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Altered Belonging: The Transnational Modern Dance of Itō Michio

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Tara Rodman

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Abstract

This dissertation, "Altered Belonging: The Transnational Modern Dance of Itō Michio," argues that Itō forged an artistic and social identity out of the very categories of racial and national difference typically used to exclude Japanese from Euro-American society. The strategies he employed provide a paradigm for how performing bodies marked as foreign claim freedom of mobility and a sense of belonging in their adopted communities. Addressing the full span of his career across five decades of performance in Europe, the U.S., and Japan, this dissertation restores the historic and analytic relationships among geographically distinct archives. By uncovering the linkages between his eurythmics training in Hellerau, Germany, his modernist collaborations in London, his nearly three decades dancing in New York and Los Angeles, and his Pan-Asianist activities under Japan's wartime empire, I recover, for instance, how Itō's experience of New York stage Orientalism later shadows his Pan-Asianist planned performances for Imperial Japan, and how the universalist ideals of his Hellerau training resurfaced as an ideology of community dance in Los Angeles. The trans-oceanic linkages thus rendered legible are relevant for understanding not only Itō's career but also the integrated nature of twentieth-century modernism and the strategies by which modern artists refashioned alterity into a basis for creative freedom and freedom of movement.

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Introduction

These days, I am often asked my age, and each time, I respond, 'I am 21.'
'Hunh…!?'
'When I went to Germany I was 19, and from then on, I spent each New Year abroad; since returning to Japan, I have only greeted the New Year twice, and so, this year makes me 21.'[1]

The modern dancer and choreographer Itō Michio includes this exchange in his 1946 *Amerika to Nihon* (America and Japan), a volume published at the beginning of the post-war Allied Occupation of Japan. The book is part memoir, part manual of American culture and lifestyle, trading upon the nearly thirty years that Itō spent abroad, first in Europe, and then in the United States. Itō was born in 1893; his claim then, that he is only twenty-one is more than being a little coy about his age. His reckoning—nineteen years of childhood plus the most recent two—erases the three decades spent abroad. This is a particularly striking lacuna given that the rest of the book is full of anecdotes about his experiences in the US and Europe. In Itō's sleight of counting then, we encounter a primary problem of the transnational, one that is vivified throughout Itō's career: what time counts?

The very terms of Itō's calculation are suggestive of the experience of shifting temporalities that structured his career, as his account evokes the national or local, the regional, and the Western. In the anecdote, his preferred unit of measurement is not a year, but rather, an observance of the New Year, a detail that particularly situates Itō within a regional East Asian conception of time. Traditionally, in China, Korea, and Japan, the New Year was the day on which everyone turned a year older—the celebration of individual birthdays being a Western

[1] Itō Michio. *America and Japan* [Amerika to nihon] (Tokyo: Yakumo Shoten, 1946, 1949), 48.「このごろ、よく私の齢を訊かれるのですが、その度に私は「二十一歳です」と答へるのです。何故ってーー、私がドイツに行ったのは十九歳の時で、それからのお正月は全部外国、日本に帰ってからはまだ二度お正月を迎へただけだから、本年とって二十一歳なんですね。」

custom that only began to be embraced after the war. For Itō, the only birthdays that seem to count are the ones that occur while he is in Japan on the New Year. The anecdote thus implicitly asserts allegiance to Japan and East Asia, in opposition to the time he spent in the West, and a Western method of counting. And yet, the rest of the book in which this exchange appears is filled with accounts of his experiences abroad. Excised from the calculation of his age, the time abroad nevertheless re-appears as personally, and perhaps societally, meaningful recollection. Written in the immediate postwar period, the anecdote illustrates both the politically-inflected oscillation of Itō's geographic allegiances over the course of his career, as well as the broader problem of transnational time.

Itō's itinerary traversed not only multiple geographic locales, but intersected with different communities and institutions, all of which demanded different performances—of self and of artistic expertise. From the Dalcroze Institute in Hellerau, Germany (August 1913 – August 1914), to a collaboration with W. B. Yeats and Ezra Pound in London (spring 1915 – fall 1916), from the emerging modern dance scene in 1920s New York to the Community Arts Movement in 1930s Los Angeles, Itō made his way across Europe and the US, securing membership in a range of artistic and social communities by claiming and performing affiliation and allegiance. His internment in Department of Justice Camps following the bombing of Pearl Harbor inducted him into yet another, albeit forced, community. Repatriated to Japan in 1943, he devoted his energy to his nation's war effort; when, just as suddenly the war ended and the Allied Occupation forces arrived, Itō was ready to produce theatrical entertainments for the occupying foreigners—not so foreign, after all, to him. As Itō moved, from one geographic locale and performance context to another, his desire for membership, his desire to feel an affective sense of belonging, was constantly in tension with his status as a foreign-marked body.

The assertion that he is twenty-one, then, is a sort of narratological strategy that proclaims that the time that matters to him is the time that matters to those whom he is with. It is a performative claiming of presence to address the problem of transnational time.

If our sense of time is constructed out of experiential memory, both personal and communal, then the problem faced by a transnational figure such as Itō is that he is always absent from some other place's experiential time. Having departed, the time he shares with a given community, in a given place, is put on hold. Upon returning, and indeed, upon arriving in any new locale as well, the transnational figure desires to throw himself into the immediacy of a community's local time, and does so by engaging with the shared reference points, conventions, and goals that constitute the community as such. That is, the transnational figure constantly feels the necessity of making himself matter to the community he finds himself in. He does so by constantly writing and re-writing his own biography to afford primacy to his present locale, stitching together a story of self in which what matters is that he is here, now.

And yet, that omission is never an erasure. The time away hangs, caught up in the folds of this re-stitching, a pregnant absence. For the time away is the transnational figure's capital, and he must beckon his audience with his gifts from abroad—the experiences and expertise he has gained while away. This expertise is precisely what makes him valuable to the present locale, but it is also what will end up marking him as an outsider. Itō's odd counting then, can be recognized as a strategy to diminish the distance—both geographic and temporal—that constantly threatens to exclude him from a community.

In this dissertation, I understand Itō as someone constantly negotiating an anxiety of unbelonging, occasioned by his international circulation. While his internationalism was—and continues to be—valorized, it also meant that Itō was repeatedly cast as an outsider. The

contours of this outsider status, visualized in the corporeality of his dancing body, were articulated in terms of racial and national difference, that thereby consistently framed Itō as foreign. As a Japanese subject traveling across the globe in the first half of the twentieth century, foreignness was thus both the premise of his potential exclusion, as well as the foundation of a strategy of performed foreign expertise that provided a basis for him to assert mobility and claim a sense of belonging. I argue that for Itō, the desire to belong—and the anxiety that he would not—manifested in the performative identities of the modernist artist and the cosmopolitan. Elastic terms whose precise meanings shifted in accordance with the changing locations and time periods of his career, Itō's sense of himself as modernist articulated a desire to be recognized as an innovative artist, simultaneously paradigmatic of modern times, and conspicuously ahead of them. The cosmopolitan impulse, meanwhile, expressed an affiliation with people and institutions beyond the nation-state. While Itō's self-conscious modernism always retained somewhat of a Western orientation, as his career unfolded along with geopolitical events, his cosmopolitanism shifted from a European-based universal-internationalist ideal to an increasing identification with Asian regionalism, and even Japanese imperialism. Through these performances and acts of self-invention, Itō made himself matter, asserting meaning and continuity to the transnational itinerary of his career.

* * *

While Itō's career offers a narrative of complex cultural negotiation and performance, its main themes are, in fact, visible in the story of his family background and childhood in Japan. Itō Michio (伊藤道郎) was born April 13, 1893, the eldest surviving son of the architect Itō Tamekichi (為吉) and Itō Kimie, née Iijima (喜美栄、飯島). Not descended from a line of anti-Western samurai, as Itō's disciples and the American press often asserted, his family history was

in fact, paradigmatic of Japan's swift modernization in the latter half of the 19th century. Itō Tamekichi was born in Isematsusaka to a line of doctors. In 1884, he went to San Francisco to study physics and architecture, working as a peddler to feed himself. Itō's father Tamekichi was thus part of the early wave of young Japanese men who traveled to Europe and the United States in the 1880s, bent on absorbing Western modernization and bringing it to Japan. In 1888, Tamekichi returned to Japan, where he specialized in Western architecture, made Western-style furniture, and also worked as a dry cleaner.[2]

According to Michio's younger brother, the director Senda Koreya (千田是也), if claims to samurai blood had any basis in fact, it was through their mother, Kimie. Rumored to be retainers of the clan in Mashūhama, her parents' identities were unknown; the family, however, were certainly members of the elite. Kimie's older brother, Iijima Isao (飯島魁) studied physiology at Tokyo University, the nation's premier institution, and then spent three years studying at Leipzig University. He returned to Japan in 1885, and a year later, became a teacher at the College of Science. That same year, Kimie graduated from Ichihashi Higher Girls School and her brother made sure that she was exposed to the new trends and Western customs that had started to penetrate upper class Japanese life (Senda, 142-3).

Tamekichi and Kimie's meeting represents the family's distinctive engagement with the West, and with westernization in Japan. While in San Francisco, Tamekichi had done work at a convent school, in the process becoming a devoted Christian and taking communion. From then on, his vocation was to build churches. To that end, he regularly attended a bible study class in

[2] The following narrative is drawn from Senda Koreya's correctional afterward included in the Japanese translation of Helen Caldwell's biography. Senda Koreya, "Afterword: Dream and Reality" [Atogaki: yume to genjitsu] in the Japanese version of Helen Caldwell, *Michio Ito: The Dancer and his Dances* [Itō Michio: Hito to geijutsu], trans. Nakagawa Enosuke (Tokyo: Hayakawa Shobō, 1985), 141.

the Komagome neighborhood of Tokyo. No one in the Iijima family was Christian; however, Isao, responsible for finding Kimie a husband, had begun to worry that she was getting beyond marriageable age. One day, Isao saw the Western-style furniture Tamekichi had built; struck by it, he became convinced that Tamekichi would make a good husband for his sister, and so she was sent to the bible study class to meet him. The two married in 1889, when Tamekichi was twenty-four and Kimie twenty-one (143). The couple had nine children together. Although Michio was the third born, the first-born son died a month after birth; Michio therefore filled that role and received special treatment which, in his brother's memory, made him rather spoiled. The children were:

- First-born daughter, Yoshiko (嘉子), 1889.11.11 ~ 1959.11.2, married the army general Furushō Motō (古荘幹郎)
- First-born son, Kōichi (晃一), 1891.1.15~1891.2.25
- Michio, 1893.4.13~1961.11.6
- Tetsue (鉄衛), 1895.6.16~1951.7.10, architect
- Yūji (祐司), 1897.9.14~1963.3.31, musician, stage artist, married the Japanese-American dancer Teiko (テイコ)
- Kisaku (熹朔), 1899.8.1~1967.10.28, stage artist
- Nobuko (暢子), 1902.1.20~1970.10.28, married yōga painter Nakagawa Kazumasa
- Kunio (Senda Koreya) (圀夫、千田是也), 1904.7.15~1994.12.21, actor, director
- Tadao (忠男), 1907.2.12~1907.7.19 (144)

In the 1910s, Tamekichi had an affair with another woman, Tanaka Namiji (田中浪路.) The three resulting children were given the Itō family name:

- Aiko (愛子), 1905.7.7.~1957.7.12, married Bandō Jusaburō the Third (坂東寿三郎), kabuki actor and Japanese music specialist
- Teiryou (貞亮), 1908.8.3~???, architect
- Ousuke (翁介)1911.2.26~ 2009.2.28, guitarist, composer

The architecture profession was uncertain, and Michio's childhood was spent moving from one house to another in accordance with his father's fortunes. The most notable of these homes was an earthquake resistant house Tamekichi designed. The house was located in the Kanda neighborhood of Tokyo, where Michio wandered through old bookstores and hung around *shinpa* theatres (146-8). He was exposed to both the new and the old in theatre; Michio wrote of the formative memory of seeing his mother beautifully dressed up for a *kabuki* performance they attended, her elegance suggestive of the impressiveness of the entire occasion (151).

Michio's childhood was, however, somewhat turbulent. In middle school his relationship with his mother became tempestuous, as she sought to discipline his spoiled nature. In his postscript to Helen Caldwell's book, Senda Koreya writes of episodes in which she burned Michio's violin, and another in which he was pushed into the fire (152). The family moved within Tokyo three times—from Kanda Misakichō to Sendagaya, to Yotsuya's Ushigome Akagi, and back again to Sendagaya. And Michio, an unruly student, was repeatedly kicked out of his schools, cycling through four of them (Keio Private Normal, Kōgyōsha School, a mission school in Nagoya, and another mission school, Aoyama Gakuin) before finally graduating (153).

Throughout his childhood, Michio's musical talent stood out; his mother, however considered such pursuits a waste of time. Around the time of his graduation he played the harmonica in a Christmas performance at the Komagome church, leading the pastor to recommend that Michio study music in serious. Michio's brother-in-law Furushō Motō (古荘幹郎), an army general serving at the embassy in Germany, happened to be visiting at the time and soon invited Michio to stay with him to pursue his musical studies in Germany (157-8). Although Kimie initially protested, once she agreed to the plan, she threw herself into preparing

Michio for the opportunity and determined that he should attend Tokyo Music School in Ueno, Tokyo (東京音楽学校). In order for him to pass the entrance exam, the family purchased a piano and hired the famous Japanese opera soprano Miura Tamaki (三浦環) of *Madama Butterfly* fame, as well as the foreign music teachers Welkmeister and Junger. Michio read *Hedda Gabler* and *When We Dead Awaken* with his German teacher, and met with Chiba Shūho (千葉秀甫), a scholar of German literature who had recently been in Germany and seen numerous theatre performances during his stay. Miura Tamaki also invited Michio, along with Ishii Baku (石井漠), Shimizu Kintarō (清水金太郎), and Komori Toshi (小森敏), to take *nihon buyō* (traditional Japanese dance) lessons from Wakayagi Kichitoyo (若柳吉登代) (159-61).

These preparations offer a sense not only of Michio's training, but also provide a glimpse of how European theatrical texts, forms, and performance professionals circulated through Japan at the beginning of the 20th century. The Japanese government's early support for opera as an appropriate genre for entertaining foreign dignitaries had led to its primacy among imported theatrical forms. But as Michio's reading list and tutorials with Chiba Shūho also evidence, both realist drama and contemporary avant-garde experiments were familiar to the Japanese artistic and academic elite. Meanwhile, the tutorial in *nihon buyō* with other youths who were to become Michio's artistic peers, demonstrates that by the first decade of the 20th century, embrace of Western forms no longer entailed disavowal of Japanese ones. Rather, performance training included both, an openness that shaped this generation of artists' approach to creating modern Japanese performance.

In his late teenage years, Michio also gained stage experience, which cemented his desire to work in performance. In July of 1911, Miura Tamaki left her position at the Tokyo Music

School to join the newly-organized opera section of the Imperial Theatre as a lead actress. Miura secured roles for Michio in a few of the theatre's opera productions. These were *Cavaliera Rusticana* in December 1911, *Yuya* (熊野) in February 1912, and Welkmeister's *Siddhartha* (釈迦) in June 1912. The *Siddhartha* production particularly excited him, with its lavish Indian-style costumes (160). Already then, Michio was exposed to the aesthetics of Oriental performance—the theatrical presentation of an exotic East—and its potential to please audiences, in Japan, and later, in the West. This early production thus simultaneously prefigures what was to become a primary strand in Michio's own performance career, and reminds us of Japan's own Orientalism and racialized hierarchies within Asia.

Just before he left, Michio helped found the *shingeki* troupe Toridesha (とりで社) with friends from the Tokyo Higher Normal School. The group included Murata Minoru (村田実), Kishida Tatsuya (岸田辰弥), and Uno Shirō (宇野四郎). In October of 1912, they put on Maeterlinck's *L'interieur* and Nagata Mikihiko's *The Dancing Girl Dahlia* (舞姫ダリア). Since Michio was preparing to depart, he offered to help with office production work; however his enthusiasm soon led him to recruit his younger brother Kisaku (then in middle school) to make props, and even involved Kimie, as the Itō house became the group's rehearsal space. On October 15th, they gave a trial performance at the Seiyōken in Tsukiji, attended by important figures of Japan's modern theatre movement, such as the translator, critic, and playwright, Tsubouchi Shoyō and the director Osanai Kaoru (161-4). Michio later described the performance as a "youthful effort"—they paired Maeterlinck's story with staging heavily influenced by Edward Gordon Craig, whose theatre essays they had been reading. The group members had also

just seen Hauptmann's *Lonely Lives* and Maeterlinck's *Death of Tintagiles*; they felt their production was an effort to clear similar stylistic ground for Japanese modern theatre.

Michio's Toridesha experience upends common assumptions that his arrival in Europe was the moment of exposure to an entirely new world of modern performance. The group's fluency with the works of modern dramatists and Craig's emerging stage theories reveal the up-to-the-minute familiarity of Japanese artists working in the early 20th century. Indeed, given Michio's clear appreciation for Craig's work, it becomes even less of a surprise that he was subsequently drawn to the Dalcroze Institute, where the *Festspielhaus*, designed by Adolphe Appia, had much in common with Craig's aesthetic of flexible, abstract, and symbolic scenic design. The Toridesha example reveals the vibrancy of the Tokyo modern theatre scene. Michio and his friends were able to experiment with new forms and styles, just as their European counterparts were doing, and could do so with support from the primary figures of the modernization movement in Japanese theatre. And yet, drawn by the excitement and cultural capital of training in Europe, Michio felt compelled to leave. On November 6, 1912, he sailed from Yokohama, landing in Marseilles on December 23, 1912. He arrived in Berlin five days later.

* * *

In 1917, Itō told the *New York Tribune*, "In my dancing it is my desire to bring together the East and the West. My dancing is not Japanese. It is not anything—only myself."[3] Studies devoted to Itō, which have grown in number over the last forty years in both the United States and Japan, have, in general, taken the cue from Itō's own pronouncement and focused on him as a figure of culture fusion. Yet, as this quote suggests, pinning down the constitutive elements and

[3] Harriette Underhill, "Michio Itow," *New York Tribune*, August 19, 1917, C2.

meanings of Itō's cultural blending is a perverse endeavor; in one sentence, he embraces the premise of interculturalism, and in the next, dismisses these constructions in a declaration of total singularity. In the face of such mutability, studies of Itō tend to focus on one half of the equation or the other, focusing either on the putative presence of an "East" and a "West" in his work, or on his individual genius. Not surprisingly, tracing the scholarship on Itō also reveals a historiography reflective of broader trends in cultural studies: early efforts to reclaim his place in the modernist and modern dance canon have shifted to interrogations of how race and ethnicity shaped his career.

The first biography of Itō in either language was written in 1977 by Helen Caldwell, one of his California students. This book provides important documentation of his dance technique and shares some of the stories and motivations behind his dance pieces.[4] Based, however, on Itō's own self-narratives, it is riddled with inaccuracies resulting from Itō's penchant to embellish. The Japanese translation of Caldwell's work, published in 1985, includes a postscript written by Itō's brother Senda Koreya, which corrects many of these fabrications. Caldwell's analysis of Itō's choreography attempts to identify certain elements, such as the grounded nature of his choreography, as Japanese, and others, such as his musical selections, as Western. At the same time, Caldwell venerates Itō as a singular genius whose artistic creativity was truncated by the war. In her reading, Itō's interculturalism (of a static East *and* West) is dismantled by nationalism, resulting in his erasure from the modern dance canon.

The trope of East and West continues in the next wave of scholarship on Itō. Mary-Jean Cowell, who studied Itō's method and choreography with Satoru Shimazaki (who was a student

[4] Helen Caldwell, *Michio Ito: The Dancer and his Dances* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); *Itō Michio: hito to geijutsu*, trans. Nakagawa Enosuke (Tokyo: Hayakawa Shobō, 1985).

of Ryuki Maki, who was, herself, a student of Itō's), places Itō's choreography in context with other early modern dance contemporaries, identifying both corporeal and ideological overlap with the Dalcroze method of Eurythmics, as well as Isadora Duncan and Ruth St. Denis.[5] While Cowell identifies the elements of Itō's choreography that she believes derive from Japanese tradition, she simultaneously critiques the tendency of Itō's spectators to interpret all of his work as "Oriental." Meanwhile, Takeishi Midori's careful research—particularly valuable for her attention to Itō's musical accompaniment—traces the rise of Japanese elements in Itō's early work.[6] Focusing on the collaborative activities involving Itō and a cast of other modernists, Takeishi identifies the likely Japanese sources for the imaginative work of this coterie (which included W.B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, Gustav Holst, Charles Ricketts, Edmund Dulac, Alvin Langdon Coburn, and Charles Griffes), and argues that the syncretic desire propelling these artists' work is central to modernism more broadly. A third important early excavation of Itō's work was carried out by Naima Prevots, in her monograph on modern dance in Hollywood.[7] In tandem with Takeishi, Prevots' documentation of Itō's activities in Los Angeles, and in particular, her work contextualizing his activities within the community arts movement, has been important for establishing the details of Itō's influence and career narrative. However, she similarly reads Itō's work as a fusion of East and West, and in particular locates Itō's value to the Los Angeles arts community in his ability to introduce "authentic" Japanese performance forms

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[5] Mary-Jean Cowell, with Shimazaki Satoru, "East and West in the Work of Michio Ito," *Dance Research Journal* 26 (October 1994): 11-23.

[6] Takeishi Midori, *Itō Michio's Japanese Dance* [*Itō Michio no Nihonteki Buyou*] *Tokyo Ongaku Daigaku Kenkyū Kiyō* 24 (2000); Takeishi Midori, *Japanese Elements in Michio Ito's Early Period (1915-1924): Meetings of East and West in the Collaborative Works,* ed. and rev. David Pacun (Tokyo: Gendaitosho, 2006).

[7] Naima Prevots, *Dancing in the Sun: Hollywood Choreographers, 1915-1937* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1987).

to local audiences. Cowell, Takeishi, and Prevots's earliest treatments of Itō thus provide a great deal of concrete research and analysis that have served as the foundation for subsequent studies. In relying upon an East-West formulation, however, all three, like Caldwell, ultimately see in Itō an optimistic instantiation of a syncretic intercultural ideal, pointing to his artistic genius as what enabled him simultaneously to synthesize two cultures, and also to transcend them as an incomparable individual.

Japanese scholarship has been overall less concerned with the East-West paradigm. As in English-language scholarship, interest in Itō initially focused on his collaboration with Yeats and Pound, and then his training at the Dalcroze Institute. For instance, Nakadate Eiko has researched the Dalcrozian basis of Itō's dance ideology, along with the ways in which through Itō's work, dance teachers of the Dalcroze method in Japan have had an artistic basis for their work.[8] Japanese-language scholarship has also addressed other parts of his career. Tōjō Ai has examined Itō's work in New York and in California, in two articles. In California, Tōjō finds that the popular concepts of "community" and "outdoors theatre" made Los Angeles appear as a utopia to Itō, echoing his experience at Hellerau.[9] In a 2005 article, Kuritsubo Yoshiki notes the split in knowledge of Itō—in Japan he became known for his work with fashion models, beauty contests, and for the Olympics, while in the West, he remained famous for his work as a choreographer.[10] Kuritsubo sees this split as resonant with the split occasioned by war as well,

[8] Nakadate Eiko, "Music and Movement (3) Itō Michio who learned Dalcroze and Reconstruction of the '20 Gestures' of the Dalcroze Method" [Ongaku to ugoki (3) E.J. Dalcroze ni mananda buyōka Itō Michio to Darukurozu mesodo '20 no zesucha' no fukugen], *Research Bulletin, Kunitachi College of Music* 28 (1993).

[9] Tōjō Ai, "Itō Michio's California—Michio and Community Theatre" [Karoforunia no Itō Michio—Michio to komyunite shiata], *Bungei Kenkyū* 92 (2004).

[10] Kuritsubo Yoshiki, "Itō Michio—War and the Dance Artist" [Itō Michio—sensō to buyō geijutsuka], *International Literature*, 50:1 (2005).

suggesting that for Itō, "artist" and "war" were mutually exclusive states. Fujita Fujio's 2007 popular biography, *Itō Michio, Dancing through the World, Aiming at a Theatre of the Sun,* was the first comprehensive and accurate treatment of Itō in either Japanese or English.[11] Aimed at a wide readership, Fujita emphasizes Itō's enduring optimism, presenting him as a figure devoted to peaceful art, despite, or even because of the significance of war in his lifetime.

The most recent wave of Itō scholarship in English has analyzed his work with greater attention to the constraints of racialization upon his career and identity. These studies attend to the necessity Itō faced of capitulating to Orientalist stereotypes and of incorporating them into his work. In her second article on him, Cowell thoroughly investigates Itō's activity in Hollywood films, arguing that his experience in Hollywood, where he was repeatedly cast in Orientalist stereotypes, ran counter to his universalist ideals.[12] It is for this reason, she suggests, that his film work has been entirely ignored, even in his own autobiographical narratives. Building on this work, Carrie Preston has argued that the overwhelming scholarly attention to Itō's solos as the vehicle for restoring him to the modernist canon is due to the fact that those works are more easily cast as "*good* choreographies of 'multiculturalism' or 'transnationalism' rather than *bad* exoticism or orientalism."[13] Instead, in her articles and book chapter on him, Preston argues that Itō's dancing and career, constrained by categories of race, reveal the limits of modern dance's ideology of naturalness and freedom. She contends that a transnational

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[11] Fujita Fujio, *Itō Michio, Dancing through the World, Aiming at a Theatre of the Sun* [Itō Michio sekai wo mau, taiyō no gekijō wo mezashite], (Tokyo: Shinpūsha, 2007).

[12] Cowell, "Michio Ito in Hollywood: Modes and Ironies of Ethnicity," *Dance Chronicle* 24 (January 2001).

[13] Carrie J. Preston, "Michio Ito's Shadow: Searching for the Transnational in Solo Dance," in *On Stage Alone: Soloists and the Modern Dance Canon,* eds. Claudia Gitelman and Barbara Palfy (Gainseville: University Press of Florida, 2012): 7-30; "Modernism's Dancing Marionettes: Oskar Schlemmer, Michel Fokine, and Ito Michio," *Modernist Cultures* 9.1 (2014); *Learning to Kneel: Noh, Modernism, and Journeys in Teaching* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016).

approach focused on his collaborative and theatrical activities enables us to recognize that his Orientalist activities were also, and perhaps better, examples of his efforts at cultural syncretism. Including Itō in her study of the intertwining of Japanese *noh* and modernism, Preston characterizes him as yet another student of *noh*, a formulation that both puts to rest earlier assumptions about his expertise in the genre (next to none) and highlights the complicated cultural and identificatory redefinition that occurred as Itō embraced Japanese performance traditions via Western japonisme. The focus of the imbrication of race in Itō's performance and persona continues in Kevin Riordan's article on Itō's enemy alien trial at the hearing board in February 1942.[14] He argues that it was Itō's "artistic temperament"—enunciated in shades of internationalism (his performance styles, travel, and bearing)—that led to his incarceration. For Riordan, Itō's artistic persona suggested to his interrogators a fundamentally unreliable and disloyal character. Together, these studies have helped to trouble earlier positive readings of Itō's internationalism, highlighting how ethnic stereotypes, scholarly discourse about interculturalism, and the history of internment reveal the constraints of both Itō's career and of scholarship on him.

The studies of Cowell, Preston, and Riordan have thus demonstrated how Itō's career was circumscribed by racism, despite (or, indeed, because of) his lauded internationalism. Nevertheless, they miss the fact that Orientalism was not a genre that Itō suddenly encountered upon arriving in the West. Instead, he grew up already inculcated in Japan's own nationalist Orientalism, a key feature of its imperial ambitions. Among many examples, one might point to Itō's participation in the opera *Siddhartha* at the Imperial Theatre, as described above. The

[14] Kevin Riordan, "Performance in the Wartime Archive: Michio Ito at the Alien Enemy Hearing Board," *American Studies*, forthcoming.

narratives, design, and structuring gaze of Orientalism were thus quite familiar to Itō, and indeed, were central to his sense of what it meant to be Japanese—a citizen of the Asian nation that had not been colonized by the West.

Carol Sorgenfrei is the scholar who has engaged with the implications of Itō's position as a Japanese artist in the years leading up to World War II.[15] Sorgenfrei, a specialist in Japanese theatre, importantly reminds readers that in coming from Japan, Itō was already steeped in an atmosphere of transculturation, as cultural adoption and adaptation (both inter-Asian and Western) were central to Japan's cultural and historic formation. Sorgenfrei's study is also significant for introducing the matter of Japan's own imperialism into Itō scholarship. She argues that during his time in the West, Itō's embrace of Western culture and aesthetics transformed into a valorization of Japanese uniqueness, informed by the "mixed nation theory," which attributed Japanese superiority to a characterization of the nation as made up of multiple ethnic peoples. As Sorgenfrei notes, especially under the efforts of figures such as Okakura Tenshin (Kakuzō), this theory placed Japan at the center of a universalism that could also encompass, and entice, the West, a perspective she calls "Japan-centrism." Sorgenfrei argues that Itō's choreography eventually asserted a dynamic universalism for Japanese bodies that Western dancers could not embody, a "strategic unweaving," that suggested Japanese superiority and Japanese aesthetic fascism.

Like Sorgenfrei, Yutian Wong has disrupted the usual frames used to understand Itō's career, but does so from an Asian American Studies perspective.[16] In her essay, Wong takes aim

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[15] Carol Sorgenfrei, "Strategic Unweaving: Ito Michio and the Diasporic Dancing Body," in *The Politics of Interweaving Performance Cultures: Beyond Postcolonialism*, eds., Erika Fischer-Lichte, Torsten Jost, and Saskya Iris Jain (New York: Routledge, 2014).

[16] Yutian Wong, "Artistic Utopias: Michio Ito and the Trope of the International," in *Worlding Dance*, ed. Susan Leigh Foster (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

at the characterization of Itō as an "international artist," uncovering the ways in which such a term—both during his lifetime and in current scholarship, serves both to highlight his supposed ability to transcend the limits of racialization, but also to cast him as an anomalous figure outside of mainstream national narratives. The unacknowledged workings of racialization, Wong argues, are responsible for Itō's erasure from the American modern dance canon; she proposes, instead a counter-"centralizing move" of situating Itō within Asian American history. This positioning would more effectively account for Itō's historiographic erasure, given the literal removal of Japanese and Japanese Americans into detention and internment camps.

While scholarly attention to Itō has thus expanded over the last few decades into a field of rich investigation, his name also appears in studies devoted to Yeats, Pound, and their 1916 collaboration, *At the Hawk's Well.* The majority of these studies consider Itō only briefly, as a sort of providential figure who unlocked the secrets of the East for the poets, and whose dance left an evocative impression. Working from this literary perspective, yet giving Itō some of his due, Mary Fleischer devotes a significant portion of her chapter on Yeats to his collaboration with Itō, examining how Itō's rhythmic dancing concorded with Yeats' poetry.[17] More recently, David Ewick has done the most (after Senda Koreya himself) to correct and fill in the inaccuracies and puzzles that plague narratives of Itō's period in London.[18] In tracing the identities and activities of the two friends whom Itō brought along for the demonstration of *noh* in Pound's flat, Ewick establishes the rich modernist engagement and productivity of Japanese artists who spent time abroad in Europe, countering characterizations of these men as derivative

[17] Mary Fleischer, *Embodied Texts: Symbolist Playwright-Dancer Collaborations* (New York: Rodopi, 2007).

[18] David Ewick, "Notes Toward a Cultural History of Japanese Modernism in Modernist Europe, 1910-1920, with special reference to Kōri Torahiko," *The Hemingway Review of Japan* 13 (2012).

or peripheral. Along with Dorsey Kleitz, Ewick has also edited a translation of Itō's 1955 "*Omoide wo kataru*" lecture given at Tokyo Woman's Christian University. With its exhaustive footnotes, this publication represents the first reliable translation into English of one of Itō's autobiographies.[19]

This dissertation engages most directly with the work of Sorgenfrei and Wong, in particular, by thinking through the multiple significations of Itō's Japaneseness. In line with Sorgenfrei, I emphasize the significance of Japan's imperialism to Itō's work and career. While I do not see in his choreography distinctions made for Japanese and White dancers, nor hints of fascist aesthetics, I do chart an increasing engagement with Japan and Japaneseness, understood as a force to counter-balance the West. Where Sorgenfrei ultimately points to what she calls Japan-centrism (or, a proto-*Nihonjinron*) as the outcome of Itō's cultural negotiations, I see the ideology of Pan-Asianism (itself a deeply problematic, but also utopian phenomenon) as central to Itō's engagement with Japan and Orientalism. Since Wong's essay, other scholars have declined or ignored her invitation to see Itō as a figure of Asian American history, citing Wong's own assertion that the Japanese American community viewed him with suspicion. In fact, my research has revealed that Itō was deeply engaged with the Japanese American community in Los Angeles, as a teacher, choreographer, and community leader, particularly invested in trying integrate Nisei youth into the White cultural mainstream. In locating Itō within both of these histories and fields of study—the Japanese and the Japanese American—this project coheres

[19] David Ewick and Dorsey Kleitz, eds., "'Lacking the gasometer penny': Michio Itō's Reminiscences of Ezra Pound, W.B. Yeats, and Other Matters: A Translation and Critical Edition of 'Omoide wo kataru'," forthcoming.

with recent calls to recognize the productive connections between the disciplines of Asian Studies and Asian American studies.[20]

Itō's case, I argue, reveals a continuity between a modernist cosmopolitan universalism and expressions of the ultra-national, a continuity that is visible not only in his own works and writings, but in the various reception communities that coalesced around his performance events. In attending to this continuity, I work between the fields of transnational and cosmopolitan studies, and nation-based histories, showing the reach of national identities and communities far beyond the borders of the nation-state, as well as the broad similarity and complicity among US, British, and Japanese imperialisms in the early 20th century. I point to the modern and the cosmopolitan as the two aspirational identities that shaped Itō's performance of self, and informed the ways in which he navigated the experiences of travel, and how he understood the forces of nationalism and imperialism structuring that travel.

As I will argue, being modern for Itō meant carrying out a doubled performance, one in which he was always performing for two audiences—one at home, and one abroad (though which was which, of course, shifted throughout his career). This doubled performance evokes other theories of modernity's doubles—for instance, Watsuji Tetsurō's "double life" (*nijū seikatsu*), as well as W. E. B. Du Bois's "double consciousness."[21] For the Taisho-era philosopher Watsuji, the jarring collision of the new—experienced in the demands of capitalist

[20] See, for instance, Tina Chen and Eric Hayot, eds., "Introducing *Verge*: What Does It Mean to Study Global Asias?" *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* 1:1 (Spring 2015); Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Takashi Fujitani, *Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans during World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

[21] We might think, as well, of Walter Benjamin's dialectical image.

markets and a reorganization of social life, did not erase the past.[22] Rather, traditional forms, recalling especially an idealized folk experience, continually rose up as part of everyday modern life, in an experiential palimpsest. For Watsuji, this double life—and awareness of the experience of it—was evidence that the past and present co-existed; modernity was thus not a rupture, but a deepening of the available layers of Japan's time. In yet another model of the trope of the double in modern Japan, J. Keith Vincent argues for a "two timing" phenomenon in many Meiji era texts that depict, or register male homosocial desire.[23] In this case, as Vincent explains, male homoeroticism was preserved in the past "as something precious and worthy of remembrance," a preservation that also served as a "quarantine," cutting off such homoeroticism from the present. While for Watsuji, the double life explained how the past remained continually present in everyday Japanese modern life, and for Vincent, the past "persist[s] in the amber of memory," in both accounts, the experience of doubling in Japanese modernity is a temporal phenomenon. By contrast, the doubled performance of modernism I identify in Itō is primarily spatial.

There is overlap, as well, with W. E. B. Du Bois's "double-consciousness."[24] Indeed, in the first pages of *Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois turns to the metaphor of the audience to describe the "black man's … contradiction of double aims," pointing to the different performances required of the Negro in US society. In Du Bois, this necessity of pleasing two audiences results in an internalized "twoness," or double-consciousness, that he explains as the "sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others." Further, the sense of "measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity," as Du Bois continues, evokes

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[22] Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[23] J. Vincent Keith, *Two-Timing Modernity: Homosocial Narrative in Modern Japanese Fiction* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012).

[24] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Dover, 1994), 2.

some element of the modernist striving that was central to the world Itō grew up in. We might think of the experiments of the Tsukiji Little Theatre, where Osanai Kaoru and Hijikata Yoshi endeavored to lay the groundwork for a modern theatre in Japan by declaring that only works by foreign writers would be produced. This incident, so painful in the history of Japanese modern drama, is emblematic of much of the history of Japan's modernization, in which proving Japan's modernity was a matter of convincing foreigners of this status, rather than, or by way of, proving it to Japanese themselves.

For Itō, however, these audiences are not metaphorical but rather, are quite literally the reception communities at which he directed his performances. The presence of these dual audiences first emerges clearly in Itō's participation in the 1916 *At the Hawk's Well*. I show that rather than being merely a providential figure of japoniste inspiration, Itō came to the project with his own agenda—that of helping to develop the Dance Poem movement, which was the first modern dance movement in Japan. Itō's hawk dance served two different modernisms, each with its own linguistic-national trajectory. Important here is that Itō's dance is the same; he does not offer a different performance for each audience, but rather, it is the meanings and contours of intelligibility that differ. Moreover, although in the *At the Hawk's Well* project the two intended audiences are located on distant continents, later instantiations of this phenomenon see the doubled audience seated together, as in Itō's performances at the Hollywood Bowl, for both white arts patrons and members of the Japanese American community, and again in Mexico City, for the mainstream Mexican cultural elite as well as for Japanese Mexican spectators. Central to Itō's modernist double performance then, is the formation of national identity occasioned by his stage appearances. While so many of his spectators represented similar transnational narratives

or cosmopolitan affiliations, their embrace of Itō frequently served to assert that cosmopolitan identity as a form of national belonging.

The doubled glance of Itō's experience also coheres with Tina Chen's concept of the Asian American subject's expression of a "double agency," which is not a "compromised loyalty" but rather, a state of "multiple allegiances" occasioned by the always-already established assumption of foreignness.[25] Chen proposes the process of "impersonation"—the performative enactment of an assigned public identity—as the manifestation of this doubledness. For Itō, the question of foreignness (and ultimately, loyalty) was one that framed his public appearances in every site of performance, even at home in Japan. Chen's concept of impersonation, however, is particularly apt for understanding Itō's navigation of Western (US) performance expectations, which necessitated his impersonation of a japoniste, as well as a more generally Oriental, persona in order to claim a place for himself within New York's emerging modern dance scene. Indeed, Itō's engagement with cultural Orientalism, familiar to him from his childhood in Japan, was unavoidable due to his interpellation abroad as an "Oriental." The terms of Itō's being modern thus played out through his acts of impersonation, in which his identification and identity as Japanese and Oriental established the grounds upon which his recognition as a modernist was possible.

Itō's longing to be modern was a desire for a status only just coming into being. In Germany, the innovations in dance carried out by Rudolf von Laban, Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, and Mary Wigman were already described as "der moderne Tanz" by the time Itō arrived there. In the US, however, the term, "modern dance," as a deliberate appellation for the movement of

[25] Tina Chen, *Double Agency: Acts of Impersonation in Asian American Literature and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), xviii.

increasingly abstract dance expression, only appeared in the early 1930s, with John Martin's 1931-2 lecture series at the New School, which were collected and published in 1933 under the title *The Modern Dance*.[26] Prior to 1930, "modern dance" referred to jazz; the experiments of early concert dancers were presented under the rubric, "the Art of the Dance," a term that Itō used as well, in both English and Japanese. Similar shifts in terminology occurred in Japan around the same moment, as the earlier *kindai* (modern), which suggested the lifestyle of a new materialist culture, was replaced by *mōdan*, a loan-word that registered the Americanization of modern life (both in Japan as well as Europe), and a self-conscious performance of a modern persona.[27] The *moga* (modern girl) and her *mobo* (modern boy) counterpart, strolling down the Ginza, were the representatives of this phenomenon, alternately admired or dismissed, depending on cultural critics' point of view. Itō embraced these figures; one school friend, the Takarazuka director Kishida Tatsuya recalled in 1931 that since Itō went around referring to his parents as a "mobo" and "moga," he seemed a bit affected.[28] Kishida's memory here, however, involves a striking anachronism. Miriam Silverberg has traced the emergence of the *moga* to the chaotic aftermath of the 1923 Kanto earthquake. By that time, however, Itō had already been abroad for nearly a decade. Kishida's recollection then, of Itō as a "high collar modern boy" partakes of the modernist gesture, by recharacterizing his old school-mate as modernist *avant la lettre*.

Key to understanding Itō's modernist longing, then, is the recognition that the concept itself was in flux, a globalized cultural movement whose emergence offered Itō the chance to insert himself—both in actuality and in his embellished memoirs—into its founding moments.

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[26] John Martin, *The Modern Dance* (New York: A.S. Barnes, 1933).

[27] See Miriam Silverberg on these two terms and their relationship to modern mass culture in Japan. *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

[28] Senda Koreya, "Atogaki," 150.

As an earlier wave of Itō scholarship has demonstrated, Itō was, in fact, an important figure for the development of various strands of artistic modernism, including Anglophone poetic experimentation, US modern dance, and, as I will demonstrate, Japanese modern dance. But more striking is the self-consciousness of his activity (self-consciousness itself being a typical characteristic of modernism), in which the strength of his yearning and anxiety at being left out propelled his artistic work, as he attempted to choreograph himself into modernist history.

Itō's modernist longing intertwined with his embrace of a cosmopolitan identity. I turn to cosmopolitanism not only as a useful theoretical approach for analyzing elements of Itō's career, but also, like modern, as an identity that he self-consciously embraced and cultivated. Drawing upon the recent wave of studies that have reinvigorated and redefined the field, I understand cosmopolitanism as forms of both normative and actual affiliations with institutions beyond the nation-state. I follow especially Pheng Cheah's attention to the tension between normative and actual, or lived cosmopolitanisms.[29] In Cheah's work, the normative concept of cosmopolitanism will remain "an intellectual ethos of a select clerisy" unless (or until) the limited and elite institutions of cosmopolitanism can "be in a relation of mutual feedback with a global political consciousness that voices the universal interests of humanity and tries to maximize human freedom."[30] For Cheah, this mass-based consciousness would be what he terms the "cosmopolitical." Focusing on Itō alone, my interest in the cosmopolitan is far more limited, and frankly, given Itō's family background and associates, elite. However, Cheah's theorization

[29] Pheng Cheah, "The Cosmopolitical," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Cosmopolitanism,* eds. Maria Rovisco and Magdalena Nowicka. (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011): 211-224; see also Cheah and Bruce Robbins, eds., *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998); Cheah, *Spectral Nationality: Passages of Freedom from Kant to Postcolonial Literatures of Liberation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

[30] Cheah, "The Cosmopolitical," 211.

helpfully provides an articulation of the two strands of cosmopolitanism; this dissertation reads Itō's career and persona as a set of performances that oscillated between the normative and the actual. Itō's cosmopolitan ideals fueled and shaped his actual negotiations of the different communities he encountered, and these experiences, in turn, helped to mold the continuing force of those ideals.

During his childhood in Japan, growing up in a family that was decidedly engaged with the West, Itō absorbed both a form of "lived cosmopolitanism," as well as a set of expectations about the value of a cosmopolitan attitude and way of life. It was Itō's early experience in Hellerau, however, that established a normative cosmopolitanism that undergirded the rest of his career. Although, as will be detailed in Chapter 1, the Dalcroze Institute's political and financial backing was secured under the explicitly nationalist expectation that the Eurythmic method would improve the productivity of German manufacturing, the atmosphere of the Institute was markedly international, drawing students from across Europe and the US. For the teachers, students, artists, and intellectuals who flocked to Hellerau, the Dalcroze Institute seemed to represent the promise of art as a universal force that might overcome national divisions on the eve of World War I. For Itō, the experience of international camaraderie, and its sudden rupture, was, perhaps, the primal scene of his youth; we might read the rest of his career as a series of efforts to restore the sense of international community that had given him such joy at the Dalcroze Institute.

Again and again, Itō sought to recreate his Hellerau experience by affiliating himself with communities that held internationalism as a positive value and by performing an embodied worldliness, through both his choreography and public persona. As he did so, Itō himself became a figure of cosmopolitanism for the various reception communities he engaged. For instance,

during the 1930s, when he was based in Los Angeles, Itō became a pivotal figure for both the white arts community as well as the Japanese American community; for each group, Itō's oscillating internationalism, as both a local artist as well as a figure from far-away Japan, served as an articulation of their own desired values and projected identities. Similarly, in the decade prior, when Itō lived in New York, his performances in the genre of Oriental dance were understand as a sort of embodied cosmopolitanism. Years later, once he had been repatriated to Japan during World War II, this earlier practice of Oriental dance was a lived experience that informed his embrace of the ideology of Pan-Asianism as a form of Eastern cosmopolitanism. Over the course of his career, then, the original cosmopolitan ideals of his Hellerau experience transformed to meet the particular socio-political realities of each place and period. The thread of this cosmopolitan identity thus provided a sense of personal continuity even, and especially, as he engaged with nationalist communities and institutions.

That I highlight the adaptability of Itō's cosmopolitan stance might be taken as an optimistic valorization of Itō's international existence; instead, this project dwells upon the loneliness and feelings of conspicuousness of being a foreigner. As Cheah observes, "cosmopolitan" appears in Diderot and D'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*. In D'Alembert's definition, the term indicates a "citizen of the universe," "a man who is nowhere a stranger."[31] This means that the popular view of cosmopolitanism as "an elite form of rootlessness and a state of detachment and nomadic non-belonging is mistaken." It was to this ideal that Itō aspired. And yet, as Cheah continues, it is Kant's articulation of cosmopolitanism that has grounded philosophical theories of the concept. What Kant refers to in his "Perpetual Peace" essay is a cosmopolitan right pertaining to a federation of states, rather than individual citizens; it is

[31] Cheah, "The Cosmopolitical," 212.

intended to bring about peace so that states can focus on cultural education rather than the waste of war. For Kant, then, the cosmopolitan right is limited to the expectation of hospitality. That is, the cosmopolitan is, and must always remain, a guest.[32] We might then, understand Itō's cosmopolitanism as a haunting of the D'Alembertian former by the Kantian latter. For Itō's desire to experience a sense of belonging was continually menaced by an anxiety of unbelonging. As he traveled, Itō's race, nationality, and corporeal performances were both his means of entry, as well as the grounds of his exclusion. Physical difference, vivified on stage and in his daily life, marked him as a guest, welcome always, and only, as a foreigner.

I refer to Itō, in this title of this dissertation and elsewhere, as a "transnational" figure.[33] I use the term less as a descriptor of Itō himself than as a methodology for mapping his career and

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[32] Interestingly, the contingency of being a guest is demonstrated in "Perpetual Peace" via the example of China and Japan. After a passage discussing European oppression and violence inflicted upon other countries and peoples—for Europeans, Kant writes, "visiting" and "conquering" are the same, he observes that "China and Japan (Nippon), having had experience of such guests, have wisely placed restrictions on them." Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch," in *Kant: Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss, trans. H.B. Nisbet (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 106-7.

[33] In turning to "cosmopolitan" and "transnational" as terms of analysis, I have set aside one other: "interculturalism." As Rustom Bharucha has most forcefully argued, interculturalism in the theatre—represented most clearly first by productions by Peter Brook and Ariane Mnouchkine, and then by the scholarship defending these productions, authored by Patrice Pavis and Erika Fischer-Lichte, among others—has too often uncritically reflected the hierarchies of power that structure geopolitical inequality, failing to ask not just, "does this 'work'?" but "is it right?" (Bharucha, 2) As an artistic and theoretical term, interculturalism arose from, and almost always has described cultural encounters between "East" and "West." Attempts to right the "intercultural wars" as Ric Knowles has termed this scholarly debate, and to reframe the term to account for power disparities, have been made by Fischer-Lichte, Bonnie Marranca and Gautam Dasgupta, Julie Holledge and Joanne Tompkins, Helen Gilbert and Jaqueline Lo, Una Chaudhuri, and Daphne Lei. Most recently, Leo Cabranes-Grant has proposed employing a concept of interculturalism as a continual process of hybridity. Transferred to the area of Latin American Studies, the term may take on new life, but in this study of Itō, I have generally eschewed it.

Rustom Bharucha, *The Politics of Cultural Practice: Thinking Through Theatre in an Age of Globalization* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, for Wesleyan University Press, 2000); Patrice Pavis, ed., *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Show and the Gaze of Theatre: A European Perspective* (Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 1997); and ed., *The Politics of Interweaving Performance Cultures: Beyond Postcolonialism* (New York: Routledge, 2014); Ric Knowles, *Theatre & Interculturalism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Bonnie Marranca and Gautam Dasgupta, eds., *Interculturalism & Performance: Writings from PAJ* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1991); Julie Holledge and Joanne Tompkins, *Women's Intercultural*

understanding its significance. The term has frequently been employed as a sort of description of globalized co-incidence, to mean something like, "appearing in many places across the world." Instead, with attention on the mapping of transmission and development—of individuals, aesthetics, ideologies, and practices, I understand the transnational as a particular way of tracing genealogies of performance. In this study, the transnational works as the tracing of the *dragging* of the international from one national context into another. My use of the term thus draws upon the work of Aihwa Ong, and indeed, Itō should be understood as one of Ong's "flexible subjects."[34] However, in my usage, the transnational resonates with the particular rewards of pursuing a single-person study, resonating with the work by Daisuke Miyao on Sessue Hayakawa and Liang Luo on Tian Han, among others.[35] As will be revealed, it is only by tracing Itō's itinerary across numerous national, linguistic, and aesthetic borders that the overlap of both geopolitical and cultural formations become clear. For instance, the space that is "Asia" and the space that is the "US," while seemingly distinct, are seen to intertwine and lap at each other even before their co-existence on Japanese soil during the post-war Allied Occupation. Moreover, a

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Performance (New York: Routledge, 2000); Helen Gilbert and Jacqueline Lo, *Performance and Cosmopolitics: Cross-Cultural Transactions in Australiasia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Una Chaudhuri, "The Future of the Hyphen: Interculturalism, Textuality, and the Difference Within," in *Interculturalism and Performance: Writings from the PAJ*, eds. Bonnie Marranca and Gautam Dasgupta (New York: PAJ Publications, 1991); Daphne Lei, *Alternative Chinese Opera in the Age of Globalization: Performing Zero* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Leo Cabranes-Grant, *From Scenarios to Networks: Performing the Intercultural in Colonial Mexico* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2016).

[34] Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999). See also, Donald Pease, "Introduction: Re-Framing the Transnational Turn in American Studies," in *Re-Mapping the Transnational*, eds. Winfried Fluck, Donald Pease, and John Carlos Rowe (Hanover: Dartmouth College Press, 2011).

[35] Daisuke Miyao, *Sessue Hayakawa: Silent Cinema and Transnational Stardom* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Liang Luo, *The Avant-Garde and the Popular in Modern China: Tian Han and the Intersection of Performance and Politics* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2014).

single-person study such as this one emplots the transnational as a narrative that is as much about absences and unrealized projects as it is about presence and production.

My account of Itō employs not only the archival and embodied traces of his performances, found in newspaper reviews, photographs, and dance reconstructions, but also turns to his personal notebooks and other writings to investigate the dances, productions, and utopian projects he planned, but never realized. Including these projects as part of Itō's corpus reveals generic echoes and aesthetic borrowings that render legible the transnational circuits of performance practices. For example, in Chapter 4, I show that Itō's unrealized plans for a pageant history festival in the Philippines during the Pacific War drew upon the numerous earlier experiences Itō had with the pageant form. It is only by attending to his wartime venture, however, that the earlier exposures come into focus as meaningful encounters. Thus, while we are accustomed to thinking of the transnational as a positivist mapping of presence, Itō's example suggests that the transnational ought to be understood as a way of glimpsing absence, the incomplete, and the unachieved.

* * *

This dissertation proceeds chronologically, and at quick glance, the chapters seem to divide according to the rhythms of Itō's itinerary. In fact, each chapter coalesces around a particular theme and highlights a specific choreographic work. Just as Itō's repertoire remained fairly stable across his career, and yet took on different meanings depending on the audience, the questions of racialization, nationalism, belonging and unbelonging, while formulated differently in each chapter, persisted across Itō's life. I identify three paradigms of performed ideology that percolate in his career and acts of self-narrative: Japanese exceptionalism, Orientalist-Nationalist Pan-Asianism, and global modernist cosmopolitanism. In Itō's work and writings, there is

significant slippage among these three paradigms; indeed, this slipperiness is what enabled Itō to move between multiple reception communities, and to assert a sense of continuity in his work. I trace these formations across three ongoing fields of analysis: Itō's choreography, his self-promotion/biography, and his reception. Moving among these strands, which together constitute Itō's career, I reveal the linkages between seemingly distant temporal and geographic sites, showing modernist performance culture to be an always-already imbricated phenomenon, rather than the occurrence of singular and momentary encounters.

Chapter One focuses on Itō's period in Europe. At the Dalcroze Institute for Eurythmics in Hellerau, Germany, Itō stood out as the only "Oriental" student. I argue that, by learning to capitalize on his racial uniqueness, and embracing the Dalcroze method of Eurythmics as the basis for his own dance technique, Itō found a way to integrate himself into the modernist community. I examine his London collaboration with W.B. Yeats and Ezra Pound on the 1916 dance drama, *At the Hawk's Well*, showing that Itō came to the project with his own agenda—that of helping to build the Dance Poem movement (the first modern dance movement in Japan). These first years in Europe were foundational to Itō's career, resulting in the basis of his dance technique, the most famous of his collaborations, and the ability to deploy his Japaneseness as a mark of exceptionalism and thus as a claim to inclusion in these modernist communities.

Following Itō's move to New York in the fall of 1916, Chapter Two is grounded in Tina Chen's concept of Asian American impersonation. I argue that Itō's reception, informed by the already-established discourse of Japanese aestheticism, necessitated his embrace of a japoniste persona, a performance which, however, seemed to overlap with his ethnically-marked Japanese body. This japoniste impersonation, in turn, involved him in the genre of Oriental dance, in which he understood his acts of ethnic impersonation as a performance of embodied

cosmopolitanism, an allegiance with other "Orientals" that laid the groundwork for his later turn to the ideology of Pan-Asianism. In addition, I show that Itō's embrace of japoniste aesthetics also enabled him to enter into the unmarked (white) genre of interpretive dance, as his artistic skill both erased and reinscribed his Japaneseness. In Los Angeles, the primary site of Chapter Three, Itō joined the movement of community dance, working on large-group choreographies that fit the local ethic of public and participatory art, centered in mass outdoor civic venues such as the Hollywood Bowl. Shadowing this civic arts community was another community—that of local Japanese immigrants, with whom Itō increasingly engaged. Moving between these two communities, Itō endeavored to perform conspicuous foreignness not just as an individual strategy, but as one that broadly might enable first- and second-generation immigrants to integrate into the city's culture. His position as a cultural mediator in Los Angeles mirrored the variable reception he earned on tour to Japan in 1931, to Mexico in 1934, and again to Japan in 1940. His trips abroad reveal how he became representative of various reception communities' embrace—and rejection—of cosmopolitan identities, and suggest how such cosmopolitanism was frequently emphasized in concert with assertions of national allegiance.

The bombing of Pearl Harbor ruptured these communities. In Chapter Four, Itō's subsequent incarceration and then expulsion from the US frames his reintegration into Imperial Japan. I consider how Itō repurposed the earlier ideals of his career into a choreographic allegiance to Japan, founding a performance institute dedicated to carrying out the cultural promises of the ideology of Pan-Asianism. This endeavor asserted his singular experience abroad as valuable to the construction of a regional community. The American-led Allied Occupation of Japan, treated in Chapter Five, occasioned a remote re-entry into the US for Itō. Moving between Allied and Japanese cultural spaces, Itō performed the role of foreign expert, able to mediate

between these two audiences. Simultaneously belonging to America and Japan, Itō positioned modern dance as a way to teach his fellow Japanese, particularly young women, how to be "Japanese" in a post-war world. In this pedagogy, Itō re-iterated his own earlier acts of impersonation, inculcating in his students not only new bodily comportments, but an awareness of the doubled performances necessary for a Japanese modernity.

