characteristic vocabulary. As a *shite* actor Ueda Munakata Kuniyoshi was familiar with the classical repertory and instinctively wrote his play using the poetic and elegant vocabulary common to *nō* plays. In addition, the script includes several *engo* (pivot words), such as *ito* (“thread”), *hana* (“flower”), *haru* (“spring”), *tsuki* (“moon”), and *tsuyu* (“dew”), usually employed in *nō* plays to create intertextuality and allusiveness.

5.2.6 Conclusion

In the introduction to his play Ueda Kuniyoshi called it a *sōsaku nō* or “original *nō* play”, which denotes a *shinsaku* play that incorporates some original ideas. When he was writing the play he followed Umewaka Mansaburō’s advice not to limit his creativity to the conventional form of classical *nō* (Ueda 2005: 3).

Ueda Kuniyoshi based his play on Acts III and V of *Hamlet*. He drew inspiration from a scene in the original play in which Hamlet visits Ophelia’s grave. The relationships between the characters in Ueda’s play are exceptional, as the *shite* (Hamlet), a close friend of the *waki* (Horatio), is concerned about the enlightenment of the *waki*, and not *vice versa*, as would be typical of *nō* plays. The *shitetsure* Ophelia is also more independent and active than is usual in *nō* plays. Inspired by Hamlet and Ophelia’s story of everlasting love Ueda crafted a fictional plot organised according to the structure of dream plays, placing famous key phrases from the ancestral play in the proper sections of the new play to create a dual climax.

The most challenging task for the author of the play must certainly have been adapting the language of Shakespeare. Without a doubt, Ueda Kuniyoshi greatly respected the source text, resulting in his insertion of translations of direct quotes and paraphrases of verses that function like *honkadori* borrowings to create intertextuality in the play. In addition, the author translated many quotes and paraphrases into a form that combined free verse and *waka* poetry. He also tried to make a clear distinction between the characters’ mode of

²⁰⁷ In congruent song style (*hyōshi-au*) each syllable of the text corresponds to a specific beat of the music, whereas in non-congruent song style (*hyōshi-awazu*) this kind of correspondence between the beats in melodic configuration and syllables does not exist (Hare 1986: 292, 297). Congruent style is divided into three types that have different rhythmic patterns of syllables matched to the beats (Komparu 1983: 195–196). In this way the script of a *nō* play can be composed according to different rhythmic patterns, enabling the creation of verses of different numbers of syllables.

language – the *ai* speaking in a humble style, and the other characters occasionally using the *sōrō* style in their ceremonial dialogues.

Although *Nō Hamuretto* has since been performed on traditional *nō* stages, the play premiered in 2004 at Nihon University Casals Hall as “a hall *nō*” on a Western-style stage that lacked the *hashigakari* bridge-way and pillars customary for a *nō* stage. Instead of the traditional *kagamiita* soundboard with a painting of an old pine tree as a backdrop, there was a solitary cross hanging from the ceiling (Sugisawa 2005: 13). Introductory music was performed with a *taiko* drum and pipe organ, the latter instrument being most unusual in *nō* music. Unfortunately, no specific information about the costumes or masks used in the performance has been made public, beyond a remark that Hamlet’s costume included a crucifix, and that in the first act Hamlet held a scroll of a sutra in his hand, and in the second a jewel of life and peace (Ueda 2005: 6-7).

However, these small details give rise to a curious contradiction with the overall theme of the play: Hamlet’s enlightenment through Zen Buddhist meditation. This combination of Christian and Buddhist symbols, supported by the symbolic act of conferring the jewel of compassion and enlightenment at the end of the play, emphasise the Blyth-inspired mixture of universal religion on which the play is based. Regardless of the use of the clearly Zen Buddhist concept of *satori* the religious tone of Ueda’s *shinsaku* play seems to be quite elusive, conveying to the audience a universal message of harmony and peace.

In addition, some original ideas are introduced into the play, such as theme music for Ophelia that is played on a *nō* flute when her figure appears onstage and ends with the disappearance of her ghost, and is indicative of the original interpretation of the role of the *shitetsure*. Other innovative musical *kata* were also created for this *shinsaku* play: during Ophelia’s silent appearance the back row of the chorus chants verses that describe her floating in the river; the whole chorus then chants verses that recount her rebirth in the afterlife (Ueda 2005: 9). Another example of an unusual use of the *nō* chorus and musical instruments is in the *hayamai* section, at the beginning of which Ophelia dances accompanied only by a *taiko* drumbeat. When Hamlet begins to dance the second sequence of the *hayamai* the leader of the chorus chants alone, and the third sequence of Hamlet’s dance is accompanied only by a flute while the chorus is silent (*Ibid.*, 11).

The analysis of the structural and performance elements of the play is summarised in the following table.

Table 7. Web of *nō* elements in the *shinsaku* adaptation *Nō Hamuretto*
 The elements that fully meet the conventional requirements for *nō* plays are marked in the table as ⊙, and those that appear in a slightly modified form are marked as ●. The elements that deviate from the canon to the extent that they cannot be considered part of the *nō* tradition are marked as ×.

Structural elements		Source	⊙
		Characters	●
		Structure	⊙
		Language	●
Performance elements	Internal elements	Actors' training	⊙
		Music	●
		Costumes and masks	●
	External elements	Stage	●
		Hand and stage props	×
		Lighting	×

5.3 Re-adaptations into *nō* form: Yokomichi's *Takahime*

Yokomichi Mario's *shinsaku* play *Takahime* (The Hawk Princess, 1967) represents the category of new *nō* plays that are adaptations of modern dramas (or Western plays) that were adapted from classical *nō* plays. Yeats's symbolic play *At the Hawk's Well* is currently the only Western drama that has been re-adapted to the form of *nō* as a *shinsaku* play although some other works by European playwrights have been inspired by *nō* theatre and could potentially be re-adapted to the form of *nō*, such as Bertolt Brecht's opera *Der Jasager* (He Said Yes, 1930), which was based on the classical *nō* play *Tanikō* (The Valley Rite, author unknown), and Benjamin Britten's musical drama *Curlew River* (1964) that was inspired by *Sumidagawa* (The Sumida River, author Kanze Motomasa). Some *nō* influences can also be found in Paul Claudel's opera *Le Livre de Christophe Colomb* (The Diary of Christopher Columbus, 1927–28) and Eugene O'Neill's plays *The Iceman Cometh* (1939) and *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (1941). Unfortunately, however, none of these plays have gained enough attention in *nō* circles to be re-adapted to the form of *nō*, leaving Yeats's play as the sole example of this category.

In addition to *Takahime*, another adaptation of Yeats's play, *Taka no i* (The Hawk's Well, 1991), authored by the haiku poet Takahashi Mutsuo (b. 1937),²⁰⁸ also belongs to the category of re-adaptations. In Takahashi's adaptation a young man (the *waki*) decides to shoot a maiden (the *tsure*) in order to make her give

²⁰⁸ Nishino Haruo included the play in his 2005 list of *shinsaku* plays, as well as two other adaptations of Yeats's play, Umewaka Naohiko's *Taka no ido* (The Hawk's Well, 1990) and Okamoto Akira's *gendai nō* play *Mizu no koe* (Voices of Water, 1990).

him the elixir of life, but an old man (the *shite*) stops him. When the hawk/maiden begins a circular dance, the water flows out of the well, but before the men can drink it the elixir vanishes again. The maiden hides in a mist, and both men chase her. The ending of the play resembles a symbolic drama, with a chorus of shadows singing that souls deceived by the maiden are cursed to wander in the mountains for thousands of years as warriors from hell. The play also includes an interlude between the two acts, during which instead of giving the background of the story the figure of the author (the *ai*) explains to the young man that immortality is only an illusion, and tells him how to recognise the behaviour of the maiden that heralds the water's flowing out of the well. Takahashi clearly based his play on Yeats's story, adding the interpretation of the old man as the future of the young man, a motif originally found in Yokomichi's *Takahime*. He decided to use the symbol of a well (*ido*) rather than Yokomichi's traditionally Japanese natural spring. And instead of a hazel tree he made use of a fig tree (*udumbara*), which in the Hindu religion is a symbolic plant believed to flower once every three thousand years. There are many aspects of the play that are not characteristic of *nō*, such as open conflict between characters (the young man shooting the maiden, and the *waki* and the *shite* chasing the *tsure*), assigning the principal dance to the *tsure* (the maiden), the absence of poetic allusions (the poems in the play are composed by the author), and the symbolic ending of the play. In light of the characters and composition of the plot it could be concluded that Takahashi's adaptation of Yeats's play fails to meet the requirements of *nō* plays. However, Takahashi insisted that he intended the play to be read rather than performed (Takahashi 1991: 112).

Thus, the only *nō* adaptation in this category is the *shinsaku* play *Takahime*, which was written in collaboration with the well known *nō* scholar and playwright Yokomichi Mario, a group of young and rebellious *nō* actors, Nomura Mannojo, who directed the play, and the "Kanze brothers", Kanze Hisao, Hideo and Shizuo (currently using the name Tetsunojo). *Takahime* is indisputably the most popular *shinsaku* play written in the past century. Since its premiere in 1967 it has been performed numerous times on professional *nō* stages by different schools, and has a history of more than thirty performances as of 2004 (Yokomichi 2004: 4).

The analysis explores the creation of double adaptations as a process of intercultural genre adaptation from the following perspectives: first, the extent of the use of the theme and elements of Zeami's classical *nō* play *Yōrō* (Nourishing the Aged, 14th-15th century) in Yeats's symbolic play *At the Hawk's Well* (1916), and second, the development of traditional elements in Yokomichi Mario's re-adaptation of Yeats's play into the form of *nō* (in 1949 and 1967).

5.3.1 Zeami's *Yōrō* as a "god play"

Zeami's classical play *Yōrō* (Nourishing the Aged) belongs to the category of "god plays" (*kami nō*). It takes place "once upon a time" (*aru hi aru toki*) in the country of Mino, giving the story a mythical flavour. In the play Emperor Yūryaku (who reigned 456–479) hears a rumour about water from a mountain spring that has the miraculous power to extend one's life. In their search for the spring the imperial investigators (the *waki* and the *wakitsure*) meet two local men near *Yōrō* Waterfall – an old woodcutter (the *maeshite*) and his son (the *shitetsure*) – who inform the investigators of their discovery of medicinal water that flows out of a natural mountain well (*yama no i*). They recount that one day when they were tired from their hard work in the woods on the mountain, they drank water from the spring and felt refreshed; they brought some water home, where their elderly siblings also experienced the miraculous effect of the water (NKBT 40: 227–229, 232).

The play celebrates the effects of the water that prolongs human life – sake, which is variously described as "medicinal water of the Taoist immortals from the world of Hsien" (*senka no kusuri no mizu*) and "the medicine of immortality" (*iku-kusuri*), the elixir that the first emperor of Japan drank in the mythical land of Yomogi-ga-shima (*Ibid.* 227). In the *rongi* section of the play the old woodcutter tells the imperial investigators about Hōso,²⁰⁹ a Taoist immortal who lived during the Yin Dynasty (1600–1046 BC) and who drank "chrysanthemum water" (*kiku no mizu*), morning dew he gathered from the leaves of chrysanthemum flowers (*Ibid.*, 230). According to the legend, by drinking *kiku no mizu* he attained the wisdom of immortals and died at the age of seven hundred. The old woodcutter explains that when someone drinks medicinal *kiku no mizu* seven thousand years pass in a moment, and all the plants blossom on earth and in heaven (*Ibid.*, 229, 231). This "holy water" (*tamamizu*) bestows prosperity and happiness on both the rulers and their subjects (*Ibid.*, 229). The best water for making sake is gathered in early spring, therefore "the medicinal water" is also called *wakamizu*, as even old men become young in spirit after drinking it (*Ibid.*, 231).

