

Between Self-Appropriation and Self-Discovery: Park Yeong-in in German Dance Modernity

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1. Introduction

In this paper I analyze the aspect of self-discovery as well as self-representation of the Korean-Japanese dancer and dance scholar Park Yeong-in (1908-2007), who is better known internationally by his Japanese name Kuni Masami. By concentrating on his Berlin-era between 1937 and 1945 I especially want to pursue the mechanism of his self-discovery as a Japanese dancer in Europe: Under which cultural political circumstance was Park's identification with the Japanese enabled? Could his self-discovery be understood as an effect of an internalization of the Orientalism widely spread in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century? How did he perceive the reaction of the strange European audience and how did he appropriate it?

To find some possible answers to these questions, I attempt not only to illustrate Park's life, but especially to deal with a significant influence of the modern *Zeitgeist* initiated by Park's dance teachers such as Rudolf von Laban and Mary Wigman on his dance philosophy. Regarding Park Yeong-in's life and dance, it is, moreover, relevant to consider his immediate experience of the contemporary dance scene in Germany in the 1930s and 1940s which enabled him to recognize his sense of 'in-betweenness' more intensely: between Asia and Europe, between dance tradition and dance modernity and between dance theory and dance practice.

To examine such interweaving characteristics of Park's life and dance, I will first combine two theoretical terms each employed by Karatani Kôjin and Edward W. Said, namely 'discovery' and 'representation', with the Park's case. Secondly, by quoting Park's articles published during his residence in Germany I will show how strategically this intellectual originally from colonized Korea constructed his cultural identity in opposition to the European culture. This power of construction is the decisive cause of Park's self-representation as well as self-appropriation as the 'authentic' Japanese dancer in Europe.

2. Mechanism of Self-Discovery and Self-Appropriation

In this book I used the term "discovery of landscape" to connote the inversion whereby something which had never existed before came to be seen as self-evident, as an existence which in fact preceded the inversion. It is allegorical representation of the material apparatuses of modernity.¹

In an afterword to the English edition of his book *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, the Japanese Anglicist Karatani Kôjin underlines the mediating function of his term 'discovery' which enables the inversion of an accustomed perspective. According to him, even if an object could have existed previously, it requires "not a perceptual transformation, but an inversion of that topos which

¹ Karatani Kôjin (translated by Brett de Bary), *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, Durham; London: Duke University Press, 1993, P.193.

had privileged the *conception* [...]” to be seen as this ‘object’.² To demonstrate the meaning of this discovery, Karatani takes the historical reform movement in Japanese drama during the second decade of the Meiji era led by the kabuki master Ichikawa Danjūrō as an example. Karatani emphasizes that Ichikawa as a kabuki actor replaced the roll of traditional make-up as “mask” with his “naked face” during the theatre reformation.³ It means that the modern kabuki actor experienced an inevitable inversion of his perception or perspective on something indifferent or usual, so that “the naked face [...] took on meaning in and of itself and what had been insignificant became profoundly significant.”⁴ In this case of Ichikawa who tried to act his role with his unpainted bare face for the first time in modern kabuki, it is also indicated that an enormous influence of the modern naturalism from Europe on the reform movement of performing arts during the omnidirectional modernization in Japan. And for the kabuki reformers such as Ichikawa, the influence was to be regarded as an important motivation to discover their naked face itself as the ‘medium’ for their self-expression. They began to perceive unfamiliar elements of European theatre as ‘the New’ and to adapt themselves to it spontaneously.

Such historical example reflects the age of globalization in the modern performing arts which implicated a symptomatic homogenization of diverse movement languages and led therefore to a convergence of these languages in modern European conceptions. This kind of self-assimilation of the Japanese theatre reformers to the modern European discourse, which is considered as the most developed, the most enlightened as well as the most hegemonic and powerful one in Japan, caused their embodiment of ideas about modern European performing arts. With this, they exerted themselves to make their piece ‘understandable’ on the global stage. What they wanted to describe or represent with the new theatre elements on the global stage was, however, ironically not their portrait as modern Japanese, but rather as authentic indigenous Japanese that caters to the fictional Orientalist clichés of European audience.⁵ In this sense it is to say that ‘to be understandable’ is nothing else than ‘to be discoverable as such’ in terms of modernization in performing arts.

