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The Fusion of Narration and Character Voices in Noh Drama

A Narratological Approach to Zeami's God Plays and Warrior Plays

Abstract. In medieval Japanese noh theater, narration is chanted on stage and often fuses with characters' speeches. This paper aims to examine how this fusion affects the stage–audience relationship, first by applying theater semiotics and narratology, and then by analyzing specific cases in Zeami's warrior plays and god plays. In god plays, the ambiguity of the addresser tends to be sustained, and the praise of the god's benevolence is directly delivered to the audience by a voice that bears the authority of narration, while human-centered warrior plays usually minimize the intervention of the narrator. The study thus reveals Zeami's careful handling of the narrative style in accordance with the plays' socio-religious purposes.

1. Introduction

Narratology was long perceived as a theory meant exclusively for the analysis of narrative texts. Conversely, since the time of Aristotle, drama has almost always been defined in the West as a performative and literary genre without narration and thus has been out of the range of narratological studies. Although recent years have witnessed the increasing interest of scholars in the application of narratology on drama studies,[1] the narra-

tology of drama, as Brian Richardson noted in 2001 (p. 682), is still at its beginning phase.

Contrary to the Western theatrical traditions, premodern Japanese theater almost always employed narration to varying degrees depending on the genres. Generally speaking, *kabuki* 歌舞伎, which emerged in the seventeenth century, employs less narration than other genres. *Jōruri* 浄瑠璃 puppetry (a.k.a. *bunraku* 文楽) often encompasses a large quantity of narration, a storytelling technique that originated when the art of puppet manipulation was combined with the distinctive *jōruri* style of storytelling around 1600 CE. Noh drama took its current shape in the late fourteenth century and is located somewhere in between the two genres mentioned earlier: it incorporates more narration than *kabuki*, but less commentary than *jōruri* puppetry.

This trait may make noh, along with *kabuki* and *jōruri* puppetry, most appropriate for the narratological approach of literary critique. However, as anyone who has ever attempted to translate noh plays into another language will testify, the application of narratology to noh drama becomes intriguingly difficult because the speaker of a piece of dialogue (not the physical speaker on stage but the speaker in the narratological sense) is often not made clear in noh texts. Many noh plays contain sections in which narration and dialogues merge and become indistinguishable. This ambiguity is caused by the grammatical characteristics of premodern Japanese, to which Western concepts of grammatical person and tense do not necessarily apply.[2] The noh's theatrical conventions also play a part in the confusion because the physical enunciator of a given line on stage does not necessarily coincide with its narratological speaker. The chorus in noh plays is not a group of *dramatis personae* like the Corinthian women in Euripides' 'Medea'; it is, rather, a group of theater aides who render the dialogues spoken by characters and chant the narrative parts. At the same time, the actors also chant the narration apart from delivering the lines of the characters they play.[3] In other words, noh offers examples that Moni-

ka Fludernik would call "most challenging to narratologists" since these plays "[combine] dramatic and narrational facets in a creative manner" (Fludernik 2008, p. 377).

This paper will analyze this fusion of different voices[4] and narration in noh, attending especially to the god plays (*kami nō* 神能) and warrior plays (*shura nō* 修羅能) by Zeami Motokiyo 世阿弥元清 (1363?–1443?), whose drastic innovations developed the art of noh into its current form. After a brief summary of the socio-religious functions that Zeami aimed to achieve in each of the two types of plays on which this study focuses, the paper will examine the manner in which this ambiguous voice affects the stage–audience relationship. The application of narratology and theater semiotics will facilitate the observation of the particular authenticity and eloquence that a 'narration on stage' can exert on the audience's perception. Subsequently, Zeami's god and warrior plays will be compared to each other in terms of their use of such voice-ambiguous chorus sections.

The analysis accomplished in the present paper will thus demonstrate that Zeami's god plays, created to deliver religious blessings, employ an ambiguous speaker who encompasses the possibility of being an extradiegetic narrator more often than his human-centered warrior plays, where such 'fusion' of voices is often carefully avoided. In other words, the use or non-use of the synthesis of narration and character voices is closely related to the religious functions of the dramatic works. In reforming both categories of noh plays, Zeami carefully manipulated the narrative structures of the plays to suit their newly-established socio-religious purposes.[5]

2. Origin and Development of God Plays and Warrior Plays

By the fourteenth century, noh performances usually started with the 'Okina' 翁 ('Old Man'), a ceremonial dance piece featuring gods that evinces minimal dramatic development. This ritual piece was followed by a god play and then by a warrior play.[6] Yokomichi Mario (2000), a renowned noh scholar, notes the analogy between this fixed order of the two

noh categories and the structure of religious festivals in Japan. The primary purpose of such festivals was to bring stability to the community, and this intention was achieved either through the summoning of a benevolent god or spirit, or by the appeasing of a malevolent god or spirit. Yokomichi elucidates that the god play was the theatricalization of the former, and the warrior play represented the dramatization of the latter.

Besides the common religious origin, Zeami's writings suggest that the plays also shared similar types of 'rough' protagonists that represented the fierce supernatural powers of gods and spirits. For example, in 'Mono-mane jōjō' 物学条々 ('Issues Concerning Role Playing'), the second chapter of 'Fūshikaden' 風姿花伝 ('Teachings on Style and the Flower,' 1402), Zeami's first treatise on noh, he describes the theatrical representation of a god as *onigakari* 鬼掛かり ('demonlike') and also notes that the 'madness of warrior's ghosts in the hellish realm of *shura*[7] easily tends to become demonlike behavior' (*kore tei naru shura no kurui, yaya mo sureba oni no furumai ni naru nari* これ体なる修羅の狂ひ、ややもすれば鬼の振る舞いになるなり; NST 24: 25; translation mine). In the sixth chapter of the same book, 'Kashū' 花修 ('Training in the Flower'), he includes gods and the spirits of warriors in the category of *tsuyoki mono* 強き物 ('rough characters'), together with *oni* 鬼 ('demons') and *araebisu* 荒夷 ('violent barbarians') (NST 24: 50–51).[8]

Thus, both god plays and warrior plays developed into their current, more elegant, and separate styles through Zeami's genre-determining reconstructions. First, he tried to embody the principle of *yūgen* 幽玄, a term signifying profound and refined beauty, in every aspect of the noh performance to meet the aesthetic tastes of his socially high-ranking patrons because it was the dominant aesthetic for the upper circles of his contemporary society. The demonic aspects disappeared from the protagonists in both categories of the noh and an elegant dance began to mark the climax of the plays, whose texts were studded with classical allusions and literary citations.

Warrior plays especially required radical changes to better suit the tastes of the patrons of the time. Given that the shogun, the head of the samurai class, represented the highest social level among the patrons of the art form and that the higher ranking samurai favored the exquisite grace of aristocratic culture, the depiction of warriors as sinners tormented in the *shura* realm would have been viewed as both disrespectful and even insulting. Therefore, the ghost's torment or his religious salvation from that realm is not the primary focus of Zeami's warrior plays; instead, he highlights the more 'human' aspects such as the warrior's noble sentiments, his deep affections, and/or his cultural refinement.

