What Does a Cricket Have to Do with Eternity?—Intertextuality in Nishiwaki Junzaburō's Poetry

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Il n'est pas de pointe plus acérée que celle de l'Infini.

Charles Baudelaire, »Le confiteor de l'artiste«
Poèmes en prose (1869)

1

This study concentrates on the interpretation of conceptual metaphors of eternity (*eien* 永遠) composed by Nishiwaki Junzaburō 西脇順三郎 (1894–1982) in his poem Afternoon by a Cliff (»Gake no gogo« 崖の午後) included in the collection Slumber of a Gem (*Hōseki no Nemuri* 宝石の眠り), and published in 1963. The classification of the metaphor as 'conceptual' is based upon the definition by Jonathan D. Picken, who developed the idea of George P. Lakoff (b1941) that a metaphor needs to be viewed as a conceptual phenomenon and not just as a linguistic one.[1] Our intention is to interpret the inter-textual aspect of particular lyrical segments and to establish the hypothesis that Nishiwaki uses traditional patterns of eternity that had been preceded mainly in Europe by men of letters such Ovid and Shakespeare. Sommer and Weiss state in their dictionary of metaphors that in the metaphor of immortality/eternity in

1 Jonathan D. Picken, *Literature, Metaphor, and the Foreign Language Learner* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 53.

Shakespeare's Sonnet 55, namely in verse 13, a conceit was realised in which the poet confers immortality upon his subject. Here are the particular verses of the sonnet:

> So, till the judgement that yourself arise
> You live in this, and dwell in lover's eyes.

According to the authors, »You live in this« means that the sonnet itself will keep the subject deathless.[2] A resembling of this aspect can be seen in Nishiwaki's poem, although his metaphors are a bit puzzling at first sight. This is not quite surprising in Nishiwaki's case. His poetic language is generally described as translatory, as defined by Hirata, and this should be taken as a viewpoint for all attempts to interpret or evaluate his work. For example, in 1947 when he entitled his collection No Traveller Returns (*Tabibito kaerazu* 旅人かへらず) such a title might be considered to be due to the traditional Japanese influences on the content of the collection[3] as naturally 'Eastern', and no one at first reception is expected to deal with another possible variation of how to associate its meaning. However, Sato states that the title is only a phrase in one of Hamlet's soliloquies, and Nishiwaki transferred it literally, which caused irony because the sequence of the poem immediately suggests the influence of classical Japanese literature both in tone and format.[4] Thus, this method of work might be regarded as a key framework for the practical implementation of its poetic objectives. On the other hand, eternity is the central feature of such a realised world. He repeatedly invoked and innovated this subject matter, although he was aware of its natural resistance against all changes and deprived of any progress which could be noted or caused by man. Only poetic methods that aim toward this goal show progress.[5] In a poem named Epic, the realisation of such an attitude can be seen:

2 Elyse Sommer and Dorrie Weiss, *Metaphors Dictionary* (Detroit: Visible Ink Press, 2001), 223.

3 Hirata Hosea, *The Poetry and Poetics of Nishiwaki Junzaburō: Modernism in Translation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 123.

4 *The Modern Fable: Nishiwaki Junzaburō,* tr. by Sato Hiroaki (Los Angeles: Green Integer, 2007).

5 Miryam Sas, *Fault Lines: Cultural Memory and Japanese Surrealism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 123.

Eien wa kaitenshinai jikan no rokuro wa kūkan de kaeru dake da.
永遠は回転しない時間のロクロは空間で廻るだけだ。[6]
Eternity doesn't rotate / only the potter's wheel of time rolls in space.

The collection Slumber of Gem contains eighteen poems, and within exactly half of them, eternity is lexically projected in various syntactic links. Afternoon by a Cliff is one of them. Due to the economy of space, we do not provide the whole poem here, and focus only on the section examined which conveys the topic:

Asuka no onna no yoru no shōtai no kohaku no yume no hanran
Taiga no kaita kyōmon no naka de
Kōrogi no naka de eien wa nemuranai
Kono chawan wa eien no katamari da.
明日香の女の夜の招待の琥珀の夢の氾濫
大雅のかいた経文の中で
こおろぎの中で永遠の存在はねむらない
この茶碗は永遠のかたまりだ
Asuka
woman's nights / invitation's amber dreams flood
in a sutra / Taiga handwrote / in a cricket
eternal being does not sleep
this bowl is a lump of eternity...

