

# The Place of Man in the Noh Play

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## I. The Place of Man

THE FIRST SECTION of my presentation is a discussion of human existence (*Dasein*), for which the double aspect of world and self, as an essential structure, acts as the basis. We call this phenomenon *living-in-the-double-world*. My explanatory comments about this are a prerequisite for understanding the concept of an intersecting of the ways of time—past, present and future—as found in the cultural understanding of the Japanese. The second section of my presentation concerns the Noh drama as a play in which that intersecting of the ways of time is enacted, and as a deep reflection on human existence in its double aspect of life and death.

In Zen Buddhism, the concepts of world and self interpenetrate, and this mutual penetration is itself penetrated by absolute nothingness. This is expressed well in the picture of the empty circle, the eighth of the *Ten Oxherding Pictures*.<sup>1</sup> Also belonging here and essentially the same is the Zen saying: "Vast emptiness, nothing holy." This entire state of being has been summarized by Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945), the founder of modern philosophy in Japan, in the concept of *basho-teki-jiko*. The word *basho* means "place, field, space"; *teki* is a suffix that turns a noun into an adjective; *jiko* means the self. Thus, *basho-teki-*

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<sup>1</sup> See: Shizuteru Ueda, "Leere und Fülle, Shūnyatā im Mahāyāna Buddhismus" ("Emptiness and Fullness, Shūnyatā in Mahāyāna Buddhism") in *Eranos 45-1976*, especially p. 138ff. For an English translation, see: "Emptiness and Fullness: Śūnyatā in Mahāyāna Buddhism, trans. by James Heisig and Frederick Greiner, *Eastern Buddhist* XV, 1 (Spring 1982), pp. 10–22.

*jiko* means a *basho*-like self. According to Nishida, this *basho* has two aspects: the *basho* of existence, the field of existence, and the *basho* of absolute nothingness which surrounds the former. This second *basho* is the space of absolute nothingness; it is limitless, unending open space. The self, in other words, exists in a field which, for its part, is surrounded (*umgriffen*) by space of infinite openness. This entire structural complex belongs to the self as such.

It is significant in the history of Zen Buddhism that Zen masters chose mountains as their abodes, thus transforming them into a *dōjō* or "place of truth." The Zen masters then came to be known by the name of the mountain where they lived, so that man and mountain had the same name. This was often the case with the great Zen masters and Zen poets of the T'ang Dynasty in China such as Ōbaku, Yakusan, Kanzan and others. We could use Nishitani Keiji's (1900–1990) pithy formulation and simply say: "The man Kanzan (*zan* means 'mountain' in this context) is the mountain Kanzan; the mountain Kanzan is the man Kanzan." Nevertheless, this is not a question of the identity between mountain and man. Essentially it involves the unending openness of absolute nothingness which surrounds both man and mountain while penetrating them. Thus, the *landscape* of Kanzan concretely portrays how the *man* Kanzan resides in unending openness. The man Kanzan, on his part, is the spirit of the landscape of the mountain Kanzan. Here is a concrete example of how the *interwovenness* (*ineinanderwobensein*) of the understanding of self and world occurs in the true self as the *basho*-like self.

During the Eranos Convention in 1981, I developed this theme of interwovenness of self and world from the aspect of the self.<sup>2</sup> In the first section of my presentation, I wish to address the same phenomenon from the standpoint of the world. This is a prerequisite for understanding the intersecting of past, present, and future we will encounter again in the section about the Noh theater.

<sup>2</sup> See: "Die Bewegung nach oben und die Bewegung nach unten" ("The Movement Upward and the Movement Downward") in *Eranos* 50-1981, pp. 223–272. For an English translation, see: "Ascent and Descent: Zen Buddhism in Comparison with Meister Eckhart," trans. by Ian Astley and James Heisig, *Eastern Buddhist* XVI, 1 (Spring 1983), pp. 58–64.

## THE PLACE OF MAN

### Being-in-the-world

Martin Heidegger's concept of *In-der-Welt-sein* (being-in-the-world) provides us with an approach to the basic word *basho* in the concept of *basho-teki-jiko* and with it an approach to an understanding of the world as found in Zen Buddhism and the philosophy of Nishida. In Heidegger's terminology, the entity that we always are, is *Dasein*, whose *basic condition* (*Grundverfassung*) or fundamental structure is *being-in-the-world*.<sup>3</sup> *Dasein* exists as *being-in-the-world*, as Heidegger shows in the section of *Being and Time* entitled "Preparatory Fundamental Analysis of *Dasein*." In our discussion of world in *basho-teki-jiko*, we want to proceed from Heidegger in order to then further develop the concept of world by means of Zen Buddhism and the philosophy of Nishida. We wish, in fact, to develop this concept into the concept of *living-in-the-double-world* (*in-der-Doppelwelt-wohnen*) as the actual structure of *Dasein*.

For Heidegger, the world of *being-in-the-world* is the far-reaching *meaning space* (*Sinnraum*), the space of *connection of meaning* (*Bedeutungszusammenhang*) or *totality of involvements* (*Bewandtnis-ganzheit*) in which the entity first contains significance for *Dasein*. Heidegger makes visible the worldliness of the world (*Weltlichkeit der Welt*) through existential analysis of the *in-order-to* (*Um-zu*) and *for-the-sake-of-which* (*Worum-willen*).<sup>4</sup> *Dasein* understands an *entity within-the-world* (*innerweltliches Seiendes*) as an *equipment* (*Zeug*), that is, a handy *in-order-to* in every possible *Dasein* situation of which the *for-the-sake-of-which* of *Dasein* itself acts as the basis. In the course of this, the being of *Dasein* in its "original totality of structural completeness" is clarified in its character of care (*Sorge*). A jug, for example, is an equipment to hold and pour out water, and indeed for the sake of maintaining the life of *Dasein* itself.

We wish to consider a further matter along with this. Because a connection (*Zusammenhang*) is always defined and essentially limited, the

<sup>3</sup> See: M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* ("Being and Time"), Part I, First Section, Chapters 2 to 6.

<sup>4</sup> See especially Chapter 3, "Die Weltlichkeit der Welt" ("The Worldliness of the World").

world in the Heideggerean sense is also fundamentally *limited* (*begrenzt*) in its way of being as a connection of meaning (*Bedeutungszusammenhang*). Due to the limitedness of the connection, an entity has a definite meaning in the connection in question. An entity can also be double-meaning (*doppeldeutig*), that is, be in two different connections which cut across each other precisely in the entity in question. In this case, too, the connection of the connections is definite and limited. The world as far-reaching space of meaning, as the totality of connections of meanings for Dasein, is essentially limited in its way of being as a connection. Although Heidegger did not work out this character of the world in its aspect of being in the world it is nevertheless implicit in his concept of the world.

Heidegger pursues the subject further: "The world as world is disclosed first and foremost by anxiety."<sup>5</sup> Thus, Heidegger sees anxiety as the *basic state of mind* (*Grundbefindlichkeit*) of Dasein. In what way does anxiety as a basic state of mind disclose the world? "Here the totality of involvements of the ready-to-hand and the present-at-hand discovered within-the-world is, as such, of no consequence; it collapses into itself; the world has the character of completely lacking significance."<sup>6</sup> The world of being-in-the-world which has disclosed itself as totality of involvements (*Bewandtnisganzheit*), as connection of meaning (*Bedeutungszusammenhang*) and as the *horizon of meaning* (*Sinnhorizont*) for the *entity within-the-world* (*innerweltliches Seiendes*), collapses into total insignificance in the basic state of mind of anxiety. In this connection, Heidegger speaks forcefully in *What is Metaphysics?*<sup>7</sup> about nothingness which is revealed by anxiety: "In the clear night of the nothing" of anxiety, the entity slips in the totality into nothing and reveals itself that much more insistently as the entity in the totality. This is exactly what Heidegger means when he says that "the world as world is disclosed first and foremost by anxiety." Nothingness, which is revealed through anxiety, given that existence in

<sup>5</sup> *Sein und Zeit*, 4. Auflage 1935, p. 187; "Being and Time" (Translated by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson, Harper & Row, New York, 1962, p. 232.