The god plays also went through Zeami's process of sophistication. Their poetic finesse achieved a pinnacle in 'Takasago' 高砂, which dramatizes a well-known phrase in the 'Kanajo' 仮名序 ('Kana Preface') to the 'Kokin wakashū' 古今和歌集 ('Collection of Japanese Poems of Ancient and Modern Times,' 905–913/14), the first imperial anthology of Japanese poetry: 'The pines in Takasago and Sumiyoshi seem to be growing together' (*Takasago, Suminoe no matsu mo, aioi no yō ni oboe* たかさご、すみのえのまつも、あひをひのやうにおぼえ; NKBT 8: 97). The 'Kana Preface,' written by the renowned poet Ki no Tsurayuki 紀貫之 (–945), was greatly revered by later generations as the first treatise on and a canonical defense of Japanese poetry. Innumerable medieval commentaries provided highly allegorical, often religious interpretations on almost each phrase of this text. According to them, the pine trees in Takasago and Suminoe 住江 (an old name for Sumiyoshi 住吉), two loci geographically apart, stand for the two chronologically separated periods which saw the compilation of the 'Man'yōshū' 万葉集 ('Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves,' in the late 8th century), the first Japanese anthology of poetry, and that of the 'Kokin wakashū' respectively; the given phrase as a whole was allegorically interpreted to assert that just as the two periods are one and the same, the flourishing of poetry brings about the peaceful reign identical with an ideal past (SNKS 73: 474–476).

In the play, the spirits of the two pine trees in Takasago and Sumiyoshi appear as an old couple and elucidate the above hidden meaning of the phrase to a traveling priest from the Aso 阿蘇 Shrine in Higo 肥後 Province (in present Kumamoto 熊本 Prefecture). Then the spirit of the pine tree in Sumiyoshi appears as the Sumiyoshi god, who is revered as the god of poetry, and blesses the current reign and the people living in it through his dance. The onstage action thus embodies the symbolic interaction between art and society, aiming to achieve the ultimate goal of noh, which Zeami declares in 'Teachings on Style and the Flower' is to create a peaceful world and to bring pleasure to everyone (NST 24: 14).

Recent studies by Amano Fumio (2007) reveal that apart from such aestheticization of the genre, Zeami's god plays were probably intended to please shoguns, patrons of the arts. On the surface, many of Zeami's god plays commemorate the reign of an emperor; in fact, they encompass possible references to specific auspicious events for the shogunate and depict celebratory messages for it. The aforementioned 'Takasago' is no exception. The play was quite likely aimed at celebrating the historical visit of the representatives of the Aso Shrine to the capital (1422–1424), which meant their allegiance to the shogunate, and glorifying the peaceful reign of the fourth shogun Ashikaga Yoshimochi 足利義持 (1386–1428), who actively enjoyed composing poetry in his literary salon and maintained his political authority even after passing his title to his son in 1423 (Amano 2007, pp. 509–547).

In sum, although the god and warrior plays originated as two dramatical representations that shared the religious objective of achieving peace on earth, Zeami refined them, distinguished them, and separated their goals to fulfill the needs of contemporary patrons of the arts in two discrete ways. While the warrior plays satisfied the aesthetic ideals of their elite audiences by depicting warriors as poetic and refined human beings, the god plays met religio-political demands by bestowing the blessings of the gods on the shogunate. The fourth and fifth sections of this paper will

compare the two categories of plays in terms of the degrees of ambiguity they present in chorus sections apropos the speaker. Such a comparison will aid in the determination of the manner in which the narrative characteristics of the plays contributed to the achievement of their newly set socio-religious goals.

3. Narration and Its Fusion with the Voices of the Characters

3.1 Examples of 'Clear' Narration

The term 'narration' must be defined before its utilization in the noh is scrutinized. 'Secondary narration' does not matter to the present study. To clarify using Gennetian terms, the secondary or 'metadiegetic narration' refers to a character's retrospective reporting of an incident to another character (such as King Hamlet's ghost telling his son how he was murdered by his own brother). Although such secondary narrations abound in noh plays, especially in dream plays (*mugen nō* 夢幻能) wherein the central event of the plot is retrospectively 'told' to another character by a ghost or a supernatural being, they are also commonly seen in Western drama.

Rather, what is peculiar to noh, as well as to *kabuki* and *jōruri* puppetry, is the use of primary narration delivered by an extradiegetic narrator. This present or past tense account depicts incidents as they occur in the dramatic present just like the 'narration' in novels, epics, and oratorios. However, the premodern Japanese concept of allocating 'tense' to verbs was very different from the Indo-European languages; the use of deictic expressions is scarce and the 'present tense' equivalent can also be used for the description of past events. The translations that follow have been accomplished by the author of this paper. Whenever the original text contained such chronological ambivalence, both interpretations have been recorded, separated by a slash.

This type of primary narration (hereafter, narration) is typically employed at the conclusion of an act in the noh, and describes the disappearance of the protagonist or offers a final commentary on the entire incident, as the following examples indicate.

Example 1: 'Teika' 定家, the final scene of the first act

地：くるしみを助け給へと　言ふかと見えて失せにけり　言ふかと見えて失せにけり (SNKS 73: 348)

JI: Kurushimi o tasuke-tamae to / iu ka to miete usenikeri / iu ka to miete usenikeri

CHORUS:　　　　Please save me from this agony—
Seeming to have said so, she disappeared from sight,
Seeming to have said so, she disappeared from sight.

The chorus comprises six to eight chanters seated to the right of the main stage in full view of the audience. Here, it first chants the protagonist's words, a ghost's plea to a traveling monk. It then turns to narration to describe the ghost's sudden disappearance.

The next example is cited from the last scene of the second act of the noh 'Momijigari' 紅葉狩 ('Autumn Foliage Viewing'). After describing the fight scene between the play's protagonist Taira no Koremochi 平維茂 and a demon, which is enacted on stage in the dramatic present, the chorus describes Koremochi's immediate victory and praises his vigor.

Example 2: 'Momijigari,' the ending scene of the second act

地：たちまち鬼神を　従へ給ふ　威勢の程こそ　恐ろしけれ (SNKS 79: 311)

JI: Tachimachi kijin o / shitagae-tamau / isei no hodo koso / osoroshikere

CHORUS:　　　　He immediately conquers/conquered the demon. How magnificent is his powerful force!

The use of the honorific auxiliary verb *-tamau* attached to the verb *shitagau* ('to conquer') indicates that this cannot be Koremochi's own words;

here the subject of the verb 'to conquer' (namely, Koremochi) is referred to in the third person.

The narration may also occur during the performance of an act. The ongoing activities of the characters in the dramatic present are sometimes described orally by the chorus, and the narration is sometimes also delivered by the very actors who play the characters.

The following is an example from the noh 'Sumidagawa' 隅田川. In this play, a mother, who has traveled all the way from Kyoto to the Eastern province in search of her kidnapped son finally discovers that her son passed away a year ago. In the scene depicted in Example 3, she collapses at his tomb, speechless and in tears, and the *shite* actor (the leading actor) who plays the mother 'narrates' her speechlessness.

Example 3: 'Sumidagawa'

シテ：母はあまりの悲しさに　念仏をさへ申さずして　ただひれ伏して泣き居たり (SNKS 73: 185)

Shite: Haha wa amari no kanashisa ni / nenbutsu o sae mōsazu shite / tada hirefushite naki itari

Shite [Mother]:　　The mother, due to too much despair, cannot even chant the Amida Buddha's name and only prostrates herself, sobbing.

In the original, *haha* ('mother') can be considered either as a common noun (the mother) or as a first-person pronoun, with which the mother refers to herself. Therefore, grammatically speaking, this line can be translated as either a narrator describing the mother in the third person or the mother describing herself. However, its content (speechlessness of the mother) strongly suggests that it is not her own speech within the inter-character communication in this fictional world.

No fixed ratio applies to the narration in the noh plays; dream and non-dream plays particularly demonstrate opposite tendencies. The main events of non-dream plays (*genzai nō* 現在能) unfold in the dramatic

present on stage through interactions among characters. Narration is frequently employed in the descriptions of ongoing scenes, as seen in Examples 2 and 3. In dream plays, on the other hand, the main event of interest is recounted to a living traveler by a ghost, a spirit, or a god; and the primary narration is usually limited to the end of the first and/or second act(s), as seen in Example 1 (all noh plays encompass one or two acts), and all acts do not necessarily end with narration (Yokomichi 1986, pp. 44–45).