Marked by bodily difference, Itō wielded his alterity as a strategy for claiming a place for himself in various communities, ranging from the European modernist coterie to the Southern California population of Japanese immigrants. This dissertation upholds Itō as paradigmatic of the experience of the modern artist whose international circulation repeatedly brands him or her as foreign. Itō's itinerary suggests a common strategy not of escape, but of engagement, that accepts the interpellation of difference and seeks to fashion it into a basis for agency and belonging.

Chapter 1
Being Modern in Time and Space, Itō in Europe

Itō's move to Europe, in December of 1912, required a reorienting of himself in both time and space. Far away from home, geographic distance generated new ways of conceiving of himself, as Japanese, Oriental, modernist, cosmopolitan. In moving from the time-lag of Japan's never-quite-modern modernity to the up-to-the-minute modernity of Europe, Itō was at first isolated, his racial difference not so much a matter of epidermis, but of temporality. Alone at the Jaques-Dalcroze Institute for Eurythmics, Itō was out of time with the community around him; unable to connect with the other students, he felt himself caught in a condition of arrhythmia. After a few months, however, Itō found himself included in the school's community, learning to score himself as an integral beat within Hellerau's rhythms. For if the Dalcroze Institute represented a widely-held ideal of artistic internationalism, it was Itō's presence that unequivocally made it so. Itō thus learned that being part of the community required accentuating himself as a Japanese, or Oriental. His time at Hellerau, a utopic experience that he would repeatedly try to reconstruct in the rest of his career, thus left him with an abiding awareness that the key to his integration was the performance of exceptionalism.

In London, where Itō joined not only a community of Anglophone modernists, but also connected with other young Japanese artists, he reconfigured the spatiality of his activities, drawing together Japanese and Anglophone modernisms into a performative co-presence. Uncovering Itō's connection to the dance-poem movement, the first modern dance movement in Japan, I argue that in London Itō understood himself as participating simultaneously in both Anglophone and Japanese modernisms. By following the sequence of his London appearances, which culminated with the 1916 dance drama, *At the Hawk's Well*, I trace the development of

Itō's style and approach to dance as an unrecognized strand of the dance-poem movement. The simultaneity and intertwining of these two projects foregrounds Itō as a figure of doubled performance. Invested in, and actively participating in the efforts of two distinct national-cultural endeavors, Itō asserted himself as multiply modern.

In the final section of this chapter, I chart the forces of desire and imagination driving Itō's itinerary, which encompassed not only the places he actually inhabited, but also several invented journeys and encounters. These fabrications suggest the affiliations Itō imagined for himself, through encounters that alternately placed him at archetypal sites of European modernism, as well as along alternative circuits of aesthetic knowledge. Dance, literally movement through time and space, figured Itō's transnational trajectory, in which he moved through history and across the globe. Yet the figuration of this mobility was his dance *Pizzicati*, in which Itō moved only his arms, keeping his feet planted wide. It is a dance that is both humorous, as well as a focused exploration of the body as the site of self-expression and self-invention. Firmly rooted, yet in constant motion, Itō used dance as a way to locate himself in the world, and to make himself meaningful in each place.

Resolving Arrhythmia at the Jaques-Dalcroze Institute, Hellerau, Germany

When Itō arrived at Hellerau, he was, for the first time abroad, truly alone. Although he had been in Europe for eight months, he had remained in the company of other Japanese, most notably the composer Yamada Kosaku. But that summer, Yamada returned to Japan, and Itō, aware that something momentous was happening in the garden city of Hellerau, enrolled in the Dalcroze Institute. What Itō experienced there was the sudden joy of being included in a group one longs to join, a euphoric sense of camaraderie replacing his prior loneliness. The terms of

this inclusion, however, were premised on Itō learning to performing himself into rhythmic unity with his peers. As the only "Oriental" at the Institute, his Japaneseness made him stand out—but not necessarily apart. Instead, the eurythmic method offered a way for Itō to resolve the racial arrhythmia that defined his isolation. Through the exercises of musical embodiment that were to become the basis for his own dance technique, Itō found a way to be in tempo with the Hellerau community, conducting himself into a performance of Japanese exceptionalism in which his presence provided the constitutive beat of the school's internationalism.

The Dalcroze eurythmic method served as the basis for Itō's choreography throughout his career and for the development of his own dance technique. The most significant echoes can be seen in his two series of poses that resemble Dalcroze's sequence of twenty poses, and in Itō's use of embodiment exercises in which the body beats out multiple rhythms at once. The parallels between eurythmics and Itō's technique are not limited to the formal, however, for at Hellerau, Itō also absorbed the ideologies that underlay the method, and these too became central to his own artistic philosophy.

The Dalcroze method rose to prominence as a technique for rehabilitating not only individuals, but society at large, from the alienation caused by modernity. The problem of modern life, as philosophers, artists, and industrialists alike understood it, was one of time—it was moving too fast.[36] Industrialization and technology had thrown daily life out of joint, and the sense of constant acceleration had led to the disintegration of man's natural rhythms, leading to a condition of *arrhythmia*.[37] This was a problem understood as affecting the worker in particular;

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[36] See Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983).

[37] Michael J. Cowan, *Cult of the Will: Nervousness and German Modernity* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008).

engaged in repetitive labor in the unhealthy atmosphere of the urban factory, workers' very productivity was at risk. The solution proposed by economist Karl Bücher in his 1896 study *Arbeit und Rhythmus* (Work and Rhythm) was to rehabilitate the worker through rhythm. Rhythm, Bücher argued, would restore joy to the worker, returning to him his natural body, no longer alienated from itself. Responding to these anxieties, the industrialist Karl Schmidt founded the garden city of Hellerau in 1908 in order to provide holistic housing for the workers in his furniture factory. Although privately planned and managed, it was part of the broader garden city movement in Germany, led by the *Gardenstadtgesellschaft* (Garden City Society), which encouraged similar planned colonies outside nearly every industrial city in the country. The endeavors of the garden city movement were part of the broader phenomenon known as the Life Reform movement. This included an assortment of efforts, such as land reform, housing reform, *Körperkultur*, and the Applied Arts movement, all aiming to heal the ills and alienation of modernized urban living.

The Swiss composer, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze originally developed the eurythmic method at the turn of the century as a technique for music students. Rather than experiencing music as an external, intellectual phenomenon, Dalcroze developed a series of physical exercises that would enable students to internalize the music, perceiving it in and through their body. Dalcroze soon came to realize that what he had developed as a musical education method, in fact, was applicable to individuals, and to society at large. Through an emphasis on improvisation and the expression of natural emotion, Dalcroze's rhythmic method could heal widespread arrhythmia, resolving not only the music student's distance from her music, but a fundamental alienation of the human condition. In October 1909, Wolf Dohrn, who served as the first secretary of the *Werkbund*, saw Dalcroze give a lecture-demonstration. Dohrn recognized in Dalcroze's method a

solution not only for the arrhythmia of the individual, but for modern industrial society as a whole. The following day, Dohrn and Schmidt invited Dalcroze to move to Hellerau and to build his institute for rhythmic education there. By the spring of 1910, plans were underway to construct the theatre hall, designed by Adolphe Appia, that would house Dalcroze's institute, and by the fall of 1911, the school had opened.

At the institute, students trained in Dalcroze's method, learning not only a technique of musical embodiment but also a conception of the body as an organic whole. Central to the method's premise was the idea that eurythmic training would enable a student to have perfect control over her body; with her mind precisely attuned to each limb, students could approach their creative work as self-possessed individuals. Students enrolled at the Institute took classes in rhythmic gymnastics, solfège, and improvisation, and additional ones in dance, gymnastics, and anatomy. They were encouraged to develop different ways for their body to express music, as Selma Odom explains:

> He [Dalcroze] would play, and after listening carefully, the students would immediately repeat what they heard in movement, matching their steps to the duration and sequence of notes they perceived. Sometimes they would "echo" the pattern, moving in silence, immediately following the example played, or they would move in canon, making one pattern while listening to the music for the next one. Often exercises involved singing as well as listening and moving, so that patterns and whole phrases might be stepped together, the students becoming the source of both sound and movement.[38]

The ways in which a student could respond to the music grew increasingly challenging as she became more advanced. At first, she marched in time to the music's beat, soon adding corresponding arm movements, with the downbeat marked through a full contraction of the arms. Students would practice until, at a moment's notice, they could come to a stop, change which arm or leg marked the downbeat, insert extra accents, or otherwise alter the pattern. From there,

[38] Selma Landen Odom, "Wigman at Hellerau," *Ballet Review* 14:2 (Summer 1986), 46.

students worked on gaining fully independent control of the arms and legs. Such exercises could involve, "beating the same time with both arms but in canon, beating two different tempi with the arms while the feet march to one or other or perhaps march to yet a third time, e.g., arms 3/4 and 4/4, the feet 5/4."[39] Dalcroze understood the effect of these exercises specifically in terms of the problem of arrhythmia:

> Arrythmy can be radically cured only when the general functions of the human organism have been completely regulated, when constant regularity has been set up in its various manifestations, and when there has been normally developed the instinct of muscular and nervous harmonisations….Men nowadays, for reasons known to all, have lost the sense of regularity in their physical functions and also that of balance between the latter and their intellectual and animistic powers….The teacher of the future has for his aim…to fling a wide bridge across the gulf separating the mind and the body of present-day man.[40]

Throughout the exercises, students relied on a series of twenty positions; by moving through them in varied orders, tempo, and dynamics, students could interpret the music and improvise to it in unlimited ways. These twenty poses, like musical scales, were the foundation blocks with which students endeavored to embody the music.

The Dalcroze method formed the foundation for Itō's own dance technique, which became one of the earliest codified modern dance methods.[41] Although he did not begin to formalize his technique until moving to New York a few years later, and it continued to evolve throughout his career, it always retained clear echoes of his Dalcroze training. For example, recalling the Dalcroze's series of twenty poses, Itō's method relied upon a sequence of ten arm positions, which could be performed in either an A or B mode. Itō at times called these modes

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[39] *The Eurythmics of Jaques-Dalcroze*, ed. M. E. Sadler (London: Constable & Co.), 51.

[40] Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, "Remarks on Arrhythmy," trans., F. Rothwell, *Music & Letters* 14:2 (April 1933), 143.

[41] Mary Jean Cowell observes that Itō's method preceded either Graham's or Humphrey-Weidman's. Mary-Jean Cowell and Satoru Shimazaki, "East and West in the Work of Michio Ito," *Dance Research Journal* 26:2 (Autumn, 1994), 14.

"masculine" and "feminine," with the B/feminine positions having a softer feel. However, these categories were not indicative of performer or character; all students had to master both, and exercises and choreography freely moved between the two. The version of the technique that has been passed on through generations of dancers, and captured in a series of 126 widely-reproduced stills of Helen Caldwell [Fig. 1] moving through these sequences, foregrounds the importance of the series to Itō's method. Indeed, the jazz dancer Luigi attributed aspects of his own method to Itō, recalling in an oral interview conducted in 1993: "Twenty sets of arms were an inspiration from Michio Ito. Michio Ito's inspiration, those 20 sets of arms. Very important. I am making him famous. I never stop talking about him. I had him 50 years ago and I'm still talking about him. People still don't know who he is. Japanese people don't know who he is. I haven't given up on him because I've used a lot of him to recuperate myself by putting those arms in the right position."[42] Luigi's comment not only reveals the far-reaching influence of Itō's teaching, but also suggests that something of the rehabilitative impulse central to Dalcrozian ideology was incorporated into Itō's method as well. Just as Dalcroze had desired, the series of poses were not simply an alphabet for dance-making, but were a way of guiding the body into an awareness of itself.

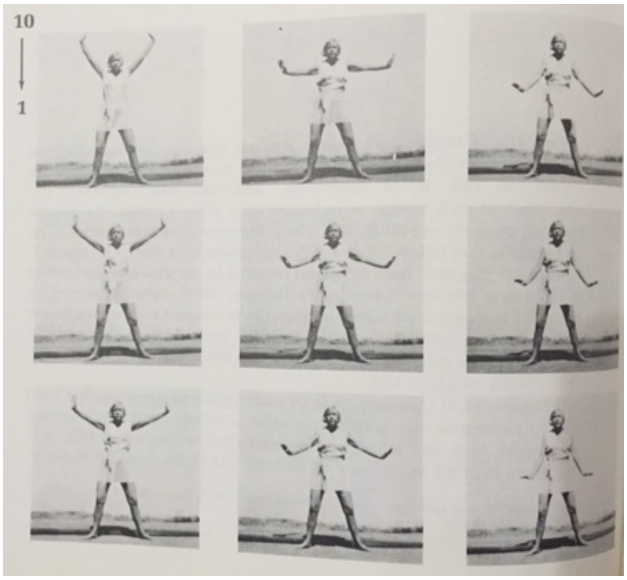

Figure 6: Selection from Helen Caldwell's demonstration of Itō's pose series. *Michio Ito: The Dancer and His Dances.*

[42] Interview with Luigi, 1993 transcript. New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, MGZMT 3-1843, 53

In addition to the pose series, Itō was influenced by the rhythmic exercises he performed at Hellerau. A masterclass in the Itō method, taught by Satoru Shimazaki in 1980 and recorded on film, reveals that the exercises by which students built facility with the technique resemble those of the Dalcroze method.[43] Students traverse back and forth across the studio, walking in time to the music, while their arms move through a sequence of the basic arm positions. In the next round, the arms move in canon, with the right arm one or two positions ahead of the left. The legs then follow another sequence, with lunges, transfers between plié and relevé, and half-turns, while the arms continue their paths through the air. This aspect of Itō's technique seems to have been present as soon as he started teaching. Beatrice Seckler, who studied with Itō in New York in the early 1920s recalled, "And I remember one thing that was difficult. You walked very straight with one foot in front of the other and not turned out at all. And the balance was interesting. You had to get your balance."[44] Having his students move back and forth across the floor, Itō required them to attend to the basic activity of walking as key to any form of rhythmic expression. From this foundation, additional movements could simply be understood as complications or embellishments of rhythm.

Itō's technique thus foregrounded a series of stationary poses, that were then recombined in sequences that required dancers to carry different rhythms in different parts of their body. In many ways, then, his method remained directly connected to the Dalcroze method that constituted Itō's own initial training. However, both the modern dancer Pauline Koner, as well as

[43] *Michio Ito Workshop*. Videotaped by George Lamboy, Workshop conducted by Satoru Shimazaki. May 11, 1980. New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

[44] Interview with Beatrice Seckler, 1974, transcript. New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, MGZTC 3-2196, 8

Cowell have attested to the choreographic power these exercises could exert. In an oral interview from 1975, Koner explained,

> He developed a whole context technically of arm shapes and arm movements, and he was a very fine musician, and transferred it to multiple rhythms in the legs and the arms. but his movement was basically arm movement.
> He had ten positions with variations and alter and eh, doing them in ways where you didn't do both arms together but they were rather like a canon, one would follow another so the variations were infinite that he could achieve in that way. but his foot movement was rather basic and simple I would say.[45]

And as Cowell observes, "While individual positions have a two-dimensional design quality, the path of the feet changes direction as the torso twists. Consequently, both the basic gestures and the entire sequence achieve more three dimensionality, the figure interacting with the surrounding space."[46] Under Itō's adoption of Dalcroze's method, the technique became a full-fledged system for training dancers and developing choreography. Unlike other Dalcroze students, such as Mary Wigman, whose approach to dance moved away from what she had learned at Hellerau, Itō remained devoted to his education there. Most notable, in fact, was his persistent belief in the importance of music in dance. While many modern dancers (spearheaded by Wigman) soon renounced musical accompaniment, preferring to present dance as a self-sufficient artistic medium, for Itō music was a necessity. As he commented in 1927, "When I dance, the music does not accompany me—we become as one. Sometimes the instrument has the melody, sometimes I have it, and sometimes the melodies are intertwined."[47] Across his career, music allowed Itō to realize the body's expressive capabilities; in his choreography and teaching,

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[45] Interview with Pauline Koner, 1975. New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, MGZTL 4-355.

[46] Cowell, 15.

[47] *Musical Courier,* November 3, 1927, 40.

rhythmic harmony remained a central ideal in his dancing, a way of conducting his own body through space.

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When Itō arrived at the Dalcroze Institute in August 1912, he could be said to already suffer from a form of arrhythmia. As Harry Harootunian has argued, Japan's program of modernization-as-Westernization bound the country within a script of "time-lag," in which modernity is an essentially Western temporality. Nations such as Japan were thus caught in an impossible game of catch-up, in which the equivalence of "not quite modern" and "not quite white" perpetually barred them entry into modern time.[48] Suspended in its own almost-modern time signature, Japan was thus out of tempo with the West. The artists, intellectuals, and many other Japanese who, like Itō, traveled to Europe to study and observe were, in effect, trying to sidestep this supposed chronological variance, plunging into the temporality of European modernity in order to return to Japan with something more up-to-the-minute than Japan's own modernity.

For Itō, this arrhythmia manifested as an intense loneliness and isolation, which he spent the first few months trying to hide. As he recalled, "In my youthfulness, I mixed with peers from other foreign countries, merrily playing piano, dancing, playing tennis; nevertheless, I was prone to homesickness, overwhelmed by the feelings of loneliness that welled up. But I wanted to become a good dancer, and so, solely pursuing that which was my heart's desire, I didn't particularly care that I had not made close friends."[49] His isolation came to a head, however, at

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[48] Harootunian, xvi.

[49] Itō Michio, *America and Japan* [Amerika to Nihon] (Tokyo: Yakumo Shoten, 1946, 1949), 144. 「年少の私は、異郷の仲間に混って、ピアノを弾き、踊り、テニスに興じたのだったが、とも

Christmas, a holiday that he would have joyfully celebrated at home in the warm intimacy of his own family. A few days earlier he had gone into the town of Dresden, and packed in with the crowds of Christmas shoppers, he had purchased a green tobacco case, a neck-tie pin with a coral stone at its head, and a little crimson box of Japanese-made lacquer-ware, though he had no one to exchange gifts with. Sitting alone in his small room on Christmas Eve, amidst a few flickering candles, Itō tried to keep himself occupied by carefully unwrapping and then re-wrapping the small presents. "Among the boxes, like a child without anyone to play with, I was enveloped in loneliness."[50] Itō's memory highlights the arrhythmia of his isolation; he unwraps and re-wraps the gifts, turning the activity into a meaningless iteration. Without anyone to share his Christmas, time does not progress and instead loops, leaving Itō alone and outside of time.

Just at that moment, there is an insistent knocking at his window, and Itō sees several faces, pressed against the glass, stifling laughter. Upon opening the window, Itō is pelted with paper snowflakes, as cries of "Merry Christmas" echo around him. The group invites him to join their celebrations, and he recognizes one of the men—Kristiansky from Poland, who thrusts himself through the window to press a gift into Itō's hand, before darting off to catch up with the others, singing as they walk down the snowy road. Itō's unexpected joy increases, as soon after, the bells of a horse-drawn sleigh draw near, with the voices of seven or eight young women bouncing around. This time, he recognizes one of the female Russian students, as the group invites him to come caroling with them. The feelings of unbearable loneliness evaporated, Itō senses the camaraderie that these students, drawn from across the world, share.

すれば、望郷の想いの中に湧く孤独な感じに閉込められるのだった。しかし、いい踊手になりたいーーと、それだけの念願に駈られて、親しい友人のないことも別に気にもとめず。。。」

[50] Ibid., 145. 「そして再び箱の中にしまうと、遊びを無くした子供のように、寂しさが押し包んで来るのを感じた。」

> On this night of blessings, I dare say, [I was struck by] their thoughtfulness towards that certainly lonely Japanese youth; if I'm not mistaken, they purposefully turned their sleigh towards my boarding house. And it was not just those young women. After the sounds of the bells of the horse-drawn sleigh had grown distant in the snowy villages, then from a female classmate from Norway, from some men from France, from a group from America, one after another, I received words of celebration and presents....As I wrote in the pages of my notebook, that year, that Christmas, for the first time, the light of my life abroad burned brightly.[51]

As with all of Itō's writings, his sense of dramatic timing and pathos renders this account a perfect model of the genre of Christmas stories, as holiday joy rescues him from miserable loneliness. On that night, the rituals of Christmas bring Itō into rhythm with the school's community. With each group's invitation, Itō slips more and more fully into the communal time of Christmas. Finally joining his classmates, Itō finds himself in tempo with his peers, finally part of the modernity he longed for.

Itō's narrative of the Christmas episode as the occasion of his inclusion in Hellerau's modern time is also notable for the way in which his integration is structured as a blossoming of internationalism. Poland, Russia, Norway, France, America; one after another different nationalities represented at the school make an appearance. Each one does so because someone has thought of the "lonely Japanese youth," and invited him to join their celebration and their community. The episode thus becomes an experience where Itō moves from national and racial isolation to a euphoric experience of community, which he portrays—with groups dashing through the snow amid the peals of sleigh bells and the sonority of different languages—as an idyllic utopia of internationalism. As Itō's narrative makes clear, however, joining the

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[51] Ibid., 147-8; 9.「祝福の夜、おそらく孤独でいるに違いない日本の青年への思いやりが、馬橇を私の下宿へ向けさせたに違いない。だ。　彼女たちばかりではなかった。馬橇の鈴の音が雪の村を遠ざかったあと、ノールウェーの女のクラスメートから、フランスの男友達から、アメリカのグループから、つづけさまに祝の言葉とプレゼントを受けた。。。。この年の、このクリスマスが、始めて海外での私の人生に明るい灯をともしてくれた。．．．私の雑記帳のある頁にそう書いてある。」

temporality of the Hellerau community does not erase the fact of his racial and national difference (an impossibility in any case). Rather, Itō's inclusion is predicated on the logic of internationalism, in which nationality must remain distinct. What the Christmas episode narrates, with its sequence of invitations, is an orchestration of the students as a community in rhythm with itself.

Having been integrated into the community, Itō began to understand his role as one of performed exceptionalism, in which his status as Japanese distinguished him as a sort of genius. In one episode recounted in his book *America*, Itō recalled the headmaster giving him piano sheet music to learn, as all students at the institute were required to study an instrument. Recognizing the piece as a Mozart sonata he had studied in Japan, he went out to play tennis. When the headmaster found him on the tennis courts, Itō was dragged to the music room to demonstrate his ability.

> Because I had more or less practiced the piece [in Japan], I was able to play it without looking at the score. The headmaster was considerably surprised. I let pass the chance to say to him, "In truth, I played this when I was in Japan."...The following day, when it was the end of the headmaster's morning lecture, he said, "We have in our school a prodigy. That is the Japanese Ito." And saying this, he invited me to the platform...There was nothing for it, so in a daze, I played the tune. And at that moment, I again missed the chance to say, "When I was in Japan, I played this song, that's why." From then on it was hard...I could not escape having to play the role of a prodigy, which was a huge trouble. To be a genius is really a disagreeable thing.[52]

[52] Itō Michio, *America* [Amerika] (Tokyo: Hata Shoten, 1940), 141-2.「この曲は多少さらってあったので譜を見ずに弾くことが出来た。校長は非常に驚いたらしい。私も『実は日本にいた時弾いたことがある。』と言はうとして言いそびれてしまった。。。。翌日、朝の校長の講話の時間が終わると、『我々の学校には天才がいる。それは日本のイトウだ。』と言って、私を教壇へまねいた。。。。仕方がないので夢中になって弾いた。その時も『私は日本にいる時弾いたことがあるのです』と言はうとしてまたチャンスを失ってしまった。　それから大変である。三年間というものは天才の化の皮が剥がれないようにと、随分苦労をした。天才というものはなかなかつらいものである。」

The passage laughingly dismisses the appellation of prodigy, even as it demonstrates the youthful Itō's virtuosity, if not at piano, then at performance. But it also records Itō's interpellation as Japanese, his nationality becoming part of the identity and explanation of his genius. Indeed, Itō frames this story by explaining that he was taken to be a representative of Japan, and therefore, felt compelled to excel in all his activities. Notable here is that Itō's genius is revealed as a demonstration of his musical ability. Precisely at the moment that he is identified as specifically foreign—Japanese—he is also acknowledged as not just in rhythm with the other students, but as having musical mastery.

Indeed, throughout his anecdotes from the period, music appears as the catalyst of his special status—integrated, but exceptional. In the Christmas story, first Kristiansky and his friends walk off singing; then the Russian students invite Itō to come caroling; and the ringing of sleigh bells scores the episode. Similarly, the repetitions of his piano playing—all framed as opportunities to admit his ordinariness, instead become moments for Itō to forge a distinct identity. No longer some foreign stranger, Itō recognized music as a structure for inclusion in the Hellerau community, in which he could uniquely strike the accent beat.

If at Hellerau, Itō learned a performance of Japanese exceptionalism, he was also cognizant of the interpellation of his person as more broadly representative of the Orient at large. At times, he experienced this racialized generalization as an obstacle preventing the expression of himself as an individual:

> I alone was Japanese, the only Oriental person. Therefore, everything I did appeared a curiosity; a Japanese person speaks in such a manner, an Oriental person does things in this way, as if I were the representative for all Japanese and all Oriental people. "Since I was born in Japan, it is well and good that I am called a Japanese person, but that they believed that my thoughts were those of a Japanese person, or an Oriental person, was

> entirely wrong." But they would disregard my explanation, and so I had to think before speaking.[53]

And yet, Itō also took advantage of the unexpected opportunities such representativeness afforded: "At the time that I entered the school...there were 300 female students, and 100 male...And in addition, since I was the only Japanese person, and Oriental, I was especially popular."[54] Particularly striking is the slipperiness of the identity Itō embraces here. In each iteration, "Japanese" slides into "Oriental," collapsing the distinction between nationality, ethnicity, and race. Responding to his classmates' sweeping categorization, Itō, in turn, began to understand himself as not just Japanese, but also as Oriental, a broad performance that continued to inform his career. In time, the embrace of the Orient as a site of identity would re-inflect Itō's understanding of himself as Japanese, an overlap intertwined with the plot of geopolitical history.

For the time being, however, Itō's special status at the Dalcroze Institute cast Hellerau as the site of an extraordinary artistic internationalism. And yet, the time-lag, or arrhythmia, which he had remedied with his inclusion in the community, reappeared, disrupting Itō's artistic idyll. For his time at the school (August 1913-August 1914) was characterized by an accumulating number of near-misses with the luminary figures and events of modern dance's origins. The extraordinary teacher Susan Perrottet, whom students adored, had already defected to Rudolf von

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[53] Quoted in Senda, Senda Koreya, "Afterword: Dream and Reality" [Atogaki: yume to genjitsu] in the Japanese version of Helen Caldwell, *Michio Ito: The Dancer and his Dances* [Itō Michio: Hito to geijutsu], trans. Nakagawa Enosuke (Tokyo: Hayakawa Shobō, 1985), 178.「僕は唯一人の日本人、東洋人であった。だからすること為すことが珍しがられ、日本人がこう言った、東洋人はこうするのだという具合に、まるで僕が東洋人と日本人の代表みたいになった。《俺は日本で生まれたから日本人と呼ばれるのはいいけれども、俺の考えから日本人、東洋人考えが、みんな俺と同じだと思ったら間違いだ》と説明がきをつけないと、うっかりものが言えなかった。」

[54] Ibid, 179.「私が入学した当時は。。。女生徒が三百人、男生徒が百人。。。。おまけに私はたった一人の日本人、東洋人だったのでとくにもてた。」

Laban's colony in the summer of 1912. The star pupil Mary Wigman, who had been offered the opportunity to open a Dalcroze school in Berlin starting in the fall of 1913, instead also followed Laban to Monte Verita. The 1913 School Festival, with its production of *Orfeo* that drew spectators from across Europe and the United States, and was immediately spoken of as a pilgrimage event that recalled Wagner's Bayreuth, was not to be repeated the following year. In February 1914, Wolf Dohrn died in a skiing accident at the age of thirty-six; plans for a 1914 School Festival were dropped as the Institute mourned. In any case, Dalcroze had agreed to oversee an immense pageant performance celebrating Geneva's history for the Fête de Juin, held there in July of 1914, which would have prevented his involvement in another festival at Hellerau. Itō had missed his chance to appear in one of the school's legendary festivals.[55]

In the end, the outbreak of World War I foreclosed the possibilities of Hellerau's international rhythmic community. Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, in Geneva when hostilities broke out, was prevented from returning to Germany. When he signed the "Geneva Protest," a document that condemned Germany's shelling of the cathedral at Reims, his contract, which would have run to 1920, was canceled. By then, however, most of the students had already left the school, as one by one, their nations were drawn into the war. Yet Itō held out, "By no means had I decided [to leave]. I had barely just mastered the fundamentals of dance training, and after all, the hope that the international situation might yet become peaceful had not yet entirely vanished, so I kept praying."[56] But with an inescapable feeling of tension in the town of Hellerau, and with

[55] Various accounts suggest that Itō must have met Wigman in Hellerau, and that he played a fury in the *Orpheus* production. Given the timing of his arrival, both of these are incorrect.

[56] Quoted in Senda, "Afterword," 183.「ただ、私にはなかなかふんぎりがつかなかった。やっと舞踊家としての基本訓練がある程度身についてきたばかりのところだったし、国際情勢だって、まだ平和の望みなきにあらずとあれば、これほど願わしいことはなかった。」

entreaties from his friends, the Dutch Triester, and the Polish Kristiansky, who warned that Itō might find himself trapped, Itō finally agreed to leave. Travelling with other Japanese, including the actor Soganoya Goro, the writer Ikuta Kizan, and the Marquis Maeda Toshinari, Itō left Berlin on August 14, 1914, a week before Japan declared war on Germany. Two days later, Itō arrived in London.

During his year at the Dalcroze Institute, Itō thus integrated himself into the school's community by demonstrating his mastery of musical expression, a musicality that put him in time with his peers. Overcoming the racial arrhythmia that marked him as an outsider, Itō instead learned that his national and racial difference could be upheld, not as a sign of non-Western time-lag, but as a characteristic of exceptionalism, in which his presence confirmed and fulfilled the community's internationalist ideals.

Multiply Modern

If at Hellerau, Itō was able to synchronize, at least for a period, the disjunctive narrative of modernity, placing himself in time with his European peers, in London, Itō experienced the multiplicity of spatial distance. In London, Itō participated in what was to become the most famous of his works, the 1916 dance drama *At the Hawk's Well*, a collaboration between him, W.B. Yeats, and Ezra Pound. Even scholarship focused on Itō (as opposed to the poets) has tended to read the event as a lucky encounter that gave Itō a creative direction for the rest of his career. While the significance of the project for Itō is certainly true, he, in fact, came to the collaboration with his own agenda: that of helping to develop the dance poem movement (*buyōshiundō,* 舞踊誌運動), which was the first modern dance movement in Japan. In aligning himself with the dance poem movement, Itō maintained a doubled orientation. Facing both East

and West, Itō's dancing in London engaged two distinct nationally-focused modernist endeavors, by which Itō sought to claim a sense of belonging and importance in London, where he found himself, and in the Japan he had left behind.

Itō's collaboration with the poets has been figured as a singular encounter of cross-cultural engagement. Like Pound's momentary glimpse in the metro, it is depicted as fleeting (Itō left for America soon after), semi-unrecoverable (who can ever know what his dance looked like?), and unique (only two performances!). In examining the range of Itō's activities in London, however, this section makes a series of claims intended to revise this common understanding of *At the Hawk's Well*. First, Itō's presence in London was neither unique nor singular. As a more detailed investigation of the collaboration reveals, there were a good number of other Japanese youths in London at the time, many of whom were Itō's friends. And Itō himself performed a great deal, in a wide variety of venues. Seeing Japanese performance (and other forms of Japanese culture) was thus a constant in the 1910s in London, rather than a rarity. Second, given the common presence of Japanese people (not to mention things) in London at the time, in a way, Japan was not so far away for Itō. This constantness meant that Itō could effectively experience London and Japan as co-present. Third, the felt proximity of Japan made it natural for Itō to understand himself as participating in, and contributing to, the project of Japan's modern culture. He did so by engaging with the dance-poem concept, in particular, through his work on *At the Hawk's Well.*

At the Hawk's Well draws its source material from one of the legends of the Irish mythic hero Cuchulain, in addition to the *noh* dramas *Hagoromo* and *Yoro*. The well of the title, guarded by a mysterious Hawk-woman, contains water that promises immortality. An Old Man, who has wasted away his life waiting to drink from the well, warns Cuchulain to leave. As they speak of

the well's soporific effect, which causes the Old Man to fall asleep every time the water bubbles up, the Guardian of the Well begins to dance, with mesmerizing, hawk-like movements. She lures Cuchulain away, and as the well water rises, the Old Man falls asleep. When Cuchulain rushes back on stage, the waters have receded—both he and the Old Man have missed their chance to drink the immortal water. Cuchulain again charges offstage, to fight the warrior women whom the Guardian Hawk has called into battle, leaving the Old Man alone to again await the waters of the well.

As David Ewick and Dorsey Kleitz have observed, the characters of the play seem to correspond to the project's central collaborators; with the well waters symbolizing artistic inspiration, both the older Yeats and the ambitious Pound turned to art forms of the East as a source of artistic rejuvenation. Itō, playing the role of the Guardian Hawk, seemed to hold "the key to unlock the mysterious Noh for Yeats and Pound."[57] Indeed, for Yeats, Itō represented not only the artistic possibilities of Eastern aesthetics, but also the poetic potential held within dance and the dancer. Itō's performance had its own eloquence, and a corporeal expressiveness that fulfilled Yeats' dream of developing a new poetic dramatic form. And, echoing the abandoned state of the Old Man at the end of the play, when Itō left for New York in the summer of 1916, Yeats discovered that he could not continue his dance drama experiments without the charismatic dancer.[58]

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[57] David Ewick and Dorsey Kleitz, eds., "'Lacking the gasometer penny': Michio Itō's Reminiscences of Ezra Pound, W.B. Yeats, and Other Matters: A Translation and Critical Edition of 'Omoide wo kataru'," forthcoming, 4.

[58] Later from 1928-1935, Yeats worked with Ninette de Valois to develop the other dance dramas at the Abbey Theatre. See, Mary Fleischer, *Embodied Texts*: *Symbolist Playwright-Dancer Collaborations* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007).

The production was a collaboration between Yeats, Ezra Pound, Edmund Dulac, Charles Ricketts, and Itō. In many accounts, however, Itō's participation is a matter of coincidence; his presence as the poets' accidental muse is reified in comic depictions of his poor English ability on the one hand and recollections of his mystical charisma on the other. As the story goes, when Ernest Fenollosa died, his widow gave Pound her husband's manuscripts of translated *noh* dramas, hoping that the poet would polish and publish them. The impact of the dramas on the poetry of both Pound and Yeats was considerable, and extended far beyond the publication of *Certain Noble Plays of Japan*, the title under which Pound put out his "translations." In the process of these experiments, Pound sought out Itō, having heard that there was a Japanese artist hanging about the Café Royal.[59] When Pound asked Itō to teach him about *noh*, Itō supposedly protested that it was the "most boring thing in the world" and he knew little about it. Pound shot back, "Then you know more than I" and thus induced Itō to perform for him. Other than seeing some *noh* performances as a child, and some months of *nihonbuyō* training during his time at the Imperial Theatre, Itō knew little about the performance form. So he recruited two of his friends, Kōri Torahiko and Kume Tamijurō, and together they performed bits of *noh* chanting and dance in the summer of 1915. The poets' encounter with the concept of *noh*, first in Fenollosa's manuscripts, and then with the performances by Itō, Kori, and Kumé, resulted in Pound's "*Noh" or, Accomplishment*, his own *noh* efforts, and other writings, and Yeats's *At the Hawks Well* (and other dance dramas that followed).

Scholarship on *At the Hawk's Well* has had two primary foci: the play's significance in Yeats' oeuvre and the relationship of the play to Japanese *noh*. Nearly all commentary focused

[59] While the common story depicts Pound as being the first to seek out Itō, in Itō's *Omoide wo kataru* he places Yeats, along with George Bernard Shaw and Thomas Sturge Moore at the first drawing room performance at Lady Morrell's. See Ewick and Kleitz, *"Lacking the gasometer penny,"* Ftnt. 28.

on Yeats sees *At the Hawk's Well* as the turning point in his dramatic writing. F.C. McGrath, Natalie Crohn Schmitt, Karen Dorn, and Yoko Sato all examine how the play enabled Yeats to develop a dramatic form in which the pictorial nature of poetry might be highlighted, and in which all elements of drama and theatrical production could create a unified impression.[60] In a similar vein, Kathleen M. Vogt, Daniel Albright, William Worthen, Sylvia Ellis, Martin Puchner, and Mary Fleischer address how the play works out the tension between drama and performance; Itō in particular, and dance in general offers a way of presenting the body's own expressiveness without resorting to mimesis.[61] Meanwhile, studies by Richard Taylor, Masaru Sekine and Christopher Murray, and Eileen Kato have focused on the relationship of the play to *noh* have generally taken a comparative approach, examining source texts and elements of *noh* performance in order to trace their presence or absence in Yeats' piece.[62] As discussed in the introduction, a somewhat more recent strand of scholarship has focused on Itō's role in, and experience of, *At the Hawk's Well*. Mirroring the studies on Yeats, scholars such as Midori

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[60] F.C. McGrath, "At the Hawk's Well: Unified Form in Yeats's Drama" *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 3:1 (June 1977): 59-71; Natalie Crohn Schmitt, "Intimations of Immortality: W.B. Yeat's 'At the Hawk's Well'," *Theatre Journal* 31:4 (Dec 1979): 501-510; Karen Dorn, *Players and Painted Stage: The Theatre of W.B. Yeats* (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1984); Yoko Sato, "'At the Hawk's Well': Yeat's Dramatic Art of Visions," *Journal of Irish Studies* 24 (2009): 27-36.

[61] Kathleen, M. Vogt, "Counter-Components in Yeats's *At the Hawk's Well*," *Modern Drama* 17:3 (Fall 1974): 319-328; Daniel Albright, "Pound, Yeats, and the Noh Theater," *The Iowa Review* 15:2 (Spring – Summer 1985): 34-50; William B. Worthen, "The Discipline of the Theatrical Sense: *At the Hawk's Well* and the Rhetoric of the Stage," *Modern Drama* 30:1 (Spring 1987): 90-103; Sylvia C. Ellis, *The Plays of W.B. Yeats: Yeats and the Dancer* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); Martin Puchner, *Stage Fright: Modernism, Anti-Theatricality, & Drama* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Fleischer.

[62] Richard Taylor, *The Drama of W.B. Yeats: Irish Myth and the Japanese Nō* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976); Masaru Sekine and Christopher Murray, *Yeats and the Noh: A Comparative Study* (Savage, MD: Barnes & Noble Books, 1990); Eileen Kato, "W.B. Yeats and the Noh," *The Irish Review* 42 (Summer 2010): 104-119.

Takeishi and Carrie Preston consider the play as the defining event of the development of Itō's art and career.[63]

In both Yeats' and Pound's writings and in much of the scholarship on the collaboration, Itō is depicted as a providential figure—the embodiment of the symbolic potential of dance itself, and a comedic curiosity, seemingly naïve about his own contributions to the project, and the source of humorous anecdotes about his foreign expressions and habits. In most accounts, it is only once Itō works in New York that he realizes the value of *At the Hawk's Well*, and *noh* more generally, going on to stage productions of the dance drama in New York, California, and Tokyo, and drawing from Japanese performance traditions for many of his other dances and performance work.

In fact, Itō came to the project with his own artistic agenda: the development of the Dance-Poem movement (舞踊詩), which was a significant strand of early modern dance in Japan advanced by the composer Yamada Kōsaku (山田耕筰) and the modern dancer Ishii Baku (石井漠). With the exception of a brief reference to Itō by dance scholar Funeyama Takashi in his examination of the movement, Itō's commitment to the Dance Poem as a form of artistic theory and practice has gone unnoticed.[64] This is despite the fact that the word "Dance-Poem" is everywhere in discussions of Itō. Indeed, the early biography written by Itō's student Helen Caldwell opens with a chapter, "The Dance Poems of Michio Itō," a term she uses throughout

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[63] Midori Takeishi, *Japanese Elements in Michio Ito's Early Period (1915-1924): Meetings of East and West in the Collaborative Works* Ed. and rev. David Pacun. (Tokyo: Gendaitosho, 2006); Carrie Preston, *Learning to Kneel: Noh, Modernism, and Journeys in Teaching* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016).

[64] Funeyama Takashi, "Yamada Kosaku's Dance-Poem: Taisho Modernism's Dreams and Failures" [Yamada Kosaku no buyōshi—Taisho modanizumu no yume to zasetsu], *Ongaku Geijutsu* 44:2 (Feb 1986).

the volume to describe his dances because, "that is what he called them." This term that seems casually appropriate was actually one that held precise meaning for Itō, and connected him to the contemporaneous dance experiments in Japan of Yamada and Ishii. Itō's embrace of the term then, was an explicit way of aligning himself with the development of modern dance in Japan, even as he remained abroad.

Connecting Itō, and *At the Hawk's Well*, to the dance poem movement requires turning our attention to the composer Yamada Kosaku, who looked after Itō in Germany, and was, in fact, responsible for encouraging him to enroll in the Dalcroze Institute. Born in Tokyo in 1886, Yamada graduated from the prestigious Tokyo Music School, and with this intensive training in Western orchestral music, went to Berlin to study at the Hochschule für Musik from 1909 to 1913. In Germany, in addition to his musical studies, Yamada immersed himself in the avant-garde art scene, drawn especially to the work of Expressionist artists.[65] He also became interested in the experiments of the Dance Reform movement, going to see performances by Nijinsky, Pavlova, and Duncan, whose natural style of dancing made an especially strong impact on him. Curious about the principles of free movement and natural rhythm that had become important to theories of musical education, in 1912, he went to visit the Dalcroze school at Hellerau, accompanied by the artist-musician Saitō Kazō. Yamada's time in Hellerau was brief—a few days at most. Nevertheless, the Dalcroze eurythmic method deeply informed Yamada's own work as a composer and music educator; upon returning to Japan, he introduced Dalcrozian methods broadly, both to other music professionals and as a general education

[65] When Yamada returned to Japan he helped to organize the first expressionist art show, of Der Sturm group, at the Hibiya Art Museum, March 14-28, 1914.

method.[66] He also began the Dance Poem movement with Ishii Baku, teaching Ishii the basics of eurythmics so that together they could develop a new direction for modern art. From 1917 to 1919, Yamada toured the United States, twice conducting at Carnegie Hall in New York City, and collaborating with Itō on several recitals. During the rest of his career in Japan, Yamada led the development of *yōgaku* (Western-style music) in a diverse array of activities, composing operas, folk ballads, and orchestral pieces, helping with the programming for the new national radio station, and participating in magazines, cultural societies, and theatrical productions.

In 1915, when Yamada had returned from Europe, he began working with Ishii Baku on developing what would become the Dance Poem movement. Ishii Baku (石井漠、given name: Ishii Tadazumi(忠純)；first stage name: Hayashi Rō: (林郎)) (1886-1962), considered the father of modern dance in Japan, began his training at the Imperial Theatre, in the same group as Itō studying opera and *nihonbuyō*. His early interest in dance led him to work under Giovanni Vittorio Rosi, the Italian ballet master brought in to lead the dance section of the opera department at the Imperial Theatre. In 1915, Ishii began working with Yamada, newly returned from Europe, and Osanai Kaoru (who had similarly made a trip to Europe, stopping by Dalcroze in April 1913), forming a group called the New Theatre (新劇場). Yamada trained Ishii in Dalcrozian methods and together they began to develop the dance poem movement (舞踊詩運動). This collaboration continued through 1922, during which time Ishii was also active in the Asakusa Opera movement. Ishii then went on his own performance tour abroad to Europe, from

[66] For instance, Yamada taught and helped design the curriculum at the Bunka Gakuin school for girls in the 1920s. See, Hirasawa Nobuyasu, "Implementation of Dance Education at the Early Bunka Gakuin: Experiments in Yamada Kosaku's 'Dance-Poem'" [Shoki bunkagakuin ni okeru buyō kyōiku jissen—Yamada Kosaku ni yoru] *Gakujutsu Kenkyū Kiyō, Kanoya Taiiku Daigaku*, March 2006, 216-217.

1922 to 1924, where he made sure to see performances by Mary Wigman and Harald Kreutzberg, and to the United States, where Itō helped him arrange his first recital in New York. Upon returning to Japan, Ishii continued his choreographic work. He also founded what is considered to be the first modern dance school in Japan, educating generations of dancers who subsequently spread modern dance not only in Japan, but elsewhere in Asia.

For Yamada and Ishii (and for Itō) "Dance-Poem" marked a concept of dance in line with early claims by European artists for dance as a distinct art form. Different from casual usage of the term as a synonym for "dance-drama," or for dancing accompanied by the recitation of poetry, it used the poem as a sort of formal analogy—a dance poem is a dance that is *like* a poem. That is, the dance expresses an idea, or an image, which is never explicit, but is revealed, obliquely yet with force, through the accumulation of mood, rhythm, and physical expression. A dance poem does what a poem does, but through movement. Indeed, as Ishii explained, "Our art of the dance must be poetry achieved through movement of the body."[67]

Yamada explicitly attributed the genesis of the dance-poem to his observations at the Dalcroze Institute. His emphasis on rhythm as the source of artistic expression is present in all his writings on the dance-poem:

> When a rhythm is expressed through sound, that is music; and when it is represented through movement, it is called dance. So, I believe, it is by this mediator, rhythm, that true dance must be expressed as a single whole of music and movement. From this premise, I have arrived at the creation of a field of research called "Buyōshi," which, for the first time, makes a perfect art form through the harmonization of music and dance.[68]

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[67] Quoted in Kataoka Yasuko, "Ishii Baku: The Development of the Dance Poem" [Ishii Baku—Buyōshi to tenkai], *Buyōgaku, 28th Meeting of the Dance Studies Association* 13:1 (1989).

[68] Yamada Kosaku, "Dance and Myself" [Buyō to watashi] (1922), in *Yamada Kosaku Collected Works*, Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2001), 11.

For Yamada, the power of rhythm, expressed through music *and* dance together, offered the purest articulation of the image, or impulse at the heart of a dance-poem. As Funeyama has traced, in addition to the Dalcrozian exaltation of rhythm, Yamada's theorization of the movement incorporated shadings of German Expressionism and mysticism borrowed from the composer Scriabin. The pieces that Yamada and Ishii developed were thus frequently preoccupied with the deranged, the marginal, and the supernatural, representing, as Expressionist art generally did, moments of anguish of the human condition.

Yamada and Ishii's dance poem experiments were first presented on June 2, 1916, exactly two months after the first *At the Hawk's Well* performance. The production was presented at the Imperial Theatre, under the aegis of the *Shingekijō*, a new performance group organized by Osanai Kaoru to present new modern theatre and dance. The program consisted of two dramas, Yoshi Isamu's *Asakusa Kannondō* (浅草観音堂), performed by Ubukata Kenichirō, Tanaka Eizō, and Miyabe Shizuko, and Strindberg's *Thunder*, translated by Mori Ogai. There were also two dance pieces, Yamada's *A Page of a Diary* (日記の一頁), performed by Ishii, and *A Tale* (物語), performed by Ishii and Otobane Kaneko (音羽かね子). A second program, given June 26-28 at the Hongo-za, featured Rabindranath Tagore's *Chitra,* again translated by Mori Ogai; Nagata Hideo's *Starvation* (飢渇); and Yamada's *Bright and Dark* (明闇), performed by Ishii Baku to a poem by Ochiai Namio.

"A Page of a Diary" represented, literally, a page from Yamada's diary—September 20th of the previous year. Rather than a depiction of the day's events, however, it was "a record of

that day's spirit."[69] In his article "Dance-Poem and Dance-Drama," published a few months after the Imperial Theatre performance, Yamada repeatedly asserted "the world of sound and movement is not the world that is manifested in words. More than words, sound and movement have an intimate connection to us."[70] To portray the "day's spirit"—that which could not be expressed in words—through dance, was to allow dance its own particular power of communication. The music composed for "A Page of a Diary" was later performed under other titles, such as "Poem," "He and She," and "Oto no Nagare," while the original title was applied to newer works that were developed out of the same creative process—different days, with different spirits to express.[71]

Yamada and Ishii experimented with multiple approaches to their new form; their writings and performances reflect the various options they tried out, as well as, later on, their differing aesthetic preferences. While the premise of the dance poem was an analogy between the two artistic media, as the June 1916 recital's performance of *Bright and Dark* suggests, they did experiment with a literal pairing of dance and poetic recitation. This format echoed the work of Isadora Duncan, whom Yamada had seen dance in Germany.[72] Similarly, while the dance poem was envisioned as a direct and embodied, rather than mimetic, expression, some of Yamada and Ishii's pieces were still narrative-based. Recognizing this, Yamada called some of the works "dance dramas" (舞踊劇). *Bright and Dark*, for instance, dramatized the story of a blind itinerant priest (Baku) and a sinful priest (Komori Toshi). Set in the temple grounds of

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[69] Yamada Kosaku, "Dance-Poem and Dance-Drama" [Buyōshi to buyōgeki] (1916), in *Yamada Kosaku Collected Works*, Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2001), 218. 「日の心を記したものである」

[70] Ibid.

[71] Itō later choreographed his own dance to Yamada's "Oto no nagare."

[72] On Isadora Duncan's dancing to poetry recitation, see Ann Daly, *Done into Dance: Isadora Duncan in America* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2002).

Kyoto's Kiyomizudera, the sinful priest, drunken and disorderly, steals the wallet of the blind priest. He is swiftly punished by losing his own sight, while the blind priest regains his. Soon, however, the newly-seeing priest succumbs to greed, experiencing the hardship of daily human life. Meanwhile, the now-blind sinful priest's heart is purified, and he recovers his humanity. Acknowledging that this type of piece could be more accurately called a "dance drama" (舞踊劇), Yamada nevertheless distinguished it from the already-existing form of dance drama. He explained that rather than being "the imitation of various forms of real life," he envisioned his dance drama as "something that comes from the hips, passing through the chest and the face," that is, an expression shaped by the logic of the body itself.[73] Not surprisingly, as a composer, Yamada maintained a belief that the dance poem should be composed with and accompanied in performance by music. By contrast, Ishii, especially after his own tour to Europe, where he saw Mary Wigman perform without music, also began to abandon musical accompaniment. Perhaps recognizing that Yamada, already a famous composer, could exert greater authority, after Ishii returned from Europe he by and large ceased to use the "dance poem" designation, simply calling his pieces "dances" (舞踊).

The official dance poem movement did not fare well in Japan. Only twenty-seven people came to the first performance, in the grand hall of the Imperial Theatre. The experiments were looked upon as yet another foreign import, at a time when calls were being made to develop domestic forms of modern art. One reviewer dismissed the genre by writing, "Like the West's

[73] Kosaku, "Dance Poem and Dance Drama," 218. 「それも實生活の種々なる象（かたち）の模倣ではなく。。。自分達の頭と胸を通過して、こし出されたものでなければならない。。。」

fermented tofu, this makes no sense." (by which, it is assumed, he meant "cheese").[74] Another critic panned the performance without even bothering to attend, apparently basing his evaluation on the opinions of a few spectators he knew. Ishii's 1922 tour through Europe, however, was very well received; born out of European dance trends, audiences there were likely more receptive to the form. Nevertheless, the dance poem experiments are considered to mark the beginning of modern dance in Japan. Recognizing Itō's role in the movement therefore means not simply acknowledging the transnational foundations of the dance-poem, as it was shaped by Yamada's trip to Europe, but it also requires us to think about nation-based movements as actively shaped by individuals residing outside of that nation.

* * *

Connecting Itō to the dance poem movement is a matter of "when," rather than "if." Several pieces of evidence point to Itō knowing about the dance-poem concept while he was in London. It is impossible to pinpoint when, precisely, Yamada came up with the idea. However, he directly connects it to his observations of the eurythmic method at the Dalcroze Institute, which he visited shortly after Itō's arrival, so if the concept emerged while Yamada was still in Europe, Itō certainly would have heard about it. Once Yamada returned to Japan, both he and Ishii exchanged postcards with Itō, another possible point of transmission. At the very latest, Itō would have explicitly learned of the dance poem idea in the spring of 1918, when Yamada visited New York, where Itō was then living. In fact, during that visit, Itō performed in a version of *A Page of a Diary* and *Blue Flame*. The clearest indication that Itō knew about the dance poem movement while he was in London comes from Ezra Pound, who organized a recital in

[74] *Engei Gahō*, July 1915.「まるで西洋の酢豆腐を食べさせられたように、わけがわからない。」

October 1915, in which Itō danced to recitation of five classical Japanese poems Pound had translated. Pound, writing in the literary magazine *Future,* calls these pieces "dance poems," and while many scholars have attributed this naming to Pound himself, it seems far more likely that he in fact, simply followed Itō's own appellation.

When Itō arrived in London after fleeing Hellerau, he began to frequent the Café Royal, a bohemian haunt where one could speak French and German freely—a boon to Itō, whose English was limited. Itō quickly established himself in a circle of Japanese and European-born artists. When he received a letter from his father urging him to come home, Itō responded that he was not ready to leave Europe, but could make his way on his own. His father sent a final hundred pounds sterling for a return ticket, which Itō promptly spent. His friend, the painter August John introduced him to the conveniences of a pawn shop, which allowed Itō to live for some time, until November 1914 when he had pawned nearly all his possessions and clothes. In what has become a famous episode, he pawned his last necktie and with the few coins it earned, bought a loaf of bread to make "bread soup" and put the remaining change in the gasometer. Shivering in his room from hunger and cold, his misery was interrupted by the painter Richard Nelson dropping by to bring Itō to a party at the house of Lady Ottoline Morrell. Despite his protestations, Itō soon found himself at the mansion, and though dizzy with hunger, when Lady Morrell showed him a closet full of sumptuous costumes he could wear for his dancing, he agreed to perform. To accompaniment by the chamber orchestra of Sir Henry Wood of the London Philharmonic, Itō performed the dance he had choreographed for his Dalcroze examination, to a Chopin piece.

The following day, he received an invitation from Lady Cunard to perform that evening. He again performed the Chopin piece, repeating it twice more as an encore, as it was the only

work he had choreographed at that point. Following his dancing, the hundred or so guests sat down to supper. Itō found himself seated across from a distinguished-looking gentleman who attempted to engage Itō on the topic of Japanese art. Frustrated at his inability to communicate, Itō asked to speak in German instead, to which the man laughingly agreed, and they amiably conversed the rest of the evening. Itō learned the next day that he had been speaking with his host, Prime Minister Asquith, in the language of the enemy.

On the basis of these impromptu appearances, Itō earned a two-week booking at the London Coliseum, running May 10 to 23, 1915. His program offered four pieces: *Dance of the Green Pine*, *A Seated Movement*, *Japanese Lady with Umbrella and Fan*, and *A Fox Dance by Moonlight*. These were all explicitly Japanesque in nature; as Itō later commented, "I was promoted as a Japanese dancer, and needed to evoke a Japanese atmosphere. For this purpose, I created dances like *Sho-jo* or Fox."[75] The sense of compulsion to perform Japanese, as we have seen, was something Itō was already aware of from his year at Hellerau. With Itō's first public appearance, we see the development of his showman's instinct, as well as a growing appreciation of how his ethnicity and cultural background might provide a fertile source of artistic inspiration.

A review by H.T. Parker, from a performance Itō gave in New York in 1917, gives the best sense of the *Fox Dance*. Although it is possible that Itō had made changes to the dance in New York, he still performed it using the fox mask Dulac had made for him [fig. 2], and Parker's

[75] Itō Michio, "Dancing in the World," *Geijutsu Shincho,* July 1955.

description articulates Itō's fusion of Dalcrozian eurythmics with the emerging concept of the dance-poem.