The poetical image of eternity offered by a poet whose name is generally associated with the birth of the Japanese Surrealist movement might have its potential in the *écriture automatique,* a Surrealist principle to which Nishiwaki professed allegiance throughout all his life.[7] However, we are convinced that behind such a seemingly incoherent combination of words, sophisticated metaphorical patterns are hiding, which correspond to the intellectual nature of his poetry, and which can hardly be viewed as a coincidental cluster of words without a 'concept'. Although Keene states that so much of Nishiwaki's poetry is not only easily intelligible but sensually pleasing,[8] we rather prefer the view which emphasises the issue of the relationship between his scholarly works and poetical writings.

6 The English translations of the poems are quoted from Sato Hiroaki's work *The Modern Fable*. The Japanese originals are taken from *Nishiwaki Junzaburō zenshishū* 西脇順三郎全詩集 [Complete Poems] (Tōkyō: Chikuma Shobo, 1964). Our translations represent only parts of the poems Plum, Glass Twilight, Italy and »Le Cerveau Combustible«.

7 Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West. Japanese Literature in the Modern Era: Poetry, Drama, Criticism* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Wilson, 1984), 326.

8 Keene, *Dawn to the West,* 326.

Besides his advocacy of Surrealism, Nishiwaki Junzaburō was a central figure of the modern Japanese poetry of the Shōwa period (1926–1989), often regarded—both in Japanese and Western critical evaluations—as 'a pillar' (*hashira* 柱) for the post-1945 Japanese generation. As a professor of English and English literature at the Keiō University, where he taught from 1926 until his retirement in 1962, he also exercised an eminent influence as the most authoritative commentator on European literature and culture at general.[9] His literary legacy includes not only fourteen collections of poems, but also many essays, scholarly papers and translations. Such an academic background left an indelible mark on his poetical writings, which is evident in the short section of the poem we are about to examine. The entire poem will not be the subject of our concern. As mentioned above, we only focus on segments related to eternity. Though this may arouse suspicion of being insensitive towards the entire corpus of the poem, we believe that there is sufficiently autonomous context in the nature of the examined subject that can be analyzed apart from the remaining part. Moreover, Nishiwaki employs a technique of switching suddenly, and the metaphoric or poetic mode is often altered into expository prose;[10] this is noticeable especially within the structure of longer pieces like this poem. This does not mean that our approach selected is definitive, but instead of explaining internal links in the poem (which might be counter-productive in terms of the previous findings) we decided to find out potential intertextual and intercultural connections between Nishiwaki's poetical segment and Shakespeare's Sonnets 18 and 55. Both writers arrived at the point where the obsessive question of human beings' existence should be raised over other conventional topics (undoubtedly, eternity is a conventional topic too!), and both arrived at similar conclusions on how to face this unreachable phenomena from the perspective of an immortal being. Nishiwaki was familiar with Shakespeare's work. After he passed away, a digest of his essays on this significant playwright and poet, containing also a short essay on the sonnets, was published. Moreover, in response to the question of which poet he considered as the greatest of all (*daiichiban no shijin* 第一番の詩人), he named Shakespeare, followed by Chaucer and Keats, though he resisted for a while such subjective questions and his answer is eventually applied only

9 *Ibid.,* 324.

10 Sas, *Fault Lines,* 17.

to English literature.[11] Therefore, we understand the juxtaposition of these two writers as viable and relevant.

2

Before we proceed to the goal of this paper, we will try to characterise in short the treatment of the semantic potential of the word 'eternity' in the whole collection Slumber of a Gem and how it affects the plot of particular poems. We believe that such an approach will reveal Nishiwaki's certain intentions engaged in the process of composing.

