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Yone Noguchi: curating an international self by 'being a poet'

Abstract:

This article will discuss issues of identity faced by the Japanese poet Yone Noguchi (1875-1947). Yone Noguchi was the first Japanese individual to publish an English poetry book in the United States, doing so in 1896. This required a deep adaptation to Western culture, even as racism and prejudice made his fitting in difficult. Although he succeeded in gaining recognition as a poet, he struggled with issues of acceptance and identity. Even after returning to Japan, he found he did not fit into Japanese society. This took place at a time when internationalization was in its earliest stages, and few people had faced these challenges. This article will argue that Noguchi created an identity as a poet, as a way to transcend nationality, ethnicity and race. His challenge is one that is now faced by countless people in our current era of globalization, conflicted politics and increasingly fractured identities.

Biographical note:

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Keywords:

Creative writing – Yone Noguchi – poetry – Japan – internationalist

Introduction

Poet is a curious term. The word ‘poet’ can refer to the occupation of someone who writes poems, who publishes poetry, or someone who simply writes poems for pleasure. It can also be a descriptor, as when someone has a poetic sense. One can secretly believe they are a poet, without telling this to others, or be recognized by others as a poet even if not claiming this label for oneself. This article will explore how a Japanese man, Yone Noguchi, created his own definition of what it means to be a poet, and how he became a poet on his own terms. ‘Poet’ was not simply an occupation for Noguchi; it provided him with a positive sense of identity when he was struggling to fit into his surroundings both abroad and in his native country Japan. His life story illustrates the importance of the labels we choose when forming connections with others and establishing a connected sense of self. In many ways, the identity struggles Noguchi faced are similar to issues of self faced by many in our current age of globalization. This article will trace Noguchi’s life story and explore his use of ‘poet’ as a way of transcending ethnic and cultural boundaries.

Noguchi left Japan for the United States a month before his 18th birthday in 1893, as a penniless young man. At a time when Japanese people were still subject to intense discrimination in the United States, he made a conscious decision to become a poet, inspired by a fateful meeting with the American poet Joaquin Miller (Noguchi 1914: 41). Noguchi seemed to feel that this was a way to continue being Japanese in America. It was with this sense of mission that he managed to publish poetry books in English, in the United States and in England, around the turn of the twentieth century. Noguchi was recognized as first Japanese to achieve this, which led to international literary recognition. He returned to Japan in 1904 as a successful international poet. He seems not to have realized, however, how deeply he had to transform himself in the West while he was living there for eleven years. His accomplishments abroad did not prepare him for the challenge of being an internationalist in Japan after his return. He struggled with his sense of belonging in Japan and elsewhere.

Noguchi’s struggles are evident in *Songs of a Poet of Dual Nationalities*, the title of his Japanese poetry book which was published in 1921. He felt as though he was an outsider, even in his own country. He later called himself ‘E’tranger’ in Japan, the French word for ‘foreigner’ or ‘stranger’. Noguchi once again found that ‘being a poet’ was a way to make sense of this alienation. It allowed him to maintain a unique international self, and provided a label for the Japanese people who did not understand his international side. He decided that his ‘being a poet’ let him negotiate these boundaries in a way that goes beyond nationality.

Today, Yone Noguchi is not well-known as a poet in spite of a recent increase in scholarship. Whatever recognition he does have comes not from the quality of his literary work, but rather his status as an early internationalist who achieved literary recognition in the West. His desire to be remembered as a poet was hurt by his increasing nationalism later in his life, which negatively affected his reputation after the war. In the context of his struggles with his identity, his politics seem to have reflected a desire to assert pride in his Japanese cultural self. In the 1960s, years after Noguchi’s death, his son-in-law, Usamuro Toyama, together with Shunsuke Kamei, a