<sup>6</sup> See above: p. 186. *ibid.*, p. 231.

<sup>7</sup> M. Heidegger, *Was ist Metaphysik?*, 11. Auflage, Frankfurt/M. 1929, especially p. 34f. M. Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, ed. by David Farrell Krell, Harper & Row, New York, 1977. p. 105.

## THE PLACE OF MAN

its totality loses its significance, discloses the world first and foremost as world, while the world as totality of involvements (*Bewandtnisganzheit*) has given significance to that which is encountered within-the-world. Transferred to our own problem, this relation means the limitedness of the world. As is also true about Zen Buddhism, the world according to Heidegger is limited or bordered by *nothingness*. It is only that *nothingness* for Heidegger is experienced negatively as *insignificance* (*Unbedeutsamkeit*) due to the character of the meaning of the world that was disclosed previously. To be sure, nothingness is at first negatively experienced as null or void, as is the case with Heidegger. Nevertheless, this initially negative experience is once again negated by nothingness in Zen and in the philosophy of Nishida so that the truth of the total condition reveals itself.

### The Limitedness of the World

What actually does the limitedness of the world mean for Dasein? This is what I wish to work out from the standpoint of Zen Buddhism and the philosophy of Nishida. In general, *limited* (*be-grenzt*) means that a *limit* or *boundary* (*Grenze*) is set to something. This limit can be deferred in various ways, although not at will and not without limit. In a limit situation, such as in the case of the concept of the world, that which is limited is essentially limited. The world as far-reaching meaning space of Dasein is limited because of its structure as a connection of meaning. What does the limitedness of the world mean as such? Also belonging to the concept of a limit are the *this-side* and *other-side* of the boundary limit. A situation in which something is limited means: it is limited by the other-side of the limit or boundary, which is unlimited, that is, limited by the unlimited and indeed surrounded by the unlimited along the limit boundary. This is true about the concept of world in which understanding of the world belongs to being-in-the-world. The world, which is limited as such, is limited by the unlimited and surrounded precisely on the limit by the unlimited—unending openness. Dasein lives in the limited world in which Dasein can orient itself in contact with other *Dasein* (*Mitdasein*) as well as in relation with entities within-the-world. Dasein lives in the essentially limited world, which for its part is surrounded and penetrated on the limit by unlimited, un-ending openness. It is precisely in-the-world that Dasein

lives simultaneously in unending openness. I call this world, which for its part is found in the endless openness that surrounds it, the *double-world* of Dasein. In this manner, Dasein is found in its basic constitution in the double-world. What does this living-in-the-double-world mean for Dasein? For example: Dasein in the world understands an entity within-the-world as a ready-to-hand for practical use *and at the same time* is confronted with the same entity within-the-world from a depth of meaning that can become endlessly deep in unending openness, in the endless openness which as such can never be exhaustively understood and which is designated as absolute nothingness. The entity thus appeals to Dasein in the entity's total depth so that it opens out from the connection of meaning in which the entity is projected into endless openness. Speaking of this, Nishida says: "Things are there and illuminate me."

In his later writings, Heidegger speaks about the "thing that things" (*das Ding, das dingt*) without referring to his earlier understanding of entity within-the-world as ready-to-hand. Using the example of a jug, Heidegger says: "The gift of the outpouring stays or maintains the basic oneness of the quartered world (earth, heaven, divine, mortal). And in the poured gift the jug presences as jug. . . . The jug's presencing is the pure gathering, as a gift, of the foursided oneness into a single time-space, a single maintaining. The jug presences as a thing. . . . The thing things."<sup>8</sup> That is, the thing maintains the foursided world, "the mirror-play as the real presence of the basic oneness of earth and heaven, divine and mortal." Heidegger then gives the name *world* to the four-sidedness, once again without referring to his earlier concept of world: "This mirror-play of the real presence of the basic oneness of earth and heaven, divine and mortal, we call the world. The world presences by worlding. . . . The thing maintains—gathers and unites—the foursided. The thing things the world."<sup>9</sup> An entity such as the jug presences as thing in the horizon of the fourfold, which things the thing. Nevertheless, Heidegger does not speak any more about *entity* (*Seiende*) or *horizon* (*Horizont*) as he did in *Being and Time*. However, he refers to the foursided as world. Nishida might ask where

<sup>8</sup> See: "Das Ding" in *Aufsätze und Vorträge*, Pfulligen 1954, p. 172. "The Thing" from "Poetry, Language and Thought," pp. 173-174.

<sup>9</sup> See above: pp. 178-179, *ibid.*, p. 179-181.

## THE PLACE OF MAN

the world is found as the foursided. We will return to further explain this concept later. As for living-in-the-double-world which concerns us here, we can summarize being-ready-at-hand and *being-a-thing* (*Dingsein*) in the same entity. A jug found in the kitchen is thus an equipment for daily use and at the same time a work of art, a situation that occurs quite often. Sometimes it is not only a work of art but also a *thing* which concretizes the entire universe in itself. Or, to express it in the religious language of Angelus Silesius: "*Die Rose/welche hier dein äußeres Auge sieht/Die hat von Ewigkeit in Gott also geblüht*"<sup>10</sup> ("The rose which your outer eye sees has bloomed in eternity in God").

The *and-at-the-same-time* spoken of above is only possible on the basis of living-in-the-double world, which for its part is also expressed by *and-at-the-same-time*. For persons who live this way in the double world in accordance with the essential structure of *Dasein*, there is an intersection, for example, of the practical way of living one's life with the poetic, artistic and religious ways. In that case, this crossing represents precisely the original point from which the proper locus of human existence always keeps itself open and free for this. Thus, man uses an entity (*Seiendes*) as a definite ready-at-hand in his life situation *and at the same time* he experiences the same entity as a thing which opens him to unending openness. This *and-at-the-same-time* has a decisive meaning in Zen Buddhism and in the philosophy of Nishida.

There is no mention as such in Heidegger's writings of this *at-the-same-time*. The idea that "the thing things" only appears later in his writings as a result of his turning away from the earlier "fundamental ontology" toward the transcendental philosophical beginnings of "thinking of Being."

Proceeding from his earlier understanding of ready-at-hand, we can reconstruct the development of his thought as follows: The entity within-the-world as the ready-at-hand in an in-order-to connection of the for-the-sake-of-which of *Dasein* in the world collapses into insignificance as nothingness of the world as world, in nothingness that can be experienced in the "basic mental state of anxiety" but also, more radically, in "being-to-death as the being of *Dasein*." This is Heidegger's view as propounded in *Being and Time*.

<sup>10</sup> Angelus Silesius. *Samtliche poetische Werke und eine Auswahl aus seinen Streitschriften*, trans. by Georg Ellinger, Berlin 1923.

However, now it is precisely in nothingness—no longer seen now from the standpoint of entity—that Being itself is experienced because “death, as the shrine of Nothing, harbors within itself the presencing of Being.”<sup>11</sup> Dasein then reveals itself as mortal with the other three: earth, heaven and divine, a “fouring” into the unique foursided. Dasein thus experiences entity as the *thing* which the quartered world things and presences. If we synchronize to some extent the development from Dasein to mortal, from ready-at-hand to thing, and from world to foursided as they are understood here, and then summarize them in an integrative manner as the structural depth of Dasein, we are already very close to the concept of living-in-the-double-world.

In Heidegger’s *Being and Time* the world, as a *totality of involvements (Bewandtnisganzheit)* is the far-reaching space of meaning. The later Heidegger speaks about the *four-quartered world (das Geviert)*—earth and heaven, divine and mortal—which he once again denotes as world. Our concern here is the double-world, the world that is found in un-ending openness. In way of summing up, we want to differentiate more precisely among these three views of the world and include them in a total context with the double-world. We will now study three aspects of the double-world:

1. The world found in the un-ending openness of absolute nothingness reveals itself first as world, although it is *surrounded (umgriffen)* by un-ending openness. Seen in this way, the world is the far-reaching meaning space for entity within-the-world. This view of the world is similar to that found in Heidegger’s *Being and Time*.