Karatani’s term ‘discovery’ is highly relevant to the theme of dance modernity, since the term points out a very complicated mechanism of modernization of Asian artists especially those of who are influenced directly or indirectly by the contemporary modern European cultural discourse around 1900. Their experiences which reflect the spatiotemporal intermediate phase from pre-modern to modern anticipated how the next generation of artists such as Park Yeong-in discovered and furthermore constructed his cultural identity in the 1930s and 1940s. Both the forementioned first generation of Asian performing artists and their offspring mostly experienced cultural modernization not as their autonomic process, but rather as a kind of ‘epidemic’ which was broken out and then rapidly spread throughout the country under the imperial and colonial sociopolitical circumstances. In this sense modernization was perceived on one hand as a threatening implantation of Orientalist ideas about Asian culture as well as the Asian body, but on the other as a way for a development of culture by the modern Asian performing artists.⁶ Such contradictory perceptions of modernization are shown

² Ibid, P.56.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Another example which shows an influence of the modern European naturalism on Japanese performing arts is Kawakami Sadayakko well-known as a representative kabuki dancer from Japan in Europe around 1900. She is nowadays considered as the first Japanese female dancer who on the Western tour played women’s role impersonated by the male kabuki artist Onnagata. According to the Japanese cultural scientist Kano Ayako, Kawakami troupe took aim at making their theatre more realistic, so that they set a corresponding motto: “women should act like women and men should act like men.”

See, Kano Ayako, *Acting Like a Woman in Modern Japan: theater, gender and nationalism*, New York: Palgrave, 2001, P.57.

⁶ The Japanese literature scholar Komori Yoichi, for example, used the term ‘self-colonization’ to characterize the Japanese modernization. According to Komori, Japanese modernization was initiated spontaneously to avoid being colonized by Western imperial states.

much clearer, for example, in cases of Korean-Japanese performing artists who were in a position to present their pieces in Europe and experienced a very different reception of local audiences compared to those of Korean or Japanese audiences.⁷ In regard to the relationship between self-discovery and self-appropriation in terms of Asian dance modernity, it is important to analyze how the Asian modern dancers in Europe perceived the reception of the foreign audience and how they internalized the reception as well as understood their indigenous culture ‘conceptually’ with their inverted or rather modernized perspective.

3. Self-Representation as an Experience of Self-Alienation

Another important theoretical term related to the formation of Park Yeong-in’s cultural identity is ‘representation’ adopted by the Palestinian-American literary theorist Edward Said. In his book *Orientalism* he states this term as follows:

*The exteriority of the representation is always governed by some version of the truism that if the Orient could represent itself, it would; since it cannot, the representation does the job, for the West, and faute de mieux, for the poor Orient. “Sie können sich nicht vertreten, sie müssen vertreten werden,” as Marx wrote in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte.*⁸

His quotation of Karl Marx – “They cannot represent themselves. They must be represented.” – calls our attention to an interactivity between two senses of representation in German, namely between ‘Vertreten’ (“as ‘speaking for’, as in politics”) and ‘Darstellen’ (“as re-presentation, as in art or philosophy”).⁹ In other words, these connotations imply that one replaces or acts for (‘Vertreten’) the Other by describing (‘Darstellen’) it. At this point, we could ask following questions: ‘Who can describe whom?’ ‘Who is actually able to describe the Other?’ These make us consider the relationship between ‘ability for representation’ and ‘modality of representation’. Hence, what matters is in fact the knowledge which means “*being able to do that*”, in other words, “rising above immediacy, beyond self, into the foreign and distant.”¹⁰

The representation of the Other is especially well exemplified by modern Western performing artists. For instance, they rendered the figure of Asia as a signifier of a cultural alienness mostly with the accent on its exotic visual elements which they mainly cultivated by reading Western travelogues of Asia or seeing performances by Asian artists on the Western stage.¹¹ In this sense, what matters is not

See, Komori Yoichi (translated by Song Tae-uk), *Postcolonial*, Seoul: Samin, 2002.