Afternoon by a Cliff is one of the nine poems where this eminent topic is projected. It depicts inclinations of eternity inside concrete objects and such compiled eternity is devoid of metaphysical plans, as it is left in its autonomous existence without any ties with the ontological questioning from the author's side. Unusual is also the fact that the imaginative potential of eternity in other poems could be understood as not from this world. Eternity is primarily assembled by subjects which somehow stand out of the phenomenal world, or which intend to leave it. The introductory passage has appointed a succession of objects related to eternity. Eternity dwells in them, even though its physical conditions determined by its nature seem contradictory to logic of such a privilege. This relation is represented by the usage of a grammatical particle meaning 'inside' (*no naka de* の中で). The 'sutra written by Taiga' (*Taiga no kaita kyōmon* 大雅のかいた経文), the 'cricket' (*kōrogi* こおろぎ), and the 'bowl' (*chawan* 茶碗) are all made from materials that do not know of a development toward persistence in eternity, as well as the physical aspect of the human beings who created them.

After our analysis of the collection Slumber of a Gem, we came to the conclusion that there are three basic approaches on how Nishiwaki figured out eternity.

The first approach involves a creation of a three-dimensional unlimited space, mostly specified as a 'field' (*nohara* or *no* 野原, 野). The genesis of this method can be identified already in the pre-war experimental contribution to the *Shi to Shiron* 詩と詩論 (Poetry and Poetry Criticism) magazine, written completely in French and entitled »Le Cerveau Combustible«. The segment

11 Nishiwaki Junyaburō 西脇順三郎 and Yamamoto Kenkichi 山本健吉, *Shi no kokoro, kokoro no taiwa* 詩のこころ, 心の対話 [The Heart of Poetry: A Dialogue from the Heart] (Tōkyō: Nihon Sono Sābisu Sentā, 1969).

where the 'horizon' *(l'horizon)* plays a significant role can be understood as a variation of such a vast wasteland:

»Enfin, mon cerveau est une cassolette dormante dans l'horizon.«[12]

This may be a possible attempt at translation:

Finally, my brain is a cassolette sleeping on the horizon.

The word *cassolette* had been transferred from the Brittany dialect and denotes a small pot serving only the purposes of one person. What makes us sure in our assumption that *l'horizon* is interchangeable with 'field' (*nohara* or *no)* is another poem called Apocalypse (»Apokaripusu« アポカリプス), published in 1975,[13] where a similar construction is carried out between the poet's 'brain' (*nōzui* 脳髄) and space. But this poem is marked by a stronger note of desperate loneliness:

Kono aozameta konkurīto no nohara wo samayō nōzui no senritsu wa seibutsu no shukumei no aishūda.

この青ざめたコンクリートの野原をさまよう脳髄のせんりつは生物の宿命の哀愁だ。

The panic of the brain lost on the fading concrete plain / the sadness of all creatures is his fate.

Such a relationship between the eternal and the transient was applied quite often in his poems, while the 'brain' is considered another major topic in Nishiwaki's writings. In his essay entitled The Magic of Words (»Kotoba no Mahō« 言葉の魔法) he confesses that from his early years he was fascinated by Nature, but that when he was eighteen he failed because of his belief that he could define such a fascination through philosophy. The second reunion with Nature came when he started composing poetry.[14] The etymology of character 野 *(ya, no),* besides a 'field' or a 'plain', also denotes 'wilderness', i.e. uncivilised Nature. From these two perspectives, the phenomenon of the eternal field can be considered as something 'uncultivated' by man, something that cannot be captured by any intellectual concepts or projections at all. Perhaps this is the particular key to reading it. A certain compositional affinity in the scenery with »Le Cerveau Combustible« can be also seen in the poem Slumber of a Gem, which gave the title to the whole collection:

Eien no hateshinai no ni yumemiru suiren yo genzai ni mezameruna
Hōseki no kagirinai nemuri no yō ni.

12 Nishiwaki Junzaburō,. »Le Cerveau Combustible«, *Shi to shiron* no 6 (Tōkyō: Kōseikaku Shobo, 1929), 156–164.

13 *Nishiwaki Junzaburō shishū* 西脇順三郎詩集 [Collected Poems] (Tōkyō: Hakkōsha, 1975), 10–12.

14 Nishiwaki Junzaburō, *Azami no koromo* あざみの衣 [Thistle Coat] (Tōkyō: Taishikan Shoten, 1961), 29.

永遠の果てしない野に夢みる睡蓮よ現在にめざめるな
宝石の限りない眠りのように。
Water lily / dreaming/ in the boundless field / of eternity
do not awake / to the present / like a gem's endless / slumber.