Zeami developed the dream play structure in the noh. From a narratological viewpoint, this invention may be interpreted as his attempt to minimize the use of (primary) narration by curtailing events occurring in the dramatic present and instead presenting the main incident through a character's retelling of the incident (secondary narration).

3.2 The Fusion of Different Character Voices and Narration

An example from the final scene of the aforementioned god play 'Takasago,' perhaps the most famous of all the noh pieces, will serve to examine the fusion of different voices and narration. In the scene cited below, the Sumiyoshi god, played by a *shite* actor, manifests his true form to a traveling priest played by a *waki* actor (a supporting actor), and performs a dance to celebrate the realm. The linguistic ambiguity brings into play numerous possible interpretations vis-à-vis the identity of the narratological 'speaker' of the chorus parts.

Example 4: 'Takasago,' ending scene of the second act

地：ありがたの影向や　ありがたの影向や　月すみよしの神遊　御影を拝む
あらたさよ
シテ：げにさまざまの舞姫の　声も澄むなり住吉の　松影も映るなる　青海
波とはこれやらん
地：神と君との道直に　都の春に行くべくは
シテ：それぞ還城楽の舞
地：さて万歳の

シテ：小忌衣
地：さす腕には　悪魔を払ひ　納むる手には　寿福を抱き千秋楽は民を撫で
万歳楽には命を延ぶ　相生の松風　颯々の声ぞ楽しむ　颯々の声ぞ楽しむ
(SNKS 73: 291–292)

JI: Arigata no yōgō ya / arigata no yōgō ya / tsuki sumiyoshi no kamiasobi / mikage o ogamu aratasa yo
SHITE: Geni samazama no maibime no / koe mo sumu nari Suminoe no / matsukage mo utsuru naru / Seigaiha to wa kore yaran
JI: Kami to kimi to no michi sugu ni / miyako no haru ni iku beku wa
SHITE: Sore zo Genjōraku no mai
JI: Sate Banzei no
SHITE: omigoromo
JI: sasu kaina ni wa / akuma o harai / osamuru te ni wa / jufuku o idaki Senshūraku wa tami o nade / Manzairaku ni wa inochi o nobu / aioi no matsukaze / sassan no koe zo tanoshimu / sassan no koe zo tanoshimu

CHORUS:	Gracious manifestation of the god! Gracious manifesta-tion of the god! To see the dance of the god under the bright moon—what a miraculous effect!
SHITE [SUMIYOSHI GOD]:	Indeed, the clear voices of the various dancing shrine maidens are heard in Sumiyoshi, where the pine trees are reflected on the blue sea; it should be exactly like 'Blue Sea Waves.'[9]
CHORUS:	The Way of the gods and the Way of the emperor are both straight, leading to the spring of the capital—
SHITE:	Just like the dance of 'Return to the Capital.'
CHORUS:	With a wish for an eternal life of the emperor,
SHITE:	Dressed in the ritual robe,
CHORUS:	A dancing arm held out sweeps away the demon; an arm pulled in holds good fortunes. The dance of 'Thousand Autumns' caresses the people; 'Ten Thousand Years' ex-tends their lives. The sound of the winds blowing through the paired pine trees is pleasing to the ear. The sound of the winds is pleasing to the ear!

The first chorus part seems to be the priest's own exclamation at the god's manifestation. However, the subsequent alternate chanting by the *shite* and the chorus blurs the identity of the speaker of the discourse. Delivered by an unidentified voice that could be the god, the priest, or the narrator,

the last chorus part describes the benediction bestowed on the world through each dance movement of the god.

Naturally, the numerous commentaries and translations of this section evince amazing variation in terms of its interpretation. Sanari Kentarō takes the first two chorus parts to represent the priest's words and considers the third and fourth chorus parts as spoken by the god with the exception of the ending lines that refer to 'the sound of the winds,' which he infers to be narration (Sanari 1930, pp. 1872–1873). Koyama Hiroshi translates the first two chorus parts as words uttered by the priest, but he does not attribute the third and fourth chorus parts to a specific character or a narrator and lets the voice remain undefined (Koyama [et al.] 1973, pp. 64–65). Amano Fumio translates the first, second, and third chorus parts as the priest's words and the entire fourth part as the god's speech (Amano [et al.] 2013, p. 261). These discrete interpretations are all valid, both grammatically and in terms of content.

3.3 The Effects of the Ambiguity: Theoretical Observations

How, then, does this ambiguity of voice affect the stage–audience relationship? Invoking theater semiotics, it must first be recalled that the language of theater acquires the peculiar power to control the audience's perception of the actual onstage space (Issacharoff 1989, pp. 157–160). When we 'read' a narrative, we 'imagine' the scene. When we witness a play, we perceive the physical space onstage to be something other than itself: a small bare platform in Tokyo may be perceived as a castle in Denmark; a stage in a baroque theater in Italy could turn into a riverbed in medieval China, even without the help of stage props. A small fan in the hand of an actor may be recognized as a sake cup or a fishing net. These interpretations depend on the manner in which they are verbally described in the play.

Theater semiotics also elucidate that a 'twofold situation of communication' is incorporated into the enaction of a play: the communication

transpiring between the fictional characters on stage, and the real-life communication that occurs between the stage and the audience (Ubersfeld 1999, p. 160). All words uttered on stage by the characters encompass the dual dynamics of 'onstage' and 'stage–audience' communication: they are spoken from one character to another character within the fictional world, while also simultaneously being addressed in real life by the actor to the audience.

These two communication situations are inversely proportional to each other; when a given speech's onstage communication is foregrounded, such as in a character's imperative, plea, or greeting to another character, its stage–audience communication becomes less prominent. On the other hand, when the onstage communication recedes, the stage–audience communication is brought forward. A monologue epitomizes the latter instance: the special 'eloquence' or 'compelling force' that monologues hold for the audience may arguably be attributed to the spotlighted or pronounced stage–audience communication (Sasaki 1982, p. 62). For this same condition to apply to it, narration must be much more 'eloquent' than monologue. While monologues usually represent a character's inner thoughts, narration addresses the audience directly without any onstage communication tools.

Narratology accords another indispensable insight for the comparison between narration and speeches delivered by characters: a piece of narration possesses its own peculiar 'credibility' or 'absolute authority' that is inevitably accepted by a reader. To borrow Seymour Chatman's words, we accept whatever the narration says, as if by "the contract that [we] willingly signed in picking up the book" (Chatman 1978, pp. 250–251), and as a result, "we must accept the given 'fact,' helplessly, as the price we pay if we are to follow the discourse at all" (ibid., p. 210).

To recapitulate these theoretical observations, it may be asserted that onstage narration transforms an audience's spatial cognition with 'abso-

lute authority' while holding audience attention through superior eloquence.

Chatman indicates that a similar effect may be observed when the voices of the narrator and a character become inseparable in the 'free-indirect discourse' in which the character's words or inner thoughts are presented through the voice of the narrator without a tag clause ('he/she said,' or 'he/she thought') that indicates the character's speaking/thinking act (Chatman 1978, p. 206). In fact, there are frequently no clear grammatical differences between narration and free-indirect discourse in the Indo-European languages; their distinction is mostly contextual and is, in some cases, open to interpretation (Cohn 1978, p. 106).

In addition to the fact that quotation marks are not used, premodern Japanese often holds no grammatical distinction even between (whether free- or not) direct and indirect discourse: subjects of verbs are usually omitted, verbs do not conjugate for grammatical persons, and the use of (what is equivalent to) personal pronouns is rather limited in comparison to their employment in Indo-European languages. Therefore, monologues can be indistinguishable from narration when a tag clause is omitted and the speaker is not specified by the context or by the use of honorifics (Keith 2015, p. 211).