In the interlude between the two acts a local man (the *ai*) suggests that a mountain deity must be the guardian of the spring, and that the water that miraculously cures the aged is the embodiment of the deity. He takes some water from the natural basin beneath the waterfall, drinks it, and begins to dance, claiming that the medicinal water has made him young (*Ibid.*).

The first act of *Yōrō* describes the discovery of the water, identified as sake, and establishes its image as the medicine of immortals and the source of energy and wisdom. The second act focuses on the connection between the miraculous power of the water and the gods, and a celebration of imperial rule. At the beginning of the second act a mountain deity (*sanjin*, the *nochishite*) appears, who

²⁰⁹ Péng Zǔ, the symbol of long life and natural medicine in Chinese folklore.

is an incarnation of the Willow Bodhisattva.²¹⁰ She explains that the source of the potency of the mountain spring is the combined power of all the *kami* and Buddha, likening the former to water and the latter to waves (*Ibid.*, 232). The concept reflects the medieval belief *honji-suijaku* that all gods are the same. Thus, Buddha and all the *kami* safeguard the reign of the emperor with the teachings of Buddhism. The pure water of the Yōrō Waterfall is called *nori no mizu* or “the water purifying human hearts with the Buddhist doctrine” (*Ibid.*). The mountain deity says that this pure water does not flow out of the spring, but it is rather the power of the gods that nourishes the aged. She then performs a *kamimai* – a dance of the gods. At the end of the play the emperor is compared to a boat and his subjects to water that supports the boat. The chorus chants that as long as his subjects respect their ruler, the peaceful reign of the emperor will never end, and the land of the gods will flourish forever (*Ibid.*).

5.3.2 Yeats’s *At the Hawk’s Well*, a symbolistic play inspired by Zeami’s Yōrō

In 1916 William Butler Yeats wrote his symbolistic play *At the Hawk’s Well*, the first of his plays for dancers. The play was performed the same year in Lady Cunard’s drawing room before a small audience that included several of Yeats’s closest friends and admirers (Quamber 1974: 77). The play started and ended with the symbolic act of unfolding and refolding a black cloth, which substituted for a curtain. A square of blue cloth was placed on the floor to represent a well²¹¹ (Yeats 1921: 3–5). Edmund Dulac, a British illustrator and designer, composed the music for the play and gathered an ensemble of flute, harp, drum, and gong players. Dulac also designed the costumes, which bore no resemblance to *nō* costumes (Harris 1986: 115–116).

Yeats’s adaptation of *Yōrō* could be called a free adaptation to modern dramatic form that was inspired by *nō* theatre. Yeats created a symbolistic drama for two obvious reasons: first, he was not acquainted with the canon of *nō*, and second, he had no intention of writing a *nō* play; instead, he was motivated to express his symbolistic ideas. Knowledge of *nō* conventions is of primary importance in writing *nō* plays, but Yeats had never seen a *nō* performance and acquired his information about the art only from the manuscripts of Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), which were edited and published by Ezra Pound (1885–1972) in 1916. Richard Taylor suggests that Yeats’s intention might have been to extract some “exciting new ideas” from the manuscripts in order to regenerate

²¹⁰ The Willow Bodhisattva or Yōryū Kannon Bosatsu is one of 33 personifications of Kannon, the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy.

²¹¹ The idea of putting a cloth on the floor of the stage as a symbol of a well could have been derived from the play *Aoi no ue*, in which a red kimono similarly placed on the stage symbolises Lady Aoi. This assumption is supported by the fact that *Aoi no ue* was one of the *nō* plays that Ernest Fenollosa had included in his book on *nō* theatre ‘*Noh*’, or *Accomplishment* (Fenollosa 2012: 31), of which Yeats was the editor.

English theatre, which had long been suffering from a lack of philosophical and aesthetic depth, and was solely “the representation of exterior or surface reality, and lyric drama” (Taylor 1976: ix). Apparently, Yeats was seeking artistic distance from the conventions of contemporary theatre when he used Celtic subject matter, symbolism, and the ritualised techniques of *nō* theatre (Quamber 1974: 76–77).

Yeats took the basic idea from Zeami’s *nō* play but replaced the characters with heroes of Irish mythology. As source material the *Irish Ulster Cycle* (in Irish *an Rúraíocht*) or the *Red Branch Cycle* seems to be extremely well suited for adapting to *nō* form, because the events took place in the distant past, in the 1st century, and the earliest manuscripts are from the 12th to 15th centuries, with some poems dating from the 7th century. Interestingly, for his first play for dancers Yeats decided to borrow only the central hero from the Cycle, Cuchulain (in Irish *Cú Chulainn*), and he followed the plot construction of Japanese classical plays.

The similarity of the theme of Yeats’s play to the classical play *Yōrō* seems obvious, as it tells the story of water from a miraculous well that guarantees eternal life. In Yeats’s play an old man sits near the dry bed of the well and waits for a rare opportunity to drink the miraculous water. Sidhe, a witch from Irish folklore, has appointed a young girl in the form of a hawk to be the guardian of the well. One day a young man, the Irish mythological hero Cuchulain, sails to the site of the well in order to attain immortality by drinking its waters. There he finds the old man, who has waited fifty years for the water to spring forth. The old man claims that the well belongs to him and chases Cuchulain away (Yeats 1921: 16). Then the old man reveals that a long time ago he also came to the island as a young man to search for the water of immortality, but over fifty years of waiting, the dancers of Aoife had lured him away from the well three times, just when the water had sprung forth (*Ibid.*). Then he asks Cuchulain to be allowed to drink first from the well when the water flowed, because it would be his last chance to attain immortality (*Ibid.*, 19).

When the mysterious hawk-guardian suddenly cries the old man is terrified and then falls asleep. Cuchulain is lured away by the hawk’s dance at the very moment when the water springs from the well. The old man awakens to discover that once again he has missed the chance to drink the water. Cuchulain arrives and learns that he was tricked by the hawk, but when he hears the warrior women of Aoife coming down the mountain, he decides to face them, rushing to the fight. The ending of the play does not bring resolution, as there is no information about the fate of Cuchulain or the old man (*Ibid.*).

Close analysis reveals that Yeats’s play differs in many aspects from Zeami’s, the source of his inspiration, despite their common theme of magical water that bestows eternal life. The first difference lies in the overall concept of the plays, as Zeami’s *nō* play celebrates the continuous reign of the emperor, while Yeats’s play depicts supernatural powers as trying to disturb or even destroy humans. Moreover, the spirit that lures Cuchulain away from the well is

demonic (Sekine and Murray 1990: 36), while *Yōrō's* Willow Bodhisattva is a supernatural power that is sympathetic towards humans and willing to share her prescription for immortality. Additionally, in Yeats's play the demonic supernatural figure of the Hawk, who has been possessed by the witch of Sidhe, simply vanishes from the stage without being pacified, whereas possessed spirits always obtain release at the end of *nō* plays.

The second significant difference between the ancestor play and Yeats's adaptation lies in the nature of the dance sequence at the end of both plays. The *kamimai* or "dance of a god" in Zeami's play is followed by verses that celebrate the holy water, comparing the emperor to a boat that floats on the "water" of his subjects or nation (NKBT 40: 232). However, the characteristics and setting of the dance in *At the Hawk's Well* are completely different, because the aim of the dance of the hawk is to lure Cuchulain away from the spring. Therefore, the dance in Yeats's play is performed in a rather seductive or even hypnotic manner, and not as a celebratory dance as it is in the classical *nō* play. It could therefore be concluded that in the *nō* play the dance movements are abstract, but in the symbolic play the hawk's dance is realistic. In addition, Yeats did not assign any lines to the hawk, but in *nō* theatre it is customary for the main character to both chant and dance during the play, a preliminary condition for creating the dual climaxes.²¹²

Another major discrepancy between Yeats's symbolic play and Zeami's is that Yeats's does not focus on a single character. A *shite*-centred structure is one of the basic conventions of *nō* plays. For instance, in *Yōrō* the protagonist of the first act is clearly the old woodcutter, and in the second act a god, the Willow Bodhisattva, with the other characters playing only supportive roles. However, it seems that in his play Yeats created two main characters, an old man and a young man, whose roles could be seen as a divided *waki* with contrasting characteristics, the former inactive and the latter active (Taylor 1976: 129). In addition, in Yeats's play the character of the deity, the witch of Sidhe is not cast in the play as a character, but her spirit possesses the hawk, who does not have an active role either, except for the cries and dance of the hawk that bring the play to its conclusion.

In contrast to *nō* plays the lines of the characters in *At the Hawk's Well* convey dramatic conflict (*Ibid.*, 133). Although it seems that throughout the play Yeats clearly tries to differentiate the speech with symbolic content from the dialogue between characters, making the former more "lofty or wistful" and the latter more direct and "characteristic of the speaker" (Quamber 1974: 83), the language of the symbolic play is undeniably beautiful, as might be expected of a renowned poet such as Yeats. However, in Yeats's adaptation the old man repeatedly uses words such as "stupid", "dumb", and "idiot" (Yeats 1921: 10, 13,

²¹² Albert Harris supposed that Yeats did not assign any lines to the hawk because the Japanese dancer Michio Itō who performed the role did not speak English and thus would have been unable to deliver them (Harris 1986: 114). In addition, the *shite* actor usually performs the central dance in *nō* theatre, rather than an actor with a merely supportive role such as the hawk in Yeats's play.

18, 23–24) that do not belong to the elegant vocabulary characteristic of *nō* plays; the nearest word one can find in a *nō* play is *oroka*, meaning “silly” or “foolish”, which creates a gentler image than the language of the old man in Yeats’s interpretation.

Yeats used many symbols from Irish mythology in *At the Hawk’s Well*. For instance, the well reminds the audience of the Celtic myth of Connla’s Well, which is surrounded by hazel trees (Taylor 1976: 128). The well symbolises immortality and wisdom, and the hazel is the Irish version of the Tree of Life – the source of knowledge, and a symbol of a quest (Quamber 1974: 79, 82). In the play the number three with its magical connotations is used repeatedly: there are three hazel trees, the water had sprung from the well three times in fifty years (*Ibid.*, 82), and the old man tries to drive the young man away three times.

As many magical symbols are employed in the play one might expect that the environment would also be supernatural or at least lush, but in the words of Richard Taylor “the myth is inverted”: instead of a celebration of universal harmony between gods and humans as it is in *Yōrō*, Yeats’s play features a desolate landscape of withering hazel trees and a dry well, as if the land of men had been abandoned by the gods (Taylor 1976: 128).

The analysis demonstrates that Yeats’s play for dancers *At the Hawk’s Well* differs in many ways from its model, the classical play *Yōrō*. Therefore, it is not surprising that Tanaka Makoto, who compiled *An Incomplete Collection of Nō Plays* (*Mikan yōkyokushū*), found Yeats’s play to be simply “a *nō* opera” and “a poetic drama” (MYSZ 8: 13). However, it was never Yeats’s intention to create a new *nō* play. On the contrary, he stated in his essay written in 1917 that he “invented a form of drama, distinguished, indirect, and symbolic” (Yeats 1998: 126).

