

REHEARSING NOH IN ENGLISH - AN EXPERIMENT WITH KINUTA

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和文要旨

能劇を英語に翻訳する場合、いろいろな問題が出てきます。能劇の言葉には含蓄のあるほのめかしや引喩が多く含まれています。たとえば英語の文字と比べると日本語の漢字の中には様々な意味が含まれています。英語の場合、アルファベット文字の性質上漢字が持つ豊かな表現を他に探し求めなければなりません。能劇を西洋劇に置き換えて演ずる場合、新たに様々な問題が生じます。散文を翻訳する場合、登場人物の性格を正しく伝えるために、言葉の使い方を変えなければなりません。詩の場合、言葉の下に隠れているものを正確に表現することが重要です。論文では著者が最近英語に翻訳した能「砧」について、上記の問題点を中心に考察します。

In Tokyo 1956 Benjamin Britten saw two performances of Sumidagawa. Nine years later he wrote in his note on his subsequently inspired Parable for Church Performance, CURLEW RIVER:

"The whole occasion made a tremendous impression upon me; the simple, touching story, the economy of style, the intense slowness of the action, the marvellous skill and control of the performers, the beautiful costumes, the mixture of chanting, speech, singing which, with the three instruments, made up the strange music - it all offered a totally new 'operatic' experience. ... There was no conductor ... the lighting was strictly non-theatrical ... the cast was all-male [and] the memory of

this play has seldom left my mind in the years since.”

(CURLEW RIVER, Britten, Decca Record Company,
London, 1989)

And Ezra Pound found the Noh to be

“a complete service of life. We do not find, as we find in Hamlet, a certain situation set out and analysed. The Noh service presents, or symbolises, a complete diagram of life and recurrence.”

(YEATS AND THE NOH: A COMPARATIVE STUDY, Masaru
Sekine and Christopher Murray, Gerrards Cross, UK, 1990, p.5)

PROSE

The prose in Zeami’s KINUTA is unapologetically straightforward. It does not pretend to any great dramatic or poetic intensity. It is simple narration, a delivery of necessary facts, in stark and flat contrast to the rest of the play. With no room for analysis, the characters themselves cannot comment – to comment would be to deflect and destroy the stringent purpose of the drama. Building in emotion, characterisation would detract from the impersonal, the supernatural, the universal that the poetry invokes. However, this causes problems for the Western actor who seeks some hold on character with which to present these figures.

The experience of translating the traditional kyogen style summary in the middle of KINUTA makes this dichotomy very clear. At this point, happily for a modern audience perhaps, the Manservant summarises ‘the story so

far'. Not set in stone, this part can be improvised to a certain extent, but it is essential (unlike the Fool scenes in Shakespeare's tragedies, the comedy of which is seen as a vital foil to the intensity of the tragedy) that the serious tone of the whole play is not disturbed. Although this part is traditionally played by a kyogen actor, it is not presented in contemporary Noh productions as a comic piece. The Noh play itself is perhaps too short to afford such a diversion: the intensity of emotion would be shattered, the thread cut so that it could not be resumed. When, in the following example from a draft of the English KINUTA, a comic effect was aimed at, it soon became apparent that, although amusing in itself, such a piece did not fit well in the context of the Noh:

MANSERVANT:

Well, I don't suppose you understood a word of that, did you? So, as I know the whole story - I'm one of Ashiya's servants you see, why don't I help you out.

The first thing to make clear is that my master was forced to stay in the pleasure-loving capital for three years because of some legal business. We won't go into details, and I don't need to tell you how homesick he was, and how he longed to return to Ashiya. So, when at last the legal business was sorted out, he immediately sent his maid, Yugiri - that means Evening Mist - he sent her back home to tell everyone that he was coming. She was to say he would be back by the end of the year, which she did.

The following rewritten version works much better as part of the whole play, even though when reading it, it seems muted, as if the writer is holding back the Manservant's words in a refusal to allow any element of the

personal or the comic to creep in, or in fact any digression at all from the main purpose - that of a simple summary of events.

MANSERVANT:

The first thing to make clear is that the master was forced to stay in the capital for three years because of some legal business. That's why he sent home his maid, Evening Mist. She was to say he would be back by the end of the year.