Japanese literary scholar, published reprints of Noguchi's works and a variety of scholarly publications related to his life and oeuvre. However, with Toyama's death, the project was discontinued. It has only been in the last ten years or so that *Yone Noguchi* has again garnered attention, through reprints of his collected English works in twelve volumes (2007–9), as well as biographies, such as *A Poet of Dual Nationalities Noguchi Yonejiro* (Hori 2012), and *Yone Noguchi: The International Poet Who Followed his Dream* (Hoshino 2012), and research articles focused on his work. This scholarship has gathered biographical information and shed light on the overall trajectory of his life and work (including poems, prose, journalistic articles, translations) both in English and Japanese. It has explored how his works were viewed, and his relationships to poets and writers of his time. There has also been increased interest in his American wife, Leonie Gilmour, including a film, *Leonie* (Matsui 2010), as well as the publication of her biography, *Leonie Gilmour: When East Weds West* (Marx 2013). Their son, Isamu Noguchi, became a world-renowned sculptor, and has been the subject of multiple biographies, the most recent of which is *Listening to Stone: The Art and Work of Isamu Noguchi* (Duus 2015). These related works shed light on Noguchi as a partner (husband) and father, and has highlighted some of Noguchi's personal failures. They have revealed that he did not take responsibility for his child and the child's American mother, and instead started another family with a Japanese woman. Scholarship related to Noguchi has now reached the point where his work is better understood, and the wider significance of his life and work can be discussed.

This article focuses on Yone Noguchi's feelings of pride in his identity as a poet, independent of whatever literary success he had, and how he clung on to it throughout his life. In our current context of globalization and complex forms of identity, he is increasingly being recognized as an early example of someone who actively and continuously curated his identity in a way which transcends traditional labels. The next section will examine the social context Noguchi was faced with, and see that there are parallels to the identity challenges faced by many today.

Freedom in making his life

Noguchi was a product of one of the first generations of Japanese people who had more opportunities to make life choices than previous generations. Japanese people who had to develop their lives after Japan opened the country to the rest of the world in 1854 faced great social upheaval. Kenneth Pyle's *New Generation in Meiji Japan* provides a sense of the loss, confusion, and new possibilities that young people in the new 'Meiji' era (1868-1912) must have felt. Many were torn between old traditions and the new customs.

The magnitude of change in the early Meiji period – especially the loosening of family ties, the appearance of new occupational groups and the influx of a new culture – served to create for youth opportunities for self-expression and social advancement scarcely imaginable in the [previous] Tokugawa period (Pyle 1969: 7).

Western culture brought individual-focused lifestyles, personal choices, technological development, new forms of education, new habits of everyday living, interaction with foreigners, and even opportunities for trips abroad. Naturally, not everybody had equal access to these influences; but the challenge of negotiating one's place in society and a world in flux was shared by many.

Yone Noguchi was born in 1875, so he and his three elder brothers benefitted from an increased openness to personal choices and responsibilities. Most of Yone's siblings took the liberty of this new era by pursuing different careers. His eldest brother Hidenosuke worked for the railway company, and his second brother Totaro Takagi was a lawyer, occupations that didn't exist before their time. His third brother Yushin became a Buddhist priest, reflecting a choice of more traditional values. Their younger sister Tane learned sewing in Tokyo at a time when education for women was still a new idea. Yone himself took full advantage of these new freedoms. In *The Story of Yone Noguchi Told by Himself* (1914), an autobiographical essay he published at age 38, he recounts that he was allowed to make his own choices as a youth. He came to Tokyo and studied at Keio Gijuku, one of Japan's first universities. Soon, however, he quit studying. When he overheard someone talking about America, he decided to go to the United States by himself, at age 17.

'Becoming a poet'

Noguchi left for the United States nearly penniless in November 1893. He himself did not know what he wanted to or could do. Later, he wrote to his friend, dated 11 October 1898, 'I came to this America with some ambition that is earthly, but not with a purpose to write poems' (Atsumi 1975: 25). Despite this inauspicious beginning, over the course of eleven years he transformed himself into a well-known poet. A crucial step in his 'becoming a poet' took place on the day he met Joaquin Miller (1837-1913). Miller was a highly regarded American poet who gained fame by publishing *Songs of the Sierras* (1871) in London. He was known as 'The Poet of the Sierras' as well as 'The Byron of the Rockies' (Frost 1967: 15). Noguchi reflected on Miller's influence in publications such as *Story of Yone Noguchi Told by Himself* (1914) and a chapter on 'Miller' in the book *Beikoku-Bungakuron (Thoughts on American Literature)* 1925. Noguchi's meeting took place one day in April of 1895¹.

