
Special Symposium for the Global Studies in Japanese Cultures Program (JCulP)
“Globalizing Japanese Culture”

Reception of Classical Japanese Literature and Theatre Abroad

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At what point are people exposed to classical Japanese literature and performing arts abroad? Based on my experience, today, I will talk about how classical Japanese literature and performing arts are being introduced, especially in the United States.

For generally educated Americans with no particular interest in Japan, there are a few possibilities of how they could be exposed to classical Japanese literature and performing arts: As part of general liberal arts courses at high schools and colleges, through Japanese traditional performing arts performed in major cities, through Japanese festivals, through TV programs that introduce the world's culture such as those on PBS and the Discovery Channel, etc. Among these, I would like to introduce two examples today: Japanese classics that are taken up in “world literature” courses in North America and overseas performances of classical Japanese performing arts. I will consider Japanese culture's global roles and implications from two sides: The perspectives of Japan and Japan experts and the reception on the foreign side.

In American high schools and universities, the class “world literature” is taught as a part of general education, along with English literature and comparative literature. There are many students who encounter Japanese classics through this class, even when their major is not Japanese. In fact, some of the students I taught at university said that they had read excerpts from *The Tale of Genji* in high school world literature classes. These classes often use world literature anthologies as textbooks. I will begin by discussing how classical Japanese literature is placed in these anthologies. On a similar topic, Shun'ichirō Akikusa has already discussed the concept of world literature and the position of Japanese literature (especially modern) in world literature anthologies in his six-part essay “Where Does 21st Century World Literature Go?” (every other month beginning June 2014 in the University of Tokyo Press magazine *UP*).

The most widespread world literature anthology is published by W. W. Norton & Company. *The Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces* has been used as a textbook in world literature classes since the early days. This anthology was published in a two-volume set in 1956, and reprinted in several revised editions. As the subtitle “Literature of Western Culture” indicates, it was mainly a collection of masterpieces of Western literature. From the third edition in 1973 to the fifth edition in 1985, *Masterpieces of the Orient* was published as a companion volume, but was treated as a supplement rather than an equivalent. It still reflected a Western-centric view of world literature.

This changed in the 1990s. With the rise of post-modernism, feminism, and so on, the Western-centric canon has been reexamined, and Norton published an expanded edition selecting many non-Western works in 1995. The Norton anthology's name was changed in 2002 from *Anthology of World Masterpieces* to *Anthology of World Literature*, and was published as a new, significantly expanded edition in six volumes. Other companies followed this example and published anthologies that reflect a new concept of world literature. With *Bedford Anthology of World Literature* published in 2003 and *The Longman Anthology of World Literature* published in 2004, the canon textbooks for world literature classes were completely renewed. Since then, Longman and Norton have been steadily

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reprinting revised editions to this day. Longman published its second edition in 2009, and Norton published its third edition in 2012, with a fourth edition scheduled to be published in 2018.

How, then, is classical Japanese literature placed in this new conception of world literature, and how did it change through a number of revisions? I will show you through examining various Norton and Longman versions. The basic structures of Norton and Longman are the same: they are published in six volumes, A to F, divided according to periods of Western history. A: ancient (before AD 100), B: medieval (100 to 1500), C: pre-modern (1500 to 1650), D: 17th-18th century, E: 19th century, F: 20th century. In this framework, Japan's Nara to Muromachi periods fall into B, and the Edo period is mainly D, so Japanese classics will mainly be included in two volumes, B and D.

Beyond the similar basic structures, each publisher has its own special characteristics. While Norton mainly groups texts from similar periods and geographic areas, Longman incorporates some themes that reflect editors' suggestions. Through thematic sections such as "Perspectives," "Resonances," and "Crosscurrents," combinations of works are suggested that cut across regions and time periods. This reflects the idea of "world literature" espoused by the editor, Harvard University professor David Damrosch.