⁷ The Orientalist reception of the European as well as American audiences caused the modern Korean-Japanese dancers to choreograph not pieces based upon the theme of Modern Western dance, but pseudo-Korean dances. To reveal this phenomenon, the American dance scholar Judy Van Zile refers to Choi Seung-hee, the representative dancer of the Korean Sinmuyong.

“The constructed view of Korean dance that evolved during Sai’s [= Choi Seung-hee’s Japanese name] 1938-1940 U.S. performances, which was the result of Sai’s own training, her views about modernizing dance while rooting it in past tradition (a common view about culture in general in Korea at the time), and her choices based on U.S. responses, may have contributed to a lasting set of Korean dance icons.”

Judy Van Zile, *Perspectives on Korean dance*, Middletown CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, P.214.

⁸ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, London: Penguin Books, 2003 (1978), P.21.

⁹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, ‘*Can the Subaltern Speak?*’, in: Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (ed.) *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993, P.70.

¹⁰ Edward W. Said, *ibid*, P.32.

¹¹ For example, there is a famous comic opera by Arthur Sullivan and W. S. Gilbert *The Mikado* also staged by Max Reinhardt, and a representative oriental dance piece *Radha* choreographed by Ruth St. Denis.

See, Lee Sang-kyong, *West-östliche Begegnungen*, Darmstadt: Wiss. Buchges., 1993; Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Die unvergleichliche Tänzerin* (1906), in: ders., *Gesammelte Werke in zehn Einzelbänden*, Frankfurt am Main:

their epistemological knowledge, but their particular ‘linguistic’ perception concerned with hegemonic modern conceptions for the Asian body and culture. Hence, this kind of perception implicates the reification of them. It reflects at the same time that modern Western performing artists’ encounter with the Aliens enabled them to experience the Other, but without losing their sense of self. This mechanism made these artists possible to represent as well as appropriate them.

By contrast, in the context of the history of dance, we can also ask how modern Asian dancers appeared on the European stage when they represented themselves. Such question is based on a consideration of how or whether their self-representation is different from modern Western dancers’ representation of the Other. And it can also refer to globalization as a modern cultural phenomenon in terms of dance modernity. As more geographical mobility and cultural exchanges were activated by aid of development of international traffic network in the early 20th century, more Asian dancers were able to gain opportunities to tour around European metropolis or to study modern dance there. Some worth-mentionable figures amongst other dancers are Itô Michio, Ishii Baku and Eguchi Takaya who either presented their dance pieces or visited modern dance workshops in Germany between the 1920s and 1930s, and nowadays are admired as pioneers of modern dance in Japan.¹² However, the modality of their self-staging seems very ambivalent: most themes as well as requisites which they selected for their dance pieces were Japanese, but mostly in accordance with expectation of the German audience. In addition, their choreography in fact consisted of modern Western movement languages pressed by longtime trainings of their body. This phenomenon indicates that these Japanese were “*contained and represented by dominating frameworks*” constituted by modern Western knowledge about dance movement.¹³ Therefore, the ‘hybridized’ self-representation of these modern Japanese dancers in Germany can be understood as an experience of “self-alienation” rather than of “self-reference”.¹⁴

In case of Park Yeong-in, which I examine in this paper, this problem of self-representation appears more complicated, because he was capable not only of bodily expression of his emotion as a modern dancer, but also of its conceptualization as an acknowledged dance scholar. He wrote many academic articles about Japanese and Asian dance in general in German and then published them in Germany between the end of the 1930s and the end of World War II, so that he made an enormous contribution to scientification of these dances as well as their aestheticization in Europe. But at this point it is necessary to consider the ‘origin’ of such scientification and aestheticization, as Edward Said asks: “Where do these come from?”¹⁵