At the time Noguchi arrived in San Francisco, many young Japanese were working for White households as 'schoolboys' doing errands, in exchange for room and board, in addition to some schooling. He did this for at least two different households, in addition to menial jobs such as delivering Japanese newspapers and dish-washing at a hotel in Palo Alto. Ambitious, and tired of manual labor, he told a friend he would like to find a place where he could read more, with less time spent on such work. This friend told Noguchi of Miller, who was interested in Japan and had hosted Japanese before. Noguchi made up his mind to seek him out at Miller's residence and retreat, the 'Hights(sic)', across the bay from San Francisco. He sold the few books he possessed, except Poe's, to come up with the ferry fee to make the crossing (Noguchi 1914: 56).

As told in *Story of Yone Noguchi Told by Himself*, Noguchi was immediately enamoured with Miller, and the artistic life he found at the ‘Hights [sic] ... the ideal spot on earth’. Miller, who emphasized ‘Silence, Love – and simplicity’, offered to let Noguchi stay (40). Noguchi writes:

What pleased me best, I confess, was Miller’s manner in calling me ‘Mr. Noguchi’ as it was the first occasion to hear myself so addressed since my arrival in California hitherto I had been a Charley or Frank according to the employer’s fancy (58).

On that same night, Noguchi ‘secretly decided that [he] would become a poet’ (41). His stay provided an opportunity for him to put together pieces of his identity puzzle in a more unified way. Being poor; being a Japanese/outsider in the United States, his name ‘Yone Noguchi’; his imperfect English; the unpleasant experience of being discriminated against as a ‘Jap’; his previously vague purpose in the United States; the principles he followed in his everyday life – all these elements could come together in a singular whole if he led a poetic (or poet’s) life by ‘being a poet’. Noguchi had the chance to try out this new self as Miller let him stay free of charge for the next four years. Noguchi also learned about Walt Whitman’s free verse and Thoreau’s work. Whitman’s work in particular served as an inspiration in Noguchi’s poetry, in addition to other writers he learned about from Miller. These influences expanded his artistic world.

We can find the power of this identity transformation in Noguchi’s semi-fictionalized English novel *American Diary of a Japanese Girl by Miss Morning Glory* (1902). The protagonist, Miss Morning Glory, a Japanese girl visiting America with her uncle, suddenly decides to move into a poet’s house to ‘become a poet’. On the first day there, she declares ‘I am a poet already. The poet without poem is greater, don’t you know?’ (Noguchi 2007: 91). Even from this fiction, two things are obvious. For Noguchi, once you yourself decide that you are a poet, you are already one. More than writing poems, he was interested in having a sense of being someone other than a foreigner. He was searching for validity and a sense of belonging in the United States.

Publication of poetry books

The depth of Noguchi’s sudden conversion to being a poet can be found in his dedication to gaining recognition for his poet self. Key to this was his meeting with a young American editor, Gelett Burgess (1866-1951), who Noguchi met through Miller. Burgess offered Noguchi the opportunity to make his debut as a poet in print. Burgess, who was a Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduate, crossed the continent in the early 1890s, and was then publishing a little magazine called *The Lark* in San Francisco. He showed a strong interest in Noguchi’s poems, and published five of them in *The Lark* in July 1896. Burgess wrote an introductory passage describing Noguchi:

An exile from his native land, a stranger in a new civilization, – a mystic by temperament, race, and religions, – these lines which I have rephrased, setting his own words in a more intelligible order are his attempts to voice the indefinable thoughts that came to him on many lonely nights; the journal of his soul (1896: 3).

Burgess stated that he modified ‘connectives’ based on Noguchi’s explanations and with his agreement. The following was the first poem of the five, typed in capital letters:

WHAT ABOUT MY SONGS?

THE KNOWN-UNKNOWN-BOTTOMED GOSSAMER WAVES OF
THE FIELD ARE COLORED BY THE TRAVELING SHADOWS OF THE
LONELY, ORPHANED, MEADOW LARK:

AT SHADELESS NOON, SUNFUL-EYED, – THE CRAZY, ONE-INCH
BUTTERFLY (DETHRONED ANGEL?) ROAMS ABOUT, HER EMBODIED
SHADOW ON THE SECRET-CHATTERING GRASS-TOPS IN THE
SABRE-LIGHT.

THE UNIVERSE, TOO, HAS SOMEWHERE ITS SHADOW; –
BUT WHAT ABOUT MY SONGS?

AN (sic) THERE BE NO SHADOW, NO ECHOING TO THE END, –
MY BROKEN-THROATED FLUTE WILL NEVER AGAIN BE MADE WHOLE! (in
Burgess 1896: 3).