An actor's body functions as a 'tag clause' in most theatrical conventions. Each actor is charged with a fixed character, moving on stage as that character, speaking only that character's lines. Therefore, any words spoken on stage are attributed to a certain character.

This case does not apply to the noh. It is true that there are actors on stage in noh theater, each of whom represents a specific character. However, apart from narration, the chorus also recites the lines attributed to various characters. The actors on stage mostly deliver their dialogues; however, they sometimes also narrate their movements, as demonstrated by Example 3 from 'Sumidagawa.' In other words, the 'tag clause' is sometimes unreliable in noh theater.

As a result, in the absence of obvious onstage communication between characters, the discourse tends to become both monologic and narration-like. Theatrically, of course, when an actor enunciates words, these words tend to be taken as the character's speech rather than as narration. When the chorus chants a long passage without apparent inter-character communication, however, the recitation is open to the possibility of being both narration and words attributable to a character (or characters), almost akin to the free-indirect speech of Indo-European languages.

A re-examination of the aforementioned ending scene of 'Takasago' (Example 4) is warranted at this juncture: the chanting alternates between the *shite* actor and the chorus and blurs the identity of the speaker and even obscures the distinction between narration and dialogue. This ambiguity remains until the end since there is no clear textual indication of the addresser and addressee of the discourse. While bearing the narrator's authority, the chorus directly addresses the spectators and reveals the transcendental meaning of each of the god's dance gestures that bring peace and good fortunes to human beings. The religious miracle is thus manifested on stage, and endowed with the narrator's authority, the god's benedictions on the current regime and on its inhabitants are delivered directly to the audience.

4. The Closing Scenes of Acts in Zeami's God and Warrior Plays

4.1 The Ending of Acts in God Plays

Interestingly, Zeami's god plays and warrior plays show strikingly opposite tendencies in their use of such fusion of narration and speech voiced by characters.[10] Foremost, let us review the ending scenes of the acts in both categories. Plays of both categories take the structure of the dream play in which, as mentioned above, many acts end with primary narration such as the one recorded as Example 1. In fact, slightly more than half the acts of both warrior and god plays end in such a manner. However, the

ending of an act most distinctively demonstrates the narrative differences between the two categories when clear narration is not employed. Put differently, god plays tend notably to retain the ambiguity of the speaker until the end and thus sustain the prospect of narration; on the other hand, the ending chorus of warrior plays tends to manifest the protagonist's speech to another character.

Of all the nine god plays by Zeami (i.e., seventeen acts in total), the following eight acts do not end with clear narration: the only act of 'Yōrō' 養老 ('Nurturing the Aged'), the second acts of 'Yumiyawata' 弓八幡 ('The Bow of Hachiman'), 'Oimatsu' 老松 ('The Old Pine Tree'), 'Hōjōgawa' 放生川, 'Naniwa' 難波, 'Takasago,' and 'Hakozaki' 箱崎, and the first act of 'Naniwa.' Among them, only one act (the first act of 'Naniwa') ends with the god's appeal to the *waki* character: 'Please wait while sleeping under the flowers' (*hana no shitabushi ni machi-tamae* 花の下臥に待ち給へ; SNKS 79: 22). Another, the only act of 'Yōrō,' ends with the god's declaration of his intention to return to his transcendental world: 'I will now return to the world of eternity' (*Banzei no michi ni kaerinan* 萬歳の道に帰りなん; NKBT 40: 232). All the six remaining acts end with an ambiguous voice that blends narration with the voices of characters, praising the god's benevolence and the peaceful realm. Example 4 from 'Takasago' is a typical example. Another exemplar of this type may be found in 'Hakozaki.'

Example 5: 'Hakozaki,' ending scene of the second act

Famous poet Mibu no Tadamine 壬生忠峰 visits the Hakozaki Shrine near Hakata 博多 (in present Fukuoka 福岡 Prefecture) that reveres the Hachiman 八幡 god, also called Great Bodhisattva Hachiman (Hachiman Daibosatsu 八幡大菩薩), who is said to be an emanation of Amitābha (Jp. Amida 阿弥陀) Buddha and have originally appeared in this world as Emperor Ōjin (Ōjin Tennō 応神天皇). Subsequently, the spirit of Empress Jingū (Jingū Kōgō 神功皇后), a goddess enshrined in the temple along with her son Emperor Ōjin, appears to Tadamine and reveals to him the legendary golden box that contains sutras. The box is said to have been buried by her under a pine tree in the shrine's precincts before she went to conquer the Korean peninsula.

Showing the sutras that she takes out of the box, she performs a dance which is followed by this ending chant:

地：願ひも満つの、光さし、願ひも満つの、光さして、弥陀誓願の、誓ひを顕はし、衆生の願ひを、満てしめたまふ、さるほどに、海原や、博多の沖に、かかりたる、唐土船も、時つくり、鳥も音を鳴き、鐘も聞こゆる、明けなばあさまに、玉手箱、また埋み置く、標の松の、もとのごとくに、収まる嵐の、松の蔭こそ、久しけれ（'Hakozaki,' p. 350)

Jɪ: Negai mo mitsu no, hikari sashi, negai mo mitsu no, hikari sashite, Mida seigan no, chikai o arawashi, shujō no negai o, miteshime-tamau, saru ho-do ni, unabara ya, Hakata no oki ni, kakaritaru, morokoshibune mo, toki tsukuri, tori mo ne o naki, kane mo kikoyuru, akenaba asama ni, tamate-bako, mata uzumi oku, shirushi no matsu no, moto no gotoku ni, osamaru arashi no, matsu no kage koso, hisashikere

CHORUS: The wish-fulfilling light shines, the wish-fulfilling light shines, manifesting Amida Buddha's vow to save all. In this manner the Hachiman god satisfies the wishes of all the sentient beings. In the meantime, out at sea, off Ha-kata, the siren of a ship from China proclaims the dawn. Cocks are crowing, and the temple bells are heard. As the day breaks, the box should be hidden; it is again buried under the pine tree, which stands as the sign of the box, just as before—things are now just as before, and the winds are calmed. Under the shade of the pine, the winds are calmed forever!

The eternal serenity and peace in the shade of the pine tree, under which the box of sutras is buried, suggests the perpetuity of Buddhism and its protection of this world. However, the identity of the speaker of this entire celebration remains unclear. The beginning part, which praises the mag-nanimity of Hachiman, can be read either as primary narration or as the goddess's secondary narration. Then, the remaining portion is devoted to the description of the surrounding scene, which makes it almost impossi-ble to distinguish between narration and speech voiced by a character. The last line, the praise of Buddhism, is enounced through this unidenti-fied voice.

4.2 The Closing of Acts in Warrior Plays

In contrast to the god plays, of the thirteen acts of warrior plays by Zeami, only two of the six acts that do not end with clear narration close with the fusion of voices observed in god plays (the only act of 'Kiyotsune' 清経 and the second act of 'Michimori' 通盛). The other four acts (the first act of 'Yashima' 八島 and the second acts of 'Atsumori' 敦盛, 'Sanemori' 実盛, and 'Tadanori' 忠度) end with a chorus that includes signal words indicating that the words should be interpreted as speech addressed to the *waki* character (a monk) by the protagonist. The following is one such example from 'Yashima.'