5.3.3 Yokomichi’s re-adaptation *Takahime*

Legendary *nō* scholar Yokomichi Mario created two adaptations inspired by Yeats’s *At the Hawk’s Well*: *Taka no izumi* (The Hawk’s Spring) in 1949 and *Takahime* (The Hawk Princess) in 1969. Yokomichi was not really interested in Yeats, but he decided to rewrite Yeats’s play so that it could be performed as a traditional *nō* play (Harris 1986: 117). His intention was to use the techniques of *nō* writing to create “something completely new” (*Ibid.*, 135). Yokomichi recalled that it was Osada Gokyō, the manager of the famous *nō* actor Kita Roppeita, who asked him to write a play for the Kita School, because Osada was looking for another new writer in addition to Toki Zenmaro, who had already created a number of plays for the School (Yokomichi 2004: 3).

However, the direct initiative to rewrite Yeats’s play came from Yokomichi’s mentor Kobayashi Shizuo, who had already written a draft of the play. The draft was titled *Taka no i nite*, a literal translation of *At the Hawk’s Well*, and one section of the play strongly echoed Zeami’s *Yōrō* (*Ibid.*, 2). When

Yokomichi learned that Kobayashi had died in the Second World War, he felt obliged to fulfil the wish of his late mentor and decided to write the play (Harris 1986: 118).

Taka no izumi as a return to the form of *nō*

Yokomichi's first adaptation, *Taka no izumi*, premiered in 1949 on a *nō* stage in Tokyo, following the classical *nō* play *Matsukaze* (The Wind in the Pines) in the program. The play was performed twice more, in 1950 and 1952, and each time the script was modified to some extent. At first Yokomichi intended to call the play *Takahime* (The Hawk Princess), because he felt that the play was more oriented towards the theme than the characters, but he finally decided on *Taka no izumi* (The Hawk's Spring), a title closer to Yeats's. In Japanese the words "spring" (*izumi*) and "well" (*ido*) have approximately the same meaning, but Yokomichi preferred the word "*izumi*" partly because of its symbolic significance as a natural water source, in order to minimise its connotations as a man-made object. For him the word "*izumi*" in the title symbolised the spring of eternal life as "an unattainable natural force" that is beyond the control of men (Harris 1986: 124–125). The image of natural medicinal water in the re-adaptation is reinforced by the word *kiku no mizu* ("chrysanthemum water"), which is a direct quote from Zeami's ancestral play. Thus, Yokomichi's interpretation of the well of medicinal water as a natural spring indicates a return to the meaning of the water of immortality in the ancestral play *Yōrō*, in which the source of the water, the *Yōrō* Waterfall, is also natural.

Although *At the Hawk's Well* has been called "Yeats's heroic failure to adapt *nō* plays" (Sekine and Murray 1990: 121), Yokomichi found some qualities in the play that made it easy to adapt to the form of *nō*, such as a limited number of roles, a relatively short script, and a story that would be easily accepted by Japanese audiences (Yokomichi 2004: 1).

The first task was to divide the roles according to *nō* conventions in such a way that the main focus of the play would shift to the *shite*. In his play, Yokomichi made the old man the protagonist (the *shite*) and cast the young man in the supportive role of *Kūfurin* (Cuchulain, the *waki*). In the play the old man leaves the stage between the first and second acts, which enables a change of costume, as is customary in two-act dream plays. Among other changes made to increase the importance of the character of the old man, the role of the chorus was redefined so that it could better express the thoughts and feelings of the *shite*, and a brief dance sequence that the *shite* performs was added at the end of the play.

Despite many changes that Yokomichi made to establish the character of the old man as the *shite*, the role of *Kūfurin* was still too active in comparison with *waki* characters in *nō* plays. In order to create a better balance in the re-adaptation the role of the hawk was recast as a *tsure* (Otome or maiden), but it

still remained “an anomaly in terms of role assignment” as it had been in Yeats’s play (Harris 1986: 122–123). In his first adaptation Yokomichi made the character of Sidhe more Japanese by casting her as the mountain spirit, echoing the *sanjin* or “mountain deity”, the *nochishite* in Zeami’s classical play.

His analysis of Yokomichi’s “radical reinterpretation” of characters led Richard Taylor to conclude that it “demonstrates how far Yeats had moved from [the] traditional character relationship in *nō*” (Taylor 1976: 130). Masaru Sekine and Christopher Murray were especially critical of the ending of the *shinsaku* play, which lacked the theme of reincarnation and made it resemble a European tragedy (Sekine and Murray 1990: 127). Albert Harris, on the other hand, stressed that “the adaptation followed *nō* style in three main areas: in language, in assignment of roles, and in structure” (Harris 1986: 120). *Taka no izumi* is written in the language of the Meiji and Taishō periods, using both the vocabulary and style of speech of *nō* plays. The structure of Yeats’s play is also rearranged as a dream play, in which the *shite* leaves the stage between the two acts while the *tsure*, the hawk maiden, performs her dance. This structural change brought the logic of the play closer to *nō*, because it diminishes the role of the hawk princess compared with that of the *shite*. In addition, the play begins with the name-saying and arrival song of the *waki* in the literary *sōrō* style, as is customary in *nō* plays, in contrast to the beginning of Yeats’s play in which the scenery is described by musicians, whom Yeats substituted for a *nō* chorus. These changes signified a shift back to the form of *nō* in the opinion of many researchers (Taylor 1976: 130, Sekine and Murray 1990: 121, Harris 1986: 120), who found that Yokomichi had succeeded in translating the story of the water of immortality back into its original theatrical language.

Yokomichi’s second adaptation *Takahime* as a move away from *nō*

Yokomichi’s second adaptation of *At the Hawk’s Well* has a special place among modern *shinsaku* plays. Its enormous popularity is evident from its remarkable performance history: since its creation in 1967 *Takahime* has been performed at least once a year, making it the most successful *shinsaku* play ever.

In writing *Takahime* Yokomichi preserved much of the design of the roles, structure, and language of his first adaptation *Taka no izumi*. However, in the process of collaborating with the director of the play Nomura Mannojo and the leading actor Kanze Hisao²¹³ he could not completely realise his intentions. Yokomichi wanted to create a new play that used *nō* techniques, but as a result of many revisions requested by the production team the second adaptation became more eclectic than he had anticipated. The following analysis of the play aims, first, to explore the differences between Yeats’s play and *Takahime* that would illustrate the shift from the symbolistic play back into the form of *nō*, and

²¹³ Kanze Hisao also choreographed dances and composed music for the production.

second, to compare some aspects of Zeami's classical play and the first adaptation *Taka no izumi* with those of Yokomichi's second re-adaptation in order to describe the process of creating the *shinsaku* play in terms of kinetic adaptation.

Symbolic reinterpretation of characters

The design of the roles in *Takahime* largely follows the previous adaptation *Taka no izumi*, casting the *shite* as an old man (*rōjin*), the *waki* as Cuchulain (Kūfurin), and the *tsure* as the Hawk Princess (Takahime).²¹⁴ The new adaptation retained some aspects of the confrontation between the old man and Kūfurin, which had already been softened in the earlier variant *Taka no izumi* by shifting the focus to the main character. The director of the play Nomura Mannojō interpreted these characters symbolically: the old man represents humanity, which is being challenged by both Kūfurin and the Hawk. On the one hand, this interpretation further minimises the role of Kūfurin, as his motives are shared by a supernatural power. On the other hand, it reinforces the intrinsic confrontation in the play, because there is a conflict not only between the *shite* and the *waki*, but also between the *shite* and the *tsure*, who supports the *waki's* intentions. In addition, the role of the Hawk Princess as a symbol of unattainable desire further emphasises the conflict between the old man and Kūfurin because of their different attitudes towards her: the old man believes that the guardian maiden has deceived him and thus denied him the chance of eternal life, but Kūfurin sees in the mysterious Hawk Princess an opportunity to overcome death by defeating her (Harris 1986: 155).

In Yokomichi's adaptation the witch Sidhe is replaced by the Spirit of the Mountain (*sanjin*), which is not cast as a character. The main difference between these two supernatural powers is that in Yeats's symbolistic play Sidhe possesses the Hawk/Guardian, but in Yokomichi's adaptation the Hawk Princess is the personification (*sudama*) of the Spirit of the Mountain (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 26). Hence, according to Yokomichi's interpretation the mountain itself protects its source of immortality from humans. From this perspective the *shinsaku* version and Zeami's classical play appear to present incompatible views, because in *Yōrō* the Spirit of the Mountain wishes to share the waters of the spring with the emperor and his subjects, who are represented by the characters of woodcutters. However, in contrast to Yeats's play, in which the old man believes that he owns the spring and does not want to share it with anyone (Yeats 1921: 14), in

²¹⁴ For this analysis I used the script of *Takahime*, the time and place of publishing, and the publisher of which are unknown. However, I also used as a reference Albert Harris's doctoral thesis, which is based on the scripts of actual productions from the 1960s and 1970s, and on interviews Harris conducted with the members of the production team. In his thesis Harris refers to the role of the *tsure* as Otome or Maiden, but I relied on the published script, in which the role is assigned to Takahime, or the Hawk Princess.

Takahime the old man asserts that the spring belongs to the Spirit of the Mountain (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 26). Yokomichi's interpretation of *Takahime* as the embodiment of the Mountain Spirit seems to indicate that he intended to emulate the classical play, but the function of the character as the protector of the spring from humans is derived from Yeats's play.

Another significant change in *Takahime* was casting the chorus as rocks (*iwa*). Compared with Yokomichi's earlier adaptation *Taka no izumi*, in which the chorus occupies its traditional role as an impersonal voice and only occasionally chants verses for the *shite*, in *Takahime* the rocks behave like individual characters, chanting in succession or in pairs and only periodically functioning as a traditional *nō* chorus. Moreover, the chorus of rocks takes over a portion of the *waki*'s traditional role in the *nanori* (name saying) and *tsukizerifu* (arrival song) sections at the beginning of the play when they describe the season and the scenery, and explain the purpose of Kūfurin's trip. In addition, they also have a voice of their own, for instance, when they express pity for the humans. Yokomichi explained that his intention was to create roles for the rocks which would be similar to the chorus in Greek tragedies, writing verses for them that could express their individuality (Yokomichi 2004: 4). By casting the chorus as rocks in his second adaptation Yokomichi reverted somewhat to Yeats's play, in which the musicians sing instead of the chorus at the beginning and end of the play, and criticise both the old and young men for their quest to attain immortality (Yeats 1921: 8, 23).

In the draft of the script staged in 1970 Yokomichi noted that the characters of the rocks "are just rocks and not spirits of rocks" (MYSZ 8: 143), adding in the remarks that he "leaves the interpretation of the roles to [the] director" (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 1). Nomura Mannojo and Kanze Hisao, his collaborators, came up with the idea that the rocks were once human, and that they became rocks by returning to the spring every day and waiting, just as the old man does (Harris 1986: 158–159). They interpreted the character of the old man as the future of Kūfurin, and the rocks as the future of the old man. Mannojo and Hisao believed that because the rocks were originally human, they retained their voice and character, as if they were still humans lacking objectivity towards the other characters and events.

During the performances, the characters of the rocks "stood, moved forward or faced the other characters while speaking" (*Ibid.*, 163), whereas a *nō* chorus traditionally sits in two rows at the right of the stage, and chants its lines without physically participating in the action. From this perspective, there are three main characters in *Takahime* – the old man as a somewhat weak *shite*, Kūfurin as an overly active *waki*, and the rocks as individual characters assembled in a chorus. This is an extremely unconventional solution for a *nō* play, which usually focuses on the *shite*. Albert Harris found the function of the chorus of rocks "the most radical element in the production". Yokomichi Mario, the author of the play, was not too pleased with this development, insisting that it was "more a matter of directing than of the script" (*Ibid.*).