This poem includes features that were common in Noguchi’s early poems. We see juxtaposition of opposites connected with hyphen, such as ‘known-unknown,’ which Noguchi may reflect the influence of Walt Whitman’s free verse. He also puts ‘less’ at the end of words, such as ‘shadeless,’ and uses two or three adjectives connected with hyphen, such as ‘sunful-eyed.’ The title ‘Lark’ had a double meaning: it referred to the lark as a bird, but also implied that the magazine was meant to be fun or mischievous (Hoshino 2015: 15). There were various reactions to the novelty of a Japanese poet publishing poems in English. The reviews included ‘The discovery by *the Lark* is a new poet in Yone Noguchi, a young Japanese’ (Anon 1896: 23). Because Burgess wrote things under many pseudonyms, and because Noguchi’s use of English was unconventional, however, some wondered if Noguchi was a fictitious creation of Burgess, as when one reviewer wrote: ‘Yone Noguchi, the San Francisco poet is not a bad-looking kid, even if he is a Jap. Is he a real live poet, or just a bluff, like *The Lark?*’ (1896).

Burgess played a key role in helping Noguchi do more than simply call himself a poet. He also published Noguchi’s first poetry book, *Seen and Unseen: or, Monologues of a Homeless Snail* (1896). As we see in the subtitle of the book, many of Noguchi’s poems were about his lonely days away from home, alone in a foreign land, trying to capture nature with his own sensibility, and finding some meanings in his life as an Asian in the West. The following is one of the fifty poems from this book, which he revised and also translated into Japanese.

LIKE A PAPER LANTERN

OH (sic), my friend, thou wilt not come back to me this night!”

I am alone in this lonely cabin, alas, in the friendless Universe, and the snail at my door
hides stealthily his horns.

“O for my sake, put forth thy honorable horns!”

To the Eastward, to the Westward? Alas, where is Truthfulness? – Goodness? – Light?

The world enveils me; my body itself this night enveils my soul.

Alas, my soul is like a paper lantern, its pastes wetted off under the rainy night, in the rainy world (Noguchi 1920: 50).

Noguchi's work was reviewed: 'Weird, mystic subtle, this Oriental of the Far West is attracting attention, and we predict for him a vogue among the lovers of the unusual' (Anon 1896b). Noguchi's poems created a minor sensation across the continent, including in New York and on the East Coast. *The Bookman* reviewed '*Seen and Unseen* ... [as a work that] cannot fail to bring California a little nearer to the literary world; and it may be that what young men of taste have done recently for book-making in Chicago, Boston and New York may now be rivaled in the West' (Peck and MacArthur 1896: 287-8). With this poetry book, Noguchi could more confidently lay claim to his identity as a poet.

In keeping with the ambition of his poet self, Noguchi travelled, promoting himself, and published two other poetry books and one novel. His second poetry book, *The Voice of the Valley* (1897) consists of seven long poems, which were written after his solo trip to Yosemite valley, where he took Milton's book and learned to mimic 'Miltonic' tone in his own poems (Kamei 1965: 15). The third poetry book, *From the Eastern Sea* (1903), included Japanese themes and took advantage of 'Japonism' in which people showed great interest in things Japanese. Noguchi also travelled to, and was published in London where interest in Japan was stimulated by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, a political accord between England and Japan. Noguchi drew attention to his nationality by putting 'Yone Noguchi (Japanese)' on the cover of the self-published poetry book – which was positively reviewed in England. With this recognition, there was a transformation in how he was treated as a Japanese, from the discrimination he faced in California as a 'Jap' back in 1893, to a proud identity as a Japanese poet writing in English. In a letter dated 24 February 1903, Noguchi's described his pleasure at being recognised and accepted in *From the Eastern Sea*: 'I made many a nice young, lovely, kind friend among literary genius (attention!) W. B. Yeats, or Lawrence [sic] Binyon, Moore and [Robert] Bridges. They are so good; they invite me almost everyday' (Atsumi 1975: 106-7)

The British were mostly welcoming of Noguchi's poems. Noguchi sent about fifty copies to writers, poets and critics, and he received thirty responses; about a quarter of them were just one or two lines thanking Noguchi for sending a book, and another quarter expressed polite appreciation (Hoshino 2013: 63). Some messages commented on the fact that he was from the East/Japan, and others expressed admiration for him writing these poems in English, with comments such as 'I congratulate you upon your familiarity with our language. Your work seems to me to be full of fine Oriental imagining' (30 January 1903, ctd. in Atsumi 1975: 74) These poets, writers and editors whom he had cultivated in his role as a poet became assets for his later publications, and for a second visit to England from 1913 to 1914.