Example 6: 'Yashima,' the ending of the first act

> In this act, the ghost of Minamoto no Yoshitsune 源義経, disguised as a local old man, recounts his military exploits to a traveling monk. In the ending scene of the act, he hints at his identity and disappears.
>
> 地：潮の落つる暁ならば　修羅の時になるべし　その時は　わが名や名のらん　たとひ名のらずとも名のるとも　よしつねの憂き世の　夢ばし覚まし給ふなよ　夢ばし覚まし給ふなよ (SNKS 79: 334–335)
>
> Jɪ: *Ushio no otsuru akatsuki naraba / shura no toki ni naru beshi / sono toki wa / waga na ya nanoran / tatoi nanorazu tomo nanoru tomo / yoshi tsune no ukiyo no / yume ba shi samashi-tamau na yo / yume ba shi samashi-tamau na yo*
>
> Cʜᴏʀᴜs:　　In the dawn when the night tide is ebbing, it should be the time of everlasting fight of the shura realm; I will reveal my name then. Whether I reveal my name as Yoshitsune[11] or not, though, please do not wake up from your dream in this world of perpetual sadness, please do not wake up from your dream.

This closing makes it obvious that the chorus chants the words addressed by the protagonist directly to the *waki* character. Conversely, in some of the other final choral pieces of the warrior plays, the identity of the speaker is muddled but subsequent 'signal words' confirm that the chorus does,

after all, reflect the ghost's words to the monk. The following ending scene of the second act of 'Atsumori' serves as an exemplar of such confusion and clarification.

Example 7: 'Atsumori,' the ending of the second act

In the first act of the play, the monk Renshō 蓮生, the former Genji 源氏 warrior Kumagae no Jirō Naozane 熊谷次郎直実 who tonsured his head after slaying young Taira no Atsumori 平敦盛 in the battle at Suma 須磨 Bay, visits the exact location where he killed Atsumori to pray for the latter's spirit. There, he encounters Atsumori's ghost disguised as a local grass mower who plays the flute beautifully, as Atsumori did in his lifetime. The ghost hints at his identity and disappears. In the second act, the ghost reappears and re-enacts the family banquet that occurred the night before his death, where he enjoyed singing, dancing, and playing the flute that he carried with him to his last battle. In the following ending scene of the play, the ghost reenacts his final battle with Naozane, tries to strike at the monk for revenge but re-frains, expressing his gratitude for the monk's continuous efforts to save his spirit.

シテ：せん方波に駒を控へ、呆れ果てたる有様なり
地：かかりけるところに、うしろより熊谷の次郎直実、逃がさじと追っ掛け
たり、敦盛も、馬引つ返し、波の打ち物抜いて、ふた打ち三打ちは打つぞと
見えしが、馬の上にて引つ組んで、波打ち際に、落ち重なって、終に討たれ
て、失せし身の、因果は巡り逢ひたり、敵はこれぞと討たんとするに、仇を
ば恩にて、法事の念仏して弔はるれば、終には共に生まるべき、同じ蓮の蓮
生法師、敵にてはなかりけり、跡弔ひて賜び給へ、跡弔ひて賜び給へ。
(NKBT 40: 240)

SHITE: Sen kata nami ni koma o hikae, akire-hatetaru arisama nari
JI: Kakarikeru tokoro ni, ushiro yori Kumagae no Jirō Naozane, nigasaji to okkaketari, Atsumori mo, uma hikkaeshi, nami no uchimono nuite, futauchi miuchi wa utsu zo to mieshi ga, uma no ue nite hikkunde, namiuchigiwa ni ochi-kasanatte, tsui ni utarete, useshi mi no, inga wa meguri-aitari, kataki wa kore zo to utan to suru ni, ada oba on nite, hōji no nenbutsu shite tomu-rawarureba, tsui ni wa tomo ni umaru beki, onaji hachisu no Rensei hōshi, kataki nite wa nakarikeri, ato tomuraite tabi-tamae, ato tomuraite tabi-tamae

SHITE [ATSUMORI'S GHOST]: Not knowing what to do, I pull/pulled up the
horse, completely at a loss.

CHORUS:	In the meantime, from behind, Kumagae no Jirō Nao-zane ran after, intending not to let me/him escape. I/Atsumori, too, turn/turns/turned the horse back and un-sheathe/unsheathes/unsheathed a sword, striking once or twice at the enemy, it seemed. Then we/they grapple/grappled with each other on the horses and then drop/dropped on the water's edge. Finally, I/he was slain dead. But now the chance for retribution has come. This is my revenge! Thus thinking, I/he try/tries to assault you/him, but you/he did a favor to your/his former en-emy. Since you/he prayed to Amida Buddha for me/him, we/they should for sure be reborn together on the same lotus flower in the Pure Land. Monk Renshō, you/he are/is no more my/his enemy. Please pray for me, please pray for me.

Although the choral section begins as the continuation of the ghost's own recollections of his last battle (secondary narration), it bears strong re-semblance to primary narration for several reasons: first, it describes the actions actually occurring on stage, the ghost's reenactment of his last fight and his present attempt to take revenge against the monk Renshō; second, as the above translation demonstrates, the grammatical persons and the subjects and objects of the verbs as well as their tenses, are largely undeterminable in the original text; third, the resemblance to primary narration is reinforced by the insertion of a perspective that is external to Atsumori during the fight: *mieshi* ('it seemed').

However, this vocal ambiguity is resolved suddenly in the last line, which clearly denotes the ghost's entreaty to the monk for a Buddhist service: 'Please pray for me' (*ato tomuraite tabi-tamae*). In other words, after the ambiguous passage bearing resemblance to primary narration, the final statement reinforces the inter-character communication. The other three instances, the second acts of 'Sanemori' and 'Tadanori,' and the first act of 'Yashima,' all end in a similar manner, placing a direct plea from the *shite* to the *waki* character into an end-of-the-act choral piece.

4.3 Summary: The Closing of Acts in Zeami's God and Warrior Plays

In sum, the endings of acts in Zeami's god and warrior plays evince distinct patterns that are peculiar to each category, as is demonstrated by the following table. Here the endings of one-act plays, such as 'Kiyotsune' and 'Yōrō,' are considered the second acts' endings as both of them mark the plays' endings.[12]

	warrior plays (13 acts in total)	god plays (17 acts in total)
ending in primary narration	first acts: 5 (38.4%) second acts: 2 (15.3%) total: 7 (53.7%)	first acts: 7 (41.2%) second acts: 2 (11.8%) total: 9 (53%)
ending with the *shite* character's words addressed directly to the *waki* character	first acts: 1 (7.7%) second acts: 3 (23%) total: 4 (30.7%)	first acts: 1 (5.9%) second acts: 0 (0%) total: 1 (5.9%)
ending is presented as the *shite* character's words, but not necessarily addressed to the *waki* character	first acts: 0 (0%) second acts: 0 (0%) total: 0 (0%)	first acts: 0 (0%) second acts: 1 (5.9%) total: 1 (5.9%)
ending in an ambiguous voice	first acts: 0 (0%) second acts: 2 (15.3%) total: 2 (15.3%)	first acts: 0 (0%) second acts: 6 (35.3%) total: 6 (35.3%)

In both categories, slightly more than half the acts end with primary narration; however, these are mostly limited to the first acts. The second acts explicitly demonstrate the almost opposite characteristics of the two noh classifications in terms of their stage–audience communication. The warrior plays tend to close with a character's appeal to another character; in other words, they end within the frame of onstage communication, rela-

tively similar to the Western bourgeois dramas that assume 'the fourth wall.'

In contrast, two thirds of the second acts of god plays end in praise of the god's benevolence or in celebration of a peaceful reign, delivered by an ambiguous voice. This indeterminate voice, open to a range of interpretations including an extradiegetic narrator, grants the religious message an authority that transcends a single character's viewpoint. Thus, with minimal onstage communication, the otherworldly blessings on the reign are delivered almost like an oracle, directly to the worldly people, the audience, almost as if it is the sole target of the benefaction.