Improving the structure of *Takahime* by returning to Yeats

The structure of *Takahime* closely follows Yeats's play, as it also opens with the chorus (the musicians in Yeats's play) describing a man climbing up the rocks to the site of the well. It is the image of the old man in his youth when he first came to the island. Then a young man, Kūfurin, arrives, who introduces himself as the third prince of Persia and asks the old man to lead him to the site of the spring (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 15). As in Yeats's play, the Old Man recounts how he came to the island as a young man searching for the spring, and was deceived three times by the guardian spirit of the mountain. He chases the young man away, but in Yokomichi's play the old man does not claim that the spring belongs to him. He explains that a demonic spell (*mashō no noroi*) had prevented him from drinking the waters of the spring three times. He pleads with Kūfurin to leave the island to give him the rare chance to drink the water of immortality (*Ibid.*, 28). The old man's admission that he lacks control over the spirit and his right to the spring moderates the conflict between him and the young man. At the same time it intensifies the image of the spring as a natural water source and its guardian as the spirit of mountain. This idea is absent in Yeats's play, but was present in Yokomichi's first adaptation, which drew on Zeami's ancestral play.

The Hawk Princess then begins to dance while gazing at Kūfurin. In Yeats's play the old man falls asleep, but in Yokomichi's version he leaves the stage, which makes the dance of the *tsure*, the Hawk Princess, more logical and befitting the form of *nō*. The *shite* usually performs the central dance of the play; therefore, the onstage presence of the old man during the hawk's dance was a feature of Yeats's play that Yokomichi had to correct in order to return to the form of *nō*.

While Kūfurin chases the Hawk Princess the water springs from the well and the first and second rows of the chorus sing a canon that expresses their woe and sympathy.²¹⁵ The old man returns to find that the water has flowed from the spring while he was gone. He again feels deceived by the spirit of the mountain, and performs a brief dance while the chorus of rocks chants, "his body turns to a rock under the spell and he becomes the ghost of the mountain" (*Ibid.*, 52).

The closing sequence of the play follows, in which the chorus of rocks chants that the poor old man had spent his whole life waiting for the water of immortality to flow, but he did not succeed, and that he did not have any family or friends, nor had he lived his life in peace (*Ibid.*, 53–54). The last verses of the

²¹⁵ The chorus chants the meaningless words *atara samara, atara samara kikirisaya, atara samara kikirisaya, kikirisaya on, kakarasaya un* (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 42–45), which are similar to the "magic words" derived from Sanskrit in classical plays, and are meant to represent a spell. The word *atara* can be translated as "What a waste!" and *samara* might come from the Arabian Samarra, but the rest of the verse is simply meant to express the magical character of the moment when the water flows out of the well. Yokomichi said that these verses were intended to suggest Buddhist prayer (Yokomichi 2004: 5). During the performance the chorus did not chant these onomatopoeic verses in unison, but "individual chorus members repeated [it] [...] in the manner of a round" (Harris 1986: 191–192).

play describe the desolate scenery around the spring that had stayed dry for an eternity (*Ibid.*, 55), echoing those at the beginning of the play that recount that the spring had dried up long ago (*Ibid.*, 1-2).

The first act of *Takahime* bears a closer resemblance to Yeats's play because the chorus of rocks makes the relationship between the characters more complex as compared with Yokomichi's first adaptation, in which the confrontation between the *shite* and the *waki* was the only serious weakness of the play from a *nō* perspective. At the same time, Yokomichi preserved some improvements he had already made in *Taka no izumi*, such as removing the *shite* from the stage during the *tsure*'s dance and establishing the image of the spring as a source of natural medicinal water guarded by the spirit of mountain. The second act, however, remains similar to *Taka no izumi*, and follows *nō* conventions more closely than the first act.

Creating allusiveness with imagery

The imagery in *Takahime* is both similar to and different from the symbols used in *At the Hawk's Well*. The desolate site of the spring or well with the dead leaves and salty sea wind are images that create a desolate atmosphere in both plays. The use of the word "spring" in *Takahime* instead of "well" shifts the meaning of the water source from man-made (*At the Hawk's Well*) to natural or even divine (*Takahime*). Yokomichi made use of this changed concept in his first adaptation and retained it in the second.

In addition to adapting the central symbol of the spring to the Japanese cultural context, Yokomichi also added a Japanese flavour with a small detail in the beginning of *Takahime*, when Kūfurin tells the old man that he had heard the story of the miraculous spring while drinking *sake* (*Ibid.*, 17). In Yeats's play Cuchulain drinks wine (Yeats 1921: 12), and in *Taka no izumi* Kūfurin discovers the existence of the spring while reading a chronicle (MYSZ 8: 113).

The hazel tree in Yeats's play was borrowed from Irish mythology, in which it is a symbol of wisdom, but Yokomichi added his personal sentiments to the word *harinoki* or Japanese hazel when he dedicated the phrase *hari no kobayashi* ("the grove of hazel") in the last verses of *Taka no izumi* to his mentor Kobayashi Shizuo, who had initiated the process of adapting Yeats's play into *nō* form (Harris 1986: 119). In his second adaptation *Takahime* Yokomichi decided to emphasise this special meaning of the symbol by inserting the phrase "the grove of hazel stands in cold wind" (*hari no kobayashi kaze samu*) at the beginning of the play (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 1-2), and the verse "silence fell over the grove of hazel" (*shizuka nari hari no kobayashi*) at the end (*Ibid.*, 55). It is almost certain that because of the connotations the word *kobayashi* possessed for Yokomichi that he used the symbol of the hazel in his two adaptations, although it has no special meaning for Japanese audiences.

However, it is interesting that Yokomichi did not use the image of a pine tree (*matsu*) instead of a hazel, although he did decide to make the character of Sidhe more Japanese by transforming her into the spirit of the mountain. Because waiting for a miracle is the theme of the play, the pivot word *matsu* with its double meaning of “a pine tree” and “to wait” would have offered an opportunity to create an allusion in the play.

It is also noteworthy that in *Takahime* allusions to its source texts are not made by inserting poems into the script, which usually creates intertextuality in *nō* plays. Instead, intertextuality is achieved in *Takahime* by using symbols such as the hazel tree and the character of the Hawk Princess, which allude to Yeats’s play, while the spring and the spirit of the mountain establish the connection between the story and the ancestral play. In addition, when Yokomichi translated Yeats’s play into the language of *nō* theatre he preserved some verses from Yeats’s work and inserted them into appropriate sections of the script. Some direct quotes from *At the Hawk’s Well* can be found in *Takahime*; for instance, Yokomichi literally translated the verses “The boughs of the hazel shake. The sun goes down in the west” (Yeats 1921: 5) as *hari no kozue wa kaze ni furete, hi wa nishi ni shizumiyuku* (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 8). Nevertheless, these few quotes seem to be selected at random, because they do not create a powerful image that could be considered to be an ear-opening verse in the structure of the *shinsaku* play.

The play is written in the poetic style common to *nō* plays, and employs the vocabulary of the Meiji and Taishō eras (Harris 1986: 121), although the second adaptation does not use the *sōrō* style as did Yokomichi’s earlier adaptation, and during the rehearsals the actors complained that some of the verses were difficult to chant in the style of *nō* (*Ibid.*, 134).

Creating radical performance elements in *Takahime*

The performance elements in *Takahime* were modified to an extent that satisfied the production team’s desire for innovation and experimentation, but they did not deviate excessively from the *nō* canon. One of the strengths of the production was the fact that the troupe was made up entirely of professional *nō* actors, and that the play was staged on *nō* stages as a matter of principle, and was only occasionally performed in concert halls. Kanze Hisao’s score was clearly derived from traditional *nō* music, although it “had [a] very distinctive sound, and it would be impossible to mistake it for standard *nō* music” (Harris 1986: 187), and an innovative element was also present, such as his use of the *ō-tsuzumi* to replicate the cry of the hawk (*Ibid.*, 190). In addition, when *Takahime* performs her dance at the end of the first act, the chorus chants “*aashiya-ooshiya*” in a novel manner that imitates the flow of water (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 38–41).

The production team of *Takahime* assembled the chorus from members of different schools, including *shite*, *waki* and *kyōgen* players, which resulted in

“some difficulty in unifying the vocal styles” (Harris 1986: 161). In addition, the members of the chorus have to chant and move in unison, which further complicates their task (*Ibid.*, 163). The team also experimented with lighting by using the traditional lighting in an innovative way, beginning the play in complete darkness and turning up the lights to produce a fully illuminated stage. There is no information available about hand props, but the only large property used in the play is a stylised grove of hazel that marks the site of the spring. During the dance of the Hawk Princess the *shite* hides behind the prop.

The most significant innovation in the production is the use of masks. The Old Man dons a strange mask with a heavily wrinkled face and a relatively long nose, but Takahime, Kūfurin and the chorus also wear masks, all designed by Ariga Jirō. While it is customary in *nō* theatre for the *shite* and *shitetsure* to have masks, it is not traditional for a *waki* to wear one. Moreover, it is even more extraordinary for a *nō* chorus to wear masks, but in *Takahime* the rocks don *hanmen* or half-masks, which resemble the masks in Italian *commedia del arte*. The masks of the rocks were designed to be totally expressionless and grey in colour to represent a “stone-faced” character (*Ibid.*, 194–195).

5.3.4 Conclusion

The rehearsals of *Takahime* occasioned numerous changes and revisions of the script, which finally resulted in three different versions of the play.²¹⁶ Albert Harris found that the method of staging the play was similar to the practice of Western directors and playwrights (*Ibid.*, 133), although the process was also typical of *shinsaku* plays. Eventually a confrontation developed between the production team and the author of the play, because while Yokomichi was willing to try different creative elements in the first half of the play, he wanted to realise his concept of *nō* in the second half (*Ibid.*, 128). Consequently, the first act of *Takahime* closely follows Yeats’s play, but the second act is more similar to a *nō* play, modelled on *Taka no izumi*. It could therefore be said that due to the disparate intentions of the artistic group behind the project the result was an uneven *shinsaku* play that falls somewhere between modern drama and a *nō* play, reflecting both Yeats’s play and Yokomichi’s first adaptation. The analysis demonstrates that Yokomichi also drew on the classical *nō* play in the creation of his adaptation, but only to an extent that allowed him to introduce some elements from Yeats’s play that the author adapted to a Japanese context, such as the natural mountain spring, the spirit of the mountain, and the symbol of the hazel tree.

The structure and innovative interpretation of characters in *Takahime* departs from the canon of *nō* plays in several respects: first, at the beginning of

²¹⁶ There were five versions of the two adaptations: two versions of *Taka no izumi* and three versions of *Takahime* (Harris 1986: 128).

the play the chorus and the *shite* speak before the *waki*; second, the confrontation between the *shite* and the *waki* remains, although the conflict is significantly softened in comparison with Yeats's play; third, instead of focusing on the *shite* there are three main characters (the old man, Kūfurin, and the chorus of rocks) in the play; fourth, there is an unconventional chorus of individual characters; and fifth, the play has two climactic dances – a longer dance performed by the Hawk Princess and a shorter dance by the old man, which Albert Harris calls “one of the structural anomalies of the script” (*Ibid.*, 180). There were also some innovations with regard to the performance elements, such as the use of half-masks and the physical movements of the chorus of rocks, unconventional lighting, and novel sound patterns in the music.