> His dance of the fox, his one distinctively Japanese number, disclosed him bare-footed, in the mask aforesaid and in the dress of his country. Beginning in writhings like to the motion of an excited animal it rose to a frenzy of such movement, for the fox of the legend was the Pierrot of beasts, moonstruck into a delirium of the dance until ecstatic death stayed him. There was no questioning the vividness of Mr. Ito's dancing or of the imagination behind it, or yet again of his rare command of singularly rhythmical movement in which head, limbs and body all answer to a mutual beat.[76]

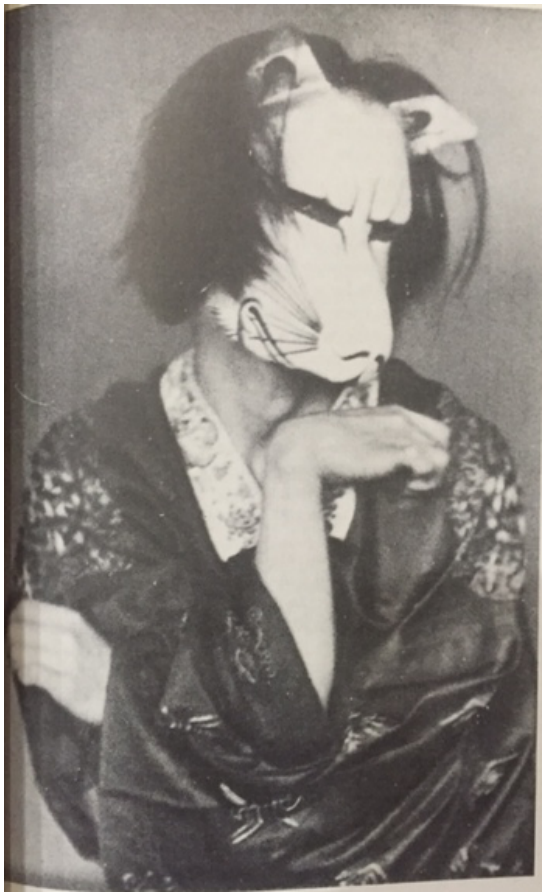

Figure 7: Itō in the *Fox Dance*, with mask by Edmund Dulac. Photograph by Alvin Langdon Coburn, 1915.

The dance, which opens with movements evoking the animal itself, develops into the delirium of dance itself, depicting movement as ecstatic impulse. In an interview Itō gave to the *New York Tribune* in August 1917, Itō explained his method of preparation: "My fox dance is furtive and independent and cunning and staccato. I studied a fox and his ways with a biscuit long before I worked out my dance. Then I went to a great hill in Hampstead and I made my soul into the soul of a fox, and so I evolved my fox dance."[77] Though some of his movements might have resembled those of a fox, realist imitation was not the aim. Rather for Itō, making his "soul into the soul of a fox" was precisely the approach that fulfilled Yamada's description of the dance poem concept, "Not just the world manifested in words…but

[76] H.T. Parker, "Roshanara and Ito" December 5, 1917 in *Motion Arrested: The Dance Reviews of H.T. Parker*, ed. Olive Holmes (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1982), 258-259.

[77] Harriette Underhill, "Michio Itow," *New York Tribune*, August 19, 1917, C2.

an intimacy." Itō's description of the dance, "furtive and independent and cunning and staccato"—in terms both stylistic and technical—articulate what Itō identifies as the essence of the fox. Parker's observation of the way in which Ito's "head, limbs, and body all answer to a mutual beat" hints at the way Itō had harnessed Dalcrozian Eurythmics for the dance poem movement. With rhythm guiding and merging with his frenzied movement, the soul of the fox, as Itō had captured it, unfolded before audiences.

Itō had first met Pound around the time of his appearance at the Coliseum. In June 1915, Itō recruited his friend, the painter Kume Tamijurō (久米民十郎)(1893-1923) and his *senpai,* the writer Kōri Torahiko (郡虎彦; pen name: Kayano Hatakazu (萱野二十一)) (1890-1924) to demonstrate *noh* to Pound and Yeats. Both Kume and Kōri were better versed in *noh* than Itō; Kōri had in fact trained as a child in the Kanze *noh* family. For this demonstration, the two sang *noh utai* while Itō danced—which Kōri later described as an "imitation of *noh*" and a "strange dance."[78] This was the first of at least a few demonstrations offered by Itō and his friends. We can ascertain then, that while Yeats and Pound were, in fact, exposed to accurate performances of *noh* chanting, it was Itō's dancing—that which was to carry over into *At the Hawk's Well*—that was at least a bit "strange."

On October 28, November 2, and November 9, Itō performed in a program arranged by Pound, in a small theatre studio in Kensington. The program consisted of five poems that Pound had translated from the Japanese. These were recited by Masirni Utchiyama, with Itō dancing, and a Mr. Minami accompanying on a flute. After Itō's departure to the United States, Pound

[78] For more on Kume, and especially Kōri and his relation to Pound, see David Ewick, "Notes Toward a Cultural History of Japanese Modernism in Modernist Europe, 1910-1920, with Special Reference to Kōri Torahiko," *The Hemingway Review of Japan* No. 13 (June, 2012).

published notes from the performances along with his translations in the December 1916 issue of *The Future*. The titles of the pieces, as listed by Pound, were 1. "Song for a Foiled Vendetta," 2. "The sole survivor," 3. "In Enemies' country just after the war," 4. "Honogi," and 5. "Yamadera." Takeishi Midori has concluded that based on Pound's translations, the Japanese originals were most likely: 1. "*Kawanakajima*", 2. "*Shiroyama"* from the text "*Kogun Funto,"* 3. "*Zangetsu,"* 4. "*Honnoji*," and 5. "*Yamadera no Oshosan*."[79] These then, were not related to *noh*, as Pound was, in fact, quick to point out in his introduction to the translations in *Future*:

> Among the finest things Michio Itow showed us, very different from the delicate women's dances and fox-dance, the finer movements of which were lost and almost invisible on the Coliseum stage; different equally from the splendid and stately dances of the Japanese classical plays which need so much knowledge of Japanese history and literature before they can be fully comprehended, were the sword and spear dances which were seen by only a few people when he performed almost privately in a Kensington studio-theatre.
>
> Each dance was in itself a drama in miniature, having within the few lines of its text not only the crux of a play but almost the form and structure of full drama, Mr. Minami accompanying on a weird oriental flute and Mr. Utchiyama's voice booming ominous from behind the curtain. Itow himself, now in a jagged whirl of motions, slashing with the sword-blade, sweeping the air with the long samurai halberd.[80]

In his growing repertoire of Japan-sourced dances, Itō mined yet another performance form—the *kenbu*, or sword-dance—which was itself a largely (re)invented tradition dating from the Meiji era. It is hard to know how much Itō's movements resembled those of actual *kenbu*, in which he had never trained, but likely saw performed during his childhood. However, Pound's description of Itō's dancing—"a jagged whirl of motions," "slashing," and "sweeping the air," evokes Itō cutting through space, his motions emitting both force and focus. In fact, here Itō resembles nothing so much as an instantiation of Vorticism—an implication I will take up later in this chapter. Pound's very description of Itō's dancing *moves*, following the choreographic shapes

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[79] Takeishi, 27.

[80] Ezra Pound, "Sword-Dance and Spear-Dance: Texts of the Poems Used with Michio Itow's Dances. By Ezra Pound, from Notes of Masirni Utchiyama," *Future* 1:2 (December 1916), 54-55.

and the gestures that seem to call up one scene and then another, the account evoking the energy unleashed in the dance.

Pound's well-known declaration, that *noh* plays proved the possibility of a long imagist or vorticist poem, has frequently been pointed to by scholars as a way of understanding the *At the Hawk's Well* experiment.[81] But his observation in the *Future* article, "Each dance was in itself a drama in miniature, having within the few lines of its text not only the crux of a play but almost the form and structure of full drama," suggests that we read the Sword-Dance Program as a counterpart to *At the Hawk's Well*, in which the development of Itō's strand of dance-poem began to take its distinctive form.

Compared to *At the Hawk's Well*, the sword-dances were far more directly derived from Japanese source material, and yet one senses a more abstract relationship between Itō's dancing and the poems, than would be the case with his hawk dance. The piece "In Enemies' Country Just After War," which, Pound notes, might also be titled "Nerves," the verse reads:

> Beneath the pale crust of the moon
> My sleeves are drenched with dew.
> Wind rushes against my face. I am cold.
> I start aside from the big snake on the pathway,
> Startled I draw my sword,
> And slash at the old-pine-tree's shadow.[82]

The poem is immediately followed by Pound's commentary: "The translation might be clearer if one supplied the words, unnecessary in Japanese, 'start aside from what appears to be the snake, and slash at what is really the shadow,' but the essence of the Japanese consists in leaving out just this sort of long explanation." Itō's dancing was never particularly mimetic, and one senses

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[81] "I am often asked whether there can be a long imagist or vorticist poem. The Japanese, who evolved the *hokku*, evolved also the *Noh* plays. In the best *Noh* the whole play may consist of one image." Ezra Pound, "Vorticism," *The Fortnightly Review* 96, September 1, 1914, 461-471.

[82] Ezra Pound, "Sword-Dance and Spear-Dance."

here that what Pound says of the poetry is true of the choreography as well. One imagines that Itō, "slashing with his sword blade" would not have prosaically imitated the rushing wind and cold, but rather embodied the nervous energy, and the terror of the moment that is the crux of the poem. In another example, "Spear Dance," Pound's commentary is considerably longer:

> This poem is about 400 years old, when Oda ruled in Honogi. He was a Daimyo, or feudal lord, who had seized the reins of power and stood in place of the Shogun, or Mayor of the Palace. Oda sent the Samurai Akechi against the enemy Mori Motonari. Akechi set forth at the head of the expedition; but an old grudge against Oda rankled within him, and at the last moment he diverts his troops from attacking Motonari, leads them back to Honogi and assassinates Oda.
> The action of the dance represents him on the march at the moment when he points his whip to the clouds for augury and determines to return against Oda. The song is, roughly, as follows: —
>
> Deep is the ditch of resentment and no man knows
> how deep
> Tonight is my night for deeds.
>
> The fodder is mixed in the nose-bag, ready to eat,
> Rainy season, the sky is like charcoal with clouds.
>
> Past the hill-slope of Osaka, I must traverse the
> West road to Bitchu (the province of Mori Motonari).
>
> If I point to the sky with my whip, for augury,
> The clouds scurry faster eastwards.
>
> *My* enemy is in the temple at Honogi,
> *The* enemy is in Bitchu.
>
> O beware, thou Oda, at Honogi.
>
> The reader may easily imagine the changes in the dance: gloom, reflection, the looking up to the clouds, hesitation, and the final climax of decision just before the last line.[83]

The compression that Pound points to—the poem does not represent the entirety of the revenge narrative supplied, but just the brief moment of decision—is characteristic of Itō's dancing in general. Rarely narrativistic in structure, it rather exerts dramatic force through a rhythmicization

[83] Ibid.

of emotion. Pound's reference to the "Honogi" dance's changing emotions suggests the directions of Itō's movement, and the propulsion of the dance through to its central image of determination.

Though Yeats famously cut his lines of poetry after seeing the expressiveness of Itō's dancing in *At the Hawk's Well*, it is rather these Sword and Spear Dances that seem closest to the dance poem concept. Even as they are accompanied by the poetry recitation, these dances appear as their own self-contained medium, running in parallel with the verse, but enacting their own choreographic logic. The briefness of the dances coheres with the evocation of poetic force that is at the heart of the dance-poem as Itō, in a continuous trail of movement, traced out with sword-slashes the wake of his body's movement.

During the winter of 1916, as Yeats composed *At the Hawk's Well*, Itō was kept busy with various public and charity performances, at which he performed versions of his Coliseum pieces, as well as other pieces derived from Japanese theatrical and folklore tradition. For instance, on January 8th, Itō appeared at the Margaret Morris Theatre with some form of a *Witch Dance* and a *Priest's Dance*, as well as his *Fox Dance*; on January 13th, he performed in a recital with Ratan Devi, with works such as *Dances from the Noh Dramas* and *Japanese War Dance*; on February 25, a matinee at the New Theatre featured *Mai no hajime* (Introduction to the Dance) and *Fox Dance*.[84] Throughout his London appearances, Itō thus continued to mine Japanese culture, reworking themes, characters, and narratives to fit his needs. While most of the pieces from this period did not long remain in his repertoire once he arrived in the United States, his

[84] See, for instance, Takeishi on Itō's appearance at the Margaret Morris Theatre in January 1916.

recital with Ratan Devi signaled the beginning of a frequent practice of joint appearances with other Oriental dancers.[85]

Starting mid-March, rehearsals began for *At the Hawk's Well*. The group involved in the dance-drama put Itō at the center of Anglophone modernism's investigation of oriental art. In addition to Yeats and Pound, who served as stage manager, also involved were the illustrator Charles Ricketts, known as an expert in *ukiyo-e*, Edmund Dulac, who designed the costumes and composed the score, and the photographer Alvin Coburn Langdon, who took pictures of the cast during a dress rehearsal. The other cast members were the actor, director, and later compiler of Yeats' letters, Allan Wade as The Old Man, and the Shakespearian actor Henry Ainley as The Young Man. Dulac performed on the drum and gong as one of the musicians, along with a Mrs. Mann (singing and flute) and a Mr. Foulds (guitar). The group gave two performances, the first, on April 2, 1916 in the drawing room of the house of Lady Maud Cunard, and the second on April 4, at the home of Lord and Lady Islington.[86] Spectators were a mix of the society and artistic elite, including T.S. Eliot, Edward Marsh (Churchill's secretary), and Queen Alexandra.

Our knowledge of Itō's choreography for the original production must be pieced together, from later records of his choreography, from staged photographs taken by Alvin Langdon Coburn, and from the text of the play itself. Helen Caldwell, who observed Itō teaching the part to Lester Horton for the Eagle Rock performance in 1929, described the dance:

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[85] Ratan Devi was, in fact, an Englishwoman, Alice Richardson, the wife of the renowned Indian art critic and historian of religion, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. She specialized in East Indian vocal music. She moved to the United States in February 1916, when her husband became the curator of the Indian Arts section of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. A notable later performance, in June 1915, featured Itō *and* Hanako, the successor to Sadayakko, in an "oriental matinee" at the Playhouse, as part of a benefit for wounded Indian soldiers; the rest of the program featured scenes from the Ramayana, as well as an appearance by Mme. Réjane. "Plays and Pictures: Indian Tableaux" *The Times of India*, July, 13 1915, 8.

[86] Ewick notes that this residence, at 20 Cavendish Square, was actually owned by the wife of Prime Minister Asquith, and leased by Lady Cunard. "Notes toward a Cultural History," 20.

> The dance performed by the hawklike Guardian, as composed by Michio Ito, was, in fact, a modified Noh dance—tense, continuous movement with subtle variations on its monotony, inducing a trancelike state in both personages and audience—but its increase in tempo was more rapid than in genuine Noh and the arm movement was broad and smoothly dramatic, recalling Egyptian representations of the hawk with spread wings and giving a feeling of a great bird's gliding and wheeling.[87]

Caldwell's description communicates the sense of powerful tension and rhythmic driving present in Itō's choreography. However, it seems likely that this description represents the choreography as Itō continued to modify it upon coming to the United States. Japoniste dance became a significant part of his repertoire, and so I suspect that later versions of the Hawk's dance feature far more "*noh*" dance than did the original.

Indeed, photographs taken during rehearsals for the original production suggest that Itō's choreography strayed far from the classical postures of *noh*. In these images, Itō holds a far more upright posture than would likely be found even in his "imitation of *noh*" as performed in the demonstration for Yeats and Pound in June 1915. Notable too, is that his heel is raised in several of the photos, and in one, his torso torques in the opposite direction of his legs, as if he has been captured in a slow spin. [Fig. 3]. Many of these are movements drawn from the vocabulary of Dalcroze, and the shifting weight and oscillations of balance that the photographs suggest reappear in Itō's other choreography.

Figure 8: Itō in the Hawk costume. Photograph by Alvin Langdon Coburn, 1916.

[87] Helen Caldwell, *Michio Ito: The Dancer and his Dances* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 45.

As has been well-demonstrated, what is drawn from *noh*, both in Yeats' play and Itō's performance, is the function of the dance. In *noh,* the *Shite*'s (protagonist) dancing occupies the segment in which the character's story is told. Rather than moving the action forward, it is a lyrical suspension in which the narrative is embroidered upon with allusions to classical poetry. Yeats, of course, intentionally shaped the play to follow *Noh* structure, and so the Hawk's dance is a sort of reverie, a display of its nature and of its power. As Curtis Bradford has traced, Yeats' original intention—that the chorus would explain the meaning of the hawk's dance in their verse—proved unnecessary once Itō began to work on the choreography.[88] Eliminated lines such as:

> The horror of unmoistened eyes
> Slips by me with side-long head
> From stone to stone, or half-flies
> The unappeasable gray wings spread.
> …
> Keep me from dancing feet and terrible eyes,
> Two feet seeming like two quivering blades,
> Eyes long withered and yet seeming young
> Keep from me—How should I bear those eyes.

suggest what Itō's dancing evoked—the mercilessness of the hawk's dry eyes, the menace of its inescapable wings, and its terrible magnetism. As Mary Fleischer similarly finds, the dancing and the music served to "suspend linear time" and to focus the audience on a "subjective experience of the Hawk's supernatural presence."[89] In Itō's subsequent choreography, his dance-poems retained this sense of suspension—they explore a theme, an image, or a sensation, and through the body's movements, layer a sense of replete expression. This style is in marked

[88] Curtis Bradford, *Yeats at Work* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965).
[89] Fleischer, 202.

contrast to Ishii Baku's far more dramatic and expressionist Dance-Poems, which nearly always contained a dramatic narrative that is carried out through the dance itself.

We should thus understand the significance of *At the Hawk's Well* not simply for the early opportunity it offered Itō to collaborate with renowned modernists, nor for the fact that it became an important touchstone in his repertoire. Rather, it shaped his approach to the dance poem form. While his early pieces performed at the Coliseum and elsewhere established his approach to choreography—brief evocations of an idea or theme; and his experimentation in the "Sword and Spear Dance" performances solidified his use of rhythmicized emotion to establish crystalline poetic force in his choreography, it was through his work on *At the Hawk's Well* that Itō developed the meditative, suspended quality that is seen in so many of his later pieces, such as *Caresse* and *En Bateau*.

What we see in this examination of Itō's London activities then, is a consolidation of his dance style, a process that occurred through his engagement with the dance poem concept. In addition to recognizing the significance of the dance poem to Itō's subsequent choreography, the intertwining of the Japanese movement with Itō's activities in London also demands that we attend to Itō as a double-facing figure. Itō was aware of the wonderful opportunity of his collaboration, so much so that he continued to perform *At the Hawk's Well* throughout his career—in New York, in Los Angeles, and in Tokyo. The play continued to serve as one of Itō's claims to modernism, evidence of his belonging in an artistic community that he had dreamed of joining since his youth, since before the term had even gained meaning. Similarly, Itō continued to use the term "dance poem" to describe his dances throughout his twenty-five years in the United States, and indeed, it also surfaces in descriptions of his method as he taught it to students after returning to Japan. We see in this constant effort of naming Itō's attempt to tie himself to

artistic developments in Japan, asserting his participation and relevance in a national movement, even as he remained abroad. What the London period vivifies then, is Itō's desire to keep one hand in each modernism, his desire to be—figuratively, but also perhaps literally as well—in both places at once.

We should therefore understand Itō as engaging in a doubled performance, always facing two different audiences. Unlike the split identity of hyphenated subjects, as described by David Palumbo-Liu, however, for Itō, the performance was the same for both audiences. Instead, what differed were the contours of intelligibility that gave the performance different meaning to different spectatorial groups. We might think of Tracy Davis's articulation of "repertoire" as the circulating discourses that enable audiences to understand performances, to thus consider Itō's London performances as belonging to two very different repertoire formations—one, that of Anglophone literary modernism, and the other, that of Japanese modern dance.[90] Insisting on his relevance to Japan's burgeoning modernism, Itō refused the displacement of distance, bringing Japan into a spatial co-presence with the London scene. In his engagement of two audiences at once, Itō thus performed himself as multiply modern.

Modernist Longing and Self-Invention

In his year at the Dalcroze Institute and his participation in the *At the Hawk's Well* collaboration, Itō had, by luck or canny instinct, placed himself at two of the major sites of European modernism. And yet, as if these experiences were somehow insufficient, Itō's biography is filled with fabricated anecdotes. Some of these, such as an invented trip to Paris on his way to Berlin, became so woven into the biography learned by his students that they are

[90] Tracy C. Davis, "Repertoire," *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film* 36:2 (2009).

frequently included in scholarship on Itō. While Senda Koreya attempted to correct some of his brother's fabrications in a post-script to the Japanese version of Helen Caldwell's biography, it has not been translated, allowing for continued repetition of these fictions.

My interest in these stories lies in a consideration of why he felt compelled to such fabrications and what this impulse tells us about modernist self-invention and the anxiety of the foreign artist. Two of these myths—his sojourn in Paris and his trip to Egypt—pertain to the European period of Itō's biography. It seems however, that Itō began to circulate these tales at some point after he arrived in the US. The stories are thus constructed out of hindsight, enabling Itō to place himself with, or in similar circumstances as, the most renowned modernists of his youth.

In likely the earliest act of autobiographical invention, Itō inserts a residency in Paris prior to his arrival in Berlin. According to Senda, however, Itō's ship from Japan docked in Marseilles on December 23, 1912, and he arrived in Berlin on December 28, making anything but the briefest of trips to Paris impossible. But in Itō's telling, Paris becomes a key site of his artistic education, gained through friendship with a catalog of notable modernists. He spends hours with Debussy, Anatole France, and Rodin, listening to them debate the meaning of art. In these conversations, he depicts himself as uncomprehending, his French too poor to grasp their debates. Nevertheless, he is innately drawn to the same questions as the artists whom he claims as his peers. In Itō's account, a shared aesthetic impulse, more powerful than linguistic barriers, asserts the connection of modernist kinship and locates Itō, both temporally and spatially, as present in the history of modernism.

At the same time that Itō plants himself in the middle of artistic Paris, he also plots for himself an alternative path. Haunted by questions about art, but rendered mute by his poor

French, Itō wanders the halls of the Louvre, where he could contemplate art, unhindered by language:

> Amidst this, was a room where art objects from Ancient Egypt were displayed, which everyday detained my feet. Passing through the other rooms beyond it, it became my habit to pass the entire day there. There were even times when the guard had to chase me out when closing time arrived.
> This room, to say it another way, what of Ancient Egypt grabbed me in this way, even at the time I could not have clearly explained it. But I had the sense that here, truly, the enigma of art was hidden.
> The first of mankind to establish the city-state, with a religion of nature worship, with all these fundamentals repeatedly spread across unrestrained picture scrolls, I felt in every point discord with Paris's maelstrom of modern sensation.[91]

As Senda points out, if Itō ever saw Egyptian art in Europe, it was probably in Berlin. But this change is not accidental. The geographic transposition, from Berlin to Paris, recalls that primal scene of modernism—Picasso's encounter with African masks in the Musée du Trocadéro in 1907.

Itō's mirroring of Picasso's epiphanic encounter asserts his own belonging and significance to modernism. That this story, like most of his anecdotes, emerged while Itō was in New York is key. Having entered the just-coalescing dance scene of the late 1910s and 1920s in New York, Itō quickly learned that while white artists were praised for the ways in which they creatively mined primitivist and oriental forms as the raw material for their aesthetic production, "ethnic" artists (a term that would not appear until 1940) were assumed to simply be rehearsing

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[91]Itō, *America and Japan*, 36.「その中でも、古代エヂプトの美術品を陳列した一室は、毎日私の足を引止めた。後には他の室を素通りにして、一日をそこに過ごすのが例となってしまった。時刻が来て番人から追い出されたことも機度となくあった。

この部屋の、言い換えると古代エヂプトの何が、このように私を捕えたのか、そのころの私にははっきり説明することは出来なかった。ただ、ここにこそ芸術の謎が秘められているような感じがするのであった。

人類で始めて都市国家を建設した彼等が、自然崇拝の宗教観にすべての基調を置いて繰展げた奔放な絵巻物は、パリーの中に渦巻いている近代感覚とはあらゆる点で背中合せをしているように思われた。」

natural impulses, that is, unartistic repetitions of inherited folk practices and rhythms. By echoing Picasso's moment of inspiration, Itō embraced the prerogatives of whiteness to discover and to use the culture of the exotic Other. This self-conscious aligning, and the utilization of an Oriental imaginary for his own artistic work, would become a repeated practice in Itō's actual biography. Indeed, as a Japanese, the increasing imperial power of his own nation allowed Itō a gaze quite similar to that of his white counterparts.

And yet, Itō also turned to Egypt to construct a narrative that contrasted with the conventional plot of a European education. In several versions of his autobiography, Itō sends himself to Egypt, replacing art objects with human relationship, and a European education with Near Eastern tutelage. In this fiction, Itō wanders along a dusty road in Alexandria, surrounded by camels and donkeys carrying luggage, weary under the blazing sun. At an oasis, under the shade of a tree, he discovers an old man teaching a group of intent children about astronomy.

> Suddenly in the road, the old man unexpectedly faced me, and my entire life was determined…
> The old man was called Abdellah Hassan. After that, I stayed in Egypt for half a year, and I was educated by the old man's fluent French. He, regardless of time and place, whenever he was struck with an idea, would speak about the stars and the universe, discussing philosophy and art. In the above, he was well-versed in modern literature, with abundant examples he explained his own beliefs…
> Especially when he spoke of his deep love for Ancient Egypt, I was so moved I forgot myself, and listened attentively while clasping the old sage's hands.[92]

[92] Ibid., 38-40. 「ところが、この大道での老人との対面がはしなくも私の一生を決定することになったのである。老人はアブデラ・ハッサンと呼ばれていた。その後、エヂプト滞在の半カ年を、この老人の流暢なフランス語で私は教育された。彼は時と場所を問わず、いつでも思いつくままに星や宇宙を語り、哲学や芸術とを論じるのだった。その上彼は近代文学にも通暁して、豊富な例証の中で自己の信念を説き進めた。
殊に、古代エヂプトへの深い愛情が語られるとき、私は感動にわれを忘れて、老師の手を握りしめながら聞入るのだった。」

Itō paints the scene with vivid detail—one suspects he spent as much time in the museum gazing at Orientalist canvases as he did staring at Egyptian art. By the time Itō wrote this passage in the post-war period, he had a skillful command of oriental evocation—the quick gestures (in both language and dance) that conjured everything from the luxuriance of a Middle Eastern harem to the austerity of a Buddhist priest. But as we have seen, this was a language Itō was already deeply familiar with, starting with his childhood in Japan. As Stefan Tanaka has demonstrated, at the turn of the century and well into the Taisho period, Japanese efforts to write a history that would match the West's led historians to identify and construct an "orient" for Japan—China—that represented Japan's origins and its development into a modern nation, mirroring the function of Western orientalism.[93] Hints of this historiography are evident in Itō's tale, in which the encounter with Abdellah Hassan "determines" his entire life. For Itō, the very ancientness of Egyptian civilization—so much older than that of Japan, was striking, and evocative of some form of radical knowledge and culture.

In another version of the story, recited in a lecture Itō gave in 1955 at the Institute for Comparative Studies of Culture at Tokyo Woman's Christian University, Itō gives more detail about the lessons he received from Abdellah Hassan:

> When the old man discovered that I was a student with an interest in the performing arts and dance, he began to draw examples from Maeterlinck, for he was the man of the moment…I was influenced tremendously by him [Hassan]. He was the one who gave me the desire to become a dancer. The performing arts are expressed by human movement, and what counts is balance. The old man told me, "A fifty-fifty balance is ordinary and tedious. The ratio of the center to the periphery must always be in flux. If one hundred is perfection, balance can be achieved at 70:30, 40:60, 99:1. Our mistake is that we always place ourselves in the center. This is why we can't keep our balance. When you stand teetering at the edge of something you can remain balanced…." His point was that we must catch the center of a movement. From a technical point of view, no matter how freely we perform, we never fall if we find our center.[94]

[93] Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

[94] Ewick and Kleitz, 19.

While the two passages adroitly execute romantic orientalism, they also perform a startling disruption of the expectations held for a person such as Itō. Within Itō's various autobiographies, the story is placed prior to his training at Dalcroze, and it offers Egypt as a replacement for Paris. In Paris, constrained by language, his study of art is limited to hazy ideas gleaned from his conversations with other modernists and to the enigmatic power of objects in the Louvre. In Egypt, by contrast, the universe itself becomes comprehensible, with everything from astronomy to performance united in a system of "harmony" and "balance"—key words that are pervasive in Itō's writings. Itō's invented trip to Egypt then, rewrites the standard narrative in which ambitious youth travel to Europe for their education. Indeed, Itō observes "In Paris, those questions which were full of anguish, when I came here [to Egypt] finally, their answers were found."[95] Egypt supplants Paris, and in this shift, Itō revises the circuits of modernist knowledge. The two discuss Maeterlinck; the Belgian dramatist whom Itō has already encountered during his training in Japan, is also well-known in the dusty streets of Egypt. Yet the two of them—the Japanese youth and Egyptian sage—use Maeterlinck, it seems, to unravel mysteries whose answers are not accessible to those in Europe. Notably, while there is a sort of imagined alliance of the East here, Itō does not posit for himself some innate knowledge of the spiritual mysteries of the universe; he too, must *learn* the secrets of balance and harmony.

In his invented trip to Egypt then, Itō does not merely demonstrate his Orientalist dexterity, but rather, reconfigures the nature of his artistic development. This is both a challenge to the center-periphery model, and also a plotting of alternative alliances. Abdellah Hassan's

[95] Itō, *America and Japan*, 43.「パリーでの、あの苦悶に充ちた疑問も、ここに来てようやく解答が得られたのであった。」

fluent French (with which detail Itō registers France's colonial attempt), is understood by Itō, where that of Debussy and Rodin was not. The fantasy is not uncontaminated by Europe, but rather, dramatizes the meeting of two "Others" for whom European knowledge is merely one tool with which to understand Art. The affection with which Itō speaks of this imaginary friend thus registers a desire to exceed the contours of his own path through Europe and the US, proffering an affinity with others marked by the brush of Orientalism. Enacting a gesture that recalls Leela Gandhi's "affective communities" Itō's invented trip to Egypt imagined the formation of friendships that seemed to disavow Western centrality.[96] As we will see, this fabricated alliance prefigures a sort of aesthetic strategy that was to appear in much of Itō's solo choreography in the United States.

The stories taking place during Itō's European period multiply over the pages of his writings and interviews—a competition-turned-friendship with Nijinsky, seeing Max Reinhardt's *Hamlet*, conversations with George Bernard Shaw. On the one hand, this is nothing more than artistic self-promotion, practiced by so many of Itō's fellow modernists (not to mention artists of any other period). On the other hand, this is a gesture of self-invention that registers an anxiety that, I am suggesting, is particular to the foreign artist circulating through Europe and the United States. Though Itō had been at two key sites—Hellerau's Dalcroze Institute and London's *At the Hawk's Well* community—it was not enough. In the accumulation of stories, one senses Itō hunger to have been everywhere, and to have met everyone, to have spread himself to all corners of modernist performance, that his claim to belonging might be unassailable. This desire—a modernist longing—begins at home; for Itō, in a Japan that self-consciously understood and

[96] Leela Gandhi, *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-de-Siècle Radicalism and the Politics of Friendship* (Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 2006).

wrestled with a modernization that always also threatened to mean Westernization. Senda writes that as a teenager, Itō pretentiously referred to his parents as *mōga* and *mōbo*—a modern girl and modern boy—and with these terms that were just coming into vogue in the 1910s, Itō claimed for his family a certain instinctually avant-garde disposition.[97] Throughout his career, Itō continued to enact this performative modernism, a self-conscious performance that attempted to compensate for the anxiety of belatedness or alterity.

The stories that asserted Itō's modernist belonging were not only his own. In much Itō scholarship, the reminiscences of Yeats and Pound shape Itō's image far more than his own writings.[98] One of the most frequently repeated snippets is from Pound's *Pisan Cantos*:

> So Miscio sat in the dark lacking the gasometer penny
> but then said: "Do you speak German?"
>
> to Asquith in 1914

It is the story that marks Itō's debut, his ascension from hunger and obscurity to a place in London's artistic world. Frequently read as evidence of Pound's racial and political alignments, it is also, in fact, a canny articulation of Itō's own mythology. The section turns on the "but" of the second line, but the moment of opportunity is not his invitation to perform, or even the performance itself, but rather, Itō's own navigation of his foreign status. Unable to adequately converse in English with the Prime Minister, Itō requests German, the language of the enemy. And Asquith, of course, generously complies. What is usually read as a sign of Itō's naiveté—if not helplessness—is in fact, a key image in the construction of his cosmopolitan persona. Insisting that wartime divisions do not hinder earnest communication, Itō becomes a figure of

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[97] Senda, "Atogaki," 150.

[98] Another fond, though Orientalist source is the memoirs of Lady Ottoline Morrell. Lady Ottoline Morrell, *Ottoline at Garsinton: Memoirs of Lady Ottoline Morrell, 1915-1918* (London: Faber, 1974).

international mediation. Perhaps more than any other, it was this mythic image that was to structure his sense of artistic purpose throughout the rest of his career.

The fabrications that Itō wove into his biography produced an expansion of his transnational itinerary. Already paradigmatic of a transnational mobility, with his stories, Itō stretched chronological time to accommodate his fantasies of place. Through Itō's fictions, he becomes difficult to pin down. Instead, occupying and producing multiple modernisms, whose chronologies overlap and whose narratives diverge and then converge, Itō performed himself as omnipresent, and constantly on the move.

And yet, in Itō's most famous dance from this period, he plants his feet, and does not move. Soon after arriving in New York, Itō premiered a new piece, *Pizzicati*, which was to become his signature work, used as the ending for many of his recitals. Whether he choreographed it during that final summer in London, or in the early fall in New York, the dance unmistakably evinces the influence of the *At the Hawk's Well* collaboration—not that of Yeats, but of Pound, with whom, as letters and snippets of poetry reveal, Itō enjoyed an affectionate rapport. David Ewick and Dorsey Kleitz have called *Pizzicati* a "vorticist shadow dance" suggesting the close relation between Itō's work and the British avant-garde movement of Vorticism. By accounting for *Pizzicati* as a vorticist dance poem, we gain a fuller sense of how Itō's time in London shaped his practice of the dance poem, differentiating it from that of Ishii and Yamada. We see as well, what might be meant by a vorticist dance—a concept that extends the literary and visual art term to the performing arts.

The dance is set to Delibes' "Pizzicato" from the ballet *Sylvia*, and it is very brief, barely a minute or two. A spotlight, set low at the front of the stage lights up on Itō, so that the shadow cast on the white backdrop behind him is immense. Throughout the dance, Itō's feet, planted in a

turned out second position with his knees slightly bent, do not move. Only his arms, thrusting and slashing through the air, oscillate around his body, in time with the music. On the backdrop behind, the magnified shadow dances as well, the swift plunges and swinging of the arms dominate the stage.

The dance is funny. This is worth noting because several commentators, reading the frequently reproduced Toyo Miyatake photo of the dance, characterize it as menacing, intimating perhaps, the violence that was to befall the world and upend Itō's life. [Fig. 4] For instance, Carol Sorgenfrei reads the image as suggesting a militaristic superiority of the Japanese body.[99] But set to Delibes' bouncing, flitting music, such interpretations seem overwrought. To be sure, in the photo, where Itō's fingers are spread out, as if his hands have become claws, and his shadow looms up behind him, the suggestion of menace is clear. But the figuration also brings to mind a child playing at being a bear, or a monster. The photograph is of the opening of the dance, a single moment of stillness before the windmilling begins. As soon as it does, the movement is continuous and fast, there would be no time to capture a photographic still, as Itō's arms whirl in a frenzy of precision. The dance seems to take joy in the fact that no matter how fast Itō moves, his shadow can keep up; the game of chase matching the ebullience of Delibes' score, *Pizzicati* represents someone playing with their shadow.

Figure 9: Itō in *Pizzicati*. Photograph by Toyo Miyatake, 1929.

[99] Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei, "Strategic Unweaving: Itō Michio and the Diasporic Dancing Body," in *Politics of Interweaving Performance Cultures: Beyond Postcolonialism*, ed. Erika Fischer-Lichte, Torsten Jost, and Saskya Iris Jain (Florence, KY: Taylor & Francis, 2014).

What then, makes the dance "vorticist"? Pound's transition from Imagism to Vorticism was instigated in the summer of 1914 by Amy Lowell's decision to have a "democratized committee" review submissions for her planned Imagist anthology. Dismissing what he was certain would be watered down Imagism, Pound was drawn to a group of painters and sculptors in London, which included Wyndham Lewis, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, and Jacob Epstein, known at the time as the "English Cubists." With the publication of the first issue of *Blast*, the group coalesced around a new movement—differentiated from Cubism and Futurism: Vorticism. Pound claimed that the dynamism at the center of Vorticism was what *he* had always meant by Imagism. Thus Pound wrote in his *Vorticism* essay in the *Fortnightly Review* in September 1914, "THE IMAGE IS NOT an idea. It is a radiant node or cluster; it is what I can, and must perforce, call a VORTEX, from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing. In decency one can only call it a VORTEX. And from this necessity came the name 'vorticism.'"[100] The Vorticists then, (particularly in Pound's formulation) took Imagism's focus on the visual and sought to inject dynamism and a sense of motion into the otherwise immobile forms of poetry, painting, and sculpture. What then, to make of a Vorticist dance, when dance is already, at its most basic, the dynamics of movement?

[100] Ezra Pound, "Vorticism."

Pizzicati's Vorticism becomes evident by way of a quotation of Wyndham Lewis, explaining the concept to the author and salon host Violet Hunt, "At the heart of the whirlpool is a great silent place where all the energy is concentrated. And there at the point of concentration is The Vorticist."[101] If we turn to a sketch Itō drew, rather than the more common photograph, we see a literal embodiment of Lewis' words. [Fig. 5] In the drawing, Itō imagines a sort of Vitruvian man, but one for whom motion, as opposed to a classical stasis, is the definition of being. The limbs radiate out, turbine-like, while the figure's torso holds center—"the great silent place where all the energy is concentrated." Dramatizing the tension between the silent, rooted torso, and the striking, whirling limbs, Itō, as the Vorticist, offered up the human body as a subject of poetry.[102]

Figure 10: Drawing of *Pizzicati*, by Itō Michio.

Pizzicati was sometimes referred to in the press as Itō's marionette dance. This was a characterization that echoed frequent descriptions of Itō's dancing, even while in London. A review in the *Egoist* of a February 1916 appearance at the Margaret Morris Theatre opined,

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[101] Violet Hunt, *I have this to Say: The Story of My Flurried Years* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1926), 211.

[102] The affective and aesthetic parallels between *Pizzicati* and the Vorticists' statements about their movement are supported by the matter of timing: Gaudier-Brzeska was killed at the front in June 1915 and Wyndham Lewis joined the Royal Artillery in March 1916. Publication of *BLAST* was suspended and Pound became the remaining promoter of Vorticism. Pound's *Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir* was published in April 1916, and that same spring, Pound acted as agent for Vorticist artworks, sending sending a collection to New York for an exhibition and arranging sales. This is also when Pound began the experiments with Alvin Langdon Coburn on the creation of "vortographs"—the machine was invented in 1917. Itō then, would have been regularly exposed to Vorticism, especially in the concentrated *At the Hawk's Well* period.

"Than Michio Itow no dancer more resembles a living marionette. The spirit of dance seems to take all conscious power from him and to actuate him with its own vivid and spontaneous movements."[103] The comparison of Itō to a marionette becomes a way of understanding his movement. What *Pizzicati* reveals is that the comparison was due to Itō's ability to isolate the movements of his limbs. As his drawing suggests, in his vision of the dance, each joint of the body was capable of independent articulation, as if joined by pegs. But if Itō is a marionette in *Pizzicati*, he is one unbothered by his strings. The force emanating from Itō's core denies the possibility of there being some puppeteer-overseer, rather, as the *Egoist* reviewer has it, the dance itself is the source of power. Both the dance, and Itō's drawing seem like a call and response to Pound's declaration in the first issue of *Blast*:

> You may think of man as that toward which perception moves. You may think of him as the TOY of circumstance, as the plastic substance RECEIVING impressions.
> OR you may think of him as DIRECTING a certain fluid force against circumstance, as CONCEIVING instead of merely observing and reflecting.[104]

The impact of the dance was not to be a single photographic still, or a sense of inward absorption, but rather, a multiplicity of movement—the body occupying all planes at once, carving out in space and in shadow the total occupancy of the human body.

The obsession with the body—the unit of the human—offered in *Pizzicati* also becomes part of Itō's compulsive self-invention. Explaining the origins of the dance, Itō offered yet another probably apocryphal story: Once, Itō visited the famous Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova, who "danced exquisitely Delibes' Pizzicati on her toes." She then asked Itō to return the favor,

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[103] Huntly Carter, "Spontaneitics," *The Egoist* 3:2, February 1916, 29. Carrie Preston notes that in a workshop at the Utah Repertory Dance Theatre Kyoko Ryutani, a student of Itō's, explained that Itō asked dancers to imagine themselves as marionettes moved by strings. "Michio Ito's Shadow: Searching for the Transnational in Solo Dance," in *On Stage Alone: Soloists and the Formation of the Modern Dance Canon*, eds. Claudia Gitelman and Barbara Palfy (Gainesville: University Press of Floria, 2012), 8.

[104] Ezra Pound, "Vortex" *Blast* 1 (June 1914).

but having brought none of his own music, he asked the pianist to play the same tune. "Planting his feet firmly on the floor he danced the entire dance using only his arms and hands."

As with all his stories, Itō's mythologizing of the origin of his most famous dance was a characteristic modernist gesture. In referencing his friendship with Pavlova, a dancer who, despite her devotion to classical methods and even repertoire, was lionized for her "modern spirit," Itō also positioned himself as an inner member of the avant-garde. And in rejecting the constricting and explicitly female tradition of balletic point, Itō declared his allegiance to modern dance's explorations of the human body in space. As with the other tales from his European period, the act of self-invention through narrative registers the question of what makes up a person—or persona, how it is constructed and performed. While the idea of the marionette, controlled by external forces, perhaps guides the dance, such an image is overwhelmed by the sheer force of Itō's propelling and whirling vorticist body. Here, self-invention is not just a matter of story-telling, but of choreography, as *Pizzicati* figures the body in motion as a site and a force of poetry.

Itō's experience in Europe thus stretched the boundaries of his body in time and space. From an arrhythmic isolation caused by his racial difference, at the Dalcroze Institute, Itō discovered music—and dance—to be activities through which he could assert not only a sense of belonging, but an exceptional role for himself as the figure who constituted a community as international. In doing so, Itō escaped the anxiety of being behind, planting himself firmly within Europe's modern time. In London, meanwhile, Itō conjoined his *At the Hawk's Well* collaboration to the dance poem experiments being carried out in Japan, thereby extending in space the significance of his dance, such that he could assert himself as a key figure in multiple modernisms. In both Germany and England, then, Itō's claim of belonging worked via

articulations of his relationship to Japan. This practice was to continue, and become more important in New York, where he embraced a japoniste identity as an act of impersonation—a way of simultaneously fulfilling public expectation and engaging in creative self-invention. Similarly, the modernist self-mythologizing that fueled his invented anecdotes accompanied him across the Atlantic, as Itō drew upon his Japanese background and European education to position himself as a central figure in the New York cultural scene.

Chapter 2
Impersonating the Orient: Japoniste, Oriental, and Interpretive Dance in New York

Itō arrived in New York on August 13, 1916. Over the following twelve years, Itō consolidated his reputation and artistic persona, establishing a place for himself within New York's emerging modern dance scene, as well as in broader theatrical networks, both downtown and on Broadway. His entrée into New York's cultural world was Japanese-inspired material consisting of pieces he had created in London as well as new choreography, a presentation shaped by the already-established discourse surrounding Japanese visual arts. Such presentation evidences that Itō embraced a japoniste identity, engaging in a similar act of self-invention as had his London collaborators. For Itō, however, the ethno-national marking of his person as Japanese meant that this embrace was also an act of impersonation, in Tina Chen's sense of the term. That is, in performing a japoniste persona, Itō both engaged in an act of creative self-invention (that was productive for his art-making as well), but also fulfilled an identity already established and expected of him. Itō's embrace of a japoniste identity not only provided an intelligible framework for his dance recitals and enabled his participation in Japan-related productions and events, it also facilitated his inclusion in the broader genre of Oriental dance. First as a member of Adolf Bolm's Ballet Intime, Itō's japoniste dances found a place alongside the works of other performers representing India, Russia, and so on; together the troupe embodied the idea of the Orient-as-collection. As one element of this collection, Itō's participation in Ballet Intime involved a further act of impersonation, in which his identity as Japanese extended to that of an "Oriental." With this expansion, Itō began to choreograph dances representing other Oriental traditions, producing his fantasies of Oriental embodiment. Itō understood these acts of ethnic impersonation as performances of embodied cosmopolitanism, by

which he corporeally and affectively aligned himself with the category of the East. Yet even in these Oriental dances, Itō retained his distinctive choreographic style, in which clear lines, rhythmic precision, and bodily control continued to evoke characteristics specifically attributed to Japanese art. In addition to extending his repertoire to included Oriental pieces, Itō also gained recognition in the genre of interpretive dance—the category of ethnically-unmarked (white) artistic dance. Itō's successful entry into the genre of interpretive dance thus revealed his japoniste impersonation as an act of compulsion, but also of flexibility. The broader discourse of Japanese aestheticism allowed Itō to present ethnically-unmarked choreography, the beauty of which could simultaneously reinscribe his Japaneseness, and affirm him as belonging to the movement of emerging modern dance.

Japoniste Self-Invention

In April 1917, a critic in *Vogue* praised the addition of Itō's dancing to New York's cultural scene: "The dancing of Michio Ito is authentic, because it tallies absolutely with all that we have ever seen exemplified in all the other arts in which the Japanese excel. To see him dance is suddenly to seem to see a thousand silken paintings, and wood-carvings, and paper screens, and lacquer lockers, and dwarfed gardens, and falling petals of pink blossoms, jiggled into momentary oscillation and lyric, living ecstasy."[105] Evidence of Itō's success in New York, the review also suggests the terms upon which Itō earned such favorable reception. In the critic's breathless description, Itō's performance induces a vision of cascading Japanese artistry, as the familiar products of japoniste consumption seem to come alive under the spell of his movement. The assertion that his dancing is "authentic" because it conforms to expectations set by the

[105] Clayton Hamilton, "Japanese Art comes to Life in the Dance," *Vogue*, April 15, 1917, 60.

circulation of other Japanese products thus reveals the way in which Japanese visual arts provided an enduring frame for Itō's dancing.

A glance at Itō's first New York recitals, however, reveals that his success was not immediate; with programs that mixed japoniste dancing with Western music, his programs were felt to be unintelligible, unplacable in a recognizable interpretive repertoire.[106] In response, Itō repackaged his dances into a more narrowly japoniste framework, a decision that can be recognized as an instance of Tina Chen's concept of *impersonation*. For Chen, impersonation is "a specific act that involves the assumption of a public identity that does not necessarily belong to 'someone else' but that has been assigned to and subsequently adopted by the performer in question in order to articulate an identity comprehensible to the public…"[107] The process of impersonation reveals that "impersonation and identity are not only related but in some sense mutually constitutive," such that these acts are ones of "*im-personation*, a performance by which Asian Americans are constituted and constitute themselves as speaking and acting subjects."[108] While Chen's theorization of impersonation describes the complex experience of the Asian American subject, an identity only articulated as such in the late 1960s, the concept of Asian American impersonation closely aligns with my reading of Itō in the US. In Itō's case, the nationality-indicating "American" portion of this identity might instead be characterized as "modernist" or even "cosmopolitan." That is, it represents the group identity in which he longs to claim a position of belonging. As in the hyphenated identity of Asian American, "Japanese" or the contemporary term "Oriental" is what represents Itō as both a special case of the modernist

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[106] See Tracy C. Davis, "Nineteenth-Century Repertoire," *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film* (2009) 36:2, 6-28.

[107] Tina Chen, *Double Agency: Acts of Impersonation in Asian American Literature and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005) xviii.

[108] Ibid, and xvii.

(American) identity, and what simultaneously marks him as always outside of this group. Moreover, as will be discussed in Chapter 3, my use of Chen's theory hints at the ways in which Itō's experiences are a sort of antecedent for the very practices and identity formations that have been articulated as Asian American, something that we should take seriously as part of Itō's biography. In embracing audience expectations informed by Japanese visual arts, Itō understood himself to be adopting the identity of a japoniste—a connoisseur of Japanese aesthetics—just as Yeats, Pound, and others of his London circle had done. However, while for his white peers, japonisme offered a way of extending identity out of the confinement of normative social expectations, Itō's Japanese ethnicity meant that his act of japoniste impersonation collapsed into a predetermined identity, in which "japoniste" and "Japanese" were indistinguishable.

The Japanese repertoire that Itō had begun to build in London served as his entrée into New York's artistic world. After disengaging himself from the Oliver Morosco Broadway show which had initially brought him to New York, Itō was soon engaged to oversee the stage arrangements and costumes for the Washington Square Players' production of *Bushido*, a version of Izumo Takeda's famous *Terakoya* scene, translated by M.C. Marcus and performed at the Comedy Theatre. Itō's efforts were widely praised in the press, positive reception that helped lay the groundwork for his status as an expert in stage japonisme. Even better, Itō took advantage of the production's standard Sunday closure by offering his own recital in the theatre on December 6th. While Itō may have had little choice in fulfilling peers' and audience desires for japoniste material, he never let an opportunity pass to present his own dance work. The pattern established with this first concert held for many of his subsequent presentations; whenever he was pressed into performing in, or helping out with a Japanese drama, he presented his own dance recitals on the theatres' dark days.

This first New York recital was an opportunity for Itō to learn what would please critics and spectators. His musical choices, directed by his own personal taste, did not cohere with the japoniste genre he had promised with a program billed as "Japanese Dances" and the *Bushido* folding screens serving as backdrop. The matinee offered twelve dances by Itō, assisted by his new partner, the Danish dancer Tulle Lindahl, and with accompaniment by the Erdmann Quintet. Recycled from London, Itō danced his "Mai no Hajime" (Introduction to the Dance) and "Shojo" to the *Nutcracker* selections "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" and "Arabian Dance." The female demon dance, now called "Hangia" was set to Rachmaninov's "Prelude in D Minor"; the "Fox Dance" and a version of the "Sword Dance" also reappeared. It was at this first recital that Itō debuted "Pizzicati" (on this program, called "Caprice"). He also offered a "Japanese Fisher Song" to a tune Itō sang himself, and "Japanese Girl on Cherry Hill" to music from *Madame Butterfly*. For Lindahl, he created "Sakura Sakura," "Chinese Dance" (to the Nutcracker piece of the same name), "Gypsy Dance" (to a selection from Saint Saens' opera *Henry the 8th*), and "Exasperation" (to Chopin's "Fantasie").[109] The press was positive, though pointed out the seeming disjunction between Itō's musical selections and the dances. As the reviewer for the *New York Tribune* commented, "As the music played was by such very Japanese composers as Tschaikowsky, Puccini, Saint-Saëns, Delibes and Chopin, it is evident that the Japanese was diluted….His gyrations were generally utterly out of keeping with the spirit of the music, but they possessed a certain exotic appeal which may or may not have been Japanese."[110] Although it was easily acknowledged that many of Itō's dances were original to him—that is, not

[109] Program, *Michio Itow in Japanese Dances*, December 6, 1916, Comedy Theatre, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

[110] "Japanese Dances Seen," *New York Tribune*, December 7, 1916, 5.

"traditional" Japanese dance, Itō's use of Western classical music for his japoniste pieces did not make sense to critics.

Positive reception in subsequent recitals confirmed this lesson. It became clear that while there was no sense of contradiction in his racially-marked body shifting between different dance categories, within each one, Itō was expected to maintain the culturally discrete boundaries of genre. For instance, in a recital in early December 1916, Itō matched japoniste music to his japoniste dances, reserving the use of Western classical music for his "interpretive" pieces.[111] In his next March 1917 recital, he repeated several works from the December recital, and added two more Japanese themed-pieces for Lindahl, and as well as his "Gollywog's Cakewalk" to Debussy. This time, a reviewer commented, "his sword dances, fox dance, and 'female demon' carried authentic likeness of the feudal romances, the folklore and ghostly legends, so cherished in patriotic traditional, highly polished art of the East…. and the audience liked the contrast of Itow's European 'Marionette' and 'Golliwog's Cakewalk.'"[112] In these early recitals, Itō's japoniste dancing was well-received when it accorded with audience expectations shaped by several decades of exposure to other artistic media from Japan. Having fulfilled these generic expectations, Itō was then free to present other styles without a sense of incongruity.

From the outset, Itō's work was most appreciated when it fulfilled the image of Japan as a land of aestheticism. While the expectations held by spectators were thus ones of ethnic stereotype, in meeting the expectation of artistic skill, Itō's work was hailed as innovative. For

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[111] Starting in the summer of 1917, Itō used music composed by Charles Griffes, Cyril Scott, and Lassalle Spier, all of whom were interested in oriental-style music as a mode of modernizing their own compositions. See, Takeishi Midori, *Japanese elements in Michio Ito's Early Period (1915-1924): Meetings of East and West in the Collaborative Works,* ed. and rev., David Pacun (Tokyo: Gendaitosho, 2006), 43-44.

[112] "Michio Itow in Dances," *New York Times*, March 8, 1917, 8.

instance, the *New York Times* reported on the *Bushido* production: "Mr. Itow used a novel scheme to make the costumes atmospheric. He could not find the figured silks he wanted, so he procured plain fabrics and painted typical Japanese designs on them."[113] Resourcefulness here becomes an opportunity for Itō to display his artistic talent, which, not limited to his dancing, is seen as so wide-ranging as to be an ethnically-determined ability. In addition to admiring Itō's artistic skill (and seeing the broad range of his activities as art), the framework of Japanese aestheticism provided a language with which to experience Itō's performance. Thus the *Washington Post* wrote, "When Itow dances, he glides from one symbolic pose into another, using them with the facility with which a skilled stenographer uses groupings of lines and curves to transcribe sound."[114] The critic's appraisal, comparing the contours of Itō's poses to the brief shapes of the stenographer's condensed dictation, at once evokes values of aesthetic abstraction, visual artistry, and japonisme. Stenographic shorthand, a system of symbols corresponding to whole words or ideas, as well as to individual letters, here implicitly evokes the idea of Japanese (and Chinese) characters.[115] The symbolic compression achieved in Itō's dancing is thus understood as a fundamentally Japanese quality. The critic's clear appreciation for the beauty with which Itō has arranged himself in movement and in stillness on stage reiterates the seeing-of-Japaneseness, as the unremarkable tools of expression—writing, dancing, and the body itself, are revealed in Itō's performance to be interconnected elements of an entire culture of aestheticism. The language of aesthetic japonisme thus structured Itō's reception, dictating a way

[113] "The New Plays," *New York Times*, November 12, 1916, X6.
[114] "Famous Dancer Here This Week," *Washington Post*, August 5, 1916, SM4.
[115] On the significance of Chinese characters to modernism, see Christopher Bush, *Ideographic Modernism: China, Writing, Media* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

of seeing in which Itō's dancing was always a multiplying of artistic expression, as the ethnic meanings of his body reiterated the (inseparable) effects of the dance itself.