5. Voice-Ambiguous Choral Sections in Zeami's God and Warrior Plays

5.1 Alternate Chanting as a Device Obscuring Voices

As Example 4 from 'Takasago' demonstrates, the ambiguous endings of god plays often start with chanting that is interchanged between the *shite* actor and the chorus.[13] In such sections, the chorus first takes the part of the *waki* character but subsequently, it shares the same statement as the *shite* actor, and eventually chants the last segment without the aid of the *shite*. This swapping of the chanting contributes greatly to the indeterminacy of the narratological speaker. The actor physically embodies the 'tag,' but by confusing the tie between the character's physical and vocal sources, the signification of this identifier is negated.

In itself, the alternate chanting is not restricted to the ends of god plays; nor is it always performed by the *shite* actor and the chorus. It may be observed at any point of either category of noh plays and is often exchanged between *shite* and *waki* players. Sometimes, a dialogue between two characters may transform into alternate chanting of a particular phrase; this duplication is often triggered by the *waki*'s agreement with the *shite*'s words (*genigeni* げにげに, 'indeed, indeed') or by the *shite*'s

solicitation to the *waki* character to jointly view the same landscape (*go-ran sōrae* ご覧候へ, 'please look at this'). After thus blurring the narratological speaker, the shared chanting is always followed by a choral section. Since, during Zeami's time, the actors who performed specific characters on stage also joined the choral sections (Omote 1985), the ambiguity of the addresser in such sections must have been all the more intense.

Interestingly, the choral pieces that appear after the alternate chanting in the middle of acts in Zeami's god and warrior plays evince the same opposite attributes that are observed in the endings of their acts. In god plays, the chorus sections usually end with the speaker remaining unidentified. Even when the content of a given section clarifies the words as belonging to the *shite* character, the onstage inter-character communication is extremely weak. In warrior plays, however, these portions tend to end with the *shite* character's entreaty to the *waki* character, or at least with clear indications of the *shite* character's speaking action toward the *waki* character, thus reassuring their inter-character associations.

5.2 The Chorus after Alternate Chanting in the God Plays

In Zeami's god plays, the chorus segment after the fusion of the *shite*'s and *waki*'s speeches almost never spotlights the communication between the two characters. Even when it is illumined that the choral chants represent the *shite* character's words, as in the third scene of 'Furu' 布留 and in the fourth scene of 'Unoha' 鵜羽 ('The Cormorant Feathers'), the addressee is not obvious and therefore the onstage communication is almost invisible.

In the third scene of 'Furu,' for instance, the chorus ends with the *shite* character's expression of her intention to wash the clothes: 'I will wash the clothes with my whole heart' (*itonami o kakete arawan* いとなみを掛けて洗はん; 'Furu,' p. 181). The fourth scene of 'Unoha' ends with the chorus chanting the *shite* character's 'list song' (*monozukushi-uta* 物尽くし歌), which comprises a compilation of homophones of *fuku* 葺く ('to thatch'). In both cases, the *shite* character's speaking or singing action (stating her

intention to start washing, or singing a list song) is not directly aimed at the *waki* character.

In the rest of such choral segments in Zeami's god plays—the third scenes of 'Hōjōgawa,' 'Takasago,' 'Naniwa,' and 'Yōrō,' and the ninth scene of 'Furu'—even the speaker is not identified, as can be seen in the following example from 'Hōjōgawa.'

Example 8: 'Hōjōgawa,' third scene

A traveling priest meets an old man carrying live fish at Iwashimizu Hachiman 石清水八幡 Shrine on the day of the Rite of Releasing Living Creatures (*hōjōe* 放生会). The elderly man informs the priest about the origin of the rite, during which live fish are released into the Hōjō River (Hōjōgawa).

ワキ：謂はれを聞けば有難や　さてさて生けるを放すなる川はいづくのほどやらん
シテ：御覧候へこの小川の　水の濁りも神徳の　誓ひは清き石清水の
ワキ：末はひとつぞこの川の
シテ：岸に臨みて
ワキ：水桶に
地：取り入るる　このうろくづを放さんと　この鱗類を放さんと　裳裾も同じ袖ひぢて　掬ぶやみづから水桶を　水底に沈むれば　魚は喜び鰭ふるや　水を穿ちて岸陰の　潭荷葉動く　これ魚の遊ぶありさまの　げにも生けるを放すなる　おん誓ひあらたなりけり (SNKS 79: 222)

WAKI: Iware o kikeba arigata ya / satesate ikeru o hanasu naru kawa wa izuku no hodo yaran
SHITE: Goran sōrae kono ogawa no / mizu no nigori mo shintoku no / chikai wa kiyoki iwashimizu no
WAKI: sue wa hitotsu zo kono kawa no
SHITE: kishi ni nozomite
WAKI: mizuoke ni
JI: tori-iruru / kono urokuzu o hanasan to / kono urokuzu o hanasan to / mosuso mo onaji sode hijite / musubu ya mizukara mizuoke o / minasoko ni shizumureba / uo wa yorokobi hire furu ya / mizu o ugachite kishikage no / tankaha ugoku / kore uo no asobu arisama no / ge ni mo ikeru o hanasu naru / onchikai arata narikeri

WAKI [PRIEST]:   Hearing your explanation, I am so grateful! Then, tell me, where is the river where the living fish are released?

SHITE [OLD MAN]:	Please look at this brook; the water is not muddy at all, just like the virtue of the promise of the Iwashimizu god,
WAKI:	since the pure promise of the Hachiman god at Iwashimizu makes its appearance in this brook,
SHITE:	by the shore of which we/they stand
WAKI:	with a water pail.
CHORUS:	To release the fish caught in this water pail, to release the fish, wetting the trains as well as the sleeves, I/he myself/himself put/puts the pail under the water. The fish rejoice, waving their fins and splashing about, and the lotus leaves sway by the shore. As shown by the sight of the fish thus delighted, the god's vow to release the creatures is being kept faithfully!

Describing the surrounding scenery, the chanting voices of the *shite* and the *waki* merge into one long statement. The chorus section that ensues continues to depict the scene in which the old man releases the fish into the river; this depiction can be the old man's self-depiction, the priest's observation, and/or just primary narration. With the speaker thus remaining unclear and the onstage inter-character communication kept to a minimum, the section ends with the celebration of the everlasting mercy of the Hachiman god toward all living creatures.

5.3 The Chorus after Alternate Chanting in the Warrior Plays

It is pertinent to also examine examples from the middle of the acts of Zeami's warrior plays where the fusion of the *shite*'s and *waki*'s words leads to a chorus section.

The choral segments of only two of seven such instances end without clarifying the addresser and the addressee: the eighth scene of 'Sanemori' ('Indeed, believing and valuing Buddha's teaching, which is never-decaying words of gold, why shouldn't I/we/he reach the shore of the Pure Land?', *Geni ya utagawanu, nori no oshie wa kuchi mo senu, kogane no kotoba omoku seba, nado ka wa itarazaru beki* げにや疑はぬ、法の教へは朽ちもせぬ、金の言葉重くせば、などかは至らざるべき; SNKS 73: 114)

and the eighth scene of 'Yorimasa' 頼政 ('Thanks to its benefits, Yorimasa will attain Buddhahood; how gracious!', *Koko zo byōdō daie no, kuriki ni Yorimasa ga, bukka o en zo arigataki* ここぞ平等大慧の、功力に頼政が、仏果を得んぞ有難き; SNKS 79: 425–426). In both cases, after the merging of the *shite*'s and *waki*'s chanting, the ambiguity of the speaker is retained until the end of the ensuing chorus. Such chanting of the benefits of Buddhist teachings can be considered as speech emanating from either character and/or as primary narration.