The play is an example of a project that was executed by professionals of the *nō* world who intended to make radical changes in *nō* plays. However, analysis of the play demonstrates that the result was not too far removed from a traditional *nō* play.

The analysis of the structural and performance elements of the play is summarised in the following table.

Table 8. Web of *nō* elements in the *shinsaku* re-adaptation *Takahime*

The elements that fully meet the conventional requirements for *nō* plays are marked in the table as ⊙, and those that appear in a slightly modified form are marked as ●. The elements that deviate from the canon to the extent that they cannot be considered part of the *nō* tradition are marked as ×. A question mark is used for elements about which information could not be found in any source available to the author of the thesis.

Structural elements		Source	●
		Characters	●
		Structure	●
		Language	●
Performance elements	Internal elements	Actors' training	⊙
		Music	●
		Costumes and masks	●
	External elements	Stage	⊙
		Hand and stage props	?
		Lighting	×

CONCLUSION: THE LIMITS OF *NŌ* IN *SHINSAKU* PLAYS

In Chapters 4 and 5 it was conclusively demonstrated that the core elements of *nō* theatre could be preserved in *shinsaku* plays. In order to determine which elements are more “adaptogenic” and how the adaptation of these elements is achieved in practice, the structural and performance elements of the five analysed plays are summarised in this concluding chapter.

Structural elements in *shinsaku* plays

Table 9. Structural elements in *shinsaku* plays

The elements that fully meet the conventional requirements for *nō* plays are marked in the table as ⊙, and those that appear in a slightly modified form are marked as ●.

	Source	Characters	Structure	Language
Kusamakura	●	⊙	⊙	●
The Gull	⊙	⊙	⊙	●
Aya no tsuzumi	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Nō Hamuretto	⊙	●	⊙	●
Takahime	●	●	●	●

Adaptation of source materials

The most important task for a playwright who intends to create a *nō* play is to find source material – a literary work or story from the oral tradition – that is adaptable to *nō*. For Zeami, this was the “seed” of the *nō* play that had to be carefully selected for its ability to be restructured and adapted into *nō* form, so that it might be preserved in a new genre and provide a new interpretation. Therefore, it could be said that finding suitable source material guarantees the future success of a *nō* play.

In this study, both of the analysed non-canonical genre adaptations, Nishino Haruo’s *Kusamakura* and Daphne Marlatt’s *The Gull*, are *shinsaku* plays that could be broadly categorised as *sōsaku* or “original” *nō* plays, because they rely on unconventional source materials and make use of multiple adaptation strategies. Professor Nishino’s new *nō* play draws its theme from two different modern literary sources – Natsume Sōseki’s novel and poem – which were adapted to the *nō* canon in a very clever way: Nishino derived from the novel an idea for elaborating the storyline and set it in the world of the poem. Both of Sōseki’s texts were written in the Meiji period, and are therefore part of an earlier historical literary heritage, which is one criterion for a suitable *nō* source. By

combining the worlds of the two main source materials Nishino created a fictional story for *Kusamakura*, in which a poet from Sōseki's novel meets the ghost of drowned woman – a legendary figure also mentioned in the novel – in a remote temple, a location that is borrowed from Sōseki's poem. In addition to the second adaptation method of creating a fictional story, Nishino also used the first strategy of eliminating one or more of a character's partners, as the roles of the two men who loved the maiden are not cast in the play.

Nishino also employed a unique technique for adapting the material to the *nō* canon, which he accomplished by means of an unusually complex collage method never before seen in *nō* plays. In addition to the two main sources he wove into the fabric of his play several other literary materials: two classical *nō* plays and three poems. In so doing, he created the *honkadōri* allusions that are also required components of *nō* plays.

The elaborate collage technique that Nishino executed in his play could also be considered a weakness, as the extensive quoting and paraphrasing of source texts in the ear-opening climax of the play, which precedes the “dance in the depths of the water”, or *minasoko no mai*, somewhat eclipses the eye-opening moment. It would appear that Nishino might have been intending to test the limits of *nō*. However, the technique produced a fascinating multiple layering of associations and allusions, thus fulfilling the basic *nō* criterion to engage the audience in the performance.

Daphne Marlatt faced a similar challenge in finding a suitable story for her play, but as she and the producer were focused on the healing of the Japanese-Canadian community, the choice of the “seed” for the play already existed in abstract form in their minds. When they decided to set the play in the village of Steveston it was obvious that the sad stories of the local people could be moulded into the form of a *nō* play. *The Gull* is a fine example of how a *nō* play can be created without a literary source, using the adaptation technique Zeami suggested for connecting a play with a *meisho* or “famous place”, even though Steveston is not a *meisho* in the classical sense because the history of the small Japanese fishing village was largely unfamiliar to Canadians before the project.

As *The Gull* is constructed around fictional characters who represent the families of interned Japanese villagers, and also because of the relatively recent nature of the event, the author did not have a classical literary source for creating intertextuality in the play. Nevertheless, Marlatt found a solution by using poems of Canadian authors that convey the feeling associated with the place and function as *honkadōri* quotes. Allusiveness to the classical play *Sumidagawa* is also established with the symbolic image of *miyakodori* or birds of passage, which intensifies the theme of a mother looking for her lost children.

In the case of the three *shinsaku* adaptations, modifying the ancestral plays involved issues entirely different from those associated with genre adaptations. The simplest but most traditional of the plays is the adaptation of the ancestral play *Aya no tsuzumi* by Toki Zenmaro. Toki closely followed the source text, almost word for word in parts of the play, making insignificant changes in the

first act. However, his rewriting of a scene in the second act resulted in a major improvement in the image of the protagonist. Toki also omitted large sections of text from the latter part of the play, and diminished the Buddhist element by eliminating phrases with a religious undertone and paraphrasing verses from the Kanze School's variant play. In terms of kinetic adaptations Toki's play generally belongs to the category of script revisions (the second adaptation strategy), which are designed to be new interpretations of the ending of a play. However, as the Kita School's variant involved the reinterpretation of the main character, which was achieved by omitting text and incorporating phrases from another version of the ancestral play, it seems that Toki also used the fourth adaptation strategy – combining different historical versions of a play – resulting in a play that was significantly different from the original.

The adaptation of Shakespeare's iconic play *Hamlet* to *nō* form could not have been an easy task, but Ueda Kuniyoshi managed to extract from the original story a part that was well suited to the structure of *nō*, although the scene that Ueda transformed into the *shinsaku* play is admittedly absent from the original story. In the *shinsaku* play the fictional meeting of Horatio with the ghosts of Hamlet and Ophelia is an event that could plausibly have happened, possibly in a sequel to Shakespeare's classical play. In placing Hamlet's story in a different cultural context Ueda successfully applied the second method of adaptation, the creation of a fictional story, which is rarely used in classical genre adaptations. Presumably, Ueda found kinetic adaptation strategies to be unsuited to the adaptation of Shakespeare's play to *nō* form because the vast cast of characters and complicated storyline of the original would have required major omissions in the script.

Ueda creatively inserted into *Nō Hamuretto* quotes from the ancestral play, such as verses from Hamlet's famous monologue "to be or not to be", which function as *honkadōri* borrowings. Verses from Shakespeare's original play were woven into the script as almost direct translations from English to Japanese, creating strong links between the ancestral play and the adaptation. The technique of inserting quotes into the new play resembles Nishino's style of adaptation, although Ueda relied on simply translating the verses rather than the extensive paraphrasing and modifying of phrases that Nishino undertook.

While Toki Zenmaro and Ueda Kuniyoshi carefully followed the texts of the ancestral plays in creating their adaptations, the former almost word for word and the latter using translations of the quotes, Yokomichi Mario's *Takahime* employs an entirely different strategy. The analysis of his *shinsaku* play makes it clear that Yokomichi did not rely solely on the direct source of the adaptation, Yeats's *At the Hawk's Well*, but also drew on the ancestral play, Zeami's *Yōrō*, which was a model for the Irish play for dancers. References to *Yōrō* can be found in Yokomichi's play that function almost as a retranslation of Yeats's play back into the cultural context of Japan. Yokomichi's *shinsaku* could be viewed as a *fukugen*, in which an ancestral play (Zeami's *Yōrō*) and a variant play (Yeats's *At the Hawk's Well*) are both used as source texts for rewriting the story.

However, in the case of *Takahime* the rewriting process resulted in the creation of an entirely new play that was not merely an adaptation of Yeats's play, as it draws on its ancestral play – Zeami's *Yōrō* – and makes considerable use of the earlier *shinsaku* version *Taka no izumi*.

The analysis of the plays shows the effort the playwrights had to make to create *honkadōri* allusiveness without the vast corpus of classical poetry that was accessible to the writers of classical plays. In place of *honkadōri* they often created powerful metaphors or symbols, such as the multiple images of water in *Kusamakura*, the birds of passage in *The Gull*, the soundless drum in *Aya no tsuzumi*, the jewel in *Nō Hamuretto*, and the spring of eternal life and the hazel tree in *Takahime*.

Adaptation of characters

All five adaptations analysed in Chapters 4 and 5 succeeded in creating appropriate *nō* characters. The most fascinating are undoubtedly the *shite* and *waki* in Nishino's play *Kusamakura*. In creating these complex characters Nishino employed the "condensation" technique of adaptation that enables characters to incorporate multiple identities: the man (the *waki*), who has a dual identity, and the ghost of the Nagara maiden (the *shite*), who represents five different women. It might seem that this type of character is too complex and sophisticated for a *nō* play, but it adds layers to Nishino's adaptation that are fascinating to discover when analysing the script. Furthermore, as the relationship between the characters is similar to that in classical plays, the complexity of their identity does not diminish the quality of the adaptation.

The characters in *Takahime* are less sophisticated than those in *Kusamakura*, but they still might seem to be too complex for a *nō* play: the old man (the *shite*) represents the future figure of Kūfurin (the *waki*), who in turn portrays the youthful image of the old man. In addition, the "rocks" of the chorus symbolise the future of the old man, according to the production team. The relationship of the old man and Kūfurin is occasionally hostile, but in the process of adapting the characters from Yeats's play Yokomichi diminished the conflict between them, making it more appropriate to *nō*. Yokomichi also placed the witch Sidhe from Yeats's play in the Japanese cultural context by transforming her into a *sanjin* or Spirit of the Mountain.

A slightly modified relationship between the *waki* and the *shite* can also be seen in Ueda's *Nō Hamuretto*, in which the ghost of Hamlet (the *shite*) is concerned about the enlightenment of Horatio (the *waki*) – a curious development in a *nō* play. Moreover, a triangle of characters is created: at the end of the play Ophelia (the *tsure*) gives the symbol of enlightenment to Hamlet, who passes it to Horatio, thus offering salvation to the *waki*. In addition, by casting Hamlet and Ophelia as a romantically involved couple Ueda departed

from the first strategy of genre adaptations, which omits one of two characters in order to focus on the protagonist.

The characters in *Aya no tsuzumi* and *The Gull* conform most closely to the *nō* canon. Just as Toki Zenmaro made only relatively minor revisions in his adaptation of the classical play, mainly eliminating parts of the script, he also left the characters largely unchanged. The only difference from the ancestral play lies in the image of the main character: in the older play he is a lonely and betrayed old man who ends his life in the pond, and in the *shinsaku* play he becomes an angry demon who leaps into the waves.