Table 1 lists the works of Japanese literature in each of the latest editions of each publisher. As I mentioned earlier, Japanese works are mostly in volumes B and D, but there are also some in C. First, let us turn to volume B. Both anthologies begin with *Man'yōshū*, and include many of the major works in chronological order, with a main focus on *waka* poems and aristocratic literature, the ones taught in classics classes in schools in Japan. In terms of themes, the Longman edition includes many works that are related to *The Tale of Genji* in its "Resonances" section, such as *Murasaki Shikibu Diary* and *Sarashina Diary*, as well as "The Princess Who Loved Insects" as parody of *The Tale of Genji*, and suggests reading *The Tale of Genji* alongside other various works from other genres and eras. Through this approach, minor works that had not been in world literature anthologies before have come to be naturally incorporated through their relation to major works. At the same time, related works would offer new angles and deepen the understanding and interpretation of classical canonical works like *The Tale of Genji*. *The Tale of Genji* is also accompanied by a "Perspectives" section that introduces courtly literature and a "Crosscurrents" section that introduces war chronicles as a contrast. As the table shows, even the Longman version that proposes a variety of combinations based on a theme, is organized by geographic region for literature prior to the medieval period, and the combination of works within each theme is limited mainly to the same region.

What about volumes C and D? Compared to volume B, the number of works is small. Also, poetry (*haiku* instead of *waka*) takes up a large percentage, especially in the Norton version. As for themes, Norton's third edition has a section called "East Asian Drama" that expands beyond Japan in volume C (volume D in the fourth edition, scheduled for 2018), which I will talk about later. The Longman version introduces some combinations across geographic regions in the early modern period, which emphasizes the anthology's stance as "world literature," not a mere list of works from different regions. For example, Ihara Saikaku's *Life of a Sensuous Woman* is listed under the theme of "Liberty and Libertines," with other works from Europe and Asia on the theme of love and freedom: John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester's "Satyr against Reason and Mankind," Eliza Haywood's short story "Fantomina; or Love in a Maze," Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract*, etc. Compared to the more conventional way Norton places Japan's other early modern works alongside each other, this separates the works from the compartmentalized "Early Modern Japan" by lining up the works of other cultures dealing with similar themes in the same era. This structure makes it easy for North American students who encounter Japanese classics for the first time. In addition, from the standpoint of students interested in Japan and researchers, the sequence is very stimulating, as it proposes a new angle to approach Japanese literature.

Next, I will introduce the contemporary literary works appearing in the anthologies. See table 2. Unlike the early modern times, you can see that the Norton anthology also incorporates themes that cut across geographical regions: Japanese literary works are arranged with those of other countries of the same period and theme. Also, the works selected in the Norton and Longman anthologies do not overlap much, and the works chosen are much fewer than there were for the classics, especially for Norton. In addition, in contrast to its emphasis on poetry (*waka* and *haiku*) in the classical Japanese literature, the Norton anthology includes no poetry for the modern period. Longman

[Table 1]