Similarly, the opening speech of KINUTA, also in prose, is a dull read, precluding any pretensions to dramatic or poetic intensity, deadened in tone and singularly devoid of emotional or dramatic interest. Here follow four attempts from consecutive drafts of the English KINUTA to translate his speech:

1. WAKI:

I'm from Ashiya, Kyushu's Ashiya, but I'm living near the capital now. Some legal business I had to take care of. I didn't think it would take so long. Three years. Home seems so far away. So I've decided. I'm going to send a servant back ahead of me.

2. WAKI:

I ought to make clear that I am not a native of these parts. I do in fact come from Ashiya in Kyushu and it is only circumstances of a legal nature that have obliged me to live in the capital. It was anticipated that my residence in the capital would be brief - however, it is now the third year. Naturally I am concerned about the condition of those I have left behind. I have decided therefore to send back Yugiri, the servant - otherwise known as Evening Mist.

3. WAKI:

Firstly I must make clear that I am not a native of these parts and that I do in fact come from Ashiya in Kyushu. It is only circumstances of a legal nature that have obliged me, as a temporary measure, to live in the capital. Since this situation was not intended to be of long term duration - three years up to this present point in time - I naturally have some disquiet as regards the condition of those I have left behind. I have decided therefore to send back the servant, Yugiri - otherwise known as Evening Mist.

4. WAKI:

So here you have someone who is not a native of these parts, someone who comes from Ashiya in Kyushu. It is in fact only circumstances of a legal nature that have obliged me to live in the capital. My anticipation was that my residence here would be brief. However, I am already in my third year. Naturally I am concerned about the condition of those I have left behind, and have decided therefore to send back the maid, Evening Mist.

A taste of the nature of the problems that occur in translating such a work is immediately offered by the issues that surround the name "Yugiri", which also carries the sound of "evening mist", a word that features later in the play. These words are at times played off against each other. If the name remains untranslated as "Yugiri" then the wordplay is lost in an English version. The first translation avoids the problem by not naming the servant, but this is only a temporary solution; the second and third use both the Japanese and English names; in the final version, the English words only are employed.

My main concern in these four translations, however, is not with words, but with character. Given that in English the Noh is relatively little known outside specialist circles and that English theatre groups are unlikely to be able or willing to produce the complex background of sound, music, rhythm and stylised movement that Noh actors and musicians have trained in all their lives, the power of the words to excite and engage the audience becomes crucial to the success of an English KINUTA. One way to achieve this is to invest the speaker with some intrinsic interest of character.

For a Western director, the main question at the start of KINUTA is how to ensure that the Waki delivers these seemingly flat lines in a way that will seduce the audience into engaging with the play. The task is to convey the essence of Waki's speech as well as adding something of character or emotion that can help carry and to some extent replace the power of the opening of a traditional Japanese version. Example 1 above attempts to do this by employing a chatty, conversational style, a likeable Waki engaging the audience's sympathy and interest in his story. The middle two examples go for more pomposity and elevation; the overblown expressions of a self-important country bumpkin, aspiring, in the big city, to be more than the nobody he is. However, this strong sense of character is a far cry from the original Japanese text. The fourth translation perhaps comes closest to the original's definite lack of personal quality with a compromise that consists of a retreat, in its initial words, into the remoteness of the third person, the effect of which is to deflate the elements of vanity, yet without completely eradicating them – they are still present for the discerning reader/actor to discover.

However, none of these is an exact translation. None adequately reproduces the flatness of the original. This is deliberate. If one did, the result would be an unsatisfactory prelude to the richness of the poetry to follow. What may work in the Japanese Noh – an accompaniment to the complicated rituals surrounding traditional Noh performance – seems like a glaring error on the English page. Furthermore, what can be delivered on stage in a straightforward manner in the Japanese, becomes in the English, almost despite itself, an ironic commentary on the Waki's carelessness in love – a reading that is reinforced by the subsequent response of Yugiri, (here and in later quotations referred to only as Evening Mist):

WAKI:

So, Evening Mist, out of concern for those left at home, I am requiring you to convey the following message to them. You are to say that I will definitely return by the end of the year.

EVENING MIST:

If that's the case I'd better be off straight away. "Definitely by the end of the year, the master will appear"

Yugiri's questioning echo of her master's command contains, in the English versions, an element of mockery that it is hard to erase. Indeed, an earlier attempt, beginning:

EVENING MIST:

By the end of this year? Well if that's the case I had better go straight away hadn't I?

clearly highlights, with its use of “hadn’t I?” the potential for mockery.