4. The Problem of Hybridized Identity: Life and Dance of Park Yeong-in

Although Park Yeong-in was recognized as an influential dancer as well as a dance scholar from Japan during his residence in Germany and worked as a professor as well as a pedagogist of dance after his immigration to the USA in the 1950s, he is almost buried in oblivion today not only in Germany and the USA, but also in Korea and Japan where he was born and raised.¹⁶ There might be some reasons

Fischer, 1979; Jane Desmond, *Dancing Out the Difference: Cultural Imperialism and Ruth St. Denis’s Radha of 1906*, in: Ann Dils & Ann Cooper Albright, *moving history/dancing cultures – A Dance History Reader*, Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001.

¹² See, Son Okju, *Zwischen Vertrautheit und Fremdheit: Modernismus im Tanz und die Entwicklung des koreanischen Sinmuyong*, Doctoral thesis, Freie Universität Berlin, 2014, P.76-86.

¹³ Edward W. Said, *ibid*, P.40.

¹⁴ Son Okju, *ibid*, P.81-82.

¹⁵ Edward W. Said, *ibid*, P.40.

¹⁶ For example, a famous German dance critic in modern times Fritz Böhme acknowledged „Dr. Masami Kuni“ (= Park Yeong-in) as a representative dancer and dance scholar. In addition, he admired Park’s

for this oblivion: first, Park spent his time in Germany during the Third Reich and as a representative dance scholar from a major political ally of Germany he actively cooperated with his German colleagues of Nazi. Like other pro-Nazi German artists who were forced to be excluded from discussion in Germany after they lost the WWII, it seems that many foreign pro-Nazi dancers such as Park were not eagerly mentioned any more after 1945. Academic researches about them are therefore hard to find in Germany until now. Secondly, after the independence of Korea from the Japanese occupation in 1945 Park decided not to come back to Korea, and to stay in Japan as a Japanese and afterwards to immigrate to the USA. In this new home, where he stayed until his death in 2007, he did not define himself as Japanese any more, but declared himself as a 'cosmopolitan'. Park Yeong-in's such path of life was extremely different from many other modern Korean dancers like Choi Seung-hee or Cho Taek-won who settled in North- or South Korea after the war. Therefore Park's long lasting absence from his de facto homeland could cause an accelerated obliteration in Korea. Lastly, Park founded his own school with his Japanese name in Tokyo and this school named 'Kuni Masami Ryu (邦正美流)' is carried on by his Japanese disciples until now. However, this school has denied any access to an outsider to come close to the school and share information about the master. This exclusiveness of the school, which keeps information about Park's life from the public, might be a reason why he has been neither well-known nor discussed actively even in Japan.

Despite such difficulties in conducting a research on Park Yeong-in, I would like to sketch briefly his life and dance particularly with the aid of a special series report of *Kyeongsang Ilbo* from May 15th to 21st 2006 featuring Park's life as an international modern dancer. By retracing his steps, we can approach the special mechanism of his hybridized cultural identity which oscillated between different conditions of dance modernity in Asia and Europe.

5. Brief Biography of Park Yeong-in¹⁷

Park Yeong-in was born into a wealthy family in 1908 in Ulsan, Korea, two years before Japanese annexation of Korea. His father was at that time an ardent member of a group which pursued national civilization in Korea, so that he motivated his son to go to Japan to study there and become acquainted with the new culture. Therefore, after spending his childhood in Korea, Park went to Japan. There he entered a prestigious high school and then attended Tokyo Imperial University to major in esthetics. His interest in dance was already awakened in his teenage years and this interest led him to take dancing classes for 6 months while he was in the university. The class was taught by Ishii Baku, who is well-known in Korea as a dance teacher of some prominent Korean *Sinmuyong* dancers such as Choi Seung-hee and Cho Taek-won. In 1933, Park even presented his own dance pieces at Japan Youth Hall in Tokyo. During this period, he lived a double life: as a student at the best Japanese university in the daytime and as a professional dancer on the stage in the evening.