The characters in Marlatt's play closely follow the tradition of *nō* plays, as the *waki* and *wakitsure* are brothers on a spiritual journey, the ghost (the *shite*) is their dead Mother disguised as a gull, and the *ai* is a local fisherman. The only difference from the *waki* in a classical play is that the *waki* in *The Gull* is not able to urge the *shite* to identify herself and tell her story. But this is derived from the logic of the story, as the second-generation young man (the *waki*) does not understand the message his mother (the *shite*) delivers in Japanese, and, therefore, he hesitates. However, of the *shinsaku* plays analysed in this study the characters in *The Gull* best meet the requirements for the design of roles.

It is interesting that in none of the analysed *shinsaku* plays is the *waki* cast as a priest on pilgrimage, as is the custom in classical plays, but rather as an individual who is on a journey for some reason: the poet in *Kusamakura* is wandering in search of inspiration and peace of mind; the *nisei* young Japanese man in *The Gull* is visiting his parents' home village; the courtier in *Aya no tsuzumi* is transmitting information between the old gardener and the consort; Horatio in *Nō Hamuretto* is returning from abroad to visit Hamlet's grave; and Kūfurin in *Takahime* is undertaking a quest to find eternal life. These *shinsaku* plays prove that it is possible to create *waki* characters that are more comprehensible to contemporary audiences than the figure of a monk on pilgrimage would be.

Structure, religion and climaxes

All five *shinsaku* plays analysed in this study follow the overall structural pattern of *nō* plays, and are written in *shōdan* structural units, which is a preliminary requirement for a play with the potential to be performed. Four of the five plays are clearly in *mugen nō* form, having a *shite* that is a ghost who reveals his or her true identity in the second half of the play: in *Kusamakura* it is the ghost of the Nagara maiden, in *The Gull* the gull/mother, in *Aya no tsuzumi* the gardener/demon, and in *Nō Hamuretto* the ghost of Hamlet. Only Yokomichi's *Takahime* can be considered to be a *genzai nō* play, because the *shite*, an old man, is alive.

The structure of *nō* plays, especially dream-plays, requires a section at the end of the play in which a religious element is present, in the form of a prayer or

the reading of a sutra. *Shinsaku* plays tend to avoid employing this traditional structural element; for example, in both *Aya no tsuzumi* and *Kusamakura* the prayer at the end of the play is absent. In contrast to these plays, *Takahime* provides a rather novel solution with the chorus of rocks chanting a mystic and incomprehensible pseudo-prayer and the verses *atasarasamara kikirisaya*, which resemble a curse or spell. This substitute for a prayer at the end of the play is used as a dramatic tool that helps to create tension in the play at the point where the hawk/princess dances and water begins to flow from the spring.

Surprisingly, the most traditional of the five analysed *shinsaku* plays from this perspective is *The Gull*, which ends with a *namu-amida-butsu* prayer and the sound of a temple bell. The most religious of all five plays, however, seems to be the *nō* version of *Hamlet*, which explicitly reflects Blythian Zen Buddhist thought and employs several symbols, both Buddhist and Christian, throughout the play. Instead of a Buddhist prayer, however, the symbolic action of passing the jewel of peace and harmony from one character to another takes place.

The ear- and eye-opening climactic moments or their equivalents can be found in the second half of each play, highlighted by a quote from the source text and/or a dance by the *shite*. For instance, in Nishino's *Kusamakura* the eye-opening moment is expressed in the woman's "dance in the depths of the water" while she chants a *waka* poem *Minasoko no kan*, assisted by the chorus. The climax of the play is preceded by the ear-opening in the *kuse* section, a collage assembled from four different sources. The ear-opening section describes the woman's love for two men and her decision to drown herself in an old well.

The ear-opening moment in *The Gull* can be clearly identified: it is just before the *shite*'s slow dance in which the gull/woman tells her sons to go home. The eye-opening moment is expressed by the *shite*'s *hayamai* (quick) dance. In Ueda's Zen Buddhist version of *Hamlet* the ear-opening moment is created by the modified quote from Shakespeare's play *seishi wa tou made mo arazu* ("To be or not to be, is *not* the question") that the enlightened Hamlet recites in the second act; the *iroe* movement and *hayamai* dance that follow in the final *kiri* section form the eye-opening climax of the play.

The climactic moments in two other plays, the Kita School's version of *Aya no tsuzumi* and Yokomichi's re-adaptation *Takahime*, are more difficult to define. In Toki Zenmaro's adaptation of the classical play the ear-opening moment arrives when the demon realises that he was asked to make a sound with a damask drum. The eye-opening climax of the play follows, in which the demon possesses the consort and forces her to beat the soundless drum, gradually increasing the dramatic tension. The culmination of *Takahime* is the most unconventional of the *shinsaku* plays analysed in this study, because the ear-opening moment is created by the chorus of rocks chanting mystic words without an expressly ear-opening phrase. The equivalent of the eye-opening in this play is the furious dance of the hawk/princess, the supporting *tsure* character, instead of the play's ending with the principal dance of the protagonist, as is customary.

Adaptation of language

The choice of language in a *shinsaku* play is always a difficult task for the playwright. The language of these five *shinsaku* plays varies according to the source material and the intention of the playwright. As was demonstrated in the analysis of Nishino's *Kusamakura*, three different adaptation methods were employed in modifying Natsume Sōseki's text for the play: extracting an image from long sentences, unifying the images by combining two phrases, and compressing phrases in order to create a noun modifier or nominalise phrases. Because of the extremely "adaptogenic" nature of the source text, which was written in an elegant style that is eminently suitable to *nō*, the collage technique of Nishino proved to be a successful experiment within the limits of the genre. In addition to the extensive use of *honkadori* inserted into the script using the collage technique, Nishino also employs a special technique of intensifying images by repeating verses, which is characteristic of *nō* plays.

The use of language in Marlatt's bilingual *nō* play *The Gull*, purposefully applied throughout the script, describes the tragedy behind the story of two *nisei* brothers severed from their Japanese roots. The Japanese language in this English *nō* play seems to have been employed as a dramatic tool to explain the motives and sentiments underlying the character's words and actions. The vocabulary is also very elegant, as might be expected of a nationally renowned Canadian poet.

Toki Zenmaro's adaptation of a classical play required modification of the text so that a more positive image of the protagonist could emerge. In order to achieve that result the author made only minor changes in the language of the play, rearranging words or abbreviating verses, and occasionally omitting longer passages. The majority of the text is taken almost word for word from the ancestral play. This method of adaptation applies to most of the play, although some sequences at the end are almost twice the length of the original.

The most challenging task for Ueda Kuniyoshi, author of the *shinsaku* play *Nō Hamuretto*, appears to have been the adaptation of the poetic language of Shakespeare's medieval tragedy into the form of *nō*. He matched Shakespeare's blank verse, with its alternation of weak and strong syllables, with the rhythm of *nō*, restructuring verses into the 7-5 syllable pattern characteristic of Japanese classical *waka* poetry. Because of extensive quotes from the source text, often directly extracted from the original play, the new play possesses the poetic and elegant vocabulary common to *nō* plays.

Yokomichi Mario's *Takahime* also includes some direct quotes from Yeats that have been translated almost word for word. Yokomichi occasionally used the *nō* technique of repeating verses to reinforce images. Although there are no *sōrō*-style monologues, the *shinsaku* play is written in the poetic style of *nō* plays, and the vocabulary is mainly drawn from the Meiji and Taishō eras, which also meets the requirements of *nō*.

Performance elements in *shinsaku* plays

Table 10. Performance elements in *shinsaku* plays

The following table provides a summary of the internal and external performance elements in the plays analysed in Chapters 4 and 5. Performance elements that fully meet *nō* requirements are marked as ⊙; elements that appear in a slightly modified form are marked as ●, and elements that deviate from the canon to the extent that they cannot be considered part of the *nō* tradition are marked as ×. A question mark is used for performance elements about which information could not be found in any source available to the author of the thesis.

	Actors' training	Music	Costumes and masks	Stage	Hand and stage props	Lighting
Kusamakura	⊙	⊙	●	⊙	?	?
The Gull	●	●	●	●	×	?
Aya no tsuzumi	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Nō Hamuretto	⊙	●	●	●	×	×
Takahime	⊙	●	●	⊙	?	×

Internal performance elements

The five *shinsaku* plays analysed in Chapters 4 and 5 all have a performance history, some longer than others. For instance, Yokomichi's *Takahime* has been performed more than thirty times. A feature that is common to all these plays, with the exception of *The Gull*, is that they were performed by professional *nō* troupes. Only the Steveston project differed in this respect, casting local amateur actors in the roles of the *waki*, *wakitsure*, *ai*, and as members of the chorus, although they were trained for several months by *nō* instructors. Only the role of the protagonist in *The Gull* was assigned to a professional *nō* actor, because she was required to chant and dance during the performance. Professional musicians were also involved in the project, which ensured that the musical accompaniment resembled traditional *nō* music as closely as possible. Interestingly, the most "radical" production from the standpoint of casting was *Takahime*; the production team decided to assemble the chorus from members of different schools and various types of actors, including *shite*, *waki* and *kyōgen* players, which made it difficult to harmonise their vocal styles.

Some of the plays experiment with both the music and the movement *kata*, such as Nishino's *Kusamakura*, in which the *shite* performs "a dance in the depths of the water" at a walking pace despite the rhythmically upbeat music, creating the feeling of dancing underwater. In Ueda's *shinsaku* version of *Hamlet* the protagonist and the *tsure* (Ophelia) dance together, which is unique in a *nō* play. In addition, a *nōkan* flute is used as theme music for Ophelia, playing only when

her figure appears onstage. A pipe organ is also used in the performance, creating a medieval and somewhat mystic atmosphere.

Similarly innovative sound effects were used in the other plays as well; for example, the evocative use of the *nōkan* at the end of the first act of *The Gull* simulates the shriek of a gull. In the same play, during the comic *ai-kyōgen* interlude, rolling waves are musically expressed by a sharp *ōtsuzumi* drum roll and the actors physically enact being on board a boat that is being rocked by waves. This descriptive use of music is uncommon to *nō* plays and more closely resembles the onomatopoeic expressions and mimetic actions in *kyōgen* plays.

The performance elements of *Takahime* were modified to an extent that satisfied the production team's desire for innovation and experimentation, but nevertheless avoided deviating too far from the *nō* canon. For instance, the music contains an innovative element, the cry of a hawk, simulated by the *ō-tsuzumi*. The same play features a novel and peculiar use of "rocks" as the chorus, which execute unconventional patterns of movement and chant in canon fashion. A musical pattern similar to that in *Takahime* is created in Nishino's *Kusamakura*, with the front row of the chorus chanting verses that the back row repeats.

The traditional *nō* costumes were modified in all the *shinsaku* productions except for *Aya no tsuzumi*, which is included in the active repertory of the Kita School and thus performed by professional actors using traditional garments and masks. The costumes in *Kusamakura* were new, but from the description in the performance report they appeared to conform to the aesthetic standards of *nō* theatre. This also applies to the costume of the *shite* in *The Gull*, but the costumes of the *waki*, *wakitsure* and *ai* were inspired by the historical garments of local fishermen, as befits the theme of the play. Some innovations were made in *Takahime*, especially concerning the masks: the old man wore a strange mask with a heavily wrinkled face and a relatively long nose, and the rocks wore *hanmen* or half-masks, but there is no information available about the costumes. This information is also lacking for *Nō Hamurette*, but at least one exceptional detail of Hamlet's costume — a crucifix — was mentioned in the script.