| | Norton Third Edition (2012) | Longman Second Edition (2009) |
|---|---|--|
| B | <p>“Japan’s Classical Age”</p> <p><i>Collection of Myriad Leaves (Man’yōshū)</i> Emperor Jomei, Princess Nukata, Kakinomoto no Hitomaro, Ōtomo no Tabito, Yamanoue no Okura</p> <p>Sugawara no Michizane</p> <p><i>Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems (Kokinshū)</i> The “Japanese Preface,” Ariwara no Motokata, Minamoto no Muneyuki, Ki no Tsurayuki, Archbishop Henjō, Fujiwara no Toshiyuki, Mibu no Tadamine, Ono no Komachi, Ōshikōchi no Mitsune, Utsuku</p> <p>Ki no Tsurayuki <i>Tosa Diary (Tosa nikki)</i></p> <p>Sei Shōnagon <i>The Pillow Book (Makura no sōshi)</i></p> <p>Murasaki Shikibu <i>The Tale of Genji (Genji monogatari)</i></p> <p>Kamo no Chōmei <i>Account of My Ten-Foot-Square Hut (Hōjōki)</i></p> <p>Yoshida Kenkō <i>Essays in Idleness (Tsurezuregusa)</i> → Deleted in the fourth edition</p> <p><i>The Tales of the Heike (Heike monogatari)</i></p> | <p>“Japan”</p> <p><i>Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves (Man’yōshū)</i> Emperor Yūryaku, Emperor Jomei, Princess Nukata, Kakinomoto no Hitomaro, Yamabe no Akahito, Yamanoue no Okura</p> <p>Murasaki Shikibu <i>The Tale of Genji (Genji monogatari)</i></p> <p>Resonances</p> <p><i>Murasaki Shikibu Diary (Murasaki Shikibu nikki)</i>, Daughter of Sugawara no Takasue <i>Sarashina Diary (Sarashina nikki)</i>, “The Woman Who Preferred Insects” from <i>Riverside Counselor’s Stories</i></p> <p>Perspectives: Courtly Women</p> <p>Ono no Komachi, Michitsuna’s Mother <i>The Kagerō Diary (Kagerō nikki)</i>, Sei Shōnagon <i>The Pillow Book (Makura no sōshi)</i></p> <p>Crosscurrents</p> <p><i>Tales of Heike (Heike monogatari)</i></p> <p>Zeami Atsumori, <i>a Tale of Heike Play; Pining Wind (Matsukaze)</i></p> <p>Resonance</p> <p><i>Kyōgen</i>, Comic Interludes: <i>Delicious Poison</i> → Included in volume D in the first edition</p> |
| C | <p>“East Asian Drama”</p> <p>Zeami Motokiyo <i>Atsumori</i> (Kong Shangren <i>The Peach Blossom Fan</i>)</p> <p>Chikamatsu Monzaemon <i>Love Suicides at Amijima (Shinjū ten no Amijima)</i> (<i>Song of a Faithful Wife, Ch’unhyang</i>) → Published in volume D in the fourth edition</p> | <p>Nothing</p> |
| D | <p>“Literature of Early Modern East Asia”</p> <p>Ihara Saikaku <i>Life of a Sensuous Woman (Kōshoku ichidai onna)</i></p> <p><i>Haiku</i>: Kitamura Kigin, Matsuo Bashō, Morikawa Kyoriku, Yosa Buson</p> | <p>Chikamatsu Monzaemon <i>Love Suicides at Amijima (Shinjū ten no Amijima)</i></p> <p>Resonance</p> <p>Hozumi Ikan <i>Chikamatsu on the Art of Puppet Theatre (Naniwa miyage)</i></p> <p>Perspectives: Journeys in Search of the Self</p> <p>Matsuo Bashō <i>Narrow Road to the Deep North (Oku no hosomichi)</i></p> <p>Perspectives: Liberty and Libertines</p> <p>Ihara Saikaku <i>Life of a Sensuous Woman (Kōshoku ichidai onna)</i></p> |

[Table 2]

| | Norton Third Edition (2012) | Longman Second Edition (2009) |
|---|---|--|
| E | <p>“Realism Across the World”</p> <p>Higuchi Ichiyō “Separate Ways (Wakaremichi)”</p> | <p>Perspectives: Occidentalism — Europe Through Foreign Eyes</p> <p>Hattori Bushō “The Western Peep Show” (from <i>Tokyo shin hanjō ki</i>)</p> <p>Okakura Kakuzō “The Cup of Humanity” from <i>The Book of Tea</i></p> <p>Ishikawa Takuboku <i>The Romaji Diary (Rōmaji nikki)</i> (Resonances to Fyodor Dostoevsky’s <i>Notes from Underground</i>)</p> <p>Higuchi Ichiyō “Separate Ways (Wakaremichi)”</p> |
| F | <p>“Modernity and Modernism, 1900-1945”</p> <p>Tanizaki Jun’ichirō “The Tattooer (Shisei)”</p> <p>Akutagawa Ryūnosuke “In a Bamboo Grove (Yabu no naka)”</p> <p>Kawabata Yasunari “The Izu Dancer (Izu no odoriko)”</p> <p>Kushi Fusako “Memoirs of a Declining Ryukyuan Woman (Horobiyuku Ryūkyū onna no shuki)” “In Defense of ‘Memoirs of a Declining Ryukyuan Woman’ (‘Horobiyuku Ryūkyū onna no shuki’ ni tsuite no shakumei bun)”</p> <p>“Contemporary World Literature”</p> <p>Ōe Kenzaburō “The Clever Rain Tree (Atama no ii ‘ame no ki’)”</p> | <p>Perspectives: The Art of the Manifesto</p> <p>Yokomitsu Riichi “Sensation and New Sensation (Shin kankaku ron)”</p> <p>Akutagawa Ryūnosuke “Rashōmon,” “In a Grove (Yabu no naka),” “A Note Forwarded to a Certain Old Friend (Aru kyūyū e okuru shuki)”</p> <p>Perspectives: Echoes of War</p> <p>Yosano Akiko “I Beg You, Brother: Do Not Die (Kimi shinitamō koto nakare)”</p> <p>Mishima Yukio “Patriotism (Yūkoku)”</p> <p>Perspectives: Literature, Technology, and Media</p> <p>Murakami Haruki “TV People”</p> |