2. The world found in the un-ending openness of absolute nothingness reveals itself as a world that is *penetrated (durchdrungen)* by un-ending openness, such as the world as foursided, for example, as found in Heidegger, or as a mandala, but also as the world of fantasy and symbol.

3. The un-ending openness of absolute nothingness as such. In no sense can this be denoted as world but only as non-world. It is the un-ending open space for worlds, which is indicated by the empty circle in the eighth of the *Ten Oxherding Pictures*.

When we speak of the double-world, as we can now do in more precise terms, the double character of the world is concretely related to

<sup>11</sup> *Aufsätze und Vorträge*, p. 177, *ibid.*, p. 178.

## THE PLACE OF MAN

the and-at-the-same-time of world 1 and world 2. This and-at-the-same-time is, for its part, only possible on the basis or—more accurately put—non-basis of un-ending openness. Thus we see the three aspects in one and speak of the double-world. If we only concentrate on the first aspect, we see the world of mere realism. If we concentrate only on the second aspect, we see the mythical world. When we observe both the first *and* the second aspect, without being aware of the third, we find ourselves in the so-called “theory of two worlds.”

In contrast to these three variations, all of which have had their individual influence on history, the living-in-the-double-world of Zen Buddhism offers an integration of all three aspects.

### The Problem of Death

It is the problem of death that leads to true and actual living in the double world. This is something that Heidegger already hinted at in his own way. Existential prerequisites for living-in-the-double world are a *realization* of the limitedness of the world as Dasein and having a presentiment of a “beyond” that cannot be known and which transcends the world. This presentiment, this realization—which is at first somewhat negative in terms of feeling—is first encountered when we become absorbed in the problem of death. We quoted Heidegger earlier in this text: “As the shrine of Nothing, death harbors within itself the presencing of Being.” He is saying this in reference to the “mortals” in the “basic oneness of the foursided world.” In this statement, Heidegger expresses something fundamentally deeper concerning death than being-to-death as found in *Being and Time*. Because the problem of death is decisive for an understanding of living-in-the-double world, I would like to quote the entire passage in Heidegger containing the word in question. After successively explaining earth, heaven and divine, Heidegger writes as follows:

The mortals are human beings. They are called mortals because they can die. To die means to be capable of death in the true sense of death. Only man dies. The animal perishes. It has death neither ahead of itself nor behind it. Death is the shrine of Nothing, that is, of that which in every respect is never something that merely exists, but which nevertheless

presences, even as the mystery of Being itself. As the shrine of Nothing, death harbors within itself the presencing of Being. As the shrine of Nothing, death is the shelter of Being. We now call human beings mortals—not because their earthly life comes to an end, but because they are capable of death in its true sense. Mortals are who they are, as mortals, present in the shelter of Being.<sup>12</sup>

“Metaphysics” defines man as *animal rational*. Heidegger says regarding this: “Rational living beings must first become mortals.” Then the world is revealed to the mortals as the foursided world. “Earth and heaven, divine and mortal are at one with one another of their own accord, that is, belong together by way of the basic oneness of the four-sided world.”<sup>13</sup>

Corresponding to being-mortal in the Heideggerean sense is living in a spirit of being already dead as found in Zen Buddhism. It is only through being dead that mortals come to the “shrine of nothing” and thus become “present in the shelter of Being.” Thus, Zen Buddhism is not concerned with “being unto death.” Rather than simply “becoming mortal,” it is concerned with dying in itself. Nevertheless, Zen Buddhism is not a matter of coming-to-an-end or an end to earthly life. Rather, it is concerned with a realization of *being capable of death in the true sense of death*. A basic problem that Zen masters often present their students with is expressed as follows: “Die completely to yourself and then come to me!” Here is how Zen master Shidō Munan (1603–1678) expressed it: “The person who is already dead while living and who has died the essential death, acting now as agrees with himself—such a one is a true man.” Master Hakuin expressed it as follows: “Young students, if you do not want to die, then die now! If you have died now, you will not die when you die.” Dying means giving oneself over to the shrine of Nothing and realizing in Nothing “the relation to Being as Being.” In this way, living-in-the-double world means living out of being-dead, although this is not concerned solely with the so-called world of the living but also with the shrine of Nothing, a Nothing that is perhaps *greater* than the shrine and *greater* than the

<sup>12</sup> See above: p. 177, *ibid.*, pp. 178–179.

<sup>13</sup> See above: p. 178, *ibid.*, p. 179.

## THE PLACE OF MAN

foursided. Living-in-the-double world, therefore, also means living together with the dead, something so characteristic of the Noh theater.

Zen Buddhism says that the person who has died now does not die when he dies. But he does nonetheless die when he dies. How? *He dies as he dies.* Zen Buddhism says that this is no other than not-dying. I will use an example to clarify how a person dies in this way. It is a practice among Zen Buddhists to compose a very short poem on one's deathbed known as a "bequeathed poem." It is a final farewell in the form of a summation of one's life. The totality of one's life is specifically present to the dying person in the act of dying. Having settled his mind, the dying person sums up his life in a final self-realization so as to deliver over his life to death and at the same time send a final greeting to his fellow human beings. Here is an example of such a poem: "Showing their front, showing their back, the autumn leaves fall." Essentially, however, the deathbed poem is nothing more than a completion of that which has been face to face with death, from the spirit of being-dead. At the same time, it is a mission entrusted to the survivors, that is, his fellow mortals, to act responsibly in receiving and answering this final greeting of the dying person in one's own life and death.

### Living-in-the-Double-world

Living-in-the-double world, with which we are concerned here, can be further clarified with the concept of the horizon. Dasein finds itself in the world. The world as connection of meaning is the far-reaching horizon of understanding of that which Dasein encounters in the world. It is only on the horizon of the world that something is accessible as something for Dasein. That which does not appear on the horizon is as good as nothing for Dasein. Now belonging to the horizon as such is the other-side of the horizon as well as the this-side. It is actually the other-side of the horizon which makes the horizon what it is. Without the other-side there can be no horizon, which is a prerequisite for understanding that which appears on the horizon. Without the other-side there is also no "melting of the horizon" (*Horizontverschmelzung*) in Gadamer's sense.<sup>14</sup> However, for the

<sup>14</sup> See: Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, Tübingen 1960.

person who is aware of this structure of the horizon in his own being, the "other-side of the horizon" becomes the other horizon of understanding, and this in both a negative and positive sense.

1. In a negative sense because he does not know what is on the other side of the horizon. However, he knows that he does not know what lies on the other side of the horizon. In knowing about one's not-knowing, the not-knowing relativizes knowing in the world. He knows that that which he knows is not the totality and that he can never know the totality because for every further horizon there is yet another other-side. In knowledge of his not-knowing, his horizon is admittedly negative but nevertheless extended beyond the world horizon to the other-side of the horizon. As one aware of his not knowing, he resides not only in the world of his horizon of understanding but also already as not-knower in the un-ending openness beyond the horizon.

2. In a positive sense, because this experience acts in a positive way for the understanding of that which he encounters in the world. A something always has a definite and concrete meaning for him as something in the limited world. At the same time, however, it has an inexhaustible depth of meaning for him in the endless openness of "beyond the horizon." This openness is given both as "beyond" with the horizon and also as openness that allows the horizon appear from the other-side and which surrounds the horizon. The "as"-structure of understanding has no value in connection with this. At most, the *as* can be used in an analogical or symbolic manner, although there is always the danger of falling back into the "categorical or existential" *as*. This must always be destroyed by negation without end. In Zen texts one often comes across the expression: "Mountains are mountains and at the same time not mountains."