This method, which is characterised by the composing of predominant space belonging to eternity's possessions, can be identified in the poems Slumber of a Gem (»Hōseki no Nemuri«) and Meditation in a Bar (»Bā no Meisō« バーの瞑想). The poem Slumber of a Gem can also be regarded as an eventual answer to a question raised by Sas: What is the relationship between Nishiwaki's Eternity and his vision of temporality and the understanding of the 'real'?[15] The water lily sleeping like a gem is not expected 'to wake up in the present' (*genzai ni mezameruna* 現在にめざめるな). The 'present' serves here as an opposite element to the 'eternal fields' (*eien no hateshinai no ni* 永遠の果てしない野に) and if the composition realised mentions a basic contradiction between them, the existence of a dormant flower directed to eternity weakens the relevance of any activities pursued in the present and inevitably denies its participation in eternity. In a relationship like this, the meaning of presence (*genzai* 現在) is absolutely irrelevant and the poem confirms an ascertainment that Nishiwaki's poetry primarily creates a world that is out of time, that is, an achronic world.[16]

The second category is the direct communication of a poet with eternity, mainly conveyed by the poet's senses. In this case, the regressive function of the brain is emphasised as are all thought processes. The poem is beginning to express a restless movement[17] and the author falls into panic and frustration. This category includes four poems: Slope (»Saka« 坂), Plum (»Sumomo« すもも), Epic (»Epikku« エピック), and Broadax (»Masakari« まさかり). In the poem Slope, we can clearly read discomfort:

[...] shokubutsu ni saserareta kamigami no yabu no kusatta nioi wa kyōretsu ni nōyui wo shigekisuru. Shinkeisoshiki ni himu eien wa tōmeina senritsu wo okosu.
〔…〕植物にさせられた神々の藪の腐った臭いは強烈に脳髄を刺戟する
神経組織に秘む永遠は透明なせんりつを起す
[...] The rotten smell of the bushes / of the gods spurned and turned
into plants by Jupiter / powerfully stimulates the brain.

15 Sas, *Fault Lines,* 122.

16 *Ibid.,* 124.

17 In the volume Studies on Nishiwaki Junzaburō (*Nishiwaki Junzaburō kenkyū,* 1971), the poet Murano Shirō 村野四郎 (1901–1975) notices a »constant restlessness moving from one place to another« in Nishiwaki's poetry (quoted from Keene, *Dawn to the West,* 330).

the eternity that hides / in the nervous system / has a transparent thrill.

We may read a similar frustration in a passage from the poem Plum:

Eien no muryō wa megami no entotsu no yō ni watashi no nōzui no naka ni tsukideteiru
Kono shōgai no tame ni watashi wa nanimo omowarenaida.
永遠の無量は女神の煙突のように私の脳髄の中につき出ている
この障害のために私は何も思われないだ
Eternity's unfathomableness / like a goddess's smokestack
stick out in my brain. / Because of this obstacle / I can't think of anything.

Nishiwaki considers the aspect of the human being as a 'sorrowful existence' (*kanashii sonzai* 悲しい存在) if it is compared with the immortal existence of 'gods' (*kami* 神). In reaction to such a plight, he finds somehow useful advice from Li Bai 李白 (701–762) and Homer: that the only things that can ease it are 'drinking alcohol' (*sake wo nomu* 酒を飲む), 'observing the scenery' (*keshiki wo miru* 景色を見る) and 'singing songs' (*uta wo utau* 歌を歌う). In this attitude he found a solution to Homer's question of what is the most pleasant thing in our lives (*ichiban tanoshii koto* 一番楽しいこと), although he was completely aware that, essentially, this is only an escape.[18] In the previous two passages, the poet's glance up to the floral personifications of 'gods' carries a weighty existential anxiety and reveals an insufficiency hidden in the cultural context and legacies. Nishiwaki wrote these poems when he was sixty-nine, and around this age he stopped drinking.[19] Certainly, it is not irrelevant to add that the link in the poem Slope is preceded by the collocation of 'toppled tavern' (*botsurakushita sakaya* 没落した酒屋), which could be read as a detection of limits obtained from inherited cultures.