In the third scene of 'Tadanori,' the chorus that succeeds the fusion of the *shite*'s and *waki*'s words describes the surrounding scenery; in the middle of this segment, the *shite* character makes a statement deploring the *waki* character's ignorance and these inserted words are then identifiable as belonging to the *shite* character: 'how senseless the words of the honorable monk are!' (*Amari ni oroka naru, osō no gojō kana yana* あまりにおろかなる、お僧のご諚かなやな; SNKS 73: 297). However, the inter-character communication between the *shite* and *waki* players is not particularly apparent since the inserted remark of the *shite* character can be regarded as an aside, and not necessarily a direct address to the monk.

In the remaining four cases (the third and eighth scenes of 'Atsumori,' the third scene of 'Michimori,' and the ninth scene of 'Yashima'), it is made obvious that the chorus chants the *shite* character's words addressed to the *waki* character. These four scenes may be divided into two types: the first ends with the *shite*'s direct entreaty to the *waki* character, such as the third scenes of 'Atsumori,' ('Please think of it as a brand of a salt maker,' *ama no takisashi to oboshi-mese* 海人の焼残と思しめせ; NKBT 40: 236) and of 'Michimori' ('Please recite the sutra more,' *Naonao okyō asobase* なほなほお経あそばせ; SNKS 79: 283); the second type ends with the *shite* character's words expressing his intentions to work for the *waki* character, such as the eighth scene of 'Atsumori' ('I will tell you the story all night long,' *yosugara izaya mōsan* 夜すがらいざや申さん; NKBT 40: 238) and the ninth scene of 'Yashima' ('I will tell the story dur-

ing your dream,' *yumemonogatari mōsu nari* 夢物語申すなり; SNKS 79: 338). In addition, in all of these four cases, the use of honorifics or modest expressions not only in the endings of but rather throughout the chorus sections affirms that they are meant to be spoken to the monk by the protagonist.

The following is an example of the first type.

Example 9: 'Atsumori,' third scene

In this act, the monk Renshō expresses his wonder at the fact that a humble local mower—the ghost of Atsumori in disguise—has played the flute so beautifully. The mower replies that, as the famous saying 'woodcutter's songs and shepherd's flute' (*shōka bokuteki* 樵歌牧笛) asserts, it is natural even for people of the lowest rank, like him, to enjoy music. To this clever reply, the monk remarks 'indeed, indeed,' which triggers their alternate chanting:

ワキ：げにげにこれは理なり、さてさて樵歌牧笛とは、
シテ：草刈の笛
ワキ：木樵りの歌の
シテ：憂き世を渡るひと節を
ワキ：歌ふも
シテ：舞ふも
ワキ：吹くも
シテ：遊ぶも
地：身の業の、好ける心に寄り竹の、好ける心に寄り竹の、小枝蝉折さまざまに、笛の名は多けれども、草刈りの、吹く笛ならばこれも名は、青葉の笛と思しめせ、住吉の汀ならば、高麗笛にやあるべき、これは須磨の塩木の、海人の焼残と思しめせ、海人の焼残と思しめせ。(NKBT 40: 236)

WAKI: Genigeni kore wa kotowari nari, satesate shōka bokuteki to wa,
SHITE: kusakari no fue
WAKI: kikori no uta no
SHITE: uki yo o wataru hitofushi o
WAKI: utau mo
SHITE: mau mo
WAKI: fuku mo
SHITE: asobu mo
JI: mi no waza no, sukeru kokoro ni yoritake no, sukeru kokoro ni yoritake no, Koeda Semiore samazama ni, fue no na wa ōkeredomo, kusakari no, fu-

ku fue naraba kore mo na wa, Aoba no fue to oboshi-mese, Sumiyoshi no migiwa naraba, komabue ni ya aru beki, kore wa Suma no shioki no, ama no takisashi to oboshi-mese, ama no takisashi to oboshi-mese

WAKI [RENSHŌ]:	Indeed, indeed, this is true; first of all, *shōka bokuteki* means
SHITE [MOWER]:	flute of mowers and
WAKI:	songs of woodcutters,
SHITE:	who, to solace themselves in this world of sadness,
WAKI:	sing,
SHITE:	dance,
WAKI:	play the flute, and
SHITE:	enjoy music,
CHORUS:	according to their own status and artistic taste. Among the various flutes with high reputation, such as Slender Twig[14] and Cicada Turn, since this one is played by a mower, please think of it as the flute Green Leaf. If this were the seashore of Sumiyoshi, it would be called Korean flute, but since this is Suma Bay, please think of it as a brand of a salt maker boiling the brine, please think of it as a brand of the salt maker.

In this manner, after the *waki*'s complete agreement with the *shite*, the two start a sort of duet, chanting the same line alternately, both praising the fact that even the lowest social strata enjoy music and art. This alternate chanting section should be taken to voice the sentiments of both characters, not merely because it is chanted by both actors but also because the *waki*'s unconditional agreement with the *shite*'s opinion at the beginning encourages such an interpretation.

However, the choral section that immediately follows the alternate chanting elucidates that its words belong to the protagonist and do not represent a duet between the two characters. To confirm that the protagonist addresses the words to the monk, his pleas are thrice repeated in the short chant: 'Please think of it' (*oboshi-mese*). These words must be uttered by Atsumori to the monk because the honorific verb *obosu* and the honorific auxiliary verb -*mesu* are utilized.

5.4 Summary: The Chorus after Alternate Chanting in Zeami's God and Warrior Plays

The list compiled below summarizes the manner in which the chorus sections that succeed the fusion of the *shite*'s and *waki*'s chanting end in Zeami's god and warrior plays. The list is classified according to the degree and the ways in which the plays clarify the voices and the onstage communication.

	warrior plays (7 scenes in total)	god plays (7 scenes in total)
ending with the *shite* character's words directly addressed to the *waki* character	4 (57.1%)	0 (0%)
ending is presented as the *shite* character's words, but not necessarily addressed to the *waki* character	1 (14.2%)	2 (28.5%)
ending with an ambiguous voice	2 (28.5%)	5 (71.4%)

As this list illuminates, even when the alternate *shite* and *waki* chanting renders the speaker ambiguous, the ensuing choral segments of many warrior plays often clarify that the *shite* character is addressing the *waki* character. Thus, the warrior plays tend to close within the framework of the onstage communication. In contrast, the god plays are more inclined to end the choral sections after the alternate *shite* and *waki* chanting with the addresser remaining ambiguous and with minimal onstage communication. As a result, the stage–audience communication is strengthened and the choral passage commands the 'authority of narration,' enabling the religious message to be delivered to the audience more convincingly and more directly.

6. Conclusion

Warrior plays and god plays developed from noh performances that served highly religious purposes. Both categories originally intended to invoke blessings on earth either by appeasing grudge-bearing spirits (in warrior plays) or by representing gods who delivered benedictions to people (in god plays). Zeami drastically reformed the two categories in accordance with the tastes and needs of his audiences of high-ranking samurai, who enjoyed the aristocratic culture of the capital and were the patrons of his noh performances. Almost all aspects of the performance of both categories of noh were substantially refined by Zeami. In addition, the warrior play was transformed from dramas depicting the torture of a dead warrior in the hellish realm to stories featuring the elegant, aristocrat-like aspects, the sophistication, and the emotions of the samurai. On the other hand, the religiosity of the god plays was intensified through Zeami's endeavors. In his god plays, the blessings bestowed by the gods on the emperors were presented as the means by which the same benedictions were extended to the incumbent shogun. These plays thus executed major religio-political functions such as the celebration of the shogunate by the gods.

