

Research Report : ID BR230203

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Host Researcher: Prof. Gaku Iwai, Host institution: Konan University, Kobe

Bridge Fellowship JSPS -23rd March – 14th April 2024

Research Topic: **The Influence of Traditional Japanese Theatre on European Modernism**

My experience in Japan as a Visiting Scholar at Konan University, was fruitful, memorable, and inspiring for future projects. I am very grateful to my host, Prof. Gaku Iwai and to Konan University for their invaluable help and assistance in taking the utmost care of every detail of my stay.

1) **Research:**

Konan University in Kobe has been an ideal location for my research, as it is part of the Kansai region (including Kobe, Osaka and Kyoto), which, since the Middle Ages, has been at the heart of traditional Japanese culture and its artistic expression.

On Monday, March 25 I visited the campus of Konan University and became familiar with the University. It was Graduation Ceremony Day, and the campus was extremely lively. I met Prof. Iwai's students after their graduation.

On March 27th, Prof. Gaku Iwai accompanied me to the Osaka School of Economics where I delivered a lecture for the D.H. Lawrence Society of Japan on Lawrence, Joyce, Modernism and exact sciences. Besides members of the *D.H. Lawrence Society of Japan*, the lecture was attended by members of the *James Joyce Society of Japan*. There was a lively discussion at the end. After the conference, Prof. Iwai and his colleagues, including Prof. Masashi Asai (he had been my host researcher during my JSPS short-term fellowship in 2014) and Prof. Hirozumi Ishihara, the President of the *D.H. Lawrence Society of Japan*, organized a dinner where we discussed further our research experiences and future projects. Some of us will meet again in Mexico City at the next International D.H. Lawrence Conference in August 2025.

On March 31st I left for Nagoya where I spent the day with Prof. Kumiko Hoshi of Aichi Gakuin University, whom I have known for many years from D.H. Lawrence conferences worldwide. She was an excellent guide and organized a visit to the Nogakudo (Noh Theatre) where it was possible to attend a variety of Noh performances with their different styles and narratives. It was an inspiring experience and full immersion in traditional Japanese Theatre.

From Nagoya I travelled to Tokyo where I stayed from the evening of March 31st to April 4th. I visited and did research at the Nogami Memorial Noh Theatre Research Institute of Hosei University and at The Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum at Waseda University. They were both very rewarding experiences which increased my knowledge of traditional Japanese theatre, with particular attention not only to the performances but also to the ancient texts, the main repertoire of Noh Theatre

and the way this ancient Japanese language is used in modern and contemporary performances.

At Hosei University I had a meeting with the President of the Study Center, Prof. Keizo Miyamoto and his collaborators. They answered all my questions about traditional Japanese theatre and put me in contact with Prof. Diego Pellecchia of Kyoto Sangyo University to explore the topic further.

At Hosei University I also had a meeting in the Global Education Center to discuss possibilities of a future cooperation agreement between Hosei University and the University of Genoa.

On April 3rd I visited Waseda University, where I had a meeting with Prof. Ryuichi Kodama and his assistant Ms Tsugumi Kondo. They guided me through the precious collection of the Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, introducing me to the different varieties (from the Middle Ages to the present time) of traditional as well as modern and contemporary experimental Japanese Theatre.

In the afternoon they had organized a meeting with Prof. Koshi Odashima, a Japanese D.H. Lawrence Scholar, who is an expert in performing studies and has translated many Western theatrical works into Japanese.

In the evening, I had the chance to meet Prof. Hiroshi Muto (former Professor of English Studies at Keio University, which had hosted me for a lecture on D.H. Lawrence, the arts and ancient cultures in 2014). We share a common interest in an interdisciplinary approach to literature with particular attention to music.

On April 4th, Prof. Nozomu Iwasaki of Rissho University, who has had a long-lasting and fruitful collaboration with Prof. Giorgio Bavestrello at the University of Genoa in the field of natural sciences (zoology, studies of corals), had organized my visit to discuss further international collaboration (to be extended to other fields) with the President Terao, the Vice President Hamahata and Director Dendo of the Center for International Exchange. Here is a link to the article they published on their website. [ジェノバ大学からStefania Michelucci教授が来校され、国際交流について会合がもたれました | 立正大学地球環境科学部 \(ris-geo.jp\)](#)

On April 5th, I visited my former host, Professor Emeritus Masashi Asai at home and we discussed further research projects on Lawrence and Anglo-American Modernism.