only features one work of poetry.

If you received an education in Japan and you look at this table, you will soon notice that many of the most famous Japanese writers and works are absent. This overlaps with what Professor Yoshio said earlier, but, Natsume Sōseki is not included in these anthologies. Nor is Mori Ōgai. In contrast, Mishima Yukio and Kawabata Yasunari, who are among the popular Japanese writers Professor Yoshio introduced, are included. Now, please pay attention to Kushi Fusako, who is included in volume F of the Norton anthology. Perhaps there are few of you who know this writer. As you can see from table 3, this writer was added when the second edition of the Norton anthology was revised for the third edition. She was added with Ōe Kenzaburō, replacing Kojima Nobuo’s “American School.” The work of Kushi Fusako will remain in the revised edition scheduled for 2018, even though Tanizaki’s work will be deleted.

Why is it that a relatively unknown writer in Japan is included, but the works of much better-known authors such as Sōseki and Ōgai slip through? It is because Japan takes a role of representing diversity in a “world literature anthology.” Kushi Fusako takes the role of a double minority of gender and ethnicity – she is not only a woman, but also a writer from Okinawa. In order to increase diversity in a “world literature anthology,” the editors look for underrepresented minority writers within the underrepresented Japanese literature to kill two birds with one stone.

[Table 3]

| | Norton Second Edition (2002) | Norton Third Edition (2012) |
|---|--|---|
| E | Higuchi Ichiyō “Child’s Play (Takekurabe)” | Higuchi Ichiyō “Separate Ways (Wakaremichi)” |
| F | Tanizaki Jun’ichirō “In Praise of Shadows (In’ei raisan)” Kawabata Yasunari “Snow Country (Yukiguni)” Kojima Nobuo “The American School” | Tanizaki Jun’ichirō “The Tattooer (Shisei)” → To be deleted in the fourth edition Akutagawa Ryūnosuke “In a Bamboo Grove (Yabu no naka)” Kawabata Yasunari “The Izu Dancer (Izu no odoriko)” Kushi Fusako “Memoirs of a Declining Ryukyuan Woman (Horobiyuku Ryūkyū onna no shuki),” “In Defense of ‘Memoirs of a Declining Ryukyuan Woman’ (‘Horobiyuku Ryūkyū onna no shuki’ ni tsuite no shakumei bun)” Ōe Kenzaburō “The Clever Rain Tree (Atama no ii ‘ame no ki’)” |

As Shun’ichirō Akikusa pointed out in his series of essays in *UP*, it is difficult to delete a famous author from the West like Shakespeare to make room for a minority writer, but it is relatively easy to delete an author famous in Japan (or Asia) like Sōseki for a North American anthology. In addition, more “unique to Japan” “purely Japanese” writers like Higuchi Ichiyō are more “preferable” in representing Japanese literature in a world literature anthology, rather than a contemporary writer who was influenced by the West, like Ōgai and Sōseki.