After graduating from university in Japan, Park Yeong-in moved to Berlin on a Japanese government scholarship to pursue a doctorate at Friedrich-Willhelms-Universität (today Humboldt Universität zu Berlin) as well as to learn the German *Ausdruckstanz* from its initiators such as Rudolf von Laban and Mary Wigman. Furthermore, he showed his dance performances as a choreographer as well as a dancer about 24 times not only in Germany, but also in other European countries like Italy and Hungary and was very active as a dance scholar specializing in Japanese dance.

However, it seems that his name disappeared from the Korean media after the emancipation of Korea from Japanese colonial power in 1945. This can be related to the fact that Park was naturalized as a

contribution to the introduction of Japanese dance to German audience.

See, Fritz Böhme, *Der japanische Tanz*, in: *Der Tanz* – 15. Jahr; Heft 1, Berlin, Januar 1942.

¹⁷ Refer to *Kyeongsang Ilbo*, May 15th, 16th, 18th and 21st 2006.

Japanese citizen after the war and opened his own dance school in Japan. Since then, he concentrated only on his dance research and training his disciples with very few contact with his family in Ulsan as well as the Korean dance scene. Although Park choreographed dance movements for a Korean-Japanese opera work *Chunhyang* performed in Tokyo in 1948, it seems that he stopped choreographing dance pieces with such an Asiatic theme after that time and positioned himself as a scholar and particularly as a pedagogue for modern dance after he settled in the USA in the 1960s.

How Park Yeong-in continued his activity as a choreographer, a scholar and a pedagogue after his immigration to the USA is unfortunately unknown in Korea today. Therefore it is necessary to activate research on his life and dance which are veiled in Korean dance history until now, although they symptomatically reflect the geographical, political and cultural ‘in-betweenness’ of modern Asian dancers.

6. “*Tanz ist bei uns [...] metaphysisches Training.*” (“Dance is metaphysical training for us.”)¹⁸

Now I would like to mention two German articles of Park Yeong-in titled, *Odori. Japanische Empfindungen – deutsche Eindrücke* (Odori. Japanese Perceptions – German Impressions) and *Tanz in Japan* (Dance in Japan). Each of them was published in 1937 in Germany and in 1942 in Austria. With the help of these articles, we could pursue how Park represented his so-called ‘indigenous’ culture in Europe, under which mechanism he found similarity as well as difference between Japanese and European culture and how he articulated his cultural identity in terms of modern knowledge.

• *Odori. Japanische Empfindungen – deutsche Eindrücke* (Odori. Japanese Perceptions – German Impressions)¹⁹

The first article *Odori* begins with Park’s journey from Tokyo to Berlin which took about 35 days at that time. Park emphasized here that the East and the West are united by a common language of emotion in dance in spite of their differentness. After that, however, the author tried to reveal the obvious difference concerning the ‘understanding’ of dance in the East and West. To describe this difference based on his own experience, he mentioned an anecdote about his first visit to a German private dance studio in Berlin. After Park saw a signboard on the door of this studio, he realized that one can learn artistic dance and gymnastics there at the same time and he felt dejected and disappointed by the discovery because Park Yeong-in believed that dance should be differentiated from gymnastics which mainly concentrates on strengthening of physical technique without any necessity of spiritual ripening considered as the core of dance, although he also recognized the value of bodily education through modern gymnastics.

In reference to Park’s disappointment as a result of his encounter with the strange modern dance culture in Germany, however, we should give attention to his relationship to the synthetic discourse between ‘Geist (Spirit)’ and ‘Körper (Body)’ in German Ausdruckstanz. The representatives of German Ausdruckstanz such as Rudolf von Laban and Mary Wigman, by whom Park Yeong-in learned theories as well as techniques of contemporary German modern dance, discovered spirit and

¹⁸ Masami Kuni, *Tanz in Japan*, in: Richard Foerster (Hrsg.), *Kulturmacht Japan*, Wien: Die Pause, 1942, P.77.