This is not a matter of logical paradox or senseless confusion of healthy human understanding. It is an expression of the experience of living-in-the-double world. Nevertheless, the phrase "and-at-the-same-time not mountains," by means of its direct negation, points directly beyond the horizon without mediation through analogy or symbol. A person who is aware of this structure of being resides simultaneously in the this-side of the horizon as one who knows and in the other-side as one aware of his not knowing. In this manner, he finds himself in endless openness which embraces this-side and other-side and which is not exhausted in this embrace.

## THE PLACE OF MAN

### Summary of the Theme of Living-in-the-Double-world

Dasein lives in the world, that is, in the limited world, although it is surrounded by unlimited openness. Because Dasein lives in the world as "being-in-the-world," it lives simultaneously in the un-ending openness that surrounds the world. Dasein lives in the limited world in un-ending openness. In this sense, Dasein means living-in-the-double world. On the horizon of the world as the far-reaching space of meaning, Dasein understands all that it encounters as something defined, although the other-side of the horizon gives a limitless depth of meaning to that which is encountered within-the-world. This is fundamentally indefinable because the horizon as such is surrounded in its character as horizon by the endless other-side of the horizon. The *and-at-the-same-time* mentioned above, however, is neither unarticulated continuity nor simply being next to each other. What we have here is the and-at-the-same-time of limitedness and limitlessness, of ending and un-ending. Negation, while making a sharp distinction between the two, at the same time combines them in an intimate way. Expressed in religious language, this is experienced by the self as "death and resurrection" or "living out of the experience of being-dead." The awareness of finiteness as death is no other than finding oneself in the midst of realized finiteness but also at the same time in un-ending openness beyond finiteness. We then find ourselves back once again in finiteness but now as a finite concretion of endlessness. This total movement makes the true self, that is, the self-less self, to be movement out of oneself and back to oneself.<sup>15</sup> Expressed once again in Heideggerean terms in way of summing up, Dasein exists as Self. The Self is now proved to be the selfless Self, which corresponds to living-in-the-double world. Dasein as Self in the world exists (*ek-sistiert*) self-lessly in un-ending openness. The facticity of *Da* (there) concretizes in the Self while the disclosure of the *Da* spreads out self-lessly in un-ending openness. Dasein lives as the self-less Self in the double-world.

<sup>15</sup> See Ueda, "Die Bewegung nach oben und die Bewegung nach unten," especially Section I, in *Erasmus* 50-1981.

### The Double-world in Everyday Life

What effect does living-in-the-double-world have on our concrete lives? What quality does our life receive through living-in-the-double-world? If a person truly and actually lives in the double-world, this double-world will also often be reflected in the limited world to the point that it can be concretely perceived. In various ways, such a person lives in the world or in two different concrete worlds. One could say outright that living-in-the-double-world has a profound effect on one's form of life. A concrete example from everyday life in Japan should help to make this point clearer.

Almost every Japanese newspaper offers its readers each week an entire page for printing their poems in the traditional poetical forms: *waka*, a short poem of 31 syllables, and *haiku*, an even shorter poem of 17 syllables. Readers send their *waka* or *haiku* to the newspaper and these poems, the products of people of all ages and walks of life, are examined by well-known *haiku* and *waka* poets. A selection of poems is carried every week in the newspaper together with critical remarks by the experts. The fact that newspapers in Japan devote an entire page every week to poems written by their readers is an expression of a style of life that is cultivated in Japanese society.

What could this phenomenon signify for life in a paradigmatic way? Man lives in two concrete worlds: on the one side in his occupation as a member of society, on the other side as a poet in the world of the arts. However, it is not so that the former activity is considered serious reality and the latter merely incidental dilettantism. In his everyday occupation, the person in question lives completely in the first world, and when composing poems he lives totally in the second world. Therefore, he lives essentially in two different worlds. Each world is, in its own way, concretely defined and thus limited. However, in going from one world to the other and in the repeated process of going back and forth between the two, the un-ending openness of nothingness flashes and then also penetrates the concrete worlds. At the same time, this passage between two worlds is an insight into the un-ending openness beyond the limit. Or, to put it in other words: in the midst of passing between the two worlds, the person is touched by the light of endless openness from the other side of the limit. To the extent that a person lives this

## THE PLACE OF MAN

way concretely in two worlds, he realizes that each world is limited and relative. And in this realization he also becomes aware that it is precisely "between" the two worlds that he is penetrated by infinity. It sometimes happens that the person in question has different names depending on which world he is in. The philosopher Nishida, for example, called himself Nishida Kitarō as a professor of philosophy and in his scholarly publications. As a calligrapher and poet he called himself Sunshin, a name given to him by his Zen master. *Sun*, actually a small unit of measure of about 3.03 centimeters, means "very small or short" and has the additional meanings of "concentrated, filled, pure, sharp." *Shin* means "heart" or "mind." *Sunshin* thus means something like "small heart," although all the other meanings sound together with this. Use of such noms-de-plume is quite widespread in Japan, and not only among waka or haiku poets. But we would be mistaken to conclude that these are pseudonyms. In Nishida's case, use of such a name involves freedom from Kitarō and becoming Sunshin as well as freedom from Sunshin and becoming Kitarō.

The world of business society has its own order in which each person has his or her particular function. The world of the arts also has its own order in which the same person also has a specific position. It is possible and actually quite often the case that a person ranked rather low in the business world has, because of his activities or abilities, a high position in the world of poetry, or vice-versa. This living in different orders, in two different worlds, also has a significant effect on society. Because of this system, society has a variety of overlapping classifications which relativize social tensions since people do not understand themselves as one-dimensional even in everyday social life.

A person who lives like this in two different worlds, thus maintaining the double-world, has a certain detachment from the world and comes, now penetrated by endless openness, back again to connection with the world in the limited world. As a result, life in the world has a dimension of religious existence.

## II. The Noh Theater

A classic example from the Japanese cultural sphere of living-in-the-double world is the Noh theater. This is a broad-reaching and complex

art form which I, as a layman, am not competent to speak about in detail. In this paper, I merely want to show how a crossroads of life and death comes to be represented in an instructive manner as living-in-the-double-world. The Noh play is a traditional theater form in Japan. Noh plays are still performed often nowadays, as are traditional plays as well as modern theater pieces in Western style. Seen etymologically, the word Noh means "being able to" or, more precisely put, spiritual ability expressed physically, that is, an ability in which the spiritual takes on form. Thus, Noh also has the meaning of "artistic ability." Given this etymology, when the word Noh is used today, it is generally assumed that this is a reference to the Noh theater. I should also mention that the word Noh in its original meaning appears in modern Japanese in a variety of idiomatic combinations: *nōryoku* (power or ability), *geinō* (ability in the arts, a general term for various artistic activities such as dancing, singing and performing music, most of which are done in the traditional style). The Noh play also belongs to classical *geinō*.

Noh, therefore, is theater that combines drama, song (individual and chorus), dance and music with each other. One could even speak in terms of total-theater. It is a combination of dialogue (spoken or sung), monologue (also spoken or sung), action and dance based on music and sung narration. With the exception of a few more modern pieces, Noh plays are based on works of classical Japanese literature such as the *Tale of Genji*, the *Tale of Heike* and the like, which inspired the Noh play authors when they wrote their texts.

The Noh play was brought to perfection at the end of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth century by Zeami (1363–1443), the son of the great Noh actor Kan'ami. There are two theatrical forms that are considered to be predecessors of Noh: *Dengaku*, a sacred play performed for agricultural rites, and *Sarugaku*, a folk comedy. Using these as a basis, Kan'ami and Zeami developed a totally new style of theater in the spirit of Zen Buddhism. The new style combines artistic and religious elements on a higher spiritual plane. Zeami is one of the great geniuses in the cultural history of Japan, combining in one person the various callings of actor, dramaturge, writer and Noh theorist. Of the 240 or so extant Noh plays, perhaps half—certainly at least a third—were the product of his pen. The discovery of Zeami's theoretical writings at the beginning of this century is one of the major

## THE PLACE OF MAN

events in Japanese cultural history. The Noh theater of today remains totally under his spell. Zeami's influence extends beyond the Noh theater to the most varied cultural and spiritual fields. In this sense, he is equal in every respect to the haiku poet Bashō (1644–1694).