External performance elements

The external performance elements are considered in this study to have had the least impact on the *shinsaku* productions. Four plays out of five were performed on a traditional *nō* stage, although Yokomichi's *Takahime* has been also staged in concert halls. Only the Steveston project *The Gull* was performed on an unconventional stage constructed for the occasion. However, as the small performance space ensured proximity to the audience and thus replicated the communal aspect of *nō* theatre, the stage could be considered as satisfying *nō* requirements with minor reservations. The stage decorations, such as a backdrop featuring a beautiful local scene of an island in the evening instead of the usual painting of a pine tree, and wooden mooring piles decorated with fishing nets in

place of pillars, were well suited to the theme of the play. Furthermore, as the play was performed for a foreign audience, the stage modifications are not considered excessive.

There is no information available on the use of hand and stage props in *Kusamakura* and *Takahime*. Presumably, traditional props are used in the performances of *Aya no tsuzumi*, because the play is included in the repertory of the Kita School. However, the hand props in *The Gull* are clearly too descriptive (a bottle of whiskey, a fisherman's lamp, and a cup), but the alteration of performance elements can be justified because *The Gull* is a transcultural play that needs to appeal to foreign audiences. Unusual hand props were also used in *Nō Hamuretto* – a scroll of a sutra in Horatio's hand at the beginning of the play, and the jewel of peace and harmony that Ophelia gives to Hamlet at the end.

Experimenting with lighting seems to be quite common in *shinsaku* productions; for example, laser lights were used in Tada Tomio's play *Isseki Sennin* and in an outdoor performance of Nakamori Akimitsu's *Musashino*. Traditional lighting is used in an innovative way in *Takahime*, the play begins in complete darkness and the lights are gradually turned up to fully illuminate the stage. A reflection of the image of a cross is used as a special lighting effect at the beginning of *Nō Hamuretto*. However, there is no information about lighting or any other special effects for *Kusamakura* and *The Gull*.

Conclusions

It is to be expected that the creation of *shinsaku* plays would involve some innovative uses of the traditional elements of *nō*, but in evaluating the plays and productions the question arises as to the extent to which the traditional elements can be modified in the process of adaptation and still be deemed to conform to the *nō* canon. The main research aim of this study is to determine which elements of *nō* are more likely to be adapted in *shinsaku* plays, how these elements can be adapted within the limits of the traditional canon, and what reasons may underlie the adaptability of some elements.

Four of the five plays analysed used unconventional source materials: modern literature in *Kusamakura*, oral history in *The Gull*, and Western drama in *Nō Hamuretto* and *Takahime*. Interestingly, three of the plays, *Kusamakura*, *The Gull* and *Takahime*, also incorporated material from classical plays in the form of allusions or borrowings. The adaptation of *Aya no tsuzumi* is based on two earlier plays, one of which, the Kanze School's *Koi no omoni*, could also be categorised as a classical play. Interestingly, the most famous of the plays, Yokomichi Mario's *Takahime*, seems to be the most precariously balanced on the borderline between *nō* and other types of plays. However, if one takes into account the enormous pressure the production team and playwright were under to create something entirely different, it could be concluded that the play remains within the *nō* tradition, despite its oddities and discrepancies.

The adaptation of themes and characters, and the creation of allusions to other works are achieved in the new plays by strategies and techniques similar to those used in classical plays. However, multiple adaptation strategies are commonly used in creating *shinsaku* plays: first, reversing the timeline of events (*Kusamakura*, *The Gull*, *Nō Hamuretto*); second, selecting the main character from the material (*Kusamakura*, *Nō Hamuretto*, *Takahime*); third, constructing a fictional story based on the image of the character in the source (*Kusamakura*, *No Hamuretto*); and fourth, incorporating both the ancestral play and its later variants into a new play (*Aya no tsuzumi*, *Takahime*).

One of the most important tasks for a playwright in the process of adapting source material is to create a protagonist and supporting characters that in addition to their identity as generalised types can function according to the dynamics specified by the *nō* canon. In the *shinsaku* plays analysed in this study some creative solutions can be seen that in some cases test the limits of the genre. While in kinetic *shinsaku* adaptations an innovative interpretation of characters (*Aya no tsuzumi*, *Nō Hamuretto*, *Takahime*) can be accepted as a possible adaptation strategy, creating both the *shite* and *waki* characters with multiple identities (*Kusamakura*) and constructing an unusual relationship between them (*Nō Hamuretto*, *Takahime*) are modifications that could not be tolerated if the other internal elements in these plays were also altered to extremes.

Adapting particular structural elements, namely religion, intertextuality and language, appears to be the most challenging task for *shinsaku* playwrights. The importance of religion in *shinsaku nō* has been diminished by several different methods: first, creating a *waki* character without any religious affiliation (all plays); second, omitting the prayer at the end of the play (all plays, except *The Gull*); and third, using religious phrases as a dramatic tool (omitting Buddhist vocabulary in order to create a more human demon in *Aya no tsuzumi*, and inserting Buddhist phrases to express the enlightenment of Hamlet in *Nō Hamuretto*).

The use of modern or contemporary source materials (all plays, except *Aya no tsuzumi*) gave rise to a need to find creative solutions for establishing allusiveness and intertextuality, which was done by directly borrowing from literary sources or making allusions to other plays. Extensive literary excerpts from the source text, the volume of which is unusual for *nō* plays, were inserted into some plays (*Kusamakura*, *Nō Hamuretto*). This magnitude of usage of the source text in *shinsaku* plays, which can appear in the form of a collage (*Kusamakura*), literal translation (*Nō Hamuretto*), or word-for-word borrowing (*Aya no tsuzumi*), was probably due to the playwrights' deep respect for the material. Where literary material could not be used to create intertextuality, allusive images were woven into the script (multiple images of water in *Kusamakura*, *miyakodori* in *The Gull*, the soundless drum in *Aya no tsuzumi*, the jewel of compassion in *Nō Hamuretto*, and the natural spring, the Spirit of the Mountain, and the hazel tree in *Takahime*). A rare example is provided by the

English *nō* play *The Gull*, in which contemporary Canadian poems serve as substitutes for *honkadori* quotes.

The choice of language for a *shinsaku* play (classical or modern Japanese, colloquial speech or English) is another challenge because of its impact on the music and rhythm. The authors of the analysed *shinsaku* plays offered some interesting alternatives to the classical Japanese language, combining different language modes and styles (*Kusamakura*), using two languages to convey the alienation of characters of different generations (*The Gull*), and modifying the form of *waka* poetry for the English language (the English verses in the *waka* sections of *The Gull*, and Shakespeare's verses in *Nō Hamuretto*).

Based on the analysis of the plays, it seems that the internal performance elements (the actors' training, music, costumes and masks) were generally adapted within the limits of the *nō* canon, while the external performance elements were adapted more freely. Interestingly, all of the *shinsaku* plays analysed in this study were performed on a traditional *nō* stage, although a special performance space was constructed for the Steveston project (*The Gull*), and *Takahime* has occasionally been staged in other theatrical spaces.

The props and lighting seem to be the external performance elements that are most likely to be modified, sometimes to an extent that radically deviates from the traditional *nō* canon. However, if the internal elements (the structural and internal performance elements) that affect the inner working of the play and the general appearance of the performance are adapted according to the traditional conventions of *nō* theatre, some unconventional performance elements would not have a decisive impact on the *nō* character of *shinsaku* performances. The external performance elements seem to be an appealing "playground" for directors of *shinsaku* productions, because experimenting with the limits of *nō* tends to occur mainly in staging the plays. However, modifying or altering small details to an extent that exceeds the tolerance of the *nō* canon is a game only a limited number of playwrights can play – those who have already proven their expertise at *nō*.

The analysis of *shinsaku* plays, which are representative examples of the five categories, leads to the general conclusion that insofar as a playwright has the necessary knowledge of *nō* theatre and a clear intention to create a *nō* play, it is the traditional internal elements of *nō* that are most likely to be adapted in designing new plays, through the use of *nō* adaptation strategies. Finding suitable source material, adapting it to *nō* form using genre or kinetic adaptation strategies, creating characters, composing the play in structural units, and using *honkadori* allusiveness (or creative substitutes) are techniques that the authors of the plays analysed in this study employed with more or less success. Some plays meet the requirements of *nō* better than others, but none of the plays analysed exceeded the limits of *nō* theatre to the extent that they could be deemed to have merely been influenced by *nō*.

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APPENDIX: TRANSLATION OF YOKOMICHI'S TAKAHIME

The Hawk Princess¹

Based on W. B. Yeats's play

Text: Yokomichi Mario

Music: Kanze Hisao

Characters:

Old Man (a ghost)

Kūfurin (young Persian Prince)

Hawk Princess (Maiden, the Spirit of Mountain)

Rocks (just rocks, not the spirits of rocks)

Place: a solitary island in the distant sea

Time: late in autumn, from the sunset till midnight

Large prop: a hazel tree *tsukurimono*

1

(When the audience becomes silent, the stage assistant *kōken* enters and places to the stage a large prop of hazel tree. The lights are slowly dimmed and in the mirror room (*kagami-no-ma*) is performed *shirabe* music after which the stage lighting is turned to about half-lights. Rocks enter and sit on the different spots all over the stage. Then, the musicians enter from *kirido-guchi* entrance and take their seats at the stage. For a moment everything is still on stage. When all performers have taken their seats, the Hawk Princess makes her appearance on stage and sits.)

2

(Instrumental music, Part 1)

(Introductory music of *nō* flute and *taiko* drum.)

Rocks together:

The spring dried up long ago.

The spring dried up long ago.

¹ The translation is mainly based on the text that has no information about the time and place of publishing or the publisher; the text is available at the library of Theatre Museum of Waseda University. I used as a reference material also the script of a performance held in 1970 and published by Tanaka Makoto in the *Mikan yōkyokushū* series, MYSZ 8, pp. 143–154.

The grove of hazel in stands the cold wind.²
The spring dried up long ago.
The grove of hazel stands in the cold wind.

First Rock:

Look! To the sea shore
A little sailing boat arrives.

Second Rock:

Truly, a little sailing boat arrives.

Third Rock:

Look! Stepping on the grassless rocks
There comes a young man.

Fourth Rock:

Truly, there comes a young man.

First Rock:

Oh, what a pity! It happens all over again!
The lantern of youth will go out.

Second Rock and Third Rock:

The lantern of youth will go out.

Rocks together:

The spring of his youth will dry up.
After he grows old his knees become stiffed,
And his hands become twisted. But he still wants to keep up
His wishes that vanish away as if they never existed,
And his dream turns to the unreachable haze.

First Rock:

Poor young man!

Rocks together:

Poor young man!

(Instrumental music, Part 2)

(A *taiko* drum solo.)

² In Japanese, *hari no kobayashi kaze samu* (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 2). With this verse Yokomichi pays homage to his late mentor Kobayashi Shizuo who urged him to write the adaptation of Yeats's play.

Rocks together:

The treetops of hazels shake in the wind,
Shake in the wind.
The sun goes down in the west,
The sun goes down.³

3

First Rock:

Look! That Old Man comes up here!

Second Rock:

Truly, the Old Man comes up here.

Third Rock:

Today again like yesterday.

Fourth Rock:

Tomorrow again like today.

First Rock:

He gazes the spring and waits the water to pour out.

Rocks together:

He gazes the spring and waits the water to pour out.

First Rock:

He waits for fifty years.

Second Rock:

No, for hundred years.

Third Rock and Fourth Rock:

No-no, for thousand years.