The last method is realised through concrete objects which are put in direct connection with eternity. This category includes poems like Glass Twilight (»Koppu no Tasogare« コップの黄昏), Italy (»Itaria« イタリア), and the aforementioned Afternoon by a Cliff (»Kage no Gogo«). In these three poems, Nishiwaki demonstrates his allegiance to arts and good taste. The objects represented here can be described as some products of the human imagination or artistic endeavours. The comparison of eternity to a female face created by Amadeo Modigliani (1884–1920) in the poem Glass Twilight tends to be in a similarly 'artistic' mood to Taiga's sutra in the passage we were considering:

Moderīanī no onna no yō ni Eien mo hosonagaku nobitekuru
モデリーアニーの女のように / 永遠も細長くのびてくる
Like Modigliani's woman / Eternity is slim stretched too

18 Nishiwaki Junyaburō and Yamamoto Kenkichi, *Shi no kokoro, kokoro no taiwa,* 62–63.

19 *Ibid.,* 14–15.

In the poem Italy he sets thousands of angels rushing into eternity in the dim light of the Basilica di Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence. Beyond all doubts, the inspirations for this poem were gathered during his journey to Italy in June 1962.[20] The collection as a whole can also be regarded as a combination of travel observations from Italy and Japan, where these two spaces intersect in a unique entity. Specifically, this is clearly visible in the conjunction of Christian angels with eternity embodied in the Buddhist principle of negation *mu* 無. The combination of attributes from two culturally different religions in one single phrase does not seem disturbing :

Sūman no tenshi no ude ga kan kan kan kan janguru jangurī
Eien no mu e isoge.
数万の天使の腕環がカンカンカンカン ジャングルジャングリー
永遠の無へいそげ
Thousands of angels' arms kan kan kan kan jungle junglee
/ Hurry to Nothingness of Eternity

As mentioned before, only poetic projections toward this topic make a progression possible. This can be clearly seen in the act of the frequent transformation of 'external' objects aspiring to penetrate 'inside'. Paradoxically, they all deny the principle of negation attributed to *mu* due to their abundance in being 'concrete'. In this so-called substitutability in the phenomenal world they remain defined by transience.

The metaphors used in the poem Afternoon by a Cliff may be assigned to the last category. There is no boundless field surrounding and no feeling of resignation or frustration around them either. In the next part we shall try to find possible answers to why Nishiwaki picked out particular objects as 'representatives' for eternity.

3

What does a cricket have to do with eternity? We have stumbled over this straightforward claim and somehow could not find any clear answer. In his famous *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790–93), in the chapter »Proverbs of Hell«, William Blake states that eternity is in love with the production of time.[21] His painting *The Ancient of Day* became a cover illustration for one of Nishiwaki's

20 *Nishiwaki Junzaburō zenshishū,* 698–699.

21 <www.english.uga.edu/nhilton/Blake/blaketxt1/marriage_of_heaven_and_hell.html>.

books[22], and Sawa notes that Nishiwaki was introduced to his poetry during his sojourn in Europe (1922–25).[23] Does this mean that the cricket in which eternity is dwelling represents a potential interference with Blake's »Proverbs of Hell«? Still, this was only speculation, so we focused on another object from the metaphorical passage: Taiga's handwritten sutra *(Taiga no kaita kyōmon)*. Ike Taiga 池大雅, the Japanese painter and calligrapher who lived between 1723 and 1776, is today considered as one of the outstanding calligrapher of the Edo period.[24] He is another painter whose work is along with Modigliani's Woman displayed in Nishiwaki's collection in the role of a candidate for eternity.[25] Based on their mutual similarity, could this be the celebration of human genius as was projected in some of Shakespeare's sonnets?