He left from London in March of 1903, returned to the United States, and eventually returned to Japan permanently except for a few short trips abroad. A number of reasons contributed to his going back to Japan. Noguchi had gained something of a reputation in both America and England, and may have struggled with the pressure of

expectations for sensational publications. Perhaps more critically, his departure was half a year after the Russo-Japanese War broke out. He came to see that while ‘being an outsider’ worked to his advantage as a poet, despite living in the United States he would not be accepted as American or British (Toyama 1975: 19). His idealized vision of himself as a poet collided with the more harsh realities of politics and prejudice. His situation was further complicated by the birth of a son, conceived several months before his departure for Japan. The mother was Leonie Gilmour, an American who helped Noguchi edit *The American Diary of a Japanese Girl*². He was not committed to a relationship with Gilmour, however, and in fact had been pursuing another woman. Going back to Japan would provide him a fresh start and let him escape the hard choices that go along with relationships and residence.

Another struggle in his own country

Noguchi, having achieved fame as an international poet writing poems in English, was warmly welcomed back in Japan in September 1904. This started a new phase of his struggle to maintain his identity as a poet and an internationalist. He continued to be very productive by publishing poetry books in English, as well as prose and articles for magazines and newspapers both in English and Japanese. He collaborated with Japanese, American and British poets and published an anthology of poetry with contributions from twelve Japanese and twenty western poets, in addition to Yone Noguchi himself (Hori 2012: 114). This ambitious international project ran into trouble, however, because of conflicts among Japanese contributors, and also because some Japanese found Noguchi’s position in the group so soon after his return to Japan ‘snobbish’ (Hori 2012: 114-6). Once again, Noguchi struggled to realize his vision of himself as a poet and internationalist.

From then on, Noguchi mostly wrote on his own, but he published a lot while also becoming a faculty member at Keio Gijuku University (his alma mater). He made several international trips: his visit to England in 1913-14 to give a lecture on Japanese poetry at Magdalen College in Oxford University, invited by the poet Laureate, Robert Bridges; a trip to the United States in 1919-20, visiting universities for lectures throughout the country. His last trip abroad was to India through China; he visited with Gandhi, Tagore, and Naidu among other writers and thinkers of the time (Hori 2012: 366).

However, even while being productive as an international literary figure, as a member of Japan’s intellectual establishment he was required to readapt himself to the norms of his home country. His sense of alienation seemed not to go away – his identity as a poet, which gave him freedom abroad, seems to have held him apart in Japan. Symbolic of this struggle, it took Noguchi seventeen years after his return to Japan to publish a poetry book in Japanese. Fittingly, it was entitled *Songs of a Poet of Dual Nationalities (Niju Kokusekisha no Shi)* (1921), and spoke directly to these unresolved issues of belonging and identity:

When Japanese read my Japanese poetry, they say,
‘His Japanese poems are not so good but perhaps his English poems are better.’

When Westerners read my English poems, they say,
 ‘I can’t bear to read his English poems, but his Japanese poems must be superb.’
 To tell the truth,
 I have no confidence in either language. In other words, I guess I am a dual citizen
 (1-2)³.

Noguchi was, of course, Japanese by nationality, but with this confession he was making a cynical joke about himself and what he felt was the lack of recognition of his work. Around this time, Noguchi’s thirtieth year anniversary of his life as a poet was celebrated with a special issue of a magazine, *Nihon-Shijin (Japanese Poets)*, in May 1926, dedicated to Noguchi. The comments from other writers were surprisingly critical, and emphasized the foreignness of his career, making little positive mention of his poems. It seems that while being a Japanese abroad was difficult, being an international poet in Japan was also a challenge.

When Noguchi was fifty, he wrote that he had lived as a poet for 30 years, that he would like to be seen as a poet above all else, and that he wanted to be remembered for his poems. To the end, he held on to the idea that ‘being a poet’ was the best way for him to make sense of his unconventional life story.