On April 7th I was invited by Prof. Diego Pellecchia to a Noh performance at the Yasaka Shrine in Kyoto, where I met some of his collaborators and students. In the environment of the extraordinary Shrine, the performance was very inspiring. We then spent the rest of the day planning a possible introduction of Noh Theatre in Genoa through the Museum Chiossone (Museum of Far Eastern Art). He also told me about the Torchlight Noh at the Atomic Bomb Dome, which was headed by the

volunteer-run Torchlight Noh Planning Committee with co-hosting from the Hiroshima Municipal Government.

On April 8th and 9th, I travelled to Hiroshima where I visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, the Atomic Bomb Dome and Hiroshima Castle and the extraordinary temples and shrines on Miyajima Island.

On April 10th I took part in an online meeting with Associate Prof. Tastero Ide, Prof. Kurata, Prof. Wu and Ms. Inomata and Ms. Kanno from the International Affairs Office to discuss the possibility of a cooperation agreement between Tohoku Gakuin University and the University of Genoa. They look forward to our future cooperation and have invited me to visit their university and give some lectures in the near future.

On April 11th, I had planned a visit to Kyoto Tachibana University, my former host university, where I delivered a lecture on European Modernism and the influence of traditional Japanese Poetry for two classes of students of Prof. Toshiharu Kitabayashi and Prof. Norman Angus. Part of the lecture was structured as a seminar where different modern and contemporary translations of a famous Haiku by Matsuo Basho were analyzed. After the lecture I had a meeting with the Dean, Prof. Koji Sakuma, and the board of international relationships where a cooperation agreement and a program of students and faculty mobility was discussed.

On April 12th, after meeting Prof. Kyoko Matsukawa, the director of the international Exchange Center at Konan University to plan future collaboration with the University of Genoa, I visited the small Noh Theater near Konan University called Gashouen, which organized a “one-day experience of Noh” and interviewed the teacher Kakuji Ueda. He guided me through the extraordinary family collection of fans, costumes, and masks.

I am very grateful to all the scholars in the universities I visited for their excellent hospitality.

During my stay I also experienced Sakura, the magic of the cherry blossom which makes Japan and its symbiosis between culture and nature so unique.

Future development and results:

1. I was invited to be part of a team for a project related to the participation of the University of Genoa at the Osaka Expo 2025.
2. I am working on a project with Japanese scholars to introduce Noh Theatre to Italy, with particular attention to the area of the Ligurian coast and the University of Genoa. The project will involve faculty, students, actors and musicians for a three-day event in Genoa including an introductory university lecture, a workshop with actors and musicians, an event at the Genoa Museum Chiossone (Museum of Far Eastern Art and Cultures) and a full performance in the evening open to the city.

3. A joint paper on European Modernism, Lawrence and Japan with Prof. Gaku Iwai, to be published in the international literary journal, *The D.H. Lawrence Review*, which will include a history of the D.H. Lawrence Society of Japan.
4. An essay on the influence of Japanese traditional poetry and art on European Modernism.
5. Further research on the way Japanese poetry and literature at the beginning of the 20th century was influenced by European Modernism.
6. Contribution to JSPS information sessions around the world, with particular attention to Italy.

Attached: 6 Pictures (Please feel free to use the one/s you like most).

- 1) Konan University, Prof. Gaku Iwai's and his students, Graduation Day.
- 2) Lecture for the D.H. Lawrence Society of Japan.
- 3) Research at The Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum with Prof. Ryuichi Kodama and Ms Tsugumi Kondo.
- 4) Lecture at Kyoto Tachibana University.
- 5) Meeting with the Dean and the board of international relationships at Kyoto Tachibana University.
- 6) Gashouen Noh Theater, "one-day experience of Noh" with the Noh teacher Kakuji Ueda.

Signature: Stefania Michelucci