Martin Hilský (b1943), celebrated Czech translator and a prominent connoisseur of Shakespeare, states in his comments on Sonnet 18 that Shakespeare is concerned with survival after death through the medium of poetry, and for this purpose he used classical patterns borrowed from the Antique period when poets like Ovid regarded poetry as everlasting in contradiction with their own lives.[26] This sonnet reads:

> When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st.
> So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
> So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.[27]

The meaning of this passage is identical with the meaning in the already mentioned Sonnet 55.[28] Nishiwaki was among the sonnets' many readers and from his scholarly position he wrote a short, only three-page, essay on this topic.[29] According to this contribution, he is aware of the intertextuality that dominates the whole body of the sonnets. As Nishiwaki states, recommendations for a wedding, the chief theme of the first seventeen sonnets,

22 See Nishiwaki Junyaburō and Yamamoto Kenkichi, *Shi no kokoro, kokoro no taiwa.*

23 Sawa Masahiro 澤正宏, *Nishiwaki Junzaburō no modanizumu* 西脇順三郎のモダニズム [Nishiwaki Junzaoburō's Modernism] (Tōkyō: Sobunsha Shuppansha, 2002), 54.

24 Penelope Mason, *History of Japanese Art* (New Jersey: Pearson, 2005), 330–332.

25 In the poem Italy, we also find reference to the French painter and sculptor Jean Fautrier (1898–1964).

26 William Shakespeare, *Sonety,* MP3, p**ů**vodní slovo Martin Hilský (Praha: Radioservis, 2011).

27 Shakespeare, *The Complete Sonnets and Poems,* ed. by Colin Burrow (Oxford University Press, 2002), 417.

28 Shakespeare employed this pattern also in Sonnet 19.

29 Nishiwaki Junzaburō, *Bashō, Sheikusupia, Eriotto* 芭蕉・シェイクスピア・エリオット [Bashō, Shakespeare and T. S. Eliot] (Tōkyō: Kobunsha, 1989), 203–205.

can also be seen in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (*ca* 1387)[30], where they had been introduced under the impact of Petrarch's works. Also, the image of the »Dark Lady« had appeared before Shakespeare in the work of Philip Sidney (1554–1586). In short, Nishiwaki does not think that the sonnet should be considered a memorial of affairs which were primarily experienced by Shakespeare. It is more likely to say that the sonnets express the taste of the time when they were created, but nevertheless, common topics such as transience (*mujōron* 無常論), beauty (*bi no mondai* 美の問題), love (*aijōron* 愛情論), grace (*onchō* 恩寵), marriage (*kekkonron* 結婚論), death (*shi no mondai* 死の問題) in Shakespeare's rendering seem to be autobiographical (*jidenteki ni mieru* 自伝的にみえる). Nishiwaki's brief insight into the sonnets testifies that he knew them very well and that he was profoundly aware of their intertextuality.

As a scholar, Nishiwaki once participated in a discussion with Kenkichi Yamamoto 山本健吉 (1907–1988), another authority on Japanese literature. This discussion took place in the Okura Hotel in Tokyo and a transcript of the recordings was published under the title Heart of Poetry. They went through various topics in Japanese, Chinese and European literature. In the section entitled Naming of Things (»Mono no Namae« 物の名前)[31] Yamamoto was talking about the vocabulary used in the *Man'yōshū* 万葉集, the oldest collection of Japanese poetry compiled around 760 CE during the Nara 奈良 period (710–784 CE).[32] In the course of the discussion, he spontaneously switched to the topic of 'crickets' (*kōrogi* コウロギ). The name of this insect held a unique position in that era. In fact, this word occurring in the poetry of the Nara period was the only one used for all species of insects that sting. Lexically, there was no other insect in that time! Although this discussion took place six years after publication of the collection Slumber of the Gem in the year 1969, which means that it can be safely ruled out that it became an inspiration for composing the poem, he first made allusion to the *Man'yōshū* in his collection No Traveller Returns (1947), more precisely in its Poem no 60.[33] Anyhow, in the lines above there is where makes mention of the cricket, we can see another allusion to the Nara period: The poem opens with the collocation of 'women of Asuka' (*Asuka no onna* 明日香の女), and as Niikura in his compilation of allusions used by

30 Nishiwaki translated Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* into Japanese.

31 Nishiwaki Junyaburō and Yamamoto Kenkichi, *Shi no kokoro, kokoro no taiwa,* 100–108.

32 Zdenka Švarcová, *Japonská literatura 712–1868* (Praha: Karolinum, 2005), 210–211.

33 Cf. Niikura Toshikazu 新倉俊一, *Nishiwaki Junzaburō zenshi inyu shusei* 西脇順三郎全詩引喩集成 [An Index of Allusions to Nishiwaki Junyaburō's Complete Poetry] (Tōkyō: Chikuma Shobo, 1982), 176.