Noguchi’s writings on poets and writers

Another way to understand Noguchi’s identity struggles can be found in his choice of topics for his books. In particular, Noguchi was interested in the outsider status of Edgar Allan Poe. Noguchi started reading Poe’s poetry book even before his visit to Miller. Noguchi was drawn to Poe’s poems, and was even accused of having plagiarized Poe’s poems. He published works on Poe in Japanese twice: *Poe Hyoden (A Biography of Poe)* in 1926 and in 1934. Throughout his life, Noguchi met many poets of the day in person, including Joaquin Miller, Charles Warren Stoddard, Edwin Mahkam, Ina Coolbrith, Zona Gale, William Michael Rossetti, Arther Symons, William Butler Yeats, Robert Bridges, and Arthur Ransome. Noguchi never met Poe, however. Despite this, he seemed to somehow identify himself with Poe, who was seen as an outsider in the literary circles of his own country, just as Noguchi was in Japan. In addition, Poe was known both for his poems and prose, as was Noguchi. Noguchi started a biography on Poe as follows:

It is impossible to think of Poe without thinking of prose. However, to think of Poe without poems is disgraceful and disrespectful to Poe. Poe, with an unusual knowledge and imagination, built a bridge between poetry and prose. We have to admit that because there is no end to criticisms of his prose, he is a person of prose, and prose is the main thing for Poe. However, Poe thought of himself as a poet, though from outside, he seems to be concerned with prose. At least, he has taken many pages in the anthology of world literature because of his prose (1926: 1)⁴.

The rest of the book talks about Poe, but unlike a general biography that covers one’s life in detail in a chronological order, he focuses on particular events, including Poe’s upbringing, his relationship to his wife, and his thoughts on poetry.

What is poetry ... it is no more than words which naturally express the common feelings that humans share. The topics of the poems can be wide and deep, yet the spirit is absolute and primitive. We can recognize poems, but we cannot grab them and categorize them. We can only see poems as an expression of the law of nature, and tentatively see them only as an expression of our crying of deep feelings. Because of this nature of poems, poems would join Poe who said 'Poems are simply feelings for me, not purpose.' Poe was a pioneer in this declaration compared to those who were present in American Literary circles a hundred years ago.

Again, what is poetry ... It was an overwhelming power, and it is an exquisite yet extremely powerful life. It is an instinctive and primitive power (68-9).

It seems as though Noguchi felt the need to defend Poe. Noguchi concluded his biography by saying, 'In short, Poe was an outsider in American Literature and I finish his biography by celebrating him as the outsider' (169). However, he edited out this line when he revised it for republication in 1934. Something made Noguchi delete that very last line, and the sentiment it contained.

Conclusion

In this article, I have discussed Noguchi's urge to make sense of his international life by claiming for himself the identity and role of an international poet. Noguchi did not write an autobiography later in life, as it coincided with World War Two – a time when internationalism was not appreciated and he himself adopted a more nationalistic stance. He tells pieces of his life story in different writings, but never put them together as a narrative from his childhood to his later years. Because of his unconventional life and long struggles to find a place for himself, it is possible that he did not know how to tell the story of his life in a way that would satisfy him.

Instead of Noguchi himself telling his life story in his way, scholars have begun putting together the different elements of his life, using information from different sources. We are learning that Noguchi's struggles with his identity as a poet and internationalist are increasingly relevant in our global age. Countless people now face similar challenges of identity, adaptation, belonging, alienation, discrimination, and artistic vision. The challenges he took on when he ventured to San Francisco at 17 are shared by immigrants and cultural minorities everywhere. Yone Noguchi was a product of his time, but his life story speaks to us in this new age of globalization and search for identity.

Endnotes

1. Noguchi himself wrote that his visit to Miller was 'April 1896' but considering that his first five poems were published in July 1896, it was probably Noguchi's mistake and that it was a year earlier than that: April 1895.
2. As mentioned earlier, Noguchi did not form a family with them, as he was then engaged to someone else, Ethel Arms, who was planning to join Noguchi in Japan the following year, but cancelled the plan because she discovered his child was born. Leonie Gilmour and their son came to Japan in March 1907 and found out that Yone Noguchi was already married to a

Japanese woman. Nonetheless, Gilmour stayed in Japan until 1920, even after Isamu left for a high school in the United States in 1918.

3. The original poem was written in Japanese. This translation is from *The life of Isamu Noguchi* (Duus 2004: 37).
4. Noguchi's work on Poe, *Poe Hyoden*, was written in Japanese. Translation by the author.

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