The paradigm of aesthetic japonisme was one Itō was already familiar with; it had been the basis of his collaboration in London with Yeats, Pound, and their circle. Japan, simultaneously a geographic region, a history, and an idea, provided material, form, and style for the artistic experimentation carried out by these Anglophone modernists, as well as many others working throughout Europe, the United States, and beyond. But as John Walter de Gruchy and Christopher Reed, among others, have argued, in addition to being a source of artistic inspiration, Japan, figured as a realm of aestheticism, also served as a discourse for imagining and enacting an alternative community of male homosociality.[116] With frequent reference to cultural elements such as jiu-jitsu, bath houses, and codes of samurai conduct, Japan was imaged as a place where artistic elegance and natural beauty intermingled, coded as a refuge for the homosocial and homoerotic. As Reed writes, "Whimsical. Eccentric. Decadent. Self-indulgent. Characterizations of *japonisme*, whether admiring or pejorative, register its essential qualities as a performance of fantasies that offered alternatives to conventional identities associated with nations, cities, and of course, gender. …[This] allowed *japonisme* to express fantasies of fitting in elsewhere at the same time that it cast dissent from social norms not as deviant, but as extra ordinary."[117] The desire for belonging evinced and gratified in the practice of japonisme mirrors Itō's own. And so we should understand his increased engagement in New York with Japanese-derived material, as not simply a response to audience expectation, but rather as a turn that marks Itō's own

[116] John Walter de Gruchy, *Orienting Arthur Waley: Japonism, Orientalism, and the Creation of Japanese Literature in English* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), Christopher Reed, *Bachelor Japanists: Japanese Aesthetics and Western Masculinities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

[117] Reed, 116.

japonisme—an equally pleasurable practice of mining traditional Japanese forms in service of creating new art.

In New York, japonisme as a homosocial practice intersected with other meanings and performances of group identity. While in London, women were undeniably present—Itō's society debut took place at Lady Ottoline Morrell's house, and the *At the Hawk's Well* performances occurred in the houses of Lady Emerald Cunard and Lady Islington—nevertheless, the active circle of artistic production, and even reception, was notably male. By contrast, in New York, female arts spectatorship and patronage claimed a more central role in shaping Itō's career. This shift is likely due to Itō's involvement in the emerging scene of early modern dance—a discipline primarily performed and watched by women, as well as the distinct combining in late-Progressive Era New York of charitable activity with arts patronage. From the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries, women in the US played an increasingly influential and public role in the cultivation of cultural, social, and political causes and activities. As historian Kathleen McCarthy observes, "Before women won the vote in 1920, philanthropic endeavors—giving, voluntarism, and social reform—provided the primary means through which the majority of middle- and upper-class women fashioned their public roles."[118] Female cultural patronage was part of the larger movement of suffragist and social reform activities of the early 20th century, but it also drew non-politicized women who accrued social capital through their investment in the arts. As Ralph Locke and Cyrilla Barr remind us, money was only one facet of the assistance women provided to artists, in addition to time, creative and philosophical

[118] Kathleen D. McCarthy, *Women's Culture: American Philanthropy and Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), xxi. See also, Karen J. Blair, *Torchbearers: Women and their Amateur Arts Associations in America, 1890-1930* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).

compatibility, spaces in which to work, and audience access.[119] When Itō performed for these female-organized charitable events, he joined other early modern dancers such as Ruth St. Denis, Isadora Duncan, and Loie Fuller in occasioning events at which "women stretched the boundaries of—while capitalizing on—the domestic responsibilities and sensibility assigned to them by separate spheres ideology," as Linda Tomko explains.[120]

Meanwhile, women's investment in both philanthropy and the arts intersected with an ongoing appreciation of Japanese aesthetics and products as a way of not only stylishly decorating their homes, but of asserting an attitude of cosmopolitan knowledge and consumption. As Mari Yoshihara has demonstrated, in Europe and especially in the US, middle-class and elite white women were the major consumers of japonisme, filling their houses with Japanese items, throwing Japanese-themed parties, and attending Japanese cultural events. As with the trend for greater participation in public philanthropy, engagement with Asia offered women opportunities for self-expression that contrasted with the restrictions prevalent in both private and public life.[121] It is essential to recognize then, the similarity in the engagement with Japan carried out by

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[119] Ralph P. Locke and Cyrilla Barr, eds, *Cultivating Music in America: Women Patrons and Activists since 1860* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

[120] Linda Tomko, *Dancing Class: Gender, Ethnicity, and Social Divides in American Dance, 1890-1920* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 55.

[121] Mari Yoshihara, *Embracing the East: White Women and American Orientalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). On japonisme in the United States, see William Hosley, *The Japan Idea: Art and Life in Victorian America* (Hartford, CT: Wadsworth Atheneum, 1990); Julia Meech-Pekarik and Gabriel P. Weisberg, *Japonisme Comes to America: The Japanese Impact on the Graphic Arts, 1876-1925* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1990). On the merchants who facilitated American women's engagement with Japanese products and art, see Constance Chen, "Merchants of Asianess: Japanese Art Dealers in the United States in the Early Twentieth Century," *Journal of American Studies* 44 (February 2010). On the intersections of women's japonisme and the cultivation of modern theatre, see Tara Rodman, "A Modernist Audience: The Kawakami Troupe, Matsuki Bunkio, and Boston Japonisme," *Theatre Journal* 65 (December 2013).

On both sides of the Atlantic, women's embrace of Japanese objects was frequently understood as a threat to the authority that elite men held; as early as 1868, Edmond de Goncourt complained, "The taste for things Chinese and Japanese! We were among the first to have this taste. It is now spreading to

both circles of homosocial male artists and by bourgeois and elite women. For both groups, the japoniste attitude offered a way to imagine, and performatively inhabit, alternatives to restrictive social orders and social roles.

The spring and summer of 1918 marked the period of Itō's most sustained and direct engagement with Japanese material, extending to his dance recitals, a production of the *noh* play *Tamura* at the Neighborhood Playhouse, and a presentation of *At the Hawk's Well*. His old friend and mentor, Yamada Kosaku was in town, nearing the end of his own US tour, as was the dancer Komori Toshi.[122] In February, Itō presented a dance recital, assisted by Komori and Lindahl, with a majority of new pieces. These new pieces were explicitly japoniste; indeed, their titles were given in romanized Japanese, without a translation as had been Itō's earlier practice. For music, Itō used original Japanese melodies arranged by Lasalle Spier, who also provided live accompaniment. The only non-japoniste pieces on the program were Itō's ever popular "Golliwog's Cakewalk," the Chinese dance from the *Nutcracker* (titled, "A Fable"), danced by Lindahl, and the new "Spirit Escaping from Bondage" to Saint-Saëns. Running for three Sunday matinees, the program for this recital suggests how, especially when collaborating with other Japanese artists, Itō felt both the compunction and the interest to present primarily japoniste material.

Itō's next endeavor, a production of *Tamura* at the Neighborhood Playhouse, clearly represented the ways in which japonisme offered a mode of engagement for women interested in

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everything and everyone, even to idiots and middle-class women." Quoted in Lionel Lambourne, *Japonisme: Cultural Crossings between Japan and the West* (London: Phaidon Press, 2005), 131.

[122] For information on Yamada's US tour, see David Pacun, "'Thus we cultivate our own World, thus we share it with others': Kosçak Yamada's Visit to the United States, 1918-1919," *American Music* 24:1 (February 2006); for information on Komori Toshi, see Motegi Hideo, *Komori Toshi and the Japanese of Paris* [Komori Toshi to Pari no nihonjin], (Tokyo: Hatsubai Seiunsha, 2011).

uniting philanthropic and artistic work. The Playhouse, funded by the Lewisohn sisters, Alice and Irene, was tied to the Henry Street Settlement House.[123] While the Playhouse was intended to provide opportunities for artistic education and expression to neighborhood immigrants, it also served as an outlet for the Lewisohn sisters' artistic ambition of producing experimental, professional-level theatre. The production of *Tamura*, inspired by the sisters' earlier travels to Japan, notably satisfied this latter aim. The production brought together several threads of New York japonisme; costumes and masks were borrowed from the art collector Howard Mansfield and from Stewart Culin, the curator of the Brooklyn Museum, who also arranged to have woodblock prints from the museum's collection displayed in the theatre. Using the Pound/Fenollosa translation, Itō played the *shite* role, and Irene Lewisohn the *waki*, making good upon the noh lessons she had taken in Japan in 1910. The verse lines, spoken in English, were voiced by Alice Lewisohn and Ian Maclaren, as Itō and Irene danced. For the revival production in 1921, the *New York Times* reported a packed audience of 400, suggesting that Irene Lewisohn was not the only one whose attraction to Japan was satisfied by *Tamura*.[124]

Performances of *Tamura* continued on weekends in March and April, by which time Yamada had joined Itō and Komori in New York. On April 6, Itō offered a new recital at the Neighborhood Playhouse that shared the program with a performance of *Tamura*, as well as a "mime play" written by Itō, with music by Spier, called *The Donkey*. For the dance and mime play portions, Itō was again assisted by Komori and Lindahl. Komori and Itō each danced a new piece by Yamada, who accompanied them; Komori performed *Harusame* (Spring Rain) and Itō performed *Nikken no Ippen* (A Page from a Diary), the dance poem that Ishii Baku had

[123] John P. Harrington, *The Life of the Neighborhood Playhouse on Grand Street* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 16.

[124] "Give Japanese 'Noh' Dance," *New York Times*, January 9, 1921, 2.

originated in Tokyo two years earlier. As noted previously, Yamada used the title "A Page from a Diary" for more than one musical composition; it is not clear, therefore, whether Itō danced to the same piece as Ishii had, or rather, engaged in the same creative process, whereby a page from Yamada's diary was used as the basis for the poetic expression of a feeling of a day. Together, the three forms of performance—the *noh* play, the mime play, and the modern dances—offered a complex gloss on Itō's japoniste work, as the evening was titled, "Modern and Classic Japanese Pantomimes and Dances."[125] With references to traditional dances and theatrical forms, the majority of the work was, in fact, entirely modern in spirit, reflecting the range of sources with which Itō and Yamada were engaged as Japanese artists who had spent a significant period of time abroad.

Later in April, the group offered a second recital at the Greenwich Village Playhouse, with an almost entirely new program. This recital suggested the freedom the artists felt to present their modern work, without recourse to the frame of traditional Japanese arts. For this set of performances, nearly all the pieces were by Yamada (the exceptions were single pieces by Spier and Griffes, and recitation by Matsuyama Yoshinori of the poems that accompanied two of Itō's sword dances). This recital thus particularly reflected Yamada's musical experiments and interests. As Takeishi Midori comments, "While words such as 'Petit Poem', 'Blue Flame', and '*Nikki no Ippen*' demonstrate Yamada's modernist roots—he was strongly influenced by Scriabin—his adaptations of traditional *Koto* works such as '*Chidori no Kyoku*' and '*Kyo no Shiki'* represent a substantial advance in the arrangement and treatment of Japanese melodies and themes as compared with other contemporary attempts."[126] In this collaboration between dancer

[125] Program, "Modern and Classic Japanese Pantomimes and Dances" April 6, 1918, Neighborhood Playhouse, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.
[126] Takeishi, 51.

and composer, then, New York audiences had an opportunity to see not authentic reproduction of classical Japan, as they might have supposed, but rather, the efforts of modern artists to come up with forms of expression that drew upon their European training but expressed something about their relationship to Japan, and their various visions for what modern Japanese art might be.

Yamada and Itō's efforts at self-representation through amalgamated japoniste forms, New York society engagement with Japan, and women's philanthropic activity all came together in the production of *At the Hawk's Well* at the Greenwich Village Theatre on July 10, 1918. For this production, Itō, Komori, and Lindahl danced the three roles, while Yoshinori Matsuyama, Anne Wynne O'Ryan, Gwendolwyn Gower, H. Asheton Tong, and Martin Birmbaum chanted the verse. The music, composed by Yamada, was performed by musicians listed as Ichikawa and Sakan. Martin Birnbaum, an art dealer who had frequented Charles Rickett's London salon while Itō was still in England, had been integral to the production's realization. Birnbaum arranged to have the Dulac masks and costumes from the original production sent over for the New York premiere, timed to coincide with a Dulac exhibition he had organized. Takeishi has compared Yamada's score to Dulac's 1921 version that was included in the printed edition of the play (and likely differed somewhat from what was actually used in the 1916 performances). She has found that while Dulac attempted to approximate traditional *noh* music in structure and by employing Japanese scales, Yamada composed a "simpler, folk-like style colored with a light Japanese tint" for harp accompaniment. She also notes that Yamada did not compose new music for the Hawk's dance, leading her to hypothesize that the traditional Japanese instruments that Charles Griffes remembered from the production might have been used for the dance portion, or perhaps Itō danced to *noh*-style chanting.[127]

[127] Ibid, 55.

The separation of the dancing and speaking, also a change from the London production, was characteristic of all of Itō's New York japoniste works that involved text. Like *At the Hawk's Well*, the Neighborhood Playhouse *Tamura* had also split up the roles into spoken verse and movement. When Itō performed his sword dances, he repeated the way it had been done in London, with a Japanese friend reciting the poetic verse while he danced.[128] Other programs, listing a "sword dance" without any accompanying recitation, suggest that Itō developed a dance-only piece that was, if not similar to, certainly derived from the London pieces. There is no clear reason why Itō always split these roles in New York. Perhaps for *Tamura* he was anxious about his English, and he might have had similar concerns for himself and Komori with *At the Hawk's Well*. Or perhaps he (or Lewisohn) worried that the slow movement and chanting done in one body would strike American spectators as strange. Whatever the reason, the effect of this change was to reiterate the image of the silent Japanese body, doubled by the common trope of dance as a speechless art, with the words of the plays assigned to (usually white) narrative bodies. The change also eliminated a key feature of *noh*—the flexibility of subjectivity—wherein a character's point of view is seamlessly taken up and spoken by both the actor playing that character and the chorus. Itō's version, in which chanters sitting on the side of the stage narrated and enacted the movement of the dancers at center, instead recalled *bunraku*, where the (higher status) singers' poetic verse is held apart from the puppeteers' movement of the puppets.

While in London, Yeats and Pound had been careful to restrict their audience to a carefully chosen few, in New York, supported by elite female patronage, the play circulated far more broadly. The July performance of *At the Hawk's Well* was given as a benefit for the Free

[128] Since in all these cases, the reciter was Japanese, it is impossible to tell whether the original Japanese poems, or Ezra Pound's translations, as printed in the 1916 issue of *Future*, was used. Reviews never comment upon the recitation, which suggests that it was done in English.

Milk for France Fund, part of the charitable war effort led by American women that aimed to send a ton of dry milk to France daily for children, wounded soldiers and tubercular patients. Following the New York performance, it served as the entertainment for a number of other benefits supporting the Free Milk Fund. On August 17, it was performed in White Sulfur Springs, West Virginia and on the 19th in Washington D.C., it was given as part of a "Japanese fete" with Mme. Jusserand, wife of the French Ambassador, in attendance. The following week it appeared in Newport, Rhode Island, and then on August 24, was featured as part of a Venetian festival sponsored by the Italian embassy in Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts. *At the Hawk's Well* thus revealed itself to be ideal for the charity circuit. A Japan-sourced play, written by an eminent Irish poet, presented by a mixed cast of Japanese, Danish, and American performers, it embodied in its production the very image of the world coming together in a shared cultural experience; it thus became a symbol of the sense of international support the Free Milk Fund organizers hoped to communicate.

The connection between Japanese performance and philanthropy was made again, quite directly, following the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923. In June of 1924, July and December of 1925, and March and June of 1927, Itō performed at benefits held at various country estates for the purpose of raising money for the reconstruction of Tsuda College for Women in Tokyo. These repeat benefits were characterized as not simply a matter of charitable giving, or even women's politics, but of international relations. At these events, the relation between Japan and the West was explicitly japoniste, in that the benefits were repeatedly described as motivated by the desire to acknowledge a certain debt owed to Japan's cultural wealth. As the chair of the benefit committee, Mrs. Vanderlip wrote, "This movement is more than the building of a school in Japan, more than a cultural influence, more than an instrumentality for the progress of

feminism in Japan. It is a gesture for international peace, an evidence of good will between citizens of two countries, a material help from a country rich in her resources to a country ancient in her culture."[129] For these appearances, Itō consistently offered his Japan-themed dances, alongside other Japanese compatriots who offered demonstrations of flower arrangement, fan painting, and jiu-jitsu. For example, at one benefit, the famous opera soprano Miura Tamaki sang Japanese songs and an aria from *Madame Butterfly*; there was also a tennis match between the professional players Seiichero Kashio and Tenzo Shimizu. The performers and performances at the benefits were not restricted to Japanese participants or dancers however; Doris Humphrey and the Denishawn dancers performed at one of these events. While the display of Japanese bodies performing Japanese culture was therefore the default, it was not the rule. Yet within this framework, Itō's japoniste dances appeared on his body as natural articulations of embodied personal history and culture.

Itō's productivity in New York as a japoniste bespeaks what Christopher Reed has characterized as the "rich history of self-invention allowed by the idea of Japan in the West."[130] Not only the province of white male artists, japonisme offered Itō a way to render his dance experiments intelligible for the reception community that supported his work. Within the confines of the japoniste discourse, critics gladly acknowledged the force of Itō's creativity and capabilities of corporeal expression. And yet, the practice of japonisme carried out by his white peers was also markedly different from Itō's acts of japoniste impersonation, precisely because the history, culture, and traditions that served as artistic raw material were considered "his own." As Chen observes,

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[129] "Japanese Lantern Ball Will Open Series of Tsuda College Dances," *New York Herald Tribune*, November 22, 1925, C3.

[130] Reed, 19

> one of the defining characteristics of the *public identity* Asian Americans have been assigned is that of perpetual foreignness. As critics have noted, the terms "Asian" and "American" have often been perceived to be incompatible, a perception whose cultural rootedness and currency is undergirded by an entire network of historical, legal, and social practice…With the pervasive ideas of Asian Americans as somehow never being able to be "American" enough, the very nature of Asian American identity might be thought of as *one that requires one to impersonate fundamentally oneself.*[131] [italics in original].

Itō's engagement with japonisme, an aesthetic that enabled both personal creativity as well as recognizable success, nevertheless involved a collapsing of the distinction between artistic attitude and putatively innate characteristic. For Itō, pursuing japonisme meant impersonating Japaneseness, an identity already assumed as his own by virtue of his nationality and ethnicity. While the embrace of japonisme thus enabled Itō's inclusion in artistic and social circles, it nevertheless marked him as foreign. Indeed, the inescapability of this identity soon rendered Itō as not only Japanese, but as a compressed and immediately recognized sign of Japan. Thus when *Vogue* ran an ad for its travel bureau in 1919, it could use Itō as the benchmark for standard knowledge of Japan: "Do you think you've seen the soul of Japan because you watched Michio Itow bringing the Nō dance to Broadway—and recognized Fuji-yama when you saw it spreading a white profile on somebody's fan? Don't go back to town in September this year—slip out along the calling sea lanes to the chrysanthemum festival in old Tokyo!"[132] The quick mention of Itō's name demonstrates the extent of his fame. But the advertisement also plays on the collapse of subject and its (purchasable) representation, as the image of Mt. Fuji painted on a fan stands in for the real thing. Itō too, performing *noh* dance on Broadway, thus is depicted as attenuated from the real Japan. Itō's embrace of japonisme, and the collapse of this identity with the ethnic identity assigned his body, here reveals one of the risks of impersonation. For in fulfilling the

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[131] Tina Chen, 17-8.
[132] "Do you know the East that's West?" *Vogue*, September 15, 1919, 30.

public expectations held for him, Itō's performance of a japoniste self could be taken, and dismissed, as inauthentic, no longer the real thing.

Becoming Oriental

At his first recital in New York, Itō's japoniste dances, given titles in the program such as "Mai no hajime" (Introduction to the Dance) and "Sho-jo" (A spirit of wine), were paired with Western classical music. As discussed above, critics found the pairing jarring, and Itō soon learned to avoid such stylistic crossings. It is clear that his musical selections in this first recital reflected his own personal taste; throughout his career, Itō gravitated to accompaniment by Debussy, Chopin, Schumann, Scriabin, Ravel and other Western composers. However, the music Itō used for his dances in that first recital—"Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy," "Arabian Dance," and "Chinese Dance," all from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*—suggests that in deviating from a narrowly japoniste program, Itō was drawn to the imaginative world of the Orient. While the ballet version of the *Nutcracker*, created by Petipa in 1892 for the Russian Imperial Theatre was rejected by critics and quickly forgotten, the music circulated through Europe and was well known. In the second act, Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* presents a sampling of Oriental musical themes. The music of the Spanish, Arabian, and Chinese *divertissements*, all immediately recognizable as signatures of geographic imaginaries, produce the pleasure of familiarity with tropes of the exotic. *The Nutcracker* thus partakes of the common formation of the Orient-as-collection, a practice of ordering the exotic as a comprehensible and categorizable display, seen everywhere from the ethnographic exhibitions at World's Fairs to the arrangement of curio cabinets in bourgeois domestic interiors. In using these selections for his recital then, Itō claimed for himself the pleasures of the Oriental imaginary, mining the melodies and evocations of the

exotic for his own creative purposes. Indeed, in New York, Itō's initial popularity as a japoniste performer expanded to the broader genre of Oriental dance, as he presented dances on Chinese, Spanish, Thai and other themes. Itō's practice of Oriental dance thus comprised yet another set of acts of impersonation; in representing other ethnic personas, the distinction between his ethnic performances and his racial identity collapsed. Unable to escape the slippage between being Japanese and being Oriental, for Itō, these performances became a practice not of representation, but of embodiment. In accepting the attribution of the Orient, Itō understood his acts of ethnic impersonation as performances of embodied cosmopolitanism, a claim of international belonging particularly rooted in his racialized body.

In the summer of 1917, when he joined Adolf Bolm's Ballet Intime, Itō rapidly absorbed the paradigm of the Orient-as-collection. Bolm, a former principal and ballet master in Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, transferred the Russian Ballet's version of spectacular Orientalism to the American dance stage. In this troupe, Itō was featured with two other principles—Ratan Devi and Roshanara (both British women performing versions of India), with supporting dancers from Western Europe and the United States, such as the American Mary Eaton, Spanish Rita Zalmani, and Itō's Danish partner, Tulle Lindahl. In a typical program, such as the company's first in Atlantic City on August 5th, each performer specialized in a single ethnic tradition. For that recital, Bolm performed his *Dance Macabre* to music by Saint-Saens, as well as his Assyrian dance "with special musical setting by Alexander Moloof. Itō presented several japoniste numbers with Tulle Lindahl, to music by Charles Griffes. Roshanara gave three Indian dance numbers, while Ratan Devi chanted several folk songs of the "Far East, to which she plays her

own accompaniment on a native instrument called the tambourne."[133] In the Ballet Intime, Itō's japoniste dancing thus figured as one curio in the company's display of the Orient on stage.

The array of ethnic traditions collected together in Ballet Intime allowed spectators to identify and compare different Orients. For example, the *New York Tribune* observed:

> The dancing of Michio Itow has an angularity about it, a sharpness and dryness of rhythm that is exciting without always being intelligible. Japanese art depends more largely upon abstract qualities, purity of line and unity of composition than the art of other Oriental lands. In India the human elements—love, the mountains, the harvest—predominate, and perhaps that is why the Hindu dances of Roshanara and the Kashmiri songs and East Indian ragas of Ratan Devi find their way so easily to the attention of their audiences.[134]

In the company's programs, differences in repertoire and style provided the foundation for ethnographic deduction, as the dancers together offered a corporeal knowledge of the Orient.

Figure 11: "Manhattan Nights and Exotic Entertainers," Feature on Ballet Intime, 1917, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Itō's dancing was seen as representative of Japan not merely because of the content of his dances, or his costume and music selections, but because its "angularity," its "sharpness and dryness of rhythm," and its "purity of line and unity of composition" recalled an entire way of knowing and recognizing aesthetic Japaneseness. This was in comparison to the established mode of embodying India, which relied upon a choreographic language of supple arms, arched backs, counter-posed hips, and a foot extended out in demi-relevé. Thus a reviewer described one of Roshanara's dances: "Two furtive, pallid, crawling forms appear against a dusky blue curtain. They are the arms of Roshanara, for all the world like a pair of white adders."[135] Without

[133] "What the Theatres Offer This Week," *Washington Post*, August 5, 1917, SM2.
[134] "Adolf Bolm's Ballet is Largely Adolf Bolm," *New York Tribune* August 22, 1917, 9.
[135] MEH, "Through Our Own Opera Glasses," *Baltimore Sun*, August 12, 1917, SN2.

a straight line anywhere, these movements correlated with the prevalence of the arabesque in Arabic visual art and architecture, an ornamentation-turned-structure that immediately signified an exotic near East. In both varieties, then, familiar visual art tropes informed the reception of the Ballet Intime performers, as their dancing bodies vivified the Orient as diverse, yet knowable, and possessable.

While in Ballet Intime, Itō's role was that of representative of Japan, his inclusion in the company also occasioned an embrace and performance of himself as an "Oriental." On the one hand, this expansion of identity performance reflected the slipperiness of racialization, reflected in linguistic and categorical haziness. Indeed, even in his experience at Hellerau, he had experienced and internalized this slide, as when he recalled, "I alone was Japanese, the only Oriental person."[136] On the other hand, the structure of Ballet Intime as an Oriental collection meant that Itō's japoniste persona was figured as a part of the Oriental whole. To be Japanese was therefore, to be Oriental. The collapse of his japoniste persona with his Japanese person thus led to acts of Oriental impersonation, where his own creative (self-)invention intersected with the racialized expectations held for his public performance of self.

Itō's embrace of Oriental impersonation was structured by Ballet Intime's widely acclaimed cosmopolitanism. Signified in the international make-up of the troupe's actual and performed nationalities, Ballet Intime represented not only a cosmopolitan ideal, but one explicitly connected to political alliances. In September 1917, *Vogue* declared, "The Adolf Bolm ballet is a cosmopolitan gathering of the best dancers in this country."[137] This, however, was a

[136] Quoted in Senda Koreya, "Afterword: Dream and Reality" [Atogaki: yume to genjitsu] in the Japanese version of Helen Caldwell, *Michio Ito: The Dancer and his Dances* [Itō Michio: Hito to geijutsu], trans. Nakagawa Enosuke (Tokyo: Hayakawa Shobō, 1985), 178.

[137] "Bolm's Ballet Intime," *Vogue,* September 1, 1917, 152

cosmopolitanism restricted to, and symbolic of, the cooperation and cultural strength of allied nations, vivified by the Russian, British, Japanese, Spanish, Danish, and Indian persons and performances seen on stage. Accordingly, the *Washington Post* hailed this "dance festival in which almost all the allied nations are represented by the artists."[138] Indeed, the occasions of the troupe's performances acknowledged this connection, as their appearances were advertised as benefits for the American Ambulance fund and other war charities (again demonstrating the connections between philanthropy and arts patronage). With this corporealization of political alignment, it is no wonder that even President Wilson attended a performance in Washington D.C. The political signification of Ballet Intime's Oriental collection thus rendered its cosmopolitanism as a meaningful assertion of international partnership. For Itō, the troupe thus suggested a way in which his Japaneseness could be positioned as inherently cosmopolitan; that this was a cosmopolitanism connected to WWI political alliances, moreover, established a link between the two which remained crucial in his later career.

[138] "Ballet Intime a Gem," *Washington Post,* August 10, 1917, 7.

From performing Japaneseness as a part of the Orient, Itō soon followed the practice of his peers, slipping into other Oriental roles. This involved expanded acts of ethnic impersonation, as Itō choreographed himself into a wide-ranging repertoire of Oriental embodiment. For instance, in June of 1921, he offered a recital at the Princess Theatre in New York in which he and his dancers performed danced ethnicities that included Mexican, Siamese, Gypsy, Chinese, Spanish, Japanese, and Indian.[139] [FIG 2] In February 1922, he organized a series of "Oriental Evenings" at Central High School in Washington D.C., which featured educational lectures in addition to a program of dances, each evening representing a different nation—Japan, India, and China.[140] Like his peers, such as Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, Itō was able to enjoy the flexibility of the Oriental dance genre, which allowed for performers to pass from one tradition to another. In the case of St. Denis, Shawn, and other white performers, however, their assertion of excellence was predicated upon widely promoted study into the particular regions they represented. For instance, in 1925, Denishawn toured Asia, during which time Shawn published a series of articles about his study of different performance traditions and St. Denis created several new dances, such as

Figure 12: *Dance Magazine*, February 1926. Northwestern University Special Collections.

[139] "Michio Itow Appears," *New York Times*, June 23, 1921, 27.

[140] Due to booking difficulties, the Chinese part was eventually canceled and replaced with a repetition of "Japanese Night." "An East Indian Night," *Washington Post*, February 13, 1922, 9; "Japanese Night," *Washington Post*, February 19, 1922, 59; "Japanese Night Repeated," *Washington Post*, February 26, 1922, 55.

White Jade, *Spirit of India*, and *Burmese Yein Pwe*, based on her observations and experiences. The fantasy of Oriental dance was thus generally paired with claims of expertise as a sign of authenticity. By contrast, Itō's knowledge of the Orient was understood to come from himself, as the performance of Oriental personas collapsed into the racial hypervisibility of his Oriental person. Accordingly, Itō was frequently engaged to lend his expertise to productions outside of the dance world. For example, in 1927 alone, Itō staged two revues called *Ching-a-Ling* and *Tokio Blues*, a musical play on Broadway, *Cherry Blossoms*, a Broadway production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*, and provided choreography for the American Opera Company's production of *Madame Butterfly*. That Itō provided an authenticating presence to such productions revealed the distinction between his peers' performances of the Orient-as-costume and his own compulsory Orient-as-act-of-impersonation. No matter how studiously they had trained in artistic traditions of the East, after the curtain fell, white practitioners of Oriental dance could scrub off their brown body paint. For Itō, however, the embrace of the fantasy of diverse Oriental personas overlapped with an already-determined identity as an Oriental, that he had no choice but to perform.

While Itō's entry into the genre of Oriental dance and his performance of an array of Oriental personas was in many ways predetermined by his Japanese-marked body, in notable ways he stood apart from the genre's standard expectations, due to the particularity of his Japanese identity. For even as he took on other Oriental identities, the language used to describe his dancing remained that of japonisme. Thus in a review from June 1921, the *New York Times* continued to uphold appreciation of visual art as the key to understanding Itō's art: "Itow's own numbers included the Bull Fighter. There was also a Spear Dance, a Song of India and several dances. The costumes were picturesque and the effect in lighting on the dancer in the Mexican

dance was beautiful."[141] Noting the wide range of ethnicities represented in Itō's dances, the critic's attention nevertheless immediately turns to the effectiveness of the costuming and lighting, articulating Itō's artistic excellence through the trope of visual art.

This paradigm was not only a matter of critical language, however; the choreography of Itō's Oriental dances also reveals a very different approach to the genre than that carried out by other performers. Itō's *Tango* (1927) set to Albeniz's "Tango in D," suggests the re-characterization of Oriental dance engendered by his choreography.[142] The piece begins with a darkly clad figure emerging out of the shadows in a slow walk downstage. He wears the quintessential costume of the Latin dance—black pants, a starched white shirt, black bolero, and black cordobes hat, the long brim obscuring the dancer's face. The principal steps of the dance are quickly introduced: simple half box steps with a drag of the following foot; pivot steps ending in low extensions of the leg; lunges back and forth in a plié second position, with a tilting up of the front foot onto its heel; slow, controlled pivot and soutenu turns. Occasionally, he delivers the expected foot stomp; twice, his fingers snap. Rarely moving beyond the area of center stage, the dancer moves back and forth along the diagonal axis, direction more a function of his shifting body weight than literal travel.

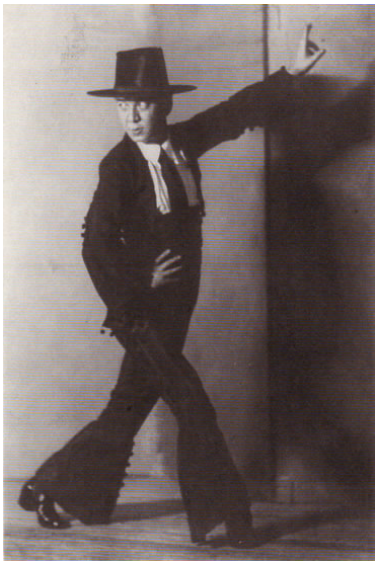

Figure 13: *Tango*, 1927

[141] "Michio Itow Appears," *New York Times*, June 23, 1921, 27.

[142] My discussion of the piece is informed by viewings both live and on film. In 2014, *Tango* was performed as part of the "Dance Archives Japan" program at the New National Theatre in Tokyo, danced by Takeishi Terutsugu and staged by Imura Kyoko. The Chamber Dance Company at University of Washington hosted Itō's student Taeko Furusho in 2001 for the staging and filming of six of his pieces; Jeff Curtis performed *Tango*.

The tango was an immensely popular dance for early modern dancers and their audiences.[143] Drawn from Argentina and alternately configured as Spanish, early modern dancers drew upon the tango craze of the early 1910s, adapting the form for stage performance. Tango fit within the flexible borders of Oriental dance, but also could be considered part of the interpretive repertoire. For many male dancers, such as Ted Shawn, it offered a chance to exhibit a highly masculine persona, as it cast male and female in the dramatic tension of heterosexual pursuit. Embodying the familiar moves of the tango, dancers tended to take on the partnering, and thus narrative, inherent in its movement, even when choreographed as a solo. Itō's *Tango*, however, is coolly restrained. Where other dancers heightened the tango's smoldering sexuality, using its deep lunges and turns to seduce their partner or the audience, Itō's version is a solo that enjoys its self-sufficiency. Brief, subtle rocking of the hips, and an almost imperceptible shimmy, which takes place more in the feet than the torso, is all that evokes the dance's usual sultriness. The dance is melancholy, as if it retraces the memory of a tango, rather than vivifying its usual drama. Exemplary of his dance-poem approach, the dance is a meditation on the idea of the tango, using the dance's ritual movements to explore their geometric and rhythmic implications. The dance's choreography reveals that critics' description of Itō's "economy of motion," his "rhythmical exactitude," and "clear-cut" gestures, were not simply tropes of japonisme blindly applied to his dancing. Instead, Itō's style seemed to confirm what they already knew of Japan, as reception and production mutually-constituted Itō's act of impersonation.

Itō's Oriental dances thus retained, and re-inscribed, his performance of a japoniste identity. With his distinctive Japanese-marked choreographic style, his embodiment of characters

[143] For instance, in Japan alone, in addition to Itō's, Komori Toshi and Miya Misako both choreographed tangos.

from Spain, China, Siam and elsewhere served to make these diverse personas of the Orient also Japanese. Itō's Oriental performances thus recalled the popular pre-World War II "mixed nation theory" in Japan. This idea, formulated to accommodate the fact that Japan had become a multi-national empire, asserted that the Japanese people were the product of intermarriage between people from Korea, China, the Malay Peninsula, the South Seas, and the Japanese archipelago. As Oguma Eiji argues, over the course of the early twentieth century, "the mixed nation theory lent itself to the claim that the Japanese nation embodied the unification of Asia, and that the peoples of neighboring regions could be assimilated into the Japanese nation and their lands annexed by the Great Japanese Empire."[144] For Itō, the logic of this theory was vivified in his practice of Oriental dance. In dancing different Oriental personas, Itō performed an embodied cosmopolitanism; always unmistakably Japanese (or japoniste), the act of corporeal personification produced an attitude of empathic affiliation with other peoples of the Orient. Embodying Oriental corporealities in an act of impersonation expected by Western audiences, Itō in turn embraced the logic of this slippage as a sign of his own cosmopolitanism.

Marking Interpretive Dance

If the genre of Oriental dance developed in the 1930s and 40s into what was known as "ethnic dance," then its counterpart, interpretive dance, laid the groundwork for what the first dance critic for *New York Times*, John Martin, would name "modern dance." This genre staged universal subjects through the white bodies of its appointed US pioneers, Martha Graham, Hanya Holm, Doris Humphrey, and Charles Weidman.[145] While Itō was not the only dancer able to

[144] Oguma Eiji, *A Genealogy of 'Japanese' Self-images*, trans. David Askew (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2002), xxii.

[145] See, Susan Manning, *Modern Dance, Negro Dance: Race in Motion* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004).

move between the earlier categories of Oriental and interpretive, that he was able to do so is notable, given that his own body signified as "ethnic." Indeed, Itō's inclusion in the unmarked genre of interpretive dance occurred during the period when legally, Asian bodies were increasingly subject to acts of restriction and exclusion, such as the Cable Act of 1922 and the Immigration Act of 1924. If in the late 1910s and early 20s, Itō's embrace of japonisme had served as the foundation for a broader impersonation of Oriental identity, the expectations of Japanese aestheticism also enabled Itō to present non-ethnically marked interpretive dances. This lauded aestheticism also enabled his participation in Greenwich Village revues, and to establish himself as an important dance teacher. Indeed, as his reputation solidified, Itō moved more and more into a directorial role, leading his own troupe, organizing recitals for his students, and working as a choreographer and producer for commercial theatrical productions. The broad acceptance of Itō's ability to choreograph and teach interpretive dance signified a loosening of the correlation of his performances with the racial and ethnic marking of his own body. Instead, the established trope of Japanese artistry allowed spectators to see his choreography and other efforts as more general examples of expressive artistry.

The choreographic productivity of Itō's time in New York saw the birth of most of his famous interpretive dances, such as *En Bateau* (1919) to Debussy, *Ecclesiastique* (1923) to Tchaikovsky's "Andante Cantabile," *Nocturne* (1927) to Chopin, and *Caresse Dansée* (1927) to Scriabin. The press' enthusiastic reception of such pieces did not ignore Itō's Japaneseness, but rather attributed to it the dancer's ability to create work of exquisite clarity and purpose. For example, upon seeing a November 1927 recital at the Golden Theatre, the *New York Tribune* commented,

> No matter how often we see this dancer's work we are newly impressed with his complete mastery of his art and of himself. Being a Japanese, he has that Oriental

> perfection of self-control…but he also has the native and meticulous precision of his countrymen, their reserve, their startling and spare vitality….There is nothing vague or generalized in his performance. Each gesture has its clear-cut place in a pattern or idea; there is no wasted effort, no groping, no meandering through a complexity of emotion, and the whole is tied together by a rhythmical exactitude both rare and exhilarating.[146]

The review's evocation of Itō's Japaneseness is doubled; not only does the critic ascribe his "self-control" and "precision" to his ethnicity, but the language of the "clear-cut" gesture and economy of movement recalls common descriptions of Japanese visual art. But rather than confirming what the reviewer (and reader) already knows about Japanese culture, the description serves to praise the way in which this artistic-ethnic essence has enabled the creation of an unmarked artistic excellence. Similarly, *Dance Magazine*, a trade publication founded in the 1920s to meet the growing enthusiasm for artistic dance, frequently covered Itō's recitals. The magazine also ran a popular feature teaching readers the steps of a dance created by a famous professional. In October 1926, the selection was Itō's *Ecclesiastique*. [Fig. 4] Although his costume for the piece is vaguely japoniste, the music, to Schumann's "Etude" and the movements, represented by Itō's own line drawings, clearly categorize the dance as belonging to the interpretive genre. The straight lines of his body, with his arms and legs creating long diagonals, and the uncentered balances in which

Michio Ito costumed for this dance

DANSE ECCLESIASTIQUE

Drawings and Choreography by MICHIO ITO

MUSIC: Etude by Schumann, Opus 13, No. 1. (The last four measures of music are repeated at end.)

First four measures—From pose (Illust. I) raise right arm sideways, palm up, to high overhead, turn palm out and lower arm to original position. Repeat with left arm.

Fifth measure—Raise both arms forward shoulder high and cross on breast, hands resting on shoulders.

Sixth measure—Raise arms high overhead, elbows leading, rising on toes as if in worship.

Next three measures—Relax, lowering arms to shoulder level and walk front, (L. R. L.) and pose drawing right foot up to left. Lunge to left (Illust. II) and change weight to right foot (Illust. III).

Next two measures—Cross left foot back of right foot, weight on left foot and pose (Illust. IV),—three counts. Pose (Illust. IV). Describing circle with right foot, place in back of left foot—two counts (Illust. V). Bring left foot directly to left side and sway weight to right, knees bent (Illust. VI)—three counts.

Twelfth measure—Cross left foot in front over right foot, turn to right, finishing facing front (Illust. VII).

Thirteenth measure—Lunge to left (Illust. VI), change weight to right foot, left arm crossing body (Illust. VIII).

Fourteenth measure—Walk to right (R. L. R.) raising right arm on fourth count, turn whole body to left (Illust. IX).

Fifteenth measure—Step on right foot,

(Continued on page 56)

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Figure 14: "Danse Ecclesiastique, Drawings and Choreography by Michio Ito," *Dance Magazine*, October 1926, 49. Northwestern University Special Collections.

[146] "Dance Notes," *New York Tribune*, November 14, 1927, 21.

both feet are in demi-relevé suggest the sense of suspension and directionality for which he became so well-known, and which spectators understood as denoting entirely creative choreography.

The aestheticism of Itō's interpretive dances allowed him to work outside of the limited opportunities of artistic dance. In adding his choreography to musical and revues, his dancing in turn in provided a jolt of confirmed artistry to these commercial entertainments. Itō's ability to join these productions expanded his chances to present his work, and offered a larger, and more varied audience. In the first decades of the 20th century, concert dancers were generally restricted to performing on Sundays, when they could rent darkened Broadway and Off-Broadway theatres. Itō had long deplored this situation, going so far as to start a "Dancer's Guild" in 1924 and a foundation for "homeless dancers" in 1928 that would provide a dedicated theatre for dancers.[147] But, Itō's turn to the theatrical revue did not necessarily guarantee commercial success; his most well-known revue, the 1922 *Pinwheel Revel* presented at the Earl Carroll Theater on Broadway, was a financial failure—which, however, helped make it an artistic success.

Scholars have tended to see *Pinwheel* as an example of Itō being forced into commercial projects, taking time away from his true artistic work. But *Pinwheel* (and John Murray Anderson's 1923 Greenwich Village Follies, for which Itō choreographed a young Martha Graham in the ballet ballad "The Garden of Kama") should instead be understood, along with his teaching work, as part of Itō's effort to expand artistic dancing's reach. It also further helped him escape the narrow confines of the Oriental genre, for in organizing the production, so roundly

[147] See, for example, "Dancers' Guild Formed," *Variety*, January 10, 1924, 12; "To Aid Homeless Dancers," *New York Times*, March 10, 1928, 11.

dismissed as too artistic, Itō shored up his own artistic credentials, as a member of the Greenwich Village avant-garde. It was precisely this emphasis on artistry that made *Pinwheel* a commercial failure. Although many revues of the time featured at least one aesthetic dance number; *Pinwheel* was entirely made up of these pieces. Therefore, at the last minute, the show's producer, Richard Herndon, insisted on adding two famous vaudeville comedians, Raymond Hitchcock and Frank Fay, but as a *Variety* critic put it, "the mixture did not mix."[148]

Reviewers attributed the production's incongruous elements to the fact that the show's concept and choreography had originated in Greenwich Village. This explanation located Itō and his dancing as part of a counter-cultural aesthetic world—intriguing to Broadway audiences, but ultimately, incomprehensible. In the early 20th century, the Village had become *the* place for aesthetic expression, political debate, and sexual freedom. Starting around the 1890s, as a neighborhood primarily filled with recent European immigrants, it was seen as less encumbered by uptown morals, and thus became a locus for the New York avant-garde, the New Woman, and as a gay refuge. It was the center of the Little Theatre Movement; the Neighborhood Playhouse, the Washington Square Players, and the Provincetown Players were all rooted there. As Brooks MacNamara explains, "By the twenties the received view uptown—and throughout America—was that 'anything goes in the Village.' Like Harlem, Greenwich Village was now seen by many as a kind of permanent carnival, an exotic entertainment center where the ordinary rules of behavior were suspended."[149] The confirmed appeal of this vision soon led, particularly in the

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[148] "On Broadway: Pin Wheel (Revised Program)," *Variety,* August 4, 1922, 15.

[149] Brooks MacNamara, "'Something Glorious': Greenwich Village and the Theater," in *Greenwich Village: Culture and Counterculture*, ed. Rick Beard and Leslie Cohen Berlowitz (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 313. On Greenwich Village, see also Christine Stansell, *American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

theatre, to a sort of exportation of Greenwich Village artistry. While the Neighborhood Playhouse, tied in space and mission to the settlement community, remained in the Village, by the early 1920s both the Washington Square and Provincetown Players had professionalized and moved uptown, with the former becoming the well-known Theatre Guild. In fact, the Provincetown Players move was occasioned by the 1920 runaway success of Eugene O'Neill's *Emperor Jones*, for which Itō originated the role of the Congo Witch Doctor. (The Neighborhood Playhouse, though it remained on Grand Street, more and more lost its commitment to amateur performance as the Lewisohn sisters sought to keep up with experimental theatre.) These theatres had all learned to capitalize upon their reputation for artistry as a powerful selling point uptown. Similarly, the Greenwich Village Follies, which featured arty costumes and European stagecraft, was already, in its first 1919 iteration, a spoof on Village customs. It soon moved to Broadway and went under the commercial management of the Shuberts, remaining uptown in subsequent years.[150] One would expect, then, that *Pinwheel* would be similarly received, as the latest artistic infusion from the Village aesthetes. Instead, it failed to strike the lighthearted balance necessary for a Broadway revue. The *Tribune* called it "a sober and erudite dancing festival"[151] and Gordon Whyte, writing for *Billboard* commented, "It is novel and very, very artistic with a big capital A. If that's your idea of a good time, you will have it at the 'Pin Wheel.' Otherwise you had better keep away."[152]

Yet, precisely because of the production's failure, dance critics—a just emerging professional category—embraced the show's mission. The *Times* wrote, "But Michio Itow, who

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[150] On the Little Theatre Movement, see Dorothy Chansky, *Composing Ourselves: The Little Theatre Movement and the American Audience* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004).

[151] Percy Hammond, "The New Play: Mr. Hitchcock's 'Pin Wheel' Is, at Least, a Sober and Erudite Dancing Festival," *New York* Tribune, June 16 1922, 10.

[152] Gordon Whyte, "Pin Wheel Revue," *Billboard*, August 12, 1922, 34.

is responsible for most of the dance numbers, has provided a number of extremely lovely moments as well as not a few that seemed rather footless. So much of it all is good, however, that it seems rather a shame that it isn't better."[153] The general consensus was that Herndon had been mistaken in his belief in the necessity of the comedic bits; the dance was, in fact, the best part of the show. And so, although the original production closed after a month, in August of 1922, Itō reopened it at the Little Theatre, another Broadway venue (now the Helen Hayes). *Life Magazine* observed,

> In its new form, it is frankly without comedy…and is much more as it should be…[with] unusual dances [such] as the Faun and Nymph, Lilies of the Field, La Repetition (with its striking reproduction of Degas color tones), the extraordinary dancing of Josephine Head and Phyllis Jackson, and the work of Michio Itow himself. These, together with the music, which is a sympathetic selection from Tschaikowsky, Brahms, Kreisler and Paurel, together with some English folk songs…made it a program of sufficient artistic merit to satisfy the most voracious seeker after things "of a better sort."[154]

In its choreography, stage design, and musical accompaniment, *Pinwheel* struck a high note, reaffirming belief in Greenwich Village artistry at just the moment when the Village seemed to be selling out. *Pinwheel* thus seemed to align itself with the emerging modern dance community, precisely because it was not a commercial success, leading John Martin to fondly recall the effort eight years later: "Sometimes Ito is engrossed in turning out a beautiful and artistic failure in the way of a musical revue, such as the 'Pinwheel' of cherished memory."[155]

The terms of critics' evaluation were articulated through the language of japoniste aesthetic appreciation, even as these origins (and Itō's ethnicity) went uncommented. In fact, many of the numbers were borrowed from his japoniste and Oriental work. The program

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[153] "'Pinwheel Revel' Odd," *New York Times*, June 6, 1922, 25.

[154] Robert C. Benchley, "Drama: An Evening with Terpsichore," *Life Magazine*, August 17, 1922, 80.

[155] John Martin, "The Dance: Japanese Art: Visiting Troupe Raises Some Questions of Comparison," *New York Times,* March 9, 1930, 124.

included a Spanish number, Ratan Devi performed some of her Indian songs and dances, and one of Itō's younger brothers, Yuji, who had recently moved to New York, sang some Japanese songs. But rather than being introduced with the common phrase "the Japanese dancer," *Variety* noted that Itō "is reputed as a preceptor of aesthetic dancing, a willowy school of choreography, always graceful."[156] *Life Magazine* particularly singled out the "reproduction of Degas color tones" in the costuming and setting for one dance number, and observed of the production as a whole, "It is made up almost entirely of extremely modern dance numbers, some of which are reduced to terms of such simplicity and economy of effort as to be rather dull, and others of which are unusually fine."[157] The descriptors, "simplicity" and "economy of effort," though not entirely positive here, are those that in other venues marked Itō's Japaneseness as the source of his artistic talent. That critics writing on *Pinwheel* did not make this connection, and by and large did not enjoy the production evidences a divide in New York's cultural world. While Itō's recitals were usually covered by critics writing in the arts sections of the *New York Times* and the *Tribune*, *Pinwheel* was also covered by theatrical trade publications such as *Variety, Billboard,* and the *New York Clipper.* Whereas critics in these former papers were invested in covering events explicitly recognized as Art, and in asserting their own evaluative acumen, writers for the latter were interested in commercial success and a different set of evaluative criteria. The division in cultural affiliation thus also revealed boundaries encircling the circulation of japoniste aestheticism as an artistic value. While for Broadway audiences and commercial theatrical journals, this coding was illegible, for critics who praised the production, it was not only an

[156] "Broadway Reviews, Pinwheel," *Variety*, June 23, 1922, 15.
[157] Robert C Benchley, "An Evening with Terpsichore," *Life* August 17, 1922, 18.

interesting experiment in the emerging category of modern dance, but also an affiliation with the range of cultural and political values that Village aestheticism represented.

If Itō's presentation of his choreography cut across different audience formations, appearing in a wide range of venues and intersecting with a variety of cultural institutions, teaching became a consistent endeavor, one that Itō found as important as his performance and choreographic work. Though he was almost always engaged in teaching, he never had an established studio location. Itō first opened a summer school at Dobbs Ferry in 1918, and then in November 1919, opened a school at 9 E. 59th St. By October 1920, he had moved to a studio at 1400 Broadway, where he seems to have remained for a few years. In 1924, he was teaching in a studio at 61 Carnegie Hall, a popular place for teaching dancers, but by early 1925, he had moved to Chatsworth Roof, at 344 W. 72nd. In February 1926, John Murray Anderson opened a school with Robert Milton, as part of Anderson's new Park Avenue Theatre. There, Itō taught interpretive dance with Martha Graham. The itinerant nature of his teaching likely reflected his tendency to constantly become involved in new endeavors, as well as the difficult economics of dance instruction, even when it was an important source of income.

Students, it seems, were drawn to Itō because they could simultaneously learn specifically japoniste, or Oriental dance techniques—a reliable way to please audiences, as well as develop their own dance style. Both Beatrice Seckler and Pauline Koner recalled that in their time as students in the mid-20s, what was to become the Itō method was much more casual—both learned his form of balanced walking, one foot in front of the other; and Koner and Angna Enters note he had developed his system of arm movements. But in these early lessons, it seems that Itō mostly taught his students his dances, and once learned, if talented enough, he incorporated the pupil into his troupe. Indeed, a distinguishing feature of Itō's teaching,

compared to that of his peers, was his eagerness to set up his students in their own careers. Around 1928, he began to present his students in individual recitals, his experience and name recognition providing a way for them to debut as solo artists. The press took notice of Itō's success as a teacher; as the *Times* observed, "Ito's protégés have a way of distinguishing themselves. Not so long ago Martha Lorber, Angna Enters and several dancers only slightly less well known were members of his ensemble. For that reason it may be interesting to note that the ensemble which will appear with him in his concert at the Golden Theatre this evening is made up of Isa Ellana, Lillian Shapiro, Beatrice Seckler, Sylvia Heller, Mercedes Krug and Marguerite Hirth."[158] While a good number of his students developed their own solo careers, they also became key members of his troupe, performing with him in New York, and joining a US tour in the late 20s. In forming a troupe and choreographing pieces for his students, Itō also turned from a japoniste and Oriental repertoire to one made up almost entirely of interpretive pieces. His earlier ethnic material thus remained conceived of as solo dances, while pieces such as *Ecclesiastique*, *En Bateau*, and *Nocturne*, even if he initially performed them on his own, were re-choreographed as group compositions, the non-ethnic nature of these pieces reiterated in the white bodies of his students and troupe members.

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In 1928, Itō gave two recitals—one in March and one in December. Critics noted how busy he was; a writer for the *Tribune* commented, "A combination dance and music critic has seemed to us one of the busiest possible inhabitants of this unquiet town, but apparently the above mentioned Mr. Ito has more hours in his day and days in his week than we."[159] It was for

[158] "The Dance: Tamiris' Art," *New York Times*, February 5, 1928, 111.
[159] M.W. "The Dancers," *New York Tribune*, February 26, 1928, F10.

this reason, reviewers concluded, that at these two recitals, Itō entirely presented old work, the program made up of a mix of the three genres with which he had built his dance career in New York. Though he was a "unique and brilliant artist," who had demonstrated "mastery of his medium," and "startling and engaging…technique," reviewers were frustrated with him. Too, the New York dance scene was moving on, developing in new ways as a new generation of dancers—soon to be known as "modern," started to make their mark. Thus *Billboard* wrote, "As a group, the Ito artists have nothing whatever to offer, that is not already done in the several schools of this city. It might be regarded as slightly old-fashioned. Alongside the Doris Humphreys group one would hesitate to mention them."[160] Modern dance was about to take off, but without Itō. His December concert was a farewell recital before he embarked on a coast to coast tour, and when it ended in California, he remained there. As he was soon to discover, in California, audiences were quite receptive to his work, which also found a new context there—that of community dance, and its embodiment in mass pageant stagings. California was also home to a large Japanese population, putting Itō "at home" in ways he had not been in New York, but also subjecting him to more explicit and increasing racism and anti-Japanese sentiment. While in New York, japoniste impersonation, structured by the established discourse of Japanese aestheticism, enabled Itō's inclusion in both the genres of Oriental and interpretive dance, in California, his choreographing of community took place in tandem with the increasingly individual racialization of his Japanese body in the years leading up to war.

[160] "New York Recitals," *Billboard*, December 15, 1928, 34.

Chapter 3
Emulsive Cosmopolitanism in California and Beyond

A few years after Itō arrived in Los Angeles, Isabel Morse Jones, dance writer for the *Los Angeles Times*, gushed:

> All that nonsense about 'East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet,' with due respect to Kipling, is disproven in one artist who lives now in Hollywood. Michio Ito is a Japanese with a European-American educational experience and his art and personal expression are as perfect an emulsion as any chemist could wish for. He was an oriental the first eighteen years of his life. Then he became successively German, French, British and American as he traveled on his westward way. Today he is a true Californian; enthusiastic, optimistic, dreaming dreams of its future as the center of art and culture.[161]

Making reference to Kipling, Jones sees Itō as a materialization of the impossible encounter between East and West, and she stages it not as a meeting between cultural practices, or two people, but rather, as occurring within and upon Itō's performing body. In her eyes, the twain do not so much meet as become absorbed in each other, the parts no longer distinct from the whole. Moreover, Itō becomes "successively German, French, British and American," as if he moves not only through his world itinerary, but through the ethnic and national identities of each place as well. She suggests then, that such identity is not inherent, but, à la Judith Butler, accrued, put on almost like costume, but indelibly. For rather than discarding one for the other, Jones portrays this as an additive process, a collecting of locally marked "experience" and "expression," such that Itō stands as a perfect cultural "emulsion." Yet she suggests too, that in each place, he becomes the quintessential representative of that culture; thus, he is now a "true Californian." Just as surely as his peripatetic career made Itō famous, now Jones hails Itō's emulsive

[161] Isabel Morse Jones, "Kipling's Famous Phrase Disproved by Michio Ito," *Los Angeles Times,* August 20, 1933, A2.

cosmopolitanism as that which will elevate California as a modern cultural center. Jones thus ties her hopes for California to Itō, seeing in him a representation of local identity.