¹⁹ Refer to Masami Kuni, *Odori. Japanische Empfindungen – deutsche Eindrücke*, in: *Der Tanz*, Internationale Fachschrift für Tanzkultur, Heft 7., Juli 1937.

body as important basic elements for an ideal dancer.²⁰ The ideal dancer in terms of German Ausdruckstanz means a synthetic human being who is able to harmonize his body with his spirit or idea, and hence is definitely different from classic ballet dancer who just performs a manual of fixed movements without any his/her own choreographic contribution to the piece. Therefore, it was crucial for the ideal dancer to recognize his own spirit and body as newly discovered modern conceptions and at the same time to realize such an idealized new type of human being not only on stage, but in ordinary life.²¹

This statement of German Ausdruckstanz had a definite influence on dance of Park Yeong-in, whose dance career began with the Western modern dance and who in addition theorized Asian dances with conceptions which were comprehensible to European audience. It is to accentuate, however, that Park perceived this synthetic discourse interestingly culturally, geographically as well as temporally dichotomized, so that he confronted spirituality of traditional Asian dance with materiality and physicality of modern European dance discipline such as gymnastics. In contrast to such a critical view of modern discipline for dance, Park appreciated the merit of a new kind of dance represented by German rebels such as Mary Wigman, Harald Kreutzberg or Max Terpis, from whose dance he deduced commonalities with Japanese dance especially characterized by a universally understandable and perceivable movement language. He moreover pointed out that the Japanese dance called Odori in general bears a semantic analogy to the Western Terpsichore and on the basis of this point he indicated that Western dance and Japanese dance are to be perceived as equal children of Terpsichore on the modern global stage. And at the end of the article, Park Yeong-in confessed that he has learned many new things since his residence in Europe not about dance techniques, but about humans through dance.

This brief two-page article is published in a famous German dance magazine *Der Tanz* in the year of Park's arrival in Germany and therefore it is not enough to revive the Berliner era of Park Yeong-in only with the aid of this article. Nevertheless, it allows us to comprehend how he classified as well as categorized components of dance in terms of modernized conceptions and how he applied modern dance discourse to his own nation-state imagination referring to diverse dance culture.

• *Tanz in Japan (Dance in Japan)*²²

The second article of Park Yeong-in is *Tanz in Japan* published in 1942 in Vienna as a contribution to a book titled *Kulturmacht Japan* (Culturepower Japan). Although this one-page article is also too brief to thoroughly analyze Park's inner mechanism related to his self-appropriation as well as self-discovery, it refers to his dichotomized perspective on the Japanese and European dance much more explicitly than the first article. As the title indicates, the article provides German audience with an overview of Japanese dance history especially with focus on traditional Japanese dance such as Bugaku, Dengaku as well as Nô and Kabuki.

Broadly speaking, this article consists of three parts. The first part is an introduction of the Japanese mythology of Amaterasu-Omikami who is considered and admired as the goddess of the sun in Japan. Park Yeong-in portrayed a scene from this mythology, in which the goddess of dance performed in front of a cave of Amaterasu to appease her anger, as the origin of Japanese dance. In the second part that followed, Park summarized the history of traditional Japanese dance from the 6th century to the

²⁰ See, Son Okju, *ibid*, P.11-20.

²¹ For example, Rudolf von Laban found a true ethical value in that the "character building (Charakterbildung)" and "body building/body work (Körperbildung)" are integrated.

Rudolf von Laban, *Die Welt des Tänzers*, Stuttgart: Seifert, 1920, P.140.

²² Refer to Masami Kuni, *Tanz in Japan*, in: Richard Foerster (Hrsg.), *Kulturmacht Japan*, Wien: Die Pause, 1942.

Middle Ages. And at the end of this article, he compared Japanese girls with European girls with regard to the purpose of learning dance and described clear cultural difference between Asia and Europe with this comparison.