(Instrumental music, Part 3)

(Music of *nō* flute and *kotsuzumi* drum. The Rocks move and gather to a group; the Old Man enters the stage. Now the stage will be gradually lighted up. At the same time the audience's seats are lighted up with half-lights. Throughout the performance this setting of lighting will not change.)

³ In Japanese, *hari no kozue wa kaze ni yurete, hi wa nishi ni shizumi yuku* (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 6). These verses are a direct translation from Yeats's play (Yeats 1921: 5) "The boughs of the hazel shake, The sun goes down in the west."

Rocks together:

He gathers dead leaves and burns dry branches.
Suffering from cold and hunger
Will he keep waiting?
Poor Old Man!

(The next song is chanted without accompaniment music.)

Rocks together:

Whatever he tries he cannot claim the water
And he will wander here forever.
He wants to sleep
And rest peacefully.⁴

(The Old Man sits.)

4

Old Man:

The Maiden. She does not say a word.
With her vague eyes
Why does she stare at me?⁵
She reminds me of an event that happened
At sunset in autumn long ago.
With her vague eyes
She stares at me.
Stop staring me with your vague eyes!
Answer me, Maiden!
Talk to me, Maiden!
Is an old man no good for anything?

(Kūfurin enters and turns to the Old Man.)

Kūfurin:

Then tell me!
A day passed after I abandoned my sailboat
And another day passed after I climbed the rocks looking for the spring.
Yet, I have got nothing.
Yet, I have found nothing.

⁴ In Yeats's play (Yeats 1921: 8) the Musicians sing: "Why wander and nothing to find? Better grow old and sleep."

⁵ In Yeats's play (*Ibid.*, 8, 10) "Why don't you speak to me?" and "Why do you stare like that? You had that glassy look about the eyes Last time it happened."

Old Man:

There is no one to tell you anything.
There is no one to speak with you.
For it is the mountain of dead, the valley of dead.
No human visits this place.

Kūfurin:

I am the third son of Persian king.
My name is Kūfurin.

Old Man:

Who are you, Kūfurin?
I have never heard of you.⁶

Kūfurin:

Beyond the sea is a city in the kingdom of Persia
That stood beneath the Great Wall more than seven hundred years.
I am the descendant of the kings who ruled there.

Old Man:

Prince of the kingdom of Persia,
What destiny brings you now
To this island?⁷

Kūfurin:

One night I was drinking at a banquet,
Where sake cups were passed merrily around.
Then suddenly I heard a rumour.
When I heard the story I hoisted the sails and headed to the sea.
It almost seemed as if the boat was flying across the sea
With a lucky wind that had been invited by sea demons.⁸
I caught the sea tide and at the dawn I stepped
To the shore of this island.⁹

Old Man:

This is a lonely island in the end of the world.
There are no people and no riches

⁶ In Yeats's play (1921: 11) the Old Man says: "I have never heard that name."

⁷ In Yeats's play (Yeats 1921: 12) "What mischief brings you hither?"

⁸ I translated as "sea demons" the Japanese word *ayakashi*, which is used to collectively indicate a group of *yōkai* monsters that appear above the surface of some body of water, such as sea, lake or river.

⁹ These words of Kūfurin are slightly modified verses from Yeats's original play (*Ibid.*).

Nor is there any hope.¹⁰

Kūfurin:

As you, Old Man, live in this deserted island
I am sure you might know something about the spring.
Now lead me to the spring
The waters of which give eternal life.
From the beneath a hazel tree bubbles up with great force
Pure and sparkling spring water.
They say that it fulfils your wishes.
Stepping on the fallen leaves
A Maiden guards the water of the spring.
The story heard in reality and the water seen in a dream.

Old Man:

Just in front of you is a hollow between the rocks,
And beside it stands a Maiden.
There is nothing but dead leaves of hazel tree.

Kūfurin:

Well, where is the spring?
There is no spring.

Old Man:

The water of the spring is my life.
For ninety-nine years
I have been waiting, but got nothing.
All I have seen is nothing but wavelets of the dead leaves.
All I have heard is nothing but cold salty wind.

Kūfurin:

So, this spring will not fill up with water,
No matter how long you wait?

Old Man:

No, its waters bubble out with great force,
When the Spirit of the Mountain dances.
It is a moment of mystery, a moment of stillness.

¹⁰ In *At the Hawk's Well* the same section (*Ibid.*) delivers different meaning: "There is no house to sack among these hills Nor beautiful woman to be carried off."

No man can tell, when it happens.¹¹

Kūfurin:

Well, then I will wait.

I am a Prince.

I have the blessing of gods.

Rocks together:

No, the spring belongs to the Maiden.

The spring belongs to the Hawk Princess.

It belongs to the Hawk Princess who is the Spirit of the Mountain.

Old Man:

The spring belongs to me!

When I was a young man as you are now

I left my country to find the spring.

I came to this island and lived here.

Days passed begging the Spirit,

And years passed begging the Spirit.

I waited and waited, but there was no water.

And when the spring started forcefully to flow

Three times I fell asleep because of the demonic spell.

Three times I woke up and found that the spring had dried up.¹²

I sank into the waves of old age,

I became dirt, an otherworldly ghost.

I will stay here and wait for the water to flow.

Oh, those good old times, good old times!

Some day for sure the spring will flow. It will.

5

(Suddenly the Hawk Princess moves herself.)

Kūfurin:

Listen! A hawk cries.

I am sure it was a hawk.

Old Man:

It was not a hawk.

¹¹ In Yeats's play (Yeats 1921: 14) can be found a similar section where the Old Man explains to the Young Man when the spring begins to flow: "A secret moment that the holy shades That dance upon the desolate mountain know, And not a living man, and when it comes The water has scarce plashed before it is gone."

¹² This section draws heavily from the verses of the Old Man in Yeats's play (*Ibid.*, 16).

Kūfurin:

No, it sounded like a hawk.
When I wandered in the rocky mountains
And climbed up the rough cliffs
I saw a hawk.
The hawk was not from this world.
It had pointed beak and golden eyes.

Old Man:

The Hawk is the Spirit of the Mountain.
It is the shadow that never stays still.
It makes people confused and allures them to follow it.
It is a demonic power waiting people to be ruined.
It spreads its threads of spell
That makes you lose your breath of youth.
Go away! Leave this island!¹³

Kūfurin:

Are you trying to play a trick on me, Old Man?
Are you trying to threaten me, you fool?
I will hold my ground, because I am the Prince of Persia
And I have the blessing of gods.

Old Man:

Now I will curse you, Kūfurin,
And you will not escape the same fate.

Rocks together:

And Kūfurin will not escape the same fate.
He will not escape that fate.

Old Man:

Go away! Leave this island!

(The Hawk Princess makes again a sudden movement.)

Kūfurin:

That was the cry of a hawk.
A hawk cried again.
I wonder if it is the Maiden who cries out as a hawk?¹⁴

¹³ In Yeats's play (Yeats 1921: 14, 16, 19) the Old Man begs three times the Young Man to go away.

¹⁴ The Young Man in *At the Hawk's Well* (*Ibid.*, 18) asks the Old Man: "That cry! There is that cry again. That woman made it, But why does she cry out as the hawk cries?"

Old Man:

The Maiden is the hawk.
The Maiden is the Hawk Princess.
She is the Spirit of the Mountain.

(The Maiden stands up.)

Rocks together:

The Maiden turns herself, shaking the sleeves of her robe.
The Maiden rubs her hands and sways her hips.
The dance of Hawk Princess becomes furious.

(Instrumental music, Part 4)

(The Old Man becomes enchanted as the strange movements of the Hawk Princess gradually intensify.)

Old Man:

Kūfurin, leave this island at once!
I beg you! Leave the water to me!
For hundred years, thousand years
I have waited for this moment.
Let an old man have the water, Kūfurin!

(Instrumental music, Part 5)

(A *nō* flute solo. Enchanted Old Man leaves the stages, moving like a sleepwalker.)

6

Rocks together:

Aa-shiya-oo-shiya.
Aa-shiya-oo-shiya.
Kūfurin stares at the Hawk Princess.
Hawk Princess stares at Kūfurin.
Hawk Princess stares at Kūfurin.

(While chanting, Rocks move to different locations on stage and sit down.
Kūfurin becomes excited.)

Kūfurin:

If you wish to dance, just dance, Hawk Maiden!
If you wish to fly, just fly, Hawk Princess!

Rocks together:

Aa-shiya-oo-shiya.

Aa-shiya-oo-shiya.

Aa-shiya-oo-shiya.

(Instrumental music, Part 6)

(Kūfurin moves fiercely toward the Hawk Princess, but then suddenly his strength wanes and he falls asleep.)

7

Rocks together:

Atasara-samara, kikiri-saya.

First Rock:

The time has come.

Rocks together:

The time has come.

First Rock:

Now the water gushes out.

Rocks together:

The water gushes out. The water gushes out.

First Rock:

Atasara-samara.

(From this part on Rocks chant in canon singing.)

Rocks together:

Atasara-samara, kikiri-saya.

Atasara-samara, kikiri-saya.

Kikiri-saya-on,

Kakara-saya-un.

First Rock:

Water!

Second Rock:

Water! Water!

Third Rock and Fourth Rock:

Water! Water! Water!

Rocks together:

Atasara-samara, kikiri-saya.

Atasara-samara, kikiri-saya.

Kikiri-saya-on,

Kakara-saya-un.

(Instrumental music, Part 7)

(Suddenly the water gushes forcefully out from the spring. The Hawk Princess dances vigorously, making water to bubble over the rocks, but then suddenly the flow stops and the Princess leaves the stage.)

8

(Old Man re-enters the stage.)

Old Man:

Could it be, Kūfurin,

That you would have the water of the spring

I've been waiting for thousand years and

Gained nothing? If the water would spring

For you, I would hate you. The spring

Is filled with the waves of withered leaves,

And in the treetops raises the storm.

(Instrumental music, Part 8)

(The Old Man moves slowly; while he moves the Rocks gather to the seats of chorus.)

9

Rocks together:

He dedicated himself to worshipping the Spirit.

He dedicated himself to worshipping the Spirit.

His sufferings continued eternally

Until his tousled white hair fell on his shoulders.

Cold wind from mountains

Brought him nothing but

Heat in summer and snow in winter.

He drank the rain,

Caught wild birds to ease hunger,

And in the last resort even monkeys.¹⁵
He didn't dare to take a nap.
And when he survived by chance,
A monster attacked him;
He fell to the ground
And his limbs shrivelled slowly.
With a thousand fibres
Of the threads of spell
The monster relentlessly
Corrupted his mind
And destroyed his body.
Although, the only thing he wanted
Was to stand up and leave.
Eventually, under the spell
His body turned to a rock,
And he became
The ghost of the mountain.

10

(Instrumental music, Part 9)
(A *taiko* drum solo.)

Rocks together:

Poor Old Man!
After all he did not find the water.
He didn't see his mother and fathered no children.
And he had no friends.
He calmly passed his days in this world.
Poor Kūfurin!

Rocks together:

The spring stayed dry eternally.
The spring stayed dry eternally.
Silence fell over the grove of hazel.¹⁶

¹⁵ These three verses are inspired by the section of Yeats's play (Yeats 1921: 16) where the Old Man describes his miserable life: "I have snared the birds for food and eaten grass And drunk the rain".

¹⁶ The same way as in the beginning of the play Yokomichi inserted verses in memory of his late mentor Kobayashi Shizuo, he dedicated also the last verse of the play to him. In Japanese, *shizuka nari hari no kobayashi* (Yokomichi *n.d.*, 55).