Itō's move to Los Angeles in 1929 has been a source of puzzlement for scholars; in leaving New York, Itō removed himself from the modern dance scene, which was just beginning to clearly solidify as a distinct American art movement. Mary-Jean Cowell suggests that Itō had postponed the move, despite being involved with the Hollywood film industry since 1921, because of pervasive anti-Japanese sentiment and the film industry's racist casting and narrative practices.[162] But, she suggests, by 1929 the financial opportunity was too appealing; Itō had been offered employment for the film *No, No, Nanette*, and meanwhile, the onset of the Great Depression had constricted dance patronage in New York. Newspaper notices also reveal that some of Itō's early patrons, such as Mrs. Frank A. Vanderlip, were now in California and eager to support him there.[163] Pauline Koner recalls that the Itō troupe carried out a cross-country tour 1929, but having run out of money in San Francisco, the Itōs decided to remain in California.[164] It is also likely that Itō left New York in search of new audiences; reviews from his final years in New York suggest that critics had grown weary of his dance programs. Some mix of financial and artistic opportunity, then, seems to explain the relocation—the only move aside from his initial departure from Japan not precipitated by war.

Carried out freely and in a time of peace, the move to Los Angeles both amplified and put pressure on Itō's self-fashioning as a figure of cultural emulsion. Over a period of twelve years (from 1929 to 1941), Itō both established himself as a force in the California dance world, and

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[162] Mary-Jean Cowell, "Michio Ito in Hollywood: Modes and Ironies of Ethnicity," *Dance Chronicle* 24:3 (2001).

[163] "Forms Dance Symphony," *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 1929, C12.

[164] Pauline Koner, *American Dance Festival Presents*, directed by Douglas Rosenberg (1998; Oregon, Wis: American Dance Festival Video, 2006).

took his work on tour—to Japan in 1931, to Mexico in 1934, and again to Japan in 1940. In each place, Itō performed the role of cosmopolitan figurehead, capable of bringing together different communities, and in this amalgamating role, signifying a particular vision held by citizens for their nation. Moving from one site to another, Itō performed differently characterized iterations of this emulsion: In California, he became a key figure in the movement for community arts, and in drawing together two distinct populations—Progressive white arts patrons and Japanese immigrants—he choreographed community as a collective embodiment of ethno-racial integration. In Japan, where he returned as the lauded native son, Itō's international career made him representative of the cosmopolitan aspirations of local artists and critics. And in Mexico, the ambiguity of his Japanese body performing Euro-American dance suggested a sort of *mestizo* persona, intersecting with contemporary articulations of Mexican modernity. In each place, Itō embodied a vision of cultural mixing, which then took on specific racial and national meanings as well.

Studying these sites together reveals that despite the variety of audiences Itō engaged, there was a striking similarity of response in the meanings attributed to his dancing body, meanings that consolidated around ideals of cosmopolitan identity and affiliation. Newspaper publicity articles and reviews from each location disclose two distinct audience formations in each locale. On the one hand, Itō appeared as a positive embodiment of a cosmopolitan ideal—in the itinerary of his international circulation, in his dance style, and in the integrated makeup of his company. In this capacity, we see two specific versions of the cosmopolitan ideal: first, critics and audiences embraced Itō as a sign of their own worldliness. And second, his dancing was valorized for the way in which it evaded the boundaries and expectations of nationalized embodiment, in favor of cultural emulsion. On the other hand, newspapers evidence how Itō's

presence provoked anxieties about this notion of cosmopolitanism, as the mongrel character of his choreography and the racially-marked bodies of his company members were interpreted as threats to ideologies of national purity. Identifying these competing and overlapping strands of cosmopolitan formation suggests an instantiation of what Pheng Cheah has described as the distinction between "normative" and "actual" cosmopolitanisms. Itō's audiences provide an example of groups moving between these two categories, as they balanced the desire for extra-national affiliation with the necessity of expressing identities that could claim a position of relevance and power via the nation. Together, these sites reveal the frequent continuity, rather than opposition, between affirmations of the cosmopolitan and the ultra-national.

Even in the early part of the decade, it was clear that Itō's vaunted cosmopolitan emulsion was not stable, evident in the occasional portrayal of his worldly body as a threat. By 1936, when he was divorced by his white wife, Hazel Wright, this instability became more apparent. Again and again, it was in moments on stage that the concreteness of his dancing body ruptured abstract valorizations of the international. Rather than being the symbolic figuration of a cosmopolitan ideal, dancing made Itō's body stick out as a point of ethnic, racial, and national contention. By the end of the 1930s, Itō's performing body had become a locus for the rejection of an earlier era's cosmopolitanism.

Communities Dancing: Los Angeles

An article in the *Los Angeles Times*, covering Itō's arrival in Southern California and the opening of his studio, declared, "He scorns making art incomprehensible, remote, a secret thing for the few, and he accuses those who would, of subterfuge. Ito is a 'communitarian.' He wants to make this a community of dancers….The main business of Ito's life today is developing this

wholly modern idea of communities dancing and the leaders in community life in Southern California are helping him."[165] The concept of "community" was a keyword of the Los Angeles arts world in the 1920s and 30s; it became, in turn, central to Itō's work there. The community arts movement, particularly focused on music but extending to theatre, dance, and other art forms, took shape as an effort to present art as a force for moral education and civic engagement. With roots in the Progressive Era and the American Pageant Movement, community arts were championed by wealthy white patrons who advocated art as a way to integrate immigrants, as an antidote to Hollywood commercialism, and as key to the development of a regional high culture. The Hollywood Bowl, an iconic amphitheater nestled in the Hollywood Hills and founded as a site for community arts, stood as the movement's primary institution. Other outdoor venues such as the Pasadena Rose Bowl and the Argus Bowl of Eagle Rock were similarly carved out of the landscape, using the literal appeal of nature to marry cultural patronage to a sense of local community.[166]

Itō embraced this local movement, making a strong argument for dance as an integral force for community engagement and expression. During his time in Los Angeles, he opened several dance studios, teaching his own technique and providing exposure for young dancers. He continued his practice of presenting dance recital programs consisting of his solo choreographies, but in Los Angeles, he primarily featured his students as performers. Most notably, he staged several large-scale works, which he called "dance symphonies." These took place at the Hollywood Bowl and other local arenas; with casts that could number in the hundreds, and

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[165] Isabel Morse Jones, "Ito Spiritually Inspired," *Los Angeles Times*, June 2, 1929, C13.

[166] See, Naima Prevots, *Dancing in the Sun: Hollywood Choreographers, 1915-1937* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1987); and *American Pageantry: A Movement for Art and Democracy* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1990); Catherine Parsons Smith, "Founding the Hollywood Bowl," *American Music* 11:2 (Summer 1993).

audiences that reportedly reached into the thousands, Itō's dance symphonies explicitly embodied the ideals of the community arts movement. In responding so fully to the local spirit, Itō integrated himself into the world of modern dance in California, positioning himself as one of its key figures.

In the shadow of this communitarian spirit lay another community to which Itō belonged: the first- (*issei*) and second- (*nisei*) generation Japanese immigrant community. Upon his arrival, Itō was immediately embraced by the Japanese cultural elite and the local Japanese-language newspaper the *Rafu Shimpo.* In response, Itō offered special performances and dance classes with the aim of integrating local Japanese, particularly Nisei youth, into the white mainstream arts world. Itō's active presence in the Japanese immigrant community, it seems, has been entirely overlooked by scholars. Many, relying on mainstream English-language sources, have found no evidence of his engagement. Yutian Wong alone has proposed using an Asian American studies methodology to understand Itō. She argues that his experience of internment is the explanatory incident of his career, underlying both his valorization as an "international artist," as well as his erasure from US modern dance history.[167] However, Wong explicitly does not consider Itō himself "Asian American," pointing to a Nisei woman's recollection that local Japanese mothers frequently viewed his recruitment of their daughters with suspicion. Evidence from the *Rafu Shimpo,* however, reveals that Itō was deeply engaged with the Japanese community. As I will show, Itō's artistic activities particularly aligned with the aims of the community's cultural leaders, who recognized in him an opportunity to assert Japanese excellence to the broader Southern California region.

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[167] Yutian Wong, "Artistic Utopias: Michio Ito and the Trope of the International," in *Worlding Dance*, ed. Susan Leigh Foster (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

Itō's increasingly strong ties to the local Japanese community occasioned a shift in the meaning assigned his dancing body, as the significance of his Japaneseness oscillated between two modes. On the one hand, as had been the case in New York, he appeared as a sort of cultural ambassador from far away Japan. In this image, he stood as a lone emissary of the exotic, where his race was depoliticized into a benign source of cultural wealth. On the other, he was, by virtue of his race, a member of the domestic Japanese immigrant community, and thus in his successes, taken as representative of an entire population. Oscillating between distant Japan and the domestic Japanese immigrant community, Itō's dancing body was both "in" and "out" of the US, a version of what David Palumbo-Liu calls the "introjection" and "projection" of Asians in the US imaginary.[168] For both the white arts community, as well as for the cultural elite of the Japanese immigrant community, these two modes co-existed simultaneously; indeed, this doubleness was the source of Itō's appeal to both groups.

The efficacy of this doubleness pivoted around the concept of community. As embraced by the white patrons of the community arts movement, the term was an assertion of similarity that could obviate racial, ethnic, and class difference; they envisioned art as the mode by which such similarity was engendered and performed. Itō's modern choreography, with its Europe-derived forms and japoniste elements fulfilled these patrons' desire for affiliation with the cosmopolitan, the artistic exotic. At the same time, Itō's association with the Japanese community meant that his activities enacted the goal of assimilation of immigrants that was the purported function of these civic events. In parallel, members of the Japanese immigrant community (including editors and journalists at the *Rafu Shimpo*, cultural leaders, and local

[168] David Palumbo-Liu, *Asian/American: Historical Crossings of a Racial Frontier* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

businessmen) recognized in Itō's internationalized dance a performance of de-racinated cultural difference, in which Japaneseness was asserted as a positive cultural value, an asset to the American melting pot. Thus for members of both groups, the attribution of Itō's benign internationalism to the local Japanese population served as a way to imagine Japaneseness as a productive value in the US. Indeed, as Eiichiro Azuma has observed, there was significant overlap between the "White progressive project of Americanization" and the reformist and assimilative goals of the intellectuals and leaders of the Japanese Association for America who constituted the Issei elite.[169] Mediating between the white arts and Japanese immigrant communities, Itō performed for both groups a deracinated belonging, that in turn, imagined the construction of an ideal American community.

* * *

In California, Itō's Japaneseness was a key characteristic in the reception of his artistic activity, yet in both his dancing and teaching he seems to have had greater control over his public image than had been the case in New York. For instance, in May of 1929, he presented a spectacle for the "May Blossom Festival" held at the Norconian Club. Of a piece with the japoniste activities of his years in New York, the publicity nevertheless specified that "Ito will be supported by a cast of specially selected dancers who will interpret a number of 'dance poems and color visions.'"[170] With the exception of a sole reference in the *New York Times* in 1927, this is the first time the term "dance poem" appears in Itō's US press coverage. It continues as a key term throughout the 1930s, and his students from the period, such as Helen Caldwell, refer to his

[169] Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 50.
[170] "Club Presents Program for Entire Month," *Los Angeles Times*, May 12, 1929, E7.

Figure 15: Publicity for Itō recital with Lindahl and Komori. New York, April 1918, University of California, Santa Barbara, Special Collections.

dances as such. It is possible that it was only in the late 1920s that Itō revived the term as central to his choreographic practice. However, the heavy imbalance between New York and Los Angeles publicity—in New York papers, Itō is almost never quoted, while in Los Angles, his pronouncements are frequently reproduced—suggests that, either as a result of his own maturation as an artist, or of different reporting practices, Itō had far greater control over his self-image in California.

The work of self-fashioning evident in written publicity materials also extended to the visual. Itō, who had always had a talent for drawing, began to use with greater frequency his own self-portraits in his promotional materials and programs. [FIGS 1-3] While one such sketch had appeared in the publicity for a recital in New York, in California, these drawings appeared with regularity. The caricature aspect of the sketches imaged Itō as a wry, urbane figure, while the crisp casualness of his drawing style suggested the wide range of his artistic talent, as if dancing alone could not fulfill his abilities of aesthetic expression. The drawings make clear reference to his Japaneseness; in the early one from his New York period, he plays up the trope of slanted eyes, while in the 1931 "Symphonic Dance Poems" advertisement, the sharp line of his thick, black hair cuts across

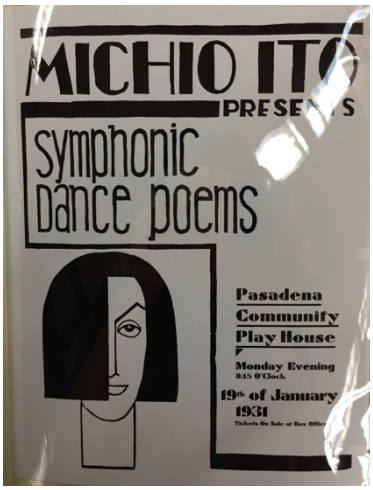

Figure 2: Publicity for Itō recital, Pasadena California, January 1931, University of California, Santa Barbara, Special Collections.

Figure 3: Publicity for Itō Recital, Los Angeles, March 1931, University of California, Santa Barbara, Special Collections.

his face, as if to mask it in an aura of mystery. And yet, in this image, his uncovered eye stares back at the viewer, while an arched eyebrow and half-grin seem both to invite and challenge. Itō's drawings then, like his dance programs more broadly, deployed signs of Japaneseness, only to subvert them in an assertion of striking individualistic artistry.

The notion of Itō as a visual artist extended to the reception of his choreography by the white press; indeed, his pictorial talent was repeatedly highlighted as the most notable element of his work. A critic reporting on Itō's June concert of dances at the California Art Club in Barnsdale Park opened the review by quoting an astonished spectator who sat in the audience: "'That guy's an artist!'…This was not a cold bit of judgment but an exclamation drawn from the painter, prefaced by a 'gosh' that was half a 'whew;' and it was about as intelligent a critical remark as could be extracted from any member of that recent Saturday night's fascinated audience, for these quiet people were seeing musical movement of the kind that only appears once in a decade."[171] The reviewer explained that the dancing to which spectators were accustomed was ballet, which stressed the "emotional possibilities of movement." By contrast, Itō demonstrated the significance of the body itself in movement. The review continued,

> In effect these dances are moving pictures. The dancers moved from one complete gesture to another. The passage was beautiful, but it was the arrival at the gesture itself that brought little murmurs of admiration and astonishment from the audience. These gestures were never bizarre or designed to startle, but gave aesthetic satisfaction because they fulfilled one's desire for complete movement, for art that could go logically and inevitably to its extremes without overstepping the possibility of being brought into the controlling design.[172]

Whereas in London and New York, it was Itō's self-possessed agility and the gem-like expression of an idea that struck audiences, here Itō's painterly skill took effect. The pictorial

[171] A.M. "Art in Movement," *Los Angeles Times,* June 23, 1929, 16.
[172] Ibid.

nature of Itō's choreography encouraged the critic's Hollywood-inflected viewing of the dance as "moving pictures." The critic's praise of the "controlling design" thus imagines Itō's choreographic vision as something as precise and unified as the camera's supervisory eye. If dance in the 1930s still sometimes occupied a grey zone in the hierarchy of cultural production, Itō's compositional skill marked his work as undeniably high art, an assertion of intentional artistry rather than accidental arrangement.

The image of Itō as a consummate artist, in control of his own self-representation, and adept at large-scale choreography, informed his successful transition to a primarily directorial and producer role. He performed less frequently than he had earlier in his career, instead devoting himself to teaching and organizing recitals at which his students and other dancers could perform—a sign of his expanding interests and perhaps, also his aging body. Thus, while his recital programs in California featured the solo dance repertoire he had developed in New York, the pieces were primarily performed by other dancers. Itō retained for himself only his signature pieces such as *Tango* and *Pizzicati*. He also featured other dancers' choreographic work on his programs, as when Lester Horton performed his own "Hopi Indian Eagle Dance" in Itō's 1929 August series at the Argus Bowl. Critics appreciated Itō's efforts at showcasing the range of Los Angeles dance talent. As one reviewer observed, "A number of very lovely things were to be seen, and to Ito's credit it must be said that they represented not only his own distinctly stylistic work, but the interpretive efforts of other representative moderns of Los Angeles."[173] On this same August program, Dorothy Wagner and Beatrix Baird appeared; an earlier concert had featured Georgia Graham (Martha's sister). All these dancers were to become key members of Itō's troupe or studio. In this way, Itō positioned himself as a key node in the

[173] Muriel Babcock, "Rhythmics of Far East Delight Eye," *Los Angeles Times*, August 15, 1929, A11.

Los Angeles dance community—whether performing in one of his programs, teaching at his studio, or taking his dance classes, most dancers in southern California orbited through Itō's presence. By focusing on teaching, and on producing and directing dance programs, Itō claimed a space for himself—and for dance—in the broader community arts movement. His activities thus asserted his centrality to the burgeoning modern dance scene in Los Angeles. In doing so, he no longer simply promoted himself as an individual, but instead, parlayed his own successful presence in the mainstream cultural sphere into an argument for the integration of the local Japanese community as well.

If the white press had given Itō a warm welcome, it was nothing compared to the passionate reception afforded by the Los Angeles-based Japanese-language newspaper, the *Rafu Shimpo.* During Itō's first six months in Los Angeles (from April through September of 1929), while the *Los Angeles Times* devoted eleven articles to Itō, in the *Rafu Shimpo*, the number comes to forty-six. Itō's involvement in this community started as soon as he arrived in Los Angeles: tickets to his first performance in April were available for purchase in Little Tokyo, and in May, he was a guest of honor at an intercollegiate dance sponsored by the JSCA (Japanese Student Christian Association), for which he apparently canceled another engagement.[174] The newspaper eagerly claimed Itō as a representative of the community. For instance, in August the paper printed a special gravure section on the occasion of the Japanese Imperial Armada's exercises. The section

Figure 4: "Welcoming the Imperial Naval Exercises," *Rafu Shimpo*, August 23, 1929, Special Section, 8.

[174] "Performance by Itō Michio, Cosmopolitan Dance Master" [Sekaiteki butō no meishu Itō Michio shi kōen], *Rafu Shimpo*, April 25, 1929, 3; "Intercollegiate Dance Attended by 100 People," *Rafu Shimpo*, English Section, May 13, 1929, 3.

presented the array of achievements and activities carried out by Japanese immigrants, with pages devoted to local merchants, farming practices, leading businessmen and so on. One page highlighted prominent Japanese in film and dance, and it was Itō, along with the film actors Tetsu Komai (駒井哲) and Sōjin Kamiyama (上山草人), who were featured as the exemplars.[175] [FIG 4] Itō was an appealing figure for the editors of the *Rafu Shimpo* because of his fame with the white cultural elite. Early articles make this especially clear, with headlines noting his support by "Well-known Persons," and observations about his popularity with white spectators.[176] The *Rafu Shimpo's* coverage of Itō thus turned on his simultaneous belonging to both communities. By claiming Itō as a representative of the Japanese community, the editors were not only making a point about Japanese achievement, but were also asserting the contribution of Japanese to the broader Los Angeles arts culture.

Itō recognized the significance of this dual membership, and understood his role as that of mediator between the two. His pronouncements in the white press about his commitment to a communitarian dance movement then, should be understood as not only about the mainstream white movement, but also about including the Japanese community in these efforts. For instance, the very first press release devoted to Itō in the *Los Angeles Times* referenced plans "for his Community Dancers, a stupendous undertaking in which Mr. Ito plans to bring all the dancers and dancing schools together into an organization which knows no limits of age, color, or belief."[177] On the one hand, the rhetoric of inclusion attributed to Itō here was standard; the

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[175] "Welcoming the Imperial Naval Exercises" [Kangei teikoku renshū kantai] (歓迎帝国練習艦隊), *Rafu Shimpo*, August 23, 1929, Special Section, 8.

[176] For example, "Itō Michio Dances with the Backing of Well-Known Persons" [Chimei no hitobito no kōen de Itō Michio kun ga odoru], *Rafu Shimpo*, April 21, 1929, 3; "St. Denis' Former Teacher Ito Michio Dances" [Sainto Denisu no onshi Itō Michio no buyō], *Rafu Shimpo,* April 27, 1929, 3.

[177] "Forms Dance Symphony," *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 1929, C12.

community arts movement, similar to that of the American Pageant movement and other progressive cultural activities, sought to use art as a force for assimilation. On the other hand, the insistence that "color" would be disregarded was a subtle acknowledgment of the different racial context Itō found in California, where his own Japaneseness marked him as part of a segregated population.[178]

As in New York, during his first months in Los Angeles in the summer of 1929, Itō used japoniste performance as a way of introducing himself to audiences. Most notably, in August he gave a series of five concerts at the Argus Bowl in Eagle Rock; each evening featured a program of his dances, along with a performance of either *At the Hawk's Well* or one of the *kyogen* he had translated with Louis V. Ledoux in New York in 1923. Widely advertised and reported on in both the white and Japanese press, these concerts thus brought together two different audiences, integrated not only in seating but, as it turned out, in reception as well.

As was to become the norm in his Los Angeles recitals, Itō limited his own time on stage. In *At the Hawk's Well*, which was presented twice, Lester Horton performed the role of the Hawk, Charlton A. Powers the Old Man, and Dewitt Bodeen the Young Man. At the first performance, Itō did not appear at all in the play; at the second he played the drum and gong. The two *kyogen*—"Somebody Nothing" and "Fox's Grave"—featured Lester Horton, Ralph Matson, Thomas de Graffenried and Tetsu Komai, "a prominent figure in Noh dramas."[179] In the

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[178] On anti-Japanese segregation, see Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962); Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924* (New York: The Free Press (Macmillan), 1988); Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese American in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008); Valerie J. Matsumoto, *City Girls: The Nisei Social World in Los Angeles, 1920-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[179] "Michio Ito Appears in Noh Drama Soon," *Rafu Shimpo*, July 15, 1929, English Section, 3.

dance portions of the programs, Itō performed *Impressions of a Chinese Actor*, *Caresse Dansé*, *Japanese Spring Dance*, two of Yamada Kosaku's *Tone Poems*, *Tango*, and *Pizzicati*. The rest of the dancing was carried out by other local dancers, including Dorothy Wagner, Lillian Powell, Xenia Zarina, Anne Douglas, Georgia Graham, Beatrix Baird, Dolores Lopez, and Edith Jane. The photographer Toyo Miyatake arranged the lighting for the programs.

The concert series drew spectators from both the Japanese community and the white arts community, and uniformly earned positive reviews. Helen Caldwell, who performed in the series, recalled that the audience "consisted mainly of artists and amateurs of the arts."[180] Meanwhile, the *Rafu Shimpo* observed of the final concert's audience, "Before a comparatively large audience one of the best dance programs was presented by Michio Ito at the Argus Bowl on Monday evening, September 2nd. A large number of Japanese were scattered throughout the bowl."[181] Notably, over the course of the concert series, in both the white and Japanese press, the dancing received far more attention than the Japanese plays. The dance critic Muriel Babcock wrote in the *Los Angeles Times*, "A brief playlet, 'At the Hawk's Well,' enacted by dancers, was remarkable for its diffuseness. Perhaps, after study of its lines and content, one might glean an inkling of what it was all about, but as presented it failed even in emotional appeal, save for a weirdly grotesque dance performed by Lester Horton." By contrast, of the dances Babcock wrote, "A splash of bright color and rhythmic movement traced in delicate and intricate patterns—this, perhaps, was the impression carried away by a casual observer of the Michio Ito presentation."[182] Similarly, while the *Rafu Shimpo* enthusiastically noted the high praise earned

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[180] Helen Caldwell, *Michio Ito: The Dancer and his Dances* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 86.

[181] "Argus Bowl Closes Successful Series," *Rafu Shimpo,* September 6, 1929, English Section, 1.

[182] "Rhythmics of Far East Delight Eye," *Los Angeles Times*, August 15, 1929, A11.

by *At the Hawk's Well*, and the "many laughs" elicited by the *kyogen*, reviews spent far more time on Itō's choreography. For instance, of the second concert, the reviewer noted that "Ito's specialty poems, the trim *Balloon Dance* and *Scarf Dance*, as always highlighted Ito's artistry."[183] And an article on the final concert explained the repetition of *Tango* on the program, "This is the best loved dance in Southern California. Having danced the tango in one of the previous programs at the Argus Bowl, so many requests were sent in for Ito to dance it again that he finally consented."[184] Whereas in New York, the japoniste material had been essential to Itō's entrée into the dance world, in Los Angeles, audiences seemed ready to appreciate his dancing without that frame. Of greatest value were his "dance poems," the pieces that struck viewers as imaginatively modern. The fact of the program's combination of japoniste and interpretive material went without a comment, a sign, perhaps, of the success of Itō's integrative efforts.

If the Argus Bowl series integrated japoniste and white modern dance forms together in the programs' content, Itō's next project sought to do so on a much larger scale, in the bodies of his performers. Upon receiving a commission to choreograph a Pageant of Lights at the Pasadena Rose Bowl in September 1929, Itō explicitly sought to carry out the ideal of community integration by including dancers from the Japanese community. Using the Edith Jane Studio in Hollywood and offering a twice-a-week 10 lesson course, Itō, through the *Rafu Shimpo*, urged young Nisei to join. As one notice explained,

> The noted Japanese dancer will personally direct the class. He is very anxious to have as many young people as possible in this class. No previous experience is needed in order to enroll in this class. All those who signed up are beginners. With the exception of one, all of them have

[183] "Argus Bowl Dance Concert" [A-gasu Bo-ru buyōkai], *Rafu Shimpo,* August 14, 1929, 2.「清楚なバルーンダンスやスカーフダンスに次いで伊藤氏得意のポエムはいつもながら氏の芸術を遺憾なく示した。」

[184] "Final Summer Dance Recital to be Given at Argus Bowl," *Rafu Shimpo,* September 2, 1929, English Section, 3.

> never had any previous lessons in dancing. A special price is being charged of the Japanese students.… Those who are skeptical about entering this beginner's dance class are invited to visit the first class on Wednesday, July 31st, and then sign up for the next class.[185]

The *Rafu Shimpo* continued to report on the class' progress throughout the summer, noting that Itō and Dorothy Wagner, who assisted in teaching, were impressed with the students' "ability and rapid cooperation of their body and mind."[186] Itō instructed the students in the series of ten movements that made up the basis of his technique, and at each session also taught a complete dance. In addition to instructing the students in his dancing, Itō also used the classes as an opportunity to introduce them to Los Angeles cultural events outside of the Japanese community. As the *Rafu Shimpo* reported, "Instead of holding their regular dancing lessons, the Japanese pupils of Michio Ito were taken to the Hollywood Bowl on Friday evening, August 16th, where they saw the entire program for the evening. Special reserved seats were obtained by the dance artist for these young people."[187] It is possible that for some students, this was their first trip to the Hollywood Bowl; in arranging the outing, Itō attempted to share with them a cultural movement which, although inclusive in rhetoric, was still circumscribed by racial divisions.

In taking part in the Pasadena Pageant of Lights, Itō's students joined in a massive expression of community art. The pageant boasted 150 dancers, a chorus of 250 singers, and accompaniment by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, directed by Modet Altschuler. Ultimately, eleven students from the class participated, as others were unable to make the rehearsals, which occurred outside of class. The girls appeared, along with Itō's other dancers, in

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[185] "Beginners' Dance Class will Open on Wednesday Evening," *Rafu Shimpo*, July 29, 1929, English Section, 3.

[186] "Michio Ito is Pleased with Results of Japanese Class," *Rafu Shimpo*, August 5, 1929, English Section, 3.

[187] "Dance Class Taken to See Vera Fokine," *Rafu Shimpo,* August 19, 1929, English Section, 3.

a large-scale version of his choreography to Tchaikovsky's *Andante Cantabile*, while the boys danced to Grieg's "In the Hall of the Mountain King," one of three sections presented from the *Peer Gynt Suite.* The only solo number of the evening, by popular request, was *Pizzicati*. Integrated into the larger dance company, the Japanese students performed bodily inclusion; in the Bowl's huge arena, racial differentiation receded in the unity of mass movement.[188]

As Itō established himself in Los Angeles, he continued to engage the Japanese community, and use performance as a way of integrating the two worlds to which he belonged. In addition to drawing Japanese spectators to his performances in mainstream venues, he gave special performances for their community. For instance, in June, he gave a performance at the Union Church in Little Tokyo. At that early event, as the *Rafu Shimpo* reported, although some doubted whether local Japanese would be interested in modern dance, "the dance recital had greater success than expected, as those in attendance truly appreciated the dancing of both Itō and his students, and appeared deeply satisfied with the remarkableness of Itō's art…"[189] After the Pasadena Pageant of Lights in September, Itō made sure that the pieces performed by the Japanese students were also presented for their local community in two recitals at the Yamato Hall. In October of 1929, when his former teacher, the famous opera soprano Miura Tamaki visited, he made a special appearance at her solo concert.[190] In January of 1930, although Itō himself was called away on other business, he arranged for his dancers to perform for a benefit

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[188] That Itō's interracial integration went unremarked is notable; perhaps that the event was so clearly part of the community arts movement made it seem matter-of-course. In any case, Itō's choreographing of White and Japanese bodies together certainly served as a model for his student Lester Horton, who is frequently credited as forming the first racially integrated dance company in the US.

[189] "Ito's Dance Art" [Itō shi no buyō geijutsu], *Rafu Shimpo,* June 9, 1929, 3.「伊藤道郎ダンスリサイタルは予期以上の大盛況にて来会者は心から同氏並びにその門弟の舞踊を鑑賞し大満足の程どあったことは伊藤氏の芸術そのものの偉太さからではあった。。。」

[190] "Mme. Miura Concert Gala Affair with Michio Ito in Colorful Role," *Rafu Shimpo*, October 28, 1929, English Section, 1.

organized by the local temple Higashi Hongwanji to raise money for a school bus.[191] In early 1930, Itō acted as producer for the visiting Tsutsui Kabuki troupe, which performed in February at Los Angeles's Figueroa Theatre, and then, under Itō's arrangement, at the Booth Theatre in New York in March.[192] Taking advantage of opportunities both to place his troupe of white dancers in front of Japanese audiences, and to arrange other Japanese performers' presentations in mainstream venues, Itō continually shuttled back and forth between the two communities, using his personal fame and the embodied work of dance to draw them into each other.

During Itō's second summer in Los Angeles he was selected to direct another large-scale production, this time at the Hollywood Bowl. A performance of Borodin's *Prince Igor*, to be conducted by the famous Bernardino Molinari, Itō again saw this as an opportunity to involve the Japanese community in the community arts movement. This was another huge undertaking, with 125 dancers performing to a 100-person orchestra, along with singing by the 200-person Mormon Chorus. Itō drew from across the city for his dancers, enlisting top students from his own schools (now expanded to six branches throughout the Southern California area) as well as those of Arnold Tamon, Lillian Powell, and Edith Jane. Groups from the University of Southern California, as well as one put together by the Los Angeles Playground Department were also

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[191] "Ito Dancers to Appear in Higashi Hongwanji Benefit," *Rafu Shimpo,* January 20, 1930, English Section, 3. Affiliated with the denomination Shinshu Otani-ha (or, New Buddhism) in Japan, the Higashi Honganji Temple (alternately spelled Hongwanji) was founded in 1904, moving several times over the course of its history. During the period of Itō's residence, it was located in the Boyle Heights neighborhood, which had a large Japanese American population prior to internment.

[192] For more on the Tsutsui Troupe, see Tanaka Tokuichi's series of articles on the group's world tour, each devoted to a different location—Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York London, Berlin, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Bali. (E.g., Tanaka Tokuichi, "On Tsutsui Tokujirō's Los Angeles Tour" [Tsutsui Tokujirō no rosanzerusi kōen nit suite], *International Relations Research* 28:4 (2008).) The troupe performed *kabuki* derived plays, in a mélange of styles with an emphasis on sword play to appeal to audiences. It toured at the same time as Mei Lanfang, and reviewers frequently pitted the two performances of "Asia" against each other. Meyerhold's first experience of *kabuki* was a performance by Tsutsui's troupe in Paris in 1930.

included. At least five dancers from the Japanese community were enlisted to participate as well, although ultimately it seems only one man, Tetsuo Shinohara, performed. Backstage, however, large numbers of Japanese supported the endeavor. Itō's younger brother, the stage designer, Kisaku, came from Tokyo to help with the production's costumes, and several members of the community joined this effort. Similarly, the Japanese-American Women's Association decorated the venue. With so much involvement on the part of the Japanese community, the *Rafu Shimpo* articulated the sense of importance assigned the production, declaring, "Much of the artistic reputation of the Japanese people depends upon the success of Michio Ito's mammoth production of 'Prince Igor' at the Hollywood Bowl."[193] Because so many different groups from across the city were involved in the production, it was felt that the success of Itō's endeavor would reflect upon Japanese immigrants more broadly. Itō's dance activities were no longer simply about establishing his own talent, but represented the value of the Japanese community, which had claimed him as their own.

Itō's choreography for the ballet aimed to satisfy both the aspirations of community arts, as well as the expectations of modern dance. Itō made use of (and dealt with the problem of) his large number of dancers by dividing them into groups of twenty-four. The three groups on stage together each performed different movements. Itō was thus able to avoid the static monumentality that would have resulted from a totally uniform choreography, while still communicating a sense of rhythmic community. However, the *Los Angeles Times* noted that with such range in skill among the 125 dancers, there was an unevenness to the performance's quality: "Only a few of the dancers were sufficiently trained to appear in the much too revealing lighting which was used. Probably the 125 dancers who composed this "Prince Igor" ballet were inspired

[193] "Prince Igor Awaited for Bowl," *Rafu Shimpo,* August 4, 1930, English Section, 1.

by a spirit of community expression but this type of ballet has been done too often by the great European dancers to have the efforts of comparative amateurs appreciated in the same roles."[194] As it had done in the past, and as had similarly been the case in New York, critics turned to the painterly quality of Itō's staging. Attributing this skill to his Japaneseness, the critic observed that Itō was "more successful in the picturesque effect he achieved with a veiled stage softening the effect of the black-coated orchestra and the color of his dancers' Oriental-Russian costumes than he was with his dance pageantry. With the Japanese skill in simple and suggestive staging, he used chiffon crepe decorated with delicate tracery behind which the music floated with a kind of ethereal beauty."[195] As always, performance, when marked as Japanese, was tied to the paradigms of Japanese visual art that had become a touchstone for any sort of cultural interpretation. The strength of Itō's pictorial ability shifted the focus from the dancers, and the dancing itself, to the lasting impressions wrought by his stage pictures. As a result, even when the choreography and its execution failed to carry out the ideals of community dance, Itō still left spectators with a sense of performed cohesiveness.

By contrast, ready to support one of their own, the *Rafu Shimpo*'s review was enthusiastic, dismissing the validity of any complaints:

> In color and in movement, the dance in its total effect was so captivating that it was some time before the audience returned to their sense of reality as the ballet came to its close. Although the more critical spectators voiced their disapproval on a few minor imperfections, the production on the whole was a great triumph.
> In the swift and precise movements, though often uneven individually, the dancers seemed inspired both by the aesthetic impulse of the celebrated director and by the thrilling melody flowing out of the concealed orchestra ably conducted by the noted master Molinari.[196]

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[194] "Ballet Wins Bowl Honors," *Los Angeles Times,* August 18, 1930, A7.
[195] Ibid.
[196] "Ito Enthralls Huge Crowd," *Rafu Shimpo*, August 18, 1930, English Section, 1.

The two papers' different takes on the performance revealed the tension inherent in the practice of the community dance movement, and the varying stakes different groups assigned the effort. The *Los Angeles Times*, clearly a bit weary of the movement as a whole, was, as with most performance criticism, most interested in evaluating individual artistry and achievement. Thus the effectiveness of the scenery and costumes were taken as signs of Itō's Japaneseness, and this Japaneseness, in turn, was posited as an exceptional quality. By contrast, the *Rafu Shimpo* stood by the premise of dance as community art; what was important was not any individual dancer's perfect execution of the choreography, but rather, that music, choreography, and performance had come together in a triumphant whole, that thus signified Japanese belonging.

In California then, Itō simultaneously performed the role of cosmopolitan modern artist, hailing from Japan, as well as productive member of the local Japanese immigrant community. In contrast to much of his career, where the meanings of his Japaneseness were performed by, and re-interpreted back onto his own body, in Los Angeles, Itō's activities asserted significance for a larger population. It is notable here, that in a time of general yellow peril rhetoric, white arts patrons passed over explicitly racialized commentary in favor of embracing Itō as a figure of their own goals. For both of these groups, Itō's cosmopolitanism thus served the shared goal of civic integration, as he choreographed a vision of communities dancing as an embodiment of their nation.

Worldly Dancing, Mestizo Cosmopolitanism: Japan and Mexico

Itō's twelve years in California were punctuated by trips abroad—to Japan in the spring of 1931, to Mexico in the summer of 1934, and once again to Japan in the winter of 1940. The first two of these trips were taken with a small group of dancers who performed Itō's repertoire.

As with similar tours abroad made by his peers, these trips were thus an opportunity to add international acclaim to his US-based success. For Itō, the tour to Japan also provided a chance to see his family for the first time in almost twenty years. In both Japan and Mexico, Itō's presence enabled various communities to coalesce around shared values, in particular, the ideal of cosmopolitanism. For the Tokyo arts community, for Mexican cultural critics, and for the Japanese-Mexican community, Itō's performances were an opportunity to demonstrate cosmopolitan fluency, and to attribute this cosmopolitanism as a national characteristic. However, even as Itō represented this worldly ideal, the physicality of the dancing body—front and center in his recitals—troubled the usefulness of cosmopolitanism for nationalist purposes. In both Japan and Mexico, Itō and his troupe's dancing bodies concretized anxieties about sexuality and gender that disrupted a more straightforward celebration of cosmopolitanism.

Itō's 1931 trip to Japan was double-billed as a triumphant return for the artist to perform for his own country, as well as a sort of delayed honeymoon. Itō arrived in Yokohama on April 10th, along with his wife, Hazel Wright, and their two sons, Donald and Gerald. Itō also brought along several dancers, a group that included local Los Angeles dancers Charles Teske and Jerre (née Miles Marshon), about whom little other information exists; Waldeen Falkenstein, who would go on to become a pioneer of modern dance in Mexico, and Teru Izumida, who had been one of Itō's Nisei students from the Japanese American community. Over two months, the group presented around five recitals, performing most of the pieces in Itō's repertoire. *Tango* and *Pizzicati*, with which Itō closed every performance, were hailed as masterpieces. Also popular were Hazel Wright's performances of *Habanera* and *Little Shepherdess*, Teske's *Primitive Rhythms*, and Waldeen in *Sonata*. The solo dances were broken up with some of Itō's group pieces—*En Bateau*, *Ecclesiastique*, *Etude*, and *Prelude*. Tokyo newspapers noted that Itō's old

artist friends—Ishii Baku, Yamado Goro, and Hanayagi Sumi—all attended performances, as did the Russian ambassador.

Itō's recitals represented both a demonstration of foreign modern dance, as well as the homecoming of a native son. As such, they offered the Tokyo press the opportunity both to demonstrate cultural cosmopolitanism, and to claim Itō's artistry as a national achievement. Touching on the costuming, lighting, and the concept behind each dance, the critic Ushiyama Mitsuru declared, "everything thoroughly surpassed the dance troupes that have visited Japan up until now."[197] Such a comparison asserted Ushiyama's own informed critical acumen, and placed Tokyo on the map as a frequent site of touring performance. Itō's visit thus allowed critics and the cultural elite to demonstrate their active participation in and affiliation with a global modern culture, claiming for themselves the mantle of cosmopolitanism. But, of course, Itō was also different from other visiting foreign troupes because he was not, in fact, foreign. Thus, Ushiyama could claim Itō's success as Japan's own: "Compared to every other country, I think we need not feel inferior with what we have in Itō Michio's performance of his worldly dancing."[198] Itō's worldly dancing became the possession of Ushiyama's "we"—the Japanese, proud of their native son.

In incorporating Itō's achievement into a national narrative, critics also expanded the global reach of their own cosmopolitanism. For the very content of Itō's dances encompassed a broad geography: "Within his dances there is China, Java, Russia, every country of Western

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[197] Ushiyama Mitsuru, "Seeing the Itō Michio Dance Group" [Itō Michio Buyōdan wo miru], *Asahi Shimbun*, April 24, 1931, 8.「音楽の選択、曲目の立方、一々の曲のあん舞、衣しょう、照明、すべてにわたって今までに来朝したいづれの舞踊団にもまさる。。。」.

[198] Ibid.「我々は伊藤道郎を有する以上いづれの国に対しても世界的舞踊の舞台においてひけめを感ずる必要はないと思う。」

Europe. And of course with pride, via the Noh, he offered artistically the spirit of his native country Japan. Each country's dance essence and dance idiom was skillfully digested, in his creation of a unique dance artistry."[199] Itō's Oriental dance pieces, a mainstay of his repertoire since his time in New York, performed an embodied knowledge of the world—a digestion of international culture. Itō had not merely come from abroad, but in performing an array of global dances, suggested that cosmopolitanism was incorporated within his body. Itō's status a Japanese citizen, meant that this too, was an achievement that could be attributed to the nation itself. Simultaneously representing both the foreign and the domestic, Itō's performance of an expansive geography represented not only a cosmopolitan ideal but hinted, as well, at Japan's imperial project.

Although Tokyo's cultural world hailed Itō's troupe and embraced its foreign elements, Itō also ran into more conservative factions. On May 5th, the troupe performed for a gathering of the International Club at the Tokyo Kaikan. Half-way through, in the middle of one of Hazel Wright's dances, the inspector general and five policemen from the local Marunouchi Station burst in, leaping on stage to arrest Wright and terminate the performance. The Itōs were brought to the police station, accompanied by the outraged Chairman of the International Club. As newspapers reported the next day, the recital violated a prohibition against "social dancing," since the program contained dances such as *Tango*, and *Empire Waltz*.[200] Social dancing—by which was meant, popular forms of Western couples' dance—was seen as a menace to public

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[199] Ibid.「彼のあん舞の中には支那があり、ジャバアがあり、ロシアがあり、西欧諸国がある。彼の相国日本はもちろんその誇りとする能によって彼の芸術に魂を與へている。」

[200] See, for instance, "Mrs. Ito Arrested During Middle of Dance, Performance Hall Thrown into Great Confusion" [Buyōchū no Itō fujin kouin de kaijō tachimachi daikonran], *Yomiuri Shimbun*, May 6, 1931, 7; "New Controls on Dance will Soon be Made by the Chief Superintendant" [Dansu shintorishimari keishichō de chikaku tsukuru], *Asahi Shimbun*, May 7, 1931.

morality, leading to frequent raids on dance halls during the 1920s and 30s. The law cited in Itō's case was the Regulations Concerning the Management of Performances and Performance Halls (興行場及興行取締規則), which had been in force since 1921, when a series of earlier laws governing theatre, entertainment halls, film, and so on, were combined into one. Itō and the Chairman argued with the Inspector General until 2am, when it was finally determined that the arrest was the result of a series of misunderstandings: Prior to the performance, as was required, the Chairman of the Tokyo Kaikan had submitted an application for the performance. It was at first refused because the recital contained dances such as the Fox Trot, Tango, Waltz, and Blues, which seemed to violate the injunction against social dancing. Four days later, the Chairman went to the Public Safety Division, and explained that the recital was strictly "stage dancing" in which some dances took social dance as their subject. He thereby secured an oral agreement permitting the recital to occur. This information either was not passed on, or the Inspector General later changed his mind about the recital's legality, a "misunderstanding" that resulted in the dramatic raid. Once Itō had worked out the issue and been released, the Inspector General and Chief of the Security Division announced that new regulations would be drawn up to avoid similar situations in the future. These aimed to simplify the petition process and granted social dancing exemptions for private banquets and artists performing in their own studios. Citing the uniform regulations of dance halls, however, they stated that no new halls would be permitted to open.

The incident, though amicably resolved, revealed the tension underlying the presence of Itō's troupe. In a common modernist gesture, Itō's choreography used popular cultural forms—in this case, social dancing—as material for his modern stage dancing. But this distinction was lost on the police, who saw in Itō's recital a threat to public morality. Indeed, though the problem

seemed to be the police's lack of sophistication in recognizing different forms of dance, their objection registers the broader threat posed by the dancing body. For while Itō's choreography did not feature men and women pressed up against each other, in the bodily citations of social dancing's postures and choreography, Itō's dancers could be seen to also embody its wantonness, and they did so on a highly visible stage. That the troupe was primarily foreign, and performing foreign forms of dance, was at the root of its apparent threat to public morality. The *Asahi Shimbun* hinted at this when a columnist hypothesized that the troupe might also have violated a rule requiring foreign performers to submit proof of identity. Although a quotation from the Chief Clerk of Entertainment of the Metropolitan Police Department seemed to dismiss this possibility, the hypothesis registered the disruptive nature of Itō's cosmopolitanism.[201] For the troupe, made up of both Japanese and white dancers, performing an array of different national and racial personas in their borrowed dance forms, suggested the way in which national purity, or morality could be violated, even when one danced alone. It was then, perhaps, no accident that the police burst in during one of Hazel Wright's numbers. Wright, Itō's white wife and the mother of his two sons, literally embodied the intrusion of the cosmopolitan into the national body. The troupe's dancing, valorized by critics and like-minded artists who sought to claim Itō's cosmopolitanism as their own, nevertheless clashed with a narrower cultural vision of what it meant to be Japanese. Whereas in California, at least for the moment, Itō's cosmopolitanism had served the overlapping goals of integration shared by white community arts patrons and the Japanese immigrant community, in Japan, Itō's presence provoked competing definitions of national character as either internationally-engaged, or resolutely turned against Western contamination.

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[201] "Notorious Crackdown" [Na Torishimari], *Asahi Shimbun*, May 8, 1931, 3.

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The questions of cosmopolitanism and racial purity that intruded upon Itō's visit to Japan similarly shaped his tour to Mexico, where two different communities—the Japanese-Mexican immigrant community, and the mainstream Mexico City cultural elite—both saw in Itō a figure for their ideals and anxieties about national identity. The tour to Mexico during June and July of 1934 featured Itō along with a small troupe of dancers: Waldeen, who had also participated in the Japan trip, and three other dancers who were active in Itō's Los Angeles studio: Bette Jordan, Jocelyn Burke, and a man who simply went by the name Josef. Hazel Wright accompanied the group but did not perform.[202] The troupe gave around ten performances, with the dancers presenting over twenty pieces in an evening, and adding new material within the program to encourage audiences to return. These works featured Itō's solo and small group choreography, Mexican-inspired dances by Waldeen, and masked solos by Josef. As had become customary, the final piece on every program was Itō's *Pizzicati*.

Mexico had its own burgeoning modern dance scene, a tradition that had begun with Anna Pavlova's 1919 visit. According to dance historian Jose Luis Reynoso, her performances, which had already enchanted audiences in Europe and the United States, allowed Mexico City elites to assert a "homotopic" cultural affinity with European values, demonstrating their modernity and sophistication.[203] While Pavlova was in Mexico City, however, she also explored

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[202] This was Waldeen's first visit to Mexico, providing the foundation for her extended engagement with Mexico and contribution to the development of Mexican modern dance. It is unclear what or who, exactly, brought Itō to Mexico, but he was one of many artists who began to travel Mexico, which appealed as a leftist, but not Stalinist locale. Among Japanese artists in Mexico, most notable was Seki Sano. See Michiko Tanaka, "Seki Sano and Popular Political and Social Theatre in Latin America," *Latin American Theatre Review* (Spring 1944).

[203] Jose Luis Reynoso, "Choreographing Modern Mexico: Anna Pavlova in Mexico City (1919)" *Modernist Cultures* 9:1 (2014): 80-98; "Choreographing Politics, Dancing Modernity: Ballet and Modern Dance in the Construction of Modern México (1919-1940)" (PhD Diss, UCLA, 2012).

the non-elite spaces of the city, venturing into popular performance halls. She incorporated the themes and movements she observed into a new piece, *El Jarabe Tapatío*, which she performed *en pointe*. This piece, which fused modern ballet with native Mexican traditions, served as a foundation for the development of Mexican modern dance, which, Reynoso argues, thereafter developed as a fusion of the universalist ideology of US modern dance, with the particularities of Mexican tradition and dance idioms. During the 1920s and 30s, ballet technique remained essential training for modern dancers in Mexico, who were expected however, following Pavlova's innovation, to treat Mexican themes, both on the concert stage, and in mass performances. When Itō arrived in Mexico City in the summer of 1934, the post-revolution years of turmoil had cooled a bit; however, negotiation over the construction of a national culture and character was still tense. His recitals offered a way for critics to think through the performance of racial and national identity, as Itō's body again represented both a productive cosmopolitanism as well as a disruptive difference.

Similar to critics in Japan, writers for mainstream Mexico City newspapers were eager to demonstrate their cultural cosmopolitanism, making a case for their country as an active participant in the circulation of modern art. In advance of Itō's visit, journalists thus repeatedly called upon readers to demonstrate their cultural sophistication by attending his dance performances. As they implied, if Mexican spectators failed to come, or worse yet, failed to appreciate the value of these performances, then the cause of modern dance in Mexico (and by implication, modern culture) would be lost. In their positive evaluations of Itō's troupe, reviewers also repeatedly turned to the established tropes of japonisme. Upon his arrival, journalists greeted Itō enthusiastically, as the "Spiritual Ambassador of Japanese Rhythms in the West." Reviews repeatedly commented upon the "fineness" of his artistic sensibility, his oriental

mystique, and the stunning simplicity of his interpretations. That these descriptions are generally identical to many of Itō's US reviews, and indeed, of other Japanese performers, is not surprising. Japonisme was, by 1934, a well-known genre throughout much of the world; to demonstrate fluency with its tropes was simply to be well-informed about modern culture in general.

As a successful troupe from the United States, Itō's dancers represented a fairly straightforward opportunity to see US modern dance. However, as a Japanese man, Itō's presence both expanded the cosmopolitanism of the tour, but also confused neat categorizations about the circulation of modern dance. As one writer observed, noting that the majority of Itō's pieces were accompanied by music composed by Chopin, Debussy, and Brahms, "despite his Asian origins, Ito's predilection is for Western dances."[204] Here, Itō seemed to run up against the modern dance model established by Pavlova; with his Western music and western dance technique, it was not clear to this reviewer in what way Itō, as a Japanese performer, had localized modern dance. The hint of contradiction observed by this reviewer, however, was nothing compared to statements made by the prominent conservative music and literary critic Carlos Gonzalez Peña: "The name is exotic, Michio Ito. They say it's Japanese. The truth is that, seeing him dance, we are convinced that his eyes aren't oblique enough to guarantee his ancestry. I don't know whether in Japan, this obliqueness is general, or just partial. Either way, isn't he something of a *mestizo* Japanese?"[205] Gonzalez Peña's evaluation of Itō dances across linguistics and physiognomy in an effort to pin down his racial character. Ito's name, which

[204] "Michio Ito y su Cuadro de Solistas En El Teatro Hidalgo," No paper title, no date. Waseda University, Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Senda Koreya Archive, J11 Scrapbook #5.

[205] Carlos Gonzalez Peña, "Michio Ito y sus Bailarinas," No paper title, June 24, 1934. Waseda University, Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Senda Koreya Archive, J11 Scrapbook #5.

sounds exotic, might be Japanese, but Gonzalez Peña holds out the possibility that it could be something else. While he first insists on physical characteristics as a guarantee of racial identity, in the next breath, he dismisses the assessments of physiognomy. Finally, he lands on the meaning of this ambiguity—Itō must be *mestizo*.

Gonzalez Peña's use of the term *mestizo* here entangles Itō in a key contemporary Mexican nationalist discourse. *Mestizaje*, a concept combining biology and culture, was the ideological affirmation of the *mestizo*, or mixed-race product of colonial conquest. Rooted in the conspicuousness of the racialized body, *mestizaje* indicated as well the concomitant blending of indigenous and European culture. During the period of the Mexican Revolution and its aftermath, the term "*mestizaje*" was embraced as an articulation of a political movement and of a modern racial and national identity.[206] Gonzalez Peña's hailing of Itō as *mestizo*, then, created a racially explicit gloss on other characterizations of Itō as cosmopolitan. For in the critic's evaluation, it is not simply the overall diversity of performers in Itō's troupe, his blended dance style, or his international circulation, but rather, the ambiguity contained within his very body that constitutes him as a figure of embodied cosmopolitanism. Under Gonzalez Peña's gaze, the affiliative cosmopolitanism that other critics embraced in Itō's dancing becomes a primary racial characteristic as well, a *mestizo* cosmopolitanism, potentially marking Itō as a national icon who might carry the same sort of symbolic weight Mexican cultural critics sought for their own country.

And yet, the potent political ambiguity of Itō's body is troubled by the frame of its presentation—modern dance. Gonzalez Peña continues his review by criticizing Itō's body,

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[206] On *mestizaje* discourse and ideology, particularly in relation to performance, see Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

bemoaning its lack of virility. He writes, if the male dancer is to appear naked at all, it should be to show off "his manly torso, sinewy legs, athletic chest, rude gestures. What's more—the beautiful outline of his calves...flexible arms, and eyes and mouth in a smile that says, 'I want to see you here. That's it. Now over there.'"[207] In Gonzalez Peña's fantasy, the powerful naked male dancer overpowers his feminized, if not female, spectator, asserting raw dominance. Male nudity is only acceptable as an expression of power, a power that can then be understood as a reflection of the emergent nation as well. As Robert McKee Irwin has shown, in post-revolutionary Mexico, conceptions of masculinity broadly shifted from that of the upper-class dandy to a more rural, hypermasculinized *machisimo*.[208] Critics such as Gonzalez Peña, though of the urban literati class, demonstrated a commitment to the revolutionary spirit through their embrace of the *machisimo* ideal. Indeed, Diana Taylor points out that the reclaimed racial and cultural identity of the *mestizaje* ideology was staked out upon the denigration of the female—the gendered bodies that had suffered the original acts of colonial sexual violence. And so, unlike in New York, where Itō's Japaneseness rendered his sexuality ambiguous, for Gonzalez Peña, Itō's supposed lack of virility is not a function of race. Instead, it becomes clear a few lines later, when he similarly dismisses the dancers Nijinsky and Petipa of the Russian Ballet as "alarmingly feminine," that it is Itō's work as a dancer that undermines the nationalist masculine potential of his *mestizo* appearance.[209] In mainstream Mexico City newspapers then, Itō's presence, as in Japan, offered critics the opportunity to perform cosmopolitan fluency and affiliation, and to

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[207] Ibid.

[208] Robert McKee Irwin, *Mexican Masculinities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 117. Thanks to Elliot Heilman for discussions on this point.

[209] Although Nijinsky himself never toured to Mexico, his renown as inescapable, making inescapable, as well, a certain association of modern dance as a haven for homosexuality. See Ramsay Burt, *The Male Dancer: Bodies, Spectacle, Sexualities*, 2nd Edition (New York: Routledge, 2007); and Kevin Kopelson, *The Queer Afterlife of Vaslav Nijinsky* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1997).

posit this as a key facet of Mexico's national character. But the dancer's body itself, with bared torso and delicate movements, undermined the political potential attributed to a *mestizo* cosmopolitanism, as gender anxieties marked the body as unproductive for the project of nation-building.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the Japanese language press saw things differently. Reviewers writing in the *Mexico Shimpo* (メヒコ新報) similarly understood Itō's presence as a performance of national identity. However, these writers were only nominally interested in his dancing, instead focusing on his experience as a Japanese living abroad. One article after another stressed how Itō, having excelled in his career while "living among the white race," was an inspiration to other Japanese abroad. To that end, the newspaper organized an event, "An Evening of Conversation with Itō Michio," at which Itō spoke of his experiences in the United States and Europe, and answered questions posed by the audience. The journalists covering the event all dwelled upon Ito's status as a racial outsider. They all declared the evening an unmitigated success.

When they got down to the details of this racial negotiation however, the journalists offered a definition of Japanese ethnicity that specifically served their own purposes as Japanese living abroad. As one journalist wrote, Itō had "balanced both the spiritual and the material according to his own personal excellence, and by then placing this in balance with the civilizations of the East and West, he has taken up the burden of being an ambassador of the construction of a new civilization, above all as a Japanese person marching in the vanguard of

his overseas brethren."[210] In his praise of Itō, the journalist invoked the image of the pioneering march of "overseas brethren," an increasingly widespread formulation of the patriotic expansionist work attributed to Japanese immigrants across the world.[211] For this writer, it was precisely because Itō was Japanese that he was capable of balancing the spiritual and the material, the East and the West, in order to create a "new civilization." The journalist thus claimed for Itō, for himself, and for his fellow compatriots living abroad a definition of Japaneseness that placed them at the forefront of Japan's national cause. As had been the case in Tokyo and with mainstream Mexican critics, Itō again represented a cosmopolitan ideal, bent to the nationalist purposes of a particular community. The rhetoric applied to Itō by the *Mexico Shimpo* journalist was prescient; as the 1930s progressed, Itō increasingly joined—and was cast as—a member of the overseas Japanese community, as his individual narrative of cosmopolitan exceptionalism became subject to the indiscriminate sweep of wartime's state of exception.