### The Noh Stage

Now we will examine the Noh theater at closer range. The actors include the *shite* and the *waki* who are accompanied by a chorus and musicians.

1. The central actor is known as *shite*, literally: "the one who acts." Only the *shite* wears a Noh mask which is known as an *omote* or "face." In many Noh plays, the *shite* also has a companion, the so-called *tsure*.

2. His protagonist is known as *waki* which means literally "next to, on the side." Although the *waki* is actually not an actor in the strict sense of the word, his role is decisive since the play actually comes into being at his instigation or as an answer to his questions. The *waki*, too, sometimes has a *tsure* or companion.

3. Also belonging to the Noh play are eight to ten chorus singers who tell the story in unison as song. The chorus, in other words, is a group of singing story tellers and the chorus singers in the Noh play are known as the *ji-utai*. The word *ji* means ground or earth and the word *utai* means singing of a text. The *shite* or *waki* often sing alternately with the *ji-utai*.

4. Finally belonging to the Noh play are three (sometimes four, depending on the play) musical instruments: a flute, two drums beat with the hand and sometimes a larger drum beat with a drumstick. There are never any stringed instruments. It is characteristic of Noh music (if one can speak of music in the *strict* sense of the word) that these three or four musicians do not actually play *together*. Although they all play at the same time, each plays for himself without any previously determined harmony. Nevertheless, there is spontaneous harmonization and accord.

However, this is not a case of creating a musical melody; rather it is a matter of lending a metaphysical atmosphere to the space of the play. Also essential are the short intervals of silence between drum beats. All persons—actors, chorus singers and musicians—appear on stage. The

## UEDA

chorus sings and the musicians remain during the entire performance on special seats even when the central player in many plays retires from the stage between the two scenes. There is no actual director. What then does the Noh stage look like?

The inner architecture of the Noh theater makes vivid the spirit of this theater form. Here I wish to emphasize three points:

1. The stage, a square about six meters on a side with four posts, is not *in front of* but rather *in* the audience. Although the stage was originally surrounded on three sides by the audience, today it is sometimes open only on two sides. In an outdoor performance, usually produced in the garden of a Shintō shrine, the stage is open on three sides even today. The fourth side is reserved for the gods as members of the audience and the play is dedicated to them. In principle, the stage is located *in the middle of* the audience. Here is no outspoken other, no dichotomy between actors and audience. The play is not performed *before* the audience; instead, actors and audience are in the same space. This situation heightens the element of togetherness in the presentation of the play. Likewise, the play is not simply shown to the audience; it *happens* in their midst. The position of the stage in the middle of the audience also influences the way in which the actors take the

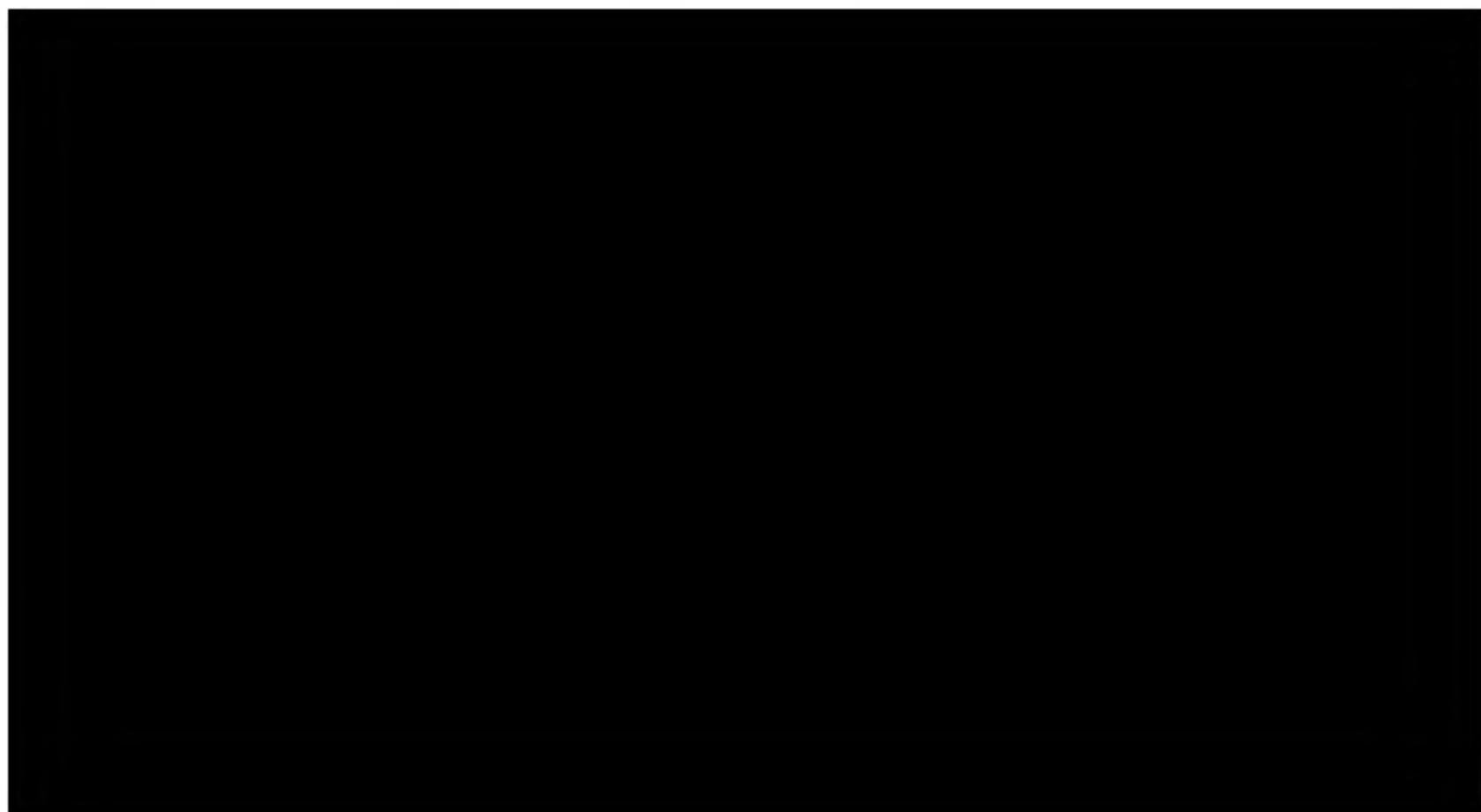


Figure 1: The Space of the Noh Theater

## THE PLACE OF MAN

stage, since the stage can be seen not only from the front but also from the side. The actor must be able to use his body to correctly present his role to all sides.

2. Yet another factor heightens the element of togetherness for the events occurring on stage. There is no curtain between the stage and the audience, although such a curtain does exist in modern Japanese theater as well as in other traditional Japanese theater forms such as *Kabuki* (popular theater) and *Bunraku* (puppet theater). In Noh, the stage is open to the audience from the beginning. Upon entering the theater, we find ourselves immediately in the space where the play will be performed. As soon as one enters the theater, the happenings on stage have already begun for the observer in the audience since the pre-happening belongs essentially to the happening, even if the former lacks any specific content. From the very start, the curtainless stage and the audience are a single space as one and the same world.

3. At first, the stage is totally empty and devoid of props. The emptiness of the stage permeates from the center out to the waiting audience seated around the stage. In various ways this emptiness has a very intense effect. Emptiness as such purifies, not only from the worldly world but also from the world as a total entity. Emptiness makes one open and receptive but at the same time taut and expectant. It creates expectations without making us impatient. Just as the emptiness summons forth expectations, it also simultaneously silences those expectations and, as a result, awakens even more intense expectations. Through the emptiness, therefore, the factor of pure waiting is heightened. Accordingly, there is a heightening of the "event" aspect of that which is going to be performed. The factor of waiting is heightened in the emptiness and through the emptiness of the stage. This is pure waiting in the sense that the audience is so permeated by emptiness radiating forth from the center that the play is now performed in their own purified emptiness. With the expectations created by emptiness, the play has already begun in its essence before the actual events begin. Also playing an important role here is the "before" as emptiness. Emptiness is actually the basic condition for something to happen—an event in which then both actors and audience participate together.