In relation to the theme of this paper, it is worth mentioning that Park's perspective on difference between European and Asian dance in this second article of the 1940s seems more radically dichotomized especially in terms of spatiality and temporality in comparison to the first one published at the end of the 1930s. It means that in the second article Japanese dance was strongly associated with a certain imagination of cultural authenticity represented in the form of traditional performing arts such as Bugaku and at the same time was generalized as a counterpart of European dance culture, but without any attention to the influence of Western dance on Japanese dance or the interrelationship between them which was intensely active between 1920s and 1940s, as reflected in activities of Park Yeong-in in Germany. Japanese dance was interpreted and redefined as a conception in which a specific temporality, namely 'past', must be immanent.

In this sense, confrontation between the different aims of dancing of Japanese and European girls observed by Park seems self-evident. In his opinion, Japanese young women learned dance neither to be a professional dancer nor for any social purpose or their own amusement, or not even for gymnastic training. Instead, they learned dancing for charm and grace of their movements in their daily lives. Park Yeong-in called such characteristic of dance in Japan as the 'metaphysical training' which is featured as a cultural antipode of European physical training. What Park Yeong-in considered as the representation of Japanese dance in this second article is insofar no more than a kind of ethnographical object interpreted or rather consisted in accordance with a geopolitical distinction based on the European orientalism. Edward Said says:

[Orientalism] is rather a distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical and philological texts; [...] it is, rather than expresses, a certain will or intention to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world; [...] Indeed, my real argument is that Orientalism is – and does not simply represent – a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with “our” world.²³

However, one should not overlook that Park Yeong-in not only embodied the modern European understanding about the Orient or Asia, but also tried to locate Japan or rather Asia in general beyond Asia as a 'European-conceived' notion. It means that Park strove for an equalization of Asia represented by Japan with the developed Europe, so that he emphasized that even traditional performing arts in Japan have never stopped developing throughout their history. Therefore, what matters is, a tradition as a moving, or rather, 'developing' one. Such a phenomenon of understanding one's own tradition not merely in the context of transforming (spatial), but especially as a developing object (spatiotemporal) refers to a special historical experience of Park Yeong-in who ironically as a foreign modern dancer was represented and at the same time represented himself as a symbol of Asian tradition in German dance modernity.

7. Conclusion

Not long ago, I saw Mary Wigman dancing. This evening was actually a pleasure for me. What I perceived in this dance was: Beauty itself always remains as beauty.²⁴

²³ Edward W. Said, *ibid*, P.12.

²⁴ Masami Kuni (translated by author), *Odori. Japanische Empfindungen – deutsche Eindrücke*, P.3.

After viewing the dance performance of Mary Wigman, with whom Park Yeong-in personally contacted even after his leaving Germany, Park crystallized his belief in permanent value of dance. However, such permanence was regarded not only as an important attribute of dance in terms of dance esthetics, but was also perceived as a cultural hegemony in the context of modern sociopolitical circumstances. This led many Asian modern dancers in Europe such as Park Yeong-in to assimilate themselves spontaneously into movement languages as well as modern *Zeitgeist* conceived and initiated by European contemporary dancers. However, such self-assimilation of Asian dancers did not cause their complete identification with the dominant European modern dance discourse, but rather led them to self-discovery. As a result, they represented their indigenous dance culture on the European stage, but with their body well-trained in modern European dance vocabulary. In the case of Park Yeong-in as a dance scholar in Germany who is originally from Korea colonized by Japan, it is meaningful to consider how he understood as well as conceptualized the so-called Japanese or Asian dance in general. Park discovered Asian dance as a traditionalized concept in correspondence with the modern European perspective on the Other and at the same time located it at the opposite of European dance in principle. Therefore, his self-discovery was not a result of an entirely natural and autonomous inner process, but an evidence of sociopolitical as well as cultural influences from outside.

Such contemplation reiterates Said's question: "Where do these come from?"

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