In Mexico then, Itō's cosmopolitanism became the locus for anxieties about how racial identity and ambiguity shaped national identity. While California and Japan dramatized the coalitions that either supported or strained a cosmopolitan affiliation, in Mexico, the responses from both groups suggest how racial chauvinism could be aligned with a sense of proud cosmopolitanism. Indeed, across California, Japan, and Mexico, the various reception communities Itō engaged were all preoccupied with asserting a definition of themselves as emblematic of, and central to, the nation, with cosmopolitanism serving as a specific ideal of national character.

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[210] "Theatre Discussion and Welcome with a Few of Itō's Supporters" [Shōsū yūshi no moyooshita Itō shi kangei zadangō], *Mehiko Shimpo*, June 9, 1934. Waseda University, Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Senda Koreya Archive, J11 Scrapbook #5.

[211] See Azuma, and Kenneth J. Ruoff, *Imperial Japan at its Zenith: The Wartime Celebration of the Empire's 2,600th Anniversary* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).

In California and on tour, Itō's repertoire remained relatively consistent, a fact that heightens the comparability of the sites considered here. More notable, however, is the constancy of repertoire, in Tracy Davis's sense of the term, as not only a corpus of work, but as also describing the contours of intelligibility that structure its reception.[212] That Itō's performances again and again became a locus for articulations of local cosmopolitanism, which then became the basis for assertions of national identity, suggests a common process by which communities were able to maintain a sense of continuity in their identity as interwar internationalism segued into rising nationalism. Nevertheless, in these sites, geopolitical hierarchies also become clear—working from a position of authority, white arts patrons in Los Angeles encouraged an image of America as assimilative of the racially- and nationally-marked Other. Japanese immigrants, in both California and Mexico, by contrast, claimed in Itō an image of Japaneseness that reflected favorably on their positions as Japanese nationals and as immigrant members of the US and Mexico. Finally, in the mainstream Mexican press, and both reception communities in Japan, Itō became a touchstone for the desire to assert a strong, independent national character, as a response to histories of unequal treaties and colonialism. It was perhaps the uneven nature of geopolitical power that accounts for the far greater attention paid to gender and sexuality in Japan and Mexico. Indeed, given Itō's marriage to Hazel Wright and their two sons, we might expect to see similar manifestations of fear at interracial mixing in California. Instead, it is in Japan and Mexico, two nations preoccupied with establishing themselves as independent powers, that gender, sexuality, and reproductive potential are so clearly positioned as vehicles for

[212] Tracy C. Davis, "Nineteenth-Century Repertoire," *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film* 36:2 (December 2009).

national power, and became the terms upon which the cosmopolitanism-nationalism dyad provoked by Itō's performances was negotiated.

Ruptured Cosmopolitanism: Los Angeles and Japan

The idea of an emulsive cosmopolitanism, borrowed from the *Los Angeles Times* critic's formulation, articulates the overlapping cosmopolitanisms that Itō embodied in the 1930s—a worldliness understood as cultural capital, an aesthetic approach drawing from multiple cultural traditions, and a presentation of interracial integration, or even miscegenation. As her evaluation of Itō suggested, she meant the metaphor positively—like so many of the other critics represented here, for Jones, recognizing Itō's cosmopolitanism was a way of claiming her own. Yet the metaphor bears further thought, for it is suggestive of the very instability that haunted Itō's performances. For in an emulsion, the molecular structure of the components does not change; it is an admixture held in a state of suspension, and there is always the threat that it will break, its constitute elements separating out once more. To employ this metaphor in a description of Itō is to reject the premise of assimilation, in favor of a heterogeneity in which the foreign is always foreign, integrated, but never absorbed.

If much of Itō's public persona and appeal in the United States, Japan, and Mexico was founded upon a cosmopolitanism rooted in the itinerary of his career, in his dance choreography, and even in his own body, this emulsive cosmopolitanism was ruptured by his 1936 divorce from his wife, Hazel Wright. Newspapers across the US salaciously reported details of the divorce, playing upon the same Rudyard Kipling formulation that had earlier been used in praise, with headlines such as, "'East is East,' American Divorcee Now Agrees. Japanese Husband Reassumed Oriental Ways, She Says":

> Blue-eyed Hazel Wright, American by birth and, until yesterday, Japanese by marriage, had her own explanation for what Kipling meant by "never the twain shall meet." Yesterday she obtained a divorce from Michio Ito, internationally known Japanese dancer. Today she told of the slowly developed rift that eventually shattered their marriage. He became Oriental, she more Occidental.
> "When I married him thirteen years ago he was absolutely Western in his ways," she said. "Now, as he grows older, he becomes more and more Oriental." The tendency, she explained, "appeared in his clothes, mannerisms, the food he wanted and the companionship he sought."
> "Nothing could have been more American than our early life," said Miss Wright. "We were married at the City Hall in New York in 1923, lived in hotels, observed all the conventions of marriage as white races know them. Gradually, he changed."
> They have two sons, twelve and eight years old. One, the mother said, was calm, philosophical, intensely proud of his Japanese blood. The younger had the opposite attitude."[213]

There are no accounts offering Itō's version of events; by this time, it seems, he was living with a Japanese woman, Tsuyako, who was to become his second wife. The gossipy report nevertheless evokes an image of Itō's life in which his cosmopolitanism, a celebrated alloy of East and West, slowly was dissolved, as if separating back out the constituent elements. The news item makes passing reference to the exclusion laws that had governed the couple's married life: Beginning in 1907, US women who married foreigners lost their citizenship; the Cable Act of 1922 rescinded this law, except in cases where a woman married an alien ineligible for naturalization, that is, Asian men.[214] Wed in 1923 in New York, where there were no anti-miscegenation laws, though their marriage was legal, it meant the expulsion of Wright from her nation of birth. In 1931, however, the law was amended to allow US women to retain their citizenship even if married to an Asian man; in 1936 the act was appealed. Over the thirteen years of their marriage then, Wright's national status fluctuated as a function of her sex; with nationality constituted as a masculine property, the limits of national borders were drawn across her body. By contrast, for

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[213] "East is East, American Divorcee Now Agrees," *New York Tribune,* April 3, 1936, 16.

[214] Bill Ong Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America Through Immigration Policy, 1850-1990* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 45.

Itō, there was never any chance of American naturalization. Indeed, throughout the report, it is suggested that there is something inexorable about being Oriental; although in his youth Itō had performed his way into an American—white—life, according to Wright, as he aged, his Japaneseness could no longer be stifled. In Itō's supposed reversion to his racial essence, the couple's two sons are similarly marked. In Wright's account, one, taking after his father, is characterized as Japanese, while the other is "the opposite." The metaphor of emulsive cosmopolitanism, then, intended as a description of Itō's artistic persona, seems to infect even the act of procreation. Itō's cosmopolitanism, held in a state of emulsified suspension throughout so much of his career, here seems to break, and the constituent elements separated back out, in the bodies of his two sons.

Silent on the topic of his divorce, Itō's name was, however, a constant in Los Angeles newspapers, as he continued his busy activities staging large productions and leading his schools. In June of 1936 he choreographed a production of Gluck's *Orpheus* at the Redlands Bowl, clearly echoing his early student days at the Dalcroze Institute, where the opera had been famously staged a month before he enrolled in the summer of 1913. In November 1936, Itō staged a ballet for the Los Angeles Federal Music Project's production of *La Traviata*, and in December presented some of his dances for a recital at the Hollywood High School in a benefit for underprivileged children. In the summer of 1937, Itō staged the most celebrated of his California works: two large scale ballets for the Hollywood Bowl season, *Etenraku* and *Blue Danube.* These two pieces represented a culmination of his efforts in the 1930s to commit himself to the ideal of community dance, as a performative representation of his own cosmopolitanism. Set against Japan's invasion of China that summer, the production also

represented Itō's dogged attempt to still weave together the two California communities to which he belonged.

In the two ballets, Itō set his choreography to orchestrations of classical music—the Japanese *Etenraku*, which newspapers glossed as "Music Coming Through Heaven," and Johan Strauss' *Blue Danube*. *Etenraku* was a modern musical arrangement by the conductor Viscount Konoe Hidemaro, of an 8th century *gagaku*, music traditionally performed with dance in the ancient Kyoto Imperial Court. The stage was decorated with an enormous gold folding screen, 150 feet long and fourteen feet high, that caught and reflected the gleam of the stage lights so that the downstage folds appeared as a series of gold columns running across the stage. The costumes evoked ancient Japanese regalia in a loose way; kimono-like robes in heavy silks and rich brocade were set off by elaborate headdresses that borrowed, one suspects, more from Itō's experience working on productions like *The Mikado* and *Madame Butterfly* than any research into ceremonial court clothing. For *Blue Danube*, Itō designed costumes "in an empire style" in various shades of blue silk; the stage lighting used similar washes of blue light to complement the dancers. The pieces featured both Japanese and white dancers. These included Shineo Ono, a dancer from Japan who had arrived in California the previous year, as well as several of Itō's Nisei students, such as Kazuo Sumida, Lily Arikawa, Cecelia Nakamura, Yoshiko Sato and Fumi Tanaka, who all appeared in *Etenraku*. From broader Los Angeles, dancers such as Flower Hujer, Ivan Kashkevich, Miriam Dawn, Byron Pointdexter, Barbara Perry, and Paul Foltz were listed as central in the ballets as well.[215] The *Los Angeles Times* called *Etenraku* "mysterious and exquisite," while *Blue Danube* was considered such a hit that it was reprised on September 24th,

[215] "Ballets to be Presented at Hollywood Bowl Tonight," *Los Angeles Times*, August 19, 1937, A8. "Hidemaro Konoye Conducts Hollywood Bowl Program," *Los Angeles Times*, August 20, 1937, 15. "Nisei Girls Dance in Ito's Ballet at Bowl Tonight," *Rafu Shimpo*, August 19, 1937, English Section, 8.

with conducting by Adolf Tandler, along with two Mozart minuettos, in celebration of the opening of a new pedestrian passageway to the Bowl.

Itō clearly conceived of the ballets as jointly weaving together the Los Angeles Japanese and white arts communities. The two pieces of music, both understood as "classic," grounded Itō's group choreography, which as usual, took advantage of the majestic outdoors setting to create a sense of solemnity and elegance. In both pieces, the gleam of the silk costumes allowed the dancers, standing in simple groupings across the stage, to echo the effect of the gleaming gold screen behind them. A publicity collage made by the Hollywood Bowl emphasized the idea that the evening represented an entwining of two traditions, and two communities [FIG 5].[216] With small central circles for the faces of Konoye and Itō, the rest of the poster features eight photographs, four from each dance. All of them zoom in on small groupings of dancers presented mostly as couples or triplets. While the two dances at first seem contrasted, the photos in fact contain multiple echoes, revealing similar choreography and atmosphere. The top right photo from *Etenraku*, for instance, in which the dancers point one foot in *tendu* and raise one arm overhead, is echoed in the *Blue Danube* photo bottom left, in which the dancers hold a similar pose. Above them, in the middle left, three white women from *Blue Danube* tilt their heads to the right, with arms stretched out low beneath them, and eyes cast to the right corner. A nearly mirror image occupies the photograph diagonally above this one, with three women in *Etenraku*; this time their heads

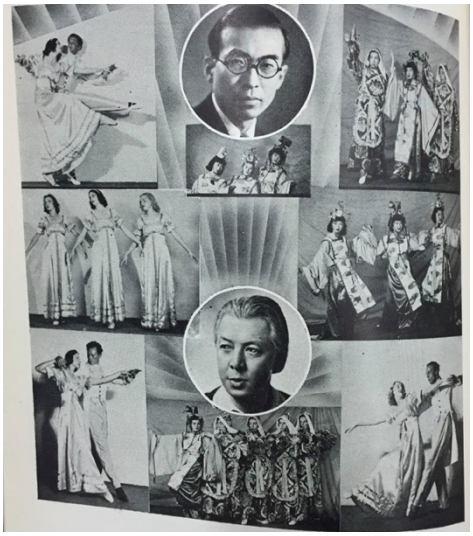

Figure 5: Hollywood Bowl Program, *Dancing Under the Stars*, August 17, 1937, 34. LA Philharmonic Archives, Los Angeles.

[216] Hollywood Bowl Program, *Dancing Under the Stars*, August 17, 1937, 34.

are tilted stage left and eyes follow suit. The other four photos all present dancers linked together with either their hands or with arms around the waist, and one foot raised in a low *attitude*. This movement, a basic ballet position, is shown to be similarly fundamental to forms of Japanese dance, where it is done with a flexed foot. The collage, rather than presenting a mélange of two vastly different dance traditions, suggests a similarity of movement vocabulary, and the ease with which different bodies can take up these positions.

Although Itō did his best to present the Hollywood Bowl evening as an interweaving of two cultures music and dance, he did so against a foreboding political background. In early July of that summer, the build-up of hostilities between China and the multiplying Japanese forces stationed there erupted in the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, which marks the beginning of the second Sino-Japanese war, and for some historians, the Pacific War itself. For the rest of the summer, Japanese forces pressed on in an invasion of China and Los Angeles, and newspapers detailed the mounting Japanese brutality in front page headlines. On July 31st, the *Hollywood Citizen News* announced "Helpless Chinese Slaughtered in New Assault on Tientsin. Joyful Invaders Hail Slaughter of Foes." On August 16, two days before the Hollywood Bowl performance, the front-page headline read, "Thousands Killed in Gory Battle for Shanghai. Americans Flee Holocaust."

The Hollywood Bowl evening attempted to compensate for the daily march of horrifying news by presenting art as a removed, unifying endeavor. This was particularly explicit in the publicity surrounding the famed conductor Konoe Hidemaro, who in addition to being leader of the Tokyo Philharmonic, came from an elite political family and was by birth a member of the peerage. His brother, Konoe Fumimaro, had just become Prime Minister in June, a post he would occupy until January 1939. The conductor's presence in California thus could have met with

disapprobation. However, promoting art over politics, the *Los Angeles Times* announced in July: "Wise Nipponese: Viscount Hidemaro Konoye of Japan, who comes to this season's Bowl to conduct the Michio Ito Ballet, believes that when music interferes with politics you should give up politics. Before sailing for America he resigned his post in the House of Peers, explaining that his musical duties made membership impracticable."[217] Konoe's renunciation of politics in favor of his music was a gesture that grounded the entire evening's performance, as Itō choreographed the joining of culture and community in the calm remove of the Hollywood Bowl.

As had been the case with Itō's other large-scale productions, the *Rafu Shimpo* saw the event as a way to not only integrate the Japanese community into the broader Los Angeles arts community (the paper reported that over 3,000 Japanese and Japanese-Americans attended), but also to demonstrate the excellence of Japanese artists. Whereas a writer for the *Los Angeles Times* had expressed doubt about the Japanese Konoe leading an American orchestra through European music, the *Rafu Shimpo* declared this effort a success: "Viscount Hidemaro Konoye of Japan proved to the satisfaction of an appreciative audience of over 20,000 that the east can masterfully interpret western music when he skillfully conducted the Hollywood Bowl orchestra last night."[218] And at a reception the following evening hosted by local Japanese musicians, the paper reported, "Viscount Konoye also encouraged the nisei in their endeavor to advance in the musical world, observing that 'in this field, there is no barrier of racial prejudice.'"[219] Again, art was positioned as an opportunity and an escape from the challenges faced by the Japanese

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[217] Boris Morros, "Wise Nipponese," *Los Angeles Times,* July 13 1937, B6. The *Rafu Shimpo*, hoping for more of a story, was rebuffed, and reported that Konoe was "Mum on Far East Strife." *Rafu Shimpo*, August 16, 1937, English Section, 6.

[218] "2nd Konoye Bowl Concert Sought," *Rafu Shimpo*, August 20, 1937, English Section, 6.

[219] "Konoye, Ito to Feature in Program," *Rafu Shimpo*, August 21, 1937, English Section, 6.

community in California. The success of Konoe and Itō seemed to promise a way to overcome the limitations of race, a path of exceptionalism that the community at large might follow.

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In the fall of 1939, Itō again went to Japan, this time alone. As the Tokyo press reported, the trip was in honor of his parents' 50th wedding anniversary. For the celebration, Itō and his brothers put on an elaborate recital, with a performance of *At the Hawk's Well*. The trip also offered an opportunity for Itō to reaffirm his ties with Japan, a commitment he had frequently spoken of during his 1931 visit. As usual, he did so through his creative work, choreographing a production of the ballet *Prince Igor*, and, with his brothers, presenting a massive historical drama, *Daibutsu Kaigen* (The Great Buddha's Awakening). This latter production was created as part of the Arts Festival for the 2,600th Anniversary of the Empire, a year-long celebration of the mytho-historical founding of Japan by the legendary Emperor Jimmu. This event placed Itō squarely within cultural efforts supporting Japan's rising nationalism, foreshadowing the artistic-political negotiations that would constitute his career thereafter.

As with his earlier tour of Japan, the press eagerly covered Itō's activities; their greatest praise went to his productions of Western and Oriental-derived work. This focus suggests that in Japan, Itō's merit lay in his demonstration of mastery over foreign material—a clear sign of the success of a representative of Japan abroad. In early November of 1939, he staged at the Nichigeki Theatre a version of the *Prince Igor* ballet he had choreographed for the Hollywood Bowl in 1930. His choreography followed Diaghilev's 1909 innovation by presenting just the "Polovstian Dances" section of the Borodin opera; critics noted, however, that Itō's choreography departed from that of the Russian Ballet. As a reviewer in the *Asahi Shimbun*

observed, Itō's choreography was, "more or less made up of Americanized novelty; in its treatment of the group dance shows a wonderful talent, as uninhibitedly Oriental rhythms joined together with the chorus, gradually and steadily becoming more frenzied in a climax of a magnificent and large-hearted group dance, whose overwhelming impressiveness created a terrifically deep impression."[220] The reviewer appreciated both how Itō had put an American stamp on the piece, making it fresh again, as well as how the choreography took advantage of the music's Orientalism to produce a stirring climax. Similar themes were stressed in press coverage of the Itō recital organized for their parents' anniversary in December. While a critic recognized many of Itō's solo dance pieces from his concerts eight years earlier, he singled out the Oriental pieces such as *Lotus Land* (danced by Yuji's wife Teiko), *Pagoda Queen*, and *Persian Impression* for their "polished technique and grasp of precise rhythms."[221] The Itō siblings' joint effort on *At the Hawk's Well*, translated into Japanese as *Taka no ito*, was applauded. This time, Michio played the Old Man, Senda took the part of the Young Man, and Teiko danced the role of the Hawk. Yuji was in charge of costumes and music, Kisaku oversaw the set and props, and Michio, of course directed. That the famous Yeats had used *noh* as inspiration for his play was already a point of pride; under Itō's direction the play "successfully formed a harmonious fusion of poetry, music, drama, and dance, an elegant total work of art."[222] The reviewer's evaluation of

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[220] "Impressive Group Dance "Prince Igor" at the Nichigeki Ballet" [Miryoku aru gunbu "Purinsu Igoru" Nichigeki bare- hyō], *Asahi Shimbun*, November 3, 1939, 8.「伊藤道郎の振付は、ルシアン・バレーの定石的なテクニックに捕らわれずに、多分にアメリカナイズされた新味を取入て、群舞の取扱いに素晴しい腕を見せ、奔放にして東洋風な節奏が合唱と相和して次第に狂躁の度を加えるに従ってぐんぐんと盛り上って来る豪放壮大な群舞の圧倒的な迫力は凄じいまでの感銘を與へる。」

[221] "Rare abilities shown in the performance of the Ito Recital" [Hibonna shuwan enshutsu ni shimeshita Itō risaitaru hyō], *Asahi Shimbun*, December 5, 1939, 8.

[222] Ibid.「道郎の演出は詩と音楽と劇と舞踊とを渾然と融合せしめ気品ある総合芸術。。。」

the recital suggested that in bringing his successes home for production among family and friends, Itō was able to fully perfect his work, an assertion that the dancer and his dances rightfully belonged in Japan.

Itō envisioned the production of *Daibutsu Kaigen* as a similar demonstration of his continuing ties to his homeland. The production was hailed as marking a new phase for *shingeki* (modern Western-style drama in Japan), enabling the genre to move from small little theatres to a grand stage and scale. The script, by Nagata Hideo, presented in five acts a massive historic drama narrating the 8th century construction of the Great Buddha at Nara. With a cast of 250, Itō had delayed his return to America to oversee the production, enlisting, as usual, Kisaku for stage setting, Yuji for music, Teiko for dancing, and Senda to help with directing and to supply actors from the New Tsukiji Theatre. Itō explained in the *Asahi Shinbun* what drew him to the script, and his vision for the production: "I see 'Daibutsu Kaigen,' as [depicting] a time when the great Buddha was constructed for the sake of national unity. Again truly I thought of the figure of contemporary Japan, so although I intended to return to America, this was a unique opportunity, as a sort of work after my own heart that has remained in Japan. …while the music is *gagaku*, I intend to do a new modern style choreography, and organize everything through symphonic rhythms into an effective spectacle, with everything raised greatly to a new phase of shingeki, I believe."[223] Recognizing that the festival would offer the resources for the type of ambitious spectacle he enjoyed creating, Itō tied his artistic vision to an articulation of national unity, both

[223] "A New Phase for Shingeki" [Shingeki ni shinseimen], *Asahi Shinbun*, December 20, 1939, 8. 「『大仏開眼』を拝見して当時の大仏の建立のための挙国一致振りは真に現代の日本の姿だと考えました、何か会心の作を日本に残して帰米するつもりでしたが又とない機会を與へられて、是が非でも奉祝作品の名に恥じぬ物を作る心算ですが、音楽は雅楽を届い、舞踊は新しく現代的に振付けるつもりで構成してスペクタクルに効果を大に上げ新劇団に一つの新生面を與へ度いと思います。」

past and present. Pairing his modern choreography with classical Japanese music, as he had done so frequently in his career, Itō asserted his dancing as a medium of cultural renewal.

If Itō spoke of the production as a demonstration of how, after so many years abroad, "his heart had remained in Japan," for critics, Itō's foreign lifestyle had left an indelible mark, making the production too foreign for such a nationally symbolic event. The Arts Festival was part of the year-long celebration of the 2600-year founding of Japan by the mythic emperor Jimmu. This foundational myth became, in 1940, the basis of a country-wide cultural movement, drawing participants of all ages and classes, with massive governmental support. Asserting 660 BC as the year of Japan's founding allowed the nation to claim an unbroken imperial line that predated both Chinese civilization and the Christian era; this claim became a key part of wartime ideology, as it articulated a history of national continuity and cultural purity.[224] *Daibutsu Kaigen*, which dramatized a key moment of Japan's early history, thus seemed an ideal work for this moment of performative national unity. However, Itō's approach to the staging—a blend of old and new, Western and Japanese, though representative of his own sense of national belonging, was out of step with the prevailing cultural sentiment. While a critic writing for the *Asahi Shimbun* praised the accuracy of the period costumes, Kisaku's grand sets, and was even willing to excuse some historic inaccuracies in the narrative, he complained about the foreignness of Itō's choreography: "The problem with the directing by the dancer Itō Michio is the discrepancy of the dance elements of this drama; though only a small issue in the imaginative scenes, in the scene reproducing a glimpse of a memorial service procession, it is undeniable that the presentation was done in a foreign style. But since he has been educated almost entirely as a

[224] See Ruoff, *Imperial Japan at its Zenith*.

foreigner, there's no use criticizing this."[225] What Itō had grandly envisioned as an effective spectacle of "symphonic rhythms" instead failed due to the choreography's conspicuous foreignness. The critic's disapproval was not simply of the choreography, however, but of Itō's education, and of his life abroad. In the critic's view, there was no longer a need—nor a place—for Western cultural practices in Japan; and in dismissing the choreography, he also disavowed Itō's place in his own nation.

Itō returned to Los Angeles in April, leaving plans to open a branch of his school in Tokyo, with a focus on the dance and broader art practices of Asia. As an article in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* explained, while there were many schools in Europe and the US where people from around the world could study Western dance, there was no such center in Asia providing a similar educational opportunity for Western students. Itō continued to conceive of dance as a way of uniting cultures, and as a mode of diplomacy. However, as the negative review of *Daibutsu Kaigen* presaged, the freedom of movement and of artistic interculturalism that structured his career could no longer be taken for granted. As Senda Koreya later commented of the production's negative reception, "Indeed, this was probably the majority opinion in that time of rampant intolerant nationalism, for four cosmopolitan brothers…in the celebration of the '2600 Years of the Imperial Era' to be left to their own wills was, anyhow, a strange bit of chance."[226] Using the *katakana* (an alphabet primarily for foreign loan words) rather than the

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[225] "'Daibutsu Kaigen' Profound Depiction of Customs" ["Daibutsu Kaigen" jūkōmi aru fuzoku byōsha], *Asahi Shinbun*, February 6, 1940, 6.「問題の舞踊家伊藤道郎氏の演出は前触に相違してこの劇には舞踊的要素が？く僅かに創造場面、供養会参進の場にその片鱗を写ったが、その表出が外国的なるを否めないのは、氏の教養が殆ど外国人のそれである事に依るので非難しても始まらないであろう。」

[226] Senda Koreya, *One More History of Shingeki* [Mō hitotsu no shingekishi] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shōbō, 1975), 445.「確かにこれが大方の意見だったろうと思われるが、偏狭なナションナリズ

Japanese kanji, for the words "nationalism" and "cosmopolitan," Senda emphasizes semantically and typographically both the affiliation with the foreign that the brothers shared, as well as the way this attitude made them stand out. Indeed, Senda was arrested along with thirteen other *shingeki* practitioners in June of 1940 for communist sympathies; as he recognized, it was only a matter of time before his family's brand of cosmopolitanism would be seen as a threat. Although the warning signs in the United States were perhaps less clear for Michio, his easy cosmopolitanism was also soon terminated. The day after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, the FBI raided Itō's Los Angeles home and arrested him as an enemy of the state. He spent the next two years in a series of Department of Justice Camps, ripped from his family, as well as from the modern dance and Japanese immigrant communities in which he had thrived. But living with other political internees and forming a new sense of community, the turn to Japan that was hinted at during his career in the 1930s became a robust commitment to Asia, as Itō sought to make sense of his internment and ruptured cosmopolitanism.

In the 1930s, Itō performed a cosmopolitan identity that also positioned him as a representative of multiple communities similarly invested in articulating extra-national identities for themselves. The interplay between his own sense of self and that of his spectators vivifies the way in which various cosmopolitan meanings were negotiated in and through the process of production and reception. In Itō's case, cosmopolitanisms could be attributed to his biography, his dance style and choreography, the make-up of his company, and even his own physical appearance. Meanwhile, for his spectators, cosmopolitan affiliation emerged in their attendance and appreciation of his performances, in their embrace of Itō as a community representative, and

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ム横行のあの時期に、四人のコスモポリタン兄弟がー。。。＜皇紀二千六百年＞を奉祝して、気儘に遊ばしてもらえたというのは、ともかくも奇妙なめぐりあわせであった。」

indeed, in their avowal of Itō as a demonstration of the nature of their own national belonging. These multiple significations of cosmopolitanisms thus suggest a fluidity between what Pheng Cheah has identified as the normative and the actual in his theorization of the term. For in the case of Itō and his spectators, ideals of extra-national affiliation were made to cohere with more nationalist identities, as cosmopolitanism became a way of performing a form of national belonging.

The breakdown of Itō's emulsive cosmopolitanism, hinted at in the tension over his 1937 productions at the Hollywood Bowl, confirmed by the critical rejection of *Daibutsu Kaigen* in Japan, and symbolized most forcefully in his divorce, suggested the ways in which his status as a worldly figure became incompatible with consolidating nationalist fervor. In California, biography—both his own as well as Konoe Hidemaro's—threatened to overpower the aesthetic. Although Konoe was applauded for sacrificing politics for music, and Itō's choreography and promotion literalized the idea that art was a force for integrating different cultures, the production occurred against a backdrop of increasing impatience with such ideals. By contrast, in Japan, where the critic found Itō's staging too foreign, aesthetic and corporeal training disclosed what might otherwise have been ignored as a piece of background biography. The body thus became a troubling vector for the residue of cosmopolitanism, a residue that clung to Itō's work even as he became subject to nationalist fervor and violence.

Chapter 4:
The Edge of Allegiance: The Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute and the War Years

In his 1946 book *Amerika to Nihon*, Itō devotes a chapter to his plan for an international cultural institute which he called the Theatre of the Sun (太陽の劇場). The kernel of the idea, he writes, emerged in the summer of 1921 when he participated in a sort of artists' colony held at the estate of the sculptor Gutzon Borglum in Connecticut. With sixteen of his students gathered in residence, everyone did as they pleased, engaging in whatever artistic activities they desired. The one rule of the colony was that they were to avoid contact with the outside world, so that they would be free to pursue their art and enjoy the simplicity of nature. Itō writes:

> However, there was one exception. This was the Japanese man employed as a cook. Every day he had to go to the town to buy groceries. And so he alone had contact with worldly affairs. One day, I had gone into the kitchen, where the cook was reading a newspaper. When I saw this, I tried to pass by, letting him be. But as I was so close, the cook, with a hint of surprise, quickly hid the newspaper. "In truth," he began to explain to me, "when I was in town buying meat, someone gave it to me. Certainly I never would have bought it." I smiled and said, "It's fine, I don't care how many newspapers you read. Incidentally, won't you read me a bit."[227]

The newspaper contained news of the naval disarmament conference President Harding was then in the process of convening, and Itō read the paper with great interest. That evening around a campfire with the other students, Itō revealed his own transgression, and relayed the political

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[227] Itō Michio, *Amerika to Nihon* (Tokyo: Yakumo Shoten, 1946, 1948), 259.「ただ一人例外者がいた。それはキャンプに雇った日本人のコックである。彼は食物の買出しに毎日町に行かぬばならない。だから彼だけが世事に通じているわけだった。

ある日、私が炊事場の傍を通ると、このコックが新聞を読んでいる。それを見ると、そのまま通り過ぎてしまへなくなった。そつと近づくと、気配に驚いたコック慌てて新聞を匿した。『実は。。。』と、彼はもぢもぢして私に言訳を始めた。『町で肉を買ったらこの新聞に句でくれたのです。決して私が買求めて読んでいるのではないんで。。。』

私は笑いだして『いいんだよ、あなたはいくら新聞を読んだって横はないことになっているじゃないか。ときに、その新聞をちよつと私に読ましてくれない』といった。。。」

news. From then on, the isolation of the colony was shattered; every night they all gathered to debate the possible terms of peace, each in turn eagerly offering plans for how they would enact a meaningful and lasting peace.

From these discussions, Itō hatched his own plan, which he later called "The Theatre of the Sun": the major nations involved in the peace talks would each donate the cost of one battleship, and this fund would go towards the founding of an international dance school that Itō analogized to the Red Cross—able to enter any country, it would bring together youth from across the globe in the harmonious study of dance. This international engagement with art would foster cooperation and understanding, and with the youth of every nation involved, both the impetus and manpower required for war would disappear, thereby laying the foundation for world peace. Borglum encouraged Itō to go to Washington with his plan, and, according to the narrative, so he did. He met first with the Japanese ambassador, Shidehara Kijūrō, who, explaining that Japan was present at the disarmament conference simply as an observer, asked Itō not to interfere. Undissuaded, Itō then met with Harding himself. Harding, Itō writes, was kind and admired the plan, but characterized it as a plan "for the future," whereas the conference was an effort to deal with the past. In a word, he declined to pursue it. "After returning from the White House, as I thought about it, and the sort of things I had said, I decided, why not ask a fellow Asian, who might better be able to understand. And so I went to the Ambassador of China."[228] In Itō's account, the Chinese Ambassador was, indeed supportive, and helped Itō to organize an art exhibition of work by artists from Japan, India, and China, at which not only the

[228] Ibid., 268.「ホワイト・ハウスから歸ってから考えると、自分はああいうことを言ったが一体東洋人同士で理解出来るだろうということが頭にきた。そこで私は隣国の支那大使館へ？込んだ。」

Ambassador of China, but also of England and Spain, were present. It was from this experience, Itō writes, that he decided "it would be my life's work to promote peace through the stage."[229]

The anecdote—and the plan itself—as fantastic as Itō's other tales, nevertheless narrates a crucial pivot in Itō's career, as he turns from the West to a more sympathetic East. The instigating moment—the encounter with the Japanese cook—reveals a rare allusion to his awareness of the racialization and labor status of so many of his fellow Japanese in the US. Reading the paper together for a moment in the kitchen, they are united in a way that supersedes Itō's ties with the artists and patrons of his usual acquaintance (though their speech preserves their distinction in status). This moment of ethno-national fellowship prompts Itō's turn to the Chinese ambassador—someone who might better understand Itō's plan because of a shared Asian heritage. From then on, as his career continued to develop in the US and he became more and more prominent in the emergent movement of (White) modern dance, we can also trace a simultaneous growing re-engagement with Asia. For Itō, this "Asia" was that ideal region represented by the cultural ideology of Pan-Asianism—as particularly articulated by the Meiji-era curator and art historian Okakura Kakuzō, whose books, *Ideals of the East* and *The Book of Tea* were foremost in defining Japan's image in the West. It was also always an Asia informed by the romantic racialism of Western Orientalism, by which Itō had made his career through his performances of ethnic dance.

Written in Japan after the war, this story, like most of Itō's anecdotes, seems suspect—although at least one newspaper article from 1928 mentions the rumor of Itō's meeting with the

[229] Ibid., 270.「そして、それ以来、舞台を通しての平和促進が私の一生の仕事だと考えるようになった。」

President.[230] Yet it held a central position in Itō's own autobiography. For the Theatre of the Sun—an idealistic vision of international artistic camaraderie overlaid with a vision of Asian cultural unity—became the project that meaningfully connected the thirty years of his Euro-American career to his activities during the war in Japan. In the postwar period, this was to prove particularly important, as artists and intellectuals in Japan broadly sought to explain their participation in the war effort. Yet the appeal of this vision during the war is evident, for it provided Itō with a sense of purpose, and of continuity, as he became subject to the forces of war, expulsion, and imperialism.

On December 9th, 1941, the day after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, the FBI raided Itō's Los Angeles home. He spent the next two years in a series of Department of Justice Camps—Fort Missoula in Montana, Fort Sill in Oklahoma, Camp Livingston in Louisiana, and the Santa Fe, NM internment camp—until the fall of 1943, when he was repatriated to Japan, along with his second wife, Tsuyako.[231] Itō spent the final two years of the war assisting the Japanese war effort. His primary activity was the founding of the Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute (*Dai toa butai geijutsu kenkyūsho*; 大東亜舞台芸術研究所), an organization intended to mobilize performing artists across the Co-Prosperity Sphere, fueled by the rhetoric of Pan-Asian cultural unity. With the exception of a single revue staged in January 1945, none of his war-time theatrical efforts were realized. However, the documents outlining his plans, read alongside notebooks from his time in the internment camps and following his repatriation, reveal

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[230] Mary H. Watkins, "The Dancers," *New York Tribune*, May 6, 1928, F9.

[231] World War II Japanese Internee Cards, National Archives. Like the majority of Japanese and Japanese-Americans living in California, Tsuyako (born Ozawa Tsuyako, in Hokkaido) had been sent to the Santa Anita Assembly Center. As Itō was shuffled from camp to camp, Tsuyako remained at the Heart Mt. facility in Wyoming until they were reunited prior to repatriation. On Itō's trial and identification as an "enemy alien," see Kevin Riordan, "Performance in the Wartime Archive: Michio Ito at the Alien Enemy Hearing Board," *American* Studies, forthcoming.

a series of imagined choreographies that chart Itō's struggle to locate himself in this new political world. Politically, Itō had turned from a Europe-based cosmopolitanism to the internationalism of Pan-Asian ideology, a turn in which his status as an exceptional Japanese artist abroad mirrored the rhetoric that was used to explain Japan's own modernity and position in the world order. The disjunctures between the two periods of his life, made unmistakable by the experience of racialized internment and expulsion, required a reordering of his allegiances. And yet, through the imagined choreographies drafted in his notebooks, Itō asserted an unfaltering belief in the corporeal universality central to modern dance. Thus, the apparent shift in political allegiance obscured an underlying choreographic allegiance that allowed him to maintain a sense of personal continuity. Itō carried back with him to Japan not only the bodily movements of his dance technique, but also the ideologies that had undergirded them—for instance, a belief in the curative potential of rhythmic movement, a practice of ethnic impersonation as cosmopolitanism, and a faith in dance as central to the performative embodiment of community. In Japan, Itō adapted these tenets and the choreography they inspired to the needs of the Imperial war effort, via the ideology of Pan-Asianism. In endeavoring to assert a sense of personal continuity in his artistic work, Itō simultaneously revealed the structural continuity between the practice and meaning of his dance in the West and in Imperial Japan.

"Traitor" Marks the Utmost Brand of Ignominy

The dissonance that war posed to Itō's sense of self and of the world is evident in the two notebooks he used while interned at Fort Missoula and Camp Livingston. The first of these opens with a set of questions that he returned to again and again, rewriting them throughout the

notebooks, insistently seeking out a logic that would relate the individual human to the circumstances of total war among nations.

> What am I?
> A human.
> What is a human?
> A living thing with body and spirit.
> What is a living thing?
> A thing that lives.
> What is the human body?
> The human body is the aggregation of all sorts of cells. From all sorts of cells are the five viscera and the five sense organs, that is, the body is arranged from the head, the neck, the torso, and arms and legs left and right. According to zoology, it belongs to the category of mammal.[232]

Insistently trying to parse what it means to be human, Itō's responses turn to scientific inquiry to assert the fundamental sameness of all people. Later in the notebook, relying on physics, he starts with the creation of the universe, plotting all of evolution from amoeba to human; in yet another section, he takes a phenomenological approach, describing his own birth and gaining of awareness of the world around him. His own origin story blending with that of the universe and of living organisms, Itō's lines of questioning repeatedly lead to the unit of the nation, and the distinction between East and West. Rarely does he explicitly mention the war; instead the obsessive tracing of human origins and ontology suggests an effort to make sense of the racial differentiation that defined his internment, and to respond to this experience of racialization with an assertion of biological sameness.

As with the anecdote of his trip to Washington, eventually the notebook pages show Itō turning to the ideology of Pan-Asianism, in effect, accepting the mark of alterity and finding

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[232] Camp Livingston/Camp Missoula Notebooks, Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Senda Koreya Archive, J21 #1. Hereafter, "CMCL." 「自分は何だ？/ 人間だ。/　人間とは何だ？/　肉體と精神とを所有する生物だ。/人間の肉體（肉体）とは何だ？/　各種の細胞からなる五臓五管卽ち頭・頸・胴・左右の手足より組織された物體がある。動物学によれば哺乳動物に属す。」

similarity and sympathy in an envisioned regional, racial, and cultural similarity. In contrast to earlier pronouncements of Asianist affiliation (and certainly in contrast to his post-war writings), in the internment camp notebooks, Japanese imperial ideology permeates his discussions of Asian solidarity. In one section, using the question and answer format that was to become a common feature of his post-war writing, Itō stages a dialogue about the Japanese empire. Proceeding through a discussion of Japan's origin myth, the *hakkoichiu* ideology, and the expansion of its empire, Itō's answers to the dialogue's ignorant inquirer hew closely to the doctrine of Imperial Prescripts. His interest, however, is always on Japan's mission to spread peace throughout the world, and its ability to blend East and West to create a new civilization. For Itō, imprisoned in a bleak camp, the Japanese Empire seemed to offer the promise of cosmopolitanism that the West had betrayed.

Standing out against the endless passages of imperial ideology in the camp notebooks are snippets revealing Itō's internment experience, and the emergence of an unexpected community. Undoubtedly, Itō absorbed elements of Japanese imperial ideology when he visited Tokyo in 1939-40 for the 2600 Year Celebration of the Imperial Reign. However, it seems that there was also frequent discussion of these ideas among the camp prisoners, and the direct quotations from Imperial Prescripts that are scattered through Itō's notes suggest that somebody must have brought copies of such documents into the camps. The presence of these interlocutors is manifested in the notebook itself; in one section, another prisoner, Nishiyama, transcribed Itō's words as he dictated them. Itō also copied out poems the prisoners composed, clearly struck by their shared sense of betrayal. Having for so long embraced a self-image as a unique individual capable of fusing two cultures to make a successful career in America, Itō began to fully embrace the identity that had been hinted at in his work with the Los Angeles Japanese

immigrant community in the 1930s. The ethnic and national categories that joined him to these men underlined the legitimacy of Japanese imperial doctrine, as the work of building a new community overlapped with the process of indoctrination.

In the camps, the community of fellow Japanese and Japanese-Americans, as well as the textual dogma of imperial ideology, shaped Itō's embrace of his national identity. Thus several paragraphs in the notebooks fall back on standard explanations of the irreconcilable philosophies dividing the spiritual East and the material West. Yet his writings just as often resisted common characterizations of the enmity between Japan and the United States, as Itō offered points of commonality between his two homes. At one point in the notebook, observing that America, the youngest nation of the West, is famous as a "melting pot" of European cultures, Itō claims that despite its 2,600 year history, Japan too, is the youngest country of the East. And further, Japan, having assembled together the range of Oriental cultures, is similarly a melting pot. The theory of Japan as a "mixed nation" was, in fact, the predominant characterization of the nation's origins throughout the first half of the 20th century. Its staying power was due to its usefulness to Japan's imperialism and policy of Japanization—first in Korea and Taiwan, and then in Southeast Asia.[233] Itō in particular would have been exposed to it since his early childhood, as the mixed-nation theory was a key argument wielded by Japanese Christians in defense of their religion. While some proponents positioned Japan's assimilative nature as a counter-balance to that of the US, for Itō, this shared nature provided the basis for a strong partnership. Although the Pacific Ocean, lying between America and Japan, had set the two nations as antagonists, he

[233] Oguma Eiji, *A Genealogy of 'Japanese' Self-Images,* trans. David Askew (Melbourne, Trans Pacific Press, 2002). This theory would again be pertinent to Itō's career when he was charged with designing the torch relay and opening ceremonies of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, for which he created a plan inspired by the ancient Silk Road. See the conclusion of this dissertation for a discussion of this plan.

writes, "I hope to resolve these cultures, having grown up in both the East and West." Calling the war between Japan and America the result of an "unfortunate" misunderstanding, Itō reveals that his self-conception as a mediator between the two had not been diminished by interment. If anything, his repeated insistence in the notebooks that encounters and relationships between individuals will provide the foundation for peace reveals his confidence in his personal ability to effect world relations.[234] In internment then, Itō embraced his Japaneseness, no longer as a mark of exceptionalism, but rather as a point of commonality, connecting him first and foremost, to other Japanese, and secondarily to other Asian peoples. It was perhaps this turn away from the European-based cosmopolitanism of the previous thirty years in favor of an affective affiliation with Asia, that prompted him to request repatriation. In the late fall of 1943, he and Tsuyako boarded the S.S. Gripsholm and sailed to Goa, where they were part of a prisoner exchange; transferring to the Teia Maru (帝亜丸), they arrived in Yokohama in February of 1944.

Itō returned to a drastically changed country. Although Japan's empire building had been underway with the acquisition of Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria before Itō first left for Europe in 1912, at the peak of its territorial control in 1942, the Japanese Empire covered much of East and South East Asia.[235] However, by the time of Itō's return, the early wave of victories had turned, and Japan was desperately attempting to defend its vast territory, as well as to administer governmental control of these regions—an effort for which it had not prepared. Although Itō was welcomed back to Japan and given preferential treatment, his long absence insulated him from the desperate confidence that supported many Japanese in the final years of the war. Ishii Baku

[234] CMCL1, 19.

[235] This included Hong Kong, French Indochine (Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos), British New Guinea, the Philippines, Malaya, and Brunei.

recalled that upon his return, Itō declared to him that the United States would win the war.[236] Itō wrote as well, in a new notebook, "With their overwhelming material resources, the American and British enemy will either obliterate our empire or demand unconditional surrender."[237]

Certain of Japan's defeat, Itō nevertheless flung himself into the war effort. He did so, it seems, precisely because it was expected of him—not merely by the Japanese government, but on a far deeper level, by the institutions of culture and civilization that had shaped his life thus far. The force of this cultural world is evident in his wartime notebook, which is scattered with quotations from the 1910, 11th edition of Encyclopedia Britannica, copied out in English and carefully translated into Japanese. An excerpt from the entry on "Civilization," which is reworked again and again in Itō's later writings, describes the development of man through the stages of savagery, barbarism, and finally, civilization. The excerpt ends on a striking note:

> In savagery the family expanded into the tribe: in barbarism the tribe developed into the nation, the epoch of civilization proper is aptly named because it has been a time in which citizenship, in narrower significance, has probably been developed to its apogee. Throughout this period, in every land, the highest virtue has been considered to be patriotism, —by which must be understood an instinctive willingness on the part of every individual to defend even with his life the interests of the nation into which he chances to be born. Regardless of whether the national cause in which he struggles be in any given case good or bad, right or wrong. The communal judgment of this epoch pronounces any man a traitor who will not uphold his own nation even in a wrong cause—and the word "traitor" marks the utmost brand of ignominy.[238]

The 11th Britannica, published as a single unit on the eve of World War One, represented an ideal of comprehensive knowledge that the war shattered soon after. Edited by the Tory journalist Hugh Chisholm, but financed and publicized by the American entrepreneur Horace Everett Hooper, it aimed to appeal to the US reading public, with shorter essays and a fresh style.

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[236] Ishii Kan, *Ishii Baku: Dance-Poet* [Ishii Baku--buyōshijin] (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1994), 265; Itō quote from WN.

[237] War Notebook, Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Senda Koreya Archive, J30 #2, pg. 20.

[238] Ibid., 4.

While imperialism and racism are pervasive in the 11th, it was also notable for the heterogeneity of its contributors, whose essays varied in style, approach, and politics. This heteroglossia made the encyclopedia an object of great appeal to many modernist writers, including James Joyce, Jorge Luis Borges, and Samuel Beckett.[239] It is tempting read Itō's interest in the 11th as yet another of his self-conscious performances of the modernist persona, an insistence on retaining his own sense of self, even within the internment camps.

The civilization entry, written by the historian and doctor Henry Smith Williams, lays out a theory of sequential stages of civilization, valorizing the nation as the most advanced societal formation, and patriotism to the nation as the "highest virtue." While the passage seems steeped in an Anglo-American worldview, in fact, Itō was likely familiar with this theory from his childhood in Japan, where it was extensively popularized by the scholar Fukuzawa Yukichi (福澤諭吉) in his 1875 book, *An Outline of Theories of Civilization*.[240] Both Fukuzawa, writing during the tumultuous period prior to the promulgation of the Meiji constitution, and Williams, writing in the first decade of the 20th century, drew from the same sources—François Guizot's *General History of Civilization in Europe* and Henry Thomas Buckle's *Hisotry of Civilization in England*. Fukuzawa's *Outline* had demonstrated the applicability to Japan of the Four Stages Theory (as it was known by), an argument that was thoroughly absorbed into Japanese historical discourse. Itō's encounter with the idea in the Britannica, then, was likely a re-meeting with a concept already localized as Japanese. For this reason, the entry's conclusion—that one must defend the nation of one's birth, regardless of situation or personal opinion—thus held authority

[239] Paul Saint-Amour, *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopedic Form* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, 199-203.

[240] Albert M. Craig, *Civilization and Enlightenment: The Early Thought of Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

as a doubly sanctioned principle, embraced by both the nation of his birth and the nations of his career. Itō had chanced to be born Japanese, and so upon his return to Japan, he demonstrated his commitment to the nation of his birth by throwing himself into performance activities that supported the war effort. To thus demonstrate his patriotism was to carry out the doctrine of civilization which had structured his life up until then. Pledging allegiance to the nation of his birth was, in fact, the only way to perform allegiance to the ideals of the West. His war time activities were therefore not a renunciation, but another kind of doubled performance, one that, following Tina Chen, might have looked like a kind of betrayal, but was, in fact, the only way to perform a consistency of identity.[241]

A New Hellerau: The Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute

In Japan, Itō responded to the calls for total mobilization by drawing up plans for The Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute (*daitoa geijutsu kenkyūsho;* 大東亜芸術研究所). With a name that clearly echoed the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, Itō envisioned it as an institution for mobilizing performing artists across the empire and as a center for Asian youth to come together for training in various cultural arts. The Institute—outlined in a series of documents, two of which were submitted to the Greater East Asia Ministry—thus recovered Itō's Theatre of the Sun idea, which was itself a re-envisioning of the Dalcroze Institute at Hellerau. While he had spoken of a similar plan numerous times in the US, and even at one point gathered funds to begin to carry it out, it was in Tokyo, in the final two years of the war, that he came closest to its realization. However, reflecting his own turn to Asianism, as well as the demands of

[241] Tina Chen, *Double Agency: Acts of Impersonation in Asian American Literature and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

wartime mobilization, Itō's Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute recast the internationalism of Hellerau as a Pan-Asian cosmopolitanism, in which his own experience as a worldly modern artist mirrored the position of Japan as a modernized nation and leader of the New Order in Asia.

From the moment he arrived back in Japan, Itō enjoyed a position of privilege that enabled him to pursue the Institute plan, even as war conditions rapidly deteriorated. As Senda Koreya put it, as soon as his brother arrived in Yokohama, friends from the government and army "remembered to take care of him."[242] Itō spent the first few days in interviews with army and government officials, while living in a suite at the chic Western-style Hotel Sanno. He soon moved to an apartment in the Tokyo neighborhood of Eifukucho, furnished with fine Western furniture. At a time when luxury items in general, and Western products in particular were widely prohibited, this arrangement further revealed the strength of Itō;s personal connections. Although his uncle Furushō Motō, who had looked after Itō in Germany, had died in 1940, there were the various officials who had provided Itō with financial support in California. It appears they continued to do so upon Itō's return to Japan. As Senda wrote in his autobiography,

> But the army and government people, especially my *senpai*, the former Finance Minister Sakomizu Hisatsune and Minobe Youji, why did they back up Michio? Was it as a reward for "dodgy dealings" in America? Or did they, at their wits end, latch onto Michio's dream as a last-ditch effort? Or giving up the war as hopeless, did they think it would help when it came time to make peace with America? Allowing this cosmopolitan to speak his dreams, or awaiting some sort of opportunity, even today we don't know [why they supported him].[243]

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[242] Senda, *One More History of Shingeki*, 475.「帰国後も道郎は政府や軍のお覚えは良いらしく。。。」

[243] Ibid., 476.「だが、軍や政府の連中、とくに私の一中の先輩で大蔵省官僚の迫水久常とか美濃部洋次とかいう連中が道郎のバック・アップをしているらしいのはなぜなのか？ただ道郎がアメリカでやった＜裏工作＞にたいする御褒美なのか、それとも彼らも切羽つまって道郎の

The government and army also provided financial support for the Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute. That Itō's project had this patronage, even at such a late stage of the war, reflected the fact that his proposal drew upon, and fit into other cultural propaganda activities carried out across Japan's empire. The difficulty Japanese leaders had faced earlier in controlling China was attributed, in part, to the fact that there had been little effort to convince the local populace of Japan's liberating cause. Therefore, in 1941, a new policy of cultural propaganda, based on the Nazi *propaganda Korps*, called for battalions of civilian *bunkajin* (men of culture) to be attached to Japan's armies in Southeast Asia. These writers, painters, musicians, filmmakers, and other culture makers had the responsibility of persuading indigenous populations to willingly join in the creation of a new Asia. Under these auspices, significant funding was devoted to theatre and dance that hewed to the required messages of Asian unity and Japanese benevolence.[244] For instance, in Indonesia, the journalist Takeda Rintaro established the Theatre Direction Center (演劇指導所, *engeki shidōsho*), which mobilized local dramatists and performers to create new touring productions.[245] And in the Philippines, the writer Kon Hidemi

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夢にすがって一息抜こうとしていたのか、それとも、もう戦争には見切りをつけて、アメリカと仲直りをするときの役に立てようとこのコスモポリートに、夢みたいなことを言わせて、待機させて置こうとしたのか、これだけは今でもまるで見当がつかない。」

[244] On Japanese cultural activities in Occupied Southeast Asia, see Samuel L. Leiter, "Wartime Colonial and Traditional Theatre," in *A History of Japanese Theatre*, ed. Jonah Salz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Faye Yuan Kleeman, *In Transit: The Formation of the Colonial East Asian Cultural Sphere* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014); Matthew Isaac Cohen, *Inventing the Performing Arts: Modernity and Tradition in Colonial Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'I Press, 2016): 251-266; Grant K. Goodman, ed., *Japanese Cultural Policies in Southeast Asia during World War 2* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991); Sang Mi Park, "Wartime Japan's Theater Movement," *WIAS Research Bulletin* 1 (2009): 61-78; Yoshida Yukihiko, "National Dance under the Rising Sun, mainly from National Dance, Buyō Geijutsu and the Activities of Takaya Eguchi," *International Journal of Eastern Sports and Physical Education* 7:1 (October 2009): 88-103.

[245] Motoe Terami-Wada, "The Japanese Propaganda Corps in the Philippines: Laying the Foundation," in *Japanese Cultural Policies in Southeast Asia during World War 2*, ed. Grant K. Goodman (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991):173-211.

organized a dance revue that culminated in a grand finale in which all the performers waved Japanese flags and sang the *Aikoku Kōshinkyoku,* or Patriotic March (愛国行進曲), a song used in Japan's occupied regions as a substitute for the local national anthem.[246] Both Takeda and Kon had returned to Japan by the end of 1943, and they became involved in the Institute's activities. Itō's proposals also included a version of the mobile theatre units that were central to Japan's cultural strategy, both domestically and abroad.[247] In fact, one of Itō's younger brothers, Kisaku, was the Bureau Chief of the Japanese Federation of Mobile Theatres, the main organization overseeing this mobilization. Itō also secured the support of several notable artists and intellectuals such as the composer Yamada Kosaku (who had been in Germany with Itō and originated the dance-poem concept), playwrights Kishida Kunio, and Kubota Mantarō, and scholar of Indian literature and Sanskrit, Tsuji Naoshirō.[248] Itō's plan thus not only reflected general cultural policies advocated by the military, but involved the first-hand expertise of friends, relatives, and other elite *bunkajin*.

Itō was not alone among artists collaborating with the government on the war effort. While Kishida Kunio, who served as chief of the Division of Culture of the IRAA is the best known example from the theatre world, nearly all performance artists joined the war effort in some way. As Guohe Zheng writes about a meeting of *shingeki* practitioners soon after defeat, when the dramatist Kubo Sakae raised the question of war responsiblity, consensus in the room was that everyone had been guilty of collaboration, and thus the matter was dropped. In

[246] Mark Ethan, "The Perils of Co-Prosperity: Takeda Rintarō, Occupied Southeast Asia, and the Seductions of Postcolonial Empire," *American Historical Review,* 119:4 (2014): 1184-1206.

[247] Numerous artists were sent on "comfort tours" to provide entertainment and assuage the home-sickness of Japanese troops; they also performed for local populations across the empire.