The fact that the stage in the middle of the audience is first totally empty and open for the audience has yet another consequence.

Necessary props, nevertheless reduced to a minimum, are often only brought on the stage when the production begins and often only after it has actually started. The first point to remember is that objects such as a house, boat, mountains, trees and the like are only hinted at. The second point is that stage hands appear on stage only for brief moments to set up props as they become necessary. In this sense they are also players, although in a very modest way. In the way they walk, bring in objects and leave the stage, their slightest movements affect the production as such in the empty space of the stage. The work of the stage hands occurs basically on the same level as that of the actors. When a mountain is brought in, a mountain happens. Everything happens *ex nihilo* as it were. One could speak, in way of analogy to *creatio ex nihilo*, about a happening or event *ex nihilo*. Nevertheless, *ex nihilo* is meant here in a positive sense, as opposed to the usual understanding of *creatio ex nihilo*. This is even more true concerning the acting by the players.

Aside from the four corner pillars, in the beginning there is only the backdrop of the stage. It depicts a large pine—a holy tree in Japanese tradition—and thus indicates the sacred origin of the Noh theater. The background was originally reserved for the gods as the holy audience. One could say that the Noh play is performed with a Shintoistic background, although in the Zen Buddhist open emptiness of absolute nothingness.

The empty stage spoken of previously is not just an architectural peculiarity of the Noh theater; it is also essentially more than simply an architectonic element. Every theater is a reflection of the world and as such an explicit form of execution of human existence recognizing itself. This is especially true about the Noh theater. The emptiness of the stage—a square whose six-meter long sides are laid out only with four corner pillars—is as such nothing less than a reflection of the un-ending openness of absolute nothingness which surrounds and penetrates the world. The emptiness of the stage points directly to un-ending openness and thus spreads out into limitless space. This has an effect both on the actors and the audience. At the same time, however, the stage is concretely limited by the four corner pillars. Thus, the empty stage with its four pillars is—both in its emptiness which points to un-ending openness and in its concrete limitedness—a perfect reflection of the double-world. This determines fundamentally and directly the

## THE PLACE OF MAN

way in which the Noh players act and represent. Action kept to an absolute minimum (corresponding to limitedness) should produce the tension that reaches as far as possible (corresponding to infinity). With just a single step on the stage, the Noh actor should be able to express a thousand miles. This requires a great deal of practice. (Noh actors employ so-called *suri-ashi*, a special way of walking in which the soles of the feet are never lifted from the ground). Precisely because the empty stage is a reflection of the double-world, life and death stand in the middle point of the Noh theater.

### The Play on the Stage

The Noh actors come out of the *kagaminoma* or mirror-room, cross the *hashigakari* or bridge-way, and come onto the stage. They leave the stage again via the bridge-way and retire back into the mirror-room. However, their appearance on the bridge-way, before they actually come on stage, and their disappearance over the bridge-way after appearing on stage have a strong effect. These are in no way secondary to their actual appearance on stage; they are a premonition of the events to come as well as a lingering reverberation of the scene that has just been played. Indeed, the bridge-way sometimes has a direct connection to the play. When there is a sad parting, an actor stands absorbed on the stage and watches as the other player goes slowly away over the bridge-way and finally disappears into the mirror-room. Sometimes a pre- or post-story is played on the bridge-way. In that case, the bridge-way acts as an extension of the stage.

Because both actors and musicians slowly leave the stage over the bridge-way after their appearance and because their leaving as such also has its own effect, there is no actual end of a scene or a play in Noh. Applause is foreign to the Noh theater. The commonly experienced sight of the actors retiring from the stage and disappearing leads the audience back once again to the original emptiness of the stage, to that emptiness in which the play occurs. Just as the time before the entry of the actors belongs to the play, so does the time *after* their exit.

The actors, then, come out of the mirror-room over the bridge-way to the stage and then retire from the stage back over the bridge-way again into the mirror-room. Their representation must give form to the bridge-way as connection between mirror-room and stage and as a

## UEDA

spanning between this-side and that-side. The inner separation between mirror-room and stage is greater in the Noh theater than the separation between stage and audience because the mirror-room is a holy room for the Noh actors. Within the framework of the double-world discussed in the first part of this paper, the mirror room acts as the mirroring of world number 2 (see section above on “The Double-world in Everyday Life”). The qualitative separation between mirror-room and stage is spanned by the bridge-way.

To what extent is the mirror-room a holy room for the Noh actors? What do they do in the mirror-room? The mirror-room, so called because there is a large mirror hanging on the wall, is no dressing room, although there is of course a dressing room in another part of the Noh theater. It is a space of inner concentration where the Noh actors concentrate on the transformation into the persons whose roles they will play. This is especially true for the main actor, the *shite*, because it is in the mirror-room that he puts on the Noh mask, the *omote* or “face.” The Noh mask is not a mask in the usual sense. Japanese has another word—*kamen* or “false face”—to denote that. Rather, the *omote* is the face, that is, the true countenance, the essential countenance, of an old man, a young woman, and a warrior, for ex-