Nishiwaki notes, this collocation denotes women serving in Asuka's temples, a place in Nara prefecture.[34] This locality is often mentioned in the *Man'yōshū*. It is also the name of a princess about whom Kakimoto Hitomaro 柿本人麻呂 (*ca* 662–710) wrote a poem when her remains were buried in a funeral hall in Kinoe.[35] For »Asuka«, Nishiwaki chose a transcription consisting of three characters 明日香, preferring it to another, shorter form of writing (飛鳥). In the notes to his Czech translation of the *Man'yōshū,* Líman states that in this collection the transcription with three characters is primarily used.[36] This might suggest that Nishiwaki intentionally used these two allusions to the *Man'yōshū* next to Taiga in order to point out their perennial, i.e. 'eternal', position in Japanese culture.

The third object is a 'bowl' (*chawan* 茶碗), the main component of the tea ceremony. Okakura Kakuzō 岡倉覚三 (1862–1913), the author of a crucial contribution on this topic, entitled The Book on Tea (*Cha no Hon* 茶の本), and an important propagator of cultural ideas of the East during the Meiji 明治 period (1868–1912), believed that preserving the cultural heritage stored in the tea ceremony could protect Japanese culture in its confrontation with the West, especially in view of the harsh Westerniszation experienced by his country.[37] In this sense, the 'bowl' can be considered a symbol of cultural resistance against the phenomena of the time.

If we consider these four allusions to concrete artefacts of a particular period in Japan's cultural history which are still evaluated as 'living' heritage, we cannot deny an aspect of 'immortality' they possess even in the present. What Nishiwaki did in this composition is his own variation on metaphors of eternity, where intellectual allusions, including lexical reference to classical Japanese poetry, make his construction highly intertextual in both directions, toward Japanese and Western literatures. On this occasion, it is convenient to note an observation by Keene:

> In Nishiwaki's poetry the familiar elements of traditional Japanese poetry—not only the sights of nature but the awareness of the transience of the world and similar Buddhist concepts—acquired new meaning because of his fundamentally un-Japanese approach to Japanese language itself.[38]

34 275.

35 *Manjóšú. Deset tisíc list—ze sterého Japonska. Díl první,* tr. by Antonín A. Líman (Praha: Brody, 2001). 104.

36 *Manjóšú. Deset tisíc list,* 106.

37 Dita Nimburská, »Čajové putování Tenšina Okakury« [Kakuzō Okakura's Tea Journeys], in Kakuzó Okakura, *Kniha o čaji* (Praha: Brody, 1999), 84–85.

38 Keene, *Dawn to the West,* 331–332.

4

The poem Afternoon by a Cliff also includes another allusion which should be mentioned here due to its significant appearance. Here are the closing lines:

Onna no kamigami no warai ga kikoeru oyu ni haiteiru otoko no fundoshi wo ubatta
kamigami ga iu / sā dete irasshai yo / kono mama ja ... / Du biu si / iii /
Pan no ashibue no kumori no onna no warai ga
女の神々の笑いがきこえるお湯にはいっている男のふんどしをうばった女神がいう
「さあ出ていらっしゃいよ」
「このままじゃ。。。。」
ドゥ　ビュ　スィ
イイイ
パンのあし笛のくもりの女の笑いが
I hear / female gods laugh / a goddess steals the loincloth
of a man in a hot bath and says / »Now I dare you to come out.«
»Can't like this...«
DE BUS SY YEE
Pan's reed pipe clouded / woman's / laugh

Nishiwaki's language is translatory and as he once said, the poems he writes are intended for some imagined 'European readers'.[39] Many borrowings and allusions he used are clearly transferred from the European traditions and this method became a standard way of how Nishiwaki expressed himself. It is evident that an allusion also appears in the title of the poem. The title Afternoon by a Cliff is of course a variation on Mallarmé's famous poem »L'après-midi d'un faune« (1865–67). On this occasion, we should add that Nishiwaki once wrote to Sato that he is aware of his intentional opaqueness in the manner of Mallarmé.[40] The most convincing evidence that Nishiwaki adopted Mallarmé's influence is Debussy's name divided into syllables *DE BUS SY* (ドゥ　ビュ　スィ) in the ending.[41] His most famous symphonic poem for orchestra *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (1894) can be considered a Siamese twin to Mallarmé's poem, and even Nishiwaki did not disconnect this relationship. In his poem there is also a Mediterranean mythological creature, a faun playing on his pipe between laughing women–goddesses (»Pan's reed pipe clouded / woman's / laugh«). However, the place

39 Sato Hiroaki, *The Modern Fable,* 12.

40 *Ibid.,* 19.