[248] See Appendix 1 for list of board members and participants.

literature, Ben Ami Shillony observes that by 1942, writers had to join the Literary Patriotic Association to maintain their ability to publish. With the exception of Nagai Kafu and Masaki Hiroshi, essentially all Japanese writers did so, and thus adapted their work to the dictates of the state. In contrast to other axis countries, where many artists joined resistance movements or became emigrés fleeing the repressive regime, in Japan most artists stayed and continued their work. Although several artists spent some time in jail for communist convictions, even in this group, participation in the war effort was not compelled through violent means or even imprisonment.[249]

From the early spring of 1944 through March of 1945, Itō was busy with his new Institute. The abandoned beauty parlor owned by a friend from his Los Angeles days served as ideal rehearsal space (beauty parlors, as a sign of Western decadence, had been banned). Itō also used the space for his newly established dance studio. At night, Senda Koreya, recently released from prison for communist beliefs and prohibited from working in the theatre, secretly used the space for rehearsals for the just-founded *Haiyu-za*. Itō's efforts were short-lived; by the spring of 1945, American firebombing had destroyed the Institute's office and rehearsal space and Itō fled to the countryside with his family and some students and performers. With only one production actually realized, evidence of the Institute exists in the series of plans Itō drew up to outline its purpose and organization. Two of these were submitted to the Greater East Asia Ministry, and

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[249] Guohe Zheng, "From War Responsibility to the Red Purge," *Rising from the Flames: The Rebirth of Theater in Occupied Japan, 1945-1952,* ed., Samuel Leiter (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2009): 279-316, 286-7; Ben-Ami Shillony, *Politics and Culture in Wartime Japan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

The involvement of these and other cultural figures was part of what led the post-war political theorist Maruyama Masao to argue that Japanese fascism was not mass-based, as in Germany, but rather, effected "from above" by the cultural and political elite working through the state. "Theory and Psychology of Ultra Nationalism," trans. Ivan Morris, in *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics*, ed. Ivan Morris (London: Oxford University Press, 1963).

have been stamped “Secret.” The others remained in his personal papers, circulated, perhaps, among the other involved artists and his brothers.[250]

[250] Reproductions of these carbon copied documents—a mix of handwritten and typed materials—have been collected in a volume edited by Ito's biographer, Fujita Fujio. Two of these were submitted to the Greater East Asia Ministry's Cultural Section; they are stamped with a "classified" seal (秘). The titles of the document, as included in Fujita’s volume, are as follows. Alternate versions of some of these exist scattered among Itō’s files in the Senda Koreya archive at the Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum; these have some minor variation of title and content.

1. Greater East Asia Cultural Movement—"The Theatre of the Sun"—Summary of its Establishment (handwritten) 大東亜文化運動　太陽の劇場　建設要旨

2. Greater East Asia Cultural Movement—“The Theatre of the Sun”—Summary of its Establishment (typed) 大東亜文化運動「太陽の劇場」建設要旨

3. Greater East Asia Cultural Movement—"The Theatre of the Sun"—Plan for its Basic Development (typed) (stamped “classified”) 大東亜文化運動「太陽の劇場」展開の具体案

4. “The Theatre of the Sun”—Prospectus and Plan (typed) (stamped “classified”) 「太陽運動」趣意並に企画

5. Movement of the Sun—"The Theatre of the Sun"— Outline of its Central Organization (typed) 太陽運動「太陽の劇場」中央機構の大要

6. "The Theatre of the Sun"—Central Organization (typed) 「太陽の劇場」中央機構

7. "Theatre of the Sun"—Its Essence and First Plan (typed) 「太陽の劇場」その本質と第一企画

8. Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute Draft of Articles of Incorporation (handwritten) 大東亜舞台芸術研究所定款草案

9. Greater East Asian Stage Arts Research Institute Draft of Articles of Incorporation (handwritten carbon copy) 大東亜舞台芸術研究所定款草案

10. Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute Identification Draft (handwritten) 大東亜舞台芸術研究所職別草案

11. Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute <Draft of Personnel Register> (handwritten) 大東亜舞台芸術研究所　＜職員名簿案素＞

12. Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute Personnel (handwritten) 大東亜舞台芸術研究所職員

13. “Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute” Goals of its Founding (typed) 『大東亜舞台芸術研究所』設立趣旨

While the ideas contained in the documents are Itō’s, a number of different handwritings appear, offering indications of who else was involved and how the organization was structured. The first document is handwritten by Itō Michio. Documents 2 and 3 are typed, but with handwritten corrections which Fujita attributes to Senda Koreya. Document 4, also typed, has both Itō Michio and someone named Ōmura Kentarō listed as its authors. Fujita has suggested that this was a pen name for Senda Koreya, who, having recently been released from prison for communist beliefs, was prohibited from doing any theatrical or writing work, and so spent the rest of the war working under various pen names. Document 5, 7, and 13 are typed with no indication of authorship. Document 6, a hand drawn chart describing the Institute's organization, and 8, a hand-written outline, are by Senda Koreya. Documents 9-

The organization of the Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute mirrored that of other wartime government organizations, especially those cultural programs that had fallen under the aegis of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (*taiseiyokusankai*, 大政翼賛会). Itō's plans thus reveal how adeptly he digested the already-established institutions of wartime Japan and incorporated their logic into his project, thereby making it appear simply an extension of already-approved policy.[251] The scale of the Institute, however, was massive; true to his Hellerau education, Itō envisioned it as a force for completely reordering society, not just in Japan, but across Asia. The seamlessness with which Itō merged these two influences to establish art as central to the fabrication of the Co-Prosperity Sphere intimates a certain logic of imperialism underlying the original Hellerau project as well.

Itō's proposal envisioned the Institute as made up of several distinct departments, that would divide up the work of broader conceptual planning and concrete production, and would balance attention to the particularities of each local site with the need for overall cohesion and ideological unity. Figure 1 shows a chart outlining the organization's structure. A Central Department and Secretariat General, located in Tokyo, would contain a general affairs section, an accounting section, and an advisory body. The advisory body, made up of experts from the entertainment world including many of Itō's friends, ensured that the Institute was immediately incorporated into existing cultural activities. The organization's daily activities were then divided between four main departments: the 1) Planning Section, 2) the Creative Section, 3) the Research

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12 are handwritten, either by Shibata Hidetoshi or Kurihara Kazuto, who both worked in the Institute's office carrying out administrative duties. Though the extent of Senda Koreya's authorship of the materials is unclear, he writes in his autobiography that he joined Shibata and Kurihara in their office duties so that, under the cover of government sanctioned work, he could use the Institute studios at night to run rehearsals for what would become the famous Haiyu-za.

[251] In funding, organization, and scope, it also recalls the US Federal Theatre Project and other WPA programs, suggesting a common approach to the arts across the Axis-Allied divide.

and Education Section, and 4) the Organization Coordinating Section. The Planning Section "will draft plans of performances in terms of performance scale, form, subject, and style as well as the principle directing management and actors, etc., that are adapted to the social conditions and sentiments of the people in every locale."[252] The Planning Section would dispatch artists abroad to study local cultures, and through research, publications, and presentations, enable artistic exchange. In addition, it would establish schools and offer short courses on local art. The Creative Section, in charge of more concrete duties, was responsible for domestic mobilization of artists and organizations and "providing leadership support for the artists in each locale so that they can concentrate on artistic activities."[253] The Creative Section would make performance schedules, compose programs, and staff the personnel for production management and administration of the theatres. The Creative Section also oversaw the Production Office, which carryied out necessary office and technical activities for specific performances. Within the Creative Section were also housed sub-sections for literature, directing, music, stage arts, stage technology, and so on. The Research and Education Section was responsible for researching the history and present conditions of religion, culture, ideology, race, politics, economics, language, manners, customs, myths, tradition, science, climate, and so on, for every country of Greater East Asia. By carrying out research on all these topics, the Research and Education Section would create a "unified intellectual treasure store for the movement's development."[254] These findings would be used to train future leaders to appreciate the cultures and ideas of Greater East Asia.

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[252] GEA #4.「本運動展開のため各地の社会情勢、民情に即応する公演企画を行い公演の規模、形式、題材、様式及び主なる演出幹部、出演~~者等を立案する。~~の運営に当たる。」

[253] Ibid.「企画に基き国内での動員、芸術家並に団体等との連絡及び招集、現地芸術家への指導援助等により創造活動への結集を行う。」

[254] Ibid.「研究に必要なあらゆる資料を蒐集、整理して、運動展開への綜合的頭脳の宝庫を形成する。」

The Organization Coordinating Section would coordinate domestic organizations, and oversee propaganda production and dissemination both domestically and abroad. Coordinating among all local areas, this section would also liaise between the other branch organizations. Finally, a Commission of Inquiry, made up of representatives from all the branches, would periodically gather to examine the development of the cultural movement

Itō's own tendencies towards ambitious plans, combined with the significant official support he received, helps explain the scale of his plans for the Institute. While most artists simply lent their talents to propaganda performances and comfort tours (which Itō did as well), in the grandest articulation of his plans, Itō envisioned the Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute as a way of reorganizing society, and Asia. Indeed, the details of Itō's explanation reveal how thoroughly the project was enmeshed with historic and philosophical discourses about Pan-Asianism. For instance, his characterization of the Research and Education Section as creating an "intellectual treasure store" references, in particular, Watsuji Tetsurō's formulation of Nara as the endpoint of the Silk Road, which, in turn, made Japan the repository of the intellectual and cultural achievements of the world.[255] The quixotic grandeur of this vision, yet another example of the modernist impulse to remake society-as-*Gesamtkunstwerk*, suggests how Itō threaded together the different periods of his career. In his plans for the Institute, he retrieved his Dalcrozian dream of a revitalizing artists' colony, repurposing its ideology for that of Japan's wartime new world order.

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In the planning documents of the Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute, Itō outlined a vision of the performing arts as a force for re-organizing society at large. In this endeavor, Itō's

[255] For more on Watsuji Tetsurō and Itō's interest in this concept, see the conclusion of this study.

past cosmopolitanism, principles of Pan-Asianism, and elements of Japan's Imperial program all came together. Indeed, it was precisely by engaging with the doctrine of Imperial Pan-Asianism that Itō made sense of the events of his career. In his notebook, Itō wrote:

> Language, in the end, has one limitation.
> If you say light, you cannot say dark, if you say a falsehood, it is not the truth, one is limited to one thing. In this way, things tend to become simpler. One can only incline in one direction. If something is actually positive, but at the same time negative—while being a falsehood something is also the truth, this is a thing that includes entirely pluralistic inconsistencies. Sensibility is entirely a monopoly of the East. Reality is a monopoly of the West. Oriental peoples love only the static, without giving consideration to material substance. Western people are all absorbed in floating on their backs through worldly activities, without knowing spirituality, couldn't one say? It's clear that all of this is not one definition or the other. However, setting that aside, are we not able to understand the above words with nodding consent? In any case, words, which for the time being put a concept in order, what they cannot express is the human.
> It is called the Orient. It is called the West. Those things are already ideas. Among this Japan, China, India, Iran, and so on; that there are a variety of worlds is understood. Provisionally they are lumped together. So one can say something like an oriental mood, or oriental colors. There is even Okakura Tenshin saying "Asia is one."[256]

Itō, who often protested that he could not be defined as East or West, nevertheless built much of his career upon this "oriental mood." An immediately communicable, yet endlessly variable and ambiguous notion, Itō's performances of the Orient had become a way of understanding himself and his artistic purpose. During his childhood in Tokyo, he had been exposed to the expectations

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[256] Wartime Notebook, Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Senda Koreya Archive, J30 #2.「言葉というとのは所詮どうしても一つの限定であって。

陽といえば陰でなくなり、虚　といえば実でなくなる様に一々自分を限って了う。それで兎角簡単になり。一方上のみ遍する。実際のものは積極的であると共に消極的でもあり一虚でありながら実でもあるという風と一にして多元的矛盾を含んだものである。味は東洋の専売。実は西洋の専売、東洋人は静的なことだけを愛して物質を顧みず。西洋人は皆世俗の活動に浮き身をやつしてみて精神を知らないか、といえば。すべてそんなことの云へるわけのないのは判りきった話である。然しそれはそれとして我等はし以上の言葉にある首肯ける気持を汲み取れないだろうか。どうせ概念で一応ものを片づけ

言葉に現すことより出来ないのが人間である。東洋と云う。西洋という。その事が既に概念である。その中に日本、支那、印度、イランなどと種々の世界のあることは分かているが。仮にそれをひっくるめて。東洋的気分とか東洋的色調とかいえば、又いえないことはないが。『アジアは一なり』といった岡倉天心さえある。」

and conventions of Orientalism via Japan's own use of the trope to establish its own differentiated modernity. Yet when Itō arrived in Europe, he found himself a subject of the Oriental idea, proclaimed a genius at Hellerau for his racial singularity. As he then built his career in New York through the genre of ethnic dance, for audiences, his embodiment of racially-marked roles engendered a slippage between his own Japanese body and that of his danced subjects. This slippage in turn became one that Itō embraced, for speaking—or dancing—for Asia was an effective form of self-promotion. By the last years of his career in the US, Itō's performance of self was a performance of a certain representativeness of Japan, and of Asia, as his opportunistic ethnic impersonation had become an embodied Oriental affiliation.

If in the US, Itō had come to perform a form of embodied Pan-Asianism, his reference to the famous pronouncement by the curator and art historian Okakura Kakuzō illuminates the contours of Itō's embrace of, or at least, acquiescence to Japanese imperialism. As Shigemi Inaga has argued, it was precisely Okakura's transnational experience, his exposure to the idea and experience of Western Orientalism, that lies behind his declaration of Asian unity. In Inaga's pithy summary, for Okakura, "Asia" is the rejoinder to the "Orient."[257] Okakura's writings, originally penned and published in English, were only translated and printed in Japan in the 1930s, two decades after his death, as militarists and proponents of imperial expansion seized the phrase "Asia is One" as their own, co-opting Okakura's reputation in the process. Itō, who left Japan for Europe in 1912, four months before Okakura's death, certainly encountered Okakura's reputation, and likely his writings as well abroad (especially given that Okakura had worked

[257] Inaga Shigemi, "Okakura Kakuzō and India: The Trajectory of Modern National Consciousbess and Pan-Asian Ideology Across Borders," trans. Kevin Singleton *Review of Japanese Culture and Society*, 24 (2012). See also the introduction to this special issue, Noriko Murai and Yukio Lippit, "Okakura Kakuzō: A Reintroduction.".

closely with Fenollosa, who was the source of the *noh* manuscripts Pound and Yeats used). Indeed, Okakura's publications, such as *Book of Tea*, were primary sources of knowledge of Japan and "the East" for Itō's audiences and patrons. Itō's reference to Okakura then, seems almost a proxy for his own turn; like the once-cosmopolitan curator whose reputation now served the purposes of the Japanese empire, Itō too now cast his career as in service of his nation. Having performed a personalized image of the Orient for so long, Pan-Asianism gave Itō a cause with which to align his performances and his persona. If the "Orient," a word that in its provisional, fragmentary categorization could not express the human, Okakura's "Asia is one," deployed now by the Japanese state, offered Itō a way to perform Asia as a coherent whole.

The entwining of Pan-Asianism and Japanese imperialism was concretized in the two-day Greater East Asia Conference held in Tokyo in November 1943. It was this conference that Itō took as the inspirational event motivating his Stage Arts Institute, and he used one of the tenets announced at the conference as the Institute's guiding principle: "Every country of Greater East Asia, mutually respecting each others' traditions, expanding the creativity of every people (*minzoku*), uplifting the culture of Greater East Asia."[258] The purpose of the conference was to officially declare the liberation of Asia and the construction of a new Asian culture as the ultimate goals of the war. In attendance were representatives from many of Japan's imperial colonies, as well as from other nations understood to be included in the sphere of influence. Wang Jingwei of China, Jose Laurel of the Philippines, Ba Maw of Burma, Zhang Jinghui of Manchukuo, Prince Wan Waithayakon of Thailand and Subhas Chandra Bose (representing India as an observer) all attended. The result of the conference was a joint declaration intended as a

[258] GEA #2.「大東亜各国は相互にその伝統を尊重し、各民族の創造性を伸暢し、大東亜の文化を昂揚する。」

retort to the Atlantic Charter. It condemned Britain and the US for having "indulged in insatiable aggression and exploitation...to satisfy their inordinate ambition of enslaving the entire region." By uniting together, through "mutual aid and assistance," the countries of Greater East Asia might "liberat[e] their region from the yoke of British-American domination, and ensur[e] their self-existence and self-defense."[259] Jointly written by the participating representatives, the declaration offered a positive gloss on the relationship between Japan's imperialism and Pan-Asianism. The physical presence of representatives from nations across Asia was a performance of Pan-Asian solidarity that seemed to embody the ideals articulated in the declaration. In its language and physical spectacle then, the conference embodied the sort of international alliance that Itō now dreamed of. Basing his plans for the Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute on the conference's declaration of cultural respect and exchange, Itō embraced the Co-Prosperity Sphere as an open arena in which he could realize his artistic goals.

Itō's vision reiterated several essential points of Japan's Imperial program. For instance, Itō stressed that the central element of the project would be touring theatrical troupes. These troupes, whose nucleus would consist of Japanese leaders in the stage arts, would "be dispatched to every region of Greater East Asia" to "mobilize and train the artists of local areas." With this mobilization, "The 'Theatre of the Sun' will spread the great idea of *hakkouuchiu* throughout the world, as a link in the 'Movement of the Sun,'" by promoting and developing through stage arts the "world's oldest cultures in the cradle of civilization, and the spiritual traditions of every race of Greater East Asia."[260] Itō's plan thus echoed the commonly stated logic of the Greater East

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[259] Joyce C. Lebra, ed. *Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in World War II: Selected Readings and Documents*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1975, 93.

[260] GEA #7. 「太陽の劇場」は、八紘為宇の大理想を世界に光被せしめんとする「太陽運動」の一環として、舞台芸術を通じて、その実現をはからうとするものである。...世界最古の文化発祥地たる大東亜の各民族の精神的伝統。」

Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The Japanese, as citizens of the only Asian country that had avoided Western colonialism and thus modernized, had a duty to guide their Asian brethren; for Itō's purposes, this meant leading artistically.

And yet, Itō's vision of the lands to which his movement would spread is not that of the classic empty spaces typical of Western colonial accession. A consistent cornerstone of Itō's vision was intensive research into the "climate, history, society, and cultural conditions" of every region. For Itō, this research would be of particular significance to the training of future leaders of the Co-Prosperity Sphere, so that they appreciated, and had respect for the individual nations. Despite the fact that all the organizations would have their central offices in Tokyo, and be led by Japanese, he repeatedly emphasized that "the realization of these abstract ideas must not be coerced" but rather specifically adapted to the particularities of each region, and carried out through local artistic leaders.

As noted earlier, Itō's emphasis on the importance of local culture and traditions was in line with at least some of the government's and military's policies. But this focus in the documents also reveals the continuities between Itō's career in the West and his participation in the Japanese war effort reveals itself. In New York, as a famous practitioner of ethnic dance, Itō donned the costumes and conventions of Oriental dance, creating pieces that cited dance traditions from China to Thailand. Itō thus embodied a sort of performative Pan-Asianism, and he understood himself as honoring and promoting the rich cultural traditions of Asia. In this work, Itō's Orient was as imagined as any other dancer's, yet his status as Japanese frequently set him apart from the other primarily White female practitioners of the genre. For the capability of representing the entirety of Asia within his individual dancing body allowed Itō to establish his Japaneseness as a sort of access point, and a receptacle of the wealth of Asian culture. Back

in Japan, a similar pattern underlay his design of the Stage Arts Research Institute. With a host of Japanese artists substituting for his single body, the mission remained quite similar, as Itō envisioned a process of cultural recovery and exchange. His own dance practices of ethnic impersonation—as well as his experience of racialization and internment—informed an optimistic belief in embodied affiliation, in which dance, rather than military might, ensured the construction of a new Asian Order.

A Colonial Mass Pageant

The clearest instance of Itō's efforts to repurpose his career in the West to the demands of Japan's imperialism is his proposal for a grand festival pageant in the Philippines. Itō proposed the pageant as a celebration of the first year of Filipino "independence." In his plans for the festival pageant, Itō borrowed from his career in the West many of the conventions he had repeatedly encountered in Euro-American modern mass pageants. Drawing on the pageant's Western genealogies, Itō's plans sought to express the history and identity of a single nation. At the same time however, his proposal necessarily included the off-stage presence of Imperial Japan, thereby reconfiguring the genre into a *colonial mass pageant*. Itō's proposal, which was never realized, offered the pageant as an imagined choreography—one that sought to unite national and transnational histories in a performance of social cohesion and personal meaning.

The modern mass history pageant emerged in the 20th century as a genre geared to the presentation and construction of national histories. Examples of the form appeared across the globe, sharing a common set of criteria: First, the modern mass pageant stages an episodic, didactic, and teleological history of the nation or place that is its subject. Second, it is performed in the place where this history occurred, and by descendants of the historical actors, whenever

possible. Finally, in its modern form, it is a genre of "mass" performance, involving the community in the pageant's preparation, performance, and spectatorship. It thus represents its community through the very means of its production, as widespread participation offers a literal embodiment of the community portrayed. A genre that circulated internationally throughout the twentieth-century, it spawned the American Pageant Movement in the 1910s, mass spectacles in Russia in the 1920s, and leftist pageants and fascist performance forms such as the *Thingspiel* in 1930s Germany.[261]

Prior to the Philippines festival plan, Itō had participated in only one pageant, staged as part of the 1919 World Peace Festival in Washington D.C., which celebrated the end of World War II.[262] However, he was repeatedly involved in endeavors that engaged and overlapped with the pageant genre. At Hellerau, Itō had been intensely exposed to the idea that rhythmic movement could be used to construct and express a community identity. Directly before he enrolled at the Dalcroze Institute, Itō saw Dalcroze and Adolphe Appia's production of Gluck's *Orpheus,* which featured a movement choir of 135 students; the performance offered a model for mass staging that was widely influential in both Europe and the United States. The following summer, in 1914, Dalcroze used his technique to stage a history pageant festival to celebrate the centennial of Geneva's entry into the Swiss Confederation.[263] Although Itō did not take part in

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[261] Naima Prevots, *American Pageantry: A Movement for Art and Democracy* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1989); David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); Erika Fischer-Lichte, *Theatre, Sacrifice, Ritual: Exploring Forms of Political Theatre* (New York: Routledge, 2005); Shilarna Stokes, "Playing the Crowd: Mass Pageantry in Europe and the United States, 1905-1935," (PhD Diss, Columbia University, 2013); Claire Warden, "Mass Dance," *Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism*.

[262] See, Marta Robertson, "Floating Worlds: Japanese and American Transcultural Encounters in Dance," *Congress on Research in Dance Conference Proceedings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[263] Selma Landen Odom, "Choreographing *Orpheus*: Hellerau 1913 and Warwick 1991," *Dance Reconstructed: Conference Proceedings* (Rutgers: Mason Gross School of the Arts, 1993); Didem Ekici,

either of these productions, he was well aware of them, and the possibilities they pointed to for using dance to present a society's history, and to re-imagine its future.

By the time Itō arrived in the US, Dalcroze's techniques of mass staging had circulated widely throughout the United States, mixing with the highly-influential trend of Delsartian movement training. US-based Progressives incorporated Dalcrozian methods into their efforts to use the pageant as the basis for a new American art form. In 1928, Itō participated in an Orchestral Drama staged at the Manhattan Opera House, an experiment in extending Denishawn music visualizations to a large-group scale.[264] The main event of the evening was Ernst Bloch's *Israel*, which staged supplicants praying at the Wailing Wall, culminating in a scene of revelation. Itō danced in a dramatization of one of Debussy's Nocturnes later in the program. Critics primarily valued the Orchestral Dramas as an effort to translate symphonic music into dance; yet *Israel*, in particular, with its presentation of symbolic movement in a mytho-historic setting, brought Itō closer to the pageant genre. When Itō moved to Los Angeles, he staged his own large group works, choreographed for groups ranging from twenty to two-hundred dancers. Staged in the area's large open-air Bowls, which had all been constructed specifically as spaces for community performance, the dances were seen by thousands of spectators.[265] They thus immediately called into being a sense of active, embodied community, which was enhanced by the fact that many of the dancers were young, local Californians. Set against the landscape, the

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"'The Laboratory of a New Humanity': The Concept of Type, Life Reform, and Modern Architecture in Hellerau Garden City, 1900-1914." PhD diss, University of Michigan, 2008; Percy B. Ingham, "The Method: Growth and Practice," *The Eurythmics of Jaques-Dalcroze* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Co, 1918).

[264] This event was produced and directed by Alice and Irene Lewisohn, founders of the Neighborhood Playhouse, and major patrons of the Progressive community arts movement.

[265] Prevots, *Dancing in the Sun*; Catherine Parsons Smith, "Founding the Hollywood Bowl," *American Music* 11:2 (Summer, 1993).

dances also asserted a strong sense of place, as the movement seemed to take on the meanings of its surroundings. In both New York and Los Angeles, Itō often shared studio space and taught alongside dance teachers who offered courses in pageant choreography and organization. At his studio in Los Angeles, he even offered his own courses training students to be "monitors and assistant directors in community dancing groups and pageants."[266]

Itō's three decades of varied exposure to pageant and mass staging in Europe and the United States thus left him with a keen sense of the potential meanings that could be constructed via large-scale choreography, especially in relation to national history and identity. His modern dance work continually registered the influence of the pageant genre, solidified in an appreciation of mytho-historic narrative, locally-rooted performance, and community participation as ways of engendering an embodied collective identity. As Itō traveled West, so too did different techniques and philosophies of group staging, as a wide array of artists adopted and innovated upon these circulating forms. By the time Itō returned to Japan, then, his exposure to the pageant genre reflected multiple genealogies, recombined in his own transnational trajectory.

* * *

In the planning document devoted to the Philippines festival pageant, Itō outlined an event that hewed closely to the genre's established conventions. Following the format of the national history pageant, Itō envisioned a grand episodic drama presenting the history of the Philippines up to independence: "…before the Spaniards came, then the era of Spanish rule, the era of American rule," and then, "under the Great East Asia war, the four stages of the era of the construction of a new Philippines...the tyrannical rule of Euro-American colonial dominion, the

[266] "Holiday Class of Interest to Instructors," *Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1930, B12.

growth of a national (*minzoku*) sentiment among the Filipino people, the history of the hardship of the independence movement, and the awakening of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere through which, with Japanese support, independence was achieved."[267] The episodic structure, presuming an ignorant spectator, presented history as teleological drama, imparting educative significance to an explicitly bookended narrative. The classic pageant structure was paired with an equally prototypical emphasis on community participation, so that this would be "a history truly written by Filipino hands."[268] Itō called for the festival activity to be led and carried out by locals: "Filipino writers, musicians, actors, dancers and so on will be mobilized and trained, from the drawing up of scripts to the entire creative process, so that as much as possible is done by Filipinos themselves…This plan's chief executive should, of course, be Filipino, a local member of the cultural elite (*bunkajin*), who can directly make contact with artists, as it is essential that they make the final decisions."[269] Highlighting the abundant artistic, cultural, and organizational capacity of the local populace, Itō reiterated the notion that community participation was essential to the performative staging of national collectivity. Taking place in Manila, but drawing upon resources across the country, the pageant would be authentically rooted in its place, representing a history by and for people who had actively participated in its events.

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[267] GEA #7.「即ちスペイン人渡来以前、スペイン統治時代、アメリカ統治時代、大東亜戦争下の新比島建設時代の四つの史的段階に置ける比島民衆の姿を描き、欧米植民政策の圧政、偽瞞比島人の民族的感情の成長、独立運動の苦難の歴史、大東亜共栄圏の覚醒、日本の支援により独立の達成等。」

[268] Ibid.「。。。比島人自身の手で脚本を作らせ。」

[269] Ibid.「比島人の作家、音楽家、俳優、舞踊家等を動員又は養成し、脚本の作成より上演に至一切の創造過程を出来得る限り比島人自身の手で行わせることが、この運動の眼目であるそればかりか、この上演に対する比島の全文化人、全観衆の関心を呼び超し、又かれらをあらゆる機会に公演芸術活動に動員し、この国民的祝祭劇の創造を比島全休の集団的文化活動たらしめる必要がある。」

Itō's plan for the Philippines festival pageant thus fulfilled the prototypical conventions of the genre, structured as an opportunity for the Filipino people, "immersed in the delight of independence," both to represent their national struggle and to solidify their sense of shared national identity through this representation. And yet, in contrast to the nationalist thrust of other modern mass pageants, it is impossible to ignore the colonial framework structuring the Philippines pageant, as it constantly intrudes upon the scene of celebratory national independence. Itō's dramaturgy of the episodic history itself reveals the Japanese presence, as when he writes: "the awakening of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere through which, with Japanese support, independence was achieved." Similarly, although Itō's commitment to have Filipinos direct and carry out the festival work is repeated numerous times in the document, he acknowledges the necessity of dispatching from Japan a limited number of theatre leaders ("directors, writers, composers, scenic artists, technicians, producers") to train and mobilize the local artists.

The lurking Japanese presence in Itō's proposal, politically inevitable given Japan's continuing control of the region, was also structurally inevitable given Itō's desire to establish a movement that would express, and give rise to, a shared Asian culture. Thus he wrote in the planning document that the Institute would, "sponsor the artistry of stage artists from every area of Greater East Asia, and at the same time, encourage awareness of themselves as independent peoples, with their hands raising up the New East Asian Culture, with deep emotion for both the 'sun' and 'Japan'."[270] Itō's plan for the pageant thus always called for the simultaneous

[270] Ibid.「即ち「太陽の劇場」は日本の舞台芸術の到達せる高度の理論、技術を大東亜各地の舞台芸術家に提供すると同時に、かれ等の独自の民族演劇創造の産婆役を努めるもので、これによって、かれ等に独立国民としての自覚を興え、新東亜文化のはぐくみ手としての「太陽」「日本」の慈愛に感激せしめ、「太陽運動」展開の地盤を作ろうとするものである。」

performance of two different collective identities—that of the Philippines as a nation, as well as that of the Pan-Asian spirit unified under the protective sphere of Japan's Greater East Asia.

This performance, of a doubled collective identity, marks the colonial mass pageant, in which the representation of a national history also inherently serves as representation of an imperial hegemony. Built upon a colonial framework, but requiring the participants to celebrate themselves as citizens of an independent nation, the Philippines pageant mandated the performative structuring of colonial allegiance. The imperial power, always remaining offstage, enables and demands that the colonized nation appear to act of its own will. Rather than the invention of history to shore up claims to national identity, this was the enacting of mythic allegiance to imperial power, done through a performance of local, traumatic history.

Although the doubled performance of the colonial mass pageant seems a departure from the prototypical nationalist model, we should, in fact, see this colonial structure as latent within the DNA of the pageant genre. As Shilarna Stokes has argued, if medieval and early modern pageants dramatized the relation of a sovereign to his or her subjects, the modern mass pageant updated this representation, such that the "sovereign" was the people itself. In her examination of Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*, Stokes suggests that the film reconfigures the modern pattern, renovating the earlier meaning but adapting it to the era of 20th century democracies, such that the representation of Hitler's body is understood as a representation of the people at large. Itō's Philippines festival pageant constitutes another twisting of the modern mass pageant form to take advantage of its earlier lineage. For in its staging of Filipinos as a national people, it simultaneously took the Philippines as synechdocal representation of an imperial order.[271] The

[271] The Nazis' imperialism should be acknowledged here as well. However, in *Triumph*, the specific relationship dramatized is that of the German people and Hitler, whereas in Itō's pageant, it is of a doubled sovereignty—that of the Filipino people, as well as that of Japan. In another parallel, we might

Philippines, nominally independent yet ultimately under Japanese control, was the ideal example of this relationship, as the pageant offered a performance of coerced freedom.

* * *

Itō's proposal for the Philippines festival pageant was never carried out. American forces had begun to retake the territory by mid-1944, and so in later documents, Itō suggested that a different festival be planned for Shanghai. Yet the proposal remains a potent example of how aesthetic forms—and the ideas they encode—circulated internationally, in and along with Itō's transnational itinerary. Itō's proposal highlights the pageant as a genre in which self-actualization occurs through self-narratization. The Philippines pageant proposal then, while an artistic plan for the Philippines, might also be read as a narrative of his own national and regional identity, an effort to performatively actualize his understanding of the historic events shaping his life.

In his use of the pageant form, and in the particular dramaturgy and organizational details with which he outlined his vision, Itō's self-narratization again and again takes recourse to conventions that still bear the mark of their Western origins. Indeed, in the plan itself, Itō was unapologetic about this embrace of foreign elements. As he explained, although the form of the festival theatre would of necessity be "magnificent and commemorative" to suit its subject, it was also essential that it appeal to the local population, who were primarily "familiar with American forms of entertainment."[272] Itō argued that since the Filipino populace was "generally intimate with film, vaudeville, revue, light music and so on, using these various forms, we must

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also recognize the totality engendered not only by the representation of communal history on stage but also by the inclusion of the audience via their spectatorship as reminiscent of Siegfried Kracauer's Mass Ornament.

[272] Ibid. 「雄渾な、記念碑的なものでなければならない」

not be afraid to turn this poison into medicine."[273] Rather than eschewing Western entertainment forms in pursuit of a purified Asian culture, Itō justifies the inclusion of popular entertainment technologies as that which will best impact local Filipinos.

But of course, this inclusion of Western forms is also about their necessity for Itō's own self-narrative. We hear, in the personal story that ghosts the episodic national history, an account in which his thirty years in the West are of use to this construction of national (and regional) collectivity. Indeed, following the dramaturgy of teleological history that is the pageant's hallmark, Itō's sojourn in the West becomes a necessary passage, not just for his personal story, but for that of Japan, and even Asia. This turn is reminiscent of Meiji-era slogans from his childhood, such as "Western technology, Eastern Ethics," as well as the more recent 1942 Overcoming Modernity Conference, in which leading intellectuals had similarly debated how to construct an unalloyed Japanese culture given the pervasive presence of Western technology and influence.[274] But in Itō's use of the pageant genre—acknowledged as a Western import—the relationship between aesthetic form and meaning crystallized as a particular way of situating himself in the world. Undeniably foreign, the pageant offered a way to encode transnationalism into both the national and personal narrative scripted in the proposal.

In making use of the pageant form, Itō validated not only his time spent in the West, but also his particular work as a modern dancer. For while he and his fellow modern dancers had engaged with pageant techniques from a concert dance approach, they shared with pageant

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[273] Ibid.「しかしながら、今日までアメリカ風な芸術を唯一の娯楽として親しんで来た比島の大衆の感受性に適合し、一般に親しまれるには、映画、ボードヴイル、レエヴイユ、軽音楽等の諸形式をもの媒体として利用し、毒を変じて薬となさしめることを惧れる必要はない。」

[274] Richard F. Calichman, *Overcoming Modernity: Cultural Identity in Wartime Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

devisers the reformist impulse to use bodily performance as a force of rehabilitation in modern society. This is a version of what Andrew Hewitt calls "social choreography," wherein dance does not mimetically reflect the social (although it can do so as well), but is a "structuring *blueprint* for thinking and effecting modern social organization."[275] Itō's proposal offered the outlines for a colonial mass pageant, but in doing so, he also offered a model for integrating the individual—as a creative force—into a social order. Returning to the nation of his birth after thirty years, Itō used the tools of his modern dance career to choreograph a simultaneous allegiance to himself and to his new home.

Revue-ing Pan-Asianism and its Promises

Although short-lived, the Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute produced one piece, a musical drama with the theme of Greater East Asia. This production was performed for three days in January 1945, at the National New Theatre (*kokuminshingekijou*). Shima Kimiyasu, an old colleague of Senda Koreya's from the proletarian theatre group *Mezamashitai*, contacted the Institute on behalf of two dancers, Ootomo Chiharu of Takarazuka and Mitsuhashi Renko of the Nichigeki, who had recently formed a new dance group, New East Asia (*shintōa,*新東亜). With Michio as the overall director, together they developed a piece featuring the major territories of the Co-Prosperity Sphere. The production was divided into three parts—one representing Japan, one China, and the third, South East Asia. Tying together the sections were dance interludes from Tahiti, Thailand, and India.

[275] Andrew Hewitt, *Social Choreography: Ideology as Performance in Dance and Everyday Movement* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005) 14.

With a short rehearsal period and limited resources, the script was cobbled together from pre-existing sources, and performers gathered from different troupes. The Japanese part consisted of a verse drama written by Kurihara Kazuto and Shoujou's *Mikusabune* (皇軍艦), which the Haiyu-za had performed in August of the previous year as part of a trial performance announcing the opening of the troupe. The Chinese part was a drama written by Shima Kimiyasu, *Kikyou Monogatari* (桔梗物語, The Story of the Chinese Bellflower) about the Great Wall of China. Takeda Rintarō, who had been dispatched to the front as a journalist, contributed a musical drama script about Java. Music was composed by Hattori Tadashi and Itō Ousuke. Since the dance group New East Asia was made up of women, male members of the Haiyu-za and the mobile theatre troupe Mizuho also participated in the performance, and female dancers from Takarazuka, Shōchiku, and the Nichigeki supplemented the ethnic dance segments. With paper for newsprint nearly non-existent, none of the newspapers reviewed it. Senda Koreya only briefly evaluated the production, commenting in his autobiography:

> The dances and ballads of Thailand, India, Java, and so on, were heartily performed by the dancers from Takarazuka and Shōchiku's Girls Opera, and well as from the Nichigeki, and so the troupe members of Shintoa considerably mastered the material. However, given the raw material, the scripts, and the preparation time, Michio's dream of surpassing a simple presentation of ethnic dances and songs was impossible to realize. At that time, in January of the year of defeat, it was unusual even to present such an elaborate and showy stage.[276]

[276] Senda, *One More History of Shingeki*, 481-2.「インドだのタイだのジャワだのの踊りや歌は、宝塚や松竹の少女歌劇でも日劇でもさかんにやられていたので、＜新東亜＞の連中もかなりよくマスターしていたが、民族舞踊や民族歌謡を突き抜けたものをつくろうという道郎の夢は、この素材、この脚本、この準備期間ではとうてい実現できるはずはなく、あの頃にしては珍しい、かなり手の込んだ華やかな舞台を敗戦の年の正月に見せたというだけで終わってしまった。」

On the one hand, it would be appropriate to interpret this production along the lines of Jennifer Robertson's analysis of the Takarazuka Revue's wartime performances. Indeed, given the borrowed cast members, there is no doubt that the dancing would have been quite similar, despite Itō's different choreographic methods. It is, in fact, likely that the production was inspired by Takarazuka's 1943 *Children of East Asia* (Tōa no kodomotachi), which also used a tri-partite structure featuring Manchukuo, China, and the Southern Region to celebrate the future of the New Asian Order. As Robertson explains, in *Children of East Asia*, and other wartime productions with titles such as *Saipan-Palau: Our South Seas* (1940), *Mongol* (1941), and *Only One Ancestral Land* (1943), Takarazuka's revue form celebrated the different forms of exoticness embodied by each locale. Yet its presentation of these nations as a series of theatrical scenes asserted a flattened similarity of relation—all belonged to the Japanese empire.[277]

Itō's collaboration with the New East Asia dance group certainly followed this model, and in doing so, likely pleased his patrons. But even in this realized production, Senda's note of regret records the imagined choreography behind the staged performance. It was, we learn, Michio's dream to "surpass a simple presentation of ethnic songs and dances." From the entries in Itō's notebooks and the planning documents of the Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute, it seems likely that he had hoped to present a form that would truly embody the inclusive internationalism that he attributed to Pan-Asianism. The revue, a form that is inherently fragmented, was perhaps fundamentally inadequate for this vision. It was, however, a genre that would become a mainstay of Itō's work in the post-war period of the Allied Occupation of Japan. As a choreographer, director, and producer at the Ernie Pyle Theatre (the main entertainment

[277] Jennifer Robertson, *Takarazuka: Sexual Politics and Popular Culture in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 115-120.

venue for Allied personnel in Japan), the discontinuous nature of the revue again offered Itō a way to cast his modern dance practice as central to the construction of a cosmopolitan society.

Chapter 5
Walking into Democracy: Repurposing Modern Dance During the Allied Occupation

On August 15, 1945, Japan surrendered, and on September 2nd, the Allied Occupation of Japan began, led by the United States. At the end of the war, Japanese were physically and spiritually exhausted, facing the enormity of their nation's defeat, evident in the millions dead, the bombed and burned out cities, and the continual threat of starvation and material deprivation. But after years of war, for many, the arrival of the Occupiers signified the possibility of prosperity and a return to activities of leisure and entertainment. The performance and publishing sectors were particularly notable in this respect. In Kyoto, a performance of song and dance was held the very day that the war ended, and kabuki actors remounted the boards in Osaka just six days later; by the beginning of September, theatres in Tokyo had also reopened.[278] Similarly, in the first year after defeat, print culture flourished; the number of publishing companies increased nearly seven-fold, available magazine titles tripled, and new books quickly climbed into the thousands.[279] The quick rejuvenation of these industries was a boon to Itō, who was well positioned to respond, in both performance and in print, to Japanese desire to learn about their Occupiers and the new lifestyle that American-style democracy required.

More so than at any other point in his career, Itō occupied the role of cultural expert, appreciated by both the Americans and the Japanese for his ability to mediate and translate. He claimed this position almost immediately. In October of 1945, Itō participated in a roundtable on American democracy hosted by the *Asahi Shinbun*; the following month he contributed a chapter

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[278] Samuel L. Leiter, "From Bombs to Booms: When the Occupation Met *Kabuki*," *Rising From the Flames: The Rebirth of Theater in Occupied Japan, 1945-1952* (Lanham, M.D.: Lexington Books, 2009) 13.

[279] John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1999, 180-2.

on American Culture and Art for a book put out by the *Mainichi Shinbun*, *America and Americans* (米国と米国人).[280] Only a few months later, in March of 1946, Itō began work at the Ernie Pyle Theater, the main entertainment venue for Allied troops and personnel. His expertise also gained broader exposure through a steady stream of articles he published in women's magazines, educating readers on American social etiquette, dance practices, and fashion, leading him to also work as a producer and advisor for fashion shows, beauty contests, and ice skating spectacles. For the rest of the Occupation, which lasted until April 1952, Itō performed this mediating role of foreign expert, transforming his experience abroad into a source for remaking Japanese society and culture.

The role of foreign expert contained echoes both historic and personal. In the Meiji era, as the Japanese government endeavored to revise the Unequal Treaties and to position Japan as a modern nation, numerous foreign experts were invited to Japan to serve as advisors and teachers in any and all areas that might contribute to Japan's modernization. Indeed, dance masters, such as Jansen at the Rokumeikan and Giovanni Vittorio Rosi, who led the dance department at the Imperial Theatre in the early 1910s (and taught most of Itō's peers), had been central to Japan's modernizing efforts. In Itō's own career, from his earliest student days at the Dalcroze Institute, in his period in London, and during the many years spent in the U.S., Itō had always, at least partially, functioned as a representative of Japan and its culture. And each time he had returned to Japan, in 1931 and 1939-40, he had functioned as a sort of emissary of Western modern dance. During the Allied Occupation of Japan, however, Itō performed this Janus-faced expertise

[280] "American Democracy—A Symposium hosted by the Mainichi" (*Amerika minshushugi—honsha no zadankai*) *Mainichi Shinbun* October 2, 3, 4, 5, 1945; *America and Americans* [*Beikoku to beikokujin*], (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1945), Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Senda Koreya Archive, J11 #8.

simultaneously. At the Ernie Pyle, Itō's experience on Broadway, and with American culture more generally, meant that he understood the type of entertainment that American servicemen would enjoy. Meanwhile his status as Japanese meant that he could do the actual work of directing, choreographing, and producing shows—work that required communicating with the hundreds of Japanese performers, technicians, and support staff who gave the theatre its life. Similarly, in his production and publishing activities directed at the Japanese public, Itō again occupied the role of foreign expert, for his nearly thirty years in the West uniquely enabled him to explain American culture and lead Japanese in their embrace of it. In all these activities, Itō's power as a foreign expert lay in the nature of the Occupation as an overlap of two societies. For in the immediate postwar era, Japan and America-as-outpost functionally co-existed on the same soil. For Itō, this meant an ability to essentially operate in the two realms at once, both at home, in Japan, and yet also simultaneously "at home" in the America from which he had been expelled. Itō was thus at once foreign and familiar to both populations, able to perform a simultaneity of belonging.

During the Occupation, Itō's artistic activities and assertion of expertise extended from the stage to the street: both within an explicitly theatrical context—staging revues for the Ernie Pyle Theatre—and in the activities of everyday life—addressed in magazine tutorials on how to walk—Itō used dance as a way to teach his fellow Japanese how to be social in the new post-war world. As with so many other moments in his career, this pedagogy expressed Itō's continuing effort to perform an image of Japaneseness. Yet whereas for much of his career, this effort had played out upon his own performing body, in his postwar activities, the focus of this work was the Japanese female body. Japanese women—including his modern dance students, the Erniettes dancing team at the Ernie Pyle Theater, and a magazine readership of young women and

housewives—were notable for enthusiastically taking up the general post-war mandate to be Japanese in a different way; Itō's choreographic pedagogy offered concrete ways of doing so. In his postwar activities, Itō's status as expert foreigner helped to position the repertoire and ideology of modern dance as central to the remaking of Japanese identity and culture. In doing so, Itō promoted dance as central to the expression and embodiment of what it meant to be human.

"Come In": Social Etiquette for a New Japan

In July 1947, Itō published a small volume titled *Etiquette* (エチケット). Like so many other publications from the early post-war, it endeavored to teach its readers new modes of behavior suitable for an American-style democracy. Yet unlike most straightforward manuals, Itō enfolded his pedagogy within a narrative about a young aspiring dancer, Makiko. One day, "S— Sensei" (a thinly-veiled Itō) hears a knock on his office door. He receives the visitor with a "Come in," and the door cautiously opens to reveal Makiko. Trembling with nervousness, she requests permission to become his dance student and to join his troupe. During the war she had worked in a factory, but passing by his dance studio every day, she was filled with desire to become a dancer, until finally she found the courage to approach him. S— Sensei readily agrees, and then asks:

> "By the way, when you entered the room, do you recall how many times you bowed?"
> "….."
> "It's actually not polite to bow so much."
> "Oh! I'm sorry."
> "Hey there, you're bowing again. That makes seven times I think."[281]

[281] Itō Michio, *Women's Handbook: Etiquette* [女性ハンドブック、エチケット] Tokyo: Rokudōbunkasha, 1947. Library of Congress, Asian Reading Room, 5.

Makiko turns red, and S— Sensei, smiling, changes the subject. But when Makiko turns to go, she again bows, another eight times, before finally leaving the room.

The episode epitomizes the problems that Itō's manual aims to address. That is, Makiko's Bourdeusian habitus, shaped by traditional Japanese protocol and further stunted by her time spent laboring in a war factory, is outmoded and hollow. Her mechanical bowing reveals a body that cannot control itself, and that performs motions empty of meaning. It is Itō's task to teach her—and his readers—new corporeal habits that will enable Makiko to move her body freely and with intention, a corporeality that Itō continually ties to both modern dance and the demands of a democratic society.

In the following chapter of *Etiquette*, we read Makiko's version of the meeting, through the device of her personal diary, which she has left on S— Sensei's desk in order to attest to her commitment to becoming a dancer and a true artist:

> With that, "Come In," I had the feeling not of one Japanese person visiting another, but rather that I was hailed as a cosmopolitan. In that instant of insight, I fell into confusion. My appearance, my clothing, manner, suddenly I couldn't help feeling it was all shabby, feeling I was under attack. This was the first time I'd had such an experience. To knock on the door of the person one visits, in elementary school, at my girls school, and in the factory even, I'd always done such a thing, it's an everyday occurrence. But with that greeting 'Come In' in English, I became totally flustered."[282]

The casual greeting, "Come In," precipitates a crisis for Makiko, as the foreign language in which it is uttered interpellates her not as a Japanese person, but as a cosmopolitan. Yet Makiko

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[282] *Etiquette*, 9.「日本人が日本人を訪問しているという感じでなく国際人としての私が、カム・インという呼びかけを受けているのだと、そんな気がしたのである。このとっさのひらめきが私を混乱させてしまった。私の身なり、持もの、態度が、急にみすぼらしく思えてやりきれない気持に襲われたのである。こんな経験は生れて始めてだった。ドアーをノックして人を訪ねるということは、国民学校でも、女学校でも、工場でもしてきたことだし、日常茶飯事の筈である。それが「カム・イン」と英語で迎えられたばかりに、私は慌ててしまったのである。」

does not feel herself to be cosmopolitan; instead, she is self-conscious of the "shabbiness" of her "outfit, personal effects, and manner," all of which become markers of her Japaneseness, given away by her incessant bowing. This is the crisis of the Japanese body that Itō addresses—a body unprepared for the new conditions of international engagement precipitated by defeat and the American Occupation. As the diary continues:

> When I left the theatre, the words 'Come in,' would not leave my head. …As I darted between the foreign cars crisscrossing each other amidst soldiers and civilians—there flowed the colors of every nation of the world. It was truly a deluge of internationalism. Up to that moment I had thought it ordinary that Japan was welcoming foreigners. But suddenly, I became aware of the impossibility of the present situation. Instead, it is that Japan is being called by all the various people of the world. Receiving the signal, "Come in," from an international standpoint, in this era in which we must willingly join the world, it had been our intention to greet our guests with uprightness, but quite the opposite, as guests, we have drawn attention.[283]

Makiko recognizes S— Sensei's "Come in," as Japan's cue to re-enter the world. The problem, as she had just discovered, is that her body, bearing, and behavior are unequipped to do so. A new corporeal vocabulary would be necessary, or, as Itō would have it, a new etiquette, to guide Japanese in inhabiting their new society.

The notion of etiquette—rules for behavior in public—became a touchstone for all of Itō's choreographic pedagogies during the Occupation. Etiquette, for Itō, was a matter of "living beautifully" and engaging in meaningful social relations. It thus became a key for how Itō envisioned Japan's re-engagement with the rest of the world. Reading across his activities at the

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[283] *Etiquette*, 10.「劇場を出てからも「カム・イン」が頭から離れなかった。。。。ひっきりなしに疾走している外国のカーすれちがう兵士やシビリアンーーそこには世界各国の色彩が流れている。まったく国際色の氾濫だ。今までの私が日本が外国人を迎えれいるとありきたりに考えていた。ところが、事態はそれどころでないことに気がついた。むしろ、日本は、世界の人類から呼びかけられているのである。国際的な立場から「カム・イン」と合図を受けて、進んで世界の仲間入りをしなければならない時代に直面しているのである客を迎えたつもりだったのが、はんたいに客として注目をあびているのだ。」

Ernie Pyle and in print reveals that Itō's focus on etiquette required attention to the different publics for which Japanese bodies performed. While his writings give the sense that Itō was genuinely happy to be back among Americans, there emerges in his work a clear distinction between performing for the Occupiers and performing for fellow Japanese. Even as he advocated the construction of a newly cosmopolitan and outward-facing attitude through bodily comportment, etiquette, for Itō, meant successfully modulating one's performance for one's audience—foreign or domestic, public or oneself. In this distinction, of course, Itō's own career and daily practices served as a fundamental, if unacknowledged, model. Itō's activities and assertions of expertise during the Occupation therefore also served to reshape the function of modern dance in postwar Japan. For in tying modern dance to rules of social conduct, Itō's activities in the post-war era served to cast modern dance not as aesthetic innovation or a form of social disruption, but as a force for reimagining the self as the foundation for reconstructing Japan.

Reviewing the Revue at the Ernie Pyle Theatre

On December 24, 1945, GHQ (General Headquarters) requisitioned the Tokyo Takarazuka Gekijō and renamed it the Ernie Pyle Theatre, in honor of a fallen war correspondent. Located just a few blocks from GHQ, and hailed as the "Radio City Music Hall of the East," the Ernie Pyle was the central entertainment venue for Allied troops, stationed not only in Tokyo but throughout Asia. The building contained two live performance theatres, a film screening room, a library, five restaurants, rehearsal rooms, offices for the theatre's staff, and a billiards room. Due to the Occupation's policy of "blocked yen," which mandated that the reparations paid by Japan could not be spent outside of the country, the facility had a huge budget. It was, therefore, not only a theatrical venue, but a center for the arts and leisure more generally.

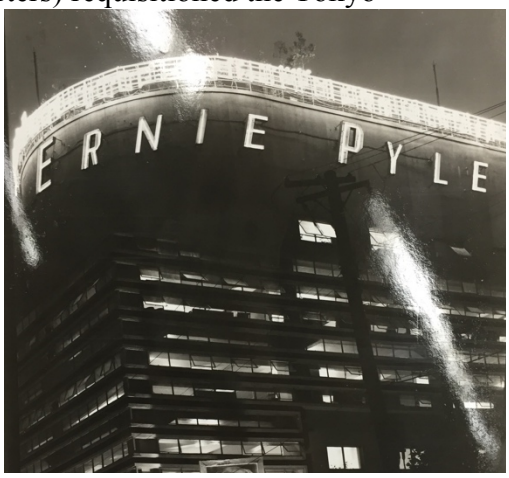

Figure 16: Exterior of the Ernie Pyle Theatre, Hibiya, Tokyo. July 16, 1946. NARA, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer. Contact Prints: 252901-253180, Box 438.

Itō was immediately engaged to direct the venue's first production, "Fantasy Japonica," which opened in February of 1946. On March 13, 1946, the CIE Bureau approved the permanent hiring request to employ Itō at the Ernie Pyle Theatre, at a recommended salary of 2,750 yen. The duties for which he was responsible were:

1. Conceives, produces and directs stage productions for the Ernie Pyle Theatre.
2. Creates the choreography for all dance routines and supervises the line instructors in teaching it to the dancers.
3. Designs costumes for the production and works in conjunction with the scenic designer, in order that his (the producer's) ideas will be embodied correctly with the settings.
4. Selects the type of music to be used in order that it may conform to the mood of the production.

> In application of the above many years of research & years of experience in Hollywood, NY & London, make the play production on the stage of the EP compared on an equal basis as those seen on the stage of Radio City NY.[284]

As Itō explained in an interview with the magazine *Nihon Engeki* (Japanese Theatre), he had been recommended for the job by a former student from his Hollywood studio, who was now a commissioned officer with the special services.[285] Over the years of the Occupation, Itō was involved in dozens of productions at the Ernie Pyle; his years of experience in the entertainment industry in the US meant that he understood both the expectations of his GI spectators as well as the rehearsal and production practices of American theatres. In his production, directing, and choreographic work at the theatre, Itō used this knowledge to stage an image of Japan as a land of rich cultural traditions, modern sophistication, and exotic allure. Befitting the Ernie Pyle's reputation as the Radio City Music Hall of the East, Itō consistently shaped these images through the fantasy of the revue. In doing so, he taught a generation of theatre audiences how to perform effective images of Japan for foreign audiences.

The Ernie Pyle's facilities were exclusively open to Occupation personnel and their families; Japanese were barred from entry. Yet, as with many other spaces during the Occupation, this official segregation elides the presence of the many Japanese theatre professionals and support staff who worked in the theatre building. The scale of the venue meant that several thousand Japanese passed in and out of the Ernie Pyle: one document listing musicians alone includes over 800 names; another, enumerating the categories of backstage personnel (typists, boilermen, elevator operators, and so on), estimates 178 people required to

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[284] Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University. Senda Koreya Archive, J23 #8.

[285] "About the Ernie Pyle Theatre: My Work" (Ānīpairu Gekijō no koto: watashi no shigoto), *Nihon Engeki*, October 1947, 41-2. The Gordon W. Prange Collection, Publications and Unpublished Materials from the Allied Occupation of Japan within the East Asian Collection, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland, College Park.

keep the facility running on a daily basis. Thus, although Japanese were barred as patrons of the facilities, in their work behind the scenes and on stage (frequently behind the Americans who performed in principle roles), hundreds of Japanese artists and theatre people gained an education in American-style entertainment. In turn, they imported this knowledge to their own theatres, disseminating new dance, music, and design techniques to the Japanese public.[286]

Itō played a key role in this theatrical circulation via his position at the Ernie Pyle (as well as in his work at other Japanese theatres), as he moved between American and Japanese spaces. In his capacity as producer, director, and choreographer, he had a hand in a significant number of the shows presented at the Ernie Pyle, ranging from plays, such as *The Brigadier's Wife* and *Snow Queen Fantasy*, to pageant-style pieces such as *1776* and the yearly Christmas show, musicals such as *The Mikado*, and revues such as *Tabasco, Rhapsody in Blue,* and *Jungle Drama*. Itō also brought onto the staff his brother, the scenic designer Kisaku, who was responsible for some of the most spectacular sets from the period. When the theatre finally closed (reverting back to the Takarazuka company) in 1966, Itō was hailed as the "principle figure behind many of the biggest shows staged at the theater…A friendly, affable man, …known as 'Papa' Ito to the many GI's who have known him and worked with him since his coming to the theater in 1946."[287] The article's gloss on the chumminess between Itō and the GIs is born out in Itō's own writings; the Occupation represented for Itō a sort of remote re-entry into

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[286] Under Itō's tutelage, many of the Erniettes later gained fame as dancers, actors, and teachers; similarly, the house orchestra soon became the Tokyo Philharmonic; and, as Kuwahara Noriko has documented, the venue facilitated important exchange between American and Japanese visual artists, and served as an exhibition space for the first generation of Japanese artists working after the war. Kuwahara Noriko, "Ānīpairu gekijō wo meguru bijutsukatachi" [Concerning artists at the Ernie Pyle Theatre], *Seitoku Daigaku Kenkyū Kiyō* [Bulletin of Seitoku University]18 (2007), pp. 41-48.