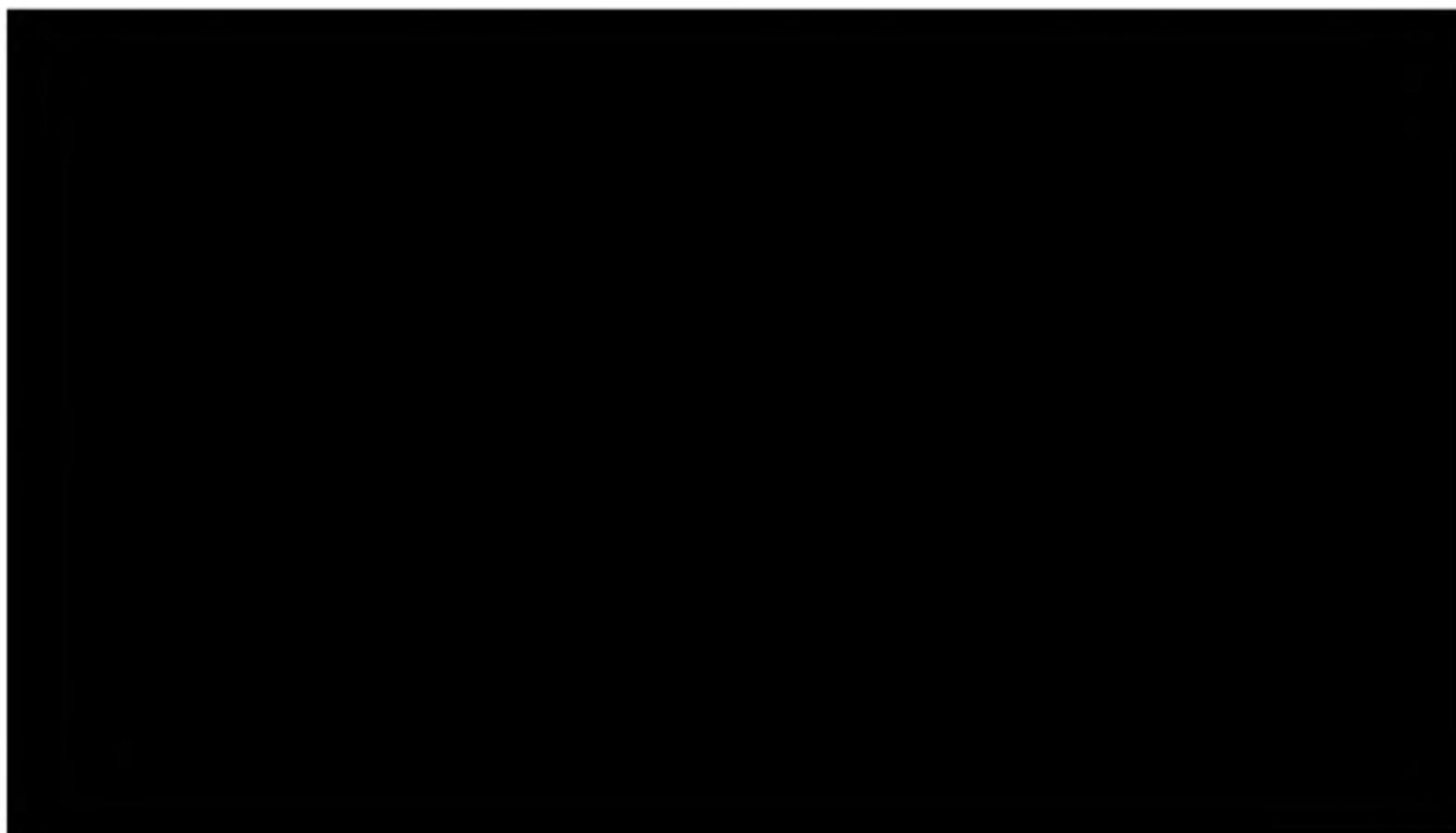


Figure 2: The Scenery of the Noh Theater

## THE PLACE OF MAN

ample, as well as of qualities and feelings such as the divine, the demonic, anger, suffering, sadness and so on.

Because the omote is considered holy, the shite makes a reverential bow in front of it before putting it on. With the mask on, the shite composes himself before the large mirror. He looks in the mirror and sees, not himself, but rather himself as a mirror image of the omote. He absorbs himself—sometimes as long as half an hour—in the omote, in the essential countenance, that is to say, in the essence of the person whom he is playing. It is a true meditation. For the Noh player, the mirror-room is the holy place of transformation. Depending on the play, this transformation can take place several times. In the play by Zeami that will serve here as an example, the shite transforms himself first into the role of a woman from the village. This woman then reveals herself as an incarnation of the spirit of a woman who died two hundred years earlier.

In the second scene, the shite appears as the spirit of this departed woman. A second transformation must take place: from the woman of the village into the ghostlike existence which nevertheless also appears as a woman. In this case, the shite retires to the mirror-room after the first act in order to transform himself into the spirit woman (with another omote in many Noh plays) to then appear again on the stage in the second scene. What we have here, then, is a double transformation.

Hanging at the exit of the mirror-room to the bridge-way is a curtain of light material that is pulled up and immediately let down again each time actors enter or exit. Thus, contrary to what was said earlier, there actually is a curtain in the Noh theater, although not between the stage and the audience. Rather, it is between the stage as the space where the play occurs and the mirror-room as the holy space of transformation. This is essential for the Noh theater. The separation between the play-space and the holy transformation-space, between two qualitatively different worlds, implies the necessity of a bridge, and thus the bridge-way. The two worlds must occur in the same space, otherwise there would be no possibility of spanning them. What space is common to them both? In spite of their qualitative difference, both are found in the same space, in the space of un-ending openness, which corresponds to the emptiness of the stage. The stage is limited, it must be limited. As such, the emptiness of the stage is not limited to the stage. It spreads out to infinity and thus points to the infinite openness of nothingness.

Only the person who lives in endless openness can go back and forth between the two worlds and join them by his going. How can the Noh actor live physically in endless openness? One of the most difficult tasks of the Noh actor is to visibly accomplish this connection through his walking on the bridge-way. This is perhaps even more difficult than meditating with the mask on in the mirror-room or the actual play on the stage. Kita Minoru (b. 1900), a virtuoso Noh actor of modern times, once admitted that it was only after sixty years of practice that he could finally begin to walk correctly on the bridge-way.

I would like to make some additional comments here about the omote or Noh mask. There are a large number of omote and they differ subtly from each other. Each of them has a name, almost a sort of individual name. They include, for example, *Koushijo* (omote of the *dignity* of an old man), *Koomote* (omote of the *purity* of a young woman), *Heita* (omote of the *bravery* of a warrior), *Kantan-otoko* (omote of the *melancholy* of a young man). Even today, omote are carved from wood. If one observes them hastily, they seem stiff. However, if one becomes absorbed in an omote, it can produce a strong impression. But it is only in an actual Noh play when it is carried by the movement of a shite that an omote can actually express various basic feelings such as joy, sadness and pain with extremely fine nuances. To tilt an omote somewhat to the side (the specialist term is "to let it become cloudy") expresses sadness or melancholy. To turn an omote very slightly upwards ("to let shine") expresses joy. To turn an omote very quickly to the side at a sharp angle ("to cut") expresses anger. To turn the omote slowly to the left and right ("to use") signifies that one is listening to the sound of the wind or the quiet hum of insects. We are always concerned here with direct and basic feelings that can only be expressed in their total purity through the omote because it hides any individual and momentary play of the facial features. One other particular difficulty for the shite is the fact that the omote is smaller than the face, so that part of the face always remains in view behind the omote. This being so, the shite must, through his acting, melt the omote and the visible part of his face into a physical unity. A shite cannot simply hide behind the mask. He must unify himself physically with the concrete purity of the omote.

The above should suffice as an explanation of the framework of the Noh theater. Here I have attempted to communicate some of the basic

## THE PLACE OF MAN

ideas of the Noh theater in order that the Noh play described below will be understandable. The deep seriousness of traditional productions is often relieved by pairing the Noh play with a companion piece, a kind of farce known as *Kyogen*. Even today, it is mainly Noh plays of the classical repertoire that are performed and there are relatively few modern Noh pieces. In keeping with the spirit of the Noh theater, more important than creating modern plays are the specific Noh-qualities of a particular performance. This does not concern the production so much as the individual acting abilities of the players. Simple walking, standing or sitting can be very different in its expressive qualities depending on the individual Noh actor. The effect of a play depends less on the content than on the abilities of the actors. The greatest commandment for Noh players reads: practice, practice and more practice!

The Noh theater has proved to be very fruitful for the modern Japanese theater. I can mention modern authors such as Mario Yokomichi, Kinoshita Junji and Mishima Yukio as well as the modern Noh actor Kanze Hisao. European authors such as Sophocles, Shakespeare and W. B. Yeats as well as themes from folk sagas and ancient epics have been produced on the Japanese stage in the Noh style.

### The Noh Play *Izutsu* by Zeami

We now turn our attention to *Izutsu*, a Noh play written by Zeami in his later years. *Izutsu* denotes a well crib, a square wooden perimeter about a meter high around the well opening. Working with a love story taken from the *Ise Monogatari* (Tales of Ise), a classical work of the tenth century, Zeami wrote the play that is considered a model for the Noh theater in general. Zeami himself judged it to be his masterpiece.

Here, in simplified and shorter form, is the love story that forms the basis of the play:

Two children, the daughter of Ki-no-Aritsune and the son of a neighbor, are fond of each other and often play together at the well. They see their reflections in the well water and are overjoyed. They measure their height on the *izutsu*, the wooden perimeter of the well, and take joy in watching how they grow. Although they never verbally express their mutual feelings, in their hearts they have pledged eternal love to each other. When they grow up, they see each other less often. They are no longer children and a certain shyness holds them back.

UEDA

One day, the young man sends the maiden the following waka poem:

By the barrel-well's  
built up crib I'd pull myself  
measuring my height:  
I've shot up like a willow  
this long while we've been apart.

The young woman answers this marriage proposal in poetic form with her own poem:

Since we vied for height  
my once childish hair has grown  
beyond my shoulders:  
If it is not to be you,  
who then best should tie it up?<sup>16</sup>

They marry and are very happy. Even when another woman infatuates the man, he remains true to the love of his wife. When his wife dies still quite young, it is the greatest pain for her to be separated from her beloved husband in this way. The man becomes the famous poet Ariwara-no-Narihira. The *Ise Monogatari*, already mentioned above, is a collection of stories about him. Deeply moved by this love story, Zeami wrote a Noh play in which he developed a characteristic style which later became the standard for those writing for the Noh theater. This style is known today as *Mugen-Noh* (*mu* meaning "dream" and *gen* meaning "fantasy") or "dream-vision Noh." It is distinguished from another style of Noh called *Genzai-Noh* or "Noh of the present." In *Genzai-Noh* the main actor is an actual person, sometimes a historical figure, other times not. The course of events on the stage corresponds to the natural passage of time. If a play consists of two scenes, these follow each other chronologically. Moreover, the linear passage of time is not suspended by the appearance of the gods and demons that often become involved in the events in a Noh play. There are many Noh plays in which, as is the case in other theater forms, the course of events on the stage agrees with the experience of time in everyday life.