POETRY

“I have found my first model ... in the “noh” stage of aristocratic Japan”
 (Yeats on Noh in his note on AT THE HAWK’S WELL, in FOUR
 PLAYS FOR DANCERS, MacMillan, London, 1921 p.86)

After navigating these difficulties in a prose that seems to offer so little that it is almost impossible not to add more, the play then swings immediately into a regular syllabic verse, multiple lines of mainly five and seven syllables, to replicate and sustain the rhythm of which, the syllabic count is repeated in the English. This verse is at times so heightened that for the unprepared listener it can verge on the unintelligible.

EVENING MIST:

Get set ready to
 go down these travelling robes are
 bound with strings of days
 go down these travelling robes are
 bound with strings of days
 heap on missed evenings end at
 inn after inn brief
 dreams heaped on borrowed pillow
 talk of the day in
 day out breaks and ends before
 long arriving in
 the dust turns to ashes in

Ashiya village
 the dust turns to ashes in
 Ashiya village

Here, as elsewhere in the play, a gradual accumulation of words and images makes for a powerful effect: the repetitions of "travelling", "days", "end", "dust" pile up, together with other words that are echoed later in the play: "heap", "missed", "evenings", "brief", "dreams", "borrowed pillow", and form a pyramid of meanings that have as their focus the transitory nature of the world. Elsewhere in the play the trend continues with "tears", "shadow", "lies", "trustless", "autumn", "leaves", "end", "wind", "waves", "travel", "storm", "scattered", "spray" etc. – emptiness, sorrow, disintegration, abandonment, transitoriness are ever present, even the pines are pining, and evoke the sense of a dying love, indeed of a dying wife. Even the words of the play themselves are shown to pass away like "leaves", which in the Chinese characters is closely related to "words", a connection that in the English version is conveyed by a juxtaposition of the two ideas, "leaves/no calling cards", or contained in a metaphorical reading, "mind his words don't fall", with either "words" or "leaves" taking the secondary role. Similarly, the physical objects of the play contain within themselves the substance of the whole story, as in the cloth the Shite beats on the kinuta, a metaphor for a lovers' pledge, worn thin like the beaten garment belonging to her husband; and gradually breaking apart like her heart, and like their love. Throughout the play, "sound", "voice", "call" ("oto") and its related "visit" occur again and again, focussing the audience on the one event that the Shite is waiting for, the one event that never occurs until too late – a visit from her husband.

Evidently, in order to replicate Zeami's reinforcement of images and ideas

by the use of repetition, his words need to be translated with the greatest of care, since many words, or their derivations, crop up in later parts of the play in different contexts. The “borrowed pillow” in Yugiri’s above quoted speech (“karimakura” in the Japanese) is one such example. The “kari” echoes the “karisome ni” (translated in different drafts as “I didn’t think it would take so long”, “a temporary measure ... not intended to be of long term duration” and “brief”) of the earlier quoted opening speech of the Waki. The “kari” of “karisome ni” becomes a crucial term in the play, acting as a frequent reference to the temporariness of life. It is significant that Zeami first chose to introduce “kari” in lines that seem so firmly fixed in the material world. A deep irony is evident. The Waki’s absence from home may have appeared to be “brief” to him – apparently he hardly notices the time passing until three years have gone by, but to his wife, the Shite, this absence is the cause of all her misery. However, in the context of the play as a whole, the Waki’s attitude can be seen in a different light, for the words in the play stress again and again how, ultimately, the nature of everything is to be “brief”.

Each time “kari” occurs, its meaning and associations are subtly altered by its previous appearances, its final power growing from the moment it first appears (within the word “karisome ni”) in the Waki’s dry introductory words; to Yugiri’s emotive reference to the “borrowed pillow” (the “brief” of “kari” being conveyed in the preceding line by the reference to “brief dreams”); to the bitterness of the Tanabata section, where even these doomed lovers, rendered in English by the “star-crossed lovers” (from Shakespeare’s *ROMEO AND JULIET*), and Jack and Jill (of nursery rhyme fame), appear in a better light than the Shite’s husband; and finally to when it returns once more as the original “karisome ni”, no longer, however, serving as an indicator of the cause of the Shite’s grief but acting

as a pointer to the way that, opening up “for/just one brief moment”, ensures that the ghost of the Shite can finally find release from her sorrow.