A comparison of the narrative structures of the two categories of noh plays reveals Zeami's careful handling of the (in-)determinancy of the voice of the chorus sections in accordance with the plays' socio-religious purposes. Many of the acts of the warrior plays culminated in the main character's direct plea (chanted by the chorus) to another character. Similarly, the choral segments following the alternate chanting by *shite* and *waki* actors in the middle of the acts of the warrior plays also often end with signal words that indicate that they indeed represent the *shite* character's utterances to the *waki* character. In this manner, warrior plays allow all their dramatic events to occur largely within the framework of the onstage communication between characters, with minimum intervention from an extradiegetic narrator. Zeami prefers to employ a 'realistic'

presentation of the characters more akin to the tradition of Western plays to depict the 'human' aspects of his fallen warriors. Instead of utilizing stage–audience communication to deliver the 'narrator's authority,' Zeami's warrior plays remain within the bounds of onstage communication as characters interact with each other.

In contrast, many of the acts and the chorus sections that follow the alternate chanting in the god plays culminate in the ambiguity of the speaker and in the avoidance of inter-character communication. The repeated celebration of the everlasting peaceful reign of an emperor in fact allegorically appeals for the eternal prosperity of the shogunate. This benefaction is bestowed directly on the audience via the immediacy of the stage–audience communication using a voice that takes on the 'authority' of an extradiegetic narrator, but that is simultaneously open to the possibility of belonging to other characters of the play.

This ambiguity of the voices that can be heard in Zeami's god plays serves as a reminder of Eva von Contzen's cognitive narratological analysis of the indeterminacy of the identity and viewpoint of the first-person narrator in medieval English literature.[15] She attributes the uncertainty to a focus on "what is narrated" as well as "the experience that is narrated [...] and the experience readers gain from the text" rather than "who narrates" (von Contzen 2018, p. 77). Notwithstanding the obvious differences between the indeterminacy of the narrator in medieval English literature and the ambiguity of the speakers in noh dramas,[16] her words can be safely borrowed: Zeami's god plays represent a theater genre in which the interest in 'what is narrated' surpasses the concern for 'who narrates.' In the finale of 'Takasago,' for example, the miraculous significance of each movement of the god's dance is guaranteed by the narrator's authority. At the same time, the speaker's voice is not assigned to the extradiegetic narrator alone; the words are potentially also deliverable by different characters, transcending the limits of individual viewpoints and consciousness. Thus, the focus is *not* on 'who narrates' (that is, who verbally

re-presents) the god's dance, but rather on the 'experience' of the dance itself as the audience is made to sense the miraculous blessing that 'presents itself.'

This analysis of Zeami's warrior and god plays revealed the peculiar effects of the voice-ambiguous choral parts on stage and disclosed Zeami's meticulous manipulation of such effects in accordance with the socio-religious aims of the noh plays. The correlations between such narrative characteristics and the functions of a genre are not restricted to the noh. Such associations may also be observed in other dramatical works that employ an ambiguous speaker with or without narration, from baroque oratorios to many postmodern dramas. It is hoped the narratological approaches to noh drama presented in this paper will therefore contribute to—and at the same time, will also benefit greatly from—future studies of other theatrical/dramatical conventions.

Notes

1   For a summary of recent narratological approaches to drama studies, see Nünning/Sommer 2008.

2   For a further thorough analysis of the linguistic characteristics of premodern Japanese, see the article by Sebastian Balmes in this volume.

3   Regarding the use of narration, chorus, and the incongruity between physical 'voice' and grammatical speaker, what is probably the most similar to noh in the Western musico-dramatic traditions is the oratorio. Although unstaged and greatly varied through its chronological and geographical development from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century across Europe, the oratorio provides examples of chorus and solo singers adopting different roles, including the one of the narrator, within one work. For example, in Carissimi's Latin oratorio 'Jephte' (mid-17th c.), the narration (words of *historicus*) is sung by different sets of vocal sources: soloists with different vocal ranges, various ensembles, and a chorus. The chorus chants a part of the narration, the cries of Israeli soldiers in the battlefield, the greetings of the Israelites welcoming the victorious return of Jephthah to his home together with his daughter, and the conclusive words at the end, repeating the lament of Jephthah's daughter and soliciting people to deplore her fate altogether. A soprano singing the words of Jeph-

thah's daughter as a soloist also joins the chorus (Smither 1977, pp. 241–246). For the comparison between noh and baroque oratorios in Italy, protestant Germany, and England in terms of their socio-religious functions, the use of narration and chorus, and the ambiguity of the speaker's identity, refer to Takeuchi 2020.

4 By 'voice,' I do not mean Genettian 'voice,' which is closely associated with the narrator; instead, this term here refers to (the voice of) the grammatical speaker/addresser of any given lines.

5 This paper draws on my doctoral thesis, 'Ritual, Storytelling, and Zeami's Reformation of Noh Drama: Issues on Representation and Performance' (PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2008). Part of this dissertation, which overlaps with some parts of the present paper, was introduced in Japanese in Takeuchi 2016.

6 Till date, a formal program of noh follows the same order, which is then followed by a woman play (*kazura nō* 鬘能, a play featuring an elegant female spirit), a miscellaneous play (*zatsunō* 雑能, a play that does not come under the other categories), and a concluding play (*kirinō* 切能, a celebrately and spectacular play), with *kyōgen* 狂言 plays (short comical plays) alternating with noh plays.

7 *Shura* is one of the six realms of reincarnation (*rokudō* 六道), where deceased warriors were believed to go and suffer perpetual fighting.

8 In fact, the protagonists of the god plays composed in the Muromachi 室町 period (1336–1573), barring those created by Zeami, such as 'Kinsatsu' 金札 ('The Golden Tablet'), 'Himuro' 氷室 ('The Cavern of Ice'), 'Kamo' 賀茂, 'Kusenoto' 九世戸, 'Enoshima' 江島, and 'Arashiyama' 嵐山, often resemble *kōjin* 荒神 (or *aragami*), that is, furious 'demonlike' gods (Kitagawa 1971). In this paper, when no translation of a title of a noh play is given, the title is either a place name, as is the case above, or the name of a person.

9 'Blue Sea Waves' ('Seigaiha' 青海波), 'Return to the Capital' ('Genjōraku' 還城楽), 'Thousand Autumns' ('Senshūraku' 千秋楽), and 'Ten Thousand Years' ('Manzairaku' 万歳楽) are titles of famous *gagaku* 雅楽 dances.

10 In determining Zeami's authorship of the plays, I referred to the list compiled by Takemoto Mikio (1999, pp. 10–20), which reflects noh scholars' general consensus.

11 Yoshitsune's name is hidden in the phrase *yoshi tsune no ukiyo* ('this world of perpetual sadness').

12 Although 'Yōrō' is now performed in the two-act style, it is quite likely that it used to be a one-act play, without an intermission in the middle (NKBT 40: 226).

13 Other examples of this pattern are the endings of the second acts of 'Oimatsu,' 'Hōjōgawa,' and 'Yumiyawata.'

14 Slender Twig (Koeda, or Saeda 小枝), Cicada Turn (Semiore 蝉折), and Green Leaf (Aoba 青葉) are names of famous flutes. 'Korean flute' (*komabue* 高麗笛) is a type of flute.

15 I owe my gratitude to Dr. Sebastian Balmes for bringing this article by von Contzen to my attention. For some hints on issues of experientiality, see his paper in this volume.

16 One of the most apparent differences between them is that in noh, the narrator's voice and characters' voices can become indistinguishable, whereas in medieval English literature (as well as in oratorios), the ambiguity of the speaker boils down to the indeterminacy of the identity and the perspective of the first-person narrator.

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Abbreviations

SNKS   Shinchō Nihon koten shūsei 新潮日本古典集成
NKBT   Nihon koten bungaku taikei 日本古典文学大系
NST   Nihon shisō taikei 日本思想大系

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