<sup>16</sup> *The Tales of Ise*, trans. by H. Jay Harris, Charles E. Tuttle, Tokyo, 1972, pp. 64-66.

## THE PLACE OF MAN

In Mugen-Noh or dream-vision Noh, of which *Izutsu* is an example, things are essentially different. Mugen-Noh plays generally consist of two scenes which contrast with each other in terms of the passage of time. The course of events on the stage is different from the normal passage of time, in that a reversal of the direction of time takes place between the two scenes. Thus, although the second scene is a continuation of the first in formal sequence, it is not so in terms of content. On the contrary, it is ranked independently on a level with the first scene. In the second scene, the past is brought into the present by way of death. However, this present of the second scene also embraces the present of the first scene.

Now we must try to imagine the concrete progression of events in the play *Izutsu* on the stage.

### The First Scene

On a day in late autumn, a wandering monk, played by the waki or auxiliary actor, arrives at Ariwara Temple where some two hundred years earlier the famous couple Ariwara-no-Narihira and his wife, the daughter of Ki-no-Aritsune, had lived and where the grave of the husband now stands. In remembrance of the couple, the wandering monk now wants to visit the temple. Having read the *Ise Monogatari*, he is familiar with the love story of Narihira and his wife. He enters the temple garden, strolls around the temple grounds and says prayers at the grave. Evening comes and he sits down in a corner of the stage on the place of the waki in order to rest in the temple garden. There he remains until the end of the second scene.

A woman from the village now appears on the bridge-way, a Buddhist rosary in her right hand and a branch in her left. This role is played by the shite with the corresponding omote. Coming on the stage, the woman turns toward the backdrop of the theater. With her back to the audience she sings: "Everyday a water offering to the Buddha. Everyday a water offering to the Buddha. The reflection of the moon in the water purifies my heart." As the chorus repeats this verse in a low voice like an echo, the woman turns to the audience and sings again: "On a lonely autumn night in a faraway temple. . . ."

It might seem strange that the shite, in the role of a woman from the village, first sings with his back turned to the audience. But this has a

## UEDA

particular effect. Because the woman does not sing facing the audience, the song seems to be of indefinite origin and flows into the audience. This creates a unique atmosphere of unlimitedness that fills the openness of the empty stage, and the audience is also drawn into this atmosphere.

Now the actual action begins. It is toward evening and already quite dark. The woman draws water from the well in the temple garden in order to pour it in a prayerful and fervent spirit on the gravestone of Ariwara-no-Narihira. This scene incites the curiosity of the wandering monk. Still sitting on his waki place, he turns to the woman and asks her who she is, what she is doing and why she is here so late in the evening. The woman answers briefly and hesitatingly: "I live in this village and I do not know much about Ariwara-no-Narihira. Something drew me to see the grave of the famous poet." The curiosity of the monk is incited even more. He asks further questions, and the woman starts to tell the story of Narihira and his wife. Her song becomes more and more passionate and sometimes threatens to switch into the first person. Parts of the song are sung alternately with the chorus. The woman also sings the two poems quoted above. Then she is asked her name by the chorus. There follows a dialogue, this time not with the monk but between the chorus and the woman. Through this change we know that the question of her identity is no longer just the personal question of the monk but a general question that concerns the entire audience. Finally the woman admits hesitatingly, "I am his wife," and disappears behind the well crib. She retires slowly and quietly over the bridge-way and into the mirror-room.

Musing on the wife of Ariwara-no-Narihira, the wandering monk now sings: "The night grows deeper. The moon of the night in Ariwara Temple. The moon of the night in Ariwara Temple. Turning my clothes to the outside (as if to reverse the course of time), stretching out on a bed of moss, lying down to sleep, and to dream." So ends the first scene.

Kanze Hisao, an outstanding Noh actor of modern times, once had the following to say: "The decisive moment is when the shite, who has been sitting at the grave as the woman from the village, stands up saying, 'I am his wife.' In the act of standing up and through that act, the total transformation from the woman of the village into the wife of Narihira should be expressed visibly."

## THE PLACE OF MAN

### The Second Scene

Now the shite or main actor appears as the wife of Narihira, although as the incarnation of her spirit. The woman is wearing the clothes of her husband. She has put on her husband's clothes which she has donned as an expression of her union with him. She dances around the well and sings the story of her love as if it were present. While dancing, she sees her reflection from time to time in the well. Her joy is great when she sees her husband's reflection. But the reflection also shows her sometimes as an old woman. The contrasting feelings of joy and disappointment elevate to a climax. Because of her feelings, the woman dances with abandonment but also with restraint. This dance is one of the most beautiful of the Noh theater. Meanwhile, the monk sits immovable and silent the entire time at the waki place in a corner of the stage, absorbed meditatively in the scene occurring before his eyes. He sees how Ariwara-no-Narihira's wife, already dead for two hundred years, is now performing her love dance. The shite and the chorus take turns singing throughout the entire second scene. The final chorus ends with the words: "In the old temple the wind blows in the pines. The woman disappears. The dream turns to dust, the dawn breaks."

In this Noh play in the style of Mugen-Noh, two roads of time cross each other: the way from the present into the past and the way from the past into the present. The first is the way of the wandering monk as waki or supporting actor. The second is the way of the woman as shite or main actor. In the first scene, the monk remembers the story of the married couple from two hundred years ago. In his case, the memories are the way that leads from the present into the past. Then the woman of the village meets him as a woman of the present. The meeting takes place in the dimension of the everyday present. However, the woman then reveals herself as Ariwara-no-Narihira's wife, the woman who died two hundred years ago. The woman of the village, by revealing herself as the dead wife, brings the past into the present. What we have here is a turning around on the way of time. This turning still takes place in the everyday present of the beginning, although the direction toward the actual crossroads is already constellated.

## The Chronological Crossroads

The two scenes articulate an existential crossing of ways. The shite, the main figure, is a "present body" in the first scene and a "spirit body" in the second scene. Between the first and the second scene there is a transformation of the main figure from present body into spirit body. The datum point of this event is the waki—in this case, the wandering monk—sitting still at his place. He completes for the audience the transformation from the simple present of the play's beginning to the expanded present in the crossroad. Now the main figure, as spirit body, experiences the former events in the present. They are events that became past through her death at that time. This new present of the main figure as spirit body is a present that also includes the present of the play's beginning and simultaneously expands that original present into a more comprehensive present beyond death. What we have here, then, are two contra-rotating and intercrossing chronologies. From death, the quintessence of life reveals itself in direct concentration. In the two hundred years that have passed since the woman's death, all contingencies of her individual life have faded. Thus, the essential meaning of a life can be crystallized that much more clearly and concentrated in an expanded present. A present of this sort, which has been expanded through a crossing of chronologies, can flare up in an instant or be experienced in a dream, waking from which we are led back again to the simple present.

By means of this structure of the Mugen-Noh style, Zeami has succeeded in taking a human life permeated by passions such as love and representing it through death and *beyond* death in a form on the stage that is purer and more complete in itself while beyond time. In the Noh play the way of the monk from the present into the past and the way of the woman from the past into the present cross each other. Thus, a performance of the play becomes an experience of an existential crossroads for the audience.

This concrete example from the Japanese cultural sphere should help to clarify both living-in-the-double-world, which was treated in the first part of this paper, and the crossing of the ways of time where life and death, past and present, this-side and that-side of the horizon are integrated.