CHORUS:

... the path is
 now becoming clearer for
 just one brief moment
 of beating the kinuta's
 sound an opening for
 a prayer coming directly
 from the heart is now
 blossoming becomes the seed
 of her salvation

Each time that “kari” appears, countless juggling tricks have to be employed to ensure that as little as possible of its gradually accumulated wealth of meaning is lost in the English version. For example, the first and third translations of “karisome ni” the Waki's above quoted opening speech, “I didn't think it would take so long” and “temporary measure ... not intended to be of long term duration”, although adequate in themselves, were abandoned when it proved impossible to re-employ these terms at the points where “kari” occurs again. “Brief”, it was decided, was a much more flexible choice. Moreover, in Yugiri's first poetic utterances, it soon became clear that the “karimakura”, at first simply translated as “borrowed pillow”, needed to be more clearly signposted as another element in this act of repetition, so it became necessary to insert the word “brief” in an adjoining phrase. This change is shown in the following two examples, which also record an attempt to reflect the wordplay of “yu kure” (“evenings end”), similar in sound to “Yugiri” – thus carrying a subliminal reference to both

the servant and the evening mist. In the first version this echo is lost; in second version it is rendered as “missed evenings end”.

1.

heap upon evenings end at
 inn after inn dreams
 heaped among borrowed pillow
 talk of the day in

2.

heap on missed evenings end at
 inn after inn brief
 dreams heaped on borrowed pillow
 talk of the day in

Later in the play, “kari” becomes “karikoromo” (translated as “riding jack/[e]t ... for one brief night”). In KINUTA, a play that is constantly referring to the temporariness of love, of promises and of time, “koromo” (variously translated as “robes”, “woven.fabricked”, “fabric”, “loose weave”, “thread”, “cloth”, “coat..fabricated..rags..wear..”, “clothes”, “gown”) is a key term. Similarly, “kari” (“brief”, “borrowed”), “makura” (“pillow”) and “tabi” (“travelling”, “travels”, “far from home”, “bound south..flies so many miles”, “walking far from home”) make frequent appearances in the play. These four words come singly, but are also often combined: “tabinokoromo” (“travelling robes”), “karimakura” (“borrowed pillow”), “karikoromo”, (“riding jack/[e]t ... for one brief night”), “tabimakura” (“walking far/ from home oh where have you gone/pillowed”). “Koromo” in particular carries great strength. It is variously used in the play as a symbol of despair, lost love, obsession, broken heart, broken

promises and dreams, the changing nature of life and the unreliability of love, but its most striking presence is as the physical cloth that the Shite beats both in life and death, and which, wearing thin, becomes the broken promises of the Waki,

CHORUS:

do not tear apart
 this dream coat sewn with
 fabricated
 promises if broken down
 to rags then who will
 call no one will come to
 wear it ...

These lines are the start of a brilliant sequence of half-completed sentences that turn midway, disordered and fragmented, contradicting themselves, just as the tortured mind of the Shite twists and turns this way and that, unable to free itself of its self-imposed obsession. To replicate this, in the English, “who will call” turns into “call no one” and then to “no one will come to wear it”. The madness of the Shite is imminent, and the tension mounts, until she “cannot/ stand it” any more. She cannot sleep – unlike the husband sleeping far from home – and her despair sings out in sharp contrast to the lines in the English version (lifted from the song, WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THE DRUNKEN SAILOR?) “hooray and up she..”, which lead us to the doomed Tanabata lovers, together for one brief night – temporariness raising its head again – this night that the Shite/Chorus says only a few lines before is “so long I cannot/stand it”. The speech continues:

.... will last
 for ever if they call if
 it does not tear like
 cloth they can repair it from
 nothing's changed to
 thin summer clothes hang
 on this worthless bond is pledged
 on the road to hell
 with oh you see the night is
 so long I cannot
 stand it under this moon there's
 no more sleep no more
 hooray and up she beats
 the cloth hooray.

The star-crossed lovers pledge their
 faithful word their bond
 across the milky way off
 with the riding jack
 it in jill for one brief night
 of love in parting

Here, sexual reference mixes in with nursery rhyme allusion "jack/ it in jill", highlighting the Shite's desperate loss of control. Strictly speaking, "karikoromo" ("the riding jack[e]t") does not include a repetition of the earlier "kari", since at this point a different Chinese character is employed, but the echo of the sound of "kari" remains very powerful, so, in deference to this, the word "brief" is juxtaposed in the English version.