This role of Japan as fulfilling a “diversity” element for the world literature anthology is clearly reflected in the balance between classical and modern Japanese literature included in the anthologies, as well as the choice of cover art. As I mentioned earlier, the world literature anthologies tend to include much more classical Japanese literature as compared to modern and contemporary. In addition, the anthologies include more Heian period literature that has more female authors, as compared to Edo literature that has more male authors. As for the cover art, both Norton and Longman include one Japanese image among the six volumes, which features images of a Japanese woman. Volume D of the Norton anthology is Utamarō’s *ukiyo-e* of a beauty, while the volume B of the Longman has a portrait of a female author from the Heian period. Japan used to be a complete “other” in the Western-centric concept of “world literature” before the 1990s. However, even in the newer concept of “world literature” that reflects multiculturalism, Japan is still forced to take a role as an exotic minority, to a certain degree.

On the other hand, compared to the works included in the early world literature anthologies, Norton and Longman also welcome the influence of editors who are Japan specialist researchers. Rather than simply fitting in the established canonical works, the works included reflect a comparative perspective and the current state of the field of Japanese literature. In the Norton anthology, the Asian literature editor changed from the second edition to the third edition, from Chinese literature scholar Stephen Owen to Wiebke Denecke, a scholar of Sino-Japanese literature. As a result, as shown in table 4, the inclusion of Heian period *waka* and Sino-Japanese poetry increased dramatically. The inclusion of Sugawara no Michizane in particular reflects Denecke’s specialty. Likewise, Longman’s rich selection of works related to *The Tale of Genji* reflect the editor Haruo Shirane’s approach and deep knowledge of the work.

Now, there is a practical issue with the current versions of world literature anthologies. Originally, a world literature anthology was published on the assumption of being a textbook for a “world literature” class studied in one semester of a high school or university. However, what once was at most two volumes before 1990 has become six, and it is impossible to deal with the entire anthology in one semester. As a result, when it is used as a textbook for a “world literature” class that covers the classics to the present age, the teacher needs to choose the works that can be read in one semester. If the teacher is not a specialist in Japan, it is likely that the most famous works before the new concept of “world literature,” such as *The Tale of Genji* and *haiku*, would probably form the selection. In

[Table 4]

