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Editorial Offices
Unesco, 19 Avenue Kleber, Paris 16, France

Editor-in-Chief
Sandy Koffler

Associate Editors
English Edition : Ronald Fenton
French Edition : Alexandre Leventis
Spanish Edition : Jorge Carrera Andrade
Russian Edition : Yvelin Matchavariani

Layout & Design
Robert Jacquemin

Circulation Manager
Jean Groffier



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An 18th century Japanese classic, *Ugetsu Monogatari* ("Tales of the Rain and the Moon") by Akinari Ueda—now translated into French under Unesco's programme of translations of Representative Works—has also become known outside Japan through the cinema. In this scene from the film based on these stories the Princess Wakasa (a phantom) comes to ensnare the humble potter Genjuro. (See page 18).

"His Symphony is a crass monster, a hideously writhing wounded dragon, that refuses to expire, and though bleeding in the Finale, furiously beats about with its tail erect."

"All impartial musicians and music lovers were in perfect agreement that never was anything as incoherent, shrill, chaotic and ear-splitting produced in music. The most piercing dissonances clash in a really atrocious harmony, and a few puny ideas only increase the disagreeable deafening effect."

Readers of THE UNESCO COURIER will undoubtedly be surprised to learn that the above quotations show how leading critics of the time received Beethoven's Second Symphony and his Overture to Fidelio. Nicolas Slonimsky, the American conductor from whose *Lexicon of Musical Invective* (1) the quotations are taken, states in his preface that "objections levelled at every musical innovator are all derived from the same psychological inhibition which may be described as Non-Acceptance of the Unfamiliar... This phenomenon is revealed in every instance where custom clashes with an alien mode of living or a heterodoxal mode of thinking... Foreign languages are barbarian, unpronounceable... Unfamiliar customs offend. Gestures have widely divergent social connotations in different lands. A Tibetan sticks out his tongue and hisses when he greets a friend, but such salutation is an insult to an Occidental."

Music is subject to the "Phenomenon of Non-Acceptance of the Unfamiliar" even when, as in the above cases, the unfamiliar is still part of one's own culture and tradition. How much more so is this true when the listener is from a different culture. Mr. Slonimsky, who did not have Asian source material available in compiling his anthology, nevertheless has one quotation to offer, a letter to a New York daily from a Japanese who attended the New York premiere of Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* in 1907: "Western music is too complicated for a Japanese. Even Caruso's celebrated singing does not appeal very much more than the barking of a dog in faraway woods."

There is no doubt that a large section of the present-day Japanese public would no longer react in this way to Western music—for the great music of the West is becoming increasingly familiar to the Japanese, hence enjoyable. Unfortunately, there is no doubt too that the greater part of the Western public would still react ungraciously to the sound of Japanese music—and indeed to any Asian music.

The UNESCO General Conference held in New Delhi last year voted that three "Major Projects" be undertaken by the Organization. One of the reports on the conference contains the following statement: "It is probably not too much to say that the project which has caught the imagination of all Member States to the highest degree is the one on 'Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values.' While this project is still in its formative and exploratory stages, its potential as a major factor for developing a new sense of community through greater knowledge of and appreciation for each country's culture and civilization was felt to be so important that this could be a project of paramount importance to the whole world."

The new project is to be concerned not only with music, but also with painting, sculpture, architecture, the dance, theatre, philosophy, religion and literature. This activity is of course not entirely new for UNESCO which has been interested in furthering mutual appreciation of the cultures of its Member States in many of these fields ever since UNESCO was founded. The "Major Project", however, will co-ordinate and intensify UNESCO's activities towards this end and attempt to turn them into an achievement of "paramount importance to the whole world."

A number of future issues of THE UNESCO COURIER will be devoted to one or another of the aspects of this project in the years ahead. The present issue, devoted to the UNESCO programme of translations of Representative Works, gives an insight into some of UNESCO's achievements so far in furthering mutual appreciation of the literatures of East and West.

(1) Published by Coleman-Ross Company, Inc. New York 1953.

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