The web of references does not end here however. In Yugiri's first poetic speech she also mentions "tabinokoromo" in a repeated line - translated as "travelling robes". The powerful image of the cloth is here combined with travelling - which is what the Waki has been doing, an activity that has served as an agent for the grief of the Shite, and an activity that the Shite herself is fated to continue with after her death. There is also the sense of moving time, included in the English with the adjoining words "go down" and "strings of days", and in the wordplay on "robes" and "roads", all of which set the "travelling robes" firmly in the context of the temporariness of time and place. "Get set ready" - words usually employed at the start of a race, also emphasise the onward movement.

EVENING MIST:

Get set ready to
go down these travelling robes are
bound with strings of days

The very next poetic speech - the Shite's first words - repeats the "makura" ("pillow") of the previous "karimakura" ("borrowed pillow talk") - here without the "kari" of the previous speech, but with its recent echo in the audience's memory, again adding the sense of temporariness, emphasised with the use of "parting" and "sad".

SHITE:

falls sad thoughts of lovers parting
over sweetened
pillow talk of the devil take

"Tabi", first introduced in "tabinokoromo" ("travelling robes"), returns

again and again in the play. The examples below show the Shite remembering the story of Sobu, who hears his wife and child's attempts to contact him even in his sleep; he is later compared to her husband, who, it seems, has completely forgotten her. The repeated words are "tabine" and "tabimakura".

1. SHITE:

Sobu was hundreds and hundreds of miles away, but in his sleep, far from home, he heard the village kinuta.

2. CHORUS:

Sobu in northern parts far
from his home sleep walks
while he if he is under
the eastern skies come

3. CHORUS:

dry up the water running
deep sleep walking far
from home oh where have you gone
pillowed in this cold
night gown I throw down to earth
beating it even
your day dreams are
empty of me oh

The "tabimakura" in example 3 (its range of meaning translated in the words, "deep sleep walking far/from home oh where have you gone/pillowed"), also harks back to the "karimakura" - the "borrowed pillow" of

Yugiri's first speech. But there Yugiri was coming home with news of her master's return (even though later this is refuted). And the pillow "talk" - with its connotations of intimacy and sex, was, being in an inn, merely temporary. True, it was the "talk of the day", but this phrase seems relatively innocuous in comparison to the more bitter "pillow/talk of the devil") in the Shite's subsequent speech. In example 3, the pillow in the Chorus' words carries no sense of communication or intimacy, instead there is coldness and desolation, even a foreboding of death, in the "pillowed in the cold/night gown I throw down to earth". Another layer of meaning is added, when Yugiri's "brief dreams heaped on borrowed pillows" become "your day dreams ... empty of me", increasing the awareness of the Shite's sense of desertion.

READINGS

"What do I want from words...? A situation, an emotion, an image. ... The little opera scene in *THE SKRIKER* (1994 ...) had words without the usual structure of sentences (welcome homesick drink drank drunk). ... In *HOTEL* ... I decided there would be no complete sentences, just little chunks of what was said or thought, that could be absorbed first time round, or in a repeat or even never."

(Caryl Churchill in her introduction to her libretto, *HOTEL*, Nick Hern Books, London, 1997)

The multi-layered texture of the Japanese Noh poetry with its grammatical shortcuts, incomplete sentences, plethora of homonyms, *kakekotoba* ("pivot" words), and the rich depths of the Chinese characters present a real challenge to a translator. The English alphabetic system cannot hope to

equal the wealth provided by the Chinese characters, but the patchwork effect of allusions and quotations drawn from other sources can be emulated, and, as has been shown, an extensive use of imagery and *kakekotoba* can make up for some of what is lost. James Joyce and Caryl Churchill provide good models in this respect. In the following example from Churchill's *HOTEL*, the imagery seems to emerge of its own accord from the turnings in sense and juxtapositions of the unexpected:

The hotel is situated..
 in every room..
 continental or full English
 in case of fire

(Caryl Churchill, *HOTEL*, Nick Hern Books, London, 1997)