| | Norton Second Edition (2002) | Norton Third Edition (2012) |
|---|--|---|
| B | <p>“Japan’s Classical Age”</p> <p><i>Collection of Myriad Leaves (Man’yōshū)</i> Kakinomoto no Hitomaro, Ōtomo no Tabito</p> <p><i>Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems (Kokinshū)</i> Ki no Tsurayuki, Lady Ise, Ariwara no Narihira, Ki no Tomonori, Ono no Komachi, Kiyohara no Fukayabu, Monk Sosei, Minamoto no Muneyuki, Ōshikōchi no Mitsune, Fujiwara no Okikaze, Mibu no Tadamine, Archbishop Henjō</p> <p>Sei Shōnagon <i>The Pillow Book (Makura no sōshi)</i></p> <p>Murasaki Shikibu <i>The Tale of Genji (Genji monogatari)</i></p> <p><i>The Tales of the Heike (Heike monogatari)</i></p> | <p>“Japan’s Classical Age”</p> <p><i>Collection of Myriad Leaves (Man’yōshū)</i> Emperor Jomei, Princess Nukata, Kakinomoto no Hitomaro, Ōtomo no Tabito, Yamanoue no Okura</p> <p>Sugawara no Michizane</p> <p><i>Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems (Kokinshū)</i> The “Japanese Preface,” Ariwara no Motokata, Minamoto no Muneyuki, Ki no Tsurayuki, Archbishop Henjō, Fujiwara no Toshiyuki, Mibu no Tadamine, Ono no Komachi, Ōshikōchi no Mitsune, Utsuku</p> <p>Ki no Tsurayuki <i>Tosa Diary (Tosa nikki)</i></p> <p>Sei Shōnagon <i>The Pillow Book (Makura no sōshi)</i></p> <p>Murasaki Shikibu <i>The Tale of Genji (Genji monogatari)</i></p> <p>Kamo no Chōmei <i>Account of My Ten-Foot-Square Hut (Hōjōki)</i></p> <p>Yoshida Kenkō <i>Essays in Idleness (Tsurezuregusa)</i> → Deleted in the fourth edition</p> <p><i>The Tales of the Heike (Heike monogatari)</i></p> |
| C | Nothing | <p>“East Asian Drama”</p> <p>Zeami Motokiyo <i>Atsumori</i></p> <p>(Kong Shangren <i>The Peach Blossom Fan</i>)</p> <p>Chikamatsu Monzaemon <i>Love Suicides at Amijima (Shinjū ten no Amijima)</i></p> <p>(<i>Song of a Faithful Wife, Ch’unhyang</i>)</p> <p>→ Published in volume D in the fourth edition</p> |
| D | <p>Zeami Motokiyo <i>Haku Rakuten, Atsumori</i></p> <p>Kanze Kojirō Nobumitsu <i>Dōjōji</i></p> <p>“Literature of Early Modern East Asia”</p> <p>Ihara Saikaku “The Barrelmaker Brimful of Love (Jō o ireshi taruya monogatari)” from <i>Five Women Who Loved Love (Kōshoku gonin onna)</i></p> <p>Matsuo Bashō <i>The Narrow Road of the Interior (Oku no hosomichi)</i></p> <p>Ueda Akinari “Bewitched (Jasei no in)” from <i>The Tales of the Moonlight and Rain (Ugetsu monogatari)</i></p> | <p>“Literature of Early Modern East Asia”</p> <p>Ihara Saikaku <i>Life of a Sensuous Woman (Kōshoku ichidai onna)</i></p> <p><i>Haiku</i>: Kitamura Kigin, Matsuo Bashō, Morikawa Kyoriku, Yosa Buson</p> |

fact, when I heard from students who took “world literature” classes in high school, most students had only dealt with *The Tale of Genji* and *haiku*.

Of course, students who become interested in Japan through these classes may also take classes in Japanese literature. However, compared with the Japanese literature in a world anthology, which has a strong emphasis in classical literature and an exotic image, the demands for courses focusing on Japanese literature are quite different. For a Japanese literature class in North America, it is quite rare to have an entire class dedicated to classical literature. Rather, these classes examine Japanese literature from various periods, connecting classical literature to

contemporary, or comparing Japanese literature with literature from other cultures. In other words, it is a Japan that is naturally located in the world, without being bound by a fixed image, such as “tradition” or “old Japan.” Even in classes that focus on classics, we actively introduce contemporary movies, pop culture, and *anime*, and discuss them through historical changes or continuations across time.

So far, I have been mostly talking about how (mostly classical) Japanese literature has been placed in world literature anthologies in general. In the remaining time, I would like to touch on one more theme, the position of classical Japanese theatre. First let us turn to how it is placed in world literature anthologies. See table 1 and table 4. Both anthologies include *nō* and puppet theatre, but the location of these works is not fixed in either anthology. In the Norton anthology, volume D of the 2002 edition has three *nō* plays. In comparison, in the 2012 edition, *nō* is reduced to one work, Chikamatsu’s love-suicide play is added, and they are included in volume C in the section called “East Asian Drama” with *The Peach Blossom Fan* from China and *Song of a Faithful Wife*, *Ch’unhyang* from Korea. In both cases, the connections with the preceding and succeeding works are not strongly visible, but the 2012 version emphasizes the genre of theatre, in the East Asian comparative context. In comparison, the Longman anthology listed *nō* and *kyōgen* in volume D in the first edition, and moved them to volume B in the second edition. Although it might simply have been a matter of the relative number of pages per volume, when *nō* and *kyōgen* are in volume D immediately before the puppet play, the genre of theatre is strongly emphasized, while when they are in volume B with other medieval works, their relationship with the medieval period and especially relation to *The Tales of the Heike* become apparent. More broadly, this is connected to the issue that classical theatre could be considered as theatre and also as literature. In the framework of world literature anthologies, classical theatre is not a work that has come from being performed; classical theatre is literature to be read and appreciated. However, when thinking about classical Japanese theatre beyond the framework of the world literature anthology, it is also very important to teach it as living theatre that is performed on stage.