41 Niikura Toshikazu, *Nishiwaki Junzaburō zenshi inyu shusei,* 276.

where Pan makes his appearance is absolutely unexpected: in a traditional Japanese spa. One may find this combination remarkable, and it is undoubtedly attrractive. Winkelhöferová describes Nishiwaki's poetical world as unique, peculiar and almost grotesque,[42] which is clearly a matter of fact in this poem. In Ppan's appearance we may also can identify an theoretical background transferred from Pierre Reverdy's (1889–1960) essay entitled »L'image« (1918), where the strength of an image is defined by its emotional power and poetic reality can be substantiated by bringing together two distant realities. This view ofn the image was cited by André Breton in his first surrealist manifesto, as well as in Nishiwaki's work Surrealist Poetics (*Chōgenjitsushiron* 超現実詩論).[43] It seems that this principle of composition remained with Nishiwaki even long after he had dissociated from surrealistic movement, but evidently this kind of technique does not belong exclusively to Surrealist writers. It only shows how deeply he was engaged in evaluating and citing French poets and alluding to to their techniques. However, this innovative approach became somehow 'traditional' in the European scene after a few decades, and therefore—considering these historical circumstances—it would become possible to transfer the scene with the faun to a Japanese spa in 1963, the year when the poem was published. It is after all slightly traditional after all, if we consider the image as surrealistic and abide by a European perspective on this matter.

The second 'traditional' aspect could be seen from a psychological perspective, and our intention is to stress that the way how Nishiwaki composed his verses toward eEternity in this poem was not conceptually innovative. On the other hand, this does not mean it should be, even if a formal rendering consists of uncommon intertextuality. In the verse where young laughing goddesses emerge along with a faun, we are confronted with the overwhelming vitality of their »immortal youth in an immortal age«. Their vitality feeding their master's laughter is slightly provocative and fascinating at the same time. The erotic moment (»loincloth«) is accentuated by their inaccessibility. Mortals in pre-Christian eras were always fascinated and excited about the eternal beings of forever-young gods.[44] So, in these lines Nishiwaki follows another cultural stereotype presented by a youthful vigorous age of immortal creatures.

42 Vlasta Winkelhöferová, *Slovník japonské literatury* [Dictionary of Japanese Literature] (Praha: Libri, 2008), 222.

43 Sas, *Fault Lines,* 14–15.

44 Vladimír Ondráček and František Holub, *Fantastické a magické zhlediska psychiatrie* (Bratislava: Columbus, 1993), 118.

Contrary to these views given by an 'imaginative European reader', all poetical constructs mentioned before have a certain degree of undeniable uniqueness for the Japanese. The way Nishiwaki absorbed and implemented foreign patterns in Japan are truly exclusive. But unlike in the West, Japanese thinking in various domains such as philosophy, architecture or literature constantly exercises destructive forces—being 'architectonic' in Japan is actually radical and political.[45] Based on this definition, maybe Nishiwaki's deliberate implementation of foreign patterns could be seen as radical. Or should we give another definition, according to which there is no peculiar and homogeneous Japanese culture because each of its trends was prefigured outside Japan and in foreign cultures?[46] If so, Nishiwaki's faun along with the conceptual metaphor hidden in the cricket may be considered 'traditional'. All these questions only confirm how unique his poetical work is in the context of modern Japanese poetry, where he occupies an inalterable place.

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45 Karatani Koji, *Architecture as Metaphor* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1997), 45.

46 Harry Byron Earhard, *Náboženství Japonska* [*Religions of Japan: Many Traditions within One Sacred Way,* 1984], tr. by Robin Heřman (Praha: Prostor, 1999), 9.