Kathryn Hunter's 1994 performance in Caryl Churchill's play, *THE SKRIKER*, at the National Theatre in Britain, demonstrated that it is possible to deliver such lines in a way that their multiple readings can all be heard. Such skill can be aided by judicious use of word and line endings, as in the following excerpt from the English *KINUTA*:

SHITE:

Moment of beauty
 full stopped in its track
 down the exact time is now
 an autumn evening

A speaker of these lines will naturally give emphasis to "moment of beauty" and "stopped in its track". However, at the end of both the first and second

lines, after the faint pause that is demanded by the line endings, the phrases continue into other secondary meanings: “beaut[i]ful” and “track down”. Furthermore, the additional reading of “full” as “full stop”, present within the phrase “full stopped in its track”, suggests a pause which, in its delivery, seems entirely appropriate to the sense of being present in the ‘now’ – a sense that is expressed by the use of the “exact time is now”. In addition, the lack of the expected “s” on “track” serves as an announcement of an imminent switch to a second reading, and helps to give both readings of “track” an equal emphasis, as if the line is stopping at mid-point, turning on a wheel of meaning – a fitting experience for this moment of “exact time”.

In a more challenging text, the actor (and perhaps the reader) is forced to make choices. In the following four short lines from the English KINUTA, seven words act as kakekotoba, or pivots of meaning, forcing the flow of meaning to change direction seven times. (Incidentally, the loving ducks of the original are here transformed into a more appropriate “dove” for an English audience):

SHITE:

Under the standing screened from
 view to bye bye lovey dove' e
 won't last the night
 falls sad thoughts of lovers parting

The kakekotoba are “screened”/ “view”/ “bye”/ “dove' e”/ “night”/ “falls” and “sad” – with “standing screen” becoming “screened from view” becoming “view to b[u]y” becoming “bye bye lovey dovey” becoming “[h]'e won't last the night” becoming “the night falls” becoming “falls sad” becoming “sad thoughts of lovers parting”. The effect is reminiscent of James Joyce,

as British poet John Cassidy commented after reading extracts from the English KINUTA:

“I was surprised to find the language so Joycean ... full of puns, associations, allusions and hidden quotations. The absence of conventional punctuation effects constant surprises, turnings of the sense, when the expected turns into the unexpected.”

(John Cassidy, Letter, unpublished, 1998)

The essence of KINUTA is enmeshed not only in its own references backwards and forwards, but also in its rich drawings from what is commonly referred to as a brocade of different quotations and allusions – sometimes as difficult to unravel as the cloth that dominates the play. Since references to classical Japanese texts will strike few chords with an average English audience, alternatives need to be found. An exact parallel is perhaps too great a challenge, but the general effect of a literary brocade is well within reach. In the following speech, allusions are made in the English version to the Bible “to dust thou shalt return” (“minoyukue” in the Japanese), an old folk tale “Turn again Dick Wittington” (the story of the country boy who dreams of riches in London), John Lennon’s song, IMAGINE, “I can’t imagine all the people living in peace” (“itsuwarino/nakiyonariseba”, a phrase from an old seventeenth century poem), a fragment of a proverb “mind his words don’t fall on” and the lines about Iago in Shakespeare’s OTHELLO, “smile and smile and be a villain”.

CHORUS:

Here in the back of beyond
belief shall wither

to the dregs of autumn leaves
no calling cards look
promising no
body is left to
lay my trust ends in dust thou
shalt return again.

Dick Witting turn three years in
autumn's but a dream
Dick Witting turn three years in
autumn's but a dream
if only sorrow would fade
away my body
stays awake not from
memories of the
past has changed no trace remains
but lies there are so
many lies
I can't imagine
all the people living in
pieces of mind his
words don't fall on what kind of
world would make one smile and
smile and be a
villain else I am
too foolish a heart is fooled
by a trustless thing

EXPERIMENTS

Any attempt to render Zeami's masterpieces in another language, different cultural setting, and time framework, can only be an attempt. No project can set itself up as the definitive one, and perhaps no work can ever truly be complete. Losses are bound to be incurred. However, such an undertaking is not just a question of salvaging the remains, but of examining and exploring the new and very different possibilities of achieving a similar effect.

"There is nothing specifically Japanese left in the Parable that William Plomer and I have written, but if stage and audience can achieve half the intensity and concentration of that original drama I shall be well satisfied"

(from Benjamin Britten's note on his Parable for Church Performance, CURLEW RIVER, Decca Record Company, London, 1989)

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