When teaching classical theatre in the United States, I taught mainly students interested in Japan or literature in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. However, Japanese theatre could also be taught to students specializing in drama from the Theatre Department, who do not know anything about Japan. In either case, it is very useful to show images and videos because by simply silently reading the text, one does not understand anything about speed, music, visual information, etc. I also incorporated some performative aspects to the class by acting out the texts with the students, in order to capture the classical theatre that was performed at the time and accepted by the public as something familiar. In a classical theatre class that I taught, instead of a term paper, I had the students engage in creative projects of writing their own *nō*, *kyōgen*, *jōruri* puppet play, or *kabuki*, and acting it out. By analyzing the works with production in mind, I think the students were better able to pay attention to the stage directions, costumes, music, etc., which tend to be passed over when reading them *qua* literary works. At the University of Hawaii and Portland State University, there are also full-fledged *kabuki* and *nō* presentations by students. Although this is limited, I think that the classical theatre of Japan is more familiar at universities and towns with such activities.

When you look outside universities, there are also opportunities for ordinary people to experience classical Japanese theatre in America. There are many Japan festivals both on college campuses and elsewhere, with performances such as *taiko* and *rakugo*. In addition, in major cities, overseas performances from Japan also take place. Even frequent theatregoers who are not especially interested in Japan will be able to experience classical Japanese theatre in these overseas performances. To end today’s talk, I would like to briefly touch on the general trend of overseas performances of classical Japanese theatre.

Overseas performances of classical Japanese theatre began with prewar *kabuki*, and *nō* and *jōruri* followed suit. *Kabuki* has been particularly popular in recent years. What is interesting here is that the overseas performances of *kabuki* exhibit a similar trend as the changes seen in world literature anthologies. In the past, overseas performances were performed as a part of cultural exchange and introductions to convey “traditional and proper *kabuki*” to the world, from the standpoint that the receiving side also appreciated the traditional performing arts of “others.” Such a view is reflected in the review in *The New York Times* on July 1, 1982: “The Grand Kabuki, which opened Tuesday night at the Metropolitan Opera House for a two-week run, is likely to seem an alien world to Western eyes.”

However, especially since Nakamura Kanzaburō XVIII's Heisei Nakamura-Za Theatre in New York in 2004, many recent overseas performances have aimed to create a more "living" universal entertainment, with less concern for tradition or "Japaneseness." In 2015 and 2016, Ichikawa Somegorō VII (current Matsumoto Kōshirō X) performed *kabuki* using projection mapping in Las Vegas. Here is the *Los Angeles Times* critic at the time writing on May 7, 2015: "Think of kabuki as a Cirque du Soleil-type performance, complete with dramatic makeup, costumes and performances." The newspaper critic seized upon the intention of the new *kabuki*'s overseas production, comparing *kabuki* to Cirque du Soleil. In contrast to the 1982 newspaper review that regards *kabuki* as other, this reflects the attitude that *kabuki* is not classical or a peculiar Japanese traditional theatre, but a global entertainment to attend for pleasure.

In summary, when we think about "globalizing" Japanese culture, there are two approaches. We may emphasize the "peculiarity" of a distinctive and exotic Japan, as was done in world literature anthologies of the 1990s, with their focus on classical Japanese literature. On the other hand, we may consider Japanese culture, not as a unique and distinctive thing, but as something to be naturally placed in connection with the rest of the world, relevant to contemporary times. World literature anthologies began tentatively moving towards this approach in the early 2000s. We can also see this trend in the changing attitudes towards *kabuki* in American newspapers. Rather than emphasizing its uniqueness, the process of understanding Japan in conjunction with world phenomena and normalizing Japan in the context of global culture seems like a better way of "globalizing Japanese culture."