[287] George H. Lambert, "End of an Era: Far East's Largest Service Club Closes," *The Brigadier*, January 25, 1966, 5. Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University. Senda Koreya Archive, J23 #14.

the US, a nation whose customs had become "second nature" to him, as he explained to a journalist from the magazine *Maru* in 1948.[288] At the Ernie Pyle, Itō worked alongside Americans whose manner was deeply familiar to him; the informal friendliness of his relations there, reminding him of his life before the war, became a common theme of his magazine articles. One gets the sense that although for many Japanese, the Ernie Pyle was a painful symbol of the complicated sense of exclusion and opportunity wrought by the Occupation, for Itō, it offered a sort of return to his adopted home, while remaining in the nation of his birth.

Much as Itō's involvement with the Ernie Pyle comprised a return to his American life, rather than an entirely new experience, Itō's work producing revue-style shows in Japan involved multiple repetitions and echoes of the past. During his New York period in the 1920s, Itō had worked on several revues, most notably the 1922 *Pinwheel Revel* and the 1923 *Greenwich Village Follies*. In these productions, Itō's participation had brought an element of "downtown" artistry to the commercial showiness of Broadway; reviewers frequently noted the lyrical movement and aesthetic atmosphere that Itō's choreography injected into the program. (Even in these early, "artsy" productions, however, Itō knew how to capitalize upon the value of a pair of bare legs—reviewers routinely noted the skimpiness of the costumes.) But at the Ernie Pyle, Itō was the managing producer of many of the shows, tasked with the responsibility of entertaining American troops. He therefore integrated his more abstract choreography with styles mined from other parts of his career, reusing pieces from his Japoniste, ethnic, and popular dance repertoire, and folding them into the various programs presented on the Ernie Pyle stage. While some scholars have cast Itō's work at the Ernie Pyle as the product of political exigency, Anthea Kraut

[288] Shimada Toshio, "Ernie Pyle Theatre: Notes from Visiting Itō Michio" (Ānīpairu gekijō Itō Michio hōmonki), *Maru*, May 1948: 25-9. Prange Collection.

reminds us that in the post-war period, Itō's peers across the Pacific, most notably Hanya Holm and Agnes de Mille, were also turning to the Broadway musical, as "Euro-American modern dance and ballet increasingly infiltrated the musical and, in the process, displaced African American jazz and tap."[289] Far from being isolated and confined to a different professional path from other modern dancers in the US, although Itō's post-war work occurred at a remove, it resembled that of his peers more than might be supposed.

Just as Itō's work at the Ernie Pyle did not actually necessitate "new" choreographic modes, the revue-style dancing he presented was not new to Japan. During the 1920s, the musical revue had been a widespread and popular genre—one, that, in fact, endured through much of the war, due to its ability to incorporate the epistemology of imperialism into its form and content.[290] The change present in Itō's Ernie Pyle revues was the dancers themselves, a new generation of young women. The theatre's exclusive dancing team, known as the Erniettes, was primarily made up of OLs (office ladies) who were already employed by GHQ. These were thus women already inclined to participate in, and take advantage of the American presence in Japan. Although a few had some ballet experience, the women were for the most part amateurs whom Itō was tasked with training. (Instruction of amateurs, of course, had been fundamental to Itō's own introduction to the art of the dance at Hellerau decades earlier, and similarly grounded his involvement with the Japanese immigrant community in Los Angeles in the 1930s.) In both his choreography, and in the form of the revue itself, then, Itō's work at the Ernie Pyle constituted a sort of review of the revue. Although the dances performed by the Erniettes under Itō's tutelage

[289] Anthea Kraut, *Choreographing Copyright: Race, Gender, and Intellectual Property Rights in American Dance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), xvi.

[290] Jennifer Robertson, *Takarazuka: Sexual Politics and Popular Culture in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

represented a return, rather than something new, in performing for the Ernie Pyle's audience of Allied troops, the revue served as a way for the dancers to learn how to perform for the Occupier, and for the world beyond Japan more generally.

The lessons Itō offered in performing a new vision of Japaneseness are evident in the two types of themes he treated in Ernie Pyle productions: Japanese (or even, Japoniste) performance traditions, and content with an exotic or jazzy flavor. These two modes can be seen in Itō's *Sakura Flowers*, his dance piece *Rhapsody in Blue*, and in the popular dance extravaganza *Tabasco*, all from 1947. Figures 2 – 4 show scenes from *Sakura Flowers*, taken by one of the Signal Corps US Army Photographers. On the back of the photographs is a brief explanation of the image:

Figure 17: *Sakura Flowers*, Ernie Pyle Theatre, 1947. NARA, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer. Contact Prints: 285141-285420, Box 553.

> Michio Ito Production Presented at Ernie Pyle:
> 8th Army Special Service det. presented a colorful dance drama for occupation forces at the Ernie Pyle Theatre in Tokyo, Japan. The production "Sakura Flowers" (Cherry Blossoms) was produced and directed by the world renowned dance director Michio Ito, and featured periodical costumes which represented the 8th century thru the present time.[291]

[291] National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, RG 111-SC, Photographs: Signal Corps Photographs of American Activity, 1900-1981. Box 553, Contact Prints: 285141-285420. April 25, 1947, SC 285268.

The scenes of *Sakura Flowers* proceeded through a history of Japanese performance traditions. In one scene [Fig. 2], four dancers perform *bugaku*, a dance from Japan's Imperial Court dating from the 7th or 8th century. In another [Fig. 3], two men and two women are arranged in a scene from either *kabuki* or *nihon buyō*. Figure 4 (next page), which seems to show the number before intermission, reveals cast members in costumes from multiple numbers in the production, hinting at the range of eras represented in the production. *Sakura Flowers*, then, reminiscent of Itō's Japoniste work in New York and Los Angeles, used the revue format to argue for the richness of Japanese cultural history, suggesting to the GI audience the present availability of Japan's artistic wealth.[292]

Figure 18: *Sakura Flowers*, Ernie Pyle Theatre, 1947. NARA, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer. Contact Prints: 285141-285420, Box 553.

In *Sakura Flowers*, Itō presented an image of Japan as possessing a doubled allure via the simultaneous appeal of both its past and present. For while most of the production offered

[292] In an unsurprising yet resonant example of Marvin Carlson's theatrical ghosting, the set for *Sakura Blossoms*—specifically, the arched cherry blossom tree and the strings of metallic paper hanging from the proscenium arch—had been created for the Ernie Pyle production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* the year before. Itō had also participated on this production, one of several times he worked on this show, which competes with *Madame Butterfly* as the best known Western depiction of Japan as aesthetic fantasy. On this and other Occupation-era productions of *The Mikado*, see my article: "'A More Humane Mikado': Re-envisioning the Nation through Occupation-Era Productions of *The Mikado* in Japan," *Theatre Research International* 40:3 (October 2015): 288-302.

spectators tastes of Japan's traditional performance forms, a photograph that likely depicts the production's finale suggests how Itō choreographed Japan into a modern present. In Figure 5 (next page), we see the male performers dressed in the Heian-era costume from an earlier number. However, they are surrounded by women in long contemporary gowns that seem to draw from nightclub fashions as well as from the free-flowing skirts popular with US modern dancers. Their pose, with one leg stretched out in *tendu* to reveal a long slit in the skirt, and their heads tilted out over a bare shoulder, suggests choreography typical of a revue's line of chorus girls. A single woman, wearing a vampish gown of black lace and posed in a deep lunge to the side with her torso twisted front, makes explicit the shift in choreographic temporality. While the men in the background remind us of Japan's past, even they, standing with arms outstretched, have adopted the physical repertoire of the modern Broadway-style show. In this number, Japan's rich cultural past is absorbed into a jazzy and seductive present, the two temporalities co-existing in a production of Japan as a site of entertainment and enticement.

Figure 19: *Sakura Flowers*, Ernie Pyle Theatre, 1947. NARA, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer. Contact Prints: 285141-285420, Box 553.

Itō's dramaturgy of Japan's cultural history in *Sakura Flowers* employed the revue form to offer spectators a choreographic album of Japan's performing arts. The characteristic episodic structure of the revue allowed Itō to move easily from one era to another, yet in his dramaturgy,

Figure 20: *Sakura Flowers*, Ernie Pyle Theatre, 1947. NARA, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer. Contact Prints: 285141-285420, Box 553.

the production ultimately presented Japan's cultural richness not as collage, as would be expected of the revue form, but as teleology, in which the past flowed into, and seemed to logically end up in an alluring, Westernized present.[293] Instead of the disjunctive nature of many revues, in *Sakura Flowers* a sense of overall chronology served to smooth over temporal breaks in the narrative. Concluding in a demonstration of Japan's cultural modernity, in which dancers smilingly welcomed foreign spectators into a performance of the present, the production thus offered a historiography similar to ones that would soon be advanced to explain Japan's era of imperialism and war as an aberration, an interruption that had momentarily turned Japanese away from a fundamentally internationalist and peaceful nature. *Sakura Flowers* thus presented the revue, both in its formal properties of choreography and structure, as well as in its beckoning content, as the natural next stage of Japan's performance history. This characterization, in turn, overlapped with Itō's own self-stylization as a figure with expertise in both areas of performance—the traditional and modern, Japanese and Western. Itō thus asserted a synchronicity within Japanese arts and within

[293] The depiction of Japan as a nation with a rich artistic past claimed a position of relevance for the country in the present. This was, of course, a formulation of Japan's particular brand of modernity that had been effective in the Meiji and Taisho eras as well (and, as I will turn to in the conclusion, was also central to the way Itō envisioned Japan's postwar position in the world through his work on the 1964 Tokyo Olympics).

his own choreographic practice, where the past and present existed together as continuously available repertoires of being Japanese.

* * *

While *Sakura Flowers* used the history of Japanese performing arts to propel Japan into an image of present modernity, many of the other productions directed by Itō relied upon settings in far off locales in order to assert a sense of worldiness on the stage of the Ernie Pyle. Two other productions from 1947, *Rhapsody in Blue* and *Tabasco,* suggest how Itō's work at the Ernie Pyle consistently presented an image of Japan as forward-facing, modern, and engaged with the international. While these productions used foreign settings to plot a new image of a more cosmopolitan Japan, they did so through nostalgic evocation, using well-known tropes to assert a familiar worldliness.

Rhapsody in Blue, presented in mid-August of 1947 and set to George Gershwin's famous composition, aimed to transport spectators to the exhilarating spirit of New York City. In doing so, the show asserted the parity of Ernie Pyle productions with ones found on Broadway. In turn, *Rhapsody in Blue* required Itō to adopt the choreography of the Broadway show, which generally had not appeared in his pre-war work. A photograph (not shown) reveals

Figure 6: *Rhapsody in Blue,* Ernie Pyle Theatre, August 1947. NARA, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer. Contact Prints: 289621-289900, Box 569.

the set, primarily consisting of a backdrop across which is fanned the twinkling skyline of New York, the buildings seeming to encircle the dancers in an arc across the stage. The jazzy atmosphere suggested by the set is echoed in the choreography captured in a rehearsal photograph [Fig. 7]. Since the dancers are already in costume and their gaze is out to the audience, this is likely a dress rehearsal shot; Itō, dancing among the group of six women, is perhaps going over the choreography, checking spacing on the theatre's actual stage, or marking the steps for lighting cues. The dancers hold an open fourth position, with torsos counter-posed against the direction of the hips; the photograph thus reveals how Itō had picked up multiple choreographic vocabularies in the course of his career. (Another rehearsal shot from the era suggests that he also taught the Erniettes tap dance.) And yet, returning to the production photograph, in which the full cast is arrayed on stage, also shows that Itō incorporated his own dance technique into his Ernie Pyle choreography. The women and men standing upstage with arms outstretched all hold one of the positions from the series of poses that form the basis of his dance technique. The women kneeling down on the stage, meanwhile, hold a pose that one finds in many of Itō's earlier solo and small group pieces. *Rhapsody in Blue*'s jazzy music, stage design, and select choreographic moments thus served to root the production in the specificity of a metropolitan fantasy, thereby giving space for Itō to fill out much of the dancing with his own choreographic style. Then again, since it was in New York in the late teens and 1920s that Itō began to formalize his own dance technique, that positions from his own method appear so clearly in his choreography for *Rhapsody in Blue* is perhaps not surprising; to insert his choreography into a New York scene was not so much fantasy, as nostalgic memory.

If *Rhapsody in Blue* appealed to GI spectators (and Itō) for the way it evoked an already well-known romantic image of New York, Itō's responsibility at the Ernie Pyle—to bring to the

troops American-style entertainment—also required him to fill the stage with other geographies of escape and desire. *Tabasco*, presented in late February, was a musical extravaganza that drew upon Itō's 1934 trip to Mexico. The production was made up of a series of Latin and Latin-flavored dance numbers, connected simply by the shared thematic content of the foreign appeal of far-off Mexico. The scenario for the production reveals the quick succession of Latin fantasies, as each scene gestured to one established trope of Latin music and dance after another:

> Rhumba overture. At end, curtain opens. Stage still black.
> …
> Opening scene women in houses looking out of windows, shooing away beggars
> Market scene, lots of sellers of fruit, vegetables, hats, dolls
> Church Bells—Ave Maria. Children (20 ppl) form a line, hastening to the church. Once the children have entered the church, the girls selling flowers appear.
> Flower Song, flower selling girls split into choruses of three each, stage left and right, when one chorus finishes, the first exit. The girls walk around the stage while singing.
> From left and right come dancers (4 men 20 women) dancing to the flower song. They exit.
> Holding a sombrero, the solo dancer of the Huapango enters and dances. When finished, exits while beckoning.
> Stage right dancers enter in a single line. Rancho Grande dance. When finished
> From stage right to left dancers (8 men 8 women) enter for tango
> In the middle of the tango, from right to left rhumba dancers (24 women) enter
> As the rhumba dancers enter slowly the tango music fades out and the rhumba plays
> When the Rhumba finishes, fly in of front of set
> Conga, whole cast appears for conga finale into the Cucaracha
> Curtain. 25-30 min playing time.[294]

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[294] *Tabasco* Scenario, Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, Senda Koreya Archive, J23 #1.「ルンバのオーヴァチュア/終わると/幕が揚がる/舞台　暗黒のまま / 。。。/ いろいろの売店登場 /「ツボ売　クダモノ売　ヤサイ売 / 人形売　ボーシ売　網を持った漁師/売買　ひとしきり /「教会の鐘 やがて教会の鐘がふりわたる /「アヴェマリア子供達（二十人）列を作って教会にいそぐ。子供達/教会へ入ると花売娘登場。/ フラワーソング唄う /「フラワーソング　花を買った娘達　上手下手に分かれて /三人ずつコーラス / ワンコーラス終わると娘達退場 / 花売娘　歌い乍ら舞台をめぐる /右手、左手より踊り手（男４名　女２０名）登場 / フラワーソングに合わせて踊る /花売娘とフラワーソングの踊手退場 /「サンボレロ持つ　　するとウワ、パンゴの（ソロ）踊手登場 /「サンボレロ持つ　　するとウワ、パンゴの（ソロ）踊手登場/「ウワパンゴ 踊る/ 終わると手招きしながら退場 / 下手から一列に踊手登場 /「ランチョグランテ　　踊る「得るランチョグランテ / ランチョグランテ終わってた以上すると / 上手下手より単語の踊手（男８名　女８名）登場 /「タンゴ 踊る「タンゴ / タンゴの途中に上手下手よりルンバの踊手登場 /（女２４名）/ ルンバの踊手登場するとだんだんにタンゴのメロディは

Moving through the Rhumba, an Ave Maria, the Huapango, Rancho Grande, Tango, Conga, and finally the Cucaracha, *Tabasco* offered the range of what Brian Herrera has called "Latin Numbers"—"the stylized mode of musical-theatrical presentation that deployed a shifting constellation of visual, musical, and linguistic cues to enact a distilled fantasy of Latin American peoples, places, and traditions, presumably for US audiences."[295] With no overarching story to speak of, *Tabasco* instead offered spectators an atmosphere of tropical charm and energetic leisure. It invoked as well multiple waves of nostalgia for its audience, both for being back home in the US, where such routines had become standard in Broadway and Hollywood musicals, as well as for the recent war years, during which time Latin-themed numbers had been a mainstay of productions sponsored by Special Services Divisions, including USO (United Service Organization) entertainments, jeep shows, and field camp theatricals. (Indeed, since the Ernie Pyle was run by the Eighth Special Services Division, the production offered GIs both a sense of nostalgia and of continuity.)

Although *Tabasco* staged an established genre of American entertainment, carried out in the bodies of Japanese performers, the production also served to recast an overall image of Japan as an expansive site of foreign seduction. For example, one photographed scene [Fig. 8], which possibly depicts the Flower Song from the scenario, suggests how fully Itō's production

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弱くな / っていき、ルンバに変わる/「ルンバ終わると同時に前景のセットとぶ/ルンバ / ルンバ終わると~~コンガのメロデ~~ /「ドラム/ドラム八小節 / そしてコンガとなる/ コンガの女王を中心として全員登場　フィナーレ / コンガ / クカラクツナヤ / 幕（所用時間 25-30 分）」

[295] Brian Herrera, *Latin Numbers: Playing Latino in Twentieth-Century U.S. Popular Performance* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2015), 20.

borrowed from the Latin fantasy of popular entertainment. The women, in costumes resembling one of Carmen Miranda's famous outfits, are in the middle of a shimmy as they direct attention to a female lead dancer who is similarly attired—though with more sequins. With their bared midriffs and flouncy skirts, the dancers perform the sensual and energetic physicality expected of the Latin Number, demonstrating mastery of the stylized aggregation of the Latin idea. In doing so, however, the performers appeared as a doubled ethnic exotic. Already fulfilling the fantasy of Oriental allure, in performing *Tabasco*'s Latin Numbers, the dancers also appeared capable of embodying Latin exoticism (and eroticism) as well. That the projection of this cross-ethnic fantasy required Japanese dancers playing Latino/a characters echoed common casting practices in the US, in which Asian and Latino/a performers frequently were cast in other ethnic roles.[296] *Tabasco* then, made use of the Latin Number to stage Japan as a geographically capacious site of racially ambiguous fantasy.

Figure 7: *Tabasco*, Ernie Pyle Theatre, February 1947. NARA, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer. Contact Prints: 284581-284860, Box 551.

Presented on the stage of the Ernie Pyle for an audience of GIs, *Tabasco* was also suggestive of Japan's position in the new post-war world order. As Herrera observes, the Latin Number, which peaked in popularity during the Good Neighbor Era as an instantiation of efforts

[296] See Herrera's chapter on the "Stealth Latino" in *Latin Numbers*.

to promote co-operation with "other American republics," "function[ed] as a ready stylistic and dramatic device to inject a jolt of colorful unpredictability and energetic physicality into any (and nearly every) musical of the period."[297] In musicals and films of the 1930s through the end of the war, Latin Numbers were thrown into otherwise unrelated plot-lines, conspicuously staging an encounter, in music, dance, and costume, with the American Other. This dramaturgy thus staged Latin America as a site of fun and easy titillation, which, confined to a single number, had been smoothly and safely absorbed into the US cultural mainstream. By contrast, *Tabasco* is entirely made up of Latin Numbers. Instead of the genre's usual function of staging a brief encounter of White America with Latin America, *Tabasco* suggested Japan's indoctrination into the role of yet another American (US) republic, under the watchful gaze and economic patronage of the Occupation.

If, in *Tabasco*, the interplay between the bodies of the Japanese performers onstage and the American spectators in the house, suggested Japan's incorporation into the United States' hegemonic sphere, Itō's position in this relationship was less clear cut. Just as was the case for the GI audience, for Itō, *Tabasco* operated as a site of nostalgia, as he drew upon both his 1934 trip to Mexico, as well as his years of exposure to the Latin Number genre while living in the United States. Indeed, the performance of ethnic ambiguity central to the production's success is also reminiscent of Itō's own success in the genres of Oriental/Ethnic dance in New York in the 1920s. In choreographing Japan's emergence onto the world stage as embodiment of fantasies of the exotic, Itō created space at the Ernie Pyle for his own choreographic practices and past to shape a vision of Japan's future image.

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[297] Herrera, 47.

Itō's production and choreographic work at the Ernie Pyle thus educated a new generation of Japanese performers in specific and successful modes of performing Japanese—rich in artistic traditions, urbanely sophisticated, and suggestively alluring. Yet these performances were to be restricted to the theatre, where they could offer a potent, yet safe embodiment of Japan's post-war rehabilitation of its image. Indeed, these were performances of Japaneseness specifically intended for a foreign audience. By contrast, among their fellow countrymen and women, Itō offered other performance lessons, as he sought to teach a wide readership of women's magazines how to embody the corporeality of democracy.

Make Up: Another Lesson in Etiquette

At the Ernie Pyle, Itō choreographed the Erniettes into dancing instantiations of a new image of Japan as a nation that was ready to re-engage the foreign spectator (and patron). The Erniettes' flirtatious choreography and suggestive costumes concretized the greeting, "Come In," that had caused such anxiety in the student Makiko. However, in another chapter of *Etiquette*, Itō makes clear that the welcome provided by the Erniettes necessarily had to be restricted to the protective frame of the proscenium arch. For outside of the theatre, such a performance ran the risk of misrepresentation. Figure 8 shows an illustration from *Etiquette*; the face and torso of a woman fills the foreground, while another female figure, seen from behind, appears to be walking away in the opposite direction. An idle GI slouches, gazing at them. The caption, commenting on the woman whose face is visible (and likely the other woman as well), reads, "There are some people who walk along calmly, even though they are made up as if they were indecent women." Itō observes in the main text on the following page, "American girls use hardly any rouge, but in Japan, without a single exception, they entirely color their cheeks as if it

were stage makeup. What's more, from the forehead to under the eyebrows, through the cheeks to near the chin, they paint themselves red with such abundance that it looks as if they were totally drunk. And then, with that color and amount, so wanton, no matter how one looks at it, it's the form of a prostitute."[298] The Erniettes, who *were* appearing on stage, occupied a privileged, but unstable position, in which the structure of the theatrical event (theoretically) guaranteed that they would not be taken for drunken women of the night. But, according to Itō, the average Japanese woman had to be on guard as to what meanings her appearance suggested.

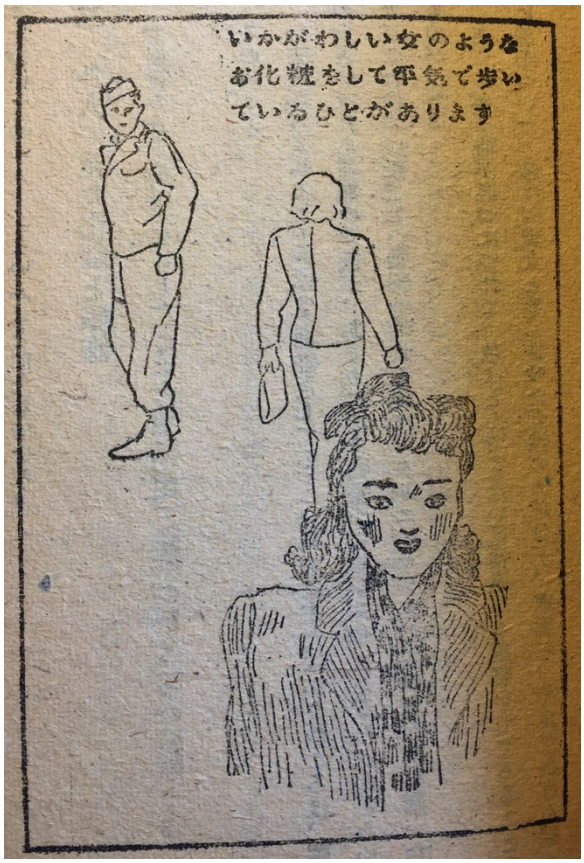

Figure 8: *Etiquette*, July 1947, pg. 27. Library of Congress, Asian Reading Room.

Central to the anxiety pervading this etiquette lesson is the figure of the pan pan girl—prostitutes who specifically targeted GIs. As John Dower has detailed, the pan pan girl occupied an inflammatory position in the postwar period. While many Japanese suffered from starvation and material deprivation, along with a sense of humiliation occasioned by defeat, pan pan girls, with their jaunty outfits, cigarettes, and steady stream of cash, represented the sharp contrasts present during the Occupation. While these women, ostentatiously performing the re-adoption of

[298] Itō, *Etiquette,* 28.「アメリカの娘達は、ほとんど頬紅を使わないが、日本では一人残らず、まるで舞台化粧のように頬を染めている。しかも、こめかめから眉の下、頬を過ぎておとがい近くまで、まるでアルコールが廻ったときのように赤々仰山な塗り方だ。そして、その色調とその濃さが、はすっぱで、どうみても娼婦型だ。」

Western values, marked the prosperity promised by the American presence, they were also a source of shame and a reminder of defeat. In makeup, outfit, and bodily habitus, the pan pan girl gave performances that were uncomfortably similar to those of the Erniettes (and indeed, likely there was some overlap between these groups). However, the pan pan girl performed her dance of welcome outside of the theatre, and in doing so, symbolized the need for alternative choreographies of being Japanese. Itō thus turned his attention to offstage spaces and the bodily performances that they required. His focus was, again, the figure of the Japanese woman, and he directed his lessons to her through numerous articles in popular women's magazines. While the Occupier remained a presence in these lessons in his frequent references to American customs, his focus in these articles turned to Japanese as both performer and spectator, as he sought to choreograph a corporeality of individualism for the new post-war Japan.

A New Way to Walk

For most of his career, Itō had valorized dance as key to constructing a modern community of international exchange as a basis for world peace. This was not just a random and far-fetched ideal, but one that had been foundational to his time at the Dalcroze Institute in Hellerau before the outbreak of WWI. As scholars have demonstrated, much of the justification for the Dalcroze Institute's funding and governmental support was, in fact, based on narrowly nationalist goals of increasing German workers' output. But Itō, like so many of the modern intellectuals and artists who flocked to the school's summer festivals, understood the Institute and the practice of Eurythmics as representing a promise of how renovating the body through rhythmic movement could serve as the foundation for renovating society as a whole. Itō's faith in

this doctrine of corporeal renovation remained consistent, even during his period of internment and the last years of the war, as the American military decimated Japan.

For Itō, the Occupation, with its rhetoric of friendship and rebuilding, offered an opportunity to once again pursue this ideal. Thus his writings from the period, which touch on everything from the organization of the US government to how Americans spend their weekends, and from recollections from his own career to observations about Japan's educational system, repeatedly come around to the odd bromide, "To be a good dancer, one must be a good artist, and to be a good artist, one must become human." For Itō, the key to "being human" was to "live beautifully." The obsession with beauty (one of his books from the period is entitled *A Classroom for Beauty*) at first seems a peculiar bit of banality better passed over. Yet piecing together the numerous writings from the Occupation period reveals Itō's consistent effort to assign meaning, and importance to the body, which was, for him, the unit and sign of the human. For Itō, living beautifully meant moving through the world—in social interactions and in one's own body—with corporeal honesty. Still inspired by the ideals of Hellerau, Itō dreamed of bodies whose movement produced both aesthetic beauty and direct meaning. He understood an American way of life, with its greater forthrightness and ideology of democracy, as a lifestyle that might better enable Japanese to live beautifully and to "become human." Itō thus asserted his knowledge of American customs not only to establish himself as a foreign expert, but to advance a schema in which mastering these new modes of social organization and interaction would, in fact, restore meaning and honesty to the body's movements.

The vacuum in corporeal signification that seems to have haunted Itō during and after the war is, perhaps, what lurked behind his fixation with the notion of etiquette. As he declared in an issue of *Seikatsu Bunka* (Life & Culture):

> Why the heck did this thing called etiquette emerge among humans on earth? Isn't it so that there will be respect between one human and another?...[But] if one has the form of what you would call correct manners, it is decidedly not the case that simply by remembering the form, you will have true courtesy….
> Speaking of which, today among ordinary Japanese people, the comprehension of courtesy is academic…. In contrast to this, for example if one pays attention to Americans' speech, what you will notice right away is, even if they do not know the [correct] form, and will not ever know it, in devoting themselves to the situation with kindness, even people who truly don't know a thing will express themselves with beautiful manners. For the former [Japanese], from the [outer] form they are moved within, or possibly, for all that, the form breaks down, by contrast, with the latter [Americans], from within themselves are born free expressions of politeness.[299]

This was precisely the problem that Itō had identified in the student Makiko, whose mechanical bowing betrayed the alienation of her emotions from her body. In contrast to a merely external performance of courtesy—a practice Itō identifies as Japanese—he advocated a practice of etiquette in which the body itself would truthfully manifest the person inside. For Itō, such corporeal honesty was the only possible basis for a society, and world relations, in which individuals and nations respected each other.

As with the experiment at Hellerau, Itō's vision for the capacity of the body to enact meaningful social ties was one he aimed at society as a whole, with women standing as the particular focus of his project. As Mark McLelland, among others, has documented, during the

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[299] Itō Michio, "Social Knowledge: Decorum, About Japan and America" [Shako no chishiki: Reisetsu toiukoto, Nihon to Amerika ni oite] *Seikatsu Bunka*, December 1946, 20-1. Prange Collection.
「いったい礼儀と呼ばれるものが、なぜ人間の世界に生まれてきたのだろう？それは、人間と人間の間に相手をレスペクト（尊敬）する気持が生じるからではないだろうか。。。。正しい礼儀といわれる型があって、その型を覚えさえすれば同時に礼儀正しいかというと決してそうではない。。。。

ところで、今日日本人が常識的に体得している礼儀はアカデミックなものである。。。。これと反対に、たとえばアメリカ人の言動に注意すれば直ぐ気づくところだが、彼等は型など知りもしないし、知ろうともしないが、親切という心の状態に立って人に盡すから、全く知らない人に對してもそれが美しい動作となって表現されている。前者が、型から内なるものに觸れようとしたり、或は型倒れになっているのに對して、後者は内なるものから、自由な礼節の表現を生んでいるといえる。」

Occupation, women stood as harbingers and ready adopters of the massive political and social changes that accompanied the arrival of the Americans.[300] With that troublesome figure of the pan pan girl leading the way, Japanese women in the Occupation were newly visible, seeking out new freedoms, and embodying them by their very presence. In far greater numbers than their Taisho-era *moga* (modern girl) predecessors, women embraced the new opportunities and behaviors made possible by the Occupation, as they worked, consumed leisure activities and material goods, and simply occupied public space, sitting, standing, and walking outside.

It was to walking that Itō thus turned his attention, offering in this most quotidian of activities an opportunity for his readers to remake their bodies for the new era. Itō's guides for walking appeared in at least five different magazines in the late 1940s, frequently followed by tutorials on sitting and standing. He later reprinted and expanded many of these in a section of *A Classroom for Beauty*. As scholars such as Miriam Silverberg and Barbara Sato have discussed, during the Taisho era, an explosion of magazines specifically aimed at women created an entirely new, mass female culture.[301] Central to the formation of a collective (though of course, not universal) identity, women's magazines offered readers new possibilities of identity and behavior. The boom in publishing after the war resumed this trend and quickly spread to an expanded readership. While many publications, hindered by paper shortages, had to make due with black and white print on pulp, women's magazines such as *Style* used full-color cover illustrations almost immediately. With their glossy vibrancy, such magazines offered women

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[300] Mark McLelland, *Love, Sex, and Democracy in Japan during the American Occupation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

[301] Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Barbara Sato, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

ways of imagining a new post-war lifestyle of color, energy, and style. In his articles teaching women how to walk, Itō offered a way of enacting this new lifestyle, one so simple that the possibility of corporeal renovation could be available to anyone.

Of course, Japanese women already knew how to walk. Itō's lessons, instead, taught readers what he identified as a Western style of walking. The body, he instructed, should form a triangle; the shoulders should be aligned as level base, with the rest of the body narrowing to the triangle's point at the feet.[302] [Fig. 9] The narrowing was achieved by ensuring that one walked along a single line, one foot placed precisely in front of the other. Maintaining this posture would take lots of practice, he conceded—just as in the familiar scene from Hollywood movies in which chorus girls, balancing books upon their heads, practiced walking day and night. If Japanese women would similarly devote themselves, he promised, they would be amazed at how beautiful the lines and shape of their body walking would become. The triangle shape was necessary due to the difference in Western and Japanese fashions. The kimono encouraged a slumped, rectangular posture, in which women toddled with small, quick steps from the knees, following two lines with their feet, instead of one. Such a posture, while perfectly suitable to kimono, would make a body clad in Western clothing appear unbeautiful. From this tutorial followed an entire remaking of the body—how one stood, held one's purse, directed one's gaze, and so on—by which physical posture became the key to embodying a new, freer persona. [Fig. 10]

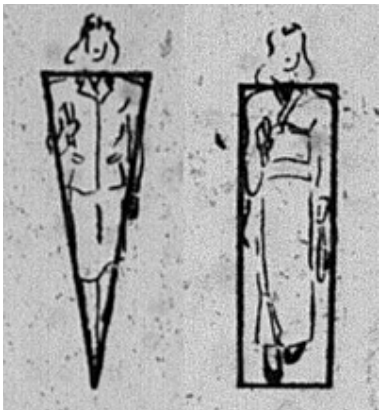

Figure 9: Illustration from *Style*, June 1946, pg. 54.

[302] Itō Michio, "How to Walk Beautifully" [Utsukushii arukikata], *Style*, June 1946, 54-5.

That Itō's lessons so explicitly connected a new post-war corporeality to fashion was part of a common trend during the Occupation, one particularly encouraged by the authorities at GHQ. Women's fashion in particular stood at the intersection of ideologies of consumerism, personal freedom, individualism, and women's liberation. As Malia McAndrew has documented, during the Occupation women's magazines promoted an ideal of white beauty and American womanhood, accompanied by dictates on how to be "free."[303] This form of subtle propaganda, paired with GHQ's censorship policies, meant that women's magazines were particularly potent sites of cultural coercion—a "soft power" approach to complement the continuing displays of American military might. Itō's articles, which consistently help up American women's beauty habits and lifestyle as a model to be emulated, thoroughly participated in GHQ's strategy of cultural propaganda. To recognize the embrace of this pressure in Itō's work, however, is simply to understand the Occupation as a continuation of the ways in which, throughout his career, constraints of race and nation shaped the possibilities for his artistic work and circulation. Itō's espousal of an American lifestyle and his readiness to position himself as an expert in these practices was just the other side of his decades-long performance abroad of Japaneseness. Always constrained and operating within a hierarchy of political power and performance expectations, Itō designed his performances to take advantage of the situations he found himself in.

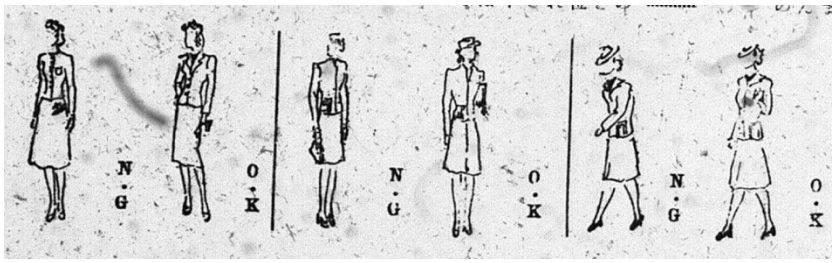

Figure 10: Illustration from *Style*, September 1946, pg. 42. The comparisons are labeled "Not Good" or "Okay."

[303] Malia McAndrew, "Beauty, Soft Power, and the Politics of Womanhood During the U.S. Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952," *Journal of Women's History* 26:4 (Winter 2014).

For Itō, valorizing the postures and underlying ideology of an "American" way of walking ultimately served to foreground a notion of dance that was deeply shaped by his education and career abroad. In his explanations of American democracy, Itō argued that it was more than a political system; it was, instead, "a lifestyle." At the heart of this lifestyle was the principle of individualism, which pervaded and structured all aspects of American life. Thus, for example, in *America and Japan*, Itō describes a family deciding what to do for winter break. Both the boy and girl are encouraged to state their individual preferences; the boy wants to go to the mountains, the girl to the sea. Respecting these expressions of individual desire, together, the family finds an option (going to an onsen…) that will make everyone happy.[304] Though Itō's example, like most of his descriptions of American life, seems more romantic fable than accurate depiction, his characterization was not merely a regurgitation of American ideology. Instead, Itō's espousal of the doctrine of individualism connected an image of America—and the remaking of Japanese society according to such an image—to the practice of modern dance. As Anthea Kraut reminds us, "Sharing artistic modernism's emphasis on the autonomous individual and heavily influenced by the movement principles of Francois Delsarte, who approached movement as an expression of one's emotional interiority, US modern dance in the first decades of the twentieth century rested on and advanced the notion that original movement proceeded 'from the fore of the individual'; in early modern dance, bodies externalized what was internal and proper to the self."[305] In modern dance, particularly as it developed in the US alongside Itō's career, the ideology of individualism was a way of asserting the primacy of the body. For Itō,

[304] *America and Japan*, 91-2.
[305] Kraut, 19.

too, a notion of the body as the most powerful expression of the individual was central to his conception of his own work.

In Itō's Occupation-era writings, the importance of the individual body undergirds his tutorials on walking, standing, and especially, dancing. In his articles and books, Itō repeatedly advised his readers to "know oneself." As S— Sensei explains to Makiko, the key to becoming a dancer is to gain a "deep aesthetic sense of the development of one's own body."[306] The only way to do so is to constantly study one's own corporeality—one's height, the movement of one's hands, to what extent the head can rotate around the neck, if one's shoulders are square, sloping, or in a straight line, how one's legs bend, and the bones in one's feet. Committing to a deep knowledge of one's own body, Itō suggests, is the only way to begin to conceive of the meanings it can impart, the only way of living beautifully.

During the Occupation then, the early ideals of corporeal and societal renovation that Itō had absorbed at the Dalcroze Institute became fully enmeshed with the ideologies of individualism and democracy in the United States, where he had lived so much of his life. No longer dancing himself, choreography, teaching, and publishing became the modes by which Itō advocated remaking the self as fundamental to the task of remaking Japan. In the post-war era, simple acts of movement became ways of expressing the self. Aiming to reconstruct a body that had been dulled by both war and automatic habits of social life, Itō envisioned even quotidian movement as an act of dance. In the fall of 1916, Itō had choreographed what was to become his most famous piece, *Pizzicati*. In it, he shoots his arms through space, carving out a figure of the human as continual motion and corporeal energy. His legs, however, never move; his feet remain

[306] *Etiquette*, 15.「それが基本になって、体のこなし方が発達し美意識が深まってくる。」

planted in second position. Towards the end of his career, Itō instead turned to walking—an almost oblivious movement of the feet. But this too, was a way of articulating the body as a force of artistic expression, a body that would not transcend the constraints of the social and political conditions it inhabited, but one that nevertheless managed to walk through them.

Conclusion
Choreographing the Silk Road for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics

In 1960, Itō was tapped to direct the torch relay and opening ceremonies of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. For Itō—and for Japan—this event was a momentous opportunity to re-emerge onto the world stage. In this final decade of his career, Itō had slipped into relative obscurity from his earlier position of fame as a successful international dancer. The 1964 Olympiad was thus a chance for him to again promulgate his vision of dance as a form of embodied cosmopolitanism, and to do so for a global audience. Itō's personal goals matched those of the Olympic planning committee, for the 1964 Games, the first held in Asia, were understood as Japan's chance to re-introduce itself post-war as a peaceful, cultured, and cosmopolitan nation.

Itō's proposal for the torch relay involved a re-tracing of the historic Silk Road, in which the torch would be carried from Greece, across Asia, on into Japan. Along the way, Itō envisioned music and dance performances of regional folk cultures—what he termed "A Bouquet of Arts Dedicated to the Torch of Nations."[307] The plan thus involved the exhibition of Asian bodies as ethnographic display, a mode of performance that drew upon the multiple ways in which he had choreographed both his own, and other bodies, as "Asian" throughout his career. Born of early cosmopolitan ideals shaped by his childhood in Meiji Japan and at the Dalcroze Institute in Hellerau, Germany, these performances also conformed to the spectatorial and patronage requirements present at each stage of his career: that of Western Orientalism in New York in the 1920s, of Japanese-American immigrants in 1930s Los Angeles, and of Japanese

[307] 冊子『１９６４年オピンピック聖火—聖火にむすばれる絹の道』地球との対話　第六十二号（編纂 川添浩史）地球文化研究所, 36. [Booklet, "The 1964 Olympic Torch and the Silk Road tied to the Torch," A Global Discussion, #62, edited by Kawazoe Hiroshi, Earth Civilization Research Institute.] Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Senda Koreya Archive, J9.

imperial administration during the final years of the Pacific War. As with the 1964 Olympics in general, Itō's plan, even as it staged a vision of new cosmopolitanism, was haunted by the Orientalist and imperial gestures of his past performances. The dancing bodies called for in Itō's plan—both spectacularly present as representatives of native traditions, and yet simultaneously absented as contemporary political agents—thus illuminate the racial and national performances undergirding Itō's own transnational career, as he sought to make meaningful the emplotment of his Japanese body in national, regional, and international networks.

Itō's proposal for the torch relay presented a vision of Asia unified by the passage of traveling bodies. The plan entailed the torch being carried over 10,000 kilometers, involving not only athletes on foot, but on camel and horse as well. Over the space of a year, Itō envisioned that the torch would travel from Olympia, Greece to Syria, through Iraq, Iran, and Afganistan, on into India, Burma, and Thailand, then proceeding north through Vietnam, into China, and then curving around through North and South Korea to finally arrive in Japan.[308] In his broad definition of the Silk Road, Itō thus articulated a capacious vision of Asia. The inclusiveness of this mapping served certain ideological purposes; if part of Japan's successful bid for the Olympics lay in its position as a US-backed capitalist bulwark against communist Asia, then the inclusiveness of the Silk Road vision suggested Japan's potential to bring those countries back into the neo-liberal sphere. Many commentators saw the inclusion of China and North Korea in the plan as a key feature of its appeal; the Olympics could be an occasion of Cold War defrosting, with Japan positioned as cultural mediator. Nevertheless, Itō also provided for an alternate route, should negotiations fail: "Moreover, regarding the world history of cultural

[308] No paper title, No date. (Probably January 1961). Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Senda Koreya Archive, J24, Scrapbook #10.

exchange, while there is the northern route, from China to Korea, there is also the world historical Southern route, from the northwest part of India, Delhi, going south to Bangkok, passing through Southeast Asia on to Tokyo; this would be another possible plan."[309] Itō observed that this route would recall that although "Marco Polo took the Northern route, on his return he took the southern route."[310] With his reference to Marco Polo, Itō justified either plan as symbolically meaningful and amenable to current world affairs. Itō's proposal for the Silk Road thus sketched a comprehensive geography, knitting together via a history of commerce and exploration, a united Asia, as well as a joined East and West.

Itō's use of the Silk Road as the theme for the relay mined an intellectual tradition from early 20th century Japan, which upheld the route as symbolic of Japan having an essentially syncretic, intercultural nature. The major proponents of this characterization were the curator Okakura Tenshin (Kakuzō) (岡倉天心) (1863-1913) and the intellectual Watsuji Tetsurō (和辻哲郎) (1889-1960). Okakura, an advocate of Pan-Asianism, described Japan as "a museum of Asiatic civilization": because its culture, religion, and language were all derived from China and India, Japan represented a storehouse of Asian heritage. This heritage was then, by virtue of Japan's insular geography, adapted and transformed into something uniquely Japanese. Thus Japan's essential nature was syncretic, but not derivative. Okakura focused his amalgamative historiography on the 8th century capital Nara, where the presence of numerous Buddhist

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[309] Kawazoe, "The 1964 Olympic Torch." 「それには世界史の文化交流において、北方ルートとして中国から朝鮮への道と、一つは南方世界史ルートとしてインド北西部から南下してデリー、バンコックから東南アジアえを過ぎて東京への道も考案される。」

[310] Ibid.「これはある意味で北の道を通ったマルコ・ポーロが、その帰りにはこの南方ルートを通ったことを想起せしめるものがある。」

temples and statuary revealed Japan's debt to the Asian continent. Watsuji similarly focused on Nara, and posited it as the Eastern endpoint of the Silk Road. The diverse treasures of the East—as well as those of the West—could thus be said to accumulate in Nara/Japan, and this syncretic internationalism became, for these thinkers, the essential characteristic of Japan as a nation.[311] Writing in late Meiji and early Taisho, Okakura and Watsuji thus plumbed Japan's past in order to define the nature of its national modernity. As Stefan Tanaka observes, this was a process central to the articulation of Asian modernity; rather than plotting modernity as a turn against the past, the specific nature of Asian modernity drew upon its past, positioning cultural heritage as the force shaping the particular instantiation of what was understood to be a universal condition.[312]

Itō's adoption of the Silk Road theme then, doubly linked Japan's post-war present to the idea of the nation's cosmopolitan past—both that of the Nara period, as well as that of the early 20th century. In a pamphlet that outlined the planning committee's vision for the proposal, Itō (or a colleague) wrote effusively of Japan's appeal to foreigners since the earliest days of the Silk Road, citing not only Marco Polo, but also Kublai Khan, Christopher Columbus, and even the American Commodore Perry.[313] That these examples were almost all attempts at imperial

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[311] See William LaFleur, "A Turning in Taishō: Asia and Europe in the Early Writings of Watsuji Tetsurō," in *Culture and Identity: Japanese Intellectuals during the Interwar Years*, ed. Thomas J. Rimer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Stefan Tanaka, "Imaging History: Inscribing Belief in the Nation," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 53:1 (Feb 1994).

[312] The model of modernity/modernism as rupture with the past is based on the examples of Britain and France. The model outlined by Tanaka also characterizes Germany, which, of course, was modernizing at the same time as Japan.

[313] Kawazoe, "The 1964 Olympic Torch." 「まさに地球はここに一つであり、その諸文化はあらゆる個性をもしつつ、美しい球体的調和の中に統一されるように、いまオリンピックは世界のあらゆる地方の色彩と音楽をもって、一つの綜合芸術をつくるように表現されるのである。」

invasion, and that only Perry actually made it to Japan, goes unremarked; these historical figures instead simply suggest Japan's eternal allure, that would again be in evidence when foreigners flock to Japan for the Olympics. Thus the pamphlet made clear the way in which the Olympics would be a continuation of Japan's status as cultural storehouse and endpoint of the Silk Road: "Certainly, here the earth becomes one, as every individual culture is unified in a beautiful global harmony. Now with the Olympics, the color and music of every region of the world will be expressed in a single synthesized art."[314]

While the use of the Silk Road theme thus seemed to cast the nativist isolationism of the Pacific War as an aberration from Japan's essential cosmopolitanism, shadows of the war and Japan's imperialism in Asia haunted Itō's plan. The ritual of the torch relay itself had originated at the 1936 Berlin Olympics as part of the effort to choreograph Hitler's legitimacy and Germany's mytho-historic ties to Greece. The designer of that relay, Carl Diem, was thus invested in perpetuating it as an Olympic tradition. The next Games were scheduled to be held in

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The Mongol invasions, led by Kublai Khan in 1274 and 1281 were rebuffed because of out-of-season typhoons (so-called *kamikaze* or Divine Winds), which established a belief, lasting until the end of World War II, that Japan could not be invaded or defeated. Since to the Spanish, the Americas were unknown and unmapped, Columbus set out for—and believed he had arrived at—Japan, which due to Marco Polo's writings was famous as a land of gold.

[314] Ibid. 「６。宗教音楽――民謡

ヨーロッパからアジアにわたる全地域には、無数の地方音楽が著しい発達を示していて、その楽器もまことに多種多様である。拍子にも、メロディーにも、ハーモニーにもそれぞれの特色がある。ことに民謡にいたっては、それこそほとんど未だ聞かれないものが無数に存在している。これをこの際、全世界に演奏し、合奏せしめるのでる。

７　民俗舞踊――民族劇

きわめて魅力と迫力に富む郷土舞踊が、その自然のいかにも荒々しくあればあるほど、それをおぎなうために、それらの地方には生命力にあふれたたくましい舞踊や、やわらかな舞曲などがいたるところに現存している。これをレースの行われる前後に、応援のために演出されるのである。

Tokyo in 1940, and Diem offered his assistance to the Tokyo Olympic Organizing Committee. The plan he presented was for a torch relay along the historic Silk Road; the torch would travel from Olympia to Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, India, Burma, Vietnam, China, and Korea, before finally crossing the sea to Japan. Although the plan was officially adopted, its realization always seemed dubious; given the war with China, it seemed unlikely that the relay would be able to pass through the indicated territory.[315] In any case, in July 1938, the Tokyo Games were canceled, as Japan's government finally chose to explicitly devote all available resources to the war in China. By that time, however, the meaning of the Silk Road in Japan had also undergone revision; the assimilative capacity that Watsuji had posited as central to Japan's essence was embraced in the 1930s as yet one more justification for the Co-Prosperity Sphere and Japan's imperialism in Asia.

Itō's plan for the torch relay, explicitly borrowed from the 1940 plan, thus fell back into Japan's militarist legacy, even as it attempted to imagine an alternate history—and future—for the country. This tension is clearest in the emendations Itō made to the 1940 Silk Road plan, which reflected his own expertise and interest in performance. As described in the pamphlet, the relay would not simply involve the transmission of the torch by athletes; in addition, the folk customs of each stop along the route would be presented in an ongoing Folk Festival. Itō desired that the local musical and dance traditions be highlighted in particular:

> 6. Religious Music & Folk Songs
> Across the whole world, from Europe to Asia, we will highlight the development of countless regional [varieties of] music, as well as the true diversity of musical instruments. For each [place] has its own local variety of tempo, melody, and harmony too. Especially with regards to folk songs, there exist so many varieties that they have not yet all even been heard. For this festival we will have these performed in concerts for the whole world.

[315] Sandra Collins, *The 1940 Tokyo Games: The Missing Olympics* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 126.

> 7. Folk Dance & National/People's Theatre
> Regional dances, extremely rich in fascination and force, are indeed by their nature rough, but to that same extent are compensated by the way in which these dances overflow with robust vitality, while gentle music exists everywhere. These [dances] will be performed before and after the race as a form of cheering.[316]

On the one hand, Itō's plan for the Arts Festival was a straightforward celebration of "traditional" culture in Asia. On the other hand, while it valorized the diversity of performance practices, because they were staged along the route and thus embedded in an implicit chronology, the performances were thus framed as remnants of the past, while Tokyo—the destination—stood as an instantiation of the modern present and future. As had been the case with earlier formulations of the Silk Road by Watsuji, Itō's performance plan cast Japan as simultaneously of Asia, and yet apart from it.

The sense of exceptional belonging present in Itō's Olympic plan derived not only from the Silk Road dramaturgy, but also from his own past career. During his training at the Dalcroze Institute in Hellerau, Germany, Ito was taken by his classmates and teachers as representative of not just Japan, but also the entire Orient. While he protested—then and throughout his career—that he was nothing more than himself, he soon learned to deploy this racial visibility as an entrée into European modernist art communities, such as the Japoniste circle led by Ezra Pound and W.B. Yeats, with whom he collaborated on the 1916 dance drama *At the Hawk's Well*. Subsequently in New York, and on tour throughout the US, Itō participated in the early modern dance genre of Oriental dance. Itō's performances there of Japoniste dances, as well as of pieces described as Chinese, Balinese, Thai, and Burmese, cast his Japanese-marked body as affectively Oriental, or Asian. In stepping into and embracing the category of the Oriental, Itō understood himself as performing a sort of bodily cosmopolitanism, in which the diverse cultures of the

[316] Ibid.

Orient were brought together and celebrated. In Los Angeles, in the 1930s, Itō continued these performances mainly aimed at white audiences, but he also established himself within the local *issei* and *nisei* Japanese immigrant community, where his success as a performer took on particular meaning for an increasingly racialized and isolated population. Precisely due to the ways in which his body had taken on a racialized hyper-visibility, Itō was arrested by the FBI the day after Pearl Harbor, and interned for two years. When he returned to Japan in 1943 as part of a prisoner exchange, the performance of affective Orientalism that had marked his career in the West became the basis for his involvement in Japan's wartime imperial efforts, via his founding of the Greater East Asia Stage Arts Research Institute (大東亜舞台芸術研究所). His plans were almost entirely unrealized, but Itō envisioned for the Institute a series of pageant, mobile theatre, and revue productions that would highlight the diverse local performance practices of each region. Thoroughly embracing Pan-Asian rhetoric as it idealistically described an inter-connected and unified aesthetic culture, Itō's plans offered a vision of a cosmopolitan Asia, repurposing his earlier individual dances as a choreography of regional identity. In the immediate postwar period of the Allied Occupation of Japan, Itō's cosmopolitan stance—affiliated beyond the nation-state—positioned him as belonging to both Japan and the US, a doubled expertise and allegiance that enabled him to working between the two overlapping cultures.

Itō's proposal for the Olympic relay then, reiterated the multiple (both Western and Japanese) imperial inscriptions of the dancing Oriental body that had shaped his transnational career. From his early student days in Germany to his activities in war-time Japan, the abstract cosmopolitan ideal embraced by artists and intellectuals in the early 20th century was one that was used to justify imperial programs, and thereby involve individuals in those efforts. By the outbreak of World War II, the movement of individuals across national borders and the activity

of international cultural exchange was fundamentally regulated by imperial systems—whether one moved with privilege as a subject of an imperial nation, or with coercion as an object of imperial force. What then, to make of the post-war cosmopolitan gesture, typified by Itō's Olympic plan, haunted as it inevitably is, by memories of military aggression and the habits of racialization that buttressed the wielding of imperial violence?

Itō died in November 1961 of a cerebral hemorrhage; his plans for the Olympics thus remained largely unrealized. From its inception, detractors had complained of the cost and political challenges of Itō's plan, suggesting instead a torch relay by airplane. It was this option that ultimately was carried out; Itō's vision of a physical tracing of the pre-modern pathways of international exchange was abandoned in favor of a display of technological might.[317] The unrealized nature of his Olympic proposal offers a gloss on Itō's layered vision of Japanese, Asian, and global cosmopolitanism performed via the Silk Road torch relay. For his proposal of an idealized montage of local performance practices, rooted in individual and unknown bodies who lived along the route, rehearsed an inventory of his own past choreographies, in which a utopian cosmopolitanism was always a step away from the imperial realities in which his own body circulated. With its impractical and haunted choreography confined to the page, Itō's

[317] 「聖火は空路各国歴訪、高島理事帰国談、陸路踏破は廃案に」(Olympic Flame Will Visit Every Country by Air; the Story of Director Takashima's Return; Rejection of the Overland Route by Foot"), *Yomiuri Shinbun*, April 27, 1962, 6; "Olympic Flame leaves Athens," *The Times of India,* August 24, 1964, 10.

Although Itō's subtler, and perhaps unintentional, echoing of the past was abandoned, the memory of the war was marshalled at the opening ceremonies: the final person to carry the torch and with it, light the Olympic cauldron, was a boy born in Hiroshima on the day of the atomic bombing. The ceremonies began with the release of thousands of doves (or pigeons, as the New York Times noted), an unmistakable gesture for reframing the host nation. Arthur Daley, "With Matchless Pageantry," *New York Times*, November 11, 1964, S2.

Olympic plan suggests that the post-imperial cosmopolitan ideal might only exist as a hypothetical performance.

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